ANDERSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING AND ZONING - STAFF REPORT

CASE ANDERSON 2-2026 LUP ANDERSON
UPDATE TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE ANDERSON TOWNSHIP ZONING COMMISSION ON NOVEMBER 16, 2026

APPLICANT: Anderson Township Planning and Zoning Staff, on behalf of the Anderson Township Board of Trustees

REQUEST: To provide recommendation to the Anderson Township Board of Trustees for approval for the Update to the Anderson Township Comprehensive Plan.

CASE HISTORY: Adoption of the Plan was initiated by the Board of Township Trustees on November 5, 2026.

PLAN HISTORY: In 2005, the Township adopted its first comprehensive plan that would help guide officials in making decisions for the betterment of the community. The Township has updated the plan in 2011, 2016 and 2021 to reflect new priorities and initiatives as the Township evolves over time.

Each of the following plans or planning efforts that pertain to Anderson Township has been incorporated into this plan:

- Design Guidelines (2026)
- Trails and Walkways Plan (2023)
- Public Art Master Plan and Appendix (2021)
- Kellogg Gateway Study (2021)
- Clough Pike Corridor Study (2020)
- Beechmont Plan (2018)
- Ohio Riverfront Plan (2013)
- ANCOR Plan (2013)

PLANNING PROCESS: The Anderson Township Board of Township Trustees hired McKenna, in January 2026, to help prepare the Comprehensive Plan Update. The community engagement process highlights include the following:

Steering Team:
After a call for volunteers, an application process and approval by the Board of Township Trustees, a Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Team was formed in February, ensuring a broad representation of the community. The Steering Team consisted of 13 members including residents, a representative from the Anderson Park Board, Forest Hills School District and Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce. The Steering Team met six times throughout 2026 to discuss and provide input and guidance on the planning process, background research and draft plan elements.

Public Engagement:
While the last Comprehensive Plan Update took place during the Covid-19 pandemic, efforts were made to reach the public, however, the focus was primarily

the Future Land Use Map. With this update, Township staff really wanted to place a focus on meeting the residents where they are. Through the following methods, we were able to reach new audiences within the Township.

Community Awareness-
Social media and Township website updates, articles published in the Township's newsletter, Anderson Insights, and emails from Township staff were all used during the process to keep the public informed and engaged. The draft plan was reviewed by the Steering Team and the public for feedback and comments.

Online Survey- An online survey was made available during the summer months on the Township website and Facebook, which had questions focusing on the wants, needs and desires of the community.

Youth Engagement- Annually over several days, Anderson Township hosts all second graders from Forest Hills School District for a field trip at the Anderson Center called History to Schools. During this field trip, students get a hands on opportunity to experience the different facets of local government, including: Public Works, Hamilton County Sheriff's Department, Anderson Township Fire Department, a nature walk around the Anderson Center, Planning and Zoning and the history room provided by the Anderson Township Historical Society. During the Planning & Zoning session, staff took the opportunity to do something a little bit more creative this year and ask the students what they would like to see within the Township and have them create their own maps.

Staff also worked with the Forest Hills School District's Aspire program to introduce high school students to various land use categories and have them create their own Township. Given only the outline of the township and land use categories, they came up with very creative outcomes for what their versions of Anderson Township would be.

Pop-Up Events- With the focus of meeting the residents where they are, staff analyzed known popular events around the Township and had set ups for the Comprehensive Plan. These events included the Forest Hills 5K, Oktoberfest, and the America 250 Open Doors event.

Visioning Sessions & Focus Groups- Three different Visioning Sessions & Focus Groups were held based on specific topics. The topics included: Housing, Economic Development and Community and Cultural Assets. While the Focus Groups were limited to individuals related to those fields, the Visioning Sessions were held in public spaces (Wandering Monsters, Anderson Tap House, and Big Ash Brewery) and were open to all.

Board of Trustees Working Sessions- In the beginning of the planning process, the Anderson Township Board of Trustees, the Forest Hills School Board and the Anderson Park District held a joint meeting where the process and explanation of

what a Comprehensive Plan is was described by staff and McKenna. At the Board of Township Trustees' May planning meeting, staff and McKenna held a workshop session where the Trustees had various topics in which they needed to pair images with in order to describe their visions. These topics once again included housing, economic development and community and cultural assets and helped gain a cohesive vision among the Board. In October 2026, the Board of Trustees held a Special Meeting of the Board to discuss the draft plan.

Open Houses- Two Open Houses were held throughout the process, one in June and one in October. The session in June was during the data collection process, so the open house was more interactive and focused on finding out what people love about the Township. The session in October was towards the end of the process and provided an overview to those who joined in with what the plan would consist of, including goals and objectives.

PLAN SUMMARY:

Key Themes:

Throughout the public engagement, staff consistently heard the need for various housing options, including smaller, less expense single family lots. This "missing middle" type of housing can be found mentioned throughout the plan. In addition, there were comments throughout the process about the need to preserve our "green" character. Individuals that participated in the survey, as well as in person public engagement stressed the need to keep the Greenspace program thriving and functioning. Through this, we also had discussions about sustainability efforts with our tree canopy and the need to focus on resiliency planning with our waterways.

Guiding Principles:

Seven guiding principles carry the vision through every chapter of the Plan. They are the common thread that was heard throughout the public engagement process.

1. A mature community with reinvestment as the next chapter
2. Preserving community character and assets with stewardship of Greenspaces
3. Housing choice across every stage of life
4. Strengthen and expand commercial nodes
5. Connected neighborhoods and expanded mobility
6. Resilient and modernized infrastructure as a new foundation
7. Building community through arts, culture and connection

Plan Organization:

The plan is organized into four parts and then separated into chapters within. Below is the organization:

I. The Foundation
    1. Introduction
    2. Anderson Today

II. The Vision
    3. Preserve What Matters: Historic, Natural and Cultural Resources
    4. Grow Thoughtfully: Housing and Neighborhoods
    5. Prosper Together: Economic Development and Reinvestment

6. Connect Anderson: Transportation and Mobility
7. Celebrate Community: Community Life, Arts, and Culture
8. Steward Our Future: Sustainability and Resilience

III. Physical
9. Community Character Framework

IV. Implementation
10. From Vision to Action

Future Land Use Map:
With intensive changes to the Future Land Use Map during the last Comprehensive Plan Update in 2022 (including removal of the institutional land use category), staff and the steering team did not see the need to make any changes to the Map. However, this does not mean that the map cannot be changed through the public hearing process, outlined in the Ohio Revised Code, if there is a desire to do so later on. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan Update provides guidance on using the Future Land Use Map for development decisions and discussions.

Big Moves:
The Comprehensive Plan Update calls for the Anderson Township Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee to identify "Big Moves." This means that they will identify a focused set of actions from the implementation matrix to serve as the year's "Big Moves." The selection considers importance, readiness, available resources, partnerships, funding opportunities and connections to other Township initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the Update to the Comprehensive Plan, which would then allow it to be reviewed by the Anderson Township Board of Township Trustees and Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission at future meetings, as:

- The Comprehensive Plan Update will serve as a guide for development decisions and decision-making activities so as to maintain a high quality of life in the Township.
- The Comprehensive Plan Update was guided and reviewed by a 13 person Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Team which was comprised of Township residents and representatives from local organizations and government agencies.
- Information was collected through numerous public engagement sessions, including pop-up events, visioning sessions, focus groups, youth engagement and open houses.
- The Comprehensive Plan Update was built upon significant background information, including reports outlining past planning efforts and summarizing citizen input.
- The Comprehensive Plan Update was the result of discussions with key stakeholders and a series of meetings with organizations or interest groups, including but not limited to, neighboring political jurisdictions, regional planning agencies, utility, parks and recreation providers, educational

institutions, environmental organizations, safety service providers, business leaders and major landowners.

- The Comprehensive Plan Update embodies recommendations found in the previously approved Township and regional plans, including but not limited to the ANCOR Area Plan, Anderson Trails and Walkways Plan, Ohio Riverfront Plan, the Beechmont Plan, The Public Art Master Plan and Appendix, the Kellogg Gateway Study and the Clough Pike Corridor Study.