



FACT SHEET: Concord Township Mixed-Use Town Center Concept

General information

- *What this is about:* Exploring the feasibility of a mixed-use development planned for seven township-owned acres at the southwest corner of Auburn Road and Capital Parkway. The current zoning of this property and the land surrounding it allows for such a concept that could include a mixture of retail, personal service, restaurants, and offices – with a high-end residential component, including townhomes and loft units above commercial structures.
- *What are the potential gains:* Benefit the community by strengthening its future economic base while preserving the charm and character of Concord Township through stringent design guidelines. Protect the community and control future growth by choosing planned, rather than haphazard, development.

Current Status of Finding a Developer

- In May of 2017, a Request for Proposal (RFP) was initiated to solicit interest for a Master Developer for the mixed-use Town Center concept.
- One developer has been qualified to provide a proposal as part of Phase II of the RFP Process.
- The developer has submitted a “draft visionary plan” only as part of Phase I.
- No plan or proposal has been approved by the Township and no Master Developer agreement is in place to move forward with the developer.
- The developer has requested an extension, to Nov. 15, to submit a formal plan for consideration.
- Go to ConcordFacts.com for more information and summary of the RFP process.

How the Township Bought the Land

- The township spent \$980,000 on seven acres as the potential site for a mixed-use Town Center concept. The purchase was made through income tax money generated from the Concord-Painesville Joint Economic Development District – the JEDD. It did not come from our residents’ property taxes.
- Income tax revenue collected are to be used to encourage and promote economic development under the JEDD agreement between Concord Township and the City of Painesville.
- The township’s plan all along has been to eventually sell this property and earn our investment back.

Why Residential is a Critical Component of Any Town Center

- Quite simply, to attract and sustain desirable high-end commercial and retail businesses, Town Centers across the nation include residential units. Many of the proposed nonresidential uses depend on the residential component as part of a Town Center to thrive, and it creates a 24/7 environment where residents can live and work. An analysis of other Town Centers overwhelmingly supports this approach.
- But they must be the right kind of residential units. In the case of Concord Township, we are focusing on high-quality, high-value townhomes and second- and third-story loft units. Indeed, existing zoning laws for the planned development area **do not permit** vertical, stand-alone multifamily buildings. That means no high-rises.



- No Section 8 housing has been proposed as part of the draft visionary plan submitted under the RFP process, nor has this type of housing been discussed as part of a Town Center concept.
- The township would **not** lose tax dollars by having a mix of residential and commercial in a Town Center rather than all commercial. Here's why: the residential and commercial support one another. Also, second- and third-story loft units do not detract from allowable commercial development.

Indeed, single-story shopping centers, for example, provide less taxable value than retail with residential above. Finally, because residential can now be included in a JEDD as part of a mixed-use development, the residents in a Town Center also would pay an income tax.

The Impact on Traffic and Services

- A Town Center as envisioned would not pose a burden to schools. Target residents are millennials and empty-nesters, which is what the market dictates for these types of developments. Yes, there may be some families, but they will be the exception, and not the norm.
- The township is anticipating more development in the commercial corridor with the extensive amount of land available. In 2016, we updated our contract with the Lake County Sheriff's department, in part, for additional police protection and patrols. In the same year, the Public Safety Levy was passed to expand emergency services available to the community. With these additional services and funding in place, a potential mixed-use Town Center development would not put any additional undue strain on sheriff, fire and EMS services.
- I-90 and State Route 44 are major roads designed by ODOT to handle traffic from potential development. Additionally, the just-completed \$13-million road project within the SR 44 corridor has improved safety and was designed with an eye toward future development.
- **Under Ohio JEDD law, §715.72(A)(9), a "mixed-use development" is defined as a real estate project that tends to mitigate traffic and sprawl by integrating some combination of retail, office, residential, hotel, recreation, and other functions in a pedestrian-oriented environment that maximizes the use of available space by allowing members of the community to live, work, and play in one architecturally expressive area with multiple amenities.**

The Zoning Question

The recent repeal in August 2017 of proposed zoning text amendments for additional guidelines for the Town Center concept does not stop the RFP process from moving forward. Township zoning that is already on the books would permit a project to move forward without the text amendment within the commercial corridor, with stringent standards guiding such a mixed-use development. By repealing the proposed text amendments, the area within the corridor that allows for this type of development was reduced to the original zoning boundary of the Capital District, which went into effect in 2015.

History

The Town Center concept stretches back more than 11 years. Over those 11 years, there have been numerous presentations, discussions and debates in public meetings, held by the Concord Trustees, Concord Zoning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, as well as the Concord-Painesville Joint Economic Development District. A Town Center concept became feasible in part because of the ODOT approved Auburn-Crile-SR 44 road improvements. Here is a brief history. All events cited took place at public meetings.



- **January 2006:** A committee for studying the Auburn-Crile Road Business Corridor is established at a Board of Trustees' meeting, enlisting the assistance of the Lake County Planning Department to help develop the study.
- **March 2006:** The concept of a town center for Concord begins to emerge at committee meetings through the hiring of Kent State's Urban Design Collaborative.
- **May 2006:** The Auburn-Crile Business Corridor Study is adopted by the Board of Trustees.
- **2007:** Concord receives a grant for a corridor study aimed at relieving traffic congestion at State Route 44/Auburn and Crile Roads. The intersection is labeled a high-accident area by ODOT, [as reported in The News-Herald](#). A Technical Advisory Committee for the road project is created.
- **January 2009:** The Technical Advisory Committee, at its final meeting, announces in public that ODOT has approved the addition of an east-west access road across State Route 44 to address safety issues and relieve congestion. As a condition of their approval, **ODOT requires that Auburn Road traffic east of SR 44 be diverted to the new road at Capital and SR 44 in order to access SR 44.** "The addition of this access road across SR 44 is a huge component of the Town Center development that is envisioned for this area," then-Concord Administrator Jack Nettis [tells The News-Herald](#). A series of public meetings on the road project follows.
- **2011:** Concord Township applies for and receives just over \$3.2 million in NOACA funding for the construction of the new connector road and right-of-way acquisition.
- **November 2012:** Concord trustees hold two public meetings at the Quail Hollow Resort ballroom to solicit input on the road project. [The News-Herald reports](#) that "a handful of people" attend and each attendee is given a questionnaire by the trustees seeking comments on the project.
- **November 2013:** Concord Township, on its third try to win a grant for the road project, succeeds and is awarded \$3.46 million by ODOT for the Auburn and Crile Connector Road project, [The News-Herald reports](#). This second grant helps township officials continue their objective of **not** using property tax dollars for the road project.
- **December 2013-January 2014:** Township trustees review proposals, hire a planning consultant and form a steering committee to develop an updated comprehensive plan for the township. That plan includes models for a town center.
- **January-September 2014:** Nine public meetings on the comprehensive plan update are held, including a public forum, which provided a presentation of a preliminary draft plan on Sept. 24, 2014.
- **October 2014-February 2015:** Five more public meetings on the plan are held, ending with a second presentation on Feb. 16, 2014.
- **2014-15:** With the help of the planning consultant hired for the Comprehensive Plan Update, zoning text is prepared for the new Capital District within the Auburn-Crile business corridor, which would permit Innovative Site/Planned Developments, the zoning use category for mixed-use Town Center developments. The zoning text is approved and goes into effect in February 2015.



- **May 2015:** Trustees adopt the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update at a public meeting, as recommended by the steering committee and the Zoning Commission. The plan discusses the Town Center concept as a key to future development.
- **August 2015:** ODOT construction starts on State Route 44.
- **September 2015:** ODOT construction starts on the Auburn-Crile connector road.
- **January-September 2016:** At a JEDD meeting in January, planning consultants Risinger & Associates present a proposal for the Town Center concept. Town Center visualizations, demographic data and market analyses are presented in public at four subsequent JEDD meetings between March and September 2016.
- **July 2016:** The Crile Crossing development holds a groundbreaking and announces Starbucks and Burgers 2 Beer will open franchises beginning in early 2017.
- **Nov. 18, 2016:** The Town Center Master Plan, a document that describes the proposed mixed use concept and provides background data and market analysis, along with case studies of other town centers, is presented by Risinger and Associates and accepted by the Concord-Painesville JEDD.
- **Nov. 29, 2016:** A special joint meeting on the Town Center Master Plan, open to the public, is held with the Board of Trustees, the JEDD, the Zoning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals.
- **December 2016:** Concord announces the ODOT road improvement project is “fully open.”
- **Dec. 21, 2016:** Trustees adopt the Town Center Master Plan as a supplement to the 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update.
- **March 28, 2017:** Trustees hold a Special Meeting on the Town Center Master Plan Implementation.
- **June 2017:** [The News-Herald reports](#) that “Concord Township is starting to see the economic potential of the Crile Crossing project come into bloom” as Discount Drug Mart and other retail outlets open or break ground.
- **July 1, 2017:** [The News-Herald reports:](#) “After 11 years, Concord Township is ready to step up to accept proposals for the development of a new Concord Town Center Mixed Use Project.” The newspaper reports that the project will include “high-end retail, restaurants and entertainment venues, in addition to offices and some residential housing options.”

Want to know more? Check out our Concord Facts page online at our website at www.concordtwp.com or just type in <http://ConcordFacts.com>.

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