



VILLAGE OF ANTWERP

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2014

www.villageofantwerp.com

Planning Consultant - Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc.

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ORDINANCE NO: 2014-13

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE
VILLAGE OF ANTWERP, OHIO TO ADD SECTION 429 ADOPTING A
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE VILLAGE OF ANTWERP,
AND DECLARING THE SAME AN EMERGENCY**

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Commission of the Village of Antwerp recommended, by the adoption of a motion, to amend the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Antwerp to add Section 429, which is a Comprehensive Plan for the Village of Antwerp to serve as a guide for community development in a comprehensive fashion, said recommendation made in compliance with Section 703 of the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Antwerp, Ohio; and

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Commission of the Village of Antwerp transmitted its recommendation on said proposed amendment within sixty (60) days from making a motion to amend the zoning ordinance in compliance with Section 707 of the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Antwerp, Ohio; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing on this recommendation was held on the 11th day of June, 2014, in compliance with Section 708 of the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Antwerp, Ohio, after notice of said public hearing was published and any required notice mailed to property owners in compliance with Sections 709 and 710 of the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Antwerp, Ohio.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the Village of Antwerp, Paulding County, Ohio, that the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission be adopted and approval of the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance as follows:

Section 1. The Council of the Village of Antwerp moves to adopt the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission that the Zoning Ordinance be amended to add Section 429, which is the Comprehensive Plan for the Village of Antwerp, a copy of Section 429, the Comprehensive Plan, is attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by reference.

Section 2. The amendments to the Zoning Ordinance identified herein shall be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance of the Village of Antwerp upon the date this Ordinance becomes effective by law.

Section 3. It is found and determined that all formal actions of the council concerning and relating to the passage of this Ordinance were adopted in an open meeting of this council, and that all deliberations of the council and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal regulations including all lawful Ordinances and any applicable provisions of Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Section 4. This Ordinance is deemed an emergency measure necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety and welfare, and for the further reason to comply with Section 711 of the Zoning Ordinance, which requires the Village Council to act within thirty (30) days of the public

hearing on the proposed amendment, and this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect immediately after its passage; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in force after the earliest period allowed by law.

PASSED THIS 16th day of June, 2014.


Tom VanVlerah, Mayor
Village of Antwerp, Ohio

Attest:


Loretta Baker, Fiscal Officer

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Introduction

Planning for the Future

Background

This Comprehensive Plan is the result of a year-long, participatory planning process involving multiple organizations and input from residents. It is the collective voice of nearly 200 people who completed surveys, attended meetings and provided insights and perspectives. It sets the stage for action and defines a desired vision for Antwerp in the future. It looks forward 10-years and describes key community attributes in the future, along with a list of necessary action steps to achieve specific goals.

Comprehensive Plans

Communities are constantly evolving. They grow, age, develop and redevelop. Sometimes physical change is subtle and nearly imperceptible. Other times, physical change can be dramatic as larger development projects occur. This change is the product of decisions made by residents, property owners and community leaders, and village we see today is the result of large and small decisions made over many decades. The Village has made decisions about what public infrastructure to build and maintain, while private interests have made development decisions to respond to a wide range of needs and demands.

Apart from the pace of community change is the larger question whether a community is becoming more livable, economically stable and attractive. This key question is best answered from a long-term perspective and it naturally leads to conversations about the future and what can be. The purpose of a Comprehensive Plan is to provide this vision, capturing and articulating desired community goals, based on community attitudes and preferences. Effective Comprehensive Plans serve as a guide for those day-to-day decisions that shape the community in the context of long-term community goals and objectives.

Comprehensive plans typically have several common characteristics. First (as the name implies), they address major elements of community development in a comprehensive way. This means providing an overall and long-term vision of development in a way that is cognizant of the interrelated elements of community fabric. This includes how land is used, how people move from place to place, and what public facilities are built to support human needs.

Village of Antwerp



Source: Google Maps

Our Community

Overview of Antwerp

The Village of Antwerp is a small rural community located in Paulding County in the northwest corner of Ohio. It is located along the upper reaches of the Maumee River, about 3 miles east of the Ohio/Indiana state line. Named after a large city in Belgium, Antwerp has community roots that go back to the early 1800's. Antwerp was platted in 1841, and grew as a community located midway between Fort Wayne Indiana and Defiance, Ohio. In the mid to early 1800's, communities such as Antwerp grew after the Wabash and Erie Canal was completed. This canal connected the Maumee River with the Wabash River in Indiana. The completion of this project enabled goods to be transported between the Great Lakes, the Ohio River and ultimately the Gulf of Mexico.

Today, transportation improvements are still influencing Antwerp. After many years of planning, engineering and construction, the "Fort to Port" project was recently completed. This massive highway project involved new construction to replace major parts of the old rural two-lane US 24 with a new four-lane limited access highway. Large segments of US 24 were notorious for serious accidents and US 24 was often congested. Today, US 24 is a much safer and efficient connection between Fort Wayne, Indiana with the Port of Toledo. A large portion of the vehicles on US 24 are trucks and there are significant economic benefits to improved safety and efficiency in this region. The newly constructed portion of US 24 is located along the southern edge of Antwerp. The completion of improvements to US 24 now





provides for a short 30-minute trip between Antwerp and downtown Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Population

According to the 2010 US Census, Antwerp, Ohio has 1,736 residents. The median age of these residents is 37.9 years old. This median age is actually somewhat less than the median age for Ohio as a whole – which was 38.8. Antwerp's residents are almost all white (98.6%) and they live in 752 households in the Village. Most (464) of these households are "family households" wherein the residents consist

of people related by blood, marriage or adoption. The other 288 households are non-family householders and mostly individuals living alone. The average household size is 2.31.

Housing

Antwerp has 838 housing units. Among all of these units, 752 are occupied and 86 are vacant (most vacant units are for rent or for sale). Nearly 2 out of 3 (64.2%) of the housing units are owner-occupied (35.8 % are rental units). This mix of owner/rental housing units is nearly equal to the State of Ohio as a whole – where 67.6% of all housing units are owner-occupied and 32.4% are rental units. Housing is very affordable in Antwerp as the median value of an owner occupied unit in Antwerp is \$86,000. The median value of an owner-occupied housing unit for Ohio as a whole was \$135,600. Like

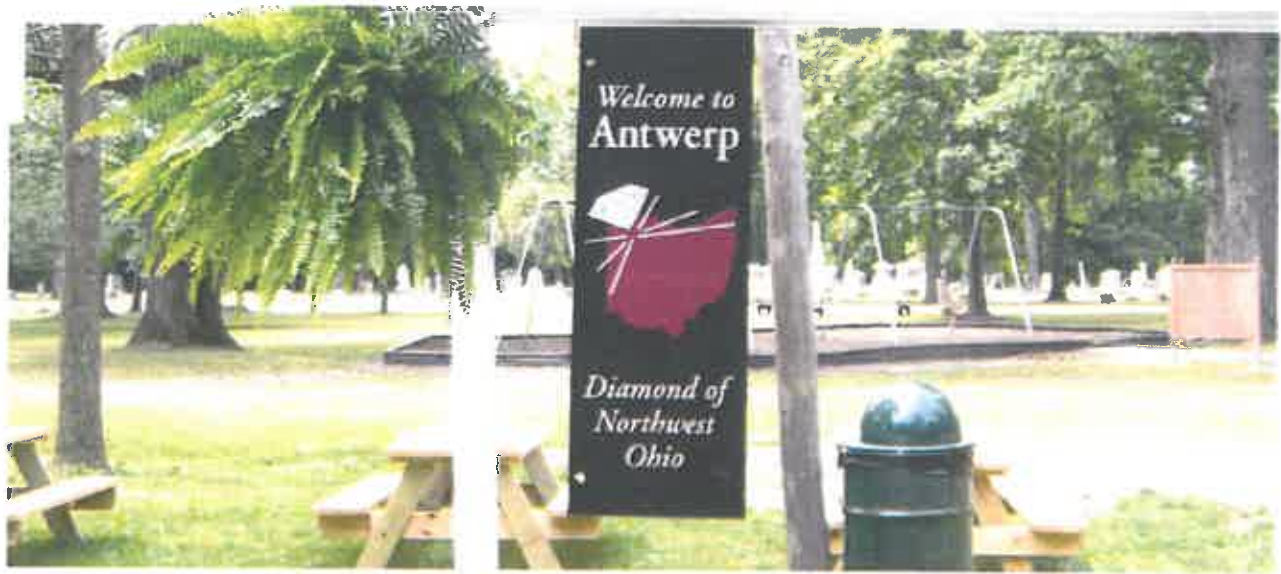


most villages and smaller communities in Ohio, most (65.9%) of the housing stock is detached single family units. Additionally, it is evident that about 2/3 of all housing units in Antwerp were built before 1960.

Jobs

Among all of Antwerp's 1,736 residents, 915 people are considered to be in the labor force. Among those that are both in the labor force and employed, the mean travel time to work is 23.7 minutes and the dominant industries are manufacturing, educational services and retail trade. Antwerp's mean travel to work time is only slightly higher than the mean for the whole State of Ohio; which is 22.9 minutes. For the most part, Antwerp's employment opportunities are related to the proximity of Fort Wayne, Indiana. The eastern edge of the Fort Wayne Urban area is less than 20 minutes to the west, and the recent completion of the US 24 (Fort to Port) project allows for a comparatively short commute to Fort Wayne, a city of more than ¼ million people, and the surrounding Allen County Indiana area, which includes more than 355,000 people outside Fort Wayne.





Recreation

The Village of Antwerp has two parks. Riverside Memorial Park is located on E. River Street along the Maumee River with pedestrian access to the river. The park includes a Civil War Soldier Statue and memorial tablets honoring Antwerp servicemen and women. In 2005, new play equipment was installed with efforts of The Friends of the Park Committee. There are five shelter houses, restrooms and picnic tables. Village Green Park is located next to Village Hall on N. Main Street. The park area is landscaped with a pergola and tennis court.



three lagoons to treat effluent before discharge. A system of storm sewers and catch basins also exist in Antwerp. This system collects storm water from rain events and discharges water to the receiving ditches and waterways (and ultimately the Maumee River).

Public Water and Sewer Systems

The Village of Antwerp provides both public water and sewer systems. In terms of drinking water, Antwerp draws its drinking water from wells. There are three (3) wells in operation located on the southeast side of the village by the water treatment plant. This well water requires minimal treatment and, according to the Ohio EPA, the underground aquifer has a low susceptibility to contamination. In terms of sanitary sewers, the village owns and operates a wastewater treatment plant located on Rd 43. The gravity sewage collection system connects to the treatment plant which uses

Utilities

Several private utilities provide services to Antwerp and nearby areas. These include:

- Ohio Gas Company (natural gas)
- American Electric Power (electricity)
- Mediacom (Internet/TV/phone)
- Verizon (Internet/TV/phone)
- Metalink (Internet/TV/phone)
- Brightnet (Internet/TV/phone)

Community Change

Antwerp Past and Present

To some, the idea of considering how a community will look and function in the future can be a difficult concept to grasp since communities can seem stable and static. However, dramatic change can easily be seen over years and decades. The change that we see over a longer period of time is often shaped by private decisions related to new building construction, demolition or renovation. We also see changes to streets and other public infrastructure that add a measure of difference between the past and the present.

To put the issue of community change into context, the following images are presented to help illustrate how Antwerp has changed (or not changed) in recent decades. Historical images were obtained from the Paulding County Carnegie Library online at <http://pauldingcountylibrary.org/antwerphistoricalpictures.htm>. The dates associated with the historical photos are believed to be from the late 1940's. New photos were taken in July, 2013 by Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc.





The Chrysler Plymouth Dealer at the corner of Main and River Street no longer exists and is currently a parking lot. The absence of a building at the corner diminishes the "downtown feel" of this prominent corner property. The underutilized parking lot suggests an emptiness and lack of activity.



The heart of downtown has changed significantly with the addition of new railroad tracks and the relocation of the depot to the west side of town. The basic building forms still exist south of the railroad tracks, but the utilization of the buildings seems to have declined.



Historic building forms are still evident along South Main Street. The gas pumps have been changed - but still exist. Some utility lines have been removed which helps to reduce visual clutter.



Basic building forms are intact, but an overgrown tree blocks an attractive building façade. Additional overhead utility lines detract from a largely intact historic block and clutter the streetscape, which otherwise is an authentic, walkable and pedestrian-friendly place.



Other historical photos from the Paulding County Carnegie Library.

Trends

Factors Already At Work Shaping the Future

There are a number of national and local trends that are currently influencing the future of Antwerp. While it is not possible to say for certain how these trends will be manifested in Antwerp, it is helpful to recognize the potential impact they will have on how Antwerp looks and feels in the future.

Aging Residents

The relationship between the age of residents and the physical characteristics of a community may not be immediately apparent; but in reality the connection is very strong. In recent years, the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) has funded a number of studies (with other organizations) to address how American communities meet the needs of a growing senior population. This issue grows in importance in light of projections that indicate that during the next 20 years, the number of adults age 65 and older will nearly double in the United States.

Antwerp will experience the same trend given the age of existing residents as shown (2010 Census Data). What is immediately apparent is the fact that the some of the largest age groups in the Village are those who

will be reaching retirement age in the next 10-20 years. This is a mathematical certainty if one assumes that existing residents "age in place" which is a common desire among people entering their retirement years.



Age of Residents		
	Number	Perecent
Total	1,736	100%
Age		
Under 5 years	122	7.0 %
5 to 9 years	115	6.6%
10 to 14 years	138	7.9%
15 to 19 years	113	6.5%
20 to 24 years	98	5.6%
25 to 29 years	126	7.3%
30 to 34 years	103	5.9%
35 to 39 years	96	5.5%
40 to 44 years	93	5.4%
45 to 49 years	141	8.1%
50 to 54 years	128	7.4%
55 to 59 years	107	6.2%
60 to 64 years	84	4.8%
65 to 69 years	82	4.7%
70 to 74 years	55	3.2%
75 to 79 years	54	3.1%
80 to 84 years	47	2.7%
85 years and over	34	2.0%

While each community must strike its own balance among competing planning issues, the two key areas where steps can be taken to improve livability for seniors include housing and transportation. In terms of housing, a community can encourage more diverse housing options (e.g., single family, multifamily, accessory dwelling, condos, assisted living and other supportive housing) to offer choices and alternatives. These offer choices to those interested in downsizing and lower maintenance responsibilities. Communities can also encourage mixed uses so that travel times to reach daily necessities, services and community amenities are not as great. Local government can also encourage home construction with features that serve residents across their life span. Housing options can be increased by looking for opportunities to allow accessory dwelling units (sometimes called "mother-in-law suites") which could be attached to the main house or located elsewhere on the lot.

In terms of transportation and mobility, the auto-dominated landscape of most communities works well for many residents – but not all. For some, use of an auto is not possible because of income or physical ability. Many in this latter group are elderly. Public transit is the important alternative to private auto use, but non-motorized transportation options are also important to older residents. This means reliance on a well developed sidewalk system with well defined and safe pedestrian crossings, both of which are especially important for those in wheelchairs or scooters, or those with specific mobility impairments.

Childless Households

It is expected that in the future more and more households will be childless. Most of the growth in new households will be centered on households without children and single person households. This national trend will no doubt play out in Antwerp and its implications will be felt in the local housing market. Growth and change in the number of households fuels the demand for housing. With more and more childless households, it is expected that we will see more local demand for condominiums, town homes, duplexes and similar housing styles.

Health

There is a growing recognition of the connection between the health of residents in a community and how it is physically designed. Public health experts have reported that obesity rates have increased dramatically over the last 30 years, and obesity is now considered to be an epidemic in the United States. Alarming facts about health are particularly troublesome since our community planning decisions (or lack thereof) is sometimes to blame. Auto-oriented design, sprawling development patterns, and an absence of pedestrian or

bike amenities mean that people are more sedentary, and motorized vehicle travel is generally the only viable means to travel for everyone. Community design as a whole often does not encourage walking or biking, or more active living. Increasingly, it is becoming clear that the American health issues are, at least in part, an urban design issue, and that communities should take steps to provide better transportation options so that residents can choose to walk or bike and be more physically active.

Healthy eating is also at the core of some health concerns, and there has been a dramatic increase in the number of farmers markets. The popularity of farmers markets relates to both health matters, as people pursue more healthy food alternatives, and in terms of activating downtown spaces. In 2012, there was nearly four times the number of farmers markets in the U.S. as there were in 1994 (according to USDA statistics).

Smart Growth

After decades of urban sprawl in many parts of the United States, a growing and substantial movement toward "smart growth" has emerged in many communities. The Smart Growth Network (SGN) is a leader in this effort and it is a

partnership of government, business and civic organizations that support smart growth principles. Since 1996, the network has facilitated the sharing of best practices. It is led by a core group of partner organizations, one of which is the US EPA, a founding partner of the Smart Growth Network.

Ten smart growth principles are defined as follows:

- **Mix Land Uses**
- **Take Advantage of Compact Building Design**
- **Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices**
- **Create Walkable Neighborhoods**
- **Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place**
- **Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas**
- **Strengthen and Direct Development towards Existing Communities**
- **Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices**
- **Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective**
- **Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration in Development Decisions**

Considerably more information is available from the Smart Growth Network, and each principle can be explained in much more detail.

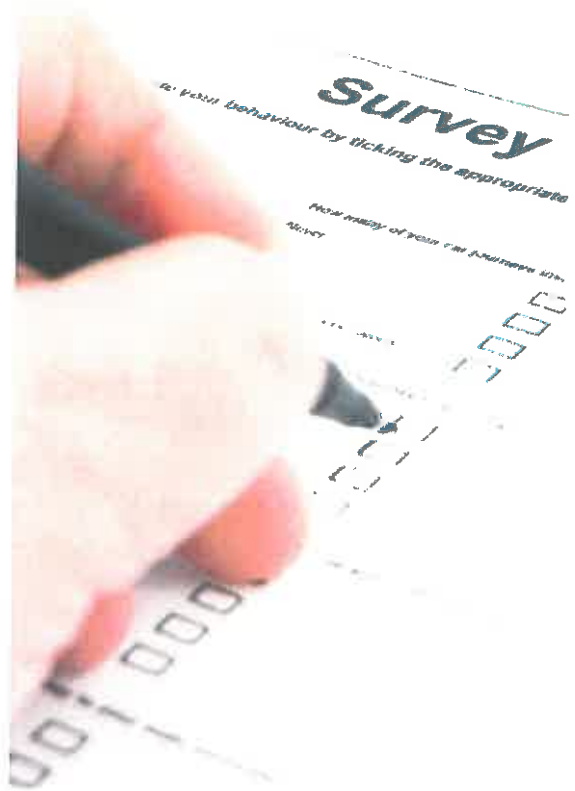
Resident Engagement

Conversations About The Future

Community engagement is a very important component of community planning, and typically substantial effort is made to reach out to residents for input on key issues facing the community. In Antwerp, the planning process included several efforts to reach out to residents for input into planning issues. First, an on-line survey was prepared and made available to all residents. Second, Village officials conducted a local planning workshop and invited residents to identify and discuss planning issues facing the Village.

Survey

The community survey took place in late 2013 and it was available to be taken on-line from the municipal web site and in print form. Publicity about this survey was provided by a newspaper article and other out-reach efforts. In total, 186 people completed the survey and the following list provides important insights gained from this effort:



Key Survey Findings

- Many residents are long-term residents. Nearly half of the survey responded indicated that they have lived in Antwerp for twenty-one years or more.
- Few residents actually work in Antwerp.
- The survey included participation from a large number of younger residents. Nearly 1 in four respondents were under 18 years old.
- Some of the best reasons people can think of about living and/or working in the Village of Antwerp relates to family roots and friends nearby, the rural community atmosphere and the schools.
- The things that residents wish would get more attention in the Village include; the need to develop more job opportunities and recreational opportunities. There is also an apparent desire for more community involvement, awareness and education and greater housing choices and affordability.
- Residents are generally pro-growth and seem a bit dissatisfied with the past rate of community growth. Historically, Antwerp has grown slowly in the past 20 years and popular responses to the question about future growth suggest that residents would like to see a little more.
- On a long list of issues for the future, residents generally consider the acquisition of additional park land to be only slightly important, while the need to create places for industrial development is considered to be very important. Other endeavors considered to be important included the following:
 - Encouraging further development and expansion at existing park facilities.
 - Encouraging/requiring architectural standards for new commercial development.
 - Encouraging the development of varied housing types to expand local choices.
 - Developing a more extensive system of bike trails and bike lanes.
 - Physical Improvements to downtown.

- Among all the reasons to like living in Antwerp, those mentioned most often by survey respondents included – the small town atmosphere, friends and family in the area, the proximity to Fort Wayne, the schools and the low crime rate.
- The lack of local job opportunities topped the list of things residents like least about Antwerp.
- People have feelings of attachment to Antwerp mostly in terms of their residential neighborhoods. Interestingly, school buildings provide more of a sense of attachment than downtown. This may be partially attributable to the large number of respondents who were under 18.

A complete list of survey results is available at the Village Hall.

Visioning Session

Building on the insights gained from the survey results, a community visioning workshop was scheduled and conducted on February 11, 2014. This workshop was conducted at the Antwerp School Auditoria at 303 S. Harrmann Road. Despite very cold winter weather temperatures, about 30 people attended this

event. They heard a brief presentation that recapped the planning process to date and reviewed the survey results.

Based on those survey results, four questions were discussed in several groups. These questions and the resulting responses are provided below:





Does the Village of Antwerp need to improve on its system of sidewalks and bike routes (and, if so, where?)

- One group felt that bike routes are not a significant issue in Antwerp. The preference was to improve sidewalks and fill gaps as necessary. Particular attention was focused on sidewalks between highway 424, Harrmann and to the School.
- Other groups identified gaps in the sidewalk system in the following locales:

East Woodcox
Park Ave
Dutchman's Cove
The "New" Addition (Jumps addition)
Harrmann Road
Erie Street

Does the Village of Antwerp need a more appealing downtown (and, if so, how and in what way?)

- The downtown needs awnings to be cleaned and replaced.
- Streets need to be cleaned up.

- Need improvements to the tennis courts
- Flower pots.
- Outdoor dining venues are desirable downtown.
- A general facelift is needed.
- Specialty stores are needed.
- More parking.
- Farmers Market.
- Improve the tennis courts and hold events downtown. Events can include family nights and movie nights.
- The Village should consider a canoe/Kayak rental area.
- An entertainment venue is needed in or near downtown (movies).
- Need to "showcase" the storefront windows better.
- Need to view downtown with different eyes and get creative.



- Need to stimulate some property improvement to hope such steps become more contagious.
- Create events such as "A Taste of Antwerp" given the fact that there are several well-known eating establishments in town. Alternatively, create a shop local event or a shop – walk event.
- Need general clean up, along with flags, banners, better lighting and flowers.

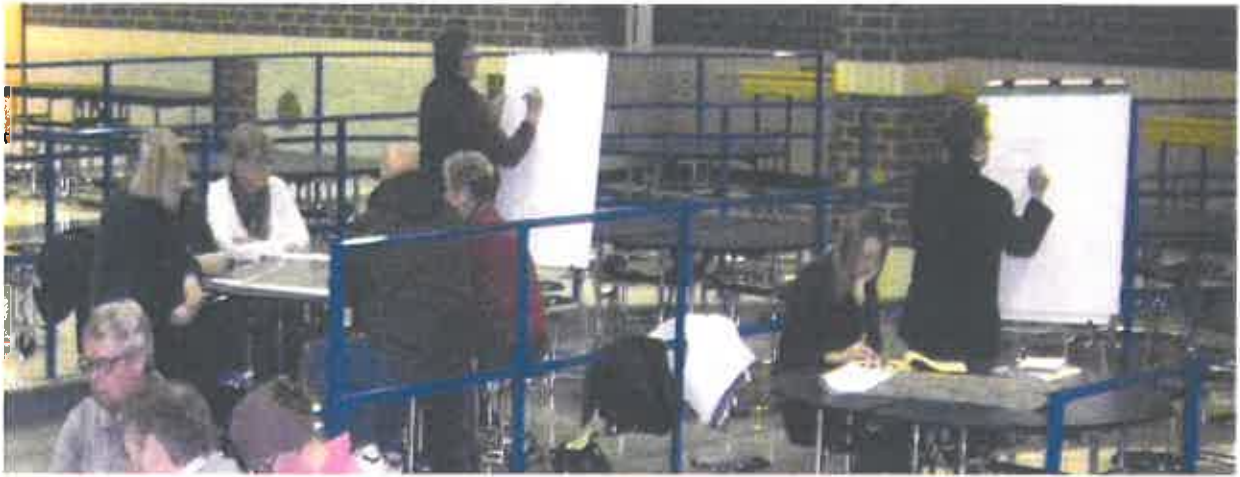
Where should the Village look to develop new places for economic development and employment?

- Most people consider the new interchange area to be the place for future employment.
- Need to attract and support people interested in starting up businesses.

Development near the new interchange is likely to occur in the future. What should be done to make it attractive and viable?

- A mixed use environment is desired to include commercial spaces, housing and office uses.

- Entertainment venues are needed locally. These could include a movie theater (possibly a drive-in). Also need a fitness center and roller/ice rink
- A retirement community is desirable here, along with potentially a satellite campus for a college/university.
- Proximity to the highway may also be appealing to a warehouse/distribution facility.
- Highway signage will be important to support development.
- It was noted that the interchange area is the area that helps to form a first impression of Antwerp. It was also noted that some communities focus on efforts to create an attractive "image area" at the primary community entrance. Such efforts often include heavy emphasis on landscaping and quality architecture. Ohio examples include communities such as Dublin near Columbus and Troy near Dayton.



Existing Land Use

How Our Community is Now Spatially Organized

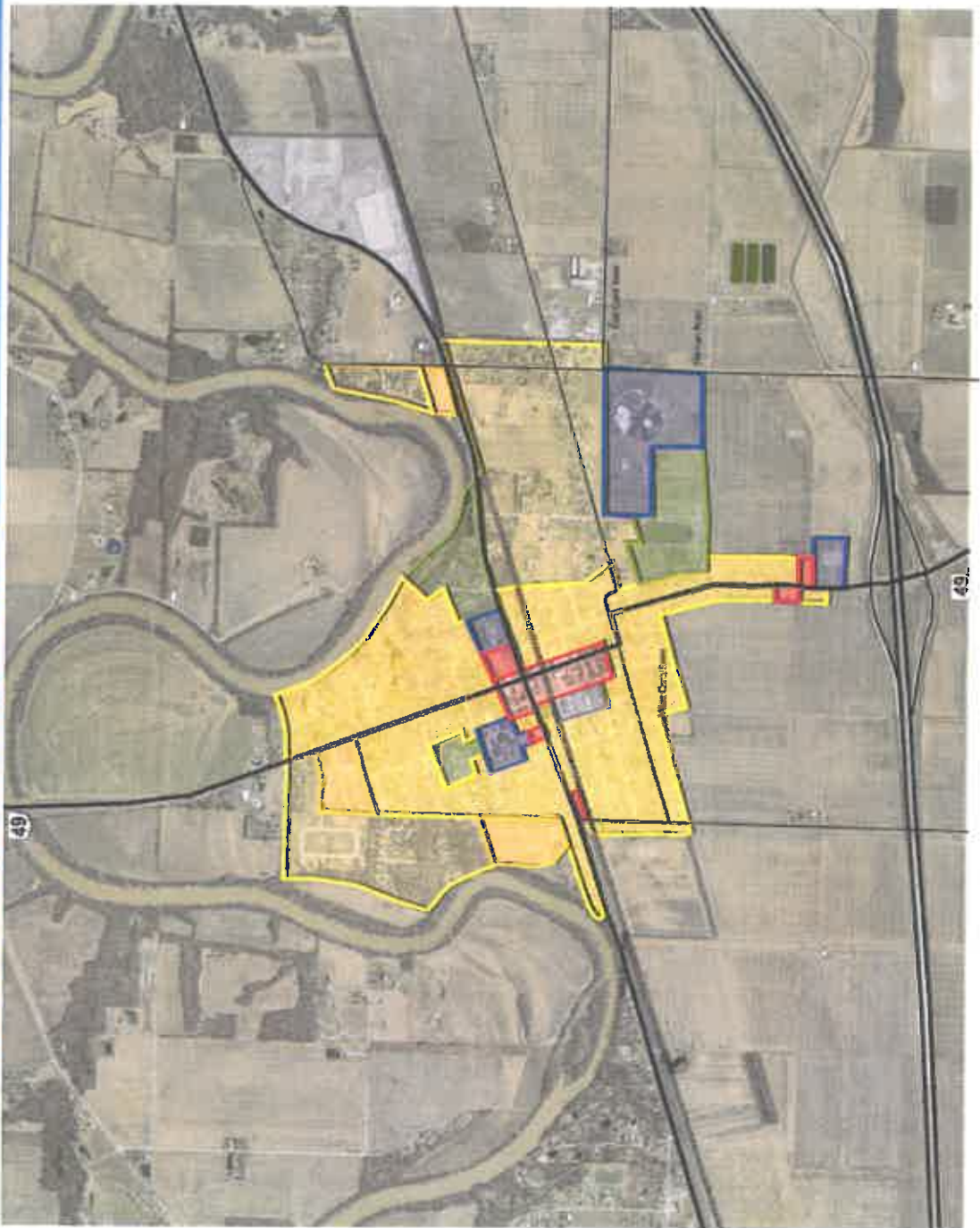
Existing Land Use

Map 1 illustrates existing generalized land use patterns in Antwerp. As shown, the majority of the Village is used for residential purposes. Generally, lower density residential uses are found in more recently developed areas of town, while higher density residential areas are found within older sections of town on lots that were part of the original plat. The highest density residential areas are in manufactured home parks and in an apartment complex on the north side of town.

We find two types of commercial land uses in Antwerp. The downtown commercial spaces include some of the oldest buildings in town. They are typically pulled forward toward the sidewalk and often they include non-retail uses in upper floors. More general commercial uses are also found near downtown and typically they are more suburban-type commercial development with parking lots between the road right-of-way and the building and a vehicular orientation.

Industrial land uses are found east of Antwerp. Here, larger industrial facilities manufacture goods and have access to the rail line. Recreational land uses include municipal parks and recreational areas owned by the local school district. Public and semi-public land uses include school facilities, churches, cemeteries and other public buildings.

MAP 1 Antwerp Existing Land Use



LEGEND



Low Density Residential
Areas that are almost exclusively single family detached housing units. Common lot size range from 1/2 to 1/4 acre. Land density is between 10 to 20 units per acre.



Medium Density Residential
Areas that are generally made up of town with detached single family housing units. In some cases, large lot size housing units may have been converted to duplexes. Common lot size range from 3/4 to 1/2 acre. Density is about 20 to 30 dwelling units per acre.



High Density Residential
These areas include multi-unit townhomes, townhouses, and apartment complexes. Density is generally above 30 dwelling units per acre.



Downtown Commercial
Downtown commercial uses are often mixed with other uses such as housing, offices, retail, and entertainment. These areas are often located in the downtown area and are characterized by high density and high value.



General Commercial
General commercial uses are found near downtown and along major corridors. Typically, these areas include retail, offices, and other commercial uses. These areas are often located in the downtown area and are characterized by high density and high value.



Industrial
Industrial uses are found on the west side of town. These areas include manufacturing, warehousing, and other industrial uses. These areas are often located in the downtown area and are characterized by high density and high value.



Public / Semi Public
This land use category includes schools, libraries, community centers, and other public facilities. These areas are often located in the downtown area and are characterized by high density and high value.



Parks and Recreation
This category includes parks, recreation facilities, and other recreational areas. These areas are often located in the downtown area and are characterized by high density and high value.

Vision

What We Want Our Community To Be Like

Four critical elements of community vision emerge from this planning process.



Make the most of development opportunities near US 24 and SR 49.

Without a doubt, development in this area holds the most promise for increasing local tax base, creating local jobs and helping to provide needed community goods and services. Development interest is real and tangible. It is known that the next US 24 interchange to the west in Indiana will soon be developed with a new truck stop and related development. In Antwerp, there has also been considerable attention paid to this area. Officials have had many conversations with entities interested in developing this area (beyond the construction of the new Dollar General Store). In fact, plans for a development called the Antwerp Commons were prepared in 2013 showing a mixed-use development, complete with new street construction providing a linkage to Harrman Road to the east. Efforts in this direction should continue guided by the following principles:

- **This development area should express quality design.** It should include architectural styles that convey impressions of value and significance. The village should avoid acceptance of standard franchise architecture and push for architectural styles that help convey a sense of place and local context. Heavy emphasis on landscaping, especially near the US 24 exit is warranted to help provide a sense of arrival to the community. This area will serve as a community gateway for generations and it should provide the impression that one has arrived at a place of quality and pride.
- **Mixed uses are desired and defined to include several residential types, retail, service and office.**
- **This area should strive to offer a blend between vehicular mobility and pedestrian/bike travel.** This non-motorized feature should link to the school facilities to the north, and ultimately connect to the rest of Antwerp.



Existing Entrance to Antwerp



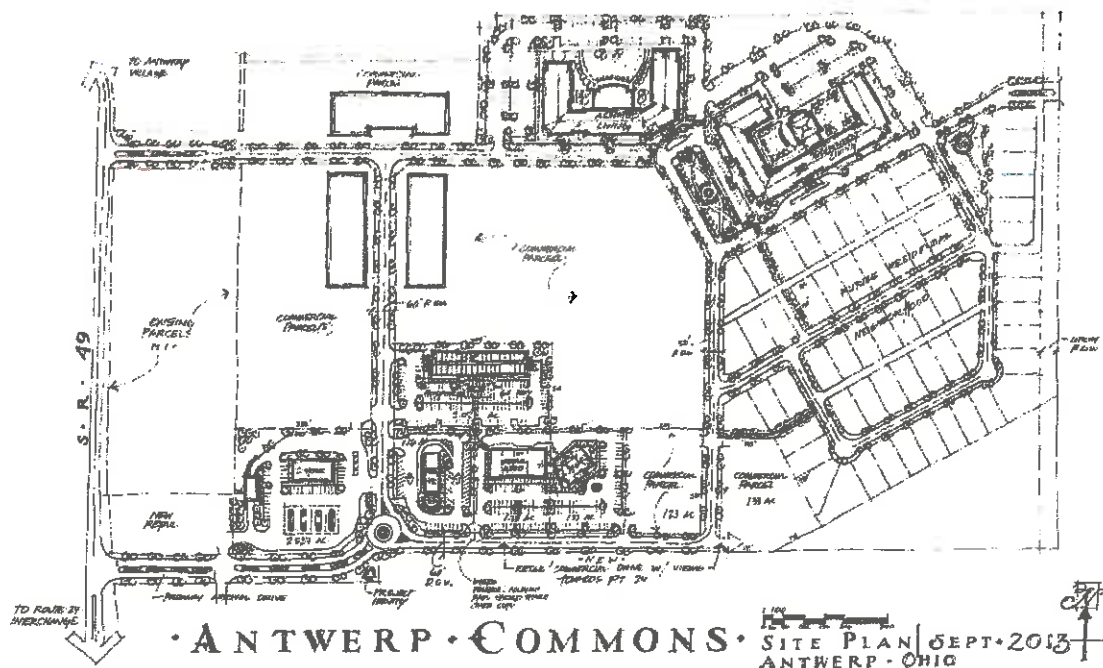
Examples of Adaptations to Franchise Architecture



Examples Of Entry Signage and landscaping to Create a Sense of Arrival

Existing Concept Plans

Preliminary conversations with developers have produced concept plans that illustrate one possible development scenario for the area east of SR 49 and north of US 24. The concept shown below illustrates potential road alignments and mixed land uses. This development concept will likely evolve in the future, but the underlying principles of mixed uses, quality design and pedestrian mobility should hold constant.





Revitalize Downtown

Downtown is the heart of Antwerp, but it shows signs of neglect and distress. Vacancies at both the ground floor and upper floors are evident. A downtown revitalization program is needed to improve the streetscape, fill storefronts and create events that draw people. Organizational support is also needed to help spearhead efforts.





Antwerp Should Be More Walkable And Bikable

Multiple opportunities exist to make Antwerp more walkable and bikeable. Non-motorized transportation options are important for both younger and older residents which supports the need for a well-developed sidewalk system with well-defined and safe pedestrian crossings. This is especially important for those in wheelchairs or scooters, or those with specific mobility impairments.



Recreational Opportunities Should Be Expanded

Acquisition of new recreational facilities is not necessarily needed, but ideas about how to expand local recreational opportunities are plentiful. For example, the village makes little use of the River, which could offer canoe and kayaking opportunities. Similarly, events such as movies in the park would help draw people to the area.



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Strategy

Strategic Steps Forward

A number of strategies have been identified as necessary steps to move the Village of Antwerp forward toward its goals. These strategies are as follows:

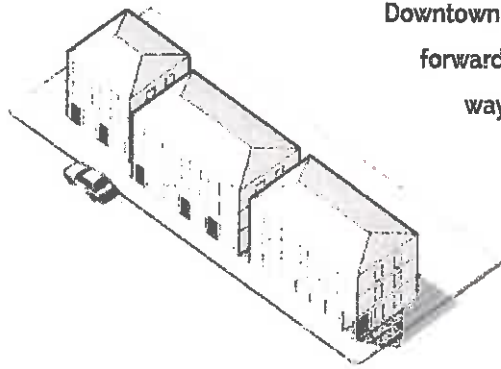
Update Zoning

Zoning is a significant tool that can help the Village of Antwerp realize long-term goals. Zoning essentially defines what can be built where, and it defines minimum standards in terms of building placement, parking, landscaping, signage and other attributes of new development. After comparing the long-term vision of the community with existing zoning, the following issues surface:

1. Create a new Zoning Classification for the US 24 & SR 49 Area: One way to help ensure that new development in the US 24 & SR 49 area meets community objectives is to establish new zoning for this area. This new zoning should provide for mixed uses and urban design guidelines that will help create a quality place. The fact that a wide range of mixed uses would be allowed also suggests that there are several zoning tools and approaches to be explored and a range of

approval mechanisms to be considered. Along with architectural guidelines, new zoning requirements should include minimum landscape standards, signage requirements and lighting controls to help provide minimum standards. Zoning should not be overly restrictive, but it should be relied upon to help provide consistent design themes (especially since areas may be developed by separate entities over a long period of time). It could take many years to fully build out an area as large as the area shown on the Antwerp Commons Concept Plan.

2. Update Downtown Zoning: Antwerp has one business district that is associated with all commercial property in the village. Downtown Antwerp should have its own unique zoning district that is focused on desired characteristics of a downtown environment. Downtown should be a pedestrian-oriented place and the list of permitted uses should reflect desirable activity. Downtown zoning should expressly permit restaurants of all types, outdoor cafes, upper floor housing (now listed as a conditional use). Off-street parking should not be required in downtown, and uses that include drive in or drive-through facilities should be conditional uses. Further, while no front yard setback is now



Downtown buildings should be pulled forward toward the street right-of-way to help maintain a defined pedestrian space.

required, there should be a "build-to" requirement so that new construction will be required to be pulled forward toward the street (within 10 feet). This will help maintain a solid street frontage with building walls and a greater sense of place.

3. Update Commercial Zoning: After distinguishing between general commercial and downtown commercial uses, a general commercial zoning district is needed to reflect more auto-oriented and general commercial activity. There are no setbacks required in the existing general commercial zoning district and that could be problematic outside of downtown Antwerp. The list of permitted uses and other development standards should similarly be reviewed.

4. Update Industrial Zoning: There is one industrial zoning district defined in the Zoning Code. This industrial district is broadly defined and it also includes all commercial uses as permitted uses. This should be revisited in order to clearly define places in the Village for industrial

uses (rather than a blend of commercial and industrial uses). Suitable locations for industrial development are limited in Antwerp and they should be held exclusively for industrial uses to help support future job creation and economic development. Commercial uses should be directed toward existing commercial areas and the US 24 / SR 49 area.

Update Subdivision Regulations:

With pending development activity at a larger scale near US 24 and SR 49, it is important for the Village of Antwerp to update its Subdivision Regulations. Municipalities and counties in Ohio have the authority to adopt regulations that define how new subdivisions will be built in terms of new public infrastructure such as new roads, utilities and pedestrian/bike travel amenities. For example, existing regulations can be strengthened to more clearly require sidewalks and bike amenities to be built along with private development activity.

Encourage More Focused Downtown Planning and Strategy Development:

Apart from general steps to improve zoning, improvements to downtown are most likely to flow from the efforts of local merchants and property owners. The Village can and should be supportive of revitalization efforts and offer the following public actions:

1. Embrace the Main Street Methodology: The Main Street Approach was developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and it divides the workload among a minimum of four standing committees (Organization, Design, Economic Restructuring and Promotions). It tries to balance revitalization efforts by concurrently improving all aspects of what makes real estate attractive and valuable.

Organization involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program. A governing board and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of the volunteer-driven program. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets - such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets - is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere, created through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping, conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include instilling good maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.

Economic restructuring relates to consideration of the mix of commercial offerings in a downtown and discovering voids in the market. Often market studies document the need of one type of service or other, and may also identify business clusters that combine to create synergy and great business activities.

Promotion is the art and science of advertising and drawing attention to what downtown has to offer. It can involve marketing and branding efforts delivered via web sites, brochures, events, direct mail and a variety of other means.

2. Strategically pursue Financing Options to Improve

Downtown: The Village of Antwerp should investigate the CDBG Downtown Revitalization Program. This program funds infrastructure improvements as well as improvements to privately owned Downtown buildings and businesses. The Competitive Downtown Revitalization Program has been re-tooled by the Ohio Development Services Agency, and is available to non-entitlement communities once again. The City should work with County officials to determine if a Downtown Revitalization grant application can be submitted on behalf of the Village of Antwerp. The grant program does allow a small administrative set-aside that could be used to pay wages for a grant coordinator.

The City should also pursue grants from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), in particular its Transportation Alternative Program (TAP). ODOT also has other programs such as the Gateway Enhancement Program that could assist Antwerp with downtown improvement projects.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resource's (ODNR) Division of Forestry has a grant program for the purchase and planting of trees, which may or may not be funded in any given year. This is a 50% matching program on a reimbursable basis. Grants range from \$2,000 to \$20,000, and the Village can use force account labor as a match.

The Village could request funds from the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) to improve infrastructure in Downtown Antwerp. Projects can include replacement and/or upgrading of waterlines, sanitary sewers, and storm drainage. This is a very competitive program with annual deadlines.

Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP) funds, which are also administered through OPWC can be used for street improvements, including replacement of pavement, reconstruction of streets, and associated drainage improvements.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts, while often geared more toward large scale development, could be used to

promote investment in the Downtown. Large scale mixed-use development proposals including office and commercial uses might be approved based on the number of jobs created and/or private investment made. While it would not be a primary development incentive, it should not be left out of the toolbox as a possible resource to call upon. This strategy has been successfully used by other communities to fund downtown infrastructure and decorative streetscape improvements.

For larger projects in Downtown Antwerp, such as new retail stores, businesses, or restaurants, that are going to create new jobs, the Small Business Administration (SBA) may be able to provide low-interest loans through its 504 direct loan program. SBA will finance up to 50% of the total fixed asset cost, but no more than \$35,000 per new job to be created as a result of the project, provided that other SBA requirements are met.

The CDBG-Economic Development (ED) program should be investigated for any specific project in Downtown Antwerp that will result in 10 or more new jobs being created. The

Village can request up to \$500,000 in grant funds for infrastructure or up to \$500,000 to loan to a business. Up to \$25,000/new job can be requested for loans, or \$10,000 per job created for grants; 51% of those jobs must be targeted to persons from low and moderate income households. A major benefit of an ED grant is that repayments or "program income" can be used as seed money to start a local revolving loan fund.

In December 2006, both Ohio's House and Senate passed legislation creating a State Investment Tax Credit that allows a 25% tax credit for the restoration and rehabilitation of Ohio's vacant and underutilized buildings. This tax credit is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in taxes owed. Owners of buildings listed on the National Register, certified as contributing to a registered historic district, or designated by a Certified Local Government, are eligible for this credit. This highly competitive program has already spurred 157 projects in 229 buildings in 34 different communities, and has the potential to generate millions of dollars of additional reinvestment in Ohio's downtowns.

Develop the Non-motorized Transportation System:

The village should address the need to develop an enhanced non-motorized transportation system on two fronts. First, there is a need to fill existing gaps in the sidewalk system as described during the visioning session. Secondly, sidewalks and pedestrian connections should be required when new construction occurs. This is particularly important in the area near US 24 and SR 49 at the south end of the village.

Future Land Use/Transportation Map

Map 2 provides an illustration of future land use and transportation-related improvements and serves as a summary of key community planning principles expressed in this Comprehensive Plan.

MAP 2

Antwerp Future Land Use



Enhance the Entry Corridor

Capitalize on the location of the Antwerp Gateway to create a more vibrant, walkable, and bikeable entry corridor. This study will explore the potential for a new, multi-modal transit hub and a new, multi-modal transit hub. The study will also explore the potential for a new, multi-modal transit hub and a new, multi-modal transit hub.

LEGEND



Low Density Residential

Areas that are suitable for single-family detached housing units. Common lot sizes range from 1/2 to 1 acre and density is typically less than 10 units per acre.



Medium Density Residential

Areas are generally older parts of town with detached single-family housing units. In some cases, larger older housing units may have been converted to duplexes. Density is typically less than 20 units per acre.



High Density Residential

These areas include multi-unit housing, parks and apartment complexes. Density is generally above 20 units per acre.



Downtown Commercial

Downtown commercial areas are often mixed-use areas with upper floors used for housing or office space. These areas are typically downtown commercial areas with upper floors used for housing or office space.



General Commercial

General commercial areas are typically mixed-use areas with upper floors used for housing or office space. These areas are typically mixed-use areas with upper floors used for housing or office space.



Industrial

Industrial areas are found in the east side of Antwerp. These include larger facilities and smaller operations. Existing open space and undeveloped areas are also included.



Public / Semi-Public

This land category includes school facilities, churches, large churches, and libraries.



Parks and Recreation

This category includes parks and recreation facilities associated with the local school system.

