

Pleasant Township

Comprehensive Plan

Franklin County, Ohio

Rural Character · Safe Transportation · Environmental Protection



 **Franklin County**
Where Government Works
Commissioners
Paula Brooks
Marilyn Brown
John O'Grady



Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan

Rural Character · Safe Transportation · Environmental Protection



Commissioners

Paula Brooks

Marilyn Brown

John O'Grady

Adopted June 9, 2009

Pleasant Township Board of Trustees

Keith Goldhardt, *Chairman*

Nancy Hunter

Dale Worthington

Paula Wilkins, *Fiscal Officer*

Cover photos by Angi Beer

Produced by:



Economic Development & Planning

James Schimmer, Director

R. Lee Brown, Planning Administrator

150 South Front Street
FSL Suite 10
Columbus, Ohio 43215-7104

Tel. 614-462-3094

Fax 614-462-7155

www.franklincountyohio.gov/edp

Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan

Project manager

Benjamin Weiner

Project team

Louis Clayton

Devin Keithley

Brandon Mark

Elise Yablonsky

Disclaimer: We produced the maps, figures, tables and other information in this plan only for Franklin County business purposes. While we made every effort to include complete information, the maps, figures, tables and other information are not guaranteed to be accurate. The content of this plan is for reference purposes only and shouldn't be used for any survey, engineering or commercial purpose.

3/1/10 13:02

Quick Start



If you're looking for...

...start here

General overview

Overall summary

A top-to-bottom summary of this plan



Plan Summary

page 11

Just the maps

Recommendations for
future land use and transportation



Map Center

page 21

Specific information

Detailed recommendations

The plan's recommendations, organized by theme:
Preserving rural character, protecting environmental
resources and providing safe transportation



Recommendations

page 53

Acknowledgements

Pleasant Township Plan Working Committee

Mike Cordle
Georgetta Darr
Anne Dick
Bert Doddroe
Thomas Fancher
Martha Gilson
Linn Horn
Gary Mayle
Bob Mueller
Richard Paddock
Rich Ries
Lori Wade
Pat Wilson

Pleasant Township Board of Trustees

Keith Goldhardt, *Chairman*
Nancy Hunter
Dale Worthington
Paula Wilkins, *Fiscal Officer*

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Chester R. Jourdan, *Executive Director*
Amelia Costanzo
Cheri Mansperger

Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District

John R. O'Meara, *Executive Director*
Steven Studenmund

Franklin County Planning Commission

Douglas Cochran, *Chairman*
Benjamin Drake

William Flaherty
Adrienne Joly
Vincent Papsidero
Steven Salay
Wilbur Smith
R.J. Sontag
Kevin Wheeler
Nancy M. White

Franklin County Rural Zoning Commission

David Brobst, *Chairman*
Jim Daley
Robert Garvin
Joe Martin

Franklin County Board of Zoning Appeals

Gary Dever, *Chairman*
Christopher Baer
Keith Goldhardt
Timothy Guyton
Barbara Seeger

Franklin County Engineers Office

Dean C. Ringle, *County Engineer*
William Crosier
Warren Diehl
Brady Koehler
Michael Meeks
David L. Pearson
Cornell Robertson

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District

Jennifer Fish, *Director*
Emily D. Weber

Martha Gilson
David Reutter

Franklin County Sanitary Engineers

Stephen A. Renner, *Director*

Franklin County Board of Health

Susan A. Tilgner, *Health Commissioner*
Paul A. Rosile
Keith Burt
Gary Young

Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney's Office

Ron O'Brien, *County Prosecutor*
Nick A. Soulas, Jr.
William Stehle

Franklin County Public Affairs

Hanna M. Greer, *Director*

Franklin County Economic Development & Planning Department

James Schimmer, *Director*
Rollin Seward
R. Lee Brown
Matthew Brown
Louis Clayton
Scott Fulton
Anthony Hray
Devin Keithley
Brandon Mark
Jonathan White
Elise Yablonsky

In memory of Judith Reiser Edwards, former Franklin County Rural Zoning Commissioner
and dedicated Pleasant Township conservationist

Contents

1. Introduction 9

Plan summary.....	11
Planning area map.....	13
About this plan.....	15
Policy statements.....	17



2. Map Center 21

Future Land Use	23
Conservation Strategy Tiers	25
Proposed Bikeways	27
Pedestrian Priority Areas	28

3. Current Conditions 29

Background	31
Natural resources.....	33
Community facilities.....	37
Community character	43

4. Recommendations 53

Rural Character	55
Safe Transportation	63
Environmental Protection.....	69

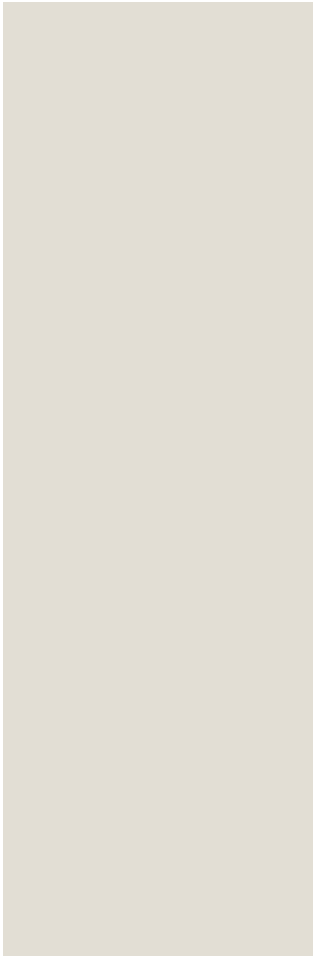
5. Implementation 73

Implementation strategies	75
Implementation tables.....	77
New development checklist.....	83

Section 1

Introduction

Plan summary	11
Planning area	13
About this plan	15
Policy statements	17



Plan Summary

Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan

Rural Character · Safe Transportation · Environmental Protection

The Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan is a guide for future land use in the township. The plan includes recommendations for the future: how land should be used, what new buildings should look like, what areas are designated for preservation. The plan also includes desired public improvements, such as gateway signs and areas that need sidewalks.

Recommendations follow the plan's themes:

Preserving Rural Character, Safe Transportation and Environmental Protection

Rural Character



Many factors combine to create rural character: how land is used, where new buildings are located and especially the presence of farms and related agricultural uses. All the recommendations aim to keep this character in the face of advancing development.

- Encouraging cluster-style design for new residential growth
- Containing commercial development to specific areas
- Using rural site design techniques for new commercial development
- Preserving agricultural land and increasing its productivity

Safe Transportation



A safe transportation system allows people to travel easily by car, foot or bicycle where appropriate. Although mostly rural, parts of Pleasant Township have denser development. All the recommendations aim to have the transportation system complement Pleasant Township's rural character. Recommendations include:

- Improving safety for pedestrians in dense areas
- Expanding the bicycle network, both on- and off-road
- Improving the safety of the road network

Environmental Protection



Pleasant Township contains 14 miles of the Big Darby Creek, one of Central Ohio's most enjoyed and celebrated natural resources. As development proceeds toward Pleasant Township, environmental protection measures are critical in preserving the Big Darby watershed's sensitive ecology. A healthy Big Darby creek will continue to be a key Pleasant Township asset. Recommendations include:

- Prioritizing preservation of highly environmentally-sensitive land
- Following recommendations of the Big Darby Accord
- Using stormwater best management practices to protect streams
- Encouraging reduction in household energy use

Plan Summary

Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan

Regional Map

Planning Area Location

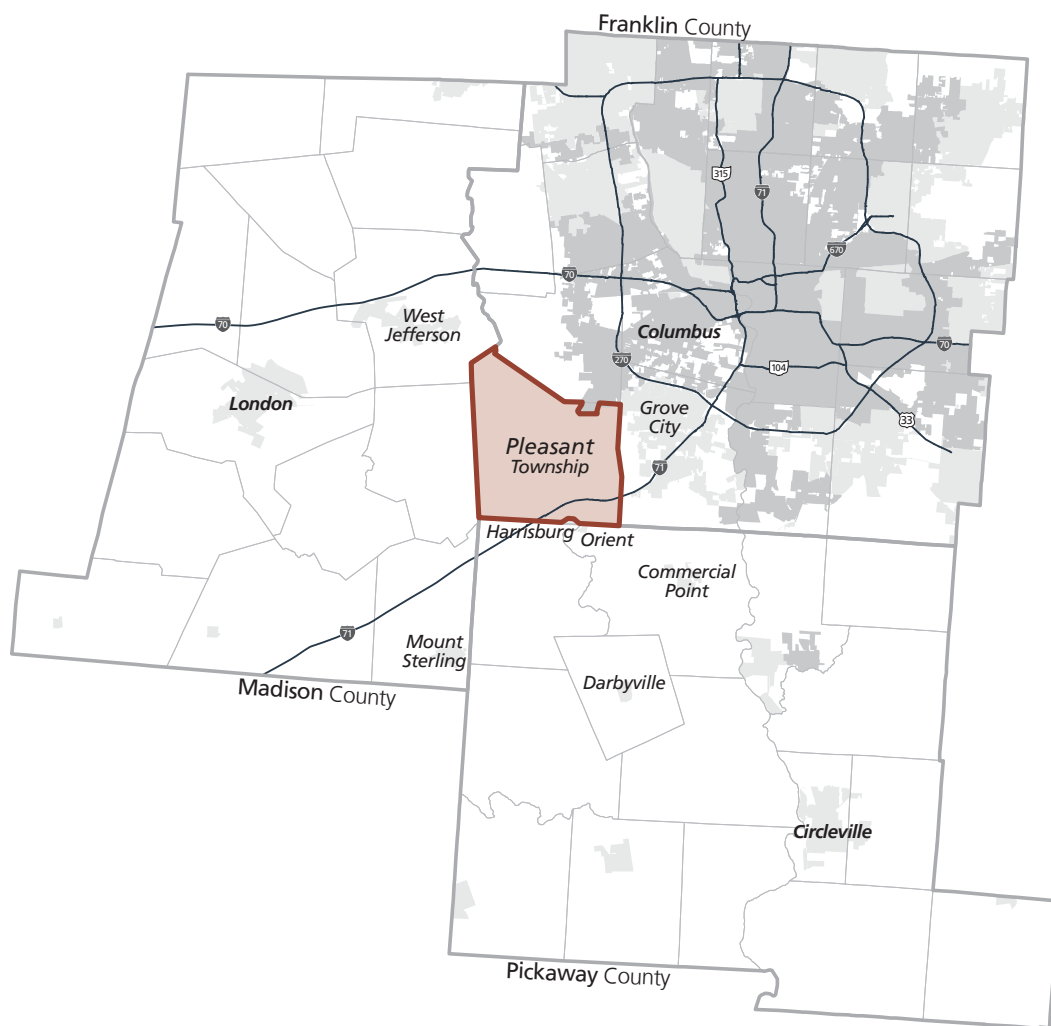


Figure 1
*Pleasant Township
is bordered by 10
jurisdictions, spread
over three counties*

Planning area

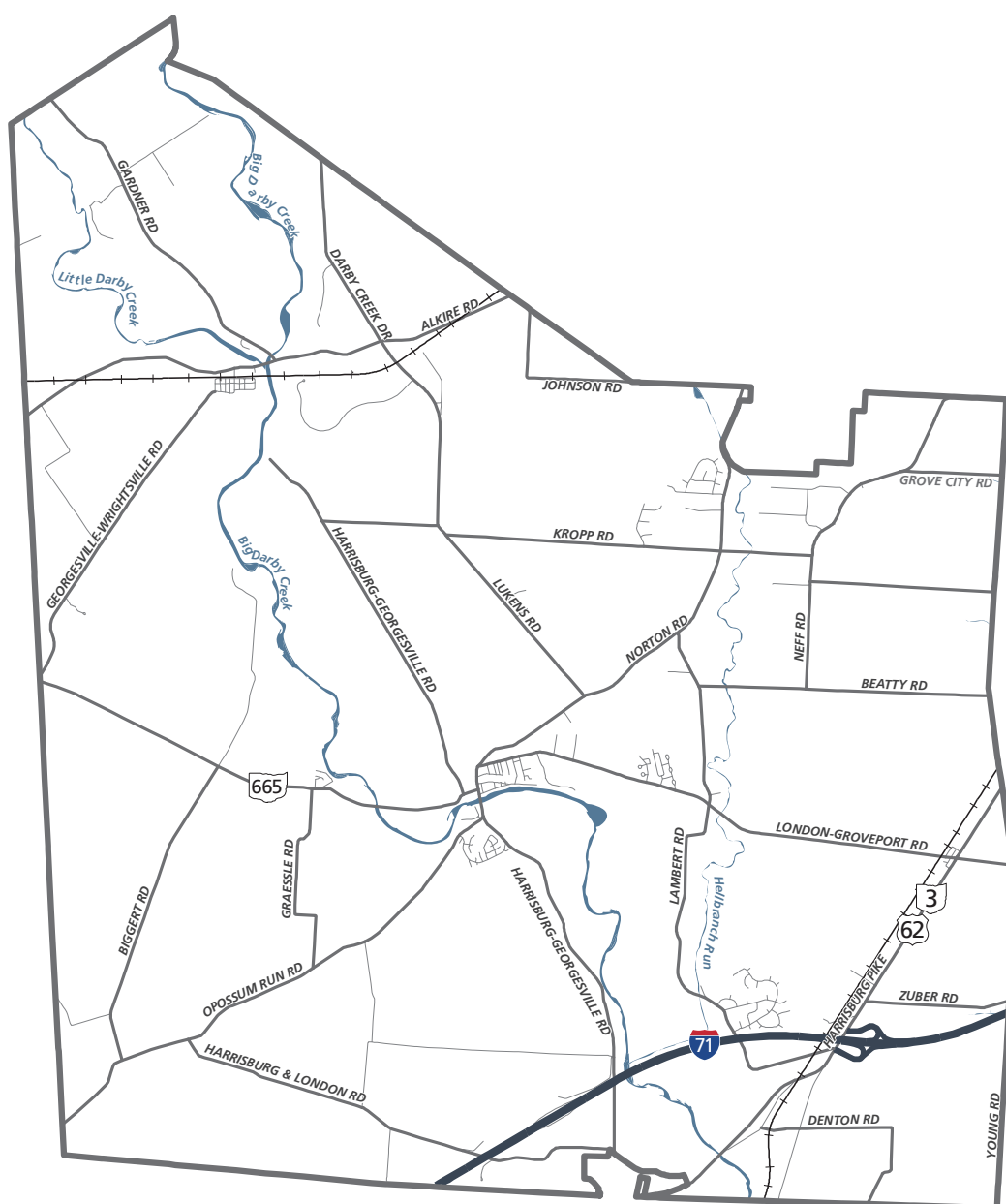


Figure 2
Pleasant Township
consists of over 43 square
miles in southwestern
Franklin County

About this plan

What is a plan?

A land use plan represents a community's desire for the future: how land is used in the future, what new buildings look like and how people travel around and through the community.

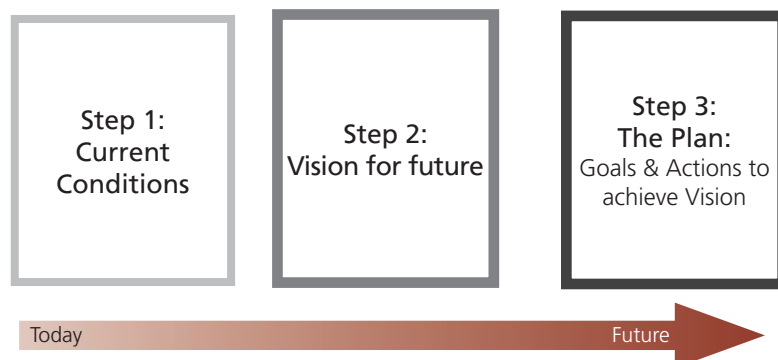
Steps in creating a plan

A plan begins by assessing a community's existing state—the current conditions of land use, building appearance, shopping areas and transportation network. The second step is deciding on a vision—a view of the community at a point 10 to 20 years in the future. The third step is developing the bridge from the present to the future: the plan's recommendations. The recommendations explain in detail how the community, starting in the present, achieves its desired vision for the future.

The recommendations: goals and action items

To develop the plan's recommendations, a community takes the desired vision for the future and divides it into smaller pieces, called goals. Each goal is a piece of the vision. Here's an example:

A community has a main street with a large shopping center. The shopping center building is in poor condition and is only half-occupied. Arriving by car is the only convenient travel method. For its land use plan, the community



imagines the future: the vision for the shopping center is an attractive, fully-occupied shopping area with housing near or above the stores and convenient transportation for pedestrians. Taking its vision, the community breaks it down into goals for each vision and action item that explain what's needed to achieve each goal.

Just like the example, the Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan sets an overall vision and divides the vision into goals. The plan then lists action steps to achieve each goal. Each goal works both separately and together with the other goals to achieve the desired future for the planning area.

Policy statements

Each of these statements describe how the Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan abides by policies, including those adopted by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners.

Sustainability Resolution

Franklin County passed resolution 683-06 stating its commitment to the mutually-compatible goals of environmental protection and economic growth. The resolution covers a range of county activities. For land use plans, the resolution states two important policy goals: practicing environmentally responsible land use and preserving natural resources. This plan complies fully with the resolution.

Environmentally responsible land use

The Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan, in concert with the Big Darby Accord, outlines conservation-style design for new development. Conservation-style ensures environmentally sensitive areas remain protected. For commercial development, the plan recommends targeting specific areas for retail and other commercial activity. Keeping strict limits on future commercial areas will discourage uncontrolled growth and unpredictable land use. Lastly, the plan targets areas west of the Big Darby Creek and south of Interstate 71 for continued agricultural production. The intent is to discourage housing developments at the fringe when

developable land is already available closer to established population centers.

Preservation of natural resources

The planning area, located mostly within the Big Darby Creek watershed, has significant natural features and environmentally-sensitive areas. This plan calls for preservation and protection of natural resources.

In addition to preservation, this plan encourages increased interaction between people and the environment. Having a closer relationship with nature allows people to appreciate the importance of green areas.

For new development, this plan calls for use of stormwater best management practices. Hard surfaces such as rooftops and parking lots create storm water runoff when it rains. Instead of untreated water rushing into streams, the runoff should soak into the ground using planted areas known as rain gardens. This helps recharge ground water and also provides attractive areas of landscaping while keeping pollutants out of the Big Darby Creek and its tributaries.

Central Ohio Green Pact

Beginning in 2007, elected leaders throughout the county have adopted the Central Ohio Green Pact, a shared commitment to making the region more sustainable. Franklin County is one of the pact's member communities. The Green

Pact addresses 10 subjects, including reducing household waste, building greener buildings and growing a green economy. One of the pledges is adopting sustainable land use policies.

From the Green Pact:

The way our communities grow can have a significant impact on the environment. We agree to examine our codes and policies to determine how we can: create walkable, bikeable communities; promote infill; protect natural resources such as trees; protect our rivers through stormwater controls; and create more green neighborhood infrastructure, such as green roofs, bio-swales and rain gardens.

The Pleasant Township plan fully complies with the green pact. The plan recommends retrofitting existing higher-density neighborhoods and commercial areas with sidewalks. The plan extends the bicycle network throughout the township for residents and visitors. The plan also takes significant steps to harmonize environmental policies with the Big Darby Accord to protect the health of the entire watershed. Among the recommendations are preserving a stream buffer area around waterways and using stormwater best management practices such as rain gardens and planted swales.

Plain language statement

We wrote this plan in plain language, with you in mind: residents, developers, public officials, planners and anyone else interested in the planning area. Plain language is a clear, straightforward way of writing.

Plain language keeps it simple, using only the necessary number of words. But, plain language isn't dumbed-down or overly-simplified English. It's a way of writing that lets a reader concentrate on the message, instead of being distracted by complicated language.

We wrote this plan in plain language to help you, the reader. Too often, government documents use long sentences and lots of jargon. Writing in plain language should allow everyone to understand what's in this plan.

For more information on plain language, visit these websites:

www.plainlanguage.gov

www.centerforplainlanguage.org

www.plainlanguagenetwork.org

Regional Connections

Regional Connections: A Regional Growth Strategy for Central Ohio is an effort to establish a plan for growth across the central Ohio region—the seven county region of Franklin, Delaware, Licking, Fairfield, Pickaway, Madison and Union—for the next 25 years.

Regional Connections was formed by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and led by a 60-member steering committee of public and private leaders.

In 2006, MORPC published the Regional Connections report, a series of alternate future development scenarios, ranging from expanding

The Central Ohio Green Pact calls for protecting rivers and using rain gardens



Franklin County



Martin County, Minnesota

sprawling outer suburbs to ultra-compact urban development centered around transit. The report gathered input from across the central Ohio region.

The report emphasizes the importance of local governments taking steps to anticipate growth. The report calls for directing the majority of new growth inward, near already-built roads and sewer lines. Growing inward reduces the development pressure and sprawl that overtakes rural communities.

Four visions

The Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan complies with the intent of Regional Connections. We show this by following Regional Connection's four visions: one for place, prosperity, people and leadership.

Vision for Place

From Regional Connections:

The vision for place is a physical environment that accommodates future growth efficiently and is distinguished by high quality neighborhoods and communities and careful stewardship of natural resources and agriculture land. Integrated-uses and more intensive utilization of land in neighborhoods and communities are evident throughout the region. Development occurs concurrent with the extension of appropriately-sized utilities and roads and development policies are based on an understanding of the economic impacts to affected local governments. Places are connected by a range of transportation choices, including roads, public and private transit, and paths for walking and biking.

This plan meets that by:

- Establishing defined areas for higher-density residential development
- Preserving environmentally-sensitive areas near streams
- Reinforcing agriculture as a valuable use of land for the long term

Vision for Prosperity

From Regional Connections:

The vision for prosperity is a diverse, healthy economy that provides job opportunities for residents and revenues to government to support the

provision of quality community services and facilities, including infrastructure. Approaches to economic and community development that respect the natural environment and strike a balance of regional and local needs through cooperation and sharing of costs and benefits.

This plan supports that by:

- Establishing clearly-defined areas for commercial development
- Focusing commercial development around transportation infrastructure
- Targeting financial incentives for agricultural production
- Specifying stormwater best management practices for commercial development



Vision for People

From Regional Connections:

The vision for people is a diverse and civically engaged population that enjoys a healthy environment and has access to affordable housing, a range of employment choices, recreational and cultural amenities, spiritual institutions, and life-long learning opportunities. Residents of the region have accessibility to civic life and more housing choices near jobs.

This plan supports that by:

- Targeting infrastructure spending to retain the attractiveness of affordable neighborhoods
- Developing a bicycle infrastructure network to connect residents to recreation opportunities

Vision for Leadership

From Regional Connections:

The vision for leadership is governance that is defined by shared understanding and aligned decision-making among all levels of government. Plans, policies and decisions related to growth, development and major infrastructure investments are made with a regional perspective, desire for improved efficiency of service delivery, and sense of mutual responsibility for providing services and protecting environmental resources. Residents and stakeholders are involved and well-informed about regional issues.

This plan supports that by:

- Continued coordination of development with Big Darby Accord partners
- Increasing residents' access to development proposals

MORPC's Regional Connections emphasizes development's regional nature. Development in each jurisdiction impacts neighboring communities near and far. The Pleasant Township Comprehensive Plan embraces development's regional nature to allow the entire region to prosper.