



2022 YEAR END REPORT



GEAUGA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

12611 Ravenwood Drive
Chardon, Ohio 44024

Geauga County Planning Commission

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Part 1: Introduction and Overview of Yearly Activities

The year 2022 was somewhat of a period of adjustment with two of the staff being relatively new to the office and operations moving into the new Geauga County Office Building on July 1, as pictured on the front page of this report. The office was closed for only one day, with little impact on the Commission's function. The staff and Board also became accustomed to the new conference room where our meetings are held.

It is a pleasure to work in such a nice building and the residents have already benefitted from centrally located offices. A property owner may visit the Planning Commission office about a lot split and they can easily walk down the hall to Geauga Public Health and the Building Department with septic system or construction/permit related questions.

The first annual review of the General Plan was conducted as well as initial discussion on updating the County Subdivision Regulations, last updated in 2010. Additionally, GIS work was advanced through the creation of several maps using ArcGIS Online, which is a valuable asset to county employees.

Part 2: Comprehensive Planning and Zoning

a. General Plan:

October 2022 marked the first year the Geauga County General Plan ("Plan") has been in use. The Plan itself requires an annual review, the purpose of which is to ensure the staff and Commission actively use it, make observations as to how it is used, and discuss potential items to add, delete, correct, or modify during the major five-year update. During the annual review various corrections/updates were made which were forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners in early 2023 for adoption. The staff referred to the Plan often, totaling forty (40) times during 2022.

b. Model Township Zoning Resolution:

Article I, II, and VII were updated as it relates to sign regulations, in light of any potential conflicts with freedom of speech. Article 10 was also updated regarding supplementary conditions on variances.

c. Land Use Map:

Updates to the county land use map were completed in May. There was also discussion regarding potential changes to the methodology in which the map is prepared.

d. Township Assistance:

The staff assisted the townships approximately ninety-five (95) times with various questions including informal and formal amendments, zoning amendment process, lot splits/plats, agricultural use, 208 maps, project mapping assistance, zoning/variances, easements, storm water, township land use plan, and demographics.

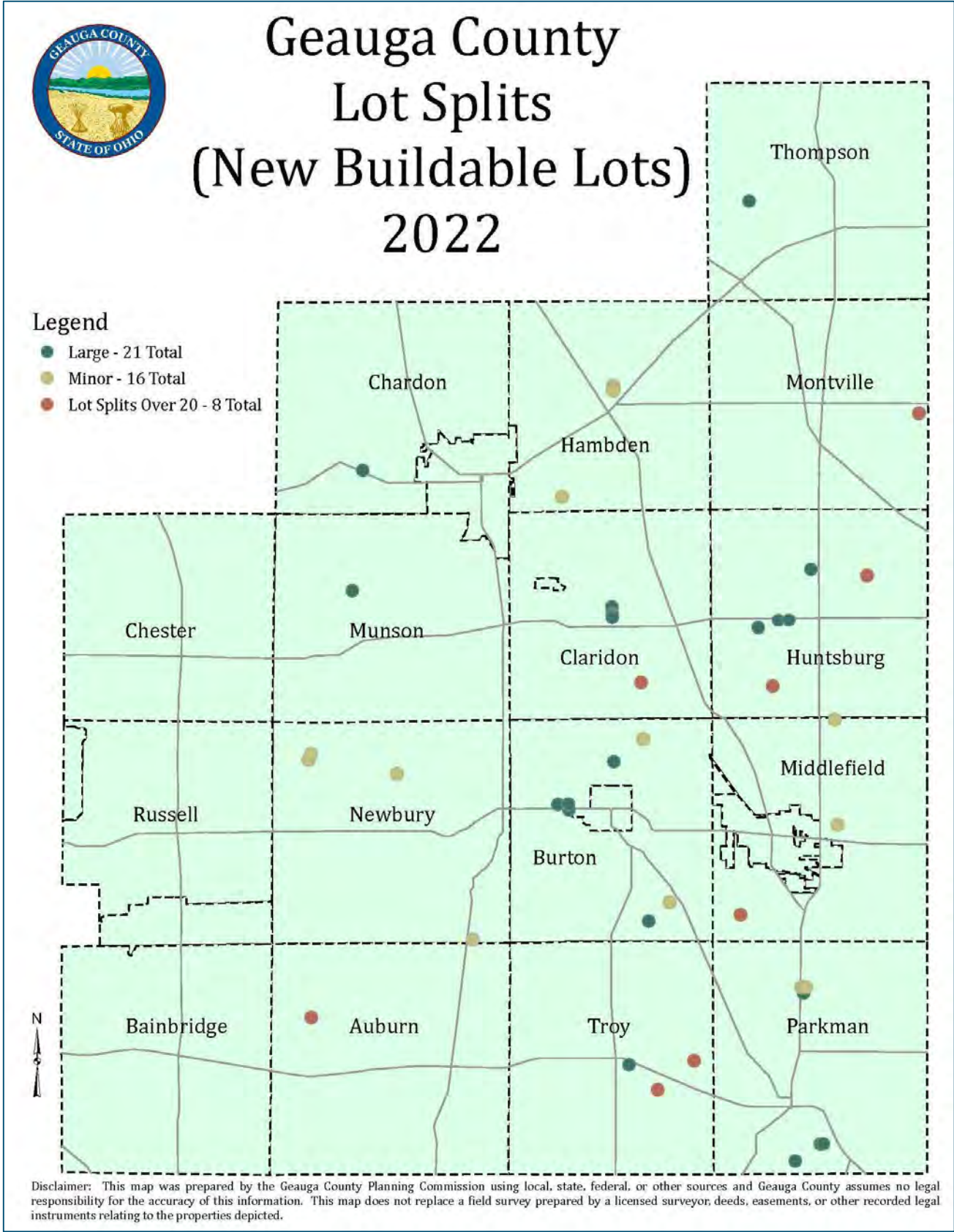
Part 3: Planning Administration

a. **Subdivision Activity:**

The following chart is a breakdown of the lot splits, easements, and other subdivision activity as well as the number of text/map amendment reviews.

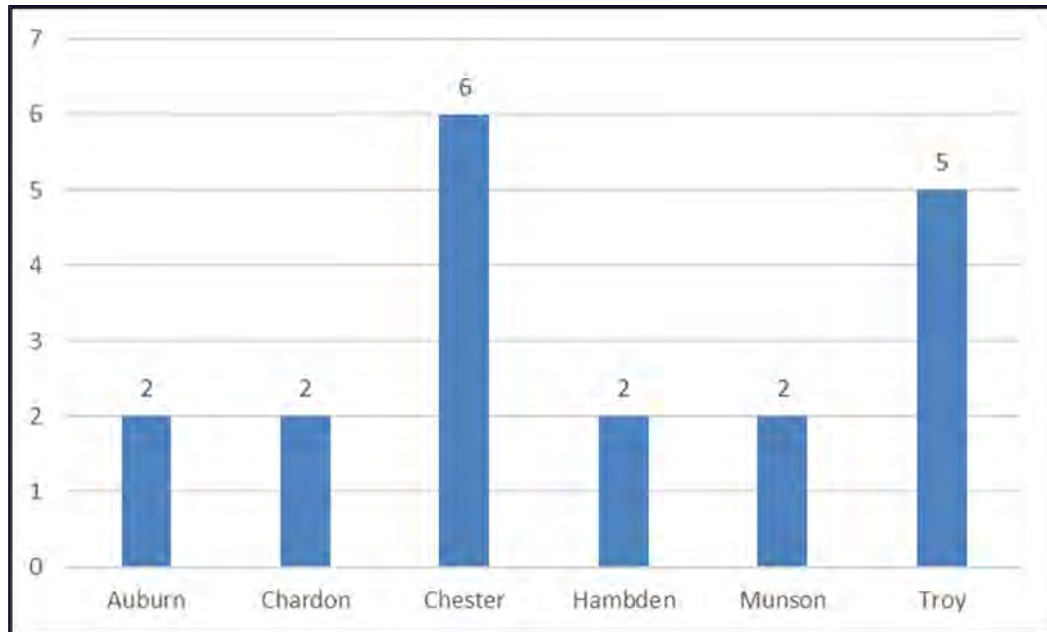
| | 2022 |
|---|----------------|
| | # Reviewed |
| Lot Splits/Subdivisions | |
| Re-plat | 3 |
| Major Subdivision | 2 (informally) |
| Minor Subdivisions (5 acres and less) | 16 |
| Large Lot Subdivisions (Between 5-20 acres) | 21 |
| Exempt Lots (Transfer to Adjacent Owner) | 60 |
| Exempt Lots (Over 20 acres) | 8 |
| Lot consolidations | 90 |
| Total | 200 |
| Zoning | |
| Informal text or map amendment reviews | 8 |
| Formal text or map amendment reviews | 19 |
| Preliminary lot split inquiries | 230 |
| Miscellaneous planning/zoning inquiries | 393 |
| Total | 650 |
| Miscellaneous | |
| Easements (roadway, septic, utility...) Total | 46 |

The map below illustrates the lot split information contained in the table located in 3a. Forty-five (45) new building lots were created in 2022 as compared to 54 in 2021 and 38 in 2020.



b. Township Zoning Text/Map Amendments:

Nineteen (19) total formal zoning amendments were reviewed in 2022 as compared to seventeen (17) in 2021, and fifteen (15) in 2020. Two of the amendments involved a change to a zoning map. Sixteen of the amendments were initiated by township zoning commissions and three were initiated by property owners.



The map below illustrates the zoning information contained in the table located in 3a.

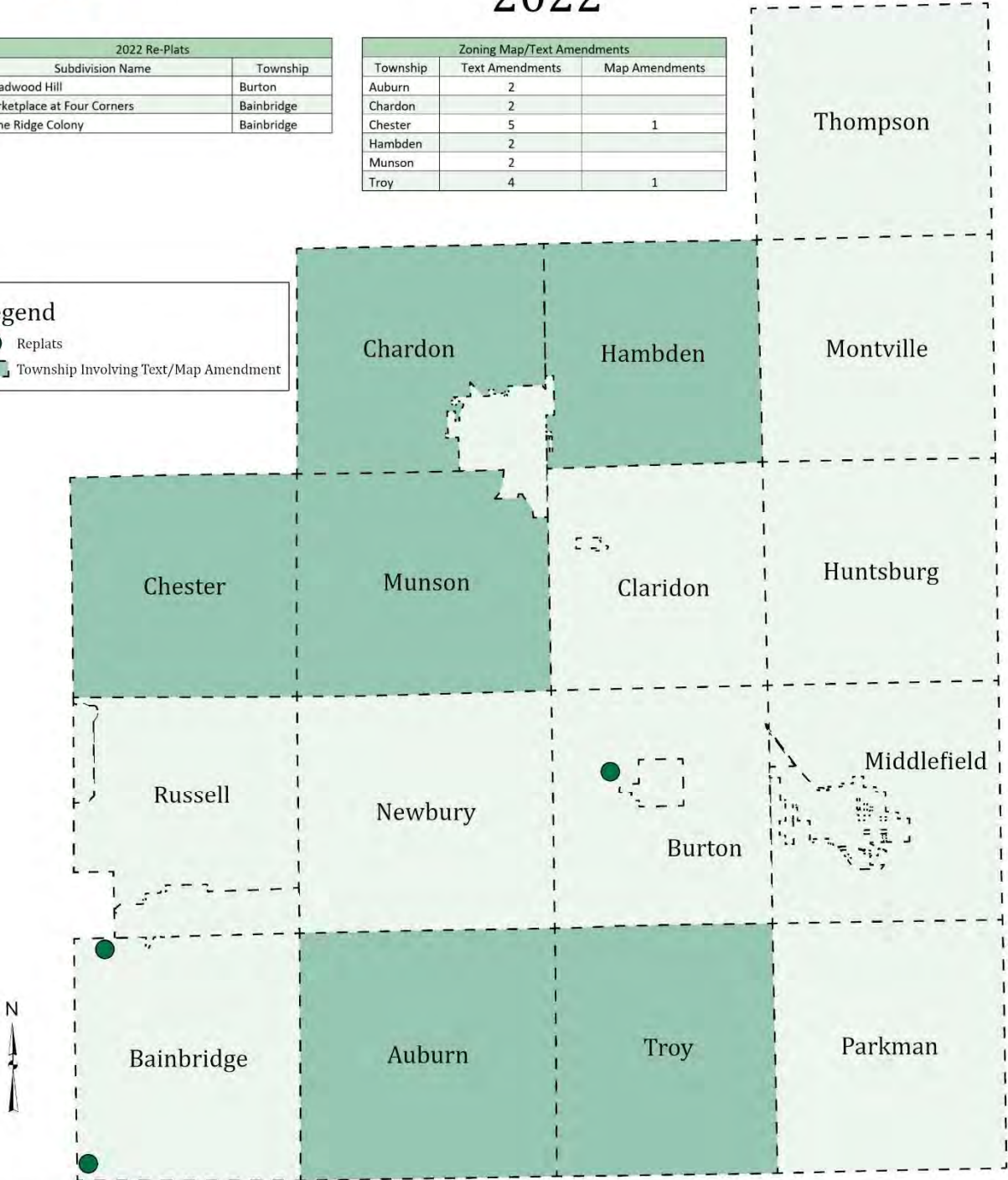


Geauga County Re-Plats & Text/Map Amendments 2022

| 2022 Re-Plats | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Subdivision Name | Township |
| Broadwood Hill | Burton |
| Marketplace at Four Corners | Bainbridge |
| Stone Ridge Colony | Bainbridge |

| Zoning Map/Text Amendments | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Township | Text Amendments | Map Amendments |
| Auburn | 2 | |
| Chardon | 2 | |
| Chester | 5 | 1 |
| Hambden | 2 | |
| Munson | 2 | |
| Troy | 4 | 1 |

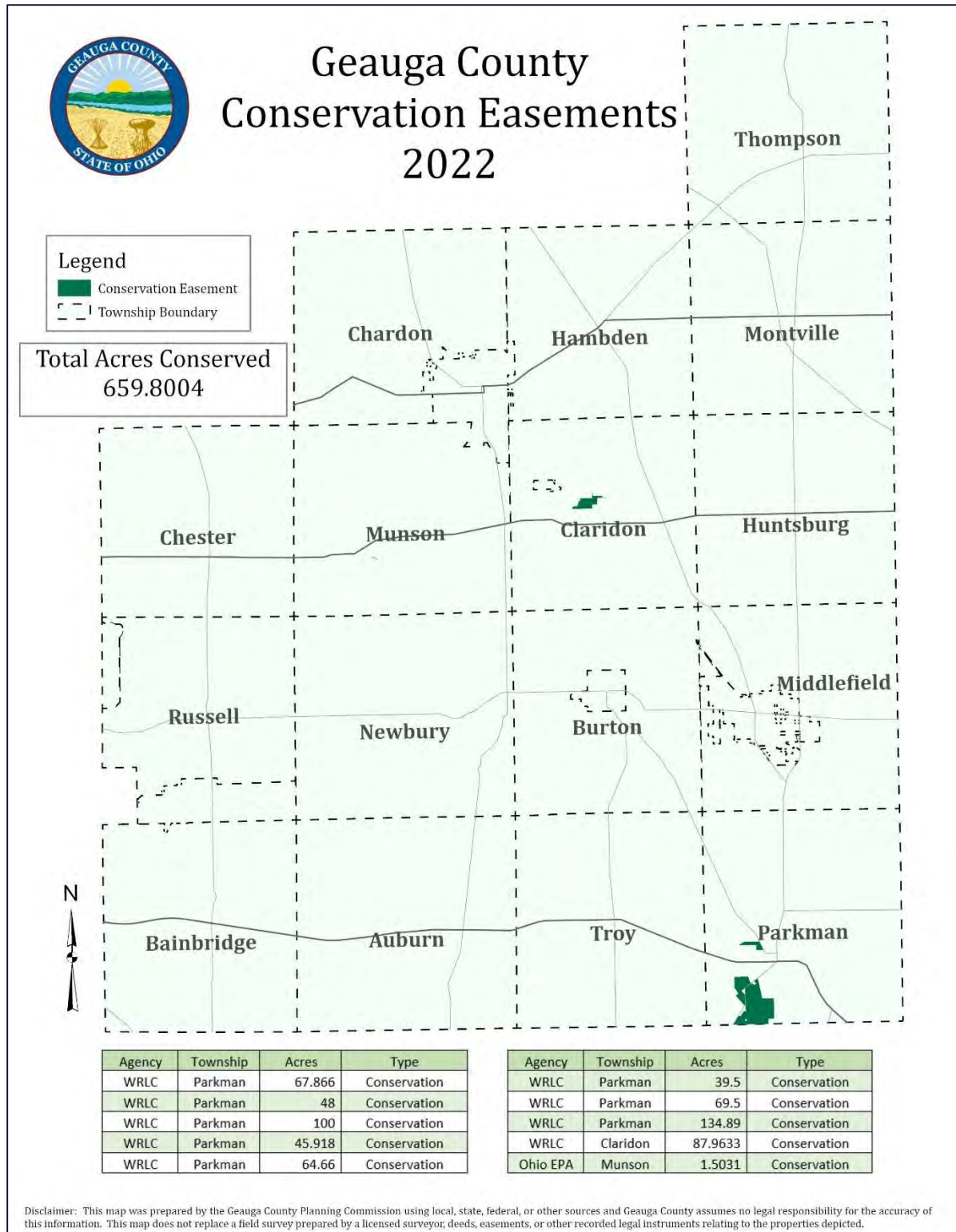
Legend
 Replats
 Township Involving Text/Map Amendment



Disclaimer: This map was prepared by the Geauga County Planning Commission using local, state, federal, or other sources and Geauga County assumes no legal responsibility for the accuracy of this information. This map does not replace a field survey prepared by a licensed surveyor, deeds, easements, or other recorded legal instruments relating to the properties depicted.

c. Easements

Forty-six (46) easements were approved in 2022, notably lower than the 93 in 2021, and 131 in 2020. Easements are generally for utilities, storm water, conservation, septic systems or highway purposes. Conservation easements are depicted in the map below:



Part 4: GIS

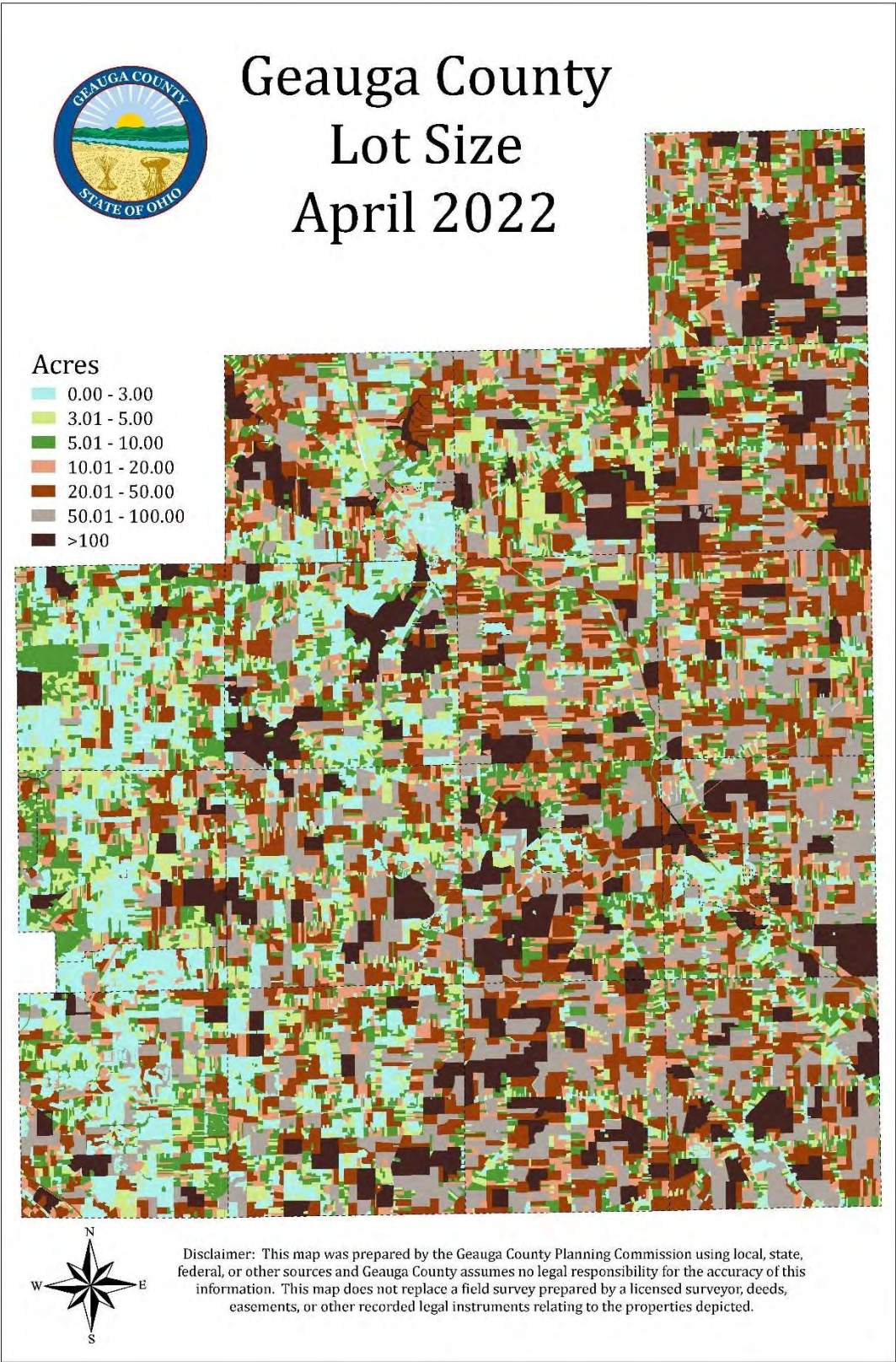
- a. **Mapping Projects:** Planner II Kobus made strides in advancing the Commission's use of GIS. Arc Online and ArcPro were made available to various county departments through the County Auditor's Office upgrade of their GIS system. Using the Map Gallery of ArcGIS Online, staff can share maps that may be of interest or use to other county employees, eliminating the need for emailing, use of Dropbox, shared network files, etc. (ArcOnline does require log-in credentials.) Ms. Kobus posted a variety of maps including County Township Zoning, County Population Change 2010-2020, Conservation Easements, County Generalized Zoning, Township 208 maps, and the lot splits. Additional maps will be added as needed.

The following maps were created or updated: County Land Use, Burton Village Zoning, Claridon Zoning, Newbury park/conserved properties, Russell Township street maps (for Police Dept.), and the County Generalized Zoning Map.

- b. **Networking:** The staff kept in contact with local GIS professionals via two GIS events, both coordinated by Lakeland Community College, to share knowledge and ideas that could benefit the communities for whom we work. Women in GIS was held virtually in April and GIS Day in November was in-person. GIS Day exposed high school and college students to local governments and businesses who utilize GIS, remote sensing, etc. A few photographs are provided below:



A new map never before created in 2022 is the Geauga County Lot Size Map depicted below. This map, at a glance, helps to provide an overall sense of the lot sizes countywide.



Part 5: Miscellaneous

- a. Northeast Ohio Planning and Zoning Workshop: The staff coordinated with Lake County Planning and Community Development and participated in the Northeast Ohio Planning and Zoning Workshop held at Punderson State Park in Newbury Township.



The workshop was a success with 96 attendees, not including presenters or volunteers. Thirty-one officials from Geauga County townships and municipalities attended including those from Parkman, Hambden, Bainbridge, Russell, Newbury, Middlefield Village, Chester, Munson, and Chardon townships.

Attendees included Township Trustees, BZA and Zoning Commission members and secretaries, zoning inspectors, planners, planning commission members, parks personnel, and economic development personnel.

- b. Planning Commission Website Updates: Updates to the Commission's website, primarily related to zoning inspector or secretary contact information, township website/zoning resolution links, and meeting minutes were made throughout the year. As the current overall County website will be decommissioned in early 2023, the staff also worked with the County ADP Department to create a new Planning Commission website with the Commission's input.
- c. Info Sheet Series: Draft versions of the "*How Do I Split My Property?*" and "*What Permits Do I Need for a New Home?*" info sheets were presented to the Commission in 2022, with the final versions to be released in 2023.
- d. Housing Inventory: A draft table of existing apartments, condominiums, duplexes, and triplexes was created based upon data obtained from REALink and online research. The table will include data on the number of single-family homes and this project is expected to be completed in 2023 with assistance from local communities, when possible.
- e. Standard Operating Procedures Manual: Ms. Irizarry created or updated approximately ten process sheets that will be included in the creation of the Standard Operating Procedures Manual.
- f. Directory of Public Officials: The move to the new building necessitated more updates than usual to the Directory and Ms. Irizarry completed those updates along with any changes that occurred with the November 2022 election.

- g. **New Single-Family Housing Starts:** Housing starts were slightly lower in 2022 with 160 as compared to 189 in 2021. See the table below for data on current and previous single-family housing starts. The 2020-2022 three-year average is also 160.

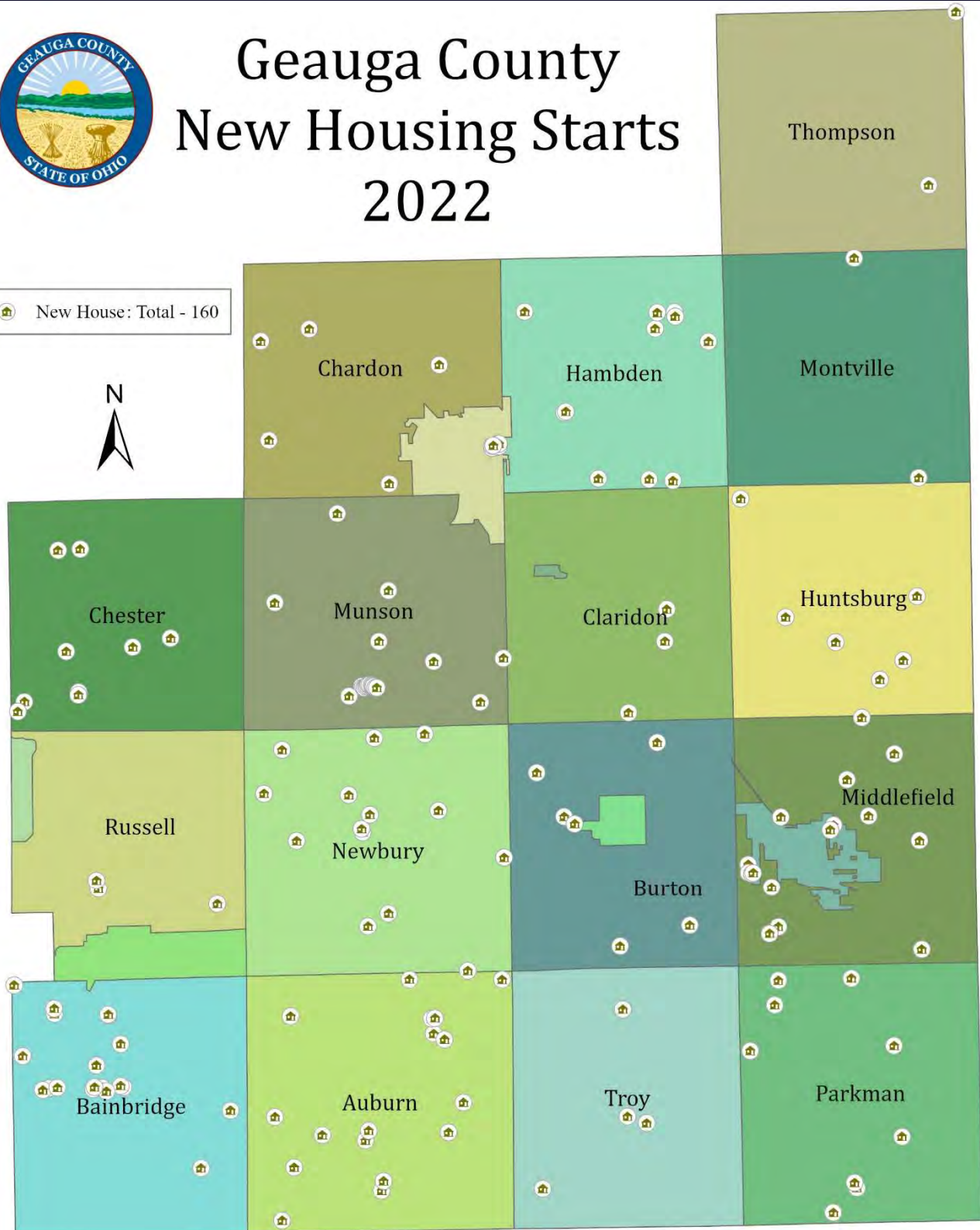
| Geauga County New Single Family Housing Starts | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 2016-2022 | | | | | | | |
| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Aquilla Village | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Auburn Twp. | 18 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 18 | 17 |
| Bainbridge Twp. | 26 | 33 | 33 | 23 | 26 | 31 | 22 |
| Burton Twp. | 5 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| Burton Village | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Chardon City | 8 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 11 | 11 |
| Chardon Twp. | 6 | 8 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| Chester Twp. | 5 | 5 | 8 | 12 | 6 | 9 | 9 |
| Claridon Twp. | 0 | 6 | 10 | 9 | 1 | 9 | 3 |
| Hambden Twp. | 11 | 13 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 13 | 11 |
| Huntsburg Twp. | 10 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 6 |
| Middlefield Twp. | 5 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 10 |
| Middlefield Village | 3 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 11 | 6 |
| Montville Twp. | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Munson Twp. | 13 | 13 | 11 | 11 | 17 | 15 | 20 |
| Newbury Twp. | 3 | 12 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 10 | 14 |
| Parkman Twp. | 13 | 12 | 7 | 12 | 8 | 13 | 9 |
| Russell Twp. | 6 | 6 | 10 | 14 | 9 | 9 | 3 |
| Thompson Twp. | 2 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 2 |
| Troy Twp. | 4 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 4 |
| TOTAL | 141 | 156 | 145 | 153 | 131 | 189 | 160 |
| * Data not available for South Russell Village | | | | | | | |

The map on Page 15 illustrates that new housing starts were, in general, spread out across the entire County. Bainbridge (22), Munson (20), and Auburn (17) had the highest number of housing starts.



Geauga County New Housing Starts 2022

New House: Total - 160



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- h. **Legislative Updates:** There were four pieces of legislation of note from the 134th General Assembly of the Ohio Legislature in 2022:
- I. **HB 172 (Fireworks):** Effective July 1, 2022, Ohio residents can lawfully discharge consumer-grade fireworks, but only on certain holidays. Local communities can choose to restrict or ban discharging of fireworks.
 - II. **HB 563 (Short Term Rentals):** prohibits the ability of townships and municipalities to regulate short term rental units (with limited exceptions), which can have a deleterious impact on surrounding neighborhoods due to their transient nature. Local communities as well as the Ohio Township Association submitted Opponent Testimony. The 134th General Assembly regular session ended in 2022 with no action on this bill.
 - III. **HB 698: (Eminent Domain):** This bill proposes to allow land owners to more easily navigate the legal system to receive compensation when their land is taken through eminent domain. Also included is defining “public use” as not including the use of property for recreational trails. The 134th General Assembly regular session ended in 2022 with no action on this bill.
 - IV. **Sub HB 501 (Small Solar Facilities):** This bill permits counties, townships, and municipalities to regulate small solar facilities, defined as having a capacity of less than 50 megawatts. The new language will be added to O.R.C 519.213, which is the same section that allows townships to regulate small wind farms. The Model Township Zoning Resolution will be updated accordingly.
- i. **CEDS:** In August the Planning Director concluded attendance at the CEDS (Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy) meetings coordinated by NOACA. Commission members present at the December 2022 meeting voted to submit a letter to the County Commissioners to end involvement with the CEDS economic development initiative.

Part 6: Staff Related

Ms. Irizarry and Ms. Kobus both completed their first year of employment with the Planning Commission in May and October 2022, respectively. Staff participated in twenty-four (24) educational related webinars or meetings as listed below, organized by general topic:

Planning and Zoning

1) Northeast Ohio Planning and Zoning Workshop (June); 2) Planning for Electrification: Strategies and Tools for EV Infrastructure Development; 3) Cleveland Planning and Zoning Workshop (October); 4) County Planning Director’s meeting; 5) Four Geauga County Township Association meetings; 6) Zoning inspector roundtable 7) Geauga Public Health Needs Assessment.

GIS

1) Women in GIS; 2) Underutilization of GIS and How to Cure It; 3) ArcPro; 4) Ohio GIS Conference; 5) Lakeland’s GIS Day

Employee Training

1) CORSA's Defensive Driving, 2) CORSA management training; 3) A.L.I.C.E training (active shooter); 4) Cybersecurity training; 5) new County issued Mitel phones; 6) WordPress

Miscellaneous

1) Soil and Water Conservation District Annual Meeting; 2) Geauga Growth Partnership's State of Education; 3) Storm water Task Force meeting; 4) meeting minute preparation; 5) farmland leases

Part 7: Fiscal

In 2022 new accounts were created for Travel, Advertising, Training, and Membership Dues/Licenses/Subscriptions so that in the future funds for such activities can be more appropriately budgeted, instead of the "Other" account containing a large amount of the budget. The Planning Commission's 2022 amended budget was \$210,592.00 and approximately \$202,000.00 was spent, a usage of approximately 95.9%.

In terms of revenues, which are received through the collection of lot split and platting fees, the 2022 total was down from previous years at \$7,380.00. The chart below provides a five-year revenue summary. Fluctuations can largely be attributed to major subdivisions and replats, which have the highest review fees, and very few of those were received in 2022.

| Year | Total Revenues |
|------|----------------|
| 2018 | \$25,932.50 |
| 2019 | \$7,950.00 |
| 2020 | \$23,200.00 |
| 2021 | \$19,800.00 |
| 2022 | \$7,380.00 |

Part 8: Conclusion

The Planning Commission began and accomplished many projects in 2022, several of which will carry over into 2023, including the Subdivision Regulations update, Model Zoning Resolution review, Info Sheets, and the Housing Inventory. Public education on various planning and zoning related topics is always one of the Commission's objectives, which will continue in 2023 with the intended release of as many Info Sheets as possible.