

Meeting Date:
January 12, 2026

Request
Text and Map
Amendment to the Land
Development Code
establishing District 11

Applicant
City of Hudson

Case Managers
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Project Introduction:

City staff has prepared the following in response to the City Council request to consider LDC map and text amendments to establish District 11 South Darrow Rd Corridor.

Discussion has commenced over the following timeline:

- April – July, 2025: Council subcommittee discussions
- September 9, 2025 City Council Workshop: Proposed amendment was discussed with forwarding for the first meeting.
- September 16, 2025: City Council Meeting: First reading and referral to the Planning Commission.
- October 27, 2025: Planning Commission introduction
- November 10, 2025: Planning Commission public hearing
- December 8, 2025: Planning Commission discussion

Background

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 outlet 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.

Summary of the December 8, 2025 Meeting

The Planning Commission and staff discussed the proposed amendment at the December 8, 2025 meeting. The Planning Commission requested staff further study the proposed allowances for residential uses. Staff noted the following discussion items:

1. Remove the industrial use header under conditional uses as no applicable uses are proposed under this header.
2. Revise purpose statement to clearly reference residential as secondary use within a development.
3. Incorporate residential as a transition along Terex Road as existing residential is located to the north.
4. Graphics are desired to help visualize the size, scale, and number of buildings that would be permitted in the district.
5. Further study restrictions to residential buildings, including a total cap on residential units.
6. Further study how housing has been integrated into other mixed-use developments.
7. Study how many townhome and multi-family units could be built throughout Hudson.

Staff Updates

In response to the December 8, 2025 meeting, staff has incorporated the following revisions to the amendments. These revisions include additional controls related to residential development. Staff researched other communities to aid in determining these controls:

1. Industrial Use header removed from the Conditional Use category.
2. Planned Developments within District 11 would require a minimum size of 10 acres (initial proposal was at 5 acres). The LDC currently has a minimum requirement of 2 acres in District 5 and 5 acres in all other zoning districts.
3. Purpose statement revised to reference residential as a secondary use and part of a mixed-use setting.
4. Purpose statement revised to encourage residential along the Terex Road frontage to transition to the existing residential to the north.
5. A standard has been incorporated within the Property Development/Design Standards stating, “Residential uses shall not exceed 20% of the gross acreage of a Planned Development and no more than 200 units total shall be within any Planned Development”.
6. A standard has been incorporated within the Property Development/Design Standards to keep the Darrow Rd frontage focused on commercial uses per the Comp Plan by stating, “Residential uses are not permitted on the ground floor of buildings fronting Darrow Road.”
7. Maximum structure heights for “Townhomes”, “Multifamily”, and “Mixed-Use Residential” buildings are introduced within the Property Development/Design Standards to align with current D5 allowances and would be below the maximum height currently permitted in the existing D8.

Staff has prepared the following additional information/resources in response to discussions during the December 8, 2025 meeting:

1. Residential Map Study: Staff has prepared attached maps that depict potential residential development areas based on the proposed text amendment. Developing site specific visuals is challenging, as layouts require determining allocations for roads, parking, driveways, lawns, stormwater detention basins, utilities, etc. Therefore, staff studied existing residential developments and determined actual housing units commonly contain 70% of the maximum density permitted. The maps use this assumption to

develop potential “blocks” of residential development within each District 11 parcel.

Staff Comment: Based on the noted projections of max build out, the Planned Development allowances have been amended to cap at 200 maximum housing units and no more than 20% of a PD land area.

2. Mixed Use Development Study: Staff has prepared the attached study of two mixed use developments in northeast Ohio:

- Valor Acres, Brecksville:** Redevelopment of a former VA Hospital site into a “live-work-play” community featuring apartments, townhomes, office space, retail, restaurants, a hotel, and a major Sherwin Williams R&D center.
- The District, Solon:** Redevelopment of a former Liberty Ford site into a mixed-use district featuring apartments, retail, a food hall, hotel, and parking garage.

Staff Comment: The above projects are both located within site specific zoning districts and are directly related to development proposals. The District 11 text is a city-led amendment that would establish zoning standards prior to a development proposal.

3. Character Images: Staff compiled character images to help visualize the scale of the buildings the text amendment would permit. The character images include:

- A 3-story mixed-use retail and residential building with a height of 40 ft
- A 3-story multi-family building with 30 units and a height of 40 ft
- A 3-story commercial building with a height of 50 ft
- Townhome buildings with the scale of 8 adjacent/attached units and heights ranging from 25-35 ft.

4. Townhome/Multi-Family Build-Out: In addition to the attached residential map study, staff has researched where additional townhome and multi-family units could be constructed within Hudson. Staff Comment: Staff notes that townhome and multi-family buildings are currently only permitted within District 5 and the proposed District 11 limiting such future development. The attached Residential Map Study documents how many units could be developed within the proposed District 11.

Staff reviewed all viable parcels in District 5. They include the city-owned “Clinton Crossing” acreage and the proposed townhome development on the northeast corner of Clinton Street and Morse Road. The preliminary concept for Clinton Crossing would account for approximately 50-100 housing units; however, it is anticipated to be predominately single family. The proposed townhome development on the northeast corner of Clinton Street and Morse Road depicts 18 townhome units.

Considerations

District Standards (Section 1204.01) Zoning Map and Text Amendments

All applications for text or zoning map amendments shall be reviewed by the PC and City Council for compliance with the nine standards set forth within Section 1204.01 of the Land Development Code (LDC).

- Whether or not the proposed amendment is in accordance with basic purpose and intent of the Land Development Code*
 - Promote the public health, safety, convenience, comfort, prosperity, and general welfare;*
 - Secure safety of persons and property from fire, flood, and other dangers, and to secure adequate open spaces for light, air, and amenity;*
 - Conserve and stabilize property values through the most appropriate uses of land in relation to one another;*

- d. Preserve and protect forests and woodlands, existing trees and vegetation, agricultural lands, floodplains, stream corridors, wetlands, and other sensitive environmental areas from adverse impacts of urban and suburban development;*
- e. Facilitate the economic provision of adequate public facilities such as transportation, water supply, sewage disposal, drainage, electricity, public schools, parks, and other public services and requirements;*
- f. Prevent congestion in travel and transportation, reduce community dependence on automobile travel, and encourage trip consolidation;*
- g. Preserve and protect the architecture, history, and small-town character of the historic village core;*
- h. Encourage innovative residential development so that growing demand for housing may be met by greater variety in type, design, and layout of dwellings, and by conservation and more efficient use of open space ancillary to such dwellings;*
- i. Encourage nonresidential development that preserves and protects the character of the community, including its natural landscape, and that minimizes objectionable noise, glare, odor, traffic and other impacts of such development, especially when adjacent to residential uses or to the historic village core;*
- j. Manage overall community growth, including population and employment growth, to benefit the community and to encourage fiscally efficient and orderly development; and*
- k. Encourage a balance of residential and non-residential uses and development in the community so that future growth occurs in a fiscally prudent manner.*

Staff Comment: Staff offers the following

1. The proposed D11 area has limited environmental constraints allowing for; in general, less environmental impact than other portions of the city.
2. The multi lane divided median street design of St Rt 91 and Terex Rd do have greater ability to manage traffic and provide expanded separation to surrounding uses.
3. Residential development is only proposed through a Planned Development requiring a higher standard of design and review including acceptance by both the Planning Commission and City Council.
4. Non-residential development would have significant setback and buffer to surrounding residential zoning. The proposed amendment would remove the heavy industrial allowances and shift to a less intensive light industrial and commercial focus.
5. The amendment would allow additional amenities to support the surrounding commercial/industrial areas and facilitate further investment in the large vacant areas within the proposed D11 Corridor.

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);*

Staff Comment: 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.

The proposed amendment would align with the following relevant to the Comprehensive Plan:

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.

Staff notes the following specific plan references relevant to the proposed amendment:

- Focus Area - Darrow Road Corridor:
 - Vision: *The vision for Darrow Road is to enhance the mix of commercial and light industrial land uses while supporting new suburban residential use and public/semi-public space, creating a distinct mixed-use district that complements downtown Hudson*
 - “Light Industrial Flex” is proposed for large portions of the D11 area. The Plan notes these areas should focus on a strong income tax base with the intent to limit large truck traffic.
- Plan Goals, Objectives and Recommendations
 - Objective 1.3.2 notes for the Main Corridor Focus area: *Progress development that is walkable, at a neighborhood scale and density, and creates an enhanced streetscape environment.*
 - Objective 1.5 under land use and Focus Areas notes *Continue to strengthen the local economy along major commercial corridors while protecting open space*
 - *1.5.1: Identify and progress a mix of uses, including residential, along the S.R. 91 and S.R. 303 corridors, where existing commercial centers exist.*
 - *1.5.2: Prioritize development of existing industrial and commercial sites over new development.*
 - *Objective 2.3: Promote retail and mixed-use developments in designated areas that align with the evolving workplace and economy.*
 - *2.3.1 Perform surveys of the business community to help determine the state of the evolving workplace and economy and consider implementing needs identified in, or responsive to, the survey*
 - *Objective 2.4: Seek the adaptive reuse of existing office, commercial, and industrial centers.*

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.

- 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;*
Staff Comment: Since the Land Development Code, office/industrial development has evolved to desire increased access to support amenities. This is somewhat counter to the current District 8 zoning which only permits such uses on a narrow, limited basis. Additionally, the large vacant facility at 5555 Darrow Rd is a significant change in conditions requiring study of the larger corridor.
- d) *Whether or not the amendment corrects an inequitable situation created by the Land Development Code, rather than merely grants special privileges;*
Staff Comment: The proposed amendment would not grant special privileges as the corridor covers a large area with numerous development sites. The currently vacant facility at 5555 Darrow Rd does contain a large portion of the district; however, this site at 100 acres and 1.4 million square feet of building is significantly larger than several existing zoning districts within the City of Hudson.
- e) *Whether or not the amendment avoids unlawful exclusionary zoning;*
Staff Comment: 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;*
Staff Comment: The proposed map amendment would be consistent with classifications of surrounding land. The modest step down from industrial zoning of the corridor will provide an improved transition from the industrial development on the southern edge to the commercial and residential areas to the north.
- 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);*
Staff Comment: the proposed requirements can be complied with.
- 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;*
Staff Comment: The amendment would not affect the city's ability to provide adequate services. Staff notes the existing street and utilities network has adequate capacity.
- 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.*
Staff Comment: Staff notes the incorporating of some mixed use elements and allowances for retail/service commercial will address changing in the amenities desired adjacent to modern office development. Additionally, the amendment is responsive to the current economic conditions of the corridor which contain significant vacant facilities.

Preliminary Findings of Fact:

Staff finds that the application is compliant with the general review standards for Code Amendments stipulated below and detailed within the staff report. The Planning Commission may adopt the staff comments provided for these requirements on pages 3-6 as the Findings of Fact.

Section 1204.01

- 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.

Required PC Action Chapter 1203.02

The PC shall conduct a public hearing, make specific recommendations to the City Council, and transmit the application to the City Council, together with the text and map amendments pertaining thereto, within 120 days from the date of initiation of the application for text or official zoning map amendments. The initiation of the application was commenced with City Councils referral on September 16, 2024. The January 12, 2026 meeting is the last regularly scheduled meeting within the 120 days.

The City Council shall hold a public hearing and take final action within twenty days of said public hearing. An amendment before the City Council for consideration shall take effect only if passed or approved by not less than five members of the City Council.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Commission review the proposed text amendments and then proceed with consideration of a formal recommendation to City Council.