

CHAPTER 1

PLAN FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

In 2004 Allen Township, Union County undertook the creation of a comprehensive plan to proactively address future growth and development. This plan is a guide for the future that recommends how the area should develop or redevelop in order to meet community goals and is based on a twenty-year time horizon. The plan allows residents, business owners, and developers to make investments with a reasonable expectation of what will happen in the future. The plan represents a balance between the sometimes competing interests of the environment, individual land owners, and the community overall.

The plan reflects the community's values and provides a resource to the various zoning bodies and elected officials as they make future land use decisions. The impacts of each decision are accumulated over time and will either provide positive or negative impacts.

While the major elements of the plan can identify a broad future pattern of land use, it cannot foresee and answer in detail the host of questions that will occur over time. Therefore, a major element of plan development is the formulation of policies and guidelines for judging future

rezonings, reacting to development or redevelopment proposals, and directing public improvements.

This plan should be viewed as a community blueprint for the future - a mechanism to help ensure each decision fits as part of the whole. This plan should be used not only by the Allen Township officials, but also Union County officials whose decisions regarding transportation and utility improvements have an effect on the land use pattern.

Among the many reasons for the comprehensive plan are the following:

- Present a future land use map that illustrates how the community should develop logically over time.
- Provide a legal basis for zoning and other regulations for the type, intensity and timing of development.
- Provide that, as development occurs, the most significant natural features are conserved or enhanced.
- Outline specific strategies to address situations where one land use is not compatible with an adjacent land use.
- Provide a sustainable community with a land use pattern that translates into a diversified tax base to support the desired facilities and services with reasonable tax rates.

MAJOR ISSUES FACING ALLEN TOWNSHIP

Like most rural areas in the Central Ohio region, Allen Township is faced with exurban development pressure. Allen Township's location relative to US Route 33 and major employment centers, as well as its beautiful natural surroundings have made it appealing to individuals seeking the aesthetics of a rural environment and a relief from denser urban and suburban areas. In addition, the lack of an income tax makes the Township a desirable location for commercial and industrial development. The land shown as for sale in Figure 1.1 below is currently zoned for commercial use.

Figure 1.1 – Commercial Development Site



Figure 1.2 is a prime example of the type of residential development that has been occurring. This twelve unit residential development strips out existing road frontage

creating a linear subdivision that does little to preserve the rural character of the Township.

Figure 1.2 – Buck Run Farms Development



The development pressure has caused a split within the community. One side representing large property owners who want to preserve their right to sell land for development and the other side representing citizens seeking to minimize the spread of new residential development within the Township, specifically in the form of subdivisions.

The retention of farmland in the community is critical to maintaining the rural character of the Township. However, farmers must be given options and incentives for preserving farmland if farming no longer becomes viable within Allen Township, alternative development options that preserve rural character and the Township's natural features should be in place within the

development regulations to ensure that old and new growth can be integrated in a manner that maintains a high quality of life for all residents of the Township.

VISION STATEMENT

In order to maintain a high quality living environment, Allen Township will preserve its rural atmosphere and abundant natural resources, enhance the community tax base, and promote on-going citizen participation in all aspects of government.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Encourage increased participation in local governmental affairs.
 - 1.1. Encourage an on-going proactive planning process.
 - 1.2. Improve communications between citizens and Township officials
 - 1.3. Provide citizen education on issues affecting local government.
 - 1.4. Provide training for local elected officials and board members.
 - 1.5. Create a network of local volunteers.
2. Create a balanced land use pattern that is economically and environmentally sustainable.
 - 2.1. Encourage diverse business growth that enhances the tax base while still respecting the rural character of the Township.
 - 2.2. Promote quality design for all land use types.
 - 2.3. Encourage integration of open space into all new developments.
 - 2.4. Promote better site planning.
 - 2.5. Balance individual property rights with community interests and goals.
 - 2.6. Promote a variety of residential densities.
3. Improve and maintain a safe and efficient road network that supports the community land use pattern.
 - 3.1. Improve local traffic patterns.
 - 3.2. Minimize traffic conflicts.
 - 3.3. Improve road quality.
 - 3.4. Minimize curb cuts onto major arterials.
4. Maintain the rural atmosphere of the Township.
 - 4.1. Conserve and protect the Township's natural resources including surface and ground water, wetlands, and woodlands.
 - 4.2. Preserve air quality.
 - 4.3. Preserve the view of the night sky.
 - 4.4. Preserve agricultural land.
 - 4.5. Preserve streams and stream corridors.
 - 4.6. Preserve large tracts of open space/green space.
 - 4.7. Prevent unmanaged growth and sprawl.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Steering Committee

A fifteen member steering committee was appointed by the Township Trustees upon recommendation from the Zoning Board to work with Burns, Bertsch & Harris, Inc. The steering committee met nine times throughout the course of the project, see below. During these meetings, the steering committee discussed major issues related to growth and development, developed goals and objectives, and assisted in the development of the future land use plan. In addition, the steering committee facilitated community focus groups and assisted in the open house.

Steering committee meetings were held on the following dates:

January 12, 2004
February 9, 2004
May 10, 2004
June 14, 2004
July 12, 2004
August 9, 2004
September 13, 2004
November 8, 2004
January 24, 2005
February 21, 2005
March 21, 2005

STEERING COMMITTEE VISIONING SESSION

During the February 9, 2004 steering committee meeting, steering committee members were asked to consider the following questions:

1. What's going well in Allen Township?
2. What's not going well?
3. What do you want Allen Township to be like ten years from now?
4. What must the Trustees, Zoning Board, and other groups do to ensure that this happens?

The results of the steering committee visioning session follow.

1. What's going well in Allen Township?
 - a. Developing – getting to be more of a home place than just a farming community; contained, regulated progress.
 - b. Ahead of the game; good fire, EMS, nice meeting facility; newer homes and residents.
 - c. Excellent public safety services; roads well maintained.
 - d. A lot of greenspace/open space.
 - e. Township employees get along.
 - f. Don't have a lot of crime; good place to live and raise children.
 - g. Good tax base from Honda; good employment opportunities within the Township.
 - h. Diverse culture of people within the Township.
 - i. Impact of the Columbus economy.
 - j. Good communication between elected officials and employees.

- k. People excited about having things happen; insight of Trustees – not trying to shut anything down.
 - l. Canvas for development – financial stability, jobs, services, open space, schools – all factors that make a good community.
 - m. Township administration anticipating community needs.
 - n. Clean air and water.
 - o. Location relative to Columbus and US Route 33.
 - p. Slower development than other townships – ability to handle development.
 - q. Sense of community.
 - r. Rural and urban landscape mix.
2. What's not going well?
- a. Unplanned development and issues; drainage problems; neighbors not getting along.
 - b. Traffic volume and speed.
 - c. Flag lots – houses in front of each other; “Countrytime development”
 - d. Township roads – need a more progressive approach to bringing up to standards.
 - e. Residential development before infrastructure - not sufficient drainage and traffic control.
 - f. Finances – housing and businesses bring in a little money but not enough to address roads, ditches, water problems.
 - g. Transitioning from what we were to what we will be in ten year; need to manage expectations of citizens; need a plan for all sides.
- h. Improving the forum for expressing views and expectations. In the past there was a lack of communication.
 - i. Zoning requirements - room for improvement. Lot sizes may be unreasonable. Are four to five acre lots really farmland preservation.
 - j. Not respecting land owners property rights. People moving in want to be the last people in the Township.
 - k. Education of new people coming in as to what services they can expect from Townships. People don't understand township government and zoning rules.
 - l. People underestimating the expertise of those in Township government positions.
3. What do you want Allen Township to be like ten years from now?
- a. More of the same kind of homes and people with the infrastructure to handle development.
 - b. High quality residential growth.
 - c. Preservation of good farmland.
 - d. Small commercial development in established areas.
 - e. Growth while maintaining country atmosphere where individuals can do things they could not do in a municipality.
 - f. Strong economy so Honda continues to grow.
 - g. Manage green space and traffic.
 - h. Limited government intervention.
 - i. Still a good place to live; more areas of higher density residential to preserve good farmland.

- Some areas of the Township are not as fertile and development should be located there.
- j. Proactive stakeholder group.
 - k. Still attractive to people raising families.
 - l. Increase in small agricultural operations/businesses.
 - m. Good Township economy.
 - n. Limited annexation.
 - o. Water and sewer in parts of the Township.
 - p. Businesses along Northwest Parkway.
 - q. Preservation of open space, clean air/water, floodplains.
4. What must the Trustees, Zoning Board, and other groups do to ensure that this happens?
- a. Come up with plan to address deficiencies and build on strengths.
 - b. Build on vision of the plan.
 - c. Positive attitude to deal with change.
 - d. Continued planning; maintain small town community feel distinct from a Columbus suburb in spite of population growth.
 - e. Communicate with residents about plan and why decisions were made. Use newsletter.
 - f. Zoning Board and Trustees need to communicate issues and goals to citizens.
 - g. Provide a forum for communication. Find a common ground and get rid of the barriers to communication.
 - h. Use public meetings to get input. Educate residents on the cost of community services.
 - i. Balance growth and development; attract more businesses.
 - j. Incentives for farmland preservation.
 - k. Don't use up the entire road frontage.
 - l. Need policies in place to follow through with vision.
 - m. Communication between all parties and voters – no in-fighting, referendums, levies.
 - n. Good plan for development to address greenspace, higher density residential, balancing of opinions.
 - o. Once a plan is approved, Trustees and Zoning Board must work together – review plan to ensure getting desired results.
 - p. Cooperate with County Commissioners. County needs water and sewer going other places to relieve pressure from Marysville.
 - q. Regional approach to development.
 - r. To make good decisions, need good input/advisors. Make sure we all understand what's there. Tap into experts; need information.
 - s. Boards must work together; keep programs that benefit the Township.
 - t. Comprehensive plan must be an evolving document that is updated faithfully and used by the Zoning Board and Trustees.

Community Focus Group

On April 12, 2004, the steering committee hosted a community focus group session in order to gather public opinion on growth and development issues facing the Township as well as further define several Township issues that surfaced as a result of the recent community

survey sent out by the Zoning Board. Approximately seventy individuals attended the session.

When participants arrived, they were divided into tables of approximately nine individuals. Each table had a facilitator and recorder, both members of the steering committee. During the session, the facilitator and recorder gathered the opinion of the citizens around the table. The goal of the discussion was not to reach a consensus on the issues but to listen to all sides. The results of the community focus group follow.

Question 1. According to the community survey results, 81 percent of the respondents stated that the country atmosphere was what they liked most about living in the Township. In your opinion, what elements make up or contribute to the “country atmosphere?”

Group 1

- Single family homes, not in subdivisions, not on top of each other
- Subdivisions with roads are better than flag lots along roads
- Developments should construct the entrances before all lots are sold
- Neighbors, friendliness
- Some lots can be too big to be maintained

Group 2

- Open space and peace of mind – no parking lots and commercial development
- Low traffic

- Houses set back off the road
- No high density residential development
- Agricultural use retained
- Feeling of isolation and privacy

Group 3

- Spacing
- No development
- Quiet
- Open space
- Farms
- Seclusion
- Wildlife

Group 4

- Green space
- Protect natural areas especially the Big Darby
- Agricultural design – grouping of homes with large open spaces

Group 5

- Larger lots
- Farmland
- Wildlife
- Open farmland
- Low density development
- Natural sounds of wildlife
- More natural landscapes (i.e. meadows)
- Low noise level
- Wooded areas

Group 6

- Size of lot
- Not mixed use of land
- No industrial mixed with agricultural
- Larger lots (two acres or more)
- Lack of commercial property
- Open land
- No annoyance from mixed uses
- Soil conditions require more land for leach fields – bigger lots needed (at least five acres)
- Concerned about facts to determine if lots can really handle sewage
- Concern over density
- Concern over consistency of lot size

Group 7

- Open spaces
- No houses on houses
- Open atmosphere – not necessarily farming
- Freedom
- Lack of traffic
- Safety
- Open space – low density
- Buffer of a large lot
- County doesn't mean "farms"
- Lot size
- Privacy
- New neighbors, new friends

Group 8

- Be in an area not overly populated with buildings, people, noise and traffic.
- Lack of developed communities
- You have neighbors but don't see them
- Lack of utilities
- Nice to see cows grazing in fields, nice to see farms
- No subdivision communities – should be in municipalities; no multi-family

Group 9

- Acreage
- No subdivisions – houses too close, low acreage, high density
- No red lights
- No Super Wal-Mart or other big boxes
- Minimal noise
- Well water
- Septic systems
- Open spaces
- Farms
- Country smells
- The way the Township is now
- Five acres is too hard to take care of – people let it go
- Farm animals
- Subdivision on Poling Road is nice – large lots

Question 2. According to the community survey results, 26 percent of the respondents cited traffic as what they liked least about living in the Township. In your opinion, what are the major traffic issues facing the Township? (Ask for specific intersections/roads)

Group 1

- Roads are going to need repair due to construction and heavy trucks
- Construction contractors need to clean up their mess on roads
- A lot of traffic going to Honda
- Roads are better taken care of now to help with all traffic
- Speed limits should be better enforced
- Need more speed signs and enforcement

Group 2

- Collins and Maple Ridge
- North Darby Coe and Buck Run
- Allen Center and SR 245

Group 3

- Allen Center Road is busy
- West Darby Road
- Northwest Parkway
- Bear Swamp Road at 6:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Lobby County to get widening and traffic light in front of fire station

Group 4

- Speed – difficult to enforce with so much Honda traffic
- County and State control speed limits
- Too many driveways

Group 5

- Honda traffic
- Route 245 and Northwest Parkway
- Bear Swamp Road – speed
- In general, volume at peak times and speed
- Need for wider berms
- Holycross-Epps
- Wilber Road/Route 245
- Trash that accumulates among the roads

Group 6

- Township roads biggest concerns versus county roads
- Will the area hold the demands made on infrastructure
- Develop infrastructure before development
- Don't care about roads
- Poling Road is very poor
- Maintenance of existing roads
- Traffic not a problem
- Traffic cutting through Poling to Bear Swamp
- Law enforcement is an issue
- Speed is an issue
- Width of roads is a concern
- Route 245 is dangerous

- Amount of traffic is high in general
- Collins and Maple Ridge intersection is dangerous
- Northwest Parkway and Holycross intersection is dangerous
- Holycross and Allen Center intersection is dangerous
- Darby Road along the Creek next to the railroad buttress

Group 7

- Compared to Hilliard – no significant traffic
- Disrespect for speed limit
- Could the way development happens help
- Honda traffic
- Continue to ask County Engineer to evaluate speed limit
- Railroad traffic
- Darby-Pottersburg has “s” curves and bad road conditions
- Deputy sheriff is absent about 3:00 p.m. when traffic is the worst
- We have a traffic and safety officer that may be used
- A change to 45 mph on Allen Center would send traffic out to the highway

Group 8

- Allen Center Road became congested ten years ago
- Honda influenced traffic has increased

- Low levels of traffic increase rural character – the opposite of what is happening
- Not only Honda traffic but others as well - excessive speed and use of back roads to reach destinations
- The rises and dips are dangerous to children in the Township
- True rural housing is low traffic levels
- Entrance to Buck Run development is near the county road – intersection is dangerous between two dips
- Concerned that shortcut will form between Bear Swamp and Allen Center – speed limit is ignored
- Subdivisions create more traffic and more traffic accidents
- Have been waiting on more houses to be built on road so speed limit can be dropped
- Law officer has helped in Township to slow traffic down in some areas
- Bike traffic/recreation is impacted by too much traffic

Group 9

- Honda causes traffic issues
- Allen Center Road
- Maple Ridge
- Holycross – speed
- Allen Center Road and SR 245
- No speed limit signs on Bear Swamp Road
- Most roads don't have speed limit signs
- Collins/Maple Ridge

- Road maintenance and snow removal is good

Question 3. Development and expansion were also cited as something citizens liked least about living in the Township. In your opinion, what type of development and expansion issues are facing the Township?

Group 1

- Do all those who voted against James development still feel the same way?
- Expansion should be kept to five acres.
- Lot size is an issue when development is planned.
- Subdivisions provide too many homes in too few of acres.
- Zoning rules need to be changed as too many homes are now being built.
- Frontage should be larger with more road frontage.

Group 2

- Rising property taxes
- Population density
- Pond guidelines
- Drainage concerns

Group 3

- At least two acres
- Density versus lot size
- Five acres/home
- Large lots preferred
- Two acres too small
- Too many septic systems and wells

Group 4

- Subdivisions – smarter use of land
- Majority of land used for single family homes

Group 5

- Lot size
- Sewage/septic issues
- Those that want to sell conflicting with those who want to see less development
- Lack of planning for drainage and other infrastructure
- Need for education of new residents to the country (i.e. septic, pets, snow, wells, farming issues)
- Water supply
- Drainage impervious surfaces causing too much water on certain segments of land
- Access to roads from driveways

Group 6

- Keeping what we have
- Keeping undeveloped areas
- Strong feeling to stop it now

Group 7

- Every house in Allen Township is not a waste of farmland
- Best use of land is probably houses
- Lot size (too small) may lead to problems and drainage
- Moved to country to have low density housing
- Controlled growth

- Fast growing county
- May not be able to have any more industrial development
- There is no one formula for appropriate residential lot size
- Don't allow lot splitting
- Problems maintaining larger lot sizes
- No property maintenance codes in the Township

Group 8

- Control growth with an actual comprehensive plan
- Consider cluster housing where community land is available
- Flag lots seem to cause neighbor conflicts
- Cluster housing - more hard surfaces cause more run-off. Pushing water on other people. Buck Run increasingly floods more often.
- Paulding soils have poor drainage. Septic systems are not correctly working.
- Look at dredging Buck Run before any more housing.
- The development in the Township will make areas in the flood plains that are not there now
- Bear Swamp historically wet area – always had a drainage problem
- Drainage problems will continue to worsen with increased housing
- Retention ponds should be mandatory
- Comprehensive plan should take into account drainage and housing density – a plan with limits and standards
- Should lot size be increased?
- How do leach fields correctly drain and have a proper design on smaller (2 acre) lot size?
- The county health department is unreasonable in expecting leach systems to work on small lots
- Can an outside consultant help with leach field failings and drainage?
- Respect of property rights
- Five acres seems to be a good size to reflect rural character
- Keep communities consistent (not too many small lots)
- Conversed regularly with developer – would not support green space
- Communal septic systems will be part of subdivisions and may have a history of failing
- Would rather have smaller lots that are neat looking as opposed to large lots that are junky looking
- Can zoning help with the junky lots? Is this being addressed?
- Enforce clean up and zoning in the Township
- Homes built in the last ten years or so seem very nice
- Some folks economically can't handle the care of five acres but can two acres
- Rural is not synonymous with farming; however agriculture is part of it
- Five acre lots consume more farmland
- Utilities are a big issue. If sewer, etc comes to the Township density scenario will change

- Two acre lots will create more traffic
- Development could be detrimental to farming operations
- 60 percent of people that live in the Township have been here less than ten years

Group 9

- Five acre lot splits and driveways (congestion)
- Housing
- Don't want rapid change
- Change is inevitable
- All comes down to money
- Access road for larger developments will create more traffic issues
- Need to look at impacts of housing
- How much high density can the aquifer handle?
- Run-off and other environmental issues such as puddling and flooding
- Taxes, impact on schools
- Need to put controls on land development
- Don't want to react

Question 4. What types of development are most compatible with your vision for the future?

Group 1

- Plan developments similar to Hunter's Run. This is better than all small lots off of road frontage.
- Want nice looking developments.
- Development on poorer ground than using good farming land.

- Is it good for farming – forget about development.

Group 2

- No lots less than five acres

Group 3

- Quality of water
- At least five acres per development
- No commercial growth except on Northwest Parkway – controlled
- Try to bring in office type businesses for tax reasons
- Separate zoned areas with consideration to supply and demand and impact on Township

Group 4

- Those that do not chop up land like we have
- Well planned developments with their own roads off main routes

Group 5

- Controlled residential density
- Ten acre lots
- Light, low density residential development
- Linked to minimum square footage of homes – lot width, road frontage, schools

Group 6

- Single family homes on five to seven acres
- No apartments in country like on Route 296
- Mitigate development with earthen berms
- Want to back up ten years

- Want twenty to thirty acre lots but can't get it passed
- Ten to thirty acres is too big

Group 7

- Single family homes

Group 8

- Low density
- Five acre lots
- No central sewer
- DSL – high speed internet access
- If we maintain larger lots maybe utilities aren't needed
- Honda sewer line actually runs through Township
- No subdivisions – may have negative impact on property values
- A local convenience store would be nice
- Well thought out plan – slow growth and smart growth
- Route 33 already has businesses clustered
- Identify type of businesses to attract and locate them where other businesses already exist – Northwest Parkway

Group 9

- No M/I or Dominion Homes type housing – poor quality
- Development along Bear Swamp Road/Holycross is the appropriate type of development
- Five acre lots

- Expensive housing
- Road frontage requirements in code
- Trees in swampy areas (Deer Creek Crossing development)
- Need to strengthen zoning laws
- Concerns over shared driveways
- Shared driveways = buyer beware
- Depends on what you want to see
- Want to see woodland preservation
- Want variety
- Deed restrictions – quality of housing higher than Township and County standards
- Keep the Township alcohol free
- Small commercial
- Keep warehousing and light industrial concentrated where it is now
- Cottage industries
- Wholesale businesses – plant nursery
- What farmland is left will most likely go residential
- No shopping centers
- No businesses on Allen Center – keep them on Northwest Parkway
- Small market that serves the community
- Detest “progress” that has been made – Honda and other plants
- Can't fight change
- Economics of farming – not profitable, not a viable option in any community
- People shouldn't dictate what development should be

Question 5. According to the community survey, farmland preservation should be an important component of the comprehensive plan. What does farmland preservation mean to you?

Group 1

- Want the farm land to keep going but how can you control the owner from selling it for development.
- State should protect farmers, like wild life preservation, etc.
- New developers should have zoning to not allow small lots. Look at other townships and see what their rules are.
- Tough question.
- Some felt that you should be allowed to do with your land as you want.

Group 2

- Tax incentives to farms
- Preserve valuable farmland
- Wetland preservation
- Preserve family farms and green space

Group 3

- Farmer needs to be able to sell
- The county has control of farmland
- Keep open space
- Allow property owners to still do what they want

Group 4

- Help farmers be able to afford to keep the land in production

- Keeping industry away and large housing developments

Group 5

- Retain large units of farmland – assumption is that people are envisioning cropland
- Open space preservation – even if its not necessarily farmland

Group 6

- Farmland preservation is a ridiculous concept
- Can't prevent farmers from selling their land
- Pricing farmers out
- Farmland is not too good in the Township
- Open space sounds positive
- Lot sizes and widths/frontage greater

Group 7

- Clean and unobstructed land – adequate drainage
- Creative development
- If development has more than four homes, must have equal amount of green space within the development
- Undeveloped space/green space
- Farmland doesn't mean plowed fields and livestock
- The land needs to be maintained. If left to go wild it may create problems with water, etc.
- Poor farmland
- We are past the stage of legislating preservation of true farmland

Group 8

- Township could buy up land and turn it into green space
- Do not develop large tracts, avoid farming around houses
- Farmers want to sell their land for economic gain
- Campaigned to stop development
- Want to sell farmland but want to keep it representative of what is there
- No lot downsizing
- Nobody seems to be against it (farmland preservation) but understanding how to do it is difficult
- Check on agricultural easements

Group 9

- Most people don't make money
- Forestry program
- Union County Soil and Water natural prairie program
- Wildlife preservation
- Country atmosphere is being able to do what you want with your land
- Nature of the area
- Farmers are getting out of the business but what do they do with the land
- What can the Township do?
- Hard to preserve – high taxes on Township residents
- Farmers have the right to sell land
- Shouldn't put a hold on contractors or farmers

- Horrible drainage
- More preservation of green space/open space
- Lazenby subdivision is a good size; Hunter's Run is too big
- Hide houses/development
- Focus on preservation of land, not necessarily farmland
- Can have houses but use trees, etc. to hide

Question 6. How should the Township manage growth and development?

Group 1

- Having development rights controlled by State programs.
- Not having subdivisions in Township.
- Make five acres the minimum lot size.
- Don't want one driveway for multiple driveways.
- No new roads needed in Township. This should control growth.
- Limit the number of homes that can be built in the Township each year.

Group 2

- Develop a responsible plan and specifications for development
- Consistency in the zoning regulations
- Conservative approach to development – keep options open

Group 3

- Need professional development

- Separate light industrial
- Be aware of economic development effort by Township
- Develop master plan

Group 4

- Strong zoning code

Group 5

- Steering committee and community meetings
- Zoning committee structure
- Do more about educating people about zoning limitations
- Require developers to set aside significant land for green space
- Planned development instead of lot after lot along road

Group 6

- Manage roads and ditches as part of the development
- Visibility and accountability of Trustees and process and possible conflict of interest
- Open forum on Trustees and interests
- Communication of Township business is lacking
- Did appreciate Dan Fancey's letter
- People want input
- Tighten up controls on zoning
- What are qualifications of Zoning Board
- Be willing to accept change

- Qualification and process of elected officials and Zoning Board appointees

Group 7

- Township Trustees should listen to the Township people. Question as to whether Trustees may take advantage and act independently. Need better communication.
- May not be able to do much about development
- Increased lot size may help to limit growth
- Others feel lot size is not the answer
- Deed restrictions

Group 8

- Compare costs of bringing in utilities such as sewer and compare that with farmland preservation costs
- Long range plan that is followed and that reflects the views and opinions of citizens
- We need professionals to view and look at drainage/aquifer, sewer/septic for the plan. Science needs to be part of the plan plus community input.
- Steering committee does not reflect representation of Township. Many pro-development individuals on steering committee. Concerned that steering committee will not direct the plan.
- Get more people involved in plan process. Right now representative of developers.
- Survey results indicate less development.
- Outside experts need to be used in planning process.

Group 9

- Everyone has a different idea – newcomers see it different than long time residents
- Keep the space
- Can't have development and land preservation – key issue is controlled growth
- Should the Township control growth – there is a difference of opinion
- Would like to see dilapidated houses condemned
- Need strong leadership
- Need to oversee what is going on
- Input from the community is needed
- Someone needs to make decisions and manage growth
- Don't want to see all the houses from the roadway
- Don't want subdivisions of the same houses
- Enforce codes
- Keep the Township clean
- Subdivisions/developments with access on Allen Center Road

Question 7. What factors should be considered when determining the appropriateness or compatibility of new residential development with existing development in Allen Township?

Group 1

- Home size
- No mobile homes
- Lucky to have the park, fire department, life flight and keep the life flight in our Township.

- Regulations now in place are keeping beautiful homes being constructed.
- Some of the problems are due to the number of people being employed in our Township but feel we are fortunate to

Group 2

- Well placement
- Lot size – minimum five acres – two acres by acceptance (individual basis)
- Road frontage

Group 3

- Density
- Road improvements
- Water
- Schools
- Sewer
- Compatibility with surrounding development

Group 4

- Separate residential and business areas with buffers/different areas for each other

Group 5

- Septic/sewage
- Drainage
- Traffic impacts
- Lot size
- Education of new residents

Group 6

- No comments

Group 7

- Drainage
- Water availability
- Sewage capacity
- Development consist with adjoining properties

Group 8

- Be able to make decisions on land use changes based on science and planning
- A fair assessment/reflection, no self serving planning
- Have a balance between planning and leadership. No development interests.

Group 9

- Lot size – four to five acres
- Road frontage – don't use as a way to control growth (150-200 feet is reasonable)
- Two to three acre lots are not appropriate unless green space is preserved
- Lazenby subdivision adds more to the Township than linear strip development
- Housing enhancements
- Two acres is a lot to mow – hard to justify five acre lots
- Need to think about what other townships are doing

Open House

On October 11, 2004 the steering committee hosted an open house. A variety of stations were set up around the Township Hall. Displays on alternative development practices including conservation development and hamlet development were presented. Activities were designed to solicit input from residents regarding the draft future land use plan, goals and objectives, vision statement, and policies. Approximately one hundred individuals attended. The results of the open house exercises are located in Appendix A.

Figure 1.3 – Open House



CHAPTER 2

Existing Conditions Analysis

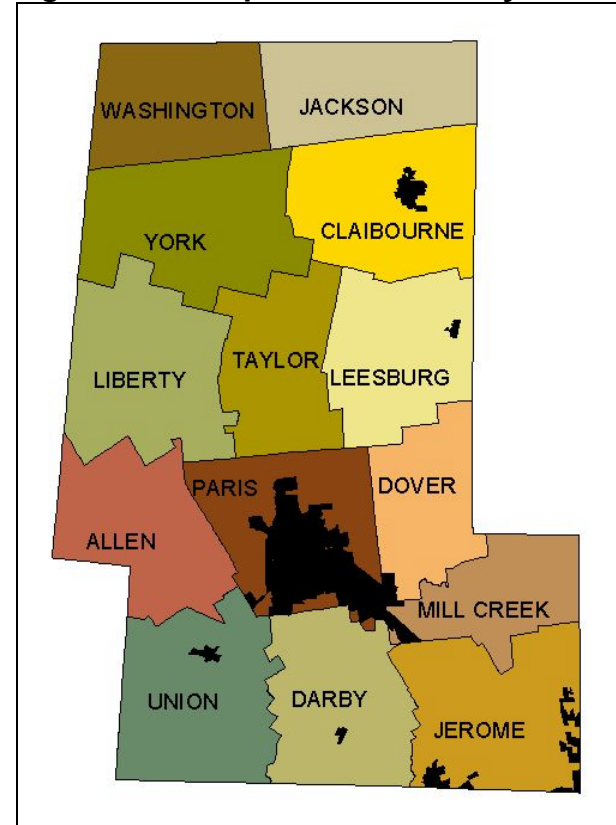
INTRODUCTION

All good plans begin with a thorough assessment of existing conditions. Though most residents already have a qualitative sense of what the data tells us, measuring the magnitude of change and potential for future change is an important activity of the planning process. Assessing the study area's current situation is critical to understanding the potential for future growth and development.

LOCATION

Allen Township is approximately 19,834 acres and is located in central Union County. The Township shares a border with Liberty Township, Paris Township, and Union Township, all in Union County, Rush Township in Champaign County, and Zane Township in Logan County. Union County is part of the Columbus Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the largest and fastest growing MSA in the State of Ohio. Metropolitan Statistical Areas are integrated geographic regions comprised of at least one city and adjacent communities. The Columbus MSA is comprised of eight counties – Union, Madison, Morrow, Delaware, Franklin, Pickaway, Licking, and Fairfield. Union County and Delaware County are the fastest growing counties in the MSA.

Figure 2.1 – Map of Union County Townships



EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Demography is the science of vital and social statistics of populations. Demographics can be used to provide a snapshot of a community, portraying the many characteristics of its population. Demographics also provide the basis for forecasts to determine future community patterns and predict change. This demographic analysis primarily focuses on Allen Township's population and housing trends and their future implications for the community. The data was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau.

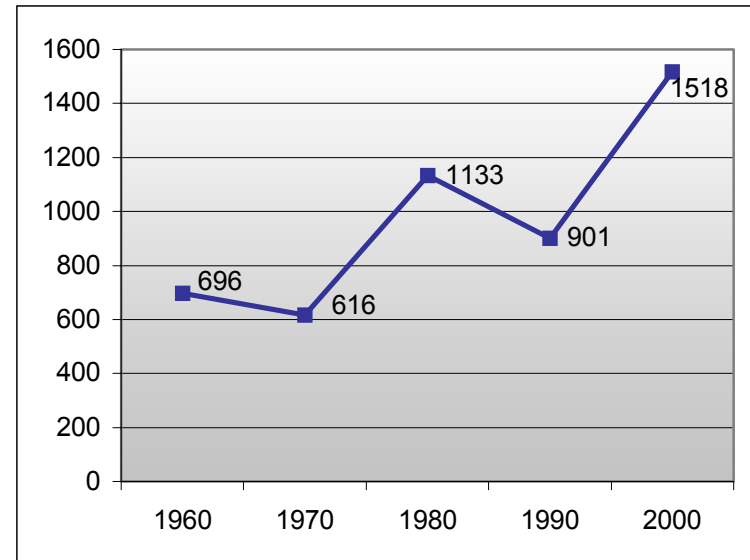
Population

According to the U.S. Census, Allen Township had a 2000 population of 1,518, representing a 68.5 percent increase in population since 1990. Historically Allen Township has not exhibited a steady, increasing growth trend, Chart 2.1. While Union County did not experience a decline in population from 1960 to 2000, it experienced slower growth from 1960 to 1970 and from 1980 to 1990, consistent with the decades of declining population in Allen Township.

Table 2.1 – Regional Growth Trends

	Allen Twp.		Union Co.	
	Pop.	% Change	Pop.	% Change
2000	1,518	68.5	40,909	28.0%
1990	901	-20.5	31,969	8.2%
1980	1,133	83.9	29,536	24.2%
1970	616	-11.5	23,786	4.1%
1960	696		22,853	

Chart 2.1 – Population Trend



EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age is an important factor in a demographic analysis because population groups of different ages have differing needs for community services. For example, young people have a greater requirement for educational services and recreational facilities while senior citizens face a growing need for medical services and may need assistance with housing and transportation. Therefore, looking at age distributions can help a community prepare for the needs of its residents.

In 2000 the median age in the Township was 36.3 years. Approximately 6.3 percent of the population was 65 years of age or older while 32.4 percent was 19 years of age or younger. This age distribution is consistent with the age distribution typically found in suburban communities.

Housing

From 1990 to 2000 the number of housing units in Allen Township increased from 323 to 534 respectively. In 2000 92.8 percent of the occupied housing units were owner occupied. The average household size of owner-occupied units is 2.96 persons per household while the average household size of renter-occupied units is 3.05 persons. The median value of owner-occupied units was \$158,400.

In 2000 approximately 94 percent of the housing was single-unit, detached. Slightly over 1 percent of the housing was two units while 5.1 percent of the housing

was mobile homes. Since the 2000 Census, no housing of two units or higher has been constructed.

Approximately 40.2 percent of the housing stock that existed in 2000 was constructed from 1990 to March of 2000. 27.6 percent of the housing stock was constructed between 1970 and 1989 while 32.2 percent was constructed from 1969 or earlier.

Consistent with the increase in new housing stock there has been a steady influx of new residents into the Township since 1990. As shown on Table 2.2, approximately 70.5 percent of the occupied housing units in the Township contain residents who moved in from 1990 to March 2000.

Table 2.2 – Year householder moved into unit

Year Household Moved into Unit	Percent of Occupied Housing Units
1999 to March 2000	8.5%
1995 to 1998	36.5%
1990 to 1994	25.5%
1980 to 1989	12.7%
1970 to 1979	13.68%
1969 or earlier	3.2%

Approximately 53.9 percent of the population five years and over lived in the same house in 1995. Of the 46.1 percent that reported living in a different house in 1995, 30.5 percent were from a different county.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Economic Characteristics

In 2000 approximately 81.3 percent of the population was in the labor force. This figure is based on the population sixteen years of age and over. Only 0.9 percent of those in the labor force were classified as unemployed.

OCCUPATION

The U.S. Census classifies the occupation of the employed civilian population 16 years and over into six broad categories. Occupation describes the kind of work the person does on the job during the week. For those who worked at two or more jobs, the data refer to the job at which the person worked the greatest number of hours. Table 2.3 provides 2000 occupational data for individuals in Allen Township.

Table 2.3 – Occupation

Occupation	Percent of Employed Civilian Population
Management, professional, and related occupations	37.0%
Service occupations	13.8%
Sales and office occupations	20.6%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	1.7%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	9.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	17.4%

INDUSTRY

Information on industry relates to the kind of business conducted by a person's employing organization. For employed people the data refer to the person's job during the week. For those who worked at two or more jobs, the data refer to the job at which the person worked the greatest number of hours.

The industry classifications in Table 2.4 are the same broad industry classifications found in the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). In the U.S. the NAICS replaces the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. Detailed descriptions of what types of businesses are included in each industry sector can be obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau. Table 2.4 provides 2000 industry data for the employed civilian population 16 years and over in the Township.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Table 2.4 – Employment by Industry Classification

Industry	Percent of Employed Civilian Population
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	9.3%
Construction	4.9%
Manufacturing	26.2%
Wholesale trade	4.9%
Retail trade	9.1%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	2.7%
Information	0.6%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	1.5%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	9.4%
Educational, health and social services	17.8%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food service	5.3%
Other services (except public administration)	4.8%
Public administration	3.6%

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY INCOME

The U.S. Census provides income information on both households and families. A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. A family is defined as a group of two or more

people who reside together and who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

Approximately 93.7 percent of the households reported earnings in 2000. 14.4 percent of the households had retirement income with the mean of \$11,918. The median household income was \$80,359, significantly higher than Union County's median household income of \$51,743.

The median family income was \$82,485 with approximately 7.2 percent of the families reporting an income of \$150,000 or more per year. In 2000 there were 467 families in Allen Township. Of the families in Allen Township, 1.7 percent were below poverty level.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

There are an abundance of natural features including streams, wetlands, and woodlands that make an important contribution to the quality of life in the community. As expressed during the citizen focus group sessions, retention of these natural resources is of primary importance to many residents.

In terms of development, these features provide both constraints and opportunities. Natural features have a significant influence on future land use patterns for the community in conjunction with other factors such as existing land use, infrastructure, market factors, transportation and community regulations.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Alteration to the fragile natural features needs to be carefully considered to minimize impact and insure mitigation where necessary to maintain the natural balance. Not doing so will alter the system and possibility result in such things as increased erosion and sedimentation, decreased ground water recharge and increased surface runoff to the local streams. To ensure that future development is compatible with the natural features of the community, all new developments need to make every effort to maintain the natural functions of the environment.

The following is an overview of some of the major natural features that are prevalent in Allen Township. As development occurs, the following features should be considered in addition to other site specific conditions that may be pertinent to each individual location.

STREAMS AND WETLANDS

Streams

By definition, a stream is a body of running water that is confined in a channel and moves downhill under the influence of gravity. In some parts of the country, stream implies size: rivers are large, streams somewhat smaller, and brooks and creeks even smaller. Geologists, however, use stream for any body of running water, from a small trickle to a huge river.

Practitioners categorize streams based on the balance and timing of the storm flow and base flow components. There are three main categories:

- Ephemeral streams flow only during or immediately after periods of precipitation. They generally flow less than 30 days per year.
- Intermittent streams flow only during certain times of the year when groundwater provides water for stream flow. During dry periods, intermittent streams may not have flowing water. Runoff from rainfall is a supplemental source of water for stream flow.
- Perennial streams have flowing water year-round during a typical year. The water table is located above the stream bed for most of the year. Groundwater is the primary source of water for stream flow. Runoff from rainfall is a supplemental source of water for stream flow.

The Big Darby Creek is the largest perennial stream in the Township. Big Darby Creek is designated as a State and National Scenic River. Buck Run and small portions of Flat Branch and Spain Creek are the other perennial streams in the Township. All are tributaries of the Big Darby. Figure 2.2 illustrates the stream network, the 100 year floodplain of the Big Darby Creek and Buck Run, and the location of wetland areas within the Township.

Wetlands

By definition wetlands are lands that are wet for significant periods during the year that typically create anaerobic (i.e. low oxygen) conditions favoring the growth of hydrophytic plants and the formation of hydric soils. Wetlands are transitional areas between the aquatic ecosystems and the surrounding upland areas. Wetlands are important natural resources providing numerous values to society, including fish and wildlife

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

habitat, flood protection, erosion control, and water quality maintenance

Figure 2.2 – Water Resources

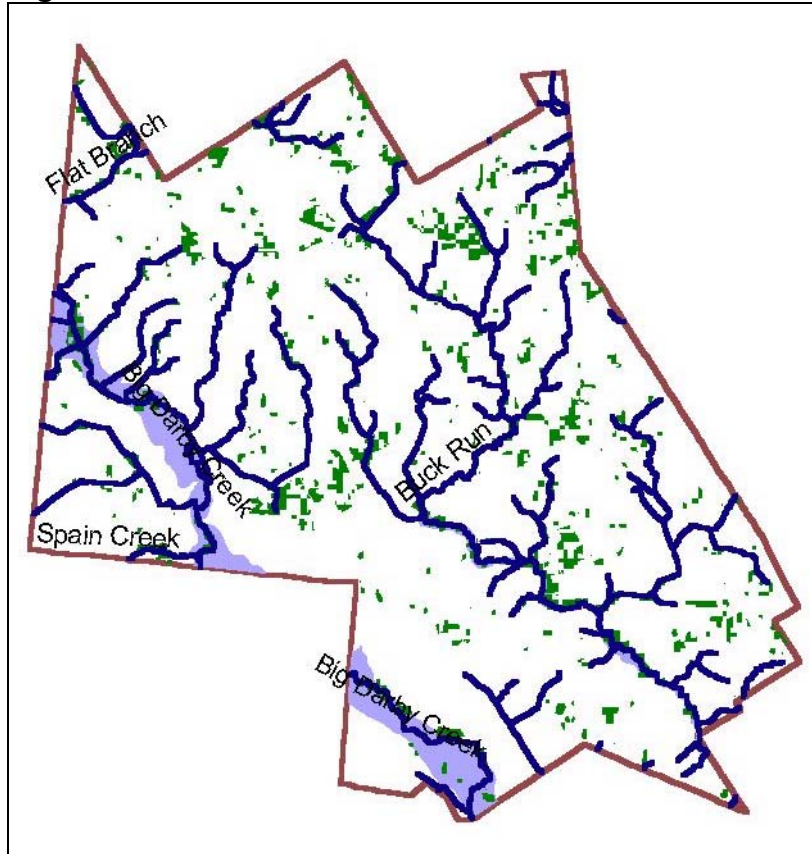


Figure 2.3 – Buck Run

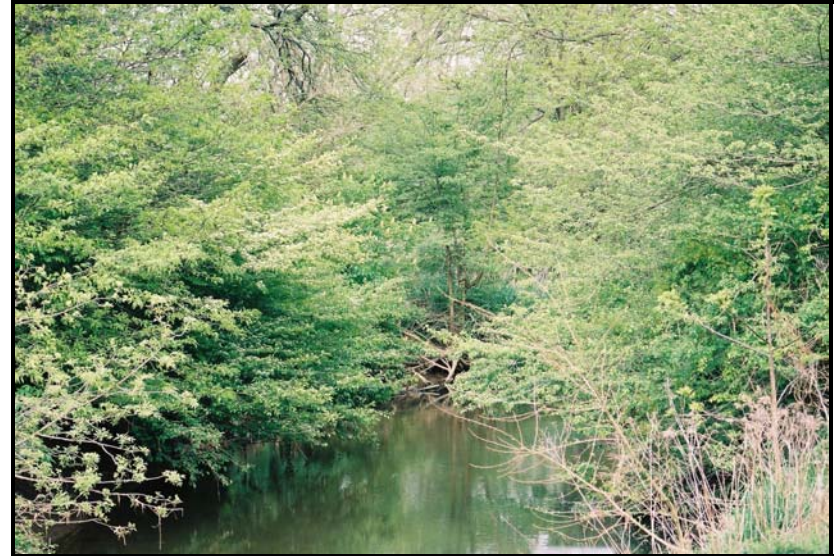


Figure 2.4 – Wetland along Poling Road



EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Darby Creek Watershed

A watershed is all the land area that drains into a given body of water. The majority of the Township is located in the upper portion of the Darby Creek Watershed. The Big Darby Creek is regionally and nationally significant because of its ecological and scenic qualities. It is known for its diversity of fish (over 100 species recorded) and mussels (about 40 recorded) and has been declared a State and National Scenic River.

Figure 2.5 below illustrates the entire watershed while Figure 2.6 provides a close-up of Allen Township and the portion of the Township within the watershed.

Figure 2.5

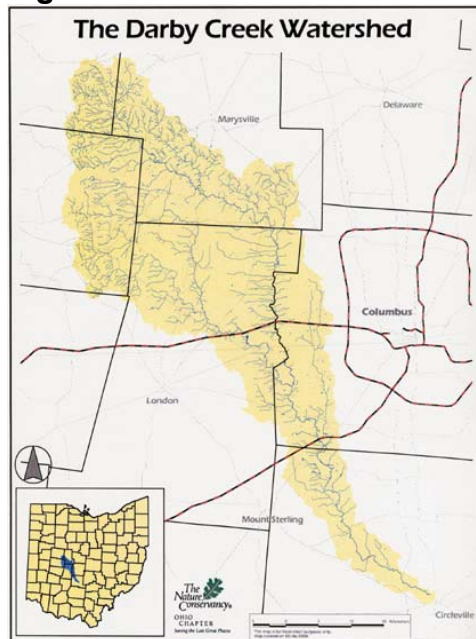
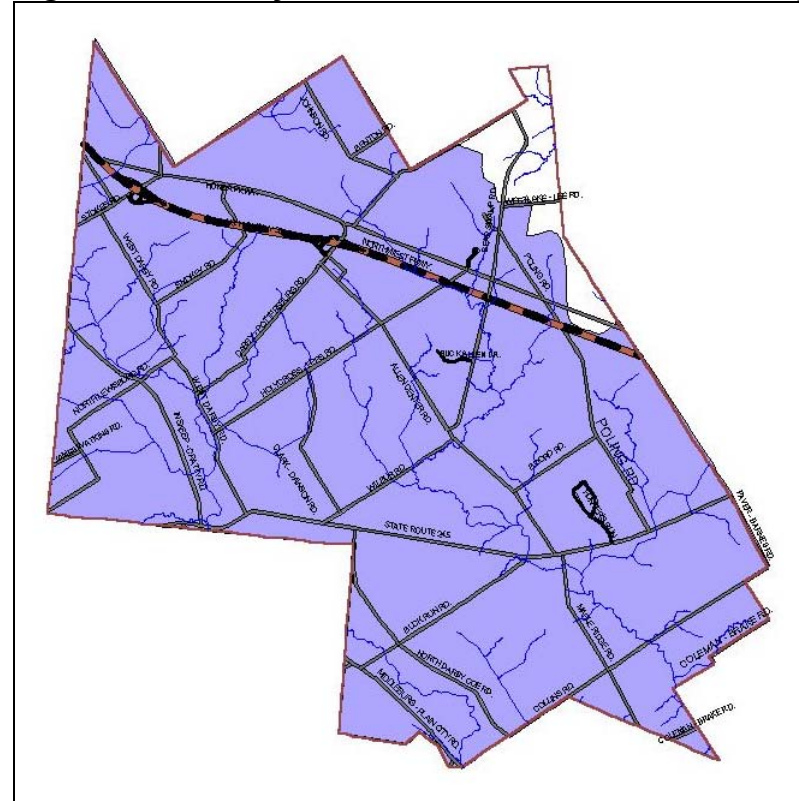


Figure 2.6 – Darby Creek Watershed, Allen Township



According to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency “the Darby Watershed is at a crossroad. The unique and diverse biological communities of fish, freshwater mussels and the associated benthic invertebrate fauna can be saved for posterity through wise water resource management and land use decisions. However, without sufficient action and precautions in the near future,

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

declines in water quality and stream habitat may forever change the essential character of these streams.”¹

Overall, one of the biggest threats to the Big Darby Creek is the conversion of farmland to suburban and commercial land uses.² According to The Nature Conservancy, sediment, nutrient and chemical loading from agricultural fields, and the stormwater runoff from urbanizing areas also represent threats to water quality.

Figure 2.7 - Big Darby Creek

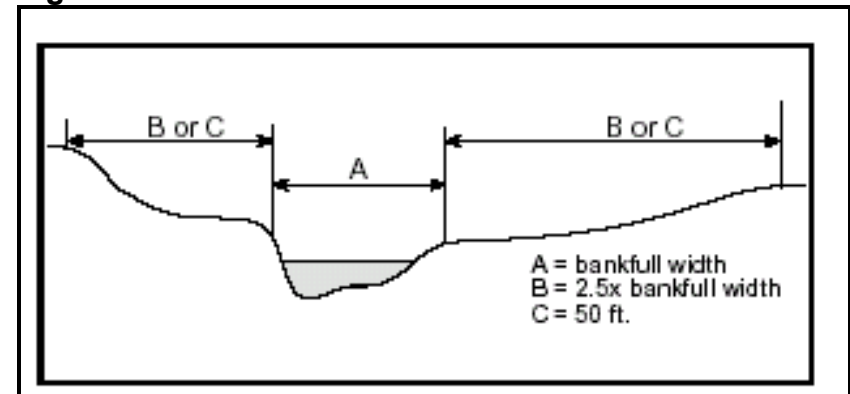


Serious sediment pollution of both the Big Darby Creek and Buck Run, as well as high bacteria pollution is an issue within the portion of the watershed located within Allen Township. Another major problem affecting the Big

Darby Creek and its tributaries is the removal of the riparian forest buffer. A riparian forest buffer is an area of trees and shrubs located adjacent to streams, lakes, ponds and wetlands. Riparian forest buffers are important for several reasons. They filter pollutants from surface runoff, stabilize stream banks, reduce flood flow velocities, regulate water temperature, provide essential habitat for terrestrial organisms, allow for groundwater infiltration, and provide a basis for the aquatic food chain.³

It is difficult to define the ideal size for a riparian forest buffer. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recommends a width of 35 to 180 feet depending on the order of the stream. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) recommends a minimum of fifty feet or 2.5 times the bankfull width of the stream, whichever is greater, see Figure 2.8 below.⁴

Figure 2.8 – ODNR Formula



¹ Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

² Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

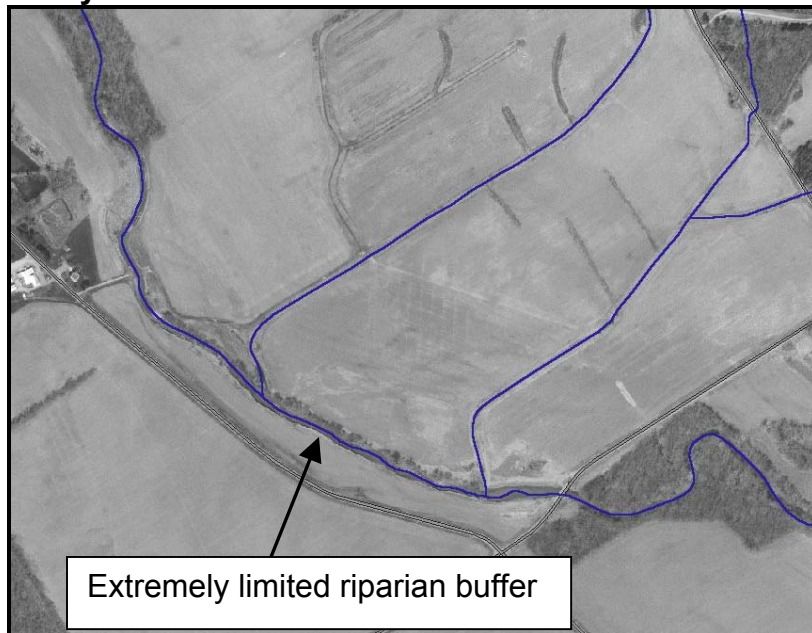
³ Ohio Department of Natural Resources

⁴ http://www.dnr.ohio.gov/water/pubs/fs_st/stfs13.pdf

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

The Union County Soil and Water Conservation District recommends a minimum 120 foot to 250 foot riparian forested buffer along the Big Darby Creek. Figure 2.9 provides one example of where the riparian forest buffer has been removed for agricultural purposes. This is a portion of the Big Darby Creek along Inskeep-Cratty Road.

Figure 2.9 – Limited Riparian Forest Buffer on Big Darby Creek

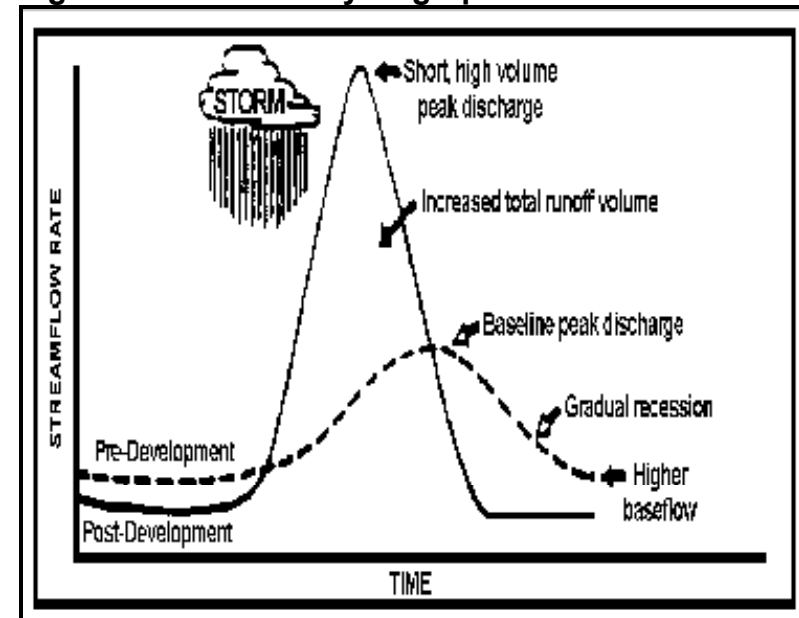


Effects of Urbanization on the Stream System

Urbanization increases the frequency and magnitude of floods. When more impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots, driveways, and rooftops are built, the amount of land available for infiltration of rainwater

decreases. Rainwater reaches the stream quicker; therefore, streams show greater frequency of flooding for low to moderate discharge events. Increases in the frequency of flooding and peak flow volumes alter the stream's physical characteristics such as channel width and depth leading to decreased base flow. Figure 2.10 is a flood hydrograph that further explains the effects of urbanization on a stream system.

Figure 2.10 – Flood Hydrograph



In addition to increased flooding potential, the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has identified other water quality issues related to increased runoff.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

These include sedimentation, increased temperatures, habitat changes, and the loss of fish populations.⁵

The Union County subdivision regulations contain standards that address stormwater management issues. When lot split development occurs, these same standards do not apply. Therefore, stormwater and other drainage issues are typically not addressed.

WOODLANDS

As shown in the dark green areas on Figure 2.11, a significant amount of woodlands exist in the Township. Many of these woodlands are located along the stream corridors creating a riparian forest buffer. Riparian forest buffers are important for several reasons, as previously stated.

Other woodlands are scattered throughout the community. Woodlands contribute to the quality of life for residents. Woodlands and trees help create a peaceful, rural atmosphere. Trees provide a visual barrier between individual properties and neighboring properties, an essential factor for preserving the rural atmosphere and property values.

Figure 2.11 - Woodlands



⁵ <http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/urbanize/report.html>

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

SOILS

The Soil Survey of Union County provides detailed information on the nature and behavioral characteristics of soil including productivity, development suitability, and permeability.

Prime farmland

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing feed, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. The following soils are considered prime farmland by the U.S. Department of Agriculture:

Ag	CrA	Pm*
BoA	CrB	Ro*
BoB	Lc*	So
Bs*	MrB	Wc*
CeB	OdA*	We

**Soils with a crop yield index of 95 or higher. Shown in red on Figure 2.12.*

In Figure 2.12 on the following page, prime farmland areas are shown in light green and red. The red areas are the most productive of the prime farmland soils. These soils have a crop yield index for corn, soybeans, and wheat of 95 or higher based on a scale of 0 to 100. While a large portion of the Township has prime farmland soils there are limited pockets of the most highly productive soils.

Hydric soils

By definition, hydric soils are soils that formed under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part. The concept of hydric soils includes soils developed under sufficiently wet conditions to support the growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation. Soils that are sufficiently wet because of artificial measures are included in the concept of hydric soils. Also, soils in which the hydrology has been artificially modified are hydric if the soil, in an unaltered state, was hydric. Some series, designated as hydric, have phases that are not hydric depending on water table, flooding, and ponding characteristics.

The following soils are classified as hydric:

Bs	Mu	So
Lc	Pa	Wc
Mn	Pm	We

Hydric soils have a high water table and therefore limited capacity for development. The long term ability of these soils to sustain septic systems is also limited. In addition, these areas serve as prime groundwater recharge areas. Figure 2.13 on the following page shows the location of hydric soils in Allen Township.

Note the strong correlation between prime farmland areas and areas of hydric soils.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Figure 2.12 – Prime Farmland

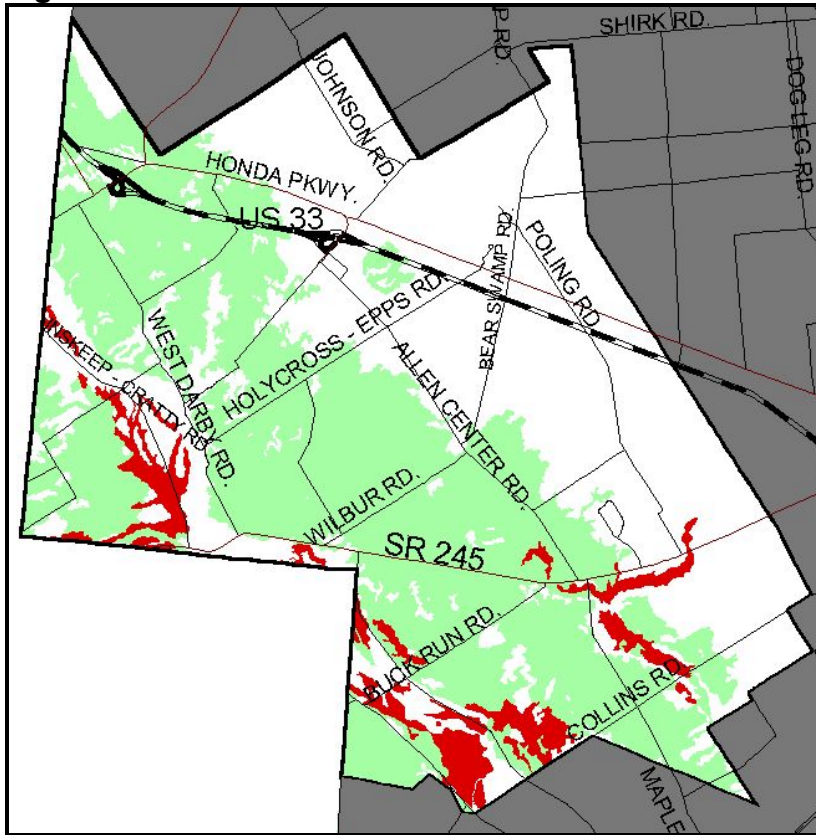
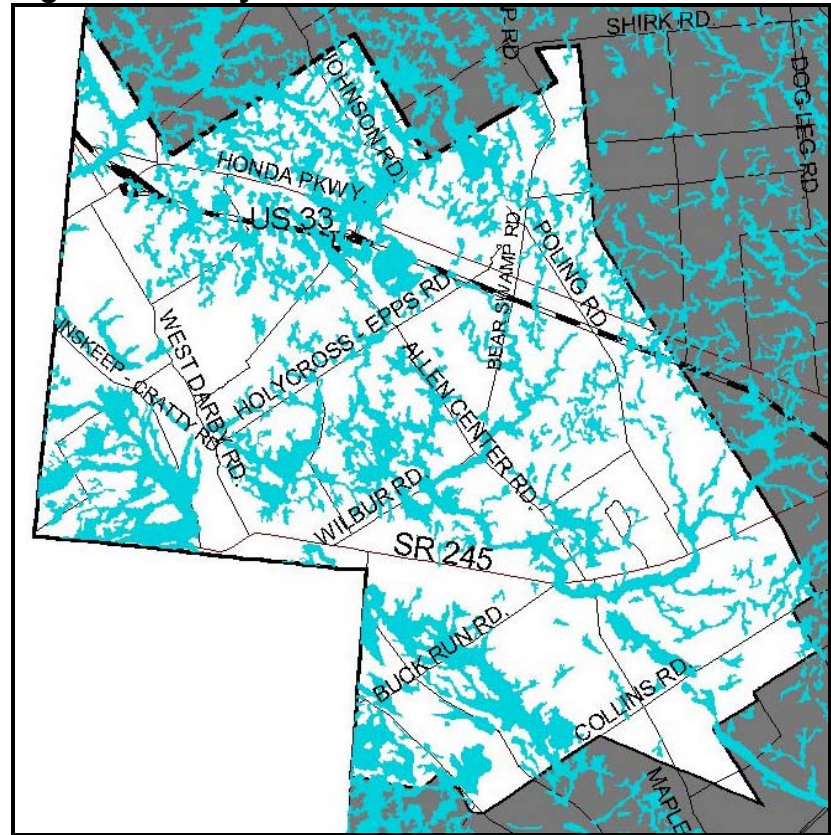


Figure 2.13 – Hydric soils



INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure can be broadly defined as the facilities and services needed to sustain all land use activities, including water, sewer lines, and other utilities, streets and roads, communication systems, and public facilities such as fire stations, parks, and schools. The following discussion will focus on public facilities and services, utilities, and the road network.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Township facilities and services

Township Government

The township form of government was brought with the original settlers to the New England states around 1620. Twenty-two states have the Township form (or similar type) of local government. A three member elected board of trustees oversees Allen Township. Township trustees are elected to four year terms and are charged with the duty of overseeing the business of the township, including but not limited to ensuring the public health, safety and welfare of all township residents. The trustees administer, enforce and execute all policies and resolutions of the township for the betterment of the township and its citizens. In order to carry out its duties, the board of trustees conducts monthly meetings, as well as attends other township, county and state meetings as deemed necessary. The Board of Trustees appoints the Zoning Inspector, the Zoning Commission, the Zoning Clerk, and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Zoning Commission consists of five residents of the Township appointed by the Township Trustees to serve

staggered five-year terms. The Zoning Commission is responsible for making recommendations to the Township Trustees concerning the Board of Zoning Appeals, application of the Township Zoning Resolution, conducting hearings on requested changes, and initiating amendments to the Zoning Resolution.

The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) is a five-member administrative body also appointed by the Township Trustees to serve staggered five-year terms. The functions of the board are to hear appeals from the decisions of the zoning inspector and to consider requests for variances and conditional uses as outlined in the Township zoning resolution.

The Zoning Inspector works with the Township Trustees, Zoning Commission, and Board of Zoning Appeals and is responsible for enforcing the zoning resolution. In carrying out this function, the zoning inspector reviews applications for zoning permits, conducts on-site inspections to ensure construction conforms to approved applications, and investigates violations.

The Zoning Clerk attends the meetings of the Zoning Commission and the Board of Zoning Appeals, schedules hearings and meeting, and places ads.

Township Hall

The Township Hall is adjacent to the Fire Department. It provides office space for Township employees and is also available for rent. Adjacent to the Township Hall is a community park.

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Figure 2.14 – Community Park



Fire and Emergency Medical Service

The Allen Township Fire Department provides full time fire and emergency medical service (EMS). The fire station is located at 16945 Allen Center Road (the intersection of Wilbur Road and Allen Center Road) and employs twenty-seven individuals. A Medflight helicopter ambulance is located behind the fire station. The Medflight helicopter is not affiliated with the Township. Medflight leases the space from the Township. In addition to providing service to Allen Township residents, the Fire Department provides service to a portion of Zane Township, Logan County and mutual aid service to other surrounding political jurisdictions.

Figure 2.15 – Township Fire Station



Police Protection

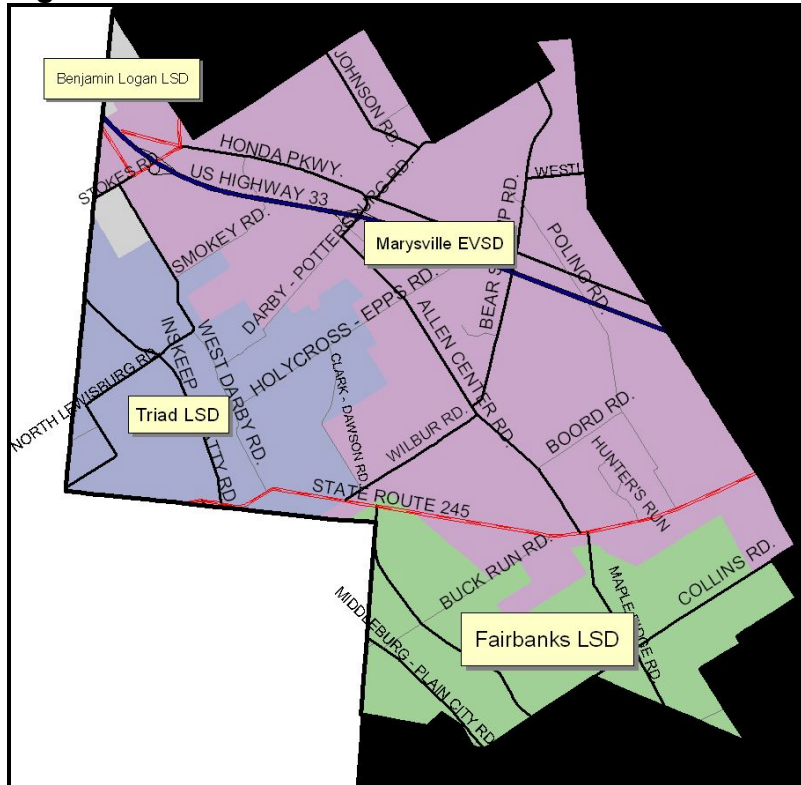
Police protection within Allen Township is provided by the Union County Sheriff's Office.

School districts

There are four school districts in Allen Township: Fairbanks Local School District, Triad Local School District, Marysville Exempted Village School District, and Benjamin Logan Local School District see Figure 2.16 below. There are no operating school buildings within the Township.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Figure 2.16 – School Districts



UTILITIES

A sewer force main owned by the City of Marysville parallels Northwest Parkway. The line was paid for with funds from the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD). According to the City's agreement with ODOD, the line can only be used for industrial purposes. One hundred percent of the capacity is committed to Honda. The only other site hooked into the line is the State Highway Patrol office located on Northwest Parkway.

Honda of America also has a private water treatment facility on Johnson Road. No one may use this facility without Honda approval.

According to the Union County Engineer, it is not likely that publicly provided central water or sewer will be available to residents in the future.

ROAD NETWORK

The road network of the Township is comprised of a series of federal, state, county and township roads. There are three state routes in Allen Township – SR 287, SR 739, and SR 245, and one US Route – US 33. The State of Ohio is responsible for maintaining all of the routes previously listed. The following are county roads and therefore maintained by the Union County Engineer: Honda Parkway, Inskeep-Cratty Road, North Lewisburg Road, Johnson Road, Allen Center Road, Wilbur Road, Bear Swamp Road, North Darby Coe Road, Maple Ridge Road, Collins Road, Middleburg-Plain City Road, Westlake-Lee Road, West Darby Road north of the intersection with North Lewisburg Road, Paver-Barnes Road, Darby-Pottersburg Road north of intersection with Allen Center Road, and Stokes Road. The following are township roads and therefore must be maintained by Allen Township: James Watkins Road, Buck Allen Drive, Darby-Pottersburg Road south of the intersection with Allen Center Road, West Darby Road south of the intersection with North Lewisburg Road, Clark-Dawson Road, Buck Run Road, Hunter's Run, Boord Road, Coleman Brake Road, Poling Road, Bishop Road, Smokey Road, Benton Road, and Holycross-Epps Road.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Pavement Widths

According to the Union County Engineer, generally twenty feet is the minimum recommended pavement width for through roads depending on roadway classification and average daily traffic. The following County roads do not meet that standard: North Lewisburg Road, Wilbur Road, North Darby Coe Road, Westlake-Lee Road, and Paver-Barnes Road. The following Township roads do not meet that standard: Bishop Road, Darby-Pottersburg Road, Clark-Dawson Road, Poling Road, Boord Road, Benton Road, Holycross-Eps Road, James Watkins Road, West Darby Road (south of the intersection with North Lewisburg Road), Smokey Road, and Coleman Brake Road.

Functional classification

The road network is based on a hierarchy or functional classification. Streets and highways do not operate independently. They are part of an interconnected network, and each one performs a service in moving traffic throughout the system. Generally, streets and highways perform two types of service. They provide either traffic mobility or land access and can be ranked in terms of the proportion of service they perform. The criteria used to describe each class of road must apply to a wide range of conditions in which the road operates such as geography, population density, traffic volumes, spacing, and distance and speed of travel.

At the top of the hierarchy are arterials. They include those classes of roads emphasizing a high level of mobility for the through movement of traffic. Land access is subordinate to this primary function. Generally, travel

speeds and distances are greater on these facilities compared to the other classes. The highest classes of arterials, Interstates and freeways, are limited access to allow the free flow of traffic. In the middle of the hierarchy are the collectors. They collect traffic from the lower facilities and distribute it to the higher. Collectors provide both mobility and land access. Generally, trip lengths, speeds, and volumes are moderate. At the bottom are local streets and roads. Their primary function is to provide land access. Travel speeds, distances, and volumes are generally low, and through traffic is usually discouraged. The County's access management standards are based upon the functional classification of the road.

Access management

In January of 2004 the Union County Engineer adopted access management regulations that will apply to all county and township roads. The purpose of these regulations are to promote traffic safety and efficiency, maintain proper traffic capacity and traffic flow, reduce vehicular accident frequency, minimize the future expenditure of public revenues, and improve the design and location of access connections to county and township roads while at the same time providing necessary and reasonable ingress and egress to properties along those roads.⁶

The access management regulations are based on the classification of the roadway as defined by the County Engineer. US Route 33 is classified as a major arterial; SR 245, SR 739, and SR 287 as major collectors. Allen

⁶ County Access Management Regulations

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Center Road and Middleburg-Plain City Road are classified as minor collectors for local purposes but as major collectors for federal aid purposes. Stokes Road, North Lewisburg, Maple Ridge Road, Bear Swamp Road, and West Darby Road are also classified as minor collectors. Johnson Road, Paver-Barnes Road, and Collins Road are classified as minor collectors for local purposes but as local roads for federal aid purposes.

Table 2.5 outlines the required spacing for new driveways based on the access management regulations. In addition to driveway spacing requirements, the number of driveways per parcel will also be limited.

Table 2.5 – County Access Management Standards

Road Classification	Spacing for Low, Medium, and High Volume Driveways	Spacing for Very Low Volume Driveways
Major arterial	495 feet*	495 feet*
Minor arterial	495 feet*	495 feet*
Major collector	495 feet	495 feet
Minor collector	360 feet	360 feet
Local road	250 feet	250 feet
Collector street	250 feet	40 feet from an existing or planned driveway and 120 feet from a road or street
Local street	250 feet	25 feet from an existing or planned driveway and 80 feet from a road or street

*Ohio Department of Transportation standard

Figure 2.17 – Access Management Definitions

1. Minimum Volume Driveway
 - a. Field drive – provides access to agricultural land
 - b. Utility drive – provides access to public utility facilities
2. Very Low Volume Driveway
 - a. Farm drive – provides access to agricultural buildings
 - b. Single-family residence drive
 - c. Single-family common access drive serving five or fewer residences
 - d. Multi-family residence drive serving five or fewer residential units
 - e. Walking, jogging, biking or equestrian trails
3. Low Volume Driveway
 - a. Less than 100 trip ends in the peak hour
4. Medium Volume Driveway
 - a. 100 or more, but less than 200 trips, ends in the peak hour
5. High Volume Driveway
 - a. 200 or more trips ends in the peak hour

Road improvements

According to the Union County Engineer, long-term capacity improvements are planned for Allen Center Road. Improvements are also planned for West Darby Road, North Lewisburg Road, Middleburg-Plain City Road, and Collins Road, pending the availability of funding.

During the community focus group participants outlined a number of additional road improvements that they felt were needed in the future:

- Collins Road and Maple Ridge Road intersection
- Improvements to North Darby Coe Buck Run Road intersection
- Allen Center Road and SR 245 intersection

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

- Wilber Road/SR 245 intersection
- Northwest Parkway/Holycross-Epps Road intersection
- Widen West Darby Road
- Widen Holycross-Epps Road
- Traffic light needed in front of fire station on Allen Center Road

Trail Improvements

A multi-purpose trail is being constructed in North Lewisburg that will connect with Innskeep-Cratty Road. The Upper Darby covered bridge will be relocated to the trail.

LAND USE

Allen Township is approximately 31 square miles (19,269 acres), the majority of which is in agricultural production. Single-family residential homes are the second largest use of land within the Township.

Figure 2.18 – Farm along Collins Road



Some of the residential uses are clustered in small subdivisions while the majority are scattered along existing road frontage. The residential lot sizes in Allen Township vary but due to local lot size requirements as well as local Health Department requirements for septic systems, lot sizes are generally two acres or more.

The majority of commercial and industrial uses are located north of US Route 33. A Honda of America manufacturing facility is the single largest industrial use within Allen Township, Figure 2.19.

Figure 2.19 – Honda of America Manufacturing Facility



The largest area identified as protected land in Figure 2.20 is owned by The Nature Conservancy while the smaller parcel is owned by The Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Figure 2.20 is based on County Auditor information, aerial photos, and field investigations.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Figure 2.20 – Current Land Use (2004)



CHAPTER 3 LAND DEMAND AND CAPACITY ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

Future growth in the Township can take a variety of forms including residential, commercial, or industrial and it is important to understand the impact each form of growth may have on the Township as it occurs. The purpose of this chapter is to look at historic population trends and using a variety of methods, forecast future population. Once estimates of future population have been established, estimates of the number of households that will be needed to accommodate this increased population can also be established. This chapter will also look at the impact that these additional housing units will have on Allen Township.

POPULATION FORECASTS

Changes in population impacts land use as well as the demands placed on a community's services and infrastructure. Therefore, forecasts are used to estimate future population in order for the Township to adequately

plan future growth areas and avoid undue expenditures related to public services.

A variety of factors are not considered when preparing population forecasts including local preference for growth as well as future infrastructure improvements.

There are many different ways in which population can be forecasted. Three different methods have been used in this study. The linear and proportional forecasts tend to provide the most realistic results.

Linear Forecast

The linear growth model is the simplest and most widely used projection technique. This model assumes population grows following a straight line with constant slope indicating a constant incremental change.

The 2000 population was used as the basis for the projection. Using the linear method results in the following population forecast for Allen Township, Table 3.1:

Table 3.1 – Linear Forecast

Year	Projected Population
2010	2134
2020	2750
2030	3366

LAND DEMAND AND CAPACITY ANALYSIS

Geometric Forecast

The geometric growth model inflates the population assuming that relative change remains the same. This method creates a geometric curve where population grows at a constant rate. However, this method does not take into account that growth will inevitably be limited by saturation of land or resource constraints, both physical and fiscal.

The 2000 population was used as the basis for the projection. Using the geometric method results in the following population forecast, Table 3.2:

Table 3.2 – Geometric Forecast

Year	Projected Population
2010	2555
2020	4300
2030	7237

Proportional Forecast

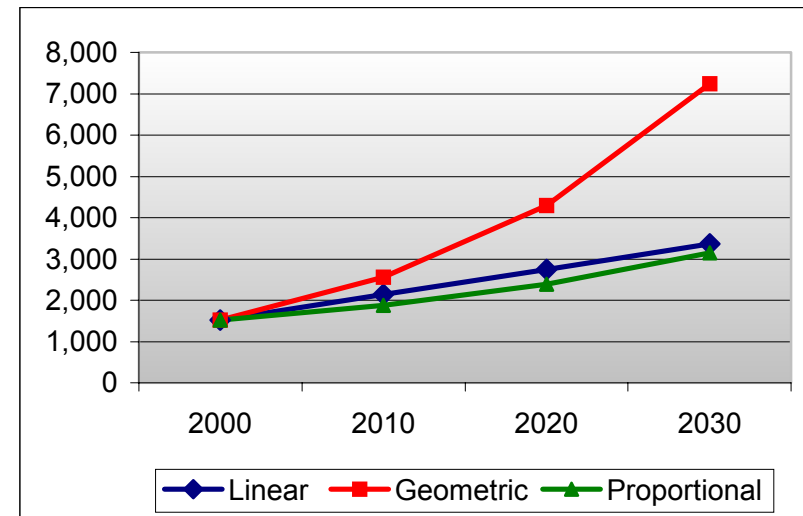
County level population forecasts were prepared by the Ohio Department of Development through 2030. The County level forecast accounts for birth and death rates and well as in migration and out migration statistics. In 2000, Allen Township was 3.7 percent of Union County's total population. Applying this same percentage to the Union County population forecast results in the following, Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 – Proportional Forecast

Year	Union Co. Projected Population	Allen Twp. Projected Population
2010	50,736	1877
2020	64,568	2389
2030	85,193	3152

Chart 3.1 illustrates the population fan for Allen Township through 2030 based on the various forecast methods. Note the similarities between the proportional and linear projections. Based upon current trends, it is more likely that growth in the Township will occur according to these forecasts rather than the geometric projection.

Chart 3.1 – Population Fan



HOUSING FORECASTS

According to the U.S. Census, there were 534 housing units in the Township in 2000 with an average household size of 2.96 for owner occupied housing units. Using this figure as well as the population projections, the number of future housing units that will be needed within the Township to accommodate future population can be estimated, Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 – Estimated Number of Housing Units by Forecast Method

Year	Proportional	Linear	Geometric
2010	634	721	863
2020	807	929	1456
2030	1065	1137	2445

Based on the estimates provided in Table 3.4, on average 10-33 new housing units will be needed per year to accommodate anticipated population growth.

ESTIMATED IMPACTS

LAND CONSUMPTION

The size of residential lots in Allen Township is largely dictated by two factors – the zoning resolution and the ability of the soil to support an on-site septic system. While the minimum lot size cannot be smaller than the lot size dictated by the zoning resolution, it may need to be larger if more land is needed to support an on-site septic system. The Union County Health Department typically

requires a minimum lot size of 1.5 acres in order to support an on-site septic system; however, the minimum lot size in all residential zoning districts within the zoning resolution is two acres.

Using a minimum land amount of two acres and the data provided in Table 3.4, an additional 1062 – 3822 acres of land would be consumed by residential housing units by 2030. If the minimum lot size were increased to five acres, residential housing units would consume an additional 2655 – 9555 acres of land by 2030. As previously stated, Allen Township is approximately 19,269 acres, with slightly over one-third of that already developed.

If all new lots are developed with a minimum of 150 feet of frontage, an additional fifteen to fifty-five miles of road frontage in the Township will be lined with new homes.

TRAFFIC IMPACTS

Intuitively as the amount of development increases, the amount of traffic also increases. In addition to the residential traffic, the Honda of America manufacturing facility located on Honda Parkway is a large employment center and therefore generates a high volume of traffic during peak morning and evening commuting hours.

Concentrating on vehicle trips generated by households and using an average of four vehicle trips per household per day¹, currently there are approximately 2136

¹ Institute of Transportation Engineers

LAND DEMAND AND CAPACITY ANALYSIS

residential vehicle trips per day on roads within Allen Township. Based on estimated household growth, there will be an additional 2124 – 7644 vehicle trips per day on roads within the Township by 2030. Commercial and industrial growth within the Township as well as regional growth will also impact the amount of traffic on roads within the Township.

WATER SUPPLY

“The water resources of Union County consist of surface water from two main streams, a number of smaller streams, numerous small ponds scattered throughout the county and a plentiful ground-water supply. Ground-water resources in Union County are fair in quality but are abundant in quantity. Aside from the City of Marysville, which obtains about 66 percent of its water from Mill Creek, the majority of the county population (both rural and urban) gets its drinking water from ground-water sources.”²

The average household in the U.S. uses approximately 200 gallons of water per day. Therefore in residential use alone, water consumption will increase by 106,200 – 382,200 gallons per day by 2030. Honda of America is a large consumer of water within the Township and draws water from the same aquifer as the residents.

² The Ohio State University Extension Fact Sheet #AEX 480.80

THE COST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

When planning for a community, it is important to look at the fiscal implications of the land use pattern. Traditionally, decision makers have believed that any type of development is the best use of vacant land for increasing tax revenues. Often residential developers sell their projects through claims that the development will “pay for itself” and lower each individual’s property tax. The preservation of farmland and open space has been viewed as a loss of tax base. However, recent cost of community studies and fiscal impact analyses have shown quite the opposite is true.

Every community has a number of land uses including farming, residential, and commercial or industrial. Each land use is subject to tax payments to support the community services demanded by the community. These services include schools, roads and bridges, safety, etc. While farmland usually pays a lower tax amount than residential land use, it also demands less community services and fewer service expenditures. When an area is growing, there are usually increased tax revenues collected and also increased service expenditures demanded.

Decisions about changes in land use are often made at the local level and need to be made with the best financial information available. One tool used to look at the fiscal impacts of development is the cost of community services study (COCS). It is conventional in COCS studies to divide land into three categories:

LAND DEMAND AND CAPACITY ANALYSIS

residential, commercial/industrial, and farmland/open space. One of the most common procedures used is the calculation of a COCS ratio for each land use category. The ratio compares how many dollars worth of local government services are demanded per dollar collected. A ratio greater than 1.0 suggests that for every dollar of revenue collected from a given category of land, more than one dollar is spent in association with it.

Virtually all studies show that for residential land, the COCS ratio is substantially above 1. That is, residential land is a net drain on local government budgets. The average estimate ranges from about 1.15 to 1.50, which means that for every dollar collected in taxes and non-tax revenue, between \$1.15 and \$1.50 gets returned in the form of services by the local government and school district.

On the other hand, the COCS ratios for the other two land use categories are both substantially below 1. For commercial/industrial, the ratio usually ranges from 0.35 to 0.65, indicating that for every dollar collected, only about 35 to 65 cents worth of services are provided by the local government. For agriculture and open space, the ratios are only slightly smaller, usually ranging from 0.30 to 0.50.

The largest single expenditure category for communities, according to the studies, is the public school system, accounting for 60 to 70 percent of spending. Since open space and commercial development in themselves do not place any burden on the schools, it should not be surprising that their ratios are less than the residential

category. COCS studies suggest that growing communities should be aware of the need to balance both commercial/industrial development and residential development. It suggests that communities with only residential land uses are likely to experience higher service expenses compared to revenue streams.

CHAPTER 4

Future Land Use Plan

INTRODUCTION

Allen Township wants to preserve the quality of life for existing residents by ensuring that future development occurs consistent with the community's vision, as articulated in the plan foundation. This plan does not attempt to stop growth; rather, to manage it.

In order for the plan to be successful, continuing discussions about land use patterns and policies should be on-going. The future land use plan provides a guide for those discussions. While the Township can steer development into the most desirable and appropriate areas as shown in the future land use plan, the plan is not without flexibility. Unanticipated market demand, changing demographics, and regional factors out of the control of the Township can make flexibility an important component of this plan. When an issue arises that is not addressed by this document, the Township should refer to the goals contained within the plan to ensure consistency in decision making.

The future land use map is general in nature. In contrast to zoning maps, which display exact zoning classifications for each parcel, this map does not necessarily recognize or follow property lines and is

based upon broad use categories. As such, the future land use map does not dictate how specific parcels should be zoned in the future. Rather, the appropriate zoning body and elected officials should consider the map to be only one of several tools available to assist them in making land use recommendations and decisions.

The information contained on the map should always be supplemented by site specific information. In order to provide guidance when making land use decisions the following checklist is provided. The checklist should be used for all rezoning requests to ensure that relevant land use issues are raised. Certain answers would not mandate a particular decision and not all of the questions are pertinent to every situation.

Check List

1. Is the proposed development consistent with the Township's vision?
2. Would the proposed development be contrary to the future land use plan?
3. Is the development (change) contrary to the established land use pattern?
4. Would change create an isolated, unrelated district?
5. Will the proposed development increase the load on public facilities beyond reasonable limits (streets, schools, etc.)?
6. Will the change adversely influence living conditions in the surrounding area?

7. Will the change create or appreciably increase traffic congestion?
8. Will the development seriously impact adjacent areas?
9. Will the development seriously affect the natural character of the land to the point of creating potential hazards?
10. Have the basic land use conditions changed?
11. Will approval be a deterrent to the improvement or development of adjacent property in accordance with existing plans and regulations?
12. Will the proposal constitute a grant of a special privilege to an individual that will not be granted to others at the expense of the general welfare?
13. Are there reasons why the property cannot be used as it is presently planned or zoned?
14. Is the change out of scale with the area's needs? The Township's needs? The region's needs?
15. Are there alternative undeveloped sites for the proposed use(s) that would be more appropriate?

LAND PRESERVATION TECHNIQUES

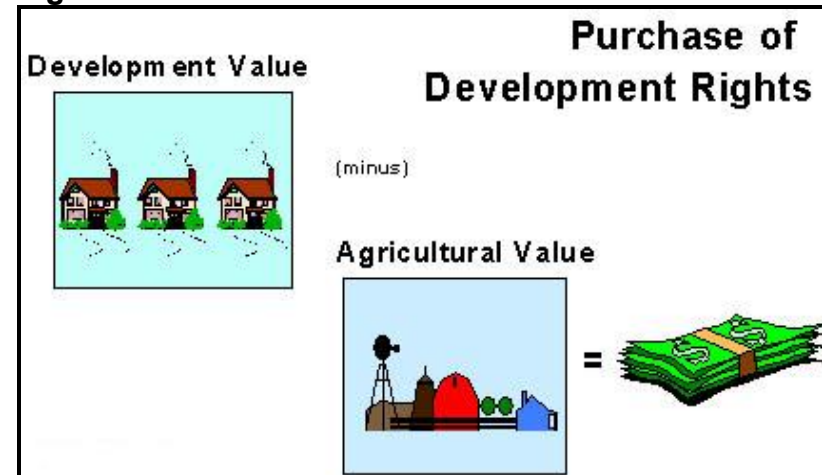
PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS & TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Fee simple land ownership provides landowners with a “bundle of rights, each of which may be separated from the rest and transferred to someone else while still retaining ownership of the land. One of these is the right to develop the land. Others include mineral rights, water rights (both surface and groundwater) and air rights.

Purchase of development rights (PDR) is a voluntary program where an agency usually linked to local government makes an offer to a landowner to buy the development rights on a parcel. The landowner is free to turn down the offer, or to try to negotiate a higher price. Once an agreement is made, a permanent deed restriction is placed on the property that restricts the type of activities that may take place on the land in perpetuity.

In such a program, a landowner is paid the difference between the value of the land based on its development potential and the value of the land in its present use, Figure 4.11. Funding for PDR programs varies between jurisdictions, with many communities using bonding or tax schemes to raise money for PDR.

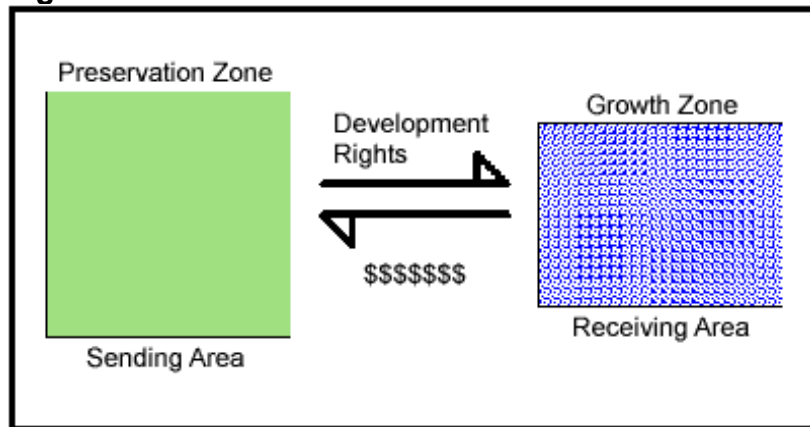
Figure 4.1 - PDR



Transfer of development rights (TDR) allows landowners to transfer the right to develop one parcel of land to a different parcel of land. Generally established through local zoning codes, TDR programs can protect farmland by shifting development from agricultural areas to areas planned for growth called “receiving areas.”

For TDR to work properly two districts need to be established, a preservation, or “sending” area, where no development will occur, and a “receiving” area that uses the rights for higher development densities above communities zoning guidelines, Figure 4.2. The TDR then becomes a tool to redirect growth from one area of the community to another.

Figure 4.2 - TDR



Developers can increase the density of development in a designated receiving area by purchasing development rights from landowners in a protected “sending area.”

Once the development rights are transferred from agricultural property, the land can be restricted with a permanent agricultural conservation easement. As a result, development occurs in appropriately zoned areas at a higher density than ordinarily permitted by base zoning. Ideally, TDR causes growth to occur in an efficient, less sprawled manner. TDR not only protects farmland, but also changes the way growth occurs. To be successful, this process should involve the input of all stakeholders including public officials and citizens as well as landowners and developers.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Conservation easements can be used to preserve agricultural land as well as natural resource areas such as riparian corridors, wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife habitat. Conservation easements limit land to specific uses and thus protect it from development. These legal agreements are voluntary and are created between private landowners and qualified land trusts, conservation organizations, or government agencies. Grantors of conservation easements may receive federal and tax benefits as a result of donating easements.

Easements may apply to entire parcels of land or to specific parts of a property. Most easements are permanent but some may impose restrictions for a limited number of years. While conservation easements limit development, they do not affect other private property rights. A landowner may transfer the property; however, the easement remains.

The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) administers the Clean Ohio Fund Agricultural Easement Purchase Program. Under this program, the Ohio Department of Agriculture purchases agricultural easements. Applications are ranked based on a number of criteria developed by the ODA. Farmland owners do not apply for the program directly. Rather, county commissioners, township trustees, or land trusts must apply on behalf of farmland owners.

AGRICULTURAL ZONING

Agricultural zoning is zoning that protects the viability of agriculture through limiting density of development and restricting nonfarm uses of the land. Agricultural zoning can be an important preservation tool for the following reasons.

- Agricultural zoning reduces the conflicts that may occur between farmers and non-farmers due to situations such as chemical irritants spilling onto non-farm properties or the litter and vandalism of agricultural land.
- Zoning encourages orderly growth, which, in turn, enhances aesthetics and minimizes the cost of public services.
- Agricultural zoning protects the agricultural land base and productive soils and is most effective when applied to large areas of contiguous farmland.
- Agricultural zoning corresponds with conservation movements such as retaining open space, protecting environmentally sensitive wetlands, and protecting water resources and air quality.

Agricultural zoning is the land use tool most commonly used for the preservation of farmland. In addition to limiting density and nonfarm uses, it protects agricultural land by requiring houses to be built on small lots and restricting subdivision of land into parcels that are too small to farm.

This zoning technique is attractive to local governments because it can quickly protect large areas of farmland, and it is flexible to the changing needs of the community. Those persons purchasing land in an agricultural zone understand up front the restrictions of the area. Furthermore, it can be less expensive to implement than other preservation tools such as purchasing development rights.

OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

The object of open space development is not to increase the number of units developed, but to regulate the amount of land disturbed by structures, lawns, and drives. The gross density must still fall into the requirements of the zoning resolution. Homes are grouped in those areas of a development site that are best suited for development. Often large parts of a site are permanently protected open space, protected by a restoration covenant or, in some instances, deeded to a non-profit land trust or the Township, see Figures 4.3 and 4.4.

Figure 4.3 – Comparison 1 between Conventional and Open Space Development

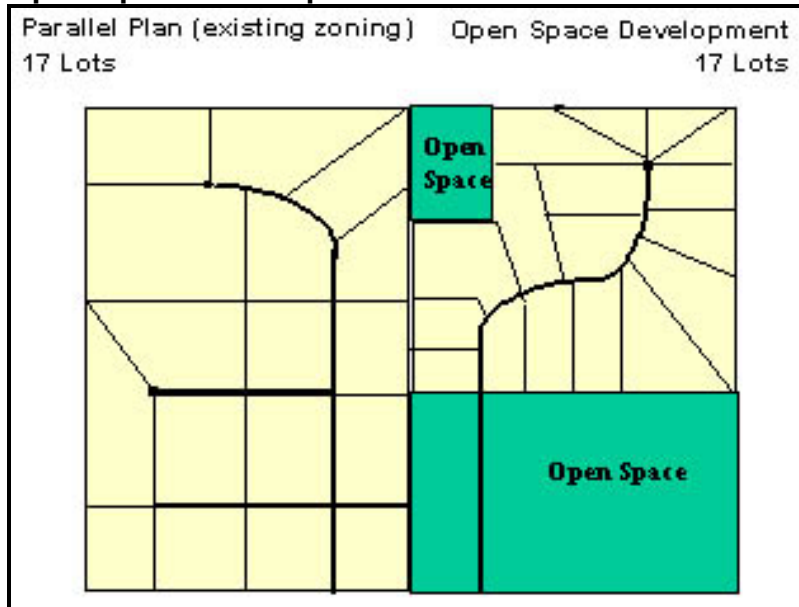
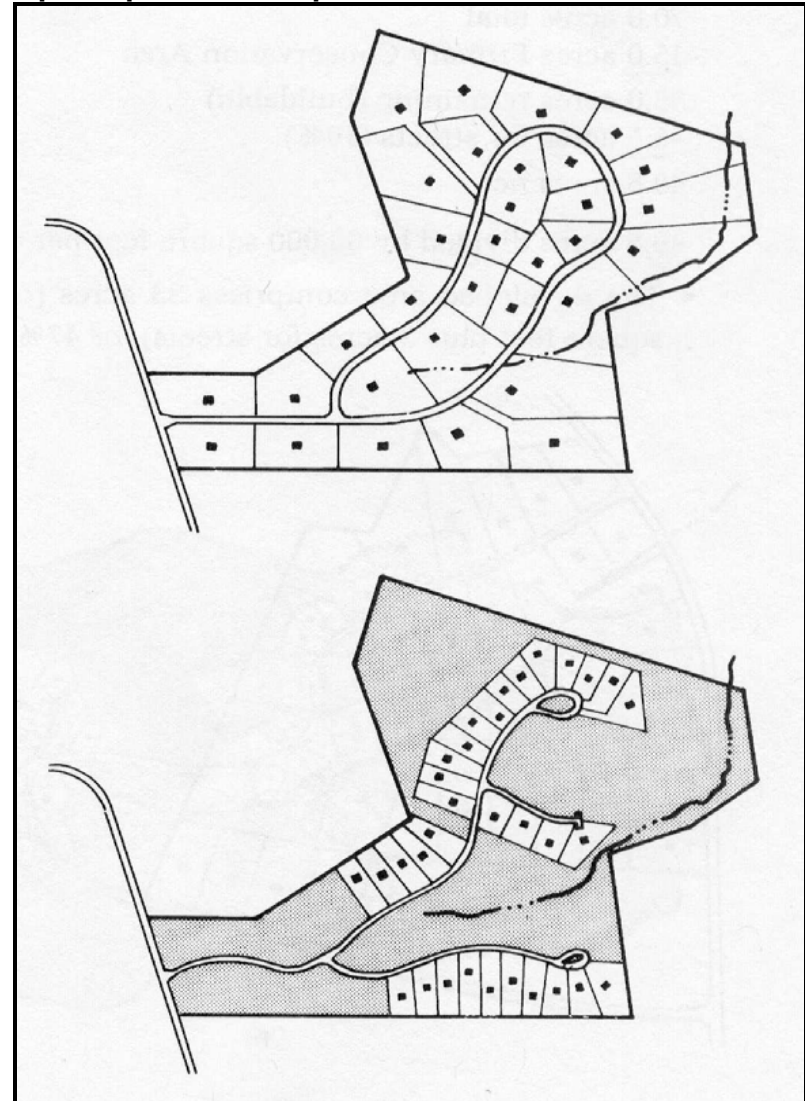


Figure 4.4 – Comparison 2 between Conventional and Open Space Development



This development technique allow for the preservation of significant natural features, provides open space for recreation, or allows the continuation of farming on interior land areas. To preserve the roadside character, some or all of the required open space could be placed abutting the roadway. Density bonuses may be granted in order to encourage this type of development, but are not necessarily needed since clustering can reduce a developer's construction costs for road paving, grading, etc.

Figures 4.5 and 4.6 are from the Rolling Meadows open space development in Summit County, Ohio. The subdivision contains twenty-three building sites on 1½ to 1¾ acre lots. Approximately 60 percent of the total developable site was preserved as open space. Note the view from the road, Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5 – Rolling Meadows Subdivision Entrance



Figure 4.6 – Preservation Area used for Agriculture



There are several advantages to this type of development.

1. Open space development provides opportunities for creative, quality design and preservation of open space;
2. Creates larger areas of open space rather than just lot-by-lot development; preserves natural features, advances environmental protection, improves drainage, and provides for better housing sites;
3. Allows greater administrative discretion and negotiation between the developer and community;
4. Reduces development costs by maintaining overall residential density developed over a smaller area;
5. Lower costs of infrastructure and design;
6. Faster appreciation in home value.

It is up to the Township to determine in the zoning regulations what percentage of land should be required

for the open space set-aside. The recommended open space set-aside is typically between 40 to 50 percent.

Planned Unit Development

The Planned Unit Development (PUD) process is an alternative to conventional rezonings. It combines project elements such as housing, streets, open space, recreation areas, and commercial/office uses if appropriate into a functional unit that is integrated with the natural features of the site.

PUDs allow for developer flexibility while meeting overall density and land use goals. PUDs can allow for a mix of land uses, reduction of lot size, increase in height, or other waivers from conventional zoning regulations in exchange for some public benefit. PUDs have been used to promote historic preservation, open space preservation, affordable housing, and other community goals.

The planned unit development is a common regulatory tool available to townships that allows them to preserve sensitive areas and open space. It enables townships to negotiate with developers in order to create a compatible relationship between the built and natural environment.

PUDs may be used to preserve open space, natural features, and farmland by permitting sufficient flexibility in the development process to allow significant land areas to be set aside for preservation. For example, most open space in a conventional zoning district is in the yard of each individual lot or in a park. A PUD offers the

opportunity to provide the same mixture of land uses without the need for individual rezoning, resulting in a much more coordinated compatible plan. Some communities include a density bonus depending upon the extent of the public benefit.

Open space developments are typically done using the planned unit development process.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The future land use plan speaks in terms of density, not lot size. Density is the number of dwelling units permitted per acre of land. Lot size requirements are restrictions controlling the minimum area and minimum width of lots. When working with subdivisions and planned districts, density-based zoning provides more flexibility to both the developer and Township. The developer has the flexibility to incorporate a variety of lot sizes into the development as long as the density limitation for the site is not exceeded. This also enables the Township to preserve open space and other natural amenities, or have land set-aside for public uses such as a park, school or fire station. Open space development and planned unit developments are examples of density-based approaches to development.

Density can be controlled through zoning in the following ways: use restrictions, minimum lot size requirements, floor area ratios, land use-intensity ratios, setback and yard requirements, minimum house size requirements,

ratios comparing number and types of housing units to land area, and limits on units per acre.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

GENERAL

1. Land use decisions must be approached in a holistic manner that considers its many consequences and interactions.
2. Land use decisions should not create an arbitrary development pattern.
3. Uses of land should maintain the rural atmosphere through site design, architecture and landscaping.
4. All Township residents are dependent upon the Township's underlying groundwater resource for their potable water supply. Its protection must be one of the Township's primary land use planning concerns in terms of both quantity (capacity) and quality (minimizing pollution).
5. Development should be minimized in areas of the Township's best agricultural lands to preserve critical masses of farmland.
6. Development activities and natural resource protection will be compatible. Recognition of the impacts that adverse development can have on the natural environment is a priority. Any growth should be developed in such a way that the Township's natural resources can be sustained and protected.
7. Agricultural and natural resource preservation areas are target areas for the purchase of development rights and/or fee simple acquisition.

RESIDENTIAL

1. Allen Township has a limited infrastructure base with no access to central water or sewer. Therefore, the future densities of residential development in the Township will be limited.
2. Subdivisions are discouraged in prime agricultural areas.
3. Residential development should respect the natural features of the land.
4. Large subdivisions should be extensively buffered from adjacent agricultural and natural resource areas.
5. Existing residential areas should be protected from incompatible development.

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL

1. Commercial and industrial areas should be located in clusters rather than in isolated, scattered locations. Strip commercial development is discouraged.
2. Major commercial and industrial areas should be located where there is direct access to existing or planned major transportation facilities.
3. Commercial and industrial areas should be extensively buffered from adjacent residential areas.

Figure 4.7

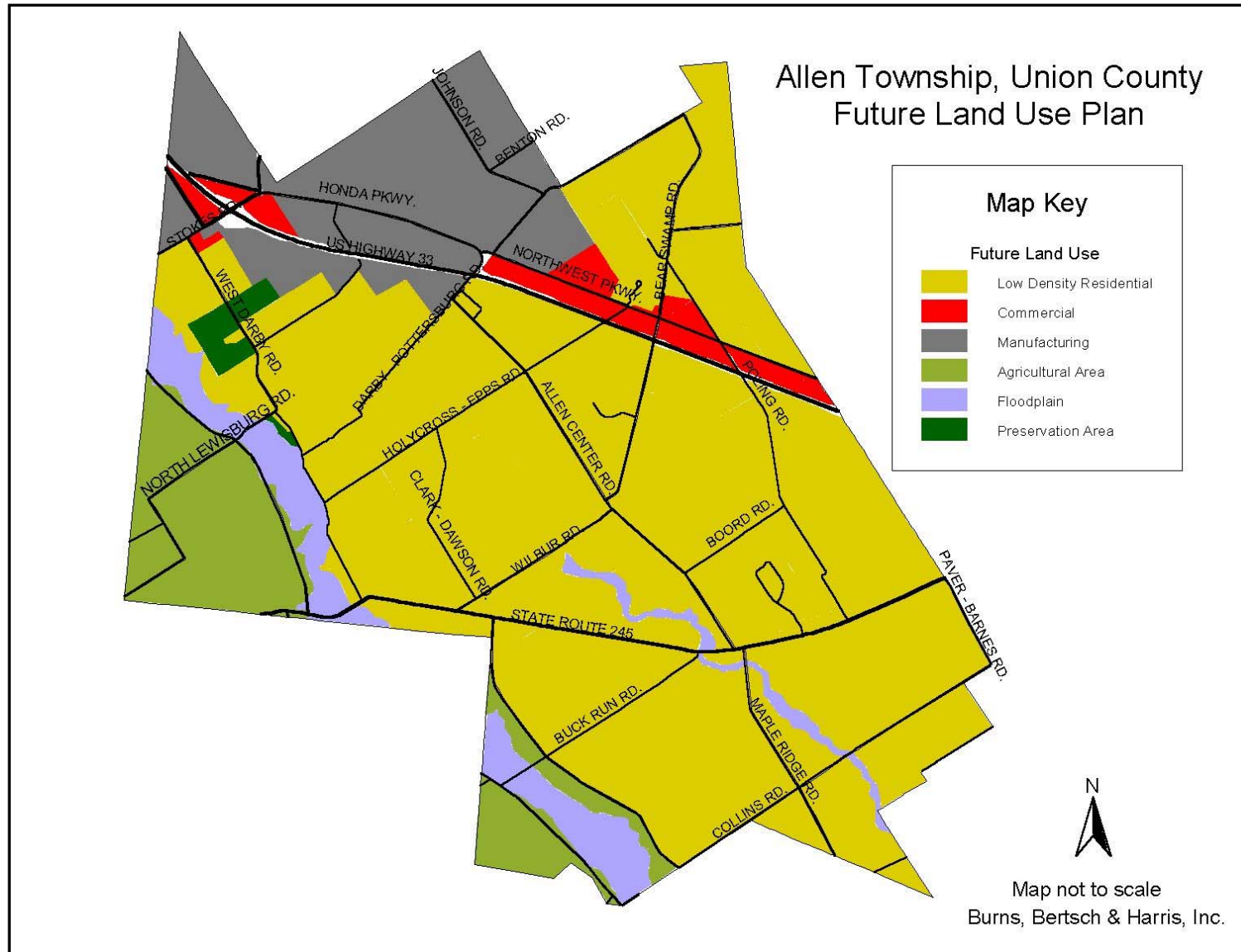
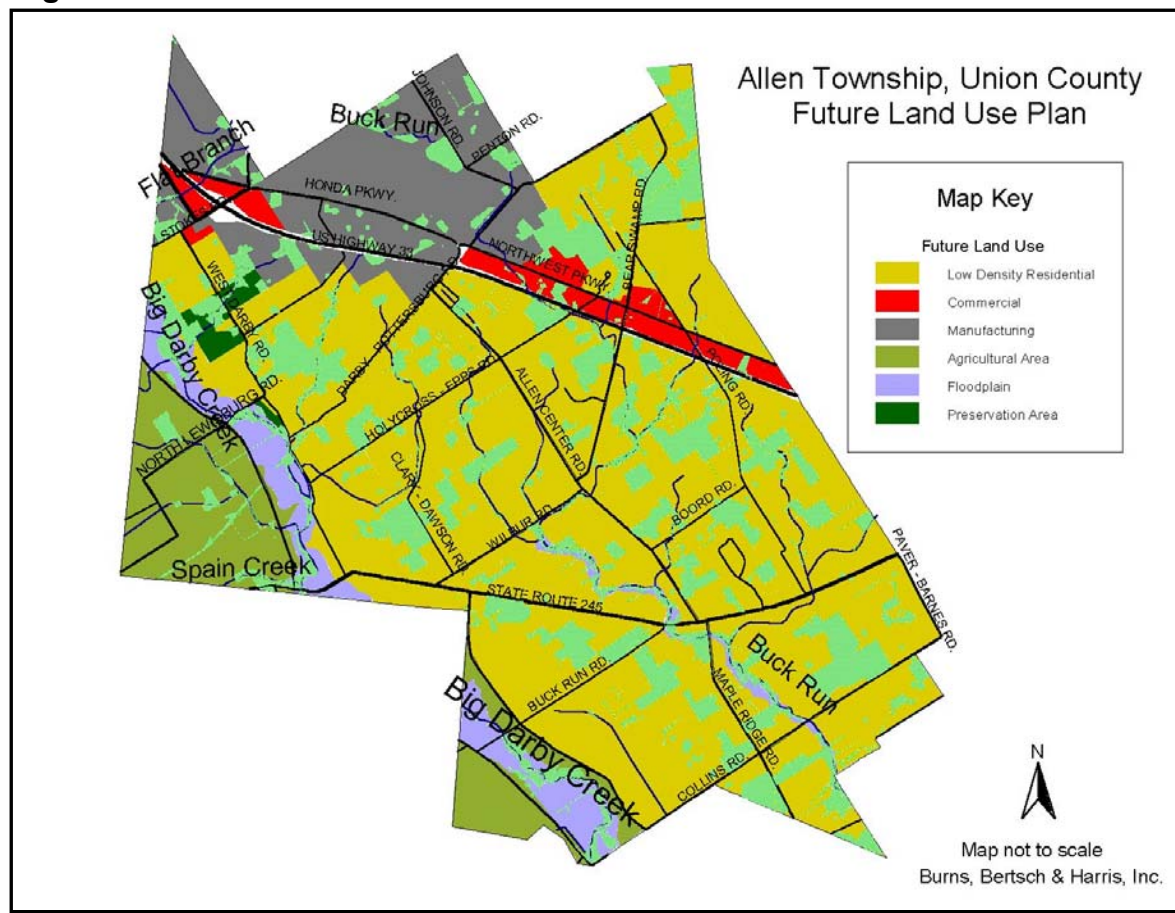


Figure 4.8 below is the future land use plan with the wooded areas as well as the wetland areas shown as a lighter green. Development is not prohibited in these areas. However, future development should respect these natural features and they should be integrated into site.

Figure 4.8



LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

Floodplain – All land within the 100 year floodplain of the Big Darby Creek and Buck Run are shown. Residential development will not be permitted within the floodplain.

Preservation Area – Land within this area has been purchased for preservation purposes. Therefore, no future development has been proposed.

Agricultural Area – This area represents the majority of the highest yield prime farmland soils. The Agricultural Area accommodates all types of agricultural activities and agriculture-related businesses as well as open space and low-density residential development. Land in this classification should be prioritized for farmland preservation programs and incentives. The recommended base residential density in this area is 1 unit per 3 acres unless additional density is granted. The amount of additional density granted will be determined by the Township Zoning Board and Trustees. Basic criteria that can be used to determine if additional density should be granted is provided in Figure 4.9. *Additional density cannot be granted unless the PUD process is used.*

Low Density Residential – Development in this area should be limited to residential development as well as public/quasi-public uses such as churches, schools, parks, and governmental facilities. The recommended base residential density is 1 unit per 3 acres unless additional density is granted. The amount of additional

density granted will be determined by the Township Zoning Board and Trustees. Basic criteria that can be used to determine if additional density should be granted is provided in Figure 4.9. *Additional density cannot be granted unless the PUD process is used.*

Figure 4.9 – Criteria for Density Bonus

The following criteria will be used to determine if additional density should be granted in residential developments. The maximum increase in density is one unit per acre.

- Is this an open space development? Is the open space set-aside more than the minimum required in the zoning resolution?
- Does the development respect the natural features of the land?
- Will the homes exhibit a high level of architectural design?
- Are additional site amenities provided? (i.e. playgrounds, trails, etc)
- Does the development incorporate rural design characteristics into the overall design of the development?

Commercial - By definition, commercial uses are a business use or activity at a scale greater than home industry involving retail or wholesale marketing of goods and services. The commercial areas may include neighborhood, community, highway, and service commercial uses, as well as office uses.

Manufacturing - This classification includes all forms of industrial and warehousing development including fabrication, assembly, distribution, and storage.

Table 4.1 – Future Land Use Plan Summary

Land Use Classification	Area	Percentage
Floodplain	1096	5.6%
Preservation Area	170	0.9%
Agricultural Area	1754	8.8%
Low Density Residential	13,040	65.7%
Commercial	615	3.1%
Manufacturing	3159	15.9%
TOTAL	19,834	100%

CHAPTER 5 IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

A strong implementation strategy is the key to any successful planning effort. The previous chapters of this plan have described the planning process and the community's vision for the future. This chapter describes in greater detail how that vision can become a reality.

PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

The comprehensive plan is a working document and therefore must be evaluated regularly to ensure that it continues to reflect the vision of the citizens of the community while also responding to new development pressures or trends in development. The following are suggestions to ensure the plan remains an effective and relevant document as changes occur.

1. The Zoning Board should prepare an annual report summarizing the status of implementation of the plan's recommendations.
2. Zoning Board reports should include a statement declaring their interpretation of whether or not development or zoning proposals are consistent with the plan, as part of their recommendations to Township Trustees.

3. When determined that sufficient grounds exist, require a formal amendment to the comprehensive plan prior to deviation from the established policies.
4. Conduct a formal update every five years.

STRATEGIES

The strategies provided below should be used to ensure that development occurs consistent with the vision of the citizens. Some strategies are policy statements that provide the general direction for a governmental agency to follow in order to meet its goals and objectives before undertaking action. In other instances the strategy outlines additional work that must be undertaken by the Township. Strategies with an asterisk (*) are taken from the Union County Comprehensive Plan.

Land Use and Development

1. Promote flexibility throughout the development process to encourage mixed-use development patterns as well as to promote innovative design concepts that protect agricultural and environmental resources.
2. Update the zoning code to improve the planned unit development process.
3. Update the zoning code to require site plans for all new commercial, office, and industrial development that is not part of a PUD.
4. Promote the use of planned conservation developments. In planned conservation

developments, the overall density is the same as conventional subdivisions of the same property in the same zoning district. However, the size of individual lots may be reduced to allow for the preservation of open space for agricultural purposes, recreation, and environmentally sensitive features.

5. Create a reward system that provides bonuses to developments in the Township that preserve agricultural land or incorporate the use of conservation design when not otherwise required to do so.
6. Evaluate all rezoning requests based upon the adopted land use
7. Reduce traffic hazards and preserve investments by avoiding spot and strip commercial development and the inappropriate intrusion of commercial development into residential areas.
8. Maintain natural drainage swales as development occurs.
9. Consider the creation of a corridor overlay district along Northwest Parkway.
10. Actively participate in the subdivision review process. Ensure that a Township representative attends all preliminary plat and final plat meetings conducted by the LUC Regional Planning Commission and Union County Engineer. Ensure that comments are provided on all documents forwarded to the Township for review.
11. Encourage the Union County Health Department to strengthen health code requirements

regarding on-site sewage treatment and disposal.*

12. Encourage Union County to update the subdivision regulations to accomplish the following goals:*
- Strengthen environmental review and approval of development projects;
 - Include soil standards that discourage development on prime agricultural soils;
 - Expand public input process.

Agricultural and Natural Resource Preservation

1. Support the preservation of farmland as an important community asset.
2. Encourage landowners to voluntarily participate in agricultural preservation programs.
3. Work with local farmers interested in the State of Ohio farmland purchase program administered by the Ohio Department of Agriculture. Farmland owners cannot apply for the program directly. However, Township Trustees may submit an application in conjunction with the farmland owner.
4. Create an agricultural zoning district with a minimum ten to twenty acre lot size. Encourage farmers to voluntarily rezone their land to this classification. Waive the rezoning fee for those individuals willing to rezone their property.
5. Support the creation of state legislation that would expand the Township's ability to protect farmland.

6. Create a fund devoted to the purchase of development rights in agricultural areas and natural resource preservation areas. Allow developers to purchase development rights in lieu of preserving agricultural land or open space as a part of their development when appropriate.
7. Create an incentive system that provides density bonuses to developers who preserve agricultural land and/or use conservation developments.
8. Update existing zoning regulations to require preservation of riparian forest buffers when development occurs. When the riparian forest buffer has been reduced to 25 feet or less or has been removed, work with developers or appropriate agencies to enhance the forest buffer.
9. Create an open space overlay district that will apply to land along Big Darby Creek and Buck Run.
10. Incorporate the Darby Creek stormwater management standards into Township regulations.
11. Discourage enclosing, straightening, or relocating streams in all new development.
12. Work with appropriate agencies to develop or identify grant programs that can be used by non-agricultural property owners to preserve or restore trees along stream banks.
13. Establish relationships with both the Union County Heritage Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy. These groups can work with the Township to preserve land within the Township by holding easements, purchasing property, and/or assisting with other local preservation efforts.
14. Encourage property owners to use conservation easements to protect natural resources.

15. Require developers to include interconnected paths or open space linkages in new neighborhoods.
16. Actively seek grants that can be used to purchase critical open space and natural resource areas.
17. Work with the County Park District to pursue the purchase of open space/parkland in the community.

Economic Development

1. Support and promote agribusinesses.*
2. Participate in regional economic development partnerships and programs to help attract businesses to the region, while simultaneously working to attract new businesses to the Township.
3. Ensure the preservation of prime commercial, office, and industrial land, as shown on the future land use plan.
4. Use a JEDD or a CEDA to increase the financial benefit of development to the Township while also promoting intergovernmental cooperation.
5. Review Sections 250 through 295 of the zoning code concentrating on the permitted and conditional uses.

Infrastructure

1. Maintain a high level of maintenance on local roads to minimize the need for costly repairs.
2. Ensure that there is adequate access to all properties for emergency vehicles.

3. Encourage the County to widen Darby-Pottersburg Road and Paver-Barnes Road.*
4. Encourage the County to improve the intersection of Northwest Parkway/Holycross-Epps Road.*
5. Encourage the County to improve the intersection of Collins Road/Maple Ridge Road.
6. Work with the Union County Sheriff's Office to improve enforcement of speed limits on roadways during peak commuting hours.
7. Encourage the Union County Engineer to evaluate the speed limit on Allen Center Road.
8. As development occurs, ensure that the private sector participates in infrastructure improvements through rights-of-way dedication and road construction.
9. Limit transportation improvements in agricultural areas to maintenance and upgrading of nonstandard roads.
10. Consider a no-cut buffer of a certain depth along the rights-of-way of local roads in order to preserve rural roadway aesthetics.
11. Connect the park and recreational facilities as well as the residential areas with a system of non-vehicular pathways.
12. Work with surrounding political jurisdictions including those outside of Union County to identify possible future bikeway connections.
13. Promote the construction of a bikeway or path system along Big Darby Creek.
14. Promote the development of indirect, shared access roads to reduce curb cuts on major arterials.
15. Control the intensity of land use to keep traffic volume on any thoroughfare from exceeding its

planned capacity unless roadway improvements are made prior to development.

16. Internalize traffic to encourage sound development patterns.
17. Compare existing right-of-way and pavement widths to the design criteria established by the Ohio Department of Transportation. Acquire additional right-of-way and make improvements when necessary.
18. Ensure that roadway improvements minimize the disturbance to the natural drainage patterns.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

1. Support and promote Union County's regional planning activities.
2. Support and promote continued Darby Creek Watershed planning activities.
3. Work with Liberty, Paris, Union, Rush, and Zane Townships to promote compatible development at the borders.
4. Create a formal protocol for communication and coordination between neighboring communities including the City of Marysville in order to minimize future land use and transportation conflicts.
5. Improve coordination and communication between the Township and local school districts in planning, zoning and economic development issues.*
6. Actively work with the county, state, and region regarding transportation improvements that will benefit the community.

7. Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions and associations in the provision of park and recreation services to avoid duplication of efforts and encourage maximum use of available resources.

Community Involvement

1. Promote the comprehensive plan to gain public support.
2. Complete the community web page and include information on local land use and development issues.
3. Foster the beneficial aspects of natural community groups such as churches, service organizations and clubs that will provide for an increased sense of township community.
4. Host a yearly land use and development summit where citizens can discuss local land use and development issues in a non-confrontational environment and receive information about the implementation of the comprehensive plan. Invite County representatives to participate as well as Soil and Water Conservation Office and Ohio State Extension Office.
5. Identify regional, state, and national land use planning conferences and seminars and provide adequate funding for attendance by local elected officials and board members.
6. Conduct a bi-annual goal setting retreat for local elected officials in order to prioritize the strategies of the comprehensive plan.

PRESERVING RURAL CHARACTER THROUGH DESIGN

According to a community survey administered by the Zoning Board, 81 percent of the respondents stated that the country atmosphere was what they liked most about living in Allen Township. During the community focus group session, participants were asked to define what elements make up or contribute to the “country atmosphere”. Overwhelmingly participants used terms such as open space, farms, quiet, limited development, low traffic, and wildlife.

Aside from aggressive open space and farmland preservation planning programs, design guidelines are one of the most effective planning tools. For communities that want to retain their rural character, the goal of design guidelines is to create the appearance that the natural environment is still the dominant feature of the landscape.

The following is a general discussion of rural guidelines that should be considered by the Township. The majority of these guidelines can be incorporated into the zoning resolution.

Streetscapes and Road Corridors

The look and feel of road corridors is important because so much time is spent traveling these corridors. The view of the corridor, whether experienced from a car window or walking along the road, reflects the image or character of the area. Ideally, new development should enhance the visual experience of the motoring and pedestrian public. While the view of new homes and other buildings may not necessarily be a bad visual experience, it is the predominance of buildings in a rural environment that often invites criticism. Retaining a piece of the natural environment along the Township's corridors is an important reminder of the past and enhances the visual experience for everyone.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Preserve existing vegetation along road corridors to the greatest extent possible by limiting clearing and grading along the road frontage to the minimum needed for safety, access, and sight distance.
2. Do not locate engineered storm water basins along the road frontage if practicable.

COMMERCIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL AREA GUIDELINES

1. Provide mass plantings, or road buffers, along the frontage of properties.
2. Buffer parking lots from roadway corridors with hedges and other landscaping.
3. Require a comprehensive landscaping plan for the frontage of all non-residential properties.

RESIDENTIAL AREA GUIDELINES

1. Avoid curbing on new residential streets.
2. Follow existing contours of the landscape to the maximum extent possible.
3. Border preserved open space along major collectors with split rail or other open fences.
4. Connect adjacent residential neighborhoods and subdivisions with through roads.

Architecture and Building Design

As new development occurs in the Township, every effort should be made to incorporate architectural elements of rural architecture. The size and massing of new buildings should be similar to surrounding buildings. Buildings should include a variety of detailed features and patterns that provide visual interest from the perspective of both the pedestrian and the motoring public. If designed correctly, the building landscape can be an enjoyable experience and provide a positive community image.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Architectural elements of rural architecture should be incorporated into new, non-residential buildings.
2. Traditional building materials should be used whenever possible for new construction including brick, wood, stone, and stucco.
3. Buildings should be designed using a human scale.
4. Development on hillsides should use earth tone colors and/or reduced building heights. Construction on ridgelines should be avoided.

COMMERCIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL AREA GUIDELINES

1. Commercial and office buildings with multiple uses or tenants should be designed with a complex massing that includes varying roof lines, projections/recesses, smaller additions to the main building, and/or separate, smaller structures.
2. Long uninterrupted walls should be modulated according to the size of the building.
3. Roof lines should be similar to buildings in the surrounding area.
4. Buildings should have a rhythm of openings and/or architectural features consistent with buildings in the area.

RESIDENTIAL GUIDELINES

1. Visual interest and diversity should be provided in new single family developments by the following means: a) provide variation in building setbacks and

- lot widths; b) provide variation in building footprints; c) provide variation in landscaping treatments; d) provide variation in amenities and architectural features (e.g. building materials, front porches, balconies, porticos, rhythm of openings, etc)
2. Avoid blank exterior walls.

Open Space and Farmland Scenic Vistas

One of the most defining elements of Allen Township is its abundance of open space, farmland, and scenic vistas. Open spaces serve as habitats for plants and wildlife, function as groundwater recharge areas, and provide scenic vistas.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Significant open space and environmental features of a site should be protected and incorporated into the site plan.
2. Riparian buffers should be preserved. When vegetation has been removed, new vegetation should be planted at the time of development.

COMMERCIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL AREA GUIDELINES

1. Open space areas should be highly visible.
2. Commercial open space and recreational areas should be linked to open space areas of other commercial and residential developments.

RESIDENTIAL AREA GUIDELINES

1. Large contiguous areas of open space should be preserved. Open space parcels less than three acres in size are discouraged unless they are designed specifically for recreational purposes or to connect to other open spaces.
2. Open space and farmland should be linked within individual developments and between adjacent developments.
3. The open space in conservation subdivisions should be situated to provide direct access to as many of the homes as possible.
4. Scenic vistas should be preserved by clustering development away from the viewshed.
5. Paths should be provided in all new residential developments.

Landscaping

The predominance of trees and other vegetation is a critical element of Allen Township's landscape. Landscaping serves many functions. New landscaping should include plantings native to the area and be designed in consultation with landscape architects or other landscape professionals.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. Existing vegetation should be retained in new developments to the maximum extent possible.

2. Existing trees with a minimum 10" caliper should be identified on site plans and preserved.
3. Trees and shrubs should be planted to help define the edge of road corridors.
4. Development on hillsides should be screened from public view with vegetation.
5. New landscaping should be planted in natural clusters, using varied plant material.

COMMERCIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL AREA GUIDELINES

1. New development should include landscaping plans that provide visual interest for all four seasons.
2. Trees and vegetation should be selected from a native planting list according to site conditions.
3. Groupings of trees and vegetation should be provided near large buildings to help reduce the potentially imposing presence.

RESIDENTIAL AREA GUIDELINES

1. Peripheral vegetative plantings should be provided around large residential subdivisions to maintain privacy for the homeowners and avoid the view of backyards from road corridors.
2. Vegetative buffers should be used to separate residences from adjacent agricultural, commercial, or industrial developments.

TOWNSHIP PRIORITIES

As previously stated, many of the strategies require further action by the Township. However, the Township cannot possibly undertake all of those strategies simultaneously and therefore the strategies must be prioritized. The following strategies are the top priorities of the Township and activities aimed at completing these activities should be undertaken within the first two years following completion of the plan:

1. Complete the community web page and include information on local land use and development issues.
2. Revise the zoning code consistent with the comprehensive plan. A number of the strategies provide specific recommendations that should be included in the update of the zoning resolution. In addition, rural design standards should be incorporated into the zoning resolution.
3. Create an incentive system that provides density bonuses to developers who preserve agricultural land and/or use conservation developments.
4. Actively participate in the subdivision review process. Ensure that a Township representative attends all preliminary plat and final plat meetings conducted by the LUC Regional Planning Commission and Union County Engineer. Ensure that comments are provided on all documents forwarded to the Township for review.
5. Create a formal protocol for communication and coordination between neighboring communities

including the City of Marysville in order to minimize future land use and transportation conflicts.

APPENDIX

RESULTS OF OCTOBER 11, 2004 OPEN HOUSE

On October 11, 2004, the Allen Township Steering Committee and Burns, Bertsch & Harris, Inc. hosted an open house for Allen Township residents. Approximately 100 citizens attended. There were a variety of information was provided to residents including the results of the existing conditions analysis. Displays on alternative development practices including conservation development and hamlet development were presented. Activities were designed to solicit input from residents regarding the draft future land use plan, goals and objectives, vision, and policies.

The results of the open house were used by the Steering Committee to revise the draft future land use plan and craft policies and recommendations for the comprehensive plan.

Storyboarding Exercise

Two statements were posted and citizens were given blank sheets of paper and asked to complete the statement.

1. All new residential development should be required to.....
 - Follow minimum maintenance requirements.
 - Be voted through by people who live or own property in the Township.
 - Encourage natural landscapes – Rural atmosphere means natural sights and sounds.
 - Open – greenspace.
 - Meet density requirement of 5 acres per residence.
 - Explore conservation design in some areas.
 - Designate agricultural preservation in some areas – 10 to 20 acres per residence
 - Submit to PUD Township requirements with minimum average of 5 acre lots per development
 - 20 acre lot size for agricultural preservation areas.
 - Adhere to strict zoning and building standards. This includes signage, structure materials, greenspace easements, etc.
 - The preservation of the community standards should exceed individual development.
 - Create construction guidelines concerning roof pitch, exterior materials, outbuildings, etc.
 - Be approved by a vote of Township residents, with each resident to have one vote per acre owned in the Township.
 - 2 acre minimum in low density, 5 acres in very low density, 10 acres in agricultural preservation areas
 - Maintain 60% minimum open space by conservation open space development
 - Developments separated by agricultural zoned land.
 - Non-development lot sizes to be 5+ acre minimum.

- 5 acre lot minimum with 300 feet minimum road frontage lot size for all types of density/hamlet proposals
- Meet current zoning and health department regulations
- 5 acre minimum lot size (3)
- Small parks for kids
- 5 acre lots given the type of soil. This much land is needed for septic and well protection.
- Abide strictly to our zoning laws
- Abide by land owners decision for restrictions they want, not the Township. They would present to Township for vote.

2. All new commercial and industrial development should be required to.....

- Encourage natural landscapes.
- Preserve open space/greenspace
- Needs to be put before the Township for a vote.
- We need to be very careful about this in order to maintain clear air, avoid more congested roads, water well contamination etc.
- Conform to strict architectural requirements to preserve rural appearance as much as possible.
- With commercial development comes traffic, with traffic comes widening roads, which comes land being taken and higher taxes for maintenance.
- Pay taxes to the Township – sales tax, parkland tax, something!
- Adhere to strict zoning and building standards. This includes building materials, signage, green space, easements, etc.

- Why can't I buy milk in the Township? Some business would be helpful.
- The property between the two intersections on Honda Parkway should be more structured to commercial and retail development. This land is not good for farming or home development and is located in an ideal place for such development.

Scale Exercise

Individuals were asked to indicate where they fell on the following scale.

My property is my land and I should be able to do anything I want with it.

Land development's impacts go beyond the owners' property and the community should have a say in what happens.

Seventeen individuals indicated a 1; five indicated a 2; two indicated a 3; twelve indicated a 4; and nine indicated a 5.

Vision Statement Exercise

The following three vision statements were presented to citizens and they were asked to indicate which vision statement they preferred.

1. Through cooperation with both the citizens and state and local governing agencies, Allen Township will preserve a high quality living environment that

maintains the Township's rural atmosphere and abundant natural resources and balances private property rights. **(3 votes)**

2. In partnership with the citizens and governing agencies, Allen Township will ensure a high quality living environment that preserves the Township's rural atmosphere and abundant natural resources while respecting private property rights. **(17 votes)**
3. In order to maintain a high quality living environment, Allen Township will preserve its rural atmosphere and abundant natural resources, enhance the community tax base, and promote on-going citizen participation in all aspects of government. **(24 votes)**

There was one comment on draft vision statement number three.

- Enhancing community tax base should not come at the expense of rural preservation and maintenance of natural resources.

Goals and Objectives Exercise

The draft goals and objectives created by the Steering Committee were presented and citizens were asked whether they supported the goals and objectives. Citizens were given the opportunity to comment on why they did not support the goals and/or objectives.

The number in parentheses at the end of each statement in the objectives indicates the number of times individuals

indicated they DID NOT support the objective. Comments as to why individuals DID NOT support the goal and/or objective are indicated below the goal and/or individual objective. Additional comments not associated with a specific objective are also noted.

Goal 1

Thirty eight individuals indicated that they support goal one and the objectives.

Goal

Encourage increased participation in local governmental affairs.

Objectives

- 1.1 Encourage an on-going proactive planning process.
- 1.2 Improve communications between citizens and Township officials
- 1.3 Provide citizen education on issues affecting local government.
- 1.4 Provide training for local elected officials and board members.
- 1.5 Create a network of local volunteers.

Additional comments

- A more diverse cross section of Township residents should be included in the zoning planning process.

Goal 2

Fifteen individuals indicated that they support goal two and the objectives.

Goal

Create a balanced land use pattern that is economically and environmentally sustainable.

Objectives

- 1.1. Encourage diverse business growth which enhances the tax base of Allen Township. (4)
 - o Should be done very carefully. Protect owners (land rights and property values)
 - o Business growth for enhancing tax base should not be at the expense of rural setting and peaceful quality of life.
 - o Marysville is not that far away for business needs.
- 1.2. Promote quality design for all land use types. (1)
- 1.3. Encourage integration of open space into all new developments. (6)
- 1.4. Promote better site planning. (1)
- 1.5. Protect private property rights. (1)
- 1.6. Promote a variety of residential densities. (8)
 - o A code for high density development.
 - o Low and very low density – no high density.
 - o Very low density supported but not low density or hamlet type.
 - o I do not support the rural hamlet.
 - o So broad and vague. We have as a majority strongly disagreed with developments with

less than five acres in last meeting. Yet, overlooked by personal interests.

- 1.7. Discourage residential and commercial development along the Big Darby Creek. (10)
- 1.8. If development occurs, limit the density of development along the Big Darby Creek. (9)
 - o Housing should be controlled but not discouraged due to Big Darby Creek. Fix the discharges of the septic to be clean and housing shouldn't be a problem.

Additional comments

- Discourage commercial development along Big Darby. Limit residential development along Big Darby to 10 acre lots.
- Keep it rural – it is the country.
- Land use map based on facts and data – not personal opinions. Lots of 2 acres only allowed in conservation design developments. Four acre minimum everywhere else.

Goal 3

Twenty-six individuals indicated support for the goal and objectives.

Goal

Improve and maintain a safe and efficient road network that supports the community land use pattern.

Objectives

- 3.1 Improve local traffic patterns.
- 3.2 Minimize traffic conflicts.

- 3.3 Improve road quality.
- 3.4 Minimize curb cuts onto major arterials. (6)

Additional comments

- Main routes for Honda employees need a reduction in speed. For example, Maple Ridge, Allen Center Road, etc. Add traffic calming measures. (Three individuals in addition to the author of the statement indicated support)
- You need to improve the Poling Road dead end. Include a turn around and widen. (One individual in addition to the author of the statement indicated support)
- Encourage private roads with no frontage requirement on the public road.

Goal 4

Twenty individuals indicated they support the goal and objectives.

Goal

Maintain the rural atmosphere of the Township.

Objectives

- 4.1 Preserve and protect the Township's natural resources including surface and ground water, wetlands, and woodlands.
 - o Five individuals stated that they were very concerned about preserving and protecting the Township's natural resources but didn't want someone else to totally control their choice.
- 4.2 Preserve air quality.

- 4.3 Preserve the view of the night sky. (1)
 - o This is important but needs to be addressed to business sectors.
- 4.4 Preserve agricultural land.
- 4.5 Preserve woodlands.
- 4.6 Preserve streams and stream corridors.
- 4.7 Preserve large tracts of open space/green space. (1)
- 4.8 Prevent unmanaged growth and sprawl.
 - o Concern regarding this objective was expressed. The individual felt that someone else would be controlling their choices.

Additional comments

- Preserve land owners' right to sell property when zoning and common sense permit, whether large or small tracts. Allow individual variances within the general plan layouts. (nine individuals in addition to the author of the statement indicated support for this statement)
- PUD's with five acre average lot size will go along way in preserving rural setting while allowing those who wish, "to develop their property".
- The Township can purchase parkland or development rights if taxpayers are willing to fund the expense. (One individual in addition to the author of the statement indicated support.)
- Preserve thru education on management of natural resources. (One individual in addition to the author of the statement indicated support.)
- The rights of property owners is number one. If you want to restrict land rights then you should pay for

them. (One individual in addition to the author of the statement indicated support.)

- Keep lines of communication open between residents, land owners and Township. For example – meetings, fliers, etc. (One individual in addition to the author of the statement indicated support.)
- Preservation versus conservation? Any human impact prevents preservation. Conservation is wise land use. (One individual in addition to the author of the statement indicated support)

Policy Exercise

A variety of policy statements were prepared and individuals were asked to indicate how they felt about the individual statements.

Statement	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree
1. The Township <u>should</u> discourage random-pattern and sprawl development.	30	2	0	3	3
2. The future land use plan <u>should</u> designate agricultural preservation areas.	23	1	2	6	5
3. The Township <u>should</u> adopt strict local zoning laws and other regulations that control development including laws that protect the Big Darby Creek.	25	2	1	2	6
4. The Township <u>should</u> allow limited increased density in some areas in exchange for the permanent preservation of farmland and/or natural areas.	14	6	6	2	7
5. Green space <u>should</u> be set aside in new subdivisions if they are developed.	34	2	1	1	2
6. The Township <u>should</u> promote business growth in order to increase the tax base.	10	13	1	6	4
7. The Township <u>should</u> explore the creation of limited architectural standards for commercial development.	18	11	2	2	1
8. The Township <u>should</u> promote intergovernmental cooperation by working with the City of Marysville and surrounding Townships on issues affecting land use and economic development.	7	23	0	5	0
9. A variety of residential lot sizes should be permitted in the Township as long as Union County Health Department standards and Ohio EPA standards regarding septic systems are met.	16	11	1	3	6

Comment on statement 5 – We don't want subdivisions in Allen Township. The vote totals should be clear to everyone involved. This question should be removed. No subdivisions of any kind or size. We already voted on it.

Comment on statement 9 – If you go door to door you will find out that the majority of residents want 5 acres. Most do not like the current 2 acres. Take the time to learn what they really say and it is 5 acres.

Comments On The Future Land Use Plan

1. Is there too much of any proposed classification of land use? If so, please identify which classification and where.

- No (2)
 - Specifics are missing. Land classification map should be accompanied by supporting data.
- Very low density (1)
- Low density residential (6)
 - No lot should be less than 5 acres (4)
 - I worry about the wells and septic systems in this area. Also, all the run off that comes from more housing. There has been a significant increase of water on our farmland due to the building of just four homes on four acre lots since 2000. Something needs to be done to control this.
 - Low density in St Rte 245, Allen Center Road, Holycross Epps triangle. I would make this very low density
- Natural resource preservation (2)

- I respect keeping some areas for parks, but you are limited my heirs to ever build a house in the woods. This should be considered as 1 house per 10 acres or something similar.
- Natural resource preservation is being declared on a large portion of land owned by my family. We should decide if we want to put it in natural resource preservation, not the Township.
- Hamlet (1)
- Commercial (2)
 - Too much along Northwest Parkway. 50% less would be better.
- Agricultural preservation areas (2)
 - Might limit substantially options if owners die.
 - The farmland in much of Allen Township is not very good. Much of it is best used for houses of 2 to 5 acre lots.

2. Is there too little of any proposed classification of land? If so, please identify where this classification of land should be encouraged.

- No (2)
- Agricultural preservation (4)
- Natural resource preservation (2)
- Low density (1)
- Very low density (2)
 - Wilbur Road, St Rte 245, Allen Center Road area
- More 2-5 acre lot density areas with private roads. No rambling big subdivisions.

3. Additional comments of the draft future land use plan.
 - Sweeping general statements and ambiguous terms (such as sprawl, hamlet, etc.) can be misleading and may taint community input.
 - I would hope that the commercial sites are limited to only certain areas, and not allowed to mushroom all over the Township because if one business goes into an area others will follow.
 - Very suspicious that the biggest low density is what was tried to sell earlier for development. Is this landowner on the steering committee?
 - I do not like the idea of being locked into a classification. I want the right to use my property as I see fit within zoning and health department regulations.
 - Please involve the residents with this plan. Residents in Allen Township moved here because it is rural. Don't let developers come in and ruin the Township. Greed is not the answer. Controlled growth that is approved by the residents is the answer.
 - I believe the low density residential area should be proposed as very low density or with very strict residential zoning.
 - More commercial and industrial development brings more water pollution, air pollution, traffic, etc. I did not move into the country to again live with these city problems. I have noticed significant increase air traffic too.
 - We need to be notified of any new designation of preserve. We shouldn't be limited to no housing in the woods on Poling Road.

- Concerned about hamlets. Who cares for the open preserves? What about septic? Seems more appropriate to sewer and water lines.
- I would like to see better use of land where 3 or more parties are sharing a driveway. Carson Woods, Reflections and Joe Detwiler's on Raymond Road are good examples of private roads where all the land is used and maintained.
- Base land use map on facts not personal opinions. Rural hamlet should have a 2 acre minimum; low density a 4 acre minimum; very low density a 10 acre minimum; and agricultural preservation a 20 acre minimum.
- I like the idea of open space conservation development – sharing spaces rather than rigid lot size conventional development.
- I live near where the rural hamlet is proposed and do not agree with it. I moved here to get away from that type of thing.
- More hamlet detail needed to understand concept.

Recommended Minimum Lot Size in Agriculture Preservation Areas

Citizens were asked what they thought was an appropriate minimum lot size in agricultural preservation areas. They were given the choice of 2 acres, 5 acres, 10 acres, and 20 acres. This activity had low participation, evident from the results. Eleven individuals voted for 2 acres, 7 for 5 acres, 1 for 10 ac

Figure 4.7

