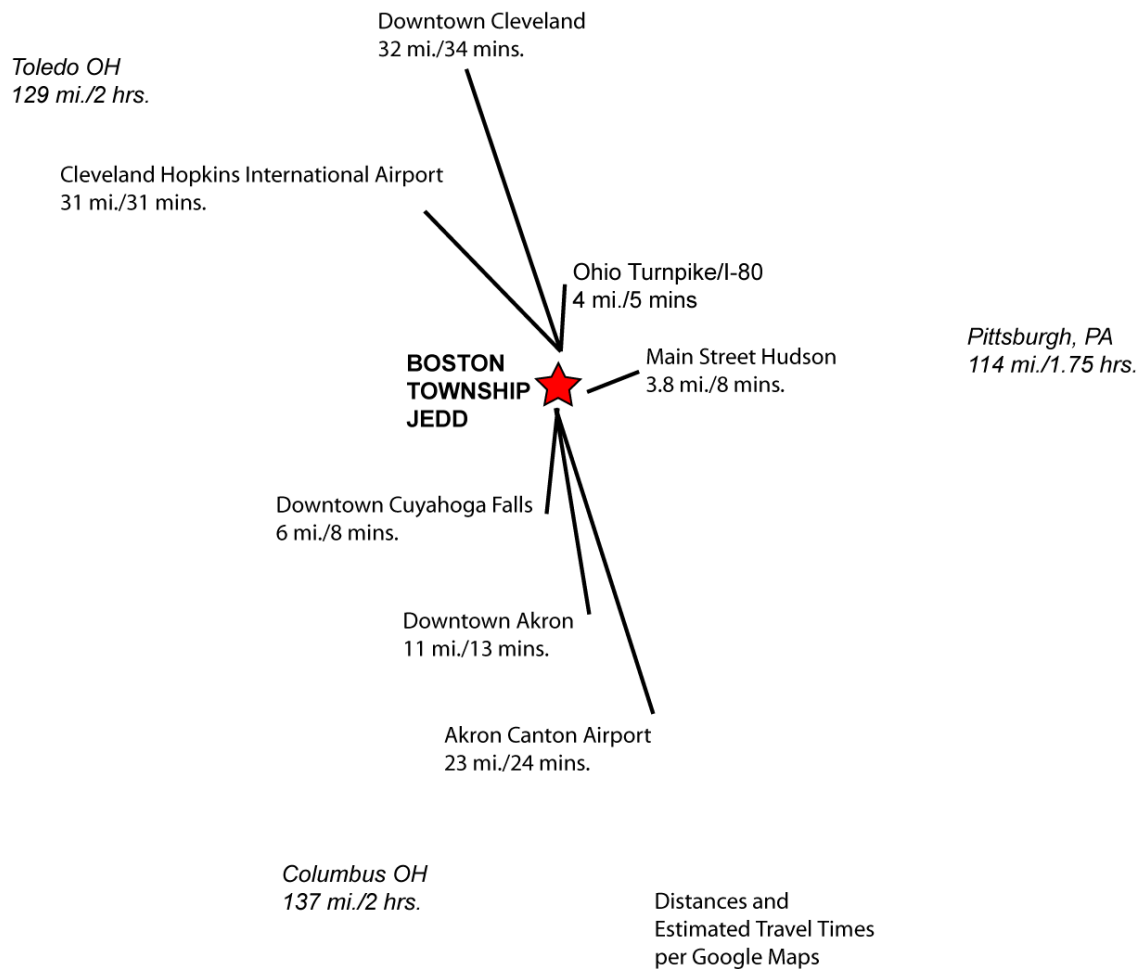


Boston Township

Summit County, Ohio

BUSINESS CORRIDOR JEDD PLAN



BOSTON TOWNSHIP
Summit County, Ohio

BUSINESS CORRIDOR JEDD PLAN
January 2017

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Boston Township JEDD* Business Corridor.

This growing commercial neighborhood is the focus of business activity and investment in Boston Township. Located within the rapidly developing State Route 8 highway corridor north of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, the Boston Township Corridor is anticipating planned growth with the expansion of infrastructure and the arrival of new businesses.

** JEDD – Joint Economic Development District. A JEDD is a legal arrangement between a township and a municipality agreeing to coordinate the economic development of a specified area and to sharing the benefits therefrom.*

Increasing development activity in nearby areas surrounding the Boston Township JEDD indicate that this location is also ripe for investment. The Township looks forward to encouraging and welcoming new business.

This document is Boston Township's plan for the JEDD Business Corridor. It provides background information and analyses as the basis for the JEDD Plan and outlines the Township's intent to encourage and support business development.

The contents of this Plan will be useful to existing property owners in the Corridor and to potential businesses and property purchasers who consider making investments in this area. This Plan will provide an introduction to the business potential of this Corridor and to the resources which Boston Township and its municipal JEDD partner, the City of Cuyahoga Falls, will make available to interested investors.

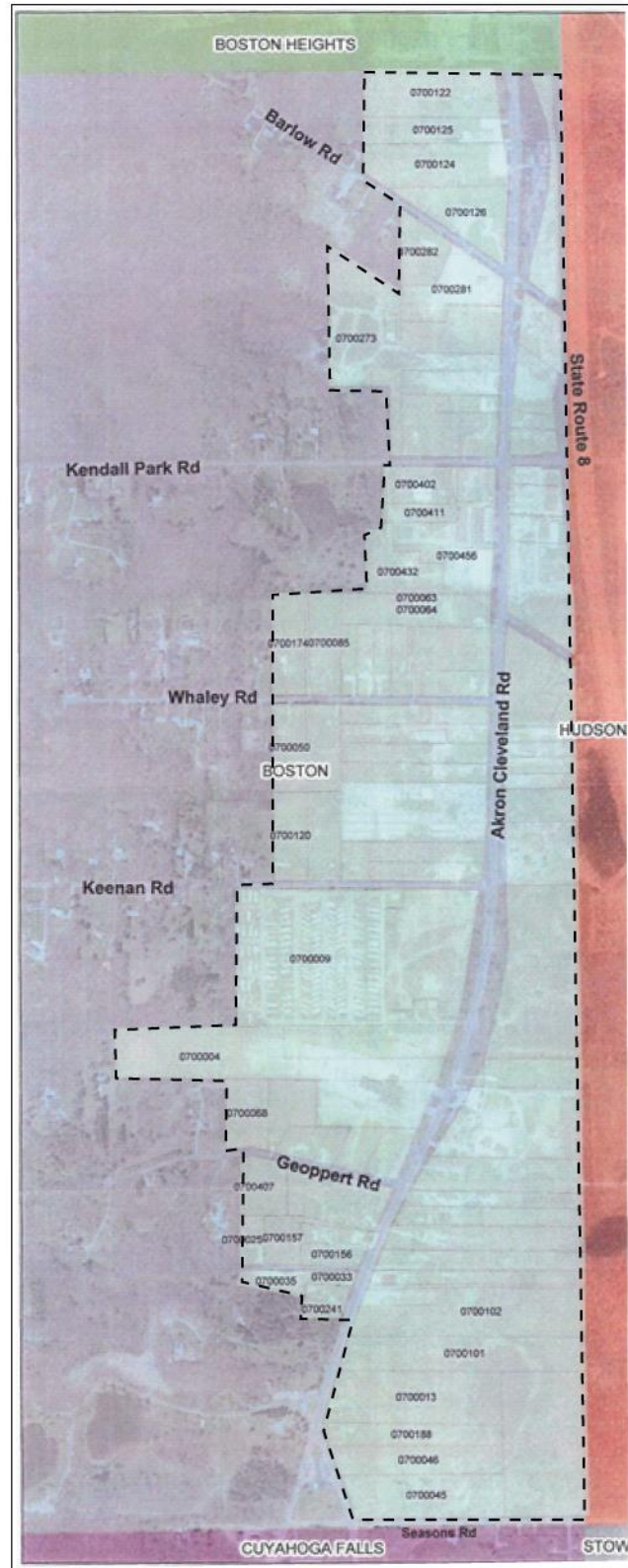
Interested parties are encouraged to contact Boston Township for more information and assistance. Please contact the Township Administrative Offices at 330.657.2059.

BACKGROUND, CURRENT CONDITIONS & ANALYSIS

Boston Township & Cuyahoga Falls Joint Economic Development District

General Statistics:

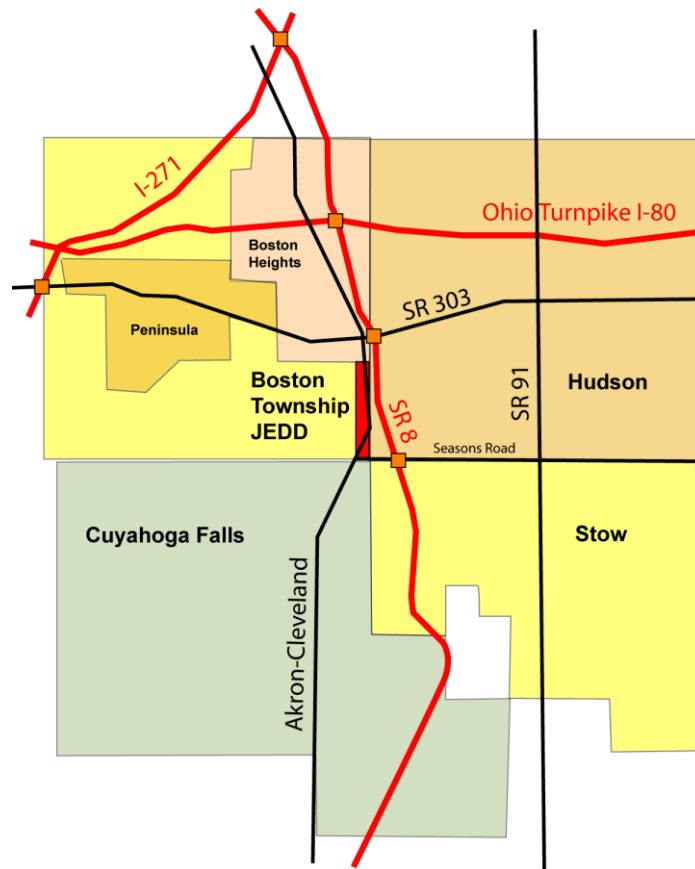
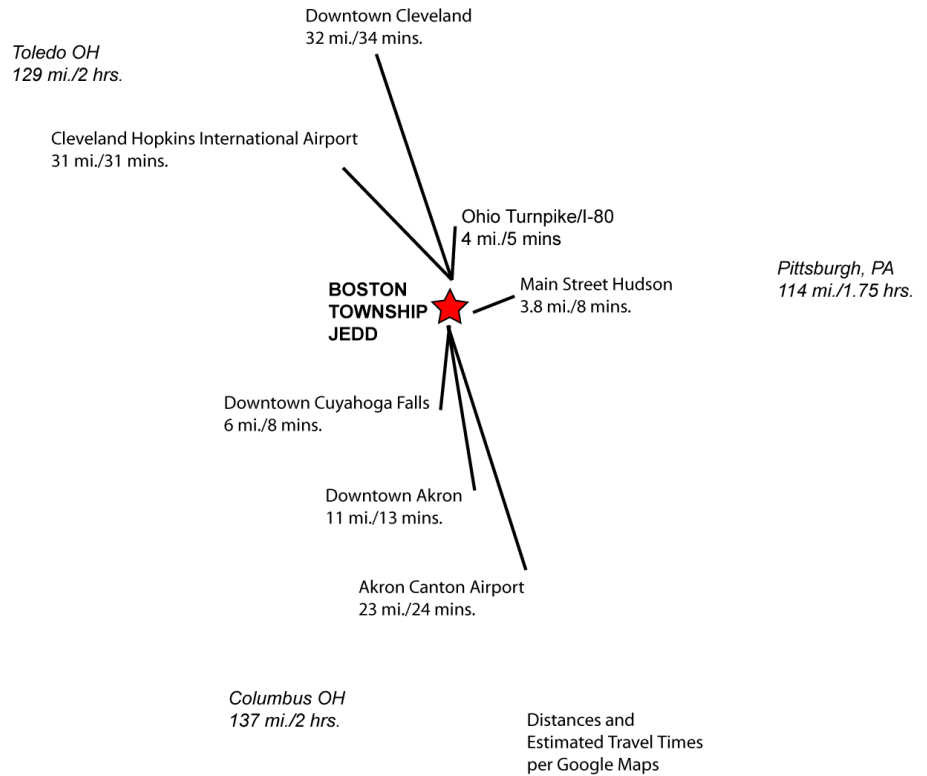
- 1.6 miles long
- Approximately 250 acres
- 18,000 linear feet of frontages on Akron-Cleveland and Seasons Roads
- 50-60 acres developed for business uses



Travel Times to Local and Regional Destinations

This location benefits from easy and fast access to major regional and interstate highways.

Several major cities can be reached in travel times of 2 hours or less.



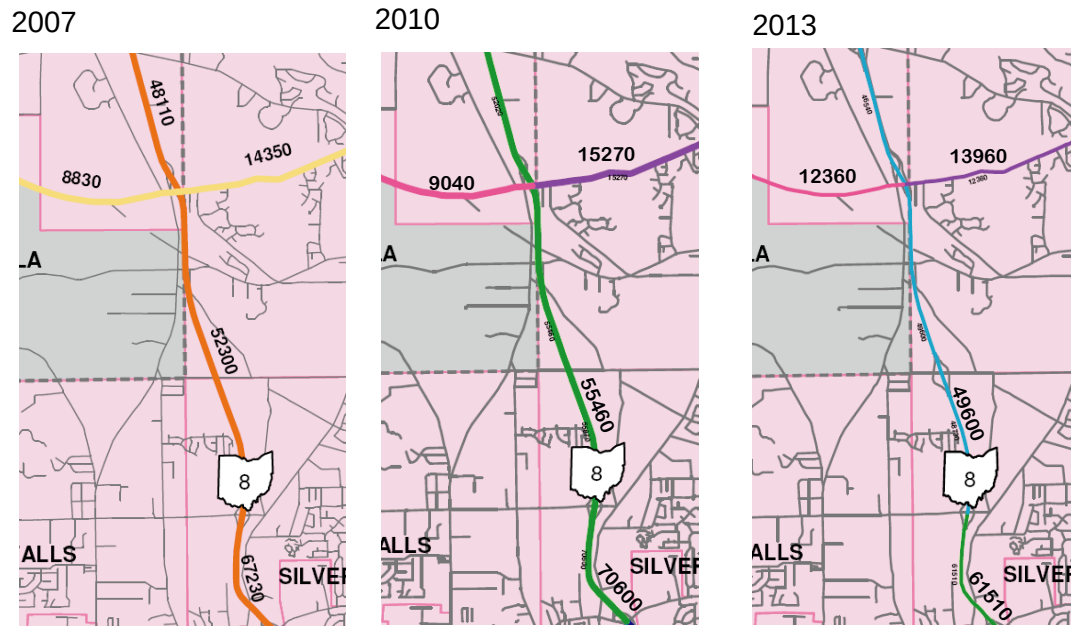
Access to Major Regional Highways

SR 8 Interchanges located on the north and south ends of the JEDD Corridor permit fast access to the Ohio Turnpike (Interstate 80), I-271, I-77, and I-480.

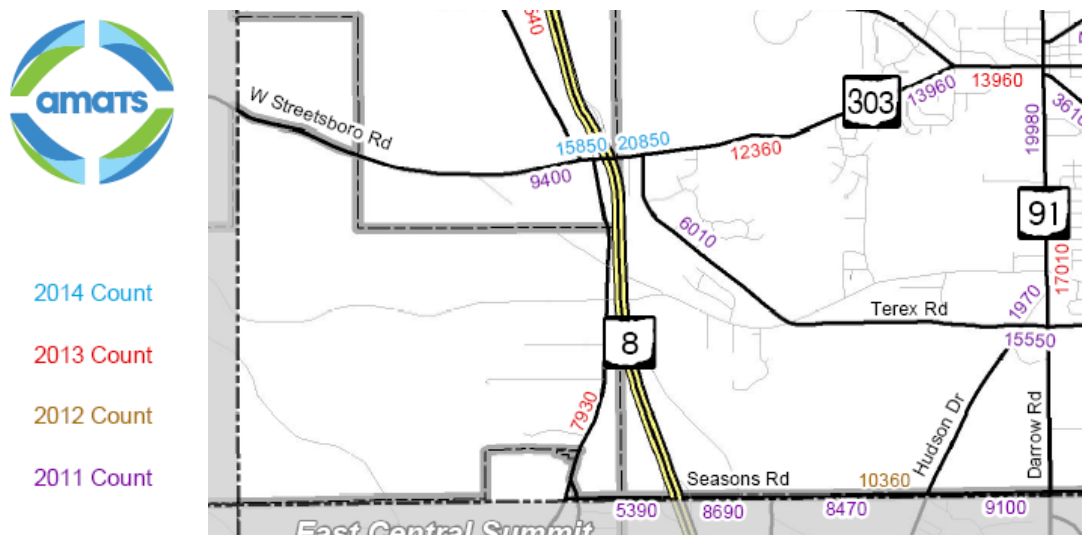
JEDD Area Traffic Volumes

The Boston Township JEDD is located in the heavily travelled Akron-Cleveland Route 8 Corridor. Average Daily Traffic Counts measured in the Corridor and surrounds for recent years are reported below. Recent major improvements completed to SR 8 have improved accessibility and safety, including improving access to the Boston Township JEDD.

Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Traffic Counts:



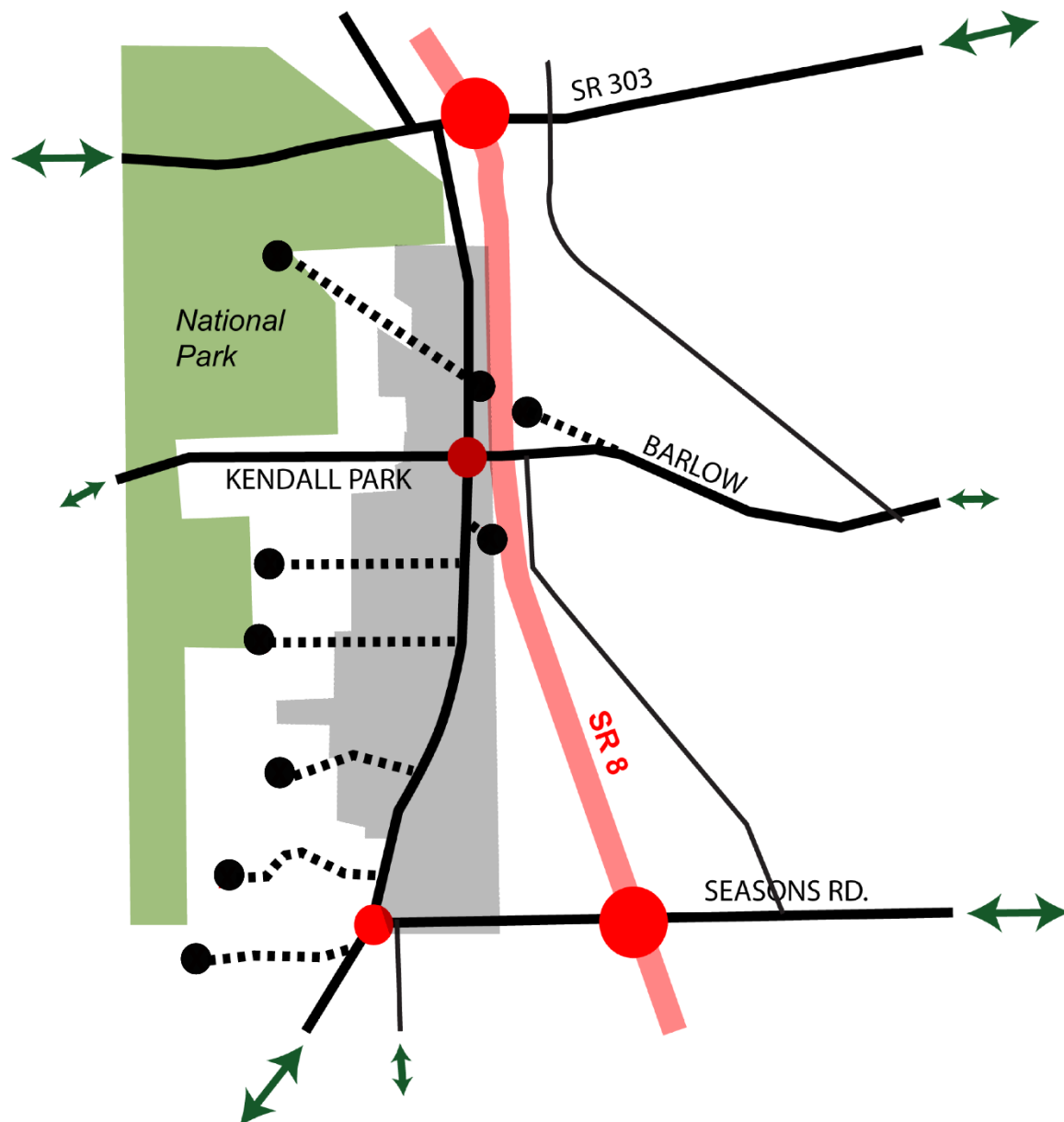
Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) Traffic Counts:



Infrastructure: Local Roads

Key elements of the road pattern serving the Boston Township JEDD are illustrated in the sketch below.

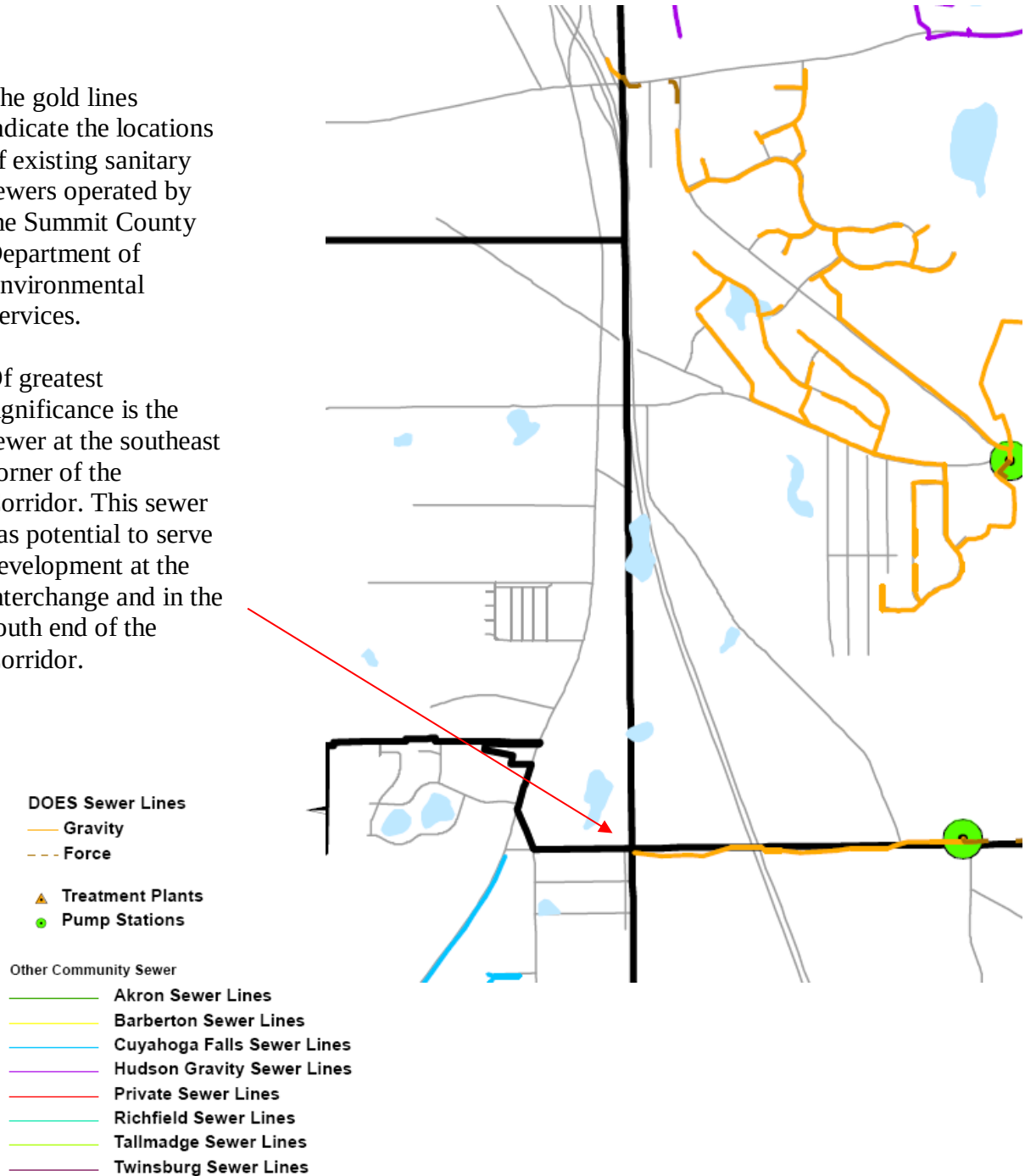
- SR 8 accesses to the Corridor are located at both the north (SR 303) and south (Seasons Road)
- Major intersections within the JEDD are located along Akron-Cleveland Road at both Seasons Road and at Kendall Park Road
- Several cul-de-sac streets, primarily serving adjacent residential areas, also occur along the Corridor



**Infrastructure: Summit County D.O.E.S.
and Adjacent Community Sanitary Sewer Lines**

The gold lines indicate the locations of existing sanitary sewers operated by the Summit County Department of Environmental Services.

Of greatest significance is the sewer at the southeast corner of the Corridor. This sewer has potential to serve development at the interchange and in the south end of the Corridor.



Map by Summit County D.O.E.S.

Location of Existing Sanitary Sewer at Southeast corner of Corridor

The existing sanitary sewer at the southeast corner of the JEDD is shown on the aerial below.



Source: Summit County GIS

Wetlands and Riparian Buffers

The illustration at right highlights two concentrations of wetlands and riparian buffers in the Corridor.

These important environmental features may be valued contributions to open space design on some properties and may limit the character and extent of development on others.

The light blue areas are wetlands. The darker blue lines are riparian setback areas from watercourses.



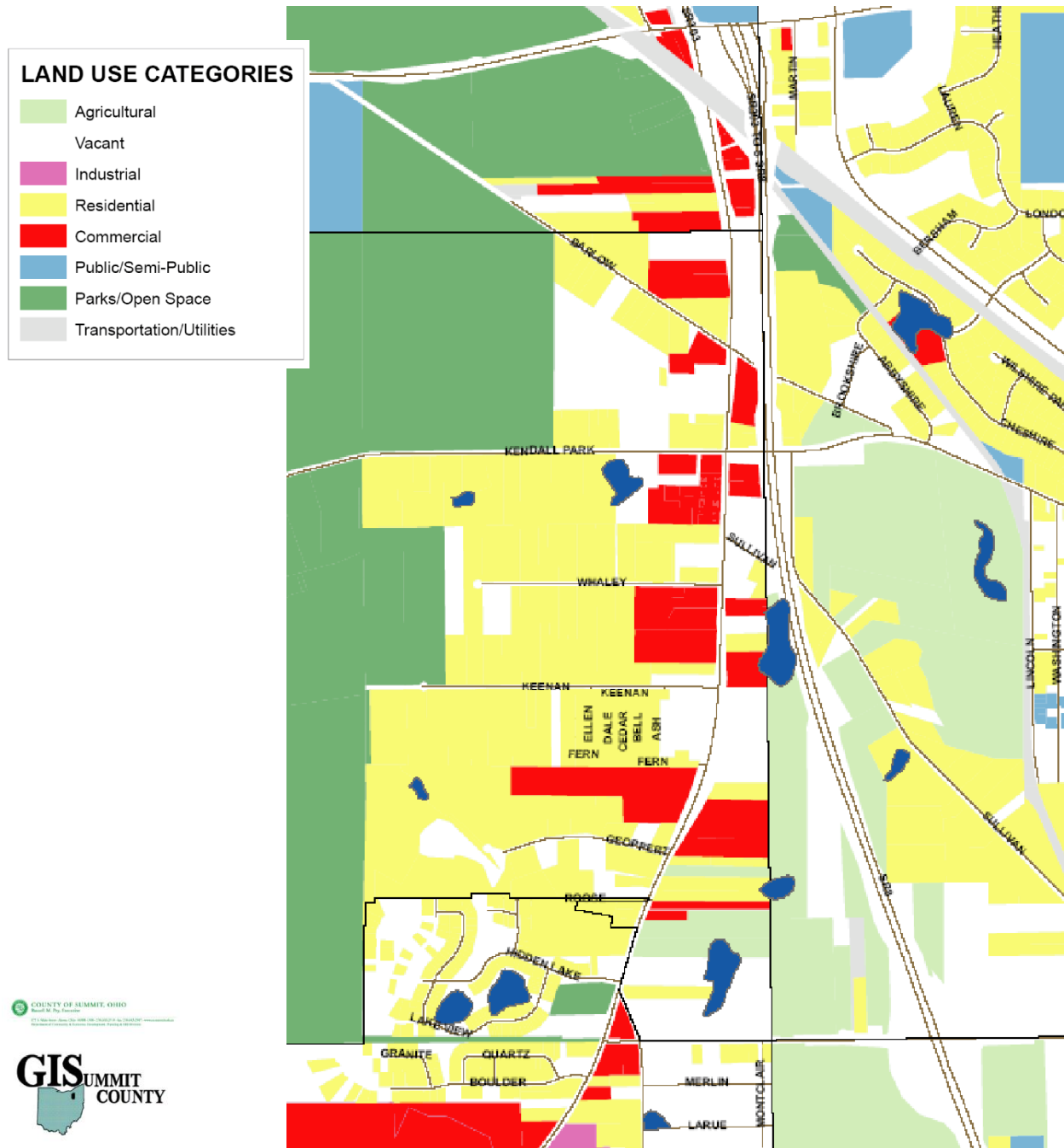
Source: Summit County GIS

General Description of JEDD District Boundaries and Surrounds

- On its west side, the Corridor abuts low density residential neighborhoods, primarily accessed by cul-de-sac streets, and including a high density manufactured home park of about 110 homes. West of these residential areas, the area is completely within the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
- To the north, the Corridor abuts the Village of Boston Heights. Much of this area of the Village is owned by the National Park and is not developed
- On its east, the Corridor abuts the right of way of SR 8, a limited access highway. Toward the southern end of the Corridor, the SR 8 right of way swings to the east into the City of Hudson. In this area, the Boston Township JEDD Corridor abuts the City of Hudson in an area zoned for industrial development.
- To the south, the Corridor abuts the City of Cuyahoga Falls in an area zoned for residential and mixed use development.

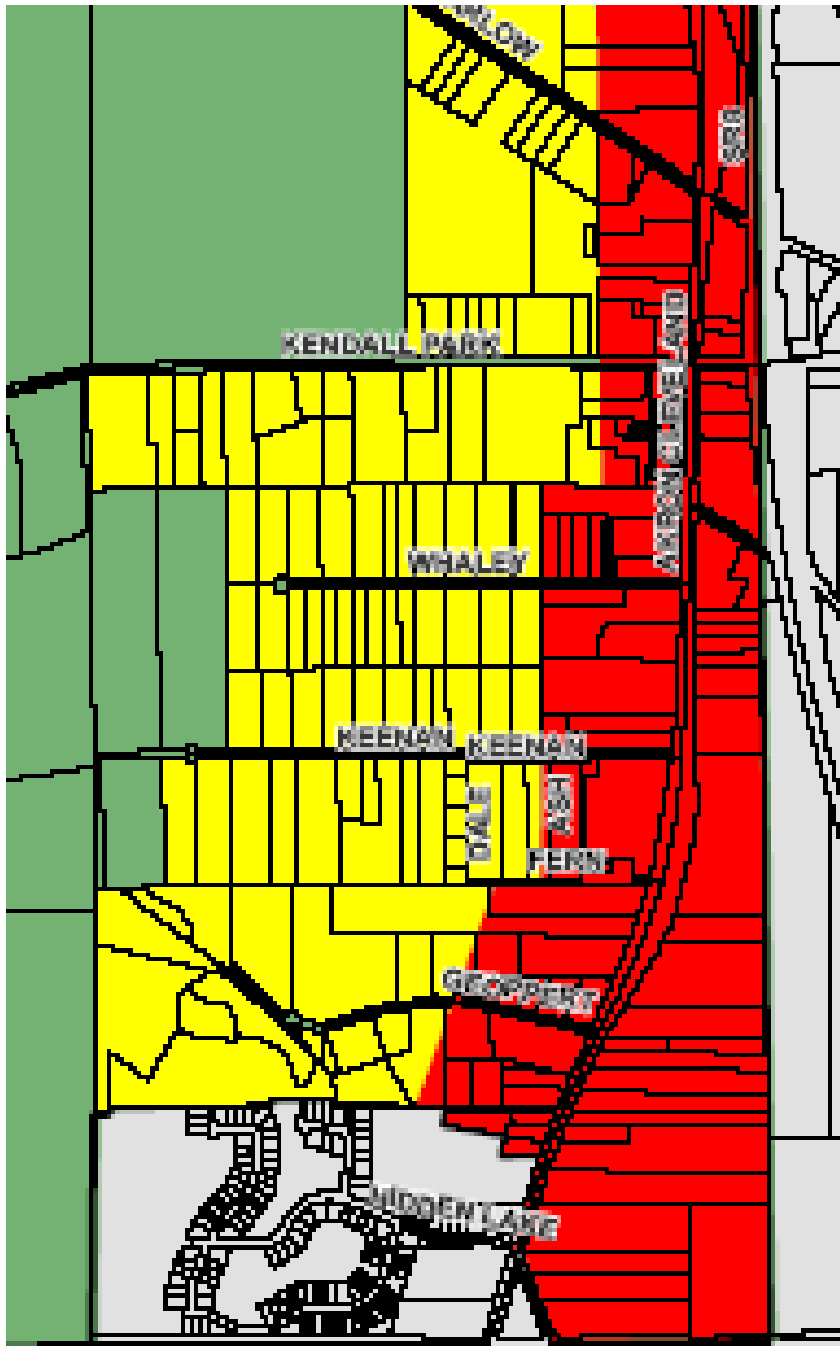
Existing Land Use in the JEDD

The map below illustrates the generalized pattern of existing land use in the JEDD Corridor. Note that where a land use is present on a property, whether on a small part of the property or on the entire property, the entire parcel is indicated as occupied by that land use. Several large parcels are, in fact, largely vacant and may be available for development.



Business Corridor Zoning

The map below is a section of the Boston Township Zoning Map. It illustrates the locations of the Business Corridor District (in red), the Residential District (in yellow), and the Economic Activity District (in green).

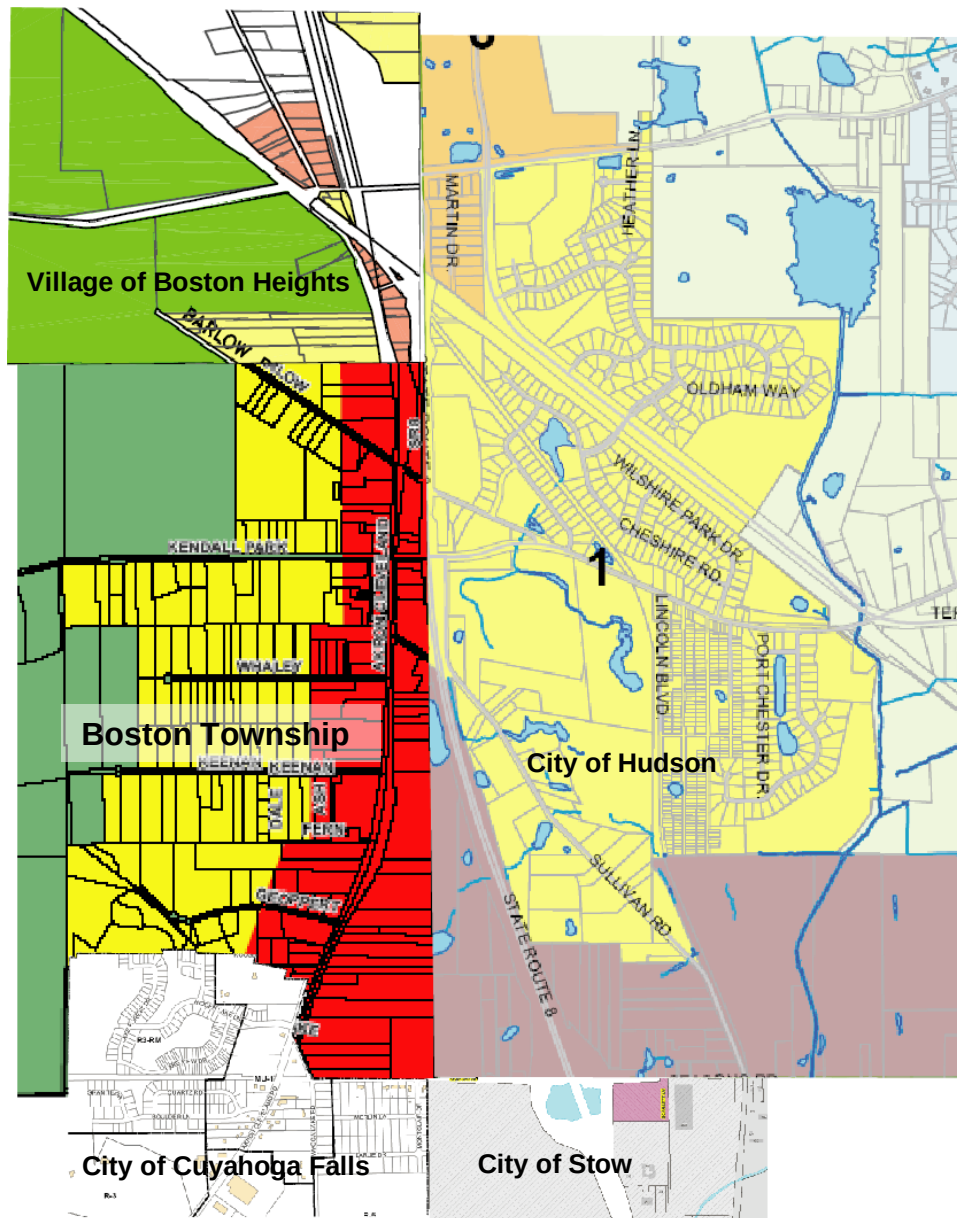


Composite of Zoning Maps

This map is a composite of sections of the Boston Township Zoning Map and the zoning maps of the four abutting municipalities.

Of most significance here are:

- (1) the boundary with the City of Hudson where the abutting land is zoned in the Industrial Business Park District; and
- (2) the boundary with Cuyahoga Falls which is zoned in the MU-1 Mixed Use Rural Neighborhood Center and the R5 Residential District.



PLAN OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the JEDD Corridor Plan are straightforward.

- **Determine the best development pattern for this area of the Boston Township community.** This eastern edge of Boston Township is the most accessible and developable part of the township community and has the highest density of residents and businesses (outside of the Village of Peninsula). This is in large part due to the long development history of Cleveland-Akron Road, its proximity to State Route 8, and the dominance of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park throughout most of the remainder of the Township.

The Township recognizes that promoting a suitable development pattern is essential to preserve and enhance the residential neighborhoods which are attached to this corridor as well as effectively pursuing the business and tax revenue objectives discussed below.

- **Promote jobs and personal income; business and property owner revenues; and revenues to support township services.** The Boston Township JEDD Business Corridor is a key economic development resource for the community due to the amount of land available, its access to a regional highway, and the JEDD partnership with Cuyahoga Falls.

The Jedd Corridor contains approximately 250 acres of privately-held land. Business development of these properties generates jobs and income opportunities for employees, property owners and business owners.

Business development also generates important local tax revenues to support Boston Township services. Increased land values result in increased property tax revenues which are a crucial resource for the Township. Outside of the JEDD Corridor, most of the Township is comprised of non-taxable federal park land which yields no tax revenues despite its reliance upon Township-supported road and safety services.

Due to the JEDD partnership, the Township also receives income tax revenues which it could not collect without the JEDD.

While the National Park and other non-profit organizations and businesses in the balance of the Township are beginning to generate some income tax revenues from another recently-established JEDD (in partnership with the Village of Peninsula), the Business Corridor also has great potential to provide financial support for Township services in the future.

- **Identify top development priorities and effectively focus limited resources.** The JEDD corridor is a large area comprised of many existing businesses as well as vacant and underdeveloped properties. The Township intends to focus its resources toward accomplishing top development priorities which will leverage additional economic growth and public revenues.

JEDD CORRIDOR PLAN

General Corridor Concept

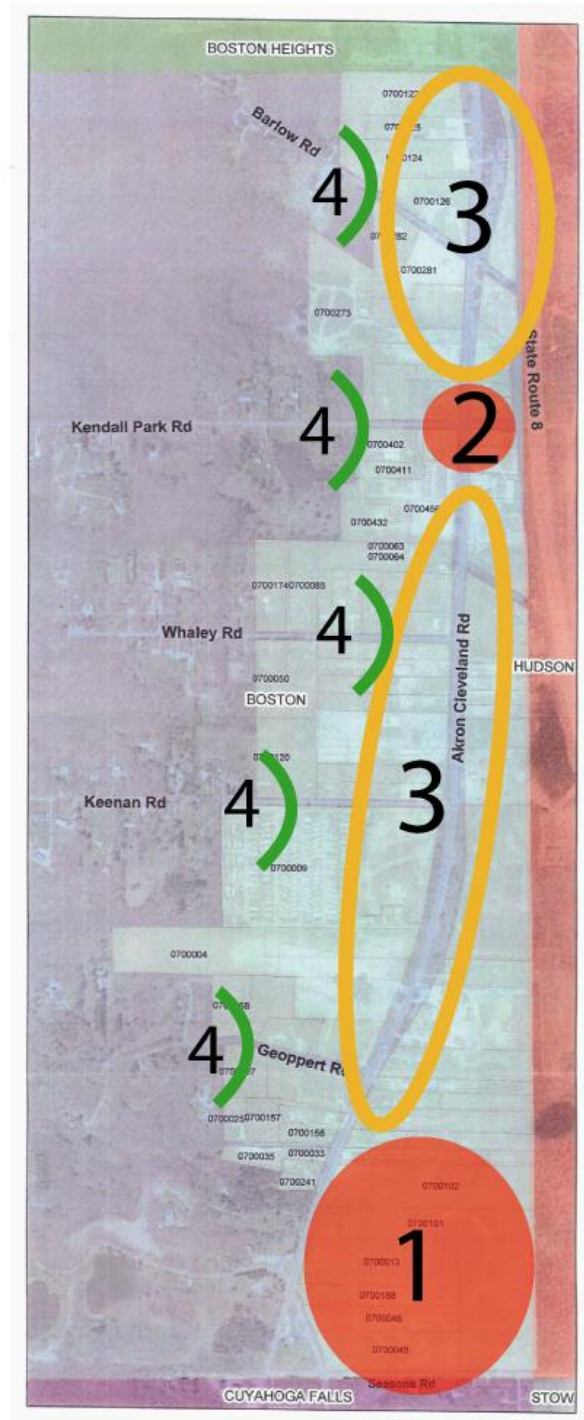
Planning for this long corridor requires identifying priorities as well as addressing issues for the overall area.

The sketch at right identifies two priority development areas (No. 1 and 2) within the overall corridor which have the greatest short-term potential for development.

Outside of the top priority business-zoned areas of the corridor, the segments indicated as No. 3 are addressed with recommendations for zoning amendments which will help to shape and promote future development of suitable uses.

The locations in which residential neighborhoods abut the west side of the corridor (No. 4) are addressed as requiring upgraded zoning regulations and possible zoning map amendments to maintain, promote, and protect those residential environments.

More specific recommendations for Areas No. 1, 2, 3, and 4 are outlined on the following pages.



1. Seasons Road Priority Development Area

This area is identified as the highest priority development for several reasons including its specific advantages.

- The location enjoys high accessibility to the region due to proximity to the State Route 8 interchange
- Utilities are nearby and their extension has been determined to be feasible. A sanitary sewer is located near the southeast corner at Seasons Road.
- A property owner has assembled several properties which have potential as a site for a sizable planned business development
- The area has been the subject of a recent development proposal which is an indication of the market's awareness of – and potential interest in - this location.
- The area is largely undeveloped. As a result there are few existing capital improvements which would obstruct or add to the cost of new development.
- Sobczak Lake may be an amenity attractive for a planned development or campus-type environment of office, medical, and similar uses

Several development challenges are also present in this location.

- The Township does not directly abut or include any part of the SR 8 interchange. The quadrants of the interchange are within the jurisdictions of abutting municipalities which each have their own specific plans, zoning and development standards. They primarily anticipate commercial and industrial development in this area. Depending on the nature and extent of a proposed development, cross-boundary cooperation and coordination with these communities may be needed.
- Sizable wetlands and water bodies located in the area may constrain development.
- While the proximity of utilities is an important advantage, extensions will be required to support development and sources of financing will be needed.

The future of this development area will in large part be driven by the interest of the market and specific development proposals brought forward by property owners. The Township, however, should take several actions which will encourage development and ensure that development will fit with the needs of the community.

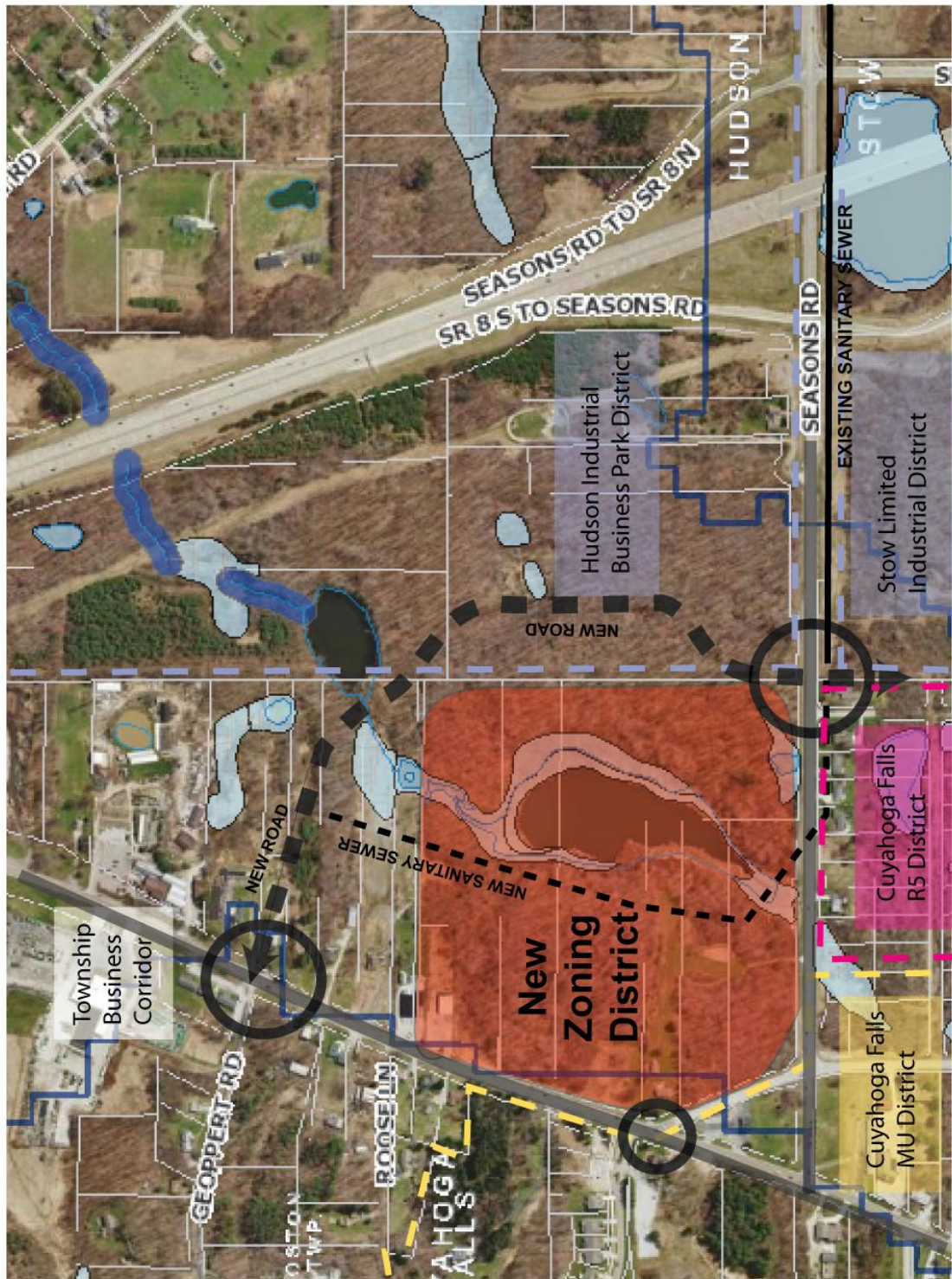
Recommended immediate tasks include the following:

- Meet with land owners to discuss their objectives and seek coordination
- Meet with Cuyahoga Falls officials to integrate planning for this area, addressing planning, zoning, utilities, and future road patterns
- Consider creating a new zoning district differentiated from the existing Business District with the intent of facilitating development of this area. Objectives to be considered for this new district include:
 - Creating a “development-ready” district which simplifies development approvals to the extent possible
 - Promoting a quality district of higher value uses (office, retail) while excluding some of the currently permitted uses which may not be attractive neighbors to the anticipated type of development
 - Creating potential for a Planned Development/Business Park/Campus

- Limiting or preventing piecemeal, uncoordinated developments
- Coordinating with Cuyahoga Falls MU Mixed Use District which abuts the Township to the south side of Seasons Road
- Identify potential funding for utilities anticipating coordination of financing with development proposals
- Consider future road locations.
 - To encourage full development, “internal roads” may be needed to access back properties in both the Township and in Hudson. (For example, a new internal road extending from the Akron-Cleveland/Goeppert Road intersection east and south to roughly the Seasons/Montclair intersection could serve this purpose.
 - A relocation of Wyoga Lake Road into this new intersection could create a cohesive new road system and remove some traffic from the Akron-Cleveland/Seasons intersection.)
 - During a public meeting regarding this plan, a suggestion was made to consider a new roundabout intersection to improve the existing Akron-Cleveland/Wyoga Lake intersection.

The area sketch provided below illustrates a suggested extent for the new zoning district as well as suggestions for future road and utility extensions.

Concept Sketch:
Seasons Road Priority Development Area



2. Kendall Park Road Priority Development Area

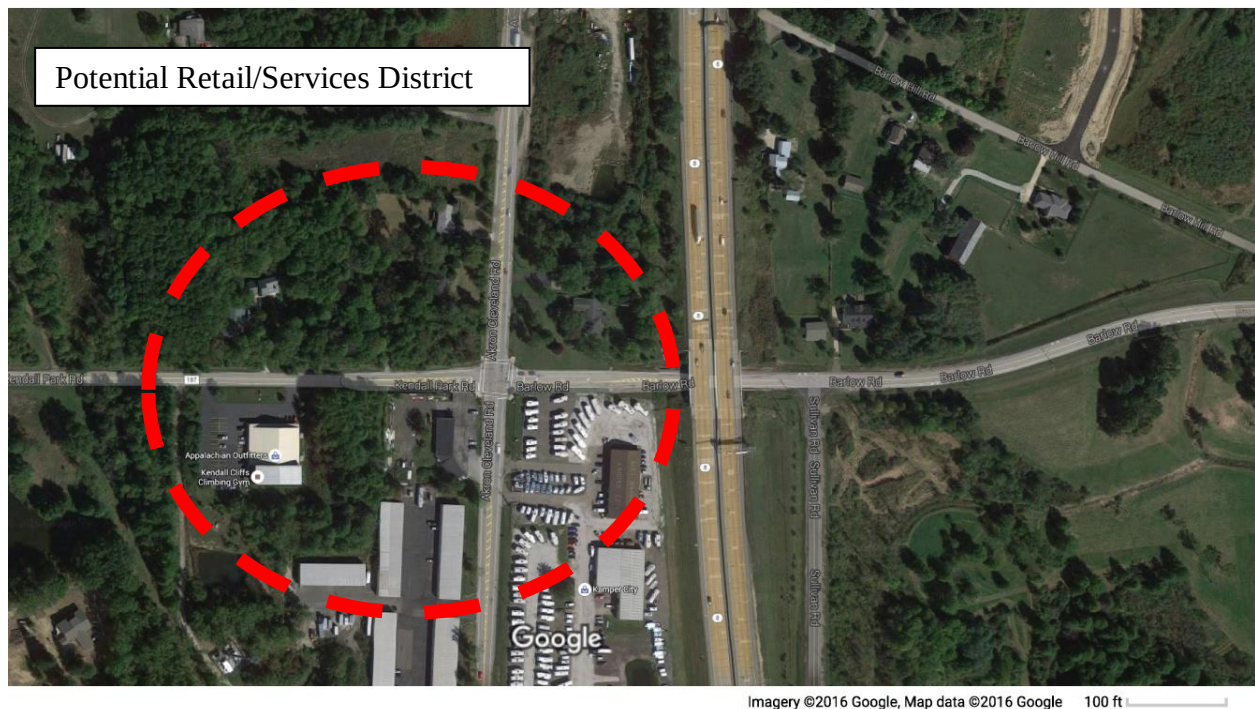
The intersection of Akron-Cleveland and Kendall Park Roads is the second priority development area recommended for consideration. This location is the only full cross road intersection in the corridor and presents a business location opportunity.

In addition to its cross-road status, this location is a secondary entry to the National Park and to the Virginia Kendall area recreation activities. A recreation-oriented retailer - Appalachian Outfitters – has already located here, suggesting that the area may be attractive to recreation-related businesses.

As in much of the corridor, a key limitation to development in this area is the lack of sanitary sewers and public water. A successful strategy which brings these utilities into this key location may not only make this new development area a reality, but may also instigate additional development in its surrounds.

Recommended immediate tasks include the following:

- Meet with land owners of properties abutting and near to the intersection
- Consider creating a new business zoning district focusing on retail, restaurant, consumer services, park- and recreation-related uses. Exclude incompatible uses in order to promote a cohesive concentration of uses.
- Meet with CVNP re future recreational activities in this area (and in the Corridor generally) and potential economic development spinoffs related to those activities.
- Investigate potential for sanitary sewer, including the feasibility and cost of force mains, and public water.



3. Update General Corridor Regulations

A single zoning district is in effect over the entire 1.6-mile-long corridor, thus applying the same list of uses and zoning standards throughout. The single district limits the potential for differentiating areas which have special characteristics and development opportunities (as in the priority development areas identified above) and may encourage uses with limited economic value or which conflict with potentially more valuable uses. The single set of regulations also does not recognize the different conditions found on the east side (abutting SR 8 and other commercial districts) versus the west side (abutting the residential areas).

Establishing the two new districts proposed above (for the Seasons Road Area and for the Kendall Park Road intersection) will begin to create distinct areas. Additional consideration should be given to amending the existing Business Corridor zoning to address the following:

- Differentiate the standards applied on the east side of Akron-Cleveland Road versus the west side. On the west side, issues to be addressed include the relationships between commercial and industrial uses and the abutting residential areas. On the east side, proximity to the SR 8 right-of-way may justify reduced regulations in terms of noise, lighting, dust, and other impacts. Attention may also be given to permitting signs which are visible from the SR 8 right-of-way as well as screening of outdoor storage. (The appearance of the district from this regional highway will become increasingly important.)
- Evaluate the list of uses to determine if any are or will no longer be suitable in the corridor in the future or if additional standards should be applied for conditional uses. Some uses may be better located on either the east or west side of the corridor depending on their site requirements and impacts.
- Identify land use and development standards which can be enforced by the Township to promote environmental protection in the corridor and its surrounds. While many such standards are under the authority of other governmental agencies, the Township may encourage environmental protection by restricting potentially damaging uses and managing environmental impacts through site design.

4. Improve Residential Interfaces

Eight roads serving residential areas connect to the business district. Most are cul-de-sac streets which are especially sensitive to abutting development in the corridor due to the limited access in a cul-de-sac (i.e., the only way in and out of the neighborhoods is through the business district). With further development in the corridor, the impacts of business uses will increase and may increasingly affect residential neighborhood functions and values.

Among these impacts, increasing traffic on Akron-Cleveland Road may affect intersections and access to/from the neighborhoods. Environmental impacts such as noise, exterior lighting, dust, and others may occur. As noted in the recommended updates to the general business corridor regulations, many of these impacts can be mitigated by continued enforcement of the existing zoning standards and updates.

These impacts may also be moderated by adjusting the boundaries between the residential and business districts. The conditions of each residential interface is unique. Examination of the zoning map, of the JEDD boundaries, and of existing land uses indicates that a more detailed evaluation of each interface will be necessary. In some cases, non-conforming residential uses (which are, nonetheless, part of existing neighborhoods) extend into the business corridor. In other locations, existing business uses and/or the rear areas of the properties on which they are located extend into the residential areas. As vacant or underdeveloped land infills with new development both of these situations may contribute to conflict between the uses.

It is also important to recognize that a key purpose of promoting business development is to increase township revenues in support of services which benefit these residential areas. The anticipated increases in business activity and impacts on residential areas should thus be viewed in balance with the local financial benefits.

While protecting these residential boundaries will become increasingly important, attention to these issues may be of less immediate priority than efforts to promote development in the key opportunity areas. As time and resources are available, however, attention should be directed to the following:

- Update the zoning text to improve buffers and reduce potential future impacts. These issues may be addressed in the update to the general business corridor regulations discussed above.
- Consider location standards or prohibition for some uses in areas abutting residential neighborhoods. (May also be addressed in the update to the general business corridor regulations).
- Update the zoning map (and possibly the JEDD map) to adjust for existing land uses, district lines, and JEDD boundaries to reduce future land use conflicts due to impacts of business uses.

SUMMARY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

1. Seasons Road Priority Development Area
 - Meet with land owners
 - Meet with Cuyahoga Falls
 - Consider creating a new zoning district
 - Identify potential funding for utilities
 - Consider future “internal road” locations.
 - Request that CVNP add the Seasons Road interchange to the park map
2. Kendall Park Priority Development Area
 - Meet with land owners
 - Consider creating a new business zoning district
 - Meet with CVNP
 - Investigate potential for sanitary sewer and public water.
3. Upgrade general corridor regulations
 - Differentiate the standards applied on the east side of Akron-Cleveland Road versus the west side.
 - Evaluate the list of uses
 - Identify land use and development standards which can be enforced by the Township to promote environmental protection
4. Investigate Potential Utility Funding Sources – short term re priority development area and long term re the entire corridor
 - Developer-funded
 - TIF – Tax Increment Financing
 - Parcel TIF
 - Incentive District TIF
 - OWDA – Ohio Water Development Authority
 - Sewer and Water Pollution Control Project Loan
 - OPWC - Ohio Public Works Commission
 - Ohioattorneygeneral.gov/economicdevelopment
5. Improve Residential Interfaces
 - Update the zoning text to improve buffers and reduce potential future impacts
 - Consider location standards or prohibition for some uses in areas abutting residential neighborhoods.
 - Update the zoning map (and possibly the JEDD map) to adjust for existing land uses, district lines, and JEDD boundaries

6. Marketing Tasks

- Meet with key property owners in the Corridor to establish/maintain open communication, discuss development needs, encourage participation in Site Selection Tool.
- JobsOhio Site Selection Tool. Coordinate with interested property owners and JobsOhio to collect required data and submit development sites to the JobsOhio data base where they can be posted for viewing by potential buyers.
- Provide development-related information on the Township website, including contact information, Corridor Plan, and links to JobsOhio website once properties are posted.
- Recreation-related development – identify and promote uses which are related to park activities and which will make positive contributions to Corridor development