



**Wayne County, Ohio**

# **Comprehensive Plan Audit 2007**

Effective May 16, 2007

Wayne County Planning Department  
428 West Liberty Street  
Wooster, Ohio 44691  
[www.wayneohio.org/planning](http://www.wayneohio.org/planning)

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## Introduction

The purposes of the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan Audit were; to ensure, that after a decade, the visions and goals of the plan were still consistent and viable, to create a catalog of accomplishments and/or setbacks of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, and to prioritize and evaluate the implementation strategies recommended in the plan.

As with the 1997 plan, a citizen's audit committee was appointed and a professional planning consultant was contracted to assist in the process. The audit committee was made up of a cross section of Wayne County that included representatives from all corners of the County and various walks of life. Each member applied for a seat on the committee and the Board of Commissioners then made appointments based on statements and qualifications listed in the application. The committee seats were advertised and open to any and all of the residents in the County. As with the previous planning process, public participation was the key to a successful audit.

The initial meeting for the **2007 Wayne County Comprehensive Plan Audit** was held in June of 2005 and the final meeting in May of 2007. The audit took almost two years to complete, and the audit committee accomplished a thorough job. The committee also presented ideas to the general public in an Open House that was held in January of 2006, this event featured comment cards, facilitated discussions and planning exercises. All of which the audit committee took into consideration before making any recommended changes to the comprehensive plan.

After months of deliberation, the audit committee came to the conclusion that the vision and goals of the 1997 plan were, in fact, still consistent and viable. The committee concluded that the residents of Wayne County would agree.



Preserving farmland and the rural character is a priority in Wayne County

## **Vision and Goals**

The vision and goals of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan were still consistent and viable. Therefore, the 2007 Comprehensive Plan Audit Committee chose to re-recommend the vision and goals. A summary of the vision and goals can be found in the executive summary (page ii) of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan.

## **Major Recommendations**

The 1997 Major Recommendations

- Redirect and Concentrate Development
- Manage Population
- Conserve Farmland and Green-space
- Protect Rural Character
- Encourage Economic Prosperity

The 2007 Major Recommendation

- Re-evaluate the use of either township or countywide zoning as a tool to accomplish the major recommendations already listed in the 1997 Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

The 2007 recommendation was presented to the Planning Commission on May 9, 2007 and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on May 16, 2007, with the following recommendations from the Planning Department Staff:

- The use of an updated Resource Management Areas (R.M.A.) map, created by the Planning Department and approved by the audit committee.
- The definition change of **Future Expansion Areas**. FROM: Locations where sanitary sewer services are available outside corporate boundaries and within where longer-term development may occur. TO: **Locations where sanitary sewer services are available in or outside corporate boundaries and within where longer-term development may occur.**
- In order to implement the recommendation made by the 2007 Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, the Wayne County Planning Department has written a working draft plan focused on township and countywide Land Use/Zoning Education.

# **Implementation Report**

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In order to audit the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, it was imperative to catalog the action steps taken to achieve the implementation strategies listed under the objectives in the plan. The following is such catalog; a report aimed at targeting the actions that have taken place in the last ten years. Not all actions resulted in the desired outcome. However, the majority of strategies have proved to be successful in carrying out the vision and goals of the comprehensive plan. The 2007 Audit Committee assisted in the brainstorming process. The staff of the Wayne County Planning Department verified and added any action steps that may have been omitted.

## **Community Facilities and Services**

**Objective 1- Local Coordination- Facilitate coordination among all units of government in Wayne County relative to identifying, prioritizing, funding and implementing community facilities by:**

1.3 Monitoring development and report on potential demands for improved facilities and services.

*Action Taken: The Board of County Commissioners, on behalf of Rails to Trails Wayne County, applied for and received funds from the Ohio Department of Transportation trail enhancement program, April 27, 2005.*

**Objective 2- Mandatory Parkland Dedication Requirement – Provide for additional public parkland through mandatory parkland dedication requirements in County Subdivision Regulations, by:**

2.1 Updating County Subdivision Regulations to require parkland dedication or fees-in-lieu based on residential density.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007.*

2.2 Educating land surveyors, sub dividers, builders and planning officials regarding the value of parkland and the appropriate site planning principles to create viable parkland sites.

*Action Taken: The subdivision regulations have been strengthened over time to allow for the dedication of parkland or a fee in lieu process. The education process that accompanies this objective happens on a continual basis through open communication between the planning staff, the developers, the surveyors, the builders and planning officials either through discussions in the planning department, Technical Review Committee meetings or at a Planning Commission meetings. No specific trainings have taken place though various subcommittees have met and developed proposed regulations for access management, storm water management and common access drives*

## **Cultural Resources**

### **Objective 1- Historic and Archaeological Preservation – Continue to preserve Wayne County’s outstanding historic and archaeological resources, by:**

1.4 Encouraging historic preservation easements through creation of a nonprofit land trust.

*Action Taken: The Killbuck Watershed Land Trust, Inc. officially incorporated on May 30, 2000 as a citizen generated, private, nonprofit conservation organization.*

### **Objective 2- Cultural Preservation- Preserve Wayne County’s historic farm-based culture, by:**

2.4 Creating a county-level Barn Again Program under the guidance of the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) and create a mechanism for brokering the preservation of barns through a seller/buyer network.

*Action Taken: A local effort has been the Barn Again! Program aimed at assisting local farmers regarding reuse and restructuring existing barns.*

## **Economic Development**

### **Objective 1- Industrial Reuse- Encourage reinvestment in existing industrial areas by:**

1.1 Targeting economic incentives to existing industrial areas.

*Action Taken: The Wayne Economic Development Council identifies and targets existing facilities for reuse. This process is outlined in their strategic plan.*

1.2 Encouraging the reuse and rehabilitation of existing industrial structures.

*Action Taken: The Wayne Economic Development Council identifies and targets existing facilities for reuse. This process is outlined in their strategic plan.*

### **Objective 4 – Agriculture and Agribusiness Development- Give agriculture and agribusiness the same consideration as other industries and businesses, by:**

4.1 Encouraging and promoting agriculture/agribusinesses to the same extent as other commercial and industrial businesses to help maintain the county’s diverse economy.

*Action Taken: The Wayne Economic Development Council, funded in part by the County Commissioners, created a full-time Project Management position focused on the countywide retention and expansion of agricultural production and agribusinesses in January 2005. The Board of County Commissioners adopted the Wayne County Agricultural Security Areas Policies and Procedures, May 16, 2006, which include tax incentives.*

4.2 Identifying an agriculture/agribusiness association to work with existing development councils.

*Action Taken: The Wayne Economic Development Council, funded in part by the County Commissioners, created a full-time Project Management position focused on the countywide retention and expansion of agricultural production and agribusinesses in January 2005. The Board of County Commissioners officially agreed to support and*

*participate in the Wayne County Ag Success Team, a group of volunteers dedicated to the prosperity of farmers and agri-business, on September 26, 2006.*

4.3 Promoting the completion of a retention and expansion program for agribusiness.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Ag Success Team administered and compiled an agribusiness producers survey in 2004. The Wayne Economic Development Council, funded in part by the County Commissioners, created a full-time Project Management position focused on the countywide retention and expansion of agricultural production and agribusinesses in January 2005.*

4.8 Strengthening Farm Markets.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Convention and Visitors Bureau sponsored the “Cultivating Agritourism” workshop, March of 2003. The Wayne County Ag Success Team administered and compiled an agribusiness producers survey in 2004. The Board of County Commissioners officially agreed to support and participate in the Wayne County Ag Success Team, a group of volunteers dedicated to the prosperity of farmers and agri-business, on September 26, 2006. Ongoing support provided to the Main Street Programs in the municipalities.*

**Objective 5 – Tourism- Continue to support travel and tourism by:**

5.2 Continue to fund travel and tourism efforts.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Convention and Visitors Bureau sponsored the “Cultivating Agritourism” workshop, March of 2003. Ongoing financial support from the Board of County Commissioner’s to the Wayne County Convention and Visitors Bureau.*

**Housing**

**Objective 1 - Efficient Use of Land - Encourage the efficient use of land in cooperation with local units of government, by:**

1.1 Appointing the County Planning Commission to oversee implementation of the Comprehensive Plan with support by the Planning Department.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Commissioners appoint residents to the planning commission from the public to maintain a diverse membership. Each member is appointed to a 3- year term.*

1.2 Issuing an Annual Growth Report that measures changes in development, updates population and building forecasts and summarizes implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Planning Department staff members annually prepare and distribute a summary of development activity.*

**1.3 Sponsoring an annual meeting among local government officials to consider growth and planning-related issues.**

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Planning Department has sponsored land use management meetings on a regular basis to provide a forum for discussion.*

**Objective 2 - Residential Development - Target countywide residential growth rate at one percent per year (measured as dwelling units) and target average residential density at 2.0 dwelling units per acre, by:**

2.1 Managing infrastructure improvements to maintain the target.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Water and Sewer and the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program grants awards on a continual basis for this objective.*

2.2 Encouraging higher-density residential development (2.0 to 6.0 dwelling units per acre) in cities and villages.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007.*

2.3 Encouraging lower-density residential development in townships (0.5 to 1.0 dwelling unit per acre) and discouraging very-low density residential development in townships (less than 0.5 dwelling units per acre).

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007.*

## **Land Use**

**Objective 1 - Efficient Use of Land - Encourage the efficient use of land in cooperation with local units of government, by:**

1.7 Directing future development to identified Growth Areas and Future Expansion Areas.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007. Under Section 208 of the Clean Water Act, NEFCO is the designated area wide water quality management and planning agency for Portage, Stark, Summit, and Wayne Counties. In order to complete the 208 Plan, all of the political subdivisions of Wayne County, including the County itself is required to submit a 201 Facilities Plan which describes its wastewater treatment alternatives (prescriptions) for the next twenty (20) years and map the existing sewers within the planning area.*

**Objective 5 - Farmland Conservation - Conserve farmland, by:**

5.1 Adopting a county-level Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program.

*Action Taken: A local campaign placed a PDR program on the ballot in November of 2001. The initiative failed.*

5.2 Creating a nonprofit land trust to purchase or obtain through gifts conservation easements on prime agricultural land.

*Action Taken: The Killbuck Watershed Land Trust, Inc. officially incorporated on May 30, 2000 as a citizen generated, private, nonprofit conservation organization.*

5.3 Encouraging participation in the Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) Program and Agricultural Districts.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Planning Department created a CAUV promotional document for distribution at the County Administration Building September 2006. The Wayne County Planning Department, the WEDC and OSU Extension hosted Agricultural Protection Resource meetings in January and March of 2007.*

5.4 Amending the Subdivision Regulations to include more stringent environmental assessment requirements, more restrictive minor subdivision provisions to limit number of lot splits, more restrictive lot frontage requirements to reduce the number of flag-shaped lots, adopting soil erosion and sediment control regulations, and give emphasis to new regulations which would promote the perpetuation of the family farm.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999. The Board of Wayne County Commissioners adopted the Sediment and Erosion Control standards Jun 12, 2000. The Wayne County Subdivision Regulations amended January 25, 2007. The Board of Commissioners has awarded contracts to develop regulations for storm water management and access management. Both activities have anticipated completion and adoption in the near future. The Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation District are in the search process for an engineer to spearhead the storm water management program.*

5.5 Directing future development to identified growth areas and future expansion areas.

*Action Taken: Under Section 208 of the Clean Water Act, NEFCO is the designated area wide water quality management and planning agency for Portage, Stark, Summit and Wayne Counties. In order to complete the 208 Plan, all of the political subdivisions of Wayne County, including the County itself is required to submit a 201 Facilities Plan which describes its wastewater treatment alternatives (prescriptions) for the next twenty (20) years and map the existing sewers within the planning area.*

5.6 Adopting agricultural protection zoning districts.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Agricultural Security Areas Policies and Procedures adopted April 26, 2006.*

5.10 Supporting other opportunities.

*Action Taken: A Farmland Preservation Task Force was appointed in 1997 and dissolved in 2001. The Wayne County Ag Success Team, a group of local volunteers dedicated to the prosperity of farmers and agribusinesses, was formed in 2002. The Board of Wayne County Commissioners participation in the State of Ohio's Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (AEPP), a grant opportunity for local landowners to place permanent agricultural deed restrictions on land, funded through the Clean Ohio Fund, ongoing participation since January 2001.*

**Objective 6 - Rural Character - Protect and enhance rural character, by:**

6.1 Implementing farmland preservation strategies in Objective 5.

*Action Taken: A Farmland Preservation Task Force was appointed in 1997 and dissolved in 2001. The Wayne County Ag Success Team, a group of local volunteers dedicated to the prosperity of farmers and agribusinesses, was formed in 2002. The Board of Wayne County Commissioners participation in the State of Ohio's Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (AEPP), a grant opportunity for local landowners to place permanent agricultural deed restrictions on land, funded through the Clean Ohio Fund, ongoing participation since January 2001.*

6.6 Encouraging preservation of fencerows and vegetative stream corridors.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Soil and Water Conservation encourages landowner to implement conservation management plans.*

6.8 Directing future development to identified growth areas and future expansion areas.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007. Under Section 208 of the Clean Water Act, NEFCO is the designated area wide water quality management and planning agency for Portage, Stark, Summit and Wayne Counties. In order to complete the 208 Plan, all of the political subdivisions of Wayne County, including the County itself is required to submit a 201 Facilities Plan which describes its wastewater treatment alternatives (prescriptions) for the next twenty (20) years and map the existing sewers within the planning area. The Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted October 13, 2005 now allows the review of 5-20 acre parcels. It is hoped this will help reduce the wasteful creation of large lots for the sole purpose of avoiding governmental review.*

**Objective 7 - Update Regulations - Update County Development Regulations as a means of implementing the Comprehensive Plan, by:**

7.1 Formally incorporating open-space subdivision design and submittal requirements, including incentives, and requiring open space land dedication requirements in residential subdivisions.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999, improved January 14, 2004 and amended January 25, 2007. In 2004, open space development incentives were added to the Wayne County Subdivision Regulations.*

7.2 Expanding lot frontage requirements and placing further restrictions on the number of permitted lot splits.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007.*

*HB 115 also impacted this objective locally. The Wayne County Commissioners adopted an amendment on 10/13/2005 to allow review of 5-20 acre lots. The Board of Commissioners awarded a contract for the preparation of access management regulations. It is anticipated that these new regulations will have an effect on land utilization, by requiring more stringent controls over access to the public roads.*

7.5 Strengthening health code requirements relative to on-site wastewater systems.

*Action Taken: Adoption by the Board of Health of the Wayne County Combined General Health District July 12, 2000. Please see Regulation #136. Revisions ongoing and posted at [www.wayne-health.org](http://www.wayne-health.org)*

**Objective 8 - Model Township Zoning Resolution - Provide a model township zoning resolution to encourage township-based zoning in Wayne County (at the discretion of township residents by referendum) and to encourage consistency among separate township zoning programs, by:**

8.1 Preparing a model township zoning resolution.

*Action Taken: Zoning, An Informational and Educational Panel Discussion for Local Officials, May 31, 2001, The Zoning Process, The Prosecuting Attorney. The Conservation Development Resource Manual was developed and distributed by the Countryside Program, 1998.*

8.2 Sponsoring educational workshops with township officials and distributing the model.

*Action Taken: The Board of County Commissioners in conjunction with the Wayne County Planning Department has held zoning meetings in Canaan and Green Townships in 2004. Countywide Comprehensive Planning and Basic Land Use Tools were held in 2005. Countywide Zoning Discussion facilitated by the Wayne County Planning Department with the Wayne County League of Women Voters was held in 2006.*

8.3 Providing technical assistance to townships as they consider adopting a zoning resolution.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Planning Department assists townships when they consider adopting a zoning resolution. The Planning Commission reviewed the Franklin Township Zoning Resolution on December 12, 2001.*

**Objective 9- Update Local Comprehensive Plans- Encourage cities, villages and townships in Wayne County to update existing comprehensive plans or to prepare a comprehensive plan where one does not exist, by:**

9.3 Providing technical assistance and guidance to communities, as plans are prepared.

*Action Taken: The Township Planning Assistance Grant Program, utilizing revolving loan funds, was created in November of 2006. Baughman, Chippewa, Congress and Greene townships recipients in the pilot year program 2007. The Wayne County Planning Department staff provides technical assistance, guidance, and research materials and resources to the townships involved.*

9.4 Providing County funding assistance to cities, villages and townships to finance preparation of plans.

*Action Taken: The Township Planning Assistance Grant Program, utilizing revolving loan funds, was created in November of 2006. Baughman, Chippewa, Congress and Greene townships recipients in the pilot year program 2007.*

## **Natural Resources**

### **Objective 2 - Preservation - Preserve outstanding natural resources, by:**

2.1 Creating a nonprofit land trust to purchase or receive as a donation outstanding natural resources or to purchase or receive as a donation conservation easements over outstanding natural resources.

*Action Taken: The Killbuck Watershed Land Trust, Inc. officially incorporated on May 30, 2000 as a citizen generated, private, nonprofit conservation organization.*

2.2 Ensuring sufficient funding to Wayne County Park Board to acquire key natural resources as public preserves.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Park Board placed a tax levy on the ballot, which failed voter approval in 1995, 1998, and in 2001.*

2.4 Updating County Subdivision Regulations to require land dedication in platted subdivisions and target such dedications to outstanding natural resources.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999. Amendments made effective January 25, 2007.*

### **Objective 4 - Woodlands and Wetlands - Encourage conservation of woodlands and wetlands, by:**

4.3 Adopting environmental assessment requirements in County Subdivision Regulations.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007.*

*The subdivision regulations and the Soil and Water Conservation District's sediment and erosion control regulations have opened the door for the requirement of stream easements and storm water quality control basins as well as storm water runoff basins.*

4.4 Promoting development guidelines (Objective 3).

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007.*

### **Objective 5 - Stream Corridors - Encourage conservation of stream corridors, by:**

5.4 Encouraging preservation through proposed land dedication amendment to County Subdivision Regulations.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted January 14, 2004 and amended January 25, 2007.*

**Objective 6 - Water Quality - Improve surface water quality, by:**

6.2 Assisting in securing state funds to finance sanitary sewer system improvements and construction, and provide matching funds.

*Action Taken: The Board of Wayne County Commissioners through the assistance of the Wayne County Planning Department secure state funds through Issue 2, federal funds utilized through Community Block Development Grant (CDBG) and USDA Rural Development for the construction of Wastewater Treatment Plan facilities throughout the county and villages.*

6.3 Studying current minimum health standards for on-site wastewater systems make recommendations regarding appropriate lot size and study alternative technologies.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007 allow for this coordination with the Wayne County Health Department. Soil & Water Conservation District's Sediment and Erosion Control regulations have allowed for the enforcement of water quality basins within major allotments.*

**Objective 8 - Economic Considerations - Conserve natural resources important to Wayne County's economy, by:**

8.1 Discouraging development of prime agricultural soils, timber production areas and sand and gravel locations.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007. The Board of Commissioners joined membership in January 2007 to Crossroads RC&D, a multi-county non-profit agency dedicated to **economic and environmental sustainability** through the conservation and effective utilization of the area's resources.*

## **Population**

**Objective 1 - Resource Management Areas (RMA) – Encourage implementation of Resource Management Areas, by:**

1.2 Using RMAs to guide subdivision development, infrastructure extensions and road improvements.

*Action Taken: Wayne County Subdivision Regulations adopted September 8, 1999 and amended January 25, 2007.*

## **Transportation**

**Objective 1 - Highway System - Maintain and preserve investments made in the existing County highway system, by:**

1.1 Continuing to rehabilitate, repair and replace County's bridges as deficiencies are identified.

*Action Taken: The implementation is ongoing through the Wayne County Engineer's Office.*

1.2 Continuing to monitor and correct unsafe intersections, roadway segments and railroad grade crossings.

*Action Taken: The implementation is ongoing through the Wayne County Engineer's Office.*

1.3 Continuing routine maintenance of pavements and culverts and, if funding allows, expanding resurfacing programs.

*Action Taken: The implementation is ongoing through the Wayne County Engineer's Office.*

**Objective 2 - Highway Infrastructure - Improve highway infrastructure to meet increasing demand and development, by:**

2.4 Continuing working with ODOT to improve Access Ohio recommendations. Where feasible, to help meet Amish travel requirements, pursue upgrading state routes to a "Super 2" (i.e., wider berms) – including county routes.

*Action Taken: The Wayne County Planning Department Staff continues to attend meetings with the Ohio Department of Transportation and the County Engineer's office to encourage wider berms on pertinent roads in the county to serve the Amish population.*

## **Utilities**

**Objective 1- Provide Adequate Water Service- Maintain and ensure future production of adequate quantities of water for drinking, sanitary and where needed commercial and industrial purposes to Growth Areas, by:**

1.1 Understanding community water needs.

*Action Taken: The Board of County Commissioners established the Wayne County Water District, March 7, 2007.*

1.4 Identifying sources of funding for future construction.

*Action Taken: The Board of County Commissioners established the Wayne County Water District, March 7, 2007.*

**Objective 2 - Provide Effective Wastewater Treatment - Maintain and provide effective wastewater treatment for all Growth Areas, by:**

2.6 Constructing effective wastewater facilities where needed.

*Action Taken: The Burbank wastewater facility established in September of 2004, and the Kidron wastewater facility in September of 2005.*

# **Zoning/Land Use Education Plan**

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**Land Use/Zoning Education Plan  
Wayne County Planning Department  
Wayne County, Ohio  
2007**

**I. Introduction**

II. Needs Statement

III. Current Status Summary

IV. Proposed Education Plan

V. Goals and Objectives

VI. Implementation Strategies

VII. Conclusion

## Introduction

The issues of “Land Use” and “Zoning” have been on the minds of the citizens of Wayne County for many years. In 1966, Chippewa Township successfully passed a zoning resolution. This was the first and only success for a very long time. Ten years later in August of 1976, the first county comprehensive land use plan consisting of five parts was adopted. This plan was soon followed by a proposed countywide zoning code. In 1977, during a statewide era of government corruption and misuse of police power, The Board of Wayne County Commissioners attempted to pass a county wide zoning resolution but it failed miserably at the polls. Since that failed attempt, countywide zoning has not been presented on a ballot. However, two decades later in 1994 the Congress Township successfully passed a township zoning resolution. In the two years to follow, other townships waded in the zoning issues, but ultimately the philosophy failed. They are as follows:

- 1995 Chester Township’s zoning resolution fails
- 1995 Canaan Township writes a zoning code, but never takes it to a vote
- 1995 Wooster Township’s zoning resolution fails
- 1996 Chester Township tries again at the ballot, but again it fails.

Since 1996, discussions of zoning have remained under the radar screen in Wayne County with one exception. In 2001, Franklin Township wrote a zoning resolution, placed it before voters, but it suffered the same fate and failed.<sup>1</sup> Historically, zoning has not been successfully implemented as a means of enforcement for either county or township leaders. Despite these failures, the list of land use issues continues to grow. Some notable issues include the following: the loss of farmland, the lack of protection for natural resources, protection for the agri-businesses, creating an adequate base for economic development, the fear of becoming a “bedroom community” for the urban workforce from Cleveland and Akron, lack of community facilities to support the increasing population, and addressing the housing demands.

*Even though zoning has not been too successful, The Board of Wayne County Commissioners have continued to deal with land use issues through the adoption and updating of their comprehensive plans and subdivision regulations. As noted earlier, the first county comprehensive land use plan was adopted in 1976. In 1997, the plan was rewritten and adopted. Currently, in 2007, the 10-year audit of that plan is underway.*

The Wayne County Planning Department would like to move forward with developing a Land Use/Zoning Education Plan in order to further investigate land use and zoning issues and therein provide education tools for local leaders and residents.

This plan will list our goals, objectives and implementation strategies as well as list what is currently being done and how we can enhance those programs.

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<sup>1</sup> See Attached State/County Zoning Timeline

## Needs Statement

The Wayne County Planning Department initiated an audit of the 1997 Wayne County Comprehensive Plan. A steering committee of 16 county residents volunteered hours of time to this audit.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the audit was to analyze the visions and goals, examine the implementation strategies, report the initiated items and reorganize the priorities. After two years of work sessions, the committee came to the realization that the visions and goals had not changed, the implementation strategies in place were doing their intended purpose and basically the priorities were in the correct order. What the committee felt was lacking was a tool of enforcement for the plan. The Comprehensive Plan had many strong and solid goals, but it lacked a means of implementation. Therefore the steering committee made a recommendation to The Board of Wayne County Commissioners. The recommendation is as follows:

**We recommend that the County Commissioners re-evaluate the use of either township or county-wide zoning as a tool to accomplish the major recommendations already listed in the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan including: redirecting and concentrating development, managing population growth, conserving farmland and green-space, protecting our rural character, and encouraging economic prosperity.**

*Based on this recommendation, the Wayne County Planning Department proposes to follow the committees' recommendation and utilize our resources and expertise to research and investigate the topic of countywide and township zoning leading to an educational program for local leaders with both the benefits and/or drawbacks to local zoning resolutions. A Land Use/Zoning Education Plan would put the wheels in motion to accomplish what the steering committee believes to be so vital for the implementation of the current Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.*

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<sup>2</sup> See Attached list of committee members

## **Current Status Summary**

A Land Use/Zoning Education Plan will not only recommend future programs, but also enhance the current programs that the Wayne County Planning Department is involved in. In the past two years, the Planning Department has been very active in promoting, updating, enhancing and educating the public on land use issues. Current/Recent measures or programs include:

## **Agricultural Security Areas; Local Policy**

April 2006, a committee was formed to create local policies to compliment the State of Ohio's policies on the agricultural security areas program. This program is designed to set aside prime farmland from development for a ten-year period. The local policies were created to better equip the Wayne County Planning Department, the Wayne Economic Development Council and the landowner when making application. The Board of Wayne County Commissioners adopted the local policies and they went into effect in 2006. This has resulted in one application thus far that is in the review process.

## **The Zoning Question**

October 2006, The League of Women Voters (Wayne County chapter) requested the Wayne County Planning Department to facilitate an educational zoning meeting. A panel of local residents with a vested interest in land use and zoning interests was created. The panel included realtors, farmers, politicians and entrepreneurs. The public was welcome to attend and in fact about 60 people attended this meeting. The pros and cons of zoning were discussed and questions from the audience were answered.

### Township Planning Assistance Grant (T.P.A.G.)

January 2007, The Board of Wayne County Commissioners allocated \$20,000 of revolving loan funds to assist townships in completing a township level comprehensive plan. This is a one-year program to be completed by 12/2007. Four townships applied for and were granted matching-funds. In this pilot year, Baughman, Chippewa, Congress and Green Township have been working on writing new comprehensive plans. Zoning is a topic discussed and explored in this process. While Chippewa and Congress already have zoning codes, they asked to be included in within this program as a means of updating the current zoning resolutions.

The Wayne County Planning Department is acting as support staff and facilitator for the townships. An outside professional consultant has been hired to actually write the plan. To date, four public meetings have been held, a citizen's steering committee has been formed for each township, over 2000 community surveys were mailed to residents and four steering committee meetings have been held.

### **Agricultural Protection Resource**

January & March 2007, The Wayne County Planning Department in conjunction with the Wayne Economic Development Council and OSU Extension Wayne County, held four agricultural protection resource meetings. At these meetings, land use tools already in place were introduced and discussed with Wayne County landowners. Topics covered were Current Agricultural Use Valuation, Agricultural Districts, Agricultural Security Areas and Agricultural Easement Purchase Program. All four topics are directly related to land use. Total attendance for the meetings was about 125 residents. As a result of this outreach, several landowners have applied for Agricultural District Classification with the Auditor's office and one group of farmers have made application for an Agricultural Security Area.

## **Proposed Education Plan**

The Current Status Summary provides evidence as to the continuing activities of the Wayne County Planning Department, under the direction of the Board of Wayne County Commissioners, over the last two years. We believe that despite these efforts, an education plan with a specific goals and objectives, needs to be implemented. The residents of Wayne County need to be aware and enlightened as to the land use issues facing the community and the options that are available.

The education plan will be an evolving document addressing the current pressures and issues of the county. This education plan could serve as a guide to The Board of Wayne County Commissioners, the Planning Commission and the Township Trustees of Wayne County. The final product will address questions associated with zoning and other land use issues as well as being a tool to collect citizen input while being highly interactive with links to educational research tools.

## Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Create a user-friendly document to answer complicated zoning questions

Objectives:

- Survey local leaders (Villages and Townships) to identify questions and concerns
- Research similar county and township zoning codes
- Attend zoning workshops
- List the pros and cons
- Link info via WWW
- Make information available
- Study the ORC
- Enlist the help of County Prosecutor
- Enlist the help of experienced zoning professionals
- Enlist the help of APA and OPC
- Draft a report of common zoning misunderstandings with clear concise answers

Goal # 2: Set Foundation for Future issues and Education

Objectives:

- Utilize professional resources in the County
- Pre-study, research and investigate zoning
- Determine the need for future studies

Goal # 3: Be a Useful Resource to the Township Trustees

Objectives:

- Educate the Township Trustees
- Connect local leaders with one another
- Build social capital

Goal #4: Develop a Community-Based Educational Program

Objectives:

- Utilize print, web and personal contact to educate
- Volunteer with Jr. Achievement, 4-H and other youth educational forums.
- Present findings to the public in variety of settings
- Pitch a monthly space in an educational resource

## **Implementation Strategies**

In order to achieve the above listed goals, the Wayne County Planning Department will need to have a few implementation strategies in place. The following is an initial list of ideas that will serve as a starting point.

1. Township Trustee Business Meeting

We would like to coordinate with the township trustees in order to allow the four townships involved in the Township Planning Assistance Grant Program to communicate the process, benefits and obstacles involved in this program. Since 2007 is the pilot year of the program we anticipate many questions and many changes. We feel that the trustee will have an impact on the sustainability of this program. If we could host a township trustees business meeting (apart from their annual meeting) we believe this will give s the opportunity to set the pace for next years program, future zoning workshops and meetings as well. The Wayne County Planning Department has resources and expertise in this area that should be used for the townships.

2. Land Use Articles

The Wayne County Planning Department is involved in many educational outreach projects. Just as the OSU Extension, we talk to residents and local leaders on a daily basis about land use issues. Developing an educational article once a month in a newspaper or newsletter will not only spread the word about land use issues, but also create a better public relationship with the County offices as a whole. The utilization of organizations like the Home Buliders Association or the Realtors Association will provide additional outlets for education. Currently, no county office (with the exception of OSU Extension) has a monthly article to inform the public of what we are working on and how we are here to help. This monthly article could be written by a planning staff member or a planning commission member.

## **Conclusion**

Land Use and Zoning issues are complex. There are many questions that arise when studying and researching land use options and zoning codes. The current Wayne County Comprehensive Plan contains an objective under the Land Use section, which calls for a model township resolution. Strategies mentioned include:

- Preparing a model township zoning resolution
- Sponsoring educational workshops with township officials and distributing the model.
- Providing technical assistance to townships as they consider adopting a zoning resolution.

Following through on this Land Use/Zoning Education Plan will fulfill the objective and complete the implementation strategies called for in the 1997 Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

In order to take a closer look at township and/or countywide zoning, time and resources will have to be spent. The Wayne County Planning Department is willing to put the time into this initiative, but additional resources would have to be made available in order to carry out the full scope of the education plan.

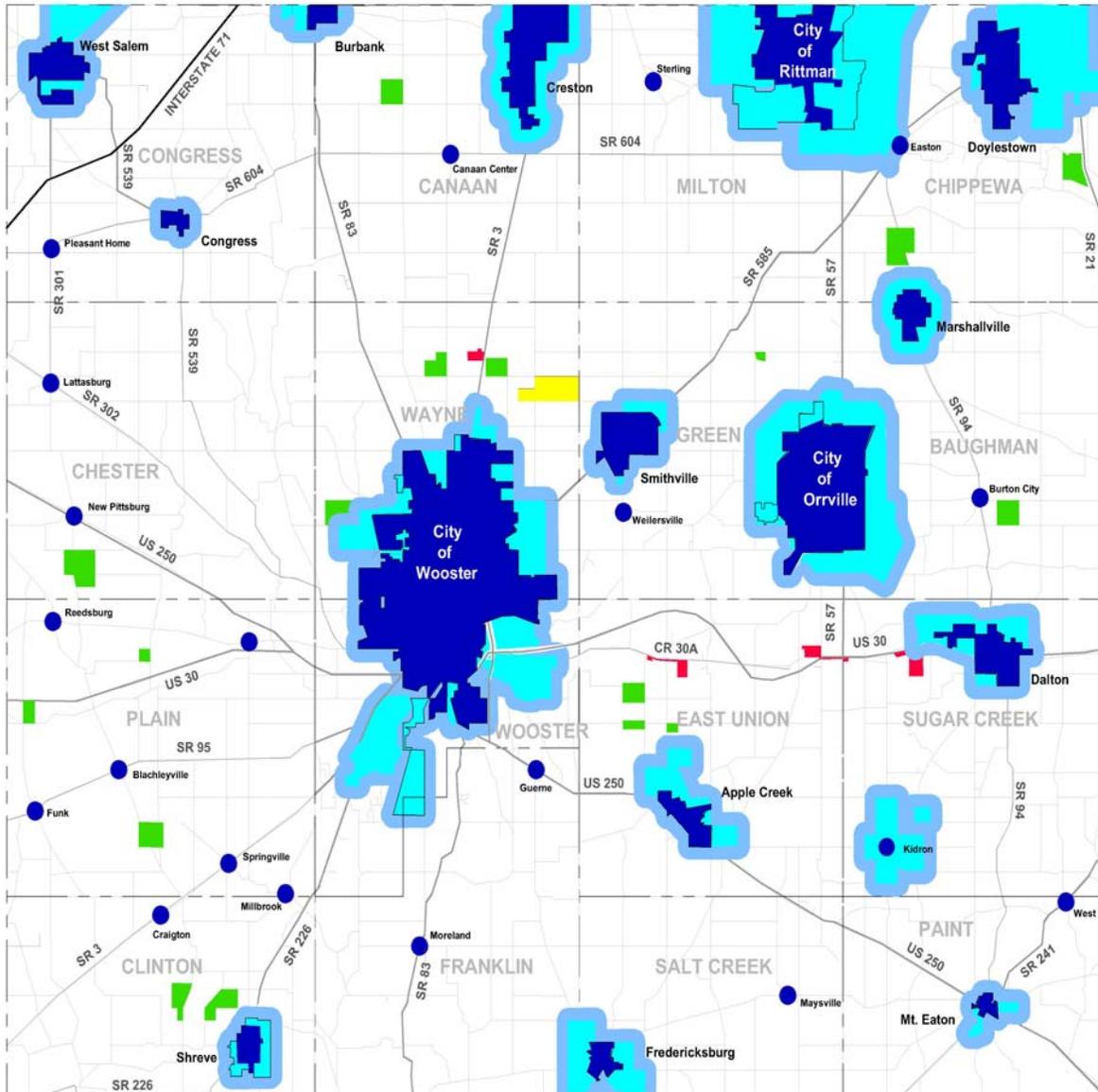
# Resource Management Areas Map

Comprehensive Plan Audit 2007

Effective May 16, 2007

Wayne County Planning Department  
428 West Liberty Street  
Wooster, Ohio 44691  
[www.wayneohio.org/planning](http://www.wayneohio.org/planning)

# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AREAS



- GROWTH AREAS
- FUTURE EXPANSION AREAS
- TRANSITION AREAS
- CONSERVATION AREAS
- EXISTING RURAL SUBDIVISIONS
- EXISTING RURAL SUBDIVISIONS WITH SEWER
- EXISTING INDUSTRIAL PARK
- INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS
- MAJOR STATE CORRIDORS
- MAJOR COUNTY CORRIDORS
- OTHER STATE, COUNTY & TOWNSHIP ROADS
- COUNTY & TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES
- HAMLET
- NORTH

Wayne County Planning Department  
 as part of the  
 Wayne County Comprehensive Plan Audit  
 2006/2007  
 Approve WC Planning Commission May 9th, 2007  
 Adopted WC Board of Commissioners May 16th, 2007

# Resource Areas Management Map

## Definitions<sup>3</sup>

**Growth Areas:** Cities, villages and hamlets where future development should be directed.

**Future Expansion Areas:**<sup>4</sup> Locations where sanitary sewer service is available in or outside corporate boundaries and within which longer-term development may occur.

**Transitional Areas:** Locations outside cities, villages and hamlets within which low-density (single-family) residential is to be encouraged, but not commercial and industrial development in most cases.

**Conservation Areas:** A majority of the County where agriculture and natural resources should be conserved, and development generally discouraged.

**Existing Rural Subdivisions:**<sup>5</sup> Very low-density, conventional neighborhood designed as a smaller, self-contained development. (Only developments of 20+ units were mapped)

**Existing Rural Subdivisions with Sewer:**<sup>6</sup> Very low-density, conventional neighborhood designed as a smaller, self-contained development utilizing central sewer system. (Only developments of 20+ units were mapped)

**Existing Industrial Park:**<sup>7</sup> See Footnote

**Major State/County Corridor:**<sup>8</sup> New Development should be located adjacent to existing, similar development where access is appropriate, where utilities are present and with the intention of encouraging the creation of nodes of activity that can be properly managed.

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<sup>3</sup> Consistent and also listed in the 1997 Comprehensive Plan 6.13 Overview unless otherwise noted.

<sup>4</sup> Definition change adopted May 16, 2007; listed differently in 1997 Comprehensive Plan

<sup>5</sup> Not pictured or defined on 1997 Resource Areas Map within the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. Definition exists in the Wayne County Subdivision Regulations 4.6 (2007)

<sup>6</sup> Not separately defined in the Subdivision Regulations. Defined separately only for visual mapping purposes.

<sup>7</sup> The only Industrial Park notated on the 1997 Comprehensive Plans Resource Areas Management Map. Future industrial park site criteria listed in the 1997 Comprehensive Plan 4.7.

<sup>8</sup> Also Defined in 1997 Comprehensive Plan 6.16.