

Adopted October 6, 2015

RESOLUTION 2015-11

# CITY OF POWELL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN







# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Responding to Changes, Planning for the Future

In 2014, the Powell Comprehensive Plan was approaching the twenty-year mark since its adoption in 1995. While many of the plan's policies and recommendations remained relevant, much has changed in the intervening years. The City of Powell undertook the Comprehensive Plan Update to respond to the changes that have occurred while creating a strategic vision for the next twenty years. One of the first tasks of the plan update was an update to the Comprehensive Plan **Vision Statement** (page vi) to better reflect the Powell of today and its aspirations for the future. The major goals of the 1995 plan were also refined and revised into a series of ten **Guiding Principles**, vetted through the public review process. Together the Vision and Principles provide an overarching framework for the plan's recommendations.

## Purpose of the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is the key policy guide for land use, development, annexation, and infrastructure decisions in the City of Powell. This plan serves as a guide for the City of Powell Staff, the Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council and other government entities as they assess the character, location, and extent of public investments and private development proposals in the City of Powell. The plan's policies and recommendations will be implemented over time through public and private decisions, such as capital improvements carried out by the City, and annexation, zoning, or development proposals initiated by property owners and conducted through the public review process.

## Structure of the Plan

The Plan is comprised of five major components:

### Introduction

The Introduction provides an assessment of current conditions and relevant trends affecting Powell. It also describes the process used to develop the plan.

### Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan documents Powell's current land use patterns, and provides recommendations for future land use and development decisions within the community. The Land Use Plan is a guiding framework to be used when making public and private decisions about annexation, development, redevelopment, and related infrastructure

investments. The Plan consists of a Future Land Use Map, and a series of related development guidelines and policy recommendations. The Plan provides descriptions of each land use category depicted on the Future Land Use Map, with specific policies related to transportation, infrastructure, open space, and development standards.

### Transportation Plan

The Transportation Plan provides recommendations for transportation policy and related infrastructure investments within the community. As with the Land Use Plan, the Transportation Plan guides decision-making regarding the appropriateness of development proposals and infrastructure improvements necessary to support future development. The Thoroughfare Plan is the primary reference tool within the Transportation Plan, identifying recommended roadway improvements, right-of-way needs and other roadway elements. This section also includes a detailed analysis of traffic conditions in Downtown Powell and provides recommended solutions to improve downtown traffic congestion.

### Fiscal Analysis

The Fiscal Analysis provides an assessment of the long-term sustainability of the City's finances, both at the current level of development and of each of the scenarios considered during the development of the plan.

### Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan is a long range vision for the community. The plan is also intended to serve as a guide for how the community can turn vision into reality through specific actions. The Implementation section provides a detailed implementation matrix that outlines recommended policies and actions, and responsible parties. Among these implementation items, three **Key Priorities** are identified based on their significance in addressing the major issues facing the community:

**1. Initiate a strategic urban design plan for Downtown Powell** to address complex transportation and development needs in a coordinated manner.

**2. Create a sustainable revenue structure** by thoroughly examining and adjusting taxation and development policies to support long-term community needs.

**3. Establish a multi-jurisdictional working group** to address shared issues and advance coordinated planning initiatives amongst the City, surrounding townships and the County.

## **Property Rights and the Distinction Between Land Use Planning and Zoning**

It is important to recognize the distinction between the Powell Land Use Plan (as established in this Comprehensive Plan) and the City's Zoning Code, and more specifically, the distinction between the Future Land Use Map and the Zoning Map. The Land Use Plan is a statement of policy to be used as a guide for development and infrastructure decisions; the Zoning Code is a regulatory ordinance that governs the details of how property is permitted to be used and developed. Likewise, the Future Land Use Map is an illustrative depiction of a long term vision for growth and general development patterns to be encouraged by municipal policy and decision-making moving forward. The Zoning Map is much more specific and definitive; it is a legal instrument that identifies the precise boundaries of districts in which certain land uses and development types are permitted or restricted today.

**The Land Use Plan is a statement of policy to be used as a guide for development and infrastructure decisions; the Zoning Code is a regulatory ordinance that governs the details of how property is permitted to be used and developed.**

Adoption of this Plan and the Future land Use Map does not change existing zoning. Over time, the Zoning Code and Zoning Map may be modified through development approvals and municipal actions as a means to implement the policy recommendations of the Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map. However, until such amendments are adopted into the Zoning Ordinance, the Future Land Use Map *does not* change current zoning and *does not* affect how properties may be used today. Furthermore, even in circumstances in which zoning classifications and requirements are changed in the future, existing uses and structures remain legal (often referred to as "grandfathered"), potentially with some limitations that are specified in the Zoning Code.

This relationship between land use planning and zoning requires thoughtful and balanced consideration by the community and the City's decision-making bodies when presented with development proposals. Private property rights are one of the cornerstones of American law as established in the Constitution. Yet there is also a long-standing history of land use planning as a means to ensure that private development occurs in an orderly fashion that preserves the health, safety, and welfare of the larger community.

The Land Use Plan should be consulted as a key guide when making decisions about development proposals. In some cases, the Plan's recommendations may help to determine whether or not a requested change in zoning classification should be approved. The Plan may also be used to influence the details of how a proposed development is ultimately built.

However, the Plan *cannot* be used as the sole means of denying an approval for a development that otherwise is permitted "by right" through existing zoning and development regulations. Where substantial conflict exists between the policy vision of the Land Use Plan and the types of uses and development patterns that are permitted (or perhaps even required) by current regulations, those conflicts should be resolved through a deliberative examination and public process to determine the most appropriate and acceptable direction forward. Ultimately, the planning and development process is characterized by compromise. Through a deliberate, incremental, and legally-sound decision-making process, the Plan can be implemented in a way that advances the community's goals, while also protecting the rights of individual property owners.



# VISION STATEMENT

The City of Powell is **one of Central Ohio's premier communities**, sought after for its high quality of life, unique community character, and vibrant business environment. Situated in a significant growth corridor in southern Delaware County, Powell has planned for continued growth and development in a responsible and strategic manner. It has retained the **charm of a small town with rural roots** while **responding to changing trends** and development pressures in a way that is uniquely Powell.

## Guiding Principles



The historic, small town charm of Downtown Powell should be preserved and enhanced. Downtown Powell should be a vibrant, accessible center of the community with a diverse mixture of uses and activities.



Traffic improvements should strive to relieve congestion at the Four Corners, but not at the expense of pedestrian mobility and safety. Improvements should enhance, rather than detract from, the character of Downtown.



Diverse housing options are important to the community. The City embraces its family-friendly character and also recognizes the need for housing to serve a diverse population in all stages of life. Alternatives to large lot single family subdivisions are acceptable, but design aesthetics, character, and high quality development standards are critical to ensuring new options are appropriate for Powell.



The natural environment should be preserved as a community amenity. This does not preclude development, but new development should be sensitively designed to protect natural features such as streams and wooded areas. Specifically, new residential development should include, where appropriate, accessible and useable public parks and open spaces in a variety of scales and types, integrating natural areas wherever possible.



Rural character should be preserved and reinstated (through new development) along the community's edges. This may be through preservation of farmsteads and active farming operations within the surrounding townships, or through sensitive roadway designs, landscape treatments and development practices that retain a rural feel for those living in and traveling through the community.



The City should strive to plan cooperatively with Liberty Township and other nearby communities to establish a shared vision and development policies.



Pedestrian and bicycle connections should be enhanced and expanded throughout the community, including connections to the surrounding townships, parks, and other destinations.



Development patterns should seek to minimize traffic impacts by mixing uses or locating compatible uses within walking distance (i.e. a 5 to 10 minute walk), and by providing interconnected street systems with sidewalks and multi-use paths that provide safe, comfortable and convenient pedestrian routes.



New commercial development should contribute to both the service needs of the community as well as the economic and fiscal well-being of the City.



Opportunities to expand transportation options (public transportation, car/ride sharing, bikes, paths, etc.) into and through Powell should be supported, both to increase transportation options for residents and employees, and to alleviate traffic congestion.





# INTRODUCTION





## Introduction

The City of Powell is known as one of Central Ohio's premier family friendly residential communities. The City pays special attention to recreation and community services and has a lower income tax rate than other area cities. As a bedroom community, Powell is just a 20 minute drive to Downtown Columbus; however, rush-hour traffic creates a significant strain through the downtown core. As Powell and surrounding communities continue to grow, traffic moving through and around the City has heavily impacted the community. Traffic issues, increased development pressures, low revenue and a growing population have created a strain on Powell, driving the need for a clear vision to fit the larger goals of its residents.

### What is a Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is the key policy guide for land use, development, and infrastructure decisions in the City of Powell. This plan serves as a guide for the City of Powell staff, the Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council and other government entities as they assess the character, location, and extent of public investments and private development proposals in the City of Powell. The plan's policies and recommendations will be implemented over time through public and private decisions, such as capital improvements carried out by the City, and zoning or development proposals initiated by property owners and conducted through the public review process.

### Why Update the Plan?

In 2014, the Powell Comprehensive Plan was approaching the twenty-year mark since its adoption in 1995. While many of the plan's policies and recommendations remained relevant, much had changed in the intervening years. For instance, Powell has grown significantly since 1995, introducing new residents and increasing the need for public services and infrastructure. The original vision of Powell as a "rural greenbelt town" is no longer an adequate description of Powell's size and development conditions. Continued growth in Liberty Township, and continued development pressures immediately north of Powell require the City to establish its own vision and priorities for areas that could become part of Powell in the future, and which will undoubtedly affect, and be affected by the City. In some cases, critical planning elements,

such as a community-wide thoroughfare plan map, had not been included in the previous plan.

In recent years, both local and regional demographic changes, such as an aging population, changing family structures, and desire for more walkable communities and maintenance-free living, are beginning to increase demands for different types of development not previously anticipated. This trend (refer to Regional Trends on pages 16-17 for more information) is beginning to affect communities throughout Central Ohio, including many of the suburban municipalities that compete with each other for economic development and private investment. Competitive communities such as Worthington, Dublin, Westerville, and others are investing infrastructure in their historic centers and changing their development codes to allow alternative types and densities of housing and walkable mixed use development. These revised planning and development policies are a recognition that the economic welfare of the community is closely linked to the community's willingness to accommodate the demand for more compact, walkable development. This is particularly important as more of the regional workforce desires to live in closer proximity to their place of employment, and employers choose to locate in the types of communities their employees want to live in. Among the many issues facing the City of Powell that led to this plan update is the need for the community to respond to these changing trends in order to remain competitive in the region.

On February 3, 2014 Powell City Council participated in a strategic planning session facilitated by the Novak Consulting Group and focusing on issues affecting the future of the City in the coming year. The initiation of this Comprehensive Plan Update was one of the outcomes of the retreat. At the retreat, Council placed "Review & Update Plan" as a "very important" priority, in large part because most of the other goals identified in the session were contingent on an update of the plan to ensure they are adequately addressed and prioritized. Other "very important" items were to increase cooperative intergovernmental relations and sustainable capital funding.

## Purpose and Process

This plan was developed through a collaborative effort between Powell City staff, a Steering Committee comprised of Powell residents and business owners, and a multidisciplinary team of consultants including MKSK (land use, urban design, and community engagement), Trans Associates (transportation engineering), and Regionomics, LLC (fiscal analysis).

This plan responds to the changes that have occurred since the last plan was adopted and creates a strategic vision for the next twenty years. The three main components of the plan are the Land Use Plan (Section 2), Transportation Plan (Section 3), and Fiscal Analysis (Section 3). Together, these elements establish a framework that will guide Powell in responding to the issues and opportunities it is currently facing, as well as those that may arise in the future. An implementation strategy (Section 4) puts the planning recommendations into action.

Exhibit 1 illustrates the plan update process. The process began with a “Baseline Analysis” - an assessment of existing plans, policies, and physical conditions. The results of this analysis are described in the remainder of this section. With planning issues assessed and prioritized, the planning team developed alternative “Preliminary Scenarios” for growth and development for consideration by the community. Feedback and guidance from the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the general public helped to guide the development of a “Preferred Scenario” and plan, including a series of policy recommendations. A draft plan was reviewed by the Steering Committee and forwarded with recommendations for review by the Planning and Zoning Commission on August 25, 2015. The Planning Commission moved to adopt the plan on September 9, 2015 and forwarded the document on to City Council for final review and adoption. City Council reviewed the plan on September 15 and, following revisions in response to public comment, adopted the final plan on October 6, 2015 (Resolution 2015-11).

Exhibit 1.1: The Planning Process



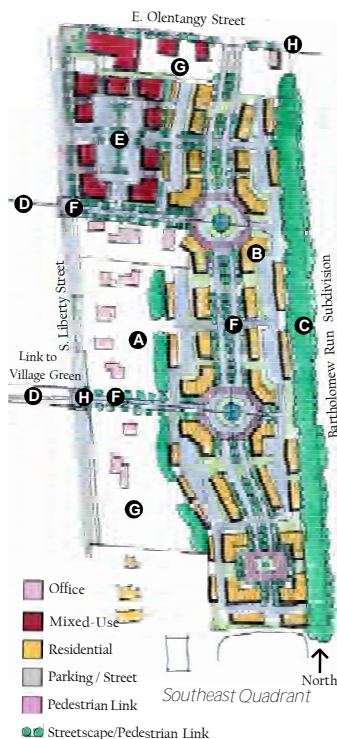
# INTRODUCTION

## Past Planning Efforts

A variety of plans and studies are currently in place to guide growth and development decisions both within Powell and in surrounding communities. This of course includes Powell’s 1995 Comprehensive Plan, which is revised and updated by this document. Other plans have been consulted to provide an understanding of current policies that may affect Powell, or which may be affected by Powell’s plan. In some cases, the recommendations of this plan may conflict with those of other policy documents. In these cases, the City of Powell should proactively engage surrounding communities to ensure cooperative and coordinated planning efforts.

### 1995 Powell Comprehensive Plan

Originally conceived as an update to the Village of Powell’s 1988 Comprehensive Plan, the 1995 plan recommended a significant rethinking of the community’s land use and transportation priorities, primarily with the goal of minimizing long term traffic impacts and fiscal strains. The plan recommended low density, high-quality residential development; limiting government services and associated costs; and minimizing employment-generating land uses that require costly transportation system upgrades.



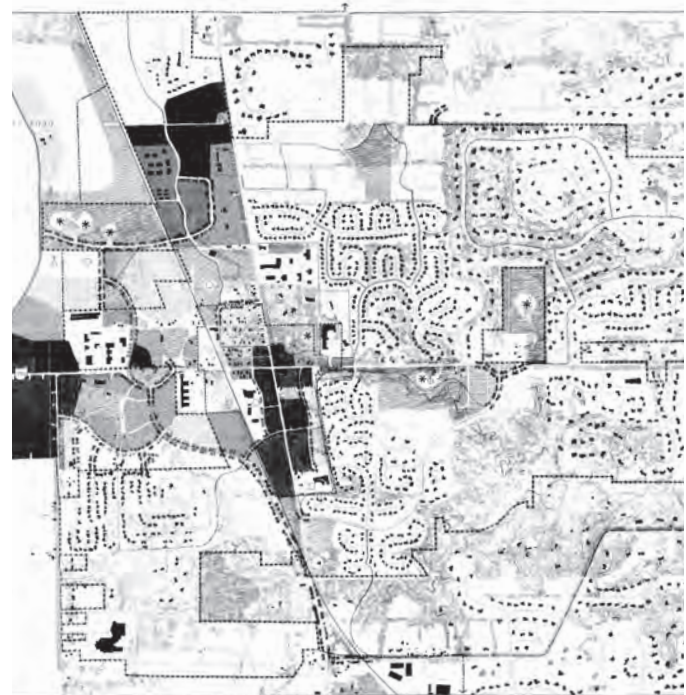
Source: Downtown Powell Revitalization Plan, 2004

The plan also emphasized the importance of reinforcing and improving the pedestrian-oriented character of downtown Powell. It endorsed introducing a variety of housing types in the town center including “village lot” condominiums and multi-family options as a means to support local businesses.

Cumulatively, the 1995 plan established a vision for “a small, rural, greenbelt town, located off the beaten path.” Twenty years later, this plan has withstood the test of time as many of the planning and transportation issues facing Powell remain relevant, and warrant a reconsideration of goals and strategies in light of current conditions and trends.

### Downtown Powell Revitalization Plan (2004)

The Downtown Powell Revitalization Plan furthered the 1995 Comprehensive Plan’s recommendations for the town center with a detailed market analysis and physical plan for each quadrant of the downtown. The plan calls for rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures, as well as targeted infill and redevelopment with a mixture of uses. Like the Comprehensive Plan, the Revitalization Plan envisions the introduction of both detached and attached housing types and potentially “live-work”



Source: 1995 Comprehensive Plan, City of Powell, December 1995



housing as a means to support downtown business. The plan recommends streetscape enhancements, and street extensions to create an interconnected grid at a pedestrian-oriented village scale, with buildings fronting streets and shared parking behind. The potential for a left turn lane at Olentangy Street and Liberty Street is considered, with further analysis recommended to fully understand the impacts such a project would have on the character of downtown Powell.

#### ***Liberty Township Comprehensive Plan (2006)***

The Liberty Township Comprehensive Plan foresees continued development of farmland in the unincorporated portions of the township to the north of Home Road. The plan anticipates that sewer service requirements will likely increase pressures to develop at minimum one-acre lot sizes in the Farm Residential zoning district, which covers most of the township, rather than two to five acre lot sizes that have occurred in the past. The plan recommends maintaining a one unit per acre maximum net density for residential development north of Home Road, but also considers the possibility of Conservation Subdivisions that would cluster residential development and preserve large amounts of open space while maintaining low densities over the larger area. Generally, the plan does not recommend commercial development north of Home Road, but does consider the possibility of transitional mixed uses along the Township's northern boundary of Bunty Station Road near the City of Delaware.

To the south of Home Road, the Township plan recognizes the possibility of continued annexation of land into Powell. In these areas, the plan recommends alternative development patterns be considered to minimize sprawl, including mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND).

#### ***Concord Township Comprehensive Plan (2004)***

Like the Liberty Township plan, the Concord Township Comprehensive Plan also recommends low residential densities throughout its Farm Residential zoning district, but also considers the possibility of Conservation Subdivision developments to preserve rural character and open space while clustering housing. The plan also recommends Traditional Neighborhood Design Development as an alternative to sprawl in targeted areas.

#### ***City of Delaware Comprehensive Plan (2003-2008)***

The City of Delaware's currently adopted Comprehensive Plan establishes a generalized future growth boundary just north of Bunty Station Road. Of note for Powell though, Delaware has planned for a significant amount of light industrial development north of Bunty Station and along US 42. The planned extension of Sawmill Parkway from Hyatts Road to US 42 (scheduled for construction in 2015-2016) will reinforce the development potential of this area.



Infill redevelopment in Downtown Powell.

# INTRODUCTION

## Growth and Development

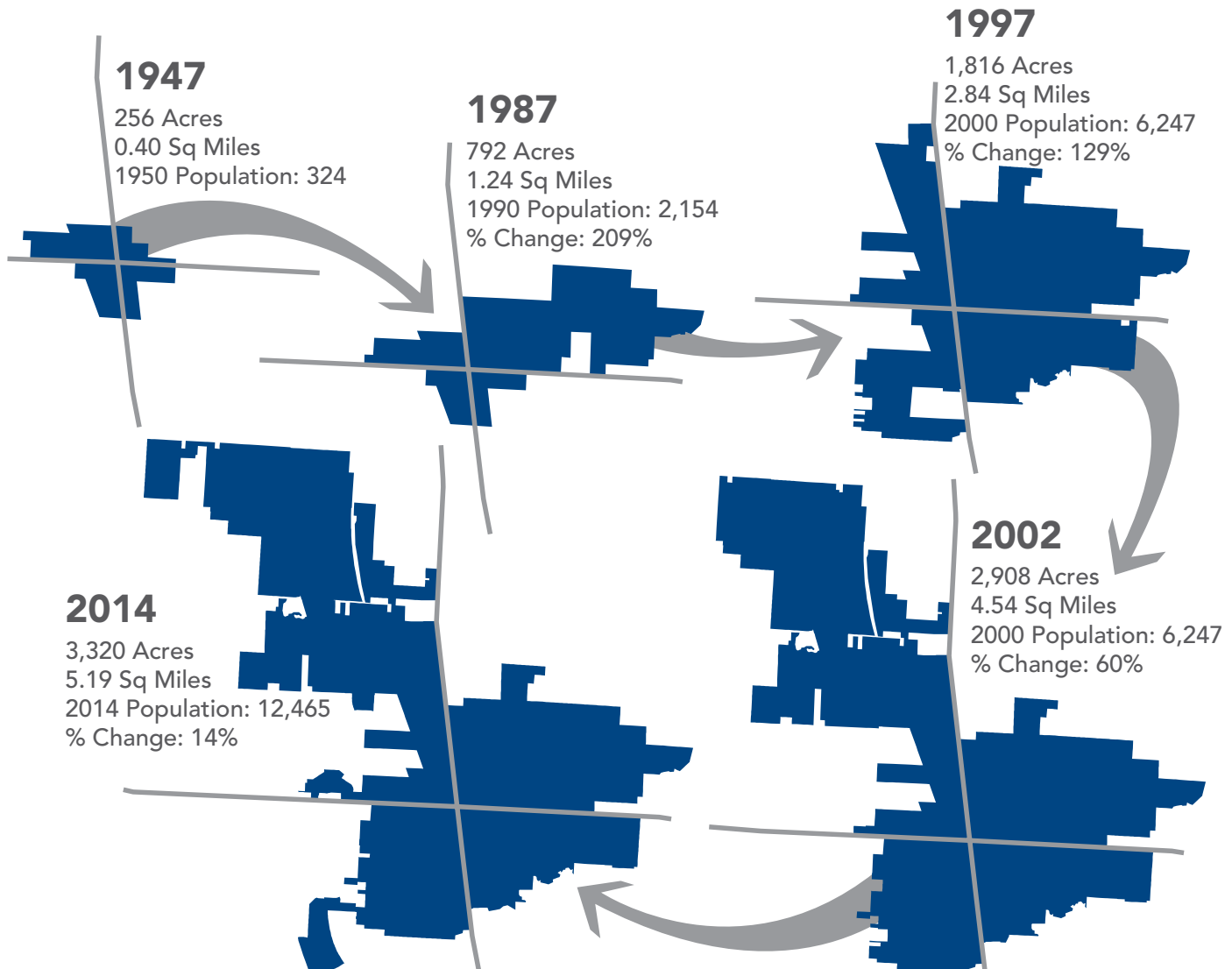
Powell was originally settled in 1801 as a frontier crossroads community called Middlebury. It was incorporated as a village in 1947, nearly a century after taking the name of Powell. The village began to expand in the 1980's with the trend of suburban residential subdivisions beyond the I-270 outerbelt. By 1990 the population was over 2,000 and 10 years later, when Powell was incorporated as a city, its population had tripled through continued expansion and subdivision.

Between the years 2000 and 2010, Powell's population nearly doubled again, largely due to the 2002 annexation of approximately 1,000 acres along the Sawmill Parkway

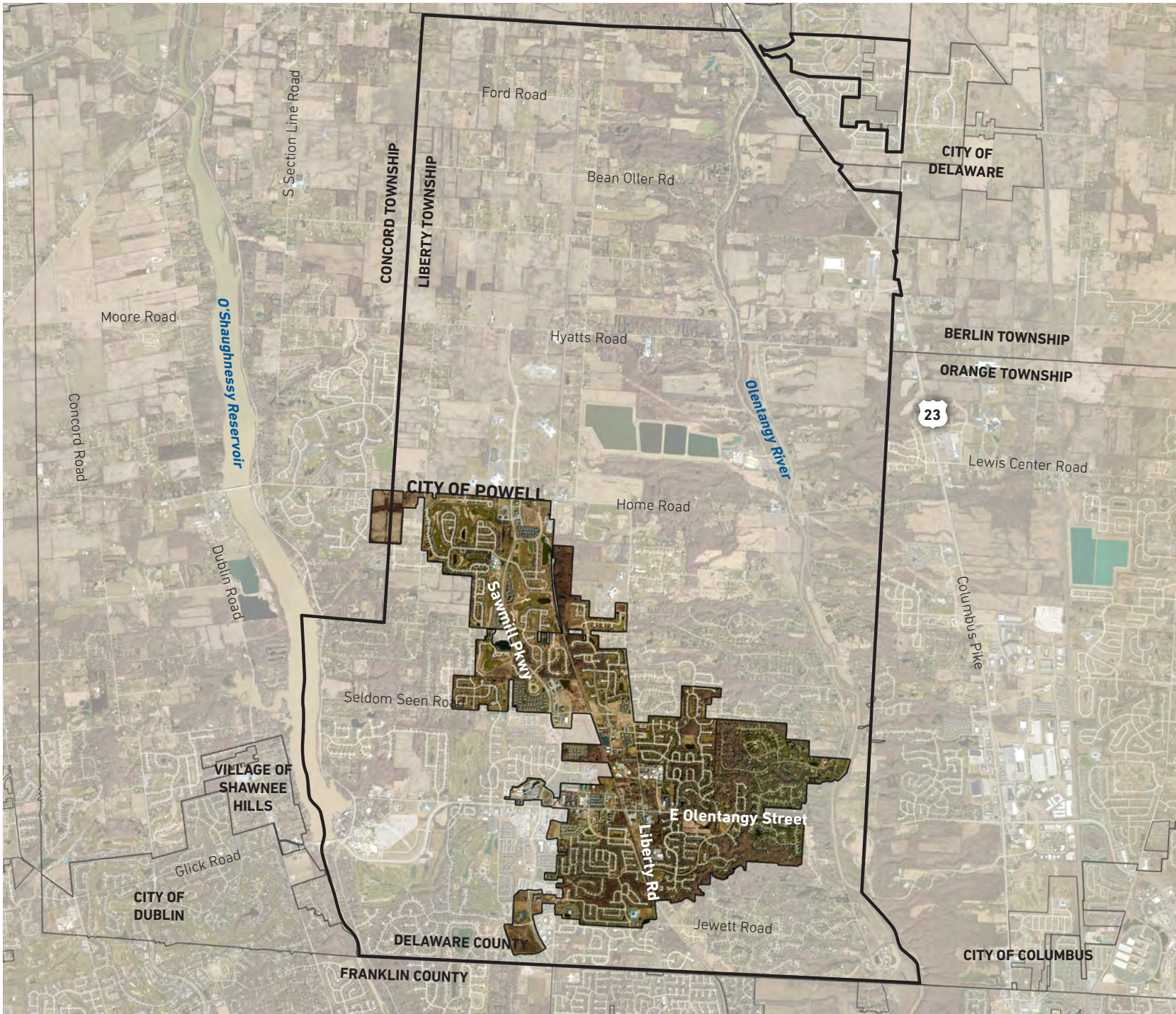
extension north of Seldom Seen Road for the development of the Golf Village community. At about the same time, Powell and Liberty Township entered into a Cooperative Economic Development Agreement (CEDA), which guides annexation from the township to the City, and limits Powell's expansion north of Home Road until the year 2017. In recent years, Powell has experienced more modest annexations, primarily of commercial land along the Sawmill Corridor near the southwest quadrant of the city. The City has also expanded into Concord Township with new residential development along Home Road.

Refer to the Land Use Plan section for more information about Powell's current land use and development patterns and recommendations for future growth.

### Exhibit 1.2: Powell Historical Growth







### Exhibit 1.3: Powell In Context

- Powell City Boundary
- Liberty Township Boundary
- Township Boundary

↑ NORTH 0 2,000' 4,000'

# INTRODUCTION

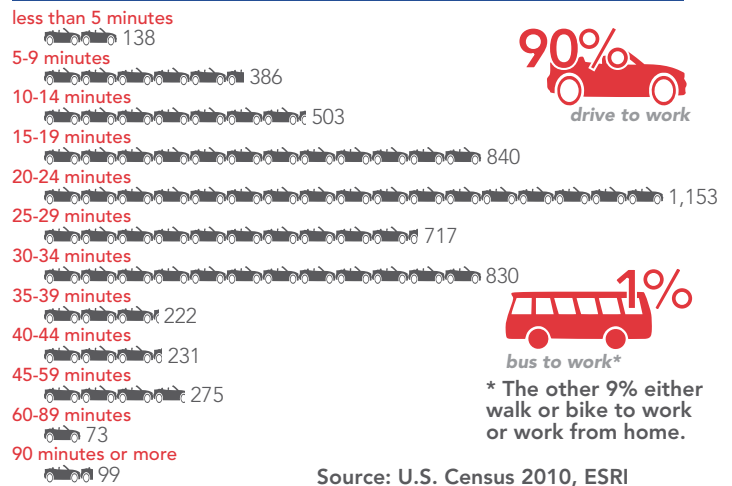
## Transportation

As with the region as a whole, east-west transportation through and around Powell is problematic, largely due to limited bridge crossings of the Olentangy and Scioto Rivers. Disconnected suburban street systems have exacerbated this issue, as does the CSX railroad which bisects the city with multiple at-grade crossings. Traffic congestion in Downtown Powell, specifically at the Four Corners intersection of Olentangy and Liberty Streets is a top concern of the community. The extension of Sawmill Parkway north of Powell Road has improved north-south mobility since the 1995 Plan, serving new development in Powell and Liberty Township. However, the extension of Sawmill Parkway north to US 42 will establish a significant regional connection that will open more land for development while also supporting increased through traffic within Powell. Likewise, the planned widening and extension of Home Road will improve east-west mobility, while also supporting new development. Other currently planned regional and local transportation improvements are illustrated below.

## Public Transportation

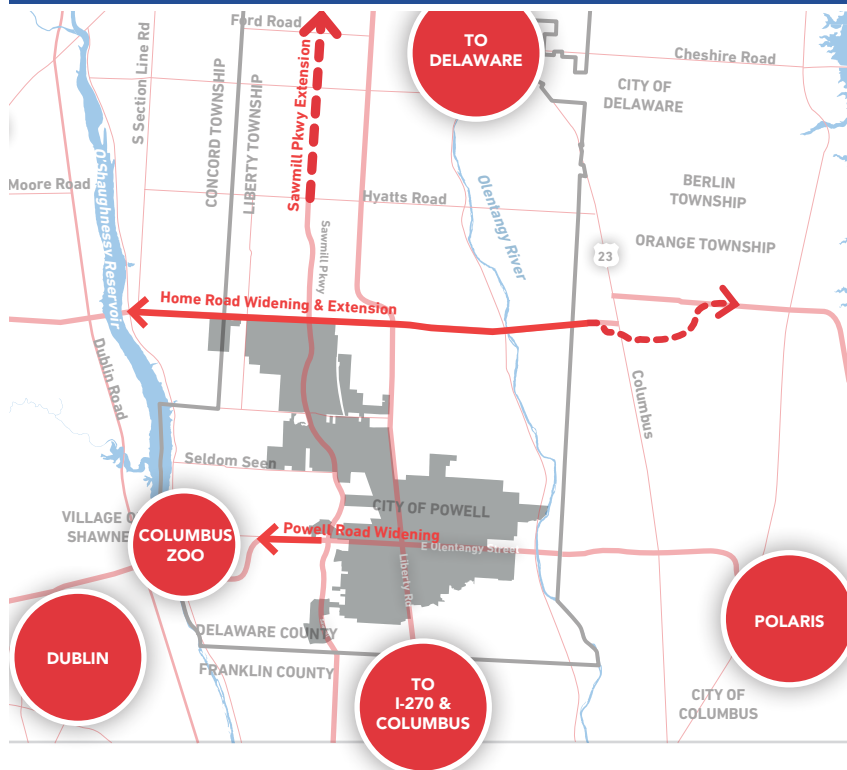
Currently COTA does not provide service to the City of Powell. The closest stops are at the Columbus Zoo and to the south at the intersection of Smoky View Boulevard and Smoky Row Road (South Liberty Road). While no plans currently exist to introduce commuter rail service to Central Ohio, the railroad does offer a long term opportunity to turn a transportation issue into an asset.

**Exhibit 1.5: Powell's Commuting Patterns (2008 - 2012)**

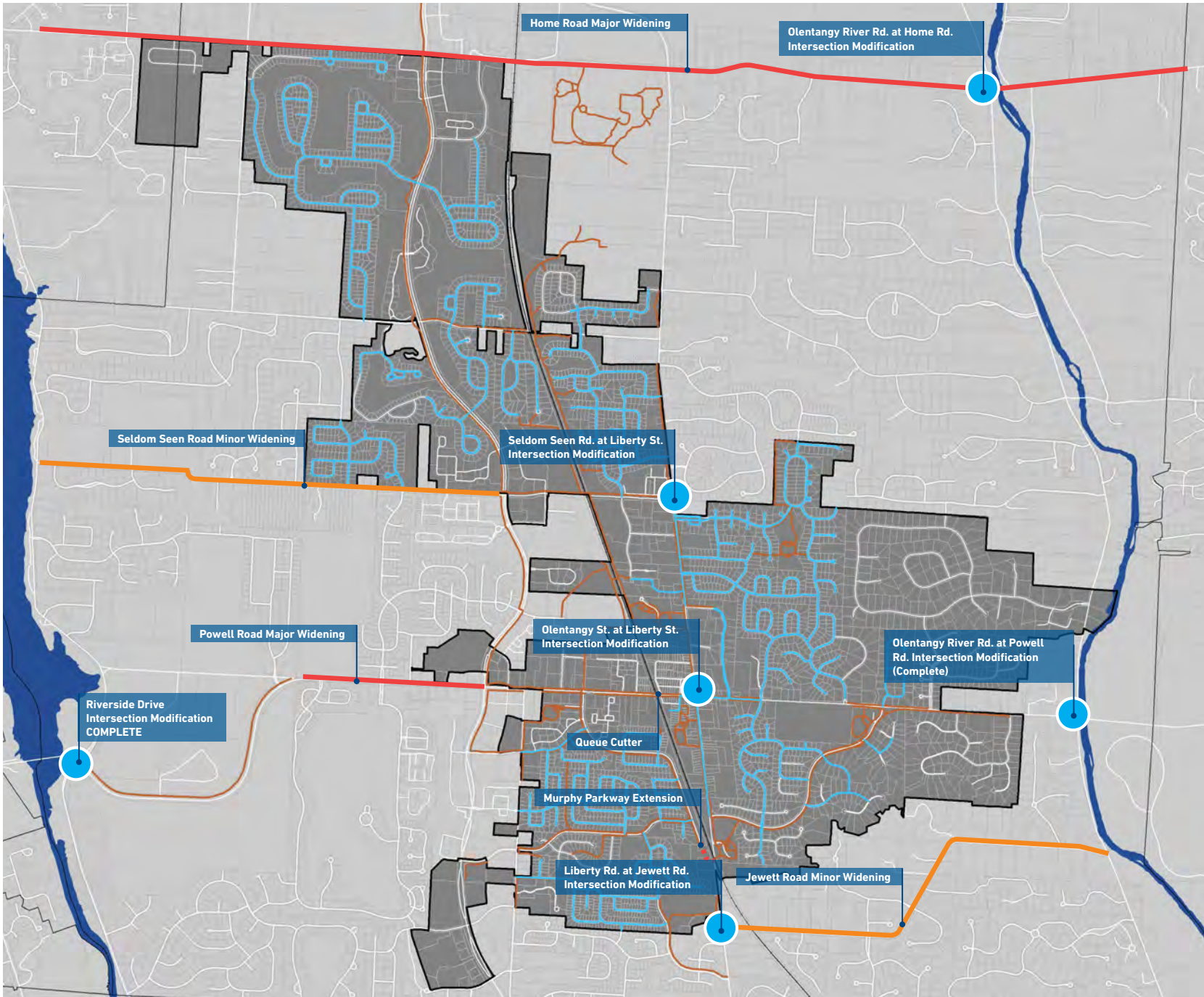


Source: U.S. Census 2010, ESRI

**Exhibit 1.4: Surrounding Area**







### Exhibit 1.6: Transportation Projects

(As planned by the City of Powell, Delaware County, and designated in the MORPC 2012-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan)

- City Boundary
- Building
- Hydrology
- Railroad
- Streets
- Intersection Improvement
- New Roadway
- Major Widening
- Minor Widening
- Access Management
- Multi-Use Trail
- Powell Streets - With Sidewalk
- Existing Bike Path

↑ NORTH

0 1,000' 2,000'

# INTRODUCTION

## Population & Housing

### Population Growth

Powell maintained a relatively constant number of residents from 1950 through 1980, and then experienced a significant jump in population with growth in the 1980's. By 2010, the population had increased to over 11,000 new residents. Projections developed by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission indicate that Powell is expected to add nearly 5,000 additional residents over the next 20 years, but this number does not include potential growth through new annexation. By contrast, surrounding Liberty Township is projected to grow by over 25,000 new residents by the year 2035, increasing from just over 15,000 residents to over 41,000. Through annexation, a portion of this growth may occur within the City of Powell.

### Household Composition

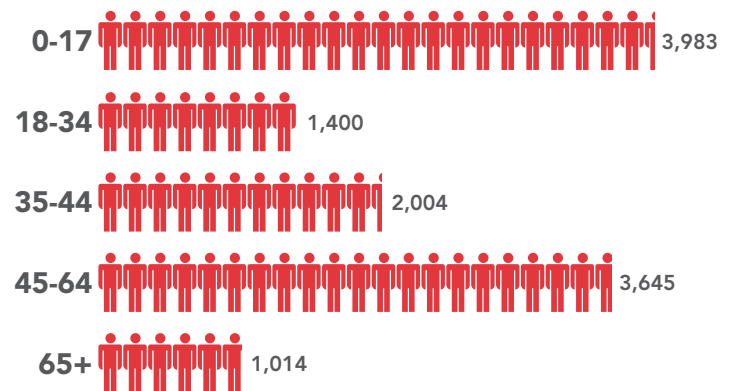
Powell is a family-oriented community with 85% of its households being families with children. Average household size for most single-family neighborhoods is 3 persons per household. The remaining 15% of households are comprised of couples or individuals. Average household sizes for attached housing types

(condos or apartments) within Powell generally range between 1.3 and 1.9 persons per household. A result of the condos being designed for retirees.

### Demographics

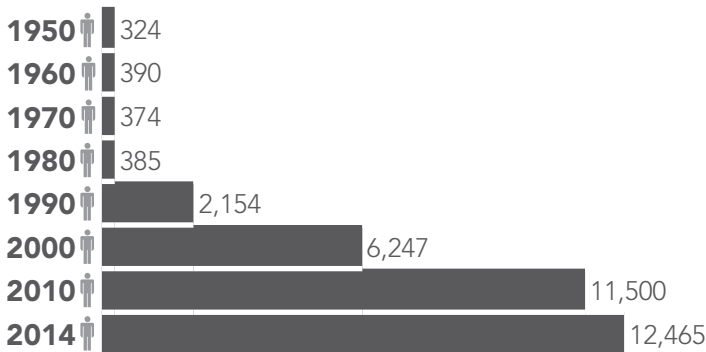
School aged children and middle-aged adults (their parents) make up the majority of the population of Powell. However, projections by the Olentangy Local School District indicate that the rate of growth in school aged children is expected to slow over the coming years. As with many local communities, the population in the 55-year and older age groups is expected to grow in

**Exhibit 1.8: Population by Age (2013)**



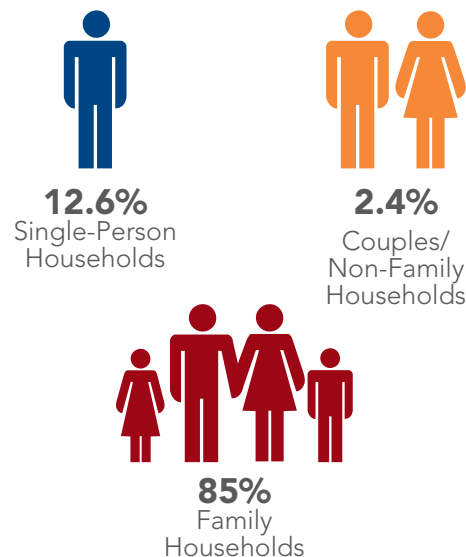
Source: U.S. Census 2010, ESRI

**Exhibit 1.7: Historical Population Data**



Source: U.S. Census 2010, ESRI

**Exhibit 1.9: Powell Households by Type (2010) %**



Source: U.S. Census 2010, ESRI

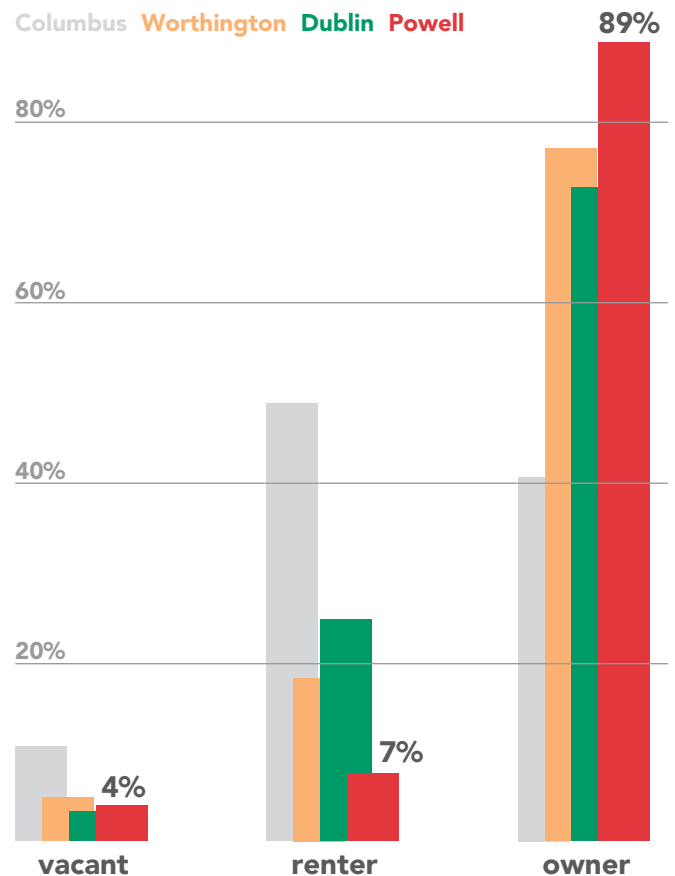


Powell for the foreseeable future (U.S. Census Bureau; ESRI forecasts). Powell's population is also steadily diversifying, with Asian-Americans and Asian immigrants represent over 7% of the population in 2015, and expected to increase to nearly 10% by the end of the decade.

### Housing Stock

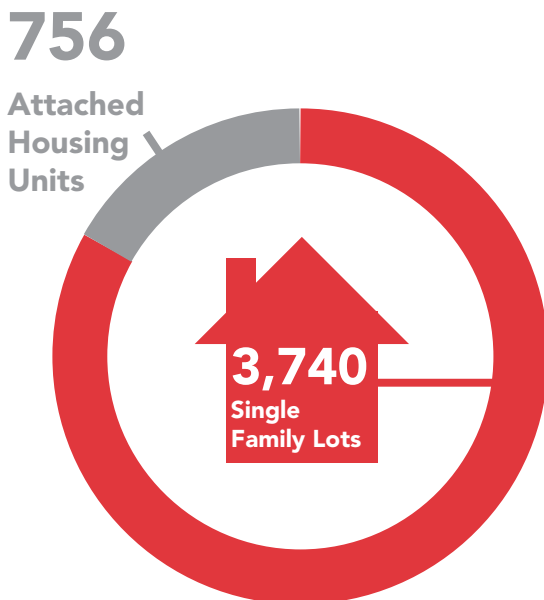
In the Columbus metro area Powell has the highest median home value at nearly \$400,000 - 2.5 times the median home value in the City of Columbus. The majority of Powell's housing stock is relatively new, built between 1990 and 2010. By comparison, the nearby City of Worthington's housing stock is substantially older, having been built primarily between 1950 and 1980. Nearly 90% of homes in Powell are owner-occupied, significantly higher than other nearby primarily single-family communities. Approximately 7% of housing units in Powell are renter-occupied; a small number of these are apartment units, while the rest are single family homes. As of 2014, approximately 83% of the City's housing stock (existing and approved for construction) is comprised of detached single-family homes. The remainder of attached housing units are primarily condominiums, typically ranging from 2 to 5 units per structure.

**Exhibit 1.11: Occupancy of Housing Units 2014**



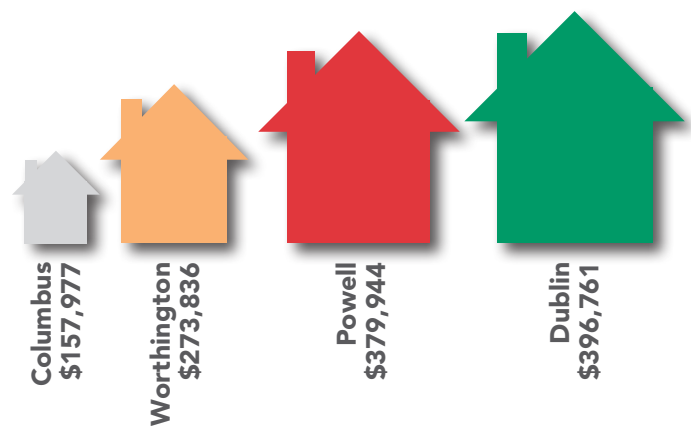
Source: U.S. Census 2014, ESRI

**Exhibit 1.10: Powell Housing Types (Existing and Approved)**



Source: City of Powell, 2014

**Exhibit 1.12: Median Home Values 2014**



Source: U.S. Census 2014, ESRI

# INTRODUCTION

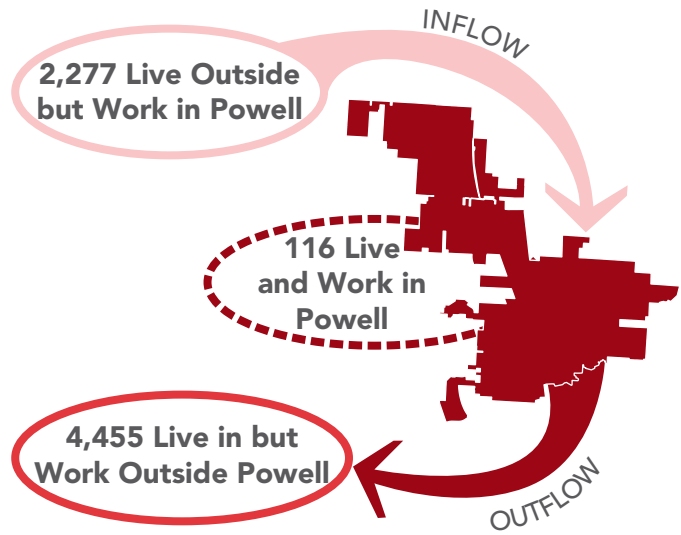
## Economy & Employment

Powell is home to a highly educated and well-paid workforce. However, most Powell residents commute outside of the city for work. Only about 5% of those who work in Powell also live within the community. Most jobs within the city are held by employees who commute into Powell on a daily basis.

Nearly 70% of Powell's residents hold a bachelor degree or higher, and over half are employed in either a management or business position. The rest of Powell's white collar occupations are divided nearly equally between healthcare, technology, and education.

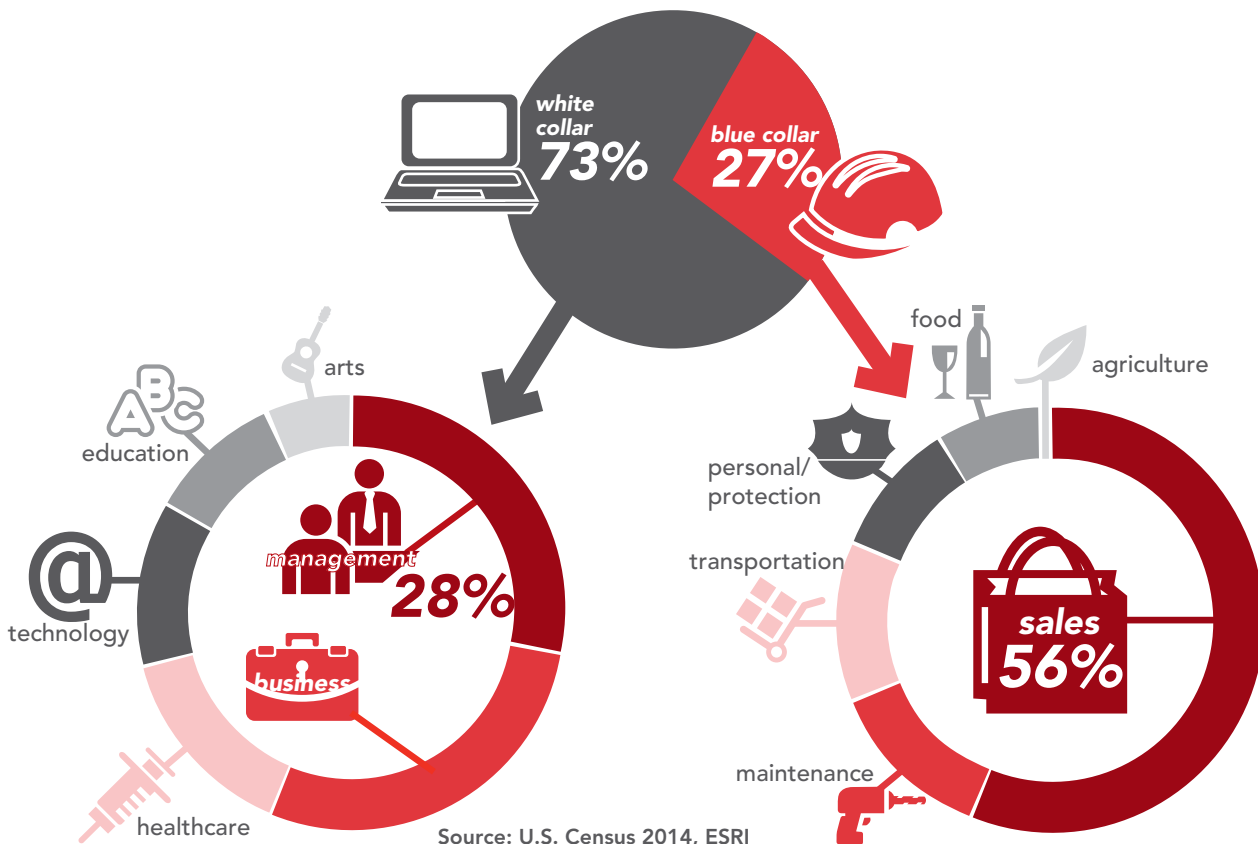
The majority of Powell residents make more than \$100,000 annually, with over 38% making more than \$200,000. This is consistent with local demographics; a highly educated population in the prime of their careers. The median household income is \$149,601 and is expected to increase to over \$160,000 by the year 2020.

Exhibit 1.14: Inflow/Outflow Jobs 2011



Source: U.S. Census 2014, ESRI

Exhibit 1.13: Occupation of Powell Residents 2014



Source: U.S. Census 2014, ESRI



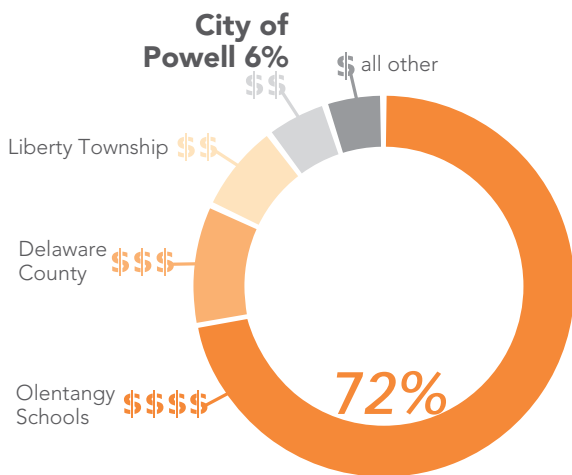
The City is primarily residential but does include limited employment opportunities. The service sector dominates current businesses within Powell. These types of businesses include auto repair, salons, dry cleaners, dentist offices, doctors offices and schools.

### Income and Property Taxes

Powell’s municipal income tax rate is 0.75%, the lowest in Central Ohio and one of the lowest in the state. The full 0.75% rate applies to those who earn wage and business income within the city. Those who live in the city but work in another municipality (city or village) that imposes an income tax are subject to Powell tax at a rate of 0.5% in addition to the rate applied by the municipality where the resident is employed. Within Central Ohio, the municipal income tax rate is typically in the range of 1% to 2% (the City of Columbus rate is 2.5%). This means that a Powell resident who works in Columbus has an effective income tax rate of 3%: 0.5% paid to Powell and 2.5% to Columbus.

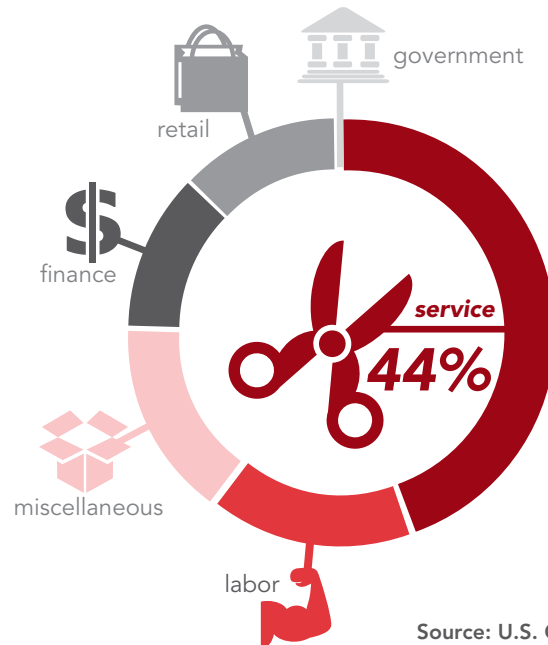
The majority of property taxes paid by Powell residents and business goes to the Olentangy Local School District. Approximately 5% goes to the City of Powell for city services and infrastructure, with the remainder going to Delaware County and Liberty Township.

**Exhibit 1.15: Powell Property Tax**



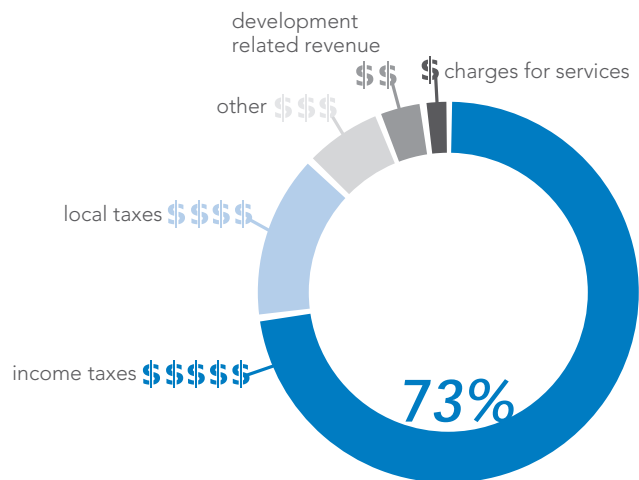
Source: City of Powell, 2013 Annual Report

**Exhibit 1.16: Businesses by Type in Powell 2014**



Source: U.S. Census 2014, ESRI

**Exhibit 1.17: Powell Revenue Sources**



Source: City of Powell, 2013 Annual Report

## Community Facilities

### Schools

The local education system is an important quality of life consideration for Powell's residents, and is consistently cited as one of the main reasons why people move to the Powell area. The majority of children in Powell attend Olentangy Local Schools, although it is not necessary to live within the Powell city limits to attend. In fact, only one public school is located within Powell's municipal boundaries, while six are located immediately outside of the city. The district is highly ranked with a 98% graduation rate and the state's Performance Index of 91%. The school district is comprised of 95 square miles located in Delaware County with a small, southern portion in Franklin County. The district serves all of the City of Powell but also all or part of a number of area municipalities. The total student population for the district as of October 2014 was 18,769 with roughly 19% of the students being Powell residents. Village Academy is the only private school within the City boundaries. It offers education for Pre-Kindergarten thru 12th grade.

### Parks, Open Space and Trail Connections

There are over 100 acres of public parkland within the City of Powell. The City recently adopted a master plan for the Park at Seldom Seen, a 23-acre addition to the City's park system that will provide both active and passive recreational opportunities in the geographic center of the community. Other major community parks include Adventure Park, Village Green Park, Arbor Ridge Park, and Library Park. Liberty Park, within the Liberty Township civic corridor along Liberty Road, provides additional parkland that also serves Powell residents. High Banks Metro Park is located along the east bank of the Olentangy River, less than a half-mile from Powell; however, there are currently no safe pedestrian or bicycle connections to this major recreational destination.

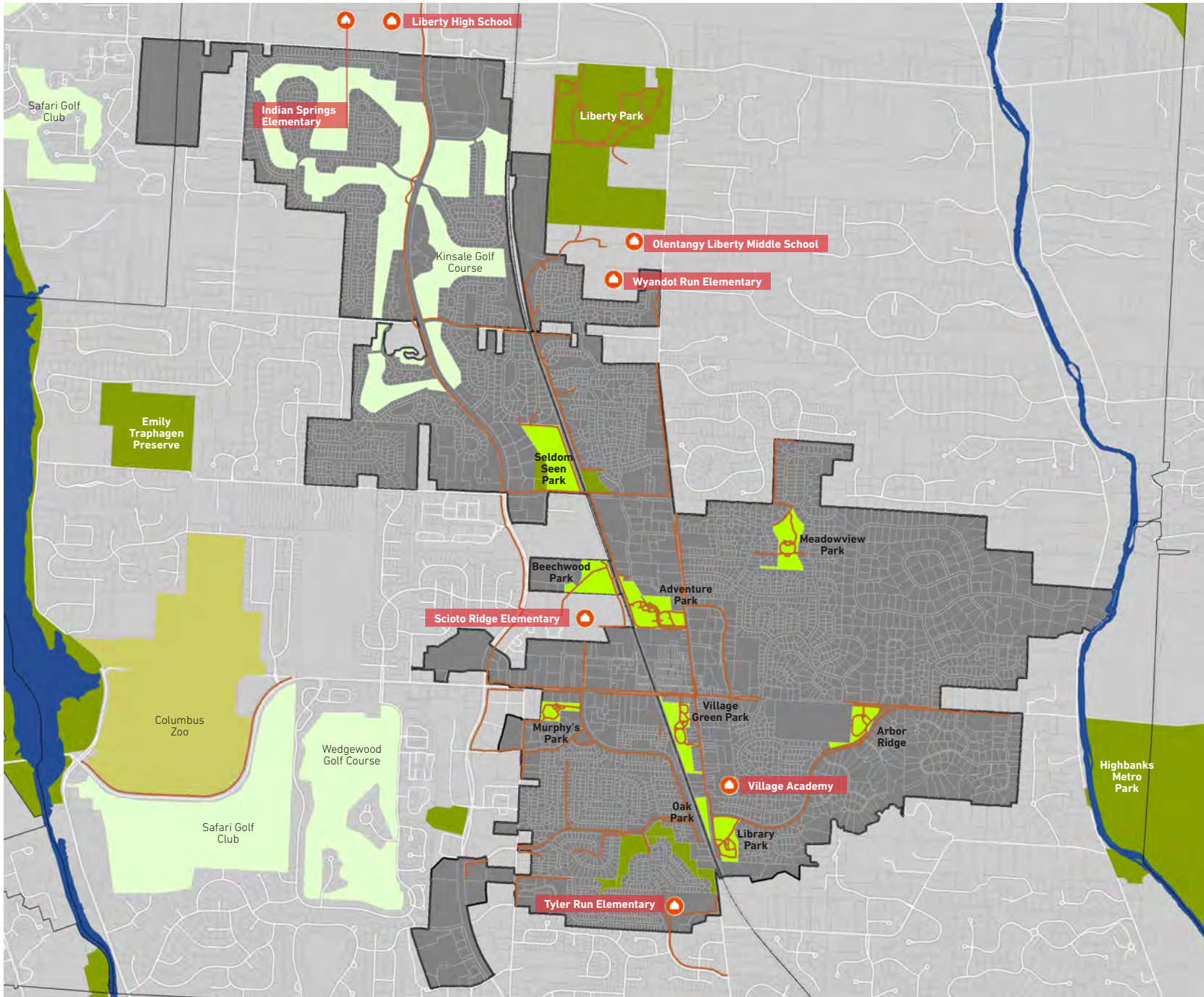
There are currently 13 miles of multi-use paths throughout Powell. However, there are a number of gaps within the path system that limit citywide pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. The Exhibit on the opposite page illustrates where the City has identified needed path connections, to be completed over time as capital funding is available.



The Park at Seldom Seen will be the newest addition to Powell's public park system.

Source: POD Design





### Exhibit 1.18: Parks & Open Space Existing Pedestrian And Bicycle Infrastructure

- City Boundary
- Building
- Hydrology
- Parcels
- Streets
- ⚓ Railroad
- City of Powell Park
- Other Parks
- Commercial Golf Course
- Columbus Zoo
- Existing Multi Use Path
- 🏠 Schools

↑ NORTH

0 1,000' 2,000'

# INTRODUCTION

## Regional Trends

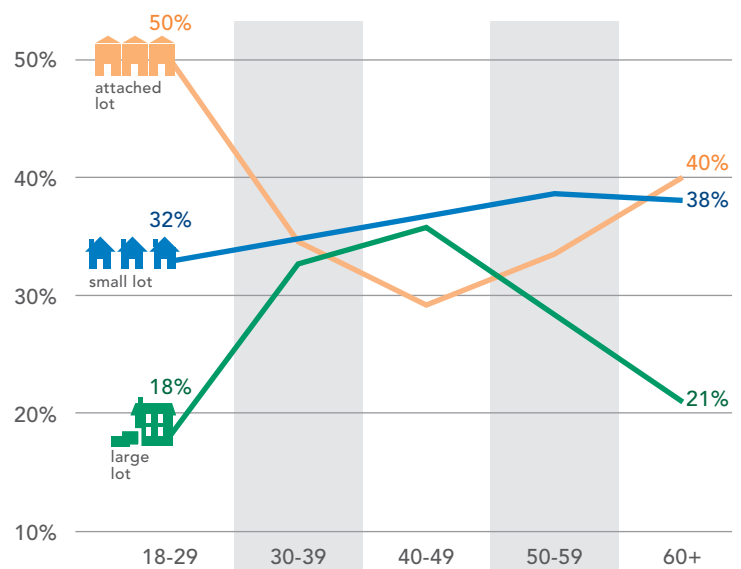
The Comprehensive Plan update was undertaken during a time of significant change for the Powell community and the region as a whole. As Powell began the planning process, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Agency (MORPC) was also engaging leading national planning consultants to analyze demographic and development trends for Central Ohio. This includes a report by demographer Arthur C. Nelson — *Columbus, Ohio Metropolitan Area Trends, Preferences, and Opportunities: 2010 to 2030 and to 2040*, and the *Insight2050* initiative, a joint collaboration between MORPC, Columbus 2020, and the Urban Land Institute, led by Calthorpe Associates. These studies document significant demographic changes that will affect development patterns throughout the region, and identify the growing opportunities for more compact, walkable, mixed use development that will best respond to the needs of a changing population. As discussed at the beginning of this section, Powell must consider how best to respond to these trends and remain competitive with other communities that are already taking action.

Despite projections for static or declining population numbers for most communities in the State of Ohio, Central Ohio is projected to experience continued growth and economic development over the next 30 years. However, mirroring national trends in changing demographics and housing preferences, the region is projected to experience a significant increase in demand for attached and small lot housing options. This is an issue affecting many of the suburban communities in the metropolitan Columbus area, which are dominated by large lot single family development and are now exploring how best to

accommodate other housing types in a manner that fits with the overall character of the community.

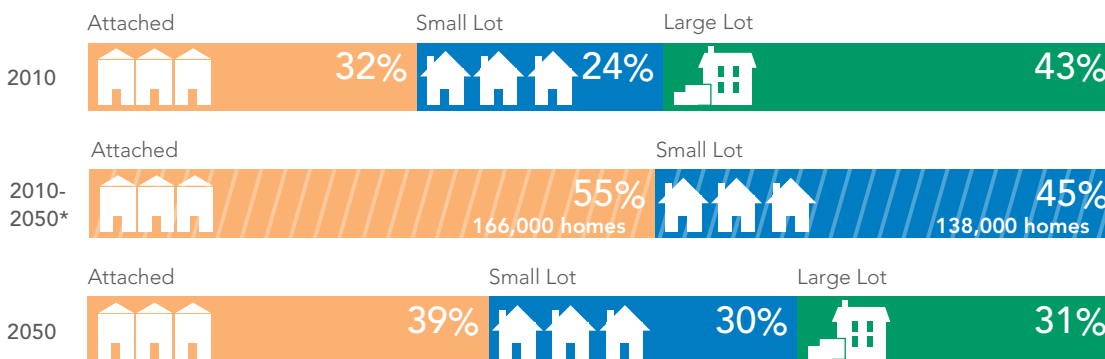
Regionally, the 65 and older demographic is projected to experience the largest percentage increase in population over the next 25 years. While Powell is currently dominated by families with children, the community can be expected to experience an increase in the senior population as the Baby Boom generation reaches retirement and begins to downsize. While there are currently some senior-oriented housing developments in Powell, the community can expect continued interest in alternatives to large lot single family homes, particularly in areas with walkable access to community amenities.

**Exhibit 1.20: Housing Type Preference by Age**



Source: National Association of Realtors (2011)

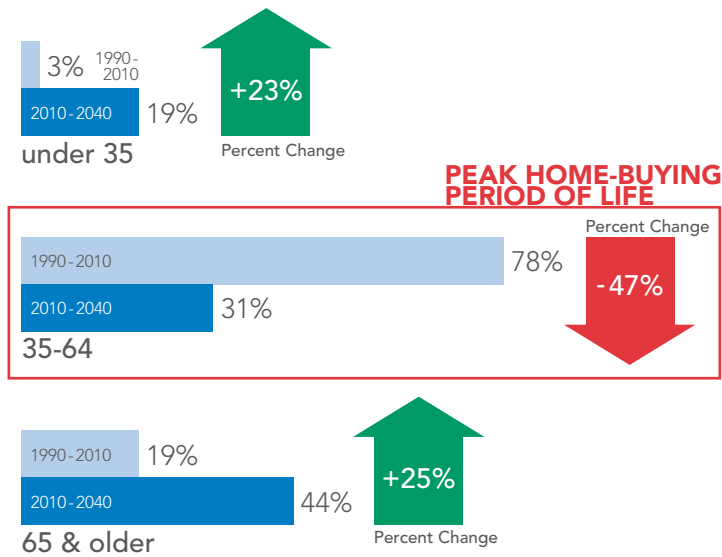
**Exhibit 1.19: Projected Demand for Housing by Type, Columbus MSA (2010-2050)**



\*Refers to households from 2010-2050, excluding households that existed prior to 2010.

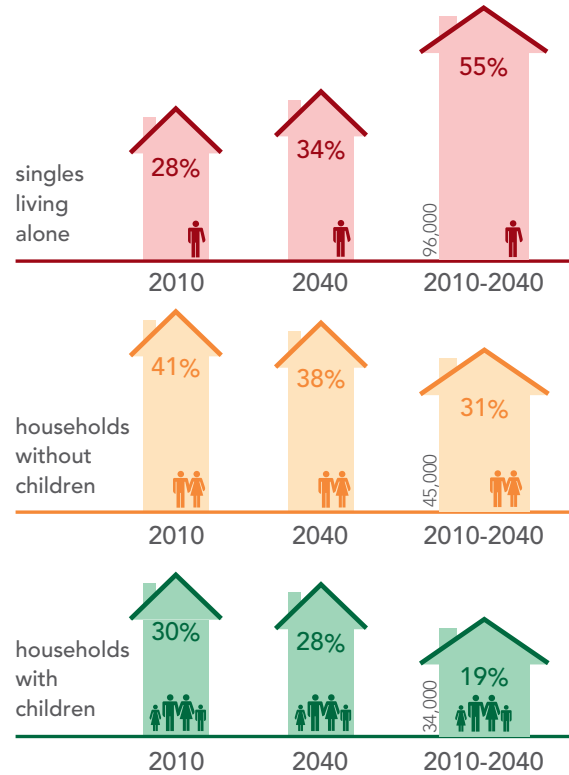
Source: Arthur C. Nelson, *Columbus, Ohio, Metropolitan Area Trends, Preferences, and Opportunities: 2010-2030 and to 2040* (NRDC)

**Exhibit 1.21: Columbus MSA Population Growth Projections by Age Group**

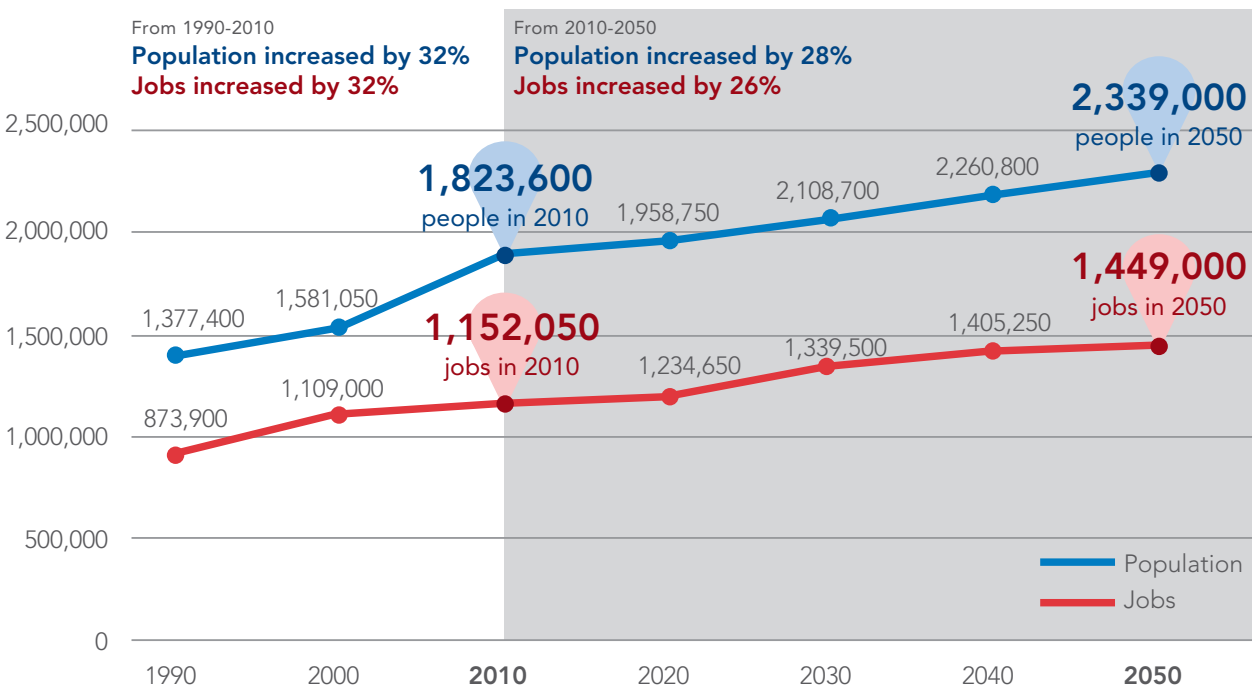


Source: Arthur C. Nelson, Columbus, Ohio Metropolitan Area Trends, Preferences, and Opportunities: 2010-2030 and to 2040 (NRDC)

**Exhibit 1.23: Current & Future Households Growth by Type, Columbus MSA**



**Exhibit 1.22: Important Columbus MSA Population Changes**





## Community Perspectives

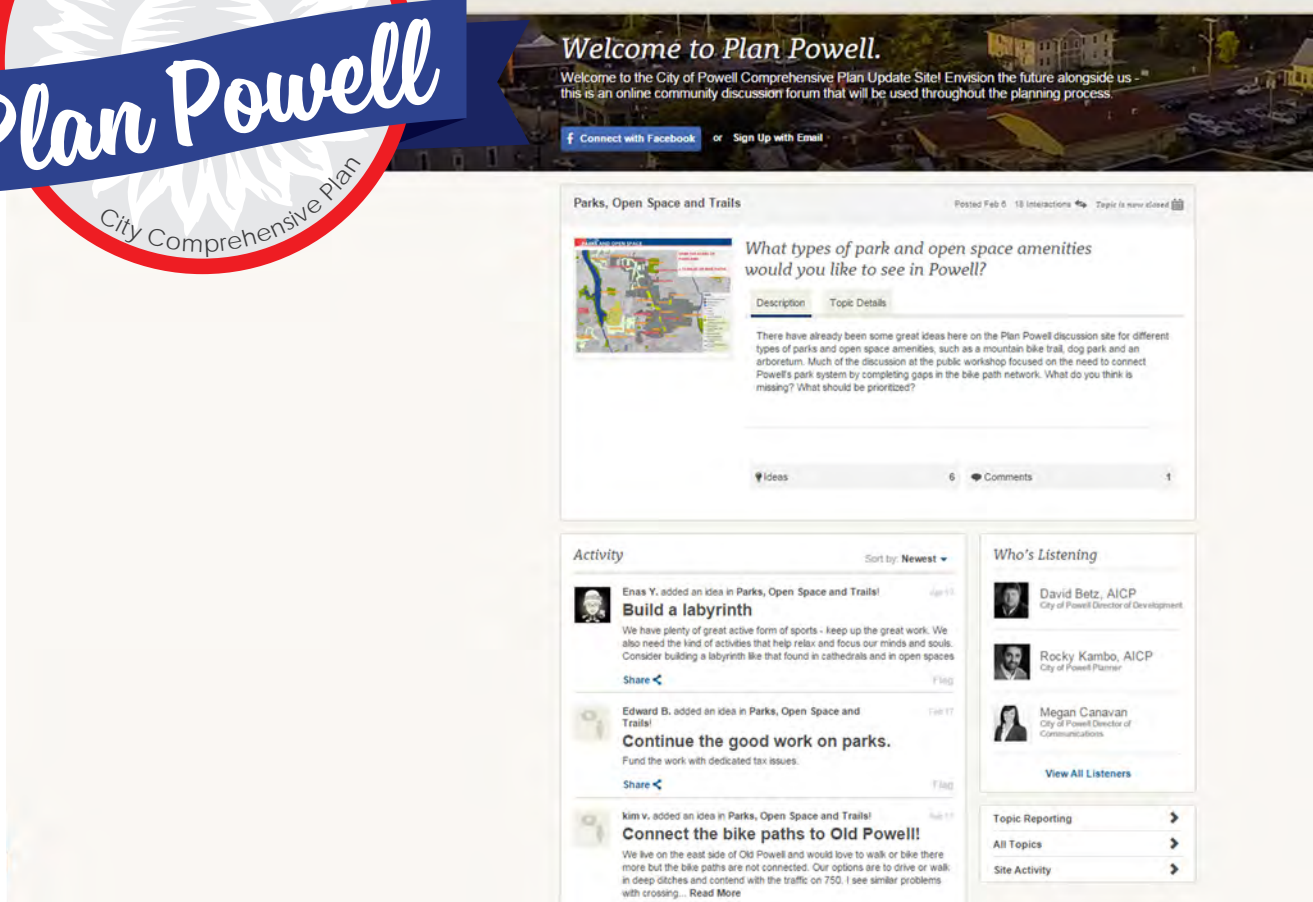
### Community Attitudes Survey

In the Spring of 2014, Powell engaged the public opinion research firm Saperstein Associates to conduct telephone interviews with over 400 registered Powell voters. A majority of residents consider the City of Powell an outstanding community. They praised the city-managed amenities, city services, and Powell’s public officials. They also cited the city’s small-town atmosphere as one of the most attractive aspects of the community. The survey identified two major issues that the community needs to address: 1) traffic congestion, particularly in Downtown Powell, and 2) residential development involving higher densities of housing than Powell has seen in the past.

### Plan Powell! Campaign and Online Engagement

In order to generate public outreach and discussion, the planning team and the City of Powell developed a branding and outreach campaign called Plan Powell! This included promotional videos and an interactive outreach website using a web-based discussion platform designed specifically for public collaboration.

The Plan Powell site generated over **200** user-generated “ideas” from over **100** participants. The site had over 13,000 page views with over 4,000 unique visitors throughout the entire process of updating the plan. All of the ideas and comments are located in the Appendix of this document. In some cases, there was considerable consensus regarding community perspectives, such as the need to improve the bikeway connections throughout the City. For other issues, especially the most topical issues of traffic congestion and housing development, a wide variety of opinions were expressed, demonstrating a clear need for the plan to provide recommendations on these items.



Plan Powell MindMixer website

## Stakeholder Interviews

At the beginning of the planning process, the planning team conducted targeted interviews with individuals and small groups representing a variety of interests in and around Powell. Such interviews help to supplement the information gained from online discussion and community-wide public meetings by providing planners with direct insights from those who live in and conduct business in the community. Groups included residents and business owners (both within downtown and outside of downtown), local developers (both those who have successfully developed in the city and township, and who may have interest in future development in city), and representatives from local government agencies, including the Olentangy Local School District, Delaware County, and Liberty Township. The following summarizes key points of discussion:

### **General Business Owners (outside of downtown)**

- There is a strong market for local business space
- The market is currently focused service-oriented office/retail that primarily serves Powell/Liberty Township residents
- Need for flexible spaces (overhead doors, loading docks, etc.)
- Powell is missing Class A office space that could serve as an anchor for commercial areas

### **Downtown Business Owners/Residents**

- Fixing the Four Corners is a top priority
- General support for downtown housing options, but must be high quality
- “Character of place” is part of downtown’s success
- There are several infill/redevelopment opportunities in or near downtown. These should be developed to fit within downtown’s character and to extend its character further along Olentangy and Liberty Streets.
- Need diverse businesses



### **County, Township, School Representatives**

- Planning for more large lot single-family development, but recognize need for diversity
- Multiple sewer extensions under study
- Elementary school enrollment is decreasing
- Opportunities exist for new trail connections between City and Township
- Maximizing existing infrastructure

### **Development Community**

- Residential developers are responding to shift in demand for smaller lots and attached units
- Prospective customers (new residents) want access to up-scale amenities, dining, bike path connections, open space, etc.
- A consistent source of capital improvements funding to support new development is needed.
- Diverse housing options needed



## Public Workshops

The plan update included three public workshops held at the Village Green Municipal Building at key points of the planning process. These provided an opportunity for the planning team to share findings and educate the public about key issues, and to listen to residents concerns and ideas to help guide the development of the plan.

### Public Workshop - February 5, 2015

The planning team hosted an introductory public workshop that was well attended with approximately 75 people. A general presentation kicked off the evening to inform the audience about existing conditions and trends. The participants then were invited to split up to discuss various topics in 15 minute intervals. Discussion topics and ideas included:

#### Land Use & Development

- Annex remainder of Powell Road
- Don't grow too fast
- Be more aggressive with annexation / plan for undeveloped land
- Sawmill Road, Home Road and railroad tracks are prime ground
- Consider merging with Liberty Township

#### Traffic / Transportation

- Four Corners intersection is *the* transportation issue
- Create a more effective downtown bypass
- Some advocate widening Olentangy and Liberty to add left turn lanes
- Others want to eliminate all left turns (at all times)

- Improve signage to divert traffic
- Use Seldom Seen Road as a bypass to downtown
- Create an overpass/underpass at railroad crossing(s)

#### Parks / Open Space / Trails

- Connect bike paths (fill gaps), both within Powell and in the Township
- Create a bike connection from downtown Powell to Highbanks
- Require developers to dedicate more open space
- Preserve the Bennett Farm

#### Fiscal Health

- Need to provide incentives to lure jobs
- Focus employment uses on Home Road/Sawmill Parkway
- Interest in fiscal impact of zoo and schools
- Encourage small and medium-sized businesses
- Diversify employment in Downtown

#### General Discussion

- Much discussion about appropriate housing types and locations
- Recognition of need for senior housing/downsizing options/aging in place
- Little expectation for housing demand among younger groups
- Some support for residential in downtown, but not (generally) rental/apartments, and not next to the railroad tracks





### Public Workshop - April 15, 2015

The second public workshop allowed participants to review conceptual scenarios for Powell's growth and development and discuss preferences regarding land uses and development character. The planning team also presented preliminary findings of the transportation and fiscal analyses and implications for Powell's future. Discussion topics amongst workshop participants included:

- The potential to redevelop downtown single family north of Olentangy Street
- The pros and cons of on-street parking in Downtown
- The potential for a new center of development north of Home Road
- Aging community demographics
- A desire for specialty shops in Downtown
- Long-term potential for merger with the Township
- The declining need for more single family housing
- Annex existing Sawmill corridor to the Zoo
- Northward expansion and related traffic impacts
- Encourage Mixed-Use & Senior Housing
- Concern with Downtown development traffic as well as the need for business patrons in walking distance
- Creating path connections to Downtown
- Preserving the quality of the school system



### Public Workshop - June 17, 2015

The final public workshop was attended with approximately 55 people. The planning team presented the results of the scenarios analysis and related transportation and fiscal impacts. This workshop was an opportunity for residents to review and comment on the recommended future land use plan and thoroughfare plan. Discussions helped to craft the final plan and recommendations in this document. Key outcomes included:

- General consensus for annexation of commercial development to improve tax revenues, including portions of the Sawmill Parkway corridor
- General consensus for the development of a new mixed use center and employment-generating uses to the north of Home Road
- A continued variety of opinions regarding the types of housing appropriate for Downtown Powell
- General support for the creation of additional street connections in Downtown Powell, but concern with how quickly this can be accomplished



## Young Residents Workshop - May 6, 2015

The City wanted all residents to have the opportunity to voice what they loved about Powell and this, of course, had to include the younger residents who are such a pivotal part of Powell. The City hosted a workshop specially designed to engage the younger population to better understand their likes and dislikes. Some of their answers are listed below.

### *What do you like about Powell?*

- Greater's, Rita's, Local Roots, Trinity All-Starts, etc.
- People work together
- It's nice and safe, small and cozy
- The Powell Festival
- The Splash Pad
- Becoming more modern, new styles
- Easy to run
- Everyone is close and kind of knows each other
- Close to the zoo, friends and I can walk to shops

### *What would you change about Powell?*

- A place to hang out with your friends
- More trees, bigger parks
- More businesses downtown, More shopping for younger residents
- Nothing, I love everything!
- Make the splash pad bigger!
- More shopping
- Need an indoor track

## Conclusion

The comprehensive plan update was undertaken at a critical period in Powell's development history. The community has experienced significant growth over the past twenty years, and is also being impacted by growth in surrounding communities. There is also the potential for continued suburban growth, particularly to the north of the city with the extension of Sawmill Parkway, that will surely have an impact on Powell. This growth, coupled with limited east-west regional transportation connections and reliance on the single-occupant automobile, has created a significant traffic congestion issue in the community, most notably in Downtown Powell at the Four Corners intersection.

At the same time, changing demographic and development trends suggest the Powell should consider the need for alternative forms of development, including more diverse housing options and more walkable neighborhood design. The community is already facing market pressures for new housing types, particularly in Downtown Powell, with a variety of opinions among residents about what types of development are appropriate in the village center.

These development and transportation pressures are occurring within the backdrop of a limited municipal revenue stream that already makes it difficult to fund major transportation improvements, and may create future challenges in maintaining the high levels of municipal services that Powell residents have come to enjoy.

The planning process that resulted in this document was initiated to address these important issues facing Powell, and to provide a vision and strategies to guide the community as it makes decisions about growth, development, infrastructure, and fiscal policies over the coming years. The remainder of this Plan outlines specific issues and planning recommendations for land use (Section 2), transportation (Section 3) and fiscal sustainability (Section 4). An implementation strategy (Section 5) with key policy recommendations and action items provides a road map for the community to put the plan into action.