

# 2050 Comprehensive Plan



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## ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

### A

AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
ACS	American Community Survey
AEDP	Agricultural Easement Donation Program
AMATS	Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study
ASA	Agricultural Security Area

### C

CARES	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security
CAUV	Current Agricultural Use Value
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CHIP	Community Housing Improvement Program
CRA	Community Reinvestment Area
CSP	Conservation Stewardship Program

### E

EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EMS	Emergency Medical Service
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency

### F

FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map

### G

GIS	Geographic Information Systems
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GPM

### H

HUD

### J

JCTC

JEDD

### L

LAEPP

LOS

### M

MPO

MSA

### N

NEFCO

NEOTEC

NHD

NPS

NRCS

NRHP

NRPA

NWI

### O

OACP

ODA

ODNR

ODOT

OEFFA

Gallons Per Minute

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Job Creation Tax Credit

Joint Economic Development District

Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program

Level of Service

Metropolitan Planning Organization

Metropolitan Statistical Area

Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning and Development Organization

Northeast Ohio Trade and Economic Consortium

National Hydrography Dataset

National Park Service

Natural Resources Conservation Service

National Register of Historic Places

National Recreation and Park Association

National Wetland Inventory

Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police

Ohio Department of Agriculture

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Ohio Department of Transportation

Ohio Ecological Food and Farm



## Ravenna City Comprehensive Plan

	Association
OGRIP	Ohio Geographically Referenced Information Program
OHI	Ohio Historic Inventory
OSIP	Ohio Site Inventory Program
OTARMA	Ohio Township Association Risk Management Authority

### P

PARTA	Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority
PCB	Polychlorinated Biphenyl
PCRPC	Portage County Regional Planning Commission

### S

SWCD	Soil and Water Conservation District
SWPA	Source Water Protection Area

### T

TIF	Tax Increment Financing
TIP	Transportation Improvement Plan
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load

### U

USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### What is a Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan is a document that provides the framework and policy direction for future development decisions. It is a forward-thinking, long-range document that looks ahead up to 30 years to anticipate future challenges and needs of the community. The Comprehensive Plan once adopted, becomes a flexible guide for the City to follow in order to achieve their desired vision for the community. The Plan is used in conjunction with the zoning code to establish a common direction for the community and to support decisions being made about the future of the City. While not legally binding, the Plan is important to consider in all community decision-making because its recommendations reflect the desire of the community. To ensure that the Plan does not end up on a shelf, an annual report on its status should be provided to the City Trustees, including initiatives that have begun, goals that have been achieved, land that has been set aside, etc.

### *Why Does Ravenna City Need a Plan?*

The Plan provides guidance to City Council and City Boards on the development of Ravenna in a coordinated and unified manner. It can continuously be referred to in deciding development issues and avoids continuous reliance on case-by-case studies to make development decisions. The Plan gives the City a method and the rationale to coordinate the overall pattern of physical development in the community.

The Plan encourages development in areas that can best accommodate growth and provide services

to people, preventing wasting of valuable land and resources. If uncontrolled, unplanned development is allowed to proceed, the following kinds of problems can occur:

- Excessive costs for extension of public utilities and services
- Damage to environmentally sensitive areas
- Loss of valuable resources such as agricultural land, recreation and open space, sand, and gravel.

### *Planning Process*

The Plan begins with an identification of major issues and resulting planning principles that provide an overall glimpse of the most pressing concerns and priorities of the community. The planning principles are the overarching ideas and recommendations that should be taken into consideration in each development proposal. The Plan is then broken down into multiple elements that each play a role in the future growth and development of the community. These include: Demographics, Housing, Environment, Community Facilities, Economic Development, Transportation, and Land Use. The significant issues in each of these elements, along with the interaction between them, must be considered for their relation to the overall growth and vision of the City. One chapter is devoted to each element. The goals, objectives, and strategies are presented in Chapter 10.

### *Public Engagement*

Public participation in the Ravenna City Comprehensive Plan 2050 Update was solicited in three different ways: through an online and paper community survey; a community workshop at Ravenna High School; there was a survey sent out to the youth and another to businesses. The community responses provided feedback on what Ravenna residents think about community facilities, environmental issues, and land use. They are also used to aid the creation of a vision for the future of development of the City. The future land use and development outlined in this Plan reflects what the community wants to be, how it wants to look, and embodies goals and aspirations for the future.

## History of Ravenna City

The City of Ravenna is located east of Kent, in central Portage County along the neighboring Camp James A. Garfield Joint Military Training Center and West Branch State Park. Ravenna City is in the center of Ravenna Township. Rootstown Township is directly south. The City is within 300 miles or a day's drive of several major cities including Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Detroit. (see Map 1-1).

The settlement of Ravenna was founded in 1799 when Benjamin Tappan claimed the land in his father's name to land purchased in the Connecticut Western Reserve. In 1800, his new wife, Nancy Wright, suggested the name Ravenna after the city of the same name in Italy. When in 1806 the formation of Portage County was being planned, she lobbied for Ravenna to be the county seat, it was made so in 1808. By 1810, the first county courthouse and log jail were built. Ravenna's first true industry was glassworks, established in 1848. The first statewide meeting of the Ohio Woman's Rights Association was held in Ravenna in 1853. From 1900 to 1930 the population of doubled to 8,019. This was facilitated by the A. C. Williams Co. being incorporated in Ravenna in 1905. The company through the 1920s was recognized as the largest cast-iron toy manufacturer in the world. In 1993, the City of Ravenna voted to become politically independent from Ravenna Township. Since the 1970s, Ravenna has held the Balloon A-Fair and cruise-ins as annual attractions that brings thousands to admire the preserved architecture, history, and heritage.



Map 1-1 Regional Location

# Chapter 2

## Natural Features

### Topography

The City of Ravenna lies in the Glaciated Allegheny Plateau physiographic region of Ohio. Elevations range from a low of 1,050 feet near the future Emerald Lake Preserve on the far western edge of the City, to a high point of approximately 1,170 feet on North Chestnut Street near University Hospital Portage Medical Center. Most areas of the City are flat to gently rolling. The steepest slopes, 35 to 50% slope, are in the vicinity of Havre's Woods Park in the southeast part of the City along a stream that drains towards Michael J. Kirwan Reservoir. These steeper slopes also extend into the wooded area east of Ohio Avenue and south of the City's Composting Facility. Slopes of 12 to 18% characterize the area around Chestnut Hills Park, paralleling Wahoo Ditch (see Map 2-1).

### Surface Waters

#### *Watersheds*

Ravenna City is split between two watersheds (see Map 2-4). The western two thirds of Ravenna is in the Breakneck Creek-Cuyahoga River watershed while the eastern side of the city drains to the West Branch of the Mahoning River. The Ohio River-Lake Erie divide, high ground that separates the Ohio River watershed from the Great Lakes Basin, splits the City. The divide follows North Chestnut Street south, cuts across Maple Grove Cemetery, and turns south again roughly following Freedom Street. This divide separates rivers and streams that flow into the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence Seaway, and the Atlantic Ocean from those that flow into the Ohio

and Mississippi Rivers and eventually the Gulf of Mexico.

The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River watershed is the single largest watershed in the world, containing 84% of North America's fresh water. To protect this water source, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact was ratified and codified in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) in 2008 along with seven other states and two Canadian provinces. In general, the Compact seeks to achieve no net loss of water from the Great Lakes Basin by prohibiting new and increased withdrawals or consumptive use of water outside of the Basin, though applications for exceptions can be made. These regulations may affect Ravenna's central water and sewer services that cross the divide.

#### *Floodplains & Wetlands*

Floods occur naturally and can happen almost anywhere, not exclusive to bodies of water.

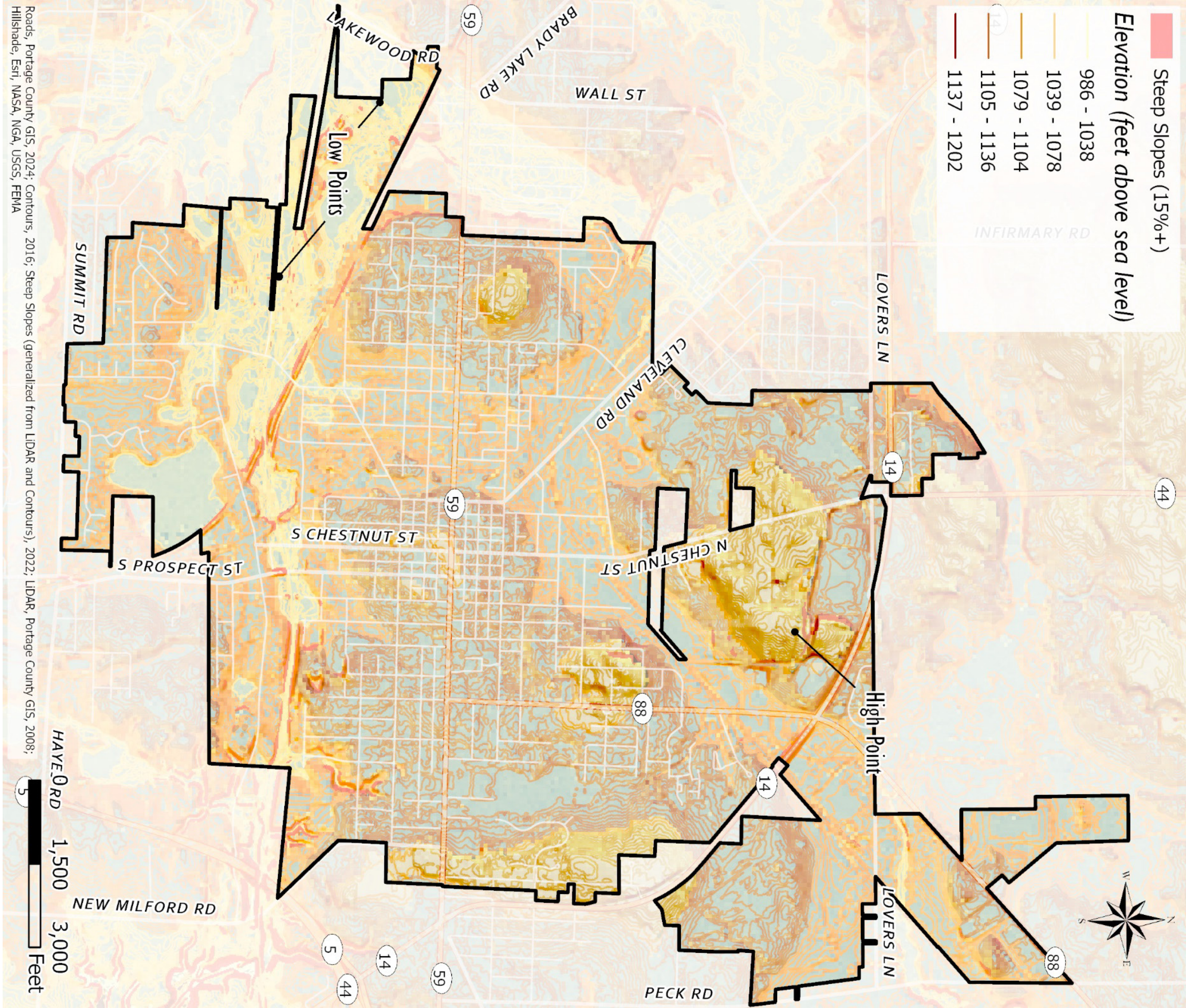
Floodplains are generally flat land adjacent to rivers and streams that are periodically inundated by water. Wetlands in and around the floodplain temporarily store excess water during heavy rains. Together the floodplains and wetlands create a riparian zone. Riparian zones left in their natural state:

- Provide shelter, food, and migration corridors for wildlife
- Provide recreation opportunities and scenic beauty,
- Stabilize stream banks
- Improve water quality due to vegetation removing nutrients, sediment, and excess runoff

The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) maintains flood maps which are used to determine areas at highest risk for floods in the City. It is important to note that simply because an area is identified as low risk does not mean that it will not flood. The flood zones shown on Map 2.3 were created using FEMA's National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) data. FEMA continuously updates the NFHL based on effective flood maps and letters of map change delivered by communities. Ravenna City's flood map has an effective date of 2009.



Map 2-1 Topography and Steep Slopes







Wetlands are associated with several streams and drainage areas. Wahoo Ditch, in the northern portion of Ravenna, is a mix of channelized stream beds and underground culverts which flows east to west following the course of the Akron Barberton Railway. Just outside of the city, Wahoo Ditch turns south and flows into Breakneck Creek which flows into the Cuyahoga River. A small 100-year floodplain (Flood Zone A) is associated with Wahoo Ditch (see Map 2.3). The channelization of the stream and lack of natural riparian areas to absorb excessive rain and runoff contribute to flooding problems along Wahoo Ditch.

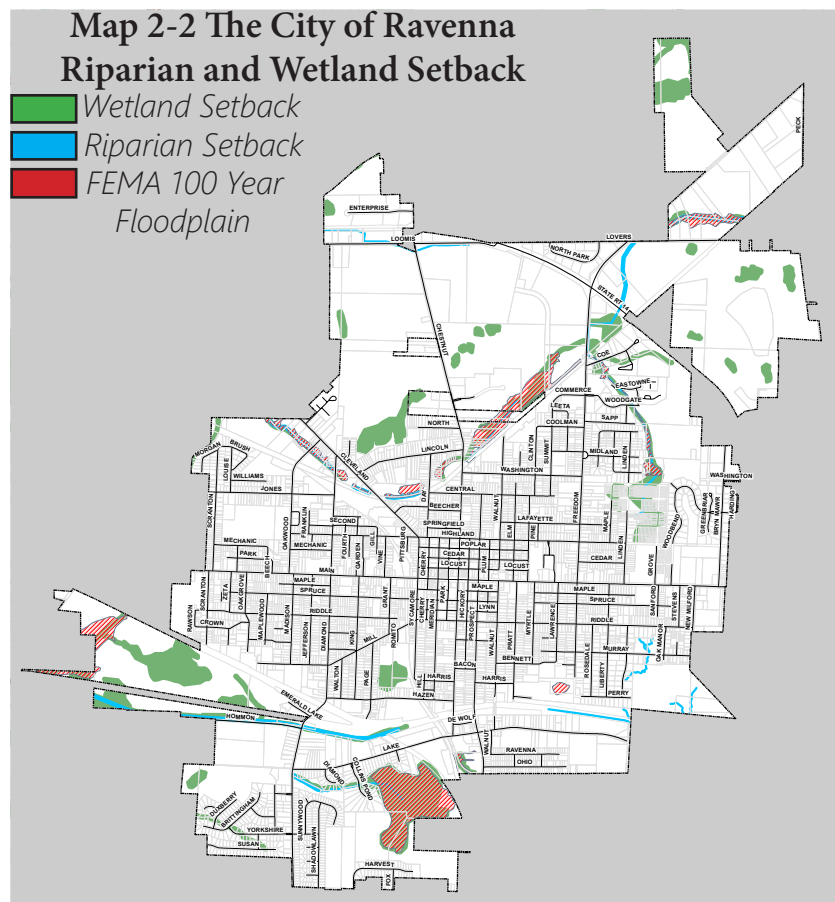
There is a wooded wetland system and drainage area north of East Main Street behind Giant Eagle and west of Woodbend Drive. The stream drains primarily to the north and is mostly channelized. It has a narrow floodplain as it runs through residential areas along Woodgate Boulevard and Coe Road. While the wetland spans the Cuyahoga River and Mahoning River divide, the wetland drains mostly north to Wahoo Ditch rather than to the Mahoning side of the divide.

There is a large wetland and flood hazard area around Collins Pond in the southern part of the City. The railroad tracks to the east and surrounding roads and development along West Lake Street and Diamond Street serve to isolate this wooded wetland and floodplain.

Another flood hazard area that affects the City proper crosses SR 88 north of Lovers Lane/Loomis Parkway. Harmon Brook flows west to east behind Brookside Assisted Living and Portage Industries, across SR 88 into wetlands and a small lake that carries the water to the West Branch of the Mahoning River on the east side of Peck Road. The flood hazard area is about 80 to 200 feet wide in the channelized area of the stream between SR 88 and railroad tracks to the east but widens out considerably in the wetlands in Ravenna Township east of Maplewood Joint Vocational School. In this area, north and west of the school, the wetland-woodland system is considered high quality based off of these qualifiers:

- large undisturbed areas
- areas that provided an important environmental buffer
- places that had multiple vegetation communities
- proximity to riparian corridors, mature woods, or significant wetlands
- vernal pool
- connectivity to protected areas
- areas within 500 feet of an EPA designated high quality stream
- areas within 300 feet of a named stream
- areas adjacent to source water protection areas

Impacts to riparian zones such as development or extension of lawns can be detrimental to water quality and species habitats. Ravenna City maintains a riparian zone map and has codified wetland setbacks and riparian setbacks within the city ordinances. Land must be maintained in its natural state within the setbacks.



## Water Quality & Source Protection Areas

### *Stormwater and Impervious Surfaces*

Stormwater is precipitation that runs off impervious or compact surfaces such as driveways, streets, parking lots, farm fields, or lawns, instead of being absorbed into the ground. In many urban environments, water is removed from streets, sidewalks, and lawns as quickly as possible using gray infrastructure (systems of curbs, gutters, pipes, culverts, etc) emptying directly into a stream or lake. Anything dumped down a storm drain goes directly to the local water body. Urban environments, such as Ravenna, have large swaths of impervious surfaces where precipitation is unable to absorb into the ground, increasing the rate of runoff in comparison to the surrounding natural environment. The stormwater carries all the pollutants and sediments collected from the built environment directly into the water ways. When the ratio of impervious surfaces to watershed area exceeds 10%, as is the case in Ravenna, the water quality of a stream can be negatively affected. Water quality can be improved by using green infrastructure that helps absorb and clean runoff before it enters the streams and alleviates flooding.

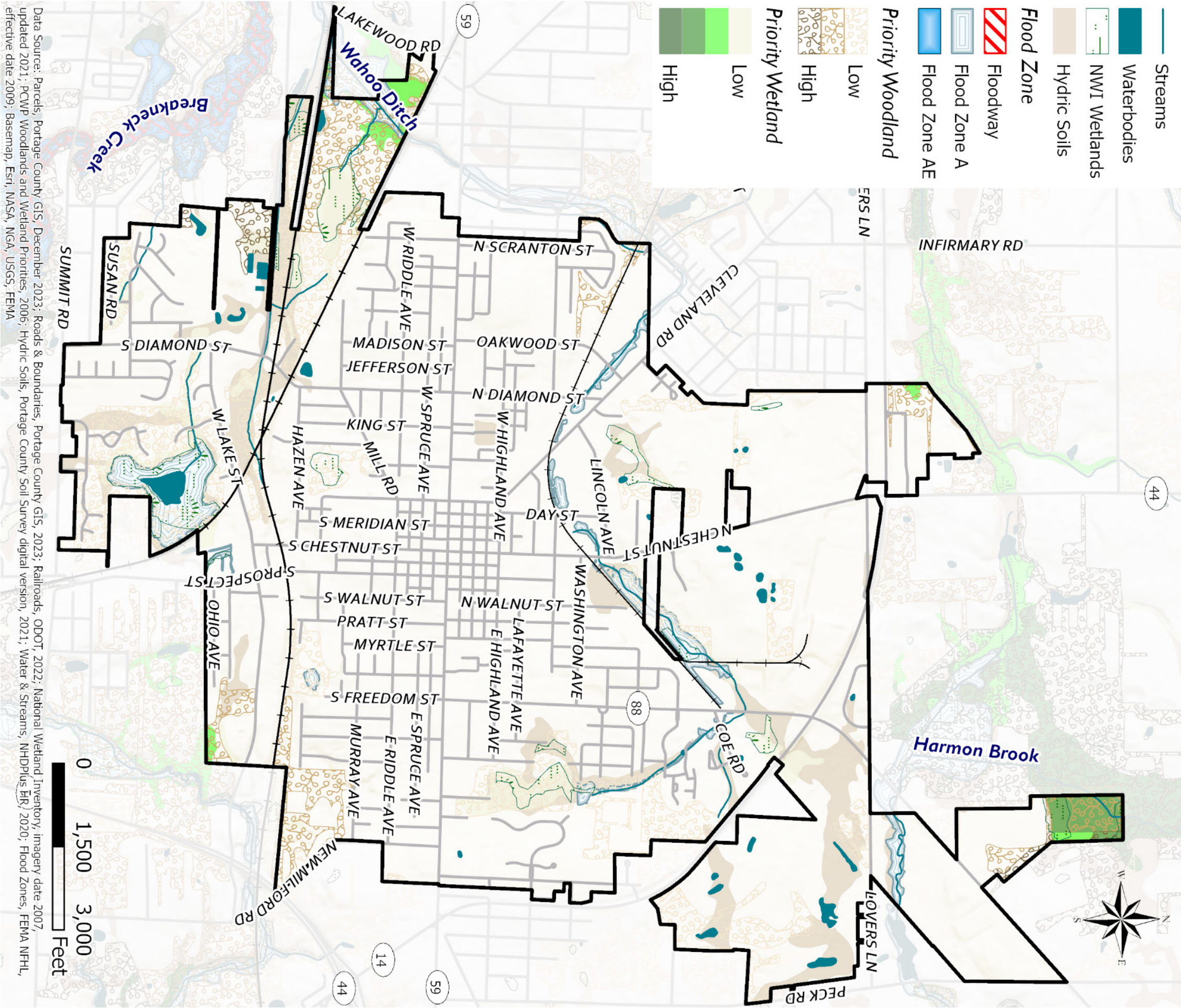
- Bioswales and rain gardens slow and filter water using vegetation.
- Permeable pavement infiltrates, treats, and/or stores rainwater where it falls. Often used for parking lots.
- Planter boxes help capture rainwater from streets, sidewalks, or parking lots and are used to beautify city streets.
- Downspout disconnection reroutes rooftop drainage pipes from draining into storm sewers to flowing into cisterns, rain barrels or onto permeable areas where the water infiltrates into the soil or is stored.
- Urban tree canopies have many benefits including absorbing stormwater in leaves and branches, reducing urban heat island effect, and providing habitat within the city.
- Green roofs capture rainfall on roofs and reduce heating and cooling loads.

In 2014, the EPA funded a stormwater demonstration site at Chestnut Hills Park to help address non-point source pollution from urban stormwater runoff in the Feeder Canal-Breakneck Creek watershed. The improvements included permeable pavement, rain gardens, vegetated swales, and permeable rock berms.





Map 2-3 Wetlands and Floodplains



Data Source: Parcels, Portage County GIS, December 2023; Roads & Boundaries, Portage County GIS, 2023; Railroads, ODOT, 2022; National Wetland Inventory, imagery date 2007, updated 2021; PCWP Wetlands and Wetland Priorities, 2006; Hydric Soils, Portage County Soil Survey digital version, 2021; Water & Streams, NHDPlus HR, 2020; Flood Zones, FEMA NFHL, effective date 2009; Basemap, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA





### ***NPDES***

In 1990, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program was formulated under the Clean Water Act to address stormwater runoff and reduce or eliminate the amount of pollution entering the waterways ultimately increasing water quality. Ravenna City falls under Phase II of the program which covers small operators of Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4). The City implements a Stormwater Management Program addressing six minimum control measures stipulated by the EPA; however, illicit discharges still impact water quality. Ravenna's stormwater utility provides the City with the tools to meet the EPA's regulation requirements.

### ***Drinking Water***

Lake Hodgson is the primary source of Ravenna City's drinking water. There are emergency interconnections with Portage County as well. A large source water protection area has been delineated surrounding Lake Hodgson (see Map 2-4). It is divided into three categories.

1. Source Water Assessment and Protection Area (not shown on the map)- This represents the drainage area upstream of the public water system intake.
2. Corridor Management Zone- The area where the potential for drinking water contamination warrants delineation, inventory, and management because of its proximity to a public water system intake.
3. Emergency Management Zone- The surface and subsurface area in the immediate vicinity of the public water system intake.

Ravenna last updated the City's drinking water source protection plans in April 2014 to protect the water system (Ohio EPA, 2023). Utility services including water are discussed further in Chapter 4.

### ***Priority Woodlands & Wetlands***

The larger wooded and wetland areas of Ravenna are associated with landscapes that historically posed limitations to development like steep slopes, poor soils, wetlands, or stream corridors. The largest intact high quality wooded area will be preserved as part of Emerald Lake Preserve, a park under design by the Ravenna City Parks Department.

## **Air Quality & Climate**

Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA designates National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for outdoor air pollutants that may be harmful to human health and the environment. The NAAQS set a maximum level for the following pollutants: ozone, particulate matter (2.5 and 10 microns), carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. The Akron Regional Air Quality Management District (ARAQMD) monitors ambient air quality for Portage County. Portage County is in moderate non-attainment for Ozone (2015-standard).

### ***Heat Islands***

A heat island is an urban area that experiences temperatures higher than those in the outlying areas. Structures like buildings, roads, and other infrastructure absorb and emit more heat than natural landscapes. Daytime temperatures can be 1 to 7°F higher than surrounding rural areas while nighttime temperatures are 2 to 5°F higher. Increasing warming trends due to climate change will cause increasingly intense temperatures in heat islands. Heat islands have many negative impacts on the environment and residents such as:

- Causing increased energy consumption
- Elevating pollutant emissions and greenhouse gas emissions
- Compromising human health and comfort
- Impairing water quality

The image to the right, created in ArcGIS Online by the Trust for Public Land, shows the urban heat island effect in the City of Ravenna. Downtown, Main Street, Chestnut Street near SR 14, the high school, and Cleveland Road experience the highest urban heat island temperatures (shown in red). These are areas with higher density development with lots of impervious surfaces and less greenery.

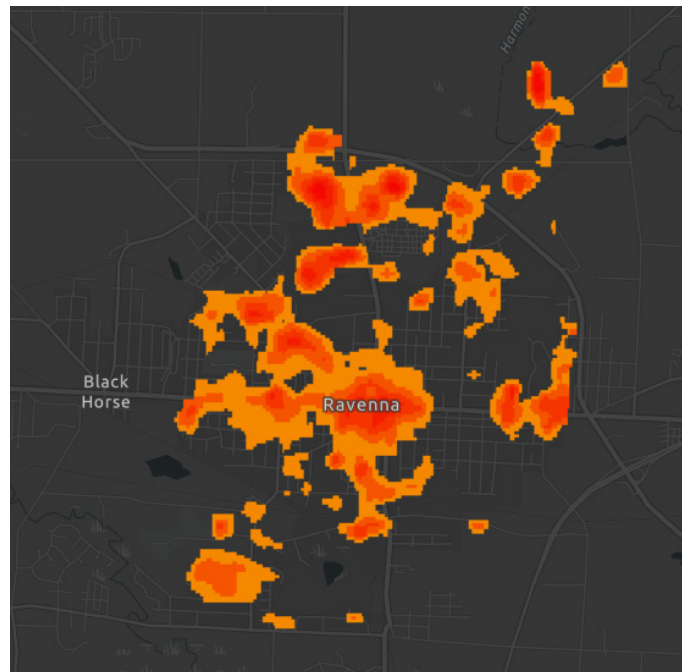
Reducing the urban heat island can be done through several methods including:

- Increasing trees and vegetation
- Encouraging green roofs or rooftop gardens
- Installing cool roofs (a roof with material or coating meant to reflect sunlight and heat away from the building)
- Cool Pavements- reflective or permeable pavements
- Smart Growth

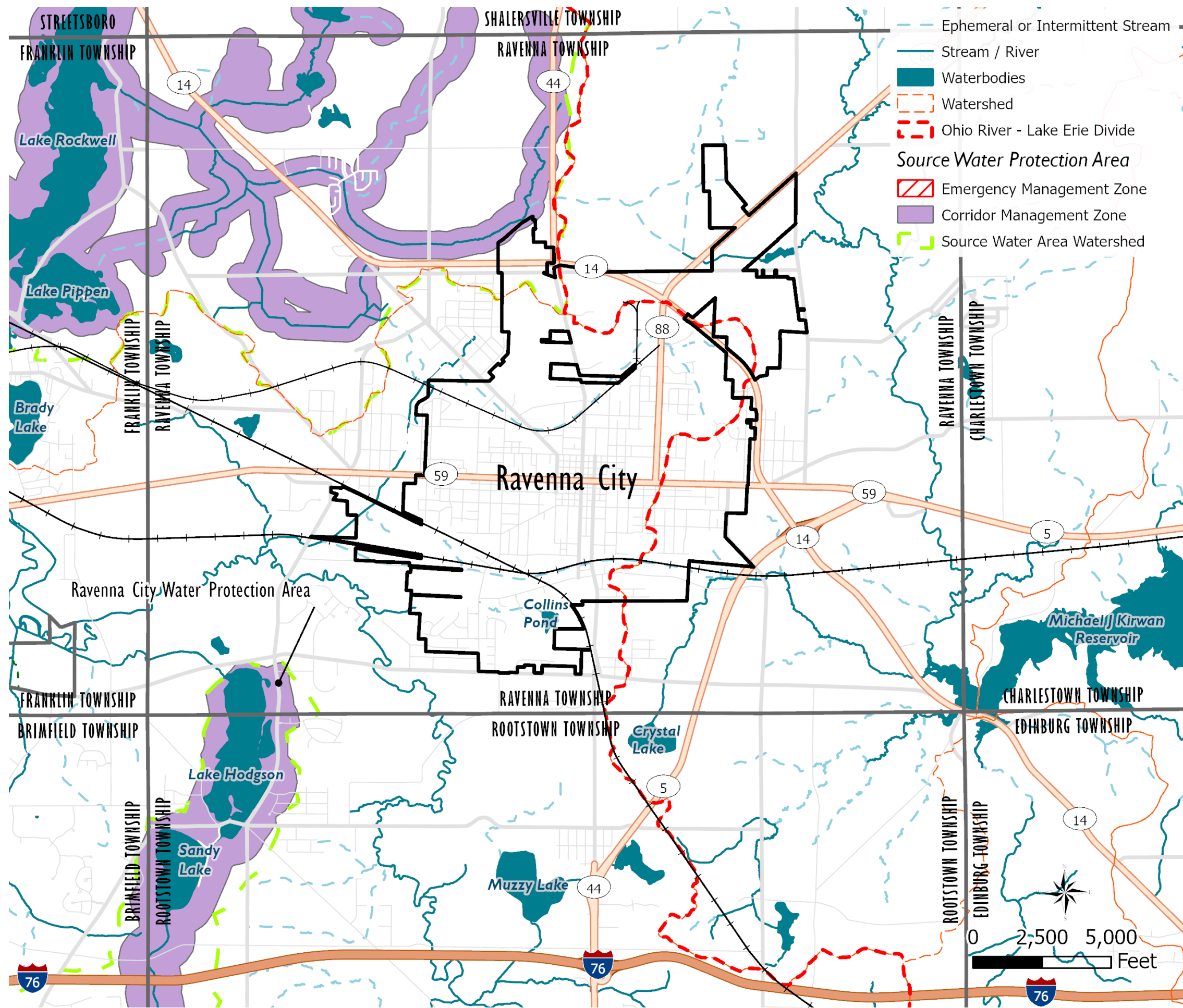
More information is available at <https://www.epa.gov/heatislands/heat-island-cooling-strategies>.

Reducing the heat island will benefit the City and its residents in the following ways.

- Reduced energy use by increasing shading or reflecting more sunlight away from the buildings instead of being absorbed into dark pavements and roofs
- Improved air quality and lower greenhouse gas emissions due to introducing more life into the City which removes air pollutants and sequesters carbon dioxide.
- Enhanced stormwater management and water quality
- Improved aesthetics and quality of life.



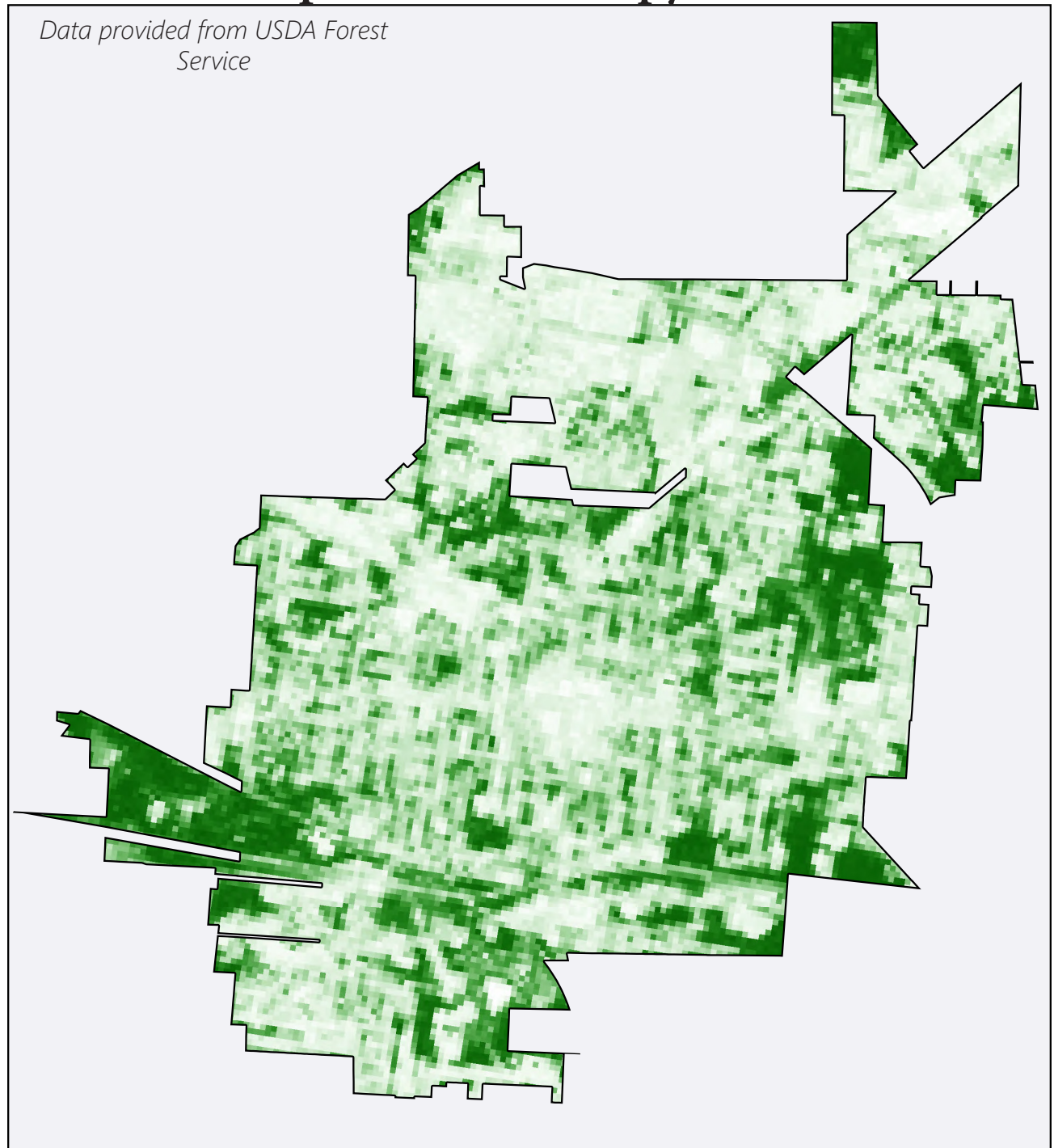
Map 2-4 Drinking Water Protection Areas





Ravenna City has a Shade Tree Commission which aids Administration in maintaining and replacing trees throughout the City within the right-of-way. The City is responsible for roughly 6,000 trees.

## Map 2-5 Tree Canopy Cover





# Chapter 3

## Land Use & Zoning

The status of the existing land use gives the community an accurate description of where Ravenna's development patterns are in Map 3-1. The purpose of identifying the existing land use patterns and environmental constraints help plan for the future of Ravenna. The existing land will show the current issues which this plan will address through solutions.

### Existing Land Use

Commercial uses are concentrated along Main Street/SR 59 and Chestnut St, significantly where they intersect at the center of the City. There are other concentrations around the intersection of SR 59 and SR 44. Industrial uses are concentrated along the railroad right-of-ways across the city.

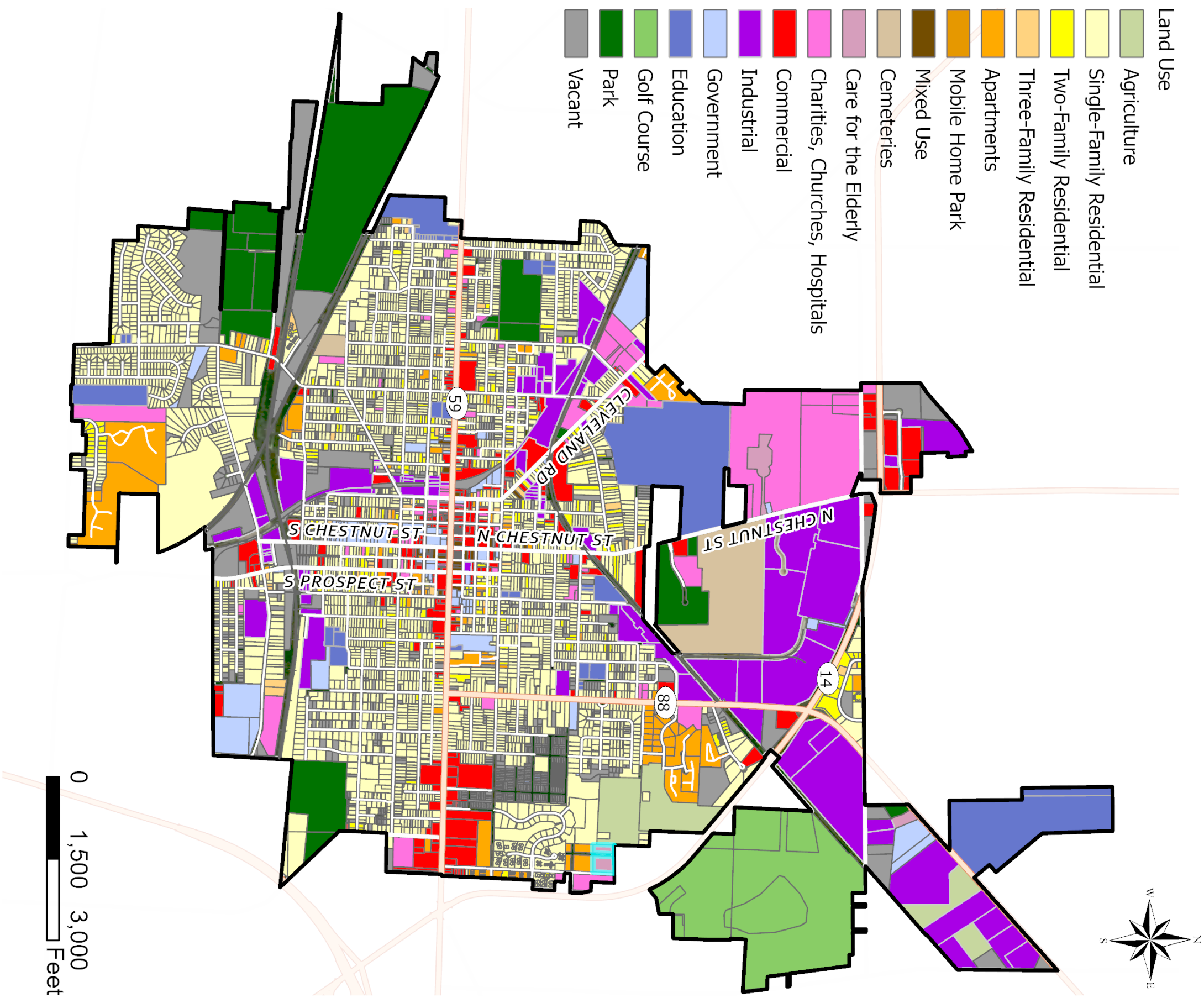
There are three parks across the City providing spaces to the City residents to enjoy nature.

Vacant land characterizes approximately 10% of the City. These vacant lands are in areas of possible residential development or industrial development.

**Table 3.1. Land Use**

Land Use Type	Acres (2024)	Percent Coverage
Agriculture	62.63	2.00%
Park	249.42	7.98%
Cemeteries	72.63	2.32%
Charities, Hospitals, Churches	181.08	5.80%
Elderly	12.96	0.42%
Education	208.73	6.68%
Government	87.89	2.81%
Vacant	322	10.30%
Rail Right-of-Way	6.39	0.20%
<b>Residential</b>		
Single-Family Residential	815.44	26.10%
Two-Family Residential	67.16	2.15%
Three-Family Residential	16.12	0.52%
Apartment	130.43	4.17%
Mobile	0.95	0.03%
Other Residential	137.33	4.40%
<b>Commercial</b>		
Residential/Commercial	6.66	0.21%
Commercial	162.35	5.20%
Golf Course	191.27	6.12%
<b>Industrial</b>		
Industrial	393.44	12.59%
Sources: Land Use - based on Auditor's CAMA classification and 2023 aerials (Portage County Auditor's parcel data, July 2023)		

Map 3-1 Existing Land Use



Data Source: Parcels, Portage County GIS, December 2023; Roads & Boundaries, Portage County GIS, 2023; Railroads, ODOT, 2022.



### ***Develop-able Areas***

Map 3-1 displays the current land use areas with development potential. With large areas of vacancies, the City hopes to progress these spots into more commercial and industrial opportunity. Over the next 30 years, some of these already urbanized areas may have the opportunity for redevelopment and revitalization as newer commercial opportunities emerge.

## **Future Land Use**

The Future Land Use map, Map 3-2, was created using the community survey and input from the City Steering Commission. The following describes the future land use, average acreage covered, and the reasoning for the use.

Moderate Density Residential category includes multi-family homes, single-family homes, along with opportunities for expansion. This category concentrates future housing developments near existing infrastructure or where it may easily be extended. Approximately 24.71% of the City is shown as Moderate Density Residential on the future land use map.

Low Residential category is shown to cover 37.13% of the City. This area is mostly single family housing with a few areas of vacancy. Redevelopment and new housing to these areas would provide more cohesion & pride to the community. The Community survey, revealed that 88.07% want more development of single family housing in Ravenna City.

The Core Commercial category covers the whole of downtown Ravenna, because as the County seat it is a center of commerce and community activity. This district is meant to resemble the bustling heart of a thriving community, a pedestrian-friendly city center with mix of uses including residential, commercial, and office both next to each other and mixed vertically within the same structure. Ideally, this will reduce the possibility of commercial sprawl, encouraging more compact well-designed development. Local businesses should be attracted to this area. The historical significance and character of Ravenna is on beautiful display by the preservation of its historic structure, most of which may be found here. According to the Community survey, 52.84% of respondents liked Ravenna because of its historical character. This zone also covers the dense commercial activities at Main St/Milford Rd and at St. Rt. 14/ N Chestnut St. 81.82% of respondents put that they would like to see more sit-down restaurants, with 59.09% also wanting more retail in the city. Approximately 4.58% of the City will be covered by Core Commercial 1.96% of which is in the Central Business District (CBD).

Secondary Commercial areas are extensions of sparse commercial spreading out of the Core Commercial. It helps provide local commerce to residents further outside of the city and with less traffic. One such area is the west side of the City along Main st. Here there are opportunities to develop commercial activity with more focus on improving this entrance to the City. More of this area extends north along N Chestnut St. Approximately 9.33% of the City is covered by Secondary Commercial.

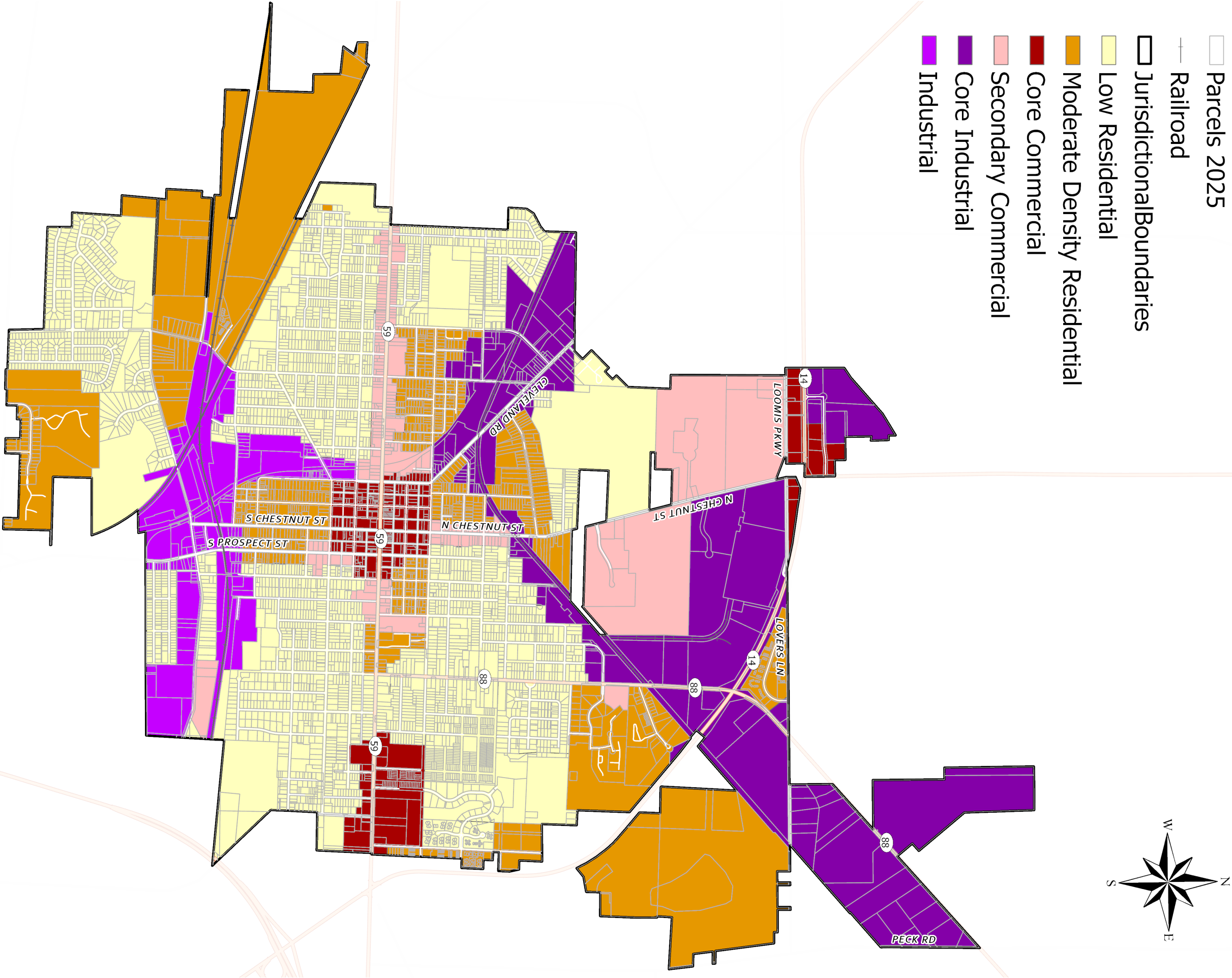
Core Industrial areas are located north of the downtown along the existing Portage County Hike & Bike trail. They are located here to take full advantage of Ravenna's location and ease to access highways and freeways connecting to the larger economic market. This area covers approximately 17.97% of the City.

The Industrial area shown to be in the south of the city along the existing and in use railroads have many underutilized vacant spaces that could be cleaned up and redeveloped to bring more jobs and economic

activity to the city. This would also greatly help with the development of residential development in the surrounding neighborhoods. Approximately 6.27% of the city is Industrial.



Map 3-2 Future Land Use



Data Source: Parcels, Portage County GIS, December 2023; Roads & Boundaries, Portage County GIS, 2023; Railroads, ODOT, 2022.



## Zoning

Zoning helps determine and regulate how land develops, defining the allowed uses and how the land is permitted to develop in the future. According to Ravenna City's Zoning District Map shown in Map 3-3, there are 8 zoning districts: four residential zoning districts, two commercial, one industrial, and one central business/mixed use district.

### ***Residential District (R-1)***

This district is to accommodate single-family residential dwellings at the lowest density and other compatible land uses that occupy large open land areas. The intent of this zoning district is to discourage concentrated development in and at the periphery of the floodplain and other environmentally sensitive areas. Single-family residential with a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet or one and one-half acres is permitted in this district. Residential District R-1 covers zero acres of the City.

### ***Residential District (R-2)***

Residential district R-2 is a low-density residential development that will promote the continuation of open land areas within the City boundaries. Permitted uses include single-family dwellings with a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet. The Residential District R-2 comprises approximately 423 acres.

### ***Residential District (R-3)***

This medium-density single-family residential district endorses a semi-urban character in areas adjacent to built-up portions of the City. Single-family dwellings in this zone have a minimum lot size of 7,200 square feet. Residential District R-3 covers approximately 918 acres.

### ***Residential District (R-4)***

Residential District R-4 provides for intermediate zoning between single-family and multifamily zoning. It is meant to encourage development at densities up to 2 dwelling units (du) per 5,000 square feet and provide for the systematic cluster development of the City. The minimum lot size required by zoning is 7,200 square feet. Residential District R-4 comprises about 570 acres of the City.

### ***Residential District (R-5)***

This residential district is established to accommodate multifamily dwellings at a medium density. Permitted uses include single-family, two-family, and multifamily dwellings with 3,000 square feet per dwelling unit. Minimum lot size is 7,200 square feet. Residential District R-5 covers approximately 333 acres of the City.

### ***Residential District (R-6)***

This high-density district is established to accommodate multifamily development in built-up portions of the City. The permitted uses are single-family, two-family, and multifamily residential dwellings. Minimum lot area is 7,200 square feet and 500 square feet per dwelling unit. Residential District R-6 comprises zero acres of the city.

### ***Central Business District (CBD)***

Central Business District accommodates a variety of uses so as to maintain the traditional historic center of Ravenna with certain unique characteristics including on-street parking, zero lot line, and other historic aspects. Mixed use development is promoted by providing multifamily residential dwelling units on the second floor and above while the lower floors are retail, general business and professional office uses. The minimum lot area is 1,000 square feet and 500 square feet per dwelling for new construction or 200 square feet per dwelling in existing buildings. This district covers about 71 acres of the City.

### ***Local Commercial District (C-1)***

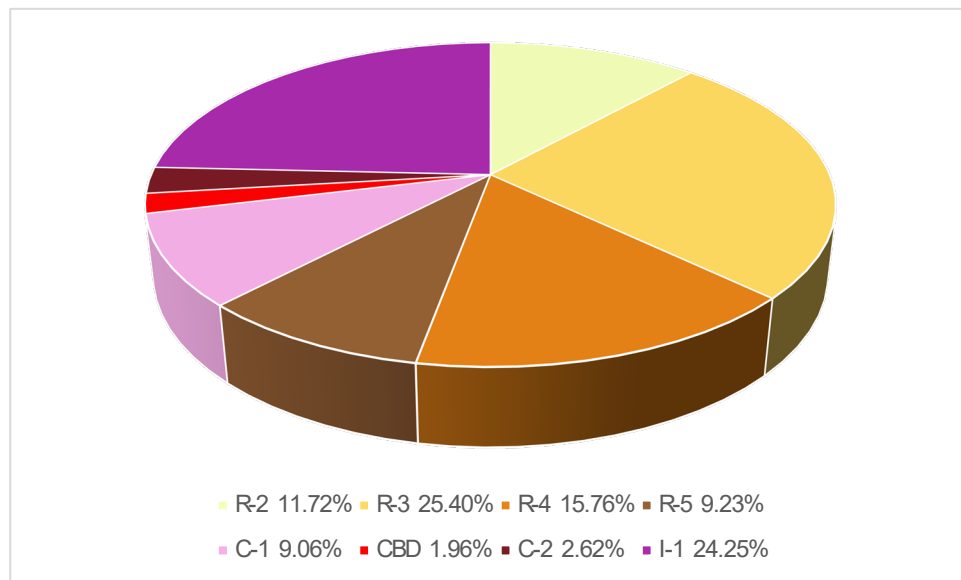
Local Commercial District is established to accommodate light commercial business. Buildings and sites are for the uses that are smaller in scale and size and recognize the adjoining residential areas that most uses border. Accordingly, the size, bulk, and scale of any buildings, while larger than residential buildings, should strive to be harmonious with adjoining residential structures. Permitted uses include multi-purpose retail and smaller business development with some single-family and multifamily residential units. Minimum lot area is 9,600 square feet and 2,500 square feet per dwelling unit. The Local Commercial District comprises approximately 328 acres of the City.

### ***Heavy Commercial District (C-2)***

Heavy Commercial District accommodates heavy commercial business. This use anticipates larger structures with considerable size and scale and accompanying large areas for parking. Areas zoned for Heavy Commercial are at major arterial intersections with higher intensity commercial land uses that need the visibility and nearness of large volumes of traffic. The minimum permitted lot area is 9,600 square feet and 2,500 square feet per dwelling unit. Heavy Commercial covers 95 acres of the City.

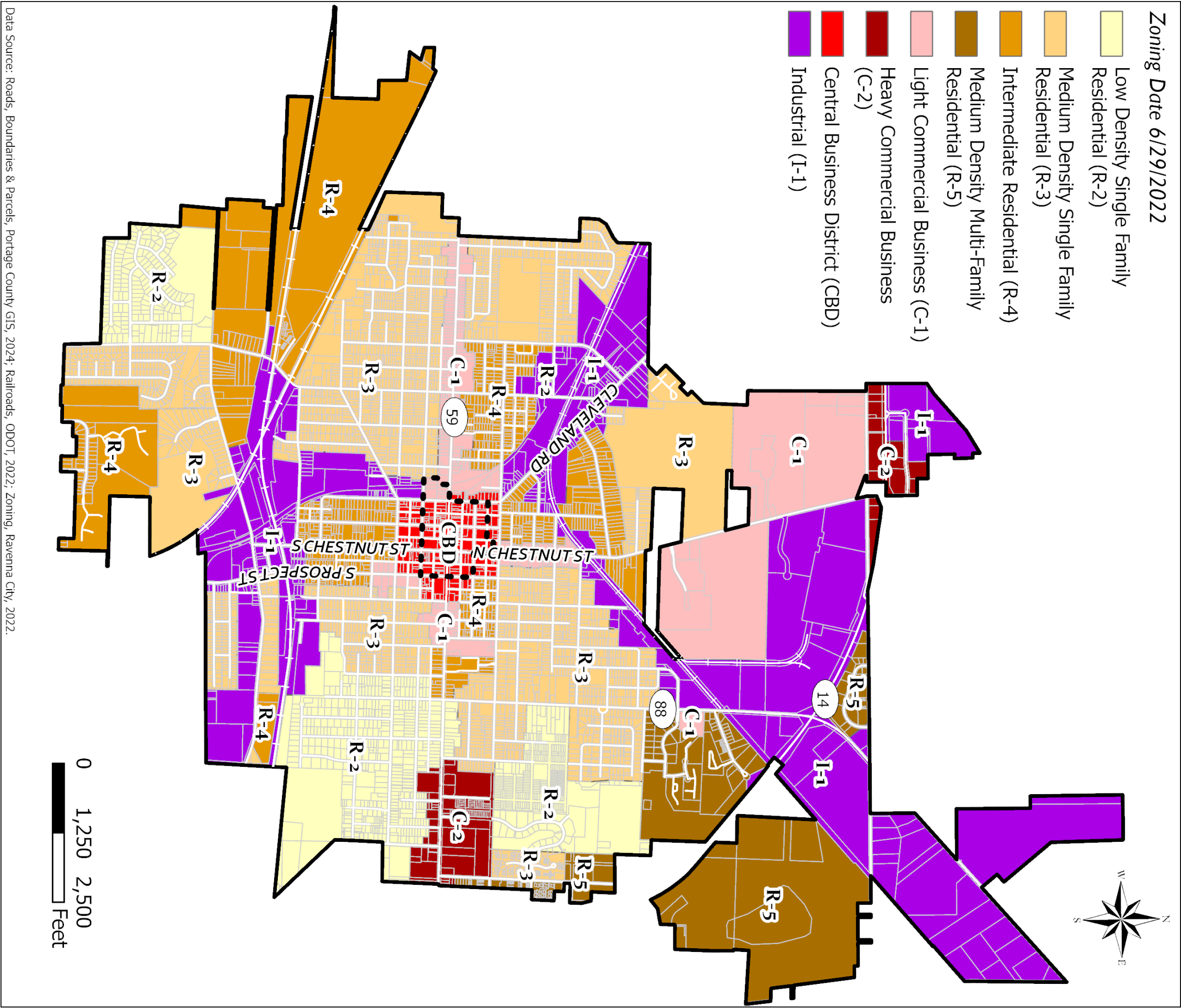
### ***Industrial (I-1)***

Industrial zoning provides areas for industrial uses. Such uses ought to be no closer than within 100 feet of any R-district. Where the I-1 district abuts upon but is separated from any R-district by a street, the width of the street may be considered as part of the required setback. Permitted uses include all industrial services that may also involve dust, smoke, fumes, glare, odors, dangerous, hazardous, or commonly recognized offensive conditions. The minimum allowable lot size is 12,000 square feet and 2,500 square feet per dwelling unit. Industrial comprises approximately 876 acres of the City.



*Percentage of Zoning Districts in The City of Ravenna*

# Map 3-3 Zoning Districts









# Chapter 4

## Public Owned Properties

As the county seat, the City of Ravenna consists of many publicly owned properties throughout the community and outside the city boundary. Downtown is a highly concentrated area of most of these publicly owned properties. The properties range from parks to federal agencies. City Hall is located on Park Way, next to the Fire and Police Departments. Adjacent to City Hall is the Portage County Municipal Courthouse which is adjacent to properties including Portage County Adult Probation and Portage County Development Board. North on Chestnut Street on the edge of downtown is the Post Office.

Outside of downtown, another cluster of government entities is south of Main Street on Meridian Street. The Meridian Street area currently holds many Portage County departments including the Building Department, Auditors Office, Jobs and Family Services, Veteran Services, Regional Planning Commission, and Board of Elections in the Portage County Admin. Building.

Roughly 18% of the City is publicly owned property, the vast majority of which is held by the City and Portage County (see Map 4-1). While some of this is vacant land, much of the land contains functions of local government.

City Hall, the fire station, and police are currently located west of the courthouse. This area concentrates city government functions into a small campus environment. The City Hall Annex holds additional city offices not able to be contained at City Hall. The City has purchased the old High School site at the corner of Main Street and Clinton Street

and is planning a new City Hall and safety center. An architect was hired in 2022 to design the site.

Portage County owns over 110 acres of land within the City, most of which is concentrated in the south between Harris Avenue, Meridian Street, Prospect Street, and Main Street. These properties contain the County Administration Building, Prosecutor's

### Addressing Needs for Publicly Owned Properties

- o Establish community signage for pedestrians to navigate.
- o Record a parking lot study.
- o Create an interactive resource that has hours of business, contact information, and locations of these properties.

Offices, Courthouses, and the associated parking lots. With the City moving its government complex, the County can expand or rebuild the county courthouse facilities and offices.

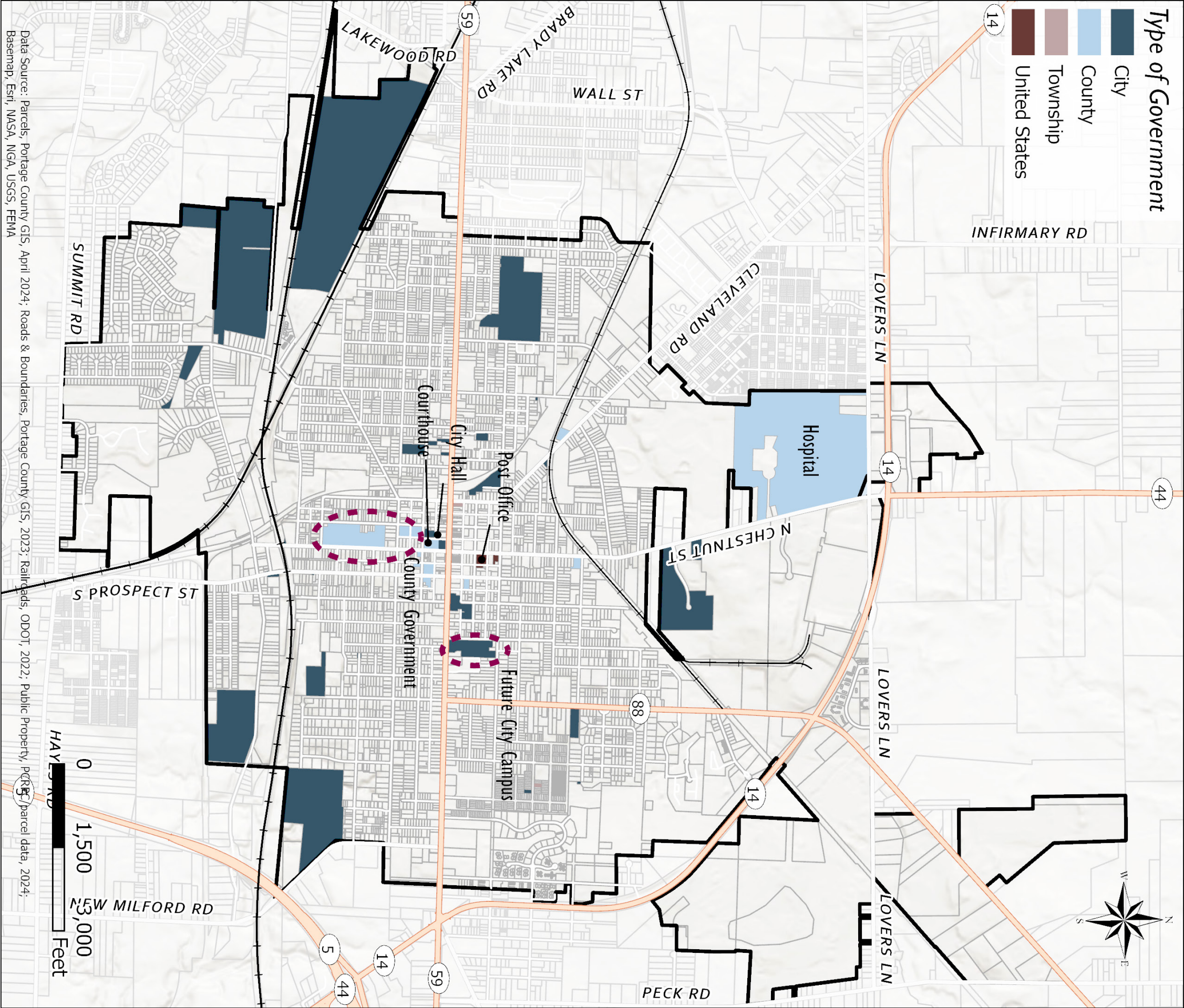
### Water Protection Areas

The City of Ravenna owns over 700 acres of land outside of the city limits (see Map 4-2). The primary purpose serves to protect the City's water supply. The majority of this land is located around Lake Hodgson and Muzzy Lake. Lake Hodgson serves a dual purpose as a recreation facility as well as a water supply. The land around Muzzy Lake was originally purchased to help the city meet growing water demands that the former Crystal Lake water plant could not meet. Since the Crystal Lake water plant was abandoned, the Muzzy Lake facilities have not been in operation.

The City owned land at Muzzy Lake could provide another recreation opportunity in the Ravenna area. The area could be coupled with Triangle Bog State Nature Preserve to increase conservation areas, trail connections and park amenities.

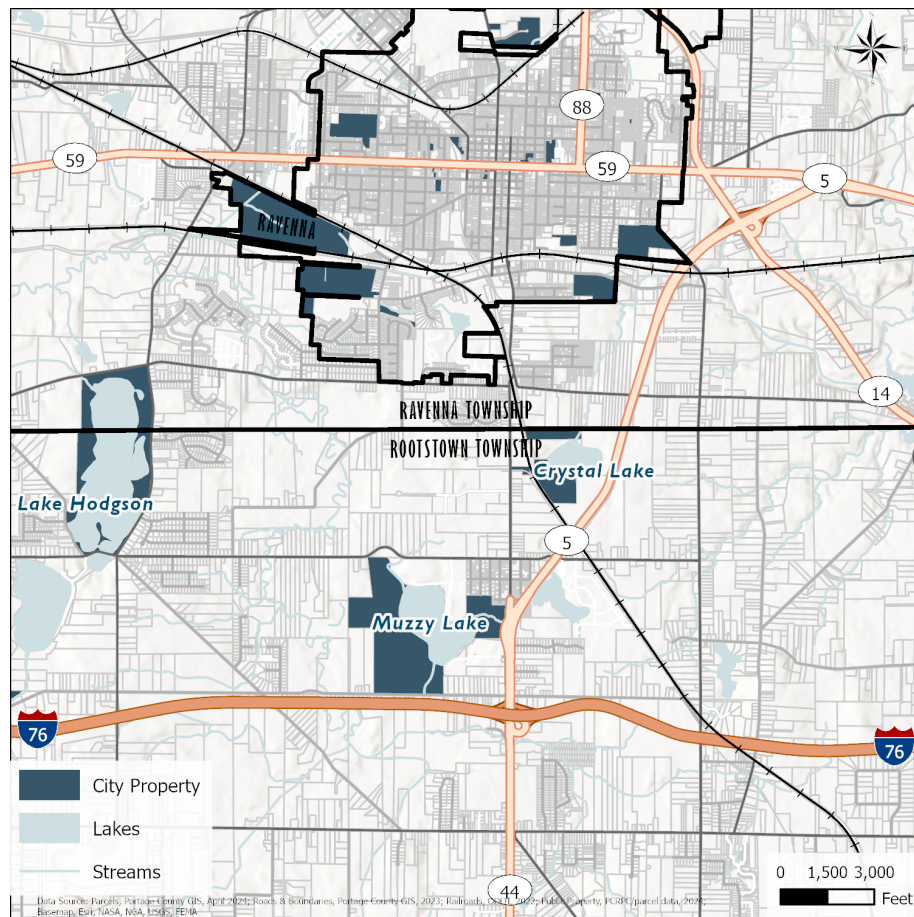


Map 4-1 Publicly Owned Property









Map 4-2 Property owned by the City of Ravenna within the surrounding Townships

## Central Sewer and Water Facilities

In 1907, the first sewers and treatment plant were put in place. By 2023, there have been numerous updates to the plant and sewers around Ravenna. The treatment plant and sewer system treatment facility are designed to treat an average flow of 2.8 million gallons daily, with a peak hydraulic capacity of 6.02 million gallons daily. The water treatment is in Ravenna Township on CR 151. The Waste Water Treatment Facility is at the south end of Ravenna City on Hommon Road. The utility billing building is at 530 N. Freedom Street. See MAP for the two locations of the water facilities.

Ravenna City and surrounding outlying neighborhoods are served by the City's sanitary sewer system (see Map 4-4 and NEFCO Clean Water (209)Plan). Water service also extends well beyond the City corporation line. System expansions are planned to serve neighboring areas of Ravenna Township that contain high densities of businesses and homes in the interest of public health and safety. The Clean Water (208) Plan helps guide future sewer extensions. This plan has been the catalyst for wastewater management discussions and plans between counties and municipalities since 1979 with updates by NEFCO on how to implement the Clean Water Act. Ravenna City is the primary service provider for both water and sewer in the City as well as the Township. Portage County Water Resources is a secondary provider of water and sewer for the Township.

Expanding central water and sewer facilities is a major investment. According to the Community Survey, 48% of all responses marked that new development should take the form of infill development while 47% responded that redevelopment and rehabilitation is desired. This means planning new commercial and industrial development around existing infrastructure as well as utilizing existing infrastructure to retain current commercial endeavors. Sit down restaurants (82% of responses) and retail (59% of responses) could be constructed using infill and redevelopment techniques.

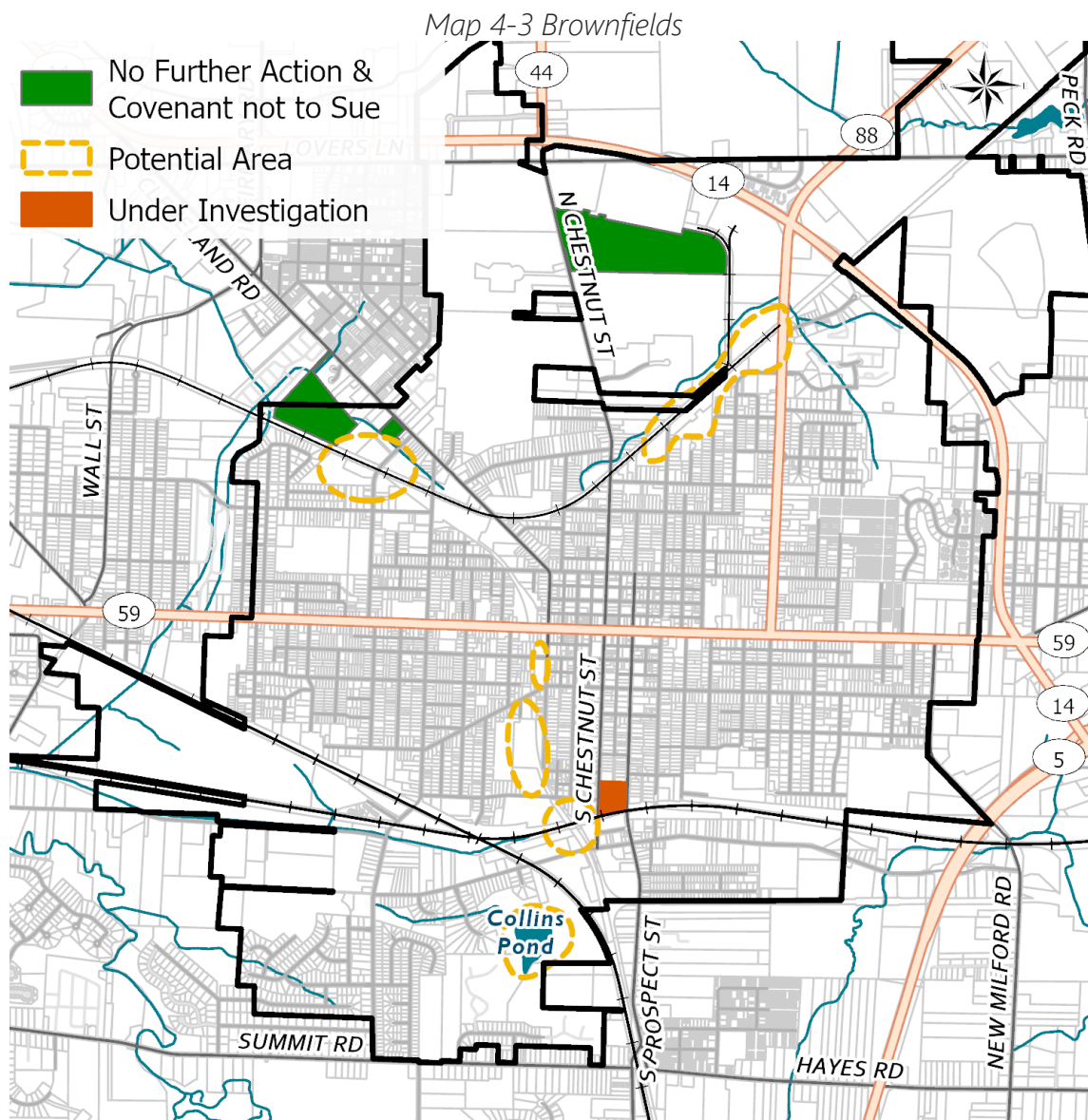
## Brownfield Sites

Brownfields are defined as properties that contain the presence or suspected presence of a hazardous substance or contaminate, complicating efforts to expand, redevelop or reuse them, according to the US EPA. The Ohio EPA adds underutilized commercial and industrial properties to the definition. Ravenna City has three known brownfields which have been cleaned and issued a finding of no further action and covenant not to sue. Environmental controls have been established limiting the use of these properties to commercial and industrial purposes and prohibiting groundwater extraction and use. These properties may benefit from a site specific marketing plan.

Currently Redfern Mills on South Chestnut Street is being assessed by the US EPA for potential contamination, type, and extent. Clean up actions will continue to occur over the next few years.

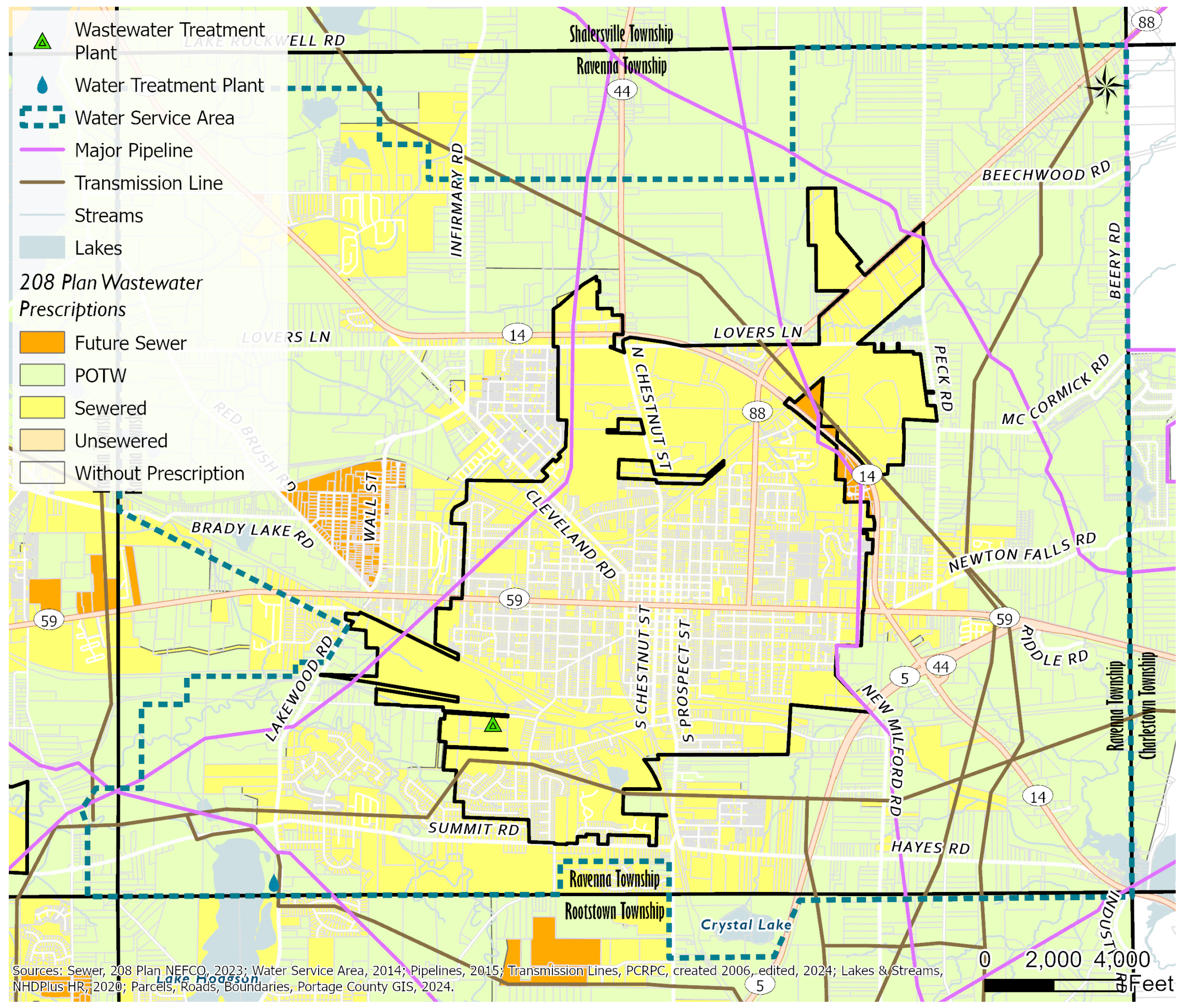
### Potential and Suspected Sites

Old industrial areas within the City contain potential brownfields, see Map 4-3. Collins Pond is a suspected brownfield within the City. The Redfern Mills and its sister site, Annevar Dye House, which contained various industrial





Map 4-4 Central Sewer & Water Facilities





uses between 1890 and 1980, drained toward Collins Pond. Contamination of the pond has not been confirmed.

A brownfield inventory would help identify suspected and potential sites as well as aid the City in obtaining funding to clean the sites.

## Resources and Funding

***Portage County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank):*** Land Banks acquire vacant, blighted, abandoned, and distressed residential, commercial, and industrial properties and return them to productive use. Until recently, the Portage County Land Bank has primarily worked with residential properties and demolitions, but has now taken on industrial, commercial, and institutional brownfield sites using grant funding from the State of Ohio's Brownfield Remediation Program.

### ***Federal and State Technical Assistance:***

The Ohio EPA provides technical assistance to local governments through the Targeted Brownfield Assessment (TBA) program. Ohio's TBA program supports aspects of Phase I and Phase II assessments at no cost which are important for transaction and due diligence considerations as well as enabling the community to leverage additional cleanup funding. Ohio EPA's staff regularly meets with local governments and other interested parties to walk them through the brownfield cleanup process and funding opportunities. Applicants do not need to own the property to apply for TBA assistance, but there must be an access agreement with the current owner. Applicants must not be the responsible party for the contamination.

The US EPA provides similar support through the Technical Assistance to Brownfields (TAB) program. US EPA Region 5, which covers Ohio, can take advantage of assistance offered by Kansas State University's TAB program. The US EPA's program provides many services which include identifying potential funding sources, economic feasibility and suitability analyses as well as review of technical documents. A complete list is available at [ksutab.org](http://ksutab.org).

## Schools

Ravenna School District has four schools: one preschool, one elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. Each year, the Ohio Department of Education assigns school report card ratings to school districts and individual schools. For the 2022/2023 school year, Ravenna Schools have an overall rating of 2.5 out of 5 which means the school needs support to meet state standards. Enrollment of 2022/2023 was 1,965. Total enrollment in the district for 2025/2026 school year was 1,948 showing a decline in enrollment.

There is also a training center northeast of downtown Ravenna on the northwest side of State Route 88. It is a vocational school providing technical education for high school students and workforce development for adults. Maplewood Career Center is a major asset to Ravenna by bringing in students from neighboring communities and providing trade and job-ready learning.

Ravenna’s schools include Brown Middle School, and the other two schools on either end of Ravenna, which are all relatively close to each other. A comprehensive travel network between the schools is a priority that regional planning wants to see Ravenna School District apply. As bus driver shortages and more residents are not working at home anymore, Ravenna’s students need a safe and efficient network for before and after school.

Name	Description	Address
Preschool	Preschool	531 Washington Avenue
Willyard	Elementary	680 Summit Road
West Main	Elementary	639 West Main Street
Brown	Middle School	228 S. Scranton Street
Ravenna	High School	6589 N. Chestnut Street
Maplewood Career Center	High School and Adult Learning	7075 OH-88

*The schools all need a walking-transportation network.  
(Source: Ravenna City Schools)*

Over the last few years, bus driver shortage has been a large issue for the Ravenna City School District. A way to combat the shortage in sustainable ways is by enabling students to walk/bike/carpool. The Safe Routes to School Program (SFSP) provides resources, technical assistance, and project funding to encourage and enable students to use alternative forms of transportation. Safe routes include information for crossings, visibility of sidewalks, winter maintenance, and bike facilities. The SFSP provides technical assistance for communities to use.



There are premade templates that Ravenna can easily use for this project. It is imperative for coordination between the local government representatives, education representatives, and community members.

### ***Safe Routes to Schools***

Through the Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS), ODOT provides resources and technical assistance to encourage walking and biking to school through support for infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects. Funds are awarded annually for projects within two categories.

1. Infrastructure projects. Project limit of \$500,000. Reimburses up to 100% of eligible costs for all phases including preliminary engineering, design, right-of-way, and construction engineering. Must be within two miles of a school serving K-12. Projects must be sponsored by a local government agency such as the Ravenna City Engineering Department.
2. Non-infrastructure activities such as education and enforcement. Reimburses up to 100% of eligible costs for training and materials, safety and education incentives and public awareness campaigns. Project limit is \$60,000 or \$120,000 for a 2-year project.

To be eligible, Ravenna Schools must have a school travel plan or active transportation plan, student and crash radius maps, examine how students currently travel, and coordinate with ODOT District 4's Safe Routes to School Coordinator. ODOT provides support for creating both the maps and the school travel plan. Ravenna City and Ravenna School District could explore partnering to obtain a Safe Routes to School grant to make the areas around the schools safer.

Out of all the district schools, West Main Elementary has the highest number of pedestrian and bicyclist crashes occurring within 0.5 miles. Approximately 29 crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists have occurred between 2012 and 2022 with one crash involving a pedestrian fatality, 14 crashes involving bicyclists and 14 crashes involving pedestrians. Brown Middle School has the next highest number of crashes with one fatal crash involving a pedestrian, five crashes involving bicyclists, and six involving pedestrians within 0.5 miles. Most of these crashes occur along Main Street (State Route 59). Not all involved in these crashes were students.

# Chapter 5 Community Landmarks

## Historic Assets

Historic places create connections to the City's heritage, help people understand the past, celebrate accomplishments, and learn from mistakes. Preserving historic places helps communities like Ravenna City maintain and build a strong sense of identity.

## Historic Districts

Ravenna City was founded in 1799 by Benjamin Tappen. Many of the buildings which make up the downtown were constructed between 1850 and 1930. In 1986, the City designated a local historic district via city ordinance which includes all properties facing Main Street between Linden and Sycamore Streets, expanding to the neighborhoods on either side (see Map 5-1). Within this area, the Design Review Commission reviews improvements and renovations of buildings to maintain the historic character

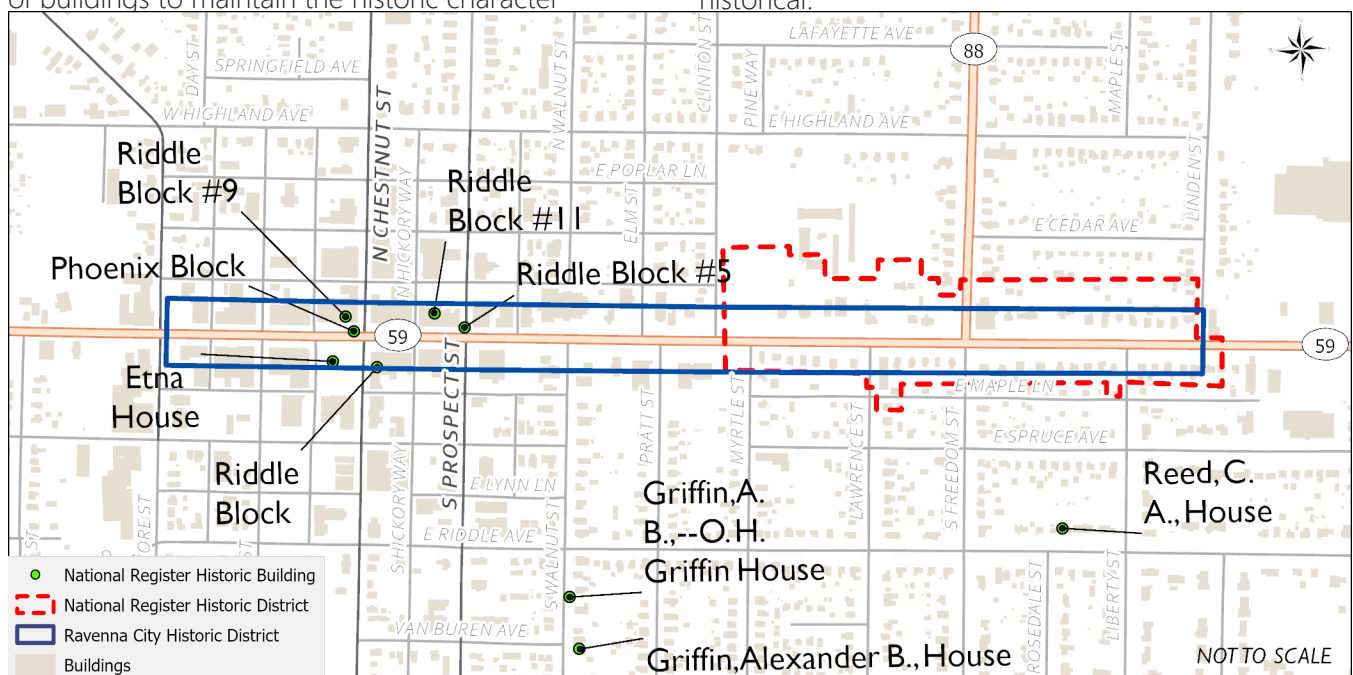
and integrity, improve housing stock and increase property values.

Along East Main Street from Clinton to Linden, is a historic residential district listed on the National Register of Historic Places in October 1985. At the time of listing, this district was comprised of 50 buildings, six of which were non-contributing to the historic character. Since the time of listing, the high school and the gas station have been demolished, reducing the non-contributing buildings to four.

## Historic Homes and Structures

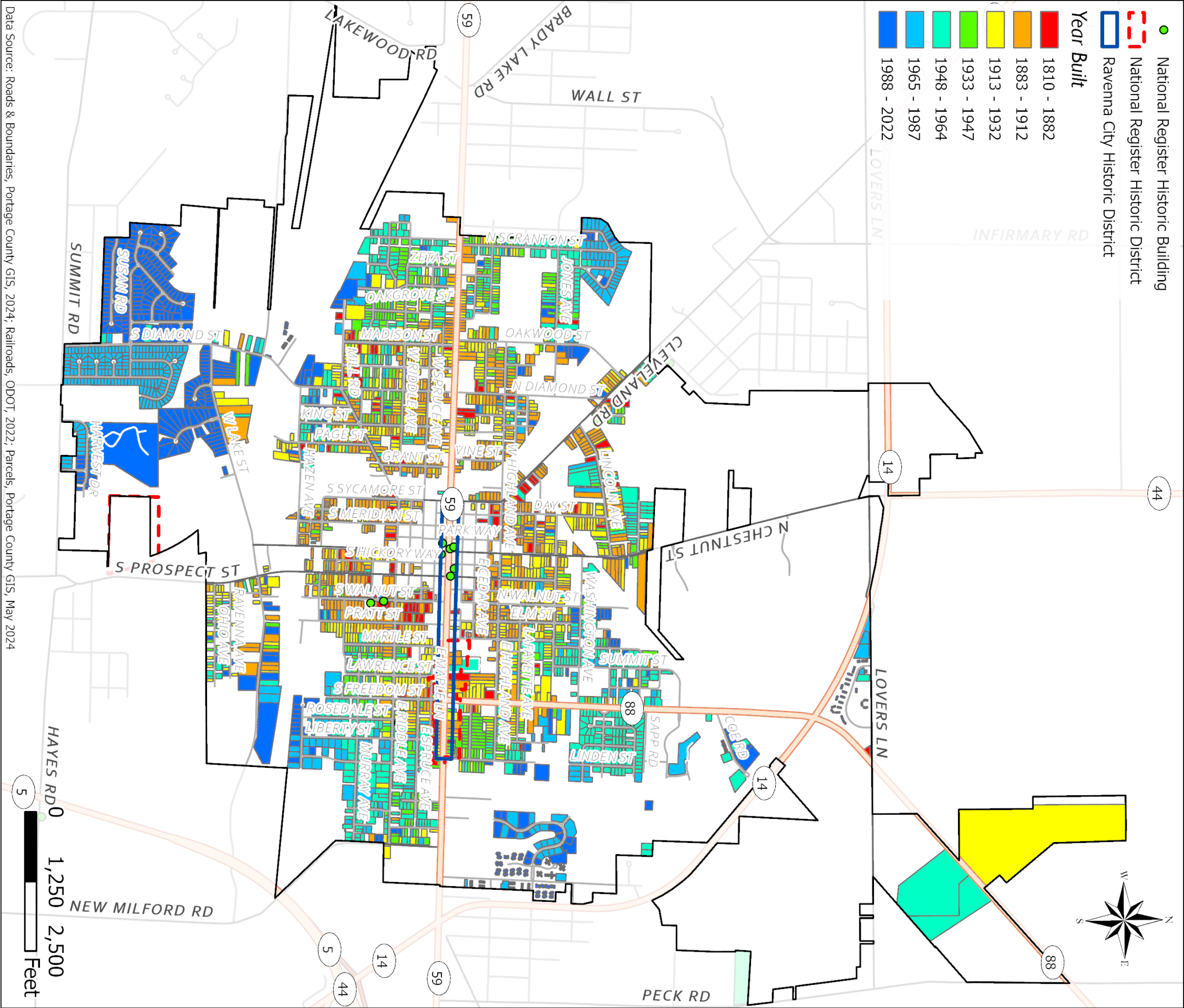
The Ohio Historic Inventory evaluates the state's architectural and historic resources. Any structure over 50 years old that has been surveyed for the National Register of Historic Places is listed in the inventory. The Ohio Historic Inventory does not indicate eligibility of a property for the National Register of Historic Places. Ravenna City has 157 structures listed on the Ohio Historic inventory and 9 on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2022, a StoryMap was created documenting many of the historic structures in Ravenna.

The vast majority of the City of Ravenna has structures and buildings over 50 years old. Most of the homes within the city were constructed pre 1970s. Map 2 shows parcels containing structures built pre 1970s. Due to the age of the structures, there is a high potential for many more buildings not listed on the Ohio Historic Inventory to be deemed historical.



Map 5-1 Downtown Ravenna Historic Districts and Structures

Map 5-2 Year Structures Were Built







## Parks and Trails

Ravenna Parks and Recreation Department maintains the parks with Portage County Parks District maintaining the Portage Co. Bike and Hike. Many of the parks feature different amenities for a variety of events. John Tontimonia, Diamond, Volunteer, and Havre Woods Parks all have baseball/softball diamonds, while Veterans Memorial and Ravenna Township provide convenient locations for relaxing and enjoying the downtown. The trail is located north of Ravenna's downtown with access points along roads like Day Street, Chestnut Street, and Oakwood Street. The trail has two parking options that are listed on (Table 3-1). The trail is a option not only for exercise, but also alternative transportation uses. The community sidewalks and street network connect users from the trail to downtown. Cities like Kent and Tallmadge feature their trails as ways to route people to their downtowns. The city can design signage and a plan to get bikers, walkers, and runners from the trail into downtown Ravenna.

Parks are complex elements that play a vital role in the social, economic, and physical well-being of the City and its residents. Robust city park systems have been shown to

- Encourage active lifestyles which results in reduced healthcare costs,
- Strengthen local economies by enhancing property values, increasing municipal revenues, and creating job opportunities by attracting residents and businesses,
- Increase resiliency by integrating parks with infrastructure plans to mitigate and manage stormwaters,
- Reduce crime by using park planning and programming to engage residents so that parks reflect the needs of the community, fostering a stronger sense of community,
- Clean air and improve public health by introducing more green space and plant life into the city (City Park Alliance, 2024).

Ravenna Parks and Recreation Department maintains three parks within the City as well as the Ravenna Athletic Complex (RAC), shown on Map 5-3. The RAC offers fitness machines, an indoor track, and group fitness classes for preschoolers through adults among other features. Lake Hodgson, located south of the City, is also a recreational area during the summer and fall months. A regional trail maintained by the Portage Park District, the PORTAGE Hike and Bike, runs east to west through the northern portion of the City. Parking for the trail is available at Chestnut Hills Park and off Cleveland Road. A complete list of parks and green spaces is contained in Table 5-1.

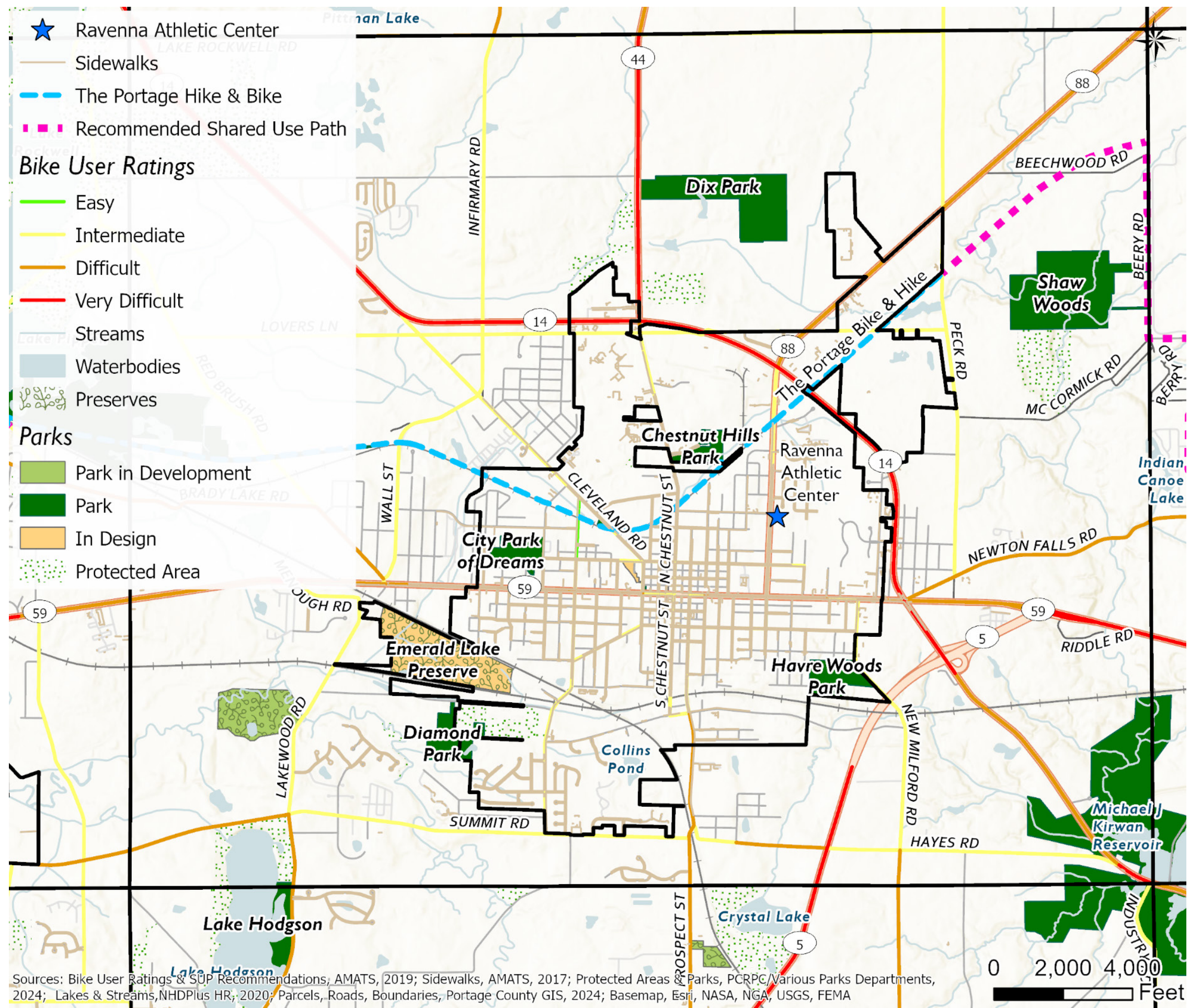
Table 5-1. Existing Parks, Trails, and Green Spaces

Park	Amenities
<i>Chestnut Hills Chestnut Hills Drive</i>	Children's Playground, community garden, covered seating area, parking for the hike and bike trail. Green infrastructure demonstration area.
<i>John Tontimonia City Park of Dreams 165 Oakwood St.</i>	25 acres. Basketball, baseball/softball, playground, skate park, pavilions, tennis, and pickleball
<i>Havre Woods 5893 New Milford Rd.</i>	Soccer, softball, playground, trails, fitness course, and pavilions
<i>Lake Hodgson 5331 Lakewood Rd.</i>	180 acres. Fishing, boat rentals, and picnic areas. Only open during posted months in the summer and fall.
<i>Ravenna Volunteer Park 845 S. Diamond St.</i>	Managed by Hot Stove. Baseball fields.
<i>Ravenna Township Park Main St.</i>	Benches, picnic table.
<i>The PORTAGE Hike and Bike Trail</i>	7-mile multi-purpose ADA accessible trail.
<i>Veteran's Memorial Park / Courthouse Lawn Main St.</i>	Veteran's Memorial, flagpole, benches. Lawn for public gatherings and events.
<i>Pocket Park Main St.</i>	Benches and swing benches

### Issues and Needs

- Signage to direct residents from parks and trails.
- Update ordinance community garden and 5ft. setback.
- Ban invasive plants.
- Plant more trees.
- Track input from community





## Map 5-3 Parks and Trails





Several other parks are near Ravenna. The largest is West Branch State Park which features a 2,650-acre lake and 5,379 acres of meadows and wooded lots. West Branch is popular among fisherman, boaters, and swimmers. Mountain bike trails, horseback riding trails, and hunting encompass the rest of the wooded and meadow areas. Additionally, over 100 camping sites in the park provide outdoor recreation for everyone. Pristine natural areas within proximity add to the vitality of the community.

Urban parks have always been an important setting for arts and cultural programs. The only urban park is Veterans Memorial Park located in front of the Portage County Municipal Courthouse. Two new urban parks are in development.

### ***Park Planning***

Ravenna City is in the process of designing three new parks.

1. Emerald Lake Preserve. Located between two railroad lines, Emerald Lake Preserve contains mature woods and a large marsh. The City is still working on acquiring this preserve. This land may remain an untouched preserve or have several nature trails developed.
2. Osborne Park. The City has acquired land behind McDonalds on the south side of West Highland Avenue adjacent to an abandoned railroad right of way. Several ideas were presented for this park. Ravenna Parks & Recreation Committee choose a plan that includes a connector trail between the Portage Hike and Bike and downtown, an amphitheater, open field, parking lot, food concession area, and bathrooms for cultural events.

In 2020, a Complete Streets and Bike Policy was developed by Main Street Ravenna with the focus on providing avenues for pedestrians and cyclists to access downtown from the Hike and Bike. Alternative transportation improvements are needed citywide. Ravenna City is working towards finding resources to fund a bike and pedestrian master plan for the entire city. The goal is to increase connectivity citywide, linking neighborhoods, parks, businesses, and schools.

# Chapter 6

## Transportation

Traditional forms of mobility include automobiles, walking, biking, and transit, but the automobile has dominated transportation for the last 60 years. All cities, including Ravenna, have decentralized leading to lower densities and reliance on the car. This has led to observations about air pollution, traffic congestion, and climate change to have significant increases—all of which the automobile contributes to. Mobility and transportation in the future will be multi-modal. For example, a person may ride their bicycle a short distance to a bus stop, and then take the bus for the remainder of the trip. Investing in multiple forms of transportation provides people an option for getting from A to B and can improve health, decrease pollution, and lessen traffic.

Ravenna was largely developed before automobiles dominated the landscape. The classic grid pattern has left several livable streets throughout the community where alternative transportation can thrive. Historically, walking was the main form of mobility in Ravenna and can still be seen today. Approximately 75% of the population lives within one mile of Main Street, keeping walking a viable form of transportation. Bus services routinely frequent Main Street making multi-modal transportation an accessible choice for many city residents.

### Roads

The Federal Functional Classification of Highways groups streets and highways based on their general characteristics. Map 6-1 shows the City of Ravenna's roads and highways as part of the functional class system. The roads in color are eligible for federal funds. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) updates functional classes annually in

January. The Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) controls the allocation of federal transportation funds to the Akron region, making open communication with them very important.

- Principal arterials: SR 59 and SR 14
- Minor arterials: Cleveland Road, Summit Road, North Chestnut Street, South Prospect Street, Freedom Road
- Major Collectors – Diamond Street, Riddle Avenue, Highland Avenue, New Milford Road, Mill Road, South Chestnut Street, North Prospect Street

### *Traffic Congestion and Safety*

AMATS released data from 2020 to 2022 examining traffic crashes and safety in the region. Main Street (SR 59) through Ravenna and New Milford Road from Main Street to State Route 14 are high crash road segments. Intersections with the most crashes in Ravenna include the following:

- SR14/SR44 (North Chestnut Street) – this is the highest crash intersection in the AMATS region with 37 crashes, one pedestrian crash and at least one fatal crash between 2020 and 2022. This intersection is listed in AMATS Safe Streets For All (SS4A) Action Plan
- North Chestnut Street/Highland Avenue – 14 crashes including one bike related crash.
- South Prospect Street/East Lake Avenue- 9 crashes
- Main Street (SR 59)/Chestnut Street- 20 crashes include three involving bikes and two involving pedestrians. This is Ravenna's main intersection and has the highest incidence of bike and pedestrian collisions.
- West Main Street (SR 59)/Oakwood Street- 9 crashes with one crash involving pedestrians.

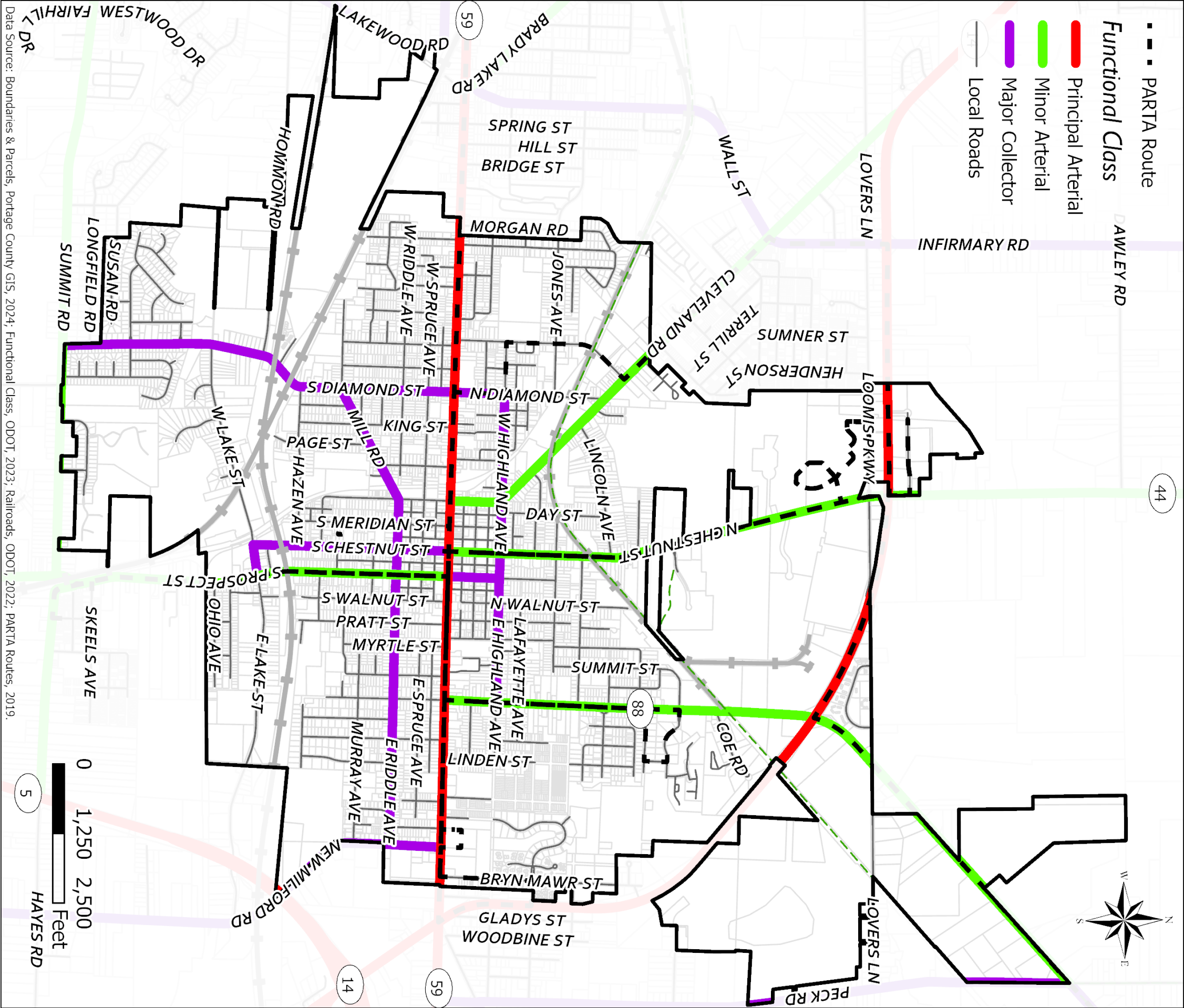
High crash areas and average daily traffic levels are shown on Map 6-2 and Map 6-3.

### **SS4A**

AMATS has developed a Safe Streets For All Action Plan for the entire region allowing jurisdictions with areas listed in the plan to apply for grant funding. Ravenna has several locations listed in the plan

1. Main Street between Sycamore and Prospect Streets. Recommendations include crosswalk visibility enhancements, medians, and pedestrian refuge islands

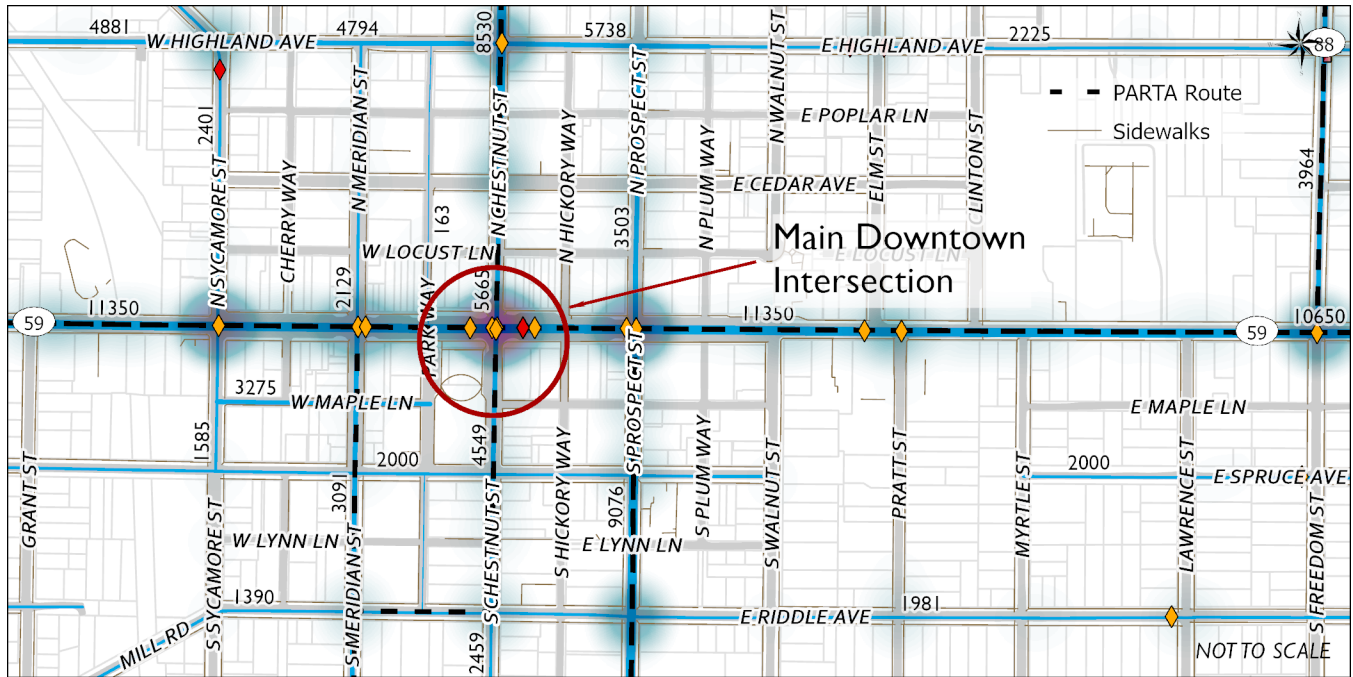
Map 6-1 Functional Class and Bus Routes







2. SR 14 at SR 44/ North Chestnut Street
3. North Freedom Street (SR 88) at East Highland Avenue
4. North Chestnut Street from Highland Avenue to SR 14/44.



Map 6-2 highlights Ravenna City's downtown. It shows the sidewalks and bus routes which converge at the center of town. North Chestnut Street and SR 59/ Main Street are the highest crash areas for pedestrians and bicyclists and is included on the SS4A Action Plan developed by AMATS.

## Mobility and Active Transportation

Active Transportation is defined by the US Department of Energy as human-powered mobility, such as biking, walking, or rolling which results in reduced fossil fuel emissions and improved community health. In 2024, AMATS updated the Active Transportation Plan. The plan emphasizes:

- Development of shared use paths alongside major road improvement projects, especially those with regional importance
- Use of AMATS funding to improve bicycle routes and sidewalks
- Maintain, invest, and improve pavement and road surfaces to ensure smoother road conditions for cyclists, pedestrians and micromobility
- Encouraging transit ridership through implementing transit-oriented development and amenities
- Participation in the Ohio Safe Routes to School program.

## Mass Transit

In the past, commuter rail was available to residents to travel between towns in proximity. Today, the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA) provides transit service between Ravenna and other communities like Kent, Garrettsville, and Streetsboro. PARTA operates 15 fixed bus routes, four of which serve the Ravenna area. Dial-a-ride service (DART) is offered to Ravenna residents who live outside of a 0.3-mile radius of fixed routes Monday through Friday. Due to the number of fixed routes serving Ravenna, DART is only available to residents who live within the southeast and southwest corners of the city. Although the time taking PARTA to travel from Ravenna to Kent can be 20 to 30 minutes, driving takes approximately 15 minutes. Ravenna City has several options to make mass transit more viable and attractive to residents.

1. Ensure sidewalks are available to transit stops.
2. Communicate with PARTA about upcoming road projects and the opportunities to add mass transit amenities like bus bays or turnouts, shelters, and bike racks at stops. This will allow the bus to more easily enter and exit traffic, allowing traffic to continue to flow, as well as provide a more comfortable space for riders to wait.

### ***Complete Streets***

Complete streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe use for all modes of transportation and users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all abilities and ages. Policies implementing complete streets may be set at the state, regional, and local levels and are often included as part of roadway design guidelines. Approaches vary by community context. Complete streets incorporate a range of elements including sidewalks, bike lanes, bus lanes, median islands, curb extensions, accessible pedestrian signals, modified travel lanes, and streetscape and landscape treatments. Benefits of complete streets include:

- Reduced motor vehicle crashes, pedestrian risk, and bicyclist risk through the separation of users and other safety features
- Improved health of the general population through safe access to walking and biking corridors
- Reduced contribution to air pollution by providing alternative transportation options

Downtown Ravenna and the surrounding neighborhoods have many complete street features making it more walkable and bikeable than neighborhoods on the edges of the city. Residents who live near downtown can accomplish many errands on foot if desired. Main Street's right-of-way ranges from roughly 100 to 130 feet wide between Sycamore Street and South Walnut Street, limiting the ability to implement a downtown boulevard which typically needs a right-of-way of 160 feet. Nevertheless, there is room to make some complete street improvements to Ravenna's streetscape.

- Median islands with plantings. There are opportunities for this on a limited basis according to AMATS SS4 Action Plan. This would create safety areas for pedestrians crossing the street as well as limit sightlines, reducing traffic speeds downtown.
- Adding bike markings and corridors citywide.

A study could be done to further examine how complete streets could be implemented to meet the needs of the residents and add vibrancy and safety to the corridors. Funding may be available through AMATS Connecting Communities and Transportation Alternative Set-Aside grants on a competitive basis.

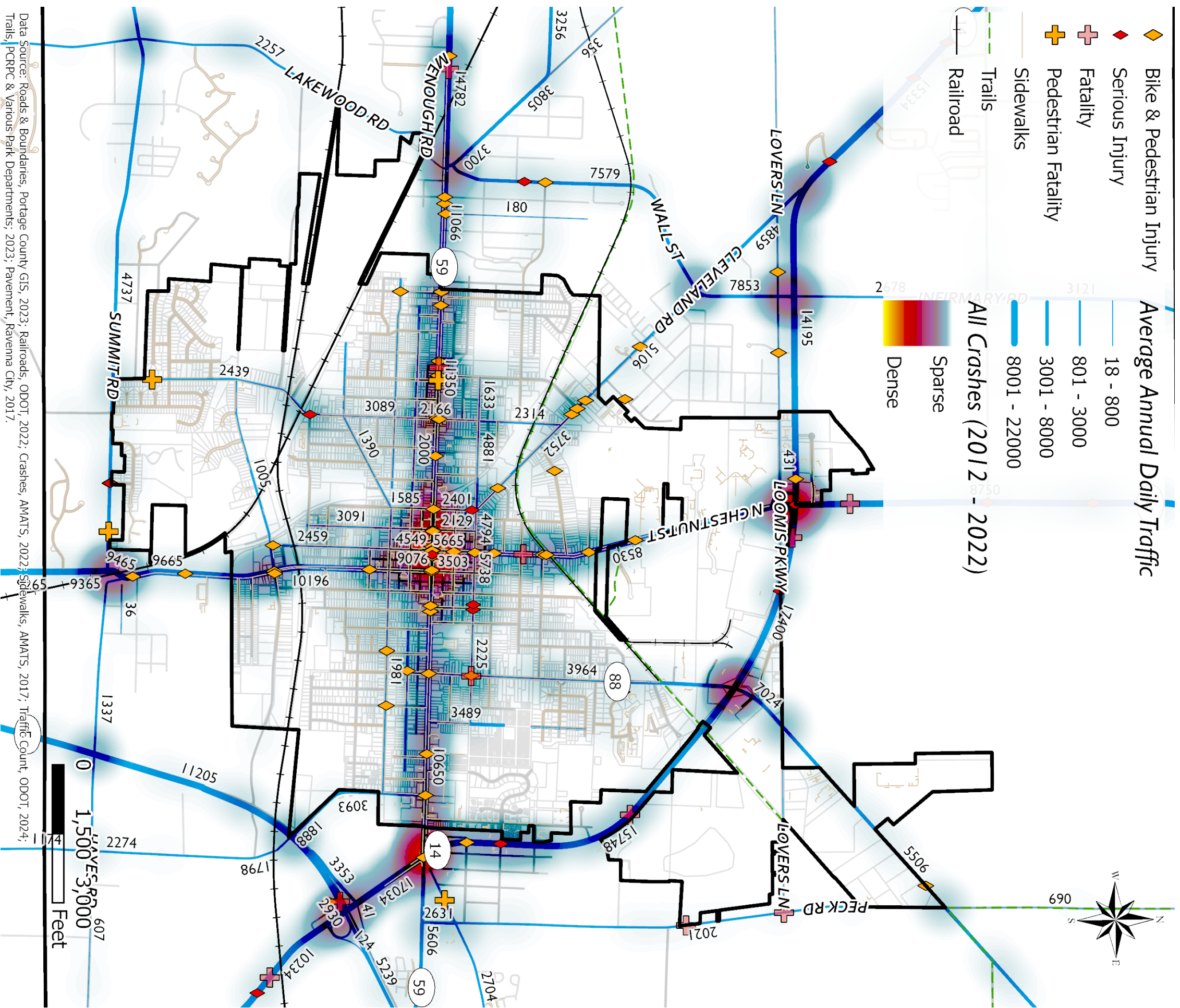
## **Rail**

Three railroads traverse Ravenna consisting of CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern, and Akron-Barberton Cluster/Wheeling Corporation. Ravenna's lines carry freight and/or passengers to neighboring communities like Warren, Akron, and Cleveland. In northeast Ravenna, a rail spur feeds an industrial park which houses companies like LG Chem and future Menard's distribution center. It is the only rail line that has a dedicated stop in the city and is contributing to industrial growth in that area.

### ***Freight Line Expansions***

Menards is developing a greenfield site across SR 88 from Maplewood Career Center (Map 3) with the total cost projected to be \$50 million. The company is expanding the nearby rail to meet its needs. The Ohio Rail Development Commission granted \$175,000 to expand the rail which the company matched at \$315,000 (ORDC, July 2020).

Map 6-3 Accidents and Congestion







### ***Passenger Rail***

In the State of Ohio Rail Plan (2019), the Ohio Rail Development Commission established goals to revitalize passenger rail service and improve rail stations on existing passenger routes. Although Ravenna has rail that is used for passenger services, there is no train station in the city. The closest stations to Ravenna are Alliance and Cleveland. If there is community interest, the city could approach Amtrak to request an assessment of the city for the potential addition of a stop.

Multiple news articles have been released in the past two years concerning expansion of passenger rail in Northeast Ohio, two of which are detailed below. How these developments, should they occur, will affect Ravenna will largely depend on the City's ability to interconnect with them through transit options.

1. June 2024. The Akron Beacon Journal produced an article detailing requests by federal lawmakers to include a request for Amtrak rail service development to Akron-Canton in Ohio's 2024 State Transportation Plan. The exact route this would take, should this request be successful, is unknown.
2. January 2024. An initial feasibility study was implemented by the federal government studying three proposed corridors and increased existing Amtrak service along one corridor. One of the proposed corridors is the Cleveland-Columbus-Dayton-Cincinnati (3C+D) corridor, which, if built, may have trickle down affects to Ravenna.

If passenger rail is developed over the next 20 years, it will be beneficial to create multimodal connections. Having multiple connections helps to decrease traffic congestion that occurs when there is only one way to access each development.

### ***Abandoned Rail Right of Ways***

There are abandoned or out of service rail and rail rights-of-way crossing the center of the city from south to north. Osborne Park was once an old rail line and commercial site. Working with the rail companies to reuse lines that are decommissioned or demolished can bring improvements to the city. If put back into use as rail, it would bring the city additional manufacturing and commercial opportunities, increasing the City's marketability. Abandoned rights-of-way can also be put into use for parks, bike connections, and multi-modal developments.

## **Transportation Plans and Capital Improvement**

Capital improvements for roads eligible for federal funding are laid out in the Transportation Improvement Plan written by AMATS. The FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Plan shows all road work designated for the City as being underway.

### ***Emerging Trends***

DriveOhio, an initiative of ODOT, was created to advance smart mobility throughout the state by bringing together public and private organizations under one umbrella to support the development of electric vehicles, autonomous and connected technologies, and advanced air mobility. The following focuses on emerging technologies that will likely impact Ravenna over the next 20 years.

### ***Electric Vehicles***

DriveOhio tracks the latest trends in alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) across Ohio . Since 2021 there have been 4,535 battery electric vehicles and 2,106 plug in electric hybrid vehicles registered in the Akron-Canton area which includes Portage County. While only a handful of those vehicles belong to Portage County residents, AFV registrations have been increasing statewide.

The National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) formula program, created under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, intends to establish a national network of electric vehicle (EV) chargers that support access

and reliability for all users. The adoption of EV technology is expected to reduce emissions, improve air quality, and create jobs. Over the next five years, Ohio will receive 140 million dollars to install direct current fast chargers (DCFC) along alternative fuel corridors. Currently, Ravenna has no charging stations for public use. Details concerning funding for charging stations are on DriveOhio's website. Ravenna City is eligible for the Community Charging and Fueling Grants.

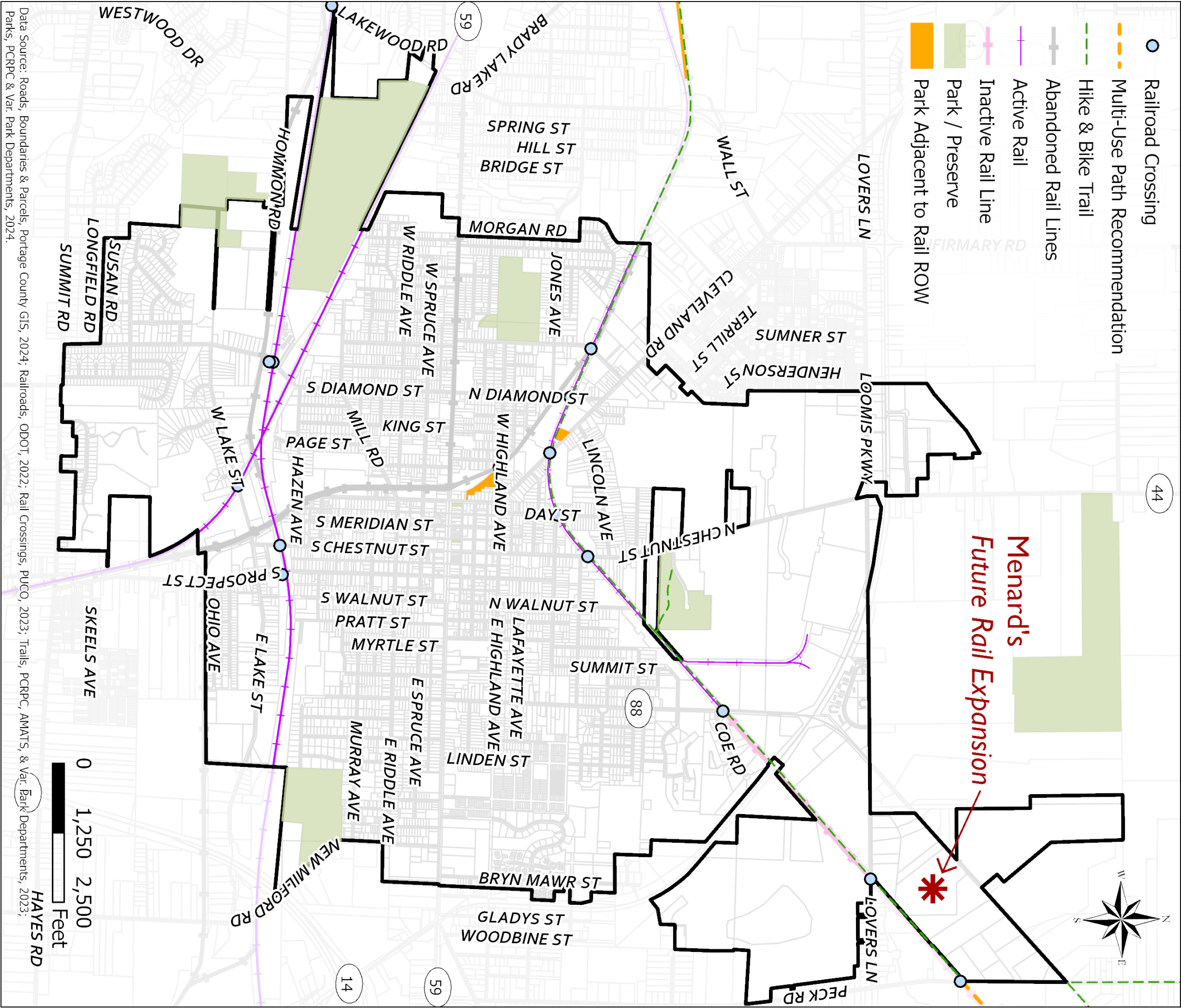
### ***Automated and Connected Vehicles***

Autonomous and connected vehicles are eventually expected to change every aspect of our lives impacting not just how we travel but the economy and development of our communities. Driverless vehicles are expected to impact four main areas:

- Traffic Systems- once autonomous vehicles are common everywhere with the infrastructure to support them, commute times and congestion could greatly decrease due to increased efficiency. In the meantime, congestion could increase due to lack of infrastructure and more cars on the road.
- Road Infrastructure- reduced need for parking space due to cars being sent back home after dropping off for the day. Current parking areas may be redeveloped into parks, playgrounds, etc. Road Construction and design will also change due to cars communicating to each other electronically.
- Logistics Industry- supply chain companies may adopt autonomous vehicle technologies for long-haul freight either as completely autonomous options or as a driver switching between auto and manual modes.
- Human Health- increase accessibility to transportation and reduce injuries due to accidents (Yeruva, 2022).

Ohio has begun installing infrastructure for autonomous vehicles and connected vehicle systems around the state. Youngstown, East Liberty, Columbus and several roadway stretches are testing areas for autonomous vehicles.

Map 6-4 Railroad rights-of-way (ROW)



Data Source: Roads, Boundaries & Parcels, Portage County GIS, 2024; Railroads, ODOT, 2022; Rail Crossings, PUCCO, 2023; Trails, PCRPC, AMATS, & Var. Park Departments, 2023; Parks, PCRPC & Var. Park Departments, 2024.





# Chapter 7

## Demographics

### Population

An understanding of the present characteristics of Ravenna City establishes a framework for considering the future. Recent trends in population and housing can be analyzed through a review of census statistics, building permit data, and lot creation records.

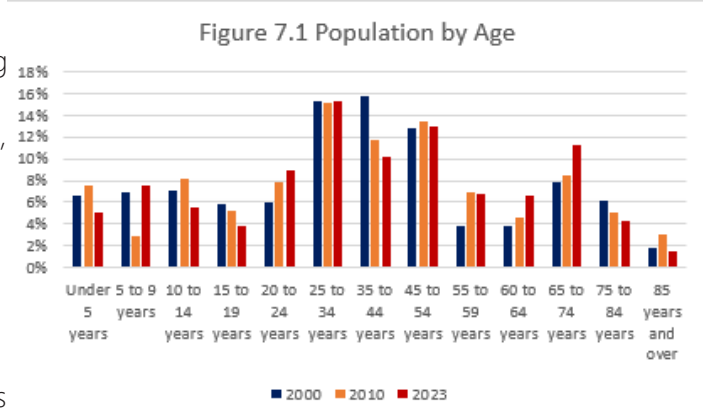
According to the 2020 Decennial Census, Ravenna City had 11,323 residents. Table 7.1 compares the population of neighboring communities to the City. Between 2010 and 2020, Ravenna experienced a 3.4% decrease in population, while neighboring cities like Streetsboro and Aurora increased by more than 7%.

From 2010 to 2020, there was an increase of less than 1% in Portage County's population; however, the Ohio Department of Development, Office of Research is projecting an 11.58% decrease by 2050.

That decline is approximately 18,000 people (Ohio Department of Development, 2022).

### Age

According to the 2020 Census, there were 5,463 males and 5,860 females in Ravenna. The median age was 41.3 years, four years older than the 2010 Census. The community largely consists of middle-aged adults, likely with children. The county's median age is 39.8, a two-year difference. Figure 7.2 suggests an aging population with residents 25 to 54 years old outnumbering those in other age categories. There is a spike in 65 to 74 year olds which may indicate aging in place. Between 2000 and 2021, the median



Source: US Census, 2000-2023, ACS 5-year Estimates

age increased from 36.1 years old to 41.0 years old. For the younger population of Ravenna, the median age has shifted since 1990.

Table 7.1 Comparison of Population				
	1990	2000	2010	2023
Ravenna City	12,069	11,771	11,773	11,286
% Change		-2.5%	0.0%	-4.1%
Ravenna Township	8,961	9,270	9,190	9,035
% Change		3.4%	-0.9%	-1.7%
Aurora	9,192	13,556	15,196	17,239
% Change		47%	12%	13%
Streetsboro	9,932	12,311	15,383	17,260
% Change		24%	25%	12%
Portage Co.	142,585	152,061	159,943	161,791
% Change		6.6%	5.2%	1.2%
US Census Bureau, Decennial Census, ACS, 1990-2023				

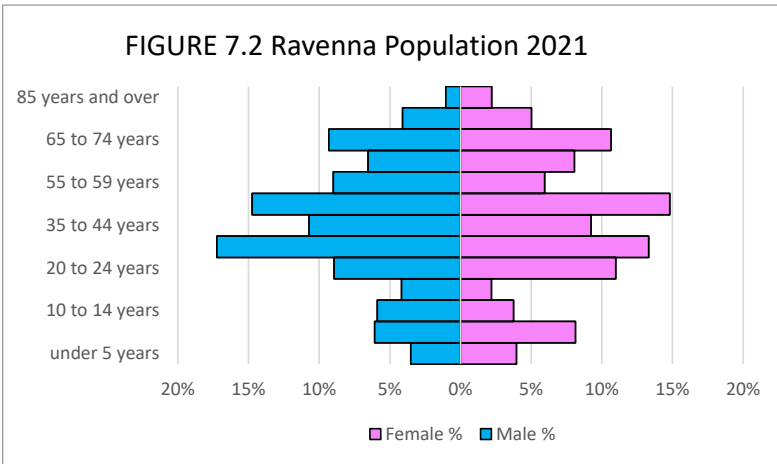


Table 7.2 Total Population of 19 Years and Under	
Year	Population
1990	3,177
2000	3,072
2010	2,798
2023	2,038
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS, 1990-2023	

Table 7.2 indicates a shrinking population of Ravenna’s younger population.

A population pyramid is a bar graph that shows how the population of an area is divided by age and gender. There are three patterns that look different, the patterns reflect rapid growth, stagnation growth, and negative growth. The population pyramid shown in Figure 7-3 indicates a negative growth; there is an aging population in Ravenna because there are fewer younger residents compared to older residents.

Education Level

As shown in Table 7.3, the American Community Survey estimates provide data on educational attainment for individuals 25 years and older.

Approximately 86% of Ravenna’s population has their high school diploma or some type of higher education ranging from some college to graduate degree, compared to Portage County at 92.2%. The number of Ravenna residents who have a high school diploma is 12% more than Ohio of 32.3%. With Maplewood Career Center in Ravenna and higher education institutions in Portage County, there is no shortage of academic opportunities. Local businesses have stressed that they have a need for skilled laborers.

Table 7.3 2023 Educational attainment for population 25 years and older			
	Ravenna	Portage County	Ohio
Less than 9th grade	3%	1.8%	2.6%
9th - 12th grade, no diploma	8%	5.3%	5.7%
High School Graduate	44%	35.8%	32.3%
Some College, no degree	17%	17.7%	19.4%
Associate's degree	9%	7.9%	9.0%
Bachelor's degree	10%	18.8%	19.0%
Graduate or professional degree	10%	12.7%	11.9%
Source: US Census , 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates			

Race and Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity are important to Ravenna because it is essential for the population to be aware of their diversity. Ravenna City is a diverse community that consists of many different race and ethnicities.

Race

Table 7.4 shows the change in races from 2010 to 2023. The community is made up of residents who are Asian, Black/African American, Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans. White alone is the majority race in Ravenna; however, other racial populations make up the population. Ravenna City had a 84.1% increase in Black or African Americans alone. The population of Asians increased by 113.5%. While there are race groups increasing in

**Table 7.4 Population of One Race**

	2010	2023	%Change
<b>Total of one Race</b>	11451	11286	-1.4%
White alone	10677	9159	-14.2%
Black or African American alone	659	1213	84.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	27	0	-100.0%
Asian alone	52	111	113.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	3	0	-100.0%
Some Other Race alone	33	184	457.6%
Source: US Census, ACS 2010-2023			

**Table 7.5 Race change from 2010 to 2023**

	2010	2023	% Change
<b>Ravenna City</b>			
Population of one race	11,451	10,667	-7%
Population of two or more races	273	619	127%
<b>Portage County</b>			
Population of one race	158,677	153,531	-3%
Population of two or more races	2,742	7,890	188%
Source: US Census, DC 2010, ACS 5-year 2023			

Shown in Table 7.5, between 2010 and 2021, Ravenna's population of one race decreased by 6%, as Portage County decreased slightly by 2%. In Ravenna and Portage County, the population of two or more races greatly increased.

Ravenna City, several populations are decreasing. American Indians and Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islanders alone have decreased significantly from 2010 to 2023.

### Ethnicity

Ethnicity is defined as having a common language, culture, or national origin. In order to measure Ethnicity, the US Census Bureau records Hispanic or Latino counts. According to the 2023 ACS 5-year estimates, the percent of Hispanic and Latino population increased in Ravenna, although the population remains below Ohio's overall percentage as well as the United States (Table 7.6).

**Table 7.6 Hispanic and Latino Population**

	Ravenna (2010)	Ravenna (2023)	Portage County	Ohio	United States
Hispanic or Latino	1.41%	3.29%	2.22%	4.56%	18.99%
Not Hispanic or Latino:	98.61%	96.71%	97.78%	95.44%	81.01%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census Redistricting data (PL); US Census Bureau, 2023 5-year ACS

## Economic Trends

### Poverty

Ravenna's poverty levels are slowly improving, as well as the entire county. This has increased due to more individuals' higher education options, better wages, and more access to necessary quality-of-life resources.

**Table 7.7 Percentage of Population Living in Poverty**

Ravenna (2012)	Ravenna (2016)	Ravenna (2023)	Portage County	Ohio	United States
23.10%	22.3%	21%	11.40%	13.20%	12.40%
Source: US Census, 2012-2016-2023, ACS 5-year estimates					



Table 7.7 shows the poverty rates of Portage County, State of Ohio, and US in 2023 are much lower than Ravenna City. According to the ACS 2023 data, the population living in poverty in Ravenna was significantly higher than Portage County, the State of Ohio, and the United States average poverty status.

**Social Equity**

Social Equity is defined as fair and just inclusion in which all members of society can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Ultimately, this will encourage a society with full and equal participation among all groups. Planning for equity expands opportunities to all members of a community and builds local capacity to respond to equity concerns moving forward. Looking at the past, present, and future of Ravenna, accessibility and inclusion are stressed needs for residents to thrive in the community. Whether it is access to jobs, transportation, or food, all areas of the community need to be included to encourage equal participation. A disparity in Ravenna is access to food. While the east of Ravenna features two grocery stores and several restaurants, the west side of Ravenna has far fewer options.

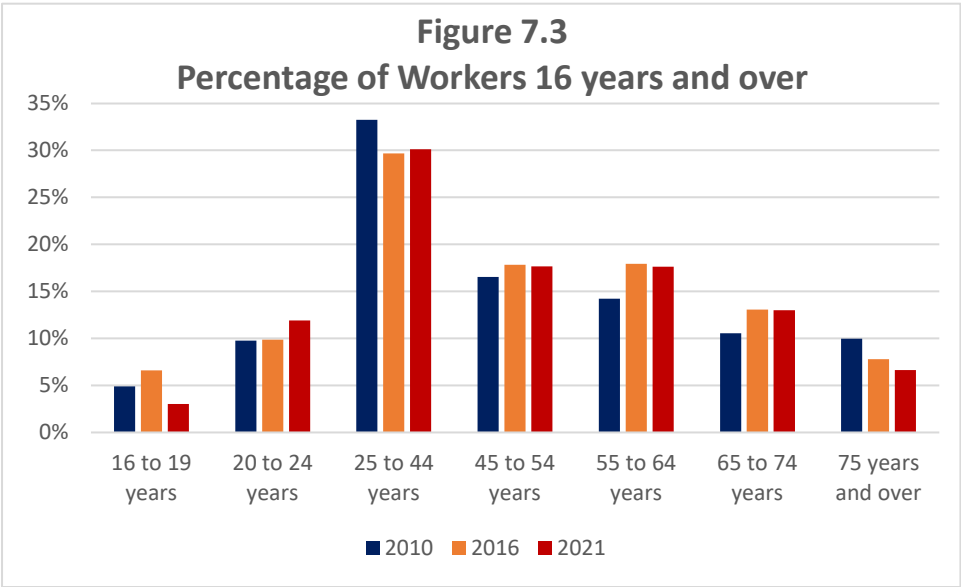
**Historically Underserved Areas**

Understanding historically underserved areas in Ravenna is important because the policies made in the Ravenna Comprehensive Plan target the areas that need resources the most. Pinpointing areas in Ravenna using Census data is problematic because the census tracts use areas that combine the City and Ravenna Township. Using data and identifying these areas that cross city boundaries into Ravenna Township will help policymakers have a larger understanding and reach for creating solutions.

Of the four Census Tracts in Ravenna, the working population in 6009.01 has a median income of \$27,446, while the average of the other three Tracts has a median income of \$35,726 (ACS 2021 5-year). Census Tract 6009.01 has the largest population of people without a high school diploma. Approximately, 10% of Census Tract 6009.01 is uninsured, while only 4.5% of the other three Tracts are uninsured.

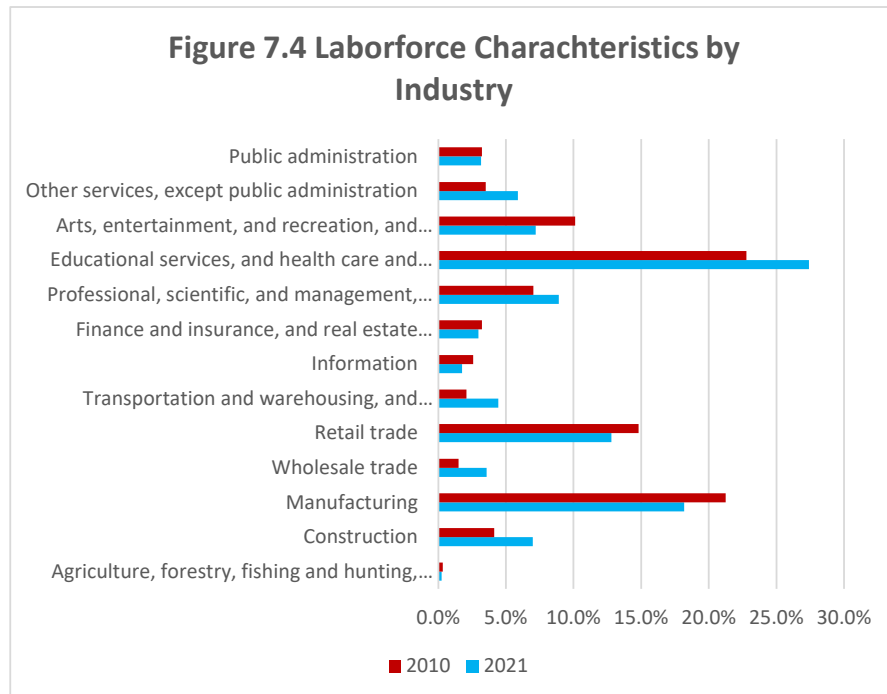
**Employment**

In 2021, there were 6,148 civilians in the labor force. Figure 7.3 shows that ages 25 to 44 years old make up the largest portion of the workforce. The unemployment percentage in 2021 for Ravenna is 5.5%, compared to 12.8% in 2010, the percentage is slightly lower than the Portage County percentage for 2021 (5.8%).



### Labor Force Characteristics by Industries

Ravenna has a strong workforce and a wide range of industries, with educational services, healthcare, and social assistance being one of the biggest. In 2021, the group was 27% of civilians employed, a 16% increase from 2010. Two of the biggest industry increases from 2010 to 2021 were the wholesale trade and transportation, warehousing, and utilities industry. Respectively, wholesale trade and transportation, warehousing, and utilities doubled.



Source: US Census, 2021, ACS 5-year Estimates, Industry by Class of Worker

### Commute to Work

The 2021 ACS 5-year estimates predict that 81.5% of the workforce drove alone to work while 9.5% carpooled. The commute for most Ravenna residents was an average time of 25.6 minutes in 2021. Over 27% of commuters spend less than 14 minutes getting to work (See Table 7.8). Commuter statistics have stayed the same since 2010. Other means of commuting without a personal vehicle are biking or working from home. The Portage Bike and Hike or taking PARTA are viable options for Ravenna residents to access the neighboring communities like Kent without the use of a personal vehicle. For certain sectors of the labor force, in particular technology, management services, engineering, administration, etc, work from home may be a growing trend to examine in the future.

Table 7.8 Percentage of Commuters Travel Time	
Less than 14 minutes	27.90%
15 to 29 minutes	40.50%
30 to 59 minutes	27.70%
1 hour or more	3.90%
Source: US Census Bureau, 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates	

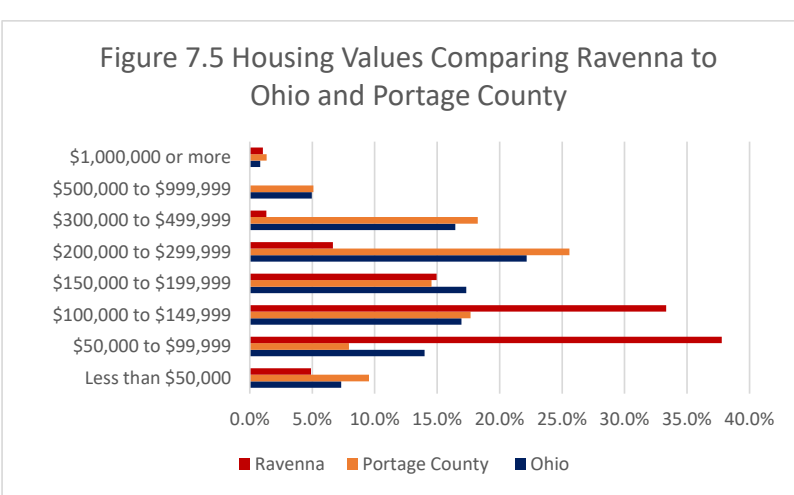
## Housing Trends

### Housing Value

In 2023, the median value for owner-occupied housing was \$129,400. This is an increase from the 2010 median home value of \$115,600 or \$159,603.72 when adjusted to 2025 dollars for

inflation (see table 7.9 and figure 7.5).

According to the 2023 ACS 5-year estimates, over 62% of homes in Ravenna are between \$100,000 and \$199,999. This is higher than Portage County and State of Ohio shown in Table 7.9. The range of \$100,000 to \$149,999 is the largest category for home values in 2023, followed by \$150,000 to \$199,999.



Source: US Census, 2021, ACS 5-year Estimates, DP04 Selected Housing Characteristics

Table 7.9 Median Housing Values in Ravenna			
	2010	2023	
Owner-occupied units	2540	2516	Change in %
Less than \$50,000	148	80	-85%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	655	444	-48%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1234	1081	-14%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	378	487	22%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	89	327	73%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	27	69	61%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	9	16	-100%
\$1,000,000 or more	0	12	100%
Median (dollars)	\$115,600	\$ 129,400	11%

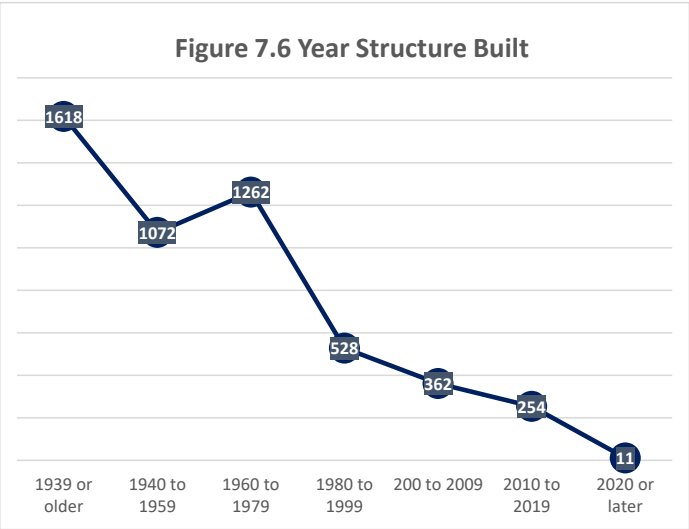
Source: US Census, 2010-2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Value

Age and Condition of Residential Structures

According to the 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates, approximately 77% of all housing stock was built before 1980, making it over 40 years old (Figure 5.6). Throughout time, the upkeep increases as houses age. While the population ages and changes into a fixed income, aging homes may become a financial burden for residents to maintain. Promoting diversity in housing types can help people move into housing that they find more desirable with a comfortable financial burden.

Housing Types

Table 7.10 shows residential units from 2016 data. While not fully accurate for present day, the City still consists largely of (single-family) houses of the total residential housing stock. However, the City is seeing more housing being converted to rental units like duplexes/triplexes.



Source: US Census, 2021, ACS 5-year Estimates, S2504 Physical Housing Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units

## Affordable Housing

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines affordable housing as housing on which the occupant is paying no more than 30% of gross income for housing costs, including utilities (HUD, 2011). Affordable housing options allow residents to live close to where they work. Not only does this alleviate issues that lower and moderate-income residents experience in getting to work like lacking reliable transportation or long commutes, but it also promotes a more efficient transportation network.

The average of all occupied housing (Own and Rent), 37.1% of residents spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Over 60% of residents renting in Ravenna spend \$800 or more on monthly rental costs.

7.10 Residential Units	
Houses	3,351
Duplexes	390
Three-family	45
Condominium	-
Manufactured Homes*	7
Apartments *	850
Mutli-unit Apartments*	79
<b>Total*</b>	<b>4,722</b>
Data from 2016, *Data not taken into account	

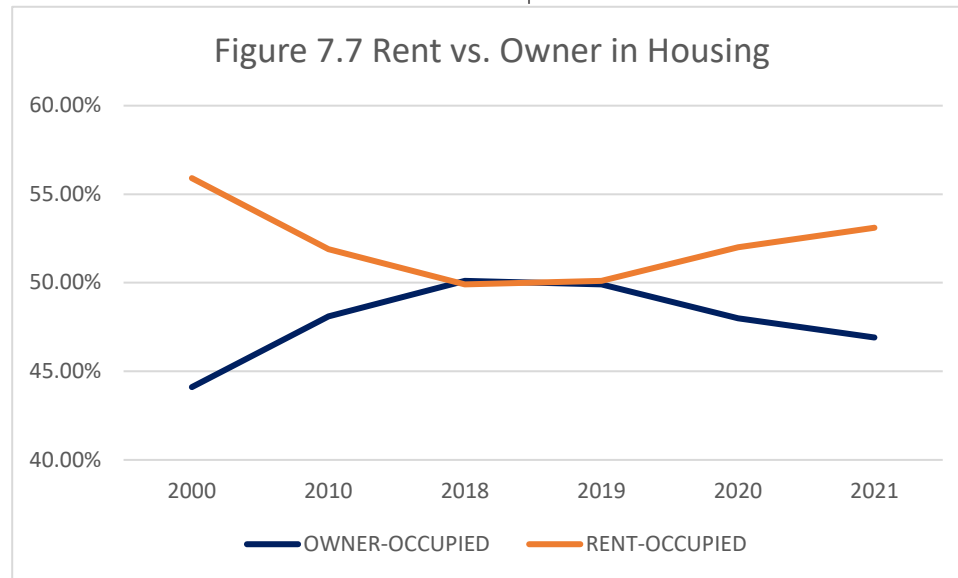
Table 7.11 contains a breakdown of monthly housing costs as a percentage of household income. A critical part of the solution to combat the mismatch between the available housing stock and what the market wants and needs is “missing middle housing”. Daniel Parolek, author of *Missing Middle Housing*, describes “missing middle housing” as housing types that fall somewhere in between a single-family house and mid-rise apartment buildings, such as townhomes, cottage courts, granny flats, and courtyard clusters (Parolek, 2020). In 2021, 56% of the total housing units were 1-unit detached structures.

Table 7.11 Monthly Housing Costs as a percentage of Household Income in the past 12 months						
	All occupied Housing	All Occupied Percentage	Owners	Owner Percent age	Renters	Renter Percent age
Less than \$20,000	709	14.00%	53	2.10%	656	25.90%
Less than 29 percent	65	1.30%	10	40.00%	55	2.20%
30 percent or more	644	12.80%	43	1.70%	601	23.70%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	1071	21.20%	215	8.50%	856	33.80%
Less than 29 percent	263	5.20%	110	4.40%	153	6.00%
30 percent or more	808	16.00%	105	4.20%	703	27.80%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	533	10.60%	265	10.50%	268	10.60%
Less than 29 percent	378	7.40%	203	8%	175	6.90%
30 percent or more	155	3.10%	62	2.50%	93	3.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	811	16.10%	507	20.20%	304	12.00%
Less than 29 percent	768	15.30%	480	19.10%	288	10.40%
30 percent or more	43	0.90%	27	1.10%	16	0.60%
\$75,000 or more	1735	34%	1476	58.70%	259	10.20%
Less than 29 percent	1704	33.70%	1445	57.50%	259	10.20%
30 percent or more	31	0.6%	31	1%	0	0%
Zero or negative income	136	2.70%	0	0.00%	136	5.40%
No cash rent	53	1.00%	(X)	(X)	53	2.10%
Source: US Census, 2023, ACS 5-year Estimates, S2503 Financial Characteristics						



## Rent vs. Own

In the year 2000, the decennial census data show there was a ratio of 44.3% to 55.7% own versus rent comparison. According to the 2021 ACS data, the ratio was 46.9% to 53.1%. The average owner-occupied State of Ohio is 66.3% and the US average is 63.9%, substantially higher than owner-occupied average in the City. Indicated in Figure 7.7, Ravenna is seeing an increase of renters in the community for several reasons like a lack of rentals in Kent or Rootstown, higher upfront costs, the responsibility for maintenance and repair costs, and interest rates rising. Additionally, not all people have a stable or growing income to invest in a home, lower income individuals cannot afford home ownership.



*Source: US Census, 2000-2021, DC and ACS 5-year Estimates*

## Senior Housing

In 2021, approximately 16.4% of Ravenna's population was 65 years and older (2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates). As the population in Ravenna is aging, there has been an increasing desire to age in place; however, senior housing choices are limited. There are more than 8 senior living facilities in Ravenna that serve the city and area. A lack of senior housing options results in senior residents moving out of Ravenna to accommodate their housing situations.

A few factors that may increase living difficulty for seniors are the following reasons:

- Increasing inflation costs
- PARTA Routes not in close proximity to home
- Aftermath of COVID-19 Pandemic health related care
- Home and property features:
  - Laundry in basement;
  - Second floor master bed and bathrooms;
  - Long walking distance to mailboxes.

Organizations in Ravenna that Assist Seniors

- King Kennedy Center
- Portage County Senior Center
- Mobile Meals
- Portage County Veteran Services
- PARTA Dial-to-Ride

# Chapter 8

## Economy

Economic development is the process of retaining and growing jobs through investment within a community through programs, policies, and activities. Improving and attracting businesses through investment strengthens the community because the taxes go to schools, services like police and fire, and infrastructure like streets. Strengthening businesses in Ravenna is important to the community because it creates a higher quality of life for residents.

Ravenna is easily accessible through multiple State Routes like (SR 14, SR 59, SR 44) and highway access from Interstate 80 and Interstate 76. Ravenna has multiple rail lines throughout the city limits which are controlled by organizations like Norfolk Southern, CSX, and Akron-Barbeton Cluster. The Portage County Regional Airport is accessible to the City being only a ten-minute drive from the downtown area. While Ravenna is the county seat, the community features a wide variety of industries outside government entities like educational and health services, manufacturing, industrial, retail, and services.

The comprehensive plan builds upon the assets in Ravenna and opportunities in the community to create policies to increase economic development and higher quality of life.

### Downtown

Ravenna's downtown is one of the most important features of the community. Downtowns are important because they are the heartbeat of communities as they are highly invested in, provide space for business and residence, and establish a character for the community. There are multiple reasons why downtowns are a priority for constant improvement.

Kennedy Smith from Planners Web presents reasons for downtown priority as:

- Downtowns are an extremely efficient land use form.
- Downtowns represent an enormous amount of investment already in place.
- A downtown's historic buildings provide a distinctive market identity for the community.
- Downtowns attract and cultivate independent, locally-owned, businesses.
- Downtowns create new jobs.
- Downtown development minimizes air pollution.
- Downtowns are true civic places.
- Downtown revitalization is the ultimate form of recycling.
- Downtowns are places where true innovation often occurs (Smith, 2005).

Downtowns continuously change and evolve.

Throughout the history of Ravenna, downtown has evolved while maintaining its original character through façade restoration in key architectural buildings like the Riddle Blocks and Etna House. While the downtown in Ravenna seeks improvements to become more vibrant and inviting for economic growth, it is important for the City to examine the support area surrounding the downtown to increase vibrancy while creating a higher quality of life and community character.

### Commercial

Approximately 360.28 acres of the City is occupied by commercial uses, however, 191.27 acres of that total is Windmill Lakes Golf Course property. Of the 294 commercial parcels in the City, more than 107 properties are along Main Street indicating its unique importance to the city's business character. Five properties lie in the area designated as the historic district in 1986.

Since 2000, most non-residential development in the City has occurred along North Chestnut Street, State Route 44 and along Main Street. The new high school, Coleman Adult Day Services, and LG Chem featured in the industrial section formed the basis of new development on North Chestnut near the hospital. Though the North Chestnut Street corridor is not the only place development has occurred north of Main Street, commercial properties have

developed near State Route 44/14 on North Freedom Street.

The Ravenna Comprehensive Plan aims to guide the City in creating policies to maintain its character and enhance its sense of community by creating distinctive places along corridors like North Chestnut Street, East and West Main Street, and Cleveland Road to promote and develop patterns to have housing, employment, shopping, and cultural assets mesh into concentrated places.

New commercial development in Ravenna should enhance the existing community through landscaping, architectural design, size compatibility, and signage. While meeting commercial needs, development in residential should enhance landscape design and vibrancy to become part of the area.

Vacant land accounts for 10.3% of the City's land. Most vacant industrial and commercial land is located near S. Chestnut and W. Large St., but other vacant lands are found. The once vacant 23-acre parcel north of Maple Grove Cemetery on North Chestnut Street has been developed into LG Chem, projected to create over 70 jobs (Smith, 2023).

Main Street in downtown Ravenna is very marketable for commercial expansion as vacant storefront and space is available in multiple buildings. The existing infrastructure helps build the downtown to become stronger and more attractive.

Industrial

Approximately 393.44 acres of the City is used for industrial purposes in Ravenna and accounts for 10.9% of the land. In general, the industrial uses are located close to existing or former railroads. Numerous industries are adjacent to the rail line that runs through the northern part of the City which the Portage County Hike and Bike trail parallels.

There are several rail lines that remain active in Ravenna and industries in the southern part of the City still remain active and several industries are located in that area on Prospect Street. Near North Chestnut Street the rail line that is parallel to the Portage County Hike and Bike is connected to two industrial buildings, WestRock Co. and LG Chem. Several industrial organizations are located along the rail line near Cleveland Road. These organizations have close proximity to State Routes and the downtown making the sites attractive for mixed-use neighborhoods. The industrial buildings on Diamond Street and Oakwood Street could support a mix of residential, industrial, and retail with planned development.

It is beneficial for the City to continue to seek industrial development and use the vacant sites to increase industrial and commercial development while new development is bringing jobs and new residents to Ravenna.

Major Road Corridors

Table 8.1 shows the major road corridors in Ravenna. These corridors are important to economic development because the areas are easily accessible and feature mixes of residential, commercial, and industrial development. The most important major corridor in the City is State Route 59/ Main Street. The corridor connects the community within minutes and features a wide range of development from east to west.

Minor corridors are streets like Chestnut Street, Highland Avenue, Diamond Street, and Riddle Avenue. These minor corridors have different businesses that contribute to the economy and feature many residential properties.

Table 8.1 Major Road Corridors
Major
State Route 59/Main Street
Chestnut Street
Freedom Street/ State Route 88
Prospect Street
Cleveland Road
Minor
Highland Avenue
Riddle Avenue
Diamond Street

## Rail

Rail is one of the best assets Ravenna has to offer for businesses. With a rich history of rail lines in Ravenna, there remains active and inactive lines. There are several rail lines in Ravenna consisting of CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern, and abandoned or out of service rails. Ravenna's lines connect neighboring counties and feed cities like Warren, Akron, and Cleveland.

An improvement is to revitalize passenger rail service and rail station improvements on existing passenger routes (State of Ohio Rail Plan, 2019). Although Ravenna has rail that is used for passenger services, there is no train station in the City. The closest stations to Ravenna are Alliance and Cleveland. The State of Ohio Rail Plan from the Ohio Rail Development Commission created a high-speed rail study and Ravenna is within this corridor.

Osborne Park is a new park in Ravenna that was once an old rail line and site. Reusing lines that are decommissioned or demolished for development is an improvement to the community.



## Brownfields

A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Map X.1 shows the site locations of five brownfields in the City. Three sites (see map x.) are registered on the Ohio Brownfield Inventory Database (OBID, 2024). The other sites not listed on the database are important for the City to get registered.

The Former Smith & Cowan on Pittsburg Street behind the McDonald's is owned by Ravenna City and developing into Osborne Park. Less than one quarter mile (0.25) east is the RGS Automotive site, a parking lot for the Ravenna 7 Movies. The three sites outside the downtown area are White Rubber (835 Cleveland Road), Foundry (267 Hazen Street), and C F Capital (645 South Chestnut Street). White Rubber is used as a parking lot with vacant land taking up half the parcel. C F Capital was demolished and now is vacant. Foundry site is a large property with several empty industrial buildings.

It is important to examine funding to revitalize the brownfield sites into mixed-use development. All five sites are surrounded by major/minor road corridors, existing residential and commercial/industrial properties, and outside of Osborne Park, the sites are key development projects in the future.

## Economic Development Tools

Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) is a economic development tool administered by municipal and county governments that provide real property tax exemptions for property owners who renovate existing properties or construct new buildings. In 2021, the Regional Planning Commission provided a CRA Housing Study proposal to create a 28.47-acre CRA district to target conditions of residential structures and several historic district buildings. There are 3 active CRA agreements currently in place with commercial buildings.

Joint Economic Development Districts are special-purpose territorial districts created by a contract between municipal corporations and townships for the purpose of encouraging economic development, creating jobs, and improving the economic welfare of citizens.

JEDD agreements enable townships, cities, and villages to cooperatively address concerns associated with



## Ravenna City Comprehensive Plan

economic development, diminishing local revenues, growth, and annexation pressures. Local communities are enhanced by JEDD agreements because they provide an approach to solving economic development issues by allowing local governments to enter into legal agreements that have the potential to increase revenues and create jobs. JEDD contractual agreements, which vary by jurisdiction, serve as a significant economic development tool for local communities.

In 2023, a JEDD between Rootstown Township and Ravenna was approved to support Rootstown Township's town center area and other amenities around the Township. The biggest company the JEDD includes is NEOMED.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is an economic development mechanism available to local governments in Ohio to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in certain circumstances, residential rehabilitation. Payments derived from the increased assessed value of any improvement to real property beyond the original value are directed towards a separate fund to finance the construction of public infrastructure defined within the TIF legislation. LG currently has a back-end TIF beginning year 16 after their Ez agreement expires.

It is beneficial to establish TIF, JEDD, and CRA programs to create improvements to infrastructure and economic growth in the future.

# Chapter 9

## Urban Design

### Urban Form

Urban form is the physical arrangement of streets, cities, and the spaces between them. It considers and designs for social, environmental, and economic values to produce an attractive human-scale built form. Buildings, public spaces, streets, transit, and landscapes each have their own integral place that weaves together to create the built form.

Buildings are the most pronounced elements of urban design due to the way they shape and articulate space. Each building forms the street walls of the city and provides space to conduct daily lives. When buildings are well designed and grouped together, they help to create a sense of place. Whenever possible, buildings should be connected to one another to create an urban district. The right of way and setbacks have the strongest impact on how buildings dictate the urban experience. In new development, the building wall should be built at a zero-foot setback from the right of way to create an urban form consistent with Ravenna City's downtown. High density, height, building massing, and a mix of uses consistent with the traditional downtowns with minimal side and rear setback should be encouraged. Off-street parking in front of buildings should be avoided to ensure good urban form is found throughout town. This form prioritizes pedestrians over motor vehicles to help create a livable city.

### Public Realm

The public realm can be compared to the living rooms of the city. It consists of sidewalks, streets, plazas, and parks where people come together to enjoy the amenities and programming the city provides. High-quality public spaces make quality of life in the city possible and helps create livable towns. Public spaces in Ravenna city range from Main Street and the Courthouse lawn to small, pocket parks like the Ravenna Township Park and the park next to Guido's. New development should emphasize and

contribute to the quality and look of the public space through the facades, contribution to the streetscape, and patio settings or other extensions of the business into the public realm.

### Streets and Streetscapes

Streetscapes are the visual elements of the street including the buildings, sidewalks, trees, lighting signage, and street furniture housed within the right-of-way. Each street is defined by their physical dimensions and character as well as the size, scale, and character of the buildings that line them.

Streets range from grand avenues to small, intimate pedestrian streets. The pattern of the street network is part of what defines and makes the city unique. Ravenna has the bones to develop both. Thought should be given to developing State Route 59 and 44 into boulevards where feasible and small historic alleys into pedestrian-oriented corridors with public art, plantings and benches.

Ravenna's streets are laid out in a typical grid pattern that makes wayfinding conventional. As the city grew, spider-like arms developed to create connections to other urban areas. Cleveland Road and State Route 88 are examples of this. Moving forward, new and current streets should be developed as complete streets, making it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work (see Chapter X Transportation, Section X for more information). Complete streets and multimodal transportation have been shown to improve safety, lower transportation costs, and stimulate local economies.

### Landscape

Landscapes, in reference to urban design, are the green parts of the city that weaves throughout the built environment in the form of urban parks, street trees, plants, flowers, gardens, and water features. Natural areas contribute to the city's identity, house cultural events, and encourage interaction with nature. Green spaces in cities range from grand parks such as Central Park in New York City or small intimate pocket parks. Ravenna has natural areas scattered throughout the city and incorporated into its existing streetscapes. The grandest is Ravenna City Park located on the west side of town, but small pocket parks exist at the corner of Chestnut Street and Spruce Avenue and on North Park Way. The addition of sidewalks, tree lawns, trees and other plantings in residential neighborhoods where they do not currently exist would be a major landscaping opportunity.

# Chapter 10

## Implementation

Perhaps the most important piece of the land use plan is implementation. The implementation chapter details the actions specified in each section and what parties should be responsible for their undertaking. Without this piece, the Plan is simply a stack of paper on a shelf. Elements such as revising the zoning code to support the land use plan are imperative to the Plan's effectiveness and value. Some recommendations need to be acted on immediately while others may have to wait five to ten years to be applied. These items will need to be taken on by entities such as the Zoning and Economic Development Department, the Parks and Recreation Department, Chamber of Commerce, or City Council. Regardless of who is in charge, collaboration and communication are key to ensuring the actions taken achieve the intent of the land use plan principles and goals.

### Implementation Actions

In order to implement the goals, objectives, and strategies of the Ravenna City Comprehensive Plan, it is recommended that the City:

1. **Adopt the Plan as the official policy of the City to guide development, funding, and land use decisions.** Ravenna City Council must adopt the Plan by passage of a resolution. Once adopted, the Plan becomes official and should be followed when making land use decisions. The Plan is the first step in creating a more legally stable and enforceable system.
2. **Educate the public about the Plan, so that Ravenna citizens are aware of the adopted Plan.** The public should be aware of its potential impact on the City, that proposed land use changes will need to conform to the Land Use Plan, and that applicable policies will be applied.
3. **Revise the zoning code to support the goals and objectives contained in the Plan.** Changes will need to be made to truly implement the Plan. These recommendations are part of the strategies and include amending and adding zoning districts and development standards, as necessary. Having a zoning code that is in concert with the land use plan is key to making sound decisions.
4. **Require compliance with the Plan in rezoning/development requests and provide written record of such discussion and agreement for each rezoning and development decision.** It must be documented that decisions being made are in compliance with the recommendations in the existing comprehensive plan. Staff reports presented to Planning Commission and Steering Committee should include the planning principles or goals of the Plan and should discuss the proposal's conformity with them. Decisions must be consistent in order for the City to avoid legal trouble. Providing a guide for this is a primary purpose of the Plan.
5. **Maintain the official future land use map.** The Future Land Use map should be prepared and maintained using Geographic Information Systems map information, detailed to the parcel level.
6. **Obtain and allocate funding to achieve goals and objectives.** The process of securing funding is a challenge and must be taken on by individuals who are assertive and organized. These individuals must determine who the key players are regarding funding of priorities, grants available, innovative programs, government assistance and those who may be willing to donate money or land to achieve the goals in the land use plan.
7. **Involve stakeholders and community members in the Plan implementation.** In order to retain community trust and make the land use plan a true reflection of the community's best interests, the public must be involved in implementation. This can be accomplished through volunteers promoting the Plan, residents starting block watches and local events, or business leaders introducing sustainable initiatives into their practices.
8. **Coordinate and communicate with surrounding jurisdictions and the PCRPC.** Many of the recommendations in the Plan

depend on partnerships and collaboration with surrounding areas or organizations. A regional perspective on growth and assistance will help Ravenna move forward in the future. In addition, the Portage County Regional Planning Commission can assist in grant and funding information, zoning amendment reviews, zoning technique recommendations, and mapping.

9. **Be proactive vs. reactive.** The City should take an aggressive stance on preferred development, property acquisition for the preservation areas, and funding opportunities. The zoning commission and City Council should also seek education and training opportunities and resources to stay informed of current planning issues and trends.

### Plan Review and Amendment

To ensure the Plan does not sit on a shelf, it should be reviewed once a year and any necessary amendments made. This annual review will refresh the minds of legislators and other officials on the policies and thinking that led to the main ideas in the Plan. It will also introduce the Plan to new Council members and/or other officials.

The annual review should become a routine process and should be scheduled for a regular time every year. This annual review will help to assure the Plan is kept up to date.

A major reconsideration and update of the entire Plan should occur every five years. Current and changing conditions in the community and region will need to be incorporated.

The Plan may also be amended at any time during the year where it is found that certain provisions are unworkable. Policies may need to be rethought in some instances. Whatever the situation, the Plan should be kept as current as possible to be a useful tool to guide land use decisions.



## Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

### ***Goal 1: Create a vibrant community with an active downtown through placemaking and quality design.***

Objectives:

A. Provide a safe efficient, connected and location appropriate transportation network that supports walking, biking, and transit.

- Strategy 1: Obtain funding to complete a citywide bike and pedestrian study.
- Strategy 2: Build on AMATS' sidewalk study to address gaps.
- Strategy 3: Communicate with PARTA in the early design stage of road projects and right-of-way work to enhance multi-modal transportation.
- Strategy 4: Establish a network of bike corridors and signage based on citywide study.
- Strategy 5: Improve intersections and traffic safety by working to implement the recommendations in the SS4A Action Plan produced by AMATS.
- Strategy 6: Enhance access to the regional trail network through collaboration with AMATS and the Portage Park District.
- Strategy 7: Explore reusing abandoned rights-of-way as pedestrian and bike corridors.

B. Provide a balance of open space and manage environmental concerns.

- Strategy 1: Assess open space and create requirements for it to protect the health of the local environment.

C. Implement complete streets principles citywide.

- Strategy 1: Develop a complete streets master plan.
- Strategy 2: Evaluate each street, identifying existing and future needs to provide recommendations for facilities.
- Strategy 3: Provide street furniture such as benches, bike racks, trash cans, and recycling which encourages a pedestrian scale downtown.
- Strategy 4: Complete a bikeway network that closes gaps in the existing system and serves important destinations.

D. Create family-friendly gathering spaces.

- Strategy 1: Evaluate vacant and underutilized spaces as potential gathering spaces.
- Strategy 2: Determine through community input what types of spaces should be created.
- Strategy 3: Public spaces could be themed based on location, history, surrounding area and can represent the past, present and future history of the city.
- Strategy 4: Encourage various community groups to adopt or be assigned an area to also maintain these gathering areas as appropriate.

E. Focus on aesthetic opportunities.

- Strategy 1: The develop universal wayfinding and signage concepts that are consistent and easy to navigate.
- Strategy 2: The evaluate property maintenance standards and create consistent enforcement policies.
- Strategy 3: The develop design standards for new and redevelopment properties in commercial and industrial areas.
- Strategy 4: The work towards developing a process to partner with existing business owners that will encourage building improvements and appearance as appropriate
- Strategy 5: Historic properties add value to the community and may be a priority for preservation by:
  - Being listed on the Ohio Historic Inventory or National Register of Historic Places.
  - Working with property owners and other organizations to determine needs for viability and preservation.
  - Assist with grant funding opportunities to help with preservation opportunities; as appropriate.

F. Enhance signage to facilitate connecting the downtown to recreational areas, such as the hike and bike trail.

- Strategy 1: Evaluate existing signage and locations and determine where deficiencies may exist.
- Strategy 2: Develop attractive wayfinding and signage theme to assist with guiding people to trails, parks and downtown.
- Strategy 3: Develop a map of points of interest, and shopping and or restaurant options.
- Strategy 4: Prepare a creative guide for the downtown for visitors and residents alike. Creative Concepts may include:
  - Digital information
  - Incentives
  - Business location and information
  - Rewards

G. Expand the quality and use of the downtown Wi-Fi to enable visitors to experience the city in innovative and virtual ways.

- Strategy 1: Boost Wi-Fi and other internet capabilities to best serve businesses, residents and visitors.
- Strategy 2: Develop an electronic wayfinding for businesses, recreation, historical, medical and entertainment as appropriate.

## ***Goal 2: Encourage the future development and revitalization of the City.***

Objectives:

A. Plan for office/research, business park, medical research, and industrial development.

- Strategy 1: Prepare a comprehensive list of land use within the city.
- Strategy 2: Using the current zoning map, determine uses that are consistent and inconsistent and what is vacant or undeveloped.
  - By land use, fully utilized, underutilized and by building square footage.
  - Create an inventory and include value current audit value.
- Strategy 3: Promote vacant and undeveloped land where infrastructure is available.
- Strategy 4: Maintain a development task force team to address proposed development questions.
- Strategy 5: Work with regional and state partners develop pertinent development information and maintain it.
- Strategy 6: Coordinate with local economic development partners, including commercial and industrial realtors and meet on a regular basis per year calendar year.

B. Encourage redevelopment and revitalization of existing areas before building new.

- Strategy 1: Designate areas that are prime for redevelopment.
- Strategy 2: Work with the Portage County Land Revitalization Corporation (PCLRC) also known as the Portage County Land Bank to identify properties that may help connect, link or expand redevelopment area.
- Strategy 3: Location of existing infrastructure should be the priority to reduce cost and expedite redevelopment.
- Strategy 4: Revitalization and redevelopment should also consider compatibility of the surrounding area.

C. Create a diversified, well-balanced and sustainable economy.

- Strategy 1: Identify resources and match with technologies and industries.
- Strategy 2: Market and grow the Rootstown JEDD
- Strategy 3 Create JEDD with Ravenna Township.
- Strategy 4: Create a JEDD with Shalersville airport area and County employment centers.

D. Foster a workforce ready to meet employers' needs.

- Strategy 1: Explore apprenticeship programs.
- Strategy 2: Work with Maplewood to further meet the needs of existing and potential employers.
- Strategy 3: Identify training programs for under skilled adults.

- Strategy 4: Participate with the Portage Development Board to meet the work force needs of employers.

### E. Coordinate with the School District to attract young families.

- Strategy 1: Periodically coordinate with the Ravenna School District to determine shared needs and desires.
- Strategy 2: Market city and Schools together to share the good to great happening in our community.
- Strategy 3: Collaborate to establish a connection to high school age students with local businesses and employers.

### F. Create opportunities for “work from home” employees to move to the city to purchase and renovate homes; market the city as “a place to work from home”.

- Strategy 1: Evaluate “work from home” options to address changing workplace dynamics.
- Strategy 2: Determine if there are impacts to city revenues with business “work from home” policies.
- Strategy 3: Explore options for creating shared workspaces and public meeting rooms.

## ***Goal 3: Develop a flexible land use approach.***

### Objectives:

#### A. Deliver a balance of housing types that will meet the needs of all members of the community while maintaining or improving the viability of existing housing.

- Strategy 1: Evaluate zoning and existing land uses where services are available to create housing choice opportunities; single family through multi-family housing
- Strategy 2: Prepare a housing study to determine housing availability and needs.
- Strategy 3: Evaluate where rentals exist in the city.
- Strategy 4: Coordinate with developers, landlords and land bank to assist in the provision of or improving housing viability.
- Strategy 5: Develop strategies to increase homeownership and decrease home rentals; provide practical financial incentives that make homeownership more attractive and encourages landlords to consider selling their properties.

#### B. Plan for orderly and efficient land use.

- Strategy 1: Evaluate existing land use, structure conditions, utility availability, environmental circumstances and identify areas for development, redevelopment and restoration.
- Strategy 2: Evaluate capacities for water, sewer stormwater and roadways.
- Strategy 3: Evaluate service capabilities of police, fire, schools, parks and the library.
- Strategy 4: Prepare a build out scenario based on zoning densities and intensities.

#### C. Pursue flexible zoning codes and the feasibility of form-based code to support a traditional compact city design.

- Strategy 1: Evaluate where form-based code may be beneficial for residential and retail business.
- Strategy 2: Periodically evaluate the zoning code to determine if changing technologies and public preferences will require zoning code amendments.
- Strategy 3: Determine if housing types can allow for mixed density.
- Strategy 4: Changing technology and business models may allow for reduced parking requirements.
- Strategy 5: Develop compatibility standards to allow for form-based code initiatives and other for other development and redevelopment opportunities.

#### D. Foster quality intergovernmental relationships.

- Strategy 1: Explore the concept of annexation to address conflicts and improve efficiencies.
- Strategy 2: Develop a comprehensive Joint Economic Development District plan with surrounding townships.
- Strategy 3: Continue to work with Portage County and other community agencies to support the city's goals, objectives and strategies.

#### E. Encourage the concept of mixed-use development.

- Strategy 1: Evaluate other mixed-use developments and determine what would best fit the city or specific areas of the city.
- Strategy 2: Work with property owners to encourage public private partnerships as appropriate to provide or redevelop areas offering a mix of uses.
- Strategy 3: Mixed-use development projects should be able to blend internally and with the surrounding community.

F. Support local businesses through concentrated commercial development.

- Strategy 1: Downtown Ravenna and other nodes of commercial activity may be supported, through marketing campaigns, community events, support for the Ravenna Chamber, Main Street Ravenna and the businesses themselves.
- Strategy 2: Communication with the local businesses may occur on a regular basis.
- Strategy 3: As a part of communication, zoning or other boards regulations should be reviewed to accommodate changes needs.
- Strategy 4: Consider having an annual celebration of local businesses.
- Strategy 5: Work with businesses about signage, welcoming, sponsorships, and event promotion concerning their appearance.

***Goal 4: Community services that support the residents of the City; Police, Fire, Parks, Schools and Social Services.***

Objectives:

A. Promote and encourage events that are family oriented.

- Strategy 1: Coordinate with the Ravenna Chamber, Main Street Ravenna, Ravenna Balloon A-Fair, Octane nights and other entities that perform events such as Reed Memorial Library
- Strategy 2: The city may want to develop an annual event schedule to help with costs that may affect the city.
- Strategy 3: Events should be geared toward family friendly experiences.

B. Assist police and fire with staffing, training, equipment and technology to better serve the community.

- Strategy 1: Engage with the community on a regular basis
- Strategy 2: Pursue grant funding and opportunities to provide resources to Police and Fire and potentially community policing, along with dealing with mental health individuals and homelessness
- Strategy 3: Work with merchants to address homelessness concerns.

C. Collaboration with School Districts which include Ravenna, Rootstown, Maplewood and Bio-Med

- Strategy 1: A Council member may be appointed to attend and represent City Council and to stay current on school district issues and report back information.
- Strategy 2: Pursue regular communication with Maplewood and Bio-Med to learn of any concerns or opportunities that may exist.
- Strategy 3: Coordinate with the Ravenna Township and other townships that are JEDD partners or may wish to be JEDD partners.

D. Coordinate with Community Service providers to better assist the community and evaluate opportunities and others needs as they become available.

- Strategy 1: Continue to coordinate with community partners who serve the Ravenna Community. This would include but not limited to Family and Community Services, Job and Family Services, Coleman Services, Neighborhood Development Services, Ravenna Chamber, Main Street Ravenna and many other local organizations whose mission is to serve the residents and businesses of the community.



## Action Tables

The following tables use the goals, objectives and strategies listed above to develop a timeframe of implementation and assign a responsible party. This section priorities future actions of the City in four stages.

- Ongoing: this is something the City is currently doing and should continue to do.
- Short range actions are actions which should be completed within the next 5 years.
- Mid-range actions are actions that should be accomplished in the next 5 to 15 years.
- Long range actions should take 15 years or longer to accomplish.

The Completion Date is left open for the City to fill in as items are accomplished.

## Goal 1: Create a vibrant community with an active downtown through placemaking and quality design.

Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
Objective A: Provide a safe, efficient, connected, and location appropriate transportation network that supports walking, biking, and transit.				
1.A.1. Obtain funding to complete a citywide bike and pedestrian study.	Parks City Council	PCRPC City Engineer County Engineer AMATS	Mid Term	Search and receive funding for bike and pedestrian plan.
1.A.2. Build on AMATS' sidewalk study to address gaps.	Zoning Commission Board of Zoning Appeals AMATS ODOT City Engineer	PCRPC County Engineer	Mid Term	Utilize AMATS gap plan.  Eliminate sidewalk gaps in feet and miles.
1.A.3. Communicate with PARTA in the early design stage of road projects and right-of-way work to enhance multi-modal transportation.	PARTA County City Engineer	City Development Zoning Commission	Short-term	Include PARTA in road improvement projects.
1.A.4. Establish a network of bike corridors and signage based on citywide study.	Design Review City Engineer	Parks	Mid term	Address in bike plan. Signage to be determined.
1.A.5. Improve intersections and traffic safety by working to implement the recommendations in the SS4A Action Plan produced by AMATS.	AMATS City Engineer	ODOT County Engineer	Ongoing	SS4 action plan intersections were identified and how many were improved.
1.A.6. Enhance access to the regional trail network through collaboration with AMATS and the Portage Park District.	City Engineer Portage Parks AMATS	City Parks	Short-term	Coordinate with AMATS and park district when bike plan is being implemented.

Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
1.A.7. Explore reusing abandoned rights-of-way as pedestrian and bike corridors.	City Engineer City Parks	ECON Development County Parks	Ongoing	Evaluate bike master plan.
<b>Objective B: Provide a balance of open space and manage environmental concerns.</b>				
1.B.1. Assess open space and create requirements for it to protect and promote the health of the local environment.	City Engineer	PCRPC	Short-Term	Develop a process to protect and promote the environment.
<b>Objective C: Implement complete streets principles citywide.</b>				
1.C.1. Develop a complete streets master plan.	Zoning Commission City Engineer	Trustees AMATS	Short-Term	Design and approve a typical complete street diagram.
1.C.2. Evaluate each street, identifying existing and future needs to provide recommendations for facilities.	City Engineer	AMATS City Council	Ongoing	Develop a process to document street conditions and maintenance needs.
1.C.3. Provide street furniture such as benches, bike racks, trash cans, and recycling which encourages a pedestrian scale downtown.	Parks City Engineer	Econ Development City Council	Midterm	Evaluate pedestrian conditions downtown and determine elements to make it more walkable.
1.C.4. Complete a bikeway network that closes gaps in the existing system and serves important destinations.	Parks City Engineer	AMATS ODOT County	Midterm	Evaluate as part of the bike masterplan.
<b>Objective D: Create family-friendly gathering spaces.</b>				
1.D.1. Evaluate vacant and underutilized spaces as potential gathering spaces including parks.	City Planning Econ Development	PCRPC City Council Land Bank	Ongoing	Land utilization plan of public and vacant land.
1.D.2. Determine through community input what types of spaces should be created.	City Council City Engineer	OSU Extension Community City Parks	Short-Term	Periodically survey community and businesses to determine type of space people desire.
1.D.3. Public spaces could be themed based on location, history, surrounding area ,and can represent the past, present and future history of the city.	PCHS City Council	City Engineer Design Review	Mid-Term	Plan on creating unique spaces/ murals that reflect Ravenna history.

Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
1.D.4. Encourage various community groups to adopt or be assigned an area to also maintain these gathering areas as appropriate.	Chamber Main Street	City Services	Short-Term	Developing a consortium of businesses or local organizations to maintain assigned planting areas.
<b>Objective E: Focus on aesthetic opportunities.</b>				
1.E.1. Develop universal wayfinding and signage concepts that are consistent and easy to navigate.	Zoning Commission Community Volunteers City Engineer City Council Design Review	Chamber Main Street	Short-Term	Evaluate way-finding and signage in a plan to determine ways to improve travel and location finding.
1.E.2. Evaluate property maintenance standards and create consistent enforcement policies.	City Council City Engineer NDS	Zoning Commission PCRPC	Short-Term	Utilize property maintenance code to set necessary standards for the community.
1.E.3. Develop design standards for new and redevelopment properties in commercial and industrial areas.	Design Review Zoning Commission City Council	City Engineer Econ Development	Short-Term	Prepare a conceptual redevelopment plan and include utilities and infrastructure. Consider adoption of Form Based codes.
1.E.4. Work towards developing a process to partner with existing business owners that will encourage building improvements and appearance as appropriate.	Econ Development Chamber NDS	City Council Main Street	Short-Term	Utilize the Ravenna Chamber to work with businesses on appearance, the city may want to consider loans or grants for façade improvements.
1.E.5. Historic properties add value to the community and may be a priority for preservation by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being listed on the Ohio Historic Inventory or National Register of Historic Places.</li> <li>Working with property owners and other organizations to determine needs for viability and preservation.</li> <li>Assist with grant funding opportunities to help with preservation opportunities; as appropriate.</li> </ul>	Design Review City Council Econ Development	City Engineer Zoning Commission	Short-Term	Every few years the city should evaluate existing historical structures within the city and also if any new buildings should be added.



Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
<b>Objective F: Enhance signage to facilitate connecting the downtown to recreational areas, such as the hike and bike trail.</b>				
1.F.1. Evaluate existing signage and locations and determine where deficiencies may exist.	City Engineer Design Review	City Council ODOT County Engineer	Short-Term	Annually review signage locations ensuring they meet necessary standards .
1.F.2. Develop attractive wayfinding and signage theme to assist with guiding people to trails, parks and downtown.	City Engineer	City Council ODOT	Short-Term	As part of the wayfinding plan include guiding to trails, parks, and downtown.
1.F.3. Develop a map of points of interest, and shopping and or restaurant options.	Econ Development Chamber Main street		Short-Term	Evaluate opportunities to create an interactive map of local shopping and restaurants.
1.F.4 . Prepare a creative guide for the downtown for visitors and residents alike. Creative Concepts may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Digital information</li> <li>○ Incentives</li> <li>○ Business location and information</li> <li>○ Rewards</li> </ul>	City Econ Development	Chamber Main Street City Services	Short-Term	Potentially utilize interactive mapping and coordinating with Main Street Ravenna, Chamber, and local businesses for incentives and possibly a reward system.
<b>Objective G: Expand the quality and use of the downtown Wi-Fi to enable visitors to experience the city in innovative and virtual ways.</b>				
1.G.1. : Boost Wi-Fi and other internet capabilities to best serve businesses, residents and visitors.	City Services	City Council	Short-Term	“City IT” to determine cost for such a system or systems.
1.G.2 Develop an electronic wayfinding for businesses, recreation, historical, medical and entertainment as appropriate.	City Engineer Parks Chamber Historical	PCRPC City Council	Midterm	City research the possibility of creating electronic wayfinding.

## ***Goal 2: Encourage the future development and revitalization of the City.***

**Objective A:** Plan for office/research, business park, medical research, and industrial development.

Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
2.A.1. Prepare a comprehensive list of land use within the city.	Zoning Inspector Zoning Commission City Engineer	PCRPC	Ongoing	Utilize PCRPC to prepare a listing of land uses within the city.
2.A.2. Using the current zoning map, determine uses that are consistent and inconsistent and what is vacant or undeveloped. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By land use, fully utilized, underutilized and by building square footage.</li> <li>Create an inventory and include value current audit value.</li> </ul>	City Planning City Engineer	Zoning Inspector PCRPC Board of Zoning Appeals	Ongoing	Utilize PCRPC to create and complete a comprehensive list based on specific zoning criteria.
2.A.3. Promote vacant and undeveloped land where infrastructure is available.	Trustees City Engineer	City Zoning City Council	Short-Term	Identify vacant and underutilized properties within the City.
2.A.4. : Maintain a development task force team to address proposed development questions.	Econ Development City Engineer Portage Development	City Council	Ongoing	Pull together a land use development team made up of decision makers to support and assist potential development.
2.A.5. Work with regional and state partners develop pertinent development information and maintain it.	Econ Development	City Engineering Portage Development	Ongoing	Coordinate with regional, State and Federal agencies facilitate economic development.
2.A.6. Coordinate with local economic development partners, including commercial and industrial realtors and meet on a regular basis per year calendar year.	Econ Development Local Realtors Portage Development	City Engineer	Ongoing	Scheduled regular meeting with those necessary to attend.
<b>Objective B: Encourage redevelopment and revitalization of existing areas before building new.</b>				
2.B.1. Designate areas that are prime for redevelopment.	Zoning Commission City Engineer Econ Development	City Council	Short-Term	As part of a vacant and underutilized areas within the city as well as identify areas prime for redevelopment. Encourage homeownership.

Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
2.B.2. Work with the Portage County Land Revitalization Corporation (PCLRC) also known as the Portage County Land Bank to identify properties that may help connect, link or expand redevelopment area.	Econ Development City Engineer	Zoning Commission	Ongoing	Establish regular meetings with the Land Bank.
2.B.3. Location of existing infrastructure should be the priority to reduce cost and expedite redevelopment.	Design Guidelines Board Engineer	Trustees City Council ODOT County	Ongoing	Identified prime locations with existing infrastructure and capacity.
2.B.4. Revitalization and redevelopment should also consider compatibility of the surrounding area.	Design Review Zoning Commission	City Council	Ongoing	Selected project should also be coordinated with Residents for their input on a proposed project.
<b>Objective C: Create a diversified, well-balanced and sustainable economy.</b>				
2.C.1. Identify resources and match with technologies and industries.	Econ Development City Engineer	PCRPC City Council Portage Development	Ongoing	Identify strengths that would allow for technology and industry creation and expansion.
2.C.2. Market and grow the Rootstown JEDD	Trustees Zoning Commission PCRPC Econ Development Portage Development	PCWR County Engineer Rootstown Trustees City Council	Long-Term	Coordinate with the Rootstown JEDD to determine location and development based on existing strengths.
2.C.3. Create JEDD with Ravenna Township.	Ravenna Trustees City Council	Econ Development Portage Development	Short-Term	Continue to form and implement a JEDD with Ravenna Township.
2.C.4. Create a JEDD with Portage County airport area and County employment centers.	Shalersville Trustees City Council	Econ Development Portage Development	Midterm	Evaluate opportunities to form a JEDD with Shalersville Township.
<b>Objective D: Foster a workforce ready to meet employers' needs.</b>				

Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
2.D.1. Explore apprenticeship programs.	Portage Development Econ Development	Trustees Schools Colleges Trade Schools	Short-Term	Work with local trade businesses to determine how to enhance an apprenticeship program.
2.D.2. Work with Maplewood to further meet the needs of existing and potential employers.	Portage Development Econ Development	Trustees Chamber	Ongoing	Assist Maplewood to match employers and students based on needs.
2.D.3. Identify training programs for under skilled adults.	Econ Development	PCRPC Chamber	Ongoing	Create programs for under skilled adults.
2.D.4. Participate with the Portage Development Board to meet the work force needs of employers.	Portage Development Econ Development	Chamber	Ongoing	The number of jobs created with the assistance of the PDB.
<b>Objective E: Coordinate with the School District to attract young families.</b>				
2.E.1. Periodically coordinate with the Ravenna School District to determine shared needs and desires.	Schools City Council	Mayor	Ongoing	The number of meetings held annually.
2.E.2. Market city and Schools together to share the good to great happening in our community.	Schools City Development	City Council	Ongoing	Evaluate Co-branding opportunities.
2.E.3. Collaborate to establish a connection to high school age students with local businesses and employers.	Chamber Schools City Development	Econ Development PCRPC	Ongoing	Courses that work to encourage student internships with active businesses.
<b>Objective F: Create opportunities for “work from home” employees to move to the city to purchase and renovate homes; market the city as “a place to work from home”.</b>				
2.F.1 Evaluate “work from home” options to address changing workplace dynamics.	City Council	City Services Portage Development	Short-Term	Develop a process to track and measure change of people who work from home.



Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
2.F.2. Determine if there are impacts to city revenues with business “work from home” policies.	Econ Development City Council City Finances	City Services	Short-Term	Fiscal revenue changes with partial and full work from home workers.
2.F.3. Explore options for creating shared workspaces and public meeting rooms.	City Council Econ Development	Portage Development	Short-Term	The increase in shared workspaces or rooms within the city.

### ***Goal 3: Develop a flexible land use approach.***

<b>Objective A: Deliver a balance of housing types that will meet the needs of all members of the community while maintaining or improving the viability of existing housing.</b>				
3.A.1. Evaluate zoning and existing land uses where services are available to create housing choice opportunities; single family through multi-family housing	Zoning Commission City Engineer	County Engineer ODOT AMATS City Planning	Ongoing	Evaluate zoning requirements and modifications as necessary. Changes in housing unit types.
3.A.2. Prepare a housing study to determine housing availability and needs.	City Council Local Realtors	City Engineer	Short-Term	Completion of a housing study.
3.A.3. Evaluate where rentals exist in the city.	Local Realtors City Engineer	City Planning City Council	Short-Term	Completion of a housing study and review of housing licenses.
3.A.4. Coordinate with developers, landlords and land bank to assist in the provision of or improving housing viability.	City Engineer Local Realtors Land Bank	City Council	Short-Term	Annually coordinated meeting.
3.A.5. Develop strategies to increase homeownership and decrease home rentals; provide practical financial incentives that make homeownership more attractive and encourages landlords to consider selling their properties.	Econ Development Local Realtors Local Banks	City Council	Midterm	Completion of a housing study.
<b>Objective B: Plan for orderly and efficient land use.</b>				
3.B.1. Evaluate existing land use, structure conditions, utility availability, environmental circumstances and identify areas for development, redevelopment and restoration.	Land Bank City Engineer	County Engineer	Long Term	Part of the Land Use Study currently in progress.

Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
3.B.2. Evaluate capacities for water, sewer stormwater and roadways.	City Engineer	County Engineer Portage Water Recourses	Ongoing	Part of the completed Land Use Study.
3.B.3. Evaluate service capabilities of police, fire, schools, parks and the library.	City Services Parks City Council	PCRPC	Ongoing	Part of the completed Land Use Study.
3.B.4. Prepare a build out scenario based on zoning densities and intensities.	City Engineer Zoning Commission PCRPC	Country Engineer Local Realtors Design Review	Long Term	Part of the completed Land Use Study.
<b>Objective C: Pursue flexible zoning codes and the feasibility of form-based code to support a traditional compact city design.</b>				
3.C.1. Evaluate where form-based code may be beneficial for residential and retail business.	Zoning Commission City Council	PCRPC	Short-Term	Part of the completed Land Use Study.
3.C.2. Periodically evaluate the zoning code to determine if changing technologies and public preferences will require zoning code amendments.	Zoning Commission City Council	PCRPC	Short-Term	Review of the zoning code annually or biannual.
3.C.3. Determine if housing types can allow for mixed density.	Zoning Commission	PCRPC City Council	Short-Term	Part of the completed Land Use Study.
3.C.4. Changing technology and business models may allow for reduced parking requirements.	Zoning Commission ODOT AMATS	City Engineer City Council	Ongoing	Evaluated every couple of years.
3.C.5. Develop compatibility standards to allow for form-based code initiatives and other for other development and redevelopment opportunities.	City Council Zoning Commission	PCRPC	Long term	Part of the completed Land Use Study.
<b>Objective D: Foster quality intergovernmental relationships.</b>				
3.D.1. Explore the concept of annexation to address conflicts and improve efficiencies.	City Council Trustees	Community	Ongoing	Evaluated every couple of years .

Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
3.D.2. Develop a comprehensive Joint Economic Development District plan with surrounding townships.	Econ Development Trustees	Township Trustees	Ongoing Long-Term	Completion and implementation of a JEDD (Ravenna and Shalersville Twp).
3.D.3. Continue to work with Portage County and other community agencies to support the city's goals, objectives and strategies.	City Services County	City Council	Ongoing	Done through continuous coordination.

**Objective E: Encourage the concept of mixed-use development.**

3.E.1. Evaluate other mixed-use developments and determine what would best fit the city or specific areas of the city.	Zoning Commission	PCRPC City Council	Short-Term	Part of the completed Land Use Study.
3.E.2. Work with property owners to encourage public private partnerships as appropriate to provide or redevelop areas offering a mix of uses.	Zoning Commission	City Council	Ongoing	Done through continuous coordination.
3.E.3. Mixed-use development projects should be able to blend internally and with the surrounding community.	Zoning Commission	Township Trustees	Short-Term	Part of the completed Land Use Study.

**Objective F: Support local businesses through concentrated commercial development.**

3.F.1 Downtown Ravenna and other nodes of commercial activity may be supported, through marketing campaigns, community events, support for the Ravenna Chamber, Main Street Ravenna and the businesses themselves.	Main Street Chamber	Econ Development Portage Development	Ongoing	Annual community functions that bring people to the downtown.
3.F.2 Communication with the local businesses may occur on a regular basis.	Main Street Chamber	City Council	Ongoing	Regular communication with the city, Chamber and Main Street.
3.F.3. As a part of communication, zoning or other boards regulations should be reviewed to accommodate changes needs.	Zoning Commission PCRPC	City Council	Ongoing	Every couple of years review regulations.
3.F.4. Consider having an annual celebration of local businesses.	Main Street Chamber	City Council	Long Term	When celebration of businesses has occurred.
3.F.5. Work with businesses about, signage, welcoming, sponsorships, and event promotion concerning their appearance.	Design Review	Chamber Main Street	Short-Term	Each event should be coordinated to include local businesses.

### *Goal 4: Community services that support the residents of the City; Police, Fire, Parks, Schools and Social Services.*

Objective A: Promote and encourage events that are family oriented.				
Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
4.A.1. Coordinate with the Ravenna Chamber, Main Street Ravenna, Ravenna Balloon A-Fair, Octane nights and other entities that perform events such as Reed Memorial Library.	Chamber Main Street Balloon-a-fair Octane Nights	City Council PARTA Emergency Services	Ongoing	Annual meetings for these events.
4.A.2. For the city to develop an annual event schedule to help with costs that may affect the city.	Chamber Main Street	City Council	Mid-Term	Creation of a community calendar. Make this comprehensive calendar available online for easy access by the public.
4.A.3. Events should be geared toward family friendly experiences.	Chamber Main Street	City Council	Ongoing	Annual review of family friendly events.
Objective B: Assist police and fire with staffing, training, equipment and technology to better serve the community.				
4.B.1. Engage with the community on a regular basis	City Council County	Econ Development Engineering	Ongoing	Daily communication as necessary.
4.B.2. Pursue grant funding and opportunities to provide resources to Police and Fire and potentially community policing, along with dealing with mental health individuals and homelessness	City Services Econ Development	Coleman City Council F & CS	Long Term	Amount of grant funds secured. As well as expanding police and fire services to keep the community safe.
4.B.3. Work in collaboration with merchants to identify homelessness concerns.	City Council FNCS Coleman NDS	Chamber Main Street	Ongoing	How many homeless persons were affecting businesses on an annual basis.
Objective C: Collaboration with School Districts which include Ravenna, Rootstown, Maplewood and Bio-Med.				



Strategy	Lead Partner	Secondary Partner	Timeframe	Measurement
4.C.1. : A Council member may be appointed to attend and represent School Board and to stay current on school district issues and report back information.	City Council	Schools	Ongoing	Council member(s) attending School Board events on behalf of the Council.
4.C.2. Pursue regular communication with Maplewood and Bio-Med to learn of any concerns or opportunities that may exist.	Schools	City Council	Ongoing	Concerns that are identified, if any.
4.C.3. Coordinate with the Ravenna Township and other townships that are JEDD partners or may wish to be JEDD partners.	Township Trustees Schools	City Council	Ongoing	Creation of JEDDs and quarterly meetings thereafter.

Objective D: Coordinate with Community Service providers to better assist the community and evaluate opportunities and others needs as they become available.				
4.D.1. Continue to coordinate with community partners who serve the Ravenna Community. This would include but not limited to Family and Community Services, Job and Family Services, Coleman Services, Neighborhood Development Services, Ravenna Chamber, Main Street Ravenna and many other local organizations whose mission is to serve the residents and businesses of the community.	City Services Chamber Main Street F & CS J & FS NDS Coleman	Portage Development City Council	Ongoing	Daily conversation as necessary, such as having an annual open house of local services by these service providers.

# Appendix A: Youth Survey

## 1. What grade are you in?

	Percent Responses	Responses
Freshmen	30.36%	68
Sophomore	50%	112
Junior	6.7%	15
Senior	12.95%	29
Total Responses		224

## 2. What are the BEST things about Ravenna City?

	Percent Responses	Responses
Shopping	16.96%	38
Places to "hang out"	26.34%	59
Schools	12.5%	28
Getting around	15.63%	35
Churches/religious institutions	8.48%	19
Parks/bike trails	37.95%	85
Restaurants	26.79%	60
Youth activities/sports leagues	19.64%	44
Friendly neighbors	15.63%	35
Community pride	11.16%	25
Community history	11.61%	26
Safety	11.16%	25
Library	25%	56
Roads	7.14%	16
Other	13.39%	30

## 3. What are the WORST things about Ravenna City?

	Percent Responses	Responses
Shopping	32.14%	72
Places to "hang out"	46.88%	105
Schools	52.23%	117
Getting around	16.52%	37
Churches/religious institutions	8.93%	20
Parks/bike trails	8.93%	20
Restaurants	23.66%	53
Youth activities/sports leagues	20.09%	45
Friendly neighbors	20.54%	46
Community pride	24.11%	54
Community history	12.5%	28
Safety	26.34%	59
Library	9.38%	21
Roads	51.79%	116
Other	7.14%	16

4. If you answered "other" in question 2, please explain.

Top Responses

- Nothing
- Ravenna 7 movie theater
- Family
- Ice cream
- Sports

5. If you answered "other" in question 3, please explain.

Top Responses

- Everything
- Schools
- Drugs
- High food and housing prices making necessities too expensive

6. After graduating from High School, I am seeking...

	Percentage Response	Response
Enlistment (Military)	4.02%	9
Education	58.04%	130
If you answered education, you will be pursuing...		
College	89.23%	116
Trade School	10.0%	13

7. How would you rate the following things in Ravenna City?

	Good	Fair	Poor	No opinion
Schools	34 (15.18%)	98 (43.75%)	87 (38.84%)	5 (2.23%)
Safety	37 (16.52%)	123 (54.91%)	40 (21.88%)	13 (5.8%)
Community/Cultural Facilities (Churches, City Hall, etc.)	64 (28.57%)	109 (48.66%)	24 (10.71%)	21 (9.38%)
Roads	21 (9.38%)	78 (34.82%)	123 (54.91%)	1 (0.45%)
Community Pride and History	38 (16.96%)	106 (47.32%)	48 (21.43%)	30 (13.39%)
Parks/Recreational Programs	56 (25%)	92 (41.07%)	65 (29.02%)	11 (4.91%)

8. How do you get around Ravenna City?

	Percentage Response	Response
Drive	181	80.8%
Walk	135	60.27%
Bike	84	37.5%
Carpool	32	14.29%
Public Transportation	22	9.82%
Uber, Lyft, Etc.	9	4.02%
Other	13	5.8%

9. In your opinion, in ten years Ravenna City will

	Percentage Response	Response
Be a Better Place	36	16.07%
Stay About the Same	122	54.46%
Get Worse	64	28.57%

10. Briefly explain your choice from question 9.

1. The city change has been stagnant.
2. Low income leads to little change.
3. New Generation will improve the city.
4. School system is causing a decline.
5. Many believe nothing will change and are unhappy with it currently.

11. Do you plan on living in Ravenna City after graduation?

	Percentage Response	Response
Yes	26	11.61%
No	122	54.46%
Not Sure	76	33.93%

12. Briefly explain your choice from question 11.

Yes- Common Responses:

1. Low rent
2. Stay close to family
3. Staying at home during college

No- Common Responses:

1. Unsure as of now
2. Want to move out of state
3. Looking for more to do

13. If you could live anywhere, where would you want to live and why would you want to live there?

Stay in Ravenna: 12      Out of State: 126      Out of country: 30      Elsewhere in Ohio: 21

Unsure: 30

# Appendix B: Business Survey

1. What type of business do you own?

Response	Count
Manufacturing	3
Non-Profit	2
Healthcare	2
Retail/Mail-Order	1
Mongoose	1
Insurance Agency	1
General Manafar Industrial Laundry	1
Custom Rubber Molding	1
Bronze Foundry	1
Aerospace Manufacturing	1

2. How long has your business been in operation?

	Count	Percentage
More than 10 Years	13	92.86%
1 to 10 Years	1	7.14%
Less than 1 Year	0	0%

3. How long has your business been located in the City of Ravenna?

	Count	Percentage
More than 10 Years	13	92.86%
1 to 10 Years	1	7.14%
Less than 1 Year	0	0%

4. How many people work at your business, including you?

	Count	Percentage
Less than 5	3	21.43%
6 to 15	5	35.71
16 to 50	1	7.14%
51 to 99	0	0%
Over 100	5	35.71%



5. What is the primary mode of transportation to work for you and your employees?

	Count	Percentage
Automobile	14	100%
Bus, Carpool, Uber, Lyft, etc.	1	7.14%
Bicycle	1	7.14%
Walking	0	0%
Does not apply	0	0%

6. Where do your CUSTOMERS typically park?

	Count	Percentage
On the street	0	0%
Public parking lot	0	0%
Private parking lot	11	78.57%
Does not apply	3	21.43%

7. For each of the following items, identify whether that item is a strength or weakness to operating a business in Ravenna.

	Great			Great	
	Strength	Strength	Neutral	Weakness	Weakness
Visibility and access to customers	3 (21.43%)	2 (14.29%)	8 (57.14%)	1 (7.14%)	0 (0%)
Parking availability	3 (21.43%)	3 (21.43%)	7 (50%)	1 (7.14%)	0 (0%)
Proximity to public transportation	2 (14.29%)	1 (7.14%)	10 (71.43%)	1 (7.14%)	0 (0%)
Nearby competition	3 (21.43%)	1 (7.14%)	7 (50%)	2 (14.29%)	0 (0%)
Local regulations	1 (7.14%)	6 (42.86%)	6 (42.86%)	1 (7.14%)	0 (0%)
Municipal permitting and approval	2 (14.29%)	4 (28.57%)	4 (28.57%)	2 (14.29%)	2 (14.29%)
Local workforce and talent pool	0 (0%)	3 (21.43%)	3 (21.43%)	5 (35.71%)	3 (21.43%)
Character of the community	3 (21.43%)	4 (28.57%)	4 (28.57%)	2 (14.29%)	1 (7.14%)
Access to higher education	2 (14.29%)	5 (35.71%)	6 (42.86%)	0 (0%)	1 (7.14%)
Quality of commercial buildings and properties	0 (0%)	3 (21.43%)	6 (42.86%)	4 (28.57%)	1 (7.14%)
Opportunities and potential for new development	2 (14.29%)	2 (14.29%)	6 (42.86%)	3 (21.43%)	1 (7.14%)
Taxes/tax rates	3 (21.43%)	4 (28.57%)	4 (28.57%)	1 (7.14%)	2 (14.29%)
Incentives and funding mechanisms available to businesses	1 (7.14%)	6 (42.86%)	5 (35.71%)	1 (7.14%)	1 (7.14%)

8. Which of the following three improvements do you think would have a positive impact on operating a business in the community?

	Count	Percentage
More marketing support for local business	1	7.14%
Infrastructure improvements and upgrades	5	35.71%
Improved appearance along roadways	5	35.71%
Public relations and promotions	0	0%
Greater code enforcement (zoning, maintenance, building, etc.)	3	21.43%
More commercial developmet	5	35.71%
More residential development	3	21.43%
Financial incentives and funding mechanisms	7	50%
More public/private partnerships to enhance the City	3	21.43%

9. How would you describe the business community in Ravenna today as compared to when you first came to Ravenna?

	Count	Percentage
Improved	7	50%
Stayed the same	4	28.57%
Don't know	2	14.29%
Declined	1	7.14%

10. Briefly explain your choice from question 9.

Common Responses:

1. New businesses have promoted city growth.
2. Transient population/homeless make it uetenable for business to thrive.
3. Most growth takes place outside of the city.
4. Not aware of differences, everything seems steady.

11. If you had the opportunity to move your business out of Ravenna, would you?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	0	0%
No	14	100%

12. Briefly explain your choice in question 11.

Common Responses:

1. Ravenna is a central location.
2. Loyalty to the community.
3. Ravenna community and business are cooperative.

13. What is the most important thing the City could do to improve the business climate in the community?

Common Responses:

1. Partner with businesses for development, tax breaks, and financing for expansion.
2. Increase availability of mid-range housing to attract skilled workforce.
3. Fix the roads and sidewalks/clean-up downtown.
4. Expand transit for low-income workers; limit non-worker benefits; prioritize work incentives; support local childcare.
5. Outreach to bring more restaurants/retail to the downtown.
6. Deterioration of young population/lack of idea of community and the workforce.

14. Any additional comments?

Common Responses:

1. Homeless population issues regarding trespassing.
2. More investment in the community, rather than on vanity.

# Appendix C: Community Survey

## 1. Do you live and/or work in Ravenna City?

	Responses	Percent Responses
I live and work in Ravenna City	70	39.77%
I live in Ravenna City and work somewhere else	60	34.09%
I work in Ravenna City and live somewhere else	22	12.5%
I live and work outside of Ravenna City	19	10.8%

## 2. How long have you lived in Ravenna?

0 to 5 years	21	11.93%
6 to 10 years	16	9.09%
11 to 20 years	20	11.36%
21 to 30 years	21	11.93%
31 to 40 years	16	9.09%
41 to 50 years	9	5.11%
Over 51 years	26	14.77%
I do not live in Ravenna	0	0%

## 3. What is your housing situation in Ravenna?

Own	119	67.61%
Rent	6	3.41%
Neither (live with friends, relatives, homeless)	5	2.84%
I live outside of Ravenna	0	0%

## 4. How old are you?

Less than 18 years old	0	0%
18 to 24	3	1.7%
25 to 29	9	5.11%
30 to 39	24	13.64%
40 to 49	36	20.45%
50 to 59	40	22.73%
60 to 69	39	22.16%
Over 70	25	14.2%

5. How long have you worked in Ravenna?

0 to 2 years	18	10.23%
3 to 5 years	45	8.52%
6 to 10 years	14	7.95%
11 to 15 years	11	6.25%
16 to 20 years	5	2.84%
21 to 30 years	13	7.39%
Over 31 years	15	8.52%
I do not work in Ravenna.	54	30.68%
Retired	28	15.91%

6. How long is your commute?

Less than 10 minutes	52	29.55%
11 to 30 minutes	47	26.7%
31 minutes to an hour	18	10.23%
1 hour or more	7	3.98%
I work from home	21	11.93%
I'm retired/don't commute	29	16.48%

7. I like Ravenna because of the...

Location and access to surrounding areas	100	56.82%
Jobs	9	5.11%
Education	10	5.68%
Housing affordability	75	42.61%
Parks	43	24.43%
Roads	4	2.27%
Police and Fire	59	33.52%
Sense of safety	53	30.11%
Building and home conditions	12	6.82%
Historical character	93	52.84%
Friendly citizens	47	26.7%
Shopping/retail	14	7.95%
Local businesses	41	23.3%
Sit down restaurants	18	10.23%
Medical services	49	27.84%
Entertainment	16	9.09%
County resources	22	12.5%
Bike trails	47	26.7%
Community pride	28	15.91%
Other (explain in question 9)	11	6.25%



**7.** I dislike Ravenna because of the...

Location and access to surrounding areas	3	1.7%
Jobs	24	13.64%
Education	45	25.57%
Housing affordability	12	6.82%
Parks	11	6.25%
Roads	81	46.02%
Police and Fire	8	4.55%
Sense of safety	42	23.86%
Building and home conditions	74	42.05%
Historical character	5	2.84%
Friendly citizens	8	4.55%
Shopping/retail	58	32.95%
Local businesses	16	9.09%
Sit down restaurants	72	40.91%
Medical services	5	2.84%
Entertainment	38	21.59%
County resources	8	4.55%
Bike trails	2	1.14%
Community pride	27	15.34%
Other (explain in question 9)	21	11.93%

**8.** If you answered "other" in question 7, please specify.

Common Responses:

1. Library
2. Hometown & Family
3. Cost of Living
4. Local business

**9.** If you answered "other" in question 8, please specify.

Generalized Topics of 16 Responses:

- Properties not maintained
- Better upkeep and enforcement of traffic and parking: More speed bumps
- Too many drugs & homeless, officials don't add
- Lack of Downtown commerce (retail/sit down restaurants)
- Local politics is inefficient and unfair
- More programs/effort towards youth (schools) and seniors (RAC)

**10.** If more housing were developed in the City of Ravenna, what would you prefer to see?

Single family homes	155	88.07%
Duplexes	38	21.59%
Multi-family (apartments)	24	13.64%
Accessory dwellings units (granny flats, basement apartments etc.)	16	9.09%
Condominiums	40	22.73%
Apartments over retail	27	15.34%
Mobile homes	4	2.27%

**11.** What type of new development would you like to see more of?

Infill development is the construction of buildings on vacant or underutilized land in a developed area.

Sit-down restaurants	144	81.82%
Retail	104	59.09%
Kid-Centered stores, activities	50	28.41%
Redevelopment/rehabilitation	82	46.59%
Infill development	84	47.73%
No additional development	8	4.55%
Other	15	8.52%

**12.** If you chose "other" in question 11, please specify what other development you would like to see more of?

Responses:

- More Family and youth entertainment facilities
- More businesses downtown (Restaurants, coffee, art)
- More Industry
- Clearing of worn down homes and building new houses
- Community REC

**13.** What changes would you like to see in Ravenna?

Common Responses:

- Too many rentals
- Too many vacancies, need more redevelopment of housing
- Improve roads/infrastructure
- Bring in more retail and sit down outside restaurants in the downtown
- More community facilitating
- Improve Education
- Clean the Downtown so it looks attractive
- Annex Township

**14.** How important are the following issues to the recreational needs of Ravenna City?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Local recreation areas and facilities meet my needs.	11 (6.25%)	69 (39.2%)	59 (33.52%)	29 (16.48%)	6 (3.41%)
Bicycle paths need to be developed downtown.	20 (11.36%)	53 (30.11%)	73 (41.48%)	19 (10.8%)	10 (5.68%)
I would like to see more sport activities for all ages.	28 (15.91%)	70 (39.77%)	58 (32.95%)	12 (6.82%)	6 (3.41%)
I would like to see more bike lanes around the City.	21 (11.93%)	44 (25%)	67 (38.07%)	26 (14.77%)	16 (9.09%)

**15.** Should historic structures in the City be protected?

Yes	No
147 (83.52%)	25 (14.2%)

**16.** Briefly explain your opinion from question 15

Generalized Summary of Responses

- They are an important and vital part of Ravenna's identity and help make the downtown more attractive

**17.** How satisfied are you with the following recreational facilities and community events?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Never Been
Ravenna Parks & Rec. Events	8 (4.55%)	80 (45.45%)	54 (30.68%)	14 (7.95%)	6 (3.41%)	11 (6.25%)
Ravenna Athletic Center	10 (5.68%)	56 (31.82%)	60 (34.09%)	18 (10.23%)	3 (1.7%)	26 (14.77%)
Chamber Events	8 (4.55%)	49 (27.84%)	69 (39.2%)	13 (7.39%)	3 (1.7%)	30 (17.05%)
Main Street Ravenna Events	25 (14.2%)	87 (49.43%)	44 (25%)	4 (2.27%)	4 (2.27%)	8 (4.55%)
Balloon A-Fair	37 (21.02%)	72 (40.91%)	26 (14.77%)	21 (11.93%)	7 (3.98%)	9 (5.11%)
Car Show	50 (28.41%)	70 (39.77%)	26 (14.77%)	4 (2.27%)	5 (2.84%)	18 (10.23%)
Ravenna City Park	12 (6.82%)	60 (34.09%)	56 (31.82%)	25 (14.2%)	12 (6.82%)	8 (4.55%)
Volunteer Park	6 (3.41%)	41 (23.3%)	72 (40.91%)	15 (8.52%)	3 (1.7%)	34 (19.32%)
Havre Woods	6 (3.41%)	52 (29.55%)	70 (39.77%)	21 (11.93%)	3 (1.7%)	20 (11.36%)
Diamond Park	3 (1.7%)	22 (12.52%)	86 (48.86%)	17 (9.66%)	4 (2.27%)	38 (21.59%)
Ravenna Township Park	4 (2.27%)	26 (14.77%)	84 (47.73%)	15 (8.52%)	8 (4.55%)	32 (18.18%)
Chestnut Hills Park	20 (11.36%)	61 (34.66%)	61 (34.66%)	9 (5.11%)	2 (1.14%)	20 (11.36%)
Portage County Bike and Hike	34 (19.32%)	83 (47.16%)	43 (24.43%)	5 (2.84%)	2 (1.14%)	7 (3.98%)

20. Any additional comments?

Generalized Summary of Top 7 Responses

- Cleanup and maintain home & property
- Revitalize the downtown with more sit-down restaurants, lighting, and efforts to make it cleaner, prettier, and safer
- Want more law enforcement to address homelessness, drugs, and deteriorating properties
- Encourage more youth engagement in the community
- Improve local leadership in politics and community organizations
- Change monthly council meetings to quarterly informal “Town Halls”
- More local events to advertise small business downtown, can utilize online for spreading awareness (Winter market, Ravenna Ghost walk, etc..)

# Appendix D: Glossary

**100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN:** See Flood Hazard Area.

**BASE FLOOD ELEVATION:** The computed elevation to which floodwater is anticipated to rise during the base flood. The base flood elevation is a regulatory requirement for the elevation or floodproofing of structures. Flood insurance premiums are determined by the relationship of a structure's elevation to the base flood elevation. Base flood elevations are shown on FIRMs and on flood profiles.

**BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:** Methods that have been determined to be most effective, practical means of preventing or reducing pollution from non-point sources, such as pollutants carried by urban runoff. These methods can be structural (e.g., devices, ponds) or non-structural (e.g., policies to reduce imperviousness). Best Management Practices classified as non-structural are those that rely predominantly on behavioral changes rather than construction in order to be effective. Structural best management practices are engineered or constructed to prevent or manage storm water. (From "Using Smart Growth Technologies as Stormwater Best Management Practices", US Environmental Protection Agency, <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/using-smart-growth-techniques-stormwater-best-management-practices>).

**COMPLETE STREETS:** Streets designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, ages, and abilities including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders. Complete Street designs may include sidewalks, bike lanes, bus lanes, accessible public transportation stops, frequent pedestrian crossings, median islands, and narrower travel lanes. These designs vary from rural to urban areas and from city to city.

**CONGESTION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES:** Various techniques used to manage traffic congestion including carpooling, alternative work hours, intersection improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and access management.

**COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA:** A program that provides real property tax incentives for owners who renovate existing or construct new buildings.

**FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY:** Federal agency in charge of emergencies, including flood hazard area management.

**FLOOD HAZARD AREA, SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA:** An area subject to a one percent greater chance of flooding in any given year. The 1-percent annual chance is referred to as the base flood or 100-year flood. Special flood hazard areas are labelled as Zone A, AE, AH, AO, A1-30, and A99 on the FIRM. Moderate flood hazard areas, labeled Zone B or Zone X (shaded) are also shown on the FIRM and are the areas between the base flood elevation and the 0.2 percent annual chance (or 500-year) flood. Special flood hazard areas may also refer to areas that are flood prone and designated from other federal, state, or local sources of data including, but not limited to historical flood information reflecting high water marks, previous flood inundation areas, and flood prone soils associated with a watercourse.

**FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAPS:**

The official map on which FEMA has delineated both the special hazard areas and the risk premium zones applicable to the community.

**FLOODWAY OR REGULATORY FLOODWAY:** The channel of a watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. Communities must regulate development within the floodway to ensure there are no increases in upstream flood elevations. For watercourses where FEMA has



established a base flood elevation, but no floodway, the community must review floodplain development on a case by case basis to ensure that increases in water surface elevations do not occur.

**GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS):**

Geographically referenced data that can be mapped and can include characteristics of mapped features, i.e. size of water lines or the owner and sale date of a piece of property.

**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE:** Green infrastructure uses vegetation, soils and natural processes rather than engineered collection systems to manage stormwater runoff. Green infrastructure mimics nature by soaking up and storing water, resulting in less rapid discharge of storm water and cleaner runoff into receiving streams or water bodies. Also see Low Impact Development.

**INFILL, INFILL DEVELOPMENT:** The process of redeveloping vacant or under used parcels within existing typically urban areas that are already largely developed.

**JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (JEDD):** An agreement between a township and city where the city and township work to develop land within the township for commercial and industrial purposes. The city receives a portion of the taxes on the industrial and commercial development in the township without annexing the land. In return, the township collects the property taxes, a portion of the income tax generated, and may typically receives water and/or sewer from the municipality.

**KAME:** A glacial landform which is an irregularly shaped mound comprised of sand, gravel, and till which accumulates in a depression of a retreating glacier and later is deposited on the land surface.

**LOCATION BASED RESPONSE SYSTEM (LBRS):** State-wide, coordinated address mapping program headed by the Ohio Geographically Referenced Information Program (OGRIP).

**LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT:** Low Impact Development (LID) is an innovative storm water management approach with a basic principle that is modeled after nature: manage rainfall at the source using uniformly distributed decentralized micro-scale controls. LID's goal is to mimic a site's predevelopment hydrology by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source. Techniques are based on the premise that stormwater management should not be seen as stormwater disposal. Instead of conveying and managing / treating stormwater in large, costly end-of-pipe facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas, LID addresses stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features located at the lot level. Also see Green Infrastructure.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES:** The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the historic places worthy of preservation. It was established in 1966 through the National Historic Preservation Act. The NRHP is part of the National Park Services program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate and protect historic and archeological resources throughout the United States.

**OHIO GEOGRAPHICALLY REFERENCED INFORMATION PROGRAM:** A group of volunteer agencies, governments, universities and private organizations interested in GIS who encourage the creation of digital geographic data of value to multiple users, foster the ability to easily determine what geographic data exists and foster the ability to easily access and use data.

**RIPARIAN SETBACK, RIPARIAN CORRIDOR:**

The area set back from the bank of a stream to protect the riparian area (lands adjacent to water bodies) and stream from impacts of development, and streamside residents from impacts of flooding and land loss through erosion.

**SETBACK:** The distance which a building or other structure is set back from a street or road, a river or other stream, a shore or flood plain, or any other place which needs protection. See riparian setback, riparian corridor for additional setback definitions.

**SOIL SURVEY GEOGRAPHIC DATABASE (SSURGO):** The SSURGO database contains information about soil as collected by the National Cooperative Soil Survey over the course of a century and has been transformed into data that can be mapped digitally. The information is available for most areas of the United States.

**SOURCE WATER PROTECTION AREA:** An area surrounding public wells or water intakes established to concentrate drinking water protection efforts through the source water assessment and protection program. The EPA requires these areas be delineated to encompass five years of ground water travel time.

**STREETSCAPE:** A street or sidewalk related enhancement for community identity and beautification in the public right-of-way, including street lights, trees, crosswalks, street furniture, bus stops, and landscape plantings.

**SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SWCD):** Ohio has 88 conservation districts, including one in Portage County. The local SWCD encourages landowners to adopt practices that conserve and manage our natural resources. The Portage SCWD works with other local agencies and offices on storm water management and offers diverse programs for schools, farmers, and residents to protect water and soil resources.

**TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF):** A public financing method used for redevelopment and community improvement projects where the increase in property taxes generated from project improvements is used to finance the debts used to pay for those improvements originally.

**TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD:** The maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to enter a water body and allow the waterbody to continue to meet water quality standards for the particular pollutant. TMDLs must be developed for all waters identified on the state's 303(d) list of impaired waters according to their priority rankings.

**WATER QUALITY STANDARDS:** Provisions developed to protect or achieve the desired conditions of a water body. There are three core components: designated use, criteria to protect the designated use and antidegradation requirements to protect existing uses and high quality/value waters.

**WETLANDS:** An area that is inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal conditions do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, including swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

# Appendix E: References

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