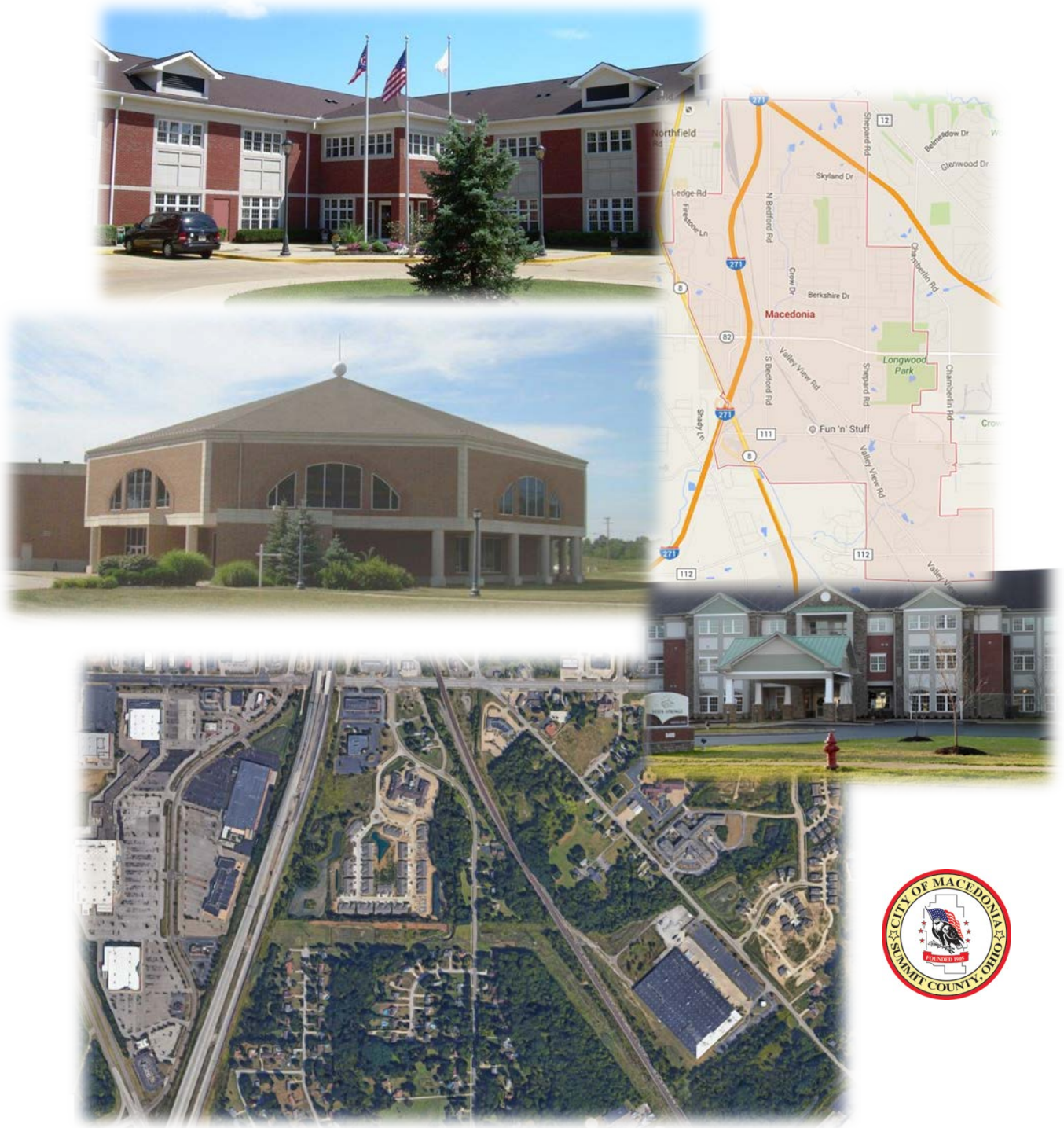


2016 Redevelopment and Future Growth Committee Update

December 2016



Prepared by:

**Macedonia Redevelopment & Future
Growth Committee**

Preface

In the late 1990s, Macedonia was beginning a new era of growth. Macedonia Commons and other new business areas in the city had changed it from open, sprawling land to a bustling city of homes and commerce. However, there was still a lot of development to be done, and residents needed a say in how their city would be shaped.

The very first Future Growth Committee was created in 1996, and in December of 1997 the *Comprehensive Growth and Land Use Plan* was presented to Mayor Joe Migliorini and to the Macedonia City Council. The report extensively detailed areas where the city needed improvement from land use (senior housing, more neighborhood developments, park and recreational needs) to economic development and infrastructure enhancements.

The detailed report was accepted by the Mayor and Council as a guideline to improve the city of Macedonia as a whole. Many of the city's improvements over the last 20 years have direct ties to the *Comprehensive Growth and Land Use Plan* and the original report is still referred to on many occasions.

In 2001, the latest iteration of the Future Growth Committee went back to work on an addendum, which updated and graded the progress of the *Comprehensive Growth and Land Use Plan*. It was approved and accepted by Council in October of 2002. The 12 person committee, chaired by then-future-mayor Don Kuchta, again wanted to present a guideline to the city's decision makers.

Kuchta would later describe the original report and the addendum as "a voice from the community." The report wasn't meant to find fault or to criticize, it was intended to help with the continued growth of the Macedonia community, which it did in many ways.

Before Mayor Kuchta left office in 2015, he wanted to form a new committee that would continue the work that he and a group of Macedonia residents (two of whom are on this current committee, Al Kalish & Roy Metzel) started almost 20 years ago. Although he briefed us on how the Future Growth Committee went about developing the report in 1997 and addendum in 2002, he left the process of either updating the old reports, or developing a new report, entirely up to the newly- created committee.

The new committee, as a whole, decided that a new version that built off the former reports would be the best way to identify specific areas around Macedonia that need re-developed. To ensure the continued growth of our city, we wanted to face the issues of our city today, and to use 2016 terminology and ideas to confront them. We are proud of the work we put in to creating this report, but also saw the value to include and evolve the original reports.

As of this day, the 2002 addendum can still be found on the city's website for review. The original report is also available upon request. This committee's hope is that our efforts in making the offspring of the original and addendum reports can hold up half as well over the next 20 or so years.

It has been an honor for all of us to serve on this committee and give voice to the potential that our city still holds. We truly believe that together we speak for the community of Macedonia.

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1.0 Introduction

The main focus of the Macedonia Re-Development and Growth Committee is to provide a comprehensive report to the Administration and to City Council that addresses ideas, concepts and future projects that will continue to make Macedonia a place where people will be proud to live. Our goal is to have these ideas discussed, our concepts studied, and our future projects brought to fruition. The purpose of the committee was to be a voice of the Macedonia community. We truly feel that this report represents that voice.

The current committee itself is a microcosm of the community. It is made up of nine individuals that are in differing stages of their lives, their careers, and their connectedness to Macedonia. The uniqueness of the committee is its strength. Nine individuals, with differing wants and needs, came together to discuss what they believe has made Macedonia a great place to live, and what they thought would make Macedonia an even more dynamic suburb in northeast Ohio.

The committee consists of a builder, a nurse, a banker, a civil servant, a web developer, a stay-at-home dad, an engineer, a retired teacher and a retired manager. The five men and four women are both married and single, range from having kids in diapers to having grandkids, or to having no children at all. Some committee members were born and raised in Macedonia, and some members have chosen Macedonia to raise their families. Statistically speaking, the committee is well comprised of the community it is representing. The contrast between committee members is countless, but all share a collective love in the city of Macedonia.

When the committee was formed in May of 2015 most members were complete strangers to one another. Over the course of this report the committee has formed a kinship because of the common goals that were shared. This report has been formulated through monthly meetings over the past year and a half. The goal was to create a report that could be utilized by current and future leaders in Macedonia. Although the report itself is the opinions of the committee, we knew that we needed to break down the feasibility of our recommendations.

Early in the process, the committee reached out to the department heads of the city, who were more than happy to come speak with us. The purpose of these meetings was more than just fact-finding - they were history lessons, they were lessons about what goes on behind the scenes, and in all, they painted a picture of Macedonia in the past, the present, and what the future may become.

After the election in November of 2015, the city welcomed a new/old Mayor and the committee was glad that he spent time to speak with us about his experiences from the past and goals for the future. The committee was glad to hear that many of the ideas that we were researching and considering matched with the goals of the new administration. In the spring of 2016, the Re-Development & Growth committee began putting together this report.

Each department head and the Mayor had lent their expertise in knowledge and experience to the committee and the group benefitted from it all. The committee wants to express its

gratitude for all of those who spent time with us - this report would not be possible if not for it. The overall theme from the department heads was simply this: For the city to endure more growth, it must first maintain and update many of the systems, buildings, and equipment that we already have in place.

The committee, although well diversified, does not believe that we possess the expertise to make recommendations on the behalf of the city departments, but we do believe that before any of our recommendations are considered, that a detailed plan is developed that strictly deals with the maintenance and modernization of the city's systems, buildings, and equipment. The committee feels that growth needs to come on solid ground, and the city needs to have a strong foundation before any new holes are dug.

We do, however, believe that our report and the areas that we focused on for redevelopment and growth can work in conjunction with those plans for maintenance. This report will focus on four areas where the committee believes we can strengthen Macedonia's value. Two of those areas are continuations from the original report in 1997: The Beautification of Macedonia and The Expansion of the Macedonia Family and Recreation Center and the Park System. The report will discuss many of the same concepts and ideas that seemed attainable 20 years ago, but also add the opinions of this committee.

The third focus area was also discussed in the 1997 report, but no strides had been taken to create a "downtown" Macedonia area. The committee believes that this concept needs to be explored and that this idea can be a viable growth catalyst for our city.

Discussed throughout the report are changes to our city. However, the committee does not have great knowledge of the zoning laws, or if some of those laws and/or ordinances need updated, changed, or still have the same effect on the city as when they did when written. We know that it might be a monumental task, but the committee would like to see some investigation into re-organizing the zoning statutes that are currently in place.

The committee has taken great pride in the development of this report and believes that Macedonia can be branded as a community that other towns would mimic. We believe that Macedonia can be a destination town, with the amenities that every member of our community can enjoy, be prideful in, benefit from, and call their own.

The Re-Development & Growth Committee

Kevin Westbrooks (Chair)	Jessica Brandt (Secretary)
Sonja Becker	Kevin Bilkie
Chris Coblantz	Bundle Dalrymple
Al Kalish	Roy Metzel
Emilie Quesada	

2.0 Maintenance of the City

The committee understands and is fully committed to the “maintenance first” concept – why build more if we can’t maintain what we have? So, before we get into the continued growth of Macedonia, we felt it necessary to weigh in with our thoughts and recommendations on the equipment, personnel, and amenities that are currently being provided by the city. It is from this solid foundation that we see growth blossoming.

As was said in the introduction, the committee spent time talking with - and more importantly listening to - the department heads and the Mayor of Macedonia. They all outlined their thoughts, plans, and recommendations during the interview. Although some changes have taken place in the administration, (the addition of the Sagamore Hills and Northfield Center Fire Departments, the change from GPD to Chagrin Valley Engineering as the city’s contracted City Engineer, a new Building Commissioner, as well as the addition of an IT Director and changes in the Zoning Department) the need for self-maintenance remains.

Although the “maintenance first” philosophy will overlap with other sections of this report and each department’s 5-year plan (available upon request to the city records department), we wanted to share what our committee found most critical for growth. This section of the report will focus on the safety forces, the service department, administrative functions, and maintaining city owned buildings, local roadways, and equipment.

2.1 Macedonia Police Department

In 2016, the administration and city council made additions to the Macedonia police department & dispatchers that made them whole again. The addition of a Safety Resource Officer (SRO) will serve as a full-time liaison between the school district and the city. With many of the threats that are facing our young people, including narcotics in the schools and use of deadly weapons in and around the school, the committee applauds the efforts made by the city. We also feel that having an officer in the school is not only good for safety and education, but it will also aid in building trust and communication with law enforcement officials.

The MPD also made strides to police the jails with full and part-time jailers, which allows police officers to stay out on the road and thus more visible in the community.

Over the years, the force has been able to use cars, weapons, and gear beyond their scheduled life-cycle. In our interview with Chief Golden, it was he who stressed the “maintenance first” policy that the committee has adopted. Chief Golden also noted the need to stay up-to-date with technology and communication devices, such as protective gear and video recorders mounted on officers.

There is a state- and county-wide plan that will force the city to update its radio and communications gear for full compliance. Although it is not part of our growth plan, the committee is hopeful that the use of grant money can be secured and used for such a costly mandatory expense.

Although Chief Golden's wish list was short, and was more about replacing officers, dispatchers, and jailers, he did feel that a structure covering the area where the patrol cars were parked would help add life to the vehicles, and also double as a safety measure.

2.2 Macedonia Fire Department

When Chief Black spoke to the committee in the late summer of 2015, his theme of regionalism of the area's fire departments could not have foreshadowed the events of 2016 any better.

As of September 15, 2016, the Macedonia Fire Department will run sub-stations in Northfield Center and Sagamore Hills. Although it is not the complete regionalism we spoke about, it is the first steps in combining equipment, personnel, vehicles, and fire trucks with the neighboring communities.

With the escalating cost of all the encompassing items that it takes to maintain a well-functioning fire department, it was not only a cost saving step, but a huge step in the right direction for all the communities that were involved and the movement towards a Nordonia Hills Regional Fire Department.

The functionality of the fire department depends on having well-trained personnel and first-rate equipment. With the three stations under the control of Chief Black, the committee expects the Fire Department ISO rating of 2 to continue through the transition, thus maintaining lower insurance cost for the residents of Macedonia, Northfield and Sagamore Hills.

The addition of the sub-stations in Northfield Center and Sagamore Hills will not alter the service to the people of Macedonia, nor will it add cost to the city. However, the strengthening of the Macedonia Fire Department may aid the department in ways of securing grant money for equipment, which in turn would save money throughout the endeavor.

The replacement of the current ladder truck that is over 20 years old will be needed as soon as 2017. It is the committee's hope that this truck be replaced in a timely manner to ensure the safety of the people of Macedonia, its businesses, and now its new partners.

The committee feels before any other recommendations are made on our part, there needs to be a time period to allow the additions to settle in.

2.3 Macedonia Service Department

When the committee spoke with John Hnottavange, in the fall of 2015, he was the Service Foreman and acting Service Director. In early 2016, he became the city's Service Director.

In the 2016 administrative budget, money for 4 part-time service department positions was included. The addition of manpower, to cover more projects in-house for the city, was Mr. Hnottavange's number one priority.

The city also purchased two steer-skid machines, one to maintain the walking trails through Longwood Park and other trails, and one to allow the service department to do patch work on the streets throughout the city.

Although the committee feels that both addition of personnel and equipment were essential to the Service Department, many upgrades in equipment and storage are still greatly overdue.

The current condition of the four service buildings is "very poor." The garages that house the equipment at Longwood Park are falling apart, with leaky roofs, and invite theft because of the lack of security measures.

The buildings on Twinsburg and Valley View Roads are facing similar conditions. And although the members of the service team have continually worked through the conditions without complaint, the lack of protection from the elements have been negatively affecting the equipment and shortened the life cycles for the city's trucks, plows, and other equipment. The lack of protective covering is costing the city in repairs, replacements and lost hours at the tune of thousands of dollars per year.

The construction of a new service building with a wash bay area will save money to the city in the long run. The wash bay area cleans the salt off the equipment prolonging its life. The fire department can also use the wash bay to clean off their vehicles, thus prolonging life to those vehicles. This committee highly recommends the administration to look into the benefits of a new, centralized service building that will house the bulk of the equipment and staff.

To help defray some of the up-front cost associated with building a new structure, the committee is suggesting that the land where the two other buildings are currently located be sold, with the proceeds going toward the new building.

The committee is also recommending a vehicle replacement plan similar to the police department. Until the new building is a reality, the current fleet of service vehicles is under constant stress from the weather, salt, and overuse. A plan for replacing trucks and plow equipment is essential for maintaining the current fleet by adding and retiring trucks on a continual basis.

2.4 Macedonia Building & Zoning Department

In 2016, a new zoning enforcement position was made to enforce the zoning laws of the city. In the following section of this document, we cover how zoning enforcement and compliance is important to not only the safety but also the beauty of our city. While speaking with newly-appointed (and now former) zoning inspector, the committee was introduced to the rules that govern our city's zoning laws. Some of the members of the committee have

first-hand experience dealing with the confusing array of zoning laws, some that date back to the 1960s and 70s.

The committee understands that these rules are in place for many reasons, but would like to see the zoning system reviewed and simplified where plausible. Again, we do not want to overstep our bounds, and as a committee we understand that this would be a grueling and somewhat expensive project for the administration to undertake. But, we feel that it is important enough to be investigated. The goal of this zoning audit would be to have an updated code that is simplified and one that does not contradict itself.

2.5 Macedonia City Center Building

Just as the Macedonia Family Recreation building is closing in on its 20th birthday, so is the City Center building, which houses the administration, council chambers, the fire department, the city's dispatchers, and the police department. The basement doubles as the senior center and community center. For the most part, Mayor Migliorini believes that the building aesthetics are still in tune with the city's Western Reserve look, and its functionality is still operating at an acceptable level, but he believes that updates are needed throughout the building.

Steps were taken in 2016 to upgrade the tech inside the building. An IT Director position was announced and approved earlier this year and filled subsequently. The Director's role is to update and upgrade tech within the building, and throughout the city. From internet security to changing phone service, the IT Director will allow the Administration to keep projects in-house, thus lowering overall cost.

On the non-technical side, the City Building does need maintenance on the infrastructure. The roof in general is holding up, but there are repairs needed in some areas.

The HVAC units are in need of a maintenance overhaul with some areas of the building cooling beyond the set temperature, while others heat or cool in a non-uniform fashion.

There is the need to refinish the men's locker room in the police station. The entire basement area including the stairwell also has a problem with mold. Upgrades and repairs are needed in the jail area.

The committee also recognizes that unfortunately, due to the atmosphere outside of anyone's control, the building needs to have better security measures installed. From installing high-definition cameras in and around the building, to having metal detectors installed at the entrances, these upgrades will ensure the safety of those who work in the building, and to those who enter the building on various occasions, such as a meeting with the building commissioner, or for events, such as a council meeting.

In general, the committee feels that each item listed, as well as, ones that may develop, should be handled in a timely manner before any of the problems become worse, and become a bigger drain on the city's general fund.

2.6 Administrative Function

As the city moves towards the third decade of the 21st century, it is always good to look back into ideas, concepts and decisions to see if they garnered the expected results. For those decisions that were successful and warrant no changes, leave them be. For the decisions that have become less successful over time, review them, upgrade them and shift them back into the realm of success. For the decisions that have not been successful at all, it is time to move forward from them.

The city administrator and the administrative staff have a duty to the people of Macedonia to continually provide steady leadership, guidance and information – whether it be positive or negative. During times of uncertainty, people turn to their local government and need a stable institute to lean on.

Although the role of government is not always popular, the mayor and his/her staff should always strive to serve the people in Macedonia, and every decision should have the best interest of the residents in mind, regardless if it is unpopular to some.

While the committee was reviewing the role of the administration and its function, many changes were being made. A new mayor was elected and took office in December of 2015. With that change new roles were created and some personnel departures were made.

2.7 Functions of City Council

The committee had a difficult time defining the exact functions of the Macedonia City Council. In theory and by charter, the body is made up of 5 individuals that speak as a whole to the community. The opinions of the majority of Council have always trumped any individual Council member's opinion. Each member has an opportunity to speak on every issue, ordinance and resolution during Council meetings before their vote is made. Once the vote has been recorded, Council has decided and that voice speaks to the community.

The committee finds that any deviation to this established pattern, as written in the charter, would be harmful to the community and cause confusion on resolved issues. This is especially true if a member of the minority presents their dissenting opinion using information that is in contrast to the majority. This sort of deviation would be detrimental to the current political system operating in Macedonia.

In recent years, individuals on Council have decided that the role of Council body has changed from a legislative branch of the Macedonian government to more of a policy-making branch. This change has brought about turmoil and has challenged the traditions of a city government system. Although no changes or reviews have been made to the current structure of the Macedonia city charter, the system has seen slight shift in power to the Council.

The committee feels that this is a dangerous shift, because members of Council are not full time employees of the city, which is by design, and have no day-to-day interaction with the administration or the heads of each department. There is no way the Council can effectively run the city under the current governmental system. There are simply too many operational functions that cannot be handled by a council that meets twice a month.

Until the Macedonia city charter is altered to allow to Council to function as full-time employees, this committee recommends to best serve the people, the Mayor acts as the executive branch and the legislative duties, as well as some policy making powers, be controlled by the Council.

The role of each individual member of Council is important but the overall function of the Council is to be the counterweight to the administration. No one member is more important than another and each member should act as such.

3.0 Beautification

Macedonia has done a lot in the past decade to make the city a retail, dining and employment destination. The Western Reserve architecture standard has ensured that new buildings are visually appealing. However, beyond the architecture there is very little else to catch the eye.

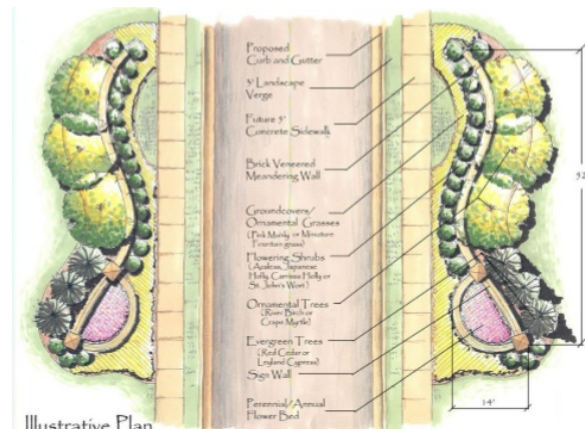
3.1 Gateways

Most notably missing are architectural and landscaping gateways to the city. One of the biggest entry points, at Rt. 8 and Highland Road, welcomes visitors with the tail end of an industrial zone, a dilapidated non-architecturally-conforming restaurant, gas stations and an un-inspiring expanse of highway. At the other end of the city, on Rt. 82 near Longwood, Macedonia is demarcated by empty fields and a small sign for the park.

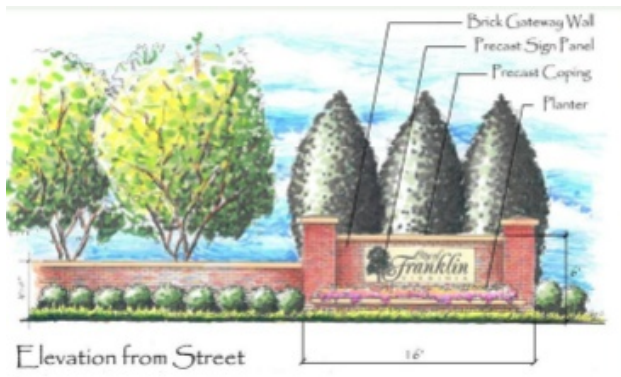
Certainly the bleakness of these entry points does not instill a sense of pride in anyone who lives or works here. Well-kept city gateways not only show off our city pride but make a memorable impression on people here to shop, work or even start a business or own a home.

Gateways can be as simple as planted dividers or berms - as found in Twinsburg, Northfield and Brecksville. Landscaping can be maintained by the city's service department or a combination of service and citizen volunteers. We feel that Macedonia can go beyond simple landscape projects to improve our entry points by hiring an architectural firm to devise plans suitable for our city. A professional firm could create a unified plan that would visually connect the various entry points in to one cohesive theme, employing new signage, landscaping, pedestrian and bike considerations, lamp posts, fencing and art.

Elements from the gateways can be drawn through the city, such as lamp posts, fencing, signage and plants. The Longwood and Sugarbush park entries should match the gateways, and Memorial Park should also include elements that tie it in to the other parks. The entries to the City Center property can be brought forth by adding better signage and related architectural elements that match the gateway plans.



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3.2 Public Art

Beyond the gateway areas, we feel the city could benefit from more public art. Art can be commissioned from interested professional artists, and also solicited as projects from interested citizens. Examples of possible art projects include:

- Trash cans in the parks could be decorated with mosaics and paint as a public project.
- Traffic light and electrical boxes can be decorated with painted murals, as seen in Cleveland and Twinsburg.
- The 271/82 underpass, 271/8 underpass and/or the railroad/82 underpass could be decorated with a mural. Artists (either professional or students) could present their designs for vote. The painting could take place as a public project, and upkeep over the years could be done by volunteers.
- Art installations could go anywhere on public land. Consider the “Free Stamp” in Cleveland, the “Cloud Gate” mirrored sculpture in Chicago.
- Art can be integrated in to the new economic development area. In the Portage Crossing development area, bike racks are shaped like hands. In Cleveland on the Euclid corridor, trash cans are laser-cut metal art. Planters, fences, light poles and crosswalks all have potential to be artwork.

There are many options for funding for public art. Grants can be solicited from the Ohio Arts Council. The city could set up Public Art Trust for collecting donations from both private citizens and businesses. Conversely, private citizens and businesses can donate funds for entire artwork projects. The city can include public art work in incentive packages for developers. Finally, specific city budget amounts can be set aside to go towards the funding of public art.



3.3 Enforcing Zoning Laws

Enforcing the zoning codes is important for maintaining property values for both residential and business owners. Proper compliance improves public safety and quality of life for communities. Code-compliant communities also have higher property values and are more attractive to visitor and business prospects. Deterioration can begin with one business or one residence and can quickly spread to the entire neighborhood. Macedonia must continue to support the Building Department in the enforcement of the zoning codes. Maintaining strict building and zoning codes only helps ensure that our city will continue to prosper, remain safe and promote a healthy environment.

It has been suggested to the committee that the zoning code should be reviewed and updated. One professional that spoke to us found the code to be silent on some issues and contradictory on other issues. As development styles change, a zoning code must change as well. This would not be an entire rework of the zoning code, only an update or revision. It is recommended that the city pursue a review of the zoning code by a planning or zoning professional.

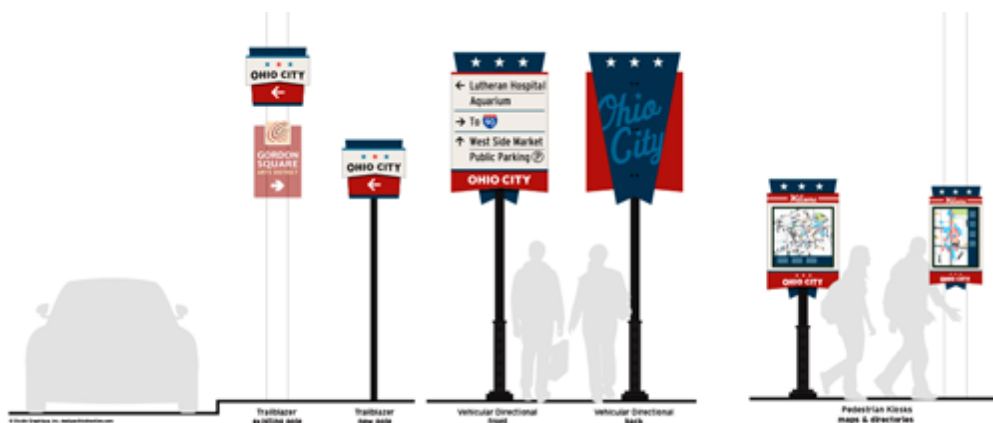
4.0 City of Macedonia Brand

For many years, Macedonia has been billed itself as “The Crossroads of Northeast Ohio.” The city of Independence makes claim to this designation as well, and it is also the registered name of a health aide and hospice service in Stow. While it still might be apt, “The Crossroads of Northeast Ohio” might not be the best way to describe Macedonia. Is the town here for passing through or should we invite people to stay?

Along with economic redevelopment and increasing the visual appeal of Macedonia, the city could benefit from branding. A brand is what can bring together the beautification and economic development ideas set forth in this document. Branding would not only help set Macedonia apart from other municipalities in the Nordonia school district, but make it stand out from other cities in the region.

A worthwhile city brand could help with economic development, as a brand and slogan guide the story of what we want people to say about Macedonia. It also provides the basis on which to build city pride, which could lead to higher voter turnout, more participation in city-sponsored events and increased personal investment in the city itself. Residents become advertisers for the city they are proud of.

While it may be enticing to have a volunteer committee of locals come up with a branding campaign, it would be wise to employ the services of a professional advertising company or a firm that specializes in city branding. An advertising or branding firm can provide the designs for signage, wayfinding, stationery, pamphlets and other advertising materials such as tee shirts and bumper stickers.





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5.0 Development of a City Center

In the latter stages of our monthly meetings, the committee started to focus on ideas that would make Macedonia a destination spot for the surrounding area, and more importantly, an area for the people of Macedonia to call their own. With the surrounding area growing with a casino, a mega outdoors retailer, a giant membership store, and a possible major retail super store, more people will be flooding to our area to shop, eat, gamble, and to relax and enjoy the night life. Macedonia needs to take advantage of the influx of people by ways of offering them a reason to come and spend money in our town, money that is currently being spent elsewhere.

Although Macedonia currently has a few options for people coming to our area, the expansion of more shops, boutiques, taverns, cafes, restaurants, and professional office space will be key in Macedonia's continued growth. While the committee sought ways to both save the identity of our town and to take advantage of people traveling through it, the conception of a downtown area was floated out and the idea took hold as a necessity to satisfy both needs, rather than a dream scenario.

The committee brainstormed on which areas around Macedonia would be the best location for a downtown area and all agreed that only one area made sense - the southeast corner of Aurora Road and Valley View Road (see map at 5a). Not only is the area a short distance for biking and driving for all of Macedonia, it would be within walking distance for the our seniors living at Summit Point, Villas of Taramina, Vista Springs, the new nursing facility on Valley View. Map 5b shows the areas of Macedonia within 10- and 20-minute walking distances of the proposed city center.

The intersection of Aurora and Valley View are the crossroads of Macedonia, and is the *de facto* center of town. Using the City Center building as a backdrop, a downtown area would fit nicely into that location. The map (5c) of that area shows an early conception of what the area could look like if reconfigured, and developed as a downtown area.

5.1 Public/Private Land Project

Following current trends, the committee feels that a downtown project would need to be a combination of a private developer and the city of Macedonia. The intertwined entities will need to work in conjunction with one another to ensure that the land is developed to have the look and the feel of a downtown area, with little shops, street parking, restaurants, and green space. The final plans should include a larger parking area, walking paths, and seating areas around the redeveloped space.

The committee feels to benefit the area, and to ensure its success, the city of Macedonia and the developer would also need to work in conjunction to entice a few anchor businesses, both retail and professional, to have stores and/or offices that will be the cornerstone of downtown Macedonia. The committee also believes that enough spaces should be designed for small business entities, local restaurateurs, eclectic shops, cafes, and boutiques that are unique to the area.

5.2 Conceptual Western Reserve Look

The continuation of the Western Reserve look and feel will enhance the downtown area and would be in harmony with the other developed areas around Macedonia. The facades of the buildings should match in feel, but each should have their own look similar to the architecture of First & Main (Hudson), Portage Crossing (Cuyahoga Falls), Eton Shopping Center (Woodmere), and Legacy Village (Beachwood). Although the inside of the space should be reserved mostly for recreation and preserved green space, access roads for deliveries and some street parking may be necessary for the area to blossom.

The buildings should be constructed for multiple use, and should not exceed two stories. The conceptual idea is to have the space lined with shops, boutiques, and restaurants on the ground floor, with office space and possible apartments situated in the second stories.

The original Western Reserve look, however, should work in conjunction with modern technology such as solar lighting, security cameras, wireless and high-speed internet, and any forward thinking tech that would give the feel that a person was back in time, but with the modern tweaks that we enjoy on an everyday basis.

The committee recommends that the courtyard area have the look and feel of a park-like setting with plenty of green space, as well as brick walking paths, benches, outdoor seating, a possible water feature and/or monument of some kind in the center. On the street side of any restaurants, café or coffee shop there should be outdoor seating, with the courtyard seating under the discretion of the owner/enterprise.





5.3 Create A New Committee

The committee highly recommends that a conceptual drawing of the space with the recommendations of this committee should be done by a professional architectural firm and that a “downtown” committee be formed.

This new committee could be made up of not only Macedonia citizens and administrators but also business owners and representatives of the developer. If the city does decide to employ a firm to develop a city brand and/or assist with beautification, this firm should be a part of the committee to develop the downtown area.

5.4 Acquisition of Land

As the map indicates, most of the houses and business currently in the site plans would need to be acquired by the city and/or developer. There is also a parcel of land that is currently for sale in the area, and would need to be bought by the city or developer. The committee also recommends that business that are not directly in the site plan, but in the surrounding area be acquired or redeveloped to fit the Western Reserve downtown concept.

5a Map of proposed city center development area boundaries

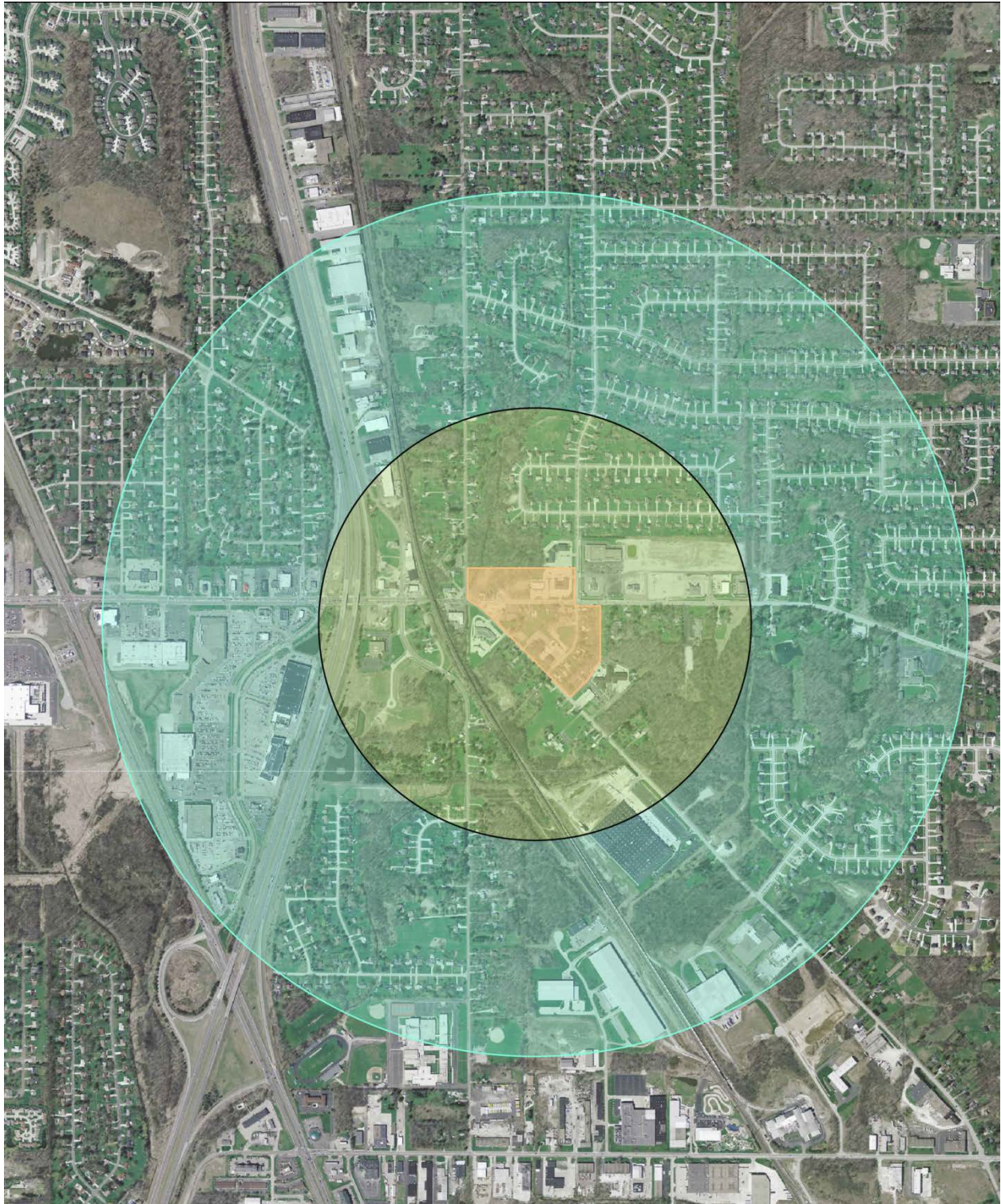


 SITE

PROPOSED CITY CENTER LOCATION
2016 MACEDONIA REDEVELOPMENT AND
FUTURE GROWTH COMMITTEE UPDATE

2016 Redevelopment and Future Growth
Committee Update

5b Map showing walking distances to proposed city center



 ESTIMATED 10 MINUTE WALK TO SITE

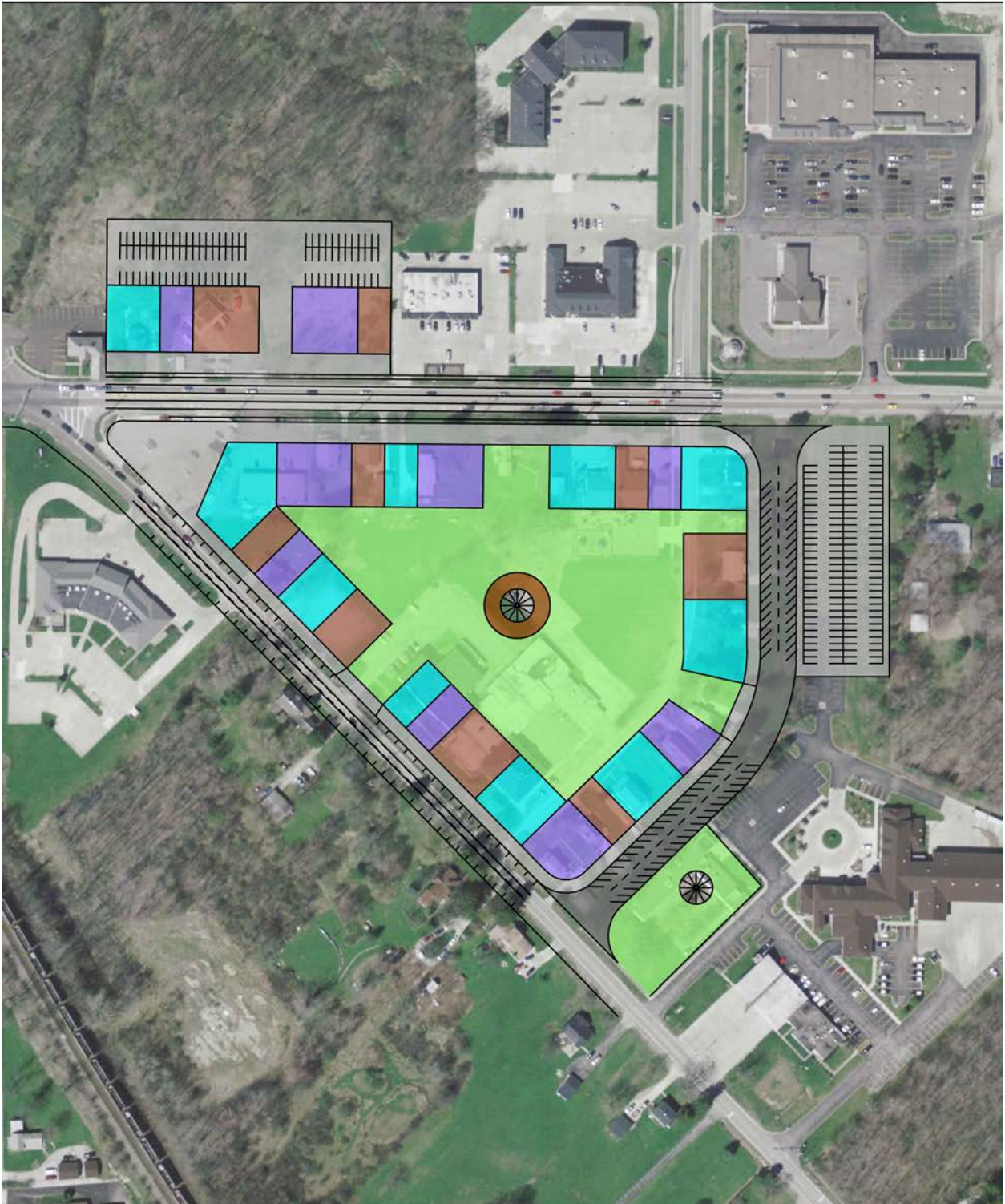
 ESTIMATED 20 MINUTE WALK TO SITE

 SITE

WALKING ESTIMATES
2016 MACEDONIA REDEVELOPMENT AND
FUTURE GROWTH COMMITTEE UPDATE

**2016 Redevelopment and Future Growth
Committee Update**

5c Map of proposed city center layout



PROPOSED CITY CENTER
2016 MACEDONIA REDEVELOPMENT AND
FUTURE GROWTH COMMITTEE UPDATE

2016 Redevelopment and Future Growth
Committee Update

6.0 Parks & Recreation

Beyond the city's obligation to protect its citizens' well being and the overall value of their property, we feel that Macedonia is also obliged to offer "value added" amenities to residents in return for their tax dollars, beyond that of basic services. While the city relies on third party developers and business owners to bring retail and entertainment options to the city, the city Parks & Recreation Department is where the city leaders have the most control over what is the full "experience" of residents and visitors to Macedonia.

As the city has grown, the city parks have been preserved and maintained as un-developed areas for local recreation and relaxation. In the year 2000, the city stepped up its recreation game by adding the Macedonia Family Recreation Center to park property. While all of the parks and the Recreation Center have been maintained and expanded to the best of the city's ability, this committee feels that the future visions for parks & recreation have been stagnant and not given the budgetary consideration they deserve.

6.1 Family Recreation Center

The Recreation Center plans were to be completed in phases, with Phase One remaining as the current state of the building 17 years since its completion. While the facility enjoys support from residents and non-residents that are regular visitors, membership is stagnant and there is little that has been done to entice new members. The Family Recreation Center is a money-making business, which gives it an edge over other city services in terms of budget, but it also means that it must compete in a market that includes almost every other nearby city's recreation offerings. Like most businesses, the Recreation Center must be able to spend money to make money. The facility will need to expand.

One trend among local city recreation offerings is a "splash park" or "splash pad" – a colorful and active collection of fountains meant for water play, geared towards families with young children. A splash park can provide the atmosphere of an outdoor pool without the same monetary commitment.

However, the original plans for the recreation facility did promise an outdoor pool and many voters are still waiting for this addition, as noted by a 2016 survey. There is no reason that plans for an outdoor pool can't include a splash park which would give Macedonia the best of both worlds – the novelty and modernity of a splash park for younger children adjacent to an outdoor pool that can be enjoyed by swimmers and sunbathers of any age. A wider variety of outdoor activities that are tied to admission prices (and positioned near a concession stand) gives the city a better chance to make its facilities self-sustaining.

It is important to mention that during the writing of this document, a popular local water park (Wildwater Kingdom) closed. The loss of this facility in Aurora leaves a tremendous opportunity up for grabs for any nearby community to develop the area's most popular family summer destination. It would be in Macedonia's best interest to seize on this opportunity and not only add an outdoor pool but an entire "family aquatic center" with pool, splash pad, water slide(s), concession stand and other features that would draw the waterpark crowd. A nearby example of such a facility is Cuyahoga Falls' Waterworks Park.

Another example in Ohio is Springfield's Splash Zone. Communities in Ohio do not need to shy away from outdoor waterparks because of weather, and city-run waterparks can rival those run by private companies.



Another feature of the Recreation Center that voters are still waiting on is a gymnasium. A gym could be used by members for organized and pick-up games of basketball, kickball, soccer and volleyball. Martial arts and gymnastics groups can have classes in a gymnasium. Organizations such as camps, scouting groups and sports groups can rent the gymnasium for a fee. A modern, state-of-the-art gym could not only add new exercise opportunities but also bring new income.

Along with the construction of a gymnasium, there should be architectural considerations for updates to current features - a better and more secure entry area, closer general parking and more handicapped parking, and updated and expanded locker rooms. It has also been suggested that the facility could benefit from the addition of a kitchen for community rental.

6.2 Longwood Park

One of the largest city parks in the state and the greatest of Macedonia's properties, Longwood Park, remains seriously underdeveloped. The park area is full of potential, still decades after it was bequeathed to the city.

The committee would like to see the following improvements to the Longwood property:

- **Community gardens** – With the addition of senior homes, condominiums and small-lot, HOA neighborhoods, there are many residents that may want to garden but do not have the opportunity to do so at their own homes. A community garden on the Longwood property would be a small investment by the city (property, fencing, running water and administration) that could bring enjoyment to many. The committee proposes that the land previously occupied by the Manor House orchards would be ideal for cultivating gardens.
- **Market Day** – Market Day was an excellent idea that came and went too quickly. It is possible that there was not enough funding for advertising to drum up community interest. If a community garden and/or an outdoor pool was nearby, there may be more interest in a market day as more people are visiting the Longwood property.

- **Basketball, tennis and volleyball courts** – Outdoor basketball, tennis and volleyball courts are features that could be added to our ample park space. Outdoor courts can be used by the same groups that would use the proposed gymnasium for basketball and volleyball. The community only has access to tennis courts at local schools and private clubs, but nothing provided by the city. The courts at the high school are not lit and also not available during school hours or when the tennis team is using them. Bringing basketball, tennis and volleyball courts to Longwood provides more opportunity for fitness beyond what may seem to be youth-centric sports services (baseball, soccer and youth football). These different courts will attract adults and children who want to play pick-up games of smaller team or solo sports.
- **Ice Rink** – We have found that the original plans for the rec center grounds included an ice rink. The people of Nordonia are not strangers to ice skating, due to indoor rinks that dot the region. But there are no venues in the immediate area for outdoor skating. In the fall and winter the skating rink could serve as a focal point for community events. If well-planned, the rink could serve a different purpose in summer months such as a roller rink or inline skating hockey rink. With some ingenuity, a winter ice rink could be combined with the summer ball courts.
- **Trails** – In 2016 the Parks Department made an excellent effort to revive the trails at Longwood, and there was a successful running event that used the revived trails. However, there has not been much attention paid to these trails since that time. The city should consider:
 - Paved trail sections that provide a walking space for people with disabilities as well as those pushing baby strollers, and those in need of solid ground.
 - Better defined trail sections with trail markers, published distances and a comprehensive map.
 - Signs demarking the trail heads (with maps at the trail heads) as well as lighting for safety.
 - Dog clean-up stations and trash cans along the trails, and in other parts of the park.
 - Added foliage along the trail in the form of bulbs, ferns, or other interesting plants.
 - A clear & identifiable path around the fishing pond.
 - Access from the south end of Shepard Road. This area, on existing park property, could have parking, trailhead signs and trail map signs.
- **Amphitheater** – A community amphitheater on park grounds would be an exciting and unique addition to our city. Currently there are no public spaces for performing arts. An amphitheater would create an opportunity for a local theater group to form. It could be a home base for the Nordonia community choir and band. The Parks Department could put it to use for its already-successful “Movie in the Park” nights as well as the music entertainment at the Spirit of Macedonia FunFest. The city or local city groups can put on performances ranging from rock bands to Shakespeare In The Park. Performance possibilities are endless.
- **The Manor House** – This committee does not have any opinion on The Manor House at this time. However, we do feel that the barns on the property are in failing condition and should be torn down instead of putting more money into them. The service department should not be storing its equipment in such dilapidated and unsafe buildings.

6.3 Sugarbush Park

Sugarbush Park is much smaller than Longwood and does not offer nearly the same amount of space for amenities. The committee feels that this park should receive as much attention as Longwood when considering upgrades and maintenance.

The main things missing from Sugarbush are electricity and water. The park desperately needs public restroom facilities with flush toilets and running water. Electricity is needed to light the fields and parking lot, as well as provide for security cameras. Aside from these needs, the basketball court is in disrepair. The driveway and parking lot need re-paved.

The NHAA and other groups use the Sugarbush baseball field for games, but the field conditions are not optimal. Dugouts and lights should be added to this field.

Much of the park property is forest area that should have nicely-maintained trails, following the same recommendations as those for Longwood Park. Along with the trails, the city should maintain the walkway that connects the Longwood Drive neighborhood to Sugarbush.

6.4 Veterans Memorial Park

Memorial Park was “de-landscaped” during the Route 82 expansion. During that time, the only money spent to revitalize the park was put towards the complete re-building of its gazebo. As construction comes to an end, it is imperative that Memorial Park’s revitalization not fall by the wayside. It is the centerpiece of our city and the face of our park system.

The re-planning and re-dedication of the park has been handed over to the Veterans Advisory Committee, who will submit plans and help defray the costs of some of the park features. For all intents and purposes, the park will be planned by the Veterans Advisory Committee.

If and when the city adopts a plan for beautification and branding, Veterans Memorial Park will be a key part of showcasing what the city has to offer, as it is on our main road in the center of town. The park is a good place for well-planned landscaping, public art and unique and beautiful architectural pieces. Further planning should include architecture and landscaping that partially obscures the railroad, houses, businesses and roadway that surround the park, giving visitors a feeling of separation from the busy city around them.

Plans for this park should keep in mind possible uses for the space such as holiday lighting, band concerts and memorial gatherings. It should also be a place that is welcoming for those wishing to stop for a picnic or simply to catch some sun.

6.5 Additional Public Land

The committee is interested in the possibility of developing the roughly 2-acre triangular plot of land between the railroad and Center Point Plaza on Rt. 82. Most of this area is owned

by Macedonia, and part of it is owned by Norfolk Southern Rail Road (and is available for development).

This land has potential to be a unique park space in Macedonia – especially if an economic city center is developed at 82 and Valley View. This park land could incorporate easy access to Indian Creek, host unique art installations and if nothing else provide a new perspective from which to watch the hustle and bustle of our beautiful city.

Lot consolidation would make this a buildable lot. One option would be for the city to purchase the railroad lot and use it for park space. Another option would be for the city to sell its portion of the space to a developer who can use the space in the “city center”

6.6 Dedicated Parks Service Staff

This committee feels that the Macedonia parks and recreation department is vastly under-served by the existing service department. Conversely, we feel that the service department is too distracted by the parks. We feel that there should be a maintenance/service staff that is dedicated solely to the Parks and Recreation department and managed by the Parks and Recreation Director.

Even without any upgrades or additions to the park lands and facilities, we feel that the Parks Director should be tasked with managing the maintenance of the park land outside the rec center and beyond. The director should be scheduling mowing, weeding, planting, pruning and facility maintenance such as at the ballfields, playgrounds and pavilions.

If and when the parks and recreation center grounds are updated with new amenities, the parks director will have even more to maintain and will definitely need a larger, dedicated staff. This is true for beautification upgrades, simple upgrades such as to trails and the largest upgrades such as basketball courts and an ice rink.

In addition to dedicated staff, this committee feels that the Parks Department service staff should have its own dedicated equipment and storage facility.

7.0 Roads, Sidewalks and Stormwater

The most important and noticeable upgrade for the city would be to create, follow and maintain a comprehensive plan for road paving and maintenance. A “Pavement Condition Rating” for all streets was done in 2015, and followed up by the new city engineers in 2016. The 2016 report gives recommendations for spending on maintenance and repair over the next 10 years.

A city-wide sidewalk plan should also be included in the larger plan. While sidewalks are not needed nor possible on all city streets, the committee feels that there are areas along larger streets that could greatly benefit from sidewalks. The South Bedford Road sidewalk already gets much use by both high school students and nearby residents. However, the sidewalk ends at the high school and does not allow for easy access south of the school to Highland Road. There are several neighborhoods along Valley View Road that are cut off from each other due to the lack of sidewalks. Shepard Road, which has a school entrance and the possibility for a park entrance, should have a sidewalk (grants for sidewalks for school areas can be sponsored by the Safe Routes to School program, headed by ODOT). Ledge Road and North Bedford Roads are both high-traffic residential roads that should have sidewalks. And sidewalks should be installed on Route 82 through the entirety of the city.

Stormwater considerations should be made when planning roads and sidewalks. The city should make every effort to properly drain all runoff created by new construction. Residents are currently paying in to a stormwater fund related to NEORSD, and city engineers should use this fund to correct existing water problems within the city.

Beyond the money generated by NEORSD, the city should dedicate tax money to the comprehensive road, stormwater and sidewalk plan as opposed to getting funds piecemeal from the general fund. The dedicated funds could come from a public vote in the form of a levy or a tax increase. The city should also dedicate county gas tax money to the road plan, instead of letting it go to the general fund.