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I. Planning Policy Statement

The purpose of this planning policy statement is to:

- **Ensure Consistency.** Promote the legal requirement of reasonableness by avoiding arbitrary decisions and furthering the uniform application of all planning procedures. The Comprehensive Plan provides specific guidance on the appropriate use and development of property in Genoa Township based on the needs and desires of its residents so that they may reasonably rely on the land uses set forth in the Comprehensive Plan for planning and development purposes.
- **Establish a Public Record.** Provide a clear statement of policies upon which the community shall rely.
- **Maintain a Basis of Planning.** Assure the appropriate use of resources. Planning decisions, such as zoning actions, must be founded upon adopted principles and objectives serving the public interest. This Comprehensive Plan avoids an arbitrary and capricious action by the Genoa Township Trustees, Zoning Commission, or Board of Zoning Appeals.
- **Develop a Planning Method.** Promote the rational utilization of land and the economical provision of required infrastructure, facilities, and services both for the individual and the collective public interest. This is accomplished through the allocation of land for a variety of uses based upon desired community objectives.

II. Policies with General Applicability

- **Total Community Interest.** Planning loses its vitality as well as its credibility if it:
 1. becomes a mere composite of neighborhood desires;
 2. is abused to advance the interest only of certain individuals or special interest groups;
 3. is implemented whimsically or arbitrarily; and/or
 4. becomes unreasonable or confiscatory in its application to private properties.

It is Genoa Township's policy that the general welfare of the Township in its entirety must be served by all planning measures. Therefore, general, as distinguished from individual, interests will be furthered. Specifically, benefit and/or impacts to individuals or groups shall be subordinate to the community considerations. Implementation of planning shall not be conducted solely for the purpose of increasing property value.

- **Reasons for Actions.** The Zoning Commission and Trustees shall undertake a review of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Resolution to ensure that all findings of fact and determinations regarding the appropriateness of development are consistent with these controlling documents. The Zoning Commission and Trustees will be guided by the terms of

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these documents and must state their reasons for recommendations and actions. During the hearing of variance or conditional use applications the Board of Zoning Appeals may refer to the recommendations and findings of the Comprehensive Plan in considering their decision.

- **Infill Development.** In order to prevent development inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan or spot zoning, requests for development must demonstrate to the Zoning Commission and the Trustees that the public interest and adjacent property owners will not be negatively affected, and that the development is consistent with the context and character of the surrounding neighborhood. Infill land typically includes individual parcels of less than 25 acres in straight residential zoning districts which; are primarily undeveloped or utilized for single-family homes, are situated along arterial or collector roads, and are immediately adjacent to or surrounded by one or more planned developments. Such parcels, historically, were not considered developable for variety of reasons, however, changes in property ownership, development patterns and models, the economy, and/or local real estate market in the past several years has made such parcels more suitable for development or redevelopment.
- **Guidelines for Analysis.** A systematic review of applications or amendments that come before the Zoning Commission shall be conducted by evaluating the following items for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
 - Would the proposed change:
 - be contrary to established land use patterns?
 - create an isolated, incompatible use or zoning district?
 - be incompatible with the density pattern of the surrounding area?
 - adversely influence living conditions in the surrounding area?
 - be adequately serviced by essential services (water, sewer, gas, electricity, schools, etc.)?
 - adversely impact traffic flow?
 - provide sufficient and appropriately located traffic access points?
 - seriously affect the natural character of the land to the point of creating potential hazards?
 - interfere with protected species or environmentally sensitive resources (e.g. watershed, streams, ravines, or wetlands)?
 - be a deterrent to the improvement or development of adjacent property in accordance with existing plans and regulations?
 - grant special privilege to a property owner that will not be granted to others at the expense of the general welfare?
 - seek divergences without clear expression of how such divergences from the Zoning Resolution serve the interest of Genoa Township residents at large?

III. Specific Issues

- **Aesthetics or Appearance.** Genoa Township residents have identified the rural and natural character of the community as one of the most desirable aspects of living in Genoa Township. As such, retention of said character is a high priority concern. Proper care for these two amenities is of economic, as well as aesthetic, benefit to the citizens, present and future, because it creates an improved quality of life. The desire to preserve and protect the area in an attractive manner shall continue to be an important determinant for development approaches.
- **Buffering.** Physical separation of different land uses will be required through use of transitional areas, such as open space, fencing, planting areas, setbacks and/or mounding. Although buffering will allow adjacent uses that may vary in density, the buffering of parcels from each other does not, in and of itself, fully mitigate the development of inconsistent adjacent uses.
- **Pedestrian Orientation.** As the Township further develops, there is a continuing desire to promote a people-oriented, pedestrian-friendly environment. It is Genoa Township's intention to encourage bicycle and/or pedestrian linkages whenever and wherever possible. The Zoning Resolution requires sidewalks and encourages walking paths to connect neighborhoods. Safe passage of pedestrians from one side of State Route 3 to the other remains a significant concern. Traffic lights at Freeman Road and a pedestrian crossing at Big Walnut Road have improved the connection across State Route 3 but have not completely alleviated these concerns. Any significant development abutting State Route 3 or the Genoa Trail will be evaluated for the inclusion of a pedestrian crossing between the east and west sides of State Route 3. Development adjacent to these crossing sites and any future passages must be consistent with use by pedestrians and bicyclists of all skill levels and abilities (i.e., families, children, seniors, disabled individuals, etc.).
- **Traffic (Arteries and Access).** The tremendous public investment in traffic-carrying facilities including streets, highways, and expressways must be protected by preventing indiscriminate access, strip development, and the creation of large scale non-residential developments designed as regional draws. Development requests must be supported by existing infrastructure. If development cannot be supported by existing infrastructure per standards determined by the Ohio Department of Transportation and/or Delaware County, the development plan must include planning and coordination with the appropriate roadway authority for the simultaneous improvement of the affected roadways. In no event may a development plan be approved that is contrary to the current Delaware County Thoroughfare Plan and/or Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) "Access Ohio 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan". See Chapter 3, Section VIII (page 54), for definitions of the terms discussed above.
- **Site Analysis Requirement.** All proposed developments shall require the submission of a Site Analysis. The Site Analysis shall include, but not be limited to, the following: location and access, topography and drainage, adjacent land use, site land use, vegetation, tree surveys,

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soils, provisions for sanitary sewers and storm drainage, natural drainageways and flood plains, potential site related pollution (air, noise, light, and water), provisions for utilities, impact on park and recreation lands and activities, impact on existing fire/EMS and police services, roads, trip generation rates, and traffic control(s).

The Site Analysis must include an analysis of the ability of police, fire/EMS, maintenance, roads, and utilities to be provided to the new development at existing or improved levels while maintaining current service levels to existing development. The analyses provided by these entities do not necessarily provide a determination that the current or desirable level of service will be created or maintained.

- **Development and Natural Drainageways.** Among the most striking attributes of the Township are its many natural drainageways to Alum Creek, Hoover, and Westerville Reservoirs. It is the Township's intention to continue to preserve and protect natural drainageways.

IV. Community Objectives and Supporting Principles

The continuing objective of this 2016 Comprehensive Plan is the development of Genoa Township land uses and related services and the preservation and enhancement of existing residential and non-residential standards. All community objectives and supporting principles are based on this premise. For each of the current or anticipated land uses within Genoa Township, this Section provides standards for development consistent with this primary objective. Each section states its objective and principles, which are further divided into the following subsections:

1. Location
2. Access
3. Impact
4. Public Services and Utilities
5. Desirability

A. Residential

1. **Objectives:** The primary use of land in Genoa Township is for homes for its residents. Homes for the residents of the Township shall be set within an appropriate physical environment when considering adjacent or other Township land uses.

2. **Principles:**

- a. **Location.** Residential development may be located in any of the development areas of Genoa Township (as set forth in Chapter 4) but is not appropriate within designated commercial, industrial, or community facility areas. Undeveloped property and most residential property have the Rural Residential (RR) zoning designation. Planned development under the Planned Residential District (PRD) or the Planned Rural Residential Conservation District (PRRCD) require a location in an area of

sufficient acreage and with appropriate surrounding infrastructure to support higher densities than permitted in the RR or Suburban Residential (SR) zoning districts.

- b. Access.** Residential development in Rural Residential (RR) and Suburban Residential (SR) zoning districts must have access to public roadways. Planned developments must have public road access with interior roads designed to minimize traffic congestion (within the development and at points of ingress and egress to and from the development). Planned development must also provide adequate police, fire/EMS, and maintenance access, including sizing to permit the safe passage and effective operation of equipment and additional emergency access if a single main access should become blocked or impassable. Residential roads within developments shall be designed to minimize through traffic and provide pedestrian and bikeway connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and Township bikeways and trails.

Ingress and egress shall provide clear lines of sight for traffic appropriate to speed limits and topography. Traffic signs, stop signs, traffic lights, crosswalks, and turn lanes shall be incorporated to satisfy traffic requirements of Genoa Township, Delaware County, and/or the State of Ohio, as applicable, erring in favor of resident safety in the event of uncertainty as to whether such measures are necessary.

- c. Impact.** All residential development must be created and maintained in accordance with the standards set forth in the Zoning Resolution. Residential development must:
 - 1) preserve the quiet rural environment;
 - 2) provide safety, security, and connectivity through appropriate lighting and sidewalks for pedestrian access;
 - 3) address environmental pollution (air, noise, light, and water);
 - 4) offer consistent architecture and material standards with surrounding residential areas; and
 - 5) contribute to the quality of life by supporting property values and the expectations of existing residents.

Residential development must be carefully located and evaluated to ensure:

- 1) the rate of growth is sustainable by essential services;
- 2) infrastructure impacts, including traffic flow, are properly controlled; and
- 3) traffic access points are sufficient in number and located appropriately to support the proposed density.

- d. Public Services and Utilities.** Residential development shall be accessible to public services and utilities. Density and design will be reviewed by police, fire/EMS, and maintenance services to ensure the safety and security of future and existing residents.

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- e. **Desirability.** Residential land use continues to be the most prevalent form of development within Genoa Township.

B. Industrial

- 1. **Objectives:** Industrial areas are designated to provide safe, secure, and limited impact environments for industrial activities within Genoa Township. Limited industrial development areas of Genoa Township have been identified in the southern end of the Township. No other industrial development sites are anticipated in Genoa Township.

- 2. **Principles:**

- a. **Location.** All industrial activity is to be conducted in the areas designated within Chapter 4. Industrial activity must be separated from residential neighborhood development by significant buffering and by preventing the intrusion of industrial uses into residential areas. It is generally not appropriate to permit industrial uses as infill development.
- b. **Access.** Industrial development shall be restricted to sites with appropriate street access. Related traffic and heavy equipment congestion shall be mitigated by locating industrial uses adjacent only to Major and/or Minor Arterial roads approved for the transportation of related industrial products and by-products.
- c. **Impact.** All industrial applications shall comply with State and Federal requirements in regards to environmental impacts on Genoa Township land, water, and surrounding areas. Such development shall be entirely consistent with the principles set forth in this Plan to avoid the disruption of surrounding land uses.

Due to the special concerns regarding environmental pollutions (air, noise, light, and water) in addition to opportunities for environmental disruption in the event of an accident or emergency, industrial zoned parcels shall be limited in number within Genoa Township. In general, no industrial use will be permitted in a location that would, upon an environmental accident, directly impact the Alum Creek or Big Walnut Creek watershed (including Hoover Reservoir). In the event that the Zoning Commission or the Genoa Township Trustees deem it necessary, an environmental impact study (publicly or privately conducted and funded) may be required regardless of any determination by a governmental entity that such environmental impact study is not required by Federal or State law.

- d. **Public Services and Utilities.** Police, fire/EMS, and maintenance resources must be satisfied that infrastructure currently supports resident safety prior to the acceptance of a new or modified industrial use within Genoa Township. New or substantially modified industrial developments are strongly encouraged to utilize public water and sewer facilities.

- e. **Desirability.** Industrial developments that contribute to the stabilization and diversification of the economic base are most desirable. In general, light industrial as opposed to heavy industrial is preferred. Additional or modified industrial applications for development of properties outside of areas currently zoned or planned for such development shall not be considered a preferred land use in Genoa Township.

C. Commercial/Office

- 1. **Objectives.** Commercial/office areas are designated to provide a safe, secure, and limited impact environment for commercial and office activities within Genoa Township. Commercial/office development areas have been identified primarily in the southern end of the Township, with limited existing exceptions. No other commercial/office development areas are planned in Genoa Township.

2. Principles:

- a. **Location.** Access to goods and services in planned commercial/office areas must be compatible with surrounding uses. Such areas shall also be situated in appropriate locations to serve residents. Commercial/office development areas of Genoa Township have been identified in the southern end of the Township consistent with prior Comprehensive Plan documents.
- b. **Access.** Commercial/office development shall be limited to sites with appropriate street access and shall provide for pedestrian and bike friendly connections to surrounding neighborhoods. As such access is a key priority of Genoa Township, commercial/office development that is not appropriate or safe for users of pedestrian and bicycle connections is not appropriate for locations abutting residential development.
- c. **Impact.** Commercial/office uses shall use architectural design and materials that are consistent with adjacent uses. Parking, delivery, trash and utility areas, and required access points shall be mitigated through the use of significant landscaping and screening. Commercial/office development shall preserve the quiet and privacy for abutting and nearby properties, with minimal environmental impact, by:
 - 1) requiring appropriate setbacks from streets and internal property lines in keeping with adjacent development;
 - 2) limiting hours of operation, deliveries and access; and
 - 3) limiting environmental pollutions (air, noise, light, and water).
- d. **Public Services and Utilities.** The Township Trustees and Zoning Commission, in conjunction with police, fire/EMS, and maintenance resources must be satisfied that infrastructure currently supports resident safety prior to the acceptance of a new or

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modified commercial/office use within Genoa Township. New or substantially modified commercial/office developments are encouraged to utilize public water and sewer facilities.

- e. **Desirability.** Any additional commercial/office development shall be primarily for the purpose of serving the residents of Genoa Township. Such developments should consist of smaller footprint buildings with a preference for businesses that are unique to the area in the form of neighborhood-scale commercial/office development, with special consideration given to: hours of operation, noise generation, use, lighting, and pedestrian/bike access. Because the only direct positive fiscal impact of commercial/office development is limited to the property taxes generated by the land and related building(s), such development is encouraged to ensure flexibility in use.

D. Open Space

1. **Objectives.** To provide and protect open space within the Township. Open space consists of land within a development, or set aside in conjunction with a development, that is reserved for the enjoyment of residents but may or may not be improved. Improvement of such land is typically; pre-approved by the Township, limited to uses and structures which are recreational or environmental in nature, and intended to benefit the users of said space. Open spaces may take numerous forms, configurations, and designs, some of which may overlap one another. These include:
 - a. **Active Recreational Open Space.** Usable open space land intended to accommodate recreational facilities and parks in order to provide opportunities for formal leisure time activities such as athletics, exercising, and general play.
 - b. **Agricultural Open Space.** Open space land utilized for the raising and harvesting of crops, nursery stock, timber, and/or livestock and their associated products.
 - c. **Common Open Space.** Open space land that is owned shared by the owners and/or occupants of a development or building but is not necessarily open to the general public.
 - d. **Greenspace.** Open space land that is partly or completely covered with grass, trees, shrubs, or other vegetation. Such vegetation may be either naturally occurring or planted.
 - e. **Greenbelt/Perimeter Buffer.** Open space land which completely wraps around the boundaries of a neighborhood or development.
 - f. **Greenways.** Strips of open space land along trails, bikeways, waterways, and other such man-made or natural features reserved for recreational use and/or environmental protection.

- g. **Improved Common Open Space.** Open space land intended to be utilized for active or passive recreational activities or greenspace.
- h. **Natural Open Space.** Open space land intended to remain in its natural, undisturbed condition to the greatest extent possible.
- i. **Passive Recreational Open Space.** Usable open space land intended to provide opportunities for informal leisure time activities such as; picnicking, nature study, and wildlife observation. Such space may be natural, landscaped, and/or improved.
- j. **Private Open Space.** Open space land that is intended to be utilized only by a select group of individuals within a neighborhood or development.
- k. **Public Open Space.** Open space land that is intended to be open to all members of the general public.

2. Principles:

- a. **Location.** Open spaces are located throughout Genoa Township. The inclusion of expanded green space in developments and as dedicated parkland is a primary tenet of development in Genoa Township. The creation and preservation of these areas is central to the quality of life afforded to Genoa Township residents.
- b. **Access.** Whenever practical and possible, access to green space shall be afforded to residents with connectivity to the Genoa Trail also being a priority. Maintenance and usage rules for green spaces inside residential developments shall be provided. To foster connected and contiguous green space, all development shall, if feasible and practical, include planning for:
 - 1) safe pedestrian and, if applicable, bicycle connections between developments;
 - 2) open access to sidewalks or maintained trails bordering roadways; and
 - 3) open access to green space located between developments.
- c. **Impact.** Park and recreation areas as green and open space are an enjoyed and desired amenity in Genoa Township with trails, in particular, being a highly supported amenity.
- d. **Public Services and Utilities.** Except as necessary to provide safe and sanitary conditions in open and green spaces or by law, utilities shall be limited in these venues to minimize environmental impact.
- e. **Desirability.** As previously indicated, open and green space is the most desirable complement to residential development. Limitations on impervious surfaces within the said spaces should also be applied while acting to preserve the greatest amount of green space, natural wetlands, woodlands, and other similar elements.

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E. Township Services, Facilities, and Amenities

1. **Objectives.** Genoa Township's rural, pastoral atmosphere, scenic beauty, unique features, local heritage, and developments shall be protected and enhanced through the planning and implementation of Township services, facilities, and amenities.
2. **Principles:**
 - a. **Location.** Genoa Township provides numerous public services including fire/EMS protection, police protection, road maintenance, public facilities maintenance, and zoning enforcement. Facilities necessary to support these functions are located centrally in the Township and should remain in these locations as long as it is feasible and appropriate to do so.
 - b. **Access.** Township services shall be located to provide quick and efficient access to all portions of Genoa Township.
 - c. **Impact.** Residents have indicated they are highly satisfied with the quality of Township services. Such services benefit all residents and typically impact few in close proximity to Township facility locations. In consideration of surrounding residents, expansion of said facilities shall be carefully evaluated to ensure that the burden on surrounding residents is necessary to provide appropriate levels of service and safety. The Township shall continue to provide facilities with meeting space for activities.
 - d. **Public Services and Utilities.** Township facilities are public services and will be granted access to appropriate utilities.
 - e. **Desirability.** The Township continues to evaluate services and facilities, both current and future, to determine the on-going needs of residents. In order to offset any burden of additional taxes, any new services and/or facilities must be of true need, fiscally prudent, and well balanced with current services and facilities. If such a responsible program can be developed, the addition of a public safety substation on the east side of Hoover Reservoir, which has been under consideration for some time by the Genoa Township Trustees, could potentially be a desirable amenity.

F. Roadways

1. **Objectives.** The thoroughfare system within the Township shall be planned, located, designed, constructed, and upgraded as growth occurs and in conjunction with County and State thoroughfare plans. The aim is to provide for the logical development of the Township's road system and to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

2. Principles:

- a. **Location.** Public roadways throughout Genoa Township are maintained and classified by four entities:
 - 1) Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
 - 2) Delaware County
 - 3) Genoa Township
 - 4) City of Westerville

- b. **Access.** Roadways must provide adequate and safe access to Genoa Township residents and visitors. Developments that increase road demand shall be accompanied by roadway improvements. Any development plan that seeks to reduce the level of service on a roadway within Genoa Township must bear the cost of mandated improvement(s) contemporaneously with the construction of the development, over and above any pending improvements scheduled by governmental entities.

- c. **Impact.** Roadway development, maintenance, and appearance is often determined by the governmental body with jurisdiction over the roadway (See Figure 3.19). While the federal government officially owns the portion of Interstate 71 that traverses through the northwestern portion of the Township, it is maintained by ODOT. ODOT also maintains and retains control over all aspects of the use of State Route 3, a limited access highway, designed to move traffic from one point in the state to another with minimal interference. Several roadways intersect with State Route 3 in the Township. The ODOT “Access Ohio 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan” does not contemplate widening State Route 3 before 2040. Delaware County retains control over the use and maintenance of; Africa Road, Rome Corners Road, Worthington Road, South Old 3C Highway, Tussic Street Road, Sunbury Road, Red Bank Road, Lewis Center Road, and Harlem Road. Genoa Township owns and maintains all other public roads, except for the western portion of Maxtown Road, which is owned and maintained by the City of Westerville.

- d. **Public Services and Utilities.** Utilities are often located within road right-of-ways. Creation and maintenance of roadways must be consistent with public service and utility needs.

- e. **Desirability.** Roadways that permit appropriate access and are maintained are extremely important in Genoa Township. The ability to move traffic through and to Genoa Township will be an important issue as development continues. All future development planning in Genoa Township must anticipate these needs and provide for improvement opportunities without reducing the level of service on existing roadways.

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