

# Morrow County Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2012



**MORROW COUNTY**   
**Love life. Live rural.**

Love Life. Live

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Chapter 1

**HISTORY**

# Morrow County Land Use Plan

## History

As one of the last counties to be created in Ohio, Morrow County was formed February 24, 1848 from parts of Richland, Knox, Marion and Delaware Counties. The County was named after Jeremiah Morrow, governor of Ohio from 1822 to 1826.

Morrow County has always displayed strong Patriotism. During the Civil War, Morrow County had more volunteers per capita for the Union Army than any county in the northern states. Looking upon World War I, the Victory Shaft monument was awarded to the citizens of Morrow County for selling the most War Bonds per capita of any Ohio County. This monument that was donated to Morrow County still stands in the center of the county seat within the Village of Mt. Gilead.



The Victory Shaft in the Middle of Mt. Gilead.

The Village of Mt. Gilead serves as the central location of the county and was designated as the County Seat. It was reported that John Chapman (Johnny Appleseed) sometimes passed through town and had at least one apple plantation in the area. Mt. Gilead is the largest village in Morrow County. Cardington, Edison, Fulton, Marengo, Sparta, and Chesterville are the other villages within the county lines.

With a population of roughly 2,000, Cardington stands as the second largest village in the county. It is also home to the Cardington Pirates, supporting black and red as their school colors. One of the three oldest villages in the county, Cardington holds the largest employer in Morrow County. Proud of the 700+ people that they employ, Cardington Yutaka Technologies is a thriving advanced technology facility and the next generation in industrial manufacturing for Morrow County.

Edison, named for American inventor Thomas Alva Edison, is home to roughly 400 Morrow County residents. Children of Edison are part of Mount Gilead Exempted Schools, home of the Purple Indians. This village has many business and also home to the Tomorrow Center.

Fulton is one of the four smaller villages; containing a population of almost 300, it is also part of the Cardington School District. While it may be a small village, it received major remodeling from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, a grant that the Development office received from the State of Ohio to improve the appearance of the village. Seen as one of the more spirited communities in Morrow County, on every national holiday the Village of Fulton decks herself out in the ole' red, white, and blue.

Marengo, Sparta, and Chesterville together make Highland Local School district, the largest district throughout the county. Marengo is located near the State Route 61 and Interstate 71 ex-

## Continued:

This village is home to many small businesses; pizza shops, a small country store, hair salon, ice cream shop, and machinery and parts stores just to name a few.

Sparta is a memorable village because of its close proximity to the Highland Local Schools. This village holds a population of roughly 160, surrounded by miles of farmland. Sparta is important to the nearby schools for its sewer utility and is the central most location for the school.

Chesterville is located not far from the Knox County and Morrow County line, and is close to the I71 interstate. As of the census of 2010, there were 228 people, 79 households, and 50 families residing in the village. Chesterville is home to the Selover Public Library, Waste Water Treatment Plant for the area, and several stores that line the intersection of SR314 and SR95.

## The Future

While the County population has increased throughout the years, its focus is still faith, family and agriculture. Morrow County's goal is to preserve and protect its farmland, open space, streams, rivers and underground water supply. Morrow County has a varied land use plan, which accommodates the needs and interests of all county residents.

Chapter 2

**TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS**



## Comprehensive Land Use Plan Team Recommendations:

1. Growth should be guided into designed areas that have the appropriate infrastructure to support it without placing an undue burden to taxpayers while protecting our natural resources. Morrow County leaders should continue to support agriculture growth as a priority.
2. County leaders should endorse a Targeting Strategy designed to attract industrial companies, which match Morrow County's rural setting and support this strategy through membership in regional public – private partnerships.
3. Morrow County leaders should collaboratively commission a study to analyze and define retail and commercial opportunities within the borders of the county.
4. With the aging population of Morrow County, Morrow County leaders, in collaboration with all local governments and private partners, should create a plan for increasing elderly housing for longtime residents. By attracting new residential developers and connecting existing local developers to financing opportunities, tax abatement incentives and job creation credits, more building can begin to fill the projected gap between assisted living facilities and nursing homes and aging Morrow County residents.
5. Collaboration and communication are important between the State of Ohio Department of Transportation and County leaders; a public annual review of the capital infrastructure improvements plan should be a priority. Transportation development should be carefully planned and financed through the wise use of authorized improvement funds.
6. Utility development will be planned, designed and constructed in cooperation with the existing utility companies and village systems to ensure efficient and effective use of land and financial resources. A County Waste Water treatment Master Plan should be prepared to ensure and our waterways are preserved.
7. County leaders should ensure codes & regulations are reviewed and updated annually to meet the new demands of our changing society and then, in return, should be enforced to protect the land value of our residents.
8. County leaders should explore possible public and private actions necessary to support a local business incubator and a facility to support a market place for home based business products.
9. County leaders should encourage, through regulations and codes, appropriate green space designations within any residential and/or commercial developments. New developments should retain vegetation along streams, lakes, reservoirs and field borders to provide shelter, shade, food and wildlife nesting habitat. Development density shall also be controlled so significant wildlife habitat will not be adversely affected.
10. To provide the community with the best public services in fire, health and law enforcement county leaders should create a planning committee to evaluate the feasibility of expanding and financing new fire, EMS and law enforcement substations or consolidating base stations thru contractual agreements at existing facilities will conserve financial resources and improve coverage across the County.
11. County leaders should attract a Post-Secondary Education Institution to Morrow County. Local access specifically attracting a community college to locate in Morrow County will be essential to creating supportive training programs for local industry.
12. County leaders should increase marketing, cooperation and collaboration to create a synergy that will increase and improve the economic and community benefits of the festivals, the Morrow County Fair and other events in the county.

Continued:

## 2005 Land Use Plan Recommendations Accomplished:

- The Morrow County Commissioners and local units of government increased their emphasis on encouraging new and expanded industrial and commercial activity in designated service areas.
- The Morrow County Development Office actually facilitated an assessment of the existing and proposed telecommunications infrastructure throughout the County to identify any service gaps. This was to prepare access to high-speed Internet service and other advanced telecommunications services.
- The Morrow County Development Office achieved a planning and development process to address the limited sanitary sewer capacity at the State Route 95/Interstate 71 interchange. This process included the Village of Chesterville, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) and property owners on both sides of the interchange.

Morrow County elected officials, utility companies and the business community were able to work diligently with the Ohio Department of Transportation to undertake the following:

Reconstruct and realign the SR 61 and I-71 interchange to include: (1) reconstruction of the overpass to three lanes; (2) realignment of the entrance ramp to I-71 northbound; (3) realignment of both the entrance and exit ramps on I-71 southbound; and (4) reconstruction and widening of SR 61 to at least three lanes for a mile both north and south of the interchange.

Reconstruct and realign the SR 95 and I-71 interchange to include: (1) reconstruction of the overpass to three lanes; (2) reconstruction of all entrance ramps to I -71 northbound and I -71 southbound; and (3) reconstruction and widening of SR 95 to at least three lanes for a mile both north and south of the interchange.

- The Morrow County Commissioners evaluated and amended local tax and financing incentive programs to ensure that incentives offered are designed to attract and retain viable commercial and industrial facilities.
- The Morrow County Development Office is responsible for increasing the public and private efforts to promote and facilitate: (1) light industrial activity at the Bennington Industrial Park in Bennington Township; (2) commercial, light industrial, warehouse/distribution activity on the northwest quadrant of the SR 61 and I-71 interchange; and (3) light industrial and commercial activity at the SR 95 and I-71 interchange.



Statue located outside the Morrow County Court House

Chapter 3

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

## Economic Development Types:

1. Industrial
2. Commercial (retail, personal and professional services)
3. Community Housing
4. Entrepreneur development.

### **Economic Development Mission:**

Our mission is job creation through attracting new businesses to the prime development centers in Morrow County; “Growing our Own” businesses by assisting in job retention and expansion; and promoting entrepreneurship in small business.



Morrow County is a part of the Columbus Region

Chapter 4  
**INDUSTRIAL**

## Industrial History:

Morrow County is strategically located in north central Ohio and is home to a diverse manufacturing and agricultural base. This diverse atmosphere includes: fabricated and primary metals, polymers, automotive parts, and household goods and appliances. Several significant historical events have influenced the industrial economic climate in Morrow County to the present time:

- The construction of I-71 in the 1950s and subsequent construction of two interchanges serving Morrow County (at State Routes 61 and 95) provided easy access to markets for goods and services as well as for workers. Morrow County's land use has been, and will continue to be, influenced by these interchanges.
- In 1994, Cardington Yutaka Technologies, an automotive parts supplier, decided to locate its manufacturing facility in the Village of Cardington. Today, it is the county's largest employer, with 700+ associates.
- The 2001 closing of HPM Corporation in the Village of Mt. Gilead resulted in the loss of more than 600 jobs. HPM had been a fixture in Morrow County since 1877 and the closing was a major economic setback to the community. Subsequently, the former HPM assets were acquired by Taylor's Industrial Services LLC. In 2009, Taylor's HPM America encountered a downturn in the injection molding industry and launched a new alternative energy manufacturing division. Struggling in the 2010 economic climate, Taylor's HPM America went into receivership and faced tax foreclosure. The facility has been closed ever since.

## Industrial Inventory:

Through the 2008- 2010 recession period, Morrow County lost the following industrial employers: Scott Fetzer's Stahl's, News Color Press, ENFAB, Pamida, HPM Americas, Snyder's Fabrication, Jenkin's Engineering. With the failure to keep all of these employers the total amount of lost jobs was over 300 employees.

## Industrial Vision:

To promote and facilitate industrial development in designated industrial areas; to increase future employment opportunities; to increase the local tax base and reduce the property tax burden on existing residential properties.

## Industrial Short Term Goals:

- The Morrow County Development Office, working with Mt. Gilead and Cardington leaders, must increase public and private efforts to promote and facilitate industrial activity in designated areas in these two villages. The villages should designate industrial areas and target water and sewer infrastructure improvements to support designated industrial areas.
- The Development Office in collaboration with Mt. Gilead and Cardington leaders must inventory all unused and abandoned industrial sites and formulate a strategy to redevelop these sites thru submission to the Ohio Brownfield Program or other federal/state programs in order to accomplish a Phase I & II Environmental Study for each site.
- All Morrow County governmental entities should build regional relationships and networks to promote Morrow County as a viable and great place to do business; thereby, increasing the regional awareness and improving the perception of the business environment in Morrow County.
- The Morrow County Development Office in collaboration with other County public and private partners must maintain professional memberships in regional and state organizations to promote county interests.

The Morrow County Development Office in collaboration with other county public and private partners must maintain a business retention and expansion program which is supportive to local industrial businesses.

## Industrial Long Term Goals:

- The Development Office in collaboration with local utility providers, business leaders and local government leaders should develop a “Targeting Strategy” to identify types of industry which most fit location and attributes of industrial prime sites.
- The Development Office in collaboration with local utility providers, business leaders and local government leaders should develop a local “successful partners” listing to identify persons with local roots and worldwide business connections and promote Morrow County as a “Land of Opportunity.”

Chapter 5  
**COMMERCIAL**



## Commercial History:

Morrow County has been a “bedroom” community; 70% of the work force travels outside the County for jobs, thus, creating the prime opportunity for commuters to purchase goods and services outside the County. This drives up consumption outside our County and drives the demand down inside the County. Many local retail stores, personal and professional services businesses struggle due to this phenomenon.

## Commercial Inventory:

Through the 2008- 2010 recession period, Morrow County lost the following Commercial employers: C & D Chevy Dealership, Mowery Dodge Dealership, Bright Choice, Mt. Gilead Truck Plaza, Extended Care Unit at Morrow County Hospital, Sunoco Gas Station at SR 61, Kinsell’s Groceries, Al’s Restaurant, Chesterville Grocery, and Wagon Wheel Pizza & Deli. The loss of these commercial services caused Morrow County to lose 176 jobs.



Vacant Stahls building in Cardington

## Commercial Land Use Plan Recommendations Accomplished:

The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should support the vitality of existing commercial businesses by encouraging cooperative marketing efforts among similar business and commercial areas. This was accomplished through the development of the Morrow County Visitor’s Guide.

## Commercial Short Term Goals:

- The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services and local governments should increase support and encouragement to existing commercial based businesses to retain or expand employment opportunities. Efforts should include targeted business retention and expansion activities to identify local and regional issues facing commercial businesses and professional service businesses.
- The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services and local governments should promote “buy local” thru Business 2 Business programs.
- The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services and local governments should offer education programs for local businesses on new state and local programs.
- The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services and local governments should promote local success stories and encourage joint marketing efforts while building positive energy and pride in our community.
- The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services and local governments should engage and solicit Columbus Private Retail Developers to study Morrow County as a rural secondary retail market.

## Commercial Long Term Goals:

- ◆ The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should collaboratively commission a study to analyze and define retail and commercial opportunities in Morrow County.
- ◆ The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should establish a merchant retail development task force to increase ambassador mentality.
- ◆ The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should develop customized “sales packages” for development sites by retailers. The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should invest in a consultant, to qualify Prospects and Suspects.

Chapter 6

**COMMUNITY HOUSING**

## Community Housing Short Term Goals:

- The Morrow County Commissioners, thru the Morrow County Housing Advisory Committee which is facilitated by the Morrow County Development Office, in collaboration with other local governments and private partners should provide an annual Fair Housing Workshop for education purposes.
- The Morrow County Commissioners, thru the Morrow County Housing Advisory Committee which is facilitated by the Morrow County Development Office, in collaboration with other local governments and private partners should include fair housing information on all web-sites and documents. Web links to the Ohio Civil Rights Commission and the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development should be included.
- The Morrow County Commissioners, thru the Morrow County Housing Advisory Committee which is facilitated by the Morrow County Development Office, in collaboration with other local governments and private partners should work to expand the housing choices of members of all protected classes so there is housing opportunity throughout Morrow County.
- The Morrow County Commissioners, thru the Morrow County Housing Advisory Committee which is facilitated by the Morrow County Development Office, in collaboration with other local governments and private partners should consider a residential growth plan around the villages where affordable services and amenities are available.

## Community Housing Long Term Goals

- ◆ The Morrow County Commissioners, thru the Morrow County Housing Advisory Committee which is facilitated by the Morrow County Development Office, in collaboration with other local governments and private partners should organize a Landlord's Association and other platforms for disbursing of fair housing information and educational materials.
- ◆ The Morrow County Commissioners, thru the Morrow County Housing Advisory Committee which is facilitated by the Morrow County Development Office, in collaboration with other local governments and private partners should consider enacting and strengthen their current building and occupancy codes.
- ◆ The Morrow County Commissioners, thru the Morrow County Housing Advisory Committee which is facilitated by the Morrow County Development Office, in collaboration with other local governments and private partners should consider requiring an affirmative marketing plan from all new residential developers in order to receive the appropriate building permits, zoning permits and subdivision approval. Stores, personal and professional services businesses struggle due to this phenomenon.

Chapter 7

**ENTREPRENEUR GOALS**

## Entrepreneur History:

This is a new section as Entrepreneur Development was not included in the 2005 report.

Since its founding on July 30, 1953, the U.S. Small Business Administration has delivered millions of loans, loan guarantees, contracts, counseling sessions and other forms of assistance to small businesses. Since 2003, Morrow County has offered free services through the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) located at Ashland University. These services include Education, Information, and Technical Assistance & Training. SBDC Counselors provide free individual face-to-face, and internet counseling for small businesses, and low-cost training to nascent entrepreneurs and established small businesses in Morrow County.

See Ohio Secretary of State Website for up to date new business filings for Morrow County: <http://www.sos.state.oh.us/sos/Businesses/BusinessInformation/businessReports.aspx>.

### Entrepreneur Short Term Goals

- The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should continue to promote SBDC opportunities and programs by offering meeting rooms and time for local entrepreneurs to meet.
- The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should liaise with local banking institutions and regional finance authorities for capital in support of new business startups.
- The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should reorganize and refocus efforts of the Community Improvement Corporations in support of new business startups.

### Entrepreneur Long Term Goals:

- ♦ The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should explore possible public and private actions necessary to support **home-based businesses** in the county. This initiative should evaluate the potential market and development of a specialty retail establishment to promote local foods and products. This type of facility could be developed as a marketplace where local craftspeople could lease space to sell the products they currently make at the home.
- ♦ The Morrow County Chamber of Commerce, OSU Extension Services, Morrow County Commissioners and local governments should explore possible public and private actions necessary to support a Local Business Incubator.

Chapter 8

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

## Community Facilities

### Background and History

The community facilities task force explored the history, current uses, and concerns for the future of community facilities and services as they relate to land use structuring or restructuring for emergency and medical services. This exploration included looking into expanding the law enforcement, jail facilities, and public libraries. The most clearly and consistently stated concern for the county's future was centered on the county needing more businesses and industry to have a positive future. Representatives from each of the community facilities areas, without exception, noted that without a stronger tax base, it would be difficult to impossible to provide the services and facilities that the county needs.

### Inventory of Emergency Services:

Morrow County continues to have several separate and often uncoordinated agencies to provide for the County's emergencies and safety needs:

**Police and Sheriff's Departments:** The County Sheriff's Office is at Home Road and State Route 42, about a mile north of Mount Gilead. The Villages of Mount Gilead and Cardington also have police forces. At various times, the villages of Edison, Fulton and Marengo have hired police officers to patrol their municipal areas. An issue related to land use planning is the continued growth of residences and the decline in revenue in the county. As the number of residences increases, so too does the need for officers. The Sheriff's department is understaffed, with only two officers at a time covering over 400 miles of county roads. Understaffing is likely to increase, particularly in the southern part of the county, as residential growth increases.

**Jail Facilities:** The Morrow County Jail can hold 126 inmates, but can be overcrowded at times with inmates from Morrow County and other counties around the state. In addition, more space is needed to store evidence and for office use. The location of the jail, at Home Road and SR 42, is in fair condition. And, there is adequate land around the current facility to construct a new building to house the Sheriff's Office. This in turn would allow the current facility to house only the jail. The jail is the third highest revenue source for the county's general fund, coming from housing out-of-county inmates; but the downfall is its also the fund's biggest user.

**911 Services:** The 911 Center in Mount Gilead answers all calls, including cell phones, and notifies the appropriate police or emergency agency. The 911 services surcharge is paid to Century Link, not the county. This pays for maintenance of the overall database of residents and finding correct addresses. 911 services in Morrow County are paid by property taxes; \$11 from each improved parcel goes to the 911 Center. This amount, which doesn't completely cover the cost of services, has not increased since the introduction of 911 services about 20 years ago. Morrow County 911 is currently 911 Enhanced Phase II compliant and is ready for "Next Generation". Next Generation calling will allow the caller to send a text message, picture or video to the 911 Center. Currently Century Link does not have the capability in this area for Next Generation 911 calling. The county currently has CODE RED an early warning system that allows 911 Dispatchers, Township and Village officials the ability to send emergency messages and alerts to all land lines and authorized cell phones in the county or within their jurisdictions.

**Fire Protection:** Morrow County has a wide range of fire protection, and each township has the option to contract with a county or non-county department. Contractual agreements are historically or politically motivated; or dependent on financial or access advantages.



## Mount Gilead Fire Department, Station 19

Fire Chief: Don Staiger

Governing Body: Village Council

Funding: Tax levies, fire protection contracts

Communities Served: Mount Gilead, Gilead Twp., portion of Canaan and Franklin Twps.

Services Provided: Fire suppression, auto rescue, fire prevention, fire inspections, decontamination team for MCEMS

Special Equipment: Decon shower trailer, spill containment trailer

Manning: 5 members Monday-Friday 8am-4pm, paid/on call evenings and week-ends

## Cardington Fire Department Station 29

Fire Chief: Jim Ullom

Governing body: Village Council

Funding: Tax levies, fire protection contracts

Communities Served: Village of Cardington, Cardington and Lincoln Twps., Richland Twp. (Marion City)

Services Provided: Fire suppression, auto rescue, fire prevention, fire inspections

Special Equipment: None

Manning: On call, hourly rate per run

## Big Walnut Joint Fire District; Station 39-1, Station 39-2

Fire Chief: Steve Roberts

Governing Body: Fire Board

Funding: Tax levies, fire protection contracts

Communities Served: Villages of Marengo, Chesterville; Bennington, Chester and Harmony Townships

Services Provided: Fire suppression, auto rescue, fire prevention, fire inspections

Special Equipment: Hazmat Spill Containment Trailer

Manning: On call, stipend rate per run

Continued:

### Perry Congress Joint Fire District, Station 59

Fire Chief: Harlan Barrack

Governing Body: Fire Board

Funding: Tax levies, fire protection contracts

Communities Served: Perry, Congress Townships; portion of Franklin Township

Services Provided: Fire suppression, county dive team, haz mat entry team

Special Equipment: Dive team trailer, Haz Mat trailer

Manning: On call, Paid per run

### Iberia Volunteer Fire Company Inc, Station 49

Fire Chief: Keith Beck

Governing Body: Fire Board

Funding: Fire protection contracts

Communities Served: Village of Iberia, Washington and North Bloomfield Twps., portion of Canaan Twp.

Services Provided: Fire suppression

Special Equipment: None

Manning: On call Volunteer

### Non– Morrow County Contracted Fire Departments

1st Consolidated Fire District, aka “Caledonia” (Marion County)

Central Ohio Joint Fire District, Station 420, aka “Centerburg” (Knox County)

Elm Valley Joint Fire District, Station 310, aka “Ashley” (Delaware County)

Lexington Fire Department – Troy Twp. (Richland County)

### Fire Protection by Townships

1. Bennington: Big Walnut Joint Fire District
2. Canaan: Mount Gilead Fire Department, Iberia Volunteer Fire Company Inc, 1st Consolidated (Marion County)
3. Cardington: Cardington Fire Department
4. Chester: Big Walnut Joint Fire District
5. Congress: Perry-Congress Joint Fire District
6. Franklin: Perry-Congress Joint Fire District
7. Gilead: Mount Gilead Fire Department
8. Harmony: Big Walnut Joint Fire District
9. Lincoln: Cardington Fire Department
10. North Bloomfield: Iberia Volunteer Fire Company Inc.
11. Perry: Perry-Congress Fire Department
12. Peru: Elm Valley Joint Fire District (Delaware County)
13. South Bloomfield: Central Ohio Joint Fire District (Knox County)
14. Troy: Lexington Fire Department
15. Washington: Iberia Volunteer Fire Company Inc.
16. Westfield: Elm Valley Joint Fire District (Delaware County)



## Emergency Medical Service:

Morrow County EMS is managed by the Morrow County Firefighter and Squadman's Association. All are County funded by a tax levy and partially supported through insurance charge back service. The public owned squads have paid staff on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Depending on manning, they are capable of Basic Life Support and Advanced Life Support. Additionally, there is an EMS Supervisor on duty 24/7, quartered at Station

1. This is an ALS SUV capable of supporting more challenging EMS calls.

Emergency Medical Service Station:

Station 1, Morrow County Emergency Services Building

Station 2, Cardington Fire Department

Station 3, Big Walnut Joint Fire District

Station 4, Iberia Volunteer Fire Company

Station 5, Perry Congress Joint Fire District



**Red Cross:** The Morrow County's Red Cross office has a network of emergency shelters; such as in churches, schools, and other locations, to house residents in case of crisis or disaster. The Red Cross would adapt to serve the county in whatever ways are necessary to meet residents' needs, regardless of land use configurations.

### Available equipment

Mobile Command Unit

Mass Casualty Trailer

EMS Transport Gator

Decon Trailer

Mobile Communications Tower

Portable Decon Shower

## Emergency Management:

Morrow County Emergency Management which is co-located with the 911 Dispatch offices and EMS Chief facilitates the emergency response forces during times of disaster, coordinates resources between local, state and federal emergency response agencies, Red Cross, surrounding counties, operates and maintains the emergency operations center, Emergency Operations Plan, the All Hazard Mitigation Plan, Chairs the LEPC and conducts annual hazmat exercises with public safety forces.

## Morrow County Hospital

The county-owned hospital that is managed by Ohio Health is centrally located within the county. Many residents who live in the southern part of the county go to St. Ann's Hospital in Westerville, Riverside in Columbus, Franklin County, or Grady Memorial in Delaware, Delaware County. Galion General, Crawford County or Med Central in Mansfield, Richland County, draws many residents from northern Morrow County. The Morrow County Hospital offers X-ray services, CAT scan and MRI services, physical therapy and laboratory services in an office on State Route 42, a few miles south of Johnsville.

The hospital's current space is near capacity and the Emergency Room is sometimes overcrowded. The hospital is working on a three-to-five-year plan to address these issues. There also is limited parking, which will continue to occur as the hospital's outpatient services expand.



Morrow County Hospital,- Mt. Gilead, OH

## School Districts

Superintendents from the four county school districts—Cardington-Lincoln, Highland, Northmor and Mt. Gilead—were asked about future needs related to land use:

**Cardington-Lincoln:** is currently involved in a building expansion, and so does not anticipate needing additional land in the immediate future. Long-term, however, new buildings may be needed in about 10 years. For more information please visit the schools website at <http://www.cardington.k12.oh.us/>.

**Highland:** is poised for considerable residential growth because it is located near the I-71 corridor and therefore convenient to jobs in Columbus and Mansfield. Current challenges with local infrastructure (sanitary sewer, water, roads) may be holding back immediate growth, however. The district has no current plans for new buildings; the school district has recently completed an expansion project consolidating elementary, middle and high schools on existing school property. A new high school was completed in 2011, former high school became the middle school and the middle school consolidated the two former elementary schools under one roof. For more information please visit the schools website at <http://highland.k12.oh.us/home/>.

**Northmor:** has adequate land in its possession for any future building needs. The Ohio Schools Facility Commission (OSFC) has conducted an assessment of the district's buildings and its recommendation (which was accepted and Northmor did obtain state money for a new building) Johnsville and Iberia elementary buildings were consolidate at one site, the former high school/junior high location. A new high school/middle school was recently completed on adjacent school property. For more information please visit the schools website at <http://www.northmor.k12.oh.us/>.

**Mt. Gilead:** has completed a major renovation and expansion of facilities with additional phases completed in 2011. For more information please visit the schools website at <http://www.mtgilead.k12.oh.us/>.

## Libraries

There are currently libraries in Cardington, Mt. Gilead, Chesterville (Selover) and Johnsville (Perry Cook Memorial Public Library). Although there is no library in Marengo, the community would benefit from a library or a Bookmobile.



Selover Public Library, Chesterville, OH

The Selover Library in Chesterville could benefit from more space and hopes to be able to purchase adjacent properties to construct additions. For now, its biggest land use issue is parking. The Mt. Gilead Public Library completed construction of its new library in June 2001.

## Community Facility Accomplishments

Morrow County Economic Development Office has an established functional economic development committee.

Morrow County Commissioners have signed off on a resolution to establish the EMA Board to oversee EMA roles, responsibilities, and accountability.

Morrow County 911, EMS, EMA in 2011 relocated to a larger more modern facility adding EMS Station 1 to the facility expanding and streamlining their operational capabilities.

Sheriff's Department acquired a larger facility from ODNR at no cost to tax payers in 2010 to expand their detective bureau.

The schools systems of Highland, Cardington, Northmor and Mount Gilead have all added new facilities, consolidated schools, and under gone major construction projects and renovations creating a modern educational system ready for the 21st Century.

Morrow County Hospital has an on going expansion project adding several outreach offices giving residents easier access to health care and is currently undergoing changes within the hospital expanding out patient services. Morrow County 911 has completed phase II cell phone compliance, added CODE RED, completed next generation 911 text messaging, video messaging, picture messaging to 911, all 911 and Sheriff Dispatchers have completed NAED training (National Academy of Emergency Dispatching).

## Community Facility Goals:

- Evaluate and explore the feasibility and need of developing a new EMS/fire station at the State Route 95/ Interstate 71 interchange.
- The Morrow County Commissioners and Morrow County Sheriff should explore the feasibility of developing a new law enforcement substation in the southern portion of the County to serve this growing area. This includes creating a planning committee to identify potential funding options to finance this proposed substation and increase law enforcement coverage throughout the entire County.
- Clearly establish an authority hierarchy (Board) within the emergency management provider and clarify responsibilities in all areas throughout the County.
- Promote performing and fine arts opportunities for county residents (such as a Community Theater Group, Community Choir, Community Band, etc.).
- The Morrow County Commissioners and elected officials should continue to explore the feasibility of the construction of a County Judicial Center and youth detention facility on property adjacent to the Morrow County Jail.
- The Morrow County Commissioners and local agricultural officials should explore the feasibility of the funding and construction of an Agricultural Resource Center on the County Home Farm.
- Local and state funding issues are creating significant financial situations with all local community services and facilities. Efforts to attract new industrial and commercial businesses to the County must be a major priority for local elected officials. Given limited financial resources, the Morrow County Commissioners and Morrow County Development Office should create an Economic Development Advisory Committee to assist the County Development Office with program and project development and marketing.
- The Morrow County Commissioners and village elected officials should establish a joint planning committee to evaluate the potential for the construction of a community-wide recreational facility, similar to a YMCA.

Chapter 9  
**CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

## CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSPORTATION TYPES: Roadway Systems, Airports, Seaports and Railways.

### Roadway System History:

Morrow County's highway system is one of its greatest assets in terms of access to and from the Central Ohio area. The 20-mile, Interstate 71 Corridor with interchanges at State Routes 61 and 95 is a valuable link to Cleveland, Mansfield, Columbus and Cincinnati. I-71 intersects Interstate 70 in Downtown Columbus; a driving time of around 30 minutes provides excellent east-west interstate travel. North of Downtown Columbus, I-71 intersects with Interstate 270. In addition to the interstate connections, the county has excellent north-south highway access with U.S. Route 42, State Routes 61 and 314, and east-west access by way of State Routes 95, 229, 309 and 529. Recent survey information indicates virtually every product, service or cultural experience desired by residents is available within a one-hour drive from the county (Additional highway information and maps are available from the Ohio Department of Transportation at <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/>). In 2009 the Morrow County Commissioners in collaboration with District 90 State Representative, organized a Public Meeting to discuss the I-71 Third Lane Expansion in Morrow County. Following multiple collaboration meeting with ODOT, State Representative Margret Ann Ruhl and Development Director Davies appeared before the Transportation Advisory Board concerning approving Phase I of three phases in the widening of I71. I-71 Third Lane from the Richland County Line to SR 95 Interchange gained Tier I status and bids were received in late September 2011. The remaining two phases are scheduled for approval according to the ODOT TRAC schedule; funding is set aside through ODOT District 6 Paving program Funds and additional TRAC moneys as necessary. In 2010 thru 2011, concurrently with the I-71 Third Lane discussion with ODOT District 6, the Development Office proposed five other priority projects for consideration to improve our transportation corridors near our prime development sites in Morrow County.

### Transportation Vision:

The vision for Morrow County is to enhance the transportation systems with proper planning that emphasizes ease of access, improvements in conditions and safety, so to create ease of mobility for people and goods moving throughout the County.



## Continued:

These projects are imperative to improving our opportunities for industrial and commercial business thru improving access management and thoroughfare route planning:

- SR 61/I-71 Complete Bridge Replacement versus Deck replacement,
- SR 61/I- 71 Extension of Left Turn Lane and Interchange landscaping,
- SR 61/I- 71 Bridge Aesthetics, Northbound Right Turn Lane on SR 61/229 Intersection.
- North Central Transportation Plan Study.
- As of 2011, all projects are funded or under consideration by ODOT Central Office or District 6.



Three lane expansion of I-71 thru Morrow County

## Road Way System Inventory:

**Roadway System Inventory:** The County's roadway system consists of nearly 900 miles of maintained roads. They are classified as township, county, state, U.S. and interstate highways. There are around 334 miles of township roads on the Township System. These roads are under the jurisdiction of the various townships, with all bridges over 10 feet in length being the responsibility of the County. There are around 376 miles of county roads. These roads are under the jurisdiction of the Morrow County Engineer; by ORC, the Board of County Commissioners are responsible for approving contracts for equipment, maintenance & construction of roads and bridges; insuring the Engineer's Department. The planning and maintenance of the roadways and all structures on these roads are the responsibility of the County Engineer.

There are around 177 miles of state roads. These roads are the responsibility of the Ohio Department of Transportation. About 131 miles are state routes; 26 miles are U.S. routes; and 20 miles are Interstate.

Morrow County has excellent state and regional access with Interstate and U.S. Highways; Interstate 71 cuts diagonally across the southeastern portion of the County. It has two interchanges, S.R. 95 and S. R. 61 and allows easy driving to the larger metropolitan areas in Delaware, Franklin and Richland Counties. State Route 61 allows north-south movement and State Route 95 allows east-west movement through the county. U.S. Route 42 runs diagonally from the southwest portion of the county to the northeast portion of the county, giving access to Delaware to the south and Mansfield to the north. Other roads that allow inter-county access include State Routes 19, 529, 229, 314, 288, 656, 746, 309 and 97.

Morrow County also has easy access via SR 95 to U.S. 23 which connects north to Toledo and south to Columbus; and easy access via SR 61 & SR 314 to U.S. 30 which connects Mansfield east to west with Fort Wayne, Indiana.

## Airport History:

**Airports History:** The Morrow County Airport came into existence on May 23, 1966 through a Resolution of the Board of Morrow County Commissioners dated November 19, 1966. In January of 1981, the Morrow County Airport Authority and the Whetstone Fliers entered into an agreement for the Whetstone Fliers to lease airport land from the County for a period of one year at the cost of \$1 per year on which the Whetstone Fliers would erect hangers. At the end of the lease period the Whetstone Fliers could either renew the lease or sell the hangers to the County. Following a series of Court filings and appeals, a settlement was reached between the Whetstone Fliers and the Morrow County Airport Authority establishing new lease terms and conditions.

The Morrow County Airport Authority conferred with the Morrow County Development Office concerning the strategic plans for the Morrow County Airport within the County's Development Strategy; a collective vision for the Morrow County Airport to become a Prime Development site and a hub of commerce was embraced. On December 10, 2008, the Board of County Commissioners approved the Morrow County Airport submission of an application for Federal Assistance to conduct a Master Plan Study. In February of 2009, the Airport Authority and the Board of Commissioners signed a grant agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration for \$150,000 and a 5% local match. Through a Professional Services contract, the Airport Authority made an agreement for Richland Engineering to conduct the Master Plan Study. In collaboration with the Development Office, an Advisory Committee was organized to weigh the recommendations within the Master Plan against the Community goals, values and needs. Through the planning process of the Master Plan Study, the Airport Authority updated their 10 year Capital Improvement Plan FY 2011 to FY2020 and continued plan for the rebuilding of the Morrow County Airport moving towards a HUB of commerce.

If further knowledge is desired, a copy of the Master Plan is available at the Morrow County Commissioners Office.

Airports are an important part of the transportation infrastructure. Listed below are the facilities most likely to be used by those living and doing business in Morrow County. Information is available from the airport websites. Distances to the airports are nearest highway miles from Mount Gilead. The facilities are:

**Morrow County Airport**

4679 Township Road 126, Cardington, Ohio 43315; (419) 947-1833

[www.airnav.com/airport/419](http://www.airnav.com/airport/419)

Distance to airport: 2 miles

**Marion Municipal Airport**

1530 Pole Lane Road, Marion, Ohio 43302-8525; (740) 382-1634

[www.marionairport.com](http://www.marionairport.com)

Distance to airport: 16.6 miles

**Galion Municipal Airport**

8240 State Route 309, Galion, Ohio 44833-9712; (419) 544-4165

[www.airnav.com/airport/KGQQ](http://www.airnav.com/airport/KGQQ)

Distance to airport: 18.6 miles

Continued:

**Mansfield Lahm Airport**

2000 Harrington Memorial Road, Mansfield, OH 44903-8051;  
(419) 522-2191

[www.airnav.com/airport/MFD](http://www.airnav.com/airport/MFD)

Distance to airport: 33.4 miles

**Port Columbus International Airport**

4600 International Gtwy, Columbus, OH 43219-1779; (614) 239-4000

[flycolumbus.com](http://flycolumbus.com)

Distance to airport: 46.7 miles

**Rickenbacker Inland Port**

7161 Second Street, Columbus, OH 43217 (614) 239-5028

<http://rickenbackerinlandport.com/>

Distance to airport: 57.7 miles

**Cleveland-Hopkins International Airport,**

5300 Riverside Dr , Cleveland OH 44135; (216) 265-6000

[www.clevelandairport.com](http://www.clevelandairport.com)

Distance to airport: 95.3 miles

**Waterway/Seaports History:**

The opportunity to connect Ohio with the prosperous eastern markets became a reality in 1817 when New York broke ground on a canal connecting Lake Erie with the Hudson River and New York City. In 1822, the Ohio state legislature commissioned the first canal feasibility survey in an effort to bring a modern reliable transportation system to the growing state. The National Road was completed only from Cumberland to Wheeling and was an expensive method of transportation. The Ohio-Mississippi river route was long and dangerous. The waterways have long served the people of Ohio in creating an opportunity to connect the eastern Sea Board with the Western Sea Board. Seaports are a viable link to international trade and other port services.

Morrow County has excellent interstate highway access to these Great Lakes seaports at Toledo and Cleveland:

**Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority**

1375 E. Ninth St., Suite 2300, Cleveland, OH 44114-1786; (216) 241-8004

[www.portofcleveland.com](http://www.portofcleveland.com)

Distance to port: 106.25 miles

**Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority**

One Maritime Plaza, Toledo, Ohio 43604-1866; (419) 243-8251

[www.toledoportauthority.org](http://www.toledoportauthority.org)

Distance to port: 110 miles

## Rail Service History:

The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad became the first chartered railroad in the United States; twenty thousand investors purchased \$5 million in stock to import the rolling stock and build the line. It was a commercial and financial success, and invented many new managerial methods that became standard practice in railroading and modern business. The B&O became the first company to operate a locomotive built in America, with the "Tom Thumb" in 1829. It built the first passenger and freight station (Mount Clare in 1829) and was the first railroad that earned passenger revenues (December 1829), and published a timetable (May 23, 1830). On December 24, 1852, it became the first rail line to reach the Ohio River from the eastern seaboard.[2]

It is now part of the CSX Transportation (CSX) network, and includes the oldest operational railroad bridge in the USA. The B&O also included the Leiper Railroad, the first permanent horse-drawn railroad in the U.S. In later years, B&O advertising carried the motto: "Linking 13 Great States with the Nation."

In 2010, the Ohio Hub, a high-speed railway project, was proposed by the Ohio Department of Transportation aimed at revitalizing passenger rail service in the Ohio region. The 3-C Corridor, as proposed would travel through Morrow County but not stop and would provide service from Cleveland to Columbus, Dayton, and Cincinnati, a distance of 255 miles (410 km). The service is predicted to carry around 478,000 people a year, using a subsidy of \$17 million from the state government.[5]

## Rail Service Inventory

The county is served by CSX Corporation; there is a CSX line north and south through the county with side-tracks at Cardington, Mt. Gilead Farmer's Cooperative, former Taylor's HPM plant#2 property, Mt. Gilead, Edison and St. James (Additional information is available at [www.csxt.com](http://www.csxt.com)).

## Transportation Accomplishments:

Interstate 71 Third Lane: In 2009, St. Rep. Ruhl and the Morrow Board of Commissioners thru coordinating efforts of the Development Office led the charge to contact ODOT and gained funding for the third lane through Morrow County. Construction is planned for 2012 -2016.

Turn lanes at SR 95 & SR 61: In 2009& 2010, the Morrow County Commissioners thru coordinating efforts of the Development Office requested the SR 61 turn lane addition/upgrades. Construction is ongoing from September 2011 to 2012.

The County Engineer worked with multiple agencies to determine the critical condition of bridges in the transportation system. In 2008, the County Engineer inventoried all open and closed bridges which could not carry the maximum legal loads as required by the Federal Transportation Agency.

In 2008, the County Engineer required all new structures on low-volume roads be built a minimum 24 feet wide; and all new structures on high volume roads be built a minimum of 28 feet wide.

In 2008, the Morrow County Commissioners and Airport Authority approved the Master Plan Study. All future improvements to the Morrow County Airport will be conducted according to this Master Plan when completed in 2012.

## Transportation Short Term Goals:

The Morrow County Commissioners, County Engineer, Township Trustees and all Village officials should collaborate to :

Create, expand and make public GIS overlays for the following: Transportation Capital Improvements Plan, yearly Maintenance projects, Functional Classification of Roadways Plan, and Parcel Overlay.

Studying the effects of access management regulations on counties that have enacted them and work to educate all citizens of the County on the benefits of such regulations. Implement Access Management regulations by the year 2015.

Establish an access management program for all political subdivisions. The adoption and implementation of proper road access management is essential to the orderly and efficient development of rural Morrow County as well as incorporated areas.

Study and educate the citizens on a Comprehensive Thoroughfare Plan for the Interchanges and near prime development site like the Fairgrounds, Morrow County Airport and Business Districts.

Study and implement Storm Sewer Regulations.

Highly encourage the Villages to address congestion issues in commercial districts thru studies and implementation strategies.

Seek alternate funding sources to enhance the local transportation budgets for the improvement of the local roadway systems so all county and township roads be paved and all substandard bridges are upgraded by the year 2025.

## Transportation Long Term Goals:

Developing and implement a Comprehensive Thoroughfare Plan at the Interchanges and near prime development sites like the Fairgrounds, Morrow County Airport and Business Districts.

Through Regulations and codes coordination, incorporate of sidewalks and /or pedestrian pathways on all future roadway designs to encourage walking or biking to work. An example would be, lobbying ODOT for four-foot extensions to create a berm for bike riders on major scenic corridors.

Study the feasibility of creating Bikeways along Stream corridors; encourage State, County, School Districts and Village officials to inventory public lands, look for their connection points connecting communities thru bike pathway.

Developing and implement a Scenic Byway Plan for SR 314, SR 95 and SR 42 to maintain the aesthetic character of rural roads and living. Study these corridors, which compliment and connect us to our neighboring Counties.

Support freight rails services and create Comprehensive Development Plan to incorporate areas with current access points to rail lines.

Study the freight rails services and create a development strategy for these sites and incorporate current access points to rail lines in land use plans.

Study the feasibility of a passenger stop in Morrow County and explore future freight service expansion opportunity in Morrow County. (EX: Ohio HUB/3-C)

Support freight rails services and create a Comprehensive Economic Development Plan that considers future development at current access points to rail lines.

Chapter 10

**UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

## UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE: BROADBAND FIBER, WATER SUPPLY, SANITARY SEWER, ELECTRICITY, AND NATURAL GAS

### Utility Vision:

The vision for Morrow County is to cause efficient use of existing infrastructure and to encourage growth around the Villages of Morrow County and the Interstate 71 interchanges. By encouraging growth in these areas it is hoped that valuable farmland can be preserved and the villages can be developed into thriving centers for commerce.

### Utilities History:

Morrow County is well positioned for development along the Interstate 71 corridor north of Columbus, Ohio. The region is considered to be an “Infrastructure Forward Area.” Rail service, natural gas transmission lines and I-71 run north and county through the County, along with excellent east-west connectors. The County seat, Mt. Gilead, is less than one hour from Port Columbus International Airport and less than 100 miles from a major seaport. Electric transmission lines cross the County at several locations, offering excellent access to the power grid. Morrow County’s physical location and its relationship to regional, state and national infrastructures dictates a future of rapid land-use succession and robust development.

### Utilities Inventory:

A new Utility, Broadband fiber, first entered Morrow County boundary line thru the construction of a fiber loop to support educational initiatives directed by the Federal Government. The availability of affordable broadband fiber has had a detrimental impact on economic development in Morrow County. This deficiency is documented in a 2008 Strategic Technology Study/Plan conducted by the Development Office through the Connect Ohio Initiative. In 2009, Consolidated Electric Cooperative was awarded a grant under the American recovery and Reinvestment Act to construct a Fiber Optic network into and through Morrow County. This network is the foundation to future development in the telecommunications landscape and a required asset for future Economic Development. (See [www.morrowcounty.info](http://www.morrowcounty.info) for Strategic Technology Plan.)

The Consolidated Electric Cooperative fiber optic network is expected to be operational by late 2011. The network consists of 180 miles of fiber optic cable extending from a data center in north Columbus following Route 23 to Delaware and then forming a loop through Delaware and Morrow Counties along the I-71 Corridor. In northern Morrow County a single spur will extend into Richland County and terminate in downtown Mansfield.

## Continued:

The fiber optic network is “carrier neutral” which means that any and all existing or incumbent telecommunication providers will be permitted access to the network. The availability of alternative services will lower the price of telecommunications throughout the service area and have significant impact in promoting economic development and job creation. The network is designed to provide access points at designated economic growth sites including business parks and the I-71 interchanges at State Routes 95 and 61.

Access to the network will also be possible at each of the Consolidated Electric Cooperative substations where fiber huts have been installed with rack space available for electronic equipment. Third party internet service providers may utilize the network to provide or upgrade broadband availability throughout the area.

Future network expansion is likely and will be demand driven by extensions of the network to provide connection to government, public institutions, or private companies as needed and warranted by cost considerations.

## Water Supply Inventory:

Morrow County is served by five central water systems: one PUCO-regulated company, two municipal systems; a large, consumer-owned water treatment and distribution system; and a private water system:

The regulated company, Ohio American Water Company, has offices in Marion, Ohio and serves the extreme northwest corner of the county. Mt. Gilead and Cardington operate municipal systems for the benefit of their residents. The south half and the northwest quadrant of the county, including the villages of Edison, Sparta, Marengo, Fulton, Fargo, Chesterville and Iberia are served by Del-Co Water Company. Del-Co is a member-owned cooperative with headquarters in Delaware County, Ohio. Del-Co has ten (10) elevated tanks and is an important supplier of water to the two Interstate 71 interchanges at State Routes 61 and 95. Candlewood Lake Association, a planned unit development in the northern part of the county, owns and operates a private water system.

Areas not served by a central water system are for the most part in the northeast quadrant of the county. Land use in the area is Agricultural, Rural Residential and Light Commercial. Ground-water resources from private wells generally yield 5-25 gallons per minute, with limited areas producing from 100-500 gallons per minute.



## Sanitary Sewer Inventory:

Of Morrow County's seven incorporated villages (Cardington, Chesterville, Edison, Fulton, Marengo, Mt. Gilead and Sparta), six (Cardington, Chesterville, Edison, Marengo, Mt. Gilead and Sparta) have their own sewer systems. The village of Fulton has a pressurized line connecting its system to the Cardington sewer plant. Each village system has a different level of excess capacity and ability to provide sewer services. SOMOCO Sanitary Sewer and WenMor Development serve the I-71/SR 61 and I-71/State Route 95 interchanges, respectively. SOMOCO has proven to be a valuable infrastructure asset with an excess capacity of 300,000 gallons per day. It currently serves the Bennington Industrial Park and has a one-mile line extension north of I-71 on State Route 61 and more than two miles west to the Heartland Retreat Center. WenMor Development Inc. provides sanitary sewer services to several businesses at the I-71/SR 95 interchange, as well as to the Morrow Meadows Industrial Park. In 2010, the Board of County Commissioners authorized an Affordability/Feasibility study for Public sewer at the I71 SR 95 Interchange area.

The Morrow County Commissioners operate a central sanitary sewer system to serve the unincorporated area of Johnsville and to address health and safety concerns raised by the OEPA. The mechanical system has a 40,000-gallons-per-day treatment facility and one duel pump lift station to serve this area.

Candlewood Lake, a planned unit development, is the third-largest community in the county with more than 600 residential units. In 2005, Candlewood Lake completed an expansion of its private sewer system which will enable the community to grow well into the future. The capacity of the sewer system is estimated to serve around 1,800 residential units.

Areas without central sewer systems utilize on-site sanitary sewer disposal systems. The feasibility of an on-site system is limited by many factors, the most important of which is soil type.

## Electric Power Inventory:

Morrow County is served by these four electric utilities: two cooperatives and two regulated utility companies:

Consolidated Electric Cooperative Inc.  
(Touchstone Energy Partners)

5255 State Route 95, P.O. Box 111, Mt.  
Gilead, OH 43338; (800) 421-5863

[www.conelec.com](http://www.conelec.com)

Mid-Ohio Energy Cooperative, Inc.  
(Touchstone Energy Partners)

2859 Marion-Upper Sandusky Road,  
Marion, OH 43302; (888) 382-6732

[www.midohioenergy.com](http://www.midohioenergy.com)

First Energy (Ohio Edison)

1040 S. Prospect, Marion, OH 43302;  
(800) 633-4766

[www.ohioedison.com](http://www.ohioedison.com)

American Electric Power

1 Riverside Plaza, Columbus, OH 43215-  
2371; (614) 716-1000

[www.aep.com](http://www.aep.com)

### Natural Gas Inventory:

The most important natural gas infrastructure asset is a Columbia Gas Transmission Company 20-inch high-pressure line. The line enters the southeast part of the county near Sparta, runs diagonally north and exits the county near Iberia in northwest Morrow County. Natural Gas Services are provided from this line to the Villages of Cardington, Fulton, Iberia, Mt. Gil-ead, Edison and Sparta through Columbia Gas of Ohio.

Natural gas service also is provided to the village of Marengo, Bennington Industrial Park at I-71 and SR 61 and Morrow Meadows Industrial Park at I-71 and SR 95. Bright Energy (a Mt. Gilead-headquartered subsidiary of Consolidated Electric) receives its gas supply from local production and Columbia Transmission Company.

### Utilities Short Term Goals:

- The Morrow County Commissioners, Utility Companies, Township Trustees and all Village officials should collaborate to encourage:
- County leaders should collaborate with Business leaders to facilitate a Public – Private Partnership in planning for growth in the Morrow County; Annual strategy sessions should be conducted to coordinate efforts to promote development at reasonable costs and efficiencies.
- Comprehensive Sewer District Plan should be created encompassing all unincorporated land and add efficiencies to the development process by offering utility services while eliminating traditional annexation difficulties.
- Development Tools such as EDA, JEDD and CRA’s should be explored to encourage business and residents to improve their value of their physical structures.
- Alternative Energy Plans (Green Buildings) for County and all local government buildings and facilities should be explored. Using the “group approach” may show a substantial savings to tax payers.

## Utility Long Term Goals:

- ◆ The Morrow County Commissioners, utility companies, township trustees and all village officials should collaborate to encourage:
- ◆ The County should encourage all providers to reduce costs by implementing Smart Grid initiatives. For Example: gridSMART® from AEP Ohio is an initiative that offers customers new ways to think about electricity. Within this initiative is the Business Incentives Program which rewards non-residential customers for implementing energy efficiency measures. Whether you have a large or small business, are investing in new facilities or renovating an existing one, the Business Incentives program from AEP Ohio provides funding to reduce the payback period and improve your bottom line. [gridSMARTohio.com](http://gridSMARTohio.com)
- ◆ Reinvestment in local assets and infrastructure to strengthen and enhance the hardware and software of the local electric grid.
- ◆ Continued monitoring and protecting the watershed areas while promoting protection of our ground water reserves.
- ◆ Monitoring new methods of energy extraction and their harm to local assets.

Chapter 11

**ENVIRONMENTAL TASKS**

## ENVIRONMENTAL TASKS

### Area of Concern:

Waters, Soils, Minerals, Sewage Treatment and Energy Production.

### Introduction and History:

The quality of life in Morrow County continues to be closely related to the quality of the natural environment. The proper use and management of the air, land, and water resources is critical to maintain the physical, social, and economic well-being of the county. Relationships to the use of these physical elements comprise the key land use issue of environmental quality. In considering future land use possibilities and alternatives, the effect on the physical environment and utilization of natural resources is of significant importance.

Much of Morrow County's social and economic development has been and continues to be determined by its natural resources. It's important to understand the effects of natural processes and human activities, such as floods, water pollution and urbanization, on the natural resources of the county. These processes and activities, to a large degree, affect the health, safety, and well-being of the citizens, the economy and the environment.

### Water Resource Vision:

The vision of Morrow County is to conserve and properly utilize our rivers, lakes streams and ground water resources. Adverse impacts from septic tank effluent, agriculture and industrial activities must be prevented from polluting the water resources.

## Ground Water:

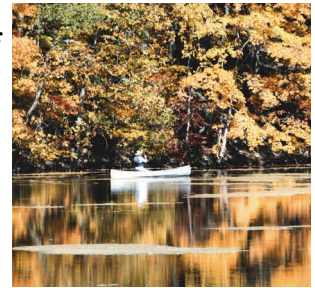
To ensure a continued supply of water, Morrow County will continue to need reliable and current information about groundwater resources. Sources of this information are not always abundant, but the county needs to obtain or generate sufficient data on which to base land use decisions that affect, or are affected by, groundwater supply to avert overdraft and land use conflicts.

## Lakes/Reservoirs:

There are four major man-made lakes or reservoirs in Morrow County.

Clear Fork Reservoir, which was completed in 1949, is in Richland and Morrow counties, about eight miles southwest of Mansfield along SR. 97. The city of Mansfield constructed the 971-acre reservoir as a water supply. This reservoir contributes 50% of the water supply for Mansfield. Clear Fork Reservoir has a gently sloping bottom with a maximum depth of 24 feet.

Mt. Gilead State Park is located on SR 95 on the east side of The Village of Mt. Gilead. The first lake at Mt. Gilead was built in 1919 on the upper level of Sam's Creek. On July 10, 1930 a larger lake was completed below the first one on this same tributary of Whetstone Creek. The Ohio Department of Natural Resource's Division of Parks and Recreation owns and operates the park.



Mount Gilead  
State Park

Candlewood Lake is a 250 acre lake located in the Candlewood Lake Association planned residential development on State Route 19 north of Mt. Gilead. The lake has a depth of 40 feet at the dam and is suitable for various types of water recreation. The lake and subdivision are privately owned and operated by the Candlewood Lake Association.

Amick, and Amann Reservoirs in Washington Township provides drinking water for the City of Galion. The reservoirs are owned and managed by the city of Galion and with the assistance of ODNR.

## Flood Plains:

The 100-year flood plain refers to the area next to waterways that have a 1% annual chance of flooding (based on expected precipitation level and surface conditions). Detailed floodplain maps are available for all of Morrow County through the National Flood Insurance Program.

Regulations addressing limitations on development in the flood plain currently are adopted and enforced by Morrow County (for all unincorporated areas) and by each municipality in its respective jurisdiction. The adoption of flood plain regulations is a requirement for local governments to remain eligible for disaster relief and flood insurance from the federal government. Typically, these regulations require flood protection measures. Details of the floodplain maps are available at the Morrow County Planning Office.

## Subsurface Water:

Geologic formations have the ability to receive, store and transmit water. In general, if a formation is capable of yielding enough water to support a well or spring, it is called an aquifer. Morrow County has three major underlying aquifers:

The western third of the county is over a poorly-yielding shale aquifer. The shale bedrock is composed of condensed layers of clay, silt or mud, which has a finely stratified or laminated structure.

A sandstone aquifer, located 15 to 136 feet below the surface, lies under north central and eastern Morrow County. The sandstone aquifer is composed of layers of fine-grained to conglomerate sandstone, and is the principal source of groundwater in east central and northeast Ohio.

The central and southeastern portion of Morrow County is over a buried valley, where sand and gravel deposits, at depths between 61 and 352 feet, make up the aquifer system. The unconsolidated sand and gravel is composed mainly of materials of glacial origin.

Groundwater also occurs in lenses, or pockets, of sand and gravel inter-bedded in glacial till deposits. Where present, these deposits are above the shale and sandstone aquifers. Glacial till generally does not provide enough water to support a well.

### Continued:

Morrow County's groundwater resources are valuable assets to its citizens and industry. The availability and quality of these resources are directly influenced by the properties of the geologic formations under the county. The productive limestone, sandstone, and sand and gravel formations that underlay parts of Morrow County have the potential to provide water adequate for domestic and agricultural uses, as well as some industrial and municipal uses. By understanding the physical and chemical nature of these resources, better decisions can be made about groundwater protection, management and use. (Information from OSU Factsheet AEX-490.59.)

### Water sheds/Surface Water Resources

There are four major drainage basins in Morrow County: Olentangy River, Big Walnut Creek, Kokosing River and Clear Fork River. Whetstone Creek, the county's largest creek, empties into the Olentangy River. Here are additional details:

Most of the western half of the county lies in the eastern part of the 536-square mile Olentangy River basin. The basin boundary begins in southern Crawford County, just southwest of Galion, and flows south into Delaware County where it feeds into the Delaware Reservoir. This basin contains the Whetstone and Alum creeks. The Olentangy River then continues south to Columbus, where it enters the Scioto River.

The northern tip of the Big Walnut Creek basin in south central Morrow County encompasses about 25% of the county's surface area. The basin drains about 557 square miles and stretches from the Mt. Gilead area south to I-270 near Shadesville, where it joins the Scioto River.

The southeastern part of the county lies in the Kokosing River basin. The Kokosing River flows east out of Morrow County to the Walhonding River and eventually turns south as it contributes to the formation of the Muskingum River.

The Clear Fork basin, which is about 218 square miles, stretches down into the northeastern corner of the county. This area also drains into the Muskingum River basin.

Notably, all of the surface water in Morrow County drains to major water supplies for large cities outside the county. Morrow County is the headwaters for all four major watersheds. (For additional information, see The Ohio State University Fact Sheet AEX-480.59.)

### Wetlands

Wetlands are protected under federal law and restrict development potential. There are many wetlands identified in Morrow County. Information about these wetland sites is available on the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the National Wetlands Inventory Maps. ([www.dnr.ohio.gov/wetlands/mapping.htm](http://www.dnr.ohio.gov/wetlands/mapping.htm))



## Environmental Accomplishments

The Morrow Soil Water Conservation District (SWCD), USDA NRCS, USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the OSU Extension offices shall encourage buffer zones along creeks and streams in Morrow County by utilizing programs such as the Big Walnut Creek and Scioto River Watersheds Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

The Morrow SWCD and the Morrow County Planning Office have worked to protect the 100-year floodplain from development. The location of the 100-year floodplain designated areas are available through the Morrow County Floodplain Manager.

## Environmental Goals:

Our goal it to ensure that the appropriate utilization of the physical environment and natural resources of Morrow County are achieved.

- The citizens of Morrow County should be empowered and educated to properly utilize natural resources in a sustainable and sound manor.
- All units of Government should work to protect the quality and quantity of the surface and ground-water.
- Morrow County residents, with the USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Ohio Department of Natural resources (ODNR) should work to conserve natural habitats and preserve habitats that may be endangered, rare or not compatible with development.
- The Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), USDA NRCS, USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the OSU Extension offices shall encourage buffer zones along creeks and streams in Morrow County
- The Morrow SWCD, through the ODNR, shall encourage the extension of the designated scenic river status of the Kokosing River into Morrow County.
- The Morrow County Regional Planning Commission and the Morrow County Planning Office should encourage appropriate green space designations within any residential or commercial developments. New developments should retain vegetation along streams, lakes, reservoirs and field borders to provide shelter, shade, food and wildlife nesting habitat. Development density should also be controlled so significant wildlife habitat will not be adversely affected.

Chapter 12  
**SOIL**

### Soil Resources Vision:

The vision of Morrow County is the reorganization of the limitations and opportunities that exist regarding the soil resources within the county. Current land use activities and future land use plans will take into account the soils, and geology that are present and the best management practices needed to be adopted for continued sound use of the soil resources of the county.

### Geology

The last glacier to cover the county was the Wisconsin glacier, which melted around 15,000 to 16,000 years ago. The Wisconsin-age glacial drift completely covers the earlier glacial deposits, and all of the surface drift is Wisconsin-age. The drift has a thickness of 300 feet or more in the eastern part of the county and ranges from 22 to 167 feet thick in the county's western portion.

The glacial till that covers the western third of Morrow County has more limestone and dolomite than in the rest of the county; the glacial till that covers the eastern two-thirds of the county has more sandstone and shale. In the western third of the county, the glacial till is highly calcareous (it's slightly calcareous in the rest of the county).

Four end moraines traverse the county: the Mississinewa, the Broadway, the Powell, and the Johnstown. The material in these moraines is a mixture of sand, silt and clay and erratic boulders of various sizes. Ground moraines are the flatter areas between the end moraines.

Most of the sorted deposits are along drainage ways. These deposits of sand and gravel were laid down as the glaciers melted and the melting water carried and deposited outwash material along the edge of the streams flowing from the face of the glacier.

The bedrock underlying the glacial drift is sandstone and shale. Shale bedrock is exposed on the very steep hillsides along Alum Creek in the southern part of the county. Sandstone bedrock crops out on some of the steep hillsides along drainage ways in the northeastern part of the county.

### Mineral Resource Vision:

The vision of Morrow County is to ensure that mineral resource production throughout the county is accomplished in a sound and environmentally responsible manor. By working with partners it will be beneficial to the citizens of the county that the abundant resources be utilized.

### Soil Limitations Table:

The following Soils Limitation Table shows the degree and kinds of soil limitations that affect onsite sewage disposal. The limitations are considered slight if soil properties and the site features are generally favorable for the indicated use. Moderate if soil properties or sight features are not favorable for the indicated use and special planning, design, or maintenance is needed to overcome or minimize the limitations. They are rated severe if soil properties or site features are so unfavorable or difficult to overcome that special design; significant increases in construction costs, and possibly increased maintenance are required.

This table contains portions from the USDA Soil Survey for Morrow County, regarding the estimated degree and kind of limitations associated with the soils for on site sewage disposal and home site location. The degree of limitation is based on the soil properties. A rating of slight indicates that the limitation is not important and is easily overcome. A rating of moderate indicates that overcoming the limitation is generally feasible. A rating of severe indicates that the limitation is difficult and costly to overcome and that the use of the soils for particular purpose is questionable although not impossible.

Soil Type	Onsite Sewage Disposal	Home Site Location
Amanda:	AdB Severe: percs slowly	Moderate: wetness
	AdC2 Severe: percs slowly	Moderate: wetness, slope
	Add2 Severe: percs slowly, slope	Severe: slope
	AdE2 Severe: percs slowly, slope	Severe: slope
Bennington:	BeA Severe: percs slowly, wetness	Severe: wetness
	BeB Severe: percs slowly, wetness	Severe: wetness
Blount:	BoA Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
	BoB Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
Canfield:	CaB Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
	CaC Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
	CaC2 Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
Carlisle muck:	Cd Severe: ponding, percs slowly, subsides <sup>1</sup>	Severe: ponding, low strength, subsides
Centerburg:	CdB Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
	CdC Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
	CdC2 Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
Chili:	ChB Slight	Slight
	ChC Moderate: slope	Moderate: slope



Continued:

<b>Soil Type</b>	<b>Onsite Sewage Disposal</b>	<b>Home Site Location</b>
Colyer Variant:	CkF Severe: thin layer, seepage, slope	Severe: slope
Condit:	Co Severe: percs slowly, ponding <sup>1</sup>	Severe: ponding
Gallman:	GaB Slight	Slight
	GaC Moderate: slope	Moderate: slope
Glynwood:	GnB2 Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Moderate: wetness, shrink-swell
	GnC2 Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Moderate: wetness, shrink-swell, slope
Lobdell:	Lo Severe: flooding, wetness	Severe: flooding, wetness
Milford:	Mf Severe: ponding, percs slowly <sup>1</sup>	Severe: ponding
Millgrove:	Mg Severe, ponding <sup>1</sup>	Severe: ponding
Morley:	MoC Severe: percs slowly	Moderate: shrink-swell, slope
	MoC2 Severe: percs slowly	Moderate: shrink-swell, slope
	MoD2 Severe: percs slowly, slope	Severe: slope
Ockley:	OcB Slight	Moderate: shrink-swell
	OcC Moderate: slope	Moderate: shrink-swell, slope
Pewamo:	Pm Severe: percs slowly, ponding <sup>1</sup>	Severe: ponding
Rittman:	RsB Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Moderate: wetness
	RsC Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Moderate: wetness, slope
	RsC2 Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Moderate: wetness, slope
Shoals:	Sh Severe: flooding, wetness <sup>1</sup>	Severe: flooding, wetness
Sleeth:	SkA Severe: wetness	Severe: wetness
Sloan:	So Severe: flooding, wetness, percs slowly <sup>1</sup>	Severe: flooding, wetness
Tioga:	Tg Severe: flooding, wetness, poor filter <sup>2</sup>	Severe: flooding
Wadsworth:	WaA Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
	WaB Severe: wetness, percs slowly	Severe: wetness
Wooster:	WsB Severe: wetness percs slowly	Moderate: wetness
	WsC Severe: wetness percs slowly	Moderate: wetness, slope
	WsC2 Severe: wetness percs slowly	Moderate: wetness, slope
	WsD2 Severe: wetness percs slowly, slope	Severe: slope
	WsE2 Severe: wetness percs slowly, slope	Severe: slope

1. Unacceptable soil type for home site septic by Morrow County Health Department Standards.

2 Possible pollution hazard to nearby wells, springs, lakes, or ponds because of filtration is inadequate.



## Soil Conditions:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a complete soil survey of Morrow County in September 1993. This document provides considerable detail on soil conditions throughout the county. Because of the substantial interest in farming in Morrow County, the agricultural properties of soil are of particular interest.

According to the USDA soil survey of Morrow County, more than 80% of the county's total acreage meets the soil requirements for prime farmland. Scattered areas of this land are throughout the county, but the majority is in the western and central parts of Morrow County. A recent trend in land use in some parts of the county has resulted in the loss of prime farmland to urban development. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts pressure on marginal lands, which generally are more erodible and less productive than prime farmland and cannot be easily cultivated.

### **USDA defines “prime farmland” as:**

The land that is best suited to raising food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops.

This land may be cultivated, pastured, or woodland.

It can produce the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources, and with the least damage to the environment.

Prime farmland does not include urban, built-up or water areas.

## Natural Gas and Oil Production:

Production of natural gas and oil began in the early 1960s in Morrow County. The first well to begin production in June of 1961 in Canaan Township. That well produced 200 barrels per day then and is still producing today. By 1964, Morrow County was the number one county in the nation with 173 producing wells (representing about one oil well every two square miles). This original exploration lasted until 1965. Although the largely unregulated production brought prosperity to Morrow County landowners, it resulted in hardship for the County including: pollution, unregulated drilling, deteriorated roads and bridges and abandoned wells. There are many producing oil and natural gas wells in the county today. The proposed exploration of the Utica shale in Morrow County has the potential to again bring prosperity, jobs, and environmental concerns.

## Quarries:

Chesterville Sand & Gravel, located on State Route 95 east of Chesterville, is a large supplier of washed gravel and sand for Morrow County and the surrounding area. Historically there were several other quarries throughout the county producing clay, flagstone, shale, sand, sandstone, gravel and limestone.

## Goals:

Our goal is that units of Government should insure that the abundant oil, natural gas and other mineral resources are utilized in an appropriate and controlled manor.

- Through ODNR, Division of Oil and Gas, existing petroleum production must be accomplished in an environmentally responsible manor.
- ODNR Division of Oil and Gas must ensure that any future exploration of natural gas and oil Morrow County shall be done in an environmentally responsible manor.
- Landowners in Morrow County should be encouraged to seek the advice of knowledgeable legal counsel before signing any natural resource production lease agreements.
- The Morrow County Engineer and Township Trustees shall ensure that construction of natural gas and oil production operations has minimal impact on local roadways.

## Sewage Treatment

The vision of Morrow County is that unincorporated areas of the county that where residences exist or where residences are planned have properly functioning on site sewage treatment systems. The soils that are present at each site determine the appropriate system to be utilized. Proper treatment of residential sewage will decrease the pollution of the surface water of the county.

## Goals:

- The Morrow County Health Department (MCHD) and Morrow SWCD should consider the physical capacity of the land and water to accommodate land uses when planning for the location, type and density of rural development. In areas with proven water pollution from septic tanks or inadequate water supply, MCHD and Morrow SWCD should encourage the provision of alternative individual treatment system or water systems to overcome health hazards or to provide a greater margin of public safety in allowable developments.
- The Morrow County Health Department (MCHD) and Morrow SWCD should work to improve maintenance and use of residential and industrial septic systems by encouraging proper operation and maintenance of septic systems, encouraging water conservation to reduce waste loading, and educating users about detrimental chemical additives, particularly those containing chlorinated organic solvents, that are sold to improve septic system and drain field operation.

Chapter 13  
**ENERGY**



## Energy Production Vision:

The vision of Morrow County will provide for the appropriate establishment of energy production facilities. Sustained affordable energy production is critical to the continued economic success of the Country, State and County. Morrow County will have the ability to benefit from the production of energy at the local level.

The topography, geography, and social location of Morrow County will provide for the potential production of wind energy. Studies have begun thought-out the county to determine the potential for Wind energy. This examination will determine the potential for the establishment several wind production facilities that may contain over one hundred wind turbines. This development has the potential to affect the community in several areas. Turbines will need to be contacted by both roadways and energy transmission lines. Land use will be affected as farmland is converted to energy production. The rural landscape setting will be transformed with the construction of the turbine towers. Construction and maintenance will increase commercial traffic on local roadways.

## Energy Goals:

- Landowners in Morrow County should be encouraged to seek the advice of knowledgeable legal counsel before signing any natural resource production lease agreements.
- Morrow County must provide appropriate oversight in the location and construction of any wind energy generating operations.
- The Morrow County Engineer and Township Trustees shall ensure that construction of wind energy generating operations has minimal impact on local roadways.
- The Morrow County commissioners must become informed on the establishment of these facilities, and their role in the process of permitting. The County must create clear policies and directives to guide employees with the implementation of these facilities.

Chapter 14  
COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

## COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE: RADIO SERVICES, TELEVISION SERVICES, WORLDWIDE WEB INTERNET SERVICES AND NEWSPAPERS

### Radio & Television Services History & Inventory:

Morrow County has no radio or television stations based in it, but is served by multiple stations in surrounding counties. The following is an Inventory of Radio & Television Services most listened or viewed by Morrow County (Data from Community Survey):

### Newspapers History & Inventory:

Morrow County has two weekly County-based newspapers, The Morrow County Sentinel (Mt. Gilead) and The Morrow County Independent (Cardington), which are offered on a subscription basis. County residents also subscribe to newspapers published in neighboring counties. In addition to The Sentinel and The Independent, these publications include: Bellville Star; Bucyrus Telegraph-Forum; Columbus Dispatch; Business First (Columbus); Delaware Gazette; Galion Inquirer; Knox County Citizen; Mansfield News Journal; Marion Star; Mount Vernon News; Sunbury News. In addition, the Shoppers Compass is distributed to Morrow County residents each week free of charge.

### Communication Short Term Goals:

- The Morrow County Commissioners, Local Businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, Local School Districts, Township Trustees and all Village officials should collaborate to encourage:
- Studying and educating units of Government on Regional Communications systems which reduce costs for tax payers.
- Development of “WiFi hot spots” within commercial districts to support mobile communications and business on the go.
- Digital Imaging and Signage to promote local business.
- A local automated Business Directory Website, which promotes “buy local” efforts.

### Communication Long Term Goals:

- ◆ Study other communities’ successful communication networks to promote a transparency in Government.
- ◆ Cultivating free enterprise to fill gaps in communication areas within Morrow County such as Radio stations, “end user” Internet providers, and local news networks.

Chapter 15  
AGRICULTURE

## Agriculture

Of the county’s 257,380 acres, more than 80 percent (207,000 acres) are classified as prime farmland. The primary crops grown in the county are corn, soybeans and wheat. In 2010, an average of 187 acres per farm combined for 870 farms across a total of 163,000 acres in farm use in Morrow County.



A large portion of our population in the northern portion of the county are Mennonite or Amish.

**Vision:** The vision for Morrow County is that prime farmland will be retained for farming operations and that farmers will be recognized as a vital part of Morrow County’s economy.

**Agricultural History:** Historically, Morrow County is typical of most counties within the state of Ohio; its background is an agrarian society, rooted in the values and work ethic exemplified by the family farm. The earliest settlers carved their farms out of woods and meadows using considerable amounts of their own personal manual labor, as well as implements drawn by horses or mules. Most farms had a diverse livestock base, including dairy cows, beef cattle, hogs, sheep, chickens and horses. Settlers farmed in a rotation and much of the produce that was raised was used to meet farm residents’ personal needs for food, clothing, shelter and the maintenance of their livestock.

As time has passed, many changes have occurred to the face of agriculture in Morrow County. Manual labor and horses have been replaced with motorized machinery that can accomplish the same amount of work, but with a significantly smaller work force and in a much shorter period of time. This change has led to a slow but steady migration of the county’s workforce to jobs and industries in towns and cities. Many county residents now commute to Columbus to work, while enjoying the rural atmosphere and open spaces still available in Morrow County.

	<b>Number of Farms</b>	<b>Average Farm Size (acres)</b>	<b>Land in Farms (acres)</b>
<b>1930</b>	2351	99	232,000
<b>1940</b>	2315	100	233,000
<b>1950</b>	2241	107	240,000
<b>1960</b>	1823	129	223,000
<b>1970</b>	1423	137	208,000
<b>1980</b>	1080	172	186,000
<b>1990</b>	910	188	175,000
<b>2000</b>	880	198	174,000
<b>2010</b>	870	187	161,000

Over the 80 years it is obvious that the amount of acres that we set aside for farmland are slowly dwindling. This is not just seen in Morrow County, or in Ohio for that matter; but literally all across the nation the amount of land being used for farming is depleting.



Continued:

The county remains an agricultural stronghold, with almost 70 percent of the county’s land devoted to farming, a \$42 million industry. Most of the land is used for cash-grain farming, in particular soybeans, corn and small grain. However, “nonfarm” development has increased in recent years—primarily in the townships in the southern part of Morrow County—because of their proximity to Columbus. With access to U.S. Route 42 and Interstate 71 from interchanges at State Routes 61 and 95, the county is within easy driving distance of major cities like Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati.

MORROW COUNTY AGRICULTURAL TRENDS (1930-2010)

	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
<b>Dairy</b>	26	24	30	21	19	10	11	12	8
<b>Hogs</b>	15	22	20	15	16	9	13	8	10
<b>Poultry</b>	18	15	13	8	1	-	-	-	2
<b>Wheat</b>	12	4	7	10	14	5	6	5	8
<b>Cattle</b>	7	13	7	12	4	12	10	6	4
<b>Sheep</b>	15	10	4	6	8	2	-	-	-
<b>Soybeans</b>	-	2	2	11	23	33	28	31	32
<b>Corn</b>	-	-	-	11	5	27	26	28	29
<b>Other</b>	7	10	17	8	10	2	6	10	6

(Compiled by Jeff McCutcheon, Extension Agent, Agriculture & Natural Resources; information from Ohio’s Agriculture Statistics Service)

Figure 15: Based on this chart it is still adherent as to what brings Morrow County the most revenue, and it hasn’t changed for over 80 years. The most important source of revenue is, and most likely will always be agriculture.



Agriculture Cont.



The agriculture industry is moving to increasingly larger farms in both the crop and livestock sectors. The traditional small, self-sufficient farms are seldom seen any longer, except in eastern Morrow County’s Amish community. The Amish farms provide a glimpse of what life was like in the early 1900’s on nearly all farms in Morrow County. On these farms you can today still see shocks of grain, ear corn in cribs and the use of horse-drawn implements as the primary source of mechanization. The Amish continue to have diversified livestock programs and raise a more traditional mix of crops based on a three- or four-year rotation of corn, wheat, oats, pasture and hay crops.

In contrast, most other farms in the county consist of specialized operations, and the number of livestock farms has dwindled. The farms that remain are under economic pressure to continually increase their size and scale to maintain their profitability. Crop programs also have grown in size and scale to encompass hundreds—if not thousands—of acres operated by individual families. The primary crops grown today on Morrow County farms are corn, soybeans and wheat. Horse-drawn implements were long ago replaced with large machinery that can

Crop Acreage

	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
<b>Corn</b>	32,960	34,490	36,490	38,876	23,651	50,200	43,000	43,200	39,900
<b>Soybeans</b>	-	5,400	13,436	19,074	37,900	52,600	56,000	65,100	67,800
<b>Wheat</b>	21,690	21,170	19,570	13,953	9,000	9,500	14,700	12,800	14,900
<b>Oats</b>	14,810	12,530	13,470	15,074	4,900	5,000	2,900	1,000	-
<b>Hay</b>	40,960	36,360	3,360	24,917	15,000	13,800	11,300	10,000	8,700

(Compiled by Jeff McCutcheon, Extension Agent, Agriculture & Natural Resources; information from Ohio’s Agriculture Statistics Service)



## Continued:

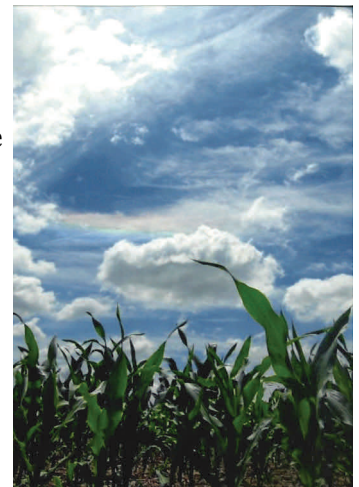
Experts in world food production and population trends suggest feed grain use will double in the next twenty years. Prime agricultural land is a natural resource that should be closely guarded to protect the food supply. In turn, protecting the food supply should be part of the national security plan. Morrow County's soils are ideal for farming: of the county's 257,380 acres, more than 80 percent (207,000 acres) are classified as prime farmland. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a complete soil survey of Morrow County in September 1993. This document provides considerable detail on soil conditions throughout the county. Because of the substantial interest in farming in Morrow County, the agricultural properties of soil are of particular interest.

According to the USDA soil survey of Morrow County, more than 80% of the county's total acreage meets the soil requirements for prime farmland. Scattered areas of this land are throughout the county, but the majority is in the western and central parts of Morrow County. A recent trend in land use in some parts of the county has resulted in the loss of prime farmland to urban development. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts pressure on marginal lands, which generally are more erodible and less productive than prime farmland and cannot be easily cultivated.

Morrow County's "wealth" is rooted in its agricultural industry and its rural environment. Our commitment is to maintain this special environment while providing for future residential, commercial and industrial growth. We will continue to strive to provide: the highest level of quality service to our businesses and residents; education and jobs for our young people; and a safe and secure community for all.

An analytical point of view to consider is an analysis of the cost of community services (COCS), which focuses on how various types of land use affect local government taxation and spending. A COCS ratio compares how many dollars worth of local government services are demanded per dollar collected in property taxes for various types of land uses, i.e. agricultural, residential, commercial and industrial. These studies generally indicate that for every dollar that agriculture contributes to the local economy, it uses .30-.50 cents worth of local government services. By comparison, the industrial/commercial development uses .35-.65 cents for every tax dollar; while residential development uses \$1.15-1.50 for every tax dollar generated.

These studies show that agricultural, industrial and commercial uses provide net tax dollars to the county, while too much lower taxable value residential growth does not generate sufficient tax dollars to pay for services. While areas that are experiencing a significant growth rate in higher value residential development will certainly increase the amount of tax income to the County, studies still indicate the cost to the community is greater than the income generated.





## Agriculture Cont.

To formulate a housing development policy, one that would ensure an available mix of housing and promote the preservation of prime agricultural land, the Morrow County Commissioners should move forward with a specific COCS study for Morrow County.

In particular, an increase in the number of houses can be a burden on the local school systems. Therefore, it is recommended that agricultural uses be protected and industrial and commercial development be increased to improve the local economy. (See the following chart for Value of Agriculture to the County's Economy.)

Socioeconomic forces have led to a larger population of county residents with no background in or ties to agriculture. The wants and desires of this segment of the county's population differ from, and can sometimes clash, with the wants and desires of modern day farm families. This "rural-urban interface" poses considerable challenges and opportunities to the residents and local officials of Morrow County to develop policy and legislation that will meet the needs of a diverse population.

Planned growth is one of the keys to successfully retaining an agricultural base and adequate green space in the county, while also meeting the growing demand for the lifestyle associated with a "rural" community. The "Love Life. Live Rural" campaign addresses this interface in a positive way that shows community support for farming and the economic value of a rural atmosphere.



Amish Farm in the northern half of Morrow County.

Continued:

**Value of Agriculture to the County's Economy**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Cash Receipts from Marketing of Farm Commodities (1) (millions of dollars)</i>	<i>Economic Spin-off Generated for the County's Economy (2) (millions of dollars)</i>
1992	\$35.254	\$63.5
1993	40.862	73.6
1994	42.256	76.1
1995	41.543	74.8
1996	46.647	84.0
1997	46.939	45.0
1998	40.011	72.0
1999	38.461	69.2
2000	38.585	69.5
2001	41.538	74.8
2002	38.772	69.8
2003	43.429	78.2
2004	50.857	91.5
2005	53.639	96.6
2006	51.478	92.7
2007	68.116	122.6
2008	79.776	143.6

(1) From Ohio Ag Statistics.

(2) Factor for Morrow County Ag is 1.8 times as calculated by the Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Developmental Economics at The Ohio State University.

Figure 18: This chart relates to the ones viewed on the previous pages dealing with agriculture.



## Agricultural Accomplishments



Two farms were placed into Ohio's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program.

County zoning was passed in 7 townships and 6 others have their own zoning which means that a form of zoning exists in 13 of 16 townships.

In 2010 a new marketing campaign "Love Life. Live Rural" was established in Morrow County.

OSU Extension, SWCD, Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the County Development offices assisted individuals with business plans and proposals dealing with agriculture.

SWCD, NRCS and OSU Extension promoted soil and water conservation management.

OSU Extension, SWCD and the Farm Bureau encouraged landowners to enroll the farms in Agricultural Districts, and educated landowners about this issue.

## Agricultural Short Term Goals

- Promote the use of and assist landowners with Ohio's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program, and other land trust programs, to preserve agriculture.
- OSU Extension and the Soil & Water Conservation District should provide education and assistance to landowners.
- Discourage the extension of sewer and water lines throughout the county unless these systems are needed to connect service to a residential service area.
- Implement and enforce model township/county zoning laws to include regulations with strict agricultural zoning for townships that are interested in preserving rural character and agriculture. The areas outside the "urban service areas" should be zoned agricultural instead of residential.
- Promote residential service areas that cluster houses serviced by adjoining "urban service areas" with central sewer and water.
- OSU Extension, SWCD and the Farm Bureau should encourage landowners to enroll the farms in Agricultural Districts, and educate landowners about this issue.
- Promote the use of "agricultural district" signage within the townships
- Encourage the rigorous use of environmental assessments concerning the effects of federal or state projects on agricultural land.
- Encourage citizens, organizations and elected officials to lobby for changes in state legislation that would help local government manage land use.

The Morrow County Health Department and the Regional Planning Commission should establish and uphold regulations that limit residential housing in areas designated for agriculture on the land use map.



## Agricultural Long Term Goals

- ◆ Marketing Morrow will encourage new agricultural, industrial and commercial growth in the county.
- ◆ The County Commissioners and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)/SWCD should take whatever steps possible to protect needed drainage for agricultural activities.
- ◆ SWCD, NRCS and OSU Extension should promote soil and water conservation management that will protect these resources, and provide education about this topic.
- ◆ OSU Extension, SWCD and ODNR should assist landowners with marketing and adopting Best Management Practices (BMP) with regard to forest management.
- ◆ OSU Extension, SWCD, Farm Services Agency (FSA) and the County Development office should assist individuals with business plans and proposals dealing with agriculture.

In summary, as growth from larger cities and the Columbus metropolitan area continues to encroach on Morrow County, local officials and planning and zoning commissions need to continue to protect the agricultural communities thereby providing residents with the rural atmosphere they seek and supporting a vital part of the county economy.

Chapter 16  
WOODLANDS/FORESTS

## Woodlands/Forests

Overall the soils in Morrow County are well suited to woodlands. The county has about 30,000 acres of woodland in small-scattered woodlots. The wooded areas generally support mixed hardwoods. On the very poorly drained soils, the composition of stands are limited to trees that are tolerant of wetness.

Firewood, lumber, and fence posts are produced from local woodlots. These woodlots provide wildlife habitat as well as protection from the wind. The unique scenic and environmental qualities of forestlands make them attractive for recreational activities such as camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, water sports and more. These activities, in addition to providing an important social benefit, can contribute significantly to the economy of Morrow County. With the proper management of the county's woodlots, the potential for yields is high. Trees planted for reforestation and for windbreaks should be tolerant of any soil limitations of the soil.

### Goals:

Our Goal is that the renewable natural resources be managed in order to maintain long-term productivity.

- Forest management and harvesting activities in Morrow County should be conducted according to sound silvi-cultural and best management practices for erosion control of logging practices in Ohio as recommended by the ODNR Division of Forestry.
- Forestland owners should be encouraged to manage their woodlands for long-term productivity and discourage practices that damage the forest's productivity.
- Morrow SWCD should work with the ODNR Division of Forestry to encourage all woodland owners to control the spread of invasive plants that threaten the long-term sustainability of forestland.



Trail at the Mt.  
Gilead State Park

Chapter 17  
RECREATION/PARKS

## Recreation

Recreation within our communities is a very important part of Morrow County life. Individual communities are constantly upgrading their facilities as circumstances permit. This can vary from community to community as their needs may differ. Residents have expressed the importance of recreation and wish the county could put even more resources in this area.

Recreation areas in Morrow County include active parks, such as ball fields, swimming pools and tennis courts, as well as passive recreation areas such as nature trails and gardens. There are two general categories of parks: local parks and regional parks.

In addition to parks, several fitness facilities and recreational businesses also call Morrow County home. A few examples are the Morrow County Community Center, Handle Bar Ranch, Dogwood Valley Camp and Splatter Park.



Highland Community Park



## Local Parks:

- The village parks in Edison, Mount Gilead, Cardington, Fulton, Marengo and the Highland Community Park in Sparta.
- Their primary function is to serve residents in their immediate area.
- These parks offer ball fields, soccer fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, swimming, hiking and planned activities.

## Regional Parks Include

The Mount Gilead State Park, which built its first lake in 1919, has 181 acres of rolling hills, streams, winding trails for hiking and horseback riding, picnic and camping areas and 32 acres of water stocked with a variety of fish.

Headwaters Outdoor Education Center, established in 1999, is in Gilead Township on 150 acres with gently sloping hiking trails and areas for bird watching. There are frequent educational activities open to students and adults.

In 2001, a donation of 17 acres in Perry Township was made to the Morrow County Park Board, and named Cedar Fork Park. This county park now includes 22 acres and offers hiking trails, picnic areas and fishing.

The northwest corner of the Delaware Wildlife Area stretches into Morrow County through Westfield Township, with recreational and wildlife developments.

The Clear Fork Reservoir, a man made body of water, was completed in 1949. The reservoir is in Richland and Morrow Coun-



Mt. Gilead State Park

## Private Camps, Church Camps And Recreation Facilities

Camp Gilead Bible Camp, established in 1955 on a 14-acre tract of land, celebrates its Evangelist and missionary services, which are available to all denominations.

Dogwood Valley Camp opened in 1965. It is an RV and tent campground nestled in the woods just north of Mount Gilead on St. Rt. 61. There are 200 campsites and a full calendar of summer and fall events as well as fishing, swimming and other activities.

Flying Horse Farms, lies on 200 acres outside of Mount Gilead on St. Rt. 95 and is home to 22 camp buildings and 2 lakes. Campers are children who have serious medical conditions such as arthritis, asthma, cancer, heart disease and other health issues. The camp is designed in every detail to help campers leave sickness behind while they are there.



Flying Horse Farms

Lutheran Memorial Camp is on 420 acres of a beech-maple forest and was created in 1945. It is known for its history of maple syrup and apple butter production and festivals in the spring and fall. It is located just South of Fulton on St. Rt. 61.

Peniel Bible Camp is on 360 acres off St. Rt. 314 south of Chesterville. It lays on gently sloping hills and serves denominations of similar beliefs with youth and adult retreats.

Heartland Conference Retreat Center is in southern Morrow County on Co. Rd. 225. It has 480 acres of woodlands and offers weekend and summer activities as well as being available for retreats and conferences throughout the year.

Cardinal Center Campgrounds, host to the Ohio State Trapshooting Assoc., is located at the intersection of St. Rt. 61 and I-71 in southern Morrow County. It has been developed as a campgrounds as well as a swimming facility of the Community Center and a place for conferences and retreats.

### Additional Private Recreational Facilities

Heritage Trail Girl Scout Camp

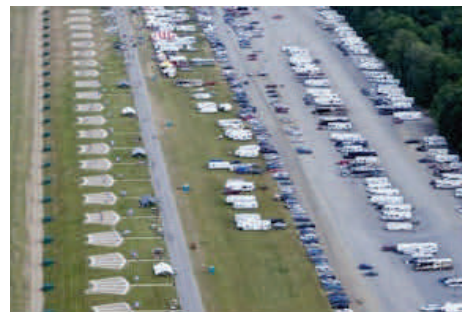
Splatter Park

Handle Bar Ranch

Mid-Ohio Sports Car Track

Morrow County Fairgrounds

Heartland Country Resort



Cardinal Center

### Golf Courses

- Pine Lakes Golf Course on St. Rt. 95 east of Mount Gilead
- Galion Country Club on St. Rt. 61 in Washington Twp.

## Fitness Centers

Buckeye Training and Fitness Academy at 480 Douglas St. in Mount Gilead concentrates on Mixed Martial Arts for the amateur and professional athlete.

Morrow County Community Center - goal is to build bridges to fitness and health. Classes in fitness, healthy lifestyle, Zumba, Tae Kwon Do, Silver Sneakers, swimming, Stretch and Tone. Fitness express gym is at 16 S. Main, the Activity Center is at 50 S. Main and swimming is at Cardinal Center near Marengo on St. Rt. 61.

Performance Plus at 27 W. High St. in Mount Gilead serves to develop both athletic and life skills in youthful athletes.

Wolfpak Martial Arts in Mount Gilead is primarily centered on the Martial Arts.



Wolfpak Martial Arts

In 1996 the county commissioners established the Morrow County Park District Board, whose mission is to acquire and maintain diverse natural habitats distributed across Morrow County and to provide educational and recreational opportunities.

## Goals/ Accomplishments



After Quonsets were cleared in Edison

A goal of the original Land Use committee was “to evaluate the potential for the construction of a community-wide recreational facility, similar to a YMCA.” Although the dream of a building has not been realized, The Morrow County Community Center has been established with an express gym at 16 S. Main St. in Mount Gilead, with an Activity Center at 50 S. Main St. and the use of Cardinal Center Swimming Pool for swimming classes. The Center was opened in December 2007 as an outreach of the Galion YMCA. The YMCA aided in establishing programs and practices and the facilities are now called the Morrow County Community Center and are independent of the YMCA.

Park facilities have been extended with the opening of Maxwell Community Nature Park in Cardington, which can be a model for other villages in the county.

Edison Village obtained grants to clear properties of aging Quonset huts along the Railroad tracks and is presently clearing the property. A village park is planned for this space.

## Performing and Fine Arts

There is a strong interest among Morrow County citizens in the performing and fine arts. This includes interest at all age levels. Fortunately for Morrow County, all school districts have newly built facilities and have the capacity to accommodate the performing arts.

Cellar Studios Ink, LLC In Mount Gilead on the public square is the home to the Morrow County Art League as well as providing both gallery and studio space for local artists.

Morrow Little Theatre was organized in 2010 and has produced plays and musical productions in 2010 and 2011 with plans for several more in 2012. Productions have been done at Mount Gilead High School and Mount Gilead Trinity Church.

### Goals:

The economic and job situation of the county could be improved by the increased promotion of the many recreational and cultural opportunities of the county. Some of Morrow County's greatest strengths and potential is in the quality of its recreational facilities, parks, campgrounds and natural rural setting.

An immediate goal should be the increased communication, cooperation and collaboration to create a synergy that will increase and improve the economic benefits of the festivals, Morrow County Fair and other events in the county. Bed and breakfasts, motels, restaurants and other businesses could better benefit from synergistic efforts with parks, campgrounds and local festivals.

Funding remains the major hurdle of attaining any of the above recreation and fine arts recommendations and will require collaboration from many parties to bring these ideas to a successful end.

Chapter 18  
RECOMMENDATIONS

## Recommendations:

Collaboration is recommended for all park and municipal districts for bikeways, nature paths and trails. The public is getting more active and the desire for walking/nature trails and bike paths is expressed. These could be within villages, inside parks or from village to village. This would require a collaborative effort from the County and Village leadership. Please note that Maxwell Park in Cardington is in the initial stages of development, which could easily fit into these criteria.

Marketing Morrow, the Chamber of Commerce and Schools can all play an important part in connecting and networking to make sure the maximum benefit is realized for every festival, fair and event activity in the county.

Many of the county fairs, festivals and events would be of interest to people around the state. Efforts need to be made to communicate these events to outside news and advertising sources.

One means of promoting recreation would be a more active and significant role of the Morrow County Park District Board.

Schools should continue to play an important part in encouraging the creation of more recreational facilities. Communities should work to improve their existing facilities by adding more ball fields, soccer fields and flag football fields and promoting planned activities.

Presently swim teams from three school districts must go outside the county to practice for their swim meets. Some collaboration between institutions in the county should be explored to examine the possibility of a Community Center Facility that would include a regulation size swimming pool. Institutions which might collaborate would include the Morrow County Community Center, the four school districts, the Morrow County Hospital and the Morrow County Development Office.

Many of the communities in Morrow County have created recreation areas and have worked hard to enhance them. These communities continue to focus on setting aside land to expand their existing recreation within their villages. Because smaller units of government have limited resources and fewer people to help develop more facilities, there is a definite need to identify funding sources of public grant programs, foundation grants and donations.

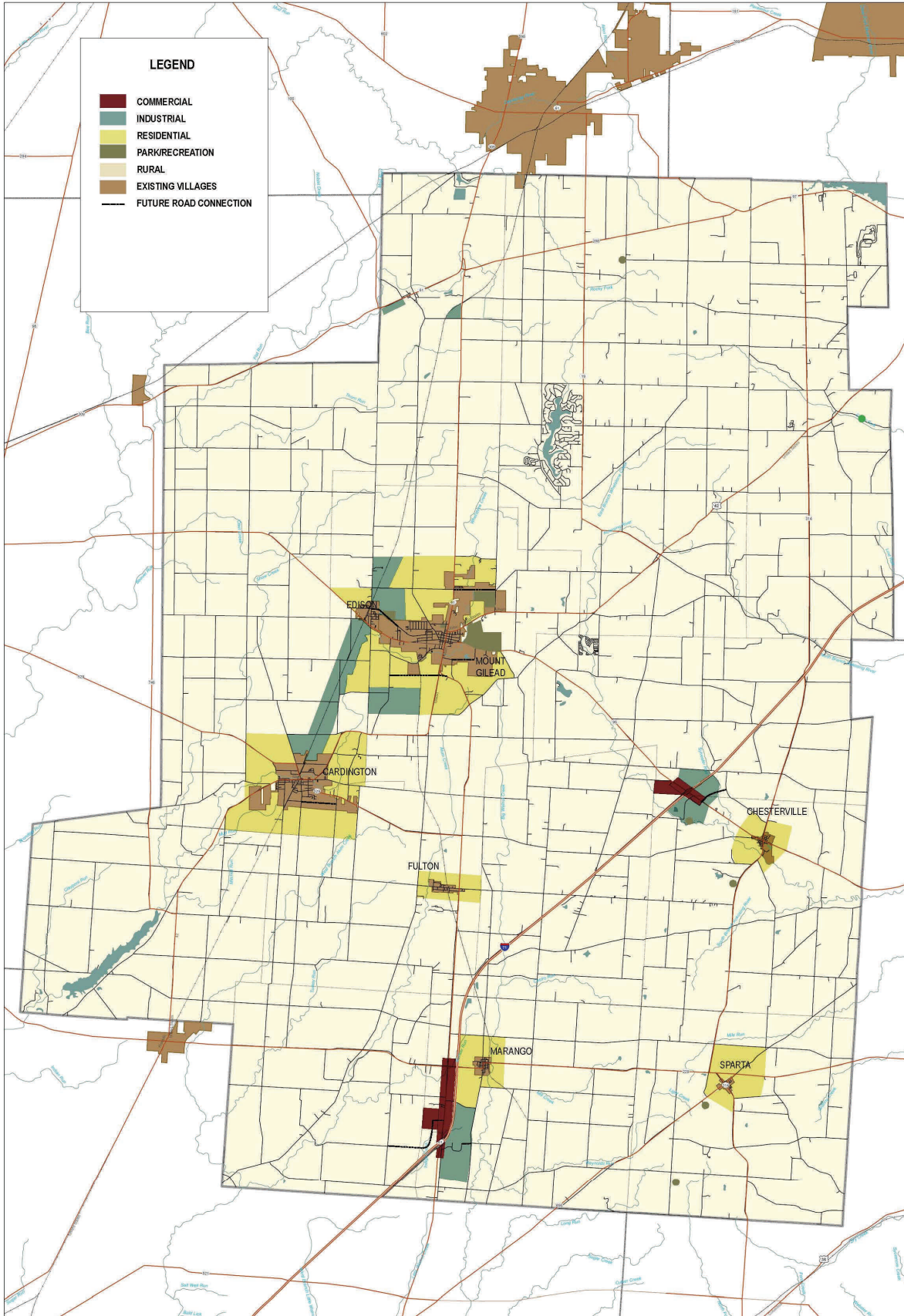
The County should aggressively encourage the dedication of park/open space for all new residential growth from land developers. Township zoning boards and trustees should work to encourage developers in their townships to preserve the natural resources and set aside green space in their developments.

The county will benefit from looking at models used in other counties of similar size that have formed groups and foundations in assisting recreation and arts organizations. All possible funding sources should be explored. Some communities to consider would be Harden County, Kenton YMCA, Ottawa Community Center, Norwalk Community Center and Bluffton Family Recreation Center.

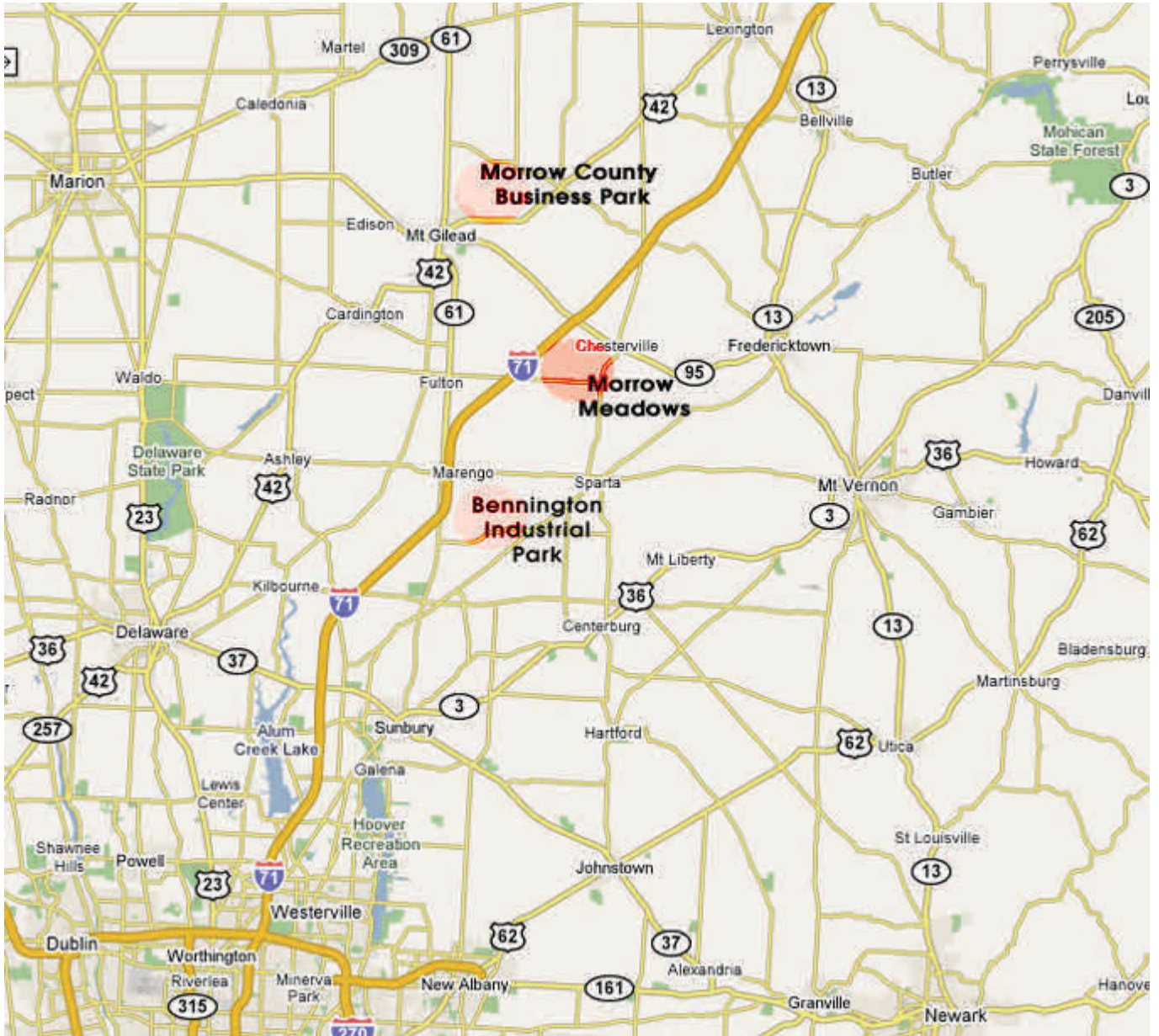
## Appendix of Images

MORROW COUNTY FUTURE LANDUSE PLAN

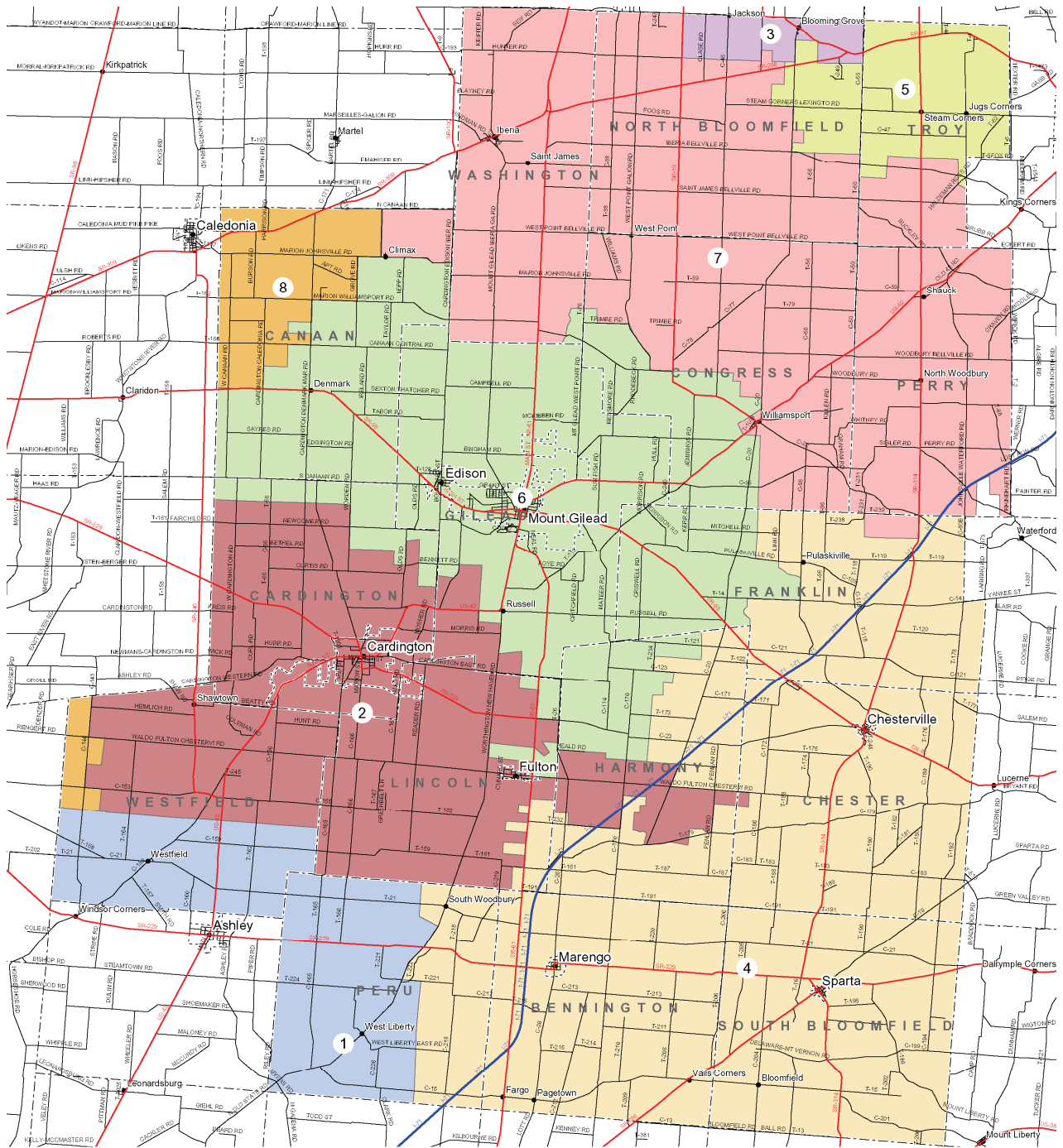
1" = 5000'





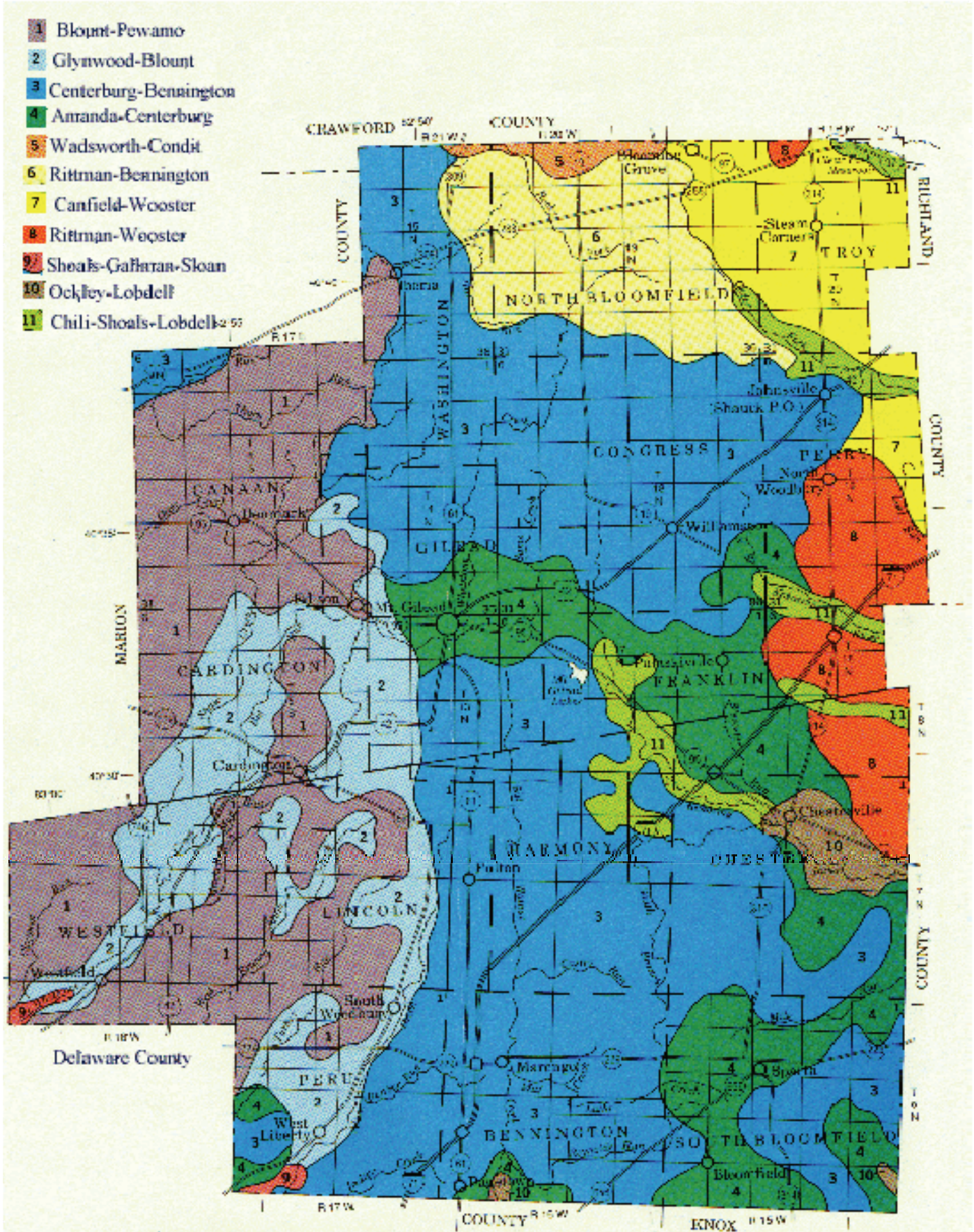


## Morrow County School Districts



- Interstate
  - Highway
  - Other Roads
  - City Boundary
  - Township Boundary
  - Places
- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <span style="background-color: #cfe2f3; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> 1-Buckeye Valley | <span style="background-color: #e67e22; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> 2-Cardington-Lincoln | <span style="background-color: #d4edda; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> 5-Lexington |
| <span style="background-color: #f8d7da; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> 3-Galion         | <span style="background-color: #d4edda; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> 6-Mount Gilead       | <span style="background-color: #f8d7da; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> 7-Northmor  |
| <span style="background-color: #fff3cd; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> 4-Highland       | <span style="background-color: #fff3cd; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> 8-River Valley       |   |





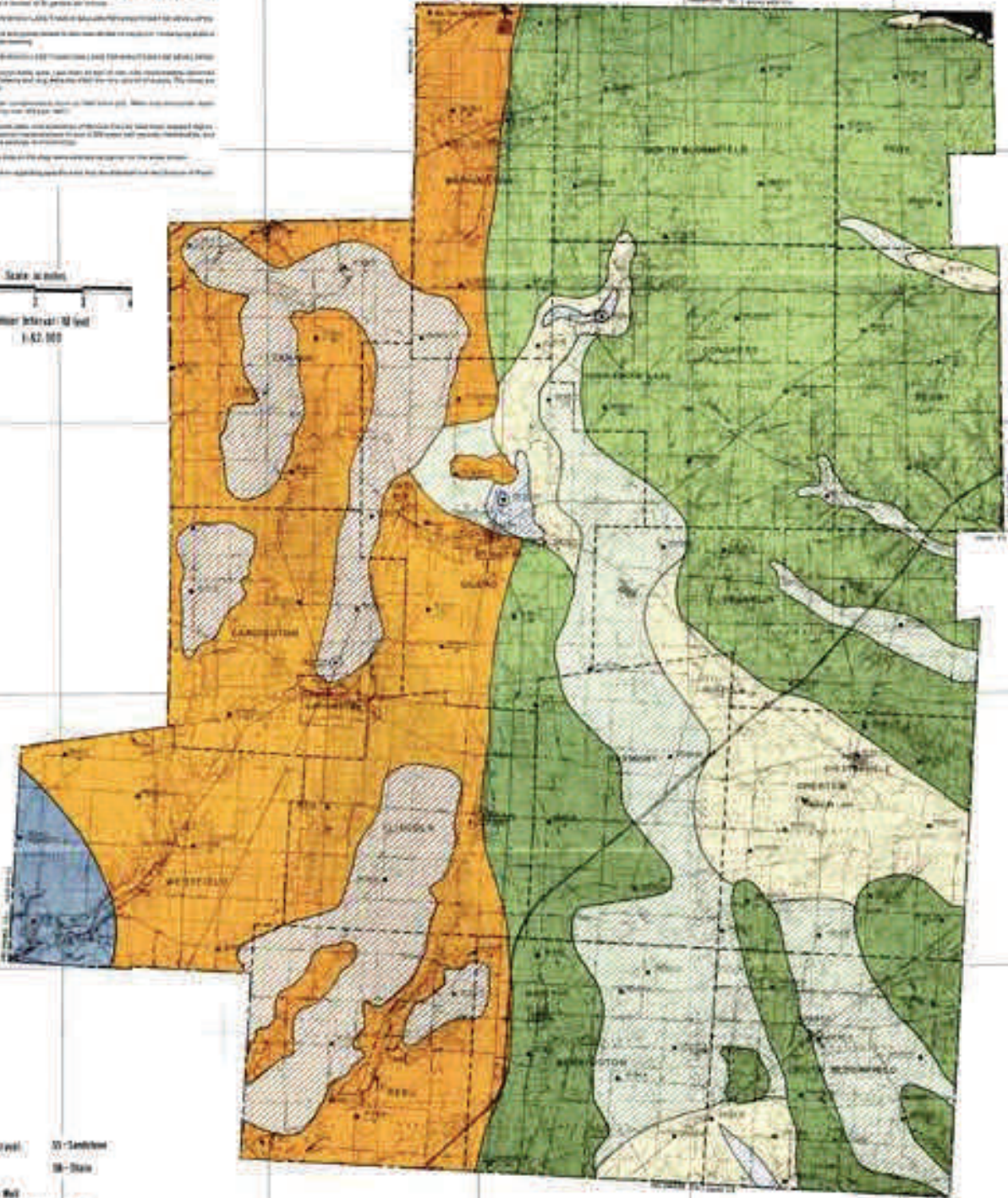
Soil Types

# Ground-Water Resources of MORROW COUNTY

by  
Richard J. Kostelnick



- MAJOR AQUIFERS OF THE STATE OF OHIO**
- 100- Sandstone** (Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Cincinnati)
  - 101- Sandstone** (Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Cincinnati)
  - 102- Sandstone** (Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Cincinnati)
  - 103- Sandstone** (Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Cincinnati)
  - 104- Sandstone** (Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Cincinnati)
  - 105- Sandstone** (Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Cincinnati)
  - 106- Sandstone** (Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Cincinnati)
  - 107- Sandstone** (Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Cincinnati)
- Scale in miles**  
Common Interval 100 feet  
1:62,500



- 100- Sandstone
  - 101- Sandstone
  - 102- Sandstone
  - 103- Sandstone
  - 104- Sandstone
  - 105- Sandstone
  - 106- Sandstone
  - 107- Sandstone
  - Well
  - Well
  - Well
- Depth in Water-bearing formation (feet)  
Depth to Bedrock (ft.)

Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
DIVISION OF WATER  
COLUMBUS, OHIO

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