



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT • 1140 Terex Road • Hudson, Ohio 44236 • (330) 342-1790

DATE: October 21, 2025
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Greg Hannan, Community Development Director, Nick Sugar, City Planner,
Katie Behnke, Economic Development Manager
CC: Thomas J. Sheridan, City Manager, Brian Griffith, Asst City Manager
RE: LDC Amendment – District 11 Establishment

Summary of Request:

The South Darrow Council Subcommittee completed five sessions in recent months to develop a draft amendment framework to the Land Development Code. City Council received the work of the subcommittee, advanced the framework to a draft amendment, and conducted a first reading and referral to the Planning Commission of the draft amendment on September 16, 2025. The proposed Land Development Code Amendment to create Zoning District 11 along the South Darrow Road Corridor establishes:

1. Focus on office and light industrial uses to continue the areas emphasis as an employment center.
2. Expanded allowance of some intended outlot retail, service, and restaurant uses in response to the lack of amenities available to the existing office and industrial parks in the area.
3. Allowance for a more transformational mixed use planned development to leverage a potential large employer to the site and expand amenities to the larger area. The development could create a connected, internal campus including a mix of uses such as restaurant, lodging, health/fitness services, grocery, and residential.

City of Hudson Comprehensive Plan 2024:

The 2024 Comprehensive Plan developed focus area recommendations for the Darrow Road Corridor. The plan recommended amending the zoning on the east side of Darrow Road from Terex Road or Georgetown Road to provide expanded opportunity for retail/restaurant/service uses. At the Council workshop on February 25th, staff presented a draft amendment responding to this narrow item of additional commercial along the frontage. City Council reviewed and requested a more holistic view be taken of the larger area.

In reviewing the larger South Darrow Rd Corridor, the following primary items guided the consideration of an LDC amendments:

1. The Comprehensive plan recommends allowing additional commercial south of Terex Road and east of Darrow Rd.

2. The Comprehensive Plan recommends revising the eastern and western portion of District 8 along Darrow Road from an industrial district to more of a light industrial-office zoning.
3. The former Joann facility (5455-5555 Darrow Rd) was occupied at the time of the Comprehensive Plan adoption; however, has since become fully vacant with the closure of Joann Corporate Headquarters. Further study was needed for this large site, beyond what was in scope for the district recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. The 100-acre site is larger than several existing zoning districts and the 1.4 million square foot structure is one of the largest available properties in Northeast Ohio.

The proposed D11 text and map amendment is responsive to the Comprehensive Plan recommendations to permit additional commercial uses along the eastern frontage of Darrow Road, the plan recommendation to step down the D8 industrial currently present on both sides of Darrow Road, and provides some additional redevelopment flexibility for the corridor in response to the vacant site at 5555 Darrow Road.

Zoning revisions to industrial corridors across the community: The Council Subcommittee completed some brief review of all Comprehensive Plan recommendations related to office/industrial areas. The Comprehensive Plan recommendations focus on implementing minor adjustments to the current D6 and D8 and considering splitting these two districts into three categories/districts:

1. Office Park (D6)
2. Light Industrial Flex (potential D12)
3. Industrial (D8)

The subcommittee determined these additional considerations to office/industrial areas outside of the draft D11 would be studied as a standalone future effort as further market and community focus is known to D11 and the 996 Hines Hill Rd sites.

City Council South Darrow Corridor Subcommittee:

The South Darrow Council Subcommittee (Council President Foster, Councilman Sutton and Councilman Bird) completed five sessions to develop a zoning framework for the South Darrow Corridor in response to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and in response to the vacant site 5455-5555 Darrow Rd (90 acre with 1.4 million sq ft of structure).

Beginning with the first Council Subcommittee Meeting on April 22, the group leveraged a use chart that featured moveable cards with various uses from the Land Development Code to be classified into Use By Right, Conditional Use, Planned Development Only, and Not Permitted categories based upon Subcommittee discussion. The group revisited and refined the chart during each meeting and identified items that required more research before classification.

The subcommittee meeting summaries are as follows:

Date	Step	Action
4/22/25	Council Subcommittee Mtg	Internal meeting of subcommittee to discuss existing conditions, general priorities, and initial discussion on appropriate uses to consider
5/19/25	Council Subcommittee Mtg	Review of the Comp Plan recommendations, possible district boundaries, and preferred uses.
6/6/25	Council Subcommittee Mtg	Site visit with representatives of Brecksville
6/16/25	Council Subcommittee Mtg	Review market data from TeamNEO, Review of larger area zoning considerations within the Comp Plan, Discuss boundary of potential D11 District
7/21/25	Council Subcommittee Mtg	Meeting of Subcommittee and Property owner to discuss the use chart and potential site development.
8/26/25	Council workshop	Subcommittee report back to Council, direction to commence Map and text amendment process
9/9/25	Council workshop	
9/16/25	Council Session	First Reading and referral to Planning Commission

Economic Development Significance

The area being considered for District 11 is of critical importance to the income tax base of the Hudson community. The proposed district includes or abuts three of the top ten income tax generating sites within the City as well as several high growth, mid-size enterprises. While the refill of the former Joann Corporate Headquarters building is an urgent community priority, creating zoning for amenities for the surrounding commercial and industrial users to increase retention of remaining businesses should be equally addressed. During retention visits, Staff has routinely received feedback regarding the lack of business appropriate hotel options, limited healthy lunch options that are accessible on a thirty-minute lunch break, and unreliable cell service.

Proposed Amendment:

The draft Land Development Code amendment establishes:

1. Focus on office and light industrial uses to continue the areas emphasis as an employment center.
2. Expanded allowance of some intended outlot retail, service, and restaurant uses in response to the lack of amenities available to the existing office and industrial parks in the area.
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Land Development Code Section 1204.01 documents the applicable guidelines for review of code amendments by Planning Commission and City Council. Staff will provide further documentation related to the applicable standards within the public hearing staff report for the November 10, 2025 meeting.

1204.01 CODE AMENDMENTS.

All applications for text or zoning map amendments shall be reviewed by the PC and City Council for compliance with the following guidelines:

- a. Whether or not the proposed amendment is in accordance with the basic intent and purpose of the Land Development Code;
- b. Whether or not the proposed amendment furthers the long-range planning goals of the City (as outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan's goals and objectives);
- c. Whether or not conditions within the City have changed since the Land Development Code was last adopted/amended, or there was a mistake in the Land Development Code, that justifies the amendment;
- d. Whether or not the amendment corrects an inequitable situation created by the Land Development Code, rather than merely grants special privileges;
- e. Whether or not the amendment avoids unlawful exclusionary zoning;
- f. With respect to zoning map amendments, whether the proposed zoning map amendment is consistent with the zoning classifications of the surrounding land;
- g. With respect to zoning map amendments, whether all of the new requirements attendant to the proposed zoning classification can be complied with on the subject parcel(s);
- h. Does the amendment affect the City's ability to provide adequate services, facilities, or programs that might be required if the application were approved; and
- i. Whether or not the amendment is necessary to address changed or changing social values, new planning concepts, or other social or economic conditions in the areas affected.