

**RICHLAND TOWNSHIP
2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

MAY 2007

Prepared by:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The 2030 Richland Township Comprehensive Plan is the result of a planning exercise that examines population, demographics, employment, land use, transportation and housing characteristics necessary to address issues relative to the future development of the Township. This Plan, comprehensive in nature, is very much related to the economic and social development of the Township. The Plan is intended to be used as a tool to support and guide the future growth of Richland Township. Most importantly, it is to be used as a tool to address change and the evolution of Richland Township.
- In order for a community to understand its future potential, an assessment of its current site and situation is required. A land use plan defines the characteristics of, and areas for, future land use. Its objective is to assure that future growth is managed in a manner consistent with the public interest. The key issues of concern to future development revolve around scattered residential development and the availability, adequacy and costs of the Township's infrastructure/services. The community's transportation network, its water distribution system, wastewater capabilities and drainage system are typical infrastructure concerns for the public.
- Richland Township is a largely rural agrarian community with productive soils. Classifying the soil by crop productivity capabilities and site limitations, when looking at all 24,497 acres, Richland Township has 2,454.12 acres of Prime Soil with No Conditions and 1,359.52 acres of non-prime soil. The remaining 20,678.36 acres of land in Richland Township is classified Prime with Conditions.
- Over the last 30 years, land use conversion in Richland Township has largely been confined to low-density residential/commercial developments occurring along existing rural roadways. Currently, agricultural, residential and recreational/quasi-public uses consume the most land within Richland Township. In 2006, 21,880.6 acres of Richland Township was identified as in agricultural use by the Allen County Auditor's Office, totaling 89.3 percent of all land use. Currently, 2,050 acres of land in Richland Township are consumed in residential use. This equates to 8.4 percent of all available land.
- According to the United States Bureau of the Census, the population of Richland Township in 2000 was 2,015 persons, an increase of 23.7 percent since 1980. The Township has experienced an overall population increase of 33.0 percent when extending the period from 1970 to 2000 or 31.7 percent since 1960. Taking measures that will sustain population growth is critical to long term stability within the Township.
- The total number of Richland Township households in 2000 was 696, an increase of 17.1 percent over the 1990 figure of 594 households. This increase in the number of households compares to a similar, but lower, statewide increase of 8.7 percent. In 2000, the average household size in the Township was 2.97 persons, higher than the State mean size of 2.55 persons per household, and an increase of 1.7 percent in size from 1990. Projections to 2030 show a decline in household size to 2.56 persons per household, primarily driven by the aging of the population. The implications of an increasing number of households and smaller size households should be monitored by local policy experts and reflected in area housing policies, building codes and zoning regulations.
- The Township's overall demographics generally reflect state and county trends. However, the younger adults, those in the 20 to 34 age group, those most likely to start a family comprise only 12.1 percent of the population. This fact identifies potential difficulties for local employers looking for younger employees. Data also suggests that simply due to age of the

population more than a third (39.3%) of the population is not able to fully contribute to the economic growth and earning power of the community either because they are too young or too old.

- Half (48.0%) of Richland Township's housing was built after 1960. All of Richland Township's housing stock are single-family units, as compared to 71.2 percent for the State of Ohio, 76.5 percent for Allen County and 76.4 percent in Bluffton. The median home value for Richland Township in 2000 (\$107,200) is significantly higher than Allen County (\$81,800) due in part to that distinction. The size and character of housing within Richland Township may encounter suitability factors as the population gradually grows older and more female in orientation.
- The primary form of residential land development in Richland Township is through haphazard roadside development of farmland. Since 2000, residential lots have consumed 534.051 acres of prime farmland in Richland Township.
- Data for the period between 2000 and 2005 shows that the number of employers located in Richland Township declined by 21.0 percent, while those employed in Township firms fell by 116 employees to a total of 325, a decline of 26.3 percent. The 2000 civilian labor force in Richland Township totaled 1,078 persons, or 2.1 percent of Allen County's total civilian labor force. Examining employment rates, 97.4 percent of residents were employed. The dominant sectors for Richland Township residents include manufacturing (25.7%) followed closely by educational health, and social services (27.0%), and retail trade (11.9%).
- Richland Township is projected to add approximately 226 more residents between 2000 and 2030. The projected growth for Richland Township will impact the demand on community facilities, housing supply, infrastructure and associated public services, as well as land use within Richland Township. Seniors are expected to comprise 19.3 percent of the population by 2030. The significance of the "seniors" group is that their presence suggests slower future growth while increasing the demand on emergency medical services, accessible housing units and paratransit services.
- The link between community development and transportation cannot be minimized. The community's access to the federal and State roadway system is very good and pending improvements will only increase the community's attractiveness. Richland Township is currently serviced by slightly more than 130 miles of roadways that provide for approximately 72,400 vehicle miles of travel per day. However, a cursory review of area roadway's reveal 113.13 miles determined to be deficient in width as defined by federal design standards. Although other governmental units share maintenance and repair of these roadways, Richland Township is solely responsible for more than 62.75 miles of rural and suburban roadways. Richland Township roadways are expected to carry more than 94,000 vehicle miles of travel per day by 2030.
- Examining potable water, Richland Township relies primarily on individual wells located on residential properties and farms. The existing water distribution system in Richland Township is constrained to those incorporated areas with the exception of the Richland Manor Assisted Living Complex off Dixie Highway and the Speedway Truck Stop. When examining wastewater treatment service, Richland Township is served by Allen County and the Village of Beaverdam. To date Beaverdam has not been very non-aggressive with extending their sewer service outside of the confines of the incorporated area. Extensions of Bluffton's sewer services have historically required annexation. Concerns arise over the coordination of future extensions of both sanitary sewer and municipal water services.

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SECTION I INTRODUCTION

The Richland Township 2030 Comprehensive Plan is the result of an extensive planning exercise that examines the population, demographics, employment, land use and housing characteristics necessary to address issues related to the future development of Richland Township. This Plan, comprehensive in nature, is very much related to the economic and social development of the Township. The Plan is intended to be used as a tool to support and guide the future growth of Richland Township. Most importantly, it can be used as a tool to address change and the evolution of Richland Township. This Plan was purposely prepared to address compatibility issues between: various land uses; the management and preservation of natural resources; the identification and preservation of historically significant lands and structures; and, the provision of adequate infrastructure to support future development.

1.1 History of Community Development & Planning

The history of community development and planning in Richland Township is fractured in terms of its nature and scope. The Allen County Engineer's Office (ACEO) has provided the professional engineering guidance to manage safety on the Township roadway system and to manage drainage across the community. Richland Township has come to rely upon the Allen Economic Development Group (AEDG) to market and guide local economic development initiatives. The Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission (LACRPC) has historically had a supportive role with respect to demographic, transportation and land use analyses. The LACRPC has also provided technical assistance to the Township with respect to developing regulatory language and documents. The Board of Allen County Commissioners has supported each of the aforementioned agencies financially and politically.

The Villages of Bluffton and Beavertown have provided the necessary oversight, construction and maintenance of public water and wastewater systems. The Allen County Health Department (ACHD) regulates the permitting process related to the construction of private wastewater systems. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) is responsible for the permitting of commercial and industrial wastewater systems.

The development of an area is directly related to changing population and land use over time. In general, population growth and demographic trends create the demand for housing and commercial development. To this end, Richland Township has shown concern over disjointed, haphazard development, and expressed a desire for a more holistic and unified approach to future development within the Township. In 1995, the Township worked with the villages of Bluffton and Beavertown to develop a comprehensive plan for the larger community. Now, after nearly a dozen years, Richland Township officials approached the LACRPC for its technical support in updating and revising the Plan as it pertains to Richland Township exclusively. The Township's administrative staff reflecting fiscal, zoning and roadway maintenance responsibilities provided the technical reviews required for document development.

Richland Township has shown concern over disjointed, haphazard development, and expressed a desire for a more holistic and unified approach to future development within the

1.2 Planning Philosophy

The preparation of this document was predicated upon the long-standing relationships that the LACRPC has forged with Richland Township and the various entities providing

technical expertise and infrastructure for community development. The strength of the LACRPC lies in the insights gained over 40 years of serving Richland Township and the other 17 member political subdivisions in planning and implementation of specific programs, projects and activities.

The document's planning philosophy is both inclusive and cumulative. Inclusive, with respect to the number of agencies and interests represented and considered during the planning process; cumulative, in that it represents the past planning efforts of various entities and agencies. That planning philosophy respects the diversity of the community. The planning document recognizes the Township's diversity in terms of population characteristics, its economic base, and its infrastructure. The Township accepts this diversity and embraces it as a strength of the community. The document also recognizes that the political subdivision possesses inherent strengths and weaknesses and aspires to new opportunities. The Richland community wants to capitalize upon shared concerns and ambitions.

The task was to support and engage existing community leaders in the preparation of a Comprehensive Plan to further cooperative efforts that would address local needs. The LACRPC was charged with the responsibility of providing technical resources/assistance to assure Richland Township that their respective concerns were identified and addressed. Thus, the ultimate objective of the planning process, as stated in the Development Strategy, is to "assess the current conditions of the Township as it relates to developing a plan that best utilizes local resources for the positive development of the Richland Township community."

1.3 Comprehensive Planning Process

The comprehensive planning process is the result of a continuing participatory planning effort completed by participants representing the diverse interests of the community. The Comprehensive Plan contains the following:

The planning process is a continuing and participatory process representing the diverse interests of the Township.

- Background and history of the site and situation of the area covered with a discussion of the economy, including as appropriate: population, demographics, labor force, crime and emergency medical services resources, infrastructure and the environment.
- A discussion of community development problems and opportunities; including incorporation of any relevant materials and suggestions from other government sponsored or supported plans.
- A discussion setting forth goals and objectives for taking advantage of the opportunities and solving the problems of the area.
- A plan of action, including suggested projects to implement established objectives and goals.
- Performance measures that will be used to evaluate whether, and to what extent, goals and objectives have been or will be met.

1.4 Plan Organization & Management

The Comprehensive Plan was prepared by staff of the LACRPC based on input from the administrative staff of Richland Township and local governmental agencies. The draft

2030 Comprehensive Plan document was presented to the Richland Township Trustees for review and subsequent approval. The draft document was circulated to local stakeholders prior to the final draft being approved. This Plan advances the vision and goals established for the Township by Samuel Aryeetey-Attoh, and Henry Moon of the University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio.

1.5 Chronology of Events

The following is a summary of events leading to the final approval of this Comprehensive Plan:

- **Issues of Concern.** Based on prior input and data analysis completed by the LACRPC, a roster of key issues was prepared and reviewed for discussion. Such discussion sessions were ongoing and finalized in Spring 2007.
- **Goals and Objectives.** Based on discussions and subsequent recommendations, goals and actions were developed for review and finalization during the Spring of 2007.
- **Action Plan.** Plan recommendations were formulated into specific actions that were considered and incorporated into the final document in the Spring of 2007.
- **Final Richland Township Adoption.** Township trustees considered formal action after the May 2007 public hearings.

Preparation Process:

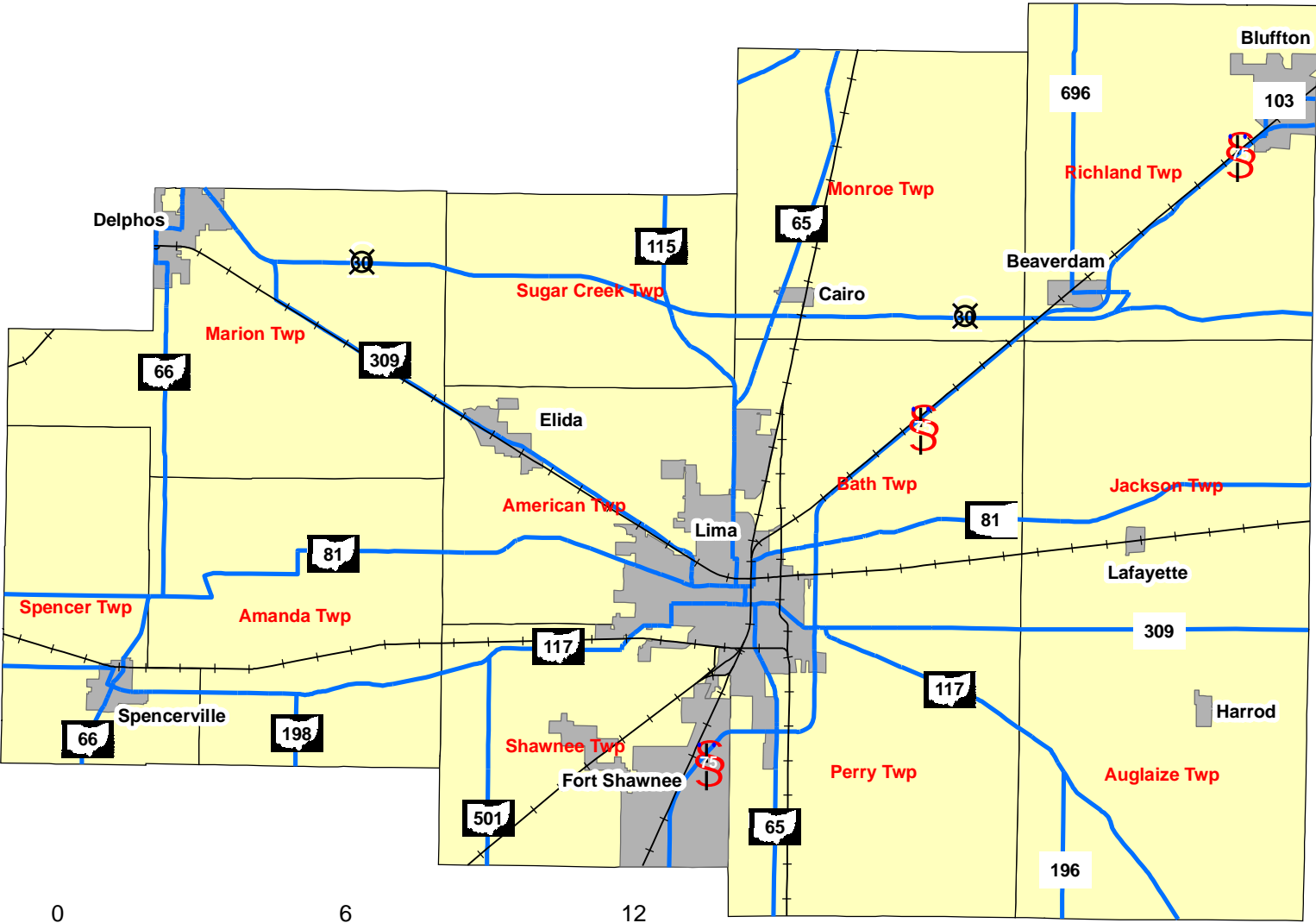
- Obtain input
- Identify issues
- Set Goals and Objectives
- Prepare Action Plan
- Obtain Approvals

1.6 Major Community Development Issues

Members of the Advisory Committee were forced to address specific issues over the course of Plan preparation. These issues include;

- The Township needs to better define agriculture as an economic activity to support the agricultural industry and preserve the rural character and heritage of the community.
- Specific roadway corridors should be targeted and infrastructure developed to encourage commercial growth, diversify the economic base and keep taxes low. These corridors are gateways to the Township and need to be improved.
- An aging population and the retention and attraction of college-educated youth pose a unique challenge to the community in terms of housing, transportation, government services and an available labor force.
- No open space requirements have been established. Natural resources, such as the Riley, Little Riley and Cranberry creeks need to be preserved. Wetlands and floodplains need to be more clearly defined for protection, and a mechanism for preserving natural resources needs to be put in place. Storm drainage is not managed properly, and existing tiles are not maintained.
- Public infrastructure, including municipal water, sanitary sewer and stormwater facilities are not yet fully coordinated and are working against a planned community.
- There is a need to capitalize on area schools, including the Ohio State University, Rhodes State College, University of Northwestern Ohio and Bluffton University.

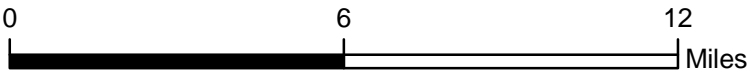
MAP 1 ALLEN COUNTY BASE MAP



4



LIMA - ALLEN COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION



SECTION II SITE & SITUATION

In order for a community to understand its future potential, an assessment of its current site and situation is required. A land use plan defines the characteristics of, and areas for, future land use. Its objective is to assure that future growth is managed in a manner consistent with the public interest. A plan should provide clear guidance to landowners, developers, legislative and administrative bodies as they make significant land use decisions. The land use plan should have, at its base, a clear understanding of the nature of the physical attributes found within the Township as well as the nature of existing land use and recent trends.

This section attempts to provide a succinct overview of Richland Township's physical properties and the economic activities etched across its landscape. The section provides valuable information and insightful illustrations before culminating with several community development issues.

2.1 Location Attributes & Composition

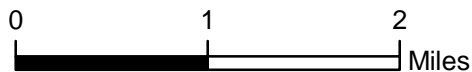
Richland Township is approximately 38.9 square miles in total area. The Township is immediately adjacent to the village of Bluffton, and includes the village of Beaverdam. The Township is approximately 6.9 miles from the city of Lima, the largest city in Allen County Ohio. The Richland community is bisected by I-75 and contains the I-75 and US 30 interchange and the Bluffton I-75 SR 103 interchange. The Township is sub-divided into 36 sections. Beginning with the Campbell Cemetery, there have been 11 separate annexations of township land by the Village of Bluffton, totaling 404.78 acres, with the last annexation taking place in 1996. The Village of Beaverdam has annexed 41.8 acres since 1878. Annexation activity hasn't taken place since 1913. The Township form of government consists of 3 trustees publicly elected to 4-year terms and one clerk also elected to a 4-year term. Map 2 provides an aerial view of Richland Township.

2.2 Climate & Natural Features

Richland Township is an area of 24,913.6 acres located in West Central Ohio in the eastern half of Allen County. The Township is mostly level or gently sloping and is excellent for agriculture. Historically, the most significant geographical feature of Allen County is its rich soils due in part to its location within the Great Black Swamp. The Great Black Swamp encompassed almost 7,000 square miles of prime timber and flooded prairies. Once a glacial lake that covered much of northwest Ohio, this land harbored immense tracts of maple, hickory, birch, oak and ash trees. But until the swamp was drained, little could be done to timber the stands of trees or utilize the incredibly rich soils.

Richland Township's global location results in a moist mid latitude climate with relatively cold winters and exhibits the characteristics of Dfa climates. Richland Township experiences this climate of warm summers and cold winters largely because of its general location on the North American land mass. The climate is somewhat moderated because of its proximity to the Great Lakes. The community generally experiences distinct warm summers that contribute to a growing season that ranges from 5 to 6 months long. Summers are complete with humid evenings and thunderstorms. Winters are relatively cold with blustery winds and snowfall, sometimes with severe blizzards.

MAP 2 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: AERIAL VIEW



1 inch equals 1 miles



2.2.1 Climate

Richland Township is relatively cold in winter and hot in summer. In winter, the average temperature is 27.9 degrees Fahrenheit and the average daily minimum temperature is 19.9 degrees. The lowest temperature on record, which occurred at Lima on January 19, 1994, is -21 degrees. In summer, the average temperature is 72.0 degrees and the average daily maximum temperature is 83.0 degrees. The highest recorded temperature, which occurred on July 15, 1936, is 109 degrees.

The average total annual precipitation is about 35.98 inches. Of this, 19.94 inches or 55.4 percent usually falls in May through October. The growing season for most crops falls within this period. The heaviest 1-day rainfall during the period of record was 4.38 inches on June 14, 1981. Thunderstorms occur, on average, 39 days each year, and most occur between April and September.

The average seasonal snowfall is 19.2 inches. The greatest snow depth at any one time during the period of record was 19 inches. On average, 40 days of the year have at least 1 inch of snow on the ground. The number of such days varies greatly from year to year. The heaviest 1-day snowfall on record was more than 18.0 inches on January 13, 1964.

The average relative humidity in mid afternoon is about 60 percent. Humidity is higher at night, and the average at dawn is about 82 percent. The sun shines 74 percent of the time possible in summer and 45 percent in winter. The prevailing wind is from the west/southwest. Average wind speed is highest, 12 miles per hour, from January through April.

2.2.2 Physiography, Relief & Drainage

Richland Township lies in the Indiana and Ohio till plain part of the Central Lowland Physiographic Province. As shown in Map 3, Richland Township is characterized by relatively flat topography, generally sloping south to north from a high of 905 feet above sea level to a low of 775 feet above sea level. The Township gently slopes in an almost uniform grade from south of U.S. 30 to its Northwestern corner.

Richland Township was once beneath a large ice sheet. As the glacier melted and retreated, a large lake formed and covered much of northwest Ohio. Over time the geological processes resulted in a gently sloping terrain and productive soils but with relatively poor drainage.

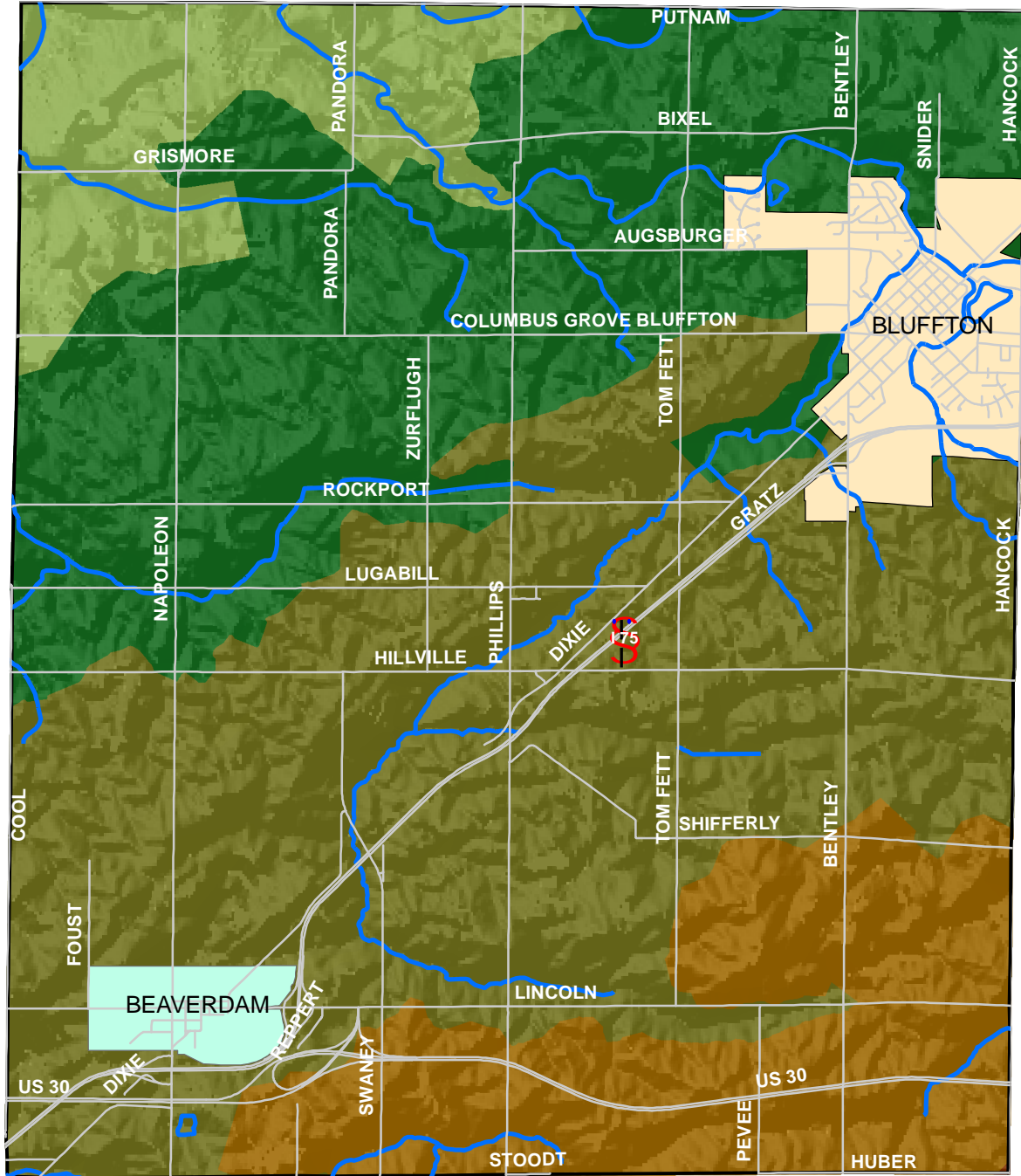
Richland Township is drained by the tributaries of the Blanchard River of Hancock County. The Blanchard River flows northward and is part of the Maumee River basin. As depicted on Map 4, Richland Township is located within 7 separate sub-watersheds including the Plum Creek, Plum Creek above Sycamore, Plum Creek at Mouth, Cranberry Creek, Sugar Creek, and Rattlesnake Creek sub-watersheds. Serving Richland Township are 37 bridges.

2.2.3 Floodplains & Wetlands

The relatively flat topography and riverine system of Richland Township coupled with the local climate and moderate precipitation result in localized flooding and seasonal ponding. Given the community's relative position with respect to other West Central Ohio counties in the Maumee River watershed the community occasionally experiences severe flooding.

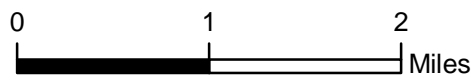
Richland Township hosts 1,109 acres of high hazard flood areas.

MAP 3 ALLEN COUNTY TOPOLOGICAL MAP



Elevation

- 944 - 983
- 904 - 944
- 865 - 904
- 824 - 865
- 785 - 824
- 765 - 785

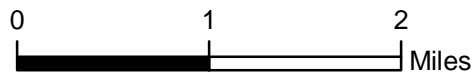
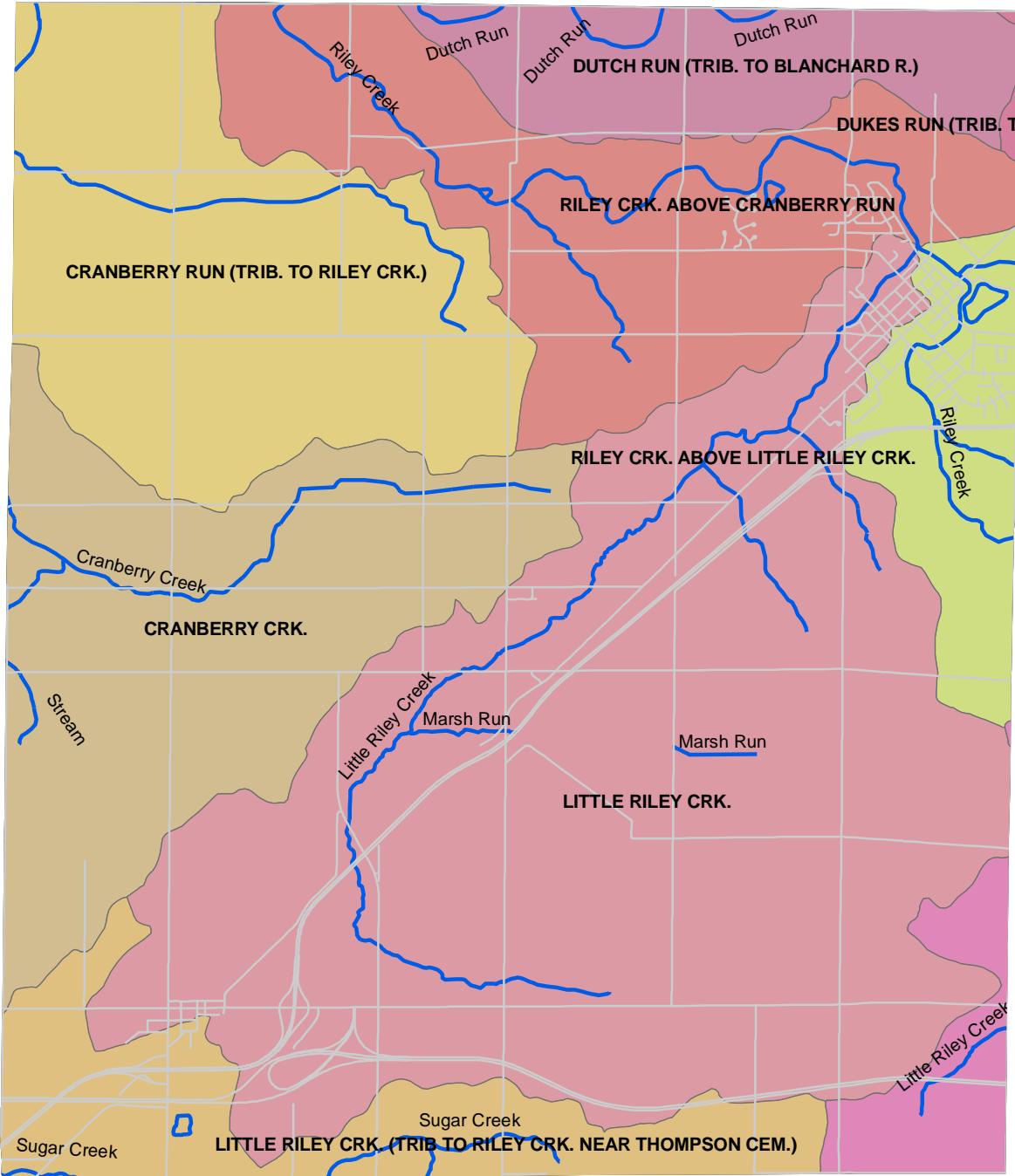


1 inch equals 1 miles



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MAP 4 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: WATERSHEDS



1 inch equals 1 miles



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Floodplains are those high hazard areas identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as areas with a 1 percent chance per annum of flooding. FEMA has identified 14,379 acres of high hazard flood areas in Allen County, of which 1,946.4 acres or 13.53 percent are in Richland Township. Primary locations of good floodplain in Richland Township are found along the Riley and Little Riley Creeks. The FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (1989) are predicated on detailed reports compiled by the United States Army Corps of Engineer (1967) and the United States Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service (1979). Map 5 details the parameters of the floodplains by their respective waterway.

Wetlands are lands that are flooded or saturated at or near the ground surface for varying periods of time during the year. Wetland delineations are predicated upon the United States Department of the Interior (USDI) and the National Wetlands Inventory. The mapped results of the USDI Wetlands Inventory (1994) are based upon survey work conducted by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) using remote sensing and information obtained from United States Geological Survey (USGS) quadrangle maps. The FWS consider wetlands as lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where either (a) hydrophytes exist, (b) hydric soils are located, and/or (c) non-soil substrate is saturated or covered with water at some time during the growing season. Data made available by USDI reveals some 300 potential wetland locations in Richland Township. Map 5 identifies wetlands documented by the USDI with FEMA identified floodplains.

2.3 Mineral Resources

The mineral resources of Richland Township are limited to bedrock, sand and gravel. Most of these resources are of minor importance because of the relatively thin deposits of any high-quality materials for wide commercial use. Dolostone is the major component of bedrock in Allen County, although limestone is also present. Dolomite and limestone have been mined from several locations in Richland Township, specifically Bluffton Stone located on both sides of I-75 at Bentley Road. There are no inactive mines currently identified in Richland Township by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). Most of the quarried stone is used for agricultural or industrial uses or for use in the transportation industry. In 2006, there was 1 parcel totaling 85.56 acres being quarried/mined in Richland Township. Map 6 identifies the location of the principle active and inactive quarries in Richland Township.

2.4 Soils

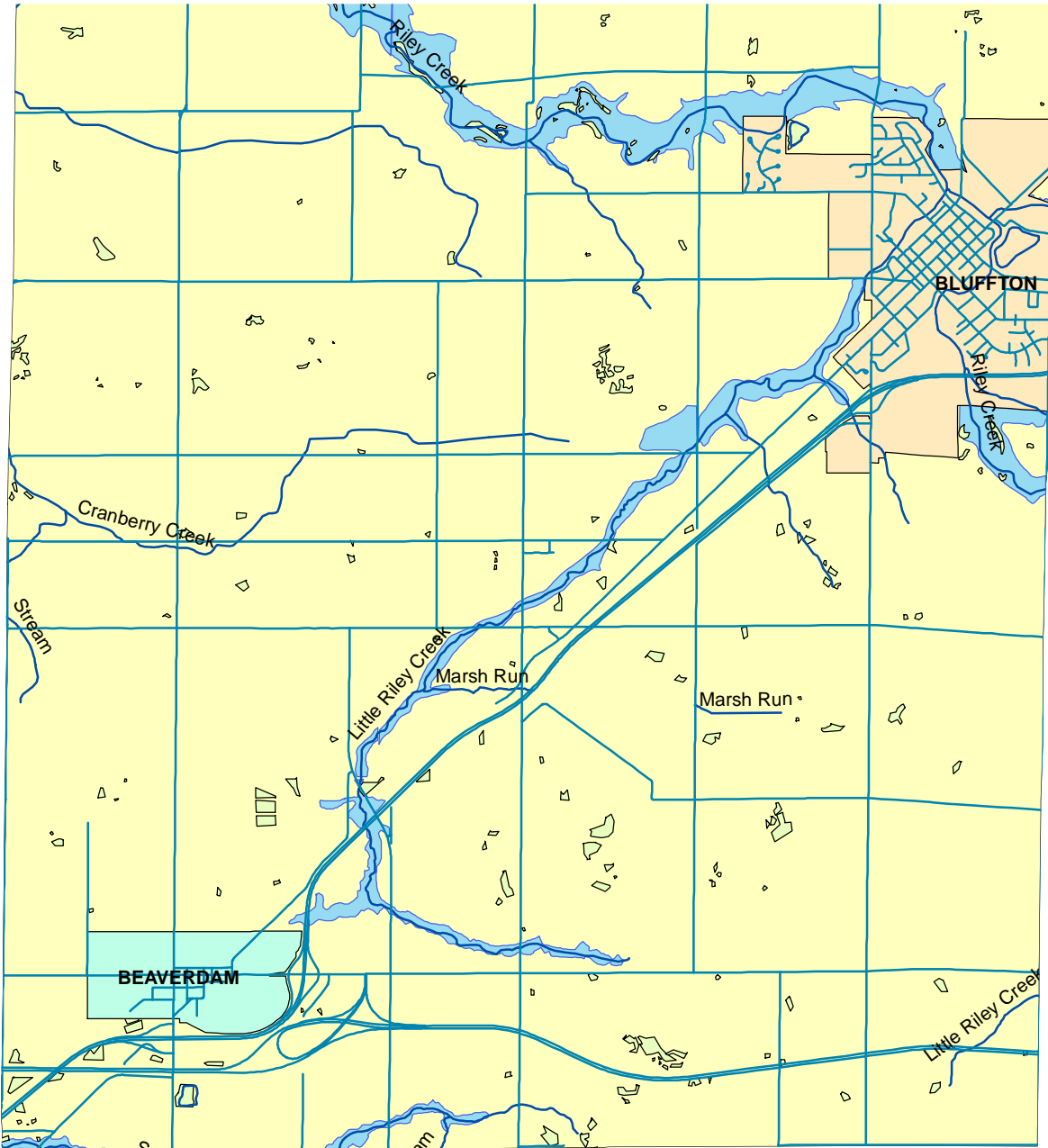
The ability or inability of soil to support a foundation, handle on-site sewage disposal, or nurture vegetation are a few of the reasons that soils are a significant factor to consider in land use planning. The purpose of considering soil type is to encourage development in areas containing soil types that are well suited for development, while discouraging development in areas recognized for their high agricultural productivity. Map 7 identifies the various soils by type.

Dolomite and limestone have been mined from several locations in Richland Township, specifically Bluffton Stone, located off Bentley Road.

2.4.1 Blount-Pewamo

The existing soils of Richland Township reflect major soil groups. The predominant group found in Richland Township (as well as Allen County) is the Blount-Pewamo Association, which makes up 48.3 percent of all soils found in Richland Township.

MAP 5 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: WETLANDS/FLOODPLAINS



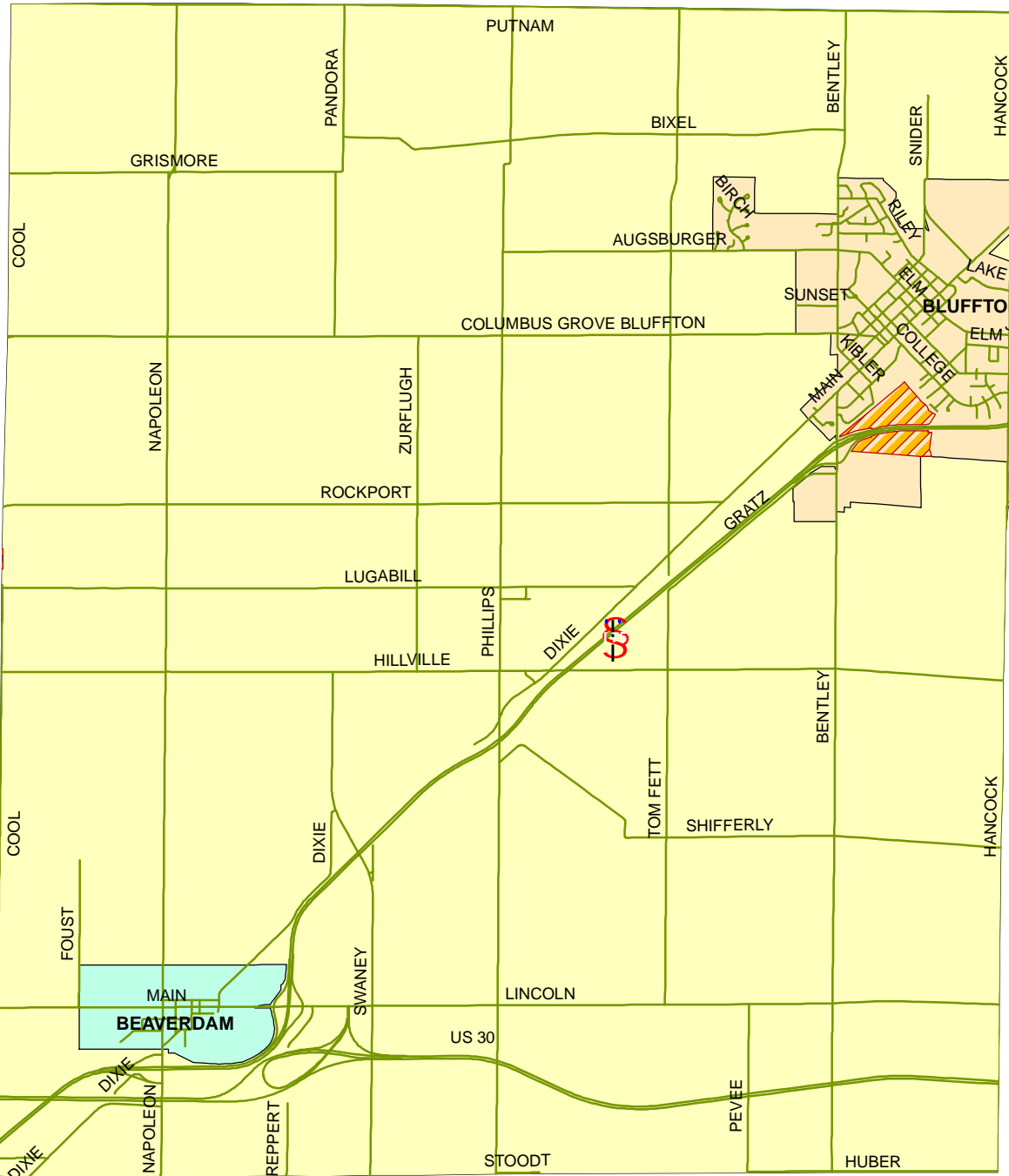
- Wetlands
- Floodplains


1 inch equals 1 miles



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MAP 6 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: MINES & QUARRIES

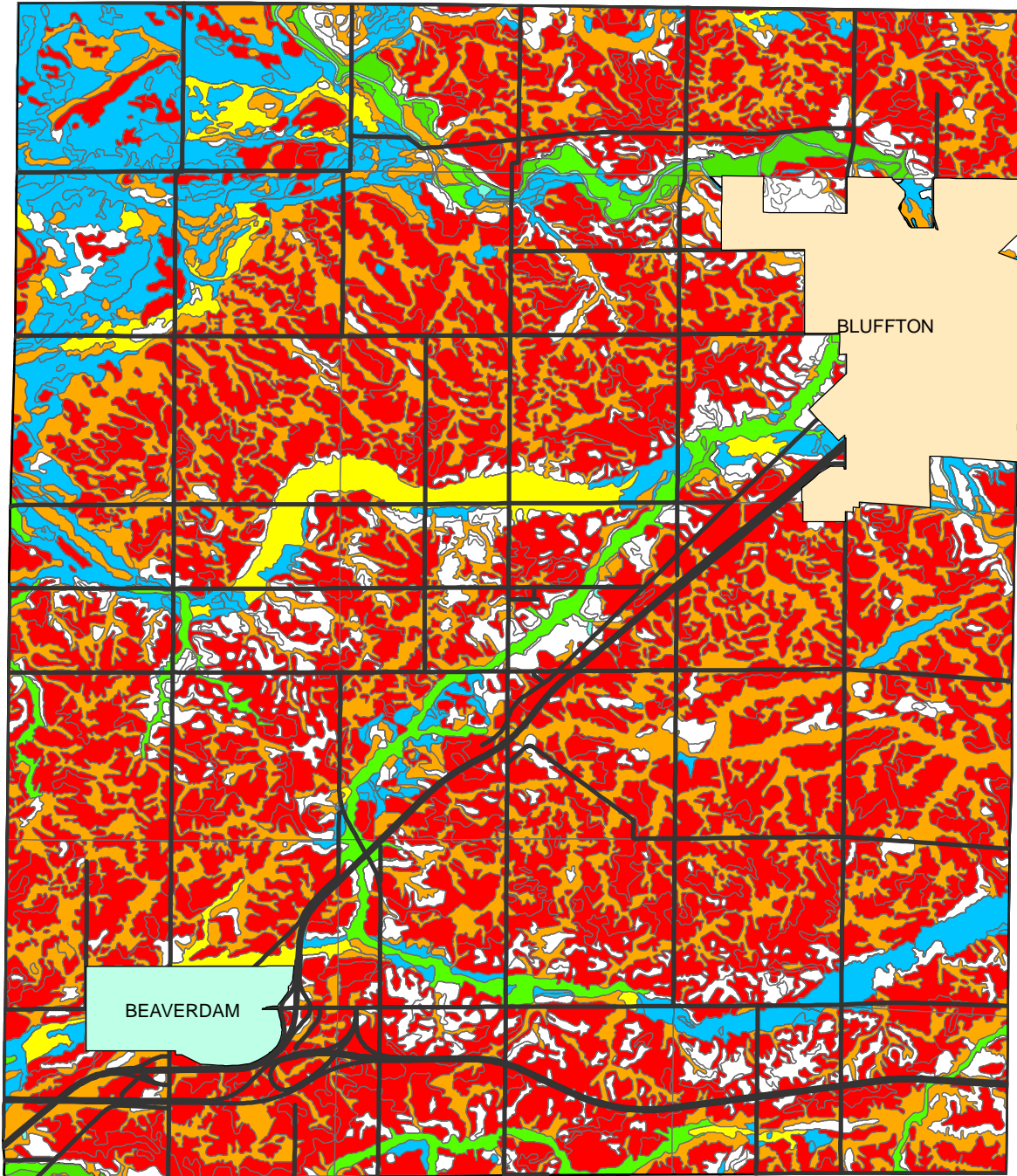


 Mines and Quarries

1 inch equals 1 miles

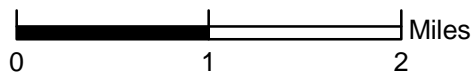
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MAP 7 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: SOILS BY TYPE



Primary Richland Soils

- Blount-Pewamo
- Pewamo-Blount
- Medway
- Darroch
- Shoals
- Others



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The second largest classification is the Blount-Glynwood-Pewamo Association, which makes up 29 percent of the soils found in Richland Township. This classification, consisting of 4 minor subdivisions, ranges from somewhat moderately well drained to very poorly drained, and its major uses are found in cropland, pasture, woodlands and urban development. Its depth class runs very deep, and topography can be seen as depressions and drainage-ways. Slope runs 0 to 2 degrees. Management concerns with this soil stem from its poor drainage, and can result in erosion, compaction and ponding.

2.4.2 Pewamo-Blount

The second most common classification found is the Pewamo-Blount Association, which makes up 22.57 percent of the soil in Richland Township. This classification, consisting of 2 minor subdivisions, ranges from somewhat poorly drained to very poorly drained, and its major uses are found in cropland, pasture, and woodlands. Its depth class runs very deep, and topography can be seen as level to gently rolling, along with depressions and drainage-ways. Slope runs 0 to 1 degree. Management concerns with this soil stem from its poor drainage, and can result in erosion, compaction and ponding.

2.4.3 Medway

The third most common classification found is Medway, which makes up 17.26 percent of the soils in Richland Township. All Medway soils are considered prime farmland, and is considered moderately well drained. Its major uses are found in cropland and pastureland. It is not considered a good site for building since it tends to flood. Its depth class runs very deep, and its formations are flats on floodplains, with 0 to 2 percent slopes. Management concerns are that the soil is not strong enough for timber industry, and is generally unsuited to septic tank absorption fields.

2.4.4 Darroch

The fourth most common classification is the Darroch loam, which makes up 3.69% of the soils in Richland Township. This classification is somewhat poorly drained, and is considered prime farmland if drained. Its primary uses are for cropland, pastureland and wetlands. It is not considered good for forestry or construction. Its dept is considered very deep, and the topography is seen as level to gently rolling. Slope runs 0 to 2 percent. Management concerns are with the strength of the soil and its traditional poor drainage.

2.4.5 Shoals

The fifth most common classification is the Shoals silt loam, which makes up 3.64 percent of the soils in Richland Township. This classification is considered somewhat poorly drained. It is considered prime farmland if drained. Its primary uses are cropland, pastureland and woodland. Because of its tendency to flood, it is not considered ideal for construction. Its depth class is very deep. Slope runs 0 to 1 percent. Management concerns are centered on the periodic flooding which occurs.

The balance of soils found in Richland Township make up less than 5 percent (4.54%) of the soils. In addition to the soil classifications, 52.853 acres of land are considered to be under water.

2.4.6 Hydric Soils

Based on a soils analysis completed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service, 4 soil types were

classified as hydric soils. Hydric soils are soils that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding. Such soils tend to support the growth and regeneration of vegetation that depends on continued high water saturation. Some hydric soil types encounter periods when they are not saturated and depend on the existing water table, flooding, and ponding for survival. The presence of hydric soils is an indicator of wetlands and floodplain areas. However, hydric soil criteria must also meet Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) criteria in order for it to be classified as a wetland.

Hydric soils have a number of agricultural and nonagricultural limitations. Such limitations can be minimized with sound policy decisions predicated upon local land-use planning, conservation planning, and assessment of potential wildlife habitats. Hydric Soils are presented in Map 8.

Limitations of hydric soils can be minimized with sound policy decisions.

2.4.7 Prime Farmland

The USDA has defined prime agricultural land as the land best suited for the production of food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Prime farmland is defined as areas of land that possess the ideal combination of physical and chemical properties necessary for crop production. Prime farmland is predicated upon soils that have permeability of both air and water but retain adequate moisture-holding capacity. Prime soils are those that are not prone to flooding or are protected from flooding. Such soils have natural fertility and an acceptable level of alkalinity or acidity. Prime soils have limited relief, typically slopes of 0 to 6 percent. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with the minimal inputs of energy and economic resources; and, farming prime farmland results in the least damage to the environment.

Only 5.5 percent of Richland Township's soils are not considered Prime Soils.

Classifying the soil by crop productivity capabilities and site limitations, when looking at all 24,497 acres, Richland Township has 2,454.12 acres of Prime Soil with No Conditions and 1,359.52 acres of non-prime soil. The remaining 20,678.36 acres of land in Richland Township is classified Prime with Conditions. Map 9 depicts those soils identified as Prime and Prime with Conditions.

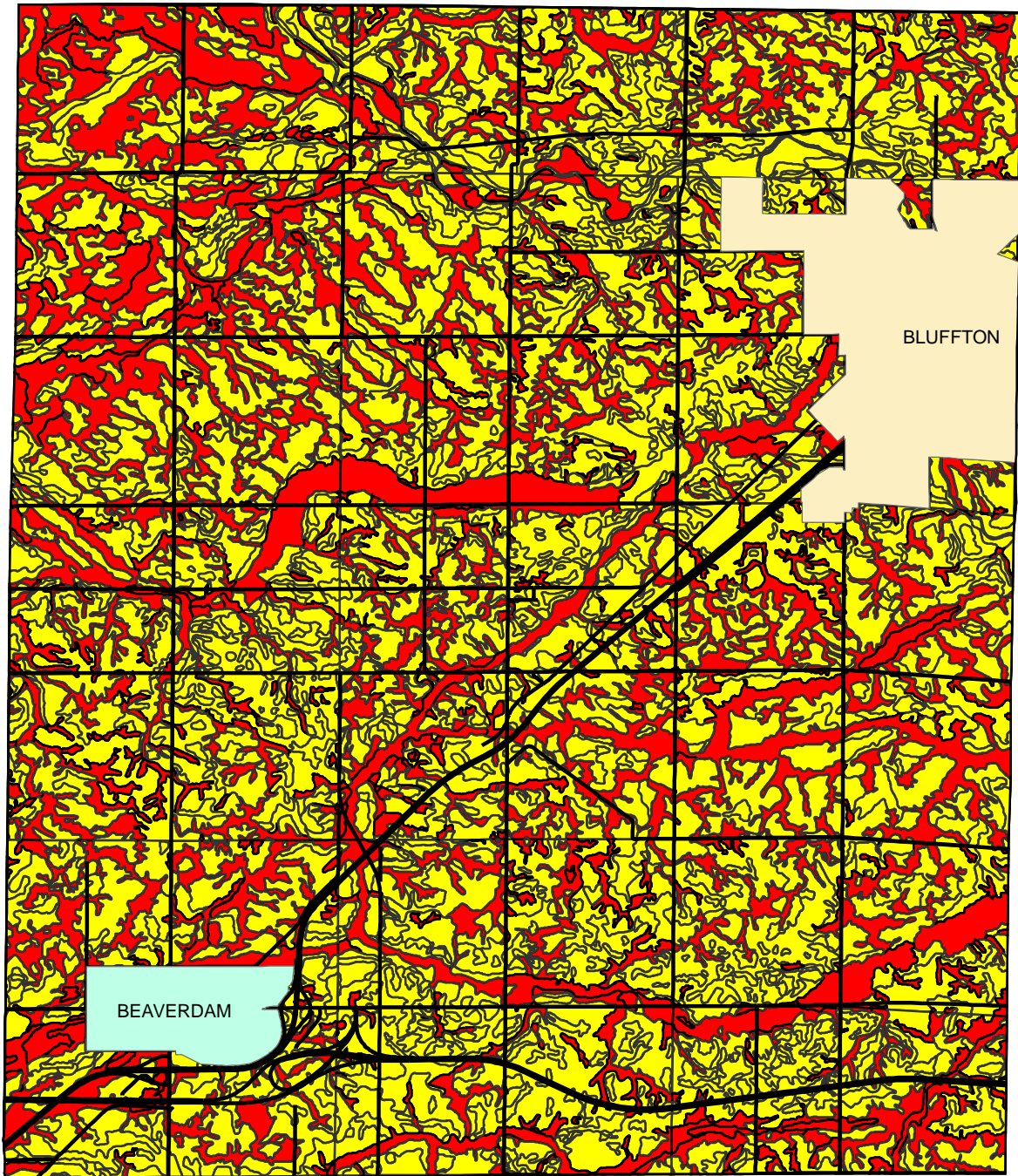
2.5 Land Use Patterns

The use of land is dependent upon, or the result of, particular attributes including size, shape and relative location. The use of land is affected by a parcel's access or proximity to utilities, roadways, waterways, services and markets. Environmental attributes and constraints, such as the presence of minerals, topography, scenic attributes, flooding, poor soils, etc., can also influence the use of land.

An analysis of the manner and extent to which land is used or employed over a period of time results in distinct patterns of use. General classifications of economic uses typically reflect agricultural, commercial, industrial, residential, recreational, utility/transportation, and public/quasi public land use patterns. Table 1 identifies the extent of general land use activities in 2006 by type and acreage. Map 10 identifies general patterns of land use in Richland Township.

Over the last 30 years, land use conversion in Richland Township has largely been confined to low-density residential/commercial developments occurring along existing rural roadways. Major residential subdivision development has recently occurred in conjunction with the Sugar Creek golf course.

MAP 8 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: HYDRIC SOILS



Soils

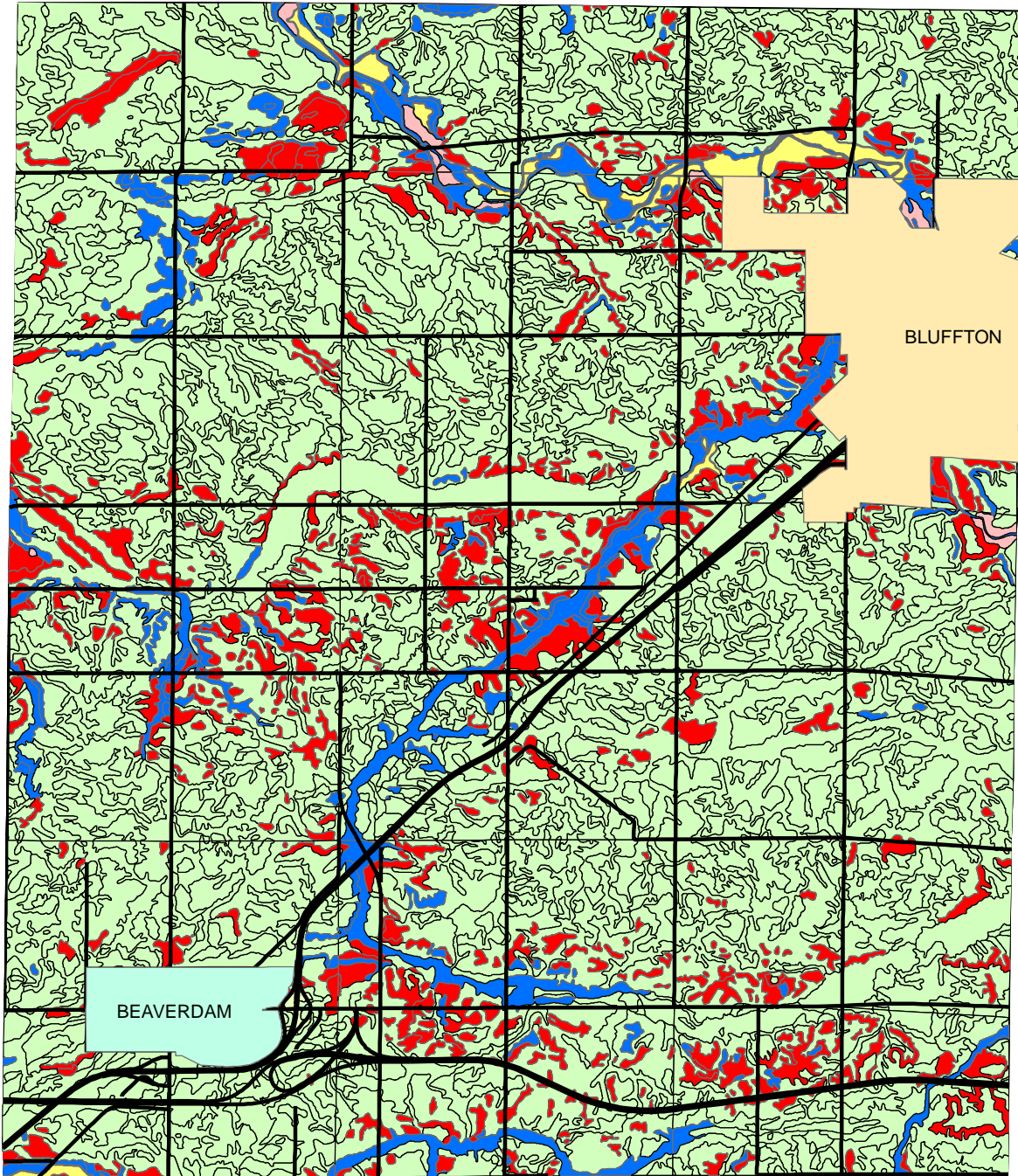
- Non-Hydric
- Hydric



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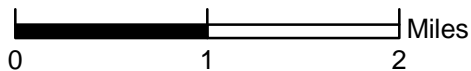
1 inch equals 1 miles

MAP 9 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: PRIME SOILS



Prime Soils

- Non-Prime
- Prime Where Drained
- Prime No Flooding
- Prime Drained / No Flooding
- Prime Unconditional



1 inch equals 1 miles



Table 1 indicates that the majority of land, 97.7 percent, in Richland Township reflects agricultural (89.3%), and residential (8.4%) land use. Agricultural activity was the prime consumer of property in Richland Township in 2006. Industrial land use activity is concentrated near I-75. Clustered retail activities have migrated almost exclusively to the Township's shared boundaries with the Village of Beavertown, and along the I-75 corridor.

TABLE 1 LAND USE BY TYPE, ACRES & PARCELS					
Land Use Type	Total Acres	Percent of Total Area	Total Parcels	Percent Total Parcels	Mean Parcel Size
Richland Township	24,497	100.0%	1,189	100.0	22.6
Agricultural Uses	21,880.6	89.3%	456	38.4	47.9
Commercial Uses	73.0	0.3%	19	1.6	3.8
Industrial Uses	17.0	0.07%	2	0.2	8.5
Residential uses	2,050.0	8.4%	646	54.3	3.2
Public/Quasi Public Uses	274.5	1.1%	56	4.7	4.9
Recreational Uses	134.1	0.6%	2	0.2	67.0
Utility Uses	68.2	0.3%	8	0.7	8.5

Note: Land use, acreage and parcel data is reflective of 2006 Allen County Auditor data. Such data incorporates acreage consumed by land supporting transportation activities, some overlap also exists between agricultural and residential due to residential and farming uses occurring on the same parcels. Statistical accuracy assumed at 98th percentile.

A recent analysis of land use change in Richland Township was conducted over the 2002 through 2006 period. Table 2 reveals that over the 5-year period residential uses consumed an additional 159.8 acres of land while commercial uses consumed 2.5 acres. The total acreage dedicated to industrial uses did not change. The loss of farmland resulting from the various land use conversions; 162.9 acres of agricultural land was consumed over the 5-year period. Currently, agricultural, residential and recreational/quasi-public uses consume the most land within Richland Township.

TABLE 2 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP LAND USE CHANGE 2002-2006				
Year	Land Use by Type and Acreage			
	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Agricultural
2002	1,890.2	71.5	17.0	22,043.5
2006	2,050.0	73.0	17.0	21,880.6
Net Gain/Loss	+8.5%	+2.0%	0.0	-0.8%

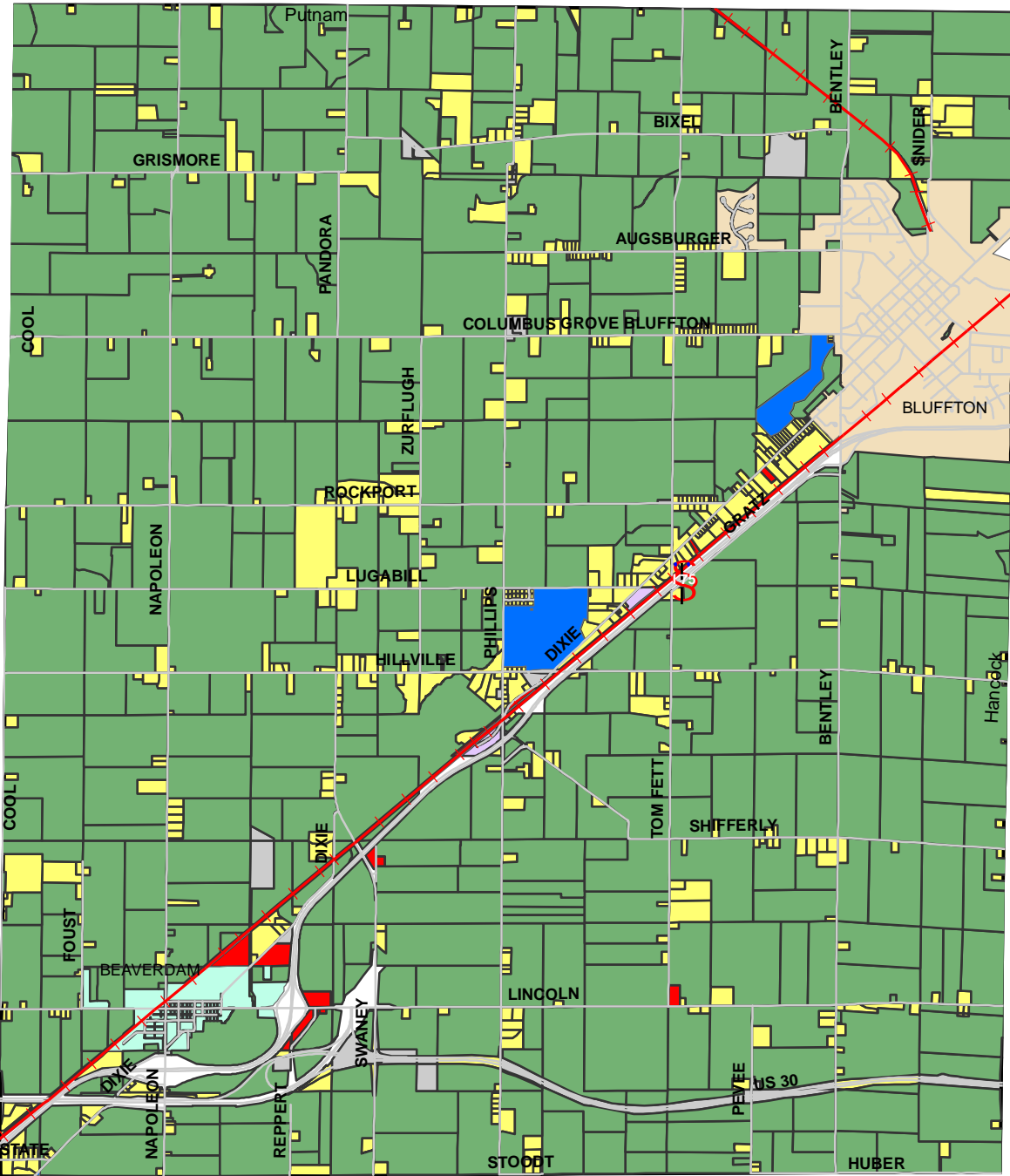
2.5.1 Parks & Recreation

At the present time, recreation within Richland Township is restricted to access to the Sugar Creek Golf Club, the Bluffton Golf Course, and what facilities are found within the Village of Bluffton and Bluffton's bike trails.

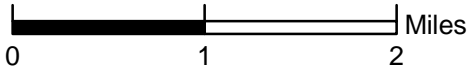
2.5.2 Agricultural Land Use

In 2006, 21,880.6 acres of Richland Township was identified as in agricultural use by the Allen County Auditor's Office, totaling 89.3 percent of all land use. When compared to data from 2002, data suggests a loss of 162.9 acres in 5 years. This is clearly depicted on Map 11. What is of concern is the conflict in land use between large lot residential sprawl and the existing farm industry, and

MAP 10 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: GENERALIZED LAND USE



- Recreation
- Agriculture
- Residential
- Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Industrial



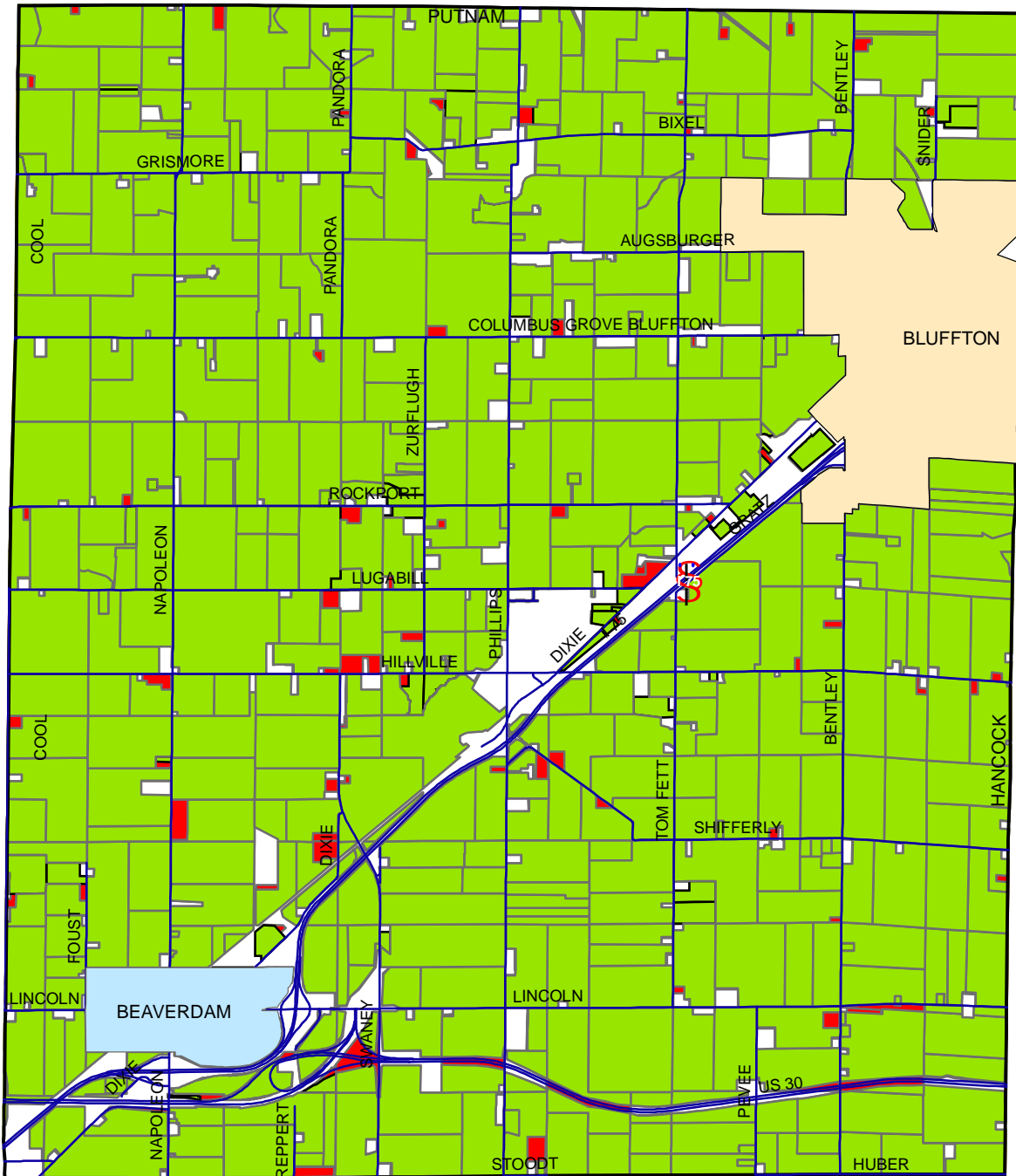
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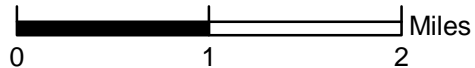
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MAP 11

RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: LOST CAUV 1999-2006



- 2006 CAUV
- 1999 CAUV



1 inch equals 1 miles
20



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the long term impact this conversion has on the efficiency of agricultural operations.

2.5.3 Residential Land Use

Currently, 2,050 acres of land in Richland Township are consumed in residential use. This equates to 8.4 percent of all available land. The primary form of residential growth in Richland Township has been through haphazard roadside development. Between 1980 and 1999, 219 residential lots were created which consumed 395 acres or 1.80 acres per lot. Between 2000 and 2006, 48 residential lots encompassing 139 acres were created each averaging 2.89 acres per lot. Since the 1980-1999 period, the growth of housing units in the township has slowed from approximately 11 units per annum to 8 units. The newest residential lots are nearly 1.1 acres larger in size than their earlier predecessors. Taken collectively lots created since 1980 represent over 26% of the existing residential acreage resulting in a net loss of approximately 1% of agricultural land per annum over that period.

Currently, there is a single large residential subdivision development proposed, straddling Section 31 of Richland Township and Section 6 of Jackson Township. The golf course-focused Village at Sugar Creek development identifies 160 new housing units at build-out, of which 125 will be in Richland Township. This will present a welcome change to the haphazard strip development which has been occurring on rural township and county roads without municipal utility services.

2.6 Summary

Traditional manufacturing and supporting warehousing operations are concentrated along I-75 and the rail lines. The retail and service sectors are clustering in or near the villages. Richland Township has some of the richest soil in Allen County future plans must recognize the implications of unplanned residential growth and the subsequent infrastructure demands, along with the inevitable conflict with the farming industry.

The unique natural features of the community contribute to a wide variety of economic activities including agriculture, services and manufacturing. The rural beauty of the Township contributes to a rich quality of life, and needs to be protected.

SECTION III POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

A thorough analysis of the Richland Township population requires the use of demographic constructs. Demographic characteristics include gender, household size, age, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, income and employment. Assessing a community's population and its respective demographic measures is important to understanding the demand for, and consumption of products and services including education, police, fire and emergency response services. Such an understanding is also necessary to broaden the community's economic base and support the local labor force. Moreover, population data and demographic characteristics provide good indicators of future population growth/decline and allow community's to better assess policy decisions/development and the wise expenditures of public funds. This section attempts to highlight specific characteristics of the community's population and provide broad generalizations that will further strengthen the strategic planning process.

3.1 Population & Population Change

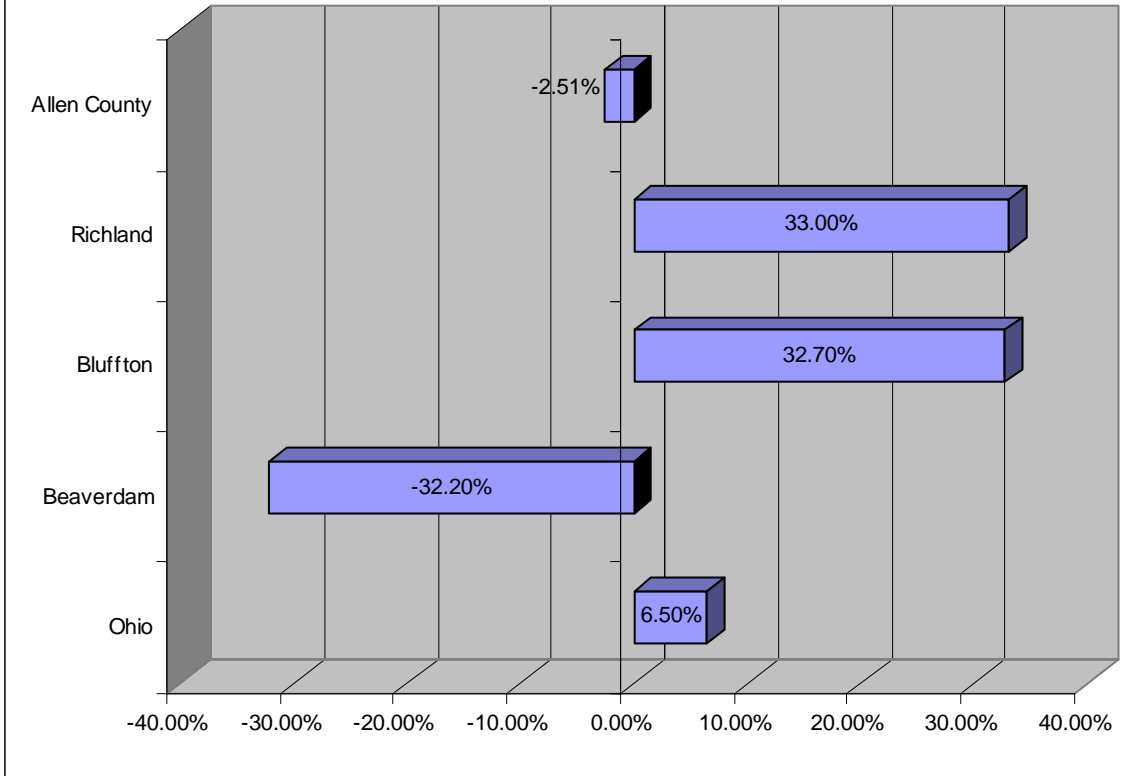
Historically populations changed rather slowly over time when left to their own accord. Today, however, based on various competing and intervening factors, populations can now change with relative speed and catch a community off guard and unprepared. In today's economic climate and social conditions, populations are much more fluid. In order to address the community's economic well being, a better understanding of the local population was undertaken. In the context of this report the term population refers to the number of inhabitants in a given place at the time of the 2000 Census tabulation. Herein, population data reflects the residents of Richland Township with comparisons to national, state and local populations provided.

From a historical perspective, Richland Township has experienced a 31.7 percent increase in population over the 1960-2000 period.

According to the United States Bureau of the Census, the population of Richland Township in 2000 was 2,015 persons, a significant increase since 1980. Population change, whether growth or decline, is neither static nor uniform. Figure 1 reveals that the Township has experienced an overall population increase of 33.0 percent when extending the period from 1970 to 2000 or 31.7 percent since 1960. In fact, many political subdivisions within Allen County have experienced an extended period of continued growth while others have experienced overall growth in cyclical spurts since 1960. Table 3 identifies each of the various political subdivisions by population and the decennial Census period.

Population change is the net result of the relationship between the number of births and the number of deaths in a population and the gross migration rate within the community. Data regarding the migration of residents and birth/death rate are not available at the Township level. However, for illustrative purposes, Figure 2 presents the various components of population change by year between 1990 and 2004 for Allen County. County data over the period reveals that the loss of 3,093 residents, a loss of 2.81 percent of the 1990 population, stemmed primarily from out-migration. Data of this type is not available at the township level. Taking measures that will prevent population loss is critical to long term stability of the Township. Based on data between the 1990 and 2000 Census periods, the population of Richland Township increased 10.6% while Allen County experienced a 1.16 percent decline. The State of Ohio grew by 4.65 percent during this same period.

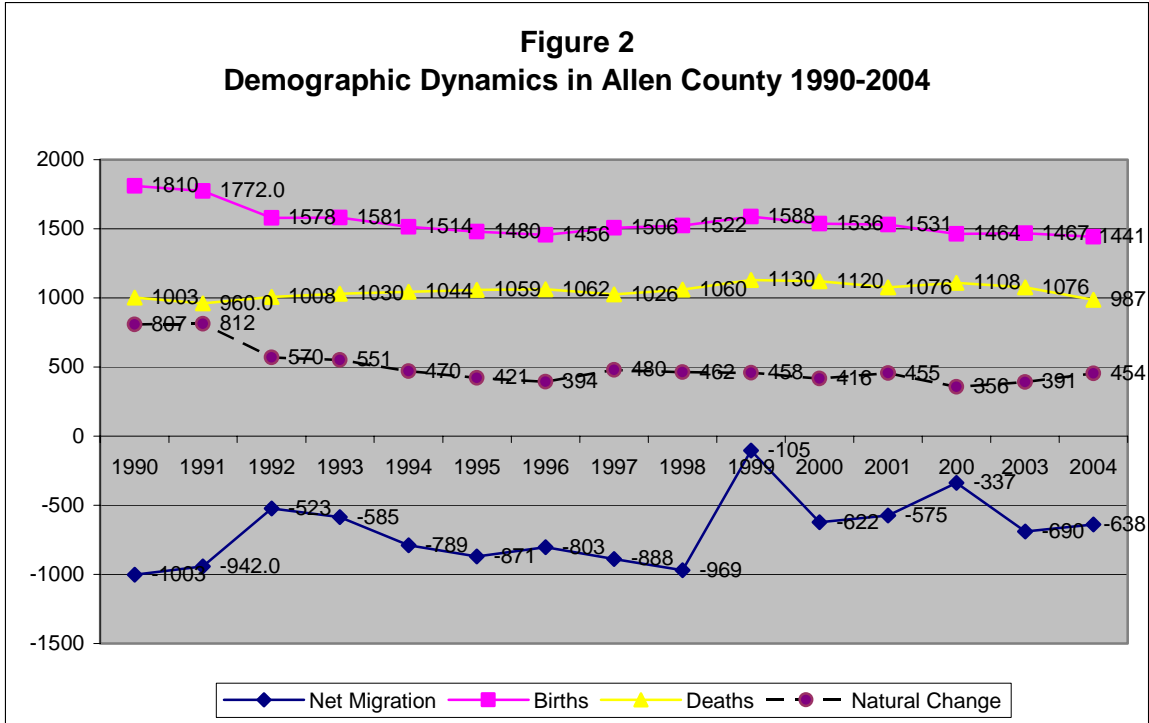
**Figure 1
Population Change 1970-2000**



**TABLE 3
POPULATION 1970-2000**

Political Subdivision	1970	1980	1990	2000	Percent Change
Allen County	111,144	112,241	109,755	108,473	4.6
City of Lima	53,734	47,381	45,549	41,578	-18.5
City of Delphos	7,608	7,314	7,093	6,944	-0.3
American Twp.	8,766	11,476	10,921	12,108	31.8
Bath Twp.	9,323	10,433	10,105	9,810	18.2
Perry Twp.	3,751	3,586	3,577	3,620	-14.0
Shawnee Twp.	6,298 ¹	7,803	8,005	8,365	-13.4
Amanda Twp.	1,498	1,769	1,773	1,913	57.2
Auglaize Twp.	1,940	2,042	2,241	2,359	35.6
Jackson Twp.	1,761	2,214	2,288	2,632	72.8
Marion Twp.	2,644	2,734	2,775	2,845	28.0
Monroe Twp.	1,490	1,621	1,622	1,720	24.1
Richland Twp.	1,515	1,628	1,821	2,015	31.7
Spencer Twp.	960	925	832	870	-1.5
Sugar Creek Twp.	1,209	1,242	1,311	1,330	14.0

¹ Fort Shawnee Created.



3.2 Age & Gender

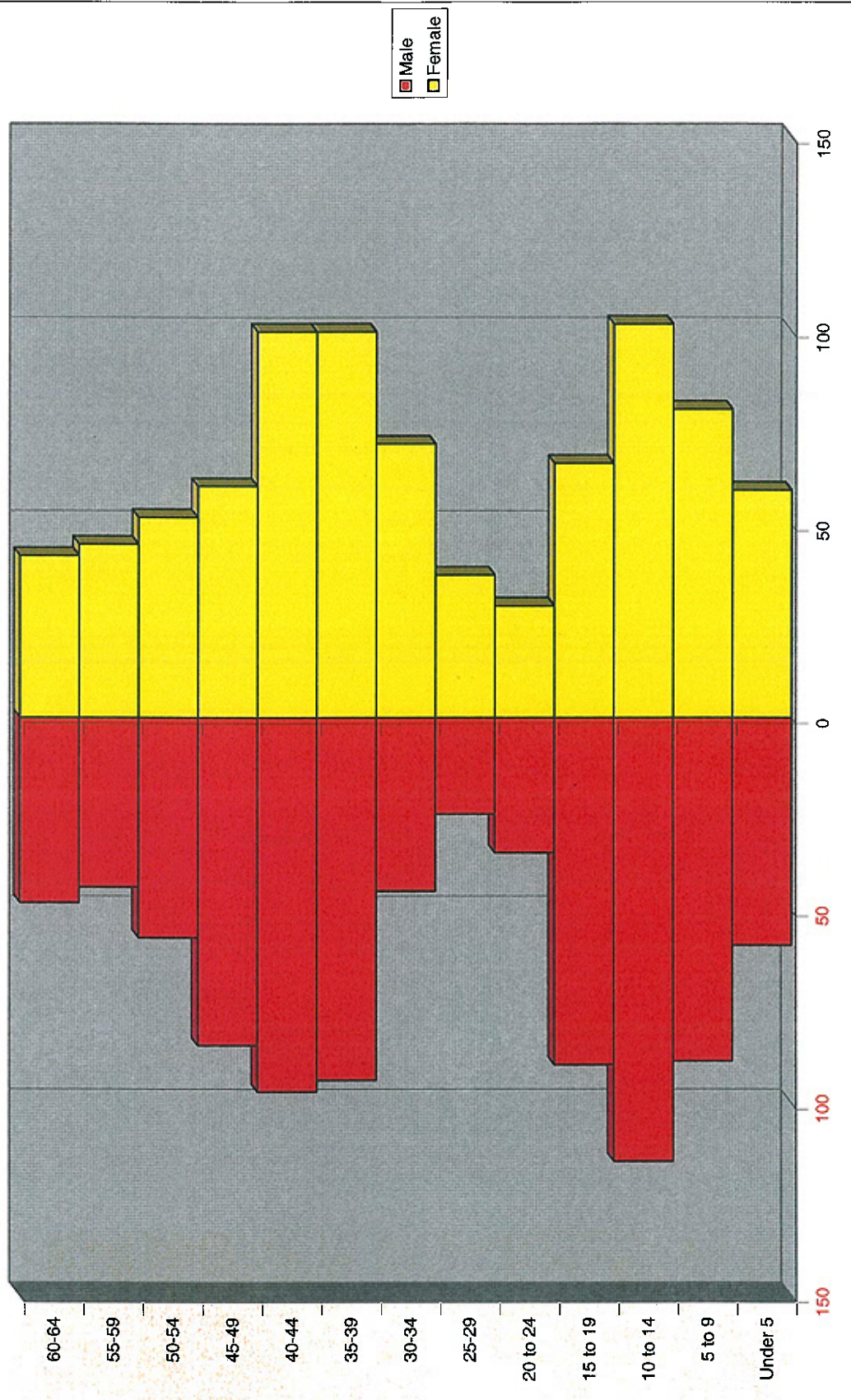
Both age and gender are critical characteristics of a community's population. Age reflects certain attitudes and beliefs. Age also reflects demands for education, employment, housing and services. Age cohorts identify specific population groupings and are important to identify specific needs or the degree to which specific services will be required by that particular population segment. The construction of a population pyramid, as seen in Figure 3, furthers an analysis of age by age cohorts and gender differences. Such a construct not only provides valuable insights as to fertility and morbidity issues but also provides data on workforce availability by age and gender.

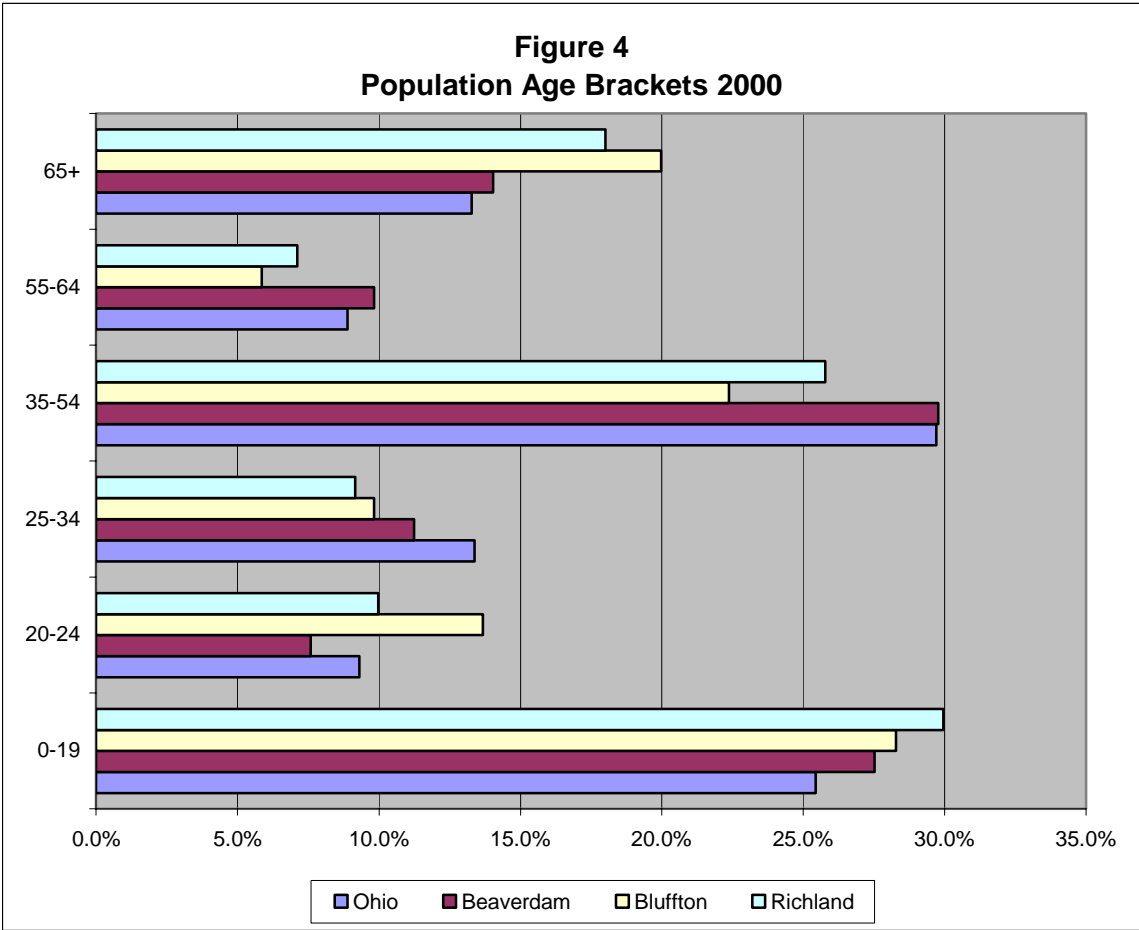
The Township's overall demographics generally reflect state, county and village statistics. However, there is a large discrepancy between the percentage of persons in the 20-34 age group living in Richland Township and the 35-49+ age groups (12.1% vs. 26.6%). This could be indicative of a high out migration of college bound and/or college-educated adults. The 2000 age distribution for Richland Township, the Village of Beaverdam, the Village of Bluffton and State of Ohio are presented in Figure 4.

Consistent with national trends, the Township's population is aging. The median age of the population is 35.8 years. That compares with a median of 36.3 and 35.2 years with Allen County and the State of Ohio respectively, and 38.3 for Beaverdam and 33.3 for Bluffton. Current age data reveals that one-fourth (25.0%) of the Township's population is below the age of 14 and another 14 percent (14.3%) are past the age of retirement. Data suggests that simply due to age of the population more than a third (39.3%) of the population is not able to fully contribute to the economic growth and earning power of the community. Data shows that an additional 8.9 percent of the population is categorized in the pre-retirement age group of 55-64 and may be readying for retirement.

More than a third of the population is not able to fully contribute to the economic growth and earning power of the community.

Figure 3
2000 Population Pyramid





The statistics in Table 4 indicate that the predominant age groups within Richland Township are 35+ years of age. These age groups are over represented with respect to other area political subdivisions. This fact helps explain household income levels and the notion that Richland residents are an upwardly mobile population. The 0-19 population cohorts are higher than those of Allen County and the State of Ohio, the Township's 18-34 age cohorts are significantly lower than all cohorts under the age of 70, pointing to a significant out-migration of young adults after high school. A number of factors could explain this emigration including: lack of employment opportunity, college brain drain and/or the availability/cost of housing.

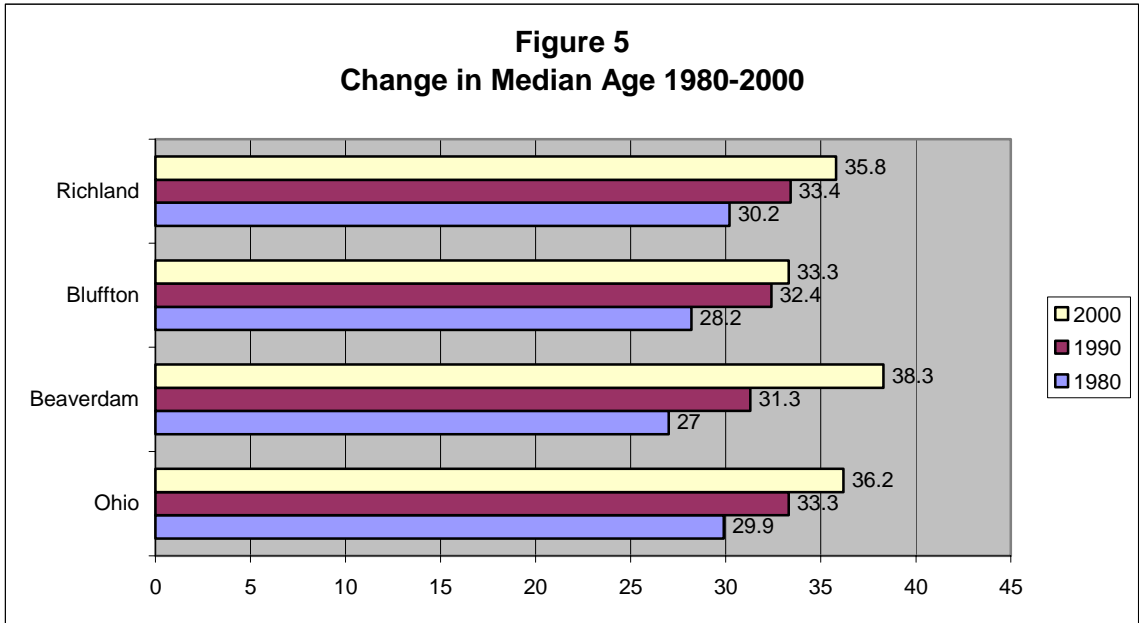
The Township's 18-34 age cohorts are significantly lower, pointing to a significant out-migration of young adults after high school. A number of factors could explain this emigration including: lack of employment opportunity, college brain drain or the cost of housing.

In addition, the median age of residents has increased between 1980 and 2000 at a lower rate in Richland Township than the State and the Village of Beaverdam, while slightly higher than the Village of Bluffton. The median age of residents in Richland Township in 2000 was 35.8 (up from 30.2 in 1980, and 33.4 in 1990) as illustrated in Figure 5. An examination of the community's population reveals an increasing senior population. Concerns center on the availability of a younger work force and the need for appropriate senior housing and services to accommodate pre-retirement and post-retirement households.

**TABLE 4
RICHLAND TOWNSHIP POPULATION BY AGE COHORTS & GENDER**

Cohort	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Total	% Total
< 5	59	5.81	59	5.9	118	5.9
5-9	89	8.77	80	8.0	169	8.4
10-14	115	11.33	102	10.2	217	10.8
15-19	90	8.87	66	6.6	156	7.7
20-24	35	3.45	29	2.9	84	3.2
25-29	25	2.46	37	3.7	62	3.1
30-34	45	4.43	71	7.1	116	5.8
35-39	94	6.26	100	10.0	194	9.6
40-44	97	9.56	100	10.0	197	9.8
45-49	85	8.37	60	6.0	145	7.2
50-54	57	5.62	52	5.2	109	5.4
55-59	44	4.33	45	4.5	89	4.4
60-64	48	4.73	42	4.2	90	4.5
65-69	40	3.94	51	5.1	91	4.5
70-74	40	3.94	31	3.1	71	3.5
75-79	30	2.96	28	2.8	58	2.9
80-84	12	1.18	12	1.2	24	1.2
85+	10	0.99	35	3.5	45	2.2
Totals	1,015	100.0	1,000	100.0	2,015	100.0

**Figure 5
Change in Median Age 1980-2000**



3.3 Households & Household Size

Households refer to any housing unit that is occupied; the total population divided by households establishes household size. Change in the total number of and the respective size of households is an important demographic measure. This measure is important since each household requires a dwelling unit, and in most cases the size of the household will determine specific housing components such as number of

Between 1990 and 2000 the number of households in Richland Township increased 17.1 percent.

bedrooms, bathrooms, square footage, play area, etc. Therefore, as households change in terms of number and/or character, housing consumption changes. If the number of households increases then the housing supply must reflect the growth. As the characteristics of the household change, new residency patterns are established. From a public policy perspective, it is important to balance the available housing supply with the housing demand, otherwise unmet needs result in out migration, excess housing costs, vacancy and unmet demands for public service.

Census data reveals the total number of households and the rate of change in the total households between 1990 and 2000. Table 5 indicates the total number of Richland Township exclusive of the villages households in 2000 was 696, an increase of 17.1 percent over the 1990 figure of 594 households. This increase in the number of households greatly exceeds a similar, but lower, statewide increase of 8.73 percent.

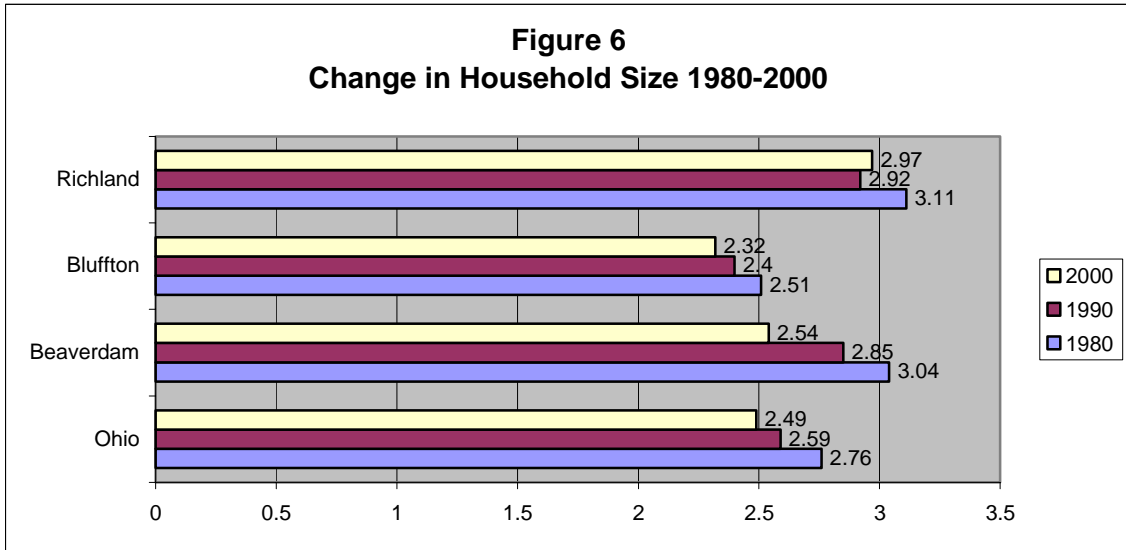
TABLE 5 TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS & AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY POLITICAL SUBDIVISION 1990-2000					
Political Subdivision	Year 2000 - Total Households	Year 2000 - Average Household Size	Year 1990 - Total Households	Year 1990 - Average Household Size	Total Households- % Change
Amanda Township	684	2.76	605	2.93	13.06
American Township	4933	2.38	4,165	2.59	18.44
* Village of Elida	698	2.75	527	2.82	32.45
Auglaize Township	843	2.80	770	2.91	9.48
* Village of Harrod	173	2.84	182	2.95	-4.95
Bath Township	3,815	2.54	3,718	2.72	2.61
City of Lima	15,410	2.42	16,311	2.79	-5.52
Jackson Township	956	2.75	771	2.97	24.00
* Village of Lafayette	118	2.58	160	2.81	-26.25
Marion Township	966	2.84	885	3.14	9.15
* City of Delphos pt.	1,563	2.52	1,467	2.68	2.53
Monroe Township	607	2.83	559	2.90	8.58
* Village of Cairo	181	2.76	169	2.80	7.10
Perry Township	1,417	2.50	1,300	2.75	9.00
Richland Township	696	2.97	594	2.92	17.17
* Village of Beaverdam	140	2.54	164	2.85	-14.63
* Village of Bluffton pt.	1,238	2.32	1,173	2.87	13.30
Shawnee Township	3,383	2.64	2,818	2.78	20.05
* Village of Fort Shawnee	1,524	2.53	1,555	2.65	-1.99
Spencer Township	304	2.87	291	2.86	4.46
* Village of Spencerville	845	2.54	841	2.72	0.48
Sugar Creek Township	476	2.79	453	2.89	5.08

*Township figures are exclusive of villages and cities.

Household size is also an important factor. Table 5 also presents information relative to the changing status of household size, as does Figure 6. In 1990, the average household size in Richland Township was 2.92 persons per household. In 2000, the average household size in the Township was 2.97 persons, higher than the State mean size of 2.55 persons per household and a slight

The implications of smaller size households should be monitored by local policy experts and reflected in local housing policies, building codes and zoning regulations.

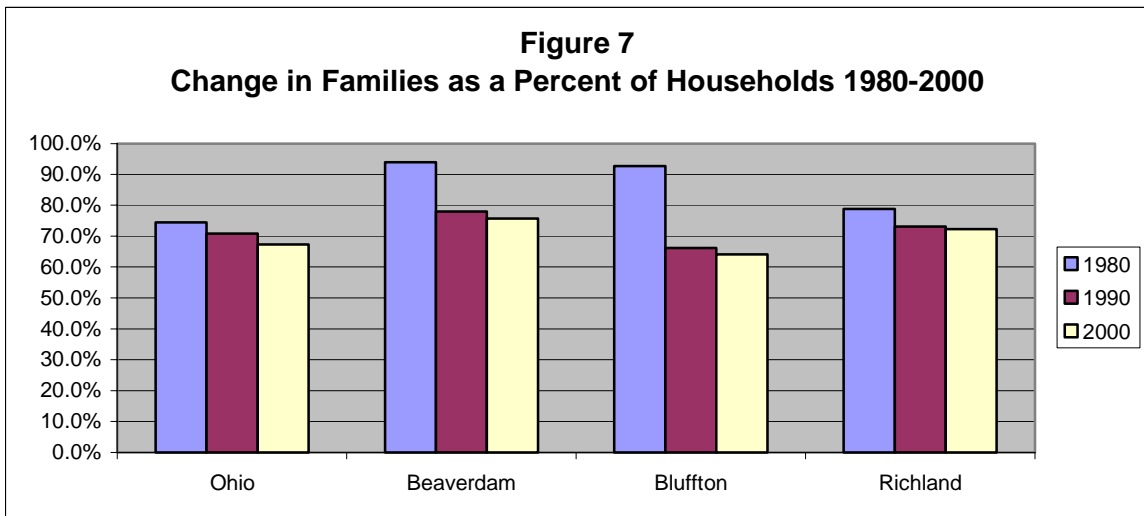
increase of 1.7 percent in size from 1990. The projected household size to 2030 is 2.56 persons per household. Notice that household size varies by political subdivision across Allen County. This data may very well indicate that a historical trend of families with children is changing to more two-person households, single-parent households with children under the age of 18 years and households comprised of retirees. The implications of smaller size households should be monitored by local policy experts and reflected in local housing policies, building codes and zoning regulations.



3.4 Families

The U.S. Census defines a family as a group of two or more people who reside together and are related by birth, marriage or adoption. Changes in the overall number of families in Richland, Bluffton, Beaverdam and Ohio are indicated in Figure 7.

The nominal decline in the number of families residing in Richland Township (-6.5%) is relatively positive when compared to Allen County (-7.1%) as a whole, the Village of Beaverdam (-18.3%) and the Village of Bluffton (-28.5), but lags with respect to the State of Ohio in general (4.9%).

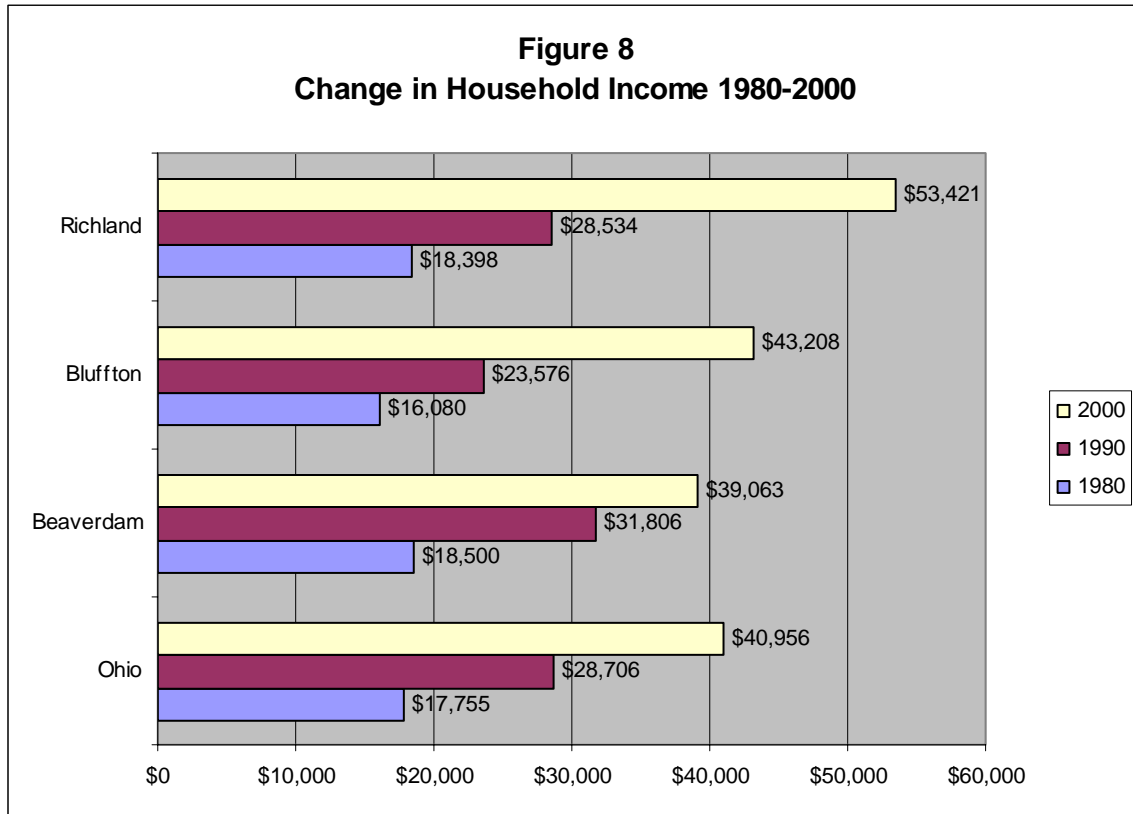


3.5 Income: Household, Family & Per Capita

Data for the three most widely used indices of income, including per capita income, household income and family income are displayed in Table 6 by political subdivision and by Census period. As seen in Figure 8, the data suggests Richland Township household median income is far ahead of the State and Allen County.

Richland Township has surpassed State & local income levels with respect to household income.

TABLE 6 COMPARATIVE INCOME MEASURES BY DECENNIAL CENSUS					
Income: By Type & Year	Richland Township	Ohio	Allen County	Richland Township as % of Allen County	Richland Township as % of Ohio
1999					
Median Household	\$53,421	\$40,956	\$37,048	144.2	130.4
Median Family	\$57,500	\$50,037	\$44,723	128.5	114.9
Per capita	\$20,469	\$21,003	\$17,511	116.8	0.96
1989					
Median Household	\$28,534	\$28,076	\$27,166	105.0	101.63
Median Family	\$33,698	\$34,351	\$32,513	103.6	98.09
Per capita	\$10,905	\$13,461	\$11,830	92.2	81.0



The median household income within Allen County has lagged behind that of Ohio, while in Richland Township, household income has significantly increased since the 1990 decennial Census period. When comparing median household incomes between Richland Township and the State, the income gap has increased from 1.63 percent in 1989 to thirty percent (30.4%) in 1999 – a marked improvement!

Family income in Richland Township was 128.5 percent of Allen County's median family income in 1999 and 114.9 percent of the State's median income.

Examining family median income, a similar pattern exists. County Median family incomes fell in relationship to the State median over the last decennial period. But Richland Township's median family income increased when compared to the State and the County. Median family income in Richland Township was 28.5 percent higher than Allen County's median family income in 1999 and 14.9 percent higher than the State's family median income. In 1989, the proportion of Richland's median family income to the County and State was 103.64 and 98.09 percent respectively.

Per capita income for Richland Township in 1999 was \$20,469 a jump of 87.7 percent from 1989 figures. Richland Township exhibited a greater growth rate when compared with the County and State per capita increases from 1989 of 48.02 and 56.02 percent, and closed the per capita gap with the state from -19.0 percent to -4.0 percent.

Per capita income rose in comparison to County and State figures over the decennial period. In 1999 Richland Township per capita income was 116.8 percent of the County and 96.6 percent of the State.

Table 7 provides a detailed breakdown of household income by type and income levels for 1999. Households with incomes less than \$15,000 in 1999 totaled 8.0 percent of all households in Richland Township. An examination of family and non-family households provides greater detail; data suggests that 3.8 percent of all families and 36.7 percent of all non-family households earned less than \$15,000 in 1999. Examination of income by household type reveals that the largest concentration of households and family incomes were found in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 income bracket with 28.2 and 31.2 percent respectively; the incomes of 5 in 10 (50.0%) non-family household were concentrated below \$25,000.

TABLE 7 INCOME IN 1999 BY RICHLAND TOWNSHIP HOUSEHOLD TYPE						
Income Range	Household		Families		Non Family Household	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than \$10,000	40	5.7	14	2.3	26	28.9
\$10,000 - \$14,999	16	2.3	9	1.5	7	7.8
\$15,000 - \$24,999	38	5.5	26	4.3	12	13.3
\$25,000 - \$34,999	65	9.3	57	9.4	14	15.6
\$35,000 - \$49,999	148	21.3	124	20.5	24	26.7
\$50,000 - \$74,999	196	28.2	189	31.2	7	7.7
\$75,000 - \$99,999	100	14.4	100	16.5	0	0.0
\$100,000 - \$149,999	62	8.9	56	9.2	0	0.0
\$150,000 - \$199,999	6	0.9	6	1.0	0	0.0
\$200,000 or more	25	3.6	25	4.1	0	0.0
Totals	696	100.0	606	100.0	90	100

3.6 Poverty Status: Persons & Families Below Poverty Level

The 2000 Census provides information regarding the number of individuals and families whose incomes fell below established poverty levels. Data collected in 1999 revealed that, 70 individuals (3.5% of all individuals), and 14 families (2.3% of all families) in Richland Township were below the established poverty level based on income and household size.

Families with no children were more likely to encounter poverty status than those families with children. In fact, of all families suffering poverty, only 4 of 14 (28.5%) had children and all of those had children over 5 years of age. For purposes of comparison, data indicates that 7.85 percent of all families and 10.06 percent of all individuals within the State of Ohio were below the established poverty level.

In 1999, 3.5 percent of all individuals, and 2.3 percent of all families in Richland Township were below poverty level.

A comparison of income data between the 1989 and 1999 Census reports reveals a slight improvement in the proportion of individuals and families in poverty. In fact, 868 individuals and 280 families left poverty status in Allen County between census tabulations; this represents improvements of 6.55 percent and 7.94 percent respectively. Households in Richland Township receiving public assistance fell from 19 to 0. Households with public assistance at the County level dropped from 7.78 percent in 1989 to 3.08 percent countywide over the same period, a decline of 1,806 households. For comparison purposes, the percentage of households receiving public assistance in the State of Ohio is 3.20 percent.

Poverty status has slightly improved over the 1989 -1999 period.

Relevant information on family households and poverty status is presented in Table 8. Table 9 provides an overview of poverty as a percentage of income for all individuals 18 years of age or older. Table 10 examines household size and unit size to expose overcrowding, a classic proxy poverty indicator.

TABLE 8 POVERTY STATUS BY FAMILY STATUS		
Family Type by Presence of Related Children		
Total Families	606	100.0%
Married - Related Children	273	45.0
Male Alone - Related Children	10	1.7
Female Alone - Related Children	6	1.0
Family - No Children	293	48.3
Poverty Status of Families with Related Children		
Total Families	14	100.0%
Married - Related Children	4	28.5%
Male Alone - Related Children	0	0.0%
Female Alone - Related Children	0	0.0%
Family - No Children	10	71.5%

TABLE 9 RATIO OF INCOME TO POVERTY LEVEL AMONG INDIVIDUALS		
Below 50% of Poverty Level	48	2.4
50% to 99% of Poverty Level	22	1.1
100% to 149% of Poverty Level	90	4.5
150% to 199% of Poverty Level	181	9.0
200% of Poverty Level or more	1,811	83.1

TABLE 10 OCCUPANTS PER ROOM AS POVERTY INDICATOR						
Tenure	Richland Township	Percent	City of Lima	Percent	Allen County	Percent
Owner Occupied	620	100%	8,796	100%	29,290	100%
0.5 or less	426	68.7%	6,983	79%	22,736	78%
0.51 to 1.00	194	31.3%	1,681	19%	6,266	21%
1.01 to 1.50	0	0%	105	1%	261	1%
1.51 to 2.00	0	0%	15	.5%	15	0%
2.00 or more	0	0%	12	.5%	12	0%
Renter Occupied	74	100%	6,645	100%	11,356	100%
0.5 or less	49	66.2%	4,082	61%	7,436	66%
0.51 to 1.00	25	33.8%	2,336	35%	3,614	31%
1.10 to 1.50	0	0%	185	3%	242	2%
1.51 to 2.00	0	0%	34	1%	56	1%
2.00 or more	0	0%	8	0%	8	0%

3.7 Educational Attainment

Table 11 presents data summarizing the educational attainment levels of the Richland Township population aged 25 years or more by racial characteristics in 2000. Data shows that there are over 134 individuals or 9.8 percent of all individuals 25 years of age or older that have not completed a high school education. This statistic compares favorably against State and National attainment levels where high school diplomas fail to be earned by 17.02 and 19.60 percent of the respective populations. Given that there are reputable post secondary schools located in Allen County and several others readily accessible, it is surprising that less than 20 percent (17.7%) of the Township's adult residents have completed a 4-year college and/or masters degree program when considering the ease of access to quality education in the area, as compared to 21.1 percent and 24.4 percent respectively for the State and Nation.

Locally accessible post secondary schools include:

- The Ohio State University
- Ohio Northern University
- Rhodes State College
- Bluffton University
- University of Northwestern Ohio
- Findlay University
- Tiffin University
- Mt. Vernon Nazarene University

TABLE 11 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR THE POPULATION 25 YEARS & OVER						
Educational Attainment	White Population		Minority Population		Total Population	
	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent
Less than 9th grade	4	0.3%	0	0.0%	4	0.3%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	122	9.1%	8	28.6%	130	9.5%
High school graduate, GED	605	45.1%	10	35.7%	615	45.0%
Some college, no degree	276	20.6%	7	25.0%	283	20.7%
Associate degree	94	7.0%	0	0.0%	94	6.9%
Bachelor's degree	163	12.2%	3	10.7%	166	12.1%
Graduate/professional degree	76	5.7%	0	0.0%	76	5.6%
Totals	1,340	100.0%	28	100.0%	1,368	100.0%

Many factors affect employment and income rates among adults. None, however, may be as important as educational attainment levels. Higher levels of educational attainment have repeatedly demonstrated higher income earnings regardless of gender. In addition, positions that require higher educational attainment levels tend to offer more job satisfaction. Moreover, individuals with lower educational attainment levels, those with no high school diploma, experience higher rates of unemployment (nearly 3 times the rate for those that have completed a bachelor degree) and less income (-60.42%) when they are employed. Therefore, it is extremely important to support local school initiatives, post secondary advancement and continuing educational programs to strengthen the skill sets of the local population and labor force.

Examining Richland residents over 25 years of age, nearly 5 in 10 (45.3%) of high school graduates went on to post secondary schools.

3.8 Labor Force Profile

The civilian labor force consists of all non-institutionalized people 16 years of age or older who are identified as either employed or unemployed, and includes those individuals currently members of the armed forces. The total available 16+ population force in Allen County numbered 83,540 persons according to the 2000 Census tabulations; those not in the labor force reflected 18,686 or 22.36 percent of the total available population. The civilian labor force residing in Allen County, as documented by the 2000 Census, was 50,886 of which 47,919 or 94.16 percent were employed. The 2000 civilian labor force in Richland Township totaled 1,078 persons, or 2.1 percent of the County's total civilian labor force. Examining employment rates of which 1,051 or 97.4 percent of the 1,078 were employed.

A perspective on the Richland labor force can be gained by examining the number of employed persons by type of occupation. Table 12 uses 2000 Census data to identify the dominant occupation sectors of Richland Township residents; manufacturing followed closely by educational health, and social services, and retail trade are the predominant occupations.

TABLE 12 RESIDENT OCCUPATION BY TYPE & PERCENTAGE OF LABOR FORCE		
Occupation	Number	Percent
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting and Mining	36	3.4
Construction	63	6.0
Manufacturing	270	25.7
Wholesale Trade	17	1.6
Retail Trade	125	11.9
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	32	3.0
Information	14	1.3
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	30	2.9
Professional, Scientific, Mgmt., Administrative, Waste Mgmt.	60	5.7
Educational, Health and Social Services	284	27.0
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, Food Service	50	4.8
Other Services (except Public Administration)	33	3.1
Public Administration	37	3.5
Total	1,051	100.0

Table 13 uses Census data to provide further employment information by the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) to provide additional insights into the employment of Richland residents.

**TABLE 13
2000 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP RESIDENT EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR**

Sector	NAICS	Employees	Percent
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting – Services	11	32	3.0
Mining	21	4	0.4
Utilities	22	12	1.1
Construction	23	63	6.0
Manufacturing	31-33	270	25.7
Wholesale Trade	42	17	1.6
Retail Trade	44-45	125	11.9
Transportation & Warehousing	48-49	20	1.9
Information	51	14	1.3
Finance & Insurance	52	30	2.9
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	53	0	0.0
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	54	6	0.6
Management of Companies/Enterprises	55	0	0.0
Administrative Support & Waste Management Services	56	54	5.1
Education Services	61	113	10.8
Health Care/Social Assistance	62	171	16.3
Arts/Entertainment /Recreation	71	15	1.4
Accommodation & Food	72	35	3.3
Non-Public Other Services	81	33	3.1
Public Administration	92	37	3.5
Total		1,051	100.0

In Allen County, the employment-population ratio, or the proportion of the population 16 years of age and over in the workforce, has remained virtually unchanged over the past 10 years at 61 percent (1990, 61.4%, 2000, 60.9%). Census 2000 tabulations reflect that 66.5 percent of Richland Township's available population is engaged in the work force. This proportion has stayed slightly above the rate for Ohio (63.5% and 64.8%) and that of the United States (65.3% and 64.0%) over the last 10 years. The unemployment rates over the past 10 years for Allen County reflect the impact of major employers relocating or instituting major cutbacks in response to market events or economic trends. Richland Township's 2000 unemployment rate was below the County rate of 5.5 percent, reflecting an unemployment rate of 1.7 percent in the 2000 Census. Table 14 documents unemployment over time and the relationship the manufacturing industry has with the labor force of Richland Township and the County as a whole.

Richland Township reflects an employment-population ratio of 63.6 percent. This proportion has stayed slightly above the rate for Ohio (66.5% and 64.8%) and that of the United States overall (66.5% and 64.0%).

**TABLE 14
RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: RESIDENTS EMPLOYED IN MANUFACTURING
1990-2000**

	1990				2000			
	Township	%	County	%	Township	%	County	%
16+ Population	1,329	72.9	82,737	75.3	1,621	79.6	83,540	77.0
Workforce	826	62.1	50,789	61.4	1,078	66.9	50,866	60.9
Employed	798	96.6	46,585	91.7	1,051	98.3	47,951	94.3
Unemployed	28	3.4	2,380	8.3	27	1.7	2,915	5.7
Manufacturing	169	21.3	11,777	25.3	270	25.7	11,510	24.0

3.9 Summary

The population of Richland Township has experienced a significant increase of 31.7 percent since 1960. Richland Township has experienced consistent growth since 1970

Census data reveals the composition, size and number of households is changing. The total number of Richland Township households in 2000 was 696, an increase of 17.1 percent over the 1990 figure. In 2000, the average household size in the Richland Township was only 2.97 persons, a slight increase of 1.7 percent in size. The implications of projected smaller size households are important and should be monitored by local policy experts and reflected in the local housing policies, building codes and zoning regulations.

Consistent with national trends the Township's population is aging. The median age of the population is 35.8 years, .5 years younger than the County as a whole. Data suggests that simply due to age of the population more than a third of the population is not able to fully contribute to the economic growth and earning power of the community. Age of residents will also impact the need for service, including education, police, fire and emergency medical service. In addition, age will necessarily be a factor in housing consumption and design. Local policies should be developed to increased opportunity, choice and costs in housing based on both physical and financial considerations.

The Township's population has grown more racially and ethnically diverse during the past decade. Racially, whites comprise the largest percentage of the population at 96.4 percent. The largest minority group within Richland Township two or more races, which comprises 2.90 percent of the total population. Those identified as African-American comprise less than 1 percent (0.5%) of the total Township population.

Many factors affect employment rates among adults. None, however, may be as important as educational attainment levels. Data shows that there are 134 individuals or 9.8 percent of all individuals 25 years of age or older that have not completed a high school education residing in Richland Township. The rate of Richland Township adults who have not graduated from high school is well below the state and national averages of 17.02 percent and 19.6 percent respectfully. Of note, while adult residents have completed a 4-year college degree and/or masters program which surpasses Allen County's 13.5 percent, its educational attainment in respect to college lags behind state and national benchmarks. This is an important factor in community development as it tends to suggest an increased demand for improving educational services and a strong foundation upon which to advance school financing.

Richland Township income has continued to out pace Allen County and the State of Ohio in comparison to the State's median household income. The median household income gap with regards to the County and State as identified in 1990 was +5.03 percent and +1.63 percent, respectively. Richland Township increased its median household income nearly 40 percent (139.17%) over the County by 2000; the gap with the State widened to +30.4 percent. Median family income in Richland Township was 128.5 percent of the County median family income in 1999 and 114.9 percent of the States median income. In 1999 Richland Township's per capita income was 116.8 percent of that of the County and 96.0 percent of the State figure.

The 2000 Census revealed that 70 individuals (3.5%), 34 households (4.88%) and 14 families (2.30%) were below the established poverty level based on income and household size. For purposes of comparison, data indicates that 12.1 percent of all households and 9.63 percent of all families within Allen County were below the established poverty level. Locally, 4 out of the 14 families in poverty had children.

When examining the type of employment of Richland residents, manufacturing is still the predominant sector. In raw numbers, there has been an increase since 1990 (169 vs. 270). Those showing construction made up 6.0 percent of the workforce. Educational and Health/Social services have not matched manufacturing with 27.1 percent of all work performed by Richland residents. An additional 11.9 percent involved in retail trade.

SECTION IV INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES

Infrastructure refers to those facilities and services necessary to support a community's residential, commercial and industrial activities. Infrastructure is often used to reference the transportation network, the water distribution and wastewater collection systems and sometimes includes the community's stormwater and drainage systems. Such systems are necessarily a concern for the public and rightfully so; taxpayers are responsible for the maintenance of such infrastructure. Privately supplied utilities such as natural gas, electricity and communications, including voice and digital communications are also part of a community's infrastructure. Therefore, infrastructure also includes the sometimes unrecognized, overhead wires, underground pipes and cables that are the conduits necessary to support a community's economic activities.

To economic development, infrastructure is largely concerned with the ability to move goods, products and services as efficiently and safely as possible between suppliers and markets. In community development, infrastructure includes not only hard physical infrastructure, but the facilities and services necessary to support and sustain the local community. This softer side of infrastructure includes a community's housing stock, its parks, schools, fire, emergency medical, and law enforcement. Parks are addressed in Section V; the remaining infrastructure/services will be addressed by others under separate cover.

The success of the planning process and the future development of Richland Township is dependent upon examining and subsequently establishing a balance between the infrastructure now serving the community and the infrastructure needed to serve residents and business alike in the future.

This section is provided in an attempt to present baseline information on the community's existing infrastructure. The success of the planning process and the future development of Richland Township is dependent upon examining and subsequently establishing a balance between the infrastructure now serving the community and the infrastructure needed to serve residents and business alike in the future.

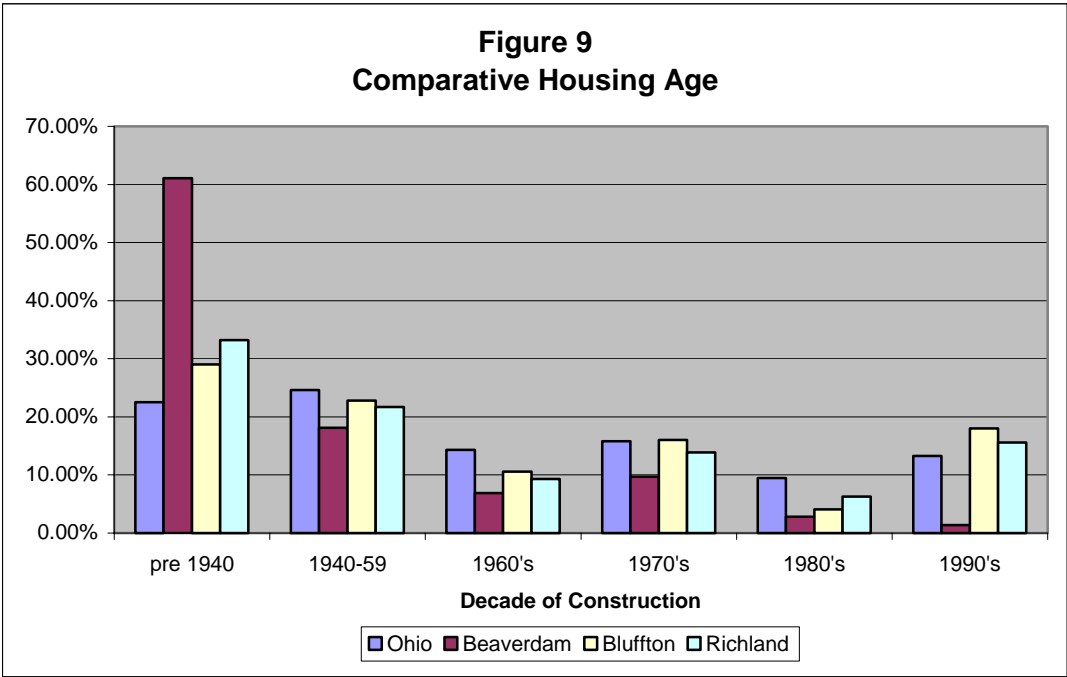
4.1 Housing

The quality of local housing relates the number and type of units available, their overall physical condition, both interior and exterior. Examining the distribution of housing units by the year in which the structure was built provides some insight into the history of residential development in the area, and can indicate potential problem areas in housing condition due to the age of structures. The following subsections attempt to identify the nature of Richland Township housing using Census data and comparisons to other political subdivisions.

4.1.1 Age of Housing Stock

Table 15 reveals that 48.0 percent of Richland Township's housing was built after 1960. Figure 9 shows a comparison of housing stock based on age between the State of Ohio, the Village of Beaverdam, the Village of Bluffton and Richland Township. Housing in Richland Township is significantly younger than the housing in the Village Beaverdam and somewhat newer than housing in the Village of Bluffton, Allen County and the State of Ohio. Comparatively, less than 49.1 percent of the housing in Allen County, and 54.0 percent of the housing in Ohio has been built since 1960.

TABLE 15 HOUSING UNITS BY AGE IN RICHLAND TOWNSHIP					
Year	Richland	Beaverdam	Bluffton	Allen County	Ohio
Total	723	144	1,302	44,245	4,783,051
Prior to 1939	33.5%	61.1%	30.0%	24.0%	22.5%
1940 to 1959	18.5%	18.1%	23.8%	26.9%	24.6%
1960 to 1969	6.2%	6.9%	11.2%	13.8%	14.3%
1970 to 1979	13.4%	9.7%	14.7%	16.9%	15.8%
1980 to 1989	13.8%	2.8%	2.5%	8.1%	9.5%
1990 to 1994	6.9%	0%	6.2%	4.6%	5.7%
1995 to 2000	7.6%	1.4%	11.6%	5.7%	7.6%

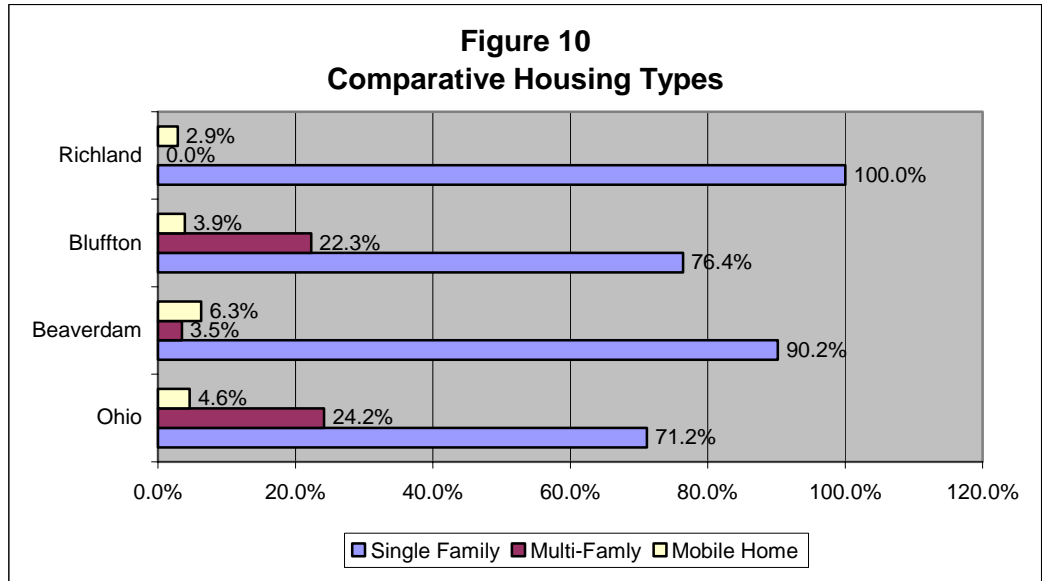


4.1.2 Type of Housing Units

The identification of housing units by type helps determine the housing choices available to local residents and allows issues of housing accessibility and affordability to be determined. All homes in Richland Township are single-family units, which exceeds The Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton and the State of Ohio as illustrated in Figure 10. Richland’s 100 percent compares to 71.2 percent for the State of Ohio, 76.5 percent for Allen County and 76.4 percent in Bluffton.

Looking to examine and compare the Township’s availability of multi-family units was futile as there is a complete absence of multi-family units in the Township. The proportion of multi-family units, including apartments, is in drastic difference to that of Allen County (19.4%) and the State of Ohio (24.2%).

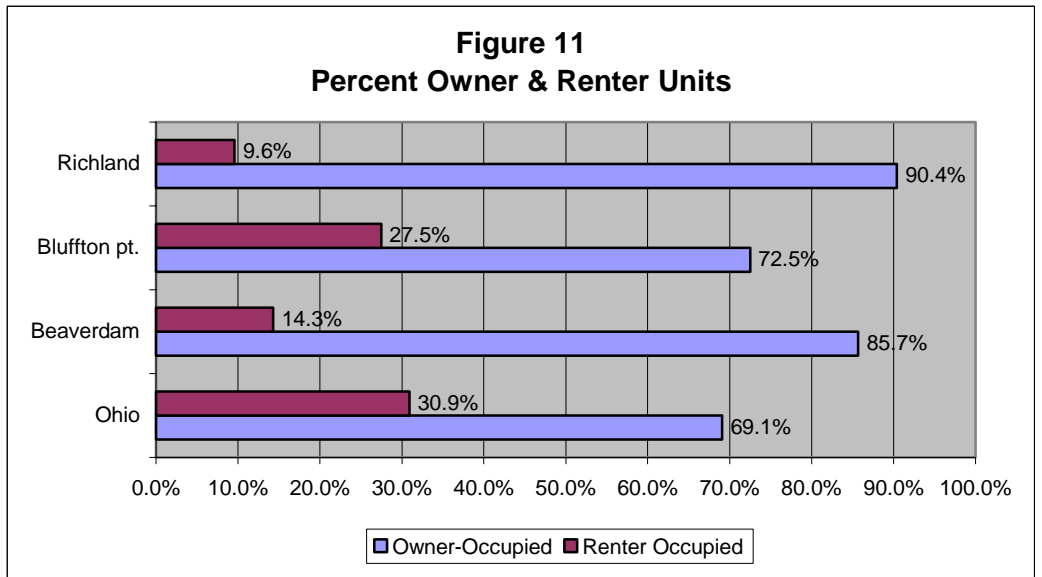
The percentage of mobile homes in the Township is 2.9 percent of the total available housing units and is significantly below the proportion found in Allen County (5.1%) and the State of Ohio at (4.6%).



4.1.3 Owner vs. Renter-Occupied Housing

Richland Township has a greater level of home ownership with fewer rental units when assessed against the larger community. As shown in Figure 11 Richland Township (90.4%) is significantly higher than that in Bluffton (72.5%), Ohio (69.1%), and Beaverdam (85.7%).

The percentage of owner-occupied housing units in Richland Township (90.4%) is significantly higher than that in Bluffton (72.5%), Beaverdam (85.7%) or Ohio (69.1%).



4.1.4 Rental Costs

According to the 2000 Census, less than 1 in 10 occupied residential units were available for rent. Table 16 reveals the cost of rental housing within Richland Township and other townships. Notice that Richland Township with regards to median rent compares favorably with the surrounding townships and Allen County. Rent is higher in Richland Township than Perry Township, but ranks below the median rent in the rest of the selected Political Subdivisions.

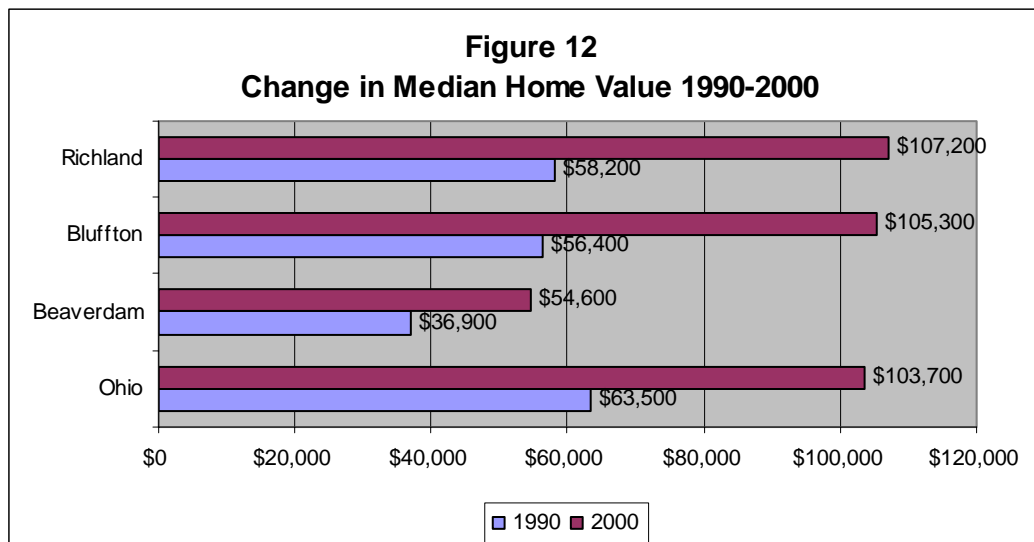
TABLE 16 MEDIAN RENT STATISTICS BY POLITICAL SUBDIVISION						
Rent	Bath	American	Perry	Shawnee	Richland	Allen County
Median	\$464	\$514	\$309	\$527	\$416	\$560
Less than \$100	7	25	11	6	7	531
\$100 to \$200	14	6	69	0	33	804
\$200 to \$300	66	77	76	11	38	1,620
\$300 to \$400	263	451	69	73	102	4,141
\$400 to \$500	232	565	15	175	67	2,352
\$500 to \$600	16	161	14	64	66	661
\$600 to \$700	24	98	0	26	38	214
\$700 to \$800	0	54	0	6	19	164
\$800+	0	91	0	34	19	267

4.1.5 Home Values

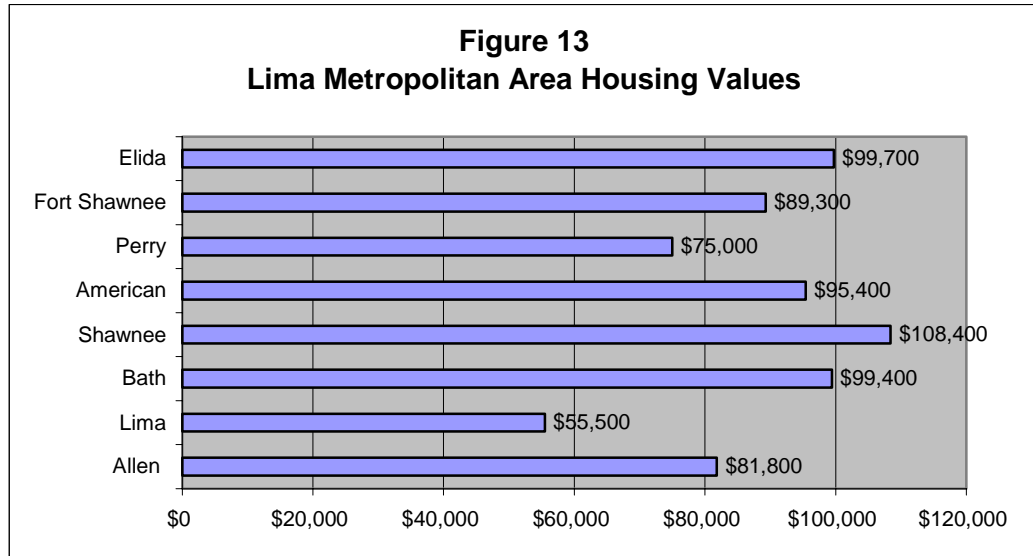
The median home value for Richland Township in 2000 (\$107,200) is significantly higher than Allen County (\$81,800) and Beavertown (\$54,600), while being slightly higher than Bluffton (\$105,300) than the State (\$103,700).

Median value of owner-occupied houses surpassed both Ohio and Bluffton between 1990 and 2000.

The median home value in the Township as compared to the villages and the State reflects the relatively young age of the housing stock, the median income of the population and current market conditions, which are dictating the continued trend of upscale single-family housing construction in Richland Township. Figure 12 reveals that the change in the median value of owner-occupied units in Richland Township between 1990 and 2000 (\$49,000/84.1%) surpassed the State of Ohio (\$40,200/63.3%). The Township did however keep pace with Bluffton (\$48,900/86.7%).



Richland Township compares favorably with the other townships comprising the Lima Metropolitan Area with regards to home value. As shown in Figure 13, Richland Township just below the top when compared to the other political subdivisions in the metropolitan area. Specific issues addressing housing, housing conditions and housing values were compiled by neighborhood and documented by the Regional Planning Commission under separate cover.



4.1.6 Housing Vacancy

Vacancy rates indicate the relative demand for housing in a community. They are based on housing units, which can be a 1-room efficiency apartment or a 5-bedroom home that are unoccupied for one reason or another. The State of Ohio has one of the lowest vacancy rates in the nation (7.1%) according to the 2000 Census. In 2000, Richland Township had an even lower housing unit vacancy rate (3.19%). Of those housing units that were identified as vacant at the time of the 2000 Census, 8.6 percent were listed as for rent, 17.3 percent were for sale, 4.3 percent had been rented or sold but were not as of yet occupied, 4.3 percent were seasonal homes and 65.2 percent were shown as “other vacant.” As a percentage of total housing units available, in 1980 vacancy represented 3.7 percent of all housing units while in 2000 it represented 3.1 percent. So the expected vacancy rate within the Township appears to be relatively stable, as seen in Table 17.

TABLE 17 VACANCY STATUS BY POLITICAL SUBDIVISION 1980-2000					
Political Subdivision	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	Change	
				Amount	Percent
Allen County	2,698	3,350	3,599	901	33.40%
Amanda Township	36	24	27	-9	-25.00%
American Township	231	198	307	76	32.90%
Auglaize Township	36	32	45	9	25.0%
Bath Township	227	168	243	16	7.05%
Jackson Township	34	24	28	-6	-17.65%
Lima City	1,572	2,355	2,221	649	41.28%
Marion Township	24	26	30	6	25.00%
Monroe Township	43	38	23	-20	-46.51%
Perry Township	51	54	75	24	47.06%
Richland Township	19	19	23	4	21.05%
Shawnee Township	165	121	140	-25	-15.16%
Spencer Township	15	10	12	-3	-20.00%
Sugar Creek Township	17	23	22	5	29.41%

4.2 Water & Wastewater Infrastructure

Public utilities and system capacities facilitate community development. This Plan recognizes utility services as necessary to sustain existing economic activities as well as future development. The Plan acknowledges the detailed studies completed by those entities charged with the delivery of such services and accepts the land use limitations developed out of a respect for coordinating such services and limiting suburban sprawl.

Public water and sanitary sewer services support minimal existing development in Richland Township and are mostly confined to the villages. In Richland Township, development has been supported by various public water and wastewater services. The extent and quality of each system varies by geographic location. Map 12 depicts the existing wastewater infrastructure. Map 13 depicts the existing public water service.

Examining potable water, Richland Township relies primarily on individual wells located on residential properties and farms. The existing water distribution system in Richland Township is constrained to those incorporated areas with the exception of the Richland Manor Assisted Living Complex off Dixie Highway and the Speedway Truck Stop. Map 13 depicts the current Village of Bluffton and Village of Beaverdam service area with near term consumer demands driving the extension of water services further into the unincorporated area.

When examining wastewater treatment service, Richland Township is served by Allen County and the Village of Beaverdam. To date Beaverdam has been very non-aggressive with extending their sewer service outside of the confines of the incorporated area. Three service extensions have been customer driven, with specific services provided to the new Village at Sugar Creek subdivision development, the Speedway Truck Stop on the east side of I-75 via Napoleon Road, and the Richland Manor Nursing Home. Allen County provides service to the Mast Estates Subdivision at Lugabill and Phillips with a Package Plant. Extensions of Bluffton's sewer services have historically required annexation. Concerns arise over the coordination of future extensions of both sanitary sewer and municipal water services.

4.3 Transportation & Transportation Services

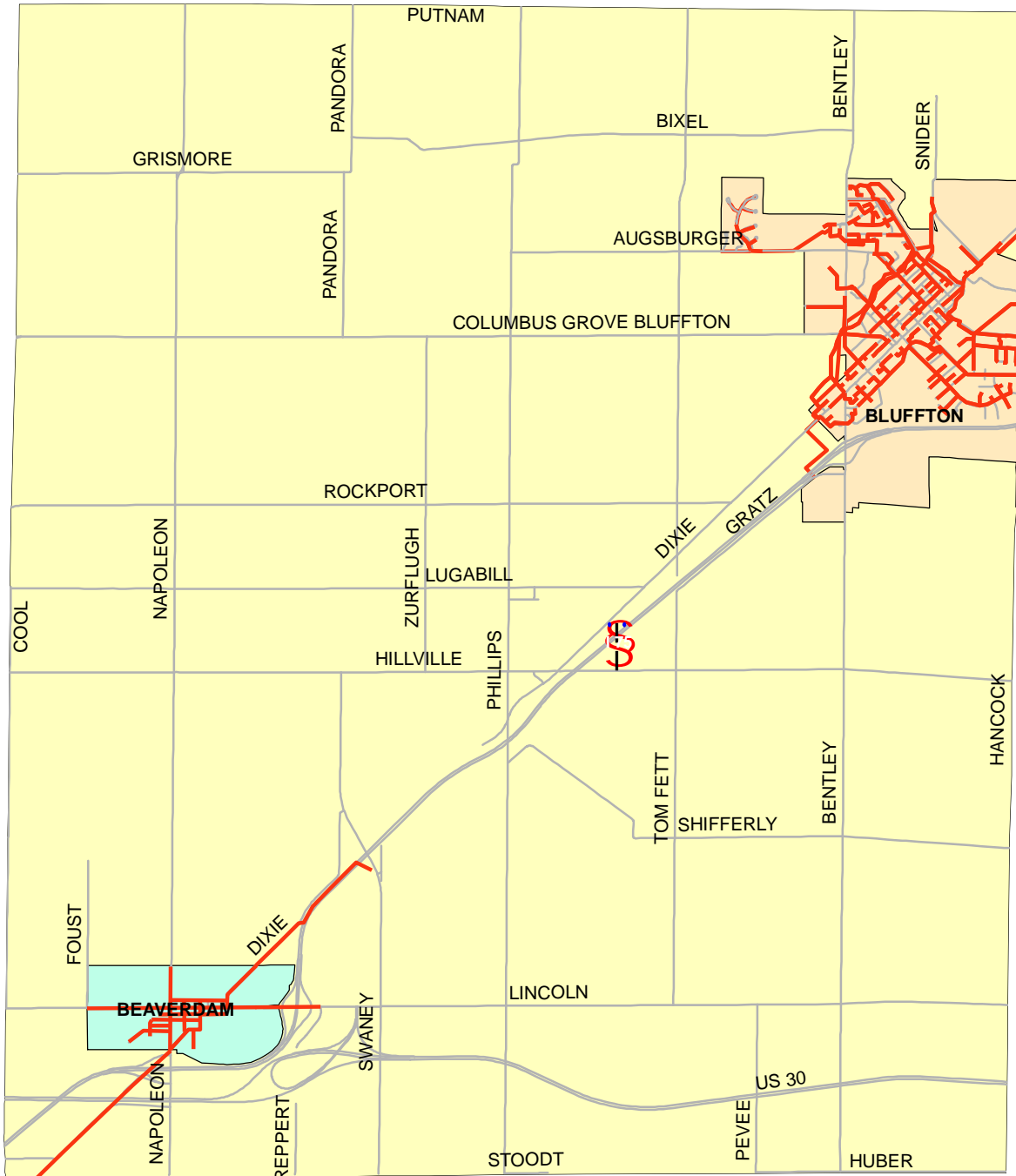
Transportation infrastructure is an important tool in community building and economic development activities. Transportation infrastructure includes roads, bridges, rail and airports. It also includes area cartage and freight service as well as inter and intra city public transportation services.

4.3.1 Highway System

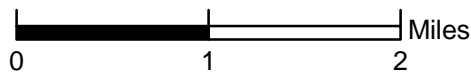
The highway system that services Richland Township is considered rural, consisting of interstate, arterials, collectors and local roads. This is depicted in Map 14. The administration of these roads is delegated to federal, State and local governmental units as depicted on Map 15.

The functional classification of the respective roadways (Map 14) identifies which roadways are eligible for federal funding irregardless of the roadway's jurisdictional responsibility. Table 18 reveals the urban/rural classification of the community's roadway system. The major north-south interstate, I-75, passes through Richland Township from its northeast to southwest corner. To the north, I-75 links the Richland community to cities such as Toledo and Detroit while to the south, the cities of Dayton, Lexington, Atlanta and Miami are directly accessible. Another major roadway located in Richland Township is U.S. Route 30. This east-west route links the Richland Township with Chicago, to the west

MAP 12 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: CURRENT SEWER SERVICE



— Sewer System

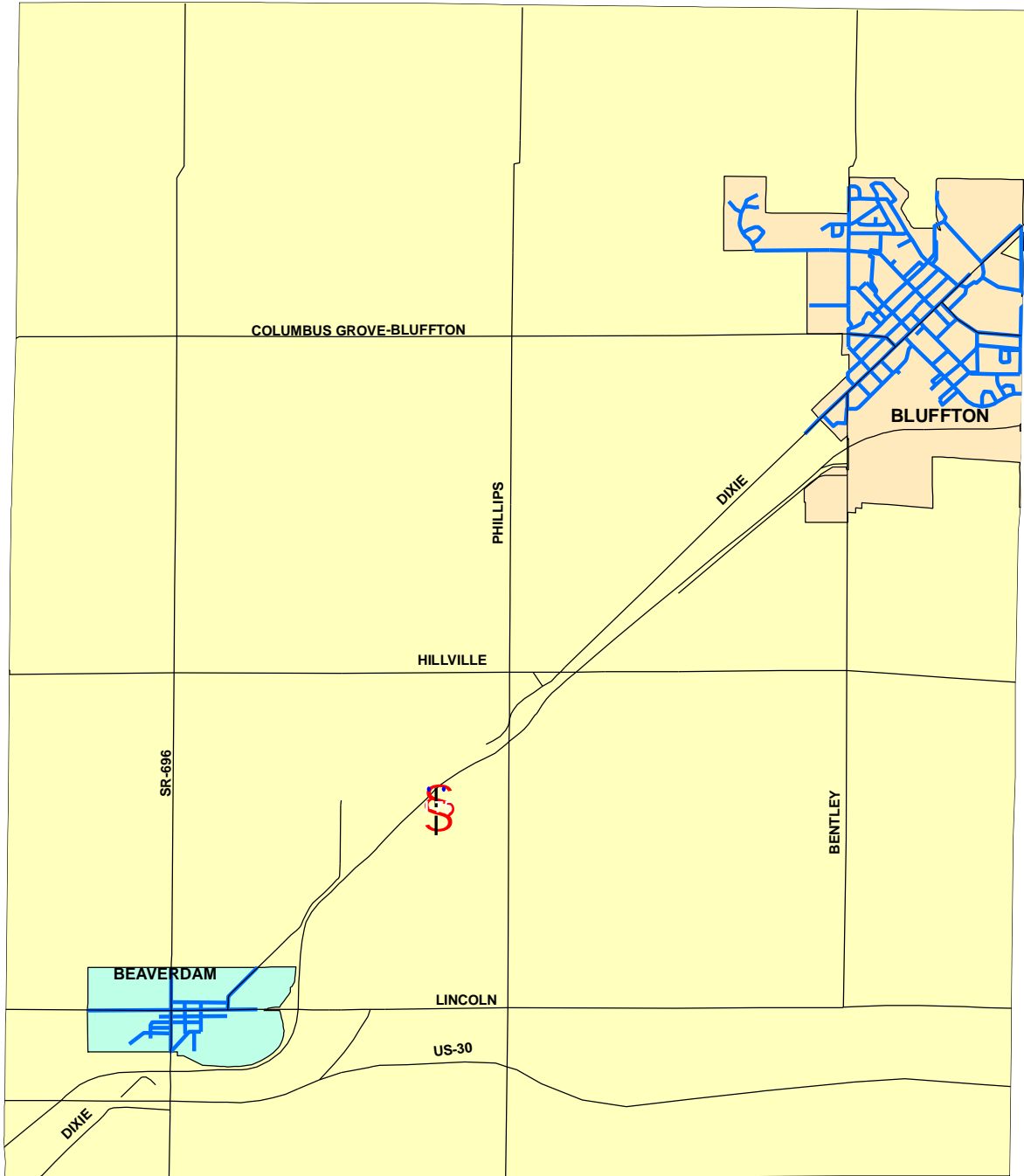


1 inch equals 1 miles



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MAP 13 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: CURRENT WATER SERVICE



— Existing Water

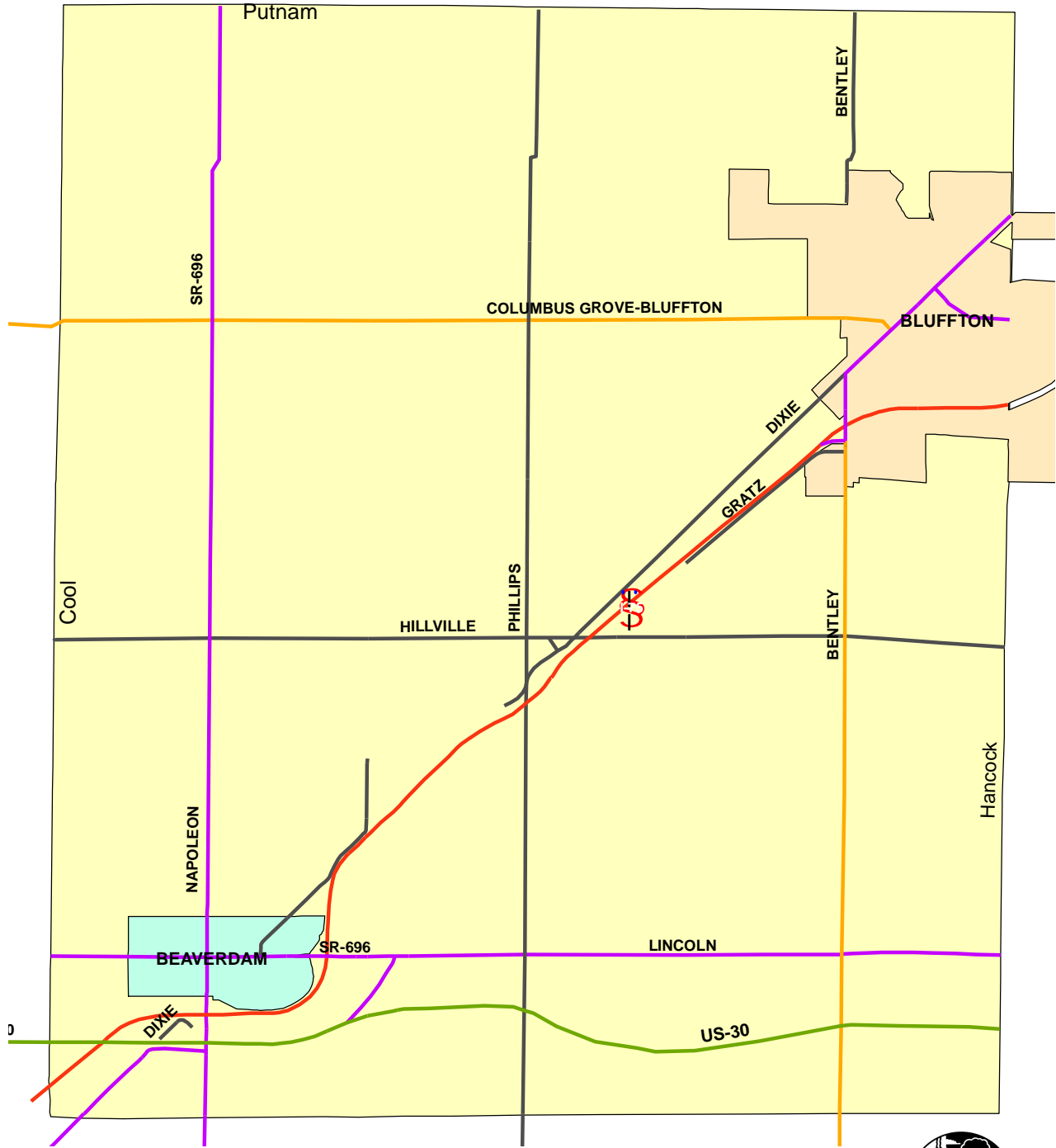


1 inch equals 1 miles

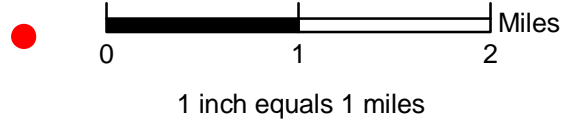


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MAP 14 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

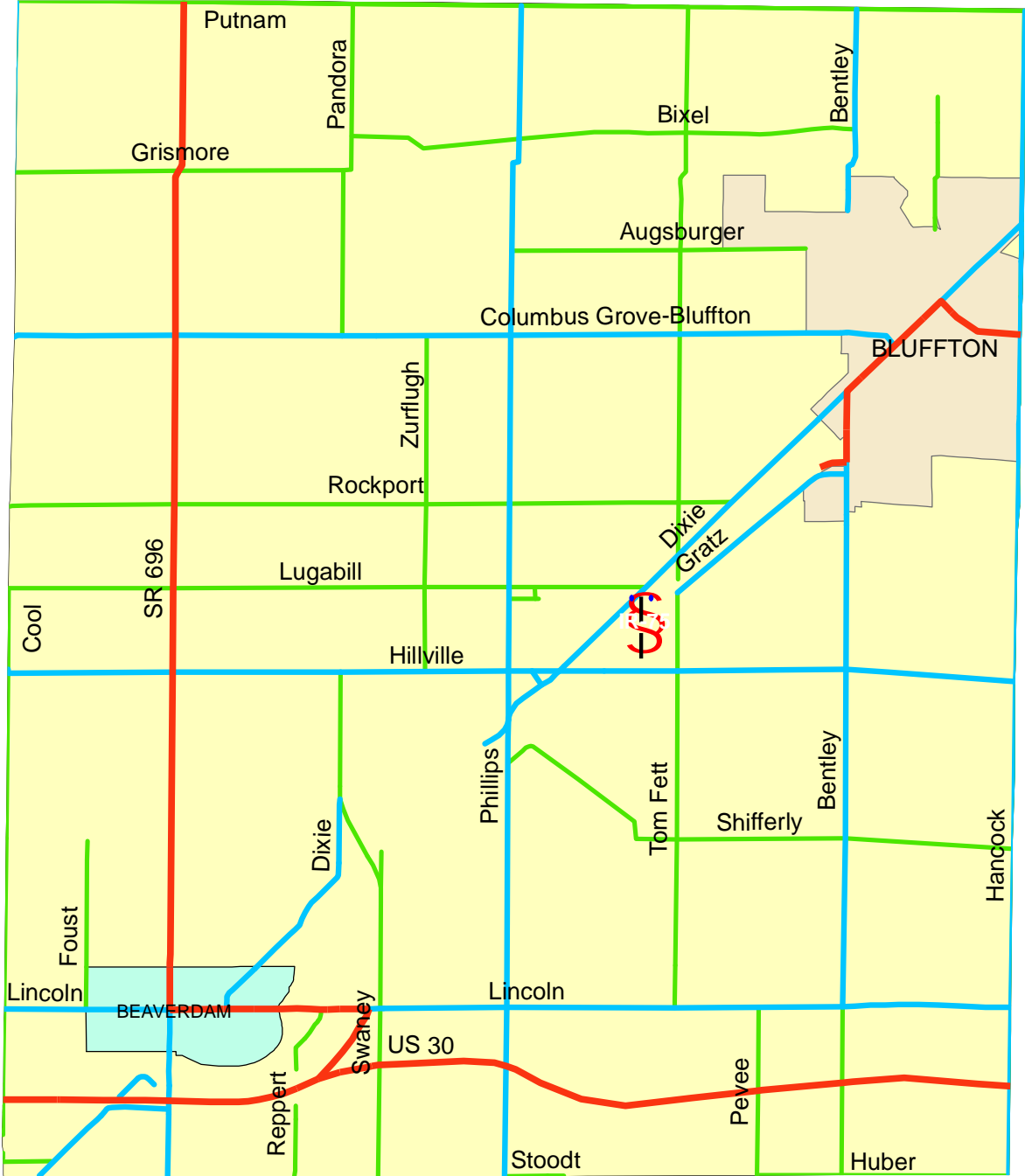


- Functional Class**
- Interstate
 - Principal Arterial
 - Major Collector
 - Minor Collector
 - Rural Local



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MAP 15 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: ROAD MAINTENANCE BY JURISDICTION



Legend

- State Roads
- County Roads
- Township Roads



1 inch equals 1 miles



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and Pittsburgh and Philadelphia to the east. In addition to I-75 and U.S. Route 30, Richland Township is serviced by SR 696 (Napoleon Road), and the historic Lincoln Highway. The aforementioned highway system supplies a solid network for the movement of goods and people within and through the Township.

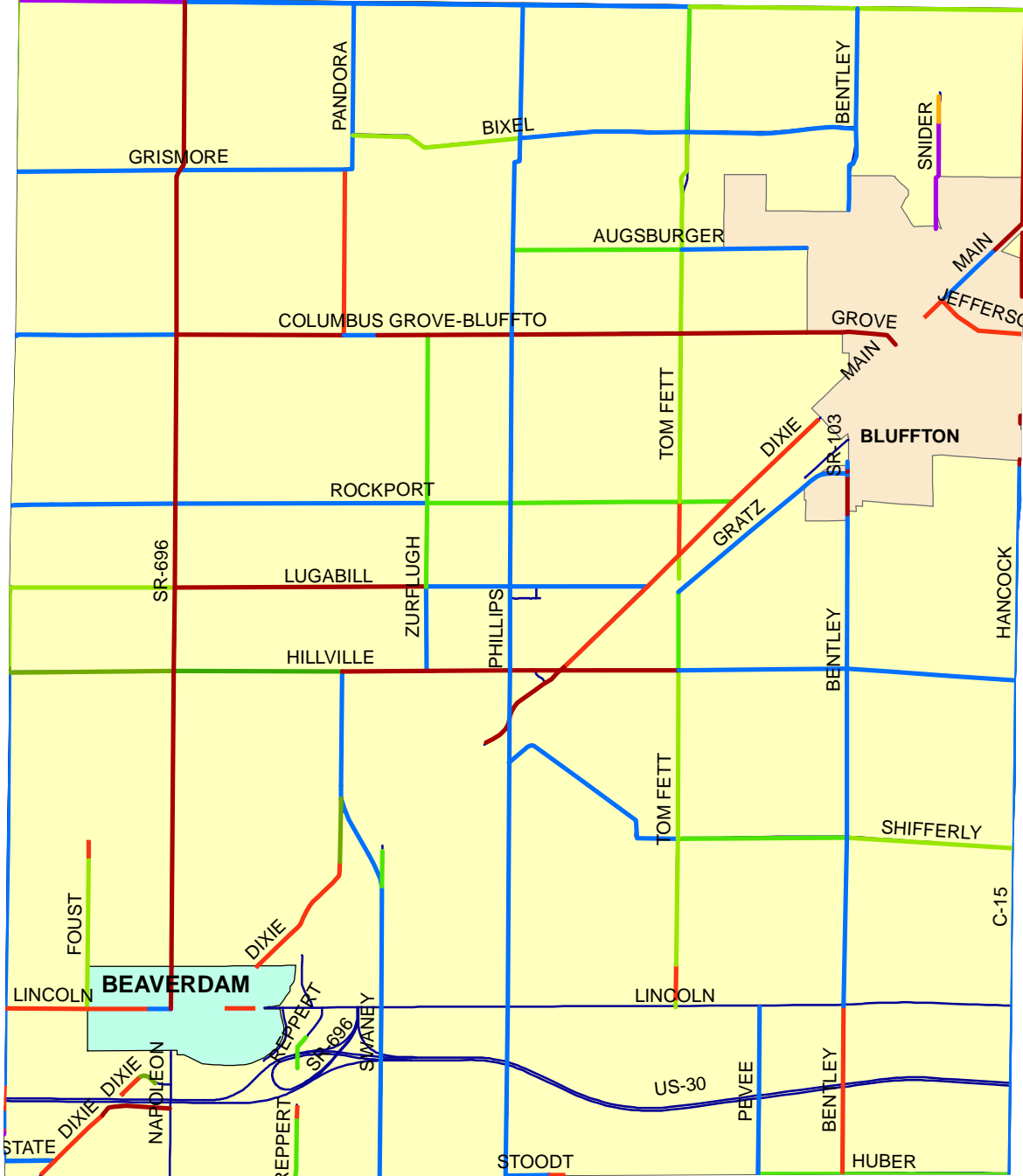
TABLE 18 ROADWAY MILEAGE BY FUNCTIONAL CLASS & JURISDICTION				
Functional Class	State Routes	County	Township	Total Miles
Rural Interstate	7.99	0.00	0.00	7.99
Rural Principal Arterial	6.09	0.00	0.00	6.09
Rural Major Collector	9.62	7.41	0.00	17.03
Rural Minor Collector	0.00	8.53	1.00	9.53
Rural Local	0.00	28.39	61.75	90.14
Total Miles	23.70	44.33	62.75	130.78

According to figures obtained from Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) total 2006 roadway system mileage within Richland Township entailed 130.78 miles, of which approximately 7.85 miles are classified as interstate mileage. Arterial roadways total 14.93 miles and account for 7.99 percent of total system mileage while collectors account for 26.56 miles. Over two thirds of the roadway system (105.96 miles) is classified as local in nature for which the Township itself is responsible for 62.7 miles, while the County maintains 44.3 miles and the State is responsible for 23.7 miles. According to 2006 estimates of daily vehicular miles of travel (VMT), total VMT approaches 72,000 miles per day in Richland Township.

Various roadway pavement widths have been identified as to their compliance with Federal design standards in Map 16. Table 19 identifies 87.07 miles of deficient roadways by extent of deficiency and classification. Estimates to improve such roadways varies due to existing conditions including shoulder width, drainage and base. Assuming an adequate base, shoulder width and no drainage problems, necessary roadway improvements are estimated at \$7.97 million. As depicted in Map 17 there are 37 bridges in Richland Township, of which 2 have been identified as deficient. Bridge repair was estimated at \$435,000 in current dollars and programmed in the County's 2030 Transportation Plan for upgrades.

TABLE 19 DEFICIENT PAVEMENT WIDTH IN RICHLAND TOWNSHIP				
Deficient Pavement Width	Rural Major Collector	Rural Minor Collector	Rural Local	Total Miles
8	0.00	0.00	13.33	13.33
7	0.00	0.00	13.52	13.52
6	0.17	0.00	41.25	41.42
5	0.00	5.14	3.50	8.64
4	0.65	4.27	6.35	11.27
3	0.00	0.00	1.51	1.51
2	1.38	0.00	0.00	1.38
1	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Miles	2.20	9.41	75.46	87.07

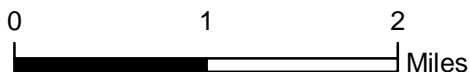
MAP 16 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: ROADWAY DEFICIENCIES BY PAVEMENT WIDTH



Legend

- Not Deficient
- 6 Feet
- 5 Feet
- 4 Feet
- 3 Feet
- 2 Feet
- 1 Feet

Note: Based on 12 Ft Standard Lane Width



1 inch equals 1 miles

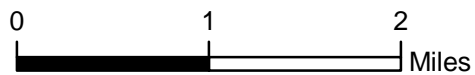


Map 17 Richland Township: Deficient Bridges



Legend

- Deficient Bridges
- Bridges



1 inch equals 1 miles



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4.3.2 Rail System

In 2007, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) documented some 99.12 miles of rail in Allen County. Approximately one tenth, 9.9 miles, are located within Richland Township. The Allen County community is currently serviced by two major Class I rail carriers CSX (48.89 miles) and NS (23.86 miles). Allen County is also serviced by the Indiana and Ohio RR (10.85 miles) and the SPEG RR (15.52 miles). Although not all located within Richland Township, each of the rail lines increase the ability of the overall rail system to service industrial and commercial interests. Collectively, these railroads are able to provide access to regional, national and international markets. Map 18 depicts the rail system traversing Richland Township. The availability of rail sidings at existing sites is somewhat limited and additional investment is necessary to increase capacity especially for break-of-bulk and intermodal functions. Future development plans would be remiss if they failed to consider opportunities for such a facility near the I-75/US 30 interchange.

The availability of rail sidings at existing sites is somewhat limited and additional investment is necessary to increase capacity especially for break-of-bulk and intermodal functions.

4.3.3 Electric, Oil & Gas Transmission Line Locations

Richland Township is serviced by a full compliment of utility providers. Residential and commercial services are readily available for electricity and gas. Service providers include Midwest Electric, American Electric Power (AEP) as well as Columbia Gas of Ohio and Dominion Gas. Specialized industrial cylinder and bulk gas is also available through BOC Gases and AGA Gas.

The availability and costs of utility services are considered very reasonable when compared to State and National costs.

When examining larger industrial applications it is important to recognize that Allen County is crossed by the pipelines of East Ohio as well as petrochemical companies that have established terminals and/or pipelines for transmission purposes including Marathon, Shell, BP, Buckeye, Ashland, Inland, and Mid Valley. It is also important to recognize that the American Electrical Power has large voltage transmission lines traversing the region. Map 19 identifies the approximate location of the various utility lines.

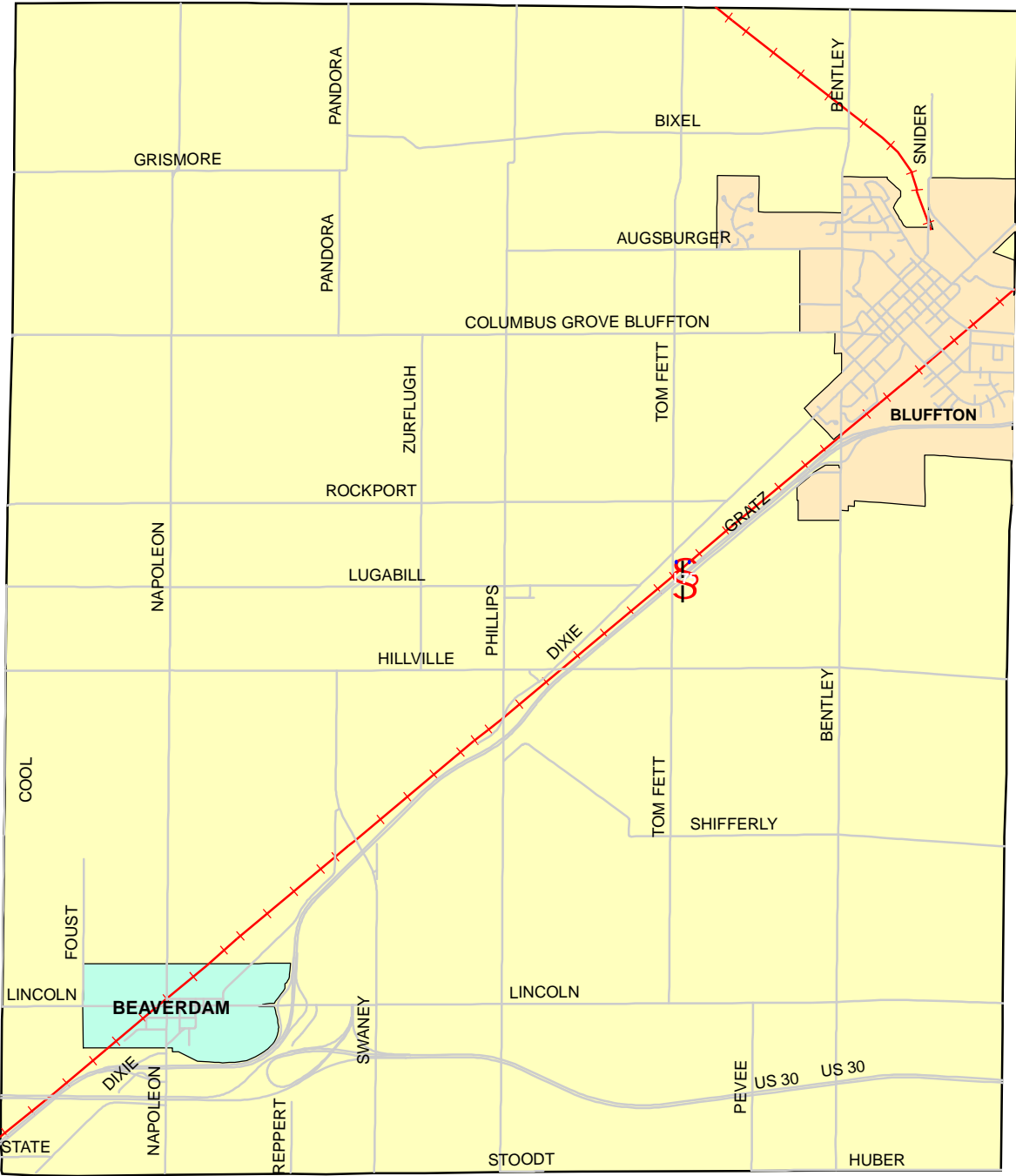
4.4 Summary

Richland Township's population has increased every census period since the 1970 tabulation. Between 1990 and 2000, the population increased 9.1 percent, adding an additional 138 individuals to the township. The 2000 Census reported a total of 723 housing units in Richland Township, an increase of 9.7 percent or 64 units over the previous 10-year period. Since 1999, 48 additional residential lots have been created, and construction has begun on a major subdivision that could provide up to 125 new residential units. Outside of the subdivision development, an additional 173 units are projected based on population growth and projected household size. Growth continues to place pressure on agricultural land use conversion. The requisite extension of public infrastructure to support such residential growth has not occurred by mandate but by public demand typically resulting in annexation of the unincorporated area.

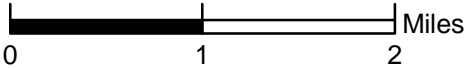
Unnecessary or unplanned mandated improvements to public utilities are expensive for residents and businesses alike.

Concerns regarding residential development include: the aging population and the appropriateness of the existing housing supply to meet future demands; the age and condition of the existing housing stock and the status of available codes/programs to support the redevelopment of some of the older housing stock; and, conflicting land use

MAP 18 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: RAILROADS



+ Railroads

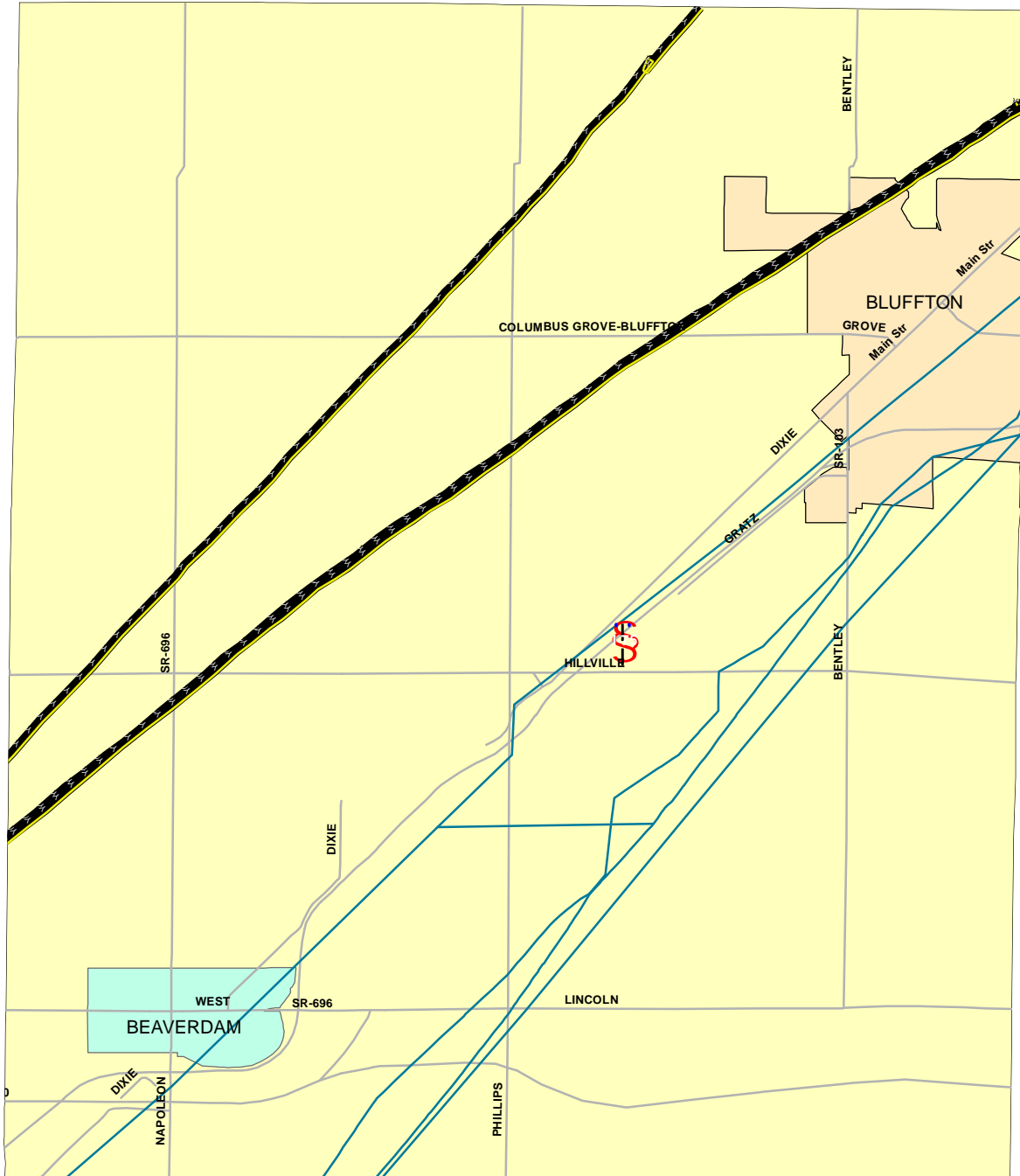




1 inch equals 1 miles
52

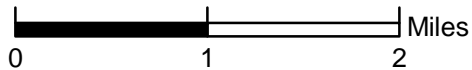


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MAP 19 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: PIPELINE & ELECTRIC INFRASTRUCTURE



-  Pipelines
-  Electric Lines



1 inch equals 1 miles



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between strip residential development and the continued viability of the agricultural industry.

The key issues of concern to future development revolve around the availability, adequacy and costs of the Township's infrastructure/services. The community's transportation network, its water distribution system, wastewater capabilities and drainage system are typical infrastructure concerns for the public. Privately supplied utilities such as natural gas, electricity, voice and data communications are also a part of infrastructure. In community development, infrastructure is necessary to maintain and support the health and safety of residents. In economic development, infrastructure is concerned with the ability to move goods, services and products between community's suppliers and markets and the sustenance of labor force. Unfortunately, unnecessary or unplanned mandated improvements to public utilities are expensive for residents and businesses alike.

The link between community development and transportation cannot be minimized. The community's access to the federal and State roadway system is very good and pending improvements will only increase the community's attractiveness. The ability to capitalize upon the region's rail infrastructure is more challenging. Currently, the limited number of through tracks on critical corridors hamper vehicular traffic on area roadways near at-grade crossings. Moreover, the availability of rail sidings at potential industrial sites is somewhat limited and additional investment is necessary to increase capacity, especially for break of bulk and inter-modal functions.

Concerns regarding water and wastewater systems include: the capacity and age of distribution and collection systems; service area expansions; the current regulatory environment; and, lack of current future plans to insure and protect the viability of the agricultural industry in Richland Township. The adequate funding of the community's transportation infrastructure is also important. Once rural roadways and bridges are now experiencing higher traffic volumes and heavier loads due to unplanned residential developments on the village/rural fringe. Such roadways do not meet minimum design standards and need to be improved to facilitate daily traffic flow safely. Adequate maintenance of roadways has become a critical issue for the Township. Future improvements will be identified in Section 7.

SECTION V ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Richland Township is considered a rural township, with a considerable amount of land in the community relatively rural with large tracts of land still engaged in agricultural pursuits. Such agricultural activities have continued relatively unimpeded in areas away from I-75. But the community is changing. As residential development moves further out it is increasing the burden on local resources and destroying the very same rural landscape identified as so important to the residents of Richland Township. The haphazard development is resulting in environmental damage and government/citizen mandates to provide municipal water/sewer in areas where agriculture is being threatened by ever increasing land values. This continued strip residential development occurring along the once rural roads is forcing local governments to address haphazard growth and development.

There have been a number of statewide studies that have concluded the greatest threat to the State of Ohio and its population centers is the loss of farmland and an absence of land use planning that considers the resources and the integrity of the ecosystems. Recognizing that a sizable portion of Richland Township's economy relies upon its agricultural base, the community may be subject to a higher level of risk than other geographic areas of Ohio.

Richland Township's natural resources may be at greater risk than other geographic areas of Ohio. The future pattern of development must protect natural resources and sustain the economy for a 25 -year period.

Managing future growth in a comprehensive and cooperative manner among cities, villages, and townships is highly desirable. Land areas designated for future development should be identified and reserved for the protection of the natural landscape and the community's resources. Achieving a future pattern of development that protects natural resources and aesthetic qualities, while allowing a sustainable economy supported by infrastructure investments sufficient for a 25-year planning period, is the goal of the Township's future land use planning process.

5.1 Solid Waste Issues

On average, Allen County residents generate 1.296 tons of solid waste annually. On such a per capita basis, Richland Township generates 2,611.44 tons of waste annually. The closest sanitary landfill to Richland Township is the Cherokee Run facility, operated by Allied Waste Systems Inc., in Bellefontaine, Ohio. The facility, which accepted only 10,086 tons or 7.2 percent of Allen County's waste stream in 2003, is reaching capacity. The largest single recipient of the community's waste stream is the Evergreen Landfill Facility operated by Waste Management and located outside of the City of Toledo. The facility accepts 82,657 tons (58.7%) of Allen County waste. Outside Allen County there are 10 other landfills that accept a portion of local waste including facilities in Mercer, Logan, Wyandot and Hancock counties. The EOLM landfill is a private facility designed and approved to dispose of construction and demolition waste.

There are two sanitary landfills in Allen County of which "both" are now closed. One of these is located in Bath Township along Sandusky Road. The Sandusky Road site encompasses 44 acres, 37 of which were used as part of the landfill operation. Because the site was a nuisance and eyesore within the community, Bath Township acquired the property in hopes of restoring the property for park use. The Township was unaware that the facility was not closed properly until notification was received from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA).

The State of Ohio requires each county to maintain a current County Solid Waste Plan. Allen County belongs to a 6-county consortium known as the North Central Ohio Solid Waste District (NCOSWD) that was formed to develop a comprehensive, cooperative, regional approach to solid waste disposal problems. Richland Township does not bid/let municipal waste contract nor does it provide drop-off recycling opportunities for its residents.

The LACRPC, with the support of ODNR and the NCOSWD, does provide anti-litter programming to reinforce educational outreach efforts, public awareness activities and media releases. The NCOSWD also sponsors a successful Annual Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off event that helps eliminate the extent of dumping illegal toxic wastes. Allen County has also recently established an affiliate with Keep America Beautiful, Inc., to better assist local communities in developing a cleaner, safer community environment.

Local leaders must acknowledged that solid waste, which can be seen as litter, reaches into every aspect of the planning/regulatory process, to include: storm water management, building codes, zoning regulations, exterior maintenance codes, etc. Developing/implementing such standards within the planning/regulatory process to address litter will open the door to long-term remediation of all forms of solid waste disposal.

- Solid Waste Concerns:*
- *Long Term Disposal Capacity*
 - *Collection Capacity*
 - *Yard Waste*
 - *Recycling Opportunities*
 - *Reduction in disposal*

The effects of litter are pervasive and far-reaching not just in the older urbanized areas of Allen County, but along the rural corridors as well. Developing environmentally sound methods for disposal of non-hazardous solid waste is challenging for townships with constrained budgets. However, acknowledging such challenges is the beginning of the solution. Residents must realize that litter cleanup is not long-term litter prevention. Although there are local programs that address litter cleanup, including, Adopt-a-Highway, Adopt-a-Roadway, and Adopt-a-Waterway as well as neighborhood cleanup, such activities do not contribute in a significant way to litter prevention. Litter prevention must be addressed at its source with jurisdictional controls and enforcement balanced with public education.

5.2 Air Quality Issues

Air Quality is one of the most pressing issues facing the region today. Richland Township resides in a unique geographic location. The community is situated between the major urban centers of Ft. Wayne located in Indiana, and the cities of Toledo and Dayton both in Ohio. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has identified these urban centers as non-attainment areas. The community's I-75 corridor aggravates local air quality. Richland Township as part of the Lima Urbanized Area has recently obtained attainment status.

USEPA issuance of "attainment" status could avoid additional environmental compliance regulations and eliminate any negative impact on local development recruiting efforts.

In 2004 Allen County was identified as being in noncompliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone. Conventional pollutant monitoring results indicate that Richland Township and Allen County are now in compliance. On Wednesday, May 16, 2007, the U.S. EPA published notice addressing Allen County being redesignated to attainment with respect to 8-hour ozone. The redesignations for the Allen County will be effective on June 15, 2007.

Allen County is working with representatives of the Ohio Department of Transportation and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) in interagency consultation to maintain air quality conformity pursuant to the USEPA 8-hour Non-Attainment Area Conformity Analysis required pursuant to Section 40 CFR 93.119.

5.3 Water Quality Issues

Water pollution prevention is one of the top concerns of local officials. The most important issues are the elimination of combined sewer overflows and managing storm water runoff. Currently, the Blanchard River and several of its tributaries have been found to be in noncompliance with the Clean Water Act. The Blanchard River and its tributaries suffer from nutrient enrichment, sedimentation and habitat alteration, combined sewer overflows and both urban and agricultural runoff. Map 20 identifies the impaired waterways of Richland Township.

In an attempt to achieve compliance with federal legislation and both USEPA and OEPA mandates, the local community must address the following points to meet the limits of the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) established by the USEPA/OEPA:

- Managing storm water runoff to reduce sediment, nutrients, and downstream flooding.
- Prevention of erosion from agricultural operations and removal of vegetation from areas in proximity to water surfaces.
- Identification and elimination of pollutant discharges from wastewater treatment plants, combined sewer overflows, package plant discharges and industrial discharges.
- Identification of the location of hazardous materials and management of these materials so that they do not enter the environment.
- In cooperation with the EMA, the establishment of hazard response teams to quickly provide adequate protection measures in the event of a hazardous chemical spill, especially along the Interstate and State Highways where hazardous materials are routinely transported.

Water quality concerns:

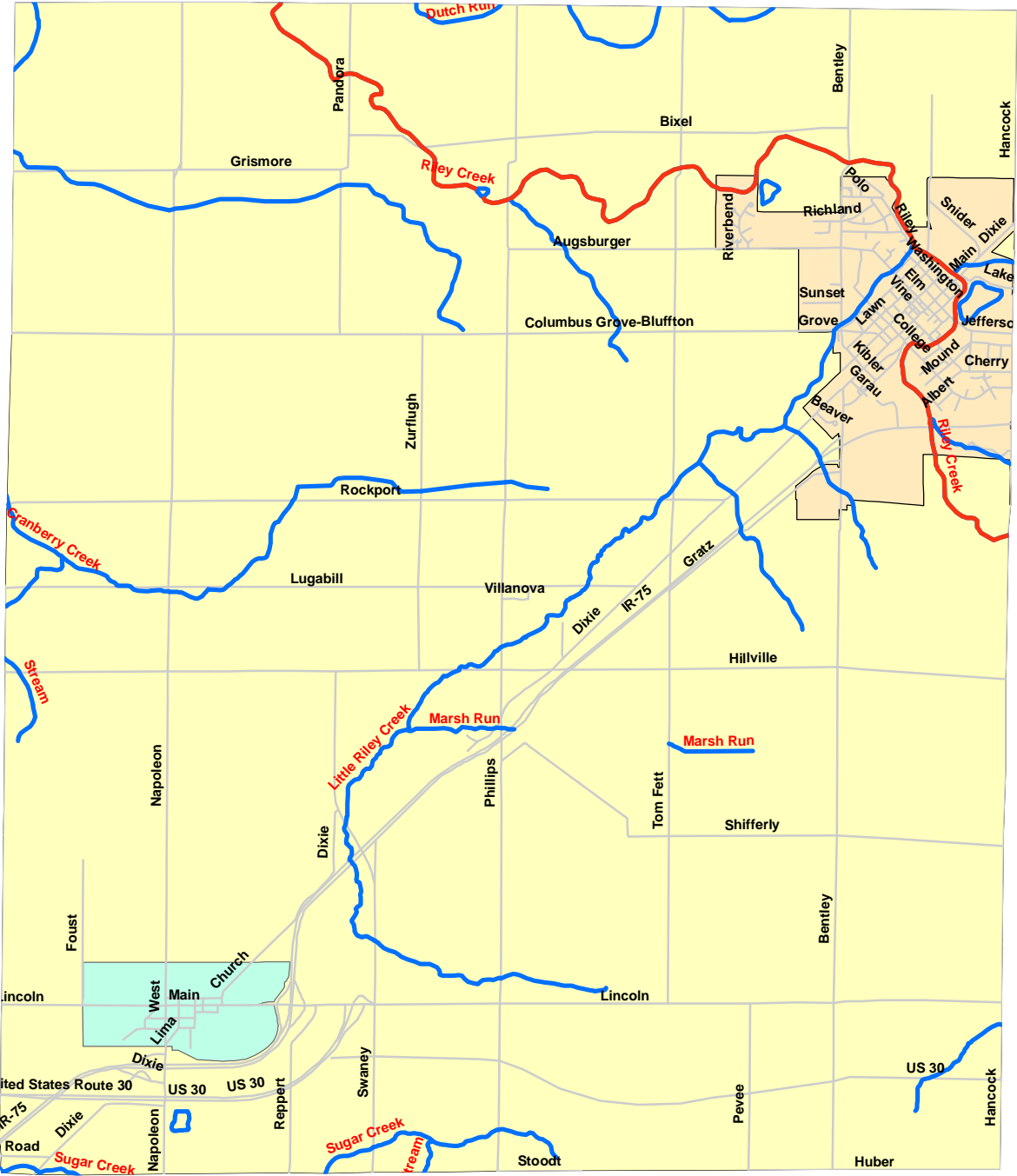
- *Managing storm water runoff in compliance with Phase II requirements*
- *Prevention of erosion*
- *Elimination of illicit discharges at point source facilities*
- *Management of hazardous materials*

5.4 The Natural Environment

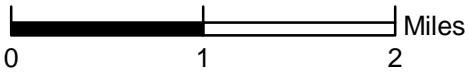
The natural environment within the community is shaped by its site and situation. The local geographic and geologic conditions provide the basis of the subtle topography, the waterways and the vegetative cover. The natural environment has been impacted and modified to a great extent by residents of the community. The natural environment has and continues to provide the basis for various economic activities including farming and quarrying for many in the community. It has provided for residential development and both industrial and commercial ventures within the villages and along the I-75 corridor. But for its troubles, the natural environment has been scarred and forced to carry the burden of such human activities as illicit dumping, septic systems leaching into local waterways, roadway salts and chemicals contaminating soils and waterways. That being said, the natural environment continues to be the foundation of much of our memories and our

The extent to which the modification of the natural landscape continues will be the basis upon which this planning document will be judged.

MAP 20 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: IMPAIRED WATERWAYS



- Impaired
- Not Impaired



1 inch equals 1 miles



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vision for the future. Map 21 provides a visual cue of the existing elements supporting the natural environment within Richland Township. The extent to which the modification of the natural landscape continues unabated will be the basis upon which this planning exercise/document will be judged in the future.

5.4.1 Tributaries to the Blanchard River

The physical and functional attributes of the Blanchard River and its drainage areas by watersheds was introduced in Section 2.2.3 of this report. However, that section failed to provide the broad understanding necessary to appreciate the relationship between the Blanchard River and its Richland tributaries (Riley Creek and Little Riley Creek) with the larger natural environment.

The Blanchard River and its tributaries play an important role in the natural environment. The Blanchard River in many ways is the backbone of the community's ecosystem. Collectively the River and its various tributaries provide: the necessary drainage; the stream valleys that provide the riparian

The 37.8 linear miles of Richland Township waterways and their respective riparian corridors should be inventoried, monitored as to their health, and protected to ensure access and their natural beauty for future generations.

habitat for a variety of flora and fauna; natural migration routes for birds and other wildlife; and, open spaces which provide visual relief and recreation amenities for the community. This resource must be protected. In fact, the 37.8 linear miles of Richland Township waterways and their riparian corridors should be inventoried, monitored as to their health, and protected to ensure access and their natural beauty for future generations. Map 4 depicts these sub-watersheds.

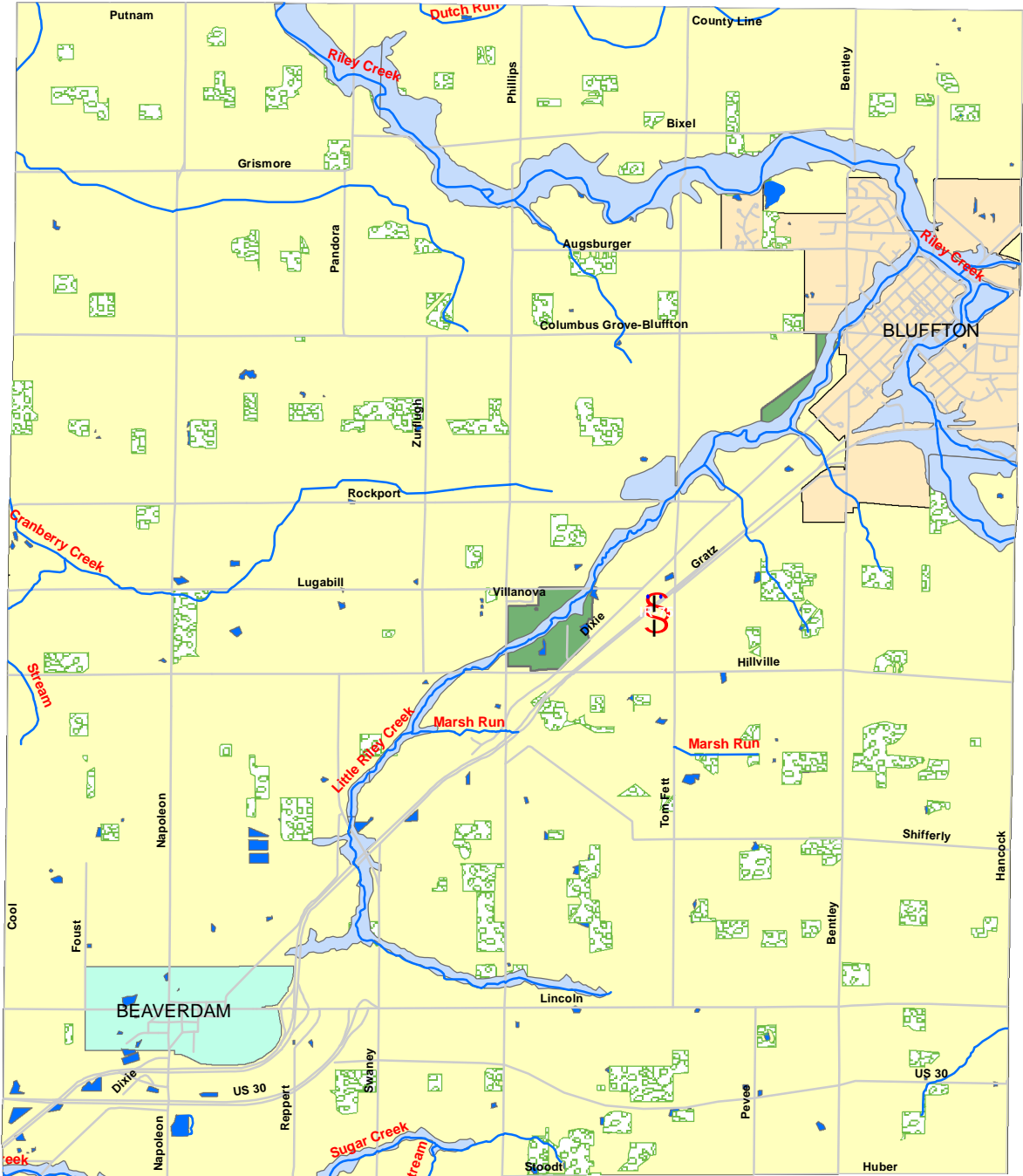
5.4.2 Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency in a report entitled Flood Insurance Study - Allen County Ohio, Incorporated Areas (1989), identified 1,109 acres in Richland Township as Special Flood Hazard Areas. The report was intended to serve in the development of actuarial flood insurance rates and assist the community in its efforts to promote sound floodplain management. Hydrologic and hydraulic analyses formed the basis of the analysis that documented Riley Creek north of Bluffton. Cranberry Creek, Little Riley Creek and Riley Creek south of Bluffton was documented using approximate analyses because the area was thought to have lower development potential. The resultant floodplain delineations of these waterways were documented by the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) in flood insurance rate maps (FIRM) identified in the Appendices of this Plan.

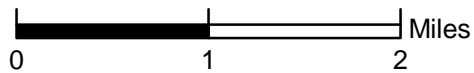
Historically, encroachment onto the floodplains has been minimal, the result of local resident's attempts to draw water when/where municipal services were unavailable, for transportation and commerce, and for irrigation of crops. Given the current level of technology, our recent pursuit of floodplain developments is based on site aesthetics and/or economics. Whether it is the beauty of these areas or the farmer's price for bottom ground, it has influenced recent development decisions and subdued all common sense possessed by our forefathers. Many consider this intrusion into these sensitive areas illogical, unsound or simply foolish on a number of grounds, including: the threat of flood related damage, increased pre- and post development runoff, declining water quality, and the loss of natural habitats for both vegetation and wildlife.

Development in, or the filling and subsequent loss of floodplains will result in a net loss to the community in terms of scenic vistas, roosting/yard areas for

MAP 21 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: NATURAL RESOURCES



- Waterways
- Floodplain
- Woods
- Wetlands
- Recreation



1 inch equals 1 miles



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birds/deer, and disrupted drainage patterns and storm water retention areas for both agricultural and urban development.

Floodplains need to be preserved and protected to prevent further damage to water quality and our ecosystem. Natural floodplains further ecological diversity and slow the peak storm water runoff from further eroding stream banks, ditches and ultimately raising the level of flooding along downstream waterways. Floodplain soils and vegetation act as the kidneys of our local tributaries; capable of siphoning out various pollutants from the storm waters and cleansing storm water as it is stored in the low lying areas before it either re-enters the local tributaries or percolates back into the soil replenishing local aquifers.

5.4.3 Wood Lots

Like the majority of northwest Ohio, the surface area of Richland Township was once covered by broadleaf deciduous forests. After generations of being farmed and developed, less than 1,559.6 acres, or less than ten percent, of Richland Township is wooded today. Most of the wood lots are concentrated in small stands of deciduous trees, along fence lines between properties and along stream corridors. It should be noted that tree preservation is a high priority in many communities across the country, because once cleared, replacing trees takes dozens of years. In addition, ornamental trees used in landscaping cannot replace the variation and character of an original stand of trees. Therefore, the loss of an original stand of trees is a loss to the natural landscape of the community and one that should not be condoned or allowed by local development policies.

The benefits of maintaining high-quality tree cover include erosion control, wildlife habitat protection and cleaner air. Aesthetic and economic benefits include a visually pleasing and “softer” environment, higher home values from treed lots and reduced energy bills from the natural cooling provided by shade. This sentiment was recognized during the visioning phase of the public planning process as Township residents expressed a desire to protect and increase the number and density of woodlots within the Township including the reforestation of lands previously cleared.

5.5 Planning for Future Growth & Development

Local governments within Allen County do not have a long history of local and county land use planning. Of the 21 local political subdivisions, only Bath Township has prepared (or recently updated) a future land use plan. Richland Township was the first township government to have taken formal planning action (1995) to support locally adopted zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, floodplain management regulations, and health code regulations.

Local governments have not yet adopted a Future Land Use Plan. Citizens and developer's alike suggest integrated cluster developments will preserve natural resources and lead to better strategies encouraging sustainable development supported by appropriate infrastructure.

To support Richland Township in preparing a future land use plan, various agencies have developed long range systems plans. At the regional level, the LACRPC has prepared a 2030 Transportation Plan. And although no agency has been charged with developing a county-wide plan for the coordinated delivery of public utilities, the Allen County Commissioner's reviewed issues related to established a county-wide water distribution system (URS/2000). The Village of Bluffton reviewed water and waste water needs in 2000 as well; but, more recently (2007) the Village has entered into a contract

with the Village of Ottawa located in Putnam County to develop a regional water distribution compact. The Allen County Commissioner's have also extended sanitary sewer services from the Village of Beaverdam to service a small area (43 acres +/-) currently outside the incorporated area. These documents/contracts were considered during the planning process.

As a result of local planning exercises, local developers, township residents, the Allen County Engineer and the LACRPC have identified the need to develop and implement alternative development patterns to conserve natural resources. Of specific interest is open space preservation, farmland preservation and the minimization of pre- and post development costs. Local officials and community activists are interested in furthering integrated developments with a mix of various uses/design issues to create locally unique development. This Plan supports the concept of integrated developments focusing on highway nodes, business centers and neighborhood developments. Local officials are interested in examining regulatory controls that promote growth of local businesses without compromising the environment or the potential for commercial success. Currently, the Township has some flexibility using planned unit developments (PUDs) and/or cluster developments in its local zoning and subdivision regulations.

Alternative types of development can provide the community with sustainable development patterns that encourage the protection and responsible use of the region's natural resources. Such strategies will also provide an opportunity to address other smart growth strategies especially those that encourage sustainable development based on future year horizons and predicated upon the necessary infrastructure investments in: roads, bridges, water, wastewater, storm water, and communication systems.

SECTION VI ECONOMIC OVERVIEW & ANALYSIS

The economic well being of Richland Township has long been founded on its agricultural sector and its relationship with the land. Today, as once rural roads and agricultural lands are occupied in residential uses, conflict between residents and industry (and its necessary support services) is increasing. As a result, residents are more likely to experience and discuss concerns about industry-related pollution, unplanned residential growth and potential annexations by Bluffton.

Local elected officials are cognizant however of the need to support both the existing farm industry and the potential for significant diversification along the I-75 corridor as they work to expand and further diversify the economic base of the community in order to provide increased employment opportunities for residents, and minimize tax increases. The identification and recruitment of employment opportunities is of the utmost importance to community development. The need to balance and coordinate economic activities with community values is complicated at best and will be ongoing. Reality requires us to understand that the economy is shifting toward a more service sector based dependency and as agricultural jobs decline, the need to further diversify the economic base will increase.

The remainder of this section attempts to provide baseline information on the community's economic underpinnings and begins with an overview of current Township business patterns. Subsequently, data from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the 2002 U.S. Agricultural Census report attempts to analyze farm operations, production, the market value of agriculture commodities and the acres in agricultural production. Prior to summary statements, an overview of Richland Township's existing tax base is provided.

6.1 Non-Agricultural Employment

The U.S. Census Bureau provides employment data across 20 employment categories. This data can be used to conduct trend analyses or to compare changes in the number of total employed residents reported by category. In Richland Township a half dozen general occupation categories were identified in the 2000 Census that comprised the bulk of occupations pursued by Richland residents including:

- Manufacturing
- Wholesale Trade
- Retail Trade
- Health, Education & Social Service
- Food & Accommodations
- Transportation & Warehousing

Collectively, these 6 categories present 7.5 of 10 employed Richland residents. Table 20 displays a comparative data analysis of occupations pursued by Richland residents for the years 1990 and 2000. Of note, the overall workforce within Richland Township grew by approximately 27.7 percent over the 10-year study period. This trend can be expected to continue because of the increased growth of Richland's population.

When examining the current occupation of workers residing in Richland Township against 1990 data, a number of developing trends appear that will be important to the community's future. First of all, no growth occurred within the manufacturing sector, and a precipitous decline occurred in the number of residents employed in the wholesale trade, while the retail sectors grew. Secondly, the number of residents working in the

fields of food and accommodations, health and education increased 42.8 percent since 1990. In fact, the primary increases are found throughout the service sector (52.4%), a trend that is consistent with both the County (9.02%) and State (21.51%). Table 20 identifies the occupation, and compares employment of Richland residents between 1990 and 2000.

TABLE 20 1990 & 2000 EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR OF RICHLAND TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS					
Sector	1990 Census	Percent	2000 Census	Percent	Percent Net Change
Employed 16 and over	823	100.0	1,051	100.0	+13.7
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting & Mining	58	6.1	36	3.4	-1.4
Construction	54	6.6	63	6.0	-1.4
Manufacturing	275	33.4	270	25.7	-4.9
Transportation & Warehousing	22	2.7	32	3.0	+1.6
Wholesale Trade	33	4.0	17	1.6	-2.9
Retail Trade	87	10.6	125	11.9	-11.8
Information	14	1.7	14	1.3	+7.2
Professional Management, etc.	12	1.5	60	5.7	+2.5
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	12	1.5	30	2.9	+2.9
Health, Education & Social Service	171	20.8	284	27.0	+6.2
Entertainment, Recreation, Food & Accommodations	35	4.3	50	4.8	+2.5
Other Services	38	4.6	33	3.1	-1.6
Public Administration	12	1.5	37	3.5	+1.0

The 2005 ES 202 Job and Family Services data base Identified 30 employers located in Richland Township in 2005 doing business in the general categories of: agricultural services, construction, manufacturing, retail trade, management of companies, administrative support, health care, entertainment and government. Collectively they employed 325 persons in 2005; however, employment in these companies decreased by 116 persons between 2000 and 2005, a decrease of 26.3 percent. This compares to a Countywide loss of 3,074 employees (-5.6%) and a statewide increase of 2.5 percent over the same period.

Overall the number of businesses reporting employment in the community decreased by 8 employers between 2000 and 2005, a 21.0 percent decrease compared to a Countywide increase of 139 (6.2%) over the same period. Table 21 reflects the types of occupations and the number employed within Richland Township in 2005. The remainder of this section examines 6 important economic sectors of Richland Township in an attempt to provide additional insights.

6.1.1 Manufacturing

Primary manufacturing employment in Richland Township is provided by Bluffton Precast. Located in the I-75 corridor, the employment in the company has grown since 2000 to 40 employees, an increase of 14.2 percent. The sector reflects a number of smaller firms. Slight job growth in the sector was identified at other local manufacturing companies including Fulco Industries (3) and Quality Ready Mix (2).

The importance of the 270 persons employed within the manufacturing sector of Richland Township is magnified when coupled with Census data that suggests that 275 Richland Township residents were employed within this sector in 1990. Census data indicates that over one fourth (25.7%) of all employed residents living in Richland Township are employed in the manufacturing sector.

TABLE 21 EMPLOYMENT IN RICHLAND TOWNSHIP & ALLEN COUNTY BY NAICS IN 2000 CENSUS					
Sector	NAICS	Richland Employees	Percent	Allen County Employees	Percent
Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting - Services	11	32	3.0	81	0.1
Mining	21	4	0.4	76	0.1
Utilities	22	12	1.1	188	0.3
Construction	23	63	6.0	2,046	3.5
Manufacturing	31-33	270	25.7	11,224	19.4
Wholesale Trade	42	17	1.6	3,028	5.2
Retail Trade	44-45	125	11.9	7,289	12.6
Transportation & Warehousing	48-49	20	1.9	1,709	3.0
Information	51	14	1.3	1,125	1.9
Finance & Insurance	52	30	2.9	1,676	2.9
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	53	0	0.0	589	1.0
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	54	6	0.6	1,262	2.2
Management of Companies/Enterprises	55	0	0.0	22	0.0
Administrative Support/Waste Mgmt. Services	56	54	5.1	1,135	2.0
Education Services	61	113	10.8	4,110	7.1
Health Care/Social Assistance	62	171	16.3	11,322	19.6
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	71	15	1.4	668	1.2
Accommodation & Food	72	35	3.3	4,579	7.9
Non-public Other Services	81	33	3.1	2,379	4.1
Public Administration	92	37	3.5	3,220	5.6
Total		1,051	100.0%	57,728	100.0%

Statewide manufacturing jobs decreased 2.60 percent during the same period. Table 22 indicates changes in the labor pool in this important sector for those firms employing 25 or more employees over the 2000 through 2005 period.

Local manufacturing firms have stayed steady since 2000.

**TABLE 22
RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: CHANGES IN MANUFACTURING
SECTOR FOR FIRMS WITH 25 OR MORE EMPLOYEES (1999-2005)**

Company Name	2000	2005	% Change
Bluffton Precast Concrete	35	40	+14.2

6.1.2 Wholesale Trade

The Wholesale Trade sector comprises establishments engaged in wholesaling merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise. The sector comprises two main types of wholesalers: those that sell goods on their own account and those that arrange sales and purchases for others for a fee or commission. There is at the present time no identified wholesalers in Richland Township. In 2000 there were two wholesalers employing 10 individuals. Total employment in the County fell from 2,917 in 2000 to 2,048 in 2005, a drop of 29.8 percent. Within the State of Ohio, the numbers working within the wholesale trade sector fell 18.67 percent, while at the national level, wholesale trade has been in a state of flux, rebounding in 2005 from a series of drops over the previous 4 years.

6.1.3 Retail Trade

Within Richland Township in 2005, 62 individuals were employed in one of 5 companies engaged in some form of retail trade. In 2000, 6 retail outlets reported employees of 119. This results in a decrease in retail employment of 47.9 percent from 2000 to 2005 within Richland Township. When comparing the responding companies of 2000 and 2005, 4 of the 6 shown in 2000 are no longer in operation within Richland Township, representing a loss of employment for 57 people. Within Allen County, those working in some form of retail trade (12.7%) make up the third largest segment of the employment base, following behind manufacturing (24.0%) and educational, health and social services (20.7%)

Table 23 shows the change in retail employment for those firms with 10 or more employees over the 2000-2005 period.

**TABLE 23
RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: CHANGES IN RETAIL TRADE SECTOR
FOR FIRMS WITH 10 OR MORE EMPLOYEES (1999-2005)**

Company Name	1999	2005	% Change
Stratton Greenhouse	22	37	-100%
Speedway Truck Stop	25	20	-20%
Citgo Truck Stop	25	0	-100%
Jimmy D's	45	0	-100%

6.1.4 Health Care

Within Richland Township jobs in the health and social assistance area decreased from 106 in 2000 to 94 in 2005, a decrease of 11.4 percent over the 5-year period. Employment in this sector increased by 1,581 jobs in Allen County between 2000 and 2005, an increase of 20.9 percent. This compares to statewide increases and rates of 39.1 percent. Health and social assistance represents 28.9 percent of jobs in Richland Township. In Allen County they represent 20.26 percent, while at the state level they make up 10.68 percent of all jobs. Table 24

Health Care employment is primarily located at Richland Manor.

identifies change over time in Richland's Healthcare and Social Service sector for firms with 10 or more employees.

TABLE 24 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: CHANGES IN HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICE SECTOR FOR FIRMS WITH 10 OR MORE EMPLOYEES (1999-2005)			
Company Name	1999	2005	% Change
Richland Manor Nursing Home	116	94	-19%

6.1.5 Accommodations & Food Services

In 2005, there were no businesses providing food or accommodations in Richland Township. Statewide the sector witnessed an increase of 20.4 percent. At the national level, food and accommodations has shown a 4.33 percent increase in employment since 2000. There were no businesses providing food or accommodations in 2000 in Richland Township.

6.2 Agricultural Employment

Census data examining agriculture at the Township level is extremely limited. The 2000 Census identified 36 residents of Richland Township employed in the primary sector which includes agricultural services. When compared to the 1990 Census (see Table 20), employment within this sector dropped off by more than one third (38.0%). However, many family farms are owner occupied as such occupants (workers) are considered self-employed not actual employees. In addition, many farms are now mechanized and operated on a part-time basis by other self-employed service providers, therefore, the number of employees can be expected to be low.

In Richland Township, currently there are 21,880.6 acres utilizing Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV). This number has decreased from 22,760 acres in 1999, a decrease of 3.9 percent. With 24,497 acres of total land in Richland, 89.3 percent is dedicated to the farming industry.

6.3 Summary

Data suggests that the economy of Richland Township has and will continue to be dominated by the farming industry. Examining data at the Township, County, State and National levels, it becomes apparent that patterns of employment outside of the farming industry are changing, with an emphasis on the service industries as opposed to the manufacturing industry

Health care is the single largest employment sector, providing 28.9 percent of all jobs in Richland Township. In Richland Township, 284 of the residents (27.0%) depend on the manufacturing sector for their employment.

Data for the period between 2000 and 2005 shows that the number of employers located in Richland Township declined by 21.0 percent, while those employed in Township firms fell by 116 employees to a total of 325, a decline of 26.3 percent.

The health care industry is the largest employer in Richland Township.

Retail trade between 2000 and 2005 showed a decline of 11.4 percent in retail employment while the purveyors of retail services decreased by 1 firm. Overall change in the retail industry was also shown to be quite volatile, with 4 firms closing while 3

additional firms opening their doors. The largest source of employment was found to be in the agricultural-related industry. Employment within health care and social assistance fell 11.4 percent within Richland Township with no increase or change in the number of providers. While a decline (47.9%) has taken place within the Retail Trade sector during the last 5 years; its dramatic growth since 1980 begs for the sector to be watched closely for developing prospects.

SECTION VII PROJECTIONS & ACTION PLAN

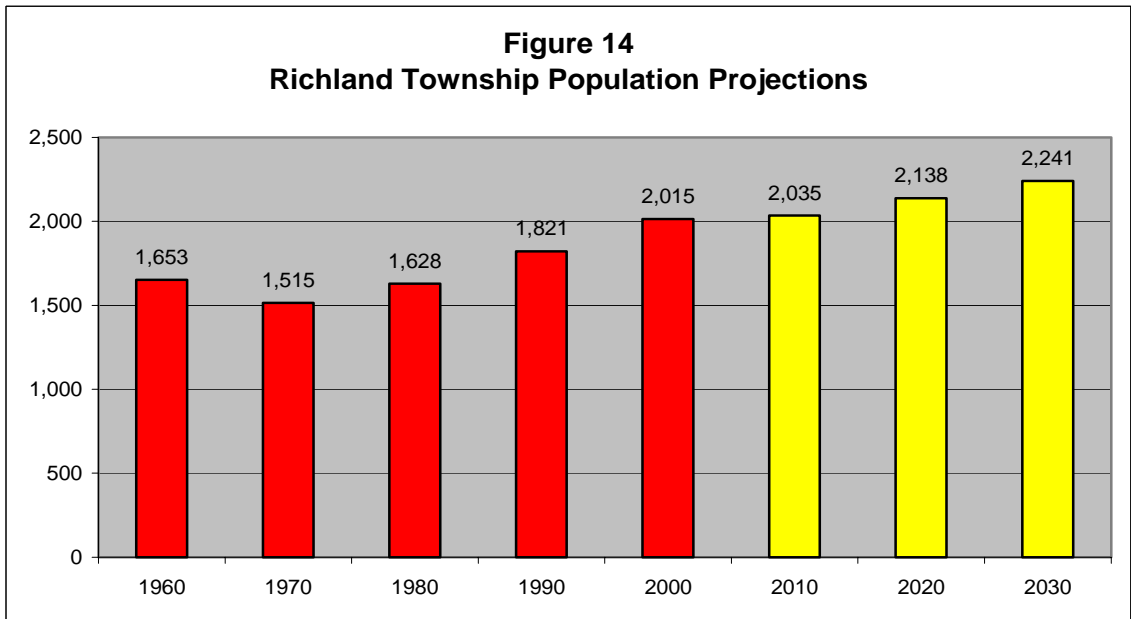
The development of an area is directly related to the dynamics of population and place over a period of time. Population is directly attributable to available infrastructure, employment opportunities, commercial/industrial activities and levels of technology. In general, however, population growth trends, age of population and household size create the basis for the changing demands in housing infrastructure and services, both public and commercial. Richland Township's population is expected to grow 11.2 percent through 2030. There are several factors accounting for this growth: easy access to I-75 and US 30, excellent local schools, a strong work ethic, abundant green space attractive to new development, and the community's overall quality of life. This section attempts to identify the implications of growth and an action plan to accommodate it over the 2030 planning horizon.

7.1 Population Projections

Section 3.1 examined population change and composition by various demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Projections published by the LACRPC, indicate a slow and steady growth for Richland Township population projection through 2030. Figure 14

Richland Township will add approximately 226 more residents between 2000 and 2030. The growth will impact the demand on community facilities, housing supply, infrastructure and associated public services.

suggests that Richland Township will add approximately 226 more residents between 2000 and 2030 based on the results of linear regression analyses. The projected growth for Richland Township will impact the demand on community facilities, housing supply, infrastructure and associated public services, as well as land use within Richland Township.

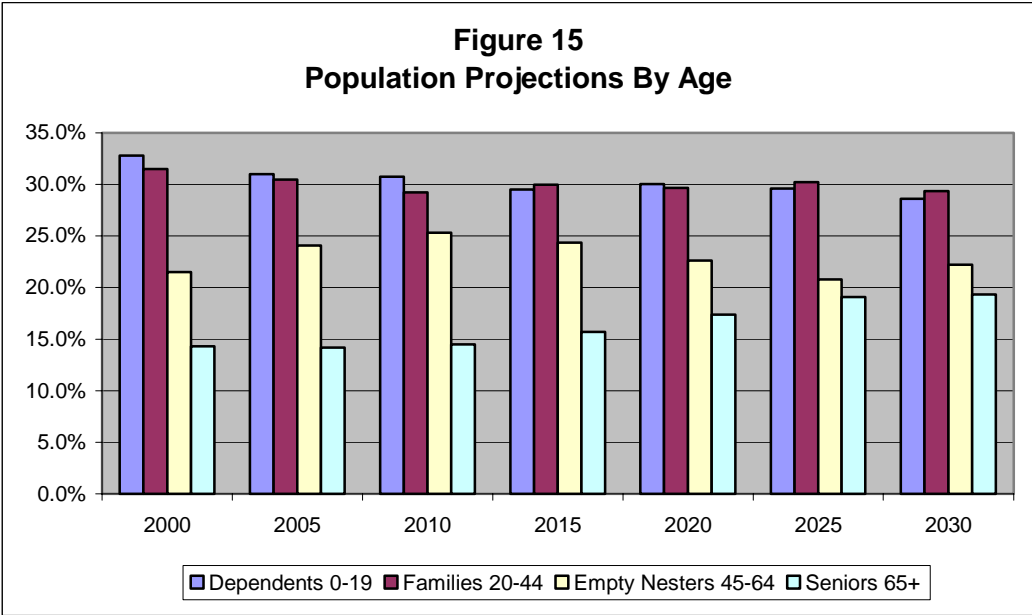


7.1.1 Gender & Age Cohorts

Section 3.2 identified existing demographic characteristics of Richland Township and the larger community. Based on existing data and future trends, Richland Township's population is expected to continue to gradually grow older and more female in orientation. Figure 15 shows a

Based on existing data and future trends, Richland Township's population is expected to continue to gradually grow older and more female in orientation.

significant increase in the “seniors,” classified as those 65+. Seniors comprise 19.3 percent of the population by 2030. The significance of the “seniors” group is that their presence suggests slower future growth while increasing the demand on emergency medical services, accessible housing units and paratransit services. That group identified as “Empty Nesters” show an initial increase to 25.3 percent followed by a significant decrease. Of course, this is the path of the Baby-Boomers. The significance to the increase of the “Empty Nesters” group is that they will most likely change the type of demands that are placed on the community in regards to the demand for services, housing, employment and future school enrollment.



7.1.2 Household Size

Like most communities across the United States, households in Richland Township are declining in size. There are several reasons for the decline in household size. More people are choosing to remain single rather than getting married. Further, married couples are tending to have less children and only after they are well settled in their careers or are preferring not to have children at all. Divorce and increased longevity also contribute to a decreased household size.

The result of decreased household size is that more dwellings must be constructed to house the same number of people. As stated earlier, household size has decreased over the past twenty years. The Township’s household size has decreased from 3.3 persons per household in 1970 to 2.9 in 2000. Richland Township’s household size is projected to fall to 2.6 people per household by 2030. Recognizing the structural elements, personal demands of an aging population need to be considered by the Township in terms of services to be provided by both the public and private sectors. According to the 2000 Census, 696 households in Richland Township, 205 households have at least one individual age 60 or older. Of the 289 individuals identified as being over the age of 65, 157 (54.3%) are female. Of these, 24 (15.2%) were identified as living alone.

Like most communities across the United States, households in Richland Township are declining in size. Richland Township’s household size is projected to fall to 2.58 people.

7.1.3 Employment

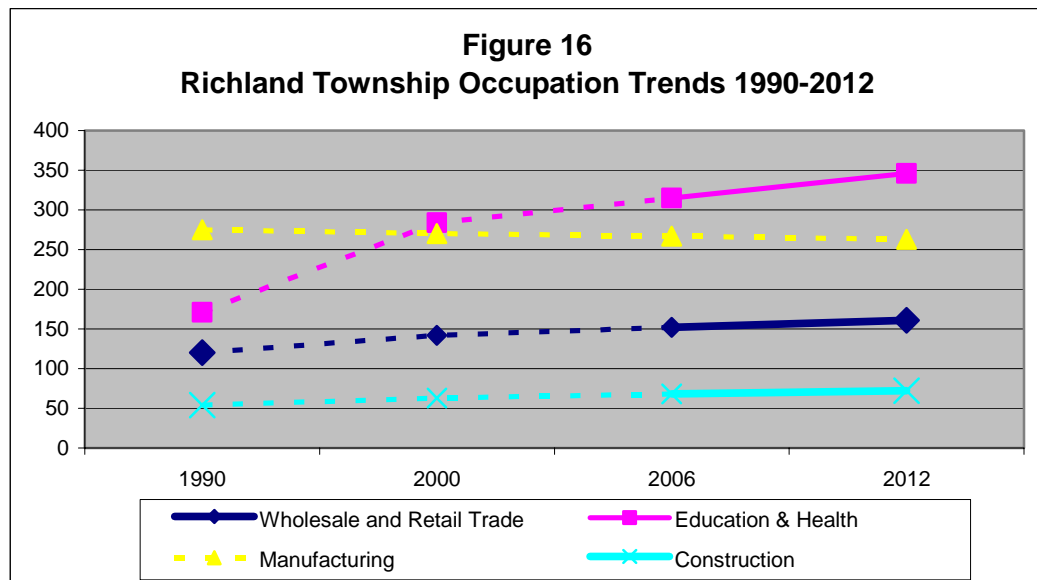
Employment in Richland Township is presented from two different perspectives. Both sections 3 and 6 identified the type of employment performed by residents of Richland Township; but, Section 6 focused on identifying the employment and type of employment available within Richland Township. Section 6 indicated that the percentage of residents employed in Richland Township declined 26.3 percent from 2000 to 2005. The number of firms reporting employment within Richland Township also declined by 21.0 percent. The Plan recognizes the community's existing economic base is undergoing a transition from traditional manufacturing to a more service oriented economy. It is also recognized that any movement in employment by the region's larger employers, including P&G, Ford, DTR Industries, Tower Automotive, Whirlpool, Bluffton University and/or St. Rita's, will have a dramatic impact on the local economy.

As the community population ages we can also expect some "retirees" to re-enter the labor pool at least to some degree.

Determining future employment is somewhat more difficult as more retirees will be expected to re-enter the labor pool at least to some degree, as life expectancy is increasing. The economy is expected to provide jobs for workers at all educational levels, but individuals with more education and training will enjoy both higher pay and greater job opportunities. This fact is supported by a recent report released by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS/2007) that suggests occupational growth rates over the next ten years will range from 4.7 percent for occupations requiring moderate-term on-the-job training to 21.7 percent for occupations requiring an associate degree. Further, all occupations that require at least postsecondary training are projected to grow faster than the 9.7 percent average growth rate of total occupations. Employment projections were calculated through 2012.

Based on local/national trends the largest and most rapid growth sector in the economy are those related to the service industry. According to ODJFS, service-providing industries will account for virtually all of the job growth. Education and health care services are expected to add one for every four new jobs. Figure 16 identifies the occupational trend for Township residents projected to 2012.

Service-providing industries will account for virtually all of the job growth, with only construction expected to add jobs in the goods-producing sectors.



7.2 Land Use Projections

Data made available by the Allen County Auditor's Office (ACAO) was analyzed by the Regional Planning Commission to assess existing land use activities and predict future land use consumption in Richland Township over a 2030 planning horizon. Residential land use was compiled by number of units, type of residential unit as well as acreage consumed. Available census data was augmented with ACAO data with discrepancies defaulting to the ACAO database. Projections for residential demands were based on anticipated population growth, the existing types of residential structures and projected household size. Agricultural land and vacant land was considered as a resource for future uses and continued urban development.

For commercial, quasi-public and industrial uses, the Planning Commission tracked development by square footage and year by type of land use over the last several decades (1970 thru 2004) to establish baseline information. Projections of demand for specific types of land use were then prepared using various regression analyses. The demands for projected development were balanced with vacant land identified/assigned to the respective land use category using the County Auditor database and/or the Richland Township Zoning Map. Map 22 depicts available underutilized/vacant land by type. Future acreage was then determined based on various factors including ancillary supporting services for each of the respective categories such as: rail spurs, loading and dock areas, employee parking, customer parking, drainage areas, service roads, landscaping/open space requirements etc. Projections were supported with R² values ranging from .9211 (industrial) to .9971 (residential) and were therefore considered reasonable for use as a predictive tool/indicator of future demands.

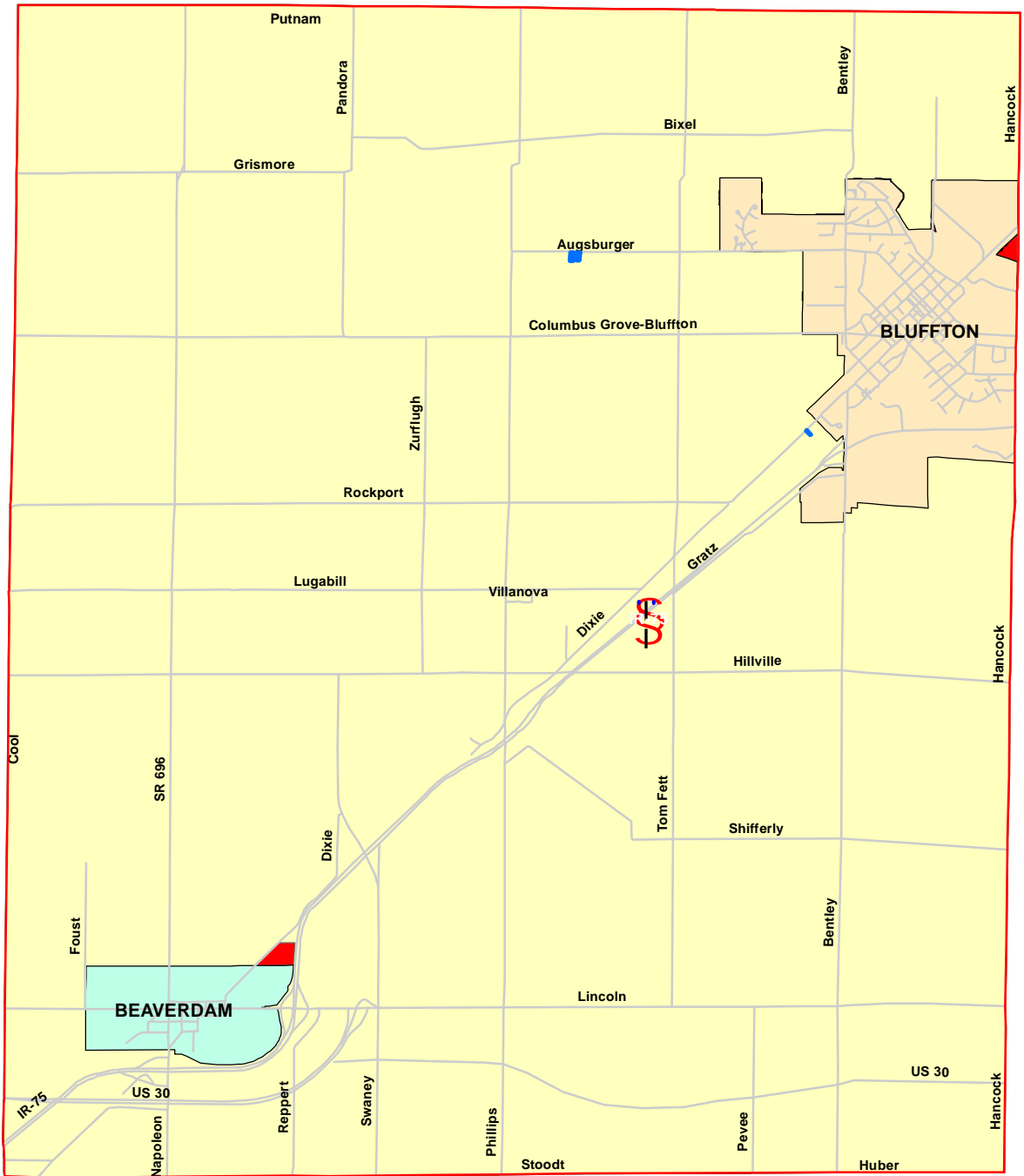
7.2.1 Commercial Land Use

Current data suggests an existing 73,347 square feet of commercial space and 204.3 acres of commercial land in Richland Township. The Allen County Auditor identified 13.2 acres located on 2 parcels as vacant commercial. Examining historical data, spurts of commercial development followed by periods of relative inactivity will result in a need for some 9,921 square feet of commercial floor space in Richland Township by the 2030 planning horizon. As shown in Table 25, this will result in an increase of 13.5 percent. Unless such growth is directed toward existing vacant commercial land, an additional 27.6 acres of commercial land will be needed.

Examining historical data, there will be a need for some 9,921 square feet of commercial floor space in Richland Township by the 2030 planning horizon, an increase of 13.5 percent.

TABLE 25 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: FUTURE COMMERCIAL LAND USE		
Year	Square Footage	Acres Required
2005	73,347	204.3
2010	76,770	213.8
2015	78,395	218.3
2020	80,019	222.8
2025	81,643	227.4
2030	83,268	231.9
Year 2000	73,347	204.3
Change	9,921	27.6
% Change	+13.5%	+13.5%

MAP 22 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: DEFICIENT & VACANT LAND USE



1 inch equals 1 miles

- Vacant Residential
- Vacant Commercial



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7.2.2 Quasi-Public Land Use

Quasi-public land use includes a mix of private and public facilities including churches, educational facilities, emergency service buildings and government facilities. Land use consumption would reflect worship/fellowship facilities, parking areas, stormwater retention/detention areas, school buildings, day care centers, playgrounds, Fire/EMS, administration buildings, utilities, maintenance facilities and staging areas. These quasi-public uses totaled more than 55,984 square feet under roof in 2000 and occupied more than 300 acres. Quasi-public use is expected to demand an additional 10,409 square feet of floor area. However, based on the extent of available land currently under those public/private entities (55 separate entities) control most often associated with quasi-public use (274.4 acres), no additional acreage is expected to be needed to accommodate a projected growth of 18.5 percent.

Quasi-public use is expected to demand an additional 10,409 square feet of floor area and consume no additional acres over the planning period.

TABLE 26 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: FUTURE QUASI-PUBLIC LAND USE IN BUILDING SQUARE FEET	
Year	Square Feet
2005	51,676
2010	54,619
2015	57,563
2020	60,506
2025	63,450
2030	66,393
Year 2000	55,984
Change	10,409
% Change	18.5%

7.2.3 Industrial Land Use

Because of past economic practices encouraging vertical integration within industries and the compatibility between manufacturing and warehousing activities such land uses were lumped together for purposes of analysis. Collectively, the floor space in industrial and warehouse operations within Richland Township are currently 34,550 square feet resting on a total of 21.6 acres. Auditor’s data suggests there are currently no industrial acres identified as vacant. Based on past precedent, an additional 18,083 square feet of floor space will be needed. Accepting current acreage consumption patterns industrial land uses will require an additional 11.3 acres. Table 27 references the demand for industrial space by year, square footage and acres. However, given the potential for available utilities and the new 4-lane improvements on US 30, the area in the vicinity of I-75 and US 30 can be expected to come under increased pressure by industrial and/or warehousing activities.

Based on projected demand an additional 19,083 square feet of floor space will be needed. Accepting current acreage consumption patterns these land uses will require 11.3 acres.

7.2.4 Parks & Recreational Land Use

As presented earlier in Section 2.5.1, Richland Township has 183 acres of parks and recreational area. A recent (2006) acquisition by the Johnny Appleseed Metropolitan Park District provided 55 acres of passive recreation. Other more active forms of recreation are available in the Township and include private

TABLE 27 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: FUTURE TRENDS OF BUILT UP FLOOR AREA IN ALL INDUSTRIAL LAND USES		
Year	Square Feet	Acres
2005	34,550	21.6
2010	38,273	23.9
2015	41,863	26.1
2020	45,453	28.4
2025	49,043	30.6
2030	52,633	32.9
Year 2000	34,550	21.6
Change	19,083	11.3
% Change	52.3%	52.3%

commercial golf courses. Based on the limited projected population growth expected thru 2030 and the more rural character of the community, the recent acquisition of parklands should satisfy the demands in the Township to 2030.

7.2.5 Residential Land Use

Richland Township utilizes 2,050.0 acres of land, or 8.4 percent of the Township's total land area for residential purposes. Future population projections suggest a 2030 population of 2,241 residents and a resulting demand for an additional 215 residential units. Only 21.4 acres of residential land on ten (10) parcels are vacant and currently available for further development. Without significant policy changes, future residential development would reflect the current average of 3.20 acres per residential unit. Given the projected need for 215 residential units, 688.0 acres of land will be required potentially occupying 23.4 miles of once rural roadway frontage.

Future population projections suggest a 2030 population of 2,241 residents and a resulting demand for an additional 215 residential units.

TABLE 28 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: FUTURE TRENDS OF BUILT UP FLOOR AREA IN ALL RESIDENTIAL LAND USES		
Year	Square Feet	Acres
2005	925,818	2006.0
2010	983,682	2131.5
2015	1,051,702	2278.8
2020	1,119,722	2426.2
2025	1,187,742	2573.6
2030	1,255,762	2721.0
Year 2000	864,027	1,872.2
Change	391,735	688.0
% Change	45.3%	45.3%

7.2.6 Agricultural Land Use

Agricultural land has been the resource upon which Richland Township has relied upon for economic and urban development. Richland Township's agricultural land has historically been prized for its beauty and its productivity. Today, Richland Township's agricultural land reflects just over 21,880.6 acres. Examining future development, reveals the impending loss of more than 1,300

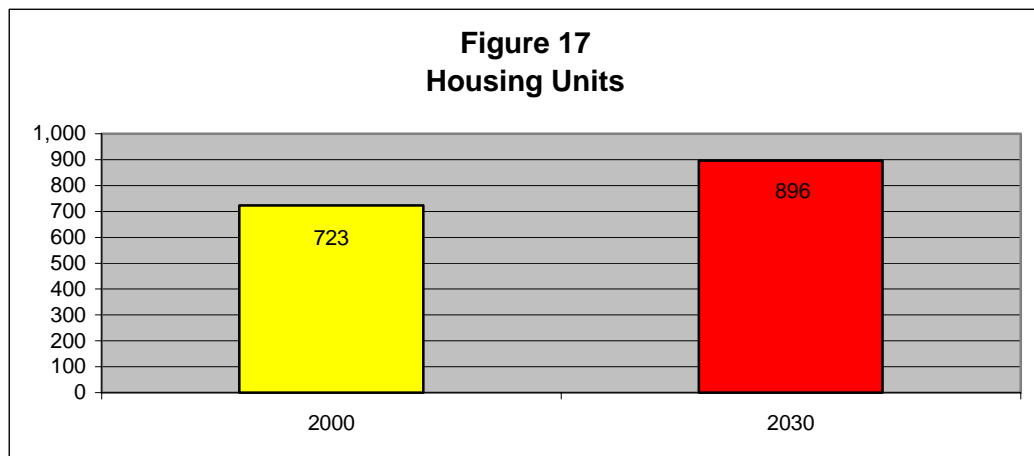
acres of a precious resource. At issue is a growing conflict between farming activities and residential land use.

7.3 Infrastructure Projections

In order to support the community's future residential, commercial and industrial activities infrastructure improvements will be required. Specific improvements will be necessary to support development activities located in areas previously not serviced by public infrastructure while physical improvements will also be required to support increased demands in areas with existing public infrastructure (roads, water, wastewater). In order to better serve the community, increased capacity can be expected in terms of additional roadway lanes/miles, the elimination of closed lines with looped lines, further integration of utility services.

7.3.1 Housing

As identified in Sections 3.3, 4.1 and 7.2.5 housing is a necessary component of the community's infrastructure, one that is indicative of the quality of life one can expect. Data from the 2000 Census identified 723 housing units and a vacancy rate of 3.3 percent. Data also suggested that Richland Township's housing costs were relatively high when compared to the villages and state. As shown in Figure 17, Based on declining household size and anticipated population growth, projections estimating the demand for future housing suggest an additional 215 units will be required by 2030; a 31.5 percent increase over the total number of units in 2000. Policies examining the type, size, condition and construction, including amenities, of the community's housing stock must be debated, clarified and once codified made available to the general public.



7.3.2 Water & Wastewater

Historically, only private individual wells were available to meet Richland Township's demand for water. However, recent contractual relations undertaken by the villages of Bluffton and Ottawa have increased the potential accessibility of municipal water services to Richland's residents and commercial interests beyond Bluffton's corporate limits. The contract identifies a service area spans parts of 9 sections or the entire northeast quadrant of the Township. Another developer-driven contract, provides municipal water from the City of Lima to Section 31's Village at Sugar Creek a planned golf course community. Issues to be discussed include the conditions under which water will be extended, whether the County will play any role and the price of the water.

At the present time, sanitary sewer services in Richland Township are restricted almost exclusively to the corporate limits defining the villages of Beaverdam and Bluffton. The Village of Bluffton has historically only expanded its utility services by annexation. The Village of Beaverdam has not annexed Township land since 1913. In recent history, any extension of the Village of Beaverdam's sewer service has been project specific, such as the Speedway development at Exit 135, as well as services to the Richland Manor Nursing Home and the themed Village at Sugar Creek golf course development. Map 23 illustrates the existing utility service areas of the villages of Bluffton and Beaverdam defined as per contractual relationships. While water service is pressure driven, sanitary sewer services are expensive and almost always development driven. What the Township has to be concerned with is the increasing density of residential development west of Bluffton, which could result in the mandated extension of utility service by the OEPA.

7.3.3 Transportation

Richland Township is currently serviced by slightly more than 130 miles of roadways that provide for approximately 72,404 vehicle miles of travel per day. Although other governmental units share maintenance and repair of these roadways, Richland Township is solely responsible for more than 62.75 miles of rural and suburban roadways that are currently in various states of disrepair. Estimates from the Allen County Engineer's Office indicate Richland Township roadways including bridges need approximately \$8.4 million to meet its responsibility to widen miles of roadway failing to meet the federal minimum standard lane widths.

Examining future growth by residential and the various other commercial classifications, Richland Township roadways are expected to carry more than 94,125 vehicle miles of travel per day by 2030, an increase of 27 percent. Such an increase brings additional maintenance and repair costs as well as concerns for highway safety as more and more vehicles traverse local highways.

Examining future growth, Richland Township roadways are expected to carry more than 94,125 vehicle miles of travel per day by 2030, an increase of more than 27 percent.

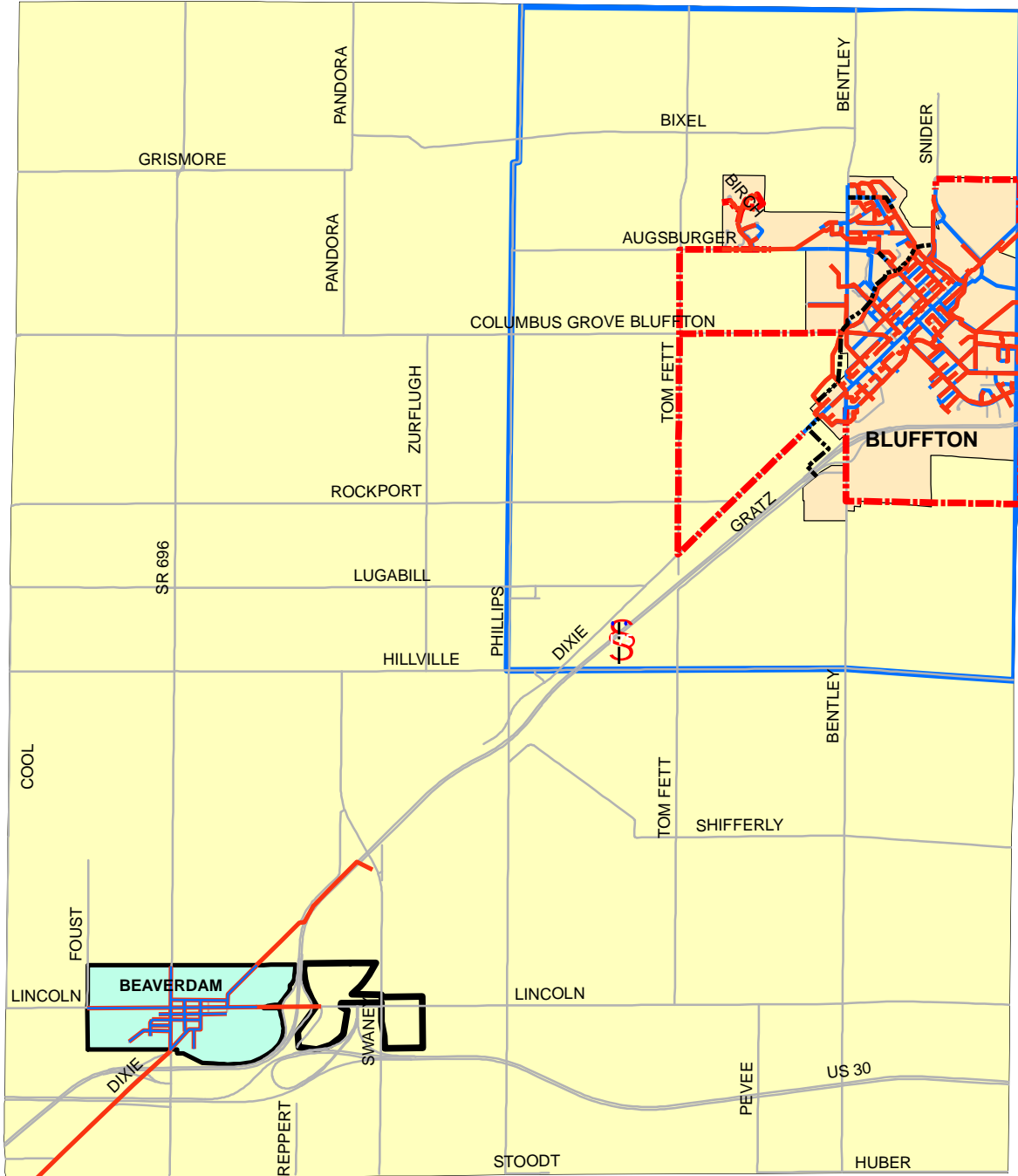
7.4 Action Plan

The Plan is driven by various interrelated factors associated with population growth (including: the demand for housing, goods and services and employment opportunities), existing infrastructure and the quality of life. Goals of the Plan have been bundled to address multiple concerns raised during the planning process and include:

- Farmland Preservation and the Community's Rural Character (7.4.1)
- Transportation Corridors & Gateway Aesthetics (7.4.2)
- Housing: Developments & Design Criteria (7.4.3)
- Furthering Local Development & Diversification of the Tax Base (7.4.4)
- Protection of Natural Resources & Environmental Conservation (7.4.5)
- Quality of Life Issues (7.4.6)

Those issues initially identified in Section 1.6 are being discussed further to address various aspects of such concerns including regulatory issues and pending actions. Specific policies, strategies and objectives are identified to achieve the desired outcomes of the Plan outlined earlier in the text. As the planning process continues, progress on each of the goals should be assessed and if necessary said goals/objectives modified. Evaluation criteria should be identified and used in order to

MAP 23 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: CURRENT AND PROJECTED UTILITY SERVICE AREAS



Legend

- Existing Sewer
- - - Proposed Sewer
- Existing Water
- - - Proposed Water
- Sewer Service Area
- Water Service Area



1 inch equals 1 miles



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further the planning process. Such criteria should then be utilized to evaluate the success or appropriateness of specific goals and objectives. The remainder of this section is designed to expand upon issues and concerns related to the goals mentioned above and to provide the implementation phase with specific tangible/quantifiable objectives furthering the planning process.

7.4.1 Preserving Agricultural Practices & the Rural Character of the Community

Over the course of the planning process it became readily apparent that agriculture is misunderstood as a land form, an economic pursuit and a zoning district. Moreover, the appreciation or understanding of agriculture tended to depend on one's own up-bringing and their impression of agriculture. Therefore, an overview of agriculture is provided to indicate the Advisory Committee's perspective and purpose developed over the planning process.

Defining Agriculture: Webster defines agriculture as "the science and art of farming, cultivating the soil, producing crops, and raising livestock, and to varying degree the preparation and marketing of the resulting products. The established zoning definition of agriculture in the State of Ohio is somewhat more precise. The State's recommended language suggests agriculture as the use of land for agricultural purposes, including farming, dairying, pasturage, aquaculture, horticulture, hydroponics, floriculture, viticulture and animal and poultry husbandry, and the necessary accessory uses for housing, treating or storing the produce, provided that the operation of any such accessory uses shall be secondary to that of normal agricultural activities. Given this definition it seems easy to understand how land use conflicts in some rural communities have developed and been able to generate some debate about what agriculture is and how it can best coexist with its neighbors.

Given this definition it seems easy to understand how land use conflicts in some rural communities have developed.

Examining today's farm economy, utilization of the term agribusiness may be more appropriate. Webster defines agribusiness as farming and the business associated with farming including the processing of farm products, the manufacturing of farm equipment and/or supplies, and the processing, storage, and distribution of farm commodities. Others reference the term Factory Farm where the business involves the production, processing, and distribution of products, equipment and/or supplies. But at what point does the family farm or the hobby farm become a factory farm? The OEPA uses an animal threshold level method to define the size and regulatory environment of farm operations. This has proved to be controversial and is an issue that the Township must be able to address and quantify if it expects to retain its rural agricultural heritage and retain agricultural as an economic activity and healthy industry into the future.

Agriculture as an Industry: As identified herein, the loss of agricultural land to suburban and exurban uses, primarily subdivisions, strip residential development and highway-oriented commercial is increasing at rate much faster than historically. The suburbanization of the rural land sometimes generates land use based conflicts between the established farmers and new homebuyers or new agricultural operations developed near strip residential development. Complaints from "suburbanites" over manure odors, noise of livestock or agricultural machinery and environmental hazards posed by the regular application of herbicides, pesticides and other chemicals are common.

Agriculture as practiced today is essentially an industrial process incompatible with many residential uses. Effective controls need to be established.

Local officials must recognize that agriculture as practiced today is essentially an industrial process incompatible with many residential uses. Effective controls need to be established to protect and separate residential and agricultural uses. The use of buffers around residential subdivisions is a tool that provides some modicum of relief to both farmers and suburbanites. The size and nature of the buffers vary, however, to be an effective buffer from agricultural nuisances and offer some wildlife habitat a minimum of 125 feet is recommended.

The Township should consider adopting the LESA methodology as the basis for all future land use decisions. The Township should also consider developing Protected Agricultural District (PAD's) standards in its zoning regulations to protect future encroachment into agricultural areas.

Supporting Agricultural Practices: The Planning Commission sought to identify the means to protect the remaining agricultural land and thereby support not only the agricultural industry but also a major component of the rural lifestyle. In an attempt to support justification of new land use policies, the Regional Planning Commission reviewed/compiled various data sets and undertook an extensive process that is referred to as a Land Evaluation/Site Assessment (LESA) analysis. Using GIS applications the Commission was able to score each parcel within Richland Township based on predetermined criteria that identified characteristics determined to be important to the future operations and economic success of agricultural pursuits. Factors impacting the score of individual parcels were:

- Soil quality and slope
- Size and shape of parcel
- Location relative to other farms or protected areas
- Proximity to development pressures, including water, sewer

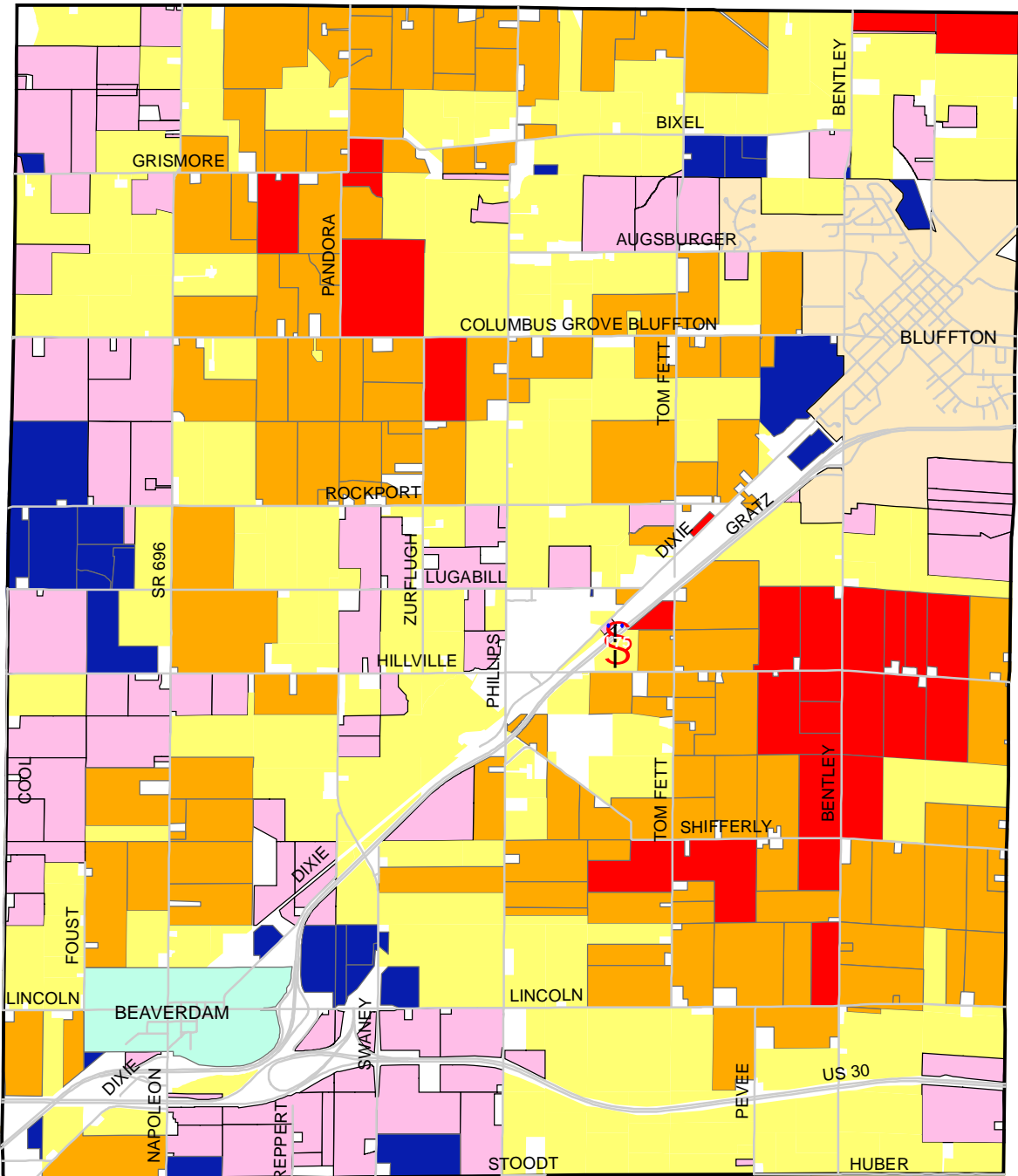
The analysis quantitatively assessed all agricultural properties to determine the heart of the community's agricultural base. The analysis also identified the agricultural properties under stress experiencing land use conflicts under continued urban encroachment. The methodology inversely identifies measures and policies to be taken to improve the economic and regulatory environment of the agricultural sector. The assessment also provides the best insights as to those properties eligible for funding from the Ohio Farmland Preservation Office under the recently enacted Ohio Agricultural Easement Program. Map 24 graphically displays that farmland determined to be under stress pursuant to the LESA analysis. It should be recognized that as land use changes or utility improvements are made on any of the parcels, analytical results change as well.

The Township should consider adopting the LESA methodology as the basis for all future land use decisions. The Township should also consider developing Protected Agricultural District (PAD's) standards in its zoning regulations to protect future encroachment into agricultural areas.

Perspectives on Agriculture: Of note, this Plan has identified specific data and offered commentary that the agricultural economy in Richland Township is undergoing increased stress. What's more this process is not compatible with long term viability of agriculture or the ambiance of rural character.

Agriculture can be expected to adapt to changing economics and regulatory controls. Adaptive farming practices may transition from traditional animal and grain farming to fruits and vegetables. The ready market for fresh high value

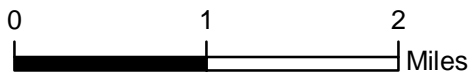
MAP 24 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP LESA ANALYSIS



LESA

Score

- 0.00 - 36.29
- 36.30 - 39.39
- 39.40 - 42.37
- 42.38 - 45.72
- 45.73 - 55.19



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produce in suburban homes, grocery stores and restaurants, including a higher demand for more naturally produced meat fruit and vegetables offer an optimistic future for agriculture in urban townships. Opportunities for u-pick fruit and berry operations, increased demand for nursery stock, and horse stabling also offer opportunities. Farmers may also resort to providing specialty services to other farmers or to urban dwellers residing in rural areas wishing to have a farmer attend to their land. Farmers may also revert to boarding or breeding animals especially dogs and/or horses, on rural farmsteads. Attempts to retain or reintroduce the rural character must be attentive to rural roadway aesthetics, agricultural structures and opportunities to integrate open space into all rural residential clusters.

Preserving the rural character: Preserving the rural character of the community was an important goal established during the community planning process. The goal was one of the primary driving forces in developing the land use component of the Plan and its overriding importance dictated many of the recommendations herein. To define and address “rural character” within the Plan it was necessary to recognize and differentiate between the terms “rural environment” and the “rural landscape.” The rural environment was determined to mean a sparsely developed area where land is predominantly undeveloped or primarily used for agricultural purposes. Whereas, the rural landscape was defined as physical attributes connoting a rural sightline including woodlands, riparian corridors, farm fields, agricultural buildings, and fencerows.

Preserving the rural character of the community was one of the primary driving forces in developing the land use component of the Plan and its overriding importance dictated many of the recommendations herein.

To preserve the rural environment non-agricultural uses should be shielded from view. Local regulatory controls must address building set backs and landscaping or buffering requirements.

In order to protect the rural character several design elements and development standards need to be considered. To preserve the rural environment non-agricultural uses should be avoided and urban encroachment including utilities and dwelling units limited to the maximum extent possible. At the very least non- agricultural uses should be shielded from view. To preserve the rural landscape, local regulatory controls must address building set backs and landscaping or buffering requirements. Increasing

setbacks from road centerlines for all non-agricultural structures and requiring landscaping or appropriate screening at effective depths for the length of property would be an extremely effective measure to control sightlines. Such measures could be developed and incorporated into corridor overlay district standards.

The design of sightlines should reflect agricultural activities and fields, and rural architectural vestiges of a more peaceful period in the community’s history. Sightlines, including the woodlots and the riparian corridors could be supported with appropriate screening including windbreaks. Indigenous trees and shrubs should be integrated within the landscape; trees and bushes suitable for windbreaks and/or fruit bearing will also support bird and animal habitats that are part of the rural landscape. Overhead utilities including lights should be eliminated or minimized with landscaping/screening. Driveways serving agricultural parcels or rural homesteads should be coordinated/collapsed whenever possible to minimize breaks in sightlines as well as to increase rural roadway safety. Fencerows and existing woodlots should be inventoried and preserved in place.

Preserving the rural environment is much more difficult to address when municipal water and sewer lines increase property values at the expense of the existing agricultural industry. The continued permitting of strip residential development on Township and County roads only exacerbates the need for extending expensive and unnecessary municipal services and drives agricultural pursuits out due to economic factors. Increased lot sizes and clustering has provided some relief to the existing rural landscape but it cannot protect the remaining agricultural lands without additional regulatory assistance. In order to preserve the rural environment the Township should develop Agricultural Protection Zones (APZs). The APZ should be established at a minimum of 40 acres in size in order to sustain the core agricultural ground necessary to continue agricultural activities into the future. Agriculturally supportive services such as farmers markets, feed/seed dealers, market transports, grain elevators, processing facilities, etc., should be recognized as permitted and/or conditional uses in the APZ in order to sustain agriculture as economically viable industry within the community and to maintain the community's rural character. Agriculture should be treated as an industry, an industry predicated on agricultural lands - a finite natural resource.

The Township should develop Agricultural Protected Zones (APZs) at a minimum of 40 acres in size in order to sustain agricultural activities.

Standards for PAD zoning should reflect the same shared community design criteria as other zoning districts. Districts should be expected to provide the same landscaped entryways, screened sight lines and sight design standards. The Township should only consider changes when supported by a LESA analysis. The Township would be better served if the APZs were surrounded by rural residential zoning districts where increased lots sizes where the presence of working farms and the lack of utilities is seen as desirable for the property owners.

7.4.2 Improving Transportation Corridors & Gateway Aesthetics

Richland Township is serviced by more than 130 miles of roadways that facilitate more than 72,000 vehicle miles of travel on a daily basis. This traffic is estimated to increase 23 percent through the 2030 planning horizon. Sections 4.3.1 and 7.3.3 identified the existing characteristics of the highway system, public transportation services and other transport modes including pipelines, rail and cartage services. This section of the Plan attempts to highlight specific issues especially regulatory controls and policies identified during the planning process. Of specific interest was:

- Roadway Safety
- Improved Aesthetics

Roadway Safety: Pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, the Township Trustees are charged with the maintenance and repair of local roadways. Current corrective measures targeting existing deficiencies exceed \$8.4 million. Maintenance costs are not available. However, maintaining a safe and efficient roadway system will require a dedicated funding source that the Township must identify/develop. The

The Township must identify alternative funding streams to maintain the integrity and safety of local roadways.

Township must undertake measures to document existing conditions and implement warranted improvements. The Township must identify alternative funding streams to maintain the integrity and safety of local roadways. Roadway maintenance is critical to supporting the community's future growth.

**TABLE 29
GOAL: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES.**

POLICY	STRATEGY	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE BY YEAR					COORDINATING AGENCY(IES)
			1	2	3	4	5	
Preserve agriculture as a viable and competitive industry.	Encourage proper utilization and preservation of agricultural farmland.	Identify and support specific high value agricultural practices.						Allen County Commissioners, State Farmland Preservation Office, State Department of Agriculture, and Farm Service Administration, Richland Township Zoning Commission.
	Establish / support a Land Trust.	Preserve farmland, open space for future generations.						Allen County Commissioners, Allen County Prosecutor's Office, State Farmland Preservation Office, State Department of Agriculture, and Farm Service Administration.
		Promote the preservation of remaining viable farmland.						Allen County Auditor, OSU Extension Office, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Soil & Water Conservation Service, Regional Planning Commission, Farm Bureau, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Develop public appreciation and fiscal support for farmland preservation.						Allen County Auditor, OSU Extension Office, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Soil & Water Conservation Service, Regional Planning Commission, Farm Bureau, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
Encourage and direct development in areas contiguous to existing public utilities in order to minimize encroachment upon remaining agricultural areas.	Support development of Comprehensive Plans for Water and Sewer for specified service areas.	Determine capacity and support full use of existing utility system investments.						Allen Water District, Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton.
		Determine where and at what density development can occur in areas adjacent to existing systems.						Allen Water District, Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, Allen County Health Department, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Develop a capital improvement program to facilitate pro-active orderly extension of services.						Allen Water District, Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, and Regional Planning Commission.
		Guide controlled residential development into areas served by municipal utilities.						Allen Water District, Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton and Regional Planning Commission.
Support further urban development and the extension of public utilities based on site-specific locational considerations including proximity to existing infrastructure, environmental sensitivity, soil productivity factors and existing agricultural operations and costs.	Support the creation of Agricultural Protection Districts (APZ) in Township Zoning.	Implement large lot Agricultural Protection Zoning requirements to minimize urban encroachment on agricultural ground, conflicting land use activities, and nuisance lawsuits.						Allen Water District, Allen County Auditor, OSU Extension Office, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Soil & Water Conservation Service, village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, Regional Planning Commission, Farm Bureau, Township Zoning Commission, Township Trustees and the general public.
	Review/revise existing regulations governing required utilities and improvements based on density and land use.	Review/revise existing Zoning Regulations for the ability to regulate land use conversion.						Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Determine population density along certain rural roadways and costs associated with providing required infrastructure improvements and local services to establish basis for impact fees.						Allen Water District, Allen County Health Department, Allen County Engineer, Allen County Drainage Engineer, Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
	Review and implement Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) System as basis for land use change.	Develop an inventory and classification system which will facilitate conversion of agricultural ground based on need as well as propinquity to existing development, existing infrastructure and soil characteristics.						Allen County Auditor, OSU Extension Office, Natural Resource Conservation, Soil & Water Conservation Service, Farm Service Administration, Regional Planning Commission, Farm Bureau, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Identify prime agricultural land to be preserved.						Allen County Auditor, OSU Extension Office, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Soil & Water Conservation Service, Regional Planning Commission, Farm Bureau, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
	Support development proposals based on compatibility with comprehensive plans developed by the villages at Beaverdam and Bluffton (water and wastewater) and Allen County (sanitary sewers).	Facilitate an orderly conversion of agricultural land.						Allen Water District, Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, Allen County sanitary Engineers, Regional Planning Commission and Soil & Water Conservation Service.

Adoption and support of access management regulations and the implementation of a pavement management system would further local safety initiatives and allow the Township to better maintain existing traffic conditions. Increasing the frequency and extent of selective enforcement events coordinated between the Township, the Planning Commission, the Board of Education and the Allen County Sheriff's Office could prove effective at addressing localized traffic problems and resolving the at risk behaviors.

Improved Aesthetics: The primary transportation corridors serving the community and providing initial images of Richland Township need to be improved. Currently, Napoleon Road, Lincoln Highway, Phillips Road, Hillville Road, Bentley Road, Tom Fett Road and Dixie Highway serve as the primary routes to and thru the community and should receive the attention necessary to bolster the community's image and appeal. These routes act as gateways to the community and are valuable assets that need to reflect the pride and capabilities of the community.

Each of the aforementioned corridors differs in their function, access to infrastructure and land uses served. Some of the corridors are serving through traffic, some are serving commercial uses or commercial industrial while others are serving local traffic simply providing access to residential and agricultural uses. All have one thing in common, delivering a first impression of Richland Township.

Receiving the appropriate mix of physical improvements, development guidelines and regulatory controls, these roadways could better serve the local community. Softer, cleaner and greener, these corridors will provide the incentive for further investments. In order to further such ends, corridor studies should be developed for each entryway integrating aspects of streetscape, aesthetics and roadway efficiency. These studies should respect the function of the roadways and provide the framework for further community development. To increase their effectiveness, corridor studies should document existing and future development, proposed corridor district development standards including signage, and landscaping requirements. Access management plans need to be included to improve the roadways function, efficiency, vehicular access and safety.

Corridor improvements should also be supported with site enhancements at key locations across the community. Appropriate landscaping will not only improve the overall appeal of such sites it will establish a certain community standard that private property owners can be expected to meet. New subdivisions should be required to address adequate signage and incorporate landscape elements in their preliminary site design reviews, especially their stormwater detention, not only to improve the overall appeal, but also to improve salability and property values. Illustration 3 provides an example of an appropriate site enhancement.

7.4.3 Furthering Development & Diversification of the Tax Base

The Community is founded on the people and infrastructure that support local economic, social and cultural institutions and activities. It is this same infrastructure and these institutions that residents will collectively rely upon to stimulate further opportunities for future community growth including those for employment and the necessary procurement of goods and services.

The community is positioned to grow and growth is seen as a positive indicator for most communities. However, growth can sometimes be painful and therefore

**TABLE 30
GOAL: CREATE A SAFE, EFFICIENT AND WELL MAINTAINED ROADWAY SYSTEM FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS AND EMPLOYERS.**

POLICY	STRATEGY	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE BY YEAR					COORDINATING AGENCY(IES)
			1	2	3	4	5	
Minimize traffic delays and congestion on the roadway network.	Improve levels of service on the local roadway network.	Identify and document unsatisfactory levels of service (LOS) on area roadways based on established volume to capacity ratios						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
		Develop warranted improvements and seek necessary funding to correct LOS deficiencies including geometric deficiencies.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
		Identify and document unsatisfactory levels of service (LOS) at roadway intersections based on established measures of delay.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
		Develop warranted improvements and seek necessary funding to improve LOS including capacity and deficient roadway geometrics.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
		Support the development/implementation of Access Management Regulations on area roadways.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
		Better coordinate transportation, land use policies and urban development.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
Maximize the safety of Richland residents/motorists on the local highway network.	Reduce the number and severity of crashes on area roadways.	Systematically identify crash locations based on frequency, severity and rates.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT and Regional Planning Commission.
		Complete detailed analysis of locations, develop warranted improvements and seek necessary funding to correct safety deficiencies.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT Regional Planning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Enforce traffic laws to curb at-risk behaviors.						Allen County Sheriff's Office, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Regional Planning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Promote safe driving behavior through public education/awareness.						Allen County Sheriff's Office, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Regional Planning Commission, Bluffton / Bath Schools and Township Trustees.
Maintain sound quality pavement conditions on area roadways.	Implement a Pavement Management System.	Inventory existing roadway pavement conditions and prioritize necessary maintenance and rehabilitative actions based on established threshold levels.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
	Develop the necessary funding to sustain roadway maintenance issues.	Identify total funding needs for warranted roadway improvements, transportation enhancements, maintenance/replacement of equipment and personnel costs.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Allen County Commissioner's, Township Road Superintendent, Township Trustees and the general public.
		Identify all potential funding streams to adequately address roadway maintenance issues.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Allen County Commissioner's, Township Road Superintendent, Township Trustees and the general public.
		Implement those actions necessary to finance warranted transportation improvements.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Trustees and the general public.
	Identify/monitor deficient roadway conditions and correct same as Township staffing and equipment will allow.	Maintain a prioritized list of transportation improvement projects.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Develop and maintain necessary roadway maintenance equipment.						Township Trustees.

**TABLE 31
GOAL: COORDINATE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND LAND USE IN ORDER TO PROMOTE DESIRABLE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS,
MINIMIZE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND COSTLY UTILITY EXTENSIONS/INVESTMENTS.**

POLICY	STRATEGY	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE BY YEAR					COORDINATING AGENCY(IES)
			1	2	3	4	5	
Use the Comprehensive Plan text and maps to guide development decisions and the extension of utilities as well as promotion of the public's health, safety and welfare.	Use the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations, including future land use map and the associated densities, as a guide to decision making when reviewing/approving development proposals and variance requests.	Create and educate public and Township officials on the findings and recommendations of the Plan.						Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Amend the Plan as conditions change.						Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Review Zoning Resolution to reflect shared community standards.						Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission, Township Trustees.
		Develop and adopt summary impact studies proposed developments.						Regional Planning Commission, Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
	Use the findings and recommendations of the various corridor plans as guide for the development and coordination of future transportation, land use and urban design issues with respect to (re)development proposals.	Promote stability and an improved quality of life.						Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Create safe and aesthetically pleasing corridors to support viable commercial/industrial (re)development.						Regional Planning Commission, Allen County Engineer's Office, Allen County Sanitary Engineer's Office, ODOT, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
Promote transportation related infrastructure improvements which will minimize adverse land use affects on adjacent properties.	Implement warranted transportation infrastructure improvements and services within new development areas.	Require Traffic Impact Studies for new development to ensure compatibility and sustainability.						Allen County Engineer, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
	Assess and execute all transportation-related improvements with regional and local infrastructure improvement plans.	Identify, monitor and maintain appropriate levels of service.						ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Support existing residential/industrial/commercial development.						Regional Planning Commission, ODOT, Allen County Historical Society, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Minimize the loss of agricultural ground.						Regional Planning Commission, Allen County Engineer's Office, and Township Trustees.
		Maximize use of limited available financial resources.						Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
Support the co-location of municipal water and sanitary sewer services.	Coordinate land use change with available municipal services.	Establish existing capacity of all municipal water and sanitary sewer services.						Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton and Township Trustees.
		Eliminate unplanned and/or unnecessary costs of infrastructure extensions/upgrades.						Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Maximize cost-effectiveness of delivering utility services.						Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Develop local recognition of feasible limits for municipal services and develop utility service district.						Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Minimize potential for urban sprawl, loss of farmland and leap-frog development.						Village of Beaverdam, Village of Bluffton, Allen Economic Development Group, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.

it must be guided, supported and regulated to ensure that the community maximizes its investments in infrastructure and services and protects its remaining natural resources. This section recognizes specific issues and concerns important to the Plan including:

- Infrastructure Coordination to Support and Sustain Development
- Minimize Traffic Impacts & Support Mixed Use Developments
- Diversification of the Tax Base
- Costs of Community Services & Reinvestment in the Community

Infrastructure Coordination: The coordination of municipal water and wastewater services to sites is critical to the future of Richland Township. Richland Township must work with representatives of the villages of Beaverdam, Bluffton and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to support and maintain the establishment of coordinated utility service areas.

Coordination will also prove to be cost effective as developers and properties in rural residential areas will not fear unnecessary and unplanned costly utility extensions. This has the added effect of reserving areas for agricultural operations without artificially inflating the costs of land and making agriculture pursuits economically unfeasible.

The maintenance and success of the Plan depends in large measure upon the careful and deliberate actions taken by those agencies vested with guarding the public's health safety and welfare. The future coordination of utilities should be guided by this Plan especially its land use and water & wastewater elements. This Plan should be consulted and supported by the various entities that provided supporting documentation for its release, as well as those who will be expected to take future actions on behalf of the public.

Minimize Traffic Impacts of New/Mixed Use Developments: New development generates traffic and accommodating traffic, especially traffic related to large commercial or mixed-use developments, can be difficult without adequate information and design criteria. Undertaking corridor studies and integrating access management regulations will improve the safety of area roadways. And market studies, inclusive of traffic impact elements, will further the community's understanding of any proposed development's impact and help identify the necessary measures and infrastructure improvements to ameliorate deteriorated levels of service on the roadway network. However, the Township must develop specific design criteria, transportation policies and regulatory language to support new mixed-use patterns of development.

Integrating mixed-use developments will have various positive impacts across the community including increased employment opportunities and diversification of the local tax base.

Developers and landowners have increasingly been able to identify and successfully integrate various retail activities, restaurants and professional services within mixed-use retail districts and business parks. Adding quasi-public or government facilities with a mix of retail, office and residential activities on individual tracts has effectively fostered the development of new activity centers sometimes referred to as lifestyle centers, village centers or new town concepts. Such development sites provide valuable employment opportunities and unique living environments especially when adequate open space and accessibility is provided. And, integrating such mixed-use developments will have various positive impacts across the community including:

- Expanded Employment Opportunities
- Shorter Commute Times
- Reduced Roadway Congestion
- Increased Community Accessibility
- Improved Air Quality
- Diversification of the Local Tax Base

However, these new developments should be required to incorporate complimentary building facades with parking and landscaping requirements that integrate traffic calming techniques and pedestrian safety with adequate linkage across such sites to existing/future adjacent development, including open space as necessary. Sites must also address the environmental effects of development including aspects of excessive light, storm water runoff, litter and wind blown debris within landscaping schemes that provide for a unique sense of place and are cognizant of the community's rural orientation. Illustration 4 depicts mixed use development that incorporates sound environmental design criteria.

As such developments are highly dependent upon creating an active location populated with a certain density of people and uses, accessibility for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic is critical. The community must identify the infrastructure necessary to develop and provide long-term stability for such unique and enjoyable places, places that attract investment and support diversified economic pursuits therein. Developing policy that requires developments to integrate an appropriate mix of infrastructure especially transportation improvements to include and support vehicular AND pedestrian will improve the community's overall appeal and quality of life. The development of such policies should be pursued as a priority and target specific transportation corridors/nodes as well as sites close to existing activity centers.

As such developments are highly dependent upon creating an active location populated with a certain density of people and uses, accessibility both vehicular and pedestrian, provide long-term stability for such unique and enjoyable places.

The concept of a diversified economic base reflects risk management practices that suggest a community's dependency upon any one sector or company.

Tax Base Diversification: Tax base refers to the total wealth in terms of land, property and income that is subject to taxation. Richland Township receives tax revenues for real and personal property to support local services; it receives no income tax monies. The concept of a diversified economic base reflects risk management practices. Practices that suggest a community's dependency upon any one sector or any one company for

employment or revenue threatens the economic vitality of the community especially as an economic downturn an environmental disaster or horrific incident might negatively impact that sector or facility and ultimately the community. From a risk management perspective a broad base of employment opportunities across a number of divergent sectors better serves the community.

Cost of Community Services: The community should underwrite a community services assessment to identify the cost of providing specific services and those costs associated with supporting specific types of land use activities. The Township needs to undertake an assessment of its financial situation to benchmark the value and appropriateness of certain land use decisions as changes in land use will affect the respective demand for services and ultimately costs incurred. Indexing the financial resources of the community against future costs can better prepare the community to address long-term development and sustainability. An analysis to assess future solvency was beyond the scope of

this Plan but specific indicators to underwrite preliminary assessments should be considered. Such an assessment would necessarily target:

- Infrastructure investments and cost of service versus valuation
- The percentage of tax valuation attributable to specific land uses
- The percentage of tax revenue available for discretionary and/or extraordinary capital improvements
- The ratio of the general fund costs to revenue source increases
- The availability of non-dedicated funding sources for ongoing administrative costs

Recovery policies would address services that are similar to those provided by the private sector to either reflect market costs or be discontinued. For those services provided by the Township, recoupment of costs such as those associated with calls for service including false alarms and ambulance runs should also be assessed. General administrative costs need to be assessed against the available general fund and, regulatory fees, such as zoning/driveway permits should be evaluated to reflect total costs. Policies should reflect the total cost of providing such services including all direct and indirect costs program wide.

The ability to maintain the community's streets and drainage systems are critical to the long-term viability of the community. Currently, no dedicated funding source exists to address reinvestment in the community's infrastructure.

If not addressed roadway pavement conditions and drainage facilities will continue to deteriorate and roadway maintenance costs will increase as pavement conditions continue to deteriorate further. Related is the existing condition of critical equipment for roadway and ditch maintenance purposes. Currently, no dedicated funding source exists to address reinvestment in the community's infrastructure; this is arguably short sighted and such austerity is ill conceived. The Township

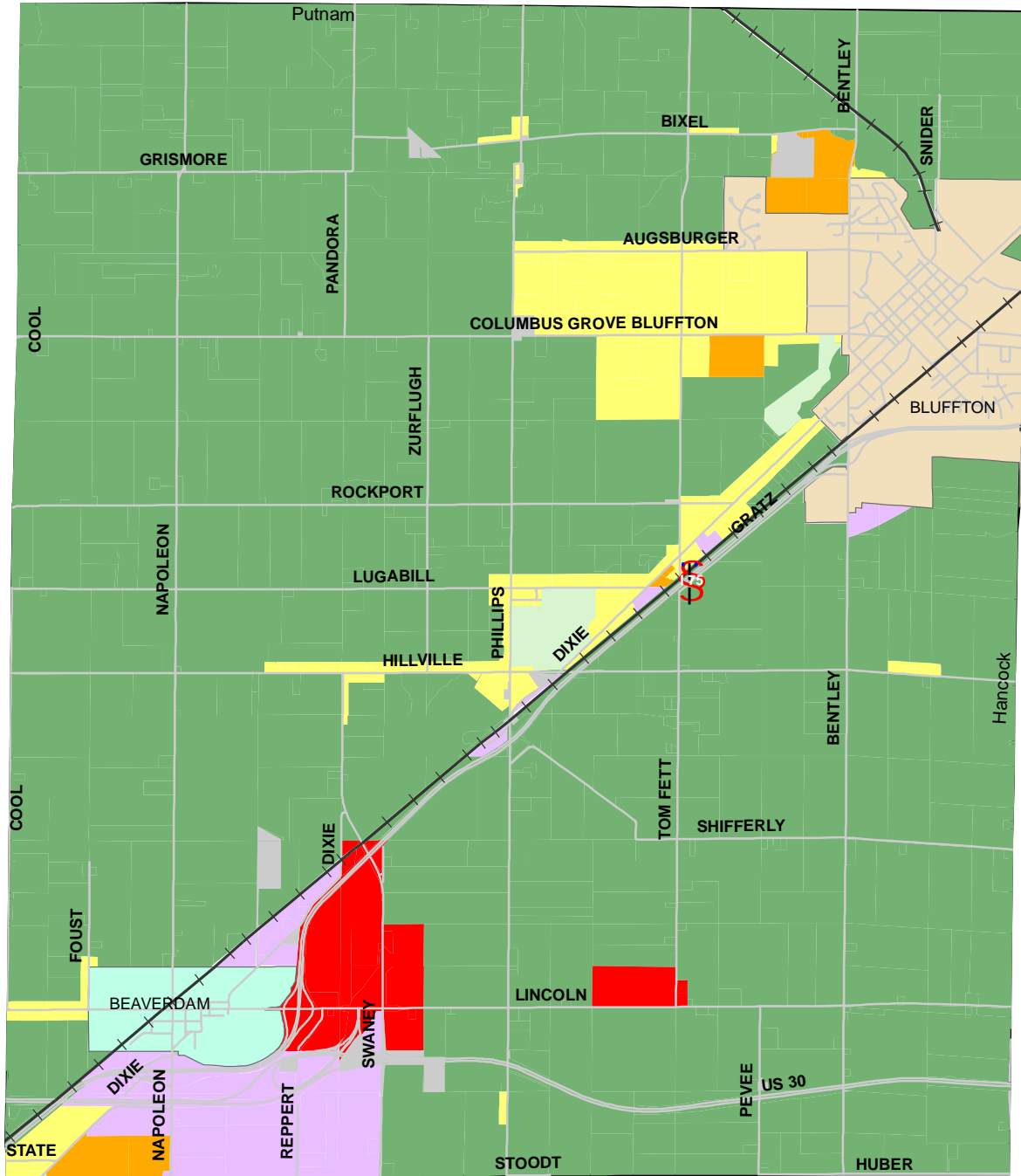
must develop a dedicated stream that addresses existing and future infrastructure upgrades. The lack of such a dedicated funding source will result in deteriorated highway safety, increased localized flooding and a declining quality of life for its residents.

Furthermore, the Township should recognize the shift in state taxation programs/policies and the cumulative impact of tax abatements on local government services as well as changes in the way personal property will be taxed. The Township should assess the long-term implications of these on the existing tax base against the Plan's stated goals and objectives and develop fiscal alternatives. In order to better prepare for declining state support the Township should undertake an assessment of all available revenue streams including the provision of new or special services, developing improvement districts, the ability to assess franchise fees and/or the support of specific public taxes/levies. The Township should consider the implications of revenue generated from such sources based on a cost benefit analysis and with respect to the Plan's stated goals and objectives.

7.4.4 Housing Demand, Accessibility & Stabilization

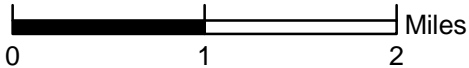
The Plan identified aspects of the Township's housing stock and population in earlier sections of the report. However, attempts to explore some of the more interrelated aspects of housing, housing consumption and population demographics have led to some interesting proposals and calls for action. Supporting specific Plan proposals are issues related to the number and type of currently existing housing units based upon a preliminary assessment of their

MAP 25 RICHLAND TOWNSHIP: 2030 GENERALIZED LAND USE



Land Use

- Agricultural
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Quasi-Public
- Recreation



1 inch equals 1 miles



LIMA - ALLEN COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION

**TABLE 32
GOAL: SUPPORT MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS, VARIED ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES AND LIFESTYLE CHOICES.**

POLICY	STRATEGY	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE BY YEAR					COORDINATING AGENCY(IES)	
			1	2	3	4	5		
Integrate mixed land use developments to promote diversity of the community's economic base and choice of lifestyle.	Recruit and promote the co-location of residential, retail, finance, entertainment, government services and/or restaurants to create a vibrant activity center.	Develop an exciting vibrant central focal point in the community.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
		Attract and retain the young skilled, educated, entrepreneurial people necessary to support local community growth.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, Ohio State University Extension Office, Allen County Commissioners, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
	Locate and integrate infrastructure both physical and social within proposed activity centers to support varied activities.	Coordinate land use decisions with available service area.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
		Cluster service activities that support the arts, sports and entertainment.						Allen Water District, Beaverdam, Bluffton Water and Sewer Dept. , Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
		Develop design criteria to enable the integration of public transportation services and open space into all activity centers.						Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
	Plan for and support the integration of varied land use activities with the infrastructure necessary to accommodate both pedestrian and vehicular traffic in those transitional areas between residential and commercial districts.	Identify potential obstacles to mixed-use developments including land development codes including environmental and safety issues.						Allen County Engineer's Office, Regional Planning Commission, ODOT, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
		Develop corridor plans specifying necessary traffic improvements, land use controls, signage, streetscape and parking standards supported with curbs/gutters, sidewalks and lighting.						Allen County Engineer's Office, Regional Planning Commission, ODOT, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
	Ensure new developments have access to the necessary infrastructure including adequate roads, transit and other needed facilities to support planned development.	Maintain satisfactory levels of service on the local roadway network.	Require Traffic Impact Analyses to assess new/proposed development projects.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
			Develop warranted improvements and seek necessary funding and developer guarantees to correct identified LOS deficiencies including geometric deficiencies.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
		Minimize traffic congestion and delay stemming from new development activities.	Identify and document unsatisfactory levels of service (LOS) at roadway intersections based on established measures of delay.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.
Develop warranted improvements and seek necessary funding to improve LOS including capacity and deficient roadway geometrics.								Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.	
Support the development/implementation of Access Management Regulations on area roadways.								Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.	
Better coordinate transportation, land use policies and urban development.								Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission, Township Road Superintendent and Township Trustees.	
Integrate alternative means of travel with new development sites.		Require an integration of pedestrian amenities to support site development in Township Zoning.						Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
		Require connectivity to existing pedestrian amenities.						Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
Integrate appropriate criteria and develop design guidelines to ensure attractive high value developments.		Create a valuable, attractive and sustainable resource for the community.						Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	

**TABLE 33
GOAL: PROMOTE AND FURTHER INTEGRATE THE (RE)DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.**

POLICY	STRATEGY	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE BY YEAR					COORDINATING AGENCY(IES)
			1	2	3	4	5	
Encourage the development and expansion of existing industries as the primary means of stabilizing the community's economic base.	Support the efforts of the Allen Economic Development Group and the Lima Chamber of Commerce in their retention and expansion efforts.	Support and stabilize the industrial base to protect the community's employment opportunities and tax base.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, Ohio State University Extension Office, Allen County Commissioners, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Develop an industrial council for major employers within the community to express their needs and interests.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, Ohio State University Extension Office, Allen County Commissioners, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
Promote additional capacity for industrial development in the community.	Identify and attract specific industries to compliment existing mix with available sites and infrastructure.	Work with industrial leadership to identify market niches for potential industries.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, Allen County Auditor, Ohio State University Extension Office, Allen County Commissioners, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Identify and strengthen synergies between compatible industries to further employment opportunities and the diversification of the community's tax base.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, Allen County Auditor, Ohio State University Extension Office, Allen County Commissioners, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
Protect areas best suited for industrial/commercial (re)development from housing developments.	Review Land Use Plan and Zoning Regulations for compatibility and to deter construction and encroachment of housing near industrial sites.	Establish and maintain an inventory of all available industrial properties in order to protect industrial development/redevelopment opportunities.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, Regional Planning Commission, Allen County Auditor and Township Zoning Commission.
Develop conditions that will support and strengthen development initiatives.	Advance transportation system improvements that will support industrial development initiatives.	Identify and advance corridor level improvements for freight.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, ODOT and Regional Planning Commission.
		Identify existing and future capacity constraints to existing industrial by site.						Allen Economic Development Group, Chamber of Commerce, ODOT, Allen County Engineer's Office, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Maximize safety and minimize congestion on truck routes.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Eliminate roadway congestion and minimize operational costs.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Ensure employers access to public transportation services.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT, Regional Planning Commission and Township Trustees.
	Advance utility improvement projects that will support industrial developments.	Identify existing utility service and capacity by site.						Allen Water District, Beavertown, Bluffton Water and Sewer Dept, , Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Coordinate development of both water and sewer services to available sites.						Allen Water District, Beavertown, Bluffton Water and Sewer Dept, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
	Support the development of intermodal facilities through the integration of highway and rail infrastructure.	Identify a systems level analysis of freight and rail modes.						Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT and Regional Planning Commission.
Identify and advance corridor level improvements for freight.							Allen County Engineer's Office, ODOT and Regional Planning Commission.	

collective ability to meet the specific needs of future population groups, especially the elderly (65+ years) and empty nesters (45-65 years).

In an attempt to address the community's diverse housing needs of the future, the Plan calls for the Township to consider developing and implementing procedures regarding:

- Market Segmentation & Feasibility Assessments
- Accessibility Standards for New Development
- Standardized Exterior Maintenance Codes
- Standardized Residential Building Codes
- Landlord Training & Occupancy Permits

Market Segmentation & Analyses: Data suggests that the community is growing older. By 2030, 4 out of 10 residents will be comprised of those identified as empty nesters and senior citizens. The Plan also reports that approximately 5 in 10 residential units of the Richland Township housing stock were built between 1960 and 2000. This housing stock primarily reflects the family demands of the post World War II era and the baby-boomer generation. All of Richland's housing units are single-family homes. More than 341 of those exist on parcels more than 2 acres in size. With 90.4 percent of Richland's housing stock owner-occupied, it becomes evident that the type of home, the number of floors, the amount of land as well as the arrangements for the care of that land will necessarily change with an aging population. The Plan suggests that the existing homes by and large will not satisfy or support an aging population.

It becomes evident that the type of home, the number of floors, the amount of land as well as the arrangements for the care of that land will necessarily change with an aging population.

By 2030, the empty nesters and 65+ populations will comprise 40 percent of the total population (896 individuals of 2,241) in Richland Township. Collectively, the projected population will add approximately 215 housing units; their household size will be less than 2.6 persons per household. To a large extent, the homes these populations will live in do not at this time exist in Richland Township. Given the changing demographics and declining household size it is clear that measures need to be taken now to ensure adequately designed residences and neighborhoods with specific accessibility designs identified for this aging population.

Consideration should be given to those development proposals that include single floor designs or ranch type homes with smaller square footage requirements. Integrated throughout should be contractual condominium-style landscaping care and wheelchair accessibility. These design criteria could easily be supported in developments of 2 to 4 units per acre when public utilities are provided. The Township should adopt accessibility design criteria and consider support for mixed use, higher density developments. Proposed developments targeting housing serving intergenerational interests should be supported by the Township. Such community proposals integrate standard single family with condominium and assisted living components. These designs allow households the ability to select the most appropriate residential setting within the community without being forced to move from family, friends and familiar neighborhoods. These developments should be supported as they promote a continuity of Township residency and neighborhood cohesion.

These designs allow households the ability to select the most appropriate residential setting within the community without being forced to move from family, friends and familiar neighborhoods.

Developments should be expected to integrate some specified design criteria supporting that population of 65 years and older as they will account for almost 20 percent of the entire population. Current demographics note that nearly a third of all households currently contain at least one individual 65 years of age or older, and of these households 40 percent live alone with three quarters of those being female. The statistics and trend is not expected to change by 2030, and the Township should recognize that the vast majority of seniors:

- Own their own home (89%)
- Prefer to age at home in same neighborhood (60%)
- Will need some community-based assistance (36%)
- Would move to smaller home (27%)
- Would move to Retirement Community (27%)
- Will suffer from vision problems (66%)

Because most seniors will prefer to age in place, there will most likely be an increasing demand for community-based services as well as the resources and expertise to modify existing homes to accommodate physical changes resulting from the aging process. Housing options such as senior apartments, assisted living complexes and continuing care facilities that provide supportive services will also increase in demand.

New housing developments should be able to serve the community's aging population and such proposals should be reflective of property maintenance from a structural and aesthetic perspective including landscaping, accessibility and supporting community services. Such issues should be addressed by developers at the preliminary planning stage and be supported with a market analysis to assist the Township Zoning Commission and Trustees in their decision-making processes. At the Township level, regulatory language and policy guidelines for the design criteria of units should be reviewed/revised/adopted. Issues to be addressed include types of units, sizes of units, parking, pedestrian lighting and accessibility standards.

Maintenance & Building Codes: The topic of residential property maintenance and building codes repeatedly came up in discussions across the Township with Advisory Committee members. It should not be surprising given that housing typically represents a family's largest single investment, residents want to protect such an investment. Housing is also important to the Township as it represents one of the largest components of its tax base in terms of valuation. As a result, the Township should take steps to ensure that such properties are kept in good repair and remain a valuable asset within and for the community.

The Township should evaluate the feasibility of adopting an exterior maintenance code to ensure that the outward appearance of properties is maintained and somewhat uniform to acceptable neighborhood standards. When individual properties are allowed to slip into disrepair they not only negatively impact the salability and valuation of the individual property but the adjacent properties as well. Left unattended such sites tend to result in a pattern of disinvestment culminating in depressed areas demanding public attention with little valuation to support public investments.

The Township should also consider the implications of adopting a standardized residential building code. A standardized code could protect the consumers of new residential housing by guaranteed inspections of the unit's major structural

**TABLE 34
GOAL: RICHLAND TOWNSHIP WILL SUPPLY SAFE, SUSTAINABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HOUSING.**

POLICY	STRATEGY	OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE BY YEAR					COORDINATING AGENCY(IES)
			1	2	3	4	5	
Support the quality of life (QOL) in existing residential neighborhoods by developing an understanding of QOL issues by neighborhood.	Identify where housing conditions/ values are declining or unstable and develop an appropriate response to improve environment.	Identify and inventory existing code violations.						Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Identify and inventory existing safety concerns including traffic, drainage, utilities, lighting, etc.						Allen County Engineer's Office, Allen Water District, Beaverdam, Bluffton Water and Sewer Dept, , Allen County Health Department, Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
	Support and develop the necessary resources to stabilize the community's older housing stock.	Identify existing market forces.						Local Banks, Board of Realtors, Fair Housing Advisory Board, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Identify available resources to support revitalization efforts.						Local Banks, Board of Realtors, Fair Housing Advisory Board, Board of Allen County Commissioners, Allen County Building Department, Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
Adapt an Exterior Maintenance Code & Inspection Program applicable to all properties.	Adopt the Building Officials and Code Administrators (BOCA) Property Maintenance Code.						Board of Allen County Commissioners, Allen County Building Department, Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority, Allen County Trustees & Clerks Association, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.	
Enhance the appeal and vibrancy of existing housing space.	Encourage/support neighborhood programs, events and service projects that foster neighborhood pride.	Publicly recognize individuals and organizations who make a difference.						Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Publicly recognize individuals for voluntarism within the community.						Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Support clean-up days, spring flower planting, festivals/ blockparties and holiday lighting programs.						Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
Encourage a wide variety of housing types and/or styles within any proposed housing development.	Review zoning and subdivision regulations for impediments to affordable housing.	Remove impediments which artificially inflate housing costs without furthering the public's general health, safety and welfare.					Regional Planning Commission, Fair Housing Advisory Board, Allen County Engineer, Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority and Township Zoning Commission.	
Provide sound housing (re)construction of all residential housing stock.	Institute an accepted code for all housing (re)construction.	Adopt the Ohio Building Officials Association (OBOA) 1, 2 & 3 Family Dwelling Code for all residential construction.					Board of Allen County Commissioners, Allen County Building Department, Allen Metropolitan Housing Authority, Township Zoning Commission, Allen County Trustees & Clerks Association and Township Trustees.	
Encourage a mix of residential and compatible services within proposed developments.	Support a Land Use Plan which reflects medium to high-density residential development opportunities only within areas able to be supported within utility service areas.	Promote residential development of medium to high density in proximity to major centers of employment/recreational activities.						Allen Water District, Beaverdam, Bluffton Water and Sewer Dept , Regional Planning Commission, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Promote mixed use Planned Unit Developments (PUD's) as supported by market studies.	Review zoning regulations in order to better meet the variety of uses, architectural designs and special needs of the entire community.					Regional Planning Commission, Allen County Prosecutor, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
	Encourage clustered residential development.	Review subdivision and zoning regulations for impediments to PUD's.						Regional Planning Commission, Allen County Prosecutor, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Protect environmentally, culturally or topographically sensitive areas.						Regional Planning Commission, Allen County Engineer, Allen County Health Department, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
Encourage the provision of housing to meet the needs of elderly residents and those with disabilities.	Establish an advisory board of special needs advocates to address and quantify the housing needs of special populations.	Identify, support and/or develop the appropriate services/programming necessary to sustain residents in their own homes.						Allen County Council on Aging, Easter Seals, Fair Housing Advisory Board, County CDBG Manager, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
		Remove impediments to housing choice.						Fair Housing Advisory Board, County CDBG Manager, Township Zoning Commission and Township Trustees.
	Support Fair Housing legislation.	Identify and target fair housing violations.						Fair Housing Office and Township Trustees.

components. A standardized code would assist consumers in comparison-shopping between similar units constructed by different builders ensuring that all structural elements are uniform to code and thereby helping to ensure the safety of its occupants.

7.4.5 Environmental Stewardship & Sustainability

Preserving the natural environment was a component of the Plan that, at least in part, actually evolved from other goals. Advisory Committee members realized that the preservation of the community's rural character and farmland preservation involved large agricultural tracts of the natural environment including wood lots and riparian corridors as opposed to the built environment with storefronts and signage, houses and manicured lawns. The Committee also noted poor air and water quality issues negatively impacting the community's overall health.

The Plan recognizes that environmentally sensitive areas of the community have hidden assets that are many times overlooked by developers and property owners who thoughtlessly destroy such resources. Such areas to be protected include the Township's floodplains, wetlands, wood lots and waterways. The Plan acknowledges that these resources must be protected legislatively with policy changes to the Township Zoning Resolutions and Stormwater Management Plans. The Township argues for reciprocal support from State and County level agencies addressing such resources including the Allen County Floodplain Management Regulations, the Allen County Stormwater, Sediment & Erosion Control Regulations and the Allen County Subdivision Regulations.

Trees and grasses have the ability to purify our air and water. Trees provide valuable shade and cleanse the air. Grasses slow stormwater runoff and allow rainwater to percolate into the soils replenishing our groundwater resources. Floodplains and wetlands mitigate flood damage by acting to temporarily store the floodwaters and associated runoff. Moreover, such wetlands and riverine environments can effectively remove the damaging effects of urban pollutants including total suspended particles (45%-99%), phosphorous (23%-96%), nitrogen (up to 90%), and hydrocarbons (40%-60%); while supporting the linkage necessary to provide shelter and refuge for bird and animals migrating across the community.

The Township argues that these resources are too important to the overall ecology of the Township to allow development to destroy or minimize their effectiveness. The Township argues for specific actions including: (1) an inventory of all waterways and ditches be established and monitored for flow, maintenance and water quality; (2) an inventory of all environmental, social, cultural and historic sites to assist with preliminary planning activities; (3) an inventory of existing wood lots by type of trees to help develop tree planting standards and sightline requirements for designated overlay districts; (4) an inventory of animal/bird nesting/feeding areas to sustain and protect the migration of same across the community; and, (5) the development of an open space preservation plan.

The Plan recognizes the importance of these resources to the natural environment and suggests that the documentation and incorporation of these resources in greenway or corridor planning activities. Such planning activities could provide the necessary personal human interaction to support the future diversity of the community's plant/wildlife communities. It is with the same logic

that the Township supports developing such corridors in order to provide both recreational and transportation opportunities that will positively influence economic and community development. The Plan suggests that such a component will support and augment landscaping, buffering and sightline corridor requirements identified earlier.

7.4.6 Quality of Life

Many communities claim their residents enjoy a high quality of life (QOL), while failing to really understand the term or the appropriate measures of the concept. It's not surprising given that the term means different things to different people under different circumstances. Some argue that QOL is a construct that connotes an "overall sense of well-being" when applied to an individual, while the same term refers to a "supportive environment" when applied to a community. Most however agree that in the realm of community development QOL refers to those aspects of the economic, social and physical environment that make a community a desirable place in which to live or do business.

The Plan recognizes the concept of QOL rankings from the perspective of providing baseline measures for monitoring and quantifying aspects and progress achieving the Plan's goals and objectives.

Today, within the realm of economic development and the energies exerted over the recruitment of employers/employees, new residents and economic growth, QOL is used as a marketing tool emphasizing the advantages of a particular location over another in terms of specific rankings or measures of community attributes. While cognizant of the community's assets and incorporating the shared values and vision for the community, the Plan recognizes and embraces the concept of QOL rankings from the perspective of providing baseline measures for monitoring and quantifying aspects and progress in terms of achieving the Plan's goals and objectives.

Recognizing that assessing QOL in a community can be subjective based on the methods and measures used. Research however has indicated that certain dimensions of QOL can be measured using indicators related to determinants of health and community-well being. Especially important in the community development process are those dimensions of QOL that include the perceptions of residents about aspects of their neighborhoods and community that either enhance or diminish their quality of life. From this perspective the Plan could use annual QOL indicators to track community growth and community concerns within Richland Township based on the criteria that Richland Township identifies as important.

Examining public safety and welfare, efforts should focus on crime by type and location; as well as vehicle crashes by location, age and contributing factors. The community's perception of crime; the location, nature of calls for service requiring the response of Fire and/or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel and response times should also be assessed to gauge coverage disparities across the community.

Indicators of QOL should focus on aspects of: public safety & welfare, jobs & economic vitality, and health & education. For example, to assess economic vitality, the Township could use employment by industry, weekly wage by industry and unemployment rates to assess change over time. Specific objectives identified elsewhere in the Action Plan could then be coordinated with

these measures to provide an annualized quantitative assessment from which future actions could be taken.

Health and education issues are critical to supporting family values in the community. Efforts to improve communications between the Allen County Health Department, the Allen County Safe Community Coalition, should be explored and expanded to include Township representatives. Health issues should examine and identify teen pregnancy issues, pre-natal health care, communicative diseases, accessibility to health care, and leading causes of death to measure community health concerns. Educational measures might rely upon high school drop out rates, standardized test scores, funding levels per student, teacher student ratios, class availability, the availability of extracurricular activities, student participation rates and safety in schools to assess progress or needed improvements.

SECTION VIII PLANNING PROCESS, SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

This Plan has been developed to provide the foresight and guidance necessary to preserve the community's existing quality of life. The Plan strives to balance shared community values with the need for, and implications stemming from, population growth and suburban development. This Plan recognizes the consequences of unplanned growth and carefully considered the environmental implications of such growth on water quality, wildlife habitat and available farmland. The Plan calls for increased coordination between development and utility service areas and open space. The Plan examines the costs of urban development and mandates that any negative consequences associated with such development be addressed prior to any further development. The Plan also calls for increased coordination between the Township and the various other local, state and County agencies charged with regulatory oversight in the areas of transportation, utilities, parks and education. The Plan should be considered pro-growth. It is offered as a vision for the future based on existing opportunities and current challenges within the community. It is hoped that the Plan provides the insight and direction necessary to fulfill the collective dreams of those of us daring to do so.

8.1 The Planning Process

The need for the Plan grew in part out of frustration on the part of local township officials who realized that too much of the development that was occurring within the community was done without much foresight. Development was occurring haphazardly without much oversight and often times resulting in mounting tensions between neighbors and increased costs to the Township. Moreover, Township officials recognized that development was sometimes occurring with the assistance of state, county and regional governments and without the insights or support of the Township. Township officials recognized that local input and local control required a comprehensive examination of the various factors impacting development within the community.

The Township Trustees, its administrative staff along with the Township Zoning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals met as a Steering Committee to discuss updating the Township Comprehensive Plan. Over the course of the next several months, the Regional Planning Commission and various other county agencies supported the efforts of the Steering Committee by providing data and insights. The Committee met during the initial stages of the planning process to identify and assess specific areas of concern including emergency services, population growth, the housing stock, transportation issues, infrastructure needs and employment opportunities. The Committee used an open house format and small discussion groups to review the concerns and perceptions of Township residents. The Committee undertook an inventory of businesses and discussed blighting influences across the community. After completing a visioning process in which preferences were established, the Steering Committee developed goals.

The Plan is relatively succinct, comprised of separate and distinct sections that address specific issues, areas or functions important to the future of the community. Although, mutually supportive of the entire Plan, each section of the report is independent. Goals were identified by the advisory committee and refined during the visioning process. The policies, strategies and objectives were identified over the course of the planning process. Policies are the fundamental assertions targeting fulfillment of the goal. Strategies were developed as a systematic approach to be taken to support a particular policy and/or stated goal. Objectives were specific tasks to realize strategic points or policy items.

8.2 Plan Summary & Recommendations

This section attempts to address the issues raised in earlier sections with summary recommendations. Section 7 of this report includes a matrix that identifies goal driven specifics on policies, strategies and objectives particularly important to the identified goals in a timeline format that provides strategic benchmarks for measuring future success. The policies, strategies and objectives included in the matrix were identified over the course of the planning process. The respective highlights of the planning process and summary recommendations for the various components are presented below.

8.2.1 Population

The Plan recognizes that Richland Township will continue moderate population growth over the next 25 years. Also, consistent with national trend, the Township's population is aging. The median age of the population is 35.8 years, .4 years younger than the State as a whole. Data suggests that simply due to age of the population more than a third of the population is not able to fully contribute to the economic growth and earning power of the community. Age of residents will also impact the need for service, including education, fire and emergency medical service. In addition, age will necessarily be a factor in housing consumption and design. Local policies should be developed to increase opportunity, choice and costs in housing based on both physical and financial considerations. Local policies must also acknowledge that growth is largely reflective of and dependent upon those in the 25-34 age cohort. This

Local policies must acknowledge that growth is largely reflective of and dependent upon those in the 25-34 age cohort. This cohort will make residential decisions based upon quality schools, ready access to parks and other recreational activities.

cohort is very mobile and will often make residential decisions based upon available amenities. Quality schools, ready access to parks and other recreational activities and entertainment facilities are critical to attracting this population. Local decision makers must recognize and prioritize land use decisions and capital expenditures based on such information.

Many factors affect employment rates among adults. None, however, may be as important as educational attainment levels. Data shows that there are 134 individuals or 9.8 percent of all individuals 25 years of age or older that have not completed a high school education residing in Richland Township. Of note, 242 adult residents (17.7%) have completed a 4-year college degree and/or masters program slightly less than both State and National averages. This is an important factor in community development, as it tends to suggest support for maintaining quality educational services and an ability to adapt to new technologies, new situations and new employment opportunities. Local officials must continue their support for local schools and tout its accomplishments. Local officials should also recognize the educational attainment levels of its residents in business attraction/retention activities.

8.2.2 Housing

This Plan acknowledges the historical consequences of land consumption, household size and suburbanization. The Plan identifies the population dynamics impacting the community and attempts to satisfy the appetite for housing consumption based on a realization of changing household size and an aging population. The Township commits to more integrated, sustainable housing development; housing that will meet the needs of a diverse community, a

The Plan promotes neighborhoods; neighborhoods that are safe, pedestrian friendly and clean. The Plan supports legislative changes to existing land use controls and building codes to support housing as structurally sound and housing as a financially secure investment.

community of all ages and incomes. The Plan supports legislative changes to existing land use controls and building codes to support housing as structurally sound and housing as a financially secure investment. The Plan supports legislative changes to existing zoning codes and recommends adoption of exterior maintenance code. The Plan also advances the integration of themed architecture styles in new medium density developments that provide direct access to open space and recreational facilities in order to minimize encroachment into prime farmland when utilities can support such density. The Plan recognizes mixed-use developments as desirable and suggests regulatory changes may be necessary to support same. The Plan suggests market studies be prepared and submitted to support new residential development. Based on current population estimates, the Township will need an additional 215 residential units that will need to reflect smaller footprints with less maintenance and energy requirements. The Township commits to more integrated, sustainable housing; housing that will meet the needs of a diverse community, a community of all ages and physical capabilities.

8.2.3 Land Use

The Plan recognizes the relationship between residential housing and employment locations on commuting patterns and supports the integration of mixed-use developments to minimize commuting time and congestion. Housing, as a basic need of the community, is estimated to consume an additional 1,368 acres of the community's agricultural base if the historical pattern of residential development is continued. The Plan supports the adoption of more sustainable development patterns in terms of increased density and integrated land use in order to preserve working farms and Richland Township agricultural heritage.

In an attempt to satisfy the economic growth of the community, the Plan identifies specific areas for light industrial, commercial/services and warehousing activities. The Plan recognizes existing land use patterns and identifies specific corridors. The combination of housing, commercial, industrial, recreational and quasi-Public uses would consume 13.5 percent of all land in Richland Township.

Such estimates are predicated upon the community's stated interest of protecting its remaining rural character and increasing the residential density allotments per acre. The Plan supports the adoption of more sustainable development patterns in terms of increased density and integrated land use in order to preserve working farms and the community's agricultural heritage. The Plan acknowledges farmland preservation as a primary tenant and adopted a LESA methodology to (a) quantitatively evaluate and regulate land use change over time; and, (b) establish Agricultural Protection Zones (APZs) outside of the defined utility service areas. The Plan is intended to preserve the agricultural industry base and rural characteristics of the community while providing the area and infrastructure necessary for further community development.

8.2.4 Transportation

Increased development will result in increased traffic. The Plan identifies specific corridors as important to the community's future development and calls for increased capacity and aesthetic upgrades. The community advances specific projects to improve north/south traffic flow and improve safety in order to adequately address ever-increasing traffic, especially the growing presence of truck traffic. The Plan mandates a transportation system that operates at a

The Plan identifies specific corridors as important to the community's future development and calls for increased capacity and aesthetic upgrades.

satisfactory level of service, a transportation system that is efficient, predicated upon safety and access.

More specifically, the Plan calls for the standardization of roadway widths, the integration of sidewalks/trails in all commercial and residential projects. The Plan specifically recognizes the Napoleon Road, Lincoln Highway, Phillips and Hillville Roads as major entryways into the community and calls for not only improved signal coordination and access management but increased attention paid to enhancements including appropriate overhead lighting, landscaping, signage and maintenance of primary gateways into Richland Township as aesthetically pleasing.

Various roadway pavement widths deficient as to their compliance with Federal Highway design standards estimated \$7.9 million for necessary improvements. The plan recognizes 37 bridges in Richland Township with only 2 currently identified as deficient. Bridge repair was estimated at \$435,000. The Plan recommends that a pavement management system be integrated within normal roadway maintenance operations to improve capital improvement program planning and budgetary requirements. The Plan identified no high crash intersection locations along county or township roadways, nor were any intersections projected to become deficient due to volume.

The Plan recognizes increased pressures spurred by existing and future demands for improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The report recommends Richland Township identify and implement additional funding for roadway improvements and maintenance.

8.2.5 Water & Wastewater Distribution Systems

Examining potable water, Richland Township relies primarily on private wells. The Allen Water District has recently extended the public water service to the Village at Sugar Creek Subdivision development. Utility extension from the Village of Bluffton has historically resulted in annexation. The Plan challenges utility services to avoid unnecessary extensions into agricultural areas.

Wastewater system facilities are provided by the Village of Beaverdam at targeted locations. Improvements to the sanitary sewer systems have been made incrementally. Most often, such improvements have been prompted by an expansion, or proposed expansion of the service area for new development. Geography, both natural and man-made have imposed limits to the expansion of sewer services in Richland Township. Human activities not serviced by the municipal sewer need to utilize private septic systems as approved by the Allen County Health Department.

The Plan recognizes further suburban developments and mandates of the OEPA. The Plan also recognizes the development of agricultural districts and the existing minimum lot size of 2.5 acres in rural residential districts.

8.2.6 Environmental Conservation

The USEPA is currently in an air quality reassessment process (May 2007) of Allen County with respect to Ozone. The Blanchard River Watershed is still considered impaired. These designations were taken seriously and were taken into consideration during the planning process. The Plan identifies existing and future areas of low and medium density residential development coupled with commercial and industrial uses. The Plan also identifies such uses and their

proximity to endangered riverine environments and natural areas including mature tree stands and parks. The Plan identifies the various watersheds and floodplains in the Township as well as the Blanchard and its tributaries impacted waterways.

The Plan promotes the protection and integration of environmentally sensitive areas within quality, high value added developments and/or public control through acquisition to protect access for future generations. More specifically, the Plan identifies the inclusion of: (a) mandated riverine buffers to be established to improve water quality; (b) landscaped buffers around commercial and industrial sites to ensure pleasant sight lines, containment of site generated litter and minimal night glaze; and, (c) mixed-use developments and integrated land uses.

The Plan promotes the protection and integration of environmentally sensitive areas within quality, high value added developments and/or public control through acquisition to protect access for future generations.

PLAN REFERENCE MATERIALS

Plan Reference Materials

Title	Plan Section	Category	Year	Author/Publisher	Description
Ottawa River and Tributaries	Site & Situation: Flood Plains & Wetlands	Flood Plain Management Study	2002	Natural Resources Conservation Service: U.S. Department of Agriculture	Includes description of study area, flood plain problems, current flood plain management, and alternative management options.
Allen County Access Management Plan	Infrastructure & Services: Transportation	Access Management Plan	2005	HDR Engineering, Inc.	Prepared for Allen County Engineer. Includes purpose for access management, examples, administration issues, design standards, and traffic impact study requirements.
2030 Long Range Fiscally Constrained Transportation Plan	Infrastructure & Services: Transportation	Transportation Plan	2005	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission	Includes land use, population, socioeconomic trends, existing transportation characteristics, alternatives to alleviate deficiencies and financial plan.
Traffic Access and Impact Studies for Site Development: A Recommended Practice	Infrastructure & Services: Transportation	Traffic	1991	Institute of Transportation Engineers	Includes need and purpose of traffic impact studies and necessary measures for the studies.
Access Ohio 2004-2030: Statewide Transportation Plan	Infrastructure & Services: Transportation	Transportation Plan	2004	ODOT Division of Planning, Office of Urban & Corridor Planning	Includes goals and objectives, demographics, economics, travel patterns, transportation network, rail system, air system, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, water ports and inter-modal connectors, transportation system security, and financial plan.
Soil Survey of Allen County	Site & Situation: Soils & Limiting Factors	Soil Analysis	2002	Natural Resources Conservation Service, ODNR, et al.	Includes overview of soil type and survey procedures.
Strategies for Defining Ohio's Economic Development Agenda	Economic Overview: Tax Base	Economic Strategy	2002	The Center for Public Management	Prepared for The Ohio and Metro Chambers of Commerce. Includes development strategy, tax structure, education, workforce, implementation, infrastructure investments, policy options, and case study analysis.
Allen County Air Quality Report	Environmental Factors: Air Quality	Air Quality	2003	Ohio Environmental Protection Agency	An assessment of Allen County Air Quality in 2003. The report provides detailed Air Toxic Testing Results pursuant to new 8-hour NAAQS.
Allen County Comprehensive Water Master Plan	Infrastructure & Services: Water Systems	Water System Report	2000	URS Greiner Woodward Clyde	Includes county current and projected populations, water demands and quality, water supply, alternative systems, recommendations, and financing.
A Transit Development Plan For the Allen County Regional Transit Authority FY 2006-2010	Infrastructure & Services: Transit	Transit Study	2004	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission	Includes demographic overview, current transit system, assessment of service development standards, and financial development plan.

Title	Plan Section	Category	Year	Author/Publisher	Description
Allen County Community Housing Improvement Strategy	Infrastructure & Services: Housing	Housing Study	2004	Rural Community Assistance Action Program	Includes demographics, housing needs, and housing issues.
Draft Solid Waste Management Plan Update	Environmental Factors: Solid Waste	Solid Waste Study	1999	Howard S. Weirnerman, Inc.	Prepared for North Central Ohio Solid Waste District. Includes inventories, generation and reduction, projections and strategies, and methods of solid waste management.
Lima/Allen County Economic Adjustment Study: Report #1 - Community Interface	Economic Overview: Tax Base	Economic Study	1996	The Liaison Group, Inc.	Includes overview of initial community interface and interaction.
Lima/Allen County Economic Adjustment Study: Report #2 - Economic Overview & Impacts	Economic Overview: Tax Base	Economic Study	1996	The Liaison Group, Inc.	Includes local economic overview and economic impact assessment of job loss due to Department of Defense downsizing.
Lima/Allen County Economic Adjustment Study: Report #3 - Target Marketing	Economic Overview: Tax Base	Economic Study	1996	The Liaison Group, Inc.	Includes cluster analysis, marketing strategies and actions.
Lima/Allen County Economic Adjustment Study: Report #4 - Facilities Analysis	Economic Overview: Tax Base	Economic Study	1996	The Liaison Group, Inc.	Provides overview of existing facilities including: Airfoil building compound & Sundstrand building compound. Highlights assets, liabilities, code issues, and reuse potential.
Nexus Ohio: Multimodal Opportunities For Economic Development - Final Report	Economic Overview: Employment	Economic Study	2003	Jack Faucett Associates	Includes Economic Development, transportation infrastructure, waterway usage, and transportation improvement scenarios.
2003 Making Vision Reality	Economic Overview: Employment	Economic Development	2003	Allen Economic Development Group	Includes overview of commercial sector and project summary.
Building a Focused Community	Action Plan: Quality of Life	Community Development	2004	Ohio State University Extension Community Development	Includes overview of Community and Visioning process.
2005 Groundhog Survey Results Summary	Economic Overview: Employment	Economic Forecast	2005	Allen County Chamber of Commerce	Overview of employment, sales, legislative issues, and accomplishments.
2004 Year End Report to Our Partners	Economic Overview: Employment	Economic Development	2004	Allen Economic Development Group	Overview of 2004 Economic Achievements.
News Release: ODJFS issues long-term job forecasts for 11 Ohio metropolitan areas	Economic Overview: Employment	Employment Forecast	2004	Ohio Department of Job & Family Services	Statewide Employment projections 2000 - 2010.
Community Housing Improvement Program 2005	Infrastructure & Services: Housing	Housing Study	2005	Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc.	Includes demographics, housing needs, housing issues, and plans.
Allen County Industrial Development Action Agenda	Economic Overview: Tax Base	Industrial Base Study	1985	Woolbert Consultants	Includes Economic overview, existing industry, locational advantages, future prospects, site availability and suitability, and development strategies.
Ohio 2000 Demographic Profile: Charting The Changes	Population Characteristics	Population Summary Report	2001	Ohio Department of Development	Demographic overview.

Title	Plan Section	Category	Year	Author/Publisher	Description
Pathways to Life Quality	Action Plan: Residential	Senior Housing	2003	Ithaca College Gerontology Institute	Collaborative study on residential choice by seniors prepared by Ithaca College and Cornell University. Examined physical demands and psychological implications of an aging population on housing and accessibility.
Subdivision Regulations for Allen County, Ohio	Action Plan: Land Use	Regulatory Controls	1998	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission	Subdivision Regulations adopted pursuant to Section 711 of the Ohio Revised Code.
United States Census 2000	Population Characteristics	Census Tabulation	2000	U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census	Statistical summations of Bloclal political subdivisions.
United States Census 1990	Population Characteristics	Census Tabulation	1990	U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census	Statistical summations of Bloclal political subdivisions.
United States Census 1980	Population Characteristics	Census Tabulation	1980	U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census	Statistical summations of Bloclal political subdivisions.
2002 Economic Census	Economic Overview: Employment	Economic Census	2005	U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census	Statistical summations of Bath Township, Allen County, State of Ohio.
2002 Census of Agriculture	Economic Overview: Employment	Agricultural Census	2002	U.S. Department of Agriculture	Statistical summations of Bath Township, Allen County, State of Ohio.
Ohio Department of Development County Population Projections 2000-2030	Population Characteristics	Population Study	2003	Ohio Department of Development	Statistical summation of projected populations by political subdivision.
Land Evaluation & Site Assessment	Action Plan: Land Use	Land Use	1996	U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service	Methodological tool to assess agricultural productivity and land use classifications.
ES 202 Employment by SIC	Economic Overview: Employment	Economic Profile	2004	Ohio Department of Job & Family Services	Identifies employees, firms by first month, second month, third month and year average from 1980 to 2002.
County Business Patterns 2001-2002	Economic Overview: Employment	Economic Profile	2004	U.S. Department of Commerce	Annual publication that provides substantial economic data by industry by NAICS code. Provides total full and part time employment as well as non-employer wages and County trends.
County & City Data Book 13th Edition	Economic Overview: Employment	Economic Profile	2000	U.S. Census Bureau	Summary of statistics on the social and economic structure of the counties and cities of the United States.
Ohio County Profile	Economic Overview: Employment	Economic Strategy	2002	Ohio Department of Development	Bi-annual publication that provides County level economic social and vital statistic data.
Traffic Crash Incident Summary Reports 2003-2005	Infrastructure & Services: Transportation	Traffic and Safety	2005	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission	Statistical compilation designed to be used for crash trend analyses.

Title	Plan Section	Category	Year	Author/Publisher	Description
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Allen County, Ohio	Infrastructure & Services: Transportation	Community Development	2005	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission	Comprehensive social and economic assessment of Allen County.
Transportation Improvement Program FY 2004-2007	Infrastructure & Services: Transportation	Transportation Plan	2003	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission	Comprehensive transportation project compilation for Allen County.
Transportation Improvement Program FY 2006-2009	Infrastructure & Services: Transportation	Transportation Plan	2005	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission	Comprehensive transportation project compilation for Allen County.

RESOLUTION
ADOPTION OF THE RICHLAND TOWNSHIP 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, Richland Township has undertaken the responsibility to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan, pursuant to Section 519.02 of the Ohio Revised Code; and,

WHEREAS, the Township's existing comprehensive plan had not been thoroughly updated in 10 years and failed to accurately reflect the community's current land use and economic conditions nor its current vision and specific initiatives to help achieve that vision; and,

WHEREAS, the Township desired to be proactive in dealing with regional issues and protecting its resources, and planning for community and/or service needs; and,

WHEREAS, the Township's Citizens Advisory Committee undertook a comprehensive assessment of historic and existing conditions within the Township, developed potential options to address such conditions and identified goals, objectives and implementation strategies; and,

WHEREAS, the Richland Township 2030 Comprehensive Plan will provide guidance to decision makers, residents, property owners and organizations relevant to the subject matters of: Community Appearance; Environmental Resources; Residential, Parks and Recreation; Community Services and Facilities; Transportation; and Future Development/Redevelopment;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township's Board of Trustees hereby adopts the Richland Township 2030 Comprehensive Plan as an important planning tool which identifies a wide range of issues, initiatives, studies, projects and programs which can be undertaken by various entities over both the short-term and the long-term.

ADOPTED THIS 22nd DAY OF MAY, 2007



Gary Lugibihl, Richland Township Trustee



Donald Brauen, Richland Township Trustee



Red Goldsberry, Richland Township Trustee