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Noticed 05/07/25

PUBLIC NOTICE – HOUSING, PLANNING, & DEVELOPMENT

Housing, Planning, & Development Committee will meet Monday May 12, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Auditorium of Lakewood City Hall at 12650 Detroit Avenue. The meeting is open to the public.

The meeting will be livestreamed on the City's website at the following link:

www.lakewoodoh.gov/councilvideos

PUBLIC COMMENT PROTOCOL (Updated 4/2025)

The public is invited to comment on agenda items by submitting a written comment in advance of the meeting using the eComment platform available [HERE](#). New users must create an eComment account. Committee Chairs may also accommodate in person public comment.

The agenda is as follows:

Approval of the minutes of the April 7, 2025 Housing, Planning, & Development Committee

Communication from Assistant Planning Director Baas regarding the Lakewood Zoning Refresh (2024-2025) – UPDATE (Preliminary Recommendations (*referred to HPD 4/21/25*))

Kyle Baker, Chair

Tom Bullock, Bryan Evans; Members

HOUSING, PLANNING, & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Individuals with disabilities who require accommodations for participation in meetings must request accommodations at least 3 business days ahead of the scheduled meeting. Contact Michelle Nochta at (216) 529-5906 or michelle.nochta@lakewoodoh.gov.



PLANNING &
DEVELOPMENT
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April 8, 2025

City Council
City of Lakewood
12650 Detroit Avenue
Lakewood, Ohio 44107

RE: Lakewood Zoning Refresh Project (2024 – 2025) – UPDATE (Preliminary Recommendations)

Dear Members of City Council,

Last month, the City's **Zoning Refresh Project** moved through another milestone with the completion of the Preliminary Recommendations Report. This report was drafted by – and represents the culmination of the stakeholder engagement, community survey, and existing conditions/conformity analysis work from – the project consultant team at Houseal Lavigne. Preliminary drafts of this report were reviewed with both the City Administration as well as the Zoning Policy Advisory Committee (ZPAC).

The intent of this communication is to provide the report to all members of Council with an opportunity for more detailed discussion in committee as we prepare to continue our work by translating and refining the recommendations into updated:

- District and Use Standards.
- Development and Sign Standards; and
- Subdivision Standards, Zoning Procedures, and Definitions.

All updated standards, procedures, and definitions will be worked through various steps of drafting, engagement, review, and refinement – before eventually being captured in draft legislation for Council consideration.

As stated in the introductory communication from last September - at each step, information and engagement opportunities will be published at the project website:

<https://lakewood-oh-zoning-hlplanning.hub.arcgis.com/>

(Note: website will be linked to City homepage if not already completed)

Sincerely,

David Baas
Assistant Director, Planning & Development

LAKEWOOD

Zoning Refresh | 2024



Preliminary Recommendations Report

March 11, 2025
Draft for Public Review

Introduction

The purpose of the Planning and Zoning Code Refresh Recommendations Report is to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the City of Lakewood’s current zoning code and present Houseal Lavigne’s initial recommendations for updates. These findings and recommendations are based on input from City staff and the Planning and Zoning Code Refresh Steering Committee, Community Engagement efforts, alignment with City’s Community Vision, the Zoning Diagnostic report, and the testing and analysis conducted by Houseal Lavigne.

The recommendations of this report are organized into five chapters as detailed below.

1. Community Vision Alignment and Code Refresh Themes Page 01

This chapter focuses on aligning the City's community vision, goals, and objectives with its development regulations to ensure growth and sustainability are achieved in accordance with Lakewood's long-term aspirations.

2. Miscellaneous Recommendations Page 24

This section highlights additional recommendations received from planning staff and other stakeholders. These recommendations fall outside the key themes section (Chapter 1) of this report and focus on clean-up items intended to update and refine the current code, where necessary.

3. Lot Standards Applicability Analysis Page 27

This chapter includes both a nonconformities analysis and a subdivision opportunities analysis. The nonconformities analysis compares the existing minimum lot area and width requirements of a district with existing development within that district. The subdivision opportunity analysis tests the alternate standards to determine whether they would create new subdivision opportunities that do not exist with the current standards.

4. Proposed Code Structure Page 33

This chapter presents the recommended structure of the updated Planning and Zoning Code and summarizes where existing code sections should be relocated within the new document.

5. Research Summary Page 40

This chapter of the report details how other communities have addressed issues and topics like those Lakewood seeks to address as a part of the Planning and Zoning Code Refresh process.

Chapter 1: Community Vision Alignment Themes

As passed by Lakewood City Council and the Lakewood Planning Commission in 2012 and again in 2017 with data updates, the Lakewood Community Vision was further updated in December 2019 by Resolution 2019-19 to incorporate insights from the City’s Resiliency Task Force. This vision serves as the City’s master plan, outlining a picture of the desired future for Lakewood.

This chapter focuses on aligning the City’s community vision, goals, and objectives with its development regulations to ensure growth and sustainability are achieved in accordance with Lakewood’s long-term aspirations. While the City’s Master Plan does not define specific land uses, it highlights key areas of community vision, each containing goals and objectives that guide development across the City. These community vision goals serve as the foundation for Lakewood’s overall planning strategy and outline the desired future for the City.

This report evaluates how well the current planning and zoning code aligns with the Citywide community vision. Specifically, it examines how existing zoning districts support the broader goals set forth in the Master Plan. Based on this analysis, we provide recommendations for updating the planning and zoning code to better support the City’s long-term vision for sustainable growth.

Of the six key areas of the City’s community vision, this report addresses four key areas that are directly related to zoning and development. The other two key areas; education and safety are broader in scope and are not fully captured through zoning code updates, though they remain integral to the overall vision for Lakewood. Based on this analysis, recommendations are provided to refresh the planning and zoning code to better support the City’s vision for the future development.

The key areas of the community vision, presented as key themes, form a foundation for the preliminary recommendations outlined in this report:

Economic Development – Retention, Attraction, Redevelopment

Housing – Stewardship, Options, Quality

Community Wellness – Environment, Health, Activity

Mobility – Options, Ease of Movements, Services

Economic Development – Retention, Attraction, Redevelopment

Community Vision Summary

Lakewood’s vision for economic development emphasizes fostering connections, enhancing existing assets, and creating spaces that support vibrant communities. The City seeks to sustain private reinvestment in both commercial and residential properties, facilitate communication among local businesses, and offer mentoring to entrepreneurs. It also ensures that residents are kept informed about commercial development activities.

The City is committed to revitalizing outdated retail spaces and supporting key commercial districts through public-private partnerships. Proactive code enforcement is essential to attract high-quality development and maintain Lakewood’s reputation as a resilient, well-managed City. Efforts to create inviting, pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly commercial areas are a priority, with a focus on mixed-use buildings that complement the scale of the City’s districts. Streetscapes are enhanced with public amenities such as trees, benches, and public art.

Lakewood aims to balance growth with adaptability, maintaining a zoning framework that responds to changing markets and new commercial opportunities. The City addresses challenges such as late-night commercial activity through thoughtful design and enforcement. Long-term planning also includes preserving historic structures, managing stormwater sustainably, and encouraging eco-friendly development practices like renewable energy and waste reduction. Strengthening economic efforts and addressing the impact of technology on local businesses are integral to fostering continued growth and sustainability.

Current Alignment with Planning and Zoning Code

The current zoning code for Lakewood’s commercial districts shows alignment with the community vision of economic development by providing space for a mix of commercial, residential, and industrial uses. Zoning districts such as C1 (Office), C2 (Retail), C3 (General Business), and C4 (Public School District) cater to a range of businesses, aligning with the vision's goal of attracting and retaining commercial development. The inclusion of mixed-use zoning districts supports the City's objective of creating vibrant communities where commercial and residential spaces co-exist. This zoning strategy contributes to the City’s emphasis on pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and spaces that foster connections between residents and businesses. The C4 (Public School District) is intended to preserve and protect the character of school-owned properties while allowing for development and redevelopment. Conditional uses in this district, such as retail, restaurant, or professional services, should be limited to Detroit Avenue and/or Madison Avenue.

However, there are areas of misalignment with the community’s broader economic development vision. For instance, the zoning code appears to limit flexibility in certain commercial areas. While the City's vision highlights the need for public-private partnerships and a focus on enhancing key commercial districts, the zoning regulations could do more to encourage the adaptive reuse of underutilized retail or commercial spaces. Lakewood’s current zoning districts, such as C1 and C2, primarily focus on specific types of development but do not sufficiently incentivize the redevelopment of vacant or outdated retail properties that the community vision targets for revitalization. There is a potential opportunity to include more flexible zoning standards or

incentives to encourage the reuse and repurposing of existing structures, which would help foster the kind of revitalization the City desires.

Moreover, the zoning code does not fully support the type of office development that aligns with the community’s vision of attracting professional businesses. For example, the C1 (Office) district currently permits primarily office uses, such as business and professional offices, banks, and financial institutions. However, with the shift in demand following the COVID-19 pandemic, traditional office uses are no longer being built as frequently. Many businesses are now seeking more flexible spaces that combine uses such as light industrial or flex space, which are not currently included within the C1 district’s permitted uses. Allowing more flexibility in the district, such as accommodating light industrial and flex space uses or similar uses would help meet the evolving needs of businesses and contribute to employment growth by attracting businesses in industries that thrive in adaptable spaces.

Additionally, while the City’s vision includes the importance of attracting diverse types of businesses for economic sustainability, there is an opportunity to enhance zoning regulations to better support a broader range of commercial and creative industry uses across all commercial districts, including C-1, C-2, and C-3.

In summary, while the zoning code in Lakewood supports much of the community vision for economic development, there are areas where more flexibility could encourage greater diversity in commercial and light industrial development and support the City’s long-term goals. More dynamic incentives for adaptive reuse, clearer provisions for office development, and better support for light industrial businesses would further enhance the alignment between the zoning code and the community’s economic development objectives.

Recommendations for Further Alignment

Encourage Adaptive Reuse and Redevelopment of Underutilized Properties

The current zoning regulations, specifically Section 1129.02 (Permitted and Conditional Uses) and Section 1129.04 (Accessory Use Regulations), do not adequately address adaptive reuse or provide specific incentives for the revitalization of underutilized properties. For instance, there are no clear provisions or relaxed requirements for repurposing existing buildings, particularly those in industrial or older commercial zones. While there are broad allowances for “business and commercial uses,” the zoning code is heavily oriented toward new construction, and does not take into account the unique challenges and opportunities of adaptive reuse. This can lead to unnecessary demolition of older structures, which results in significant environmental costs related to the disposal of building materials. Moreover, such demolitions contribute to the consumption of resources and increase carbon emissions from construction activities. To better support adaptive reuse, the following recommendations are proposed:

- The City should revise the permitted uses in the C-1 (Office), C-2 (Retail), and C-3 (General Business) districts to allow all commercial uses across these zones, with flexibility for trades, artists, and adaptive reuse of older properties. C-1 and C-2 should be brought more in line with C3, offering greater flexibility for diverse business types and creative uses of space.

- It is recommended that the City create a floating Adaptive Reuse Overlay that can be applied across various zoning districts, including commercial, residential, and industrial areas. This floating overlay would allow for greater flexibility in repurposing underutilized or historic buildings for new uses such as mixed-use, small business spaces, or residential units. The Overlay District would provide flexibility in setbacks, parking requirements, and height regulations to make it easier for developers to repurpose existing buildings. Section 1129.06 (Yard Requirements for Principal Uses) and Section 1129.07 (Height Regulations) should include exemptions or modifications to the standard regulations for adaptive reuse projects. For instance, reduce parking minimums for projects within a specified radius of public transit or walking distance to amenities, and allow for increased building heights or loft-style units in areas designated for adaptive reuse.
- Since older buildings often do not meet modern parking standards, the City should allow reduced parking minimums for adaptive reuse projects located in transit-oriented districts. Section 1129.08 (Off-Street Parking) should be revised to allow for shared parking arrangements, particularly in areas with access to public transportation and high walkability. Section 1129.08 should include flexibility for reduced parking requirements for adaptive reuse projects that provide mixed-use development and are located near transit corridors or pedestrian-friendly districts.

Revise the C-4 (School) District for Municipal and School Facilities and Adaptive Reuse

It is recommended to revise the zoning for the C-4 (School) District, which currently exists on the zoning map without specific regulations. We recommend converting the C-4 District into a “Municipal Zoning” District that would include both City-owned municipal facilities as well as School District-owned facilities. The proposed revision to the zoning should allow for the expansion, renovation, replacement, and adaptive reuse of these facilities.

According to information provided by staff, Fire Station #3, which is currently zoned as R-2, faces challenges in expanding its facilities, such as adding a locker room. The existing structure and land use are currently nonconforming to the R-2 zoning, which complicates the expansion process. To address this issue, the City should streamline the approval process for such expansions, eliminating the need for Planning Commission and Architectural Board of Review approvals. The Code should be updated to allow for municipal expansions and adaptive reuse of spaces without additional approval steps, particularly when the proposed changes meet specific development standards (ODDS).

Expand Flexibility in Zoning for Mixed-Use and Diverse Housing Options

Currently, zoning districts such as C1 (Office), C2 (Retail), and C3 (General Business) primarily prioritize commercial uses with some restrictions on residential development, especially in areas near single-family residential districts. Section 1129.02 provides for a limited number of conditional uses for residential development in commercial zones, which limits rather than promotes mixed-use development and does not provide sufficient incentives for the inclusion of housing, particularly affordable housing. For example, residential units are often required to be a secondary use in commercial districts, which can lead to inefficient land use and missed opportunities for integrating housing with commercial activity. The zoning also does not make adequate provisions

for the increasing demand for housing, especially in transit-oriented and mixed-use developments. To address the increasing demand for housing and create more vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods, the following amendments are recommended:

- Allow residential uses as a permitted use in commercial zones: In Section 1129.02 (Permitted and Conditional Uses), amend the zoning code to explicitly allow multi-family residential units as a permitted use in C1, C2, and C3 districts, especially on upper floors of mixed-use buildings. This would better support mixed use development of and create opportunities for a more integrated urban fabric.
- Incentivize mixed-use development: Include provisions for density bonuses and reduced parking requirements in Section 1129.07 (Off-Street Parking) for projects that combine residential and commercial uses. Developers could receive incentives like additional floor area or reduced parking requirements when incorporating affordable housing units, meeting energy-efficient building standards, or other standards that help Lakewood reach its goals.
- Introduce transit-oriented development (TOD) zoning: In areas close to major transit hubs or corridors, such as along Detroit and Madison Avenues, create a Transit-Oriented Development Overlay. This overlay would allow for higher density, mixed-use developments without excessive parking requirements, helping to promote sustainable, pedestrian-friendly growth near transit options. Additionally, extend the TOD zoning to residential parcels within a certain distance of these corridors, with varying standards for developments within 1/4-mile and 1/2-mile buffers. The 1/4-mile buffer could allow for higher density and more diverse housing types, while the 1/2-mile buffer could allow for slightly lower densities than the 1/4 -mile buffer but still support a broader range of housing options than the underlying residential district. This would help meet the increasing demand for housing and tie the diversity of housing types recommendations to these transit-oriented locations.
- Allow residential dwellings on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings: In mixed-use developments, residential units should be allowed on the ground floor, provided that the front/street facing portion of the ground floor maintains a storefront appearance to preserve the commercial character of the zoning district and privacy for residents. This would allow the rear portions of the ground floor to be used for residential purposes, promoting a balance of active commercial frontage while addressing the demand for housing in these areas.
- Expand allowed business uses in commercial districts: Expand the range of allowable uses within the C1, C2, and C3 districts to include more light industrial and tech-based businesses, such as tech startups, coworking spaces, and artisan/light manufacturing. These uses would complement residential and commercial development, creating a more diverse and resilient economy within mixed-use neighborhoods.

Streamline the City's Zoning and Approval Processes

The zoning code's current review process lacks clear differentiation between complex and minor projects, as seen in Section 1171.03 (Public Hearing Process) and Section 1173.02 (Public Notice Requirements). For most non-residential projects, regardless of their size, developers are required to undergo a full public review process with the Planning Commission and City Council. This can result in unnecessary delays and costs for smaller-scale projects or those that have minimal impact on the surrounding area. Additionally, the public notice requirements under Section 1173.02 often apply to projects that do not significantly affect the surrounding community, further delaying the process. Therefore, we recommend the following revisions to the Code to streamline the development approval process:

- Allow City staff to approve (in accordance with specified criteria) minor modifications from specific code standards such as adjustments to minimum/maximum parking standards, lot area and width minimums, and interior side and rear yard setbacks.
- Establish objective site and building design standards to ensure high quality development without the need for elected and appointed officials to negotiate with applicants for improvements. Utilize the current Commercial District Design Guidelines from 2011 to establish more comprehensive and objective Commercial Design Standards as detailed in the "Establish Comprehensive Commercial Design Standards" section of this chapter.
- Consolidate and reorganize all code content related to review and approval bodies and procedures into a new Chapter 11: Administrative and Enforcement Procedures as detailed in the Code Structure section of this report. This will help to better distinguish between administrative, quasi-judicial, and legislative procedures, minimize redundancy, and improve transparency.
- Include a matrix outlining the required approval bodies for each application type.
- Update all public notice and hearing requirements to align with state requirements.
- Utilize a table to clarify when published, mailed, and/or posted notice is required.
- Eliminate all application requirements from the Code and establish a manual that is adopted by resolution and updated by staff rather than be codified and updated as a text amendment. This approach will provide the City with the flexibility needed to update application requirements to align with recent development trends, technology, and state statute.

Streamline Residential Review and Approval Procedures

Lakewood's current review and approval process for residential development, as outlined in Chapter 1325 of the planning and zoning code, requires the submission of design review applications to the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) for various residential alterations, including new construction, accessory dwelling unit (ADU) modifications, and visible exterior changes. While this process offers important oversight, it can be time-consuming, costly, and create unnecessary delays, particularly for residential projects that have minimal impact on the surrounding environment. Additionally, the discretionary nature of the approval processes does not provide fair certainty to residents and can extend the approval timeline and increase costs to residents and the administrative workload of City staff.

To improve efficiency and reduce delays in the approval process for residential developments, we recommend the adoption of Objective Design and Development Standards (ODDS). These standards would provide clear, consistent, and predictable rules for new residential construction, as well as renovation, rehabilitation, and additions to existing structures, allowing projects that meet the established criteria to bypass the need for discretionary review. This would streamline the process and create a more predictable regulatory environment for homeowners and developers alike. Key recommendations include:

- Utilize the current Residential Design Guidelines to create Objective Design and Development Standards (ODDS) for Residential Projects: These standards would provide fixed requirements for residential design, making the approval process more transparent and less subjective. Projects that comply with the ODDS criteria could be processed administratively, reducing the need for discretionary reviews and speeding up the approval process. This approach would reduce delays for residential projects that meet clear design expectations, including new development after demolition, additions to existing buildings, and minor and major redevelopments. Alternatively, the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) could continue to review and approve plans as currently required but with clearer review criteria that eliminates subjectivity from decision making processes and provides more fair certainty to residents. If a proposed project does not meet the ODDS, the approval should go to the ABR for a discretionary approval process to benefit from their expertise.

Clarify Criteria for Administrative Review: Currently, there is uncertainty regarding which residential projects are eligible for administrative review. By establishing ODDS for administrative approval, the City can streamline the process for small or low-impact residential projects, to reduce the need for ABR review and approval. This approach will enhance consistency in decision-making, creating a more efficient approval process. For example, projects like front porch additions, bay windows, roofline alterations, corner lot garages, and minor changes to exterior cladding could benefit from defined design standards incorporated into the Zoning Code.

Enhance Code Enforcement Capabilities

Lakewood's current zoning enforcement system, as outlined in Chapter 1175 of the Codified Ordinances, relies on relatively low penalties for violations, such as minor misdemeanor charges and a \$75 administrative fee for non-compliance. While this process allows for a 14-day correction period, it may not be effective in addressing ongoing or more serious violations. By comparison, other communities, such as Shaker Heights, OH, and St. Joseph, MI, employ stronger enforcement practices that ensure better compliance with zoning regulations and more timely resolutions, as detailed in the Research Summary chapter of this report. Taking inspiration from the zoning enforcement practices of comparable communities, we propose the following recommendations to strengthen Lakewood's enforcement capabilities:

- Zoning Enforcement and Property Maintenance Coordination: The current zoning enforcement and penalties in Chapter 1175, part of the Planning and Zoning Code, operate independently from Chapter 1306, which is part of the Building Code and governs Property Maintenance and Safety. As a result, there are inconsistencies in enforcement procedures and penalties, creating confusion and inefficiencies for both property owners and city staff.

It is recommended that Zoning Enforcement and penalties under Chapter 1175 be cross-referenced and coordinated with Chapter 1306, to ensure the same procedures and penalties apply across both chapters. While these chapters will remain part of separate codes, this coordination will streamline the enforcement process and provide greater clarity and consistency.

- **Increase Fines and Penalties:** In order to discourage non-compliance and improve enforcement, Lakewood could implement daily fines for each day a violation remains unresolved. This approach, used by River Forest, IL, and St. Joseph, MI, ensures that each day of non-compliance is treated as a separate offense.
- **Investigate Legality of Escalating Penalties for Repeat Offenses:** The Lakewood city attorney should further investigate the legality of establishing an escalating penalty structure for repeated violations occurring within a 12- or 24-month period. Increasing fines or enforcement actions for multiple offenses within a set timeframe would help deter repeat violations and encourage long-term compliance.
- **Grant Zoning Enforcement Authority:** Lakewood should consider adopting language similar to Shaker Heights, OH, which grants enforcement authority to the Zoning Administrator, Planning Director, or other designated staff members. This would empower city officials to inspect properties, issue violation notices, and take immediate action when public safety is at risk.
- **Include Legal Remedies for Serious Violations:** To ensure effective resolution of significant or repeated violations, the City should adopt legal remedies such as injunctions or permit revocation. As practiced in Shaker Heights, such measures would allow for more immediate corrective action, particularly in cases where a violation poses a greater risk to public safety or goes unresolved over a prolonged period.
- **Classify Violations as Civil Infractions:** Lakewood could enhance its zoning enforcement system by classifying violations as civil infractions, much like St. Joseph, MI. This change would allow for more efficient enforcement by simplifying the process, reducing the need for criminal prosecution, and enabling quicker resolutions.
- **Establish Clear Administrative Procedures:** Clear administrative procedures for handling violations would help streamline the process and ensure consistency in enforcement. The City could set specific timelines for response and correction of violations and implement measures such as withholding permits or approvals for projects on properties with outstanding violations. This approach would align with best practices in communities that have already adopted more structured enforcement mechanisms.

Support Sustainable Development and Green Building Practices through Zoning Incentives

Lakewood's vision for economic development includes fostering a resilient and sustainable City, with a focus on integrating green practices in both new and adaptive reuse developments. The City aims to balance growth with environmental responsibility, prioritizing sustainable solutions to climate change while revitalizing urban spaces. The existing zoning code does not provide clear incentives for sustainable practices or green infrastructure in commercial and mixed-use developments. With growing concerns about climate change and sustainability, the City needs zoning regulations that incentivize energy-efficient buildings, green roofs, solar power, and rainwater collection systems in new and adaptive reuse developments. Therefore, the following is recommended:

- The City should amend the zoning code to provide density bonuses, height bonuses, or reduced parking requirements for projects that incorporate sustainable design elements such as solar panels, green roofs, or rainwater harvesting systems. These incentives would make it more attractive for developers to invest in green building strategies that support the City's sustainability goals. The City should Amend Section 1129.07 (Height Regulations) and Section 1129.08 (Off-Street Parking) to include provisions for density bonuses or height increases for developments that integrate sustainable design practices.
- The City should introduce supplemental regulations for green building and low impact development practices within the C-2 and C-3 districts. This can include mandates or incentives for energy-efficient materials and eco-friendly building systems, as well as options for required landscape to be replaced by rain gardens and bioswales. Additionally, the City could provide incentives for adaptive reuse projects that incorporate sustainability, particularly for developments in historically significant districts.

Expand Permitted Uses in the Industrial and C1 Office Districts

Currently, the zoning code for Lakewood's Industrial (I) District is overly restrictive, allowing only traditional heavy industrial uses such as manufacturing and warehousing. This limits the potential for more modern, innovative industries that could contribute to the City's economic diversification. As Lakewood seeks to attract a wider range of businesses, including those in technology, clean energy, and research and development, the Industrial District zoning does not fully support the types of light industrial activities that align with the City's vision for sustainable growth and innovation. Lakewood's economic development goals include fostering innovation, sustainability, and attracting diverse industries that align with modern trends, such as tech manufacturing, digital fabrication, clean energy, and small-scale advanced manufacturing.

To better align the Industrial District with the City's broader economic development goals, it is recommended to expand the list of permitted uses to include a broader range of light industrial activities. These should include, but not be limited to, Tech Manufacturing, Research and Development (R&D) Facilities, and Creative Industries. Additionally, the C1 (Office) District may be appropriate for certain lighter industrial uses, particularly those related to tech businesses and research facilities. The C1 District, focused on office uses, can be adapted to support these activities that do not require traditional large-scale industrial spaces. Expanding permitted uses in

both the Industrial and C1 Office Districts will help meet the needs of a changing economy and encourage the development of businesses that contribute to economic growth and job creation. This approach ensures that Lakewood remains adaptable to future market demands, encourages the growth of emerging industries, and aligns zoning with the City's long-term economic vision.

Housing – Stewardship, Options, Quality

Community Vision Summary

Lakewood's vision for housing focuses on maintaining a diverse, high-quality housing stock that caters to the varied needs of its residents. The City aims to enhance the character of its residential neighborhoods through proactive investment in housing programs and policies. By fostering a culture of responsibility among homeowners, landlords, and tenants, Lakewood strives to create an environment where renters can also develop long-term community roots.

Currently, the City is home to 32,000 housing units, and since launching the Housing Forward Initiative in 2012, significant progress has been made in improving the housing stock. Through regular inspections and the implementation of rehabilitation assistance programs, Lakewood has seen a rise in the quality of its homes. The percentage of homes in good condition has increased, foreclosure rates have remained low, and the number of vacant properties has dropped by 60%. Additionally, the City continues to maintain a strong focus on code compliance, ensuring that home improvements meet safety standards.

Lakewood envisions a City where connections are built through an informed and engaged landlord community, as well as homeowners who invest in energy-efficient upgrades. The City encourages realtors to effectively market Lakewood's housing to prospective buyers and supports homeowners in improving the quality of their homes. Efforts to enhance existing assets focus on incentivizing housing investment, creating awareness about financial services, and promoting active block clubs as community resources.

In terms of creating spaces for people, Lakewood promotes a variety of housing options that meet the needs of seniors, low- and moderate-income families, and special needs households. New developments and infill projects are designed to complement the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhoods, incorporating sustainable practices and universal design principles. The City is also committed to maintaining quality greenspaces throughout its residential areas.

Lakewood strikes a balance between ensuring housing quality through point-of-sale inspections and creating affordable housing for diverse income groups. The City conducts proactive code enforcement, particularly for multi-family buildings, and focuses on increasing tree canopy and preserving the historic character of residential neighborhoods. Efforts to address abandoned properties ensure that they remain safe and secure. Looking ahead, Lakewood continues to prioritize sustainable practices, affordability, and the long-term livability of its housing and neighborhoods.

Current Alignment with Planning and Zoning Code

The zoning code for Multiple-Family Residential Districts (ML and MH) aligns well with Lakewood’s Housing Vision, which aims to maintain a diverse, high-quality housing stock while accommodating the needs of a varied population. The ML District (Multiple-Family, Low Density) and MH District (Multiple-Family, High Density) are designed to offer a mix of housing types, including single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, and multiple-family residential buildings. This variety supports the City’s goal of ensuring housing options for seniors, low- and moderate-income families, and special-needs households. The ML District is primarily intended for low-density multiple-family residential buildings, while the MH District allows for a mix of medium-density and low-density housing types, along with some specialized residential uses such as adult family homes and adult group homes. This flexibility within these districts provides a foundation for fulfilling Lakewood’s vision of housing options that serve different demographic groups.

Additionally, the inclusion of accessory uses such as private garages, swimming pools, and patio decks supports the quality of life for residents by allowing for personalization that enhance the livability of homes. The inclusion of home occupations (where certain business activities are allowed) also promotes community engagement and economic vitality in residential areas, which ties into the City’s broader vision of sustainable neighborhoods. However, certain aspects of the zoning code limit flexibility and may hinder the ability to fully meet the housing goals outlined in the Community Vision such as:

- **Lot Area and Frontage Regulations:** The ML District requires a minimum lot area of 15,000 square feet, and the MH District requires 10,000 square feet. These requirements can restrict the development of higher-density, affordable housing in areas where there may be demand for such housing. Allowing smaller lot sizes or reducing the required frontage would increase flexibility and align better with the City’s goal of providing diverse and affordable housing options.
- **Conditional Use Approvals:** The Mixed-Use Overlay District (MUOD) allows mixed-use projects in specific zoning districts (ML and MH) but requires each project to undergo a conditional use review. This means that developments are assessed individually by the Commission, which can impose conditions or limitations based on specific factors. While this review process offers flexibility, it can also introduce delays and uncertainties in the approval process. Projects are not guaranteed to be granted approval if the standards of the underlying zoning are met but could be subject to additional considerations from the Commission. This case-by-case review can slow down the development of mixed-use projects, creating challenges for developers trying to meet the increasing demand for diverse housing types and more integrated community spaces.
- **Density Restrictions:** The zoning code currently limits certain developments, particularly in the ML District, by requiring density to remain consistent with surrounding areas. This approach may limit the opportunity to increase density in areas where it could be beneficial for accommodating growing populations, especially in urban areas with higher demand for affordable housing.

In addition to the ML and MH Districts, the R-2 District plays a key role in the City’s housing mix. The R-2 District allows for single-family and two-family dwellings, and while it fosters the creation of low-density residential neighborhoods, it does not offer the same level of housing variety needed to fully align with the City’s vision of a diverse housing stock. The R-2 District could be more aligned with Lakewood’s vision if it allowed for greater flexibility in housing types, such as the introduction of triplexes and quadplexes within existing residential neighborhoods.

The ML and MH Districts also have the potential to better contribute to the overall housing landscape in Lakewood. Typically, these districts allow for higher densities of multi-family residential buildings, which would complement the City’s need for diverse housing. However, zoning requirements such as minimum lot size, density restrictions, and the list of permitted residential uses still need to be updated to ensure these districts can provide sufficient affordable housing for moderate- and low-income residents, consistent with Lakewood’s vision of inclusivity.

Recommendations for Further Alignment

Increase Housing Density in appropriate Residential Areas

The density restrictions in the ML district limit the potential for higher-density development, which can be restrictive when accommodating growing populations, especially in areas with urban characteristics or near transit hubs. The City should refresh its density regulations to allow for moderate increases in density in certain residential areas, especially where public transit and services are already available. For instance, increasing allowable density in areas near commercial corridors or transit stops would enable the development of multi-family housing and mixed-use buildings that meet the diverse housing needs of residents while maintaining the overall neighborhood character. This approach would allow Lakewood to accommodate a larger variety of housing types, including affordable and attainable units, without compromising quality or livability.

Expand Housing Options in ML and MH Districts to Address Diverse Needs

The current zoning regulations for the ML (Multi-family Low Density) and MH (Multi-family High Density) districts are focused on multi-family development but do not fully accommodate the variety of housing types needed in these areas. The permitted uses in these districts still refer to regulations from the R-2 (Single- and Two-Family Residential) district, which restricts the range of housing options that can be developed. For instance, single-family and two-family homes are listed as permitted uses, which may not fully address the diverse housing needs within the ML and MH districts. To better align the zoning regulations with the need for diverse housing options, the following amendments are recommended:

- Clarify and Update Principal Uses: Revise the zoning code for the ML and MH districts to focus specifically on housing types suitable for multi-family development. By removing references to R-2 district regulations, the permitted uses can be expanded to include a wider range of housing types, such as multi-family units, mixed-use developments, and affordable housing options.
- Introduce Tailored Regulations for Diverse Housing Needs: Create distinct regulations within the ML and MH districts that are specifically designed to accommodate various

housing types. These regulations should allow for different sizes and configurations of housing to meet the needs of different income levels and household types.

Support Multi-family Housing in Planned Developments: In areas where cluster housing or planned unit developments are permitted, ensure the regulations facilitate the inclusion of diverse housing options. Streamlining approval processes for developments that incorporate a variety of housing types can support the creation of more affordable and accessible housing.

- **Refine the ML District to Accommodate Missing Middle and Townhome Housing:** Reconfigure the ML district to prioritize "missing middle" housing types, such as townhomes, triplexes, quadplexes, and other medium-density housing forms. Townhomes should be allowed to be developed on individual parcels, providing greater flexibility for owner occupied structures and helping to meet the growing demand for moderate-density housing options.
- **Maintain MH District as High-Density Multi-Family:** The MH district should remain focused on high-density multi-family development, such as apartment complexes, to ensure continued capacity for larger multi-family housing options.

Introduce More Housing Variety in Lower-Density Residential Districts

The R-2 district, which currently allows only single-family and two-family dwellings, does not provide the level of housing variety needed to fully align with the vision for diverse, inclusive housing options, especially for families and moderate-income residents. Participants in the project's initial stakeholder interview discussions highlighted that the current zoning restrictions hinder the flexibility necessary to adapt to evolving community needs. Specifically, they pointed out that duplexes converted into single-family homes cannot be converted back into duplexes in the future, which limits future housing flexibility. Additionally, existing multi-unit buildings in the R-2 district are legally nonconforming, which makes reinvestment difficult and potentially contributes to blighted conditions. To address these issues and better align the R-2 district with Lakewood's goals for diverse and affordable housing, the following recommendations are proposed:

- **Modify the R-2 district to allow small-scale multi-family housing** such as triplexes and quadplexes. This would legalize existing nonconforming dwellings, introduce more housing variety within existing neighborhoods, increase rental and homeownership options, and support the City's goal of providing diverse housing opportunities for families and moderate-income residents.
- **Revise the zoning code to allow new duplexes and the reconversion of single-family homes to duplexes** by reinstating duplexes as a legal use in the R-2 district under the updated zoning code. Currently, the code prohibits the construction of new duplexes and the conversion of single-family homes into duplexes, with the only option for adding a second dwelling unit being the construction of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), as outlined in Section 1133.06. This restriction limits flexibility in housing options in the district and restricts the ability to increase affordable housing choices. Allowing duplexes in the R-2 district would provide greater flexibility in housing development and help meet the demand for attainable housing.

Promote Universal Design and ADA Compliance in New Developments

While Lakewood’s vision emphasizes accessibility for all, the zoning code currently lacks specific provisions for universal design and ADA compliance in new residential developments. The City should refresh its zoning code to incorporate universal design principles, such as wide doorways, step-free entrances, and accessible kitchens and bathrooms, in all new housing projects. Drawing inspiration from best practices mentioned in the research summary of this report (Chapter 5), such as Howard County, Maryland, which requires features like 32-inch-wide doorways and lever handles, and the Village of Bolingbrook, Illinois, which mandates accessible passageways and ground-level bathrooms, Lakewood could ensure that all new homes are adaptable for individuals of all abilities. The City could also offer incentives, such as density bonuses or reduced parking requirements, for developments that incorporate these features, to ensure that new housing is not only accessible but also inclusive for residents of all ages and abilities.

Address the Reuse of Vacant Properties and Enhance Neighborhood Livability

While Lakewood has seen a decrease in the number of vacant properties, the zoning code does not fully address how these properties can be repurposed for more productive uses, such as housing or community spaces. The City should establish an Adaptive Reuse Overlay district (as mentioned in the Economic Development Recommendations section above) for the adaptive reuse of vacant properties, encouraging the conversion of abandoned buildings into affordable housing, mixed-use developments, or community spaces. It is recommended that the old commercial buildings, schools, or other vacant structures could be repurposed into small-scale multi-family units or mixed-use developments that integrate residential spaces with retail or community-serving businesses. The City should also consider offering incentives for developers to rehabilitate vacant properties, such as a streamlined permitting process.

Expand Housing Options for Senior Populations

Lakewood’s vision highlights the need for housing that caters to seniors, people with disabilities, and other special needs populations. However, the zoning code’s focus on adult family homes and group homes is limited, and more options are needed to meet the needs of these populations as specified in the community vision. The City should incentivize senior housing and special needs housing across various residential districts, particularly in R1H, ML, and MH districts. It is recommended that assisted living or memory care facilities be allowed as conditional uses in lower-density districts, but only in areas where redevelopment is appropriate and feasible, such as in adaptive reuse scenarios and large vacant or underutilized lots, to minimize potential impacts on existing residential properties. The City should utilize Planned Development (PD) review criteria to allow for deviations from standard zoning requirements if universal design standards are incorporated. These PD modifications would enable flexibility in the development process, specifically when universal design is applied, to ensure that the resulting facilities are accessible and inclusive for seniors and individuals with disabilities. The City should also incentivize the integration of affordable senior housing in new developments by offering density bonuses and parking reductions for projects that dedicate a portion of units to seniors or individuals with disabilities.

Enhance Accessibility in Mixed-Use Developments

Lakewood has a unique opportunity to expand housing options for seniors and individuals with disabilities through thoughtful revisions to its mixed-use development regulations. Currently, the prohibition of residential units on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings limits access for these populations, potentially creating barriers that restrict their mobility and community integration. To better accommodate the diverse needs of residents, it is recommended that the City modify its zoning codes to allow residential spaces on the ground floor, where feasible. This change would not only improve accessibility but also preserve the character and vibrancy of mixed-use developments. Key modifications to consider include:

- **Allow Residential Use on Ground Floors:** Revise regulations to enable residential units on the ground floor or in rear portions of the ground floor of mixed-use structures, providing opportunities for seniors and individuals with disabilities to live in closer proximity to essential services, public transit, and community resources.
- **Separate Entrances and Privacy Considerations:** Maintain the privacy and security of residential units by requiring separate entrances for residential tenants, with residential spaces located behind or adjacent to commercial areas on the ground floor. This configuration would provide a balance of accessibility and privacy.

Improve flexibility for ADUs

Lakewood’s current zoning code restricts Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to conditional use approval in the R2 district, which limits their development in the R1L, R1M, and R1H districts. This approach does not fully align with best practices recommended by organizations such as the AARP, which advocate for ADUs to be allowed by-right in all single-family zoning districts. By not permitting ADUs in these districts, the city is not fully addressing the demand for more flexible and adaptable housing options that could benefit a broader range of residents, including homeowners, renters, and those seeking to age in place. To better address these needs and align with best practices (see chapter 5 of this report), the following recommendations are proposed:

- **Permit ADUs by-right in all single-family zoning districts:** The City should refresh the zoning code to allow ADUs by-right, including attached or detached units, in the R1L, R1M, R1H, and R2 districts. This will help facilitate the creation of more flexible housing options and allow homeowners the ability to add ADUs without the need for conditional use approval.
- **Streamline approval process for ADUs:** Alongside permitting ADUs by-right, Lakewood should simplify the review and approval process for ADUs by establishing clear, objective design standards.

Recommendation to Eliminate the Term “Family” and Section 1133.01 Occupancy of Dwelling

The use of the term “family” in the zoning code, particularly in Section 1133.01, is proposed for elimination. The Fair Housing Act prohibits housing discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including gender and sexual orientation), familial status, or disability.

Currently, Section 1133.01 of the Lakewood Code states, “No more than one (1) family shall occupy a dwelling or dwelling unit.” Additionally, the term “family” is defined as “an individual or two (2) or more persons living together as a single housekeeping group in a dwelling unit,” which excludes units or groups of unrelated individuals occupying a house. This definition creates a distinction

between related and unrelated persons, which can lead to discriminatory practices and potential violations of the familial status protection provisions of the Fair Housing Act. These provisions also limit unreasonable restrictions on the total number of persons who can reside in a dwelling.

To align with federal law and eliminate the potential for discriminatory practices, it is recommended to eliminate Section 1133.01 in its entirety. Furthermore, the term "family" should be replaced with "unit" to ensure that all occupants of a dwelling are treated equally, regardless of their familial relationships. The maximum occupancy of dwellings should be governed by the Building Code, which offers an objective standard that applies to all residents.

Refine Lot Dimensional Standards

It is recommended that the City retain the front yard averaging approach but amend it to align with typical best practice, which includes establishing one standard minimum front yard setback requirement in each zoning district within the District Standards chapter of the proposed Code, rather than depend on the current building line map. Additionally, the City should establish clearer standards for corner side yard setbacks to improve uniformity. Including these setback requirements in the bulk and dimensional standards will ensure clarity, consistency, and better integration with overall zoning regulations.

Community Wellness – Environment, Health, Activity

Community Vision Summary

Lakewood's vision for community wellness aims to support healthy living through accessible parks, green spaces, and active lifestyle programs. The City promotes improvements to public health by improving infrastructure, offering recreational opportunities, and fostering strong community connections. This includes access to healthcare, healthy food options, and environmental stewardship, all of which contribute to the overall wellness of residents.

Key priorities include enhancing public greenspaces, increasing tree canopy coverage, and supporting inter-generational programming. The City also focuses on transportation decisions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create healthier environments. Sustainable practices are encouraged through stormwater management, increased recycling, and efforts to protect water sources like Lake Erie and the Rocky River.

By promoting active living, sustainable infrastructure, and community cohesion, the City's efforts align with zoning goals aimed at enhancing quality of life, preserving natural resources, and creating safe, accessible spaces for all residents.

Current Alignment with Planning and Zoning Code

The zoning principles outlined in the PD district align well with Lakewood's community wellness vision by emphasizing the creation of vibrant, sustainable, and healthy living environments. Specifically, the requirement for a minimum of 20 percent open space ensures the integration of green areas into developments, directly contributing to the City's goal of enhancing public greenspaces. This aligns with the vision's focus on improving environmental quality through landscaping and the inclusion of active living spaces that encourage residents to engage in outdoor activities.

Furthermore, the emphasis on pedestrian-friendly design and sustainable transportation infrastructure aligns with Lakewood's goal of promoting healthy living by reducing reliance on cars and encouraging walking and cycling. The zoning code's focus on shared access points and traffic calming techniques helps create a more walkable community that supports active lifestyles.

The integration of public amenities, such as playgrounds and courtyards, supports the vision's aim to enhance community connections through shared spaces. These features foster social interaction and provide opportunities for both recreational and health-focused activities, which are key to the wellness initiatives outlined in the vision. Additionally, the emphasis on sustainable landscaping practices, such as stormwater management, further supports the City's commitment to environmental stewardship and the protection of natural resources like Lake Erie and the Rocky River.

However, while the PD district aligns well with the broader goals of wellness and sustainability, the flexibility in land use allowed by the PD zoning may not always prioritize higher-density, mixed-use developments. While flexibility in design and parking requirements can foster diverse housing

options, there is an opportunity to further promote compact, interconnected communities that better support walkability and easy access to essential services.

Recommendations for Further Alignment

Refine the Planned Development District

The City should consider refining the Planned Development (PD) district to incentivize compact, mixed-use developments that prioritize accessibility and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. This can be achieved by promoting developments where housing, retail, and recreational spaces are closely integrated, thereby reducing car dependency and encouraging healthier, active lifestyles. By focusing on mixed-use designs that incorporate pedestrian paths, bike lanes, and proximity to essential services, the City can create more vibrant communities that align with Lakewood's vision for wellness and sustainability. These developments would foster walkability, enhance public health, and support the City's goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The City should also consider refining the Planned Development (PD) review process to introduce clearer distinctions between minor and major Planned developments and the level of appropriate review for each.

Additionally, to support a more effective review process, the review timeline for PDs should be extended from 45 days to 90 days to allow for a more comprehensive review and adequate time for input.

Expand Stormwater Management Requirements with Green Infrastructure Solutions

The City should update the PD zoning code to require advanced stormwater management systems that incorporate green infrastructure solutions, such as permeable pavements, bioswales, and green roofs. These strategies would not only improve the quality of stormwater runoff but also reduce the risk of flooding, enhance local biodiversity, and mitigate the urban heat island effect. By incentivizing these practices, the City can ensure that new developments contribute to environmental stewardship goals, including the protection of Lake Erie and the Rocky River. This approach will further align with the City's long-term sustainability objectives.

Ensure Equitable Access to Green Spaces and Recreational Amenities

The City should update the PD zoning code to include requirements for universally accessible green spaces that are designed to accommodate people of all ages and abilities. Developments should ensure that parks and recreational areas are equipped with amenities such as wheelchair-accessible paths, seating areas, and diverse recreational options that foster social interaction and community cohesion. Providing equitable access to these spaces supports the City's wellness goals by encouraging physical activity and fostering an inclusive, vibrant community for all residents.

Propose New Park Zoning District Regulations

To better support Lakewood's community wellness vision, it is recommended that the City establish clearer regulations for the Park District within the zoning code. Although the zoning map currently designates a Park District, the lack of formal regulations restricts the potential for enhancing public greenspaces and integrating parks into the fabric of the community. Clear and detailed regulations for park development, accessibility, and maintenance should be introduced. These regulations

could address park size, location, and connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods to ensure that parks are accessible to all residents. Furthermore, regulations for environmental stewardship, including tree canopy preservation, stormwater management, and sustainable landscaping practices, should be included to align with the City's sustainability goals. Proposing such regulations would ensure that parks play a central role in the City's infrastructure, support active lifestyles, and contribute to the overall well-being of the community, ultimately creating safer, greener, and more vibrant spaces for residents.

Establish Comprehensive Multifamily, Mixed Use, and Commercial Design Standards

- Currently, Lakewood does not have detailed, comprehensive commercial design standards for guiding the aesthetic, function, and site design of nonresidential developments. While Chapter 1129 provides basic zoning requirements for commercial areas, the City lacks clear, cohesive standards to ensure new developments enhance the visual appeal, functionality, and integration of Lakewood's commercial spaces.
- To address this gap, it is recommended that Lakewood implements a set of comprehensive commercial design standards to apply to all new nonresidential developments, including general commercial, mixed-use, and larger residential projects. These standards would ensure that commercial spaces are visually appealing, functionally effective, and seamlessly integrated with their surrounding environment. The standards should cover the following key areas:
 - a. Require that all commercial buildings use durable, high-quality cladding materials that align with the architectural character of the district. Materials like plywood, corrugated metal, and fiberglass composites should be prohibited.
 - b. Promote visual variety by requiring street-facing facades to incorporate architectural features such as ribs, pilasters, changes in materials, or setbacks to break up large, monotonous surfaces.
 - c. Encourage transparency at the street level by mandating a minimum percentage of glazing (windows) on facades facing streets or pedestrian areas. This promotes a pedestrian-friendly environment and strengthens connections between commercial spaces and the public realm.
 - d. Establish clear landscaping standards to screen parking lots, especially those visible from streets or adjacent residential properties. Focus should be placed on perimeter landscaping and green space within parking areas to mitigate the visual and environmental impacts of large parking lots. Stormwater management best practices, like rain gardens and bioswales, should also be allowed as an option for required landscaping to improve environmental sustainability. To align with the City's stormwater fee program, allow developments that implement approved stormwater management practices to qualify for fee reductions or credits.
 - e. Require parking be located behind or to the side of buildings, away from the street-facing view. Landscaping should be used to buffer parking areas and reduce their visual impact, contributing to a more attractive streetscape.
 - f. Clarify requirements regarding the placement of structures and plantings to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, ensuring sight triangles at street and driveway

intersections. The City should also consider requiring the installation of wider sidewalks to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort.

- g. Require larger projects, including those involving the construction of sidewalks, street improvements, and public accommodations to comply with Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) as well as all current ADA and building code standards. This will ensure that these projects are fully accessible and provide safe, equitable access for all individuals, including those with disabilities.
- Establish additional design standards, based on the existing character of Lakewood neighborhoods, for residential development to enable the development of new of duplex, triplex, and quadplex dwellings in R-2 districts. This would promote housing diversity while preserving the architectural character and integrity of residential neighborhoods. To streamline the approval process for minor modifications; such as front porch additions, bay windows, roofline alterations, and small changes to exterior cladding, the City should incorporate objective design and development standards in the Zoning Code for reviewing and regulating these features.
- Establish modern outdoor lighting standards that address LED lighting color rendering and temperature; include lighting zones and lighting zone specific backlight, uplight, and glare standards; and regulate specific lighting types like LED strip lighting which is recommended to be prohibited.

Streamline Sign Regulations

- It is recommended that the City replace the existing Chapter 1329 with new sign regulations to address key gaps in the current code, ensure content neutrality, and provide greater clarity on the types of signs permitted in each zoning district.
- The current code lacks clear distinctions between attached and freestanding signs, as well as permanent and temporary signs, which should be defined in the new regulations.
- The current code includes several content specific sign types, such as use specific identification signs, political signs, and real estate signs. In 2015, as a part of the Reed vs. Town of Gilbert case, the Supreme Court clarified that sign copy is protected speech under the first amendment and that any sign regulation that limits that speech is unconstitutional. To ensure compliance with this decision, content specific standards are proposed to be replaced with standards that regulate the type, size, location, and appearance of signs only.
- The updated code should also address the specific needs of single-tenant buildings, multi-tenant buildings with a single entrance, and multi-tenant buildings with multiple entrances to ensure that signs are proportional to the scale of the building and lot they are located on.
- The new regulations should also address electronic message signs to address issues of timing, brightness, movement, and other factors that impact how safe these signs are for motorists.
- Additionally, the new code should include a Master Sign Plan. The City could require that certain types of development, like multi-tenant buildings and multi-building developments, submit a Master Sign Plan to ensure consistency in sign style, placement, size, etc. throughout the development. The City could make the Master Sign Plan an option that

specific types of development or any development could elect to utilize to receive more flexibility in the strict application of the sign code.

- Allow administrative approval for all signs that comply with the proposed code requirements, rather than requiring approval from the Architectural Board of Review.
- It is recommended that the City allow up to 25% permanent and 25% temporary window signage in commercial areas. This would enable businesses to effectively advertise while preserving a visually appealing and cohesive streetscape.

Mobility – Options, Ease of Movements, Services

Community Vision Summary

Lakewood’s vision for mobility focuses on creating a community with modern infrastructure, public safety, and accessible transportation that serves residents, businesses, and the environment. The City aims to ensure ease of movement, offering transportation options that integrate walking, biking, and transit, while maintaining safety and sustainability.

With over 180 miles of sidewalks and 90 miles of streets, Lakewood is Ohio’s most walkable City. The City is actively repairing and improving sidewalks, with a commitment to complete repairs across the City. Lakewood also boasts robust transit service, including the GCRTA buses and rapid transit stations offering access to downtown Cleveland, University Circle, and the airport. Lakewood's Bicycle Master Plan has led to the installation of miles of bike lanes and bike racks to encourage cycling.

Success for Lakewood means well-integrated transportation systems with clear rules for all modes of travel, energy-efficient lighting, and streets that encourage walking, cycling, and public transit. The City also focuses on universal design, environmental sustainability, and innovative solutions for parking, aligning with zoning code regulations related to infrastructure, accessibility, and sustainability.

Current Alignment with Planning and Zoning Code

The existing parking code in Lakewood aligns with the City's mobility vision in several key areas but also presents opportunities for further alignment. For example, provisions for sustainable infrastructure like stormwater management (Section 1143.10) and the implementation of innovative landscaping (Sections 1143.10, 1143.11) are consistent with the City’s vision of promoting environmental sustainability. These elements support the community’s commitment to reducing carbon emissions and improving energy efficiency, reflecting a modern, eco-friendly approach to infrastructure. The zoning code also encourages multi-modal transportation options by requiring bicycle parking (Section 1143.12) for retail and office uses, which aligns with Lakewood’s emphasis on walking and cycling. Additionally, the allowance for shared parking (Section 1143.11) provides flexibility that supports transit-oriented development and shared mobility solutions.

However, there are areas where the code could better support Lakewood’s vision. While there are allowances for flexibility in parking requirements (Sections 1143.10, 1143.11), the code could further encourage reducing parking spaces in areas with strong transit access to promote alternative transportation modes, aligning with the City’s goal of improving public transit and

reducing car usage. The code also lacks specific provisions for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, which could further align with the vision for sustainable infrastructure.

The landscaping and screening regulations in Lakewood align with the City's mobility vision by enhancing the urban environment, supporting sustainable practices, and improving public spaces. These regulations aim to protect pedestrians, cyclists, and residents from adverse impacts such as noise, glare, and temperature extremes (Section 1141.01), which aligns with the vision's focus on improving public safety and creating walkable streets.

However, while the landscaping code enhances aesthetic appeal and ensures a pleasant environment for residents and pedestrians, there is room for improvement in promoting active transportation. The code mandates landscaping and screening along lot lines, particularly when non-residential uses abut residential areas (Section 1141.02). While this helps preserve the residential character of neighborhoods, it could limit opportunities for more open, pedestrian-friendly spaces that integrate with cycling and walking paths.

Additionally, the code's requirement for landscaping plans for various developments (Section 1141.03) ensures that new projects are aesthetically aligned with Lakewood's character but could do more to promote bike-friendly infrastructure and pedestrian-oriented streetscapes. There is an opportunity to explicitly integrate these modes of transportation into the landscape planning process to further align with the City's mobility vision.

Recommendations for Further Alignment

Promote Sustainable Mobility through Reduced Parking Requirements in Transit-Oriented Areas

The current zoning code addresses multi-modal transportation by incorporating provisions for bicycle parking and shared parking. However, it does not fully encourage sustainable mobility in areas with high transit accessibility. For example, in neighborhoods near GCRTA bus routes or rapid transit stations, the existing parking requirements may still be higher than necessary, leading to excess parking spaces that may discourage the use of public transit, cycling, and walking.

To align with the goal of reducing car dependency, the City should update the zoning code to reduce minimum parking requirements in transit-rich areas, such as those near public transportation hubs, and instead incentivize the use of alternative transportation modes. This could be achieved by introducing transit-oriented development (TOD) principles, where developments near transit nodes would allow reduced parking ratios or even parking exemptions. Such changes would align with the community vision of reducing car dependency and encouraging sustainable transportation choices, helping to foster a more walkable and transit-friendly City.

Additionally, the City Council/Administration is working on Complete Streets legislation, which will further support the integration of active transportation modes into Lakewood's infrastructure. This legislation will reinforce the City's efforts to reduce car dependency by prioritizing walking, biking, and transit. Complete Streets principles align with the City's broader vision by promoting safer, more accessible streets for all modes of transport. Importantly, it will ensure that new developments in transit-oriented areas are in harmony with the goals of reducing parking and fostering sustainable transportation options.

Incorporate Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure into New Developments

Currently, the zoning code does not address the growing demand for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, which is essential for fostering sustainability and supporting the transition to electric vehicles. As more residents and businesses shift toward electric cars, the lack of EV charging stations may pose a barrier to residents and visitors who need these facilities to ensure a seamless transition to clean energy transportation. To better align with the City's commitment to sustainability, the City should introduce specific provisions in the zoning code requiring that new developments, especially those in high-density or commercial zones, include EV charging infrastructure. This can include a percentage of parking spaces being equipped with EV charging stations or making provisions for future installation. This update would ensure that Lakewood stays ahead of transportation trends and supports environmental goals.

Redesign Landscaping Standards to Prioritize Active Transportation

While the current landscaping and screening regulations focus on aesthetic enhancement and environmental protection, they do not emphasize active transportation features like bike lanes, wide sidewalks, or public gathering spaces. These features are essential to achieving Lakewood's vision of becoming a more walkable and bike-friendly City. The City should revise the landscaping code to integrate active transportation features, such as bike lanes, wider pedestrian walkways, and outdoor seating areas into landscaping plans. This would support the community vision by prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists and promoting a healthier and more sustainable environment. Encouraging these features would create inviting spaces for walking and biking, making these modes of transport more accessible and convenient while also enhancing public spaces.

Incentivize Green Infrastructure in Mobility and Public Space Design

The landscaping code does not currently address the need for integrating green infrastructure elements, such as rain gardens, bioswales, or permeable pavement, into transportation and public space designs. These elements would improve both the aesthetic quality and environmental sustainability of the City's mobility network. Green infrastructure would also enhance the resilience of urban spaces by managing stormwater and improving air quality. The City should introduce incentives for incorporating green infrastructure into transportation corridors, especially along bike lanes and pedestrian pathways. This could include adding features like bioswales, permeable paving, or green roofs, which would not only support stormwater management but also improve the urban environment for residents and pedestrians.

Chapter 2: Miscellaneous Recommendations

This section highlights additional recommendations received from planning staff and other stakeholders. These recommendations fall outside the key themes section (Chapter 1) of this report and focus on “clean-up” items intended to update and refine the current code, where necessary. These items do not require detailed discussion or policy direction and are not included in the main themes. Their purpose is to address minor adjustments or improvements that will enhance the clarity and functionality of the code without altering its overall structure or core objectives.

Existing Code Issue	Existing Code Section(s)	Recommendation
Chapter 2: Base and Overlay Zoning District Standards		
Unroofed patio decks less than 300 square-feet and forty-two inches above grade are permitted as an accessory use.	1121.03 (d)	Permit unroofed patio decks under 200 square feet, regardless of elevation, and allow the replacement of an existing unroofed patio deck, provided it maintains the same size and footprint.
Sections 1121.10(b), 1123.10(b), and 1127.10(b) allow accessory structures, with masonry walls, no openings, and no roof projections to have reduced setback requirements.	1121.10(b), 1123.10(b), 1127.10(b)	Update these sections to ensure full compliance with the Ohio Building Code (OBC) and the Residential Code of Ohio (ROC) .
Section 1125.10 (a) requires accessory structures to be constructed with non-combustible materials that provide a two-hour fire rating for walls and ceilings, and prohibits them from being located within three feet of a side or rear property line.	1125.10(a)	Update this section to ensure full compliance with the Ohio Building Code (OBC) and the Residential Code of Ohio (ROC).
Schedule 1129.06 footnote 3 requires roof exhausts to be 10 feet from the property line.	Schedule 1129.06 footnote 3	Update the footnote to ensure full compliance with the Ohio Building Code (OBC) and the Residential Code of Ohio (ROC).

Existing Code Issue	Existing Code Section(s)	Recommendation
The Parks District is included on the zoning map, but there are no regulations for these districts. The Parks District also does not have an intent or purpose section in the code.	n/a	Establish and incorporate regulations for the parks district into the zoning code. Add language describing the intent of the Parks Zoning District.
Chapter 3: Use Standards		
Residential wind turbines are allowed in residential districts with the approval of a conditional use permit and subject to all applicable local, State, and Federal laws. Additional use and development standards are within Chapter 1160 Wind Energy Facilities	1161.03(x), 1160	Allow small residential wind facilities and establish standards that are appropriate for the size and zone.
The current code provides supplemental regulations for outdoor dining facilities. Current regulations require outdoor dining areas to be constructed of an approved hard surface material meeting applicable United States Access Board Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG).	1161.03	Introduce incentives for businesses that promote accessibility and ADA compliance and establish clearer guidelines to ensure accessibility standards are met.
In certain zones, grooming services are permitted as a conditional use, but only on specific streets due to noise concerns near residential areas.	Schedule 1129.02 footnote 7	Evaluate current zoning regulations for grooming services, consider allowing the use in more areas, and assess if limiting them to certain streets due to noise concerns is still necessary.
The current code does not provide standards for residential and commercial solar panels.	n/a	Allow solar panels in residential and commercial zones and establish development and design standards to ensure compatibility with the surrounding environment.
Chapter 7: Access and Mobility Standards		
There is not a minimum size for garages; the only standard is that garages are currently required to have a working door.	1133.03	Establish a minimum size for garage doors and ensure compliance with the Ohio Building Code (OBC).

Existing Code Issue	Existing Code Section(s)	Recommendation
Chapter 11: Definitions		
The current code does not have definitions for different lot types, specifically irregularly shaped lots.	1103.02	Add definitions for different types of lots; consider adding picture examples.
Currently, the building height is measured from grade to peak for primary structures and sheds. For garage structures, the height is calculated using the deck line for mansard roofs and the midpoint of the eaves and peak for gable, hip, and gambrel roofs.	1103.02(q)	The current definition will be revised to define building height as the vertical distance from the average finished grade at the front lot line to the highest point of the roof, with the exception that the garage height will be measured at the midpoint of the roof. Specific exceptions for multi-building sites and projections such as parapets and mechanical equipment will also apply. Diagrams illustrating the various building types, including flat, mansard, gable, hip, and gambrel roofs, will be included to make it easier for the reader.
The current process for approving and enforcing outdoor dining permits requires reform, as it does not adequately address key accessibility concerns, particularly those outlined in Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG). Issues such as the slopes and cross slopes of pedestrian access routes (PAR) and outdoor dining areas are not properly accounted for in the existing approval process.	1129.13	Revise the outdoor dining permit approval process to ensure compliance with PROWAG standards, specifically addressing the slopes and cross slopes of pedestrian access routes and outdoor dining areas.
The current code lacks a definition for a “buildable lot,” leading to ambiguity regarding which parcels are eligible for development, particularly those that do not meet the required width and front setback standards.	n/a	Add a clear definition for a “buildable lot” that specifies minimum requirements for lot width and front setback to ensure consistency and clarity in determining eligibility for development.

Chapter 3. Lot Standards Applicability Analysis

This lot standards applicability analysis includes both a nonconformities analysis and a subdivision opportunities analysis. The nonconformities analysis compares the existing minimum lot area and width requirements of a district with existing development within that district. The analysis provides insight on whether regulations reflect existing development patterns or if they should be adjusted to ease the burden on landowners as they seek to reinvest in their property and on staff and elected/appointed officials as they consider variance requests.

The nonconformities analysis first determines the number of parcels in each district that do not conform with the existing lot size and width requirements. It then determines the number of parcels in each district that would remain nonconforming if the lot area and width requirements were reduced.

After alternate lot area and width standards are tested, and nonconformity levels are brought down to approximately 10 percent, the subdivision opportunities analysis is conducted. The subdivision opportunity analysis tests the alternate standards to determine whether they would create new subdivision opportunities that do not exist with the current standards. A subdivision opportunity is a lot that is two times the minimum lot area and two times the minimum lot width and therefore could be split into two lots.

The lot standards applicability analysis was conducted for the following Districts:

R1L Single-Family Low Density District

R1M Single-Family Medium Density District

R1H Single-Family High Density District

R2 Single- and Two-Family Residential District

L Lagoon District

R1L Single-Family Low-Density District

Nonconformities Analysis

The analysis revealed that 45 percent of the R1L parcels, or 149 of the 331 total parcels, do not comply with the existing area minimum, while 26 percent, or 87 parcels, do not comply with the existing width minimum. To understand which lot area and width requirements would be more appropriate for the district, alternate minimums were tested as shown in the table below.

R1L	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Lot Area		
Existing - 14,000 sq ft	149	45%
Alternative - 13,500 sq ft	139	42%
Alternative 13,000 sq ft	126	38%
Alternative - 12,500 sq ft	119	36%
Alternative - 12,000 sq ft	103	31%
Alternative - 11,500 sq ft	95	29%
Alternative - 11,000 sq ft	78	24%
Alternative - 10,500 sq ft	71	21%
Alternative - 10,000 sq ft	62	19%
Alternative - 9,500 sq ft	56	17%
Alternative - 9,000 sq ft	35	11%
Alternative - 8,500 sq ft	28	8%
Alternative - 8,000 sq ft	18	5%
Lot Width		
Existing - 70 ft	87	26%
Alternative - 65 ft	72	22%
Alternative - 60 ft	51	15%
Alternative - 55 ft	47	14%
Alternative - 50 ft	25	8%
Alternative - 45 ft	11	3%

The analysis revealed that a more appropriate lot area standard would be 9,000 or 8,500 square feet and a more appropriate lot width standard would be 50 feet.

Subdivision Opportunities Analysis

To understand whether the reduced lot area and width minimums would create new subdivision opportunities, the alternates were tested to determine the number of new subdivision opportunities each would create. A total of 12 opportunities for subdivision exist under the City’s current R1L standards. The new opportunities for subdivision under alternate standards are detailed in the table below.

R1L	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Subdivision Opportunities		
9,000 sq ft / 50 ft	51	15%
8,500 sq ft / 50 ft	54	16%

Recommendation

Based on the results of this analysis, it is recommended that the R1L District lot area minimum be reduced to 9,000 square feet and the lot width minimum be revised to 50 feet.

R1M Single-Family Medium Density District

Nonconformities Analysis

The analysis revealed that 32 percent of the R1M parcels, or 137 of the 429 total parcels, do not comply with the existing area minimum, while 44 percent, or 187 parcels, do not comply with the existing width minimum. To understand which lot area and width requirements would be more appropriate for the district, alternate minimums were tested as shown in the table below.

R1M	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Lot Area		
Existing - 9,000 sq ft	137	32%
Alternative - 8,500 sq ft	126	29%
Alternative 8,000 sq ft	96	22%
Alternative - 7,500 sq ft	91	21%
Alternative - 7,000 sq ft	74	17%
Alternative - 6,500 sq ft	40	9%
Alternative - 6,000 sq ft	25	6%
Lot Width		
Existing - 60 ft	187	44%
Alternative - 55 ft	135	31%
Alternative - 50 ft	92	21%
Alternative - 45 ft	42	10%
Alternative - 40 ft	12	3%

The analysis revealed that a more appropriate lot area standard would be 6,500 or 6,000 square feet and a more appropriate lot width standard would be 45 feet.

Subdivision Opportunities Analysis

To understand whether the reduced lot area and width minimums would create new subdivision opportunities, the alternates were tested to determine the number of new subdivision opportunities each would create. A total of 20 opportunities for subdivision exist under the City's current R1M standards. The new opportunities for subdivision under alternate standards are detailed in the table below.

R1M	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Subdivision Opportunities		
6,500 sq ft / 45 ft	38	9%
6,000 sq ft / 45 ft	41	10%

Recommendation

Based on the results of this analysis, it is recommended that the R1M District lot area minimum be reduced to either 6,500 or 6,000 square feet and the lot width minimum be revised to 45 feet.

R1H Single-Family High-Density District

Nonconformities Analysis

The analysis revealed that 26 percent of the R1H parcels, or 1,176 of the 4,472 total parcels, do not comply with the existing area minimum, while 25 percent, or 1,133 parcels, do not comply with the existing width minimum. To understand which lot area and width requirements would be more appropriate for the district, alternate minimums were tested as shown in the table below.

R1H	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Lot Area		
Existing - 5,000 sq ft	1176	26%
Alternative - 4,500 sq ft	633	14%
Alternative 4,000 sq ft	345	8%
Alternative - 3,500 sq ft	200	4%
Lot Width		
Existing - 40 ft	1133	25%
Alternative - 35 ft	62	1%

The analysis revealed that a more appropriate lot area standard would be 4,000 square feet and a more appropriate lot width standard would be 35 feet.

Subdivision Opportunities Analysis

To understand whether the reduced lot area and width minimums would create new subdivision opportunities, the alternates were tested to determine the number of new subdivision opportunities each would create. A total of 70 opportunities for subdivision exist under the City’s current R1H standards. The new opportunities for subdivision under alternate standards are detailed in the table below.

R1H	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Subdivision Opportunities		
4,000 sq ft / 35 ft	57	1%

Recommendation

Based on the results of this analysis, it is recommended that the R1H District lot area minimum be reduced to 4,000 square feet and the lot width minimum be revised to 35 feet.

R2 Single- and Two-Family Residential District

Nonconformities Analysis

The analysis revealed that 53 percent of the R2 parcels, or 4,172 of the 7,919 total parcels, do not comply with the existing area minimum, while 49 percent, or 3,893 parcels, do not comply with the existing width minimum. To understand which lot area and width requirements would be more appropriate for the district, alternate minimums were tested as shown in the table below.

R2	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Lot Area		
Existing - 5,000 sq ft	4172	53%
Alternative - 4,500 sq ft	2577	33%
Alternative 4,000 sq ft	698	9%
Alternative - 3,500 sq ft	275	3%
Lot Width		
Existing - 40 ft	3893	49%
Alternative - 35 ft	398	5%

The analysis revealed that a more appropriate lot area standard would be 4,000 square feet and a more appropriate lot width standard would be 35 feet.

Subdivision Opportunities Analysis

To understand whether the reduced lot area and width minimums would create new subdivision opportunities, the alternates were tested to determine the number of new subdivision opportunities each would create. A total of 58 opportunities for subdivision exist under the City’s current R2 standards. The new opportunities for subdivision under alternate standards are detailed in the table below.

R2	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Subdivision Opportunities		
4,000 sq ft / 35 ft	52	1%

Recommendation

Based on the results of this analysis, it is recommended that the R2 District lot area minimum be reduced to 4,000 square feet and the lot width minimum be revised to 35 feet.

L Lagoon District

Nonconformities Analysis

The analysis revealed that 41 percent of the L parcels, or 19 of the 46 total parcels, do not comply with the existing area minimum, while 59 percent, or 27 parcels, do not comply with the existing width minimum. To understand which lot area and width requirements would be more appropriate for the district, alternate minimums were tested as shown in the table below.

L	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Lot Area		
Existing - 2,400 sq ft	19	41%
Alternative - 2,000 sq ft	15	33%
Alternative 1,500 sq ft	3	7%
Lot Width		
Existing - 25 ft	27	59%
Alternative - 20 ft	7	15%
Alternative - 15 ft	2	4%

The analysis revealed that a more appropriate lot area standard would be 1,500 square feet and a more appropriate lot width standard would be 20 or 15 feet.

Subdivision Opportunities Analysis

To understand whether the reduced lot area and width minimums would create new subdivision opportunities in the L District, the alternates were tested to determine the number of new subdivision opportunities each would create. A total of 9 opportunities for subdivision exist under the City’s current L standards. The new opportunities for subdivision under alternate standards are detailed in the table below.

L	# of Parcels	% of Parcels
Subdivision Opportunities		
1,500 sq ft / 20 ft	0	0%
1,500 sq ft / 15 ft	2	4%

Recommendation

Based on the results of this analysis, it is recommended that the L District lot area minimum be reduced to 1,500 square feet and the lot width minimum be revised to 20 feet.

Chapter 4: Proposed Code Structure

Land development regulations are best organized in a manner that makes them straightforward for the City to administer and for the public to navigate. This type of user-friendly format employs tables and graphics where appropriate, organizes related information in the same sections to avoid redundancy, and orders sections sequentially with those that are most generally applicable and frequently referenced at the beginning of the document.

Lakewood's land development regulations are currently spread across various sections of the Codified Ordinances, making them difficult to navigate. The existing planning and zoning code is in Part Eleven, divided into multiple titles: Title 1 (General Provisions), Title 3 (District Regulations), Title 5 (Supplemental Regulations), Title 7 (Administration and Enforcement) Within the chapters located under these titles, information that is often referenced together is found in different areas, requiring excessive cross-referencing. To enhance clarity and accessibility, it is recommended that Lakewood consolidate its zoning, subdivision, and sign ordinances into a proposed Planning and Zoning Code. The proposed Code would be organized into 10 chapters, as outlined below, to streamline the document and improve its user-friendliness.

Please note: the proposed Code structure is subject to change as the document is developed.

Chapter 1: Purpose and Applicability

Chapter 2: Base and Overlay Zoning Districts Standards

Chapter 3: Use Standards

Chapter 4: General Development Standards

Chapter 5: Building Design Standards

Chapter 6: Access and Mobility Standards

Chapter 7: Sign Standards

Chapter 8: Administrative and Enforcement Procedures

Chapter 9: Nonconformities

Chapter 10: Definitions

Chapter 1: Purpose and Applicability

Purpose and Applicability should include high-level information regarding the title, authority, jurisdiction, purpose, and intent of the Planning and Zoning Code. Currently, the zoning, subdivision, and additional zoning regulations, including the sign ordinance, have separate purpose sections that should be consolidated. In addition, provisions located in Title One, Chapter 1101, and Chapter 1131 of the existing ordinance should be relocated to Chapter 1: Purpose and Applicability, including:

- **Section 1101.01** Title
- **Section 1101.02** Comprehensive Plan
- **Section 1101.03** Purposes
- **Section 1101.004** Intent
- **Section 1101.05** Separability Clause
- **Section 1101.06** Interpretation
- **Section 1101.07** Use of Code Section References
- **Section 1165.09** Severability.

Chapter 2: Base and Overlay Zoning Districts Standards

Chapter 2: Base and Overlay Zoning District Standards should establish the purpose and intent statements as well as dimensional standards for all base and overlay zoning districts in Lakewood. Additional detail regarding recommended changes to the City's base districts is included in Chapter 1 of this report. Additionally, the subsection 1133.01; Occupancy of Dwelling subsection, which currently states, "No more than one (1) family shall occupy a dwelling or dwelling unit", will be eliminated to be compliant with what is recommended as part of the zoning code refresh.

- **Chapter 1121** Single-Family Residential Districts
 - **Section 1121.01** Height regulations.
 - **Section 1121.06** Lot area and frontage regulations.
 - **Section 1121.07** Minimum yard requirements for principal buildings.
 - **Section 1121.09** Maximum lot area coverage.
 - **Section 1121.10** Additional accessory structure regulations.
 - **Section 1121.12** Cluster Homes
- **Chapter 1123** Single- and Two-Family Residential Districts
 - **Section 1123.05** Height Regulations
 - **Section 1123.06** Lot area and frontage regulations.
 - **Section 1123.07** Minimum yard requirements for principal buildings.
 - **Section 1123.09** Maximum lot area coverage.
 - **Section 1123.10** Additional accessory structure regulations.
 - **Section 1123.12** Cluster Homes.
- **Chapter 1125** Lagoon District
 - **Section 1125.04** Height Restrictions.
 - **Section 1125.05** Lot area and frontage regulations.
 - **Section 1125.06** Side and rear yard requirements for principal buildings.
 - **Section 1125.09** Maximum lot area coverage.

- **Section 1125.10** Additional accessory structure regulations.
- **Chapter 1127** Multiple-Family Residential Districts
 - **Section 1127.05** Height Regulations.
 - **Section 1127.06** Lot area and frontage regulations.
 - **Section 1127.07** Minimum yard requirements for principal buildings.
 - **Section 1127.09** Maximum lot area coverage.
 - **Section 1127.10** Additional accessory structure regulations.
- **Chapter 1129** Commercial Districts
 - **Section 1129.04** Accessory use regulations.
 - **Section 1129.05** Lot area and frontage requirements.
 - **Section 1129.06** Yard requirements for principal uses.
 - **Section 1129.07** Height regulations.
- **Chapter 1131** Industrial District
 - **Section 1131.05** Prohibitions.
 - **Section 1131.06** Height regulation.
 - **Section 1131.07** Lot area and width regulations.
 - **Section 1131.08** Yard regulations.
- **Chapter 1156** Planned Development
 - **Section 1156.01** Purpose.
 - **Section 1156.02** Location of Planned Developments.
 - **Section 1156.04** Planned Developments.
 - **Section 1156.05** Design principles.
 - **Section 1156.06** Deviations from other regulations.
- **Chapter 1133** Additional District Regulations
 - **Section 1133.02** Structure in front of building line.
 - **Section 1133.04** Frontage.
 - **Section 1133.06** Conversion of single-family structure prohibited.
 - **Section 1133.07** Measurement of building height.
 - **Section 1133.08** Demolition or removal of principal structures on commercial or industrial properties.
 - **Section 1133.09** Demolition or removal of residential structures.
- **Chapter 1135** Mixed Use Overlay District
 - **Section 1135.08** Minimum lot area, width, coverage and height.
 - **Section 1135.09** Minimum yards.

Chapter 3: Use Standards

Chapter 3: Use Standards should establish all allowed uses and any supplemental use standards. Currently, the permitted and accessory uses of each district are located under various chapters of Title Three: Districts Regulations. These separate lists are proposed to be consolidated into tables to make them easier to navigate and to compare what is allowed in different districts. The content of this chapter will replace the following existing code sections, with outdated or redundant provisions being removed as we draft the uses and district chapters.

- **Chapter 1121** Single-Family Residential Districts
 - **Section 1121.02** Permitted principal uses.
 - **Section 1121.03** Permitted accessory uses.
 - **Section 1121.04** Conditionally permitted uses.
- **Chapter 1123** Single- and Two-Family Residential Districts
 - **Section 1123.02** Permitted principal uses.
 - **Section 1123.03** Permitted accessory uses.
 - **Section 1123.04** Conditionally permitted uses.
 - **Section 1123.11** Supplemental regulations for adult family homes.
- **Chapter 1125** Lagoon District
 - **Section 1125.02** Permitted principal uses.
 - **Section 1123.03** Permitted accessory uses.
- **Chapter 1127** Multiple-Family Residential Districts
 - **Section 1127.02** Permitted principal uses.
 - **Section 1127.03** Permitted accessory uses.
 - **Section 1127.04** Conditionally permitted uses.
 - **Section 1127.11** Supplemental regulations for adult family homes and adult group homes.
- **Chapter 1129** Commercial Districts
 - **Section 1129.02** Principal and conditional permitted uses.
 - **Section 1129.03** Accessory uses.
 - **Section 1129.09** Supplemental regulations for gasoline stations.
 - **Section 1129.10** Supplemental regulations for motor vehicle sales and leasing.
 - **Section 1129.11** Supplemental regulations for parking decks and parking garages.
 - **Section 1129.12** Supplemental regulations for mixed-use structures.
 - **Section 1129.13** Supplemental regulations for outdoor dining facility.
 - **Section 1129.14** Supplemental regulations for 24-hour operation.
 - **Section 1129.15** Supplemental regulations for media stores.
 - **Section 1129.16** Supplemental regulations for extended business hours of operation.
 - **Section 1129.17** Supplemental regulations for drive-through facilities.
- **Chapter 1131** Industrial District
 - **Section 1131.02** Permitted principal uses.
 - **Section 1131.03** Permitted accessory uses.
 - **Section 1131.04** Conditionally permitted uses.
- **Chapter 1133** Additional District Regulations

- **Section 1133.03** Garages.
- **Chapter 1135** Mixed Use Overlay District
 - **Section 1135.05** Principal and conditionally permitted uses.
 - **Section 1135.06** Accessory uses and structure.
 - **Section 1135.07** Additional uses.
 - **Section 1135.11** Hours of operation in residential district base zone.
- **Chapter 1145** Home Occupations
- **Section 1147.02** Regulations. (Recreational Equipment and Other Vehicles)
- **Chapter 1157** Antennas
- **Chapter 1159** Wireless Telecommunication Facilities
- **Chapter 1160** Wind Energy Facility
- **Chapter 1161** Conditional Uses
- **Chapter 1163** Sexually Oriented Businesses
- **Chapter 1165** Marijuana Dispensaries
 - **Sections 1165.01** Purpose.
 - **Sections 1165.03** Location of marijuana dispensaries.
 - **Section 1165.04** Design guidelines for marijuana dispensaries.
 - **Section 1165.07** Security Plan.
 - **Section 1165.08** Hearing; renewal; revocation.

Chapter 4: General Development Standards

Chapter 4: General Development Standards should include standards that are broadly applicable to development throughout Lakewood, regardless of district or use.

In this Chapter, the City’s existing open space and natural features preservation language will be replaced with new standards that require a minimum percentage of the development site area to be set aside as open space. The required percentage should vary by district and should incentivize the preservation of natural features such as mature tree stands, natural water bodies, and areas with steep slopes. This section will also include new landscaping standards to replace those currently found in the regulations for each zoning district.

Chapter 4 will also include subdivision standards that encompass only those standards relevant to subdivision activities. The content of this chapter will replace Title Three of the existing code. The content of Chapter 4 will replace the following existing code sections:

- **Chapter 1141** Landscaping and Screening
- **Chapter 1153** Fences
 - **Section 1153.02** Regulations.
 - **Section 1153.03** Fence Placement and Types.
 - **Section 1153.04** Additional Fence Regulations.
- **Chapter 1155** Subdivision Regulations
 - **Section 1155.01** Purpose.
 - **Section 1155.03** General requirements.
 - **Section 1155.08** Performance and maintenance bonds.

Chapter 5: Building Design Standards

Chapter 5: Building Design Standards should include new standards for the design of multi-family, mixed-use, and commercial buildings, including exterior building cladding materials, glazing, building entryway design, façade design and articulation, and roof design. The new standards should replace Section 1182.03 and should vary by use or district as appropriate to ensure the individual character and purpose of each district is reflected.

The Chapter should also include use-specific building design standards as needed. For example, duplex, triplex, and quadplex design standards can be established to ensure their visual consistency within existing neighborhoods. Additionally, the Chapter should include design standards for single-family residence front porches to promote cohesive architectural character and streamline the process by providing clear and consistent standards.

Chapter 6: Access and Mobility Standards

Chapter 6: Access and Mobility Standards should include regulations that pertain to vehicle, pedestrian, and cyclist access and connectivity, such as frontage improvements; street design (informed by Complete Street standards); internal access drive standards; vehicle parking; loading areas; driveways; bicycle parking; and sidewalks, trails, and pedestrian walkways. The content of this Chapter will address the following existing code section:

- **Section 1121.08** Off-street parking. (Single-Family Residential Districts)
- **Section 1123.08** Off-street parking. (Single- and Two-Family Residential Districts)
- **Section 1125.08** Off-street parking. (Lagoon District)
- **Section 1127.08** Off-street parking. (Multiple-Family Residential Districts)
- **Section 1129.08** Off-street parking. (Commercial Districts)
- **Section 1131.09** Off-street parking. (Industrial Districts)
- **Section 1133.05** Parking of commercial vehicles. (Additional District Regulations)
- **Chapter 1141** Parking
- **Section 1165.05** Off-street parking. (Marijuana Dispensaries)

Chapter 7: Sign Standards

Chapter 8: Sign Standards should replace Chapter 1183: Sign Regulations and section 1311.05: Posting of Signs in the building code.

The existing regulations are proposed to be replaced to ensure content neutrality, improve clarity, and provide flexibility in a manner that requires high quality but allows for variety and creative design. The Chapter should also include incentives for improved sign quality in exchange for increased sign area or height allowances.

- **Chapter 1151** Signs in Residential Districts
- **Section 1165.06** Sign regulations for marijuana dispensaries. (Marijuana Dispensaries)

Chapter 8: Administrative and Enforcement Procedures

Administrative and Enforcement Procedures should include all procedures for the administration and enforcement of the Planning and Zoning Code. The City's procedures and standards for administration and enforcement are currently located across several sections of the existing Zoning Code, including:

- **Chapter 1155** Subdivision Regulations
 - **Section 1155.04** Procedures for minor subdivisions.
 - **Section 1155.05** Procedures for major subdivisions.
 - **Section 1155.06** Procedures for lot consolidations and resubdivision.
 - **Section 1155.07** Procedures for lot splits.
- **Chapter 1156** Planned Development
 - **Section 1156.03** Standards for review of a preliminary PD plan.
 - **Section 1156.04** Planned Developments.
 - **Section 1156.07** Performance and maintenance bonds.
- **Section 1155.02** Definitions
- **Chapter 1171** Administrative Powers and Duties
- **Chapter 1173** Procedures for Conditional Use and Occupancy Permits, Variances, and Appeals; Determination of Similar Use; Fees; Amendments
- **Chapter 1175** Enforcement and Penalties

Chapter 9: Nonconformities

Chapter 10: Nonconformities should be derived from the current Chapter 1191: Nonconformities, Structures and Lots and the provisions regarding non-conforming signs in Section 1183.11.

- **Chapter 1149** Non-Conformities

Chapter 10: Definitions

Chapter 11: Definitions should consolidate all definitions relevant to the City's zoning, subdivision, and sign ordinances.

- **Section 1134.02** Definitions (Historic Preservation Districts (HPD) and Historic Properties (HP))
- **Section 1147.01** Definitions. (Recreational Equipment and Other Vehicles)
- **Section 1153.01** Definitions. (Fences)
- **Section 1155.02** Definitions. (Subdivision Regulations)
- **Section 1165.02** Definitions. (Marijuana Dispensaries)

Chapter 5: Research Summary

This chapter of the report details how other communities have addressed issues and topics like those Lakewood seeks to address as a part of the Planning and Zoning Code Update process. The issues examined were identified based on feedback from the public, staff, and City officials during the project kick off phase. The comparative communities discussed include the following Ohio communities: Shaker Heights, Cleveland Heights, and Portsmouth. Additionally, River Forest, Illinois; Winnetka, Illinois; St. Joseph, Michigan; and Cambridge, Maryland were also included in the comparison. Where topics have not yet been addressed by the comparative communities, a comparison of current regulations with best practices is provided instead. The topics and the comparative communities researched each include:

Improve Flexibility for ADUs

Research Summary
Current Regulations Comparison

Streamline Review and Approval Procedures

Research Summary
Current Regulations Comparison

Enhance Enforcement Capabilities

Research Summary
Shaker Heights, OH
River Forest, IL
St. Joseph, MI
Escalating Penalties for Multiple Offenses
Current Regulations Comparison

Right-Size Residential Parking Requirements

Research Summary
Cleveland Heights, OH
Portsmouth, OH
Cambridge, MD
Winnetka, IL
Current Regulations Comparison

Encourage Accessibility and Enhance ADA Compliance

Guidance from AARP and ADA

Best Practices
Example 1: Universal Design and Visitability

Overview of the TOD Zoning Study

Improve Flexibility for ADUs

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a secondary, smaller housing unit located on the same lot as a primary single-family home. ADUs can be attached to the main house, detached, or built within the existing structure, providing additional living space for family members, renters, or caregivers.

Research Summary

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) offers recommendations for updating municipal zoning codes that currently do not allow ADUs in all single-family zoning districts. To remove barriers to ADU construction, the AARP suggests zoning amendments that would permit one ADU on any lot where a single-family home is allowed. This could include internal, attached, or detached ADUs. By allowing for an additional dwelling unit on these lots, local officials can create opportunities for more flexible housing options while ensuring the ADU remains subordinate to the primary residence. These changes help expand housing choices and support aging in place.

Current Regulations Comparison

Lakewood's current zoning code restricts ADU development by allowing ADUs only as a conditional use in the R2 Single- and Two-Family District, meaning ADUs are permitted only with Commission approval and only in limited areas of the City. This approach does not align with the AARP's recommendations, which advocate for ADUs to be permitted by right in all single-family districts. Specifically, Lakewood's zoning code does not permit ADUs in the R1L Single-Family Low-Density District, R1M Single-Family Medium Density District, or R1H Single-Family High-Density District, limiting housing flexibility and missing the opportunity to support more inclusive housing options.

Streamline Review and Approval Procedures

Review and approval procedures generally involve submitting applications and undergoing evaluations by staff or a commission to obtain the necessary permits to ensure compliance with local regulations. By streamlining these procedures and implementing clear and specific standards, the City can reduce administrative delays, lower costs, and simplify the development process, making it easier for property owners and local developers to encourage community growth and comply with the standards established.

Research Summary

Objective Design and Development Standards (ODDS) offer a practical way to streamline the housing approval process. By providing clear, predictable guidelines for new development, ODDS allow for more efficient, consistent, and timely project reviews. Unlike subjective regulations, which can lead to lengthy and uncertain approvals, ODDS create fixed standards that apply to the design and build out of parcels to ensure that both developers and the community know upfront what design expectations must be met. Projects that comply with ODDS can often be processed administratively, bypassing extensive hearings and expediting the approval process. This benefits developers, who save time and resources by understanding requirements early, and planning staff, who can review more complete applications with fewer revisions. While some projects may still

require discretionary review for permits or subdivisions, ODDS significantly reduce the overall complexity and time involved in housing approvals.

Current Regulations Comparison

The City currently has Residential Architectural Design Standards in place pertaining to residential buildings found in Chapter 1325 of the Codified Ordinances. The design standards serve as more general guidelines, requiring the submission of a design review application and approval by the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) for various residential alterations, including demolition, new construction, ADU modifications, and visible exterior changes. Administrative review may be considered for applications with minimal impact on a property's exterior. The Secretary of the ABR and the Chairperson assess whether an alteration qualifies for administrative review. If it does not, the application is sent to the full ABR for further evaluation. This process does not align with best practices for streamlining review and approval. By adopting Objective Design and Development Standards (ODDS), the City could implement clearer, more predictable criteria, significantly reducing review times and creating a more efficient pathway to project completion.

Enhance Enforcement Capabilities

City staff have found that the City of Lakewood currently lacks some of the tools needed to effectively enforce its development regulations. Adequate enforcement capabilities are essential to ensuring long-term compliance with these regulations.

Research Summary

Shaker Heights, OH

Shaker Heights includes language in their code that grants enforcement authority to the Zoning Administrator, Planning Director, Zoning Enforcement Officer or their designees. They can inspect properties, issue violation notices, and take immediate action if public safety is at risk. Violations are punishable as first-degree misdemeanors, with each day of non-compliance treated as a separate offense. Legal remedies include injunctions, abatement, and permit revocations for non-compliance with zoning requirements or conditions.

River Forest, IL

Chapter 22 of the Zoning Title gives authority to the Zoning Administrator to enforce the Zoning Title. Section 10.22.2 states that any person who violates, disobeys, omits, neglects or refuses to comply with or who resists the enforcement of any of the provisions of this Zoning Title shall be fined not more than seven hundred fifty dollars for each offense. A separate offense shall be deemed committed for each day that a violation is permitted to exist.

St. Joseph, MI

In St. Joseph, enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance is managed by the Zoning Administrator, who ensures compliance with issued permits, investigates potential violations, issues violation notices, and performs other enforcement duties authorized by the City or Planning Commission (Article XIV). Article XXIII establishes the enforcement mechanisms and penalties for violations. Zoning violations are considered a "nuisance per se," meaning they can be prosecuted or abated according

to the Ordinance or state law. Violations are treated as civil infractions, with fines ranging from \$100 to \$500, plus court costs, and each day of non-compliance is considered a separate offense. The City may also seek injunctive relief or other legal remedies. Additionally, the Zoning Administrator will not issue new permits to violators unless it is to correct the violation. These rights and remedies are cumulative, meaning they can be applied alongside other legal actions to address zoning infractions.

Escalating Penalties for Multiple Offenses

The penalties section of the current codes of the Shaker Heights, OH, River Forest, IL, and St. Joseph, MI do not include an escalator for multiple offenses. While each community has penalties for zoning violations, such as fines and treating each day of violation as a separate offense, none of the codes explicitly establish an increasing penalty structure for repeated offenses within a specific timeframe. To strengthen enforcement in Lakewood, we have added a recommendation that the Lakewood city attorney further investigate the legality of establishing an escalating penalty system for repeated violations within a defined period. Refer to Enhance Code Enforcement Capabilities section of the Chapter 01 of the report.

Current Regulations Comparison

Chapter 1175 of the Codified Ordinances outlines the enforcement procedures and penalties for violations of City regulations. Individuals who violate any provision of the Code, including conditions related to variances or conditionally permitted uses, are guilty of a minor misdemeanor, unless they have been convicted of a prior offense under the Code within the past two years. In that case, the violation is classified as a fourth-degree misdemeanor. Instead of immediately prosecuting, violators may be issued a non-compliance ticket, allowing them to pay a \$75 administrative fee and correct the violation within 14 days. Failure to comply may result in further penalties, additional tickets, or prosecution. The Commissioner is responsible for establishing rules to implement this process.

Right-Size Residential Parking Requirements

Parking requirements in residential zoning districts ensure that new developments provide adequate parking to meet the needs of residents and prevent overcrowding. These requirements help manage traffic flow, reduce on-street parking demand, and support the functionality of the area. By lowering the required number of parking spaces, cities can promote more efficient land use, freeing up space for additional housing, green areas, or commercial developments. This can also lead to reduced construction costs for developers, potentially lowering overall development costs and encouraging more affordable housing options.

Research Summary

Cleveland Heights, OH

Section 1161.03 of the City’s Zoning Code outlines the number of off-street parking spaces that are required for residential uses.

Residential Use	Minimum Spaces Required
Single-family dwellings with 2 or fewer bedrooms	1 space per each dwelling unit
Single-family dwellings with greater than 2 bedrooms	2 spaces for each dwelling unit
Two-family dwellings	2 spaces for each dwelling unit, of which not less than 0.5 spaces per dwelling unit shall be enclosed
Townhouses	2 spaces for each dwelling unit, of which both spaces per dwelling unit shall be enclosed
Multiple-family dwelling	1 space per each dwelling unit
Senior citizen apartments	1 space per each dwelling unit
Lodging house, boarding houses	1 space for each bed
Dormitories, sororities and fraternities	1 space for each 3 persons based on the maximum capacity as established in the Housing Code
Nursing homes	1 space per 3 beds

Portsmouth, OH

Section 1193.13 of the City’s Zoning Code establishes the minimum number of off-street parking spaces that are required for residential uses.

Residential Use	Minimum Spaces Required
Single-family detached and semi detached, two family, and single-family attached	Two (2) spaces per dwelling unit, exclusive of garage
Multifamily	1.5 spaces for each studio or 1-bedroom unit and 2 spaces for each unit with 2 or more bedrooms plus one guest space for every 5 units
Bed and Breakfast	Two (2) spaces plus one (1) space per guest room
Family and group care homes	One (1) space per six (6) residents plus one (1) space per employee
Retirement villages and senior citizen housing	Three fourths (3/4) space per dwelling unit, plus one (1) space per employee.

Cambridge, MD

Section 6.3.4 of the City’s Zoning Code establishes the maximum number of off-street parking spaces that are required for residential uses.

Residential Use	Maximum Spaces Required
Accessory Apartment	1 per dwelling unit
Boarding House	1 per unit plus residential requirement
Boarder in Residence	1 per unit plus residential requirement
Day Care Home	1 per staff plus residential requirement
Group Home	1 per staff plus 1 per 2 residents
Halfway House	1 per staff plus 1 per 2 residents
Multifamily Dwelling	1.5 per dwelling unit
Single Family Residential – Attached (Townhouse)	2 per dwelling unit
Single Family Residential - Detached	2 per dwelling unit
Two-family, Duplex	2 per dwelling unit

The term "plus residential requirement" indicates that additional parking spaces must be provided based on the primary residential use of the property.

Winnetka, IL

Section 17.46.110 of the Village’s Zoning Code outlines the minimum number of off-street parking spaces that are required for residential uses.

Residential Use	Minimum Spaces Required
One bedroom dwelling unit or fewer	1 ¼ spaces per unit
Two-bedroom dwelling unit	1 ½ spaces per unit
Three-bedroom dwelling unit or greater	2 spaces per unit

Current Regulations Comparison

Section 1143.05 of the City’s Zoning Code outlines the number of off-street parking spaces that are required for residential uses.

Residential Use	Parking Space Requirement
Single-, Two-, Three-Family	Min. 1/dwelling unit; no max; 1 required space shall be in a garage. The front yard shall not be used for off-street parking except in the Lagoon District.
Type B Home Occupation	Minimum is same for residential use; max. of 3, in addition to requirement for residential use.
Multi-Family, Studio, 1 Bedroom, 2+ Bedroom	Min. of 1/dwelling unit; max. of 2/dwelling unit. The front yard shall not be used for off-street parking except in the Lagoon District.
Sleeping Rooms	Min. of .5/roomer; max. of 1/roomer
Senior Housing	Min. of .5/employee; max. of 1/employee or .25/dwelling unit

Group/Nursing/Convalescent/Assisted Living Home	Min. of .5/employee; max. of 1/employee or 1 space/bed
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Encourage Accessibility and Enhance ADA Compliance

Guidance from AARP and ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 ensures equal access for individuals with disabilities. In 2010, the Department of Justice published revised regulations for Titles II and III, introducing the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design to enforce updated accessibility guidelines. These standards set minimum requirements for new or altered public facilities, public accommodations, and commercial facilities, including accessible routes, parking spaces, and signage.

Within a site, accessible routes shall be provided connecting parking spaces, public rights-of-way, and public transportation stops to the accessible building they serve. These routes must have a slope not steeper than 1:20, a ground surface that is stable, firm, and slip resistant, and a clear width of 36 inches. A minimum number of parking spaces for each parking facility are required to be accessible. For every six parking spaces, at least one shall be a van parking space. Certain uses such as medical outpatient facilities, rehabilitation facilities, and outpatient physical therapy facilities are required to have additional accessible spaces. ADA compliant signage is required at the beginning of routes and in parking facilities.

While ADA regulations apply to public facilities, public accommodations, and commercial buildings, AARP advocates for making residences more accessible, promoting livable and inclusive communities that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities. One way to achieve living independently regardless of physical, cognitive, or sensory ability is universal design and visitability. The organization notes that most existing housing stock and new construction lack accessibility features. Key examples of universal design and visitability in housing include wide doorways and adequate maneuvering space in kitchens and bathrooms.

Best Practices

Example 1: Universal Design and Visitability

Incorporating features of Universal Design and visitability into zoning codes is recommended by the American Planning Association (APA) to promote the development of more accessible housing. Several mandatory and voluntary approaches have been used to implement these features in new and existing homes. Howard County, Maryland required universal design features to be incorporated in senior housing units through its zoning ordinance. The County’s zoning ordinance identifies required, desired, and optional features that are critical and relatively inexpensive to be included in new housing projects. The required features include 32-inch wide doorways and hallways, lever handles, and accessible paths. Desired features include visual smoke detectors, five-foot turning radius in kitchens and bathrooms, and covered main entries. Optional features include curb-less showers, handrails on both sides of stairs, and lighting in closets and pantries. The Village of Bolingbrook, Illinois incorporated visitability features into their zoning codes,

requiring accessible passageways, ground-level bathrooms, and step-free entrances in all new single-family, multi-family, and accessory dwelling units.

Overview of the TOD Zoning Study

The Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Zoning Study aims to enhance zoning regulations and policies in Cuyahoga County to support the growth of transit-oriented developments (TOD) along key transit corridors. The study is led by Cuyahoga County Planning in partnership with the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA), along with collaboration from local municipalities like Cleveland, Shaker Heights, Fairview Park, and Cleveland Heights. The primary goal of the study is to align zoning code with the development of dense, walkable, and mixed-use communities near transit hubs, which promotes economic growth, sustainability, and public health.

The study includes four key phases:

- **State of TOD in Cuyahoga County:** Defines TOD, identifies TOD corridors, and highlights local examples to demonstrate the benefits of zoning policies that encourage transit-oriented growth.
- **Analysis of TOD Zoning:** Reviews existing zoning regulations along transit routes to determine if they support TOD and identifies areas where changes could stimulate future development.
- **Best Practices & Model TOD Zoning:** Develops best practices and a model zoning framework that municipalities can adopt to facilitate TOD.
- **TOD Financing Strategies:** Identifies financial incentives and mechanisms for TOD, drawing on successful examples from other regions.

By improving zoning regulations, the study aims to facilitate the creation of vibrant, connected communities around transit stations. This supports the broader goal of TOD, which is to create environments that reduce reliance on cars, increase public transit usage, and boost local economies. The study's outputs, including the TOD Professionals Survey and the Model TOD Zoning Overlay, provide valuable tools for municipalities to align their zoning regulations with TOD principles and encourage sustainable urban development.