

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

HOWLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2026

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Location: Howland Township Administration Building
205 Niles-Cortland Road NE, Warren, Ohio 44484



Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 519.04 – 519.12, the Howland Township Board of Township Trustees will hold a public hearing on the following zoning matters:

Zoning Commission Case 26-C-01 – Zoning Map Amendment

A proposed change to the Howland Township Zoning Map to rezone an area located west of Niles-Cortland Road SE and south of State Route 82 from Corridor Review District–2 (CRD-2) and Commercial (C) to Mixed-Use District (MXD). The area includes properties accessed from Dawson Drive, Kenyon Drive, and Hiram Place.

Zoning Commission Case 26-C-02 – Zoning Text Amendment

A proposed amendment to the Howland Township Zoning Resolution to establish development standards for the new Mixed-Use (MXD) District. Additional proposed text amendments include development standards for roads and criteria for evaluating rezoning requests.

If approved, the proposed changes will amend the Howland Township Zoning Resolution and Map. The proposed amendment packet is available for public view at the Howland Township Administration Building during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday) and online at www.howlandtownship.org.

Frank J. Dillon, Chair

Howland Township Board of Trustees

For additional information, contact:

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Howland Township

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Summary of Proposed Mixed-Use District (MXD)

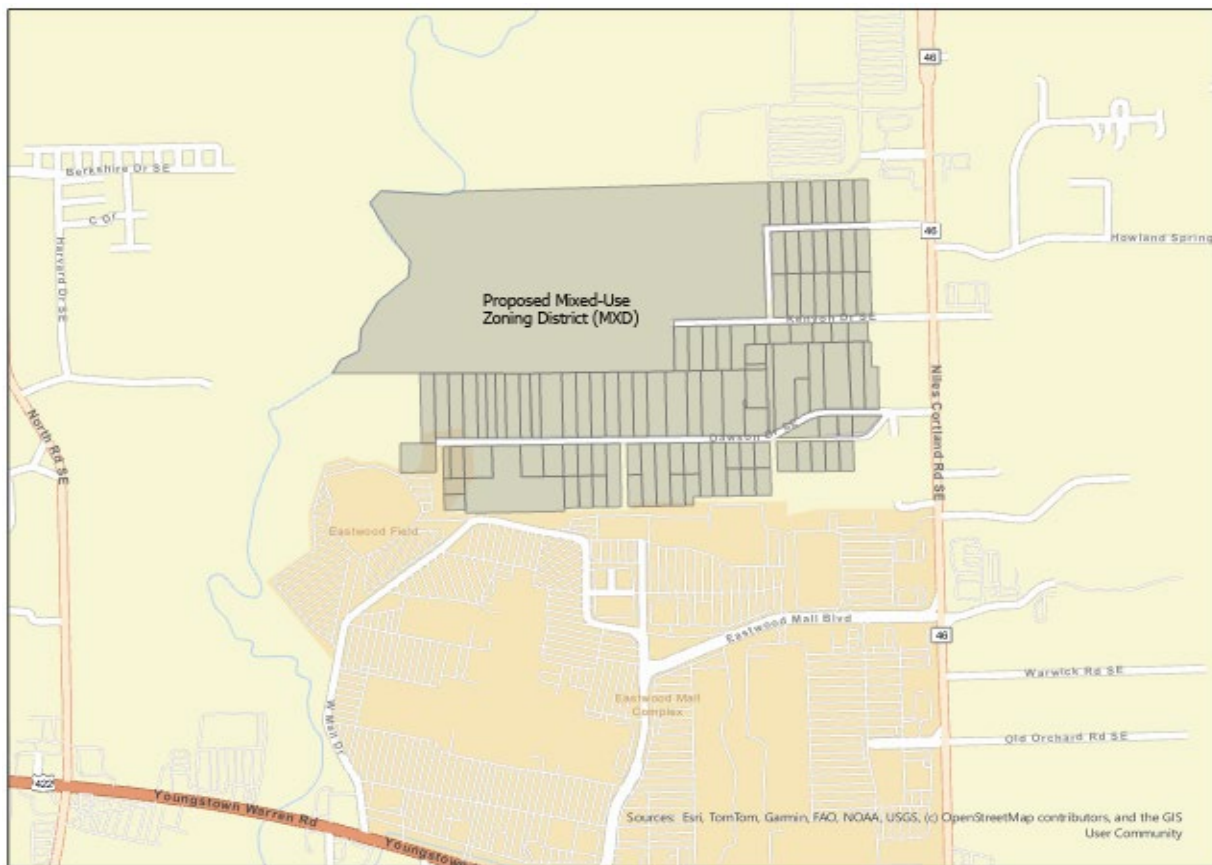
What is being proposed?

The Township is considering new regulations to create a new Mixed-Use District (MXD). The MXD is intended to enable coordinated, high-quality development that thoughtfully combines housing, commercial, office, and civic uses within a compact, walkable setting while maintaining a suburban character.

This proposal includes both a text amendment establishing the Mixed-Use District standards and a zoning map amendment applying the MXD designation to a defined area of the Township.

Where would the MXD apply?

The proposed MXD zoning would apply to approximately 200 acres located west of Niles Cortland Road SE, including lands around Dawson Drive, Hiram Place, and Kenyon Drive. No development is approved by this action alone; the zoning simply establishes the rules that future development proposals must follow.



Project Rationale

The area being considered for the new Mixed-Use District (MXD) has been zoned for commercial uses, specifically the Corridor Review District 2 (CRD-2), for nearly 25 years, following a petition by the landowners at the time to rezone the area from residential. Despite this change, no commercial development has occurred under that zoning framework. A new approach is needed. The proposed MXD represents an effort to rethink the long-term vision for this area by providing a more flexible and responsive zoning framework that better aligns with current development trends, landowner interests, and community goals. Rather than focusing solely on corridor-style commercial uses, the MXD allows for a coordinated mix of residential and nonresidential uses, creating additional flexibility while maintaining clear standards and public oversight.

Why is the MXD being considered?

The MXD is designed to support a mix of housing types, including single-family homes, townhomes, apartments, and live-work units; allow limited commercial and office uses integrated with residential development; promote walkability, internal street connections, and pedestrian access; encourage high-quality architecture, landscaping, and public spaces; protect natural features and ecological resources; and provide flexibility to respond to changing market needs while maintaining clear development standards.

How does this align with Township planning goals?

The proposed MXD zoning and map amendment conform to the recommendations of the Township's 2023 Comprehensive Plan, which identified this area as appropriate for coordinated, mixed-use development. The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes creating walkable environments, expanding housing choices, supporting economic development, and ensuring that growth occurs in a planned and predictable manner.

What types of development would be allowed?

Development within the MXD would be required to include at least two different land uses, one of which must be residential. Permitted uses include: - Single-family and multi-family housing; - Townhouses, apartments, stacked flats, and live-work units; - Retail, office, medical, and similar commercial uses already permitted in the Highway Commercial District (with some limitations); - Civic and community-oriented spaces such as plazas, greens, or public gathering areas.

Key development standards

- **Minimum project size:** 6 acres
- **Open space:** At least 15% of each development
- **Building height:** Generally, up to 3 stories; up to 4 stories in designated core areas
- **Density:** A minimum level of residential density is required. The density starts at twelve units per acre, with opportunities for higher density if public benefits are provided
- **Parking:** Located to the side or rear of buildings; shared parking encouraged
- **Design:** Buildings must face streets or civic spaces, include pedestrian-friendly entrances, and use high-quality architectural design

Public benefits and incentives

The MXD includes a density bonus program that allows additional development intensity in exchange for community benefits, including: - Preservation of natural areas and enhanced stormwater management; - Workforce housing opportunities; - Trails, sidewalks, and improved mobility connections; - Civic spaces, plazas, and community amenities.

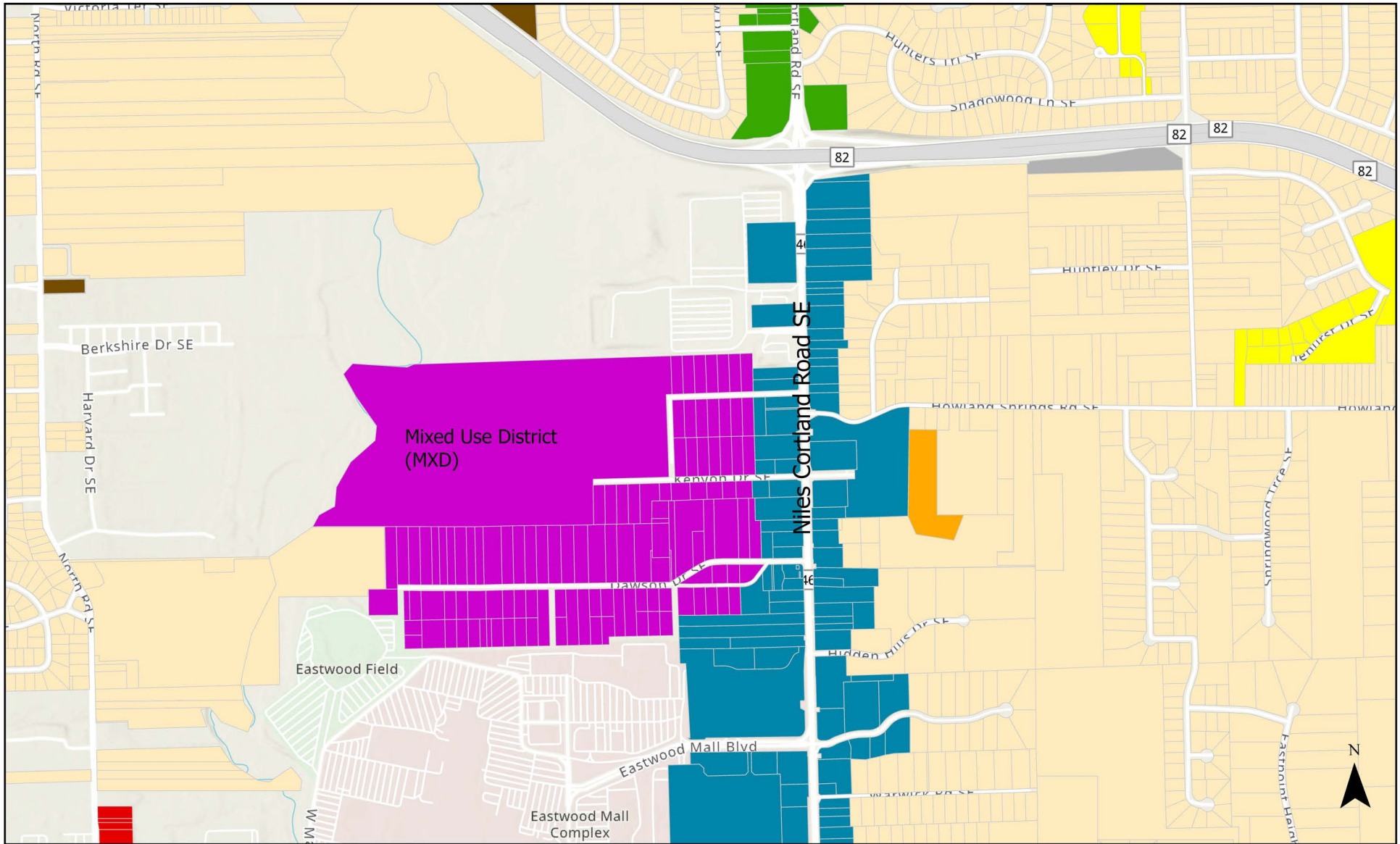
What happens next?

If the zoning text and map amendment are approved, any future development would still require separate review and approval, including site-specific plans, traffic analysis, and compliance with all applicable zoning and subdivision regulations.

This proposal establishes a long-term framework for how development *could* occur — not a guarantee that it *will* occur — and is intended to guide growth in a way that reflects community values and adopted planning goals.

Contact:

Howland Township Planning Director
Kimberly Mascarella / 330-856-3461 / Kmascarella@howlandtownship.org



Map Amendment

Mixed Use Zoning District (MXD)

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

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| Zoning Districts | | Multi-Family Residential 6+ Units (R-A-2) | Corridor Review District 1 (CRD-1) |
| Zoning | | Residential Cluster (R-CH) | Corridor Review District 2 (CRD-2) |
| Single Family Residential (R-1) | Planned Unit Development (PUD) | Mixed Use District (MXD) | Highway Commercial (HC) |
| Single and Two Family Residential (R-2) | Multi-Family Residential 3-6 Units (R-A-1) | Corridor Review District Office and Institutional (CRD-OI) | Commercial (C) |
| | | | Industrial and Manufacturing (I) |

Summary of Howland Zoning Commission Text and Map Update February 2026 (Exhibit C: Text Amendment)

<i>Section Heading</i>	<i>Affected Section</i>	<i>Proposed Change</i>
General Provisions	Section 1.11 NEW	<p>New Content: Section 1.11 Street Design and Construction Standards</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. All new public and private streets, roads, alleys, and related rights-of-way constructed within Howland Township shall be planned, designed, and constructed in full compliance with the current Trumbull County Subdivision Regulations, as adopted and amended. b. Where the standards, specifications, or requirements of Howland Township—whether set forth in the Howland Township Zoning Resolution or other duly adopted policies or regulations—are more restrictive or impose higher design, construction, safety, accessibility, or connectivity requirements than those contained in the Trumbull County Subdivision Regulations, the more restrictive Howland Township standards shall apply and shall prevail. c. Compliance with Trumbull County Subdivision Regulations shall not relieve an applicant from the obligation to meet all applicable Howland Township requirements, nor shall approval by Trumbull County be construed as approval by Howland Township where additional or more stringent local standards apply.
Establishment of Zoning Districts	Section 2.2 Establishment of Zoning Districts	<p>Updated to include the new Mixed Use District (MXD) and Description.</p> <p>The Mixed Use District (MXD) is intended to facilitate coordinated development that integrates residential, commercial, office, and civic uses within a compact, walkable environment while maintaining a suburban form and character.</p>
Business Zoning Districts	Section 5.5 Procedures	Section 5.5 Replaced with New Content, now titled “Mixed-Use District.” The proposed language is attached.
	Section 5.6 Application Contents	Section 5.6 Procedures; Content Relocated from Section 5.5
	Section 5.7	Section 5.7 Application Contents; Content Relocated from Section 5.6
Landscaping and Buffers	Section 12.4 (D)	The applicability of Multi-Family Landscaping Standards will include residential projects within the Mixed Use District (MXD).
Fences and Walls	Section 14.3	Add MXD to the Business Zoning District Table Section 14.3(B) to align with the Highway Commercial (HC) standards for fences.
Administration	Section 20.4 (D) NEW	New Content: Section 20.4 (D) Factors for Consideration in Rezoning Application. Add language addressing rezoning determinations. The proposed language is attached.
Definitions	Section 21	Add new definitions for terms referenced in the Mixed Use District (MXD).

Section 5.5 – Mixed Use District (MXD)

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Mixed-Use District (MXD) is to facilitate coordinated development that integrates residential, commercial, office, and civic uses within a compact, walkable environment, while maintaining a suburban form and character. Development within this district shall:

- 1. Encourage a balanced mix of land uses that support nearby employment centers, retail hubs, and neighborhoods;
- 2. Promote walkability and pedestrian connectivity between uses;
- 3. Protect and incorporate sensitive ecological resources and natural stormwater systems; and
- 4. Create a distinct sense of place through high-quality architecture, landscaping, and public spaces.

B. Permitted Principal Uses

The following uses are permitted in a mixed-use development project.

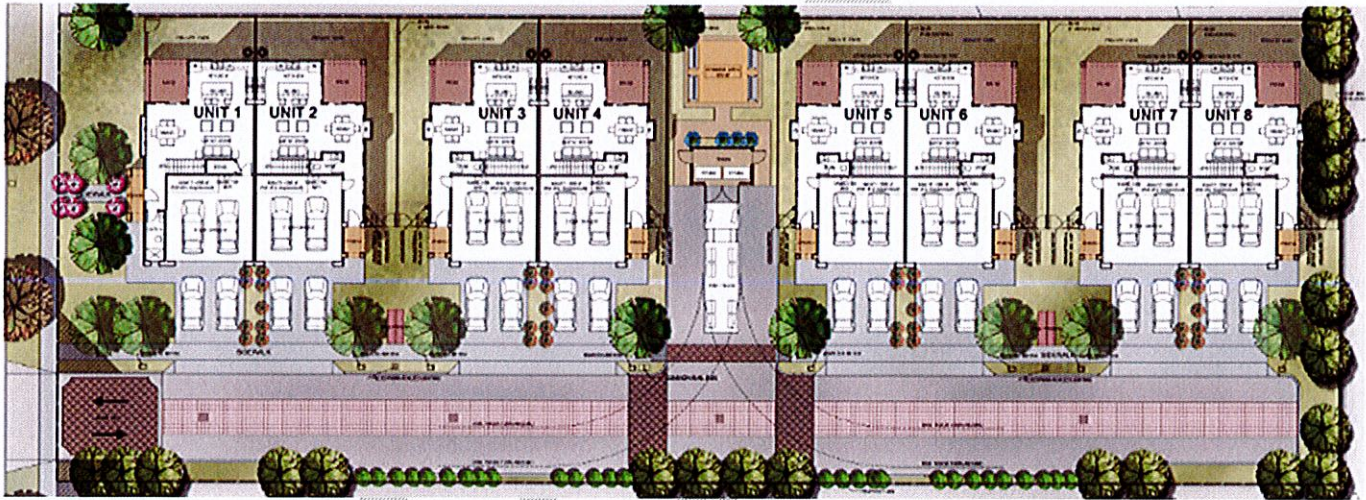
- 1. Single Family (attached and detached)
- 2. Multi-family dwellings, including townhouses, apartments, stacked flats, live-work units
- 3. All permitted uses in the Highway Commercial Zoning District (Section 5.3 Permitted Uses Summary and Table), as part of a mixed-use development project, except that fueling stations other than EVCS, nurseries, storage facilities, and vehicle washes are not permitted.
- 4. ~~There is an expectation that a balanced approach between residential and nonresidential uses will be proposed in a mixed-use development project. Each project shall include two (2) distinct land use categories, one of which must be residential, unless waived by the Zoning Administrator upon a finding that the overall intent of the Mixed-Use District is met.~~ There is an expectation that a balanced approach between residential and nonresidential uses will be proposed in a mixed-use development project. Each project shall include at least two (2) distinct land use categories. At least one (1) land use category shall be residential unless the applicant demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the Zoning Administrator, that the proposed development advances the goals of the MXD through an alternative combination of uses (such as commercial, office, medical, civic, or institutional) and that residential uses will be incorporated within a subsequent phase or in a coordinated adjacent development. The Zoning Administrator shall make a written finding that the overall intent of the Mixed-Use District is substantially met prior to approving any waiver of the residential requirement.

C. Development Standards

Standard	Requirement
Minimum Area for a Mixed-Use Development Project	Six (6) acres <u>Three (3) acres. Projects between three (3) and six (6) acres may be approved by the Zoning Administrator upon a finding that the proposed development demonstrates a viable mix of uses and meets the design standards of this section. Projects of six (6) acres or more are permitted by-right under the MXD standards.</u>
Minimum Open Space	Fifteen percent (15%) of the development project.
Parking Location	Parking shall be located to the rear or side of buildings; shared parking is encouraged <u>Parking shall be located to the rear or side of buildings; shared parking is encouraged. The Zoning Administrator may approve front parking where an applicant demonstrates that: (a) the proposed use has documented requirements for customer visibility and vehicular access; (b) the primary building façade maintains active ground-floor uses and pedestrian-scale design elements along the street frontage; and (c) the overall site design remains consistent with the walkable character and design standards of the MXD.</u>
Access	An interconnected street and pedestrian network is required
Public Improvements	Public roadways shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Trumbull County's Subdivision Regulations.
Minimum Residential Density (Lot Area per Dwelling Unit)	3,600 square feet or twelve (12) dwelling units per acre. <u>Twelve (12) dwelling units per acre (minimum by-right).</u>
Maximum Residential Density	Twenty-four (24) dwelling units per acre (subject to bonus provisions in Section 5.5(F)). <u>Sixteen (16) dwelling units per acre by-right; up to twenty-four (24) dwelling units per acre subject to bonus provisions in Section 5.5(F).</u>
Maximum Building Height	Three (3) stories (45 feet); Four (4) stories (55 feet) in a designated core area
Minimum Front Setback Range	Ten feet (10') <u>Ten feet (10') minimum; seventy feet (70') maximum. A front setback of up to seventy feet (70') is permitted where necessary to accommodate one (1) full bay of front parking and associated drive aisle between the building face and the right-of-way. Where a setback exceeding ten feet (10') is utilized, the Zoning Administrator may require enhanced</u>

	<u>streetscape treatment along the public frontage, which may include additional landscaping, pedestrian pathways, seating areas, or other pedestrian-scale amenities to maintain an active and walkable public realm.</u>
Minimum Side Setback	Ten feet (10') Zero feet (0') where shared walls are provided. However, keep a ten-foot (10') maintenance easement on one side. See Figure 5.5(a)
Minimum Rear Setback	20 feet

Figure 5.5(a) Zero Side Lot Line Setback Example



D. Design Standards

1. Building Orientation and Placement.

- Buildings shall front on a public street, private street, or civic space.
- Primary entrances shall be directly accessible from a sidewalk or pedestrian path.

2. Building Design Standards

- Section 5.4(C) of the Highway Commercial Zoning District applies to buildings that are primarily non-residential.
- Outdoor dining is encouraged and is therefore exempt from Section 5.4(D)(10).
- Ground-floor nonresidential uses shall provide a minimum of fifty (50) percent transparency along primary street frontages.
- Residential building design standards for a standalone residential structure and not part of a mixed-use structure, shall have:

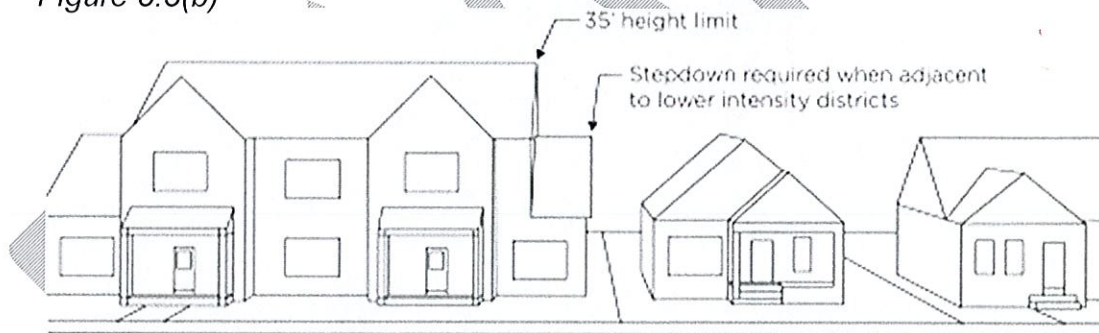
- i. Four-sided architecture, meaning all four elevations shall have details including, but not limited to, windows, doors, porches, or other features.
- ii. Elevations shall be articulated with multiple façade layers to add depth and avoid the appearance of a flat residential façade.
- iii. Exterior walls of no more than two (2) abutting dwelling units shall be aligned in the same plane.
- iv. Residential units on the ground floor shall include individual entrances, stoops, or porches.
- v. Include varied rooflines or step backs above the second story.
- vi. Garages can be attached or detached, but must be located behind the front setback line of the primary structure.

3. Building Height & Massing

a) Height Step-Down or Step-Back Measures

- i. Applicable when any building exceeds two (2) stories or thirty feet (30') and is within fifty feet (50') of a residential use.
- ii. Buildings shall step down in height as they approach a residential dwelling, as illustrated by Figure 5.5(b).
- iii. Upper-story step-back may be used.
- iv. Landscape buffers or the use of open spaces as transitions may be used.

Figure 5.5(b)



4. Parking, Circulation, Access and Connectivity.

- a) Section 11 Parking Facilities standards apply; however, off-street parking shall not be located between the principal building and the primary street.
- b) Small parking structures are encouraged.
 - i. Parking garages shall be located behind buildings that front public streets or placed toward the interior of the development block, so that active commercial, office, or residential uses frame the public realm.
 - ii. Where a parking garage is located within 100 feet of residentially occupied buildings, the structure shall:
 - 1. Maintain a minimum fifty-foot (50') setback from any residential building wall and provide a landscaped buffer.

- 2. Locate garage openings, ramps, and mechanical ventilation systems away from residential building façades.
- iii. Along any frontage facing a public street, pedestrian way, or publicly accessible open space, the parking garage shall be wrapped with a minimum thirty-foot (30') deep band of active uses, such as retail, office, or residential units. Where wrapping is not feasible due to site constraints, enhanced architectural screening shall be required
- iv. Any façade of a parking garage visible from a public street shall be designed to appear as part of an occupied building through the use of similar materials, glazing, or architectural details; decorative grillwork or screens that conceal parked vehicles.
- v. Parking garage height shall be fifteen feet (15') lower than the height of adjacent mixed-use buildings when located along the same block.
- vi. The Zoning Administrator may approve minor modifications to garage placement upon a finding that:
 - 1. The public-facing design maintains an active streetscape; and
 - 2. Residential adjacencies remain protected.

5. Access and Connectivity

- a) Sidewalks or shared-use paths shall connect all buildings, parking areas, and public rights-of-way.
- b) Internal pedestrian circulation and connectivity to adjacent uses are required.
- c) Driveways and parking lot access should be consolidated where possible to reduce curb cuts along public streets.

6. Landscaping and Buffers.

- a) Section 12 Landscaping and Buffers applies
- b) Administrative Determination on Buffering.

The Zoning Administrator shall determine whether buffering or screening is necessary between land uses based on the following considerations:

- i. Type and intensity of adjoining uses. Whether the adjoining uses differ significantly in scale, height, activity level, or hours of operation.
- ii. Potential impacts. The degree to which noise, lighting, traffic, or visual impacts may affect adjoining properties.
- iii. Existing conditions. The presence of natural vegetation, grade changes, or other existing features that provide adequate separation or screening.
- iv. Design intent. Whether the development design includes transitions or design elements (such as building orientation, landscaping, or fencing) that achieve the same buffering purpose.
- v. Surrounding context. The character of adjacent land uses.

7. Lighting: Section 15 Outdoor Lighting applies.

E. Project Phasing Requirements

1. General Requirement and Review

The Zoning Administrator may require a comprehensive phasing plan for any development exceeding ten (10) acres or one hundred (100) dwelling units to ensure orderly and balanced development.

2. Phasing Plan Submission

A phasing plan, if required, shall detail the anticipated sequence, timing, and scope of development, including:

- a) The division of the project into distinct development phases.
- b) The approximate number of dwelling units and the amount of nonresidential floor area to be constructed in each phase.
- c) The schedule for the delivery of required public amenities, infrastructure, open space, and ecological features.

3. Use Mix Requirements within Each Phase.

Each development phase shall include at least two (2) distinct land uses. Distinct land uses include residential, recreational or civic spaces, retail, office, medical, and institutional areas.

4. Proportional Delivery of Public Benefits

The phasing plan must ensure that required public amenities, open space, and density bonus features are delivered in proportion to the development intensity.

5. Distribution of Density Bonuses

If density bonuses are used, the phasing plan shall reflect the required distribution strategy.

F. Density Bonus Program Provisions

1. A Purpose.

The purpose of this program is to allow additional development intensity in exchange for public benefits that:

- a) Protect ecological resources and enhance stormwater management.
- b) Provide diverse and workforce housing options.
- c) Improve mobility options.
- d) Deliver community amenities and sustainable design.

2. Base Standards.

- a) ~~Maximum Base Residential Density: Twelve (12) dwelling units per acre. Base Residential Density Range: Twelve (12) to sixteen (16) dwelling units per acre by-right. The minimum base density is twelve (12) dwelling units per acre. The maximum by-right density is sixteen (16) dwelling units per acre. No participation in the Density Bonus Program is required to achieve any density within this range, provided the project meets the standards of this section.~~
- b) ~~Maximum Density with Bonuses: Twenty-four (24) dwelling units per acre~~
Maximum Density with Bonuses: Twenty-four (24) dwelling units per acre. Density above sixteen (16) dwelling units per acre and up to twenty-four (24) dwelling units per acre may be achieved through the Density Bonus Program in Section 5.5(F)(3).

3. Bonus Point System.

- a) Developments may earn points by providing amenities or design features listed in Bonus Table 5.5(E).
- b) Conversion Rate: Every Ten (10) points = One (1) additional dwelling unit per acre.

4. Bonus Table 5.5(E)

Category	Eligible Improvements	Points
Environmental / Stormwater	Permanently preserve ≥20% of the site in ecological conservation (wetlands, riparian, floodplain).	20 pts
	Install natural stormwater infrastructure (bioswales, rain gardens, permeable paving) serving ≥ twenty-five percent (25%) impervious area.	15 pts
	Preservation of tree canopy by ≥ twenty percent (20%).	10 pts
Housing Diversity / Affordability	Provide at least ten percent (10%) of units as workforce housing. See Section 5.5(F)(6).	30 pts
	Provide ≥ three (3) distinct housing types (single-family, townhomes, stacked flats, senior cottages, etc.).	10 pts
	Provide ≥ twenty percent (20%) of units designed for seniors or universal design.	10 pts
Mobility / Connectivity	Build multi-use trails or bike connections linking to a broader trail network, neighborhoods, retail hubs, commercial corridors, or employment anchors.	10 pts
Public Realm / Community Amenities	Dedicate a civic space, plaza, or central park ≥1 acre with public access.	15 pts
	Provide a publicly accessible community facility (daycare, senior center, co-working hub, etc.).	10 pts
	Provide public art or placemaking features valued at a minimum of one-half of one percent (0.5%) of the total project cost.	10 pts

5. Bonus Features

- a) Bonus features shall be shown on approved development plans.
- b) Bonus points are earned at zoning approval. Bonus points are earned by-right at zoning approval upon the applicant's demonstration that the qualifying improvement is included in the approved development plan. The Zoning Administrator shall have no discretion to deny bonus points to an applicant who has demonstrated compliance with the objective criteria in Bonus Table 5.5(E). Density bonuses may not be conditioned on items not listed in the Bonus Table without formal amendment of this section.

6. Workforce Housing Design and Integration Standards

- a) Workforce Housing Units shall be comparable in size, exterior materials, and quality to market-rate units.
- b) Units shall be distributed throughout the development and may be integrated within mixed-use buildings or stand-alone residential structures.
- c) Construction of Workforce Housing Units shall occur concurrently with market-rate units.
- d) Workforce Housing Units shall have access to the same amenities and open spaces available to all residents.

7. Workforce Housing Affordability Administration

- a) The developer shall submit an Affordability Plan at the time of development plan approval detailing the number, location, income levels, and proposed management of Workforce Housing Units.
- b) An affordability covenant or development agreement shall be executed prior to the issuance of a zoning certificate.
- c) Affordability shall be ensured for a minimum of fifteen (15) years through a recorded agreement approved by the Township.
- d) The property owner or management entity shall submit annual certifications verifying continued compliance.
- e) The Township reserves the right to audit or inspect records to ensure compliance.
- f) Upon expiration of the required affordability period, units may convert to market-rate housing only if the Township is provided with written notice and an opportunity to negotiate continued affordability through renewal or alternative incentives.

8. Administrative Flexibility

The Zoning Administrator may approve minor modifications – defined as adjustments not exceeding twenty percent (20%) of the originally approved unit percentages, Median Household Income (MHI) level thresholds, or duration requirements - upon a finding that the intent of this section—to provide long-term, attainable workforce housing—is substantially met and that such modification improves project feasibility without diminishing community benefit.

Examples of Minor Modifications

Minor modifications may include, but are not limited to:

- Adjusting the proportion of income-restricted units by twenty percent (20%).
- Adjusting income qualification levels by no more than twenty percent (20%) of the stated MHI threshold.
- Modifying duration or affordability-control periods by no more than twenty percent (20%).

Examples of Major Modifications (Requires Formal Review and Approval)

Major modifications—which exceed the thresholds above and therefore **cannot** be approved administratively—include:

- Reducing the number of income-restricted units by more than twenty percent (20%).
- Increasing the allowable MHI income thresholds by more than twenty percent (20%).
- Reducing the affordability period by more than twenty percent (20%).
- Any change that materially decreases community benefit, alters the overall intent of the workforce-housing commitment, or modifies the approved development plan in a way that affects site layout, building massing, traffic impacts, or public infrastructure.

Written Findings Requirement

Before approving any minor modification, the Zoning Administrator shall prepare written findings demonstrating:

- a. The modification meets the definition of “minor” as provided above;
- b. The modification maintains the overall purpose and intent of the workforce-housing requirements;
- c. The change improves project feasibility or implementation; and
- d. The community benefit is not diminished.

Section 21: Definitions:

- **Active Streetscape** is an environment designed to encourage people to walk, linger, and interact. Key elements commonly include sidewalks, crossings, human-scale building frontages, and street amenities like lighting, benches, or visual art.
- **Civic Space** is a publicly accessible open space designed and intended for community use, including plazas, greens, squares, commons, courtyards, pocket parks, or similar areas that function as focal points for social interaction, community gatherings, recreation, or public events. Civic spaces may be publicly owned or privately maintained, but must remain open and accessible to the public during normal hours of operation and shall be designed with pedestrian-oriented amenities such as seating, landscaping, walkways, and lighting.
- **Designated Core Area** is the area within the MXD intended to function as the primary activity node and characterized by a walkable development pattern, a mix of nonresidential and residential uses of high-quality building design. This area permits a greater building height than the surrounding area.
- **Institutional** means a nonprofit or quasi-public use, such as a religious institution, a library, a public, or private school, or government-owned or government-operated structure or land used for a public purpose.
- **Intent of the Mixed-Use District** means the coordinated development of two or more distinct land uses — at least one of which is residential — within a compact, walkable environment that: (a) encourages a balanced mix of uses that support nearby employment centers, retail hubs, and neighborhoods; (b) promotes pedestrian connectivity between uses; (c) protects and incorporates sensitive ecological resources and natural stormwater systems; and (d) creates a distinct sense of place through high-quality architecture, landscaping, and public spaces, consistent with the purposes of Section 5.5(A). A development substantially meets the Intent of the Mixed-Use District when it advances the majority of these objectives in a coordinated and cohesive manner, even if not all elements are achieved simultaneously, provided that any waiver of a specific requirement is supported by a written finding of the Zoning Administrator.
- **Live-work unit** is a single unit (e.g., studio, loft, or one bedroom) consisting of both a commercial/office and a residential component that is occupied by the same resident. The live/work unit shall be the primary dwelling of the occupant.
- **Mixed-use** development refers to a type of development that combines two or more different uses within a single building or site. These uses typically include residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or recreational spaces. The goal is

to create a more integrated, walkable, and vibrant community where people can live, work, shop, and socialize in close proximity.

Acceptable types of mixed-use configurations in planning:

1. **Vertical Mixed-Use:** Different uses stacked within the same building, such as retail on the ground floor, offices on the second floor, and residential above.
 2. **Horizontal Mixed-Use:** Different uses located side by side on the same site, such as a shopping center adjacent to townhomes or office buildings.
 3. **Cluster or Campus Mixed-Use:** Separate buildings with complementary uses arranged within a single development, such as a development with stacked flats, a small park, and a café within a shared site.
- **Mixed-use development Project** is a planned construction effort that combines multiple permitted uses in a coordinated way on a defined site to create a functional and cohesive environment that meets the definition of mixed-use.
 - **Stacked Flat** is a multi-family building where individual dwelling units (flats) are located directly above or below other units, often sharing common vertical circulation (stairs/elevators) but usually having all living spaces on a single story (unlike townhomes, which typically have multiple stories within a single unit). Their inclusion supports the goal of providing a range of housing choices.
 - **Step Back** is a horizontal setback of an upper floor from the façade below it. It is used to reduce perceived building mass and to smooth transitions to the street, and to adjacent residential areas. The upper story is pushed back toward the interior of the lot, maintaining the overall height.
 - **Step Down** is a reduction of the vertical height between different parts of the same building or between adjacent buildings. The height plane changes, not the horizontal position of the upper floors.
 - **Place-making features** are design components intentionally used to foster social interaction, comfort, and a unique sense of place within the township. Such features include gathering spaces, outdoor dining areas, green infrastructure, civic art, pedestrian-scale lighting, enhanced landscaping, and other amenities that encourage people to linger and engage with their surroundings.
 - **Primary street** is a street designated to carry the highest level of pedestrian visibility and activity within a mixed-use district. It typically provides the main public frontage for buildings and acts as the district's most prominent corridor for walking, biking, transit access, and vehicular movement. Buildings facing a

primary street are held to the highest design standards to support a particular character. Primary streets generally feature:

- i. Continuous building frontage with minimal setbacks.
 - ii. Ground-floor activation, such as retail, service, or civic uses.
 - iii. Enhanced streetscape treatments, including wider sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and pedestrian amenities.
 - iv. Primary entrances oriented to the street.
 - v. Higher expectations for architectural quality and transparency.
- **Universal Design** means the design and construction of buildings, dwelling units, and site features that enable safe, convenient, and independent use by persons of all ages and physical abilities, including older adults. Universal Design incorporates features that do not require adaptation or specialized design to accommodate residents with reduced mobility, vision, hearing, or other age-related limitations. Typical elements include, but are not limited to, step-free building entrances; no-step interior floor transitions; wider doorways and halls; accessible bathroom and kitchen layouts; reachable switches and controls; and adequate lighting and wayfinding intended to promote aging-in-place.
 - **Workforce Housing Unit** means a dwelling unit reserved for occupancy by, and affordable to, households earning between eighty percent (80%) and one hundred and twenty percent (120%) of the Median Household Income (MHI) for Trumbull County for the most recent year available through the US Census.

Section 20.4 Factors for Consideration in Rezoning Applications

Draft as of January 21, 2026.

Pursuant to the Township's authority under Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Chapter 519 Township Zoning, the following factors shall guide the Township Zoning Commission when evaluating an application for a zoning map amendment. These criteria are designed to ensure that all rezoning decisions promote public health, safety, and general welfare, and are consistent with sound planning principles. No single factor shall be controlling; the Commission may balance these factors based on the evidence presented. They are intended to guide decision-makers in a structured, consistent, and transparent manner. They do not obligate approval or denial but provide a framework for evaluating each rezoning request on its merits.

A. Consistency and Planning Guidance

1. Comprehensive Plan Conformance

Whether the proposed zoning map amendment is consistent with, and would further the goals, policies, and Future Land Use Map of the Howland Comprehensive Community Plan.

2. Adopted Plans and Studies

Whether the proposal aligns with any relevant adopted small-area plans, corridor plans, transportation plans, or similar policy documents.

3. Changed Conditions

Whether the proposed amendment is necessitated by changed or changing conditions in the surrounding area, including but not limited to infrastructure improvements, market trends, population shifts, or other relevant land-use changes.

B. Land Use Compatibility

1. Neighborhood Character

The character, pattern, scale, and condition of the surrounding neighborhood and the anticipated effect of the proposed zoning classification on that character.

2. Adjacent Zoning and Land Uses

The zoning and existing land uses of nearby properties, as well as the potential impact of the proposed district on those properties.

3. Permitted-Use Compatibility

Whether all uses permitted within the proposed zoning district would be compatible with surrounding properties and the general vicinity, taking into account use intensity, traffic generation, noise, lighting, hours of operation, and similar factors.

C. Site Suitability

1. Reasonableness of Existing Zoning

The suitability of the applicant's property for the uses permitted under its current zoning classification.

2. Physical Characteristics

Whether the site's physical features—including terrain, natural resources, wetlands,

floodplains, access constraints, and other environmental conditions—support the proposed zoning.

3. **Vacancy or Nondevelopment**

The length of time the subject property has remained vacant or undeveloped under its existing zoning, along with the reasons for such vacancy or non-development. Vacancy alone should not justify rezoning unless tied to market failures, outdated zoning, or other changed conditions.

D. Infrastructure and Public Services

1. **Utilities and Services**

Whether adequate water, sewer, stormwater management, and other necessary public utilities exist or can be reasonably provided to support all permitted uses in the proposed zoning district.

2. **Transportation and Traffic**

Whether existing roads and intersections can safely and efficiently accommodate the traffic and access patterns associated with the proposed zoning and its permitted uses.

3. **Public Safety and Facilities**

The availability and capacity of police, fire, EMS, schools, and other public services to serve the property if rezoned.

E. Public Interest and Welfare

1. **Public Benefit vs. Private Hardship**

Whether the expected public benefits of the proposed rezoning outweigh any claimed hardship to the applicant from maintaining the current zoning classification. Note that a hardship is not a variance-type hardship. Rezoning is a legislative action, not an entitlement.

2. **Community Health, Safety, and Welfare**

The extent to which the proposed zoning district promotes the public health, safety, and general welfare of the Township and its residents.

3. **Fiscal and Economic Considerations**

Whether the proposed amendment is likely to have a positive, neutral, or adverse fiscal impact on Township services, infrastructure, and long-term economic stability.

F. Additional Considerations

1. **Supply of Similarly Zoned Land**

The general amount of vacant or underutilized land in the Township with the same proposed zoning classification, including the practicality of developing such land.

2. **Environmental Impacts**

Potential impacts to natural features, water quality, habitat areas, and other environmental resources.

3. **Other Relevant Factors**

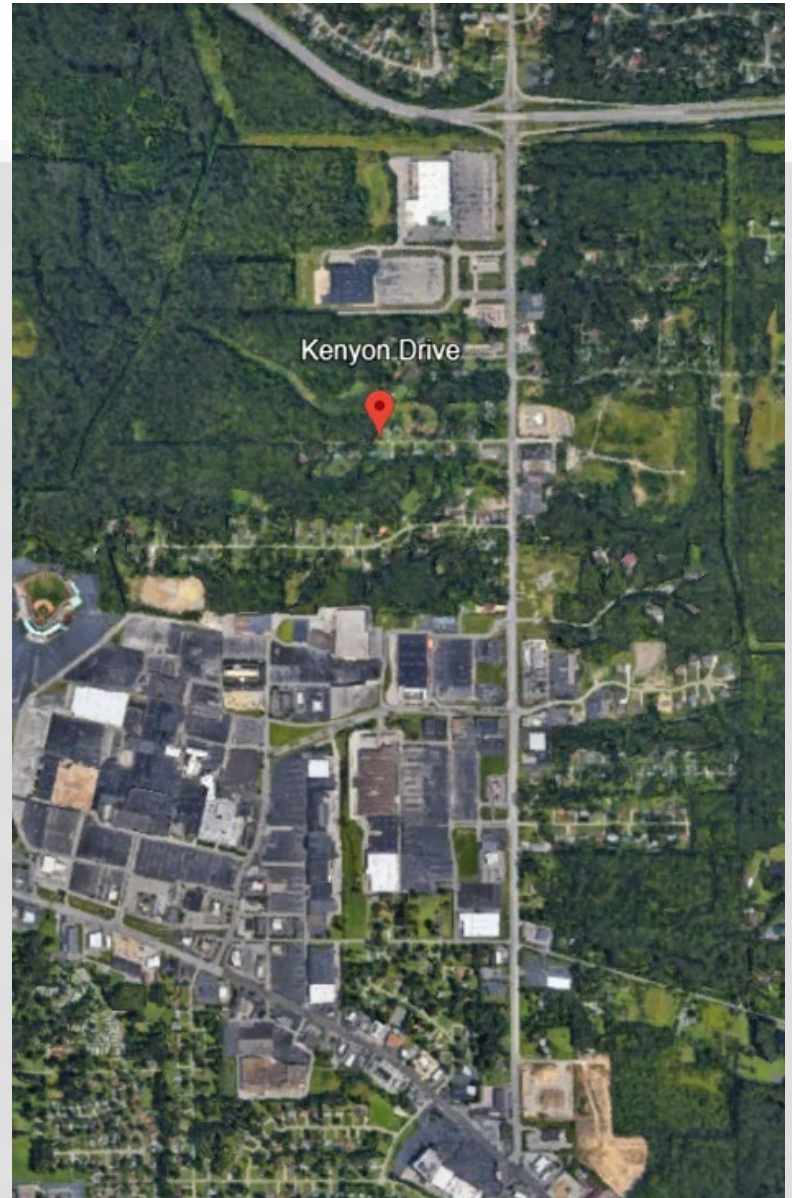
Any other factors or evidence presented during the application review process that may be relevant to determining the appropriateness of the proposed zoning amendment.

HOWLAND TOWNSHIP

PUBLIC HEARING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026 (CONTINUED MARCH 18, 2026)
CASE # 26-C-01 MAP AMENDMENT
CASE # 26-C-02 TEXT AMENDMENT

1

THE PROPOSAL



HOWLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS



2023 Comprehensive Plan Update



Howland Township
"A World Class Community"

September 2023

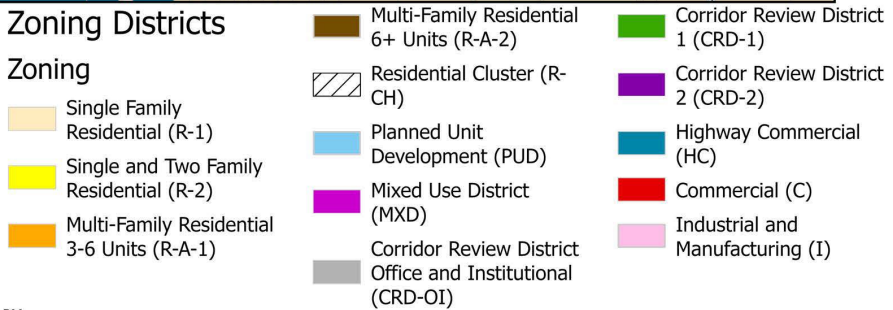
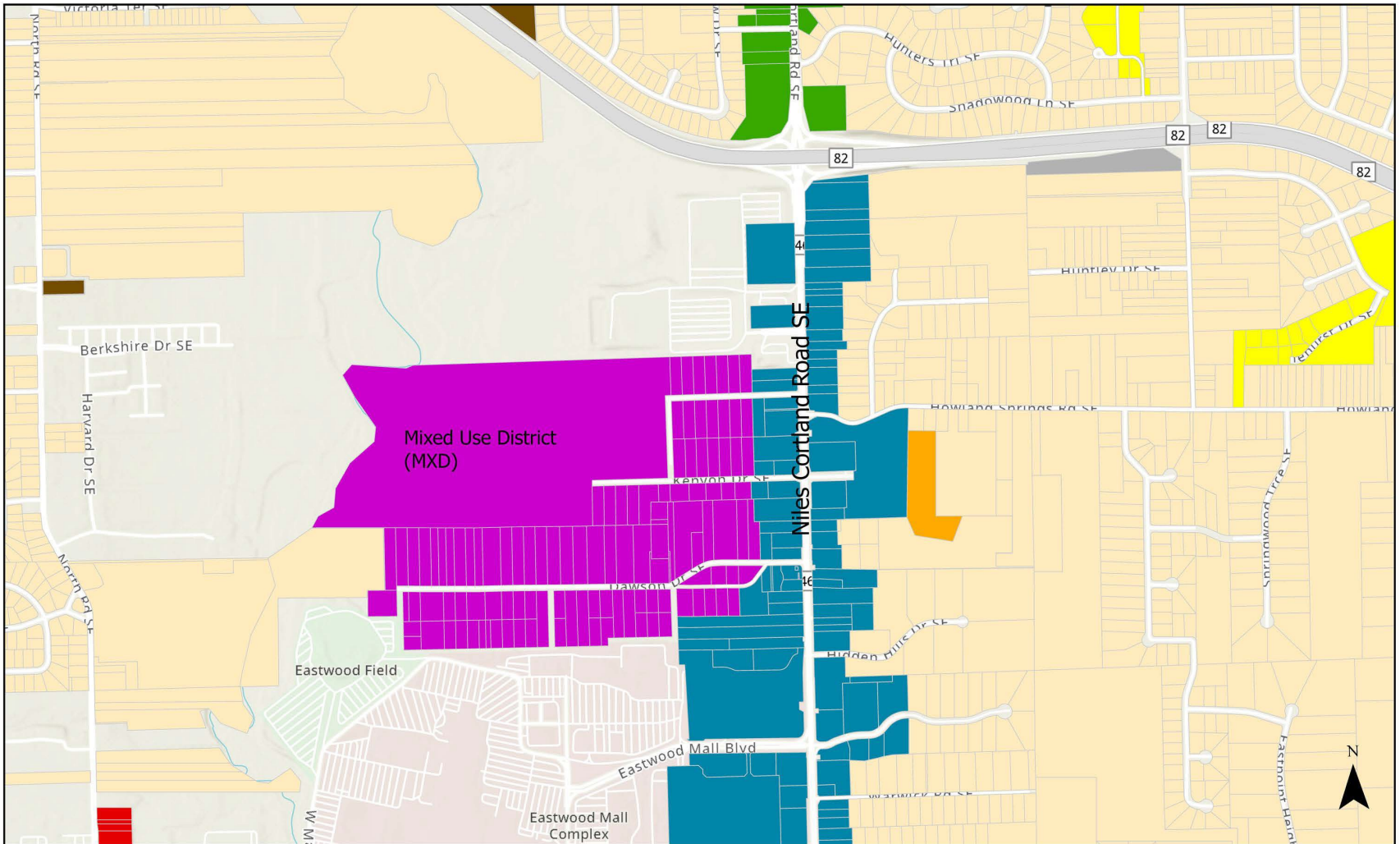
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Case 26-C-01 Map Amendment and
Case 26-C-02 Text Amendment

2023 Comprehensive Plan

Future Land Use Classifications

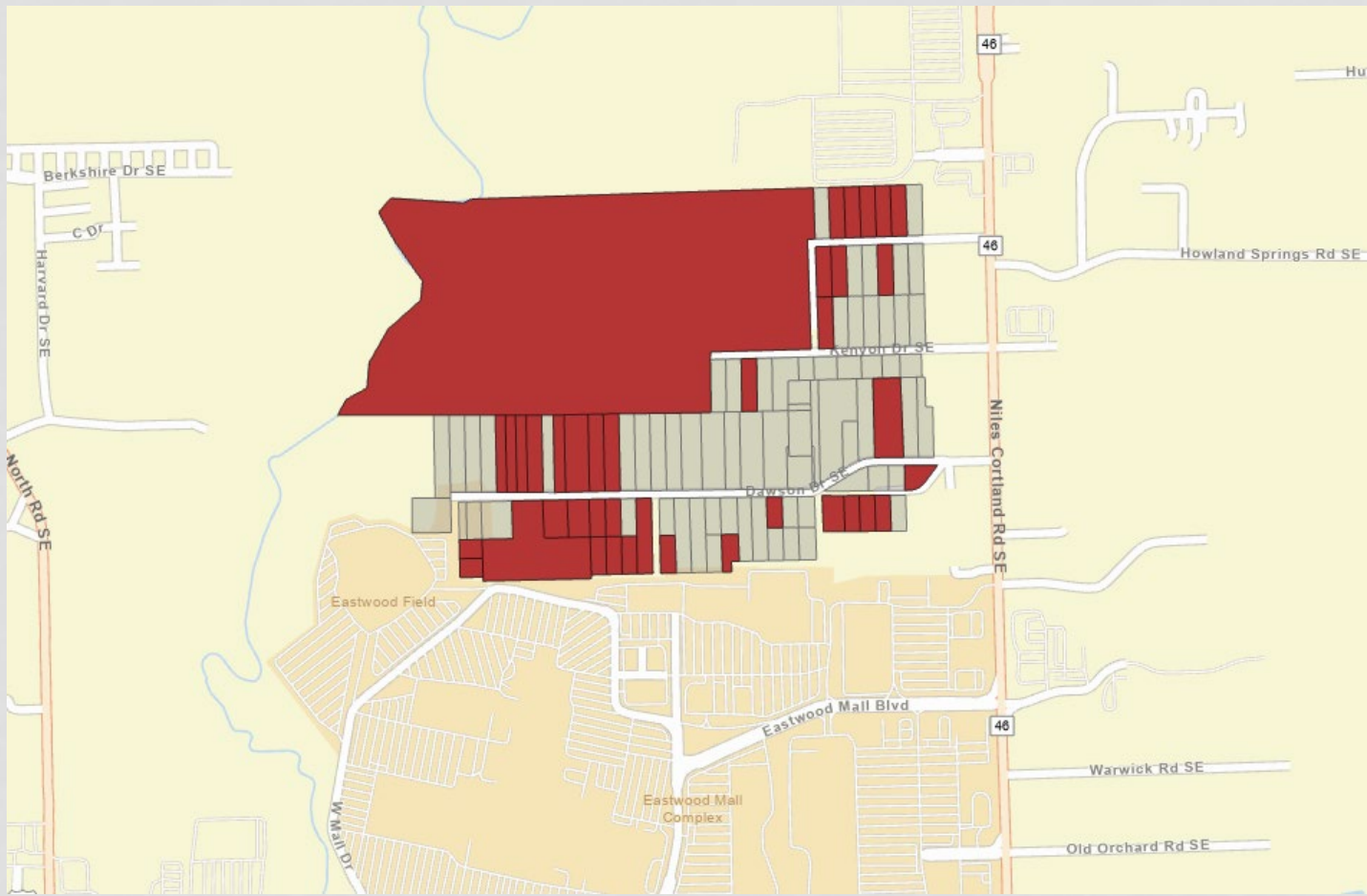
District	Intent	Uses
Single Family Residential	The intent of this district is to provide single family residences.	Primary use is single family homes
Single and Two Family Residential	The intent of this district is to allow for slightly denser residential development in areas closer to employment centers.	Uses may include single and two family residential homes
Planned Unit Development (PUD)	The intent of this district is to encourage the efficient use of land and resources, promote greater efficiency in the provision of public services, and support the residential development of properties adjacent to high intensity uses.	Uses may include residential cluster developments
Multi Family Residential	The intent of this district is to allow for denser, residential developments (up to 6 units per building) to provide "step in" and "step down" housing within the community.	Uses may include single family or multi family residences, attached or detached townhomes/condos, or senior housing
Mixed Use	The intent of this district is to allow for flexibility in end uses while focusing on the scale and form of development. Mixed Use can be defined as either a mixing of uses vertically or horizontally within the same parcel. This district should focus on coordinated development patterns at a pedestrian scale, with high-quality architecture, plazas, public gathering spaces, sidewalks, and pedestrian and bicycle amenities. Building setbacks from the primary street should be minimal and first floor non-residential uses should include large windows to better activate the adjacent streetscape.	Uses may include a mixture of higher density residential developments including townhomes/condos and/or senior housing, large medical facilities, commercial office, retail, and restaurants



Map Amendment

Mixed Use Zoning District (MXD)

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community 000035



MIXED-USE DISTRICT (MXD) DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

A New Vision for Growth: The Mixed-Use District (MXD) Proposal











STADIUM SHOWDOWN

DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR MIXED USE AREA AROUND DOME

19 NEWS IS EVERYWHERE: BROOK PARK

11:03
28°

19

19 DOWNLOAD OUR
NEWS APP

HURON





In addition to the library, the Main Street Extension project includes retail, housing, and a large central square providing green space.

The City has architectural design standards for the area. As Richardson explained, “the idea was for it to be a natural extension, not a replication, of Main Street.” The streets are laid out in a grid, connecting with the old village.

While there’s a modest parking garage, there’s also surface parking. As Richardson noted, “there’s an expectation here for that being available.”







000045

Case 24-C-02 Map Amendment and
Case 24-C-03 Text Amendment

Crocker Park





Cohasset Place



A mix of office, retail, and 14 apartments



The Homes at Cohasset Village

Single mixed-use with retail on the bottom and one living space above.

ACTIVATED STREETS FRONTAGE WITH PARKING



PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

1. Mandatory Mixed-Use Flexibility - The residential requirement is retained as the default, but now expressly allows the Zoning Administrator to waive it where an applicant demonstrates residential will be incorporated in a subsequent phase or coordinated adjacent development. A written finding is required. This preserves the mixed-use intent without blocking phased commercial-first projects.
2. The Minimum Project Size Reduced to 3 Acres. The 6-acre mandatory minimum is reduced to 3 acres. However, projects between 3–6 acres may proceed only with Zoning Administrator approval, provided they include mixed uses and meet density and design standards. Projects with 6+ acres remain by-right. This preserves viability for outparcels without abandoning large-scale coordination.
3. Parking Location Flexibility - The rear/side parking standard remains the default, but a clear administrative pathway now allows one full bay of parking in the front for a tenant with documented operational requirements, provided the street frontage retains active uses and pedestrian-scale design. This accommodates tenant needs without gutting walkability standards.
4. Front Setback Adjustment - To allow front parking, the front setback can be flexed to allow one full bay of parking and an aisleway.
5. Base Density Adjustment - Base Density expanded to a range. Densities between 12 and 16 density units/acre are permitted as a by-right entitlement, reducing reliance on the bonus program to reach financially viable yields. Densities from 16–24 du/acre remain attainable through the bonus program, which is now explicitly by-right upon objective compliance — removing discretionary uncertainty.

SUMMARY OF MODIFICATIONS

<i>Section Heading</i>	<i>Affected Section</i>	<i>Proposed Change</i>
General Provisions	Section 1.11 NEW	<p>New Content: Section 1.11 Street Design and Construction Standards</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. All new public and private streets, roads, alleys, and related rights-of-way constructed within Howland Township shall be planned, designed, and constructed in full compliance with the current Trumbull County Subdivision Regulations, as adopted and amended. b. Where the standards, specifications, or requirements of Howland Township—whether set forth in the Howland Township Zoning Resolution or other duly adopted policies or regulations—are more restrictive or impose higher design, construction, safety, accessibility, or connectivity requirements than those contained in the Trumbull County Subdivision Regulations, the more restrictive Howland Township standards shall apply and shall prevail. c. Compliance with Trumbull County Subdivision Regulations shall not relieve an applicant from the obligation to meet all applicable Howland Township requirements, nor shall approval by Trumbull County be construed as approval by Howland Township where additional or more stringent local standards apply.
Establishment of Zoning Districts	Section 2.2 Establishment of Zoning Districts	<p>Updated to include the new <u>Mixed Use</u> District (MXD) and Description.</p> <p>The <u>Mixed Use</u> District (MXD) is intended to facilitate coordinated development that integrates residential, commercial, office, and civic uses within a compact, walkable environment while maintaining a suburban form and character.</p>
Business Zoning Districts	Section 5.5 Procedures	Section 5.5 Replaced with New Content, now titled "Mixed-Use District." The proposed language is attached.
	Section 5.6 Application Contents	Section 5.6 Procedures; Content Relocated from Section 5.5
	Section 5.7	Section 5.7 Application Contents; Content Relocated from Section 5.6
Landscaping and Buffers	Section 12.4 (D)	The applicability of Multi-Family Landscaping Standards will include residential projects within the <u>Mixed Use</u> District (MXD).
Fences and Walls	Section 14.3	Add MXD to the Business Zoning District Table Section 14.3(B) to align with the Highway Commercial (HC) standards for fences.
Administration	Section 20.4 (D) NEW	New Content: Section 20.4 (D) Factors for Consideration in Rezoning Application. Add language addressing rezoning determinations. The proposed language is attached.
Definitions 000050	Section 21	Add new definitions for terms referenced in the <u>Mixed Use</u> District (MXD).

LIST OF EXHIBITS

- Exhibit A - Public Notification
- Exhibit B – Proposed Zoning Map
- Exhibit C - Proposed Zoning Text
- Exhibit D - Presentation
- Exhibit E - Audience Generated Material



Kimberly Mascarella

Howland Township Planning Director

Phone: 330-856-3461

Email: Kmascarella@howlandtownship.org



Howland Township

Planning for a Vibrant Future

Proposed Adjustment to Howland Township Rezoning of the Dawson–Kenyon–Hiram Area

Public Comment Meeting:

March 18, 2026 – 5:30 PM

Howland Township Administration Building

Proposal Prepared for Presentation at the Township Meeting

For questions regarding this proposal, please contact:

Rob Dietl – 330-360-9800

(Dawson Drive resident and property owner)

078990

146642

146643

311500

7786

7775

Howland Township Zoning has provided the “**Original**” rezoning map for the Dawson, Kenyon, and Hiram area. The “**Mixed/Residential-Multifamily Hybrid**” was prepared as an alternative by a resident of the area. While rezoning may provide potential benefits for Howland Township, several concerns have been identified with the current proposal.

The **original rezoning plan applies a single Mixed-Use Development (MXD) designation to the entire area**. This approach treats significantly different types of properties—established residential streets and large wooded tracts—as if they have identical development potential and needs.

A **modified approach**, referred to as a “**MXD / Residential–Multifamily Hybrid**”, may better balance development opportunities with the preservation of the existing residential character of the neighborhood.

Below are several considerations supporting an adjustment to the current proposal.

1. Differences Between Existing Residential Areas and Wooded Development Land

The **original MXD map (FIG. 2 – MXD Original)** designates Dawson, Kenyon, Hiram, and the surrounding wooded property under the same zoning category.

However, these areas represent **two fundamentally different property types**:

- Established residential streets with existing homeowners
- Large undeveloped wooded tracts that may be targeted for future development

If the wooded areas are developed first, previously released information suggests this could significantly alter the natural character of the neighborhood. These streets are currently **quiet dead-end roads surrounded by woods and wildlife**, which contributes strongly to the area’s appeal.

Development of the wooded land may also:

- Increase traffic on Dawson, Kenyon, and Hiram
- Reduce the natural buffer surrounding the existing homes
- Potentially reduce property values

- Create the risk of the neighborhood shifting toward a higher-density rental environment

Examples of similar outcomes in other areas, such as the **Mines Road corridor**, illustrate how rapid development without zoning balance can negatively affect established residential communities.

2. Encouraging Balanced Development Through a Hybrid Zone

The **revised map (FIG – MXD/Residential–Multifamily Hybrid)** proposes a development structure that supports both residential stability and future growth.

Recommended adjustments within the shaded hybrid area include:

- Allow **residential and multifamily development** with a **minimum lot requirement of ½ acre**
- Allow **MXD development on parcels of 3 acres or greater** within the hybrid area

This approach creates **graduated development standards**, allowing development to occur while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding residential environment.

Benefits of a Hybrid Zoning Model

Adjusting the current proposal from a single MXD designation to an **MXD / Residential–Multifamily Hybrid model** could provide several advantages:

- Greater **flexibility for development options** within existing residential areas
 - **Reduced land acquisition requirements**, lowering barriers for development projects
 - Lower project costs that may **attract small- to mid-sized developers**
 - Increased developer participation, which could **accelerate responsible residential growth**
-

4. Potential Positive Impact on Property Values

Thoughtful development within the hybrid area could help **increase property values for both existing and future homeowners**. Rising property values can in turn encourage further investment and growth within the community.

5. Supporting Long-Term Community Success

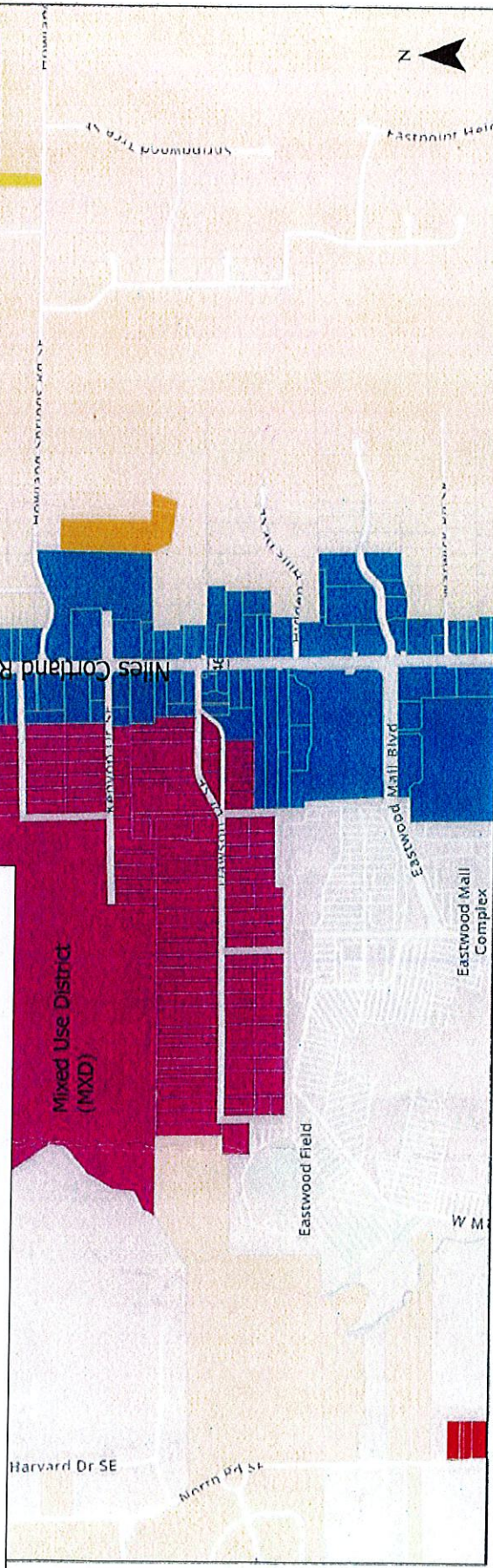
By allowing the **hybrid residential area and the MXD area to develop together but under different standards**, Howland Township can create **diverse housing opportunities** while preserving the character of existing neighborhoods.

FIG- MXD ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

All property in this zone changed to MXD with broad standards and restrictions that could impact residential portion of area.

Key negative guidelines:

- One size fits all
- Minimum of 6 Acres of Multi Family and Commercial
- “Broad” High Quality Architecture Design requirement



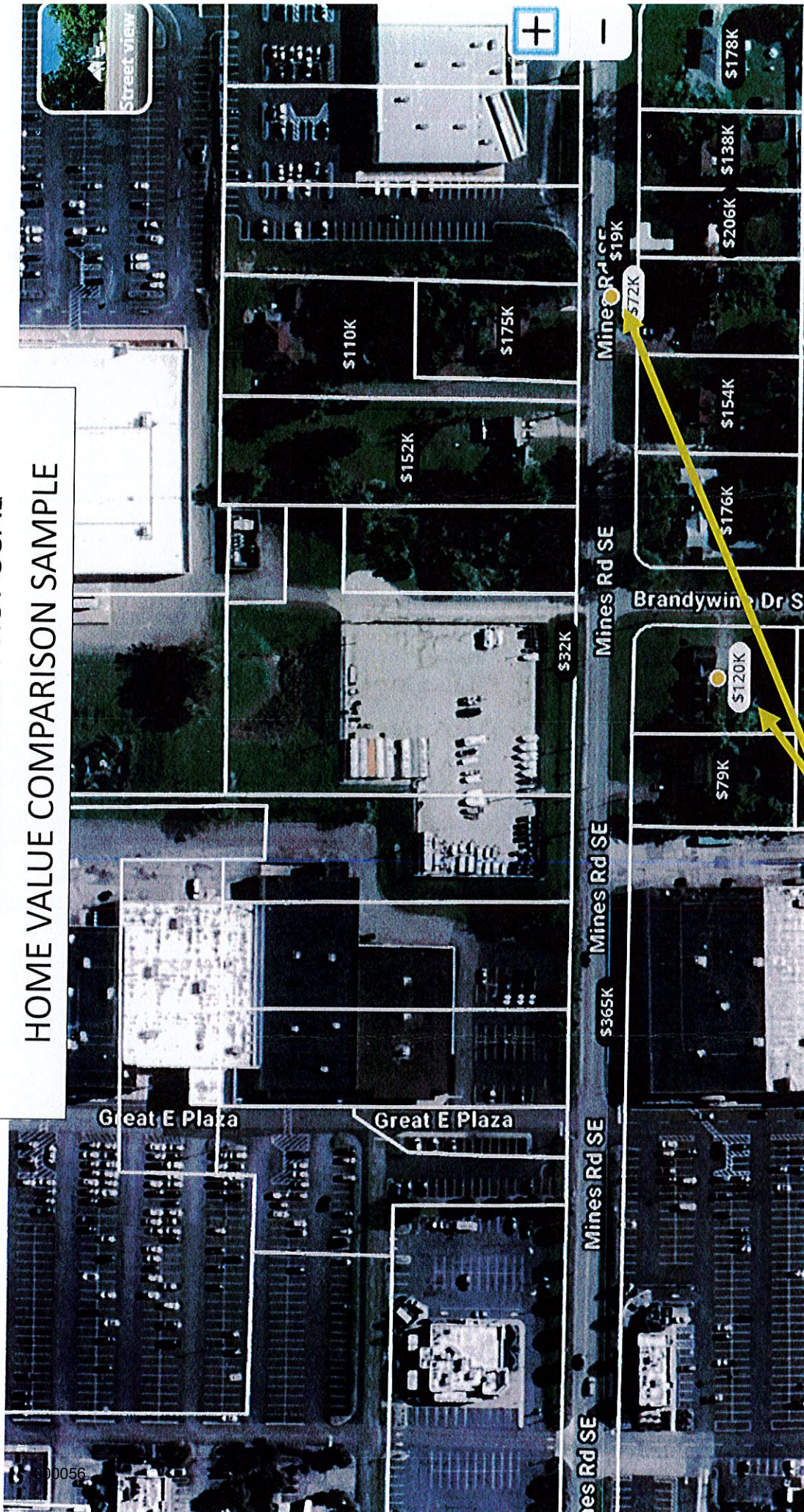
- Zoning Districts**
- Multi-Family Residential 6+ Units (R-A-2)
 - Residential Cluster (R-CH)
 - Planned Unit Development (PUD)
 - Mixed Use District (MXD)
 - Corridor Review District Office and Institutional (CRD-OI)
 - Corridor Review District 1 (CRD-1)
 - Corridor Review District 2 (CRD-2)
 - Highway Commercial (HC)
 - Commercial (C)
 - Industrial and Manufacturing (I)
- Zoning**
- Single Family Residential (R-1)
 - Single and Two Family Residential (R-2)
 - Multi-Family Residential 3-6 Units (R-A-1)

**Map Amendment
Mixed Use Zoning District (MXD)**

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FMO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

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FIG 2- ORIGINAL MXD PROPOSAL-
HOME VALUE COMPARISON SAMPLE



YELLOW DOT

Home Values of Houses Recently Sold
* Information retrieved from Zillow

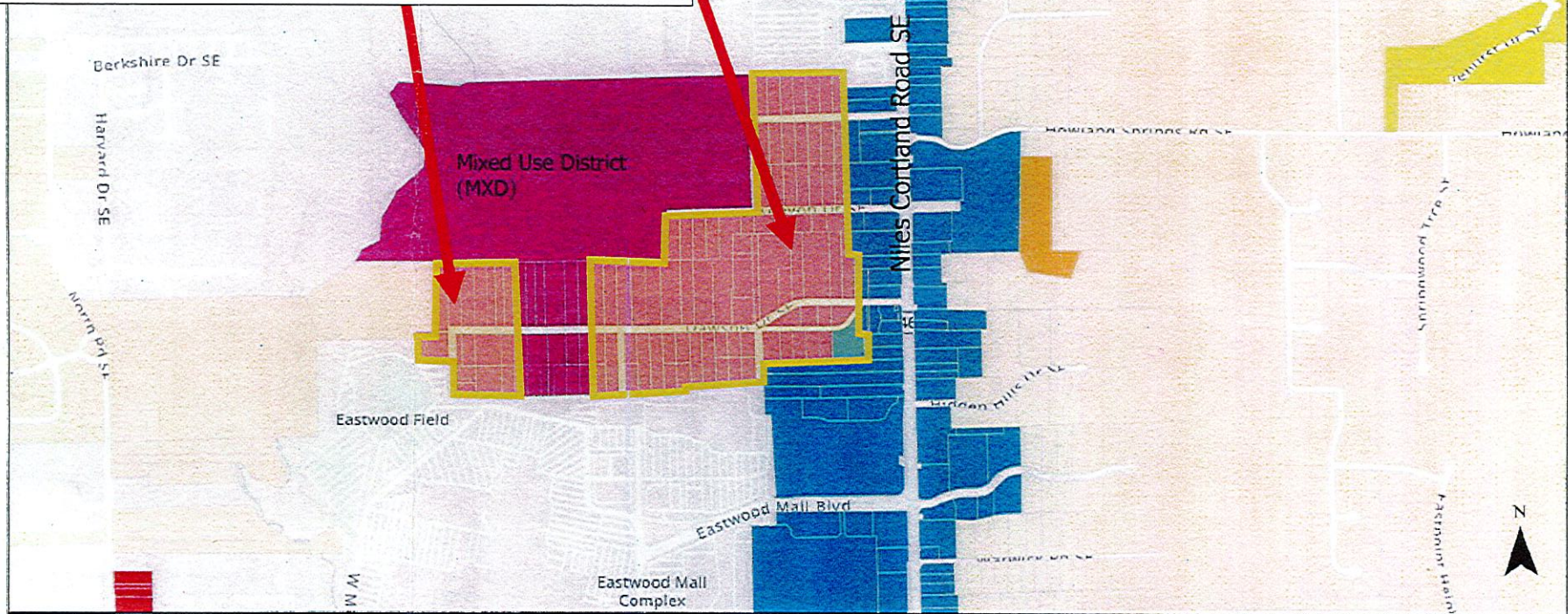
This example demonstrates how residential property values can decline when development plans within a commercial district fail.

PROPOSED CHANGE from MXD PROPOSAL to

Residential/Multi Family MXD Hybrid ZONE

Propose change from CRD-2 to Multi-Family Residential with 3-6 Units Per 1/2 Acre and a Minimum Development Size of 1/2 Acre.

Automatic Rezoning option for land owners to convert to Mixed Use District for contiguous properties of 3 Acres.



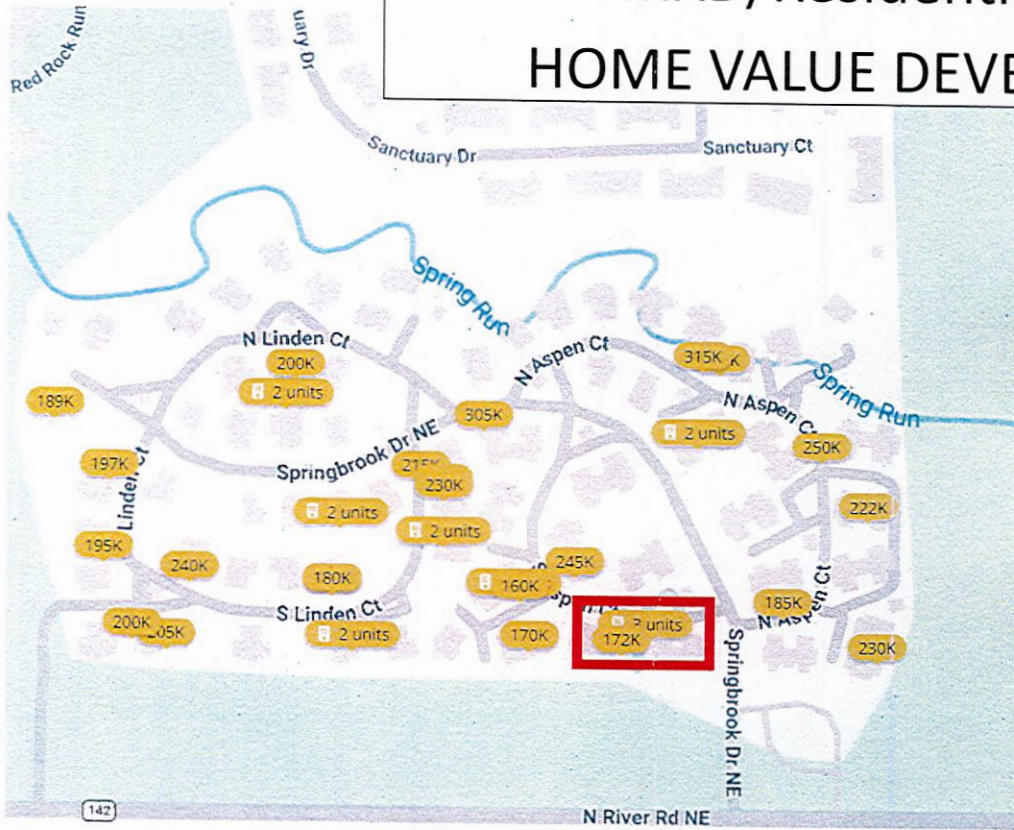
Map Amendment Mixed Use Zoning District (MXD)

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

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FIG- "MXD/Residential-Multi Family Hybrid":- HOME VALUE DEVELOPEMNT POTENTIAL



Sort: Homes for You



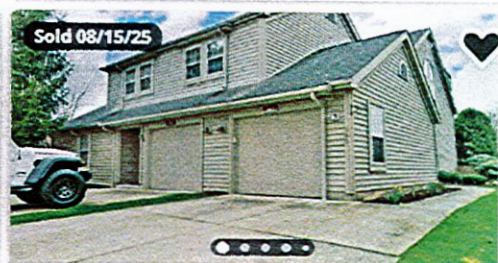
\$210,000
2 bds | 3 ba | 1,538 sqft | Sold
255 S Linden Ct, Warren, OH 44484
ALTOBELLI REAL ESTATE. Listing provided by MLS Now



\$235,000
2 bds | 2 ba | 1,792 sqft | Sold
126 N Aspen Ct Unit 2, Warren, OH 44484
KELLER WILLIAMS CHERVENIC REALTY. Listing provided by MLS Now



\$160,000
2 bds | 2 ba | 1,227 sqft | Sold



\$195,000
2 bds | 3 ba | 1,679 sqft | Sold

Sample Size Multi Family Development

½ Acre – 8 Units (Example of units Sold)

Example shows development potential in a "MXD/Residential-Multi Family Hybrid" and benefit from reducing development size standard from 6 Acres to ½" for Multi Family

Example shows development potential in a "MXD/Residential-Multi Family Hybrid" and benefit to Howland Township for increasing development opportunity in the residential area per ½ Acre and property value for residents that want to stay or sell their property for development.

*Incentives could be provided to developers for larger size developments

Eastwood Mall Complex

*Please reply to: 5577 Youngstown-Warren Road
Niles, OH 44446
Phone (330) 480-5532
acafaro@cafarocompany.com*

February 26, 2026

Kimberly Mascarella
Planning Director, Howland Township
205 Niles-Cortland Road NE Warren, Ohio 44484

Via Email: Kmascarella@howlandtownship.org

RE: Proposed Mixed-Use District (MXD) Zoning Amendment

Dear Ms. Mascarella,

I am writing to formally submit comments regarding the proposed Mixed-Use District (MXD) zoning amendment, which seeks to rezone approximately 200 acres along the Niles Cortland Road SE corridor from Corridor Review District 2 (CRD-2) to MXD. As a locally based commercial real estate development firm with extensive experience navigating complex retail and mixed-use projects nationally, we appreciate the Township's intent to foster coordinated, high-quality growth.

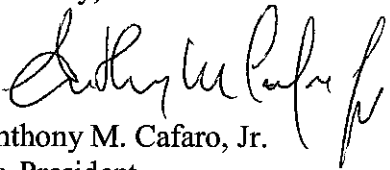
However, from a practical development and underwriting perspective, the proposed MXD framework introduces several strict mandates that will inadvertently stifle investment and render many market-driven commercial projects financially and logistically unviable. We respectfully request that the Township consider the following concerns:

1. **The Unintended Consequences of Mandated Mixed-Use:** The proposal mandates that any development within the MXD must include at least two different land uses, one of which must be residential. While encouraging mixed-use is a laudable planning goal, strictly mandating it eliminates the ability to execute viable, single-use commercial or retail centers. Real estate capital is often highly specialized; forcing a commercial developer to take on the underwriting, operational, and market risks of a residential component will likely deter development entirely rather than spur the "coordinated mix" the Township desires.
2. **Restrictive Minimum Project Size:** The establishment of a 6-acre minimum project size is highly prohibitive. Under the existing CRD-2 framework, there are no minimum lot area, width, or depth requirements, allowing for flexible, market-responsive development. A 6-acre minimum effectively destroys the economic viability of standard commercial outparcel development (e.g., 1-to-2 acre footprints for quick-service restaurants, banks, or medical users). This requirement forces developers into capital-intensive, large-scale land assemblies that are incredibly difficult to finance and execute in the current economic climate.

3. **Conflicts with National Tenant Site Requirements:** The MXD design standards dictate that parking must be located to the side or rear of buildings and that buildings must face streets or civic spaces. While this supports a "walkable setting", it directly conflicts with the prototypical site criteria demanded by national retail and commercial tenants. These tenants require front-loaded parking and unobstructed vehicular visibility to drive revenue. If developers cannot deliver site plans that meet the operational demands of high-credit tenants, the projects cannot be financed.
4. **Entitlement Risk and the Density Bonus Program:** Shifting from the predictable "by-right" development of the CRD-2 district to the MXD's highly subjective entitlement process introduces significant underwriting risk. The base residential density of 12 units per acre is restrictive, forcing developers to navigate a "density bonus program" to achieve financially viable yields. Making vital density contingent upon exacting community benefits—such as workforce housing or public plazas—places the ultimate financial viability of a project at the discretion of reviewing boards, creating a level of unpredictability that deters institutional investment.
5. **Ambiguity in Commercial Limitations:** The summary notes that retail, office, and medical uses currently permitted in the Highway Commercial District will be allowed, but with "some limitations". This ambiguity, combined with the mandate that such uses be "integrated with residential development", prevents developers from accurately assessing land value or actively pre-leasing space. Clear, objective, and "by-right" commercial uses must be preserved to maintain the corridor's economic engine.

We strongly encourage the Township to revise the MXD proposal to act as an opt-in overlay rather than a mandatory replacement of the CRD-2 zoning, or to significantly relax the 6-acre minimum and residential mandates. Fostering high-quality development requires a framework that aligns with the realities of commercial and mixed use residential real estate financing and tenant demands.

Sincerely,



Anthony M. Cafaro, Jr.
Co-President
CAFARO