



2011 Bath Township Comprehensive Plan



Prepared for Bath Township by:

McBrideDALE
CLARION

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This comprehensive plan was prepared under the direction of the Bath Township Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The members of the steering committee dedicated hours of volunteer time to the research of planning issues, discussion of Bath' Township's future, meetings, and formulation of the policies for the comprehensive plan. In particular, the following Bath Township citizens served on the steering committee and deserve much praise and appreciation of the community for developing a plan that will guide Bath Township well into the next 20 years:

2011 Bath Township Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

Jeff Kerr (Chair)	Kurt Schloss
Maryellen Burnham	Maryanne Rackoff
Chris Esker	Steve Katz
Elaine Marsh	Susan Poulos
Bruce McMakin	Susan Locke
Hal Horton	William Weber
Ken Ertel	Donald Jenkins
James Nelson	Elaina Goodrich
Becky Corbett	

2009 Bath Township Trustees

Donald Jenkins
Elaina Goodrich
James Nelson

2011 Bath Township Trustees

Elaina Goodrich
James Nelson
Becky Corbett

Bath Township Administrator

William Snow

Bath Township Zoning Inspector/Administrator

William Funk

Bath Township Legal Counsel

Robert Konstand

Consultants





INTRODUCTION

Bath Township is a unique community. The township offers bucolic views, wooded ravines, rolling meadows, and equestrian trails, all within a few minutes' drive of a complete range of urban services, shopping, and restaurants. Like many other communities, Bath Township is dynamic and while positive things have happened in the township since the 1997 Bath Township Comprehensive Plan, the township continues to face a number of challenging issues. Development pressures along the main corridors have increased the desire to protect the township's sense of place, particularly at major gateways and in the hamlets of Ghent and Hammond's Corners. Protection of vital natural resources and the Heritage Corridors also continue to be a primary goal and challenge for the township. Finally, Bath Township recognizes that they are not a community in a vacuum and that their decisions affect adjacent communities as much as those adjacent communities affect Bath Township. The township continues to strive to find ways to work cooperatively with those adjacent jurisdictions.

This plan is intended to replace the 1997 plan but did not disregard any of the work or recommendations from the original plan. The 1997 plan was used as a foundation for the development of this 2011 plan and readers are strongly encouraged to look to the original 1997 plan (See Appendix C) as a starting point for understanding the township's vision. This plan expands on the 1997 plan with the inclusion of a glossary of terms in the back of this update (Appendix A) to help define terms that may not be common vocabulary for most readers. Where a conflict may occur between the information and recommendations of the 1997 plan and this 2011 update, the 2011 Bath Township Comprehensive Plan shall control.

The core elements and goals of the 1997 plan, which were developed through an extensive planning effort, are fundamentally intact. The purposes of this planning process includes evaluating and validating the goals and policies of the 1997 plan, revising and enhancing those goals as necessary, and supplementing the plan with an updated list of implementation strategies. This plan will continue to serve as a guide for the public and the decision-making bodies of Bath Township. In addition to these core purposes, the planning process also allows for the incorporation of planning policies and recommendations for various planning efforts undertaken in the last 13 years. Some of these planning efforts are localized, undertaken by the township itself, while others are regional and involve the township as a key player in regional dynamics. This plan allows the township to both recognize the importance of these planning efforts and to take a comprehensive look at the plans as a whole.

The following is only a sample list of some of the plans and processes examined during this planning process:

- Bath Township Design Guidelines
- Heritage Corridors of Bath – Management Plan and Addendum
- Joint Economic Development Agreement (with Akron and Fairlawn)
- Erosion and Sediment Control Resolution
- Bath Nature Preserve Master Plan
- Natural Resource Protection Study
- Water and Sewer Planning and Engineering Report
- Summit I8 Corridor Study





- Clean Ohio Fund Application
- Summit County Greenway Plan
- National Register Nomination Information
- Yellow Creek Watershed Management Plan
- Reports from several Bath Township Committees
- Bath Township Survey (2009)

These and other plans that have been, or might be, adopted by the township in the future are still in effect after the adoption of this comprehensive plan and should continue to be a reference point for future decisions. A hard copy of all of these plans and reports are incorporated as part of this plan by reference and are available at the township offices as part of the official copy of the 2011 Bath Township Comprehensive Plan.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a planning tool that looks at the various elements of the township and creates a series of broad policies to help guide future decisions about the physical, economic, environmental, and social aspects of the community. Comprehensive plans are general in nature and are purposely long-term, recognizing that some visions cannot be achieved immediately but take years to accomplish. Other than the future land use plan element, this plan does not make recommendations about the future of specific properties, and even within the future land use element, the plan is designed only to provide a vision of the community over the 20-year planning horizon.

In addition to being an important decision-making tool for all of the township's decisions, the comprehensive plan has also served Bath Township well as a foundation for zoning, one of the township's primary methods of land use regulation. In the State of Ohio, townships have the authority to regulate the use and location of lots, structures, and buildings for the purposes of public health, safety, public convenience, comfort, prosperity, and general welfare if it is "in accordance with a comprehensive plan." Such purpose of township zoning is clearly established in Section 519.02 of the Ohio Revised Code and is a purpose for which the township currently maintains its own local zoning regulations. This plan will continue to serve as the comprehensive planning foundation of the Bath Township Zoning Resolution.

While this plan does serve as a **foundation** for decisions made by the township regarding zoning, the adoption of **this plan does not alter the zoning map or zoning text** in effect at the time of the plan adoption. In the future, if the township does undertake changes to the zoning resolution or zoning map, property owners still have all of the protections afforded to them under state law including nonconforming use ("grandfathering") protections that allow the continuation of existing uses legally located in the township.



Figure A: Bath Township Zoning Districts Map



Summary of the Planning Process and Public Input

In 1997, Bath was prepared to meet these challenges with a well-delineated plan that provided a blueprint for implementation actions, guiding future development in a manner that retained the open space design character of the community, protected the integrity of existing neighborhoods, and encouraged quality improvements in gateway areas of the township. Now, some 13 years later, the township is continuing this process by providing a forum to evaluate the original plan, adopted in January 1998, and revise it as appropriate. That process has led to this document, the 2011 Bath Township Comprehensive Plan, which incorporates and supplements that original plan and expands upon it to address changing issues and priorities. For example, while preservation of the rural single-family character has continued as a main priority of the township's planning efforts, there has also been an increasing desire to provide for some attached housing options in targeted areas of the community to provide housing opportunities for young professionals and empty nesters. Ever increasing development pressures along S.R. 18 and Cleveland-Massillon Road have required a more detailed evaluation of these areas with new policies and standards for development of the southwest portion of the township along S.R. 18, and the northern area of the township between Hammond's Corner and the Village of Richfield. Additionally, there is an increased desire to preserve and enhance the historic development form of Hammond's Corner and Ghent through enhanced standards and historic preservation regulations.

As with the 1997 plan, Bath Township established a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to work with McBride Dale Clarion (MDC) to develop the 2011 comprehensive plan. This committee was designed to include a cross-representation of residents, business owners, and property owners from across the township that could provide feedback on various plan elements. In addition to the steering committee, public input was gathered through postings to the township website and the facilitation of public meetings, the first of which was held in September 2009 and provided an interactive forum where attendees could highlight places they were proud of and places that needed improvement.





Figure B: Mapping Exercise from the Initial Public Meeting

This 2011 plan is a strategic revision with resources focused on validating the goals and updating key information and recommendations. That being said, the process was designed to ensure more than sufficient public access and input as an important method of establishing a clear vision for the future.



BASIC INVENTORIES

A key component of any comprehensive planning strategy should be an understanding of how the community has grown and developed into the community that it is and how the community wants to grow in the future. Accomplishing this task means evaluating how the township has grown through an inventory of the existing conditions. This creates a foundation for which the township can base decisions on what policies are adequate and what policies should be refined or changed. The following is a summary of the inventories of existing land uses, natural resources, and infrastructure found in the township today and appropriate comparisons with information from the 1997 plan.

Existing Land Use

An assessment of how the land is currently being used is an important piece of information that must be evaluated in any land use planning effort. Property information and aerial photography, along with input from staff, helped establish an existing land use map (Map 1). This map classifies property in Bath Township under one of the following land use categories:

- **Agriculture, Vacant, or Large Lot Residential (5+ Acres)** properties are areas of the township that are maintained as farmland, either crops or for the raising of livestock, or are properties that are not currently used for any use listed below. Large residential properties with over five acres also fall within this category due to the potential for future subdivision.
- **Single-Family Residential** uses are those properties with a single detached dwelling unit located on a single parcel.
- **Multi-Family Residential** uses only comprise a small area of the township and are located where there are multiple dwelling units, attached to one another, located on a single parcel. This category may include apartment buildings, townhomes, duplexes, two-family homes, and other attached housing.
- **Commercial and Office** uses cover those areas of the township where the primary use is the provision of goods and services to the general public in a commercial setting or where there are establishments that provide executive, management, administrative, medical, dental, or professional services in either small or large-scale office buildings.
- **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space** uses are properties used for public open space and recreational uses such as playgrounds, ball fields, horse trails, open space, and other local or regional park lands. A large portion of the eastern edge of the township is classified as this use because of the presence of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
- **Public and Institutional** uses are properties and structures used for the provision of services related to the general public (e.g., township offices, public utilities, or fire stations) or institutions such as schools and churches.

Map 1: Existing Land Use, illustrates existing land uses across the township while *Figure C: Existing Land Use Distribution*, illustrates the ratio of land uses as a whole.



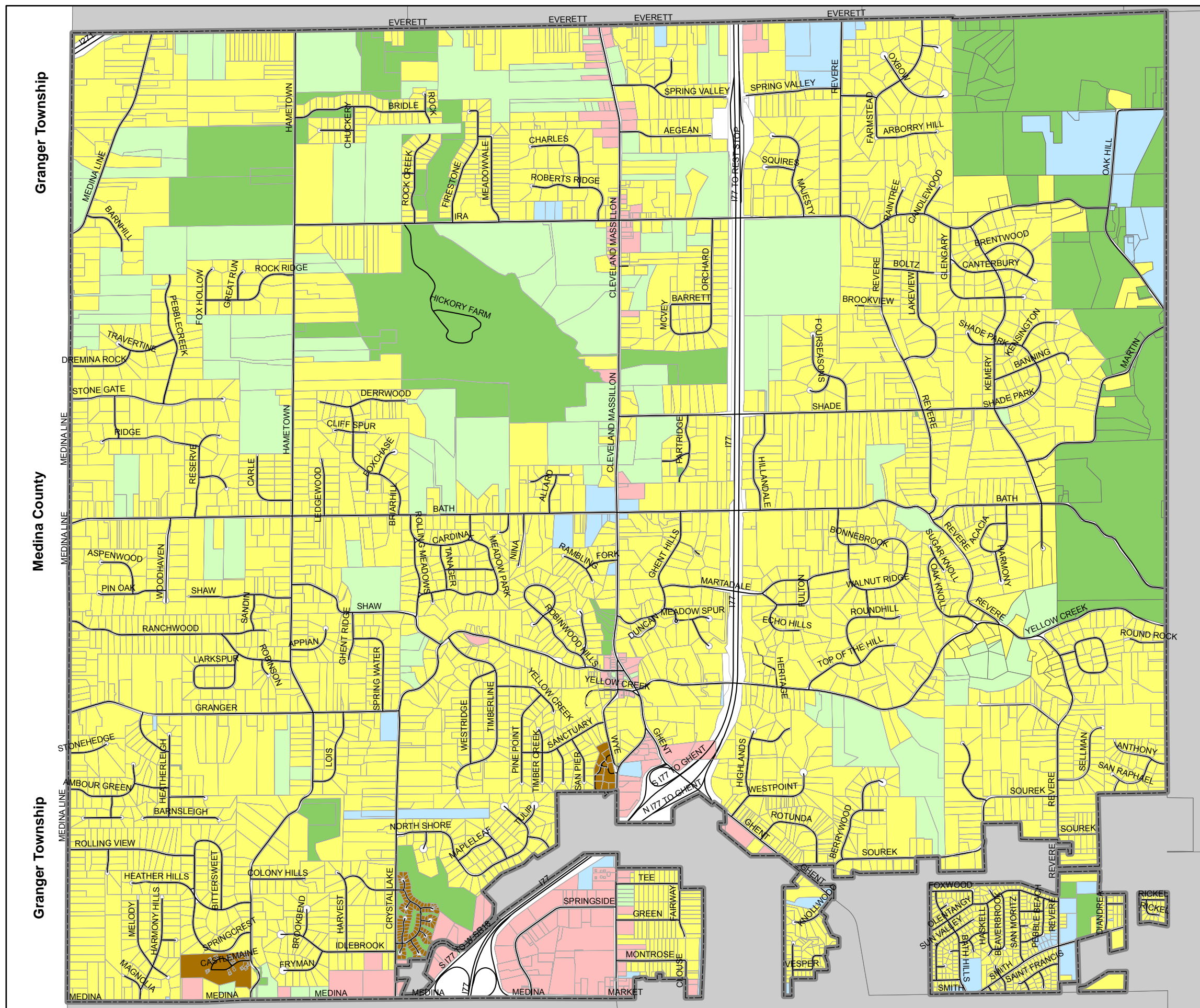
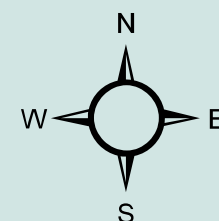
2011 BATH TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Map 1: Existing Land Use

- Bath Township Boundary
- Agricultural, Vacant, or Large Lot Residential (5+ Acres)
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Commercial and Office
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Public and Institutional

1 inch = 2,500 feet

Source: Summit County GIS and Department of Development



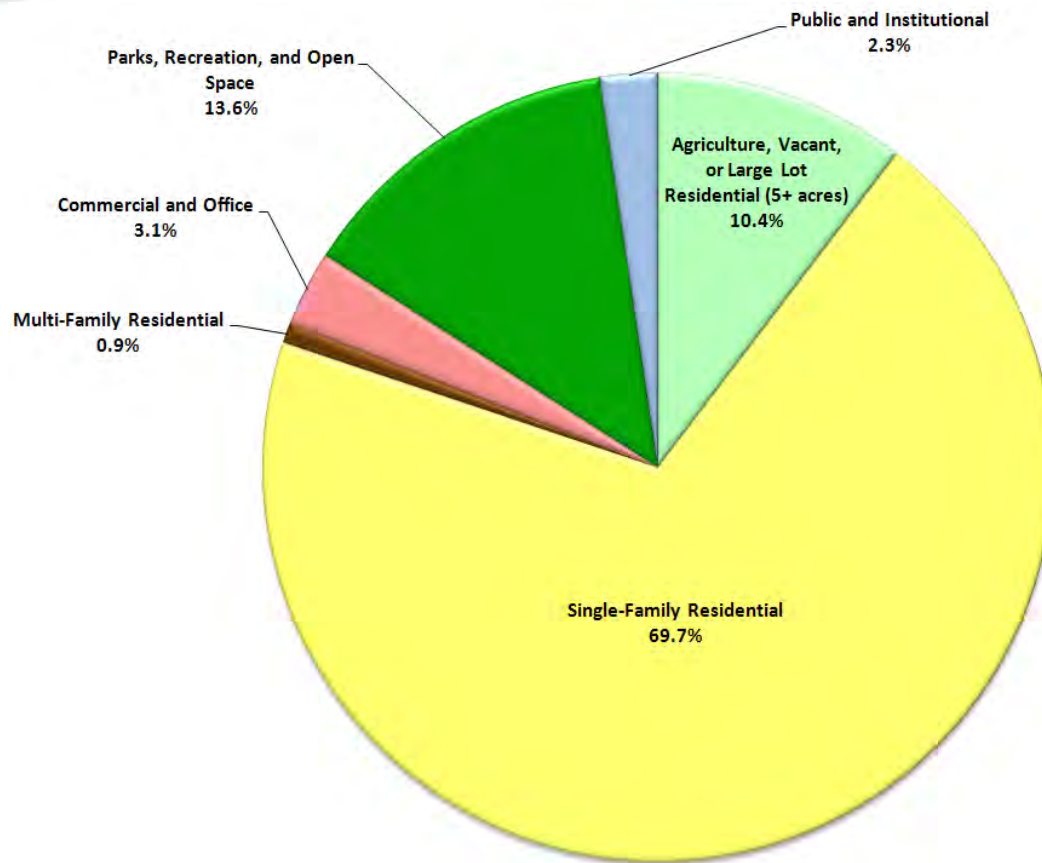


Figure C: Existing Land Use Distribution

Almost 90% of land within Bath Township is currently considered developed, with little to no potential for future subdivision. Of that, almost 70% of the land is used for single-family residential uses (there were 3,662 housing units in the township in 2000) and 14% for parks, recreation, and open space uses, all uses that contribute to the township's single-family, rural character. Approximately 1,800 acres of land (10.4% of the township) remains classified as agricultural, vacant, or large lot residential uses (lots with a minimum area of five acres that also contain a home). Much of this land is located north of Bath Road and zoned for residential densities of one unit per 2.5 acres. While this 10% of the township may be subject to future development pressures, much of it is constrained by natural features such as wetlands, floodplains, and slopes or are subject, in part, to the township's riparian corridor protection standards. All of these constraints will further limit future development potential in the township to no more than 600 additional dwelling units, for a maximum of 4,262 dwelling units at full build out of the township.



Natural Resources

The protection of vital natural resources was a key goal in the 1997 plan and continues to be a major theme and goal of this plan.

As part of the 1997 plan, a Natural Features Inventory and Analysis was prepared by ACRT, Inc. Environmental features such as waterways, floodplains, wetlands, hydric soils, non-hydric soils with hydric inclusions, slopes greater than 12%, forest resources, and watersheds were mapped and analyzed. This plan includes updated information on each of these key resources.

Tree Canopy Cover

Bath Township has a significant amount of tree canopy coverage that spreads out across the community and is a major factor that contributes to the community's rural character and to the township's Heritage Corridors (See Figure D below.). The benefits of maintaining tree canopy include, but are not limited to, reducing air and noise pollution, providing habitat for birds and mammals, reducing water run-off and soil erosion, enhancing aesthetic and visual qualities of the community, and providing shade.

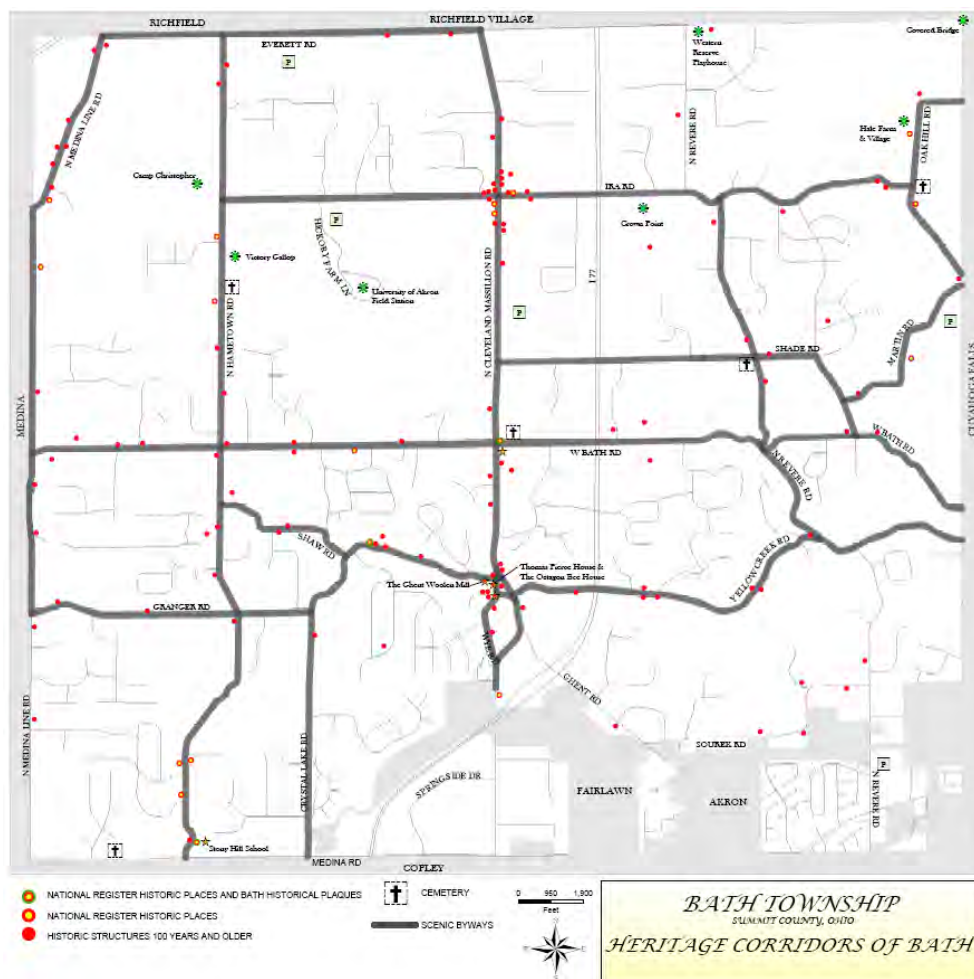
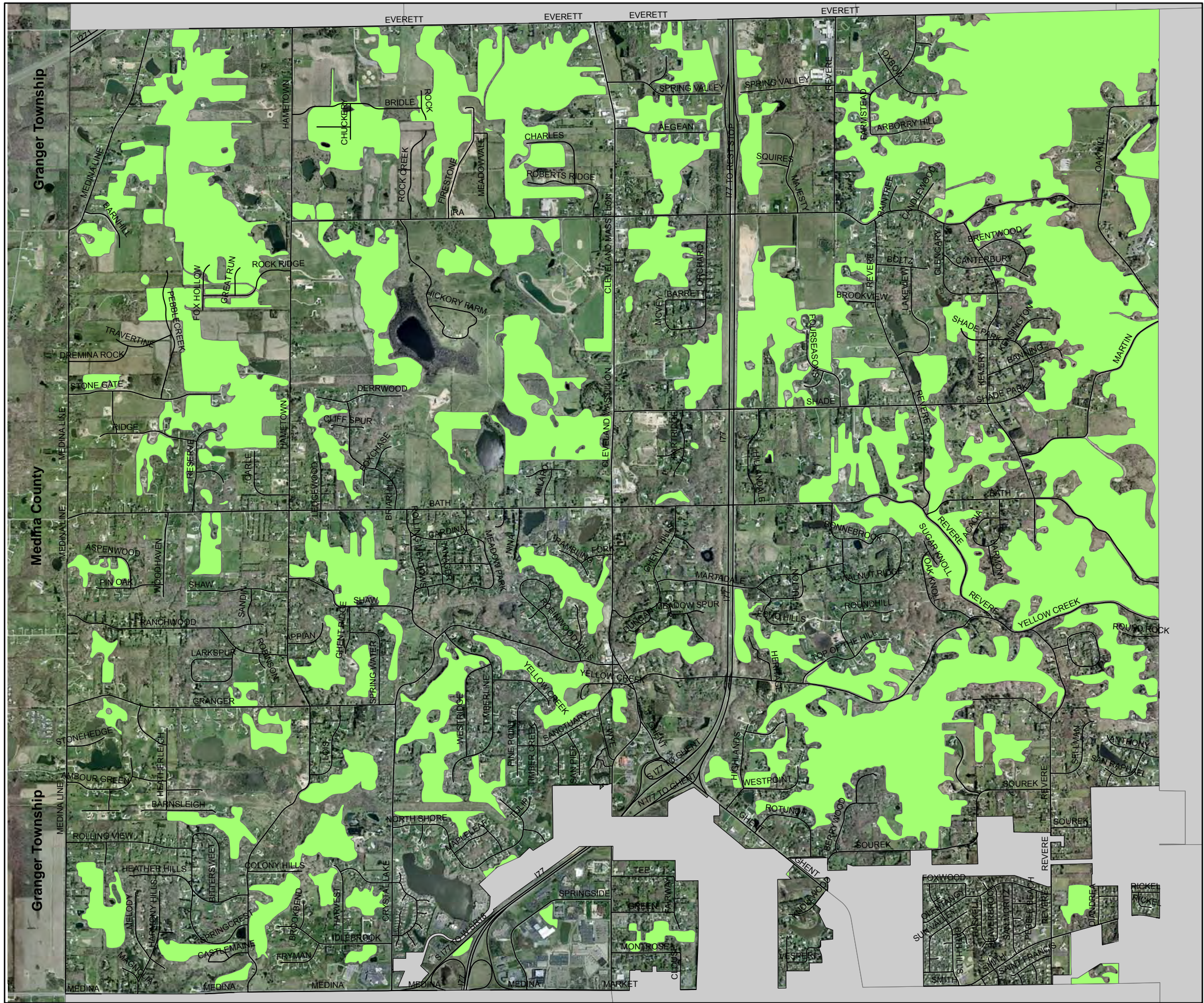




Figure D: The Heritage Corridors of Bath Township



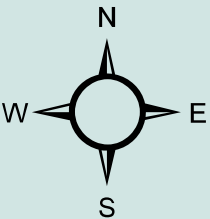
**2011 BATH TOWNSHIP
COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN**

Map 2: Tree Canopy Cover

-  Bath Township Boundary
-  Tree Canopy Coverage

1 inch = 2,500 feet

Source: Summit County GIS and
Department of Development





In the 1997 plan, the Natural Resources Inventory showed that approximately 40% of the township was covered by large areas of woods and tree canopy. *Map 2: Tree Canopy Coverage*, shows the updated digital information (in light green) provided by the county showing only 27% of the township covered in tree canopy. Fortunately, upon review of the county's 2000 aerial photographs (also included in Map 2), it is clear that the 1997 information is more representative of the current tree canopy and that the county's digital tree canopy information only identifies tree canopy on large tracts that are outside of subdivisions.



For tree canopy coverage, the precise percentage of coverage is not as important as maintaining as much of the canopy as possible and, if possible, supplementing that existing canopy with the planting of additional trees. The goal of protecting trees and major areas of tree canopy coverage was important in the 1997 plan and remains a primary goal of this plan.

Topography

The eastern portion of Bath Township is comprised of a number of valleys that follow the Yellow Creek, the Cuyahoga River, and their respective tributaries. These valleys have a significant amount of topography with slopes of 12% or steeper (a 12% or steeper slope is the only information currently available in digital mapping). Moderate and steep slope areas are key resources because of their scenic features but also because they can pose potential erosion hazards if not properly protected. Minimizing the disturbance of land, drainage ways, and vegetation on slopes over 18% will help greatly reduce the potential health and safety hazards posed to people and structures by steep slopes. Slopes that exceed 30% should largely be left in their natural state with as minimal disturbance as necessary.

In the 1997 study, the natural features inventory showed that 16% of the township was covered with slopes of over 12%. The most recent mapping information from Summit County shows that just under 10% of the township is covered by areas with a slope of 12% or greater. Fortunately, very little steep slope areas in the township have actually been disturbed since 1997 and the discrepancy between the 1997 plan and the current findings (See *Map 3: Topography*.) is the availability of better, more detailed mapping.





Natural resource protection, such as the protection of slopes for the aesthetic qualities and safety hazards, was a main goal in the 1997 plan and continues to be in this 2011 plan.



2011 BATH TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

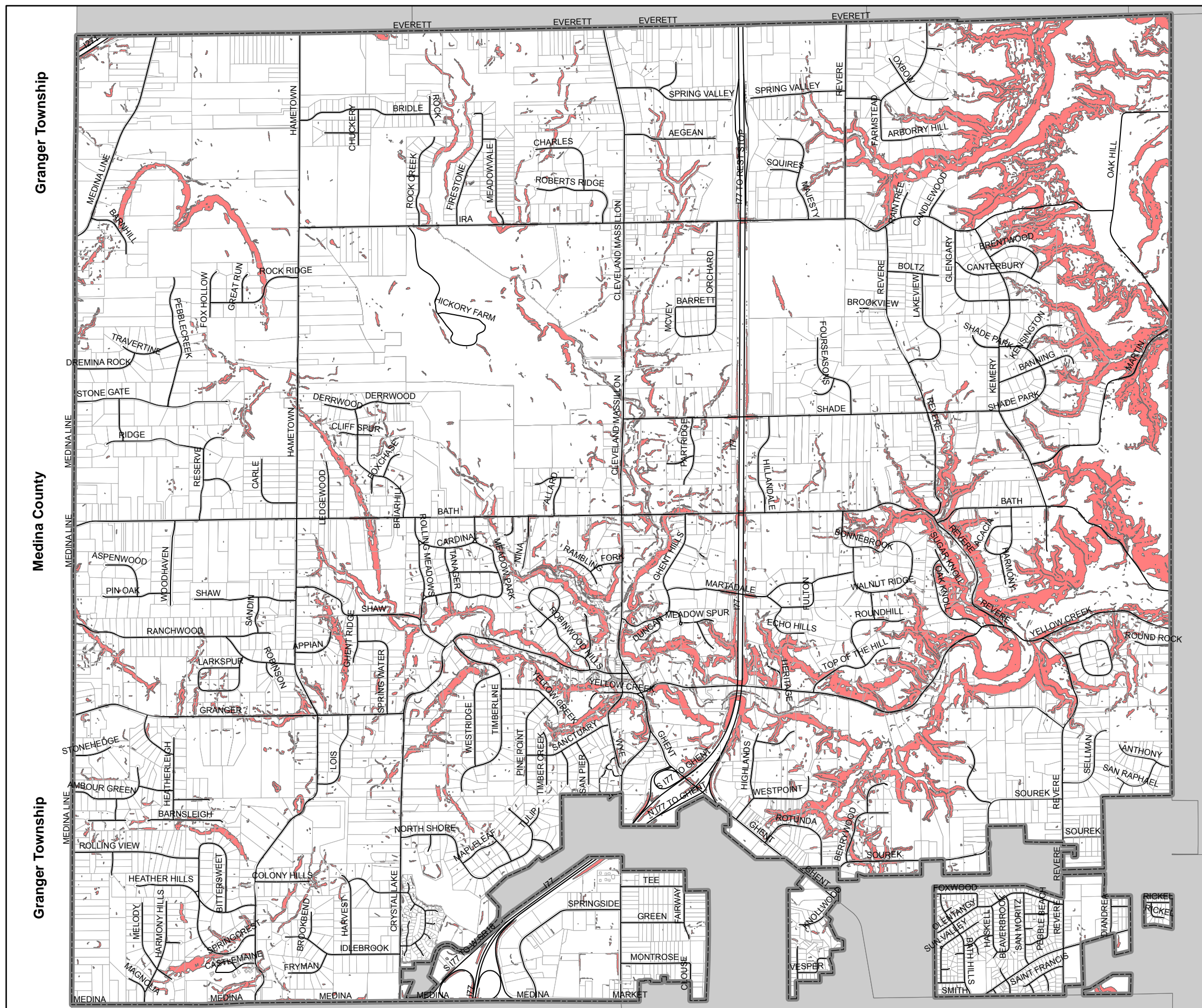
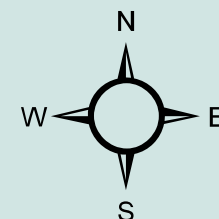
Map 3: Topography

-  Bath Township Boundary
-  Slopes of 12% or Greater

1 inch = 2,500 feet

Source: Summit County GIS and
Department of Development

Map Date: March 21, 2011





Floodplains

Floodplains within Bath Township are mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Floodplains are the areas adjacent to rivers and streams that are subject to frequent or regular flooding, and are classified as either a 100-year floodplain or a 500-year floodplain (See the glossary for further definition.). Due to the chance of flooding, and the potentially dangerous situation this poses to people and property, construction in and adjacent to floodplain areas is highly discouraged, if not prohibited (i.e., in the floodway) both for safety reasons and also to prevent increased flooding downstream of development.

In 2009, FEMA undertook a process to update the floodplain maps in Summit County. While the changes were minimal in most parts of the township, there were some areas where the floodplain areas were significantly changed, particularly around the old Firestone Estate property. Both the 1997 floodplain boundaries and 2009 floodplain boundaries are illustrated in *Map 4: Floodplains*.

The Summit County Building Standards Department currently serves as the Floodplain Administrator for the township, as is typical for most townships in Ohio. The county also sets the minimal standards for floodplain protection within the county building codes. Townships do have the authority to enact additional standards that will further minimize the disturbance of land in floodplains, including tools such as the riparian corridor protections. The township should continue to utilize tools such as the riparian corridor setbacks and open space residential developments as a method of keeping development outside of flood prone areas and therefore further protecting the health and safety of residents and structures in the township.




Wetlands

As with the other water features and resources found in the township, wetlands are a vital resource that holds a significant environmental value for the township. Wetlands provide habitat for numerous animal species and are important to flood mitigation, stormwater abatement, and ground water recharge. Wetlands essentially function as sponges that absorb water, delaying the downstream release, serving as biological filters of ground water. For the 2011 plan, new information was provided that divides designated wetlands into three categories, emergent wetlands, forested wetlands, and scrub/shrub wetlands, all of which are shown on *Map 5: Wetlands and Riparian Corridors*, and all of which should be protected from encroachment from future development.



2011 BATH TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

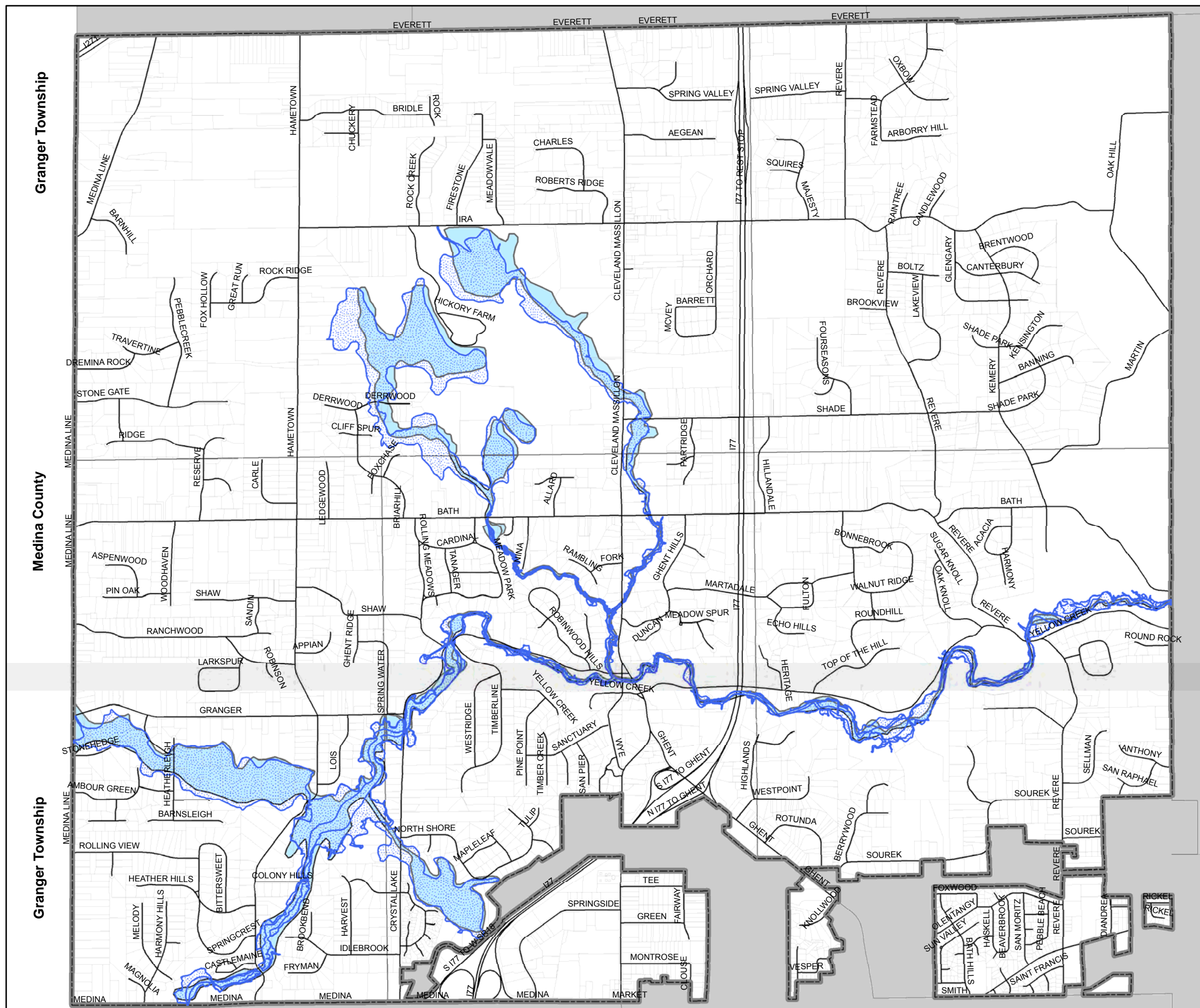
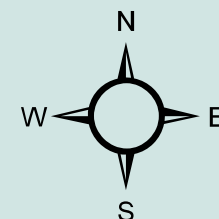
Map 4: Floodplains

-  Bath Township Boundary
-  2009 Floodplain Boundaries
-  1997 Floodplain Boundaries

1 inch = 2,500 feet

Source: Summit County GIS and
Department of Development

Map Date: March 21, 2011





Riparian Corridors


Another method the township uses to protect both surface and ground water quality is the preservation of a riparian corridor along the Yellow Creek and all of its major tributaries. The protection of these areas is accomplished by minimizing and/or prohibiting certain activities such as tree and vegetation removal, stream crossings, and construction. The width of the corridor is based on factors such as the size of the drainage area for the stream, the percentage of slope, and the presence of wetlands. In Bath Township, the riparian corridor for the eastern portion of Yellow Creek is 100 feet wide on each side of the waterway. The riparian corridor for the Yellow Creek's main tributaries, such as the North Fork and the West Fork, are 75 feet wide on each side of the waterways. All other streams and tributaries are protected by a setback of 50 feet on each side of the applicable waterway. The various riparian corridors are illustrated in *Map 5: Wetlands and Riparian Corridors*. Additional information on the specific requirements and regulations for riparian corridors can be found in the Bath Township Zoning Resolution.








2011 BATH TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN




Map 5: Wetlands and Riparian Corridors

 Bath Township Boundary

Wetlands

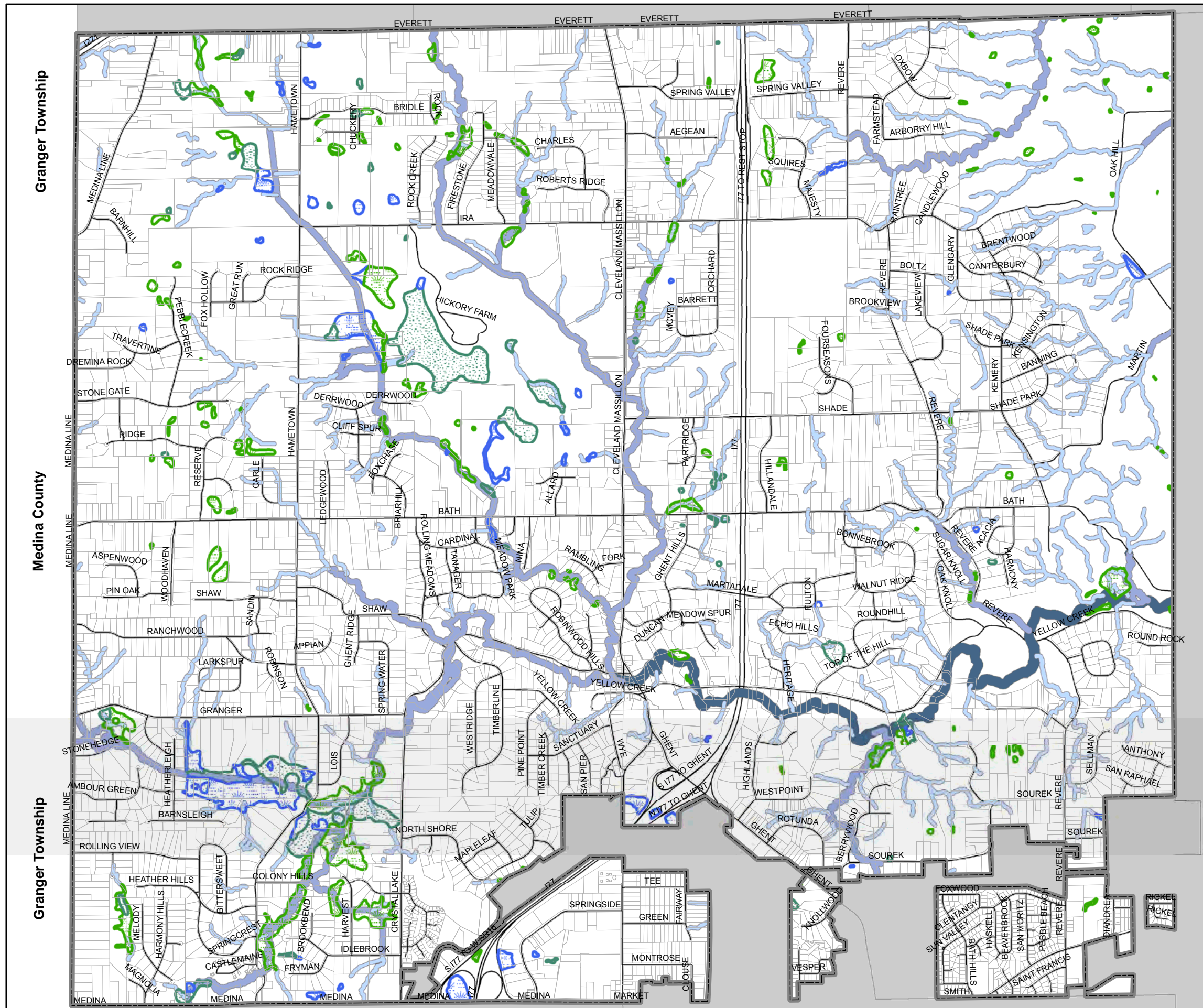
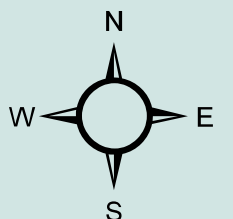
-  Emergent Wetlands
-  Forested Wetlands
-  Scrub / Shrub Wetlands

Riparian Corridors

-  50-Foot Setback (Each Side)
-  75-Foot Setback (Each Side)
-  100-Foot Setback (Each Side)

1 inch = 2,500 feet

Source: Summit County GIS and
Department of Development





Future Capacity for Development

Taking into account all of the existing land use and natural resource/sensitive areas described previously, the potential for new development in the township is fairly limited. There are approximately 1,804 acres of land that have some form of development potential (residential areas larger than five acres or vacant, commercial zoned property). Of that, less than 1,500 acres are located outside of areas designated as natural resources (e.g., floodplain, wetlands, steep slopes, etc.). Applying the current zoning to that land shows that there is only capacity for approximately 588 new homes and 48 acres of commercially zoned land, most of it along the northern areas of Cleveland-Massillon Road. This is summarized below in *Table A: Future Capacity for New Growth* and the land areas are illustrated in *Map 6: Potential Development Areas*.









Table A: Future Capacity for New Growth			
Zoning	Acreage (Total)	Acreage (Outside of Natural Resource Areas)	Total Potential Buildout
B-1	38	38	38 acres
B-4	5	5	10 acres
R-1	54	34	6 homes
R-2	1,707	1,455	582 homes
TOTAL	1,804	1,532	-----

It is important to note that these numbers only show the capacity of existing land in the township to accommodate new growth and is not a population or housing projection of what will occur. For the 588 homes to be built out assumes that all available land, over five acres in size, will have to be subdivided and this is an unlikely scenario. Some of the land shown in Map 6 may never be sold for development and some may not be developed to its full zoning potential (i.e., land may be subdivided into five acre lots even though zoning allows for 2.5 acre lots). The purpose of this exercise is to simply highlight how much new growth the township could accommodate if all land was built out.



2011 BATH TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

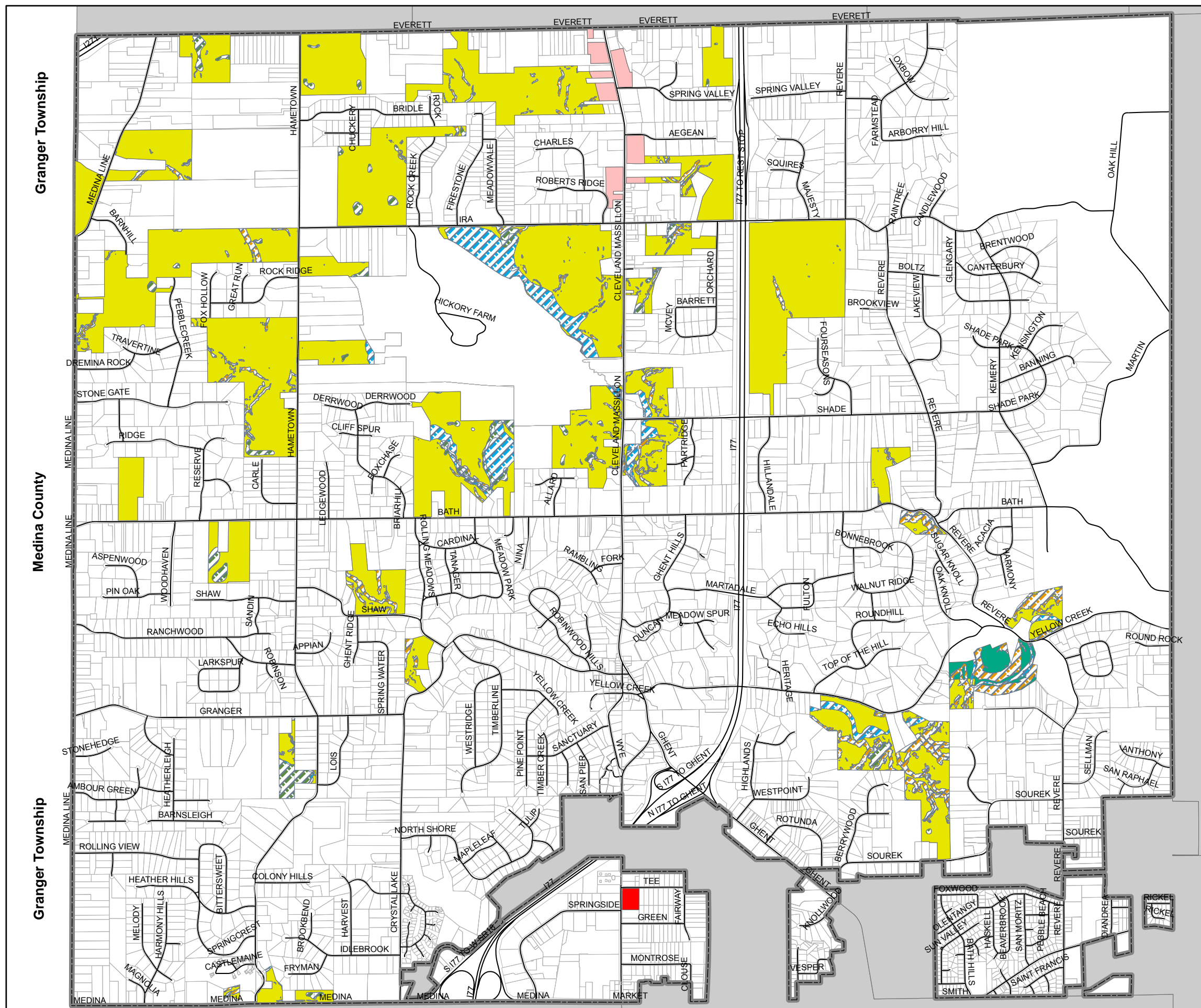
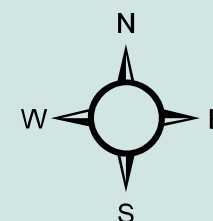
Map 6: Potential Development Areas

-  Bath Township Boundary
-  B-1 Zoning - Unconstrained
-  B-4 Zoning - Unconstrained
-  R-1 Zoning - Unconstrained
-  R-2 Zoning - Unconstrained
-  Steep Slope Constraints
-  Wetland Constraints
-  Floodplain Constraints

1 inch = 2,500 feet

Source: Summit County GIS and
Department of Development

Map Date: March 11, 2011





Infrastructure




The presence of centralized infrastructure, such as water and sewer, has generally been a driver for increased development pressures. Many refer to this as “development that follows the pipe.” This pressure goes against many of the primary policies of the 1997 plan and the direction the public sees for the township’s future in this plan. Fortunately, since the adoption of the last plan, several actions have taken place that will minimize the extension of water, and more specifically, sewer. First, the township has entered into a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) with the cities of Akron and Fairlawn that 1) established a 2% income tax on all township properties within the JEDD area; and 2) in return, establishes that no annexations will occur at least until 2097, unless the agreement is continued or otherwise modified. See *Map 7: Water and Sewer District Map* (which also includes the JEDD boundaries). This has essentially curtailed unplanned development that would have previously occurred when a property owner requested annexation into one of the cities in order to get the infrastructure and, in theory, a higher price for their land. The area included in the JEDD is already served by sanitary sewer.

The second action, which was a direct result of the 1997 comprehensive plan, was the adoption of the Bath Township Sewer and Water District Plan. This plan sets forth a policy that only wells and septic systems may be used in the Water and Sewer District, which covers all of the areas of the township outside of areas currently served by sewers (See *Map 7: Water and Sewer District*). As part of this plan, it is important to understand these dynamics as the implication is that for the foreseeable future, the only major infrastructure improvements that will take place in the township, other than transportation improvements, are those within current service areas. The only exception that the township may consider is the extension of sanitary sewer from Richfield, Ohio, if the capacity can be made available and all appropriate agreements are made, into the northern areas of the Cleveland-Massillon corridor. If such an extension is made possible, it is important to understand that the policy of this plan is to limit service to the very northern areas of the township. No extension of sewers should be allowed to properties 400 feet east or west of the Cleveland-Massillon Road centerline between the township’s northern boundary and Hammonds’ Corners to the south. No service or extensions should be allowed south of Hammond’s Corners.



2011 BATH TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

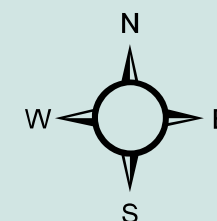
Map 7: Water and Sewer District

-  Bath Township Boundary
-  Bath Township Water and Sewer District
-  Bath Township Property within the JEDD

1 inch = 2,500 feet

Source: Summit County GIS and Department of Development

Map Date: March 21, 2011





POPULATION AND HOUSING TRENDS ANALYSIS

A key component of any comprehensive planning strategy is an understanding of the demographics of a community and a review of the general trends affecting its future. This type of analysis is useful in answering the following questions, which in turn provide the basis for making decisions during the development of the comprehensive plan.

- How has the township grown in the past?
- What are some of the changing trends, both in the township and across the nation, that might affect our future?
- How might we grow in the future if these trends continue unchanged?

The following sections provide a summary analysis of the demographic profile of Bath Township and the general analysis of trends. These analyses are important to the plan because current trends may bring more or less growth than what the community wants in its future. The purpose of these analyses is to provide a foundation of knowledge of how much growth the township may anticipate in the future if current trends and development policies continue and is not reflective of any recommendations proposed as part of this plan. These analyses also allow the township to tailor planning tools that will guide any new growth toward the community's vision of Bath Township for the next 10 to 20 years.

Population

Bath Township has had a relatively stable growth rate since 1970 that ranged from an average growth rate of 0.5% a year up to just over 1% annual growth in population. The township's major growth surge occurred prior to 1970 when the township nearly doubled in population between 1960 and 1970. The township has continued to see moderate growth since the 2000 Census. For comparison purposes, *Table B: Historic Population Growth in Bath Township*, illustrates the growth rates of Bath Township, Summit County, the City of Akron, and the adjacent Copley and Granger Townships. While the adjacent townships have grown at a slightly higher rate than Bath Township, both Summit County and the City of Akron have experienced a decline in population as residents have moved to outlying neighborhoods such as Bath Township or to areas outside of the region.



Table B: Historic Population Growth in Bath Township

	Summit County	City of Akron	Bath Township	Copley Township	Granger Township [1]	Village of Richfield	Richfield Township
1960	513,569	290,351	4,613	9,656	1,663	---	---
1970	553,371	275,425	7,552	14,735	2,142	3,228	1,715
% Annual Growth [2]	0.75%	-0.53%	5.05%	4.32%	2.56%	—	—
1980	524,472	237,177	8,476	15,910	2,660	3,437	1,504
% Annual Growth [2]	-0.53%	-1.48%	1.16%	0.77%	2.19%	0.63%	0.00%
1990	514,990	223,019	9,015	11,130	2,932	3,117	1,893
% Annual Growth [2]	-0.18%	-0.61%	0.62%	-3.51%	0.98%	-0.97%	0.14%
2000	542,899	217,074	9,635	13,641	3,928	3,286	2,138
% Annual Growth [2]	0.53%	-0.27%	0.67%	2.06%	2.97%	0.53%	0.80%
2010	541,781	199,110	9,702	17,304	4,445	3,648	2,517
% Annual Growth [2]	-0.03%	-1.07%	0.09%	3.02%	1.56%	1.31%	2.06%

Notes: Source: U.S. Census and McBride Dale Clarion (calculations)

[1] All of the communities are located in Summit County except for Granger Township, which is located in the adjacent Medina County.

[2] The annual growth rate is the compound average annual growth rate between each census date or census estimate.

One aspect of the population that was considered during this planning process is the aging of the community and the desire to allow people to “age in place,” whereby there are housing options available for residents of all ages. This concern is well founded since the fastest growing population in Bath Township is those aged 65 years old and older. In 1990¹, only 10.1% (910 residents) of the township population was 65 years old or older. Ten years later, the population of older residents had almost doubled to 1,648 residents (17.1%) while the population of residents 18 years or younger had begun to decrease. This decrease in the younger population is also evident in declining enrollment populations in the Revere Local School District (See *Table C: Revere Local School District Population*). While the aging of our population is a national trend due to longer life spans and increased ability to live independently, the rate of increase was far higher in Bath Township than in many other areas across the state. With this aging population, there will be more demands for alternative housing options and services to meet the needs of a varied population.

Table C: Revere Local School District Population

School Year	District Enrollment
1979-1980	2,990
1989-1990	2,516
2000-2001	2,800
2009-2010	2,651

¹ The breakdown of population by age was not available for the 2010 Census at the time of the adoption of this plan and as such, the information was only available based on 1990 and 2000 Census information.



Housing

Given the population trends presented above, it is possible to forecast the potential future population of the township if it is assumed that the township will continue to grow in a manner similar to historic trends. Assuming that the township will continue to see an average annual growth rate of approximately 0.5% per year, that trend would lead to a total population of approximately 11,090 by 2025 resulting in the addition of just over 900 people in the course of the next 15 years. If you further assume 2.8 persons per dwelling unit, then the township might see the construction of 321 new dwelling units (900 divided by 2.8 persons per dwelling unit), or an average of 21 units per year. This growth trend is reflected in recent building trends as documented in *Table D: Building Permits by Year*, which summarizes building permit data from Summit County between 2000 to 2008. Given that in 2000, there were 3,662 housing units in the township, if you add the 280 permitted between 2001 and 2008 (Table C), and the 321 projected above, the township might see 4,263 housing units by 2025. You can also compare the projected 321 new housing units with the township's development capacity of 588 housing units (Page 17) to show that the township is nearing full buildout where new housing growth will be minimal due to a lack of available land for new development unless policies change related to sanitary sewer service provision and permitted zoning densities that will allow for new growth.

Table D: Building Permits by Year

Year	# of Permits for New Units
2001	44
2002	55
2003	45
2004	37
2005	41
2006	27
2007	14
2008	17

In addition to understanding the general trends in the number of dwelling units, it is also important to have a better understanding of the characteristics of the housing stock as it can demonstrate a deficiency in a particular type of housing as well as identify where the township may start to see long-term maintenance issues.

In 2000, 92% of all housing units in Bath Township were detached, single-family dwellings (See Figure E.). This ratio is considerably higher than the county's average of 71% of all county dwelling units. On the other hand, the number of multi-family dwelling units in the township is considerably lower than the county and other similar communities. Small-scale multi-family uses, with two to four units per structure, comprise approximately 3.3% of the township's housing units while higher-intensity multi-family uses comprise approximately 3.9% of the township's housing and can be accounted for in the two major long-term residential care options of Arden Courts and Brookdale. The remaining housing units fall in between the two extremes with less than one percent of the total housing units.

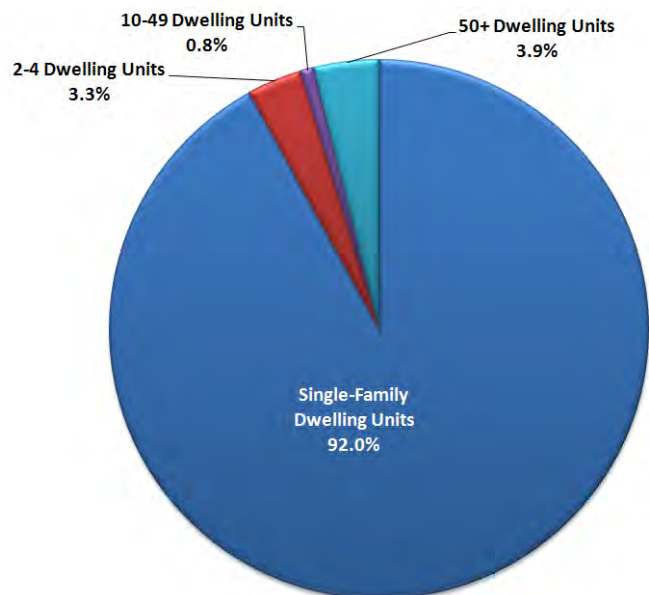


Figure E: Breakdown of housing units by type.



Taking the above analysis one step further, *Map 8: Township Lots by Size* and *Table E: Breakdown of Lot Sizes in Bath Township*, illustrates how the 4,318 residential lots in the township are broken down by general lot size. Based on information from the Summit County Geographic Information System (county mapping), you can see that over half of the township's residential lots are between 1.0 acre and 2.5 acres, even though a significant portion of the township is zoned for the larger lots of 2.5 acres or more. This is due to the fact that many of the smaller lots are found in the southern areas of the township where sanitary sewer service is available and where there are minimal environmental constraints. Another interesting item of note is that there are very few vacant or agricultural uses that would be considered to have some level of residential development potential. Only 56 properties are over five acres in size, which ties back to limited future development capacity discussed on Page 17.

Table E: Breakdown of Lot Sizes in Bath Township		
Lot Size	Total # of Lots (% of 4,318 Lots)	Number of Lots that are Vacant or Agricultural
Less than 0.5 Acre	608 (14.1%)	20
0.5 Acres to 1.0 Acre	275 (6.4%)	10
1.0 Acre to 2.5 Acres	2,246 (52.0%)	16
2.5 Acres to 5.0 Acres	832 (19.2%)	15
More than 5.0 Acres	357 (8.3%)	56

One additional aspect of the housing stock to consider is the age of dwellings. Evaluation of the 2000 U.S. Census shows that a large percentage of the township's housing units are relatively modern with almost a third having been built since 1980 and almost 88% having been built since 1950. This can be compared to the county-wide numbers that show only 20% of homes built since 1980 and 67% built since 1950. This is easily attributed to the fact that housing for the City of Akron is included in the county-wide figures and includes some of the oldest homes in the county. That being said, 442 homes (12.1%) in the township were built prior to 1950, many of which are part of the historic fabric that the township would like to maintain. As the housing stock continues to age, priorities will likely continue to shift toward enhanced property maintenance requirements.



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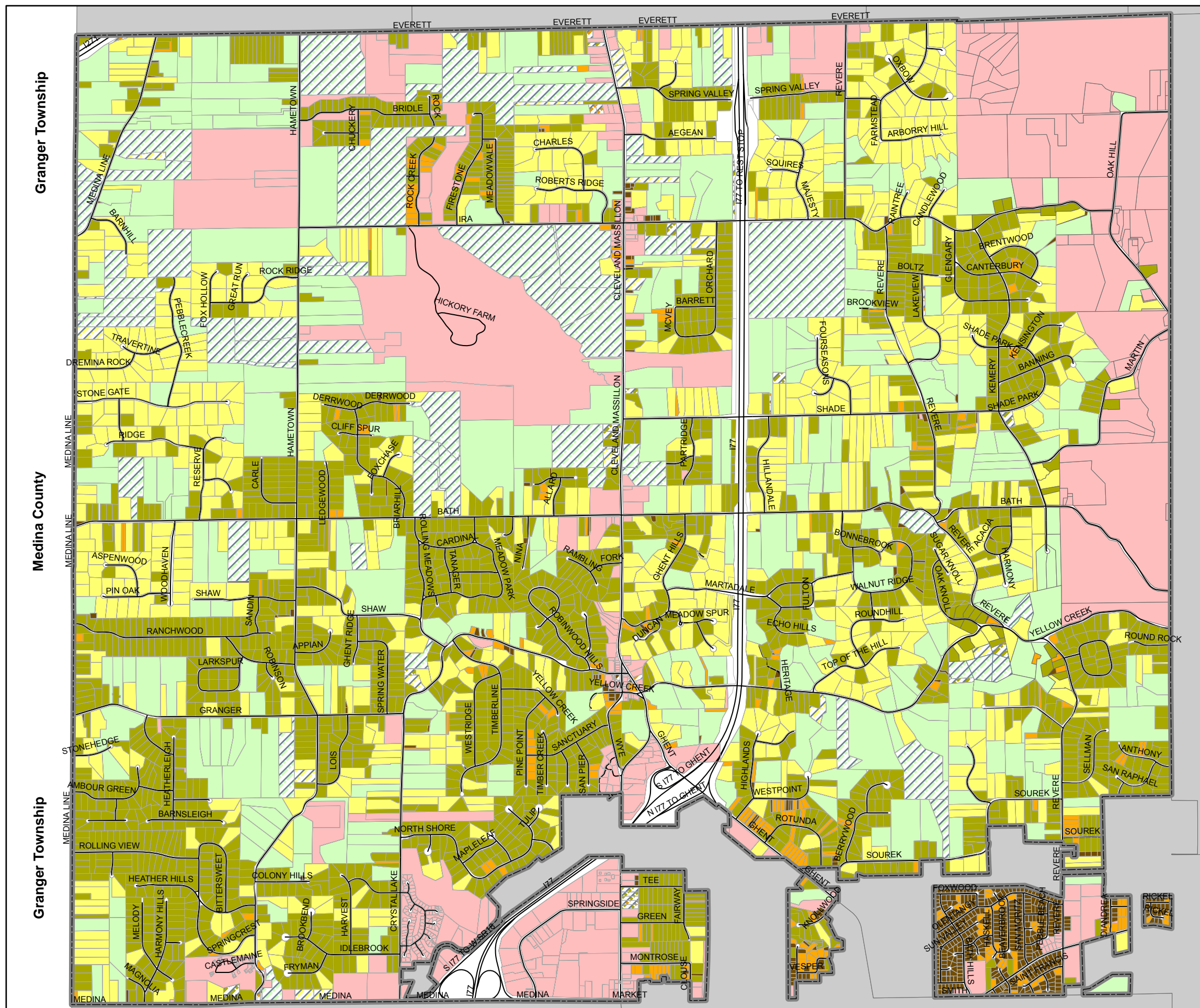
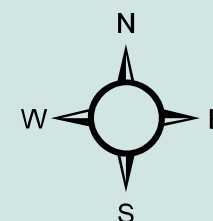
Map 8: Township Lots by Size

- Bath Township Boundary
- Public, Institutional, or Other Nonresidential
- Residential Under 1/2 Acre
- Residential 1/2 Acre to 1 Acre
- Residential 1 Acre to 2.5 Acres
- Residential 2.5 Acres to 5.0 Acres
- Residential Over 5 Acres
- Vacant or Agricultural Under 1/2 Acre
- Vacant or Agricultural 1/2 Acre to 1 Acre
- Vacant or Agricultural 1 Acre to 2.5 Acres
- Vacant or Agricultural 2.5 Acres to 5 Acres
- Vacant or Agricultural Over 5 Acres

1 inch = 2,500 feet

Source: Summit County GIS and
Department of Development

Map Date: March 21, 2011





GOALS

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to help guide the future development of the community over the next 10-20 years. Central to that guidance are the vision, goals, and objectives, which form the foundation of the plan for Bath Township.

One of the charges of this planning process was to assess the 1997 plan and its implementation success and then to “validate” the underlying policies. In 1997, the plan was focused around 12 different plan policy statements that included:

- Promote and reinforce an open space preservation, single-family community character;
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas from degradation;
- Promote quality public services supporting the planned character of the community;
- Develop and maintain a transportation system that provides adequate circulation and safety for the planned population while maintaining the rural streetscape;
- Protect residential areas from commercial encroachment by land use designation and streetscape buffering standards;
- Encourage small-scale neighborhood type retail in certain select areas;
- Carefully manage the development of the remaining large parcels of land through the use of special zoning districts designed to retain the open space character of the community;
- Plan for the Bath Water and Sewer District to become a viable organization in terms of deciding appropriate locations for new central water and sewer service in the township;
- Develop and provide a township-wide system of open space and conservation greenways, with a trails system to connect parks and neighborhoods;
- Work cooperatively with adjacent communities to establish long-term joint zoning approaches to deter additional annexations;
- Promote the contiguity of open space and agricultural/equestrian uses in the northwest area of the township by adopting provisions for an agricultural preservation zone district; and
- Preserve the history of Bath Township by conserving the design and improving the value of property within designated historic and cultural conservation district.

As a result of the validation process, which included close coordination with the elected trustees, the plan steering committee, and the first public meeting, as described in the first section of this plan, it is clear that the basic township planning values have remained stable. They do not reflect a substantial change in direction; rather they represent a focusing of the township’s vision to set the stage for updated tools and strategies for the township to use in implementing its planning values.



In validating the policies of the 1997 plan, several major themes arose that encompassed the major policies of the 1997 plan while also emphasizing certain issues, such as the high quality corridors, that were not addressed in the previous plan's policy statements. The following ten themes serve as the framework for this plan and help drive the recommendations in the land use plan and implementation sections:

1. Rural single-family character
2. Protected natural resources
3. Open space, greenways, and trails
4. Preserve and enhance hamlets
5. High quality corridors
6. Sustain neighborhood values
7. Sustain business vitality
8. Public facilities that reinforce overall growth management goals
9. Multi-jurisdiction cooperative planning
10. Sustainability

All of this information was translated into a single vision for the township and a series of goals for each of the ten major themes as presented in this section of the plan.

2011 Bath Township Comprehensive Plan Vision

Bath Township will continue to value a preserved rural single-family character, natural resource protection, preserved open space, enhanced historic hamlets, high quality travel corridors, coordinated growth management, and compatible businesses in carefully planned locations. The township's public services and facilities will be provided in a fiscally sustainable manner in coordination with its land use planning.

In summary, Bath Township will continue to maintain its rural residential nature and be a community for enhanced family living.



2011 Bath Township Goals and Objectives

The following are the goals for each of the ten major themes. Specific objectives are identified as implementation tasks in the Implementation Strategies section of this plan.

1. Rural, Single-Family Character

Goal: Low-density, single-family land use will continue to be the prevailing pattern in Bath Township, other than in the existing business or hamlet portions of the township.

2. Protected Natural Resources

Goal: The valued natural resources of Bath Township, such as water resources, floodplains, riparian corridors, wetlands, soils, slopes, and tree canopies, will be preserved, enhanced, and mitigated from potential negative impacts of existing and future development.

3. Open Space, Greenways, and Trails

Goal: Bath Township will have a connected system of preserved open spaces, greenways, and trails.

4. Preserve and Enhance Hamlets

Goal: The hamlets of Ghent and Hammond's Corners will be preserved, enhanced, and developed to have a vibrant historic hamlet atmosphere with enhanced walkability and accessibility.

5. High Quality Corridors

Goal: State Route 18, Cleveland-Massillon Road, and the township's Heritage Corridors will reflect high design quality in both the public and private realm.

6. Sustain Neighborhood Values

Goal: The residential neighborhoods, including those abutting Route 18 along the southern portion of the township, will remain stable and attractive residential environments for families.

7. Sustain Business Vitality

Goal: The businesses and nonresidential areas of the township will be a prime source of economic development for the community and will contribute to the strong sense of place that is Bath Township but shall be limited to those areas where business uses are recommended in this plan.

8. Public Facilities that Reinforce Overall Growth Management Goals

Goal: Public facilities will be provided in a fiscally responsible manner with adequate levels of service and will be coordinated with land use planning and development decisions.



9. Multi-jurisdiction Cooperative Planning

Goal: Land use planning and public facilities planning will be reviewed with adjacent and relevant jurisdictions and agencies, especially near township borders, to support complementary zoning.

10. Sustainability

Goal: The township will continue to act as a role model incorporating sustainable practices within the township as well as embracing, educating, and encouraging sustainable development practices throughout the community.



FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Bath Township Future Land Use Plan establishes the desired future land use, natural resources, and general development patterns of the surrounding area. Whereas the 1997 plan focused on the variety of land uses that might be appropriate in certain land use concept areas, this plan was refined into more of a true land use plan that will allow decision-makers to make a more direct connection between this plan and zoning. The plan is a graphic translation of the vision and goals identified in the previous section to a map of the township and is intended to address all of the health, safety, and general welfare issues embodied in that vision and goals. This plan will help guide the decisions of the Bath Township Trustees, Bath Township Zoning Commission, Bath Township Board of Zoning Appeals, the numerous subcommittees of the township, and regional agencies, regarding a variety of issues such as rezonings, conditional uses, extension of property improvements, conversion of buildings to different uses, and other planning related issues.

The Bath Township Future Land Use Plan Map on Page 33 serves as a guide for land use planning in the township and as a primary decision making tool for zoning. That being said, the map **is not** a zoning map and only serves as a general basis for the decision-making bodies of the township. The following is a brief description of the proposed land uses.

Park and Conservation Use

The majority of the area designated for Park and Conservation Uses are part of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the O'Neil Woods Metropark. The remaining properties are largely residential with some public and institutional uses in the form of the Old Trail School and Hale Farm. This area is highly valued because of the passive recreational activities and scenic beauty throughout the area and the priority for the future is long-term preservation in its natural state.

With the predominance of the existing public park uses and steep slopes, the lack of community services, and the minimal number of privately owned residential uses, the future land uses for this area should continue to be primarily parks and conservation uses. There should be allowances for the residential use of any remaining private properties at a maximum density of one unit per five acres that is of a low enough density to address issues related to a lack of sewer and the presence of natural resources without being overly regulatory of development.





Rural Estate Residential Use

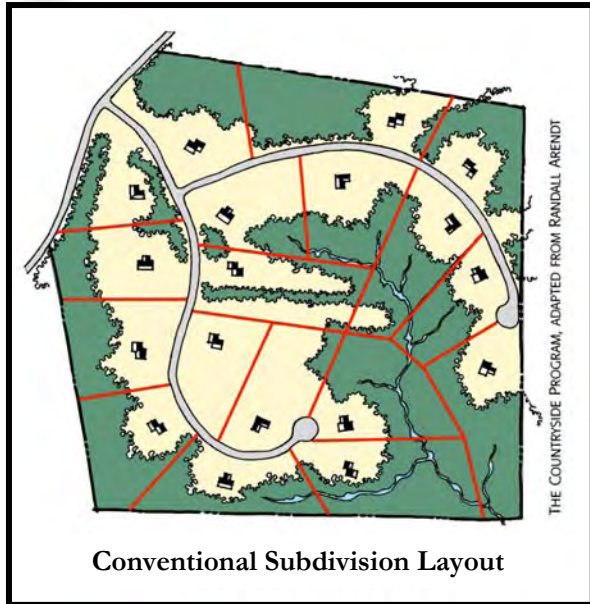
The Rural Estate Residential areas of the township reflect the predominant use and character of Bath Township, which is agriculture and single-family detached residential uses on large lots. These types of low-intensity uses continue to be the long-term vision the Bath Township citizens have identified for the majority of the township where public services are limited and there is an abundance of natural resources and prime agricultural lands. The only exception to the large lot development form is the residential development on the Firestone estate that was developed under the concept of an open space residential development, allowing for the clustering of homes on smaller lots with the remaining land maintained as open space by the homeowners association.



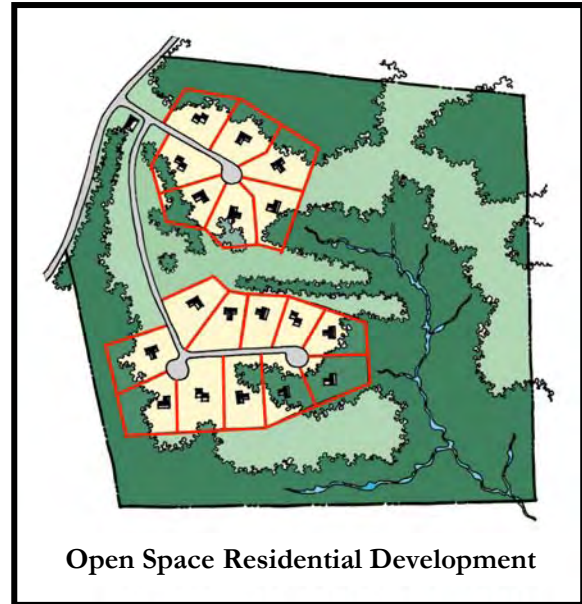
This area lies almost completely within the township's sewer and water district where there are no plans to extend sanitary sewer. This means that any future development in this area will require on-site septic systems, or some alternative, that will require larger lots to accommodate the systems. This issue, along with the presence of significant natural resources (e.g., tree canopy, wetlands, floodplain, and topography) limits the amount of development of any type to maintain the health and safety of residents and property owners in this land use area. The vision of the rural estate residential use area continues to be for agricultural uses, single-family detached uses on large lots, and open space residential developments that protect large areas of natural resources. All of this should be undertaken with a maximum density of one unit per 2.5 acres.

Open space residential developments continue to be encouraged as an effective development method for allowing residential development while protecting key natural and environmental resources. Any new open space residential development should maintain a maximum density of one unit per 2.5 acres while also incorporating the following principles into the subdivision layout:

- Locate lots to the rear of the development site, away from any designated Heritage Corridor, to protect the rural roadway corridors and maintain large areas of woodlands and open spaces along these roads;
- Locate lots in areas that are least likely to block any scenic views of hills, valleys, roadway corridors, waterway natural areas, wetlands, woodlands, or historic sites;
- Use the natural resources to buffer the visibility of homes by maintaining the tree canopy between the proposed development area and any roads; and
- Group lots into several clusters of homes within a single development to break up the concentration of housing into any one single area of the development.



Area: 36 acres
Lots: 18 lots
Open Space: None
Road Length: 3,808 feet



Area: 36 acres
Lots: 18 lots
Open Space: 53%
Road Length: 2,072 feet

Parks and recreational uses, as well as public or institutional uses, are also appropriate for these areas given the services they provide to residential uses in this area but should be located along arterial roads that are best suited for the impacts of these more intense, nonresidential uses. The development of passive recreation as part of open space residential developments and as part of a township-wide parks and open space effort is desirable. As the township and developers move forward with their various planning and development efforts, it will become even more important to incorporate connectivity within any open space or natural resource protection areas. As stated in the goals and implementation strategies, the preservation of natural resources is a priority as is the public access and use to those areas.



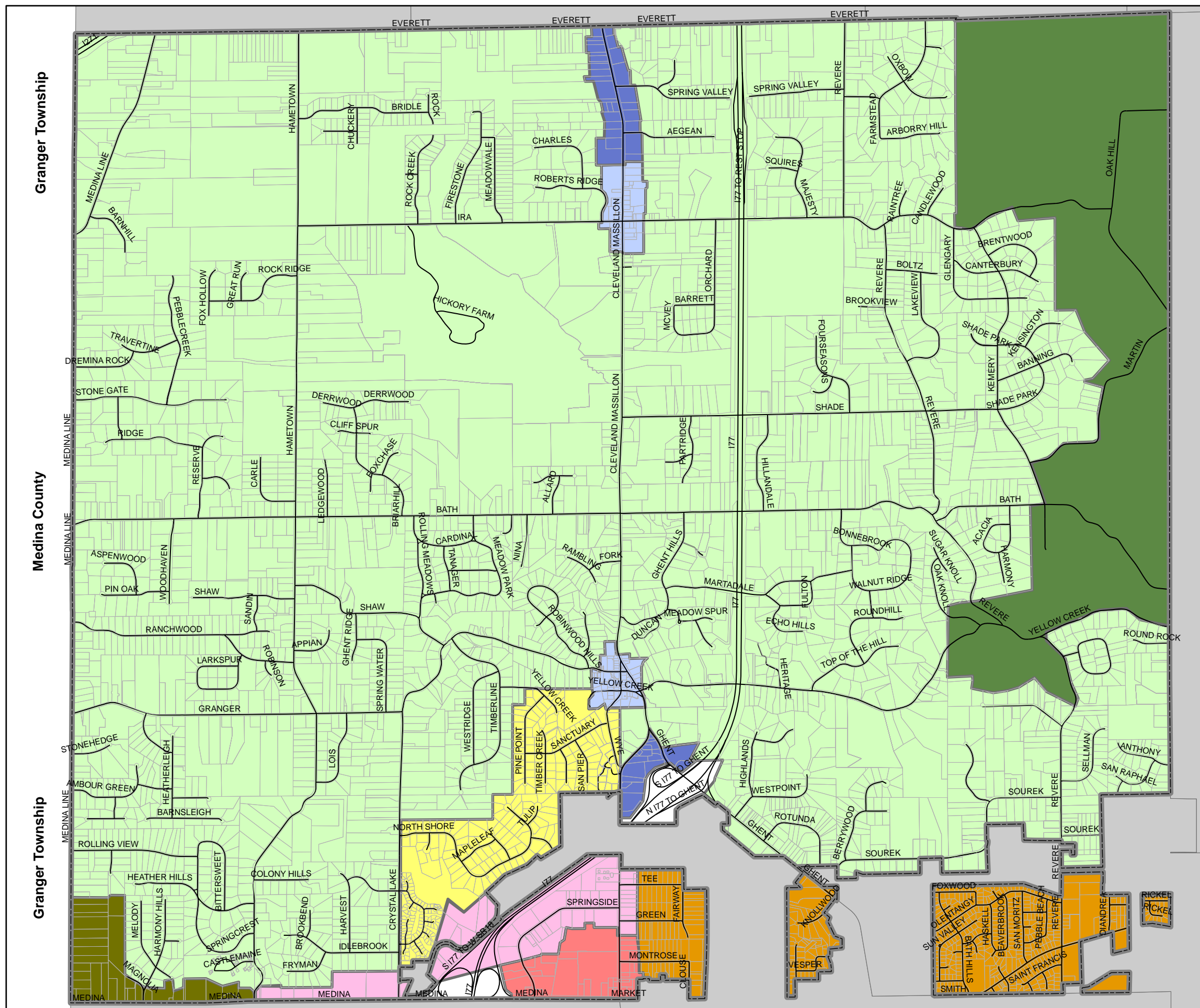
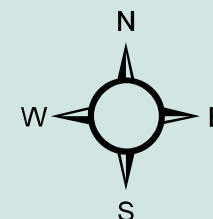
2011 BATH TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Map 9: Future Land Use Plan

- Bath Township Boundary
- Park and Conservation Use
- Rural Estate Residential Use
- Suburban Residential Use
- Traditional Neighborhood Use
- Route 18 Residential Use
- General Office
- General Retail
- Cleveland-Massillon Mixed Use
- Hamlet Mixed Use

1 inch = 2,500 feet

Map Date: March 21, 2011





Suburban Residential Use

The Suburban Residential Use area represents a compact area of moderate density residential development in Bath Township. The land, currently zoned as R-3 and R-4 residential, includes the Crystal Lake Village area and similar developments that, unlike the traditional neighborhood areas, is focused around open spaces and waterways with development typically constructed on cul-de-sac roads. This area is almost completely built out with only a few vacant lots available in previously platted subdivisions. Because of the limited potential for new development, the future vision of this area is the continuation and maintenance of the existing single-family residential uses and character at similar densities and layouts as the existing development. While the community appreciates the value of this type of development and the housing opportunity it provides, there is no vision to see this use expand outside of the boundaries illustrated on *Map 9: Future Land Use Plan*.

Parks and recreational uses, as well as public or institutional uses, are also appropriate for these areas given the services they provide to residents of this area but should be located along arterial roads that are best suited for the impacts of these more intense, nonresidential uses.

Traditional Neighborhood Use

Traditional Neighborhood Uses represent the highest density residential neighborhoods in Bath Township. The majority of the neighborhoods are comprised of single-family detached homes located in close proximity to Akron and Fairlawn. As with the suburban residential use areas, these areas are almost completely built out with little to no room for new development. Because of the limited potential for new development, the future vision for these areas is the continuation and maintenance of single-family residential uses at a maximum density of four units per acre. As with the Suburban Residential Use areas, the community appreciates the value of this type of development and the housing opportunity it provides, but there is no vision to see this use expand outside of the boundaries illustrated on *Map 9: Future Land Use Plan*.

Parks and recreational uses, as well as public or institutional uses, are also appropriate for these areas given the services they provide to residents of this area but should be located along arterial roads that are best suited for the impacts of these more intense, nonresidential uses.

Route 18 Residential Use

The corner of the township designated as Route 18 Residential Use is one area that has the most pressure for intense development due to the proximity to the State Route 18 corridor. This area is a predominantly residential area of the township currently zoned to allow one housing unit per 2.5 acres. The pressures for development in this area have greatly increased due to the area's proximity to Interstate 77, higher density suburban residential uses to the south and southwest, the hospital and related offices uses to the east (east of Hametown Road), large areas of commercial zoning to the west in Grainger Township, and high traffic volumes along State Route 18. The township evaluated these pressures with the fact that this area has a high concentration of natural resources such as groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and riparian corridors, and the area, as currently used for residential purposes, already serves as a good buffer between the intensity of uses and traffic along State Route 18 and the residential uses and subdivisions just north of this area. In order to balance the demand for development with the need to protect the health and safety of nearby residents, this area will either need to be developed at very low residential densities or at somewhat higher densities balanced with increased open space and resource protection standards.



Through this planning process, it was clearly established that the township continues to envision this as a residential area with no expansion of any nonresidential uses west of Hametown Road. There was also clearly a vision to encourage the continuation of existing low-density of residential uses but, with appropriate protection standards and township review, allow for increased residential densities. In keeping with the vision for this area, the following are the three future land-use options for development in this area:

- Single-family, detached residential development at a maximum density of one unit per 2.5 acres reflective of the uses and character proposed for the Rural Estate Residential Use; or
- Detached or attached residential uses under a planned residential overlay district (See Appendix B for a description of the Planned Unit Development tool.) that will allow for the enhanced protection standards and township review desired for increased development densities in this area. Under the planned residential overlay district, the detached or attached residential uses could develop with a maximum density of four units per acre and a minimum of 50% open space that needs to encompass all natural resources identified in this plan and those vital resources that may be identified further in the Yellow Creek Watershed Action Plan. The purpose of utilizing a planned development overlay district is to provide flexibility in the development of this area while giving the township some authority to review development to ensure that it meets the goals and vision of this plan. The township should develop the planned residential overlay district to address the following issues, at a minimum:
 - Open space standards (e.g., what uses and activities the township will count as open space and what activities and uses, such as stormwater management facilities, that the township will not count as open space);
 - The minimum standards for natural and environmental resource protection including what resources must be protected and how they shall be protected. For example, the township may develop special development standards for the building of homes near, not on, steep slopes to help make development blend into the resource;
 - Access management standards for vehicles, with a preference of avoiding access from S.R. 18 through the development of access along Medina Line Road. Where access from S.R. 18 is necessary, the township should mandate the consolidation of access (e.g., driveways) so that multiple uses are accessed from a single driveway or curb cut, minimizing traffic conflicts and congestion with any new development;
 - Housing type or housing mix standards (e.g., the minimum percentage of single-family detached or the minimum percentage of attached housing units) which may vary based on the amount of open space (e.g., more open space required for the development of attached housing units);
 - Buffering requirements to protect the views of the main corridors and views from adjacent development; and
 - Architectural standards for the development of all uses.





- Attached senior living uses that will provide housing options for the township's older residents while minimizing impacts on surrounding natural resources and traffic. As with the higher density residential uses allowed above, the development of attached senior living uses should only be allowed under a planned residential overlay district that will allow for the enhanced protection standards and township review desired for increased development densities in this area. Under the planned residential overlay district, the attached senior living uses could develop with a maximum density of eight units per acre and a minimum of 50% open space that needs to encompass all natural resources identified in this plan and those vital resources that may be identified further in the Yellow Creek Watershed Action Plan. This type of planned development should be subject to the same recommendations and standards outlined above for the attached and detached residential densities.

As with other areas of the township, parks and recreational uses, as well as public or institutional uses, are also appropriate for these areas given the services they provide to residents of this area but should be located with access off of Medina Line Road rather than S.R. 18 to minimize traffic conflicts.

General Office Use

The General Office Use area in Bath Township is located along S.R. 18, east of Hametown Road, through the Montrose area where it comprises the predominant use along Springside Drive. This area is dominated by uses that create high volumes of traffic but also provide a key economic generator for the community without excessive impacts on services. This area has been zoned and developed as a primarily non-retail business area and the township wants to continue to maintain this use and character. That being said, there is also a strong goal to stop the expansion of commercial and office sprawl along S.R. 18. While the long-term future of this area is to allow for the continuation of non-retail, non-industrial commerce, such uses should not expand beyond the boundaries of this area as identified in *Map 9: Future Land Use Plan*.



The appropriate land use activities for this area are uses such as professional offices, health and medical offices/clinics, research and development facilities, and financial institutions. Hotels are an acceptable use in this general office area with associated food retail as a supporting service of the surrounding office uses but the retail aspect of the uses should be limited to small-scale supporting uses. Any new uses or development in this area needs to be adequately buffered from adjacent residential uses. Developments should also incorporate best practices in access management due to the high traffic counts in the area. Such practices include the consolidation of access points and the provision of access from secondary roads and access drives (not including residential roads).

General Retail

The General Retail Use area in Bath Township is concentrated along State Route 18 around the intersection of S.R. 18 and Cleveland-Massillon Road. This area has long served as a regional commercial destination in Bath Township with large-scale retail commercial uses such as Barnes and Noble Booksellers, Lowe's Hardware, and a number of multi-tenant shopping centers built in a typical suburban form with large amounts of parking and the buildings set back towards the rear of the lots. As with the general office areas of Bath Township, these uses serve an important and vital purpose in the township but the community does not envision the expansion of this area outside of the boundaries illustrated on *Map 9: Future Land Use Plan*.



This area continues to be an appropriate location for retail commercial uses, office uses, and service uses that cater to both the local and regional market. This area will continue to be predominately auto-oriented uses but should encourage safe pedestrian access, particularly between adjacent residential areas and the commercial areas. Any new uses or significant redevelopment in this area needs to be adequately buffered from adjacent residential uses. Developments should also incorporate best practices in access management due to the high traffic counts in the area. Such practices include the consolidation of access points and the provision of access from secondary roads and access drives (not including residential roads).

Hamlet Mixed Use

Along the Cleveland-Massillon Corridor are two very distinct hamlets, or crossroad centers, that were identified as places of importance in the township as part of this planning process. Both Hammond's Corners and Ghent are two areas with a strong historic character (in age and in the development form) that are comprised of a mixture of residential, commercial, and office uses. These areas stand out from similar uses in other areas of the township based on the historic character of the development (e.g., built closer to the road in a more compact development form), the intensity of uses, accessibility within the hamlets, and their unique aesthetic qualities. The boundaries of these two areas are based on



the current limits of uses and properties that contribute to each of the individual areas. A priority for this plan is the long-term protection of these areas as historic hamlets, maintaining the current development form, that creates a local and regional destination with good accessibility both internally and between the hamlets.

Appropriate uses in these areas continue to be a mixture of uses including residential, commercial, and office uses, including the mixture of uses within a single structure (e.g., apartments on the second floor of a structure with commercial on the first floor). Any development or redevelopment should be accomplished in a manner that protects the hamlet character with an emphasis on maintaining the predominant:

- Scale and massing of buildings;
- Height of buildings;
- Setback of buildings from the road;
- Location of parking to the rear of the site; and
- To the maximum extent feasible, the architectural character of buildings.

As stated in the implementation strategies, the township should consider any available zoning tools that will allow for the establishment of formal development standards in each of these two hamlets.



Cleveland-Massillon Mixed Use

The two main gateways into Bath Township along Cleveland-Massillon Road have seen a significant amount of change over time. While they both started off as residential areas, over time, commercial, industrial, and office development began to take place in the north and in the south, where services are more readily available. It is important to maintain these mixed use type areas but also minimize the impact the uses have on adjacent areas that are predominantly residential; prevent the creation of large-scale uses on this primarily two lane road to reduce traffic congestion; and limit the expansion of nonresidential uses into the surrounding residential neighborhoods that will allow for the existing residential uses to flourish.

The township does not envision the expansion of this area outside of the boundaries illustrated on *Map 9: Future Land Use Plan*.

The vision for the future of the two areas designated as Cleveland-Massillon Mixed Use continues to be to serve as a gateway entrance into Bath Township, with high-quality design that may incorporate a mixture of small-scale uses including any of the following:

- **Attached Housing**

Attached housing is a housing type that many have identified a need for in Bath Township to allow for options in both housing types and housing values that might attract young professionals or empty nesters. Attached housing may include rowhouses, townhomes, and attached patio homes where the units may share common walls but each unit has a separate exterior entrance. The maximum density of attached housing shall be six to eight units per acre with a maximum of eight attached units per a single structure. The maximum finished floor area in each unit shall not exceed 2,000 square feet in order to encourage smaller scale housing and to reduce the overall costs of this housing type.



- **Live/Work Units**

Live/work units are a mixed-use type development that essentially allows for a commercial or office type use with a residential component for the business owner or employee. These units can be two-stories in nature (similar to a rowhouse) where the commercial or office use is on the first floor and the residential dwelling is on the upper floor(s) or may have the residential unit located to the rear of the nonresidential use. Live/work units should be designed similar to attached housing with no more than six to eight units per acre and all units shall have separate exterior entrances.



- **Small-Scale Commercial and Office Uses**

Both commercial and office uses are appropriate in this mixed use area but should be small in scale with no strip centers that have multiple uses. Any new commercial or office use in these areas should be single tenant spaces (i.e., designed for only one user) with a maximum square footage of 3,000 square feet. The buildings should be oriented toward the street with only one row of parking between the building and the road to encourage development closer to the streets and to help create more of a gateway entrance.



- **Small-Scale Flexible Space (Northern Cleveland-Massillon Road Only)**

The northern area of Bath Township along Cleveland-Massillon Road is comprised of a mix of commercial, office, and even some industrial uses due to close proximity to larger trucking related activities to the north. The Cleveland-Massillon Mixed Use area in the northern area of the township may include some future small-scale flexible space that has a building frontage that appears to be retail or office in nature but has some small warehouse space in the rear for a number of uses ranging from commercial to light industrial. In no case shall there be any industrial uses that require outdoor storage or operations. As with the commercial and office uses in this area, all new buildings shall be designed for a single tenant with a maximum square footage of 3,000 square feet. The warehouse portion of the building shall not occupy more than 50% of the total building space. Additionally, the buildings should be oriented toward the street with only one row of parking between the building and the road to encourage development closer to the streets and to help create more of a gateway entrance.



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

This section of the plan outlines both general tools available to the township for the furtherance of this plan and specific implementation tasks related to the major themes and goals of the plan.

General Tools

Monitoring the Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan is a long-term visionary document that looks at a planning horizon of 20 years or more. This does not mean that the township should wait 20 years before reviewing and/or updating the plan. In fact, it is highly recommended that the township review the plan, in moderate detail, at least every 5 to 10 years due to the fact that major changes in infrastructure, the transportation system, development methods, and even changes in elected officials, state law, or other regulations can have a significant impact on the recommendations of this plan. It may not be necessary to go through a long and intensive review process, but the township should take steps to involve the public in this review process to ensure that the goals and objectives are still relevant. The review should also identify major changes in infrastructure, transportation and trends that may change the recommendations of this plan.

Involve the Public

Bath Township should consistently involve the public in every affair of the township whether it is input for this comprehensive plan or guidance on the design of new public buildings. Elected and appointed officials of the township, as well as hired staff, are held responsible by the public, and public input helps assure that decisions are made in the best interest of those citizens. As the township continues to grow, public input will be a key ingredient in the process.

Committees

The township has consistently involved citizen committees for issues ranging from updating this plan, to evaluating architecture, to protecting natural resources such as the Yellow Creek. These committees, which are often short term and serve a particular purpose, are very useful at involving as many of the residents as possible in township government. For Bath Township, the best resource is to incorporate the use of committees wherever a special need or purpose arises that cannot be addressed by zoning alone.

Coordination and Communication

This plan recognizes that agencies outside of the township regulate many elements of the community including sewers, water, transportation, and stormwater. In fact, the township is restricted in its participation in the subdivision review (not zoning) process, which is under the purview of the Summit County Regional Planning Commission. With so many agencies working in Bath Township, the township has the ability to serve as a coordinator and identify ways to make improvements in the community that will be more efficient and benefit the entire region. One of the simplest strategies for implementing many of the recommendations is to communicate with the appropriate agencies, inside and outside of the township, and inform them of township policy and the needs of the community.



Specific Implementation Tasks

In addition to utilizing the variety of general tools listed above, there are specific tasks that the township should undertake to work toward the established goals and objectives. The following table identifies individual implementation tasks along the left side of the chart and the goals each task helps achieve to the right. The intent of this matrix is not to be exhaustive in nature as it would be impossible to list all of the potential strategies and actions the township could undertake to implement this plan. Instead, the table is intended to summarize some initial actions that have been discussed with the public as reasonable strategies to easily implement key goals. As the township continues to monitor this plan, new tasks can be added and evaluated for action.

Due to the fact that available resources and priorities change over the years, the township trustees (along with input from the comprehensive plan steering committee) should consider this list on an annual basis and make decisions on what tasks should be undertaken. The purpose for highlighting the goals that the individual action will work toward is simply to show the impact of each action on achieving the long-term vision of this plan, which may help in prioritizing each task.

Additionally, certain goals, such as the support of development in the hamlet areas, could potentially conflict with the preservation of the key natural resources. The township should not use this plan to choose one goal over another but should use the plan to find the best balance among the goals in order to achieve the shared vision of the community.



Table F: Specific Implementation Tasks

Implementation Task (Not Listed in Any Priority)	Goals									
	Rural, Single-Family Character	Protected Natural Resources	Open Space, Greenways, and Trails	Preserve and Enhance Hamlets	High Quality Corridors	Sustain Neighborhood Values	Sustain Business Vitality	Public Facilities that Reinforce Overall Growth Management Goals	Multi-jurisdiction Cooperative Planning	Sustainability
1. Maintain the current gross density of one unit per 5 acres in the park and conservation use areas on the future land use map.	X					X				
2. Maintain the current gross density of one unit per 2.5 acres for the rural estate residential use areas on the future land use map.	X					X				
3. Maintain the existing boundaries of the R-1 and R-2 Residential Zoning Districts except where uses other than park and conservation uses and rural estate residential uses are allowed on the future land use map.	X					X				
4. Update the Bath Township Zoning Resolution to enhance the standards for open space residential development to ensure that the regulations best achieve the goals of this plan, especially as they relate to rural design, open space preservation, and natural resource protection.	X	X	X			X				
5. Continue to support and pursue implementation of the Yellow Creek Watershed Action Plan.		X							X	X
6. Review and strengthen, as appropriate, the natural resource protection standards in the township zoning resolution.		X								X
7. Develop a strategy, including pursuing grants and other funding opportunities, to preserve and protect environmentally sensitive resources.		X	X							X



Table F: Specific Implementation Tasks

Implementation Task	Goals									
	Rural, Single-Family Character	Protected Natural Resources	Open Space, Greenways, and Trails	Preserve and Enhance Hamlets	High Quality Corridors	Sustain Neighborhood Values	Sustain Business Vitality	Public Facilities that Reinforce Overall Growth Management Goals	Multi-jurisdiction Cooperative Planning	Sustainability
Implementation Task (Not Listed in Any Priority)										
8. Develop a protocol for prioritizing those environmentally sensitive resource areas of the township that should be protected by the township, or another entity (e.g., if faced with limited funding, what resources should the township target first, what are the ones that are most at risk?).		X								X
9. Identify unnamed headwater streams and evaluate protection opportunities.		X								X
10. Explore solutions to minimize impacts of storm water on the community such as enforcement, education, enhanced regulations, and general stormwater improvements.		X							X	X
11. Update the township's zoning regulations to incorporate better standards for the mitigation of stormwater, including, but not limited to, the encouraged use of pervious pavement, rain gardens, and rain barrels.		X								X
12. Identify outside agencies that the township can work with to purchase, dedicate, or otherwise protect the natural resources (e.g., the Western Reserve Land Conservancy).		X								
13. Explore protection of well water/ground water as well as septic system controls.		X						X		X
14. Provide community education strategies and partnerships on potential environmental concerns (e.g., water testing, radon testing, etc.).		X				X				



Table F: Specific Implementation Tasks

Implementation Task (Not Listed in Any Priority)	Goals									
	Rural, Single-Family Character	Protected Natural Resources	Open Space, Greenways, and Trails	Preserve and Enhance Hamlets	High Quality Corridors	Sustain Neighborhood Values	Sustain Business Vitality	Public Facilities that Reinforce Overall Growth Management Goals	Multi-jurisdiction Cooperative Planning	Sustainability
15. Prepare an open space conservation plan that identifies and prioritizes open space in the community.		X	X							
16. Coordinate with other agencies to update and implement the Bath Township Trails and Greenway Plan.			X						X	X
17. Incorporate public access trails within greenways (that may just be connected areas of tree canopy and natural areas without public access), where feasible.		X	X							
18. Create or form an alliance with other partners to promote acquisitions, conservation easements, or other protection strategies (e.g., Friends of Yellow Creek, the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, and the Nature Conservancy).	X	X	X						X	
19. Coordinate trails planning with an overall corridors and hamlet preservation strategy.			X	X	X					
20. Coordinate local bike trail planning with transportation plans and improvements completed by the county, state, and AMATS.			X						X	
21. Explore cooperation of adjacent jurisdictions in the development of trails.			X						X	
22. Explore funding strategies for future sidewalk and trail projects.			X							
23. Prepare small area land use and design plans for the hamlets.				X						



Table F: Specific Implementation Tasks

Implementation Task	Goals									
Implementation Task (Not Listed in Any Priority)	Rural, Single-Family Character	Protected Natural Resources	Open Space, Greenways, and Trails	Preserve and Enhance Hamlets	High Quality Corridors	Sustain Neighborhood Values	Sustain Business Vitality	Public Facilities that Reinforce Overall Growth Management Goals	Multi-jurisdiction Cooperative Planning	Sustainability
24. Pursue conservation zoning overlay based on the focus area plans for the hamlets that identify appropriate setbacks (from roads and adjacent buildings), architectural styles, if appropriate, building heights, parking location, signage, buffers, landscaping, and similar requirements based on the small area plan and an evaluation of what defines each of the hamlets as a “place.”				X			X			
25. Recognize Ghent and Hammond’s Corners as historical community focal points of activities with a mixture of land uses that are compatible with their historic character and scale.				X	X					
26. Encourage the focusing of activities in the hamlets by permitting higher intensity development and a mix of residential, nonresidential, and public uses that helps keep the hamlets vibrant.				X			X			
27. Connect the hamlets with pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure as part of a township and regional-wide system.			X	X						
28. Establish an economic development strategy for each of the hamlets (e.g., capitalize on the quality and types of uses and market each area individually).				X	X		X			
29. Update the Bath Township Zoning Resolution to establish special rural corridor development standards for the Heritage Corridors of Bath Township to require that any new development be compatible with the scenic character goals of the Heritage Corridors of Bath Management Plan.	X			X	X					



Table F: Specific Implementation Tasks

Implementation Task	Goals									
Implementation Task (Not Listed in Any Priority)	Rural, Single-Family Character	Protected Natural Resources	Open Space, Greenways, and Trails	Preserve and Enhance Hamlets	High Quality Corridors	Sustain Neighborhood Values	Sustain Business Vitality	Public Facilities that Reinforce Overall Growth Management Goals	Multi-jurisdiction Cooperative Planning	Sustainability
30. Explore redevelopment opportunities for the northern portions of Cleveland-Massillon Road. This may include rezoning and/or developing and implementing design guidelines for the B-I zoned area at the north end of the Cleveland-Massillon Road corridor that promote appropriate commercial design related to site layout, building configuration, materials, massing, shape, height, landscaping, signage, parking and vehicular design, lighting, and others. Such design guidelines should be related to the uses proposed for the area in this plan.							X			X
31. Preserve the Cleveland-Massillon Road corridor between Ghent and Bath Center, and between Bath Center and Hammond's Corners, as a rural residential area.	X				X	X				
32. Explore solutions to facilitate the enhancement of the gateways in the township through the development of a gateways plan or strategy.					X					
33. Develop and implement design guidelines for the Route 18 corridor (Montrose area) that promote appropriate commercial design related to site layout, building configuration, materials, massing, shape, height, landscaping, signage, parking and vehicular design, lighting, and others.					X					
34. Collaborate with stakeholders of the Montrose business area to ensure long-term economic stability, such as improvement districts.					X		X		X	



Table F: Specific Implementation Tasks

Implementation Task	Goals									
Implementation Task (Not Listed in Any Priority)	Rural, Single-Family Character	Protected Natural Resources	Open Space, Greenways, and Trails	Preserve and Enhance Hamlets	High Quality Corridors	Sustain Neighborhood Values	Sustain Business Vitality	Public Facilities that Reinforce Overall Growth Management Goals	Multi-jurisdiction Cooperative Planning	Sustainability
35. Develop a Planned Residential Overlay District that allows for increased density of residential uses on the western area of the SR 18 corridor under the conditions outlined in this plan.					X	X				
36. Monitor conditions in township neighborhoods that affect housing stock values. This may include establishing a database and/or map of zoning complaints, police or emergency service calls, and similar issues to better document the condition of a neighborhood.	X					X				X
37. Investigate tools for sustaining quality neighborhoods such as property maintenance codes and alternate methods to control nuisance properties.						X				X
38. Inventory and evaluate nonconforming uses and nonconforming structures (i.e., the structure does not meet height, setback, or similar requirements but the use is permitted) in the township.						X	X			
39. Explore tools to enable the township to control or influence incompatible land uses throughout the township.					X	X	X			
40. Utilize the unique qualities and attributes of Bath Township as a marketing tool to attract new businesses to the appropriate areas and to attract patrons to existing businesses.							X			



Table F: Specific Implementation Tasks

Implementation Task	Goals									
Implementation Task (Not Listed in Any Priority)	Rural, Single-Family Character	Protected Natural Resources	Open Space, Greenways, and Trails	Preserve and Enhance Hamlets	High Quality Corridors	Sustain Neighborhood Values	Sustain Business Vitality	Public Facilities that Reinforce Overall Growth Management Goals	Multi-jurisdiction Cooperative Planning	Sustainability
41. Prohibit the expansion of nonresidential uses in areas not so designated in this plan to prevent the oversaturation of business activity areas and minimize vacancies.	X				X		X			X
42. Work to meet or exceed baseline level of service standards for township services, including police, fire, parks, and maintenance of township roads and other facilities.								X		
43. Coordinate with the Bath Township Water and Sewer District on future planning for sewer and water services to foster rural land use patterns and planned densities of the township. The effort should specifically look at areas of potential change such as SR 18 and the northern areas of Cleveland-Massillon Road.	X							X	X	
44. Explore the community need for a future community center facility with other stakeholders that may include other local or county government agencies or non-profit organizations.								X	X	
45. Coordinate complementary zoning with Granger, Sharon, and Copley Townships for the areas along the southwestern borders of Bath Township.					X	X	X		X	
46. Prepare common design guidelines for the Route 18 corridor in collaboration with Copley Township and the City of Fairlawn.					X		X		X	



Table F: Specific Implementation Tasks

Implementation Task (Not Listed in Any Priority)	Goals									
	Rural, Single-Family Character	Protected Natural Resources	Open Space, Greenways, and Trails	Preserve and Enhance Hamlets	High Quality Corridors	Sustain Neighborhood Values	Sustain Business Vitality	Public Facilities that Reinforce Overall Growth Management Goals	Multi-jurisdiction Cooperative Planning	Sustainability
47. Collaborate and promote the values of regionalism with local governments on mutual goals and improvements.									X	
48. Work with the school system to identify ways in which the schools and township can collaborate to mutually reinforce common interests.						X			X	
49. Work with Richfield Township and the Village of Richfield to develop a small area plan, or similar strategy, for areas that border the northern end of the township, and specifically the Cleveland-Massillon Corridor. Such effort should address issues such as infrastructure provision, access, land uses, and the joint use of funding and resources, if applicable.									X	
50. Update the Bath Township Zoning Resolution to address sustainable development practices that may include a range of strategies from the easy (e.g., clearly allow for solar panels, green roofs, and rain gardens) to the more complex (providing for higher densities in focused areas or other incentives in exchange for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified buildings and/or developments).					X	X	X			X
51. Update the Bath Township Zoning Resolution to incorporate sustainable development provisions that will promote walkability, enhance energy conservation methods, and reduce impervious surface coverage, amongst other related sustainable requirements.		X	X							X



APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

The following are definitions of certain technical terms used in this plan.

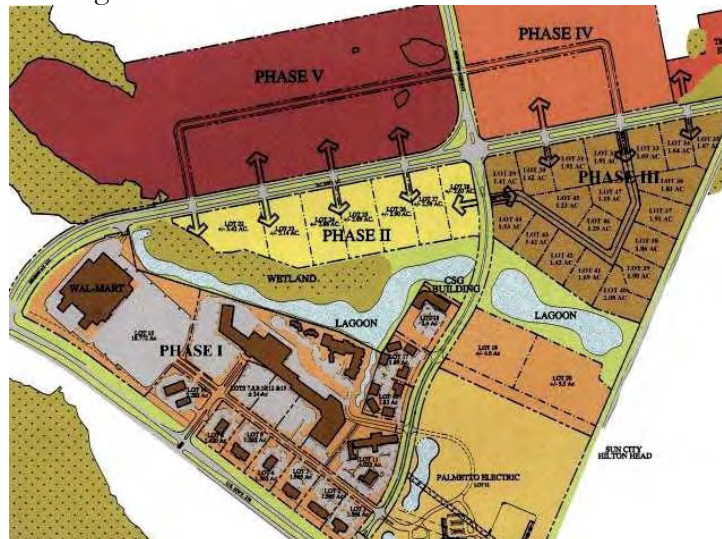
- **100-Year Floodplain** – A 100-year floodplain is the land adjacent to a stream, river, or waterway that experiences occasional or periodic flooding. The 100-year floodplain is calculated as the level of water expected to be equaled or exceeded every 100 years, on average. Annually, there is a 1.0% chance of a 100-year flood occurrence.
- **500-Year Floodplain** – A 500-year floodplain is the land adjacent to a stream, river, or waterway that experiences occasional or periodic flooding. The 500-year floodplain is calculated as the level of water expected to be equaled or exceeded every 500 years, on average. Annually, there is a 0.2% chance of a 500-year flood occurrence.
- **Buildout** – The amount of housing units or commercial acreage that could be developed if all major areas of vacant, agricultural, or similar lands were to develop for non-agricultural purposes.
- **Development Form** - The character of a development that sets it apart from other developments including architecture, building setbacks, lot size, density/intensity, and general development layout.
- **Goal** – A goal is a desired end state that, if achieved over the long term, will contribute to the attainment of the community vision.
- **Hamlet** – A hamlet is a small community, with a mixture of residential, nonresidential, and public uses, that are typically not large enough to be an incorporated village or city, and are often found at the crossroads of two major roadways. For the purposes of this plan, the two identified hamlets are Ghent and Hammond's Corners.
- **Riparian Corridor** – A riparian corridor is the land and vegetation located immediately adjacent to a stream. Riparian corridors may or may not include areas designated by FEMA as a floodplain.
- **Vision** – A vision is the overarching statement of the aspiration for the community.
- **Wetlands** – Wetlands are those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil condition. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.
 - **Emergent** - Wetlands that are characterized by plants growing with their roots underwater and leaves extending above the water.
 - **Forested** – Wetlands that are characterized as having a significant component of woody vegetation.
 - **Scrub/Shrub** – Wetlands that are dominated by woody vegetation less than 20 feet tall.



APPENDIX B: OVERVIEW OF PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS (PUDs)

A PUD is looked upon as a tool that gives a community such as Bath Township the authority to review and approve an alternative form of development than what might be proposed through the basic subdivision process and traditional zoning district. In return, the community receives more “say” in the development process and often establishes some basic trade-offs for a better design. For example, a conservation subdivision (such as that in Firestone Estates) was a common development type that was the result of PUDs in the 1980s and 1990s where a community would provide for smaller lots, possibly higher densities, in return for a more creative development design and open space. Since the 1980s and 1990s, PUDs have become far more extensive and are seen as an option for providing unique development types such as mixed-use developments where the community wants to have the ability to review the development in detail before approving the new development. In return, communities look for more open space, higher quality design, and a better overall development.

The PUD process can vary from community to community but the most common review procedure occurs in two steps. First, there is the approval of a preliminary development plan that goes along with a zoning map amendment that changes the zoning to a PUD. The preliminary development plan typically establishes the big picture/visionary elements of a development such as proposed land uses, densities, street layouts, open space, and natural resource protection areas. Once the applicant has that approval, they develop the more detailed final development plans that outline building locations, parking requirements, landscaping requirements, etc. In a township, the zoning commission and board of trustees act on the preliminary development plan as part of a zoning map amendment process. The final development plan is reviewed and approved by the zoning commission, or in some townships, it goes further for final approval through the trustees.



Above is one example of a preliminary development plan for a mixed-use PUD. Here, the applicant has shown the commercial building footprints, street layout, and a bubble diagram of the location of different housing types and densities.



Above is an example of a final development plan for a mixed-use PUD. Here you can see all the details such as building footprints, landscaping, and parking.

An important aspect of the PUD for townships in Ohio is that they let the township have more input into a development. Townships in Ohio **do not** have the authority to review and approve subdivisions. That means if someone wants to develop a 50-acre property under the current zoning requirements, they go to the county (who approves subdivisions) with their proposed street layout and lot layout. As long as the proposed subdivision meets the township's basic lot requirements (e.g., lot area and lot width), and any county street standards, they are essentially approved without any discretionary review. The township has no say in the subdivision layout. With a PUD, the township does get to approve the street layout, lot layout, size, etc. and when the applicant goes to formally subdivide the land, they have to follow the plans approved by the township.

The Ohio Revised Code - PUDs in Townships

The following is language from the Ohio Revised Code that addresses PUDs for townships (emphasis added to certain points). It is important to note, that no matter what, the applicant has to request the PUD review, a township cannot force a property owner to develop through the PUD process.

ORC Section 519.021 Planned-unit development regulations.

A township zoning resolution or amendment adopted in accordance with this chapter may establish or modify planned-unit developments. Planned-unit development regulations ***shall apply to property only at the election of the property owner*** and shall include standards to be used by the board of township trustees or, if the board so chooses, by the township zoning commission, in determining whether to approve or disapprove any proposed development within a planned-unit development. The planned-unit development shall further the purpose of promoting the general public welfare, encouraging the efficient use of land and resources, promoting greater efficiency in providing public and utility services, and encouraging innovation in the planning and building of all types of development. Within a planned-unit development, the township zoning regulations, where applicable, need not be uniform, but may vary in order to accommodate unified development and to promote the public health, safety, morals, and the other purposes of this section.

Planned-unit developments may be included in the township zoning resolution under one of the following procedures:



- (A) The board of township trustees may adopt planned-unit development regulations that do not automatically apply to any property in the township, but establish standards that will apply to property that becomes part of a planned-unit development as provided in this division. Property owners who wish to have planned-unit development regulations apply to their property may apply to have the zoning map amended pursuant to section 519.12 of the Revised Code to rezone their property as a planned-unit development and no longer subject to any previously applicable zoning regulations. Once property has been rezoned as a planned-unit development, subsequent development on that property shall comply with the planned-unit development regulations as determined by the board of township trustees or township zoning commission, as applicable. After the designation of the property as a planned-unit development on the zoning map, any approval or disapproval of subsequent use or development of property in a planned-unit development as being in compliance with regulations established as authorized by this division shall not be considered to be an amendment or supplement to a township zoning resolution for the purpose of section 519.12 of the Revised Code, but may be appealed pursuant to Chapter 2506. of the Revised Code.
- (B) Upon the application of property owners, the board of township trustees may establish a planned-unit development for their property, designating the property as a planned-unit development on the zoning map in accordance with the procedures set forth in section 519.12 of the Revised Code, and simultaneously adopting regulations as part of that same procedure that will apply only to that planned-unit development. Within that development, property is subject to the planned-unit development regulations and not to any other zoning regulations. Compliance with the planned-unit development regulations shall be determined by the board of township trustees or township zoning commission, as applicable. After the designation of the property as a planned-unit development on the zoning map and the simultaneous adoption of regulations that will apply only to that planned-unit development, any approval or disapproval of subsequent use or development of property in a planned-unit development as being in compliance with regulations established as authorized by this division shall not be considered to be an amendment or supplement to a township zoning resolution for the purpose of section 519.12 of the Revised Code, but may be appealed pursuant to Chapter 2506. of the Revised Code.
- (C) **(Overlay Option)** Pursuant to section 519.12 of the Revised Code, the board of township trustees may adopt planned-unit development regulations and amend the zoning map to rezone property as planned-unit developments. Any other zoning regulations and zoning district that exist at the time a planned-unit development district is established under this division continue to apply within the planned-unit development district unless the board or the township zoning commission approves an application of an owner of property within the district to subject the owner's property to planned-unit development regulations under this division. Such an application shall be made in accordance with the planned-unit development regulations and shall include a development plan that complies with the planned-unit development regulations. Upon receiving such an application, the board of township trustees or township zoning commission, as applicable, shall determine whether the application and plan comply with the planned-unit development regulations. The board's or commission's determination shall not be considered to be an amendment to a township zoning resolution for purposes of section 519.12 of the Revised Code, but may be appealed pursuant to Chapter 2506. of the Revised Code. If the board or commission makes a final determination that the plan included in the application complies with the planned-unit development regulations or, if the board's or commission's final determination is one of noncompliance then if a court of competent jurisdiction makes a final nonappealable order finding compliance, the board or commission, as applicable, shall approve the application and upon approval shall cause the zoning map to be changed so that any other zoning district that applied to the property that is the subject of the owner's application no longer applies to that property. The removal of the prior zoning district from the zoning map is a ministerial act and shall not be considered to be an amendment or supplement to a township zoning resolution for the purposes of section 519.12 of the Revised Code and may not be appealed pursuant to Chapter 2506. of the Revised Code.

Nothing in this section prevents a board of township trustees from authorizing a planned-unit development as a conditional use in the zoning resolution pursuant to section 519.14 of the Revised Code.

As used in this section, "planned-unit development" means a development which is planned to integrate residential, commercial, industrial, or any other use.



For Bath Township, the recommendations for “Route 18 Residential Use” is focused on the use of the third option above, which is considered the overlay option. In this case, the township can establish some basic standards for a PUD in the designated area. For example, the township could create a SR 18 PUD Overlay District. Under the district, the township can establish standards for any number of development characteristics including, but not limited to:

- Permitted density;
- Minimum open space requirements;
- Open space standards (e.g., what counts, what does not);
- Natural and environmental resource protection standards;
- Access standards;
- Housing type or housing mix standards; and
- Architectural standards.

The stricter and clearer the standards are, the better for the township. Historically, many communities leave their PUD regulation vague with minimal guidance for what the community wants to see by way of a new PUD. This is frustrating for a developer who does not have a clear idea about the township’s vision for development and it is also frustrating for the community as they may find it difficult to say “no” to a proposed development if the applicant appears to meet the vague, open-ended standards.

The SR 18 PUD Overlay District would also have to establish the basic review process for the various plans. The only difference will be that unlike the original process outlined in the first part of this appendix, the township will not be waiting for a property owner to present a preliminary development plan before rezoning the property. Instead, the township will rezone the applicable properties with the SR 18 PUD Overlay. The underlying R-2 zoning would still be in place. The township could still require that preliminary and final development plans be reviewed by the zoning commission and the township trustees.

With the overlay district in place, a property owner has two options. **First**, they can develop under the base R-2 zoning district at one unit per 2.5 acres with no need to go to the township with any special plans. The **second** option is that the property owner can go through the review process established in the PUD Overlay District and subject themselves to those pre-established standards. The incentive for developing under the PUD is that per the plan recommendations, the PUD Overlay will provide for a higher density in return for more open space (higher quality open space), and a higher quality development. The township retains the ability to deny a PUD application if someone presents a concept that does not meet the goals of the plan or goals and standards of the established PUD overlay district. If the property owner does not like either one of those options, they continue to retain the right to request a zoning amendment to some alternative zoning district.



APPENDIX C: 1997 BATH TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN