



2021 Five Year Economic Development Plan: Moving the Plan Forward

Introduction:

In 2016, Clayton’s Development Department presented their Five-Year Economic Development Plan to City Council, a document which set the foundation for future growth within Clayton’s boundaries, based on a smart growth strategy staff believed was essential in accomplishing realistic goals and initiatives throughout the entire community, specifically over the immediate next five years. This strategy, based on the Framework for Creating a Smart Growth Economic Development Strategy: A Tool for Small Cities and Towns, published in January 2016 by the EPA’s Office of Sustainable Communities, set forth a list of development goals and planning initiatives specific to Clayton. Smart growth “refers to a strategy that builds upon existing assets, takes incremental actions to strengthen communities, and builds long-term value to attract a range of investments.” Staff used steps detailed in the report and created and outlined strategic tasks believed essential in not only growing the city’s tax base and community appeal over the 2016-2021 time period but for the next several decades.

Over the time frame outlined in the 2016 plan, staff created projects specific to the listed tasks, partnered with regional agencies and marketed potential sites to developers attempting to move the entire plan forward. A byproduct of these efforts was the emphasis by staff in creating positive narratives across many of the city’s marketing platforms. Accomplishing the tasks in the prescribed timeframes was emphasized throughout the past five years, while the idea of “placemaking” became one of the leading philosophies of the city’s Development Department. As detailed in the introduction of the 2017 report Place Matters: The Role of Placemaking in Economic Development, the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) set forth “to explain how placemaking is increasingly relevant to the field of economic development, to identify the role of the economic developer in placemaking activities, and to share examples of how creative, successful, and cutting-edge placemaking initiatives are used to enhance traditional economic development efforts.” They also defined placemaking as “the practice of creating or enhancing a community’s assets to improve its overall attractiveness and livability.” In the report, the IEDC found that “according to Mark Wyckoff of the Land Policy Institute at Michigan State University, ‘placemaking is not a single new tool; it is a set of best practices for improving the effectiveness and outcomes long targeted by community and economic development professionals.’” Clayton’s staff combined the goals and tasks set forth in the 2016 Five Year Economic Development Plan with consistent efforts to build upon a wide array of various placemaking initiatives to create a development philosophy unique to Clayton in the regional landscape.



One of the strongest components of the 2016 plan was an emphasis on updating and creating new planning documents to assist in future development. Staff created and implemented the N. Main Street Overlay District in 2017, creating a more efficient development process along the corridor, making this commercial center much easier to develop long term. PLAN Clayton, the update to the 1999 Land Use Plan, was undertaken and eventually approved by City Council in 2018. This new plan provides staff and the city a roadmap for future community and economic development efforts for the next two decades. Finally, a complete rewrite of the Clayton Zoning Code was started in 2019 and was approved in mid-2021, providing a much more user-friendly document which lays out new development standards and zoning regulations consistent with what is laid out in the PLAN Clayton document. These were the three main planning components of the 2016 plan, and all were completed by the middle of 2021.

Within the smart growth framework of the original plan, there has been over \$21.3 million of capital investment completed in Clayton over the span of the past five years, with a majority of the commercial investment occurring along the three main corridors identified in the 2016 plan. Over the past five years almost all the tasks described in the plan have been successfully completed or are in the pipeline to be finalized in the near term.

- N. Main Street: The new million-dollar Bone and Joint Surgeon and Athletico Therapy building was constructed and opened in 2017. The North Main Animal Clinic, another new million-dollar building, was constructed in 2019, using the newly approved development standards set forth in the N. Main Overlay District. Ten residential structures were demolished along this corridor, two city owned properties have been consistently marketed with real estate brokers, with one currently under contract with an end user who has committed to build a new commercial building to the standards first set forth in the N. Main Street Overlay District. Finally, the formerly vacant Dayton Artificial Limb building was refurbished by Main Street Health in 2020 as part of a \$500,000 redevelopment project and is now a productive tax producing member of the Clayton commercial community. There have also been 30 new businesses which have opened their doors along this corridor over the past five years.
- Salem Avenue/Hoke Road: Casey's General Store built and opened a new store at the corner of Salem and Union (2018), Burger King opened a newly built restaurant at the corner of Salem and Hoke (2019) and Goodwill opened their newly constructed store on Hoke Rd, just north of Wal-Mart (2020), all within the past five years. The 51-acre tract of land on Salem Avenue, identified in the PLAN Clayton document as an industrial use classification, was in fact rezoned to industrial and is now being actively marketed by a commercial broker. Additional land along Salem Avenue is also now being actively marketed by commercial brokers. Staff also submitted a \$2.6 million grant application to MVRPC to widen Hoke Rd. and to extend utilities south on Hoke from Wenger Rd to assist in future commercial growth along this corridor. This specific grant application appears to be on track to be awarded by the state by the end of 2021.



Year Two - 2017-2018																				
Task																				
One new commercial use with plans - Village of N. Clayton	Staff was aggressive throughout 2018-2019 on engaging commercial end users and working on a multi-family project																			
Removal of Residential Blight	started in 2016 Completed																			
Vacant Farm Land - data input	Completed																			
Assist realtors with commercial land marketing	Completed and will continue to do																			
Master Plan - Implementation	Plan Adopted Working on Implementation																			
	May, 2017	June, 2017	July, 2017	Aug, 2017	Sept, 2017	Oct, 2017	Nov, 2017	Dec, 2017	Jan, 2018	Feb, 2018	Mar, 2018	Apr, 2018	May, 2018	June, 2018	July, 2018	Aug, 2018	Sep, 2018	Oct, 2018	Nov, 2018	Dec, 2018
	Time Frame to Accomplish Task																			
	Task Process Started & In Progress																			
	Task Completed																			

Year Three - 2018-2019																				
Task																				
Zoning Code Re-Write	Kickoff event was December, 2018																			
Hoke Road Development- One new retail use at site	Started in 2017 Burger King opened in Jan. 2019 and Goodwill was approved late '18																			
N. Main Street Redevelopment - Have plans for one new commercial use using new overlay specs	Plans submitted in April N. Main Vet broke ground in the fall of 2018																			
Village of N. Clayton - Commercial use in place, res. Lots under site control	Residential lots went up for auction in 2018 and are beginning to be purchased. City controls 4 acres now and land is being marketed with broker. Still engaging commercial end users																			
Engaging owners of farm land	Farm land available for development is presently on the market and is on the various real estate platforms including Zillow																			
Salem Avenue - End user breaking ground	Casey's opened in October, 2018																			
	May, 2018	June, 2018	July, 2018	Aug, 2018	Sept, 2018	Oct, 2018	Nov, 2018	Dec, 2018	Jan, 2019	Feb, 2019	Mar, 2019	Apr, 2019	May, 2019	June, 2019	July, 2019	Aug, 2019	Sep, 2019	Oct, 2019	Nov, 2019	Dec, 2019
	Time Frame to Accomplish Task																			
	Task Process Started & In Progress																			
	Task Completed																			

Year Four - 2019-2020																				
Task																				
Land Use Plan - Incorporating new plan with econom plan	Zoning Code re-write should be completed in 2021 and staff is working on a status update of the 2016 Economic Development 5 Year Plan																			
Land Bank NIP - Finalizing demolition specs	Project was completed in 2017																			
Village of N. Clayton - Planning for future residential development	Staff has worked with Quiet Creek for past three years. Staff has also been working with Windsor Properties which has purchased all the remaining North Clayton residential lots to develop																			
Salem Avenue - End user project completed	Staff worked with owners of 53 acres to rezone to Industrial at the beginning of the year and the land is now being proactively marketed																			
N. Main - Looking for second end user with Overlay specs	Land is on market and we've spoken with a possible end user for one of our lots. COVID has stalled restaurant and retail sector right now																			
	May, 2019	June, 2019	July, 2019	Aug, 2019	Sept, 2019	Oct, 2019	Nov, 2019	Dec, 2019	Jan, 2020	Feb, 2020	Mar, 2020	Apr, 2020	May, 2020	June, 2020	July, 2020	Aug, 2020	Sep, 2020	Oct, 2020	Nov, 2020	Dec, 2020
	Time Frame to Accomplish Task																			
	Task Process Started & In Progress																			
	Task Completed																			



- The existing street infrastructure is in good condition. There has been one third of a sidewalk/streetscape plan completed.
- There exist two to three core areas of older residential stock which could be realistically demolished and made available for commercial redevelopment long term. One issue is that almost all of the existing housing in these areas are current on property taxes and are occupied, making using tax delinquent acquisition and demolition via the city's unsafe structure regulations difficult.
- There are several older commercial buildings that remain vacant and need demolition or redevelopment efforts to make them viable business candidates.

2. Salem Avenue/Hoke Rd. Business Corridor

- This corridor continues to be the most likely location for future industrial uses.
- The corridor also has a market viability for future commercial and fast casual dining options with its proximity to existing industrial parks, Miami Valley CTC, direct access to I-70 and the several residential areas within a two-minute drive from the corridor.
- Utility infrastructure exists for the majority of available future development options along Salem Avenue. Hoke Rd. needs to be widened and utilities extended south of Wenger Rd, per the PLAN Clayton document. Traffic control improvements are needed at the Hoke/Wenger intersection as well.
- Hoke Rd. has the opportunity to develop various flex-use opportunities as identified in the PLAN Clayton document. This includes possible connectivity and streetscape upgrades from Smith Dr. north to National Rd.

3. Village of North Clayton

- A mixed-use town center with an active HOA and Community Authority. This development kicked off in the 2005/2006-time frame and became a victim to the Great Recession and ownership issues which left the majority of the properties in probate court until 2018.
- New multi-use path completed in 2016 which goes in front of the development and connects the development to the Northmont high school and middle school campus, Kleptz YMCA, Kettering Health Network, Sinclair campus, Kleptz Early Learning Center, and the future site of the new Northmont branch of the Dayton Metro Library.
- Infrastructure and utilities are already in place.



- Two commercial tenants currently in place.
- A few dozen undeveloped single family and townhouse lots ready to be developed.
- Multiple TIF districts already existing which can assist future infrastructure extensions to undeveloped parcels.
- Windsor Properties purchased the remaining residential and commercial lots at the end of 2020.
- Esther Price Companies and Crossman Properties control a few other lots throughout the development. A handful of privately owned lots by individuals looking to build single family homes in the near future.
- City owns four acres of commercial land which fronts National Rd.

4. Residential Development

- Clayton is made up of a majority of older residential neighborhoods which predate Clayton becoming a city. There have been a handful of newer residential neighborhoods started since 2000: Wenger Village and Wenger Estates, which are under the same PUD, Village of North Clayton and Country View Estates (14 homes). Wenger Meadows/Virginia Springs (22 homes), and Wetzel Farms (9 homes) were initiated prior to 2000 and were built out soon after. Since the mid 2000's there have been no new residential developments started in Clayton.
- PLAN Clayton identified several different areas in the regulating plan, specifically Clayton Commercial Center, Creekside Village, Northmont Village, Old Village Annex and Warner Village as possible new residential and flex use communities within Clayton. It also identified vacant land throughout Clayton for future residential use.
- Wenger Village, Wenger Estates and Village of North Clayton all have land currently included with their original PUD that have not been fully built out. Additional phases of residential development can occur in these neighborhoods under the current zoning.
- The majority of the areas which have been identified for specific communities or residential use in general, currently have access to public utilities.

Define the Context

The 2016 Five-Year Economic Development Plan concentrated on finding both quantitative and qualitative data to determine not only where Clayton's future growth should occur at, but also what the community felt was important as part of future growth within the city's boundaries. To accomplish this, staff undertook three action items to assist in future development efforts. Moving forward, staff will continue to



concentrate development efforts based on the results of these three tasks and the selected focus areas previously discussed. The results of those tasks are included below:

1. Create an Overlay Zoning District along N. Main Street: This was the first context task completed as part of the Five-Year Economic Development Plan. As the main commercial corridor in Clayton, N. Main Street was previously a hodge podge of zoning districts which limited the potential of future development projects. This new district has since been incorporated as its own zoning district in the updated zoning code. By streamlining the zoning regulations along N. Main Street, the city has provided additional development potential. As part of this new district, the design review requirements were transitioned to staff, removing additional process barriers which makes new development much easier along N. Main Street. Future development along this corridor should be much smoother over the next five years due to this new zoning district. This will allow staff to concentrate additional efforts on other elements of N. Main Street including new streetscape plans and identifying strategies to incorporate existing older housing stock along the corridor into future commercial development.
2. Update the Comprehensive Land Use Plan: The project resulted in the PLAN Clayton document. As part of this project, there were several different types of community outreach opportunities for residents, property owners and business operators to respond and provide direction on the final version of the document. Ultimately, this project provides the roadmap for future growth and development in the entire city for the next two decades, but also with any project implementation plan, sorted with short-, mid- and long-term goals over the same period. City Council created a PLAN Clayton Implementation Committee consisting of elected officials, a Planning Commission member, a real estate professional, and residents representing each city ward to provide project suggestions from the Implementation Plan to be undertaken over the next several years in the city. Future implementation projects will greatly influence future development trends and where the city will most likely observe future residential and commercial investment within the city's boundaries.
3. Update the Zoning Code: This project will make zoning regulations consistent with PLAN Clayton. Prior to updating the zoning code, many different aspects of PLAN Clayton could not be implemented via the development process because the zoning code did not require certain aspects found in the comprehensive land use plan. As new development projects occur in the city, the city should see projects which align with PLAN Clayton more closely. This should lead to future investment within



the city and will assist in growing the city as desired by the community at large, ensuring the city's growth is consistent with the feedback staff received during the community engagement period of PLAN Clayton. Staff also created a Steering Committee for the project consisting of city residents, members of the Board of Zoning Appeals, Planning Commission, Montgomery County Building Department's Chief Building Official, staff from MVRPC and city staff. This committee met with the city's zoning code consultant several times throughout the process for recommendations and to review various levels of the draft for input.

Define Goals

The goals of the Five-Year Economic Development Plan are ultimately what stakeholders are interested in reviewing when looking at the document as a whole. Defining those goals is essential ensuring an appropriate and reasonable level of expectations. Staff has created separate project tasks to implement from the goals listed below. These goals are consistent with staff's philosophy of placemaking playing a vital role in future development projects within the city. Investment following other investment is an overly simplistic manner of saying a flourishing community breeds future successful development projects. Industries look for communities where there is a thriving workforce population, community assets and ample land with available utilities and public infrastructure. Commercial development occurs where there are critical mass of residential populations creating both a strong workforce and consumer base to draw from. Without those components, commercial development can prove to be difficult over the long term. To that end, in order to create a community which is not only attractive for future commercial growth, Clayton must continue to grow its residential base. In Place Matters: The Role of Placemaking in Economic Development, it points out "Because talented workers are mobile and in high demand, they often decide to live and work in communities with a high quality of place. Among 25–34-year-olds with college degrees, two-thirds look for a job *after* they choose the community where they want to live. Consequently, communities that incorporate placemaking initiatives into their economic growth strategies often manage to attract high quality talent, leading to population growth, employment growth and an expanding tax base." The goals included with this document include several aspects of placemaking but also strategies to support our existing and growing business community.

Please see the attached 2021 Five-Year Economic Development Plan: Five Year Goals, Summary and Flow sheet for additional information on the specific development goals and corresponding timeframes for the city over the following five years.



1. Increase Population

- To be successful, communities must grow. If they are not growing then they are dying. The reason is simple. The cost of services will continue to increase each and every year. According to Clayton's March, 2021 Moody's Investors Service Annual Comment document, Clayton's tax base is "satisfactory, yet they are relatively weak when compared to its Aa2 rating position." "Also, the full value per capita (\$54,670) is significantly below other Moody's-rated cities nationwide." "Lastly, the total full value (\$720 million) is weaker than the US median." Without an expanding tax base, via new residents and commercial expansion, municipalities cannot realistically keep up with the increasing cost of police, fire, and road maintenance without passing those costs onto the residents via property tax levies and other mechanisms. Another alternative is cutting the levels of service. If a community is increasing its population, the cost of services is spread out, keeping taxes consistent, municipal income tax rolls increase, and excellent service levels are maintained, making the community more attractive for future residents.
- According to the 2000 US Census, Clayton had a population of 13,347 people. In 2010 the population in Clayton was down to 13,209 and the projections over the past ten years is the population has remained relatively stagnant with little to no growth. Clayton also has an aging population with very minimal housing vacancy. The Northmont community as a whole continues to struggle to attract young professionals while also losing empty nesters and retirees to communities outside Montgomery County due to lack of low maintenance housing options and higher property taxes. To combat those two trends Clayton needs to actively concentrate on increasing not only the amount of residential development within the city, but also the types of housing options, so there is a mixture between new and various levels of single family residential and new market rate multi-family. Northmont City Schools offers a strong school system with the capacity to add additional students and a community full of amenities for young families and residents of all ages. Creating additional and diverse housing options is essential to growing Clayton long term.
- There will be several different tasks for this particular goal and setting a target for an increase of population will be one of them.



Over the next ten years, staff believes it is reasonable to work towards increasing Clayton's population by 5% from the 2010 Census number of 13,209. Staff believes this is a reasonable number because we expect the 2020 Census population to remain consistent with the 2010 number. Over the next five years, staff will work toward increasing the population by 2.5% or by approximately 330 residents. To accomplish this task Clayton must create an "Aging in Place Housing Policy," which means approving developments that provide a diversity of housing options which appeal to both young professionals/families and empty nesters and retirees. Increasing residential development will lead to an increase of commercial development long-term.

2. Support Existing Businesses

- Supporting Clayton's existing businesses will always be the primary goal of the Development Department. Fostering positive relationships with our current business owners and operators is the best way to spur additional commercial investment via retention/expansion initiatives in the city. Over the past five years, Clayton's staff has created various business programming to assist in this endeavor, including the Business Meet and Greet, Business of the Month program, the "Welcome to Clayton" business packet and the small business video spotlight series. Ensuring our local businesses know who to contact with the city in times of need and uncertainty as well as when they are considering an expansion is invaluable and essential to our goal of becoming the thriving community we believe we can be over the next ten years.
- Partnering with our community and regional development counterparts will continue as Clayton moves forward. Taking part with various Montgomery County BusinessFirst! training and networking opportunities as well as quarterly Dayton Development Coalition, JobsOhio and the I-70/75 Development Association meetings will maintain our regional presence within the local development landscape.

3. Attract New Commercial Investment

- Every development organization strives to attract new commercial investment within their particular city's boundaries. Clayton's staff will continue assisting local property owners with the



marketing of available land to the commercial sector over the next five years. The PLAN Clayton document also describes different corridors where future business growth is ideal and action items specifically call out initiatives to successfully assist in attracting additional commercial investment into the future.

- Staff will continue working on extending public utilities and improving the overall business corridors to promote future business growth.
- Site control by local jurisdictions is one of the quickest ways to spur commercial growth. Currently the city controls three commercial sites and there is opportunity along the N. Main Street corridor to add to our inventory. Over the next five years staff will strategically identify potential sites along N. Main Street where site acquisition and assemblage makes sense. Staff will also work on marketing sites under city control for commercial development opportunities.

4. Implement Community Amenities Improvements

- The PLAN Clayton Implementation Committee is a great resource and opportunity for the city to begin selecting projects which will greatly enhance the Clayton community for all of our residents and businesses alike while promoting the “Clayton brand” long term. Future projects will be selected from the PLAN Clayton Implementation Plan including initiatives which will improve the city’s walkability, parks, infrastructure, and overall brand. These projects will enhance the marketability of Clayton as a whole, for both new residents and commercial developers.
- In accordance with staff’s philosophy of strong placemaking assisting in a vibrant development practice, improving existing community amenities while spurring additional community investment is essential over the next five years. Staff believes one such project which needs to be studied is implementing Phase 2 of the N. Main Street streetscape project. One such funding source could be the N. Main Street TIF.



Identify Assets and Barriers

One of the key attributes of the placemaking philosophy is being able to identify and market community assets to make the community more attractive for future development. Clayton's staff has done a really good job of highlighting the city's assets over the past several years while also identifying where barriers exist, and additional improvements are needed. Knowing where the assets and barriers exist is a major part of the equation, so additional steps can be undertaken. Below is a list of the community assets and barriers within Clayton which can assist and detract from the city's future development potential.

Community Assets

- **Location:** With close proximity to I-70 and the Dayton International Airport, Clayton has a strategic location for future manufacturing and logistics operations. Being a part of the Montgomery County region and the county's emphasis on work force development, economic development partnerships and small business retention/expansion endeavors, Clayton is an ideal location for commercial growth. Clayton is also part of the larger Northmont community which boasts a population of almost 43,000 as well as community anchors such as Northmont City Schools, Miami Valley Hospital North, Kettering Health network, Miami Valley Career Technology Center, four national grocery chains, a library branch, the Kleptz YMCA, a vibrant park system, Sinclair Community College campus, CAT Logistics, Englewood Commerce Park and numerous commercial and retail strip centers.
- **Strong School System:** As previously mentioned, Clayton is part of the Northmont City School system which historically is ranked excellent each year on state grade cards. The Kleptz Early Learning Center and High School are both facilities which have been built over the past ten years. The district not only has the capacity for additional students, the school system also has a long-range facility plan to address new technology needs and campus upgrades over the next several years. Northmont schools also have the capacity to take on additional students across all of their campuses. The Miami Valley Career Technology Center is also located in Northmont and is currently undergoing a four-year, \$150 million campus expansion project. Finally, the MVCTC adult facility is located in Clayton, providing adults across the region with post-secondary education and job training. Sinclair Community College also has their Englewood campus located next door to the Kleptz YMCA at the corner of National and Hoke Roads.



- **Strong Park System:** Clayton has three public parks which include miles of walking paths, an upgraded disc golf course, tennis courts and baseball fields. Meadowbrook at Clayton, a former private country club which is now a public golf course and event facility located in Clayton. Five Rivers MetroParks also has the Englewood Park located on N. Main Street and there are several other public parks located in the Northmont community, accessible via walking paths and public rights-of-way.
- **Available Land:** There are hundreds of acres of available land located in Clayton for both commercial and residential development. This potential developable land has public utilities available on the majority of the sites and almost all of it is now currently on the market.
- **Strong Infrastructure:** Clayton has undergone a significant infrastructure improvement project over the past four years. 90% of the residential streets have been resurfaced in addition to damaged curbs and gutters being replaced during the same time period. Salem Avenue will have the entire Clayton section of road resurfaced by the end of 2021 after all the curbs and gutters were replaced in 2020. All three intersections along Salem Avenue will also have safety projects completed by the end of 2022 thanks to state safety grants. Wenger Rd., Hoke Rd. and Garber Rd. have also been resurfaced in the last five years thanks to various regional and state grants. With a utility agreement with the city of Union also in place, new development north of National Rd., within the designated Clayton Improvement District, is also possible where county and city infrastructure is not located. The city also now has in place a regular improvement schedule to ensure the long-term maintenance of the city's streets and infrastructure.
- **Strong Demographics:** The city boasts a highly educated population (95% with a high school diploma and one third of population has a bachelor's degree or higher) meaning its earning power is higher than the average community. The median household income level (\$78,000) is the fourth highest in Montgomery County and exceeds both the county and state average. The median house price (\$136,000 based on 2010 Census) is also higher than the state and national average. Finally, Clayton continues to be ranked the safest city in Montgomery County, every year since 2016, based on FBI statistics.
- **Existing TIF Districts:** There are several different TIF districts existing in Clayton which can be used to assist in funding infrastructure



improvements needed for future development. The N. Main TIF was created two years ago which combined existing TIF's along this corridor with all other properties along the N. Main Street Overlay District. This TIF can be used for property acquisitions and infrastructure improvements along N. Main Street over the next 28 years. There is also multiple TIFs at the Village of North Clayton available to assist new developers with additional infrastructure upgrades as additional phases occur.

Community Barriers

- Lack of Utilities in Key Areas: While the city does have utilities or utility agreements in most areas of the city where future development is ideal, there are other areas where utilities are lacking. The biggest impact area included with this description is on Hoke Rd., south of Wenger where both water and sanitary is lacking and north of Wenger where water is not available until the Village of North Clayton. The Historic Village of Clayton also lacks both water and sanitary lines running to it, making new development difficult throughout the original plat.
- Limited Commercial Base & Available Tenant/End User Space: While staff works hard with the local business community, the size of the commercial sector is limited. Clayton only has two main industrial companies in CAT Logistics and Anchor Fabricators and the majority of the commercial sector is limited to the N. Main Street corridor. Northmont Schools is in fact the city's second highest employer. The city currently only has approximately 200 businesses open in Clayton. Along with this limited number of open businesses, Clayton does not have a large inventory of vacant business locations. The largest shopping center, Randolph Plaza, is currently operating around 90% occupancy and several of the formerly vacant business spaces along N. Main Street have filled up in the past twelve months. While there remains a handful of vacant tenant spaces, the majority of those consist of older and smaller buildings which struggle to serve the modern business environment. Those would be best served being razed and repositioned with neighboring parcels to be more attractive to future commercial developers.
- Lack of Walkability: While Clayton boasts several public parks, Meadowbrook at Clayton and the multi-use path along National Road, Clayton improvements could be made within the city for walkability. N. Main Street only has one of three sections completed of its long-anticipated streetscape project which is supposed to run from Heathcliff to



Westbrook Road. The three public parks and Meadowbrook at Clayton also do not connect with each other, so the city could improve on completing those critical community linkages. Wayfinding enhancing is another way the city could improve on connectivity and strengthening the Clayton brand.

- Lack of Housing Diversity: While the Clayton community boasts a strong supply of single-family homes of various styles, lot sizes and price points, the existing inventory of new multi-family units is underrepresented for a community wishing to attract young working professionals while also providing housing with low maintenance options to our existing empty nester and retiree population who wish to age in place. Only 13% of the housing stock in Clayton is multi-family, which also includes condos and townhouses, and the majority of those communities are 30+ years of age and older. Multi-family housing not only provides needed housing diversity to the community it also assists in creating the needed residential density commercial developers desire when selecting new communities to locate.
- Limited Resources: While Clayton has come a long way in a short period of time, specifically only being a city for a little over 20 years, being able to provide essential services is the first priority of every budget cycle. With service levies only accounting for approximately 50% of both the police and fire department's operating budgets and the service department funded exclusively via the general fund, there are limited resources to undertake extensive economic and community development projects.
- Identity Crisis: While the PLAN Clayton project was successful in mapping the next 20 years of potential growth for Clayton, there continues to be a divide within the community of what that path forward should actually be. Should Clayton remain a community with thousands of acres of farm fields in the northern portion of the city and only concentrate on doing minimally sized and single end user development projects on infill lots, or should we follow the PLAN Clayton document and strategically develop a minimal selection of available land in accordance with the plan which was approved unanimously by City Council in 2018. The amount of available land which can be developed is already limited in scope due to zoning designations and available utilities. This situation is exacerbated when the city rejects development opportunities based on the resistance of a small number of residents. This has the unintended consequences of the city being labeled an anti-development community, further reducing the number of development opportunity areas, and forcing solid developments



into neighboring communities which then get to enjoy the boost to their local tax base. If the city believes growth is needed to balance the very real cost increase to providing essential services to the community, developing the city in a responsible manner is essential to the health and safety of the Clayton community. If the city chooses to continue to have vacant parcels of land, which are already identified as zoning districts permitted for development, located within the Clayton Improvement District and outside the rural preservation areas, but are only farmed along corridors being developed everywhere by other cities, other funding mechanisms will need to be studied and seriously considered by the entire community or unfortunately essential services will need to be adjusted due to the flat rate of revenue currently being generated by the city. The decision will need to be made if we desire to be a growing, flourishing city of the future, used as an example of the smart growth and placemaking philosophy or a stagnant community which models itself as a mix of a rural Ohio township and aging bedroom suburbia.

Select the Right Tools

Selecting the correct tools to address specific barriers within our development plan is essential to making sure we are as successful as possible.

1. **Land Use Policy:** This tool will be fully implemented by the end of 2021. With the adoption of the North Main Street Overlay District, PLAN Clayton and the updated Clayton Zoning Code, Clayton will have updated all of its major land use policy documents. The next step is following these plans to ensure the vision set out within the documents is met. The creation of the PLAN Clayton Implementation Committee (PCIC) is a good start on garnering community partnership while selecting future projects to move the PLAN Clayton vision forward. Over the next five years staff will continue to work with elected officials to fund projects submitted by the PCIC.
2. **Partnership Building:** Staff currently works well across the region with development and community partners in our attempts to push our development agenda forward. Monthly and quarterly meetings with Montgomery County BusinessFirst!, Dayton Development Coalition, JobsOhio, MVRPC TAC Committee and the I-70/75 Development Committee are all excellent networking opportunities between public and private entities which should benefit Clayton long term. Working with the Northmont Area Chamber of Commerce, Premier Health (Miami Valley Hospital North), the Clayton/Clay Twp. JEDD and Northmont City



Schools ensure Clayton is responsive and aware of growth and development opportunities within the local market.

3. Business Development, Entrepreneurship & Workforce Development: This tool will continue to be activated via our partnerships with Montgomery County, Dayton Development Coalition and JobsOhio.
4. Brownfield and Infill Redevelopment: Staff believes the most likely scenario for successful infill redevelopment is along the N. Main Street corridor. With installing the N. Main Street Overlay standards along this corridor, staff believes responsible development will occur slowly over the next two to three decades while also establishing a unique brand along the business corridor. To assist in the facilitation of quicker redevelopment along this corridor, staff believes strategically identifying and acquiring multiple lots in the same cores and repositioning them via demolition and lot combinations would be greatly beneficial.
5. Transportation: Creating walkable and connected neighborhoods within Clayton serves the entire city as a whole. Having different modes of travel throughout the city, being able to easily travel from one park to another via a trail system or wayfinding signage and reducing traffic congestion and pollution all make a city a stronger more vibrant version of itself. PLAN Clayton has provided examples and tasks in the Implementation Plan to improve transportation modes within the city. Staff has also been working on various infrastructure improvement projects and grant applications over the past few years and these efforts will need to continue. The PLAN Clayton Implementation Committee has been meeting in subcommittees, during the first half of 2021, discussing action items such as “Great Streets and Infrastructure” and “Connected Parks,” and what projects should be suggested to City Council as items which need to be considered for funding to move forward in the short term. Staff will continue working towards improving transportation options within the city over the next five years, based on the plan submitted by the PCIC.
6. Infrastructure Financing: Extending and improving infrastructure is essential for a growing city. For a city with the population level of Clayton, obtaining grants and creating tax abatement districts are important tools which allow the jurisdiction to attract new developments while avoiding immediate budget impacts. As part of the North Main Overlay District, staff also proposed the combining the existing multiple TIF districts along N. Main Street to create one district to encompass the entire corridor. This new district should assist implementing additional phases of the N. Main streetscape over the long-term redevelopment of N.



Main Street. Staff has also been working with two developers to take advantage of the existing TIF at the Village of North Clayton, to install new roads and infrastructure so the build-out of that community can come to fruition. Over the next five years staff believes there will also be opportunities to create new TIF districts for development, which the city should strongly consider, assisting in increasing population and critical mass to attract future commercial development. Grants will continue to be a critical tool for improving and expanding existing infrastructure to assist in future development opportunities, and the Service Department's new residential maintenance schedule will assist in ensuring our existing residential communities' stay safe and aesthetically pleasing for our residents.

7. Neighborhood Stabilization: Over the past five years Clayton has instituted an aggressive and proactive code enforcement program. In addition to significantly increasing the number of violations issued for property maintenance concerns on an annual basis, the level of compliance has increased dramatically since implementing this new program. In 2015, prior to this new program, the compliance rate for property violations hovered around 50% and in 2020 the compliance rate was almost 90%. Staff has also undertaken two residential demolition projects in the past five years, removing almost a dozen dilapidated structures from the city's landscape. There has also been approximately another dozen properties razed by property owners as the result of the city's code enforcement efforts during the same period. Moving forward, Clayton will continue addressing neighborhood stabilization via strong code enforcement, localized demolition efforts and assisting infill construction on vacant lots within these neighborhood communities. Staff also believes working to enhance connectivity to neighborhood parks throughout the city in addition to additional walking and biking trails throughout the city at large will continue to strengthen the community's neighborhoods over the long term.



Conclusion:

This plan is a continuation of the framework and foundation established in the 2016 Five-Year Economic Development Plan. Staff suggests continuing to use a smart growth philosophy combined with placemaking strategies to create a community where residential and commercial investors desire to locate. The planning mechanisms laid out in the 2016 plan will be fully completed by the end of 2021 and building upon this foundation is essential to continue the positive momentum built over the past five years. The original plan set goals to “bring new, diverse economic development: assist in spurring new development along Salem Avenue, redeveloping N. Main Street and getting the Village of North Clayton off the ground and moving towards what it was originally planned to be.” Implementing the goals laid out in that plan led to successfully accomplishing the tenants desired: (1) There have been three new commercial projects along the Salem/Hoke Rd. corridor. (2) North Main Street has new development standards, a new TIF district, three new commercial projects which each separately demonstrated between a \$500,000 to \$1.2 million in capital investments and, 30 new businesses have opened their doors over the past five years; and (3) The Village of North Clayton has two new developers (Windsor and Grand Traditions) which are getting ready to move this community towards what was originally intended. This new Five-Year Economic Development Plan aims to position the Clayton community more solidly for the economic development growth which it has been preparing for these past five years. We have set goals to increase our population, assist current and future businesses, improve parks, create walkable neighborhoods, and implement additional PLAN Clayton components all in the goal of creating the most desirable community in northwest Montgomery County for development dollars to be invested. The land use and zoning plan we created over the past five years were done with the goal to impact development over the next 10-20 years. Now is the time to begin implementing these standards and build upon the foundation created in the 2016 Five Year Economic Development Plan.