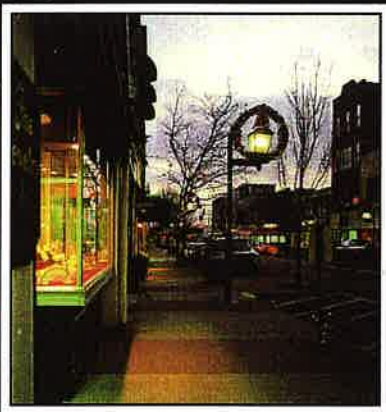
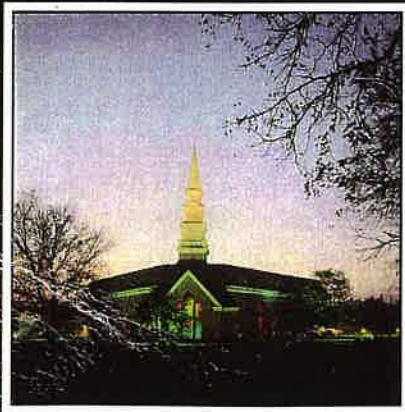
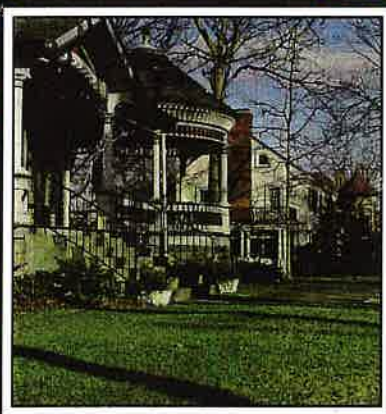


# KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FOCUS 2100 ADVANCED...

MARCH  
1998





**Focus 2100 Advanced...**

# **KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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**THE MOUNT VERNON/KNOX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

THE PREPARATION OF THIS PLAN WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM:

**KNOX COUNTY AND ITS MUNICIPALITIES AND TOWNSHIPS**  
**KNOX COMMUNITY HOSPITAL**  
**MOUNT VERNON NAZARENE COLLEGE**  
**KNOX COUNTY PARK DISTRICT**  
**MOUNT VERNON COMMUNITY TRUST**

PLANNING CONSULTANT:

**POGGEMEYER DESIGN GROUP, INC.**

**MARCH, 1998**

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## CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

This Plan represents a new vision for the Knox County of tomorrow. It is the product of the best efforts of more than 100 people who served on task forces and donated their time and expertise at many meetings over a 12-month period. The many people who participated in this Plan and gave freely of their time, did so out of concern for the future. They participated in a planning process with the belief that the development of a logical and well thought-out community plan will shape the future in meaningful ways. The development of this Plan was also grounded in the belief that often there is one chance to make wise community development decisions. There is also a belief that Knox County may be at a decisive point in its history, with critical decisions on the horizon. Consequently, the goals defined in this Plan are set high, reflecting the positive attitudes of Knox County residents, and recommended actions go beyond more common remedial solutions and weak initiatives.

No one who participated in the development of this Plan believes that all initiatives and recommendations contained herein will move forward unaffected by emerging trends or unforeseen circumstances. However, as the future unfolds, it is expected that this Plan will represent a fundamental statement of community vision and will be updated regularly. The significance of this vision is reflected in the considerable effort placed on public participation and consensus building throughout the planning process.



## PURPOSES OF THE KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Four fundamental purposes underlying the need to prepare a comprehensive plan for Knox County were identified early in the planning process. These four purposes were:

- **To Develop a Plan That Will Help Direct Future Development and Redevelopment in a Way That Will Enhance the Physical, Social, and Economic Environment of Knox County.** Knox County is determined to make choices and decisions that will direct development and redevelopment in a way that will enhance the physical, social, and economic environment, rather than detract from it. Communities are in a constant state of change. Either they move forward with positive community-building choices, or they fall behind those communities who recognize the importance and excitement of self-determination. The direction of this change will be the product of choices made by residents and local leaders. These choices will include active choices to take some type of action or passive choices that may involve choosing not to act on problems or opportunities.
- **To Serve as the Beginning of an Ongoing Planning Process That Defines a Long-term Community Vision.** Ongoing planning efforts should also maintain the perspective of building a community with a long-term vision. The completion of this Plan is not expected to be the conclusion of planning efforts. Rather, it is recognized that community planning is a process that



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- **To View the Completion of this Comprehensive Plan as the Beginning of Dedicated Implementation Efforts.** This Plan represents an effort to build a consensus among community leaders so that proactive initiatives can move forward with broad support. A lack of commitment to ongoing community planning often results in planning documents that are not meaningful. Most commonly, this happens in a community that lacks a sense of self-determination and embraces a perspective of being dependent upon outside forces. Knox County is not such a community; and this Plan is viewed as a means to an end, not an end in itself.
- **To Define Both County-wide and Local Planning Perspectives.** The preparation of this Plan is grounded in the belief that there are two relevant planning perspectives. First, there is the perspective that certain development issues are legitimately County-wide and require a response from the County level. Second, other issues are almost entirely local with little County-wide significance. Concerns such as major roadway corridors, aquifer protection areas, and connections between park facilities are County-wide matters that involve multiple local governments. Issues such as local road improvements and delivery of local services are largely local matters with little County-wide impact. This plan strives to distinguish between these two perspectives and is focused primarily toward addressing County-level matters and issues.

## ROOTS OF THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Community planning is actually a process. Ideally, it is an ongoing process kept current with continual effort. In Knox County, several planning efforts have preceded this comprehensive plan. Some of these plans are transportation-specific and are described later. Two other prior planning efforts are County-wide and comprehensive and include the 1974 Knox County Comprehensive Plan and Focus 2100. These are described below:

### 1974 Comprehensive Plan

In 1974, a comprehensive plan was prepared for Knox County. That planning document, like many produced during this time, was funded with a federal grant and contained a substantial amount of information on the physical, social, and economic characteristics of Knox County. Unlike many plans produced during that time however, the population projections developed proved to be reasonably accurate. Additionally, as will be noted elsewhere in this Plan, some development concepts expressed nearly 25 years ago are still quite relevant today. These concepts will surface in several areas throughout this Plan.

### Focus 2100

More recently, in January 1996, the Knox County/Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce sponsored a bold initiative called Focus 2100. The connection between Focus 2100 and the development of this Plan is so significant that it was decided that the title of this Plan should express the advancement of the Focus 2100 process.

Focus 2100 was a one-day conference open to all residents of Knox County. It was designed to create an environment where open and creative group discussion could lead toward the development of shared visions for the future of Knox County. More than 100 people attended this conference. The conference results form a significant basis for this Plan.

Participants in Focus 2100 selected one of six groups and engaged in the identification of community strengths and areas of concern. At the group-level, goals were developed, ranked, and then reported to

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## CHAPTER 1

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Participants in Focus 2100 selected one of six groups and engaged in the identification of community strengths and areas of concern. At the group-level, goals were developed, ranked, and then reported to



all participants, who then voted on the top three community goals for Knox County. The six groups included:

- Land Use and Environment
- Transportation
- Economics (Industrial)
- Economics (Service)
- Culture and Society (Institutions)
- Culture and Society (Attractions)

At the conclusion of the conference, the top three identified community goals were:

- To develop a County-wide land use mission statement and plan to protect/preserve our rural and community character - to be updated every five years.
- To improve Knox County education to emphasize functional literacy, thinking skills, job entrance skills, and lifelong learning.
- To enhance, encourage, and promote economic development and quality of life. Transportation goals included commissioning an in-depth traffic flow study of Knox County roadways, winning County-wide and regional support for short and long-term plans for improvements that will provide efficient and effective traffic flow with connections to I-71 and I-70 and reduce travel time while traffic volumes increase.

### **Other Local Planning**

Besides prior County-wide planning efforts, the recent completion of an area planning study for College, Harrison and Monroe Townships, Kenyon College, and the Village of Gambier is important. This planning effort was completed in 1996 and is integrated into this Plan.

It should also be noted that during the preparation of this Plan, representatives from Hilliar Township and the Village of Centerburg initiated a local planning project focused toward this area of Knox County. Local planning such as this was encouraged by the leadership involved with the development of this Plan and coordinating efforts took place.

### **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

Building on the efforts of Focus 2100, the approach used to produce this Plan sought to maintain a high level of community participation throughout the planning process. It was an early and common view that the successful implementation of this Plan would depend largely on public acceptance and consensus built throughout the planning process. Consequently, the development of this Plan involved cultivating close working relationships with three appointed task forces organized around the subjects of land use,

*The approach developed to produce this plan sought to maintain a high level of community participation throughout the planning process.*

# INTRODUCTION

## CHAPTER 1

transportation/utilities, and quality of life. These task forces first met independently to gather relevant information, then met jointly to collaborate on the development of a draft plan. Once the draft plan was completed, more than 300 complete copies were distributed to municipal, county and townships officials, and other community leaders throughout Knox County. A summary of the draft plan was also printed in the Mount Vernon News on February 4, 1998. More than twenty-five pages of comments were received from many individuals between January 15, 1998 and February 16, 1998. Throughout the process, an overall steering committee (which included representatives from each task force) monitored overall progress of the plan development.

## WHAT HAVE WE GAINED NOW THAT THIS PLAN IS FINISHED?

One of the most difficult, but important questions to be asked following the completion of a major planning project is, what have we gained now that we are finished? Although this might be a difficult question, it deserves a simple and direct response. Reflecting on individual community planning sessions and the year-long process that led to the development of this Plan, the question can be answered in the following way:

- There is **a much better understanding of community growth pressures**. Current levels of growth and development have been documented. Growth projections from public and private sources have been obtained and discussed.
- There is **a consensus between City and County leaders that local planning needs to be reorganized and reinvented**. This step is necessary to ensure that innovative and creative local planning becomes an ongoing component of local government activity. It is also necessary in terms of assuring that key initiatives found in this Plan move forward.
- Focus 2100 and the development of this Plan have helped establish **an enriched atmosphere for community dialog on County-wide development issues**. This type of coordinated and collective County-wide focus had not previously existed.
- There is **greater community awareness of areas of groundwater resources in Knox County** and the need to be more sensitive to areas identified as having significant groundwater pollution potential.
- A major issue facing a growing Knox County is planning for new roads to redirect traffic flow. This Plan defines **proposed improvements (at a conceptual level) that are generally accepted as presenting minimal negative impacts while providing substantial improvement to area traffic flow**.
- Farmland and rural character preservation are an especially important land use issue in Knox County. Specifically, participants in this planning process have consistently voiced a strong desire to preserve the rural character of the County in the face of increasing growth pressure. This plan sets forth **initiatives to address this important local issue. Collectively, these initiatives have been called Knox Rural Design Initiatives (KRDI) and are described in Chapter 8**.
- Although Knox County's rural character provides considerable open space, **the comparative lack of outdoor recreation acreage was identified during the planning process. Now, specific goals and initiatives have been established to address this situation**.



- Because of the recent designation of the Kokosing River as a State Scenic River and because of this planning effort, greater attention has been directed toward the Kokosing and Mohican River Corridors. **Reinforcing a concept expressed in the 1974 Comprehensive Plan, both the Kokosing and Mohican River Corridors have emerged as major elements of a future open space system for Knox County.**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **CHAPTER 1**

## CHAPTER 2

# CHALLENGES

Change in Knox County has occurred relatively slowly throughout most of its history. In the 50-year period between 1940 and 1990, Knox County's population increased by nearly 16,500 people. In the future, however, growth is expected to be much more rapid. If current projections are accurate, it will take approximately half that time to add another 16,500 people to Knox County. It is also possible that these projections may be too conservative based on current levels of construction activity. Given this expected population growth, together with social, economic, and technological changes that the dawn of the next century will bring, Knox County is clearly entering an unprecedented period of change.

*In the past, it took approximately 50 years for Knox County to increase in population by 16,500 people. Current projections indicate that this amount of growth will occur in half the time.*

Recognizing that the Knox County community is at the threshold of a period of significant change, many challenges have become apparent during this planning process. These challenges are long-term and are expected to remain relevant years from now. Some of these challenges include the following:

### THE KNOX COUNTY COMMUNITY WILL BE CHALLENGED TO . . .

- Take the necessary steps to avoid being the next bad example of sprawl and uncontrolled development in central Ohio. Four current trends and circumstances will make this difficult. First, employment opportunities will move closer to Knox County from the Columbus urban area. Second, people will likely continue to regard a 30 to 40-minute commute to work as acceptable. Third, the general preference for a large rural lot in a country setting will likely remain strong. Fourth, Knox County will continue to be an attractive place to live with its high quality of life.
- Maintain its focus on the key planning principles defined in this Plan. These principles are aimed at accepting growth and expanding economic opportunities, while maintaining and enhancing a livable social and natural environment.
- Address more intensive and controversial growth issues in a positive way with long-term vision. Growth and development have historically occurred slowly, and related growth issues have been relatively non-controversial. It is expected that in the future, as development pressures intensify, public attitudes toward development will become more polarized, contentious, and controversial. Some evidence of this trend has already emerged.
- Maintain its cherished historic and cultural identity and rural atmosphere. The maintenance and enhancement of critical elements of local quality of life will require dedication and perseverance. Beyond initiatives expressed in this Plan, new efforts to enhance historic and cultural resources and preserve rural atmosphere should be continually developed and implemented to keep the community at the forefront of livability.

*"Some communities are going to be victims of change, they won't understand it, they won't adapt to it, and they will fail. Others will prosper, most likely those that understand that planning is a lot more than next week's zoning case"*

Former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.



# **CHALLENGES**

---

## **CHAPTER 2**

- Create and maintain an effective planning organization to carry out effective and meaningful community planning. In the past, community planning in Knox County (and in most other areas) has focused on current development proposals and immediate problems. The challenge is to remain focused on long-term planning with a periodic redefinition of this vision while addressing current issues.

## CHAPTER 3

# COMMUNITY SETTING

Considerable effort was placed on gathering pertinent information about Knox County as part of the development of this comprehensive plan. At the same time, there was an attempt to present only the most relevant information in this document to describe the community effectively. This general community information is organized according to the following areas:

- Historic Roots of Knox County.
- Knox County Communities and Background
- Natural Environment
- Population Characteristics
- Economic Characteristics
- Housing Characteristics
- Agricultural Characteristics
- Cultural Characteristics
- Existing Land Use
- Quality of Life Indicators
- Community Facilities
- Transportation Characteristics
- Regional Development

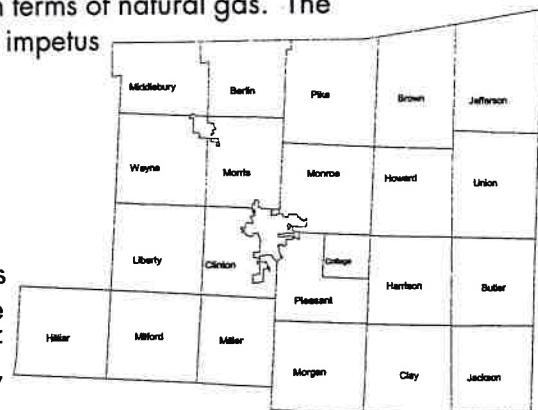
## HISTORIC ROOTS OF KNOX COUNTY

Originally, the area known as Knox County was home to many Native Americans, including the Adena Tribes who were its first farmers. The rich lands and rivers provided the Tribes with food, shelter, and agricultural land for more than 1,000 years. The area was also well known to fur trappers and pioneers who traversed the area in the mid- to late-1700's. The first settler on record in Knox County was Andrew Craig, who lived in a log cabin near the juncture of Center Run and Kokosing River "before 1801," according to County histories. The Knox County we know today was organized in 1808 and named after Henry Knox, a General in the American Revolution and the Secretary of War during George Washington's Administration.

Historically, agriculture has played a major role in the history of Knox County, and the rich farmlands still make agriculture the primary business in Knox County. The mineral resources of Knox County have also been an important factor in local development, especially in terms of natural gas. The "gas and glass boom" of the early 1900's became an early impetus for industrial development in the area.

## KNOX COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES AND BACKGROUND

Knox County is organized into several political subdivisions that include townships, villages, and a single city. There are 22 townships and seven villages (including the Village of Utica which is only partially in Knox County). The only city in Knox County is Mount Vernon, which is the County seat.



# COMMUNITY SETTING

## CHAPTER 3

Other incorporated municipalities include Martinsburg, Gambier, Centerburg, Utica (part), Danville, and Gann (Brinkhaven).

### Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon is located in central Knox County and is the Knox County seat. The City of Mount Vernon is a highly attractive community with a prominent colonial atmosphere. In recognition of its high quality of life, Mount Vernon was named an All-American City in 1965 by *Look Magazine* and the National Municipal League. In 1990, Mount Vernon was featured on the cover of *Ohio Magazine* and praised for its elegant charm, and later in 1994, was named Ohio's "Most Livable Community."

*Mount Vernon was named an All-American City in 1965 by Look Magazine and was named "Ohio's Most Livable Community" by Ohio Magazine in 1994"*

The first pioneer to view the site of what is now Mount Vernon was John Stilley who, as a captive of Native Americans, traversed Owl Creek (Kokosing River) from its mouth upward in June 1779. The original plat of Mount Vernon included a town square as a hub of commerce and community activity. In the center of the square is a monument erected in 1877 to honor the Knox County residents who died to preserve the Union.



The settlement of Mount Vernon, the County seat, was established in 1805 by Joseph Walker, Thomas B. Patterson, and Benjamin Butler. Mount Vernon was named after George Washington's homestead. Early inhabitants of this area were from Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

Major historical attributes of Mount Vernon today include the following:

- Daniel Decatur Emmett (born October 29, 1815), Mount Vernon's most famous son, was the author and composer of "Dixie," the beloved song of the south during the Civil War and one of the

nation's favorite songs. He also wrote the children's classic, "Old Dan Tucker."



- The Woodward Opera House (circa 1851) is located in downtown Mount Vernon and is one of the oldest opera houses in the United States. This opera house has close ties with Daniel Emmett, and it is considered the most historically significant pre-civil war theater in America.
- The residential area surrounding the town square contains impressive examples of nineteenth century architecture (e.g., Greek Revival, Italianate, High Victorian Gothic). To draw attention to these historic resources, a walking tour of Mount Vernon's historic East Gambier, East High, and North Main Districts was created by the Knox County Historical Society. Collectively, these areas are likely to be strong candidates for designation as an historic district (or districts) to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Several of these properties have become popular bed and breakfast inns.
- Mount Vernon's downtown area is very attractive with a number of family-owned businesses. Brick streets in the area date back to the town's origins. Like the surrounding residential area,



the downtown area of Mount Vernon has a strong historic flavor with many older and well-maintained buildings constructed many years ago.

- Mount Vernon was home to Johnny Appleseed (John Chapman), who is credited with planting apple trees throughout the region.

### **Centerburg**

Centerburg is located 14 miles to the southwest of Mount Vernon in the far southwest corner of Knox County. This Village was laid out by Stephen Sutton and Jacob Houck in 1830. As the name implies, the Village of Centerburg is situated in the geographical center of Ohio. The Centerburg Town Hall was built in 1896.



### **Danville**

Danville is located in the eastern portion of Knox County, 15 miles from Mount Vernon. The Village holds a unique place in the history of central Ohio. It evolved during a 100-year period, and its final form was a result of the merger of three distinct communities. The settlement was originally named Sapp's Settlement. Later, the Village was renamed after Daniel (Dan) Sapp, a distinguished veteran of The War of 1812, and an original settler of the area. Some notable elements of Danville's history include:

- Saint Luke Catholic Parish in Danville is the "second oldest congregation in Ohio." The Parish, founded in 1820, celebrated its 175th anniversary in 1995. The church cornerstone was laid on August 11, 1895.
- The railroad's arrival in the 1870's established this community as a service center in the area for agriculture, trade and commerce.
- Buckeye City and Rossville were established next to Danville during the late 19th century. In 1923, these Villages merged with Danville.

### **Fredericktown**

Located seven miles north of Mount Vernon, the Village was founded in 1807 by John Kerr, as a mill site, and named after Frederick, Maryland. This community is an important market center for agriculture and is credited for being the home of the original design of the Future Farmers of America jacket.

### **Gambier**

Located just four miles east of Mount Vernon, Gambier is home to one of America's most distinguished liberal arts colleges. Kenyon College was founded in June 1824 by Philander Chase, the first Episcopal Bishop of Ohio. Kenyon College includes 50 buildings with distinctive stone architecture and is the oldest private liberal arts college in Ohio. With a student body of approximately 1,500, Kenyon College has a very distinctive reputation for academic excellence.

### **Gann (Brinkhaven)**

Gann is a small village (approximately 200 people) located along the scenic Mohican River in the northeast portion of the County. Although "Gann" is the legal name for this Village, it is also locally known as Brinkhaven. Gann is a canoe stop along the Mohican River and is located in an especially scenic area of the County.

### Martinsburg

Martinsburg is a small village (with a population of approximately 200) that is located south of Danville in the south-central portion of Knox County. Martinsburg was founded in 1828 when the Villages of Williamsburg and Hanover combined. Recent growth in the area has included a number of Amish families.

### Utica

Only the northern part of Utica is located in Knox County, with the remainder located in Licking County to the south. Utica is well known in the area as the home of Velvet Ice Cream and the associated "Ye Olde Mill." The Mill was built in 1817. It has been restored as an 1800's ice cream parlor and contains the nation's only ice cream museum. Apart from being a tourist attraction, the local production of ice cream creates a demand for locally-produced dairy products.

### Apple Valley

Although technically an existing incorporated municipality, Apple Valley is a large recreational and residential community in east-central Knox County. However, with thousands of existing residents, ample available vacant lots and expected growth, Apple Valley has the potential to become incorporated as a municipality in the future.

## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Knox County is blessed with a beautiful rural landscape that includes gently rolling hills, river valleys, lakes, cultivated areas, pastures, and woodlots. The varied topography is largely the product of glaciation. The major river valleys include those that relate to the Kokosing River, Mohican River, and North Fork of the Licking River. Most of the County is farmland.



### General Topography

There is approximately 600 feet of elevation change in Knox County. The highest elevations in Knox County are found on the western side and the lowest are found on the eastern side. The highest point in the County is in Liberty Township and the lowest is found at the point where the Kokosing River leaves Knox County in northwest Butler Township. An illustration of general contour elevations is shown on **Map 1**.

The steepest slopes in Knox County are found toward the northeast parts of the County near the Mohican River. Other areas of steep slopes (greater than 15 percent) are shown on **Map 2**. Generally, slopes greater than 15 percent begin to present some limitations for urban development.

### Surface Water

According to the Soil Survey of Knox County, Ohio, prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service (November 1986), most of Knox County is drained by the Kokosing River, North Fork of the Licking River, Mohican River, and Wakatomika Creek. These waterways are part of the Muskingum River Watershed. A small part of western Knox County is drained by Big Walnut Creek, which is part of the Scioto River watershed. An illustration of surface water features is shown on **Map 3**.




**KNOX COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

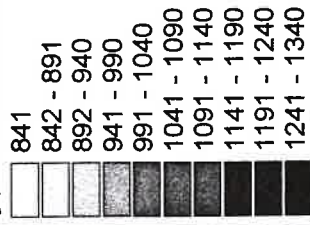
**Map 1**

**Contour Elevations  
at 50' Intervals**



 Township Boundaries

 Contour Elevations










# KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

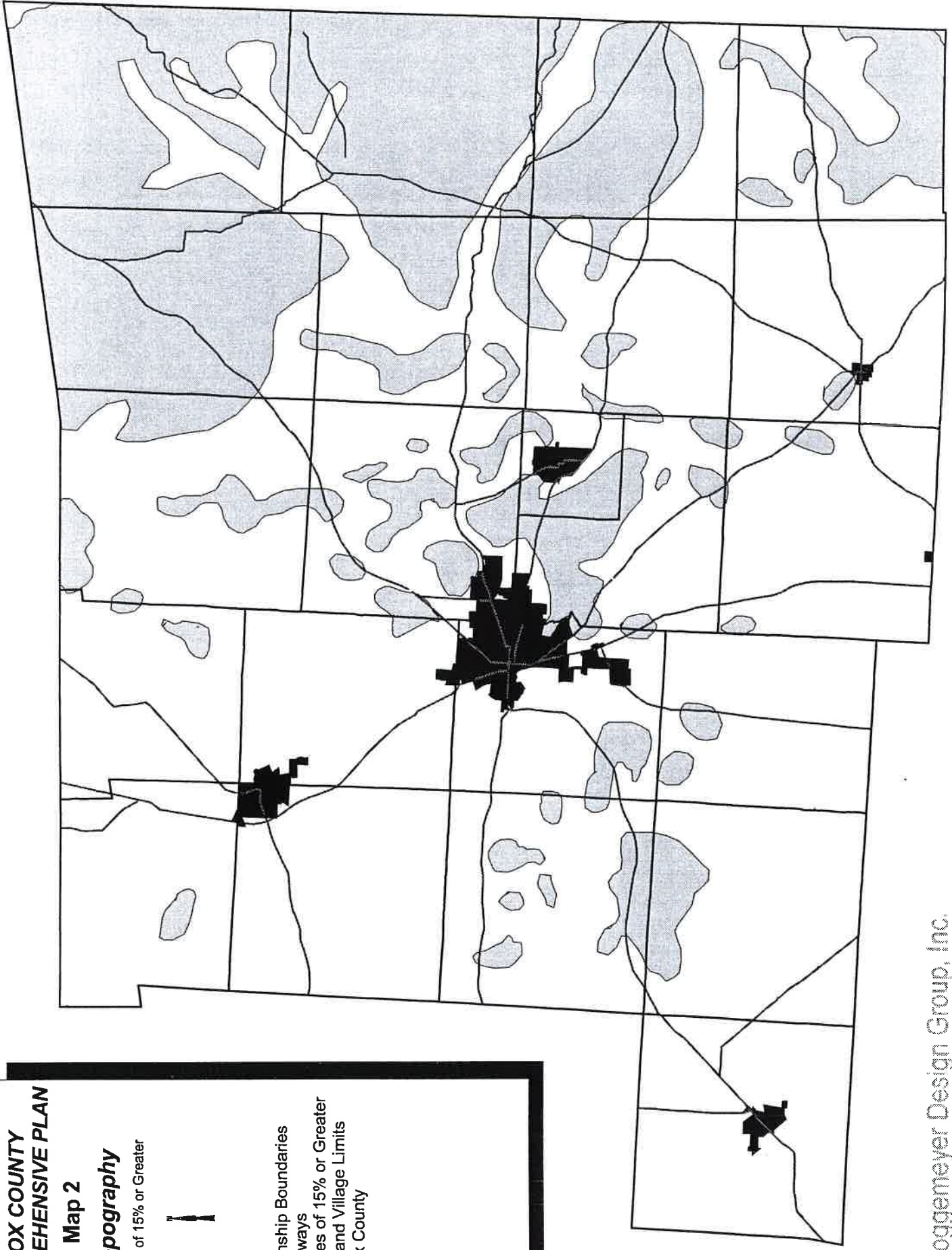
## Map 2

### Topography

Slopes of 15% or Greater



-  Township Boundaries
-  Highways
-  Slopes of 15% or Greater
-  City and Village Limits
-  Knox County



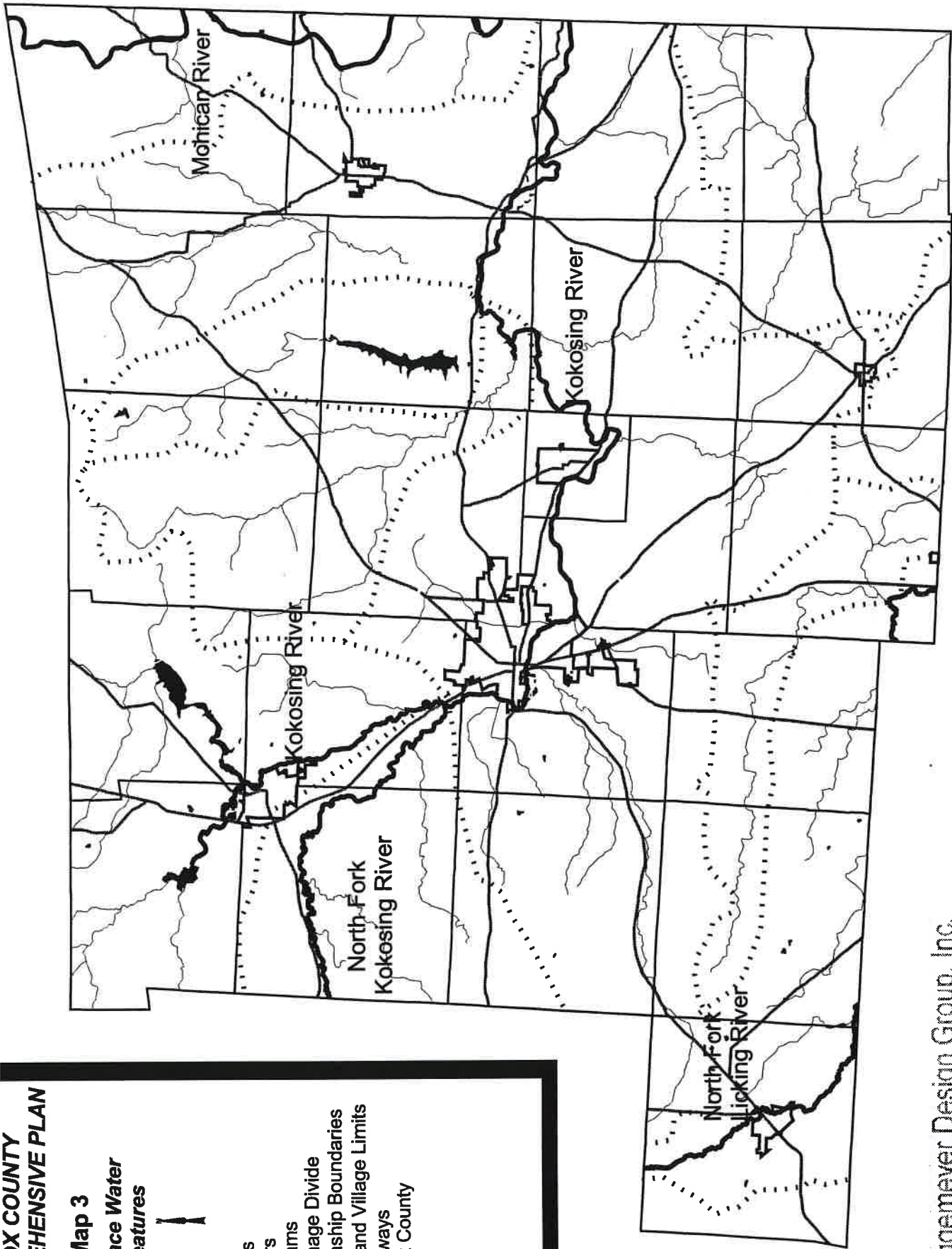
# KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Map 3

## Surface Water Features



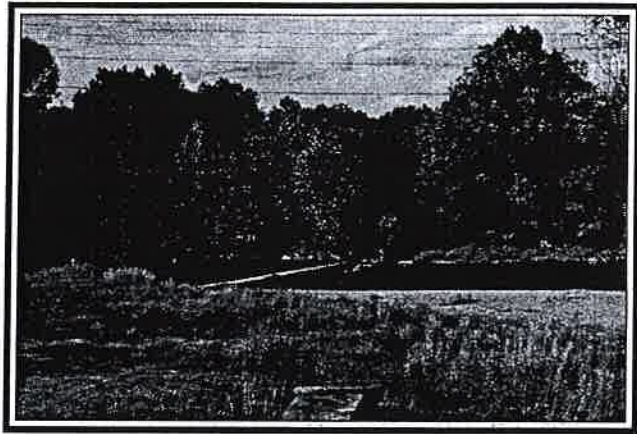
- Lakes
- Rivers
- Streams
- Drainage Divide
- Township Boundaries
- City and Village Limits
- Highways
- Knox County





### The Kokosing River

A dominant surface water feature in Knox County is the Kokosing River. In September of 1997, the Kokosing was designated as a Scenic River under the Ohio Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers Law. This designation took place after considerable local effort and the completion of the Kokosing River Study in September 1997. This study was prepared by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Natural Areas and Preserves. Its primary purpose was to determine whether the Kokosing River met the criteria for designation as a wild, scenic, or recreational river. Included in this study is an extensive biophysical description of the Kokosing River system. Among the many findings of this study are some considerations that are particularly relevant to this Plan. These include:



***The interaction between the surface water of Kokosing and the groundwater varies from location to location and can alter between a situation where stream flow is augmented by ground water to a state where groundwater is recharged by stream water.***

- Historically slow growth and the stable land use patterns of the past have benefited the river system and allowed it to maintain a high quality.

- There is a high degree of interaction between the surface water of the Kokosing River and subsurface groundwater. This interaction varies from surface water location to location and can alternate between a situation where stream flow is augmented by groundwater to a state where

groundwater is recharged by stream water. According to the Kokosing River Study, "it is imperative that land use decisions regarding groundwater recharge areas are made carefully with consideration to the pollution potential of the aquifer."

- Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) uses several techniques to evaluate the health of waterways in Ohio. According to the Index of Biological Integrity (IBI), the values for the Kokosing indicate stream water quality that rates among the best in Ohio. Calculated scores for the Kokosing range from 41 to 53, while typical ranges for Ohio streams range from 12 to 60.

***According to the Index of Biological Integrity (IBI), the values for Kokosing indicate stream water quality that rates among the top in Ohio.***

***The Kokosing River has some of the highest quality aquatic habitats in Ohio.***

In terms of aquatic habitat, the Kokosing River has some of the highest quality aquatic assemblages in Ohio. Segments of the River have been designated either exceptional warm water habitat or warm water habitat. Exceptional warm water habitats apply to waters that can support and maintain an exceptional or unusual community of warm water aquatic organisms comparable to the 75th percentile of sites statewide. Warm water habitats apply to waters that support and maintain a balanced, integrated, and adaptive community of warm water aquatic organisms with a specific species composition, diversity, and organization.

- Because of the designation of the Kokosing as a Scenic River, some regulatory mechanisms will provide some level of protection to this resource. Specifically, the protection afforded to the



Kokosing now that it is a Scenic River is primarily that proposed projects involving public funding will be reviewed by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Beyond regulatory considerations that exist by virtue of the Scenic River designation, the presence of the high water quality in the Kokosing River System will likely influence effluent limitation from wastewater treatment plants. New anti-degradation regulations adopted by the OEPA are likely to have an impact on the operation of wastewater treatment plants. This will be addressed later in this Chapter under the subject of community facilities.

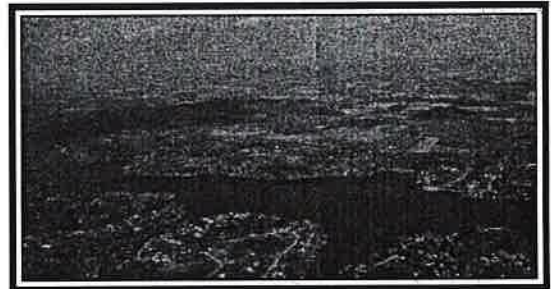
### **Flood Plains**

Associated with the surface water features are the flood plains of rivers and streams. The general location of the 100-year floodplain map is illustrated on **Map 4**. The 100-year flood plain refers to the area next to waterways expected to flood at least once in a given 100-year period. This frequency is based on expected precipitation levels and surface conditions. Detailed floodplain maps are available for all of Knox County through the National Flood Insurance Program. The largest flood plains are associated with the Kokosing and Mohican Rivers. Except for areas in Mount Vernon and other urbanized places, most floodplain areas are used for agricultural or open space uses.

Regulations addressing limitations on development in the flood plain are adopted and enforced by Knox County (for all unincorporated areas) and by each municipality (in respective jurisdictions). The adoption of flood plain regulations is a requirement for a local government to remain eligible for disaster relief from the federal government. Typically, these regulations require elevating new building sites or other flood protection measures.

### **Lakes**

There are three major lakes in Knox County. All are manmade bodies of water that are part of the Kokosing River watershed. Apple Valley Lake is a 511-acre private body of water located east of Mount Vernon. Knox Lake is nearly 500 acres in size and is located northeast of Fredericktown. Knox Lake was constructed in 1954 and includes boat launching and related facilities at three locations. Kokosing Lake is located northwest of Fredericktown and was constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers for flood control and recreation in 1971. Kokosing Lake, which is approximately 160 acres in size, is part of approximately 1,300 acres which is managed for fish and wildlife. Public facilities include camping and picnic grounds, latrines, wells, and a boat launching ramp.



### **Subsurface Water**

Knox County has extensive groundwater resources as illustrated on **Map 5**. A large aquifer along most of the Kokosing River Corridor provides an excellent source of water in the Mount Vernon area. Other areas of the County have less groundwater resources; but in most cases, areas are considered to have sufficient groundwater availability for most needs.

### **Natural Gas & Mineral Resources**

Although Knox County once had an abundance of natural gas, current levels of production are not even close to production levels of natural gas production in the early 1900's. In the past, original rock formations that held natural gas have been used as natural storage tanks for gas imported from other areas. Knox County is fortunate however to have several large capacity natural gas transmission lines along with widespread distribution systems owned by several companies.

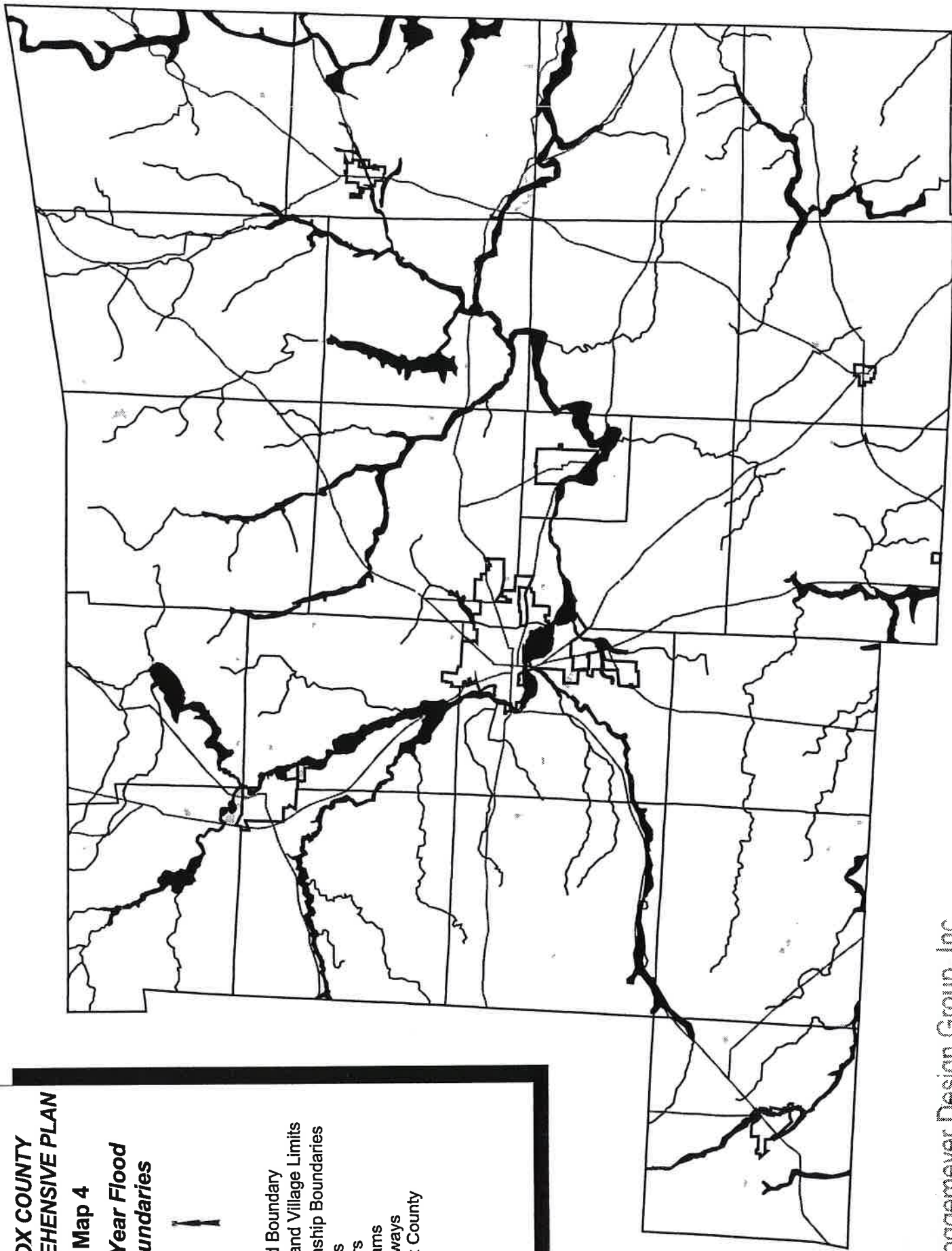
# KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Map 4

### 100 Year Flood Boundaries



- Flood Boundary
- City and Village Limits
- Township Boundaries
- Lakes
- Rivers
- Streams
- Highways
- Knox County



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Engineers+Architects+Planners



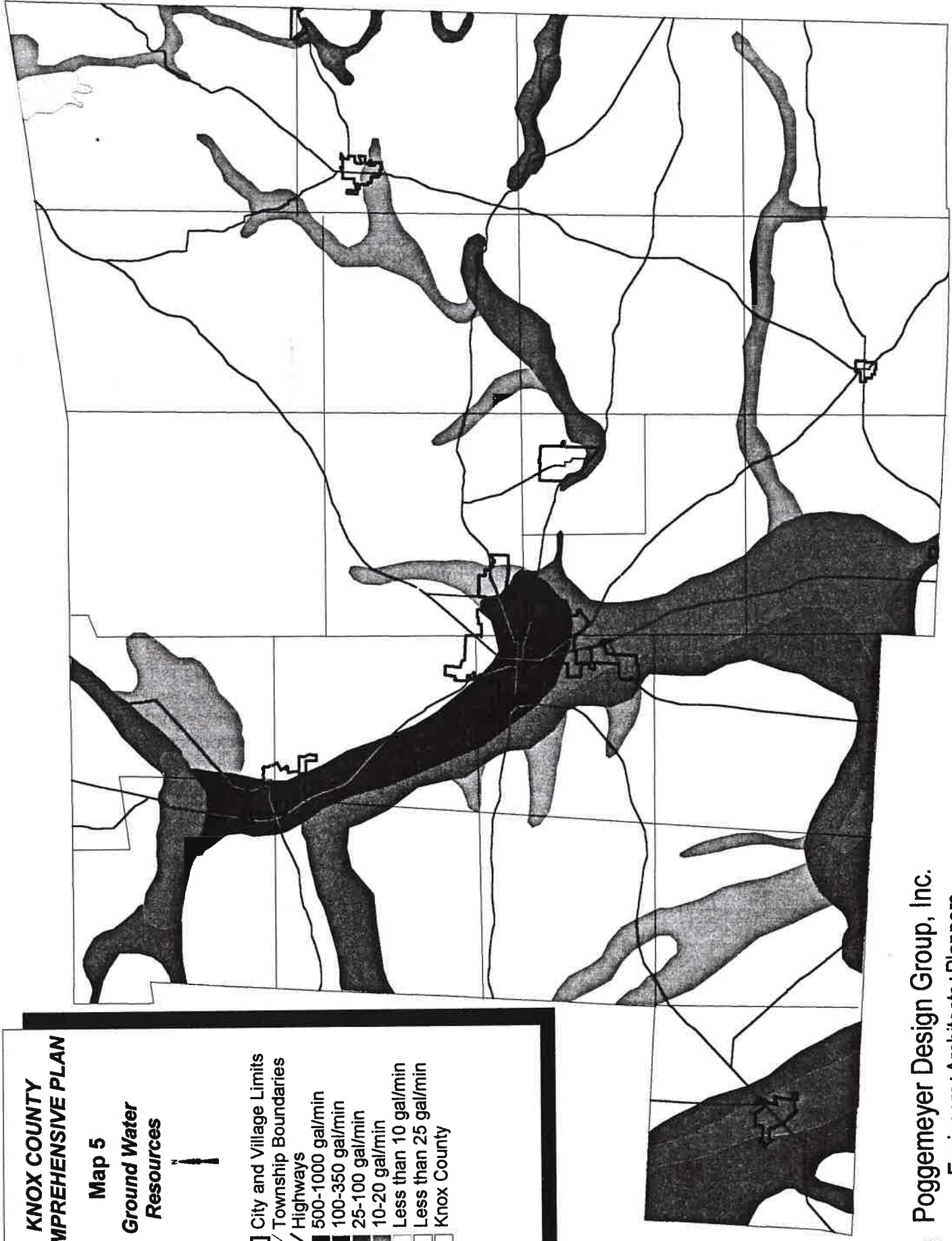
# **KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Map 5**

## **Ground Water Resources**



- City and Village Limits
- Township Boundaries
- Highways
- 500-1000 gal/min
- 100-350 gal/min
- 25-100 gal/min
- 10-20 gal/min
- Less than 10 gal/min
- Less than 25 gal/min
- Knox County





The most common natural resources that are mined today are sand, shale, and gravel, which are abundant around the Kokosing River and its tributaries. Many quarries along the Kokosing River are close to abandonment and redevelopment, and will likely change the width of the River in a few places.

### Wetlands

There are numerous wetlands identified in Knox County. Information on wetland sites can be obtained through the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the National Wetlands Inventory Maps. Wetlands are protected under federal law and restrict development potential.

### Geology

Knox County is on the outer edge of an area that was once covered by continental glaciers. The latest of the glaciations, the Wisconsin, covered the western part of the County about 15,000 to 16,000 years ago. This glacier left thick deposits. Most of the relief in this part of Knox County was caused by uneven surfaces of the glacial deposition and erosion of the glacial mantle. Most of the eastern part of the County was covered by the earlier Illinoin glacier more than 100,000 years ago. This glaciation was not strong enough to level the existing bedrock hills. Rather, the ice flowed between the hills and left thick glacial deposits in some areas and almost none in others. The northeast and southeast corners of the County were not glaciated. Several valleys in Knox County carried large volumes of glacial meltwater. Extensive gravel deposits laid down by this flowing water form the terraces along the sides of the valleys. The gravel deposits concentrated along the riverbeds. Today, gravel and sand mining areas can be found in these areas. Sandstone is another rock that occurs naturally in Knox County and has been productively mined. A map illustrating gravel pit operations in Knox County is provided in the

### Appendix.

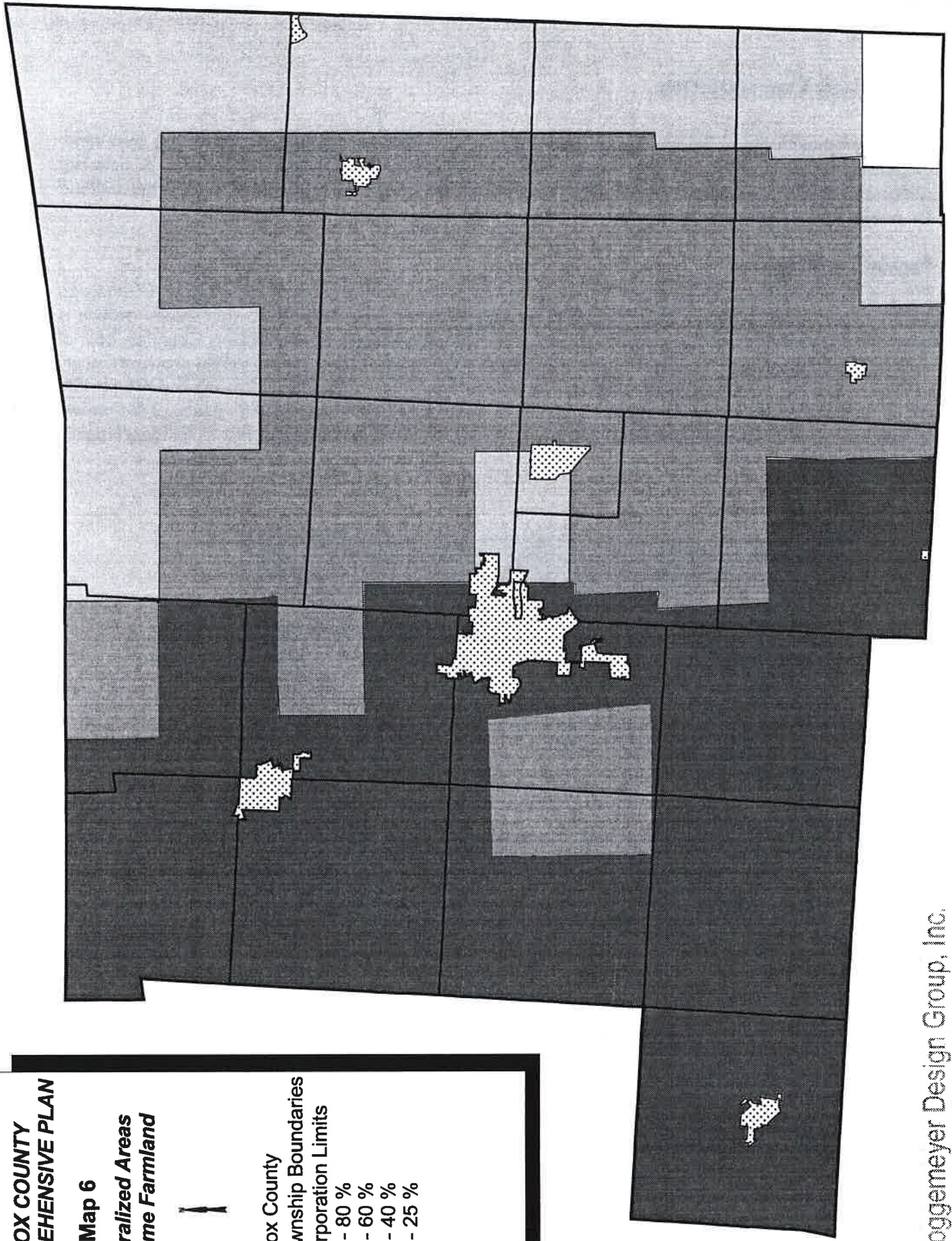
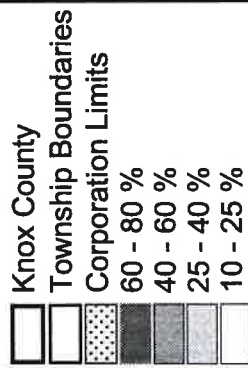
### Soil Conditions

A detailed soil survey was completed for Knox County in 1986 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This document provides considerable detail on soil conditions throughout Knox County. Because of the substantial interest in farming in Knox County, the agricultural properties of soil are of particular interest. The USDA defines prime farmland as the land that is best suited to grow food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. This land may be cultivated, pasture, or woodland and can produce the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources with the least damage to the environment. According to the USDA soil survey for Knox County, more than half (57 percent) of the total acreage of the County is classified as prime farmland. This prime farmland is found throughout Knox County, but the largest concentrations of prime farmland are found in western Knox County where slopes are more gentle. As part of this planning effort, the location of prime farmland was mapped at a highly generalized level and is illustrated on **Map 6**.

# **KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Map 6**

**Generalized Areas  
of Prime Farmland**



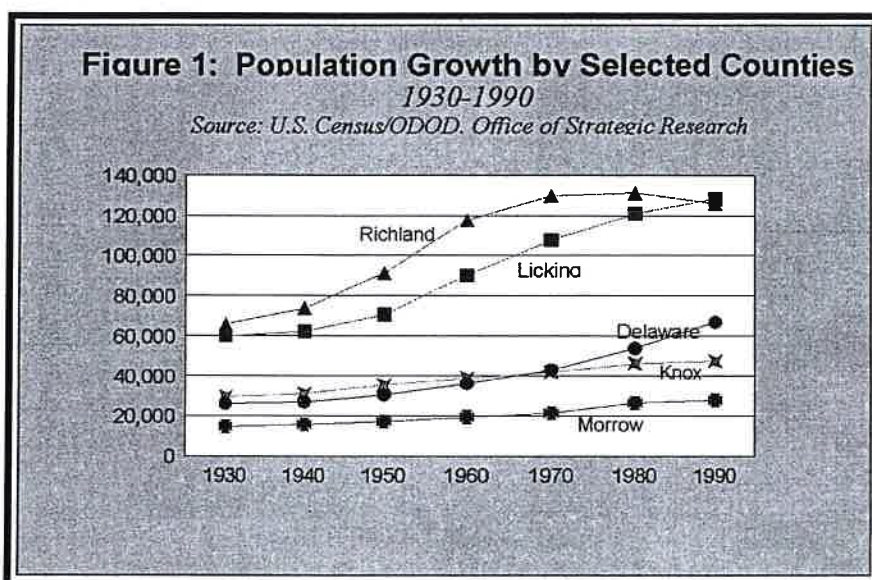


### POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The development characteristics of an area are directly related to changing population over time. Generally, local population change influences local demand for various types of housing, commercial space and employment opportunities. Changing population in a community also influences the demand for public facilities and infrastructure.

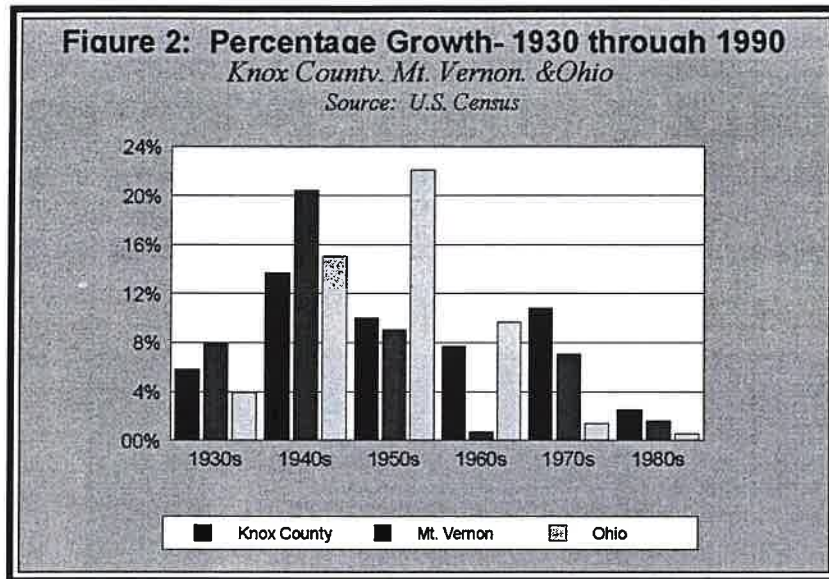
#### Population Change

**Figure 1** shows the population of Knox County and surrounding counties between 1930 through 1990. This figure illustrates steady growth for Knox County over the years. This steady growth is contrasted somewhat with more rapid growth in neighboring Delaware and Licking Counties, both of which more than doubled during this time. Neighboring Delaware County is the fastest growing County in Ohio, and current Ohio Department of Development - Office of Strategic Research (ODOD-OSR) projections indicate another 33 percent increase in population by the year 2015. Much of the growth in central Ohio counties is related to growth in employment opportunities in the Columbus/Franklin County area.



While Knox County's growth rate is less than some surrounding counties closer to Columbus/Franklin County, it has still been a growing area within the State of Ohio, especially over the last two decades. **Figure 2** shows the percentage growth rates by decade for Knox County, the City of Mount Vernon and Ohio. While the City and Ohio have alternated between periods of slow and fast growth, Knox County's population growth has been more steady.





### Municipal and Township Population Change

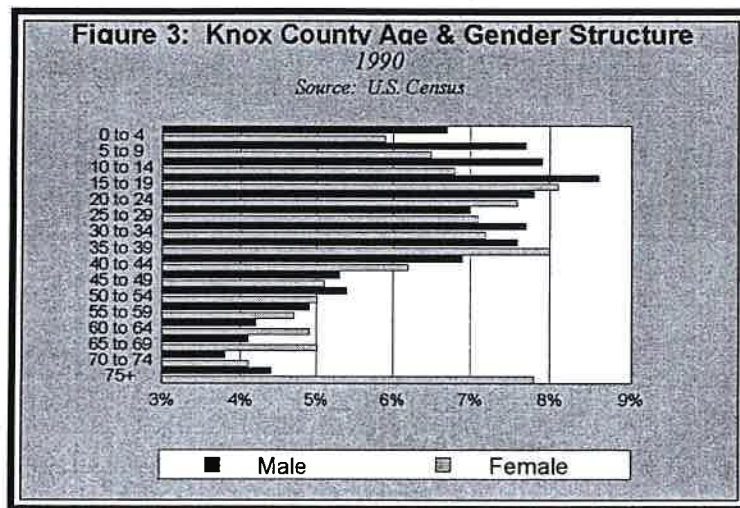
Certain municipalities within Knox County have shown significant population growth over the past several decades. Most notably, the population of Mount Vernon increased by nearly 10 percent (1,777 people) between 1970 and 1990, while the population in the Villages of Gambier and Centerburg increased by more than 25 percent (from 1,571 and 1,038 people to 2,073 and 1,323, respectively) during this period. Population change among the other Villages in the County remained relatively stable during this period. Some higher levels of growth have also been apparent in certain townships. For example, construction activity in recent years in Apple Valley has resulted in the population of Howard Township more than doubling (from 947 to 2,149) in the 20-year period between 1970 and 1990. Similarly, the populations of Hilliar, Milford, and Clay Townships have increased by approximately 50 percent during this period (851 to 1,322; 766 to 1,175; and 585 to 871, respectively). A table that illustrates population growth by political subdivision between 1970 and 1994 appears in the Appendix.

The distinction between historic growth in townships and municipalities is useful from the standpoint of comparing urban and rural growth in Knox County. According to U.S. Census statistics, over the last 20 years, Knox County has grown by approximately 6,000 people. More than two-thirds of this growth has occurred in townships, while only one-third has occurred in municipalities. In other words, this evidence suggests that historically, Knox County growth has occurred in more rural unincorporated areas, rather than in more urban municipalities. Part of the reason for this is due to the growth in the Apple Valley area which is unincorporated.

**More than two-thirds of the growth in Knox County between 1980 and 1990 has occurred in townships, while only one-third has occurred in municipalities.**

### Age and Gender

**Figure 3** is an illustration of age and gender structure and shows the percentage of Knox County's 1990 population that are male and female by age bracket. After World War II, the United States experienced a "baby boom." This term refers to the unusually high number of births following World War II, lasting into the early 1960's. The effect of the baby boom can be seen in **Figure 3** as the bulge in the number of "middle aged" people. The figure also shows a second bulge in the very young age brackets (less than 19), which is sometimes called the "echo boom." However, because baby boomers are delaying having children or choosing not to have children at all, this bulge is relatively small.



It is also important to note that Knox County has a significant number of older residents as shown on **Figure 3**. It has been suggested that one reason for this is because places such as Apple Valley have become partly a retirement destination attracting older people to the area. Evidence of this higher number of older residents is found not only in **Figure 3**, but also in the fact that according to the 1990 U.S. Census, Knox County ranks near the top fourth of all Ohio Counties in number of social security beneficiaries per 1,000 residents.

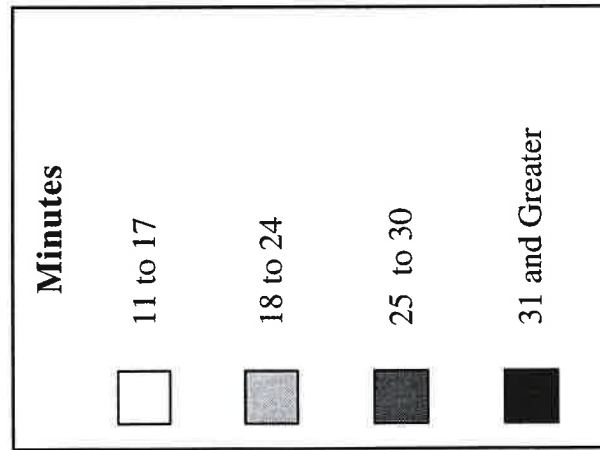
### Economic Characteristics

Knox County has enjoyed a strong, stable and diverse local economy. The economic base of Knox County contains a healthy mixture of agricultural operations, industries and services. Besides local industries, Knox County's proximity to employment centers in adjacent and nearby counties provides employment opportunities to persons willing to commute. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, approximately 4,350 workers commute to places of work that are outside Knox County. More than 40 percent (1,807) of these commuters travel to work in Franklin County. Looking at commuting patterns geographically on **Map 7**, it is apparent that the highest number of workers who travel 45 minutes or more to work live in south and southwest Knox County. It is likely that these workers are traveling to Franklin County.

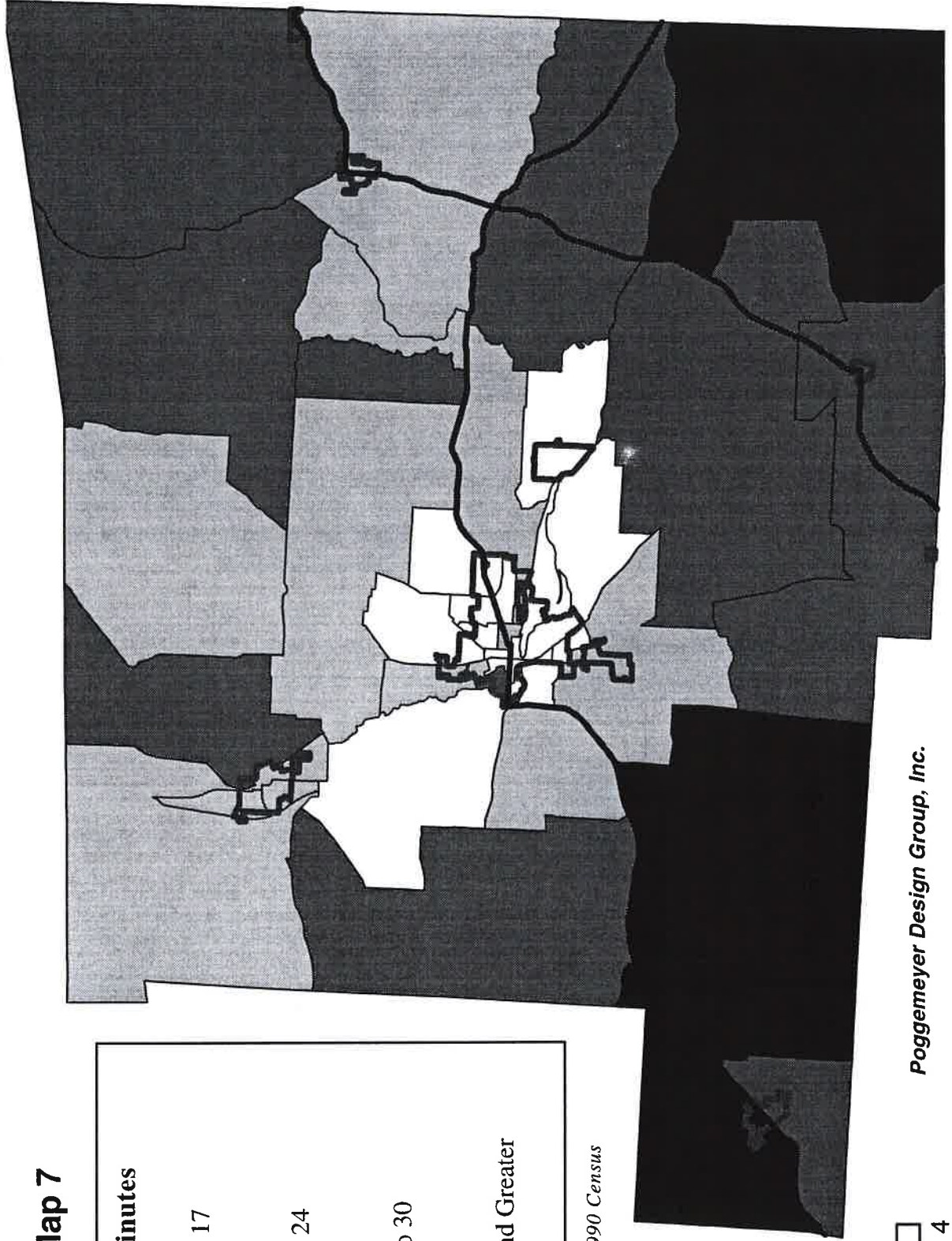
Knox County is also a destination for commuters who travel to work from outside Knox County. In 1990, more than 1,500 residents of neighboring counties traveled to Knox County for work. These in-commuters were from Licking, Morrow, Richland and Franklin Counties.

# Average Travel Time to Workplace Location of Commuters by Knox County Block Groups

Map 7



Source: 1990 Census



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### Major Local Private Sector Employers

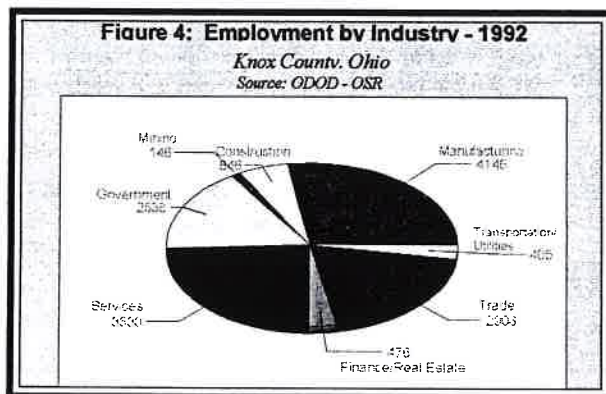
Some of the major employers in Knox County include: Cooper Industries, Wenco of Ohio, Kelsey-Hayes Company, AMG Industries, Ariel Corp., First Knox National Bank, Dana Corp., United Pre Cast, Ward/Craft, Kokosing Construction, Owens Corning and Weyerhaeuser.



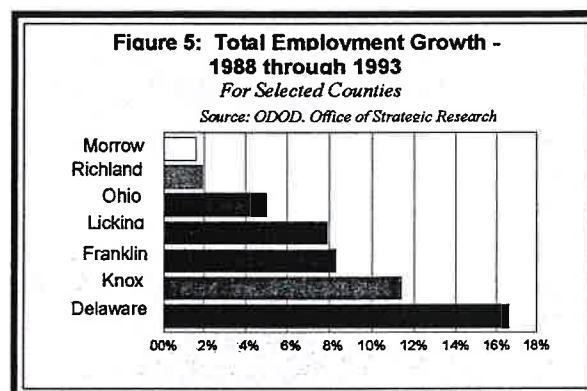
### Industrial Employment

In 1992, the manufacturing industry employed the most workers in Knox County, 4,246; and the construction industry was the fastest growing, increasing 26.3 percent since 1991. **Figure 4** illustrates the number of employees by industry and shows that the service and government sectors are significant employers in the County. Average weekly earnings for all industrial groups in Knox County was \$402.

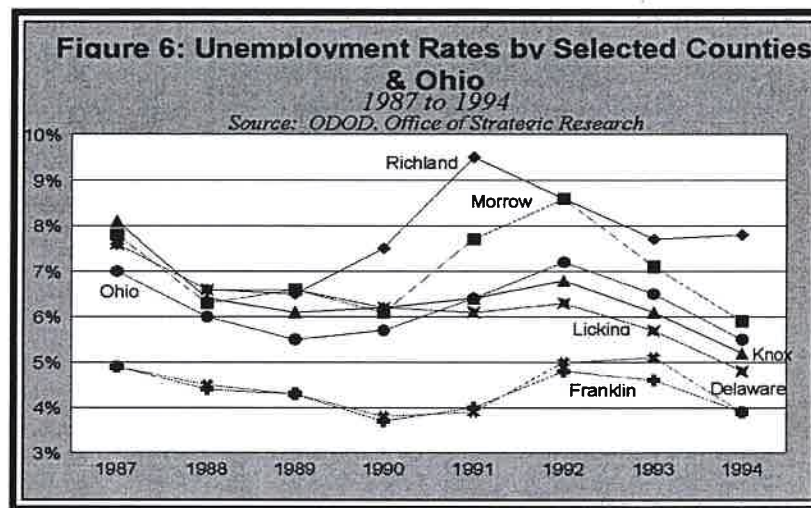
The 1992 civilian labor force for Knox County totaled 25,000 including agricultural employment. This agricultural sector of the local economy is quite significant and is best indicated by annual gross receipts which total nearly \$57 million annually. Dairy products, livestock, corn and soybeans generate the largest amounts of farm income. Apart from farm receipts, an important part of the local economy is dependent upon serving the needs of farmers and agricultural operations.



Historic employment and economic trends for Knox County are positive. The rate of employment growth in the County has been comfortably higher than Ohio as a whole. **Figure 5** illustrates that from 1988 to 1993, employment growth in Knox County grew by more than 11 percent, well ahead of Franklin and Licking Counties.



The remainder of Ohio employment grew by 5 percent during the same period. An analysis of unemployment rates by selected counties is shown in **Figure 6**. This data suggests that the demand for jobs in the County is relatively stable because the unemployment rates between 1987 and 1994 were generally at or below the State rate and not excessively higher compared with other surrounding counties.



### Tourism

Because of Knox County's local attractions and its proximity to nearby attractions, tourism is a significant aspect of the local economy. Apart from local attractions, Knox County is located next to Holmes County, a major tourist destination attracting approximately four million visitors in 1995. Knox County is also considered part of "Mohican Country," which is also a major tourist destination for camping, canoeing, and related activities.

An effort to quantify the economic impacts of tourism in Knox County was recently undertaken in a study conducted by MarketVision Research, Inc. According to this study, the 1996 economic impact of local tourism was estimated to be \$21.51 million. Included in this impact are an estimated 793 jobs attributable to tourism that provide an annual payroll of \$8.25 million. Additionally, the local economic activity associated with local tourism results in tax receipts estimated to be \$1.86 million.

Apart from the 1996 statistics of local economic impact of local tourism, there is some evidence that travel tourism is increasing in Knox County, given substantial increases in the local bed tax revenue (up 45 percent over the last five years). It is also likely that this trend will continue given the construction of the new 72-room Holiday Inn Express motel on Gilchrist Road, just south of Coshocton Road, and increased promotional activities by the Knox County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

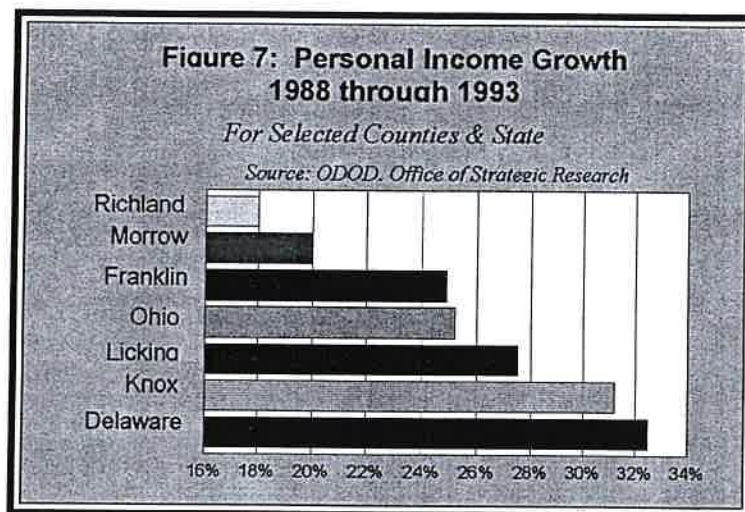
### Income

The two-income family is quickly becoming the most common household economic structure due in part to the shift from a manufacturing to a service-oriented economy. Therefore, personal income growth remains a significant determinant of employment trends in an area. **Figure 7** illustrates the percentage growth of personal income between 1988 and 1993. Similar to employment growth trends, personal income growth in Knox County was comfortably higher than Ohio, as well as many surrounding counties.

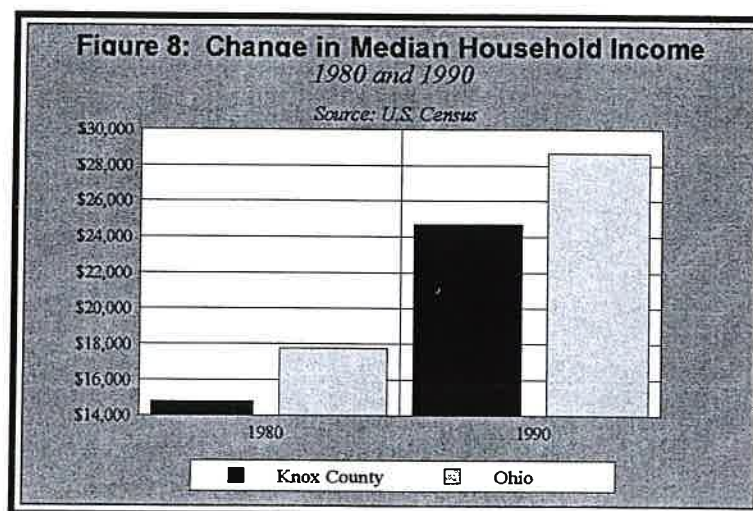
# COMMUNITY SETTING

## CHAPTER 3

In fact, Knox County was only slightly behind Delaware County in personal income growth during this period. This trend is significant because Delaware County has been one of the fastest growing counties in the State of Ohio during the 1990's. Personal income grew by more than 30 percent between 1988 and 1993 in Knox County, compared with 25 percent for Franklin County and the State of Ohio as a whole. This growth suggests that residents of Knox County have more income to spend on goods and services, as well as housing.



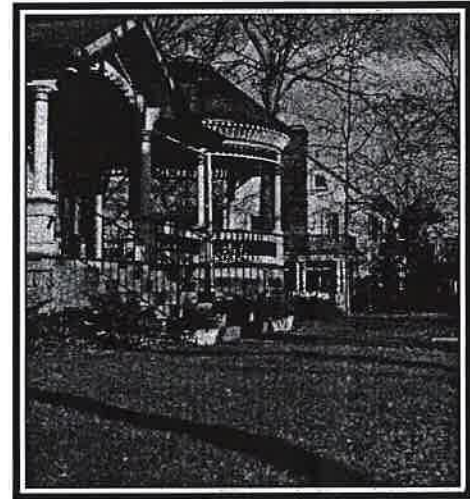
Between 1980 and 1990, the median household income for Knox County increased more than the median household income level for Ohio as a whole. In 1980, the County's median household income was \$14,800 and Ohio's was \$17,754. In 1990, Knox County's median household income rose to \$24,701 (+67 percent), compared with the state's that rose to \$28,706 (+62 percent). During the 1980's, the percentage increase of household income growth in Knox County was greater than household income growth in Ohio; however, the County's income level was slightly less than the state's level as shown in **Figure 8**.





## Housing Characteristics

Apart from agriculture, residential development is the dominant land use throughout Knox County. Important observations that can be made regarding housing include recent levels of new housing construction, the age of housing units, general housing market conditions, and housing needs for low-and moderate-income (LMI) persons. Concerning the housing needs of LMI persons, an in-depth analysis of Knox County housing needs in terms of LMI residents is available in the Knox County Community Housing Improvement Strategy (1994) and the Knox County Community Housing Improvement Strategy Update (February 1997). Also included in the 1997 update are proposed actions and strategies to address the housing needs of LMI persons through a local private rehabilitation program, infrastructure improvements in target areas, home repair programs (emergency improvements), renter assistance and homebuyer assistance. The City of Mount Vernon has a similar housing strategy and program.



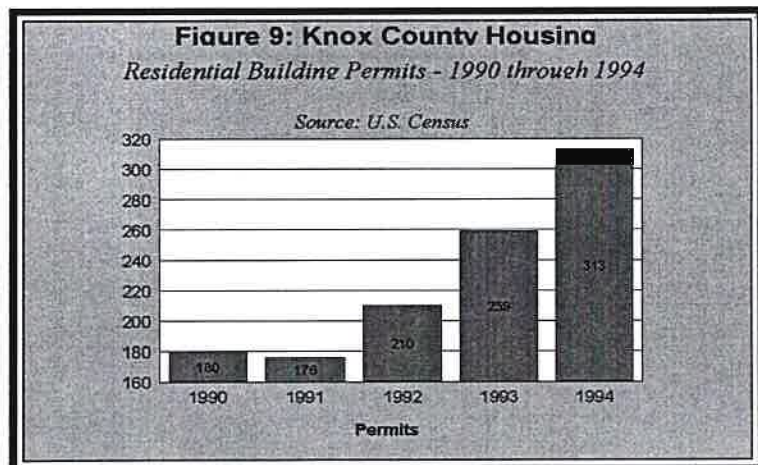
## Recent Housing Construction

Between 1980 and 1990, a total of 2,592 new housing units were built in Knox County. **Map 8** illustrates the number of housing units built during the 1980's in Knox County by U.S. Census block group. Most of these homes were built in the Apple Valley area of Knox County. Unfortunately, more recent census data of this type is not available. In 1990, the U.S. Census Bureau counted 18,508 dwelling units in Knox County. This was an increase above the 1980 figure of more than 7 percent, representing 1,243 additional units.



Documenting more recent residential construction activity (since 1990) is somewhat difficult. The U.S. Census Bureau does track residential permit activity, but not all areas have local zoning, and other areas may not be counted for various reasons and therefore, are not included in annual Census Bureau reports. Since 1990, residential building permit

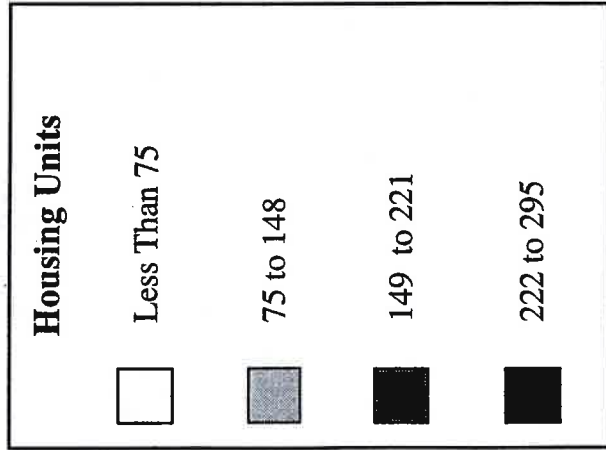
information reported to the Census Bureau shows an increasing level of residential construction. **Figure 9** shows a rather steady and substantial increase in residential building permits. Additionally, it has been documented that in Apple Valley, 391 homes were built between 1990 and 1994. Since 1995, 366 homes have been built in Apple Valley.



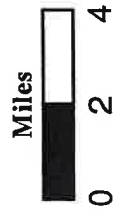
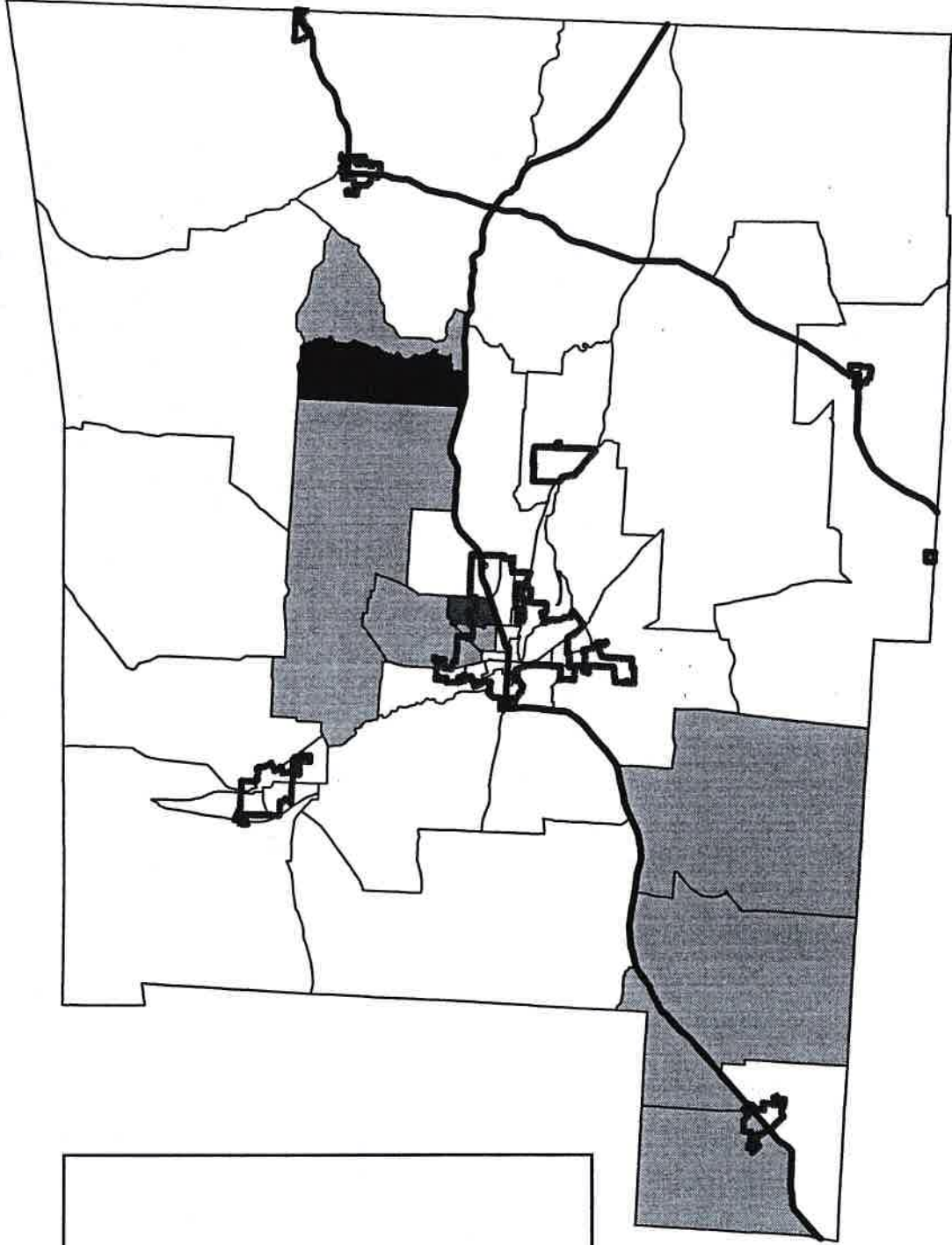
# Housing Units Built in the 1980's

## Location of Units by Knox County Block Groups

**Map 8**



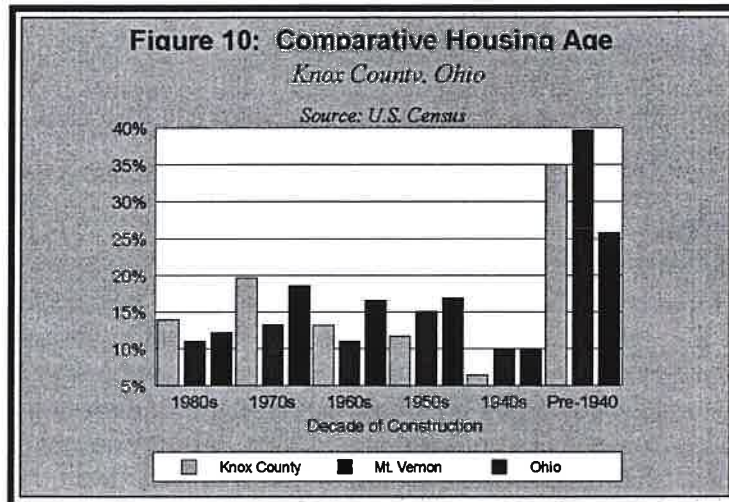
Source: 1990 Census



Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc.

### Age of Homes

Examining the distribution of housing units by year the structure was built provides some insight into the history of residential development in Knox County. **Figure 10** shows a comparison of housing age among Knox County, the City of Mount Vernon, and the State of Ohio. Housing in Knox County is generally newer than the City of Mount Vernon, but slightly older than the State of Ohio as a whole. In Mount Vernon, nearly 50 percent of the housing was built before 1950. At the same time, less than 42% of the housing in Knox County and less than 36% of housing in Ohio was built before 1950. The age of housing units is important because it gives insight into historical development trends and indicates the number of housing units that are older and more likely to require extra efforts to maintain.

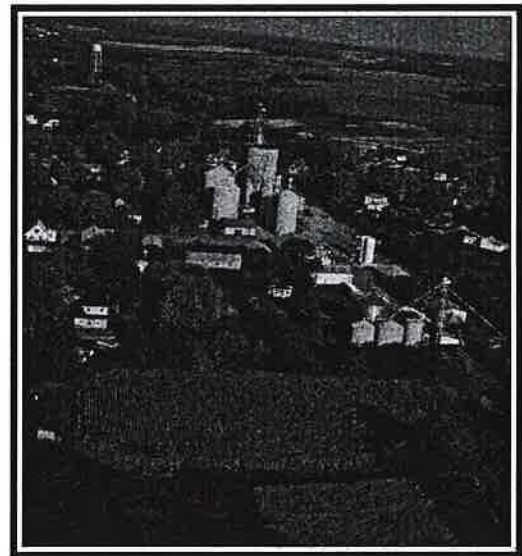


## AGRICULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Farming has been a major part of Knox County culture and the local economy for at least 1,000 years. Because of the variety of terrain in the County (ranging from hilly in eastern portions to slightly rolling in western portions), a variety of agricultural products are produced on Knox County farms. Dairy products represent 23 percent of the annual agricultural output in the County, while corn makes up 23 percent, beef is 13 percent, soybeans are 9 percent, swine is 12 percent, and poultry and other products represent 11 percent. Other crops produced on Knox County farms include wheat and oats.

Some important facts about Knox County agriculture as a whole include:

- Knox County was known as the sheep capital of the country in the first part of this century. Today, Knox County has the distinction of being the largest sheep and wool producing County in Ohio.
- Producers Livestock is located on Columbus Road west of Mount Vernon. This sale center for livestock represents an important aspect of the local farm economy and draws farmers from a multi-county area.
- Knox County was once called the "No-Till Capital of the World." This type of farming emphasizes soil and water conservation with properly applied herbicides. It is preferred to plowing generally because it saves the soil from wind and water erosion.





# COMMUNITY SETTING

## CHAPTER 3

- Historically, there has been a trend toward fewer, but larger farms in Knox County. In 1981, the average farm size was 163 acres. By 1995, this average farm size increased 25 percent to 204 acres.
- During this time, while the average farm size has increased, the actual number of farms declined by 310 (1,430 in 1981 to 1,120 in 1995).
- In 1987, Knox County ranked in the top third of Ohio Counties (25 out of 88) in terms of total farm acreage.

### Family Farming

The family farm in Knox County is a fundamental component of local culture, community life, rural values, and economics in Knox County. An extensive description of family farming in Knox County is available through the Family Farm Project. The Family Farm Project is a three-year study exploring family farming in Knox County. Initial support for this project was provided by a National Endowment for the Humanities Distinguished Teaching Professorship awarded to Howard L. Sacks at Kenyon College. This project extensively documents family farming and has been the recipient of awards from organizations such as the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums and the American Farm Bureau Federation. Besides an Internet web page, the Family Farm Project includes an audio series and interpretative booklet titled Rural Delivery-Family Farming in Knox County, Ohio.



Some findings of the Family Farm Project regarding the current state of family farming in Knox County includes the following:

- Family farming is deeply rooted in Knox County as a way of life and as part of local culture. Beyond a source of income, individuals engaged in family farming share a connection to the land, close family relationships, and a great passion for farming.
- Historically, those engaged in family farming have struggled with the decisions to use emerging farming technology and specialize operations or to hold on to current farming practices.
- Organizations such as the Grange, 4-H, Future Farmers of America, and the Farm Bureau are important social organizations that support the rural values and a sense of rural community.
- There is a large Amish community in eastern Knox County. Amish farms typically are committed to preserving farming technologies of the past. Over the last 20 years, more Amish families have been moving into Knox County.

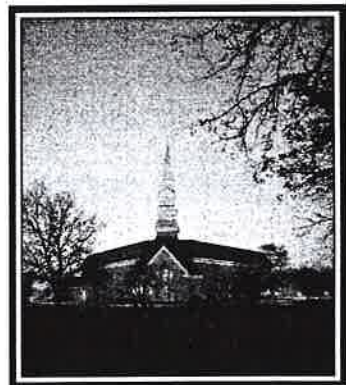
## CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Knox County offers many opportunities for cultural enrichment which add significantly to the quality of life in the area. These cultural characteristics include both physical facilities, cultural events and organizations.

### Cultural Facilities

While it is not the intent of this section to identify all cultural attractions in Knox County, some of the more prominent attractions are shown on **Map 9** and listed below:

- The Memorial Theater (Mount Vernon): Since 1925, the Memorial Building in Mount Vernon has been a focal point of the County's cultural heritage. The Memorial Theater has been the home of Ohio's Junior Miss scholarship program since 1972. This annual event honors outstanding female high school seniors and attracts hundreds of spectators. Events such as symphony concerts, lectures, theater performances, and exhibits are also conducted in the 1,100-seat theater.
- Dan Emmett House (Mount Vernon): Daniel Decatur Emmett (1815-1904) was the father of the American minstrel show, composer of "Dixie," "Old Dan Tucker," "Blue Tail Fly," and other classic American songs. Period furniture used during this time is displayed to complete the atmosphere.
- Fredericktown Historical Museum (Fredericktown): This museum is located on South Sandusky Street and was formerly a Methodist church. This museum displays nineteenth-century artifacts, including photos from area homes and a recently produced video tape of local history.
- Kenyon College (Gambier): This nationally prominent liberal arts college, founded in 1824, features an 800-acre campus, excellent examples of Gothic collegiate architecture, and a full schedule of cultural events including plays, concerts, readings, lectures, art exhibits, and films.
- Knox County Historical Society Museum (Mount Vernon): This museum, located at 977 Harcourt Road, displays artifacts illustrating 19th-century domestic life, trades, and professions. A notable collection of self-propelled farm engines, other engines, artifacts, and documents relating to Daniel Decatur Emmett are featured.
- Knox County Agricultural Museum (Mount Vernon): This site, also located at the Knox County Fairgrounds, includes more than 2,000 implements and other items displayed relating to agriculture and rural life in the 19th and early 20th century. Special attractions feature a Conestoga wagon, a log cabin dating from 1881, and several prehistoric Native American implements.
- Mount Vernon Nazarene College (Mount Vernon): Mount Vernon Nazarene College is a Christian college on a beautiful 210-acre campus. Cultural events held on the campus include concerts, lectures, plays, and exhibits.



# **KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN Map 9**

## **Cultural Attractions**

- Cultural Attraction
- ▤ Railroad
- ▤ Corporation Limits
- ▤ Highways
- ▤ Township Boundaries
- ▤ Knox County

Fredericktown  
Historical Museum

Knox County  
Agriculture Museum

Sunny O'Neill's  
Victorian House

Woodward Opera House

Dan Emmett House

Knox County  
Historical Museum

New Testament Stone Garden

Memorial Theater  
Ohio Festival

Alcove Restaurant  
Mt. Vernon Players

Mt. Vernon  
Nazarene College

Peoli Spring Center  
for American Folk Song

Kenyon Center for  
Environmental Studies

Poggemeyer Design Group, Inc.  
Engineers+Architects+Planners



### **Cultural Events and Organizations**

While cultural facilities are important to any community, events and organizations are very important to sustaining local culture and character. Like the cultural facilities above, an effort was made to identify a sampling of representative local events and organizations that contribute to defining local culture. These include:

- **Mount Vernon Players:** This 30-year-old community theater group offers a musical every summer at the Memorial Theater and several dinner theater performances throughout the year at the Alcove Restaurant.
- **Knox County Symphony:** The symphony performs three to four concerts per year.
- **Community Concert Association:** This organization performs four to five concerts per year.
- **Kenyon College and Mount Vernon Nazarene College:** Art exhibits, lectures, and concerts are regularly sponsored by Kenyon College and Mount Vernon Nazarene College. The lecture artist series sponsored by Mount Vernon Nazarene College brings nationally known artists and scholars to the area. Additionally, a fall big bands concert is held annually on the campus of Mount Vernon Nazarene College and includes musicians from the Big Band Era. The Glen Miller Orchestra was featured in 1997.
- **Knox County Fair:** Because of deep farming traditions, the Knox County Fair is a major event and aspect of local culture. This annual event regularly features activities such as harness racing, horse racing, antique tractor parades, tractor pulls, demolition derby, amusement rides, top-name country entertainment, agricultural and 4-H exhibits. An important aspect of the Knox County fair is that this event brings farmers and non-farmers together to a major community event.
- **Dan Emmett Music and Arts Festival:** Activities consist of concerts featuring top national and regional talent; fiddle and banjo contests, children's performances, arts and crafts sales, a quilt show, an antique show, Civil War encampments, classic vehicle shows, and historic buildings tour. This weekend event has grown in popularity with crowds estimated to reach 10,000 people.
- **Mohican Bluegrass Festival:** This annual event, held near Danville at the Mohican Wilderness campgrounds, features 24 hours of music with nationally known bands. Camping, canoeing, and horseback riding are other activities at this event.
- **Old-time Farming Festival:** This festival is held in Centerburg and features displays of antique tractors and farm machinery, demonstrations of traditional farm skills, craft shows and contests.
- **Gambier Craft Sale:** This well-established pre-Christmas craft sale features crafters and artisans from throughout central Ohio. This sale follows an Austrian market theme and includes home baked goods and other food items for sale.
- **Christmas Walk - Downtown Mount Vernon:** This event always occurs on Sunday following the Thanksgiving holiday with open houses in Mount Vernon's Central Business District. It features horse-drawn wagon rides, roasted chestnuts, carolers, period costumes, storytelling, and candle-lighting. A Christmas parade kicks off this event on the Saturday before the walk.

### EXISTING LAND USE

A generalized map of existing land use in Knox County is shown on **Map 10**. As noted previously, agriculture is an important aspect of life in Knox County and, in terms of land use, the Ohio Department of Development estimates that more than 60 percent of the land in Knox County is used as farms.

Residential land use in Knox County has increased substantially in recent years, especially in rural areas. Better roads and the nearby growing metropolitan region of Columbus have been attributed to the increased demand for residential lots in Knox County. Many areas that were originally planned as resort housing, like Apple Valley, have become homes to full-time residents. Also, one- to two-acre lot splits for single-family homes along already established roads are more common in rural areas.



Apart from commercial centers in the heart of most Knox County villages, commercial land use is concentrated in three areas in Knox County. There are two prominent regional commercial areas in Knox County: a well-established area on Coshocton Avenue and a smaller, but emerging area on Harcourt Road. Both areas are located on major routes in or next to Mount Vernon and are sources of significant vehicle trip generation. Coshocton Avenue is, in many respects, a common commercial strip with several "big box" retail uses and numerous smaller restaurants and retail uses. Downtown Mount Vernon is considered to be the third major commercial area. Unlike the other two commercial areas, downtown Mount Vernon offers a unique historic atmosphere, a more pedestrian-oriented environment and more specialized retail and service businesses.

Major industrial land uses are found south of the City of Mount Vernon and in specific locations in villages. The industrial area on the south side of Mount Vernon has been fast expanding due to the marketing efforts of the Area Development Foundation and other private and public groups.

### QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS

Residents of Knox County enjoy a high quality of life for a variety of subjective reasons. From a purely statistical perspective however, there are a few indicators that provide some evidence of a high quality of life when compared with the State of Ohio as a whole. These measurable indicators of quality of life include tax rates, numbers of families and female headed households with incomes below the poverty level, numbers of high school dropouts, and people with higher education degrees.

#### The Per Capita Tax Rate

The per capita tax rate in Knox County is more than one-third less than Ohio as a whole. In 1990, the per capita tax rate in Knox County was \$441 compared with \$612 for Ohio residents. A lower per capita tax rate in Knox County provides an opportunity for residents to apply extra income toward other household expenses.

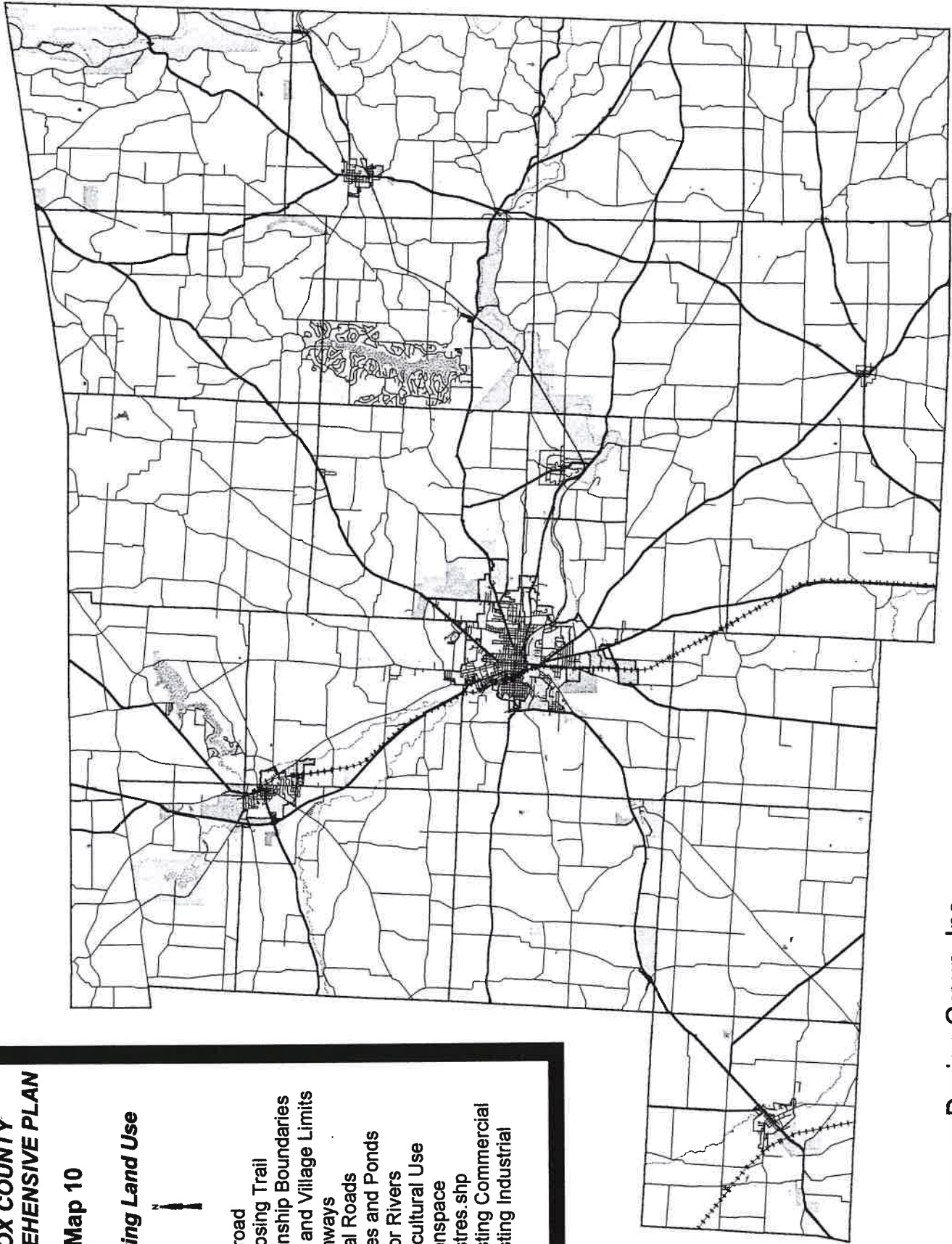
# KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Map 10

## Existing Land Use



- Railroad
- Kokoosing Trail
- Township Boundaries
- City and Village Limits
- Highways
- Local Roads
- Lakes and Ponds
- Major Rivers
- Agricultural Use
- Openspace
- Existres.shp
- Existing Commercial
- Existing Industrial





### Families With Incomes Below the Poverty Level

The percentage of families in Knox County with incomes below the poverty level is less than Ohio as a whole. The percentage of families in Knox County with incomes below the poverty level in 1990 was 9.2 percent, compared with 9.7 percent of households in Ohio as a whole.

### Female-Headed Households With Incomes Below the Poverty Level

The percentage of female-headed households with incomes below the poverty level was 31.9 percent, compared with 33.7 percent of female-headed households in Ohio as a whole.

### High School Dropouts

Among adults 25 years and older, the percentage of high school graduates in Knox County is about equal to the percentage in Ohio at 75 percent. When comparing the percentage of high school dropouts, however, Knox County has a much lower percentage of dropouts than the State of Ohio as a whole. In Knox County, 5.3 percent of high school students between the ages of 16 and 19 dropped out of high school in 1990, compared with a dropout rate of 8.9 percent for Ohio. A lower dropout rate in Knox County is an indication of a better educated community with greater opportunities, a more productive work force, and residents relying less on public assistance programs.

### Higher Education

Knox County is ranked in the top third of Ohio Counties (29 out of 88) in terms of persons 25 years old and older who have a Bachelor's Degree or higher level of education.

### Outdoor Recreation Space

One negative indicator of the quality of life in Knox County is available outdoor recreation space. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources publishes the statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) as Ohio's official policy document for outdoor recreation. The SCORP provides data on the amount of outdoor recreation acreage by County. The total size of Knox County is 338,560 acres (529 square miles) which ranks the County in the top one-fourth of Ohio's 88 counties in terms of geographic size. However, Knox County does not rank favorably in the amount of outdoor recreation acreage in terms of land and water. As a whole, Knox County is reported to have 5,229 acres (eight square miles) of recreation acreage or approximately 1.5 percent of the County's total land area. This ranks the County in the bottom one-fourth of Ohio's 88 counties in the percent of total acreage for outdoor recreation.

In terms of the amount of outdoor recreation space that is available per person, Knox County is reported to offer 110 acres of outdoor recreation space per 1,000 residents. Although this amount of outdoor recreation space ranks Knox County 47th out of 88 Ohio counties, this ratio is still significantly below the state average of 131 acres per 1,000 residents. Typically, the counties with smaller amounts of outdoor recreation areas are in areas of more extensive agricultural activity.



# **COMMUNITY SETTING**

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Village of Fredericktown**

The Village of Fredericktown uses three wells to access groundwater for their community. The water treatment plant capacity is currently 432,000 gallons per day, but the Village is in the process of upgrading its plant to bring capacity to 665,000 gallons per day. Currently the average daily flow is 225,000 gallons per day. The Village has an elevated storage tank providing 100,000 gallons of storage and an in-ground clear well of 150,000 gallons. The system uses iron and manganese high pressure filters. Four filters are in operation. The upgraded water treatment plant should provide adequate water supply for the foreseeable future given current growth rates. However, general water pressure issues, fire protection, and/or the potential need to supply a large industrial user could create the need for other water system improvements.

### **Village of Gambier**

The Village of Gambier purchases treated water from the City of Mount Vernon by agreement. The average daily flow to Gambier is 300,000 gallons per day that is pumped into the Village's 250,000 gallon elevated storage tank and then distributed to local users. Recently, the Village conducted a study to examine the feasibility of extending water and sewer services northward toward New Gambier Road. This study was conducted in association with preliminary plans for private development in the area.

### **Village of Centerburg**

The water treatment plant serving the Village of Centerburg has a maximum capacity of 400,000 gallons per day. The average daily usage in the Village is 170,000 gallons per day. The Village serves 560 customers, 30 of which are outside the corporate limits. Water is provided by two wells. The Village also maintains a 200,000-gallon elevated storage tank. With water usage at less than half capacity, the water treatment plant capacity should provide adequate water supply for the foreseeable future given current growth rates. However, general water pressure issues, fire protection, and/or the potential need to supply a large industrial user could create the need for other water system improvements.

### **Village of Danville**

Approximately 480 customers inside the corporation limits of the Village of Danville and a total of 12 sewer and/or water customers outside the corporation limits are served water by the Danville water supply system. The Village currently has an ordinance that indicates a willingness to provide water service outside the corporation on a case-by-case basis. Residents receiving service must agree to annex into the Village. The Village of Danville operates two wells for its water supply, which is treated at its 600,000 gallon per day water treatment plant. Average daily usage is 110,000 gallons per day in the Village. The Village has underground storage in the amount of 165,000 gallons. With water usage at a fraction of capacity, the water treatment plant should provide adequate water supply for the foreseeable future given current growth rates. However, general water pressure issues, fire protection and/or the potential need to supply a new large industrial user could create the need for other water system improvements.

### **Clinton Township Regional Water and Sewer District**

The Clinton Township Regional Water and Sewer District was recently established under Section 6119 of the Ohio Revised Code. Existing water customers were previously provided service by an agreement between Knox County Commissioners and the City of Mount Vernon, which was transferred to the Regional Water and Sewer District. The City of Mount Vernon and the Regional Water and Sewer District are currently negotiating an agreement for water service in the District territory, which is consistent with the Clinton Township boundaries.

The agreement, as proposed, would provide for the construction of distribution lines by the Regional Water and Sewer District, which would be maintained and operated by the City after one year's operation.



The City would provide treated water and bill the end user directly for services. The contract would be for 50 years with an additional 25 years and would allow expansion beyond the District boundaries (currently Clinton Township) with approval by the City.

### **Knox County**

The Knox County Sewer District was established as County-wide in the late 1970's or early 1980's and includes one water service area known as the Howard/Apple Valley District. The water supply system serves approximately 1,670 residential customers. The system, which is comprised of four wells, a chlorine chamber, two storage tanks, and more than 61 miles of water distribution lines, is designed ultimately to serve all Apple Valley lots and the Village of Howard, which has approximately 150 homes.

### **Del-Co Water Company**

Del-Co Water Company has purchased property in Wayne Township to develop a well field to provide additional water to their service areas west of Knox County. There is also some indication that Del-Co is considering expanding services into Knox County but currently does not have any customers in the County.

### **Existing Publicly-Operated Wastewater Systems**

The method of sewage disposal for more than half the County's homes is by means of a public sewer system. However, 8,451 homes dispose of waste by means of a septic system and tile field, and 218 dispose of it through other means. All wastewater systems were previously illustrated on **Map 11**.

The following table shows methods of sewage disposal in Knox County compared with the State of Ohio, as a whole, using 1990 data.

### **Anti-degradation**

Recent anti-degradation rules adopted by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) will potentially have a significant impact on the construction of new wastewater treatment plants and the expansion of existing wastewater treatment plants. Consequently, before describing existing wastewater treatment plants, it is useful to note how current anti-degradation regulations and future designations of area waterways may impact allowable discharges of wastewater treatment plant effluent into Knox County waterways.

Currently, all streams that receive effluent from wastewater treatment plants in Knox County are classified as "warm water habitat" or "exceptional warm water habitat." In the future, however, it is possible that the full implementation of anti-degradation regulations will lead to reclassification of waterways and substantially higher standards for wastewater treatment plant effluent. As noted previously, the Kokosing River was recently included in the Ohio Scenic Rivers System and has very high water quality. This could lead to reclassification of certain Knox County waterways as "outstanding national resource waters" or "outstanding high quality waters." Outstanding national resource waters and outstanding high quality waters are surface waters that have a national ecological or recreational significance. National ecological significance may include providing a habitat for populations of federal endangered or threatened species or displaying some unique combination of biological characteristics beyond those factors listed in OAC 3745-1-05(A)(8)(b) of the anti-degradation rules. National recreational significance may include designation in the national wild and scenic river system.

The reclassification of the Kokosing to "outstanding national resource waters" or "outstanding high quality waters" in the future would represent major limitations for discharges from wastewater treatment facilities. For example, under this designation, the director of OEPA may require that new sources of



pollution may not discharge directly to outstanding national resource waters or points located upstream unless it can be demonstrated that the chemical and biological quality of the outstanding national resource water will not be adversely affected. Additionally, if the Kokosing River Basin was reclassified, the director of OEPA could reissue permits for existing sources with the requirement of no net increase in permitted discharge concentration of regulated pollutants, unless there is an increase in water conservation practices at the facility. The increase in concentration may not exceed a 5 percent change in the ambient water quality of the receiving water as projected to occur under appropriate design conditions. This requirement would have a major effect upon future expansions of wastewater treatment plants.

It should also be noted that new sources and modifications may not discharge at points located upstream from outstanding high quality waters unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant that the chemical and biological quality of the outstanding high quality water will not be measurably affected. Measurably affected in this context means that a change can be detected with reasonable scientific certainty.

### **City of Mount Vernon**

The City of Mount Vernon currently serves approximately 5,850 customers within the City and outside the City corporation limits with wastewater collection and treatment. The City also has agreements with the Clinton Township Water and Sewer District and the Knox County Commissioners to provide services in the adjacent unincorporated areas. No annexation is required for service.

The wastewater system is owned and operated by Mount Vernon and includes a gravity collection system with three lift stations and a mechanical treatment plant providing primary and secondary dechlorination and sludge handling. The plant design capacity is 5 MGD. Average usage is 3 MGD. The City does experience some overloading of the plant during heavy rainfall due to inflow and infiltration, but is attempting to reduce the problem with continuous repair and maintenance of the system.

The Mount Vernon wastewater treatment plant discharges effluent into the Kokosing River, which is listed as exceptional warm water habitat under current OEPA water quality standards. For current anti-degradation purposes, the ten-year, 30-day low flow is used to calculate assimilative capacity of the receiving stream. This flow is approximately 27 cubic feet per second. Based on this flow rate, it appears that there would be significant capacity in the river to assimilate more wastewater discharge under current regulations. However, as noted, this could change with any future re-designation of the Kokosing River. The existing difference between plant design capacity and average usage is equivalent to supporting an additional 20,000 people (or an equivalent amount of combined residential and non-residential flow). While the capacity is substantial, some additional wastewater flow will be added to the Mount Vernon Wastewater Plant as new Clinton Township customers are added to the system. There are no current OEPA "findings and orders" associated with the wastewater treatment plant.

### **Village of Fredericktown**

The Village of Fredericktown operates a wastewater gravity collection system and wastewater treatment system using a trickling filter. The facility was constructed in 1938 and was expanded in 1991. Currently, the capacity of the plant is .432 MGD and the current average daily flow is more than half this capacity at .225 MGD. The existing difference between plant design capacity and average usage is equivalent to supporting an additional 2,100 people (or an equivalent amount of combined residential and non-residential flow). Currently however, the collection system includes some combined sewers and has had some problems with infiltration of rain water. This adds to peak flow rates and creates problems at certain times. The treatment plant itself may also be in need of certain upgrade. This treatment capacity should provide adequate wastewater treatment for some time based on current growth rates. There are no current OEPA "findings and orders" associated with the wastewater treatment plant.

**Village of Gambier**

Wastewater treatment is provided by an oxidation ditch completed in 1996. The gravity collection system includes three lift stations. The design capacity of the plant is 500,000 gallons per day and average use is less than half this capacity at 220,000 gallons per day. The last renovation of the plant was completed in 1996. As noted previously, the Village recently conducted a study to examine the feasibility of extending water and sewer services northward toward New Gambier Road. This study was conducted in association with preliminary plans for private development in the area. The wastewater treatment plant discharges effluent into the Kokosing River. Downstream from Gambier to the confluence of the Walhounding River, the Kokosing is classified as State Natural Resource Waters and Exceptional Warm Water Habitat. Being downstream from Mount Vernon, it appears that there would be significant capacity in the river to assimilate more wastewater discharge under current regulations. However, like Mount Vernon, this situation could change with any re-designation of the Kokosing River. The existing difference between plant design capacity and average usage is equivalent to supporting an additional 2,800 people (or an equivalent amount of combined residential and non-residential flow). This treatment capacity should provide adequate wastewater treatment for some time based on current growth rates. There are no current OEPA "findings and orders" associated with the wastewater treatment plant.

**Village of Centerburg**

The Village of Centerburg owns and operates a gravity collection system and wastewater treatment plant that is a conventional trickling filter plant followed by a sand filter. The plant has a design capacity of 200,000 gallons per day with an average daily usage of 140,000 gallons per day. The plant serves 380 customers inside the Village corporate limits. The plant was originally constructed in 1956 and retrofitted in 1987 and 1988. The Village experiences some inflow and infiltration problems and has experienced some problems with the treatment plant which are currently being addressed. The Village of Centerburg is located toward the headwaters of the North Fork of the Licking River. In this area, the North Fork is classified as Warm Water Habitat. Future increases in plant capacity will depend on the assimilative capacity of the stream and the best available wastewater treatment. The existing difference between plant design capacity and average usage could support an additional 600 people (or an equivalent amount of combined residential and non-residential flow). Given current and projected growth, a plant expansion may be needed in the future. There are no current OEPA "findings and orders" associated with the wastewater treatment plant.

**Village of Danville**

Approximately 480 customers inside the Village limits and 12 outside the Village limits are served by the Danville Wastewater Treatment System. The system is approximately 30 years old and includes a gravity collection system and an aerated lagoon. The design capacity of the system is 200,000 gallons per day and average daily usage is 130,000 gallons per day. Recent renovations included an extended capacity of 800,000 gallons per day to control overloading during high periods of inflow, and infiltration along with lagoon lining and a chlorinating system. New collection improvements have also been made to address inflow and infiltration problems. The Danville wastewater treatment system discharges effluent into the East Branch of Jelloway Creek, which flows into the Kokosing River. Future increases in plant capacity will depend on the assimilative capacity of the stream and the best available wastewater treatment. The existing difference between plant design capacity and average usage is equivalent to supporting an additional 700 people (or an equivalent amount of combined residential and non-residential flow). This treatment capacity should provide adequate wastewater treatment for some time based on current growth rates. There are no current OEPA "findings and orders" associated with the wastewater treatment plant.

**Clinton Township Regional Water and Sewer District**

Existing customers served by the Clinton Township Regional Water and Sewer District were previously



served by the City of Mount Vernon through an agreement with the Knox County Commissioners. The District has recently completed an agreement with the City of Mount Vernon to provide wastewater services to additional residents within the District. The agreement is for a period of 50 years. The District will construct the collection system and retain ownership. The City will provide wastewater treatment and billing directly to the end user. After one year of operation, the City will also provide operation and maintenance of the collection system. The agreement allows expansion beyond the District boundaries (currently Clinton Township) with approval by the City.

### Knox County

Knox County operates several wastewater service areas within the County Sewer District. The largest County owned and operated system serves the Howard/Apple Valley District, which currently has approximately 1,670 customers. The wastewater plant (which has primary, secondary and tertiary treatment) has a maximum capacity of 2,000,000 gallons per day, and similar to the water system, was designed to serve the entire Apple Valley development and the Village of Howard. The collection system includes several lift stations and more than 116 miles of sewer mains. The existing difference between plant design capacity and average usage is equivalent to supporting an additional 18,000 people (or an equivalent amount of combined residential and non-residential flow). There are no current OEPA "findings and orders" associated with the wastewater treatment plant.

The County also operates several package treatment plants and collection systems that serve Countryside Manor Subdivision (32 homes), New Hope School, County Service Building and County Water and Wastewater Office, County Engineer/Highway/Dog Pound/Cat Shelter, and East Knox Bladensburg Elementary School. A lagoon system serves the Pleasant View Acre Subdivision and has a maximum capacity of 59 homes. Package plants were also previously illustrated on **Map 11**.

### Summary of Wastewater Capacity Summary

A table which summarizes the status of existing wastewater treatment capacity appears in the **Appendix**.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

Recreation and park land in Knox County include active recreation such as ball fields, and passive recreation such as nature trails and gardens. The rolling hills, streams, and open fields provide many outdoor recreational opportunities including hiking, water and snow skiing, biking, fishing, and boating. Public parks are classified by the region in which they serve. There are three general categories: neighborhood parks, major urban parks, and regional parks. A table illustrating all park and recreation facilities is provided in the Appendix and the location of these parks appear on **Map 13**.



- **Neighborhood Parks:** There are 11 neighborhood parks in Knox County. These parks range in size from 1 to 18 acres. Their primary function is to service residents within the immediate area, although some may have facilities available to support larger events. The total acreage of parks in this category is approximately 73 acres.
- **Major Urban Parks:** There are four major urban parks. These parks are larger, provide activities to a larger section of the community in which it is located, or provide enough space and facilities to support local and regional events. The parks range from 20 to 50 acres in size. The combined total acreage of all the parks in this category is approximately 140 acres.



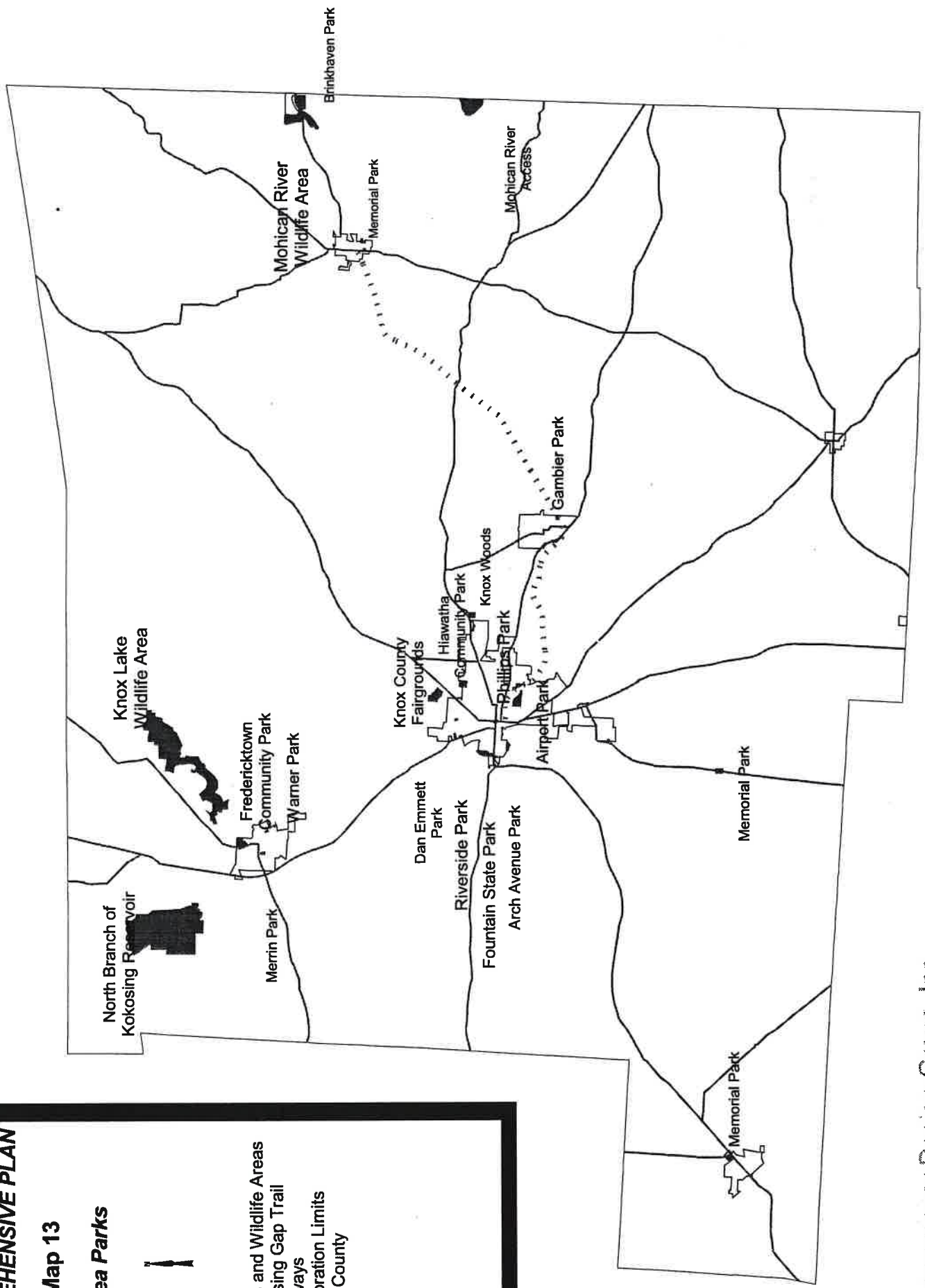
# KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Map 13

## Area Parks



- Parks and Wildlife Areas
- Kokosing Gap Trail
- Highways
- Corporation Limits
- Knox County



- **Regional Parks:** These parks serve a regional area and provide active and passive recreational activities, including boating, hiking, fishing, hunting, biking, and camping. Roadside parks are also included in this category because of the nature of the use of the parks by travelers as rest areas. Combined acreage of the regional parks is approximately 3,182 acres. Included in these regional parks are three large wildlife areas. These include, the Mohican, Kokosing, and Knox Lake Wildlife Areas.
- The Mohican River Wildlife Area consists of two separate units called the Upper and Lower Areas. Most of the land was acquired from the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District in 1958. The areas are located on the eastern boundary of Knox County near Danville. Part of the wildlife areas are in Coshocton County. The stretch of Mohican River which flows through the area averages one hundred feet in width and is comprised of relatively long, deep pools with occasional ripples. Activities in the wildlife areas include fishing, canoeing, and hunting. Conservation activities include protection and improvement of the shrubbery covers and permanent grasslands and maintenance of small portions of open bottom land, and habitat development for native species of wildlife. The only facilities available are a parking lot and a primitive boat launching ramp at the Upper Area.
- The Kokosing Wildlife Area, north of Fredericktown, provides good cover for deer, rabbits, turkey, and pheasant. Public hunting is permitted on the 580-acre tract during the appropriate season. The Kokosing Reservoir, along Waterford Road north of Fredericktown, is stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, saugeye, crappies, catfish, and other common species. The Kokosing River, flowing from northwest to southeast through the County, offers scenic views and good water quality.
- The Knox Lake Wildlife Area, northeast of Fredericktown is stocked with largemouth bass, crappies, bluegills, perch, and other common species. Knox Lake is twenty-feet at its deepest point near the spillway, tapering at the northern end of the lake to between two to four feet in depth. There are boat ramps and boat rental, bait and parking facilities available.

## **Kokosing Gap Trail**

Besides more typical park and open space areas, the Kokosing Gap Trail (KGT) represents a significant outdoor recreation facility for residents and visitors. The KGT is a paved trail through the woods along the Kokosing River between Mount Vernon and Danville. The KGT is owned by the Knox County Commissioners and maintained by the board of trustees of the Kokosing Gap Trail, Inc., a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization. This organization is responsible for day-to-day maintenance, fund raising and coordination of volunteers. All support facilities, such as water fountains, rest rooms, benches, parking lots, and equipment were funded by donations and gifts coordinated by the board of trustees which does not receive any federal, state or local funds for daily operation. The KGT was constructed on a former railroad right-of-way and is considered the heart of a "greenway" through much of central Knox County. The term "greenway" has been applied to generally linear areas that can tie local parks together to form a more cohesive park, recreation and open space system. This concept is discussed in more detail later.



The total distance of the trail is 13.8 miles, and the route is shown on **Map 14**. Distances between communities along the KGT are as follows:

- Mount Vernon to Gambier is 4.5 miles.
- Gambier to Howard is 4.5 miles.
- Howard to Danville is 4.3 miles.

Since the KGT was originally constructed, its popularity has increased and a number of associated improvements have been made to add to this important element of local recreation. Some more recent improvements include:

- Five historic plaques placed along the trail that describe local history.
- A bridge was built between the KGT and the Kenyon College Environmental Center.
- 2000 flowering bulbs were planted along the KGT.
- The 1924 Chesapeake & Ohio railway caboose was relocated from the former Pennsylvania Railroad station on South Main next to the Trail in Gambier.
- Rotary Park was constructed along the Trail near the Village of Howard. This new park includes play equipment, landscaping, restrooms and picnic facilities. It was funded by the Rotary Club which raised private donations and secured volunteers to help construct the improvements.









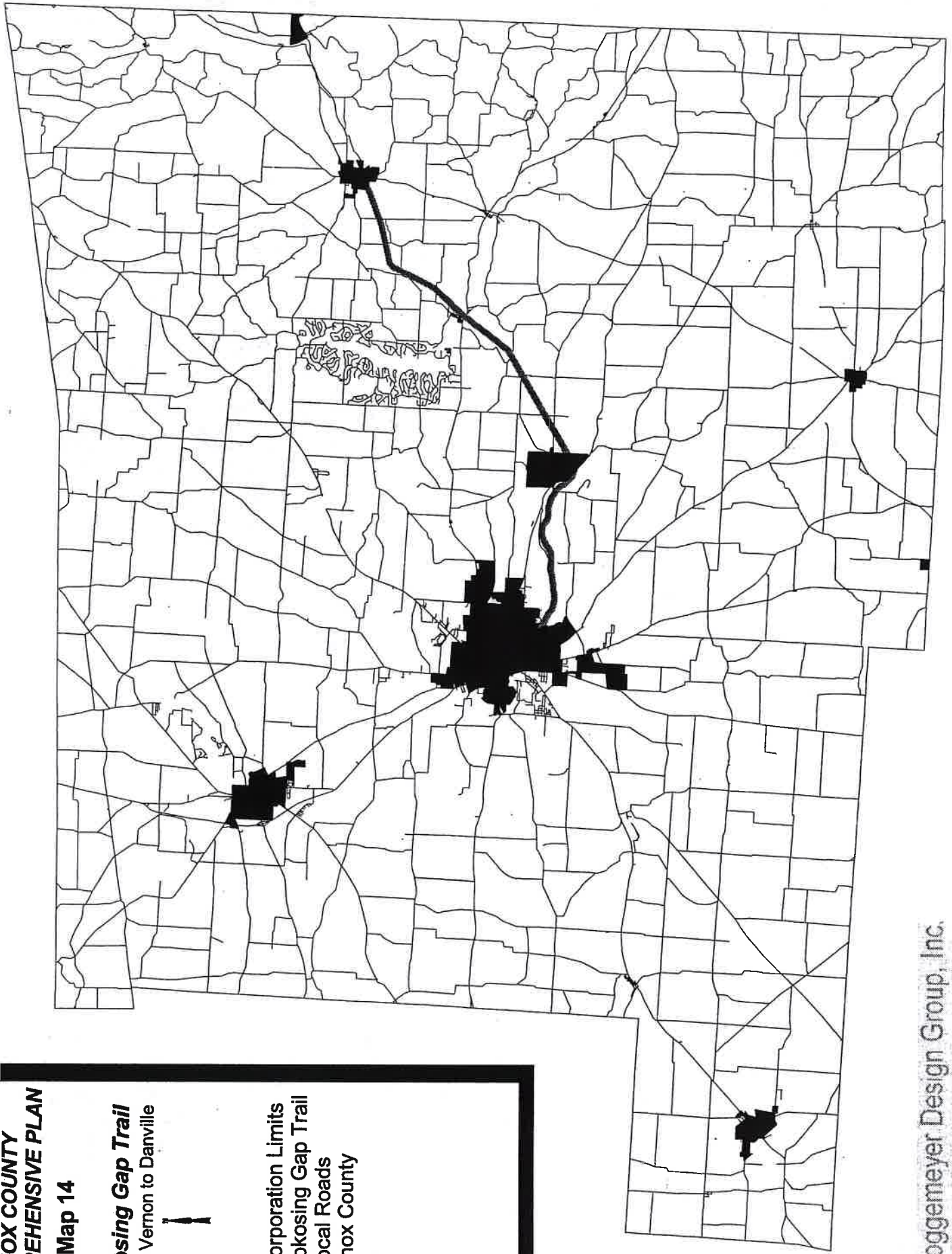
**KNOX COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Map 14**

**Kokosing Gap Trail**  
Mount Vernon to Danville



-  Corporation Limits
-  Kokosing Gap Trail
-  Local Roads
-  Knox County



Beyond improvements along the existing trail, the potential to extend the KGT has been proposed. One such extension is a proposed three-mile trail beginning near the western end of the existing KGT at Mount Vernon Avenue. From this point, this extension would lead westward along the Kokosing River and within Memorial Park, then cross over to the north side of the river at Main Street, and continue westward to High Street on the west side of Mount Vernon. A grant application for funding an initial phase of this project was prepared in July 1997. The total project cost is estimated to be between \$250,000 and \$300,000.

At the other end of the KGT in Danville is the Mohican Valley Trail (MVT), which is currently being developed. The MVT begins in Danville and extends into Holmes County. Two recent NatureWorks grants and private donations have helped make the MVT a reality. The first grant of \$50,000 funded the acquisition of the railroad property. The second grant, awarded in June 1997, was for the construction of a covered bridge over the Mohican River. When completed, this bridge will be the second longest covered bridge in the United States and will use the old concrete and steel bridge foundation.

## **TRANSPORTATION CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Previous Planning Efforts**

There are several prior planning efforts that should be described as background information. Among these are; A Thoroughfare Plan For the Mount Vernon Area, Mount Vernon Bypass Study, and Access Ohio.

- A Thoroughfare Plan For the Mount Vernon Area. This plan was adopted by the City of Mount Vernon in May 1992. Among many needs identified in this Plan, it was noted that the City of Mount Vernon and the Region need to:
  - a) Develop alternate City traffic routes to relieve pressure on major arteries.
  - b) Reevaluate downtown access and traffic movements in an effort to keep the central business district attractive.
  - c) Continue to improve access to the industrial park and other major employment centers.
  - d) Work to eliminate possible traffic impediments on key routes that connect the region with Central Ohio (such as eliminating the low clearance below an unused rail bridge near Centerburg). This project has been completed.
  - e) Continue to seek ways to reduce air pollution by improving traffic flow and encourage alternative means of transportation such as walking and biking with more sidewalk improvements and bike paths that create linkages between residential areas and common destinations.



In response to these (and other) needs, a number of transportation improvement projects were proposed. There were a total of 16 projects proposed and verbally described (a map showing possible alignments was not included). These 16 projects included the following:

# COMMUNITY SETTING

## CHAPTER 3

- a) Upgrade Yauger Road to meet current state highway or city collector street minimum standards. This project has been completed.
- b) Relocate S.R. 768 east to extend south from Wooster Road along an upgraded Upper Gilchrist Road, linking Routes 3, 36, and 229, and then to extend south eventually to connect with an upgraded Glen Road and Route 13 to complete an easterly improved tow lane controlled access around the City.
- c) Develop and improve a safer and more direct highway link between Mount Vernon and 1-71 to the west possibly using S.R. 229. Initially, the route could be upgraded to include selected widening, berms, turn lanes, and a possible southerly bypass of Marengo in Morrow County to tie S.R. 229 to the 1-71 and S.R. 61 interchange.
- d) Work with appropriate authorities to seek prompt removal of the low clearance railroad bridges near Centerburg. This project has been completed.
- e) Redevelop Coshocton Road east from the intersection with existing S.R. 768 up the hill to Upper Gilchrist Road to include five lanes with a center turn lane and traffic signal for the Knox Village Square Shopping Center, and for future expected commercial growth in the vicinity.
- f) Improve and upgrade McGibney Road between Wooster and Sychar Roads to include widening, berms, storm drainage, curbs, and sidewalk.
- g) Realign the dangerous intersection at Fairgrounds, Clinton, and Mansfield Roads to improve traffic safety.
- h) Extend the easterly bypass south and west across the City to eventually link with Harcourt Road or Routes 3-36. This future extension will provide a cross link between Routes 586, 13, 661, 3, and 36 and would help to reduce through truck traffic which now comes into the center of the City.
- i) Harcourt Road improvements could be completed in two phases to provide enhanced access from the west and south. Phase One would include a center turn lane. †Phase Two, at a later date, will involve widening the highway to a minimum of four lanes as well as intersection improvement at Route 229 with a possible interchange.
- j) A northerly bypass link extending north from Harcourt Road and S.R. 229 intersection to S.R. 13 north of the City.
- k) The link from Route 13 to S.R. 3 north of the City would be the last section of the outer access-way around the City.
- l) Implement Phase Two of the Coshocton Avenue improvement from Park Street to near Catherine Street in 1993. This work includes selected widening, increased turning radius, and other improvements. This project has been completed.
- m) Develop Phase Three of the Coshocton Avenue improvements from Center Run east to Shalimar Drive. Work will include widening to three lanes and other needed safety improvements.



- n) Fully improve the City's plan to include the east-west link from Mount Vernon Avenue to South Main Street and other traffic safety improvements on Routes 13, 586, and 661. Improvements will include selected widening to permit turn lanes, new signs, and traffic control.
  - o) Consider the possible rerouting of Route 36 westbound on Chestnut Street from Park Street to Sandusky Street.
  - p) Conduct a review of traffic signals for their overall impact on traffic flow throughout the City.
- **Mount Vernon Bypass Study:** The Mount Vernon Bypass Study was completed in May 1995. This study further developed some concepts advanced in the 1992 Thoroughfare Plan and included a workshop specifically addressing the need for a bypass around Mount Vernon. The workshop began with a presentation of background information by City, County, and State engineers; a representative of the Area Development Foundation, and consultants. After selecting the criteria for evaluating possible roadway alignments, workshop participants ranked a number of proposed alignments according to established criteria. At the conclusion of the workshop, the bypass segments that ranked the highest involved the connection between S.R. 661 and U.S. 36/S.R. 3 south of Mount Vernon and a southern bypass route from S.R. 229 south and westward to U.S. 36/S.R. 3 creating a south bypass. After the study results were released, the idea of a bypass received criticism from agricultural interests concerned with impacts on agricultural operations. Non-agricultural interests also voiced objections. However, a consensus exists that a solution to the problem is important, especially from the standpoint of area growth.
  - **Access Ohio:** This transportation plan is a comprehensive view of the State's highway network. It classified roads as arterials and collectors and identified deficiencies and proposed improvements. In Knox County, U.S. 36, S.R. 3, and S.R. 13 are defined as rural arterials. Capacity deficiencies were identified on U.S. 36 and S.R. 13 near Mount Vernon, and improvements were proposed.

### **Interstate Linkages**

**Map 15** illustrates the relationships of the primary routes in and out of Knox County, and their connections to interstates. There are three interstates in the region: I-71, I-70, and I-77. I-71 is nearest to Knox County, nearly touching the northwest corner of the county boundary, and provides a connection with the Columbus Metropolitan area. It is accessible by way of S.R. 95, 229, 13, and U.S. 36. I-70 travels east-west through Columbus and is most directly accessible by S.R. 661 and 13. U.S. 36 leads to I-77 to the east.

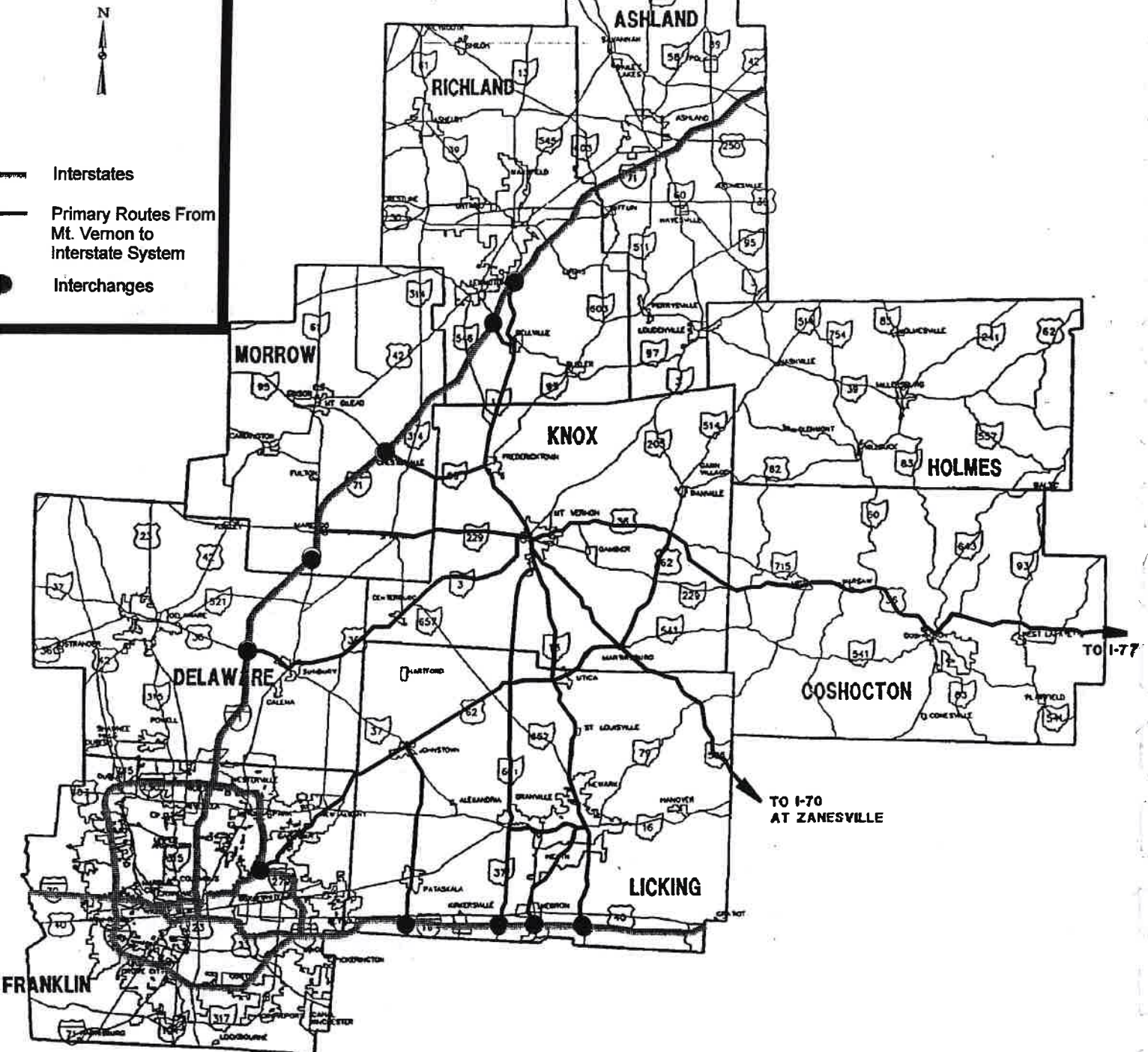


### **Ohio Department of Transportation Traffic Counts**

Traffic counts for Knox County are available along all U.S. and State Routes. These are regularly updated by the Ohio Department of Transportation. The most recent counts are illustrated on **Map 16**.

# Knox County Comprehensive Plan

## Map 15 Interstate System Linkages

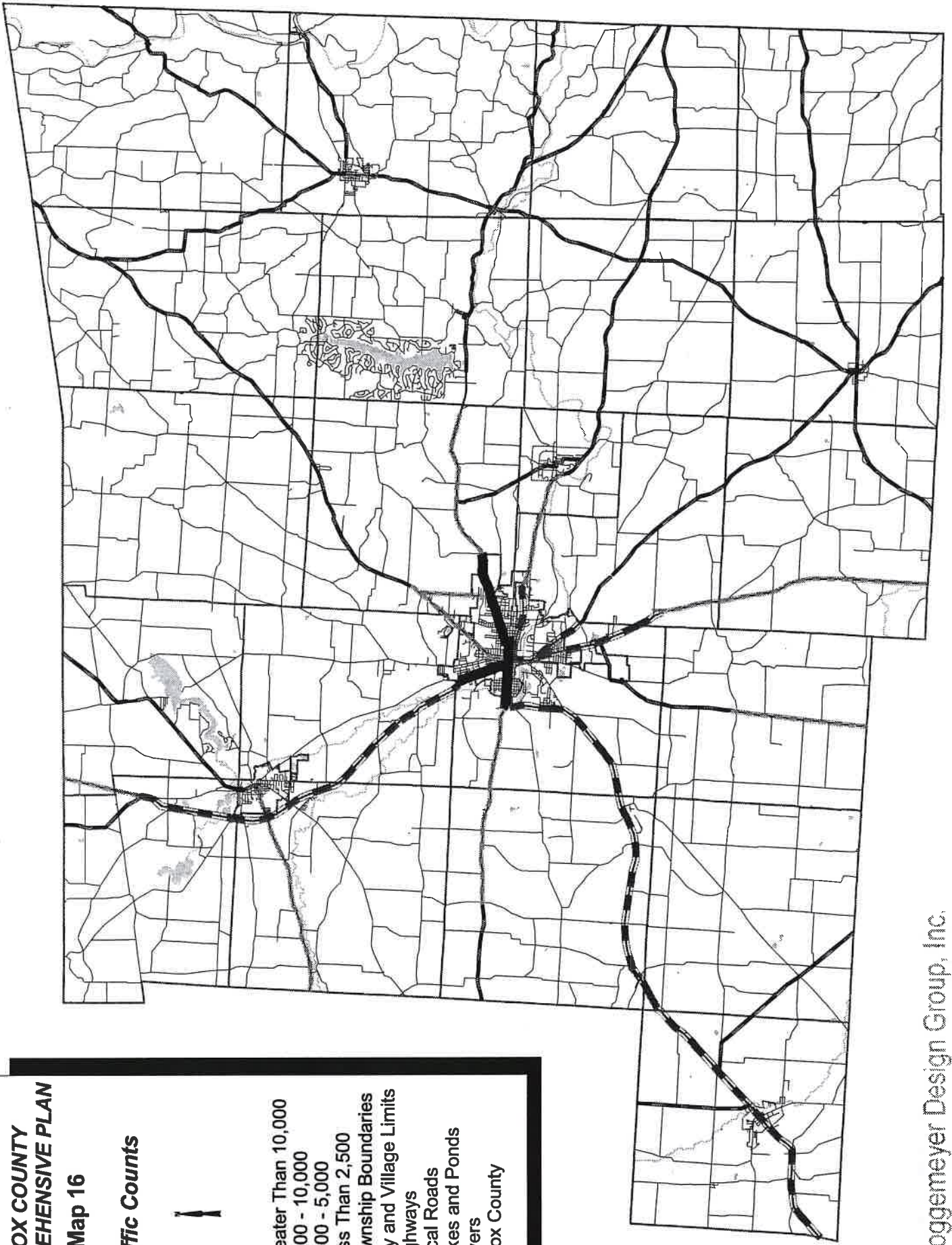
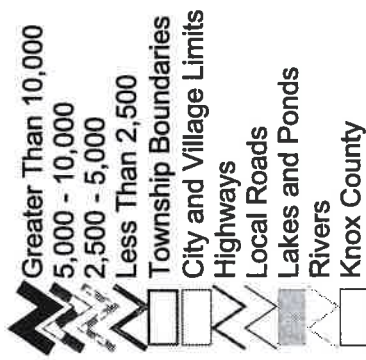




# **KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Map 16**

## **Traffic Counts**





**Traffic Accidents in Knox County**

The Ohio Department of Public Safety records keeps a record of all reported accidents by County. Information for accidents occurring in 1996 was analyzed and compiled. There were 499 accidents reported in Knox County in 1995 and 1996. The roads with the most number of traffic accidents include:

- Coshocton Road - 187 accidents, representing 37 percent of all accidents reported.
- Gambier Street - 68 accidents, representing 14 percent of all accidents reported.
- Newark Street - 49 accidents, representing 9 percent of all accidents reported.
- Martinsburg Road - 40 accidents, representing 8 percent of all accidents reported.

The intersections with a significant number of traffic accident reports include:

- Coshocton Road and Vernonview Drive - 78 accidents, representing 16 percent of all accidents reported.
- Newark Road and Martinsburg Road - 30 accidents, representing 6 percent of all accidents reported.
- Gambier Street and Mulberry Street - 10 accidents, representing 2 percent of all accidents reported.

In addition to the above information, more recent data indicates that serious traffic accidents have been on the rise. In 1997, the total number of fatal accidents reached 11 in Knox County as a whole. This compares with only two accidents the previous year. Not surprisingly, U.S. 36 is one of the most heavily traveled roads in the County and is one of the most dangerous in terms of accident frequency.

**Knox County Vehicle Registration**

According to the Department of Motor Vehicles, there were 33,753 passenger vehicles registered in Knox County in 1996. In 1990, there were 26,859 registered vehicles. The following table shows the number of vehicles registered in Knox County by year from 1990 to 1996.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Passenger Vehicle Registrations</b>	<b>Percent Increase</b>
1990	26,859	
1991	28,548	6.3%
1992	29,748	4.2%
1993	31,192	4.9%
1994	32,107	2.9%
1995	32,888	2.4%
1996	33,753	2.6%

The total increase in passenger cars over this six-year period is approximately 26 percent. By comparison, the number of vehicle registrations issued in Ohio as a whole increased by only 17 percent from 6,815,072 in 1990 to 7,960,247 in 1996. Therefore, the number of locally-owned vehicles on Knox County roads are increasing at a relatively fast rate. Additionally, given the current ratio of vehicles per Knox County resident and population projections, it is expected that the number of locally-owned passenger vehicles will climb to more than 40,000 by the year 2020.

## Significant Areas of Traffic Generation in Knox County

From the standpoint of traffic generation, there are several key areas that represent major origins and destinations of vehicle trips. These include:

### Coshocton Road

This area is the primary auto-oriented highway shopping district in Knox County and is located on the far east side of Mount Vernon. Coshocton Road is designated U.S. 36. Due to the commercial activity along this route, it is among the busiest and most accident prone roadways in Knox County.

Police statistics indicate that traffic volumes are approaching 30,000 cars per day. One reason for the high accident rate is the basic conflict that commonly exists along major higher-volume commercial roadways between access to adjoining property and through traffic movement. Without more innovative measures, such as access roads and shared driveways, a roadway cannot maximize both through traffic movement and access to adjoining property because of the inherent conflict between turning movements and through traffic.

Several initiatives have been developed over the last ten years in response to traffic flow problems along Coshocton Road. In 1989, a traffic study of Coshocton Road was performed. This study recommended



a number of short-term and long-term improvements in response to rising traffic volumes and proposed commercial development. Among the various construction projects, some initiatives included the development of an access management plan to construct future access roads. In 1994, the City of Mount Vernon initiated a project involving major construction improvements. These improvements were considered a "major upgrade" by the Ohio Department of Transportation and included widening Coshocton Avenue to five full lanes from Vernonview Drive to Upper Gilchrist Road (including curbs, gutters,

sidewalks, associated drainage improvements, and two new traffic signals). The estimated cost of this project was \$3.7 million, but unfortunately, funding is not expected for many years given ODOT's current ranking system and available funding.

In August 1997, an updated access road plan was unveiled as a means to improve traffic flow along Coshocton Road. This plan would include the addition of two signals and new access roads. One access road south of Coshocton Avenue would connect Yauger Road with Coshocton Road. The other access road would be on the north side of Coshocton Road almost parallel with Coshocton Road and connecting to Vernonview Drive and the Kroger parking lot. Funding for these access road improvements are still being investigated.

### Harcourt Road

This area is also part of U.S. 36 on the outskirts of Mount Vernon. Development pressure in this area is expected to intensify with additional commercial uses and some industrial use, partly because of the recent availability of sanitary sewers. It is predicted that Harcourt Road will continue to experience greater commercial development pressure in the future. Later elements of this Plan address the need to encourage redevelopment of this area as opposed to expanding this commercial strip westward.

### Industrial Area South of Mount Vernon

There is a large industrial area south of Mount Vernon, which is partly in Clinton Township and partly within the City corporate limits. This area generates a significant amount of worker and truck traffic. A major economic development and transportation issue is to find better ways for truck traffic to efficiently and safely carry goods into and out of this area. This concern was a significant issue leading to the development of the 1992 Thoroughfare Plan and the Bypass Study.

### Apple Valley



Apple Valley is fast becoming less of a resort area and more of a place for permanent year-round homes. In recent years, housing construction has been substantial (as described more fully later). Concerns regarding how current and future Apple Valley residents will travel to and from places of work and shopping is emerging as a significant transportation issue. Apart from the rate of current construction activity is the fact that "build-out" of Apple Valley will not occur for many years because of the large number of existing vacant lots. Apple Valley currently contains approximately 1,500 housing units, but when the area was platted it contained approximately 6,600 lots. While some existing homes are located on two or more lots, and some future homes will also be located on two or more lots, there remains a large number of vacant lots that will likely someday be home sites. For illustrative purposes, the following calculations can be made to help describe future traffic flow. If it is assumed that there are 4,000 remaining vacant lots in Apple Valley and three-fourths will become home sites at some point in the future, it is estimated that additional traffic flow could reach as high as 30,000 vehicle trip ends per day (each trip end is a trip to or from a housing unit). This estimate is based on an Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) calculated average trip generation rate of ten trips per day per detached single-family housing unit. This trip generation rate may however, be somewhat high given the composition of typical households in Apple Valley.

Given this current and projected future traffic flow into and out of Apple Valley, the intersections of S.R. 36 and Apple Valley Boulevard (County Road 4) and the intersection of S.R. 36 and Monroe Mills (County Road 3) will likely become more dangerous and congested. This will likely result in the need for traffic controls or lane improvements in these areas to maintain safety and road capacity.



### Downtown Mount Vernon



### Mount Vernon

The downtown area of Mount Vernon is both a thriving local center of business and a regional tourist attraction for dining, shopping, and entertainment. The downtown square is also the intersection of several local and regional highways, namely U.S. 36 and S.R. 3, S.R. 13, and S.R. 229. Two of the highways, U.S. Route 36 and State Route 13 were named major arterials in the previous comprehensive plan for Knox County. State Route 3 and S.R. 229 were designated minor arterial routes. The traffic around the square travels in a clockwise direction (one-way only). It is especially problematic

for truck traffic to pass through this intersection. Also, the additional traffic makes the square hazardous to pedestrian-oriented activities and could potentially be compromising the atmosphere that attracts tourists. Traffic counts at this intersection make it the busiest in Knox County.



## **Brick Streets**

Mount Vernon has a substantial amount of brick streets which, apart from adding to the historical atmosphere of central Mount Vernon, represent a major repair cost concern for the City. Although brick streets can far outlast conventional pavements, repair is frequently very expensive. Although the City of Mount Vernon appropriated \$100,000 in 1997 for brick street repair, current repair needs are estimated to be approximately \$11 million to reconstruct 8 miles of brick streets. The existence of the brick streets also is related to the issue of truck movement through central portions of Mount Vernon, as heavy truck loads can hasten damage.

## **Railroads**

When the comprehensive plan was prepared in 1974, there were two active rail lines traversing Knox County. One was the Penn-Central line which followed an irregular east-west path through the County through Centerburg, Mount Vernon, Gambier, and Danville. This line has been abandoned, and the right-of-way has been redeveloped into the Kokosing Gap Bike Trail. The other line was the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad running north/south through the County. There are two depots in Knox County (one in Mount Vernon and one in Fredricktown). The railroad serves industrial and agricultural cargo uses.

## **Transit Facilities**

Transit services are provided by the Mid-Ohio Transit Authority (MOTA). Services vary and include buses picking up elderly and disabled at their homes, taxi service throughout the County, and shuttle services.

## **Airports**

There are six airfields and one County airport in Knox County. The airfields are all private, serving either corporate or pleasure craft users.

### **Knox County Airport**

The Knox County Airport (KCA) is located four miles southwest of the City of Mount Vernon and is a public-use airport owned by the Knox County Regional Airport Authority. Classified as a general aviation airport, the single runway and related improvements at the Knox County Airport support the general aviation needs of Knox County. The single runway is nearly 5,000 feet in length and 75 feet in width with a parallel taxiway. A terminal building provides space for passenger waiting along with offices and restrooms. Several hangars provide space for aircraft storage. A pilot school is also associated with this airport. The airport is located in Miller Township and is accessible from S.R. 661 and U.S. 36, south of Mount Vernon.

Several improvements to the Knox County Airport have been proposed to upgrade this facility to meet current and projected aviation demands. These proposed improvements include:

- Acquisition of approximately 69 acres of land for runway extension and widening.
- Obstruction removal and upgrades to runway safety areas.
- Relocation of runway approaches along with widening and extension of the runway.
- Construction of access roads, parking facilities, and corporate hangars; expansion of aircraft parking aprons, improved lighting; and relocation of fueling facilities.

### **REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Major development projects are underway near Knox County. Because of their size and magnitude, these developments will impact Knox County life as construction nears completion. Some of these major developments include:

- **Easton:** Located near I-270 and Morse Road, Easton will be a 1,200 acre development that will cost an estimated \$1.5 billion to construct. It will include more than 10 million square feet of offices, apartments, hotels, and dining and entertainment space. This development is at a comparable scale to the Mall of America in Minneapolis, Minnesota and will be a destination of national significance.
- **Polaris:** Polaris is located along I-71 in southern Delaware County. It involves 850 acres, of which approximately one-third is currently developed. Polaris is a mixed-use development that provides employment for nearly 6,000 people (nearly half are employed at BankOne). An additional 4-8 million square feet of space is expected to be constructed in the next ten years.

## CHAPTER 4

# DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Communities are in a constant state of change as they respond to social and economic forces. Some of these forces of change are the result of local conditions, while others are the result of influences from regional, national, or even global considerations. Identifying trends and the direction of social and economic change is useful in understanding the influences on future community development. However, it is important to recognize that trends can change, and often do.

### TRENDS IN RURAL GROWTH

For most of this century, metropolitan areas have grown more rapidly than non-metropolitan areas as people migrated to urban areas for employment opportunities. More recently, this trend has been showing evidence of change as rural areas generally experienced greater population gains in the 1990's. During the early parts of this decade, three out of four non-metropolitan counties gained population. This growth is thought to be fueled by more rural residents staying in rural areas and an immigration of people who prefer a more rural environment (*The Rural Rebound Revisited*, American Demographics, July 1995). The recent increase in migration to rural areas is due partially to an increased willingness to commute greater distances to employment opportunities. According to U.S. Census statistics, between 1960 and 1990, the number of workers who commute to other counties has tripled from 9 million to 27 million. As a result, housing construction on the fringes of metropolitan areas has boomed, while housing construction in central cities has nearly halted.

**Between 1960 and 1990, the number of workers who commute to other counties has tripled from 9 million to 27 million.**

The decentralization of development may continue and even accelerate into the future due to several factors (*The State of the Nation's Housing*, 1996, Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University).

Advances in telecommunications, preferences for rural life styles, and second homes for vacation and retirement are factors that may contribute to the sustained movement of population toward more suburban and rural areas. This substantial nationwide trend has even been documented in a recent cover story in *Time Magazine* (December 8, 1997).

### State Rural Growth Trends

One trend in Ohio regarding rural development is the large proportion of rural subdivision activity. Under Ohio law, local counties may adopt and enforce subdivision regulations that commonly categorize subdivisions into three types. Major platted subdivisions typically include new streets and central water and/or sewer services. Lots in platted subdivisions typically are smaller and land is developed more efficiently with consideration being given to issues such as drainage, new road intersections, buffering, etc. Minor subdivisions are often between one and four residential lots that are less than five acres created from a larger parcel (commonly a farmstead). In most

**In unincorporated areas in Ohio, the ratio of land being subdivided in less dense and random building parcels compared to platted subdivisions is approximately seven to one.**



**Ohio's population grew by 13 percent between 1960 and 1990, while the amount of urban land increased by 64 percent. In Columbus, population grew by 68 percent while urban land increased nearly 400 percent during this same time.**

counties, such minor subdivisions (or lot splits) receive only cursory review in terms of minimum lot size and well/septic system feasibility before they are recorded as permanent parcels. Besides major and minor subdivisions, land divisions that involve lots larger than five acres are specifically exempt from subdivision review.

A survey was conducted statewide in 1996 by the County Engineers Association that revealed some interesting facts about subdivision activity in the unincorporated areas of Ohio. Major platted subdivisions resulted in approximately 19,483 new lots and consumed 9,730 acres. By comparison, there were 22,377 new lots created under the rules of minor subdivisions, or these new lots were more than five acres and were generally exempt from subdivision review.

These lot splits and exempt subdivisions involved 68,740 acres of land. While it is not likely that all minor and exempt subdivisions were subdivisions for development purposes, the ratio of land being subdivided in less dense and random parcels compared with platted subdivisions is approximately seven to one. This trend raises serious issues about the consumption of land resources and the pattern of sprawl in rural areas statewide.

Other evidence of this consumptive trend is found in the fact that, between 1960 and 1990, Ohio's population grew by 13 percent, while the amount of urban land increased by 64 percent. Closer to Knox County, this trend of land consumption is evident in the City of Columbus where, between 1960 and 1990, population grew by 68 percent while land consumption grew by nearly 400 percent according to the U.S. Census Bureau.



### Regional Growth Trends

Knox County is socially and economically linked to the central Ohio region and aspects of its future are tied to regional trends. Many national trends in rural and suburban growth identified above are strongly evident in central Ohio. Central Ohio has been a growth area within the state and substantial portions of this growth have been outward from Columbus and Franklin County. Between 1989 and 1993, almost 34 percent more people moved from Franklin County to surrounding counties than moved into Franklin County from surrounding counties. This migration trend may be supported to some extent by future employment opportunities. According to projections prepared by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), employment growth will be increasingly more concentrated around the Columbus outerbelt as the year 2020 approaches. More employment opportunities located further outward from the urban center will likely fuel outward migration trends. Projections of this nature are confirmed by developments such as Easton and Polaris, which will add thousands of jobs in and near the outerbelt. Additional projections by MORPC suggest that current growth trends will result in metropolitan Columbus and the surrounding County seats essentially fusing together with suburban development densities by the year 2010.

**Employment growth will be increasingly more concentrated around the Columbus outerbelt as the year 2020 approaches.**

Communities such as the Village of Sunbury (approximately 10 miles southwest of the Village of Centerburg in southwest Knox County) are currently experiencing rapid growth. Several subdivisions in

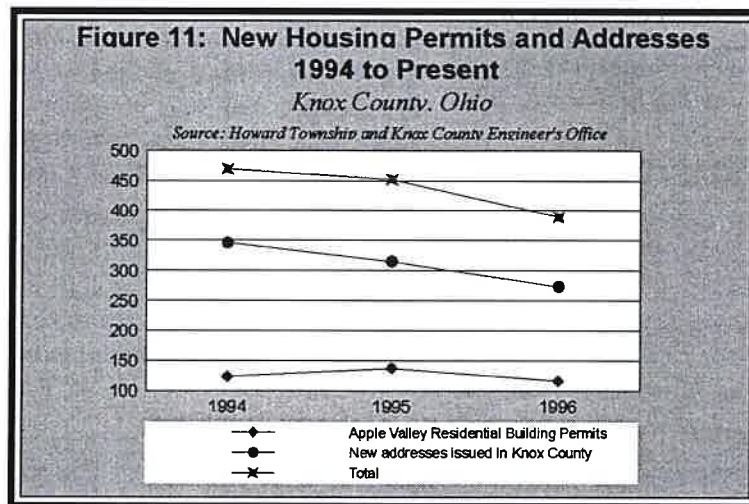
the Village are currently in the planning stages and if all are built in the next five years, the Village of Sunbury will add another 2,538 units and quadruple in population.

### Recent Knox County Growth

Decennial U.S. Census data can quickly become outdated toward the end of each decade because the federal government only conducts a full-scale census every 10 years. As the year 2000 approaches, the 1990 U.S. Census data for Knox County has become more obsolete. For this reason and because of a belief that construction activity has increased substantially since 1990, effort was made to document residential development in the last few years.

The documentation of residential construction activity focused on two primary sources of information. The first source was the Knox County Engineer who issues new addresses for all new residences. The second source was the Howard Township Zoning Inspector who is responsible for issuing zoning permits within the Apple Valley area. It was necessary to combine these sources of information since Apple Valley is already platted with assigned addresses. The result of this investigation showed that new housing construction activity has likely been taking place county-wide at the rate of 400 to 450 units per year over the last several years. Given the current average household size of 2.5 persons per household, it is believed that Knox County has been growing at a rate of approximately 1,000 people annually in recent years. This construction activity is shown in **Figure 11**.

**It is believed that Knox County has been growing at a rate of approximately 1,000 people annually in recent years.**



This rate of housing construction is verified somewhat by reviewing new well/septic tank permits issued by the Knox County Health Department. Since 1992, between 200 and 300 new well/septic tank permits have been issued annually by the Health Department. Obviously, new well/septic tank permits would not be an indicator of the amount of residential construction occurring within incorporated areas with central water and sewer services or in unincorporated areas, such as Apple Valley, where central water and sewer are available.

This level of well/septic tank permit activity indicates that a high percentage of new housing construction activity continues to occur in the unincorporated areas of Knox County that are not served by central



water and sewer services. It was noted previously that between 1980 and 1990, more than two-thirds of Knox County growth occurred in unincorporated areas. Since 1990, the Knox County Health Department has issued permits for more than 1,500 new septic systems, suggesting that the substantial trend toward rural development continues. Another indicator of rural development trends is local subdivision activity.

**Since 1990, the Knox County Health Department permits for over 1,500 new septic systems. This suggests that the substantial trend toward rural development continues in Knox County.**

According to information obtained from the Knox County Auditor and Regional Planning Commission, the number of property subdivisions in 1997 will likely exceed 450 throughout Knox County. This activity includes new parcels greater than and less than five acres, and many subdivisions that were not necessarily done for development purposes. However, it is interesting that according to only partial statistics for 1997, some large amount of subdivision activity has occurred in Berlin Township (47 property splits), Clay Township (23 property splits), and Milford Township (73 property splits).

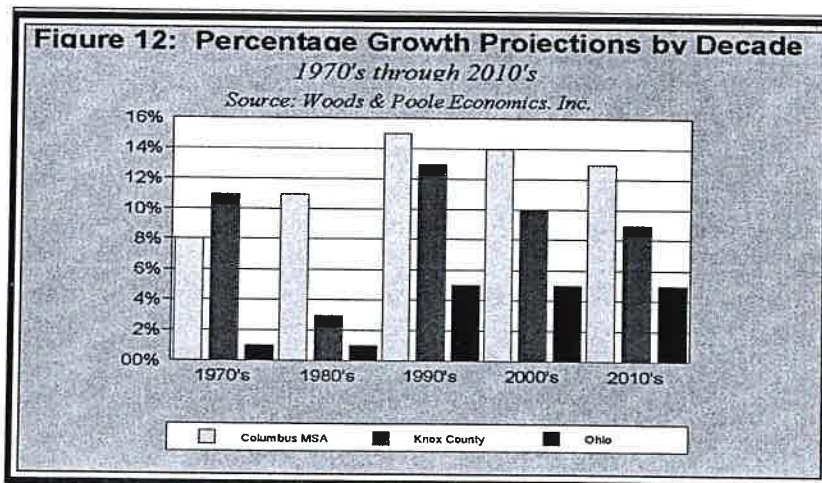
### Projected Knox County Growth

Predictions for future populations of a County can be somewhat unreliable and can vary substantially from source to source. The most straightforward methods for projecting population use current trends with the assumption that what has been happening in the past will continue. Of course, there is no guarantee that this will be true and in fact, it is more likely that current trends will change.

**Knox County's projected growth to the year 2020 is approximately equal to the current population of the City of Mount Vernon.**

Population projections for Knox County are illustrated in **Figure 12**. These projections published by Woods and Poole Economics, Inc. of Washington, D.C., show a continued trend of steady population growth for the County well into the next century. The specific projection of population indicates that there will be

16,910 more residents added between 1990 and 2020. The 2020 population of Knox County is therefore projected to be approximately 65,000 people. To put this growth into perspective, Knox County's projected growth by the year 2020 is nearly equal to the current population of the City of Mount Vernon. This projected growth will have an impact on the County through increased demands on community facilities, housing supply, and infrastructure. Population projections prepared by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), Office of Strategic Research indicate more conservative growth in Knox County during this same period.





The growth projections for Knox County, Columbus Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and Ohio indicate that the slower growth in the 1980's in Knox County will be replaced by much greater growth during the 1990's, 2000's, and 2010's. **Figure 12** shows that Knox County will outpace the State of Ohio in percentage growth during this time and will remain slightly below the growth levels in the Columbus MSA. The Columbus MSA includes the counties of Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Licking, Madison, and Pickaway.

Given this level of overall County growth, effort was made to identify growth areas within Knox County that are likely to experience higher than average levels of growth pressure. Based on current trends, it is expected that growth pressures will be highest in the following areas:

- Centerburg and Hilliar Township: Estimated to have grown by nearly 300 people between 1990 and 1994.
- Fredericktown: Estimated to have grown by over 300 people between 1990 and 1994.
- City of Mount Vernon: Estimated to have grown by nearly 500 people between 1990 and 1994.
- Apple Valley and Howard Township: Estimated to have grown by nearly 500 people between 1990 and 1994.

It is interesting to note that if the current rate of housing construction is sustained over the next 20 years, there will be an additional 2,400 housing units in Apple Valley. This would result in the total number of housing units reaching 3,900. Assuming an average household size of 2.5, the resulting population of Apple Valley will then approach 10,000 people. This amount of population is commonly associated with a small city.

In addition to the above areas, it is likely that there will be continued pressure for residential development in scattered rural unincorporated areas. Currently, a substantial amount of the demand for residential development sites is being satisfied by rural subdivision activity (lot splits from farms and larger rural tracts). This development pressure is expected to continue although it is expected to be affected by initiatives described later in this Plan.

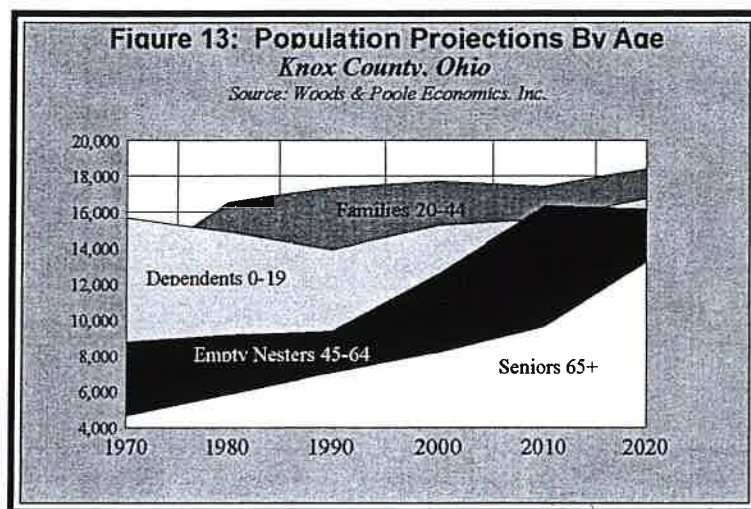
**The population of Apple Valley could reach 10,000 in the next 20 years. A population of this size is commonly associated with a small city.**

### Projected Age Groups

In the future, the dominant age groups within Knox County's population will change. **Figure 13** illustrates the age brackets for Knox County and how these groups are projected to change. The post-World War II baby boomer is becoming middle-aged. By the year 2010, when all of the baby boomers will be more than 50 years old, nearly 37 percent of the County's population will be over 50, compared with 29 percent in 1990. In 2010, the median age of the Knox County population is projected to be nearly 40 compared with 34 in 1990.

**Figure 13** shows significant increases in the "empty nester" (people between the ages of 45 and 64) and "senior" (people age 65 and older) groups. What is significant about the increases of these groups is that they will most likely change the types of demands placed on the community concerning social services, housing, employment, and other factors. Often, people in these age groups do not

require large houses because households are typically only one or two persons. These trends vary nationally however, and there are some indications that new homes are actually becoming larger. This information is examined further in the section entitled "Housing Trends." Also, aging services and health care needs may increase. The aging of the population will lead to slower rates of population growth in the future. **Figure 13** also shows slight increases in the number of people labeled as "families," those persons between the ages of 20 and 44.



### Life Expectancy

People are living longer than at any point in history, and the clear trend has been toward even longer life expectancies. By the year 2020, the average life expectancy for adult women is expected to reach 88, and 83 for adult men. This longer life expectancy has long-term implications for life in the next century. For example, not only will older residents make up a greater proportion of the population, but people in the highest age bracket (85 and older) will increase at a faster rate than the total elderly population. One estimate suggests that by the year 2045, one in five elderly persons will be 85 or older (*Myths of an Aging America*, American Demographics, August 1994). Increasing longevity and improved health at older ages may delay effective retirement and allow people to stay in the work force longer. Since Knox County currently has a high proportion of older residents, this trend is especially noteworthy and will affect employment trends, health care, and demands for social services.

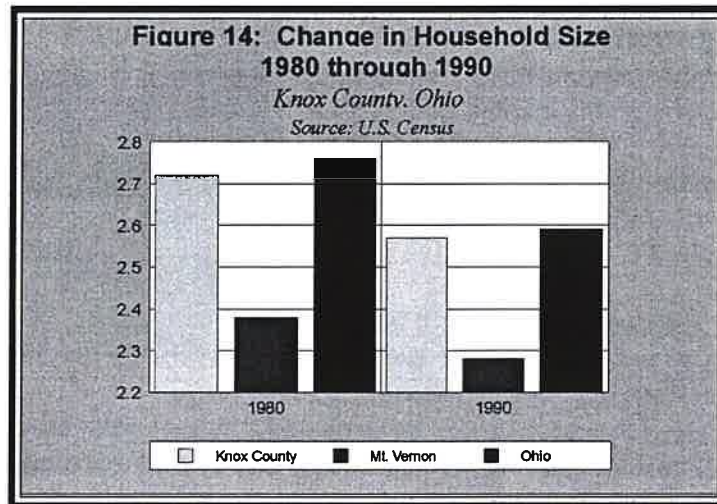
### HOUSEHOLD TRENDS

Household size is getting smaller in Knox County as it is in most other places in the United States. In 1980, the average number of persons per household in Knox County was 2.72. By 1990, that number had fallen to 2.57 and is projected to decrease to 2.53 by 2000. **Figure 14** shows the City of Mount Vernon follows county and state trends in reduced household size.

There are several reasons for the decline in household size. Among them is that more people are choosing single life over marriage. Further, when couples do

**Along with population growth, projected increases in the number of households will create greater demand for new housing units in the future in Knox County.**

get married, they are often choosing to delay having children until their careers are well established or choosing not to have children at all. Increased longevity also contributes to decreased household size. Senior citizens often live in small households containing only one or two people. The result of decreased household size is that more dwellings must be constructed to house the same number of people. One very important result of this trend in household size is increased demand for new housing units. Housing studies typically indicate that along with population growth, household growth is a key determinant of



the demand for new housing construction. This is particularly true when the percentage of household growth is greater than the percentage of population growth. In Knox County, the number of households increased by more than 8 percent between 1980 and 1990 (from 15,895 to 17,230) compared with a 2.5 percent increase in population during this period. Household growth projections prepared by Woods and Poole Economics show that households in Knox County will increase by more than 15 percent to 19,840, compared with a projected population growth of 12.9 percent by 2000.

### General Housing Market Trends

While it is far beyond the scope of this section to provide a thorough housing market analysis, a cursory investigation of residential market demand has been made to understand general residential real estate supply and demand. Most of this effort included interviewing real estate professionals in various areas around Knox County. Important observations about the local housing market include the following:

- Overall, the Centerburg area is among the most active of the local real estate markets.
- Throughout Knox County, residential real estate sales activity in 1997 was somewhat slow compared with 1996. However, activity increased in the Fall of 1997.
- Sales of existing single-family homes are typically in the \$90,000 price range, while prices of new construction generally range between \$100,000 and \$200,000.
- Vacant residential lots in Mount Vernon and in other municipalities are scarce. However, rural lots are generally in good supply because of rural subdivision activity. Sales are stronger outside incorporated areas.



# DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

## CHAPTER 4

- Residential construction activity has been stable and seasonal in the Apple Valley and Knox Lake areas. Housing starts in the Apple Valley area have remained strong, averaging more than one hundred per year over the last several years.
- There may be some shortages of rental units due to a lack of recent new construction of such units. A two-bedroom apartment in Mount Vernon typically rents for between \$450 and \$500 per month.

### General Trends In Housing Construction

A comparison of home values between Knox County and the State of Ohio shows that the state's median home value was approximately one-fourth greater than the County's median home value in 1990. The 1990 median home value in Knox County was \$49,100 compared with \$62,900 in Ohio as a whole.

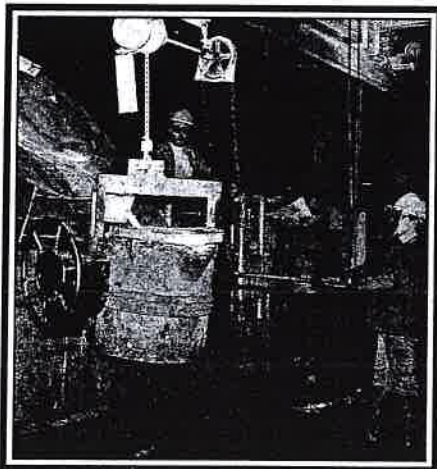


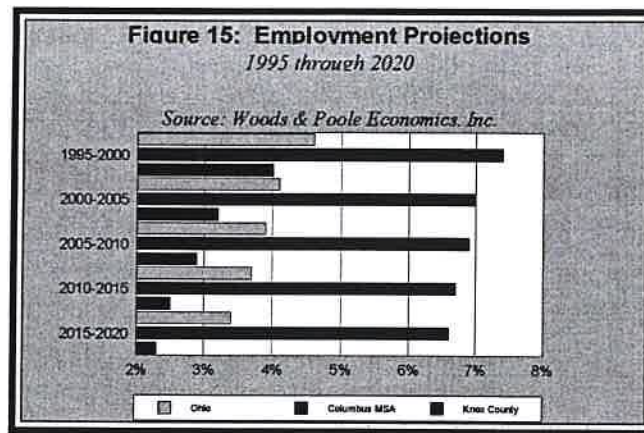
As the population of Knox County grows older, it is likely the demand for housing types will change. For example, as the number of empty nesters and smaller households increase, shifts toward smaller housing units can be expected. Recent national trends show, however, that new home buyers want much bigger houses with larger rooms than buyers wanted 20 years ago. To obtain this, home buyers are willing to put the house on a smaller lot. A study by the National Association of Home Builders suggests that the average size of new homes has increased from 1,645 square feet in 1975 to 2,095 square feet in 1995. During this time, the percentage of new homes with 2,400 square feet or more accounted for more than 25 percent of the new units constructed.

### EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The long-term employment and economic trends for Knox County are positive. The rate of employment growth in the County was comfortably higher than Ohio as a whole. Employment projections are useful tools for projecting future growth trends. Employment projections published by Woods and Poole, Inc.

indicate a generally stable trend in employment growth in Knox County as a whole through 2010. The employment growth rate for the 1995-2000 period is projected at 4 percent, with a total of approximately 1,000 new jobs in the County. Most of this growth is projected within the manufacturing sector with approximately 250 new jobs, service industries with approximately 225 new jobs, agricultural services with approximately 100 new jobs, and the government sector with approximately 175 new jobs. This shift from the manufacturing sector to the service sector represents a continuation of employment trends occurring nationally. However, it is also projected by Woods and Poole, Inc. that employment will decline slightly after 2010. Projected employment growth in the County will generally be less than the Columbus MSA and Ohio as a whole as shown in **Figure 15**.





## HERITAGE TOURISM

There is evidence that tourism related to history and cultural roots is gaining popularity nationwide. The term "heritage tourism" has been coined to express how travelers are drawn to historic and cultural sites and related educational experiences. Although actual statistics are difficult to obtain, a 1995 survey showed that more than three-quarters of historical attractions predicted that attendance would increase in the next year and surveys of travelers in the Spring of 1996 indicated that nearly half of all adults planning a leisure trip intended to visit a historic site (*American Demographics*, September 1996).

Part of this increasing interest in historic areas is being attributed to the growing number of older vacationers who want educational experiences while traveling. †This increase in heritage tourism is relevant to Knox County given the many local historical and cultural features identified previously.

## TRENDS IN FAMILY FARMING AND AGRICULTURE

An increasing demand for rural land has resulted in increasing land values for farmland in Ohio. †Between 1992 and 1997, the average value of farmland has increased 51 percent (from \$1,396 per acre to \$2,110 per acre). Besides this important trend, the Family Farm Project has documented many important trends with respect to local agriculture and family farming practices. Many of these trends are disturbing from the perspective of changing rural character. Some of these trends are identified below:

- Family farms are becoming fewer in number and larger. The number of farms in Knox County has declined approximately 30 percent from approximately 1,700 in 1973 to less than 1,200 in 1992. During this time, the average farm size has increased from approximately 150 acres to nearly 200 acres. For some family farms, there is a perceived need to grow to remain competitive, while others see a need to maintain a smaller size to remain a family farm.
- Many farm operators are getting older and few are actually full-time farmers. More than 42 percent of the farm operators in Knox County are more than 55 years old. Only 35 percent of them are full-time farmers.
- There is a general trend toward specialization on farms. The general farm of the past with crop and vegetable production, cows, pigs, chickens, etc., is disappearing in favor of more specialized operations.





## CHAPTER 5

# EMERGING COMMUNITY PLANNING ATTITUDES

Attitudes toward the way communities develop and redevelop have undergone change throughout most of this century. This is true not only in terms of the beliefs held by developers and planners, but also in terms of public attitudes toward what constitutes positive community development. In many respects, these new attitudes challenge conventional thinking toward development and redevelopment of communities.

A brief explanation of some of these new attitudes and trends is provided to help form a basis for later discussion of key initiatives in Knox County. It is important to recognize that there are many common ideas among these trends and emerging attitudes. Some trends that are most relevant to Knox County include:

- Sustainable Development.
- New Urbanism or Traditional Town Planning.
- Updated Development Standards.
- Conservation Design.
- Farmland Preservation.
- Greenways and Park Linkages.

**In many respects, these new attitudes challenge conventional thinking toward development and redevelopment of communities.**

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The concept of sustainable development has gained popularity with planners and community leaders since the early parts of this decade. Essentially, the concept of sustainable development advances the simple idea that communities are built for people and that the development of a community should enhance the quality of life of its residents, not detract from it. This concept promotes the idea that development should not create excessive environmental, social, or economic costs for current or future generations.

More specific definitions of sustainable development vary, but a common denominator in most definitions relates to rethinking the role of development in a community toward an enhancement of quality of life, and recognizing that the community development of today should not create future costs for the next generation in terms of repairing environmental damage, infrastructure costs, and/or social problems.

**The sustainable development concept means that development should enhance the quality of life of its residents, not detract from it, and should occur without excessive environmental or social costs to be borne by future generations.**

The cities of Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington are among the larger cities that have embraced the concepts of sustainable development. Both communities are high-growth areas that often appear as highly-rated places to live and work.

Challenged by how to grow without losing control of environmental quality, economic stability, and social problems, these communities have taken strong steps toward sustainable development principles and approaches through active community planning.

Sustainable development approaches generally include the following types of initiatives:

- **Create an urban growth boundary.** An urban growth boundary is an official limit to the geographic expansion of urban development. Land within the boundary is targeted for higher-density development and investment in public infrastructure such as water and sewer improvements. Land beyond the boundary is designated for rural uses. The creation of such a boundary helps to officially separate urban and rural land uses and to reduce sprawl.
- **Avoid continuous commercial zoning along arterials in favor of pedestrian-friendly clusters of commercial development.** Commercial strips that extend for miles are not pedestrian-friendly and essentially require the use of autos to access goods and services. This type of development pattern is tremendously consumptive in terms of land resources and is inefficient. More compact, pedestrian-friendly commercial nodes can be developed to produce a more livable environment.
- **Encourage mixed-use development.** Traditional zoning has encouraged a separation of uses. If properly planned, mixed-use developments can produce inviting commercial space and livable residential atmospheres. Mixing uses can produce more of a sense of community and reduce reliance on auto travel to distant destinations for everyday needs. Development should include a high diversity of housing types, sizes, and styles and should offer the potential to live, shop, and work within walking distances of each other.
- **Revitalize existing urban areas.** A decaying urban core in large communities is not unusual, and yet investment is directed toward sprawling suburban development, which consumes tremendous amounts of land. The costs to support this trend are considerable, given the need for new or upgraded roadways and other infrastructure. Conversely, most if not all of the necessary infrastructure is in place in developed urban areas, and revitalization can provide new residential and commercial space with far less environmental impact.
- **Provide a more balanced mix of transportation alternatives.** Many sustainable development principles relate to the idea of allowing for alternatives to automobile transportation. In more urban areas, this includes integrating development with mass transit options along with organized opportunities for car pools and van pools. In less developed areas, the focus is more toward designing developments with separate bike/walking paths to provide for more opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle transportation, along with potential ride sharing efforts.

## NEW URBANISM OR TRADITIONAL TOWN PLANNING

New urbanism or traditional town planning have become increasingly popular in recent years, as it has become more apparent that the traditional American suburb has many social, economic, and environmental flaws. Proponents of new urbanism or traditional town planning believe that disinvestment in central cities, spread of suburban sprawl, increased separation of people by race and income, environmental deterioration, loss of agricultural land, and the erosion of society's built heritage create one interrelated complex problem. Some new urbanism or traditional town planning concepts include the following:

- **Existing urban centers should be revitalized and new developments should be constructed as real neighborhoods.** These neighborhoods should be diverse in use and population and should be designed for pedestrian, transit, and auto travel. **The natural size for a neighborhood is about 200 acres, which allows for a five minute walk to most destinations within the neighborhood.**

- **There should be a mix of housing types within each development.** Many developers produce residential projects that are very uniform in lot size, housing style, dwelling size, and type of unit and cost. While there is some demand for this uniformity, it can lead to unintended consequences, especially if the trend is primarily toward large-lot and large home development in suburban settings. A community with little variety in housing types limits the ability of seniors and young families to stay or live in the community. Seniors and empty-nester households sometimes prefer low-maintenance and lower-cost housing units. Most young families cannot often afford large homes in large-lot developments. There are also potential social implications from having a community with uniform housing types. A broad range of housing types can bring people of more diverse age, race, and income into more daily interaction that can help strengthen social bonds in a community.
- **Concentrations of civic, institutional, and commercial activity should be embedded in neighborhoods and districts, not in remote, single-use complexes.** Schools should be sized and located to enable children to walk or bicycle to them.
- A range of parks, from tot-lots and village greens to ballfields and community gardens, should be distributed within the neighborhood. However, **conservation areas and open space should be used to define and connect different neighborhoods and districts.**

Among the best-known examples of new urbanism or traditional town planning is a development called Kentlands in Maryland. Advertisements for this successful development highlight the following characteristics:

- Narrow, two-lane streets designed to slow traffic.
- Homes built close to the street and close to each other to encourage human interaction. Sidewalks that link schools, recreation centers, shopping, restaurants, and other destinations that are close to homes.
- A variety of complementary housing types located next to each other. This results in condominiums on the same street with estate homes, town homes, mansions, and cottages.
- A block-long village green along with preserved natural landscapes and water features.

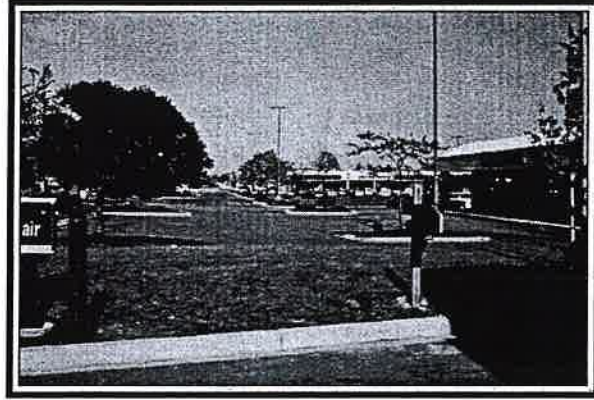
## UPDATED DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The requirements embodied in local zoning codes and subdivision regulations are responsible for many characteristics found in the built environment of most communities. These development standards are often wasteful, ineffective, and simply unnecessary. In more progressive communities, many of these development standards are being reexamined and changed to require a more desirable development pattern. Examples of these updated development standards include the following:

- **Modifying parking requirements for commercial development:** Parking requirements for retail business are often blamed for requiring excessive amounts of parking. This creates vast expanses of parking areas that are seldom used and waste land. Requirements vary considerably from as low as 2.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet of retail space to as much as 10 spaces per 1,000 square feet. Recommendations from organizations such as the Urban Land Institute include a minimum of 4 spaces per 1,000 square feet of retail space. Places such as Seattle, Washington and Orange County, California require approximately 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet.



- **Reducing parking lot standards:** Zoning codes typically include standards used for parking lots such as aisle widths, parking stall widths, and numbers of spaces that can be for compact cars. These standards can be modified to use land more efficiently. For example, aisle widths in parking lots can be reduced to 22 feet (or sometimes 20 feet) and standard parking spaces can be reduced to 8.5 feet in some cases.
- **Allowing zero lot line, single-family housing to increase housing choices:** Zero lot line housing can provide affordable housing opportunities in a community and are not necessarily an inferior type of residential development. Minimum lot sizes can range from 3,000 square feet to much larger lots with side setbacks that are 10 feet on one side and zero feet on the other. Zero lot lines on both sides of the lot are also uncommon.



## CONSERVATION DESIGN

Although conservation design is not necessarily a new concept, the idea that subdivisions should be constructed to incorporate open space networks and produce more than simply housing lots and streets is becoming more popular. This concept has been advanced most recently by Randall G. Arendt in books such as "Conservation Design for Subdivisions." Earlier related ideas have been sometimes called "cluster subdivisions" and "planned unit developments."

Current thinking on the subject of conservation design requires the design of a new residential subdivision to begin with the identification of the land to be preserved, given the natural amenities of the site. These amenities might include woodlots, open meadows, river corridors, etc. Then, given the total number of units that would be allowed under conventional zoning classifications, the subdivision design should cluster housing units in the remaining areas of the development. In this way, the conservation design is "density-neutral," given that the same number of units would be allowed on the site under conventional development and conservation design.

Some major advantages to the practice of conservation design include the following:

- **Lower development costs:** Clustering development can significantly reduce development costs with less requirements for streets, utility lines, and other infrastructure. This advantage is quite clear and direct since conservation design can leave half or more of a site unimproved. These reduced development costs can be passed on to the home buyer and result in more affordable housing.
- **Environmental advantages:** Conservation design can have tremendous environmental advantages since it provides the flexibility necessary to preserve ecological assets on a site that might otherwise be destroyed. Typical subdivisions are often designed with the primary objective of maximizing the number of lots that can be placed on the property. Conservation design allows for the maximum number of units to be constructed while protecting waterways, wetlands, and similar features that might otherwise be cleared, graded, or covered with pavement and rooftops.

- **Preservation of the rural atmosphere:** It is ironic that as more people seek to live in and enjoy a rural atmosphere, that which is cherished and treasured becomes lost to urban development and sprawl. Conservation design is one way that development can occur along with efforts to preserve and protect important elements of the rural environment.

The following page provides an illustration that compares creative with conventional development practices using conservation design principles.

## FARMLAND PRESERVATION

The issue of farmland preservation has emerged as a major area of national concern over the last 20 years. During this time, many agriculturally-oriented states confronted this issue and developed programs and initiatives to address the concern over diminishing agricultural land resources.



In Ohio, attention toward the subject of farmland preservation increased dramatically in 1996 when Governor Voinovich established the Ohio Farmland Preservation Task Force (OFPTF). Twenty-one members were appointed to the OFPTF, including representatives from business, government, academic, and environmental concerns. This task force studied the issue in Ohio, conducted public meetings throughout the State, and released a report in June of 1997.

This new focus on farmland preservation in Ohio has drawn attention to many important statewide land use trends. Some land use trends noted in the findings of the OFPTF include:

- According to the U.S. Census of Agriculture, **Ohio lost 1.4 million acres of farmland between 1974 and 1992.**
- Between 1954 and 1992, **28.7 percent of Ohio's "land in farms" was converted to non-agricultural use.**
- **Ohio is among the top six states in the nation in land consumption per citizen.** Mr. David Rusk, a national urban policy consultant in Washington, D.C., calculated that while Ohio's population grew by 13 percent between 1960 and 1990, urban land area increased by 64 percent. This means that the amount of urban land increased 4.7 times the population growth rate.
- This high rate of land consumption in Ohio exists while up to **one-third of all land within incorporated areas (with utilities and infrastructure) is vacant or underutilized.**

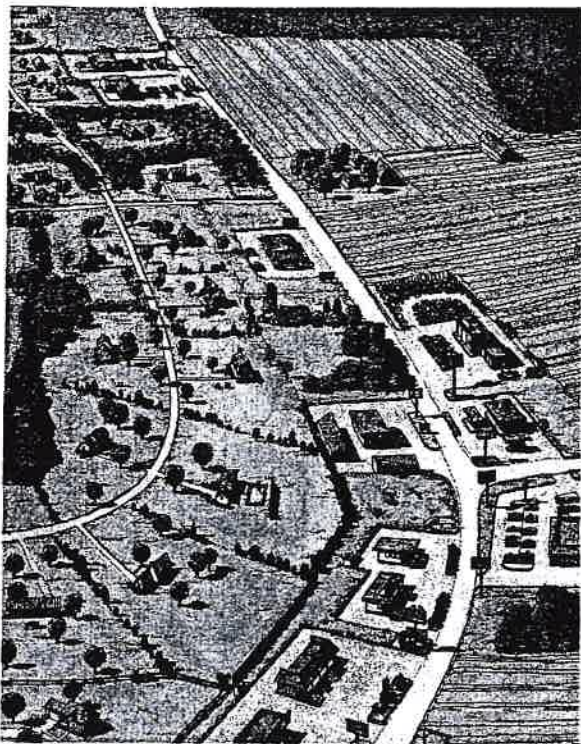


The need for farmland preservation in Ohio, as supported by the findings of the OFPTF, has attracted national attention. The American Farmland Trust (a national nonprofit organization established to protect agricultural resources) has ranked the Eastern Ohio Till Plain as among the ten most threatened agricultural

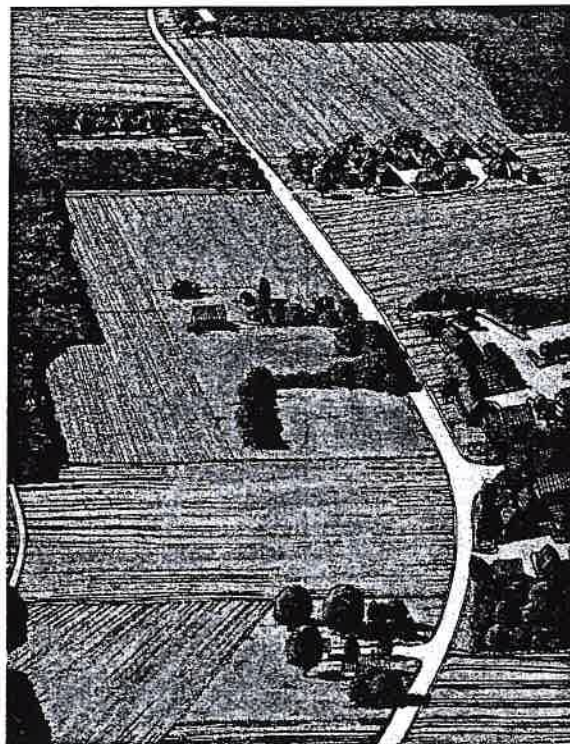


# EMERGING COMMUNITY PLANNING ATTITUDES

## CHAPTER 5



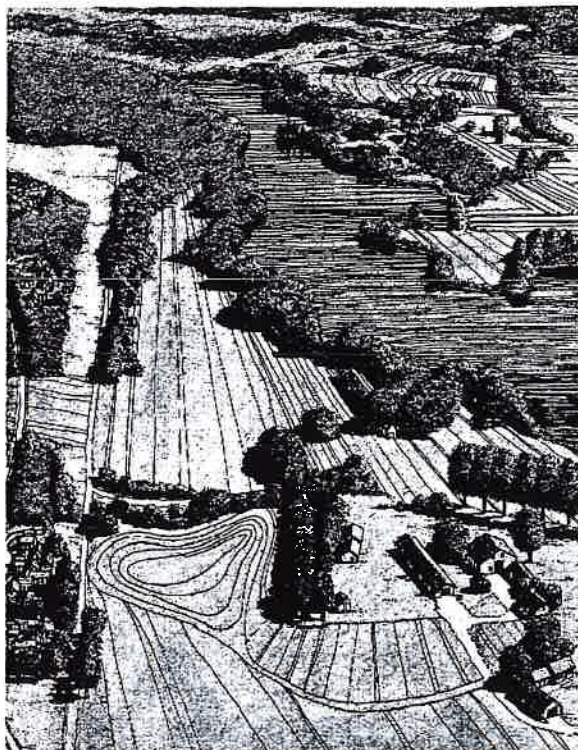
Conventional Development



Creative Development



Conventional Development



Creative Development

Source: Dealing with Change in the Connecticut River Valley: A Design Manual for Conservation and Development, Published by The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, September, 1998



areas in the nation. The Eastern Ohio Till Plain includes Knox County. The factors considered in developing this national designation include the amount of prime or unique farmland available and the amount of development pressure. Development pressure in central Ohio (Franklin County and surrounding counties) has been documented by U.S. Census statistics, showing that between 1982 and 1992, 17,000 acres (27 square miles) of central Ohio farmland were developed. This represents nearly 50 acres per day.

Besides recommending that the State of Ohio preserve the State's productive agricultural land and protect it against unnecessary and irretrievable conversion to non-agricultural uses, key recommendations contained in the June 1997 report of the OFPTF include:

- Create an Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) within the Ohio Department of Agriculture to administer a Farmland Preservation Program for Ohio.
- Develop a set of State Guidelines and Criteria for Local Comprehensive Plans.
- Create a Farmland Preservation Program at the State level.
- Administer a pilot Ohio Farmland Preservation Fund.
- Develop and administer an Ohio Farmland Preservation Strategy.
- Require the Preparation of Biannual Reports to the Governor on the progress of programs and activities.
- Establish an advisory board for the OFP.

Some important recommendations were made regarding the development of an Ohio Farmland Preservation Program in terms of the further development of tools to help preserve farmland. Many of these recommendations involve statutory changes to the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and are under review.

Included in these recommendations were supporting and improving existing programs such as Ohio's Agricultural District and Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) laws. Agricultural Districts, which can be created under Chapter 929 of the Ohio Revised Code, allow agricultural land owners in such districts to receive deferments from sewer and/or water assessments and can provide some protection from nuisance suits. The CAUV program provides a means to tax agricultural land based on its value as agricultural land, rather than according to higher non-agricultural use values.

Recommendations were also made to develop new tools to help preserve agricultural land. These tools included:

- **Create a new voluntary program of local and/or regional Agricultural Security Areas.** These areas would include the benefits of agricultural districts and CAUV.
- **Authorize the creation of a Purchase of Development Rights (PER) Program.** A PER program would allow a farmer to sell the right to develop farmland in return for a permanent conservation easement on the affected land. This easement would preclude future land uses other than agriculture. Currently, legislative authority does not exist for a PER program in Ohio according to the Attorney General; consequently, new legislation is needed. The Farmland

Protection Program through the federal government (authorized under Section 388 of the Federal Agricultural Reform and Improvement Act of 1996) can provide some funding for a PER program if accomplished according to certain guidelines. **With a Farmland Protection Program in place, Ohio would be eligible to apply for a grant of up to \$2 million from the federal government.** It is recommended that a PER program operate within an Agricultural Security Area and according to a local comprehensive plan.

- **Authorize the creation of a Lease of Development Rights (LDR) Program.** An LDR program is similar to a PER program except that it would allow a farmer to make a more limited commitment to protect farmland from development. A period of at least 30 years is recommended in the OFPTF report. It is also recommended that an LDR program operate within an Agricultural Security Area and according to a local comprehensive plan.
- **Authorize the creation of local or regional Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs.** TDR programs allow property owners to buy and sell the right to develop their property. Transactions for the sale of development rights would be recorded and monitored at the local level.
- **Consider the feasibility of a State 30-year Land Use Tax Credit (LUTC) program.** The LUTC program would offer eligible landowners a tax credit on their property taxes in return for a 30-year easement on the affected land.
- **Consider the feasibility of creating a state or local interest buy-down program for farmland acquisition loans.** To encourage the purchase of farmland for new or expanded operations, this program would subsidize the interest paid on farmland acquisition loans in return for a permanent conservation easement on the affected land.
- **Encourage State and local land acquisition agencies to consider the protection of land through the purchase of development rights or conservation easements, rather than "fee-simple" purchases.** State and local governments routinely purchase land for many purposes. Some of this acquisition activity is for open space purposes such as wellhead protection and could be accomplished more efficiently with conservation easements or a purchase of development rights, allowing farming to continue.
- **Create a pilot State Farmland Preservation Fund to provide funding for voluntary incentives for farmland preservation.** This would provide seed funding for the creation of local programs to offer voluntary incentives for farmland preservation.

### Other Ohio Farmland Protection Efforts

It is important to note that local efforts to preserve farmland have been demonstrated in many areas around the State of Ohio for some time. Conservancy organizations have been formed in many areas with the goal of acquiring development rights and/or conservation easements over land as a means to preserve agricultural land or environmental assets. Typically, these organizations are privately funded and have comparatively few resources given the considerable scope of the issue.

## **GREENWAYS AND PARK LINKAGES**

The term "greenway" has been applied to areas that tie parks together to form a more cohesive park, recreation and open space system. Communities have begun to look at parks and recreation spaces as more than isolated locations of open space or recreational activity. Newer attitudes have advanced the concept that park facilities and open spaces should be part of a system that can be connected with greenways and linkages to allow area residents to travel along paths. This movement could include walking, jogging, bicycling, and in-line skating. Greenways typically follow natural features. However, manmade greenways can be built corridors that are part of development projects. Manmade greenways can be located within subdivisions or along utility easements and can provide access to active and passive recreation areas.

Several statewide conservation organizations, such as Rivers Unlimited and the Ohio Chapter of the Ohio Rails-To-Trails Conservancy, have begun efforts to generate momentum for a statewide greenways initiative. This effort will complete a report on the economics of greenways in Ohio, collect case studies, hold a statewide conference, and create an Ohio Greenways Blueprint for action.

Outside Knox County, a good example of a greenway in Ohio is the Huron River Greenway that is being planned by the local park district.

Erie MetroParks has been involved in planning this greenway for several years with the support of the Huron River Greenway Coalition, Inc. (a 501(c)(3), tax-exempt organization). This greenway follows the former railroad route along the Huron River, beginning near Huron, Ohio and ending in Norwalk, Ohio.





# **EMERGING COMMUNITY PLANNING ATTITUDES**

## **CHAPTER 5**

## CHAPTER 6

# CORE PLANNING ISSUES

Because of Focus 2100 and the dialog that took place during the meetings of the three task forces, a number of core planning issues surfaced. These core issues are very important now and are likely to continue to be important in the future. How local leaders deal with these core issues will profoundly affect whether the overall quality of life in Knox County improves or declines over the next twenty years. These core issues are identified and explained below.

### ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

The completion of this Plan is intended to represent a turning point for Knox County in terms of local community planning. As stated throughout the planning process, the completion of this Plan should represent the beginning of dedicated implementation efforts. In order for the initiatives defined in this Plan to move forward, there is a need to restructure local planning functions.

At present, the Knox County Regional Planning Commission (KCRPC) does not function as a true independent and cooperatively formed planning organization as authorized under State law. Section 713 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) permits any municipal corporation(s), board(s) of township trustees, and board of County commissioners to cooperatively create a Regional Planning Commission (RPC). The member entities agree on the terms of their participation, funding, staffing levels and other organizational matters. Typically, RPC's hire professional staff; rent, lease or buy office space and equipment; and have broad authority to accept and expend funds from external entities. A key advantage of a regional planning commission is that member entities can gain access to professional planning staff who might otherwise be unavailable.

### LAND USE ISSUES

Core land use issues are divided into several categories.

#### General Land Use Issues

- The development of this Plan helped to highlight the fact that information on land resources in Knox County is very decentralized and is not readily available. **A centralized depository of information on land resources would be very useful for residents, local officials, and developers.**
- All mapping submitted as part of this Plan was accomplished using Geographical Information System (GIS) technology. This provides a good basis for future development of a GIS for Knox County. However, Knox County is one of the few counties in Ohio that has not taken advantage of the Ohio Capability Analysis Program (OCAP) offered by the Ohio Department of Natural



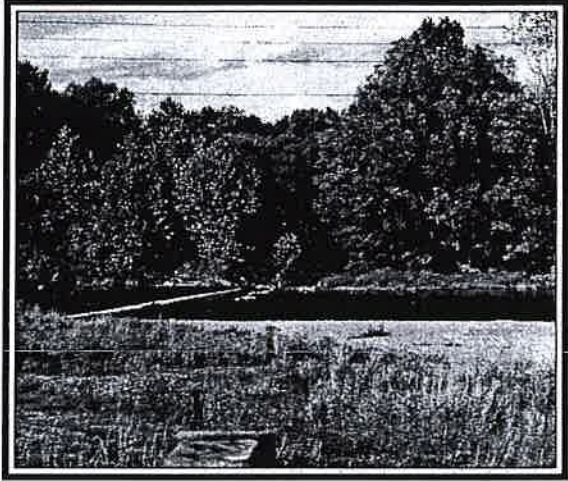
# CORE PLANNING ISSUES

## CHAPTER 6

Resources, which could provide considerable information on land resources at comparatively little cost. This program could also assist the County Auditor with developing current agricultural use value (CAUV) property tax calculations.

- **Knox County did not have an up-to-date generalized Plan for Future Land Use** to provide an overall vision for growth and development County-wide until completion of this document. Projections of growth indicate that approximately 16,500 more people will call Knox County home by the year 2020. **A key issue in the development of this Plan is to identify areas most suitable for this additional growth based on the expansion of existing urban areas and extension of municipal services.**

### Environmental Issues

- The Kokosing and Mohican Rivers are major environmental and historical assets in Knox County. Unrestrained rural development and suburban sprawl pose a threat to these resources. Local efforts are needed at two levels. **First, effort is needed to more precisely define biophysical boundaries for these river corridors and to more completely document historic and ecological characteristics of these areas. Second, the concept of the Kokosing and Mohican River Greenway should be advanced to become the centerpiece of a County-wide open space system.**
- 
- Knox County has many areas of exceptional groundwater potential. Certain areas have also been identified as being significant in terms of groundwater pollution potential. **It is important to raise awareness of groundwater pollution potential and make certain that only desirable land uses are allowed in sensitive areas.**

### Rural Development Issues

- The potential future loss of agricultural land in Knox County is a serious concern from a land use perspective, in terms of the loss of rural character and the stability of agricultural operations. **If Knox County development patterns follow similar trends as in nearby counties, Knox County will lose significant amounts of agricultural land as rural areas are inefficiently subdivided for large-lot rural residential development.** A more innovative approach to land use regulation is needed to preserve agricultural land, while not severely impinging on private property rights. This approach should be consistent with the Plan for Future Land Use and is likely to include more effective and innovative use of the Knox County Subdivision Regulations and local zoning ordinances.
- New State legislation authorizing various local initiatives to preserve agricultural land are expected soon. **Knox County is uniquely positioned and well prepared to move forward with the implementation of agricultural land preservation programs when they are authorized.** Any funding for local programs is expected to be very limited and, thus, there is a need to maximize the impacts of farmland preservation efforts by combining agricultural land preservation efforts with needs such as river corridor preservation and aquifer protection.



- The rural character of Knox County is an attribute that many residents cherish. **Deliberate and effective actions are needed to assure that the rural character of Knox County is not lost to suburban sprawl.**

### Land Use Regulation

- **There is a growing awareness of the need to provide a higher level of assistance to Knox County villages and townships regarding zoning.** Many zoning codes are outdated and lack the structure necessary to effectively guide development in a positive way. In fact, in many respects, local township zoning actually requires development to occur in a pattern of sprawl with wasted land resources.

### Commercial Development

- Future residential growth will spur demand for additional commercial space in Knox County. **The manner in which new commercial space is developed is very important. Two directions are possible.** Strip commercial development could continue outward from urbanized areas along major corridors such as Coshocton Avenue and Harcourt Road. Alternatively, limits could be placed on the expansion of existing commercial strips in an effort to contain sprawling commercial areas and encourage the redevelopment of existing commercial property.

### Industrial Development

- **Local employment opportunities and the tax base of Knox County need to keep pace with population growth if Knox County is to avoid becoming a bedroom community.** Bedroom communities for larger urban areas often experience higher tax rates because residential development typically demands more in terms of services than can be paid for in terms of taxes generated. An important element in providing adequate employment opportunities and tax base is to identify and protect key areas with high industrial development potential.

### TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

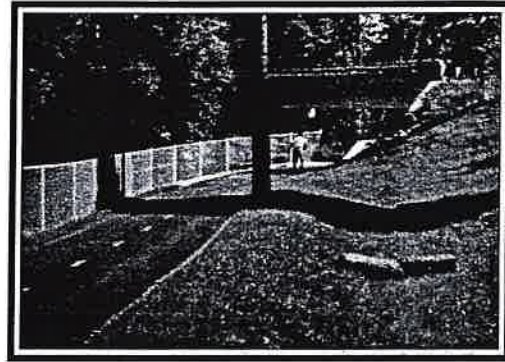
- **A fundamental transportation problem that must be addressed as Knox County grows is to solve traffic flow problems through Mount Vernon.** Outward growth from the City of Mount Vernon will continue, placing increased demands on the roadway system, and congestion will continue to increase downtown. Given the long-term nature of planning for, and actually constructing new roadways, there is a need to initiate short-term action.
- **There is a need to protect existing roadway capacity from uncontrolled development because new road construction and improvements are expensive.** Congestion and traffic flow problems can be amplified with poorly located driveways, inadequate setbacks, and poor signalization. As growth occurs along key arterials in Knox County, proper land use controls that address traffic impacts, setbacks, and driveway locations need to be in place to maintain roadway capacity and safety.



# CORE PLANNING ISSUES

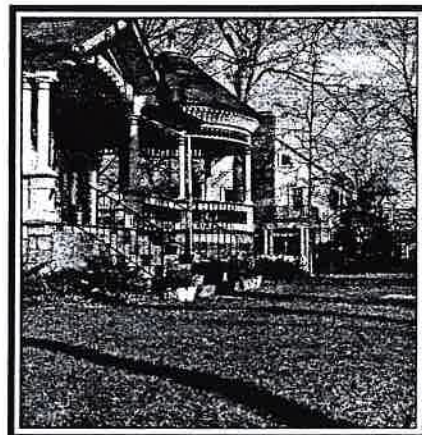
## CHAPTER 6

- There is a need for a fundamental shift in thinking away from the perception that the automobile is the only mode of transportation. **Future development should place greater emphasis on bike and pedestrian movement with the construction of sidewalks, paths, and linear parks that connect to community facilities, parks, and shopping areas.** Car pools, transit, and other forms of ride sharing are also important elements to this shift.



## QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES

- Knox County has many historic resources. Some of these resources are obvious, while others are much less obvious. The identification and recognition of all major historic resources will enhance community character and image, and will help establish a greater sense of place. **In the future, historically significant buildings and potential historical districts need to be more fully identified and recognized.**
- A large part of community identity in Knox County is rooted in rich historic resources. Once fully identified, the protection of these resources becomes vital to the maintenance and enhancement of community image and cultural roots. **As development occurs, individual historic structures, major areas of historically significant buildings, archeological sites and other historic elements need to be protected from inappropriate redevelopment and damaging rehabilitation.**
- **Promoting local historical resources should be part of an overall economic development and heritage tourism development strategy.** Knox County is located in or near many tourist destinations of statewide and national significance. Opportunities to capture additional tourist dollars can be enhanced by offering a unique historic experience for visitors.
- The amount of public outdoor recreation space on a per capita basis in Knox County is below average. To be comparable to the State as a whole, Knox County would need nearly 1,000



additional acres of outdoor recreation space according to the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). **In addition to current needs, projected population increases will create the need for approximately 2,000 additional acres for outdoor recreation space for a total of 3,000 acres.**

- Health care is a particularly important issue in Knox County due to the current and projected number of older residents. Knox County is fortunate to have a hospital that is nationally ranked as one of the best in the country for its size, giving residents access to an excellent hospital facility. **However, greater local health care emphasis needs to be placed**

**on the prevention of disease, rather than treatment.** Presently, the majority of health care resources are directed toward the treatment of disease, with little directed toward wellness and disease prevention.



# **CORE PLANNING ISSUES**

## **CHAPTER 6**

## CHAPTER 7

# VISION AND GOALS

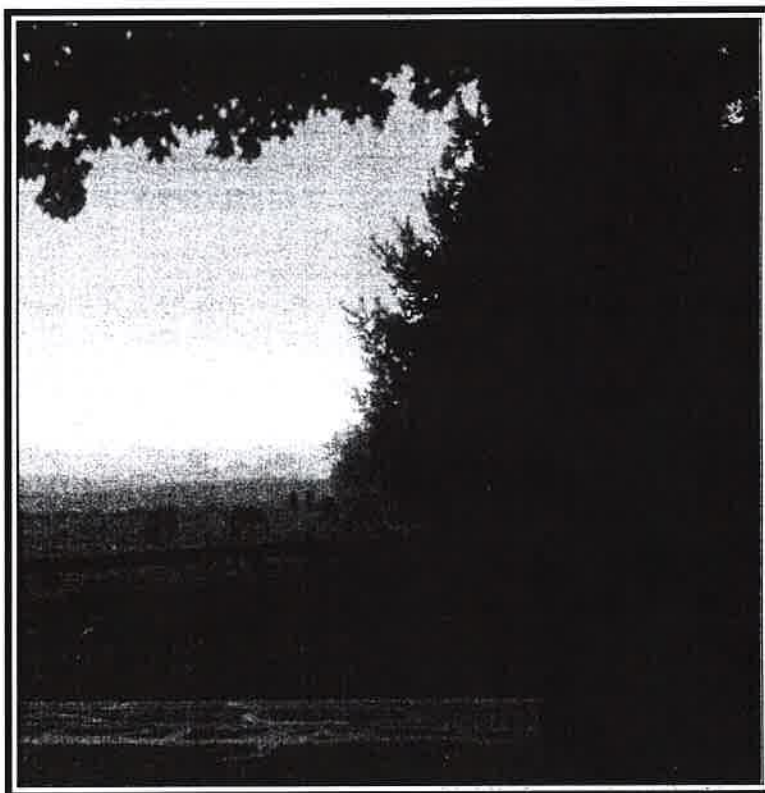
A fundamentally important result of the development of this Plan is the identification of the long-term vision and the goals for the Knox County community. In simple terms, the definition of this long-term vision is an expression of where the Knox County community wants to go. The development of these goals are based on the community goals conference held as part of Focus 2100 and discussions held during the development of this Plan.

**The establishment of a long-term vision and goal is an expression of where the Knox County community "wants to go."**

The following vision is intended to capture and describe the desired future for Knox County in a nontechnical manner. It is based on the dialog that took place during the preparation of this Plan, the specific community goals that follow, and the proceedings of the community goals conference that took place in 1996. Written from the perspective of a Knox County resident in the year 2020, it is the hope that this vision, with an ongoing commitment to keeping policies and initiatives current and relevant, will enable a future resident to say . . .

Knox County is an excellent place to live and work with approximately 65,000 people. Thanks to the renewed commitment to local planning that began in 1997, and subsequent efforts to maintain updated plans, Knox County has become known as a progressive rural community with outstanding community development accomplishments. A full-service local planning organization has been in existence for many years and has become a respected source of impartial and professional planning services throughout the County. The growth that has occurred over the last 20 years has been well planned and represents positive additions to the community. There is also the widely held belief that Knox County is a better place today than it was in 1997. People from Knox County are proud of where they live.

Knox County was able to avoid being another unfortunate example of suburban sprawl in central Ohio. County and township officials worked cooperatively toward rural design initiatives that have become a statewide model for



preserving farmland and rural character. Farming is still very much an important component of local culture and the economy. Recent additions to the corporate community use locally-produced agricultural products, adding to the stability of local farming operations. Key roadway corridors, scenic routes and river corridors have been preserved as open space and help define the rural character of Knox County. The Kokosing and Mohican River Corridors are the centerpieces of an impressive County-wide open space system providing connections to residential areas. Many local efforts have resulted in an expanded system of trails, linear parks, and outdoor recreation opportunities that now provide more than ample recreation open space with connections to residential areas.

Excellent job opportunities are available in Knox County for all residents in a variety of employment sectors. In addition to farming-related employment, increased tourism has created many jobs in the area, as has the expansion of manufacturing industries in key industrial areas. Major roadways lead directly into and out of these industrial areas and allow truck traffic to move efficiently through Knox County.

The downtown area of Mount Vernon is a vital center of community, government and business activity, with a variety of shops and businesses that meet the needs of county residents. It's historic center is also a major destination in Ohio for cultural attractions and heritage tourism. The restoration of the Woodward Theater and other improvements have helped Mount Vernon receive more recognition among Ohio's most livable communities with a strong focus toward cultural identity. Historic architecture in and near downtown Mount Vernon has been preserved and maintained and continues to remind residents of the past.

Commercial development in the area has increased to meet demands for goods and services. This commercial construction activity has been focused on redevelopment of existing areas rather than as strip development along major commercial arterials. This has helped keep existing commercial areas viable and reduce traffic congestion.

The foresight shown by local leaders toward the prevention of disease has proven to pay large dividends. Innovative local wellness programs, begun in 1998, resulted in greater attention toward wellness and disease prevention and have made Knox County residents more healthy overall.

Besides the development of the above description of long-term community vision, specific goals have been developed, along with associated policies and initiatives to achieve these goals. The following list of goals have been developed. Policies and initiatives are described in the next chapter.

### **GENERAL GOALS**

- 1) To establish an effective and adequately staffed and funded planning organization in Knox County.
- 2) To have organized, relevant and up-to-date information on Knox County land resources readily available to local officials and the public.



## **LAND USE GOALS**

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- 1) To effectively guide overall development according to a land use plan and basic principles of wise land use.
- 2) To protect the natural resources and environmental assets of Knox County.
- 3) To protect Knox County's farmland and rural character.
- 4) To establish areas for residential growth throughout Knox County in a manner consistent with desires to preserve farmland and rural character.
- 5) To develop and redevelop attractive, accessible, and viable commercial areas to serve the needs of Knox County residents.
- 6) To identify areas especially suitable for industrial development and provide adequate industrial sites for future employment needs.

## **TRANSPORTATION GOALS**

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- 1) To maximize the capacity and function of existing roadways and to provide for the safe and efficient movement of traffic between local and regional destinations.
- 2) To construct new roadways and upgrade existing roadways to address current and projected traffic flow problems.
- 3) To encourage alternative forms of transportation.
- 4) To enhance and protect the positive experience of traveling within Knox County.

## **QUALITY OF LIFE GOALS**

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- 1) To identify and recognize historic resources.
- 2) To protect and enhance historic resources.
- 3) To promote historic resources.
- 4) To increase the total amount of outdoor recreation space by 1,000 acres by the year 2005 to satisfy current needs, and by an additional 2,000 acres by the year 2020 to meet the projected demand from population growth.
- 5) To reduce the incidence of preventable disease.



## CHAPTER 8

# POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

Having identified a long-term vision and goals for the Knox County community, there is a need to define how this vision and these goals are to become a reality. The following policies and initiatives are an expression of how Knox County intends to reach its goals. Some initiatives are defined as being "short-term" because of the need for more urgency and/or ease of implementation.

**The identification of policies and initiatives in this Chapter defines how the goals and vision for Knox County will be achieved. In simple terms, it defines "how we are going to get where we want to go."**

### GENERAL GOAL:

### TO ESTABLISH AN EFFECTIVE AND ADEQUATELY STAFFED AND FUNDED PLANNING ORGANIZATION IN KNOX COUNTY.

#### Policies and Initiatives:

##### 1. Reorganize the Knox County RPC (Short-Term Initiative)

Knox County will strengthen local capacity to maintain local community planning functions by reorganizing the Knox County RPC. This reorganization will take place with the following considerations:

- The KCRPC should be renamed so as not to be perceived as a "department" within a local unit of government.
- New bylaws should be developed, establishing this new planning organization as an independent public entity that relies on funding from its membership. Membership should include both the City of Mount Vernon and Knox County with townships, villages, special districts, community organizations, and the business community encouraged to join.

**This effort needs to be initiated by Knox County, the City of Mount Vernon, the Chamber and the existing RPC itself. Townships and villages also need to be included in organizational decision making.**

This project should be initiated in 1998.

- An important benefit of joining this planning organization should include a specified level of staff services to local planning commissions, zoning commissions, and elected officials. Membership should also include the ability to appoint individuals to the governing board. When staff services are provided to local planning commissions, zoning commissions, and elected officials, those entities retain the ultimate decision-making responsibility.
- Members should be encouraged to adopt this Plan.
- This planning organization should be allowed to act as administrative agent for community and economic development programs for any local entity. This would include administering Community Development Block Grant and related programs.



- The bylaws should require that substantial time and energy be focused toward long-range planning issues, not simply current issues such as rezonings and proposed subdivisions. The bylaws should also identify this planning organization as a central depository for land use information throughout the County.
- This planning organization should have all duties and responsibilities as provided in ORC 713.23 and 711.10. These responsibilities relate to normal functions of RPCs such as the development of community plans, coordination of planning efforts, economic development, adoption and administration of subdivision regulations, and providing recommendations on township zoning.

### **2. Prepare a Model Zoning Code for Townships and Villages and Proceed to Update Local Zoning Codes (Short-term Initiative).**

A model zoning code should be prepared for all Knox County townships and villages. While many township zoning issues are very specific to each township, there are many common problems and issues that can be addressed in an up-to-date model code.

Some of these common issues include definition and regulation of manufactured homes, limitations on special land uses such as junk yards, and clear procedures for amendments and variances. Another concern is that many codes are organized in a somewhat cumulative basis. This means that areas zoned commercial or industrial also allow residential uses. This form of zoning is problematic and can invite land use conflicts. This model code should also contain provisions for cluster subdivisions and

other more state-of-the-art land use controls discussed later in this Plan.

**The Knox County RPC should initiate this effort once it is re-established and fully staffed.**

This project should be initiated in 1998 and completed in 1999.

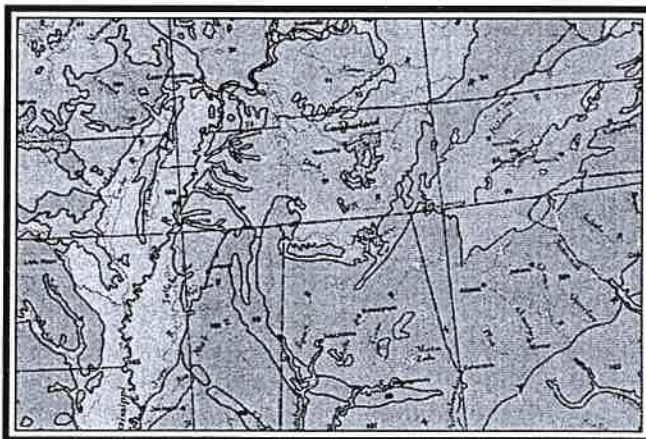
### **GENERAL GOAL:**

**TO HAVE ORGANIZED, RELEVANT, AND UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON KNOX COUNTY LAND RESOURCES READILY AVAILABLE TO LOCAL OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC.**

#### **Policies and Initiatives:**

##### **1. Standardize Information with GIS (General Policy).**

The Knox County landscape is a collection of finite and irreplaceable resources. Viewing land as a resource and identifying its characteristics are important steps toward achieving a desirable land use pattern and making wise land use decisions. Clear and up-to-date information on Knox County land resources should be readily available to local officials, developers, and others making development decisions. New computer technology allows local governments to easily and effectively organize land resource data. The organization, maintenance, and distribution of this information is viewed as being an ongoing County responsibility. ARCVIEW/ARCINFO is a logical software format for Knox County to build on the



data assembled with the development of this Plan. Data provided by the State of Ohio is also commonly available in ARCVIEW/ARCINFO format.

Ultimately, one important use for having up-to-date land resource information within a GIS system is to be able to produce accurate natural features inventory maps for all of Knox County that would be useful at a more site-specific scale. Among other applications, this would allow for the site-specific identification of environmental assets (such as stream corridors, woodlots, areas with steep slopes). These areas could be identified as future primary or secondary conservation areas along with existing protected conservation areas (as advocated by Randal Arndt and others focused toward advancing environmental principles in site design). With this information, localized open space corridors can be planned and environmental assets can be more effectively identified and preserved.

## **2. Fund and Implement an OCAP Program (Short-term Initiative).**

Representatives from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources should be invited to make a local presentation on the Ohio Capability Analysis Program for the Knox County Regional Planning Commission. The costs for this program are expected to reach \$45,000. This commitment should be made as soon as possible as there is a waiting list of projects and the actual work can take a year or more to complete. The completion of this project would dramatically improve the available land resource information available and provide a major step forward toward the development of a useful GIS system.

## **3. Central Information Depository (General Policy).**

The Knox County Commissioners and members of the Regional Planning Commission should pass resolutions indicating that all information regarding land use should be sent to the Regional Planning Commission for inclusion into a County-wide data base. A target list of information should be developed and sent to all townships, villages, and cities, whether or not they are incorporated, and all public agencies. This would include local information such as:

**The Knox County RPC should initiate this effort and request funding from the Knox County Commissioners. Participation from other local units of government may also be desirable.**

This project should be initiated in 1998.

- Computerized zoning maps and codes from all municipalities and townships.
- Water and wastewater treatment facilities and planned expansions.
- Locations of conservation easements.
- National Register nomination listings.
- Local Land Use Plans and updates.
- Mining activities, planned operation duration, and reclamation plans.
- Proposed municipal and township roads.
- Current land use information.
- Park plans and expansion plans.
- Farming information, such as locations of containment farms, regional changes in production, or regional failures to produce because of outside influences.

Some information may already be available to or produced by the County. However, if the process of internal data collection is made more formal through the use of policy changes within the Planning Commission, it would be easier to coordinate the input of data presently gathered by the Planning Commission, the County Engineering Office, and/or other County agencies.

### **LAND USE GOAL:**

### **TO EFFECTIVELY GUIDE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH A PLAN FOR FUTURE LAND USE AND BASIC PRINCIPLES OF WISE LAND USE.**

#### **Policies and Initiatives:**

##### **1. Define Desirable Land Development (Short-Term Initiative).**

There is a need to more formally and completely express desirable land development principles for Knox County. This should be done in the form of a separate document titled "Knox County Development Design Manual." The need for this manual is grounded in the fact that land development regulations such as subdivision regulations and zoning are legal instruments that define acceptable minimum standards and rarely provide guidance toward the best and most desirable development practices.

To help Knox County encourage more high-quality development and reach identified land use goals, a development design manual is needed. Such a manual would not have the force of law, but could be used as a more clear identification of a locally accepted view of "good" development. Basic elements in this local design manual should include guidelines for the development of residential subdivisions using conservation design and sustainable development principles.

**The Knox County RPC should establish a task force charged with the responsibility of producing this manual. A task force is needed because there are many technical issues to address. Membership should include the County and City Engineers, health department representatives, local developers, and others.**

This project should be initiated in 1998 and completed in 1999.

Additionally, this manual could help further define how elements of land development such as signage, lighting, and landscaping could express community character within commercial areas and entryways. The requirement that new parking lots include not less than five percent of landscaped islands and trees is one such example. Desirable exterior building characteristics could also be defined in terms of rooflines and facades. The usefulness of this design manual, particularly in terms of rural residential development will become more apparent as development concepts of the Plan for Future Land Use are more fully explained in the following material. The design manual for the Connecticut River Valley in Massachusetts would make an excellent model for Knox County due to similarities that exist between these two areas.

##### **2. Plan for Future Land Use - Development Concept (General Policy).**

Local land use decisions should be guided by the Plan for Future Land Use developed as part of this comprehensive plan with the cooperation of all local governments. This Plan for Future Land Use was developed with careful consideration of the many development constraints and opportunities from a County-wide perspective and is provided on **Map 17**. In addition, there are two important attributes of this Plan For Future Land Use.



- Although this Plan for Future Land Use illustrates a single future land use for specific areas, it is possible that other land uses may also be suitable, and even desirable, for a given area. This suitability and desirability would be directly related to consistency with the guiding principles defined below.
- This Plan for Future Land Use is generalized and long-term. No effort was made to define future land use on a parcel by parcel basis. These land use decisions are made at the local municipal and township level, but should be made within the context of this broader county-wide Plan for Future Land Use. In the future, recommendations made by the Knox County Regional Planning Commission on township zoning amendments should be consistent with this Plan for Future Land Use.



The fundamental principles expressed in the Plan for Future Land Use include the following:

- Future growth should be directed toward defined urban growth areas where centralized services are currently available or can be more economically provided.
- Infill development should be encouraged to more efficiently utilize underdeveloped areas.
- Development in urban areas should emphasize creative approaches, such as mixtures of development types, traffic calming measures, neighborhood orientations and design criteria that reflect adjacent historic properties.
- Revitalization of deteriorated urban areas should be encouraged as opposed to a continued emphasis toward development of vacant green field sites. New development of all types, outside urban growth areas, should be allowed but held to a high standard in terms of preservation of rural character, agricultural land and open space.
- Mixtures of land use types should be allowed and encouraged in new developments when properly screened, buffered, and when appropriate site planning is provided.
- Land development should be sensitive to natural resources and environmental assets.

## **LAND USE GOAL:**

### **TO PROTECT THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS OF KNOX COUNTY.**

#### **Policies and Initiatives:**

##### **1. Define a Special Planning Area for the Wellhead Protection Area Northwest of Mount Vernon (General Initiative).**

The defined wellhead protection area northwest of the City of Mount Vernon is a special area of interest from a land use planning perspective. Recommendations outlined in a separate study prepared by a consultant should be followed with respect to future land use. This will require the cooperation of City, Township, and County officials.

### **2. Define a Special Planning Area Adjacent to Knox Lake & Apple Valley Lake (General Initiative).**

The area adjacent to Knox Lake represents a special concern from a land use planning perspective. Development near lakes and waterways is often very popular. As a result, it is expected that development pressures will increase in this area. Future unplanned development will present problems due to the lack of central sewers and general environmental consequences. Problems could result from additional storm water runoff, as well as pollution problems from on-lot sewage systems. The appropriate response to this issue is the creation of a special planning group for this area to address long-term development concerns. This group should be composed of Township, Village, and County officials who should be charged with developing a site-specific plan for development near this important resource. Local planning should address the subject of sanitary sewers in the area.

Like Knox Lake, Apple Valley Lake is a significant resource that would benefit from being designated a special planning area aimed toward water quality protection. Although this area is served by a central wastewater system, additional residential development will likely bring additional discharges of storm water runoff into the lake. This will increase sedimentation and add to the amounts of pesticides and fertilizers entering the lake.

### **3. Define the Kokosing and Mohican River Corridors as a "Greenway" and Centerpiece of an Extensive County-Wide Multi-Purpose Open Space System (General Policy).**

The Kokosing and Mohican River Corridors should be viewed as a linear feature that presents substantial environmental assets and important passive recreational opportunities throughout Knox County. Geographically, these corridors should be considered the centerpiece of a coordinated open space system and "greenway." Greenways are linear open spaces that tie together parks, historic sites, and natural areas following waterways, bikeways, and other transportation corridors. Related to this general policy is a short-term initiative (discussed under quality of life goals) that involves additional documentation of environmental and historic resources within these corridors.



### **4. Develop a Watershed-Based Land Use Planning Approach in Future Local Area Plans (General Policy).**

Once a GIS-based land resource information system is developed, efforts should be placed on planning and management of surface water discharges in an effort to control and reduce pollution into rivers and streams. As urban development increases in certain areas, the need to maintain high-water quality in tributaries will increase. Effective site-specific land use planning is warranted using land resource information organized at a watershed level, along with the use of buffer strips and other means to control runoff.

## **LAND USE GOAL:**

### **PROTECT KNOX COUNTY'S FARMLAND AND RURAL CHARACTER.**

#### **Policies and Initiatives:**

##### **1. Knox Rural Design Initiatives (KRDI).**

Urban sprawl and random very low-density residential development are threats to the agricultural heritage of Knox County. To address this, the KRDI has been developed as a means to effectively deal with rural

development and is based on the belief that efforts to preserve farmland and rural character should be based on both regulatory and voluntary approaches. These approaches are specifically defined in items 1a, 1b, and 1c.

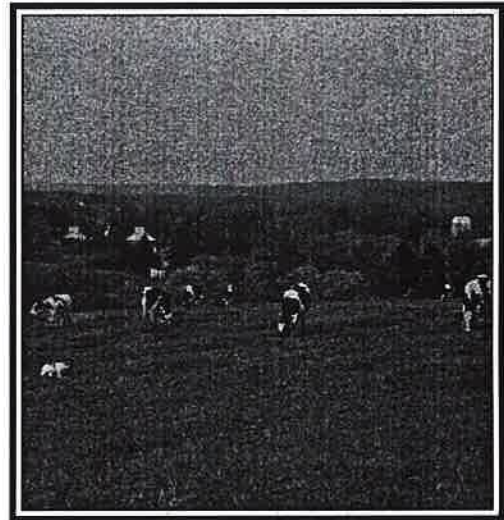
The regulatory component of KRDI seeks to balance private property rights with the idea that urban development in rural areas should be held to a higher standard than has previously been considered acceptable. Essentially, regulatory approaches should provide a means for property owners outside urban growth boundaries to develop property, but in accordance with higher development standards. These higher standards include principles of cluster subdivisions and conservation design.

Along with a regulatory approach, voluntary efforts are also an important component of local farmland preservation policy. Voluntary programs include Agricultural District Creation, Purchase of Development Rights (PER), and Lease of Development Rights (LDR). As these voluntary programs become available with new legislation and funding, appropriate Knox County organizations should pursue local implementation of these programs. To the extent that local funds are needed to match State or Federal dollars required to fund programs, these commitments should be made and carried out in accordance with the Plan for Future Land Use.

### **1a. Voluntary Farmland Preservation Efforts: Purchase of Development Rights (General Policy).**

Purchasing development rights forever, or for a finite period of years, is an effective but expensive option in the list of farmland preservation tools. However, this expense is more easily justifiable when more than one land use objective is met. Purchasing development rights in the defined wellhead protection area or along the Kokosing and Mohican River Greenway will not only preserve farmland, but will also provide other environmental benefits to Knox County.

Urban growth areas are illustrated on the Plan for Future Land Use Plan. The boundaries of these areas represent desirable limits for urban development while still accommodating reasonable levels of growth. Voluntary agricultural preservation programs should be directed toward areas shown to be "agricultural" on the Plan for Future Land Use.



### **1b. County-Level Regulatory Farmland Preservation Efforts (Short-term Initiative).**

Certain major regulatory initiatives are needed at the County level to help prevent sprawl and preserve farmland in Knox County. These regulatory measures are considered an appropriate balance between private property rights and the need to discourage sprawl and preserve farmland. These initiatives include:

- **Limit Rural Lot Splits:** The Knox County Subdivision Regulations should be amended to restrict rural lot splits uniformly throughout the unincorporated areas of Knox County. A number of approaches are possible, but as one example,

**The Knox County RPC, Engineer, Commissioners, and Prosecutor should develop amendments to the subdivision regulations that will address lot splits and updated design standards.**

This project should be initiated in 1998 and completed in 1999.



# POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

## CHAPTER 8

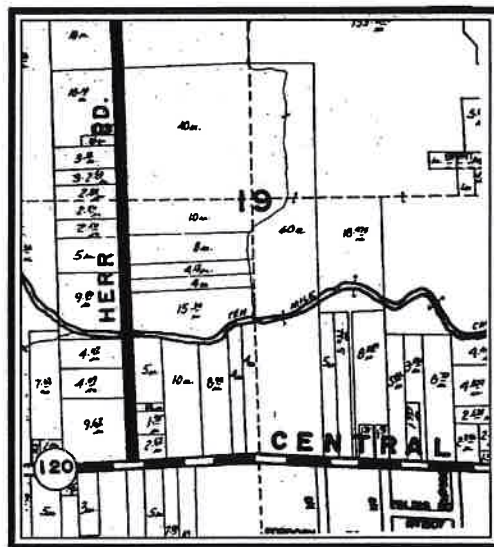
these regulations can be amended to restrict rural splits (less than five acres) to a maximum of four for each original tract as of a date of a subsequent amendment. Any future subdivision activity must then be accomplished as a major subdivision.

- **Update Development Standards:** Development standards defined in the Knox County Subdivision Regulations should be updated to allow for and encourage cluster subdivisions and conservation design.

### 1c. Township-Level Regulatory Farmland Preservation Efforts (Short-term Initiative).

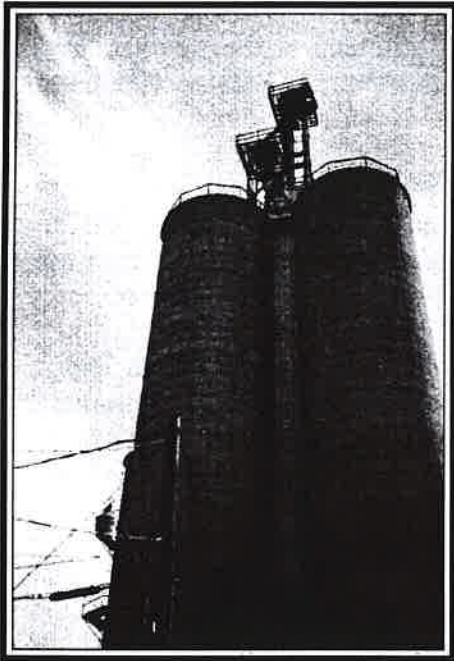
Certain regulatory measures are needed at the township level to help reduce sprawl and preserve farmland from premature and random urban development. These initiatives should be included in township zoning codes and in the model township zoning code to be developed by the RPC. Key elements include:

- **Elimination of Flag Lots:** One approach to limit flag lots is to include a 3:1 width to depth ratio in the model township zoning code. Such a requirement should apply to all new lots (regardless of size). This requirement would eliminate "flag lots" and diminish the incentive to develop lots that are just more than five acres in size that circumvent the Knox County Subdivision Regulations. Provisions in the Knox County Subdivisions Regulations should state that the County may not approve any division of property unless it meets township zoning requirements.
- **Limit Subdivision Activity in Agricultural Zones:** Township zoning should include a limitation on subdivision activity that can occur as lot splits (minor divisions of land involving less than four new building sites) in agricultural zoning districts. The benefit to having this requirement at the Township level (in addition to the County-level) is that a rezoning would be necessary in order to develop property beyond a few new lots. Limitations on lot splits could mirror County requirements (a maximum of four new splits less than five acres from an original tract) or could go beyond this threshold and limit subdivision activity to a maximum of four new splits less than 20 acres from an original tract depending on local needs. The original tract should be defined as of the date of the zoning amendments. Minimum lot sizes should not be reduced to below one acre in Agricultural Zones.
- **Develop a New Rural Residential Zoning District:** In an effort to balance private property rights with the need to prevent sprawl and maintain farmland, an alternative rural residential district is needed. This would be an option to allow those who wish to develop rural property to do so, but with more stringent standards than previously required. To accomplish this, the model township zoning code (and the codes of individual townships as they are amended in accordance with this model) should include a new rural



As indicated previously, the RPC will develop a model zoning code. This model should include elements described in this section. Work with individual townships should commence immediately. Priority should be given to higher growth townships.

This project should be initiated in 1998 and completed in 1999.



residential zoning district requiring new platted residential development to be developed in accordance with cluster subdivisions and conservation design principles. Clustering residential density and the preservation of site amenities should be specific requirements. Minimum lot sizes should be reduced as needed in Rural Residential Zones to allow for clustering of residential density. With such a district in place, the owner of rural land zoned agricultural (and subject to the limitations on rural lot splits and larger lot size requirements) could pursue rezoning of the property to this Rural Residential Zoning District. Rezoning to conventional urban residential districts should not be allowed in areas shown as agricultural and outside the urban growth boundary on the Plan for Future Land Use Map.

## **2. Maintain Key Corridors as Knox County's "Entrance Ways" (General Policy).**

The Plan for Future Land Use illustrates two unique and important roadway corridors in Knox County. The first corridor is the U.S. 36/S.R. 3 corridor leading from the southwest corner of Knox

County through the Village of Centerburg and into Mount Vernon. The other is the S.R. 95 corridor from the western County line to S.R. 13 on the west side of the Village of Fredericktown. Both corridors are parallel to waterways (the Kokosing River and Dry Creek) and they are important gateways into Knox County. In many ways, these corridors represent the Knox County "front doors" and help define the rural character of the area for visitors. The Plan for Future Land Use purposefully includes both agricultural and open space uses along most of these corridors. It is anticipated that there will be future pressure for commercial development along these corridors given existing and future traffic volumes. However, the common tendency toward strip commercial development along roadways of this nature should be strongly avoided in favor of directing commercial development toward concentrated commercial areas as shown on the Plan for Future Land Use.



## **3. Focus Economic Development Toward Agribusiness and Specialty Farming Activities (General Policy).**

In addition to pure land use concerns, economic considerations related to local agriculture are very important to maintaining rural character. Consequently, local efforts to attract, maintain and develop farming related business is viewed as being important to the long-term viability of farming in Knox County. This might include deliberate efforts to make contacts with and attract major seed companies or research and development firms engaged in agricultural products. The further development of a clear strategy could be led by groups such as the local OSU Extension Service, Farm Bureau, and/or Chamber of Commerce. Other related efforts could include the development of a local farmers' market potentially tied to downtown development initiatives in Mount Vernon or in the Villages.

## **4. Create a Farmers Market in Mount Vernon to Sell Locally Produced Goods (General Policy).**

This market might become a part of the downtown restoration effort along the river, thus highlighting the agricultural heritage of the community. The train station on West High Street, at its current location or

# **POLICIES AND INITIATIVES**

## **CHAPTER 8**

relocated, would be a splendid facility for a market. The success of the North Market in Columbus, the West Side Market in Cleveland, and the Erie Street Market in Toledo suggests the economic advantages of this approach and potential attractiveness to middle-class residents, who are likely to increase in number in the coming years.

### **5. Publish a Guide to Local Food Sources in Knox County (General Policy).**

These booklets are being produced in many counties across the country. The guide would include a brief history of agriculture in the County and suggest the benefits of buying local food to the consumer. It would then list sources for local goods arranged by food type and by section of the County.

### **6. Develop Plans for Kenyon College and Other Institutions to use Local Food.**

The food services at Kenyon and at other institutions in the County could provide a major source of revenue to County farmers if they used local food. This approach requires systematic planning, but the results can be better food for consumers, cheaper prices to the institutions, and additional revenue to local farmers.

## **LAND USE GOAL:**

### **TO ESTABLISH AREAS FOR RESIDENTIAL GROWTH IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH DESIRES TO PRESERVE FARMLAND AND RURAL CHARACTER.**

#### **Policies and Initiatives:**

#### **1. Encourage Residential Development in areas shown on the Plan for Future Land Use (General Policy).**

Residential growth should be encouraged within the areas identified as residential on the Plan for Future Land Use Plan. This residential growth is purposefully directed toward areas that currently have urban services, are close to such services, or already support a high level of urban development. There areas include:

- **Areas Outward From Mount Vernon:** Certain areas around Mount Vernon are shown as future residential growth areas. Some of these areas are already zoned to permit higher-density residential development. Given this current zoning, and the proximity of central water and sewer services, these areas represent logical growth areas. New septic systems and wells should be discouraged in this area in favor of central water and sewers extended in a manner consistent with the Plan for Future Land Use. One unique area illustrated as "Future Residential" on the Plan for Future Land Use is the area on the eastern side of Mount Vernon South of U.S. 36. This area has been designated as a special planning area because of the presence (or proximity) of Knox Woods Nature Preserve, Wolf Run, the Kenyon Center for Environmental Studies, the Kokosing Gap Trail, Kokosing River Corridor, and other environmental features. It is recognized that proper site planning should take place in this area to realize the considerable potential to connect these features with open space linkages and open space corridors.
- **Apple Valley:** The Apple Valley area represents a residential growth area for Knox County since this area is already platted and served by central utilities. Apple Valley has hundreds of vacant residential lots available for residential development.
- **Knox County Villages:** Knox County Villages represent residential growth areas for Knox County. In most cases, these Villages provide both central water and sewer services and are logical areas for residential growth. As municipalities, villages can adopt and enforce zoning and subdivision regulations to guide growth in an orderly manner.



- **Unincorporated Places:** Knox County has many unincorporated areas that represent concentrations of existing urban development (primarily residential). Some examples of these areas include: Rich Hill (Hilliard Township); Mount Liberty (Liberty Township); and Brancon (Miller Township). Further residential development in and near these areas could be beneficial, given a more limited impact on farmland and rural atmosphere. At the same time however, these areas currently lack central sewer services and the addition of more development could worsen pollution problems from septic systems. Generally, the future provision of central sewer service in these areas is not expected unless pollution problems reach a point where EPA actions are warranted. For this reason, these unincorporated areas are not shown as expanding residential areas on the Plan for Future Land Use.

## **LAND USE GOAL:**

### **TO DEVELOP AND REDEVELOP ATTRACTIVE, ACCESSIBLE, AND VIABLE COMMERCIAL AREAS TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF KNOX COUNTY RESIDENTS.**

#### **Policies and Initiatives:**

#### **1. New Major Commercial Development Should Occur in and Adjacent to Existing Commercial Areas. Defined Limits on Commercial Expansion Should Be Established to Encourage Development of Existing Vacant Commercial Property (General Policy).**

Apart from commercial centers in the Villages of Knox County, major commercial areas of County-wide significance include:

- **Coshocton Road:** The existing stretch of commercial area along Coshocton Road should end near Upper Gilchrist Road. This will help avoid a continuation of traffic flow problems and encourage more infill of the existing commercial areas. Additional rezoning of land for commercial purposes past Upper Gilchrist Road should be discouraged.
- **Harcourt Road:** This area is expected to emerge as a more prominent commercial area in the future. The availability of central sewer and water is expected to fuel demand for commercial development. The area is naturally limited by West High Street and the flood plains of the Kokosing River on the north. Boundaries are less defined to the south, and there is the potential for strip commercial development to extend haphazardly along U.S. 36/S.R. 3 to the southwest. Rather than allowing this type of strip development to occur, infill development should be encouraged along Harcourt Road, and a southern boundary should be maintained. Additional rezoning of land for commercial purposes, south of the Harcourt Road/Columbus Road split, should be discouraged. An overlay zone should be developed by Clinton Township as a way to control access and setbacks, as well as to provide for landscaping.

Focusing and containing commercial development to defined areas is also viewed as a means to encourage the redevelopment of downtown Mount Vernon.

### **LAND USE GOAL:**

**TO IDENTIFY (AND RESERVE) AREAS ESPECIALLY SUITABLE FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDE ADEQUATE INDUSTRIAL SITES FOR FUTURE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS.**

### **Policies and Initiatives:**

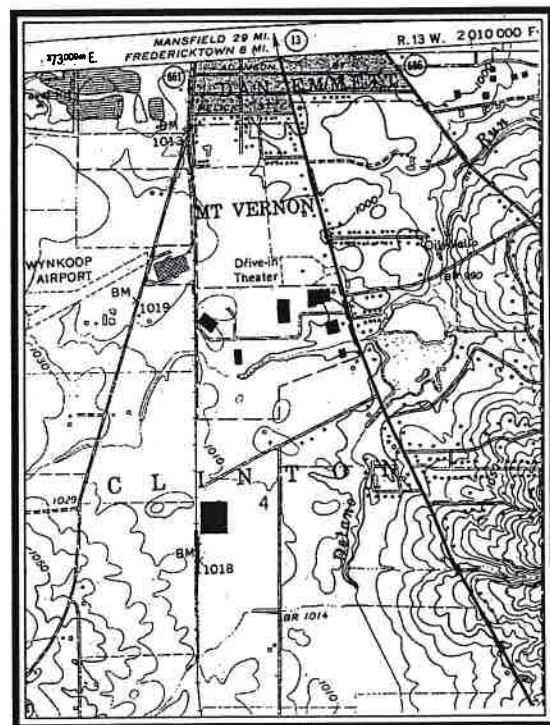
#### **1. Focus Future Industrial Expansion in Areas Shown on the Plan for Future Land Use (General Policy).**

It is recognized that to provide for an adequate local tax base for schools and to maintain a balance between residential development and local employment opportunities, the need for the expansion of industrial areas is necessary. Conservative employment projections indicate that by the year 2020 there will be at least 1,000 more industrial jobs in Knox County. Because estimates of the specific land requirements for this employment growth can vary considerably and because it is generally desirable for a community to have a range of industrial sites available to offer to prospective industries, the Plan for Future Land Use illustrates a considerable amount of land as "Future Industrial." Several specific areas are illustrated on the Plan for Future Land Use and are described below:

- **Industrial Area near S.R. 13 and S.R. 661:** The expansion of the industrial area near S.R. 13 and S.R. 661 south of Mount Vernon represents a logical area for industrial expansion. To blend with existing industrial development in this area, future uses should be limited to "light" industrial activities with high development standards. The suitability of this expansion is based on the following:

- a) Utilities are available from either the Clinton Township Water and Sewer District or the City of Mount Vernon.
- b) This area has good access to rail transport, air transport, and major regional and interstate roads.
- c) This area can expand southward and westward to provide additional sites for light industrial development. The westward extent of this industrial area reaches Dry Creek and includes the Wynkoop Airport to the north. This area is currently used for agricultural purposes and becomes more suitable for industrial development with the construction of a new road connecting with Kenney Road, as recommended in the transportation section. This area should be rezoned to an industrial zoning district and should be included as an enterprise zone.

- **Fredericktown Industrial Areas:** A substantial amount of area within and outside the corporate limits of the Village of Fredericktown has light industrial development potential. Many of these sites are small, but can offer an alternative to industrial sites south of Mount Vernon. Some advantages of these sites are:



- a) Proximity to the S.R. 13 bypass and convenient access to I-71.
  - b) Potential availability of rail access.
  - c) Existing or potential water and sewer availability.
- **Danville Industrial Area:** A relatively large area of industrial land is available in the southeast corner of the Village of Danville. This is the Village's primary area for existing and future industrial development. Several small industries are currently located in here, and the potential exists to expand this area to the east and to the south.
  - **Centerburg Industrial Area:** A small industrial area on the east side of Centerburg along S.R. 714 is shown as a future land use. This area is a potential location for light industrial land uses with limited truck traffic. More intensive industrial development that requires truck access to I-71 and the Columbus area may be more appropriate at an industrial site on the west side of Centerburg.

### TRANSPORTATION GOAL:

**TO MAXIMIZE THE CAPACITY AND FUNCTION OF EXISTING ROADWAYS AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE SAFE AND EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF TRAFFIC BETWEEN LOCAL AND REGIONAL DESTINATIONS.**

### Policies and Initiatives:

#### **1. Classify Knox County Roadways According to Function. Categories include: Regional Routes, Collector Routes, and Local Routes (General Policy).**

Associated maps illustrate roadways as Regional Routes, Primary Routes, and Local Routes. Knox County Subdivision Regulations should refer to these categories and define certain development standards accordingly. Additionally, local township zoning should incorporate setback requirements and associated development standards for these categories of roads. Specific development standards are provided in the following policies:

The following table defines the terms: "Regional Routes," "Collector Routes," and "Local Routes":

Type of Road	Traffic Moving to Minor Areas of Traffic Generation or Local Destinations	Traffic Moving between Major Areas of Traffic Generation throughout Knox County; including Municipalities	Traffic Moving In and Out or Passing through Knox County
Regional Route	Secondary Function	Primary Function	Primary Function
Collector Route	Primary Function	Primary Function	Secondary Function
Local Route	Primary Function	Secondary Function	Not Generally a Function



# **POLICIES AND INITIATIVES**

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It is recommended that the following roads be designated as follow:

- **Regional Routes:** U.S. 36, U.S. 62, S.R. 3, S.R. 13, S.R. 514, S.R. 314, S.R. 715, S.R. 95, S.R. 541, S.R. 205, S.R. 661, S.R. 229.
- **Collector Routes:** C.R. 27 (Sycamore), C.R. 11 (Sparta), C.R. 66 (Montgomery/Lower Fredericktown-Amity), parts of 14 (Danville-Amity), T.R. 245 (Harding), part of C.R. 8 (Gilchrist), T.R. 254 (Upper Gilchrist), T.R. 275 (McKenzie), part of C.R. 5 (Old Mansfield), part of T.R. 368 (Banning), T.R. 131 (Blackjack), and C.R. 7 (Granville Road/South Main).
- **Local Routes:** All other roads.

**Map 18** illustrates the location of all classified routes. It is important to note that Sycamore Road (C.R. 27), Fredericktown-Amity Road (C.R. 66) and Sparta Road (C.R. 11) are designated as Collector Routes to reflect their significance as east-west routes north and south of Mount Vernon.

### **2. Regulate Land Development to Accommodate Roadway Function (General Policy).**







Township zoning should incorporate specific requirements for building setbacks and driveway locations. The Knox County Subdivision Regulations should be amended to contain certain requirements for new platted subdivisions. Specific changes include:

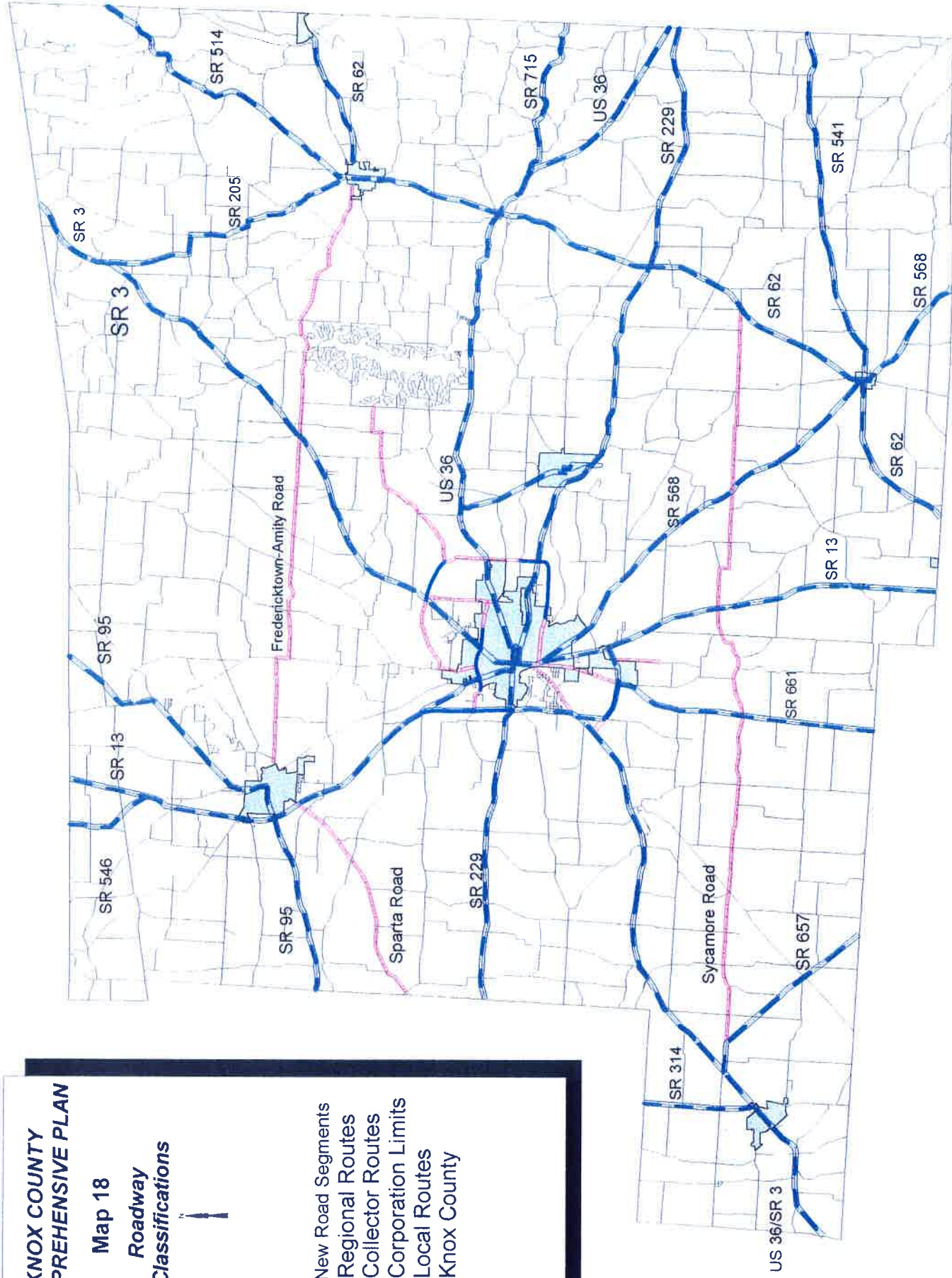
- **Building Setback Requirements for Regional Routes:** A minimum front building setback line of 150 feet from the centerline of the right-of-way should be established in township zoning codes. This will allow for future widening and could allow for front access roads if the need arises. This will also allow for adequate separation between higher traffic flows on Regional Routes and adjacent development.
- **Building Setback Requirements for Collector Routes:** A minimum front building setback line of 100 feet from the centerline of the right-of-way should be established in township zoning codes. This will allow for future widening and for turn lanes next to intersections or high traffic volume uses. This will also allow for adequate separation between higher traffic flows on Regional Routes and adjacent development.
- **Driveway Locations for Regional Routes:** Township zoning should incorporate a minimum nonresidential driveway spacing of 250 feet. Each nonresidential use should have no more than one driveway, unless the benefits of a second driveway are documented in a traffic impact study. Knox County Subdivision Regulations should be amended to require that new platted residential developments provide internal access roads. Residential lots in new platted developments should not be allowed to have driveways that access Regional Routes.
- **Driveway Locations for Collector Routes:** Township zoning should be amended to require a minimum spacing of 100 feet between driveways serving nonresidential uses. Each nonresidential use should have no more than one driveway, unless the benefits of a second driveway are documented in a traffic impact study. Knox County Subdivision Regulations should be amended to require that new platted residential developments provide internal access roads. Residential lots in new platted subdivisions should not be allowed driveways that access Collector Routes.

# KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Map 18 Roadway Classifications



-  New Road Segments
-  Regional Routes
-  Collector Routes
-  Corporation Limits
-  Local Routes
-  Knox County

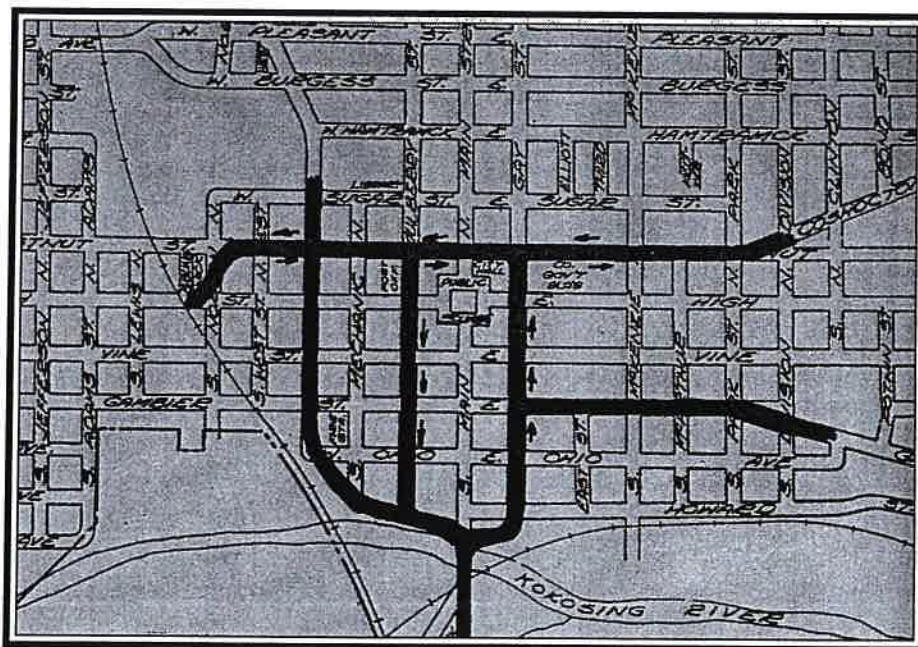




### 3. Designate Truck Routes in and Near the Mount Vernon Area Using Existing Key Roadways (Short-Term Initiative).

The existing patterns of roadways in and near Mount Vernon, which were originally designed as a radial roadway system, do not provide for efficient movement of higher volumes of truck or passenger vehicle traffic. All major traffic flow is directed toward the town square in Mount Vernon, which has limited traffic capacity. There is also the issue of the desirability of large passenger and truck traffic volumes being directed toward the more pedestrian environment of downtown Mount Vernon. Longer-term solutions to congestion problems involve the construction of new roadways (as will be defined later), but such projects will take many years to be fully implemented. The primary concern for the near-term is the development of truck routes to direct the flow of truck traffic in the most acceptable manner possible, given the shortcomings of the existing roadway network. In this light, the following truck routes are proposed as a short-term solution until new roadways can be constructed:

- **Granville Road - Parrott Street - Columbus Road Truck Route:** The Granville Road-Parrott Street-Columbus Road Truck Route is established to connect the industrial area south of Mount Vernon with the S.R. 229 and U.S. 35/S.R. 3 corridors that link Knox County with I-71 and the Columbus area.
- **Downtown Truck Route:** The movement of trucks through downtown Mount Vernon is an undesirable but necessary consequence of the current roadway network and land use system. No solution involving downtown truck movement through downtown is desirable for the long-term; but for the short-term, a truck route as shown below appears to be one feasible solution.





**TRANSPORTATION GOAL:****TO CONSTRUCT NEW ROADWAYS AND UPGRADE EXISTING ROADWAYS TO ADDRESS CURRENT AND PROJECTED TRAFFIC FLOW.**

Potential corridors for new roadways should be defined now so that the opportunities to extend roadways are preserved for the future. Actual road construction can occur with private land development or as a future public improvement project. Individual projects described below are phased and prioritized to indicate time elements. The primary short-term initiative would be the authorization of more detailed engineering studies to further document costs and more specifically address alignment issues. It is very possible that additional study and further site-specific investigation may provide other viable alternatives. An illustration of future roadway segments is provided on **Map 19**. It is important to note that the identification of future roadway segments is not an effort to establish a beltway or bypass around Mount Vernon. The identified new road segments represent individual projects aimed toward improving the flow of existing and future traffic volumes.

**Policies and Initiatives:****1. Define and Construct New Roadway Segments to Provide Connections Between S.R. 13 on the South Side of Mount Vernon to S.R. 13 on the North Side of Mount Vernon (Short-Term Initiatives and Longer-Term Policy).****Phase 1: Extend S.R. 661 Westward Toward Kenney Road South of Wynkoop Airport (High Priority).**

A new road is needed at the intersection of S.R. 661 and Granville Road to connect with Kenney Road. Beyond Kenney Road, this new route could extend directly to U.S. 36/S.R. 3, or could utilize an upgraded Kenney Road. Kenney Road could be upgraded along with the existing bridge over Dry Creek. Intersection improvements and realignments would be needed at the intersections of Columbus Road, Kenney Road and Harcourt Road. This new roadway would be similar to S.R. 661, including the number of lanes, design speed, and right-of-way width; and should be classified as a Regional Route. Construction of this roadway could be accomplished with private development of an industrial area west of S.R. 661.

This project would address these issues:

- Provide more direct truck and passenger vehicle accessibility between the industrial area south of Mount Vernon and U.S. 36/S.R. 3 and S.R. 229. This more direct route would provide better traffic flow as compared with the Parrott Street truck route, given that it would be more direct and involve far fewer vehicle turning movements.
- Link all State Routes in the southwest quadrant of Mount Vernon, including S.R. 13, 661, 3, and 229.

It is possible that this project could be funded with the aid of economic development programs such as tax increment financing or Ohio Department of Development discretionary funds in association with a specific industrial development project.

### **Phase 2: Upgrade Harcourt Road (High Priority).**

Upgrades to Harcourt Road are anticipated to address projected traffic volumes after Phase 1 improvements are made. These upgrades may include additional through lanes and turning lanes to accommodate access to existing and future adjoining commercial development.

### **Phase 3: Extend Harcourt Road Northward, Connecting to Banning Road and Improve Tilden Avenue (High Priority).**

Generally, a preferred alignment for an extension of Harcourt Road would extend east of the Green Valley subdivision and would closely follow the Kokosing River northward to Banning Road. Banning Road becomes Tilden Avenue in the City of Mount Vernon and the existing bridge over the Kokosing River could be used. Some widening of Tilden Avenue may be needed to accommodate higher traffic volumes. It is recognized that the connection to Sandusky Street (S.R. 13) is less than ideal for trucks, given the grade north of the Sandusky Street/Tilden Avenue intersection.

This road extension may require some construction in the floodplain and is located in the wellhead protection area. Future development is not encouraged in this area as shown on the Plan for Future Land Use. The addition of bike lanes within the future right-of-way would be desirable for planning further extensions of the Kokosing Gap Trail. This new road segment would be classified as a Regional Route. Associated improvements would also include improvements to the intersection of Harcourt Road, S.R. 229, and West High Street.

This project would address this issue:

- Phases 1, 2, and 3 would effectively create an alternative route along the western side of Mount Vernon connecting S.R. 13 north of Mount Vernon with S.R. 13, south of Mount Vernon. This would eliminate the need for north and southbound traffic on the west side of Mount Vernon to go through downtown.

### **Phase 4: Connect S.R. 13 near the Rail Crossing to Banning Road at the Connection Point with Phase 3 (High Priority).**

A connection to S.R. 13 north of the City of Mount Vernon (near Green Valley Road) would be the most desirable northern connection to S.R. 13 on the north side. This would result in the elimination of the S.R. 13 railroad grade crossing. The route reduces property acquisition and is generally parallel to the Kokosing River. Like the segment to the south, the addition of bike lanes within the future right-of-way would be desirable for planning further extensions of the Kokosing Gap Trail. This new road segment would be classified as a Regional Route.

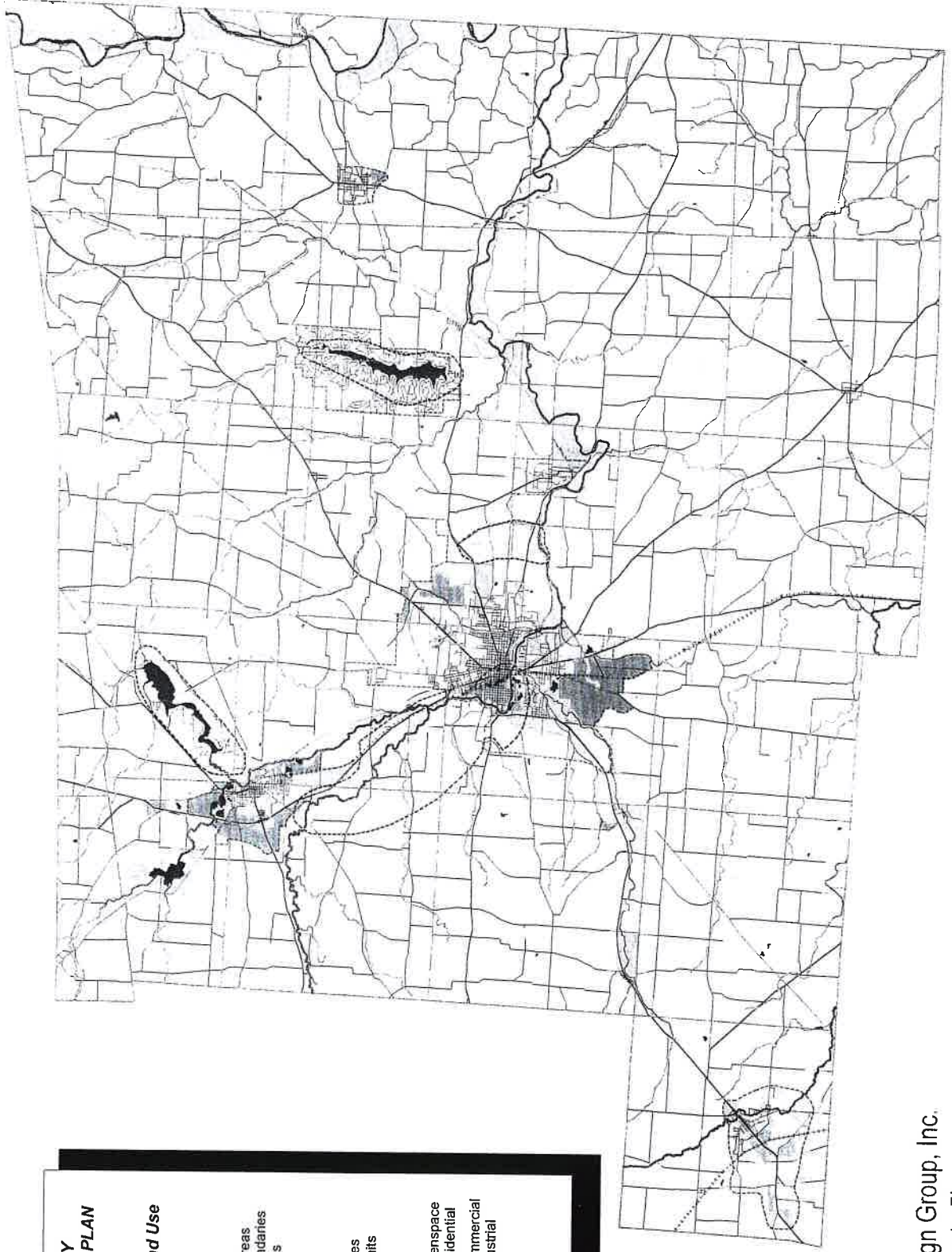
This project would address this issue:

- When combined with earlier phases, this connection would provide an ideal route for trucks and passenger vehicles around the west side of Mount Vernon. This phase would provide an alternative to the use of Banning Road and

**KNOX COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Map 17  
Plan For Future Land Use**

- Special Planning Areas
- Urban Growth Boundaries
- Streams and Creeks
- Major Rivers
- Lakes
- Railroad
- Kokosing Trail
- Township Boundaries
- City and Village Limits
- Highways
- Roads
- Agricultural Use
- Existing/Future Openspace
- Existing/Future Residential
- Existing/Future Commercial
- Existing/Future Industrial





Tilden Avenue. This alternative would be especially important for northbound and southbound truck traffic.

## **2. Define and Construct New Roadway Segments to Provide Better East-West Traffic Movement on the North Side of Mount Vernon (Short-Term Initiative and Longer-Term Policy).**

East-west traffic movement on the north side of Mount Vernon is severely limited because of the radial nature of the roadway network. Ideally, a connection between Coshocton Road and S.R. 13 would help general traffic patterns significantly.

Eastern elements of this east-west connection can be accomplished by extending Beech Street westward to connect to Belmont Avenue. In total, the road segment would be nearly one mile long and would involve extending a new roadway through undeveloped portions of Moundview Cemetery and aligning with the Belmont Avenue/Mansfield Avenue intersection. It is also feasible, over the very long term, to construct a new roadway west of the Belmont Road/Sandusky Street intersection to connect to Banning Road and the new extension of Harcourt Road, as discussed previously. This latter element should be viewed as being more long-term and would require acquisition of several developed properties. It is expected that this route would handle only limited amounts of truck traffic and would be classified as a Collector Route. It is also expected that parts of this road extension could be accomplished with private land development in this area.

An alternative to the above alignment would involve use of Fairgrounds Road (C.R. 51) with extensions to the west and east. An eastward extension would involve a new road connecting Fairgrounds Road with S.R. 768. A western extension would involve extending Fairgrounds Road to the west to connect with S.R. 13. With appropriate alignments and intersection designs, these two extensions would provide ample east-west traffic movement.

## **3. Define and Construct New Roadway Segments to Provide Better North-South Traffic Movement on the East Side of Mount Vernon (Short-Term Initiative and Longer-Term Policy).**

The east side of Mount Vernon lacks useful major north-south routes. To address this, several projects are identified that would aid overall circulation and efficient traffic flow. These projects are not shown as phased improvements as each segment could provide benefits that are more independent of each other.

**4. Connect Upper Gilchrist Road with S.R. 3:** Connect the north-south segment of Upper Gilchrist Road to S.R. 3 and improve its intersections with S.R. 3, S.R. 768, and McKenzie Road. The new roadway and the upgraded portions of Upper Gilchrist Road could become redesignated as S.R. 768. This road segment would be classified as a Collector Route and would be viewed as a long-term improvement.

This project would address these issues:

- Improve east-west access on the north side of Mount Vernon.
- Improve access to Coshocton Road and destinations on the west side of Mount Vernon from places such as Fredericktown.
- Improve traffic flow between Apple Valley and destinations west of Mount Vernon, such as I-71 and the Columbus area.

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**5. Extend Upper Gilchrist Road South to Gambier Road:** The southward extension of Upper Gilchrist Road to connect with S.R. 229 would help create an additional north-south route on the east side of Mount Vernon. There are some slope limitations that exist in this area that will require additional engineering efforts. Private development plans may be underway for this area; therefore, public-private coordination should occur in the near future. This road segment would be classified as a Collector Route.

This project would address these issues:

- Create better north-south access on the east side of Mount Vernon, which could be advantageous for emergency response times.
- Redirect the limited truck traffic on S.R. 229 around the north part of the City of Mount Vernon.

**6. Define and Construct New Roadway Segments to Provide Better East-West Traffic Movement on the South Side of Mount Vernon (Short-Term Initiative and Longer-Term Policy).**

On the south side of Mount Vernon, the major opportunity to enhance east-west circulation involves the extension of Mount Vernon Avenue eastward, then turning northward to connect to and extend to Upper Gilchrist Road. This is a comparatively low priority public project. However, it is expected that residential development will occur in this general area; and as subdivision plats are proposed, a roadway generally configured as shown should be incorporated into the street layout. This road segment would be classified as a Collector Route. An associated improvement would include improvement of the intersection at Mount Vernon Avenue and S.R. 13. Specific improvements would need to be determined after an appropriate traffic study.

**7. Upgrade Blackjack Road, South of S.R. 661 (Short-Term Initiative and Longer-Term Policy).**

The planned industrial corridor south of S.R. 661 along Blackjack Road will create the need to upgrade this road segment to accommodate truck traffic. This road segment is currently designed for very low residential traffic volumes. Improvements to this roadway can be made as industrial development occurs. Additional right-of-way also appears to be needed to accomplish an adequate lane configuration.

This project would address this issue:

- Improvements to Blackjack Road will allow future industrial traffic to flow northward between the rail crossing and S.R. 661. Future truck traffic should not use roadways outside this industrial area.

## **TRANSPORTATION GOAL:**

### **ENCOURAGE ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION.**

#### **Policies and Initiatives:**

**1. Strengthen County and Municipal Subdivision Regulations to Require Pedestrian Linkages When New Residential Development is Near Existing or Proposed Trails, Schools, Parks, Playgrounds, Commercial Areas, or Community Facilities (General Initiative).**

Local subdivision regulations are a primary means to accomplish the construction of pedestrian linkages. Future efforts to update County or municipal subdivision regulations should include new requirements for these pedestrian linkages.

**2. Create a Depository of Information on all Existing Bike Trails and Planned Extensions in Knox County and in Municipalities for Distribution to Developers. The Knox County Park District, in Cooperation with the Knox County Regional Planning Commission and Kokosing Gap Trail Board, Should Initiate This Project (General Initiative).**

**3. Establish a Network of Bike Routes and Lanes Throughout Mount Vernon. This Should be Facilitated by the Knox County Park District, the Kokosing Gap Trail Board, and the City of Mount Vernon. This Effort Should Include Providing Parking Areas for Bikes as well as General Efforts to Make Roadways More Accommodating for Cyclists (General Initiative).**

**4. Educate Children About Bike Safety Through the Development of Special Programs. The Kokosing Gap Trail Board, Along with the School Systems in Knox County, Should Coordinate These Programs. This Includes Encouraging the Use of Helmets (General Initiative).**

**5. Encourage the Use of Ride Sharing, Especially for Columbus-Area Commuters (General Initiative).**

**6. Establish bus or other forms of public transit connections between Mount Vernon and Apple Valley. Routes should circle Alley Valley via Apple Valley Drive (General Initiative).**

## **TRANSPORTATION GOAL:**

### **TO ENHANCE AND PROTECT THE POSITIVE EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELING WITHIN KNOX COUNTY.**

#### **Policies and Initiatives:**

**1. Establish Additional Development Standards along Key Corridors and Entrance ways into Knox County (General Initiative).**

Harcourt Road and Coshocton Avenue, along with the U.S. 36/S.R. 3 and S.R. 95 corridors, are key corridors and entrance ways for Knox County. Initiatives, such as the development of overlay zones that require additional landscaping and signage requirements, should be encouraged. This effort should occur in a coordinated manner to ensure continuity in design throughout the County. The development of the model zoning code (with specific requirements to further this objective), as discussed previously, is a logical approach.

**2. Establish Special Requirements for Outdoor Advertisement along Scenic Routes (General Initiative).**

Since certain roadways in Knox County are designated as scenic routes, there should be extra effort to include additional development standards along these routes to protect attractive views of Knox County.

**Map 20** illustrates these scenic routes.



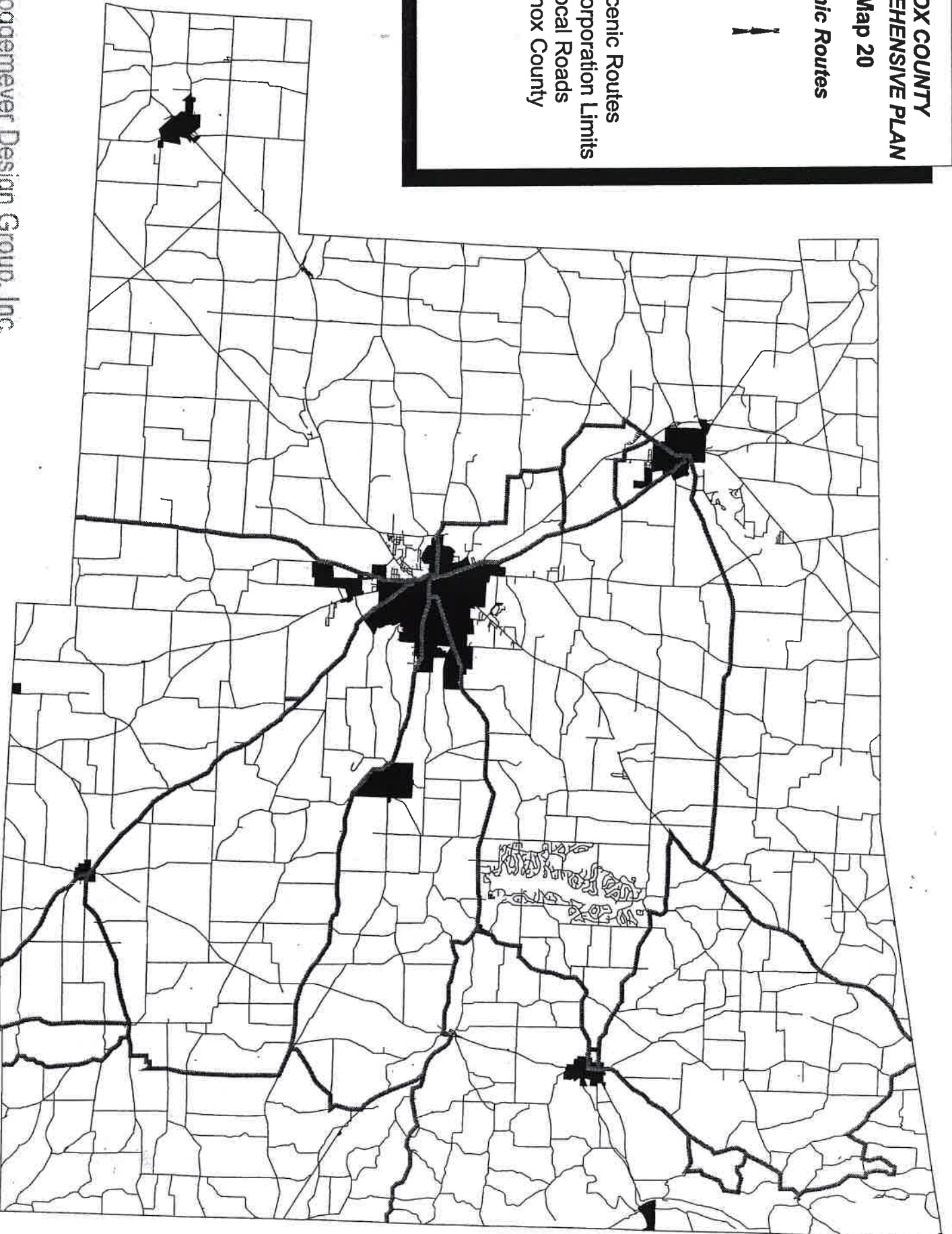
**KNOX COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Map 20**

**Scenic Routes**



-  Scenic Routes
-  Corporation Limits
-  Local Roads
-  Knox County



## QUALITY OF LIFE GOAL: IDENTIFY AND RECOGNIZE HISTORIC RESOURCES.

### Policies and Initiatives:

#### **1. Place Downtown Mount Vernon and Surrounding Residential Neighborhoods on the National Register of Historic Places (Short-Term Initiative).**

Efforts to designate the downtown area of Mount Vernon, and surrounding residential areas as Historic Places should move forward to help draw attention to the substantial historic resources of the area. This can help supplement efforts to restore the Woodward Theater and to further the concept of promoting a heritage tourism program in Knox County. A nomination to the National Register would require a current inventory of property and an established historical narrative proving that the property meets the Secretary of the Interior's requirement for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The residential areas next to Downtown include East Gambier Street and North Main Street.



**A cooperative effort between the City of Mount Vernon and the Convention and Visitors Bureau should be initiated to create a National Register District(s).**

#### **2. Document Historic and Environmental Features Within the Kokosing and Mohican River Corridors, Which Represent Major Environmental and Historic Resources in Knox County. Historic Features Include Indian Trails, "Smoke Rings," Burial Grounds, Etc. (Short-Term Initiative).**

A logical approach toward assembling this inventory is to seek the involvement of the local academic community. Kenyon College, perhaps in partnership with other academic institutions, could spearhead a comprehensive program to define the components of the natural, cultural, and aesthetic landscape of these river corridors. This information can then be used to guide subsequent actions to protect and enhance these important corridors. Foundation grants and future transportation enhancement grants available from the Ohio Department of Transportation are likely funding sources. This initiative is related to the availability of grant funding and/or other resources.

**Efforts to seek funding for this initiative should commence immediately and then pursued. It is quite possible that a phased approach may be needed to fully document important features of these river corridors.**

Project should be initiated in 1998 and pursued to completion.

#### **3. Inventory Historic Farms in Knox County (General Initiative).**

Farming as a way of life has been a major part of Knox County culture for hundreds of years. Today, major changes are occurring in the way farming is conducted, which is resulting in the disappearance of family farms. These trends are well documented by the Family Farm Project at Kenyon College. Additional efforts to identify local farming operations that are particularly relevant to Knox County history are necessary. With this knowledge, a deeper appreciation of this agricultural history can be acquired and any necessary preservation efforts could be undertaken.



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### **4. Develop a Video Biography of People and Places in Knox County Today for Use in the Future (General Initiative).**

A substantial effort to document local history is needed. Many older Knox County residents possess considerable information about the recent past that should be formally documented. Efforts should also be made to archive video tapes of current local events such as parades and county fairs.

## **QUALITY OF LIFE GOAL:**

## **TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE HISTORIC RESOURCES.**

### **Policies and Initiatives:**

#### **1. Revitalize the Woodward Theater and Target It as a Cultural and Historic Anchor for Downtown Mount Vernon (Short-Term Initiative).**

Revitalization efforts by organizations such as the Knox Performing Arts Coalition (KPAC) need to go forward and culminate in the opening of this historic facility within the next few years. KPAC has developed a detailed business plan designed to make this facility an economically viable theater that would significantly contribute to local culture. Some State funds have also been allocated to this project.

**This project is underway and gaining momentum through the efforts of KPAC and the CVB.**

Initial phases of this project should be initiated in 1998 and completed in 1999.

**2. Acquire the Train Depot on West High Street for Renovation and Reuse into Either a Public or Semi-Public Facility (General Initiative).** The train depot on West High Street is currently for sale. Potential options for this building include moving the building to another site for tourist purposes or other types of economic development uses. Despite the lack of an immediate use, this building should be acquired, placed under local control, and preserved.

#### **3. Develop Specific Plans for a Major Civic Focal Point Within the Existing Gravel Pit Area on the South Side of the River Within the Next Year. Specific Study Parameters Are Needed (Short-Term Initiative).**

There is a major opportunity to develop the river front area on the south side of Mount Vernon. Some of this area currently includes gravel pits, but could include several types of community facilities such as an amphitheater or park area. Development of this area for community facilities and as public open space helps create a southern focal point for downtown Mount Vernon and complements the development of the Kokosing River Corridor. A river walk that is lit and well landscaped could be an added downtown attraction and supplement the civic focal point concept. Considerable work is needed to move this concept forward toward definitive plans. Questions concerning parcel configurations, site limitations, and potential uses need to be answered.

**A project-specific planning effort should be launched to develop a major civic focal point along the Kokosing River. This should include the concept of extending the Kokosing Gap Trail and potentially the development of a downtown riverwalk.**

This project should be initiated in 1998 and pursued to completion. Key partners in this effort include the City of Mount Vernon, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Chamber of Commerce.



**4. Develop a River Walk Extending along the River Corridor, Together with Plans to Develop a Major Civic Focal Point and to Extend the Kokosing Gap Trail Westward (Short-Term Initiative).**

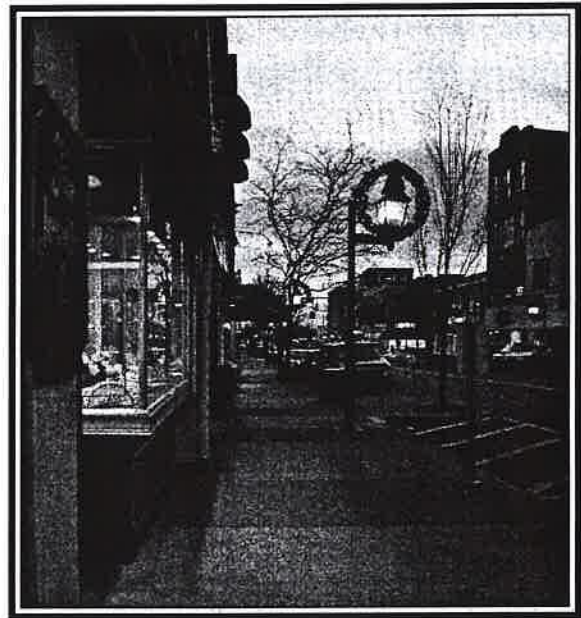
Specific plans need to be prepared to define details for potential improvements. Such a project could also be a catalyst for additional economic development and could be phased.

**5. Review Existing Design Review Regulations for Residential Areas along North Main Street and East Gambier Street and for the Downtown Area (Short-Term Initiative).**

A cursory review of existing regulations affecting historic property in downtown Mount Vernon and in adjacent residential areas suggests that additional steps should be taken to adequately protect historic property from inappropriate development and/or renovation. Design review regulations should be developed and implemented with considerable input from local property owners.

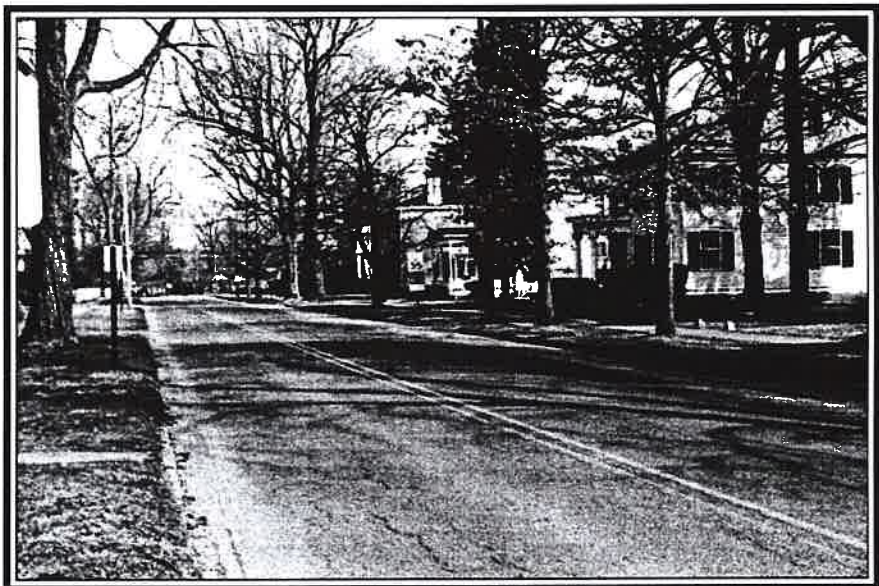
**6. Encourage and Support Villages and Other Local Units of Government to Protect and Enhance Historic Resources (General Policy).**

Many local communities in Knox County have substantial local historic resources and have done an excellent job of protecting and enhancing these resources. However, as most smaller units of government have very limited resources and few people to rely on to accomplish historic preservation initiatives, there is a need to provide support to local historic preservation efforts from the county-level.



**A task force of City leaders and involved property owners should be formed to examine design review regulations and update them as needed.**

This project should be initiated in 1998 and pursued to completion.



## PROMOTE HISTORIC RESOURCES.



acquisition elsewhere. Parkland acquisition accomplished with a fee should be consistent with this Plan and any specific park and open space plan adopted by the City of Mount Vernon.

**2. Aggressively Seek Additional Parkland Acquisition Funds Through Available Public Grant Programs, Private Foundation Grants, and Private Donations (General Policy).**

Knox County is already deficient in outdoor recreation space. Consequently, it will take major efforts to make up this deficiency. Few public grant programs exist for park and recreation development and consequently important projects must be accomplished with limited public resources and significant private efforts.

Responsible entities for carrying out this initiative include the Knox County Commissioners, Knox County Regional Planning Commission, Mount Vernon Planning Commission, Mount Vernon City Council, and Knox County Park District.



**3. Pursue a Dedicated Source of Local Tax Revenue for the Knox County Park District (General Policy).**

The Knox County Park District was recently formed and has accomplished many major initiatives using minimal funding from Knox County. Across the State of Ohio, most active park districts have successfully exercised their local taxing authority and have passed a small millage (generally one mill) to fund programs and activities. This dedicated revenue source can serve as matching funds for grants and is sometimes shared with local villages and townships which need small-scale improvements to neighborhood parks.

**4. Extend the Kokosing Gap Trail Where Possible Along The Former Rail Right-of-Way (General Policy).**

The Kokosing Gap Trail has been a tremendous success in Knox County and efforts to expand it should be encouraged. For example, the rail right-of-way to extend the Kokosing Gap Trail eastward to Brinkhaven is under public ownership. Completion of a rail-trail between Brinkhaven and Danville would provide the necessary connection between the Kokosing River Greenway and the Mohican River Greenway and would connect with trails in Holmes County to the east.

To the west of the existing Kokosing Gap Trail, rail right-of-way is abandoned and available for sale at a cost that is currently prohibitive. Nonetheless, the future extension of the Kokosing Gap Trail westward is desirable from several perspectives:

- It would make the Kokosing Gap Trail longer and therefore more of a regional attraction.
- It would help "connect" the southwestern parts of Knox County with more central and western parts of Knox County.
- It would help define and solidify the concept of an open space corridor along U.S. 36/S.R. 3 next to Dry Creek.



### **5. Create a Community Land Trust (General Initiative).**

The creation of a community land trust (CLT) in Knox County could be very beneficial as a means to supplement efforts of the Knox County Park District in terms of open space preservation. A CLT is a private nonprofit, grass-roots organization created to conserve land resources for ecological, agricultural, scenic, or historic purposes. One target for such land acquisition should be along the Kokosing River and Kokosing Gap Trail in an effort to add to the development of the greenway. A CLT can accept conservation easements from land owners who wish to protect land resources after land is sold. A conservation easement places restrictions on the future uses of the land and a CLT can be assigned the responsibility for enforcement of those restrictions. The Knox County Regional Planning Commission and Knox County Park District should take the initiative and define the need to pursue the creation of a local CLT.

## **QUALITY OF LIFE GOAL:**

### **REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF PREVENTABLE DISEASE.**

#### **Policies and Initiatives:**

##### **1. Create a Knox County Wellness Task Force (Short-Term Initiative).**

Improvements are needed in the way local wellness programs are developed, coordinated and implemented in Knox County to shift the focus from disease treatment and toward disease prevention. The establishment of a local organization to coordinate wellness programs conducted by organizations such as the health department, hospital, and private industry could help maximize the effectiveness of these programs and bring greater visibility to the issue of wellness.

**A Wellness Task Force should be appointed and develop specific recommendations on how to move forward with key local programs.**

This project should be initiated in 1998 with recommendations developed shortly after.

#### **Specific actions of this organization could include:**

- Developing linkages and alliances among wellness program providers.
- Conducting, developing, or coordinating community seminars on smoking, weight loss, stress reduction, hygiene, etc.
- Publicizing early warning signs of common diseases.
- Providing advertisements for proper nutrition.





# **APPENDIX**

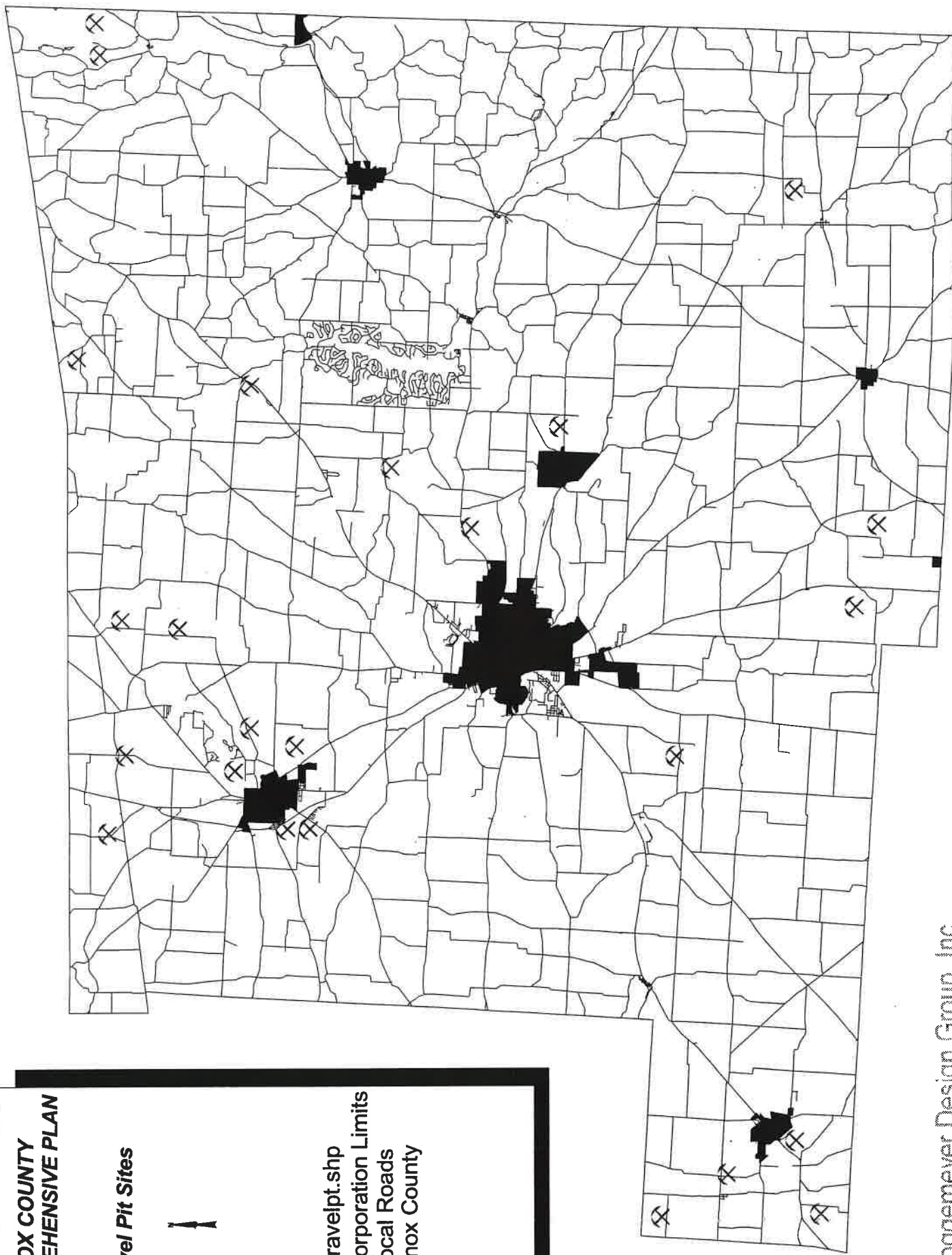
- **GRAVEL PIT OPERATIONS**
- **POPULATION CHANGE BY POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS**
- **SUMMARY OF EXISTING WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT CAPACITY**
- **PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

# KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## Gravel Pit Sites



-  Gravelpt.shp
-  Corporation Limits
-  Local Roads
-  Knox County







## Summary of Wastewater Capacity

SYSTEM	DESIGN CAPACITY	AVERAGE DAILY FLOW	ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE	CAPACITY (PER CAPITA EQUIV.)
Mt. Vernon	5.00 MGD	3.00 MGD	Municipal System	20,000
Fredericktown	.432 MGD	.225 MGD	Municipal System	2,100
Gambier	.5 MGD	.220 MGD	Municipal System	2,800
Centerburg	.2 MGD	.14 MGD	Municipal System	600
Danville	.2 MGD	.13 MGD	Municipal System	700
Clinton Twp. Regional Water/ Sewer District	Collection Only Treatment by Mt. Vernon		Regional District (6119, ORC)	See Mt. Vernon
KNOX COUNTY			County District (6117, ORC)	
Apple Valley/Howard	2 MGD	Currently serving 1,670 residents	Conventional Plant	18,000
Countryside Manor Subdivision	Max. 32 residential lots		Package Treatment Plant	
Pleasant View Acre	Max. 59 residential lots		Lagoon System	
New Hope	Designed to serve current user		Package Treatment Plant	
County Service Complex			Package Treatment Plant	
County Highway Dept/Dog Shelter			Package Treatment Plant	
East Knox Bladensburg Elementary School			Package Treatment Plant	

### Knox County Population Change by Political Subdivision

Area	1970	1980	1990	1994 (est)
<b>Knox County</b>	41,795	46,304	47,473	50,003
<b>Berlin Township</b>	1,192	1,452	1,388	1,395
<b>Brown Township</b>	816	1,000	1,019	1,147
<b>Butler Township</b>	373	449	504	551
<b>Clay Township</b>	819	1,040	1,084	1,101
Martinsburg Village	234	240	213	244
Balance of Clay Twp.	585	800	871	857
<b>Clinton Township</b>	3,072	3,600	3,502	3,584
<b>College Township</b>	1,854	2,363	2,421	2,609
Gambier Village	1,571	2,056	2,073	2,219
Balance of College Twp.	283	307	348	390
Fredericktown Village	1,935	2,299	2,443	2,749
<b>Harrison Township</b>	529	559	586	640
<b>Hilliar Township</b>	1,889	2,337	2,645	2,916
Centerburg Village	1,038	1,275	1,323	1,450
Balance of Hilliar Twp.	851	1,062	1,322	1,466
<b>Howard Township</b>	947	1,557	2,149	2,637
<b>Jackson Township</b>	498	674	680	721
<b>Jefferson Township</b>	562	558	524	549
<b>Liberty Township</b>	1,006	1,277	1,213	1,181
<b>Middlebury Township</b>	783	950	849	818
<b>Milford Township</b>	766	1,075	1,175	1,277
<b>Miller Township</b>	649	722	717	763
<b>Monroe Township</b>	2,215	2,172	2,062	2,106
<b>Morgan Township</b>	634	636	624	682
Utica Village (pt)	0	0	17	16
Balance of Morgan Twp.	634	636	607	666
<b>Morris Township</b>	1,644	1,896	1,801	1,788
<b>Mount Vernon City</b>	13,373	14,323	14,550	15,036
<b>Pike Township</b>	913	1,057	1,065	1,148
<b>Pleasant Township</b>	1,166	1,321	1,454	1,527
<b>Union Township</b>	2,098	2,124	2,150	2,261
Danville Village	1,025	1,127	1,001	1,035
Gann Village	172	173	179	193
Balance of Union Twp.	901	824	970	1,033
<b>Wayne Township</b>	874	863	868	816

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



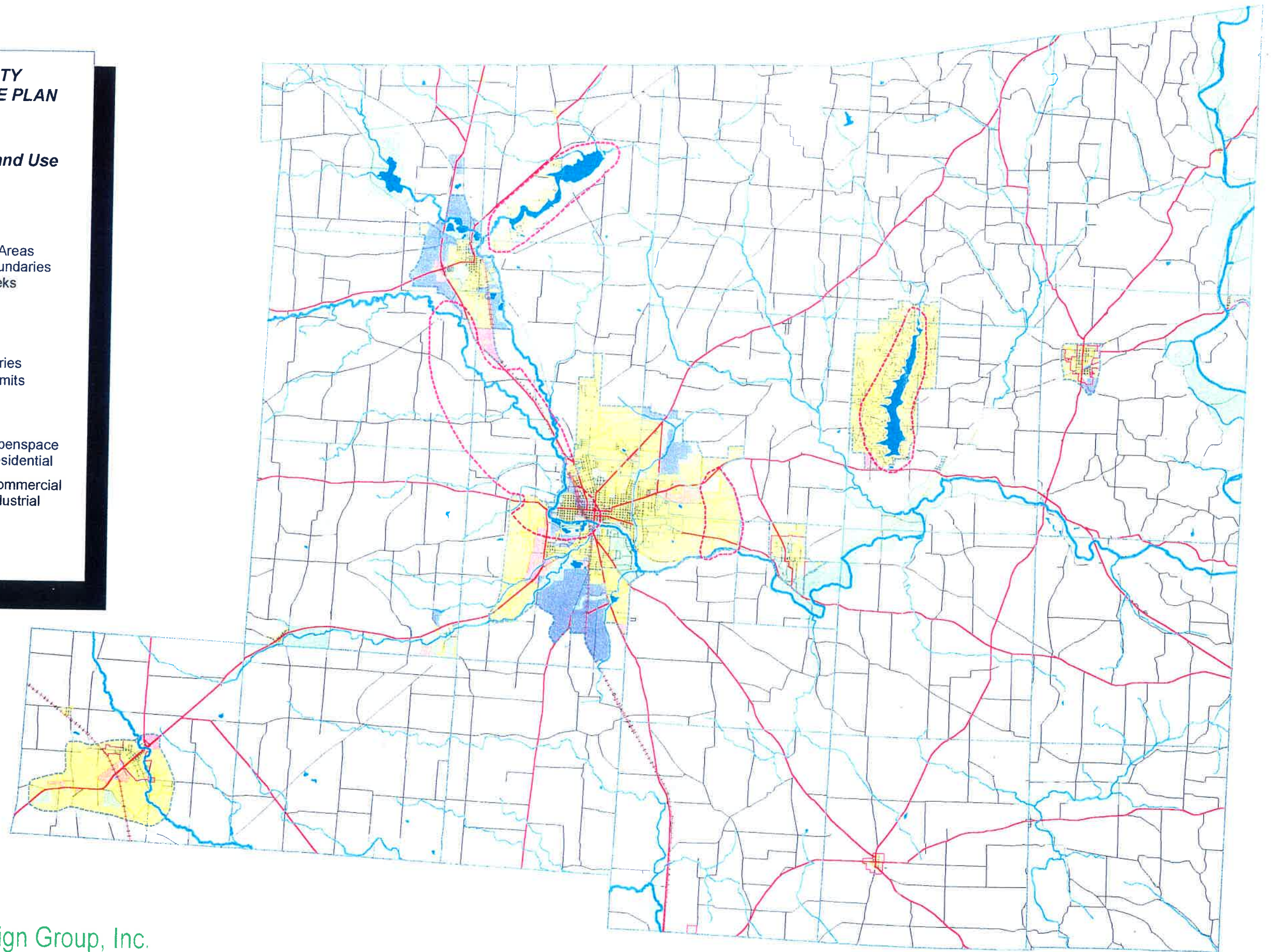


# KNOX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Map 17  
Plan For Future Land Use



- Special Planning Areas
- Urban Growth Boundaries
- Streams and Creeks
- Major Rivers
- Lakes
- Railroad
- Kokosing Trail
- Township Boundaries
- City and Village Limits
- Highways
- Roads
- Agricultural Use
- Existing/Future Openspace
- Existing/Future Residential
- Existing/Future Commercial
- Existing/Future Industrial



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