



City of Willoughby Hills

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPT. 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

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Review of 2014
Willoughby Hills
Economic Development



2014 established our existence as a legitimate and professional Economic Development Department. Real estate brokers, contractors, developers and the even the general public all came to recognize the importance including us in their decision-making process. Though our resources are limited, we are now able to compete with larger cities.

Mission

The mission of the Economic Development department is to effectively market Willoughby Hills in order to retain, expand, promote and attract investments to the city while enhancing its tax base and increasing the value of commerce.

Though funds are still limited, low cost initiatives such as the Mayor's "Advisory Committee for Economic Development", The Willoughby Western Lake County Chamber of Commerce, The Lake County Ohio Port and Economic Development Authority, Team NEO, OEDA, and ODA, have all been used to make significant progress in all areas of the mission.

- *Identify, market, promote and facilitate the expansion of existing businesses and to attract new investments to the city.*

ACED continued to mobilize the existing merchants to participate in numerous events geared towards attracting more shoppers to the city; events were held for Halloween and Christmas and many merchants took advantage of the Color Run held in the city by offering discounts and extending hours.

- *Serve as an advocate and an information source for businesses operating or seeking to operate businesses within the city.*

Due to budgetary constraints no proprietary studies have been completed, However, by combing the public records kept by the state, local and federal government, we were able to satisfy most of the needs of our prospects.

- *Establish and maintain relationships with county, regional, state and federal economic development entities.*

We have excellent relationships all entities and continue to strengthen these by consistently communicating with them and by monitoring sales, trades and transactions through local media.

- *Develop and maintain relationships with developers, property managers and commercial realtors and help them to promote and develop their properties.*

Relationships have been developed with all the major players within the city, county and state.

- *Implement the city's economic development plan.*

The progress of city's development plan is largely dependent on making new land available for development. Currently Willoughby Hills has a mere 16 acres of developable commercial land available and no acreage available for industrial development. If the city is to progress, more desirable land must be made available.

The Shoppes at Willoughby Hills have acquired by Transamerica Premier Insurance Co. and is managed locally by CBRE. At this point, their plans are unclear. Spigel sold a portion its property to Jim Riggle at Eddy's Bike Shop and those plans are unclear as well.

Industrial Development: The city's industrial zone is at capacity. Vacant land is owned by Swagelok and Cuyahoga County. Neither appears to be interested in developing or selling the land.

New Development

Opened in 2014/2015

- O'Reilly's Auto Parts.
- The Dollar Tree.
- Flowers by Shelley.
- Appliance and Mattress Warehouse.
- Clover Development-Unassisted senior living.
- Dunkin' Donuts-Donut and coffee shop.
- American Heritage Motorcycles-Indian Chief motorcycle franchise.
- Willoughby Eastlake School District: STREAM Academy.
- The Woodroom
- Pizally's

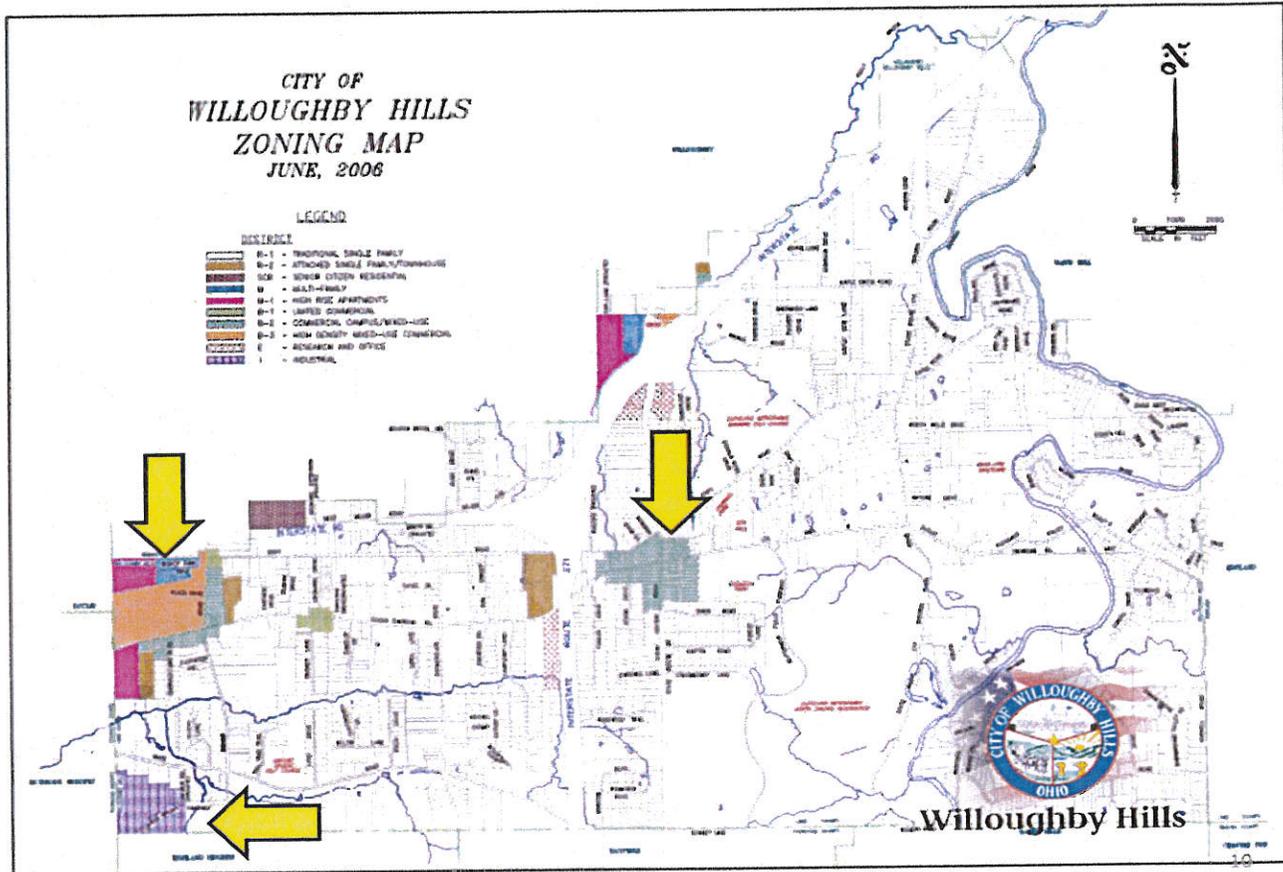
Other Initiatives

- **New Logo**-Constant evaluation and re-evaluation lead us to continue to make improvements in the city's economic development logo. We believe we now have one that reflects the image the city is trying to project.
- **Website**-Major redesign is constantly underway.
- **Zoning Maps**-New, improved, easier to read maps have been developed but are under constant review.
- **Sales Collateral**-New collateral is being developed.
- **Contact and inventory lists**-are always under review and refined as necessary.

Issues affecting economic development in the City of Willoughby Hills:

1. Land availability

While any parcel within the city is subject to “redevelopment”, there simply is no room available for NEW development. Our industrial zone is 100% occupied and there are only about 16 acres available for new commercial development.



2. Zoning Regulations.

Our zoning regulations are not conducive to commercial development. Areas across the street from each other are zoned differently and restrictions have been placed on some areas and individual parcels that will always require a waiver from the planning commission. Developers want clean zoning laws that do not have to be amended every time property changes hands.

In addition, the land available for new commercial is limited and the city’s most attractive areas for development are zoned residential.



City of Willoughby Hills

Residential

	A- (Master Plan)	B- (Master Plan)	B1- (Master Plan)	C- (Master Plan)	D- (Master Plan)	E- (Master Plan)	F- (Master Plan)
	Total Acres/ District	& Developed Acres	Developed Acres (A+B)	Acres Vacant (A-B1)	Flood Plain (E-C)	Total Developable Land	Percent Of A-
R-1 Residential	4,899	59.0%	2,890	2,009	237	1,772	36.2%
R-2 Residential	44	91.0%	40	4	4	0	0.0%
SCR Residential	12	0.0%	0	12	0	12	100.0%
M Multi-Family	21	100.0%	21	0	0	0	0.0%
M-1 High Rise Apartment	59	81.0%	48	11	0	11	18.6%
Total Residential	5,035	60.0%	2,999	2,036	254	1,783	25.7%
Commercial							
B-1 Commercial	10	80.0%	8	2	0	2	20.0%
B-2 Commercial	93	81.0%	75	18	0	18	19.4%
B-3 Commercial	72	97.0%	70	2	0	2	2.8%
E Research	37	86.0%	32	5	0	5	13.5%
Total Commercial	212	87.0%	185	27	0	27	12.7%
Industrial							
I-1 Industrial	45	18.0%	8	37	0	37	82.0%
Total Industrial	45	18.0%	8	37	0	37	82.0%
Total Interstate	350	100.0%	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Parks							
Cleveland Metroparks	990	100.0%	990	0	0	0	0.0%
Lake Metroparks	114	100.0%	114	0	0	0	0.0%
Local Parks	203	100.0%	203	0	0	0	0.0%
Total Parks	1,307	100.0%	1,307	0	0	0	0.0%
Total Acres	6,949	100.0%	3,192	2,100	254	1,847	26.6%
Available for Commercial/Industrial						27	16

3. Marketing.

Budget constraints have severely limited our ability to market the city. Other cities (our competitors) have hired retail consultants to develop studies and contact retailers on behalf of the cities they represent.

In addition, they set up meetings between the cities and prospects at various industry meetings.

We do not advertise and have no funds for professionally developed sales materials.

While we attended one industry meeting in 2013, due to the budget, we did not attend any in 2014 and have no plans to do so this year. Attending such meetings are valuable only when individual meetings with retailers and developers can be arranged ahead of time by the consultants.

The city does not offer any financial incentives. The only incentives available to prospective developers are those that can be obtained through the state or federal governments. These are available to all cities. While other cities offer various financial packages that give them a competitive advantage, there are no financial incentives unique to Willoughby Hills.

2014 Plan

Our successes in 2014 are reinforcement that our strategic plan is one that will serve us well for the short term future (1-3 years.) By then, Bishop Road should be fully developed and Loreto will continue to fill in development on the east side. This will serve us well in the near term and our plan for 2015 will be an extension of the prior year with minor enhancements as the year progresses.

However, this strategic plan is insufficient to alleviate the increasing tax burden being placed on the residents of the city. Instead, the City needs a sustainable strategy that addresses the previously mentioned issues if the city desires to attract NEW commercial/industrial development.