

# **Comprehensive Land Use Plan**

February 2006

Prepared for:

**Coshocton County Commissioners**

Prepared By:

**The Comprehensive Land Use Plan Committee**

With assistance from

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# 1. Introduction

## Purpose

The Coshocton County Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CCLUP) was developed for the purpose of providing a broad strategic framework for the development and conservation of Coshocton County's land resources. It is a generalized long-range policy guide that provides the basis for future decisions on the physical, social, and economic development of Coshocton County and attempts to include the diversified interests of all citizens.

This document is the final product from the efforts of this process and should be viewed as a policy guide to decisions about the future development of the community. It represents a public vision statement of the most desirable uses of land for the next 5 to 50 years and is an all-inclusive approach at addressing the issue of the future growth of the community. The plan was prepared to address compatibility issues between various uses of land, management and preservation of natural resources, identification and preservation of historically significant lands and structures, and takes a look at the inventory of cultural resources.

In addition, the plan addresses issues related to parks, open spaces and recreation, residential housing, and potential economic development as it relates to future land uses in the community. The plan further explores emergency services and law enforcement needs as they relate to potential growth patterns. Past, current and projected demographic profiles of the Coshocton County were examined in detail and have been integrated into the process. Emphasis has been placed on the identification and preservation of agricultural land and environmental resources. Integrated into the planning process is a close examination of the current and projected infrastructure needs relating to transportation, water and sewer services to include an assessment of the current and future technology and communications assets of the community. Lastly, as part of the land use planning process, tourism and its historical roots and potential growth is integrated into the overall process as a viable attribute to the overall development of land in the Coshocton County.

It is extremely important to maintain a clear distinction between the Comprehensive Plan itself and potential implementing measures. This Plan should not be construed as an attempt to create a regulatory document. Implementing measures include such regulatory controls as zoning and subdivision codes, public land acquisition, taxation policies and public improvements, which are just some of the methods or tools to implement land use policies. These measures are specific actions and are the work of public policy and decision makers. The Comprehensive Plan simply establishes a guide for future decisions regarding land use within the community.

As described, the term "community" applies to all land within the Coshocton County and encompasses the city, villages, and townships within. The scope of the plan also recognizes the influence of external social and economic growth patterns emanating from surroundings counties and communities.

A primary consideration in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan should be its usefulness. The Coshocton County Plan is a statement of public values, beliefs and expectations intended

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for coordination purposes with other jurisdictions and in making specific decisions about present and future land use. As stated earlier, the central purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a guide for the utilization of the land resources of Coshocton County. To accomplish this, consideration must be given to all types and categories of land use. There are many other aspects of our society that interrelate with land use activities and all must be considered concurrently in developing a Comprehensive Land Use Plan. However, decisions on how to manage these other concerns should be consistent with, and based upon, land use considerations. This has been the approach used in developing the Coshocton County Comprehensive Plan. The Plan recognizes the land use impact of existing conditions and anticipates the possible impact of future changes.

Existing economic, physical and social conditions, as well as projections of the most desirable future conditions, must be used to establish balanced policy and land use allocation in the future. The balancing process should result in a plan that provides the greatest long-term benefit to the greatest number of present and future citizens of Coshocton County. A transition will be to the long-term benefit of both the individual and the public.

## **Process**

The original CCLUP dates back to 1972 and had little, if any, input from the citizens in the community. The Plan was not used and was regarded as a plan developed to meet the requirements of the federal government as a prerequisite to receiving grant funds.

In the spring of 2002, The Coshocton County Board of Coshocton County Commissioners enlisted the aid of The Ohio State University Extension (OSUE), Coshocton County, to shape an educational process in an effort to enhance the local citizens understanding of land use planning and to prepare the community to respond to future land use decisions in an efficient and informed manner. Viewed as an educational process, this task was undertaken by (OSUE) in earnest by the fall of 2002. OSUE was charged by the Board of Commissioners with ensuring that there was a legitimate process that engaged and informed the community during all phases and development of the plan process.

In any planning process where governmental policies are being established, citizen participation is not only desirable but also essential. Therefore, an initial public meeting of over 120 individuals was held to ascertain the public's desires, views and commitment to the land use planning process. A post-meeting survey instrument was used to solicit and measure the citizen's input and establish goals and objectives for this undertaking. Additionally, those in attendance were asked if they would volunteer their time to serve in one capacity or another during the proposed 18 to 24 month endeavor. This citizen-based approach and process encouraged the involvement of a number of Coshocton County citizens in an effort to reflect a cross-section of ideas and values supporting a desired outcome that reflects the consensus of the participants. The process focused on achieving the objective to open the planning process to any interested citizen or group in the Coshocton County. The intent was to create a broad base of support and "stakeholders" in the plan.

Involving the public in all stages of the planning process helps to build consensus and creates a plan in which the community has ownership. To accomplish this, the Coshocton County



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Commissioners appointed a 24-member Steering Committee to oversee this plan's development. The membership of this committee represents a diverse background of both private and public interests in Coshocton County. Commissioners used selection criteria based on demographics, bipartisanship, and leadership and declined to appoint elected or public office holders in attempt to create a neutral and unbiased environment.

The steering committee gained knowledge and skills through a series of initial training sessions focused on creating an educational awareness of comprehensive land use planning principles, procedures, and techniques. Primary emphasis centered on recognized principles necessary to create an effective environment for planning purposes. The principles under which the Steering Committee operated are articulated in the Ten Important Principles, Steering Committee Mission Statement, and the Plan Vision, which are listed below:

## **Ten Important Principles:**

1. The Plan should be forward looking: five to fifty-year time frame.
2. The Plan should be developed through a process of extensive community involvement.
3. The Plan should have widespread community support.
4. The Plan should be based upon and adequately reflect community values, beliefs and expectations.
5. The Plan should be used to guide community decisions.
6. The Plan should be a living, community document that is amended from time to time reflecting community changes.
7. All meetings of every committee should be open to anyone who wishes to attend.
8. All media outlets for the Coshocton County should be kept informed of meeting times and places.
9. Every reasonable effort should be made to listen to and consider issues or concerns raised by those who are not active in the planning process.
10. The committee must develop rules of procedure to facilitate the orderly development of the plan.

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## **Mission Statement**

(As developed by the Coshocton County Commissioners- 2002)

Use a citizen-based approach and educational process to develop a Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Coshocton County. By encouraging the involvement of Coshocton County citizens, the plan reflects a cross-section of ideas and values. The desired outcome is to have a planning document that reflects the consensus of the participants for future land use decisions.

## **Coshocton Land Use Committee Vision Statement**

(As developed by the Coshocton County Land Use Committee, February 2003)

Coshocton County will be comprised of vibrant communities, productive farms, and valuable natural and cultural resources and a well maintained land use pattern that will:

- Be an appealing place to live, work, and visit.
- Create and maintain an environment that acknowledges and respects age and cultural diversities.
- Enhance and maintain farms and forests as working resources.
- Preserve and enhance open spaces, natural areas, streams, rivers, and cultural resources.
- Foster, encourage and oversee structured growth within identified areas of infrastructure.
- Offer a range of economic opportunities, together with a viable travel and tourism industry, a healthy environment and effective public services for all citizens.

## 2. Existing Conditions

This chapter summarizes the overall existing conditions in Coshocton County at the time of this Plan's development.

### Regional Context

Coshocton County is located in the east-central portion of the state. US 36 & 16 and SR 541 cross the county east and west and State Routes 60, 83, 93 & 206 run north and south. State Route 83 connects with Interstate 70, about 20 miles south of Coshocton. SR 83 also connects with US 36, now being linked with the new 4-lane highway to Interstate 77, about 20 miles east of Coshocton, and SR 83 connects with SR 16 one mile west of the county's industrial park.

Coshocton is ranked 67th in population among Ohio's 88 counties, according to the 2000 U.S. Census. Coshocton is not a part of a metropolitan area. (A metropolitan area as defined by the 2000 census of population and housing is an area comprised of a large urbanized area with a population of one million or more that would have significant economic and social interrelationship to the immediate area). Therefore, the closest metropolitan area to Coshocton County is the Columbus area. With the East-West corridor passing through Coshocton County, Columbus is within approximately 1½ hours driving time. The Cleveland-Akron metropolitan area is within approximately 2 ¼ to 2 ½ hours driving time. These metropolitan areas provide more social relationships to our county (arts, shopping, major sporting events, etc.) than an immediate economic impact because of driving distances for day-to-day employment.

The counties surrounding Coshocton are as follows: Tuscarawas County to the east, Holmes to the north, Muskingum to the south, Knox to the northwest. Small sections of Coshocton county touch Guernsey to the southeast and Licking to the west.

### Existing Conditions (Figure 1, 1A and 2)

Figure 1 identifies several key existing features that may impact future land use in Coshocton County. These features include the following:

- Incorporated communities;
- Areas where public water and sanitary sewer services are currently available;
- Lands with significant use restrictions, including several Recreation Areas and the American Electric Power (AEP) coal lands;
- Areas that have significant natural constraints, including flood plains and lands that overlay abandoned mines;

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- Existing resources, including cell towers, and large employers;
- Areas that are subject to joint economic development agreements between the City of Coshocton and surrounding Townships.
- Park and recreational resources (Figure 1A)

As Figure 1 illustrates, a large number of Coshocton County's existing resources, ranging from Points of Interest to water and sewer service areas, are located in a relatively small portion of the County. Future land use options in portions of the County that do not have access to public water, sanitary sewer, high-capacity roadways, etc. will be limited.

Since much of Coshocton County is dependent on groundwater resources, Figure 2 illustrates the relative groundwater yields available for the County. As this map demonstrates, groundwater yields range from over 500 gallons per minute in the river valleys to less than 3 gallons per minute in much of southeastern Coshocton County. Groundwater yield patterns need to be considered when evaluating future development scenarios or development proposals in order to anticipate locations where intensive development may require alternative water supplies.

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INSERT FIGURE 1



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INSERT FIGURE 1A



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INSERT FIGURE 2



**Back of Figure 2**



## Population Characteristics

The following describes the general population of Coshocton County. Data was gathered from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing. This data was analyzed to determine descriptive attributes of the population, such as age, racial composition, school enrollment, educational attainment, and ancestry.

### Overview

The 2000 population in Coshocton County was reported as 36,655. The urban population accounted for approximately 34.4% and the rural population was approximately 65.6%. Residents classified in the farm population totaled about 6.2%. The male population accounted for 48.8% (17,905) and the female population was 51.2% (18,750).

### County Population

The net population change in Coshocton County from 1950 to 2000 was 5,514, which is an increase of 17.7 %. The greatest growth increase occurred between 1970 and 1980. The rate of growth has been rather stagnant since 1980, even a decrease from 1980-1990. It is interesting to note that the growth for the state of Ohio was a 42.9 % increase for the period of time from 1950 to 2000, indicating that Coshocton County grew at a rate less than one-half that of the State during the last half of the 20th century (The population in 1950 for Ohio was 7,946,627 and the 2000 population was 11,353,140).

*Table 1.1 Population trends over past 50 years for Coshocton County*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Coshocton County</u>	<u>Actual Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
1950	31,141	----	----
1960	32,224	1,083	3.5
1970	33,486	1,262	3.9
1980	36,024	2,538	7.6
1990	35,427	(597)	(1.7)
2000	36,655	1,228	3.5

Source: Ohio Department of Development Office of Strategic Research, 2000

### Regional Population Change

As Table 1.2 demonstrates, Coshocton County's growth rate between 1990 and 2000 was comparable to most of its neighboring counties, with the notable exceptions of

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Holmes, Knox and Licking counties, which have experienced intensive growth pressures due to outmigration from Columbus and the Tuscarawas Valley.

*Table 1.2 Regional Population Change*

<b>County</b>	<b>1990 Population</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>Actual Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Coshocton	35,427	36,665	1,238	3.5
Guernsey	39,024	40,792	1,768	4.5
Holmes	32,849	38,943	6,094	18.6
Knox	47,473	54,500	7,027	14.8
Licking	128,300	145,491	17,191	13.4
Muskingum	82,068	84,585	2,517	3.1
Tuscarawas	84,090	90,914	6,824	8.1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>449,231</b>	<b>491,890</b>	<b>35,835</b>	<b>7.98%</b>

Source: Office of Strategic Research, Ohio Department of Development, 2000

### **Age Distribution**

Coshocton County compares quite closely to the state with regard to percentages of persons in the various age categories. Table 1.3 summarizes the age groups in Coshocton County as well as for the State of Ohio for 2000.

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*Table 1.3 2000 Age Characteristics*

<u>Age</u>	<u>Coshocton County</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>State of Ohio</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Under 5	2,351	6.4	753,172	6.6
5-9	2,620	7.1	816,215	7.2
10-14	2,848	7.9	831,032	7.3
15-19	2,800	7.6	804,052	7.1
20-24	1,848	5.0	736,929	6.5
25-34	4,365	11.9	1,513,761	13.3
35-44	5,661	15.4	1,822,236	16.1
45-54	5,066	13.8	1,560,185	13.7
55-59	1,900	5.2	554,342	4.9
60-64	1,821	5.0	453,121	4.0
65-74	2,860	7.8	796,240	7.0
75-84	1,936	5.3	539,990	4.8
85 and over	579	1.6	131,865	1.5

Median Age 37.8

Source: Factfinder.census.gov. 2000Census

### **Racial Composition**

Coshocton County's racial composition in 2000 was predominately white, including 97.4 % (35,685) of all persons. The proportions of ethnic or racial minority populations were as follows:

- Black or African-American -1.1% (399) of the county's population.
- American Indian and Alaska Native - 0.2% (62).
- Asian and the Pacific Islanders - 0.4 % (128)
- Hispanic- 0.6 % (216)
- Other - 0.3 % (165)

### **Township Population**

The actual population of Coshocton County's townships from 1990 to 2000 indicates growth in 20 of the 22 townships. This excludes Coshocton City, which had a decrease in population of 511 persons (12,193 in the 1990 census to 11,682 in the 2000 census) for a 4.2% decrease. Table 1.4 illustrates the change in population for the townships of the county for the last decade; this data excludes the City of Coshocton and all villages.

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Table 1.4 Township population from 1990 to 2000

<b>Township</b>	<b>1990 Census</b>	<b>2000 Census</b>	<b>Actual Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b>Adams</b>	595	755	160	26.8
<b>Bedford</b>	499	601	102	20.4
<b>Bethlehem</b>	1163	1191	28	2.4
<b>Clark</b>	578	594	16	2.8
<b>Crawford</b>	1,221	1,594	373	30.5
<b>Franklin</b>	1,376	1,286	-90	-6.5
<b>Jackson</b>	1,947	2,045	98	5
<b>Jefferson</b>	1383	1,549	166	12
<b>Keene</b>	1,583	1,689	106	6.7
<b>Lafayette</b>	4,140	4,285	145	3.5
<b>Linton</b>	611	632	21	3.4
<b>Mill Creek</b>	540	747	207	38.3
<b>Monroe</b>	399	452	53	13.3
<b>Newcastle</b>	387	441	54	13.9
<b>Oxford</b>	1,512	1,560	48	3.2
<b>Perry</b>	408	513	105	25.7
<b>Pike</b>	411	550	139	33.8
<b>Tiverton</b>	291	348	57	19.6
<b>Tuscarawas</b>	2,151	1,798	-353	-16.4
<b>Virginia</b>	525	636	111	21.1
<b>Washington</b>	533	629	96	18
<b>White Eyes</b>	981	1,078	97	9.9

Source: Factfinder.US Census.gov

This data appears to indicate that households are moving to the rural areas away from the City of Coshocton and nearby areas. The opening of development in the North corridor may increase population to the north and east of the City of Coshocton over coming decades. One would expect a definite increase in Keene Township.

### **Housing**

The total housing units for Coshocton County in the 1990 census was 14,964. The 2000 census showed the number of housing units as 16,107, for an increase of 7.6 %. The largest percentage of housing units over the last 50 years was in the decade of the 1970s to the 1980s, when the increase was 15.7 %. This increase directly coincides with the population increase during that time frame.



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The number of mobile homes in the 2000 census was 2,625 units, which accounted for 16.3 % of the total housing units. One-unit, detached housing accounted for 71.6 % of the total housing units. The remaining 12.1 % accounts for multi-family properties having two or more units in one building.

## Proportion in Labor Force

The civilian labor force, as defined by the Census, is comprised of civilians 16 years of age and over who are working or seeking work. It excludes military personnel, persons in institutions, those studying or keeping house full-time, persons who are retired or unable to work and volunteer workers.

The 2000 annual civilian labor force for Coshocton County was: total labor force - 17,500, employment - 16,600, unemployment - 900, and unemployment rate - 5.0%. Coshocton County ranked 32<sup>nd</sup> in unemployment among Ohio's 88 counties.

## Employment and Labor Market

Table 1.5 below indicates the distribution of County residents by occupation type. Table 1.6 indicates the distribution of County residents by industrial sector and Table 1.7 provides unemployment data for a 30-year period.

*Table 1.5 Employment by Industry*

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Management, professional, and related occupations	3,703	22
Service occupations	2,276	13.5
Sales and office occupations	3,531	21
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	184	1.1
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	1,542	9.2
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	5,610	33.3

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*Table 1.6 Employment by Industrial Sector*

<b>Industry</b>	Number	Percent of total
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	688	4.1
Construction	883	5.2
Manufacturing	6,053	35.9
Wholesale trade	262	1.6
Retail trade	1,492	8.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	1,033	6.1
Information	230	1.4
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	461	2.7
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	667	4
Educational, health and social services	2,897	17.2
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1,053	6.3
Other services (except public administration)	703	4.2
Public administration	424	2.5

Source, Tables 1.5 and 1.6: Ohio Department of Development prepared by the Office of Strategic Research, 2000

*Table 1.7 Labor Market Information for Coshocton County, 1970 – 2003.*

Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate (%)
1970	15,000	14,300	700	4.7
1980	16,300	15,400	1,000	5.9
1990	16,000	14,900	1,100	6.9
2000	17,400	16,100	1,300	7.7
2003	16,700	15,300	1,400	8.6

Source: Labor Market Information.state.oh.us as of January, 2003



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## Per Capita Personal Income\*

In 2000, Coshocton had a per capita personal income (PCPI) of \$21,898. This PCPI ranked 58th in the State, and was 78% of the State average of \$27,977. In 1990, the PCPI of Coshocton was \$14,440 and ranked 63rd in the State. The average annual growth rate of PCPI over the past 10 years was 4.3% while the average growth rate for the State was 4.1%. In 2000, 717 families in Coshocton County were reported below the poverty level (5.0%). The state percentage below poverty level was 5.3%.

*Table 1.8 Household Income for 1999 as reported on the 2000 Census*

Category	Coshocton County	Percent	State of Ohio	Percent
No. of Households	14,344		4,446,621	
Less than \$10,000	1,355	9.5	406,698	9.1
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1,153	8.0	285,372	6.4
\$15,000 to \$24,999	2,340	16.3	594,143	13.4
\$25,000 to \$34,999	2,391	16.7	602,996	13.6
\$35,000 to \$49,999	2,745	19.1	771,129	17.3
\$50,000 to \$74,999	2,657	18.5	905,323	20.4
\$75,000 to \$99,999	1,089	7.6	444,599	10.0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	445	3.1	289,049	6.5
\$150,000 to \$199,999	100	0.7	71,062	1.6
\$200,000 or more	69	0.5	76,250	1.7

Source: factfinder.census.gov 2000 census

## Total Personal Income\*

In 2000, Coshocton County's TPI (total personal income) ranked 66th in the State of Ohio and accounted for 0.3% of the State total. In 1990, the County's TPI ranked Coshocton County 65th in the State. The average annual growth rate of TPI over the past 10 years for Coshocton County was 4.6 percent. The average annual growth rate for the State was 4.5 % and for the Nation was 5.5 %.

## Earnings by Industry\*

The largest proportion of earnings by industry for Coshocton County in 2000 were:

- Nondurable goods manufacturing, 19.2% of earnings;
- services, 18.9%; and
- durable goods manufacturing, 16.2%.

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- In 1990, Coshocton County's largest proportion of earnings by industry were nondurable goods manufacturing, 26.8%; durable goods manufacturing, 16.1%; and services, 15.2%. Of the industries that accounted for at least 5% of earnings in 2000, the slowest-growing from 1990 to 2000 was nondurable goods manufacturing, which increased at an average annual rate of 0.9%. The fastest was services, which increased at an average annual rate of 6.6%.

\*oh.profiles.iastat.edu/bearfacts from the Regional Economic Information System

## School Enrollment

Persons three years old and over are included in the school enrollment characteristics provided in Table 1.9. The breakdown of the age categories in the 1990 census varies from the 2000 census. This makes it difficult to do a comparison; however, the 1990 census shows approximately 82.3% of total school enrollment in the kindergarten/elementary/high school category. The 2000 census shows 83.7% in that same age population. The State of Ohio percentage in that category is 71.6%. School enrollment for the kindergarten/elementary/high school category in Coshocton County is 12% higher than the state. Coshocton County percentages are higher in all categories except college. The new branch college in Coshocton should help the county show an increase in this category. Also noted, more students were enrolled in private schools at the state level. This enrollment may not address home schooling.

*Table 1.9 2000 School Enrollment Characteristics*

Categories	Coshocton County	Category Percent	State of Ohio	Category Percent
Enrolled in school	8,641		3,014,460	
Nursery School,	648	7.5	204,086	6.8
Preschool				
Kindergarten	501	5.8	163,537	5.5
Elementary School	4,562	52.8	1,349,361	44.7
Grades 1-8				
High School	2,172	25.1	645,083	21.4
Grades 9-12				
College Enrollment	758	8.8	539,392	17.9
Graduate, Professional	---	----	113,001	3.7

Source: Factfinder.census.gov. (School Enrollment)



# Comprehensive Land Use Plan Coshocton County, Ohio

## Education

Educational attainment characteristics have been collected from the 1990 and 2000 census. Persons 25 years and older are included in this data. The data found that those with a high school diploma dominated the educational classifications at both the Coshocton County and state level. Coshocton County shows one-half of the population having obtained a high school diploma, while a little over one-third of State residents fell into this category. Coshocton County's proportion of high school graduates increased in the ten year decade from 1990 to 2000. Table 1.10 shows a percentage comparison of educational attainment levels for Coshocton County between 1990 and 2000, while Table 1.11 compares Coshocton County's 2000 educational attainment data to that of the State.

*Table 1.10 Educational attainment characteristics for Coshocton County (Age 25 and over population)*

Category	1990	Percent	2000	Percent
Less than a H.S. diploma	6,559	28.7	5,148	21.3
High School graduate	10,968	47.9	12,356	51.1
Some college-no degree	2,679	11.7	3,209	13.3
Associate degree	809	3.5	1,093	4.5
Bachelor's degree	1,309	5.7	1,533	6.4
Graduate/Professional	554	2.4	833	3.4

Source: Factfinder.census.gov. 1990 & 2000 census

*Table 1.11 Educational attainment characteristics for Coshocton County and the State of Ohio (Age 25 and over population)*

Category	Coshocton Co.	Percent	Ohio	Percent
Less than a H.S.diploma	5,148	21.3	1,262,085	17.0
High School graduate	12,356	51.1	2,674,551	36.1
Some college-no degree	3,209	13.3	1,471,964	19.9
Associate degree	1,093	4.5	439,608	5.9
Bachelor's degree	1,533	6.4	1,016,256	13.7
Graduate or Professional Degree	833	3.4	547,275	7.4

Source: Factfinder.census.gov. 2000 Census

## Ancestry

Of the 36,655 Coshocton County residents, the highest percentage responded as being of German background (24.5 %). The majority (36,187 persons, or 98.7 %) were born in the United States. Resident population of 5 years and older were questioned regarding language spoken in the home. Responses indicated that 32,007 persons or 93.3 % spoke only English.

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Table 1.12 2000 Ancestry Characteristics

<u>Ancestry</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
German	8,993	24.5
U.S. or America	5,282	14.4
Irish	3,751	10.2
English	3,689	10.1
French (except Basque)	755	2.1
Italian	682	1.9
Miscellaneous/ Other Ancestries	13,503	36.8

Source: Factfinder.census.gov

## Population Projections

Population projections for Coshocton County were released by the Ohio Department of Development in July, 2003 for the years from 2000 through 2030. The projections for the county reflect the stable historical trends demonstrated from 1950 to 2000. These projections indicate that Coshocton County is expected to experience very slow growth over the next 30 years. This projected population is only a 2.6% increase over the 30 year period. Table 1.13 shows this slow increase.

*Table 1.13 Population projections for Coshocton County*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>% Change</u>
2000	36,655	--
2005	36,890	.6%
2010	37,070	.5%
2015	37,420	.9%
2020	37,700	.7%
2025	37,820	.3%
2030	37,610	.6%

Source: Ohio Department of Development Office of Strategic Research, July, 2003

Though Coshocton county's population is expected to remain stable, the county will experience a larger share of residents who reach 65 or older. In the year 2000, the population of age 65 and over was 5,380. Table 1.14 shows the projection for this age group.

*Table. 1.14 Population projection for age 65 and older.*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>% Change</u>
2000	5,380	
2005	5,520	2.6%
2010	5,580	1.0%
2015	6,070	8.8%
2020	6,650	9.6%
2025	7,370	10.8%
2030	7,740	5.0%

Source: Ohio Department of Development, Office of Strategic Research, July, 2003

This amounts to an increase of 43.8% over the 30-year time frame for this age group.

For this same time frame, the opposite end of the spectrum age (0-9), there is a projected decrease of 7%. Table 1.15 shows this data.

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Table 1.15 Population projections for age 9 and under.

Year	Projections	% Change
2000	4,970	--
2005	4,690	5.6%
2010	4,540	3.2%
2015	4,860	7.0%
2020	4,950	1.9%
2025	5,020	1.4%
2030	4,620	8.0%

Source: Ohio Department of Development, Office of Strategic Research, July, 2003.

The projected population of aged persons versus ages 0 - 9 is typical of the State of Ohio, since the general population is living longer and birth rates have generally declined.

In terms of the individual townships from 1960 through 2000, there are slight increases in all townships except Tuscarawas and Jackson. The census records noted this was due largely to the annexation of parts of this territory to Coshocton City. The village of West Lafayette (largest incorporated village in the county) had a 57% increase due to the annexation of surrounding areas of this village. The remaining incorporated villages in the county (Conesville, Nellie, Plainfield, and Warsaw) showed an insignificant amount of population change.

These projections could change as the north corridor develops. Water lines from the Village of West Lafayette to Route 36 could also have an impact on development and population increase.

## Important Issues to be Considered

The following are key points regarding demographics. The population changes do affect housing, employment, health issues, education, and economic trends.

1. The county population is expected to remain stable; however the county's residents will be older.
2. Households are moving to the rural areas.
3. The county will experience very slow growth unless measures are taken to stimulate growth through industry which would bring employees and their families to the area.

### **3. Future Land Use Plan**

Figure 3 following provides a summary of the future land use recommendations developed by the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Committee during the course of this Plan's development. The elements identified on Figure 3 are identified in the following sections. Each section follows the same basic format:

- a. An introduction and overview of the development of the issue in Coshocton County's history
- b. A Vision statement, which articulates the overarching goals of the Committee relating to this topic, and
- c. A statement of Goals and recommended strategies for meeting these goals.

Each section was created independently by separate committees. As a result, each chapter will have a different style and tone, and internal organization may vary slightly in order to preserve the original intent of the Coshocton County Land Use Plan Committee members.

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Insert Figure 3

Back of Figure 3



## Agriculture

### Introduction and Historical Background

A land use survey of Coshocton County was completed in the summer of 1968 in conjunction with the preparation of the first Comprehensive Plan. The survey showed that land used for agricultural purposes, or which is essentially undeveloped, accounted for about 89 % of the County's total 362,250 acres. Other types of development including recreation areas, strip mines, rights of way and all urban development, utilized the remaining 39,350 acres or 11 % of the land. In 1970 Comprehensive Plan there were 90,000 acres of land in cropland, 75,000 acres in pasture and 149,000 acres in forest.

The 1970 Plan concluded:

The growth of average farm size and the use of modern technology have contributed to the development of a strong commercial base in the agricultural sector of Coshocton County. The strength of this base has meant the continuing importance of agricultural sector of Coshocton County. The strength of this base has meant the continuing importance of agricultural activity to the County economy. At the same time, the number of agricultural workers required to produce the increasing sales levels has declined thus increasing the potential labor force available to other sectors of the economy.

It was anticipated that by 1990, the number of agricultural jobs in Coshocton County would have decreased to between 750 and 1,000.

In 1982, the Coshocton Soil and Water Conservation District and USDA, Soil Conservation Service completed a Natural Resources Inventory for Coshocton County Land Use. The report indicated the following: Cropland 101,500 acres; pastureland 65,600 acres; forest land 152,200 acres, urban land 9,600 acres and other land 32,500 acres. The report also indicated Coshocton County has about 57,000 acres of prime farmland. Prime Farmland soils are defined as the best suited to producing food, fiber, forage, feed and oilseed crops. Prime farmland soils produce the highest yields with the minimal inputs of energy and economic resources. Farming these soils results in the least damage to the environment.

Coshocton County's agricultural environment has changed dramatically, as demonstrated by Table 2.1

*Table 2.1: Change in Agriculture, 1963 – 2003*

Year	2003	1993	1983	1973	1963
Land in Farms(ac)	175,000	172,000	201,000	222,500	Not Avail.
Gross Cash Receipts(\$)	33,170,000	27,790,000	Not Avail.	11,570,000	7,970,000
Number of Farms	1,040	850	1030	1220	1354
Avg. Farm Receipts(\$)	31,897	32,659	Not Avail.	9,484	5,866

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Average Farm Size(ac)	168	202	195	182	Not Avail.
Corn/Soybean/Wheat(ac)	35,900	37,500	36,000	31,000	19,200
Hay Acres	29,700	26,900	21,200	27,400	29,400
Cowcalf/Milk Cows(hd)	26,300	25,000	38,600	39,700	39,800
Hogs/Pigs(hd)	36,300	21,800	Not Avail.	Not Avail.	Not Avail.

Source: Agricultural Task Force Final Report, Coshocton County Port Authority

Similarly, the experience of farming has changed substantially for area farmers in recent decade. As the Coshocton County Port Authority identified in a recent report:

Obviously, with an increase in technology and capability, the need for added labor is not as apparent as in the past. **Efficiency, science, and a trend away from diversification** allow producers to concentrate their efforts on one or two major fronts. Add to that an increase in machinery and market capability, producers can and do produce much more efficiently than in the past. That however **has affected the smaller associated businesses** that simply cannot compete. Feed mills, seed dealers, livestock markets, applicators, fertilizer dealers, etc. are continuing to struggle and phase out. The Wal-Mart type of competition has shown itself even in agriculture. Our progression appears to have made the competition tighter and more complex, and we don't see the old way of business returning. We do however, see the ag-related businesses **improving their product offerings** and doing a better job of **providing its clients with in house financing opportunities**, which in some cases, can assist. With the decline of institutions that have first hand knowledge of production agriculture and the struggles that are at times overwhelming, the financing issue is continually a very high priority.

(Agricultural Task Force Final Report, p. 3. Emphasis original.)

### **Agriculture Committee Vision:**

- Preserve Prime Farmland
- Promote the agricultural value of Prime Farmland to competing land users and decision makers
- Make it a priority that agricultural operations be:
  - Economically sustainable
  - Environmentally sustainable
  - Socially acceptable to the community

## Goals and Strategies

### ***Goal 1: Coordinated Development in Coshocton County***

Development in Coshocton County should utilize cooperation between county agencies and developers, investors or landowners to ensure that the county remains diversified and retains an agricultural base. Coshocton County's various governments and agencies need to coordinate their efforts to ensure that development is directed to the areas where it will be most beneficial and cost-effective to the community and where it will help Coshocton County preserve its agricultural character. Ensuring that development is concentrated in areas that have adequate public infrastructure, and locating development away from Prime Farmland to the greatest extent possible, will protect Coshocton County's agricultural sector, as well as the County's financial resources.

An effective land use plan addresses and incorporates all significant local issues and priorities, but must also be based on the land and its natural resources. Land use planning is both a social science and physical and biological science. Failure to consider the natural environment can result in cost overruns, increased runoff and flooding, environment degradation, construction delays, and expensive planning mistakes.

### ***Strategies***

- *Facilitate cooperation with the local Soil and Water Conservation District to provide soil and water evaluations of proposed developments.* County agencies should use soil and water data to determine if existing soil and water conditions can support the proposed land change needs.

The USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service by request of the Coshocton SWCD and Coshocton County Commissioners recently completed the Coshocton Soil Survey. The Soil Survey provides detailed predictions of soil behavior for selected land uses and highlights soil limitations, improvements needed to overcome limitations, and the impact of selected land uses on the environment. This information should be made readily accessible to the public and should be used to help form regulation guidelines for Health board representatives, Realtors, banking interests, and other planning agencies.

- *Protection and preservation of prime land for agricultural production is greatly facilitated by encouraging and maintaining cooperation and coordination among political subdivisions.* Municipalities, townships, and counties can best help preserve farmland by fostering development that follows the recommendations of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Figure 3).
- *Avoid extending water and sewer lines into areas of prime agricultural land unless non-agricultural future land uses have been identified for that area on Figure 3.* Homeowners and businesses that plan to build commonly follow the extension of infrastructure into rural areas. However, if it is necessary to extend infrastructure into areas of prime

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agricultural land, this should be undertaken as carefully as possible in order to minimize resulting negative impacts on agricultural activity. It may be necessary to establish a set of standards in conjunction with water and sewer extensions in prime farmland areas to diminish the likelihood of loss of prime farmland.

- *Develop residential building standards that discourage excessive lot sizes.* This would help reduce the amount of farmland being used for residential purposes.
- *Clustered development for residential housing deserves serious consideration.* A clustered development permits the same number of houses to be built on a site as would be permitted under conventional regulations, but it places the houses on smaller lots in order to create a large area of undeveloped open space. The open space can be owned in common by the residents and can be administered by a homeowner's association. Cluster developments use less land, and reduce the amount of infrastructure needed. Cluster options also make it possible to place houses at a distance from farm operations and cause less disruption to and impact upon the overall landscape. A clustered development option should be included in the County subdivision regulations and should be included in any future land use regulations.

## **Goal 2: Green Space Protection**

Green Space includes parks, farm fields, vacant hillsides and other land uses that support primarily vegetative land cover. Maintaining the County's green spaces is essential to the ongoing vitality of the agricultural sector, and provides natural habitat and natural resources as well.

### **Strategies**

- *Prime land for agricultural production should be preserved and protected to the maximum extent by utilizing all possible and applicable incentives.* One method to preserve prime farmland includes maintaining, extending and creating new agricultural districts in which agricultural activity, even within urban systems, is taxed at a lower rate than urban land use activities. Another method is to implement the recent legislation that allows local governments to purchase development rights from farmers. In these ways agriculture can continue as a valued and productive way of life and major feature of landscape.
- *Encourage landowners to enroll in the Ohio Agricultural District designation.* The Ohio Agricultural District Program was initiated in 1982 to help preserve agricultural land and avoid costly litigation to continue commonly accepted agricultural practices. Farmers who enroll their lands in agricultural districts at no cost for five years receive exemptions from sewer and water assessments and protection from nuisance suits. Renewal forms are sent to the landowners by the county auditor on each 5-year anniversary.

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- *Work to establish a reclamation plan for former gravel and mining areas to create recreational areas for hunting, fishing and other recreational opportunities. Establish guidelines to prevent former mining areas from being converted into possible less favorable commercial uses: i.e. “landfills.” Gravel removal is a major detriment to retaining prime farmland and the aesthetics of major areas within our County.*

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## **Economic Development**

### **Introduction and Overview**

The Comprehensive Plan can be Coshocton County's most important document regarding economic growth, development and change. It establishes the framework to help guide public and private activities as they relate to land use and resource utilization. It can serve as a basis for future land development decisions.

In addition to the environmental and social considerations, it is necessary to consider the economic relationships as well.

In determining land use policy and making land use related decisions, it is vital that economic impacts are made a part of the process. The nature of comprehensive planning indicates that these economic considerations be generalized and in the best interests of the general public. The plan cannot determine specific individual economic relationships. It can give general guidance in making larger Countywide land use decisions and provide the economic perspective that can also be extended to specific issues.

### **Coshocton County Today**

Coshocton County today has a solid agricultural, tourism and industrial base which provides a stable economy for the county. In looking at today from a perspective of development of the commercial and industrial base the following are some observations:

- Coshocton County has a rich history of agriculture, tourism and industry. The county developed along its rivers and canals. Agriculture has played a major role in its development and still does today. Industrial and commercial facilities have developed, expanded with some leaving and others continuing to prosper.
- Flood plain areas around the three rivers in the county and behind the Mohawk and Wills creek Dams limit development in these areas. The Woodbury Wildlife Preserve encompasses 19,000 acres in the west central part of the county.
- The Townships in the county that do not have access to state routes or water and sewer will not be able to support industry or large commercial development. They will develop as small rural-type agricultural enterprises or bedroom communities to the other more developed areas.

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- Water and sewer access in the North Corridor will feed expansion of the airport, residential developments and other projects such as light industrial or commercial development. Highway access in this area is also excellent.

Effective development plans should align economic development strategies with land use, transportation, infrastructure, and workforce development plans at regional and county levels. Alignment with strategic partners can bring valuable information, services, or products into the collaborative venture.

The County's decline in agricultural employment is expected to continue, but the farm as an economic unit should remain viable, assuming there are no major shifts in public policy directed against their efficiency. The agricultural sector's share of Coshocton County's employment understates agriculture's importance because it fails to account for the indirect affect farm production has on the local economy. The main function of the economic goals and policies of Coshocton County are to enhance economic conditions relative to land use decisions. The most direct affect upon the economy will be in areas of land based economic activities such as agriculture.

We must not mistake land development for economic development. Coshocton needs to create more wealth. Prosperity requires people, innovation, productivity and place. Raw vacant land can be one ingredient in the creation of new jobs, but real estate development in and of itself is not an economic strategy and should not be mistaken for one.

All decisions of land use control or development incentive must consider the larger regional economic objectives. For example, denial of a land division may have an adverse economic effect upon the individual property owner, while at the same time the decision may be necessary to the continued viability of the agricultural economy. These relationships must be kept in perspective in achieving the long-term economic goals of the County.

Coshocton County is seeing an increase in new residential construction in the unincorporated areas, albeit limited when compared to Licking and Tuscarawas counties. This new housing activity can be attributed to in-migration into the county or simply households moving out of the city of Coshocton. Local officials and landowners easily dismiss this slow, almost imperceptible growth of housing into the rural areas of the county. The pitfall of this attitude is the long-term cumulative effect of scattered non-farm housing has on the ability of the county and townships to provide increased services, not to mention the impact on rural character, farming operations, and loss of prime farmland.

Coshocton County residents' orientation to the Zanesville, Newark and New Philadelphia areas for shopping, entertainment, medical services and other related

commercial services and facilities has tended to drain the commercial vitality of Coshocton.

Economic development does not happen in a vacuum. To be successful, economic development in Coshocton County must function as a part of the whole socio-economic environment. This environment is constantly evolving and changing. Coshocton County is currently in the process of developing a strategic long range economic development plan to set the direction for development action. Land use planning must be an integral component of this process.

### **Economic Development Committee Vision**

The main function of the economic goals and policies of Coshocton County is to enhance economic conditions relative to land use decisions.

Coshocton County will support the provision of increased employment opportunities for all residents of the County through

- Maintenance of a strong agricultural economy;
- Diversification of the economic base of communities.
- Provision of sufficient areas for future industrial land use;
- Coordination of planning and development of public facilities;
- Development of a strong tourist economy in appropriate areas;
- Achievement of a natural resource use pattern which provides for tomorrow's needs, today's needs and the protection of the environment.

## **Goals and Strategies**

### ***Goal 1: Maintenance of a strong agricultural economy***

#### ***Strategies***

- *Protect areas designated as Prime Farmland on the Land Use Plan Map for agricultural land uses, with the exception of prime farmland designated on the Map for future development.* Areas identified as Prime Farmland on the Land Use Plan Map are intended, as the name implies, primarily for agricultural use in large commercial farm units. There is widespread support from property owners for maintaining these areas for the exclusive use of farming and protecting them from non-farm conflicts. These areas are the foundation of the agricultural industry in Coshocton County and are intended to be maintained for long term agricultural production. Prime farmland can be protected

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through land use regulations, use of available preferential taxing policies, or support for voluntary preservation initiatives.

- *Continue to promote and support agriculture as an important part of the economy and economic development.* Promote public and private programs to aid the agricultural economy. Promote agriculture as a preferred land use in rural areas.
- *Encourage local farmers to place their land in Agricultural Districts in order to preserve the county's farms and farmlands.* A variety of existing programs are available; more information is provided in Appendix A.
- *Promote public and private programs to aid the agricultural economy.* For example, the County should support initiatives through other local organizations to build Coshocton County's specialty foods and food products industries, which can provide an opportunity for small farmers to continue to operate profitably by producing niche products.

## **Goal 2: Diversification of the economic base of communities.**

### **Strategies**

- *Coordinate with the city of Coshocton and the villages of West Lafayette, Warsaw and to some extent Newcomerstown to prepare and maintain an inventory of buildable commercial lands.* One of the challenges that faces many efforts to promote commercial or industrial development is a lack of information regarding available developable lands. A simple database can be maintained by the County or other special agency to identify available properties and their pertinent information, such as infrastructure characteristics, soils, fire and law enforcement coverage, existing structures, etc. Such an inventory is currently in place in several Ohio counties and helps County officials respond effectively to companies interested in locating within their County.
- *Work with business owners and operators and community groups to formulate redevelopment plans for existing commercial areas.* Although redevelopment of existing commercial areas (both within municipalities and in the unincorporated County) will occur via the private sector, the County may find that it can attract more serious attention to these sites if it can present potential developers with a well-thought-out scenario for its development. When a community has a redevelopment plan for an area, a potential developer may be more interested for two reasons:
  - The developer's initial, and potentially cursory, assumptions regarding the area's potential may be challenged by the analysis provided in the redevelopment plan; and

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- The developer will have a more clear understanding of the site's potential and they type of redevelopment most likely to gain the local government's (and citizen's) approval.

Such a redevelopment plan should include an analysis of the area's assets and liabilities, its short- and long-term market opportunities, an identification of potential land uses and land use mixes, and a concept site design indicating how the area can be redeveloped successfully. Redevelopment plans should be developed with ample opportunity for public involvement, and should be shared with both citizens and potential developers at every opportunity.

- *Facilitate secondary centers of economic activity near the villages of West Lafayette and Warsaw.* Both Villages have existing but limited infrastructure, and do afford additional opportunities for economic development. Economic activity in these locations can vary widely, but it may be appropriate to focus on activities that will benefit from their proximity to smaller population centers or niche strategies that can draw on a wide trade area.
- *The county should recognize and encourage small scale industries as viable alternatives to larger, conventional enterprises.* Nationally, small business growth creates the large majority of new jobs and new wealth, and small business growth strategies are often particularly well suited to largely rural areas. It may be beneficial to review County practices with existing small business operators to identify any opportunities for facilitating small business start-up and growth and address any potential impediments.

## ***Goal 3: Provision of sufficient areas for future industrial land use***

### *Strategies*

- *Concentrate intensive commercial and industrial development around the City of Coshocton.* The Comprehensive Plan encourages growth in and around the city of Coshocton, because these areas are the locations where the necessary infrastructure of development, including public water and sanitary sewer, are either already in place or can be reasonably extended. Much of the County does not have this existing or available infrastructure, and much of the County also lacks roads and information networks with sufficient capacity to meet the needs of commercial or industrial development. Attempts to foster more intensive economic development in areas without such infrastructure are likely to waste the County's resources, both because the County's efforts will likely be unsuccessful and because any successful development under such circumstances is likely to incur expensive long-range consequences to the County, such as difficult road maintenance or groundwater contamination.

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It is possible that a strategy of concentrated economic development will create conflicts between Townships that benefit from new development and those that do not; it may be possible to pursue revenue-sharing strategies among Townships.

- *Use land use regulations to protect lands designated for industrial or commercial use should be protected from being compromised by the encroachment of incompatible uses.* Coshocton County has an extremely limited amount of land available for more intensive industrial or commercial development, and this opportunity will be lost if key portions of these few sites are developed for land uses that would be equally suitable elsewhere. Land use regulations will be necessary to protect the existing public investment in these sites and to prevent encroachment of conflicting land uses that may make commercial or industrial development of these sites physically or politically impossible. Use of performance standards may provide a good opportunity to permit property owner flexibility in meeting such standards.

Industries of similar types, service needs, and performance characteristics should be concentrated within like designated areas of each other. Likewise, the encouragement of adequate land for new industrial development within designated growth boundaries. The County should consider it a priority to ensure the stability and functional aspect of industrial areas by protecting them from incompatible uses. Established industrial areas may be extended and new industrial areas designated by plan amendment where development trends warrant such extension or designation as roads, water and sewer services are extended into the area, if appropriate, and the extension or designation of land use and services is consistent with all other goals and policies of the comprehensive plan.

## ***Goal 4: Development of a strong tourist economy in appropriate areas***

Tourism is a vital aspect of Coshocton County's economy that is addressed in great deal in the Tourism chapter of this Comprehensive Plan. This Goal is intended to support the recommendations of that Chapter, on the basis of the understanding that Tourism is a key economic generator at present and will support the building of other economic sectors by raising the County's visibility and promoting its high quality of life, which will help attract other business opportunities.

## ***Goal 5: Achievement of a natural resource use pattern that provides for tomorrow's needs, today's needs and the protection of the environment.***

Natural Resources are also a vital aspect of Coshocton County's economy that is addressed in great deal in the Natural Resources chapter of this Comprehensive Plan. This Goal is intended to support the recommendations of that Chapter, on the basis of the understanding that effective stewardship of the County's natural resources will support the building of other economic sectors by creating a high quality of life, which will help attract other business opportunities.



## Residential Development and Housing

### Introduction and Overview

Any Comprehensive Land Use Plan must provide for housing needs of the area residents. The housing must be adequate and affordable and meet the varied needs of present and future Coshocton County residents. Although no significant increase in county population is projected through 2015, the County's housing needs will change. This is due to aging homes, changes in the demographics of county residents and consumer desires. Residential housing needs must be coordinated with other county needs for land, i.e., industrial and commercial, farming and recreation. Also, the plan must be environmentally friendly. As water and sewer lines radiate from the City of Coshocton and other providers, growth of both residential and commercial properties will tend to follow the lines. This trend must be coordinated with the overall residential housing plan.

As demonstrated in Chapter 2, the population of Coshocton County has not grown significantly in proportion to overall Ohio growth. From 1900 to 2000, county population increased from 29,337 to 36,655. This represents a percentage increase of 25%. For the same time frame, the total Ohio population increased from 4,157,545 to 11,353,140. This was a 173% increase. Through the year 2015, Coshocton County population is projected to decline to 35,400. Probably the cause of this is very little industrial growth in Coshocton County.

The total housing units for Coshocton County in the 1990 census was 14,964. The 2000 census showed the number of housing units as 16,107 for an increase of 7.6% over the past decade. The largest percentage increase of housing units over the past 50 years was in the decade of the 70's to the 80's when the increase was 15.7%. This increase directly coincides with the population increase during that time frame. The number of mobile homes in the 2000 census was 2,625 units, which accounted for 16.3% of the total housing units. One-unit, detached accounted for 71.6% of the total housing units. The remaining 12.1% represented for two or more units in one complex. The number of homes built prior to 1940 is 30% of the total existing homes. The building trend today is using manufactured homes to fill the need for relatively smaller homes (less than 1500 square feet). Most homes more than 1,500 square feet are stick-built homes.

Although the total number of housing unit needs will not increase, the aging population of the county will require different types of homes be considered. Fifteen percent of county residents were over the age of 64 in 2000. Some needs for the aging and disabled residents have been met by recently completed or planned projects. These include Covington Square, which provides duplexes, about 30 housing units, in an area desirable by seniors. It is close to a large market, a doctor's office, and the County Senior Citizen Center. Windsorwood Place is another senior living unit that provides assisted care to residents. It has a population of 50 people. Another project recently completed is the Autumn Care health center. It provides more intensive care for approximately 120 people. Also completed recently was a manufactured home park in the Village of Warsaw with 50 to 60 sites.

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Expansion of the City of Coshocton water and sewer line system to outlying areas was started in 1995 with water going to Pleasant Valley. Presently, water and sewer lines are being extended to the North Corridor, approximately a four-mile expansion. Water and sewer extensions are being made just west of Coshocton. The water and sewer lines will have a great impact on where residences will be built. Smaller lots can be used. Presently to have a well and septic system, your lot must be at least one acre.

A four-lane highway bisecting Coshocton County from east to west has been partially completed. The road is complete from Coshocton east to Tuscarawas County and Interstate 77. In the planning stages is the project to continue the four-lane from Coshocton to Muskingum County. The overall thrust of this project is to have a four-lane limited access highway from Pittsburgh to Columbus.

A soil study of Coshocton County has been completed. This study will be of great value in determining the best areas to build homes. One thing the soil study will show is which lands are most adaptable to building sites. The study also shows where reclaimed coalmine lands are. Also existing are flood maps outlining locations where construction opportunities are limited by FEMA flood insurance regulations.

## **Residential and Housing Committee Vision**

Meet the needs for residential housing in Coshocton County for the next 20 to 25 years. Although total population is not expected to change significantly, older obsolete homes will need replaced and changes in consumer desires must be met. Also, changes in demographics need to be considered. The county needs for residents' housing are varied and must be met. We identified certain areas of the county as shown on the attached map to be most desirable for residential building.

## **Goals**

Coshocton County is likely to experience continuing population growth in rural areas. Although a small number of houses located at a distance from each other on multi-acre lots will generally have few negative impacts, large numbers of homes on septic systems, wells and inadequate streets have the potential to damage the County's groundwater agricultural capacity, economic development potential, transportation movement and other aspects of the County. As a result, two factors of Coshocton County's residential development capacity should be addressed. First, ensuring that as much residential development as possible occurs on public water and sewer systems, and on properly-designed roads and driveways, will help absorb the residential demand without impairing the County, particularly in areas where groundwater supplies are already minimal. Second, ensuring that new residential development is designed to manage its impacts on roadways, hillsides and other elements will be vital to retaining the value of Coshocton County's residential property.



***Goal 1: Increase the County's infrastructure capacity for residential development in appropriate areas.***

*Strategies:*

- *Encourage sanitary sewer and water infrastructure between West Lafayette and Coshocton, east from the Village of Warsaw, and southeast from the City of Coshocton in the vicinity of Route 541 (particularly in conjunction with the roadway improvements identified for this area in the Transportation section). This corridor is likely to represent the most efficient and most logical opportunity for strengthening the County's infrastructure system, and is the area likely to be in highest demand for residential development. Expanding sanitary sewer and water infrastructure in these locations will provide greater opportunities for residential developments using water and sewer services, which will lessen the proportion of the population that is dependent on wells and septic systems.*
  
- *Establish a County Water District to facilitate coordination between the various agencies that provide water and sewer. As portions of the County experience increasing residential development, it is likely that pressures for infrastructure extension will grow. A County Water District will provide an opportunity for all of Coshocton County's water and sewer providers to:*
  - *Develop coordinated responses to future water and sewer needs;*
  - *Determine the most efficient strategies for serving particular areas;*
  - *Collaborate on funding strategies and grant applications;*
  - *Develop strategies for sharing costs and revenues, if desired, and*
  - *Establish regular communication between agencies that might not otherwise have many opportunities for sharing information.*
  
- *Improve traffic flow over highway, particularly between West Lafayette and Coshocton. As residential development pressure increases in this area, the number of vehicles using U.S. 36 will increase significantly. In locations where residential development is proposed in proximity to this or other major local highways, it may be prudent to require service roads to direct the development's traffic to an existing intersection with adequate capacity, rather than permitting an additional curb cut on the main road to create an entry to the development.*

***Goal 2: Increase the County's capacity for residential development in appropriate areas by establishing regulations to prevent negative impacts.***

***Strategies***

- *Implement building codes/regulations for the unincorporated areas of the county.* County Subdivision regulations have been recently established, and these regulations will help support sound practices in rural residential development.

In addition, the County and Regional Planning Commission should develop a countywide permit and guideline system for home building. A permitting system will enhance the county's quality of life and the economic value of property by protecting investment in a property from any negative impacts resulting from incompatible land uses on nearby properties. Successful implementation of any such regulations will require a focused effort educate residents regarding permits purposes and requirements and the steps necessary prior to building a home in the county.

One tool that may be particularly useful is a handbook for new residents/home builders that describes the steps necessary in buying home or starting home building process. An example of this is the publication "A Guide to Building and Living in Licking County," which is available from the Licking County Regional Planning Commission.

- *Coordinate residential development and consider increasing permit fees so as to have some control over development.* As demand for rural Coshocton County residential development increases, the amount of oversight required to protect the interests of other property owners will also increase. Existing permit fees should be reviewed in comparison with other Ohio counties on a regular basis, and reasonable increases designed to cover the County's administrative costs relating to new development should be considered.
- *Review proposed developments in the vicinity of the Airport in conjunction with Airport officials to identify any concerns relating to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) restrictions on land development in flight paths.* Although FAA regulations will not prevent development, it is possible that specific types of development will require FAA approval, particularly if it is located in the approach zone of a runway. Airport officials should be asked to provide comments on any development located in the flight path. Requirements will change over time as a result of expansions of runway facilities.

## **Environmental Resources**

*“A Native American Proverb says, ‘We have not inherited the Earth from our fathers, we are borrowing it from our children.’ The water, soil, minerals, forests, and wildlife of our county need to be understood and the quality protected for future generations.”*

### **Introduction and Overview**

Coshocton County is located in the east-central unglaciated portion of Eastern Ohio. With a mean elevation of 1,100 to 1,200 feet above sea level, Holmes, Tuscarawas, Guernsey, Muskingum, Licking, and Knox counties border the county. Created in 1810 from Muskingum County, the word Coshocton is a derivative of an Indian word meaning, "union of waters."

The quality of life in Coshocton County continues to be closely related to the quality of our native environment. The proper use and management of our air, land, and water resources are necessary to maintain our physical, social, and economic well being. Our relationships to the use of these physical elements comprise the key land use issues of environmental quality.

In considering future land use possibilities and alternatives, their effect on the physical environment and utilization of natural resources is of significant importance. The effects of natural processes and human activities--floods, water pollution, mining, and urbanization--on the natural resources are important to understand because these processes and activities, to a large degree, affect the health, safety, and well-being of the citizens, the economy, and the environment of the county.

Effective management of environmental resources requires current and accurate information that can be used to evaluate and recognize possible land use changes affecting the local ecosystems. High-quality information is necessary to identify and respond to these trends. Today, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are being used to ensure that rational and ecologically sound decisions are made concerning resource development, impact mitigation, environmental monitoring and other environmental management issues pertaining to land use management. GIS can evaluate land and resource use alternatives while considering potential environmental and cultural resource impacts, economic implications, and potential use conflicts.

### **Environmental Resources Committee Vision**

Coshocton County will have a full complement of the environmental resources that the community needs to maintain health and biodiversity and attract and retain residents, visitors and businesses.

## **Goals and Strategies**

Since Coshocton County's environmental resources vary widely in terms of their issues and needs, each is addressed below with a separate section that has separate goals and strategies. Selected background information is provided at the beginning of each section.

### **Ground-Water Resources (See Figure 2, Chapter 1)**

Of the many natural resources available, water has always been crucial to Coshocton County's growth and economic status dating back to our historical beginnings in the early 1800's. Groundwater is water naturally stored below ground surface, in broken rock, gravel, or other permeable material. Coshocton County is comprised of parts of several geologic formations. The aquifers in these formations yield various quantities of water, and recharge at different rates. Many types of land uses depend on groundwater, including agriculture and industry, the city of Coshocton, villages of West Lafayette, Warsaw, and individual residences. Coshocton County currently has an adequate and safe water supply.

Three main aquifers provide ground water for Coshocton County. The unconsolidated coarse-grained sand and gravel aquifer is the most productive in terms of the amount of water than can be accessed. This aquifer is located in the river valleys that cut through the center of the county from east to west and from northwest to southeast. Yields of 100 to 1,000 gallons per minute (gpm) or more are obtainable from the thick permeable deposits of sand and gravel beneath the flood plains adjacent to the Muskingum River, and are also located in a portion of Wakatomika Creek. The ancient drainage channel beneath the Muskingum River from Coshocton to Dresden is filled with as much as 135 feet of coarse deposits of sand, gravel, boulders, and thin layers of clay. Proven yields of as much as 1,500 gpm have been developed in the vicinity of Conesville. In the southeastern portion of the county, including the Plainfield area, yields up to 100 gpm are possible from valley fill material containing sand and gravel deposits. Scattered throughout the county, the sandstone, shale, and limestone aquifers offer limited yields that range from 25gpm to less than 3 gpm. Specific information on ground-water availability and wells can be obtained by contacting the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Water.

Ground water is a major water source for rural households in Coshocton County. Approximately 47 percent of all households obtain their water from private wells and developed springs. Based on an estimated usage of 75 gallons per person per day, 1,260,525 gpd from private wells and developed springs are used. Other private water uses include industry (95 million gpd) and livestock use (0.39 million gpd), which are mostly from ground-water supplies. In addition, the Muskingum River provides approximately 260 million gpd of surface water for thermoelectric-power cooling purposes at the Columbus Southern Power Generating Plant in Conesville. The remaining 53 percent of households use public-water supplies that use ground water as the source.

Runoff and sediment from residential development, construction sites, and agricultural lands

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may enter the county's streams and lakes. Also, runoff may carry other pollutants, such as lawn and agricultural chemicals (pesticides and fertilizers), effluent from septic systems, oil and gas from spills, and industrial wastes.

*Table 2.2 Water Use in Coshocton County, Ohio.*

Public Water System	Population Served	Primary Water Source	Water Usage (GPD) <sup>2</sup>	Treatment Plant Capacity (GPD)
Coshocton	14,538	Ground Water	6,810,000	8,100,000
Echoing Hills	86	Surface Water	10,300	23,000
Millers HOA <sup>3</sup>	100	Ground Water	5,000	60,000
Warsaw	713	Ground Water	80,000	218,000
West Lafayette	2,613	Ground Water	225,000	1,080,000
Other <sup>4</sup>	570	Ground Water	39,600	N/A

<sup>1</sup> Estimates from Ohio EPA.

<sup>2</sup> GPD = gallons per day.

<sup>3</sup> Millers Home Owners Association.

<sup>4</sup> Includes mobile home parks, nursing homes, housing developments, and religious institutions; total treatment plant capacity figure not available.

(Informational source: Coshocton County Ground-Water Resources. P. D. Golden, K. T. Ricker, L. C. Brown. AEX-480.16. Ohio State University Extension)

There are five watersheds that impact Coshocton County:

- Tuscarawas
- Mohican
- Walhonding
- Muskingum
- Wills Creek

While the present and future availability and safety of water is good for Coshocton County, we must protect our rivers and future reservoir sites for water supplies. We must prevent septic tank effluent, agriculture, industry, and mining from polluting our streams and soils. This was the goal in 1970 and is still necessary in 2004. In order to insure a continued supply of water to this variety of uses, Coshocton County will continue to need reliable and current information regarding groundwater resources. Sources of this information are not always abundant, but the county needs to obtain or generate sufficient data on which to base land use decisions that affect, or are affected by, groundwater supply in order to avert overdraft and land use conflicts. The demand for consumptive use of water has and will continue to increase. At the same time, increasing use of the resource by recreation and the need to maintain or enhance fish habitat argues for consumption issues. The increased human activity in the county heightens the risk that the resource will be polluted.

There are 11 Coshocton County sites listed in the Ohio EPA Master Sites List (MSL) where there is evidence of, or it is suspected that waste management has resulted in the contamination of air, water, or soil and there is a confirmed or potential threat to human health or the environment. Eight are situated in the city of Coshocton, 2 in West Lafayette, and 1 in

Monroe Township. Planning groups need to secure funding to clean up these sites.

***Goal 1: To efficiently utilize the water resources of and for Coshocton County while maintaining good quality water for public water supplies, propagation of wildlife, fish and aquatic life, and for domestic, agricultural, industrial, commercial, municipal, recreation and other beneficial uses.***

***Strategies***

1. The County should consider the physical capacity of the land and water to accommodate land uses when planning for the location, type and density of rural development.
2. Maintain rural densities of 1 to 3 acres per dwelling in rural residential areas to minimize potential groundwater pollution from septic tank use. Even lower densities should be required when soil limitations show more than the usual limitations for septic tank systems or approved alternative on-site sewage systems.
3. In areas experiencing proven water pollution from septic tanks or inadequate water supply, encourage the provision of alternative individual treatment system or water systems to overcome health hazards or to provide a greater margin of public safety in allowable developments.
4. Minimize soil erosion and sedimentation by encouraging soil conservation techniques. Educational programs and technical assistance should be provided in voluntary erosion abatement.
5. The County Health Department should sustain sanitary surveys in areas of concentrated rural development to determine present or potential septic tank pollution problems.
6. Residential, commercial and industrial development should be encouraged to be designed or located in a manner to maintain an acceptable impact on water quality.
7. Coshocton County should continue to support watershed management practices that protect and enhance water quality and quantity.
8. Water resources used as municipal water supplies should be protected by encouraging the strict enforcement by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and Ohio Department of Health Standards.
9. Small watersheds that are current or potential water sources for municipalities should be identified, and coordination requirements defined, in intergovernmental agreements if the city or villages determines that special protective measures are needed for the watershed. When municipalities have identified particular needs and

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methods for protecting their watersheds, the county should consider including such measures within the Coshocton County Comprehensive Plan.

10. Encourage water quality testing of rural residential wells through a public information program.
11. Improve maintenance and use of residential and industrial septic systems by:
  - a. encouraging proper operation and maintenance of septic systems.
  - b. encouraging water conservation to reduce waste loading,
  - c. educating users about detrimental chemical additives, particularly those containing chlorinated organic solvents that are sold to improve septic system and drain field operation.
12. Coshocton County should recognize the risk to maintenance of good quality groundwater from improperly abandoned wells and encourages proper abandonment of unused wells.
13. Participate in cooperative water quality planning through such agencies as the Ohio EPA and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Army Corps of Engineers, Ohio State University Extension, U.S. Geologic Survey and the Coshocton County Soil and Water Conservation District.
14. Encourage water providers to share delivery systems and supply sources within populated growth boundaries.
15. Encourage construction of wells for municipal water use only within populated growth boundaries to minimize impacts of wellhead protection areas on other land uses.

## **Goal 2: To ensure all standards and regulations applicable to waters in Coshocton County are coordinated.**

### ***Strategies***

1. Coshocton County should coordinate with state and federal agencies to help ensure the waters of the county comply with applicable state and federal water quality standards.
2. Coshocton County should, to the extent financially and practically possible, support water quality or quality management plans and programs of federal, state and regional agencies.
3. In supporting good decisions about land use, the County should encourage conservation of water resources, improved treatment of point sources of pollution and the control of non-point sources of pollution.



4. Encourage Ohio EPA to expand their monitoring program and increase sample areas to determine locations approaching or exceeding drinking water standards. Impacts from domestic sewage shortfalls should be assessed to identify any possible hazards.
5. Coshocton County should cooperate with municipal and other public water service providers in development and implementation of wellhead protection programs consistent with Ohio EPA state water quality and land-use requirements.
6. The Strategies of this Comprehensive Plan should provide a framework to protect the groundwater resources of these and other aquifers from unsustainable levels of use.

***Goal 3: To strive for an adequate quantity of water for beneficial uses within the County.***

**Strategies**

1. Evaluation of demand for water should include, but not be limited to, the following potential beneficial uses in no particular order: domestic, municipal, agriculture, stream flow augmentation, industrial, commercial, livestock, mining, and recreation.
2. Identify and designate areas of the county that lack sufficient water as “Groundwater Limited Areas.”
3. A separate Water Management Plan should be developed and adopted as part of the county comprehensive land use plan for reference. The goals then should be part of the overall guidance for county land use decisions developed from the information presented in the Water Management Plan and should be utilized in all future land use decisions.

***Goal 4: To educate property owners about the importance of the use of their property to water quality and quantity.***

**Strategies**

1. The Coshocton County Regional Planning Commission may develop and maintain a source of information regarding water conservation, water quality protection, and water laws for public use.
2. The Coshocton County Regional Planning Commission should refer land use applicants to sources of information regarding water conservation, water quality protection, and water rights early in the development review process.



3. Encourage individual water conservation practices to hold water demands to a minimum through a public information program.
4. Help ensure that adequate information is submitted by developers seeking new groundwater rights to determine whether the proposed consumption will exceed the sustainable yield of the aquifer or interfere with other wells in the area.

## **Mineral Resources**

Mineral production in Coshocton County has played key roles in the current infrastructure development and maintenance, and the Comprehensive Land Use Plan recognizes the importance of mineral and aggregate resources. Because of their limited availability, mineral and aggregate resources require a thorough understanding of necessary considerations because of their importance to a healthy and growing economy. Therefore, the land use planning process needs to further investigate the relationships among the geologic, economic, and environment-related characteristics of mineral commodities and deposit types. In addition, land use management considerations will require increasing needs for better geologic and minerals data on industrial minerals, especially in areas adjacent to growing population centers and prime agriculture farm land. A thorough investigation and discussion of the mineral and rock resources in Coshocton County should be considered in the future to determine what resources remain as viable contributors to the local economy.

Information from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Geosurvey and interactive map for Coshocton County lists the following minerals removed from mines and quarries annually:

- Coal 33,959 ton. (The Ohio Coal Association listed 2001 production at 54,530 short ton.)
- Sand, gravel, and sandstone 32,137 ton
- Sand and gravel 402,408 ton
- Sandstone and Conglomerate 30,723 ton

In 2002 the Ohio Division of Mineral Resources Management reported that the volatility of the oil and gas cycles in part, contributed to the lowest number of wells being drilled since at least 1988. There has been a decline in oil and gas production for the past 10 years. As the 7th ranked county in wells drilled, Coshocton County has followed the trend.

The long-term effort of data collection and interpretation provides natural-resources managers and policymakers with essential earth-science information needed to make future land use decisions about Coshocton County resources and mitigation of environmental problems.

***Goal 5: To plan for and protect mineral and aggregate resources for future use.***

*Strategies*

1. Consideration applications for new or expanded resource sites in accordance with state regulatory policies and guidelines in a proactive manner.
2. Conduct periodic resource use and inventory reviews.

## **Forests/Woodlands**

Coshocton County has 177,057 acres of woodland. According to the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, in 1991 there was 2.05 times more growth than removals of growing stock and 1.90 times more saw timber growth than removals. Forest/woodlands are significant to the economic, recreational and environmental character of Coshocton County. These forest and woodlands provide the direct resource base for the forest industry and an indirect base for related industries. A majority of the water resources of the County originate in the forested areas of the County and are primary watershed areas. These forests also serve a multitude of functions that include abundant wildlife habitat and areas that are widely used for outdoor recreation. The unique scenic and environmental qualities of forest lands make them attractive for recreational activities such as camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, water sports, etc. These activities, in addition to providing an important social benefit, can also contribute significantly to the economy of Coshocton County.

Woodland also provides an abundance of fish and wildlife habitat. A large number of animals require the cover, food supply, and protection provided by the timber and other vegetation for their continued existence.

Agriculture and timber production are similar and compatible land uses. The long-term growth aspect of timber production makes it different from other agricultural production. However, both programs need similar protection from non-compatible activities to insure that forestry continues to be a viable industry if managed properly by private landowners and public entities.

***Goal 6: Protect and maintain our forest resource.***

*Strategies*

1. Support a woodland protection program in Coshocton County to limit the uses of identified woodlands to timber production, farming, watershed, wildlife habitat, recreation and other compatible uses. Designate appropriate areas for continued forest activities.

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2. Develop a timber conservation zone and apply it to those areas best suited to woodland uses.
3. On lands that contain a mixture of agricultural and forest uses, a Farm/Timber zone should be applied to protect these resources uses from incompatible uses.
4. Forest management and harvesting activities in Coshocton County should be conducted according to the Best Management Practices (BMP's) for erosion control for logging practices in Ohio, administered by the ODNR, State Forestry Department.
5. Strive to conserve woodlands and mixed farm/timber lands by maintaining a mixed forest and agricultural base and to protect the county's forest and farm economies by making possible economically efficient woodlot and agricultural practices that assure the continuous growing and harvesting of woodland tree species and agricultural products as the leading use on forest land and mixed farm/timber land consistent with sound management of soil, air, water and fish and wildlife resources and to provide for recreational opportunities.
6. Prohibit subdivision development and other land divisions creating new dwelling sites that are not compatible with the protection and efficient management of forestry and woodlands.

## **Soils**

The Soil Survey of Coshocton County contains information that affects land use planning. It contains predictions of soil behavior for selected land uses. It highlights soil limitations, improvements needed to overcome the limitations, and the impact of selected land uses, on the environment. The Soil and Water Conservation District, the County Health Department, and some developers are using this recent publication as a guide for development.

### ***Goal 7: Anticipate and plan for potential impacts of soil types.***

#### *Strategies*

1. Encourage the continued use of the Soil Survey for Coshocton County and the continuing development and enhancement of the GIS formatting of this data for easier and more frequent web-based use by the public.

## **Fish and Wildlife Habitat**

The Woodbury Wildlife Area contains 20,000 acres, Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District at Mohawk Dam and Wills Creek have 3,730 acres, and Coshocton Park District contains 450 acres. This large wildlife habitat area has resulted in a large population of deer, raccoon, turkey, geese, and other species. The streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds are home to aquatic wildlife. The discussion of fish and wildlife habitat issues emphasizes that fish and wildlife are directly dependent on the quality of the natural environment. With awareness of the environmental needs of fish and wildlife, care can be exercised in reviewing lot splits and developments in rural areas of Coshocton County which will remain in agriculture and forestry uses, thereby achieving most of the protection needs of this habitat.

### ***Goal 8: Protect fish and wildlife habitat, maintain optimal ecological balance and protect endangered species.***

#### *Strategies*

1. New roads requiring County approval should be located to avoid identified habitat areas whenever possible. Bridges, roads and access rights-of-way should be designed to avoid restriction of channel capacity and minimize removal of shoreline vegetation.
2. Developments should retain vegetation along streams, lakes, reservoirs, and fencerows to provide for shelter, shade, food and nesting.
3. To maintain stream quality and protect sensitive waterfowl areas, land uses that require drainage, excessive removal of riparian vegetation, alteration of stream banks and filling shall be discouraged in these locations.
4. Conflicts with wildlife should be considered in land development. Development adjacent to streams, sensitive waterfowl areas and critical wildlife areas shall incorporate adequate setbacks and buffer zones.
5. Development density should be controlled so that significant wildlife habitat will not be adversely affected.
6. Coshocton County should cooperate with local, state and federal agencies to identify, conserve and protect fish and wildlife habitat and in implementation measures for the protection of such areas.
7. Native plant species, wetlands and stream bank vegetation on managed public lands should be protected.
8. Continue current efforts funded by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect the environment of the endangered

purple cat's paw mussel. These agencies are providing funds to build fencing to help farmers keep cattle out of the stream beds that had been identified as the mussel's environment.

## **Solid Waste Disposal**

Solid Waste management involves collection and disposal of various solid waste materials such as household, commercial, and industrial garbage. There is currently one public Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA)- licensed landfill in Coshocton County where private and commercial haulers deposit solid waste. Because of the landfill method of disposing of solid waste, potential concerns for land and water quality exists.

***Goal 9: Meet the needs for safe, efficient, and sanitary storage, collection, transportation, and disposal of solid waste, and to increase, to the maximum, salvage reclamation and reuse of materials from solid waste.***

### *Strategies*

1. Site selection and location of solid waste disposal facilities is a significant land use issue. Land use compatibility and environmental, and economic impacts as well as public acceptance must be considered. Specific OEPA site criteria for any new facility should be clearly understood and become of the County's Land Use Plan.

## **Sewage Sludge Disposal**

The by-product of treating wastewater or sewage is accumulation of organic solids. When sewage is processed in a treatment facility, the process involves removal of waste solids from the sewage water. The purified water is returned to rivers and the solids or sludge remains. The disposal of sludge is usually accomplished by either taking it to a landfill or by spreading it on agricultural lands as an organic fertilizer and soil conditioner. The use of sludge can be beneficial to agricultural land, making it more productive. It contains significant quantities of nitrogen and phosphorus plus the humus material that can improve the quality of farmland.

The use of sludge as an agricultural fertilizer has its limitations since its over-application can be a threat to land and water quality. Improper use can result in harmful accumulations of nitrogen and heavy metals. Because of these problems, each application site of sludge is reviewed and approved by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). The main concerns involve disposal of the sewage sludge in an environmentally safe way.

There presently are three generators of sludge in Coshocton County. Currently, only the City of Coshocton produces sufficient quantities of sludge to present a disposal problem. However, the

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needs of Warsaw and West Lafayette must also be understood. In addition, municipalities from neighboring counties may utilize land in Coshocton County as OEPA approved application sites.

Coshocton County recognizes the potential beneficial aspect of agricultural application of limited amounts of sewage sludge. However, disposal of unlimited quantities of sewage sludge becomes a disposal problem of a different level. The dumping of large quantities of sludge in one location would create potential land use, health, productivity and water quality problems.

### ***Goal 10: Manage sewage sludge disposal to the benefit of all County residents.***

#### *Strategies:*

1. Encourage the beneficial agricultural application of sewage sludge in limited amounts according to OEPA standards.
2. Require monitoring of sludge disposal sites for possible problems.

## **Parks & Open Spaces**

### **Introduction and Overview**

Parks and open spaces provide the opportunity for active recreational pursuits and also for more passive pursuits such as nature study. They provide a place for sport-oriented activities such as golf, swimming, tennis, soccer, etc. and also a place for non-sport activities such as picnicking, bird watching, camping, etc.

In addition to the personal benefit that residents receive from parks and open spaces, the County benefits in two other important ways. The first is an environmental benefit. Land used for parks and open spaces helps assure the land will be preserved for a long time which will then enhance air quality and water quality and protect wildlife and plants. The second benefit is economic in nature. The development of parks and open spaces is attractive to tourists, it may increase property values, and businesses may be more interested in a community with a viable park system.

The first land use Plan for Coshocton County recommended that community parks use the existing resources and be located at or near elementary schools. The plan projected a large population growth and suggested that emphasis should be placed on the development of community parks. It has been over thirty years since that first plan was drafted. The county has changed in many ways, some of which were foreseen in the 1970 plan and some that were not foreseen. One of the most significant things that was predicted, but did not happen, was population growth. The fact that the population figure remained relatively stable impacts the recommendations of the first plan.

According to the Ohio State University Data Center, population growth for Coshocton County through 2015 is predicted to remain flat at about 35, 400. This plan will be based on this prediction and will concentrate on sustaining and improving existing resources.

### **Facilities Analysis**

It is evident from the number of parks, ball fields, and other recreational facilities already in place that the people of Coshocton County consider parks and open spaces an important component in their everyday lives. Parks and recreational facilities have been mapped onto a county map and identified as: Points of Interest, Ball Fields, Birding, Camping, Golf, Hiking/Walking Trails, Horseback Riding, Hunting, Ice-Skating, Picnic/Parks, Shooting, Skateboarding, Soccer, Swimming, and Tennis. These points of interest are identified on Figure 1A in Chapter 2.

The above mentioned activities and facilities are not only important to the residents of the county but they also can be a “draw” for tourists. They should be maintained and developed with the best interests of both groups in mind.



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The Coshocton Park District includes Bancroft Park and Lake Park. Lake Park is the largest park in the District and in the County. Centrally located and adjacent to Roscoe Village, it is heavily used by both County residents and tourists. With the addition of the Aquatic Center in 1999, it is the magnet that draws people to the Park. The number of campers staying at the campground has increased significantly due to the new pool. The renovated Lake Park Pavilion can be rented by groups or individuals and is reserved almost every weekend throughout the year. It is one of the few surviving dance pavilions in the State and is of historic significance in addition to being a well-used facility. The Canal Boat is available for trips down the canal April through October. The Park works in conjunction with Roscoe Village booking charter trips and individual reservations. The Park District also offers numerous picnic shelters, walking and biking paths, hiking trails, an extensive playground, fishing in the canal basins, and ball fields.

Burt Park is situated on 6 acres in the center of the village of West Lafayette. It was completely restored and rededicated in May of 1998. The park contains a bandstand, picnic shelter, gazebos, tables, and benches. It is frequently used by West Lafayette residents for family picnics and for community functions.

Riverview Park located in the village of Warsaw is a popular site for residents of the Village and surrounding townships. The Park contains three shelters (one with kitchen facilities), a playground, picnic tables, swimming pool, tennis courts, ball fields, walking path, and a basketball court. The Park is truly a community focal point.

There are other smaller parks located throughout the County. These have been identified as: Hall Park in the City of Coshocton, owned by the Coshocton Board of Education; Bancroft Park in the city of Coshocton owned by the Coshocton Park District; South Sixth Street Park and the Otsego complex, both owned by the City of Coshocton; Fresno Park, owned by the Fresno Methodist Church; Bakersville Park, owned by the Bakersville Community Park Board; McElwee Park in New Castle, owned by Community of New Castle; Tiverton Park owned by the Township trustees; and Plainfield Park, owned by the Village of Plainfield. Other picnic areas in the County include Mohawk Dam area, Wills Creek area, the Boy Scout Camp, Sportsman's Club, Cyclops Lodge/AK Steel, and the Fairgrounds. Each elementary school in the county has a playground that often serves as a neighborhood park for children and their families.

Clary Garden is a 15 acre site located on SR 541 just West of Coshocton. This is in the planning process to become a botanical garden.

There are numerous ball fields located throughout the County. These are located in the City at the Otsego Ave. complex, the Himebaugh Lot, the Athletic Field (behind Stewart Field), and Cassingham Hollow. The Lake Park fields are comprised of softball fields, a Pony League diamond, and the upper diamond, which is a very well maintained baseball field. There are also fields located in Canal Lewisville, at Union School, River View Park, River View High School, Ridgewood Recreation fields in West Lafayette, Conesville, Fresno, New Castle, Nellie, Roscoe, Keene, and Plainfield.



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Biking takes place anywhere there are roads and/or sidewalks to accommodate bike traffic. Specifically bike paths have been constructed at Lake Park, the Otsego complex (which includes a BMX course), paved paths at Riverview and Fresno parks, and the path that connects the city with Lake Park. The hiking trails at Lake Park, and Woodbury Wildlife Area can accommodate mountain biking.

There are three wonderful natural areas for birdwatchers: Woodbury Wildlife Area, Lake Park, and Wills Creek.

The county provides a number of opportunities for boating. There is a privately owned canoe livery on the Walhonding River near Lake Park. There is a boat ramp on the Muskingum River within Coshocton city limits. In addition to the Walhonding and the Muskingum Rivers, boaters can access the Kokosing River, the Tuscarawas River, Killbuck Creek, the Mohican River, Wills Creek, and the Lake Park Basins all within Coshocton County.

Camping is a popular activity in the County. The following locations and facilities offer campsites: Lake Park, Lake Lila, Shady Grove, Walhonding Hills, Roscoe Colonial Campground, Forest Hills, Muskingum Valley Scout Reservation, the Sportsman's Club, Mohawk Dam, Whispering Falls, Tonawanda, Riverfront Campground, and the Fairgrounds (trailer camping only).

Fishing can be enjoyed in all the rivers, streams, ponds, and lakes in the County with permission of private landowners, if needed, and an up-to-date fishing license, if required.

There are four golf courses in the County: Hilltop Golf Course, Hickory Flats, River Greens, and the Coshocton Country Club.

The sport of hiking and walking can obviously take place anywhere but there are a number of designated trails and paths within the County: The Towpath, Scarr Loop Trail, Scarr Forest Trail, and Eagle Ridge Trail, all at Lake Park; Woodbury Wildlife Area, Otsego Complex walking path, Riverview Park walking path, AEP coal lands trails, the Boy Scout Camp, Sportsman's Club, Fresno Village path, Kids America Indoor track, the Fairgrounds, outdoor tracks at each of the county high schools.

Horseback riding can be enjoyed on the AEP coal land equestrian trail, on the Fairgrounds track, and at privately owned stables within the County.

Coshocton County has long been a destination for hunters. The land is specifically hunted for deer and wild turkey. There are over 20,000 acres of public land available and private lands are also used for this sport as long as permission has been given and a hunting license has been purchased.

There are soccer fields in numerous places throughout the County. Many are located near schools. The two largest soccer complexes are located at Lake Park and at the Otsego Ave. Complex. There are two indoor soccer fields at Kids America.

Two areas specifically designed for skateboarding are at the Otsego Ave. Complex and at Lake

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Park.

Shooting sports can be enjoyed at the Woodbury Wildlife Area, the Sportsman's Club, The Coshocton Gun Club, the Fresno Gun Club, and a one-thousand yard range near Plainfield.

There is one indoor swimming pool at Coshocton high School. Outdoor swimming pools and lakes include Lake Park Aquatic Center, Warsaw Community Pool, the West Lafayette Pool, Forest Hill Lake, Coshocton Town and Country Club Pool, and a pool at the Boy Scout Camp.

There are tennis courts at Coshocton High School, The Coshocton Town and Country Club, Hall Park, Riverview Community Park, Riverview High School; and indoor courts at Kids America and Schelgel's farm.

Additional commercial recreational facilities and opportunities exist such as the Coshocton Bowling Center, Colonial Sports and Courts Health Fitness Center, and Kids America (an indoor recreation complex).

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has established guidelines to be used in the planning, acquisition, and development of park, recreation, and open space lands, primarily at the community level. They were prepared as minimum rather than maximum guidelines. One standard that has evolved over time from studies of park acreage within metropolitan areas is between 6.25 and ten acres of park and recreation land per one thousand population. By adding the acreage of The Coshocton Park District (approximately 450 acres), Woodbury Wildlife Area (20,000 acres), and the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District in the Wills Creek area (3730 acres) we have already far exceeded the suggested 6.25-10 acres of recreational area per one thousand residents. At issue in Coshocton County is not the attainment of hundreds of additional acres but rather the stewardship of the land that has already been set aside for parks and recreation.

## **Parks & Open Space Vision and Goals**

An adequate number of parks, recreation areas, and natural spaces will be preserved and maintained for future generations of Coshocton County.

To that end, these goals have been established:

1. To identify all existing parks, recreation areas, and natural areas within Coshocton County.
2. To recommend the parks, recreation areas, and natural areas that should be maintained and preserved and/or expanded.
3. To suggest areas where new parks, recreation areas, and natural spaces could be established.
4. To maintain and preserve all the lands in the county dedicated to parks, recreation areas and natural areas.

## **Goals and Strategies**

### ***Goal 1: Coordinate administration of park and recreational resources between the State, County and various local park and recreational facility providers.***

The Woodbury Wildlife Area is owned and under the control of the State of Ohio. The Wills Creek area is under the control of the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District. The County has little jurisdiction over those lands, however, local governments are urged to keep abreast of the care of and plans for these lands. County government and various forms of local government such as township trustees, the Coshocton Park District, village councils, etc. do have jurisdiction over the majority of the local parks, swimming pools, and ball fields. All forms of local government are urged to work together for the betterment of these areas. In the case of the Coshocton County Park District, the County and City governments are encouraged to cooperate to ensure stable funding for the District. This local park district is important to the residents of the County and is very important in attracting both permanent residents and tourists. In the same way it is crucial that Burt Park and Riverview Park receive local funding to remain viable recreation areas within their respective communities.

### ***Goal 2: Build upon Coshocton County's existing park and recreational resources.***

This portion of the Plan does not recommend that large portions of additional land be set aside for parks and recreation. It does strongly recommend that consideration be given to acquire or promote the following recreational opportunities, which are identified on Figure 3

#### ***Strategies***

1. The Coshocton Park District should work with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to acquire the area known as Wild Turkey Locks.
2. County and local governments should support the extension of the Ohio to Erie Bike Trail, Panhandle Route, through Coshocton County.
3. If substantial residential growth should occur in any township in the County that does not have a park and/or playground, either the township Trustees or zoning laws should ensure that parks, playgrounds, and green spaces are constructed.
4. The wetlands area located adjacent to Ridgewood High School should be preserved. Interested parties are encouraged to seek state funding to insure that this ecologically fragile area be saved for future generations.

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## **Tourism**

### **Introduction and Overview**

Tourism as a recognizable industry in Coshocton County was non-existent until the restoration of Historic Roscoe Village in the late 1960's. In 1980 the Coshocton County Convention and Visitor's Bureau was established to promote the area. The emergence of interest in the Amish Culture in the 80's provided enhanced opportunities for tourist travel with Amish settlements located in the North and Northeastern regions of the County and extending into Holmes, Knox and Tuscarawas Counties.

The early 1990's saw the nationally promoted AMERIFLORA come to Franklin County. Because there were limited lodging facilities available, tourists traveled to the remote areas seeking food and places to stay, which included Coshocton County. Also in the 1990's, the expansion of the Longaberger Company, the largest manufacturer of handmade baskets in the USA, with facilities in Muskingum and Licking counties, created marketing opportunities for Coshocton County because of its central location between the popular basket manufacturer and Amish country. The construction in the mid-1990's of several lodging and restaurant facilities improved the county's position as a destination. In the late 1990's and 2000, improvements implemented at Coshocton Lake Park, that included the restoration of the Pavilion, construction of the Playvillion, Aquatic Center and development of a recreational trail, provided additional sites to increase tourist traffic. In 2000, the completion of the 4-lane US-36 E highway between Coshocton and Interstate 77 dramatically increased traffic flow through the heart of the county.

It is anticipated that the next quarter century will bring more tourists into the area because of the national trend of families to take shorter, yet more frequent "day" or week-end trips that tend to avoid high population and high-risk destinations. It is believed that this trend will put pressure on rural and less frequented destinations. This pressure will induce a natural tendency for commercial expansion, and in doing so will also put pressure on the use of land once considered as open space, agricultural or undeveloped.

### **Industry Analysis**

Tourism is vital for the future of Coshocton County. It provides a solid base for growth and development, generating economic benefits as a multi-million dollar industry, leading to new job creation and enhancing quality-of-life by merging the heritage of our past with modern tourism facilities, and providing educational and recreational opportunities for both visitors and residents.

Tourism in Coshocton County includes a range of sites, facilities and events that are diverse. Usage levels of local facilities are greatest in the summer, while promotion of activities in the fall has lengthened the tourist season. Springtime visitation is more site-specific with seasonal availability of limited outdoor facilities. Winter activities have shown low results keyed to negative climate perceptions. Over the past twenty years, we have seen the positive impact

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tourism has had on Coshocton County. The future of this industry in Coshocton County should be just as bright as its past. We envision the continued development of the Tourism Industry in this county to sharpen its focus around the areas in which we have had proven successes:

- Historical Sites
- Recreational parks and facilities
- Wildlife Sportsmanship

The tourist is difficult to define. The United States Travel and Tourism Administration generally includes anyone who travels overnight or on a day trip of more than 100 miles within this category. With a diversity of attractions, events and reasons for traveling here, visitors include families, senior citizens, motorcoach tours, outdoor enthusiasts, educational groups, school tours, international visitors, historians, and business, conferences and conventions. These visitors create an economic impact with minimal cost to the community. Local infrastructure serves residents as well as visitors and facilities designed to be attractive to visitors are available for local usage creating a better quality of life for Coshocton County residents.

Based on visitor numbers, Roscoe Village and the Lake Park Complex are at the center of the present Coshocton County tourism industry. This focus is primarily due to three factors; (1) facility, (2) geographic location, and (3) promotion. A 10-year Traffic Survey (1992-2001) indicates an increase ranging from 10% to 70% in traffic flow at major intersections throughout Coshocton County.

The future focuses on the enhancement and preservation of our historic sites. This would include the preservation of the canal locks and Roscoe Village, the development of our Indian heritage as it relates to tourism and the preservation of historic buildings and sites relevant to Coshocton County history. We believe that there needs to be an understanding of the value of such historic venues to the point that the encroachment of modern development into these areas should be discouraged

Recreational facilities should continue to be a draw for the county. Parks should be established in addition to Lake Park and the community should focus on the continued enhancement of unique park venues throughout the county. Water activities should be enhanced along the three rivers, making use of these scenic waterways.

Botanical gardens are in the planning process. The Clary Garden, located just West of Coshocton on SR 541 West, will be a 15- acre garden area and will act as another tourism draw as it is close to Roscoe Village.

Sporting venues such as Woodbury, Mohawk Dam and Wills Creek should be developed to call attention to our hunting and sporting competition arenas. The areas around these districts should be developed to encourage tourism-related businesses that are compatible with outdoor sports.

Entertainment and Cultural development should be encouraged in areas where existing and planned infrastructure are suitable. Infrastructure should have sufficient capacity to

accommodate the added development without an unreasonable cost to the community after considering the benefits of added jobs and economic enhancement.

It is equally as important that any development is of a standard that contributes to a positive experience for visitors and improves the physical appearance of the county, particularly on major tourist routes. However, commercial facilities must be provided to meet local and tourist demands, but avoid over-excessive, strip-commercial development.

Flexibility is key in the location of tourism facilities. This approach recognizes the contribution that the tourism industry makes to the county's economy and the need to be innovative and flexible in the development of tourist infrastructure.

## **Tourism Committee Vision**

Coshocton County's Tourism Industry will be recognized as a viable and vital segment of the economic future of the community-at-large by maintaining existing tourism ventures, and promoting and encouraging new development. This shall be accomplished with regard to the surrounding environment and neighboring land uses to preserve its unique heritage, culture and landscape.

## **Near-Term Goals, Strategies and Recommendations (5-10 year timespan with immediate planning)**

***Goal 1: The County will take a position to protect, preserve and/or restore publicly or privately recognized historic sites, landmarks and structures.***

### *Strategies*

1. Work jointly and cooperatively with individuals, private developers, and government agencies to encourage responsible and realistic use of land in areas of known historical significance. This should take into account the prevention of development within a predetermined space so as not to cause structural damage, inappropriate noise pollution or impair the visual esthetics of the site.
2. The development of public roads, bridges, right-of-ways, and utilities should be completed in a way that promotes tourism yet also encourages preservation and/or restoration of land containing historical sites.
3. This should be done without unreasonably discouraging private enterprise and the responsible development of lands surrounding and adjacent to the historical site.

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## *Recommendations*

1. Designate a land border that will be maintained in the land surrounding the restored section of the canal in Lake Park. An ample stretch of land and sufficient tree line should be maintained in the land adjacent to the canal to preserve the aesthetic beauty of the view and the quiet nature of the ride.
2. Develop a plan for the alteration of traffic patterns to decrease traffic flow through Roscoe Village. As the properties at the extension of Hill and High Streets develop, increased motor traffic proportionally increases noise pollution and adds to safety concerns.
3. Preserve the property surrounding the Old Stone Fort along Route 36 as it continues to develop.
4. Develop a plan for the preservation of the Triple Locks. As clearly a one-of-a-kind venue, this unique example of the canal heritage could be further restored as a Park attraction and/or as a very significant teaching tool.

***Goal 2: Encourage officials to initiate and enforce appropriate legislation that reduces visual and noise pollution that detracts from Coshocton County's scenic landscape.***

## *Strategy*

1. Develop a plan to ensure that visitors to our community are greeted and depart with a positive impression/experience.

## *Recommendations*

1. Land along highways and waterways should be free from accumulations of unsightly debris including billboards, salvage yards, etc.
2. Land should be used to create inviting entrances and exits to municipalities. Create areas of pocket landscaping near signage
3. Uniformity of signage with the creation of a Coshocton County Logo that depicts/supports the historical/cultural philosophy.



## **Long-Term Goals, Strategies and Recommendations (20+ years with short-term planning)**

### ***Goal 1: Encourage the development of a county multi-purpose exhibition center***

#### *Strategy*

- Develop a multi-purpose complex that would place emphasis on Coshocton County's agricultural culture while providing space for other events. Location in the North Corridor would provide easy access from US 36, SR 16, SR 93, SR 83, I-77 and Richard Downing Airport.

#### *Recommendations*

Given the agricultural nature of the County Fair, the lack of expansion opportunities for the present land-locked facility, and its relatively difficult access, the Coshocton County Fairgrounds should be relocated to or near the North Corridor. Construction would include a multi-purpose exhibition center that would be utilized for conventions, private events and recreational opportunities. The facility should be configured to permit the flexibility to handle one large event (trade shows, automobile shows, etc.) or could be broken into smaller venues to accommodate simultaneous events.

Relocation could be financed partially through the sale of the existing County Fair site with additional funding sources acquired by aggressively seeking Federal, State and Local grants. Advance planning would permit a timeframe to work within to ensure funding would be available.

The construction of a multi-purpose exhibition center located at the Fairground site would be a tremendous boost to the economic development of Coshocton County, and would nicely co-exist with present and developing venues within the North Corridor area.

### ***Goal 2: Encourage tourism resources development close to municipalities to take advantage of existing and planned infrastructure.***

#### *Strategy*

- Recognizing that locating additional attractions, hotels and recreational facilities near already functioning tourist attractions adds to the perceived value of each entity, develop a plan to pursue businesses that compliment the established tourism sites.

#### *Recommendations*

1. Guide the development of a technology plan for the county that supports the various technological standards that business travelers and convention planners expect in their host communities. Special attention must be paid to implementing the best

possible technological enhancements without infringing on the aesthetic appeal of the county.

2. Identify areas that have ample water/sewer access to accommodate hotels, restaurants, campgrounds, etc. The intersection at SR93 and US36 could serve as the eastern gateway to Coshocton County and northward to Amish Country .
3. When the four-lane SR16 West is constructed toward Columbus, the municipality of Conesville will be the site of enhanced commercial tourist opportunities. The issues of sewer/water and infrastructure enhancements in that area will be critical to the development of tourism.

***Goal 3: Develop, maintain and improve the quality of surface water resources, utilizing them for recreational sites, where appropriate.***

*Strategy*

- Review the current lakes and rivers for access and development. Encourage the development of man-made lakes as other growth continues, recognizing the quality of the lakes for aesthetic value and recreational use.

*Recommendations*

1. Encourage ecologically friendly development of the rivers for recreational use.
2. Take an active role in the encouragement of the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District's efforts to enhance recreational development on MWCD land
3. Encourage development of the Wills Creek area as a recreational asset through cooperation with the Wills Creek Conservancy District.

***Goal 4: Encourage conservation of environmentally sensitive areas and promote preservation of natural resources***

*Strategy*

- Capitalize on the likelihood that, as the Akron/Canton area, Cleveland, and Columbus become increasingly developed, under-populated, rural, scenic counties such as Coshocton will become increasingly popular as outdoor recreational venues. Assets such as the county's rivers, lakes, and wildlife areas (i.e. Woodbury) will continue to draw large numbers of hunters, fishermen and outdoor enthusiasts. These areas should be recognized as tourism assets and preparation should be made to develop the adjacent lands to accommodate increased tourism

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- Capitalize on the likelihood that, as the Akron/Canton area, Cleveland, and Columbus become increasingly developed, under-populated, rural, scenic counties such as Coshocton will become increasingly popular as vacation home site development for the reasons noted above.

## *Recommendations*

1. Promote the development of cabins, lodges and vacation homes around lakes, parks and natural wildlife to attract vacation tourism and lodging.
2. Analyze the areas in the southern part of the county (those near Wills Creek or adjacent to Woodbury) for potential campground facilities. With the popularity of the Lake Park camping facilities, it would seem that Coshocton County could use more campgrounds. One of these alternate sites would be a nice addition to the park system.

## ***Goal 5: Encourage development of cultural/entertainment venues in geographic areas where existing & planned infrastructure permits***

### *Strategy*

- Recognize that if Coshocton County has the sites, what happens if they come, as most cultural venues strive to accommodate large crowds; (a) there should be ample parking available to accommodate the cultural tourist; (b) water/sewer and ingress/egress issues are vital to their success.

### *Recommendations*

1. Facilitate completion of the Coshocton Performing Arts Center complex with construction of parking facility near or adjacent to the venue.
2. Utilizing the natural hill terrain, develop an outdoor amphitheater for plays, concerts, and festivals in a geographically feasible location.

## ***Goal 6: Guide tourism growth throughout the county in a way that such growth does not have a negative impact on local municipalities, communities or residents of the county***

### *Strategy*

- Evaluate adequacy of food services/lodging sites to accommodate tourism growth.
- A proven theory in the Tourism Industry is the concept that more attractions in one area bring more visitors. In other words, the guest is looking for a wealth of things to do in

one concentrated area. Therefore, partnering together from the inception to build strong attractions should be encouraged. New attractions should share, at least to some extent, their plans with other existing attractions to create venues that will draw additional travelers.

*Recommendations*

1. Establish through the Convention and Visitor's Bureau, a task force of individuals who would act as consultants for incoming attractions, hotels, etc. hence encouraging coordinated land development.
2. As new venues approach the municipalities for approvals, etc., they will be encouraged to share their plans with other tourism entities in the county to optimize all partnering efforts. As a group, there will be a stronger force to suggest optimum uses of land for tourism.

***Goal 7: Encourage development of wildlife sportsmanship outdoor & recreational opportunities in compatible geographic areas***

*Strategy*

- Recognizing that Coshocton County has abundant sites due to a variety of topography, numerous new venues could be created to capitalize on growing awareness of outdoor recreation. This strategy would lead to the creation of satellite commercial tourist opportunities.
- Evaluate pre-existing trails and support the development of new paths that may lead to intercounty/state-wide venue.

*Recommendations*

1. Utilizing hill terrain, encourage entrepreneurial development of recreational activities that promote cold weather usage.
2. Encourage development of abandoned strip mine areas for moto-cross (extreme sport) attractions where appropriate.
3. In addition to existing sites, development of remote land to accommodate shooting sports (Sporting Clay Academy).

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4. Conversion of abandoned railroad beds to tie-into Rails to Trails.
5. Expansion of Horseback Riding Trails in the Conesville area and development of new trails in areas where the terrain is appropriate.
6. Continue the development of bicycle and walking trails for access to tourist attractions including historic sites, parks and recreation venues.

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## **4. Infrastructure Improvements**

Figures 1 and 3 also identify several aspects of the County's infrastructure systems. A large portion of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Committee's membership focused on infrastructure issues during the course of this Plan's development. For the purposes of this section, Infrastructure is defined as the operations systems that allow various land uses to occur. These include public sanitary sewer and water systems, telecommunication systems, transportation networks, and law enforcement and safety services.

As in Chapter 2, each of the following sections follows the same basic format:

- a. An introduction and overview of the development of the issue in Coshocton County's history,
- b. A Vision statement, which articulates the overarching goals of the Committee relating to this topic, and
- c. A statement of Goals and recommended strategies for meeting these goals.

Each section was created independently by separate committees. As a result, each chapter will have a different style and tone, and internal organization may vary slightly in order to preserve the original intent of the Coshocton County Land Use Plan Committee members.

## **Technology & Communication**

### **Introduction and Overview**

Technology can be the deal breaker in a business contract or it can be the key to revitalizing a residential area as a "bedroom community." No matter what your area of interest in Coshocton County, technology is the glue that will hold it together and the stimulant that will make it grow.

There are several aspects of technology that will be addressed. One covers the need to have conduit for future communication or technology fiber optics laid and mapped whenever water and sewer systems are installed or replaced. This would allow for easy access for incoming businesses- at less cost. There is a need to develop an education policy that will inform business as well as the general public of their options for "linking up" at work or at home. The use of telecommunications to work or study from the home or school will be vital in a society that is becoming more family-oriented with each generation. The fast approaching use of wireless communication will require dealing with right-of-way issues and policies that will need to put into place, to allow for maximum coverage and usage. With so many changes in the technology and communications field, the creation of an advisory committee to follow these changes would only enhance Coshocton's ability to stay a step ahead of the competition for future economic development.

It is most important to consider that technology and communication methods and means are

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constantly and consistently evaluated by the community. Because we are involved in the information and technology age and the means are ever evolving, the community must create awareness throughout its institutions, businesses, and households of the importance of maintaining up-to-date technology and communicating regularly with the community. Technology availability itself is not the primary contributor to economic and community growth, yet it is an important catalyst to create an environment where businesses want to locate, education practices state of the art methods, and communication is made convenient and readily available for all citizens.

It is imperative for our community to take a proactive approach to technology and communication. If the Commissioners, or an appointed ongoing task force of the Commissioners, act to communicate and streamline all county efforts to increase and maintain communication and technology means, duplication and conflicts in ongoing projects may be eliminated while creating an environment of better community awareness, responsiveness to, and participation in efforts to promote Coshocton County. This will allow technology and communication become more readily available in our schools, businesses, and homes. Coshocton County will be better positioned to acquire new businesses and industries as well as becoming a community to which people desire to locate to work, raise families, and contribute to the community.

To better understand the need for technology in Coshocton County, an assessment of the types of telecommunications and business technology that are present was conducted. Unfortunately not all areas of Coshocton County have access to all of the following types of telecommunication and some have none, few have all, and many are in the middle. The committee broke down the types of communication into three categories: voice, Internet, and television.

The voice category consists of landlines, cellular service, citizen band and H.A.M. radio. Landlines are available to the general public and are used by the phone companies. Cellular service is a hit-and-miss effort. One cellular company services half of the county; another services the other half of the county. There are numerous "dead" spots and many areas that do not receive any service at all. Some of this due to geography, but most is due to lack of towers and relay stations. There are six cell towers in Coshocton County and four are located within a one-mile diameter area, just east of the City of Coshocton. Of the other two, one is located in southern Virginia Township near the south line of Coshocton County, near State Route 16 and the other tower is located near the Village of Nellie in Jefferson Township along State Route 36 in the NW quadrant of the county.

The Internet category consists of: dial-up services, cellular, wireless, cable, satellite, DSL and T1 lines. Local computer companies or cable services primarily provide these. There are two cable companies that service Coshocton County: Time Warner and Adelphia. Time Warner offers Internet access through its cable system. At this time Adelphia does not offer Internet access in the Coshocton area, but it does offer it in the larger cities. Several local computer companies offer Internet service through dial-up or wireless abilities. The largest Internet access available is dial-up. Larger, national chains offer satellite hook up and SBC offers DSL and T1 line capabilities for more access to the Internet. DSL is a recent addition to the Coshocton area through SBC. It provides service for a three-mile radius from the SBC building located on



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Walnut Street. T1 lines have been available for some time in Coshocton but are used primarily by businesses and large industry. They involve laying conduit and costly excavating of earth.

The final category of telecommunications is television. This form of communication has been around many years. Unfortunately, not all Coshocton County residents are able to “connect” and receive cable services. This is due largely to geographic reasons, but also because of the widespread rural population of Coshocton County. Satellite and antennae broadcast is a very large portion of the television services provided in our area. This, too, is due to rural population. Even though it may seem as if there are several forms of telecommunication in place in Coshocton County, we are still very much behind in making it accessible to all county businesses and residents. Wireless and cellular are the two fastest growing forms of telecommunications and the County is lacking in both.

## **Future Development Technology Requirements**

### *Economic Development Requirements*

Larger corporations are less affected by today’s technology limitations than the smaller businesses. They will spend the money for a T1 line to their place of business. T1 lines are more expensive in Coshocton (\$897/mo) compared to cities like Columbus (\$99/mo), but this is not a factor for the larger companies.

Small business must rely on DSL connections and cable for an affordable broadband connection. DSL is coming to West Lafayette and Coshocton through SBC, but the western side of the county is served by Verizon and will not get DSL in the foreseeable future. Cable access is limited to just where current services are located inside the city limits.

Customers are now forcing small companies who have traditionally fought technology advances and corporate HQ’s to add connectivity or go out of business. Business needs to conduct business-to-business transactions, distance learning, advertising and web site management. More companies are also open to telecommuting, allowing employees to live in rural areas like Coshocton County, but still maintain an active role in daily business from their homes. In 2000, our county had 3948 people commuting outside Coshocton to their daily jobs ([http://www.osuedc.org/profiles/commuting/commuting.php?fips=39031&county\\_limit=8&sort=out](http://www.osuedc.org/profiles/commuting/commuting.php?fips=39031&county_limit=8&sort=out)). That number has grown significantly probably due to the many closings of manufacturing plants in the area.

Return on Investment (ROI) is a problem for technology companies to substantiate the healthy investment required to serve all areas of the county. Business could take a more active roll in promoting the use of technology in the county though workforce training. The Chamber of Commerce could also take a more active role in the promotion of technology to current business. The more people that use existing technology, the more likely technology companies will be open to investing in our area.

***Residential Telecommunication Requirements***

As bandwidth-hungry applications emerge and functionality of the Internet user evolves, the need for broadband access will become a reality. Some of the current applications that are driving the residential market today are the demand for CD's for CD players, downloading games for game consoles and VCR tapes for VCR cassettes. It is predicted that, in the near future, each person will carry two digital devices such as PDA's, cell phones, notebooks and PC tablets. This market will drive the wireless revelation that we enable access at virtually any location.

The current workforce is becoming more mobile. Many professionals want to do more work out of the office. There are a growing number of telecommuters. These applications are current driving factors for broadband. These users need a connection to the office LAN so they can share resources and files. With wireless connections the office can be at any location even making a coffee shop a virtual connection to the office. Broadband deployment will transform the educational marketplace. On-line classes are currently available from most all universities. With broadband in the home students will no longer need to commute to campuses.

***Water and Sewer Telecommunication Requirements***

When beginning to write grants for running water and sewer lines, we need to also make sure that conduit for technology is worked into the grant so that it can be run at the same time for future county development.

## **Technology and Communication Vision:**

Create a flexible infrastructure for reliable, affordable world-class communication technology promoting high-tech residential, educational, and commercial entities in Coshocton County, proactively eradicating the digital divide.

## **Goals**

***1. Establish provisions for a countywide technology advisory committee.***

With the constantly changing face of technology, it is imperative for a new advisory entity position, involving a committee, to be instituted. This advisory committee would be responsible for keeping the commissioners and other governing bodies apprised and educated, about new telecommunication and technological advances, on a meeting interval to be decided. This committee would be vital to the continued growth for Coshocton County not only for industrial telecommunications but also for residential areas that could become bedroom communities. With the many changes that are happening daily it is very important that the deciding authorities be well informed and updated on the latest advancements. The following will outline basic provisions for the formation and maintenance of such an advisory committee and include a suggested guide for issues to be addressed as well as duties and authority of the committee.

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1. *Name:*

The committee should be named the Coshocton County Technology Advisory Committee.

2. *Functions:*

The committee should serve in advisory capacity to the Coshocton County Commissioners as well as for other public entities that so choose to utilize the committee's services. The major function of the committee would be to advise the above entities on technology and communication issues for which the county, city or municipality has an interest in promoting technology to foster growth. The committee would also serve to ensure appropriate coordination of projects and events involving technology with other projects of similar interest. The Coshocton County Commissioners may also delegate to this entity other duties such as reviewing proposals and making recommendations on the purchase of equipment, promoting private expansion of technology, and maintenance and upgrades of publicly utilized technology and services. Some specific duties of this committee are as follows:

- a. Establish policies and practices for use of Public Rights of way (PROW) including application, review, and processes for such use.
- b. Formulate policy and procedure to ensure due emphasis is placed on technology availability when decisions are made to place new water/sewer lines, regulate new and existing housing developments, economic development, and other cooperative improvement efforts.
- c. Ensure proper communication, collaboration and awareness among entities (public and private) providing technology/communication services.
- d. Promote public awareness of planned technology related projects or procurement.
- e. Other specific technology related tasks as assigned by Coshocton County Commissioners.
- f. Formulate policies and procedures for use of publicly owned buildings for the placement of private transmission equipment to encourage competition in the industry.
- g. Maintain a continuous assessment of communication and technology availability.
- h. Explore the availability of multiple technology and communication options to ensure competitiveness.

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- i. Create awareness of and encouragement for increased importance in usage and education of technology.

3. *Committee Composition:*

This committee should be composed of representatives appointed and/or approved by the Commissioners and should represent both public and private sector. Each should have knowledge and experience in technology/communication issues and have the capacity to adequately advise the Commissioners on such issues.

Note: Should the proposal for such committee be accepted, the following would be considered in creating policies or bylaws to govern the committee and its functions.

- a. Process for appointment to the committee
- b. Process for resignation or removal
- c. Composition/number of appointments/committee positions
- d. Conflict of interest policy
- e. Meeting schedule/venue
- f. Process for reporting or making recommendations to the Commissioners

**2. *Advise concerning best practices for use of public right-of-ways and public spaces for technology and communications applications.***

A goal of the comprehensive land-use plan is to insure fair and proper use of public rights-of-way (ROW) to promote and enhance the county's technology infrastructure, capability, and availability. The remainder of this section includes recommended best practices for ROW access for service providers, suggested Coshocton County ROW policies, key considerations for managing provider agreements, and a recommended provision for the formation of a standing county technology advisory committee.

*Best Practices for ROW Access for Service Providers*

- a. Access to ROW should be extended to all telecommunications providers, as long as they receive authorization from the appropriate unit of government.
- b. Government entities should act on a request for authorization to operate and place equipment in the ROW within a reasonable and fixed period of time from the date that the request for such access is submitted.
- c. Authorized providers shall apply for construction permits to place equipment in the ROW with the proper unit of government. Such permits shall be processed within a reasonable and fixed period of time from the date that the request for construction is submitted.

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- d. The proper unit of government reserves the right to receive fair and reasonable compensation from providers that use ROW. Fees charged for ROW access shall be published in writing and made publicly available by request prior to authorization.
- e. All providers should be subject to equivalent terms and conditions of access to the ROW, subject to reasonable alternatives in particular cases, such as overcrowding and/or alternate route planning.
- f. For management purposes, the appropriate local authority should be able to identify the owner and the location of all facilities in the ROW. The availability of ROW shall be inventoried and made publicly available.
- g. ROW construction permits shall not contain unreasonable terms, qualifications, procedures, or other requirements unrelated to the actual management of the ROW. This does not preclude requirements for proof of authorization, indemnification of liability, insurance bonding, or construction route planning. The appropriate unit of government authority may take into account relevant public safety concerns, zoning and planning regulations as long as they do not unreasonably discriminate among service providers.
- h. Standard engineering practices should be used to manage construction in the ROW and to guide the development of any engineering standards involving placement of facilities and equipment in the ROW. Standard engineering practices should include consideration for interferences and incompatibilities with current and future planned improvements.

### *Best Practices for Coshocton County ROW policies*

The technology advisory committee discussed below should help define the following set of uniform ROW management practices and procedures.

- a. Coordination of construction schedules.
- b. Insurance, bonding and indemnity requirements.
- c. Establishment and enforcement of building codes and other public safety codes, including police and fire codes.
- d. The tracking of multiple systems that use the rights-of-way, to prevent interference among them.
- e. General time, place and manner of construction regulations.
- f. Issuance of permits and/or authorization memorandum prior to excavations or construction work.
- g. Relocation procedures.
- h. Requirements to repair streets and other public infrastructures to return them to their pre-construction condition.
- i. Applicant contact information.
- j. A proposed construction schedule and construction map.

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## *Key Considerations for Managing Provider Agreements*

The following best practices for managing agreements between providers and state and local government entities will help support the County's goals.

- a. Timing -- Units of government must act on a request for public rights-of-way access within a reasonable and fixed period of time from the date that the request for such access is submitted, or such request must be deemed approved.
- b. Clarity -- The specific steps and appropriate documentation (i.e., documentation must relate to ROW management, rather than the financial, technical, or legal qualifications of the provider) necessary to obtain a permit should be clear and in writing. Each unit of government involved in the process, and its specific requirements, should be identified. To the greatest extent possible, the unit of government that issues permits should be centralized, to avoid requiring multiple or duplicative approvals.
- c. Cooperation -- Due to constraints on available space in the existing public rights-of-way, due process must be considered to develop solutions that accommodate both the government's concerns and each industry member's service goals and needs.
- d. Fees -- The industry agrees that a local government is entitled to recover fees directly related to the costs it actually incurs to manage the right-of-way as a result of the telecommunications provider's activities in the right-of-way. However, local governments do not uniformly agree with the industry concerning the nature and amount of such fees. Consequently, issues relating to appropriate fees potentially create delays in the permit approval process. For this reason, permits should not be conditioned on the payment of fees, but rather the fee issue should be provisioned in the contract or permit and resolved in a separate process.

### **3. *Establish the importance of technology awareness and education to foster community development.***

Technology is an integral part of conducting business and every day life. Many governmental agencies and private businesses expect people to "do business" online. Those without the service or knowledge of computers and the Internet are being left behind.

Access to communications technology services, especially high-speed Internet connectivity is imperative to the overall well being of the Coshocton County economy and individual citizens. Equally imperative is a planned campaign to inform and educate our citizenry to become savvy and knowledgeable technology consumers/users.

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- a. Develop a countywide resource of current technology services to simplify the process of connecting and ensure competition.
- b. Develop business education/assistance/incentive programs to encourage technology use.
- c. Promote and further develop current access points where individuals can attend technology classes and receive information about services available online.
- d. Identify, develop and promote communication/ media / technology education to prepare our youth for future opportunities.
- e. Secure Coshocton County representation on regional and state boards and committees associated with technology expansion and education to act as advocates for the development of technology opportunities in our county.

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## **Transportation**

### **Introduction and Overview**

Coshocton County's transportation system has evolved over the last 200 years from dirt paths to a complex system, including major 4-lane highways, railroads, paved municipal streets, and an expanded airport. These goals have been developed, revised, and implemented by individuals, committees, and visionaries of Coshocton County. The thoroughfare system in Coshocton County is well established and if, correctly defined, future additions and improvements will enhance the social and economic growth in the area.

The following sections review key elements of Coshocton County's transportation network:

#### *Highways and Roads*

Currently, there are 1,199 miles of roads within Coshocton and 307 bridges. Coshocton County is principally served by three state highways. Ohio State Route 83 is a two lane highway and the main north/south artery through the county. Ohio SR 36 is a major east/west highway, the eastern portion of which, from the City of Coshocton to the Tuscarawas county line is the only significant four-lane highway in the county. State Route 36 continues west from the City of Coshocton to the Knox County line and is a two lane highway. Ohio SR 16 originates in the City of Coshocton and traverses the southwestern portion of Coshocton County to the Muskingum county line. The eastern most 2½ miles of SR 16 is a four lane highway and acts as a by-pass around the City of Coshocton.

Secondary highways serving Coshocton County are SR 60, 93 and 751 which either cross the county or originate in the county and are north/south routes. SR 541 crosses Coshocton County in an east/west direction. The majority of traffic using the state highway system in Coshocton County is east/west traffic. Coshocton County's closest access to the interstate highway system is to I-77 at the Village of Newcomerstown via SR 36, 20 miles east of the City of Coshocton.

The miles of roads are designated as follows:

State Highways	224
County Roads	352
Township Roads	623

Any new road right-of-ways for residential, commercial, and industrial developments should be a minimum of 60 feet from the centerline through the property. This will allow sufficient width for future maintenance and expansion if the traffic pattern is warranted.

#### *Airport*

Richard Downing Airport is located approximately two miles northeast of the City of Coshocton and is centrally located in the county. Richard Downing operates as a general aviation service airport. It currently has one, 4100 foot runway and is equipped with lights for night time use. The

airport has a very active and capable Board of Directors. The Board operates with a five-year plan for future improvements.

The airport constructed a new 3100 sq. ft. administrative building in 2004 and has recently expanded its aprons and taxiways. There are plans to extend the current runway an additional 500 feet. After this extension, the runway will be capable of handling all types of corporate jets. The airport currently has 30-40 acres of land available for commercial development and has plans to make another eight acres available. This will require moving approximately 170,000 cubic yards of dirt.

Currently, the Richard Downing Airport is under going a building improvement and taxiway expansion project. The National Guard will be located at the airport in the near future. The landing runway is 4100 feet in length. Current Airport plans indicate that it will be extended to 5,000 feet within the next five years.

## **Transportation Vision**

Provide a logistical transport system that allows all individuals to travel in the county - efficiently, effectively, and affordably - which will enhance the quality of life.

## **Goals and Strategies**

### ***Goal 1: Ensure County benefit from widening of State Route 16.***

There will be an expansion of the four-lane highway through Coshocton within the next 20 years on State Route 16. The expansion of the highway will be limited access with minimal interchanges. It is imperative that county public officials, as well as City of Coshocton officials, remain vigilant and in communication with state officials to ensure an adequate number of access points along this four-lane corridor.

#### ***Strategies:***

- Ensure that Coshocton County and other potentially impacted governments continue to participate in the ODOT Project Development Process (PDP) to the greatest extent possible. At this time, the ODOT process has progressed to the point of identification of a preliminary corridor. The County and other potentially impacted governments and agencies have been participating in the PDP process to date. Continuing to participate fully will be vital to ensuring that the County's interests and needs are addressed to the greatest extent possible.

## ***Comprehensive Land Use Plan Coshocton County, Ohio***

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- State Route 621 should be widened to allow for more traffic traveling to the North due to the availability of public water and sanitary sewer in this location and interest in more intensive commercial and residential development in this vicinity.
- Township Road 287 should be improved. This will improve access to AEP Company and would need to be coordinated with the Village of Conesville.
- The upgrade of SR 16 to limited access will necessitate the improvement of some county and township roads to maintain access for local traffic. The possible roads affected are County Road 6, Township Roads 282, 283, and 306.
- The current State Route 16 from the county line on the south county line to the existing four lane highway may become a County road.
- Any access roads will need to be established and maintained to allow our citizens to travel to state highways, keeping in mind the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) has very detailed and prescribed method of roadway improvements.

### ***Goal 2: Support improvements to other State highways.***

Improvements to State highways outside of home rule municipalities must usually be initiated by ODOT, although the County Engineer often plays a key role in advocating for certain improvements. The following potential improvements should be supported by the County and other local entities as potential subjects of safety and feasibility studies to ODOT and, where appropriate, the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC). If such studies indicate significant benefits for the local and regional transportation system, it may be feasible to begin the process of advocating for the designation of funds for design and construction of the improvement. It should be noted, however, that state roadway funding is intensely competitive.

#### ***Strategies:***

- US 36 may need to be improved to 4 lanes from the Village of Warsaw to the intersection of State Route 16 and US 36. All remaining state highways should have adequate capacity to serve the county citizens for the next 20 years.
- Encourage ODOT to continue their program of spot safety improvements to reduce hazard areas.
- Encourage ODOT to improve all State Route Bridges to the legal load limits.

***Goal 3: Support improvements to County roads and bridges.***

The Coshocton County Engineer currently maintains 350 miles of roads and 290 bridges over 10 feet long in Coshocton County.

*Strategies:*

- Support repaving and roadway reconstruction efforts designed to provide a minimum width of 20 feet of paved surface on all County roads where sufficient right of way exists or can be acquired at reasonable cost.
- Support efforts to resurface all County roads at least every 10 years.
- Support efforts to upgrade all bridges to legal load limit and a minimum of 20 feet wide.

***Goal 4: Support improvements to Township roads.***

The 22 townships maintain a total of 600 miles of roads, which vary widely in use and condition.

*Strategies:*

- The township trustees should be encouraged to widen and improve the roads under their jurisdictions, as funds become available, in order of most to least accessed.
- Platted-but-never-built roads and road that were built but later abandoned should be reviewed and possibly vacated to avoid future conflicts.

***Goal 5: Support improvements to City and Village streets within Coshocton County***

Although this Plan focuses on Coshocton County outside of the municipalities, promoting safe and adequate traffic flow in the City of Coshocton and in the villages of Warsaw and West Lafayette is important for the vitality of the entire County, since both municipal and County roads are used by both sets of residents. As in the county, economic growth will be hindered by badly maintained streets, incomplete circulation patterns, poorly located driveways, inadequate setbacks and poor signalization.

*Strategies:*

- The City of Coshocton should establish access management regulations to address traffic impacts of new development or redevelopment. Access management elements should include driveway spacing, standards for signalized intersections, driveway and private road design standards, left turn lane requirements and other nationally-accepted access management requirements in order to maintain roadway capacity and safety.

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- The City of Coshocton should construct an overpass from Bank Street west over the Ohio Central Railroad and connect into Second Street. This may be connected into the Free Mini-mall on Second Street. A side street from Brown's Lane may be made to connect into the new street to allow access over the railroad. Although overpass construction will be costly, this improvement will greatly improve traffic circulation in this portion of the City and will benefit the City and County by improving traffic movement and supporting the economic viability of surrounding properties.
- The City of Coshocton should evaluate the need for a gated railroad crossing should be at Pine Street in the City of Coshocton. It should be noted that construction of railroad crossings requires significant negotiations with the railway that has jurisdiction over the railroad right of way.
- Third Street in the City of Coshocton should be extended to the stop light that is located at vacated Wal-Mart/Big Bear building in order to facilitate the redevelopment of one of the area's few large developable sites.
- Skyline Heights in the City of Coshocton should be extended to meet Hillcrest Drive. This will alleviate the problem of only having one access to Hillcrest and Ridgewood Drives.
- All municipalities and villages should consider upgrading all sidewalks to be handicapped accessible. Funding may also be available from the State or Federal governments.

## ***Goal 6: Support improvements to Coshocton County's Railroad system***

The Ohio Central Railroad operates two mainline tracks through Coshocton County. The current system has been in existence since 1855, with upgrades continually being performed. One line runs north and south and the other runs east and west. The Ohio Central Railroad currently serves seven industrial customers in Coshocton County. There are 65 miles of track currently in Coshocton County. Long range regional plans currently exist for a High-speed Passenger Railroad from Columbus to Pittsburgh, which may travel through Coshocton County, although construction of this system is not expected in the near future.

### *Strategies*

- Funding will need to be pursued to improve the grade railroad crossings in the county, including the installation of additional gated crossings for safety issues.
- The County should encourage the Ohio Central Railroad or other owners of Coshocton County line to maintain the current right-of-way for double track. Only one track is currently in place in most places in the County. Losing the option of double track may

hinder the development and growth of Coshocton County.

***Goal 7: Support improvements to Coshocton County's Airport***

*Strategies*

- A new access road to the facility is recommended by the construction of a two-lane county road from CR 193. The new road should be considered due to new business development around the Canal Lewisville area. Access to the airport from US 36 via County Road 202 may need to be accomplished by an overhead intersection if the new 4-lane highway becomes a restricted highway.
- The County should evaluate the costs and benefits of installing additional hangars. Several Coshocton area pilots are currently storing airplanes at other airports outside of Coshocton County.

## Water and Sanitary Sewer Systems

### Introduction and Overview

#### *Water distribution*

Water distribution service is provided by three municipal systems: Coshocton, West Lafayette and Warsaw. These systems primarily provide service to customers inside their respective corporation limits. Two private systems (Echoing Hills and The Supreme Council of the House of Jacob) are also in operation. The current capacities of these systems are:

	<u>Capacity (GPD)</u>	<u>Current Use</u>
Village of Warsaw	180,000	84,000
Village of West Lafayette	1,000,000	190,000
City of Coshocton	15,000,000	6,000,000
House of Jacob	50,000	11,000
Echoing Hills	23,000	10,000

Limited expansion of water service has occurred around the perimeter of the City of Coshocton, most recently the North Corridor project. Areas outside the City of Coshocton currently being served by the City of Coshocton include:

- the North Corridor and the Airport area,
- the Bordenkircher addition,
- West along CR 55 to the Olinger addition,
- all of Pleasant Valley Township and various Tuscarawas Township locations.

The Village of West Lafayette has also extended its water system north along SR 93 North across the Tuscarawas River to the north side of SR 36. A few water customers in the extreme eastern end of the county are currently served by the Village of Newcomerstown, which is located in Tuscarawas County.

A large portion of Coshocton County has no water distribution service. Residences and businesses in these areas must either operate on water wells or haul water from someplace else. A number of areas in the county have poor groundwater quality and/or minimal groundwater availability making the use of water wells problematic.

#### *Sewer Collection & Treatment*

Coshocton County is also presently served by three municipal sewage systems: City of Coshocton, West Lafayette and Warsaw and two privately owned systems (the Supreme Council of the House of Jacob and Echoing Hills.)

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	<u>Capacity (GPD)</u>	<u>Current Use (GPD)</u>
Village of Warsaw	170,000	80,000
Village of West Lafayette	220,000	180,000
City of Coshocton	4,000,000	2,000,000
House of Jacob	15,000	7,000

The only public sewage collection and treatment in Coshocton County, outside of the City of Coshocton and the Villages of Warsaw and West Lafayette, is along the “North Corridor” project and in the area of Richard Downing Airport.

### *Water & Sewer– Villages of Warsaw & West Lafayette*

The Village of Warsaw has a very adequate water and sewer department. It does not provide any services outside of its corporation limits at this time. The Village has a five year capital improvement and operational plan for its water and sewer department. The department is currently preparing to drill a third well to supplement the two existing wells. This third well will be a backup well.

The Village of West Lafayette has a very adequate water and sewer department. The village has extended its water line north along S.R. 93 and does serve some customers on the north side of the Tuscarawas River. In the last 10 years the Village has constructed a new water treatment plant and in 2004 completed an upgrade to its wastewater treatment plant.

### *Water & Sewer- City of Coshocton*

The City of Coshocton has completed an expansion of its water treatment plant that will increase its capacity to 15 million gallons a day. When this expansion is complete, the City of Coshocton will have more than enough water treatment capacity to be the regional water provider for residential, commercial and industrial use.

The City of Coshocton operates a wastewater treatment plant that is currently operating within rated capacity. However the City is considering an expansion to their plant to service the needs of the proposed ethanol plant to be constructed south of the City of Coshocton.

Most residential areas of the City currently have water service available. However there are residential areas that are not presently served by the sewage collection system. In addition there are undeveloped areas inside the Coshocton City corporation limits that could be developed, such development would add to the tax base, but access to existing water lines and especially sewer lines is particularly problematic.

The City of Coshocton maintains a gravity flow sewage collection system inside the city. The existing residential areas that are not currently connected to the existing sewage system and the areas in the city that are presently undeveloped are located on the high hill tops on the east and south sides of the city. Or they are located on the downhill sides of these hills, on the side



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of the hills opposite from the existing sewer system. In effect the City of Coshocton has developed its sewer system to the natural limits that can be serviced by a gravity system.

Like many older communities, the City of Coshocton is facing the challenge of an aging existing water distribution system and a sewage collection system that is sometimes overburdened by sewage and storm water infiltration.

## *Coshocton County Water and Sewer District*

The Coshocton County Commissioners currently maintain a water and sewer district that services all unincorporated areas of Coshocton County except those areas served by the Villages of West Lafayette and Newcomerstown. This district is organized under Section 6117 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The Coshocton County Water and Sewer District does not operate any sewage treatment facilities at this time. All distribution and treatment, for both water and sewer, is performed by the City of Coshocton on a contract basis. The various areas of the county district have different rate structures that were based on the conditions prevailing at the time service was originally provided.

To expand its distribution system to serve more customers and generate more revenues to pay for this system, the Coshocton County Water and Sewer District only has two options. It must either

- Purchase water from one of the existing water systems with treatment facilities at a price low enough to allow the District to cover the expenses of running the county system; or
- The District must construct its own water wells and treatment facility.

The Coshocton County Water and Sewer District currently has very few customers and a large amount of debt. This unfortunate combination leads to negative cash flow from the county general fund.

As stated above the Coshocton County Water and Sewer District currently serves a small number of customers along the “North Corridor” and the area near Richard Downing Airport.

Various locations in the County hold the potential for sewage pollution problems. The most prominent is in Fresno, which has been identified by the EPA. County Commissioners have been mandated to correct the sewage pollution problems in Fresno.

## *Other Issues*

Many areas of the county have clusters of homes on small building sites where wells and septic systems are located in close proximity to each other creating the potential for health and pollution problems. A short list of some of these locations would include:

- The incorporated Villages of Conesville, Plainfield and Nellie
- Newcastle
- The Dickerson Subdivision
- Cooperdale
- Tyndall Hollow
- West Bedford
- Wakatomika

These areas will eventually cause future health and pollution issues. These potential health problems will impact economic development in the county and will need to be addressed by public officials.

## **Water and Sanitary Sewer Vision**

Coshocton County will improve its sewer and water services as strategically and cost-effectively as possible, to the end of protecting the County's natural and agricultural resources and building its opportunities for economic growth.

***Goal 1: Strategically expand Coshocton County's water and sewer resources in a manner that will create the greatest possible impact on Coshocton County's environmental health and economic development opportunity.***

### *Strategies:*

- Water and sewer lines should be extended the entire length of the existing four-lane "State Route 36 corridor" northeasterly to county line, to tie in with existing lines running from SR 36 to West Lafayette.
- Water and sewer lines should be extended
  - east and west from West Lafayette along State Route 10;
  - south from West Lafayette;
  - south from the City of Coshocton into the proposed development area;
  - east and south from the Village of Warsaw into the proposed development area, and
  - southwesterly from the vicinity of the North Corridor along State Route 83.
- A multitude of grants and alternative financing plans are available to municipalities to utilize in expanding existing water and sewer lines. These financial vehicles are in a flux of constant change, and are available from Federal and State agencies, as well as certain private sectors. A countywide committee should be formed to aggressively research, apply for and garner these types of funding.

## ***Law Enforcement & Safety Services***

### **Introduction and Overview**

The agencies and departments that serve Coshocton County have an interesting and diverse history as they have developed over the past one hundred ninety two years. The following introduction will briefly trace the beginning and growth as they evolved to today's services.

#### ***Law Enforcement***

Office of County Sheriff began in 1811, with 38 Sheriffs to date. Three jails have existed prior to current Justice Center. Current jail is rated for housing 27 inmates but averages 67 daily and has exceeded 78 inmates. A staff of 67 employees with 38 additional Special & Auxiliary Deputies (16 mounted officers) complete the staffing level of the Sheriff's office. The communications center dispatches all law enforcement, fire & emergency medical services within the county along with neighboring county emergency services. The City of Coshocton contracts with the Sheriff's Department for Law Enforcement and is charged with all Law Enforcement in the county & city, except for the village of West Lafayette. West Lafayette has a staff of 16 providing police protection for that village.

#### ***Coshocton County EMS***

Early ambulance service was provided by local funeral homes. This was mainly due to the fact that they were the only ones that had the communication equipment and staff to provide it. Coshocton County established countywide ambulance services in 1976, and paid staff was hired to supplement the largely volunteer force in 1995. A 3.0 mill operating levy passed in November of 2003 enables enhancements in staffing and equipment for the service, which provides the community with a better care.

#### ***Coshocton County Haz-Mat Team***

The first Haz-Mat Team was formed & organized in 1991. The Team reorganized in 2002 and additional training provided 21 members trained to Technician Level. The Haz-Mat Team currently has 18 career firemen & 3 volunteer firemen.

#### ***Coshocton County Fire Departments***

Coshocton County currently has four volunteer fire departments, two volunteer fire districts and one professional fire department, which serves the City of Coshocton. The volunteer fire departments range in size, equipment and funding. A detailed history of the fire departments is located in Appendix E.

Baltic, Dresden & Frazeyburg Volunteer Fire Departments also serve Crawford, Perry & Washington Townships, and Swiss Valley and Newcomerstown E.M.S. serve Crawford & Adams Townships.

#### ***Current Issues***

The apparent trend of Coshocton County becoming a bedroom community and/or a retirement community will increase demands on all emergency services. There will be a greater need for services provided by the emergency agencies. Additionally, as volunteer emergency manpower decreased due to the aging population, the requirement for emergency services increases. This combination of impacts will have a profound effect on Coshocton County's future emergency services needs.

## **Law Enforcement and Safety Services Vision:**

Identify the resources and actions required to provide public safety services to meet the ever-changing needs of Coshocton County.

### ***Goal 1: Support expansion of County water systems and concentration of development in areas that can be served by adequate public water pressure for fire protection.***

Because of population density, terrain, State Wildlife property and large tracts of previously strip mined areas, it is not a realistic goal that the county be covered 100% with a water system. However, population centers, industrial and commercial areas should be located in areas that can be well served with systems that incorporate the existing capabilities of Coshocton, West Lafayette & Warsaw. New water systems, storage tanks should take into consideration the need of adequate capacity to handle fire flows for hydrants, sprinkler system needs and growth in area served. A strong argument in the water system funding issue is money saved on insurance coverage.

### ***Goal 2: Support development of a New County Jail***

New public safety facilities should be located on a site that can be protected from fire, weather, and civil unrest without presenting a threat to the general population. Safe access for the EMS serving the inmates should be a consideration. The building must be served by a water system that will support sprinkler protection. The facility should have a communications system that will interface with all county, state & federal emergency systems.

### ***Goal 3: Support construction of new fire stations &/or upgrade old buildings***

As of this report, several of the County's firehouses are approaching 50 years old. Some of these buildings are old structures that were not intended to house fire equipment and will require replacement in the near future. The location of stations operated by volunteer responders is a major consideration, due to the need for volunteers to access them quickly and efficiently.

Presently the SR 16/US 36 corridor has 7 state highway accesses & 47 township & county road accesses. Future highway construction and moves to limit access to the corridor may have a negative impact on responders getting to the station and emergency equipment getting to the incident location.

New structures should allow for expansion, have drive-through bays and accommodate larger equipment as it evolves. Volunteer stations should be served by sprinkler protection & alarm systems if the building is not constantly occupied. Opportunities to share space with parks, recreation areas, or highly protected risk properties should be considered.

***Goal 4: Establish a County wide radio communications system***

The terrain in Coshocton County prevents 100% emergency radio coverage for the area. The location of radio towers is a prime concern for effective communications. The non-emergency communications towers & sites on private owned property could be utilized without redundant towers and should be considered. Emergency services must be able to communicate among each other as well as with neighboring counties neighboring counties that provide services within Coshocton County through mutual aid agreements.

***Goal 5: Improve Emergency Services training for all County first responders***

All emergency services would benefit from qualified instruction being available within the county. In the case of the volunteer services the candidate is working a full time job or is a full time parent. Versatile training schedules are a key issue in attracting volunteers. Our county has the Joint Vocational School & the Coshocton Education Center as resources for this vital issue. High School class offerings could include: Introduction to EMS, Law Enforcement or Firefighting and be credited as part of basic training. Continuing education is offered in selected emergency fields." In house" training is appealing to part time employees or volunteers.

Activities such as moto-cross (extreme-sports), water recreation activities and expansion of horseback riding trails will also have an impact on equipment & training required to respond to emergencies.

***Goal 6: Design new roadway elements to ensure emergency access.***

Roadways, driveways, bridges, and culverts either new or upgrading old shall be able to accommodate emergency equipment safely. Existing roadways shall be free of obstructions, such as limbs, structures, poles, wires & etc.

*Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
Coshocton County, Ohio*

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**Appendix A**

*Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
Coshocton County, Ohio*

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**Appendix B**

*Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
Coshocton County, Ohio*

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**Appendix C**

*Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
Coshocton County, Ohio*

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**Appendix D**

*Comprehensive Land Use Plan  
Coshocton County, Ohio*

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## **Appendix E**