



Fulton County

Comprehensive Plan Update

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter Contents

- 1.1 What is a Comprehensive Plan?
- 1.2 Why Does Fulton County Need a Comprehensive Plan?
- 1.3 Past Comprehensive Planning Efforts
- 1.4 Process for Plan Development and Adoption

1.1 What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a government document used to guide the future of a community. Commissioners use citizen input to create a long-range plan, so a community's vision is not led astray. While this is not a legally binding document, it is closely followed by government officials and local planners to maintain communities' trust and guide decisions. The Fulton County, Ohio Comprehensive Plan Update is a living document and will be reviewed as the region develops and goals are met.

1.2 Why does Fulton County Need a Comprehensive Plan Update?

Fulton County's 1998 Comprehensive Land Use Plan outlined issues regarding agricultural preservation, growth management and community character. Twenty years later, these issues are still relevant within the County. This Comprehensive Plan Update will create a blueprint for Fulton County's future. County commissioners and other staff will access this updated document when they need to make decisions about future zoning, economic development, infrastructure investment, revitalization projects, land use, and community character. This is increasingly important due to a projected population decline. Now, more than ever, it is necessary for county officials and citizens to use this information to increase growth while preserving important assets.

This update is not to be considered a replacement to the 1998 Comprehensive Plan but is intended to supplement and evolve along with the County. The 2020 Comprehensive Plan update was developed with the objective of advocacy for County-wide sustainable development, community growth and cultural conservation. The county commissioners partnered with Maumee Valley Planning Organization to update the 1998 Comprehensive Plan. Following public input and review the Fulton County commissioners adopted this document on April 24, 2021.

1.3 Previous Plans

Fulton County strives to preserve its core values by utilizing resources to develop multiple plans for many different topics, including hazard mitigation, land use planning and economic development planning. Below is a list of previous plans completed by the County or the entities within it.

- ❖ Fulton County Comprehensive Development Plan (1998)
- ❖ Fulton County Comprehensive Plan - Natural Resource Amendment (2004)
- ❖ Fulton County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2016)
- ❖ Comprehensive Plan: City of Wauseon (2004)
- ❖ Comprehensive Land Use Plans: Swanton, Lyons, Delta, Fayette and Metamora (2001-2010)
- ❖ SR 66 Relocation Project – The Economic Consequences of a Truck Bypass: Village of Archbold (2015)

1.4 Process for Plan Development and Adoption

Fulton County's 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update is the result of citizen participation, government official input and MVPO staff intervention. Multiple surveys, meetings, social media discussions and public presentations were used to gather this information. This plan reflects public concerns and values while planning for the County's future.

The purpose of this Plan Update is a tool that provides guidance and solutions to County-wide concerns. While this is a policy guide, it can be a resource for political jurisdictions in the implementation or amendment of laws: Analysis of Fulton County's previous development patterns and suggestions for future land use and development that best serves its communities. This document is intended to remain "living" and accessible to the public at all times. Idealistically, this document should be reviewed every 5-10 years to ensure it is up-to-date and productive; necessary adjustments and updates should be administered should the information become obsolete or inapplicable to Fulton County and its needs.

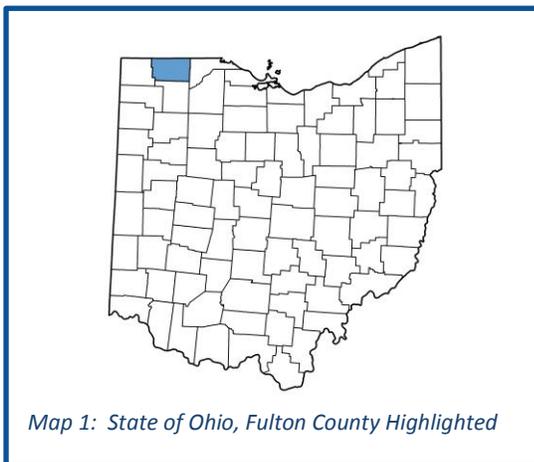
The Fulton County Planning Commission along with Maumee Valley Planning Organization took many steps to ensure that the public was provided opportunities to participate in the development of this document. In May of 2019, there were 4 public hearings hosted across the County to discuss this plan and receive public input. In addition, press releases were published along with a survey. In March of 2020, the world was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, all public outreach was conducted online. Discussion questions were published on more than a dozen community social media pages. A community comment page was also developed online. The combination of these efforts provided a rich source of information for the planners developing this document. The final version of this plan will be available on the County's website. Paper copies can be requested by contacting Fcplan@mvpo.org.

Chapter 2: Existing Conditions

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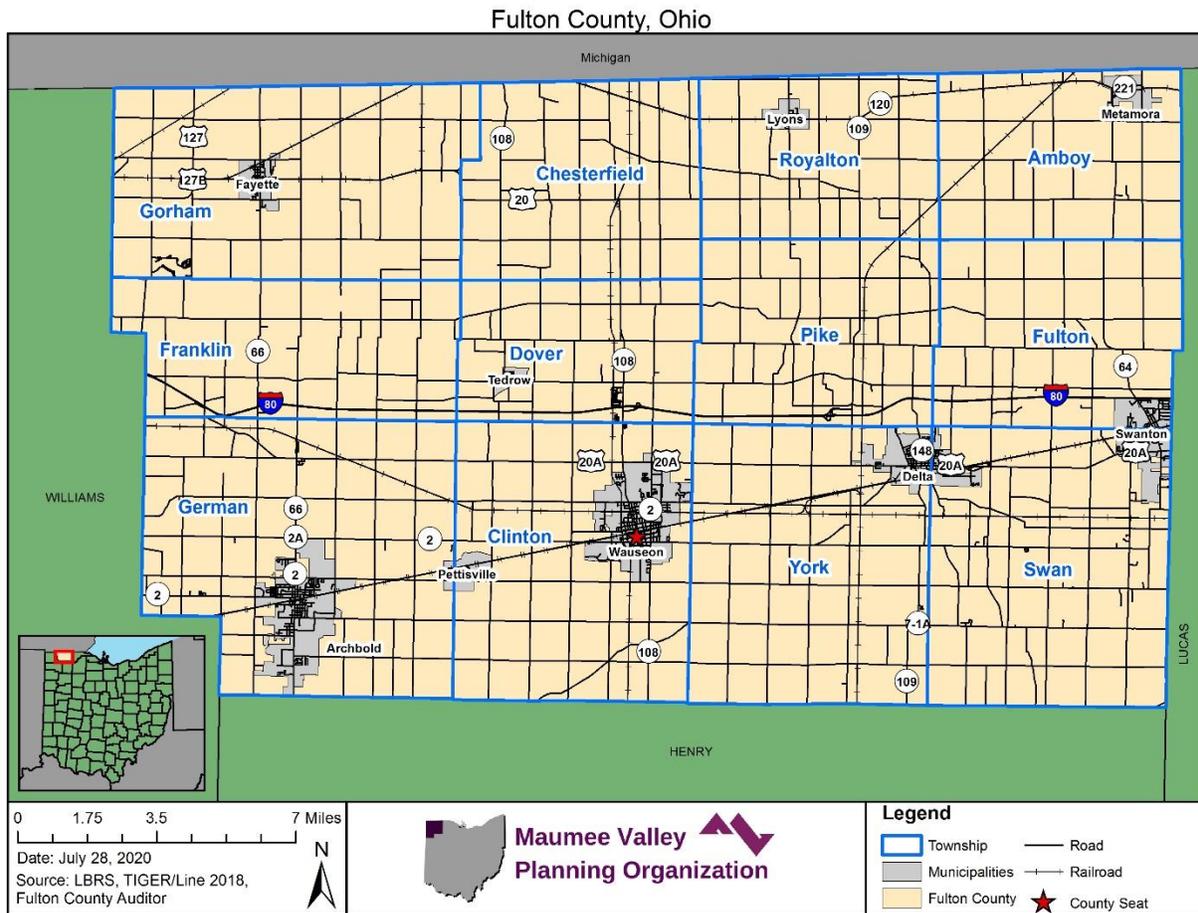
- 2.1 Regional Background and Overview
- 2.2 Demographic Trends and Projections
- 2.3 Housing
- 2.4 Employment and Industry Statistics
- 2.5 Institution Services

2.1 Regional Background and Overview



Fulton County, established in 1850, is a rural farm community located in Northwest Ohio. Historically, the County has been composed of small farm communities and a small industrial base. The County houses eight (8) Villages, one (1) City and twelve (12) Townships. Increased access to water sources and the Ohio Turnpike has brought more people—and thus development—into the County. Fulton County’s overarching goal is to maintain the established farm economy and small-town charm without being consumed by development. The

Board of County Commissioners emphasizes the following community goals: community growth, land use development, capital improvement plans, capital financing, and strategic planning.



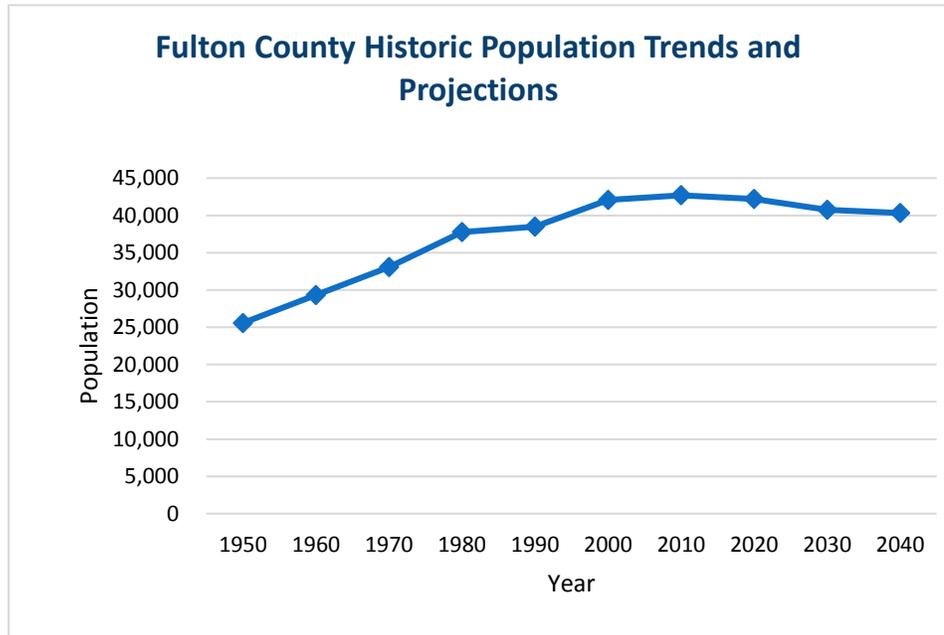
Map 2: Fulton County, Ohio¹

Balancing growth with preservation is important to the agricultural communities in Fulton County. Urban growth areas are successfully designated around City and Village centers and most of the natural land is preserved. Fulton County’s 1998 Comprehensive Plan and the 2020 Update outline prominent issues like agricultural preservation, growth management and the safeguarding of Fulton County’s unique community character.

2.2 Demographic Trends & Projections

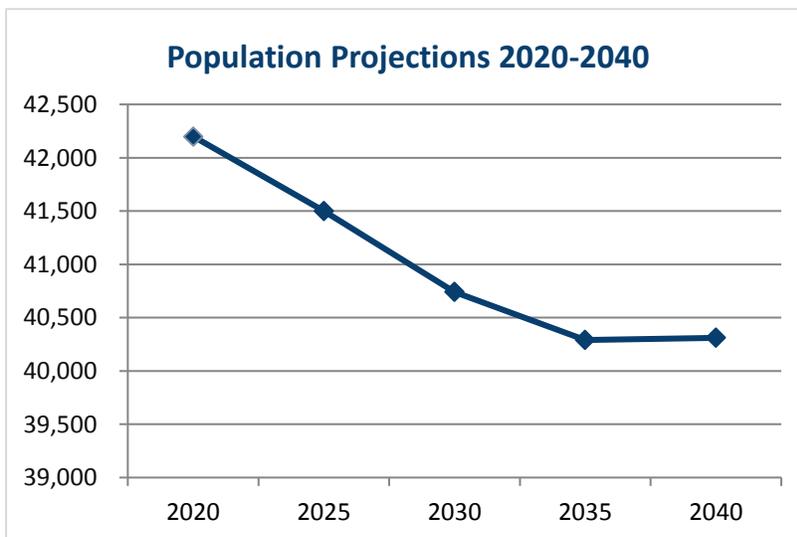
Fulton County has experienced steady growth in population since 1950 but is projected to decline by approximately 5% within the next 20 years. In 1998, Fulton County’s concerns revolved around the projected rapid population growth.

Graph 1 depicts historical population numbers, as well as future projections. Today, Fulton County’s slight decline in population can present future challenges.



Graph 1: Fulton County Historic Population Trends and Projections²

According to 2016 American Census Survey (ACS) data, Fulton County currently has a

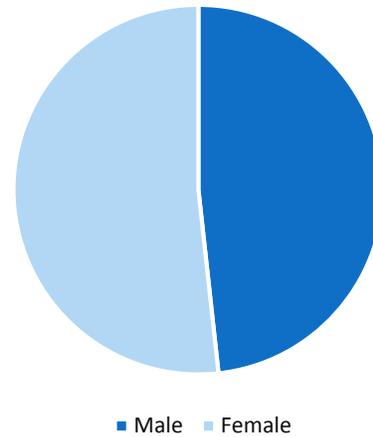


Graph 2: Fulton County 2020-2040 Population Projections³

population of 42,466 (*Graph 2*). The City of Wauseon is the most populous municipality, housing 7,059 citizens. The least populous municipality in the County is the Village of Lyons, home to 465 citizens. Fulton County gender projections are expected to result in a slightly greater number of female residents by 2040 (*Graph 3*).

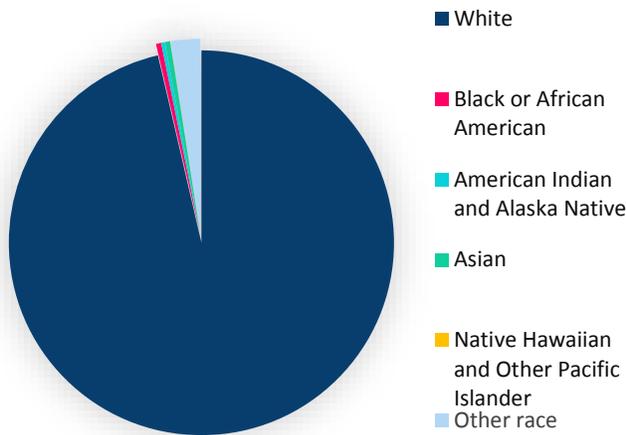
Fulton County is relatively homogenous. As shown in [Table 1](#), 94% of the population is white, the next highest population being Hispanic or Latino. Fulton County’s Hispanic or Latino population is 5% higher than the State’s; the County’s white population is 12% higher than the State’s ([Graph 4](#)).

2040 Population Projection: Gender



Graph 3: Fulton County 2040 Gender Projection⁴

Fulton County Population by Race



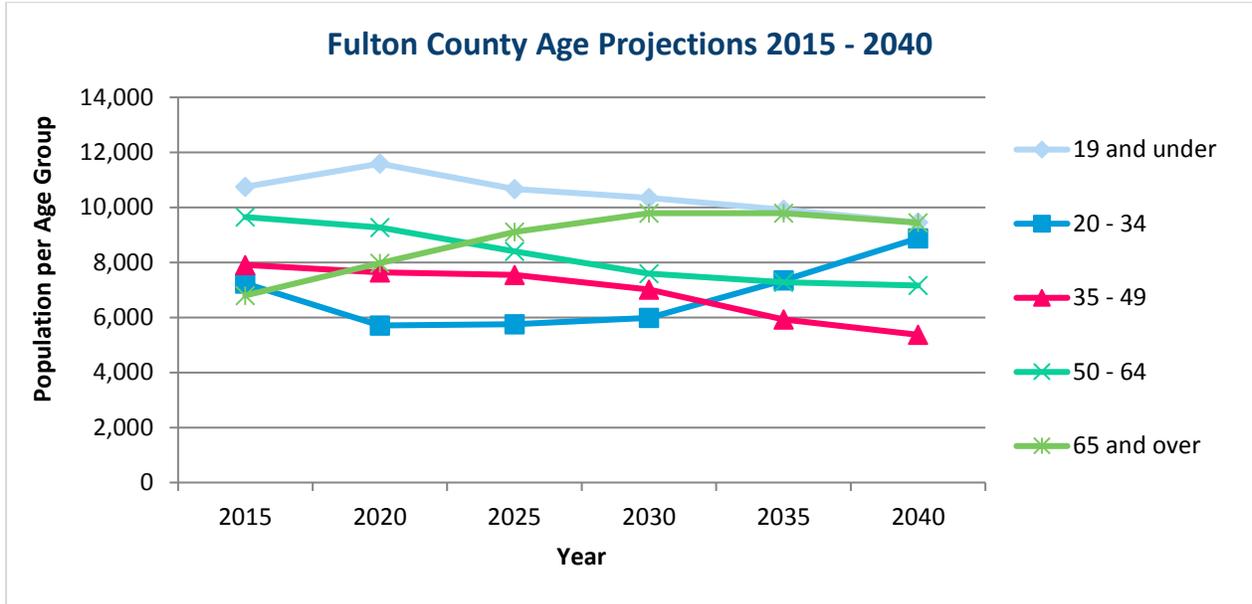
Graph 4: Fulton County Population Racial Makeup⁵

Fulton County Racial Percentages

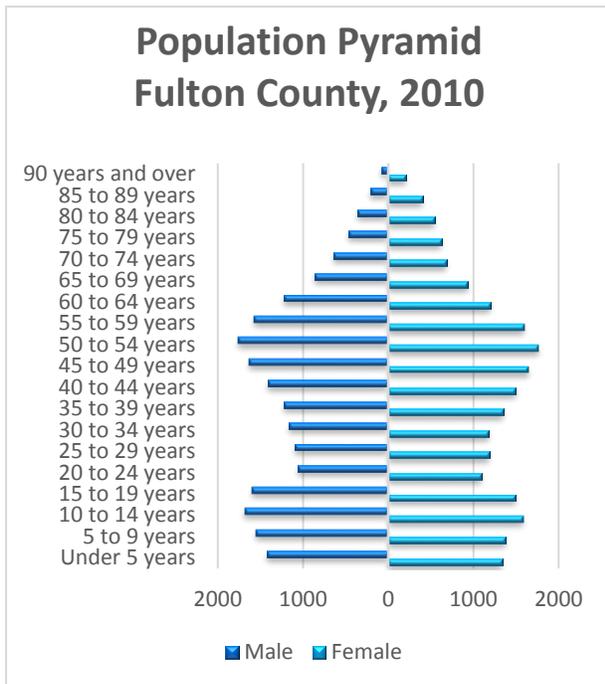
	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaskan Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Another race	Two or more races	Hispanic or Latino
Fulton County	96.9%	0.9%	0.4%	0.4%	0.1%	3.3%	1.4%	8.8%
Ohio	81.7%	13.1%	0.3%	2.5%	0.1%	0.8%	2.4%	4.0%
United States	76.3%	13.4%	1.3%	5.9%	0.2%	4.8%	2.8%	18.5%

Table 1: Fulton County Racial Percentages⁶

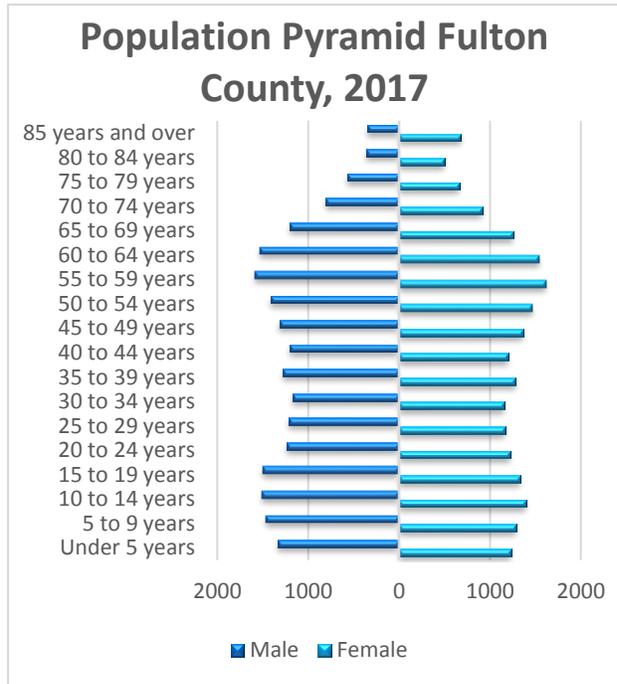
In addition to the decrease in population, Fulton County’s population is aging. The current median age of the County is 40, whereas the median age in 2010 was 38. The line graph below shows age projections from years 2015 to 2040. The population pyramids following these projections show the age breakdown comparison from years 2010 and 2017.



Graph 5: Fulton County 2015-2040 Age Projections⁷



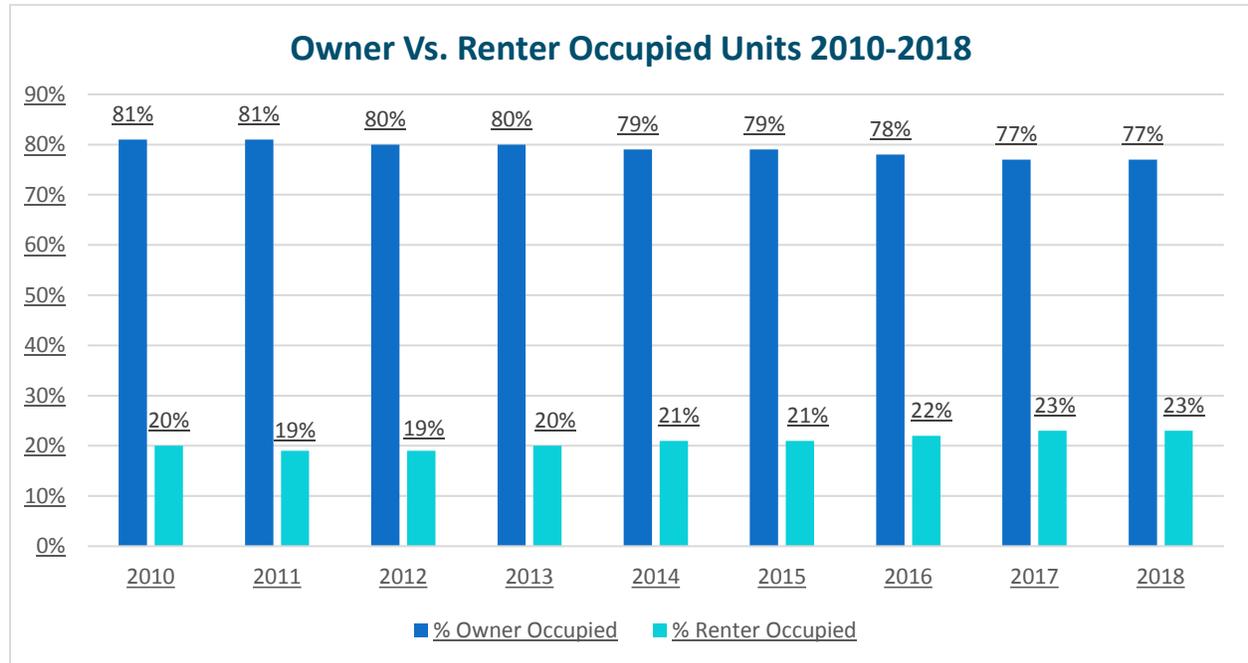
Graph 6: 2010 Fulton County Population Pyramid



Graph 7: 2017 Fulton County Population Pyramid⁸

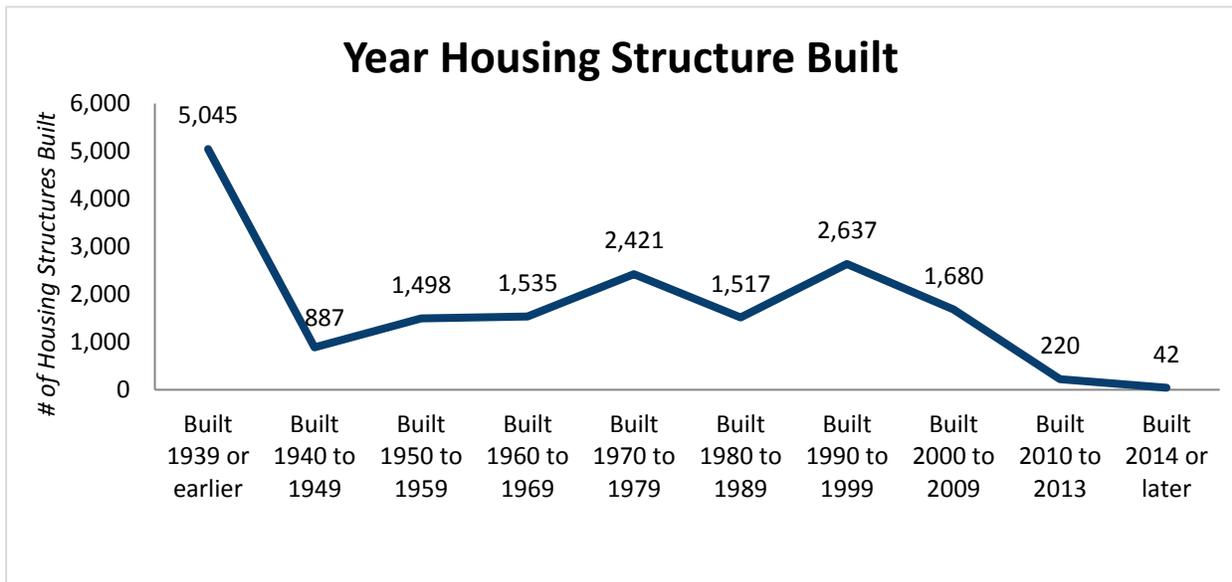
2.3 Housing

Fulton County has approximately 17,367 housing units with 1,127 (6.5%) of those units vacant. As illustrated by the graph below, owner-occupied and renter-occupied unit habitation has stayed relatively consistent over the last decade; however, there is a 3% decrease in owner-occupied units since the year 2013. The median value of owner-occupied units in Fulton County is \$131,100. The majority of units range between \$100,000 and \$149,000.



Graph 8: Fulton County Owner versus Renter Occupied Units Percentages 2010-2018⁹

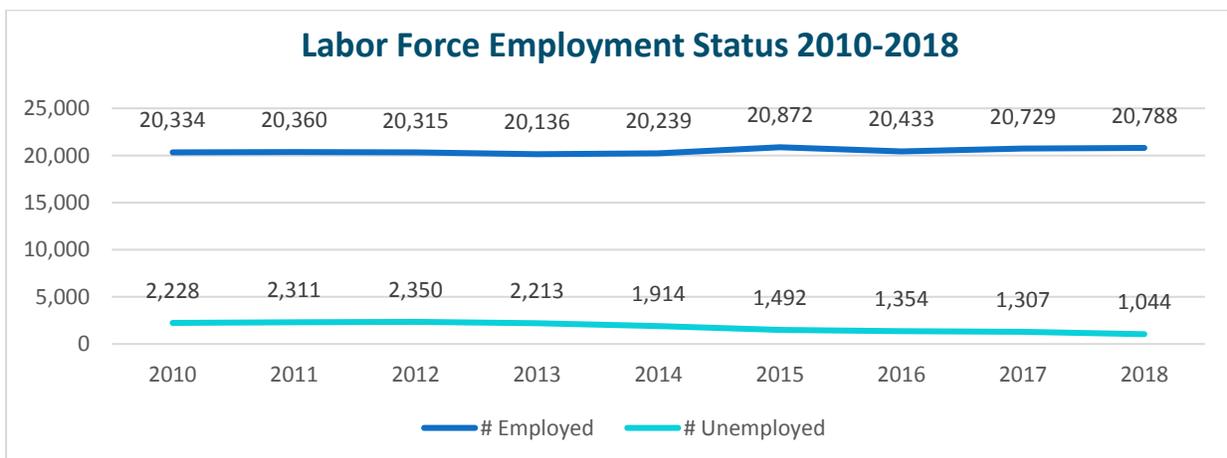
Only 262 of the existing housing structures were built after 2010. Most Fulton County housing structures were built earlier than 1939. The construction peak between 1990 and 1999 created 2,637 housing structures. The minimal construction of housing in Fulton County is beneficial because it reflects the County's goal to preserve agricultural land rather than increase residential development.



Graph 9: Fulton County Housing Construction Numbers by Year¹⁰

2.4 Employment

Employment numbers vary in the County. Fulton County’s total population in the labor force reached a high of 23,500 jobs in 2006¹¹. Following the Great Recession, Fulton County experienced tremendous job loss from 2007 – 2011. The County unemployment rate was at 16% in January 2010, the highest during the Recession¹². Jobs have slowly returned since 2011 ([Graph 10](#)), but it does not appear that Fulton County will regain the jobs lost during the Recession in the near future.



Graph 10: Fulton County 2010-2018 Labor Force Employment Status¹³

Industry

Fulton County is home to agricultural, commercial and industrial business. Fulton County's agriculture industry accounts for 2% of Ohio's agriculture sales¹⁴. The County first experienced industrial growth and development through the construction of a rail transportation network. As railroad development dwindled, Fulton County's industry remained stagnant until the Ohio Turnpike interchanges were built. The development of the interchanges introduced industries and manufacturers; agricultural and industrial businesses grew as the Region became more accessible. Today, there is an active mix of both agricultural and industrial business in Fulton County. Studying employment rates and industry groups identifies the strong and weak points of the economy for public officials to address.

2.5 Institutional Services

Citizens have access to a variety of services that keep the community safe and thriving.

- ❖ Public Schools
- ❖ Northwest State Community College
- ❖ Public Parks
- ❖ Government Buildings
- ❖ Water Treatment Plants
- ❖ Hospitals
- ❖ Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- ❖ Drug Treatment Centers
- ❖ Non-Profit Resources

Together, these organizations support Fulton County as resources that maintain a safe, healthy and tight-knit community in which to live and work.



Figure 1: Sheriff's Office in Wauseon¹⁵



Figure 2: Fulton County Health Center in Wauseon¹⁶

Chapter 3: Economic Development

Chapter Contents:

- 3.1 Goals
- 3.2 Existing Trends and Conditions
- 3.3 Income and Taxes
- 3.4 Community Reinvestment Areas
- 3.5 Employment
- 3.6 Objectives

3.1 Economic Development Goals

Still rural and vested in preserving its agricultural heritage, Fulton County should strive to balance economic growth with the protection of its unique cultural character. Rural counties in the United States face a constant struggle to maintain their individuality during suburbanization, which tends to result in a loss of identity as they grow and coalesce with the surrounding metropolitan areas. Economic prosperity is, however, a critical factor in creating a thriving and healthful region. Financial incentives, revenue and local investments are the heartbeat of a community. To maintain a prosperous community and prepare for the future, it is important to analyze Fulton County's economy. Government officials can plan for the Region's future by studying employment and development trends. If done correctly, it should positively impact community welfare, prosperity and health.



Promote economic development in appropriate and suitable areas



Create new job opportunities in the region



Support local businesses, entrepreneurship and innovation



Increase economic development and revitalization



Improve and advance diversity in the workforce



Encourage development of industries that support the County's historical and cultural background



Support workers



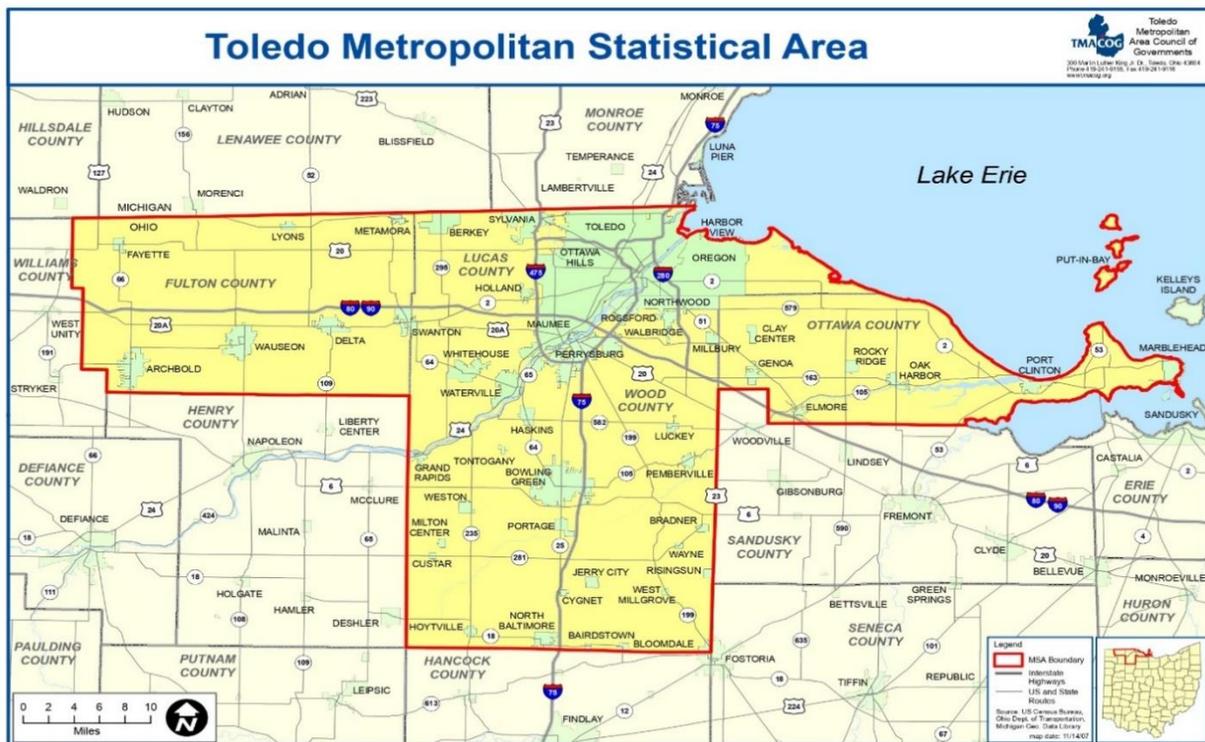
Support the local food economy

3.2 Existing Trends and Conditions

The United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB) places Fulton County in the Toledo Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the 6th largest metropolitan region in Ohio. The Toledo MSA expands across four (4) Ohio counties: Fulton, Lucas, Ottawa and Wood. The MSA contains a total population of 672,000¹⁷. The Toledo MSA is part of the larger Toledo-Findlay-Tiffin Combined Statistical Area (CSA)¹⁸.



Figure 3: Downtown Wauseon¹⁹



Map 3: Toledo MSA²⁰

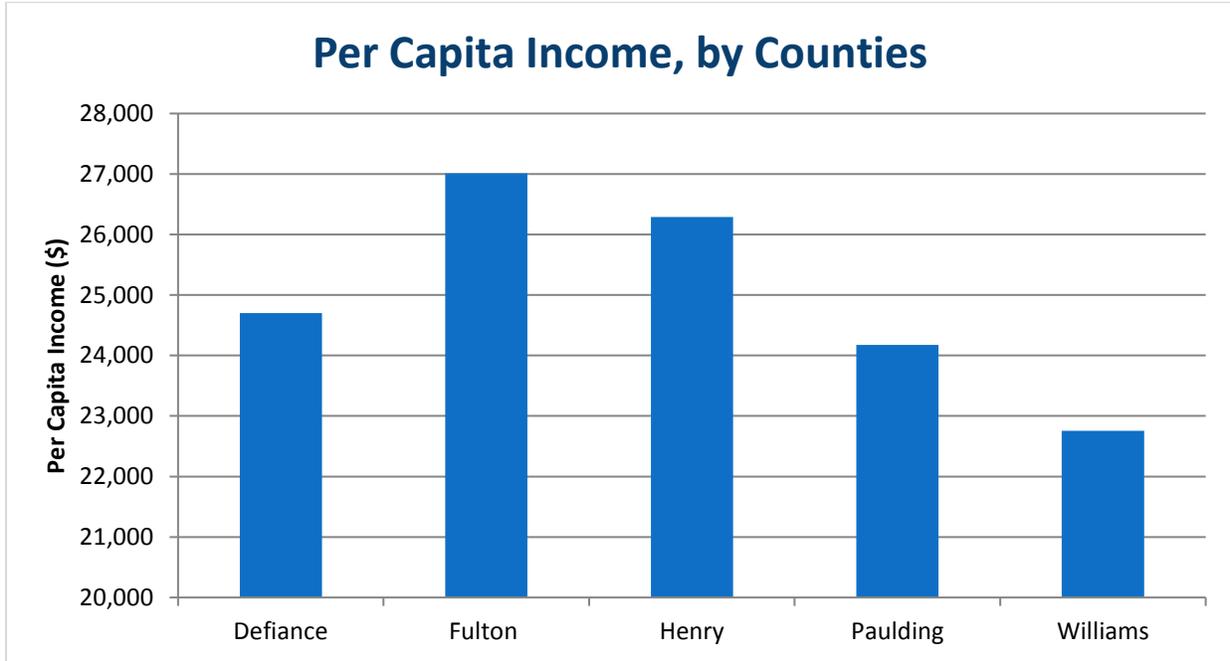
“First introduced in the 2000 standards, Combined Statistical Areas can serve as an important geographic tool for the Federal statistical data community. They can be characterized as representing larger regions that reflect broader social and economic interactions, such as wholesaling, commodity distribution and weekend recreation activities and are likely to be of considerable interest to regional authorities and the private sector. If specified criteria are met, adjacent Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas, in various combinations, may become the components of a Combined Statistical Area”²¹

The Ohio Attorney General’s Office published the *Ohio Economic Development Manual*, a valuable resource for citizens and government officials interested in fostering community growth. Best practices for transportation, zoning, land use planning, loans and grants are discussed in the text. In the coming years, this document and its updated versions may be reviewed when Fulton County officials seek information about the lawful structure of economic development²².

3.3 Income

The following tables and graphs compare the per capita income of Fulton County residents to that of the surrounding counties like Defiance, Henry, Paulding and Williams, as well as averages from the State of Ohio. Historically, the per capita income in Fulton County is a few thousand dollars lower than the State of Ohio. It should be noted the per capita income in Fulton County has been on the rise since 2005 and indicates growth in the area.

The per capita income measures the average income earned by every citizen in the region. In [Graph 11](#), the per capita income in Fulton County is estimated to be about \$27,000, which is greater than the other counties in the comparison²³.



Graph 11: Maumee Valley Region per Capita Income²⁴

Median household income divides the income earned by a community’s households into two halves: Half of the homes in the area earn more and half earn less; the median household income is the amount split between the two. The table below²⁵ shows the median household income is about \$10,000 more than the Toledo MSA and \$5,000 more than the State of Ohio. The median household income of Fulton County is similar to the national average median.

	Median Household Income
Fulton County, Ohio	\$60,231.00
Toledo, Ohio MSA	\$50,428.00
Ohio	\$54,533.00
United States	\$60,293.00

Table 2: Fulton County Income Comparison

Table 8-2. PERSONAL INCOME SUMMARY- State of Ohio				
	2005	2009	2013	2017
Personal Income (thousands of dollars)	\$374,067,981	\$410,863,852	\$476,450,081	\$544,828,471
Population (persons)	\$11,463,320	\$11,528,896	\$11,567,845	\$11,658,609
Per capita personal income (dollars)	\$32,632	\$35,638	\$41,187	\$46,732
Table 8-2. PERSONAL INCOME SUMMARY- Fulton County, Ohio				
	2005	2009	2013	2017
Personal Income (thousands of dollars)	\$1,334,104	\$1,389,054	\$1,619,433	\$1,824,732
Population (persons)	\$42,897	\$42,747	\$42,183	\$42,289
Per capita personal income (dollars)	\$31,100	\$32,495	\$38,391	\$43,149

Table 3: State of Ohio Personal Income Summary²⁶

Fulton County’s cost of living is 11.7% lower than the U.S. average. The County’s cost of living is similar to the State of Ohio’s, excluding differences between health cost and grocery cost. The Village of Fayette has the lowest cost of living and the Village of Swanton’s cost of living is the highest. A significant discrepancy between Fayette and Swanton is their differing housing prices. The other cost factors, however, are similar.

Fulton County Expenditures

	City of Wauseon	Village of Metamora	Village of Lyons	Village of Archbold	Village of Swanton	Village of Delta	Village of Fayette
Overall	84	87	83	88	90	85	80
Grocery	95.5	95.5	95.5	95.5	94.5	95.5	95.5
Health	101	101	101	101	103	101	101
Housing	52	62	62	65	73	55	38
Utilities	98	98	98	98	99	98	98
Transportation	99	99	99	99	100	99	99
Miscellaneous	100	100	100	100	98	100	100

Table 4: Fulton County Expenditures by Village and City²⁷

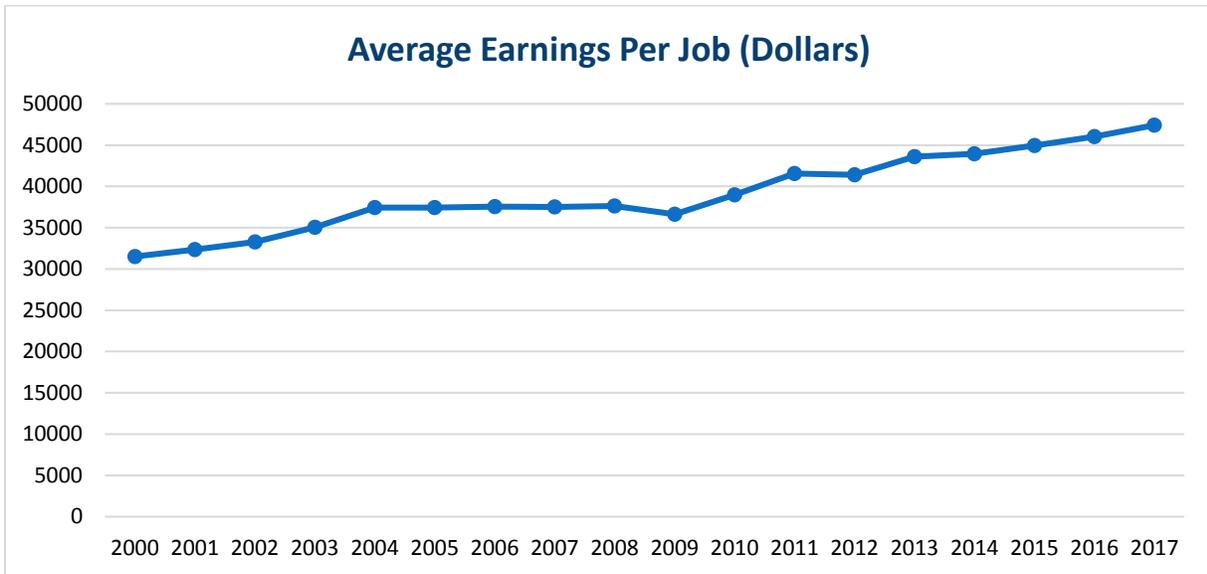
There are not great discrepancies between the State of Ohio and Fulton County expenditures. The most notable spending differences between the County and State are health and grocery expenditures. It may benefit County officials to analyze spending trends and discern possible future development needs and opportunities for their communities.

Spending practices and development in similar counties may be reviewed to give direction to officials who desire greater accessibility to county resources based upon successful practices from other communities.

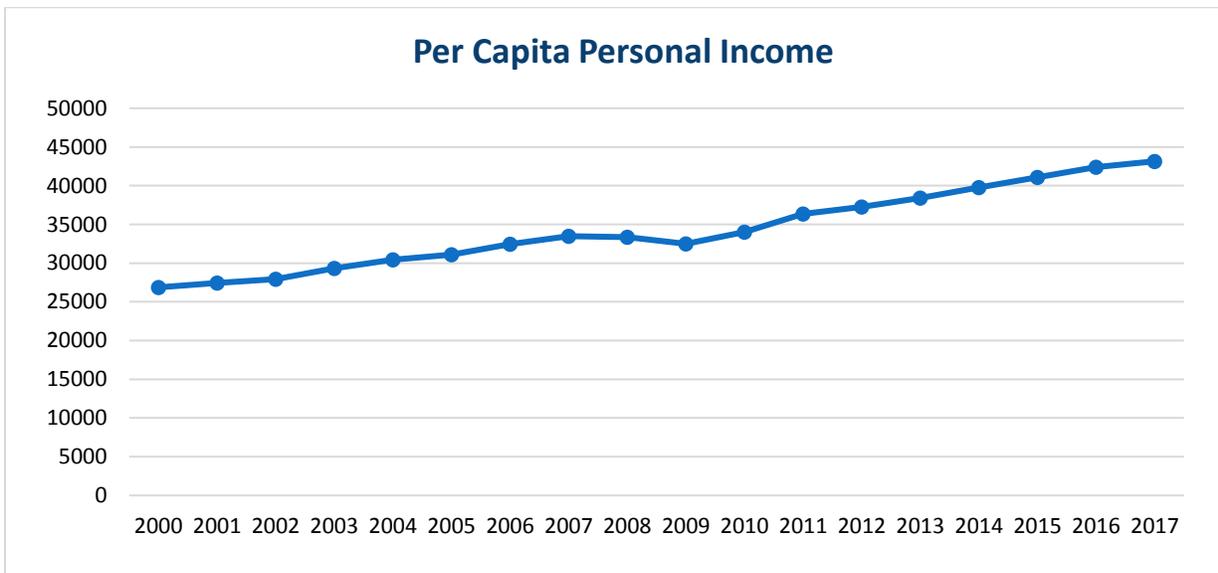
	Fulton County	Ohio
Overall	88	88
Grocery	95.5	99.2
Health	101	98
Housing	66	67
Utilities	98	99
Transportation	99	100
Miscellaneous	100	98

Table 5: Fulton County and State of Ohio Expenditures Comparison²⁸

The following graphs depict historical trends of the average earnings per job and per capita income of Fulton County since the turn of the century. Both figures follow similar patterns of steady increase during the early part of the 2000s, followed by a plateau and slight downturn before a recovery period into the 2010s.



Graph 12: Fulton County Average Earning Per Job²⁹



Graph 13: Fulton County per Capita Income³⁰

The average earnings per job is calculated by adding all salaries of a selected group together and then dividing that total by the number of people accounted for in the equation³¹. It is important to note that extremes in salary, whether low or high, can skew this average. Circumstances resulting in lower average earnings per job include industries with an emphasis on part-time positions (reliance on part-time employment may devalue a position as well), small counties, the event of a crisis (pandemic, earthquakes, hurricane, etc.), periods of major construction and agriculture-dependent areas³². It should be noted average earning does not account for variations in low versus high wage jobs.

Translated from Latin as “by the head”, per capita income measures income earned per person in an area³³. Per capita income is an important consideration, as it plays a role in the evaluation of a community’s wealth; this includes an area’s affordability and population spending capabilities. Per capita income is calculated similarly to average earnings but takes the process a step further. The calculation groups individuals via salary amount, multiplies the number of earners by their salary and adds all multiplied salaries together before averaging the total³⁴. Per capita measurements have limitations, which includes a possible inaccurate representation of living standards in areas of excessive wealth or poverty. Other factors, such as inflation, an individual’s saving habits, number of children in a community and working conditions may skew the results of per capita calculations.

In any case, averaging income may result in discrepancies due to extremes in population. It would be wise for Fulton County officials to look beyond average earnings and per capita income to account for populations in need. Results depicted in the graphs look promising but can be misleading when wealth disparities are not considered.

Taxes

Individual income tax is based on a resident’s income, which is placed within a certain tax bracket. Income tax filing season begins January 27th, 2020 and the deadline is July 15th, 2020 (extended for a month due to COVID-19 without penalty or interest)³⁵. Ohio’s progressive income permits lower tax rates for lower income earners. Property tax is assessed on value of a structure near local school districts, cities and other taxing authorities. Real property is defined under 2 classifications: Class I property is residential and agricultural; Class II is commercial, industrial and all other types of real property³⁶. Ohio property tax rates are expressed in units called *mills*, which are equal to “one-tenth of a cent (.01 cents) in cash terms”³⁷.

The municipal income tax is enacted by a city or village and is paid by residents³⁸. Fulton County sales tax is the amount of tax paid on goods purchased; the state sales tax rate is 5.75% and Fulton County’s tax rate is 1.50%, which totals to a 7.25% rate³⁹. School District Income Tax (SDIT) is income tax levied separately from federal, state and municipal income taxes created

specifically to support school districts. Imposition of a SDIT must be approved by voters of a school district. Residents of the school district pay tax, but corporations are exempt; the SDIT is traditional tax-based and earned income tax-based⁴⁰.

Current Agricultural Use Value (CAUV) is a provision made for Ohio farmers with 10 or more agricultural acres designated for commercial use; lots below 10 acres must average a yearly gross of at least \$2,500⁴¹. The CAUV is based upon agricultural value rather than full market value, which means a lower tax bill for the farmer. This is done for property tax purposes.

For Taxable Years Beginning in 2020—Annual Tax Rates for Ohio Individuals

<i>Ohio Taxable Income</i>	<i>Tax Calculation</i>
<i>0 – \$22,150</i>	<i>0.000%</i>
<i>\$22,150 – \$44,250</i>	<i>\$316.18 + 2.850% of excess over \$22,150</i>
<i>\$44,250 – \$88,450</i>	<i>\$946.03 + 3.326% of excess over \$44,250</i>
<i>\$88,450 – \$110,650</i>	<i>\$2,416.12 + 3.802% of excess over \$88,450</i>
<i>\$110,650 – \$221,300</i>	<i>\$3,260.16 + 4.413% of excess over \$110,650</i>
<i>Greater than \$221,300</i>	<i>\$8,413.14 + 4.797% of excess over \$221,300</i>

Table 6: Ohio Annual Individual Income Tax Rates⁴²

3.4 Community Reinvestment Areas

The Ohio Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Program is utilized by municipal and county government as an economic development tool for renovation or construction of properties through tax incentives for property owners. The establishment of a CRA Program requires a petition to the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) for a declining neighborhood with lower rates of housing investment⁴³.

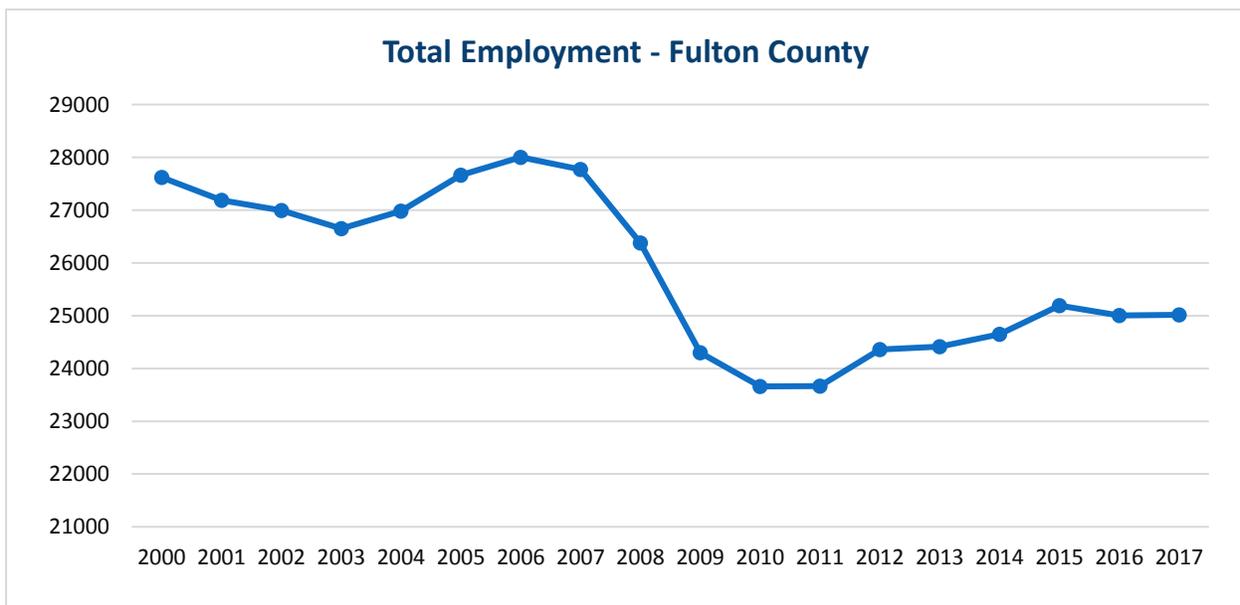
Fulton County CRAs are located in Archbold, Delta, Metamora, Swanton, Wauseon and York Township. Each CRA utilized in these areas is based upon the pre-1994 abatement standards, which states that real property abatements must be 100%. The pre-1994 CRAs were established by county officials rather than under the authority of the OSDA. Future CRAs established under post-1994 legislation allow flexibility in real property tax incentive amounts. Post-1994 tax abatements over 50% do require the consent of local school districts⁴⁴.

Retail Sales

Fulton County has not experienced great discrepancies in annual retail employment numbers in the last decade. The County’s retail trade numbers nearly 3,100 employees, about 13.3% of the total population employed under the major Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system⁴⁵.

Retail trade is registered under Division G of SIC; retail trade establishments include the processing and/or selling of goods and services for the consumption of a population⁴⁶.

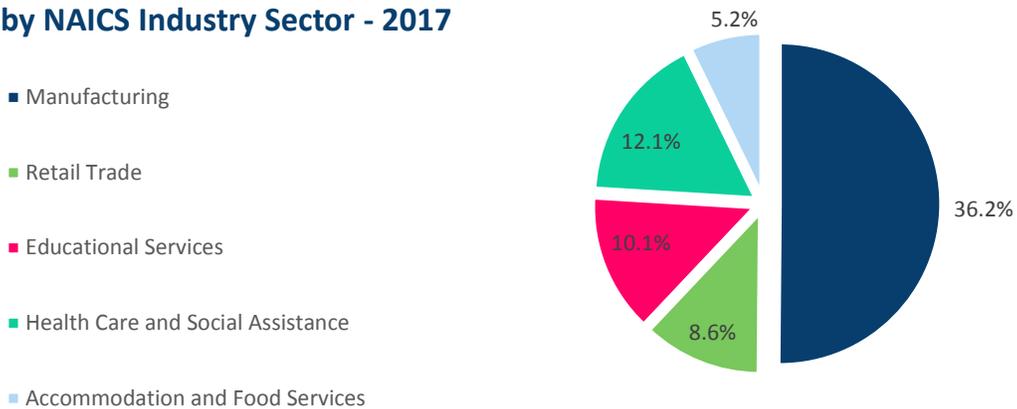
3.5 Employment



Graph 14: Fulton County 2000-2017 Total Employment Rates⁴⁷

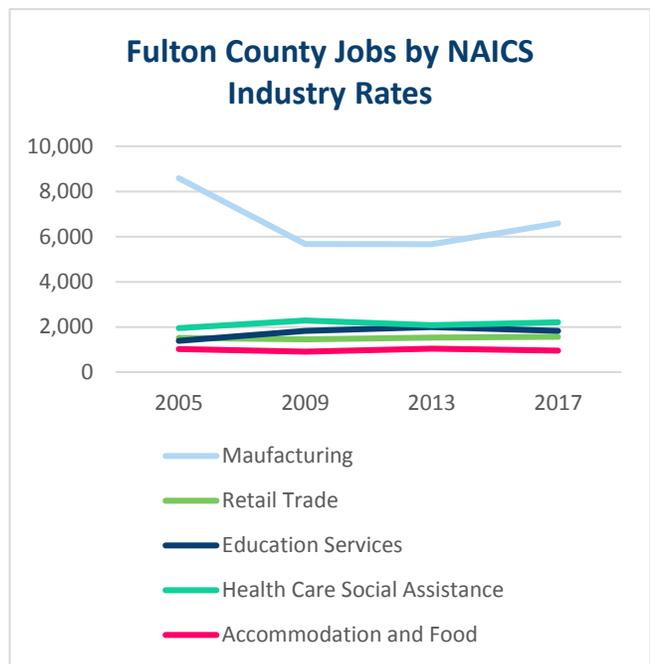
In Fulton County, employment numbers have varied. As depicted in the map below, Fulton County’s total employment was at a high of 28,000 jobs in 2006 (U.S. Census Bureau “On the Map”). Following the Great Recession, the County experienced tremendous job loss from 2007 – 2011. In March 2020, the State of Ohio implemented a 2-month emergency shut-down due to risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. County employment was greatly impacted and will require aid in the coming months and perhaps, years.

Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector - 2017



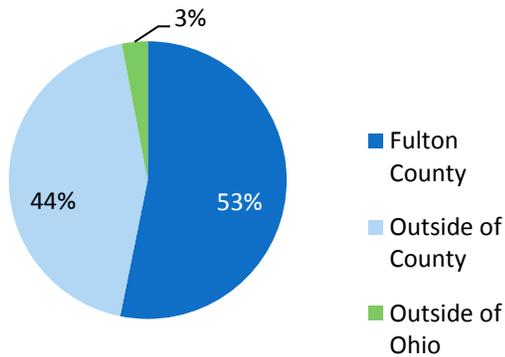
Graph 15: Fulton County Jobs by NAICS Sector⁴⁸

The following table and graphs provide a breakdown of jobs within the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Fulton County industries with highest employment numbers include manufacturing, healthcare and social assistance, education services, retail trade and accommodation and food services. These industries have been the top 5 performing industries in Fulton County over the last decade.



Graph 16: Fulton County Jobs by NAICS Industry Rates 2005-2017⁴⁹

Place of Work for Fulton County Residents

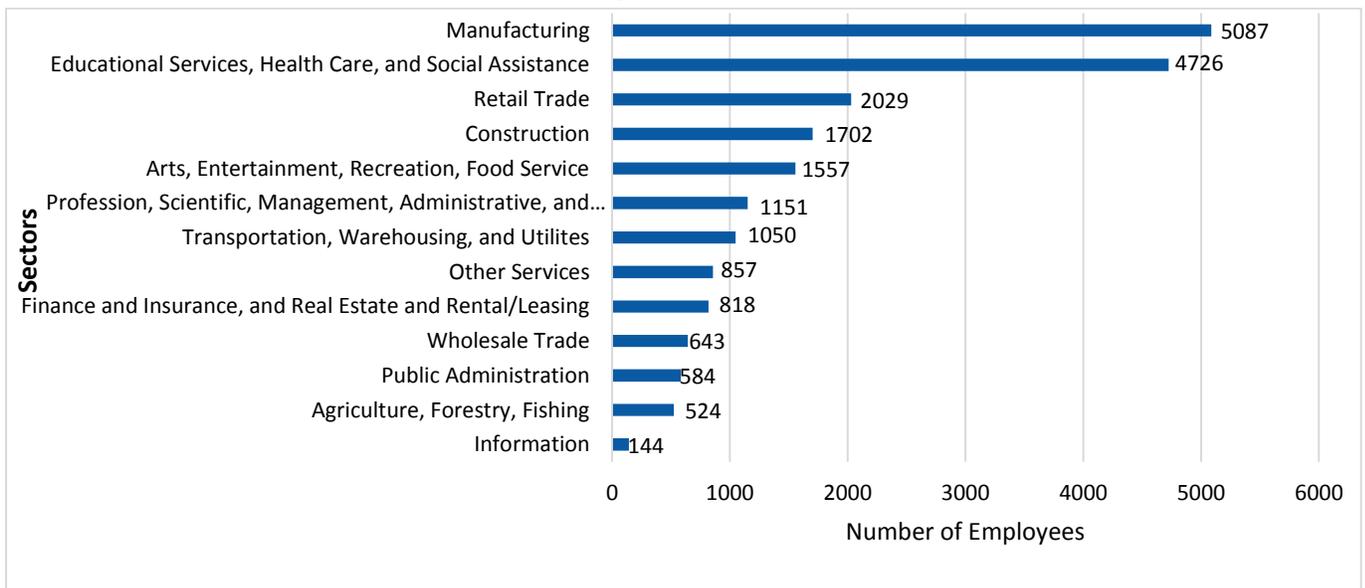


According to 2016 ACS data, 44% of Fulton County residents work outside of the County. Only a small percentage of residents work outside of Ohio.

As depicted in [Graph 17](#), 53% of residents live and work in Fulton County. Residents who live and work in Fulton County are employed mainly in manufacturing, educational services, health care, social services and retail trade. [Graph 18](#) below shows the breakdown of industries with the most employees.

Graph 17: Fulton County Residents Place of Work⁵⁰

Industry Sectors



Graph 18: Fulton County Employee Numbers by Sector⁵¹



Figure 4: Sauder Business in Archbold⁵²



Figure 5: North Star BlueScope Steel in Delta⁵³

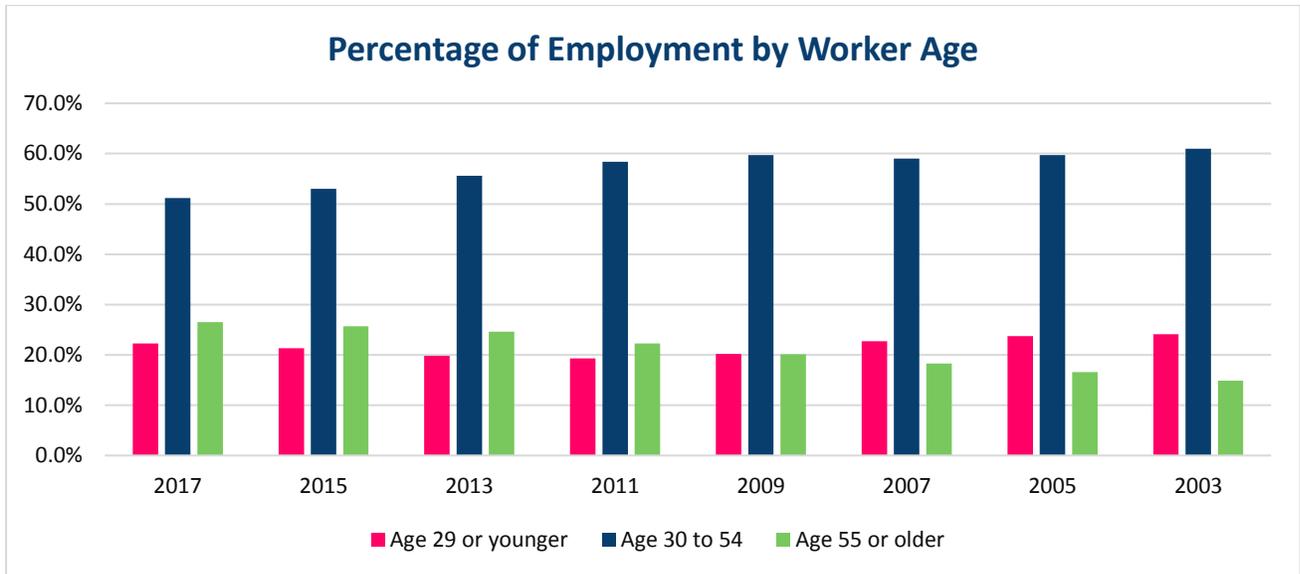
Major and Notable Employers



The number of workers aged 29 or younger in Fulton County’s work force has increased slightly, with just over 20% of the workforce falling within this age range. The dominant age range of Fulton County’s workforce is between the ages of 30 and 54. The percentage of workers in this category peaked in the early part of the century at around 60% of the workforce; it fell to almost 50% in 2017. The final category, workers aged 55 and older, has been on the rise and represents the largest change among workforce characteristics. This population consists of individuals reaching retirement age but remain employed longer for economic or personal reasons.

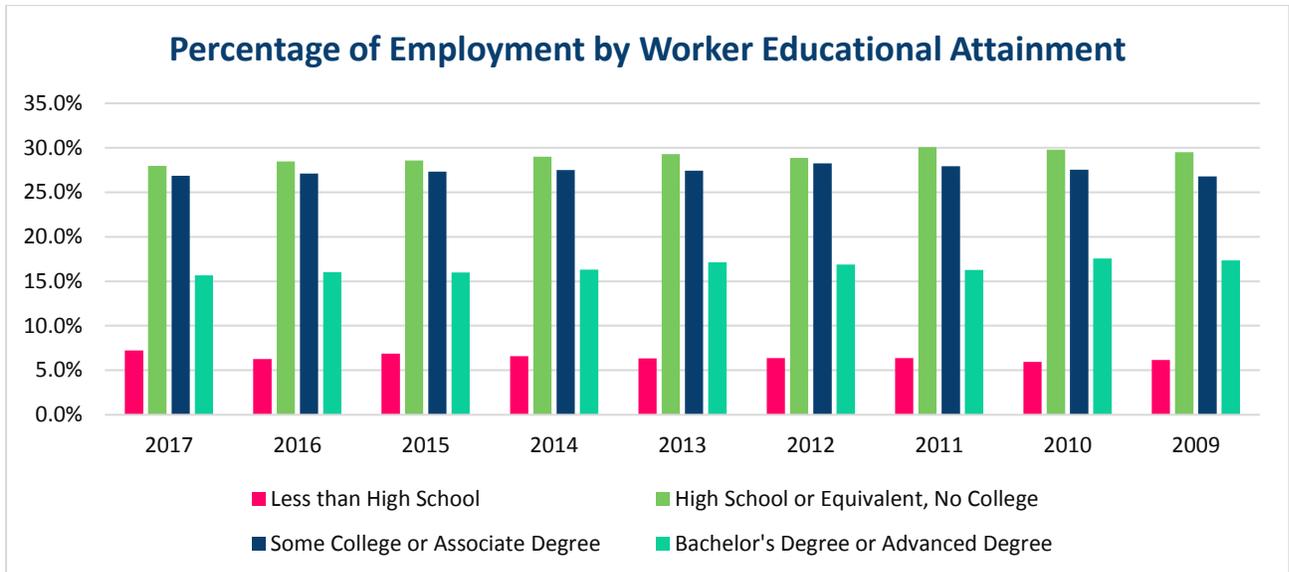


Figure 6: ConAgra Sign in Archbold⁵⁴



Graph 19: Employment Percentages by Worker Age⁵⁵

Education rates have generally remained the same in the past decade. The first category, “less than high school”, hovers around 5%; the category “High school or equivalent” sits at nearly 30%. About 35% of the workforce in Fulton County have attained the equivalent of a high school education or less. Fulton County should strive to reduce this percentage, as research suggests that lower educational attainment results in lower wages. The other two categories, “Some college or Associate’s degree” and “Bachelor’s degree or advanced degree” show promising signs Fulton County is attracting an educated workforce. More than 25% of workers in Fulton County have at least some college education and around 15% of the workforce has obtained a bachelor’s degree or higher. Individuals with higher educational attainment are to be considered desirable for the County given the recent emphasis on higher education among the general public.



Graph 20: Fulton County Employment Percentages by Worker Educational Attainments⁵⁶

The final section on workforce trends involves an analysis of the labor market in Fulton County. According to data from the United States Census Bureau “OnTheMap” feature, the labor market in Fulton County has experienced recent changes. Fulton County’s population peaked at 25,649 in 2013, but has since declined. The number of people employed in Fulton County has increased steadily since 2009.

It is beneficial to observe trends regarding employee residency in relation to work location when analyzing labor in Fulton County. People who reside outside of Fulton County and travel into the County for work outnumber those who both live and work in Fulton County by a few thousand. The tables below provide a detailed breakdown of how many people both live and work in Fulton County, how many people live in Fulton County and work elsewhere and how many people live elsewhere but are employed in the County. Also provided is a breakdown of inflow/outflow characteristics that identifies the age and type of employment for jobs internal and external to Fulton County. This data illustrates the number of people investing in the Region through residency, employment, or both. Fulton County’s goal is to develop a professional economy and inviting community that supports vital infrastructure, safety services and exceptional school systems.

Fulton County Labor Market

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Employed in Fulton County	18,183	18,051	17,280	17,420	17,137	17,268	16,561	16,318	16,914
Living in Fulton County	20,660	20,922	20,304	20,541	25,649	25,399	25,016	19,113	19,325
Net Inflow/Outflow	-2,477	-2,871	-3,024	-3,121	-8,512	-8,131	-8,455	-2,795	-2,411

Table 7: Fulton County Labor Market

In Area Labor Force Efficiency

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Living in Fulton County	20,660	20,922	20,304	20,541	25,649	25,399	25,016	19,113	19,325
Living + employed in Fulton County	8,576	8,553	8,245	8,249	8,116	8,266	7,869	7,701	8,043
Fulton County resident, employed elsewhere	12,084	12,369	12,059	12,292	17,533	17,133	17,147	11,412	11,282

Table 8: Fulton County Residence and Employment Comparisons

In Area Employment Efficiency

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Employed in Fulton County	18,183	18,051	17,280	17,420	17,137	17,268	16,561	16,318	16,914
Employed + Living in Fulton County	8,576	8,553	8,245	8,249	8,116	8,266	7,869	7,701	8,043
Employed in Fulton County, but Living Elsewhere	9,607	9,498	9,035	9,171	9,021	9,002	8,692	8,617	8,871

Table 9: Fulton County Employment and Residence Comparisons

Outflow Job Characteristics

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
External Jobs Filled	12,084	12,369	12,059	12,292	17,533	17,133	17,147	11,412	11,282
Workers Age 29 or Younger	2,864	2,836	2,875	2,879	4,701	4,449	4,714	2,733	2,755
Workers Age 30 to 54	6,465	6,658	6,444	6,659	9,239	9,200	9,263	6,641	6,629
Workers Age 55 or older	2,755	2,875	2,740	2,754	3,593	3,484	3,170	2,038	1,898
Workers in "Goods Producing"	2,829	2,965	2,644	2,715	3,107	3,086	2,984	2,341	2,254
Workers in "Trade, Transportation and Utilities"	2,689	2,697	2,724	2,894	4,775	4,695	4,904	2,898	2,834
Workers in "All Other Services"	6,566	6,707	6,691	6,683	9,651	9,352	9,259	6,173	6,194

Table 10: Fulton County Outflow Job Characteristics

Inflow Job Characteristics

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Internal Jobs Filled	9,607	9,498	9,035	9,171	9,021	9,002	8,692	8,617	8,871
Workers Age 29 or Younger	2,173	2,095	1,962	1,922	1,872	1,802	1,669	1,628	1,784
Workers Age 30 to 54	5,009	5,030	4,857	5,080	5,025	5,099	5,100	5,234	5,384
Workers Age 55 or Older	2,425	2,373	2,216	2,169	2,124	2,101	1,923	1,755	1,703
Workers in "Goods Producing"	4,439	4,241	3,956	3,800	3,625	3,541	3,540	3,606	3,731
Workers in "Trade, Transportation and Utilities"	1,736	1,829	1,716	1,730	1,559	1,694	1,534	1,496	1,642
Workers in "All Other Services"	3,432	3,428	3,363	3,641	3,837	3,767	3,618	3,515	3,498

Table 11: Fulton County Inflow Job Characteristics

INDUSTRIES CLUSTERS (JobsEq)

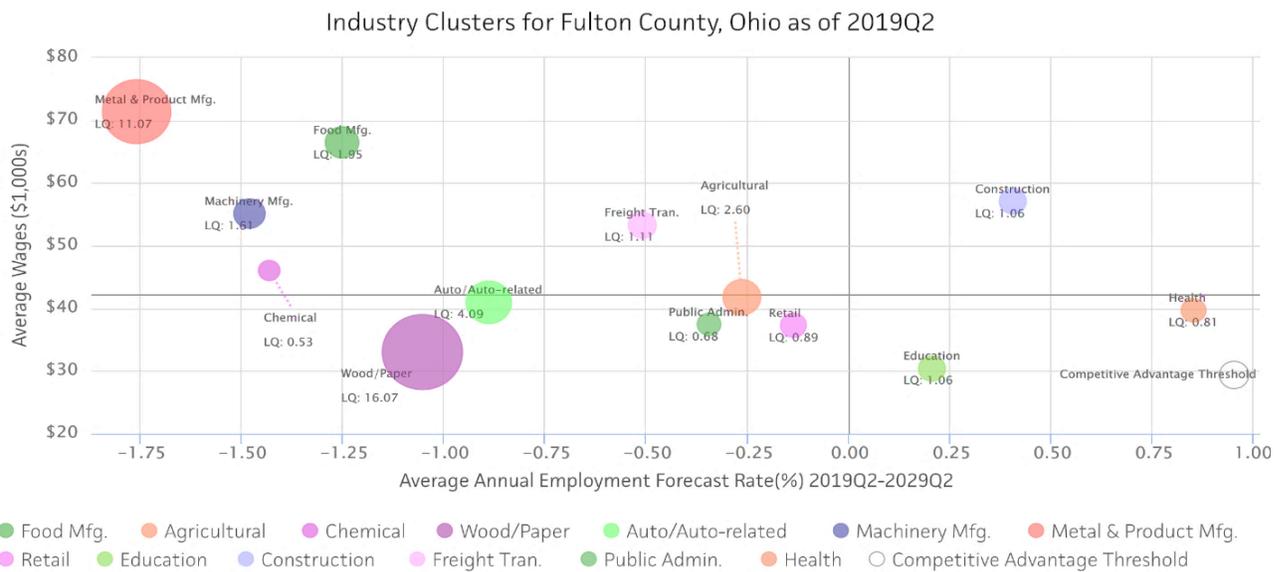


Figure 7: Industries Clusters⁵⁷

The following industries have large location quotients, which indicates there is a high concentration of employment in these sectors when compared to the national average.



All industries listed above are expected to have reduced employment rates in the next decade. Industries most vulnerable to employment loss are metal and product manufacturing, machinery manufacturing, chemical and food manufacturing.

Though the aforementioned industries are expected to decrease in employment rates, a handful of industries have positive growth rates and are projected to increase employment in the next decade. Those industries include the health, construction and education field.

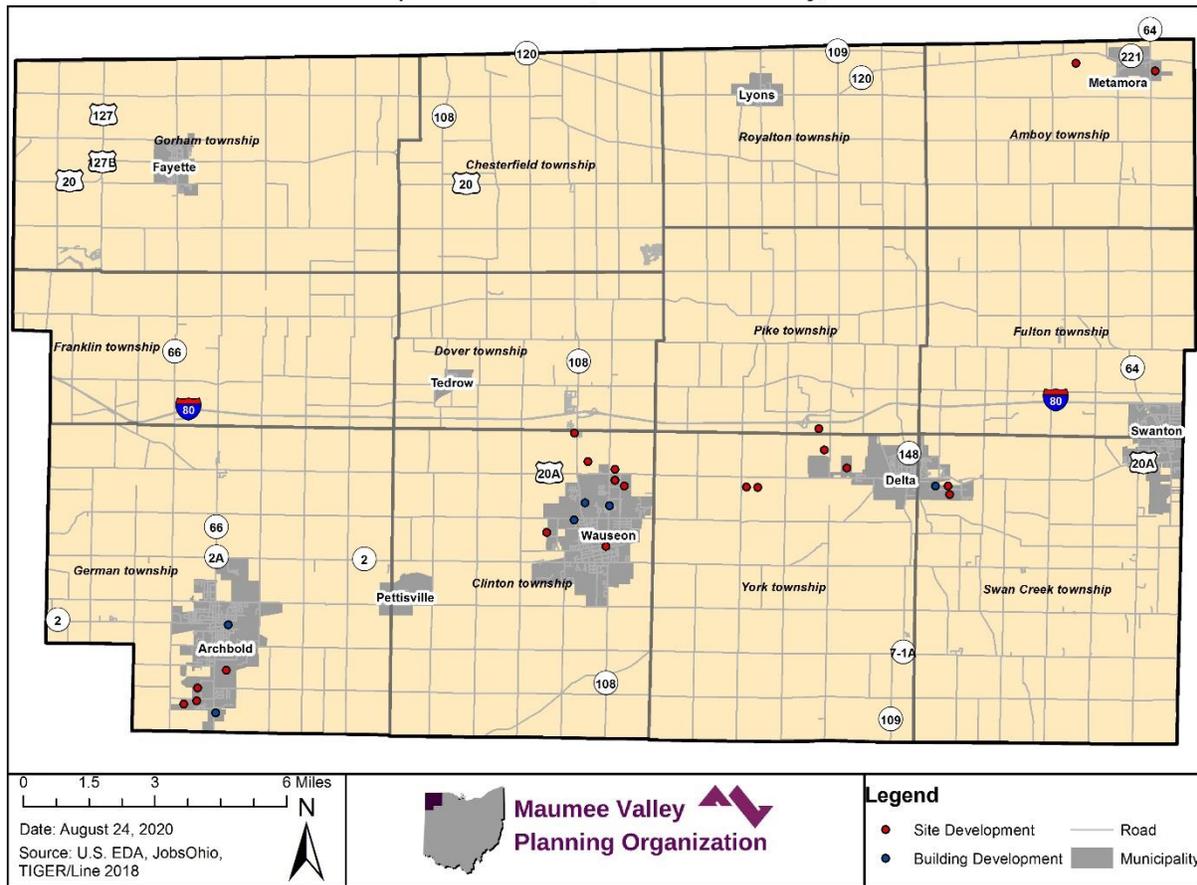


It is recommended that Fulton County’s government, citizens and local businesses work towards the reversal of negative projections to maintain a flourishing economy. This may include welcoming new industries, providing greater opportunity for local businesses and increased communication and collaboration between the local government and its community.

Future Industries

It is recommended that Fulton County actively manage their potential development sites to encourage economic development. Currently, Fulton County’s Economic Development Corporation (FCEDC) advertises areas of potential development. FCEDC may be a useful tool for interested investors; the County should consistently update its advertisements when new sites become available or existing sites are sold. As of November 2020, there are 19 sites available and 7 buildings prepared for development⁵⁸.

Development Areas, Fulton County, Ohio



Map 4: Fulton County Development Sites⁵⁹

3.6 Goals and Objectives

Economic Development Goal 1: Promote Economic Development in Appropriate and Suitable Areas.

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Identify appropriate sites for retail, commercial and industrial development based on topography, geology, accessibility, infrastructure and proximity to complementary uses.</i>	Identify areas with unique economic development potential and encourage similar land uses on adjacent land when possible.	July 1, 2021	Fulton County Economic Development Corporation
	Identify, assess and create a database of locations appropriate for retail, commercial and industrial development. Policies, current infrastructure, human health, environmental health and land conditions should be considered when establishing this database.	September 1, 2021	Fulton County Economic Development Corporation

Economic Development Goal 2: Create New Job Opportunities in the Region.

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Prepare for growth.</i>	Identify, assess and create a database of locations appropriate for retail, commercial and industrial development. Policies, current infrastructure, human health, environmental health and land conditions should be considered when establishing this database.	February 2022	TBD
	Develop a formal County Wide economic development strategic plan that include SMART goals.	June 2025	

<i>O2: Improve administration.</i>	Encourage business growth in infill locations.	Continuous Improvement	
	Review and streamline city and county administrative processes relating to the establishment of local business. The amount of “red tape” paperwork and permits should be reduced if they are found to be redundant or not applicable to the business being established.	Continuous Improvement Continuous Improvement	All County Agencies and stakeholders
<i>O3: Identify additional resources to aid in economic development.</i>	Support the creation of an Economic Development District in the region. This will give the area access to more economic development resources.	January 2022	Maumee Valley Planning Organization

Economic Development Goal 3: Support Local Businesses, Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

<i>Objectives</i>	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
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<i>O1: Create a business retention and expansion program.</i>	<p>This plan should identify opportunities to help companies expand in the community.</p> <p>Relationships with individual company executives is created to help build loyalty. This can be via yearly lunch and learns sponsored by the County, etc.</p>	TBD	TBD
<i>O2: Promote mixed use developments.</i>	TBD	TBD	TBD
<i>O3: Support efforts to examine and expand technological infrastructure for business and residential needs. This includes promoting access to high-speed telecommunications.</i>	Technologies advancements are supported by the County when businesses and agencies communicate technology needs	TBD	TBD
<i>O4: Research economic gardening.</i>	<p>A short report defining economic gardening should be created to establish if it is a good fit for Fulton County.</p> <p>If economic gardening is deemed appropriate, move forward with a plan to include it in the strategic plan and addressing the next steps to moving forward.</p>	TBD	TBD
<i>O5: Expand and support Retail and Tourism.</i>	Hire a consultant or create a new job position for a Retail and Tourism Coordinator. Grant funding will have to be secured to explore this option.	TBD	TBD

Economic Development Goal 4: Increase Economic Development and Revitalization.

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Maintain and enhance existing industrial areas, with special attention to changing technology and market conditions.</i>	TBD	TBD	TBD
<i>O2: Establish and strengthen partnerships.</i>	<p>The Counties economic development agencies should have a close relationship with Ohio Development Services Agency and JobsOhio.</p> <p>Identify additional resources to aid in economic development.</p>	TBD	TBD

Economic Development Goal 5: Improve and Advance Diversity in the Workforce.

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Establish an understanding of workforce diversity.</i>	Create a definition of what workforce diversity means in Fulton County.	July 2021	Fulton County Economic Development Corporation
	Create a County website shell about workplace diversity.	July 2021	
<i>O2: Understand current diversity trends in the County.</i>	Every 5 years have the top 20 employers in Fulton County complete a survey/census related to diversity.	August of 2021, 2026, 2031, 2036	- Fulton County Economic Development Corporation

<i>O3: Socially support workplace diversity.</i>	Develop a report that utilizes the data from this survey into a useable, actionable plan.	January 2022, 2027, 2032, 2037	- Fulton County Economic Development Corporation, MVPO,
	Publish an online resource guide on the County economic development website that provides businesses with the essential resources they need to learn about and support diversity in the workplace.	July 2021 (continuous updates)	- Fulton County Economic Development Corporation
	October is diversity month. Participate by creating a month-long marketing campaign related to workforce diversity.	Yearly	- Fulton County Economic Development Corporation, Ohio Means Jobs Fulton County
<i>O4: Support workplace diversity through actionable items.</i>	Create a voluntary diversity award for local businesses to apply for that "labels" them as leaders in diversity.	May 2022. Revisit & update criteria as needed.	Fulton County Economic Development Corporation
	Assist 3 local businesses each year in receiving this award.	January 2023-2040	
	Develop a way to publicly recognize/reward businesses that achieve this award.	January 2023	
	Establish diversity policies for businesses that receive local tax incentives.	July 2024	
<i>O5: Review</i>	Conduct a review of these goal and objectives every 5 years.	January 2026,2031, 2036	Fulton County Economic Development Corporation, MVPO, County Commissioners, Planning Commission

Economic Development Goal 6: Encourage Development of Industries that Support the County’s Historical and Cultural Background

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Entity Responsible</i>
<i>O1: Establish appropriate design characters.</i>	Develop and enforce design standards. Encourage local initiatives such as establishing design corridors, business improvement districts, or historic district designation to focus attention and resources on downtown revitalization.	TBD	TBD
<i>O2: Support historic preservation ordinances.</i>	Locate any existing locations that have historical significance to the County.	2022	TBD
	Create historic preservation ordinances.	2024	
	Explore and highly consider creating a Historic Preservation Commission that works closely with the economic development office.	2026	

Economic Development Goal 7: Support Workers

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Entity Responsible</i>
<i>O1: Improve access to local employment opportunities.</i>	TBD	TBD	TBD
<i>O2: Increase access to advanced education, workforce development and job training opportunities.</i>	Promote relationships with Northwest State Community College and Four County Joint Vocational School.	TBD	TBD

<i>O3: Improve the quality of K-12 education.</i>	Support schools so they can have an average state grade of "B".	Continuous Improvement	All government agencies and citizens.
<i>O4: Providing an adequate supply of affordable housing for all income levels within the community.</i>	<p>To increase housing options, the communities should be educated about and encouraged to give incentives to developers that provide both market rate housing and low-income housing.</p> <p>-Local agencies should help citizens on waiting lists for housing to sign up for educational programs that improve their life skills, credit and earning potential.</p> <p>- Coordinate public and private resources to support housing needs.</p>	TBD	TBD

Economic Development Goal 8: Support the Local Food Economy

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Entity Responsible</i>
<i>O1: Identify and expand the support for a local food economy.</i>	<p>Identify organizations and/or individuals interested in the food economy. Work with them to decide what they would like from the county. i.e., spaces for community garden, etc.</p> <p>Complete a county survey to identify interest in community garden space.</p>	<p>September 2021</p> <p>November 2021</p>	<p>TBD</p> <p>County Planning Commission</p>
<i>O2: Promote agency and County</i>	Complete research to find out if	December 2021	TBD

<p><i>government cooperation to expand community gardening opportunities.</i></p>	<p>underutilized, publicly owned properties/ facilities could be used for one or more components of the food system loop.</p> <p>Identify and establish a space for a community garden(s) if desired by the public.</p> <p>Established one or more community gardens/parks.</p>	<p>April 2022</p>	
<p><i>O3: Support the local farming economy.</i></p>	<p>Work with communities to promote food choices for supporting local farmers. This includes increasing the access of information about local growers to consumers interested in purchasing locally grown food.</p> <p>Support efforts to engage retiring farmers in an agriculture apprenticeship program to share knowledge and sell active farmlands to new farmers.</p> <p>Support local farm producers marketing initiatives. This can be done by starting County Produce social media accounts, devoting space for produce advertisements, etc.</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>TBD</p>

Chapter 4: Transportation

Chapter Contents:

- 4.1 Existing Conditions and Trends
- 4.2 Resident Transportation Needs
- 4.3 Transportation Types
- 4.4 1998 Transportation Goals
- 4.5 Moving Together 2040 Transportation Plan Goals
- 4.6 Safety-Crash Reports
- 4.7 Ohio Turnpike I-90/I-80 Services and Impact
- 4.8 Functional Classification
- 4.9 Transportation for an Aging Community
- 4.10 Objectives

Fulton County’s rural communities rely heavily on several modes of transportation. Today, much of America depends on long-distance freight transportation due to the popularity of



Figure 8: TOL Express Airport in Swanton⁶⁰

online shopping, global development and manufacturing management. Personal transportation is a necessity for rural Americans because of increased distance between home, work, shopping and extra-curricular activities. Fulton County citizens and industries depend on reliable transportation services. This section of the Plan examines transportation development, safety, road use and economic impacts.

4.1 Existing Conditions and Trends

“The state maintains 140.63 miles of road in Fulton County and the Ohio Turnpike Commission operates 26.10 miles. There are 363.35 miles of county roads and 383.81 miles under township jurisdiction. The County Engineer, County Commissioners and Township Trustees of Fulton County are dedicated to improving and maintaining first class road and drainage networks for the benefit of county residents and our welcome visitors”⁶¹.

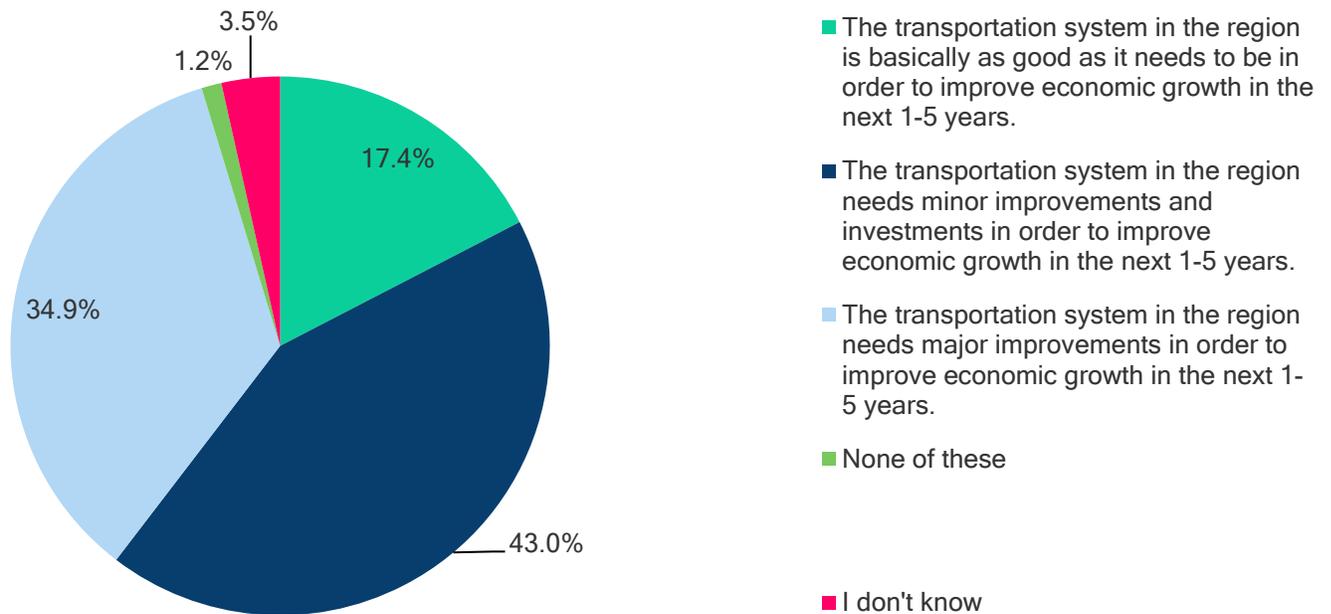
4.2 Resident Transportation Needs

A survey was conducted by MVPO to ascertain transportation obstacles and community needs that could provide guidance for improved transportation methods and services. The survey results show the majority of Fulton County’s residents are satisfied with its transportation

system. Most residents reveal they have access to reliable transportation, with personal transportation being the most popular means. Very few survey respondents indicated transportation is a barrier to reaching their destination. In response to citizen feedback, Fulton County Commissioners created goals and compiled transportation data relevant to the future of transportation within Fulton County; the data and goals will be discussed in this chapter.

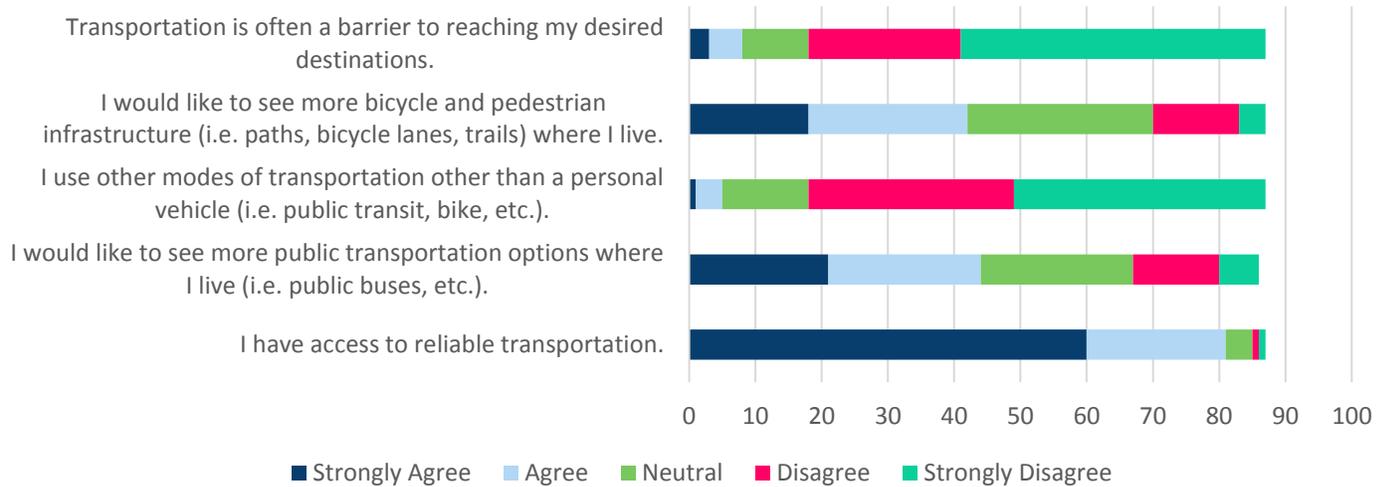
Graph 21 reveals that 43% of survey participants claimed the transportation system in the region needs only minor improvements and investment to improve economic growth in the region within the next 1-5 years.

Transportation: Statement That Best Reflects Respondent Views of Transportation System



*Graph 21: Fulton County Transportation Survey Responses*⁶²

Resident Sentiments Regarding Transportation System

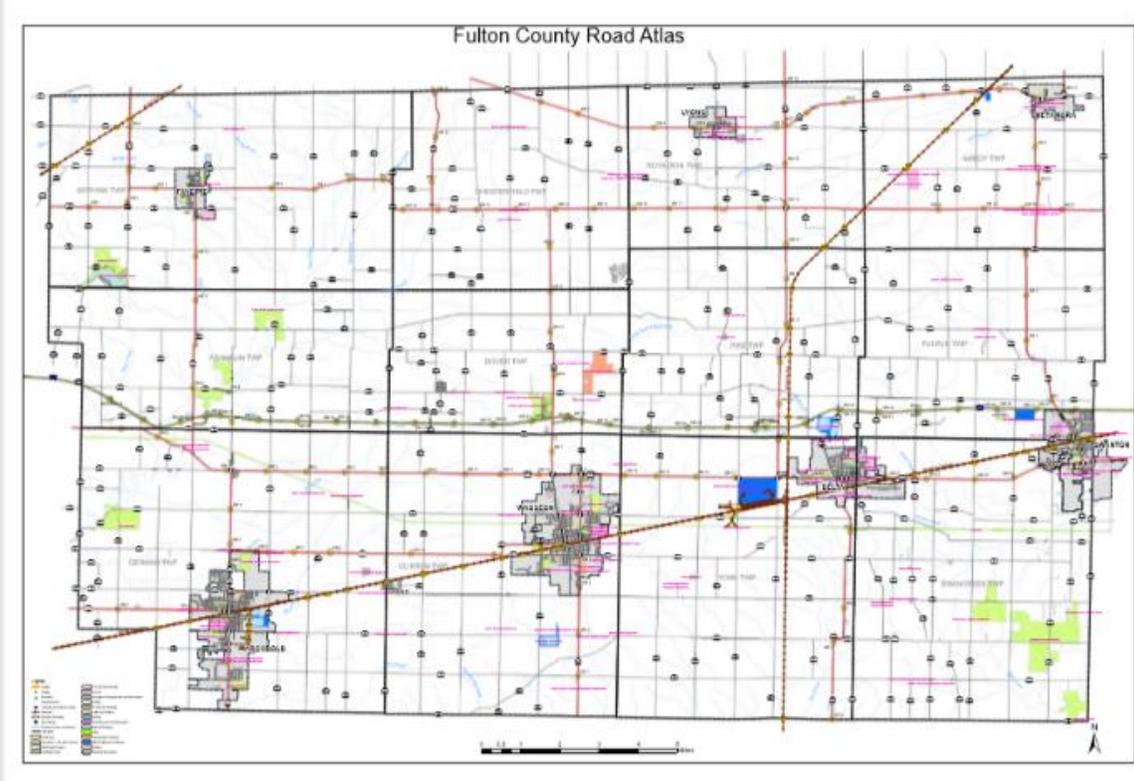


Graph 22: Fulton County Resident Sentiments Regarding Transportation System⁵⁶

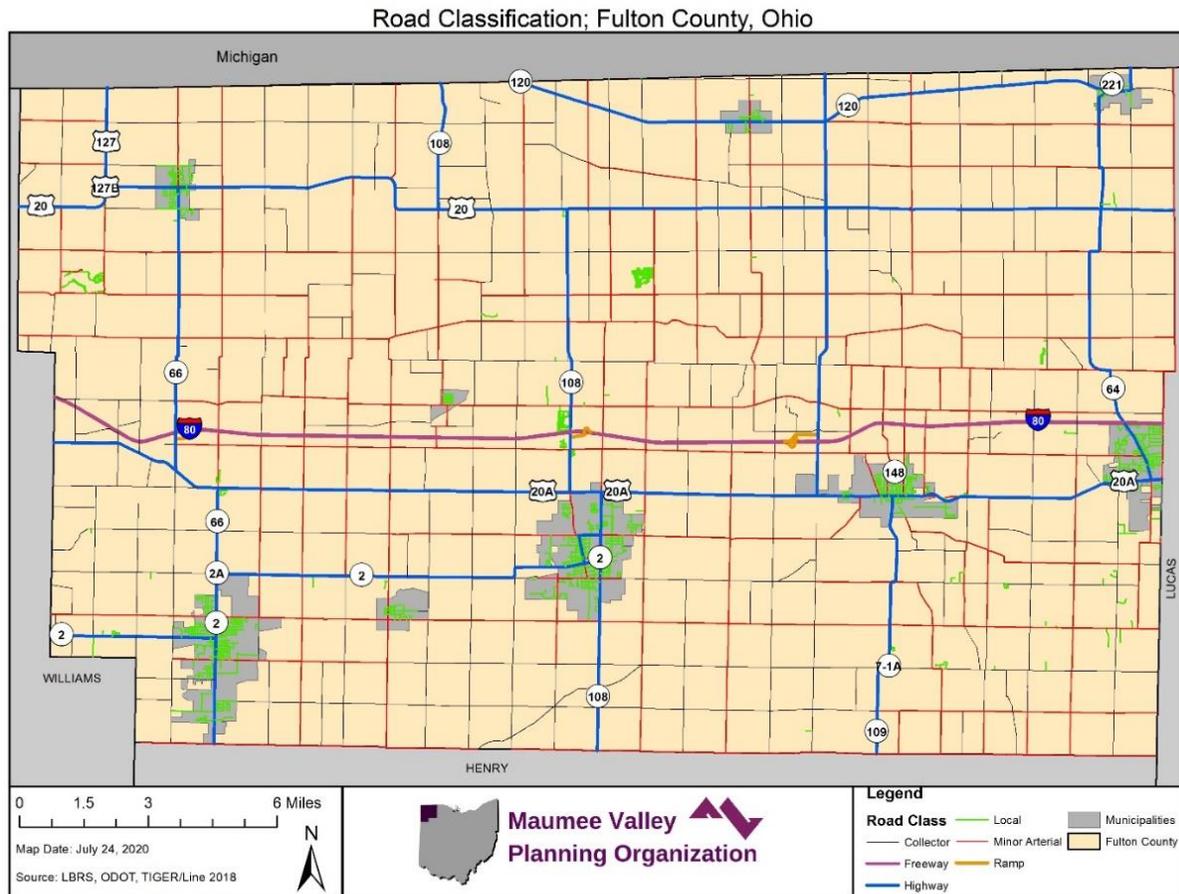
Above, [Graph 22](#) appears to support the notion that Fulton County citizens are happy with the current transportation situation. The graph depicts that residents are neutral about moving forward with active transportation modal options.

4.3 Transportation Types

Fulton County has an extensive transportation system, including I-80/I-90, which extends east and west across the County. Fulton County is serviced by three separate interchanges (exits 25, 32 and 39). Shipments moving north and south can access I-75, which is 10 miles east of Fulton County. County state routes, highways and U.S. routes accessible to other areas include: SR-2, SR-66, SR-108 SR-109, SR-120, SR-127 and US-20. Below, [Map 5](#) depicts the transportation network within Fulton County, Ohio.



Map 5: Fulton County Road Atlas⁶³



Map 6: Fulton County Road Classification⁶⁴

Rail Transportation

Fulton County contains a multitude of railway networks. Fulton County companies utilize the Norfolk Southern dual main line which runs east and west from the Atlantic Coast to the Pacific Coast. The Ann Arbor Railtex, a short line which runs north and south through the County, extends from the Detroit and Canadian markets south to the Cincinnati markets. The Indiana and Ohio Railway (IORY) is 543 miles long and travels through the MVPO region about one time a day: the IORY hauls agriculture products, chemicals, plastics, metals and minerals. The expansive rail network provides valuable travel, commerce and industry development opportunities⁶⁵. It is recommended that officials and businesses identify potential opportunities for growth through rail transportation.

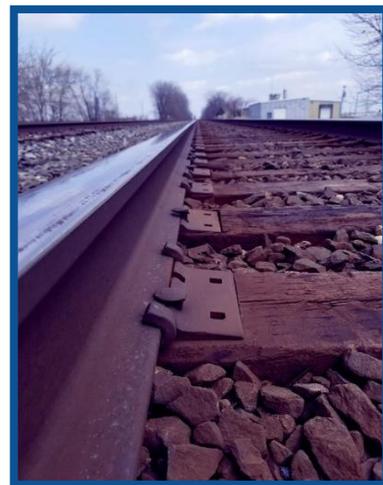


Figure 9: Pettisville, Ohio Main Railroad Tracks⁶⁶



⁶⁷ Air Transportation

Fulton County Airport (USE)

Located north of Wauseon, the Fulton County Airport offers general aviation services. The airport conducts corporate flight activities from the Northwest Ohio Region. The Fulton County Airport is owned by Fulton County Commissioners and managed by the Airport Authority Board⁶⁸. The airport covers 42 acres and has two runways: One is 3,882 feet long and the other is 2,115 feet long. The airport averages 61 aircraft operations per day: 45% are local general aviation, 45% are transient general aviation and 10% are air taxi. Less than 1% of the Fulton County Airport aircrafts are designated for military use⁶⁹.

Toledo Express Airport (TOL)

The Toledo Express Airport (TOL) is located in Swanton, Ohio in Lucas County. The TOL is a joint civil-military airport located in Swanton and Monclova Townships. The Village of Swanton is split between Fulton and Lucas Counties; thus, the TOL is a convenient means of transportation for many Maumee Valley residents and businesses.

Toledo Express ranked 218 in enplanements at commercial service airports from 2017 to 2018, resulting in a nearly 20% increase in passengers within that time frame⁷⁰. The airport ranked 116 in U.S. cargo airports based on landing weight from 2017-2018⁷¹. TOL features Allegiant and American Airlines; these airlines provide 5 nonstop destinations to Fort Myers/Punta Gorda, Orlando/Sanford, Tampa/St. Pete, Charlotte and Chicago. TOL provides daily access to business hubs like Detroit, Chicago, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh and Cleveland⁷².

Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW)

Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport (DTW) is located in Romulus, Michigan, about 20 miles southwest of Detroit's Central Business District and 90 minutes northeast of Fulton County. DTW was the 19th busiest US airport in 2018 and 2017 based on total passengers boarding⁷³. The airport was ranked 35th overall in U.S. cargo airports due to the amount of weight landed in 2017 and 2018⁷⁴. The airport services more than 140 nonstop destinations via 13 international and national airlines and 2 charter airlines. The airport has 35.2 million passengers annually with an estimated 10.2 billion dollars in annual economic impact. DTW consistently ranks high in airport quality and customer satisfaction. DTW ranked first in customer satisfaction for large airports in 2019, according to a J.D. Power and Associates study⁷⁵.



Map 7: Fulton County Airport Accessibility⁷⁶

Non-Drivers

The Administration of Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) provides transportation services under the direction of the Fulton County Job and Family Services (FCJFS) Community Transportation Plan. Under the Community Transportation Plan, services are provided to eligible participants, as is stated in Chapter 5160-24-01 through 5160-24-03 of the Administrative Code. Qualifiers for this service include a citizen be a resident of Fulton County and have a qualifying Medicaid assistance group for the month transportation is requested⁷⁷. There is a need for an active transportation plan in Fulton County; it is recommended one be established and implement further public transportation services for the community.

4.4 1998 Transportation Goals

In 1998, the Fulton County Comprehensive Plan addressed four traffic concerns:

- ❖ Congestion
- ❖ Regional Access
- ❖ Carrying High Traffic Volumes and the Need to Provide Access to Land Users
- ❖ Cut-Through Traffic

To address these concerns, three transportation goals were developed. These goals have been analyzed to determine if they were met in the last 22 years. To learn more about the County’s level of achievement towards these goals, refer to *Figure 10* below:

<p>1. Protect Road Integrity</p>  <p>ACHIEVED</p>	<p>Goal: To protect the integrity of State, County and Township roads that will ultimately be collectors or arterials from land use patterns that reduce their carrying capacity.</p> <hr/> <p>The Fulton County Subdivision Regulations have been amended to help meet this goal.</p> <hr/> <p>Article VI, Access Management, was added to the County Subdivision regulations. This article is vital to protecting the integrity of roads.</p> <hr/> <p>A Fulton County Access Management Map was created in 1999, which classified roads.</p> <hr/> <p>Distance between drive cuts are restricted, depending on road classification.</p>
<p>2. Preserve Right of Way</p>  <p>ACHIEVED</p>	<p>Goal: To ensure that adequate right-of-way is preserved on all development to provide for widening of roads and adequate drainage capacity.</p> <hr/> <p>The Subdivision Regulations & Zoning Regulations require a minimum setback measured from proposed highway right-of-way.</p>

<h3>3. Protect Road Drainage</h3> 	<p>Goal: To protect State, County and Township road drainage from being used for draining developments.</p>
	<p>Require developers to provide a drainage plan.</p>

Figure 10: Fulton County 1998 Comprehensive Plan Transportation Goals

“Provide a safe, efficient and sustainable multi-modal transportation system that fosters economic development, protects the environment and meets the needs of all residents in the region”.

-MOVING TOGETHER 2040 VISION

4.5 Moving Together 2040 Transportation Plan Goals

In July 2015, Maumee Valley Planning Organization published the *Moving Together 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan*. This plan identifies improvements to existing transportation infrastructure and future initiatives that should be completed by 2040 in the Maumee Valley Region. This plan was followed closely to accomplish Fulton County’s new transportation goals. Currently, MVPO Staff is working to update this transportation and create a *Moving Together 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan*.

Moving Together 2045 Long Range Transportation Goals		
<h4>Infrastructure Condition</h4> 	<h4>Personal Mobility</h4> 	<h4>Freight Movement and Economic Vitality</h4> 
<p>Maintain the existing transportation system in a state of good repair</p>	<p>Increase transportation options available for people to reach their desired destination</p>	<p>Improve the region's freight network and support the economic vitality of the area</p>
<h4>Safety</h4> 	<h4>Environmental Sustainability</h4> 	<h4>Bicycle and Pedestrian Initiatives</h4> 
<p>Increase the safety of the region's transportation network for motorized and non-motorized users through reduction in fatalities and serious injuries</p>	<p>Protect the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life while improving the region's transportation network</p>	<p>Improve the non-motorized transportation network</p>

4.6 Safety-Crash Reports

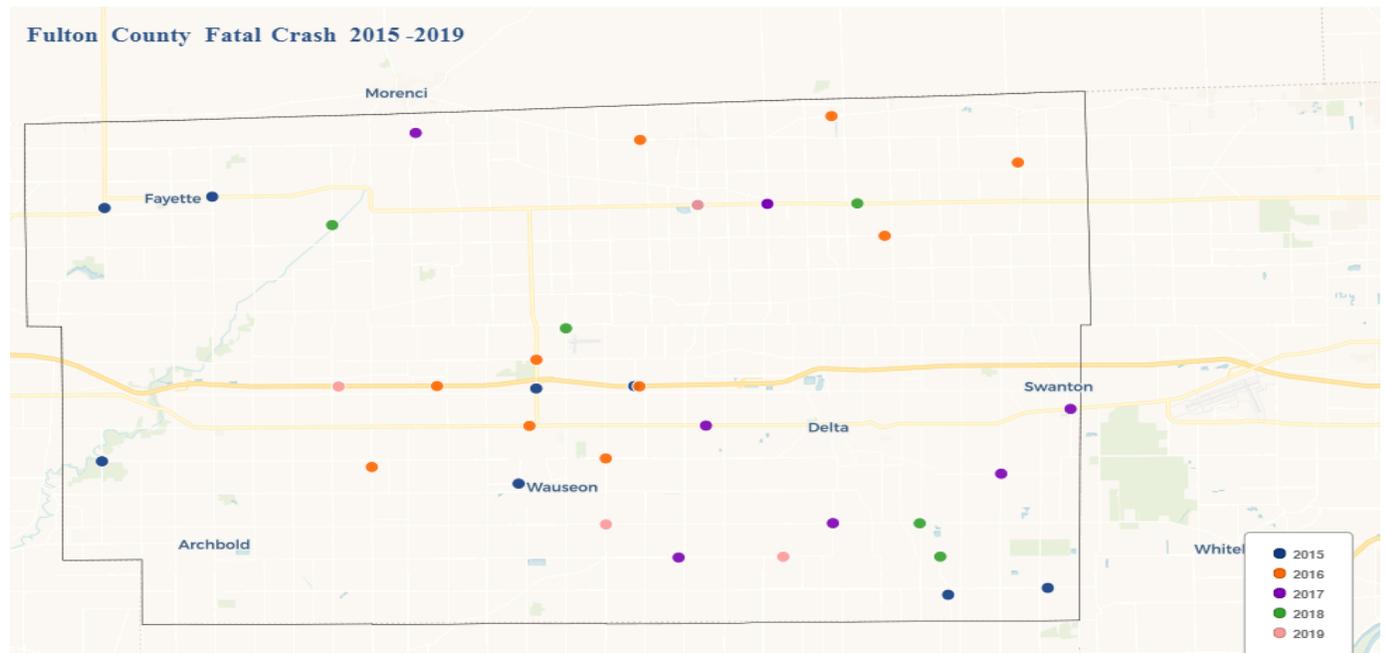
Fulton County’s first goal is to improve its transportation system’s safety and efficiency.

Consistent analysis of Fulton County’s crash data may be used to measure the progress of this goal. *Map 8* depicts locations of the fatal crashes in Fulton County between 2015 and 2019. The findings reveal fatal crashes do not occur with any sort of frequency at a specific road segment. The fatal crashes occur at random sites throughout the county and do not appear to be connected to improper road engineering⁷⁸.

Fulton County, OH Fatal Crashes 2015-2019



Graph 23: Fulton County 2015-2019 Fatal Crash Numbers



Map 8: Fulton County 2015-2019 Fatal Crash Sites⁷⁹

4.7 Ohio Turnpike I-90/I-80 Services and Impact

Fulton County’s next transportation goal is continuous development of a modern, safe and efficient transportation network; the Ohio Turnpike impacts advancement of this goal. Today, the Ohio Turnpike I-80/I-90 has three access points running through Fulton County. The construction of these exits has expanded the County’s transportation network.

Figure 11 displays the frequent interchange activity that occurs on the Ohio Turnpike exits located in Fulton County⁸⁰.



*Figure 11: Turnpike 80/90 outside of Delta*⁸¹

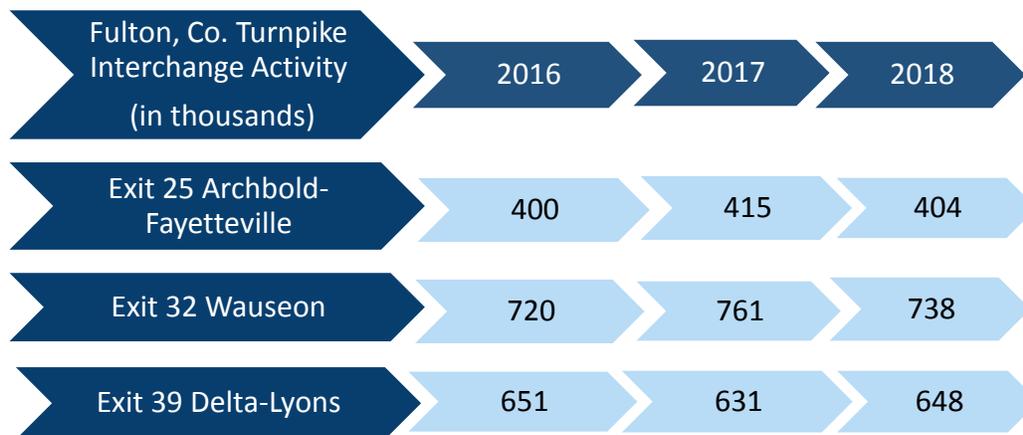


Figure 12: Fulton County Turnpike Interchange Activity

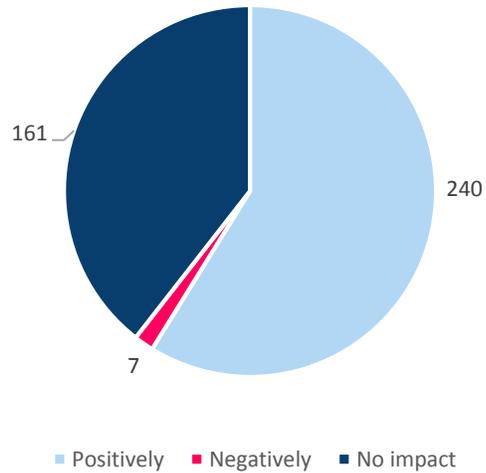
The 1998 Comprehensive Plan expressed concerns regarding the long-term effects of the 3 exits on the region’s rural character. An individual social media poll was published on June 30, 2020 to collect input concerning the impact the turnpike has on Fulton County citizens. The poll stated, “As a resident of Fulton County, has your life been impacted positively, negatively, or not impacted at all by the creation of the 3 turnpike exchanges within the County? How so?” Below, *Graph 24* provides evidence of the overwhelmingly positive impact of the turnpike exits.

Graph 24: Fulton County Resident Responses to Turnpike Exits

Positive Impacts of the Turnpike

- ❖ Travelers pay for road damage rather than taxpayers
- ❖ Creates a larger network to transport goods for Fulton County livelihood
- ❖ Creates jobs for Fulton County citizens
- ❖ Increases prime advertisement space
- ❖ Supports Fulton County industries
- ❖ Fulton County is more accessible

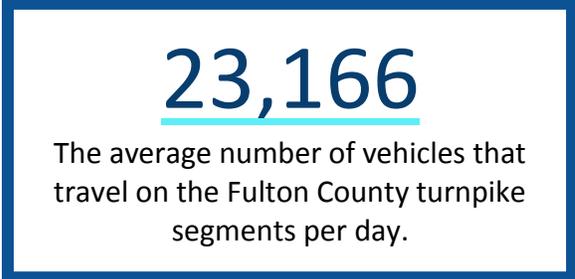
The Impact of the 3 turnpike exits on Fulton Co. Residents



Negative Impacts of the Turnpike

- ❖ Traffic impacts citizen drive time

Figure 13: Fulton County Average Number of Crashes on Turnpikes ⁸²



4.8 Functional Classification

Functional classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the type of traffic service they provide. There are three highway functional classifications: Arterial, collector and local roads. All streets and highways are grouped into one of these classes, depending on the character of traffic (i.e., local or long distance) and the degree of land access they allow. These classifications are described as follows:

- ❖ **Arterial:** Provides the highest level of service at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance, with some degree of access control.
- ❖ **Collector:** Provides a less highly developed level of service at a lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them with arterials.
- ❖ **Local:** Consists of all roads not defined as arterials or collectors; primarily provides access to land with little or no through movement⁸³.

In 2010, an update to the functional classification network eliminated the separation of classes into urban and rural designations in the 2000 network. Currently, the same seven classes exist in both areas; the urban and rural characteristic determines the federal aid eligibility of the road.

Federal Aid Eligible Facilities

Rural Routes	Urban Routes
01 Interstate	01 Interstate
02 Other Freeway/Expressway	02 Other Freeway/Expressway
03 Principal Arterial	03 Principal Arterial
04 Minor Arterial	04 Minor Arterial
05 Major Collector	05 Major Collector
	06 Minor Collector
Non-Federal Eligible Facilities	
06 Minor Collector (Rural)	
07 Local (Urban and Rural)	

Table 12: Federal Aid Eligible Facilities

The table below illustrates the Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled in thousands (kDMVT) on rural and urban routes in Fulton County. This data measures the average flow of traffic on the roadways in a 24-hour period. The rural and urban DMVTs are divided into roadway segments and the total amount of miles traveled are totaled⁸⁴.

Rural Route Network # of Miles Traveled (000's)							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Subtotal
582.42	0.00	121.70	164.53	338.61	58.32	168.17	1,433.734
Urban Route Network # of Miles Traveled (000's)							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Subtotal
30.55	0.00	0.00	85.21	27.07	2.87	24.08	169.780
							Total
							1,603.51

Table 13: 2018 Fulton County Summary: Rural Route Network Number of Miles Traveled (in Thousands)⁸⁵

The 1998 Transportation Plan emphasized the importance of creating and maintaining adequate capacity on Alternate Route 20, reserving County Road D as a regional arterial and maintaining the regional arterial of U.S. 20. These factors are important today because Alternate Route 20, County Road D and U.S. 20 provide major transportation services.

Fulton County Travel Fast Facts

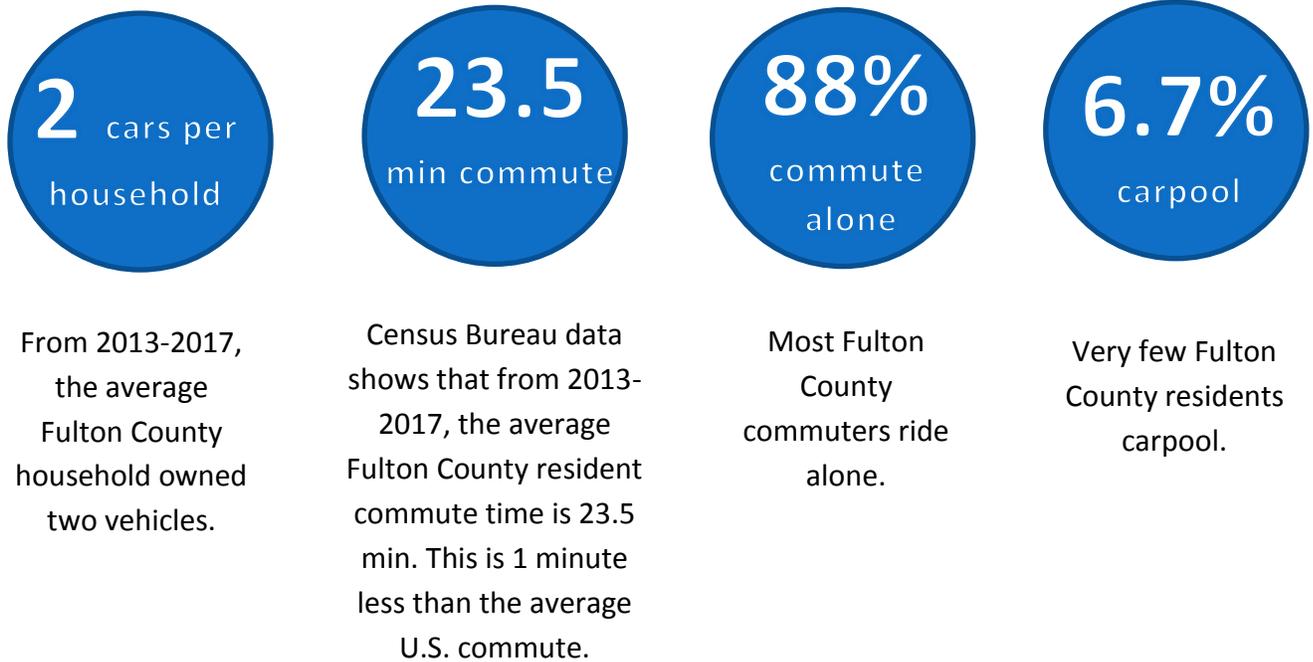


Figure 14: Fulton County Travel Fast Facts

⁸⁶ 4.9 Transportation for an Aging Community



As the Fulton County population ages, there may be greater need for senior transportation services in the area. Currently, the Fulton County Senior Center relies on volunteers to provide transportation services to seniors in need⁸⁷.

Across the United States, large counties partner with ride share programs like Lyft and Uber to transport seniors. For a one-time \$15 registration fee, citizens aged 60 and older can pay \$1 for every ride that is 15 miles or less. It is recommended that County officials consider instating a similar ride share program partnership to improve transportation for the elderly and disabled population⁸⁸. The Fulton County Coordinated Transportation Plan 2017-2022 goes into further detail about transportation services for the elderly population.

Figure 15: Walking Symbol on Brick Wall in Delta⁸⁹

4.10 Goals and Objectives

Fulton County shall strive to meet the transportation following transportation goals by 2045. Many of the goals were developed in MVPO’s Moving Together 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan and are designed to be implemented throughout the region. The goals are cited from both MVPO’s Transportation Plan and the Fulton County Coordinated Transportation 2017-2022 Plan.



Transportation Goal 1: Safety

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by Date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Identify and improve hazardous intersections and sections of roadway in the MVPO region.</i>	23,108 crashes occurred from 2015-2019 in the 5-county region. 152 of these crashes resulted in a fatality. Total crashes in region increased by 1.4% over year 2015-2019.	Continuous	ODOT MVPO County Engineers
<i>O2: Support and prioritize projects that enhance safety.</i>	Many projects listed on the annually updated Project List reflect safety needs in the region.	Continuous	MVPO Local Government Agencies
<i>O3: Support and promote the work of safety education groups and programs.</i>	County-area Safe Communities and District Safety Review Teams meet monthly or quarterly to discuss high crash areas and ways to educate the public on safe driving.	Continuous	DSRT Liaison Safe Communities Coordinator MVPO

Transportation Goal 2: Improve Infrastructure Condition

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by date	Entity Responsible
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<i>O1: Support and prioritize projects that improve the condition of existing transportation.</i>	A number of projects submitted by our local partners indicated specific locations in needs of infrastructure repair.	Continuous	ODOT MVPO Local Government Agencies
<i>O2: Ensure the efficiency and reliability of the transportation network through good infrastructure condition and efficient transportation operations.</i>	Over half of survey respondents stated poor pavement and infrastructure conditions were among the top 3 transportation issues they experienced.	Continuous	ODOT MVPO Local Government Agencies
<i>O3: Identify and match funding opportunities for bridge repair.</i>	The MVPO region has 128 bridges listed in poor condition or worse.	December 31 st , 2025	MVPO Local Government Agencies

Transportation Goal 3: Environmental Sustainability

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by Date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Support projects that minimize, avoid and/or mitigate environmental impacts of transportation improvements.</i>	The MVPO region is home to an endangered bat species as well as many environmental areas of interest, wetlands, rivers and National Register of Historic Places locations.	Continuous	County Environmental Agencies and Private Organizations
<i>O2: Support equitable and environmentally just transportation services and facilities.</i>	35.4% of public survey respondents stated environmental sustainability was one of their top 3 transportation goals.	Continuous	MVPO
<i>O3: Protect prime farmland in the region.</i>	The agricultural land in the MVPO region is approximately 80% prime farmland – best land for producing crops.	Continuous	Local Government Agencies
<i>O4: Keep an up-to-date record of environmental areas of interest in the region.</i>	Gives the public the ability to know where their local flood plains, historic sites, state parks, nature preserves, wildlife areas and wetlands are located.	Continuous	MVPO

Transportation Goal 4: Enhance Personal Mobility

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by Date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Investigate and support alternate transportation options, such as coordinated human services transportation, for individuals in the MVPO region.</i>	66.1% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement: "I would like to see more public transportation options where I live."	December 31 st , 2021	MVPO
<i>O2: Improve mobility for individuals to and from places of employment.</i>	Throughout the majority of 2020, the position of Mobility Manager was vacant. This left a hole in the ability to service individuals needing a ride to work.	December 31 st , 2025	MVPO Transportation Stakeholders
<i>O3: Regionalize transportation services to better serve individuals across county lines.</i>	There is not currently a regional transportation plan in place – the creation of one could be beneficial for providers and individuals using the service.	June 1 st , 2022	MVPO

Transportation Goal 5: Bicycle and Pedestrian Initiatives

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by Date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Increase the miles of dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the region.</i>	There is a growing interest from MVPO residents to incorporate more active transportation options.	Continuous	ODOT MVPO
<i>O2: Improve the condition of existing bicycle and pedestrian related infrastructure.</i>	Based on 2019 survey results, safe bicycle and pedestrian-related infrastructure was the second highest of seven for most important transportation goals.	Continuous	ODOT MVPO

<i>O3: Identify areas where existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure can be expanded, or new facilities can be constructed.</i>	There is not a current inventory of areas needing improvements.	December 31 st , 2024	MVPO Local Government Agencies
<i>O4: Promote and support the adoption of Complete Streets Policies.</i>	Complete Streets would promote pedestrian safety in high traffic areas.	December 31 st , 2022	MVPO Local Government Agencies
<i>O5: Support the incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure where possible in new construction projects.</i>	The growing interest for active transportation modes in the MVPO region will make this goal a primary focus over the next 20 years.	Continuous	ODOT MVPO Local Government Agencies

Transportation Goal 6: Freight Movement and Economic Vitality

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by Date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Identify regional growth and investment areas to coordinate improvement to the transportation network.</i>	County Economic Development offices are aware of these areas and can partner with MVPO on improving the transportation network.	June 30 th , 2025	MVPO Economic Development Agencies Local Government Agencies
<i>O2: Increase access to employment areas and sites, especially those that utilize or are related to freight.</i>	Many projects on our prioritized list include the need for access roads to high employment areas or opportunity areas.	Continuous	MVPO Economic Development Agencies Local Government Agencies
<i>O3: Allow for efficient transfer of goods between all modes.</i>	Ohio is the 7 th most travelled state in the United States. It is important to keep goods	Continuous	ODOT

	moving efficiently across all modes.		
<i>O4: Increase options for alternate modes of freight movement.</i>	New and different modes of transportation are being continually explored and our region can be a partner in that.	Continuous	ODOT MVPO
<i>O5: Encourage public/private partnerships in order to leverage funding from federal, state and other sources.</i>	Funding of transportation projects is often multi-faceted.	Continuous	Local Government Agencies

Chapter 5: County Facilities and Services

Chapter Contents:

- 5.1 Goals
- 5.2 Government Responsibilities
- 5.3 Information Technology
- 5.4 Education
- 5.5 Libraries
- 5.6 Parks and Recreation
- 5.7 Health Services
- 5.8 Public Utilities
- 5.9 Public Safety
- 5.10 Objectives

5.1 Goals



1. Become more accessible



2. Maintain investment in public buildings



3. Stay current in technology advancements



4. Support local schools



5. Support local libraries



6. Support local communities parks and recreation



7. Be a partner with health services



8. Provide responsive and affordable public utilities



9. Be supportive of environmental programs



10. Maintain investments in public safety

5.2 Government Responsibilities

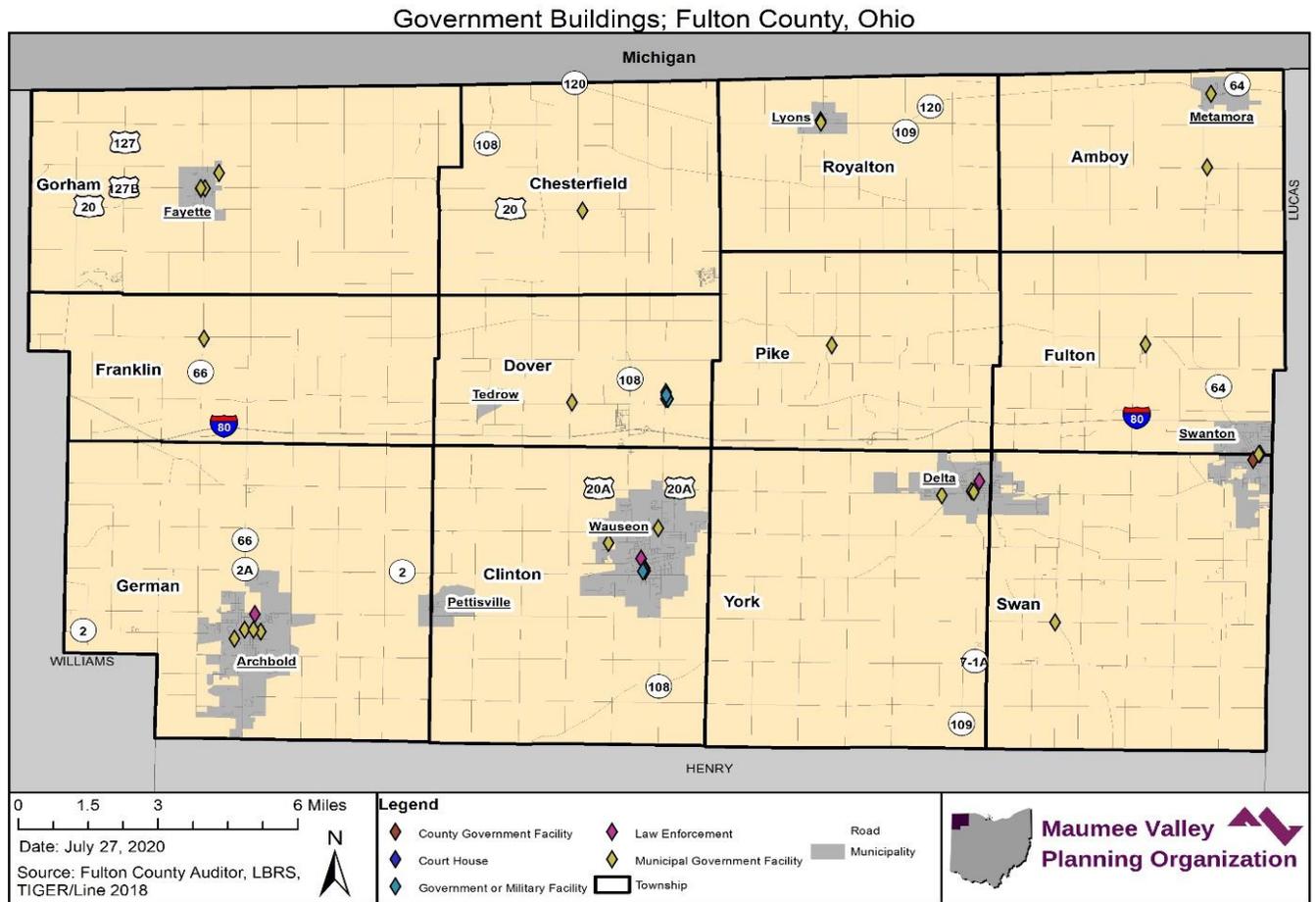
County residents elect three county commissioners to guide government operations during a four-year term. Their responsibility is to review budgets, zoning codes, policies and manage administrative departments. Other elected positions include the Sheriff, Clerk of Courts, County Engineer, County Treasurer, County Coroner and County Recorder. These officials conduct much administrative work in Wauseon, the county seat.



Figure 16: Western District Court in Wauseon⁹⁰

Government Buildings

Fulton County is responsible for maintaining several administrative buildings. There are 21 buildings owned by the County, such as: The Eastern and Western District Courthouse, the Fulton County Emergency Operations and the Engineer's Office.



Map 9: Fulton County Government Buildings⁹¹



⁹² 5.3 Information Technology

Information Technology (IT) encompasses a range of computational functions and policies that guide IT departments in technical support, network maintenance, security functions and device management⁹³. IT technical applications may include devices such as: internet routers and servers, phone systems, computers and individual laptops. IT is a crucial service to most organizations, as society’s dependence on technology has grown considerably.

At the County level, IT serves as a vital participant in community function and service management. Information systems collect and store County data—they house a large scope of information, including data from the Justice Department, social services, public works and

more⁹⁴. Fulton County has a public website monitored by the Information Services (IS) department. This county-run website is continuously updated and provides easily accessible information available to residents.

Fulton County does not have a centralized IT department; technological needs for residents and businesses are the responsibility of the client. The IT department services Fulton County employees who work in county buildings, as well as providing support for county staff who work remotely⁹⁵.

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated a need for expansion in internet services. Schools and businesses in the area have suffered communication and technical difficulties as a result of limited access to internet service and technological resources. Many Fulton County school districts have made provisions for quarantined students, including online learning platforms and tablets for student use. Evergreen School District offers its “1:1 Chromebook Program” for its students in the increasingly technologically dependent climate; this service is offered to students in grades 4-12 for academic purposes⁹⁶. It may be beneficial for individual school district IT departments to develop best practices through coordination and communication through the districts. As time progresses, a need for improved online schooling options may be necessary if the coronavirus becomes more problematic in the region. Internet access is a prevalent issue in Fulton County, which may be worth addressing in a society growing more reliant on internet communication and functionality.

5.4 Education

Education is critical for the advancement of community economic development, social justice and public health. Four public school districts provide K-12th grade education to Fulton County residents. The State of Ohio publishes an annual report card which measures each school district’s educational achievement proficiency and discerns the effectiveness of educational systems utilized by the schools. Additional information on how report card letter grades are assigned can be found on Ohio’s Department of Education website. The district superintendents are satisfied with Fulton County’s commitment to the schools and feel that there are few outstanding problems the County has failed to address.

Public and Private Schools in Fulton County

Private Schools in Fulton County		Adult Education in Fulton County	
New Horizons Academy at Sarah’s Garden		Northwest State Community College	
St. Richards		Four County Career Center	
Emmaus Christian Preschool			
Holy Trinity Catholic School			
Public School District	Current Enrollment	2018-19 State District Grade	# of School Buildings
Archbold - Area Local	1483	B	3
Evergreen Local	1120	B	3
Fayette Local School	686 students	C	1
Pettisville Local School District	553	C	1
Pike-Delta-York Local	1,234	B	3
Swanton Local	1,222	C	3
Wauseon Exempted Village	1,821	C	3

Table 14: Fulton County Public School District Grades⁹⁷

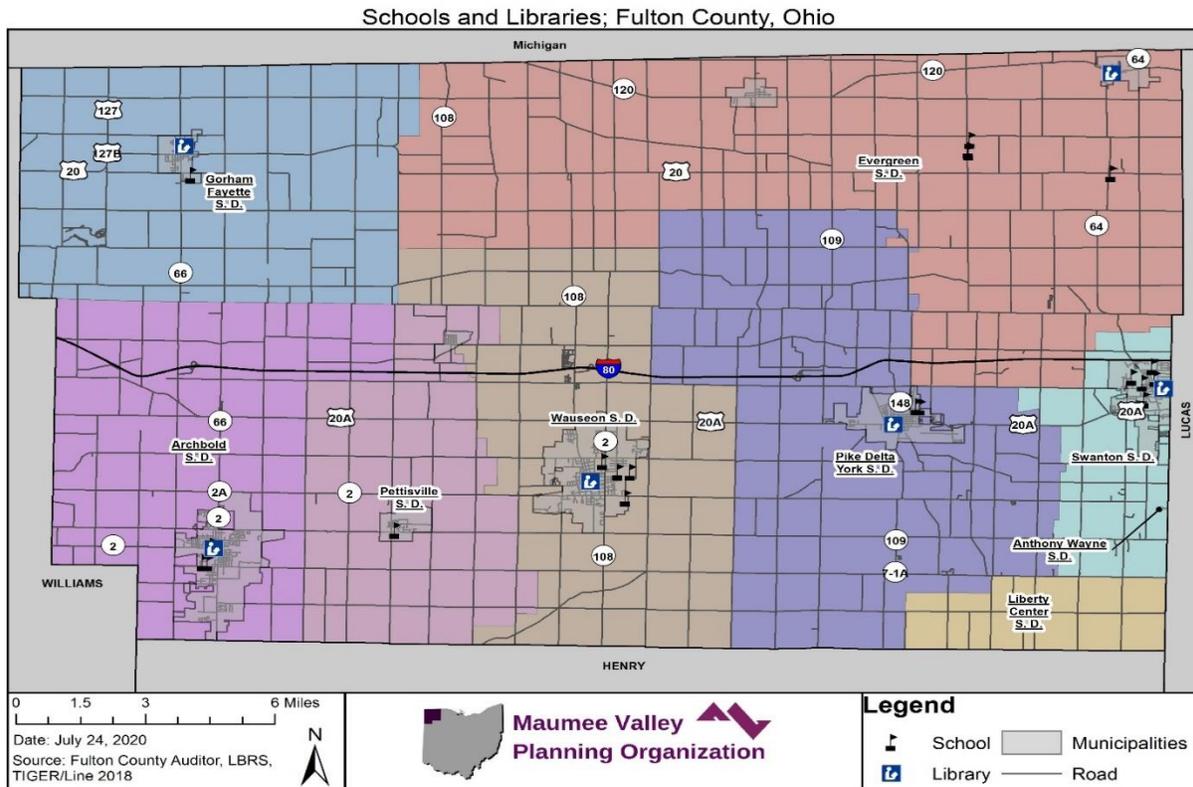
Multiple Fulton County school buildings were renovated or reconstructed. A study published in the Journal of Public Economics revealed renovations and construction of new school buildings increases reading scores by .15 standard deviations and raises home prices in the district by roughly 10%⁹⁸. Updated educational facilities correlate with an increase in academic performance and improvement of local economy.

Fulton County has experienced upgrades to its educational system since the creation of the 1998 Plan. The Pike-Delta-York Local School District constructed a new elementary, middle school and transportation building; its high school building experienced major renovations, as well. In 2001, Evergreen Local School District built a new high school and a new elementary school in 2005. In 2007, the Fayette Local School District constructed a new PreK-12 school building. In 2010, Wauseon Exempted School District constructed a new middle school and completed extensive renovations to the



pre-school and high school. The County had another major educational update in 2011 when Pettisville opened a 94,000 sq. ft. PreK-12 building rated LEED Gold, which was powered by a 750kW wind turbine owned by the District. The Swanton School District built a high school in 2003 and completed major renovations to the middle and elementary schools in 2017.

Figure 17: Northwest State Community College in Archbold⁹⁹



Map 10: Fulton County Schools and Libraries¹⁰⁰

School Funding

Public school districts receive funding from state funds, property taxes, income taxes and federal funds. State funds are dependent upon enrollment numbers and district property wealth. Ohio’s schools are funded through the Department of Education’s General Revenue Fund budget and Ohio Lottery profits¹⁰¹. Districts receive income tax funding approved by voters. Property taxes and earned income taxes are levied based upon property values in the school district. School districts may put a proposed levy on a local ballot up to three times a year on election dates¹⁰². If a majority of votes are in favor of the levy, tax is charged, collected and dispersed under the proposed terms of the levy. The objective of the levy must be for “a legally defined school district purpose”¹⁰³. Permissible uses for tax levies include: Expenses related to operation, school improvements (continuous or a specific project),

community/cultural center, safety and security, educational technology and debt service for school construction bonds.

The November 2020 Fulton County ballot had a substitute levy proposal by Wauseon Exempted School District for 3.87-mill, which will replace the original levy implemented in 1991. The Pike-Delta-York Local School District will place a 5-year, 1% SDIT levy on the ballot for Delta residents¹⁰⁴. Voters approved the renewal of an \$825,000 emergency levy for Swanton Local School District in 2017; a proposal for the renewal of this levy will be placed on the ballot again in 2022. Evergreen School District has multiple property tax levies and three income tax levies are in place currently.

Current and Future Needs

When looking to the future, Fulton County schools may require assistance in the form of greater revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic and an increase in online attendance in the virtual academies. A need for increased web-capable staffing is prevalent due to a decrease in in-person enrollment. The need for student access to internet has become far greater with the shift to remote learning¹⁰⁵. Greater funding for the food service program is necessary; the program was originally self-funded but is currently funded by The District's General Fund. State funding for resources like electronics and staffing is needed due to a rise in online attendance. Relationship building with local businesses is suggested to support instruction and networking between students and proprietors¹⁰⁶. As the Fulton County population diversifies, additional resources for the English as Second Language (ESL) students will become necessary¹⁰⁷.

Issues Faced by School Districts

Certain Fulton County school districts are experiencing slight declines in enrollment due to greater school of choice opportunities, increased home schooling and establishment of public charter schools. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a reduction of Wauseon School District's budget by about \$580,000. The federal government provided \$278,000 in relief funding; thus, Wauseon experienced a loss of \$302,000 in funding. County school graduation rates are a current concern, as is the State's graduation requirement flexibility implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Concerns regarding the pre-1994 Tax Abatement in Delta have arisen: The current CRA abatements negatively impact Pike-Delta-York School District and residents financially. The pre-1994 100% abatement takes away tax donations that would otherwise fund the school operations. While the pre-1994 CRA abatement zones are attractive development opportunities, it does pose an issue for schools in the area that require tax-based funding.

5.5 Libraries

Libraries provide free educational resources to all ages, preserve local and national history, supply employment resources to community members and offer professional research support. Fulton County houses six libraries that provide these services and more to its patrons.

Archbold Community Library
205 Stryker Street
Archbold, OH 43502

Delta Public Library
402 Main Street
Delta, OH 43515

Normal Memorial Library
301 North Eagle Street
Fayette, OH 43521

Evergreen Community Library
253 Maple Street
Metamora, OH 43540

Wauseon Public Library
117 East Elm Street
Wauseon, OH 43567

Swanton Public Library
305 Chestnut Street
Swanton, OH 43558

The Public Library Fund (PLF) accounts for 1.7% of Ohio's General Revenue Fund¹⁰⁸. As of 2019, Fulton County received \$1,396,238 from the PLF, which is around \$240,000 less than funding given in 2000¹⁰⁹.

The Swanton and Delta Public Libraries established the Friends of the Swanton Public Library (FOSPL) and Friends of Delta Public Library (FODPL), non-profit organizations dedicated to fundraising and volunteer practices through community participation. These organizations support library services and reduce dependence on federal funding. The Evergreen and

Archbold Community Libraries offer the option to donate money and historical artifacts to promote library sustainability and educational opportunities. Fundraising programs and events are productive means of increasing library revenue and are useful in the event that federal funding becomes slimmer.



Figure 18: Delta Public Library¹¹⁰

5.6 Parks and Recreation

Public parks provide essential services to communities through the improvement of economic value, increase of social interaction and health and environmental benefits.

The development and maintenance of public parks and spaces is recommended because they may foster community connections. This recommendation could greatly benefit the community-minded Fulton County. These spaces support local economy by increasing property values, increasing tax revenue and their presence may influence an individual’s decision to become a resident of a county. Parks act as social conduits and reflect the quality of life in a community: They serve as a gathering ground, reduce crime rates and may be made accessible to the public¹¹¹. Parks are touted for their health and environmental benefits, as they provide the opportunity to exercise, relieve stress and enjoy outdoor hobbies. Lastly, public parks create buffer zones which improve groundwater quality, prevent floods and establish wildlife habitats¹¹². While Fulton County is unable to support its own Metroparks, the County officials are cognizant of public park and green space benefits. For this reason, Fulton County officials are dedicated to supporting the development of public parks and spaces whenever the opportunity arises.

Park Inventory City of Wauseon

Homecoming Park	Contains an indoor and outdoor pavilion equipped with a full kitchen, private restrooms and temperature control, suitable for events. Walking trails, gazebos, playground equipment and a sledding hill available.
Rotary Park	Contains an on-site shelter house with a full kitchen, temperature control, playground and walking paths.
Reighard Park	Several pavilions, playground equipment, a tennis court, a public pool and contains the only disc golf course in the County.
Wabash Park	Features a half basketball court, playground and skate equipment.
Biddle Park	Multiple baseball, softball and tee ball fields are located at Biddle Park. Contains soccer

	fields, volleyball courts, basketball courts, batting cages, several large pavilions and a concession stand.
South Park	The oldest of Wauseon’s parks, visitors may utilize two basketball courts and a playground, or relax in the gazebo.
North Park/Memorial Park	This small neighborhood park is home to a war memorial statue, playground and half basketball court.
Depot Park	This park is dedicated to the railroad history in Fulton County, Ohio. Located here is a historical train depot, preserved caboose and a wooden play train.
Wabash-Cannonball Trail	Owned and maintained by NORTA, the Wabash-Cannonball trail is 62.5 miles long and runs through Wauseon. Users may bike, ride horses, cross country ski and hike the scenic trail.
Sara’s Park	Owned and maintained by Sara’s Garden, a local non-profit. Open to the public after business hours, Sara’s Park is the only park in the County that is fully accessible to children with neurological, intellectual and physical developmental delays. (Open to the public only after hours of operation.)

Village of Archbold

Memorial Park	Houses 40 acres of space, available to local baseball and softball programs. Contains a volleyball court, playground, several tennis courts and a park shelter.
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North Pointe Park	Contains a playground, basketball court, sledding hill and picnic shelter.
Ruihley Park	A variety of recreation amenities are located at this park. Contains a public pool, tennis courts, horseshoe pits, playgrounds, basketball courts, sand volleyball courts, a baseball diamond and picnic shelters.
South Street Park	New playground equipment and recent basketball court upgrades are available.
Lion’s Park	A basketball court and picnic shelter are features of this small, neighborhood park.
Woodland Park	Woodland park is the newest addition to the Archbold parks department. Boasting 60 acres, Woodland Park provides space for flag football, soccer games, a concession stand, basketball court and walking trails.
Goll Woods State Nature Preserve	Goll Woods State Nature Preserve is located just outside Archbold, Ohio. Guests can hike on designated trails throughout this old growth oak nature preserve and view a variety of flora and fauna.

Village of Lyons

Community Ball Park	Contains a baseball diamond, basketball court, large gazebo and large playground.
Dunbar-Ingall Park	A memorial park dedicated to those in the community that served in World War 1, World War II, Korea, Vietnam and Desert Storm.
Green Memorial Park	A small park outfitted with a gazebo, picnic table, playground and volleyball net.

Village of Swanton

Oak Openings	This park provides visitors with 6,800 acres of land to hike, bike, ride horses and more.
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Guests will discover sand dunes, streams, ponds and many species of wildlife here.

Pilliod Park

Pilliod Park is home to Swanton’s famous Little Red Caboose, a walking path and several picnic gazebos. Pilliod Park is sometimes referred to as Rotary Park.

Swanton Memorial Park

Home to several different features such as: Baseball diamonds, sculptures and a “Spirit of the American Doughboy” statue.

Maumee State Forest

Located on Township Road 2, the Maumee State Forest offers opportunities for hiking, horseback riding and multisport off roading.

Village of Delta

Delta Park

The Delta park offers amenities such as: Volleyball courts, basketball courts, a skate park, a soccer complex, several covered shelters and a playground.

Delta Pool

The Delta public pool is an extension of Delta park. This 200,000-gallon swimming pool is open to the community between Memorial Day and the week before school begins.

York Township

York Township Community Park

Offers an open-sided pavilion and playground equipment.

Village of Metamora

Metamora Community Park

Metamora community members have access to baseball diamonds, a playground and shelter.

Village of Fayette

Harrison Lake State Park

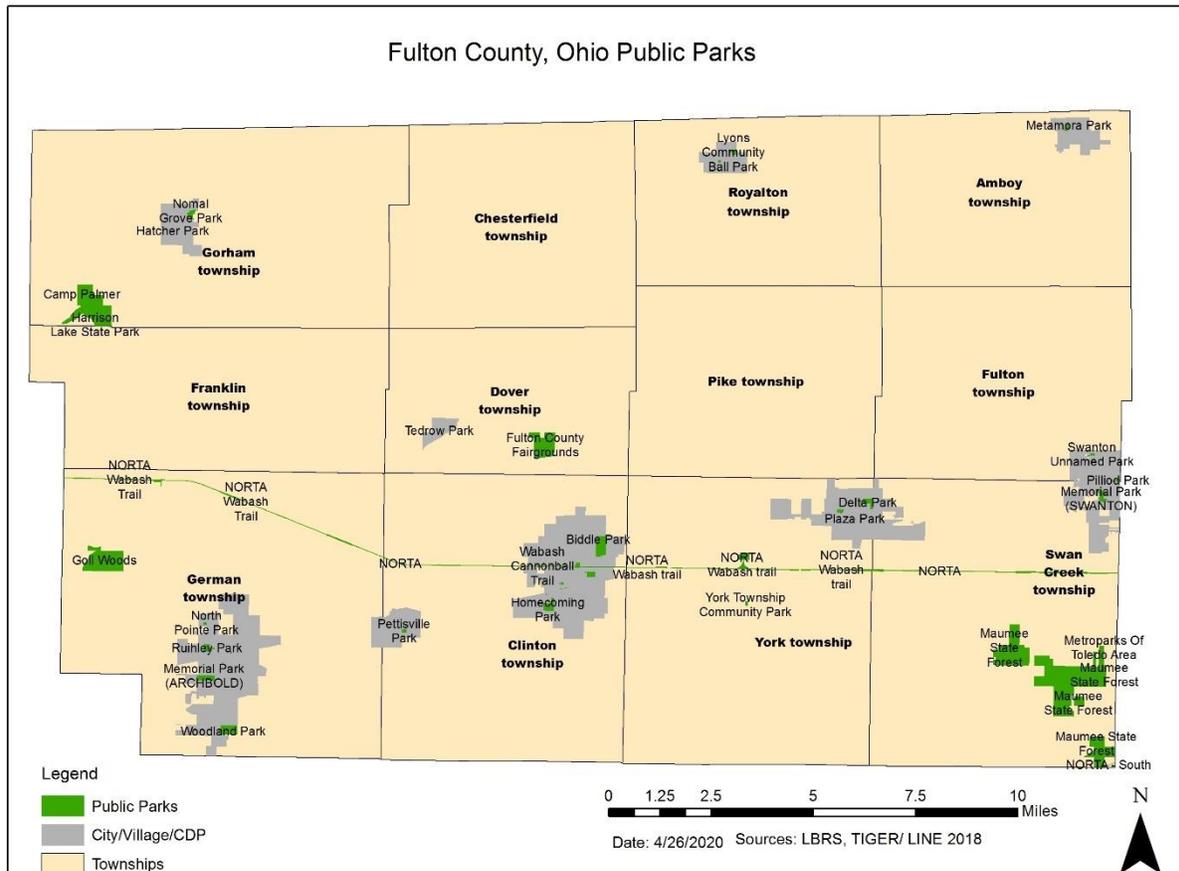
Harrison Lake State Park is popular destination for the public to go fishing, swimming and kayaking. Guests may camp for an additional fee.



Figure 19: Wauseon Public Swimming Pool¹¹³



Figure 20: Archbold Playground¹¹⁴



Map 11: Fulton County Public Parks¹¹⁵

Citizen Input

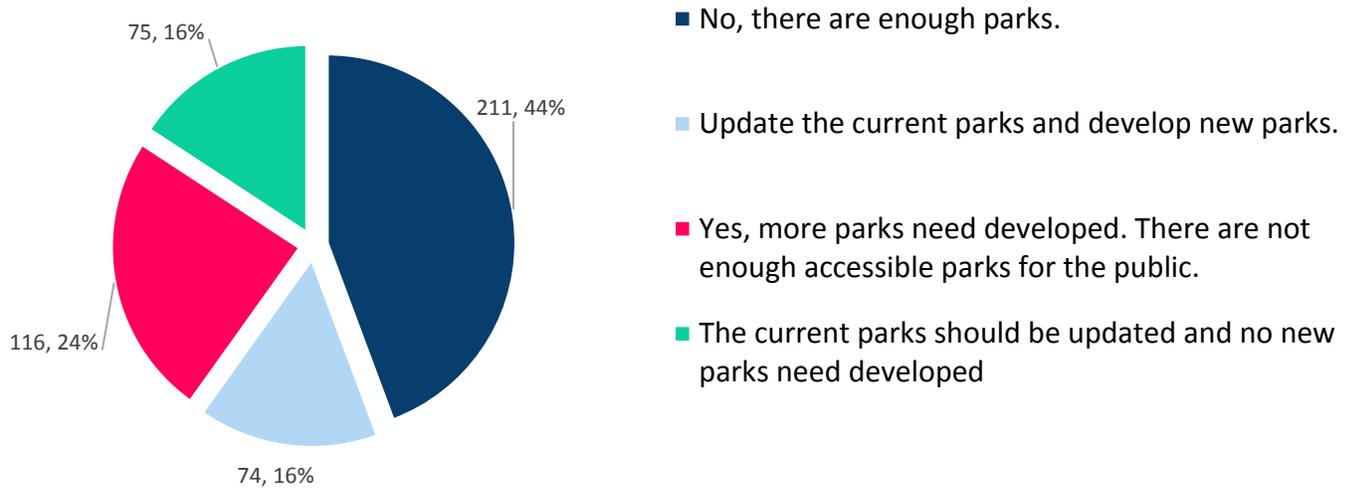
In March 2020, Fulton County residents answered the social media survey, “Do you believe Fulton County needs more public parks? Such as playgrounds, hiking trails, bike paths, baseball diamonds, basketball courts, etcetera”. Four Hundred Seventy-Six citizens participated in this poll; many added additional comments. Forty-four percent of the participants responded, “No, Fulton County, Ohio residents have enough public park space available to them”. Twenty-Four percent of the participants said, “Yes, more parks need developed. There are not enough accessible parks for the public”.

Two common themes arose from citizen commentary. Firstly, respondents favored the establishment of a dog park in the County. Respondents would also like to see more accessible and inclusive parks and playgrounds with accommodations made for disabled citizens. Several residents expressed that current inclusive parks are inconveniently located or inaccessible to the public at certain times of day. As a result, Fulton County officials may wish to explore

opportunities that support the development of a dog park and more inclusive, accessible park space.

The advancement of technology allows community members to leave 1- to 5-star reviews of parks on Google Reviews. Several of the Fulton County parks have hundreds of reviews. In the future, Google Reviews may be used as a tool to improve parks across the County.

Fulton County, Ohio Citizen Input: Public Parks



Graph 25: Fulton County Public Parks Survey Responses¹¹⁶

Locations for Future Parks

When deciding upon future park locations, County administrators and Parks and Recreation departments may consider developing parks near existing public utilities with easy road access. Administration may note that park investment encourages community growth, as families are more likely to settle in areas with convenient access to public spaces. As a result, it is recommended that parks be strategically built-in areas where residential growth is desirable.

Fulton County struggles to track park system projects in the Region because of multiple separate Parks and Recreation entities situated throughout the County. Park systems are most successful when there is clear communication between local parks departments; thus, Fulton County would benefit from establishing a Parks and Recreation Board. The Board may be made up of individuals involved in parks and recreation from the 12 County communities who convene on a quarterly basis. Maintaining these partnerships would increase the visibility, use and development of park features in the County.

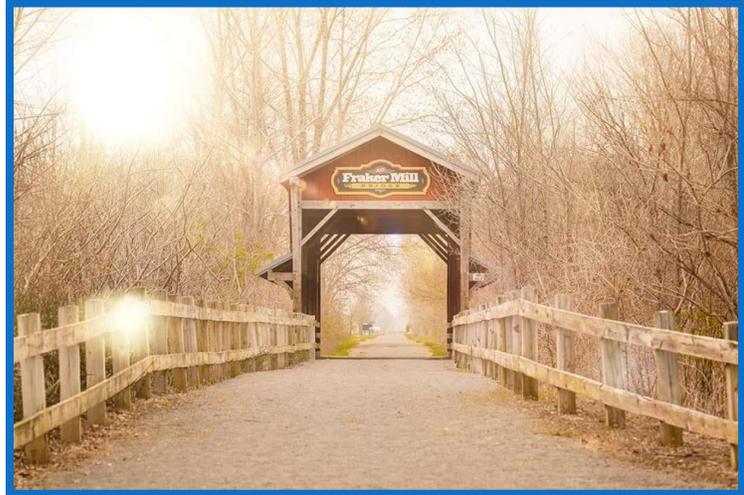


Figure 21: Wabash Cannonball Trail Covered Bridge¹¹⁷

Park Partnerships

To expand the Fulton County park system, establishing and supporting partnerships with organizations is suggested. Several Fulton County parks are currently supported through partnerships. For example, the Wabash-Cannon Trail is owned and maintained by the Northwestern Ohio Rails-To-Trails Association (NORTA). Park partnerships are beneficial because they may provide greater funding opportunities and access to a variety of land parcels and other resources.

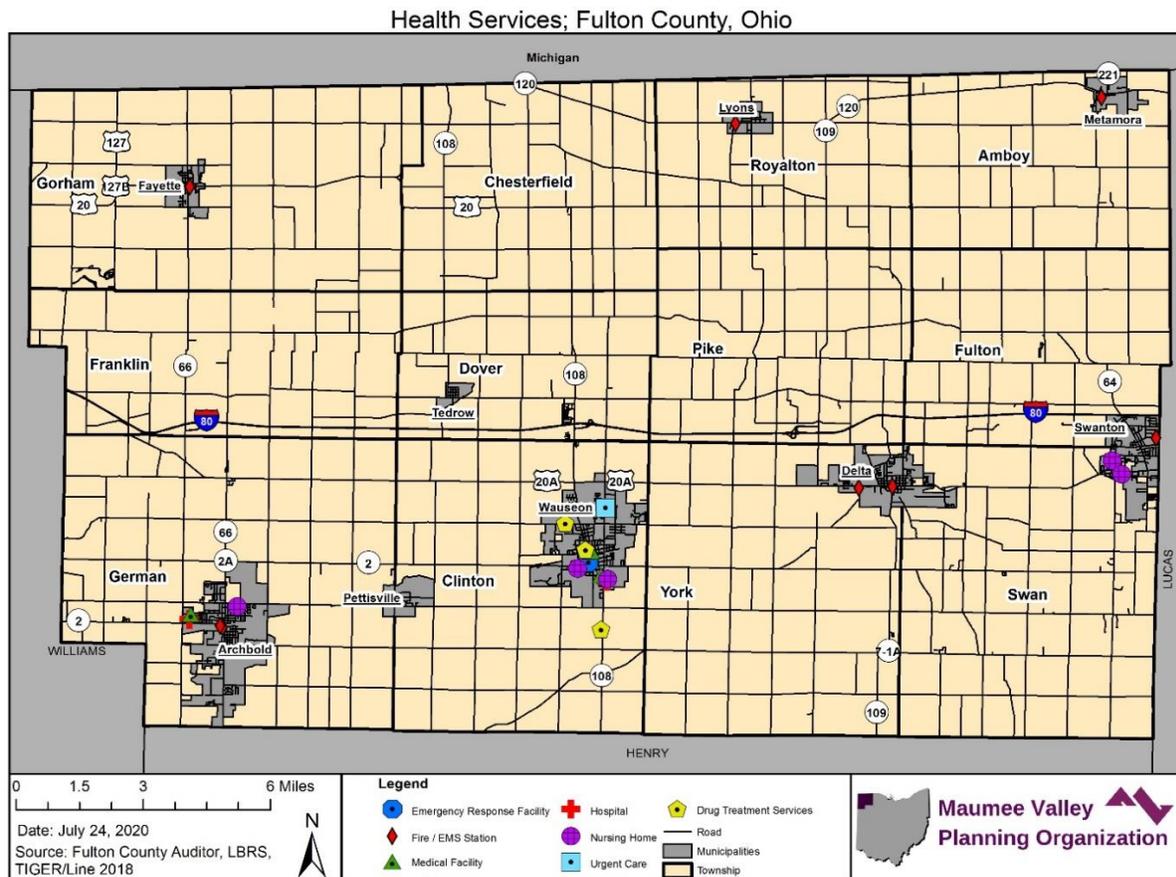


5.7 Health Services

Fulton County provides healthcare through hospitals, urgent care centers, drug treatment centers and emergency services located throughout the County to ensure ample service accessibility.

The Fulton County Health Center is a research hospital that offers surgery services, emergency care, behavioral health care and nursing home rehabilitation services. Residents experiencing health concerns have access to the Urgent Care of Wauseon; County residents are encouraged to utilize urgent care services for primary care, lab testing, treatment for minor injuries, or pre-employment physicals.

The Fulton County Health Department shares information regarding healthcare policy and practices. The Health Department monitors community health and hazards via food inspection, solid waste, nuisances, campgrounds and household sewage treatment systems. Individuals in need of assistance pertaining to drug and alcohol addictions can find resources at Four County Alcohol Drug Services, Recovery Services of NW Ohio and the Fulton County Alano Club.



Map 12: Fulton County Health Services¹¹⁸

County Health Report

2017-2020 Fulton County Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

The Fulton County Partners for Health implemented Community Health Assessments (CHA) in 1998 with the intention of measuring and improving the community's overall health. The assessment is modeled after recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention and data procured from community surveys.

CHA research conducted in 2016 allowed the Fulton County Partners for Health to instate a 2017-2020 Fulton County Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). CHIP is a strategic plan that outlines the vision for Fulton County's health, priorities, action steps and outcome measurements¹¹⁹. Being that it is 2020, the CHIP will be revisited in the near future.



¹²⁰ Fulton County Health Status Report

In 2016, Fulton County Partners for Health published a Health Status Report. The published data was used to make decisions concerning public health and services. This data was based upon Fulton County health perceptions, coverage, access, drug use, mental health and physical health. The study considers the needs of the community and best practices for the establishment of health programs¹²¹.

Maintaining the health of citizens includes several factors: The availability of livable wages, reliable healthcare, public clinics and food security. The Fulton County Sheriff's Office states mental illness and prescription drug abuse are persistent issues in the communities¹²². Investment in mental health facilities and substance abuse programs is strongly recommended. Most Fulton County residents have reliable access to food; however, the elderly and disabled populations may have trouble accessing healthy food options—particularly those who reside in rural areas.

The Fulton County Sheriff's Department works in accordance with the Four County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board and A Renewed Mind mental healthcare services for screening and treatment of mentally ill citizens. Fulton County law enforcement partakes in de-escalation courses and Crime Intervention Team (CIT) programs to ensure calm interactions between officers and the public. Fulton County Sheriff Roy Miller states, "I would put Fulton County Law Enforcement at the front of mental illness awareness...there's always room for improvement"¹²³. A current issue in mental health and law enforcement is bed availability for mentally ill offenders, which has been reported to state representatives and Ohio's governor.

The Maumee Valley Planning Organization (MVPO) is contracted with Fulton County to assist in economic development.

Family Services

Fulton County Job and Family Services provides resources and amenities for families and individuals in need of food, monetary assistance, childcare, re-entry connections and transportation. Public Assistance like Medicaid is available for qualifying Fulton County residents. Child services and elder abuse and neglect reporting and investigation services are available; the Ohio Office of Child Support provides forms and applications to assist parents in need of support, as well as prospective adoptive and foster parents.

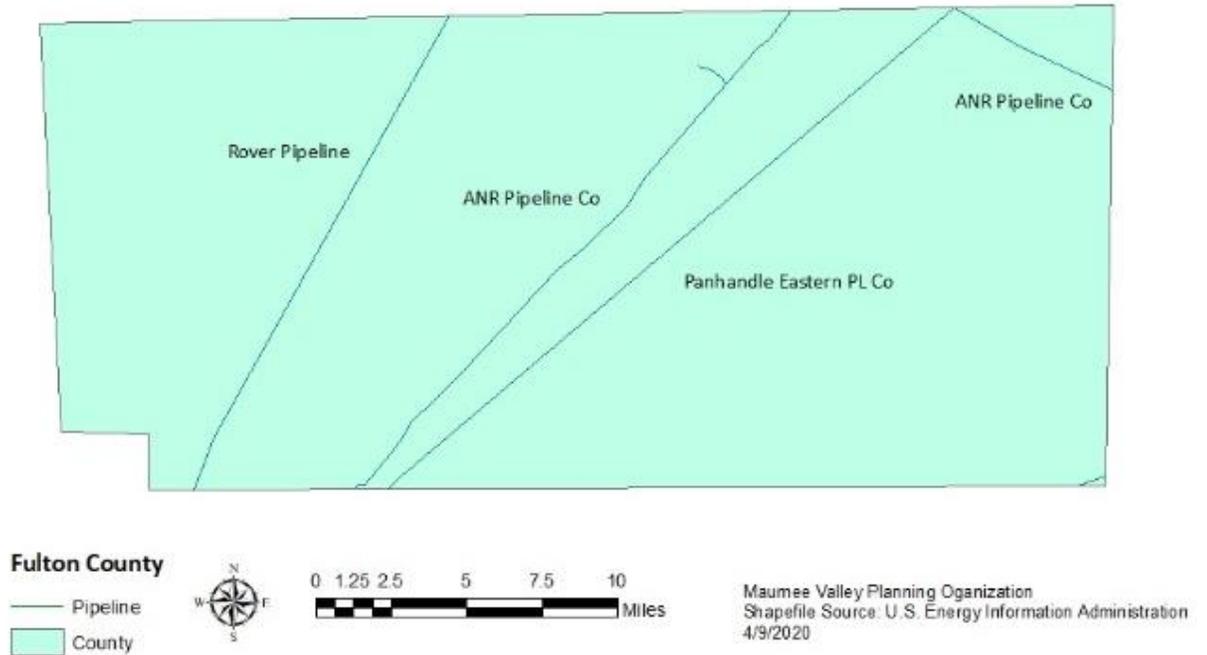
5.8 Public Utilities

On average, Fulton County pays \$53.79 per 1,000 cubic feet per month in water purchases from Lucas County¹²⁴. In 2001, the City of Wauseon began using a nearby holding reservoir to store drinking water to limit dependency on outside sources for its water demand. Water from the Maumee River is pumped into this reservoir. The City of Wauseon receives some of its drinking water from Big Ditch and Stuckey Ditch. Big Ditch is located west of the water treatment plant; water in this creek is mainly field runoff. Stuckey Ditch is east of the water treatment plant and the water in this creek includes field and city street runoff. Water pumped from these creeks is sent to Wauseon's holding locations before entering the water treatment plant¹²⁵.

Natural Gas

Natural gas in Fulton County is distributed through four pipelines by three distribution companies. The Rover Pipeline is located in Western Fulton County, Panhandle Eastern Pipeline is located in Central Fulton County and ANR Pipeline Company resides in the northeast and central portion of the County.

Fulton County, OH Natural Gas Pipeline Distribution



Map 13: Fulton County Natural Gas Pipeline Distribution

Pipeline life expectancy depends upon types of materials used. According to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, steel has been used extensively since the 1950s and plastic has been in use since the 1970s. Only Eastern Ohio is still using pipeline installed prior to the 1960s¹²⁶. It is recommended that Fulton County keep organized records of pipeline permits and installation dates to ensure proper maintenance and replacement of infrastructure.

Pipeline Miles by Material - Gas Distribution

Time run: 4/9/2020 3:40:21 PM

Portal - Data as of 4/8/2020 10:14:29 PM

Region: State: OHIO

		2019		
System Type	Pipe Material	Total Miles	% of Miles	# of Services
MAIN	STEEL	27,902.0	26.5%	
	PLASTIC	30,691.7	29.1%	
	OTHER MATERIALS	422.8	0.4%	
	IRON	175.4	0.2%	
	COPPER	0.6	0.0%	
SERVICES	STEEL	6,274.3	6.0%	425,747
	PLASTIC	32,856.5	31.2%	2,477,903
	OTHER MATERIALS	6,202.4	5.9%	576,574
	IRON	0.1	0.0%	12
	COPPER	799.5	0.8%	74,576
Grand Total		105,325.3	100.0%	3,554,812

$$Q = 433.5 \left(\frac{T_{SC}}{P_{SC}} \right) \left(\frac{P_1^2 - e^s P_2^2}{G L_e T_m Z} \right)^{0.5} D^{2.667} E$$

$$s = \frac{0.0375 G \Delta z}{T_m}$$

$$L_e = \frac{(e^s - 1)L}{s}$$

Table 15: Pipeline Miles by Material and Gas Distribution

Figure 22: The Weymouth Equation¹²⁷

If the average service length is null or zero in the Annual Report, average service length is assumed to be 90 feet. The capacity of pipelines is dependent on different variables. The Weymouth equation can be used to calculate high-pressure gas flow capacity of a pipeline¹²⁸.

Water

There are five water treatment facilities in Fulton County which serve individual cities and/or villages. The Northeast Water System is a water distribution system owned by the Fulton



Figure 23: Archbold Water Tower

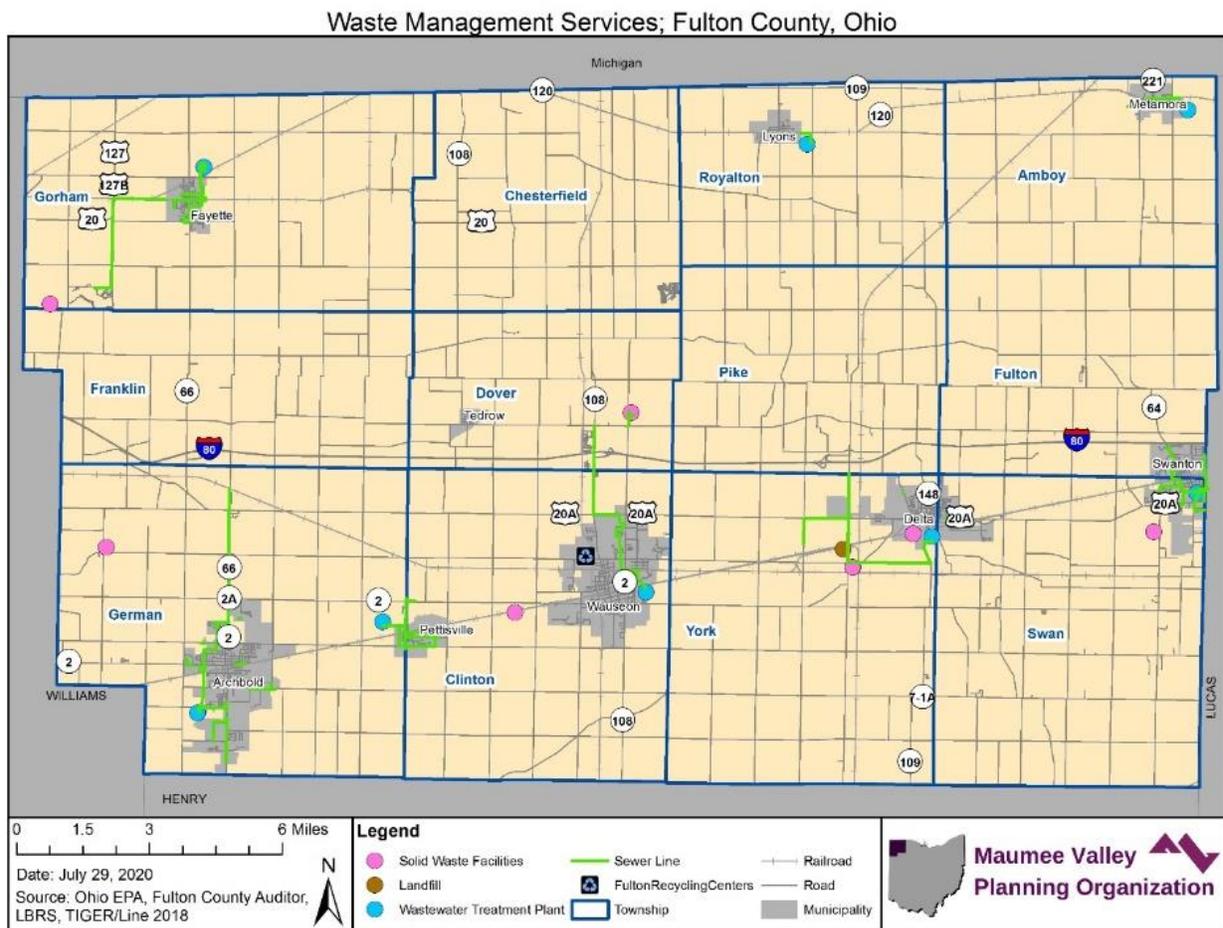
County Commissioners; the system acquires its water from the City of Toledo. Most residents who reside outside of city and/or village limits likely have groundwater wells. Those dwelling within city and/or village limits likely have access to public water distribution systems. [Table 16](#) includes known water treatment facilities in Fulton County, as well as capacity and storage capability.

Facility Name	Location	Capacity	Storage Capacity
Archbold Village Water Treatment Plant	Archbold	Averages 1.5 MGD with a capacity of 7.6 MGD	1.95 million gallons of finished water
Wauseon Water Treatment Plant	Wauseon	Averages 1 MGD with a capacity of 3 MGD	2.1 million gallons of finished water
Swanton Water Treatment Plant	Swanton	Averages 1.25 MGD with a capacity of .376 MGD	800 thousand gallons of finished water
Village of Delta Water Treatment Plant	Delta	Capacity of 1.2 MGD	1.2 million gallons of finished water

Table 16: Known Fulton County Water Treatment Facilities

Wastewater

Most Fulton County wastewater treatment plants have combined sewer systems. This means the wastewater treatment plant receives stormwater from storm drains and wastewater from residential and commercial facilities. There are three major wastewater treatment facilities in the County. Due to recently evolving weather patterns, the amount of stormwater entering these sewer systems is overwhelming wastewater treatment plants. Some measures have been taken to combat this, such as extra reservoirs for water holding until the flow becomes controllable enough to treat the retained water. Technology has been implemented at some wastewater treatment facilities to improve effluent quality. The separation of combined sewers is recommended in order to more effectively treat wastewater and sewer capacity could be increased.



Map 14: Fulton County Waste Management Services¹²⁹

Wastewater Management Issues

Extraneous flow is storm water or groundwater that drains into sanitary sewer systems and reduces capacity due to volume of water infiltration. The consequence of this occurrence is sewage backup and overflows into the surrounding environment. The sources of these flows are *infiltration* and *inflow*. Extraneous flow via infiltration occurs underground, typically by way of defective pipes, manholes, or connections. Inflow occurs aboveground via improper openings and/or connections: Catch basins, downspouts, yard drains and manholes pour water into the sanitary sewer rather than a storm sewer. Wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) struggle to operate effectively when excess water drains into the sanitary sewers; this results in the by-passing of untreated water, often in the case of extreme rainfall. Rather than the constant expansion of WWTPs, it is more productive to address issues related to infiltration and inflow to reduce this occurrence.

Wastewater Management Solutions

Under the EPA anti-degradation policy 40 CFR 131.12 the State “shall develop and adopt a statewide anti-degradation policy and identify the methods for implementing such policy...consistent with the following: Existing instream water uses and the level of water quality necessary to protect the existing uses shall be maintained and protected”¹³⁰. In the case of a sanitary sewer system extension, the obtainment of a Permit-to-Install (PTI) must comply with Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) policy that requires the elimination of extraneous flows. The elimination follows a removal multiplier, which requires a specified amount of extraneous flow to be eliminated for every given amount of sanitary sewage that enters the system.

To temper issues regarding water treatment in WWTPs, the pre-treatment of industrial wastewater is a means to reduce the risk of dangerous sewer fires and corrosion, stalled sewage treatment processes and excessive sludge in the publicly owned treatment works (POTW). The industrial facility pre-treats its wastewater before it is discharged to a WWTP in order to mitigate risk associated with the inability to treat industrial wastewater. Pre-treatment programs are recommended for state and public sewage systems. These programs can require an industry to treat the water and meet set standards before water is discharged into the public sewer.

Areas without sanitary sewer systems may wish to utilize package wastewater treatment plants, which are privately-owned plants that dispose of sewage. Package plants range in capacity from 1,500 to 100,000 gallons per day. These plants are used in areas without sewers. When the amount of sewage surpasses septic tank capacity or leaching is not possible due to soil conditions¹³¹.

Sludge is the “solid or slurry byproduct produced in the treatment of water or wastewater”¹³². Sludge is created through the digestion of organic matter from sewage by microorganisms, also known as “waste activated sludge”. The digestion of this sludge creates biosolids, which utilize less space than slurries containing more liquid. To dispose of biosolids, one of four actions may be taken:

- ❖ Incineration
- ❖ Placement in Sanitary Landfill
- ❖ Application to Agricultural Land
- ❖ Hauling to an NPDES Permitted Facility

In Northwest Ohio, the application of biosolids to agricultural land is common practice; it is decidedly the best option of the four because it recycles nutrients from the biosolids rather than simply disposing of them and risking environmental contamination near disposal sites. Biosolid treatment, storage, disposal and application is regulated by Ohio EPA under Ohio Administrative Code 3745-40¹³³. NPDES permits or sludge management plans are necessary for actions taken regarding biosolids; in the case of application, regulations include nutrient and pollution concentration limits and method and location of application to prevent water contamination.



¹³⁴ Facility Planning Areas

A Facility Planning Area (FPA) is an area designated for sanitary sewer services. An FPA is recommended when regional coverage of public wastewater treatment is most productive and economical, i.e., in municipalities surrounded by developed areas. The FPA services residents by directing household sewage into a WWTP through a sewage system. FPAs are tools used in assessing wastewater collection and treatment needs, as well as the implementation of facilities to meet these needs.

FPAs are useful in the decision-making process when constructing public sewers: Policies included in an FPA plan can establish a centralized sewer servicing system for residences and businesses, coordinate with Ohio EPA to approve sanitary sewer extensions within the FPAs in accordance with policies of a plan and prohibit construction of sanitary sewers in open space (including farmland and low-density residential lands) beyond FPA boundaries.

Typically, the FPA houses a central wastewater treatment plant or services wastewater to a nearby plant. For unsewered FPAs, the decision to build a new treatment plant or service to the existing facility depend upon the ability to protect public and environmental health, cost to participants and the feasibility of the provision. An area that services its sewage to an FPA continues to be served by that facility until the treatment facility can no longer meet NPDES

permit requirements resulting from “extraneous water, unanticipated growth, or treatment quality problems”¹³⁵, or the decision to end service is mutually agreed upon by the DMA.

Package plants are to be considered temporary means of sewage treatment until public sewage services are available; therefore, the package plant does not need an FPA. In the case of a pre-established extended aeration wastewater treatment plant, which is owned and operated by a DMA as a permanent POTW, an FPA is required. Package plants are to only be permitted within FPAs where public sewers are not available and all PTIs and NPDES permits for new or pre-existing package plants shall be required to tap when public sewers become available.

When establishing FPA boundaries, it is recommended to plan for future wastewater collection and treatment facility needs. The FPA plans for a specific current or future WWTP and service area for the plant. Multiple WWTPs are considered when they are interconnected to treat varying levels of wastewater intake.

The Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG) Areawide Water Quality Management “208” Plan advises for FPA boundaries:

- a. *FPAs should be compact and contiguous concentrations of urban land uses without islands of one FPA surrounding another.*
- b. *Remote service areas may be included in an FPA when connected by force main and separated by areas that should remain un-urbanized.*
- c. *FPAs should be designed to serve residents in the most cost-effective manner without duplication of service.*
- d. *FPA boundaries should be consistent with adopted local land use plans.*
- e. *FPA boundaries should be developed through cooperative dialogue among affected local jurisdictions. TMACOG encourages neighboring governments to resolve sewerage service conflicts through collaborative processes.*¹³⁶

Facility Planning and Land Use

Land use planning and sanitary sewer service area planning are inherently connected. Public sewer availability is a crucial element for urban development, particularly in areas without soil quality conducive for on-site sewage treatment and removal. With community growth comes a need for proactive infrastructure planning to mitigate problems that arise from improper sewage services.

Land use plans, zoning and FPAs are closely related: FPAs are formulated through county plan committees. Urban growth boundaries (UGBs) are to be included in plans concerning FPA boundaries, which shall include detailed planning practices and applications. For example, it is important to consider the specifics of sewer lines built on boundary roads and how they may

service either side of the road separating the classification of land use. As suggested by TMACOG, policy shall approve a sewer extension if:

- ❖ A developed area is beyond an FPA but contiguous to it.
- ❖ Sewers in FPA are near enough to be considered “available” under applicable Ohio State law.
- ❖ An FPA boundary shall be amended to include a served area when sewers are extended beyond the FPA.¹³⁷

When implementing a land use plan, the local government relies on zoning to control what is built and where it is located. Zoning practices and FPAs should support one another, as both are key elements to land use planning. When planning for future land use, it is productive to assess sewerage facility capabilities for service. Questions listed below are provided by TMACOG:

- ❖ Is the collection system adequate to handle planned growth?
- ❖ Does the wastewater treatment facility that provides service to an area have capacity for planned growth?
- ❖ How much growth is projected for the wastewater treatment facility in the land use plans and zoning of other jurisdictions in its service area?
- ❖ Does the FPA’s sewerage system have problems with sewer overflows, or extraneous stormwater entering the sewers? Will it be necessary to remove stormwater flows from the system in order to handle sanitary sewage due to planned growth?
- ❖ What will the ultimate development density be? If an area is developed as low-density and sewers are sized accordingly, the sewers may become overloaded if density increases in the future.¹³⁸

FPA Amendment Process

FPA plans shall require updates as circumstances change. Changes shall be reviewed and enacted by the plan committee responsible for the FPA actions.

NPDES Permits

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) is used to enforce the regulation point source pollution discharges, including those sourced from municipal WWTPs. This permit impacts POTW operations through limitations established by Ohio EPA. The limitations, as well as conditions and schedules



Figure 24: Wauseon Wastewater Treatment Plant

established by an NPDES, require a municipality to construct, upgrade, or expand its WWTP. The requirements of this permit can stimulate community participation in programs like the Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) Grant Program, which may fund necessary community flood-proofing and reconstruction projects.

Known Wastewater Treatment Facilities within Fulton County

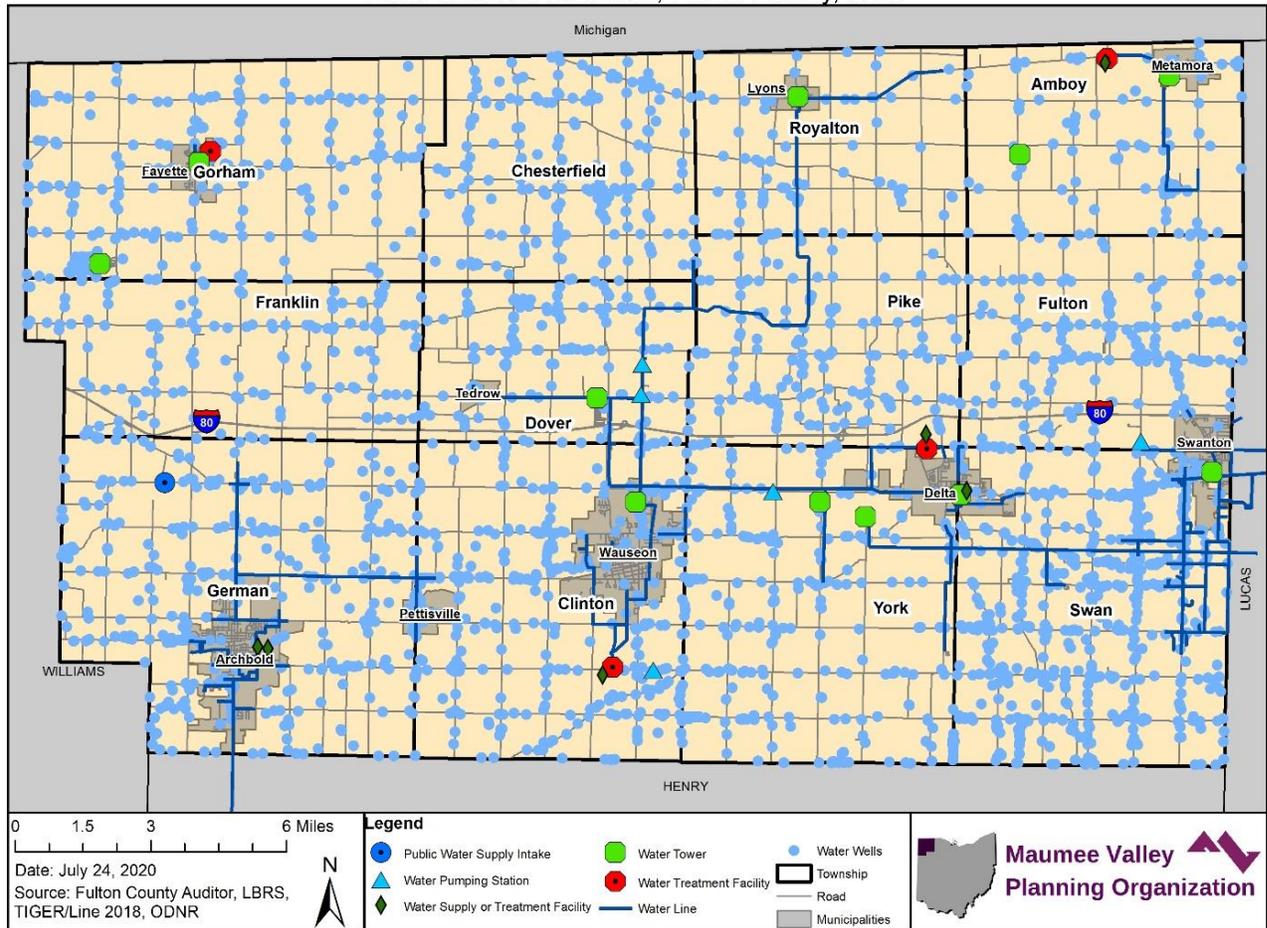
Facility Name	Location	Capacity	Sanitary or Combined?
Swanton Water Reserve Facility (WRRF)	Swanton (split between Fulton and Lucas Counties)	Averages 2.76 MGD with a daily average of .92 MGD	About 75% Separated
Delta Sewage Treatment Plant	Delta	Average 725,000 per day with over 4 million capacity with a 5-million-gallon overflow	Combined
Wauseon Wastewater Treatment Plant	Wauseon	Average 1.5 MGD with ability to expand to 4.4 MGD	Combined

Table 17: Fulton County Known Wastewater Treatment Facilities

Groundwater Wells

The known number of groundwater wells in Fulton County is 5,363¹³⁹. Both incorporated and unincorporated areas in Fulton County receive water from a distribution system; certain areas receive water sourced from Lucas County.

Water Services & Utilities; Fulton County, Ohio



Map 15: Fulton County Water Services & Utilities¹⁴⁰

Water Sources in Fulton County

Fulton County Incorporated Areas Summary

Village or City	Water Source
Archbold	Tiffin River, Brush Creek and off stream holding reservoirs
Delta	Bad Creek and off stream holding reservoirs
Fayette	Groundwater Wells
Lyons	Purchases from Wauseon
Metamora	Purchases from Toledo/Lucas County

Swanton	Swan Creek and off stream holding reservoirs
Wauseon	Big Ditch, Stuckey Ditch, Maumee River and off stream holding reservoirs

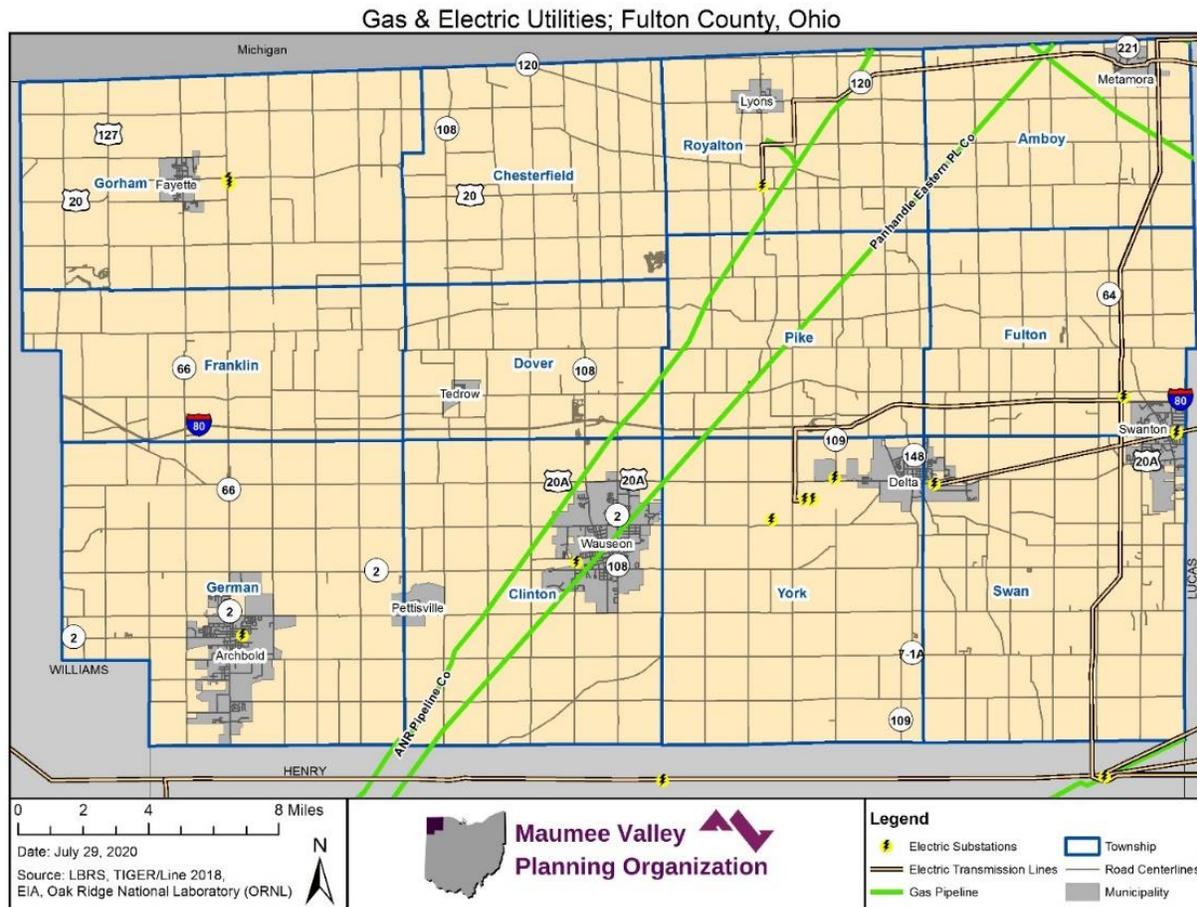
Fulton County Unincorporated Areas Summary

Rural Water System	Water Source
Swan Creek Rural Water District	Purchased from Toledo/Lucas County
Ai	Purchased from Toledo/Lucas County
Assumption	Purchased from Toledo/Lucas County
Elmira/Burlington	Purchased from Archbold
Pettisville	Purchased from Archbold
Tedrow/Ottokee	Purchased from Wauseon

Table 18: Fulton County Rural Water Sources

Electricity

Most of Fulton County’s electricity is provided by Toledo Edison and a portion is provided by the Tri-county Electric Cooperative.



Map 16: Fulton County Gas & Electric Utilities¹⁴¹

Power Plants in Fulton County

Two power plants provide a portion of power to the electric grid in Fulton County. The Sauder Power Plant in Archbold is a wood/wood waste biomass power plant. The Napoleon Power Plant located in Wauseon is a petroleum liquids facility.

Sauder Power Plant

The Sauder wood-waste biomass power plant in Archbold has an operating capacity of 7.2 MW and can generate 2 units. The use of wood waste biomass is beneficial, as the product is carbon neutral. The primary fuel for this plant is wood and wood waste solids¹⁴². Natural gas is used to assist in power generation; the net power generated is 28,764 and the capacity factor is 0.456050228¹⁴³.



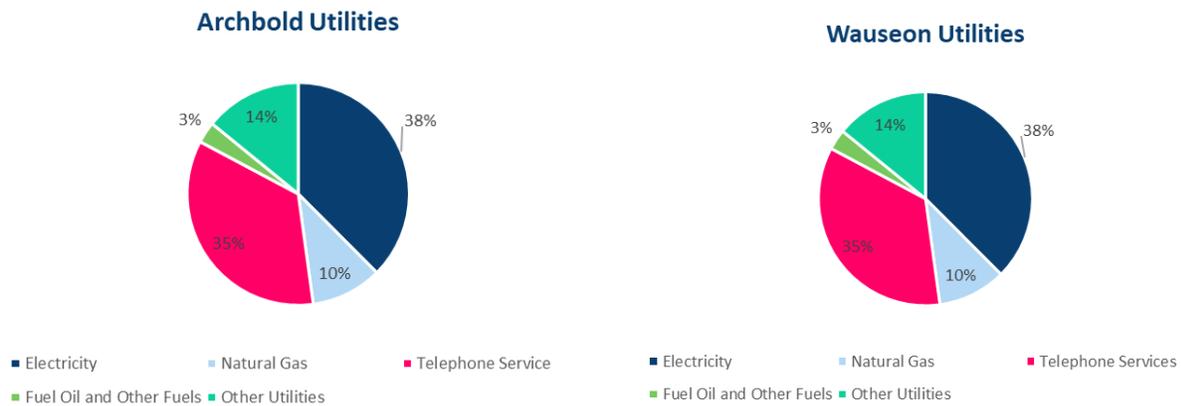
Figure 25: Sauder Manufacturing Company

Napoleon Power Plant

The Napoleon power plant, located in Wauseon, is a petroleum liquid facility plant that generates fossil fuel electric power. The primary fuel for this plant is distillate fuel oil and the operating capacity is 5.4 MW¹⁴⁴. The oil is used to generate power and the net power generated is 2.

Utility Use in Fulton County

Utility use in Archbold and Wauseon is similar (*Graphs 27 & 28*). This information may be expanded upon for future development opportunities regarding capacity of power generation and the use of utilities in the County.

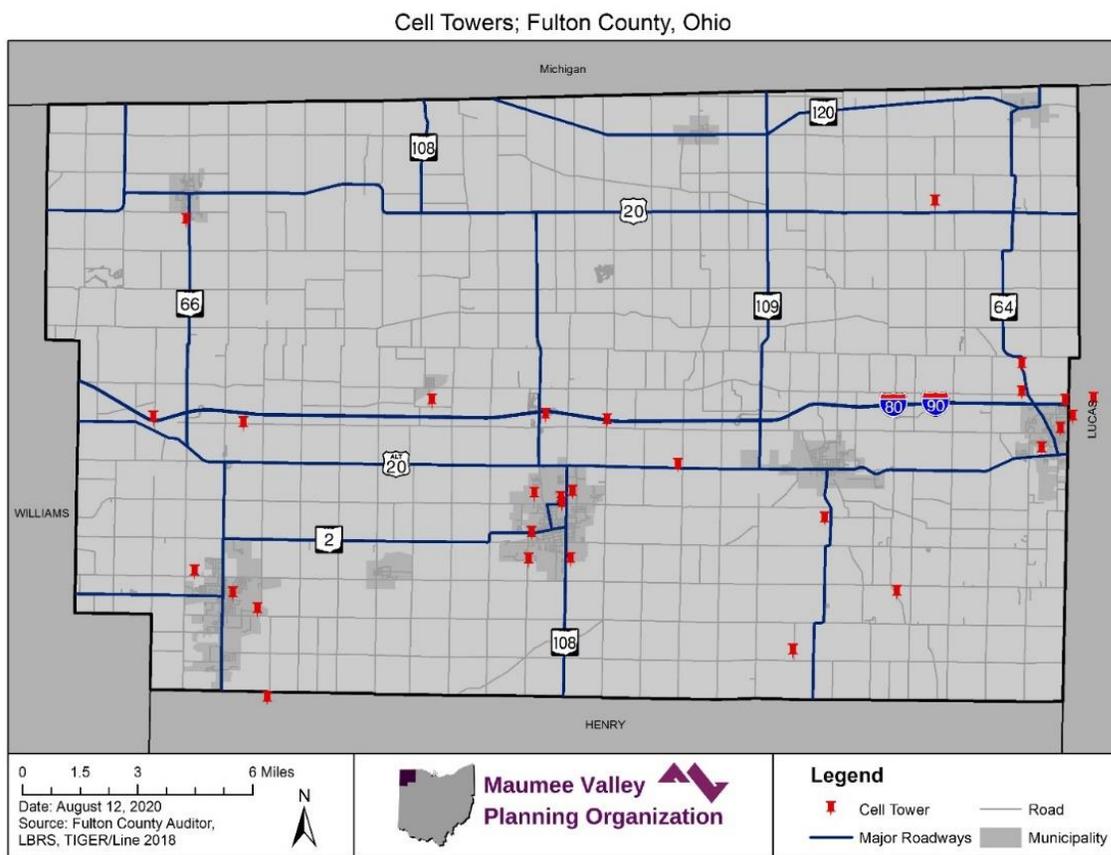


Graph 26: Archbold Annual Utility Use

Graph 27: Wauseon Annual Utility Use

Cellphone Towers

Section 332(c)(7)(B)(v) of the Federal Communications Act preserves state and local authority over cell phone zoning and land use¹⁴⁵. Towers above 200 feet are registered with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Cellphone companies can utilize another's towers at up to 5 carriers per tower. There are both publicly and privately owned towers. The need for additional 4G infrastructure is significant nationwide and the continued deployment of new towers and base stations will be necessary as the 4G phone industry transitions to 5G networks in 2020. The CityScope program may be used to estimate the number of towers and base stations necessary to provide coverage for the County.



Map 17: Fulton County Cell Tower Locations¹⁴⁶

Known Cellphone Tower Locations in Fulton County

VILLAGE OR CITY	ADDRESS	COMPANY	YEAR BUILT
ARCHIBOLD, OH	407 E Holland St	Felhc	2016
	8179 C R 25	Global Tower	
	22511 C R H (1-80 & R 66)	New Par (Verizon)	
	Fulton County Rd 21 & 22	Pinnacle Towers LLC	
	23660 C R D	Sba 2012 Tc Assets LLC	2005
DELTA, OH	753 Twp Rd W 21	Stc 5 LLC (Sprint)	
		Taylor University Broadcasting Inc	
	8288 C R 13	American Towers LLC	2003
	2201 C R 8	Diamond Communications	
	2-11106 S R 20a	Futronics Inc	
FAYETTE, OH		Global Tower LLC	
	Richard Whiteville Rd	Link Investments Ltd	
	7467 C R F	Sba 2012 Tc Assets LLC	
METAMORA, OH		Stc 5 LLC (Sprint)	
	R 66	Alltell Communications LLC (Verizon)	
SWANTON, OH	14250 Tr4-3	New Par	
	2090 C R J	American Towers	1995
TEDROW, OH	South Fulton Lucas Rd	Bryant Tower Investments LLC	2012
	14105 S Schaefer Rd	Cellco Partnership	2000
	7204 CR 1-3	Diamond Communications	2015
		Education Media Foundation	
	Hallet & Woodland	Felhc Broadway	1989
	2677 Fulton Lucas Rd	New Singular Wireless Services Inc (At&T)	
	Fulton Lucas C R 1 Mile North	Ohio Turnpike Commission	
	6121 C R 1	Sba	2006
	2964 C R V	State of Ohio Dept of Admin	
	R 64 1.9 Mile N NW	Subcarrier Communications Inc	2006
WAUSEON, OH	2024 C R J	Tillman Infrastructure LLC	2019
	8640 S R 172	Alltel Communications LLC	
WAUSEON, OH	550 W Linfoot St	American Towers	1995
	134 Lawrence Ave	Felhc	2002
	725 S Shoop Ave	Fulton County Commissioners	
	310 Cole St	Fultronics Inc	2007

S R 108 3.17 Mile North	Ohio Turnpike Toll Plaza 3	1983
987 N Shoop Ave	State of Ohio Dept of Admin	2002
1302 N Shoop Ave	Time Warner Cable Midwest LLC	1965
839 C R 15	Tower Sites Inc	2010

Table 19: Fulton County Known Cellphone Tower Locations



Figure 26: Lattice Style Cellphone Tower in Archbold

Tornado Sirens

The Fulton County Emergency Management Plan includes 39 tornado sirens that can be activated from the Sheriff’s Office in Wauseon. The outdoor warning system is designed to be heard by residents outdoors—the sirens are not designed to be heard from indoors.

5.9 Public Safety

The County maintains an Emergency Management Agency. The purpose of this agency is to act as a comprehensive emergency management program that strives to minimize disaster impact before it occurs. This is accomplished through stakeholder collaboration and proactive planning¹⁴⁷.

Sheriff Services

The Fulton County Sheriff’s Department provides emergency response services and enforces federal, state and local law. The Fulton County Sheriff’s Office is located in Wauseon. As of July 2020, the Sheriff’s Office employs twenty-two (22) full time sheriff’s deputies, seven (7) part-time special deputies, eight (8) full-time dispatchers, two (2) civilian staff and one (1) 911 coordinator¹⁴⁸.



¹⁴⁹ The 911 coordinator maintains a database of emergency services and crimes that occur in the County each year. This information can inform decision makers of potential and existing services that may be offered to reduce crime rates in the County.

The Fulton County Sheriff's Office is located in the Wauseon, the County Seat. The Sheriff's Office emphasizes community relationships and cooperation among Fulton County law enforcement and the organizations, schools, businesses, media and citizens. In addition to general law enforcement, the Sheriff's Office provides carry concealed weapon (CCW) applications and permits.

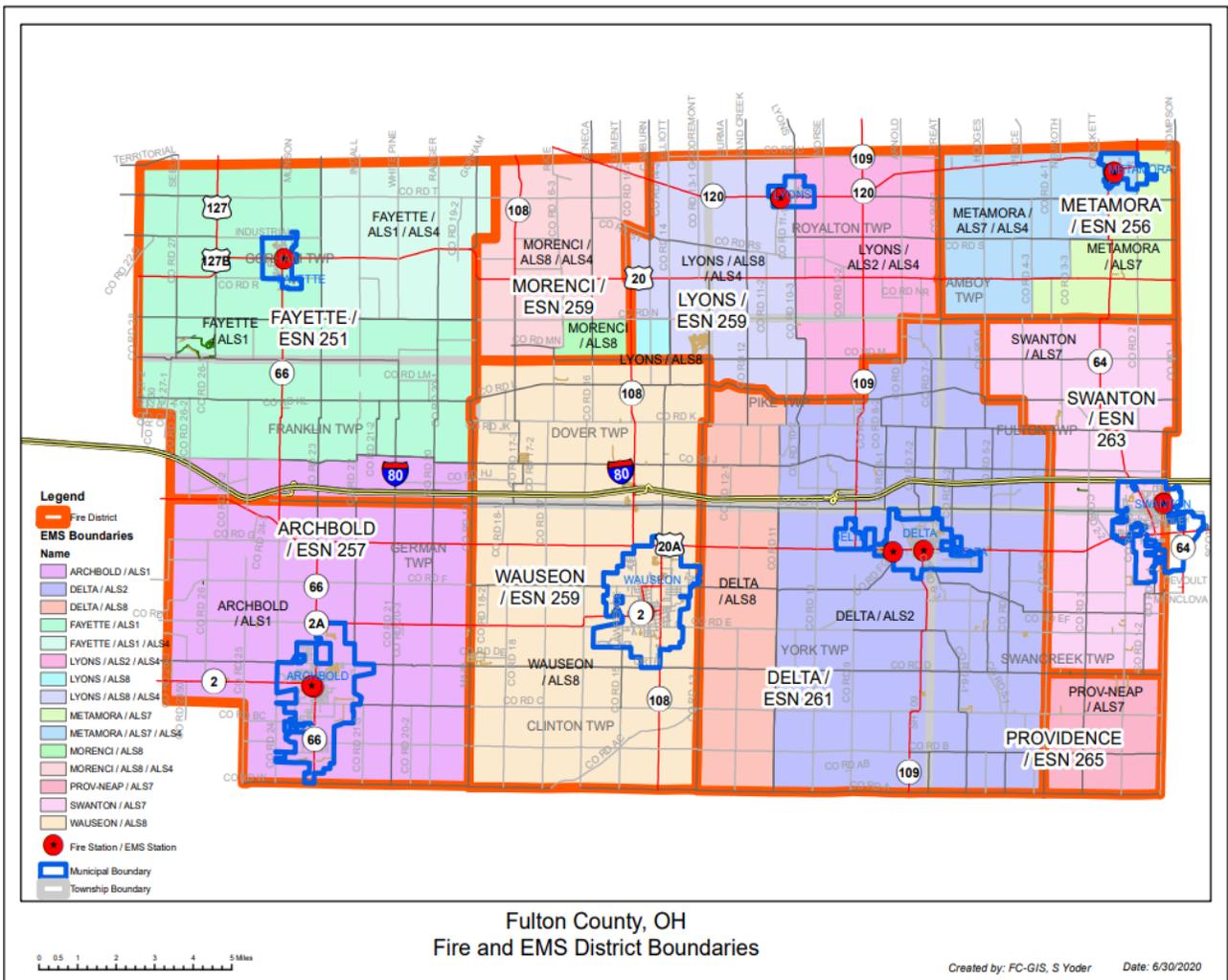
Fire and EMS Services

The Fulton County Emergency Medical Services (FCEMS) provides daily services to over 40,000 residents in a 406.8 square mile area. Annually, Fulton County EMS responds to 4,000 emergency and non-emergency calls. There are four (4) advanced life support stations and three (3) basic life support stations staffed in the County¹⁵⁰. The Wauseon Fire Department provides courses on CPR and first aid; the courses are taught by certified American Heart Association (AHA) instructors and successful completion of the courses comes with certification¹⁵¹.



Figure 27: Wauseon EMS and Fire Department¹⁵²

The Fire and EMS Departments coordinate to provide safety services to Fulton County residents. Administrative complexities associated with Fire and EMS frustrations arise as a result of increased call volume, station staff funding issues and entities that control fire departments (such as cities or townships). To provide a safe, efficient and effective response model in Fulton County, it is recommended that the commissioners and fire departments collaborate to sponsor further research regarding the current and potential fire service functions and fund allocations¹⁵³.



Map 18: Fulton County Fire and EMS District Boundaries¹⁵⁴

5.10 Goals and Objectives

Government

Goal 1: Become More Accessible

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Use Tech</i>	Increase electronic footprint	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities
<i>O2: Market</i>	Promote government	December 1, 2039	County Commissioners
<i>O3: Encourage Participation of Youth</i>	Partner with schools to expand local government understanding.	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities

Public Buildings

Goal 2: Maintain Investment

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Completed by date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Improve Access to Local Buildings</i>	ADA analysis	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O2: Reuse Existing Square Footage</i>	Repurpose building uses	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O3: Replace Buildings Based on Community Need</i>	Do not be afraid to build NEW if it is the right thing to do	January 1, 2040	Multiple Agencies

Information Technology

Goal 3: Stay Current

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by date	Entity Responsible
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<i>O1: Buy Next Generation as Needed</i>	Understand useful life for equipment	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities
<i>O2: Upgrade Software</i>	Replace software per operation as needed	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities
<i>O3: Encourage Staff to be Aware of Outside Issues</i>	Cyber threats evolve and staff must be vigilant.	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities

Education

Goal 4: Support Local Schools

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Completed by date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Improve Access to Government</i>	Work to always improve our web site	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O2: Use Technology</i>	Produce documentation	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O3: Improve Communication Both Ways</i>	Work with video communication	January 1, 2040	Board of Education

Libraries

Goal 5: Support Local Libraries

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by date	Entity Responsible
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<i>O1: Improve Access to Government</i>	Much like schools, the public should know more	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities
<i>O2: Use Technology</i>	Produce documentation	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities
<i>O3: Improve Communication Both Ways</i>	Work with video communication	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities

Parks and Recreation

Goal 6: Support Local Communities

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Completed by date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Improve Access to Local Buildings</i>	Provide community CDBG funding for ADA analysis	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O2: Provide CDBG Funding</i>	Improve community Educational attainment on grants	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O3: Help Market Community</i>	Assist in creation of Materials	January 1, 2040	Multiple Agencies

Health Services

Goal 7: Be a Partner

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by date	Entity Responsible
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<i>O1: Support State and Local Objectives</i>	Health department and hospital has the lead, we support	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities
<i>O2: Market</i>	Health department and hospital has the lead, we support	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities
<i>O3: Work with the Board on Space</i>	Health department and hospital has the lead, we support	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities

Public Utilities

Goal 8: Be Responsive & Affordable

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Completed by date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Partner on a Regional Basis</i>	Public utilities can be share	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O2: Apply for Grant Funding as Applicable</i>	State and Federal funding may assist	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O3: Replace Facilities Based on Community Need</i>	Coordinate locally as needed	January 1, 2040	Board of Education

Environmental Programs

Goal 9: Be Supportive

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Complete by date	Entity Responsible
-------------------	----------------------------------	-------------------------	---------------------------

<i>O1: Support State and Local Objectives</i>	Health department and hospital has the lead, we support	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities
<i>O2: Market</i>	Health department and hospital has the lead, we support	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities
<i>O3: Work with the Board on Funding</i>	Health department and hospital has the lead, we support	December 1, 2039	Multiple Entities

Public Safety

Goal 10: Maintain Investment

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Completed by date	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Improve Access to Local Buildings</i>	ADA analysis	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O2: Replace Existing Equipment</i>	Vehicles will be replaced as well as software and communication equipment	January 2030 January 2040	Multiple Agencies
<i>O3: Replace or Combine Buildings Based on Court Need</i>	Coordinate with Courts to meet specific need	January 1, 2025	Board of County Commissioners

Chapter 6: Natural Resources

This chapter addresses the types of natural resources found in Fulton County and their impacts on citizens and business operations. The natural resources examined include: Soil types, industrial resources, agricultural resources, land types, minerals and water resources.

Chapter Contents:

- 6.1 Goals
- 6.2 Legal Framework for Groundwater Quality
- 6.3 Existing Conditions and Trends
- 6.4 Fulton County Agriculture and Development
- 6.5 Natural Resource Quality
- 6.6 Waste Management
- 6.7 Objectives

6.1 Goals



Goal 1: Water quality improvement through soil erosion reduction and storm water retention



Goal 2: Provide information and education



Goal 3: Nutrient management



Goal 4: Farmland Preservation



Goal 5: Wildlife habitat and woodland improvements and management

6.2 Legal Framework

The Ohio EPA oversees the Water Quality Management Plan (WQM) as is prescribed by section 303 of the Clean Water Act¹⁵⁵. To preserve pure water sources, water pollutant issues are identified and regulations are placed on wastewater facilities; afterwards, the management of nonpoint source pollution is implemented. The Ohio EPA oversees drinking water facilities throughout the state of Ohio in order to maintain public health under the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The SDWA protects both humans and natural resources

such as: Rivers, springs, reservoirs, lakes and ground water wells. Health-based standards for Ohio's drinking water protect its denizens from natural and manmade contaminants. It should be noted that the SDWA does not regulate private wells, which are not a significant source of water for Ohio communities¹⁵⁶.

Quality of Groundwater

The City of Wauseon sources water from the Maumee River, Big Ditch and Stuckey Ditch, which may impact its drinking water quality. In 2018, the City of Wauseon conducted a study to determine contaminants present in the drinking water. Harmful contaminants such as nitrate, barium, atrazine, radium-228, copper and lead were found in Wauseon's drinking water. Small amounts were discovered in the study, but a large spike in any of these contaminants could cause severe public health concerns. Like those of Wauseon, other Fulton County drinking water sources are susceptible to these harmful contaminants. Contamination sources like agricultural runoff, home construction runoff, oil/gas production activities, landfills and combined sewer overflows contribute to the release of harmful contaminants into groundwater. The potential negative impacts of these harmful contaminants can be decreased by implementing measures to protect the Maumee River, Tiffin River, Big Ditch, Stuckey Ditch and other surface water sources in the County.

2017 City of Wauseon Drinking Water Consumer Confidence Report

Contaminants (Units)	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Range of Detections	Violation	Sample Year	Typical Source of Contaminants
Bacteriological							
Coliform bacteria tests	0	1	0	0 – 1	No	2018	Naturally present in the environment
Chlorine / TOC							
Total Chlorine (ppm)	NA	4	1.56	0.6 – 3.0	No	2018	Water additive used to control microbes.
TOC* (*)	NA	< 1	1.85	1.20 – 2.20	No	2018	See note below (*)
Inorganic Contaminants							
Fluoride (ppm)	NA	4.0	1.01	0.88 – 1.13	No	2018	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive that promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate (ppm)	10	10	0.75	0.36 – 2.01	No	2018	Runoff from fertilizer use; Erosion of natural deposits
Barium (ppm)	NA	2	0.008	NA	No	2018	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Volatile Organic Contaminants (all in ppb)							
Trihalomethanes (ppb)	NA	80	65.2	7.3 – 85.6	No	2018	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Bromodichloromethane	NA	NA	17.4	1. – 17.4	No	2018	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Chloroform	NA	NA	62.6	5 – 62.6	No	2018	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Bromoform	NA	NA	0.9	ND – 0.9	No	2018	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Dibromochloromethane	NA	NA	7.4	1 – 7.4	No	2018	By-product of drinking water chlorination

Total Haloacetic Acids	NA	60	25.53	16.6 – 31.4	No	2018	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Turbidity							
Turbidity (NTU's)	NA	TT	0.24	0.06 – 0.24	No	2018	Soil runoff
Turbidity (% meeting standard)	NA	TT	100%	100%	No	2018	Soil runoff
Synthetic Organic Contaminants including Pesticides and Herbicides							
Atrazine (ppb)	3	3	< 0.3	< 0.3	No	2018	Runoff from herbicide used on row crops
Radioactive Contaminants	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Range of Detections	Violation	Sample Year	Typical Source of Contaminants
Radium - 228 (pCi/L)	NA	5	ND	NA	No	2014	Erosion of natural deposits
Lead and Copper							
Contaminants (units)	Action Level (AL)	Individual Results over the AL	90% of test levels were less than	Violation	Year Sampled	Typical source of Contaminants	
Lead (ppb)	15 ppb	0	ND	No	2017	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	
	0 out of 20 samples were found to have lead levels in excess of the lead action level of 15 ppb.						
Copper (ppm)	1.3 ppm	NA	0.035	No	2017	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	
	0 out of 20 samples were found to have copper levels in excess of the copper action level of 1.3 ppm.						

Table 20: City of Wauseon Drinking Water Consumer Confidence Report for 2017¹⁵⁷

*The value reported under “Level Found” for Total Organic Carbon (TOC) is the lowest ratio between the percentages of TOC actually removed to the percentage of TOC required to be removed. A value of greater than one (1) indicates that the water system is in compliance with TOC removal requirements. A value of less than one (1) indicates a violation of the TOC removal requirements

6.3 Existing Conditions and Trends

Fulton County experiences moderate weather year-round. The annual high temperature is 59°F and low temperature is 39°F. The annual rainfall is 35.4 inches and annual snowfall is 29.5 inches. There are typically 180 sunny days out of the year and a typical UV index of 3.6¹⁵⁸.

Types of Soil in Fulton County

Fulton County has 62 soil mapping units in total, 45 of which are considered prime farmland or locally important (*Table 21*). The most abundant soils are Hoytville Clay Loam, Mermill Loam, Ottokee Fine Sand, Haskins Loam and Grandyby Loamy Sand. Three of these are loamy soils, making them most suitable for plant growth due to the combination of sand, silt and clay. The mixture leaves space for air and water to penetrate because of its varying particle sizes. Clay holds moisture well, making these soils more fertile¹⁵⁹.

Top Five Soils Present in Fulton County, Ohio

<i>Type of Soil</i>	<i>Description of soil</i>	<i>Acres in AOI</i>	<i>Percent of AOI</i>
<i>Hoytville Clay Loam (HoA)</i>	<i>Deep, dark colored soil that is very poorly drained. Contains more clay than other types of minerals.</i>	<i>31874</i>	<i>12.2%</i>
<i>Mermill Loam (Mf)</i>	<i>Deep, very poorly drained soils on plains. Formed in loamy glaciolacustrine or water-sorted material. Contains equal parts sand, silt and clay.</i>	<i>23034</i>	<i>8.8%</i>
<i>Ottokee Fine Sand (OtB)</i>	<i>Very deep, moderately well-drained soils formed in sandy glaciolacustrine. Sand particles have a diameter of 0.125 to 0.25 mm.</i>	<i>17332.8</i>	<i>6.7%</i>
<i>Haskins Loam (HkA)</i>	<i>Very deep, somewhat poorly drained soils that are moderately. deep to dense till. Contains equal portions of sand, silt and clay.</i>	<i>12972.3</i>	<i>5.0%</i>
<i>Grandyby Loamy Fine Sand (Gr)</i>	<i>Deep, poorly drained soils formed in sandy outwash or sandy. glaciolacustrine deposits. Contains more than 50% fine sand.</i>	<i>12366.4</i>	<i>4.7%</i>

Table 21: Fulton County Top Five Soils¹⁶⁰

Physiography

During the Ice Age, most of Ohio's surface was covered by sheets of ice up to 1 mile thick. The ice sheets left mixtures of clay, sand, gravel and boulders; the sand and clay became soil suitable for farming. Clay is composed of fine-grained minerals that contain nutrients and drainage properties necessary for farming. Glaciers scraped, flattened and shaped the land, which deposited sediments in Northern Ohio. This enriched the soil and created a flat landscape suitable for agricultural practices¹⁶¹. Fulton County is in soil region 1 and 3, where limestone, dolomite and limy shales are the most common bedrock. The bedrock contains lime concentrations in the substratum, which increases soil fertility¹⁶².

Soil region 1 makes up most of Fulton County. The crop fields are nearly level and contain drainage ditches and subsurface drains. The northwest corner of Fulton County is in soil region 3; this includes areas of the Indiana and Ohio Till Plain. Soils in this region are less fertile for crop production because they were formed in older glacier deposits and experienced greater weathering. Fulton County's soil contains more than 3% of organic matter and more than 27% of clay in its topsoil¹⁶³.

Prime Farmland

Most Fulton County soil types are suitable for farming. Fulton County had 196,306 acres of farmland in 2017, utilized for crops and livestock; approximately 94% of Fulton County is agricultural land. Commonly grown crops include soybeans, corn and wheat; specialty crops are tobacco, cotton and fruits¹⁶⁴.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture describes prime farmland as land that contains the best combinations of chemical and physical characteristics for producing food¹⁶⁵. Prime farmland has the soil quality and moisture supply needed to produce a high crop yield. Fulton County possesses 6.4% of soils considered prime farmland. Some soil units shall be considered prime farmland only if drained or protected from flooding¹⁶⁶. In Fulton County, wet soils are generally well-drained after the application of drainage measures, whether from farming or other types of land development¹⁶⁷. About 69.4% of drained soils are potential prime farmland; therefore, a total of 75.8% of Fulton County's soil may be considered prime farmland if drained. 20.5% of Fulton County's soils are considered local importance. Local Importance farmland include soils that meet criteria for prime farmland but are not presently irrigated¹⁶⁸. Including the aforementioned soils, Fulton County is 96% prime farmland and soils of local importance.

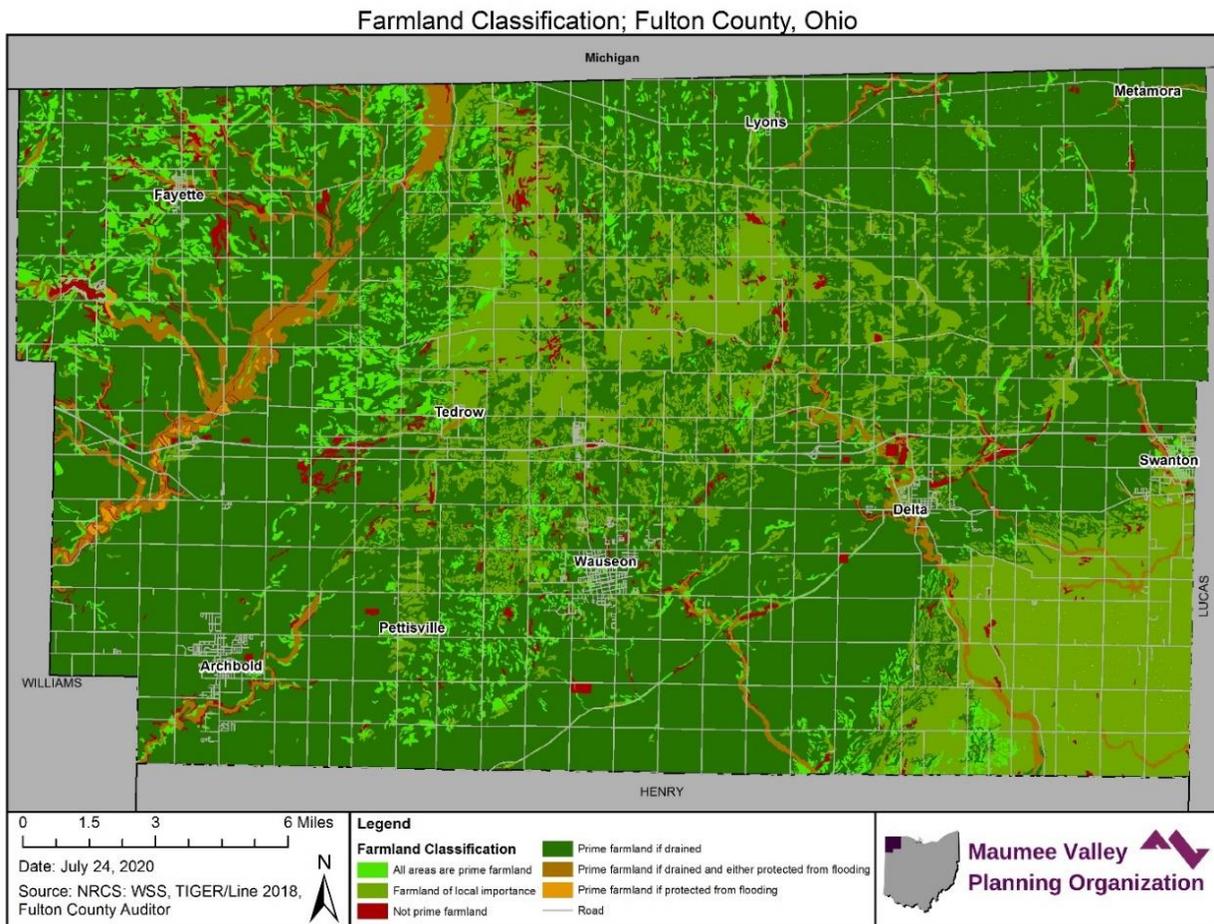
List of prime soil in Fulton County, Ohio

Symbol	Soil Name	Prime	Percent
BcA	Bixler Loamy Fine Sand	1	0.8 %
Blo2A1	Blount Loam	2	1.1 %
Blo2B1	Blount Loam	2	3.6 %
BnA	Blount Loam	2	2.1 %
BoB	Blount-Rimer Complex	2	1.1 %
ByA	Brady Sandy Loam	1	0.8 %
Cn	Colwood Loam	2	2.1 %
CoB	Colonie Fine Sand	3	1.8 %
CoC	Colonie Fine Sand	3	0.9 %
CoD	Colonie Fine Sand	3	0.1 %
DfA	Del Rey Silt Loam	2	1.7 %
DmA	Digby Loam	2	0.4 %
DtA	Dixboro Fine Sandy Loam	1	0.7%
Ee	Eel Silt Loam	2	0.2 %
FtA	Fulton Silty Clay Loam	2	3.0 %
FtB	Fulton Silty Clay Loam	2	0.8 %
GaB	Galen Loamy Fine Sand	1	0.5 %
Gf	Gilford Fine Sandy Loam	2	3.3 %
GnB2	Glynwood Loam	1	1.8 %
Gr	Granby Loamy Fine Sand	3	4.7 %
HkA	Haskins Loam	2	5.0 %
Symbol	Soil Name	Prime	Percent

HoA	Hoytville Clay Loam	2	12.2 %
KfA	Kibbie Loam	2	2.5 %
La	Lamson Fine Sandy Loam	2	0.4 %
Lc	Latty Silty Clay	2	4.2 %
Lf	Lenawee Silty Clay Loam	2	2.5 %
Mf	Mermill Loam	2	8.8 %
Mo	Millgrove Loam	2	1.3 %
NnA	Nappanee Loam	2	3.1 %
NnB	Nappanee Loam	2	0.3 %
OrB	Oshtemo Loamy Sand	1	0.4 %
OtB	Ottokee Fine Sand	3	6.7 %
OuB	Ottokee- Glynwood Complex	3	1.0 %
PeB	Perrin Sandy Loam	3	0.2 %
Pm	Pewamo Clay Loam	2	3.8 %
RbB	Rawson Sandy Loam	1	0.7 %
RnA	Rimer Loamy Fine Sand	2	2.0 %
SdB	Seward Loamy Fine Sand	3	1.2 %
SfB2	Shinrock Silty Clay Loam	1	0.2 %
Sh	Shoals Silt Loam	2	0.6 %
So	Sloan Silty Clay Loam	2	2.7 %
TdA	Tedrow Loamy Fine Sand	3	3.9 %
TsA	Toussaint Silty Clay Loam	2	0.1 %
TuB	Tuscola Fine Sandy Loam	1	0.5 %
Symbol	Soil Name	Prime	Percent
Zie5A	Ziegenfuss Clay Loam	2	0.5%

Table 22: Fulton County Prime Soils¹⁶⁹

Total 96%



Map 19: Fulton County Farmland Classification¹⁷⁰

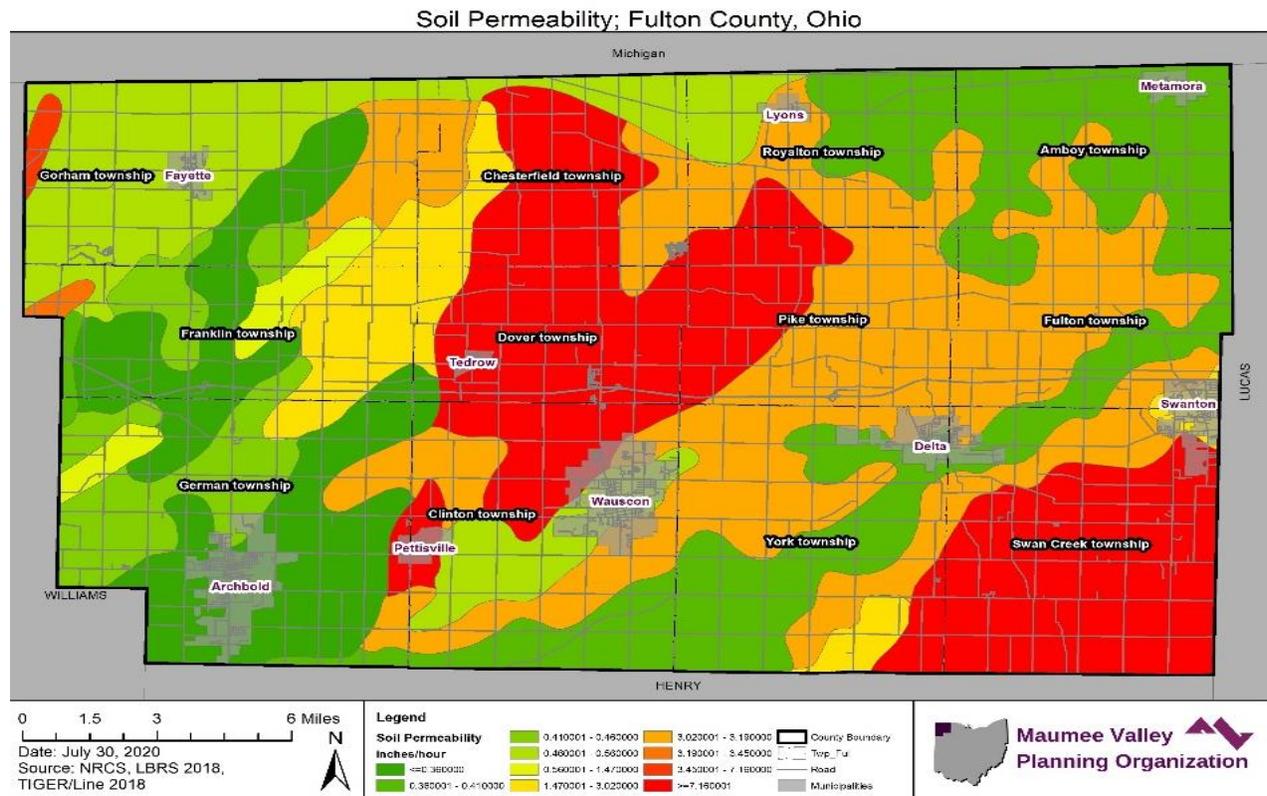
Agricultural Production Value

Agricultural land is defined as “land area that is either arable, under permanent crops, or under permanent pastures”¹⁷¹. In Fulton County, agriculture occupies about 93% of the total land use. The County covers 260,288 total acres of land; about 195,000 acres of that land is utilized for agriculture¹⁷². According to the USDA, there are 785 farms in Fulton County and the average farm spans 250 acres. 71% of the agricultural land area is cropland, while the remaining 29% is reserved for livestock. The most common Fulton County farm crops are soybeans (85,396 acres), corn (72,863 acres) and wheat (10,585 acres)¹⁷³.



Figure 28: Corn Harvest South of Archbold¹⁷⁴

Permeable Soils



Map 20: Fulton County Soil Permeability¹⁷⁵

Soil permeability is a soil’s ability to transmit water and air. Soil permeability is dependent on soil’s texture: Coarser texture results in greater permeability, whereas finer texture creates less permeability. The less permeable the soil, the slower the flow of water through the soil. Fulton County ground water flows rapidly into these permeable soils; this type of soil is present in productive aquifers¹⁷⁶.

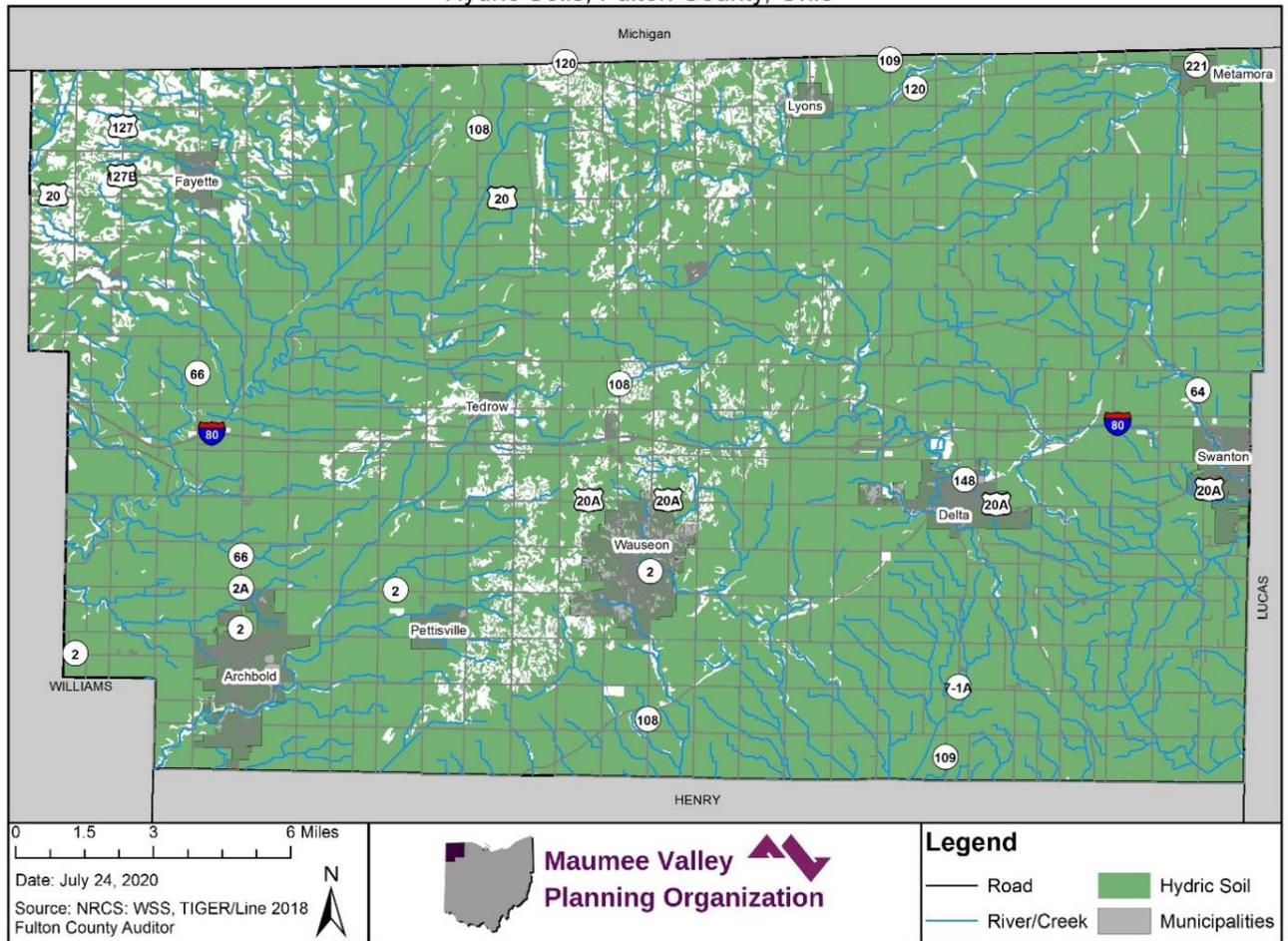
Soil Type	Texture	Permeability
Clayey Soil	Fine	Very slow
Loamy Soil	Moderately fine – moderately coarse	Slow – rapid
Sandy Soil	Coarse	Very rapid

Table 22: Soil Permeability According to Soil Texture¹⁷⁷

Hydric Soils

Fulton County contains an abundance of hydric soil. Hydric soils are found in poorly drained areas; typically, these soils are formed by standing water or soils saturated in moisture over a long period of time. When hydric soils are drained, they retain their hydric classification. Drainage may result from human practices or natural occurrences. Hydric soils are commonly drained in Fulton County, as 50% of the County’s soils are considered hydric; Fulton and Amboy townships have larger concentrations of the soil¹⁷⁸. Areas containing hydric soils are not considered suitable for buildings due to stability concerns. However, they are suitable seasonal habitats for plants and amphibians.

Hydric Soils; Fulton County, Ohio



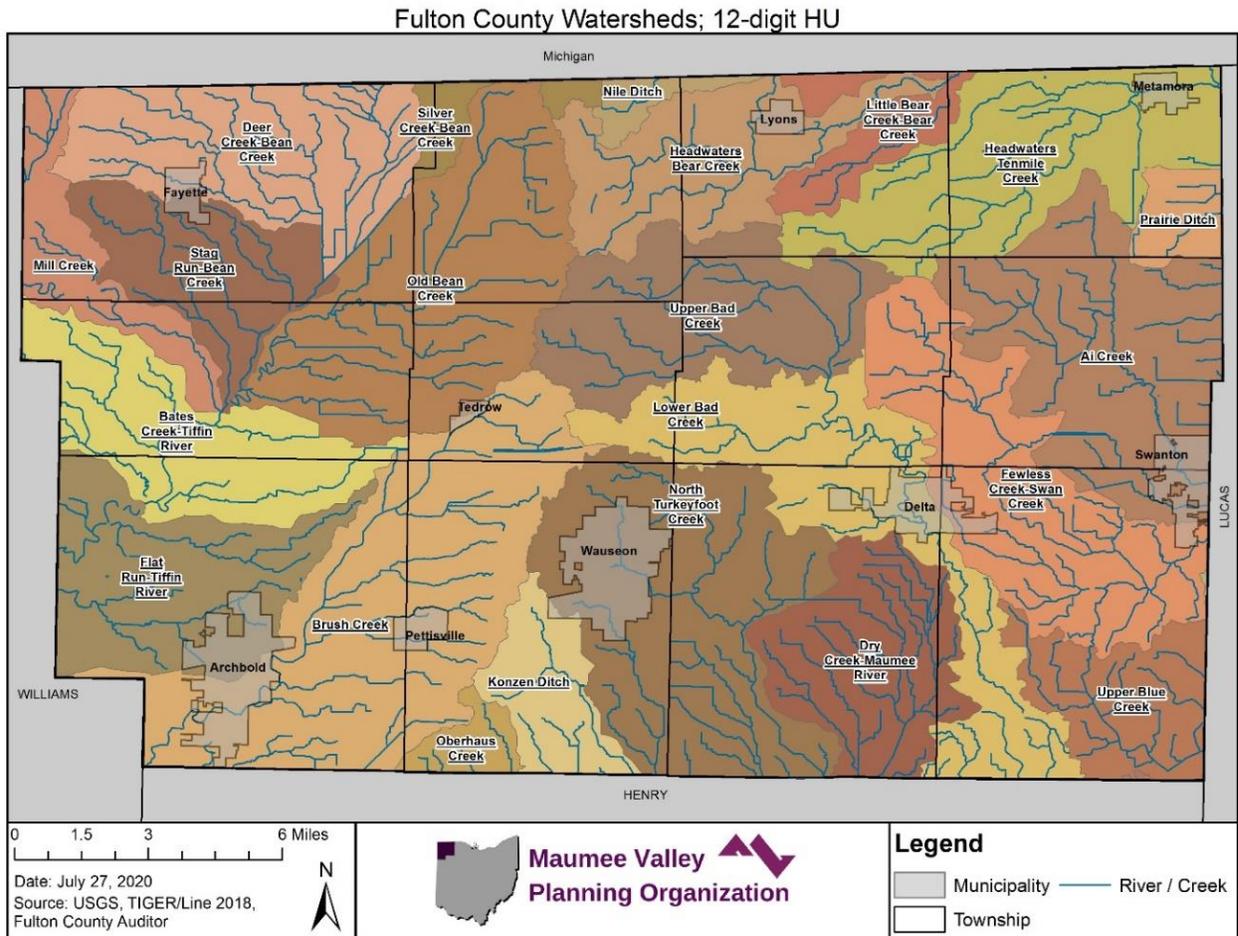
Map 21: Fulton County Hydric Soils¹⁷⁹

Watersheds



Figure 29: Archbold Reservoir Panorama¹⁸⁰

Fulton County lies in the larger Lake Erie Basin watershed, which is divided into six smaller basins. A watershed is a drainage basin into which surface or ground water flows. Fulton County uses two smaller basins in the Lake Erie Basin watershed: The Maumee River Basin and the smaller Ten-Mile Creek Basin. The Maumee River Basin is the third largest watershed in Ohio; it covers 6,608 square miles of drainage area and includes 327 tributary streams¹⁸¹.



Map 22: Fulton County Watersheds¹⁸²

Aquifers & Drainage Patterns

Township	Sand + Gravel	Sand	Gravel	Clay	Shale	Limestone
Gorham	8	2	2	0	0	0
Chesterfield	3	0	2	0	0	0
Royalton	2	1	0	1	1	0
Metamora	1	1	1	0	3	0
Franklin	7	0	1	0	0	0
Dover	1	0	3	0	1	0
Pike	3	0	1	1	2	0
Fulton	2	1	2	0	0	0
German	5	0	2	0	3	0
Clinton	2	2	3	0	1	0
York	4	0	2	0	1	0
Swan Creek	0	0	4	1	4	1

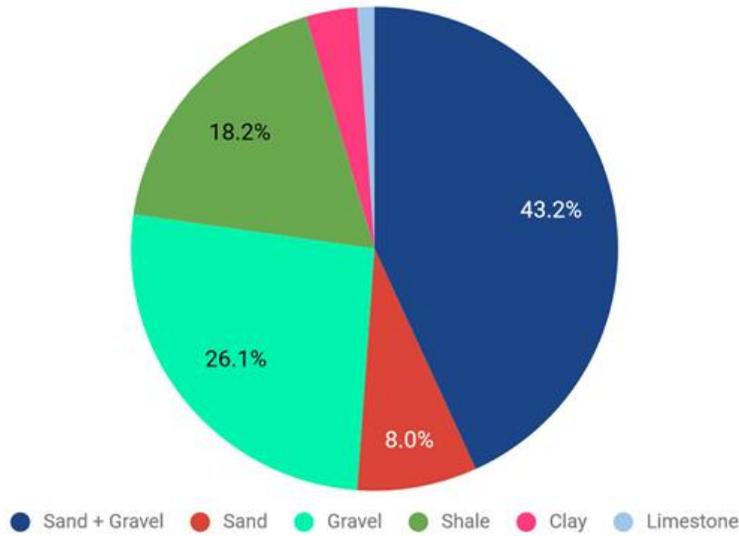
Table 23: Fulton County Aquifers & Drainage Patterns by Township

Table 24 depicts aquifers found in Fulton County Townships and the number of aquifers located in each township. An aquifer is defined as any geological formation which contains or conducts groundwater and supplies it to wells and springs¹⁸³. Fulton County contains copious aquifers, likely due to Black Swamp drainage. Gravel aquifers outnumber other types of aquifers in the area due to local glacial deposits. Shale found in Fulton County forms aquifers by acting as an impermeable layer. These aquifers may prevent flooding because they have an immense water-storing capacity.

Drainage patterns depend upon inland water features, including rivers and streams, rock hardness and topography of the land¹⁸⁴. Fulton County is geographically flat with rectangular and parallel drainage patterns, which assist in the prevention of flooding. Parallel patterns involve multiple pathways that merge into one to drain into a single area. These paths adhere to flat geographic structures and follow natural Black Swamp drainage patterns.

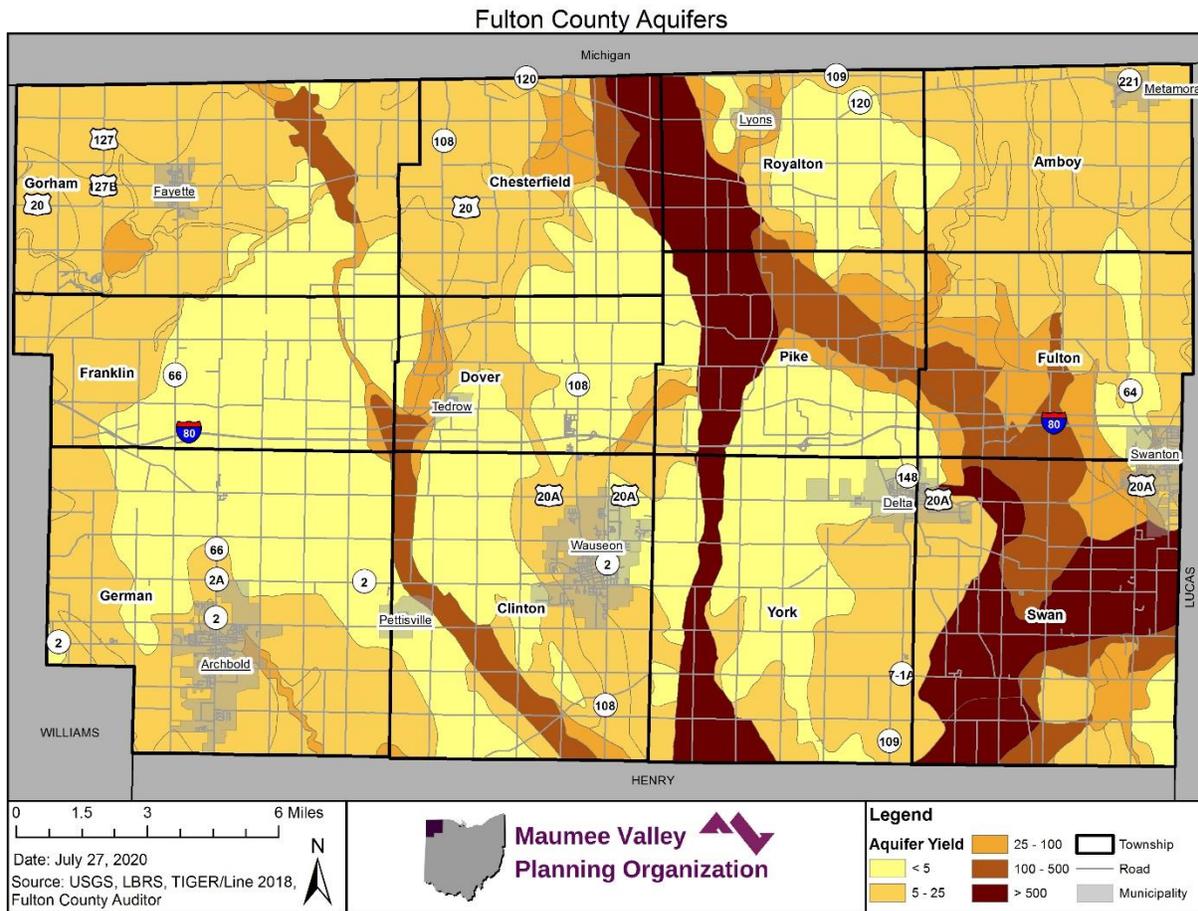
Limestone is an uncommon Fulton County aquifer; it is a carbonate rock aquifer, which varies greatly in water yield. Fractured limestone is permeable and a productive aquifer. Drainage patterns in the County are dominated by sand and gravel aquifers. Sand and gravel aquifers are

Aquifers in Fulton County



more easily defined because sand may be found underground near the Maumee River watershed; gravel is hidden in subterranean layers. Clay and shale aquifers are often found layered deeper underground than sand and gravel¹⁸⁵.

Graph 28: Fulton County Aquifer Type Percentages



Map 23: Fulton County Aquifers¹⁸⁶

Plants and Animals

Fulton County Common Animal Species	
Common Raccoon	Fox Squirrel
Eastern Chipmunk	Virginia Opossum
Striped Skunk	White-Tailed Deer
Eastern Gray Squirrel	Red Fox
Eastern Cottontail Rabbit	Coyote
Groundhog	House Mouse
American Toad	Northern Cardinal
Ruby-Throated Hummingbird	Red-Tailed Hawk

Table 24: Fulton County Common Animal Species¹⁸⁷



Figure 30 Eagle's Nest in Delta - Citizen Submitted



Figure 31 Fulton Flowers - Citizen Submitted

Endangered Fulton County Species

Name	Type	Status
Indiana Bat	Animal	Endangered
Northern Long-eared Bat	Animal	Threatened
Rayed Bean Mussel	Animal	Endangered

Table 25: Fulton County Endangered Species¹⁸⁸

The Ohio Bat Conservation Plan was developed to protect the rapidly declining Ohio bat population. Much of this decline is credited to habitat loss due to development, human disturbance of roosting areas and caves and White Nose Syndrome (WNS). Beyond preserving species diversity, bats are pollinators and natural insect deterrents (effectively saving roughly \$3.7 billion annually for farmers in pesticide use and crop damage). The continuous study of these creatures has led to groundbreaking medical and military research. Bat Conservation Plan develops short- and long-term goals for protection of Ohio bat population through migratory and health monitoring, education and outreach and land management and protection¹⁸⁹.

To increase conservation efforts and wildlife protection, Fulton County may benefit from the Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) model developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). WLFW practices are implemented to preserve wildlife habitats and increase population of disadvantaged species through working land use improvements. Farmers and landowners receive technical and financial assistance for participation in WLFW through the NRCS Farm Bill¹⁹⁰. This may be a productive option for County residents, as it improves environmental health and furthers the goal of agricultural preservation.

Invasive species pose a threat to native plants and animals in the areas they infiltrate. An invasive species is a non-native organism introduced into an area, typically via human

intervention, that is harmful to the surrounding environment and its native inhabitants¹⁹¹. The need for invasive species management and prevention is great: Management practices are crucial to the continued survival of native species, habitat preservation and environmental biodiversity.

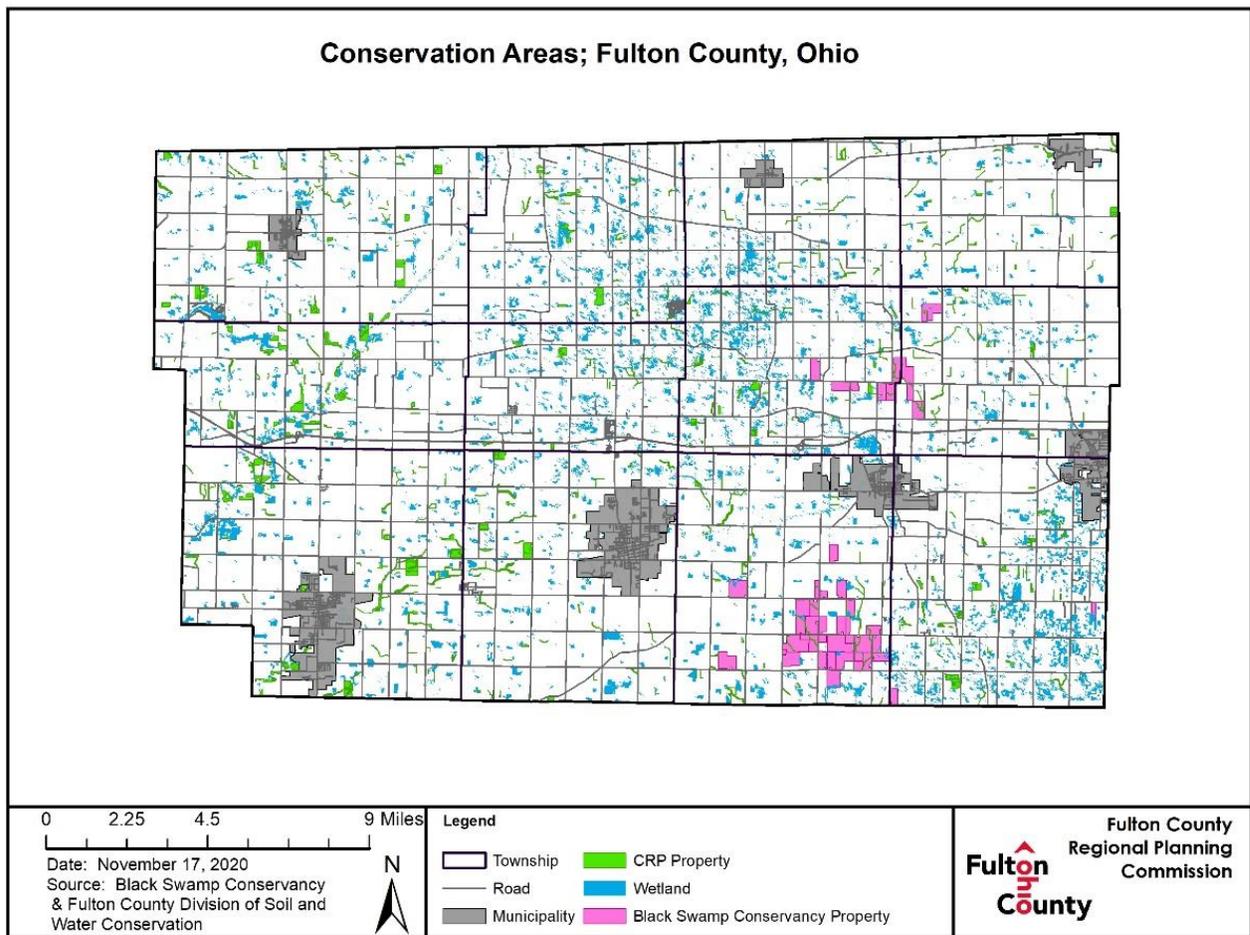
Fulton County List of Invasive Species

<i>Name</i>	Type	Management Practice
<i>Amur Honeysuckle</i>	Plant	Seedling removal; annual mowing and cutting; herbicide
<i>Canada Thistle</i>	Plant	Mowing, cutting, pulling during growth season; herbicide
<i>Glossy Buckthorn</i>	Plant	Pulling entire plant; herbicide
<i>Cut-Leaved Teasel</i>	Plant	Digging up roots; cutting stalks before flowering; controlled burning; herbicide
<i>Garlic Mustard</i>	Plant	Pulling entire plant; cutting stems during flowering period; herbicide
<i>Japanese Knotweed</i>	Plant	Continuous cutting and mowing during growing season; herbicide
<i>Multiflora Rose</i>	Plant	Digging up roots; repeated mowing; controlled burning during growing season; herbicide
<i>Purple Loosestrife</i>	Plant	Pulling entire plant; herbicide; <i>Galerucella</i> beetle; <i>Hylobius transversovittatus</i> and <i>Nanophyes marmoratus</i> weevil
<i>Tree-of-Heaven</i>	Plant	Pulling seedlings; herbicide; <i>Atteva punctella</i> moth
<i>Sweet-Clover</i>	Plant	Pulling young plant; mowing and cutting; herbicide

<i>Zebra Mussel</i>	Animal	Washing boat and fishing supplies; Potash chemical fertilizer
<i>Gypsy Moth</i>	Animal	Mating disrupters; <i>Bacillus thuringiensis</i> ; trapping; not moving firewood
<i>Emerald Ash Borer</i>	Animal	Insecticide; stingless wasp; not moving firewood
<i>White-Nose Syndrome</i>	Fungus	Decontaminating shoes and supplies before and after entering hibernaculum; not disturbing bat population; reporting unusual bat activity to experts

Table 26: Fulton County Invasive Species¹⁹²

Conservation Sites



Map 24: Fulton County Conservation Areas¹⁹³

Oak Savannas are native in this region and offer a plethora of bio-diverse benefits. Unfortunately, the County has experienced a significant decrease in these habitats due to residential development and uncontrolled agricultural practices. Fulton County will benefit tremendously from the development of an Oak Savanna, which is an environment composed of shrubbery, wildflowers, prairie vegetation and oak tree groupings. Oak Savannas have the potential to restore wildlife populations and wetlands. Restoring or installing the Savannas come with monetary incentives and includes an annual payment for the ground on behalf of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)¹⁹⁴. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) provides monetary incentives in compliance with the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). Fulton County agencies should partner with private landowners and adjacent county park districts to establish a plan that will drive the restoration of Oak Savannas throughout the region.

The Fulton County Soil and Water Conservation District has enacted conservation easements, including all the land along the Tiffin River near Goll Woods. Some of eastern Fulton County’s natural lands within Oak Openings Preserve are owned by Maumee State Forest and Toledo Metroparks. Any areas of agricultural or wet prairieland of 10 acres located around Maumee State Forest should be preserved. Conservation stakeholders believe that it is in the best interest of the County to create a connection between Maumee State Forest and the Oak Openings Metropark.

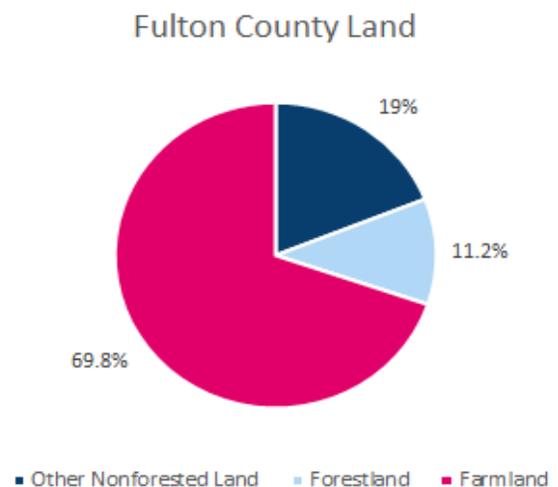
Fulton County has access to an array of professional conservation services, which are available to government and citizens alike. Resources include: Kitty Todd Nature Preserve, the Black Swamp Nature Conservancy, the ODNR and Fulton County’s Soil and Water Conservation District.

Ohio Important Bird Area (IBA)

Ohio’s Important Bird Area (IBA) Program, managed by the Ohio IBA Technical Committee, is a statewide effort towards the documentation and conservation of 70 official IBA sites through advocacy and stewardship conducted by volunteers and community partners. Criteria found on nomination packets can establish an IBA to create programs and foster greater conservation of at-risk sites, which involves training volunteers, surveying and research. Fulton County may benefit from the IBA Program if reserve managers reach out to the IBA Technical Committee and fill out the nomination packet to provide information which discerns if certain natural areas qualify as IBAs. This may assist both Fulton County and the Technical Committee in recording findings, as well as introducing possible conservation practices through cooperation with this committee¹⁹⁵.

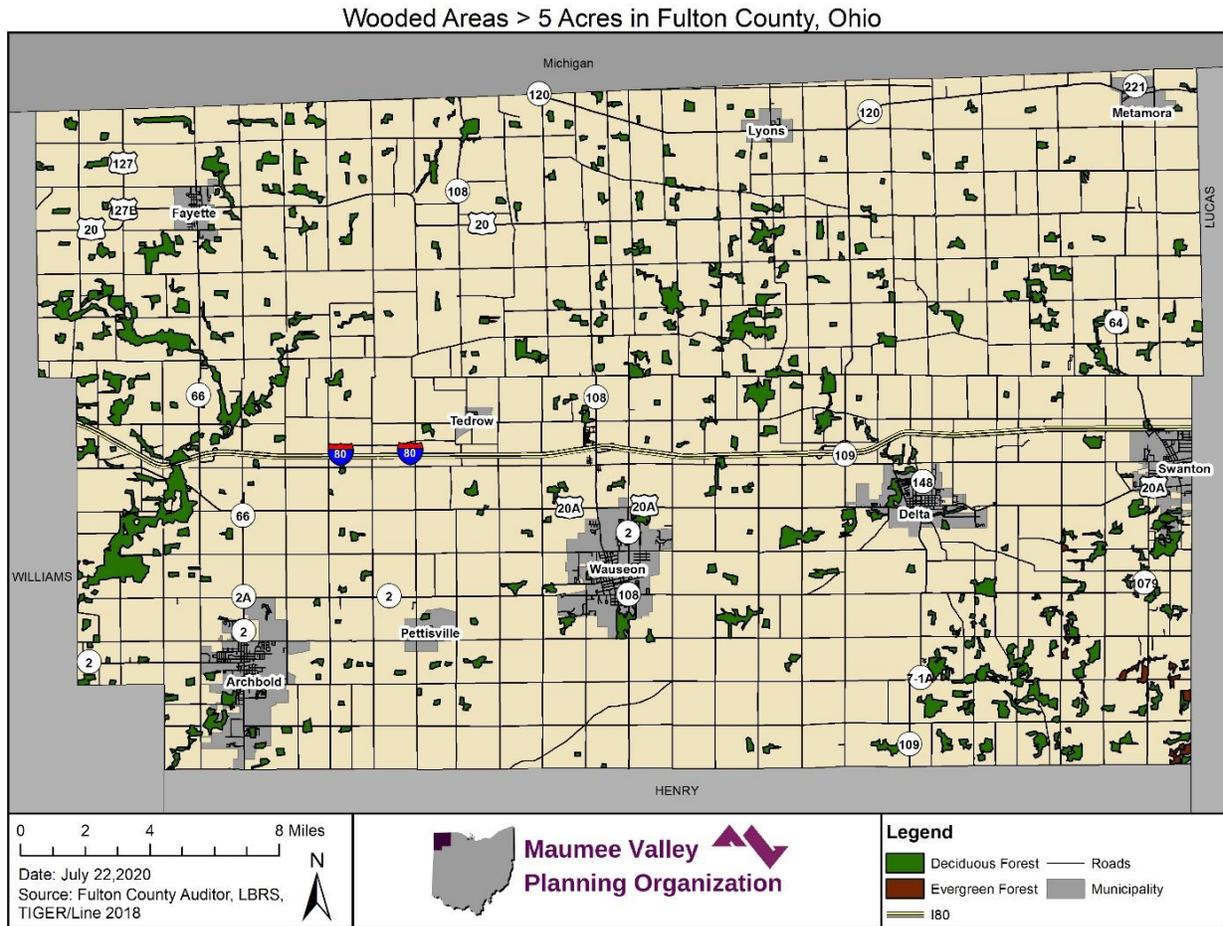
Forestlands

Forestland is an area covered in trees, which can be utilized for timber, hunting and conservation purposes. It is recommended that forestland be preserved because it prevents soil erosion and protects watersheds. Fulton County contains a total of 405 square miles of forestland, farmland and other non-forested land. Roughly 11% of Fulton County is forestland (29,000 acres)¹⁹⁶. In addition, forestland is beneficial for the County because it provides logging and product manufacturing jobs for the community. Oak, hickory, maple, beech,



Graph 29: Fulton County Land Makeup¹⁹⁷

birch, elm, ash and cottonwood trees are featured in the area. 63% of Fulton County's forestland is comprised of oak and hickory trees¹⁹⁸.



Map 25: Fulton County Wooded Areas Under 5 Acres¹⁹⁹

6.4 Fulton County Agriculture and Development

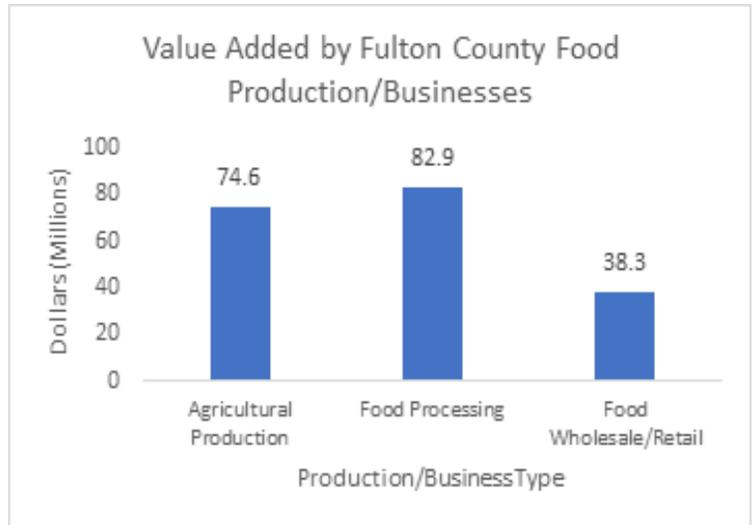
Fulton County is ranked 9th in the State of Ohio for crop sales and 24th in the state for livestock product sales. In 2017, the market value of all products sold by Fulton County was \$173,103,000. Approximately \$122,932,000 of the total value comes from crop sales and the remaining \$50,171,000 comes from agricultural product sales. Total farm-related income was \$5,651,000 in 2017; however, that is about 24% lower than the amount of farm-related income in 2012²⁰⁰. Income for individual farms in Fulton County is variable. The economic value of Fulton County has increased greatly due to agricultural production. Food processing adds the greatest production value to Fulton County, followed by agricultural production and food wholesale and retail business²⁰¹.

Curbing excessive development and preserving agricultural land has been a continuous goal for Fulton County since the implementation of the 1998 Comprehensive Plan.

Compact Farm Near Fayette²⁰²



In 2000, Fulton County had around 214,000 acres in farmland; by 2017, the amount of farm acreage had decreased by about 8%.



Graph 30: Fulton County Food Production Value²⁰³

Subdivision Regulations implemented in Fulton County have requirements including proper access to public water and sewer systems. These regulations have contributed greatly to urban growth control. Reducing the number of subdivisions located on the outskirts of towns, cities and villages can preserve natural land and improve aspects of city living. It is recommended to focus development and growth inward; this will help to preserve the small-town charm and reduce sprawl by improving upon pre-existing buildings and street networks to greater serve the communities in these areas.

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) is available for the purpose of restoring, enhancing and protecting wetlands, grasslands and working farms and ranches via conservation easements. Agricultural land easements are provided through the NRCS, which provides 50-75% of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement²⁰⁴.

It may be productive to instate a land preservation association or land trust. County residents may participate voluntarily for the purpose of protection and stewardship of farmland and green spaces. These associations utilize conservation easements through maintenance of rural character, environmental benefits, saving tax dollars and development in more productive areas. For example, the American Farmland Trust (AFT) is funded by membership dues and gifts and/or contributions from individuals and businesses. Fundraising and grants, as well as project campaigns, are encouraged for the purchase of preserved parcels or conservation easements²⁰⁵.

6.5 Natural Resource Quality

Water quality depends upon levels of pollution and types of contaminants present in water channels or bodies of water. Sources of pollution may be point or nonpoint, which differ in pollutant origin: Point source pollution is typically released from an easily discernable and confined system, such as piping, ditches, channels, or otherwise utilized for drainage purposes by power and sewage treatment plants. Nonpoint source pollution comes from varied sources, which include: Agricultural and urban runoff, excessive sediment deposits, erosion, animal waste and hydromodification caused by channel reconstruction²⁰⁶.

In Ohio, water health is measured through analysis of aquatic inhabitants present in stream systems. Water quality degradation may be present if there is an abundance of pollution-tolerant life residing in the stream. The Swan Creek watershed is split between Fulton, Henry and Lucas Counties. Swan Creek headwaters are located northwest of Swanton and its eastern portion runs from Fulton County into the Maumee River. A portion of Swan Creek streams may be considered impaired due to agricultural and urban runoff, vegetation removal, stream channelization and the implementation of tile drains²⁰⁷. Excess soil and nutrients are carried through the deepened streams, which may deplete oxygen levels, raise temperatures and harm aquatic life; thus, these actions degrade the waters.

The Village of Swanton draws its drinking water from Swan Creek. The watershed is included on the Ohio's impaired waters list as per the U.S. EPA 2020 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report²⁰⁸. To combat the presence of pollutants and monitor the water quality of Swan Creek, a Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) report is implemented under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. The TMDL analyzes pollutant amounts in an impaired body of water; the maximum amount of pollution present in the water is calculated in relation to the amount allowed in order to meet water quality standards prescribed by the EPA. TMDLs are recommended for the restoration of impaired water sources through the management of point and nonpoint pollution sources and strategies that improve overall water quality.

Air Quality

The Clean Air Act (CAA) serves as a comprehensive federal law that regulates air emissions to reduce pollution and to protect public health and the environment, including regulations that reduce emissions further and manage acid deposition (acid rain)²⁰⁹.

Air quality is an important consideration for Fulton County residents. The preservation of rural areas reduces emissions commonly found in metropolitan areas, but the County should account for common air degradation factors like agricultural pollutants, open burning contaminants and

automobile emissions. In Fulton County, backyard burning commonly takes place in the form of fire pits and trash burning. While these are small and typically contained fires, the unfiltered emissions disperse airborne dioxins, which can cause grave health concerns when inhaled. Open burning standards have been established under the Ohio Administrative Code 3745-19 to curb intensely hazardous burning practices²¹⁰.

Farming operations create emissions by way of fertilizer and animal waste; this ammonia-rich substance mixes with industrial and vehicular emissions and creates a deadly aerosol cocktail that can greatly deplete air quality and public health. These findings, however, do not require county officials to “jump on the backs of farmers”: To become harmful, agricultural emissions must combine with automobile, power plant and industrial pollutants²¹¹. With this in mind, it is far more productive to reduce overall pollutants in order to increase Fulton County’s quality of air and life.



Figure 32: AirNow air quality monitoring of Wauseon²¹²

A major educational goal is to increase regional understanding of health impacts as a result of exposure to pollution and the purpose of air quality measures to protect public health. Fulton County is not a non-attainment area, so air quality is not at an immediate disadvantage. The AirNow feature, located on the EPA’s website, maps areas of concern using an Air Quality Index (AQI) to measure overall air quality²¹³. A partnership between Fulton County and the EPA may allow for possible provisions, such as the implementation of an air quality monitor in the area. Lucas County currently uses 3 air quality monitors and Wood County uses 1 monitor. Currently, Fulton County air quality is monitored from surrounding Counties.

Lake Erie Algae Blooms

A persistent issue in Northern Ohio, including certain Fulton County communities, is the harmful algae blooms (HABs) occurring in the Lake Erie Basin. HABs are cyanobacteria that produce toxins that are harmful to the liver, skin and nervous system²¹⁴. The Maumee River, a source of water for the Cities of Wauseon and Napoleon, has experienced recent blooms in harmful algae like those found in Lake Erie²¹⁵. Lake Erie itself provides water to communities in Fulton County that source their supply from Toledo.

Cyanobacteria thrives in warm waters rich in nutrients like phosphorus; both nonpoint and point sources are to blame for the rapid increase in phosphorus levels in the Basin. The primary nonpoint source of the phosphorus is chemical fertilizer runoff from farm fields into shallow lake waters²¹⁶. Man-made drainage ditches created by farmers have carved a path through which phosphorus may flow into the lake. To curb this problem, steps have been taken to incentivize farmers to practice greater conservation efforts to restore health to the waters. Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been implemented by some Fulton County farmers near the Tiffin River. BMPs are tools that can reduce the amount of phosphorous flowing into the Tiffin River and Lake Erie; these practices include using cover crops, filter strips and other tools that control drainage. It is wise to encourage the continued use of BMPs by County farmers to further improve water quality in neighboring rivers, streams and lakes.

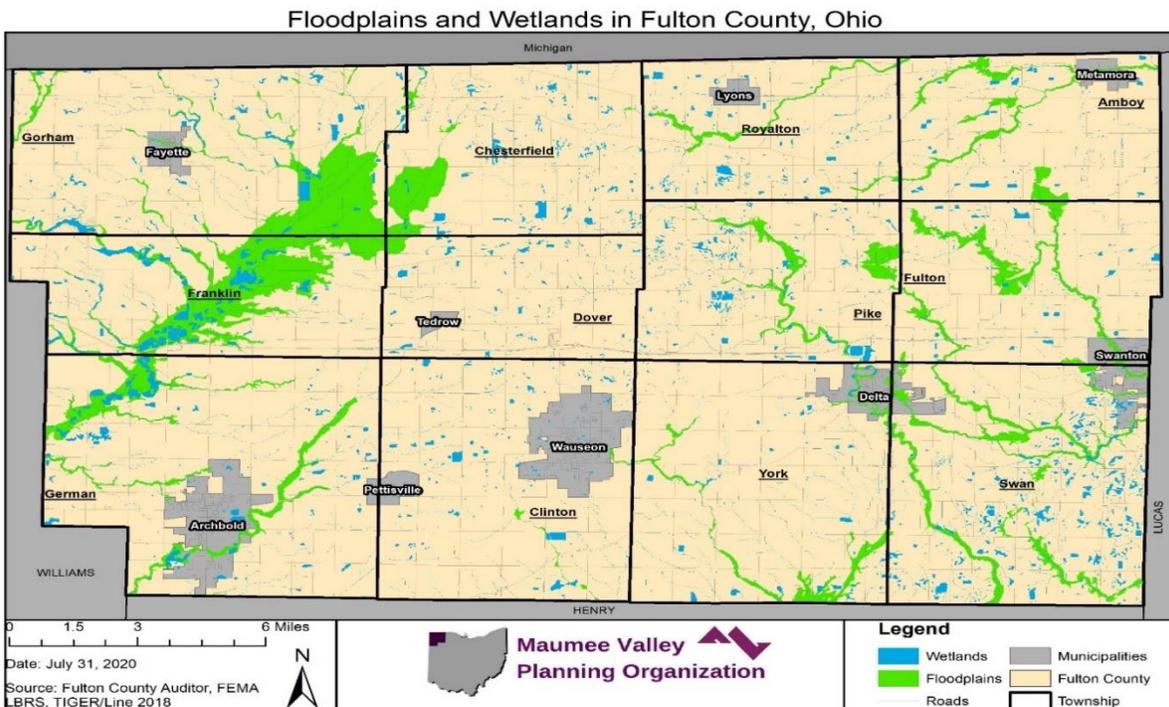
Wetlands

Wetlands are areas where the land's surface is covered by a thin layer of water during the entire year or at certain periods, sometimes including the growing season. Wetlands host a variety of unique flora and fauna, including amphibious creatures, which thrive in the hydric soil. Agricultural practices are partially responsible for wetland depletion in the state of Ohio: Around 87% of Ohio's wetlands have been removed due to farming and timber production²¹⁷. Wetlands are a valuable resource for northwest Ohio because of multiple environmental benefits, which include: Natural water filtration for nutrients and runoff, erosion control and they provide habitats for a host of creatures—aquatic, terrestrial, or otherwise. The wetlands are a source of recreation for citizens, as well, being a productive bird-watching area, a place to paddle and a fisherman's paradise²¹⁸.

Wetlands are categorized by landscape layout, vegetation type and hydrological regime (determined by water coverage and amount of water that saturates soil). The Cowardin wetland classification system identifies five types of wetlands as follows: Riverine, Lacustrine, Palustrine, Marine and Estuarine. A Riverine system is open wetland that surrounds a channel, which houses deep-water habitats. This channel can be natural or manmade and contains a moving current that links two bodies of still water. A Riverine wetland is classified into four subsystems: Tidal, Lower Perennial, Upper Perennial and Intermittent. The subsystems vary depending upon river current velocity, gradient rate and flow patterns. Lacustrine systems include shallow lakes within swamps—dammed or naturally occurring—that contain aquatic fauna and vegetation. They are 20 acres or more in total area and have less than 30% vegetation cover. The Palustrine system is a nontidal wetland with low water depth that does not exceed 20 acres in total area; its bodies of water are shallower than 6.6 feet in depth. It contains multiple types of vegetation, such as trees, shrubs and aquatic vegetation. There is a low saline freshwater ratio (>.5% per thousand). A Marine system is open ocean water and its

associated coastline, subject to the ebb and flow of tides. It is a high-energy system. The Estuarine system includes deep-water tidal habitats and its adjacent tidal wetlands (typically partially closed by land) that have occasional access to open ocean and dilute waters with freshwater runoff from land. This includes lagoons and reefs. The Estuarine is considered a low-energy system. A subtidal system is land continuously emerged by water and the intertidal system is exposed and occasionally flooded by tides²¹⁹.

The emphasis on agricultural preservation protects much of Fulton County’s current natural resources, including native wetlands. The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) has been implemented in Fulton County through the USDA, which reverts former farmland back to its original wetland state. These are considered private lands protected under the WRP. The county has six varieties of wetland, including: Shallow marshes, shrub wetland, open water, farmed wetland, wet meadow and woods on hydric soil. Goll Woods State Nature Preserve, located in Archbold, contains the largest wetland in Fulton County. The wetlands are crucial to Fulton County biodiversity because they host a wide range of unique animal and plant species.



Map 26: Fulton County Floodplains and Wetlands²²⁰

Erosion

Erosion poses a problem for Fulton County's environment and its citizens. Erosion causes deterioration and depletion of soil, which is detrimental to both the environmental and economic prosperity of an area²²¹. Erosion contributes to pollution that is carried into waterways due to a lack of retainage areas, such as forests and wetlands. Without a buffer to purify water stores, these contaminants can seep into water bodies and result in algae blooms that harm wildlife, raise water temperatures and reduce overall water quality²²². Economically, erosion presents a problem for Fulton County farmers due to reduced soil quality through destruction of nutrient-rich topsoil and an excess of phosphorous and nitrogen, both necessary to plant life in moderation but can cause plant decay and death in high amounts²²³. The need to continually replace displaced soil and the re-establishment of eroded land and waterways can be costly and inefficient.

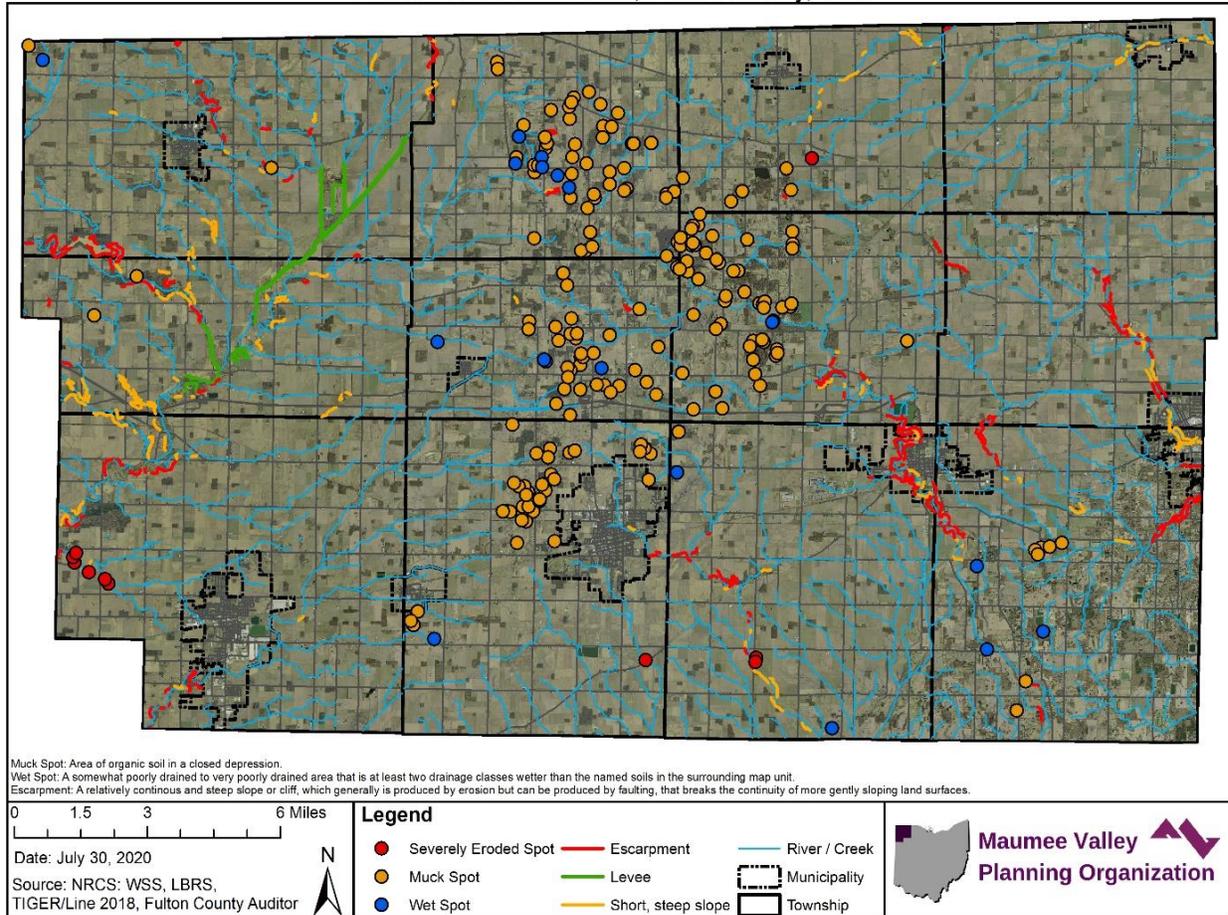


Figure 33: Erosion in Fulton Co. Prior to Installation of a Headwall

There are solutions and preventative measures that may be taken in order to reduce erosion and its negative implications. Natural applications, such as buffer zones and vegetation retention, may provide erosion control by filtering and dissipating runoff, reducing uncovered soil susceptible to erosion and create suitable habitats for native flora and fauna. In Fulton County, there are conservation incentives available to farmers and landowners. The Conservation Compliance Sodbuster provisions, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and the Clean Ohio Fund provide sustainable practices and strategies to protect land from erosion in coordination with residents. It is wise for Fulton County to take steps toward erosion prevention and management, in part because there are erosion risk areas in the County. The Maumee River Watershed has a potentially high risk of soil erosion and increased levels of sediment in its streams from possible over-cultivation due to agricultural processes. The implementation of CREP and windbreaks, wetlands and/or buffers may prevent erosion and pollution along waterways that flow into the Lake Erie Basin. The District Windbreak and Maintenance Program is offered by the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The SWCD

aids landowners in land inspection, windbreak design and recommendations for vegetation types. Upon the implementation of a windbreak, landowners are responsible for maintenance.

Erosion Areas of Interest; Fulton County, Ohio



Map 27: Fulton County Erosion Areas of Interest²²⁴

Critical Areas

Critical areas include wetlands, areas with “critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water”, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas and geologically hazardous areas²²⁵.

Green Infrastructure

Under Section 502 of the Clean Water Act, green infrastructure is defined as “the range of measures that use plant or soil systems, permeable pavement or other permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to store, infiltrate, or evapotranspire stormwater and reduce flows to sewer systems or to surface waters”²²⁶. Green infrastructure is a holistic approach to storm water and runoff management, utilizing natural elements to process and rejuvenate runoff through filtration and storage. Being a cost-

effective storm water management practice, Fulton County may wish to research green infrastructure applications to further promote sustainable water management and eco-friendly pollution reduction.

Storm Water Management

Dangers concerning stormwater arise when precipitation runoff flows over areas where the water cannot be absorbed. The water carries pollutants and contaminants into bodies of water like streams, rivers, lakes and oceans; these can greatly harm the waters, including the life surrounding and contained within them. The EPA established the Storm Water Program in compliance with the Clean Water Act and includes actions required by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Two types of storm water permit applications are available based upon industrial or municipal activity and discharge. These place regulations on point source pollution and protect water sources; this includes technology-based limits (measurement of pollution source) and water-based limits (measurement of pollutants in water)²²⁷.

The Delta Wastewater Treatment Facility constructed a 5-million-gallon overflow basin that retains storm water and sewer flow during heavy rains; this was an EPA mandated project designed to prevent sewage discharge into drainage waterways²²⁸. The Wauseon Wastewater Treatment Plant, in addition to receiving sanitary flows, receives storm water into its sewer system²²⁹. Regarding Fulton County's storm water management practices, a suggestion for further guidance on this subject would be to reach out to the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG). TMACOG has developed its 208 Regional Water Quality Plan in compliance with the Clean Water Act through strategic action concerning sewer systems, wastewater treatment and storm water management²³⁰.

Glacial Aquifers

Fulton County is located on several different glacial aquifers: Williams Aquifer, Lake Maumee Aquifer, Oak Openings Beach Ridge Aquifer, Tiffin River Alluvial Aquifer and the Maumee River Alluvial Aquifer. An aquifer is a mass of porous rock or sediments, through which water can freely move; it is capable of holding large amounts of water. There are nine high-capacity wells, as well as five high-capacity water well active facilities in the County. There are five high-yield aquifers located in Fayette, Lyons, Archbold, Wauseon, Delta and Swanton²³¹.

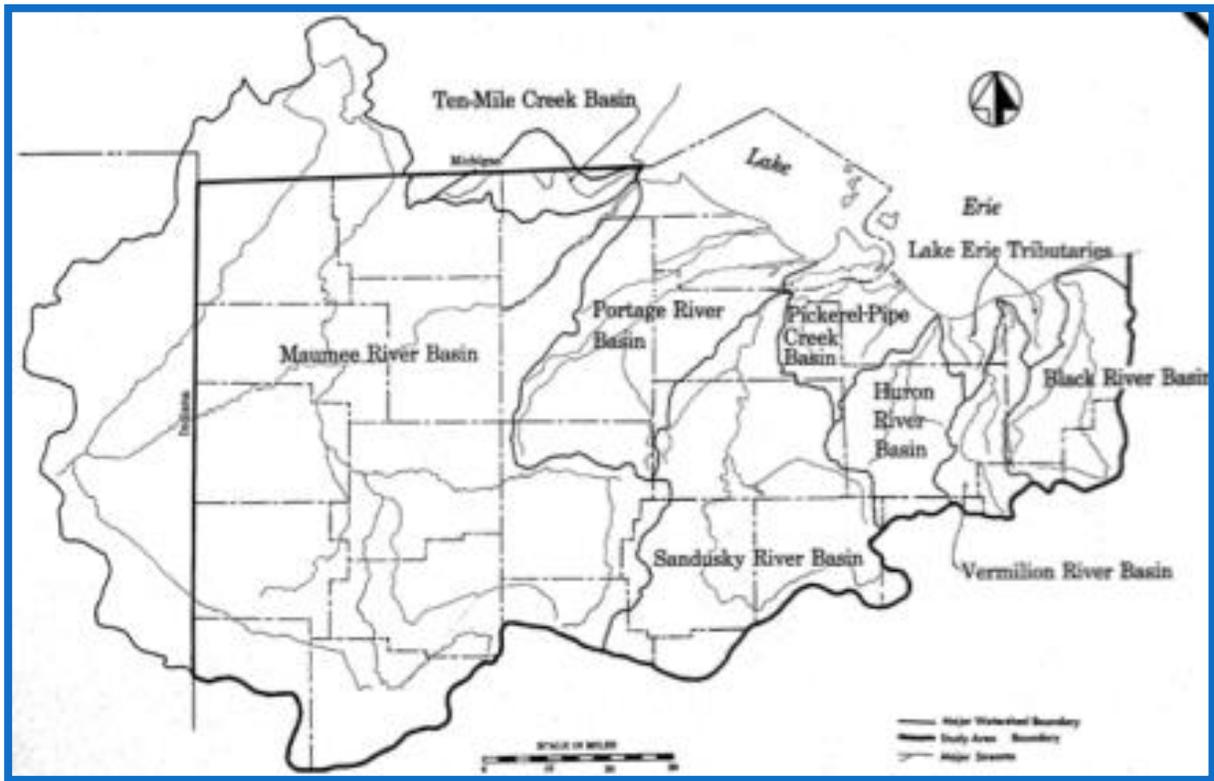


Figure 34: River Basin Locations²³²

Groundwater Pollution

Groundwater resources are subject to contamination from surface sources. To measure groundwater pollution potential, a system called DRASTIC is used. DRASTIC uses seven hydrological factors, after which the system is named: Depth of water, net recharge, aquifer media, soil media, topography, impact of the vadose zone media and hydraulic conductivity²³³. This system assumes that groundwater contaminants originate from the surface level and are flushed into the ground water by precipitation, a common trend in the groundwater contamination process.

Floodplains

A floodplain is defined as an area of land that borders a body of water. Floodplains are often prone to flooding after large precipitation events. The area along the Tiffin River is the largest floodplain in Fulton County. Smaller floodplains are located along minor rivers and creeks throughout the County.

Figure 35: Tiffin River in Fulton County²³⁴

Surface Water

Fulton County features varying hydrological resources, including reservoirs, rivers, ponds and creeks. This water is utilized for drinking, cooking and bathing. Industries use it for production purposes; in agriculture, surface water is used for irrigation.



6.6 Waste Management

Septic systems are common in rural areas without access to centralized sewer systems. Septic systems are located underground and are typically composed of a septic tank and a leach field, or soil absorption field. The tank receives all waste matter from the home's main drainage pipe and separates the solid contents from the wastewater. The liquid (also known as effluent) is sent through a series of soil-based pipes buried in a leach field or other units designed to release effluent into the soil. Septic systems vary by type of absorbent matter (such as sawdust, peat, manmade wetlands, or other pollutant neutralizers) and method of removal, which includes wastewater evaporation or disinfection²³⁵.

Septic systems provide benefits for the homeowner in a rural community. Decentralized systems, when utilized properly, reduce the risk of disease spreading and pathogen exposure that can occur in centralized systems via drinking or surface water. The household treatment system removes pollutants from the effluent and replenishes aquifers near the leach field. Economically, septic systems reduce energy costs relating to wastewater collection and treatment and reduce infrastructure size of the community. Septic systems can pose a risk when installed in areas that exceed the maximum treatment capacity. When installed incorrectly or poorly, problems of surface water contamination and pathogen presence negatively impact the surrounding population via drinking water well or groundwater reserves.

Excessive rates of phosphorous and nitrates can corrupt the water supply and lead to algae growth and reduced oxygen in the water, which can harm nearby aquatic inhabitants. The Fulton County Board of Health provides regulations under section 3701-29 of the Ohio Revised Code to ensure proper regulations and inspections are implemented in order to reduce risk of improper sewage treatment practices that can result in disease and inconveniences²³⁶.

The exact number of Fulton County homeowners who currently have septic tanks as their residential waste system is currently unknown. It is reasonable to believe that most of the population within cities and/or villages within the county have access to public sewer. Populations outside of city and/or village limits are likely to have septic systems.

The EPA established the Ground Water Rule (GWR), which provides protection “against microbial pathogens, specifically bacterial and viral pathogens”²³⁷ in public water systems that utilize ground water. The Ground Water Rule applies to public water systems (PWS) that rely upon ground water sources or combine surface and ground water supplies through distribution of ground water directly into PWS. The GWR requires actions that mitigate risk associated with microbial contamination from fecal matter present in ground water sources. The GWR requires sanitary surveys (primarily state responsibility), source water monitoring, compliance monitoring and corrective actions if necessary.

Sanitary surveys are required every 3 years for community water systems (CWS) and every 5 years for non-community water systems (NCWS) by the State. Extending sanitary surveying from 3 years to 5 years for CWS is possible provided that system management supply a 4-log virus treatment application *or* display outstanding performance records, which are determined by the State. Ground water treatment practices are conducted in accordance with compliance monitoring to ensure proper treatment protocol. In the case of a CWS significant deficiency, corrective action is necessary to remove contaminants in triggered source water.

The Ohio EPA, in accordance with federal EPA regulations, adopted Solid Waste Policy: Ban on Field Filtration of Ground Water Samples from Municipal Solid Waste Landfill Facilities (OAC 3745-27-10)²³⁸.

Ohio’s Source Water Assessment and Protection (SWAP) program assists its communities in the protection of public drinking water supplies (aquifers, streams and lakes) from contamination. This program does not apply to private residential water systems. SWAP assesses waters that may require protection and possible sources of contamination. The EPA recommends that communities with impacted water supplies create a local planning team and strategic actions that may reduce contamination levels and protect waters from future pollutants. The Village of Archbold is a municipal public water system that utilizes SWAP protection planning. Harrison

Lake State Park, West Clinton Mennonite Church and Shiloh Christian Union Church are non-municipal water systems located in Fulton County; these systems refer to protection checklists provided through the SWAP program²³⁹.

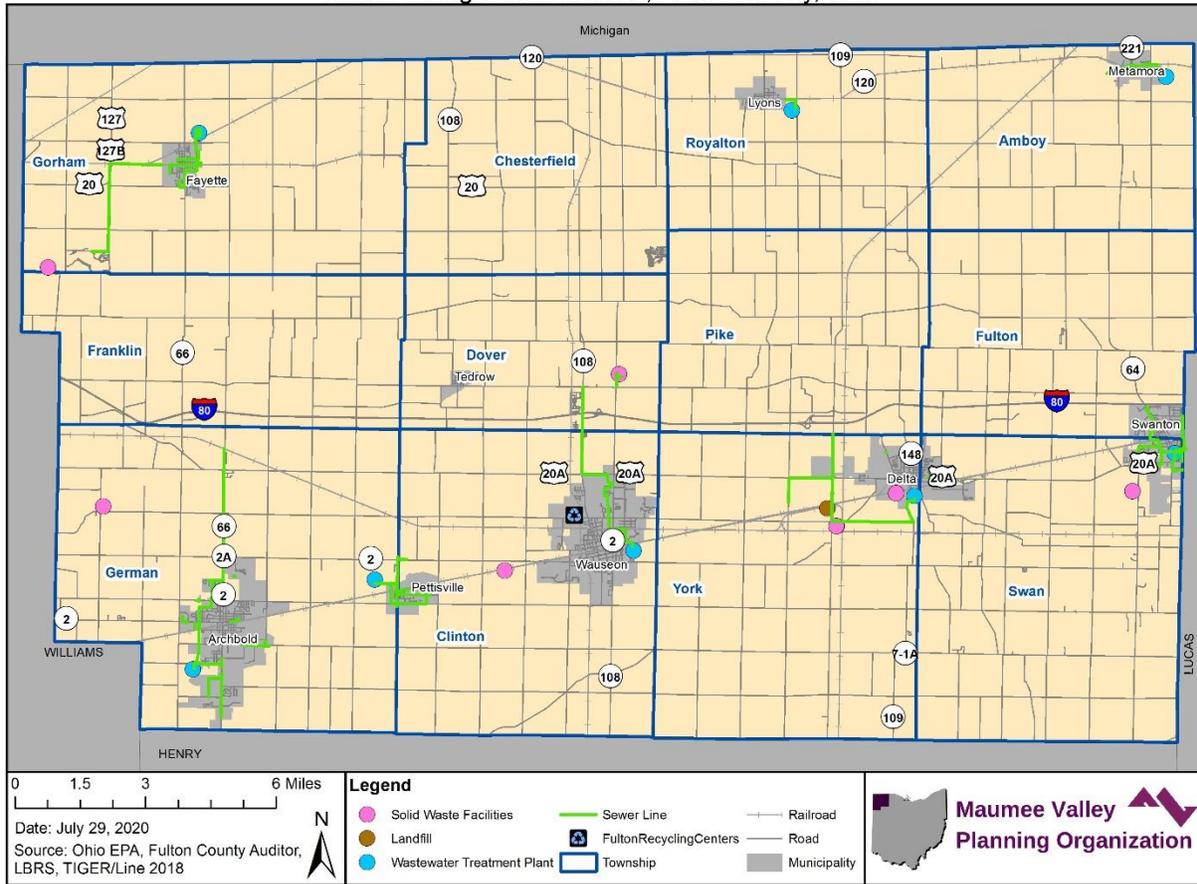
H2Ohio, introduced by Governor Mike DeWine in 2019, focuses on reducing phosphorous levels, creating wetlands, addressing failing septic systems and preventing lead contamination²⁴⁰. Through collaboration with farmers, phosphorous-laden fertilizer runoff may be managed and reduced in order to prevent algal blooms, which harm Ohio's water supply.

There are potential ground water pollutant sources located in Fulton County. These sources may be classified into high priority sources and potentially high priority sources. The high priority sources include: Agricultural runoff associated with fertilizer, herbicide, or pesticide application; storage tanks, both under- and above-ground; runoff from landfills; septic system malfunction; shallow injection wells; hazardous waste sites; malfunction associated with overflow of pipelines and sewer lines; salt storage and road salting runoff; suburban runoff, which includes storm drains/storm water; small-scale manufacturing and repair shops; fire training facilities²⁴¹. Potentially high priority pollution sources include: Concentrated animal feeding ops (CAFOs); surface impoundments; mining and mine drainage; uncategorized spills and leaks²⁴². It is recommended that Fulton County create measures and policies to monitor and reduce levels of high and potentially high priority pollution.

Solid Waste Management Facilities

Ohio House Bill 592 modernized Ohio's solid waste landfills to increase the level of protection to human and environmental health. Each of Ohio's 88 counties must have an environmental solid waste plan funded by the communities they serve. Fulton County shares a solid waste district with Defiance, Paulding and Williams Counties. This plan was last updated in 2015 and, based on population projections, is adequate until at least 2030. The joint solid waste management utilizes three landfills, all outside of Fulton County. Yard waste, hazardous waste and a tire scrap collection program are all managed by the joint district. There are two waste transfer facilities and three waste-to-energy facilities located in the Fulton County.

Waste Management Services; Fulton County, Ohio



Map 28: Fulton County Waste Management Services²⁴³

Joint Solid Waste Management District

LANDFILL	REMAINING SPACE	YEARS REMAINING
DEFIANCE COUNTY	12,000,000 cubic yds	Approx. 80 years
WILLIAMS COUNTY	18,000,000 cubic yds	Approx. 90 years
W M EVERGREEN	13,000,000 cubic yds	Approx. 70 years

Table 27: Joint Solid Waste Management District for Defiance, Fulton, Paulding and Williams Counties

Waste to Energy Facilities

COMPANY	ADDRESS	WASTE MANAGED (PER TON)
SAUDER MANUFACTURING	930 W Barre Rd	503
LAUBER MANUFACTURING	317 Stryker St	28
SW MILLS	3646 C R 42	13,983

Table 28: Waste to Energy Facilities

Recycling Waste Locations

Mobile Drop-Off Part-time Ongoing Recycling Program DRP-3 locations

Village of Delta
Village of Lyons
Village of Metamora
Pike Township

DRP-3: At a minimum aluminum cans, steel cans, plastic containers (#1 and #2) and newspaper. Additional materials vary per site.

Drop-Off Full-time Recycling Program DRP-2 locations

Clinton Township
Swan Creek Township
City of Wauseon, Triangular Processing

DRP-2: At a minimum aluminum cans, steel cans, plastic containers (#1 and #2) and newspaper. Additional materials vary per site.

Curbside Recycling Program DRP-1 locations

Village of Archbold
Village of Delta
Village of Swanton

DRP-1: Aluminum cans, steel cans, glass, plastics, other paper, newsprint and cardboard. Magazines accepted at some locations.

Table 29: Fulton County DRP-3, DRP-2 and DRP-1 Recycling Locations

Land Conversion and Use Conflicts

Agricultural preservation remains a prevalent issue in Fulton County. While development and income growth are desirable, preserving natural environment is a major goal in this County. Based on the economic development and population variables discussed throughout this document the County should address needs regarding the balance between development and preserving agriculture. Conflict between development and preservation has created a

stalemate in the decision-making process. This document and the goals addressed throughout should enable the local government and citizens to work together to balance economic prosperity and agriculture preservation. Conflict on this topic will continue to occur but should be minimal by creating new and making changes to existing regulation.

6.7 Goals and Objectives

All goals in the Natural Resource Section will be managed and achieved by staff at the Fulton County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The natural resource goals will be updated every five years by the SWCD in their long-range plan. The SWCD long range plan will be updated at the end of 2021.

Goal 1: Water Quality Improvement Through Soil Erosion Reduction and Storm Water Retention

Objectives	Implementation Strategies
<p><i>O1: To stabilize the soil, reduce damage from sediment and runoff to downstream areas.</i></p>	<p>Advertise, meet with prospective customers and plan, design and assist and/or implement 250 Farm Bill programs in accordance with Resource Management System (RMS).</p> <p>Work with Engineer’s office and ODOT to install 50 buffer strips along road improvements.</p>
<p><i>O2: Provide technical assistance to farmers, landowners, county agencies and contractors to improve water quality management.</i></p>	<p>Assist with 5 soils investigations, design and management of ponds.</p> <p>Continue to work with county ditch maintenance supervisors, engineer and landowners in developing 50 conservation plans for the ditch maintenance tax reduction program. Advise each continuous CRP, CSP, EQIP and CREP request about the ditch maintenance program.</p> <p>Attend 10 official ditch hearings of the county commissioners to provide information on the filter strips and water control structure practices to landowners.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance to landowners in the Brush Creek, Deer Creek, Flat Run and Stag Run watersheds to install filter strips, cover crops, water control structures and erosion control structures and complete all reporting requirements.</p> <p>Offer additional incentive through the Village of Archbold per their resolution.</p> <p>Write a Great Lakes Commission grant to cover Eastern Fulton County for Fulton 2020 Restoration grant for technical assistance to landowners to plant cover crops, conduct soil testing, install erosion control structures and filter strips and if awarded complete all reporting requirements.</p> <p>Implement all water quality practices and Working Lands programs through the S.B. 299 (Clean Lake 2020 plan). Provide incentives to landowners who install practices. Complete all reporting requirements.</p>

<p><i>O3: Increase success in no-till and/or conservation tillage planting, by concentrating on existing no-tillers and encouraging new no-tillers.</i></p>	<p>Monitor the amount of conservation tillage and residue cover throughout the county by taking 10 tillage transects (winter and summer each year). Put out an article or news release on the long-term trends.</p>
<p><i>O4: Encourage landowners/operators to install tree plantings and windbreaks.</i></p>	<p>Set up 5 individual meetings for new tree planting applicants for all windbreak and tree planting programs.</p> <p>Assist in the planning and planting of 5 miles or 26,400 feet of windbreaks, 5 acres of tree plantings and 10 oak savannas to include planting conservation cover with landowners and operators both in the spring and fall.</p>
<p><i>O5: To meet Farm Bill Conservation Compliance and requirements.</i></p>	<p>Service 10 new 1026s making negative and positive determinations.</p> <p>Establish and update 75 conservation plans on the current NRCS computer program.</p> <p>Complete all requirements of CRP by servicing 25 FSA cost-share requests.</p> <p>Conduct five 5% spot checks on Food Security Act, mid-contract management and WRP status reviews as needed.</p> <p>Promote Farm Bill programs through five newsletter articles, ten news releases, five ads, 50 meetings with customers and five workshops.</p> <p>Utilize the Beehive reporting system as well as PRS reporting system.</p>

Goal 2: Provide Information and Education

Objectives	Implementation Strategies
<p><i>O1: To provide information and increase public awareness of the value of protecting our natural resources.</i></p>	<p>Submit 40 articles/news releases on District highlights to area newspapers, radio stations, website, Facebook and Twitter.</p> <p>Publish 10 District newsletters and distribute via bulk mail, e-mail and website.</p> <p>Create 5 mail lists and send letters to those who attend ditch hearings about the cost-share programs on filter strips and erosion control structures.</p> <p>Serve as Tree Commission member on the Wauseon Tree Commission, attend 45 meetings.</p>

Organize and coordinate 5 annual meetings and supervisor elections.
Reward cooperators for their conservation accomplishments.

Schedule and educate 10 landowners/operators about the use of the tractor, seeder and grass drill for conservation practices.

Install 5 new Fulton SWCD conservation practice signs at project locations and maintain existing ones.

Promote and assist partnership agencies by distributing their news, seeking award nominees, or utilizing their facilities to promote their organization. Cooperator of the year (5), Booster of the Year (5), CREP Achievement award (5), County Soil Judging Awards (5), Area 1 Envirothon winners (5), ODA-DSWC, ODNR-various divisions, Farm Bureau, Pheasants Forever, county agencies, The Nature Conservancy, USDA, OSU Extension.

Promote and sponsor the following: NW Ohio Woodland & Wildlife Festival (5), Black Swamp Educators Extravaganza (5), Area 1 Envirothon (5), Kids' Outdoor Science Camp (5), Ohio Forestry Camp (5), County Soil Judging contest (5), Ag Fest (5), Air Tour (5).

Recruit 2500 hours of Earth Team Volunteer time.

Enhance 50 working relationships with county educators.
Acquire equipment and resources necessary to carry out education programs. Publish educational flyers via e-mail and website.

Five annual reviews of academic national contents standards and correlate them into SWCD education programs.

Promote five Arbor Day and Earth Day events.

O2: Provide information and assistance to educators and students in Fulton County, encouraging them to teach the protection and wise use of our natural resources.

Goal 3: Nutrient Management

Objectives	Implementation Strategies
<i>O1: To assist with the design and operation practices for livestock storage systems.</i>	Assist livestock producers with the planning, design and implementation of 25 animal waste and 10 composting systems through available funding programs. Assistance and/or funding for fertilizer containment systems.
<i>O2: Raise producer awareness of best management practices for nutrient management.</i>	Work with OSU Extension on promoting the 4Rs education and promote other types of nutrient management, i.e., nitrogen containment facilities.
<i>O3: Raise producer and public awareness of best management practices for livestock nutrient management.</i>	Develop 100 Certified Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP) and Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) for producers and conduct follow up visits as requested. for EQIP applicants. Encourage use of 100 soil, tissue, manure testing, phosphorus and nitrogen test kit to raise producer awareness of the value of nutrient management. Investigate 25 pollution and/or sediment complaints and complete required documentation. Advise livestock producer of solutions to pollution/sediment problems.

Goal 4: Farmland Preservation

Objectives	Implementation Strategies
<i>O1: Assist landowners who want to apply for the Ag Easement Donation and Purchase Programs.</i>	Assist 15 landowners on preparation of soils segment and conservation plan for Ag Easement applications. Monitor and report to ODA 75 AEPP and AEDP recipients. Assist landowners in applying for Ag Easement Purchase Program through ODA.

Goal 5: Wildlife Habitat and Woodland Improvements and Management

Objectives	Implementation Strategies
<i>O1: Promote and increase wildlife habitat and woodland improvements and/or management.</i>	Organize and coordinate five plant material programs. Organize five fish fingerling programs for pond owners in Fulton County. Inform landowners/operators about Farm Bill programs that promote wildlife. Assist with establishing 125 acres of warm season grass seedings and provide Brillion Seeder and Great Plains grass drill for landowner use. Provide education on individual seeding rates. Maintain mallard and wood duck nest boxes in various locations. Support the purchase of 10+ acers plots surrounding the Maumee State Forest to restore to native woodlands and prairies. Provide opportunities for the community to learn more about the endangered bat population and how to support the bat population. Sell bat houses. Increase Oak Savannas throughout the County.

Chapter 7: Community Character

Chapter Contents

- 7.1 Goals
- 7.2 Unique History and Culture
- 7.3 Future Historical Preservation Strategies and Programs
- 7.4 Resident Sentiments and Community Connections
- 7.5 Objectives

7.1 Goals

Community character is a sense of place created by the merging of Fulton County’s physical attributes and its citizens’ values. Streets, architecture, environmental features, public spaces, businesses and other attributes all impact the character of Fulton County. Community characteristics include common beliefs, values and local pride. Chapter 7 introduces goals and objectives important to preserving and developing Fulton County’s community character.



Figure 36: Fulton County Courthouse and Sunset in Wauseon²⁴⁴

Community Character Goals



1. Preserve small-town charm



2. Preserve and embrace historical resources



3. Increase economic development and revitalization



4. Establish community identity and county connections

7.2 Unique History and Culture

Fulton County citizens have ample access to information regarding regional history. Archbold is home to Sauder Village, the State's largest living history museum. In 2018, the County completed construction of its first welcome center and museum. Additionally, many Fulton County communities have their own active historical societies.

Fulton County Welcome Center and Museum

The Fulton County Welcome Center and Museum serves as the hub for all things new and old. Guests can learn about popular businesses and upcoming events. They also can learn about Fulton's historical significance. The museum features artifacts from as early as the 1830s. The artifacts and exhibits hallmark the county's past, present and future²⁴⁵. Museum hours of operation are 10:00AM to 4:00PM Monday through Saturday; on Sunday, admission is allowed 12:00PM to 4:00PM.



Figure 37: The Fulton County Welcome Center and Museum in Wauseon²⁴⁶

Fulton County has much history, whether that be its rich farming heritage or chilling legends; these themed tours provide enjoyment for the community and its visitors. Wauseon and Delta host an annual “Haunting History” tour through the Fulton County Historical Society. These walking tours take place in late October and feature historical storytellers that share Fulton’s history, both natural and supernatural.

Sauder Village

Located in Archbold, Sauder Village is the State’s largest living history museum. Sauder features story tellers, activities and architecture based on local and significant historical events.

Sauder Village invests in the future by presenting the past through live demonstrations to teach today’s youth the importance of work ethic and historical preservation. Activities offered include: Basket making, blacksmithing, broom making, pottery, quilting and more²⁴⁷.

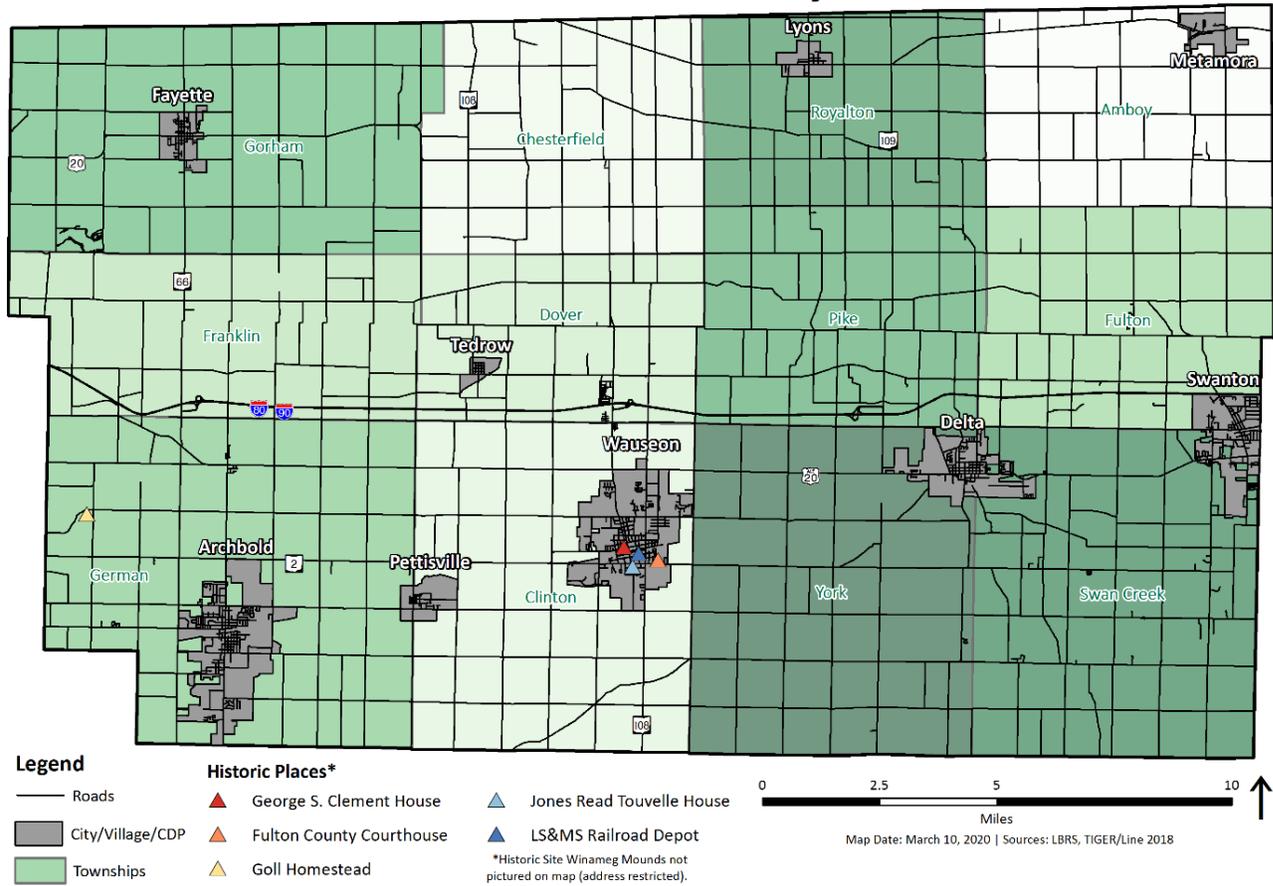


Figure 38: Sauder Village in Archbold²⁴⁸

Historical Landmarks

The National Register of Historic Places and Landmarks was established under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. This list preserves and advertises the Nation’s historical buildings, districts, sites and structures. Six Fulton County landmarks are listed on this registry. The map below depicts these landmarks and [Figure 40](#) provides a picture and short description of each.

Historic Places Fulton County, Ohio



Map 29: Fulton County Historic Sites²⁴⁹



Jones, Read, Touvelle House

This beautiful home has been preserved for its outstanding representation of two 19th century architectural styles: Italianate and Queen Anne.



Lake Shore & MI Southern Railroad Depot

Wauseon passenger depot was built in 1896. In 1910 the depot was moved 20 feet further north of the tracks to allow for a new set of railroad tracks.



Winameg Mounds

The Wingameg Mounds are a sacred space that contain Native American remains and their valuables. These remains are believed to date to tribes that lived here before 8000 BC, as determined by archaeologists.



Goll Homestead

Front of the Goll Homestead, located at 26093 Township Road F in the Goll Woods Nature Preserve northwest of Archbold in German Township, Fulton County, Ohio, United States. Built in 1862.



Fulton County Courthouse

The architecture features make the Fulton County Courthouse a historically significant space. It features an Italian villa style clock tower and statue commemorating veterans. The inside contains additional historical features.



Clement, George S., House

Around 1872, George S. Clement, a prominent businessman, built this high victorian style home for his family. This home serves as a memoir to Mr. Clement's contribution and celebrates the architecture of this period.

Figure 39: Fulton County Historic Places Snapshots²⁵⁰

7.3 Future Historical Preservation

To meet the goals asserted in this chapter, it is important that the County create and support plans that preserve assets of historical significance. The Swanton Historical Society is in the process of developing a Railroad Depot Park. Sauder Village constructed a full-scale 1920s Main Street replica. This 1920s Main Street includes a speakeasy, which has sparked excitement for many residents of the traditionally conservative County. The Railroad Depot Park and the 1920s Main Street are the sole projects implemented to embrace and preserve Fulton County's history. The photo below is a conceptual drawing of a 1902 vintage railroad depot and a train viewing platform. Trains served as a vital form of transportation to county citizens.

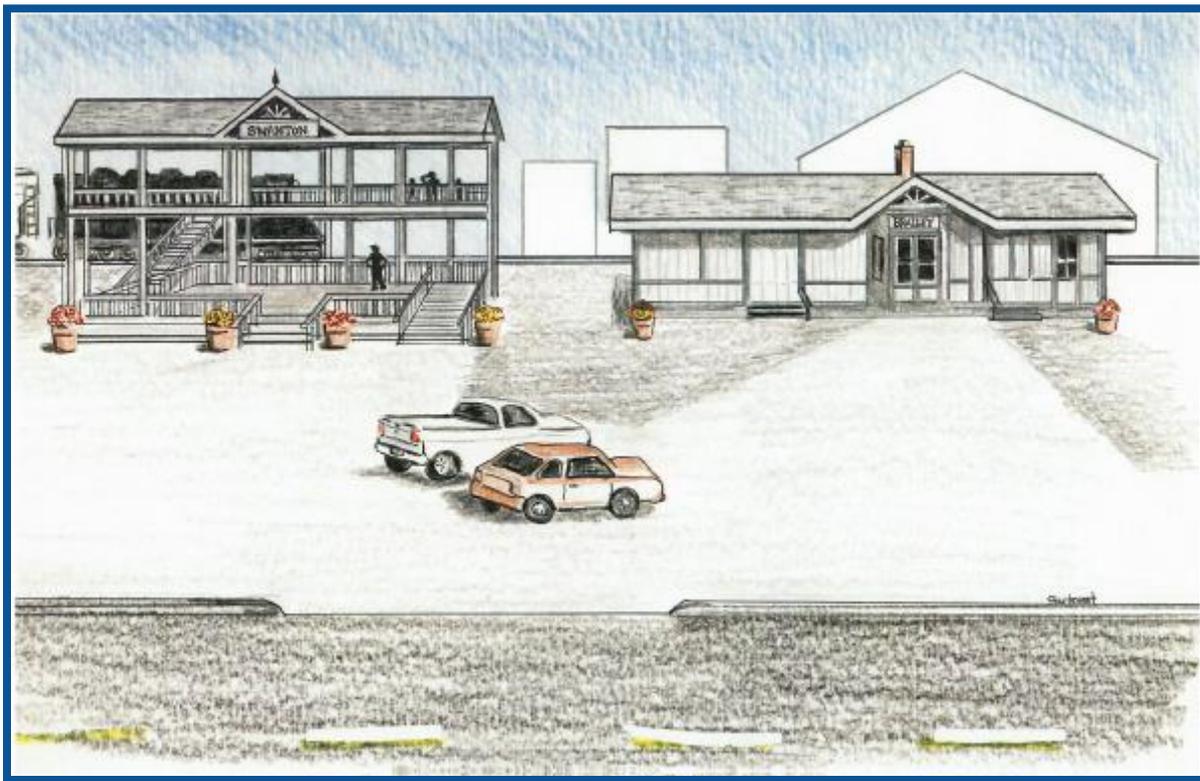


Figure 40: Swanton Railroad Depot Concept Art²⁵¹

Historic Overlay District

Under the sphere of preservation, Fulton County should strive to preserve its historical sites, buildings and landscapes. Regulating sites of historical significance can provide protection from destruction and encourage conservation and improvement efforts directed at the regulated site.

Historic overlay districts (HOD) provide an active means of preserving heritage sites through zoning practices. The HOD does not assume the role of the previous zoning regulations placed upon the area; rather, the HOD is an additional set of guidelines for proper use that are tailored to the needs of the historic sites within the prescribed district. The process of establishing a HOD begins with citizen suggestion and funding support from the neighborhood or city participating in research regarding preservation eligibility. Upon the report assessing fitness of the historical site, amending the County Zoning Ordinance is undertaken to instate the HOD²⁵².

7.4 Resident Sentiments and Community Connections

Characteristics of Fulton County—Survey Results Current Physical Conditions



RURAL | WELCOMING | SMALL TOWN CHARM | HISTORIC | WHOLESOME |
AGRICULTURE | FAMILY FRIENDLY | FEW CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TOWNS |
SECTIONS OF BLIGHT

Figure 41: Fulton County Current Physical Conditions

Residents are proud of the small-town charm and rural character depicted in Fulton County. In one survey, respondents revealed they believe charm and character are the County's greatest assets. In this same survey, 63% of respondents expressed that retaining and attracting businesses should be the County's highest priority. Goals in this chapter were established by County Commissioners to preserve the small-town charm and provide suggestions that may assist in attracting businesses to the area.

Community character impacts the future of development, revitalization and preservation in Fulton County. Following public input, Fulton County's community character was summarized and is depicted in [Figure 43](#). These nine characteristics serve as the building blocks of the community character goals established in this comprehensive plan.

Festival and Other Events

Fulton County Festivals and Events

Festival Name	Location	Date (tentative)	Description
<i>Fulton County Fair</i>	Fulton County Fairgrounds—Wauseon, OH	Late August to Early September	Animal showing, live entertainment, food and drink, camping
<i>National Threshers Convention</i>	Fulton County Fairground—Wauseon, OH	Late June	Tractor pull, antique steam engine and tractor shows, shopping, food and drink
<i>Delta Chicken Festival</i>	Delta, OH	Mid-June	Chicken dinners, live performances, tournaments, beer tents
<i>Park-O-Rama</i>	Metamora, OH	Early August	5K, tournaments, games, music, chicken dinners

Table 30: Fulton County Festivals and Events

Fulton County has a host of events and festivals which connect the community through exciting



Figure 42 Delta Chicken Festival²⁵⁴

activities and comfort food. The County’s most popular event, the Fulton County Fair, is the largest county fair in Ohio²⁵³. The Fulton County Fair is a weeklong event in late August-early September and provides a full week’s worth of entertainment, including: Tractor pulls, 4-H animal shows and auctions, culinary contests, live music performances, classic fair rides and food, camping and much more.

For a glimpse into Fulton County’s agricultural history, the National Threshers Convention is a family-friendly event that takes place at the Fulton County Fairgrounds. This three-day event features antique tractors and steam engine displays, contests, evening shows and historical information booths. The event showcases Fulton County’s agricultural history through the operation of unique tools and machinery. The Threshers Convention meets annually in late June

at the Fulton County Fairgrounds in Wauseon and provides many spectator opportunities as well as a variety of on-site vendors.

Delta hosts its annual Chicken Festival on Saturday and Sunday in mid-June. It is not solely chicken dinners, however: The festival is an all-day event with live performances, sports tournaments, fair food, beer tents and a parade. The Village of Metamora’s annual Park-O-Rama, taking place in early August, kicks off with a 5K run and walk, accompanied by sports tournaments, games, live music, tractor pulls and chicken meals.

Community Connections

A sense of community need not be limited to the immediate vicinity. Fulton County’s communities are separated by large swaths of agricultural land, which may reduce a feeling of cohesion and togetherness. It may be productive to implement festivals or designated dates that advertise small businesses. Municipalities can boost both local economy and community connection between townships by hosting designated festivities which showcase local business, restaurants and artisans. This can be coordinated by local government and businesses through meetings; a volunteer may be appointed to operate a social media account dedicated to this event. This is an accessible means of creating county-wide community cohesiveness and boosting morale.

Social media is a constantly evolving method of communication between internet users and can be advantageous for Fulton County. It is a useful tool for displaying County events, generating public polls and merging the gap between the County’s residents. Fulton County government and businesses would benefit from consistently updating a managed social media account for the purpose of public input and interaction. Furthermore, social media can humanize and advertise various government sectors through the uploading of pictures and personalized messages, as well as current projects or goals. This may create a sense of pride for both residents and employees of the County.

7.5 Goals and Objectives

Fulton County, Ohio is made up of multiple, small communities. Individually, the communities are very tight knit. Through the lens of a County, the interaction and vision between these communities are limited and fragmented. The following goals were established with the idea in mind to reduce fragmentation and evolve community character throughout the County that supports the overall vision of maintaining a small-town American community, steadfast in its agricultural roots.

Goal 1: Preserve the Small-Town Charm

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Entity Responsible</i>
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<p><i>O1: Maintain a steady, small growth in population. -A small-town can only be maintained if there is steady, slow population growth. The region cannot afford to lose its population if they hope to maintain a community with small-town charm.</i></p>	<p>The goals for this objective are outlined in "Chapter 3: Economic Development" of this Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><i>Limit growth outside of urban areas in efforts to preserve agriculture lands.</i></p>	<p>The goals for this objective are outlined in detail in "Chapter 8: Land Use" of this Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><i>O2: Support local events.</i></p>	<p>Provide support for large county events in whatever ways feasible. Via online marketing, Sheriff surveillance, etc.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Multiple agencies</p>
<p><i>O3: Create a balance between development and agriculture.</i></p>	<p>Only encourage development near pre-existing business /industrial districts. Encourage projects that follow traditional neighborhood designs. Incorporate standards that promote a traditional layout and design for new communities and neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	
<p><i>O4: Continue supporting pedestrian friendly communities.</i></p>	<p>More details on this can be found in "Chapter 4: Transportation" of this Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><i>O5: Support new and existing spaces for sociability.</i></p>	<p>Financially support development in city centers that promote sociability. The goal is to promote neighbors running into each other and a place where people feel comfortable interacting with one another.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>County Commissioners</p>
		<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Multiple Agencies</p>

Pursue grants that promote sociability in communities.		
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Goal 2: Preserve and Embrace Historical Resources

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Preserve heritage sites.</i>	Provide continuous support to Sauder’s Village, the Historical Society and Historical Museum.	Continuous	All government and private entities are responsible for ensuring historic preservation.
	Review Historic Overlay Districts and identify best practices of those.	Continuous	TBD
	Gain feedback from townships about their interest in participating in Historic overlay districts.	TBD	TBD?
<i>O2: Preserve and maintain structures of significant historical, architectural, or cultural value and their immediate environment and/or historical setting.</i>	A resource guide should be developed using a gradient approach for significance. The inventory should include historical structures and sites, archaeological sites and sites of cultural significance and identify the level of importance from a national, state, or local level.	TBD	TBD
<i>O3: Increase opportunities for heritage tourism and promote public awareness and appreciation of the area’s historic sites and resources.</i>	Develop a self-guided tour through the County that allows people to visit and learn about the region’s historical significance on their own time.	Established December 2022. Continuously updated. 2024	Fulton County Visitors Center? TBD
	Offer to help the Fulton County Historical Society revitalize their website. A member of the society should be trained immediately		

	so that website maintenance does not become a long-term responsibility of a County official.		
<i>O4: Establish a clear directive for decision makers for how Fulton County wishes to protect and manage historical and cultural resources for future generations.</i>	Write a historic ordinance to provide clear directives based on community input and outreach.	Complete by 2035	County Commissioners and the Planning Commission
<i>O5: Encourage and promote the adaptive reuse of historically or culturally significant buildings and structures.</i>	Encourage and promote the adaptive reuse of historically or culturally significant buildings and structures.	Continuous	Multiple County Agencies
<i>O6: Promote the economic benefits of historic resources as a source of community pride, enhancement and tourism.</i>	Continue to monitor the tourist activities generated by historic resources and continue to celebrate the community's rich history through on-going efforts and activities of the Fulton County Visitors Center and Museum, Historical Society and other organizations and agencies.	Continuous	Fulton County Visitors Center and Economic Development Center

Goal 3: Increase Economic Development and Revitalization

Economic development is strongly connected to community character. Counties with strong economic development provide an abundance of wealth for businesses to invest in their employees, customers and communities. Thus, having direct positive impacts on the County's Character. Please reference Chapter 3 of this comprehensive plan for more details and goals relating to economic development and revitalization in Fulton County.

Goal 4: Establish and make clear the County's identity and connections

The objectives should create a sense of place through recognition and identity statements. This can be done through landmarks, monumentation and the creation of memorable places and interactions that engage and attract people to come visit and/or live in the County.

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
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<p><i>O1: Strengthen sense of place, especially in downtown areas.</i></p>	<p>Explore opportunities for the incorporation of gate way elements (e.g., signage, planning and architectural elements that can be used to create a sense of destination or arrival. This can be done by completing a way finding plan.</p> <p>Identify the best location of these elements.</p> <p>Identify grants that can be applied for to help fund the purchase and installation of these elements.</p> <p>Gateway elements should be erected in selected locations.</p>	<p>Continuous</p> <p>January 2022</p> <p>Continuous</p> <p>2022-2026</p>	<p>Planning Commission</p>
<p><i>O2: Establish a strong social media presence.</i></p>	<p>Create and consistently update a managed social media account. This account should provide information on current projects, personalized messages, community events and positive citizen outreach.</p> <p>Stay current with social media accounts used based on social technology trends and targeted population.</p>	<p>January 2022</p> <p>Continuous</p>	<p>Multiple Agencies</p>
<p><i>O3: Utilized citizens knowledge and skills to advance sense of "togetherness".</i></p>	<p>Gage citizens interest in creating a volunteer board that focuses on the development of Fulton's Community Character and develop a "happiness" project throughout the County.</p> <p>Establish five-year strategic plan for this organization if it is created.</p>	<p>July 2022</p> <p>January 2023</p>	<p>TBD</p>

<p><i>O4: Establish strong a broadband connection. This will allow business owners, citizens and tourists to engage with a local and worldwide audience.</i></p>	<p>Conduct a study on the internet services and broadband options currently offered throughout the county.</p>	<p>August 2022</p>	<p>TBD</p>
	<p>Review the US EPA’s Cool and Connected program to establish best practices to carry out this goal in rural areas.</p>	<p>August 2022</p>	<p>TBD</p>
	<p>Establish an action plan to expand the use of broadband. Establish strong and affordable internet connection throughout the entire County.</p>	<p>July 2023</p>	<p>TBD</p>
	<p>Establish an action plan to expand the use of broadband. Establish strong and affordable internet connection throughout the entire County.</p>	<p>January 203</p>	<p>TBD</p>
<p><i>O5: Implement the use of art throughout the County.</i></p>	<p>Identify areas that are well suited for public art.</p>	<p>2023</p>	<p>Planning Commission</p>
	<p>Identify funding resources and organizations that help communities install public art projects that reflect the community character.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Planning Commission</p>
	<p>Help each township with a downtown to invest in a piece of public art.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Multiple stakeholders</p>
	<p>Look for opportunities to incorporate agricultural theme into the public art to highlight the City’s agricultural identity.</p>	<p>2025</p>	<p>Multiple Stakeholders</p>
	<p>Create “Percent for Art” ordinance in the County to help fund public art projects</p>	<p>2027</p>	<p>County Commissioners</p>

Chapter 8: Land Use

Chapter Contents

- 8.1 Goals
- 8.2 Current Land Use
- 8.3 Scale
- 8.4 Zoning Complications
- 8.5 Zoning Solutions
- 8.6 Objectives

8.1 Goals

This chapter examines land use practices in Fulton County. It addresses types of zoning and the relevance of each zoning type in the County. The zoning types are agriculture/rural estate, commercial shopping, general business, light industrial, general industrial, planned industrial, manufactured home and residential. Each type of zoning offers a unique set of benefits for the County economy and its social character. This chapter also examines areas for future development in order to improve the economy and maintain the character of Fulton County.

Land Use Goals



1. Manage Subdivision Regulations



2. Protect Agricultural Resources



3. Monitor Construction and Renovations
Projects

8.2 Current Land Use

Fulton County maintains and preserves the agriculture land and value within the County. Located in Northwest Ohio, the County is composed of eight (8) Villages, one (1) City and twelve (12) Townships. The Ohio Turnpike I-90/I-80 runs through the County with the number of access points increasing to three (3) in the past twenty years. The County also supports an airport and numerous State Routes and US Highways. Greater access to the Ohio Turnpike and increased transportation has allowed establishment of industrial and commercial businesses.

Current Land Use Classification

The Fulton County Zoning Code includes specified zoning districts, which are applicable to the County-zoned townships of Amboy, Franklin, Fulton and York.

Fulton County Zoning Districts	
"A1"	Agricultural District
"AG-5, RE-1"	Agricultural and Rural Estate District
"R1"	First Density Residential District
"R2"	Second Density Residential District
"R3"	Third Density Residential District
"MH"	Manufactured Home District
"C1"	Local Service District
"C2"	Community Shopping District
"C3"	General Business District
"M1"	Light Industrial District
"M2"	General Industrial District
"M3"	Planned Industrial/Business Park District

Table 31: Fulton County Zoning Districts²⁵⁷

Development Districts

A Community Development District (CDD) is a “governmental unit created to serve the long-term specific needs of its community. A CDD’s main powers are to plan, finance, construct, operate and maintain community-wide infrastructure and services specifically for the benefit of its residents”²⁵⁸. A CDD increases quality of life through applications like storm water management, water supply sustainability practices, sewer and wastewater management, greater safety practices and other community needs. A CDD is governed by a Board of Supervisors elected by landowners and is funded by the community through property values and taxes. Currently, Fulton County does not have a CDD; Fulton County may benefit from the implementation of a CDD for the purpose of community growth and satisfaction.

Employment and Service Classifications

The Wauseon Service Center is managed by the USDA. Service Centers are designed to be a single location where customers can access services provided by the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Rural Development agencies²⁵⁹. These agencies connect residents with both Farm Service Agency (FSA) agents and Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) employees to address concerns regarding farming operations and conservation practices and programs.

Business Districts

Areas zoned for business have specifications and qualities that are followed to best serve the businesses and clientele served. Each zoned municipality in Fulton County has some form of business district. These are typically centralized in the village, town, or city; the business district is designed to be accessible and house the appropriately specified establishments allotted in that district. This practice protects the integrity of the prospective business, which is more likely to settle in an area that has established business zoning. As was noted in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, Fulton County is dictated by both nonresidential development and disparate zoning practices. This can be remedied by directed residential growth policies that best coordinate business growth with community need. An area that properly balances residential and nonresidential development may have more positive implications regarding growth in the form of greater property values and an improved tax base. Zoning in such a fashion awards a greater promise of revenue that allows for greater business and services expansion. It is important to consider the impact of expansion in the form of roadways, public water and sewer services as a factor of business creation and retention.

8.3 Scale

A community's scale and the scale of the buildings within that community are two other important elements of community character. Scale assists the character explanation for a particular area. The combination of a community's design and functional elements ultimately translates into the quality elements of a community character.

The 1998 Comprehensive Plan²⁶⁰ emphasized the importance of scale when planning for a community and meeting its needs based upon size of various community features. Scale greatly impacts the community character, meaning that it is crucial to properly assess scale and form the County to improve and maintain the proper design of a community and its character. Scale of a community is related to character classes, which are discussed below. Fulton County is divided into 3 classes, which are further subdivided into 8 different character types.

Community Character Classes and Types		
Urban	Urban Core	Central Business District (CBD); major regional employment and retail industry; requires pedestrian accessibility; very high congestion; imposing structures; largest scale. Not a feature of Fulton County.
	Urban	Building-centric, buildings enclose space; smaller cities and villages included in this type; road congestion likely; moderate-large scale; green space a necessity to reduce constant interaction. A feature of Fulton County (ex: Wauseon, Delta).
	Auto-Urban	Designed for access to areas via automobile; road and parking lots dominate landscape; buildings smaller; pedestrian access less—smaller human scale; less enclosed and convenient for auto travelers; degrades sense of community. A feature of Fulton County (ex: Wauseon’s Shoop Avenue, Delta/Swanton’s State Route 2).
Sub-Urban	Suburban	Incorporates permanent open space in development; spacious lots; open space ratio (OSR) measure of available borrowed space; greater sense of privacy; large setbacks. Landscape design important due to lack of building presence. A feature of Fulton County.
	Estate	Lower density than suburban; almost always residential; landscape prominent feature; private septic and water typically required (unless cluster development); to preserve this type of development, open space must be protected to preserve landscape. A feature of Fulton County.
Rural	Countryside	Residential land use permitted; likely to become suburban without preservation measures; subdivision regulations strongly recommended. Very low density; agricultural uses encouraged. Strong relationship between development and

		roadways; community character dependent upon landscape. A feature of Fulton County (ex: Tedrow, Ottokee).
	Rural	Mainly farmland—residential secondary in addition to agricultural use; very low density; travel required for entertainment and necessity. Commercial use not encouraged. Accounts for much community character; a feature that accounts for most of Fulton County.
	Natural	Little chance of development; largely conserved area and recreation use; public land; likely little to no residential or commercial use. A feature of Fulton County.

Table 32: Community Character Classes and Types Explained²⁶¹

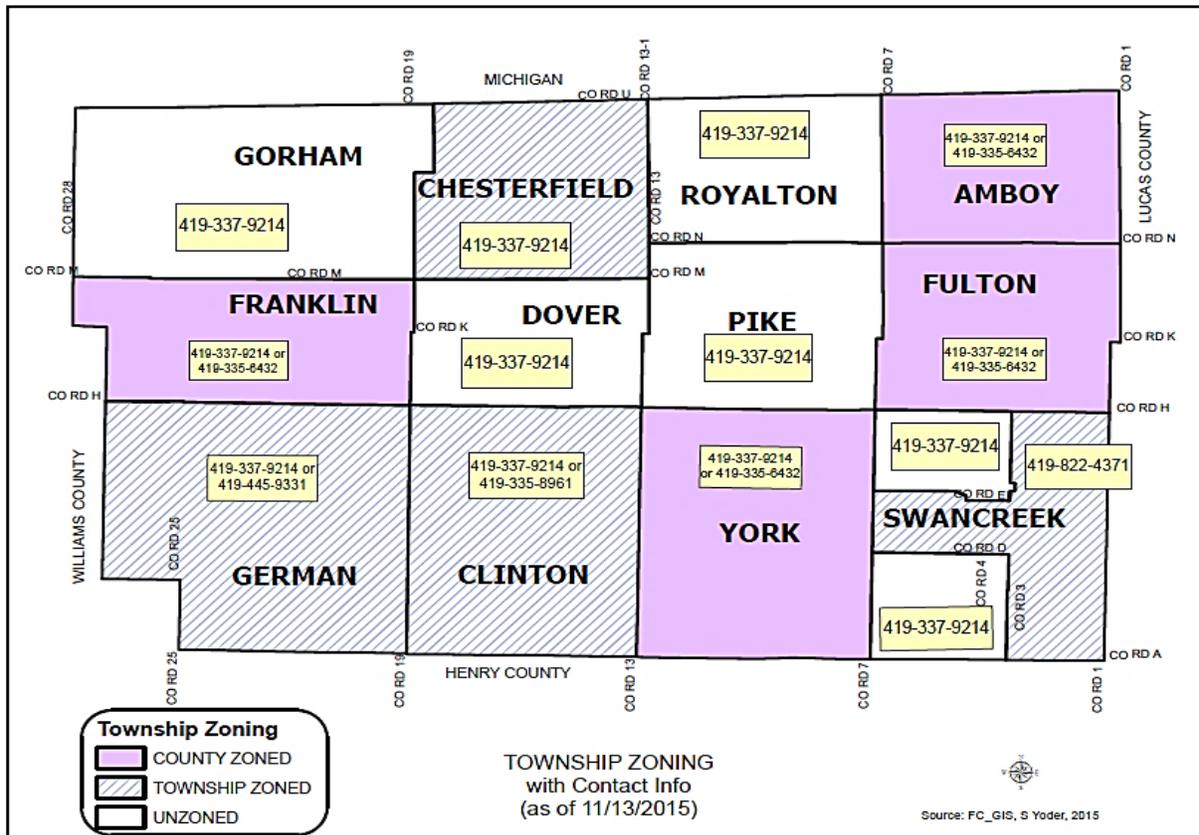
Character greatly depends on community classes and the types that fall within them. Fulton County functions on a smaller scale, which should be preserved to maintain its rural, small-town atmosphere. Large development and sprawl can greatly reduce that which makes the area unique. Urban centers in Fulton County should create and maintain a centralized neighborhood that serves as its urban core. Township trustees and county commissioners may wish to work on inward development and growth as a means to preserve city character and protect the small hubs (for example, hamlets like Pettisville and villages like Metamora) present in Fulton County.

Scale may be measured by travel time within the prescribed character class and type. A hamlet or cluster, understood as compact and intimate, should require “no more than two minutes of normal walking”²⁶² to traverse the developed landscape. In the case of a village, walking time should span 5-10 minutes across the area. As travel time increases, so does size of buildings due to spread of development. In this case, it is suggested that building size remain small to reflect scale of an area for the sake of continuity and an aesthetically appealing character.

Another necessary consideration is the creation and maintenance of boundaries between communities and the rural surroundings. Preserving identity in a Fulton County town, city, village, or otherwise relies on the establishment of boundaries that present an explicit sensation of place. Outward development introduces a danger known as sprawl^a, which can diminish both the character quality of the developed area and the rural surroundings. As was recommended in the 1998 version of this plan, it is suggested that there be a clear division

^a Its credibility as a legitimate concept is widely disputed; however, it is pertinent to discuss the hazards associated with sprawl as an agent of murky and uncontained growth that undermines community character and unique features present in the County.

between communities to better protect character. Delta and Swanton are still to be considered at-risk for losing identity by growing into a singular entity. The suburbanization between these communities not only dilutes their unique character but reverses the regulations placed to protect the rural classification and its benefits to Fulton County. Rural classification divisions are a useful method of separation, as are natural topographical features like streams and forestland.



Map 31: Fulton County Township Zoning²⁶³

8.4 Zoning Complications

The 1998 Comprehensive Plan²⁶⁴ emphasized the importance of County-wide zoning for the sake of continuity and sustainability. The Comprehensive Plan idealized a zoning ordinance spanning the County; it would both protect agricultural land by minimizing sprawl and building the economy inwards to best support its residents. A county-wide plan may quickly reach its limitations because of a lack of cohesiveness between townships due to discrepancies in zoning regulations. Perhaps at the forefront of the zoning debacle is the necessity to preserve agricultural land through zoning implementation; this protects the land from excessive development and land use that opposes the desires of the community.

Fulton County is only partially zoned. The lack of zoning in half the County represents a serious threat to the implementation of this plan. Without zoning, the County is unable to control land use. In areas without zoning, the County has little power to prevent inappropriate land uses that lower the value of surrounding properties. The implementation strategy for this plan is divided into several levels based on the ability to use zoning as an implementation tool. Achievement of the plan at the highest level of achievement assumes zoning is available. A second level of the plan accepts a lower level of achievement in those areas that do not currently have zoning and do not opt for zoning in the coming years.

Presently, Fulton County zoning is relatively heterogeneous. Zoning differs by township, ranging from unzoned to county zoned. There exists a struggle between township autonomy and the desire to create an efficient means of zoning to best preserve the features that make Fulton County unique. The goal of county-wide zoning faces obstacles, including:

- ❖ May only be implemented with the consent of the individual township (hence why only 4 townships are county-zoned).
- ❖ Community resistance to change and intervention from governmental organizations.
- ❖ Current zoning practices may be outdated, resulting in a need for overhauling current zoning where it is applied.
- ❖ A lack of focus surrounding the intention of county-wide zoning—if the main goal is agricultural preservation, then there needs to be a consistency in zoning practices to best meet this goal.
- ❖ A lack of public understanding regarding zoning and its purpose for the County.
- ❖ Overall practicality of a county-wide zoning ordinance.

8.5 Zoning Solutions

Perhaps the most glaring barrier to the implementation of county-wide zoning is practicality of the goal. The goals of agricultural preservation, sprawl reduction and economic prosperity are not limited to county-wide zoning, however; alternatives are available and should be considered as methods used to achieve the best possible outcomes for Fulton County land use. Alternative approaches are discussed below and are to be considered by planning officials in the County.

Agricultural Protection Zoning

The implementation of an Agricultural Protection Zoning (APZ) District may be a productive solution to the zoning issue. An APZ is advantageous when placed upon large areas of land; it is relatively easy to implement at a low cost and can operate effectively with other conservation

approaches. Municipalities may enact an APZ over certain areas intended for agricultural use by placing additional regulations that limit conflicting development and land use in the district. The key to success in the establishment of an APZ includes:

- ❖ Clear communication between planners, local government and the public
- ❖ Active and sustainable farmland of substantial size
- ❖ Agricultural-adjacent businesses in the area
- ❖ An APZ plan based upon extensive research, public input, logical and practical goal setting and application
 - ❖ Clear intent of APZ District
 - ❖ Agricultural and zoning definitions for sake of clarity
 - ❖ Permitted uses of APZ land
 - ❖ Subdivision regulations and specifications of requirements

It is important to note that amendments to zoning upon the application of an APZ can impact its effectiveness depending upon adjustments to zoning ordinances—with this in mind, it is suggested that changes be compatible with an APZ to best support established goals provided through the APZ District.

Agricultural Protection Zoning Approaches

<i>Large Lot Zoning</i>	Establishes minimum lot size (typically 25, 40, or 50 acres); used to protect prime farmland from residential development in the form of subdivisions.
<i>Area-Based Allocation</i>	Specified allowance of residential development on farm acreage. Example: Specify percentage or ratio of land divided for residential versus agricultural use to contain development.
<i>Sliding-Scale Zoning</i>	As acreage of farm increases, number of allotted dwellings decreases. In addition, there is typically a maximum residential lot size to reduce area devoted to dwellings, typically placed on least productive soil types that reduce interference with agricultural operations.

Table 33: APZ Approaches²⁶⁵

The aforementioned practices may be used in combination or at varying degrees dependent upon preferences of the County.

Providing Notice

The implementation of an APZ should include a note which elaborates the inconveniences and hazards of residential properties located in an agriculturally zoned area, as well as the legislation and regulations put in place to protect the zoning practices associated with an APZ. This serves as a protection to farmers and those implementing this zoning ordinance. The notice is to be considered a requirement associated with the establishment of the ordinance.

Alternative Agricultural Protection Methods

<i>Agricultural Security Areas (ASA)</i>	Farmers are “entitled to special protection from condemnation and laws and ordinances that would unreasonably restrict farming operations” ²⁶⁶ . An ASA does not require that farmland be preserved, nor does it restrict development.
<i>Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program (ACEP)</i>	Allows officials at varying levels of authority to incentivize farmers who restrict their land use to commercial agricultural production. This program is competitive and it is suggested that applicants establish an ASA before submitting their proposal to the NCRS.
<i>Clean and Green</i>	Tax incentive provided to farmers and landowners that agree not to develop on land utilized for agriculture, wood production, or open space. This does not prevent sale of land, as it is a voluntary program for the owner of that particular plot of land. A minimum of 10 acres owned is required to receive benefits of participation of this program.
<i>Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)</i>	Zoning that can permanently protect agricultural and other heritage features by directing development to planned areas. In combination with APZ, the TDR can further increase revenue for farmers and landowners in the event that they wish to sell their agricultural land by way of a TDR.

Table 34: Alternative Agricultural Protection Methods²⁶⁷

Fulton County may find greater success in its preservation goals through the implementation of an APZ or an alternative option for protection that does not rely on county-wide zoning. There are many types of tools and means to combine the described approaches to best fit a community's needs; those described above have proven successful for many small communities nationwide and may be an answer to the issue of agricultural preservation. It is recommended that the Fulton County Planning Commission review these tools and other resources in pursuit of successful implementation in the County.

Planned Unit Development

Planned Unit Developments (PUD) are not subject to standard zoning requirements; rather, they are uniquely regulated by local government to best serve public needs within the development. PUD may contain mixed-use spaces, as well as recreational areas. It should be noted that PUD come with restrictions on property personalization in order to maintain property values and adhere to regulations associated with development²⁶⁸.

In Fulton County, PUD enable developers to operate under more lenient standards and provide room for adjustments in lot sizes, dwelling types and setback requirements. PUD may be a productive alternative to traditional zoning practices in open areas in the County, as they allow liberties in decision-making regarding design, resource use and utility infrastructure²⁶⁹.

Revitalization Projects

The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) is administered by the Office of Community Development, which provides federal funding to communities with programs for varied needs. The CDBG addresses local needs, which qualify under the national objective of low-moderate income (LMI) benefit or Elimination of Slum and Blight. Non-entitlement populations in Ohio counties and cities may apply and use CDBG funds for housing rehab, economic development and public works improvements. The program is divided into two components: Formula Allocation Grants and Neighborhood Revitalization Grants (NRG). The CDBG Economic Development Program creates and maintains permanent private sector job opportunities to LMI citizens through the expansion and retention of business and industry in Ohio communities through Fixed Assets Loans and Public Off-site Infrastructure Assistance. Non-entitlement cities/counties may apply on behalf of for-profit businesses committed to creating at least five jobs within its jurisdiction. The CDBG Public Infrastructure Grant provides funding to ensure a safe and sanitary living environment through the provision of safe, reliable drinking water and proper disposal of sanitary waste in distressed communities with an LMI population of at least 51%²⁷⁰.

Urban areas across the nation have fallen victim to urban decay, also referred to as neighborhood blight. Neighborhood blight is a grim response to infrastructural neglect,

increased crime rates, or economic destitution²⁷¹. This phenomenon can greatly diminish the housing values and population numbers of the impacted area. Fulton County would benefit from monitoring and assessment of blight present in order to determine and address the cause(s) of decay. It is recommended that Fulton County coordinate with Maumee Valley Planning Organization to create and implement a blight tracking and management system utilizing GIS software within the next year. Management of this system would be undertaken by Planning Commission and/or the County's GIS Analyst. A blight management system would allow the County to remain updated on at-risk areas, potential projects and funding opportunities. Consistent monitoring and annual or bi-annual blight reports are recommended.

Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs)

The desire for economic and community development and the goal of environmental preservation are often found at a stalemate, as these two spheres of planning can become polarized. Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs), also referred to as Urban Growth Areas, are a holistic means to bridge the gap through inward growth and by placing limitations on urban expansion into natural areas. UGBs can be considered a powerhouse of a planning strategy provided that Fulton County's different administrative bodies can reach a harmonious agreement regarding the placement of these boundaries and their associated requirements.

Implementation of UGBs requires the participation and input of Fulton County's key stakeholders, the municipal administrators and township officials. Before establishing specific UGBs, it is productive to create a common goal; this may likely require compromise from each party, but a consensus should be reached for the sake of amicable conditions and harmonious adherence and enforcement of these boundaries. It is important that a specific and steadfast decision is made regarding the placement and desired outcomes of the UGBs; it is necessary to reference and interact with this planning tool to ensure that it remains purposeful and functional. It would be beneficial to create a steering committee comprised of a diverse array of administrative officials that represent both the economic and environmental population, as well as a contractual development agreement to reduce potential conflict.

Implementing UGBs: Important Points and Useful Questions to Ask

The list below provides general procedures for the creation and implementation of UGBs. It is productive to provide the questions listed to those tasked with the establishment of UGBs to zero in on specific and attainable goals and the necessary methods to achieve them.

Involve Important Stakeholders

- Develop a common goal through compromise and best practices.
 - *Why do we need UGBs?*

Establish Desired Development Patterns

- Should be specific and quantifiable.
 - *What exactly are we protecting?*

Predict Growth and Development in Near Future

- Population is expected to decrease in the next 5-10 years.
 - *How will the estimated population decline impact UGBs?*

Delineate UGBs

- Boundary should be moderately sized and just beyond areas of development to avoid excessive growth but allow for prospective developers to utilize space.
 - *How much vacant land is needed to accommodate growth?*

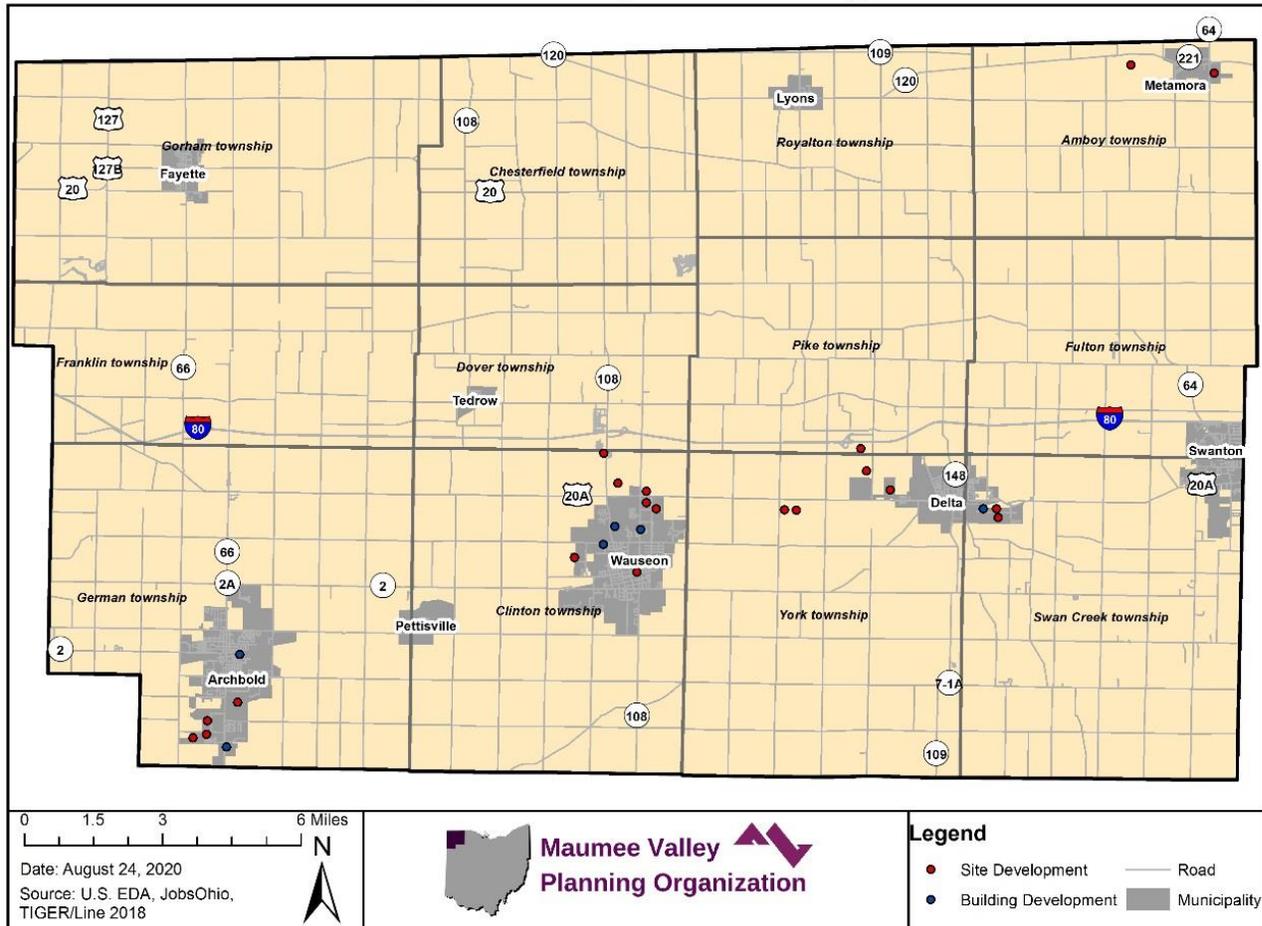
Officially Adopt UGBs

- Create public awareness of the UGB via meetings and include the boundaries in land use maps when updating land use regulations. Zoning can impact UGB efficiency and legal weight.
 - *Which types of zoning districts can best represent and execute the goals established through the use of UGBs?*

Re-evaluate UGBs Regularly

- Assess UGBs routinely to ensure that they function in accordance with pre-established goals and policies.
 - *Do the projections of the UGBs conflict with government jurisdiction?*
-

Development Areas, Fulton County, Ohio



Map 32: Fulton County Development Areas²⁷²

8.6 Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Manage Subdivision Regulations

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<i>O1: Address Subdivision Regulation Issues regarding lot size and frontage.</i>	<p>Increase the minimum lot size to 2 acres, regardless of public water and/or sewer. The larger lot size will lessen the risk of future public sewer needs, particularly along waterlines where development is increased.</p> <p>The minimum frontage for 2 acres is currently 250 ft. Decrease the minimum frontage.</p>	June 2022	Fulton County Planning Commission
<i>O2: Address Subdivision Regulation Issues regarding lot depth.</i>	<p>The minimum lot depth is currently 235 ft. The minimum depth with public sewer (no public water) is 135 ft. This can be contrary to farmland preservation for splits involving existing homesteads. The 235 ft. minimum depth should be solely for parcel splits with no residence. The 135 ft. minimum depth for lots with public sewer will not meet setback requirements.</p>	June 2022	Fulton County Planning Commission
<i>O3: Address Subdivision Regulation Issues regarding proof of water.</i>	<p>All proposed minor splits (5 acres and smaller) must have an approved water supply, prior to conveyance. A well must be installed. Well logs and pump reports must be submitted. Remove "proof of water" if the minimum lot size is increased to 2 acres. Require "proof of water" for lot splits 3 acres and smaller, as opposed to 5 acres & smaller. This will</p>	June 2022	Fulton County Planning Commission

	<p>preserve 2 acres of farmland. Developers currently split off 5 acres to avoid drilling a well.</p>		
<p><i>O4: Develop a drainage plan requirement.</i></p>	<p>The Subdivision Regulations do NOT regulate drainage. A drainage plan should be required either during the split process OR during the zoning / development permit process.</p>	<p>December 2023</p>	<p>Fulton County Planning Commission</p>
<p><i>O5: Determine if the street construction requirement is cost prohibitive.</i></p>	<p>“Rural Subdivision” development was added to the regulations in 2002. Since that time, just 1 rural subdivision has been developed (Co Rd J, east of SR 108). Is the street construction requirement cost prohibitive?</p>		<p>Fulton County Planning Commission</p>
<p><i>O6: Determine Pond regulations and requirements.</i></p>	<p>Development Permit (Ponds) Per Section 345 a Development Permit is required for the construction of residential, industrial and accessory buildings in the unincorporated areas of Fulton County. There is no mention of a permit being required for a pond.</p> <p>A pond permit is currently required countywide. However, the regulations are merely recommendations without the County adopting them.</p> <p>Determine if the County should adopt the Development Permit Application, which includes pond regulations?</p>		<p>Fulton County Planning Commission</p>

Goal 2: Protect Agriculture Resources

The 1998 Comprehensive Plan focused on the implementation of County wide zoning to protect agriculture resources which has proven to be impractical. The following goals were established to identify alternatives to County wide zoning that will be just as impactful.

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<p><i>O1: Research the listed types of farmland easements. Select at least 1 type of easement to be implemented in Fulton County.</i></p>	<p>County Easement Purchase: Landowners sell the development rights to their county. Landowners retain ownership of the land but agree to permanent deed restrictions that prohibit nonagricultural development.</p> <p>Direct Easement: The state purchases the development rights on farmland directly from the landowner and the landowner retains ownership of the land.</p> <p>Fee Simple: Farms are purchased outright from willing sellers, permanently preserved for agricultural use and resold or leased with deed restrictions attached.</p> <p>Grants to Nonprofits: The state provides cost sharing grants of up to 50 percent to assist nonprofit organizations in permanently preserving farms.</p> <p>Planning Incentive Grants: These are grants to municipalities or counties that have identified specific project areas where they intend to permanently protect large blocks of reasonably contiguous farmland. Municipalities must have an agricultural advisory committee and their master plan</p>	<p>2025</p>	<p>Fulton County Planning Commission</p>

	<p>must contain a farmland preservation plan.</p> <p>Eight Year Program: An eight-year program allows landowners to voluntarily restrict nonagricultural development on their property for eight years in exchange for selected easement - purchase benefits, such as protection from emergency water restrictions and access to soil and water conservation matching grants.</p>		
<p><i>O2: Establish an Agricultural Security Areas program</i></p>	<p>Agricultural Security Areas (ASA) This program is a tool that promotes farmland retention by creating areas of at least 500 contiguous acres for 10-year periods in which agriculture is protected and recognized by local government officials.</p>	<p>2025</p>	<p>TBD</p>

Goal 3: Monitor Construction and Renovation Projects

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<p><i>O1: Allow only high-quality buildings that are constructed for the long-term value of the community, are easily adaptable to the changing market conditions and that reflect a sense of permanence and public pride.</i></p>	<p>New and renovated buildings should be architecturally significant, reflecting characteristics of the community.</p> <p>Discourage building elements that identify a corporate brand to reduce difficulties of future building adaption.</p> <p>Public buildings should be constructed to create a continuity between the past, present and future of the community. This</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Multiple Agencies. i.e., County Commissioners, Planning Commission, County Engineer, etc.</p>

<p>includes creating architecturally significant structures that are consistent in design, expression, materials and/or other elements. The buildings should use high visibility areas to underscore their significance and be designed with an emphasis on conservation and environmental quality.</p> <p>Strongly encourage the increased use of permeable surface area by reducing the amount of concrete or other non-permeable surfaces used for parking areas. This can be done through landscaping and greenspace use.</p>		
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Goal 4: Implement Urban Growth Boundaries

Objectives	Implementation Strategies	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<p><i>O1: Establish and enforce UGBs in selected areas considered most productive for development and growth. Restrict growth beyond these boundaries in favor of selective development.</i></p>	<p>Introduce this goal at an RPC meeting; give notice to administrators to who may have commentary and input on this process.</p> <p>Create a steering committee comprised of members from different townships and municipalities. A development agreement or contract may be necessary for the purpose of harmonious decision-making regarding location and goals of UGBs.</p> <p>Established UGBs should be depicted on development and land use maps. The UGB</p>	<p>2024</p>	<p>Stakeholders — township officials and municipal administrators, County Commissioners, Planning Commission.</p>

<p>should be complementary to zoning and subdivision regulations.</p> <p>Consistent evaluations of the UGBs are necessary to ensure that they are furthering the goals of the County Comprehensive Plan.</p>		
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Chapter 9: Closing Notes

The Fulton County Comprehensive Plan sets several goals for the county to achieve or strive to achieve over the next five to twenty years. Goals, policies and initiatives established throughout the plan can be executed through both public and private actions. The Comprehensive Plan will be implemented in several ways. Daily, the document is used by County staff to help frame recommendations to the County Board and other advisory commissions. It is also used by residents and developers to understand the County’s intentions for the use of land, the provision of housing, infrastructure needs and planned park and open space improvements.

Each chapter provides guidance in how to achieve the Comprehensive Plan’s vision over the next twenty years. The following is a summary of the implementation measures discussed throughout these chapters.

9.1 Strengths

- ❖ Fulton County may perform better than Toledo, Cleveland, Fort Wayne and Ann Arbor in cost of living because the County is not yet a high-growth area.
- ❖ The County has a low crime rate and ample housing options.
- ❖ Fulton County appears to lead in education.
- ❖ The County has access to national highways and air service.
- ❖ Inexpensive and desirable land.
- ❖ Defined as a welcoming community by current residents.

9.2 Weaknesses

- ❖ The County is small and lacks higher education facilities. Toledo, Cleveland, Fort Wayne and Ann Arbor may fare better in jobs, education, health care, arts and recreation because of their increased access to resources and higher population numbers.
- ❖ Fulton County aims to protect agricultural land; therefore, certain current subdivision regulations are not conducive to the protection of agricultural land.
- ❖ During the creation of this plan, the United States was impacted by the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic. As a result, many traditional methods of attaining public input

were not used. Rather, much of the public contribution was received through online surveys and social media interaction. Survey questions and public meeting notes may be acquired at request to the Fulton County Planning Commission and Maumee Valley Planning Organization.

9.3 Implementation

Fulton County's role in achieving these goals and vision involves a variety of expenses and levels of participation. Many of the County's responsibilities are clear and spelled out; others still need to be determined because matters are clouded by competing interests and current trends. Therefore, several components should be deliberated closely.

- ❖ Stay current and educated: identify trends and issues, research, monitor, analyze for policy development, conduct pilot studies and take public input seriously.
- ❖ Involve and assist constituents: share information to increase awareness of issues, protect public safety, provide technical assistance and motivate sustainable behavior.
- ❖ Advocate: promote policies in local, regional, state and federal government that will benefit the people of Fulton County.
- ❖ Collaborate and Facilitate: Work in partnership with others, coordinate activities and relationships to achieve more than could be done unilaterally.
- ❖ Maintain high standards: all county programs and facilities should be managed to high standards that demonstrate the County's commitment and potential best practices.
- ❖ Regulate: administer ordinances and laws through permitting, inspection and enforcement.

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