

## Chapter I Introduction

In 1999, Pittsfield Township began the process of developing a land use plan which would set the framework for achieving three goals:

- Retention and Expansion of Agricultural Commercial Investment
- Enhancing non-agricultural commercial investment along key development corridors to provide a balanced tax base
- Create a quality development environment that would enhance the Township financial structure and allow for the provision of high quality services for its residents and businesses.

A Land Use Committee was appointed by the Township Trustees. This Committee worked both within the context of assisting in the development of the Lorain County Comprehensive Plan (1999-2000) and afterward to create Township specific policies and implementation plans that were consistent with the overall County Plan objectives. **Strategic Public Policy** provided technical assistance for the formulation of this Plan.

The Plan contained in this document is intended to reflect policy objectives for the next 10 years. This medium range time frame was adopted in recognition of the uncertainties that are inherent in primary agricultural areas in Ohio which currently lie outside suburban development path pressures but will require re-assessment in fifteen to twenty years to reflect changing regional, national and international agricultural realities. Above all, this Plan is intended to nurture and protect the current positive agricultural economy within the Township while providing high quality opportunities for agriculturally supportive commercial and residential rural development.

**Chapter II**  
**Land Use Patterns, Demographic Influences**  
**And Environmental Context**

**Land Use**

The original land use data developed as part of the Lorain County Comprehensive Plan was further field checked for accuracy and land use changes in 2001. A parcel-based map was developed to further analyze the detail of the owned and rented agricultural fabric of the community. The result of this analysis is shown on Map 1 **Existing Land Use** and in Table I **Existing Land Use Acreage**. As a result of this more detailed process, the acreages shown in Table I are slightly different from the data contained in the County Plan tabulation.

**Table I**  
**Existing Land Use Acreage**

	<b>Acreage</b>		<b>% of Total Township</b>
Agricultural	12,123		72.79
Owner Operator	7,813	(64.30%)	
Rental	4,310	(35.70%)	
Rural Residential	1,386		8.34
Commercial/Industrial	45		0.27
Public Institutional	80		0.48
Parks and Recreation	422		2.53
Woodland	2,597		15.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,653</b>		<b>100</b>

It is clear from the review of existing land uses that agriculture retains primacy within Pittsfield Township. Soils analysis indicates that of the 16,653 acres within Pittsfield Township, 13,362 acres are classified as Prime Farmland. With 12,123 active agricultural acres within the Township, 91% of all classified prime farmland is still in active agriculture. It is further of note that less than 9% of the land is currently used for rural residential development. This indicates that many of the residential/agricultural conflicts which act as a disinvestment to future agricultural interests throughout Ohio are minimized within the

Township area. It must also be noted that currently less than 0.3% of Township land is in the higher tax revenue producing commercial/industrial category. As additional residential development occurs within the Township, even at modest levels, revenues to provide services to its residents will be dependent upon the need to create additional commercial land uses. Revenue and Cost of Services Projections indicate that an additional 300 acres of commercial development will be needed to offset residential service costs in approximately fifteen years.

A review of the land use locations on Map I shows the relatively equal dispersion of agricultural and residential uses. No areas of the Township have reflected disinvestment of agricultural with the possible exception of areas along US.20, on SR.58 from the intersection with US.20 northward, and in the northwest portion of the Township (north of the Hughes and Quarry Roads Intersection) where there is a concentration of rented agricultural land and new platted residential development. The Land Use Plan will be targeted to maximize non-farm development within those areas.

### **Demographic Influences**

The Lorain County Comprehensive Plan projects that while approximately 31,000 new homes will be built within the County over the next 20 years, development pressure will be minimal within the region adjacent to Pittsfield Township. This is substantiated by the fact that between 1990 and 2000 the surrounding townships and villages have experienced no population increase. The 1990 population for the Townships of Camden, LaGrange, New Russia, Wellington and the incorporated areas of Oberlin, Wellington and LaGrange was 24,885. According to the 2000 Census data, the area had a population of 24,803 – an actual decrease. This lack of regional development pressure indicates the validity of the agricultural retention focus of this Land Use Plan.

Table 2 reflects the population growth in Pittsfield Township from 1980 to 2000.

**Table 2**  
**Population Change 1980 – 2000**

1980	1990	2000	Change	% Change
1,436	1,546	1,549	113	7.8

Review of the New Housing Units built and new lots created from farmland over the last decade also indicate extremely low development pressure. Historical Residential Units and Lot Split data are shown in Tables 3 and 4.

**Table 3**  
**Historical Housing Unit Data**

1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Total	Average
12	11	11	13	17	12	6	22	8	10	122	11

The practiced lot size in Pittsfield Township ranges between 2 and 5 acres. At the high range, only 55 acres of residential land are being taken out of agricultural production each year.

**Table 4**  
**Lot Split Historical Data**

1992-1996	1997-2001	Total	Average Per Year
92	69	161	16

The consistency between the lot splits and the actual homes built further indicates the strength of the agricultural economy.

### **Environmental Context and Influence**

The Land Use Planning Process evaluated environmental factors to assist in the analysis of future land use suitability and appropriate environmental constraints. As stated previously, 13,362 (80%) acres of Pittsfield Township are classified as Prime Farmland. It is the stated goal of the Plan to continue active utilization of this asset.

In terms of future development potential and capacity, there are several categories of environmental limitations as summarized in Table 5. These environmental constraints are primarily located along the Black River and stream riparian areas.

**Table 5**  
**Environmental Development Constraints (Acres)**

<b>Constraint</b>	<b>Slopes &gt;10%</b>	<b>Wetlands</b>	<b>Woodlands</b>	<b>Floodplain</b>	<b>Total</b>
Acreage	341	402	2,597	2,322	5,662

In addition, approximately 1,336 acres in Pittsfield Township consists of hydric soils which severely limit development dependent upon on-site septic systems.

As noted in depth in the County Comprehensive Plan and its accompanying environmental analysis report, all of Pittsfield Township lies within the Black River Drainage Area and is dominated by the West Branch of the Black River and its tributaries which are currently experiencing unacceptable levels of run-off pollutants. As the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency will no longer approve new or expanded treatment plants which discharge into the Black River, on-site disposal will continue to be the primary wastewater service option for the vast majority of Pittsfield Township for the immediate future. This Plan recognizes both the public wastewater treatment constraints and the importance of improving the environmental quality of the Black River through use of wetland, riparian corridors, stream and floodplain setbacks that act as natural filters for pollutants and eliminate detrimental siltation. The policy of this Plan to enhance these setbacks and require them for new development proposals also is intended to address the issue of improved stormwater management which the County has identified as a future critical problem.

### **Chapter III Consistency with Lorain County Comprehensive Plan**

Through this Land Use Plan, Pittsfield Township is attempting to support and forward key concepts of the County Comprehensive Plan. The County Plan includes the following policies:

- Target Infrastructure and control its Development Costs
- Support the concept of Urban Growth Boundaries
- Diminish use of frontage development as the primary residential development model
- Pursue adoption of Open Space Conservation Residential Development Standards
- Improve Subdivision Regulations to support farmland preservation and enhance quality design standards
- Encourage local adoption of Adequate Public Facility regulations so that infrastructure and services are capable of supporting new development without additional public cost
- Encourage land use patterns and local zoning that could support the concepts of density transfers and development clustering
- Encourage use of Joint Economic Development District Agreements (JEDD's) to facilitate cost effective infrastructure extensions that target development and minimize annexation battles between cities and townships
- Encourage local zoning that supports agricultural retention and further investment.

Pittsfield Township has already begun the process of including many of these policies in its Zoning Resolution and will continue to support County efforts to achieve improved infrastructure systems, subdivision regulations and enhanced environmental protection goals. Pittsfield Township understands that much of its success in achieving the farmland investment protection goals will be dependent upon cooperative policies being enacted by the County with regard to subdivision standards, utility planning, and Health Department Administrative Regulations. It is hoped that the adoption and implementation of this Plan as detailed in the following chapters will provide incentives to the various County departments to actively pursue the needed changes at the County level.

## Chapter IV Infrastructure Capacity and Services

The Land Use Committee has analyzed Road Capacity and Function, public wastewater treatment availability options, Stormwater Management concerns, public water capacity and the demand levels of providing adequate police, fire, and emergency medical services as part of the Planning process.

### **Transportation**

Pittsfield Township is served by a combination of US Highways, State Highways, County and Township roads with varying degrees of capacity. The Township is provided easy access to major Lorain County employment, shopping and services centers via US Rt. 20 and SR.58. Access to the Ohio Turnpike exists within 15 minutes travel time at the Baumhart Road interchange. The road inventory and functional classifications are depicted on Map 4. Table 6 summarizes the road miles by ownership.

**Table 6  
Road Miles by Owned Classification**

United States Highways (US.20)	4.1 miles
State Roads	10.0 miles
County Roads	17.4 miles
Township Roads	<u>19.6 miles</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>51.1 miles</b>

**Table 7  
 Identification of Roads by Owned Classification**

<b>US</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Township</b>
US Rt. 20	Ashland/Oberlin Rd. (SR.58)	Hallauer (75)	Kipton-Nickle Plate (pt)
	Wakeman/Richfield Rd (SR.303)	West (38)	Hughes
		Quarry Road (30)	Hawley
		Webster (71)	Pitts
		Kipton-Nickle Plate (pt) (52)	Whitney  Merriam

**Functional Classification System**

An important element in determining future land use is assessing the road capacity and functional classifications. The Functional Classification system provides a hierarchy of roads and streets within Pittsfield Township. This hierarchy is based on the overall function that each roadway performs within the Township’s Transportation network. These classifications provide the Township with a basis upon which to make improvement, access management and adequate public facility decisions.

**Freeways**

The primary purpose of a freeway is to safely serve long distance interstate and regional trips at high speeds. As such, access is limited to widely spaced interchanges and limited crossings with local streets. In Pittsfield Township **US.20** is classified as a freeway.

### **Arterials**

The arterial system interconnects with freeways and carries auto and truck traffic within, through, into and out of the community. As such, turning radii at intersections should be designed to accommodate truck traffic. Turn lanes should be provided at major intersections and high volume driveways. Access to adjacent properties should be carefully controlled with high volume curb-cuts requiring a minimum spacing of 600 feet.

The following roadways should be classified as arterials:

- SR.58
- SR.303

### **Collector Roads**

Collector roads link the local streets with the arterial network and provide inter-community circulation. Access to adjacent properties should also be carefully controlled for collectors. Speed limits should be less than on arterial roads. Pedestrian and bicycle route separations should be considered when evaluating future development proposals. The following roadways should be classified as collector roads:

- West
- Hallauer
- Quarry
- Hughes
- Pitts
- Webster

### **Local Roads**

Local roads should be planned and maintained to achieve farmland preservation, and environmental protection goals. As such low maintenance demands must be retained. Pavement widths should generally not exceed 24 feet for new development and 20 feet for Rural Conservation development. With the exception of Conservation development, cul-de-sac streets should have a turnaround radius of at least 50 feet to accommodate school busses and utility vehicles. The following roadways are currently classified as local roads:

- Kipton-Nickel Plate
- Hawley
- Merriam
- Whitney
- Austin

**Strategic Public Policy** reviewed all road conditions and traffic count data available through the County Engineer's office in order to determine future improvement needs and to identify capacity or safety problems. The only intersection requiring remedial improvements is that of the US.20/SR.58 and Kipton-Nickle Plate area. Ohio Department of Transportation studies have identified this intersection area as one with a high rate of accidents due to the turning movements onto Kipton-Nickle Plate from SR.58, and lack of appropriate turn lanes and signal timing. Currently, the plans are to improve the safety of this area by closing Kipton-Nickle Plate at SR.58. State Route 58 is currently carrying approximately 9,500 cars per day (ADT) with a peak hour level of service rating of D at the SR.58/US.20 intersection. There are no funds available through State or County sources for capacity improvements to SR.58 for the time frame of this Plan. It is important, therefore, for the Plan to reflect policies that preserve the capacity of this road. The Township is adopting the Ohio Department of Transportation Access Management Standards in order to assure that there is development capacity to support future commercial development in the northern portion of SR.58 and to improve the turning safety factors off both SR.58 and US.20.

Careful attention must be paid to retaining traffic carrying capacity on Township and County Roads by controlling land uses, minimizing curb cuts and monitoring the advisability of turn lanes to serve future development. Both the County and the Township have very limited financial resources with which to maintain or improve and expand roadways. National studies have consistently shown that adopting sound access management policies can increase safe road carrying capacity by over 30%. As a primary agricultural community with a low tax generation base, the Township must minimize road improvement costs. To that end, in addition to adopting ODOT Access Management Standards in the zoning regulations, Pittsfield Township should adopt policies which offer incentives to avoid frontage development along Township roads and encourage land use intensity which corresponds to the narrow chip-and-seal Township agricultural roads.

### **Water and Wastewater Treatment**

The Lorain County Comprehensive Plan acknowledges that the development of sound water, wastewater and stormwater facility plans are needed throughout the County. Currently the County has no capital plans for provision of expanded sewer facilities outside of established existing sewer facility planning areas. A review of the Northeast Ohio 208 Water Quality Management Plan indicates that only a small portion of northern Pittsfield Township is within an established sewer facility planning area – that of the City of Oberlin. However, the City of Oberlin has a policy of not providing sewer service without annexation; even though its existing sewer line extends into Pittsfield Township and serves the Lorain County Joint Vocational School south of US.20 on SR.58.

The County also currently has a written Memorandum of Understanding with the Lorain County Rural Wastewater District (LORCO), a State of Ohio certified 6119 facility district, that recognizes the right of LORCO to provide public sewer services within its area of certification which includes Pittsfield Township. LORCO is the organization of choice for Pittsfield Township for the long-term establishment of its future sanitary sewer service areas.

As stated previously, one goal of the Township Land Use Plan must be to maximize appropriate developable land along key water and sewer served investment corridors in order to generate tax base revenues that will allow the Township to provide services to its residents and businesses while nurturing low tax base agricultural retention. The most appropriate area for this development is north of the US.20 intersection along SR.58. This is an area which has established commercial interests via Oberlin's annexation areas at the intersection of 20/58 and New Russia Township's commercial zoning along SR.58 north of Pittsfield Township. Again, as noted, this area is already served with an adequate capacity sewer line owned by the City of Oberlin. Ideally, a defined Joint Economic Development District Agreement (JEDD) would be negotiated between Pittsfield Township and Oberlin that would allow for reasonable economic development in the SR.58 Corridor. This would benefit Oberlin through user

fees to its utility while allowing non-annexable tax base expansion for Pittsfield Township. This JEDD process would implement the 208 Water Quality Management facility plan concepts. If unable to implement a JEDD agreement, LORCO would be utilized to provide on-site treatment management for properties within the Township economic investment areas.

### **On-Site Sewage Treatment**

The Lorain County Comprehensive Plan well documented the on-site sewage problems within the County. Due to limiting soils conditions, virtually all areas of the County, including Pittsfield Township, are deemed unsuitable for traditional septic systems. The County Plan also documented the high rate of septic systems failures. The on-site systems failures have added to the water quality problems within the County and caused dispersed development patterns. The Lorain County Health Department adopted use of the Wisconsin Mound Systems to overcome some of the soil limitations and is embarking on a plan for systematic on-site system inspections. The County is also studying the suitability of other alternative treatment systems such as lagoon systems and irrigation spray systems; however none have been approved within the County at this time. All parties recognize the importance of creating a public wastewater treatment system to address future development demands; however for the area around and including Pittsfield Township, low development demand and density levels preclude the establishment of a cost-effective general wastewater system for at least the next ten years.

In recognition of this, the Township's plan should focus on agricultural retention and pursue residential open-space conservation development approaches that would support use of group alternative sewage treatment systems that would be under the management of certified sewer district operators.

### **Water Services**

The Township is served by the Lorain/Medina County Rural Water District which provides service along road frontage throughout the area. Within the Township this system is not designed to be a fire suppression system due to low development densities, with the exception of the SR.58 Corridor. The agricultural retention goals of the Land Use Plan will minimize infrastructure future improvement costs and depress fire loss levels.

### **Stormwater Management**

Due to the low permeability of local soils as documented in the County Environmental Analysis, careful attention must be paid to the maintenance of drainage tile systems for agricultural uses. The Township should adopt site plan review processes to preserve these systems. In order to minimize future Stormwater system infrastructure demands, the Township should develop a conscientious set of setback requirements from stream and river corridors.

### **Emergency Services**

Fire Protection is provided to the Township by the Wellington Fire District supported by mutual aid agreements with the City of Oberlin Fire Department which has a station on SR.58 north of the Pittsfield Township line. Currently, Pittsfield Township represents 20% of the Wellington District service population while reflecting 18% of the demand level. Ambulance and Emergency Medical Services are provided through a Joint District which serves Camden, Henrietta, Kipton, New Russian, Oberlin and Pittsfield. Review of EMS responses shows that Pittsfield Township represents approximately 10 percent of the service population while requiring less than 5% of the services. Pittsfield Township residents support the Fire District and Ambulance District directly through property tax levies and Emergency Service user fees.

Police protection is provided through the Lorain County Sheriff's Department. There is no separate local levy or service contract between Pittsfield Township and the Sheriff's Department. Retaining the agricultural base of the Township will help minimize future police demands within the Township.

## **Chapter V Farmland Preservation**

A review of the current land uses, development patterns and available public infrastructure and service capacities all support the wisdom of pursuing an overall policy of agricultural preservation for the 10 year time frame of the Township's Land Use Plan. As noted previously, not only is 13,362 acres of the Township rated as prime farmland from a soils perspective, 12,123 acres of this land is still in active cultivation. It is also important to note that there are substantial livestock investments within the Township which are difficult to maintain with contiguous residential development. Most importantly, of the 12,123 acres which are in active farmland, the vast majority (90%) is owned and/or rented by 20 local farm operators. In fact, over 67% of all active farmland is operated by 8 farmers. Fewer than 60 acres per year is taken out of agriculture for residential development purposes. Finally, as of 2001, over 12,000 acres of agricultural land is registered in the State of Ohio Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) program which both offers a reduction in property taxes and indicates a high level of commitment to keep land in agriculture for the future.

Pittsfield Township is recognizing and proceeding to implement the policies of the Farmland Retention Committee that was an integral part of the Lorain County Comprehensive Plan Process. These policies include:

- Encourage Agricultural Zoning and Open Space Conservation Development
- Minimizing incompatible land use intrusion into farm primacy areas
- Focusing development into areas already served by public water and sewer services
- Minimizing road frontage development that creates isolated pockets of farmland, reducing their long-term viability

- Create development patterns that are support of alternative sewage treatment systems to limit need for high cost public sewer systems
- Utilize JEDD agreements for provision of public services in investment areas without annexation
- Retain development patterns that would foster participation in future State of Ohio Conservation Easements and Purchase of Development Rights programs.

Review of Maps I and 2 illustrates that the current land use patterns and agricultural investments within the Township are not conducive to the identification of many areas that would be appropriate for standard subdivision development within the time frame of the Land Use Plan. The Land Use Committee reviewed the owned and rented farmland within the Township by quadrant. The result of this analysis is shown in Table 8 and on Map 2.

**Table 8**  
**Summary of Agricultural Investment**  
**Area Concentrations**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Acres Rented</b>	<b>Acres Owned</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Total</b>
14A	528	808	61	1,336
B	625	717	54	1,342
C	630	1,103	64	1,733
D	832	826	50	1,658
E	98	1,363	93	1,461
F	710	961	57	1,671
G	582	1,154	66	1,736
H	305	881	74	1,186
	<b>4,310</b>	<b>7,813</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>12,123</b>

Table 8 shows that agriculture investment occurs relatively uniformly throughout the Township with no area falling below 50% of farmland owned and operate by local farmers.

The Township Plan should, therefore, focus on encouraging future residential development which would support long-term agricultural compatibility throughout the Township. The most compatible development is that which is designed according to Residential Conservation Development principles which include:

- Minimum of 40% of land set-aside in permanent conservation easement areas
- Residential development located within specific construction areas which are least suitable for agriculture
- Utilization of joint septic discharge areas or group alternative sewage treatment systems to minimize agricultural land conversion
- Minimization of frontage development which isolates agriculture parcels, creates farming conflicts and reduces road capacity.

Not only is this development alternative useful for eliminating conflicts with agriculture, it has the added benefits of (1) creating high quality development that has been proven to retain its resale value at a higher rate than standard frontage development (2) in the long term future it is more easily incorporated with standard residential development infrastructure systems, and (3) it provides a rational, low cost approach to provision of long term open space and recreation assets for future residents.

It is noted that areas along US.20, SR.58 and Quarry Road north of Hughes, have the potential for higher density future housing by virtue of available utility and transportation capacity. The Township should provide for alternative residential zoning in these areas which could support the concept of density transfers from other agricultural areas. While density transfers do not appear feasible at this time due to County Subdivision policies, State law and low development demand, they do provide the possibility for additional revenue inputs to owners of farmland in the future. The concept of density transfers would also be used in conjunction with State Agriculture Easement and Purchase of Development Rights programs, should they receive adequate funding and legislative support at the State level. The Township should consider focusing on purchase of agricultural frontage parcels with these programs.

**Agricultural zoning** is used extensively in other States to clearly identify long-term prime agricultural areas and to prevent the incursion of incompatible land uses which accelerate disinvestment in agriculture. Agricultural Zoning also offers farm operators a predictable investment environment. As noted previously, Pittsfield Township has a solid base of farmers with large operations. While the average farm size in Ohio is approximately 130 acres, several farm interests in the Township control more than 1,000 acres. Thus, the Township has the current land use structure that would support the efficacy of agricultural zoning. The Township will pursue developing voluntary Primary Agricultural Use District Zoning Language and work proactively with local interests to encourage their participation. The Primary Agricultural Use District should contain the following concepts:

- Limit residential development incursions in prime farm areas by increasing minimum lot size
- Minimize fees and administrative procedures for approval of land uses compatible with agriculture

- Allow for grandfathering of already established undeveloped lots and reasonable additional rural residential development potential
- Encourage multiple owner large blocks of land in excess of 300 acres to be placed in the Prime Agriculture Districts
- Contain a commitment to keep land in the Agriculture District for a specified length of time.

With use of these tools, Pittsfield Township will be assuring agricultural investment and viability for the future, supporting the County concepts or urban service areas and minimizing tax burdens for its residents.

## **Chapter VI State Route 58 Investment Area**

The State Route 58 Corridor north of US 20 presents development potential that addresses the County Comprehensive Plan policies of utilizing JEDD agreements for cost effective infrastructure, utilizing urban growth boundaries to target development impacts and identifying potential future development density transfer areas. This area is already a subject of a tax sharing agreement between Oberlin and Pittsfield Township that was enacted when Oberlin annexed commercial development areas north of US.20. According to this agreement, Oberlin would share various personal property, real property and income taxes with Pittsfield on designated properties in exchange for annexation and commits Oberlin to actively market the economic development of the area.

In 2000, a large agricultural property north of the annexation area filed for rezoning to commercial use with Pittsfield Township. As this property abuts a newly developing residential subdivision recently annexed to Oberlin, a Joint Land Use Committee was formed by Oberlin City and Pittsfield Township to develop an overall long-term land use plan for the SR.58 Corridor. This Plan was designed to maximize economic development potential while providing detailed quality-of-life site design standards that would protect adjacent residential uses. A professional consulting firm was hired to provide technical assistance to the Committee. The result of this joint planning effort was the State Route 58 Corridor Plan that was subsequently adopted by Pittsfield Township in early 2001. As a separately adopted policy document, this Plan is included by reference as an essential element of the Pittsfield Township Land Use Plan and is based upon the following Guiding Principles as contained in the Plan, (The full Corridor Plan is included in the Appendix of the Land Use Plan.)

### ***Guiding Principles for the Route 58 Corridor Plan***

1. Long Term Development and Redevelopment within the Corridor should result in quantifiable positive financial benefits for both the political jurisdictions and individual property owners.
2. Proposed new development will be designed to maximize and protect existing viable land uses within the Study area and to minimize impact on unique environmental components.
3. Additional Commercial/Retail Development will be focused north of the Rts. 20/58 intersection.
4. Mixed Use areas will be defined in the Plan to allow for changing market conditions and demands.
5. Existing Commercial Areas will be integrated with proposed new development through access management plans meeting the standards of the ODOT Access Management Handbook, shared parking, common landscape design and setback management.
6. Rezoning proposals or conditional use permits will comply with the agreed upon Plan. Site Plan review will be required for all new land uses within the Corridor to assure protection of existing residents and achievement of a long-term coherent development pattern.
7. The new Oberlin Recreation Complex will encourage and enhance future residential development potential within the Study area and be connected with such by safe pedestrian access.
8. New Development Site Plans and Zoning Approvals will be consistent with the Corridor Plan level of service standards and concurrency requirements with regard to road capacity and safety, water and sewer infrastructure capacity, pedestrian access, and safety service capacity and response time.

9. SR.58 Road Widening will be controlled and minimized through use of turn lanes, limited curb cuts and use of connector roads.
10. Development standards shall reflect and respect the rural and small town character of Pittsfield Township and the City of Oberlin.
11. Substantial improvement of the Rts. 20/58 intersection will be a priority for both jurisdictions and have the capacity to support the build-out of the Final Plan.

After adoption of the Plan (summarized on Map 3) Pittsfield Township proceeded to draft zoning and site plan review standards for all properties within this Corridor Investment area.

Pittsfield Township views implementation of this Plan as a basis for exploring an expanded Joint Economic Development District Agreement with the City of Oberlin. The financial analysis contained in the Plan demonstrates that overall public revenue sources would be substantially enhanced by inclusion of commercial areas of the SR.58 Corridor Plan within a JEDD format. Further, as will be demonstrated in following sections of this plan, Pittsfield Township must achieve a stronger commercial land use presence in order to balance future residential service costs. Additional annexation of this area by Oberlin without expansion of tax sharing concepts will seriously impact the ability of the Township to provide future resident services while maintaining the Farmland Preservation goals of the County and Township Plans.

It has been suggested recently through adjacent area resident input that Pittsfield Township should utilize other areas of the Township for economic development purposes. However, this area represents the best and, in fact, only area of the Township with adequate public facilities, road capacity and marketability for successful commercial base enhancements. Further, it is the desire of the Township to support already established commercial areas by addressing the issue of needed “critical retail mass”. Pittsfield Township thus feels that the only area which can achieve the above local and County goals is the area represented in the SR.58 Corridor Plan.

## Chapter 7 Pittsfield Township Financial Analysis

### Introduction

Understanding the relationship between development public costs and revenue streams is an important input in the Comprehensive Land Use Planning process. The ability of a community to provide adequate services and infrastructure that protects and enhances the health, safety and welfare of current and future residents and businesses is dependent upon wise management of property tax funding mechanisms, control of infrastructure quality and capacity and requires a thorough understanding of how the Township and other service providers receive revenues. In Pittsfield Township there is a further concern – that of protecting the agriculture economic base of the Township. Recent comprehensive studies in the State of Ohio have shown that agricultural communities with increasing amounts of road frontage suburban residential development often have the greatest financial challenges. Agricultural land uses represent a relatively low demand in terms of services and public infrastructure costs. However, they are also low revenue generators and their continued existence depends upon a minimal property tax burden. As townships depend primarily on property taxes for revenues, it is critical to control the increasing service costs caused by suburban residential demands or agricultural will no longer be viable. This section of the Land Use Plan reviews the financial trends of Pittsfield Township and the current fiscal impact of residential development.

### Land Use Value Distribution Trends

Different land uses create different revenue streams for the Township. For example, commercial and industrial uses generate tangible personal property taxes while residential uses do not. Public Utility and non-residential uses generally have a higher tax rate than residential uses. Agricultural land is taxed under the State of Ohio Current Agricultural Use Valuation (CAUV) that is substantially lower than residential or commercial valuations. To maintain long term economic viability, there should be a balance of land uses to offset the relative strengths and weaknesses of various land use revenue streams. Table 9 represents the tax value trends by land uses in Pittsfield Township from 1996-2001.

**Table 9  
Pittsfield Township Property Tax Valuations**

Property Classification	Tax Yr '96-97	97-98	'98-99	99-00	00-01	% Incr.	% Distr.	
							1996	2000
Agricultural	\$4,695,990	\$5,197,260	\$5,194,610	\$5,516,150	\$6,149,590	31.0	20.6	19.2
Mineral	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Industrial	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Commercial	\$791,830	\$928,510	\$948,390	\$1,134,680	\$1,250,220	58.0	3.5	4.0
Residential	\$12,926,640	\$16,473,610	\$16,481,030	\$17,753,070	\$20,742,130	60.5	56.8	64.7
Pub. Utilities/Railroads								
Real	\$1,180	\$1,280	\$1,270	\$1,680	\$1,910	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Pub. Utilities/Personal	\$3,745,770	\$3,639,710	\$3,525,320	\$3,533,410	\$3,251,660	16.5	-	10.1
Tangible Personal	\$599,090	\$508,420	\$475,968	\$593,220	\$654,760	9.3	2.6	2.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$22,760,500</b>	<b>\$26,748,790</b>	<b>\$26,626,588</b>	<b>\$28,532,210</b>	<b>\$32,050,270</b>	<b>40.8</b>		

Table 9 represents the tax value trends by land uses in Pittsfield Township from 1996-2001.

These trends present concerns. While agricultural values as a business economic input have generally remained stable and commercial valuation has shown a small distribution increase, residential values have risen by 60.5% and have increased in percent distribution from 56.8% to 64.7%. Tangible personal property values have declined in distribution from 2.6% to 2.0% and Public Utility values have decreased in distribution from 16.5% to 10.1%. What this means is that the portion of land uses requiring the most in terms of services and infrastructure costs (i.e. residential) are increasing at a much higher rate than business tax generator land uses.

In general, non-agricultural commercial uses should represent at least 20% of value in a rural township in order to help offset the residential value demands. In Pittsfield, this percentage is only 16.1% for the 2000-2001 tax value year, down from 22.6% in 1996. Recent State-enacted legislation will decrease the amount of personal tangible taxes and public utility taxes over the next ten years. Based upon these scheduled phase-downs and past development trends, commercial valuation will represent less than 10% of the overall tax valuation by 2010. The Land Use Plan for Pittsfield Township should, therefore, identify areas for and support the enhancement of designated commercial areas within the Township. It is estimated through this analysis process that a minimum of 300 acres of Commercial development will be needed by 2015 to offset future residential service costs. The trends identified above have not yet reached a level of high concern due to the low residential development demand levels in Pittsfield Township and the surrounding areas, however without property planning and zoning regulations being adopted, this will become a major financial problem in the future.

### **Revenue and Expenditure Trends**

**SPP** has reviewed the Income and Expenditures for Pittsfield Township for 1998, 1999, and 2000. The results are shown in Tables 10 and 11.

**Table 10**  
**Revenue Trends**

<u>Source</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>% Distribution</u>	<u>Change</u>
Property Taxes	\$105,149	\$108,454	\$113,182	35.8	8,033
Licenses/Fees	\$6,747	\$6,987	\$13,715	4.3	6,968
Intergovernmental Revenues	\$187,098	\$185,900	\$178,694	56.6	-8,404
Interest	\$987	\$4,195	\$8,214	2.6	7,227
Miscellaneous	\$19,207	\$17,559	\$2,100	0.7	-17,107
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$319,188</b>	<b>\$323,095</b>	<b>\$315,905</b>		<b>-3,283</b>

**Table 11**  
**Expenditure Trends**

<u>Cost Center</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>% Distribution</u>	<u>Change</u>
General Government	\$66,026	\$67,405	\$68,904	20.6	2,878
Roads and Bridges	\$70,865	\$113,534	\$179,486	53.7	108,621
Health	\$9,274	\$5,264	\$6,642	2.0	-2,632
Conservation/Recreation	\$2,363	\$50	\$577	0.2	-1,786
Capital Expenditure	\$109,585	\$62,578	\$79,285	23.7	-30,300
Miscellaneous	\$11,773	\$16,647	\$0		-11,773
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$269,886</b>	<b>\$265,478</b>	<b>\$334,894</b>		<b>65,008</b>

Review of this data shows that revenues have declined by 1%, while expenditures have increased by 24%.

Of greatest concern on the revenue side is the declining amount of intergovernmental revenues which represent State and County revenue inputs into Pittsfield Township. Intergovernmental revenues consist primarily of Motor Vehicle License Taxes, Gasoline Taxes, State Homestead and Rollback Payments, Issue II

grants and State Local Government Revenue Assistance Funds. The Local Government Revenue Assistance funds had been one of the dependable increasing sources of revenues (increasing an average of 6% a year). In last year's State budget, these funds were capped and there was an active effort to actually reduce these distributions. Pittsfield currently gets approximately \$52,000 per year from this fund. Gasoline taxes do not increase with population but rather all townships in Ohio receive the same amount irregardless of size, need or population. Motor Vehicle License Tax Distributions do increase with population growth but these are very modest revenues currently representing about \$15 per household. District 9 of the Ohio Public Works Commission averages \$1.9 million annually of Issue II funds for distribution among its jurisdictions. Pittsfield Township is on track to receive \$32,000 to help meet the expenses of repaving Pitts Road this year; these funds are an unpredictable source of revenue.

In summary, although Intergovernmental Revenues represent over 56.6% of the Township's revenues, this segment of income will be flat or actually declining over the next five years. Property taxes, private developer inputs and additional fees will be required to meet additional future expenses. It is noted that since 1998, property taxes have risen from 32% to 35.8% of all revenue sources, while Intergovernmental revenues have decreased from 58.6% to 56.6% over the same time period.

Turning to Table 11, the greatest continuing expense for Pittsfield Township is the ongoing maintenance of roads which represents almost 54% of Total Expenditures. This is actually an underassessment as the Capital Expense Line item also includes road improvement expenses. Road maintenance costs are traditionally one of the most difficult to manage for townships. As stated previously, revenues are derived from Gasoline Taxes, Motor Vehicle License Taxes, property taxes and Issue II grants. In the year 2000, Pittsfield Township had road maintenance expenses of \$179,486 (\$9,134 per mile) while it had revenue sources dedicated to road improvements of \$167,600 (\$8,508 per mile). As increasing demands are placed on agricultural roads and new roads are created, additional property tax revenues will be needed to support this cost center. It is critical that new development be structured to pay for and minimize new capacity demands and improvements because agricultural land will generate very little in support of new road improvement revenues.

**Current Estimate of Fiscal Impact**  
**Property Tax Structure**

Pittsfield Township currently has the following residential property tax structure. As a Township, Pittsfield cannot utilize local income tax options.

**Table 12**  
**Property Tax Structure**

<b>Function</b>	<b>Inside Millage</b>	<b>Outside Effective Millage</b>
General Government	0.28	
Road and Bridge (4.47)	2.47	1.079
Fire (2.75)		2.382
Ambulance (3.00)		2.549
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>6.010</b>

Based on the County Auditor's records, the average residential home in Pittsfield Township is tax valued at \$36,908. (This represents an average total value per unit of \$105,450.) Thus the average home generates the following revenues for the various services annually:

General Government	\$10.33
Road and Bridges	\$131.00
Fire	\$87.84
Ambulance	\$94.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$323.17</b>

The Current Cost per Household to provide these services is:

General Government	\$122.60
Road and Bridges	\$346.00
Fire	\$105.00
Ambulance	\$88.00
(not including \$50 service Charge)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$661.60</b>

\*Based on 200 ft. of frontage

**Table 13**  
**Summary of Residential Fiscal Impact**

<u>Property Tax</u>	<u>Revenues</u>		<u>Costs</u>	
	<u>Intergovernmental</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>Difference</u>
\$323	\$271	\$594	\$662	-\$67.60

Based upon the construction values for the last two years, the average new home value is \$196,370. This value generates the following fiscal impact.

**Table 14**  
**New Construction Revenues**

General Government	\$19.15	
Road and Bridges	\$244.00	
Fire	\$163.77	
Ambulance	\$175.21	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$602.23</b>	Plus \$271 = \$873.23

With an average cost to provide service of \$662, new residential development is currently exhibiting a positive cash flow of \$212 per unit.

**Agricultural Fiscal Impact Trends**

It is extremely difficult to accurately assess the local costs and revenues associated with agricultural lands. In essence, the value inputs from agriculture are dependent upon regional synergistic markets. At the local level in terms of both revenues and expenditures, agriculture operates at low levels. In Pittsfield Township, for example, the tax value for agricultural land is an average of \$507 per acre. For a 340 acre farm this would generate \$1,509 for all government functions (including roads maintenance and improvements, fire protection, emergency health services and general government); while costing \$3,775. The costs and revenues are summarized in Table 15.

**Table 15**  
**Agricultural Revenues and Costs**

	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Costs</u>	<u>Deficit</u>
General			
Government	48	122	
*Road and Bridge	612	3,460	
Fire	410	105	
Ambulance	439	88	
	1,509	3,775	
Intergovernmental	271		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,780</b>	<b>\$3,775</b>	<b>-\$1,995</b>

Based on 2,000 feet of frontage

Without the road maintenance costs factor, agriculture represents a positive cash flow of \$853.

It is easy to see through this analysis that careful control of future road expenses is critical to agricultural viability.

**Commercial Fiscal Impact**

Based upon current tax values, commercial uses represent the following revenues and costs per acre:

**Table 16**  
**Commercial Land Use Revenues and Costs Per Acre**

	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Costs</u>	<u>Differencet</u>
General			
Government	7.00	44.50	
Road and Bridge	89.30	N.A.	
Fire	60.00	38.00	
Ambulance	65.00	32.00	
	<b>\$221.30</b>	<b>\$114.50</b>	<b>+\$106.80</b>

**New Commercial Development**

Based upon the calculations of the State Rt. 58 Corridor Study new commercial development would show the following revenue streams per acre:

	<b><u>Revenue</u></b>	<b><u>Costs</u></b>	<b><u>Difference</u></b>
General Government	54.34	60.00	
Road and Bridge	691.00	N.A.	
Fire	465.80	334.20	
Ambulance	504.60	309.00	
	<b>\$1,814.74</b>	<b>\$703.20</b>	<b>+\$1,111.54</b>

This analysis assumes that all commercial development will occur on State Routes. If development is placed along Township Roads, assuming 500 feet of frontage, the positive cash flow is reduced to \$1,025 per acre. This also assumes that the Township would bear no capital infrastructure capacity costs. Without this assumption, commercial development would lose its positive impact. To be financially beneficial, commercial development should be located on established U.S., County and State Routes where infrastructure capacity costs can be monitored and controlled and where shared income tax revenues can be generated via use of JEDD agreements.

**Infrastructure Capacity Analysis**

The cost impacts of new development are largely driven by infrastructure and service capacity issues. At this time the capacity of roads and the ability to provide adequate services does not appear to be challenged by the rate of community and regional development. The following table represents the regional acreage and population impacts.

**Table 17**  
**Regional Density and Population**

<u>Community</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Acres per Person</u>
Camden Township	12,655	1,265	10.0
LaGrange Township	16,400	5,972	2.7
New Russia Township	17,881	10,113	1.8
Wellington Township	14,286	5,904	2.4
Pittsfield Township	17,030	1,549	11.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>78,252</b>	<b>24,803</b>	<b>3.1</b>

The total number of dwelling units in the above communities is 15,928. Thus, even with the populations of Oberlin City and Wellington and LaGrange Villages, there is only approximately 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres. This represents a very rural based development pattern.

Without regional increased demands on infrastructure and service, Pittsfield Township will be able to manage its financial obligations in a reasonable manner if they control on-site development impacts, maintain the primary agricultural land use tax base, and increase their long-term commercial tax base percentage..

## **Chapter VII Land Use Policies and Plan**

Based upon the documentation and analysis provided in the previous Chapters, the following Policies form the basis for the Pittsfield Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan. These Policies are designed to encompass realistic development influence, environmental protection issues, maintenance of agricultural primacy and achievement of the Lorain County development and infrastructure goals and implementation plans.

- (1) The overarching Land Use Policy of Pittsfield Township will be to preserve and enhance the viable agricultural base of the Community while providing opportunities for a balance of rural residential and non-agricultural commercial investment.
- (2) With the exception of designated medium residential density areas within the SR.58 Corridor Plan area and in the north west area of Hughes and Quarry Roads and an area generally bounded by Pitts, Whitney, SR.58 and Merriam, residential development should be designed to provide a non-intrusive interface with the prime agricultural lands of the Township.
- (3) Open space and outdoor recreational activity areas will be primarily provided by the utilization of Residential Conservation District zoning techniques requiring permanent set-aside of conservation lands.
- (4) All primary major non-agricultural commercial activities will be contained within the following areas: SR.58 Corridor Plan District, the Route 20 corridor investment areas and the existing Town Center District of the SR.58 and 303 intersection area.
- (5) Rural Residential development will be targeted to non-prime farmland areas to the maximum extent feasible and lot layout minimizing frontage development will be emphasized in zoning regulations.

- (6) Site Plan review processes will be adopted for all major planned residential conservation development and non-residential development proposals to assure infrastructure demands are compatible with the agricultural and rural residential economic base.
- (7) Alternative sewage treatment techniques and utilization of common conservation areas for on-site sewage treatment will be pursued in conjunction with the appropriate Lorain County agencies to protect the agricultural fabric of the Township. To the maximum extent feasible, development design that allows for the future possibility of tying into a public system will be encouraged.
- (8) Conservation reserve programs to minimize impact within the riparian corridor areas of the Black River will be pursued. Likewise, zoning regulations will establish minimum setback areas for all riparian corridors and existing wetlands.
- (9) Proposed development will be carefully reviewed to ensure non-interruption of agricultural drainage systems.
- (10) Open Space, recreation, conservation and wooded areas and existing railroad r-o-w areas shall be designed to create integrated systems.
- (11) Community infrastructure elements such as water and sewer lines and roads will be constructed only in conformance with the growth policies of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.
- (12) Development will be required to identify adequate public infrastructure and service facilities as part of the zoning and development review process.
- (13) Infrastructure investment should be targeted to achieve economic development goals.

- (14) Traffic Impact and Access Management Guidelines will be developed to ensure preservation of the agricultural economy. The Township will work with the appropriate Lorain County agencies to assure compliance.
- (15) Frontage Development will be minimized to the maximum extent feasible along key transportation corridors such as State Route 58, US Route 20, State Route 303, Quarry and West Roads.
- (16) The Township will, in conjunction with the efforts of Lorain County, seek to develop programs specifically designed to protect and enhance agricultural investment. These programs should include adoption of Agricultural Zoning, Residential Open Space Conservation Development regulations and participation in State agricultural easement acquisition programs such as purchase of development rights.
- (17) In coordination with goals 13 and 16, areas north of Route 20 are designated for more intense development and may be suitable to act as a potential transfer of development rights area.

The Future Land Use Plan is functionally represented on Map 4 and identifies areas for Agricultural Retention and Investment, minimal targeted traditional subdivision residential development areas, protection of woodlands and stream corridors, enhancement of public uses and targeted economic development.

#### **Agriculture Investment Area**

Farmland Preservation potential exists throughout the Township and areas are shown in a parcel specific manner on Map 4. Farmland retention is dependent upon managing future development of incompatible uses and creating large blocks of agricultural land.

***Implementation Strategies:***

- Encourage creation of Primary Agricultural Zoning Districts
- Create Residential Conservation Development Zoning District Language
- Work with the Lorain County Engineer's office to establish access management guidelines that minimize frontage development on Quarry and West Roads
- Pursue utilization of State and Federal Conservation Reserve funds to reimburse agricultural interests for environmental protection setbacks to riparian corridors and wetlands
- Establish committee to work with County agencies for adoption of
  - (1) Alternative wastewater treatment approaches to protect agricultural fabric and minimize property tax burdens
  - (2) Conservation Development compatible subdivision regulations
- Require traffic impact analysis for proposed new development to assure functionality of local roads
- Identify higher density residential potential areas to function as future development density transfer areas. (Hughes/Quarry Roads and SR.58 Corridor Plan area)
- Create notification registry of available farmland coming on the market

- Expand allowable farm-compatible uses for Primary Agricultural District zones such as relative housing, expanded commercial opportunities, agri-tourism.

### **Future Public Investment Area**

The Pittsfield Township Administration Buildings and Park are located at the State Routes 58 and 303 Intersection. To the north and west of the Township Buildings are existing commercial uses while to the south there is a church. This intersection district is served by an existing traffic signal.

The Land Use Plan recommends expansion of public uses for this area such as increased park and recreation facilities and enhancement of usable public gathering space in front of the Township Hall. As the governmental center for the Township, a sense of identity should be created over time through use of landscaping treatment along the SR.58 and 303 corridors for a distance of at least 500 feet. New proposed uses for this area should establish uniform setbacks and minimize the effects of front yard parking and storage.

### ***Implementation Strategies:***

- Work with Ohio Department of Transportation to include pedestrian and/or bike lanes along SR.303 from Hallauer Road to Pitts Road
- Establish committee for evaluation of Township land for expanded public gathering uses
- Require roadway landscaping for new and redevelopment uses
- Develop new sign guidelines for this area

### **State Route 58 Corridor Plan Area**

This area must serve to maximize tax base value for the Township while protecting existing residential uses, maintaining the traffic carrying capacity of State Route 58, and providing for higher density residential uses.

#### ***Implementation Strategies:***

- Adopt zoning language to allow for Medium Density Residential, Large Business Commercial and Retail, and transitional Residential to Office that implement and policies and design guidelines of the Corridor Plan
- Cooperatively pursue negotiations with the City of Oberlin to improve and expand joint economic development agreements to achieve cost-effective utility services and land use compatibility
- Utilize regional economic development agencies to appropriately market this area.

### **Future Residential Development Areas**

The purpose of these areas is to identify locations where existing uses, lot configurations, environmental factors and/or public utility services all minimize its potential for long-term agricultural investment. These two areas in the north and south portions of the Township are also served by arterial and collector roads which would act to limit traffic impacts on local roads.

#### ***Implementation Strategies:***

- Encourage high quality multi-lot suburban development with clustered lots
- Consider possibility of density transfers for these areas supported by alternative wastewater treatment systems.

### **Riverine, Woodland and Floodplain Areas**

Pittsfield Township recognizes its role in improving the water quality of the Black River Drainage Area. Required development setbacks to stream corridors, wetlands and floodplains will all serve to eliminate runoff pollutants. Conservation Reserve programs will be pursued to minimize agricultural run-off. Remaining woodlands will be protected through the site plan review process for both environmental quality and property value enhancement purposes.

#### ***Implementation Strategies:***

- Adopt Site Plan Review Zoning regulations to create environmental setbacks and protection standards
- Encourage use of Residential Conservation Development Zoning Districts to achieve limits of disturbance in key environmental areas
- Work with the County to establish a Stormwater Management Plan which emphasizes non-structural storm water control approaches
- Include maintenance of agricultural drainage tile systems in proposed development review processes.

### **General Administrative Implementation Strategies**

The above listed Implementation Strategies are not meant to be exhaustive. In addition, the Township will proceed to update its zoning resolution and administrative procedures to implement all of the Land Use Policies cited at the beginning of this Chapter. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan establishes the legitimate public policies of the Township grounded in factual analysis and public input.

These policies will be fully articulated and put into practice by means of thorough and ongoing revisions to its Zoning Resolution. Extensive resident communications will be established through use of the Township web-site and utilization of ongoing, issue-specific citizen committees.

Through extensive citizen involvement, development of joint development policies with Lorain County, adjacent jurisdictions and public service agencies; Pittsfield Township will achieve its goals of farmland preservation, high residential quality of life and sound tax balance.