

4.2 ENHANCE, CONNECT & RE-IMAGINE SOUTHPARK MALL

The City of Strongsville has one of the region's strongest shopping malls, but with a growing shift towards online shopping and anchor stores beginning to close locations and downsize, an alternate future for this location needs to be addressed. Small steps can be made now to help enhance and connect the site as it exists today, but also plan for a future where SouthPark Mall may no longer exist.

Currently, there is very little connectivity within the mall site to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists safely. There are very limited sidewalks and crossing points that are also extremely dangerous as a majority of traffic entering the site from Royalton Road and Howe Road do not have stop signs. The Plan recommends enhancing the pedestrian and bicyclist experience and improving safety at key crossing points.

Additionally, the SouthPark Mall site has some of the highest concentration of impervious pavement within the entire community. The vast majority of visitors utilize the parking on the northern portion of the site at the main entrance and other parking areas tend to remain mostly empty. A reduction in these excess parking areas could help with controlling runoff and lead the way to greenway development and better connectivity. The Plan recommends looking at the reduction of parking along the southern half of the site to accommodate additional greenspace and multi-use paths.

Lastly, the future of the mall itself needs to be considered. While this is a regional retail destination right now, this may not be the case in five or ten years. As other malls in the region have closed, planning ahead and being prepared is critical to ensure that this site does not sit vacant. The Plan recommends working with residents, elected officials, and professionals to start envisioning potential ideas for this site.

ACTION STEPS: STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS

- A. *Create a landscaped buffer between the roadway surface and pedestrian surfaces to increase safety and provide a more pleasant walking and biking experience*
- B. *Install benches, bike racks, waste receptacles, flags, and other enhancements that share consistent City branding*
- C. *Consider implementing planted medians in place of painted or concrete medians on Royalton Road to create a "boulevard" environment in front of the Mall*

ACTION STEPS: SITE CONNECTIVITY

- D. *Consider implementing a multi-use path around the exterior of the site that connects to existing interior sidewalks*
- E. *Increase connectivity between interior pathways and the existing sidewalk network along Howe Road and Royalton Road*

ACTION STEPS: REDUCE IMPERVIOUS PAVEMENT

- F. *Continue reviewing parking requirement reductions to promote site development and place making*
- G. *Replace impervious pavement with greenspace and green infrastructure for increased stormwater management and to create enhanced pedestrian spaces*

ACTION STEPS: PLANNING AHEAD

- H. *Consider alternative development options for a future where SouthPark Mall no longer functions as it is today*
- I. *Implement flexible development regulations for potential future redevelopment (mixed-use, setbacks, height, etc.)*
- J. *Analyze and amend the Zoning Ordinance to expand the list of permitted uses on the SouthPark Mall site to anticipate and facilitate future redevelopment opportunities*