

# CHAPTER FIVE

UPDATER 2013 –  
THE SANDUSKY COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## QUALITY OF LIFE

### A. HISTORIC PRESERVATION



#### SUMMARY

Historic properties provide evidence of a community's heritage and a visual reminder of the foundation upon which the community has been built. These same properties, however, are rapidly becoming extinct, falling prey to neglect, demolition or simply renovation that alters the property beyond historic recognition. The destruction of such historic properties, whether through private and public action or inaction, diminishes the community's character, destroys its individuality and takes away from its vitality. Preservation and restoration of these markers of historic heritage are invaluable and should be viewed from a *future generation's* perspective.

#### PLANNING ISSUES

Planning for historic preservation may be stymied by several issues:

1. The private ownership of the building
2. Limited resources, especially in regards to severely dilapidated structures or sites
3. A public uneducated as to the value of the property in question
4. The political landscape, whether locally, at the state level or nationally

Historic preservation can provide positive influences on the community; especially when the community is directly involved in the restoration process. Pride in the community, resurgence of the local business community, especially a downtown area, lower crime rates, a rise in private investment and the growth of the tourism industry may all be outgrowths of a properly planned and implemented preservation project(s). Such projects should include, but are not limited to: a historic preservation ordinance or resolution, zoning law changes, demolition moratoria, downtown revitalization programs, local economic incentives, public education programs and identification of tourist sensitive areas ripe for development.

**Historic Preservation Goal:** To preserve Sandusky County's rich history through renovation and restoration of its most vulnerable historic buildings and sites.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Identify properties that can be candidates for the National Register of Historic Places
2. Preserve identified public properties with local government (city, village and county) taking the lead while involving the citizens in a direct and decisive manner
3. Create an education plan that can be reproduced for all grade levels designed to enrich students history curriculum with a focus on Sandusky County's contribution on the state and national level including its formation, the ties to the War of 1812, Revolutionary War, Civil War, World Wars I and II and its economic significance from a historical perspective
4. Create a map identifying historical buildings and properties which includes a legend identifying each property's ownership status, whether or not it has been restored, is on the National Register of Historic Places and whether the property is vulnerable to near future demolition
5. Revitalize historic downtowns of Fremont, Clyde, and other communities as feasible in keeping with their historical significance
6. Identify properties ripe for development as a draw for tourism, which should include the creation of a strategic plan with a timeline to develop and market them as such

***EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS***

Sandusky County is home to a wide variety of public and private historic buildings and sites that are held and administered by different agencies.

**Fremont Sites****1. Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center**

**Address:** 1 Spiegel Grove, Fremont

**Governing Body:** Hayes Board of Directors, Ohio Historical Society

**Revenue Streams:** Private donations, admission fees, State of Ohio, Ohio Historical Society

**General Description:** Rutherford B. Hayes was the 19<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. The Center houses 1<sup>st</sup> Presidential Library in the Nation, his home, museum, grave site and the gates that once hung at the White House. It is a vital place of education and research and is home to a variety of programming and exhibits

**Public or Privately Owned:** Private

**2. Sandusky County Historical Society**

**Address:** 514 Birchard Avenue

**Governing Body:** Sandusky County Historical Society Board

**Revenue Streams:** donations

**General Description:** Built in 1884, the Victorian home was a wedding present for Carrie June, the daughter of Mr. And Mrs. David June, upon her marriage to Martin Holderman on September 10, 1884

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

**3. Minnie Louise Failing/DAR House**

**Address:** 209 Justice Street

**Governing Body:** Colonel Croghan Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution

**Revenue Streams:** membership dues

**General Description:** Built in 1867, it was the family home of William E Haynes, a Lieutenant Colonel of the 10<sup>th</sup> Ohio Cavalry appointed by President Andrew Johnson to be collector for the IRS for the 9<sup>th</sup> Ohio District.

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

#### **4. Fremont Women’s Federation Home**

**Address:** 506 Court Street

**Governing Body**

**Revenue Streams**

**General Description:** The house was built in 1854 by Anson Miller, a banker from New Hampshire. The Fremont Federation of Women was established on June 16, 1903. In 1925 Mary Miller Hayes, who was a friend of the President of the Fremont Federation of Women, Ellen Brady, gave the house to the Federation in honor and memory of her mother, Nancy Otis Miller

**Public or Privately Owned**

#### **5. Dillon House**

**Address:** 1329 Buckland Avenue

**Governing Body**

**Revenue Streams**

**General Description:** This Victoria-era residence is an example of the Towered Second Empire design. It was built by Charles and Anne Dillon. Anne’s father Ralph P. Buckland shared a legal practice with Rutherford B. Hayes from 1845-1849

**Public or Privately Owned:**

#### **6. Historic Jail and Sheriff’s Home**

**Address:** 622 Croghan Street

**Governing Body:** Sandusky County Commissioners

**Revenue Streams:** tax dollar supported

**General Description:** completed in 1891, the building was designed in a combination of the [Romanesque Revival](#) and [Queen Anne](#) styles of

architecture. The 3-story structure consists of the Sheriffs’ home in the front portion and the rear portion for keeping the prisoners

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

#### **7. Sandusky County Dungeons**

**Address** 622 Croghan Street

**Governing Body:** Sandusky County Commissioners

**Revenue Streams:** tax dollar supported

**General Description:** Located directly beneath the courthouse addition on the west side, the dungeons were used to house prisoners beginning around 1841. Thought to be inhumane, they were replaced by the adjacent facility

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

#### **8. Soldiers Memorial Parkway**

**Address:** Memorial Parkway

**Governing Body:** City of Fremont

**Revenue Streams** n/a

**General Description:** constructed in honor of Sandusky County’s eighty-five soldiers who were killed in action during World War I

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

#### **9. McKinley Memorial Parkway**

**Address:**

**Governing Body:** City of Fremont

**Revenue Streams:** n/a

**General Description:** constructed in honor of Sandusky County’s eighty-five soldiers who were killed in action during World War I

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

#### **10. St. Paul’s Episcopal Church**

**Address:** 206 S. Park Ave

**Governing Body:** Church Parishioners/board

**Revenue Streams:** private

**General Description:** Original Structure built in 1842 was 52 seats and 60 x 42 square feet. Oldest continuous place of worship in Fremont

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

**11. Old Post Office {Pontifex}**

**Address:** 416 West State Street

**Governing Body:** Pontifex, Inc. board of Directors

**Revenue Streams:** donations, membership fees

**General Description:** built in 1932 as a WPA project, the building is a candidate for the National Register of Historic Places

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

**12. Buckland House {Rivers of Life Church}**

**Address:** 300 S. Park Avenue

**Governing Body:** Rivers of Life Church

**Revenue Streams:** donations

**General Description:** Home of Ralph P. Buckland, US Representative and Brigadier General for the Union during the Civil War

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

**13. Fabing House {Dr. Kelderhouse office}**

**Address:** 201 s. Park Avenue

**Governing Body** n/a

**Revenue Streams** n/a

**General Description:** Built in 1859, the 3 story brick structure of the Second Empire style is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was the home of Frederick Fabing a successful businessman and arguably one of Sandusky County's wealthiest residents at the time.

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

**14. Sandusky County Fairgrounds**

**Address:** 712 North Street

**Governing Body:** Sandusky County Agricultural Society

**Revenue Streams:** Events, facility rentals, private donations

**General Description:** The Site of the horse racing scenes for the movie "home in Indiana" and the site where Colonel Bradstreet (British) camped in

1764 when quelling Pontiac's Rebellion and the western most site reached by colonial forces led by Colonel Putman

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

**15. Peninsular Farms {Whittaker's Reserve – Sandusky Township}**

**Address:** 1872 Port Clinton Road

**Governing Body:** n/a

**Revenue Streams:** n/a

**General Description:** The Wyandots here gave 1100 acres to their white captive, James Whittaker. About 1780 he married, thus establishing probably the first permanent American home in Ohio

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

**16. Postal Worker Grave Sight**

**Address:** Croghan Street between Arch & Justice (south side)

**Governing Body:** n/a

**Revenue Streams:** n/a

**General Description:**

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

**17. Flag Park**

**Address:** inside Court, Justice, Park and Croghan Streets

**Governing Body:** Sandusky County Commissioners

**Revenue Streams:** n/a

**General Description:** Home to the Veterans Memorial, green space

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

**18. Bartlett House {James & Marlene Ellis, Offices}**

**Address:** 212 Park Avenue

**Governing Body:** n/a

**Revenue Streams:** n/a

**General Description:** AKA Cole, Sardis and Margaret House

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

**19. Brady's Island**

**Address:** Sandusky River

**Governing Body:** Railroad

**Revenue Streams:** n/a

**General Description:** Site where General Washington's Scout Samuel Brady watched the Indians. He was captured on his 2<sup>nd</sup> trip but escaped from the burning pyre

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

### **20. Ball's Battlefield**

**Address:** 2319 Buckland Avenue

**Governing Body:** n/a

**Revenue Streams:** n/a

**General Description:** Major Ball's Squadron 2nd Light Dragoons U.S. Army while escorting Col. Wells 17th U.S. Infantry from Major General Harrison's headquarters at Fort Seneca to relieve Major Croghan of the command of Fort Stephenson for alleged insubordination in refusing to evacuate the fort was ambushed by Indians near this spot but gallantly charging them killed seventeen with the sabre. 30th July 1813.

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

### **21. Mull Covered Bridge {Ballville Township}**

**Address:** 1515 CR 9

**Governing Body:** Owned by County Commissioners; managed by Sandusky County Park District

**Revenue Streams:** Tax dollar funded

**General Description:** Built in 1851 by the Henry Mull Family to allow for safe access for trade to the Mull Mill. Is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. County Commissioners, Ballville Township Trustees, and County Park District were recently awarded an ODOT Historic Transportation Facility Grant of approximately \$300,000 for rehabilitation of the bridge.

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

### **22. Historic Strand Theater**

**Address:** 220 S. Front Street

**Governing Body:** n/a

**Revenue Streams:** Ticket Sales/private funding

**General Description:** Built in 1870, the Strand was initially part of the Ball House Hotel. It has undergone numerous changes and uses over the years and is now home to the Historic Strand Theatre.

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

### **Lindsey Sites**

#### **1. Creek Bend Farm**

**Address:** 654 S Main Street

**Governing Body:** Sandusky County Park District

**Revenue Streams:** tax dollar funded

**General Description:** The brick home was built in 1862 of the Greek Revival Style. The Overmyer family founded the approximately 300 acre farm which included a saw mill. Today, 7 of the original buildings remain

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

### **Bellevue Sites**

#### **1. Bellevue Historical Society: Tremont House**

**Address:** 103 east Main Street

**Governing Body:** Bellevue historical Society

**Revenue Streams:** donations

**General Description:** built in 1846

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

#### **2. Mad River Railroad Museum**

**Address:** Southwest Street

**Governing Body:** Mad River Board of Directors

**Revenue Streams:** donations, entrance fees

**General Description:** Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad was the 1<sup>st</sup> Chartered railroad in the state of Ohio, trains first rolled through Bellevue in 1838 helping develop the area. The museum houses a large number of train cars and memorabilia

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

**Clyde Sites****1. Clyde Historical Museum****Address:** 124 west Buckeye Street**Governing Body:** Clyde Heritage League Board of Directors**Revenue Streams:** Donations**General Description:** Located in the formal Grace Episcopal Church, it features unique historical items such as Indian artifacts, pioneer to industrial era items, and interesting memorabilia about war heroes and other famous people from the Clyde area**Public or Privately Owned:** Public**2. James “Birdseye” McPherson House****Address:** 300 McPherson Highway**Governing Body:** Clyde Heritage League**Revenue Streams:** donations**General Description:** boyhood home of General James McPherson. The house was built circa 1833**Public or Privately Owned:** public**3. Independence Hall****Address:** 131 S. Main Street**Governing Body:** Clyde Heritage League**Revenue Streams:** donations**General Description:** built in 1882 and once housed the Fire Department and the Police Station in addition to meeting rooms**Public or Privately Owned:** public**Green Springs Sites****1. Seneca John Monument****Address:** state Route 19, north of Green Springs**Governing Body:** n/a**Revenue Streams:** n/a**General Description:** Seneca John, Noted Chief was executed near this spot, easterly, by his tribe, in 1828, charged with witchcraft**Public or Privately Owned:** n/a**2. Stemtown Museum****Address:** 111 Morgan Street**Governing Body:** Stemtown Historical Society**Revenue Streams:** donations**General Description:** located in the home of Revolutionary War veteran who migrated to Green Springs following the war**Public or Privately Owned:** public**3. Green Springs Sulfur Springs****Address:** Green Springs**Governing Body:** n/a**Revenue Streams:** n/a**General Description:** thought to be the largest mineral springs in the world, bottled and sold until 1930's, also became a healing destination**Public or Privately Owned:** private**Gibsonburg Sites****1. Northcoast Veteran’s Museum****Address:** 411 North Main Street**Governing Body:** Northcoast Veterans Museum Board**Revenue Streams:** donations**General Description:** home to a large collection of military paraphernalia from the Civil War to present day**Public or Privately Owned:** public**Woodville Sites****1. Woodville Historical Society Museum****Address:** 107 East Main Street**Governing Body:** Woodville Historical Society

**Revenue Streams:** donations

**General Description:** local and regional historical artifacts and related material

**Public or Privately Owned:** public

### 2. Cronenwett House

**Address:** 606 W Main Street

**Governing Body:** n/a

**Revenue Streams:** n/a

**General Description**



Of the numerous and diverse attractions of historic significance listed above, the property with the greatest national and international interest is the Rutherford B. Hayes Home, Museum, and the property on which it is situated, Spiegel Grove. Located in Fremont, the Rutherford B. Hayes Home is a thirty-three room mansion and is centerpiece of the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center in Fremont, Ohio. The home, library and museum, and tomb are located in a twenty-five-acre park called Spiegel Grove. The museum of the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center was started by the President's second son, Colonel Webb Cook Hayes, and includes exhibit galleries (two floors), research library (one floor), and storage areas (four floors) comprising 52,640 square feet. The museum also includes 13,000 artifacts, 1,785 of them on permanent display, to illustrate the life and times of Rutherford B. Hayes, the 19th President of the United States.

The Hayes Presidential Center provides the following programs and services:

- ] An active school visitation program that brings 10,000 school children into the Center and Hayes Home each year. Each group receives a tour by a well-prepared docent.
- ] A Library containing a rich collection of published and unpublished sources that annually attract nearly 5,000 researchers and genealogists who use the collections.
- ] An active program of concerts, lectures, and other functions that entertain and educate, including the Civil War reenactments).
- ] Active volunteers assisting in every area of the Museum, Library, and Historic Site.

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

### 3. Layman Law Office

**Address:** 212 W First Street

**Governing Body:** n/a

**Revenue Streams:** n/a

**Public or Privately Owned:** private

### 4. Colonel Tom Henricks Memorial



- ] Indexing programs for local newspapers and other sources of value to the historian and genealogist readily accessible on the computer and computer-generated hard copy.
- ] Publication of The Statesman, a quarterly newsletter containing information about the Center, its collections, and programs.

Historic preservation is only one aspect of the tourism industry in Sandusky County. The Sandusky County Convention and Visitor Bureau is a fully staffed organization located just south of the US 20 bypass in Fremont at the SR 53 North intersection. Numerous studies have shown how tourism affects the national economy. In 2011, the travel industry generated \$1.9 trillion in economic output, with \$40 billion in the state of Ohio. This is a growing component of Ohio's economy. Every dollar spent promoting Ohio tourism returned \$14 in State and local taxes, with 443,000 jobs being supported by Ohio's travel and tourism industry. This represents 8.7 percent of Ohio jobs. Tourism is a revenue generator for Ohio.

With tourism being such a large economic factor, Sandusky County needs to plan to continue to be part of this industry. Some of the areas of concentration should be natural resources and recreation and historic preservation and heritage. The mission of the Sandusky County Convention and Visitors Bureau is simply stated: *"To enhance the economic profile of Sandusky County by marketing the area as a destination to travelers inside and outside the county."*

## **STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Develop a Historic Preservation Plan** Meets Historic Preservation Objectives: 1-7

A historic preservation plan is a statement of the community's goals for its historic properties and the actions it will take to reach those goals. It is most effective when it is a component of a community's master plan and is coordinated with other policies for housing, economic development, transportation, et cetera. Communities that do not have a master plan, or that will not be revising it soon, can create a separate historic preservation plan to serve in the interim.

The plan at its best, however, is more than a written document. It should be a continuous process that brings together citizens and interest groups and helps them identify where their diverse goals complement historic preservation and how they can work together to preserve their local heritage.

Historic preservation planning should include these factors:

- ] The history and inventory of historic properties of the community. In order to plan for historic properties, a community must identify them first. A thorough and up-to-date survey of historic properties is critical. Keep in mind that your community's history is found not only in architectural

centerpieces, but also in middle and working class neighborhoods, modest commercial rows, industrial structures, cemeteries, farm buildings, bridges, landscapes, and in the often-hidden archaeological value of unassuming structures and vacant land.

- ] A map and address list should be developed of known historic properties from surveys, local historic districts and landmarks, and the National Register of Historic Places.
- ] Rehabilitation Tax Credit computerized log: This log lists all the development projects in Ohio that successfully used the federal historic rehabilitation tax credit. It contains property names, addresses, developers, owners, project costs, and the use of the property before and after rehabilitation—all of which can be searched by county, region, or the entire state and used for marketing local historic properties.
- ] Agriculture Chronology and Bibliography: This is the first in a series of references the Ohio Historic Preservation Office is beginning to develop about broad themes in Ohio's history. The chronology lists pertinent events, people, legislation, technologies, and other factors that contributed to Ohio's agricultural development; the annotated bibliography provides sources for further research. They are meant to assist local governments, state agencies, Ohio Historic Preservation Office staff, and others in evaluating the historic significance of properties.
- ] Work with your local government to plan carefully for the future of the places, which are evidence of your community's heritage. If you have a historic preservation plan, make sure it is up-to-date and is being implemented.
- ] Establish local historic preservation legislation. Protect your historic resources through an ordinance or resolution, or make sure the existing legislation is adequate and that the properties that need protection have indeed been designated as historic.
- ] Examine local zoning. Make sure the zoning for historic areas encourages their survival, rather than their replacement with parking lots or commercial strips.
- ] Document your community's historic properties. Work with your local historical society, preservation organization, or other citizen groups to conduct surveys or develop National Register nominations.
- ] Encourage your local government to participate in the Certified Local Government (CLG) program. As a Certified Local Government, your community will be eligible to apply for federal matching grant funds for planning and other preservation activities.

## **5.2 Utilize historic preservation tools and incentives** Meets Historic Preservation Objectives: 2, 5, and 6

**Certified Local Government Program**

Jointly administered by National Park Service in partnership with the State of Ohio Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the CLG Program is a model and cost-effective local, State, and federal partnership that promote historic preservation at the grassroots level across the nation. Working closely with such national organizations as the National Association of Preservation Commissions, the CLG program seeks to develop and maintain local historic preservation programs that will influence the zoning and permitting decisions critical to preserving historic properties. It also ensures the broadest possible participation of local governments in the national historic preservation program while maintaining preservation standards established by the Secretary of the Interior. By being listed as a “Certified Local Government”, communities in Sandusky County can qualify for dollars to perform a wide array of historic preservation efforts. Since 1985, more than \$40 million in HPF grants has been allocated to the Certified Local Government program; and 1,228 local governments currently participate in the program nationwide.

**Historic Preservation Easements**

A preservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement that protects a significant historic, archaeological, or cultural resource. An easement provides assurance to the owner of a historic or cultural property that the property's intrinsic values will be preserved through subsequent ownership. In addition, the owner may obtain substantial tax benefits. An entire historic structure or just the facade or interior may qualify. Historic preservation easements also are used to protect a historic landscape, battlefield, traditional cultural place, or archaeological site. Under the terms of an easement, a property owner grants a portion of, or interest in, her property rights to an organization whose mission includes historic preservation. Once recorded, an easement becomes part of the property's chain of title and is tied to the property in perpetuity, thus binding not only the owner who grants the easement but all future owners as well.

According to the IRS an easement must either preserve a certified historic structure or a historically important land area to qualify for federal income and estate tax deductions. The IRS definition of a certified historic structure includes any building, structure, or land area that is either listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or located in a registered historic district and certified by the U.S. Department of the Interior as being historically significant to the district.

**Historic Preservation Tax Incentives**

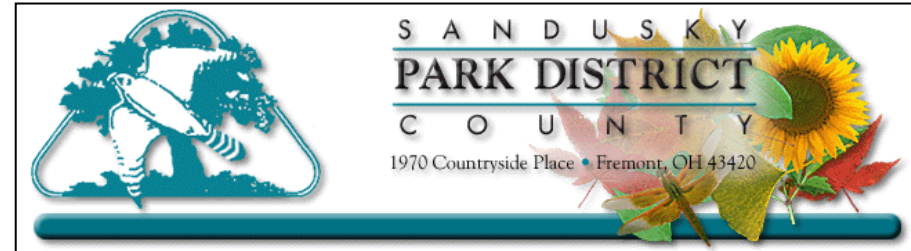
The Federal historic preservation tax incentives program (the 20% credit) is jointly administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior and the Department of the Treasury. The 20% rehabilitation tax credit applies to any project that the Secretary of the Interior designates a certified rehabilitation of a certified historic structure. The 20% credit is available for properties rehabilitated for commercial, industrial, agricultural, or rental residential purposes, but it is not available for properties used exclusively as the owner's private residence. To be eligible for the 20% rehabilitation tax credit, a project must also meet the following basic tax requirements of the Internal Revenue Code:

- The building must be depreciable. That is, it must be used in a trade or business or held for the production of income. It may be used for offices, for commercial, industrial or agricultural enterprises, or for rental housing. It may not serve exclusively as the owner's private residence.
- The rehabilitation must be substantial. That is, during a 24-month period selected by the taxpayer, rehabilitation expenditures must exceed the greater of \$5,000 or the adjusted basis of the building and its structural components. The adjusted basis is generally the purchase price, minus the cost of land, plus improvements already made, minus depreciation already taken. Once the substantial rehabilitation test is met, all qualified expenditures, including those incurred outside of the measuring period, qualify for the credit.
- If the rehabilitation is completed in phases, the same rules apply, except that a 60-month measuring period applies. This phase rule is available only if: (1) there is a set of architectural plans and specifications for all phases of the rehabilitation, and (2) it can reasonably be expected that all phases of the rehabilitation will be completed.
- The property must be placed in service and returned to use. The rehabilitation tax credit is generally allowed in the taxable year the rehabilitated property is placed in service.
- The building must be a certified historic structure when it is placed in service; if it is not yet a certified historic structure at that time, the owner must have requested on or before the date that the building was placed in service a determination from the NPS that the building is a certified historic structure, and have a reasonable expectation that the determination will be granted.
- Qualified rehabilitation expenditures include costs associated with the work undertaken on the historic building, as well as architectural and engineering fees, site survey fees, legal expenses, development fees, and other construction-related costs, if such costs are added to the basis of the property and are determined to be reasonable and related to the services performed. They do not include costs of acquiring or furnishing the building, new additions that expand the existing building, new building construction, or parking lots, sidewalks, landscaping, or other facilities related to the building.

In addition to the federal program, The Ohio Development Services Agency administers an **Ohio Historic Tax Credit** program as well. This program provides a 25 percent tax credit for the rehabilitation expenses to owners and lessees of historically significant buildings. A building is eligible if it is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places; contributes to a National Register Historic District, National Park Service Certified Historic District, or Certified Local Government historic district; or is listed as a local landmark by a Certified Local Government. The program is competitive and receives applications by-annually in March and September. Over eight previous funding rounds, \$290.4 million in tax credits have been approved for 141 projects to rehabilitate 191 historic buildings in 34 communities. This program can be used in tandem with Federal tax credits. For more information, contact the Development Services Agency, <http://development.ohio.gov/Urban/OHPTC/> 614/995-2292.

***PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE******SUMMARY***

Recreation and the availability of public facilities and parks has become an increasing need, as residents have demanded more healthy leisure choices. Such amenities as biking and walking/jogging trails have found their way to more park planners' drawing tables as a more fitness-conscious population makes its wants known.



The greatest work being performed in the area of open space and green space preservation is being carried out by the Sandusky County Park District, which has been charged with providing outdoor recreational opportunities countywide. The activities, facilities, and programming of the Park District are designed to complement and not compete with public and private recreation programs being carried out in virtually every municipality within the county, and by at least one township (Ballville). With cities and villages providing parks and neighborhood playgrounds and a wide variety and depth of team sports and recreational facilities, and with three townships (Ballville with three, Sandusky, and Jackson) maintaining parks as well, much of the focus of the Park District has been placed increasingly upon passive recreation in natural areas. This follows a national trend toward public demand for eco-tourism and access to natural areas.

***PLANNING ISSUES***

Recreation facility and site planning involves the same criteria as planning for virtually any other use, although some criteria, such as sensitivity to the maintenance of the natural condition of a site, may be more prominent. When planning for parks/recreation facilities and open space the following issues should be considered:

1. Compatibility of the site with adjacent and nearby uses. How will the public use of the site as a park or recreation facility impact local roadways and adjacent land uses, especially residences? How will the adjacent uses adversely impact users' enjoyment of the facility?
2. The "fit" of the specific site and facility within Overall Park district planning. Is the site planned within a larger "greenway" or belt? Does it complement other activities or offer easy accessibility to a geographic area that was denied similar facilities previously?

3. Long-term maintenance. Has the Park District factored site and facility maintenance and operation into its overall budget from now on?
4. Is the site or facility accessible via safe and adequate roadways, and is safe parking of suitable capacity available to meet expected demands?
5. Is the use of the land as parkland or open space precluding a more beneficial or significantly more productive use of the land? Does the property contain special or distinctive natural features that present it as a unique opportunity for preservation as a park or open space?

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Parks and Recreation Goal: To promote the health and well-being of residents through the encouraged use of active and passive recreational outlets.

Objectives:

1. Provide a well-balanced array of recreational activities and outlets.
2. Pursue the feasibility of seeking additional revenues for the Sandusky County Park District and community park and recreation departments to expand operations and its recreational inventory.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS**

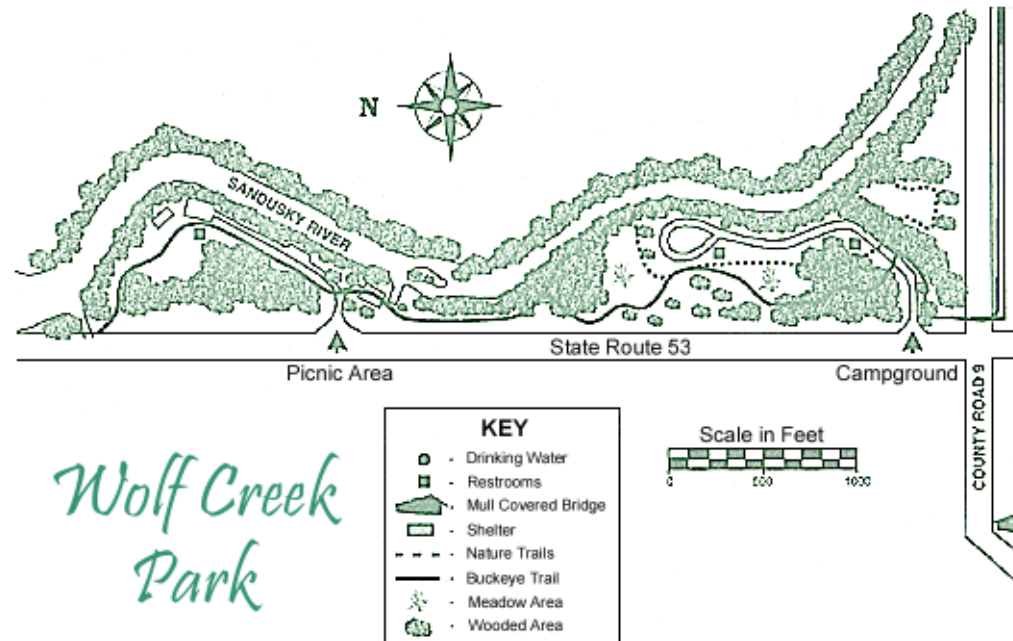
Countywide parks and recreational facilities are promoted and supervised by the Sandusky County Park District. Governed by a Board of Park Commissioners, the Sandusky County Park District operates with an annual budget of approximately \$1,400,000. The largest revenue source is a ten-year, 1.0 mil levy that was passed in 2007. This levy provided \$1,000,000 in 2011. Other sources include user fees (such as fees for scuba diving and swimming in White Star Park) and grant funds. Major facilities owned and operated by the District include:

- White Star Park, 800 acres, located ½ mile south of downtown Gibsonburg on State



Route 300, offering picnicking, hiking, swimming, fishing, camping, and scuba diving, making use of the local quarries and surface water. Facilities include a quarry with a beach and swim area, fishing platforms, boat ramp, scuba platform and access area, a nature preserve area and hiking trails. Nearly 120 acres of White Star Park have been restored to wetlands as part of the North Coast Regional Council of Park Districts Wetland Mitigation Program.

- Wolf Creek Park, located 5 miles south of Fremont on State Route 53, and offering picnicking, camping, hiking, and access to the Sandusky River. Canoeing is also offered nearby for those interested in exploring this state scenic river.
- Blue Heron reserve, a 160-acre wildlife reserve located north of Clyde on County Road 260 at U.S. Route 6, offering a view of woods reminiscent of the Great Black Swamp, and a rare fen area. Blue Heron Reserve is also home to a wetland restored through the North Coast Regional Council of Park Districts wetland mitigation program. The area can be viewed from a unique recycled plastic boardwalk.
- The North Coast Inland Trail, a regional non-motorized multi-use trail connecting Bellevue, Clyde, Fremont, Lindsey, and Elmore. Users of the 26-mile trail may be walking, running, bicycling, using wheelchairs, or in-line skating. Regionally, the North Coast Inland Trail provides important transportation and recreational benefits in Ottawa, Sandusky, Huron, and Lorain Counties.
- The Park District's main office is located in the Countryside Park on Countryside Place in the county office complex, and in addition to a variety of resources housed in the main office; the grounds include picnicking, gardens, and a paved walking path.
- The Mull Covered Bridge, one of northwest Ohio's few remaining covered bridges, is maintained by the Park District and is located on County Road 9, west of Wolf Creek Park.



- Creek Bend Farm: located on 654 South Main Street in Lindsey. This property is listed as the Overmyer-Waggoner-Roush Farm on the National Register of Historic Places and is managed as a 1930's-1950's era family farm by the Sandusky County Park District. The property contains restored timber framed barns, an historic house, a certified tree farm, two miles of Muddy Creek, restored riparian areas, and trails. Modern and historic farming techniques are demonstrated on the property.
- Ringneck Ridge Wildlife Area is located at 1818 County Road 74 in Washington Township. The 360-acre wildlife area provides public hunting and nature trail access.
- Shelley Wetland is a 17-acre wetland donated by the Paul and Kate Shelley Family and is located at the intersection of County Road 177 and York Twp. Road 292. Access to the wetland is located at the North Coast Inland Trail parking lot on Township Road 292.
- Muddy Creek Reserve is located at 1675 C.R. 157 in Riley Township. The 82-acre reserve contains forested wetlands, diked mashes and Muddy Creek access. The area is presently open for program use only.
- Decoy Marsh is a former private hunt club property located at 2700 C.R, 259 in Riley Township. The 67-acre marsh contains diked marshes and access to Green Creek for popular canoeing programs. The area is presently open for program use only.

In addition to these *facilities*, which are maintained by Park District staff, the District offers area residents and groups a variety of *programs* to better their understanding of the bounty of resources available within the county. Nature walks include night hikes, a river walk, and general nature walks. A variety of nature talks are available as well. Reference materials, including books, lesson plans, materials, compact discs, and slide shows, are also available for loan for educational purposes. The district provides some 300 such programs annually. A focus of these programs is to engage participants of all ages, especially children, to reconnect with the natural world around them.

The Park District is responding to new demands and new priorities. A major new thrust is in the area of wetland and stream restoration. An ultimate goal is to be able to control targeted corridors, limit development, and preserve their natural features.

Three areas of focus include flood plain areas along Muddy Creek in Washington Township from the Shade Road area north through Lindsey and Rice Township to the Sandusky Bay, the Sandusky River flowing through Ballville Township, Fremont, and Sandusky, Rice, and Riley Townships to the Bay, and the Green Creek corridor, flowing from southern Green Creek Township, through Riley Township into the Sandusky Bay. A fourth corridor also receiving attention in Sandusky County, within the context of a larger planning area being considered by the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments, is the Portage River corridor, which extends through the township and village of Woodville at the county's western edge.



Because of the immensity of any plan to restore or preserve riparian lands along these three to four major corridors, the Park District is adopting the strategy of taking advantage of opportunities to preserve or protect resources as they come about. One example is the preservation of the Peninsula Farms land along the Sandusky River shoreline north of Fremont, preserved in perpetuity as private land, through the use of conservation easements. The District is prepared to use any of the several available tools for land preservation when available and feasible, including conservation easements, acquisition easements, and purchase of development rights.

In some cases, control of these riparian corridors could lead to greenway and water trail development. For example, District officials envision a potential for a greenway park extending north from Fremont along the Sandusky River to the county line and a water trail connecting Decoy Marsh and the Muddy Creek Reserve.

In addition to river corridors, preservation of natural features extends to large tracts of land at the Blue Heron Reserve (some 160 acres) and the 800 acre White Star Park. The Park District is involved in an innovative project in these areas, involving the active restoration of wetlands, as required of developers who must “replace” wetlands that are forsaken in development projects, and the use of these wetlands to filter and drain runoff in a drainage area on the south side of the Village of Gibsonburg. A 120-acre location in White Star Park has been selected for this purpose. The Park District is working in conjunction with four other county districts (Erie, Lorain, Wood, and Medina) to form the North Coast Regional Council of Park Districts. This regional council was formed to facilitate regional cooperation on wetland, conservation, and trail projects.

Continued development of bikeways is viewed as a high priority over the next few years. Bikeway planning began in the late 1980’s, with the development of the Sandusky County Bicycle Plan. As the North Coast Inland Trail’s components have come together to eventually form one uninterrupted trail through northern Ohio connected to a continental trail, the vision of a trail within the county from Bellevue to Elmore has now been realized. The North Coast Inland Trail provides valuable non-motorized transportation, recreation and health benefits.

### ***STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS***

The Sandusky County Park District will continue to work to fulfill its two-pronged mission: providing accessible passive, outdoor recreational and educational opportunities that take advantage of the natural character, features, and amenities available throughout the county; and to preserve, protect, and make the public aware of those areas within the county that, because of their environmentally sensitive character, plant and animal life, geology, or other factors, should be preserved in their natural state.

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND EFFORTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:***

**5.3 When feasible, pursue other elements described in the Park District’s “Sandusky County Bicycle Plan”.** Meets Parks objectives 1 and 2.

Where possible, tie bicycle paths to scenic corridors and rivers. Develop improved bike trail linkages and routes in Fremont and Bellevue. Link the North Coast Inland Trail to Terra State Community College.

**5.4 Continue to concentrate on the use of conservation easements and partnership with conservation land trusts to hold land in perpetuity as open space.** Meets Parks objectives 1 and 2.

The Park District has initiated some activities in this realm, including the achievement of a conservation easement for Peninsula Farms along the Sandusky River north of Fremont. More information on conservation land trusts is provided in the Natural Resources chapter of this Plan.

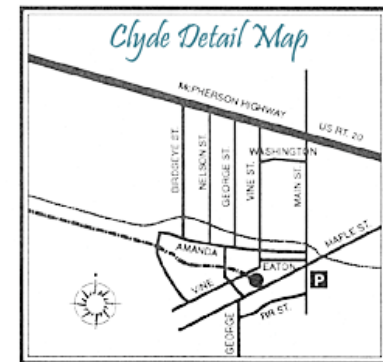
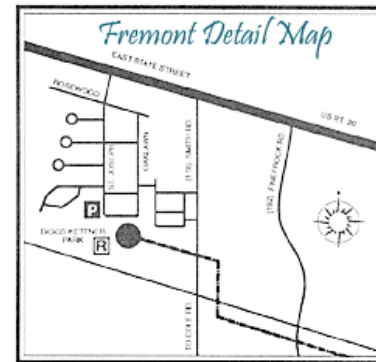
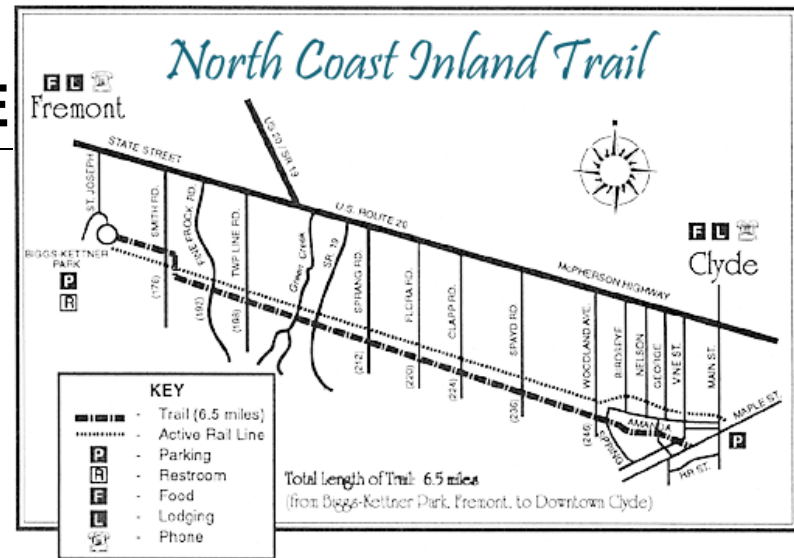
**5.5 Pursue a continued focus on the eventual development of “greenway parks”, such as the development of a greenway, extending north from Fremont along the Sandusky River.** Meets Parks objectives 1 and 2.

**5.6 Pursue development of a “Water Trail” linking Decoy Marsh and Muddy Creek Reserve via Green Creek, Muddy Creek Bay, and Muddy Creek.** Meets Parks objectives 1 and 2.

**5.7 Further the development of the Gibsonburg area as a recreational destination.** Meets Parks objectives 1 and 2.

White Star Park is already sought out as a regional venue for SCUBA diving, and the park contains the County’s only swimming beach. The emerging wetlands mitigation area provides an educational opportunity to serve as a “laboratory”. A private camping and water sports area exists within the village. Further, the quarries both in and adjacent to the village offer potential as additional recreational facilities, with passive boating and fishing, the potential for hiking trails, and walkable access via sidewalks from the village. The net effect could be a sizeable water-related destination area that could boost local businesses and help support a more active central business district and tourism/recreation-oriented business (such as bed and breakfasts, restaurants, swim and SCUBA related retail) in Gibsonburg.

**5.8 Continue to coordinate park and recreation facility and programming planning with municipal and township recreation programs within the county, to ensure that programming is complementary and not redundant.** Meets parks objectives 1 and 2.



It is apparent that the current system promotes a “continuum” of services from active participant sports, community centers with planned activities, and neighborhood pocket parks in cities and villages, to the “wide open spaces” and educational naturalist programs of the park district. By continuing to ensure this continuum, county residents’ lives will continue to be enriched.

## ***EDUCATION***

### ***SUMMARY***

Education has become increasingly important in the realm of economic development and workforce development, and the quality and content of one’s education increasingly has a direct bearing on career success and financial security. Further, the education system, when responsive to the current and future needs of local employers, can provide the necessary linkage to allow youth and young adults to prepare for and enter satisfying careers within their community and county. Sandusky County is fortunate to house a continuum of education providers ranging from pre-kindergarten classes and Head Start programs, to a vocational school with locations in Fremont and Tiffin, to a growing State Community College.

### ***GOALS AND OBJECTIVES***

Education goal: To maintain a coordinated system of education throughout the County with a consistently positive reputation for providing all students with a solid preparation for college, careers, and business success.

Objectives:

1. Support the development of new educational facilities when their location is consistent with good planning principles, need has been established, and construction design offers long-term compatibility with technology and education needs.
2. Support programming throughout the County that is coordinated, reduces redundancy and inefficiency among school systems, and responds to known needs of employers within the County and with national employment trends.

### ***EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS***

Sandusky County's school systems have been fortunate to have undertaken numerous improvements to their building stock, including a number of new schools, or plans for new facilities, throughout the County. A review of the County's school systems reveals:

In the **Bellevue City School District**, two new school buildings broke ground in the spring of 2011 and are ready for use. The new Middle School, housing grades 6-8, and a new elementary school housing preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, opened at the beginning of the 2012-13 school year. The district will now have three school buildings, with elementary grades now consolidated in a facility within the City.

In the **Clyde-Green Springs District**, construction was completed in August 2010 on a new middle school in Clyde and a new elementary school on the site of the former school in Green Springs. Additions and renovations were also made to the Clyde elementary school and the Clyde High School. All four buildings have earned LEED Gold certification from the United States Green Building Council, and the buildings feature the latest in green construction and energy conservation strategies.

In the **Fremont City Schools**, the PK-12 program is provided in seven elementary buildings (Atkinson, Croghan, Hayes, Lutz, Otis, Stamm, Washington), one middle school (the new Fremont Middle School at 1250 North Street) and the High School.

**Gibsonburg's** local school district completed a new school campus on the south side of the Village during the last decade.

The **Woodmore Local Schools** serve the area including Woodville and Elmore (in Ottawa County, to the north). The district will be building a new pre-k through grade 8 school in Woodville, and this will be completed by fall 2015. In 2004 the district will be placing a levy on the ballot for a new auditorium. The current auditorium will be demolished with the old elementary building.

The **Catholic School System in Fremont** has consolidated from a group of three separate pre-K through 8 schools and a 9-12 high school into three campus locations: Sacred Heart (pre-K-3), Saint Joseph (4-8, and SJCC (9-12). Saint Ann's school was closed but is being considered for future use. All current facilities are wireless and include the use of laptops, iPads, and Smart board technology.

Students at the Catholic Schools can attend classes provided by Terra at the SJCC campus, and eighth grade students can take high school credit classes in Algebra I, Science, and Spanish I. The schools also provide access to on-line classes offered through the Toledo Diocese and other vendors. The system requires students to shadow at least two careers and locations prior to graduation, helping solidify career choices. The system is in its third year of consolidation and is looking at long range plans, which could include new buildings or renovations.

**Vanguard-Sentinel Career Center** is located in Fremont, with a second facility to the south in Tiffin. This institution works to maintain a curriculum that is responsive to the needs of area employers, by providing class work and experience in locally and nationally demanded occupations and professions. The Vanguard Tech Center is a 205,000 square foot state-of-the-art Career and Technical training facility located on Cedar Street in Fremont. The Vanguard Tech Center campus offers over 25 college and career training programs for high school sophomores, juniors and seniors as well as seven full-time adult education training programs.

Sandusky County and Fremont are also fortunate to complete the spectrum of educational opportunities with the presence of **Terra State Community College**, adjacent to SR 53 on Fremont's western edge. New facilities added in recent years have included the Skilled Trades Facilities for existing programs in power technologies, welding, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), built in 2010 at a cost of \$3.7 million. The facility also contains computer and smart technology classrooms. Another renovation has been the Marsha S. Bordner Arts and Health Technologies Center for Terra's academic programs in fine arts, music, clinical laboratory science, health information technology, medical assisting, nursing, and physical therapist assistant. The renovation cost \$5.3 million and was completed in 2011.

New programming includes the above topics covered in the Arts and Health Technologies Center, as well as hospitality management, and the following certificate programs: Allied Health with certificate in coding and phlebotomy; computer systems with certification in PC Technician and network technician; Digital Arts and Media Design with certificate in Digital Publishing; Marketing with a degree in Sales; Office Administration with a certificate in Medical Clerk, and Robotics/Mechatronics with certificate in Robotics.

Numerous significant plans are underway at Terra, and are included within a recently completed strategic plan. Many of the plans involve the physical campus and its environment, as well as land use decisions to improve the value of the campus and location. Terra is developing a main entrance road off State Route 53 that will cost approximately \$2.2 million, allowing for campus expansions into housing, retail businesses, restaurants, a performing arts center, conferencing center, and field house and training center. Expanding infrastructure to the west of the campus with city water and sanitation will be necessary for the planned retail and housing expansion. Further, the campus is interested in developing a new ring road around the campus to improve on egress in and out of the campus.

Specific plans include renovation of Building G into a conference center at a cost estimated at \$2.2 million assisting Hospitality Management students in preparing for event planning and setups. Renovation of Building B for Hospitality Management with new energy efficient mechanical systems in 2013 will cost some \$3.4 million. In 2013 through 2015, Terra intends to develop retail and housing/retail/restaurants with a cost between \$5 and \$15 million. In 2014, Terra hopes to develop a Student Activities Sports Center from expansion of Building C at a cost of \$11.5 million. This will assist the college in developing sport programs and student activities. Future years will see expansion of academic programs with two buildings at a total cost of \$28 million.

**Library Services:** The Birchard Public Library of Sandusky County is a free public library, which seeks to meet the information, education, and recreation needs of the residents of Sandusky County, to provide easy and equal access to these materials in their variety of forms, and to develop broad community awareness of the Library and its services. These library facilities are located in Fremont, Green Springs, Gibsonburg, and Woodville. Library facilities are also located in Clyde and Bellevue. With changing communications and research technology, libraries are evolving to best meet the needs of their public, especially in the realm of computer technology and digital media. It is recommended that communities

continue to support and be encouraged to patronize their libraries, and to offer input regarding public needs and wants, in order that these community assets can maximize their usefulness, meet significant needs, and enrich the lives of community residents.

### **STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The education system is actually a set of disparate entities working to fulfill their specific missions. Education will serve its student “clients” best when it offers training in subjects and skills that will forward the employability and success of those “clients”. Local officials should promote physical improvements to school facilities, as well as curriculum changes and updated programming to fulfill this need.

The initial 2003 plan did not incorporate any specific strategies regarding education facilities or planning. This update adds the following general considerations, which should be included when proposing any new facility.

**5.9 Support the development of affordable new or improved physical facilities that further the mission of the County’s educational institutions and improve their ability to fulfill that mission.** Meets Education objectives 1 and 2.

**5.10 Support program and curriculum development that encourages efficiencies of delivery, minimization of redundancy among entities, and responsiveness of curriculum in meeting significant employer needs that will maximize students’ career and employment potential and choice within Sandusky County.** Meets education objectives 1 and 2.

**5.11 Consider ways in which to maximize the use of school facilities as community centers and assets.** School facilities can offer more than daytime education – they can host meetings of community organizations, “open gym” periods, community events, concerts, and other functions. Meets education objectives 1 and 2.

**5.12 Include the following planning considerations in any school facilities location decision:**

- Placing schools close to community centers when possible, to minimize commuting time and automobile usage, increase accessibility, increase opportunities to collaborate with local organizations, cultural groups, arts centers, and recreational facilities, and maximize the proportion of children who can use safe routes to school by themselves.
- Site characteristics, including shape of the site, noise from neighboring uses and roadways, soil conditions, utilities, access to roadways of sufficient capacity, sunny and shaded space, protection from off-site intrusion, accommodation of pre- and post-school traffic, and compatibility with adjacent and neighboring land uses.
- Safety considerations, such as visual contact and no blind spots within buildings, minimization of need for students to cross roadways, fencing for protection from traffic, buffering from nearby inhabited buildings, adequate site lighting, and design of playgrounds and other exterior activity centers with visibility from the building interior.

**5.13 Integrate the growth strategy of Terra State Community College with the surrounding community, including transportation system coordination.** Meets education objectives 1 and 2.

### ***HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE***

#### ***SUMMARY***

There are many facets to safeguarding the health and safety of a community's residents, far more than can be included within a planning document such as this. However, some aspects of health and safety are tied to land use, transportation, or utility planning, as well as the physical layout of a community. The section represents an attempt to briefly capture those aspects, which include the location and accessibility of medical facilities and programs that are responsive to priority health needs, encouragement of new development that promotes healthy lifestyles (such as encouraging walkability and accommodating bicycle use), the coordinated provision of safety services throughout the County, and proactive provision for disasters or hazards.

#### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**Health and Safety Goal:** To promote and encourage healthy lifestyles through community design, local programming, dissemination of educational information, and the promotion and development of superior health care facilities.

**Objectives:**

1. Incorporate planning and development elements that promote and facilitate healthy lifestyle choices, including walkable neighborhoods, pedestrian and bicycle safety, trails and green space, and other provisions for passive recreation.
2. Promote and publicize programming by local communities, agencies, and health care providers that offers education and information pertaining to healthy lifestyle choices.
3. Promote and publicize the availability of a wide array of both general and specialized health care providers throughout Sandusky County, and support their efforts to develop new facilities and capabilities in response to local needs.

**PLANNING ISSUES**

The Healthy Cities and Communities movement in planning is based on the goal of improving the health and quality of life for residents of cities and communities. The movement emphasizes the importance of how one lives and the lifestyle choices one makes. A 1988 paper for the World Health Organization<sup>1</sup> identified eleven characteristics of a healthy city:

1. A clean, safe physical environment of high quality (including housing quality).
2. An ecosystem that is stable now and sustainable in the long term.
3. A strong, mutually supportive and nonexploitative community.
4. A high degree of participation and control by the public over decisions affecting their lives, health, and well-being.
5. The meeting of basic needs (for food, water, shelter, income, safety, and work) for all the city's people.
6. Access to a wide variety of experiences and resources, with the chance for a wide variety of contact, interaction, and communication.
7. A diverse, vital, and innovative city economy.
8. The encouragement of connectedness with the past, and the cultural and biological heritage of city dwellers and with other groups and individuals.
9. A forum that is compatible with and enhances the preceding characteristics.
10. An optimal level of appropriate public health and sick care services accessible to all.
11. High health status (high levels of positive health and low levels of disease).

The planning implications of the foregoing movement or emphasis on healthy communities can lead to such physical planning elements as making neighborhoods more walkable, taming (or calming) traffic to reduce pedestrian and bicycle injuries, connecting open space using greenways or linear parks, and planting street trees to provide shade and reduce heat. Further studies have led to the promotion of increased development densities to create walkable neighborhoods, mixed-use development, and bicycle and pedestrian systems. Increased attention in planning circles is being paid to the link between the built environment, physical activity, and health.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS:****The 2009-2010 Sandusky County Complete Community Health Assessment**

The Sandusky County Health District conducted a Community Health Assessment during 2009 and 2010, collecting health-related data for adult (19+), youth (12-18) and children (0-11) participating in a survey. The assessment began by listing top types of death in the United States: heart

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard Duhal and Trevor Hancock, "Promoting Health in the Urban Context", World Health Organization Healthy Cities Papers, No.1, 1988.



disease, cancers, stroke, chronic lower respiratory tract disease, unintentional injuries, and so forth. In Sandusky County between 2006 and 2008, leading causes were heart disease (23%), cancers (23), stroke (6), chronic lower respiratory disease (6), and accidents and unintentional injuries (6). The second table indicated “actual causes of death, which are usually behaviors in which Americans engage (or other behaviors in which they do not engage but should). The nine causes and their percentage of incidence are: tobacco (18.1%), poor diet and physical inactivity (15.2), alcohol consumption (3.5), microbial agents (3.1), toxic agents (2.3), motor vehicle (1.8), firearms (1.2), sexual behavior (0.8), and illicit drug use (0.7). The assessment notes that “the leading causes of premature loss of life in America are for to personal behaviors which cause chronic diseases and injuries, not because of inadequate numbers of medical specialists or hospitals.”

The Sandusky County Health Assessment found that 59 percent of adults had visited a doctor for a routine visit in the past year, and less than two-thirds (62 percent) had visited a dentist or dental clinic in the past year. Over two-thirds (69%) of adults were overweight or obese, and 17 percent of youth were identified as obese. Nineteen percent of adults were current smokers and 24 percent were considered former smokers; 15 percent of youth (12-18) were smokers, increasing to 22 percent of those aged 17-18. Regarding alcohol consumption, eight percent of adults were considered frequent drinkers; 53 percent of Sandusky County youth drank at least one drink of alcohol in their life; over one-fourth (27%) of youth and 47 percent of those aged 17-18 had at least one drink in the past thirty days. In 2009, seven percent of the adults had used marijuana in the past six months, and five percent had used medication not prescribed for them or took more than prescribed to feel good or high and/or more active or alert. Thirteen percent of youth had used marijuana at least once in the past 30 days. About 31 percent of women and 36 percent of men had high blood pressure, and 25 percent of women and 27 percent of men had high blood cholesterol.

In 2010, Sandusky County parents reported their 0-11 year old child slept an average of 10.4 hours per night. Thirty percent of parents reported they read to their child almost every day. Fully 97 percent of parents reported their neighborhood was always (57%) or usually (40%) safe, 28 percent reported someone smoked in their home, 37 percent of adults kept a firearm in or around their house (39% for hunting, 27% for protection, 21% for multiple reasons), 5 percent reported an unlocked firearm, and three percent reported a loaded firearm in their home. Twelve percent of parents reported their child had moved to a new address three or more times. Only forty-one percent of Sandusky County families reported eating a meal together every day of the week, somewhat less than the Ohio (55%) and United States (58%) proportions. Sixty-two percent of the County’s children age 0-5 were reported to attend religious services at least once a month, a much larger percentage than the Ohio (11%) and U.S. (13%) percentages.

The assessment noted that, based on standards of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the County had a shortage of healthcare professionals in the area of primary care, dental, and mental health.

When Sandusky County adults were asked what programs they have looked for for themselves or a loved one, demand was highest for the following programs: weight control (14%), depression or anxiety (13%), smoking (7%), alcohol abuse (2%), and drug abuse (2%). Further, adults looked for

the following programs to assist in care for the elderly for themselves or a loved one: in-home care (3%), out-of-home placement (2%), assisted living program (2%), and temporary or overnight care (1%).

About two-fifths (42 percent) of Sandusky County adults in 2009 reported they were limited in some way because of a major impairment or health problem. Ten percent of adults needed help handling their routine needs such as everyday household chores, shopping, and doing necessary business.

Twenty-two percent of adults reported they had been a witness to domestic violence, 4 percent were threatened to be abused, and 7 percent were abused (71 percent of whom were abused by their spouse). Twelve percent of adults needed help meeting their general daily needs such as food, clothing, shelter, or paying utility bills, and ten percent attempted to contact a social service agency for assistance.

### HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

For a relatively small rural county, Sandusky County is endowed with a large number of health care facilities. There are two primary care hospitals, and one longer-term hospital. **Memorial Health Care System** (formerly Memorial Hospital) has existed for decades in Fremont, and has become part of the ProMedica health care network, which will extend its capability and reach in assisting patients and linking services with other ProMedica institutions. The Memorial Health Care System, as it is known today, reported 2,311 inpatient admissions, 80,976 inpatient and outpatient visits, 4,444 surgical procedures, and over 1.1 million lab tests in 2011. MHCS made \$4.2 million in capital investments over the past year, including a child and adult specialty clinic, purchase of new imaging equipment, purchasing an automated medication dispensing system in the recently renovated Emergency department, renovating and expanding the rehabilitation area in the Clyde Physical medicine location, and upgrades to the information technology systems. The hospital campus has been expanded with the construction of a surgery center, and in 2007, the Herbert-Perna Center for Physical Health, a 29,000 square foot facility housing physical and occupational health services. A number of ancillary medical facilities and offices have been developed within close proximity.

The **Bellevue Hospital**, on the City's far west side, accepted its first patients on March 13, 2005. The 129,000 square foot facility is located on 109 acres, and encompasses new equipment, programs, and services, including new MRI and CT scanners, an Occupational Health program, and expansion of services in the Specialty Care Clinic with full-time cardiology services. The former building was torn down and converted to green space, with three medical buildings in the area remaining. The hospital has over 450 employees and some 119 physicians on the active and courtesy medical staffs.

The third facility, **Elmwood at the Springs**, formerly St. Francis Health Care Centre, came under new management with its purchase by Elmwood Centers, Inc., which operates assisted housing and a nursing home to the immediate east. The 35 acre health care campus was combined with Elmwood Centers' 12 acre senior living campus, creating a 47 acre health and wellness campus. Elmwood Healthcare Center at the Springs

provides specialized care services for patients requiring extended medical care and rehabilitation. Those with catastrophic or acute illnesses and injuries can work toward recovery. The average length of stay is 25 days. The facility is a Long-Term Acute Care Hospital. Inpatient dialysis and wound care specialists are available.

#### STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, planning decisions should take into consideration the impact of a decision, design, or development on community health. Including how they conform to the “eleven characteristics of a healthy city” cited above.

**5.14 Support and promote program offerings that address changing health-endangering behavior that leads to longer and healthier lives for Sandusky County residents.** Meets community health objective 1, 2.

**5.15 Support the siting and development of new, accessible health care facilities that serve acknowledged needs and meet locational criteria such as local zoning and access codes.** Meets community health objective 3.

**5.16 Endorse and encourage new development that contributes to one or more of the characteristics of a healthy city or community.** Meets community health objective 1.

#### *PUBLIC SAFETY*

##### EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

##### Police, Fire, and EMS Service

The unincorporated portion of Sandusky County and some smaller Villages (Helena, Burgoon, and Lindsey) are policed by a county sheriff, assisted by a deputized staff. Every other municipality within the county maintains its own police force. Fremont and Bellevue have full-time staffs of professional fire fighters. Volunteer departments in the rest of the county are trained through state-sponsored fire-fighting clinics. Mutual assistance agreements between departments provide additional support if the need arises.

A map of the County’s fire districts is included in this chapter. The County is covered by a total of eighteen fire districts, of which one (Gibsonburg/Helena) is a dual response zone. The listed fire departments, some of which are based in adjacent counties, are (from west to east): Woodville, Gibsonburg, Bradner, Risingsun, Kansas, Bettsville, Helena, Lindsey, Elmore, Portage, Sandusky Township, Ballville Township, Old Fort, Green Springs, Clyde, Townsend Township, and Bellevue.

Similarly, the County is blanketed by a number of EMS units. Most of the County is served by Sandusky County EMS units in Woodville, Gibsonburg, Clyde and Fremont (staged in Fremont at Fremont Fire and an EMS station on Countryside Drive), and a unit in Woodville, LS 91, that is operated by Woodville Township and supported by a tax levy approved by Woodville Township residents.. The extreme southwest corner of the County is served by Sandusky County EMS with mutual aid from either Bradner or Bettsville. Also, the area immediately surrounding and including Bellevue is served by North Central EMS based in Bellevue.

#### **Sandusky County Emergency Management Agency**

The Sandusky County Emergency Management Agency (EMA), its cooperating agencies and dedicated volunteers are committed to coordinating and providing professional mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery services that save lives, reduce injuries, economic loss and enhance recovery from disasters for the citizens of Sandusky County. The primary responsibility of the EMA is to provide mitigation (eliminating or reducing the probability of occurrence of an emergency or disaster), preparedness, response and recovery (returning all systems, both formal and informal, to normal) services that save lives, reduce injuries and economic loss, and enhance recovery from disasters.



The EMA is responsible for implementing the action steps, when necessary, for a number of planning documents, including the Emergency Radiological Procedures document, the Sandusky County HazMat Plan, the Sandusky County Emergency Operations Plan, and the county's Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan for Natural Disasters was last updated in 2009, and was prepared by a 14-member planning committee. The plan was prepared with the participation of the County Commissioners, all three cities, and five villages. Natural disasters with potential for adversely impacting Sandusky County and the vulnerability of critical facilities were identified, and include the following: Class I dam failure, drought/extreme heat, earthquake, flood, hailstorm, land subsidence, severe winter storm, tornado, and windstorm. With regard to flooding, four waterways were identified as of most concern: Sandusky River, Portage River, Big Muddy Creek, and Raccoon Creek; four additional grouped waterways of concern were the Lake Erie area (including Muddy Creek Bay and Sandusky Bay), Toussaint Creek area (including Toussaint Creek and Sugar Creek), Muskellunge Creek area (including Muskellunge Creek and Little Muddy Creek), and Green Creek area (including Green Creek and South Creek).

Multi-Hazard Goals within the plan include enhancing public information and educational programs for both pre-disaster and post-disaster situations; strengthening existing partnerships among all public and private sectors within and beyond Sandusky County; integrating, as necessary, mitigation components within existing Sandusky County plans whose provisions are influenced by the mitigation of natural disasters; identifying and pursuing opportunities for funding of mitigation projects; and solidifying mitigation initiatives directed toward critical facilities (schools, medical facilities,

emergency services, and others). Specific hazard goals include enhancing early warning systems for tornados to maximize public notification, and minimizing flood losses to structures and properties within Sandusky County.

#### Sandusky County Emergency Response Team (HAZMAT)

This team made up of twenty-two volunteer men and women was formed in 1995 in cooperation with Chemical Waste Management (Vickery Environmental, Inc.) located in Townsend Township. This team aids and assists area law enforcement, fire departments and emergency medical services in the event of hazardous materials incidents, biological events, weapons of mass destruction, etc. This highly trained and equipped unit is centrally located on the northeast side of Fremont and is dispatched by the communications division of the Sandusky County Sheriff's Department.

#### **STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Sandusky County EMA has highlighted the following as specific projects to be pursued in order to best mitigate, prepare, and respond to disasters. Since they are already included within that agency's planning, listing them as goals or strategies that are specific to this plan would be redundant; they are included below for reference purposes.

- Install a county-wide communication system, and migrate the system to the statewide Multi-Area Radio Communications System (MARCS).
- Continue to install or replace tornado sirens in strategic locations throughout the County, to provide coverage of the entire County.
- In the next update to the Natural Disaster Mitigation Plan, include additional materials in order to further develop it as an All-Hazards mitigation plan.
- Prepare for a "next generation" 911 system, including wireless capability.
- Improve safety concerns at railroad crossings throughout the County, including installation of signals and gates wherever financially feasible, and advocate for grade separations at critical locations such as downtown Fremont.