

# ***Comprehensive Plan***

***Liberty Township,  
Union County, Ohio***

By

***LUC Regional Planning Commission***

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The last update of the Union County Comprehensive Plan was completed in 1999. Liberty Township had been using the Union County Plan but felt that to a large extent, it was outdated in its ability to fulfill Township needs. Hence, it was the intention of Liberty Township to develop a Comprehensive Plan exclusive of Union County's Plan that focused on their specific goals, visions, and requirements. Liberty Township has also experienced an extremely high growth rate in population over the last two decades. Therefore, they were looking for guidance in dealing with such a high growth rate. In addition, Township officials deemed it necessary to have a pro-active document with both direction and legal backbone. Finally, as a result of the Community Survey performed as part of this Plan, 89% of the residents felt the need for a Comprehensive Plan for the Township.

With the increase in population in Liberty Township over the past two decades, it has become necessary to assess the ability to provide for residents needs. How can local schools improve the graduation rates and proficiency test scores in order to obtain State funding? Are health and safety services adequate? Are there employment opportunities available for residents, and how these can be increased? These are questions that Township needs to address and improve upon in order to meet the needs of its community in the future.

Overwhelmingly, preserving rural character through controlled development was the main concern of the community. Residents place a high value on their small town, country atmosphere. In addition, they like the peacefulness and quietness of their Township. Above all, Township officials need to keep priority in mind when making local decisions.

Local economic development in the Township was an important issue with residents. Jobs for residents, and business and services for them to frequent

was a concern Township residents found very important. Although the median household income in Liberty Township is about \$1,100 less than in Union County, it is about \$10,000 higher than the median household income in the State of Ohio. However, there are 17 families (3.7%) or 56 (3.4%) individuals who are below what the federal government defines as poor. How does the community begin to improve the quality of life for ALL its residents? These issues will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

Other major issues the community has are in regards to infrastructure improvements and zoning. Centralized wastewater facilities, or lack there of, and water quality is a major concern for the community. Each resident in the Township has on-site septic and individual water wells. In the more densely populated regions of Raymond and Peoria, lack of wastewater infrastructure is a growing concern with the residents. In addition, with the addition of central sewage, will continued or increased growth occur? Storm water runoff is another problem the residents of the Township face. The existing systems in Raymond and Peoria are inadequate, and the Township needs to address this problem. Three possible solutions to this problem are discussed in Chapter 4 of this plan.

The other infrastructural issue is that of traffic and roads. The residents have concerns about the high volumes of traffic generated by the Honda factory, especially through traffic in Raymond. The Township needs to address this issue and research the feasibility of traffic lights or other possible measures to ensure the safety of its residents. Although most of the roads in the Township are in fair or good condition, there are a few township highways, which are designated as being in poor condition. The Township needs to develop as part of this Plan, a guide for continuous improvement of the Township highways.

The residents are very concerned about controlling development in the Township. Most of the residents want to see commercial growth in the form of “Mom and Pop” type of small businesses and retail establishments. But at the same time, the residents want this type of growth to be controlled and regulated, in order to maintain the rural, small town character of the region.



Another issue the Township is struggling with is that of junk and nuisance areas. Residents overwhelmingly commented through the planning process about their frustrations with trash and junk becoming a local eyesore on numerous properties. Local officials need to develop an abatement plan to quell resident dissatisfaction and aggravation.

## **1.2 Goals and Objectives**

Given the problem of an outdated Countywide Comprehensive Plan, Liberty Township has commissioned a new Plan to be put into action. The goal is to apply a Comprehensive Plan that provides the Township with an inventory of existing demographic patterns and community services and to formulate Township goals and objectives during this planning process based wholly on resident and local government official input, visions, and priorities. But, just formulating goals and objectives is not enough—the Plan must include an action or implementation strategy. This Township Comprehensive Plan must be used to guide future development in the area and to provide the Township with legal fortitude with the increasing threat of litigation. Alternative sources of funding need to be found to pay for the increased cost of services provided to the community.

The goals listed in Chapter 5 of this plan seek to direct the public and local government in the future at satisfying local needs and priorities. The goals outlined below provide a brief view into the values of the community as well as their concerns for the future. They were devised directly from the results of the community survey that local residents and government officials completed. Highlights are summarized as follows.

In regards to administration, one of the issues raised was the lack of proper communication with Township residents about local events, meetings, and going-ons. The Township needs to better communicate the details of such to its residents. For this purpose, multiple media like email, newspapers, bulletin boards, and newsletters need to be effectively used.

In reference to economic development, formulated goals include the increase of development while maintaining the small-town and rural character of

Liberty Township through planned and controlled growth. More economic development efforts and better coordination of such to attract new retail establishments and professional services is a central part of the development goals.

As far as zoning and housing is concerned, goals and objectives include addressing the current zoning code and land use issues as well as cleaning up nuisance areas by way of zoning regulations to make Liberty Township a more attractive place to live. Stricter enforcement of the Zoning Resolution needs to be prioritized to reduce the problem of junk in the Township. In addition, discouraging adult entertainment services/facilities through the addition of zoning text was found to be important to Township residents.

The community needs to strive to preserve its character and rural atmosphere through the research of open space and conservation type of developments. The Township should utilize its relationship with the Logan-Union-Champaign Regional Planning Commission to explore the use of conservation overlay districts, cluster housing, and farm village subdivisions.

In order to increase the quality of life for the residents of Liberty Township, local government needs to concentrate on the decreasing of poverty, the increasing of community involvement, increasing activities through local gatherings, and increasing social service presence. Options for social activities and entertainment should be expanded and citizen participation and involvement needs to be promoted. Education of the Township youth is also of great importance through the increase of local graduation rates and proficiency test scores to ensure state funding and to guarantee workforce or university readiness. In addition, increased patrolling of the Township adds to the feeling of well-being and safety.

In relation to access and transportation, solutions need to be found to mend the negative traffic problems. In order to reduce the problems created by Honda traffic, the possibility of traffic light installation needs to be investigated. Continued improvement and maintenance is also important to keep the streets safe and in good working condition.

Perhaps the most needed infrastructure goal pertains to sewer. Currently the Township residents have their own on-site septic. A need for central sewer in Raymond and Peoria is strongly felt by the community.

Lastly, Township residents value their local parks. The Township needs to make residents aware of Keckley Park and other park services. The addition of park infrastructure, equipment, and activities will also contribute to a healthier and happier community.

### **1.3 Significance of Study**

The most significant reason for the creation of the Liberty Township Comprehensive Plan is to improve the quality of life for its residents and to make it an attractive place to live and work. The Liberty Township Plan will be used as a means to guide local policy and development while at the same time protecting the physical environment and managing growth. This Plan is relevant in advising Township officials concerning overall future development, land use decisions, infrastructure and transportation planning, and political and fiscal administration. In addition, the plan is substantially essential in protecting community necessities such as the safety, health, and welfare of the citizenry. Also, it addresses the importance of economic development in assuring that residents have jobs, income, and resources in which to live as well as the necessary local services to provide for their physical and social needs.

The Comprehensive Plan developed here is meant to be a pro-active document in fulfilling Township needs and improvements. Rather than reacting to possible future problems, the intent of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide possible solutions to problems before they occur and to brainstorm and tackle existing challenges. Hence, planning is an attempt to lessen both the unfamiliar and unpredictable. The plan guides change while recognizing the practical needs and familiarity in which citizens find comfort. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan takes into account differing views among residents, government officials, political interests, business owners, and other community parties in an effort to create cooperation in the planning process that everyone can benefit from.

## **1.4 Summary of Chapters**

Below is a summary of the chapters contained in the Liberty Township Comprehensive Plan.

- *Chapter 1* provides a brief overview and introduction of the Plan and presents the purpose and background of the study.
- *Chapter 2* defines the Liberty Township study area as well as providing a brief community profile of the Township.
- *Chapter 3* discusses the methodology and analysis used in the research of the Liberty Township planning process.
- *Chapter 4* presents the problem analysis and resource inventory. It provides demographic, economic, and housing trends, and portrays the structure of local government, community facilities, infrastructure, and natural and historic resources. In addition, an overview of Liberty Township funding structure is given.
- *Chapter 5* includes the goals and objectives for Liberty Township.
- *Chapter 6* wraps up the plan with the recommended strategies for successful implementation of the goals and objectives.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LIBERTY TOWNSHIP STUDY AREA

#### **2.1 Liberty Township Study Area**

Liberty Township is located in the west central region of Union County, Ohio near the border of Logan and Union Counties. Both State Routes 739 and 347 intersect in Liberty Township. State Route 33, which connects to Columbus is about 1 mile South of the Township. The closest interstate highway is I-70, 35 miles to the south. Cities in close proximity include Marysville in Union County (8 miles), Urbana in Champaign County (28 miles), Bellefontaine in Logan County (21 miles), Delaware in Delaware County (22 miles), Marion in Marion County (28 miles), Springfield in Clark County (40 miles), Dublin (19 miles), Columbus (43 miles) and Dayton (69 miles).

#### **2.2 Community Profile**

Liberty Township was the sixth township established in Union County on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1822. The Township occupies approximately 23,451 acres at the western boundary of Union County. It is contiguous to Logan County in the west, York Township in the north, Taylor Township in the east, and Allen and Paris Townships in the south. There are two villages in Liberty Township, Raymond and Peoria, however they are not incorporated.

Mill Creek runs through the Township. Entering from Logan County on its western boundary, it meanders in a general southeastern course, leaving Union County to pass into Delaware County. Liberty Township is a part of three watersheds: Bokes Creek, Mill Creek, and Darby Creek Watersheds. The Mill Creek Watershed covers most of the Township. The other two watersheds cover very small portions of the Township -- Bokes Creek in the North and Darby Creek in the Southwest.

Most of the land in the Township, about 86.43% has a U-1 (Rural) zoning designation. 11.82% of the land is zoned I-1 (Special Limited Industrial). High Density Residential (R-3) makes up 0.85% of the Township's land.

Below you will find a community profile for the Liberty Township that includes various demographic facts and local information in Table 2.1.

### **2.3 Comparative Analysis**

The following Townships in Union County are also developing or have completed Comprehensive Plans: Allen, Darby, Jerome, Millcreek, and Taylor. The remaining Townships in Union County use the Union County Comprehensive Plan as a tool for guidance in development, land use, and the like. However, some countywide Comprehensive Plans tend to focus on the bigger towns or county seats and often ignore the townships and smaller villages. This has caused some bit of discontent at the township and village levels. As mentioned in Chapter One, the Township felt that the Union County Plan no longer fit their needs, visions, and goals. Therefore, this Comprehensive Plan for Liberty Township is being developed.

The last three decades have been summarized by a great deal of industrial development in the region due to Honda of America Manufacturing and their subsequent suppliers. Honda of America Manufacturing employs over 12,000 employees at 5 manufacturing plants (Marysville Motorcycle Plant, Marysville Automobile Plant, Anna Engine Plant, and East Liberty Automobile Plant, and Honda Transmission Manufacturing) in the region, most of which are within mere miles of the Township. In addition, Honda Research and Development is located in Liberty Township and employs approximately 930 associates. Hence, growth in population, housing development, and income has been a result for many communities in the region including the Liberty Township.

Union County has also experienced a great deal of growth due to the urban sprawl from the City of Columbus. Residents of Columbus are no longer satisfied with just relocating to its suburbs. They are continuing to move into the surrounding rural Townships in Union County to obtain an atmosphere of "country living".

## **Table 2.1 Liberty Township Community Profile**

*Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000*

### **Population & Demographics**

- Total Population 1,705
- Female Population 818
- Male Population 887
- Total Households 585
- Median Household Income \$50,625
- Median Housing Value \$126,500

### **Local Government**

- 3 Elected Township Trustees
- 1 Elected Township Clerk/Treasurer
- Zoned Community

### **Community Facilities**

- Churches 3
- Library 1
- Community Center 1
- Parks 3
- Ball Fields 3
- Cemeteries 3

### **Hospitals**

- Memorial Hospital of Union County in Marysville, 8 Miles
- Mary Rutan Hospital in Bellefontaine, 21 Miles
- Mercy Memorial Hospital in Urbana, 27 Miles
- Children's Hospital in Dublin, 19 Miles

### **Education**

- Marysville Exempted Village School District, Graduation Rate 96.2%, District Rating Excellent
- North Union School District (small portion of Liberty Township students), Graduation Rate 94%, District Rating Continuous Improvement

- Benjamin Logan School District (small portion of Liberty Township students), Graduation Rate 88.4%, District Rating Effective
- Raymond Elementary School, District Rating Effective
- Ohio Hi-Point Joint Vocation School in Bellefontaine, 21 Miles
- Urbana University in Urbana, 27 Miles
- Wittenberg University in Springfield, 40 Miles
- Clark State Community College in Springfield, 40 Miles
- Ohio State University in Columbus, 43 Miles
- Ohio State University Marion Branch, 28 Miles
- Marion Tech in Marion, 28 Miles
- Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, 22 Miles
- Capital University in Columbus, 43 Miles
- Franklin University in Columbus, 43 Miles
- Columbus State Community College in Columbus, 43 Miles

#### **Transportation**

- State Routes 739 & 347 in Township
- US Route 33, 2 Miles
- Interstate 70, 35 Miles
- Interstate 270, 19 Miles
- Interstate 71, 43 Miles

#### **Airports**

- Union County in Marysville, 8 Miles
- Urbana Grimes Field, 28 Miles
- Bellefontaine Municipal, 21 Miles
- Port Columbus International, 43 Miles
- Dayton International, 66 Miles

#### **Utilities**

- Electricity, Dayton Power & Light, Union Rural Electric
- Telephone, Sprint
- Cable, Time Warner Cable



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### **3.1 Methods of Analysis**

Data that was gathered for analysis and inventory in Chapter Four of this Comprehensive Plan was formatted and generated into tables and graphs to show trends and patterns using spreadsheets in the Microsoft Excel software program. These graphs include various forms of pie and bar charts as well as tables that were used to display information and the progression of such over time.

Mapping and GIS (Geographic Information Systems) services were implemented as part of this Plan as tools to portray the spatial and locational variations of specific socio-economic, environmental, and demographic data sets relevant to this Comprehensive Plan. This task was performed by LUC Regional Planning Commission using the ArcGIS software program.

The use of GIS in planning can be an important tool. It can be used for both inventorying and visualizing spatial data. GIS itself is a mapping program that allows the user to store, analyze, and display data that is spatial in nature. For purposes of this Liberty Township Plan, GIS was used mainly to display various layers of data in the form of maps. For example, in Chapter 4, you will find zoning, land use, and soil maps to name a few. In addition, GIS was used to analyze and exhibit the transportation networks in the Township. In all, the Liberty Township maps are presented as user-friendly sources to display data that is easy for the reader to understand.

#### **3.2 Data Sources**

Most of the data used in the Problem Analysis and Resource Inventory section (Chapter 4) of this Comprehensive Plan was taken from the U.S. Census

Bureau. Sources of data are quoted at the bottom of each table and graph in this Plan.

A community survey was sent out to the 1003 registered voters in Liberty Township. 262 (24%) of these residents returned the completed surveys to the Township. In addition, LUC Regional Planning Commission sent a survey with specific public service questions to all local Township government employees and officials. You will find the surveys in Appendices A and B. The results of the surveys were presented to the community and officials of Liberty Township at a public meeting, held on February 20, 2003.

Following the public meeting, three focus groups were organized to assist in solidifying Township needs, visions, goals, and objectives. Results were significant in first collecting general data and more importantly in gaining perspectives concerning community strengths and weaknesses. The focus group questions can be found in Appendix C. Attendance was approximately 31 people that participated in these focus groups. Further, a meeting with the Liberty Township Zoning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals was organized on September 8, 2003, to discuss specific land use issues and zoning items that needed to be included in the Plan.

The results of these surveys and focus groups were compiled and summarized using descriptive statistical techniques, and they constitute the basis for what follows in Chapter 5, Goals and Objectives. Liberty Township as well as LUC Regional Planning Commission is comfortable in the fact that the actual goals and objectives formulated in this Plan come directly from their citizenry and a diverse cross-section of their community. This Comprehensive Plan was built from citizen input and is truly a consensus-based document.

A community survey was necessary to involve public opinion in the planning process. A plan itself can be a consensus building activity, which derives support from the community. The survey is one way to attain balanced views and differing opinions for eventual action. It gathers diverse points of view and identifies problems that the planner may not have seen with out living or working in the community that is being planned for. The idea of planning needs to involve the community in an open process where everyone has the opportunity

to participate. Traditionally, the comprehensive planning process involved the public in the later half of the process only, often after a draft plan was produced. This would often cause some discontent in the community, probably because resident concerns were not addressed in the plan. Furthermore, if you want your local citizens to “buy into” and support the Plan, you must involve them forthright. Hence, we’ve attempted here through the use of the community survey, interviews, and early public meetings, to involve the citizenry in the “front-end” stages in hopes that input would actually shape the Plan. The resulting Plan, having been developed with community input, would therefore have a wider acceptance in the community.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**PROBLEM ANALYSIS**

**AND**

**RESOURCE INVENTORY**

**4.1 Introduction**

Analyzing existing patterns and conditions in the community by means of a “Problem Analysis and Resource Inventory” is a necessary part of a plan. It is essential to study or access the existing conditions before determining what direction to take, and how to get to the desired future. This was the case for Liberty Township. It was necessary to evaluate Liberty Township’s current situation in order to assess future goals and objectives.

Most of this part involves gathering and analyzing data. In the case of this Plan, most of the data was taken from the U.S. Census Bureau. Additional data was obtained from the Union County Engineer and the Union County Auditor’s Offices. The process that was used is outlined below:

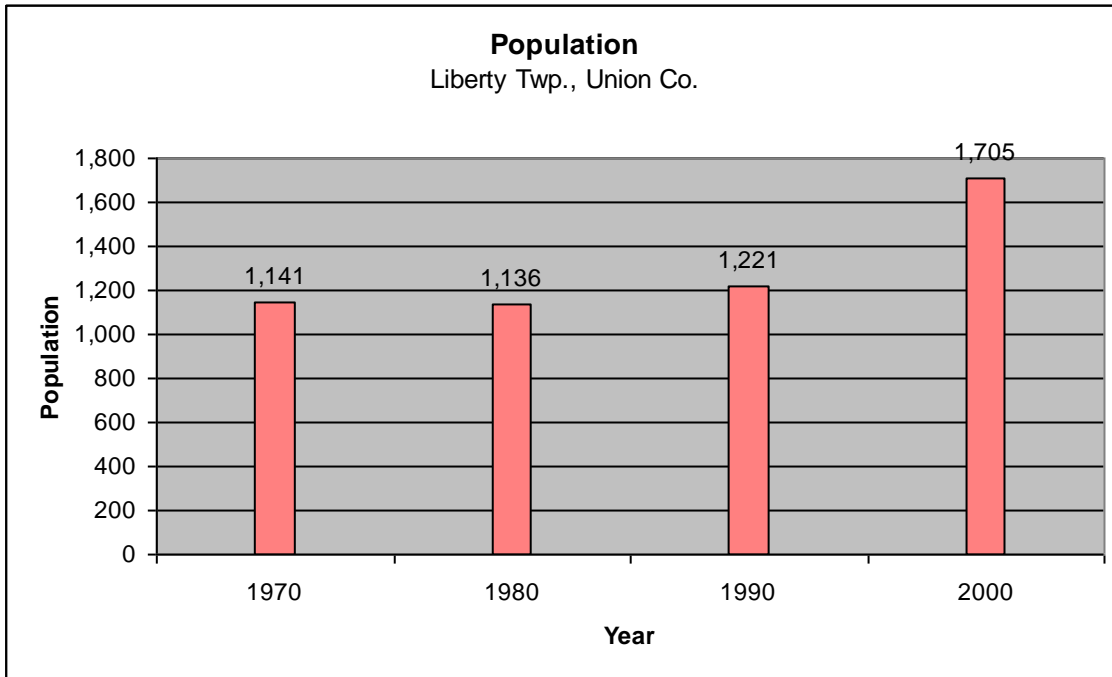
1. Identify the areas where data is needed
2. Assemble all previous reports that were performed in regards to Liberty Township
3. Gather all pertinent data for the subject areas already identified by use of internet
4. Analyze the data and transfer to charts, figures, and maps
5. Provide text to describe patterns and analysis

The areas that were identified as pertinent and necessary to study were demographic trends and patterns, economic trends and patterns, natural and historic resources, community facilities and infrastructure, housing characteristics, local government and community services, land use, and finally fiscal analysis.

## **4.2 Demographic Trends and Patterns**

### **4.2.1 Population Growth Trends**

Liberty Township has experienced a population growth of nearly 40% over the past decade. The 1,221 population figure of the Township for 1990 has increased to 1,705 according to the 2000 census data. In contrast, Union County's population has grown by 27.96% during 1990-2000. **Figure 4.1** shows the Township's population growth over the past three decades. This population growth is the 4th largest among all Townships in Union County for the 1990-2000 period. This growth may be attributed to Honda of America Manufacturing expanding its operations in the region or the continuing trend of further sprawl from the Columbus metropolitan area. Finally, the Ohio Department of Development estimates that the population increased to 1,926 in 2004.



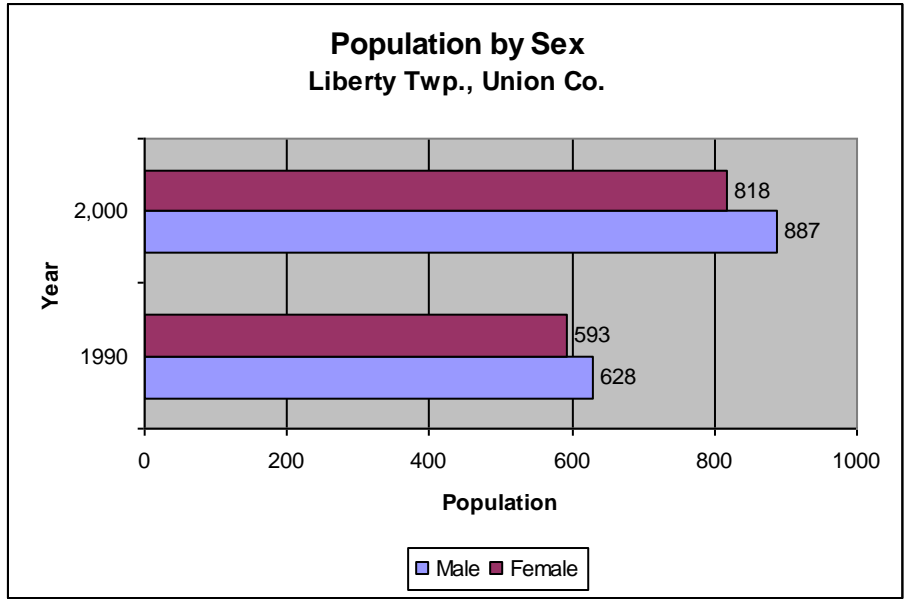
**Figure 4.1: Population**

Source: US Census Bureau

The total number of households in the Township has increased from 418 in 1990 to 585 in 2000, and the number of people living in these households has increased by 484 over the past decade alone.

**4.2.2: Age Group Trends**

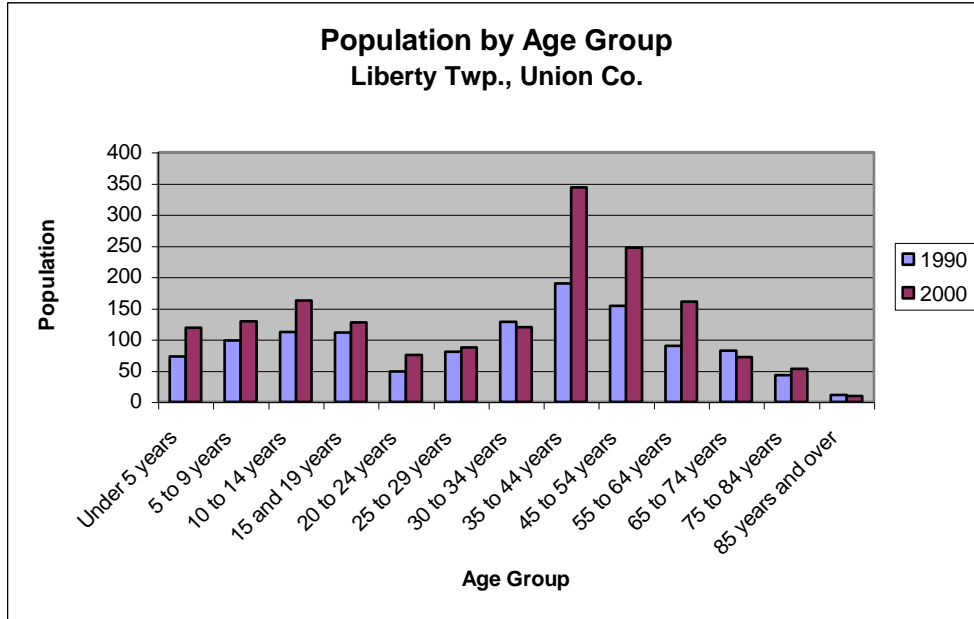
As seen in **Figure 4.2**, the number of males exceeds the number of females in the Township for the past two censuses. In addition, the median age of women is 36.8 years while that of the males is 35.3 years as shown in Table 4.1.



**Figure 4.2: Population by Sex**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

	Liberty Twp.	Union Co.	Ohio
<b>Median age</b>			
Both sexes	36.1	34.5	36.2
Male	35.3	33.7	34.9
Female	36.8	35.2	37.5



**Figure 4.3: Population by Age Group**

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990, 2000

**Figure 4.3** shows the population of the Township over the past two censuses by age group. The median age of the population is approximately 36 years (**Table 4.1**). In the year 2000, the largest age group was 34 to 44 years, which is 20.18% of the total population. This is followed by the 45 to 54 years age group, which makes up 14.49% of the total population in 2000 (**Table 4.2**)

**Table 4.2: Population by Age Group**

**Liberty Twp., Union Co.**

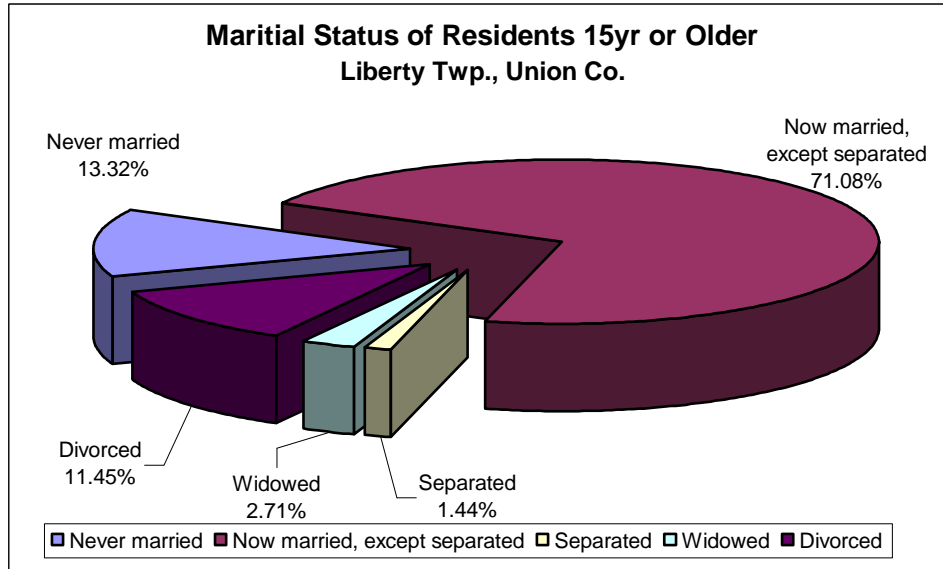
Source: US Census Bureau (1990,2000)

	1990		2000	
	Number	%	Number	%
Under 5 years	73	5.98%	119	6.98%
5 to 9 years	98	8.03%	129	7.57%
10 to 14 years	112	9.17%	162	9.50%
15 and 19 years	111	9.09%	127	7.45%
20 to 24 years	49	4.01%	75	4.40%
25 to 29 years	80	6.55%	87	5.10%
30 to 34 years	128	10.48%	120	7.04%
35 to 44 years	190	15.56%	344	20.18%
45 to 54 years	154	12.61%	247	14.49%
55 to 64 years	90	7.37%	161	9.44%
65 to 74 years	82	6.72%	72	4.22%
75 to 84 years	43	3.52%	53	3.11%
85 years and over	11	0.90%	9	0.53%
Total:	1221		1705	



### **4.2.3: Marital Status**

According to the 2000 Census of Liberty Township, currently married residents 15 years or older make up 71.08% of the population. **Figure 4.4** shows that 13.32 % Liberty Township residents 15 years or older have never been married, 11.45% are Divorced, 2.71% are Widowed, and 1.44% are Separated.



**Figure 4.4: Marital Status of Residents 15 years or Older in %**

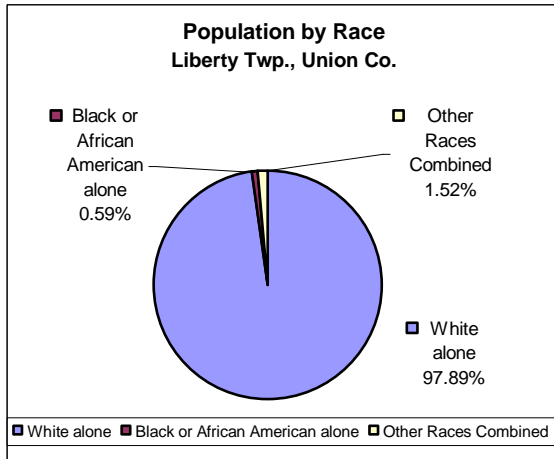
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

#### **4.2.4: Education**

**Table 4.3** shows the educational attainment as percentage of population over 25 years of age in Liberty Township. Approximately 52% of population over 25 years of age has a High School Diploma. In contrast, the Union County High School graduation rate is nearly 44%. Around 2% of population over 25 years of age has an Associate’s Degree, 9% has a Bachelor’s Degree and almost 2% has Graduate or Professional Degree.

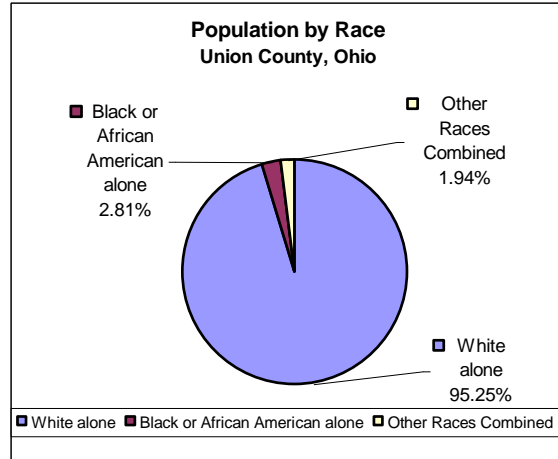
<b>Table 4.3: Educational Attainment of population 25 years or older</b>		
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000		
<b>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</b>	<b>Liberty Twp</b>	<b>Union Co</b>
Less than 9th grade	3.03%	3.25%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	7.14%	10.67%
High school graduate	51.86%	43.88%
Some college, no degree	25.24%	20.60%
Associate degree	2.15%	5.60%
Bachelor's degree	8.90%	11.80%
Graduate or professional degree	1.66%	4.20%
Percent high school graduate or higher	89.80%	86.00%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	10.60%	15.90%

#### 4.2.5: Race



**Figure 4.5 Population by Race  
Liberty Township**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000



**Figure 4.6 Population by Race  
Union County**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

The two figures above, **Figure 4.5** & **Figure 4.6** show the racial population breakdown in Liberty Township and Union County. The percentage of African Americans in Liberty Township (0.59%) is less than that in Union County (2.81%). This leaves approximately 98% of Liberty Township's residents that are Caucasian. The remaining 1.52% population is comprised of other races like, American Indian & Alaska Natives, Asians, Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders and some other races.

### **4.3 Economic Trends and Patterns**

#### **4.3.1 Income and Occupations**

<b>Table 4.4 Median household income in 1999</b>	
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000	
<b>Region</b>	<b>Dollars</b>
Liberty Township	50,625
Union County	51,743
Ohio	40,956

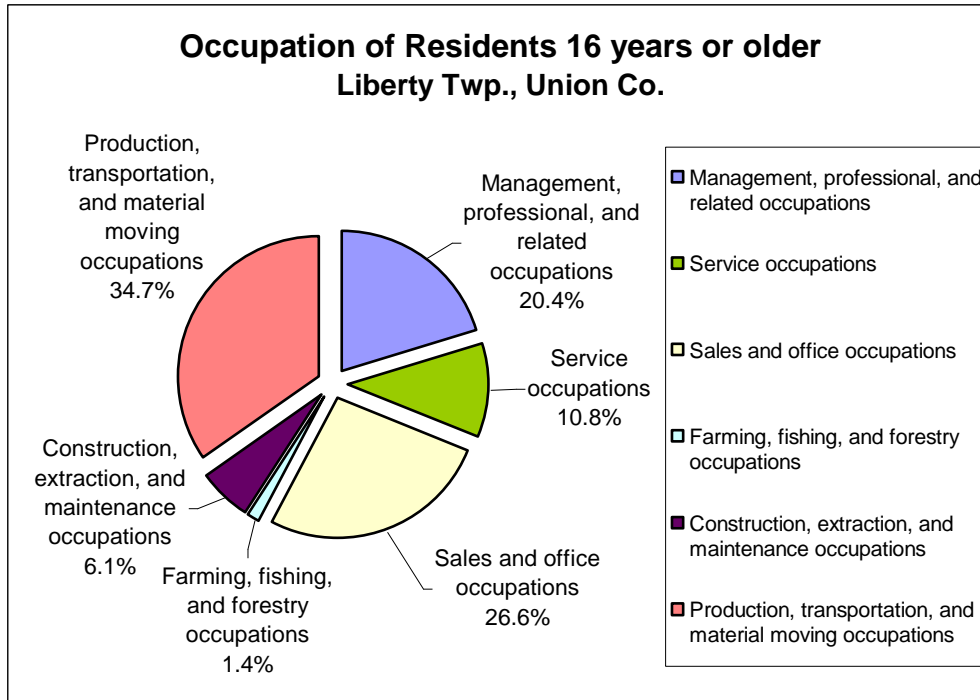
**Table 4.4** shows that the median household income in Liberty Township (\$50,625) is greater than that of the State of Ohio (\$40,956). However, it is about \$1,100 less than that in Union County (\$51,743). **Table 4.6** shows that the highest percentage of households falls in the \$50,000 to \$59,999 household income category. The \$50,000 to \$99,999 category makes up 42.57% of the entire Township's households. This figure is similar to that for Union County (41.98%). In contrast, only 30.36% of households in the State of Ohio fall in this household income category.

<b>Table 4.6: Household Income in 1999 (% Households)</b>			
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000			
	<b>Liberty Twp.</b>	<b>Union Co.</b>	<b>Ohio</b>
Less than \$10,000	3.12	4.96	9.15
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.04	4.23	6.42
\$15,000 to \$19,999	3.85	4.95	6.44
\$20,000 to \$24,999	0.55	5.17	6.92
\$25,000 to \$29,999	1.83	5.74	6.79
\$30,000 to \$34,999	1.28	4.55	6.78
\$35,000 to \$39,999	9.54	5.60	6.22
\$40,000 to \$44,999	8.07	6.27	5.92
\$45,000 to \$49,999	15.96	5.71	5.21
\$50,000 to \$59,999	16.15	12.06	9.59
\$60,000 to \$74,999	12.84	14.71	10.77
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13.58	15.21	10.00
\$100,000 to \$124,999	3.49	6.07	4.50
\$125,000 to \$149,999	5.69	2.66	2.00
\$150,000 to \$199,999	0.00	1.53	1.60
\$200,000 or more	0.00	0.59	1.71

**Table 4.5** below shows that the unemployment rate in Liberty Township is 2.69%. This is slightly higher than the unemployment rate in Union County (2.26%). It is comparatively low, about half that of the State of Ohio (4.96%). This may be attributed to the presence of Honda of America Manufacturing in the Township.

<b>Table 4.5: Employment Status</b>						
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000						
<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>Liberty Twp.</b>		<b>Union Co.</b>		<b>Ohio</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Population 16 years and over</b>	<b>1,170</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30,747</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8,788,494</b>	<b>100</b>
In labor force	892	76.2	21,333	69.4	5,694,708	64.8
Armed forces	0	0	23	0.1	9,918	0.1
Civilian labor force	892	76.2	21,310	69.3	5,684,790	64.7
Employed	868	74.2	20,826	67.7	5,402,175	61.5
Unemployed	24	2.1	484	1.6	282,615	3.2
Percent of civilian labor force	2.7	-	2.3	-	5	-
Not in labor force	278	23.8	9,414	30.6	3,093,786	35.2
% of Unemployment	2.69		2.26		4.96	

**Figure 4.7** shows that 34.7% of the Township’s residents 16 years or older are employed in the Production, Transportation, and Material moving occupations. Another 26.6% are in the Sales and Office occupations, and 20.4% are in the Management, Professional and Related occupations. If we compare the figures for Liberty Township with those for Union County and the State of Ohio in **Table 4.7**, we find that the Production, Transportation, and Material moving occupations sector doesn’t reflect the State closely. In fact the figures for this sector in Liberty Township (34.7%) are nearly 1.5 times that of Union County (23.4%) and nearly double that of the State (19%). The figures for Sales and Office occupations are nearly the same for all the three regions, Liberty Township (26.6%), Union County (26.3%), State of Ohio (26.4%).



**Figure 4.7: Occupation of Residents 16 years or older**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

**Table 4.7: Occupation of Residents 16 years or older**  
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

OCCUPATION	(%)		
	Liberty Twp	Union Co	Ohio
Management, professional, and related occupations	20.4	27.1	31
Service occupations	10.8	13.8	14.6
Sales and office occupations	26.6	26.3	26.4
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	1.4	0.8	0.3
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	6.1	8.7	8.7
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	34.7	23.4	19

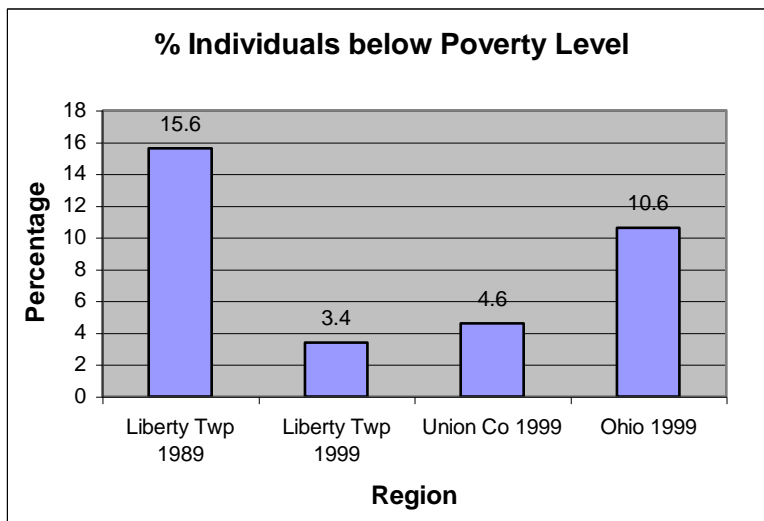
**Table 4.8** shows the percentage of different industries in Liberty Township, Union County and the State of Ohio. About 43.80% of the industries in Liberty Township are of manufacturing type, and another 5.3% are transportation, warehousing and utilities related. Together these two industries represent 49.1% of all the industries in the Township. The manufacturing industry percentage for Liberty Township is more than double that of the State of Ohio.

<b>Table 4.8: Industry</b>			
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000			
<b>INDUSTRY</b>	<b>(%)</b>		
	<b>Liberty Twp</b>	<b>Union Co</b>	<b>Ohio</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	2.8	3.2	1.1
Construction	3.8	5.6	6
Manufacturing	43.8	26.1	20
Wholesale trade	0.7	4.2	3.6
Retail trade	8.2	10.8	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5.3	4.7	4.9
Information	0.8	2.7	2.4
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	4.5	5.2	6.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	8.5	8.6	8
Educational, health and social services	10.9	14.4	19.7
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	6.1	6.5	7.5
Other services (except public administration)	2.1	4	4.5
Public administration	2.5	3.9	4.1

#### **4.3.2: Poverty Status**

**Table 4.9** shows that the number of families below poverty level dropped significantly between 1989 and 1999. In 1989, there were 47 (13.2%) such families, and in 1999 there were 17 families (3.7%). **Figure 4.8** shows that the poverty level for individuals in Liberty Township has decreased since 1989 as well. In 1999, 3.4% of individuals were below the poverty level as compared to 15.6% in 1989. As per **Figure 4.8** the percentage of individuals below the poverty level in the year 1999 in Liberty Township (3.4%) is lower than that of Union County (4.6%) and the State of Ohio (10.6%) for the 2000 Census.

<b>Table 4.9 POVERTY STATUS (below poverty level)</b>								
Source: US Census Bureau (1990,2000)								
POVERTY STATUS IN 1999 (below poverty level)	Liberty Twp. 1989		Liberty Twp. 1999		Union Co. 1999		Ohio 1999	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Families	47	13.2	17	3.7	397	3.6	235,026	7.8



**Figure 4.8: % Individuals below Poverty Level**

Source: US Census Bureau (1990, 2000)

The Department of Health and Human Services defines the federal poverty level based on the number of persons living in the family unit. If only there is only 1 person in the household, the poverty level is defined as \$9,570 or less; 2 persons \$12,830; 3 persons \$16,090; 4 persons \$19,350; 5 persons \$22,610; 6 persons \$25,870; 7 persons \$29,130; 8 persons \$32,390. For each additional person in the family, \$3,260 is added.



## **4.4 Natural and Historic Resources**

### **4.4.1 Location**

Liberty Township is located on the west central region of Union County, Ohio near the border of Logan and Union Counties. Both State Routes 739 and 347 meet in Liberty Township. US Route 33, which connects to Columbus, is about 1 mile South of the Township. The closest interstate highway is I-70, 35 miles to the South. Cities in close proximity include Marysville in Union County (8 miles), Dublin in Union, Delaware, and Franklin Counties (19 miles), Bellefontaine in Logan County (21 miles), Delaware in Delaware County (22 miles), Urbana in Champaign County (28 miles), Marion in Marion County (28 miles), Springfield in Clark County (40 miles), Columbus (42 miles) and Dayton (69 miles).

### **4.4.2 Topographic Features**

A topographic map constitutes the shape of the earth's surface that is shown by contour lines. By observing the topology for Liberty Township and the spacing of the contours, we see that the geology of the region is relatively flat to the south of Mill Creek in the west central part of the Township and slightly rolling elsewhere. Four streams run pass through the Township which include Mill Creek, Otter Run, Flat Branch, and Blues Creek.

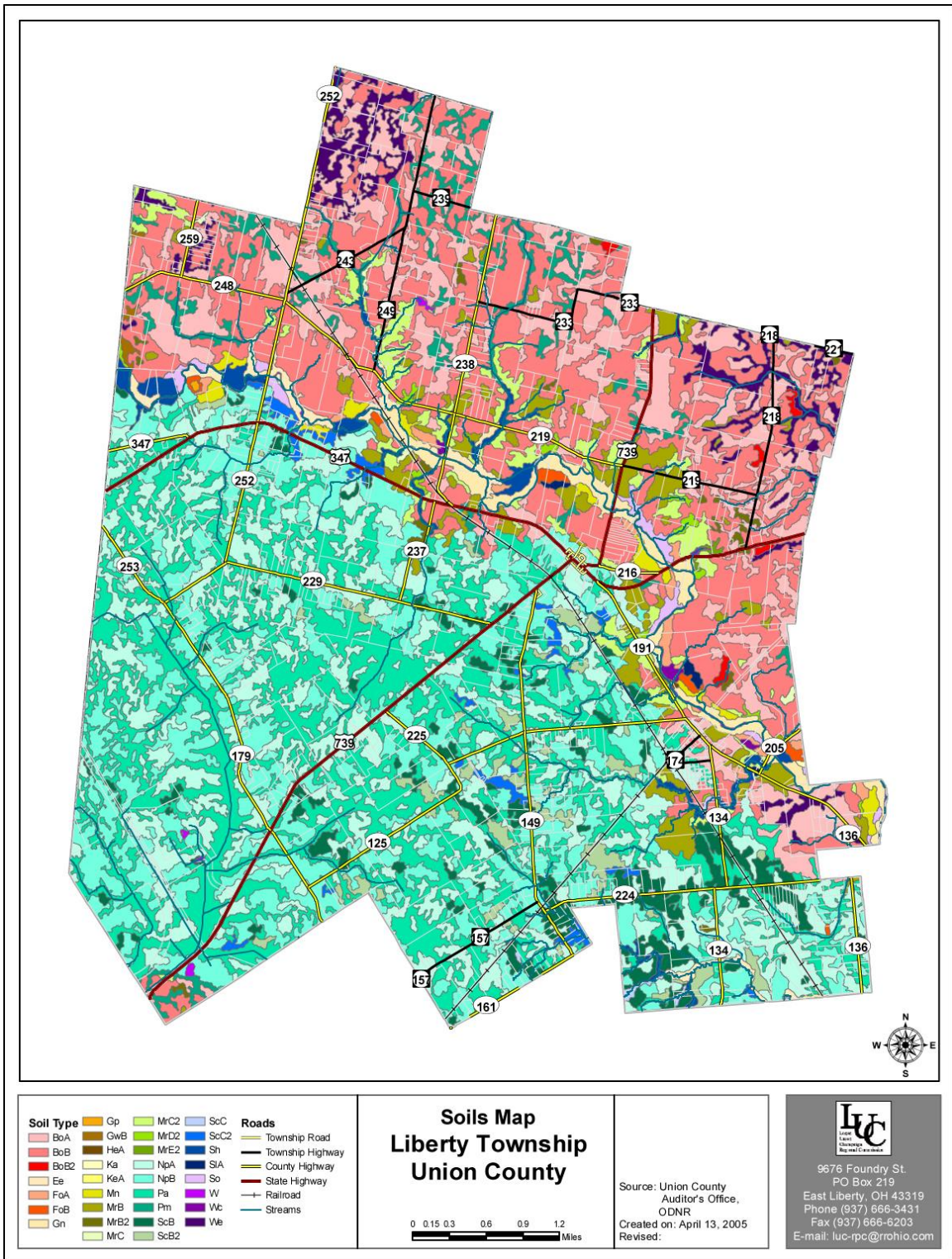
### **4.4.3 Soils**

Soils are very important to identify land which has good bearing and drainage capacity for development, septic tank suitability, depth to bedrock, and other potential hazards such as flooding and slope failure. In addition, it is important to consider the types of soils that are appropriate for building foundations, septic tanks, roads, and underground utilities.

The three major soil types found in Liberty Township are Nappanee silt loam (30.15%), Blount silt loam (28.26%), and Paulding silty clay (19.62%). The Nappanee, Blount and Paulding series consist of nearly level to gently sloping soils that are somewhat poorly drained, and are used mostly for pasture and

crops. Paulding soils have a high shrink swell potential, and Napanee and Blount soils have Moderate shrink swell potential. This high to moderate shrink swell potential can cause cracks in basement walls and renders the soils generally undesirable for building and road construction. Due to the poor permeability and the seasonal high water table associated with these types of soils, they are poorly suited for septic tank absorption fields.

Figure 4.9 - Liberty Township Soil Types

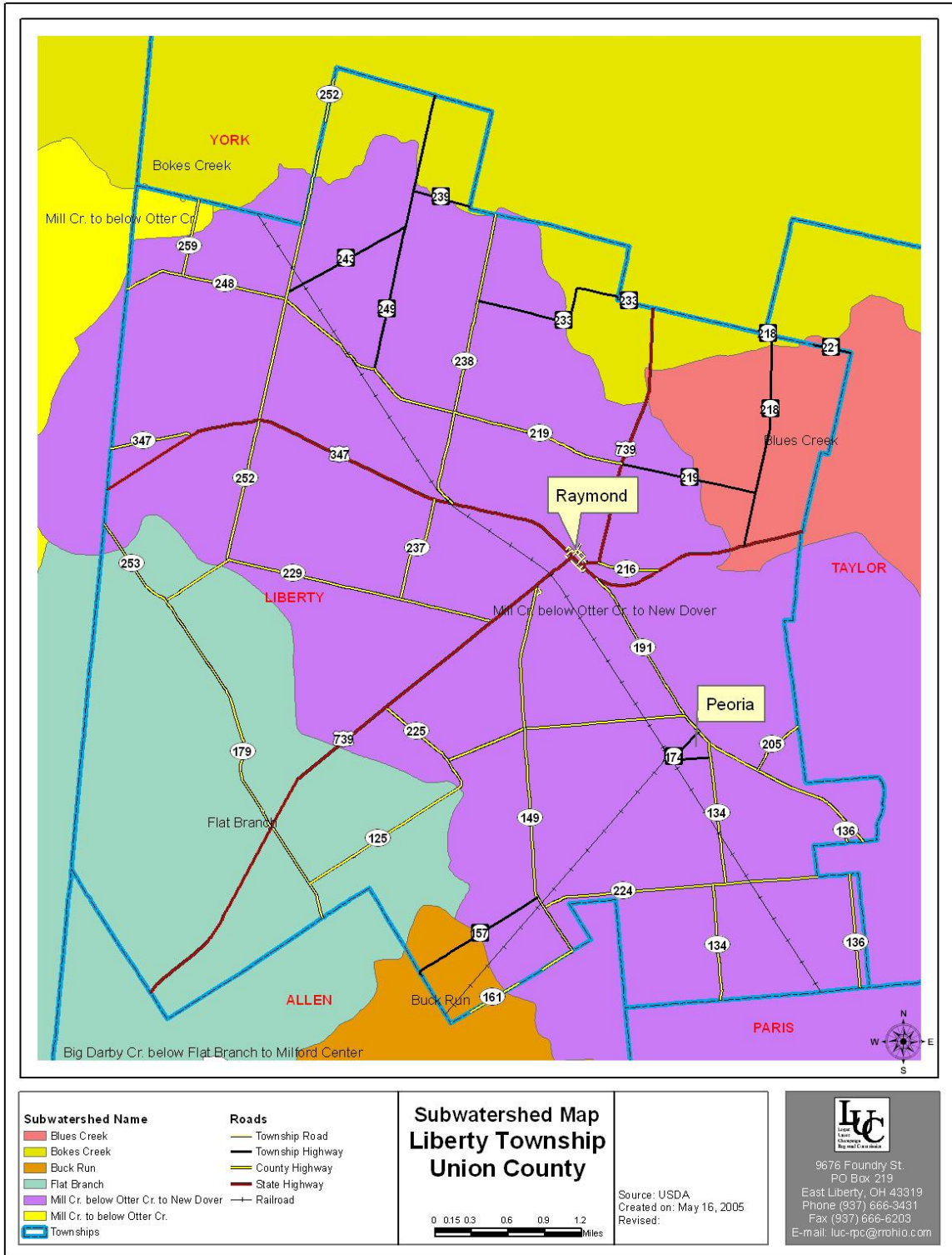


#### **4.4.5 Mill Creek, Bokes Creek, and Darby Creek Watersheds**

A watershed is the land that water flows across or under on its way to a stream or lake. Liberty Township is a part of the Mill Creek, Darby Creek, and Bokes Creek Watersheds. Figure 4.10 shows the watershed boundaries in Liberty Township. Mill Creek to below Otter Creek, Mill Creek below Otter Creek to New Dover, and Blues Creek Sub-Watersheds are part of Mill Creek Watershed. Flat Branch, and Buck Run sub-watersheds are a part of the Darby Creek Watershed.

Mill Creek and Bokes Creek Watersheds respectively drain 178 square miles and 84.2 square miles of land in Logan, Union and Delaware Counties. The Darby Creek Watershed system drains to about 560 square miles of land in six counties in Central Ohio including Southwestern portions of Union County. The Bokes Creek Watershed (39.7 Miles long), Mill Creek Watershed (37 Miles long), and Darby Creek Watershed (over 300 Mile long) include main stem and tributary streams that flow through agricultural, urban, and transitional areas. The Mill Creek Watershed provides 66% of the drinking water for the City of Marysville. Consequently, the Darby Creek Watershed has been named one of the top five exceptionally warm freshwater habitats in the Midwestern United States and one of the most diverse of watersheds in the country according to size.

**Figure 4.10- Liberty Township Watersheds**



#### **4.4.6 Settlement and Incorporation**

Liberty Township was the sixth township formed in Union County on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1822. At this time, the boundary of the Township stretched from the southwest corner of Paris Township, then west to the County line, then north to the north boundary of the County, and then east to the west boundary of Paris Township. Upon the organization of Allen Township in the south on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1827 and York Township in the north December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1833, the territory of the Township was reduced and brought to its present limits and boundaries.

In 1824 the first schoolhouse was erected in Liberty Township, however, until 1853 no official record was kept of the schools in Liberty Township. The first teacher was William Edgar. In 1982 bonds were issued after a vote to start a High School in Newton. The Methodist Episcopal Church at Newton was the first organized religious body in Liberty Township formed in 1819.

Levi Carter was believed to be the first settler of the Township and moved here in 1813-1814. His brother Israel Carter moved to the Township two years later. Dr. Winthrop Chandler came to Ohio in 1818 and was the first doctor to reside in the Township. Samuel Orahood erected the first mill in Liberty Township in 1831-32.

The Village of Newton (now known as Raymond) was subdivided into lots and streets on August 25, 1838. The same year, the first hotel and store were opened in the Village, and the first post office was established in 1842. Finally, Peoria was surveyed and came into existence on May 20, 1870.

## **4.5 Township Facilities and Infrastructure**

### **4.5.1 Introduction**

Creating and maintaining an environment that is conducive to a good quality of life in Liberty Township is a necessary function of government. The results of the community survey, focus group discussions, and public meeting indicate that the residents of the Township feel the area is rich in positive life values, and hence, they wish to maintain them. Contributing to this sense of well-being is the fact that the infrastructure that supports the quality of life is in place and is functioning to their expectations. It is important to continue to maintain and improve those facilities so that future residents can enjoy the same level of success. The major infrastructure items studied in this report include transportation, drinking water, wastewater, and storm water control.

### **4.5.2 Highways**

The existing system of highways is maintained by three separate government entities. Each entity has its own unique program to maintain and improve their portion of the system.

The Ohio Department of Transportation maintains the nineteen miles of the State Highways system that are located within the township. The State Highway system is composed of State Highway Number 347 that passes through the Township west to east and State Highway Number 739 that transects the Township from the southwest to the northeast. The two highways intersect in the community of Raymond.

Portions of both State Highways serve as feeder routes for materials and human resources for the large Honda facilities located adjacent to the Township's south boundary. Both State Highways are in fair condition and are adequate for the traffic they carry. The residents of the community of Raymond have concerns about the amount of through traffic in the more densely populated area. A goal of the Township is to reduce the negative impact the through traffic has in the Raymond area. Two methods were suggested to address this concern, and they appear in the Goals and Objectives portion of the study.



Union County maintains the majority of the highways in the Township. The Union County Engineer is responsible for the maintenance of the County Highways. It should be noted that the County Engineer is also responsible for maintaining all bridges greater than ten feet in length on both the County and Township Highway system.

All of the County Highways are in fair to excellent condition. The Union County Engineer has an ongoing program to improve the roads on the County system. The program is based in part, on the County functional classification system that is shown on Table 4.10. State Highway Number 347 and State Highway Number 739 are designated as Major Collectors, while Raymond Road, Bear Swamp Road, Johnson Road and Lunda Road are all designated as Minor Collectors. All other roads in the Township are considered Local roads. The functional classification of a road indicates the service that road provides to the County system as a whole. Therefore, the highways assigned classifications above the local designation are providing links to other parts of the system. Johnson Road is scheduled for improvement in 2005, while Bear Swamp road is targeted for improvement in 2008 and Raymond Road in 2009.

During the 2004 construction season, the County improved Liberty West Road by resurfacing and Shirk Road by widening and resurfacing. During the 2005 construction season, the county widened Paver Barnes Road and Dog Leg Road. These two roads will be resurfaced in 2006. In addition, the County replaced three bridges in 2005: Wheeler Road, Paver Barnes Road Section G, and Hoover Bault Road Section B. No bridge replacements or road widenings are planned for Liberty Township in 2006.

One of the objectives of the Union County Master Plan was to establish an Access Management Plan for the rural areas of Union County. An Access Management Plan of Union County was adopted in 2003 and is in effect. This Plan will protect the County and Township systems from detrimental development of driveways along the sides of the rural roads. By requiring minimum spacing and encouraging common access drives, the usefulness of the existing highways is maintained in the future.



The third component of the road system in the Township is the Liberty Township Highway system. This system is comprised of roughly eleven and one-half miles of roads assigned to the Township Trustees for maintenance. The Liberty Township Highways were evaluated for condition and the results of the evaluation are shown on Table 4.10. In general, the Township Highways are in fair condition. The only highway closed is Benton Road in the south end of the Township. The road is closed because of the unstable soil conditions in the area.

The Union County Engineer has established minimum standards for the County Highway system, which includes a minimum pavement width of twenty feet. It can be seen from the Inventory and Condition chart that none of the Township Highways have twenty feet of pavement. Additionally, only Peoria Loop Road has sixty feet of right-of-way that would support twenty feet of pavement.

One of the objectives of the Plan is to continue the improvement of the highways in the Township. The Trustees may wish to develop an annual plan to resurface and possibly widen the roads on the Township Highway system. Such a program will need to be financed from the dedicated highway funds from license plate fees and gasoline tax revenues.

During past six years, the license plate revenues have averaged \$4,500 each year and the gasoline tax has provided, on average, another \$50,000 for a total of \$54,500 each year. In 2003, the Ohio Legislature enacted a measure that will dramatically increase the gasoline tax revenue. By phasing in a tax increase and also changing the funding of the Highway Patrol, the Township will realize an additional \$44,000 (projected) by 2007.

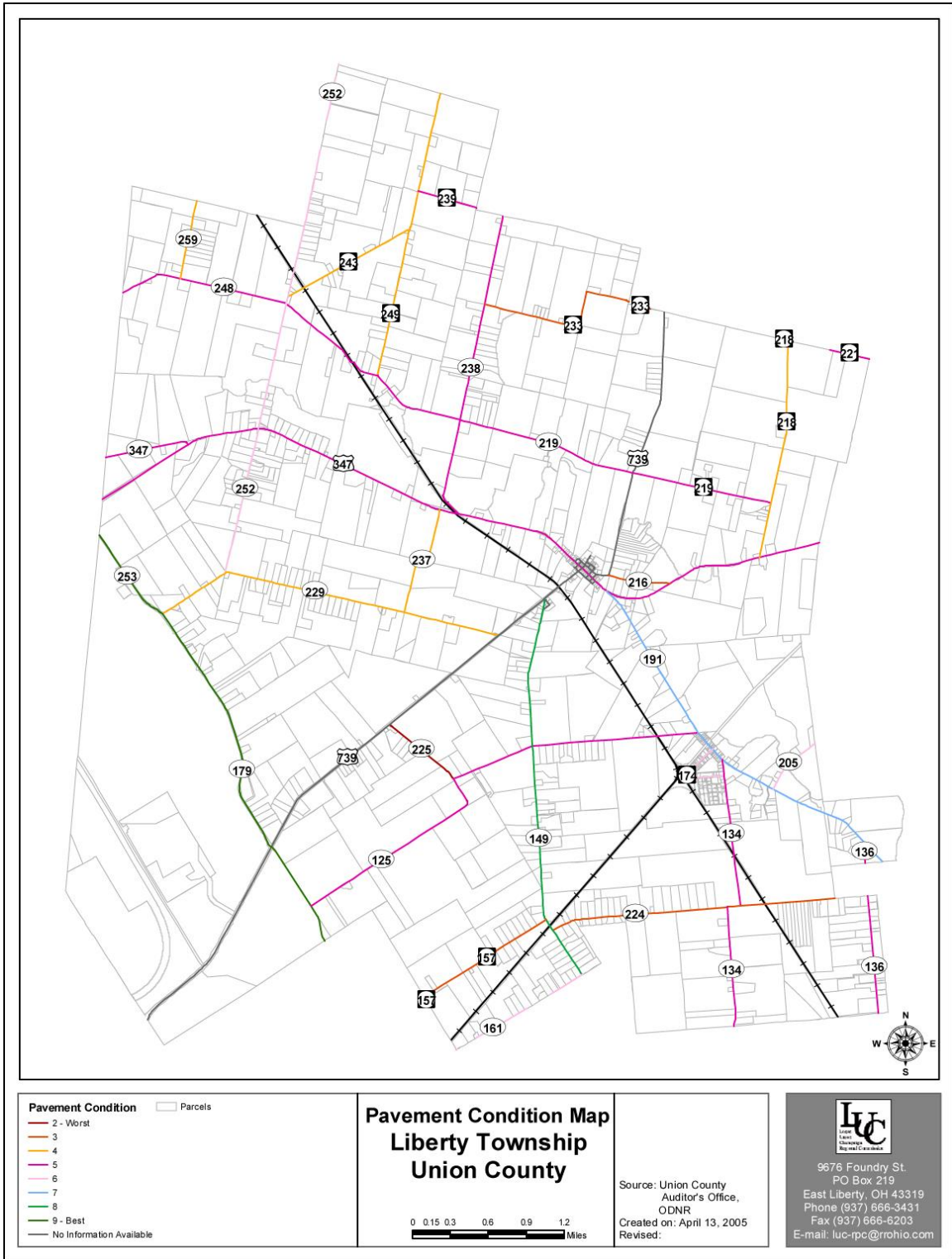
The average daily traffic count in 2004 is 28,565 vehicles per day, and is projected to grow to 37,135 by the year 2014.

<b>Table 4.10: Surface Rating Condition Codes</b>				
Road Number	Road Name	Section		Condition
		From	To	
157	Benton Rd	Allen Twp.	Bear Swamp Rd.	2
174	Peoria Loop Rd.	Raymond Rd.	Paver-Barnes Rd.	7
218	Patrick-Brush Run Rd.	SR 347	Barnett Rd.	5
219	Hoover-Bault Rd.	SR 739	Patrick-Brush Run Rd.	5
221	Barnett Rd.	Patrick-Brush Run rd.	Taylor Twp.	5
233	Evans Rd.	Storms Rd.	SR 739	5
239	Cahill Rd.	Coder-Holloway Rd.	Morse Rd.	6
243	Morse Rd.	Lunda Rd.	Coder- Holloway Rd.	9
249	Coder-Holloway Rd.	Hoover-Bault Rd.	Morse Rd.	6
249	Coder-Holloway Rd.	Morse Rd.	Cahill Rd.	8
249	Coder-Holloway Rd.	Cahill Rd.	York Twp.	6
Excellent Surface Condition				10
No Cracking but some irregularities				9
Minor Cracking, some rough areas				8
Open Cracks, rough areas				7
Minor breakup, out of shape, minor patching				6
Out of shape, patching, beginning breakup				5
Out of shape, patches, some pavement failure				4
Pavement and base failing				3
Critical condition due to failure				2

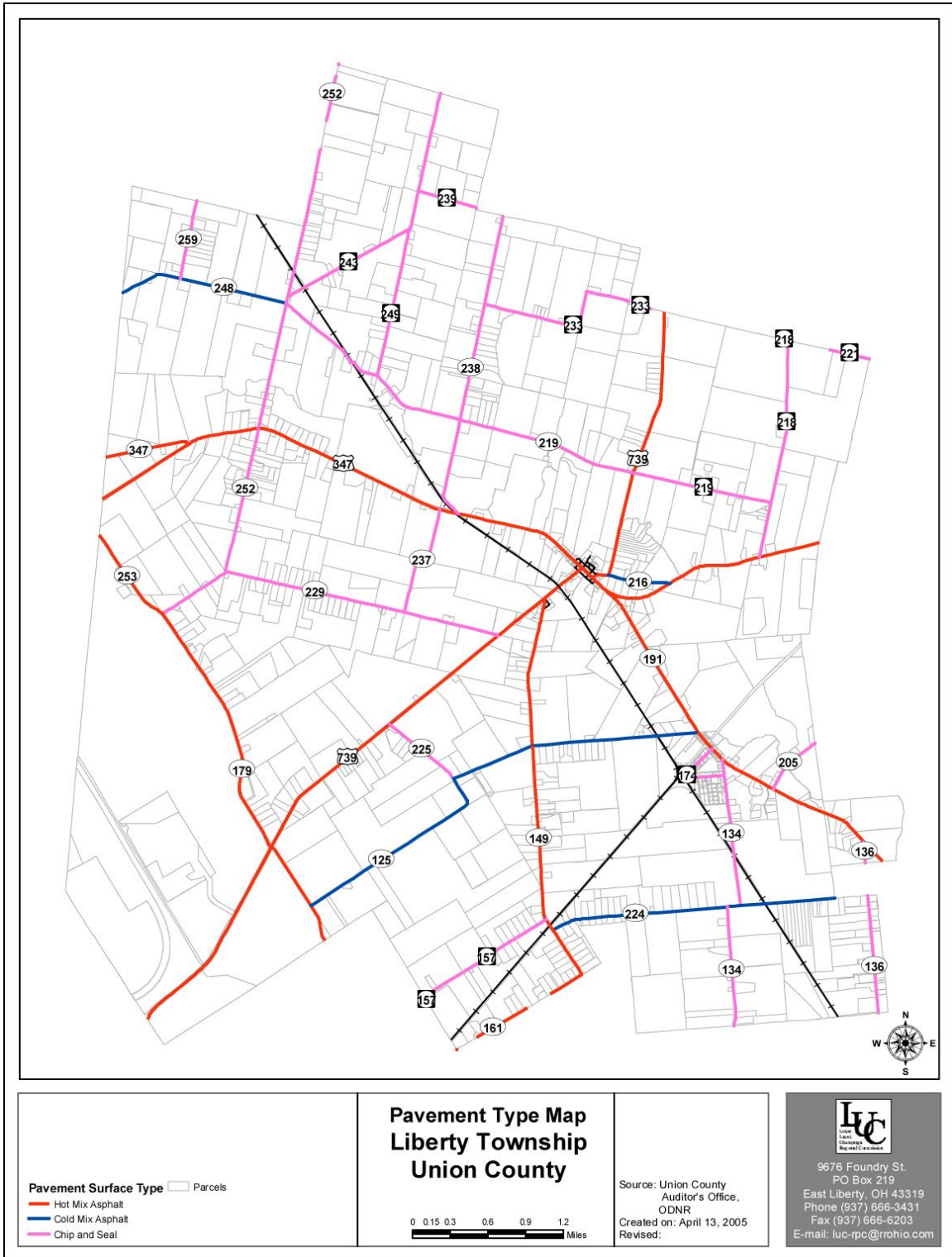
<b>Table 4.11- Township Streets by Road Type</b>	
Type	Miles
State Highway	18.88
County Highway	29.23
Township Highway/Roads	11.43
<b>Total</b>	<b>59.54</b>

<b>Table 4.12- Township Streets by Condition</b>	
Condition	%
Poor	22.67
Fair	44.88
Good	16.03
Not Rated	16.42

**Figure 4.11 Liberty Township Streets Condition**



**Figure 4.12 Liberty Township Streets**



### **4.5.3 Railroads**

Two railroads operate facilities in the Township. CSX railroad operates a line that carries freight through the State of Ohio. There is a connection at Peoria with the ORTA Rail Road. ORTA Rail Road operates a local service to the Honda manufacturing facilities.

### **4.5.4 Air**

Regional airports are located in Marysville and Bellefontaine. These are both General Aviation airports and are not served by large commercial air services. Small business jets can use these facilities. Port Columbus and Rickenbacher airport, which are both located to the east in Columbus provide connections to passenger airlines and large freight carries.

### **4.5.5 Drinking Water Facilities**

There are no public drinking water facilities in the Township. The residents rely on private wells for drinking water.

### **4.5.6 Wastewater Facilities**

At this time, all of the residents of the Township rely on septic systems to treat household wastewater with the exception of the Raymond School, which houses its own sewage package plant. While this is adequate in the rural portion of the Township, the more densely located residents of Peoria and Raymond are at risk of developing problems in the future.

Union County is currently developing a plan to provide a wastewater system to collect the wastewater from the residents of Peoria and Raymond and then transport it to a treatment facility.

### **4.5.7 Storm Water Systems**

There is a concern in the community with respect to storm water runoff. The existing systems in the unincorporated villages of Raymond and Peoria consist of old tiles that are inadequate to handle the water during rainy periods.

As with all communities that were developed in the distant past, this has become a major environmental issue.

Since these communities are not incorporated, the statutory remedies for these problems are the same remedies that are used to drain agricultural land. All of the existing government programs for drainage require the landowners to bear the cost of the work. Listed below are three different methods of available to the storm water problems.

The first method is the most simple. The landowners would contact the Union County Soil and Water Conservation Office and begin the process to establish a co-operative group project. The Soil and Water employees would then have the interested parties sign an agreement. Once the agreement was in place, the Soil and Water District would perform field studies and develop the plans for the drainage improvements. Once the owners agree with the plan, the Soil and Water District would hire the contractor and have the work completed. The cost of the project would be pro-rated to all of the owners in the Watershed who have signed the agreement. This method depends on all of the landowners to cooperate and willingly pay their share of the cost. This method does not address the issue of maintaining the facility in the future.

The second method is for a landowner or group of landowners to petition the local Soil and Water District asking for an improvement to be made. In this more formal process, a study is made and the Board of Supervisors holds public hearings to determine the need for the project and to approve the final plan. As with the group project, the District would collect the funds to pay for the work from the landowners in the Watershed and then take bids from contractors to have the work completed. If a project is constructed in this manner, the project can then be placed on permanent maintenance. The cost of the maintenance would be pro-rated to the Watershed in the same fashion as the construction cost was pro-rated.

The third, and more time consuming method, is for the landowners to petition the County Commissioners to perform the improvements under the County ditch petition process. This process requires the County Engineer to perform the preliminary study and develop a preliminary cost estimate. The

Commissioners then hold a public hearing to determine if a project is cost effective. If as a result of the first hearing, the Commissioners order the project to move forward, the County Engineer would then prepare a final plan, as well as a schedule of assessment that pro-rates the project cost over every landowner in the Watershed. A second hearing is held by the County Commissioners. If the Commissioners order the project forward, the County Engineer is responsible for taking bids on the contract and ensuring the work is done in a timely manner. The funds for construction are collected from the landowners either through direct payments or collecting the payment over time when the annual property taxes are collected. Once the project is built, the new facility is placed on perpetual maintenance funded by the landowners.

Please note again that all three of these methods require the landowners to pay for the improvements, and only the last two methods provide for perpetual maintenance. If in there are problems in the road right-of-ways on Township roads, the Township is responsible for fixing the drainage systems.

## 4.6 Housing Characteristics

### 4.6.1 Housing Values

**Table 4.13: Owner Occupied Housing Unit Value  
in Median Dollars**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

	Liberty Twp	Union Co	Ohio
Median (\$)	\$126,500	\$128,800	\$103,700

**Table 4.14: Owner Occupied Housing Unit Value**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

	Liberty Twp		Union Co	
	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Specified Owner-occupied housing units</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8,544</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>VALUE</b>				
Less than \$10,000 to \$34,999	0	0	68	0.9
\$35,000 to \$69,999	18	4.8	572	6.7
\$70,000 to \$99,999	103	27.1	1956	22.9
\$100,000 to \$149,999	160	42.1	3211	37.5
\$150,000 to \$199,999	83	21.9	1692	19.8
\$200,000 to \$249,999	16	4.2	638	7.5
\$250,000 to \$299,999	0	0	218	2.6
\$300,000 to \$399,999	0	0	118	1.4
\$400,000 to \$499,999	0	0	47	0.6
\$500,000 to \$749,999	0	0	14	0.2
\$750,000 to \$999,999	0	0	0	0
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0	10	0.1
Median (dollars)	\$126,500	--	\$128,800	--

In **Table 4.13** we see that the median housing unit value in Liberty Township (\$126,500) is \$2,300 less than that of Union County (\$128,800). It is however, \$22,800 more than that in the State of Ohio (\$103,700). As per **Table 4.14**, about 42% of the houses in Liberty Township fall in the \$100,000 to \$149,999 category.



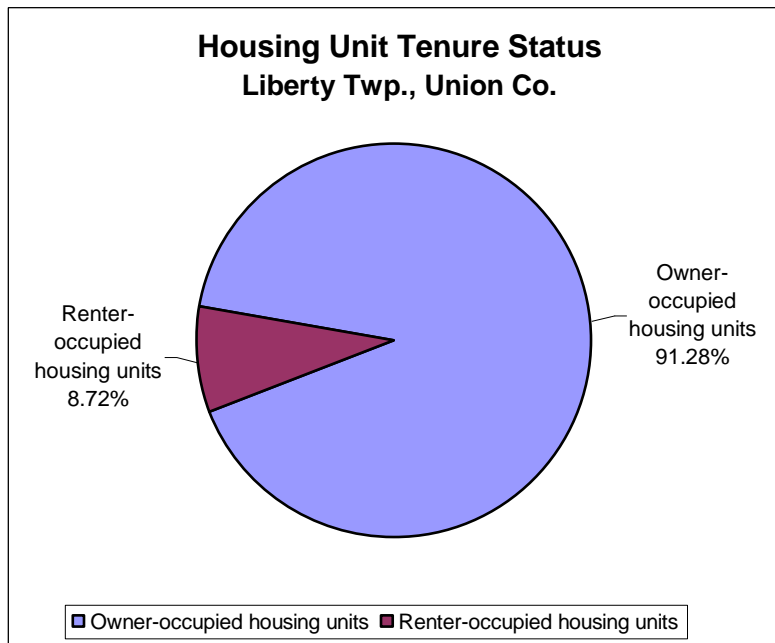
**Table 4.15** shows the age of housing units in Liberty Township. About 45% of the housing units in Liberty Township were constructed before 1970, which closely reflects the housing age for Union County where 44% of housing units were constructed before 1970. It also shows that in Liberty Township 35% of housing units were constructed before 1939 while the same figure for Union County is 26%.

<b>Table 4.15: Age of Housing Units</b>				
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000				
	<b>Liberty Twp</b>		<b>Union Co.</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT</b>				
1999 to March 2000	30	5.1	738	4.8
1995 to 1998	99	16.8	2,163	14.2
1990 to 1994	50	8.5	1,247	8.2
1980 to 1989	68	11.6	1,657	10.9
1970 to 1979	76	12.9	2,647	17.4
1960 to 1969	48	8.2	1,155	7.6
1940 to 1959	13	2.2	1,648	10.8
1939 or earlier	204	34.7	3,962	26

#### **4.6.2: Household Characteristics**

The total number of housing units in Liberty Township in 2000 was 618 (**Table 4.16**). Out of this 95%, 585 units were occupied and 5.3% were vacant. Of the occupied housing units, about 91 % or 534 units were owner occupied units while the remaining 9% or 51 were renter occupied units. Although the percentage of occupied housing units stayed nearly the same during the 1990 and 2000 Census at 94.4% and 94.7% respectively, the percentage of owner occupied housing units went up from 87.8% in 1990 to 91.3% in 2000.

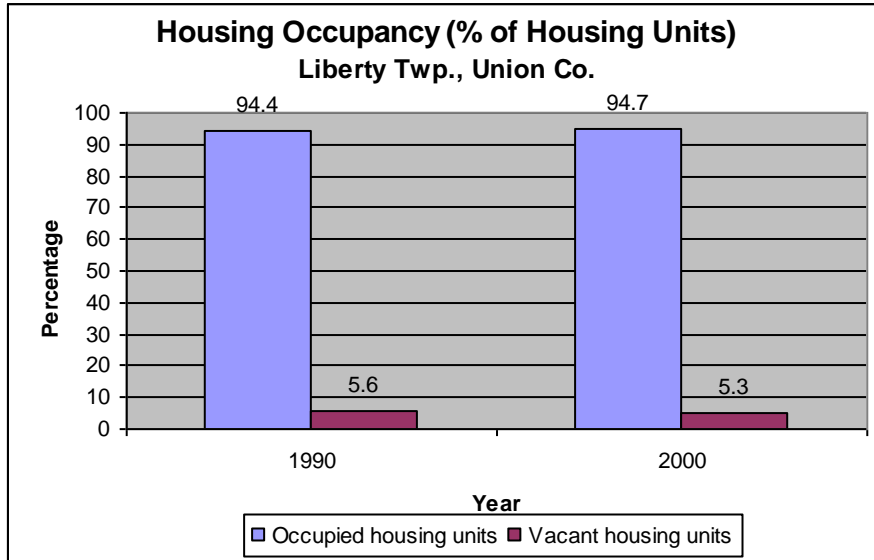
<b>Table 4.16: Housing Unit Occupancy and Tenure</b>				
<b>Liberty Twp., Union Co.</b>				
Source: US Census Bureau (1990, 2000)				
<b>OCCUPANCY STATUS</b>	1990		2000	
	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total housing units</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>100</b>
Occupied housing units	418	94.4	585	94.7
Vacant housing units	25	5.6	33	5.3
<b>TENURE</b>	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Occupied housing units</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>100</b>
Owner-occupied housing units	367	87.8	534	91.3
Renter-occupied housing units	51	12.2	51	8.7



**Figure 4.13: Housing Unit Tenure Status**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

As shown in **Figure 4.14** the housing occupancy rate has not changed much over the past two decades in Liberty Township.



**Figure 4.14: Housing Occupancy (% of Housing Units)**

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

Year	# of Permits	Construction Cost
1990	6	\$512,000.00
1991	6	\$454,000.00
1992	17	\$1,224,600.00
1993	10	\$711,800.00
1994	12	\$1,231,800.00
1995	25	\$2,441,600.00
1996	18	\$1,857,600.00
1997	24	\$2,844,864.00
1998	28	\$2,962,519.00
1999	40	\$4,093,662.00
2000	21	\$2,517,694.00
2001	17	\$1,938,351.00
2002	26	\$3,699,188.00
2003	25	\$4,714,331.00
2004	21	\$3,058,928.00

<b>Table 4.18: Average Cost per Single Family Construction – 1990-2004 in Liberty Township, Union County.</b>			
Source: Union County Engineer's Office			
<b>Year</b>	<b># of Permits</b>	<b>Construction Cost</b>	<b>Avg. Cost/ Unit</b>
1990-1994	51	\$4,134,200.00	\$81,062.75
1995-1999	135	\$14,200,245.00	\$105,187.00
2000-2004	110	\$15,928,492.00	\$144,804.47

**Table 4.17** shows the single-family construction history from 1990 to 2004 in Liberty Township. **Table 4.18** shows the average cost per single-family construction from 1990 to 2004 in five-year intervals. As per **Table 4.17** the number of single-family homes constructed has fluctuated from year to year, with an overwhelming increase in construction in the last ten years. In addition, **Table 4.18** shows that the average cost of single-family construction has increased over the 5-year periods shown.

## **4.7 Local Government and Community Services**

### **4.7.1 Local Government Structure**

The government of Liberty Township includes three Township Trustees and a Township Clerk. The Township Hall, local Fire Department, and Library are located on Main Street in Raymond.

The Fire Department in Liberty Township covers an area of 130 square miles. It is primarily a volunteer fire department with one full time employee and about 25 part-time paid employees (15 of which are paramedics). Four people man the station on a day shift and one to two people man the station after hours. There is one regular full time employee. In addition, Liberty Township has a contract with York and Taylor Townships for fire coverage. The LTFD responds to mutual aid requests to other local agencies. The Fire Department has the following vehicles in its fleet: 2 fire engines, 1 tanker and 1 grass truck, 1 4WD pickup, and 1 station car. They also have 1 ambulance. The firemen also handle the EMS (emergency medical service) responsibilities in the Township. One of the fire engines is a rescue and advance life support equipped responder.

The Post Office is located in the Township building in Raymond. The postal zip code is 43067. Liberty Township also holds a branch of the Marysville Municipal Library. The Library staff consists of 3 part time workers. It has 3 computers available to the public with internet access.

### **4.7.2 Community Organizations**

There are currently 3 churches in Liberty Township: Church of Christ in Christian Union, Raymond United Methodist, and Church of Christ Millcreek.

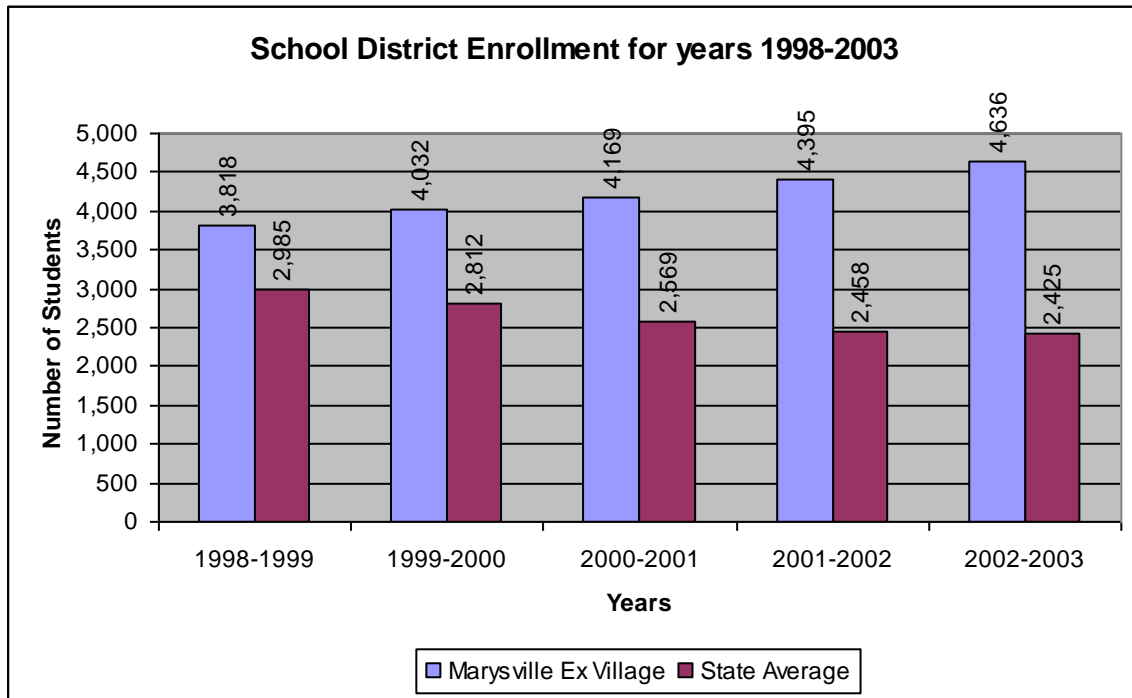
Below is a list of Liberty Township Organizations:

- Northwestern Lions Club
- Raymond-Newton Historical Society
- Keckley Rural Life Center Board
- Mothers Club
- VFW

Boy and Girl Scouts  
 Raymond Junior Baseball Association  
 Various 4-H Clubs

**4.7.3 Schools**

Most children in Liberty Township attend schools in the Marysville Exempted Village School District.



**Figure 4.15: School District Enrollment for School Years 1999-2004**

Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2005

**Figure 4.15** shows enrollment in the Marysville Exempted Village School District and the State average over a period of five school years from 1998 to 2003. Enrollment has increased every year in this School District over the past five school years, even though for the same five school years, the State average enrollment has declined.

**Table 4.19** shows the total expenditure per student by Marysville Exempted Village School District and the State of Ohio over the 1998-2004 school years. As can be seen from the table, the expenditure per student for the

District was lower than the average expenditure per student in the State of Ohio for the school years 1998-2002. The expenditure per pupil in the Marysville District increased for the school years 2002-2004 and was greater than the state average for these two school years.

<b>Table 4.19: Expenditure per Pupil for School Years 1998-2004</b>						
Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2005						
<b>Reporting District</b>	<b>1998-1999</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>
Marysville Ex Village	\$5,987	\$6,921	\$7,206	\$7,936	\$8,672	\$8,672
State	\$6,642	\$7,057	\$7,602	\$8,073	\$8,441	\$8,443

<b>Table 4.20: Type of Expenditure for School Years 1998-2003</b>						
Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2005						
<b>Reporting District</b>	<b>Expenditure Type</b>	<b>1998-1999</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>
Marysville Ex Village	Administrative Expenditures	15.65%	14.04%	11.74%	10.17%	10.97%
	Building Operations Expenditures	15.53%	20.00%	20.75%	19.91%	18.28%
	Staff Support Expenditures	1.35%	3.06%	3.83%	3.13%	4.09%
	Pupil Support Expenditures	8.94%	8.09%	9.35%	13.26%	13.17%
	Instructional Expenditures	58.53%	54.80%	54.33%	53.54%	53.49%
State	Administrative Expenditures	11.68%	11.87%	11.54%	11.93%	12.37%
	Building Operations Expenditures	19.21%	19.19%	19.57%	19.01%	19.17%
	Staff Support Expenditures	1.95%	2.10%	2.33%	2.55%	2.72%
	Pupil Support Expenditures	10.78%	10.98%	11.02%	11.17%	10.18%
	Instructional Expenditures	56.38%	55.86%	55.53%	55.33%	55.56%

**Table 4.20** shows the different types of expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures for the Marysville Exempted Village School District and the average for the State of Ohio over the 1998-2003 school years. The greatest percentage of expenditure for both the Marysville District and the State average has been instructional expenditures over the 1998-2003 school years.

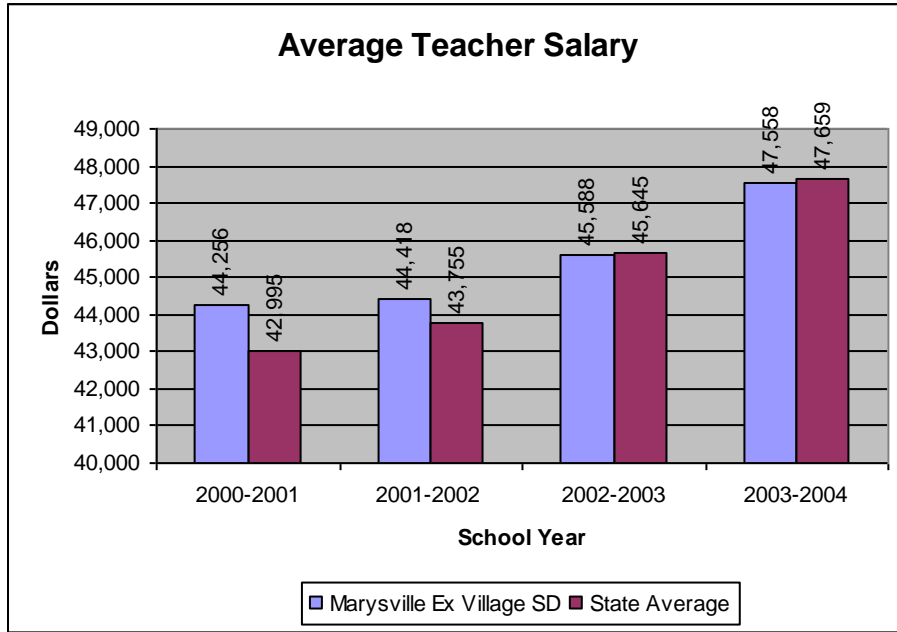
**Table 4.21: Revenue per Pupil for School Year 1998-2003**

Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2005

<b>Marysville Ex Village School District</b>										
Revenue Source	1998-1999		1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003	
	Per Pupil	% of Total	Per Pupil	% of Total	Per Pupil	% of Total	Per Pupil	% of Total	Per Pupil	% of Total
Local Revenue	\$3,965	68.10%	\$4,239	68.90%	\$4,320	65.70%	\$4,104	57.30%	\$3,965	56.10%
State Revenue	\$1,681	28.90%	\$1,783	29.00%	\$1,954	29.70%	\$2,734	38.20%	\$2,814	39.80%
Federal Revenue	\$175	3.00%	\$128	2.10%	\$303	4.60%	\$328	4.60%	\$294	4.20%
Total	\$5,821	100.00%	\$6,150	100.00%	\$6,577	100.00%	\$7,166	100.10%	\$7,073	100.10%
<b>State Average</b>										
Revenue Source	1998-1999		1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003	
	Per Pupil	% of Total	Per Pupil	% of Total	Per Pupil	% of Total	Per Pupil	% of Total	Per Pupil	% of Total
Local Revenue	\$3,407	51.00%	\$3,540	50.50%	\$3,787	49.80%	\$3,843	47.80%	\$3,916	47.10%
State Revenue	\$2,898	43.40%	\$3,070	43.80%	\$3,351	44.00%	\$3,711	46.20%	\$3,846	46.30%
Federal Revenue	\$377	5.60%	\$406	5.80%	\$473	6.20%	\$488	6.10%	\$550	6.60%
Total	\$6,682	100.00%	\$7,015	100.00%	\$7,611	100.00%	\$8,041	100.00%	\$8,312	100.00%

**Table 4.21** shows the source of funding for the Marysville District and average for the State of Ohio for the school year 1998-2003. The highest percentage of funding for the District comes from local revenues in the form of taxes. For all these school years, the State and Federal funding for the District has been lower than the state average.





**Figure 4.16: Average Teacher Salary 2000-2004**

Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2005

**Figure 4.16** shows the average salary of teachers in the Marysville Exempted Village School District and the average salary of teachers in the State of Ohio for the past four school years. The average salary for the school years 2000-2002 was higher than the state average. However, over the past two school years the average teacher’s salary in this the District has fallen below the average teacher’s salary in the State of Ohio.

**Table 4.22: Number of Students per Teacher 1998-2003**

Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2005

	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Marysville Ex Village SD	20	21	19.1	19	17.6
State Average	18.6	18.1	18	16.9	16.5

**Table 4.22** shows the number of students per teacher in Marysville Exempted Village School District and the State of Ohio. The Number of students per teacher for the Marysville District has been higher than the State average for the past five years.

<b>Table 4.23: Graduation Rate 1992-2003</b>					
Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2005					
<b>District</b>	<b>1998-1999</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>
Marysville Ex Village	93.70%	83.70%	90.90%	93.50%	94.80%
State	80.60%	80.60%	81.10%	82.70%	84.30%

<b>Table 4.24: Honors Graduates Percentage 1998-2003</b>					
Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2005					
<b>District</b>	<b>1998-1999</b>	<b>1999-2000</b>	<b>2000-2001</b>	<b>2001-2002</b>	<b>2002-2003</b>
Marysville Ex Village	11.00%	11.00%	17.00%	19.80%	17.30%
State	16.20%	16.70%	17.80%	17.60%	17.90%

**Table 4.23** and **Table 4.24** show the graduation and honors graduation rates. The graduation rate for the Marysville District has been higher than the State. However, with the exception of school year 2001-2002, the honors graduates percentage for the District has been lower than the State average for the school years 1998-2003.

In 1998-1999, the Ohio Department of Education started grading its district's schools by assigning a performance indicator to each school every academic year. These grades were assigned based on the number of performance targets achieved by the school out of a total possible 27 targets. In academic years 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, there were 22 targets defined. The range of State performance targets include Grades 4,6,9 and 12 proficiency test scores in the five subject areas of Citizenship, Mathematics, Reading, Writing and Science as well as district attendance and graduation rates. The school district can be assigned the following grades in descending order: Excellent, Effective, Continuous Improvement, Academic Watch and Academic Emergency.

- **Excellent-** Districts met 26 or more performance indicators of 27 possible
- **Effective-** Districts met 21-25 state performance indicators
- **Continuous Improvement-** Districts met 13-20 performance indicators

- **Academic Watch-** Districts met 8-12 performance indicators
- **Academic Emergency-** Districts met 0-7 performance indicators

For the five academic years from 1998-2003, the Marysville Exempted Village School District has not met the AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) Status. For the academic year 2002-2003 the School District was rated as Continuous Improvement, which is a step down from its Effective Status in the previous school year.

The attendance rate for students at the Marysville District is given in Table 4.25. The attendance rate for this District has been above the average attendance rate in school districts across Ohio.

<b>Table 4.25: Attendance Rate 1999-2004</b>		
Source: Ohio Department of Education, 2005		
<b>School Year</b>	<b>Marysville Ex Village SD</b>	<b>Ohio</b>
2003-2004	94.75	94.5%
2002-2003	95.55	94.5%
2001-2002	95.05	94.3%
2000-2001	95.7	93.9%
1999-2000	95.55	93.6%

#### **4.8 Land Use**

Liberty Township is a zoned Township with an area of approximately 23,450 Acres. This figure includes 132.68 acres of improved streets and alleys devoted to the safe and efficient movement of people and goods. Please refer to Table 4.26 and 4.27 below for the breakdown of Liberty Township zoning and land use designations

<b>Table 4.26: Summary of Liberty Township Zoning Designations</b>		
<b>Source: Union County Engineer's Office, 2005</b>		
<b>Landuse</b>	<b>Acre</b>	<b>%</b>
I-1	2770.79	11.82
M-2	38.68	0.16
R-3	199.30	0.85
U-1	20268.06	86.43
Peoria	64.18	0.27
Raymond	109.54	0.47
	23450.55	100.00

<b>Table 4.27: Summary of Liberty Township Land use Designations</b>		
<b>Source: Union County Engineer's Office, 2005</b>		
<b>LandUse</b>	<b>Acre</b>	<b>%</b>
Agricultural	20184.30	86.07
Agricultural - Vacant	135.08	0.58
Alley/Street	132.68	0.57
Churches/Cemetery	13.74	0.06
Commercial	384.55	1.64
Industrial	279.09	1.19
Public Facilities	110.76	0.47
Residential - Other	752.20	3.21
Single Family Homes	1458.15	6.22
Total	23450.55	100.00

**Figure 4.17 Liberty Township Zoning Designations**

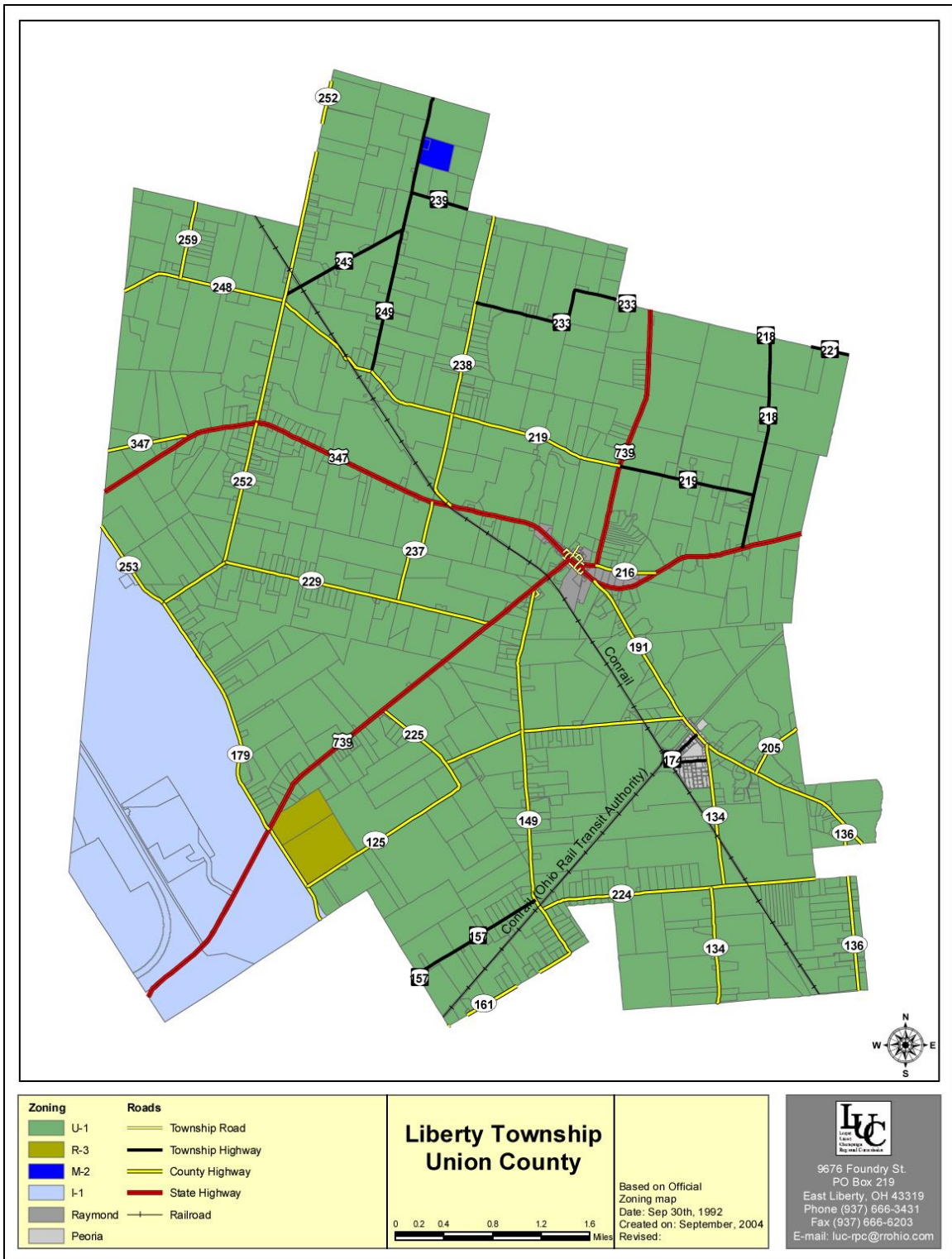
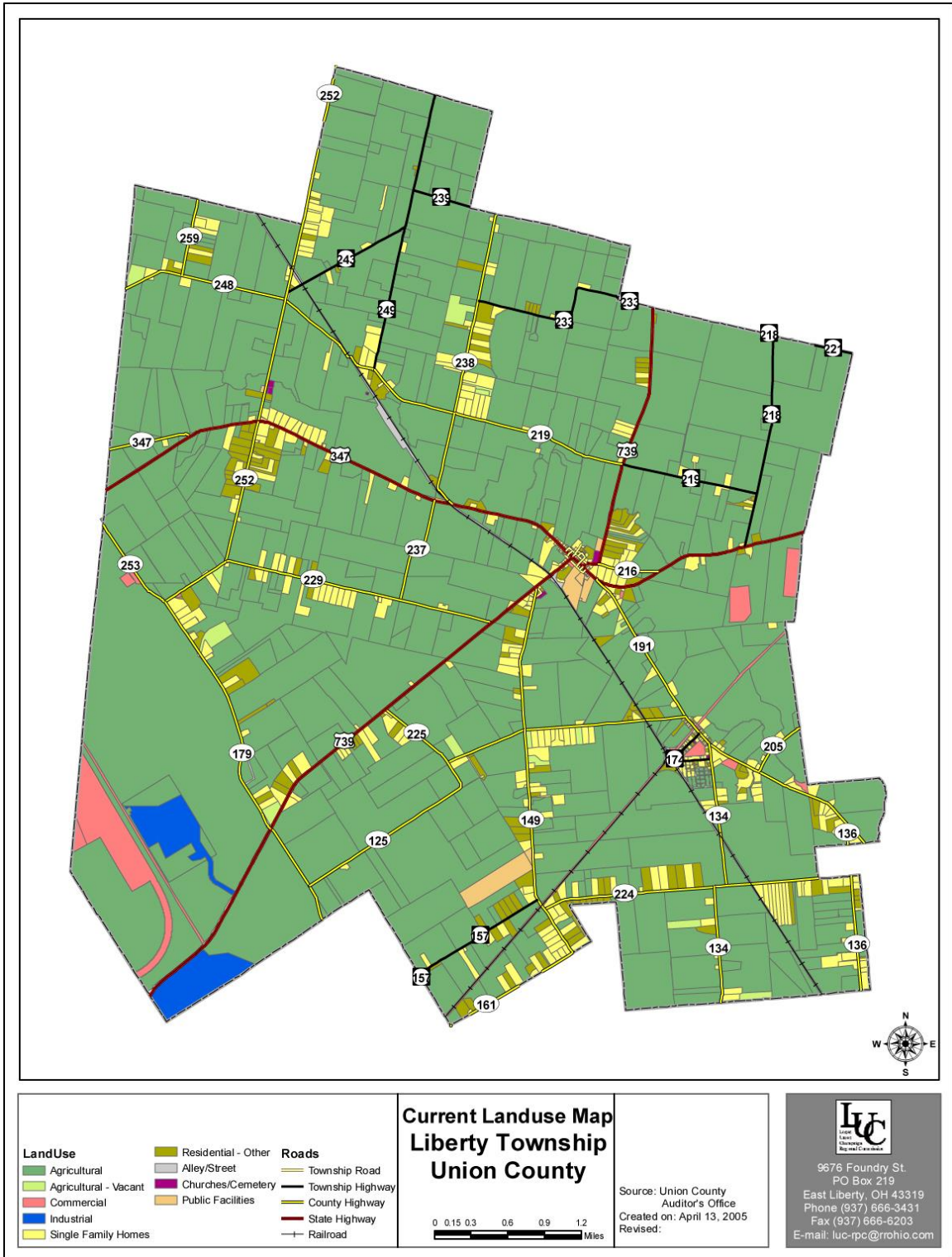


Figure 4.18- Liberty Township Land Use Designations



#### **4.8.1 Business**

The only land zoned as B-2 (Local Business) in Liberty Township is within the boundaries of Raymond and Peoria Villages. Raymond has 15.71 acres of its land zoned as B-2 and Peoria has 15.72 acres of B-2 zoned land. Currently, commercial land use makes up about 384.55 acres of land in Liberty Township. Most of these parcels are zoned as I-1 and U-1.

#### **4.8.2 Industrial**

Nearly 11.98% (2809.47 acres) of land is zoned for industrial development. Heavy manufacturing or land zoned M-2 occupies 38.68 acres in the northern portion of the Township with T.R.249 as the western boundary, just north of T.R.239. The southwestern portion of the Township is zoned as I-1 (Special Limited Industrial). The Transportation Research Center is located in the southwest region of the Township. This facility includes vehicle test tracks and other vehicle-testing infrastructure. Although this region is zoned I-1, the majority of land use seen in this area is agricultural. In addition, Honda of America's Research and Development facility also lies in Liberty Township.

#### **4.8.3 Residential**

The two types of residential zoning districts in Liberty Township are R-1 (Low Density Residential) and R-3 (High Density Residential). The only areas zoned as R-1 are located within the village boundaries of Raymond and Peoria. Raymond has 59.64 Acres of land zoned as R-1, and Peoria has 48.15 Acres land zoned as R-1. Raymond also has 34.19 Acres of its land zoned as R-3. The only other area zoned as R-3 in Liberty Township is at the intersection of C.R. 179 and C.R. 125. This makes up 0.85%(199.3 acres) of Liberty Township's land area.

#### **4.8.4 Undeveloped/Agricultural**

Most of the land in Liberty Township, about 86.43%, is zoned as U-1 (Rural). This designation allows for uses like agriculture, very low density

residential, public and quasi-public uses, nurseries, orchards, trees and plants. Most of the U-1 land is being farmed.

#### **4.8.5 Open Space/Parks**

There are two open spaces in the Township. The first, the Liberty Township Park, is located on land, which is zoned as R-2. The second one is the Keckley Rural Life Center. This land is zoned as U-1.

#### **4.8.6 Zoning Regulations**

In regards to the zoning regulations for Liberty Township, the Township requires land in R-1 Low Density Residential and R-3 High Density Residential to have a minimum lot size of 87,120 S.F. with 150 feet of road frontage. In the U-1 Rural Undeveloped District, the Liberty Township Zoning Resolution requires a minimum lot size of 130,680 with 250 feet of road frontage. Principal and accessory buildings that occupy residentially zoned land must occupy no more than 25% of the lot for R-1, 30% for R-3, and 25% for U-1. Land zoned for B-2 Local Business must have a minimum lot size of 87,120 with 150 feet of road frontage and may occupy 100% of their lot.



## **4.9 Fiscal Analysis**

### **4.9.1 Introduction**

The finances of the Township were for each year from 1998 through 2003 were reviewed for the purpose of this report. The various funds were consolidated to allow us to review these funds by the services the Township provides to its residents. Table 4.28 contains the detailed analysis prepared for this report.

A brief review of the income for the Township reveals that the general property tax collected each year is a mainstay of the Township. For the year 2000, the general property tax made up 35.67% of the total revenue collected by the Township. In 2000, the Township collected \$118 per person in general property taxes. The total revenue per person for the same year was \$330. Estate taxes made up only 0.3% of the total revenue in 2000, amounting to a mere \$1 per person.

The Township does not have any water or sewer infrastructure; hence there is no water or sewer revenue collected.

Our review of the expenditures was broken down into the following categories:

- Safety Services
- General Government
- Streets and Highways

### **4.9.2 Safety Services**

The Township spent \$383,074 on safety services in 2003, which is 52.03% of the total expenses. \$375,162 of this expenditure on safety services comes from the fire levies of Liberty, Taylor, and York Townships while the remaining \$7,912 comes from the general fund.

#### **4.9.3 General Government**

In 2003 the general government portion of the budget was \$140,236. This accounts for 19.05% of all the expenses. Of this \$140,236 expense, \$136,299 came from the general funds and the remaining \$3,936 came from the Fire Levy. It must be remembered that this category contains all of the expenses of the Township operation, including the funding to house the Township's equipment and offices. While it is a general category, it is critical to the every day operation of the Township.

#### **4.9.4 Streets and Highways**

The total income of the Township on the Highway Account was \$58,767, for the year 2003. Gasoline Taxes contributed \$ 54,062 towards this income. The remaining income was generated by interest amount, Motor Vehicle License Tax and other resources. The total expenditure on public works in the Township in 2003 was \$67,693. Of this total expenditure on public works, \$62,250 came from the highway account and the remaining \$5,433 came from the Special Assessments (Lighting) fund.

**Table 4.28: Liberty Township Fiscal Analysis 1998-2003****Source: Liberty Township Treasurer, 2004**

<b>Income</b>						
	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Account</b>						
General Fund	\$163,553	\$129,917	\$173,414	\$162,068	\$196,082	\$206,117
Special Revenue (Highway Account)	\$54,721	\$53,019	\$55,501	\$54,547	\$54,915	\$58,767
Cemetery Account (Sale of Cemetery Lots)	\$2,000	\$1,400	\$3,400	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$1,600
Fire Levy	\$215,689	\$320,161	\$325,141	\$345,138	\$385,377	\$433,944
Special Assessments (Lighting)	\$5,176	\$378	\$5,545	\$6,024	\$5,883	\$6,381
Debt Service (Operating Transfers In)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$41,974	\$0
Capital Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$169,027	\$69,898
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$441,140</b>	<b>\$504,875</b>	<b>\$563,001</b>	<b>\$569,277</b>	<b>\$856,259</b>	<b>\$776,706</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>
General Government Total	\$ 66,162	\$ 83,539	\$ 100,780	\$ 100,638	\$ 106,831	\$ 140,236
Public Safety Total	\$ 65,029	\$ 180,333	\$ 156,990	\$ 232,092	\$ 271,690	\$ 383,074
Health Total	\$ 25,315	\$ 24,834	\$ 11,794	\$ 1,840	\$ 13,979	\$ 32,640
Public Works Total	\$ 57,751	\$ 71,389	\$ 64,679	\$ 55,905	\$ 48,476	\$ 67,693
Human Services Total	\$0	\$0	\$ 225	\$ 3,830	\$ 2,101	\$ 13,553
Capital Outlay Total	\$ 144,151	\$ 21,566	\$ 19,628	\$ 66,437	\$ 508,213	\$ 99,082
Buildings	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 41,890	\$0
Miscellaneous	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$ 150,000	\$0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 358,408</b>	<b>\$ 381,661</b>	<b>\$ 354,096</b>	<b>\$ 460,742</b>	<b>\$ 1,143,179</b>	<b>\$ 736,278</b>

## CHAPTER FIVE

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The goals and objectives of this Plan are based solely on resident opinions and thoughts to the future of the community they live in. These goals and objectives are based on the Liberty Township community survey responses, focus groups, public meeting, and other specified meetings outlined below.

In the winter of 2002-2003, Liberty Township officials sent out a community survey to all 1,003 active registered voters of the Township. In addition, surveys were made available to the general public at various public places in the Township (Mosier's IGA, Raymond Library). Approximately 24% of residents responded to the survey. Results of the community survey were then compiled and presented at an advertised public meeting that was held on February 15, 2003. Around 55 people attended this public meeting where more responses about the future of Liberty Township were solicited. Consequently, it was decided during this public meeting that Liberty Township should pursue a Comprehensive Plan.

Following the community survey, various consensus-building activities such as meetings and interviews were held where public input was gathered. On September 8 of 2003, the Liberty Township Zoning Board, the Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Zoning Inspectors met to give their opinions on what goals the Township should incorporate into the Comprehensive Plan relating to zoning and land use. Overwhelmingly, members of these Boards felt that updating the Zoning Resolution should go hand in hand with the Comprehensive Plan.

In October and November of 2003, three focus groups were held to further explore community thoughts, opinions, and ideas regarding the future of Liberty Township. In attendance were 31 residents at 3 scheduled meeting days (October 27, November 1, and November 12).

Following the public planning process summarized above, results were summarized, which forms the basis for this chapter and Liberty Townships Goals

and Objectives for the future. It should also be noted that there were several positive comments from members of the community in praise of the efforts being made to involve them in the planning process.

Overwhelmingly, the most common response from community residents is to maintain the “rural” and “peaceful” country atmosphere of Liberty Township. Having said this, all goals and objectives in this Plan should keep this at the center of all local decisions.

## **5.2 Administration**

- *Goal:* Improve communication with Township residents about local events, meetings, and happenings and encourage more citizen participation.  
*Objective:* Implement use of bulletin board at public place (ie- Township Community Hall, Post Office) that includes Trustee and Local Officials contact information as well as monthly Trustees meeting dates.  
*Objective:* Hold Township public meetings annually (such as the public meeting held in Feb. 2003) to report to the community and solicit feedback from residents.  
*Objective:* Explore cost and implementation methods to developing a Township Newsletter. Find alternative ways to fund postage for mailing.  
*Objective:* Use email to communicate with those residents who have internet service.  
*Objective:* Advertise and use local newspapers more.  
*Objective:* Explore cost and implementation of Township Web-site.
- *Goal:* Continue communication with Township employees and public service providers and within local government offices.  
*Objective:* Continue working sessions of officials; create network system such as village email.
- *Goal:* With Township growth, officials need to find alternative sources of income to pay for increased cost of services.  
*Objective:* Research available grants and lending programs to fund increases in Township services.

- *Goal:* Address goals and objectives of Comprehensive Plan after adoption.

*Objective:* Create Township timeline for implementation, annual review of Plan's goals and objectives, action plan.

It is very important to have good and competent community leaders, who accept the suggestions of the plan and make an effort to implement its recommendations. It is equally important to have leaders and officials, who have the confidence of the community. Therefore, it is important to address these administrative issues. It is imperative that these leaders and officials have good communication amongst them, and keep the community updated on the progress being made in the implementation of the plan.

### **5.3 Economic Development**

- *Goal:* Control and plan development to specified areas of Township to maintain "small-town" and "rural" atmosphere.

*Objective:* Create land use map to address where commercial, industrial, and residential development should be targeted. Recommend zoning amendments accordingly. Communicate and forward this map/land use plan to various county officials such as the County Economic Development Professional and County Commissioners.

*Objective:* Target retail development to Raymond and Peoria.

*Objective:* Research and explore use of Conservation Overlay Districts (COD's) that define additional rules and development standards to preserve character and sense of place.

*Objective:* Inventory sites and buildings that may be available for business.

- *Goal:* Expand small ("Mom and Pop" family businesses) and neighborhood business/services (restaurants, pizza parlor, ice cream shop, grocery, antique shop, doctor/dentist office, video store, and other small retail) to maintain "small-town" atmosphere.

*Objective:* Increase local community and economic development efforts to attract retail business such as developing a community profile and marketing piece.

*Objective:* Create a volunteer community organization which targets and researches local business owners who may be interested in expanding their business to another/additional location in Liberty Township.

#### **5.4 Zoning and Land Use**

- *Goal:* Determine future land use vision in Township.

*Objective:* Review local zoning map and identify residential, industrial, and commercial growth areas/corridors. Create new land use map that targets growth and recommend zoning amendments accordingly.

*Objective:* Distribute land use map to Zoning Board, Trustees, Board of Zoning Appeals, and LUC for utilization when making zoning amendment and use recommendations and decisions.

- *Goal:* Promote cooperative planning efforts with LUC, neighboring townships, and Union County.

*Objective:* Provide copies of Liberty Township Comprehensive Plan to neighboring Townships and Union County.

*Objective:* Create a “library” of local plans from neighboring jurisdictions.

- *Goal:* Address current zoning code and enforcement.

*Objective:* Research Liberty Township zoning code and utilize LUC Regional Planning Commission in updating zoning code regulations in targeted areas (identified by Township Planning Board and BZA) such as: Adult Entertainment, Junk and Nuisance Areas, Telecommunication Towers, Ponds, P.U.D.’s (Planned Unit Developments), Agriculture, noise, signs, mobile homes, etc.

*Objective:* Identify nuisance areas, then review, outline, and implement local nuisance and maintenance procedure utilizing Union County Prosecutor’s Office to litigate problem areas. Create timeline and penalty fee schedule for enforcement and clean up of nuisance areas.

*Objective:* Add/change zoning text where appropriate to address nuisance areas in Township Zoning Regulations.

*Objective:* Develop a “road map” and strategy for enforcement of zoning to encourage consistency, fairness, and results. Also, develop a priority list of target enforcement areas.

- *Goal:* Control and direct growth in Liberty Township to preserve rural attitude and preserve open land.

*Objective:* Research and explore ways to control growth through encouragement and use of alternative development such as conservation development, subdivision development (to reduce lot splits), zoning code updates such as minimum lot sizes or lot densities, use of Agricultural Zoning districts (A-1, FR-1), Conservation Overlay Districts (COD's) that define additional rules and development standards to preserve character and sense of place, etc.

*Objective:* Work with LUC in arranging and sponsoring guest speakers to educate local officials and public on such issues as agricultural zoning, conservation subdivisions, overlay districts, etc.

*Objective:* Target commercial growth to Raymond and Peoria and area immediately surrounding them.

*Objective:* Target industrial and manufacturing to the I-1 Special Industrial District and near existing Honda of America facilities.

*Objective:* Encourage residential growth in the areas adjacent to and surrounding the existing growth centers of Raymond and Peoria.

*Objective:* Actively participate in the subdivision review process with LUC when a subdivision is proposed in Liberty Township.

- *Goal:* Encourage farmland preservation in Liberty Township while at the same time honoring rights of farm/property owner.

*Objective:* Research and explore alternative farmland preservation programs and their possible future use in Liberty Township such as PDR's (purchase of development rights), AEPP's (agricultural easement purchase program), conservation easements, smart growth and clustered development programs, Agricultural zoned districts, lot densities, etc.



*Objective:* Sponsor local seminar open to Liberty Township Agricultural producers/residents on farmland preservation and various programs they may choose to enter (ie- AEPP program).

*Objective:* Study and identify prime farmland in Liberty Township using local experts such as Ohio State University Extension. Map accordingly.

*Objective:* Explore model agricultural zoning text and hold public meeting to gauge interest.

- *Goal:* Discourage Adult Entertainment in Liberty Township.

*Objective:* Include text in zoning regulations on Adult Entertainment.

- *Goal:* Clean-up nuisance areas to make community more attractive.

*Objective:* Identify nuisance areas, then review, outline, and implement local nuisance and maintenance procedure utilizing Union County Prosecutor's Office to litigate problem areas. Create timeline and penalty fee schedule for enforcement and clean-up of nuisance areas.

*Objective:* Develop priority list of target enforcement areas.

*Objective:* Add/change zoning text where appropriate to address nuisance areas in Township Zoning Regulations.

*Objective:* Implement Village Beautification Program.

- *Goal:* Preservation of stream corridors, wooded areas, and environmentally sensitive areas and the protection of natural assets and scenic qualities.

*Objective:* Produce a drainage plan with the Union County Soil and Conservation District.

*Objective:* Explore the utilization of a buffer area or overlay district to limit development along local streams/critical watersheds.

In order to control and guide future development it is very important to try and achieve balance between social and economic needs of the community. Moreover, it is not sufficient to just formulate rules that control the way development takes place, but strict enforcement of these rules is essential to achieve the desired development. The goals and objectives listed above speak volumes about the social values of this community. It is evident that the

community wants to grow as a clean, family oriented rural community, and is prepared to take the necessary steps to regulate growth.

### **5.5 Community Development**

- *Goal:* Increase communication and activities with Raymond Elementary School as is great asset to community.  
*Objective:* Meet with Principal to offer support and involvement of community.
- *Goal:* Increase local high school graduation rate and increase local proficiency test scores in schools.  
*Objective:* Meet with local school officials and school board members to offer support of Liberty Township.
- *Goal:* Increase community involvement by encouraging citizen participation and volunteerism.  
*Objective:* Research and implement Township newsletter, web site, bulletin board. Increase activities in Township such as local gatherings.
- *Goal:* Enhance and improve public safety in Township.  
*Objective:* Communicate with local public safety officer and Union County Sheriff's Office on particular traffic and safety concerns.  
*Objective:* Initiate local block-watch formation in Raymond and Peoria.  
*Objective:* Increase patrol during peak hours such as Honda shift changes and school start and end times.  
*Objective:* Increase safety patrol in rural areas of Township.  
*Objective:* Continue to sponsor safety seminar for targeted populations such as elderly and children.
- *Goal:* Continue operation of 24 hour staffed Township Fire Department.  
*Objective:* Research grants to continue operation of Fire Department, to purchase new equipment, and to increase staffing.
- *Goal:* Improve and maintain cutting edge fire and safety services in the Township.  
*Objective:* Introduce a fire safety program at local schools.  
*Objective:* Develop and maintain a fire prevention inspections program.

- Objective:* Improve the Fire Department capabilities to respond.
- *Goal:* Continue Township Dumpster Days to reduce trash and junk areas.
  - Objective:* Continue to advertise Dumpster Days more aggressively.
  - Objective:* Create an identification program included in Dumpster Days to ensure that Liberty Township residents are the users.
- *Goal:* Maintain “small town” and “rural” atmosphere of Township.
  - Objective:* Research reintroduction of Raymond Days.
  - Objective:* Continue to encourage the operation of the Raymond-Newton Historical Society/Building in the preservation of Township history.
  - Objective:* Implement use of bulletin board or newsletter in communicating Township happenings and gatherings.
- *Goal:* Continue operation of Raymond Library as asset to Township.
  - Objective:* Increase communication with Marysville Library System to ensure services in Raymond continue.
- *Goal:* Support local farming efforts in the Township.
  - Objective:* Offer and sponsor workshops or seminars on CAUV, estate planning, PDR’s (purchase of development rights), TDR’s (transfer of development rights), AEPP (Agricultural Easement Purchase Program).
  - Objective:* Continue to support the local 4-H groups and the local FFA program.

The ultimate goal of any comprehensive plan is, to improve the lives of the people in the region, and promote community development. In other words, the goals and objectives should reflect the social needs of the community. The goals and objectives mentioned above reflect the social needs of Liberty Township residents, and include safety, improving the education system, improving the quality of social services, increasing interaction between residents and active participation of the residents in community events.

## **5.6 Infrastructure**

- *Goal:* Reduce negative traffic problems.

*Objective:* Increase communication with ODOT to encourage traffic counts at peak Honda shift times and the possibility of traffic light installation.

*Objective:* Continue to increase safety patrol at high traffic times.

- *Goal:* Expand County sewer/central sewage to Raymond and Peoria.

*Objective:* Continue work with County Engineer on timing, feasibility, etc. in continuing to develop a community wastewater system.

- *Goal:* Increase Park Services in Township.

*Objective:* Research expansion of bike trail/walking path and funding of such.

*Objective:* Increase marketing of Keckley Park to further its use in the Township.

*Objective:* Research feasibility (and develop where appropriate) of expanded sports/parks programs and facilities, playground equipment, etc.

*Objective:* Encourage park/green space in residential development areas.

*Objective:* Study the ability to provide and expand utility services & infrastructure to prime and identified residential growth areas.

- *Goal:* Increase technology capabilities in Township.

*Objective:* Provide citizenry with options of internet services that are available in Township including offerings at the Library.

- *Goal:* Continue Road improvements in Liberty Township.

*Objective:* Research funding opportunities for continued Township Road improvements. Classify and target local roads for improvement. Assign time schedule where appropriate.

*Objective:* Increase communication with County Engineer and ODOT to implement improvements on State and County Roads/Highways.

- *Goal:* Improve drainage and tile problems in Township.

*Objective:* Target and prioritize problem areas and work with property owners in repair. Explore funding for repairs.

*Objective:* Work with Health Department and Union County SWCD on improvement of procedures and approvals of such (as well as individual septic).

- *Goal:* Ensure safety of Township residents in the event of a crisis or hazard situation.

*Objective:* Establish an emergency shelter location at the Liberty Township Community Building with a generator.

*Objective:* Establish an emergency evacuation plan for the Township.

*Objective:* Inform citizenry of emergency shelter locations and evacuation plans.

- *Goal:* Continue operation and beautification of Township cemetery.

*Objective:* Research growth and expansion of cemetery and explore the purchase of additional land.

*Objective:* Continue beautification through additional landscaping and tree plantings, etc.

The quality of life in a community is often described, among other things, by the quality of public services available in the community. Good roads and transportation networks are essential for connecting the community to other communities, and movement of goods. Water and sewer infrastructures are very important to support growth, and the health of residents. Parks offer opportunities for community interaction and entertainment. The goals and objectives listed above show the concerns, and needs of Liberty Township residents, as far as public facilities are concerned.

## **5.7 Summary**

A plan should be inclusive in setting goals and objectives that address all issues in the community. Goals and Objectives for Liberty Township covered a range of topics that include economic development, administration, zoning and land use, community development, and infrastructure. Again, these goals and objectives were derived directly from Township residents and officials and represent active citizen participation. These are the visions and goals that

Liberty Township feels are important in improving the quality of life for all persons in their Township.

## CHAPTER SIX

### ACTION PLAN

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The “Action Plan” section of a Comprehensive Plan is essentially the “blueprint” for a jurisdiction to follow to fulfill its goals and objectives. The Comprehensive Plan is only useful if it is put into action. The adoption of the Plan by the Township should be the beginning of a long-term planning effort.

This “action plan” will guide the Township in areas that were previously identified in Chapter 5, “Goals and Objectives”. They include the five topics of Economic Development, Administration, Land Use and Zoning, Community Development, and Infrastructure. After establishing the Goals and Objectives, the implementation strategies were established in a working session with Township officials where they were reviewed, prioritized, and assigned time frames. This forms what you will find below.

#### **6.2 Administration**

- Place bulletin board in high traffic area for Township residents to view local official contact information and meeting dates.

##### ***Already completed***

- Collect email addresses to create database of local government officials and Township residents for an improved networking system. This would provide a mass notification system to happenings in the community in order to improve communication within the Village. Email provides the ability of short and quick messaging to be read and reviewed at the reader’s convenience.

##### ***Already started - ongoing***

- Implement Township newsletter.

***Target date for first newsletter January 2006***

- Research the implementation of a Township web site. Explore free or low-cost linking to other Union County government sites and the use of local schools in the development.

***January 2006 - June 2006***

- Periodic working sessions of local government officials in order to improve communication within Liberty Township.

***Already started – ongoing***

- Begin Township “Annual Meeting” to report to the public and local residents on the state of Liberty Township.

***First Annual Meeting February 2006***

- Research grants and alternative sources of funding that are available to the Township to assist in the increased cost of Township services.

***Already started – ongoing***

- Study option for improvement of fire department facilities.

***Already started – March 2008***

- Submit a 5-year Activity Plan for Fire Department. For example, training, prevention, and activities, etc.

***Already started – ongoing***

- Make regular contact with the Union County Sheriff’s Office and the local public safety officer regarding increased patrol at peak traffic times and school start and ending times.

***Already completed – ongoing***

### **6.3 Economic Development**

- Forward land use map and plan to local officials such as the County Economic Development Professional, County Commissioners, Regional Planning, etc to utilize when making growth and development decisions and recommendations.

***December 2005***

- Inventory sites and buildings that may available for development (industrial, commercial).

***January 2006 - June 2006***



- Produce a community profile to make available to prospective businesses.  
**July 2006 - January 2007**
- Create volunteer community organization to target local small business owners to expand in the Township.  
**September 2006 - August 2007**

#### **6.4 Zoning and Land Use**

- Update and amend sections of Liberty Township Zoning Regulations where necessary.  
**Already completed December 2004 - ongoing**
- Distribute local land use map and plan to the Township Zoning Board, Board of Zoning Appeals, and LUC for use in making zoning amendment recommendations and decisions.  
**December 2005**
- Provide Liberty Township Comprehensive Plan to neighboring Townships and the Union County Commissioners to promote cooperative planning efforts.  
**January 2005**
- Create a library of planning and zoning resources which includes all County Comprehensive Plans and land use handbooks.  
**September 2006 - ongoing**
- Work with LUC in the researching and sponsorship of presentations and seminars to educate local officials on conservation subdivisions, cluster development, overlay districts, buffering, and other growth techniques.  
**January 2006 – December 2006**
- Convene Zoning Board and Board of Zoning Appeals to explore agricultural zoning and the use of agricultural districts in the Township. Hold public meeting to gauge interest.  
**March 2006 – March 2007**
- Creating a nuisance maintenance procedure. Prioritize nuisance areas in Township and timeline for enforcement and abatement. Develop zoning

enforcement map with County Prosecutor, Regional Planning, Sheriff's Office, etc.

***Already started – ongoing***

- Develop a flowchart and step-by-step process document for new buildings and structures.

***March 2006 – December 2006***

**6.5 Community Development**

- Contact Raymond Elementary and Marysville Exempted School District officials and board members to offer support and involvement.

***January 2006***

- Work with the Union County Sheriff's Office in the formation of a local block-watch program.

***January 2006 – August 2006***

- Invite Union County human and social service agencies to develop an outreach program in the Township, which would include satellite visits in an effort to increase local social services.

***January 2006 – January 2007***

- Solicit members of community to volunteer to serve on "Community Activities" committee that includes researching the reintroduction of Raymond Days.

***December 2005 – August 2006***

- Implement Township newsletter.

***Target date for first newsletter February 2006***

- Continue to advertise Dumpster Days aggressively to reduce trash and junk areas and create an identification program for Dumpster Days to ensure the users are local.

***April 2006 – August 2006***

- Communicate with local public safety officer and the Union County Sheriff's Office on particular traffic and safety concerns. Increase patrol during high traffic times and peak hours such as Honda shift changes and school start and end times.

***Already started – ongoing***

- Communicate the importance of library services in Raymond by attending Marysville Library Board meetings.

***January 2006 – ongoing***

- Work with the Union County Farm Bureau, Union County Land Trust, Union County Auditor's Office, LUC, etc. to sponsor workshops and presentations to local farmers and land owners on CAUV (Current Agricultural Use Value), estate planning, PDR's (purchase of development rights), TDR's (transfer of development rights), AEPP (Agricultural Easement Purchase Program), etc.

***March 2006 - ongoing***

**6.6 Infrastructure**

- Make regular contact with ODOT (Ohio Department of Transportation) District 6 to explore traffic light installation at high traffic count intersections. Encourage ODOT to perform traffic counts at peak Honda shift change times.

***January 2006 – ongoing***

- Continue to communicate with the Union County Engineer and Union County Commissioners regarding the community central wastewater system.

***Already completed – ongoing***

- Create a Township Park Board to research the expansion of park services and programs (such as walking/bike path, increased playground equipment, etc.) and better marketing to local residents of Keckley Park.

***March 2006 – March 2008***

- Make residents aware of local internet service options and library internet services and hours. Explore the expansion of DSL with local utility companies including cable, Co-op electric, and phone services.

***February 2006 – ongoing***

- Create an annual improvement plan and priority list for local Township Road resurfacing and widening.

***March 2006 – June 2006***

- Establish an emergency shelter location at the Township Community Hall. Purchase generator for Township Hall. Inform residents of emergency shelter location and evacuation plan.

***February 2006 – February 2007***

- Research expansion of Township cemetery system, and explore the purchase of additional land for such.

***Already started – December 2006***

- Research grants and other funding opportunities for operations, purchasing of new equipment, and increased staffing of the local Fire Department.

***June 2006 – June 2008***

**6.7 Summary**

As mentioned earlier, a successful Plan is dependent on the Township's ability to put it into action. This should include measurement of progress and continuous communication, evaluation, and feedback from Liberty Township officials and citizens. Adoption of the Plan is just the beginning of the Comprehensive Planning process. The goals, objectives, and recommendations presented in this Comprehensive Plan provide a vision for the community of Liberty Township, offer guidelines for promoting economic development while preserving the rural character, and serve as a basis for promoting public health, safety and welfare, preventing nuisances, and directing investment so as to influence development in desired ways. Essentially, this is a tool to guide growth and development in Liberty Township. It is important the Comprehensive Plan presented here be viewed as a continuous, flexible, and amendable process since local priorities are likely to change in the future to conform to changes in local, county and statewide policies, as well as global priorities.

**Appendix A- Liberty Township Resident Survey**

- 1) How long have you lived in Liberty Township? (circle one)  
0-5 years    6-10 years    11 or more years
  
- 2) Do you live North\_\_\_\_\_ or South\_\_\_\_\_ of State Route 347?
  
- 3) What do you like best about living in Liberty Township?
  
- 4) What do you like least about living in Liberty Township?
  
- 5) What types of improvements would you like to see in Liberty Township?  
....in the next 5 years?  
....in the next 10 years?
  
- 6) The current lot size for residential development is three acres with 250 feet of road frontage.  
Is this too large? \_\_\_\_\_ too small? \_\_\_\_\_ just right? \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 7) Please rate the following aspects of Liberty Township on a Scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest value and 1 being the lowest.
  - rural atmosphere/ farming community \_\_\_\_\_
  - lifestyle \_\_\_\_\_
  - school system \_\_\_\_\_
  - closeness to shopping or employment \_\_\_\_\_
  - safety services \_\_\_\_\_
  - township services \_\_\_\_\_
  - other \_\_\_\_\_

8) Rate what type of residential development should occur in Liberty Township on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest value and 1 being the lowest.

- single family homes \_\_\_\_\_
- townhouses or condominiums \_\_\_\_\_
- multi-family dwellings(apartments) \_\_\_\_\_
- housing for the elderly \_\_\_\_\_
- cluster development \_\_\_\_\_
- affordable housing \_\_\_\_\_

9) Rate what sort of open space use we should encourage on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest value and 1 being the lowest.

- preservation of historic, scenic or open space \_\_\_\_\_
- conservation easement program \_\_\_\_\_
- expand or enhance the township park system \_\_\_\_\_
- encourage farmland preservation \_\_\_\_\_
- maintain rural character of the roads \_\_\_\_\_

10) Rate the types of economic development that should take place in Liberty Township on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest value and 1 being the lowest.

- farming/ agriculture \_\_\_\_\_
- small scale retail \_\_\_\_\_
- commercial \_\_\_\_\_
- office buildings \_\_\_\_\_
- warehousing \_\_\_\_\_
- manufacturing or processing \_\_\_\_\_

11) Should a comprehensive plan be developed for Liberty Township to help direct future development? \_\_\_\_\_

12) Would you serve on a committee to develop such a plan? \_\_\_\_\_. If so contact one of the Township Trustees or fill in your name here

Comments:

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**Appendix B- Liberty Township Public Service Provider Survey**  
**(Survey responses will be kept CONFIDENTIAL)**

- 1) What primary concerns do you have for the future of Liberty Township?
  
- 2) What do you like best about working in Liberty Township?
  
- 3) What do you like least about working in Liberty Township?
  
- 4) What types of improvements would you like to see in Liberty Township in:  
.....next 5 years?  
.....next 10 years?
  
- 5) In terms of services provided by the Township, how do you rate service, quality, and price?
  
- 6) Are there problem areas or operating policies that need to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan discussions?
  
- 7) Are there any unmet capital/funding needs that you foresee as being needed in the immediate future?
  
- 8) What is needed to make Liberty Township additionally attractive to businesses and residents?
  
- 9) How would you rate the quality and availability of park and recreation facilities (for seniors, family, and youth)?



- 10) Based on your experiences with the Liberty Township Zoning codes and regulations, can you identify areas that present interpretation or usage problems?
- 11) Are there any land use compatibility problems that should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan?
- 12) What are your attitudes toward growth (commercial, residential, industrial) in the community?
- 13) Are additional efforts needed to communicate with Township employees and public service providers?

Additional Comments:

## **Appendix C- Focus Group Questions**

### **Economic Development-**

- ✓ What type of development would you like to see in Liberty Township?
- ✓ Where should this development occur?

### **Land Use and Zoning-**

- ✓ In the recent community survey, many pointed out their concern over growth in the Township. What do you think should be done? How does the Township go about preserving its rural character?
- ✓ How should the Township preserve open space and farmland?
- ✓ What should the minimum lots sizes be?
- ✓ What types of zoning issues should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan?
- ✓ Where should growth in Liberty Township occur?
- ✓ What do you think of the parks in Liberty Township?

### **Community Development-**

- ✓ What sort of community or human services are lacking in Liberty Township?
- ✓ Is safety a concern in Liberty Township?

### **Administration-**

- ✓ Do you feel like you are aware of the going-on's in Liberty Township?
- ✓ Where do you go to find out more information about what is going on in the Township?
- ✓ What can be utilized to improve better communication in Liberty Township to increase public participation?

**Infrastructure-**

- ✓ What type of infrastructure improvements should the Township undertake?

**Miscellaneous-**

- ✓ What primary concerns do you have for the future of Liberty Township?
- ✓ What are they main issues that should be addressed in the Liberty Township Comprehensive Plan?