

Northwood looks at creating revitalization district

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Northwood City Council on Thursday will consider establishing a revitalization district as a tool for economic development.

The district would promote the development of new restaurants, and other social and entertainment establishments in properly zoned areas of the community.

"Basically, if passed by council, extra liquor licenses would be available within the district," said City Administrator Bob Anderson. "City council is looking at different ways to encourage economic growth along Woodville Road from the Great Eastern Shopping Plaza to I-280."

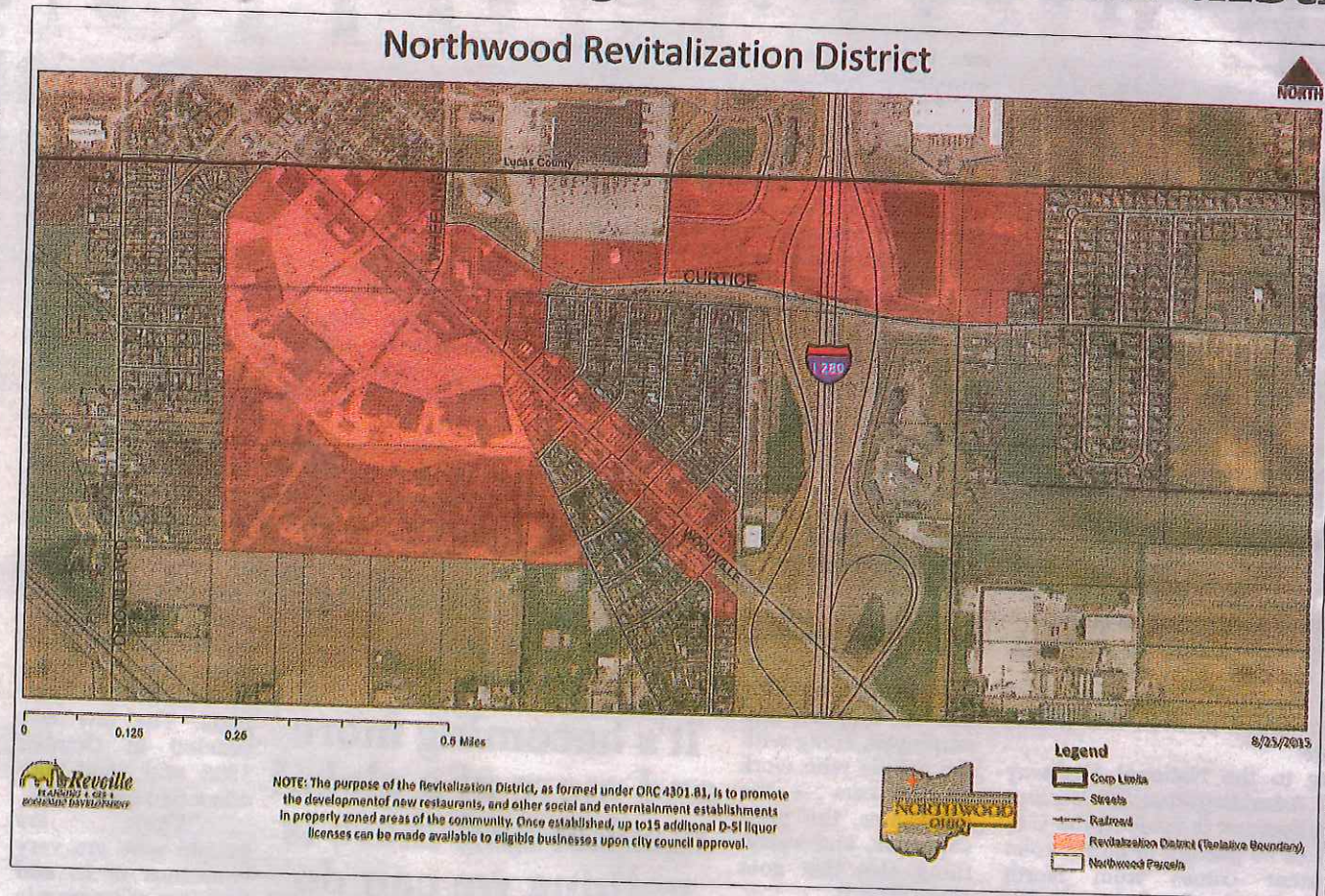
Creating the district would provide businesses with better access to D-51 liquor permits, which would spur investment and economic development, according to Glenn Grisdale, an economic development consultant for Northwood. The district would be established through the Ohio Division of Liquor Control, which would allow the sale of up to 15 additional D-51 liquor permits within the district. D-51 permits allow full liquor sales privileges.

"The reason why this tool was created is because sales of liquor permits are based upon population in the state of Ohio. The most coveted and desired liquor permit is the D-51, which allows establishments to offer beer, wine and spirituous liquor until 2:30 a.m.," said Grisdale.

Liquor permits are sold quickly, on a first come first serve basis, he added, because restaurants are more profitable when selling liquor.

"Northwood not only wants to provide their existing residents with this service, but for them to get to the next economic level, they're going to need additional rooftops and economic activity that only comes from inviting new traffic to the community. It's just one element to the overall economic development strategy that we're trying," he said.

Without the establishment of the district, a Northwood business seeking to buy a D-51 liquor permit would have to go through the Division of Liquor Control's TREX program if there are no licenses



The proposed revitalization district (red) would promote the development of new restaurants and other social and entertainment establishments in Northwood. (Courtesy City of Northwood)

available for transfer within the community. The business would be allowed to purchase another liquor permit in Ohio but is required to buy the business's assets as well, which can be cost prohibitive.

"Usually, it can get so expensive to the business looking to buy the permit that the deal will go away," said Grisdale. "So when someone in the district applies for a liquor permit, the Division of Liquor Control will look at the address on the application, and will see it's in a revitalization district, and that business will be eligible for a D-51 liquor permit. They would be able to buy the D-51 liquor permit without having to buy the business's assets. That's the whole benefit of this district. It allows people to save money, and get just the license. They can use the extra money to fix up their building,

do a business plan, buy food, or whatever."

He noted that the public shouldn't be wary about additional liquor licenses turning the city into the "wild, wild west."

"The market will find this tool valuable up to a certain point where people will say, 'There are just too many restaurants over there, or too many whatever.' But that will never happen because city council will keep their ears to the ground and will listen to the public. It will never get that way because businesses will go through the same liquor permitting process as anyone else. It just makes them eligible," he said.

One possible boundary for the revitalization district could be the Central Business District along Woodville Road, he said. It would be used in conjunction with other tools to help revitalize the area, which

includes the Great Eastern Shopping Plaza.

"Generally, it includes the far west boundary of the Great Eastern Shopping Plaza, then north to Old Curdice Road, then east to the outlots around Meijer and Applebee's, then to the outlots along I-280, then across I-280 to outlots at Menards, then back to the Great Eastern Shopping Plaza," he said.

The proposed district does not include the property where the former Woodville Mall was located on Woodville Road before it was razed.

"Council did talk about that, but upon my advice, I didn't want this district to get too large because people would not see the fruits of the program, it would be too sprawled out," he said. "It could be included later."