

THINK FREMONT

An Economic Growth
&

Development Plan
2019-2028



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
GROWTH	
INTRODUCTION	3
GOAL	8
HOUSING	
INTRODUCTION	10
OBJECTIVES	16
SUMMARY	19
INDUSTRY	
INTRODUCTION	20
OBJECTIVES	24
SUMMARY	25
COMMERCIAL & RETAIL	
GENERAL INFORMATION	26
OBJECTIVES	29
DOWNTOWN FREMONT	
SUMMARY	30
SHORT TERM GOALS	31
LONG TERM GOALS	32
LIFESTYLE	
INTRODUCTION	34
OBJECTIVES	39
SUMMARY	41
EDUCATION	
INTRODUCTION	43
OBJECTIVES	45
SUMMARY	47
HEALTH & WELLNESS	
INTRODUCTION	48
OBJECTIVES	50
SUMMARY	51



Contact Information

**Office of the Mayor
323 S. Front Street – Third Floor
Fremont, Ohio 43420**

**Daniel R. Sanchez, Mayor
419-334-5900
dsanchez@fremontohio.org**

**Robert Gross, Executive Assistant to the Mayor
419-334-5900
bgross@fremontohio.org**

Introduction



THINK FREMONT

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Development & Community Growth Plan for the City of Fremont is meant as a guide toward improving our community. While driven by the City of Fremont, this plan accounts for the Fremont Community, meaning the neighboring townships and those residents choosing to make Fremont, Ohio their home. The purpose of this plan is to address issues facing our community. This plan looks at what Fremont is missing, prioritizes the need and takes steps toward obtaining those things that make a community thrive. The plan identifies goals to attract jobs, improve housing and enhance the quality of life.

City leaders will utilize this plan to work with developers looking to invest in Fremont. In this plan are specific goals and action steps toward achieving success for the Fremont community. The goals are intended to be measurable and achievable. Many of the goals outlined throughout this plan are 5 year or 10 year goals. Each year the leaders of the City will review and evaluate the progress made toward achieving many of these goals. The intent is to look back on this plan in 5 years or 10 years and know we have accomplished at least 75% of the goals listed.

The plan identifies areas of need such as jobs, housing, shopping, education, healthcare and lifestyles. This intended to be flexible, allow for opportunity and account for some unexpected development. The goals in this plan come as a result of information gathered from the charrette, housing advisory board, city council members and general feedback collected throughout the year. We hope you find the information relevant to what you are seeking, and as you read through this plan, you become excited about the future of Fremont and look to invest in our community

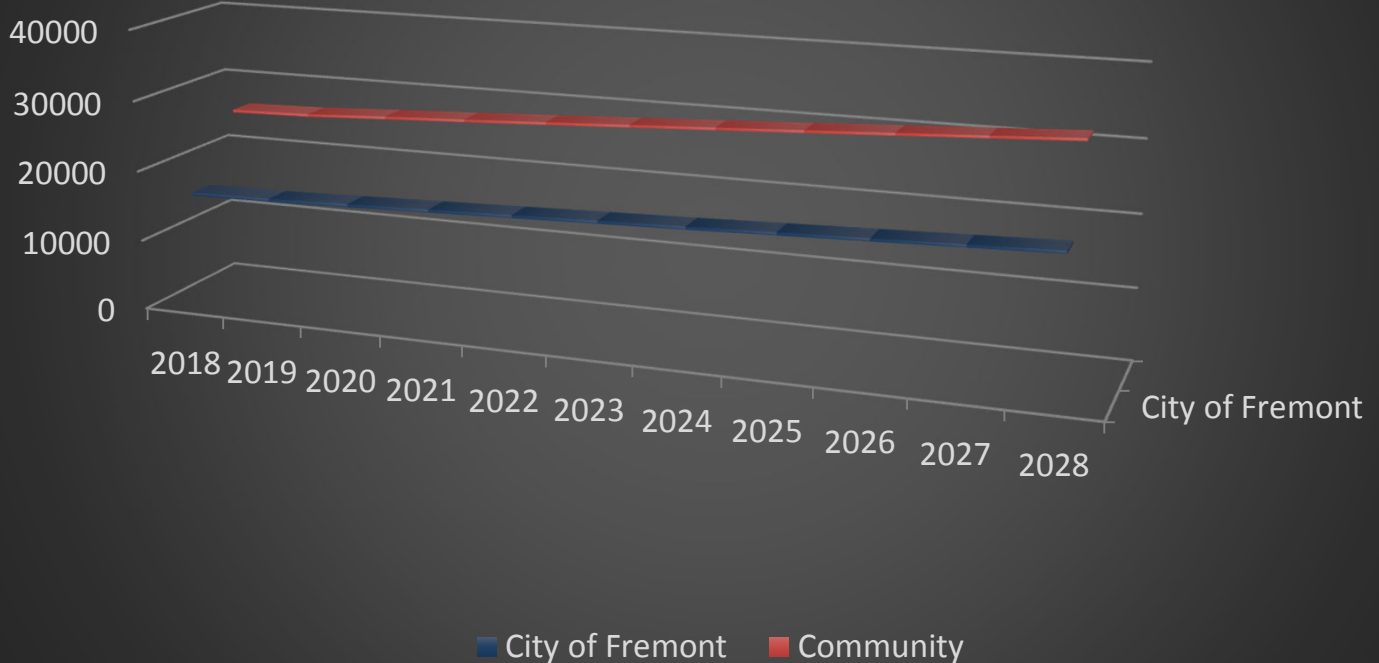
Growth



THINK FREMONT

Overall Goal: Growth

Expected Growth



Current Population

- Fremont: 16,388
- Community: 25,843

In 10 Years

- Fremont: 19,781
- Community: 31,194

Growth

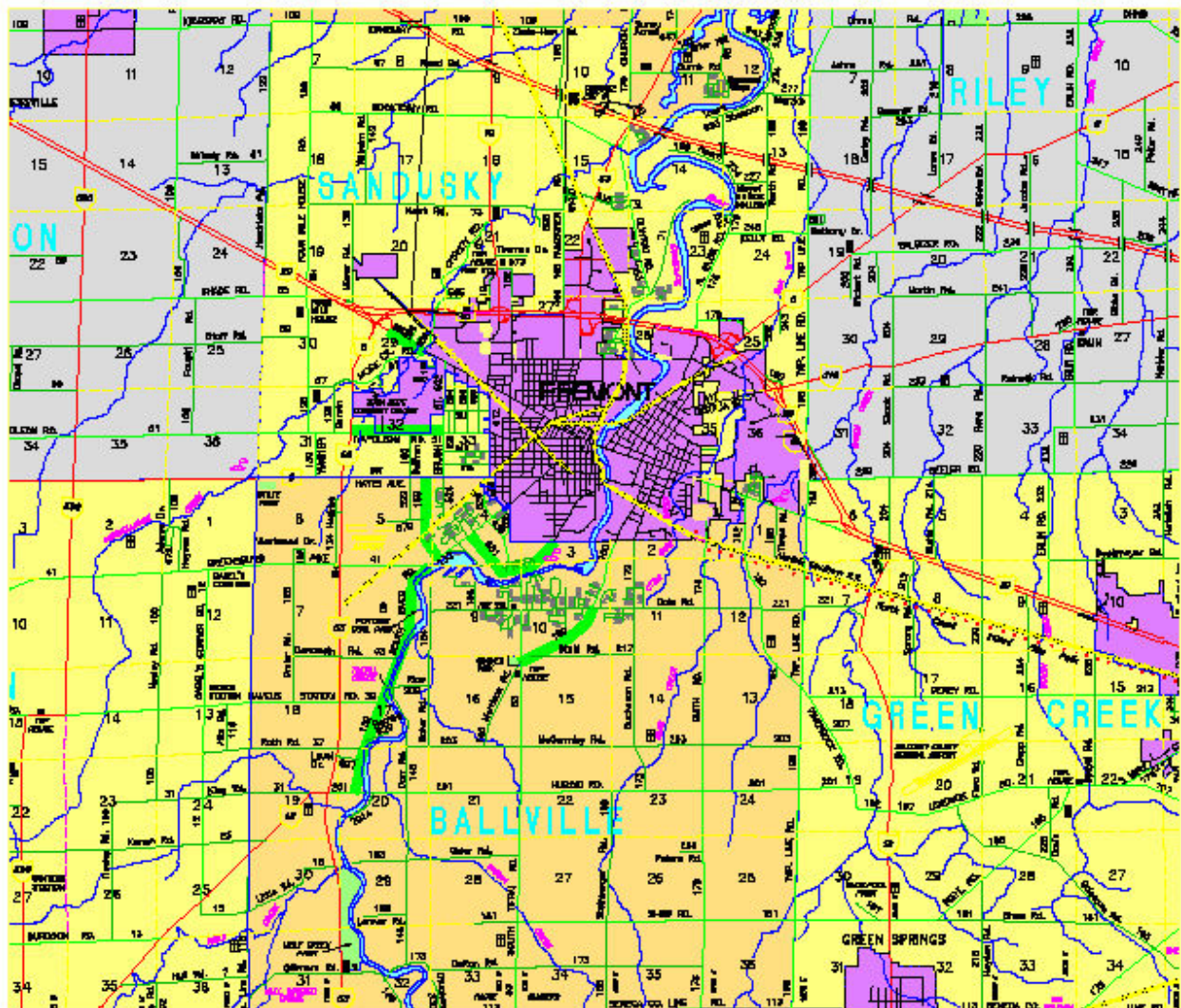
The Fremont Community 2007 to 2017

The City of Fremont today, has a population of about 16,400 people and 6,800 households. A key advantage for Fremont is its central location to many major cities and attractions. Toledo is approximately 40 miles (45 minutes) to the west, with Cleveland 86 miles (1.5 hrs) to the east, Columbus 100 miles (2 hrs) to the south and the beautiful Lake Erie less than 20 minutes to the north. This puts Fremont in great position to attract residents and businesses alike, so it only makes sense to grow this wonderful community.

While the city has done a good job of retaining its population, significant growth has not occurred over the most recent 10-year period. The population is a mixed ethnic background population with about 27.3 percent of those workers performing production, manufacturing, distribution, and transportation and logistics jobs. Others are working in management, business services, office occupations or support roles representing about 25.1 percent of the workforce. About 19.6 percent of the workforce is engaged in educational services, healthcare, religion and government occupations. An additional 21.0 to 28.0 percent are engaged in retail sales, food service and other sales, service and construction occupations. The population tends to be compensated somewhat below the state average in terms of the highest paying jobs and jobs requiring the highest levels of skills. This may be largely due to the rural character of the community and its connection to agriculture. The demand for highly trained workers has increased significantly in recent years and employers are experiencing labor shortages in some trades.

The City of Fremont can also be defined as the greater Fremont area (or “Fremont Community”) which in many ways gives a more accurate description of the area, community functions and its demographics. To get to the numbers right for this economic growth and development plan, we have added Ballville and Sandusky Townships to our “Fremont Community” (FC) total numbers, which creates a population of 25,750 people and 10,300 households. These numbers reflect all of the residents of Ballville and Sandusky Townships, plus those within the city limits of Fremont. These people all live within 3-5 miles of downtown Fremont and call Fremont their home. They should be included as part of the population of Fremont when you think about Fremont by size, demographics, characteristics and its future growth potential.

The need for this anomaly was largely created by a city practice during the 1990’s and early 2000’s, a period of significant household growth, when Fremont was not annexing properties and was actively providing utility services outside the city limits without requiring annexation. In other communities much of this growth would have occurred within the city limits as the city would require annexation to get access to utility services.



Demographics

The demographics of an area can be very telling as to the socioeconomic status of those residents, as well as the health of the area's economy. When you look at the statistical data for the City of Fremont, it's easy to note that the averages are not as high or low as one would wish for a growing, up and coming city. However when you note the Fremont Community, the picture that is painted is one right on par with the state's good economic health.

The average household income in the state is just over \$68,000 per year, while Sandusky County is just under \$60,000. The Fremont Community compares well with these numbers when you consider them on a whole. Ballville Township comes in much higher than the state average at \$73,000, Sandusky Township is below the state average but above the county average at \$64,000 and Fremont comes in very low at almost \$47,000.

Out of the 25,843 individuals that live in the Fremont Community, 5,695, or 22% are considered to be in poverty status. This is very close to the state's 20% of individuals in poverty status. When broken down by political subdivision, we see that Fremont proper is the highest at 25%, Sandusky Township is at 23% and Ballville Township is very low at 15%. We are very aware that these percentages are too large for us to be comfortable with, and this plan is laid out in ways to help decrease the amount of our residents in poverty.

The housing market is one of the biggest priorities in this plan, and after looking at the data it is easy to understand why. The median value of a home in Fremont is \$81,000 while Sandusky Township is at \$122,000 and Ballville is at \$149,000. As a whole, this shows that the average home value is much lower in the Fremont Community than at the state level, which is \$131,900. It is difficult to attract new residents with a higher income to a community that does not have housing to fit their needs. You will see this very point outlined much further in the Housing chapter.

Table 3-5: Social and Economic Characteristics: Fremont, Sandusky County, Ohio									
Characteristic	Fremont		Sandusky Twp	Ballville Twp	Fremont Community		Sandusky Co.	State of Ohio	
	Number	Percentage							
Total Population	16,388		3,562	5,893		25,843		59,870	11,586,941
16+ Population in the Labor Force	7,680		3,075	4,978		15,733		47,747	9,255,859
Unemployed (2006-2010)	680		218	98		996		1,895	423,956
Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)	16		17	19		52		20	23
Civilian Employed Population Age 16+	6,989		1,595	3,257		11,841		28,410	28,410
Management, Business, Science, Arts	1,337	19%	494	1,106	34%	2,937	25%	7,044	7,044
Service Occupations	1,177	17%	288	456	14%	1,921	16%	4,514	4,514
Sales and Office Occupations	1,345	19%	223	771	24%	2,339	20%	5,600	5,600
Nat. Res., Construction, Maintenance	577	8%	229	785	24%	1,591	13%	3,053	3,053
Production, Transportation, Material	2,553	37%	361	739	23%	3,653	31%	8,199	8,199
Households: With Income <\$50,000	4,503		610	947		6,060		12,095	2,270,741
Income \$50,000-\$99,999	1,715		708	955		3,378		8,078	1,411,533
Income \$100,000+	508		168	610		1,286		3,493	919,175
Median Household Income	\$34,167		\$57,336	\$59,820				\$49,032	\$50,674
Mean Household Income	\$46,901		\$64,460	\$73,378				\$59,934	\$68,341
Per Capita Income	\$20,059		\$27,275	\$32,062				\$24,467	\$27,800
Individuals in Poverty	4,033	25%	806	856	15%	5,695	22%	11,064	2,289,521
Total Housing Units	7,293		1,669	2,734		11,696		26,229	5,146,944
Built 1939 or Earlier	3,500		453	333		4,286		8,583	1,064,915
Occupied Units	6,726		1,486	2,512		10,724		23,666	4,601,449
Owner Occupied	3,824	57%	1,187	2,199	88%	7,210	67%	17,420	3,035,485
Renter Occupied	2,902	43%	299	313	12%	3,514	33%	6,246	1,565,964
Median Value, Owner Occupied	80,900		122,300	149,300				111,300	131,900
Value Less Than \$100,000	2,787		358	281		3,426		7,492	1,048,943
\$100,000-\$199,999	934		608	1,449		2,991		7,441	1,222,606
Value \$200,000+	103		221	469		793		2,487	763,936
Median Gross Rent	\$628		\$670	\$697				\$646	\$743

Source: American Community Survey 2012-2016

Source: American Community Survey 2012-2016

Do we want Fremont to grow?

This was the very first question asked to residents at the April 2018 charrette, because the answer to this question would determine what path this plan would follow. Resoundingly, the answer was to grow, thus setting the tone for the long term goals and guidelines outlined in this plan.

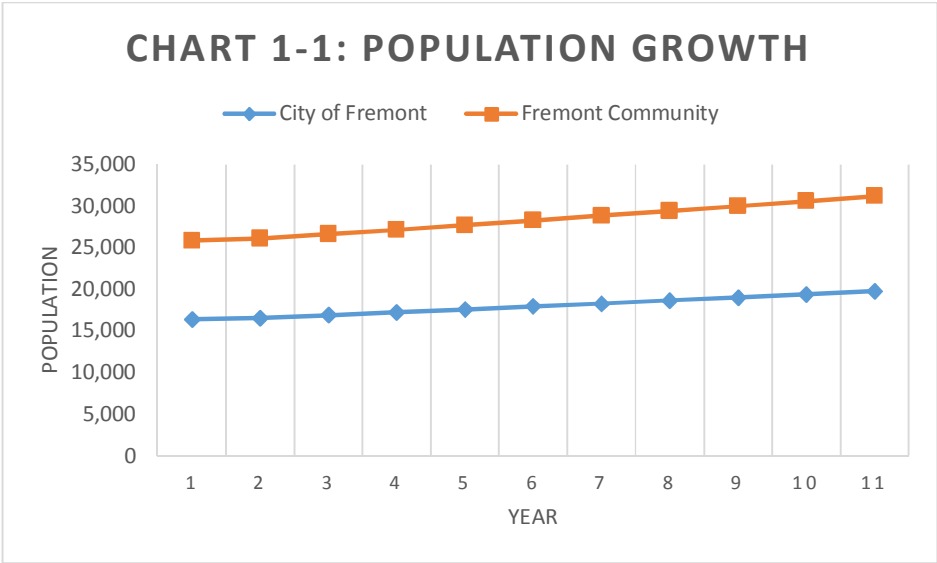
For the purpose of this **Economic Growth and Development Plan** we will use the statistics for the **“Fremont Community”** which shall include the populations of Ballville and Sandusky Townships and the City of Fremont. This creates the Fremont Community with a median income of \$43,190, 10,300 households and a population of 25,750 people based on 2016 government data. The background information being provide is intended to create a basis to judge the planned direction and goals for the Fremont Community and the actual progress that is made as The Fremont Community adopts this Economic Growth and Development Plan and begins to measure our progress over the coming 5-10 years included as a part of this plan. The plan will cover the period from January, 2019 through December 2029. Many of the goals will be set in 3 or 5 year increments allowing adequate time for, planning, action on the plan and achievement of the plan. When necessary goals may be extending out beyond 5 years as the greatest achievements are often accomplished as an entire plan begins moving forward and many goals are accomplished.

Goal

The overall goal of this economic growth and development plan is to grow not only the City of Fremont, but the Fremont Community. While we understand that this plan is a guideline and the results can vary, we are anticipating a population growth of 1% for the first 5 years and 2% for years 6-10 of this plan. Below you will see the anticipated population growth charted out through the year 2028.

Table 1-2: Anticipated Population Growth Years 1-5						
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
City of Fremont	16,388	16,552	16,883	17,221	17,565	17,916
Fremont Community	25,843	26,101	26,623	27,156	27,699	28,253

Table 1-3: Anticipated Population Growth Years 6-10					
	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
City of Fremont	18,275	18,640	19,013	19,393	19,781
Fremont Community	28,818	29,394	29,982	30,582	31,194



In the following pages you will see how this goal is executed by emphasizing several key points that are considered pillars. The following pillars are vital components to retaining the outstanding qualities that Fremont has to offer while achieving the ultimate goal; growth.

- Industrial/Manufacturing
- Commercial/Retail
- Housing
- Lifestyle
- Education
- Healthcare

Outlined in the following chapters are the goals we plan to accomplish, accompanied by the action steps that will be taken by the City of Fremont and its administration to reach those goals. This plan is laid out to be flexible while showing transparency on the steps taken and initiatives pursued over the next 10 years.

Initial Steps Toward Growth:

1. Committed to the construction of 5 new school buildings for Fremont City Schools by 2021 at a cost of \$110,000,000. This will make every city school less than 10 years old and current on technology.
2. Passed the renewal school levy which funds much of our public school expenses.
3. Found a new owner for our hospital that is progressive, cutting edge, capable and willing to invest in our future - ProMedica Health Care Systems and ProMedica Memorial Hospital
4. Built an all new cancer care hospital in Fremont, the ProMedica/Dorothy L. Kern Cancer Center.
5. Began the long process of re-vitalization of Historic Downtown Fremont and its 75 acres. Downtown Fremont, Inc. is delivering a new, re-vitalized downtown shopping district and new services to our community.
6. Terra State Community College has \$19,600,000 in new dormitory construction being completed to help Fremont and the surrounding area educate our future workers and get the advanced educations for our youth started at an early age.
7. Fremont completed the construction of a state of the art sewer plant capable of treating wastewater for a much higher population
8. Fremont completed a new water reservoir to improve the water quality and increase the available water to our community.

Housing



THINK FREMONT

HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

An overview to identify need and opportunity that addresses the housing issues within our community. This is meant as a guide to provide direction to developers and community leaders and by no means provides any limits on the type of housing that could be established in our community. The intent of this housing plan is to establish a housing priority based on research, information gathered from the charrette and recommendations from the City of Fremont Housing Advisory Board. Below you will find the basic statistics of households in our community.

Table 2-1: Households, Fremont, Fremont Community, Sandusky County, Ohio 2016 ACS

Subject	Fremont	Sandusky Twp	Ballville Twp	Community
Total Households	6726	1486	2512	10724
Family households (families)	3872	1004	1868	6744
With own children under 18 years	1911	291	563	2765
Married-couple family	2244	818	1538	4600
With own children under 18 years	869	171	380	1420
Male householder, no wife present, family	567	59	105	731
With own children under 18 years	365	32	60	457
Female householder, no husband present, family	1060	127	225	1412
With own children under 18 years	677	88	123	888
Nonfamily households	2854	482	644	3980
Householder living alone	1019	377	595	1991
65 years or over	428	172	274	874
Households with one or more under 18	2220	310	638	3168
Households with one or more 60 or over	2421	666	1113	4200
Average household size	2.37	2.36	2.31	2.34
Average family size	3.07	2.74	2.69	2.83

Source: American Community Survey 2012-2016

THE TWO BASIC FORMS OF RESIDENTIAL LIVING; HOMEOWNERSHIP & RENTING

In order to truly address the housing concerns inside the City of Fremont it is necessary to address both homeownership and renting a home. The information in this chapter speaks to one or the other or in some instances, both. For example, property owners, regardless of whether or not it is their residence or they are using the property as rental income could benefit from tax incentives if they were to make improvements to the home. The following information is meant to be helpful and provide guidance to improve housing concerns.

HOUSING STOCK

The majority of homes inside the City limits of Fremont were built prior to 1930 with close to 80% of the homes being at least 60 years old. As these homes age it is difficult for the property owners to maintain value in the home while making costly repairs. In addition, a large portion of the population is seeking newer homes without the cost of making significant repairs.

Table 2-2: Housing Characteristics, Fremont Area and Ohio

	Fremont	Ballville	Sandusky	Community	Ohio
Total Housing Units	7293	2734	1669	11696	5146944
Occupied Housing Units	6726	2512	1486	10724	4601449
Owner Occupied Units	2834	2199	1187	6220	3035485
Renter Occupied Units	2902	313	299	3514	1565964
Units Built 2010 or Later	18	0	0	18	70262
Units Built 2000-2009	389	300	63	752	506744
Units Built 1990-1999	400	414	108	922	609783
Units Built 1939 or Earlier	3500	333	453	4286	1064915
Value: Less Than \$50,000	568	89	64	721	301320
\$50,000 - \$99,999	2219	192	294	2705	747622
\$100,000 - \$149,999	665	833	360	1858	698057
\$150,000 - \$199,999	269	616	248	1133	524549
\$200,000 - \$299,999	48	407	168	623	455855
\$300,000 - \$499,999	31	58	46	135	228661
\$500,000 - \$999,999	20	0	0	20	65169
\$1,000,000 or More	4	4	7	15	14251
Median Value	80900	149300	122300		131900
Gross Rent Less Than \$500	702	53	26	781	45360
\$500 - \$999	1822	222	179	2223	563829
\$1000 - \$1499	147	13	37	197	696854
\$1500 - \$1999	74	0	0	74	362533
\$2000 - \$2499	33	0	0	33	151735
\$2500 - \$2999	0	0	0	0	66272
\$3000 or More	0	0	0	0	68169
Median Gross Rent	628	697	670		743

Source: US Census, American Community Survey

TAX INCENTIVES

The Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) program is a community development tool administered by the City that provides real property tax exemptions for property owners who renovate existing or construct new buildings. Approved projects receive a tax abatement on the increase in their property's tax valuation for a specified time period.

The City of Fremont currently has two designated Community Reinvestment Areas that cover approximately 25% of the property inside City limits. Beginning in the fall of 2018, the City will take the necessary steps to expand those areas to cover approximately 100% of property inside the City limits. Any property annexed into the City limits after the expansion of the CRA is not automatically inside the tax abatement area. The boundaries of the abatement area are specific and does not necessarily mirror the City corporate boundaries.

Additional information about the Community Reinvestment Areas can be found on the City of Fremont's website www.fremontohio.org. For questions regarding the Community Reinvestment Area please contact Robert Gross, Executive Assistant to the Mayor at 419-334-5900.

HOME BUYER EDUCATION

In an effort to increase home ownership, the City of Fremont Housing Advisory Board will work with Terra State Community College, area banks and local real estate agents to create a free monthly seminar educating prospective buyers, specifically first time home buyers. Promotion of the free seminar can offer assistance to those uncertain as to whether or not they can afford a home. In addition it can guide potential home buyers toward various assistance programs throughout our community.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH GRANTS

The free monthly seminar should promote & discuss the Sandusky County Comprehensive Housing Improvement Program which offers assistance to home buyers in the form of financial assistance for down payments and closing costs. Low earning individuals with good credit may be eligible for grant funding for down payments or closing costs.

BUILDING PERMITS

There is no local building department and necessary permits must be attained through the Ohio Development Services Agency in Columbus. This often delays construction making it difficult on local contractors to complete work in a timely manner. Establishing a Building Code Department locally would allow for quicker approval of permits. The proposed action step is for the City of Fremont to work with Sandusky County officials to establish a local office. The ability to limit delays and/or governmental obstacles benefits the overall development of our local community.

RENTAL PROPERTY

The Housing Advisory Board has discussed the rental concerns inside the City of Fremont. There are several types of rental arrangements throughout the City of Fremont with rental property accounting for nearly 43% of the housing in Fremont. This is an increase from 2014 when the rental property accounted for 36% of the housing in Fremont.

The two most common forms are rental homes and apartment rentals. While the Housing Advisory Board is open to different types of housing & locations, they are tasked with the responsibility of providing direction and establishing housing priorities. As it pertains to rental properties, the consensus of the board is to focus on apartment complexes with amenities. The focus of the apartment complexes appear to revolve around the millennial population & senior population with the two most likely locations for a new apartment complex as being the Eastside Plaza and downtown.

In addition, the Housing Advisory Board discussed the poor condition of several rental homes throughout the community. Tax incentive programs offered to property owners combined with more assertive code enforcement would promote better care of rental properties.

SUBSIDIZED HOUSING

The City of Fremont is fortunate to have WSOS in our community offering a wide array of programs for those with low to moderate incomes. We encourage our residents to utilize subsidized programs to assist with affordable homes for those individuals on fixed incomes. In addition to those programs, the City will continue to work with the Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP) to encourage repairs for homes meeting the necessary requirements for rehabilitation projects. The City intends to take further advantage of Housing and Urban Development programs to improve housing for low and moderate income home owners. Develop a private-public partnership for new subsidized housing and to improve the housing environment for low and moderate income owners.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

As the housing stock in the City of Fremont continues to age it becomes more difficult to care for homes. In some cases the home owner believes it is cost prohibitive to perform significant home repairs as those costly repairs may not add value to the home, especially if the home is used as rental income. Strong code enforcement along with tax incentives would promote better care of homes within Fremont.

LOCATIONS

Based on feedback from the charrette and recommendation from the Housing Advisory Board the top locations for housing development are the Poorman site, Meadow Creek, Hayes Elementary site, Clauss Cutlery Site, downtown and the old Eastside Plaza.

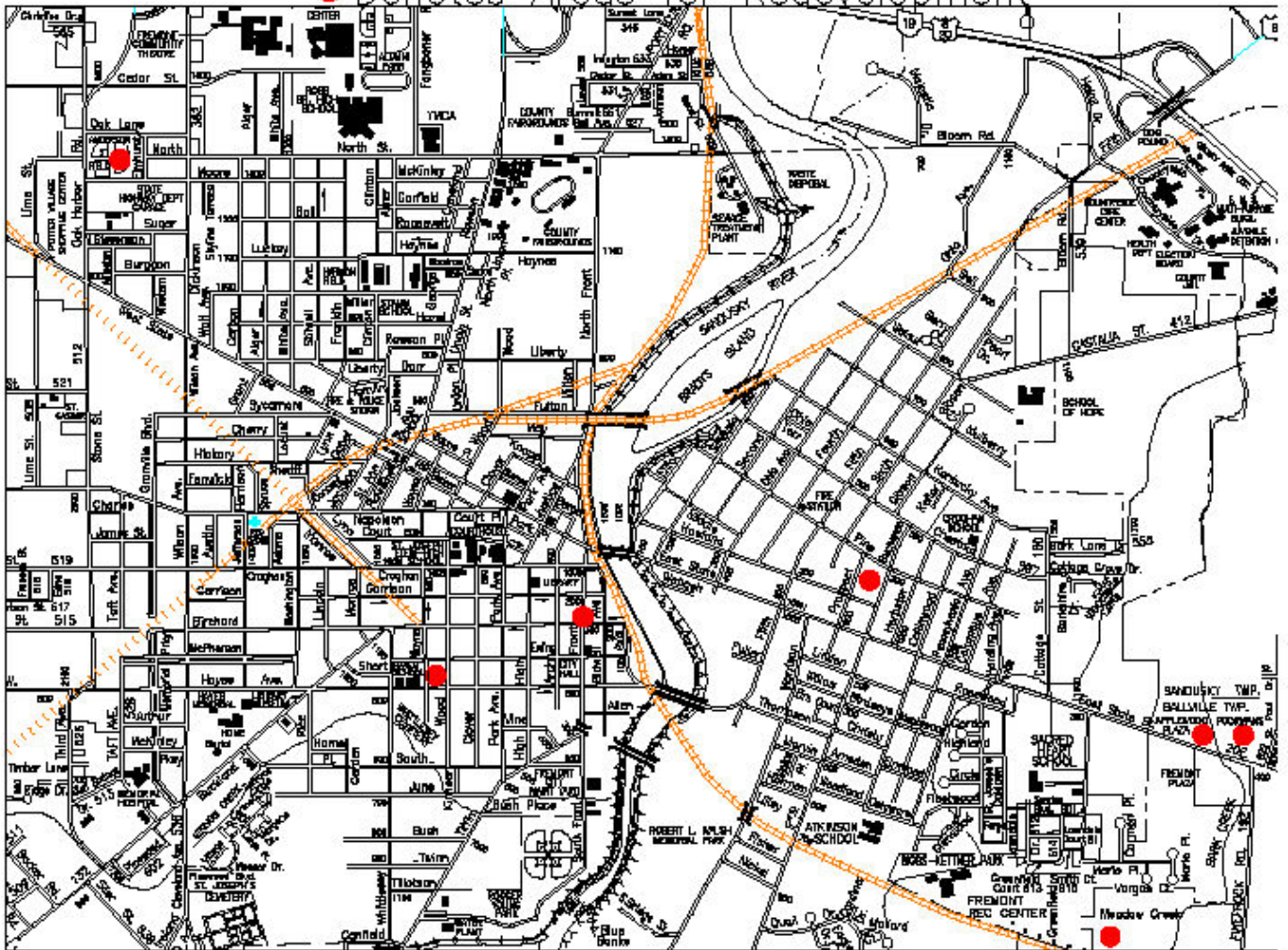
The City of Fremont Housing Advisory Board has explored various locations that could be ideal for new housing. These are preliminary locations and no formal inquiry has been conducted. The following are the possible locations for new housing:

- Hayes Elementary site
- Clauss Cutlery site
- Eastside Plaza
- Downtown area
- Demo old buildings to create site for new construction
- Anderson Field
- Poorman Site
- Meadow Creek Housing Development



THE CITY OF FREMONT

● Denotes Areas for Redevelopment



GOAL

To create new housing within the City of Fremont. The new housing would include homeownership, improved rental options and senior living establishments. Much of the new housing would include various amenities and be cost appropriate for the City of Fremont.

OBJECTIVES

1. **New homeownership** – *The majority of homes in the City of Fremont were built prior to 1930*, with many of those homes in need of significant repairs. The City needs to work with developers to create subdivisions for single family homes, condominiums or townhomes in a new subdivision with various amenities. The goal of the City is to have construction of a subdivision within the next 2-4 years.

Action Steps (Timeline 2-4 years)

- a. Work with realtors to determine the need
- b. Take information provided by realtors to Housing Advisory Board
- c. Housing Advisory Board to establish priorities
- d. Create partnerships with developers who have priorities in line with ours

2. **Apartment complex** – There is a growing trend among two demographics in our society seeking apartment complex style living. The first demographic being young professionals wanting to be located near a downtown to take advantage of what a downtown district can offer. The second demographic being those individuals downsizing and not wanting the responsibility of caring for a home. The attraction to demographic is location, amenities & lifestyle. The City must work with developers to build at least one new apartment complex within the next five years.

Action Steps (Timeline 3-5 years)

- a. Work with realtors to determine the desired amenities
- b. Take information provided by realtors to Housing Advisory Board
- c. Housing Advisory Board to establish priorities
- d. Seek developers with similar priorities

3. **Senior living** – The amenities surrounding senior living often involves convenience, accessibility, safety and comfort. Creating apartments with these amenities allows for the senior population to have good quality of life while still being engaged in the community. Building at least one new senior living complex helps provide for senior population.

Action Steps (Timeline 4-5 years)

- a. Work in conjunction with WSOS, Senior Center and realtors
- b. Take information to Housing Advisory Board
- c. Housing Advisory Board to establish priorities
- d. Seek partnerships with developers

4. **Remodeled homes, affordable homes and tiny homes** – There is a wide spread housing shortage in the City of Fremont and no option can be discouraged. Property owners recognizing the need for additional housing are encouraged to remodel existing homes. Promote and assist the preservation of aging homes.

Action Steps (immediately)

- a. Expand the Community Reinvestment Area to be city wide
- b. Educate the property owners on available tax incentives for home improvements
- c. Promote the creation of neighborhood associations
- d. Establish a free monthly seminar to assist first time home buyers

5. **Building department** – The City of Fremont and Sandusky County does not have a local building department. Many developers, contractors & homeowners are often delayed in their construction waiting for permits to be approved at the State level. Having a local building department provides for an easier and faster process. To create a local building department.

Action Steps (Timeline 2-3 years)

- a. Work with county officials to fund and staff a local building department
- b. ??

6. **Code Enforcement** – Many properties throughout the community struggle to comply with basic housing codes. Properties are often needed to be cleaned and repaired. This negatively impacts property values of the homes in close proximity to the properties in violation. In addition, these properties give a negative appearance to an otherwise beautiful city. To have stronger code enforcement.

Action Steps (immediately)

- a. To be more assertive toward the property owners in violation of city codes
- b. To increase the amount of hours spent on enforcing housing codes
- c. Expedite the process for getting property owner to correct any violation
- d. Work with the Law Director to enforce more significant consequences toward property owners in violation of the housing codes

SUMMARY

In conclusion, these are the measures the City of Fremont must take in order to prioritize housing in our community. The goal is to create an atmosphere more conducive for new construction, rehabbing and maintenance of affordable homes while simplifying the regulatory process. The following is a compact list of the goals and action steps we have outlined previously in this chapter.

1. Build a new apartment complex with amenities **within the next 5 years.**
2. To have one new senior living complex **within the next 5 years.**
3. Expansion of the Community Reinvestment Area to be City wide **within 1 year.**
4. Establish a free monthly homeownership seminar **within 1 year.**
5. Establish a local building department **within 2 years.**
6. Stronger code enforcement **immediately.**

Industry



THINK FREMONT

Industry & Manufacturing:

A History of Success: Driving Industrial Growth to Create a Larger Community

For more than 20 years, the Fremont Community has had a record of successfully attracting a variety of larger manufacturers, with operations in Fremont as well as other parts of the US and worldwide. The following companies have contributed to our success and are a vital part of our community:

- Kraft Heinz
- Graham Packaging
- Green Bay Packaging
- Inoac
- Ardagh Metal Beverage, USA (Formerly Rexam)
- Atlas
- Style Crest
- Bemis
- Crown Battery
- IAC
- Alkon Manufacturing
- Crescent Manufacturing
- Woodbridge Manufacturing
- Century Tool and Die
- Motion Controls
- Quality Steel
- Standard Technologies
- Unican
- Carbo Forge
- and many more are a vital part of our community

There are many more support industries - smaller manufacturers, logistic and transportation companies - that make our local economy successful and make our manufacturers better by providing specialized services and collaborative partnerships all with one goal of meeting the needs of the customer.

The Sandusky County Economic Development Corporation, the Sandusky County Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Fremont Economic Development team has played a leading role in attracting new businesses, growing current businesses and solving problems that businesses encounter as they promote new products, services and technology within our region and the world. An example of problem solving is the recent efforts to create a highly trained and educated workforce to meet the employment needs of our manufacturers, distributors and service providers. Locally, partnerships have been created to deal with training, new technology and

education by Terra State Community College and Vanguard Sentinel Career Center. Over the years, the Fremont Community has provided leadership and the services needed to meet our manufacturer's needs, including infrastructure (modern industrial parks, buildings), roads, utilities, railroad access, education and employment training.

There are currently three major industrial parks, including the Bark Creek Center, the 53 North Industrial Park, and the Commerce Industrial Park. In addition to those three designated industrial parks, a significant number of manufacturers are located in older industrial areas that are not characterized as industrial parks, but zones where industrial manufacturing and distribution has been occurring for 50 years or longer. The community has been a center for new industries and creative entrepreneurship over most of its long history, where at one time there were more than 100 knife manufacturers within our city.

Current State of the Fremont Community

A recent review of the Fremont Community quickly identified the following things as indicators of the current health of businesses and residents:

- Businesses interviewed both large and small when asked about the current state of their business - feeling that the economy has improved significantly since 2012 and so has their business opportunities.
- Many existing businesses are expanding their operations and have increased employment. Many of these same businesses are experiencing difficulty hiring new employees with the necessary education, trained performance skills and the ability to pass the required drug test.
- Businesses are investing significantly in new equipment and expanding their buildings to perform the new work that they have obtained. Many businesses admit that they may be under investing in on the job training and third party specific training that workers need to work in the new hi-tech production environment.
- Many younger workers are looking for a less formal and more flexible work environment with more control over their hours of work and the way work is performed. This is causing businesses to re-think work rules, hourly pay systems, automation, incentives, benefits, and a number of cultural issues that may require a different management style. While these changes can be very difficult for employers, most of the employers are making good progress in facilitating the changes and in many cases automating production work that is difficult to find employees to perform. Thereby, the employer solves the employment issues by needing less workers to perform certain non-desirable tasks. These changes must be accounted for as the Fremont Community sets out to grow employment locally. We must recognize that each year industry strives to increase productivity largely through automation. Automation can lead to slower employment growth as industry implements improved manufacturing technologies and less employees are required.
- Manufacturer's looking to expand continue to seek locations in the central mid-west that put their new manufacturing facilities within 400-500 miles of more than 50 percent of the US population. Our region has very good infrastructure which allows for rapid

transportation of products to market. Fremont is ideally located between Detroit and lower Michigan, the Greater Cleveland area and Columbus. Fremont and the Sandusky County area have excellent access to the Interstate Highway System, Railroad Transportation and Airports. This is the place to be for many manufacturers, distributors and logistics operations.

- The Fremont Community has direct access to the amenities employees and families are looking for. Again, proximity matters, and Fremont is less than 100 miles from Detroit, Ann Arbor, Toledo, Cleveland and much more. We have Lake Erie less than 20 minutes away, a great county park system and large entertainment venues in Sandusky, Toledo, Detroit and Cleveland. There is a lot to do right here in Fremont.
- The Fremont Community has a great local and regional healthcare system that is constantly improving and growing. We have direct access to some of the best healthcare in the world less than 100 miles from our homes in Detroit, Ann Arbor, Toledo and Cleveland.
- Education is a priority in the Fremont Community, with new public schools being constructed, a good parochial school system, vocational schools and a community college. We are ready for population growth and business expansion.
- Fremont addresses the arts and cultural activities in many ways throughout the year. Fremont has the Hayes Presidential Library and Museums with 20,000 visitors annually. The arts and music are supported by the schools, the community college, and many of the local religious organizations. The Fremont Community Theater puts on 6-8 performances per year, with most actors being local talent. There is a full-time Director for Downtown Fremont who is responsible for 8 farmer markets and 6 other events annually as well as assisting with the re-vitalization of the historic district of downtown Fremont.
- The Fremont Community is blessed with an adequate supply of fresh clean water, a new state of the art sewer plant, high volume supplies of electric power, and an ever increasing supply of clean natural gas to fuel our growth.
- Fremont is working to complete a plan that will improve our secondary streets and roads over the next 5 years creating improved access to the community and our neighborhoods. There are several neighborhoods within the community that have associations and sponsor activities throughout the year.
- The Fremont Community will support expanded housing opportunities in 2019 and beyond, including choices for the type of housing, ownership or rental and the location of new housing. The entire city of Fremont will become a revitalization area allowing owners to make improvements to properties without an offsetting increase in real estate taxes for 12-15 years. With the right incentives, new homes and subdivisions will be constructed allowing residents to trade up as they expand their earnings and employment opportunities.

The Future State of the Fremont Community (By 2029)

- Fremont will be recognized regionally as a growing city with businesses regularly expanding their operations and employment because Fremont has the necessary support systems ready and geared to support expanded operations of the businesses and the residents in the community.
- By 2029 - will grow from 25,750 residents to a Community of more than 30,000. This growth will drive new opportunities and further expansion of the Fremont Community well into the next decade and beyond. The community will begin planning to become a community of more than 50,000 by 2050.
- As the Fremont Community grows so will the capacity of the city to absorb new residents and new or expanding industry. The community institutions will likewise grow to meet the expanded demand for services and expanded programs. Attention will be given to the cultural, artist and entertainment needs of the city as well as the recreational, educational, professional, and religious offerings available.
- The activities of Downtown Fremont, Inc. and its re-vitalization effort in the Historic Downtown District will assist the Fremont Community and The Historic Downtown District to become a **“Destination”** for many. The **“Think Fremont a Destination City”** Campaign sponsored by Downtown Fremont, Inc. will create greater awareness of Fremont and its amenities within the local area and regionally. People will travel to Fremont because of what is offered including food, spirits, entertainment, theater, movies, shops, events and the fun experiences of our Downtown destinations.

Knowing what will need to be done is only part of a plan. For this 10-year plan or any long term plan to work requires identifying community resources, where they are, who controls them, and what will be needed to get buy-in to the plan by those in control of the necessary resources. These are mainly our state and locally elected officials, our community leaders, local government institutions, investors, developers, voters and the residents of the Fremont Community. With all of these resources aligned and bought into the plan the Fremont Community will be unstoppable.

GOAL

To spur industrial and manufacturing development, including the creation of new employment opportunities.

OBJECTIVES

1. **New industrial park** – one new industrial park of approximately 100 acres with railroad access. Utilities must be developed. Sites for development may range between 10-25 acres. **The goal of the City is to construct one new industrial park within 5 years.**

Action Steps (Timeline: 3-5 years)

- a. Identify viable sites
- b. Create private/public partnership
- c. Seek investors & create partnership
- d. Develop site and utility plan (footprint)

2. **Build spec buildings** – building should be approximately 80,000 sq ft with the ability to expand if needed. Whether in the industrial park or not, there is a need for spec buildings in our community. This spec building should be located along rail.

Action Steps (Timeline: 4-5 years)

- a. Work with site selectors
- b. Identify investors
- c. Recruit business through existing relationships
- d. Complete construction of spec building

3. **Second industrial park** – may or may not have rail access. At least 75 acres in size with an option to obtain additional acres if necessary. Utilities must be developed same as first industrial park. **Develop a second industrial park within 10 years.**

Action Steps (Timeline: 7-10 years)

- a. Identify viable sites
- b. Create private/public partnership
- c. Seek investors & create partnerships
- d. Develop site and utility plan (footprint)
- e. Build first spec building

SUMMARY

It is clear that the Fremont Community has a successful history of growing, adding and retaining business. We must take an aggressive approach to continue this tradition of healthy industry. The following is a compact list of the goals and action steps we have outlined previously in this chapter.

1. Build one new industrial park **within the next 5 years.**
2. Build and occupy a spec building **within the next 4-5 years.**
3. Build a second industrial park **within the next 7-10 years.**

Commercial & Retail



THE CITY OF
Fremont
EST. 1849 OHIO

THINK FREMONT

Commercial and Retail

General Information

Recent research and general market information has concluded, that the Fremont Community is relatively well served with food and general retail stores compared to other nearby cities where the only food service that exists is fast food nationals with standard model stores designed based on the market size. In Fremont, most of the popular national fast food stores are present as well as a number of pizza retailers plus several coffee shops, cafes and local food establishments. For general merchandise, many smaller communities have little to offer other than general store type locations. In Fremont, we are fortunate to have a Walmart-Superstore, Lowes, Peebles, Bob Evans, Applebee's, Auto Zone, Advanced Auto, Napa, Joanne Fabrics, Kroger, and many more both local, regional and national stores providing a good mix of merchandise and other services.

New retail stores, strip centers and shopping centers are declining in many communities based on the amount of merchandise being sold via the internet on line. Stores are somewhat smaller in areas where the population is less than 30-40,000 and concentrated. There is continuing growth in businesses providing specialized products and services requiring a visit by the customer and follow-up contacts with consumers. The Fremont Community is well positioned to take advantage of any growth by the retail sector with 42 acres recently annexed near the Route 53 North Commerce Area. This area has great access and is located along State Route 53 and US 6 and 20 and is considered the number one access point into the Fremont Community. It is logical that this area will continue to grow over the coming 10 years as the Fremont Community expands to a population of 30,000 or more by 2029.

Future State of the Fremont Community by 2029

Fremont has had the good fortune of several announcements recently that when actually built will expand our retail and general services offered locally. In recent years, several automotive part stores have expanded in the community with local operators and chains both participating. Retailers are looking to expand into the Fremont community with the announcement of a large, new Kroger store to be completed in 2019, a new automated car wash that has recently opened and the continued development of Downtown Fremont. It is likely that several older retail areas within the community will be replaced or upgraded during the coming years as they are showing some age and lack of upgrades.

East Side

The community has seen some recent expansion and re-development of an older retail center on the east end of State Street. The east side of Fremont, along East State Street is one of the older retail areas and is fortunate to be receiving some new attention. It is expected that vacancy and reinvestment will continue to be a problem for the area going forward. The entire strip of East State Street from the eastside to the Sandusky River is a mix of retail, residential, apartment, commercial, fast food, gas, auto service, offices, and other low impact services which can go into existing residential neighborhoods and older structures with minor conversion costs. Many of these structures are aging and not conducive to modern cityscape designs. Like older residential neighborhoods work will need to continue and some areas will be redeveloped for other purposes.

Historic Downtown Fremont

The central downtown historical district is in transition. Great strides are being made to restore this area and repurpose many of the properties while preserving the history and classic exterior appearances of the older Fremont buildings. This is all happening in the area locally know as “Historic Downtown Fremont,” an area that consists of 75 acres of opportunity for preservation and a renewed future. The area includes a 3 block section of West State Street, a number of blocks on Front Street and numerous other blocks which contain mixed land use by small industry, service businesses, restaurants, banks, offices and apartments. (See the Downtown Fremont chapter)

West Side

The west side of Fremont includes significant commercial and retail activity along West State Street from the downtown area to State Routes 20, 6, and 53. The area is dominated by mostly older properties that have had varying levels of care. Mixed in with residential single and multi-family homes are some older industrial operations. Much of the commercial space will need to be upgraded or replaced over the next several years. This will pose decisions regarding how these areas should be improved, knowing that they are not in commercial retail developments that can drive re-development opportunities. All of State Street, both east and west, will continue to present these questions during the next decade.

Oak Harbor Road Corridor

Fremont has the Potter Village Shopping Center which is located along Oak Harbor Road. This is an older retail area that is in decline and in need of significant redevelopment to remain viable as a commercial/retail district. Due to the recent announcement from Kroger, the area will get a new store on the very northern portion of Oak Harbor Road. This development will complicate the traffic pattern and vacate the old Kroger location in Potter Village. There is some thought that the new store could be considered an anchor store and lead to further commercial or retail development. However, at this time, it is difficult to see how the new Kroger store will impact retail growth.

53 North

The Fremont Community will continue to expand and grow during the next decade. It is believed that most of the commercial/retail growth will occur in the 53 North area. Since it is well established and has all of the necessary amenities it is attractive for additional development. As was indicated earlier in this section, 42 acres was recently annexed into the city and zoned for commercial or business use. In addition, there are more than 100 acres available to the west of State Route 53 that that could also become commercial or business development. Fremont can continue to study the area along 53 in the coming years as the time for development has not occurred. There is significant opportunity for the City to continue expanding to the north and the Ohio Turnpike area. The newest hotels are currently located in that area. Fremont is fortunate to have a four lane highway connecting the commercial/retail area to the north, east and west allowing visitors easy access to good shopping. The future of the Fremont Community will be driven by our ability to make Fremont a destination city.

GOAL

To compete with larger markets by offering similar shopping experiences and keeping dollars in our local economy. We understand that in the realm of commercial and retail development, this usually follows the growth of manufacturing and increased housing capabilities.

OBJECTIVES

1. Assist developers in the process to quickly and easily become a part of the Fremont market. As the Fremont Community grows, more people from 20-30 miles away will visit our commercial/retail area and our downtown district. **Be able to accommodate retail growth for maximum benefit to the community.**
2. Individual commercial/retail areas may need to evolve into small strip centers (larger in size and depth) rather than single free standing businesses along State Street on the east and west side of the town.
3. Fremont will need to hold property owners, developers, re-developers and the tenants accountable for long-term development planning and construction techniques that will stand the test of time and look great 10-20 years from now. Fremont must quickly move into the 21st Century and become a progressive modern community that everyone can be proud of. Fremont must understand what industrial leaders see when visiting our community. Our growth will be driven by the quality of our people, our skills and our quality of life. Employers look closely at these amenities and our services when choosing a community to invest \$10-100 million.

Downtown Fremont



THINK FREMONT

Downtown Fremont

Summary

Since 2014 over **9 million dollars** has been spent revitalizing the 75 acres that delineates the Downtown Fremont Historic District. Much of this new investment has come to the district due to property and building owners investing in the renovation of various properties within the historic district. Property owners have done façade renovations, new building & store rehabs, signs, roofs and more. Needless to say the appearance of Downtown Fremont in the historic district is improving and so is the climate for new businesses and restaurants.

Recent Accomplishments

- Three new restaurants were added- one on Garrison Street in 2016 and two on Front Street in 2017, The Garrison, Elroy's Deli Market, and Scarpetta's Italian have all been added along with the creation of Live Edge, a catering and entertainment center next to Down Thyme Café. There are a lot of great food options in Downtown Fremont, expanding food, fun, shopping and entertainment for the whole city.
- WSOS Community Action is keeping its headquarters in the historic downtown district, and has started its renovation of an existing building at 127 S. Front Street. A formerly vacant department store building for many years, will become productive and home to nearly 130 employees. This renovation alone will protect 130 jobs for the City of Fremont and a tax revenue stream in excess of \$95,000.00 annually. The cost of this renovation is in excess of 5 million dollars and will create a new beautiful workplace for the WSOS employees. The WSOS organization is also undergoing a complete re-branding, becoming the Great Lakes Community Action Partnership in their 50th year in the community. New jobs created in the district between 2015-2017 total more than 150 with 70 additional jobs retained during this period, and an estimated annual payroll of over 2 million dollars.



- Starting in 2016 with six apartments above the S.C. Chamber of Commerce, another nine new apartments were placed in construction during 2017 and are now available. Since 2014, residential use of 2nd & 3rd floors are growing in demand. People are moving into the Downtown Fremont Historic District and are enjoying Fremont's redevelopment efforts. Other projects are in the planning stages including the addition of new retail rental space for additional shops and businesses to move into. New projects are being planned and will be announced during 2018.
- Along with this new construction in the historic district, Downtown Fremont successfully saw the relocation of S&S CPA Singer & Associates, and three new retail/service storefronts also opened; Polter Real Estate, Gypsy Soul Jewels Boutique & Salon, and Mana Fix Game Store. Downtown Fremont also continued to incorporate new events into its standing repertoire (farmer's markets, car shows, farm to table, and holiday events) with the New Year's Celebration, Small Business Saturday events, & continuing to collaborate with the Sandusky County Visitors Bureau, Fremont City Schools, City of Fremont, Terra State, & many other organizations for the City of Fremont's first annual Cinco De Mayo celebration and the Sandusky County Fishing & Outdoor Festival. Downtown Fremont continues to beautify with their seasonal banners, lighting, decorations, and signature flower planters in the historic district that sets itself apart and makes you "Think Fremont".

What's next for Downtown Fremont?

After two Charrette events one in 2014 & another in 2018, the path is clear for Downtown Fremont, both from the public standpoint and of that from the City of Fremont; not only is Fremont City to grow but also that of its City Center, into a Destination City, where visitors, residents, and investors alike Think Fremont!

Short Term Goals

In the last four years Downtown Fremont has proudly accomplished the majority of its 5 year goals and is looking toward the next 5 years of short term goals for Downtown Fremont:

- The continuance of seeking out quality retail stores & shops; focusing on specialty stores that are unique and create destination attractions, suggestions from the community include: boutique women & men's clothing stores, art galleries, cigar shop, brewery/distillery, furniture, bookstore, artisan crafts/workshops, etc. again with the focus on the unique, creating a must visit destination location.

- Another short term goal is improving the signage in the Downtown district, through distinctive & informative wayfinding which includes; directional signs for the identification of the historical district footprint, location of historic & important landmarks/attractions, parking locations, & general information on the district. Directional signage will also be added outside the historic district to direct locals and visitors to the Downtown business & event district.
- Continued beautification of Downtown Fremont with street & parking improvements; such as street paving, predestination walking paths, bike fix it stations & racks, developing & adding new parking areas, sidewalks, better lighting, curb painting & signage.
- Along with infrastructure upgrades is the beautification of the historic district with more art installations and murals, sculptures, building façade improvements, and creating attractive & distinctive entrance points to the downtown with flowers, trees, and other attractive upgrades.

Long Term Goals

In terms of Medium & Long Term goals, looking toward to 2020-2024, Downtown Fremont has distinct redevelopment plans:

- Along with creating a shopping destination is an entertainment destination; goals for the historic district include improving the entertainment district by fostering & helping to improve the historic cinema & surrounding theaters for a diverse & dynamic “after hours” activities hub.
- Fostering our Sandusky River front development with a boat basin & public access
- Supporting & collaborating with the historic Birchard Public Library for improvements & redevelopments of the former Fremont Middle School property.
- A goal of encouraging support for upgrades and use of 2nd & 3rd floor spaces for offices & tenants.
- Accessibility of parking expansion in the form of code enforcement, metering & employee designated lots.
- Further connect the walkability of downtown Fremont with attractive brick alley ways from Bidwell Avenue to Birchard Public Library, & beyond to Flag Park & and the newly renovated & historic Sandusky County Courthouse.

- Engage residential involvement in the 75 acres of the historic district through the development of neighborhood associations.
- Clean up debilitated & vacant sites in the historic district for future redevelopment, creating & executing the process for demolitions.

Often it is asked in City development plans & by the city populace, why the focus on main streets/downtowns of a city? The answer is simple, it is the heart of any city, usually the oldest, that holds special memories and has a distinct landscape & setting unique to that city to be found nowhere else. Lots of economic studies have found that to make a city work it's downtown & main street has to be equally well cared & fostered so that city landmarks and identity are preserved, successful cities have a thriving downtown, no exceptions. Downtown Fremont as the city center is an integral piece of creating a Destination City & makes locals and visitors alike Think Fremont!



Lifestyle



THINK FREMONT

LIFESTYLE

INTRODUCTION

Lifestyle is the way in which we live our lives. It often defined by our beliefs, behaviors, interests and activities. Lifestyle often involves: churches, service organization, hobbies, leisure activities, parks, historic relevance and social economic status. An important factor in developing community goals is understanding our culture here in Fremont. Knowing the various lifestyles helps to establish practical and reasonable goals to improve our community.

PARKS

The City of Fremont is responsible for the maintenance of 7 parks located throughout the city. They are home to many different events including Mayor's Concert Series, cross country meets, family reunions, and baseball just to name a few. Shelter house rental is popular and able to accommodate parties. Some of the shelters are upgraded with electricity.



While driving through Fremont, one may notice that many of the streets are tree lined. Fremont has been designated as a Tree City USA for 33 years by maintaining 4 core standards: having a designated tree board, implementing a tree care ordinance, an annual forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita and observance of Arbor Day with a proclamation.

Many of the City parks are old and in need of significant upgrades. For many years, little to no resources have been put into our park system for improvements. Many of the parks are in need of new restrooms, playground equipment and shelter houses. Having good parks promotes healthier lifestyles, offer various recreational activities, gives the community a sense of pride and helps sell your community to those looking to move to our town.

The City has already started making a strong effort to secure grant funding to make the much needed upgrades. The following projects have been awarded grant funding:

Rodger Young Park

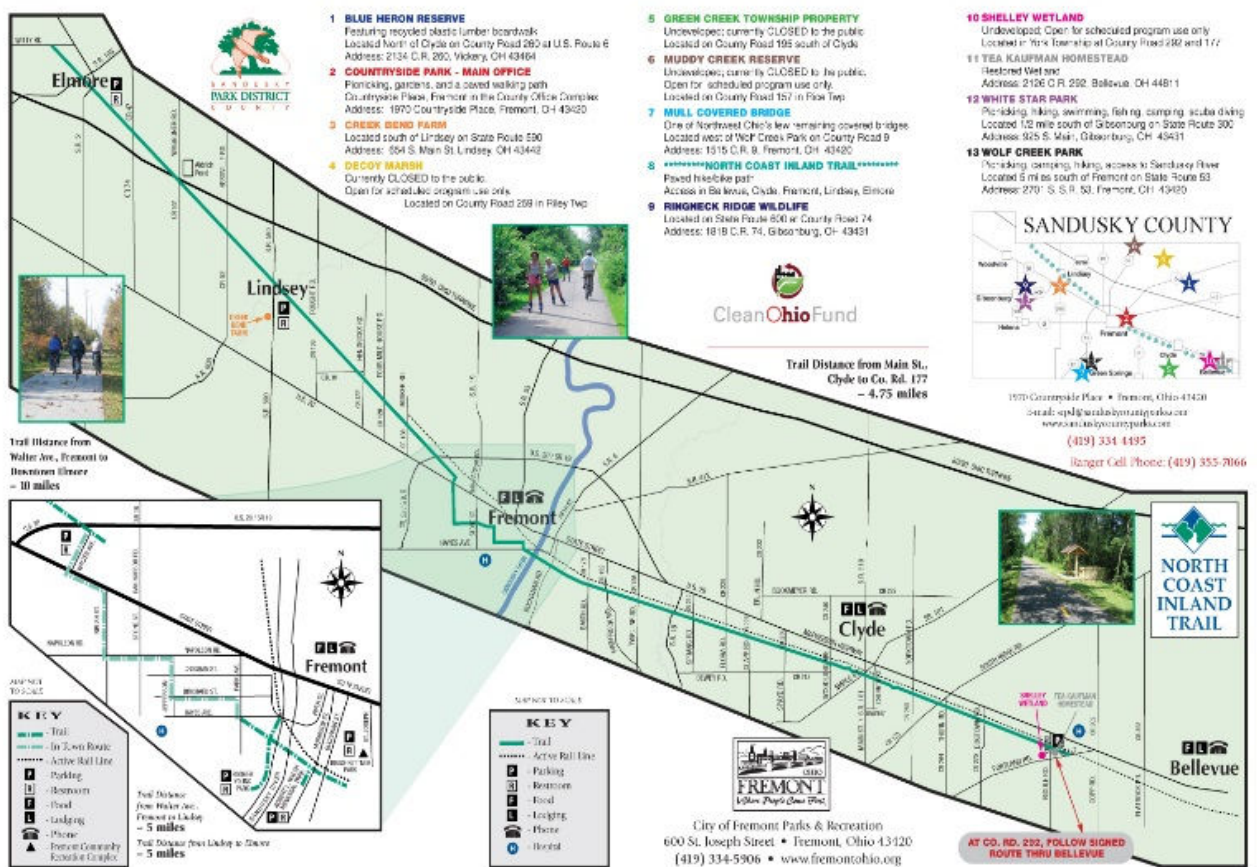
- Bathroom renovation
- New shelter
- Additional sidewalks to parking lots
- Dugout roof covers
- Basketball court renovation
- Tennis court renovation

Fremont Community Recreation Complex

- Shade structures on pool deck (phase 1 funded, phase 2 applied for)
- New pool feature

RECREATION

The Fremont Community offers several recreational opportunities including the traditional seasonal activities such as baseball, softball, volleyball and basketball. The Fremont Recreation Center also offers running, swimming and weight lifting. As part of this plan the City is exploring alternative recreational activities in order to keep the community active and healthy. The Sandusky County YMCA offers several recreational programs for adults and children as well. The two organizations offer multiple avenues for healthy lifestyle opportunities. The Northcoast Inland Bike Trail which connects Genoa to Bellevue runs through the center of Fremont. Hundreds of active residents utilize the trail each month to run, walk or bike their way through the city and county. Being innovative and discovering alternative recreational activities keeps individuals engaged and active throughout the community. The City is also working on developing connector routes off the Northcoast Inland Bike Trail to local attractions such as the Hayes Presidential Library and Museums, Downtown Fremont, the Sandusky River and the reservoir, to promote healthy living.



NEIGHBORHOODS

Good neighborhoods are key to having a great community. There are common factors to consider when having good neighborhoods. Does the neighborhood match your lifestyle and do you take pride in where you live? Low crime rates, great schools and historic neighborhoods help preserve an aging housing stock. Many of the homes inside the City of Fremont are in need of maintenance and renovation. Preserving neighborhoods by preserving homes helps property value from declining. Being close to parks as well as the bike trails allows for outdoor activities and promote recreational health. Walkability is being able to walk to restaurants, shopping, parks and other key attractions and is one way to enhance one's pride in their community.

Many neighborhoods need help to simply clean up yards, throw junk away and complete basic exterior maintenance on certain homes. Focusing on improvements made to neighborhoods through community clean-up days, creating neighborhood associations, encouraging citizens to take a sense of ownership in the area in which they live and creating stronger code enforcement of properties in disarray are all great ways to enhance the neighborhoods we live, work and play in.

NIGHT LIFE

Night life activities are usually adult orientated forms of entertainment. This often includes restaurants, bars, nightclubs, parties, concerts, theatres, cinemas or shows. A healthy energetic night life contributes to the development of the local culture and improves the quality of life within the community. In addition, the increased options for our community allow for a greater number of local residents to enjoy entertainment without having to leave the community.

This aspect of a community's development is often overlooked as it relates to economic development. The money spent supports local business owners and helps strengthen the local tax base by keeping those funds in the community. Further utilization of the Revitalization District would allow for additional entertainment venues and continue the growing notion of Fremont being a destination location.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is important to building a community that flourishes. This is accomplished in a variety of ways from being a part of a local service organization to coaching youth sports. Being actively involved in different community events/activities helps create a sense of pride and accomplishment throughout the community. It has a positive impact on others, whether it is helping a young person to have fun, get exercise and develop athletic skills or to help fundraise for community improvements. Volunteering is capable of changing a community.

The following is the list of local service organizations that contribute so much to our community and a brief description of what they contribute throughout our community. Our goal is to encourage others to join one of these organizations.

- Kiwanis
- Rotary
- Exchange
- Elks
- Moose
- Lions
- VFW
- Mayor's Office
- Downtown Fremont Inc.
- Knights of Columbus

CHURCHES

Most of the fundamental beliefs of a society are rooted in a faith based system. The most commonly referred moral standards originate and revolve around the Ten Commandments. There are 48 churches in Fremont, and to many of the residents of Fremont, church is very important. The focus of church is people. The priority of the church is to help those seeking spiritual guidance. Churches are often more than a sermon on a Sunday morning; there are children's ministries, Sunday school classes and small group bible studies as well. Churches are capable of providing help to those in need; for example, counseling, disaster relief, emergency support and general labor for special community projects. Many churches are rooted in tradition and closely associated with members of the community. Churches are a part of the fabric of our community and have significant meaning to many in the community.

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Hayes Presidential Library and Museums/Spiegel Grove – home to the 19th President Rutherford B. Hayes, this location is rich in education and history as well as beautiful scenery
- Don Paul Stadium – the renovated home of the Fremont Ross Little Giants and St. Joseph Central Catholic Streaks football teams
- Birchard Public Library – a free public library that has settled on the battlefield of Fort Stephenson
- Sandusky County Historic Jail – built in 1892, this structure is available for tour and is rumored to be haunted
- Fremont Community Theatre – puts on several theatrical shows each year with talented local actors used as the cast



GOAL

To enhance the quality of life through various leisure and free time activities.

OBJECTIVES

1. **The Adopt-A-Park program** – Have at least one church partner with one service organization to provide the attention to detail that is needed to make our city parks flourish. This is necessary in addition to provide additional attention to the parks during the summer months, when the parks are most utilized. These groups can organize clean-up days throughout the year such as spring clean-up. These groups could organize fund raising events to get capital improvement dollars for special feature unique to the park or to make necessary upgrade to enhance the parks. **The goal of the City is to have the Adopt-A-Park program up and running in two years.**

Action Steps (Timeline 2 years)

- a. Create partnerships with service organizations and churches
- b. Develop an improvement plan for each park
- c. Work through a plan and how it will be funded
- d. Have the first park adopted by December 2020

2. **Create neighborhood clean-up days.** The City would work with these groups and Republic Services to get large trash containers to help property owners throw things out to clean up their yards. These groups can utilize individuals in their organizations to help make basic home repair for those individuals in need and do not have the resources. The majority of the home repairs can be focused on the exterior of the home. **Have the first neighborhood cleanup in Summer 2019.**

Action Steps (Timeline 1 year)

- a. Create neighborhood groups/associations
- b. Work with Republic on trash container donations/purchase
- c. Set date for cleanup and advertise
- d. Hold neighborhood cleanup

3. **Create a master plan for upgrading, renovating and investing funds into the parks.** The City has identified the parks as a priority, so it is important to continue with the progress that has already been made. Gather City Administration and Rec Board members to identify problems and solutions and put that into a plan. **Have a parks and recreation master plan completed by the Spring of 2019.**

Action Steps (Timeline less than 1 year)

- a. Gather group of individuals
- b. Establish goals and priorities
- c. Release the master plan

4. **Continue to be aggressive in finding creative funding solutions for park and recreation improvements.** Find grants, sponsors and donors to fund additional improvements in the park and recreation system. Use priorities set in the master plan to guide the applications and assist in project choice.

Actions Steps (Timeline Immediately)

- a. Search for additional funding opportunities
- b. Create projects from master plan priorities
- c. Submit applications for projects
- d. Receive funding
- e. Complete projects

5. The **creation of neighborhood associations** is key to creating a sense of community and encouraging residents to take ownership in their home town. Working together to keep Fremont and their neighborhoods beautiful will give residents a sense of belonging and satisfaction as well. **The goal is to promote and support the development of neighborhood associations.**

Action Steps (Timeline Immediately)

- a. Develop standard guidelines for neighborhood associations
- b. Create a section on the City website to promote, educate and support associations
- c. Have administration involved with these associations
- d. Have a yearly meeting for all association members to network and share ideas

SUMMARY

In order to have a quality community additional efforts are going to have to be made to revitalize struggling neighborhoods or parks. Volunteering time and efforts to help our neighbors and improve our neighborhoods are necessary to improving the quality of life in the City of Fremont. The following list of objectives are the proposed actions steps with approximate timelines for those objectives to occur. The information on the list is what was outlined throughout this chapter.

- 1. The goal of the City is to have the Adopt-A-Park program up and running in two years.**
- 2. Have the first neighborhood cleanup in Summer 2019.**
- 3. Have a parks and recreation master plan completed by the Spring of 2019.**
- 3. Continue to be aggressive in finding creative funding solution for park and recreation improvements.**
- 4. The goal is to promote and support the development of neighborhood associations.**

Education



THINK FREMONT

EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The educational system in Fremont is key to economic and community development. A successful economy has a strong, educated and trained workforce able to address local workforce needs. Knowing how education and training connects to the local economy can better help understand how workers, businesses and communities flourish. In addition, the construction of new school buildings help in the marketing of the community to prospective businesses looking to locate to Fremont.



The City of Fremont is rich with educational opportunities, starting with choices all the way down to entry level education. Fremont City Schools has committed to preparing students for their future by following their mission statement, *“The mission of Fremont City Schools is to develop well-educated, life-long learners prepared to be responsible, productive and respectful members of their communities.”* Starting in the Spring of 2019, construction will begin on 5 new elementary schools and a new high school. The community overwhelmingly supported this investment with the passage of a new levy in the Spring of 2017, which will generate \$58.6 million to support the cost of the new buildings.

In addition to Fremont City Schools, Bishop Hoffman Catholic Schools offers students a high quality education. BHCS offers small class sizes and the availability of technology to every student, as well as a Faith based education. BHCS continues to maintain an impressive 100% graduation rate while committing to a safe learning environment, including those with special needs.

Students in Fremont are also very fortunate to have the opportunity to attend Terra State Community College while still in high school using the College Credit Plus program. This is available to students attending public, private and home schools in grades 7-12. Students are able to earn college credit and experience the college atmosphere on Terra’s campus while still in high school. Some students are even able to graduate with a high school diploma and an Associate’s Degree from Terra at the same time. This offers area students an advantage when heading into the workforce or off to a four year school.

There are options for students wishing to enter the workforce with a skill as well. Vanguard Sentinel Career and Technology Center offers programs to area high school students to ready them for the workforce and enable them to earn a competitive wage right out of high school. They also offer a variety of adult education programs for those looking to learn during their adult years.

Terra State and Vanguard boast a long history of partnering with each other dating back to 1968. Terra (then called the Vanguard Technical Institute) would hold night classes for their 78 business and engineering students in the classrooms at Vanguard Vocational Center. In 2018, both institutions will celebrate their 50th anniversary of supporting students in their educational journeys.

GOAL

For the local school systems to achieve high academic standards and prepare students for life after graduation by improving the conditions of the learning environments. Help to coordinate services for students transitioning into college, military and the workforce. Provide the necessary information to young adults to make informed decisions regarding their career path. Many of the objectives listed are information gathered from the three day charrette that was held in April 2018.

OBJECTIVES

1. Improve the conditions of the learning environments.

Action Steps (Timeline: Within 5 years)

- a. The construction of new Fremont City School buildings will be a significant upgrade and allow students to learn in an environment better suited for education purposes.
- b. Greater accountability of those students with chronic or serious behavioral problems, therefore, limiting the distractions and negative environment of those students meeting classroom expectation.
- c. Promote a positive school culture both in the classroom and at sporting events. Creating a greater sense of pride in our schools.
- d. Increase enrollment in the schools through improved marketing and programming.

2. Support and help coordinate training programs of those students transitioning into the workforce.

Action Steps (Timeline: Immediately – 1 year)

- a. Work with the schools to help create or shape programs that meet the needs of local manufacturers looking for a skilled labor workforce.
- b. Make aware the many opportunities that are available for those students not interested in attending a traditional four year college. Promote the various vocational or training programs that exist that would allow an individual to choose a career path while learning a skill and earning a salary.
- c. Be specific with the educational institutions as to what programs are needed in the manufacturing community.

3. Collaboration of the different institutions working together.

Action Steps (Timeline: 1 year)

- a. Terra State Community College & Vanguard-Sentinel Career & Technology Center have recently begun partnering on certain programs helping students to start a career path sooner, get additional education in their chosen field and begin an apprenticeship.
- b. Bishop Hoffman Catholic Schools & Fremont City Schools working together when possible to save on expense and to develop new opportunities.

SUMMARY

The goal of having quality educational institutions is important to the revitalization of our community. Improving the conditions of the learning environment, supporting programs of those students transitioning into the workforce and collaboration between the schools strengthen our community. The following list of objectives are the proposed actions steps with approximate timelines for those objectives to occur. The information on the list is what was outlined throughout this chapter.

1. Construction of a new school facilities completed **within the next 5 years.**
2. Support and promote various vocational programs that are offered to students **immediately.**
3. Establish vocational or job training programs that meet the needs of the manufacturing community **within the next 1 year.**
4. Greater marketing of our school system to help increase enrollment **within 1 year.**
5. Develop better collaboration within the education institutions **within 1 year.**

Health & Wellness



THINK FREMONT

Health & Wellness

Introduction

The Fremont Community should be a place where the well-being of residents is supported through the healthcare providers and is the foundation for achieving all other goals of the community. Healthcare in Fremont, Ohio is dynamic with cutting edge 21st century technology. There are new and upgraded facilities for ProMedica Memorial Hospital, Community Health Services, & Valley View Health Campus. In addition, several community partners such as Sandusky County Health Department, Fremont Recreation Center, Sandusky County YMCA, and the Terra State Activity Center are committed to working together for the overall health of the community.

ProMedica Memorial Hospital

Memorial Hospital located at 715 S. Taft Avenue, merged with the ProMedica Healthcare System ensuring on trend healthcare updates and upgrades, resulting in the 3rd largest employer in Fremont, Ohio. First started by Mary Miller Hayes in 1918, ProMedica Memorial Hospital will celebrate 100 years of quality patient care in 2018. Along with a ten million-dollar renovation to the original historic hospital, ProMedica Memorial hospital is a 186 bed facility with 200 physicians and 400 employees. It is a not-for profit organization committed to Fremont, Ohio and diligent on providing the best care for residents, employees, & visitors to their facilities. Such an example of this exemplary service & commitment to the community includes the \$5 million Dorothy L. Kern Cancer Care Center which opened in 2015, reducing the need for area residents to travel for quality cancer care treatment. In addition, Fremont is also served by road and air service with two ProMedica ambulances and two helicopter units, one from ProMedica and the other from St. Vincent. The air units are stationed at the Sandusky County Regional Airport to aid in greater expediency.

Northern Ohio Medical Specialists (NOMS)

Northern Ohio Medical Specialists (NOMS) officially formed in 2000 and opened for business in 2001. NOMS is a multi-specialty physicians group with over 200 providers and 31 specialists. They are committed to superior patient satisfaction and to continually improving their scope and depth of service. NOMS recently made a significant investment in the Fremont community by expanding their facility on N. River Road. This expansion was to accommodate additional doctors and to offer more services.

Community Health Services (CHS)

Community Health Services in Fremont, Ohio has served the community for over 40 years and in 2017 completed a new main campus site located at 2221 Hayes Avenue at the cost of 5 million dollars, further ensuring quality care & employment. They offer a full spectrum of healthcare services. Their mission is to strive to be the model for comprehensive quality healthcare. Their staff is committed to improving access to care. Community Health Services offers health education and prevention programs. They provide comprehensive medical and dental services for adults and children.

Senior Care Facilities

The Fremont community is fortunate to have quality senior care facilities. Facilities such as Elmwood Assisted Living & Nursing Home and Valley View Health Campus are just two examples of the quality establishments. The recent multimillion dollar new construction of the Valley View Health Campus located at 1247 North River Road is one example of continued improvements being made to our healthcare system in Fremont.

Sandusky County Health Department

The Sandusky County Health Department provides a variety of programs and services. These programs and services include Help Me Grow, nursing, immunizations, a Reproductive Health & Wellness clinic, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, Maternal and Child Health services, and is responsible for the surveillance and management of communicable diseases. The Sandusky County Health Department has completed a strategic plan to meet new standards associated with the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) accreditation process and the 2017-2019 Ohio State Health Improvement Plan. Most of the services provided through the Sandusky County Health Department are little to no cost to the public.



Community Health Services
Your Partners for Better Health



Objectives

- Expand Sandusky County Creating Healthy Communities initiatives like the Complete Streets Program, walkability, community food programs-to increase availability and cost reduction, etc.
- Investigate & create a joint city wide health facility membership to the Fremont Rec Center, Sandusky County YMCA, ProMedica Facilities, & the Terra State Activity Center for all residents
- Work with investors looking to make significant improvement to existing nursing home facilities. The utilization of the Community Reinvestment Area tax abatement program for investors as incentive to move forward with the project.

Summary



THINK FREMONT

GOAL SUMMARY

IMMEDIATELY

- Stronger code enforcement
- Be aggressive in finding creative funding solutions for park and recreation improvements
- Promote and support the development of neighborhood associations
- Support and promote various vocational programs that are offered to students
- Accommodate retail growth for maximum benefit to the community

YEAR 1

- Have a growth rate of approximately 1%
- Expand the Community Reinvestment Area to be City wide
- Establish a free monthly homeownership seminar
- Hold first neighborhood cleanup
- Create parks and recreation master plan

YEARS 2-5

- Have a growth rate of approximately 1%
- Build a new apartment complex
- One new senior living complex
- Establish local building department
- One new industrial park
- Build and occupy one spec building
- Have the Adopt-A-Park up and running
- Construction of new school facilities

YEARS 6-10

- Build second industrial park
- Have a residential growth rate of approximately 2% each year