



To: Members of Planning and Zoning Commission
From: Vincent A. Papsidero, FAICP, Planning Director
Date: January 21, 2016
Initiated By: Devayani Puranik, Planner II
Re: Bright Road Area Plan Update

Background

In August 2015, the City of Dublin initiated an update to the Bright Road Area Plan. The last major update to this area plan occurred in 2007, with minor technical revisions completed in 2013. Since that time, changes in market and development trends have necessitated the need to revisit the plan, and evaluate how this area can best benefit the greater Dublin community in the future.

MKSK are the consultants for this project. This memo summarizes the public planning process to date. Once the public process is completed, the final plan will be brought back to the Commission for formal consideration, prior to submittal to City Council for adoption.

What is an Area Plan?

The Dublin Community Plan provides a comprehensive vision for the continued growth and development of Dublin and identifies key land use and transportation recommendations that inform decision-making on matters of development.

Special Area Plans identify key areas within Dublin that require an additional level of analysis. These plans can also provide schematic representations of potential development areas at a variety of scales and levels of detail.

Packet Information

The PZC packet includes:

- Public Workshop I: All materials from October 27th public workshop including Consultant presentation, display boards, sign-in sheets, comment boards, and online public workshop survey results.
- Public Workshop II: All materials from December 9th public workshop including Consultant presentation, display boards, sign-in sheets, comment boards, and online public workshop survey results.
- Memo summarizing the planning process to date.

Planning Process

To date, the planning process has completed the first two planning tasks: (1) the analysis of existing conditions in order to create a baseline understanding of how development and infrastructure

conditions have changed since the 2013 update, and (2) the presentation of draft plan concepts, intended for review by the public and refinement. The following sections describe these tasks, and the public input received at the community workshops hosted for each. This information will be used to inform the final task, and the development of the final Bright Road Area Plan Update.

2015 Update

This current planning process evaluates existing and future land uses, transportation connections, and potential future development character within the Bright Road Area. As part of this effort, the boundaries for the Bright Road Area Plan are updated. The study area now includes all properties between Emerald Parkway and Sawmill Road, south of Hard Road, and the two parcels on the southwest corner of the Hard Road and Emerald Parkway intersection owned by the City of Dublin.

The study area comprised approximately 250 acres.



Existing Plan Revision Considerations

Since the completion of the previous Bright Road Area Plan update, there have been several important developments in the study area. These include the completion of the final phase of Emerald Parkway through this area, the City of Columbus's planned roadway improvements to Sawmill Road, and finally a shift in office development trends occurring nationwide. These changes have a direct impact on the existing character and future potential of the Bright Road Area. As such, it is important to re-evaluate the Bright Road Area Plan within this new context. Combined with the information gathered through the existing conditions analysis and public input, the following objectives for refining the existing Area Plan's policy direction and recommendations have been identified:

- Update recommendations on land use types in light of recent developments in this area.
- Update design recommendations for identified land uses.
- Establish appropriate development character for the land uses identified for the Bright Road Area.
- Consider the impact water and sewer accessibility will have on the Bright Road Area.
- Identify strategies to address traffic concerns in this area.
- Emphasize bicycle and pedestrian connections.
- Reinforce the importance of natural features in the Bright Road area.

Preliminary Planning Goals

To begin, seven goals are identified to help guide the planning process. These built upon, and incorporate, the goals identified in the previous Bright Road Area Plan, while also acknowledging the need to respond to the changing conditions within the Bright Road Area. The goals for the Bright Road Area Plan are to:

- Advance economic development goals for office development in the Emerald Parkway Corridor.
- Establish desired land use patterns that respect the existing residential uses in the area.
- Identify the appropriate scale and high quality design of potential office development along Emerald Parkway.
- Define site design standards to guide development form, scale, and character.
- Promote bicycle and pedestrian connections to parks and natural features.
- Develop thoroughfare connections that address growing traffic concerns.
- Ensure adequate provisions of utilities and services.

Existing Conditions Analysis

A review of the existing conditions for the Bright Road Area was conducted through an analysis of existing plans and relevant land use, traffic, and natural features information. As previously mentioned, this information was important in order to understand how development, infrastructure, and the Bright Road area has changed since the 2013 update. The following summarizes the existing conditions information presented at the first public workshop:

- Currently, the Bright Road Area consists of mostly residential, office, and undeveloped areas. The existing office and limited commercial uses are located along the Sawmill Road corridor, while Grandee Cliff Estates, the Holder-Wright Park, and undeveloped parcels are located west of Emerald Parkway corridor.
- The current Bright Road Area Plan proposes additional single family residential adjacent to Grandee Cliff Estates to the east (on Dublin City Schools property), Standard Office/Institutional is proposed east of the residential, along Emerald Parkway, with Premium Office facing the I-270/Sawmill Road interchange. East of Emerald Parkway, Mixed Residential Medium Density is proposed south of Bright Road, with Neighborhood Office/Institutional north of Bright Road. On the opposite end of the study area, near Riverside Drive, Standard Office/Institutional is

proposed along Emerald Parkway, to the south of Holder-Wright Park is proposed north of this, along Bright Road. Please see the map below.



- An important asset of the Bright Road Area is the development of the Holder-Wright Park, which will memorialize the existing native earthworks on the property, and provide an important cultural and community destination in the Bright Road Area.
- Dublin City Schools currently own the parcel of land directly adjacent to Grandee Cliffs Estates, to the east. Discussion with DCS representatives has indicated that although there are no immediate plans to develop a school facility at this location, it remains a possibility under consideration by the District.
- An important consideration for the Bright Road study area is access to City of Dublin sewer and water services. Currently, Grandee Cliffs Estates, along with the three parcels on the southeast corner of Bright Road and Emerald Parkway, and the residential parcels on the northeast corner of this intersection, do not have water and sewer access. In December 2015, Dublin City Council adopted an update to the City's water and sewer service policy. The policy targets service provision to Grandee Cliffs Estates in 2022, and to the parcels near the roundabout in 2030.
- Traffic has long been a concern for residents living in and around the Bright Road Area. Since the adoption of the previous Area Plan Update, Emerald Parkway has been completed, which impacts traffic patterns in this area. The existing plan identifies a cul-de-sac of Bright Road at Riverside Drive, and the widening of Bright Road between Emerald Parkway and Sawmill Road to four divided lanes. Heavy traffic volumes on Sawmill Road also creates congestion problems in the Bright Road Area. The City of Columbus is working on plans for this corridor; preliminary plans suggest that at least one south-bound lane will be added in the future, but there are no immediate plans to pursue this improvement.

- In addition to vehicular connections, the Bright Road Area also has seen improvements to pedestrian and bicycle connections. Multi-use paths and sharrows have been introduced along Emerald Parkway, between Riverside Drive and Bright Road. A multi-use path continues north of Bright Road, with sharrows proposed as well. The need for future bicycle connections has also been identified along Riverside Drive, Bright Road, and Sawmill Road. There is a significant amount of natural features in the Bright Road study area. The City has been proactive in preserving these features, and incorporating them into plans for this area, such as the Holder-Wright Park. Adjacent to the Park is a ravine-type condition, with Wrights Run Creek. The Park's master plan and the previous Bright Road Area plans identified the importance of preserving this area, and keeping it from being traversed by cars. The current Area Plan also emphasized the importance of preserving and incorporating existing, mature tree stands into any development where they already exist.
- Finally, the City of Dublin is in the process of implementing plans for a parking lot and a Visitor Orientation Space as part of the Holder-Wright Park.

Public Input – Community Workshop #1

The following information was presented to the public in a community workshop held on October 27, 2015, which provided the opportunity for Bright Road area residents and community members to discuss existing challenges and opportunities. The workshop was attended by over 50 residents, and consisted of a formal presentation and small group discussion tables. In addition to the workshop, discussion questions were posted on the City of Dublin's website to provide an additional avenue for public input. From this initial public effort, the following common themes were expressed through comments received at the workshop and online:

A) Land Use

- Ensure any development in this area is consistent with the high standard of design found in other developments along Emerald Parkway.
- Consider the traffic impact of new land uses in this area will have. There is generally support for office development, but concerns with the associated peak hour traffic.
- There are concerns with the proximity of potential non-residential uses to Grandee Cliffs Estates, however there is recognition that the current area plan's recommendation of single-family development on the entirety of the Dublin City Schools property may not be feasible from a real estate market and noise perspective.
- East of Emerald Parkway, along the north and south sides of Bright Road, there was some interest expressed in a senior-oriented housing option, or offices similar in scale to the office uses currently in this area.
- Potential appropriate land uses include office, single family residential, a senior housing option, and potentially a school.
- There is a significant interest in the topic of water and sewer service to existing residential in this area, and concern with both the timing and potential cost to residents.

B) Mobility

- Traffic congestion is a concern in the early morning and early afternoon.
- Residents have reported an increase in the amount of cars speeding on Bright Road, between Riverside Drive and Emerald Parkway.
- Congestion on Bright Road between Emerald Parkway and Sawmill Road creates further congestion along Emerald parkway, south of the roundabout.
- There is concern with the character of a widened Bright Road, and the impact it would have on the Village of Inverness.
- Although not shared by all residents, there was strong interest in creating some type of connection over I-270, between the Bright Road Area and the Bridge Street District. This may be a vehicular or pedestrian/bike connection. (See the Community Workshop #2 Summary for more discussion on this item.)

C) Bike and Pedestrian Connections

- Increase bike and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods within the Bright Road Area.
- Incorporate bicycle connections along Bright Road and Riverside Drive to connect residents to community destinations and parks.

D) Natural Features

- There is a desire to preserve the rural character of Bright Road.
- Preserve existing trees and natural features, such as Wrights Run Creek.
- The construction of the Holder-Wright Park will provide an important community asset; there is interest in the potential expansion of the Park to Riverside Drive.

Concept Development

The existing conditions analysis, along with the public input received from both the first community workshop and the online engagement effort, helped to guide the development of draft concepts and recommendations for the Bright Road Area Plan Update. Specifically, four land use scenarios were created, along with mobility and roadway character recommendations, bike and pedestrian connections, and natural features recommendations.

A) Concept Development – Land Use

The development of an updated future land use scenario for this area is a primary focus of the Area Plan Update. The following land uses were identified for this area:

- Parks/open space: This includes Holder-Wright Park and areas that are to be preserved
- Single family residential: Residential similar to Grandee Cliffs Estates, Bryson Cove, or Hanna Hills in this area.
- Institutional: Civic-oriented uses. In this case, specifically Dublin City Schools which own property in the Bright Road area
- Emerald Parkway-oriented office: Office uses that are oriented toward Emerald Parkway, and similar in scale to other office uses located along Emerald.

- Freeway-oriented office: Larger office buildings oriented toward I-270. Similar to Cardinal Health or other freeway-oriented office in Dublin.
- Sawmill Road-oriented office: Smaller office, generally one story, oriented toward Sawmill Road.
- Mixed office/residential: This addresses the potential for a more flexible approach to land use between Emerald Parkway and Sawmill Road and would emphasize the scale, form, and character of development with a compatible combination of small-scale office or senior-oriented residential options. This could also include institutional living or medical-oriented uses such as nursing care or assisted living. Commercial: Primarily limited to the existing Lifetime Fitness site.
- Medium density residential: Residential that would be similar in scale to the Village at Inverness.

Benchmark imagery and draft recommendations accompany each of these classifications to suggest what their appropriate character and scale could be. This approach is intended to be specific enough to understand what the standards are for each land use, while also being flexible enough to allow the Bright Road area to respond to changing market demands and development trends. For example, the mixed office/residential classification suggests that in areas where this land use is applied, either office or residential uses may be appropriate, it will depend on what the market can support. Whichever is developed, the benchmarks and recommendations define the appropriate character and scale of these future buildings.

An important complementary element of the land use concepts is the location and amount of suggested buffering. Buffering is shown and emphasized where residential is located next to office or institutional uses. It is also shown along Bright Road, to buffer any new office that may be developed adjacent to the corridor. Because the Bright Road area has a significant amount of mature tree stands, much of the buffering suggests the incorporation of existing trees.

Four land use concepts were created, to share with City Staff and the public, in order to generate feedback on which land use components were preferred, and which were not. Within these are several places where the assigned land use does not change, such as the Holder-Wright Park, and the location of some Emerald Parkway-oriented and freeway-oriented office. The concepts differ in two areas: the two parcels located to the east of Grandee Cliffs Estates, and within the area along Bright Road, east of the Emerald Parkway roundabout.

Generally, the four land use concepts can be described as the following: (The visuals of the concepts are available within the "Final Presentation" for Public Workshop II)

- Concept A suggests single family adjacent to Grandee Cliffs Estates, along Bright Road, and office south of this along Emerald Parkway. This concept also specifically suggests office along the Sawmill Road corridor, and residential south of Bright Road, adjacent to the Village at Inverness Court.
- Concept B suggests the Dublin City Schools develops an elementary school on the parcel directly adjacent to Grandee Cliffs Estates, which they currently own. Next to this, Emerald Parkway-oriented office uses are suggested. Along Sawmill Road, this area could be office or residential, or a mix of the two, depending on what the market supports.
- Concept C suggests a school oriented toward Bright Road, with office south of this, along Emerald Parkway. This also suggests office, residential, or a mix of the two along the eastern portion of the Bright Road corridor.

- Concept D suggests an expanded school site, including the parcel adjacent to the current Dublin City Schools property, and develop a larger school, possibly a middle school. It also more specifically assigns office and residential uses along the eastern portion of Bright Road, similar to Concept A.

B) Concept Development – Mobility & Road Character

Additionally, the mobility and roadway character concepts and recommendations suggest potential street connections to support the desired types of land uses, and to address traffic concerns in this area. These build upon the mobility recommendations identified in the previous Bright Road plans. This specifically includes:

- Cul-de-sacing Bright Road at Riverside Drive.
- Widening Bright Road between the roundabout and Sawmill Road.
- Creating a new vehicular connection between Bright Road and Emerald Parkway that aligns with Macbeth Drive.
- Suggesting some type of connection over I-270 to connect this area to the Bridge Street district.

Concepts include creating an internal system of connections between Emerald Parkway and Sawmill Road. This would improve connectivity in this area, and open up development opportunities.

In terms of roadway character, concepts consider what Bright Road should look like in the future. Bright Road west of the Emerald Parkway roundabout will likely remain narrow, with two-lanes, especially if it is cul-de-saced at Riverside Drive. The question for this area is whether the road should be curbed, and how bicycle facilities should be incorporated into the corridor. Both curbed and uncurbed concepts were considered, along with the option of bike paths next to the road, bike sharrows in the travel lanes, or a wide shoulder to accommodate cyclists.

East of the roundabout, Bright Road will need to be widened in order to accommodate the amount of traffic that is and will continue to use this portion of the corridor with right-of-way implications for adjacent properties. The current Bright Road Area Plan and the Dublin Thoroughfare Plan proposes a median for this area. Due to the limited physical space available for right-of-way expansion, benchmarks for narrow median treatments were explored, as well as the possibility of an undivided 5-lane roadway section.

C) Concept Development – Bikes and Pedestrian Connections

Concepts focus on improving connectivity to neighborhoods in the Bright Road area. Potential connections would build upon the City of Dublin's existing Bikeway Plan. Additional connections are considered as part of landscape buffer treatments between residential and non-residential uses.

D) Concept Development – Natural Features

No significant changes from the current Area Plan are recommended.

Public Input - Community Workshop #2

The draft goals and concepts were presented at a second community workshop on December 9, 2015. A formal presentation was given to over 25 attendees, after which participants were asked to review and comment on the concepts. Materials were also posted on the City's website, along with discussion questions, to gather additional input. The following summarizes common themes that were present in the input received:

A) Land Use

- Land use Concept A, which included single family residential along Bright Road, received the most favorable response
- There remains a concern about how future land uses (particularly office) would impact traffic
- Landscape buffering to shield office along Bright Road is desired
- Residents generally do not favor of a school that would front and/or have access from Bright Road
- Residents emphasized the importance of Holder-Wright Park, and the natural features in this area

B) Mobility & Roadway Character

- Traffic remains a major concern in this area.
- There is limited support for creating a vehicular connection over I-270. Most residents are more inclined to support a bicycle/pedestrian connection.
- There is concern about how widening Bright Road east of the roundabout will impact properties in this corridor.
- Residents would like to see a designated right-turn lane at the intersection of Bright Road and Sawmill Road.
- Many residents would like to see the Bright Road cul-de-sac completed. Some residents desire a signalized intersection.
- There is concern about a public road between Bright Road and Emerald Parkway.

C) Bikes and Pedestrians

- Providing bike connections along Riverside Drive is an important priority for this area.
- There is interest in strengthening bicycle and pedestrian connections between Bright Road and adjacent neighborhoods and parks to the north.
- There is general support for a bike path along Bright Road.
- There is some interest in a bicycle/pedestrian connection over I-270 to the Bridge Street District.
- Bike connections within Holder-Wright Park are desired.

D) Natural Features

- The existing natural features contribute greatly to the character of this area
- The Holder-Wright Park will be a great amenity for the area.

- Preservation of mature tree stands is important, and should be incorporated into landscape buffering and site design.

Public Input Meetings and Surveys schedule

- Kick-off Meeting- Core Group (August 25, 2015)
 - Core group includes staff representatives from Planning, Engineering, Building Departments and two Citizen/ Resident representatives.
- Meeting with Dublin City Schools (September 23, 2015)
- Public Workshop I Process
 - Core Group (October 10, 2015)
 - Public Workshop I- (October 27, 2015)
 - Staff Workshop I- (November 4, 2015)
 - Online Public Survey I (November- December, 2015)
- Public Workshop II Process
 - Core Group (November 25, 2015)
 - Public Workshop II- (December 9, 2015)
 - Staff Workshop II- (January 15, 2015)
 - Online Public Survey II (December- January, 2015)

Next Steps

The input received through the second community workshop and online engagement effort will be used to refine the draft concepts for the Bright Road Area Plan Update. From these, a preferred land use scenario concept will be chosen, and, along with the updated mobility, bikes and pedestrians, and natural features recommendations, will be drafted into a final Bright Road Area Plan. This concept will be reviewed with City Staff before being presented at a third community workshop and posted online (tentatively by end of February, 2016). Any final edits will be made following public feedback, and the plan will be taken forward to the Planning Commission and City Council for adoption.

Recommendation

Information Only