



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Matthew H. Greeson, City Manager  
Robyn Stewart, Assistant City Manager  
David McCorkle, Assistant City Manager

FROM: R. Lee Brown, Director of Planning & Building

DATE: June 30, 2021

SUBJECT: Ordinance to Rezone 155, 163 & 173 E. Wilson Bridge Rd. from the R-10 District, Low Density Residential to WBC-2 District, Professional Office – **REZ 02-2021**

---

### Background & Request:

The Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study, adopted in 2011, makes recommendations for the Wilson Bridge Road corridor from the Olentangy River to the west to the Railroad Crossing to the east. The Study recommends the need to promote the redevelopment of the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor into a mixed-use area that will generate new economic growth within the City. These recommendations are intended to foster development that strengthens land use and economic value; encourages a mix of uses; enhances livability of the area; augments pedestrian and bicycle connections; and promotes construction of high-quality buildings and public spaces that create and sustain long-term economic vitality.

City Council adopted the Wilson Bridge Corridor Zoning on April 18, 2016, creating new zoning districts and development standards for the Wilson Bridge Corridor. The next step in the process of achieving the Study recommendations is to initiate the rezoning of parcels in the corridor to be in compliance with the adopted Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study and the Wilson Bridge Corridor Zoning.

The request before you is to rezone approximately 3.07 +/- acres on the south side of E. Wilson Bridge Rd. The request is to rezone three parcels 100-002474, 100-002475 & 100-002476, also known as 155, 163 & 173 E. Wilson Bridge Rd. from the R-10 District, Low Density Residential to the WBC-2 District, Professional Office. These three parcels are currently being used as single-family homes. This rezoning action would result in the three single-family homes becoming non-conforming legal uses. The residential use would be permitted to continue unless it is discontinued or abandoned for six consecutive months or for eighteen months during any three-year period. It would prevent large scale expansion or redevelopment of new single-family homes in this area envisioned by the Study to be office.

**R-10 District – Low Density Residential – Current Zoning**

For low density residential development which has ready access to most community facilities. Community water and sewerage facilities are required.

(1) Permitted Uses:

- Single-family dwelling
- Public uses
- Essential services
- Accessory uses
- Home occupation

(2) Conditional Uses:

- Public service facility
- Plant production
- Noncommercial recreational facility
- Semipublic uses
- Co-located child day care center, nursery school and preschool

(3) Development Standards:

Zoning	Minimum Lot Width	Minimum Lot Area	Front Setback	Rear Setback	Side Setback	Max Height of Building Stories	Max Height
<b>R-10 District</b>	80-feet	10,400 sq. ft.	30-feet	30-feet	8-feet, 12-feet	2 ½ - stories	30-feet

**WBC-2 District – Professional Office – Proposed Zoning**

Areas to promote small to medium sized office uses. A variety of office types and styles are encouraged to promote flexibility and adaptability.

(1) Permitted Uses:

- Office uses
- Essential services
- Accessory uses.

(2) Conditional Uses:

- Public uses and Semi-public uses

(3) Development Standards – South side of E. Wilson Bridge Rd.:

Zoning	Minimum Lot Width	Minimum Lot Area	Front Setback	Rear Setback	Side Setback	Max Height of Building Stories	Max Height
<b>WBC-2 District</b>	200-feet	2-acre	5-feet to 20-feet	50-feet	No Minimum	2 ½ - stories	35-feet

### **Surrounding Zoning & Land Uses:**

<b>Direction</b>	<b>Current Zoning</b>	<b>Recommended Land Use</b>
North	C-3 – Institutions & Offices	WBC-4 - Office
East	R-10 – Low Density Residential	WBC-1 – Medium Density Residential
South	R-10 – Low Density Residential	R-10 – Low Density Residential
West	R-10 – Low Density Residential	WBC-2 – Professional Office

### **Worthington Planning & Zoning Code**

#### **1151.06 Nonconforming Uses of Structures or of Structures & Premises in Combination**

If lawful use involving individual structures with a replacement cost of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or more, or of structures and premises in combination, exists at the effective date of adoption of this Zoning Ordinance (Ordinance 51-71, passed December 13, 1971), or amendment thereto, that would not be allowed in the district under the terms of this Ordinance, the lawful use may be continued so long as it remains otherwise lawful, subject to the following provisions:

(a) No existing structure devoted to a use not permitted by this Ordinance in the district in which it is located shall be enlarged, extended, constructed, reconstructed, moved or structurally altered except in changing the use of the structure to a use permitted in the district in which it is located.

(b) Any nonconforming use may be extended throughout any parts of a building which were manifestly arranged or designed for such use at the time of adoption or amendment of this Ordinance, but no such use shall be extended to occupy any land outside such building.

(c) If no structural alterations are made, any nonconforming use of a structure, or structure and premises, may as a special exception be changed to another nonconforming use provided that the Board of Zoning Appeals either by general rule or by making findings in the specific case, finds that the proposed use is equally appropriate or more appropriate to the district than the existing nonconforming use. In permitting such change, the Board of Zoning Appeals may require appropriate conditions and safeguards in accord with the provisions of this Ordinance.

(d) Any structure, or structure and land in combination, in or on which a nonconforming use is superseded by a permitted use, shall thereafter conform to the regulations for the district, and the nonconforming use may not thereafter be resumed.

(e) When a nonconforming use of a structure, or structure and premises in combination, is discontinued or abandoned for six consecutive months or for eighteen months during any three-year period, except when government action impedes access to the premises, the structure, or structure and premises in combination, shall not thereafter be used except in conformity with the regulations of the district in which it is located; and

(f) Where nonconforming use status applies to a structure and premises in combination, removal or destruction of the structure shall eliminate the nonconforming status of the land. Destruction for the purpose of this subsection is defined as damage to an extent of more than fifty percent of the replacement cost at time of destruction.

## **Land Use Plans:**

### [Comprehensive Plan Update & 2005 Strategic Plan for Worthington](#)

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update states that office space has always been an important part of a well-balanced community because it provides employment centers and professional services for residents. Today, however, the companies located in Worthington's professional office corridors are crucial to the financial well-being of the City. The employees of these businesses generate a significant portion of the income tax revenues that sustain the City budget. Approximately four percent of the land within the City of Worthington is devoted to commercial office land uses. By today's standards for Ohio cities, this would be considered a low percentage. Still, there is adequate commercial freeway office area to support a strong tax base for Worthington if it remains occupied and of high quality.

### [Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study](#)

The Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study, adopted in 2011, makes recommendations for the Wilson Bridge Road corridor from the Olentangy River to the west to the Railroad Crossing to the east. The Study recommends the need to promote the redevelopment of the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor into a mixed-use area that will generate new economic growth within the City. These requirements are intended to foster development that strengthens land use and economic value; encourage a mix of uses; enhance livability of the area; to augment pedestrian and bicycle connections; and to promote construction of high-quality buildings and public spaces that create and sustain long-term economic vitality.

The Study recommends incorporating a mix of small to medium sized office spaces designed to serve local and regional markets. A range of office types and styles are desired in this area that are flexible and adaptable. New development should occur in a way that complements and enhances the streetscape through architectural design that is pedestrian in scale (i.e., setbacks, windows, façade treatments). Parking should be located to the side or rear of the structure or incorporated or shared with adjoining uses when possible.

The 2011 Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study identifies this area as Professional Office for office uses and a recommended height of 2 ½ stories in height in this area.

### [Wilson Bridge Corridor Districts](#)

Chapter 1181 was adopted by City Council in 2016 to facilitate implementation of the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor Study, which promotes the redevelopment of the Wilson Bridge Road Corridor into a mixed-use area that will generate new economic growth within the City. These requirements are intended to foster development that strengthens land use and economic value; to encourage a mix of uses; enhance the livability of the area; to augment pedestrian and bicycle connections; and to promote construction of high-quality buildings and public spaces that help create and sustain long-term economic vitality.

The area was recommended for [WBC-2 Professional Office](#) that would allow for a office uses with a height of 2 ½ stories. Areas to promote small to medium sized office uses. A variety of office types and styles are encouraged to promote flexibility and adaptability.

**Staff Analysis:**

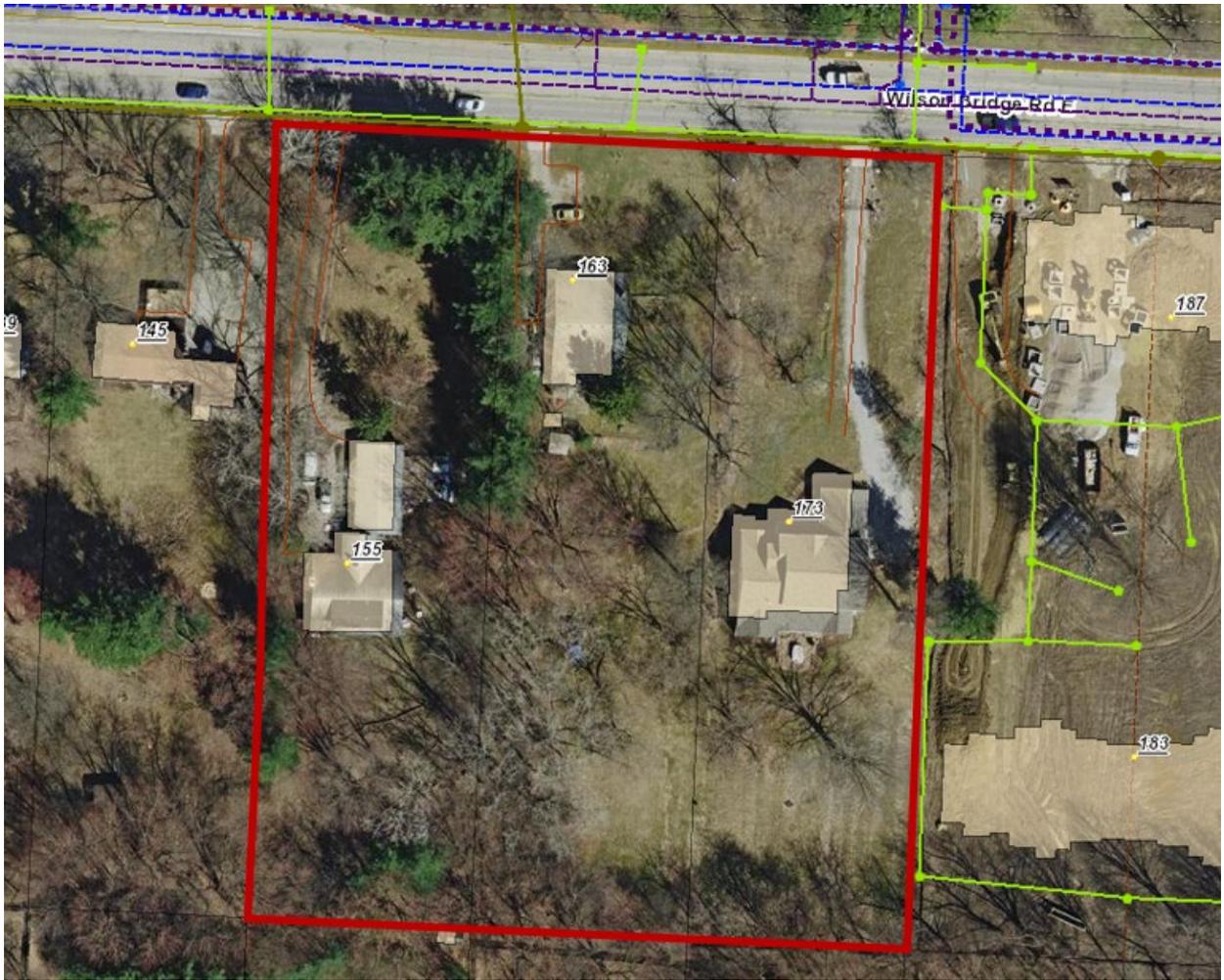
- If the properties are rezoned to office, the current residential use of the property would be considered a non-conforming use. The residential use would be permitted to continue unless it is discontinued or abandoned for six consecutive months or for eighteen months during any three-year period.
- As long as we continue to have R-10 zoning, the City cannot prevent new or significantly renovated/expanded single-family houses on these parcels. Significant new single-family investment makes it more challenging and more expensive for the City to achieve the goals of the Wilson Bridge Corridor Study for this area.
- To move toward achieving the recommendations of the Corridor Study, the City should rezone the parcels to the recommended zoning (WBC-2 Professional Office). Once rezoned, the current structures and uses would be able to continue as non-conforming uses within the new zoning, however they would be prohibited from major expansion or new construction as residential properties, thus setting the stage for eventual redevelopment into office.
- Future development on these parcels would still be subject to an approved Preliminary and Final Plan that must be approved by the Municipal Planning Commission and City Council.
- The City was proactive and rezoned two parcels to the WBC-1 – Medium Density Residential District in 2017 where the Granby Place apartments now stand to prohibit future single-family residential redevelopment on those parcels.
- There are two parcels in the corridor that are recommended for professional office and medium density residential that have had significant investment in new single-family homes.
  - Both these property owners were made aware of the City’s vision for the corridor prior to construction.

**Next Steps:**

After its introduction, the City’s Codified Ordinances required City Council to refer the Ordinance to the Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) for investigation and report. The Municipal Planning Commission expects to review this item on Thursday, September 9, 2021 and forward its recommendation based on the Planning Goals of the City, as referenced in the Land Use Plans to City Council.

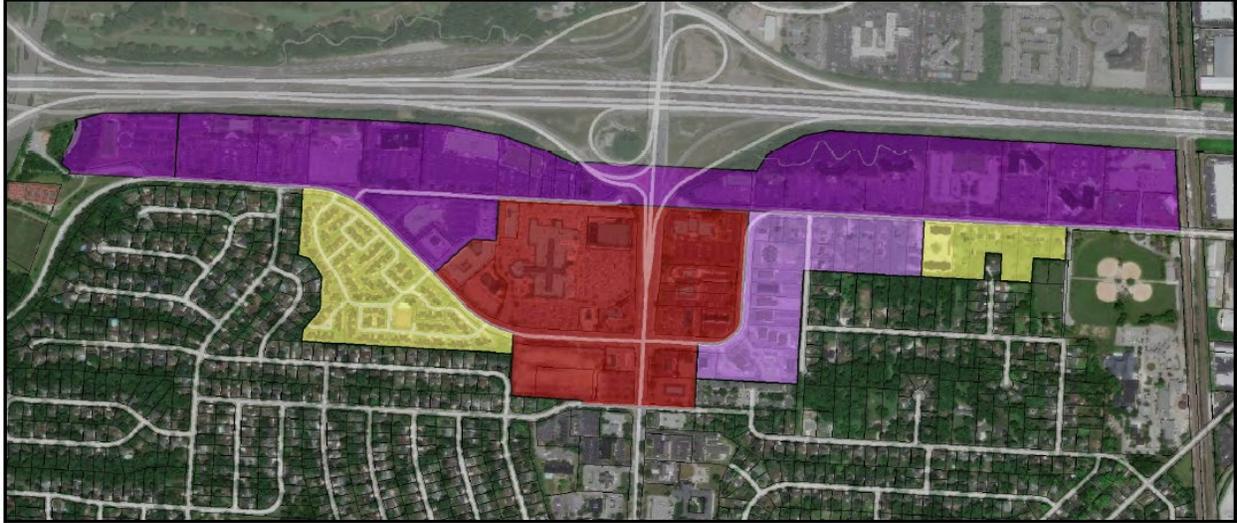
Future development on these parcels is still subject to an approved Preliminary and Final Plan that must be approved by the Municipal Planning Commission and City Council.

Please see attached maps for reference:



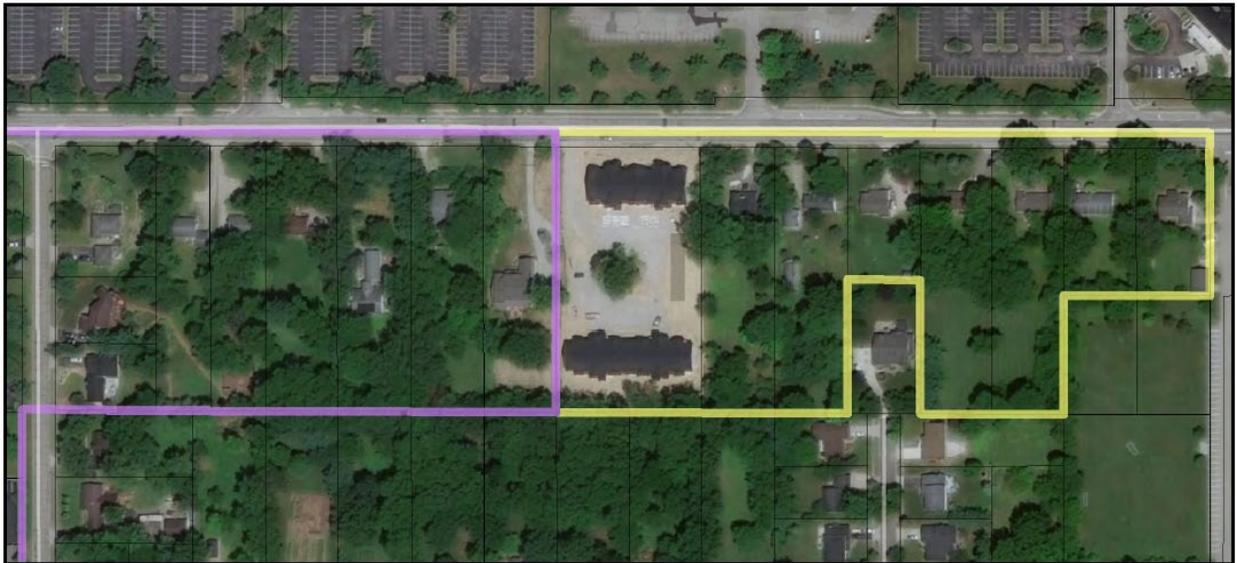
Proposed Zoning

-  WBC-1 - Medium Density Residential
-  WBC-2 - Professional Office
-  WBC-3 - Mixed Use
-  WBC-4 - Office



Proposed Zoning

-  WBC-1 - Medium Density Residential
-  WBC-2 - Professional Office



### WBC Properties

- CIC Owned Property
- New Residences
- Multi-Family

