

PLAN CHAPTER

The plan chapter represents a culmination of the work that has been done during the planning process. The information in this section of the plan will be used as a guide to bring the vision and goals of this community into reality. The plan chapter will help guide the future development of various types of land uses as well as the infrastructure and facilities needed to support all facets of the township.

Included here are maps that indicate places in the township that are considered most suitable for different land uses. Along with those maps are descriptions of those uses and the elements that should be incorporated in their makeup. Also included in this section are “concepts” that can be used to stimulate ideas for future projects.

The recommendations in this chapter are based on community survey results, as well as citizen input from public meetings held over the course of this project. This chapter should serve as the basis for zoning decisions in the future. It should not, however, hinder the



Figure 55: Highpoint Park, located in the heart of Old Etna.

zoning commission, board of zoning appeals or the township trustees from making decisions that will benefit the future success of the township. It should be used to guard against unguided or

ill-conceived development that would have a negative affect on Etna Township, while providing concrete solutions to work toward the greater good of this community.



VISION STATEMENT

Etna Township, like many other unincorporated areas, has long enjoyed a proud rural history. The rural makeup of this community serves as the fundamental basis for the strong desire within Etna Township to maintain as much of that history as possible. With the passage of time, urban areas extend their reach into the untouched areas of our landscape. The rapid consumption of land has become a necessity in order to respond to a growing population and its need for more goods and services. Etna Township has been at the threshold of this urban growth for well over a decade. During that span, this community has seen rapid development, resulting in many new homes, as well as industrial and business expansion. These developments have been accompanied by increased infrastructure and the expansion of utilities for their use. With these changes, land that was once farmed has come out of agricultural production in favor of development. If this trend continues, the rural nature of Etna Township will fade. This plan seeks to properly plan for future growth to make sure that doesn't happen. The residents of Etna Township treasure its rural heritage and seek to maintain it far into the future. To fulfill the promise of a continued rural



Figure 56: Rural features such as fence rows are encouraged in future developments.

lifestyle in Etna Township, steps must be taken to ensure that goal is realized. A balance of different land uses will be critical to the future health and well being of this community. By diversifying the makeup of land use in the community, Etna Township will be able to adequately

provide needed services to its residents without overburdening the township budget. The township must work toward greater accessibility and connectivity for pedestrians, bicycles, and automobiles. Linking significant parts of the community to each other will develop a

greater sense of community and give residents safe alternatives to automobile travel. The township should strive to be self-sufficient and encourage the development of services to meet the needs of its residents. Doing so will eliminate the need to drive to other communities to satisfy

those needs, and will also help keep tax revenues and jobs within this community.

These improvements must be made in ways that are aesthetically pleasing and add to the community fabric. Their implementation will lead to a

sustainable environment, thereby attracting and retaining new residents and businesses. Most importantly, these steps will help to build upon the strong rural foundation already existing within this community, and continue to make residents proud to call Etna Township home.



LAND USE

BALANCE OF LAND USES

An important consideration when developing the future land use map is the cost that each type of land use incurs in terms of community services. It is important for a community to balance the types of land uses that it has in its jurisdiction. Thought should be given to

It is important to understand the relationships between residential and commercial growth, agricultural land use, conservation lands and the communities' bottom line.- American Farmland Trust

the costs versus revenues for each type of land use. The American Farmland Trust has participated in Cost of Community Services studies in at least 151 communities since 1980. Over the course of these studies, findings suggest that residential development does not generate as much revenue as it costs a community for services, while industrial/commercial uses and working and open lands have generated fiscal surpluses. The Farmland Trust contends that communities pay a high price for unplanned growth, and scattered development frequently causes traffic congestion, air and water pollution, loss of open space and increased demand for costly public services. For this reason, it is

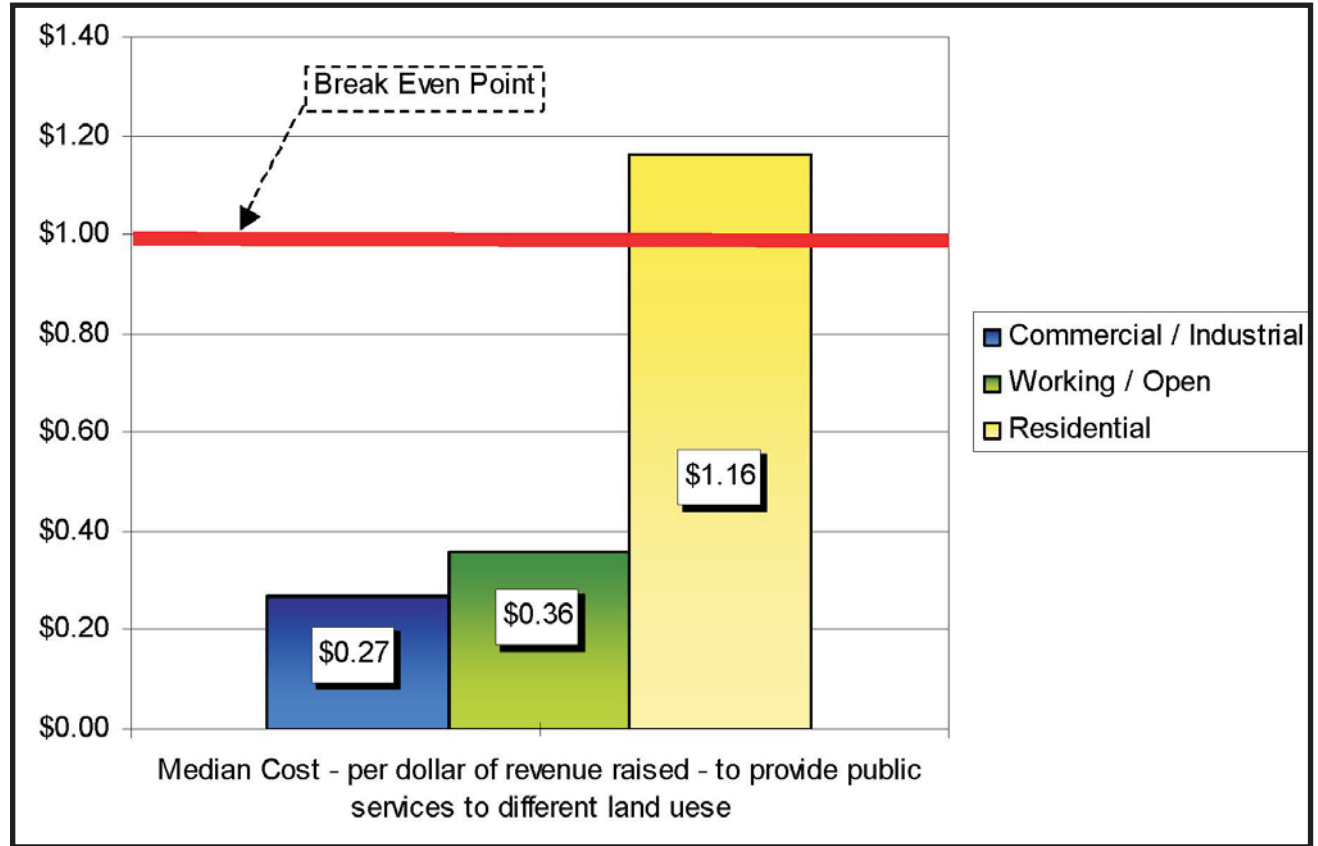


Figure 57: Residential development can be very costly to a community (Source: American Farmland Trust).

important to understand the relationships between residential and commercial growth, agricultural land use, conservation lands and the communities' bottom line (source: American Farmland Trust: Farmland Information Center, Fact Sheet, Cost of Community Services Studies, August 2010). The planning committee recognizes this fact, and has attempted to balance the types of land uses found on

the future land use map for Etna Township (see Figure 58 - Future Land Use Map, Percentage of Land Use on page 46; and Map 22 - Etna Township Future Land Use Map on page 53).

While the plan should regulate what development occurs in the township, it should not be so rigid that development in Etna Township becomes unattractive to **45**

developers. Township officials should review this document with potential developers, and work with them to create projects that meet the vision and intent set forth in these pages. However, this document should not prohibit the zoning commission, board of zoning appeals and the township trustees from being flexible and creative when working with those who want to locate businesses and homes in the community. Forming public-private partnerships with developers will be invaluable to the future success of the township. It is important that future development compliments existing infrastructure and community facilities. Any development that happens in Etna Township should benefit both the community and the developer, with minimal financial and physical consequences to the township and its residents.

There will be occasions where deviating from the future land use map will be appropriate and in the best interest of this community. When and if officials choose to deviate from this plan, sound reasoning must be employed. It should be shown that school systems have enough capacity, and that adequate infrastructure, such as roads and water and sewer services, would support further development.

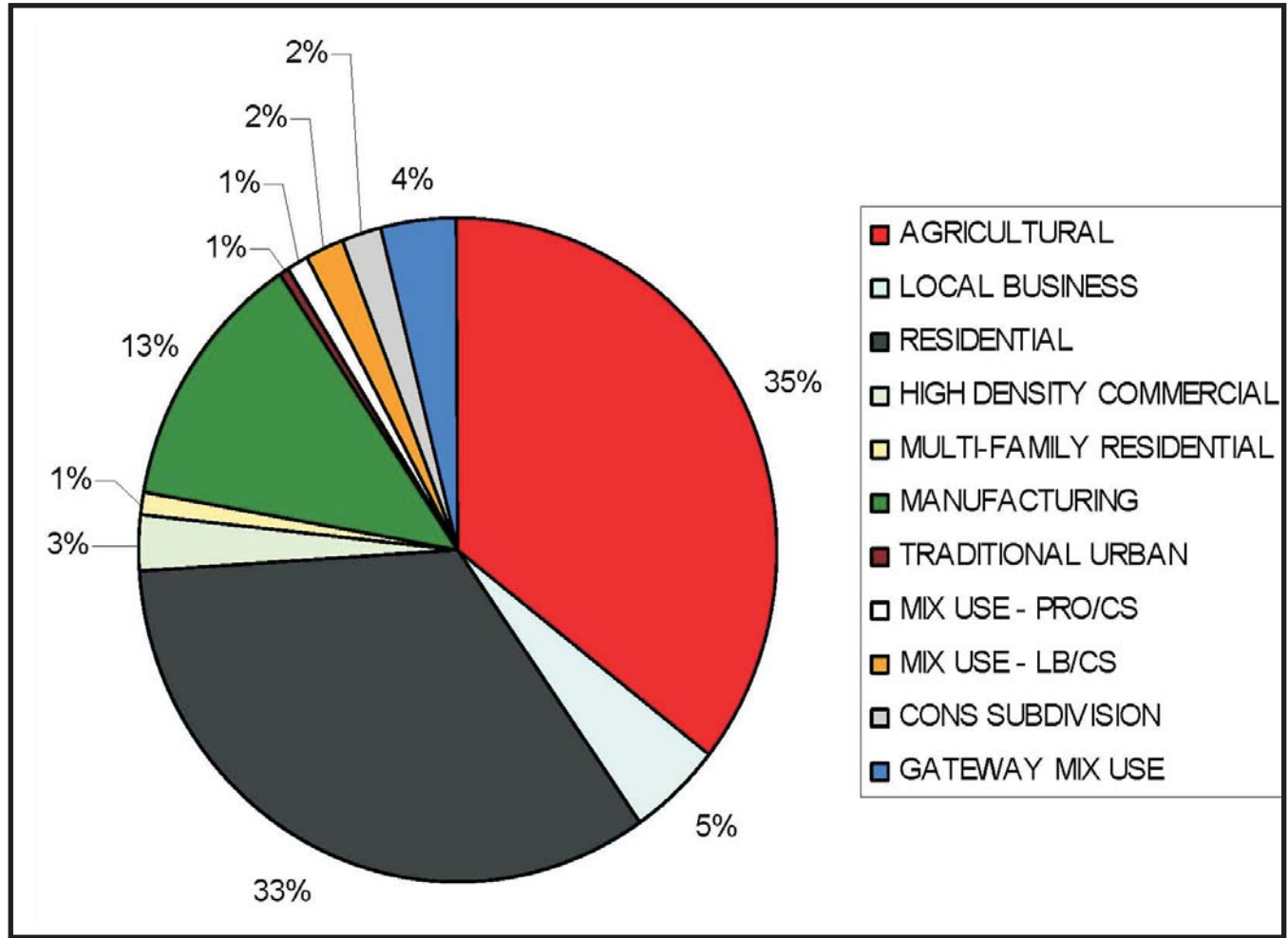


Figure 58: Percentage of land use on the future land use map (see page 53).



FOCUS AREAS

To best understand the land use recommendations of this plan, the township has been divided into four quadrants, along with the State Route 310 corridor focus area. Each of these areas has its own unique qualities, meaning the future vision for each of them will differ from the others. The following narrative further describes each section and how it should develop in the future.

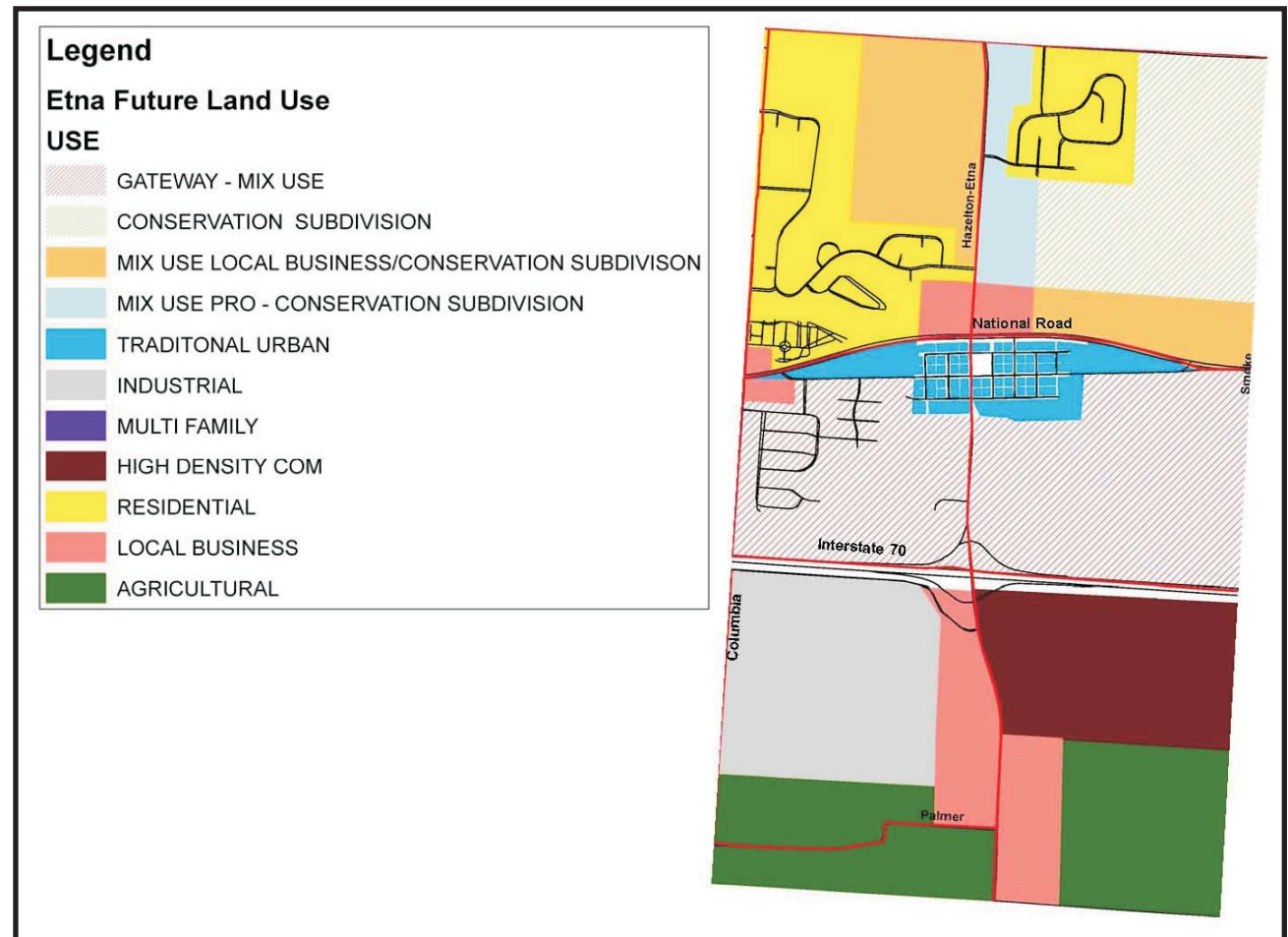
310 CORRIDOR SECTION

The State Route 310 Corridor, spanning Etna Township from Fairfield County to Pataskala, is a defining area for this community. Therefore, careful thought and well-conceived strategies have been employed by the Etna Township Planning Committee in creating a plan for this part of the township. The planning committee recognizes the importance of this corridor and has developed a future land use map and land use narrative with the whole community in mind. The committee believes that this is the centerpiece of the comprehensive community plan, and will serve as the foundation for the overall community land use strategy. As with any other rural community on the fringe of sprawling development, Etna Township is faced with challenges. Typical concerns, such as

increased traffic, annexation, unattractive future development and loss of rural environment are a part of the land use conversation in this community. The Etna Township Planning Committee has acknowledged these issues and has made decisions that it feels will protect

Etna Township from unfettered and unguided development.

Previous to this planning effort, a detailed plan for the 310 Corridor was done by the (MSI) Myers/Schmalenberger Incorporated, planning and design firm. When charged



Map 18: The State Route 310 Corridor Future Land Use Map.

with developing a more refined vision for the 310 Corridor, the Etna Township Comprehensive Planning Committee heavily relied on that plan for guidance and direction for their decisions. The result is a combination of suggestions by the MSI plan and the strategies developed by this planning committee. The belief of the planning committee is that these plans should not be mutually exclusive, but should integrate the best parts of the MSI study with the suggestions developed during this process. The goal for this group is to develop not only a plan for the 310 Corridor, but one that has the entire Etna Township Community in mind.

ETNA TOWNSHIP QUADRANTS

Northwest Quadrant

The boundaries of the Northwest Quadrant are Columbia Road on the east, Reynoldsburg on the west, Refugee Road to the north and I-70 to the south.

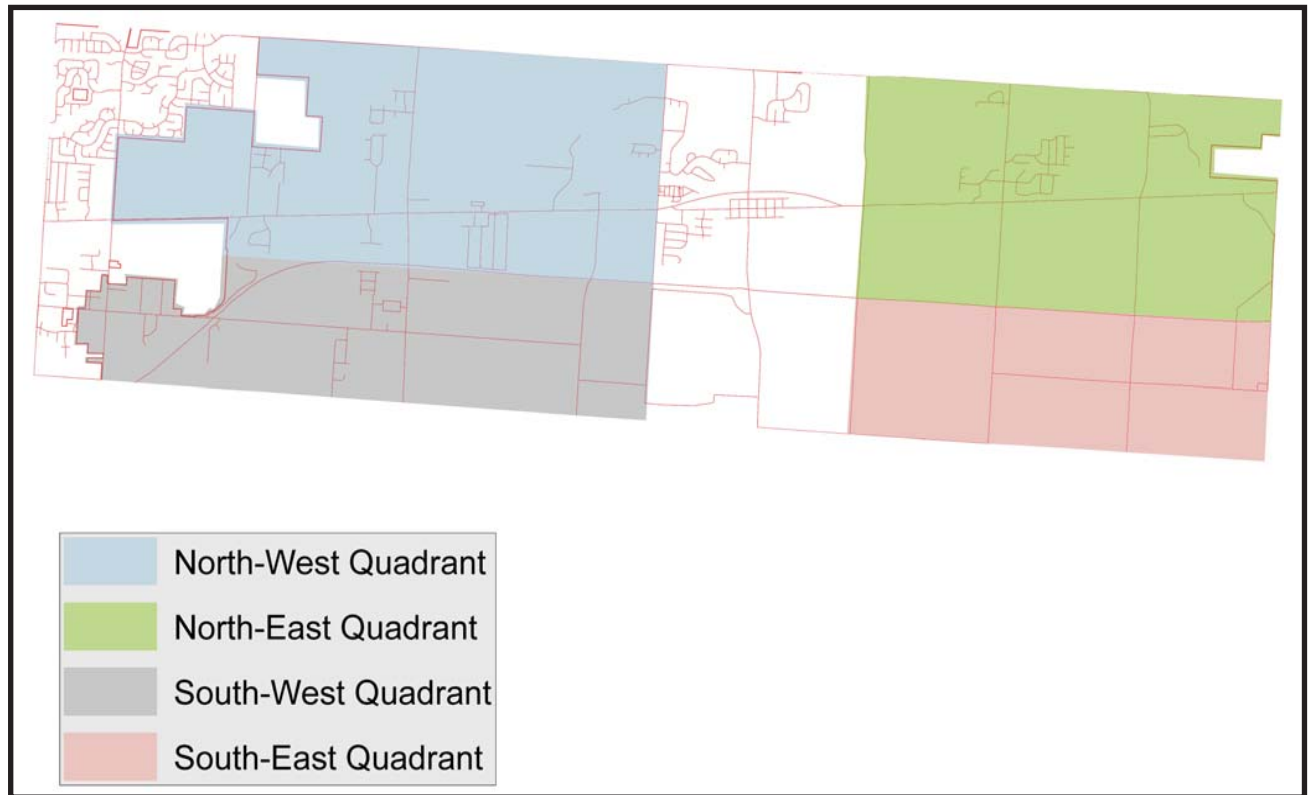
This quadrant is heavily zoned for manufacturing. It is the target area for current and future business in Etna Township. This is the area where the community will see the most progress in job creation and revenue generation. This section of the township should be the location of major industrial and business



growth in the future. Current uses and zoning have enabled the development of a first class industrial complex. The new Jobs Ready Site Road that extends from the Etna Corporate Park north into Pataskala will only help to accelerate the attraction of future business to this area of the township. The JEDZs established in this section of the community have already helped to generate a tax revenue and will continue to do so as businesses expand and new ones relocate to this location. The growth of the corporate park will generate new jobs, which could be filled by Etna residents. Living and working in the same

community will keep tax dollars local and reduce the drive time to work for those who are currently employed in other communities. Future industrial development in the township should primarily locate in the large area in this quadrant already zoned for industrial and manufacturing growth.

Also in this quadrant are a few areas where local level commercial businesses should locate. There are many parcels already zoned for general businesses along US 40. Future additions of local commercial should be contained to those areas. Too



Map 19: The Etna Township Quadrant Map.



Map 20: Etna Township's current Zoning Map.

much retail development could over saturate the township with that type of development, which typically does not contribute much in the way of tax dollars.

Multi-family development should be considered in this quadrant in the small area that borders the Reynoldsburg corporation limit, as shown on the future land use map on page 53. This area is suitable for multi-family development because it would be bordered by residential subdivisions and a high-density commercial area. The high-

density commercial area shown on the future land use map is located at the intersection of Taylor Road and U.S. Route 40, two of the major thoroughfares in the township. These roads will be able to absorb the added traffic that this type of development would generate. The commercial development in this area should provide safe paths or pedestrian features linking multi-family development to itself. Additionally, the land identified as suitable for high-density commercial and multi-family development is located along the Etna

Township/Reynoldsburg border. Allowing more intense uses in that location will help to guard against annexation pressures from Reynoldsburg. The remainder of the Northwest Quadrant should be reserved for single-family residential development.

Southwest Quadrant

The boundaries of the Southwest Quadrant are Lynns Road on the east, Reynoldsburg on the west, I-70 to the north and the Fairfield County line to the south.

The Southwest Quadrant currently consists of agricultural uses and single-family homes. It has the only area in the township that is solely zoned for multi-family housing. Also present in this area are several parcels zoned for manufacturing uses. The remainder of the current zoning in this quadrant is largely agricultural, with a few areas that have been zoned residential. Future development in this area should remain agricultural or single-family residential in nature. Residential development here should follow the requirement of the (PRCD) Planned Residential Conservation District (see Map 21).

Water and sewer services do not extend far into this quadrant. Because of this, the area should continue in agricultural production and large lot residential homesteads. Future extension of water and sewer services should not be considered in this area. There should be no future expansion of manufacturing in this quadrant. The areas currently zoned for manufacturing and multi-family uses should not be permitted to greatly increase. New manufacturing businesses should locate near the Etna Corporate Park or in the newly zoned manufacturing area near the intersection of U.S. Route 40 and State Route 158.

New multi-family developments are provided for in the Northwest Quadrant near the Reynoldsburg corporation limit.

Southeast Quadrant

The boundaries of the Southeast Quadrant are Kirkersville on the east, Smoke Road on the west, I-70 to the north and the Fairfield County line to the south.

The land in the Southeast Quadrant is primarily agricultural in nature. Current use in this quadrant is mainly agricultural, with a few areas zoned for residential uses. These uses are in line with current zoning in the area. Members of this community have consistently noted their desire to maintain a rural environment in the township. This quadrant has been in agricultural production for many years and should so continue far into the future. This would be a prime area to utilize farmland

preservation programs such as the Agricultural Easement Purchase Program, offered by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, or a Transfer of Development Rights program.

If development does occur in this area, the Planned Residential Conservation District (PRCD) section of the Etna Township Zoning Resolution should be used to guide that development. Subdivisions that maximize open space, use little infrastructure and contribute to the rural feel of the township should be encouraged in this quadrant.

Northeast Quadrant

The boundaries of the Northeast Quadrant are Kirkersville on the east, Smoke Road on the west, Refugee Road on the north and the I-70 on the south. Currently the section of this quadrant north of US 40 has a range of uses,



Map 21: The Planned Residential Conservation District (PRCD) overlay map.



including commercial business, residential and agricultural land. The existing zoning is consistent with these uses. However, south of US 40 the intensity of development is much less than that north of US 40. While there are homes located there, future expansion of such uses should be avoided or limited to conservation-subdivision-style development, and large lot single-family homes.

The far east side of this quadrant was opened up to manufacturing development with a large rezoning to the M-1 zoning category in 2009. Any additional manufacturing ground in this area is discouraged. The preferred land use on adjacent properties is agricultural. Due to its rural surroundings, additional landscaping/buffering requirements should

be implemented in this district. One idea would be to establish a mandatory overlay area, establishing more stringent design criteria on the manufacturing development in this area. The land south of US 40 in this quadrant would be a prime area for farmland preservation programs.

National Road passes through this part of the township. The eastern section of US 40 that lies within Etna Township has green medians separates the eastbound and westbound lanes. The green medians help to impress upon visitors and residents the rural nature of this community. Every effort should be made to maintain these medians. The alternative of removing them in favor of pavement, as was the case on the western half of the township, should not be considered.

Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program

The Clean Ohio Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (AEPP) compensates farmland owners to place an agricultural easement upon their farm with the express goal of preserving Ohio's valuable farmland for future generations. An agricultural easement is a deed restriction that prohibits any future non-agricultural development. The easement allows for agricultural development and the land itself stays under private ownership. Currently the AEPP is funded at \$6.25 million per year; more information can be found at the Office of Farmland Preservation's website: <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/farmland>.

Transfer of Development Rights Program*

The premise behind this program is when "right to develop" is severed from land having important agricultural, open space or ecological value and made available for sale to landowners in an area where higher density development is encouraged.

*Currently this is not available in Ohio, but legislation has been introduced in the Ohio Legislature.

Manufacturing East Overlay Concept

The area identified as Manufacturing along US Route 40 on the east side of the township should meet more stringent landscaping and buffering requirements than already existing manufacturing districts in Etna Township. The screening between the industrial use and the non-industrial use should consist of year-round vegetation, such as pines or evergreens, earthen mounds, fences or an acceptable combination of these elements. This area is unique because it is still an undeveloped site, surrounded by agricultural uses on all sides.

An important strategy to the success of this plan is to maintain a rural feel throughout the township. The area surrounding the land designated as manufacturing has been identified as most appropriate to maintain the kind of rural feel that residents of the township desire. Future development of the manufacturing district at this intersection should be sensitive to this and include larger setbacks and more intense landscaping and buffering in order to soften the impact of future industrial/manufacturing businesses on planned agricultural uses and rural residential households.