

# **LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP MEDINA COUNTY, OHIO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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The development of the  
**LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
was made possible with funding assistance  
from the Medina County Planning Commission  
and the Litchfield Township Board of Trustees.

**THE LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
reflects the dedication and work  
of many residents of Litchfield Township  
who participated in planning meetings  
in 2005 and 2006.

Gratitude is extended to all persons  
who participated in the meetings  
which led to the creation of the  
**LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.**  
Your commitment will benefit  
the residents of Litchfield Township  
for many years to come.

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LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

This document represents a comprehensive planning effort by citizens of Litchfield Township. The Comprehensive Plan provides a logical and goal driven strategy for shaping the future of the Township. The planning process began with an analysis of past and present social and economic conditions, land use patterns, traffic circulation, environmental resources, utilities, and community facilities and services. The Township reviewed the 1993 Litchfield Township Comprehensive Development Policy Plan to identify which goals the Township has accomplished in the past twelve years. With this background in place, a survey was developed and distributed to the residents of Litchfield in order to determine the desires and needs. Evaluations were made about the community and its future. The results of the survey were formulated into goals which are followed by recommendations for accomplishing them.

The Comprehensive Plan for Litchfield Township is intended to serve as a guide for decision making for both day-to-day issues and long-range policies. Properly used the Comprehensive Plan can help the Township to use resources in the most effective and efficient manner and also ensure that all of the various players involved in building and shaping Litchfield Township are working together toward common goals resulting in a viable and strong community.

## **REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

Litchfield Township is located in the northwestern portion of Medina County, Ohio. The Township is bordered by Penfield Township in Lorain County to the west, Grafton Township in Lorain County to the north, York Township in Medina County to the east, and Chatham Township in Medina County to the south. The City of Medina, which is the Medina County seat, is a short distance east of the Township on Norwalk Road (State Route 18).

Litchfield Township is a predominantly rural residential community providing country living with easy access to regional employment centers, retail destinations, recreational opportunities, and education opportunities in Medina, Akron, and Cleveland.

For many years, Litchfield's population was small and grew relatively slowly. The population is now growing much more quickly. Development is bringing both problems and opportunities. The increasing population is accompanied by new housing and is resulting in greater amounts of traffic, a change in storm water runoff, greater demands for services and facilities, new children in the school system, and other impacts. Growth is also bringing an enlarged tax base, attractive new neighborhoods, increased membership and support for facilities and community organizations (Township Boards, civic groups, churches, etc.), the opportunity for the location of convenience services, and other new resources contributing to quality of life in Litchfield Township.

## TOWNSHIP SURVEY

The Township sought guidance in the development of the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan Committee worked with a planning consultant to devise a survey which would identify the needs and desires of the Township's residents.

In the fall of 2005, the Comprehensive Plan Committee mailed a survey to all households and businesses in Litchfield Township. Approximately 52% of the surveys were returned with an equal representation from the four quadrants of the Township. A copy of the survey is available in Appendix A. The complete compilation of responses is available at Township Hall after project completion. Highlights of the responses to this survey include the following:

- The average length of time respondents of the survey have lived in Litchfield is 20 years.
- Fire and Emergency Services received the highest rating of the Township services with approximately 99% scoring the service as an A, B, or C.
- The majority of the residents scored Police Protection as a "B".
- Road maintenance and snow plowing received passing grades. Residents residing on County Highways and State Routes graded road maintenance and snow plowing slightly higher than those residents residing on Township Roads.
- 75.4% of Township residents gave zoning regulations a passing grade while 24.6% gave zoning regulations a failing score indicating that the Township could improve on their Zoning Resolution.
- Approximately 31% of the respondents who reside in the southeast quadrant of the Township gave zoning regulations a failing grade.
- 70.0% indicated that home-based businesses do not cause problems for neighbors. Many residents stated that it depends on the type and nature of the business or use as to whether it causes or could cause problems for neighbors.
- 70.4% believe that the Township should carefully regulate business activities in residential areas.
- Recreation received the lowest rating of Township services with 45% of the residents giving recreation a failing score.
- Approximately 41.5% of the respondents participate in organized recreational activities.
- If the Township built new recreational facilities, 29.5% would be very likely to use the facilities, 35.7% would be somewhat likely to use the facilities, and 34.8% would not be likely to use the new facilities.
- 49.3% of the respondents believe that there are sufficient housing opportunities for seniors while 50.7% believe that there are not sufficient housing opportunities in Litchfield.
- 59.6% of the respondents over the age of 65 believe that there are not sufficient housing opportunities for seniors in the Township.
- While 50.7% of the respondents feel that there are not sufficient senior housing opportunities in Litchfield, overall the residents would not support a zoning change to create a special zoning district to permit senior housing construction.
- An assisted living facility was the only zoning change for senior receiving a positive rating. Yet, this rating is just over half, with 50.2% supporting it.

- The survey indicates that 76.7% of the respondents believe that there are sufficient housing opportunities for young families just getting started to remain in the Township.
- There is little support for a zoning change to create a new zoning district intended to provide some starter housing for young families.
- Approximately 75.1% of the respondents indicated that 3-acres is about the right minimum lot size.
- The survey indicates that there are approximately the same number of respondents who would like to increase the 3-acre minimum lot size as those who would like to decrease the 3-acre minimum lot size.
- According to the survey, length of residency has an impact on views of the minimum 3-acre lot size. Generally residents who have lived in the Township longer are more likely to believe that the 3-acre lot size is too large while newer residents are more likely to want to see the 3-acre lot size increased.
- The main reason that residents were attracted to Litchfield was the rural character of the Township. The most frequently given reasons indicate that country living, the large 3-acre lots, open spaces, and farmland are very important to the residents of the Township.
- The majority of shopping is in Medina and other commonly frequented communities include Wellington, Elyria, Wooster, and Grafton.
- There is a slightly higher percentage against additional retail business and services locating in Litchfield to more conveniently meet the daily needs of the residents. Approximately 49.2% would like to see additional retail business and services while 50.8% would not like to see additional retail business and services.
- Approximately 54.1% of the respondents would like to encourage development of business and industry in designated locations while 45.9% would not like to encourage business and industry development.
- At the present time, the majority of the land uses in Litchfield are residential homes and agricultural uses with very few commercial and industrial businesses. Approximately 63.7% believe that the Township can provide adequate services to the residents with the taxes collected from farms and homes.
- Approximately 67% of the survey respondents stated that they would support a change to shift some of the tax burden from residences to non-residential uses.

## GOALS

The goals of the Litchfield Township Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

**1. PROTECT AND RETAIN OPEN SPACES AND SCENIC VISTAS WHICH PRESERVE THE RURAL CHARACTER OF LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP**

The rural atmosphere of Litchfield is highly desired by the Township's residents. The results of the survey show that the main reasons that residents were attracted to Litchfield were the rural character, farmland, open spaces, and the large tracts of land. Similar to the results of the 1991 Litchfield Township Zoning Survey, residents agree that the rural character is a valuable asset and should be preserved and protected.

As development pressures increase, the desirability of preserving the open areas becomes critical and important. The farms, fields, wooded areas, and open spaces are attractive, low impact elements of the local landscape, affording Litchfield a significantly different atmosphere than nearby Medina Township and the City of Medina. These open spaces and farms are affected by many forces, including land uses around them.

The large open tracts of land create significant expanses of open space with scenic vistas and a sense of openness which helps to preserve the Township's rural image.

**2. LIMIT AND CONTROL THE POPULATION DENSITY OF THE TOWNSHIP**

Density control is essential to preserving the rural character of Litchfield Township. Density controls are also critical to protecting ground water resources and ensuring proper operation of on-site waste disposal systems.

As population increases, there can also be significant impacts on Township infrastructure including roadways and the water system. As the demand for water increases with the construction and connection of new homes, so do safety concerns that water lines will not be adequate to handle fire flows and daily use issues regarding quality of service and domestic flow rates.

**3. MANAGE THE USES AND DEVELOPMENT OF LAND IN THE TOWNSHIP TO PROTECT SURFACE WATER RESOURCES (CREEKS, WETLANDS, FLOOD PLAINS) AND OTHER NATURAL RESOURCES FROM POLLUTION, SEDIMENTATION, AND UNNECESSARY ALTERATION OF THEIR NATURAL FORMS AND FUNCTIONS**

The 1993 Development Policy Plan advocated that Township officials promote and preserve green space within the community. To promote the preservation of green spaces, large lot development and open spaces where topography and soil conditions prohibit higher density uses was encouraged. The Township should continue to encourage preservation of open spaces as one aspect of preserving the rural character of Litchfield and protecting natural resources.



**4. PROVIDE FOR SAFE, EFFICIENT, AND EFFECTIVE MOVEMENT OF VEHICLES AND PERSONS TO ENSURE THAT THE TYPE AND CAPACITY OF TRANSPORTATION ELEMENTS ARE APPROPRIATE AND SUFFICIENT FOR ANTICIPATED TRAFFIC DEMANDS**

The 1993 Development Policy Plan recommended that the Township maintain a system of roads and streets which provide convenience and access to all parts of Litchfield while adhering to the rural character of the community. The Township should layout future street connections to direct traffic flows and provide alternate local routes for Litchfield residents rather than traveling on the main State Highways.

**5. DETERMINE APPROPRIATE AREAS FOR FUTURE RETAIL BUSINESS AND SERVICES WITH THE INTENT OF PROVIDING FOR DAILY CONVENIENCE AND WEEKLY SHOPPING AND SERVICE NEEDS OF THE TOWNSHIP WHILE LIMITING THE IMPACTS ON THE ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS**

It is anticipated that major shopping goods will continue to be purchased in locations outside of Litchfield Township in the larger and more developed areas of nearby Medina, Wellington, Elyria, and Grafton. Commercial developments within the Township should be oriented toward convenience shopping and service needs as the principal type of future commercial development. It is recommended that the Township discourage establishment of larger regional-scale commercial facilities that create substantial traffic and public service impacts and limit the scope and scale of new commercial developments accordingly.

Some limited and controlled convenience commercial establishments will help with balancing the tax base, limiting the length of travel time for Litchfield residents, reducing fuel consumption, and controlling environmental impacts. Future commercial areas should be located within or abutting the core residential development areas for convenience to the community and to limit their impact in more rural areas. The most appropriate location for future commercial development is along the major thoroughfares in designated and controlled areas.

**6. ENHANCE LITCHFIELD CIRCLE AS A FOCAL POINT FOR THE COMMUNITY**

Historically, the central focus of Litchfield Township has been Litchfield Circle located in the geographic center of the Township at the intersection of State Route 18 and State Route 83. The governmental core of the Township is located at Litchfield Circle including Township Hall, the Fire Station, the Litchfield Circle Park, and the post office. Outsiders know they are in Litchfield when they arrive in Litchfield Circle. The image of the Township is directly related to the image of Litchfield Circle. Maintaining and preserving the character of Litchfield Circle's small town center is important to retaining the Township's heritage. It is critical that the Township take the necessary steps to ensure the maintenance and character of the circle.

**7. PROVIDE MORE SUITABLE LOCATIONS FOR LOCAL BUSINESS AND LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF APPROPRIATE SCALE AND NATURE**

The areas currently zoned for industrial use have significant deficiencies, lack functionality, are improperly located, and cannot compete effectively as potential business locations. More appropriate and feasible areas for the creation of a light industrial and business base in Litchfield Township should be created. The net result could be more local job opportunities, an enhanced tax base, more resources for balancing public budgets, and shifting some of the tax burden from residential properties. Designation of more appropriate locations for industry and business will also help the Township avoid the potential problems that will inevitably occur if the currently zoned sites are developed with industrial uses.

Industrial and business development should be controlled and limited in both scope and scale. It is recommended that stricter guidelines in the industrial and business areas be developed. Smaller-scale developments should be encouraged in locations where the infrastructure can support such uses. Developments should incorporate appropriate techniques that provide high quality projects which are compatible with the surrounding areas. The use of open space, landscape buffers, and screening can maintain the rural image and ease the transition from the business and industrial areas to residential uses.

**8. MAINTAIN THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE RESIDENTS OF LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP BY MAINTAINING THE HIGH LEVEL OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE LITCHFIELD VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT, MEDINA COUNTY SHERIFF, SERVICE DEPARTMENT, AND OTHER TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS**

The Township needs to provide a certain level of services while maintaining its rural character. According to the results of the survey, services in Litchfield were given good grades with the majority of the responses listing A, B, or C for fire and emergency services, police protection, road maintenance, snow plowing, recreation, and zoning regulations. The Township should strive to maintain the high level of services currently provided to all residents of Litchfield Township.

Litchfield Township may experience a variety of natural and manmade hazards that cause damage to property and local citizens. The Emergency Mitigation Agency in Medina County prepared a countywide hazard mitigation plan that proposes to enable communities to recuperate more quickly and easily from disasters. Litchfield Township intends to decrease vulnerability to natural and manmade disasters and update their response to public threats through the use of the County's All Hazard and Flood Mitigation Plan through risk management tools, prioritizing hazards, and identifying vulnerabilities. Educating community officials and residents to understand potential threats to security will assist responders in the event of a natural or manmade disaster.

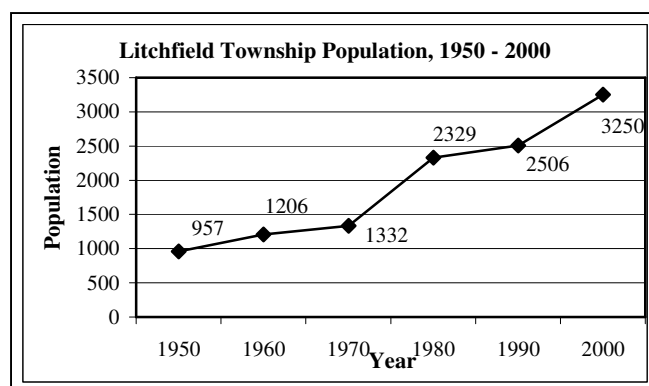
The term "hazard mitigation" describes actions that can help reduce or eliminate long-term risks caused by natural or manmade disasters, such as floods, droughts, tornadoes, earthquakes, and dam failures. After disasters, repairs and reconstruction are often completed in such a way as to

simply restore damaged property to pre-disaster conditions. These efforts may expedite a return to normalcy, but the replication of pre-disaster conditions often results in a repetitive cycle of damage and reconstruction. Hazard mitigation is needed to break this repetitive cycle by producing less vulnerable conditions through post-disaster repairs and reconstruction. The implementation of such hazard mitigation actions now by state and local governments means building stronger, safer and smarter communities that will be able to reduce future damage and injuries.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### POPULATION

According to the 2000 US Census, Litchfield Township's population is 3,250, representing a 29.7% increase in population over the last decade. Census figures indicate a 70.6% increase in population over a 50-year time frame with a 14.1% average increase each decade.



The US Census reports that the estimated population in Litchfield Township was 3,368 persons in 2001, 3,496 persons in 2002, 3,361 persons in 2003, and 3,709 persons in 2004. Since the 2000 Census, the estimated population in Litchfield has increased by 459 persons representing a 14.1% increase in the past four years.

The table below depicts population for Litchfield Township, adjacent communities, Medina County and Lorain County as a whole. Litchfield Township is growing faster than adjacent townships both in terms of absolute numbers and percentage change. But still accounts for only 2.5% of the total growth in Medina County during the past decade.

Population Comparison Adjacent to Litchfield Township, 1990- 2000				
Community	1990	2000	Absolute Change	Percent Change
Litchfield Township	2,506	3,250	744	29.7%
York Township	2,479	2,912	433	17.5%
Chatham Township	1,799	2,158	359	20.0%
Penfield Township, Lorain Co.	1,312	1,690	378	28.8%
Grafton Township, Lorain Co.	3,052	2,722	-330	-10.8%
Medina County	122,354	151,095	28,741	23.5%
Lorain County	271,126	284,664	13,538	5.0%
Source : US Census				

Litchfield Township has a slightly smaller elderly population when compared to Medina County and the State. The US Census reported that 6.5% of Litchfield's population is 65 and over compared with 10.5% in Medina County and 13.3% in Ohio. A large retired population requires special services and needs including housing, emergency and health care. However, it appears that the Township's elderly population is substantially smaller than the surrounding area and the rest of Ohio. This finding may be related to the nature of the existing housing options within the Township and the special housing needs of seniors.

### INCOME

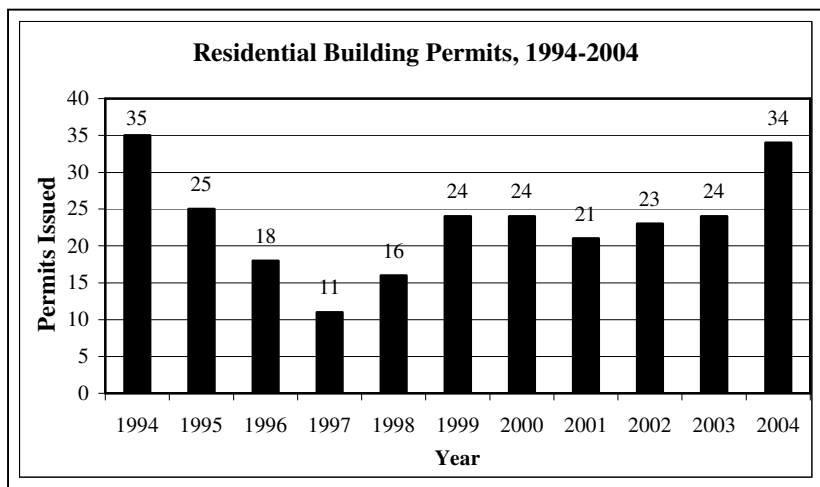
The 2000 Litchfield Township labor force included approximately 1,793 residents. The 1999 median household income was \$55,881 compared to the Medina County 1999 median household income of \$55,811 and Ohio's 1999 median household income of \$40,956. The Township is significantly more affluent than the State of Ohio.

According to the 2000 US Census, 5.9% of the individuals in Litchfield Township are below the poverty level, while 4.6% of the individuals in Medina County are below the poverty level. By comparison, 10.6% of the individuals in the State of Ohio are below the poverty level. The Township is above the poverty level when compared to the rest of Ohio but below the poverty level when compared to the remainder of Medina County.

## HOUSING

According to the 2000 US Census, the number of dwelling units in Litchfield Township was 1,056, an increase of 290 dwelling units or +37.9% from 1990. The Township had about 1.9% of the total housing units in Medina County in 2000 and generated 2.1% of new dwelling units.

Between 1994 and 2004, 251 residential building permits were issued in Litchfield Township. There was a downward trend in the number of residential building permits issued in Litchfield Township during the mid-1990s. In the past five years, Litchfield has seen a steady increase in the number of new dwelling units with the construction of five new subdivisions. Additional residential developments are in the planning process which provide the potential for continued housing growth in the Township.



Litchfield Township's average household size for 2000 is 3.08 persons which is above Medina County's average of 2.74 and the state's average of 2.49. This indicates that there is a higher concentration of families with children in the Township. In 1990, the US Census reported that the average household size of Litchfield Township was 3.34 and Medina County's average household size was 2.9. Both Litchfield Township and the County experienced a decrease in average household size between 1990 and 2000, similar to the trend that there are less persons per household seen in the rest of Ohio and nationally.

The housing stock in Litchfield Township is primarily owner-occupied, single-family housing. According to the 2000 Census, the level of owner-occupied housing units in Litchfield Township is higher than in Medina County and the State of Ohio. 91.9% of the housing units in Litchfield Township are owner-occupied as compared to 81.3% in Medina County and 69.1% in the state. The US Census tabulated that there are 2.0% vacant housing units and 0.1% vacant housing units used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use in the Township. These are low vacancy rates which reflect merely normal turn over of housing units and no standing inventory of available dwellings.

## LAND USE PATTERNS

A land use inventory conducted during Fall 2005 and Medina County Highway Engineer's aerial photography were used to identify how property is currently being used and to study distribution of lands within Litchfield Township. The existing Land Use Map identifies generalized locations of land uses in order to determine development and growth patterns for the Township.

The land use inventory divides Litchfield Township into the following four (4) categories:

- Residential
- Commercial / Industrial
- Public / Institutional / Parks and Recreation
- Agricultural / Wooded / Vacant

### RESIDENTIAL

The majority of residential development in Litchfield is detached single-family residences scattered throughout the Township. Residential development occurs along much of the frontage of the major roads in the form of simple rectangular 3-acre lots subdivided from larger farm parcels. Rear lots or flag lots are also common. Newer developments are being located on long cul-de-sac roads branching off from main roads.

### COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL

Litchfield Circle is the commercial focal point of the Township. The majority of the Township's commercial businesses are located on State Route 18 (Norwalk Road) east of Litchfield Circle to the York Township line. Commercial uses include mini-storage, gasoline service station / auto body shops, restaurant, small corner store, and other neighborhood convenience services. The Smokehouse business is located on Crow Road, just east of Crows Nest Lane. Home businesses are scattered throughout the Township and are typically identified by small free-standing signs located in front yards.

Litchfield has very little industrial business. A manufacturing company is located at the intersection of Avon Lake Road and Stone Road, just south of the railroad tracks. Adjacent to this manufacturing business is an electrical substation.

The RLCWA water tanks are located in the northeast quadrant of Litchfield on Spieth Road. The Township has two radio towers. The first is at the intersection of State Route 18 (Norwalk Road) and Vandemark Road. The second radio tower is found between Smith Road and Branch Road, west of Erhart Road and east of Vandemark Road. A cell tower is located at the northeast corner of Smith Road and Avon Lake Road.

## **PUBLIC / INSTITUTIONAL / PARKS AND RECREATION**

Public and institutional uses including Litchfield Township Hall, the fire station, the vacant Litchfield Elementary School, and the post office are located in the center of the Township at Litchfield Circle. The Township Service garage is located at the southwest corner of Norwalk Road and Beat Road.

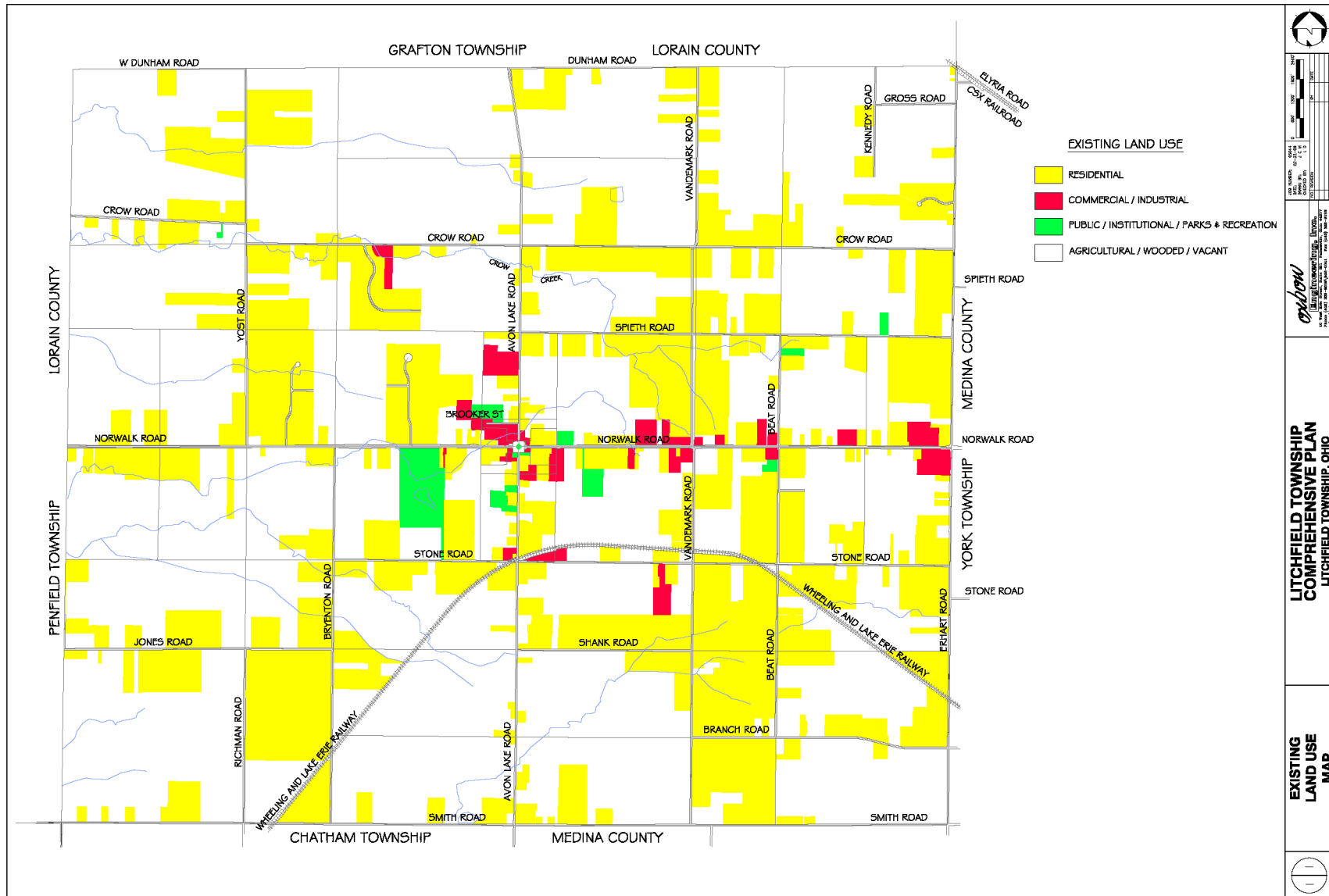
Litchfield Township has very few churches. The existing churches are scattered throughout Litchfield. Litchfield Center Cemetery is located just east of Litchfield Circle on State Route 18. Another small cemetery called Crows Corner Cemetery is situated just south of Crow Road and west of Yost Road, in the northwest quadrant of the Township.

A one-acre park is located at the intersection of Norwalk Road and Avon Lake Road creating Litchfield Circle. The park serves as passive recreation for the residents of Litchfield. Four soccer fields are located just south of the Township Service garage on Beat Road.

## **AGRICULTURAL / WOODED / VACANT**

Large, active farms dominate Litchfield. A significant portion of the land is being used for the production of grain crops such as soybeans, corn, and wheat. Other farms include cattle, horse, alpacas, and tree nurseries. These farms are an important factor in helping to maintain Litchfield as a rural community. Sizable wooded lots are common in the interior of blocks. Portions of Litchfield are vacant and covered in natural vegetation.

LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN





## TRANSPORTATION

### ROAD NETWORK

Litchfield Township is served by a combination of north-south and east-west state routes, county highways, and township highways. The local road pattern in Litchfield Township is relatively well-balanced, with north-south and east-west routes spaced evenly across the Township.

Norwalk Road (SR 18) runs west to east and Avon Lake Road (SR 83) runs north to south. These two State Routes intersect in the geographic center of the Township dividing Litchfield into four quadrants and creating a traffic circle (town center). While there are no freeways in the Township, Avon Lake Road (SR 83) connects with SR 10, I-80 and I-90 to the north and with I-71 to the south. Norwalk Road (SR 18) connects with I-71 and I-77 to the east.

North-south main routes include Avon Lake Road, Vandemark Road, Erhart Road, Beat Road, Bryenton Road, Richmond Road, and Yost Road. West-east main routes include Norwalk Road, Crow Road, Smith Road, Stone Road, Spieth Road, Branch Road, Shank Road, Jones Road, West Dunham Road, and Dunham Road.

Newer residential developments are located on long cul-de-sacs branching off from the main roads.

### TRAFFIC COUNTS

Traffic counts were completed for State Route 18 and State Route 83 by the Ohio Department of Transportation in 1999, 2002 and 2004.

LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP MEDIAN 24-HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUMES				
Road	1999	2002	2004	5-Year %Change
<b>STATE ROUTE 18</b>				
At western Litchfield Township Line	3190	3210	3230	1.3%
At State Route 83	4490	5450	4830	7.6%
At York Township Line	5870	6400	6020	2.6%
<b>STATE ROUTE 83</b>				
At State Route 18	4700	4620	4890	4.0%

Source: Ohio Department of Transportation

The Medina County Highway Engineer performed traffic counts for the years of 1998, 2002 and 2004 for the county and township roads in Litchfield Township. Calculations were performed in order to show percent change over the six-year increment and to track the changes in traffic flows from 1998 through 2004.

It is important for the Township to direct any future development to areas where it can anticipate the traffic demands. As part of its capital improvement planning, Litchfield Township needs to anticipate upgrades and enhancements to the existing street network. The focus will become clearer as the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan are developed.

LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC COUNTS**

Road	1998	2002	2004	6 -Year %Change	Road	1998	2002	2004	6 - Year %Change
<b>STONE ROAD T.H. 74</b>					<b>SHANK ROAD T.H. 108</b>				
E. of Bryenton	112	392	234	108.9%	E. of S.R. 83	169	*	299	76.9%
W. of S.R. 83	254	308	478	88.2%	W. of Vandemark Rd.	264	*	234	-11.4%
E. of S.R. 83	252	376	371	47.2%					
W. of Vandemark Rd.	221	253	299	35.3%	<b>JONES ROAD T.H. 5</b>				
E. of Vandemark Rd.	212	334	*	**57.6%	W. of Richman Rd.	296	*	272	-8.1%
W. of Beat Road	224	*	313	39.7%	E. of Richman Rd.	431	*	396	-8.8%
E. of Beat Road	211	*	382	81.0%	W. of Bryenton Rd.	545	*	534	-2.0%
W. of Erhart Road	395	375	454	14.9%					
<b>SMITH ROAD T.H. 4</b>					<b>BRANCH ROAD T.H. 33</b>				
E. of Township Line	854	1072	1331	55.9%	E. of Vandemark Rd.	236	398	285	20.8%
W. of Richman Rd.	838	1213	1328	58.5%	W. of Beat Rd.	229	387	400	74.7%
E. of Richman Rd.	926	1185	1362	47.1%	E. of Beat Rd.	258	411	473	83.3%
W. of Bryenton Rd.	923	1362	1509	63.5%	W. of Erhart Rd.	352	345	382	8.5%
E. of Bryenton Rd.	968	1190	1418	46.5%					
W. of S.R. 83	977	1452	1479	51.4%	<b>DUNHAM ROAD T.H. 6</b>				
E. of S.R. 83	1269	1888	1960	54.5%	W. of Yost Rd.	109	200	152	39.5%
W. of Vandemark Rd.	1267	1762	1759	38.8%	E. of S.R. 83	228	268	286	25.4%
E. of Vandemark Rd.	1563	2112	2062	31.9%					
W. of Erhart Rd.	1543	1959	2117	37.2%	<b>CROW ROAD C.H. 64</b>				
<b>SPIETH ROAD T.H. 65</b>					W. of Yost Rd.	199	397	224	12.6%
E. of S.R. 83	354	639	343	-3.1%	E. of Yost Rd.	290	397	347	16.4%
W. of Vandemark Rd.	299	676	525	75.6%	W. of S.R. 83	691	*	853	23.4%
E. of Vandemark Rd.	283	401	328	15.9%	E. of S.R. 83	457	*	433	-5.3%
W. of Beat Rd.	283	438	450	59.0%	W. of Vandemark Rd.	518	*	698	34.8%
E. of Beat Rd.	341	440	413	21.1%	E. of Vandemark Rd.	*	*	479	****
W. of Erhart Rd.	781	701	724	-7.3%	W. of Erhart Rd.	514	*	574	11.7%

Source: Medina County Highway Engineer: 1998, 2002, 2004 Traffic Count Maps

\* Info. Not Available \*\* Percent Change 1998-2002 \*\*\* Percent Change 2002-2004 \*\*\*\* Not enough information to calculate

LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC COUNTS**

Road	1998	2002	2004	6 - Year % Change	Road	1998	2002	2004	6 - Year % Change
<b>YOST ROAD T.H. 124</b>					<b>VANDEMARK RD. C.H. 31</b>				
S. of Dunham Rd.	274	333	305	11.3%	N. of Crow Rd.	323	523	698	116.1%
N. of Crow Rd.	266	373	394	48.1%	S. of Crow Rd.	420	513	538	28.1%
S. of Crow Rd.	241	398	352	46.1%	N. of Spieth Rd.	477	511	555	16.4%
N. of S.R. 18	221	489	461	11.4%	S. of Spieth Rd.	654	570	*	** -12.8%
<b>RICHMAN RD. T.H. 69</b>					N. of S.R. 18	708	*	831	17.4%
S. of Jones Rd.	172	*	220	27.9%	S. of S.R. 18	927	*	957	3.2%
N. of Smith Rd.	129	294	131	1.6%	N. of Stone Rd.	744	809	860	15.6%
<b>BRYENTON RD. C.H. 34</b>					S. of Stone Rd.	730	1011	907	24.3%
S. of S.R. 18	850	839	719	-15.4%	N. of Shank Rd.	691	*	917	32.7%
N. of Stone Rd.	710	778	852	20.0%	S. of Shank Rd.	629	*	759	20.7%
S. of Stone Rd.	752	842	851	13.2%	N. of Branch Rd.	561	919	748	33.3%
N. of Jones Rd.	690	489	408	-40.9%	S. of Branch Rd.	567	811	648	14.3%
S. of Jones Rd.	412	*	488	18.5%	N. of Smith Rd.	553	911	648	17.2%
N. of Smith Rd.	333	298	302	-9.3%	<b>ERHART RD C.H.3 / T.H. 3</b>				
<b>BEAT ROAD T.H. 106</b>					S. of Township Line	592	765	748	26.3%
S. of Spieth Rd.	115	170	190	65.2%	N. of Crow Rd.	619	619	773	24.9%
N. of S.R. 18	189	*	273	44.4%	S. of Crow Rd.	823	889	1132	37.6%
S. of S.R. 18	262	*	662	152.7%	N. of Spieth Rd.	988	1098	1112	12.6%
N. of Stone Rd.	382	411	520	36.1%	S. of Spieth Rd.	821	771	620	-24.5%
S. of Stone Rd.	279	272	270	-3.2%	N. of S.R. 18	817	*	931	14.0%
N. of Branch Rd.	223	231	227	1.8%	S. of S.R. 18	816	*	1009	23.7%
<b>CROWS NEST LANE</b>					At Stone Rd.	*	504	454	*** -10.1%
At Crow Rd.	*	218	262	***20.2%	N. of Branch Rd.	567	449	382	-32.6%
					S. of Branch Rd.	577	693	733	27.0%
					N. of Smith Rd.	561	696	694	23.7%

Source: Medina County Highway Engineer: 1998, 2002, 2004 Traffic Count Maps

\* Info. Not Available \*\* Percent Change 1998-2002 \*\*\* Percent Change 2002-2004

## **RAILROADS**

The Wheeling & Lake Erie Railroad traverses through the southern portion of Litchfield Township crossing at the Avon Lake Road / Stone Road intersection, Beat Road / Stone Road intersection, and on Erhart Road at the Litchfield Township line. The CSX railroad runs just northeast of Litchfield in York Township. While rail lines represent some industrial development potential, they also constitute safety and traffic issues for the Township.

## **TRANSIT**

There are no regular bus routes through Litchfield Township, but Medina County Transit provides both public and specialized door-to-door local transportation service between any origin and destination within Medina County. The door-to-door service operates Monday through Friday between the hours of 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Reservations must be made at least 24 hours before you plan to travel and can be made up to 2 weeks in advance. The fare structure is based on a grid system dependent on the number of grids you pass through. All Medina County Public Transit vehicles are wheel chair accessible and designed to accommodate persons who use wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, canes, service animals, or other mobility aids.

## UTILITIES

### WATER

Water service in Litchfield Township is provided by the Rural Lorain County Water Authority (RLCWA). RLCWA purchases water from the City of Avon Lake and the Village of New London. The exception is a small portion of Spieth Road at the far east end of the Township and Erhart Road south of Spieth Road which is served by the Medina County Sanitary Engineer Water Authority (MCSE).

Water service is not currently available or planned for a segment of Stone Road just east of Avon Lake Road, a portion of Avon Lake Road south of Shank Road, and the far north and far south portions of Kennedy Road.

A pump station and water tower is located at 8141 Spieth Road located between Beat Road and the Township corporation line.

### SEWER

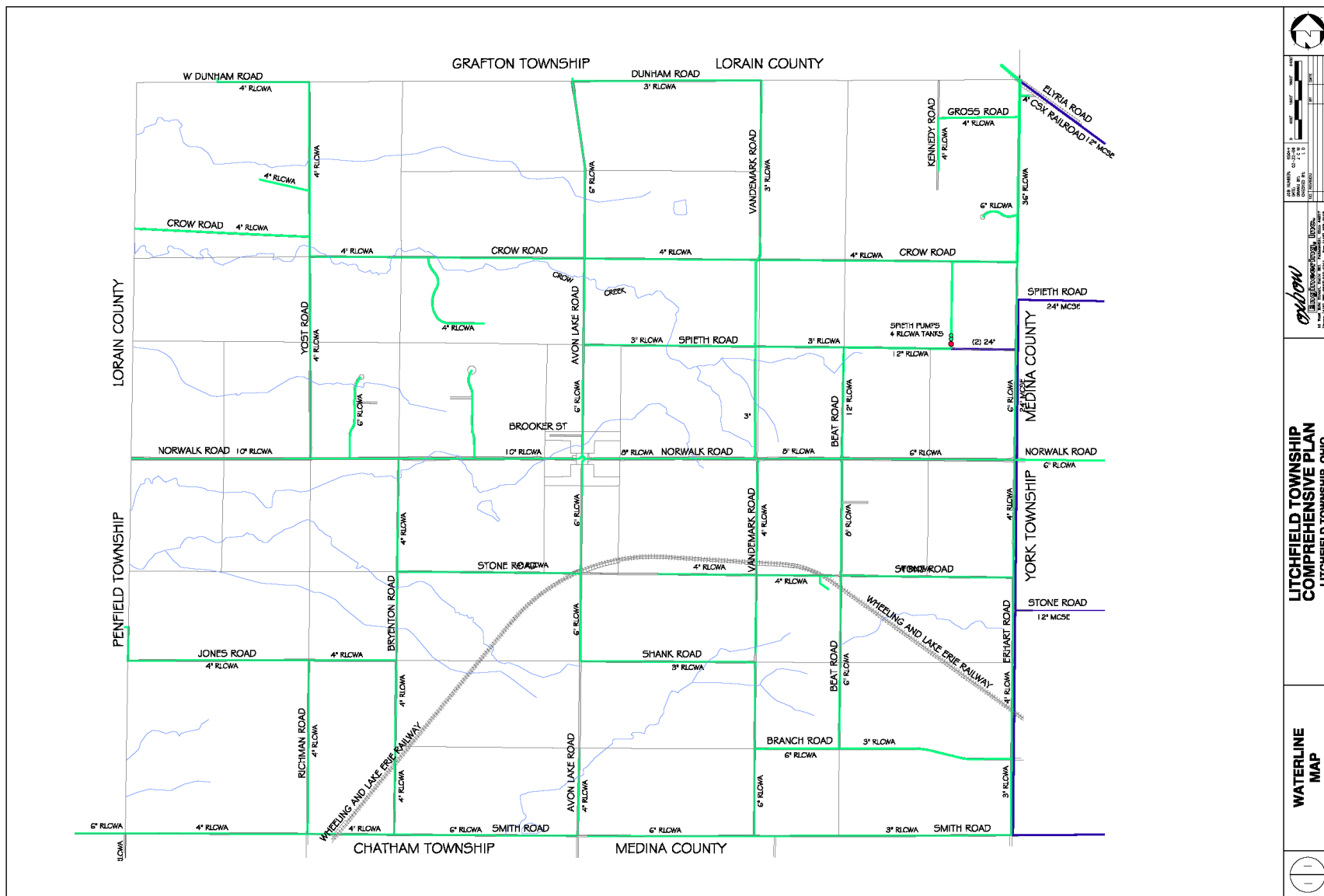
Sanitary sewer service is not available in Litchfield Township. At the present time, there are no plans to extend sanitary sewers into Litchfield.

On-site sewage disposal systems for residences are inspected and approved by the Medina County Health Department. Businesses requiring an on-site sewage disposal system must receive both Ohio EPA approval and Medina County Health Department approval.

The lack of public or central sanitary sewers serves as a limitation for certain types of development within the Township.

### TRANSMISSION LINES

A Sun petroleum pipeline is located in Litchfield Township. The pipeline runs west-east just north of Spieth Road and continues running parallel along the entire length of the Township. Electric transmission lines run diagonally across the northeast quadrant of the Township.

LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## **ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

Litchfield Township contains slightly rolling land that is cut by several stream channels with adjacent steep slopes. The Crow Creek is located in the northwest quadrant of the Township.

### **DRAINAGE**

Litchfield Township is divided into two main drainage basins: the Black River Basin and the Rocky River Basin. The larger of the two drainage basins is the Black River Basin, which encompasses approximately 2/3 of the Township. It is located in the western portion of the Township, beginning just west of Beat Road. The Rocky River Basin is located in the eastern portion of the Township. The Rocky River Basin does not contain flood plains.

### **FLOOD PLAINS**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps indicate that there are several areas in the extreme western edge of the Township adjacent to Lorain County which have been designated as Zone A 100-Year Flood Plains.

### **SOILS**

There are two Soil Associations found in Litchfield Township. Soil Associations are a landscape that has distinctive pattern of soils normally consisting of one or more major soils and at least one minor soil. The Soil Associations give the general characteristics of the soils. Soil Associations are useful to identify the location of large tracts of land that are suitable for farming or other land uses.

The Mahoning-Ellsworth Association is located throughout the majority of the Township. The topography in this association is nearly level to sloping, except for steeper slopes along the sides of stream valleys. This soil association is well-suited for farm crops with the major limitations for agricultural uses including wetness and the hazard of erosion in sloping areas that are cultivated. The most commonly used artificial drainage systems include tile and surface drains.

The second soil association is the Ellsworth-Mahoning Association. This association is located in the southeast corner of the Township. The topography in the Ellsworth-Mahoning Association is nearly level to moderately steep land. The soil is mostly moderately well-drained with some poorly drained soils.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities include those buildings and open spaces which provide educational, recreational, and governmental services to the residents of Litchfield Township.

### SCHOOLS

The Buckeye Local School District serves Litchfield Township, York Township, Liverpool Township and a portion of the City of Medina. The Buckeye School Complex which includes the high school, middle school, York Elementary, and Liverpool Elementary is located on Columbia Road in York Township, east of Litchfield. The Litchfield Township Elementary School recently relocated to the Buckeye School Complex on Columbia Road. The Litchfield teachers and students are still together, placed in the vacant classrooms at the School Complex. The future of the existing elementary school on Brooker Road just north of the town center which was built in 1979 is not known.

Ohio Law calls for each school district to receive a performance accountability rating based on 23 performance standards. These 23 standards are minimum performance goals for public education in Ohio based on statewide assessments, graduation rates, and attendance. Results are reviewed yearly and given in the District Report Card produced by the Ohio Department of Education. The Buckeye Local School District had an effective rating and met 20 of the state standards in the 2004-2005 Local Report Card. The 2004-2005 school year had an average daily enrollment of 2,266 students with an average attendance rate of 95.8%. Data regarding the annual spending per pupil in the District was not submitted to the Ohio Department of Education for the past few years. The most recent data is for the 2000-2001 school year which reports that the Buckeye Local School District had an annual spending per pupil at a level of \$7,412 as compared to similar districts at \$6,734 and the state average of \$7,057.

Litchfield Township is also part of the Medina County Career Center which is located on Norwalk Road in the City of Medina. The Career Center offers non-degree courses for adults from basic education to a wide variety of vocational classes.

### PARKS / RECREATION

Litchfield Township currently has a one-acre park located in the geographic center of the Township at the intersections of Norwalk Road and Avon Lake Road. The “town center” serves as a passive park facility. A gazebo is located there.

The Buckeye Board of Education owns and maintains a playground at the Litchfield Elementary School on Brooker Street.

The Buckeye Trail, which travels through Litchfield Township in a predominantly west to east direction, is open to all hikers and horseback riders free of charge. Through Litchfield the trail only follows rural, relatively flat roads. The route starts at the southern end of the Township on Richmond Road, heads north to Jones Road and turns east on Jones Road to Bryenton Road.



The trail then travels north on Bryenton Road to Stone Road, turns east on Stone Road to Vandemark Road, travels north on Vandemark Road to Spieth Road, and east on Spieth to the Township line. The statewide Buckeye Trail Association, a volunteer, not-profit organization maintains the Buckeye Trail. The Buckeye Trail is marked by 2"x6" light blue blazes on telephone poles, approximately 6-feet from the ground.

The Medina County Park District does not have any facilities located in Litchfield Township, but the Medina County Rail Trail is located just east of Litchfield in York Township. Letha House Park, a short drive from Litchfield Township, is located in Chatham Township on Richmond Road just north of Spencer Lake Road. The Buckeye Trail runs through both of these Medina County Parks.

The Board of Township Trustees owns and maintains a 1.7-acre parcel of land located just south of the Township Service Garage on Beat Road. The Soccer Association runs the soccer program at the four soccer fields.

#### **COUNTY SHERIFF**

Litchfield Township contracts with the Medina County Sheriff's Department for police protection. The four deputies rotate patrol in Litchfield. The Township owns and maintains its own patrol car and equipment, which is housed at the County Sheriff's Office in Medina.

#### **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The Litchfield Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department provides fire and emergency rescue service to the Township. The Fire Department is located at the southeast corner of Litchfield Circle adjacent to Township Hall. The Township also participates in the county wide mutual aid agreement and has separate agreements with Wellington, Grafton, and LaGrange.

There have been recent discussions of plans for a new fire station and the existing fire station to be converted to Township administrative offices or a community center.

#### **SERVICE GARAGE**

The Litchfield Township Service Garage situated on approximately 2-acres is located just south of the intersection of Norwalk Road and Beat Road. The Service Department is responsible for the maintenance, repairing, striping, snow removal, and ditch cleaning along township roads. There are approximately 17.5 miles of township roads in Litchfield Township.

## **CEMETERIES**

There are two cemeteries located in Litchfield Township. The Litchfield Center Cemetery is located on the north side of Norwalk Road, just east of the town center. The Crow Corners Cemetery is located southwest of the intersection of Crow Road and Yost Road. The Township is responsible for the operation and maintenance of these cemeteries.

## **POST OFFICE**

The Litchfield Township Post Office is located at the northeast corner of the town center.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

To achieve the goals expressed above, this Plan includes the following implementation strategies to guide future growth and development in the Township.

### **ESTABLISH DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDELINES TO PRESERVE OPEN SPACE WITH SCENIC VISTAS WHICH FACILITATE A SENSE OF OPENNESS AND RURAL CHARACTER**

The Zoning Resolution should be amended to incorporate provisions specifically designed and intended to protect and preserve open spaces and scenic vistas, to protect significant natural and environmentally sensitive areas, and to encourage and require features which are consistent with the Township's established rural character.

This recommendation achieves the Goal number 1 (Preserve Rural Character).

### **MAINTAIN 3-ACRE MINIMUM LOT SIZE**

In order to achieve goal numbers 1 and 2, the Township should retain the current residential zoning requirements of 3-acre minimum lot size with 200 feet of frontage. By maintaining the large lot size, Litchfield will protect and preserve its rural character and will control density throughout the Township. While it is recognized that residential development will continue and that natural areas and resources will be affected by that development, the residents of Litchfield should expect high quality developments. Litchfield will continue to be a low-density residential community with predominantly single-family dwellings.

This recommendation achieves the Goal number 1 (Preserve Rural Character) and Goal number 2 (Control Population Density).

### **ELIMINATE REAR LOT DEVELOPMENTS**

The current Zoning Resolution permits the creation of rear lot developments in the R Residential zoning district. Rear lot developments permit the property owner the opportunity to subdivide land without the dedication and improvement of road rights-of-way. Permitting rear lots encourages more and faster development because the cost of development is less than constructing roadway improvements with sublots. Rear lot development is not consistent with Goal number 1 of preserving the rural character of Litchfield. It promotes a larger number of driveways on the same street and doubles the number of units along a stretch of roadway. Rear lot development changes the appearance and character of the Township by making Litchfield less rural and agricultural. By amending the Zoning Resolution to eliminate rear lot development, the Township would slow growth and development and protect property values by limiting the number of low cost lots. In order to minimize impacts on current property owners, it is recommended that rear lot development not be eliminated until a suitable alternative technique for the development of back lands has been adopted.

This recommendation achieves Goal number 1 (Protect Rural Character), Goal number 2 (Control Population Density), and Goal number 3 (Protect Natural Resources).

## **CONSIDER USE OF ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT TECHNIQUES**

An examination of the R Residential District zoning regulations was performed. This zoning classification intends to promote the continuation of the predominantly rural residential character of Litchfield while accommodating residential development at low density. Significant stretches along primary roadways are being developed with building lots consistent with the standard 3-acre lots with 200-foot of frontage provisions of the R Residential District. While the overall density control of one dwelling unit per three acres is achieved, the image for travelers along these routes is an endless row of driveways and mailboxes. The resulting visual impression and lasting image is more large-lot suburban / semi-rural development than a rural and agricultural community. The unique characteristics that make an area desirable are lost as open space and natural features are eliminated and replaced with rows, or double rows, of houses.

To truly maintain the rural character, it is necessary to preserve significant amounts of open space and to maintain natural and rural views presently encountered when traveling on roads throughout the Township. Preservation of open spaces and natural views can best be accomplished by encouraging the use of conservation development techniques.

Conservation development provides flexibility in the layout of residential subdivisions and the potential for the preservation of selected areas within those subdivisions. Preserved areas may be set aside for private or public parks, for open spaces, for buffer areas, for wildlife habitat, or for farming. Certain properties are especially attractive for conservation development including wetlands, wooded areas, active farms, watercourses, open spaces and locations which may be desirable for public recreation. The conservation development tool could be added in the R Residential District.

The Township should explore conservation development and other development control techniques and tools, which could provide effective alternatives to rear lot development and the traditional 3-acre lot subdivision and would result in a land use pattern more consistent with the stated goals of this plan. The education of conservation development to the Board of Township Trustees, Zoning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, employers, and residents is recommended. Additional information about what conservation development is, why it is important, and how it should be utilized in Litchfield Township should be provided.

By amending the Zoning Resolution to include development techniques specifically tailored to conserve open spaces and scenic vistas, Goal number 1 (Preserve Rural Character), Goal number 2 (Control Population Density), and Goal number 3 (Protect Natural Resources) are implemented.

## **LIMIT EXTENSION OF SANITARY SEWERS**

Since it is intended that Litchfield Township remain rural and agricultural in nature and that future residential development be at very low densities, it is recommended that central sanitary sewer service not be provided within the Township. Extension of sanitary sewers throughout the Township would not be cost effective, compatible with the proposed development and land use

patterns, or consistent with reducing development pressures on prime agricultural lands. The Township's utility extension policy should be consistent with its long-range land use planning and development policies.

It is the recommendation of this Plan that that Township adopt a policy requiring use of individual on-site waste disposal systems and opposing the creation or extension of central collection systems and/or public and private wastewater treatment plants.

Limiting the extension of sanitary sewers will help to achieve Goal number 1 (Preserve Rural Character) and the Goal number 2 (Control Population Density).

#### **ESTABLISH RIPARIAN CORRIDOR PROTECTION PROVISIONS ALONG THE MAJOR STREAM CORRIDORS**

Riparian setbacks control land use activities and new development within certain distances of streams. Setting development back from streams maintains the ability of riparian areas to control flooding, limit stream bank erosion, protect habitat, purify groundwater, and reduce water pollution. Riparian setbacks would protect structures and reduce property damage and threats to watershed residents while contributing to the scenic beauty and rural character of the Township.

The riparian setbacks depend on the characteristics of the stream including flood plain areas, wetlands, topography, stream size, soil type, and land use. Limits should be placed on soil-disturbing activities around the major stream courses including Crow Creek in the Township. The Zoning Resolution should be amended to include riparian setbacks from the major stream courses in Litchfield.

The adoption of riparian corridor regulations achieves Goal number 3 (Protect Natural Resources).

#### **ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS**

A review of the transportation system was conducted for Litchfield Township. Several roadway improvement projects are very important to the long-range development of Litchfield. The Township should work cooperatively with the Medina County Highway Department and ODOT to achieve this recommendation.

The intersection of Vandemark Road and Crow Road has difficult turning movements. An intersection improvement is recommended for this area to eliminate the angles at which the roads meet.

The Crow Road / Yost Road intersection has poor sight distance. Vertical re-alignment or a traffic control device could solve the safety issues at this intersection.

Litchfield Township has several railroad crossings without any crossing gates. It is a recommendation of this Plan that the Township adopt a policy pursuing the installation of safety gates at all railroad crossing. Litchfield should work with the Railroad Commission to achieve this recommendation.

Vandemark Road at the Norwalk Road intersection is not aligned. An alignment improvement is recommended as a safety enhancement.

The roadway improvements support Goal number 4 (Ensure Safe Movement).

### **INTERIOR ROADWAY DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

It is anticipated that the majority of new development will occur in subdivisions of new streets platted in the interiors of existing blocks. As development occurs, it is essential that attention be given to ensuring adequate public access into the interior of these blocks, especially for safety and service vehicles. The Township should investigate requiring property owners or developers to loop streets through in order to create alternate routes rather than traveling on the main routes in Litchfield. The Township should work cooperatively with the Medina County Highway Department and ODOT.

The roadway improvements support Goal number 4 (Ensure Safe Movement).

### **IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AT LITCHFIELD CIRCLE**

Residents and pedestrians have a hard time crossing State Route 18 to utilize the one-acre park at Litchfield Circle. The Township should look into locating clearly marked crosswalks that are placed in a convenient and highly pedestrian traveled location in order to encourage residents to use the park. Traffic calming devices would be helpful to slow traffic down, enhance pedestrian visibility, and provide safe access throughout Litchfield Circle. The Township should work with the Ohio Department of Transportation to achieve this recommendation.

This recommendation achieves Goal number 4 (Ensure Safe Movement) and Goal number 6 (Enhance Litchfield Circle).

### **PERMIT AND REGULATE HOME BASED BUSINESSES**

The survey indicates that the majority of Township residents believe that businesses run out of residences do not cause problems for neighbors, but home-based businesses should be carefully regulated. The Township should continue to permit home based businesses. The nature of the business and the type of use should be carefully examined so that it does not cause problems for adjacent properties. Home based businesses in Litchfield should be carefully regulated in order to protect adjacent neighbors from noise, truck traffic and deliveries, and exterior appearance.

Permitting and regulating home based businesses supports Goal number 5 (Future Commercial Business).

## **ZONING ENFORCEMENT**

New residential, commercial, industrial, or recreational developments, additions, and/or structures should be reviewed to ensure their compatibility and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Resolution, and Zoning Map. In order to protect property rights, the enforcement of the Zoning Resolution should be consistent, fair, and equally enforced for every individual and property in Litchfield Township.

Zoning enforcement achieves Goal Number 1 (Preserve Rural Character), Goal Number 2 (Control Population Density), Goal Number 3 (Protect Natural Resources), Goal Number 5 (Future Commercial Business), Goal Number 6 (Enhance Litchfield Circle), Goal Number 7 (Provide Locations for Industry), and Goal Number 8 (Health and Safety).

## **AMEND AND UPDATE ZONING RESOLUTION**

A review of the Zoning Resolution and Zoning Map was conducted for Litchfield Township. The review identifies areas where the current development regulations could be or should be improved in the interest of protecting the established residential neighborhoods of the Township, ensuring that development is of good quality, and ensuring that Township officials have available the basic regulatory tools in use in other Townships around the state. We have only highlighted several examples for change.

The Zoning Resolution currently permits “nursing and convalescent homes” as a conditionally permitted use in the R Residential District. The Zoning Resolution should be updated to include assisted living and independent living as a conditionally permitted use. This amendment would provide more opportunities for seniors to remain in Litchfield. An assisted living arrangement with some common facilities was the only zoning change for seniors receiving a positive rating in the survey. This recommendation achieves Goal number 2 (Control Population Density).

The Township should examine the list of conditionally permitted uses in the R District. Currently, health care uses including doctor’s offices, clinics, and hospitals are conditionally permitted uses. These uses are better suited to be located in a commercial district than in a residential neighborhood. By amending the list of conditionally permitted uses in the R District, Goal number 1 (Preserve Rural Character) and Goal number 5 (Future Commercial Business) are achieved.

The number of parking spaces for specific land uses need to be amended. A number of the listed uses have a very high parking standard, which contributes to more impervious area and less landscaped open space. Floor area is a better basis for industrial/ commercial parking requirements since the number of employees is so variable. The opportunity for landbanked parking spaces should be added. An applicant may submit information which indicates that their parking demand is less than required by the Zoning Resolution. This would permit the applicant to construct less parking spaces which leaves the other spaces in landscaped green space until such time it needs to be constructed. Amendment of the parking regulations achieves Goal number 4 (Transportation) and Goal number 3 (Protect Natural Resources).

### **AESTHETIC IMPROVEMENTS OF LITCHFIELD CIRCLE**

The creation of a sense of place and announcing arrival at the town center (Litchfield Circle) will contribute to general wayfinding, community identity, and community pride. Special attention should be given along SR 18 and SR 83 as you enter Litchfield Circle. Aesthetic improvements at these major entries would enhance the perception of Litchfield and allow visitors to know they have arrived. Attractive signs, landscaping with streetside trees, street lighting, and quality fencing would make a statement.

The Township should consider investment in some sort of announcement at the entry. The Township will have to secure funding for plantings and maintenance. The Township should pursue sponsors to help alleviate the cost. Public donations could be contributed by civic organizations, local businesses and industries. Litchfield should encourage support and maintenance from civic organizations including church and neighborhood groups. These groups could adopt street trees and planting islands and assist with care of the landscaped areas once installed. It would be helpful to establish a regular planting program of trees and flowers and solicit neighborhood participation, school participation, and other volunteer organizations.

Improving the aesthetics of Litchfield Circle supports Goal number 6 (Enhance Litchfield Circle).

### **MAINTAIN THE CHARACTER OF LITCHFIELD CIRCLE**

It is important that the Township regulate the land use and create development standards for new structures and for changes in existing uses or structures at Litchfield Circle. Maintenance of the elements which create and sustain the impression of a town center should be encouraged and future development should be required to meet the character and flavor of Litchfield Circle. The Township should examine the possibility of creating a new zoning district for Litchfield Circle. The new zoning district would provide the Township with more ability to determine the future of the Circle. The district could provide more flexible zoning and design guidelines and site design in order to promote harmony and integration with existing developments and protect adjoining properties from adverse impacts. The regulations should promote safe and efficient pedestrian access and protect historic resources. The regulations should include such elements like architectural features and characters of existing buildings as well as traditional colors, proportion and scale.

This recommendation achieves Goal number 6 (Enhance Litchfield Circle).

### **LOCATE APPROPRIATE AREAS FOR INDUSTRIAL USES**

It is suggested that the existing industrial zoning pattern, extending along both side of the railroad tracks be re-evaluated. Several of the parcels included in the industrial zoning classification are zoned in such a manner that the industrially zoned portion of the parcels do not have frontage on a public right-of-way. Split zoning of properties in this fashion is a very poor,



ineffective, and problematic zoning technique that should be abandoned. The properties currently zoned for industrial uses would be rezoned for more appropriate land uses, consistent with the land use plan and with the current use of the properties. Some industrial base is appropriate for the Township. Viable and appropriate properties for industrial uses need to be established. It is recommended that land be set aside for industrial use as shown on the Land Use Map.

This recommendation achieves Goal number 7 (Provide Locations for Industry).

#### **ESTABLISH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

Performance standards should be established for uses located in commercial and industrial districts which could create dangerous, injurious, noxious, or otherwise objectionable element or condition which may adversely affect the surrounding area or adjoining properties. Acceptable measures and safeguards to limit dangerous and objectionable elements could include noise, fire hazards, vibration, smoke, glare, erosion and other similar elements.

The establishment of performance standards achieves Goal number 5 (Future Retail Business) and Goal number 7 (Provide Locations for Industry).

#### **STRIVE TO IMPLEMENT ALL HAZARD AND FLOOD MITIGATION PLAN**

The key purposes of the All Hazard and Flood Mitigation Plan were to identify the possible risks and hazards that may affect Litchfield through a systematic hazard identification and risk assessment process, to determine areas within the Township that are vulnerable to various types of hazards, to strategize about the best approaches to avoid and mitigate impacts, and to prioritize loss reduction and emergency preparedness activities.

Litchfield should continue to work with Medina County to strive to achieve the nine mitigation goals and objectives as outlined below:

- A. *To reduce loss of life and personal injury from natural hazards.* Update the existing warning system, which utilizes cable television and weather alert radios in public buildings and places of assembly by adding sirens.
- B. *To reduce damages to existing development from natural hazards.* Utilize current engineering standards to alleviate existing flooding problems in Litchfield by improvement of drainage capabilities. The adoption of riparian setback requirements will minimize damage from developing too close to bodies of water.
- C. *To reduce damages to future development from natural hazards.* Utilize and develop local zoning and engineering standards for new development that would make it less vulnerable to natural hazards with assistance from Medina County Planning Services. The adoption of riparian setback requirements will minimize damage from developing too close to bodies of water.

- D. To reduce damages to present and future development financed by public funds.* Public roads and infrastructure will be located outside the floodplain, above the floodplain, or designed to reduce the effects of flooding on the infrastructure.
- E. To reduce public expense for emergency and recovery services following disasters.* Development within the flood prone areas will be discouraged through use of appropriate planning and land use zoning to reduce or eliminate emergency response and recovery expenses assumed by the Community.
- F. To protect and enhance the long term economic prosperity.* Involvement of the private sector, and public-at-large in the hazard mitigation planning process is needed to protect short and long-term economic interests.
- G. To protect the natural environment as a mitigation measure.* Provide protection for existing streams, natural wetlands, and riparian corridors through use of land use planning and local zoning techniques. The adoption of riparian setback requirements is recommended.
- H. To reduce vulnerability of existing development.* Encourage utilization of NFIP, enforcement of local zoning, and seek federal and state/local grants to buy out those repetitive loss properties.
- I. To reduce vulnerability of new development.* Preventing and regulating the new construction in flood prone areas and enforcement of building code regulations.

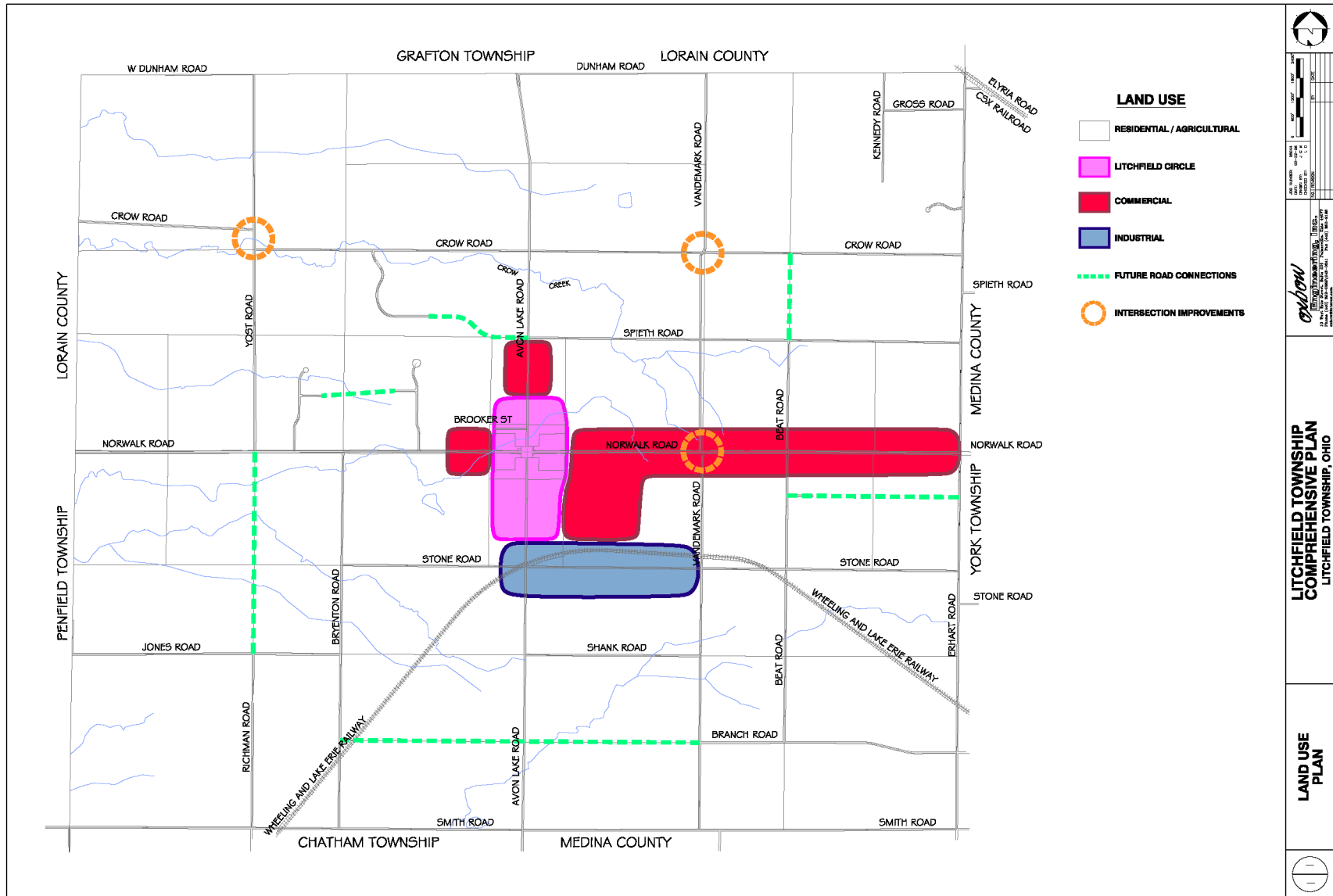
This recommendation achieves Goal number 8 (Health and Safety).

#### **MAINTAIN EXISTING COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

Based upon the planned limitation on future population growth, the identified levels of use of existing facilities, and the lack of desire and support for major recreation improvements reflected in the survey results, it was determined that existing community recreational facilities are adequate to meet the projected needs of the Township in the future and no additional facilities are recommended or planned. Given the small percentage of residents who would be likely to take advantage of expanded recreational facilities, it was determined that the Township's available resources would be more appropriately allocated to other community services and facilities.

This recommendation meets Goal number 8 (Health and Safety).

LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES**

The future of Litchfield Township described in the Comprehensive Plan will only be made a reality if action is taken by the Litchfield Township Trustees, Zoning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, and by the residents of Litchfield Township. The key implementation strategies outlined in this Section are:

- Plan Adoption
- Zoning Resolution Amendments
- Zoning Map Amendments
- Transportation
- Land Use and Utility Extension Policies
- Community Facilities

### **PLAN ADOPTION**

Priority should be given to the adoption of this Plan by the Township Trustees as the official guide for the future preservation and development of Litchfield Township.

### **ZONING RESOLUTION AMENDMENTS**

It will be the task of the Zoning Commission and Township Trustees to initiate amendments to the Zoning Resolution. The amendment process at both the Zoning Commission and Trustees level should include public notice and public hearings as required by the Ohio Revised Code.

- Amend the Zoning Resolution to include regulations to protect and preserve open spaces, scenic vistas, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Explore the opportunity to develop land using conservation development techniques.
- Establish riparian corridor protection provisions along the major stream corridors in Litchfield.
- Eliminate rear lot development in order to control density and preserve open space.
- Update list of conditionally permitted uses in R District.
- Evaluate creation of a more distinct commercial district designed to implement the Plan while protecting established residential neighborhoods.
- Amend parking standards.
- Create a new zoning district for Litchfield Circle in order to maintain its character.
- Establish performance standards for commercial and industrial districts.

### **ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS**

It will be the task of the Zoning Commission and Township Trustees to initiate amendments to the Zoning Resolution. The amendment process at both the Zoning Commission and Trustees level should include public notice and public hearings as required by the Ohio Revised Code.

The Plan implies that several areas be considered for rezoning to other districts.

- Re-evaluate industrial zoning extending along the railroad tracks.
- Create viable and appropriate areas for local business and limited industrial development consistent with the Plan.
- Rezone commercial districts as indicated on the Plan map.
- Add riparian setbacks to the Zoning Map.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

This plan includes several recommended improvements which will require Township initiative in coordinating with the Medina County Highway Engineer and the Ohio Department of Development.

- Improvement of the intersection of Vandemark Road and Crow Road to eliminate the angles at which the roads meet.
- Improvement of the Crow Road / Yost Road intersection to improve sight distance.
- Work cooperatively with the Railroad Commission to create a policy for the installation of safety crossing gates at each railroad crossing.
- Alignment improvement of the Vandemark Road / Norwalk Road intersection.
- Create interior roadway development policy to require the connection of streets to create alternate routes.
- Explore traffic calming devices for Litchfield Circle.

## **LAND USE AND UTILITY EXTENSION POLICIES**

- Create a policy that requires on-site individual waste disposal systems and does not encourage creation and extension of central collection systems and/or public and private treatment plants.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

- Strive to maintain high level of services provided by the Litchfield Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department, Medina County Sheriff, Service Department, and other Township Officials.
- Maintain existing community recreational facilities.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP SURVEY FALL 2005**

**LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
P.O. BOX 178  
LITCHFIELD, OHIO 44253**

TRUSTEE  
**Dennis Horvath**  
4389 Vandemark  
Litchfield 44253  
330/667-3106

TRUSTEE  
**Robert Kastner**  
8086 Stone Rd.  
Medina 44256  
330/725-1238

TRUSTEE  
**John Molnar**  
8336 Norwalk Rd.  
Litchfield 44253  
330/722-1821

CLERK  
**Pam Shaw**  
2885 Vandemark  
Litchfield 44253  
330/722-7068

October 28, 2005

**RE: LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY SURVEY**

Dear Citizens of Litchfield Township:

Litchfield Township is planning for its future. The Township was awarded a grant from Medina County Board of Commissioners to provide land use planning assistance. A Comprehensive Plan Committee appointed by the Township Trustees has started working with Oxbow Engineering, a planning consultant, in order to prepare a Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to serve as a guide for decision making for both day-to-day issues and long-range policies. Properly used the Comprehensive Plan can help the Township to use resources in the most effective and efficient manner and also ensure that all of the various players involved in building and shaping Litchfield Township are working together toward common goals resulting in a viable and strong community.

The Litchfield Township Comprehensive Plan Committee developed this survey in order to determine the desires and needs of the Township's residents. The results of this survey will be formulated into goals and recommendations for action as part of the Plan.

The enclosed survey has been sent to all households in Litchfield Township to gain insight into issues facing the Township. We encourage you to take the time to respond because we value your opinion. Without your returned survey, your opinions cannot be counted. Please note that you need not put your name on the survey and individual responses will be treated confidentially. A postage paid return envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

**Please mail your response by Tuesday, November 15, 2005.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Stan Sieniawski, Chairman  
Litchfield Township Comprehensive Plan Committee  
Enclosure: Litchfield Township Survey

# LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP SURVEY

## FALL 2005

Please read the following statements and provide the response that best describes your opinion. If there is an item or items that you do not wish to answer, simply leave that item or items blank.

1. How long have you lived in Litchfield Township? \_\_\_\_\_ years
2. What is your age?  
☐ 65+      ☐ 55 – 64      ☐ 35 – 54      ☐ < 35
3. In which quadrant of Litchfield Township do you reside?  
☐ Northeast   ☐ Northwest   ☐ Southeast   ☐ Southwest
4. If you moved to Litchfield within the past 10 years, what were the main reasons that attracted you to the Township?
5. Please check a grade to rate each of the following services in Litchfield Township.

### SERVICE

### GRADE

Police Protection	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> F
Fire and Emergency Services	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> F
Road Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> F
Snow Plowing	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> F
Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> F
Zoning Regulations	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> F

6. In your opinion, are there sufficient housing opportunities for senior citizens in Litchfield Township?  
☐ Yes      ☐ No
7. Would you support a zoning change to create a special zoning district to permit construction of a limited amount of new housing designed for seniors if it included the following features:
 

A smaller minimum house size (currently 1200 square feet)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
A smaller minimum lot size (currently 3 acres)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Clustering of homes with no change in overall density (i.e. maintain one unit per 3 acres average)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
An assisted living arrangement with some common facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8. In which community do you most frequently do your shopping?
9. Would you like to see additional retail businesses and services located in the Township to more conveniently meet the daily needs of Litchfield residents?  
☐ Yes      ☐ No



10. In your opinion, should the Township encourage development of business and industry in designated locations?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
11. In your opinion, are there sufficient housing options to permit young families just getting started to remain in Litchfield Township?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
12. Would you support a zoning change to create a new zoning district intended to provide some starter housing for young families if it included the following features:
- |   |                              |                             |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| A smaller minimum house size (currently 1200 square feet) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| A smaller minimum lot size (currently 3 acres)            | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Condominium style ownership                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Clustering of dwellings                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
13. The Township currently has a minimum lot size of 3 acres for a single-family home. Do you think that size is:  
☐ too large  
☐ about the right size  
☐ too small
14. Do you or your family participate in any organized recreational activities? ☐ Yes ☐ No
15. If the Township built new recreational facilities, how likely would you or your family use them?  
☐ very likely  
☐ some what likely  
☐ not likely
16. In your opinion, do businesses run out of residences cause problems for neighbors? ☐ Yes ☐ No
17. Should the Township have zoning regulations that carefully regulate business activities in residential areas?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
18. At the present time, almost all of the Township's real estate tax revenues come from non-business sources. In your opinion, can the Township provide adequate services to the residents with taxes collected primarily from residences? ☐ Yes ☐ No
19. In the future, would you support a change to shift some of the tax burden from residences to non-residential uses?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
20. What is the biggest problem or concern on your road or in your neighborhood?

**Please mail your response by Tuesday, November 15, 2005 to:**

**Oxbow Engineering, Inc.  
10 W. Erie Street, Suite 201  
Painesville, Ohio 44077**

**LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS REPORT – DECEMBER 2005**

# **LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP MEDINA COUNTY, OHIO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS**

**DECEMBER 2005**

REPORT PREPARED BY:  
OXBOW ENGINEERING, INC.  
10 W. ERIE STREET, SUITE 201  
PAINESVILLE, OHIO 44077  
PH: 440/352-9222  
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## TOWNSHIP SURVEY

In the fall of 2005, the Comprehensive Plan Committee mailed a survey to all households and businesses in Litchfield Township in order to determine the desires and needs of the Township's residents and to gain insight into issues facing Litchfield. The results of the survey will be formulated into goals and recommendations for action as part of the Comprehensive Plan. Below is an analysis of the responses.

Approximately 52% of the surveys were filled out, which is an excellent rate of return. Residents of Litchfield Township were asked to identify the quadrant they reside in: Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, or Southwest. This is important because the four quadrants are equally represented and the results of the survey are from all portions of the Township and not one neighborhood or road. The survey responses are not skewed and they accurately reflect the entire population. The average length of time respondents of the survey have lived in Litchfield Township is 20 years. The maximum length of time a respondent has resided in Litchfield is 80 years while the shortest length of time is 2 weeks.

Quadrant of Litchfield Township		
	Number	Percent
Northeast	125	22.1%
Northwest	147	25.9%
Southeast	149	26.3%
Southwest	146	25.7%

Age of Survey Respondents		
Age	Number	Percent
< 35	40	6.8%
35 - 54	319	53.8%
55 - 64	136	22.9%
65 +	98	16.5%

Four age categories were created for the survey. Age 65 and over is important because these tend to be the seniors living on fixed incomes and have special needs including housing, emergency services, and health care. The second age category is the 55-64 who will be in the "senior" category during the life of the Comprehensive Plan. It is important to review the category of people less than 35 years of age because they are the young families just starting out and they might have varying views of housing needs and desires. The age category with the largest response rate to the survey is the residents between the ages of 35-54 with 53.8% which is also the largest group of residents in the entire Litchfield Township. The category least represented was the less than 35 years of age. By comparing the age classification breakdown of the survey respondents with the age classification breakdown of the entire population, the distribution of the survey is consistent and reflects the distribution of the population as a whole.

## GRADES OF SERVICES IN LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP

The survey provided a section where residents could rate the services in Litchfield Township. The services included police protection, fire and emergency services, road maintenance, snow plowing, recreation, and zoning regulations. In general, services were given a passing grade with the majority of the responses listing A, B, or C for each service.

## FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

According to the survey, fire and emergency services received the highest rating of the Township services. Approximately 53.3% of the residents rated fire and emergency services as an A while 36.2% of the residents rated fire and emergency services as a B. Several residents indicated their concern about the location and distribution of fire hydrants on certain roads in the Township.

Fire and Emergency Services		
Grade	Number	Percent
A	295	53.3%
B	201	36.2%
C	53	9.5%
D	3	0.5%
F	3	0.5%

## POLICE PROTECTION

Police Protection		
Grade	Number	Percent
A	169	30.8%
B	244	44.5%
C	113	20.6%
D	18	3.3%
F	4	0.8%

95.9% of the residents rated police protection as an A, B, or C as indicated by the survey. The majority of the residents scored police protection as a B with 44.5% of the residents. Overall, the respondents indicated that they are pleased with the County Sheriff. The biggest concern expressed with regard to police is traffic control in regard to speeding, particularly the semi-trucks.

## ROAD MAINTENANCE / SNOW PLOWING

The Committee was interested in comparing the residents' opinions of road maintenance and snow plowing dependent on what classification of road they live on. The Township Service Department is only responsible for the maintenance and snow plowing of Township Highways. Medina County is responsible for the county roads while the Ohio Department of Transportation is responsible for State Route 18 (Norwalk Road) and State Route 83 (Avon Lake Road). Roads were divided into two categories: Township Highways and County Highways / State Routes.

Road maintenance on Township Highways, County Highways, and State Routes was rated as very similar with 93.5% of the residents residing on Township roads rating road maintenance as an A, B, or C and 93.8% of the residents residing on County roads or State Routes rating road maintenance as an A, B, or C. Residents residing on County Highways or State Routes gave road maintenance a slightly higher grade of an A than residents living on Township roads. A few respondents indicated the lack of ditch maintenance and mowing resulting in overgrown brush in right-of ways which increases visibility issues.

Road Maintenance Resides on Township Highway		
Grade	Number	Percent
A	67	24.1%
B	127	45.7%
C	66	23.7%
D	13	4.7%
F	5	1.8%

Road Maintenance Resides on County Highway or State Route		
Grade	Number	Percent
A	80	27.2%
B	128	43.5%
C	68	23.1%
D	13	4.4%
F	5	1.7%

88% of the residents residing on Township Highways rated snow plowing as an A, B, or C while 90.8% of the residents on County Highways or State Routes rated snow plowing as an A, B, or C. Similar to road maintenance, residents residing on County Highways or State Routes gave snow plowing a slightly higher grade of an A than residents living on Township roads. Issues regarding snow plowing indicated by respondents include the knocking down of mailboxes and snow removal on weekends and holidays when children are not in school.

<b>Snow Plowing Resides on Township Highway</b>		
Grade	Number	Percent
A	73	26.4%
B	109	39.5%
C	61	22.1%
D	22	8.0%
F	11	4.0%

<b>Snow Plowing Resides on County Highway or State Route</b>		
Grade	Number	Percent
A	95	32.3%
B	110	37.4%
C	62	21.1%
D	17	5.8%
F	10	3.4%

## ZONING REGULATIONS

Approximately 75.4% of the residents of Litchfield Township gave zoning regulations a passing grade while 24.6% gave zoning regulations a failing score. Several residents questioned if the survey was referring to the actual Zoning Resolution or the enforcement of the Zoning Resolution. The results of the survey indicate that the Township could improve on their Zoning Resolution.

<b>Zoning Regulations</b>		
Grade	Number	Percent
A	84	16.0%
B	155	29.5%
C	157	29.9%
D	76	14.5%
F	53	10.1%

<b>Rated Zoning Regulations as a D or F</b>	
Quadrant	Percent
NE	20.5%
NW	25.0%
SE	30.7%
SW	21.0%

By further breaking down the zoning regulation responses, the survey indicates that approximately 31% of the respondents who reside in the southeast quadrant of the Township gave zoning regulations a failing grade. While failing grades were given in all quadrants of Litchfield, the southeast quadrant seems to have the most frequent grades of a D or F.

Many residents indicated that there enforcement of the Zoning Resolution is lacking, particularly regarding junk cars, unlicensed vehicles, outbuildings, and property maintenance. Others stated that the enforcement of the Zoning Resolution is inconsistent and that the rules are not equally enforced for everyone. A couple of respondents expressed concerns that the Zoning Resolution is too restrictive and people should be able to do what they want with their land. Several residents indicated their desire to eliminate rear lot developments and flag lots. They are concerned with the driveways leading to the rear lots.

The Committee was interested in finding out whether businesses run out of residences cause problems for neighbors. Based upon the survey, approximately 70.0% of the respondents indicated that home-based businesses do not cause problems for neighbors, while 30% believe

**Should the Township Have Zoning Regulations that Carefully Regulate Business Activities In Residential Areas?**

	Number	Percent
Yes	406	70.4%
No	171	29.6%

that home-based businesses cause problems and concerns. Many residents stated that it depends on the type and nature of the business or use as to whether it causes or could cause problems. Identified concerns include noise, truck traffic and deliveries, and the exterior appearance of the business. Yet, approximately 70.4% believe that the Township should carefully regulate business activities in residential areas.

## RECREATION

<b>Recreation</b>		
Grade	Number	Percent
A	40	8.0%
B	77	15.4%
C	160	32.1%
D	136	27.3%
F	86	17.2%

According to the survey, recreation received the lowest rating of Township Services. Approximately 45% of the residents gave recreation a failing score with 27.3% rating recreation as a D and 17.2% rating recreation as an F.

The Survey Committee wanted to receive a better understanding of the recreational participation rates in the Township. At the current time, approximately 41.5% of the respondents participate in organized recreational activities and 58.5% do not participate in organized recreational activities. The survey asked if the Township built new recreational facilities, how likely the resident or his/her family would be to use them. The results of the survey indicate that approximately 29.5% would be very likely to use new Township recreational facilities, 35.7% are somewhat likely, and 34.8% are not likely to use new Township recreational facilities.

<b>Currently Participates in Organized Recreation Use of Future Township Recreational Facilities</b>		
	Number	Percent
Very Likely	120	50.4%
Some What Likely	74	31.1%
Not Likely	44	18.5%

<b>Currently Does Not Participate in Organized Recreation Use of Future Township Recreational Facilities</b>		
	Number	Percent
Very Likely	51	15.0%
Some What Likely	131	38.5%
Not Likely	158	46.5%

By further breaking down the recreational responses, the survey indicates that 50.4% of the respondents who currently participate in organized recreation are very likely to use future Township recreational facilities, while only 15.0% of the respondents who currently do not participate in organized recreation are very likely to use future Township recreational facilities. According to the survey, 46.5% of the residents

who currently do not participate in organized recreation are not likely to participate in Township offered organized recreation in the future.

Based upon the results of the survey, the Township needs to question whether it makes sense to create recreational opportunities / facilities. It is not the lack of Township recreational facilities that is keeping people from participating, it is the fact that they just do not participate. It appears that because such a small percentage of the population would be willing to take advantage of the recreational facilities, that the money spent to create such a facility is not warranted.

## SENIOR HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

The Survey Committee wanted to better understand the resident's perceptions on whether there are sufficient housing opportunities for seniors in Litchfield. The responses indicate that the Township is split on this issue. 49.3% of the respondents believe that there are sufficient housing opportunities for seniors while 50.7% believe that there are not sufficient housing opportunities for seniors in Litchfield. Several respondents indicated that Litchfield is not "senior-friendly" because of the lack of medical services including doctor offices and clinics, shopping, and public transportation. Other surveys identified that it would be in the Township's best interest to provide opportunities for older adults so they can remain in the community and would not have to move out of Litchfield as they age.

The responses regarding sufficient housing opportunities for seniors were further broken down to provide a better understanding of the views of persons over the age of 65. Approximately 40.4% of the senior population believes that Litchfield has sufficient housing opportunities for seniors while 59.6% do not feel that there is adequate senior housing in the Township. This indicates that Litchfield's senior population has a slightly different view of senior housing opportunities than the population as a whole.

<b>Population Age 65 + Housing Opportunities for Seniors</b>	
	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	40.4%
No	59.6%

In order to examine the perceptions of adults who will be "seniors" in the near future, the housing opportunities for seniors was further broken down. The adults between the ages of 55 – 64 indicated that 51.6% believe that there are sufficient housing opportunities for seniors while 48.3% believe that there are not sufficient housing opportunities for seniors in the Township. It seems that this age group feels that there is adequate housing for seniors.

The residents were asked if they would support a zoning change to create a special zoning district to permit construction of a limited amount of new housing designed for seniors. There were four zoning changes to review including creating a smaller minimum house size than the current 1200 square feet, creating a smaller minimum lot size than the current 3-acres, clustering of homes but maintaining the overall density of one unit per 3-acres, and the creation of an assisted living arrangement with some common facilities.

<b>ZONING CHANGE</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Smaller Minimum House Size	35.5%	64.5%
Smaller Minimum Lot Size	22.4%	77.6%
Clustering of Homes with No Change in Overall Density	33.0%	67.0%
Assisted Living Arrangement with Some Common Facilities	50.2%	49.8%

The results of the survey indicate that while 50.7% of the respondents feel that there are not sufficient housing opportunities in Litchfield, overall the residents would not support a zoning change to create a special zoning district to permit senior housing construction. Only 35.5% of the respondents are in favor of a smaller minimum house size, 22.4% of the respondents are in favor of a smaller minimum lot size, and 33.0% are in favor of a cluster development. An assisted living facility was the only zoning change for seniors receiving a positive rating. Yet, this rating is just over half, with 50.2% supporting it.



## OTHER HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

The survey indicates that 76.7% of the respondents believe that there are sufficient housing opportunities for young families just getting started to remain in Litchfield Township while 23.3% do not feel that there are adequate housing opportunities for young families.

The responses regarding sufficient housing opportunities for young families were further broken down to provide a better understanding of the views of persons less than 35 years of age. Approximately 80% of the younger population believes that Litchfield has sufficient housing options to permit young families while 20% of the younger population does not feel that there is adequate housing in the Township. This indicates that Litchfield's population less than 35 years of age is more confident than the population as a whole that the Township has adequate starter housing for young families.

<b>Zoning Change</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Smaller Minimum House Size	20.1%	79.9%
Smaller Minimum Lot Size	15.8%	84.2%
Condominium Style Ownership	15.6%	84.4%
Clustering of Dwellings	14.7%	85.3%

The residents were asked to decide to support or not support four zoning options in order to create additional housing opportunities in Litchfield. The zoning amendments included a smaller minimum house size than the current 1200 square, a

smaller minimum lot size than the current 3-acres, condominium style ownership, and clustering of dwellings. The responses indicate that there is little support for a zoning change to create a new zoning district intended to provide some starter housing for young families. The zoning change receiving the most support was to decrease the minimum house size, with only 20% in favor.

## LOT SIZE

The Township currently has a minimum lot size of 3 acres for a single-family home. Approximately 75.1% of the respondents indicated that 3-acres is about the right size. The survey indicates that there are approximately the same number of respondents who would like to increase the 3-acre minimum lot size and those who would like to decrease the 3-acre minimum lot size. Based upon the responses, it is not recommended to increase or decrease the minimum lot size for a single-family residence.

<b>3-Acre Minimum Lot Size</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Too Large	56	9.4%
About the Right Size	446	75.1%
Too Small	92	15.5%

<b>Comparison of Residency and Lot Size</b>	
3-Acre Minimum Lot Size	Average
Too Large	28 years
The Right Size	19 years
Too Small	16 years

A comparison was made between the number of years the respondent has lived in Litchfield and his or her opinion of the minimum 3-acre lot size. The survey indicates that the length of residency has an impact on the views of the minimum 3-acre lot size. The residents who have lived in the Township longer

believe that the 3-acre lot size is too large while the new residents would like to see the 3-acre lot size increased. Several comments provided by respondents indicated that new residents are

moving into the Township and want to change the community and make it a Strongsville or a Brunswick. Others stated that new residents want to make Litchfield something other than a rural community. From the survey, it appears that the new residents want to maintain the larger lots and keep Litchfield rural.

The survey indicates that the main reason that residents were attracted to Litchfield was the rural character of the community. The most frequently given reasons indicate that country living, the large 3-acre lots, open spaces, and farmland are very important to the residents of the Township. Other responses include less congestion, little development, availability of land, and the price of land. Others indicated their desire to move to Litchfield was due to its close proximity to large cities and places of employment. Several respondents stated “Keep Litchfield Rural”, “Do Not Change Litchfield”, and “Keep Litchfield As It Is”. These statements coincide with the survey results to maintain the 3-acre minimum lot size and not to make any zoning changes to permit senior housing or other housing opportunities for young families.

## RETAIL

The Survey Committee was interested in finding out in which communities the residents of Litchfield frequently do their shopping. The survey indicates that the majority of the shopping is in Medina. Other communities commonly frequented include Wellington, Elyria, Wooster, and Grafton. There were three responses that indicated that they shop at the Litchfield Circle.

The results of the survey indicate that the Township is split between liking to see additional retail businesses and services located in the Township to more conveniently meet the daily needs of the residents and not liking to see additional businesses. There is a slightly higher percentage against additional retail businesses and services locating in Litchfield.

<b>Would You Like to See Additional Retail Businesses &amp; Services To More Conveniently Meet Daily Needs?</b>		
	Number	Percent
Yes	290	49.2%
No	300	50.8%

The respondents interested in seeing retail locate in the Township, indicated the desire to have a small grocery store, a bank, and a drug store locate at Litchfield Circle. Several residents were concerned that Litchfield does not have

a large enough population to warrant retail establishments in the Township. Others made it clear that the residents of Litchfield would have to patronize these establishments to keep them in business.

## TAX BASE

It is important for the Township to examine its tax base in order to have a balanced tax structure and sound economic base. A key factor for ensuring the long-term economic viability and fiscal stability of the Township is the tax distribution. Business and industrial uses have the potential to generate significant property tax revenues and tend to place less demand on local public services and facilities than residential uses. The tax revenues generated by industrial or business uses could assist the Township in controlling the tax burden for the residents.

**Would You Like to Encourage Development of Business & Industry in Designated Locations?**

	Number	Percent
Yes	313	54.1%
No	266	45.9%

Approximately 54% of the population would like the Township to encourage the development of business and industry in designated locations in Litchfield.

The majority of the residents who would like to see additional retail business and services located in the Township would also like to encourage the development of business and industry, while the majority of the respondents against new retail business and services also would not like to encourage business and industry development. Overall, it appears that the opinions of retail and business development are consistent.

At the present time, the majority of the land uses in Litchfield are residential homes and agricultural uses. There are very few commercial and industrial businesses. The residents were

**Can the Township Provide Adequate Services to the Residents with Taxes Collected Primarily From Residences?**

	Number	Percent
Yes	354	63.7%
No	202	36.3%

asked to determine if they feel that the Township can provide adequate services to the residents with the taxes collected primarily from residences since that makes up the largest category of uses in Litchfield. Approximately 64% believe that the taxes currently collected from residences provide adequate services.

**Would You Support a Change To Shift Some of the Tax Burden From Residences to Non-Residential Uses?**

	Number	Percent
Yes	340	67.3%
No	165	32.7%

Approximately 67% of the survey respondents stated that they would support a change to shift some of the tax burden from residences to non-residential uses. It is important to note

that approximately the same percentage of the respondents indicated that the current tax structure is sufficient as those respondents supporting a shift of the tax burden.

Of the 36.3% of the respondents who do not feel that the Township can provide adequate services to the residents with the taxes collected primarily from residences, approximately 90% are in favor of a change to shift some of the tax burden from residences to non-residential uses. Approximately 91% of the respondents who do not feel that the Township can provide adequate services and are in favor of a tax shift also would like to encourage the development of business and industry in Litchfield.

Approximately 89% of the respondents who do not want to encourage business in Litchfield, believe that the Township can provide adequate services to the residents with taxes collected primarily from residences. Of the respondents who do not want to encourage business and feel that the taxes collected from residences provide adequate services, approximately 56% are not in favor of supporting a change to shift some of the tax burden from residences to non-residential uses.

The survey responses indicate that 1/3 of the respondents feel that it would be worthwhile to encourage business and industry in order to shift some of the tax burden from residences to non-residential uses because they think it does not make sense to fund all of the township services with the taxes collected from the residents.

### **OTHER IDENTIFIED CONCERNS**

Based upon the question “What is the biggest problem or concern on your road or in your neighborhood?”, below is an outline of the most commonly identified land use concerns, issues, and opinions:

- Keep Litchfield as it is – no changes
- Keep rural
- Save farmland
- Zoning enforcement
- No cluster development
- No more development: commercial or housing
- Yard maintenance and the upkeep of residences / businesses
- Appearance of Litchfield Circle
- Eliminate rear lots
- Ditch maintenance: drainage, mowing, and litter control
- Location and frequency of fire hydrants
- ATVs, dirt bikes, snow mobiles on roads and private property

Several of the issues and concerns raised are not land use planning issues and will not be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The opinions and comments of the respondents are important and should be brought up to the Board of Township Trustees. They include the following:

- Trucks use of jake break
- Traffic / Truck traffic
- Speeding
- Speed limit signs not posted
- Noise

**LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
ZONING MAP**

LITCHFIELD TOWNSHIP  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

