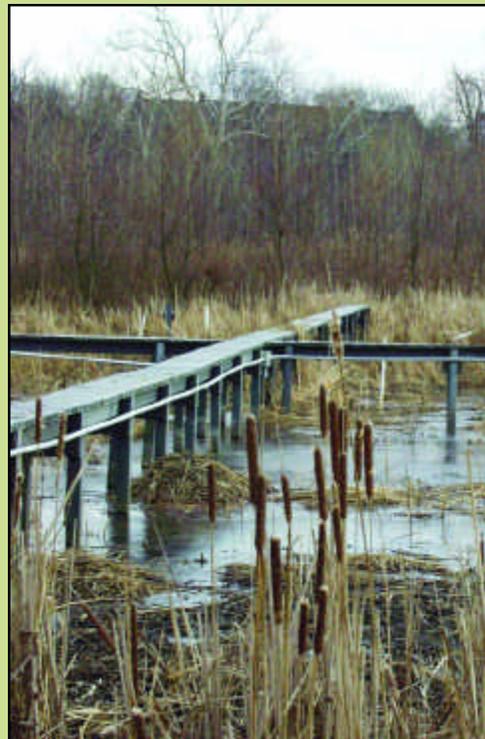


THE OLENTANGY RIVER ROAD URBAN DESIGN PLAN



The Olentangy River Road Urban Design



City of Columbus

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Former Neighborhood Planning Manager Dick Ritchie made substantial contributions to this plan.

The city of Columbus' Planning Division assisted the community with the preparation of the plan. For questions or comments please contact the Planning Division at 645-8664. The plan can also be viewed at www.columbusinfobase.org.

Columbus City Council adopted the Olentangy River Road Urban Design Plan on November 24, 2003.

Columbus City Council

Matthew D. Habash, President

Michael C. Mentel, President Pro-tem

Kevin L. Boyce

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Karen J. McCoy

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Citizens:

On November 24, 2003 Columbus City Council adopted The Olentangy River Road Urban Design Plan as the city and community's guide for future development and improvement within the Olentangy River Road planning area.

This Plan is the result of the collaboration between the city and area stakeholders. I applaud the dedication to improving the Olentangy River Road corridor and its surroundings.

The Olentangy River Road Urban Design Plan is just the first step of many to improve the area. It is crucial that both the city and the community work towards the implementation of the Plan. By working together on this, I am confident that real change will occur soon.

Sincerely,



*Mark Barbash
Director, Department of Development*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Olentangy River Road Urban Design Plan Steering Committee provided significant contributions to the development of this plan. The following individuals served on the steering committee:

Lori Baudro, Columbus Planning Division
Ben Brace, The Ohio State University
Jeanne Butas, Plaza Properties
Steve Copeland, Union Cemetery
Ed Cotter, OhioHealth
Jon Fishpaw, OhioHealth
Dana Freudeman, OhioHealth
Wayne Garland, Buckeye Real Estate
Bill Graver, Buckeye Real Estate
Greg Hurst, University Plaza Hotel
John Manley, Chemical Abstract Services
Fran McLaughlin, OhioHealth
Erin Miller, Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed
Jill Morelli, The Ohio State University
Karen Morrison, OhioHealth
James L. Nichols, River Road Hotel Corporation
Wendy Patton, The Ohio State University
Victor Shah, Super 8 Motel
Laura Shinn, The Ohio State University
Steve Tweed, Columbus Transportation Division
Paul Walker, Union Cemetery
Skip Weiler, Robert Weiler Company
Brad Westall, Columbus Recreation and Parks Department
Mike Zieg, Fairfield Inn

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PURPOSE/GOALS



PURPOSE

The *Olentangy River Road Urban Design Plan* was developed to guide future public and private investments. The Plan offers guidance on streetscape improvements, redevelopment opportunities and river corridor enhancement. The initiatives offered in the Plan will require strong support from both the public and private sectors.

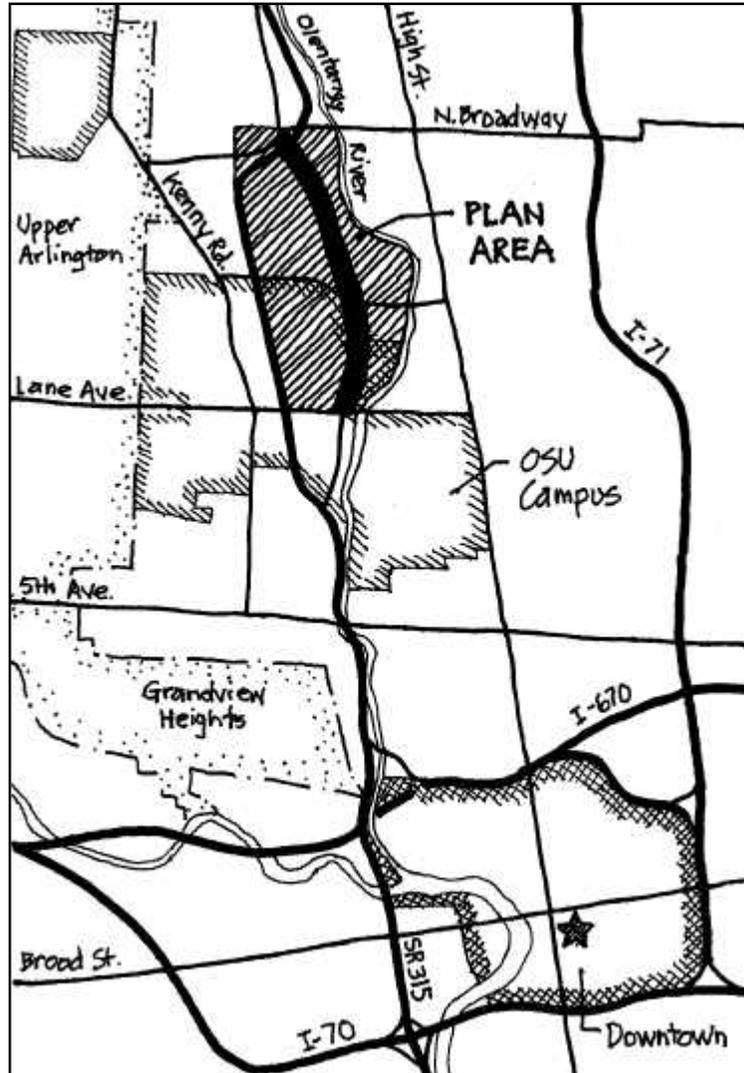
GOALS

Several goals for the plan were developed at the first meeting of the steering committee. These goals establish the framework for the Plan:

- Address crime and other issues, such as maintenance of the public right-of-way and health concerns.
- Develop improvement strategies for both the public and private streetscape along Olentangy River Road. This should include design standards for new development/redevelopment.
- Improve pedestrian facilities and access.
- Investigate the possibility of providing better roadway connections into the area.
- Provide for an appropriate mix of land uses.
- Establish the area as a destination location.
- Investigate a better way to address the Olentangy River and increase its value to the area.
- Develop an interest in maintaining private property.
- Establish a common voice for the area. Create an entity to speak for the area. Create community momentum and involve area homeowners.

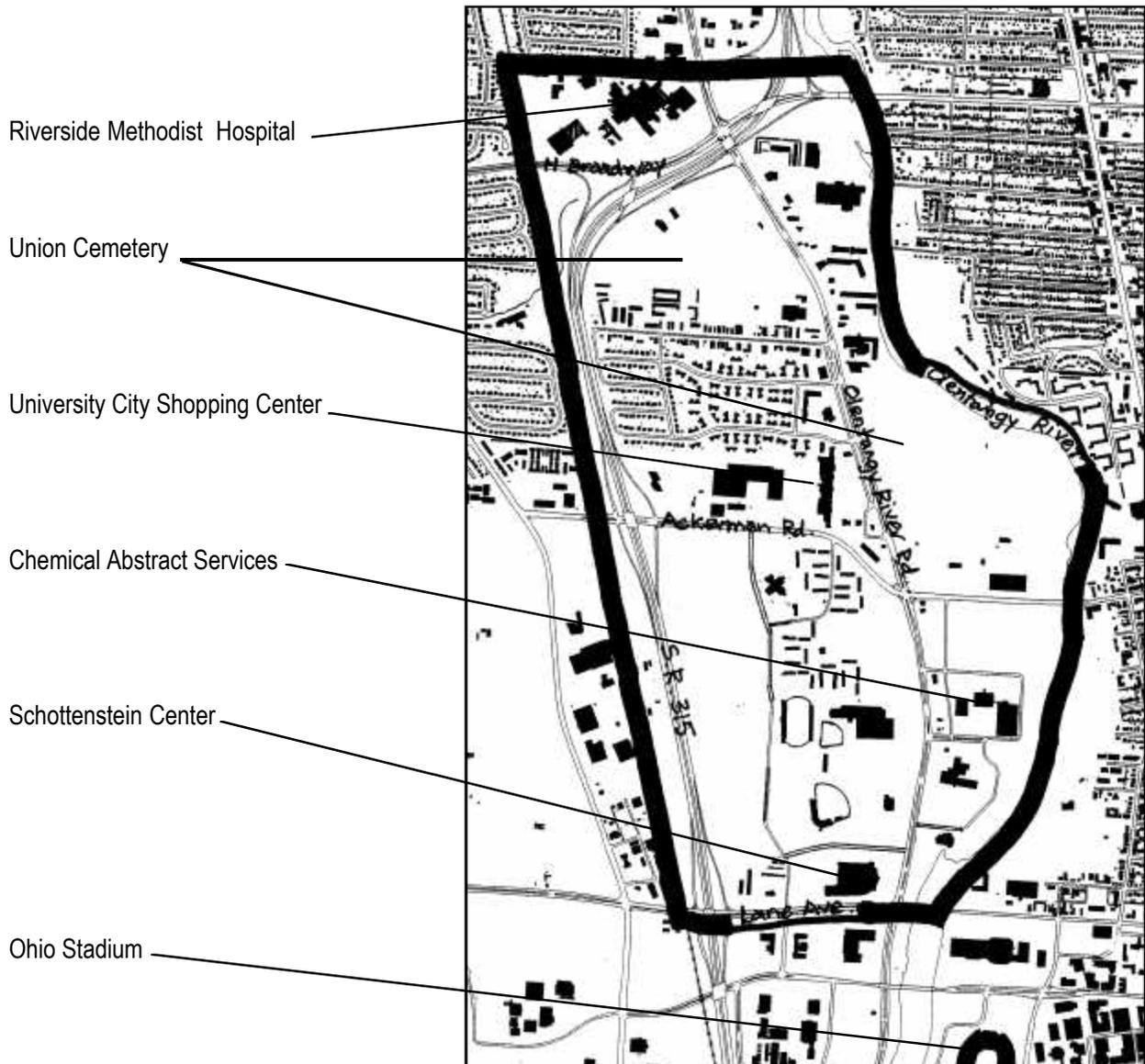
PLANNING AREA MAP

The planning area is located about four miles north of downtown Columbus, just north of the main campus of The Ohio State University.



The boundaries of the Plan are Riverside Methodist Hospital/Thomas Lane on the north, the Olentangy River on the east, Lane Avenue on the south, and the railroad on the west.

The main focus of the plan, however, is Olentangy River Road itself, along with adjacent properties.



PLANNING PROCESS

The process to develop the *Olentangy River Road Urban Design Plan* began in November 2002. A Steering Committee was formed to assist the Columbus Planning Division with the development of the Plan. The Steering Committee consisted of representatives from area businesses, including Riverside Methodist Hospital, Chemical Abstracts, The Ohio State University, and Union Cemetery.

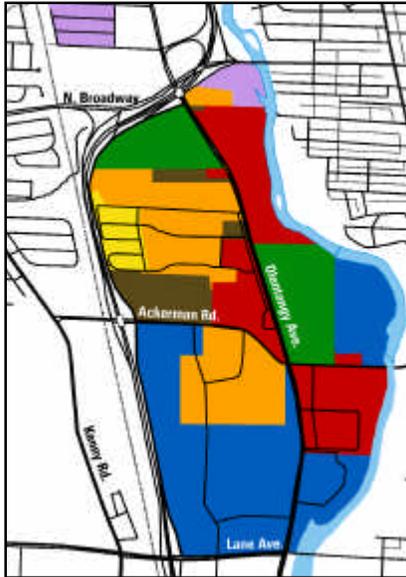
During Steering Committee meetings, the group discussed the importance of public and private investment in order for the area to remain viable. Issues such as streetscape improvements, improvements to private property and redevelopment, protections for the river, and an increase in city services were all specific topics discussed by the committee.

In addition to working with the Steering Committee, the Planning Division also held a public open house on September 24, 2003 to present the Plan provisions to the larger community. Following the open house, the Development Commission recommended City Council adoption of the Plan. City Council followed that recommendation and adopted the Plan on November 24, 2003.

PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

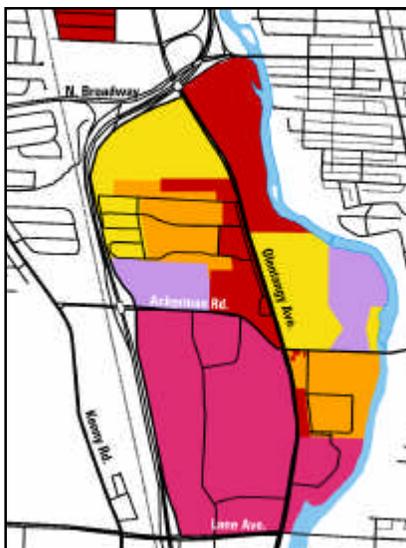
Several existing plans offer recommendations for portions of the planning area: *The Riverfront Vision Plan* (City of Columbus, March 1998), *Olentangy Plain District Plan* (The Ohio State University, February 1998), *River Corridor District Plan* (The Ohio State University, September 1998), and *The Long Range Concept Plan* (The Ohio State University, October 1995). These plans do not cover the entire planning area but rather focus on the area between Lane Avenue and Ackerman Road/Dodridge Street. Topics include improving the Olentangy River corridor, creating a system of pedestrian/bike paths along the river, and land use recommendations for land owned by The Ohio State University. *The Olentangy River Road Urban Design Plan* builds upon the provisions in the existing plans.

PLANNING AREA ANALYSIS



Existing Land Use

- Cemetery
- Hospital and Related Uses
- Multi-Family
- Office
- Religious Institution
- Retail
- Single-Family
- University and Related Uses



Existing Zoning

- Commercial
- Institutional
- Manufacturing
- Multi-Family/Apartment Residential Office
- Research Park
- Single-Family

LAND USE

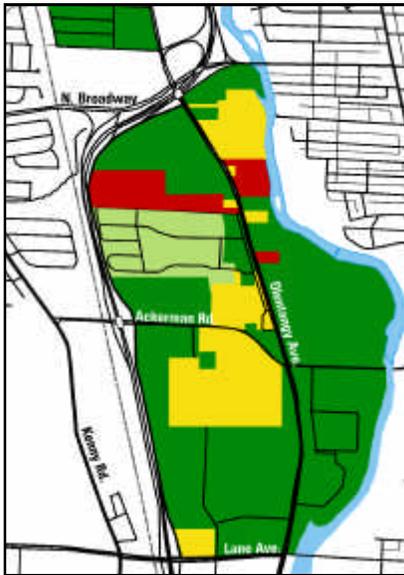
The Planning area is composed of the following uses:

- **University and related uses** - located primarily between Lane Avenue and Ackerman Road.
- **Office** - located primarily along Ackerman Road and Dodridge Street.
- **Multi-family residential** - married-student housing south of Ackerman Road and several apartment complexes west of Olentangy River Road along Riverview Drive, Stinchcomb Drive, and Harley Drive.
- **Single-family residential** - located in a pocket north of Ackerman Road, just east of State Route 315.
- **Commercial** - primarily located adjacent to Olentangy River Road north of Ackerman Road and Dodridge Street.
- **Cemetery** - two large parcels, one on both the east and west sides of Olentangy River Road.
- **Hospital and related uses** - located north of the intersection of West North Broadway and State Route 315.

ZONING

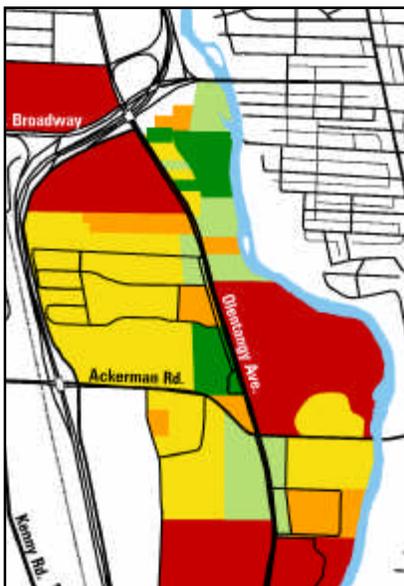
The planning area is primarily zoned for commercial, residential, and research park uses.

- **The research park** designation is concentrated between Lane Avenue and Ackerman Road.
- **Commercial zoning** is clustered along Olentangy River Road from Ackerman to North Broadway.
- **Residential zoning** is primarily in the area between Olentangy River Road and State Route 315. The majority of the residential zoning has a multi-family designation.



Visual Assessment

- "Good"
- "Fair"
- "Marginal"
- "Poor"



More likely to redevelop

-
-
-
-

Least likely to redevelop

APPEARANCE/REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

An analysis was done on the appearance of properties within the planning area. Redevelopment potential was also evaluated.

APPEARANCE

- The majority of the planning area was classified as "good" during the field survey.
- Areas that are classified as "fair" are mainly multi-family complexes that are generally well maintained but some aesthetic issues are present.
- Areas that are classified as "marginal" include university housing and commercial areas along Olentangy River Road. These areas are beginning to show signs of disrepair and/or deferred property maintenance. These are the areas that need to be addressed in terms of future investment decisions.
- Areas that are classified as "poor" include multi-family complexes along Riverview Drive and commercial uses along Olentangy River Road. These properties show signs of disrepair and/or deferred property maintenance. The appearance of the multi-family units along Riverview Drive is also influenced by the poor condition of Riverview Drive itself.

REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Based on the analysis of the planning area, certain areas are more likely to redevelop. This is based on the age and condition of the structure and how well it is currently providing services.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

Community enhancement is more than just improving the quality of the public and private streetscape. Issues such as public safety and crime prevention, code enforcement, maintenance of the public right-of-way, and the creation of a community voice are essential to community vitality. Solutions to these issues must receive top priority. These issues must be effectively addressed to set the stage for accomplishing the other provisions and recommendations of this plan.



Columbus Police Bike Patrol crossing the Olentangy River just north of Dodridge Street.

CREATION OF A COMMUNITY VOICE

The Olentangy River Road area does not have a unified voice when it comes to representing the area and helping to create change. An organization that meets regularly to discuss concerns and to help raise community awareness should be formed. This organization should contain representatives from both the business and residential communities in the area. To assist with this initiative the following approach should be taken:

- The existing Steering Committee for Olentangy River Road Urban Design Plan should continue to meet following the adoption of this plan. The Committee should serve as the core group to undertake the implementation activities of the adopted Plan.

To assist groups and organizations, the city of Columbus has established the Neighborhood Liaison Program. Neighborhood liaison staff is responsible for coordinating city programs and services with the community. The neighborhood liaison assigned to the Olentangy River Road area can assist the Steering Committee in developing goals and strategies, setting priorities, and expanding the membership of the group. The liaison can also provide assistance in the formation of a more formal business association, civic association, or area commission.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety, both real and perceived, has a tremendous impact on the vitality of a community. A group of Olentangy River Road area business owners have formed a committee to discuss crime and safety issues. During monthly meetings, the members of the group share experiences from the past month so that everyone is aware of the issues. The group's goal is to increase awareness through networking within the area to deter crime. The Division of Police Community Liaison for the area participates in the monthly meetings. To assist with this ongoing initiative the following approach should be considered:

- Continue to expand the existing business network meetings and activities. Continued participation of the Division of Police Community Liaison is crucial to the effort.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Code violations contribute to a decrease in an area's vitality and ability to attract residents, businesses and customers. In general, the city of Columbus' code enforcement system operates on a complaint-driven basis. It is important for community organizations to build relationships with the area's code enforcement officers and the Neighborhood Liaison for the area. The community and city working together can achieve a more proactive approach. To address this issue, the following approach should be taken:

- As a formal community group representing the area develops, relationships should be formed with the area's code enforcement officers and neighborhood liaison. The code enforcement officers and the neighborhood liaison should attend community meetings on a regular basis to discuss code enforcement issues.

OLENTANGY RIVER ROAD STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS



Above: The three segments of the corridor.

Olentangy River Road is an important arterial on the north side of Columbus. The road connects major institutions, such as The Ohio State University (OSU) and Riverside Methodist Hospital. There is also direct access to State Route 315. Olentangy River Road is an important gateway into the OSU campus. In addition, the planning area is bordered by the established Clintonville neighborhood on the east and the City of Upper Arlington on the west.

The intent of the Plan's streetscape improvement proposal is to improve the quality of the roadway and its relationship to the surrounding area. Creating a safe and high quality pedestrian atmosphere is also a priority given the proximity to major institutions and housing.

In addition, improvements to the roadway involve better definition of the primary functions of Olentangy River Road itself. The dissimilar functions of providing auto and pedestrian access to the business and moving cars through the corridor need to be studied and evaluated. Alternative automobile speed limits should also be studied with the goal of slowing traffic.

For the purpose of this Plan, the corridor was divided into three sections - Lane Avenue to Ackerman Road, Ackerman Road to Riverview Drive, and Riverview Drive to West North Broadway. The three sections have different qualities and constraints. However, the design of each section will mesh with the other sections to create a fully functional and high quality roadway.



Olentangy River Road is pedestrian unfriendly.



LANE AVENUE TO ACKERMAN ROAD (SOUTHERN SECTION)

Characteristics of this section of Olentangy River Road:

- Few access points along Olentangy River Road.
- Open/green space along the roadway.
- Some sidewalks do exist, although they are typically set back some distance from the roadway.
- Rural feel. Gravel strip along the roadway. No curbs/gutters.
- Large trees within the existing median and within the adjacent properties.
- Heavy pedestrian activity due to the proximity of the OSU campus and campus housing.
- Peak periods of traffic and parking due to major events at the Schottenstein Center and Ohio Stadium.
- Stable land use and anticipated to remain relatively unchanged.
- There are four northbound and four southbound COTA bus stops along this section of Olentangy River Road. COTA does not have specific ridership information available for these stops. However, these stops are important because they provide direct service to the OSU facilities in the area.

The feel and function of this segment works very well with the adjacent large campus buildings.

The proposal for this segment is:

- Enhance the existing character of the roadway.
- Construct sidewalks along both sides of the roadway to connect the existing paths to the northern portion of the planning area. The sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists, appropriately set back from the roadway and should incorporate a curvilinear design where practical. Install more trees and landscaping within the median and along the roadway to reinforce the existing character.
- Encourage both the private and public sectors to install utilities underground.



ACKERMAN ROAD TO RIVERVIEW DRIVE (MIDDLE SECTION)

This section of Olentangy River Road has the following characteristics:

- Union Cemetery along the eastern side of the roadway.
- Commercial uses with multiple access points on the west side of road.
- Service road along most of the western edge of the roadway. This service road is not in the public right-of-way but is part of the private property.
- Median within most of this roadway section. This median varies in width and is planted with grass within some sections.
- No sidewalks.
- Pedestrian activity due to the presence of convenient retail, especially the grocery store. Many residents of nearby apartment complexes walk to the retail area.
- Riverview Drive, a primarily residential street on the west side of Olentangy River Road, to be improved with curbs, gutters, sidewalks, streetlights, and speed humps. The final design is scheduled to be complete in 2003.
- Five northbound and three southbound COTA bus stops. The average load is 15.5 persons northbound and 13.9 persons southbound. On a typical day there are 15.25 people getting on the bus and 18.5 people getting off the bus at this section of roadway.

The proposal for this segment is:

- Consolidate existing access points along the western side of the roadway to create a safe environment for pedestrians. Investigate the possibility of creating a signalized intersection into the University City Shopping Center from Olentangy River Road, perhaps midway between the existing signals at Ackerman Road and Harley Drive.
- Construct sidewalks on both sides of the roadway. Sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Install curbs and gutters.
- Plant street trees along both sides of the roadway.
- Reduce or remove median in certain locations to allow for improvements along the edges of the road, i.e. sidewalks, tree lawn, and curb and gutters. Median should remain in areas where it is necessary for traffic control. The median in these areas should be improved with material patterns and landscaping.
- Articulate pedestrian crossings at traffic signals.
- Improve the intersection of Olentangy River Road and Ackerman Road to include well-articulated visible pedestrian crossings and pavement markings and signage. Also, improve pedestrian access to Olentangy River Road from the Dodridge Street and Ackerman Road approaches.
- Remove the private service drive. The drive, in part, could be used for future development. Existing function of the service drive could be shifted to the access lane adjacent to the existing buildings or to the rear of the buildings. This would eliminate conflict with Olentangy River Road auto and pedestrian traffic.
- Encourage both the private and public sectors to install utilities underground.

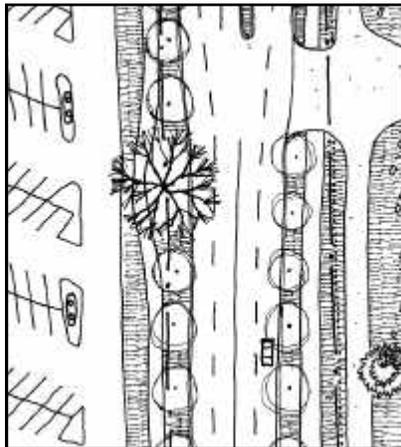
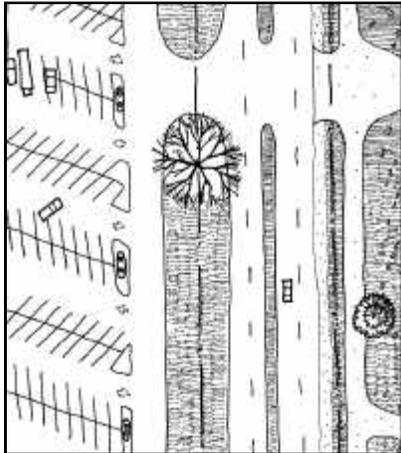


Illustration of existing conditions (top) compared to one possible means of improvement (bottom). Curb, sidewalks and street trees have been added. The road has been shifted to the west and the median has been eliminated to accommodate more room on the Union Cemetery side for streetscape. Where possible, curb cuts have been closed to foster pedestrian activity.

There are several obstacles to overcome to achieve the proposal. To place a continuous sidewalk along the western side of the roadway in its existing condition would create conflict and unsafe conditions due to the number of existing curb cuts along the private service drive. Curb cuts must be consolidated before a sidewalk is constructed along the western side of the roadway. To accommodate pedestrian traffic prior to the consolidation of the existing curb cuts, the following improvements should be made:

- Accommodate pedestrians on the west side of the roadway with the use of existing public and private sidewalks/walkways, proper signage and markings at crossings. There are existing sidewalks along Ackerman Road and a pedestrian walkway along the front of the University City Shopping Center, which is the major destination of the area.
- Investigate possible linkages from site to site and create connections to existing COTA bus stops.



Before and after:

In addition to consolidating entrances, there are opportunities to add sidewalks and landscaping without losing any parking simply by taking up "spillover" asphalt.





Existing conditions along Olentangy River Road.



Pedestrian path on one side of road. Olentangy River Road in Worthington.



Existing concrete median.

RIVERVIEW DRIVE TO WEST NORTH BROADWAY (NORTHERN SECTION)

This section of Olentangy River Road has the following characteristics:

- Union Cemetery along the western portion of the roadway.
- Eastern side of the roadway is developed with a mix of uses, including retail, hotels and residential and has a large number of access points.
- Narrow concrete median in places.
- No sidewalks.
- There are three northbound and three southbound COTA bus stops along this section of Olentangy River Road. The average load is 12.9 persons northbound and 9.8 persons southbound. On a typical day there are two people getting on the bus and 3.5 people getting off the bus at this section of roadway.

The proposal for this segment is:

- Consolidate access points along the eastern side of the roadway to create a safe environment for pedestrians.
- Construct sidewalks along both sides of the roadway. The sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Install curbs and gutters.
- Plant street trees along both sides of the roadway.
- Remove median.
- Articulate pedestrian crossings at traffic signals.
- Improve the intersection of Olentangy River Road and West North Broadway to include well-articulated visible pedestrian crossings and pavement markings and signage.
- Encourage both the private and public sectors to install utilities underground.
- Improve entranceway to Union Cemetery.

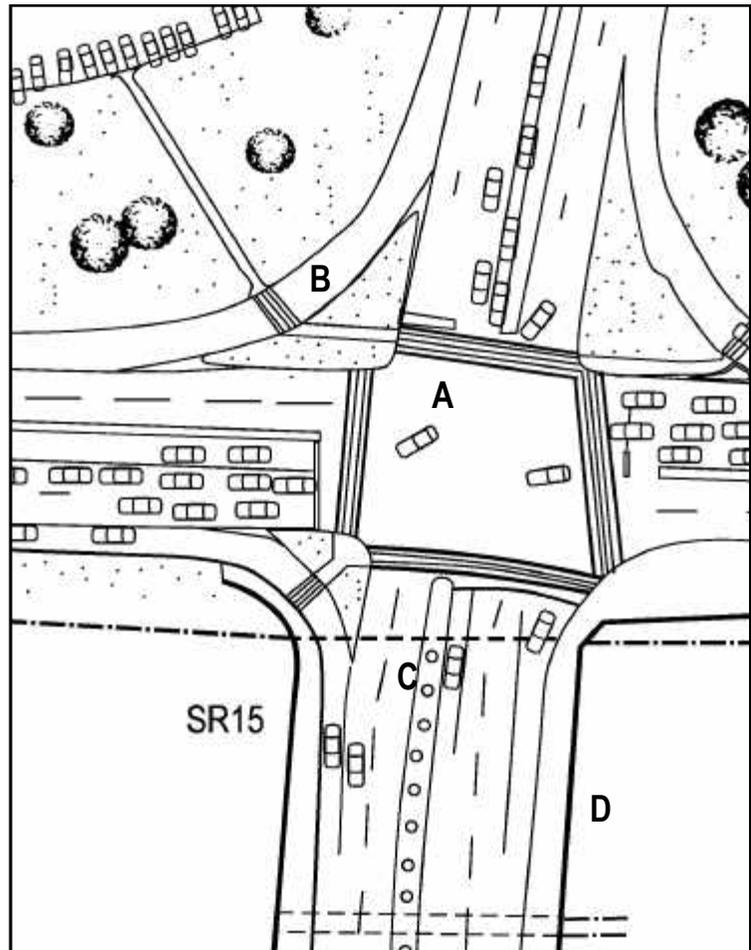


Before and after. An easy opportunity to provide pedestrian linkage from Riverside Methodist Hospital to restaurants and hotels.



**North Broadway and
Olentangy River Road**

Intersection improvements for pedestrians can include: A. Textured or raked asphalt crosswalks colored to contrast with the rest of the roadway; B. The same treatment occurring across the yield lanes; C. Extending new sidewalks across grassed islands; and, D. Continuing sidewalks to the south.



REDEVELOPMENT OF KEY OPPORTUNITY SITES



The new Fairfield Inn was constructed on the site of a former hotel. The Inn exemplifies the continued viability of hotels in the Olentangy River Road corridor.

Redevelopment opportunities differ greatly for property along Olentangy River Road. For instance, the majority of OSU development between Lane Avenue and Ackerman Road, the Union Cemetery and Riverside Methodist Hospital are areas unlikely to redevelop. However, many of the retail, office and hotel uses north of Ackerman Road are ripe for redevelopment.

Olentangy River Road is developed as a mixed-use environment. Existing land uses include large and small-scale retail, office, hotel, multi-family, and restaurants. A mixed-use environment along Olentangy River Road is appropriate, especially considering the large institutions that create a large market area.

Given that areas along Olentangy River Road are prime for redevelopment, it is crucial that the proper development standards and concepts be established for the area. The following strategies should be followed for Olentangy River Road:

- Create an attractive, vibrant and safe environment along Olentangy River Road.
- Apply a planning overlay and graphics control area to Olentangy River Road from Lane Avenue to West North Broadway. Consideration should be given to applying the *Regional Commercial Overlay* to these segments of the corridor. This Overlay establishes standards for the following: building and parking setbacks, site redevelopment, pedestrian and site access, landscaping and screening and site lighting.
 - During that process consideration should be given to:
 - Creating the signage standards to allow for appropriate signs for uses such as a cemetery.
 - Encourage the use of parking landscape islands for stormwater control/filtration, especially for parcels adjacent to rivers and streams.

- Consolidate curb cuts along Olentangy River Road. An access management study should be commissioned. A volunteer program should also be explored. This program would entail the city working with property owners to identify how curb cuts could be consolidated even without redevelopment.
- Support a mixed-use environment. However, sites must be rezoned to an appropriate classification. For instance, if residential development is proposed for an existing commercially zoned site, the site must be rezoned and the property developed under residential development standards.

There are several "opportunity sites" for possible redevelopment. The common principles for redevelopment are:

- Sites relate to the surroundings - there are connections to the street, adjacent properties, and the river where applicable.
- Redevelopment is compatible with surrounding area in terms of scale, capacity, density, and design.
- Redevelopment spurs interest for the area - either a new market is created or existing market is better served.

REDEVELOPMENT OF KEY OPPORTUNITY SITES



Large Existing Retail Sites

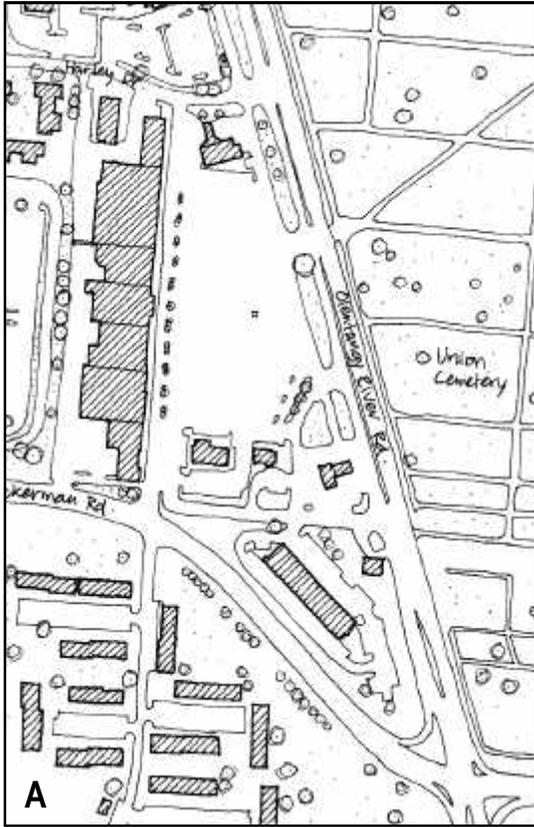
University City Shopping Center

Principles for redevelopment:

- Develop frontage along Olentangy River Road. The private service drive should be utilized for new development. Parking should be to the rear and shared with existing center.
- Create a defined entrance to the center from Olentangy River Road. This entrance should be signalized and become a new road and connect to the adjacent site to the west that is currently owned by OSU.
- Create connections from the public sidewalk into adjacent sites.
- Consider combining University City Shopping Center and the adjacent Red Roof Inn site into one interconnected site.



New buildings located closer to the street provide a more pedestrian-oriented environment.



University City Shopping Center

A. Existing. B. With proposed addition of new McDonald's and Kroger gas. C. Potential (illustrative) long-range redevelopment of the site. Significant features: new buildings fronting closer to the street; stronger contextual relationship between Buckeye Village and north side of Ackerman Road; new entry from Olentangy River Road and connection through to former ABB site.

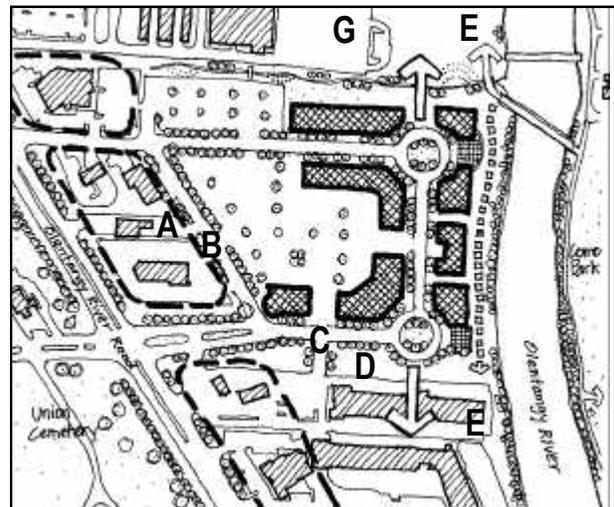
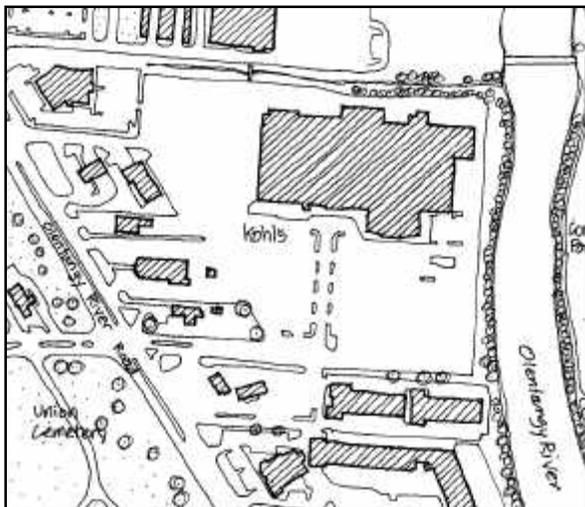




Kohl's Department Store and adjacent parcels along Olentangy River Road

Principles for redevelopment:

- Create a street edge by developing out lots along Olentangy River Road that directly connect to development to the rear. Parking for the out lots should be to the rear of the buildings. Redevelop existing Kohl's building so that it relates/connects to both the street and the river. Parking should be shared with out lots along Olentangy River Road.
- New development must be sensitive to the adjacent Olentangy River. Easements should be established to create a buffer between development and the river and to allow for recreational use, such as bike trails, of the river corridor.



Potential redevelopment of a larger site is illustrated above. Before (left) and after (right). Significant points: **A.** Properties fronting Olentangy River Road can be consolidated and /or coordinated. **B.** Parking access is provided by a landscaped service road. **C.** Access into the back portion of the site on tree lined streets flanked with buildings. **D.** Circles with links to the river, north and south circles are connected by street with close-in buildings. **E.** Potential connection to new development to the north and south. **F.** New bike bridge joins to Como Park to the east; potential path also on west side of river. **G.** Drainage ditch improved to become benefit, not a liability.

Small retail and hotel sites adjacent to the river

Principles for redevelopment:

- Combine parcels to create larger development sites. This will allow for shared parking, combined curb cuts and more unified development.
- New development must be sensitive to the adjacent Olentangy River. Easements should be established to create a buffer between development and the river and to allow for recreational use, such as bike trails, of the river corridor.

Sites between Lane Avenue and Ackerman Road

Chemical Abstracts

The main focus of any redevelopment or new development of this site is the frontage along Olentangy River Road and Dodridge Street.

Principles for redevelopment:

- Concentrate new development in the area fronting Olentangy River Road and Dodridge Street.
- Preserve open space to allow community events to continue.
- Provide conservation and/or access easements adjacent to the river.

OSU Student Housing

- Redevelop Buckeye Village into a more appropriate campus residential environment.
- Create a more direct relationship between new development and its frontage along Ackerman Road.
- Provide pedestrian linkages to surrounding sites.

THE OLENTANGY RIVER



OSU Wetlands Research Elevated Observation Tower.

The Olentangy River runs along the eastern edge of the planning area. The river is a tremendous environmental and recreational resource for the area. The treatment and use of the river corridor varies throughout the planning area. For instance, from Lane Avenue to the OSU Wetlands Research Area, located just north of Dodridge development, there is an adequate setback of buildings and parking lots from the river. There are also bike trails adjacent to this segment of river.

In contrast, however, the segment of river from the OSU Wetlands Research Area to West North Broadway has not been integrated into the adjacent development but has been ignored and encroached upon with development. There are inadequate setbacks from the river, particularly in regards to parking lots, and recreational opportunities are lacking.

There are three lowhead dams located within the planning area. All of the dams harbor sanitary sewer lines that cross the Olentangy River. A study should be conducted to address the feasibility of removing or altering these dams to improve water quality and the recreational value and safety of the river.

Both the city of Columbus and OSU have commissioned studies dealing, in part, with the area from Lane Avenue to Ackerman/ Dodridge Road. These plans are *The Riverfront Vision Plan* (City of Columbus, March 1998), *Olentangy Plain District Plan* (The Ohio State University, February 1998), *River Corridor District Plan* (The Ohio State University, September 1998), and *The Long Range Concept Plan* (The Ohio State University, October 1995).

The recommendations of these plans as they pertain to the river corridor are pertinent and should be implemented:

- The OSU Wetlands Research Area should be connected to the surrounding area by continuous trails and become a key education and interpretive destination.
- The natural river parklands should extend from Lane Avenue Bridge north to the Wetlands Research Area. The riparian edge should be enhanced with a combination of invasive thinning and additional native plantings to promote wildlife habitat.
- Add continuous paths that will extend along the upper and lower banks.
- At key locations, allow overlooks, landings and breaks in the vegetation to allow users to experience the river more directly.
- Negotiate a conservation easement with Chemical Abstracts Service. If possible, negotiate an access easement, as well, respecting their needs as a private institution, but ensuring continuous access along the banks of the river.
- Prioritize improvements to the Columbus sewer system to further reduce the frequency of combined sewer overflows in accordance with the City's long-term strategy.
- A hydrological study should be conducted to define flood control structures and identify berms that do not serve a flood control purpose and that could be removed.
- Buildings should be sited to create usable, positive open spaces, not leftover or remnant spaces.

- Buildings along the riverfront should address the river in a positive way reflecting the aesthetic role of the riverfront as an open space corridor.
- Buildings should be designed to provide view corridors and public access to the riverfront and avoid the creation of impenetrable walls that block movements and sights, ensuring continuous access along the banks of the river.
- Building faces adjacent to public open space and to streets should be treated as fronts and should activate the public environment.
- Surface parking lots should be adequately set back from the river so that the use of the river corridor is not impeded. Additionally, encourage the use of alternative surfaces for parking lots on sites that are adjacent to the river. These alternative surfaces could include permeable concrete, grass pavers, and stormwater detention swales and collection points.
- Enhance linkages between the river and the OSU campus and the surrounding community.

Although these recommendations were originally designed for the area between Lane Avenue and the OSU Wetlands Research Area, their use should be considered for the area from the OSU Wetlands Research Area to West North Broadway. Also, due to the redevelopment potential in this area the following additional criteria should be applied:

Site Redevelopment:

- Secure conservation easements. Where appropriate, negotiate access easements as well, respecting the needs of the property owner, but ensuring continuous access along the banks of the river.
- Structures and surface parking lots should be set back an appropriate distance to achieve the following performance standards:
 - Create a riparian corridor between any structure or surface parking lot and the bank of the river. Replant native plant species along the river.
 - Redevelopment should not occur in the floodplain.
 - Create usable space along the river for recreational, both passive and active, use and enjoyment. These spaces should include features such as lighting to help deter crime.
- Additionally, parking reduction variances should be supported to help reduce the setback from the river. Shared parking arrangements are also encouraged.
- Encourage the use of alternative surfaces for parking lots on sites that are adjacent to the river. These alternative surfaces could include permeable concrete, grass pavers, and stormwater detention swales and collection points.
- Minimize stormwater runoff into the Olentangy River as the frequency of combined sewer overflows are reduced and eliminated.

Bike Trail Development:

- Develop a continuous bike path system linking the planning area with the existing bike path system on the eastside of the river. The following alternatives should be considered and evaluated:
- Improve the existing North Broadway Bridge for full pedestrian and bicycle use.
- Construct a bridge from Como Park to the west side of the river. To avoid erosion, improve water quality, and provide for recreational safety, the bridge should be full-span without piers. The path would then continue northward along the west side of the river.
- Secure easements during redevelopment of sites adjacent to the river to allow for the construction of a bikepath.
- Create a more formal link from the existing bikepath through the cemetery for access to Olentangy River Road. This link could be closed after dark for security reasons.
- Create a bikepath connection to the river along the six-foot drainage swale located just north of the Kohl's site. The swale would require extensive buffering but is an opportunity for an improved linkage to the river corridor.



The bike trail across from Chemical Abstracts Service.

IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

The provisions of this plan contain elements that impact both the public and private realm. Therefore, it will take the public and private sectors working cooperatively to implement the plan.

The following implementation measures involve both the public and private sectors.

Streetscape Improvements to Olentangy River Road

- **Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

The CIP is the general framework for the city's capital investment over a six-year period.

- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District**

A TIF District provides funding for public improvements by utilizing the increase in tax revenues brought about by increased property values within the designated TIF District.

- **Special Improvement District (SID)**

A SID is a self-help tool that allows property owners to assess themselves for area-wide services and capital improvements.

- **Improvements through redevelopment**

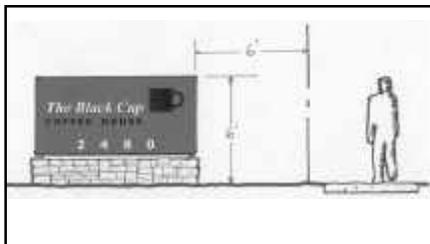
Through the site redevelopment process the following can be achieved:

- Installation of sidewalks along Olentangy River Road
- Curb cut consolidation along Olentangy River Road
- Initiation of shared parking agreements between sites

- **Access Management Study**

Conduct access management study to confirm direction of proposed improvements. The study would set location of curb cut consolidation, where the median from Ackerman Road to West North Broadway could be removed or reduced, and where new signals could be placed.

- Additionally, a facade improvement program could be established for Olentangy River Road. This program would set standards for facade and signage improvements and offer financial backing.



Signage controls should be developed for Olentangy River Road. This will create a corridor with signs compatible in style, size and location

■ **Cooperative agreements with OSU**

The city of Columbus and OSU have pooled resources in the past on public improvement projects. By working together, the following improvements could be funded for the portion of Olentangy River Road from Lane Avenue to Ackerman Road:

- Installation of sidewalks.
- Installation of landscaping along the side of the road and within the existing median.
- Installation of streetlights with banners to tie area into the rest of campus

Private Property Improvements

- Apply the Regional Commercial Overlay (RCO) and create a and special graphics control for Olentangy River Road from Lane Avenue to West North Broadway.
- Encourage tax incentives to owners who have an interest in redeveloping their property. The redevelopment plans must reflect the goals of this plan.
- Encourage property owners to improve sites through landscaping, facade improvements, signage, and consolidation of curb cuts.

River Corridor Improvement

- Continue to implement the provisions of *The Riverfront Vision Plan* (City of Columbus, March 1998), *Olentangy Plain District Plan* (The Ohio State University, February 1998), *River Corridor District Plan* (The Ohio State University, September 1998), and *The Long Range Concept Plan* (The Ohio State University, October 1995).
- Secure easements through the redevelopment of sites adjacent to the river.
- Acquire funding through the city's CIP for the construction of a bikepath along the western side of the river and provide connections to the existing path on the east side.



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