

# CHAPTER TWO

UPDATE 2013 –  
THE SANDUSKY COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

# POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

### **Summary**

This Comprehensive Plan is largely an analysis of existing and future land use. Land use is best determined by the location and movement of people. People create markets, employment bases, and demands for public services. It is important to understand where they live, where they work, where they travel to shop and have fun. It is also imperative that we understand a little about their makeup and how it may be changing over time. Is the population getting “older” as a whole? Are households changing in size and composition? If we can obtain answers to these questions and related ones, we can better understand how existing land use patterns came to exist, and what changes should be planned to accommodate future trends and needs.

### **Planning Issues**

The analysis of population and demographics (the science of vital statistics of the population) provides insight into a number of planning issues. Among them are these:

1. Population projections can help determine growth areas and local governments can plan future public services and facilities based on soundly projected growth.
2. Changes in age cohorts may help point toward changing needs. An expected rise in the number of seniors has implications regarding health care needs, as well as a change in the demand for housing.
3. Household composition can impact planning issues. Smaller households and an increase in the number of “empty nest” (45-64) and elderly households may spur demand for smaller housing units.
4. Income impacts some planning decisions. Most communities strive for balance within neighborhoods, rather than endorsing actions that lead to income “segregation”.
5. Commuting and employment patterns have implications regarding the optimal design of public transportation, and of roadways that connect workers with work.

An overview of Sandusky County and its people thus provides a helpful background for the Plan.

### Goals and Objectives

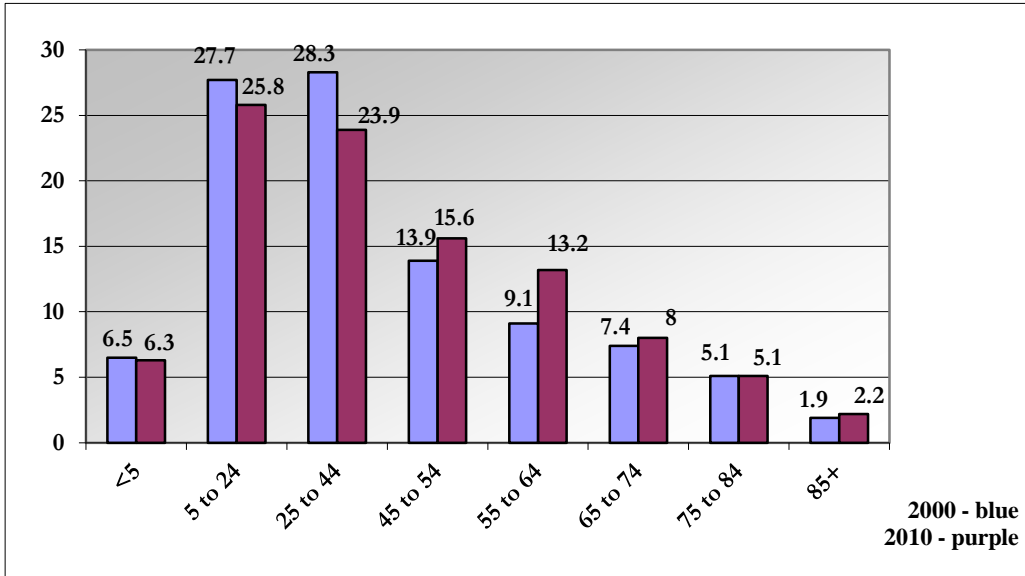
- }] Promote site planning in designated growing or growth areas with sufficient infrastructure
- }] Encourage the coordinated provision of all necessary and adequate public facilities to developing areas.
- }] Guide growth patterns to promote efficiency of travel and offer the best return on public investment, placing special emphasis on areas currently experiencing growth or designated for future growth by local officials.

### Existing Conditions and Trends

During the twentieth century, the County's population increased by 27,481 people, a boost of eighty percent. The greatest increases took place mid-century, during the 1940's (a 12.4 percent rise), 1950's (22.5 percent during this universally prosperous, post-war decade) and 1960's (eight percent). Since then, the County's total population has lost over 1,000 people during the 1980's and remained static over the 1990's, with a continued drop from 2000 to 2010. This lack of recent growth parallels the experience of the State of Ohio as a whole, as well as many of its rural counties. Greatest Ohio growth has been witnessed in counties located on the fringe of growing metropolitan areas, such as Delaware County north of the City of Columbus. Sandusky County, while on the periphery of the Toledo metro area, is too distant to serve as a new bedroom community for commuters, although Gibsonburg and Woodville are exceptions. Further, Toledo is not enjoying the prosperity of the Columbus area, and the demand for new housing subdivisions and commercial districts to service them is not as pronounced.

**Likely Projections:** The Ohio Department of Development, Office of Strategic Research, compiled County-level population projections based on the 1990 and 2000 Census of Population. Their projection for 2010 was for a decrease from 61,790 in 2000 to 59,940. The 2010 Census counted 60,944, or 1,004 more people than projected. The projection continues, with estimated totals of 57,900 in 2020 and 56,420 in 2030. Adjusting proportionately for the higher actual 2010 number, the upward revisions could project 58,870 in 2020 and 57,370 in 2030. These projections take into account assumptions about births, deaths, and natural increase, as well as age-specific births and fertility rates. Net migration by age cohort is also considered.

| Comparative County Populations, 1990, 2000 and 2010<br>(Source: U.S. Census) |         |         |         |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| COUNTY   | 1990    | 2000    | 2010    |
| Sandusky   | 61,963  | 61,792  | 60,944  |
| Wood   | 113,269 | 121,065 | 125,488 |
| Williams   | 36,956  | 39,188  | 37,642  |
| Seneca   | 59,733  | 58,683  | 56,745  |
| Putnam   | 33,819  | 34,726  | 34,499  |
| Ottawa   | 40,029  | 40,985  | 41,428  |
| Huron  | 56,240  | 59,487  | 59,626  |
| Henry  | 29,108  | 29,210  | 28,215  |
| Hancock  | 65,536  | 71,295  | 74,782  |
| Fulton   | 38,458  | 42,084  | 42,698  |
| Erie   | 76,799  | 79,551  | 77,079  |
| Defiance   | 39,350  | 39,500  | 39,037  |
| Crawford   | 47,480  | 46,966  | 43,784  |



**Population by Age:** In many respects, age is the most important dimension of the population, because changes in age cohorts over time can have significant implications with regard to the delivery of services. The much-touted explosion of elderly as baby boomers mature is just beginning to have far-reaching effects upon public and social services, and upon many other aspects of everyday life such as product marketing and restaurant menus. The chart to the left presents a snapshot of Sandusky County's population by age, compared with ten years ago. Population percentages are somewhat different for Ohio as a whole, where 6.3 percent are under 5 years old, 27.0 percent are age 5-24, 25.1 percent are 25-44, 15.1 percent are 45-54, 12.6 percent are 55-64, 7.4 percent are 65-74, 4.7 percent are 75-84, and 2.0 percent are 85 and older. According to the 2007-2011 American Community

Survey, Sandusky County's population has a median age of 40.5, two years older than Ohio's median of 38.5 and 15.3 percent of the county's population age is over 65, as opposed to the statewide proportion of 13.9 percent.

Indeed, this table depicts several trends with respect to the County's population by age. First, the preschool total is smaller than in 2000, indicating a continuing smaller near-term demand for school facilities and services. Second, there is a "wave" of baby boomers moving through the population, as evidenced by the continued growth of the 45-54 age cohorts from 8,586 in 2000 to 9,532 in 2010. As noted previously, these changes have implications ranging from a projected increase in demand for senior services to a potential demand for smaller, more accessible housing units, possibly incorporating congregate eating facilities or other amenities.

**Ethnicity:** While Sandusky County's population remains largely White, the County is home to significant minority populations as well. Both the Black and Hispanic/Latino populations have become well represented by advocacy organizations in the greater Fremont area (NAACP for African Americans, *Voces Unidas* for Hispanics/Latinos). The Minority Populations table contrasts population totals for the County between 2000 and 2010.

Minority populations had somewhat significant increases since 2000. The African American population increased by 473, or nearly one-fourth, over the decade, while the Hispanic/Latino population (which is defined by ethnic origin and not by race) grew by 1,137 persons or 26.5 percent. As was true in the preceding decade, these increases occurred during a time when the County's total population *decreased*, by 848 persons.

| Minority Populations in Sandusky County, 1990 and 2010 (Source: U.S. Census) |              |         |              |         |
|--|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|
|  | Number, 2000 | %, 2000 | Number, 2010 | %, 2010 |
| <b>Total</b>   | 61,792       | 100.0   | 60,944       | 100.0   |
| <b>All or part White</b>   | 57,902       | 93.7    | 57,120       | 93.7    |
| <b>All or part Black</b>   | 2,013        | 3.3     | 2,486        | 4.1     |
| <b>All/Part American Indian</b>  | 274          | 0.4     | 439          | 0.7     |
| <b>All or part Asian</b>   | 265          | 0.4     | 310          | 0.5     |
| <b>Hawaiian, Pacific Island</b>  | 19           | 0.0     | 32           | 0.05    |
| <b>Hispanic or Latino</b>  | 4,298        | 7.0     | 5,435        | 8.9     |

**Household Type:** Changes in the type and status of households throughout the county can have an impact on the demand for services and facilities. Single-parent households may have needs for childcare and other services. While population decreased slightly, the number of households increased from 2000 to the 2007-2011 ACS period, from 23,717 to 24,031 (an increase of 314, or 1.3 percent). The number of married couple families decreased slightly, from 13,402 to 13,099, and made up 54.5 percent of households in 2007-'11 (which is somewhat more than Ohio's incidence of 48.5%). Increases are noted among nonfamily households, female-headed households, householders living alone, and householders aged 65 and over. Reflecting continuing state and national trends, average household size has diminished, from 2.71 to 2.45 persons per household on average. This is very close to the Ohio average of 2.46. Smaller household size has land use planning implications. First, smaller households may demand smaller housing unit sizes as a third or fourth bedroom becomes unnecessary. As noted earlier, more elderly households require certain amenities, such as single floor plans for safe mobility. On a larger scale, with a population distributed among a larger number of relatively smaller households, there is a need for a larger number of housing units, very possibly requiring more space to accommodate fewer people. This observation may not be true if the nature of the demand for housing changes, from homes sited on larger lots to apartments, condominiums, and other housing that requires smaller lot sizes.

| Household Characteristics, Sandusky County, 2000 and 2007-2011 (Source: Census 2000, 2007-'11 ACS) |        |               |
|--|--------|---------------|
|  | 2000   | 2007-2011 ACS |
| <b>Total households</b>  | 23,717 | 24,031        |
| <b>Family households -families</b>   | 16,960 | 16,778        |
| <b>Married couple families</b>   | 13,402 | 13,099        |
| <b>Other family, male householder</b>  | N/A    | 1,015         |
| <b>Other family, female householder</b>  | 2,489  | 2,664         |
| <b>Nonfamily households</b>  | 6,757  | 7,253         |
| <b>Householder living alone</b>  | 5,707  | 6,105         |
| <b>Householder 65 years and over</b>   | 2,518  | 2,820         |

|                       |      |      |
|-----------------------|------|------|
| Persons per household | 2.56 | 2.45 |
|-----------------------|------|------|

### Population by Geography

| Population of Sandusky County's Political Subdivisions: 1990-2010 (Source: U.S. Census) |               |               |               |             |            |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|------------|
|   | 1990          | 2000          | 2010          | 1990-2010   | 2000-2010  |
| <b>MUNICIPALITIES</b>   |               |               |               |             |            |
| <i>Bellevue</i>   | 4,236         | 4,352         | 4,527         | 291         | 175        |
| <i>Burgoon</i>  | 224           | 199           | 172           | -52         | -27        |
| <i>Clyde</i>  | 5,776         | 6,064         | 6,325         | 549         | 261        |
| <i>Fremont</i>  | 17,648        | 17,375        | 16,734        | -914        | -641       |
| <i>Gibsonburg</i>   | 2,579         | 2,506         | 2,581         | 2           | 75         |
| <i>Green Springs</i>  | 715           | 599           | 738           | 23          | 139        |
| <i>Helena</i>   | 267           | 236           | 224           | -43         | -12        |
| <i>Lindsey</i>  | 529           | 504           | 446           | -83         | -58        |
| <i>Woodville</i>  | 1,953         | 1,977         | 2,135         | -182        | 158        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>33,927</b> | <b>33,812</b> | <b>33,882</b> | <b>-409</b> | <b>+70</b> |
| <b>TOWNSHIPS</b>  |               |               |               |             |            |
| <i>Ballville</i>  | 6,049         | 6,395         | 5,985         | -64         | -410       |
| <i>Green Creek</i>  | 4,016         | 3,467         | 3,646         | -370        | 179        |
| <i>Jackson</i>  | 1,248         | 1,297         | 1,608         | 360         | 311        |
| <i>Madison</i>  | 1,108         | 1,215         | 1,269         | 161         | 54         |
| <i>Rice</i>   | 1,467         | 1,437         | 1,370         | -97         | -67        |

|                   |               |               |               |             |            |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|------------|
| <i>Riley</i>      | 1,449         | 1,302         | 1,226         | -223        | -76        |
| <i>Sandusky</i>   | 4,441         | 4,087         | 3,619         | -822        | -468       |
| <i>Scott</i>      | 1,540         | 1,502         | 1,437         | -103        | -65        |
| <i>Townsend</i>   | 1,528         | 1,670         | 1,620         | 92          | -50        |
| <i>Washington</i> | 1,654         | 1,769         | 2,332         | 678         | 563        |
| <i>Woodville</i>  | 1,135         | 1,327         | 1,260         | 125         | -67        |
| <i>York</i>       | 2,401         | 2,512         | 2,532         | 131         | 20         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>28,036</b> | <b>27,980</b> | <b>27,904</b> | <b>-132</b> | <b>-76</b> |

Sandusky County's population remained relatively stable between 1990 and 2010, with a slight decrease. However, it is important to note whether there were any major changes in the population of the subdivisions that make up the County. The following table presents information on the 2000 and 2010 populations of the County's nine municipalities (or portions within the

County) and twelve townships. Municipalities as a whole held their own over the past twenty years, losing just fewer than four dozen people in total over that time. The largest and most consistent gainer was Clyde, followed by Bellevue and Green Springs. Fremont lost some 914 people between 1990 and 2010, and Woodville lost 182, although in the past decade Woodville gained 158. Looking only at the decade from 2000 to 2010, there were more population gainers: Clyde, Bellevue, Woodville, Green Springs, and Gibsonburg. Townships often record population losses because of annexation by adjacent communities. This may be the case for Sandusky and Ballville Townships, both of which are adjacent to the City of Fremont. Townships that posted significant population increases over the twenty years between 1990 and 2010 included Jackson, Madison, Townsend, Washington, Woodville, and York. Half (six) of the twelve townships thus showed an increase over these twenty years. Only five posted increases over the most recent decade, from 2000 to 2010.

While much of the increase over the 1990's may be attributable to a robust economy and a significant number of housing starts in rural areas, the slowdown in the most recent decade in Townships could be partially attributable to the recession and the halt of new housing starts toward the end of that decade.

### Other Population Characteristics

The following are additional items noted in the 2007-2011 American Community Survey for Sandusky County, which have planning ramifications.

- Educational attainment: High school graduates comprise 87.6 percent of the County's 25-and-over population, similar to the State's 87.8 percent. However, only 13.4 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is well below the State proportion of 24.5 percent.
- Commuting to Work: Mean travel time to work is 19.0 minutes, less than the State-wide mean of 22.9 minutes. Fully 82.5 percent drove alone to work.

- Median household income was close to the State median; \$47,277 for the County, and \$48,071 for the State.
- Per capita income was somewhat less than for the State; \$22,713 for the County and \$25,618 for Ohio.
- The population of the County is relatively stable. Of the 60,374 people age 1 year and over, 87.7 percent reported in the 2007-'11 ACS that they had lived in the same house one year prior; 4,284 of the 7,216 reporting a different house one year prior had lived in another house within Sandusky County.