

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the center, a red brick building with a white roof and a sign that reads "MILL CREEK 2010" is visible. The building is surrounded by lush green trees and a paved road. In the foreground, there is a field of young corn plants. In the background, a dense forest covers a hillside, and a tall utility tower stands on a ridge. The sky is clear and bright.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP

UNION COUNTY, OHIO

2025

FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PLAN, CONTACT:

Zoning Administrator

Millcreek Township

(937) 644-3449

zoning@millcreektwpohio.us

THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED BY:

Planning NEXT

955 Yard Street

Columbus, Ohio 43212

(614) 586-1500

www.planning-next.com

In the event of any conflict, ambiguity, or inconsistency between the Millcreek Comprehensive Plan and the Union County Comprehensive Plan—or any other applicable plan—the provisions of the Millcreek Comprehensive Plan shall govern.

RESOLUTION NO. 2608

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AND ADOPT THE MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP, UNION COUNTY, OHIO, COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025 UPDATE

The TOWNSHIP of MILLCREEK met in a public hearing on OCTOBER 6, 2025 with the following present:

MR. KEITH CONROY

MR. BILL JORDAN

MR. DAVE LONG

WHEREAS, the last update to the Millcreek Township, Union County, Ohio, Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2017; and,

WHEREAS, the Millcreek Township Board of Trustees contracted with Planning NEXT to undertake and complete a detailed update to the Millcreek Township Comprehensive Plan, working in collaboration with the Millcreek Township Zoning Commission; and,

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan is meant to serve as a planning tool to help guide growth and development within the township, applying vision and goals to current circumstances and emerging pressures; and,

WHEREAS, residents and members of the public participated in submitting input during the update process via a community survey, public open houses and public hearings; and,

WHEREAS, the Millcreek Township Zoning Commission held a public hearing beginning on September 10th, 2025 and continued to September 23, 2025 at which time the Zoning Commission recommended approval of the draft Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update to be presented to the Millcreek Township Board of Trustees for approval and adoption; and,

WHEREAS, the Millcreek Township Board of Trustees scheduled a public hearing on October 6, 2025 to review and consider for approval the draft Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update as recommended by the Millcreek Township Zoning Commission.

NOW, THEREFORE, UPON MOTION BY MR. KEITH CONROY, SECONDED BY MR. DAVE LONG, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP, UNION COUNTY, OHIO, THAT:

1. The Millcreek Township Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update as presented is hereby approved and adopted as the most current Comprehensive Plan for Millcreek Township.
2. The Millcreek Township Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update as adopted this day shall serve as an official planning guide for the Township until superseded by a subsequent legally adopted plan.
3. It is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of the Township concerning and relating to the adoption of this Resolution were passed in open meetings and that all deliberations that resulted in such formal actions, were in meetings open to the public, and in compliance with all legal requirements including RC §121.22.
4. That this Resolution shall take effect and be in force at the earliest time provided by law.

Adopted OCTOBER 6, 2025

Attest

Scott Brackman
Fiscal Officer

[Signature]

Member, Board of Township Trustees

[Signature]

Member, Board of Township Trustees

[Signature]

Member, Board of Township Trustees

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP, OHIO

Contents

- 1. INTRODUCTION** **1**
- Purpose 3
- Background 4
- Previous Plans 5
- Accomplishments 8
- 2. EXISTING CONDITIONS** **9**
- People 12
- Prosperity 13
- Place 15
- Regional Dynamics 22
- 3. VISION AND VALUES** **25**
- 4. RECOMMENDATIONS** **29**
- General 33
- Central Planning Area 60
- East Planning Area 66
- West Planning Area 72
- IMPLEMENTATION PLAN** **79**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the community members and stakeholders who participated throughout 2024 and 2025 to update Millcreek Township Comprehensive Plan to facilitate this planning process. The Township would like to specifically acknowledge the following individuals for their guidance and direction:

ZONING COMMISSION

- Kevin Bryant, Vice Chair
- Jim Lawrenz, Member
- Joni Orders, Chair
- Eryn Staats, Member
- Maryann Sweeney, Alternate Member
- Freeman Troyer, Member

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- Joanne Rausch*
- Lucas Rausch
- Aaran Schultz*

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

- Steve Cameron, Vice Chair
- Brian Clark, Member
- Jason Comstock, Chair
- Jeff Pieper, Member
- Jim Teitt, Member
- Greg Wisniewski, Member

TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES

- Keith Conroy
- Bill Jordan
- David Long

TOWNSHIP CLERK & FISCAL OFFICER

- Scott Brackenridge

TOWNSHIP STAFF

- Ron Todd, Zoning Administrator

*Also participated on the Plan Steering Committee, along with members of the Zoning Commission, Trustees, and Board of Zoning Appeals





1. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND	4
PREVIOUS PLANS	5
ACCOMPLISHMENTS	8



Note: This document includes aerial photography taken in 2017. Images locations and page numbers are included on the map above.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 2005, Millcreek Township initiated the development of a new Comprehensive Plan for the community. This plan articulated a vision for the future, supported by broad goals and specific actions. A supplement was added in 2010, and the plan was subsequently updated in 2017. The Comprehensive Plan has proven to be an effective tool, and its core elements, including the vision, will remain intact. However, the Township is situated within a dynamic region where growth and development have intensified in neighboring jurisdictions. The 2025 update aims to ensure the community is prepared to address these emerging pressures. This updated plan will apply the established vision and goals to current circumstances, revising existing recommendations or proposing new approaches as necessary. The following chapter introduces the purpose of the plan and provides background on previous planning documents.

The Plan Update will...

- » **Articulate a vision for Millcreek Township.** The Township intends to maintain its rural atmosphere through the preservation of agriculture and its natural resources while ensuring balanced growth to diversify the tax base.
- » **Define the community's goals.** To achieve its vision, the community has introduced a series of supportive goals. Some of these are generally applied, others relate to specific planning areas.
- » **Update community conditions and trends.** Central Ohio is a growing region. The US 33 and 42 corridors bisecting Millcreek Township are especially dynamic. The Township will review and utilize the most current maps and plans of neighboring jurisdictions.
- » **Provide a rationale for decision making.** Good decisions rely on good information and community support. There should be a clear line of sight between proposed actions and the community's overall vision.
- » **Propose clear recommendations.** To achieve each goal, a set of projects, policies, or programs are recommended. Some of these are context specific, as in the case of the planning areas, others are general.
- » **Establish time frames, responsibilities and evaluation methods.** Ultimately, the success of the plan will, and should be judged by its implementation.



The 2025 update to the Millcreek Township Comprehensive Plan re-establishes the community's vision and will help to support community decisions for years to come. The Township intends to remain a predominately rural community, that maintains its agricultural heritage and independence.

Background

A comprehensive plan is a broad policy document. The vision and recommendations serve as a foundation for decision making and define an aspirational condition for the community. In some communities, like Millcreek Township, that future state is quite similar to the one today. To protect the character valued by residents, conscious action is necessary.

Why a comprehensive plan? All communities evolve over time, experiencing both positive and negative changes, or a combination of both. Even in communities where maintaining the "status quo" is preferred, proactive measures are essential to safeguard the community's character against internal and external influences. A comprehensive plan examines the various components and systems that constitute a community, articulates a guiding vision and supporting goals, and provides strategic recommendations to steer the community towards a shared, desired future.

Why an update? Rather than starting from scratch, Township Trustees recognize the vision and goals supported by the community in the Township's initial comprehensive planning processes still ring true. Subsequent studies have built on this foundation, adding depth and variety to the methods for achieving the vision. This update affirms the community's vision, illustrates relevant findings and recommendations, and, where necessary introduces new actions with community support.

Since the adoption of its first Comprehensive Plan in 2005, Millcreek Township has continued to plan proactively for the future. The vision has remained consistent, but external dynamics - like regional growth pressure, water and sewer provision, and

other mechanisms - mean the community must continue to evolve its approach to achieving it. The recommendations of past plans must evolve to reflect the realities of today. In some cases, this means reaffirming action steps which are still relevant. Others may no longer apply or a new action may be necessary.

This document will help the community maintain the rural atmosphere for residents and ensure a fiscally sound operating approach until a new update is necessary.

Why plan as a Township? Under the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 519, "...in the interest of the public health and safety, the board of Township trustees may regulate by resolution, in accordance with a comprehensive plan, the location, height, bulk, number of stories, and size of buildings and other structures, ... percentages of lot areas that may be occupied, setback building lines, sizes of yards, courts, and other open spaces, the density of population, the uses of buildings and other structures ... and the uses of land for trade, industry, residence, recreation, or other purposes in the unincorporated territory of the county." Millcreek Township adopted its first comprehensive plan in 2005.

USING THE PLAN

The Township's Comprehensive Plan is used as the rational basis for the community's zoning resolution. Through this tool, the Township may regulate individual parcels. Zone classifications define the permissible use for a particular parcel. The Township may regulate for land use, minimum lot size, building placement, height and other considerations.

Zone classifications are applied to an official zoning map. By adhering to the recommendations of the land use map in the Comprehensive Plan, the zoning map becomes the legal expression of the plan. Any new development into the community will need to follow the rules of zoning resolution or pursue an exception or variance. Nonconforming uses built before the passage of the resolution may be grandfathered in, but will face scrutiny under major redevelopment, sale, or some other transaction.

The Comprehensive Plan should also serve as a "guiding light" for policy development and decision making. Through public engagement and research and analysis, the community will learn more about its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The plan will articulate these, develop recommendations and actions to take advantage of assets, and mitigate or address challenges. These recommendations can address transportation, parks and recreation, utility provision, environmental issues and others.

Previous Plans

The 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update analyzes conditions and trends, examines emerging challenges or opportunities and re-affirms existing recommendations or proposes new actions to help the community achieve its vision. The following provides a brief background on the community's previous planning documents as well as other existing plans with a direct impact on the Township.

THE 2005 COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE AND GROWTH PLAN

The Township's first comprehensive plan was adopted in 2005. The process engaged the public, elected and appointed officials, and key stakeholders in a discussion about the future of the community. A vision statement and supporting goals were developed. These informed a series of recommendations relating to growth and development, transportation, lifestyle, and other community elements. The plan also provided analysis of the Township's existing conditions in topics such as population, demographic makeup, economics and personal prosperity, and environmental conditions.

Establishing a vision. To begin the initial process, a citizen steering committee was formed to direct the analysis and inform the final recommendations. This body helped to distribute a citizen survey to every household in the community. These results shaped the community vision, helped to establish goals, and develop measurable objectives.

Revealing key issues and opportunities. At the time of the first planning process, growth in central Ohio was occurring and creating growth pressures for the community. This was especially true northwest of Columbus, in cities like Dublin and surrounding unincorporated areas. The plan highlights this growth pressure as the primary impetus for the plan and expresses concerns over "leap frog" or non-contiguous development. Secondary to this, was the fundamental need for the community to broaden its tax base and remain fiscally healthy.

Setting a direction. The strategies proposed in the 2005 plan focused on protecting the community's rural character while improving the diversity of its tax base. To achieve this, planning areas were established to accept various types of development or to preserve agricultural and residential uses. Through various techniques, development would be slotted into appropriate areas on the periphery, preserving a large majority of land at the center and north of the community. Development, in all cases, should pay for itself. As the vision and values remained consistent, they were incorporated into the 2017 and 2025 updates.

REVISITING THE ORIGINAL PURPOSE

The Township's 2005 Comprehensive Plan established a clear set of guiding principles. These are carried forward in the 2025 update.

- » Aid in the development of key guiding principles to preserve agriculture and natural resources as well as the rural atmosphere in the Township.
- » Aid in the development of key guiding principles as related to industrial, commercial and residential growth and development.
- » Be a plan designed specifically for our community.
- » Identify a balanced plan that recognizes the rights of individual landowners, while preserving property values and preparing the Township for unavoidable future development.
- » Identify any "hot spots" or sensitive areas. It shall also include recommendations and direction for these areas.
- » Make recommendations on how the Millcreek Zoning Resolution and zoning districts can be modified to better compliment the Plan.
- » Provide a basis for the implementation - including, but not limited to the Township zoning resolution, and related county growth plans.
- » Include strategic action items for the Township to implement following adoption of the plan.

THE 2010 PLAN SUPPLEMENT

Unlike the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, the 2010 Plan Supplement was initiated in response to the Township using the plan and resolution tools and identifying a need for enhancement. The 950 acre Bayly Pointe mixed-use residential project would have been split between Jerome and Millcreek Township, and include hundreds of residential units. Although the proposal was withdrawn in 2008 due to the national economic downturn, the year of negotiations revealed limitations in the Township's development review process. The Plan Supplement would augment the existing plan's recommendations (as they relate to specific development proposals) and ensure approved projects are consistent with the vision and values, and appropriately placed within the township.

Reestablishing the vision and setting expectations for development. The Bayly proposal revealed a need for the Township and its leaders to better articulate the expectations for development in the community. To achieve the vision - an agricultural community working to maintain its heritage and character - future development must meet high standards for quality, design, and be well-integrated.

Improving collaboration. One of the central recommendations of the Plan Supplement called for the negotiation of a Joint Economic Development District with the City of Marysville. The agreement



The Bayly Pointe Proposal included roughly 2,000 housing units and would have straddled Jerome and Millcreek Township.

would unlock a new revenue stream for the Township, broaden the tax base, and forge a stronger intergovernmental relationship between the Township and City.

Preserving land and maintaining the rural character. A strategy for land preservation was introduced to designate and protect woodlands, expand parks, green space corridors, wetlands, and other important natural areas through a variety of means.

Focusing on the Home Road development zone. The largest point of departure between the original plan and the Plan Supplement has to do with the placement of the community's focused development site. Based on the experience during the Bayly Pointe negotiations, this was relocated to the southernmost point in the Township, south of the proposed Home Road extension.

OTHER IMPORTANT PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

There are additional documents that are relevant to the Comprehensive Plan Update.

ZONING RESOLUTION UPDATES

Based on the recommendations of previous plans, the Township completed a comprehensive review of the zoning resolution in 2014 to ensure that the wording was proactive. As a result, several new classifications were added to ensure future development use in the Township. In 2019, the Zoning Commission reviewed permitted and conditional uses in all zoning districts to ensure compliance with the 2017 Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Commission has completed extensive text amendments since the 2017 plan was enacted, including updates of entire articles.

EASTERN UNION COUNTY TRANSPORTATION THOROUGHFARE PLAN

Completed in 2016, the thoroughfare plan is a 20-year guide for transportation maintenance and improvements in Millcreek and Jerome Townships. The study focused on the US 42 corridor and its various feeders and access points in the two communities. The work identified current and emerging issues along with related short and long-term remedies. The Township commissioned this supplemental study as an extension of a larger study for the full US 42 corridor between Delaware County and Interstate 70.

THE 2017 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The 2017 update successfully merged the foundational elements of the 2005 comprehensive plan and the strategic insights of the 2010 supplement. This update provided a thorough review of current community conditions and trends, ensuring that the plan remained relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of Millcreek Township. By building upon and refining the findings of the previous plans, the 2017 update offered a cohesive and forward-thinking framework. It introduced new recommendations where necessary, addressing emerging challenges and opportunities while preserving the core vision and values established in earlier plans. This approach ensured continuity and consistency in the township's planning efforts, fostering a well-rounded and adaptable strategy for future development and community well-being.

Consolidating the findings and recommendations of past plans. The 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update merged the two previous planning documents created by the Township. In 2005, the Township completed its first comprehensive plan. This was followed in 2010 by a plan supplement intended to address mounting residential development pressure. The 2017 plan update included the pertinent findings and recommendations from each of these documents.

Conducting research and provide recommendations on pertinent topics. Central Ohio is an increasingly dynamic development market. In the years since the adoption of the Plan Supplement the region added tens of thousands of new residents. The plan updated the local conditions, analyzed the potential impacts of regional trends, and provided new or updated recommendations relevant to the Township.

Creating a user-friendly document. The update provided top-level information on the community's conditions and trends along with strategic recommendations. It includes explanations of key policies or tools like the Planned Unit Development or special planning areas. References were included to existing plans and policy documents for quick access.

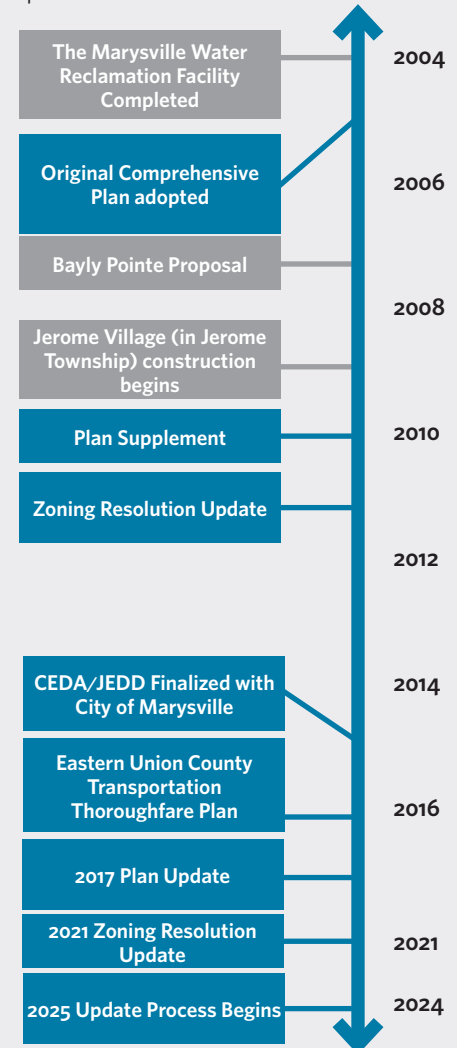
Providing an accessible tool for elected leaders, the public, and potential developers of Millcreek Township. The Township's Trustees insisted on providing a plan that could be read and understood by residents and developers alike. The update was written in an accessible language. Through the use of diagrams, sidebars and maps, difficult concepts were thoroughly explored. Community leaders and developers can also reference previous plans where applicable.

REGIONAL AND COUNTY PLANNING

Millcreek Township's planning efforts are part of a long history of regional and county-level planning, including Union County's multiple Comprehensive Plans from 1992 to 2025 and a broader regional plan in 1970. The Township has built upon this foundation, demonstrating a serious and thoughtful approach to local planning.

TIMELINE

The 2025 update is only the latest in a series of community plans. From its original plan in 2005 the community has led or contributed to several planning efforts, some regional in scope.



Accomplishments

A number of the central recommendations of the previous community plans have been implemented. These accomplishments range from physical investments to intergovernmental agreements. Each has been outlined below and will be referenced later as they relate to new recommendations.

Successful negotiation of a Collective Economic Development Agreement (CEDA) and Joint Economic Development Agreement (JEDD) along Industrial Parkway with the City of Marysville.

Intergovernmental collaboration was a central recommendation of each of the Township plans. Significant progress was made in 2016 with the successful negotiation of a CEDA and JEDD with the City of Marysville. The agreements are significant for a number of reasons. First, they allow the community to access income taxes as revenue sources. Without these agreements, these would be not available to the Township under state law. Second, the agreements effectively stop annexation by Marysville for the 50 year duration of the JEDD agreement. The JEDD agreement has two automatic 25 year renewals, stopping annexation for an additional 50 years. Additionally, the agreements allow the Township to engage in marketing with its partner, Marysville, to expose the zone and attract investment. Given the location of the district and the significant investment already occurring, this could enable the community to be discerning by use and user for each of its potential parcels in the district.

Updating the Zoning Resolution. In 2011 the Township undertook a process to fully update its zoning resolution. With the help of a land use attorney, the resolution was brought fully up to code. Over

time, updates such as this are necessary to adapt to changes in land uses and innovative zoning practices. Language introducing the Planned Unit Development District was added. This zoning classification can apply to residential, commercial, office/research, industrial, or special town center districts. In each category, developers have more flexibility in defining their site plan, as the density, mixture of uses, quality of materials, and other considerations would be negotiated with the Township. This allows the community to better define the character of final development rather than its simple zoning code.

Extension of broadband internet. As a rural community, Millcreek has struggled to attract demand-based investment into broadband infrastructure. Trustees took on the action recommended in the 2005 plan and worked with Marysville and Jenco to extend high-speed internet into the community. Through a combination of cell towers and hard wiring, the Township now has access to fast and reliable internet service.

Ongoing intergovernmental collaboration. A central recommendation of each plan was to promote the vision and visibility of the Township through increased intergovernmental interaction. Significant progress has been made. Since the adoption of the plans the Township has been active in the region, including

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan Update contains goals, recommendations, actions (policies, projects and programs) and map-based recommendations that indicate the Township's intent for where and how it will grow. The Update will be implemented over time through Township actions and those of private and public partners concerning development, redevelopment, capital improvements, economic initiatives and related matters.

The Plan should inform:

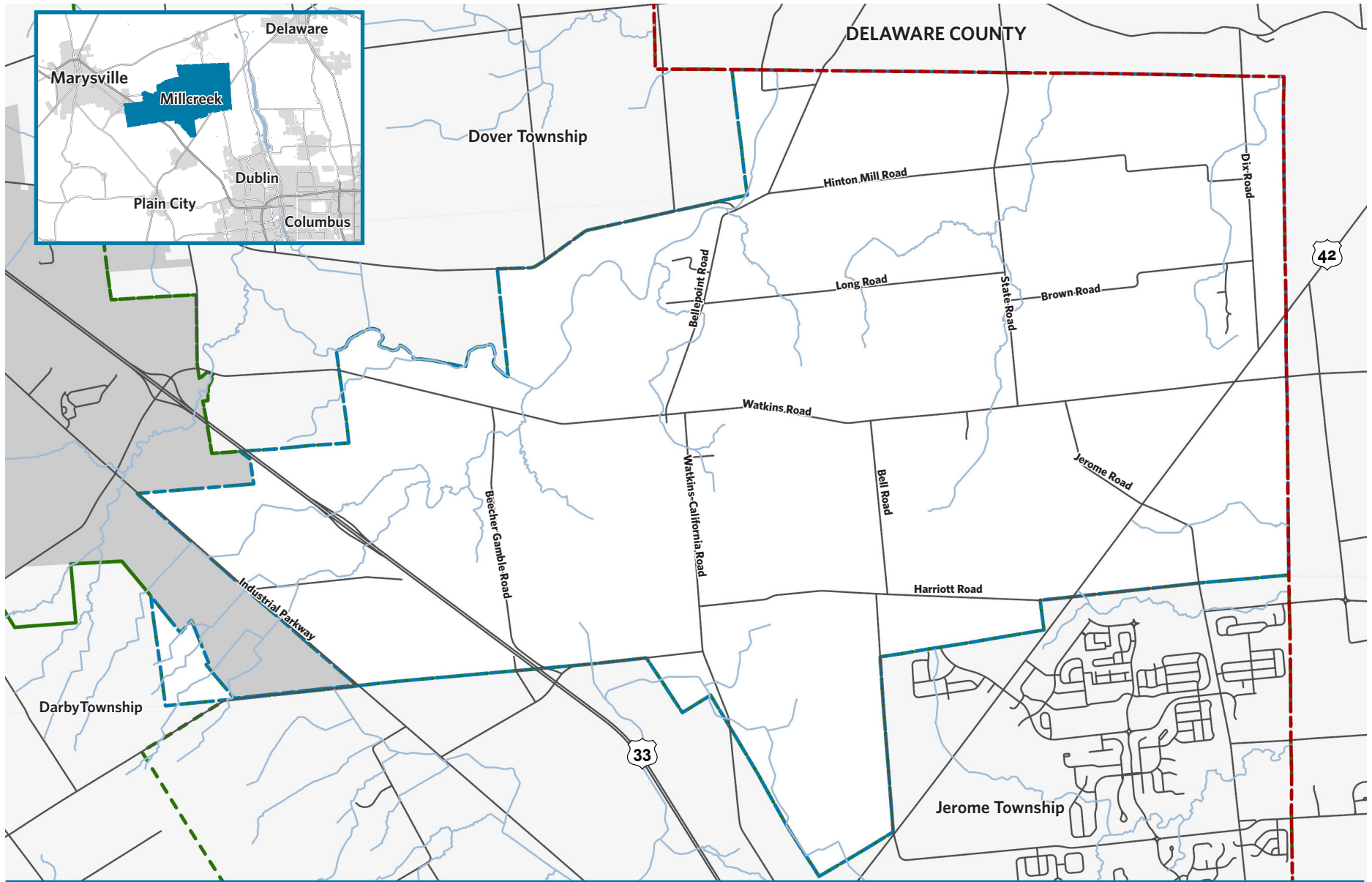
- » Development review and approvals
- » Private development and Investment decisions
- » Consistent interpretation of policies between township officials
- » Programs and budgets

with the NW 33 Innovation Corridor Council of Governments. This group meets on a bimonthly basis and recently completed its Crossroads plan, a joint land use and economic strategy for a portion of the shared geography. The community leveraged planning work occurring along the US 42 corridor in Union and Madison counties to conduct their own, detailed study of the corridor. Additionally, a Township trustee currently sits on the Union County Community Improvement Corporation. This group is charged with conducting countywide economic development initiatives. Overall, the community has been very successful in engaging its regional partners and leveraging its relationships.







2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

KEY FINDINGS	11
PEOPLE	12
PROSPERITY	13
PLACE	15
REGIONAL DYNAMICS	22



MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP

-  Millcreek Limits
-  County Boundary
-  City of Marysville
-  Township Limits

2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following chapter documents the pertinent existing conditions as they relate to three general categories: people, prosperity, and place. The People section focuses on the demographic conditions and trends of the Township, looking at population, age, and other statistics. Prosperity analyzes economic data, revealing key findings related to personal prosperity and the local economy. The Place section presents findings related to the community's physical geography, transportation network, and other environmental considerations. Information presented in previous plans have been included where relevant.



HISTORY OF MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP

Union County was organized in 1820 and divided into five townships. Millcreek's current boundaries were defined as "All (lands) east of Paris to the east boundary of said county." The first election collected 24 total votes, but results were lost to a fire years later. The first settler, Ephraim Burroughs, emigrated his family from New Jersey and settled near Mill Creek in 1815 following the War of 1812. On March 29, 1829, the Township was officially surveyed by Levi Phelps, surveyor for Union County.

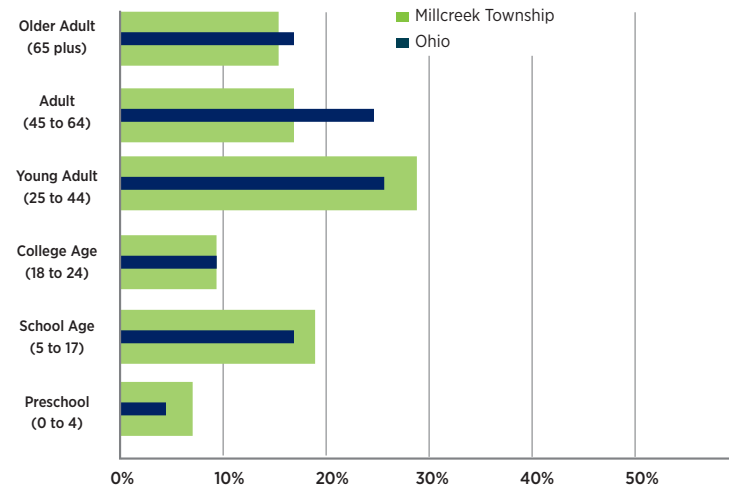
Key findings...

- » **Leveling population.** After adding almost 400 individuals in the 1990's, growth in the Township has slowed. The population growth that has occurred may be attributed to increasing household size and limited development of single-family homes.
- » **The Township is growing younger.** 25-44 year olds made up the largest part of the population in 2022 at 29%. They were also the second fastest growing age group between 2010 and 2022. 18-24 year olds were the fastest growing group.
- » **Economic agreement with Marysville an important step.** The development agreement reached with the City of Marysville unlocks potential revenue stream.
- » **Residents commute out, few workers commute in.** Residents typically commute outside the community for work; a large share drive more than 25 miles each way. The small workforce within the Township commutes in.
- » **A rural community despite surrounding growth.** Despite significant growth and development in the region the Township has maintained its rural character with agriculture as its dominant land use.
- » **Positioned within a region experiencing tremendous growth and investment.** The US 33 and 42 corridors are experiencing significant private and public investment with major initiatives on both sides of the Township.

People

Millcreek has gradually grown over its history and has a current population of just under 1,500 people. Like many rural communities, its population is relatively homogeneous. The median age is slightly lower than the state, and there are fewer families with children. Overall, the community is very similar to the county and has changed little from 2014. Some of the community's most important findings have been included below.

SHARE OF POPULATION BY AGE COHORT (2022)



23.4%

Population growth (2014-2022)

Population growth. After significant growth of 46 percent between 1990 and 2000, the Township's population remained relatively stable until 2020. The Township had a population of 1,302 in 2020, and grew to 1,497 in 2022. Some of this growth may be attributed to increasing household size and some development of single-family homes.

74.4%

Residential units built between 1960 and 1980

Most residential units were built between 1960 and 1980. 10 units have been built since 2020. There has not been major residential development in the form of large residential subdivisions within the Township.

Decreased median age. The median age decreased 5 years from 2014 to 2022 to 38 years. The median age is two years younger than that of the state's median age and equal to that of the county.

38

Median age in 2022

Household size is increasing after experiencing decline in the early 2010s. The Township's household size is larger than the states at 2.4. Household size refers to all cohabitation, not just families, but the majority of households in Millcreek are families. In 2022, 81 percent of households were families, and 35 percent of those households had children under the age of 18. This is 6 points below the state where 41 percent of householders have children under the age of 18 living in the home.

2.95

Household size in 2022

Homogenous population. There is very little racial or ethnic diversity with a majority of residents identifying as White alone in 2020. This is higher than the county and the state. 85 percent of Union County's residents identify as White alone while 77 percent in the State of Ohio identify as White alone.

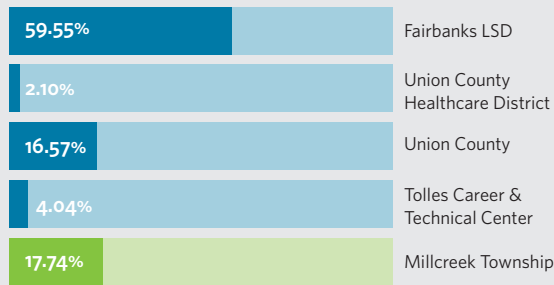
Prosperity

The Township is home to a small jobs cluster, mostly centered on the annexed manufacturing parcels along Industrial Parkway. Nearly all employed residents work outside of the community, commuting primarily to jobs in Marysville, Columbus, Delaware, or elsewhere. Fiscally, the Township derives a majority of its revenue through property taxation.

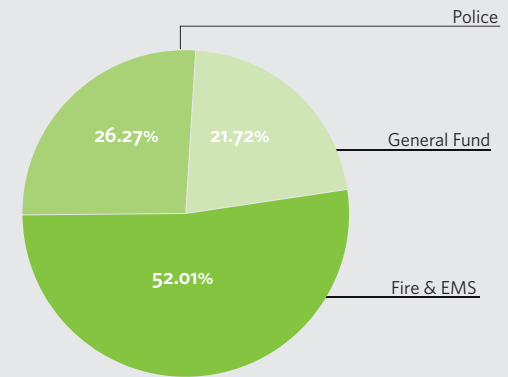
TOWNSHIP TAX STRUCTURE

The revenue model for townships in Ohio eliminates certain types of taxes, like the income tax, available to municipalities. Townships are mainly funded through property taxes levied on real property within the Township. Tax money is distributed to townships through the collections of inside millage, levies, motor and lodging taxes. A vast majority of the tax revenue for a township is used for fire and emergency medical services.

TAX DISTRIBUTION ON A MARKET VALUE PROPERTY (2024): WHAT MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP'S TAX REVENUE FUNDS (2023):



Source: Union County Auditor's website



LOCAL ECONOMY

Cooperative Economic Development Agreement provides a new source of funding. In 2015, the Township entered a CEDA with the City of Marysville, identifying its commercially zoned parcels as the boundary of its Joint Economic Development District. This agreement has the potential to provide a new source of funding for utilities, infrastructure, etc. at no additional cost to residents, ensure development pays for itself, provide a more diversified tax base, and ensure the Township can manage its own growth, planning, and zoning in these areas in the future. The CEDA also avoids annexation from the

Township to the City for the 50-year duration of the agreement. A CEDA is the only arrangement in the State of Ohio that allows Townships to collect income tax. In this agreement, the Township collects 15 percent of the levied income tax assessed on the district. The City's taxation rate will be levied over the 30-year term. Important to note, at the time of the Comprehensive Plan Update no parcels are currently part of the JEDD therefore all potential revenue is contingent on development within the commercial zoning district.

Job growth has slowed since 2017.

Between 2010 and 2017, the total number of jobs in the Township increased by 85%. Between 2017 and 2022, total jobs decreased by 16%. The employment picture in the Township can be confusing as a portion of its geography was annexed by the City of Marysville. This includes land along Industrial Parkway where businesses like Continental Inc. are located. Most jobs in the Township are located on the east side of the community.

Revenue derived from property taxes.

As illustrated above, the Township's general fund is primarily supported through property taxation. As pointed out earlier, this will diversify as development in the JEDD occurs.

Farming very productive and provides employment.

Agriculture is the Township's dominant land use and it provides employment opportunities. 29% of the jobs in the Township are in the agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting sector. However, most workers in this sector are from outside the Township.

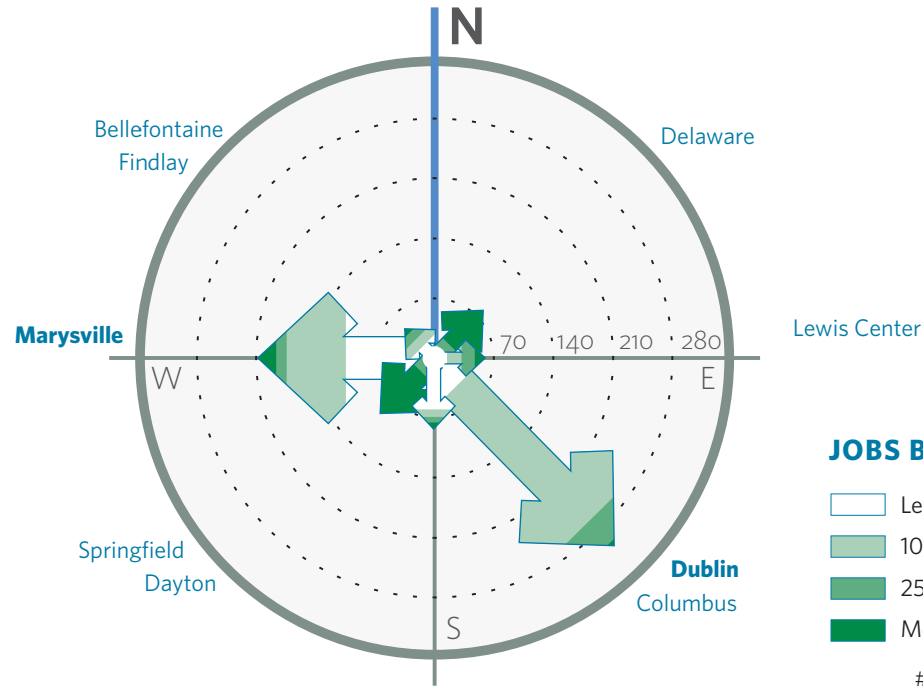
PERSONAL PROSPERITY

Educational services, manufacturing, and finance and real estate top employment sectors for residents. As the top employment sector for residents, educational services accounts for just over 40 percent or 400 of the roughly 950 jobs held by residents. This has changed drastically since 2010, when the largest sector for employment was professional, scientific, and management and educational services represented 11 percent of jobs.

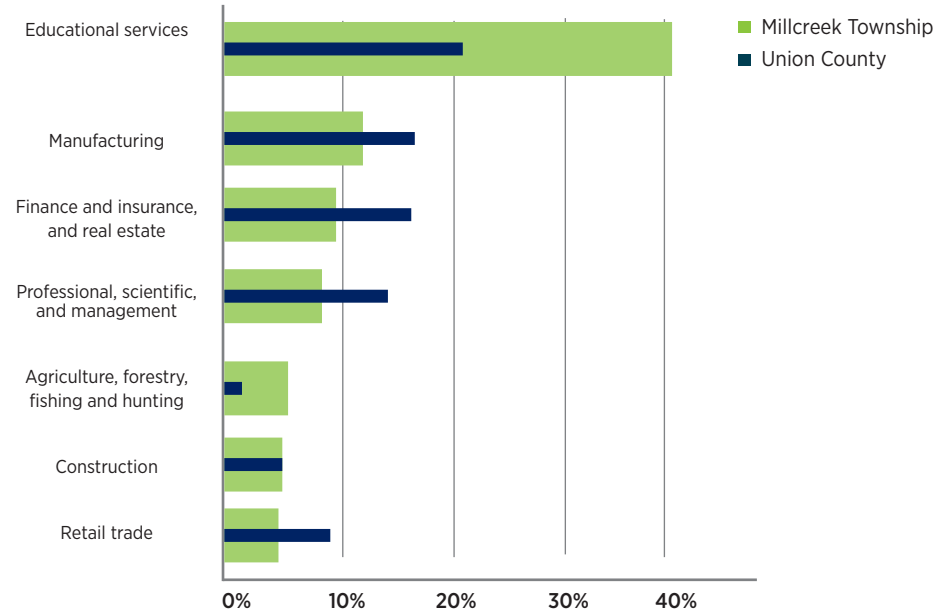
Residents earn more income. The median household income of \$150,758 exceeds both the state \$66,990, and the county \$104,496. Seventy-three percent of households earn more than \$100,000 per year and 38 percent of households earn more than \$200,000 a year.

Very high levels of workforce participation. 83 percent of Township’s population participates in the workforce. This compares to 67 percent in Union County and 63 percent in the State of Ohio.

A bedroom community. Nearly all residents, 99 percent, commute somewhere outside the Township for work each day. Employed residents commute to jobs primarily located in areas around Marysville and the Columbus Metropolitan Area. 25 percent of workers commute more than 25 miles one way.



SHARE OF TOP EMPLOYMENT INDUSTRIES FOR RESIDENTS (2022)



83% Workforce participation rate, 2022

99% Residents working outside the Township

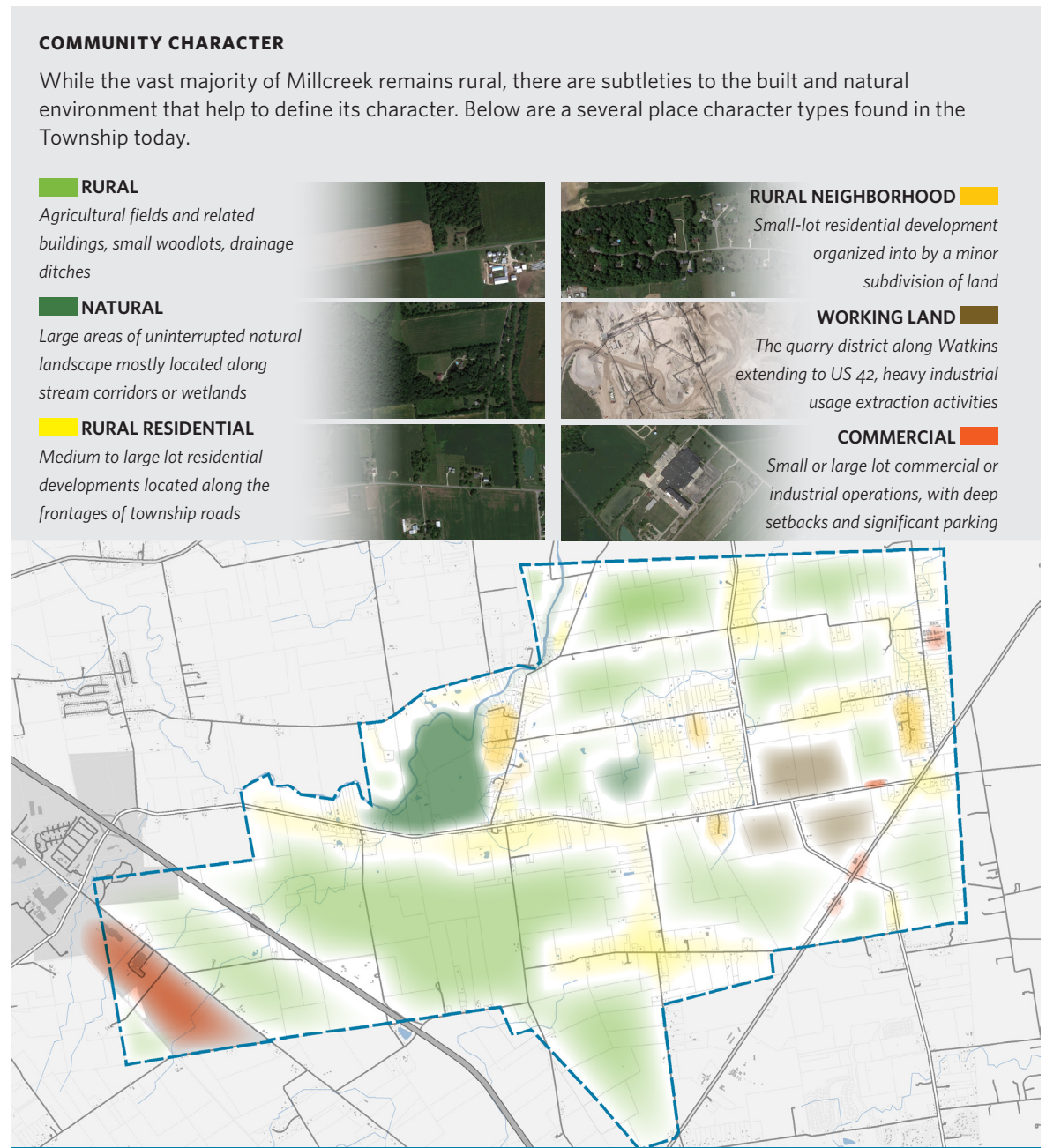
\$150,758 Median household income, 2022

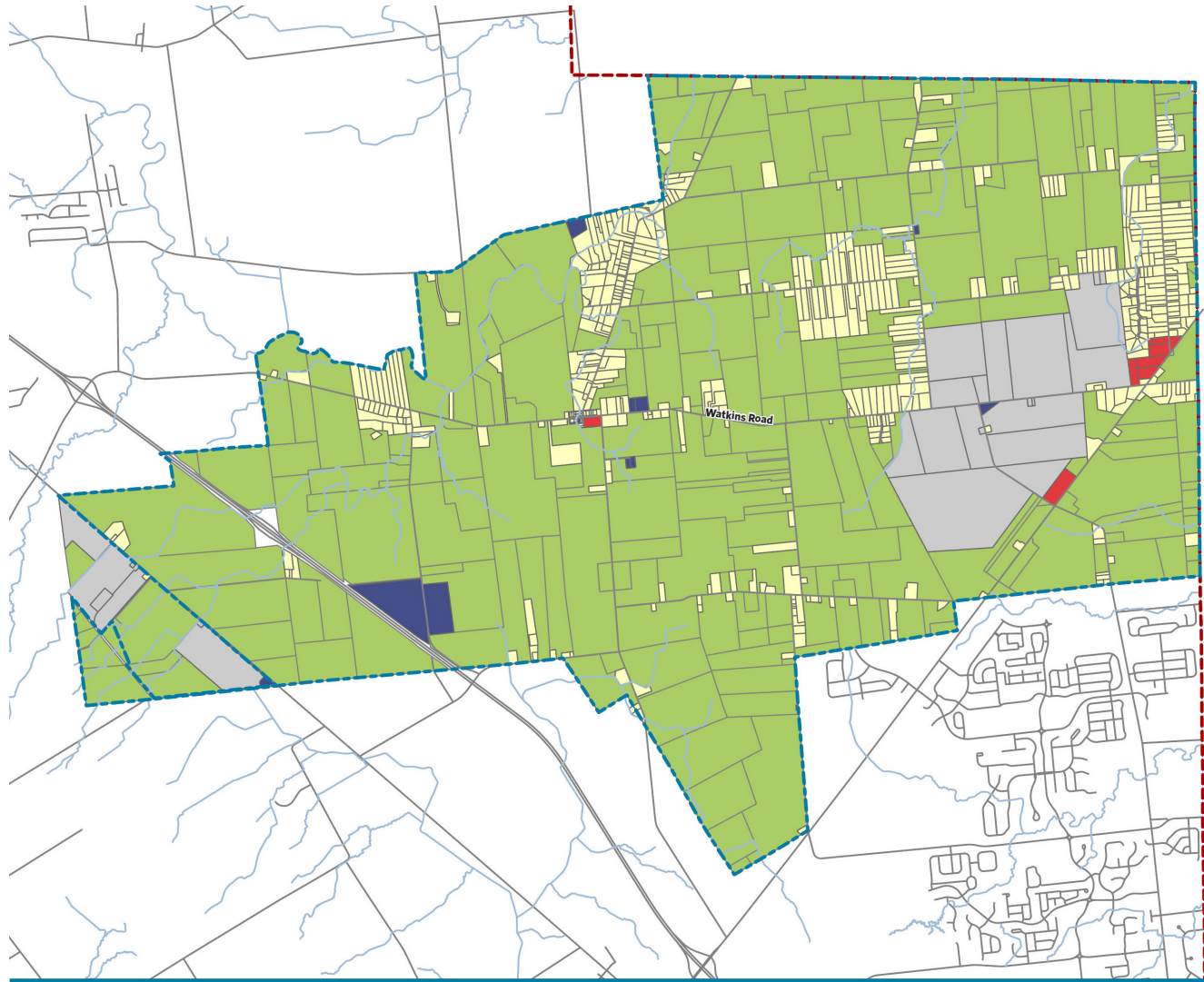
Place

Millcreek is a beautiful community defined by its wide open, rural landscape. The interplay between the agricultural fields, natural areas, and residential lots is a unique break from more haphazard development in surrounding communities. The Township has commercial uses, appropriately located along its two major thoroughfares. The Place section reviews the character of places, analyzes mobility, and describes the key conditions and trends for housing and the environment.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

A rural community. Despite growth pressure and development on its periphery, the Township remains relatively rural and undeveloped. The presence of Mill Creek and its greenway are a natural break to the patchwork of farm fields. Homes have been built into front lots or slightly denser rural neighborhoods. Commercial areas are located near the southwest and southeast boundaries. While Industrial Parkway is poised for more intense investment and development, today there are only a few industrial buildings breaking up the continuity of agricultural fields. Development is occurring along the US 42 corridor, mainly in neighboring jurisdictions. Millcreek Township may see increased development pressure along the corridor as it is built out in neighboring communities.





LAND USE

Agriculture is the primary land use. The dominant land use in the Township is agricultural with residential development scattered along the road frontage.

Shelly Materials operates a ~600 acre quarry that regularly blasts and hauls limestone as part of its daily operation. The site is active and productive. Shelly Materials rezoned another 50 acres along Watkins & Jerome Roads into the Excavation and Quarry (EQ) zoning district in early 2023 to expand the quarrying operations.

Land uses surrounding the Township include rural residential and developed single family residential scattered along the Scioto River to the east and into Delaware County. Development density increases to the west approaching the city of Marysville. At the time of the plan update, major residential and commercial developments were underway to the south of the Township in Jerome Township.

LAND USE

- | | |
|---|--|
| ■ Farm / Residential | ■ Exempt |
| ■ Low Density Residential | ■ Industrial/Manufacturing |
| ■ General Business District | |

PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

The Township maintains a small set of physical assets. The Township Hall is located at 10420 Watkins Road with the adjacent community park. The community cemetery is located on the eastern side of Watkins-California Road, with an older cemetery, no longer in use, in the northeastern portion of the Township, off Smart-Cole Road.

Fire, police, and emergency medical services contracted out. Currently the community contracts with Jerome Township for both fire and EMS services. Police protection is provided by the Union County Sheriff’s Office. The Township actively participates in the Sheriff’s Public Safety Officer (PSO) Program for additional dedicated officers.

Union County and Millcreek Township cooperatively implemented an emergency notification system called CodeRED. An extremely high-speed system, CodeRED is used to launch outbound phone calls to home, business and cell numbers. It’s an easy way to quickly call everyone within the community (or a specific geographically mapped portion of our community), for evacuation notices, search and rescues, boil water alerts, man-made or environmental disasters, utility notifications, etc. CodeRED is capable of delivering thousands of messages an hour.

Three school districts with territory in Millcreek, Fairbanks Local the largest. A vast majority of the Township, or more than 90 percent of the land area, is covered by the Fairbanks Local School District. Two other districts operate much smaller areas including Buckeye Valley Local School District in far north-central and Marysville Exempted Village School District in the northwest. There are no operating school buildings within the Township.

UTILITIES

Water Reclamation Facility finished in 2004. The City of Marysville completed its Water Reclamation Facility located along Beecher Gamble Road to serve existing customers and significantly expand the city’s service area. In early 2025, the City of Marysville purchased 80 acres on Brown Road in the Township with the purpose of constructing a new water plant.

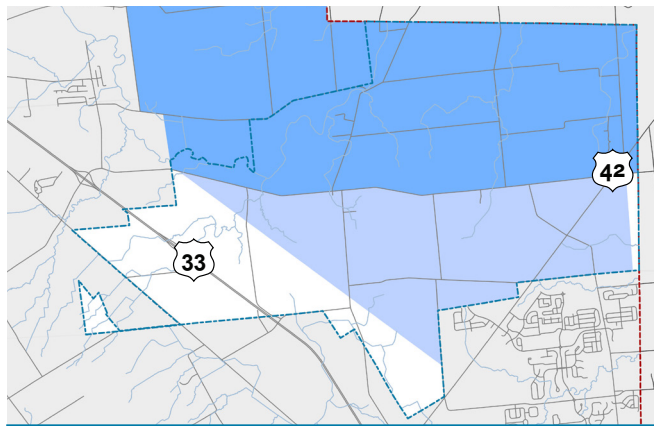
Additional utility provision. The County is served by nine different electric power distributors. Four of these serve Millcreek Township. There is currently no natural gas service available in the Township except along the quarry site on Brown Road.

High speed internet available through Jenco. A central recommendation of the 2005 plan, high speed internet, was made available in the community through Jenco in 2009. Through a combination of cell towers and hard wiring, the Township has access to fast and reliable internet service.

THE MARYSVILLE WATER RECLAMATION FACILITY

The City of Marysville completed construction on the wastewater facility in 2004 that now treats more than four million gallons of water per day. The \$40 million investment vastly expanded Marysville’s wastewater service area.

As regional development follows the US 33 corridor, tap fees are becoming more important means to recapture the initial investment for the facility.



MARYSVILLE WATER / SEWER SERVICE AREAS

Light Blue: Exclusive Service 2005

Dark Blue: Exclusive Service 2013



TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

The road network of the Township is comprised of a series of state, county, and township roads. The only roads that are maintained by the Township are Thompson Road, Shields Road, Adelsberger Road, and a small portion of Jacobs Lane. The State of Ohio maintains US Routes 33 and 42. The County maintains all other roads. Currently the Township does not maintain a road crew. Instead it contracts with Union County to provide all road maintenance and snow removal.

U.S. 42 Access Management Study. The Access Management Study is a study of the US 42 corridor from the City of London in Madison County, through Plain City in Union County, to the City of Delaware in Delaware County. The purpose of the study is to help anticipate growth and develop a plan that is complementary to the US 42 corridor. The plan included various recommendations that are important to the Township.

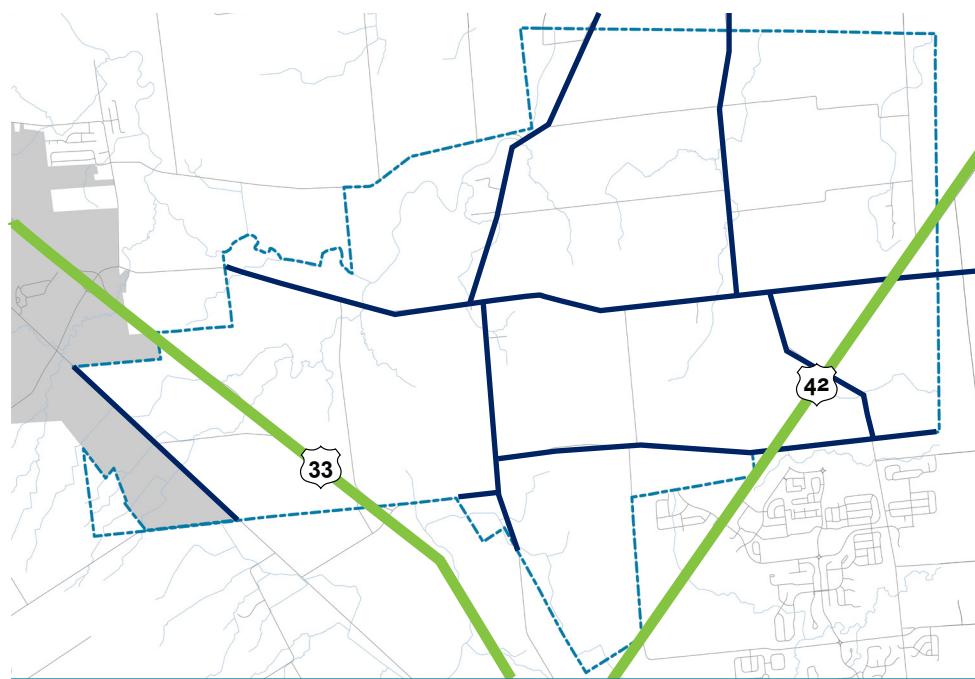
Functional classifications. The road network is based on a hierarchy or functional classification. Streets and highways do not operate independently. They are part of an interconnected network, and each one performs a service in moving traffic throughout the system. Generally, streets and highways perform two types of service. They provide either traffic mobility or land access and can be ranked in terms of the proportion of service they perform. The criteria used to describe each class of road must apply to a wide range of conditions in which the road operates such as geography, population density, traffic volumes, spacing, and distance and speed of travel.

Arterials. At the top of the hierarchy are arterials. They include those classes of roads emphasizing a high level of mobility for the through movement of traffic. Land access is subordinate to this primary function. Generally, travel speeds and distances are greater on these facilities compared to the other classes. The highest classes of arterials, interstates and freeways, are limited access to allow the free flow of traffic. There are three arterials in the Township. US Route 33 is classified as a highway; US Route 42 as a rural arterial; and Industrial Parkway as an urban arterial.

Collectors. In the middle of the hierarchy are the collectors. They collect traffic from the lower facilities and distribute it to the higher. Collectors

provide both mobility and access. Generally, trip lengths, speeds, and volumes are moderate. Derio Road, Watkins-California Road, Harriott Road, Watkins Road, State Road, Bellepoint Road from Watkins Road to the intersection with Hinton Mill Road, and Hinton Mill Road west of the intersection with Bellepoint Road are all classified as collectors.

Local. At the bottom of the hierarchy are local streets and roads. Their primary function is to provide land access. Travel speeds, distances, and volumes are generally low, and through traffic is usually discouraged. All other roads in the study area would be classified as a local street.



ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS MAP

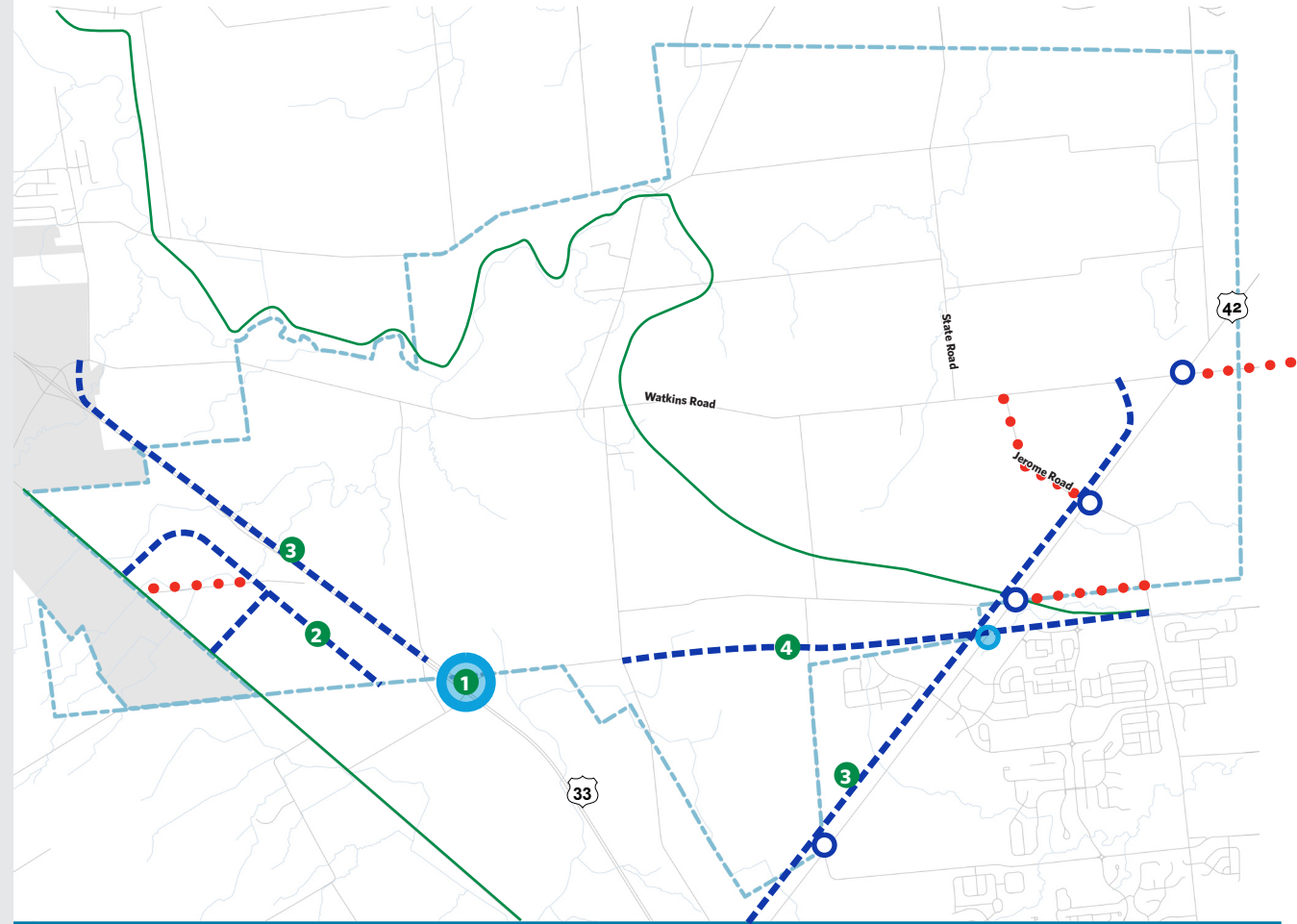
**EASTERN UNION COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION THOROUGHFARE PLAN
2016**

Completed in 2016, the thoroughfare plan is a 20-year guide for the Millcreek and Jerome Townships transportation systems. The plan projects that in 20 years, average daily traffic (ADT) on US 42 running from Watkins Road to US 33 could potentially increase by 3,500 ADT. By year 2036, US 33 average daily trips will increase from 36,410 to 50,530. The plan was a product of the several transportation goals outlined in Union County's 2013 Comprehensive Plan and the US 42 Access Management Study. Major recommendations from both studies include:











Derio Road interchange: The interchange will help reduce traffic congestion if the increasingly rapid-development.

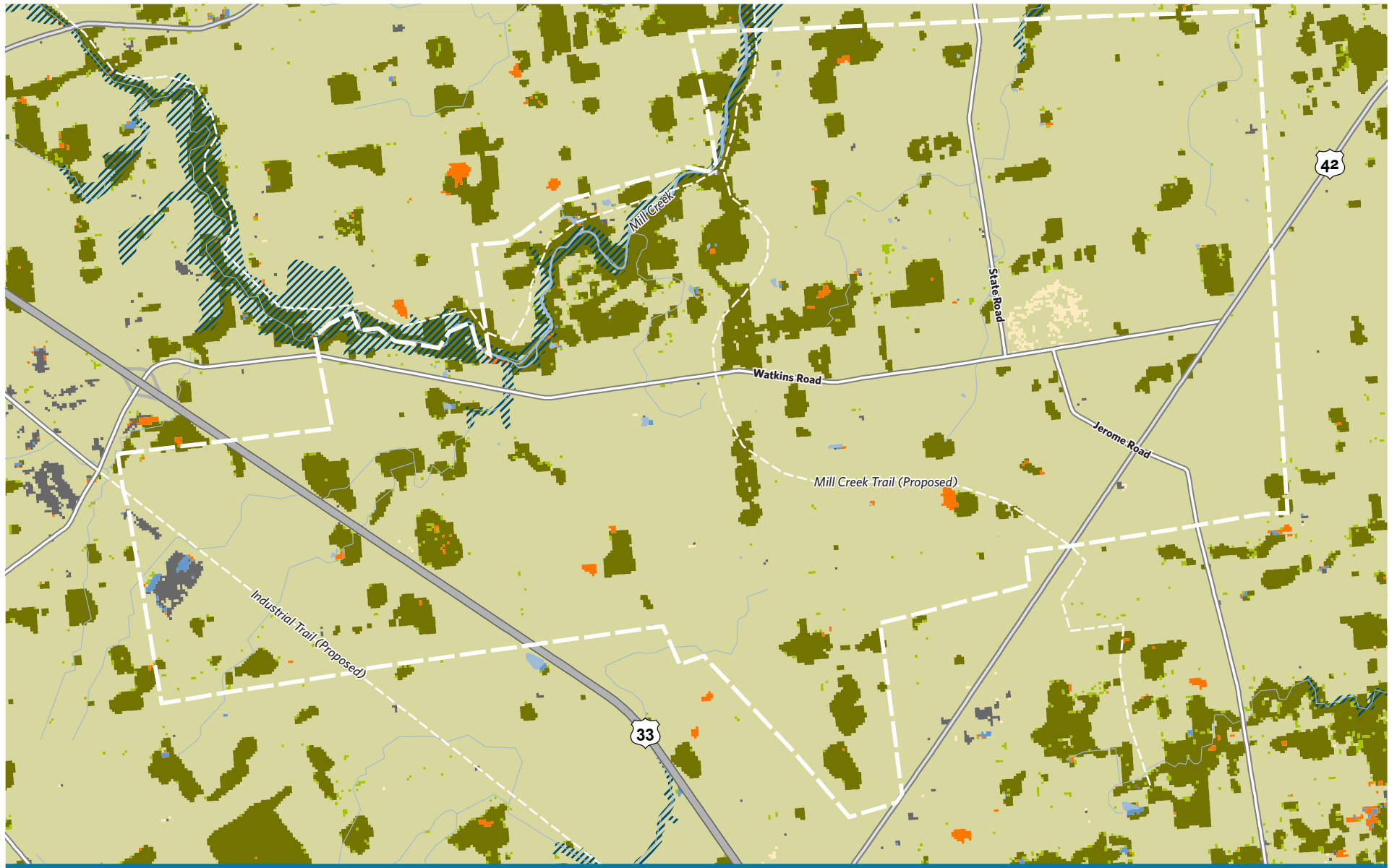
Home Road extension: Remove Harriott Road Intersection with US 42 and extend Home Road through US 42 at the old Harriott Road intersection location. The extension would reduce traffic volumes from the proposed Derio Road interchange.

Hyland-Croy extension: Extend Hyland-Croy north to connect with a re-aligned Watkins Road. This connection would facilitate traffic from the City of Dublin to Millcreek Township.



ROAD NETWORK RECOMMENDATIONS MAP

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
|  Potential Future Intersection |  Proposed Road |  Potential Derio Road Interchange |
|  High Volume Intersection |  New Multi-Use Trail |  Industrial Road Grid Proposal |
|  Proposed Road Closure |  Township Boundary |  Frontage Road Recommendations |
| | |  Home Road Extension |



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Urban land cover | Shrub land cover | 100 year floodplain |
| Agriculture land cover | Non-forested wetland | Water |
| Wooded land cover | Barren | |

ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL ASSETS

Mill Creek the only natural stream. Groundwater is the primary source of water flow for the creek and it is supplemented with runoff from rainfall. A system of intermittent streams also cross the Township. The intermittent streams do not flow year-round, only flowing when groundwater provides enough water for stream flow and there is enough rainfall runoff. Agricultural ditches were constructed throughout the County to improve the drainage of the soils. Long Ditch drains into Mill Creek.

Wetlands are sparsely located. Wetlands should be preserved as much as possible because they provide important natural resources to society including fish and wildlife habitat, flood protections, erosion control, and water quality maintenance. Because wetlands are scattered throughout the Township they cause some limitations to development.

Woodlands act as a natural buffer. The Township has several large woodlands that add to its rich natural assets. The woodlands act as buffers, filter pollutants from runoff, reduce flood flow, provide habitat for terrestrial organisms, allow for groundwater infiltration, and provide a basis for the aquatic food chain. Beyond that woodlands contribute to the quality of life for citizens and the rural atmosphere.

Rich agriculture. The Township's rich agricultural heritage is primarily due to its prime farmland that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for feed, forage, fiber, and oil seed crops. The majority of the land is considered prime farmland if drained and is located south of Watkins Road. Hydric soils contribute to the prime farmland - these are soils that are developed under sufficiently wet conditions to support the growth and regeneration of water-tolerant vegetation.

Township not uniformly suited for large scale development.

The abundance of hydric soils create considerable limitations on development. Hydric soils are formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding. The soils tend to be moist throughout the year and have poor drainage making them unsuitable for large scale development. Soil type not only influences development but also plays a major factor in the suitability for private septic systems. The majority of the Township has moderate or severe septic limitations.



UNION COUNTY TRAIL & GREENWAY MASTER PLAN

The Trail and Greenway Master Plan was completed in December 2014 as a response to a key recommendation from the 2013 Union County Comprehensive Plan. With the funding from multiple partners, including Millcreek Township, the plan established a common vision for future trail development and greenway preservation. The plan seeks to link numerous neighborhoods and to showcase natural, cultural, and recreational assets throughout the community. One of the proposed off-road trails, Mill Creek Greenway Trail, meanders through Union County passing through Millcreek Township. The Trail & Greenway Master Plan was updated in 2022 and was being reviewed as of the completion in this plan in 2025.



HYDRIC SOILS

Hydric Soil Areas

REGIONAL DYNAMICS

Millcreek Township is uniquely positioned at the center of communities experiencing tremendous job and population growth. Union County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state. A sample of major dynamic elements are summarized below:

Honda Marysville Auto Plant. The manufacturing facility is located northwest of Millcreek Township. The plant employs about 7,100 people. Today Honda among other companies have vested interest in autonomous vehicle technology and has committed to the advancement of this technology. Honda will work on analyzing vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communications to help achieve the connected automated vehicles and infrastructure of tomorrow.

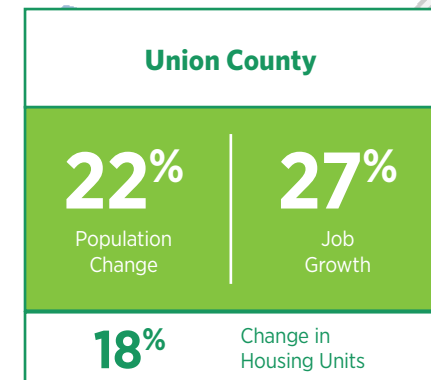
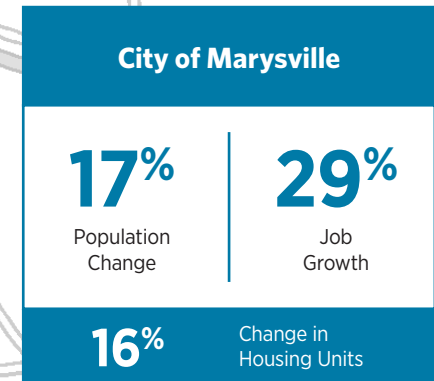
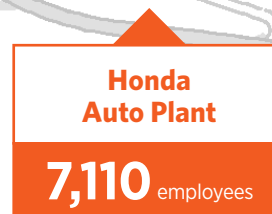
Creekview Commerce Park. At the time of this plan, Plain City was in the process of annexing 550 acres of land into the village. The land will be home to Creekview Commerce Park, a site for business development that will increase economic development and job opportunities for the area.

Scotts Miracle-Gro. An industry leader in the lawn and garden market with their headquarters is located just northwest of Millcreek Township, in the City of Marysville and employs about 1,500 people on a 900-acre campus

Other private development around Millcreek. Between 2008 and 2014 there was over \$260 million of private investment in Union County alone. The NW 33 Innovation Corridor has over 2,500 research and development jobs. Industrial Parkway area is home to over 200 businesses that employ over 2,000 people.

Jerome Village. 1,000+ unit residential development in Jerome Township featuring ten different architectural home styles, green space including parks, ponds, tree-lined parkways and extensive nature trails, and an array of community amenities for residents. The full master plan includes a build out of roughly 1,900 acres.

Jerome Village Market. At the time of this plan, the Jerome Village Market was completing construction. The retail center is anchored by a 123,000 square foot Kroger store. The store is one of the grocer's largest in the Midwest. The project is a \$30 million investment by the company and the first net new store in the Columbus market since 2009. The center includes additional retail and commercial users such as banks, health care offices, and more.



Note: Percent changes have been calculated from 2010-2021.
Data Sources: US Census Bureau, OnTheMap, Jerome Village, Union County Economic Development, Union County - Marysville The Midwest's Innovation Headquarters

**US 33 Innovation
Park Development**

203 acres

**Scotts
Miracle-Gro**

1,500 employees

**US 33 Smart
Mobility Corridor**

\$100m invested

**Jerome
Village**

2,000 acre residential
master plan

Delaware County

20%

Population
Change

35%

Job
Growth

20%

Change in New
Housing Units

City of Dublin

24%

Population
Change

6%

Job
Growth

21%

Change in
Housing Units

Jerome Township

31%

Population
Change

38%

Job
Growth

31%

Change in
Housing Units

Franklin County

15%

Population
Change

19%

Job
Growth

10%

Change in
Housing Units

City of Columbus

17%

Population
Change

18%

Job
Growth

10%

Change in
Housing Units





3. VISION & VALUES

MILL CREEK
2010



3. VISION & VALUES

A community vision is a distillation of the diverse voices of its residents into a common aspirational statement. It articulates the values and communicates clearly where the community intends to go. A vision was established in the 2005 planning process. The following planning processes affirmed that Millcreek Township is, and intends to remain, a rural community working to preserve and enrich its heritage and character in the face of external development pressure.



VISION

Millcreek Township will be...

An agricultural community that remains connected to its heritage as a haven of rural peace, quiet, and wide open spaces that reflect the values of the surrounding community.

A safe and healthy community to raise a family;

A place of rich community life, fostering social and cultural interactions; and

An economically healthy community.

VALUES

The Township will...

- » **Protect** its quiet, rural character and feeling of openness.
- » **Work** in collaboration with community groups, businesses, neighboring jurisdictions, and state and county agencies to ensure the Township's continued ability to self-govern.

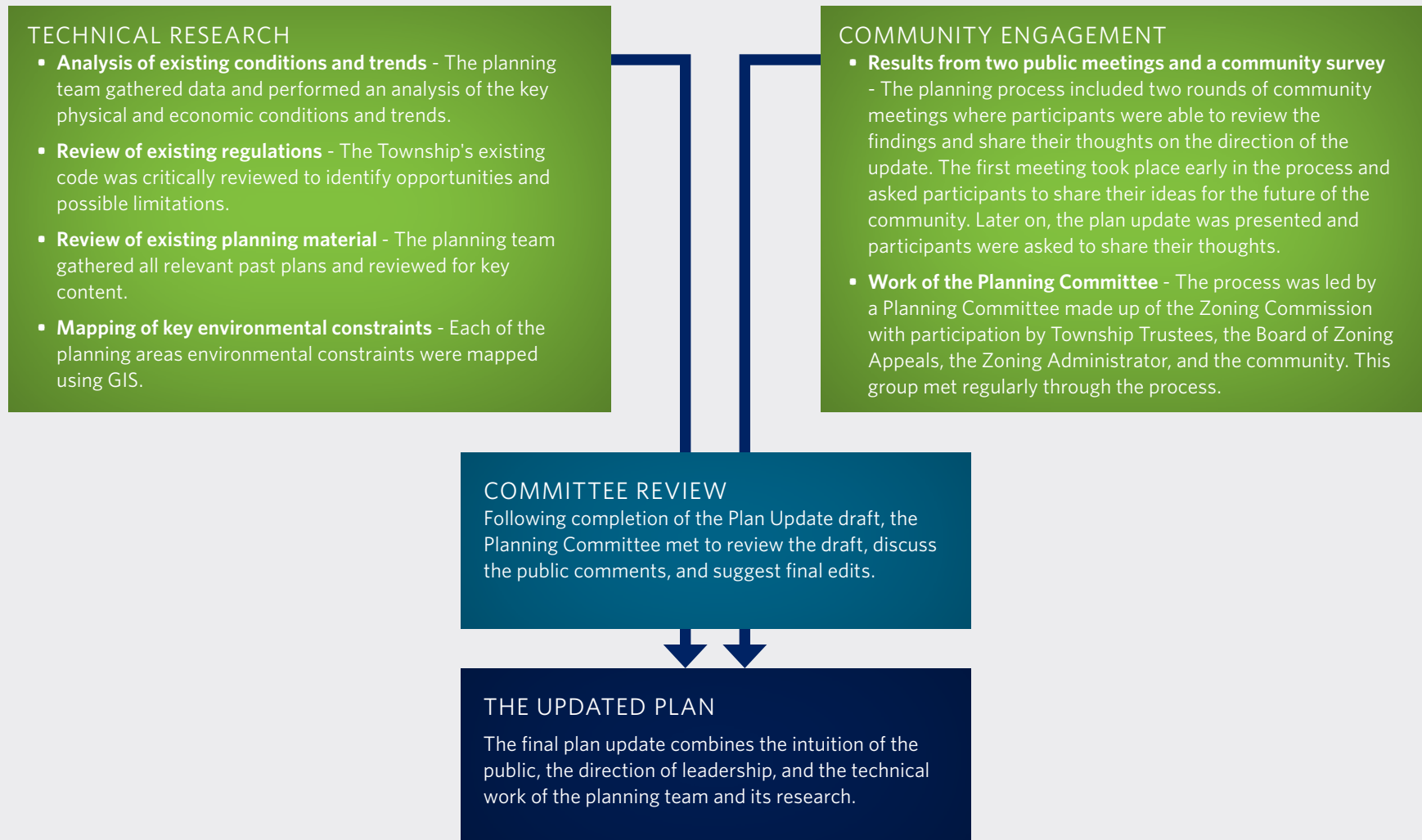
Development must...

- » **Pay** for itself and enhance the Township's economic health.
- » **Comply** with the Township's managed growth policy.
- » **Demonstrate** high quality design in construction and appearance.

- » **Contribute** to the Township's goal of ensuring a diverse tax base promoting fiscal health through various types of land uses.
- » **Occur** in strategic locations identified through rational planning processes.

The Process

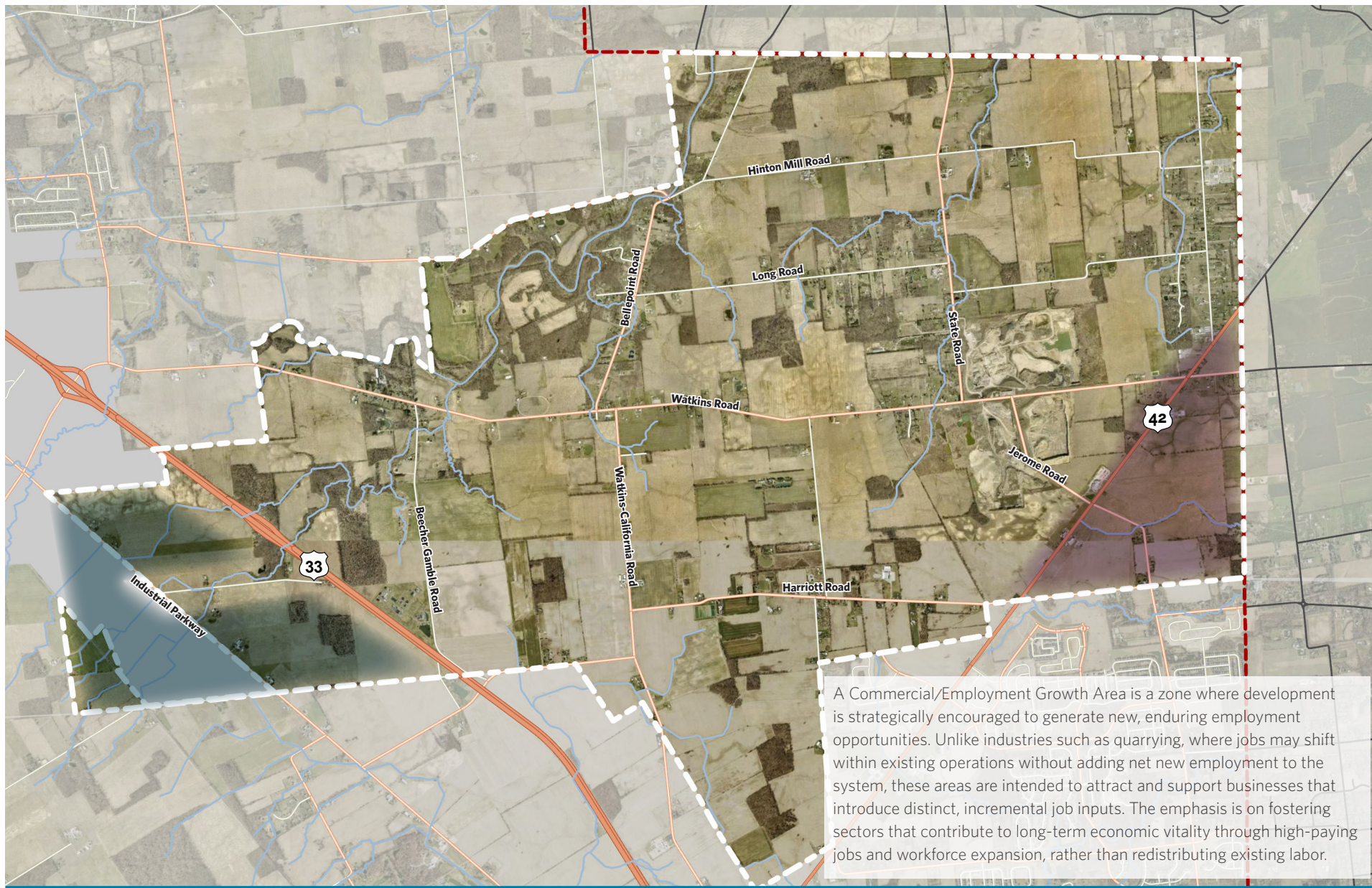
The Comprehensive Plan update process was a collaborative effort between the residents of Millcreek Township, the Zoning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, Township Trustees, and the Zoning and Planning Team. The diagram below illustrates the process.





RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION	31
GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS	33
PLANNING AREA RECOMMENDATIONS	60



A Commercial/Employment Growth Area is a zone where development is strategically encouraged to generate new, enduring employment opportunities. Unlike industries such as quarrying, where jobs may shift within existing operations without adding net new employment to the system, these areas are intended to attract and support businesses that introduce distinct, incremental job inputs. The emphasis is on fostering sectors that contribute to long-term economic vitality through high-paying jobs and workforce expansion, rather than redistributing existing labor.

Future Land Use Plan

The map generally outlines the use of land based on the recommendations set forth in this plan. There are two major uses illustrated: employment growth and no change. These recommendations are not parcel-specific.

KEY

- Commercial/Employment Growth Area
- Industrial Growth Area
- Agriculture/Rural Residential
- Township Boundary

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Subject to their power to act, the Zoning Commission and the Millcreek Township Board of Trustees will be guided by the community's vision and values to adopt and implement the suggested recommendations and actions of this Plan. Updates, such as this one, will continue to occur on a regular basis and incorporate consideration of changes to the community brought about by, as yet, unknown forces. Modification of the community vision, values, or policies shall follow the procedures used in the initial adoption of the Plan, thereby offering the opportunity for community discussion and change.



Millcreek Township is a beautiful community interested in maintaining its rural heritage for generations to come. To achieve this vision and remain fiscally healthy, the community must carefully direct growth while protecting large swathes of land.

Defining the Purpose

The 2005 Comprehensive Land Use and Growth plan established a precedent and standard for planning for the future of Millcreek Township. This update will:

- » Aid in the development of key guiding principles to preserve the agricultural and natural resources
- » Develop and publish key guiding principles as they relate to development
- » Design the plan specifically for Millcreek
- » Identify a balance between property rights and preparing the Township for development
- » Identify sensitive areas and include specific recommendations
- » Recommend amendments to Zoning Resolution and zoning districts where necessary
- » Provide a path for the implementation
- » Include strategic action steps to guide implementation

Judging Success

Ultimately, the update will be judged by its ability to deliver the community's vision and implement its key recommendations and should:

- » **Ensure Consistency.** Promote the legal requirement of reasonableness by avoiding arbitrary decisions
- » **Promote Efficiency.** Simplify materials for Zoning Committee action through the provision of guidelines and criteria
- » **Maintain a Basis of Planning.** Assure the judicious use of resources. Planning decisions, such as zoning actions, need to be founded upon adopted principles and objectives
- » **Establish a Public Record.** Provide a clear statement of policies upon which the community may rely
- » **Develop a Planning Method.** Promote the rational utilization of land based on strong market principles
- » **Ensure Adoption, Amendment and Binding Effect.** Maintain formal procedures for the adoption and amendment of this Plan and future updates

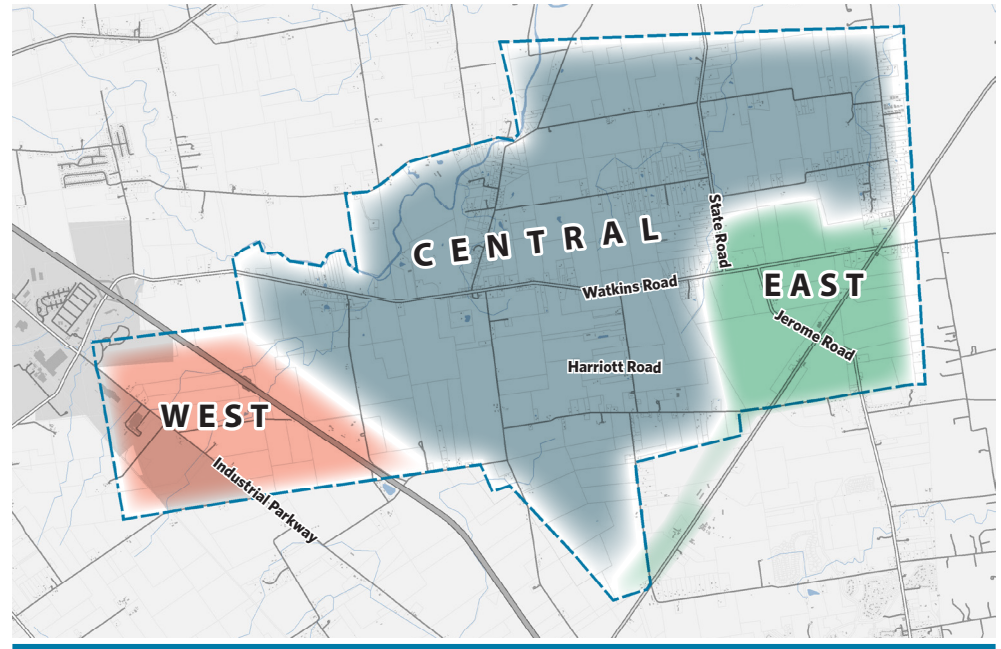
Organizing the Recommendations

The recommendations put forward in this update reflect programs, policies, or projects with the potential to move the Township forward while maintaining its community values. As an update to three previous plans, some recommendations have carried forward as they either are ongoing and remain relevant, have yet to achieve an outcome, or have been refined based on the present conditions, trends, or best practices. There are two types of recommendations.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

These suggested actions are not tied to a particular area or geography and can be applied broadly. The general recommendations include policies or programs aimed at achieving four community goals. These goals consolidate the objectives delivered in the two previous planning efforts and offer discrete action recommendations. The community goals have been prioritized. They are as follows:

1. **Preserve the agricultural heritage, protect natural assets, and expand recreational opportunities.**
2. **Improve processes and practices.**
3. **Ensure fiscal security.**
4. **Promote intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration.**



PLANNING AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2005 Comprehensive Land Use and Growth Plan introduced four geographical planning areas. It stated that the Township was not expected to see the same demand for various types of growth uniformly. Rather, certain areas, based on their zoning, access, surrounding uses, or parcel size/arrangement, might expect to see higher demand for development. The 2017 update expanded on the use of the Planning Areas as an effective means of applying specific recommendations where relevant. The 2025 update reduced four planning areas to three. These planning areas and their recommendations are elaborated later in the chapter. The map above shows the basic breakdown of the geography.

General Recommendations

The following recommendations are applicable throughout the Township, and unlike the Planning Area recommendations, do not associate with a specific geography. The strategies include relevant proposals from the 2005 Comprehensive Land Use and Growth Plan, the 2010 Land Use Plan Supplement, the 2017 Comprehensive Plan update, and new strategies from the 2025 plan update process.

STRUCTURE & ORGANIZATION

Each recommendation has been collected under a set of four organizing goals. The strategies represent a project, policy, or program to help the Township achieve this goal. Details on implementation, including responsibilities, timeframes, tactics, and evaluation techniques can be found in the implementation plan.

1. Preserve the agricultural heritage, protect natural assets, and expand recreational opportunities.

Millcreek Township is, and should remain, a predominantly rural community. In a survey conducted for the 2025 update, over 60% of respondents emphasized that green, open spaces and the rural character of the Township are crucial for preserving its unique feel. Residents have clearly expressed their desire to maintain the rural residential character while safeguarding the community's natural assets, such as woodlots, streams, and riparian corridors. Additionally, there is a strong interest in developing active recreational spaces, like parks and trails, where residents can appreciate the community's natural beauty.

Maintaining this character will first require an inventory of the community's most valuable natural areas to determine their susceptibility to impending development. The community must work proactively to ensure property rights are secured, and the rural look and feel of Township remains strong. This will likely require the adoption of innovative policies that work collectively to direct development to the appropriate Planning Area, while preserving the rights of property owners in less suitable parts of the Township. The Township also recognizes and supports the state of Ohio as a Right-to-Farm state.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- » **The rural residential character of the Township is preserved for future generations.**
- » **Natural areas are protected and made accessible through parks and trails.**
- » **Property rights are maintained through innovative approaches, and development is directed to appropriate areas in the community.**
- » **Recreational opportunities are enhanced through collaboration with county initiatives and strategic investment in Township properties, like the community center.**

Agriculture in Union County

Agriculture and the preservation of rural character continue to be top priorities for residents of both Union County and Millcreek Township. Farming also plays a major role in the local economy. According to the Union County Comprehensive Plan, 2025 Update and the U.S. Census of Agriculture, the number of hired farm workers increased from 741 in 2012 to 955 in 2017, with a slight decrease to 931 in 2022. Despite this small dip, total farm payroll has steadily grown, from \$6.4 million in 2012 to \$13.8 million in 2017, and up to \$18.2 million in 2022.

Agriculture remains one of the county's most important industries and continues to occupy more land than any other land use. Interestingly, while the total number of farms has increased since 2007, the overall acreage in agricultural use has declined. At the same time, the market value of agricultural products has continued to rise, underscoring the sector's growing economic impact.

The Township should:

- continue to promote businesses that support agriculture;
- focus retention and attraction efforts on businesses that support agriculture; and
- Continue to support local fairs and market agricultural products.

UNION COUNTY SELECTED OPERATION AND PRODUCER CHARACTERISTICS

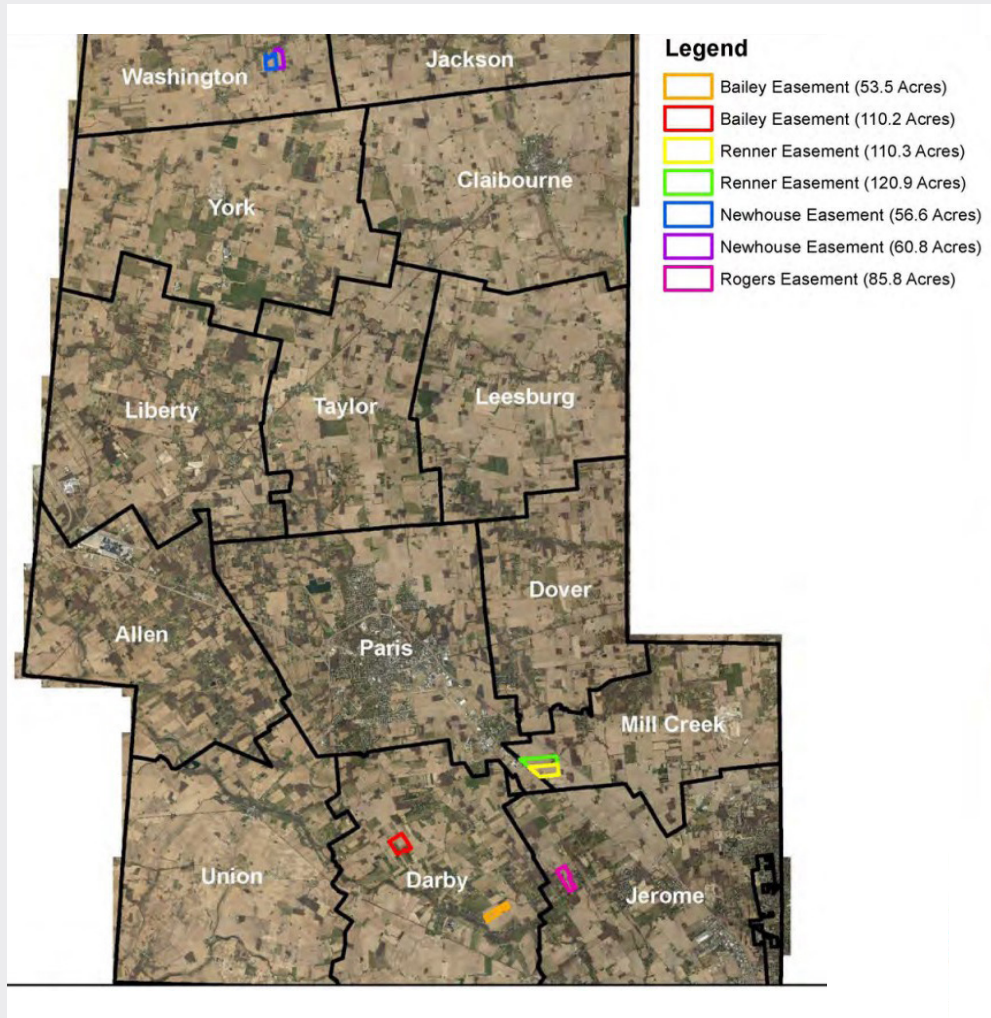
	2022	2017
Total Producers	1,927	1,703
Avg. Age of Producers	57	56.7
Persons Living in Producer's Household	3,469	3,369
Producer's Primary Occupation is Farming	727	619
Producer's Primary Occupation is not Farming	1,126	1,057

UNION COUNTY FARM SIZES

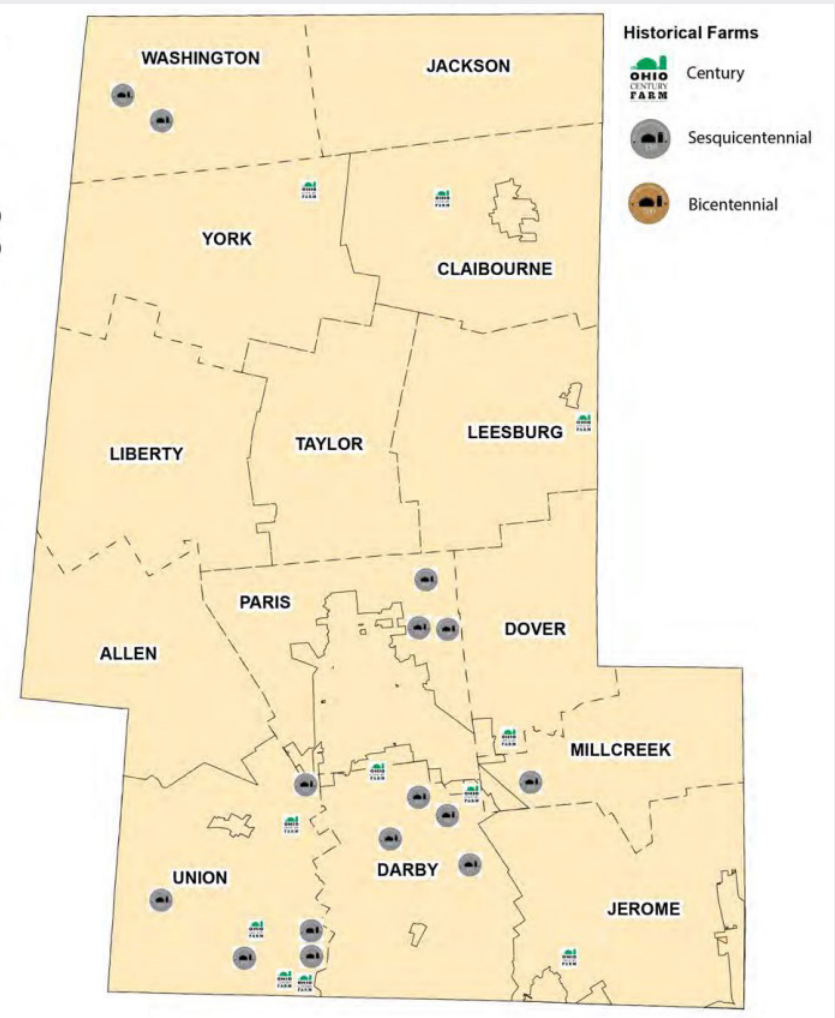
	2022	2017	2012	2007
Total Farms	1,020	997	995	932
1 to 9 acres	146	159	94	95
10 to 49 acres	381	345	386	330
50 to 179 acres	257	257	261	258
180 to 499 acres	129	130	144	143
500 to 999 acres	41	53	50	49
1,000 acres or more	66	53	60	57

UNION COUNTY MAPS

Farmland Preservation Location Map



Historical Farms



Source: Union County Comprehensive Plan, 2025 Update

ACTIONS

1. Conduct a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) to identify existing areas of natural resources.

A Natural Resources Inventory serves as an index of existing natural resources within the Township. The inventory compiles and describes the status, condition, and trends of land, soil, water, and related resources to protect, restore, and enhance the lands and waters. Cultural resources such as scenic resources may also be compiled. An NRI may include information and data on water resources, wildlife, farmlands, tree stands, and any unique geologic resources. Inventories consist of:

- ▶ **Maps and images** show the location and extent of existing resources.
- ▶ **Data and information sources** provide additional detail about features displayed on maps.
- ▶ **Descriptive report** describes summaries of each resource and summarizes the findings; may also include goals and recommendations.

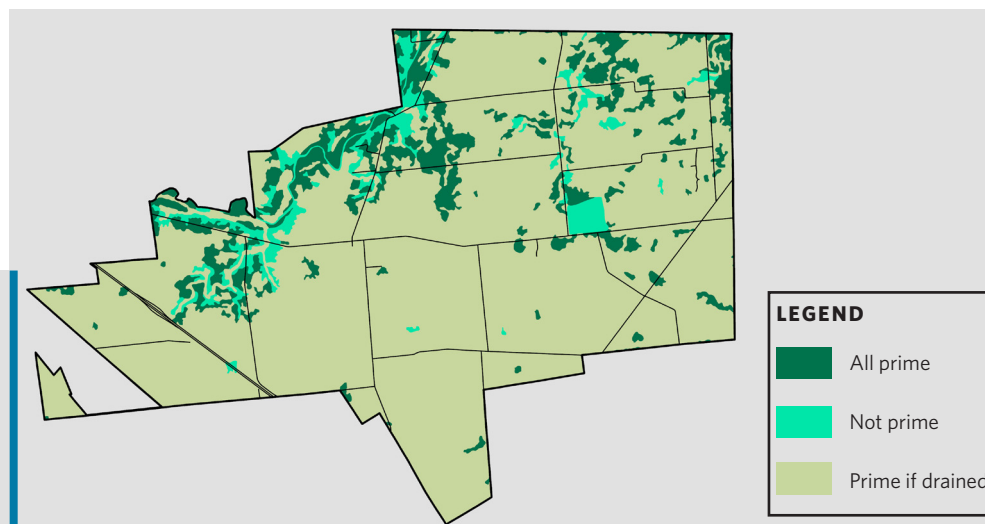
MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP PRIME SOILS

Much of the land in the Township is considered prime if drained. Prime agricultural soils can inform where some uses should be encouraged or discouraged in the Township. A prime soils map may be included in a Natural Resources Inventory.

Millcreek Township should conduct an NRI to manage natural resources, increase land conservation, and limit development impacts. By mapping natural assets, the Township can more effectively quantify and build upon the benefits of local natural resources. An NRI will also allow natural resource information to be included in future zoning resolution updates. The Township should conserve and protect the natural and environmental resources identified within the NRI.

2. Establish priority conservation areas and discourage development in those areas.

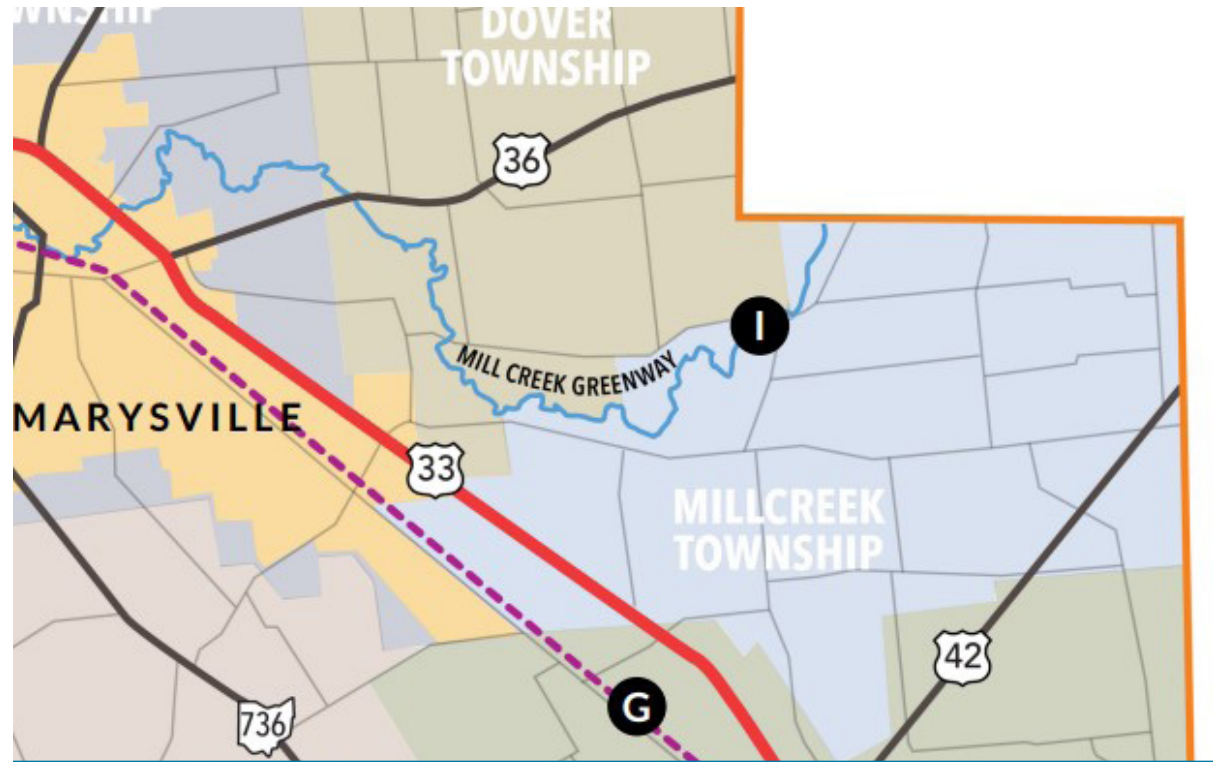
Establish conservation areas as locations designated for protection. These areas could include natural resources identified in a Natural Resources Inventory as well as farms and recreation areas. Consider adopting a conservation overlay district that prioritizes conservation of natural resources and discourages development. Limit utility expansions and access in those areas. As part of the 2024 community survey conducted for the first round of engagement, 45% of respondents said the Township should explore adding additional land conservation areas.



3. **Continue to actively support and collaborate in the implementation of the Union County Trails Plan.**

Union County completed work on its Trails Master Plan in 2014. This includes several recommendations pertinent to Millcreek Township. The community was a co-funder of the effort that sought to showcase natural, cultural, and recreational assets, illustrate how a trail system can improve quality of life for residents and grow the economy, identify possible trail types and themes, suggest possible routes to connect communities and neighborhoods to each other and the regional system, recommend policies and procedures that foster trail development, and identify early “action projects” that will spur additional trail development. The plan included two trail proposals with alignments running through the Township. The Trails Plan was updated in 2022 and was being reviewed as of the completion of this plan in 2025.

The Trails plan will benefit the Township in a number of ways by promoting healthy living and activity, protecting the environment (especially along the Mill Creek greenway) and increasing property values adjacent to, or in proximity to the trail.



Map from the Union County Trails Master Plan Update

Mill Creek Greenway - The proposed alignment of the Mill Creek Trail would meander through the Township from northwest to southeast along the riparian corridor of Mill Creek. The trail would split as it crosses the creek into the Township and run north Ostrander and south to Glacier Ridge Park in Dublin. Eastward, the trail will run into the city of Marysville and connect to an extensive network of existing and proposed trails.

Innovation Trail - Running along the Industrial Parkway, Innovation Trail will connect downtown Marysville and the Dublin through the southwest portion of the Township. The multi-use path is envisioned as a potential commuting option for the hundreds of workers along Industrial Parkway. When completed, the trail will run two miles in a straight diagonal along Industrial Parkway.

4. **Protect and enhance the Mill Creek stream corridor.**

The Mill Creek stream corridor and its tributaries and ditches are the namesake of the Township and some of its most unique and beautiful natural assets. Millcreek Township played an active role in the Log Jam project along the Mill Creek, led by Union County. The Township held public information sessions, formally put up the bond, and petitioned the county to start the process. This network should continue to be conserved for future generations through proactive measures that protect against both non-point and point source pollution. Agricultural practices like fertilization and spraying can pose a threat to streams if unaddressed. The Ohio Department of Agriculture offers a number of programs available to the Township, its streams, tributaries, and ditches. These include:

Agricultural Pollution Abatement Program (APAP) This program may provide farmers with cost share assistance to develop and implement best management practices (BMP) to protect Ohio's streams, creeks, and rivers. It has been successful in helping

to alleviate concerns associated with agricultural production and silvicultural operations which can create soil erosion and manure runoff. The program is implemented through the Union Soil & Water Conservation District.

Stream Restoration Program This program provides tools for the health assessment of streams like Mill Creek. Through the program the community can establish a health baseline by which progress can be measured.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) EQIP is a voluntary conservation program that helps agricultural producers protect the environment while promoting agricultural production. With EQIP, NRCS conservationist experts provide both technical and financial assistance to implement environmentally beneficial conservation practices on working agricultural land.

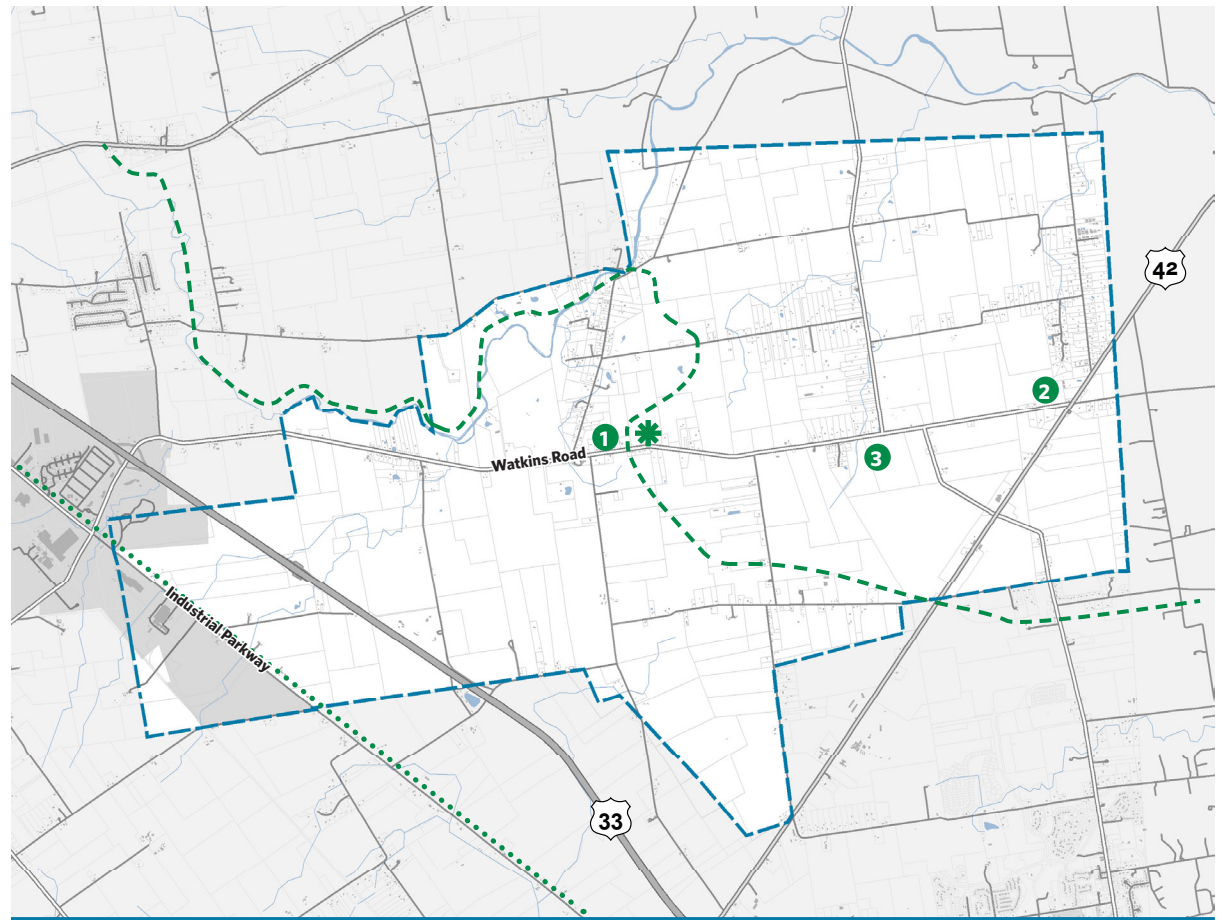


Mill Creek runs for four miles through the north west of the Township. This creek and floodplain were attractive to the first settlers of the area as they indicated suitable soils for farming. Later on, the creek earned its namesake as it was home to dozens of Mills. The creek continues to run five miles east where it empties into the Scioto River.

5. Identify enhancements to existing park spaces, including the Community Center.

The location of future parks might include unique landmarks, shared playground space with future schools or dedicated (transferred to Township ownership) open space from developments as part of mitigation of impacts from growth. The national standard established by the National Recreation and Park Association calls for 9.6 acres of parkland for 1,000 residents. The Township far exceeds this figure with more 23 acres per 1,000. There are roughly seven acres of public (the Township Community Center) and 21 acres of semi-public (Shelly Park and Wildlife Reserve) park space in the community as of 2024.

As part of the community engagement process for the 2025 update of the comprehensive plan, a survey was distributed. The Township should consider an additional survey of residents asking residents to share ideas on enhancements they would like to see and identifying appropriate locations for new parks spaces.



PARK & RECREATION ASSETS

CURRENT

- 1 Community Center
- 2 Shelly Park
- 3 Shelly Nature & Wildlife Preserve

FUTURE

- - - Mill Creek Greenway
- Innovation Trail
- * Mill Creek Trail Head

6. Explore the creation of a Township or regional Parks and Open Spaces committee.

The Township will explore the creation of a citizen based Parks and Open Space Committee to help coordinate the acquisition and development of parks and trails. This could be a regional committee including nearby jurisdictions. This body will liaise with county parks and trail officials and advocate for prioritization of Township projects like the trails plan. Once convened, the group may see value in developing a Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan to establish a community vision and goals as they relate to parks and open space, identify key opportunities and projects, and develop a community action and implementation plan. There are two basic models for a Township parks committee in the state of Ohio.

Convene a Parks and Open Space Advisory Committee

- Informal appointed or volunteer group composed of Township residents and potentially regional partners interested in parks and recreation issues
- Conduct business, such as distribute and analyze a parks survey, and make recommendations to Trustees for action
- May advocate or liaise with county or surrounding jurisdictions

Adopt a Parks District and Appoint a Board

- Formal, legal entity capable of locating, establishing, improving, maintaining, and operating a public park(s) under article 511.19 in the Ohio Revised Code
- A board of three commissioners is appointed by the Township trustees
- Formally adopted through a ballot initiative

7. Identify potential land trusts or conservancies to work with the Township, and hold discussions with them to determine their operating requirements.

The Township intends to maintain its character as a rural haven in the face of growing development pressure from its east and west. To do this, the community must explore a diversity of conservation mechanisms. One successful tool is the conservation easement. Through organizations such as the Coalition of Ohio Land Trusts, a landowner can connect with a number of existing land trusts. Through the application of a voluntary easement the landowner would forgo development rights on the property in perpetuity. This would extend to future owners as well. While the owner would forgo development potential, he or she would receive a number of income tax advantages.

The Township should encourage the purchase of conservation easements through land trusts in appropriate planning areas like the Central, and discourage this practice in more active districts like the East and West.

WHAT'S A LAND TRUST?

A Land Trust buys certain types of development rights on property that is either:

- Susceptible to imminent development but with a landholder who would like to maintain its current use (agriculture) in perpetuity;
- Contains sensitive environmental assets like woodlots, streams or wetlands;
- Has one or more unique or historic structures, or;
- Part of a larger land accumulation to protect from encroaching development.



CASE STUDY:

The Licking County Land Trust

The trust in eastern central Ohio currently protects just over 1,100 acres through conservation (focused on natural or historical assets) and agricultural (focused on continued use activity) easements. The Trust has been particularly active in the areas surrounding the Village of Granville and Granville Township where it protects just over 400 acres. The Union County Land Trust is an active option for the Township to consider.

8. Explore the transfer of development rights policy.

The Township will explore the use of transfer of development rights (TDR) and donations of easements (scenic, conservation, agricultural, historic) as methods to maintain the pastoral visual quality of the community. The Ohio Department of Agriculture offers a high level of protection and options for continued use of property held in conservation easement. It also actively promotes the use of TDR as a way for farmers to realize increased economic return from their property while still being able to conduct agricultural activities. Heritage Ohio, Inc. provides services, including the holding of façade easements on historic buildings. The National Trust for Public Land provides education, support and sometimes financing to obtain and protect significant tracts of property. Local land trusts may be created in Ohio, and the Township should explore supporting such a group if proposed in the future. Currently, the Township does have limited experience with TDR.



OHIO'S FARMLAND PRESERVATION TOOLS

As one of the most agriculturally productive states, Ohio has been on the forefront of farmland protection legislation nationally. The Ohio Department of Agriculture points to three programs in particular. These could be applied in the Millcreek context.

Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP)

The LAEPP provides funding to landowners who volunteer to sell an agricultural easement on their farm to the Ohio Department of Agriculture. The easement ensures the land will remain permanently in agricultural production. The farm continues to be privately owned and to pay taxes. County and Township governments must agree to the proposed easement, ensuring that the easement is located in an area the local government supports

Agricultural Easement Donation Program (AEDP)

Like the Agricultural Easement Purchase Program, this program offers landowners an opportunity to ensure that their land will remain forever in agricultural production, however, in this case the landowner volunteers to donate the agricultural easement. While the donation may have beneficial tax consequences, landowners act out of a heartfelt commitment to keeping their land in farming.

Agricultural Security Areas (ASA)

This program is a tool that promotes farmland retention by creating areas of at least 500 contiguous acres for ten year periods in which agriculture is protected and recognized by local government officials. ASA benefits include protection from non-agricultural assessments and potential tax benefits for new on-farm investments. ASAs may be renewed.

Source: Office of Farmland Preservation

9. Continue to research zoning practices that prioritize agricultural preservation in appropriate areas of the Township.

The Millcreek Township community values the long-established agricultural character of the community and has made its preservation a priority. Township trustees, boards, and commissions will continue to research zoning practices that prioritize agricultural preservation and how those practices may be implemented in the Township. Such ordinances could include exclusive agricultural zones, large lots, and increased minimum lot sizes to discourage development.

Millcreek Township may be able to learn from the neighboring community of Darby Township, who implemented the Agricultural District (A-1) and invited property owners to rezone into that district. Rezoning was voluntary and initiated by the property owners.

10. Implement conservation development in appropriate locations.

Conservation development is residential development that prioritizes land preservation. These communities often allocate 50% or more of the area as permanent open space, which can be used for farming, recreation, or

maintained as a natural habitat. The Township will require any open space to be high in quality and useable space. A maintenance agreement will also be required as part of the approval process to ensure continued, long-term care of any open space.

Implementing conservation development methods in new residential projects can help maintain open spaces and safeguard the Township's rural character. While it shouldn't be mandatory, the Township should consider recommending it in areas where preserving natural landscapes, scenic views, or agricultural land is important. This strategy would be feasible only if the Township plans to provide utilities in specific areas, such as along US 42, due to the permitting requirements for on-lot wells and septic systems.

11. Conduct an agricultural profile.

Working with community members, county partners, and other stakeholders, conduct a study to identify current agricultural activities within the Township and the potential for future agricultural activities. The profile will provide detailed information about crops, livestock, and farming practices used by farmers. An

agricultural profile will help officials understand the needs of local farmers, promote local agriculture, and support economic development initiatives. The information can also be used to generate community support, apply for grants and funding opportunities, manage resources such as water and infrastructure, and inform policy decisions for sustainable land use and conservation efforts.

12. Implement regulations to limit the expansion of the Excavation and Quarry District to protect the health and safety of Township residents, support economic development opportunities, and preserve agricultural lands.

The expansion of the Excavation and Quarry District, especially near US 42, could hinder economic development opportunities. The potential negative impacts on residents' quality of life, such as increased noise, dust, and traffic, could deter new businesses and investors from establishing themselves in this key area. Regulating and limiting the district's growth is essential to balance development, protect residents, and sustain local agriculture.

13. Review the Comprehensive Plans of Union County and neighboring townships to enhance understanding of the vision, resources, challenges, and opportunities for Millcreek Township.

Reviewing neighboring Comprehensive Plans will help Millcreek Township align its goals with broader regional strategies, fostering collaboration and consistency in land use, infrastructure, and economic development. It will also allow the Township to identify shared challenges and leverage regional resources and opportunities, strengthening its ability to plan effectively for the future.

14. The vision for agriculture is the preservation of farmland resources, promotion of agriculture through public education and tourism events, protection of water quality, and an economic environment supportive of diversified crops. Agriculture is a very important component of Union County's economy, land use, and history; its preservation is critical to the County's quality of life.

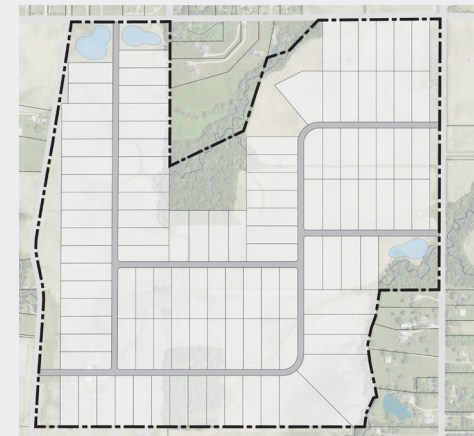
CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT - COMPARING ALTERNATIVES

Rural residential growth in Millcreek Township has typically occurred through small subdivisions or individual lot splits, both of which permanently remove farmland. To highlight the advantages of conservation development, two scenarios are presented for a 300-acre site: one with traditional two-acre lots, and another using clustered one-acre lots that preserve open space.

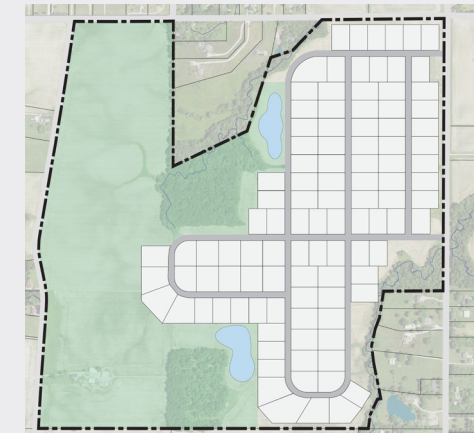
1. Rural Residential Layout: Two Acre Lots. This layout follows the Township's current zoning for platted developments, using two-acre lots for a total of 108 homes on 261 acres. However, it significantly reduces open space, disrupts wildlife corridors, and eliminates productive farmland, altering the character of the entire 300-acre site.

2. Conservation Development: One-Acre Lots. This clustered one-acre lot layout preserves 145 acres of open space and cropland while allowing 104 homes on 164 acres. It offers design flexibility and maintains Millcreek Township's rural character without limiting development potential.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT



EXISTING CONDITIONS



CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT

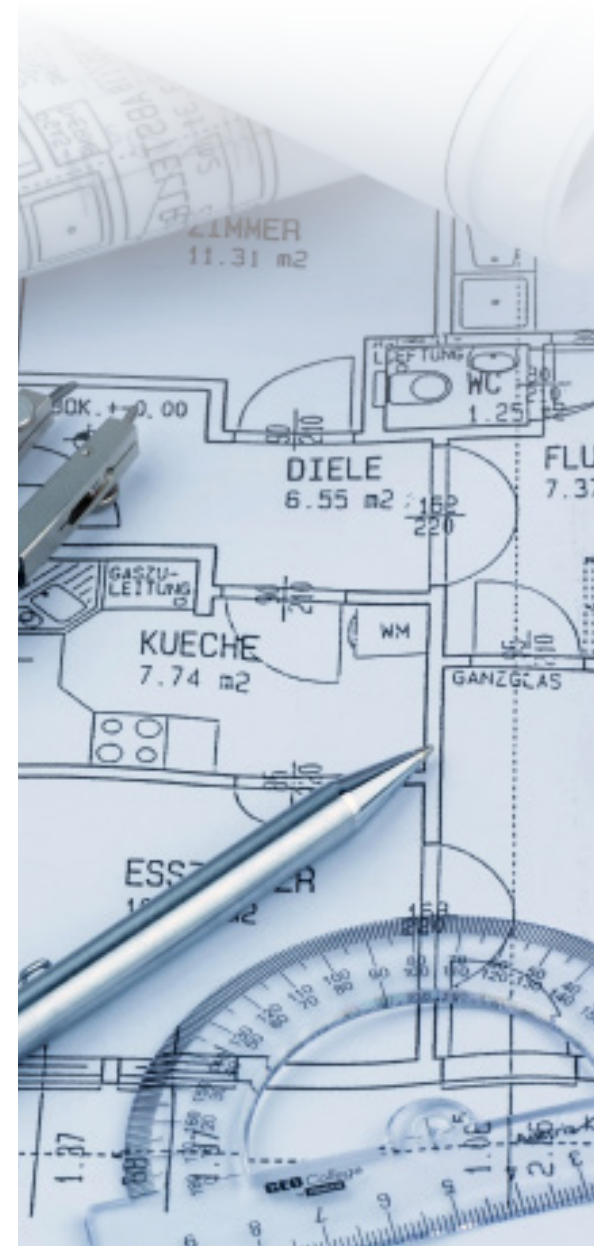
2. Improve processes and practices

For decades, development in the Township has occurred slowly with small subdivisions of land for home sites, or minor commercial or industrial construction. While this trend shows no immediate sign of changing, projected growth in Central Ohio will continue to apply pressure with major development projects on the horizon. The community has planned proactively for this pressure through its previous planning efforts and updates to its Zoning Resolution. This approach has helped define what the community expects out of development - whether it is residential, commercial, or industrial - and has set a standard for project proposals. Complementary to a definition of “good development”, enforcement of the existing code and Zoning Resolution will help to ensure developed properties continue to meet the maintenance standard.

The Township is not actively seeking growth, but if an appropriate proposal is put forward, leadership must be prepared to negotiate toward the best possible outcome for the community. A useful tool in this negotiation was adopted through the rewrite of the Zoning Resolution. The Planned Unit Development District is a process that allows a developer to “master plan” a collection of parcels for the purposes of residential, commercial, industrial, or mixed use.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- » **If development occurs, it is appropriately placed, has demonstrated market-demand, and exhibits the characteristics of high-quality design as defined by the Township.**
- » **The Planned Unit Development district is utilized for all qualifying residential, commercial, industrial, or town center projects.**



ACTIONS**1. Incentivize the use of the Planned Unit Development Districts.**

The 2011 update to the Township's Zoning Resolution introduced the Planned Unit Development (PUD). This tool allows developers to present a plan or site design for negotiation and approval, rather than following a more prescriptive zoning process. While the PUD expands the range of permissible uses, densities, and site configurations, it also requires community leaders to clearly articulate a vision for developable areas. Although the Township is not actively seeking growth or development, it cannot prevent compliant projects from moving forward. The PUD is preferred by the Township, and the community should incentivize its use whenever possible. This approach will help ensure future projects align with the Township's vision. For specific development details, please refer to the specifications outlined in the zoning resolution. Several steps can be taken to achieve this:

Tighten Standard Zoning Regulations.

Introduce stricter requirements or more prescriptive regulations to non-PUD zoning districts, especially for commercial areas. This could involve lowering density allowances, restricting permissible

uses, or tightening other regulations. However, caution is needed to avoid overly restrictive measures that could lead to takings claims from landowners.

Highlight advantages to the process. Create a simple document outlining the benefits of the PUD process (higher density allowances, mixed uses, collaborative development) and make it available on the Township's website and in print. This document should compare the straight zoning process with the PUD process, emphasizing the advantages of the latter.

Develop a guide for using the Planned Unit Development process. Simplify the review process for PUD applications (detailed in Section 7030 through 7091 of the Zoning Resolution) and include it on the Township's website along with basic information about the process.

Encourage the use of the Planned District Pre-Application Meeting. Use pre-application meetings to clearly articulate the community's vision and expectations. These informal meetings allow for early discussions about the Zoning Resolution, criteria, and standards, and help familiarize developers with applicable regulations.

Including regional partners like the LUC Regional Planning Commission can also be beneficial.

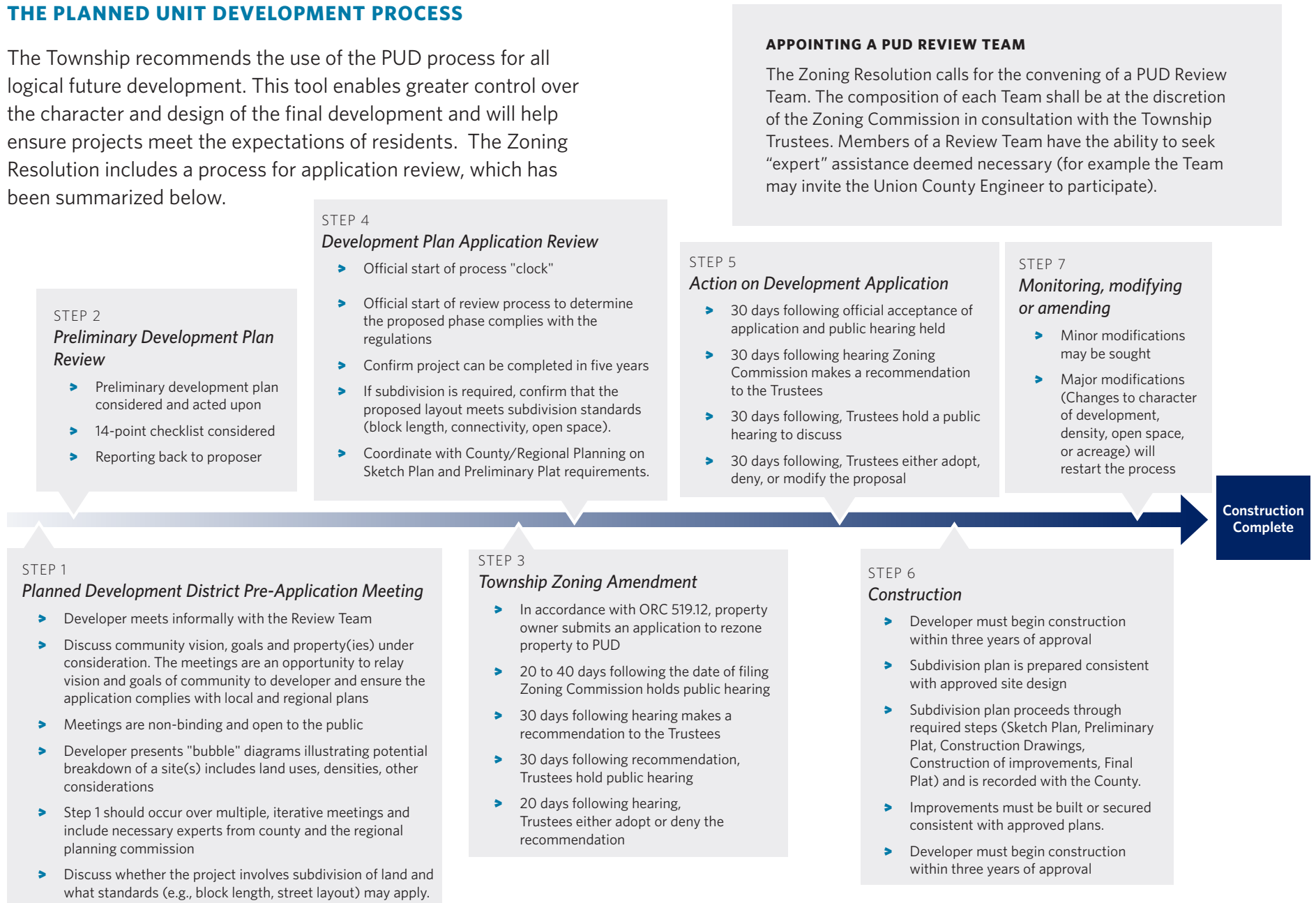
Identify priority areas and establish a vision for future development within each Planning Area. Define which districts are most accommodating and for what uses in preparation for future proposals. This involves referencing later sections of the plan that articulate the vision for each planning area and identify appropriate future uses.

Offer density bonuses. Offer increased density allowances in exchange for community benefits such as green spaces and public amenities. In addition to market-rate housing, incentives could be used to ensure the project includes workforce housing or community-oriented housing. This can make PUDs more attractive to developers by providing them with greater flexibility.

Streamline approval processes. Simplify and expedite the approval process for PUD applications to reduce time and costs for developers. Conduct mock trials to ensure the permitting process is applicant-ready, efficient, and optimized. Ensure all processes and procedures are documented in a single, easily accessible, and understandable written guide.

THE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Township recommends the use of the PUD process for all logical future development. This tool enables greater control over the character and design of the final development and will help ensure projects meet the expectations of residents. The Zoning Resolution includes a process for application review, which has been summarized below.



2. Further define the vision for each of the Township's Planning Areas to assist in the review of PUD proposals.

The Planning Areas established in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan each have their own unique recommendations and proposed set of future uses. In order to clearly articulate the community's aspirations for each district, an area vision was developed as part of the 2017 update and is included in this document. This statement, along with the area recommendations, should assist the Zoning Commission, Review Team, and the Township Trustees in their PUD proposal review process. Additionally, this should provide a more rational basis for decisions taken by each body, while laying out expectations for potential developers. Because the community is not actively seeking development, it intends to be discerning of project proposals and requires development to meet the high standards of residents.

3. Continue to regularly review and update the Zoning Resolution.

Regular reviews and updates of the Zoning Resolution will ensure it remains relevant and effective in addressing current community needs and development trends. Keeping the zoning resolution current, the township can prevent outdated regulations from hindering progress and ensure that land use policies support economic development, environmental protection, and overall community well-being. This proactive approach fosters a dynamic and adaptable regulatory framework that can better serve residents and businesses alike.

A future discussion item for the Zoning Commission could include Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). As of the time of this plan, ADUs are not currently addressed in the Township Zoning Resolution. ADUs are smaller, independent residential dwelling units located on the same lot as a primary single-family home. They may be used for additional living space or rental income.

4. Review and strengthen the architectural design standards and guidelines in consultation with legal counsel.

Architectural standards and guidelines help preserve the unique character of the Township, ensuring new, high-quality developments blend seamlessly with the existing environment. The architectural design standards and guidelines will apply to residential development. They may also apply to commercial and industrial development. Care should be taken to ensure the requirements are not overly onerous and a commitment should be made to the implementation of these regulations. Design guidelines and standards should describe the overall intent of an area, provide clear expectations about the physical characteristics and form of the built environment, and highlight key infrastructure that is expected in an area (such as sidewalks, landscaping, and signage). Requirements for roof pitches, windows on facades, and natural materials (e.g. stone or brickwork) on front facades are also examples of requirements that could be included in architectural standards or the Zoning Resolution.

5. Explore Establishing Historic Preservation Commission, and/or an Architectural Review Board.

To ensure new development in the Township is of a high-quality and attractiveness, a Historic Preservation Commission, and/or an Architectural Review Board could be established. Under OCR 511-52, Township can create a Historic Preservation Commission to “promote the importance of historic preservation throughout the unincorporated territory of the township.” In addition, the Ohio Revised Code under 519.171 allows townships to create an Architectural Review Board to “enforce compliance with any zoning standards it may adopt pertaining to landscaping or architectural elements. The Board of Township Trustees shall adopt the standards and procedures for the architectural review board to use in reviewing zoning permit applications for compliance with those landscaping or architectural standards.” Any of these actions should be completed in close consultation with the township’s legal counsel.

6. Annually review workload of the Zoning Administrator and increase capacity to handle increased rezoning and monitoring activity, as needed.

The Township Zoning Administrator helps plan, coordinate, and implement Township goals along with enforcing the community’s zoning resolution. For a community the size of Millcreek, this is an important job and ensures the safety and welfare of the Township’s citizens. Any large-scale development has the potential to greatly increase the workload of the zoning administrator. The Township Trustees should review a monthly brief prepared by the zoning administrator and consider his/her workload annually. Capacity was added through a part-time staff person and this should be continued to ensure the office is functioning appropriately.

7. Require utilities in new development or during major infrastructure upgrades be buried, including feeder or trunk lines.

Develop regulations that mandate underground utility lines in new development or during major infrastructure upgrades, especially in residential and commercial districts. All future utility extensions, including

electricity, should be buried. Utility meters and electrical boxes should be masked from view through the use of landscaping. Roof top utilities, such as HVAC, should also be screened.

8. Strengthen setback, buffering, and screening regulations at use boundaries.

Use of setbacks, buffering, and screening, such as physical separation of uses through transitional areas, open space, and/or professionally landscaped planting areas, should be required to mitigate or eliminate potential impacts upon existing, neighboring uses. The extent of these requirements should be determined by the degree of incompatibility between the existing or expected uses and the proposed development and should be detailed within the provisions of a revised Zoning Resolution. Special attention should be paid at the boundary of Planning Areas, as each district’s recommendations are different and may therefore be non-complementary. This can be accomplished through the use of traditional physical buffers, like landscaping, or through transitional uses such as “step down” districts. The use of fencing is optional but not preferred. Additionally, setbacks, buffering,

and screening requirements should be maintained through maintenance agreements or other avenues to ensure long-term compliance and care. Buffer requirements would be a consideration with the PUD approval process.

9. Require new developments to conduct a water study as part of the approval process.

Applicants will complete a water study as part of the approval process to ensure that those developments do not negatively impact local water resources and to maintain sustainable growth. Pursuant to O.R.C. 3750.11(G), a municipal corporation that owns and operates a public water system, as defined in O.R.C. 6109.01(A), and a township that is served by that public water system have coextensive authority to establish and enforce requirements in their respective zoning regulations to protect ground water resources that serve as a source of drinking water for the public water system and that are located within scientifically derived wellhead protection areas situated entirely in the unincorporated territory of the township.

NUISANCE BUFFERING

A buffer fully or sufficiently blocks potential nuisances from surrounding residential or less intense uses. Nuisances are anything that prevent a homeowner or business patron from enjoying the use of their land or service. All senses are considered in nuisance mitigation including sound, sight and smell. Effective buffering shouldn't look like buffering at all. Rather, through creative landscaping or architectural elements, developers can effectively hide, mask or dampen nuisance elements without the surrounding community being aware. Below are several well executed examples.



Photos from the American Society of Landscape Architects



Cross section renderings USDA

10. Pursue a dark sky policy.

The Dark Sky movement is an effort to reduce the overall light pollution in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Lighting for streets, parking, industrial uses, and other activities produce an urban light island and can block the view of the night sky. The advent of high efficiency, high brightness LED lighting has, in some cases, increased this effect by more than 25%. Millcreek Township should continue to enact regulations to decrease existing light pollution, especially in new development. This does not necessarily require no lighting but design and management to reduce light pollution such as directing light downwards or setting lighting on a timer.

11. Update the zoning resolution to include stricter drainage requirements for new developments.

Requirements may include setting standards for stormwater management systems. The Township may, for the purpose of public health, safety, and morals, and in accordance with a comprehensive plan, enact zoning regulations that regulate land use in such a manner as to control the drainage of surface water from residential subdivisions.

Millcreek Township has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Union County Water and Soil Conservation District, who acts as an advisor to the Township. However, the District is not the enforcement organization.

12. Develop regulations for short-term rentals within the Township.

Regulating short-term rentals will ensure community safety, maintain neighborhood integrity, and manage the impact on local resources and infrastructure. The regulations should encompass hotels, bed and breakfasts, and individual short-term rentals like Airbnb. These regulations may include restrictions based on parcel size, mandatory registration with the Township, parking limitations, residency requirements for owners, and additional provisions.

The Township should also implement a bed tax to generate revenue for the Township. Townships are permitted to levy an excise tax of up to 3% on transactions where lodging is provided to transient guests (ORC 5739.08). If the county in which the township is located has not already imposed a similar tax, the township may levy an additional lodging tax of up to 3%. Union County imposes a 3% lodging tax, so Millcreek Township is not eligible

to impose a bed tax of greater than 3%. Revenue from the lodging tax is allocated to the general revenue fund and can be utilized for various projects, including the expansion and preservation of parks, natural resources, green spaces, and trails.

13. Require market oriented planning.

A market orientation responds to the market demand for land and land uses. This orientation places the responsibility for absorbing costs for the impacts of development upon the developer/landowner. Such impacts include, but are not limited to the cost of providing community services such as parks and recreation, public water, wastewater treatment, transportation improvements, schools, police, fire and EMS protection as well as general governmental functions. Property owners and developers must pay the full financial burden and construct utility and other infrastructure extensions and improvements, including but not limited to road improvements serving the site. Payments "in-lieu-of" actual construction the infrastructure, equivalent to a pro-rata share, may be accepted if the needed infrastructure would be logically sized even larger to accommodate additional future growth that would be expected in the resulting service corridor.

14. Support proposals that set up a New Community Authority.

A New Community Authority is a well-planned, diversified and economically sound community, or an addition to an existing community, that includes facilities for the conduct of industrial, commercial, residential, cultural, educational and/or recreational activities. It is designed in accordance with planning concepts for the placement of utility, open space and other supportive facilities. An NCA is a separate public body governed by a board of trustees that may oversee, coordinate, construct and finance public infrastructure improvements and community facilities. NCAs have broad statutory powers to implement their community development program. These powers include the ability to acquire and dispose of property, enter into agreements with governments, developers or other parties (without competitive bidding, but subject to prevailing wage) for land development activities, and to construct community facilities (such as community and recreation centers, auditoriums, parks, day care centers, schools, hospitals and utilities), levy and enforce community development charges, hire employees and issue bonds.

15. Develop a standard community impact analysis form to require of applicants.

To assist in the review of future development proposals (large or small in scale) the Township should develop a standard Community Impact Form to be completed by the proposer as part of any Planned Unit Development and conditional use applications. The form should cover a range of topics and help focus the proposer onto community values and expectations. An example form has been placed in the document appendix. Questions could relate to the following:

Transportation - How will the project, as it is proposed, affect the transportation network both between neighboring sites and to the larger network? How many trips will the use generate? Are there rush periods as for a church or school? How will the use handle parking and ingress and egress? Consider current and future conditions along with other questions related to the transportation network.

Utilities - How will utilities enter the use? Where will meters be placed? Will HVAC systems be visible / audible?

Market potential - Has the proposer conducted a market study for the use? If so, what is the current and forecasted

demand? If this is a commercial use, is it neighborhood or destination in scale (i.e. a convenience store versus a home furnishings store)? How will the net fiscal impact of the development affect the Township's fiscal health?

Fiscal Impact - Millcreek Township is interested in development projects that will return a demonstrable net fiscal benefit to the community.

16. Establish transportation priorities.

Any new development in the Township has the potential to affect the road network. The Township should work with the County engineer to develop basic standards for the review of potential site plans through either a PUD or standard zoning review. These standards should focus on elements within the relative control or influence of the Township and not dwell on elements to be reviewed by the County's engineer. Transportation considerations could include the following:

Interconnectivity - The pattern of proposed streets within a site plan and their connection to surrounding sites.

Parking and access - Considerations related to on-site parking and ingress/egress plan.

Complete streets or active transportation options - Accommodations made within the right-of-way for non-auto travel, especially within residential projects.

Streetscaping - Right of way considerations for trees and tree lawns, sidewalks, street furniture, and general aesthetics.

Access management - Entrance and exit drives consider both on-site and surrounding connectivity.

3. Ensure fiscal security

Fiscal security is fundamental to the operation and independence of the Township. A strong and resilient revenue model is diverse. The national recession of 2008 revealed the inherent weakness of a singular approach to economic development. Rather than a sole focus on one industry or another, or one land use or another, the Township approaches the question strategically and will incorporate a range of appropriate uses. These uses will need to be appropriately sited to ensure the dominant character of the community remains rural.

The Township has already taken steps to improve its fiscal strength with actions like the Cooperative Economic Development Agreement (CEDA) with the city of Marysville. As detailed in a previous chapter, this agreement unlocks the potential for a new revenue stream. As development occurs in its defined commercial districts, a portion of income taxes will be returned to the Township. Without this agreement, this revenue source would not exist. The community must maximize this agreement through collaboration with its economic development partners.

Many of the specific strategies are location-based and have thus been placed into their corresponding planning areas. Some, however are generally applicable and have been included here.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- » **A greater diversity of taxable properties and operations (i.e. new businesses operating inside the boundary of the CEDA).**
- » **A strategic and collaborative approach to economic development that leverages regional assets and encourages high quality, skilled jobs with above average wages.**
- » **A balanced and diverse tax base.**
- » **A fiscal model that is monitored and managed.**



- » **As land is a limited asset, the Township should be judicious when approving projects and ensure high quality, sustainable development.**

ACTIONS

1. Leverage the Millcreek Township brand to reinforce the Township's identity and foster a sense of place.

To foster a sense of place, Millcreek Township can create a cohesive and recognizable environment by implementing branded signage and wayfinding systems. Consistent and visually appealing signage, including welcome signs, street signs, and directional signs, will reflect the township's unique character and heritage. Additionally, a comprehensive wayfinding system guiding residents and visitors to key locations, such as parks, can enhance the user experience and promote a sense of belonging.

Using the Millcreek Township brand for placemaking goes beyond signage. It involves integrating the brand into public spaces through elements like street lighting and landscaping. These efforts not only make navigation easier but also strengthen the township's identity, making it a more inviting and memorable place for everyone. People traveling around or through Millcreek Township should unmistakably know they are in the Township, while residents should feel a sense of pride and belonging in their community.

PLACE-BASED BRANDING

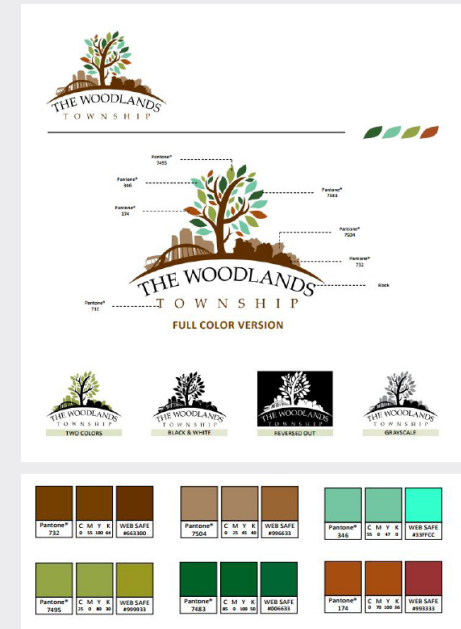
Establishing physical evidence of the area's unique identity is important. The Millcreek Township brand should follow through in many facets of the Township including; the Township website, letterheads, Township documents, and more. Prominent locations into the Township offer the chance to create thresholds through roadway arches or standing signs. Marketing materials for development focus areas or specific commercial parcels could also carry the brand and quickly communicate the community's values and identity.

The Woodlands Township, Texas uses their slogan, "It's good to be home," in marketing materials. The Township's logo and colors create a consistent graphic style and character is incorporated in websites, brochures, annual reports, digital media, stationary and more.



Promotional materials

The Woodlands Township, Texas



Branding standards



Website

2. Ensure that any new development projects are financially self-sustaining, covering their own infrastructure and service costs without burdening existing residents.

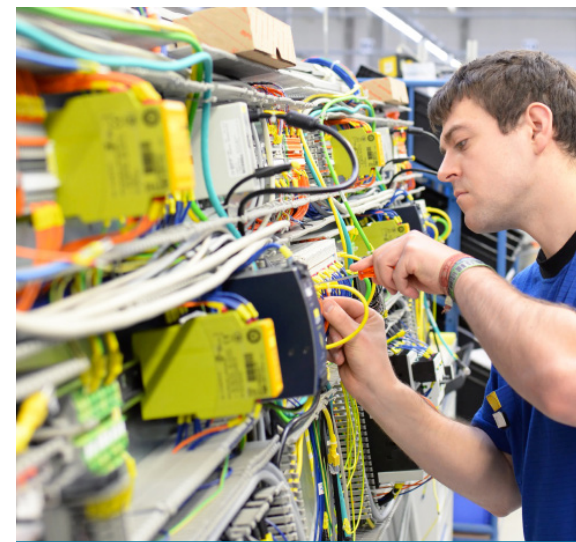
An Ohio township can accomplish this by implementing policies that require developers to pay for the necessary infrastructure improvements, such as roads, utilities, and public services, associated with their projects. The township can utilize Tax Increment Financing to capture the increased property tax revenue generated by new development. Funds collected through TIFs can be used to finance public infrastructure improvements. The Township can also utilize development agreements to ensure developers contribute to the costs of infrastructure and services. Development agreements can be included in the Planned Unit Development process. By adopting these measures, the township ensures that growth pays for itself, maintaining fiscal responsibility and protecting the financial interests of current residents.

3. Require all non-residential development be located within the Coordinated Economic Development Agreement (CEDA) boundaries to promote coordinated economic growth and infrastructure development.

The Township aims to concentrate development within specific areas to optimize resource allocation and infrastructure support. By focusing on the CEDA boundaries, Millcreek Township can manage growth more effectively, enhance public services, and create a more attractive environment for businesses and residents.

4. Proactively research and understand economic incentives to effectively leverage them for the benefit of the Township.

Union County is in the process of updating the Economic Development Incentive Programs, to enhance the understanding and application of economic incentives. Township officials should continue to enhance their understanding of these valuable tools with the intent of using them for projects that will provide long-term benefits to the community.



FIBER NETWORKS

Fiber Optic networks greatly increase the speed and bandwidth of telecommunication. A typical trunk fiber line can support hundreds of super-high-speed connections (100+ mbps) and is ideal for cloud based operations.

5. Explore the extension of fiber optic into the Township, leading from Industrial Parkway.

In the Crossroads plan (Union County, city of Dublin, and Jerome Township) completed in 2016, Union County branded the larger region as the Northwest 33 Innovation Corridor to recognize and leverage the area's economic value. Related to that idea, an effort is underway to earn designation as an Advanced Manufacturing Corridor. This federal designation would reinforce the Innovation Corridor brand and make certain federal grant funding available to area entities. The Ohio State University also lead an effort with public and private partners called the Ohio Smart Mobility Initiative (OSMI) to designate this section of US 33 as a Smart Mobility Corridor. The plan goes on to describe investments in fiber optic extensions. Union County, the City of Marysville, and the City of Dublin are working to provide fiber optic infrastructure along the Industrial Parkway corridor from Dublin's Metro Data Center to Transportation Research Corridor. Fiber is necessary to support the OSMI and will benefit all businesses along the corridor.

Millcreek should leverage this asset and explore spur options to incent appropriate high technology development along the corridor or extend higher speed internet into the community.

6. Ensure development occurs in the correctly zoned property.

The Township will ensure its fiscal security through the slow and thoughtful development of its commercial and industrial zones. In achieving a diversity of uses, the Township will ensure greater fiscal security by creating a resilient tax revenue stream in the long-term. With this said, however, the Township only intends to accept this development in the properly zoned districts in the East and West. The community will not sacrifice its rural character - i.e. allowing nonconforming development outside of its commercial districts - to improve its fiscal condition or economic diversity.

4. Promote intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration

Millcreek Township exists within a dynamic central Ohio region where growth and development have intensified. While it is impossible for the community to isolate itself, clear communication between surrounding jurisdictions, regional entities, and the private sector will help ensure the Township's vision is well-known and respected. Collaboration and cooperation in regional forums will better implant the goals of the community with decision-makers at various levels. This will serve to increase the volume of the Township's voice in policy discussions and expose the community's brand for future investment into its commercial areas.

The Township is bisected from east to west by the US 33 corridor. This connection between metropolitan Columbus, the city of Marysville, and towards Chicago and beyond, has become an especially dynamic area. Private and public investments are closing in from the east and west. As this plan was completed major institutional, retail, and industrial projects were all underway in communities bordering the Township. These, at some point, will converge along the 2.5 miles of frontage within Millcreek Township.

The intensity of these investments highlight the importance of clear communication between the Township and its regional partners. Awareness of the projects and proposals will allow leadership to lobby for those investments that fit the character and

goals of the community and to direct non-conforming investments elsewhere.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- » **Improved and consistent communication between surrounding jurisdictions, including Jerome Township and the City of Marysville.**
- » **Stronger advocacy for projects or investments that help the community achieve its goals (diversifying the tax base, protecting the character, providing better recreational amenities).**
- » **Recognition of the Township within the regional conversation on growth, development and transportation/ infrastructure investments.**



ACTIONS**1. Continue to participate in the Northwest 33 Corridor Council of Governments (COG).**

The Council of Governments currently meets on a bi-monthly basis to discuss ongoing issues and opportunities along the shared US33 corridor. The group currently consists of the cities of Dublin and Marysville, Jerome Township, and Union County, along with other area stakeholders. Millcreek Township is not an official member of the COG, however, a Township official holds an appointment as a representative of the County. In 2016, the body completed the Crossroads Plan, a unique multi jurisdictional effort to impact:

Ease of traveling to and through the area... Traffic congestion and safety are addressed by moving forward on planned transportation projects.

Development decisions... The outcomes of development proposals and the process through which decisions are made are more predictable.

Fiscal health (revenues and costs)... The way in which the area develops has real cost implications on the communities both near- and long-term.

Image and identity of the US 33 corridor...

The appearance of the place can support its identity as an area with unique economic value.

Millcreek Township is a key regional stakeholder in relation to the corridor and should continue to participate in the council to ensure its interests are represented.

- 2. Volunteer for or recruit knowledgeable citizens to represent Millcreek Township on intergovernmental boards and committees.**
- 3. Invite planning professionals for discussions on topics pertinent to the Township.**

Rather than incur the significant costs associated with attending conferences, the Township will invite in leaders from around the region and state to address elected and appointed officials and the community, share their experience, and answer questions. These conversations could involve elected leadership from similar communities, representatives from the development community, or planning professionals. Subjects may include local development projects, economic development, and

infrastructure. The Township should reasonably compensate speakers for their time and travel.

4. Liaise with State lawmakers regarding issues having indirect or direct impact on Township finances and governance.

The Township will continue to invite state lawmakers to annual meetings with Trustees, Zoning Commission and other interested citizens to share key issues in the community, understand pertinent, pending legislation, and advocate for community interests. The Township could consider a regular "State of the Township" event for this meeting where Trustees would share updates from the past year, including progress of the this plan's implementation.

5. Develop and foster partnerships with surrounding jurisdictions and Union County officials and agencies.

These collaborations can lead to shared resources, enhanced public services, and coordinated emergency responses, ensuring the community's needs are met more effectively. Additionally, such partnerships can attract economic development opportunities, improve infrastructure, and create a unified approach to regional challenges, ultimately enhancing the quality of life

for all residents. This could include a partnership with Marysville and/or Union County to conduct a parks and conservation plan.

6. Continue to actively convene an ongoing conversation with surrounding jurisdictions.

The Township will convene a regular, bilateral dialogue with its most dynamic surrounding jurisdictions. Through these informal conversations community leaders will have a better understanding of the dynamics of the region and prepare for any potential “spill over” consequences. The Township will work with the county to understand the US33 Zoning Overlay concept and consider its position.

7. Engage with regional planning organizations to better understand services provided and expand the Townships partnerships.

Union County is a member of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) and Millcreek Township can utilize the County's existing membership. Township Trustees should determine if there are additional benefits available from joining separately. MORPC is a voluntary association of Central Ohio

governments and regional organizations that envisions and embraces innovative directions in transportation, energy, housing, land use, the environment and economic prosperity. Millcreek has been active with the newly formed Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization. The Township is currently a member of the Logan-Union-Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (LUC). This group focuses primarily on rural issues in the three county region, assisting in zoning and subdivision issues. The Township should strengthen collaboration with the LUC to better understand the services they provide and potentially expand upon them.

8. Continue to be an active member in the Ohio Township Association.

The Ohio Township Association is a statewide organization dedicated to promoting and preserving Township government, through educational forums and lobbying efforts. The association was founded on June 28, 1928, and is organized in 87 of the 88 counties (Cuyahoga County only has two townships). The OTA has more than 5,200 active members, made up of trustees and fiscal officers from Ohio's

1,308 townships, and more than 4,000 associate members. The Township should continue its membership and potentially become more involved with the group to remain aware of statewide issues, liaise with other leaders from around the state, and collect best practices.

9. Explore the creation of a joint parks district with Union County or area municipalities.

The Township will explore the creation of a joint parks and recreation district with area municipalities similar to the model created by the city of New Albany and Plain Township, Ohio. The Township should hold an exploratory meeting with area municipalities to gauge potential interest and consider a management mode. In similar communities the joint district is led by a multi-jurisdictional board and a boundary is established.

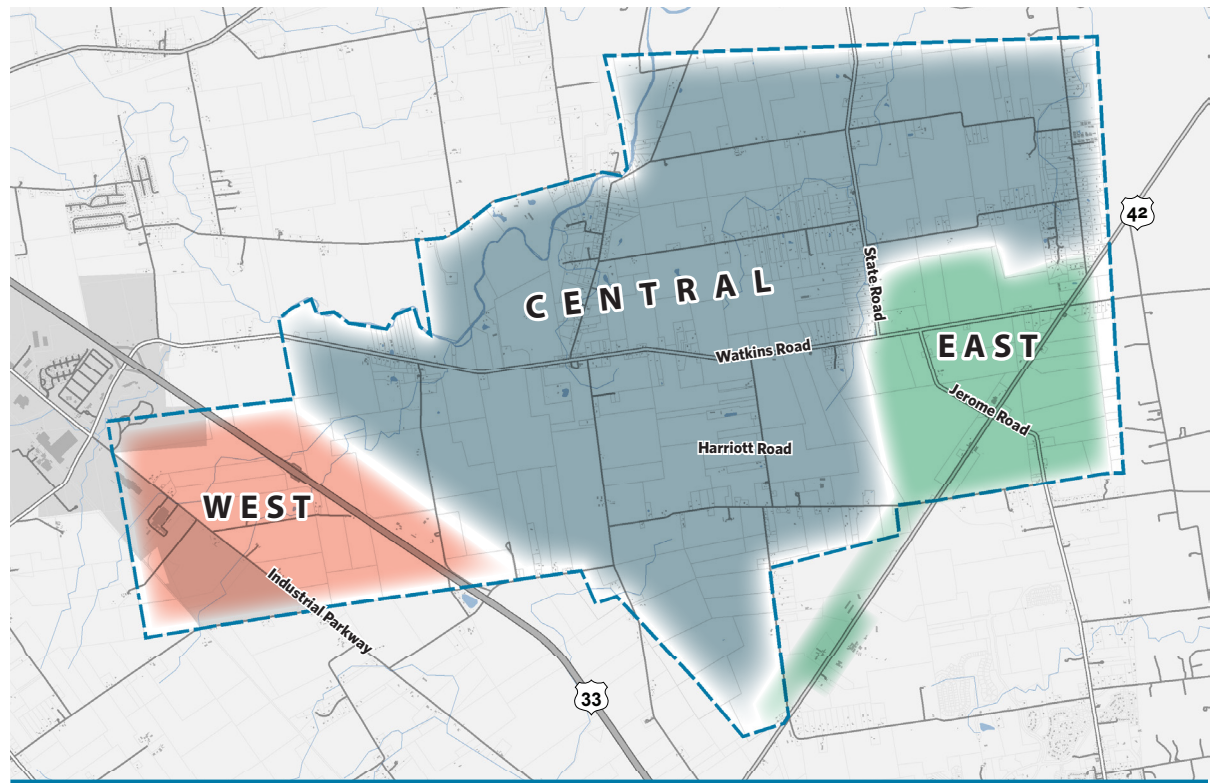
10. Work with local arborists.

The Township will elicit the expertise of local arborists to articulate its community goals related to trees and canopy cover, advocate for work in the community, and receive council on other related initiatives.

Planning Area Recommendations

The 2005 Comprehensive Plan introduced four general planning areas based on varying growth pressures and development suitability. Factors defining each area included proximity to major corridors like US 42 or US 33, existing zoning or development, and buffering considerations for the rural and residential areas. These areas were referenced and refined in the 2010 Plan Supplement and expanded in the 2017 update. The 2024 update reduced the number of planning areas to three.

The Planning Areas are an effective means for organizing recommendations specific to certain geographies. The Township intends to maintain its rural character, and thus recommended actions that seek to collect development into appropriate districts, preserving the vast majority of the Township. The unique characteristics of the planning areas make them suitable for varying types of uses. The boundaries are not hard, nor are they fixed.

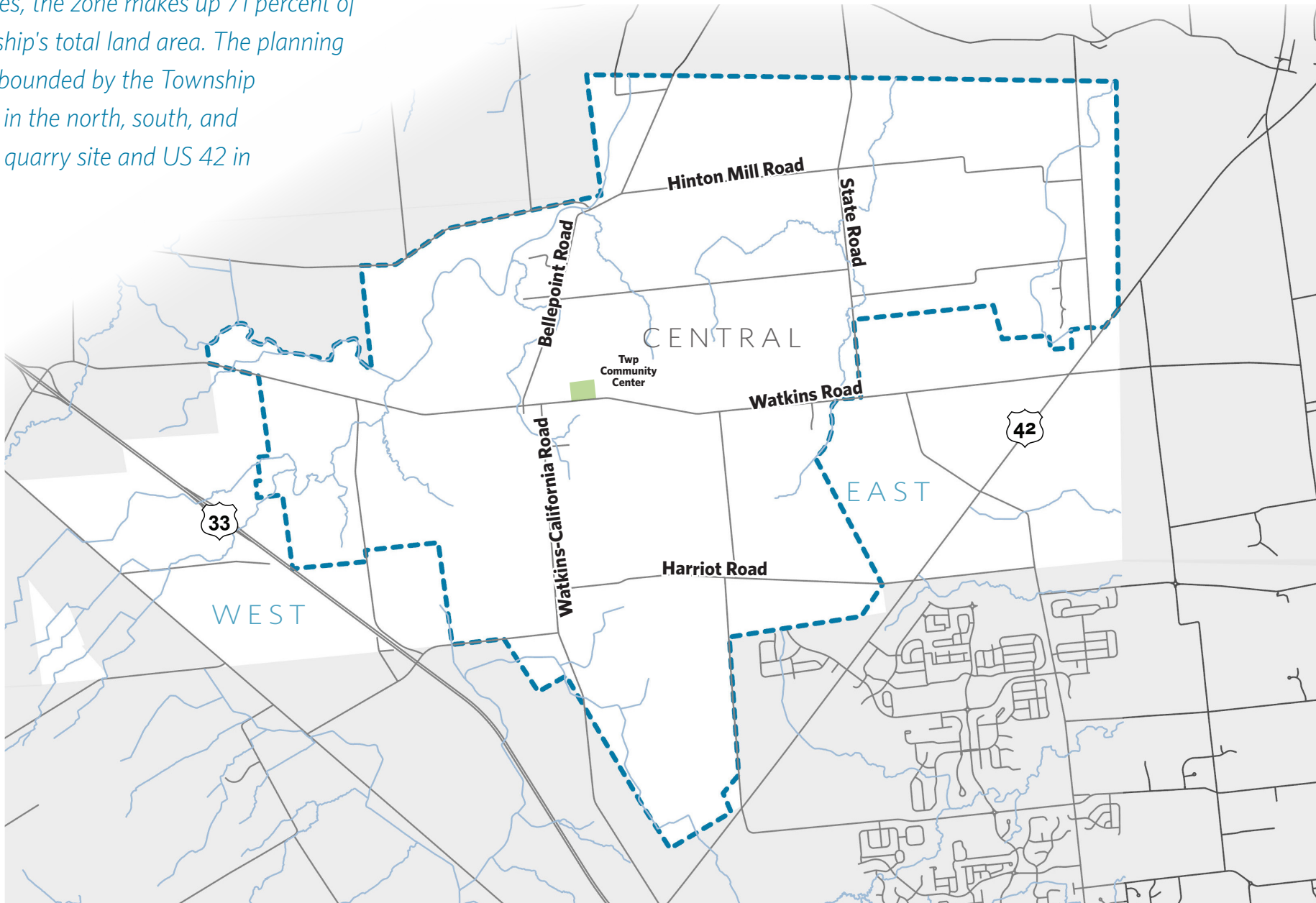


PLANNING AREAS

- Central
- West
- East

CENTRAL PLANNING AREA

The Central is the largest planning area. With over 9,700 acres, the zone makes up 71 percent of the Township's total land area. The planning district is bounded by the Township boundary in the north, south, and west, and quarry site and US 42 in the east.



Central Planning Area

The Central Planning Area is a result of the 2024 update process. The area is a combination of the previous North and South planning areas. The Central Planning Area is the prime opportunity for the Township to maintain its rural character and conserve its agricultural heritage. As the largest of the planning areas, more than half of the Township's entire land area would be conserved. Today, the area is home to low density residential uses with limited potential for large-scale development, commercial, industrial, residential or otherwise. The Township is not seeking large scale residential development in this area. Any further residential development in the Township will require the expansion of water and sewer, even when utilizing conservation design principles.



CONTEXT & CONSIDERATIONS

- The area straddles Marysville Exclusive Service area which extends to Watkins Road
- The Mill Creek and other minor streams and ditches cross the area and the corridors are lined with large woodlots
- The Community Center serves as a gathering place for Township business and recreation
- The quarry site borders the district in the far southeast
- The Union County Trails and Greenways plan includes a proposal for the Millcreek Greenway Trail, running along the creek and south to the Township Community Center
- In early 2025, the City of Marysville purchased 80 acres on Brown Road for the purpose of possibly constructing a new water plant at some point in the future

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- The rural character of the planning area, as defined through the 2005 Comprehensive Plan vision, has been maintained through proactive measures
- Trails extend through the planning area connecting to a larger County network
- The natural assets such as streams and woodlots are actively protected and serve as an attraction for visitors (through trails and parks) and an amenity for residents
- Through the introduction of new amenities, the Community Center site serves as a gathering point for residents and an active center for the Central planning area and larger Township

THE VISION

The Central Planning Area will carry on as a rural haven, a unique agricultural place, and a low-density rural community where the principles of conservation manifest in beautiful natural areas, well-appointed park spaces, and a connective trail network linking Millcreek with the county.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

1. Encourage the use of the PUD residential process and conservation development principles.

Large-scale development is not encouraged in the Central Planning Area. If, however, a project cannot be dissuaded, developers should be encouraged to follow the Planned Unit Development process for Planned Residential District (PRD) *only in areas where public water and sewer will be available within the next 10-20 years*. The Township may consider reducing the required tract size of 20 contiguous acres for the Planned Residential District, in order to incent its use. Action 2.1 expands on the incentivization of the PUD process. Action 1.10 (page 40) encourages the use of conservation development in appropriate areas of the Township, including the Central Planning Area. There are a number of suitable approaches to conservation development the community could consider. These

APPROACHES TO CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT

The 2010 Development & Growth Plan Supplement outlines five types of development that promote land conservation. When planning new developments in the Central Planning Area, developers are encouraged to consider these five types as outlined below. For complete descriptions of the development types, please refer to the 2010 Development & Growth Plan Supplement (Appendix, pg. 3).

Conservation Subdivision

Development only of a portion of a property with the least natural or cultural value. Balance owner's financial needs with preservation needs. Include a conservation easement for the undeveloped portion of the land preserving that land in perpetuity.

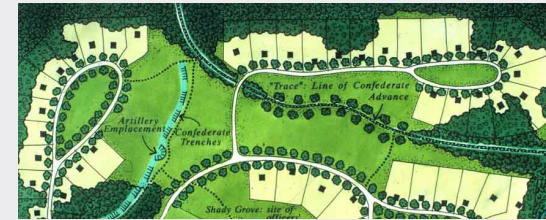


Photo from LandChoices.org

Hamlet Development

Small rural residential settlement, often at a crossroads. Often includes a church, school and/or general store. 10 to 25 acres. Based upon the size and scale of historic examples. New housing clustered or irregularly arranged. Natural and open space used to form a setting for the development.

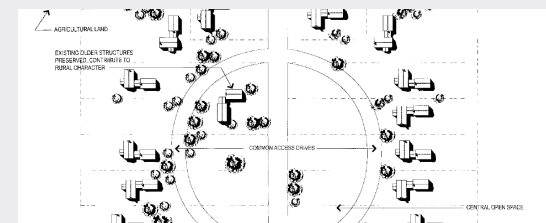


Photo from 2010 Plan Supplement

Cluster Development

Cluster all the housing units permitted on a tract of land onto one portion of the land, with the balance of land to be preserved.



Photo from Organic Architects

Traditional Neighborhood Development

A PUD based upon historic development patterns in historic American towns. Plan for mixed-use developments with buildings in close proximity.



were elaborated on in the 2010 Plan Supplement and have been included to the right.

THE PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (PRD)

The Planned Residential District (PRD) is a Planned Unit Development district adopted pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 519.021 (A) and is intended to provide flexibility in the arrangement, design, lot size and setbacks of primarily single family dwellings based on a unified development plan. PRDs are intended for those areas of the Township with centralized water and sewer that are also recommended for densities of up to 3.0 dwelling units per acre on the adopted Comprehensive Plan. Natural features such as topography, woodlands, wetlands, bodies of water, floodplains and drainage ways should be maintained in a natural state as much as possible to maintain a rural character. Open space is a major component of such a unified development plan. The objectives of the Planned Residential Development District include:

- To encourage creativity in residential neighborhood design through a controlled process of review and approval of particular site development plans that preserve open space, protect ravines, woodlands, wetlands and floodplains;
- To encourage development that makes more efficient use of land, and requires shorter networks of streets and utilities;
- To integrate and provide useable and accessible open space and recreation in close proximity to residential dwelling units;
- To use permanent open space as the centerpiece of residential developments.
- To permit appropriate densities in areas that have access to centralized

water and sanitary sewer, while protecting natural resources via clustering of houses;

- To provide a variety of housing options.

2. Map conservation techniques for all Central Planning Area parcels.

The Township will map parcels in the Central Planning Area to define the appropriate conservation approach for any future development. The Natural Resources Inventory (Action 1.1) may assist in this action. The map would only consider those parcels large enough to trigger the PRD (larger than 20 acres). Criteria for each of the conservation development techniques should be developed to inform the appropriateness from parcel to parcel. Considerations could include access or location, natural assets like streams or woodlots, contiguous land ownership, and other criteria.

3. Protect stream corridors from development encroachment.

The Central Planning Area includes the longest portion of the Mill Creek stream corridor and large swaths of forested land. This is an especially beautiful portion of the community and should be protected for future generations. As directed in the general recommendations, the Township will work with logical partners to ensure the stream corridor and its tributaries are protected. Please refer to the earlier recommendations for an elaboration

on specific methods. Any development proposal including parcels within 1,000 feet of the stream corridor should face special scrutiny especially relating to the placement of roads, buildings and open space allocation.

4. Develop partnerships that will act as a county parks system to acquire and manage wetlands, woods, riparian corridors and other parkland.

The Township will work through its county and state partners to apply for conservation programs and seek the direct purchase of conservation easements within especially sensitive areas. This is especially likely with the proposed Mill Creek Greenway trail currently sited along the Mill Creek through the Planning Area. In order to develop this amenity the County or some other entity will need to purchase an easement or right-of-way along the creek. The Township can help to facilitate the process by informing landowners of the opportunity, holding information sessions, and sharing updates. Parks, by the Township's definition, do not include

preserved wetlands or water retention areas. Rather, a park is an accessible land allocation within a development or area that is open to the public. These may or may not be programmed (have active uses like playgrounds or ball fields)

5. Explore the potential of the Union County Land Bank and other land conservation tools.

The general recommendations outline a number of available programs and tools for the conservation of land. One of these tools, the Land Bank, is an increasingly popular method for preserving land and dealing with troubled or vacant

properties. While there are only a handful of properties in the community that meet this definition, the Union County's Land Bank could provide an option for the purchase of the property and if necessary, and facilitate their demolition or resale.

6. Consider the Community Center as a trailhead location for the future Mill Creek Trail.

The proposed route for the Mill Creek Greenway would run along Mill Creek and past the Community Center on Watkins Road. The Township can take advantage of this new amenity and give trail riders a positive impression of the community. A park-and-bike trailhead at the Community Center could include

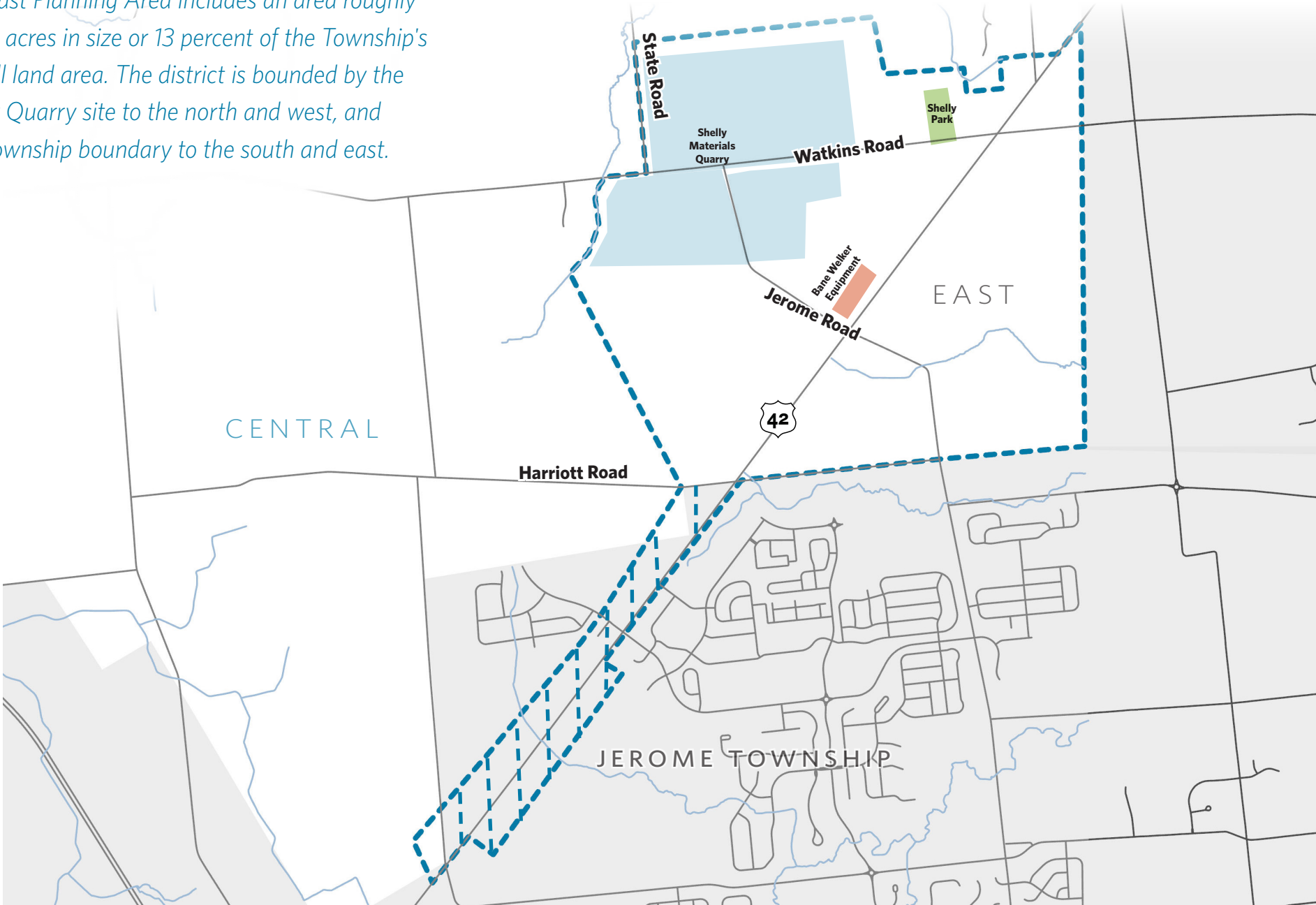
Additional Recommendations

The following recommendations should be pursued for the Planning Area but are not currently a priority. This may change in future updates to the Comprehensive Plan or in a plan supplement. The actions are not in priority order.

ID	Recommendation	Notes
7	Promote the retention and reuse or relocation of historic structures.	
8	Require appropriate road improvements to ensure safe transit for local and through traffic as development occurs.	Road improvements should appropriately accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles.
9	Retain historic farm homes and barns to be reused and integrated into new project designs.	
10	Continue to discourage further residential development within one mile of the quarry while in operation.	
11	Consider additional requirements within the Planned Residential District that a significant portion of home sites have direct access or frontage to the open space; a range of 50-75%.	

EAST PLANNING AREA

The East Planning Area includes an area roughly 1,800 acres in size or 13 percent of the Township's overall land area. The district is bounded by the Shelly Quarry site to the north and west, and the Township boundary to the south and east.



East Planning Area

The East Planning Area is a business district focused on creating full-time, livable wage employment opportunities in sectors such as office, research and development, medical, light manufacturing, and agriculture related sales. The Township is not seeking large-scale residential development in this area. Bisected by US 42, the East Planning Area hosts several active commercial uses and includes the Shelly Materials natural aggregate mining site. The area is zoned M-2, U-1, and B-2 currently. As of the 2025 plan update, the Township was in the process of drafting a zoning overlay district for US 42, which includes the East Planning Area, and US 33 in the West Planning Area. The commercial development along SR 42 in Jerome Township abuts this planning area within the Township at Harriott Road and Bell Road. The Townships should endeavour to communicate and collaborate to continue to ensure the area is planned in a cohesive manner that promotes health, safety, and general welfare.



CONTEXT & CONSIDERATIONS

- A large farm property (~400 acres) actively marketed as light industrial
- The Jerome Village project is planned to build out within a half a mile of district
- The future of the Quarry site is a key consideration. The site spans the Central and East planning areas and remains active
- Eastern Union County Transportation Thoroughfare Plan was completed in May of 2016 and includes a number of findings germane to Millcreek Township and its portion of the US 42 corridor
- Levels of congestion are expected to rise by 2036 reaching nearly 13,000 ADT on US 42 running from Watkins Road to US 33 (currently 9,000)

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- The Township portion of the US 42 corridor emerges as a well-planned, and attractive employment district
- The Township improves its fiscal security by diversifying its tax base
- A retirement plan for the Shelly Quarry site is commissioned to ensure a smooth transition to a new and productive use for the land
- Safety along the US 42 corridor is improved through strategic investments that address both the efficiency and safety of the highway
- Existing residential uses are adequately buffered from new and existing commercial activity
- The CEDA/JEDD are maximized, an additional revenue source improves the fiscal security of the Township, strategic infrastructure improvements are pursued

THE VISION

The East Planning Area will collect research and development, light industrial, office, limited commercial, and possibly agriculture-related uses into a well-planned and attractive district, improve the diversity of the community's tax base, and when the time comes, provide an innovative and productive retirement use for the Shelly Quarry. Safety along the US 42 corridor will be improved through enhanced intersections, access control and overall highway design.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

1. Explore possibility of an area planning process.

As of the completion of this plan in 2025, the East Planning Area included a 400 acre set of parcels being actively marketed along the US 42 corridor. US 42 has direct access south to Interstate 70 and north into rapidly growing Delaware County. These factors combine to create an increasingly marketable area for research, development, and light industrial activity. In the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, the district was identified as an appropriate location for the Town Center concept. This was revised to its current location in the 2010 Supplement. The future of the area should be closely considered. Given the current land offering and future potential projects, it would behoove the community to define a vision and development principles for the area.

The Township can benefit from well executed and attractive office, light industrial, and/or research and innovation development along US42, but a successful proposal will need to conform with development expectations outlined in the general recommendations and be supported by the market. Some potential advantages to employment-oriented development include:

Taking advantage of the CEDA/JEDD agreement - The agreement includes all commercially zoned parcels in the Township. Because the agreement unlocks a portion of collected income taxes on newly developed properties, the community stands to benefit from commercial development, especially if this development includes high-income office or research jobs.

Ability to define the character of development through the Planned Commercial & Office District - The PUD process will enable the Township to negotiate the look and feel of any commercial development and ensure it meets the standards of the community. The process, along with a coherent master plan, will greatly increase the potential for a positive development outcome.

Develop supportive, small scale retail - The community is currently home to very little commercial activity. While the plan is not suggesting large commercial investments, small-scale developments will help residents and businesses meet some daily needs without long commutes to retail centers. These developments should be attractive and only occur in commercially zoned properties along US 42.

It is important to stress, the community is supportive of small-scale, neighborhood-serving retail and not large format retail, strip malls, or warehousing. The Zoning Resolution clearly defines the appropriate uses for its B-2 Neighborhood Business District. No commercial uses larger than 25,000 square feet are permitted.

THE PLANNED COMMERCIAL, OFFICE & INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

The Planned Commercial, Office & Industrial District (PCD) is another PUD process outlined in the community's Zoning Resolution. The process enables the Township to develop commercial, office, or industrial zoned parcels in the same manner as the residential or town center planned districts. There is a wide range of approved uses including commercial, office, industrial and residential. The emphasis, like with the other PUD districts, is on the overall site design. Principles for good commercial design should be considered and implemented in the East. These can be used to evaluate a future project proposal and encourage modifications.

2. Coordinate in implementation of the highway design recommendations in the Eastern Union County Thoroughfare Plan to serve as a long-term plan for the build out of employment-oriented uses along the corridor.

The Thoroughfare Plan identifies policy and planning steps that can be taken at the Township level related to land use and zoning to help manage growth and preserve local resources and infrastructure as the area develops. One such recommendation includes removing the several currently permissible uses from the Farm/Residential District (U-1) to limit the proliferation of new access drives along US 42. Rather than re-write the section for the entire use, the Township may consider the drafting and adoption of a zoning overlay for those U-1 parcels along the US 42 corridor north of Smart-Cole Road. For more information, see the Eastern Union County Transportation and Thoroughfare Plan.

THE B-2 NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS ZONING DISTRICT

According to the community's zoning resolution, it is the intent of Millcreek Township to create a commercial district that will provide the atmosphere and opportunities to develop shopping and office areas which will provide a full range of services and products to the Township. Permitted uses include the following:

- Retail uses under 10,000 square feet
- Business offices
- Hospitals, medical facilities, dental facilities
- Assisted living, nursing homes, and convalescent homes
- Child care facilities
- Eating and drinking establishments
- Hotel
- Outdoor advertising/Billboards subjected to the limitations set forth in Article XI

3. Retain a long term perspective for residential or recreational re-use of the quarry site.

The Township should conduct a study with the Shelly Company to explore potential future uses for the quarry site in relation to market demand. As of 2024, the quarry is very active and has not defined a retirement date. This, however, should not stop the Township from considering the future of the site. The region has a number of positive examples for the remediation and reuse of similar sites. A range of potential uses, from passive parkland to residential planned development, should be considered.

4. Work with Shelly Materials to understand the future of the quarry, including un-touched parcels to the east and southeast of the active quarry site.

The Township will continue to dialogue with the Shelly Quarry operators and nearby residents to understand short and long-term plans for the site. Elected and appointed officials should seek to understand the operator's plans for currently untouched parcels owned by the quarry, including those located on the southeast side of US 42. While the community acknowledges the quarry

remains productive, it is important to clearly state that the township does not support any expansion of the quarry. Productive temporary uses, such as Shelly Park and the Nature and Wildlife Preserve south of Watkins Road, should continue to be sought while the quarry is still in full operation.

5. Protect future right-of-way needs for widening and improvements in the Jerome Road, Watkins California Road, Harriott Road and U.S. 42 corridors.

The Township will encourage new roads in newly developed areas to keep traffic off of minor roads. Right-of-way may need to be purchased by the County or the State in order to widen certain corridors like US 42. The Township should monitor this activity and work with its partners at the county and state to understand their long-term plans. Traffic projections show only modest increases in traffic along US42 and large scale widening is not anticipated.

THE FUTURE OF THE SHELLY QUARRY SITE

The Township will retain a long-term perspective in regards to the future of the Shelly quarry site. This process will include two major steps, remediation of the site or the removal of any environmental hazards, and site preparation for reuse. Below is an example from the region.

**CASE STUDY:
*Prairie Oaks Metro Park,
Brown Township, Ohio***

Now a 1,700+ acre Columbus and Franklin County Metro Park, the area contains four previous quarry sites. The park offers unique amenities including stocked lakes and a dog park with lake access. There are more than 400 acres of restored prairie land. In 2001, the land was sold to Columbus Metro Parks below market value from a private company.



6. Accommodate various forms of commercial office, research and development, and light industrial, uses within portions of the Township located along Route 42.

If a large-scale Planned Commercial, Office, & Industrial Development does not occur, parcel-by-parcel development may occur. If this is the case, developers should be encouraged to review the PCD considerations and consult the vision and principles established in the master plan to ensure their proposals are consistent with the community’s values. The Township should consider amendments to its B-2 General Business zoning classification to disallow speculative strip center development. At the time of this plan, the Zoning Commission was developing an overlay district to ensure more consistent development along the corridors.

FOCUSING ON AG INNOVATION?

With Evolution Agriculture (farm implement retailer), Select Sires (cattle breeding), and thousands of acres of fertile farmland, the US 42 junction with Jerome Road has the potential to attract other agriculturally focused businesses or institutions.

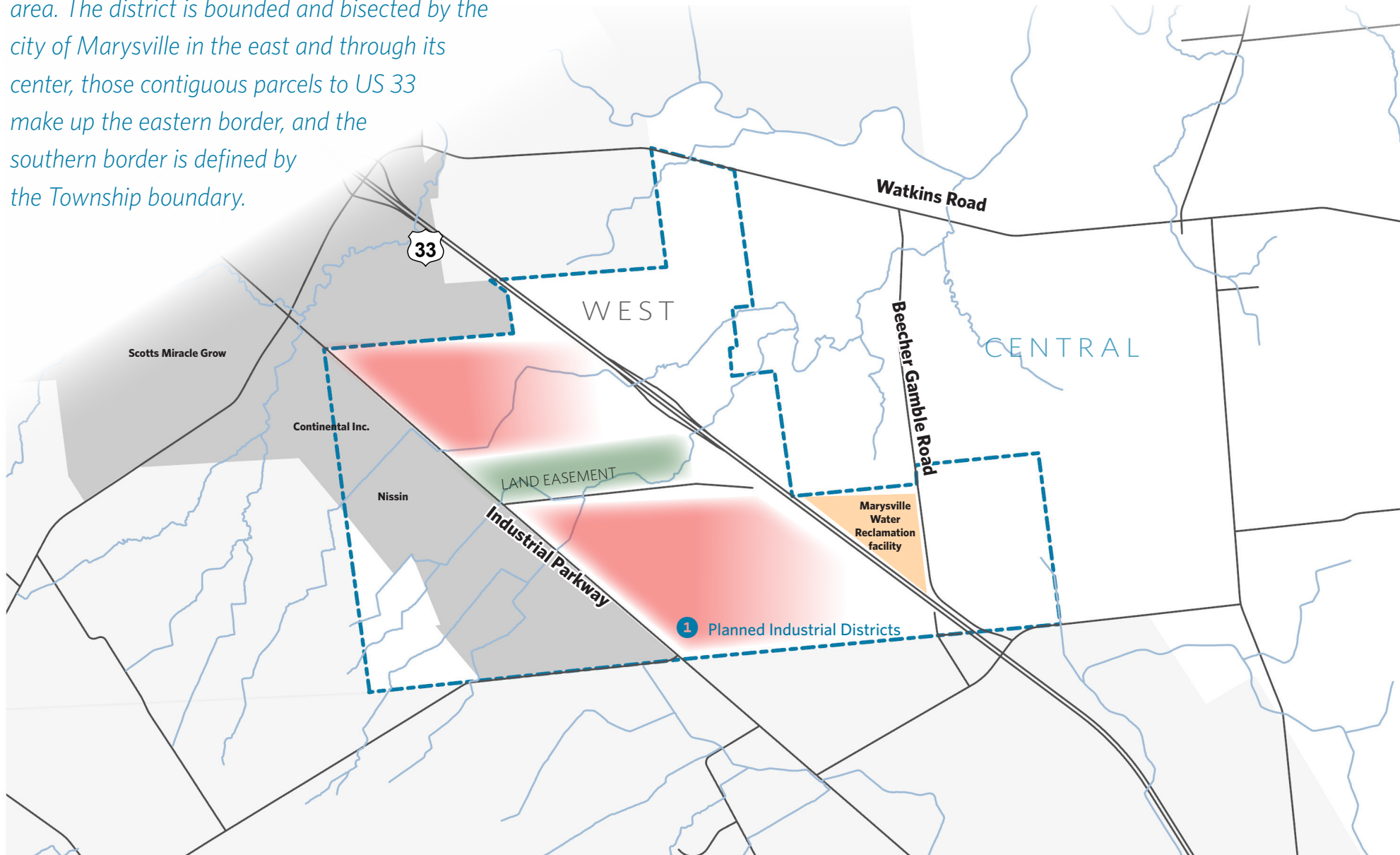
Additional Recommendations

The following recommendations should be pursued for the Planning Area but are not currently a priority. This may change in future updates to the Comprehensive Plan or in a plan supplement. The actions are not in priority order.

ID	Recommendation	Notes
7	Design and install community gateways at each end of US 42 and Jerome Road.	Gateways that are distinct and reinforce the community’s brand and identity create pride and a sense of place for residents and visitors.
8	Support the implementation of the pertinent recommendations from the 2016 Eastern Union County Transportation Thoroughfare Plan.	
9	Interface with Jerome Village developers to understand potential retail demand based on their market study information.	
10	Amend Zoning Resolution to ensure warehousing is not included within B-2 zoning package.	
11	The Township should be supportive of the development of a branch campus of a university or college.	In nearby Dublin, Ohio, a branch campus for Ohio University recently opened. With this recent opening nearby, it is unlikely another branch campus will locate in the Township in the near future. However, the Township still supports an opportunity for a branch campus locating in the east planning area.

WEST PLANNING AREA

The West Planning Area includes an area roughly 2,200 acres in size or 16 percent of the Township's overall land area. The district is bounded and bisected by the city of Marysville in the east and through its center, those contiguous parcels to US 33 make up the eastern border, and the southern border is defined by the Township boundary.



West Planning Area

The Western planning area remains one of the most dynamic of the four identified in the 2005 plan. With the Cooperative Economic Development Agreement, annexation by the City of Marysville has been effectively halted, and a new revenue stream for the Township opened. US 33 (connecting Columbus to Marysville and the Honda facility) is emerging as a technology corridor, connecting major investments in the cities of Columbus, Dublin and Marysville. Overall, the dynamism should only intensify. The Township is not seeking large-scale residential development in this area.

CONTEXT & CONSIDERATIONS

- The securing of a CEDA/JEDD agreement with the city of Marysville represents a major accomplishment of recommendations offered in the 2005 and 2010 plans, also allows the Township to benefit from and participate in economic development campaigns for the areas considered
- The Marysville Water Reclamation Facility is having an impact on the development potential within the planning area and throughout the Township
- US 33 is an increasingly busy corridor serving more than 36,000 ADT today with a projected 51,000 in 2036

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- The CEDA/JEDD are maximized, an additional revenue source improves the fiscal security of the Township, strategic infrastructure improvements are pursued
- Intergovernmental cooperation, especially with the city of Marysville, develops into an economic development partnership along Industrial Parkway, serving as a model for other communities
- Large major employers locate in the area and provide livable wage employment
- The proactive pursuit of a major office or R/D development leverages a significant investment into the JEDD district
- Key historic and environmental assets are protected through logical means
- Trail plans are implemented improving recreational amenities for residents and multi-modal connections to Marysville and beyond
- The frontage along US 33 is leveraged by high quality development

THE VISION

The West Planning Area will enable the Township to capture desirable aspects of the tremendous regional investment and growth and develop its commercial and industrial parcels into a well-planned district that takes advantages of the Cooperative Economic Development Agreement with the city of Marysville and helps to diversify the overall tax base.

PRIORITY ACTIONS

1. **Encourage the use of the Planned Industrial District and Planned Commercial and Office District for all eligible development projects.**

The West Planning Area has many unique locational advantages for the development of high tech, industrial or office uses. As was illustrated in the existing conditions chapter, Industrial Parkway runs parallel to US 33, connecting the city of Dublin and Columbus, with the city of Marysville. The area has recently been dubbed the Northwest 33 Innovation Corridor for its numerous innovative and high tech businesses and institutions running from the city of Dublin to beyond Marysville. The Township should see increasing interest in its commercially zoned properties along Industrial Parkway given their locational advantage to the Innovation Corridor and the access to US 33. The community will incent any commercial, office or industrial proposals to use the PUD process for their review and approval. Residential use is not preferred in this area and it is accommodated in other planning areas.

The Planned Commercial & Office District (PCD) process is explained in the East Planning Area. A well-conceived PCD application should be closely considered, especially if the plan includes significant office space.

Given the configuration of parcels within the Planning Area and surrounding uses in the city of Marysville enclave, industrial development is the most likely future use. Like the other PUD districts, the Planned Industrial District (PID) offers the Township and developer greater flexibility in defining a site. The Township should consider the future of any surrounding parcels when evaluating the site design and access plan. Even if the parcels north of Industrial Parkway are developed one-by-one over time, consideration should be given to internal circulation through future road spurs and utility lines. Access is another critical consideration. Plans should be explicit about access points, traffic management and the internal circulation.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PID PROJECT EVALUATION

The PID can be an useful tool in developing high-quality industrial uses along Industrial Parkway in the West Planning Area. The CEDA with the city of Marysville would activate into a JEDD with new development and help the Township ensure its fiscal security. There are, however, several key considerations for project evaluation.

Access and internal circulation - Trucking and employee access will create special challenges for an effective site design. Projects should consider consolidating traffic into single access point onto Industrial Parkway and in a single-parcel development, future road spurs can extend to the property line. As recommended in the Eastern Union County Thoroughfare Plan, roads in the district should follow a grid parallel to Industrial parkway. This provides multiple paths through the sites, and improves internal circulation.

Buffering - Industrial uses have the potential to produce use nuisances if sites are poorly buffered, especially to the north. Site designs should consider sound dampening, landscaping and other means to “step down” from Industrial Parkway to existing farm and homesteads further north. US 33 serves as the border between this activity and U-1 Agricultural uses to the north.

Use - The use of the industrial area is another critical consideration. The Township should be critical of heavy industrial or warehousing proposals. Uses consistent with neighboring parcels to the south in the Marysville enclave are ideal.

Design - Just as with other PUD districts, the overall design of the industrial sites should be well-considered. Four-sided architecture will be required and buildings will not be permitted to turn their back to either Industrial Parkway or US 33. The frontage along US 33 provides significant visibility and the should be considered during design. The site should be professionally landscaped and signage should be understated.

Maximization - The Community has a significant opportunity along Industrial Parkway with the CEDA and JEDD agreement to ensure its fiscal security for years to come. When reviewing future PID proposals, the Township should favorably consider those projects which will help reasonably maximize this agreement.

Environmental protection - All uses have the potential to negatively impact the environment if they are poorly conceived or executed. The scale and use, however, of industrial sites create special challenges. The PID language in the Zoning Resolution references environmental protection in its checklist for review. These are important considerations for the Planning Area and should be highlighted during project review.

2. Work with regional partners to attract a major investment (research and development, office, and headquarters).

The attraction of a major employer providing high quality, high-paying jobs is a fundamental goal in order to ensure the fiscal security of the Township. The West Planning Area, being significantly buffered from the rest of the Township and strategically located along US 33, is the ideal place to capture such an investment. In addition, the JEDD and CEDA with the City of Marysville apply within this area. This allows the Township to receive a portion of collected income tax on any newly developed properties within its commercial areas. Regional partners with whom to work towards attracting such investment include the Union County Chamber of Commerce, Union County Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the City of Marysville. Potential investment could take two forms: Millcreek Township could work with the County to develop a marketing package to attract one major tenant, or, investments could be evaluated and supported on a case by case basis.



THE NORTHWEST 33 INNOVATION CORRIDOR

According to the Union County Chamber of Commerce, the Northwest 33 Innovation Corridor between Dublin and East Liberty serves as a regional center of industry. It is along this corridor where Honda of America Mfg., Inc. and many automotive suppliers and advanced manufacturers have grown to form one of the largest concentrations of manufacturing industry in the Columbus Region.

In addition, the NW 33 Innovation Corridor from Marysville to Dublin is home to a number of major world-class corporations such as Nestle Product Technology Center, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Co., Continental, Parker Hannifin Hydraulics, and others. These major corporations complement the many smaller companies that also call Union County and the NW 33 Innovation Corridor home.

Many of the hundreds of new companies are heavily involved with research and development operations in support of the manufacturing and agricultural sectors. Countywide, more than 1,440 are directly employed in Research & Development, while it is estimated that another 2,000 are employed in research and development support services. Those directly and indirectly employed in research and development account for roughly 12% of Union County's workforce.

3. Develop a brand/identity for the JEDD areas along Industrial Parkway for the purposes of marketing and economic development.

The Township will work with its regional partners to develop a cohesive identity for its portion of Industrial Parkway to market sites and communicate community goals broadly. The identity would be consistent with the Township's brand and NW 33 Innovation Corridor.

4. Promote visibility and access to buildings fronting the highway.

The Township will promote visibility and access to office and industrial uses fronting Industrial Parkway. Promote design elements that wrap all sides of buildings, so buildings are not seen as showing their "backs" to the highway. Refer to and support related recommendations made in the 2016 Dublin-Jerome crossroads Area Plan.

Additional Recommendations

The following recommendations should be pursued for the Planning Area but are not currently a priority. This may change in future updates to the Comprehensive Plan or in a plan supplement. The actions are not in priority order.

ID	Recommendation	Notes
5	Consider removing “Wholesale businesses when all products are stored within the building” from the list of permitted uses under the Planned Industrial District (PID).	
6	Protect stream corridors from development encroachment.	
7	Ensure enforcement of landscaping requirements for buffer areas to produce a green and rural aesthetic.	
8	Require appropriate road improvements to ensure safe transit for local and through traffic as development occurs.	
9	Work with logical partners to spur the implementation of the Union County Trails and Greenway Master Plan.	
10	Explore with ODOT the potential of community branding on highway bridges over US 33.	
11	Design and install community gateways at each end of US 33 and Industrial Parkway.	Gateways that are distinct and reinforce the community's brand and identity create pride and a sense of place for residents and visitors.
12	Support development proposals that set up New Community Authority.	

5. IMPLEMENTATION

The 2024 Update to the Comprehensive Plan is a long-term policy guide and action agenda to ensure that Millcreek Township remains a desirable place to live. Implementation of this plan will require the collaboration of a host of Township and County officials along with elected and appointed boards and commissions. The plan is organized into general recommendations - policies, programs, and projects responding to the four community goals - and planning area recommendations - actions addressing the three defined geographies within Millcreek. This chapter includes guidance on managing and using the plan and a summary of its actions.

Using the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan update is intended to be used on a daily basis as public and private decisions are made concerning development, redevelopment, capital improvements, economic incentives, and other matters affecting Millcreek Township. The following is a summary of how decisions and processes should align with the goals and actions of the Plan.

General Implementation Strategies

- » **Foster public participation in Township matters**, whether it be input for the comprehensive plan or guidance on the design of a new development or public improvements.
- » **Cooperate with Regional Planning Efforts** as the Township is not an isolated community; what impacts the region, impacts the Township. The Township has and should continue to immerse themselves in regional plans and agencies especially those initiatives involving the US 33 corridor.
- » **Zoning Administration** is one of the strategies in which the Township can take the lead and can implement policies and guidelines that will aid in the implementation of plans.
- » **Coordinate Public and Private Improvements** to help achieve certain goals. An example of this is the Township worked to conserve agricultural parcels through state or federal programs.
- » **Citizen Volunteer Committees** can be formed as a way to involve the public in many of Millcreek's important issues. These committees provide an opportunity for community members to focus on specific issues.

Implementation Action Matrix

The following table includes all actions recommendations suggested through the General and Planning Area Recommendations in the previous chapter. The matrix connects each priority action with a timeframe for completion, a lead coordinator for the effort, any supporting organizations or partners who may need to be involved, and specific tactics or steps to complete or initiate the work. It is anticipated that the implementation steps may change over time based on new developments, or success in other areas.

NOTE ON THE ORDER OF ACTIONS

Priority actions have been listed based on their relevance to the community survey that was completed as part of Comprehensive Plan update in 2024.

TIMEFRAME KEY

Ongoing: Continually occurring | Short term: 1-2 years
Mid term: 3-5 years | Long term: Up to a decade

1. Preserve the agricultural heritage, protect natural assets, and expand recreational opportunities					
CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
1.1	Conduct a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) to identify existing areas of natural resources.	Trustees, LUC Regional Planning Commission	Union Soil and Water Conservation District (USWCD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with LUC Regional Planning Commission and USWCD to introduce concept and outline work program Manage, monitor and implement program 	Mid-Term
1.2	Establish priority conservation areas and discourage development in those areas.	Trustees	LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update zoning regulations based on maps from NRI to designate areas as conservation zones Work with landowners to establish conservation easements 	Long-Term
1.3	Actively support and collaborate in the implementation of the Union County Trails Plan.	Trails and Greenways Manager, Trustees, Parks & Open Space Committee	Union County, City of Marysville, Private partners (TBD), Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide general, ongoing advocacy Convene property owners along proposed trail alignment Pursue private partners, especially along the Innovation trail 	Long-Term

CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
1.4	Protect and enhance the Mill Creek stream corridor.	Trustees, Parks & Open Space Committee	Zoning Commission, Zoning Administrator, Union (County) Soil and Water Conservation District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify "best practices" and develop management policy Identify potential risks and develop mitigation and monitoring plan Review and pursue relevant state-level programs (see recommendation) 	Ongoing
1.5	Identify enhancements to existing park spaces, including the Community Center.	Parks & Open Space Committee	Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a community survey (via newsletter or email) on desired park amenities Inventory community assets, create a "wish list" of park assets Work with Shelly to understand temporary plans for existing / future parks and open space areas 	Mid-Term
1.6	Explore the creation of a Township or regional Parks and Open Spaces committee.	Trustees	Zoning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop criteria, purpose and mission for the committee Identify interested / qualified individuals Convene initial meeting, assign responsibilities, set a regular meeting schedule 	Short-Term
1.7	Identify potential land trusts or conservancies to work with.	Zoning Administrator	Trustees, MORPC, Ohio Township Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify high-value property list that considers if: There is a special potential for development, it is outside of an appropriate planning area, the property is above a certain size threshold (i.e. 50 acres), or other important criteria Develop "How to" guide for land owners interested in using a land trust program Proactively approach high-value property owners to introduce programs, understand immediate plans, etc. Additional mentor programs include the Logan and Greene County Land Trusts 	Ongoing
1.8	Explore the transfer of development rights policy.	Zoning Administrator	Trustees, LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore existing state tools (Ohio Office of Farmland Preservation) and develop a community guide for TDR (see recommendation) Convene meeting(s) with interested land owners 	Short-Term

CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
1.9	Continue to research zoning practices that prioritize agricultural preservation.	Zoning Commission, Trustees	Zoning Administrator, LUC Regional Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze zoning codes, policies, and outcomes from other townships, counties, and states to identify best practices Implement pilot programs to test new zoning practices on a small scale before rolling them out township-wide 	Ongoing
1.10	Implement conservation development in appropriate locations.	Zoning Commission	Zoning Administrator, Trustees, LUC Regional Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the NRI to identify areas with high conservation value Update zoning regulations to include provisions for conservation development. 	Long-Term
1.11	Conduct an agricultural profile.	Trustees	Landowners, Zoning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather data on local agricultural activities, including types of crops grown, livestock raised, and farming practices used Analyze the economic impact of agriculture on the township, including employment, revenue, and contributions to the local economy 	Short-Term
1.12	Implement regulations to limit the expansion of the Excavation and Quarry District to protect the health and safety of Township residents, support economic development opportunities, and preserve agricultural lands.	Zoning Commission	Trustees, LUC Regional Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen buffer zones around residential areas, schools, and agricultural lands to minimize the impact of quarry operations on health, safety, and the environment. Consider conducting an economic impact analysis to understand the potential effects of quarry expansion on local businesses, property values, and employment. 	
1.13	Review the Comprehensive Plans of Union County as well as neighboring townships to enhance the understanding of the vision, resources, challenges and opportunities for Millcreek Township.	Township Trustees	Zoning Commission, LUC Regional Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile and analyze themes from each neighboring jurisdiction's Comprehensive Plan to identify areas of alignment or conflict with Millcreek Township's goals. Attend regional planning workshops with representatives from Union County and adjacent townships to discuss shared challenges and opportunities. 	

CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
1.14	The vision for agriculture is the preservation of farmland resources, promotion of agriculture through public education and tourism events, protection of water quality, and an economic environment supportive of diversified crops. Agriculture is a very important component of Union County’s economy, land use, and history; its preservation is critical to the County’s quality of life.	Township Trustees	Zoning Commission, LUC Regional Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop land use policies and incentives that protect farmland, and encourage agricultural practices aligned with the plan’s goals. 	

2. Improve processes and practices

2.1	Incentivize the use of the Planned Unit Development Districts.	Trustees, Zoning Commission	Zoning Administrator, Board of Zoning Appeals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See recommendation for specific tactics 	Ongoing
2.2	Further define the vision for each of the Township’s Planning Areas to assist in the review of PUD proposals.	Trustees	Public, Zoning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene public discussions focused on each of the four planning areas focusing on opportunities and concerns Further articulate development expectations as they relate to aesthetics, etc. and fold into any future area planning processes 	Short-Term
2.3	Continue to regularly review and update the Zoning Resolution.	Zoning Commission	Zoning Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set a regular review schedule (annual, biannual) Assess the effectiveness of existing zoning regulations and identify any issues 	Ongoing
2.4	Review and strengthen the architectural design standards and guidelines in consultation with legal counsel.	Zoning Commission	Zoning Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Architectural Review Board to oversee the review Study examples from other townships and cities to identify best practices 	Mid-Term

CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
2.5	Explore Establishing Historic Preservation Commission, and/or an Architectural Review Board.	Trustees	Zoning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, LUC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop criteria, purpose and mission for the board • Identify interested / qualified individuals, including a licensed architect or engineer • Convene initial meeting, assign responsibilities, set a regular meeting schedule 	Short-Term
2.6	Annually review workload of the Zoning Administrator and increase capacity to handle increase rezoning and monitoring activity, as needed.	Zoning Administrator, Trustees	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue monthly reporting • Schedule annual review and appraisal 	Ongoing
2.7	Require utilities in new development or during major infrastructure upgrades be buried, including feeder or trunk lines.	Zoning Commission	Trustees, LUC Regional Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the township's zoning and subdivision regulations • Work closely with utility companies to develop guidelines and standards for burying utilities 	Mid-Term
2.8	Strengthen setback, buffering, and screening regulations at use boundaries.	Zoning Commission	Trustees, LUC Regional Planning Commission, Union County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a style and practices book to demonstrate appropriate / acceptable techniques • Include buffering proposal on the development proposal checklist 	Short-Term
2.9	Require new developments to conduct a water study as part of the approval process.	Zoning Commission	Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the water study a mandatory component of the development application process. 	Mid-Term
2.10	Pursue a dark sky policy.	Trustees	LUC Regional Planning Commission, Union County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with county and regional officials to understand acceptable practices/regulations • Study best practices for comparable communities • Develop specific, measurable objectives for the practice, i.e. reduce ambient light pollution by ten percent in ten years 	Mid-Term
2.11	Update the zoning resolution to include stricter drainage requirements for new developments.	Zoning Commission	Trustees, LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish clear and specific drainage standards for new developments. 	Long-Term

CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
2.12	Develop regulations for short term rentals within the Township.	Zoning Commission, Trustees	Union County, LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate specific zones where short-term rentals are permitted or restricted. • Develop an enforcement mechanism 	Long-Term
2.13	Require market oriented planning.	Trustees, Zoning Commission	Zoning Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General practice/policy 	Ongoing
2.14	Support proposals that set up a New Community Authority.	Zoning Commission	Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify successful examples from around the region • Study approach externalities 	Ongoing
2.15	Develop a standard community impact analysis form to require of applicants.	Zoning Administrator	Zoning Commission, Trustees, LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with LUC Regional Planning Commission to discuss regional equivalents and best practices • Develop web-based form to simplify review 	Mid-Term
2.15	Establish transportation priorities.	Trustees	Union County, LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review US-42 plan recommendations, establish priorities • Meet with county and regional officials to understand priorities • Identify and advocate for priority projects 	Mid-Term

3. Ensure fiscal security

3.1	Leverage the Millcreek Township brand to reinforce the Township's identity and foster a sense of place.	Trustees	LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all Township communications, including official documents and digital platforms, consistently use the brand elements • Develop and install branded wayfinding signage throughout the Township. 	Mid-Term
3.2	Ensure that all new development projects are financially self-sustaining, covering their own infrastructure and service costs without burdening existing residents.	Trustees	LUC Regional Planning Commission, Zoning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiate development agreements that require developers to fund or construct necessary infrastructure and services as part of their project approval process. 	

CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
3.3	Require all new commercial, office, and industrial development be located within a designated Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) to promote coordinated economic growth and infrastructure development.	Trustees	Zoning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend zoning ordinances to reflect the requirement that new developments must be within JEDDs. Clearly define and map out the boundaries of JEDDs. Make these maps accessible to the public and developers 	
3.4	Proactively research and understand economic incentives to effectively leverage them for the benefit of the Township.	Trustees	UC Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General practice/policy 	
3.4	Explore the extension of fiber optic into the Township, leading from Industrial Parkway.	Trustees	ODOT, Utility (as of 2017 Spectrum, WOW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to convene with regional leaders to understand spur options for fiber threads 	Mid-Term
3.5	Ensure any development occurs in the correctly zoned property.	Zoning Commission, Trustees		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General practice 	Ongoing
4. Promote intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration					
4.1	Continue to participate in the Northwest 33 Corridor Council of Governments (COG).	Trustees	33 Corridor Council of Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider benefits and costs of joining 	Ongoing
4.2	Volunteer for or recruit knowledgeable citizens to represent Millcreek Township on intergovernmental boards.	Trustees	Zoning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review regional boards of interest Identify gaps in representation and nominate citizens for ongoing representation Invite representatives to speak to the Zoning Commission and Trustees in open meetings to learn from their activity 	Ongoing

CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
4.3	Invite planning professionals for discussions on topics pertinent to the Township.	Trustees, Zoning Commission	MORPC, LUC Regional Planning Commission, Ohio Township Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify community leaders or practitioners with relatable perspective on Township issues Invite individuals into Trustee and Commission meetings to provide a public presentation and take questions 	Ongoing
4.4	Liase with State lawmakers regarding issues having indirect or direct impact on Township finances and governance.	Trustees		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subscribe to "Legislative Alerts" on the Ohio Township Association website Continue to invite state lawmakers to the community annually 	Ongoing
4.5	Develop and foster partnerships with surrounding jurisdictions and Union county officials and agencies.	Trustees	LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General practice/policy 	Ongoing
4.6	Continue to actively convene an ongoing conversation with surrounding jurisdictions.	Trustees	Zoning Commission, Zoning Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene a quarterly meeting with regional partners at revolving locations, begin by meeting in Millcreek Township Hall Consider themeing meetings based on shared regional issues like development pressure, US33 Smart Corridor, etc. 	Ongoing
4.7	Engage with regional planning organizations to better understand services provided and expand the Townships partnerships.	Trustees	MORPC, LUC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend the annual State of the Region Meeting in the Spring or the Summit on Sustainability in the Fall Invite MORPC Director to a monthly meeting of the Trustees to understand benefits of joining the organization Open dialogue with the LUC to understand the current services they provide the Township and discuss expansion of those services 	Short-Term
4.8	Continue to be an active member in the Ohio Township Association.	Trustees, Zoning Commission	Ohio Township Association, Zoning Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend local events and conferences Consider sending one or two officials per year to the Ohio Township Association Leadership Academy 	Ongoing

CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
4.9	Explore the creation of a joint parks district with Union County or area municipalities.	Trustees, Parks & Open Space Committee	Union County, Area Municipality Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a meeting with an area municipality Parks and Recreation Department or similar to discuss feasibility, potential • Based on feasibility discussion and general interest of potential partners determine whether or not to proceed 	Mid-Term
4.10	Work with the Marysville Arborist.	Parks & Open Space Committee	Trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General, ongoing support and discussion • Review / develop PUD language related to tree planting policy as it relates to location, species, etc. 	Ongoing

Central Planning Area

PRIORITY ACTIONS

CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
C.1	Encourage the use of the PUD residential process and conservation development principles.	All	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to define the PUD categories Develop "how to use" language specific to the North Determine "high-value" parcels to apply TDR's 	Ongoing
C.2	Map conservation techniques for all Central Planning Area parcels.	Trustees	LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request a study from the LUC Regional Planning Commission Review findings, consider "high-value" preservation parcels Engage property-owners to understand intentions 	Mid-Term
C.3	Protect stream corridors from development encroachment.	Zoning Commission	Zoning Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See action 1.3 	Ongoing
C.4	Develop partnerships that will act as a county parks system to acquire and manage wetlands, woods, riparian corridors and other parkland.	Trustees, Parks & Open Space Committee	Union County, LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See action 4.8, 1.6, and 1.7 	Ongoing
C.5	Explore the potential of the Union County Land Bank and other land conservation tools.	Trustees, Zoning Administrator	Union County Land Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene a meeting between the Land Bank leadership and trustees to better understand the program Identify potential properties to explore use of the program 	Short-Term
C.6	Consider the Community Center as a trailhead for the future Mill Creek Trail.	Parks & Open Space Committee	Trails and Greenways Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene ongoing conversations with the Greenways manager to understand progress and potential Leverage amenities survey (1.4) to ask about the trailhead 	Long-Term

POTENTIAL FUTURE ACTIONS

The following action recommendations have support but are not considered a priority for the Planning Area at this time. As progress is made on priority actions and/or work capacity is expanded, community leaders may elect to elevate these proposals in a logical order.

- | | | | |
|-----|---|------|--|
| C.7 | Promote the retention and reuse or relocation of historic structures. | C.10 | Continue to discourage further residential development within one mile of the quarry while in operation. |
| C.8 | Require appropriate road improvements to ensure safe transit for local and through traffic as development occurs. | C.11 | Consider additional requirements within the Planned Residential District that a significant portion of home sites have direct access or frontage to the open space; a range of 50-75%. |
| C.9 | Retain historic farm homes and barns to be reused and integrated into new project designs. | | |

East Planning Area

	CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
PRIORITY ACTIONS	E.1	Explore possibility of a master planning process.	Trustees	Consultant (Potentially)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish aims and objectives Prepare project description 	Short-Term
	E.2	Coordinate in implementation of the highway design recommendations in the Eastern Union County Thoroughfare Plan to serve as a long-term plan for the build out of commercial uses along the corridor.	Trustees	ODOT, LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and prioritize recommendations as they relate to Township priorities including development, safety, etc. Liaise with county and state transportation officials and advocate for priority projects Refine B-2 zoning classification to match vision for the Eastern Planning District 	Mid-Term
	E.3	Retain a long term perspective for residential or recreational re-use of the quarry site.	Trustees, Shelly Materials	LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with regional partners to identify best practices in site reuse, including national and international examples Consider a long-term retirement plan in next update 	Long-Term
	E.4	Work with Shelly Materials to understand the future of owned, but un-touched parcels in the south and east of their active quarry.	Trustees, Shelly Materials	Zoning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene informal meetings at least twice a year with management from the quarry Encourage pre-review discussion of any major plans 	Short-Term
	E.5	Protect future right-of-way needs for widening and improvements in the Jerome Road, Watkins California Road, Harriott Road and U.S. 42 corridors.	Trustees	ODOT, LUC Regional Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide general management and oversight Request quarterly briefings from ODOT on upcoming plans and projects in the county 	Long-Term
	E.6	Accommodate various forms of commercial office and small retail uses could be within portions of the Township located along Route 42.	Zoning Commission		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See action E1 	Mid-Term

POTENTIAL FUTURE ACTIONS

The following action recommendations have support but are not considered a priority for the Planning Area at this time. As progress is made on priority actions and/or work capacity is expanded, community leaders may elect to elevate these proposals in a logical order.

- E.7 Design and install community gateways at each end of US 42 and Jerome Road.
- E.8 Limit major residential developments to the south of US 42 in this area, unless safe access can be designed, most likely with new collector streets.
- E.9 Support the implementation of the pertinent recommendations from the 2016 Eastern Union County Transportation Thoroughfare Plan.
- E.10 Interface with Jerome Village developers to understand potential retail demand based on their market study information.
- E.11 Amend Zoning Resolution to ensure warehousing is not included within B-2 zoning package.
- E.12 The Township will be supportive of the development of a branch campus of a university or college.

West Planning Area

	CODE	KEY RECOMMENDATION	LEAD COORDINATOR	SUPPORT	IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS	TIMEFRAME
PRIORITY ACTIONS	W.1	Encourage the use of the Planned Industrial District and Planned Commercial and Office District for all eligible development projects.	All	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to define the PUD categories Develop "how to use" language specific to the West Consider developing more specific site recommendations as part of an area planning effort 	Ongoing
	W.2	Work with regional partners to attract a major investment (Research and development, office, and headquarters).	Trustees	33 Corridor Council of Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a "Millcreek Advantage" brochure List available sites on the Union County website under the Site Selection tool Continue to be active with Union County Economic Development 	Mid-Term
	W.3	Develop a brand / identity for the JEDD areas along Industrial Parkway for the purposes of marketing and economic development.	Trustees		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See action 3.1, extend to Industrial Parkway Articulate advantages of locating in the Township, targeting a high-value tenant, i.e. high tech, high wages, etc. Use to inform brochure, website, other materials 	Short-Term
	W.4	Promote visibility and access to buildings fronting the highway.	Zoning Commission	Trustees, ODOT, Union County, Private Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote "four wall" architecture for all districts Consider sign code amendments for 33 businesses, not extending to billboards however Continue to work with ODOT and county partners to advocate for transportation priorities that will improve access to the sites 	Ongoing

POTENTIAL FUTURE ACTIONS

The following action recommendations have support but are not considered a priority for the Planning Area at this time. As progress is made on priority actions and/or work capacity is expanded, community leaders may elect to elevate these proposals in a logical order.

- W.7 Consider removing “Wholesale businesses when all products are stored within the building” from the list of permitted uses under the Planned Industrial District (PID).
- W.8 Protect stream corridors from development encroachment.
- W.9 Ensure enforcement of landscaping requirements for buffer areas to produce a green and rural aesthetic.
- W.10 Require appropriate road improvements to ensure safe transit for local and through traffic as development occurs.
- W.11 Work with logical partners to spur the implementation of the Union County Trails and Greenway Master Plan.
- W.12 Explore with ODOT the potential of community branding on highway bridges over US 33.
- W.13 Design and install community gateways at each end of US 33 and Industrial Parkway.
- W.14 Support development proposals that set up New Community Authority.

