

HIRAM TOWNSHIP
LAND USE PLAN

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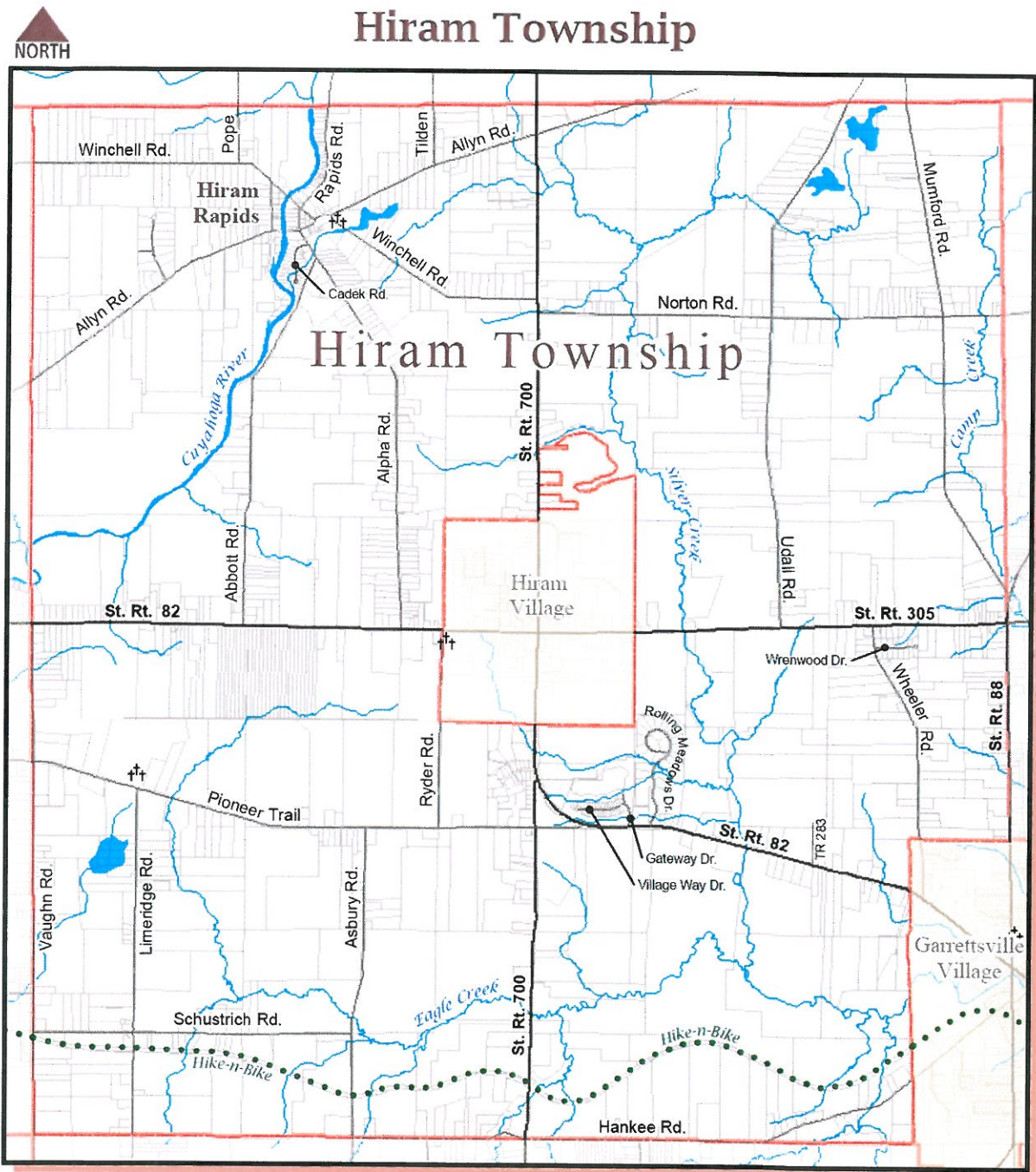
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Hiram Township faces many challenges now and in the future. The lack of diverse local employment opportunities, lack of local tax base to support basic services, excessive utility costs, impacts of development on the environment and the disappearance of farmland are but only a few of the concerns the community is contending with. Hiram also has a wealth of assets and qualities that make it a special place including, but not limited to, Hiram College, the people of Hiram, the amount of land preserved and in open spaces, and outstanding scenic resources that will help them achieve community objectives.

Change is inevitable. Planning helps communities to anticipate and manage change to their advantage. The Hiram Township community recognized this and chose to take control of their destiny by developing a Comprehensive Plan. This planning effort began in November of 2012 when the Township agreed on an approach to develop a plan for the development and conservation of important resources in the community.

The Comprehensive Plan is long range in perspective and provides a guide for how the community should develop in the future and how scarce resources should be managed. It is a blueprint for the future of Hiram Township. The Plan is intended to be a tool to help officials address challenges, opportunities and carry out the vision of the community. The Plan will help the Township Trustees, Township Zoning Commission, and the Township Board of Zoning Appeals make decisions about land use, development, conservation, infrastructure, financial investments, and economic development issues. The plan establishes policies adopted by the participating entities for the future development of the communities, so that future growth can occur in a coordinated, unified, sustainable manner that is beneficial to the community as a whole. It is based upon an understanding of the current physical, economic, and social conditions and trends which affect and shape the development of Hiram Township, projections of future needs, analysis of alternative 20 year build out scenarios, and incorporates the specified desires and directions of residents, members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee and public officials who have indicated what is appropriate for the community.

The Comprehensive Plan is not a piece of legislation, rather it outlines policies to evaluate and the need for changes to specific regulations such as zoning ordinances and resolutions as well as other legislative, administrative or financial program changes. In order for the plan to be effective, it must be recommended by the Township Zoning Commission and adopted by the Township Trustees and used as a guide for decision making. (This adoption process has occurred.) Once adopted, it may be implemented through zoning regulations, capital budgets, subdivision regulations, and other programs. The plan should be re-evaluated annually to determine if the goals, policies and implementation strategies remain appropriate and relevant to the Township and Village. The Plan should be comprehensively updated every 3-5 years to ensure necessary adjustments are made to the planning document in response to any changing conditions or trends.



Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
Political boundary updated, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, June 2012;
Trails, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, 2010.



November 2012

Map 1-1

CHAPTER 2 COMMUNITY VISION

A community plan is a reflection of the collective vision of the community, what the community wants to be and how it wants to look at some point in the future. The plan embodies the goals and aspirations of the community.

The vision must reflect the opinions, desires and attitudes of the residents and the representatives of local businesses. Creating a vision allows the community to better understand the values of the citizens and use these values as a basis for planning. A visioning process helps to articulate a big picture view to guide short term decisions and long term initiatives as well as develop tools to achieve the community's vision.¹

The processes used to understand the Hiram Township collective vision has included the following:

- Φ A community "town hall" meeting to identify assets and critical issues.
- Φ A random sample community attitude survey.
- Φ A visual preference survey

In addition, the outcome of monthly meetings with the Hiram Planning Committee have helped to clarify community vision as the community profile, existing conditions and trends and alternative scenarios were evaluated and discussed. The cumulative outcome of all of these efforts is reflected in this plan.

An explanation of the first 3 processes and outcomes are detailed below.

A. ASSETS AND CRITICAL ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

On Thursday, November 12, 2012, Hiram Township held a community meeting to acquaint citizens with the Comprehensive Planning process and scope of work to be completed, solicit their involvement in the process, and to gather input on what the citizens feel are the greatest assets as well as most critical issues facing Hiram Township. Approximately 120 people attended this kick off meeting. The participants were divided into small groups to obtain a listing of the assets and critical issues. The following pages reflect a compilation of the results.

¹ Oregon Visions Project, Oregon Chapter, American Planning Association, A Guide to Community Visioning, Hands On Information for Local Communities, (1993) p. 7.

Assets & Strengths of Hiram Township

The Rural Environment and Lifestyle, as expressed by:

- Rural in nature/rural atmosphere, natural areas, country living, diverse rural community (people, agriculture, landscapes)
- Open spaces , farmland
- Beautiful landscapes, natural beauty, scenic views, rolling landscape
- Quiet
- Minimal light pollution, can see the stars
- Low density, low population numbers

The Small Town Environment and Lifestyle, as expressed by:

- Small community/small town atmosphere, friendly, familiar faces, people know and greet each other by name, close-knit, sense of community, fellowship, caring, neighborly, community feeling, meeting familiar faces at the post office
- Quaintness
- People living close, but not too close together like the city

The Location of the Community as expressed by:

- Rural location, but near metropolitan area
 - *Greater Cleveland, Akron, Youngstown does not know where Hiram is.
 - *Access to College and urban services in an exurban setting
- Close to Garrettsville
- Proximity to Amish Community

Feeling Safe/Low Crime Rates

The Cultural Resources of Hiram as expressed by:

- Heritage, historic area, historic architectural assets, old historic homes
- Great cultural events that are shared with anyone

The People of the Community and their Feeling of Community as expressed by:

- Neighbors, people of the community, long term residents
- Diversity of people, mixture of old-timers and newcomers
- Community spirit
- Involved citizens
- Community groups
- Strong sense of community
- Family oriented

Land Use Controls in Place as expressed by:

- A non-industrial area (township), minimal industry/manufacturing
- Not commercialized
- Lack of tract housing and new developments
- No heavy traffic
- Lack of urban sprawl, malls, fast food, drive-thru's

The High Quality Natural Environment of the Community as expressed by:

- The environment, clean air, hills, open spaces
- Cuyahoga River, proximity to river
- Trees, forests
- Biodiversity (plants and animals)
- Clean community

Community Facilities and Services as expressed by:

- Walking/hiking trails through the woods, Headwaters trail
- Public schools
- Good roads make it easy to get to metropolitan areas
- Availability of libraries in the area
- Superior Fire Department/EMS
- Township maintenance of roads
- Well water in Township

Weaknesses of Hiram Township

- The distance from the sheriff's office
- The in-harmonious compatibility with Hiram College and Hiram Village
- The lack of a Town Center or central meeting place for the community
- The lack of small businesses (which would create a more solid tax base for the community.)
- The lack of effective communication with Township residents.
- The vague language in the Township zoning code limits opportunities within the community.
- The Township has limited funding.
- The current town hall is not handicap accessible.

Opportunities for Improvement within Hiram Township

Window of Opportunity to Chart a Course to a Sustainable Future as expressed by:

- Concern for the future, opportunity to plan future development, people want Hiram to be something other than just another suburb
- Better collaboration and more clear language in the zoning code
- The need for better handicap accessibility at the Town hall and other town meeting venues.
- The addition of pavilions and picnic tables for public use in parks and other public areas
- The addition of bike lanes to the township roads
- Increasing the effectiveness of the Township's working relationship with Hiram College
- Raise more awareness of Agricultural Sustainability within the Township
- Collaborate with Hiram College on a recycling plan
- Promote Agricultural tourism within the Township
- Promote and improve upon the facilities at Camp Hi and Camp Asbury
- Promote the need for the passing of a county wide park levy by demonstrating its potential effects for Hiram Township
- Extend the walking/biking trails located within the Township and connect them to surrounding trails.
- Continue preservation/conservation efforts of agricultural and open space within the Township
- Take advantage of social media to educate the public and keep them up to date on issues that affect the Township and its surrounding areas.
- Increase the support for the public school districts of Hiram Township.

Critical Issues Facing Hiram Township

The following is the initial list of critical issues facing the Township as expressed and prioritized by small group participants. A number of the issues are interrelated.

Issues Facing Hiram Township

- a. Hiram College wanting to annex more of the Township to the Village
- b. High density development within the Township
- c. Loss of farmland
- d. Loss of forests
- e. Loss of waterways
- f. Economic threat due to lack of jobs and opportunities in the Township
- g. Lack of funding on the local, federal, and state levels
- h. Lack of funding for schools, transportation, and extracurricular programs
- i. Lack of local jobs
- j. The uncertainty of the effects of fracking on roads, water supply, and other critical amenities
- k. The threat of increasing drug use county wide

B. COMMUNITY ATTITUDE SURVEY

A mail survey of the Hiram Township residents was conducted during February 2013. This survey is one of the tools used to gauge community thoughts about land use, community and economic development and preservation/conservation issues. The questions contained in the survey was developed by the Hiram Township Comprehensive Plan Advising Committee. The survey was conducted online and was taken by a total of 41 people living in Hiram Township. Participants were asked a variety of questions to ascertain their opinions on a number of topics such as the desired locations for various land uses, design concepts for development, expansion for central utilities, community service needs, zoning initiatives, cooperative governmental agreements, and methods to protect and preserve both farmland and open space areas.

Methodology:

This survey was conducted online. The survey was open for township residents to take and submit via Survey Monkey. There were a total of 41 Township residents who completed the survey.

Summary of Findings:

- Almost 25% of the population has lived in the township less than five years and about 22% percent have been residents for 21-30 years.
- 100% of respondents indicated that they own the property/home that they live in.
- Around 27% indicated that they own between 1.1 and 3 acres of land
- Just over 70% indicated that they were college graduates and one third of them have an advanced degree.
- The majority of the residents (75.6%) are between the ages of 30 and 59.
- Twenty-two (22%) percent classify themselves as professionals while 24% say they are retired and 3% are engaged as full time farmers.
- 43.9% said that either they or their land were involved in farming activities. Twenty-two percent of the land owners rent to someone else while 72% are part-time farmers of their land.
- Twelve percent (12%) work within Portage County but nearly 21% work in Cuyahoga County. 24% percent work within the Township. 41% indicated that they drive less than 10 miles one way to work.
- The top three reasons for living in Hiram township were rural character/small community atmosphere (97.5%), Friendly Citizens (65.85%), and Historical Character (43.9%)
- The community members identified agricultural fields, open fields, and trees along roadways/wooded lots to be the most important characteristics for a rural countryside and small town setting.
- 88% of respondents agreed that Hiram Township's agricultural production industry is important and 83% agreed that it needs to be protected.
- 93% agreed that historic and archeological resources should be protected

- 95% agreed that the Township should make efforts to preserve natural areas, open space, and parklands.
- 68% of respondents claimed that local recreational areas and facilities met their needs.
- When asked if the roads, bridges, and highways were well maintained, 75% agreed that they were.
- 29.3% of the people believed that traffic congestion and noise were a problem in the township.
- Half of the residents did not see a need for city water in the Township.
- On the question of central sewers Seventy-three percent (73%) felt that sewers should not be made available just anywhere in the township to accommodate future industrial or commercial development While 20% had no opinion.
- Over 95% said that Hiram should maintain its rural character.
- 44% of respondents believed that Design management of developments is not being handled properly in Hiram Township with 24% offering no opinion.
- Nearly 66% of the community is concerned with hydraulic fracking being done in the Township and 78% are concerned with injection wells.
- When asked the importance of the relationship between Hiram Village and the Township, 90% of people agreed that it was important that they work together to solve mutual problems. When asked the same question about the relationship between Hiram College and the Township, 88% agreed on the importance of the relationship.
- 93% feel that Hiram does not need commercial discount stores nor do they need more retail and general merchandising stores. And 73% did not see the need for more professional offices located in the Township.
- Over 60% of respondents were against commercial and industrial development in Hiram Township, and believed that zoning laws should not be altered to allow these types of developments. Over 50% were opposed to light industrial uses that require are activities to take place in one building.
- 92.6% were opposed to the urbanization of Hiram Township.
- When discussing the types of developments that should be encouraged in Hiram Township, 90% believed that Single-family detached homes should be encouraged and 46% believed that Conservation/open space residential developments with 40% open space should be encouraged as well.
- The majority of respondents agreed that the minimum lot size (2.5 acres) and minimum square footage for new homes (1,500 square feet) should remain the same.
- The majority of respondents found PARTA's transportation services unimportant in Hiram Township and seen no need for any additional/specific transportation services.
- Most residents believe that the Hike & Bike trail should be extended and expanded within Hiram Township and connected to surrounding trails.
- Half of the township residents believed that Hiram's county and township roads should have bike lanes, while the other half did not.
- An overwhelming majority of residents felt that there was no need for sidewalks on county or township roads as it would be too costly to maintain and interfere with Hiram Township's rural character.

Summary of Open Ended Questions

Question 28:

Are there any issues of concern that you feel should be brought to the attention of the Hiram Township Trustees?

1. Residents are extremely concerned with the effects of hydraulic fracturing.
 - a. They feel uneducated about the possible effects of fracking on the environment (water supply, air quality, road conditions, property conditions, etc.)
 - b. They feel that the laws surrounding the allowance of fracking are outdated in the Township and need addressed.
 - c. They feel that the township should better inform the residents on fracking effects, policies, and where wells are currently located and where new wells may be drilled.
2. Residents believe that the Township should work better with Hiram College and that some of the college's facilities (such as the recreation center) should be available to them at a discounted rate.
3. Residents are concerned that Hiram College is threatening the rural character of their community.
4. Residents feel a need for better communication from the trustees
5. Residents would like to see better township facilities for events such as picnics and reunions.
6. Residents feel that the township needs to better maintain trees and shrubbery that line the roads to improve visibility of drivers so that major accidents and power outages can be prevented.

Question 29:

What do you think are the three most important issues facing Hiram Township?

1. The effects of "fracking" and the increase in wells
2. The threat of the development and the expansion of Hiram College
3. The poor relationship/communication between Hiram Township, Hiram Village, and Hiram College
4. The protecting of Hiram Township's rural character by improved regional development
5. Conservation of Hiram Township's natural environment
6. Reducing crime and drug use/the township needs its own police department
7. Maintain and improve the schools in the district
8. Hiram Township's Trustees need to be more efficient

Question 30:

Please provide any concerns you may have regarding Hiram Township's services (i.e. roads, fire, rescue squad, recreation, etc.)

1. Most of the resident's believe that all services are adequate, up to date, and have no concerns
2. There needs to be more recreational facilities, possibly join with the college to provide more
3. Services are adequate now, but with the addition of more fracking wells, they may not be able to keep up their good service (maintain road conditions; have properly trained fire/EMS to deal with possible fracking incidents, etc.)
4. There needs to be more community space (parks, a building available for residents to rent out, etc.)
5. More community events that are in Hiram (not Garrettsville or Mantua) and more advertising/publicity for these events.
6. Other concerns included the lack of Hiram's own police department, results of fracking, high amounts of roadside litter, some roads need maintenance, protection of the natural environment, a better relationship with the college and the village, and some areas in the Township should have access to sewer and water.

D. SUMMARY OF ALL SURVEYS

The results of these surveys indicate that the community is primarily concerned with the following issues:

1. Managing Growth/Preserving Small Town Charm and Rural Character

Hiram's greatest concern as expressed through the Assets and Critical Issues Identification Survey is *the need to manage growth and preserve and protect the rural and small town character of Hiram Township.*

The results of the Attitude Survey indicate that 97.5% of those responding want the Township to maintain its rural character. The concern of many residents is that rapid uncontrolled growth will negatively impact the community unless techniques are implemented to balance the effects of development with the manmade landscape and the natural environment.

2. Farmland/Open Space Preservation and Protection

Approximately 83% of the respondents of the Attitude Survey felt that agriculture in the township needed to be protected. This can be accomplished by ensuring that zoning laws are amended to aid in the protection of this space. Also by, promoting agricultural sustainability and agro-tourism within the township to raise awareness to what a great asset the farmland and open space is to the area.

3. Development of Hiram Township's Rural Countryside

Support for the preservation of open space and farmlands echoed strongly in each of the surveys. The majority of the respondents in the Attitude Survey identified farms, cows and horses in fields, road front trees, rivers and ponds, wooded lots and winding roads as important characteristics for maintaining a rural countryside.

To maintain the open space in Hiram Township, 60% of the residents agreed that the current zoning laws were sufficient to accomplish this goal and that the laws should not be altered to allow for future developments that could destroy the rural feel of the Township.

4. Non-residential Development/Utility Expansion – Hiram Township

The Attitude Survey indicated that just over half of the public felt that it is unnecessary to have any type of industrial or commercial developments within Hiram Township. Opinions were very high in opposition (93%) to allow for commercial discount stores and general merchandising stores. The development of either commercial or industrial uses within the Township would require the extension of central utilities, which more than half of the surveyed residents were opposed to.

E. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Through evaluating the results of the critical issues and assets survey of residents, community attitude survey of residents, and from planning committee discussions, some general themes or guiding principles have emerged. These principles serve as a general framework for more detailed goals, planning policies and implementation measures to achieve the future desired by the Hiram communities. These guiding principles were adopted by the Hiram Township Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, April 2013.

1. We recognize the value and role of agriculture in our communities. It is part of our heritage, our local economy, scenic and natural resource base and significantly contributes to the rural character and sense of place we cherish. We further recognize the need to protect productive farmland and the agriculture industry in our community for this and future generations.
2. Conservation of our natural heritage and resources is critical to a sustainable future. We must minimize our impact on the natural environment, the use of our land and water resources, including forests, and protect our environmentally sensitive areas from degradation. Maintaining and enhancing our natural environment makes Hiram Township a more livable, beautiful and healthy community.

3. Our man-made heritage enriches our community and contributes to the fabric of our community, our sense of place, and makes us feel connected to our past. These resources, such as historic homes, barns, college buildings, and stone row fences, make Hiram Township a special place to live. We must strive to protect and maintain these valuable resources and ensure that new development is built in a manner that is sensitive to and compatible with these resources.
4. Growth in our community must occur in a manner that is consistent with the character we wish to preserve and perpetuate-small town and rural. Development within the township must minimize the impacts on rural landscapes, natural environment and agricultural lands, open spaces and greenways that contribute to the rural character.
5. Hiram College is an integral part of our identity and significantly contributes to the quality of life for our residents by providing jobs, programs, services and opportunities for enrichment of our lives and the educational advancement of our youth. As the largest employer and land use in the community, the College must continue to be a strong partner with the Township in building a livable, thriving community.
6. We must have a fiscally healthy community in order to provide the services and quality of life our residents desire without creating financial burdens for future generations.
7. We recognize that having a livable community requires that we insure that a range of housing and services are available that meet the needs of all of our community's citizens.
8. We recognize the right of private property ownership is also critical to the growth and stability of a flourishing and viable community. Continued investment in and maintenance of property is important to the quality of life of all residents, business and industry. We must strive to insure that actions taken by Hiram Township's government will balance and protect the rights of the individual with the public good, so that citizens continue to maintain and invest in their property and prepare for their future, thereby contributing to the future of Hiram.

(Note: Property owners also have an obligation to the community to maintain their property and manage their land and buildings in a manner that will not be detrimental to their neighbors or the community)

CHAPTER 3 HIRAM'S PAST

*"The pioneers who first broke ground here accomplished a work unlike that which will fall to the lot of any succeeding generation. The hardships they endured, the obstacles they encountered, the life they led, the peculiar qualities they needed in their undertaking, and the traits of character developed by their work, stand alone in our history."*¹

History not only provides an explanation of the significant events of a community's past, but also may be used to understand the current state of affairs. Dynamic social, economic, cultural, and environmental factors influence the shape and character of a community. A review of the community's history demonstrates its effectiveness to manage opportunities and deal with challenges. In this way, we may draw conclusions to explain why the present is, and what the future might be.

A. A BRIEF HISTORY OF OHIO'S TOWNSHIPS

A Frenchman named Robert Cavalier De LaSalle first explored Ohio in 1699, but westward expansion did not truly become a goal until after the Revolutionary War. The Land Ordinance of 1785 was passed to facilitate westward expansion. The Ordinance required a survey of the land and the establishment of orderly township boundaries, to ease the buying and selling of the land. What is now northeastern Ohio was surveyed in 1786 and became the Western Reserve of Connecticut. Land companies such as the Connecticut Land Company sold these organized blocks of land to speculators and settlers. However, this area's history traces back to a much older time.

B. THE ORIGINAL SETTLERS

With several perspectives of American history, much of the attention is given to the actions of Anglo-Americans. However, the influence of early Indian activity not only modified the past, but also will shape the framework of this rural region in the future. Lands deemed as having archaeological importance should be preserved and respected. As we delve into Hiram's more recent and well-known settlers, it is important to recognize that this area has an archeological significance. These locations, which may date back up to 15,000 years, are examined more in Section E of this chapter.

C. EARLY HIRAM HISTORY

Hiram Township's original proprietors were Free and Accepted Masons from the Village of Lebanon, Connecticut. According to *Portage Heritage*, legend has it that when they met, the man who provided the rum punch got to name the Township. They named their newly acquired "western possessions" in honor of a fellow Mason. Colonel Daniel Tilden is said to have given the toast: "May peace, prosperity, and brotherly love prevail for all time throughout our

¹ Statement made by James A. Garfield, Mark Roberts, Early Hiram History, 1999.

possessions to such an extent as to add luster to our patron saint, Hiram, whose name we now give" (p. 371). Nine men contributed amounts ranging from \$80.23 to \$3,600.00 for the purchase of the Town 5, Range 7 of Portage County. Hiram Township was purchased from the Connecticut Land Company for a total of \$12,903.23, or about \$0.82 per acre. Most of these men made their investment with no intention of settling here, and instead quickly resold the land at a profit. Of the original proprietors, Daniel Tilden is the only one to come to Hiram. However, as more settlers came, the price of land increased. By 1813, land was sold for \$4.76 per acre. The same lot was sold soon after for \$7.53 per acre!

Hiram Township was originally laid out in 50 large, symmetrical lots. Numbering began with 1 in the northwest corner, proceeding west-to-east for the first row, then reversed east-to-west for the second row, and so on until lot 50 was reached in the southwest corner. There were 10 rows in all, 5 lots across. The Township Center, which became Hiram Village, was located on lots 23 and 28.

It is not known for certain whom the first persons to come to Hiram with the intention of staying were. In 1802, Daniel Tilden's son Mason Tilden came with his brother-in-law Elijah Mason and a man named Elisha Hutchinson to select their lands. That same year, John Flemings built a cabin on Lot 33 and raised a crop. He stayed about a year.

In 1803, Mason, Tilden and Hutchinson returned to build cabins and plant crops. The three discovered and named Silver Creek. However, they returned east for the winter. Over the next few years, settlers began to gradually come in from New England and Pennsylvania. Three Pennsylvania men - Richard Redden, Samuel Wirt and Jacob Wirt, came to Hiram and decided to stay. Redden bought the Flemings lot and sent for his family. The Redden family was the first to spend the winter in Hiram.

Gradually, settlers brought their families and stayed year-round. In 1804, a blacksmith named Abraham Dyson arrived and set up shop. Three years later, Lemuel Punderson established the first mill at the Hiram Rapids. By 1810, Hiram's population was around 30 residents, including a lawyer, a tailor and a cooper (barrel-maker). The year 1816 brought more "civilization" in the form of the Post Office at the Township's Center, and a log cabin schoolhouse "on the North brow of the Big Hollow." In 1817, Gersham Judson took Sarah Redden to be his wife in Hiram's first wedding. More settlers poured in, and the population reached 120 people by 1817. Deacon John D. Hazen opened the first store in 1820. After that, a succession of stores was kept at the Center.

In these early days, the only road in Northern Portage County went from Warren to Cleveland and passed through Hiram Center. Three Inns were built near the Center, including Young's Exchange and Aunt Polly's Inn, and another was built near the Rapids as a result of the stagecoach traffic.

Religion was present in early Hiram as well. The Methodists were early missionaries in Hiram and had churches both at the Center and at the Rapids. In 1835, another congregation was organized by the Disciples Church and soon became very popular. It was around this time that

Joseph Smith of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (also known as the Mormon Church) visited the area with preacher Sidney Rigdon and made many converts.

Hiram College was first established in 1850 as the Eclectic Institute. The Institute/College became a major part of Hiram's life and history, as it is today. The only building was Old Main until Ladies Hall was completed 30 years later. Ladies Hall is now called Bowler Hall, and is used as a residence hall for students. Today, the College has more than 25 buildings.

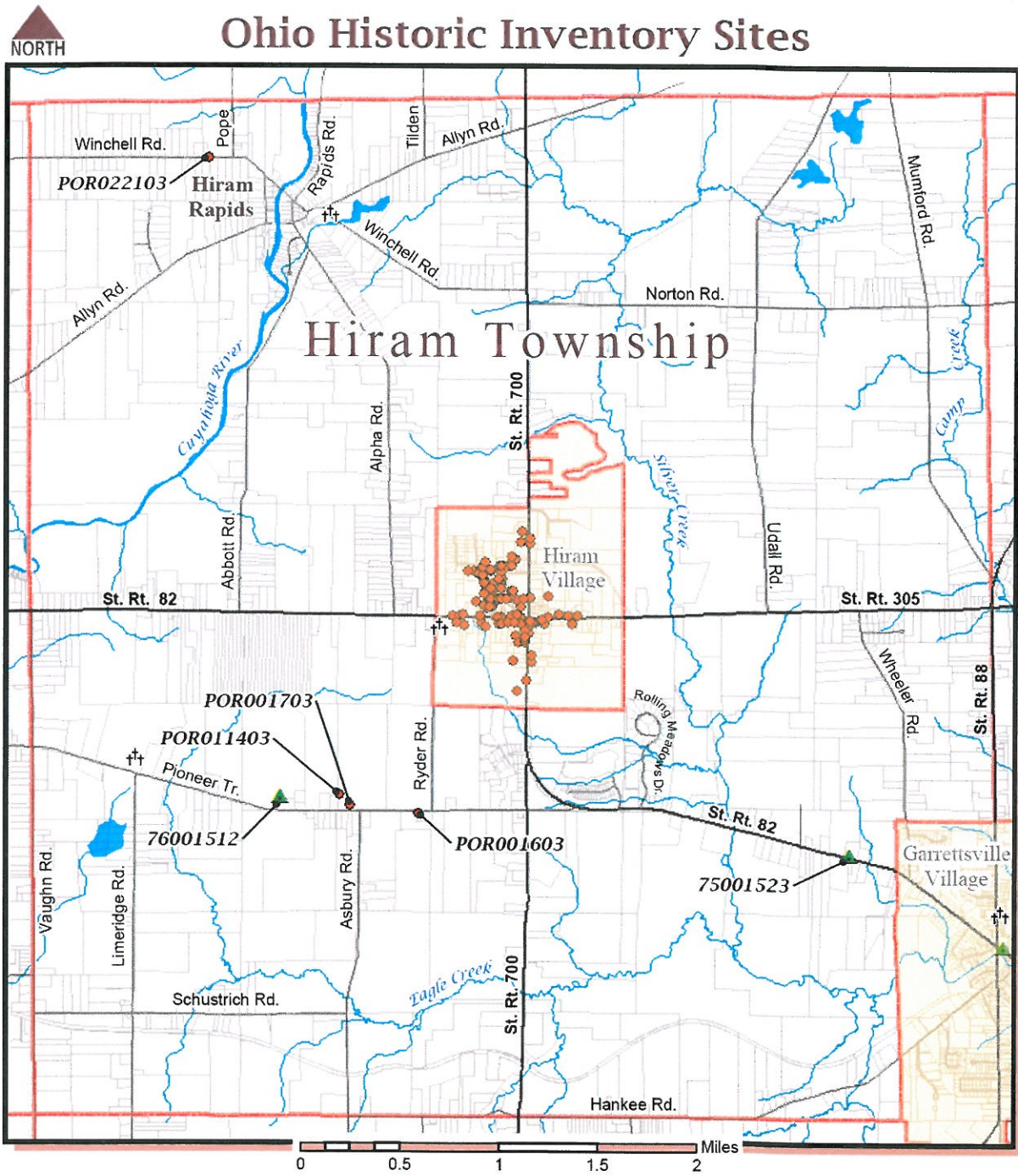
The first principal of the Institute was A. Sutton Hayden. James A. Garfield, who became Hiram's "greatest son", succeeded him. Garfield was a State Senator as well as principal of the Institute when the Civil War broke out; he joined the army until elected to Congress in 1863. After the War in 1867, the Institute became Hiram College. The College has remained a strong presence in the community through the years. Today, it blends seamlessly with the surrounding community. Many community members teach, work or attend events at Hiram College.

In 1894, the Village of Hiram was incorporated. At this time, a power plant was built to supply light and electricity to the village. Shortly after, in 1897, Hiram's fire department was organized. In 1898, after a typhoid fever epidemic resulting from a contaminated well, a waterworks system was put in place. The Hiram Telephone Company rounded out this period of infrastructure installation when it began operating in 1907.²

D. HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The activities of Hiram's early history left the township and village with a rich tradition of timeless architecture and other buildings that were the setting for important events. In fact, 109 buildings are listed with the Ohio Historic Inventory, including 2 sites under the National Register of Historic Places. Those are the Johnson House/Farm and the Thomas Young House. The Johnson House/Farm is historic because it is a significant treasure for Mormons. It was here that religious founder Joseph Smith lodged. The Thomas Young House, on the other hand, has a historic commerce and architectural significance. An entire listing of all historical building sites is contained in **Table 3-1** and **3-2** and on **Maps 3-1**. The maps show the exact locations of the historical building sites within the community. The OHI number corresponds to the numbers on the maps. For more information, please contact the Ohio Historic Inventory.

² Source: *Portage Heritage: History of an Ohio County*. The Portage County Historical Society, James B. Holm, editor. 1957.



OHIO HISTORIC INVENTORY # ●	NAME	ADDRESS
POR001603	A C Ryder House	6655 Pioneer Trail
POR001703	Jason Ryder Farm	6401 Pioneer Trail
POR011403	Mormon Church/Johnson House & Farm	6203 Pioneer Trail
POR022103	Jeremiah Crafts House	Winchell Rd

NATIONAL REGISTER # ▲	NAME
75001523	Ellenwood House
76001512	John Johnson Farm

Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Political boundary updated, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, June 2012;
 Ohio Historic Inventory, 2005.



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Map 3-1

Table 3-1
List of Historic Places – National Register

National Register Number	Name
75001523	Ellenwood House
76001512	John Johnson Farm

TABLE 3-2
LIST OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS – Ohio Historic Inventory (OHI)

OHI Number	Present Name (Past Name)	Address
POR001603	A C Ryder House	6655 Pioneer Trail
POR001703	(Jason Ryder Farm)	6401 Pioneer Trail
POR022103	(Jeremiah Crafts House)	Winchell Rd
POR011403	Mormon Church/Johnson House/Farm	6203 Pioneer Trail

E. ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES

The last large-scale survey of archeological sites in Portage County took place in 1985 and is still ongoing because constant updates are occurring. This most-recent survey can be credited to Dana Long and O.H. Pruffer. Provided is a map showing sites of archeological importance. Also included are critical areas of archeological sensitivity. The corresponding map shows their exact locations. This map was compiled from the archives at the Portage County Regional Planning Commission. Additionally, these sites were rated, according to archeological sensitivity. There were 5 distinguished time periods, each of which holds an individual significance. They are listed in chronological order:

- Palaeo-Indian 13,000 B.C. to 8,000 B.C.
- Archaic 8,000 B.C. to 1,000 B.C.
- Early Woodland-Glacial 1,000 B.C. to 100 B.C.
- Middle Woodland-Hopewell 100 B.C. to 500 A.D.
- Late Woodland and Mississippian 500 A.D. to European Arrival

Following the last Ice Age, the Palaeo-Indian period saw the commencing of settlements in Portage County. These people were hunters who sought large animals, such as the mastodon. The Archaic people were similar to the Palaeo-Indians. Farming was introduced during the Woodland era. It was at this time that communities began to form because nomadic ways of the past were no longer needed since a consistent amount of nourishment was ample in one area. The entire prehistoric progression concludes with European colonization.

The 1985 study and those before it examined what sites are the most sensitive. For instance, remains of the giant beaver and mastodon are typically found in late glacial or early post-glacial swamps and bogs. Subsequently, these sites are designated as high priority sites because of the potential to uncover the remains of not only the before mentioned animals, but also other artifacts from the Palaeo-Indian era. It is also factual that many Archaic site excavations have produced few artifacts. Therefore, sites identified as belonging to this era would be designated a lower priority as opposed to Palaeo-Indian sites.

As always, new discoveries may lead to the classification of new sites and sensitive areas.

CHAPTER 4 EXISTING CONDITIONS IN HIRAM

An examination of the local conditions and trends, with respect to the current land use patterns along with the existing environmental and natural constraints is necessary to determine the appropriate future development potential and conservation areas for Hiram. Such an examination is necessary to consider both the positive and negative impacts associated with any future land uses decisions.

In part, Hiram's land use inventory and trends, infrastructure capacity, and environmental constraints are used to develop the future alternative growth scenarios. The conclusions ultimately drawn from the review of the future alternative growth scenarios and the selection of the preferred future growth scenario is the foundation of the policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan, as established by the communities.

A. EXISTING LAND USE

Hiram Township

Hiram Township is a rural, agricultural community with large tracts of farmland and low-density residential development scattered along the frontages of the main roads. The map, *Hiram Township Land Use 2012 (Map 4-1)* illustrates that a significant amount of the Township's land is used for some form of farming activity. (See Section C., Agriculture) Large contiguous tracts of land devoted to farming are found throughout the Township.

Over the years, the landscape of the Township has been altered by spread out low-density development. **Map 4-1** shows the majority of development occurring in the Township is residential uses along the frontages of already existing roadways. This pattern of development has resulted in more and more roadway frontage, open space area and farmland being converted to residential land uses. It is a very land consumptive form of development. As open fields, wooded areas, and pasturelands along the roadways are converted for the construction of new homes, the rural character of the community will continue to be transformed into a more suburban style neighborhood if land development policies and implementation methods don't change.

Some public and private initiatives, such as Open space conservation subdivision zoning requirements, public and private conservation easements and the State of Ohio's Purchase of Development Rights Program, have been put into effect to help counter the negative affects associated with development to preserve critical natural areas. These efforts are intended to protect the natural environment, preserve open space areas, facilitate continued farming activities, and cluster development in order to maintain the

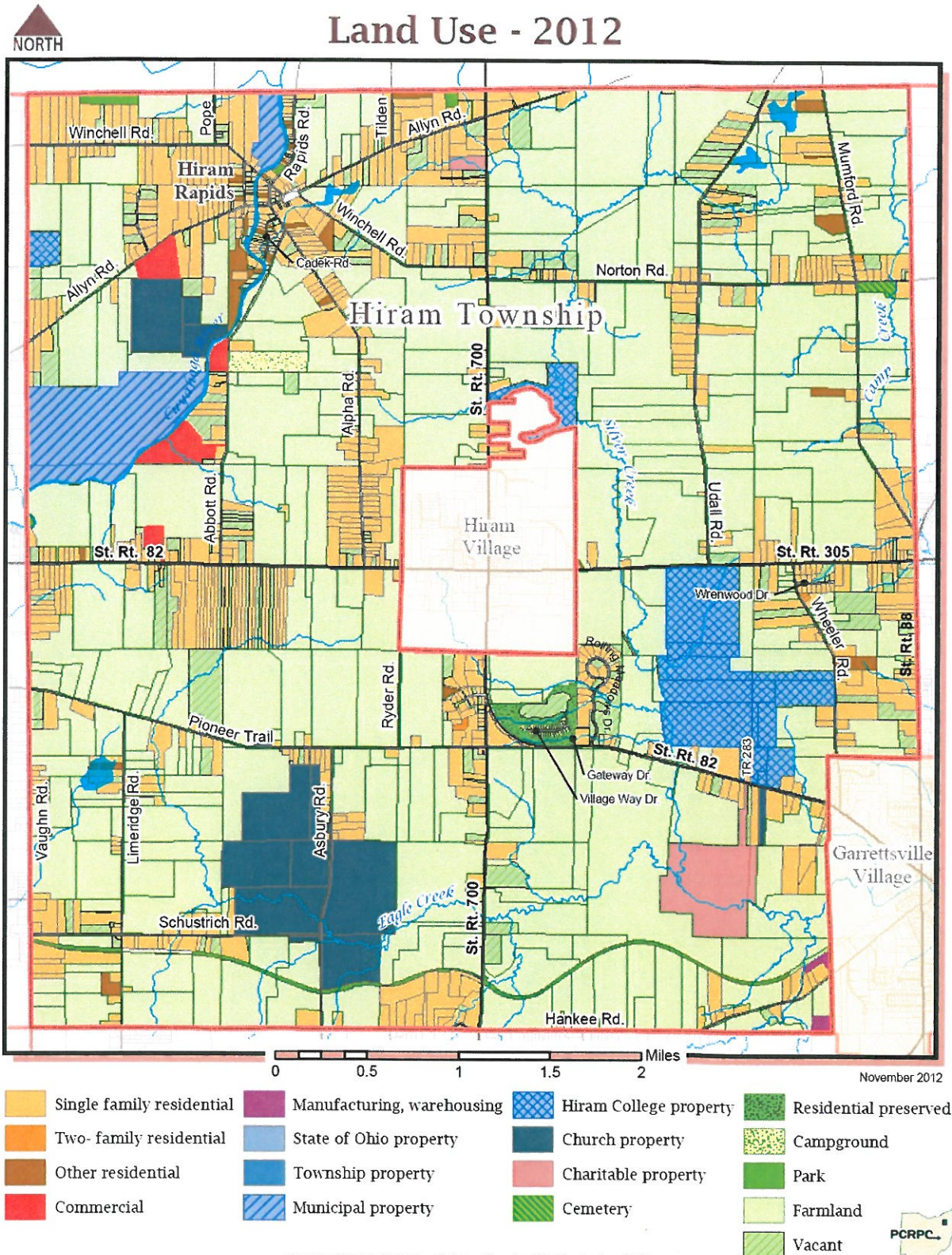
community's rural character. Over the years, many acres of land have been preserved and protected from development throughout Hiram.

Areas safeguarded from development include O.C.C.S. of St. John and the City of Akron's Cuyahoga River Protection Zone¹ in the northwest. The Hiram Biological Field Station, Camp Asbury, the conservation easement of Rolling Meadows Residential Subdivision, the Portage Park District Headwaters Hike and Bike Trail, are all located in the southern portion of the Township. For further information on these initiatives, please refer to Section E Protected Resources of Chapter 4 of this Plan.

Although commercial and industrial uses are no longer permitted within the Township, there are some non-residential establishments that still remain within the community. For instance, a commercial business engaged in selling plants, shrubs and trees is located on the south side of State Route 82 near the Mantua Township. Another commercial use is located on the south side of State Route 82, near Garrettsville Village. An industrial use is located on the eastside of State Route 700 south of the Pioneer Trail intersection. Likewise, there are two (2) separately owned parcels of land near Hankee Road that are owned by manufacturing companies located in Garrettsville Village. However, these particular lands within the Township are not used for manufacturing purposes.

Many of the Township's governmental buildings and facilities are located within the Village of Hiram. For example, the Township's Town Hall and fire station are located on Garfield Rd. There are numerous private institutions, such as churches and civic organizations located within the Township.

¹ City of Akron is protecting their source of water supply



Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Land use classification, Portage County Auditor, Jan. 2012. Political boundary updated, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, June 2012.

Map 4-1

B. PHYSICAL FEATURES, NATURAL RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

1. Physical Features

A. Topography

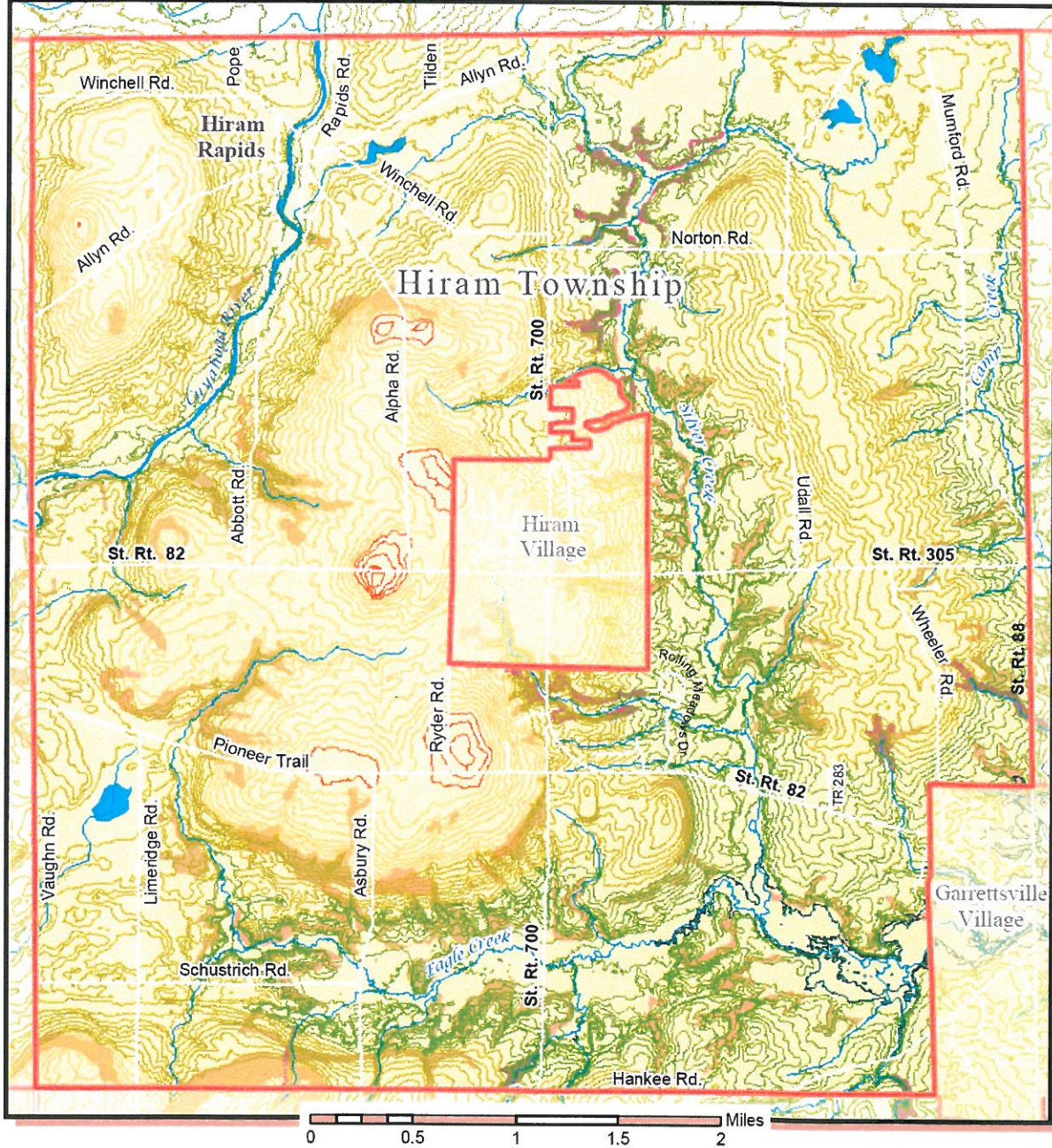
Hiram is characterized by gently rolling hills (see **Map 4-2 Topography**). The topography maps of Hiram published by the United States Department of the Interior USGS indicate the community is comprised of nearly level to gently sloping plains with several areas of steep slopes. The higher elevations are located in the western portion the Township, while the lower elevations are found in the southern portions of the Township along the banks of Eagle Creek.

The highest elevations of the Township are 1,340' and 1,330' above sea level. These prominent points are located near the Village of Hiram. The highest point in Hiram is located along State Route 82 west of Alpha Road. The second highest point in Hiram is located south of the Village along Pioneer Trail west of State Route 700. The lowest elevation in Hiram is 1,000' above sea level. This elevation is identified in the southeastern portion of the community near Garrettsville Village along Eagle Creek.

Topography determines drainage basins. The land comprising the Cuyahoga River Drainage Basin is rolling and gently sloping towards the river. Another drainage way is Silver Creek in the Mahoning River Drainage Basin. Steep slopes bound the majority of the banks along this drainage way. This drainage basin serves the Village and the center of the Township. Drainage for the eastern portion of the Township is provided by Camp Creek. The topography making up this drainage basin is similar to that of the Cuyahoga River. Lastly, the Eagle Creek drainage basin serves the southern portion of the Township. The topography of this basin widely varies. This particular basin contains both the highest and lowest elevations within Hiram.



Topography & Steep Slopes



10-foot contours		Slope	
870 - 1000	1210 - 1300	< 12%	18-25%
1010 - 1100	1310 - 1400	12-18%	25-70%
1110 - 1200			

Source: Roads, Portage County GIS Dept. , Jan 2012; Topography generalized from 40-foot LIDAR points, 2006. Slopes, SSURGO digital soil maps, 2006.



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Map 4-2

2. Natural Resources

A. Freshwater System

Freshwater is a very scarce resource. According to many scientific studies, such as the World Resources Institute, a research center based in Washington D.C., the world's water systems are in trouble! Although, 74% of the earth's surface is comprised primarily of water, freshwater makes up only 3% of the earth's entire water supply. The balance of the earth's water is labeled saltwater and predominately found in the oceans.

Approximately, 77% of the Earth's freshwater is stored as ice at the earth's poles and in other extremely cold places like high atop of mountains. Soil moisture and ground water make up another 22% of the world's freshwater supply. The remaining freshwater, making up less than 1% of the world's total, is contained in lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands and other surface bodies of water.

In October of 2000, the World Resources Institute reported that the "freshwater systems around the world are so environmentally degraded they are losing their ability to support human, animal and plant life" (Associated Press October 22, 2000). As a result of the loss of wetlands and other manmade impacts to the freshwater system, approximately 50% of the world's population will encounter water shortages by the 2025.

1. Watersheds, Surface Water, and Water Quality

Hiram has numerous water resources, mostly in the form of rivers, streams, and wetlands. There are several small lakes and ponds located throughout the Township, though none of significant size. **Map 4-3, *Watersheds and Surface Water***, shows the boundaries of the watersheds and the major surface water bodies of Hiram. The boundary of a watershed is determined by topography, with higher elevations defining the limits of individual watersheds. All surface water within a watershed drains into a particular lake, river, stream or other water body. Watersheds are nested in terms of size.

Hiram Township is located along the continental watershed divide separating rivers that drain into either the Great Lakes or the Mississippi River basins. The Cuyahoga River, designated a "State Scenic River" from Lake Rockwell north to Bridge Creek, which encompasses its length in Hiram Township, and the Grand River, designated a "State Wild and Scenic River", form two of the three major watersheds in Hiram. These two watersheds are part of the Great Lakes basin. The other major watershed, the Mahoning River watershed, drains into the Ohio River and ultimately the Mississippi River. Within each of these watersheds are smaller watersheds that drain lower order streams. For example, Eagle Creek, Silver Creek and Camp Creek are smaller watersheds within the Mahoning River watershed.

2. Groundwater (Availability/Capacity)

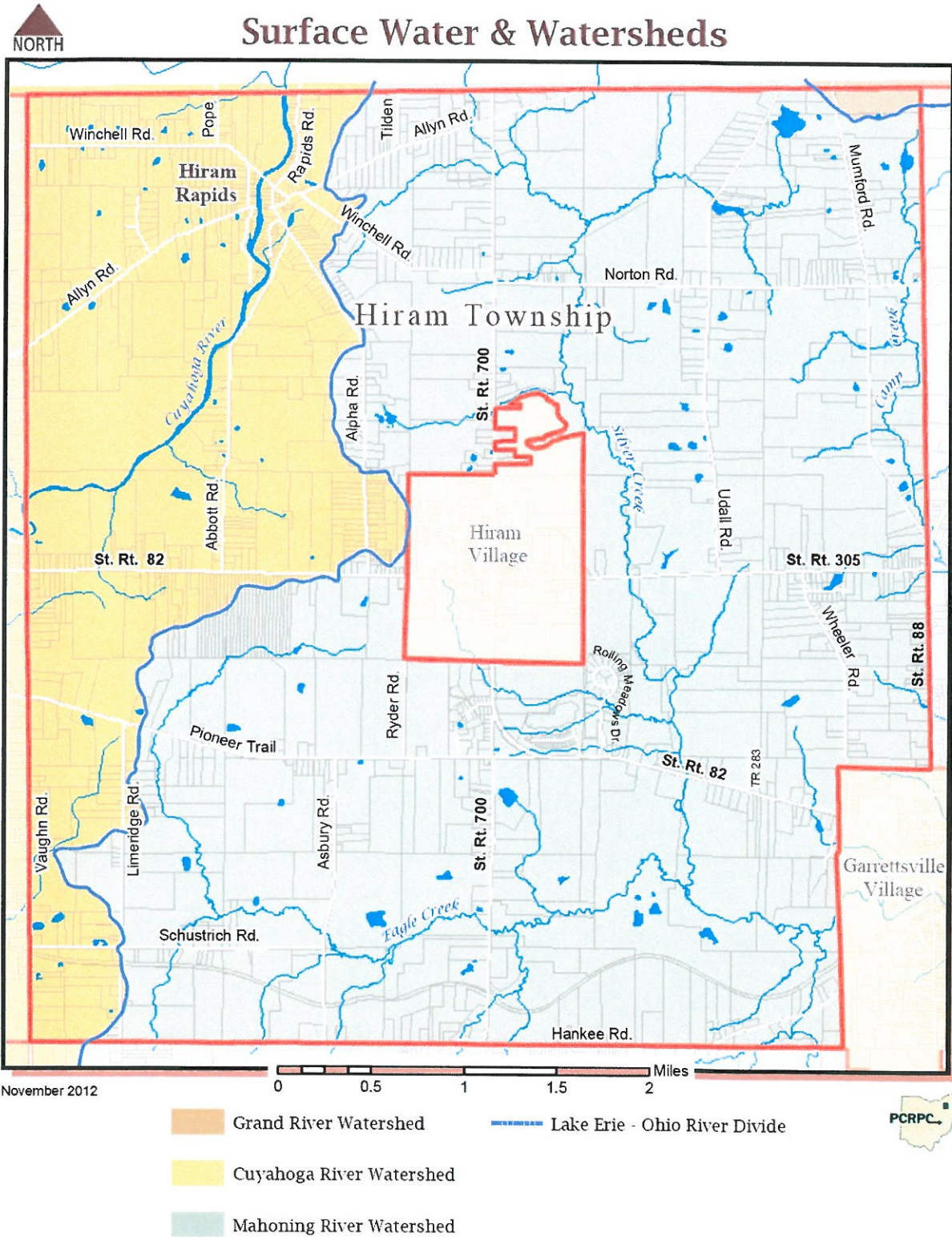
Groundwater availability, quantity and quality are important features to aid in determining the types and densities of future land use development that may occur. This is extremely important because the economic and housing base can not grow larger than the available water supply can sustain. It is very important for Hiram to protect its aquifers from pollution and man-made contamination to ensure good quality drinking water.

According to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, (see **Map 4-4, *Ground Water Resources***) the average well in Hiram Township will yield approximately 50 gallons per minute. Some wells may produce as much as 100 gallons of water per minute for short periods of time. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources has identified two distinct areas within the Township that provides or sustains greater results. These two areas were once a part of the same river valley that was formed in the pre-glacial age. During the glacial age the retreating and advancing glaciers filled and buried the river valley. The portion of the valley that was filled is identified within the Eagle Creek basin. The wells located in this area typically yield 100 gallons per minute. The other portion of the valley that was buried is located in the vicinity of Limeridge Road and Schustrich Road. The wells in this particular area are reported to yield as much as 300 gallons of water per minute.

The ground water availability in the Township is adequate for residential development and smaller commercial and industrial uses.

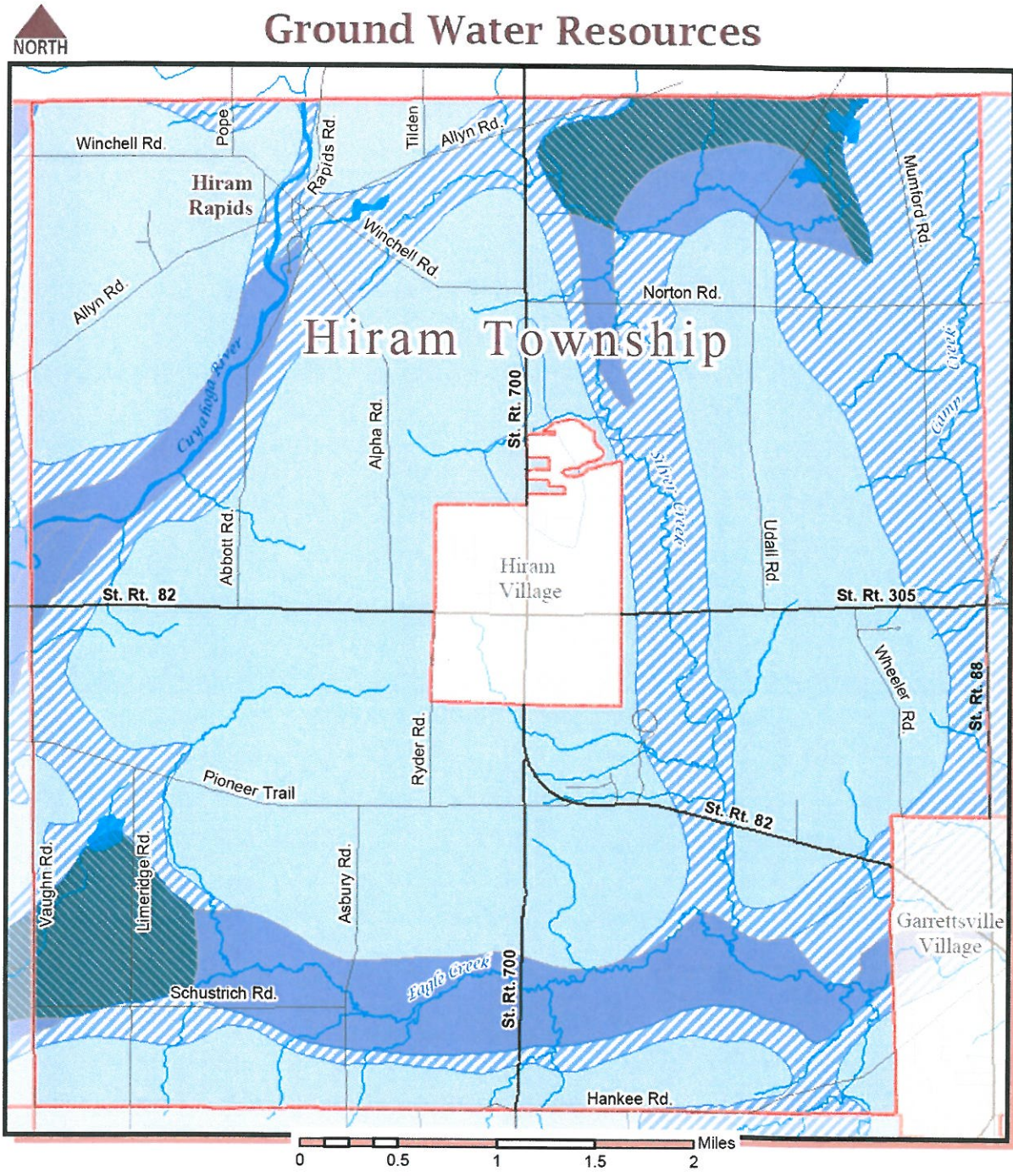
3. Land Use Impacts

Land use has a significant impact on water quality within each watershed. In order to preserve and protect the quality of water resources, communities need to control the impacts associated with urbanization, septic system failure, sedimentation/erosion pollution from development, pesticide runoff from agricultural uses, deforestation, and destruction of riparian vegetation.



Source: Roads, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012; 12-digit watersheds, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), accessed 2010.

Map 4-3



Yield from Unconsolidated Aquifers (gallons per minute)

	< 5		25 - 100
	5 - 25		100 - 500

Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Political boundary updated, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, June 2012;
 Unconsolidated aquifers of Ohio, Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources, 2000.



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Map 4-4

4. Planning Efforts to Identify Impacts

The Lake Erie Clean Water (208) Plan is being finalized by NEFCO, for the Upper Cuyahoga. The Plan identifies this portion of the River as a “Unique Regional Water” selected for priority protection. Stresses identified for this portion of the Cuyahoga River include loss of riparian vegetation and water warming due to loss of riparian vegetation or increased surface runoff. A Clean Water Plan comparable to the one being drafted for the Lake Erie basin is being started for the Ohio River basin, which should address the rivers and streams in the Mahoning River watershed.

When finalized, the Lake Erie Basin Clean Water Plan will recommend strategies for wastewater management, management of non-point sources of pollution and home sewage disposal systems, and protection of unique regional waters as well as groundwater drinking supplies. Phase II of the Storm Water National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program will require operators of municipal separate storm sewer systems to have plans in place by March 2003 to address storm water control in their communities and construction sites will face more stringent requirements.

5. Conservation Efforts

The community has long recognized the importance of protecting and preserving its surface water resources. As far back as 1900, Hiram Rapids residents disrupted an attempt to blast bedrock along the river near the county line to drain the land upstream more efficiently (called the “Onion Wars”). Continued protection of the river and stream resources in Hiram Township is being addressed by local and state agencies, including the EPA and the Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning & Development Organization (NEFCO), as well as numerous grass roots organizations.

In addition, several easements have been established along the river to preserve riparian habitat, one near State Route 82 and the others closer to Hiram Rapids. Because the Cuyahoga is part of the City of Akron drinking water supply, Akron retains strong interest in preserving the water quality. It owns several large parcels along the Cuyahoga in Hiram Township for the purpose of protecting the watershed. The Upper Cuyahoga River Task Force acts as roundtable for sharing information about protection of the Cuyahoga River in this area. The combined efforts of these groups will help protect the water resources throughout the Hiram area.

B. Wetlands and Hydric Soils

1. Wetlands

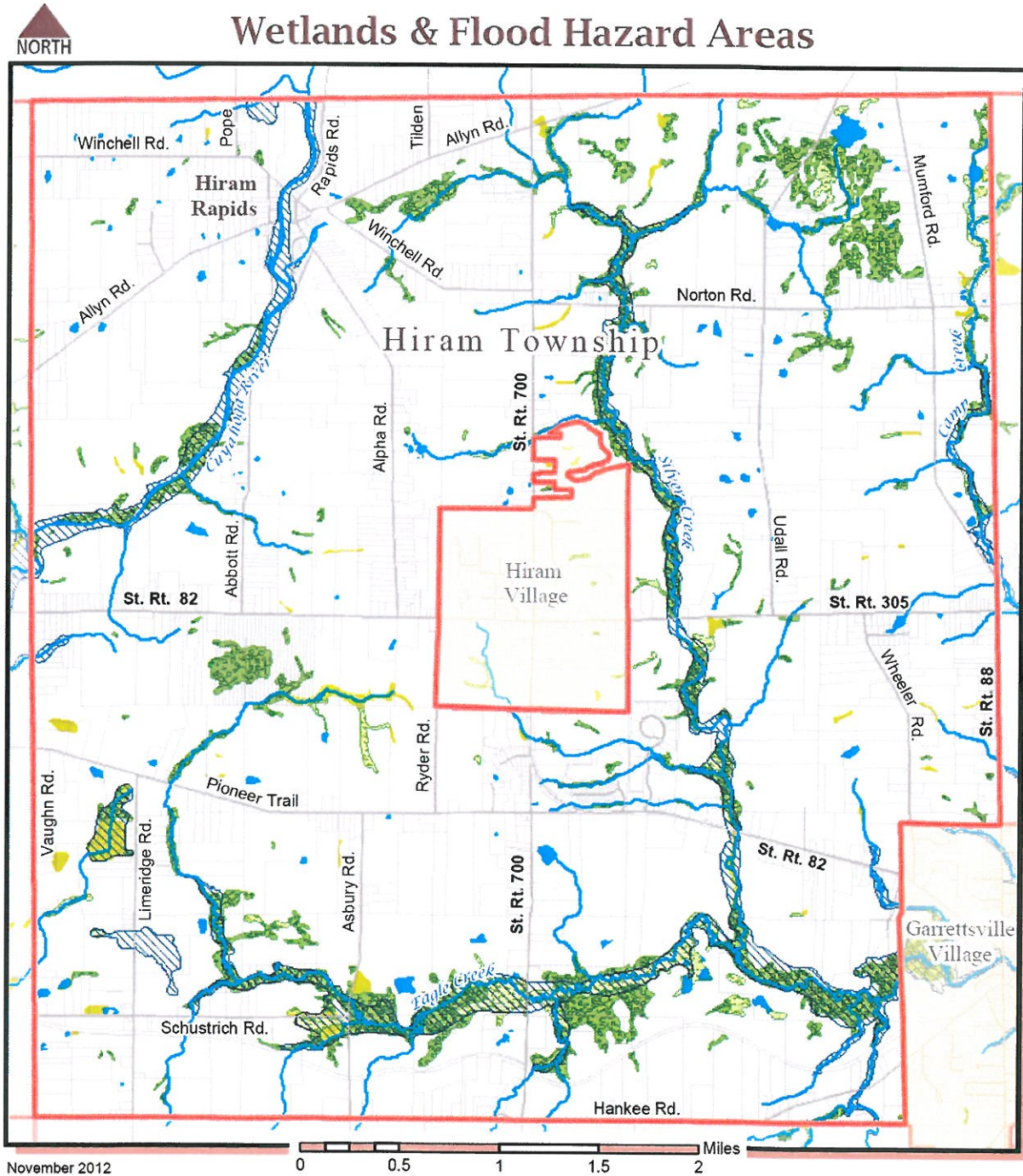
Wetlands are an essential part of the freshwater ecosystem. According to William Mitsch, a professor of natural resources at Ohio University reports “Wetlands are the kidneys of the landscape”. Aside from providing a natural habit for various plant and animal species, wetlands act as filters for replenishing the groundwater.





Wetland is a term used to describe areas of land saturated by water at or near the surface. The moisture content of the soil is high throughout various periods of the year to support hydrophytic vegetation. It is important to note that wetlands are not just swamps surrounded by cattails, as some people are led to believe, but wetlands can actually be covered with forest. Therefore, it is important to have the soil and vegetation tested to confirm the existence of a wetland.

Over 220 million acres of wetlands existed in the continental United States during the 17th Century. Today, less than half of the original wetlands remain, as a result of being converted to agriculture and urban uses. In addition, wetlands have been filled in efforts to prevent diseases usually attributed to mosquitoes. California and Iowa have lost nearly 99% of their original wetlands. Ohio has lost over 90% of its estimated 5 million acres of wetlands since being settled.

According to the Ohio Wetlands Inventory data, wetlands are scattered throughout Hiram. The majority of the wetlands are located in close proximity to the creeks, tributaries and along the Cuyahoga River. **Map 4-5, Wetlands**, uses 1987 data compiled from Ohio Wetlands Inventory to illustrate the major concentrations of wetlands still found in Hiram. The wetlands are grouped based on the characteristics of the areas that the wetlands are found in. These categories include upland areas, shallow marsh areas, shrub and scrub areas, meadows comprised of wetlands, and wetlands that are farmed.

Upland areas are identified as areas of transition between non-wetland areas and areas where the soil and vegetation types clearly indicate the presence of wetlands. Upland areas are found on higher elevations where the water table may be found at or near the surface (see Figure below). Upland areas do not contain hydric soils, however, development of these should be monitored because of the long lasting impacts to the natural environment and the possibility that undetected wetlands may be found in these areas.

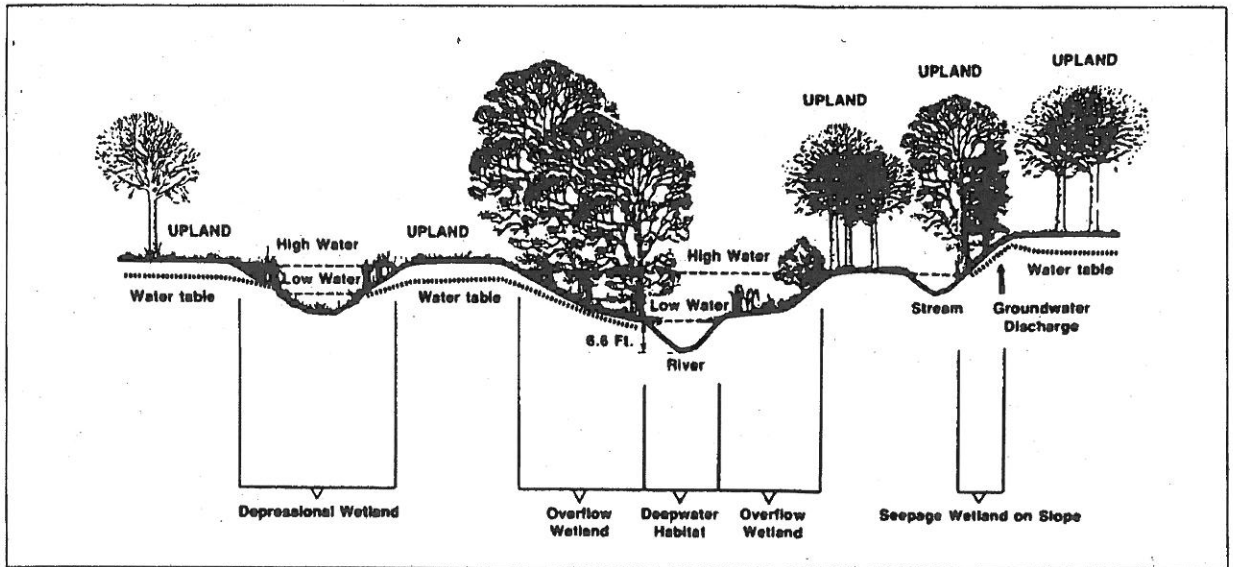


- Wetland Type**
-  Palustrine Emergent Marsh
 -  Palustrine Scrib/Shrub
 -  Palustrine Forested
 -  Flood Hazard Area

Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012; Wetlands, Portage Co. Wetlands Inventory, from 2000 aerial and orthophotos, 2004; Flood hazard areas, FEMA FIRM update, 2008



Map 4-5



Source: Protecting Nontidal Wetlands, American Planning Association, Planning Advisory Report 412/413, Chicago Illinois, 1986

By: David G. Burke, Erik J. Meyers, Ralph W. Tiner, Jr., Hazel Groman: Page 3.

Concentrations of shallow marsh and wet meadow wetlands are predominantly located adjacent to surface water bodies. The depth of the water contained in these types of wetlands will vary throughout the year. In some instances the wetland may be flooded yearlong or the water may be pooled on the surface for only a few weeks in early spring.

Certain types of tree cover such as red maple, ashes, northern white cedar, black spruce and larch may identify forested wetlands. Wooded areas on hydric soils may actually be forested wetlands. Development within these areas should require testing to determine if undetected wetlands are located in these areas.

2. Hydric Soils

Map 4-5 also identifies numerous locations of hydric soil concentrations within Hiram. Hydric soils present moderate to severe limitations for various types of structures and other improvements, primarily due to the soil's high moisture content. Plus, hydric soils are indicators of areas that may upon proper testing be reclassified as wetland areas. These soils primarily transverse the western half of Hiram from Geauga County in the north to Freedom Township in the south. Scattered hydric soil concentrations are identified throughout the balance of the community.

C. Soils

Analysis of soil characteristics is integral to development in order to determine what land uses the soil will support and what affects a land use may have on the natural environment.

Hiram Township contains six different soil associations according to the *Soil Survey of Portage County, Ohio*, compiled by the USDA Soil Conservation Service. The location of these associations is shown on **Map 4-6, Soils and Soils Associations**. A soil association contains more than one soil type - it contains defined proportions of different soils in a pattern unique to that association. The same soil can be found in various associations, in different amounts and patterns.

1. Mahoning-Ellsworth Association

The Mahoning-Ellsworth Association covers nearly all of the eastern half of Hiram Township as well as a small area of the southwest quadrangle. The association contains soils formed mostly in glacial till on upland areas. Mahoning-Ellsworth is generally level or gently sloping, with shallow depressions and drainage ways. Soils range from moderately well drained to somewhat poorly drained.

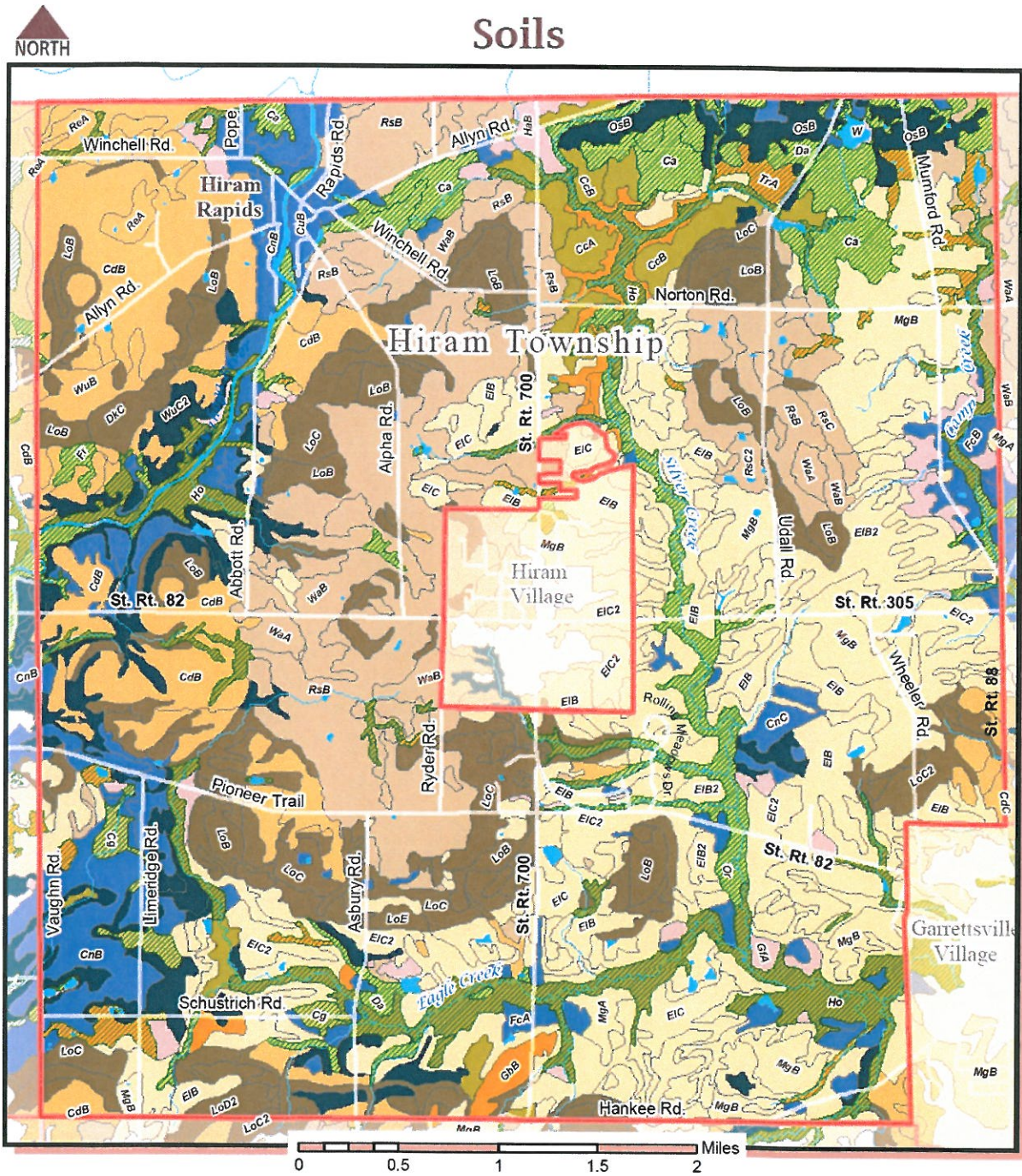
The main soil limitation for the Mahoning-Ellsworth Association is seasonal wetness, especially in the Mahoning soil. Ponding is common, and farm uses require artificial drainage. Seasonal wetness and slow permeability limit the effectiveness of septic tank filter fields. Ellsworth soils have fewer limitations for farms and building sites because their natural drainage is better. Trumbull and especially Holly soils tend to be limited by extreme wetness and poor drainage, while Chili soils can be droughty for farm uses.

2. Canfield-Ravenna-Wooster Association

The Canfield-Ravenna-Wooster association covers about an eighth of the Township, along the western border. This association contains soils that formed mostly in glacial till on uplands. It is nearly level to sloping, and drainage varies from well drained to somewhat poorly drained. Dairy farming is a prevalent agricultural use on this soil association in Portage County.

The Canfield-Ravenna-Wooster association contains a fragipan, which is a loamy, brittle subsurface area. The fragipan is not very porous, and contains mostly silt or very fine sand. It often appears cemented, and restricts roots. The fragipan is very hard when dry, and when wet tends to rupture suddenly under pressure.

Limitations of this association include temporary or seasonal wetness on Canfield and Ravenna soils. Moderately slow to slow permeability in the fragipan limits non-farm uses on all three soils. Erosion due to non-farm development must be controlled or sedimentation results.



- Major Soil Associations**
- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hydric soils | Wadsworth, Rittman | Sebring, Holly, Caneadea |
| Mahoning-Ellsworth | Loudonville, Mitiwanga, Dekalb | Carlisle |
| Canfield, Ravenna, Wooster | Chili | Other hydric* |
| Remsen, Geeburg, Trumbull | Chili, Oshtemo, Wooster | Other soils* |
- * Not part of a major soil association

Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012; Soils, SSURGO digital soils, 2006.



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Map 4-6

3. Wadsworth-Rittman Association

The Wadsworth-Rittman association is the second most prevalent soil association in Hiram, covering a large portion of the central Township and three quarters of Hiram Village. This upland association is generally level to gently sloping, with sloping areas found especially near waterways. The Wadsworth-Rittman soils have a dense, compact fragipan that is not very porous and restricts roots. This fragipan is very hard when dry, and when wet tends to rupture suddenly under pressure.

The most severe limitation of the Wadsworth-Rittman association is wetness. Temporary wetness is common, caused by lateral movement of water along the top of the fragipan. Wadsworth soil is also subject to severe seasonal wetness. Slow permeability is a major limitation to septic tank fields and other non-farm uses.

4. Chili Association

Chili association soils are found in Hiram Township along the Cuyahoga River and in the southwest corner. The Chili association formed mostly in glacial outwash on terraces. It is found mainly in the valleys of the Cuyahoga River and its tributaries. Chili association soils are formed in loamy, sandy, and gravelly material or glacial till. They are very permeable and well drained.

Chili soils and other well-drained soils in the association have few limitations for most farm and non-farm uses due to their good drainage and topography. Droughtiness, and erosion on steeper slopes, are two concerns. Also, septic tanks may pollute groundwater here, especially at higher densities.

5. Loudonville-Mitiwanga-Dekalb Association

Three small areas of this Association are scattered throughout the western half of the Township, most notably near the Hiram Rapids and near Eagle Creek. These distinct areas are usually broad, elongated hilltops at a higher elevation. Loudonville-Mitiwanga-Dekalb association has moderately deep soils, formed in loamy material overlying sandstone bedrock.

Limitations include shallowness to bedrock, which is especially limiting for excavation and construction. Severe erosion hazard on steeper slopes is another limitation. Mitiwanga soils are limited by seasonal wetness.

6. Sebring-Holly-Caneadea Association

This slow-draining association formed in lacustrine and alluvial floodplain material. These soils are nearly level to gently sloping. Streams are usually slow-moving, with a low gradient. Undrained areas are ponded for much of the year. Within Hiram, the Sebring-Holly-Caneadea Association is located in the southeast corner of the Township along Eagle Creek and Silver Creek, and again in the north-central Township near Silver Creek.

The Sebring-Holly-Caneadea Association is severely limited by excessive wetness, long periods of ponding, poor stability and softness when saturated. Holly soils are prone to seasonal flooding, and their location along Eagle Creek in southern Hiram Township indicates flood hazard. Artificial drainage is difficult in flat areas. This association is well-suited for pond sites and conservation areas.

D. Oil and Gas

Exploration for oil and gas resources is very active in Hiram. **Map 4-7, *Oil and Gas Wells***, shows the location of oil and natural gas wells in Hiram as of 1997, according to the ODNR, Division of Oil and Gas. These wells are found throughout the Hiram landscape.

The majority of oil and gas wells represent exploration into the very rich deposits found the Berea and Clinton formations. The Berea formation lies approximately 2,000 feet below the earth's surface, while the Clinton formation is found more than 7,000 feet below the earth's surface. Anyone interested in drilling for oil and gas must have a minimum of 20 acres for the wells drilled in the Berea formation and 40 acres in the Clinton formation. Land may be leased from surrounding property owners to meet these minimum acreage requirements.

State Law does not permit the Township to prohibit the use of land for oil and gas exploration, although it can regulate various aspects of oil and gas operations as it relates to health and safety issues. Both the Village's and the Township's Zoning Resolutions contain a comprehensive set of oil and gas well regulations, including maintenance of the site and minimum separation distances between wells, storage devices and buildings.

Oil and gas operations can have far-reaching effects on various land uses. First of all, the noise associated with equipment can result in complaints from surrounding property owners. The corresponding truck traffic can negatively affect the condition of the roads. Plus, the number and location of active oil and gas wells and equipment can affect the location of future development in Hiram.

With the increasing development of Utica Shale and potential of injection wells in the area, the township should stay current on best management practices as oil and gas continues to be developed.

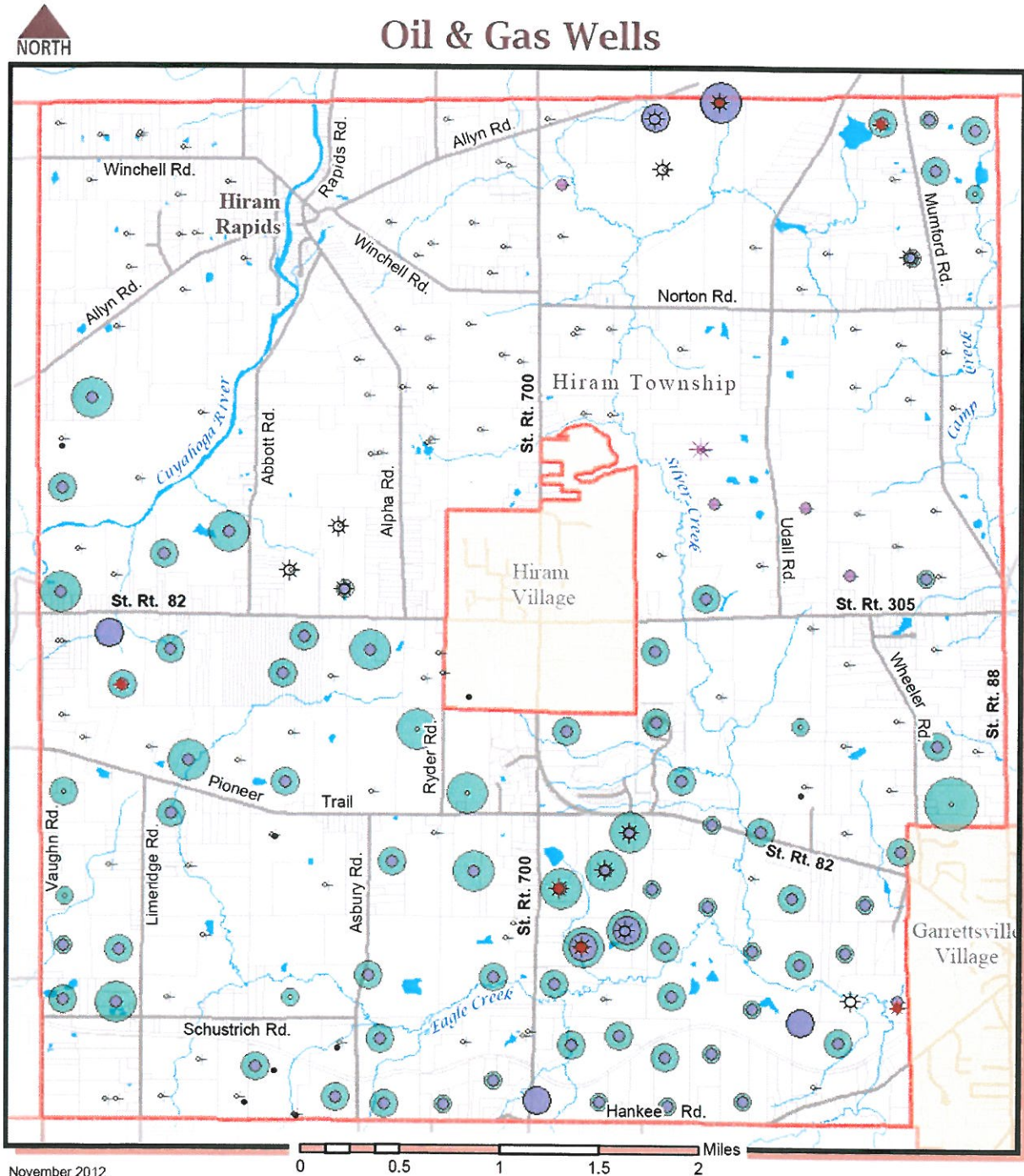
E. Sand and Gravel Deposits

Sand and gravel deposits are identified on **Map 4-8, *Sand and Gravel Resources***. The deposits are located along the major drainage ways within the Township. These deposits were formed during the glacial deposition processes. The entire Township has many kames and eskers, plus outwash and alluvium areas. Kames are hills of sand and gravel deposits. Eskers are narrow, winding ridges of stratified sand and gravel deposited by streams that flowed beneath glaciers. Outwash is gravel, sand and silt deposited by glacial meltwater. Alluvium is sand and gravel deposits formed by running water.

Kames and eskers are located mostly in the western half of the Township. These formations are identified along the Cuyahoga River, western portion of Eagle Creek, and the land between these two watercourses. Additionally, there are two areas in the eastern portion of the Township consisting of kames and eskers formations. These areas are located along the lower section of Camp Creek and the south side of Eagle Creek.

A large deposit of sand and gravel created by retreating glaciers is found stretching across the northeastern portion of the Township. The southern boundary of this deposit is formed by Silver Creek. Sand and gravel deposits formed by running water are located along the length of all of the primary watercourses and their major tributaries.

Mining is considered a temporary land use. However, the excavation necessary to quarry a site may take as long as 10 to 20 years. Although the operation may yield certain economic benefits to the local community, the mining operations can have negative effects on surrounding properties and the community. Proper safeguards need to be enacted through zoning measures to mitigate any potential negative impacts. Areas of concern include increased truck traffic and stress to roads, noise created by mining equipment, potential pollution and safety concerns, and the possible disruption/destruction of scenic rural views and farmland productivity.



November 2012

Plug or permit activity (2012)

- ☀ Drill new well
- ✳ Drill new well, horizontally
- ★ Reissue or reopen
- Other activity

Oil (barrels, 2011)

- 0
- 30 - 400
- 401 - 1115
- 2122

Gas (million cubic feet, 2011)

- + 0
- 50 - 500
- 501 - 1700
- 1701 - 4800
- 9585

Source:
 Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Permit, plug data, Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources, 2012;
 Production data, Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources, 2011.

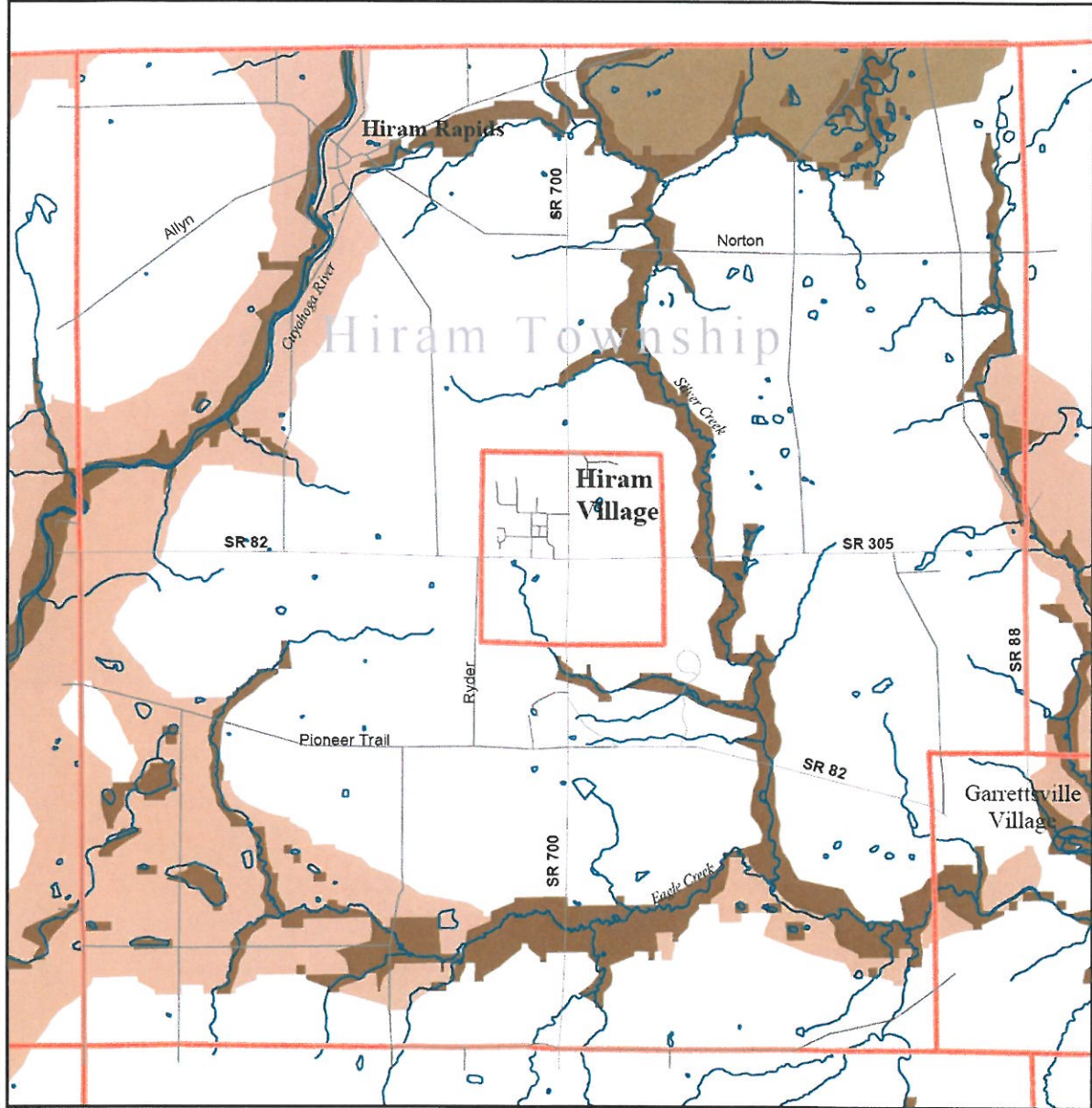
*Data reported by owners, so no degree of accuracy is guaranteed.
 Domestic well owners are not required to report production amounts.*



Map 4-7



Sand & Gravel Resources



Geologic features

- Not source
- Measured or indicated kame & esker
- Outwash
- Alluvium



Measured, indicated, and inferred geologic features that represent probable sand and gravel resources.
 No guarantee or warranty concerning accuracy of the data.

Source: ODNR Sand & Gravel Resources report, 1980.



Produced 2002.

Map 4-8

3. Development Constraints

Areas with physical and environmental limitations for development must be identified to avoid the destruction of important natural resources and sensitive areas, to minimize construction costs, to minimize potential losses of property, to protect rare plant and animal habitats, and to enhance those areas of cultural value to the community.

A. Floodplains

When rivers, streams, creeks, and ditches overflow their banks, damage to property and crops are likely to occur. Floods are common natural disasters that occur suddenly and with very little warning. They usually result from runoff caused by intense storms, rapidly melting snow, ice jams or other things, such as manmade obstacles that might block, restrict or alter the flow of water.

Any land area that is susceptible to be inundated by water is called floodplains. The boundary of the floodplain is formed from the base flood measurement usually referenced as the “100-year flood” on a flood boundary map as prepared by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, Federal Insurance Administration, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The term “100-year flood” is used to describe the worst reported case of flooding that has occurred to an area within the past one hundred years

The boundary of the Hiram floodplains is shown on **Map 4-9, Flood Hazard Areas**. These areas, for the most part, surround the Cuyahoga River, Eagle Creek, Silver Creek, southern Camp Creek, and larger tributaries. The Flood Hazard Area around Eagle Creek is the largest in size, reaching an approximate width of 3/4 of a mile at some points.

Communities should strive to ensure that land development takes place in areas outside the 100-year floodplain to prevent the destruction and losses associated with flooding. Removal of vegetation along the floodplain in association with storm water runoff may alter the size and shape of the floodway and fringe, as well as the base flood elevation, increasing risk. Communities can institute various policies and procedures to minimize losses due to flooding, such as adopting standards that exceed minimum floodplain regulations. In addition, communities can prohibit fill in floodplain areas and strictly regulate stream alterations.

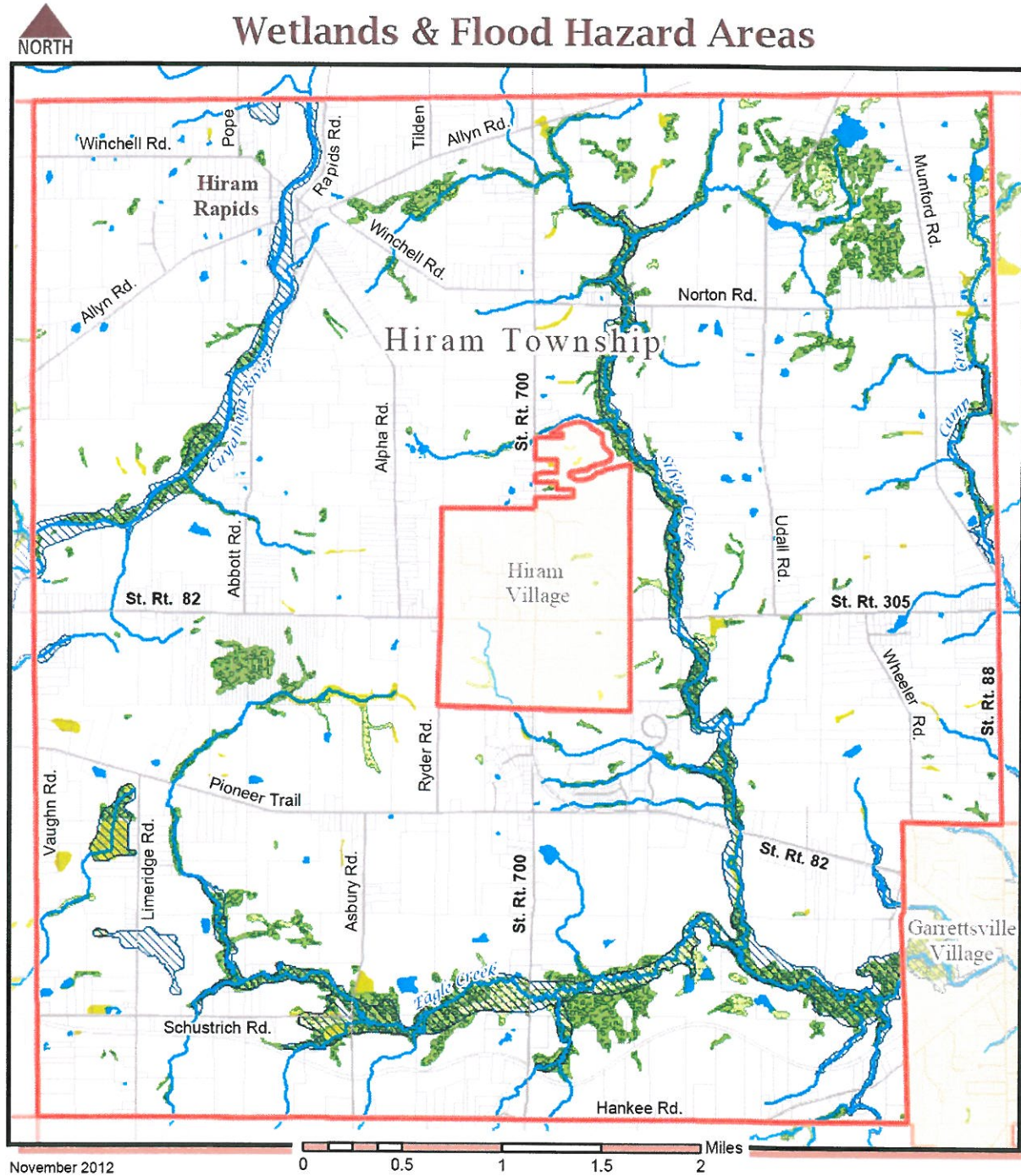
B. Groundwater Pollution Potential

Groundwater is a valuable and highly vulnerable natural resource. Contamination of the aquifers that store and transmit water can occur through faulty septic systems, leaky storage tanks, and the improper storage of chemicals. Various agricultural and lawn care practices can also lead to the contamination of groundwater.

Map 4-10, *Groundwater Pollution Potential*, shows the areas of Hiram susceptible to groundwater pollution. The higher the pollution potential index the greater the susceptibility of the area to ground water pollution from various sources of pollution. Areas with high ground water pollution potential are not appropriate for many types of development, especially land uses that have the potential to spill or leach chemicals.

Three areas of Hiram are rated with high susceptibility to ground water pollution. One of these areas is located between Pope Road and the Mantua Township boundary on the north side of Winchell Road, in the northwestern corner of Hiram. The other area in the north is east of Hiram Rapids along Silver Creek and its tributaries north of Norton Road. The third area is located in the southwestern portion of the Township near Limeridge Road along a tributary of the Cuyahoga River. This same area is reported to be capable of groundwater yields of up to 300 gallons per minute.





The map also rates other areas of the community as having a medium susceptibility for groundwater pollution. These areas appear to follow the primary watercourses and some of the tributaries within Hiram such as those serving the Cuyahoga River and Eagle Creek. Regulations should be put into effect to ensure the protection of these aquifers from encroaching development.



November 2012

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles

Wetland Type

-  Palustrine Emergent Marsh
-  Palustrine Scrib/Shrub
-  Palustrine Forested
-  Flood Hazard Area

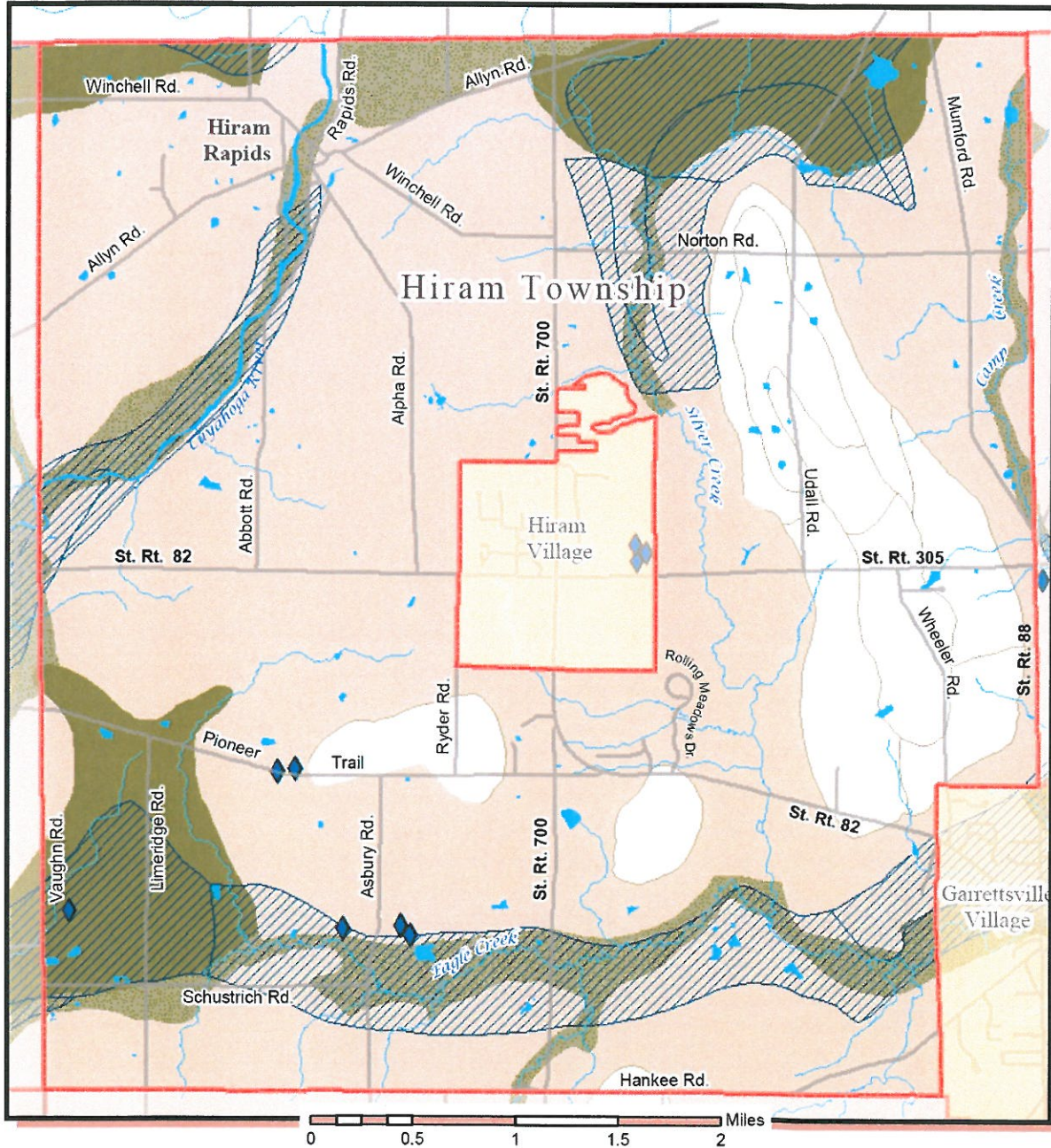
Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept. , Jan 2012; Wetlands, Portage Co. Wetlands Inventory, from 2000 aerial and orthophotos, 2004; Flood hazard areas, FEMA FIRM update, 2008



Map 4-9



Groundwater Pollution Potential



- ◆ Public water wells
 - ⊞ Buried Valley
- Pollution Potential Index Number**
- 10 - 100 Higher Pollution Potential number indicates higher probability of pollution.
 - 111 - 132 Range for Hiram Township is 82 - 197 and for all Portage County is 10 - 204.
 - 136 - 152
 - 156 - 183

Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Groundwater pollution potential - Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources Report No. 22, digital map data, 1991;
 Buried valley data from Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources, 2000; Public wells - Ohio EPA, 2004.



November 2012

Map 4-10

C. Steep Slopes

Steep slopes are areas where there are dramatic changes in the contour of the land. These areas are characterized when the percentage of the slope is 12% or greater. Slopes ranging from 18% to 25% should only be developed utilizing special construction design requirements for building stabilization and making use of certain methods to control soil erosion. Development should be discouraged in areas where the slopes are greater than 25%.

Map 4-11, *Steep Slopes*, shows the distribution of steep slopes throughout Hiram. Slopes of 12% to 18% provide Hiram with its gently rolling topography. Areas of Hiram with these characteristics are predominately located around the Village. The greatest concentration of steep slopes of 18% to 25% is found intermittently scattered in the south central portion of the Township. These slopes form portions of the Eagle Creek drainage basin.

Severe steep slopes are predominately identified in close proximity with the courses of certain creeks. Severe steep slopes of 25% or greater are concentrated along the banks of Silver Creek in the north central portion of Hiram. Another series of steep slopes of 25% or greater is dispersed in the south central portion of Hiram, scattered along various sections of Eagle Creek and many of its major tributaries.

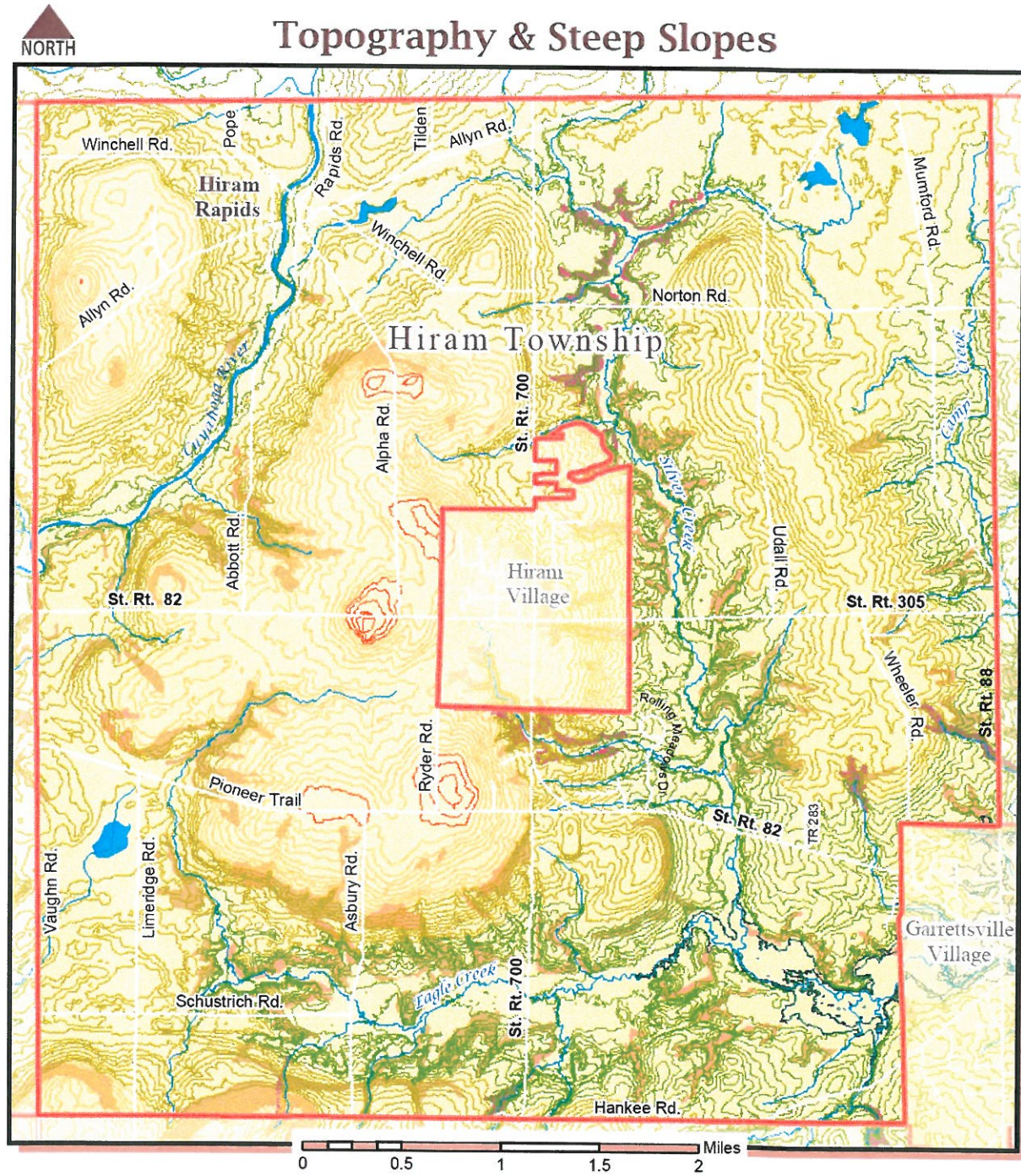
Map 4-11 also shows steep slopes of 25% or greater. Slopes of this severity are found surrounding the Village. For example, a series of these severe steep slopes form the banks of a major tributary of Silver Creek.

The development of areas characterized with steep slopes can be difficult, and in some instances, dangerous. Erosion and instability of soils are usually serious problems associated with the development of steep slopes. As the slope of the land increases, the greater are the difficulties encountered with developing a site.

D. Natural Habitats for Endangered Species

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources National Heritage Data provides information on the locations of natural habitats for endangered animal and plant species. These locations are shown on **Map 4-12, *Endangered & Threatened Species***. The main priority areas are along the Cuyahoga River in the northwest section of the Township and in the southern portion of the Township, adjacent to Eagle Creek. There are additional sites of special plants and animals identified elsewhere in the Township.

Endangered plants and animals are protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, a federally mandated program. The Act ensures that areas containing endangered and threatened plants and animals are protected from encroachment that could result in destroying the fragile ecosystem that sustains their existence. Hiram should implement land use policies that serve to preserve and protect these wildlife habitats.



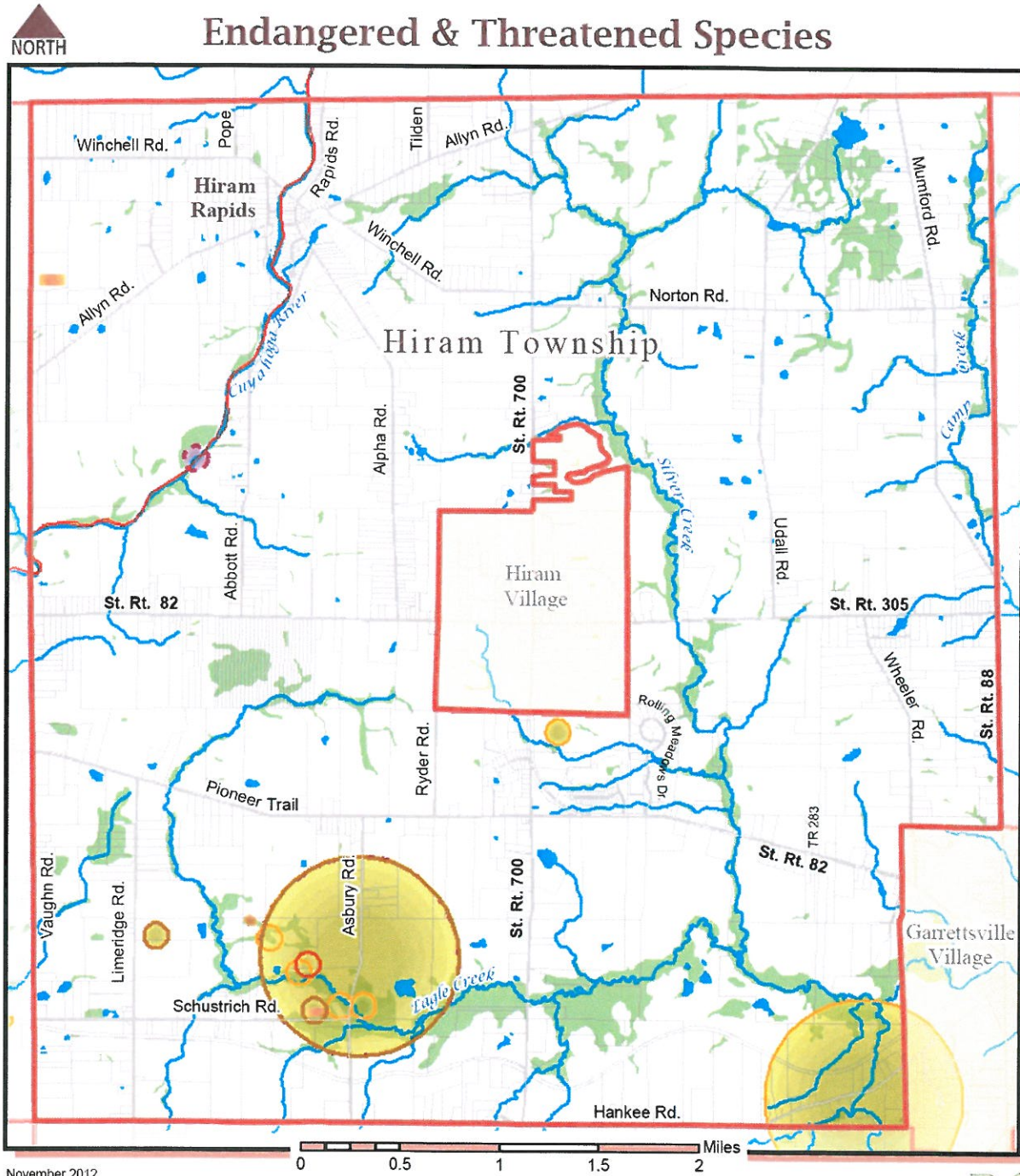
10-foot contours		Slope	
	870 - 1000		< 12%
	1010 - 1100		12-18%
	1110 - 1200		18-25%
	1210 - 1300		25-70%
	1310 - 1400		

Source: Roads, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012; Topography generalized from 40-foot LIDAR points, 2006. Slopes, SSURGO digital soil maps, 2006.



November 2012

Map 4-11



November 2012

State Status	
	Endangered
	Threatened
	Potentially threatened
	Special interest or concern

Plant or animal category	
	Terrestrial Community
	Vascular Plant
	Vertebrate Animal
	Invertebrate Animal (Found along Cuyahoga River)

Wetlands

Source:
 Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Ohio Natural Heritage Database, 2005;
 Wetlands, Portage Co. Wetlands Inventory,
 from 2000 aerial and orthophotos, 2004.

Map 4-12

E. Critical Natural Areas

Map 4-13, *Critical Natural Areas*, is an overlay of all the areas within Hiram that are environmentally sensitive. Environmentally sensitive areas include floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, surface water resources, areas of high ground water pollution potential and areas with endangered species. These areas should be protected from the encroachment of new development wherever possible. In fact, development should be discouraged in many of these areas to minimize destruction of natural resources and minimize potential damage to properties. Protection of the Township's natural resources should be a priority.

C. AGRICULTURE



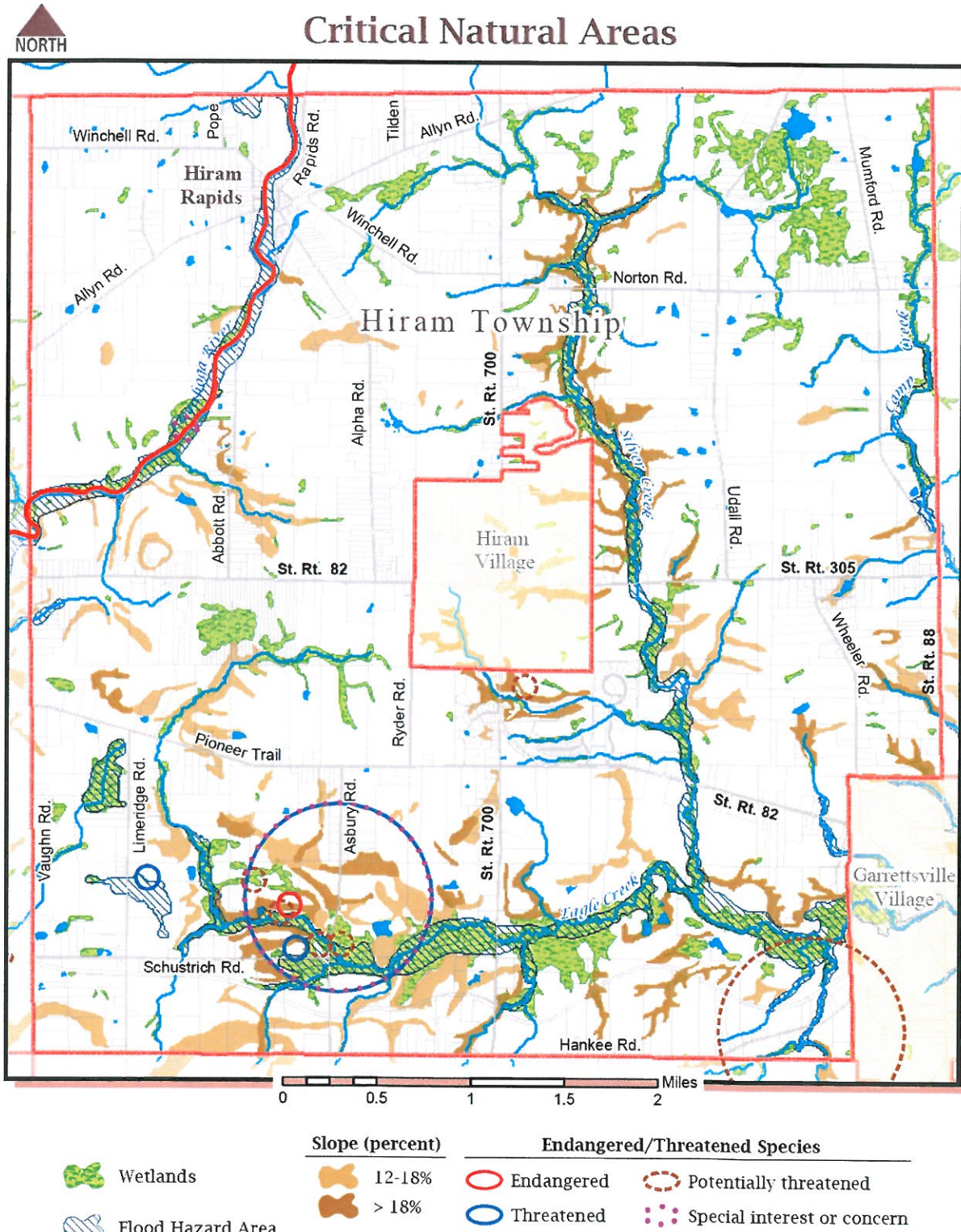
The Ryder-Groselle Farm

Agriculture has been an important part of life in Hiram since an early settler named John Flemings planted his crop in 1802. Flemings and his fellow settlers were the first of many to carve farms and homesteads out of this section of wilderness of the Western Reserve. In the nearly 200 years since the first harvest, farming has continued to shape the landscape, rural character, and quality of life in Hiram, Ohio.

1. The Value of Agriculture in Hiram and the Region

Agriculture is an industry, providing jobs on the farms and through related support businesses like farm equipment and supply and feed dealers. A viable agriculture industry provides jobs in other industries such as food processing and shipping. Land in agricultural use contributes to the local tax base, paying more in taxes than they require in services. Cows do not require an education.

Maintaining a base of farmland can enhance agritourism opportunities, thereby increasing the economic viability of agriculture. Agritourism can enrich the education of children and adults on the importance of agriculture in our lives. It may also plant the seed for future farmers or provide an appreciation and understanding of the agriculture industry.



Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012; Ohio Natural Heritage Database, 2005; Slope, SSURGO digital soils, 2006; Wetlands, Portage Co. Wetlands Inventory, from 2000 aerial and orthophotos, 2004; Flood hazard areas, FEMA FIRM update, 2008



Map 4-13

Maintaining an agricultural land base also contributes to a high quality of life in Hiram Township and the region. Residents like the rural character associated with farms and open space. Local farms provide fresh foods for local residents. Farmland and open space provide environmental benefits as well as aesthetic ones including water recharge areas, wildlife habitat, scenic views, and conservation of historic landscapes. Farmland can help to buffer parkland, providing contiguous wildlife and habitat protection.²

Agriculture is an industry with economic, environmental, cultural and aesthetic values, contributing to the quality of life highly valued by Hiram residents.

Finding the balance between maintaining the agricultural land base and industry and areas for other kinds of economic growth will require making difficult policy decisions. In general, land use policies and practices that encourage development in areas where services are available, outside of productive agricultural areas allows farmland and more open space to be conserved as well as promoting development that is easier to service and minimizes the costs to the public for such services. Policies which lead to protection and enhancement of large blocks of viable farmland will help to insure a resource base and local food source for future generations.

2. Why the Agricultural Land Base is Declining

Valuable farmland is taken out of production for many reasons - often, there are multiple contributing factors. Prevalent factors include:

- Patterns of development along road frontage, which fragments farms, decreasing efficiency of production.
- Rising land costs due to residential development. Increased land costs make the purchase of new farmland unaffordable. This forces many farmers to lease additional land. However, the average age of landowners who lease land is over 60 years of age, making these lands vulnerable to conversion to non-farm uses.
- Increasing costs of farming are outpacing farm income.
- Many farmers are reaching retirement age. These farmers may need retirement income and will sell some or all of their major asset-land. Many farmers have no one to take over the farm.
- National policies and external economic factors and forces impact farmland loss locally. Some of these factors include:
 - *Commodity Prices*
The national policy of keeping food prices low translates to net loss in income for farmers, as they pay market rate for their inputs but do not get true market rate for food and fiber they produce. Subsidies may not reach the average family farmer.

² Tom Daniels and Deborah Bowers, Holding Our Ground, Protecting Americas Farms and Farmland, (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1997) p. 21.

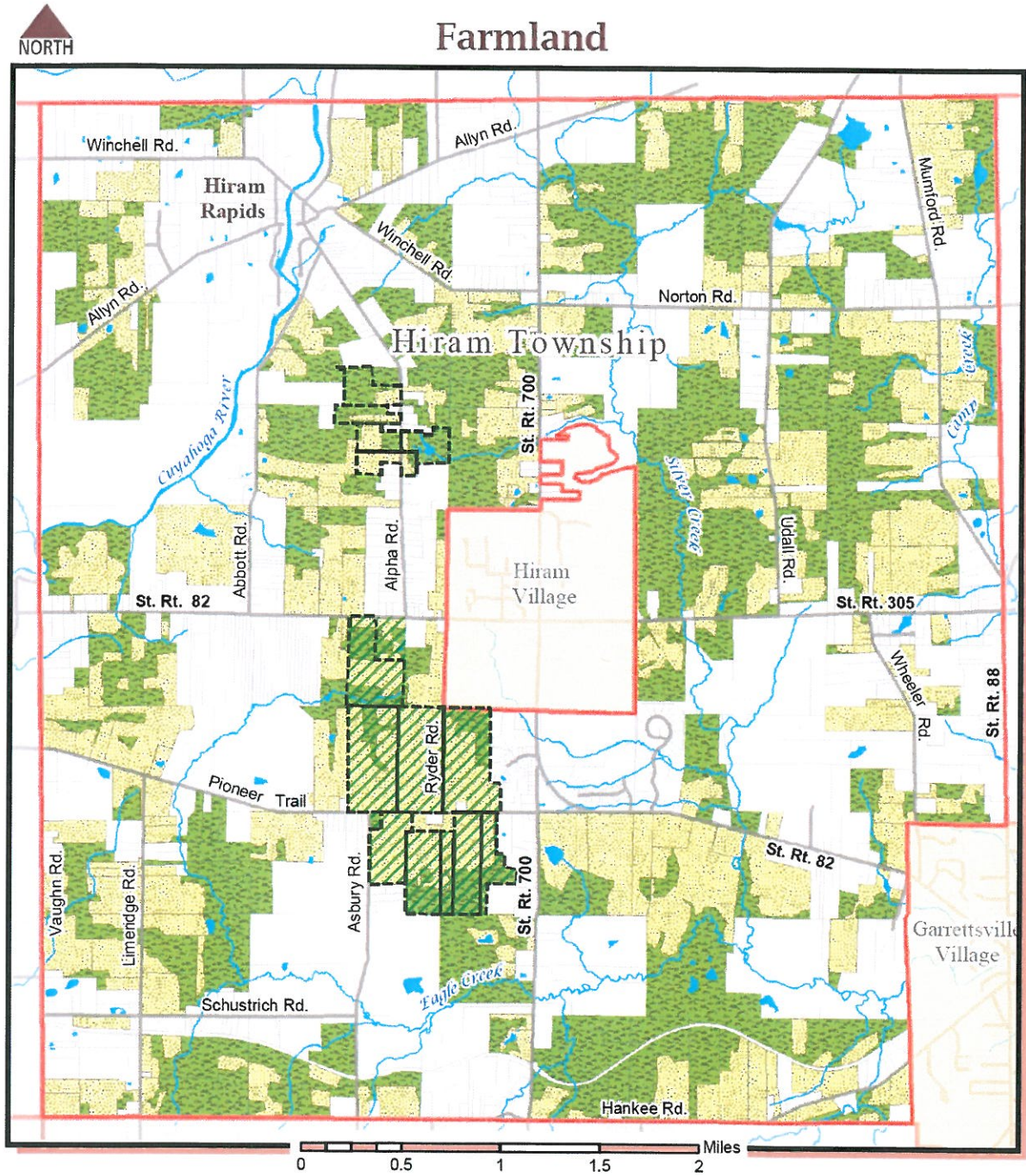
- *Movement Toward Corporate Farms*
While this movement may be good in some ways for consumers economically, it is putting our future food supply in the hands of a few, which may lead to monopolies and will speed up the loss of the family farm and loss of rural land to non-farm uses.
- *Cheap Fuel Policies*
This helps to fuel out-migration to rural areas and allows people to commute longer distances without significant economic impacts on their personal budgets. Out-migration without adequate growth management facilitates farmland conversion and contributes to an impermanence syndrome, making continuation of farming difficult physically and fiscally.

3. Land in Agriculture

Identification of the location and use of farmland within the Township is a challenging task for a variety of reasons. Many farmers lease their land, so the owner and the farm operator are often different people. Some land may be farmed one year, and not farmed the next. Farmland is increasingly being sold for development.

In 2012, the Portage County Regional Planning Commission created a Farm Lands Map of the County, based on information received from local governments and the Ohio State University Extension with some verification through aerial photos and field checking. This map identified active farmland in the county. However, not all active farmland may have been included on the map. **Map 4-14, *Farmland***, shows the location of farmland in Hiram according to this project, with the recent addition of the Knippenberg farm which had not been included in this 2012 base. This map reflects an approximate 5,000 acres of land in agriculture in Hiram Township, or 34% of the Township's land area. This map also indicates that Hiram's farmland, while somewhat fragmented, still has large blocks of contiguous farmland which are sufficiently large to be economically viable. A large contiguous block of farmland is often the best area to focus preservation efforts. This agricultural land base, combined with other preserved lands, (see **Map 4-15 *Protected Areas***) enhances the green infrastructure of the communities and envelops the Village. A block of farms of approximately 750 acres in Hiram Township submitted applications for Round 1 of the Ohio Purchase of Agricultural Easement Program. Of those submitted, 2 applications totaling 270 acres (160 acres of the Ryder-Groselle Farm and 110 acres of the Knippenberg Farm) have been selected by the State Department of Agriculture for agricultural easement purchase. The largest blocks of contiguous farmland are primarily located in the southwest quadrant of the Township.

Two other major sources of information on the agriculture industry and land in agriculture are the Census of Agriculture, conducted every five years, and the Current Agricultural Use Value (CAUV) Program, a local tax differential program. However, the

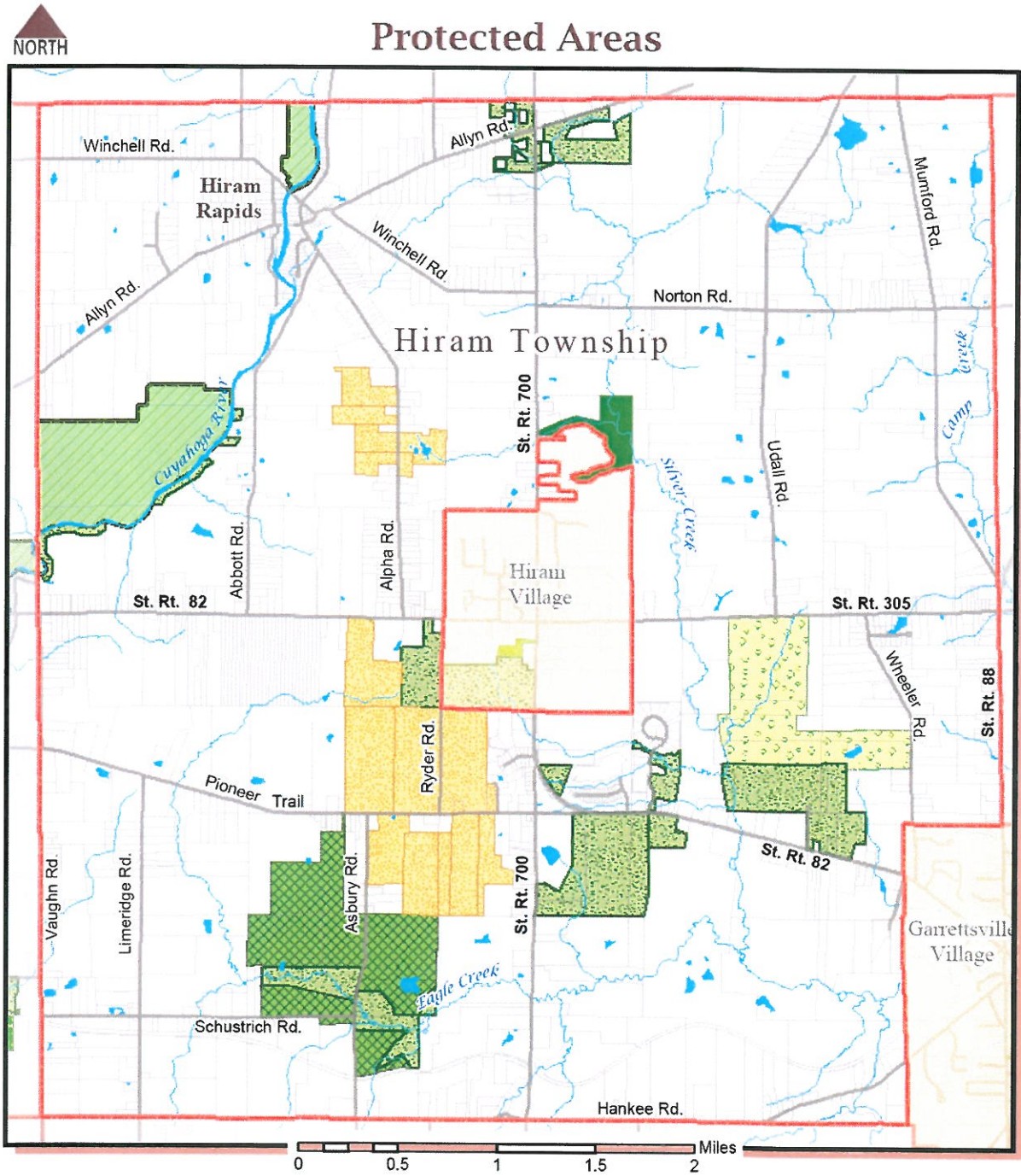






- Cropland in CAUV
- Wooded land in CAUV
- Easement preserved farmland
- Agricultural Security Area (2008)

Source: Parcels, roads, Portage County GIS, Jan. 2012;
 CAUV data from Portage County Auditor, Jan. 2012;
 Cropland in CAUV compiled from orthophotos (2010) by Portage County Regional Planning Commission, 2012.



Map 4-14



-  State nature preserve
-  Township park
-  Camp
-  Field station
-  Riparian protection (City of Akron)
-  Conservation easement
-  Deed restrictions
-  Easement preserved farmland

Source: Parcels, roads, Portage County GIS, Jan. 2012;
 Protected areas compiled by Portage County Regional Planning Commission, 2012.



Map 4-15

Census of Agriculture identifies agricultural land by the zip code used by the farmer, rather than traditional census blocks or tracts, which follow political subdivision boundaries. More than one zip code is used within Hiram Township, and the boundaries of these zip codes extend into other areas, making analysis by political subdivision impossible. The CAUV program provides a less detailed profile, and not every farmer is enrolled in the program. Information from both of these sources can be used to gain an understanding of agriculture in Hiram, but neither provides all of the desired data.

The CAUV Program

The Current Agricultural Use Value program is a differential real estate tax assessment program that was implemented by the State of Ohio in 1974. It allows eligible agricultural lands to be taxed according to their value for agriculture, rather than the full market value.

To qualify for the assessment, the parcel must be devoted “exclusively to agricultural use” as stated in Section 5713.30 of the Ohio Revised Code. Parcels of 10 acres or more are eligible to apply for enrollment. If the parcels are less than 10 acres in size the average gross income must be \$2,500 per year for three years prior to application and an anticipated income of \$2,500 for the year of application. Parcels of 10 acres or more of timber land may also be eligible if the land is devoted exclusively to the commercial production of timber. The program is administered by the County Auditor’s office. There are several advantages to the CAUV program:

- CAUV provides tax relief for farmers.
- Farmland owners would otherwise contribute a disproportionately high percentage of local real estate tax revenue versus the amount of services they require. The CAUV tax relief results in a more even distribution of costs.
- The program contributes to the preservation of farmland and open space by keeping operating costs lower.
- Farmland preservation is linked to long-term food security and protection of natural resources such as wildlife habitat and groundwater recharge.

Table 4-1 outlines the most recent CAUV statistics for Hiram Township according to the Portage County Auditor’s Office for the year 2013.

Table 4-1

Hiram Township	CAUV Value	Acreage	Property Owners
231 parcels with CAUV (all types)	\$6,603,320	7,340	143
32 parcels with CAUV timber classification (Commercial or non-commercial)	\$700,201	780	23
CAUV parcel owners with landholdings in excess of 100 acres	\$1,018, 240	3,210	19
CAUV parcel owners with landholdings in excess of 200 acres	\$266,210	1,338	4

Source: Portage County Auditor's parcel data, January 2013.

Table 4-2 and 4-3 show comparisons of total CAUV parcels, value, and acreage between 2001 and 2013.

TABLE 4-2

Year	CAUV All Types	CAUV Value	Acreage
2001	201 parcels	\$2,840,430	7,289
2013	231 parcels	\$6,603,320	7,340

Source: Portage County Auditor's parcel data, January 2013.

As of September 2013, there were a total of 32 parcels with CAUV timber classification in Hiram Township. **Table 4-3** shows more information about these parcels and how they compare to the 2001 data.

TABLE 4-3

Year	CAUV Value	Acreage
2001	\$195,260	2,785.37
2013	\$700,201	780

Source: Portage County Auditor's parcel data, January 2013.

Map 4-16 reflects the parcels enrolled in CAUV in 2012.

4. Characteristics of Hiram Farms

Due to the publication by USDA of census of agriculture information by zip code, and the fact that Hiram has land in at least 4 zip codes that extend into other communities, the analysis of the following data as it applies only to Hiram is not possible. However, as it applies to zip code 44234, which includes Hiram Village, and much of the western half of the Township, but also extends up into Geauga County. **Table 4-4** compares the 1997 and 2007 data on farms in the 44234 zip code. We can generalize a few trends from 1997 to 2007:

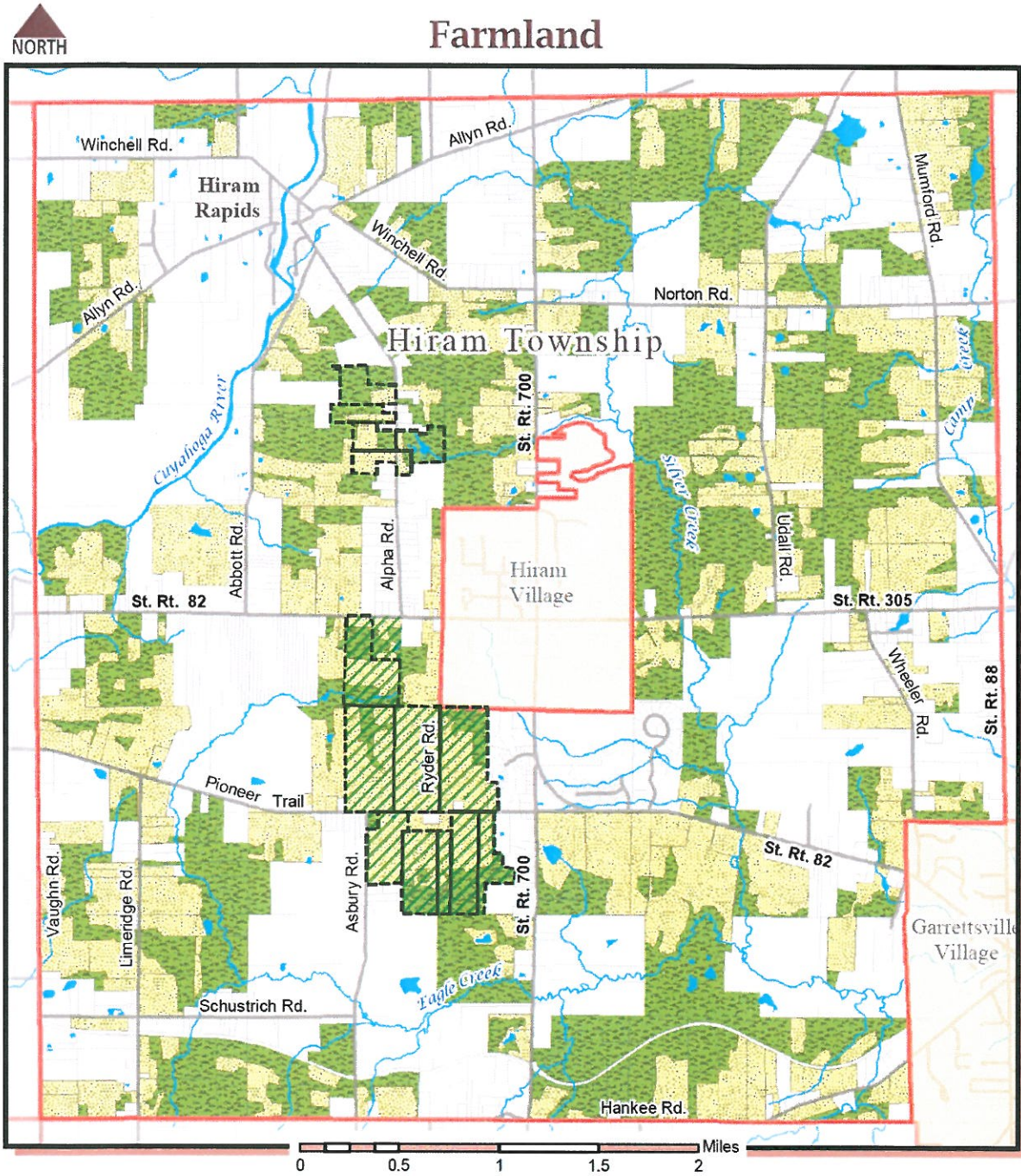
- The number of smaller farms (1-49 acres) increased
- The number of full farmers increased
- More Farmers live on the land they are farming

Category	1997	2007
Area Harvested, Small Farms (1-49 acres)	28	30
Area Harvested, Large Farms (50-499 acres)	8	9
Area Harvested, Extra Large Farms (500+ acres)	2	3
Total number of farms harvested	39	41
Farm Operations, Area Operated (1-49 acres)	19	21
Farm Operations, Area Operated (50-999 acres)	23	23
Total Farm Operations	42	44
Full-time Farmers (Primary Occupation)	20	22
Full-time Farmers who farm their primary residence	35	40
<i>Source: USDA Census of Agriculture 1997 and 2007</i>		

There was a USDA Census of Agriculture conducted in 2012; however the data from this survey is not yet available.

Hiram Township contains the only farm in Portage County that is protected under the Agricultural Security Area (ASA) Program. This farm is located just southwest of Hiram Village off of Pioneer Trail and is a total of 506.14 acres. The area can be seen on **Map 4-16**.

Per the Ohio Department of Agriculture, the Agricultural Security Area (ASA) program provides a legal framework for landowner(s), counties, and townships to preserve farmland for a period of ten years. Revised Code (R.C.) Chapter 931 provides landowners, county commissioners and township trustees to enter into a cooperative agreement affirming each party's intent to protect the ASA from non-agricultural types of development such as residential, commercial or industrial, including the construction of new roads, water and sewer lines.



- Cropland in CAUV
- Wooded land in CAUV
- Easement preserved farmland
- Agricultural Security Area (2008)

Source: Parcels, roads, Portage County GIS, Jan. 2012;
 CAUV data from Portage County Auditor, Jan. 2012;
 Cropland in CAUV compiled from orthophotos (2010) by Portage County Regional Planning Commission, 2012.



Map 4-16

5. Soil Considerations and Prime Farmland

Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce economically sustained high yields of crops when managed according to best management practices. In general, prime farmlands have an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time, and they either do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding.³ **Map 4-17** shows prime farmland in Hiram Township with the exception of some wet soils that were eliminated from consideration on this map. Prime soils shown are those that have a Class I, II, or III capability rating according to the Soil Survey of Portage County, by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, 1978. Capability groupings show the suitability of soils for most kinds of field crops. The capability classes are made according to the limitations of the soils when they are used for field crops, the risk of damage and how they respond to treatment. There are eight capability classes. Prime farmland refers to the first three in this county.

Class I soils have few limitations that restrict use for farming. Class II soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require moderate conservation practices. Class III soils have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants, that require special conservation practices or both.

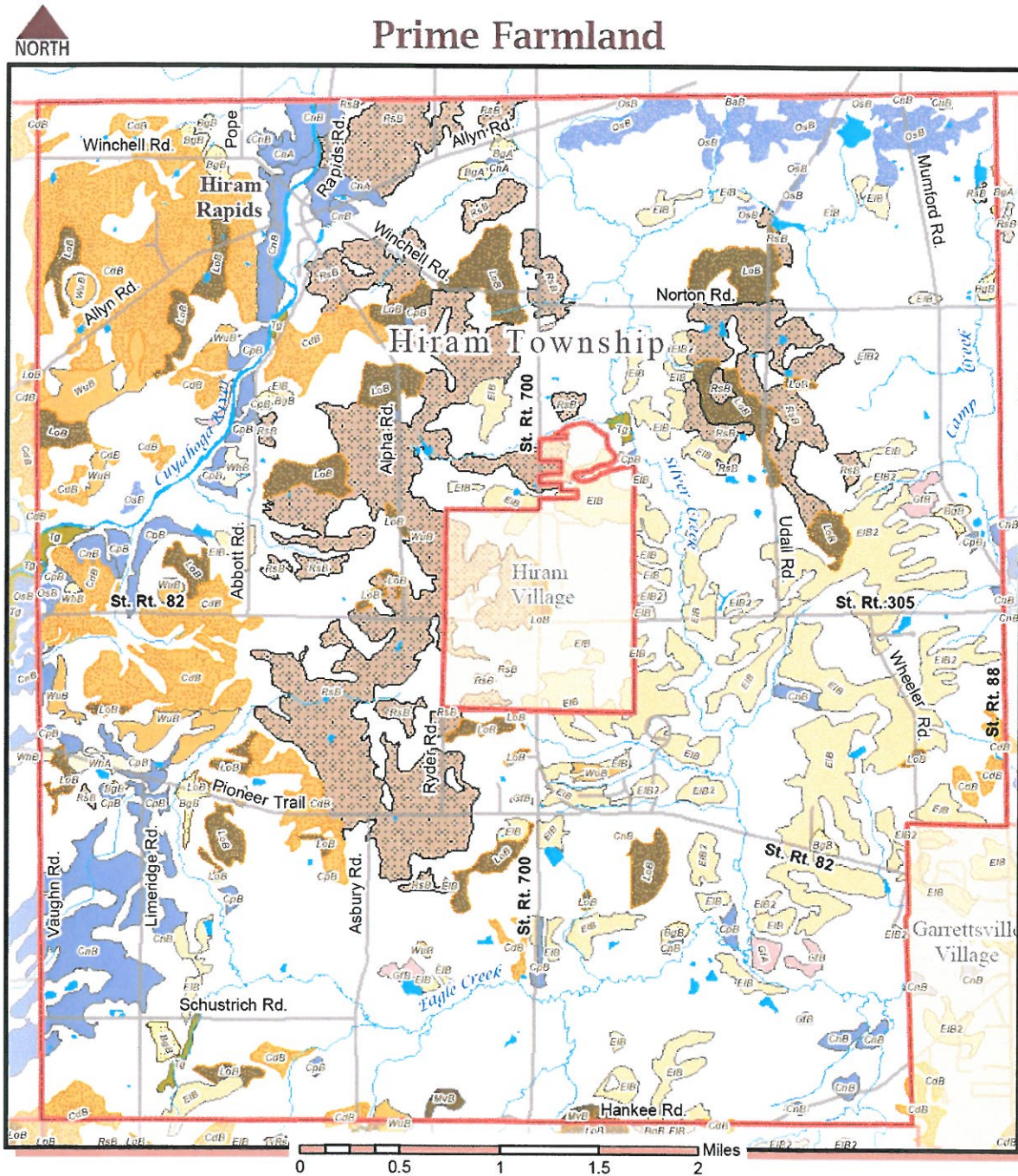
There is virtually no Class I prime farmland in Hiram. The western half of the Township is predominately characterized by Class II-e moderately well and well drained soils, with erosion being the primary limiting factor, and Class III w soils that include those soils that are somewhat to poorly drained. There are some small areas of Class II s in the northern part of the Township, in the vicinity of Hiram Rapids.

The eastern half of the Township and village is comprised of Class II e, Class III e and Class III w as well as some II w soils. Class III e soils are moderately well drained soils, with erosion the primary limiting factor. Class III w soils are poorly and very poorly drained soils. These soils include hydric soils with substantial problems for farming. They require a lot of management, subsurface drainage, and they are also potentially wetlands.

Land that is prime for farming is also prime for development since these are soils with the least physical constraints for development. Communities desiring to preserve farmland will need to try to direct growth to less productive lands.

This section will profile the advantages and limitations of each soil association specific to agricultural uses.

³ Prime Farmland Definitions, Online, Internet, available 9/3/99 at: <http://www.nhq.nrcs.usda.gov/land>



- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Ellsworth silt loam | Loudonville silt loam | Tioga loam |
| Canfield silt loam | Mitiwanga silt loam | Bogart silt loam |
| Wooster silt loam | Chili soils | Wheeling silt loam |
| Trumbull silt loam | Oshtemo sandy loam | |
| Rittman silt loam | Glenford silt loam | |

Soil symbols provided in Appendix.

Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012; Soils, SSURGO digital soils, 2006.



November 2012

Map 4-17

As discussed previously, there are six soil associations within Hiram's boundaries. Three associations appear to support the majority of Hiram's agriculture; however, at least some farming takes place in each association.

A. Mahoning-Ellsworth Association

The Mahoning-Ellsworth association covers most of the eastern half of the township, and about an eighth of western half. A number of Hiram's farms are located on Mahoning-Ellsworth soils.

The main limitations of this soil association are seasonal wetness and ponding in low-lying areas, particularly on the Mahoning soils. For farming this necessitates artificial drainage. The Ellsworth soils are better drained and better suited to building sites (such as barns and homesteads). Dairy and cash-grain farming have traditionally been common agricultural uses for this association.

B. Canfield-Ravenna-Wooster Association

Canfield-Ravenna-Wooster soils are located along the western border of the Township, especially to the north and center. This association covers about an eighth of Hiram. A number of farms are located in these areas.

Limitations of this association include erosion of farmland, resulting in sedimentation if not properly managed.

In Hiram's case, the association is not generally very steep except near the Cuyahoga River. Seasonal wetness of Ravenna soils and temporary wetness on Canfield soils are additional limitations. This soil association is also traditionally utilized for dairy farming and cash grain farming in Portage County.

C. Wadsworth-Rittman Association

This association dominates a large portion of the central Township including the Village. It also covers a small area along the northern half of the eastern border, and the southeast corner in and just to the west of Garrettsville. A great deal of Hiram's farmland is on Wadsworth-Rittman soils.

Limitations include severe seasonal wetness on Wadsworth soils. Temporary wetness can be a problem on Rittman soils, caused by lateral movement of water along the top of the fragipan. Erosion is also a problem on Rittman soils; once again, Hiram's steeper areas primarily follow the waterways.

D. Chili Association

Chili association soils follow the Cuyahoga River in the northwestern corner of the Township, and also cover about a quarter of the southwestern quadrant of the Township. Some farming does occur in Hiram on these soils, which are mostly well-drained.

The Chili association has few limitations for farm uses. Problems may occur with droughtiness in summer and early fall; Chili soils are well suited to irrigation. Erosion of the soil may occur on the steeper slopes prevalent along parts of the river.

E. Loudonville-Mitiwanga-Dekalb Association

Three small areas of this Association are scattered throughout the western half of the Township: to the west of the Cuyahoga River, near the Hiram Rapids and near Eagle Creek in the extreme southwestern corner. Some farming takes place on this association, especially in the southwestern quadrant.

The Loudonville-Mitiwanga-Dekalb association is limited by severe erosion in steep slope areas. Less-sloping areas are better suited to crops and pasture. Shallow depth to bedrock can also present problems, but is more limiting to excavation and construction uses than farming.

F. Sebring-Holly-Caneadea Association

This association occurs in the southeast quadrant of the township along much of Eagle Creek and Silver Creek, and again in the northeast quadrant along Silver Creek, following the alluvial floodplains. Little farming takes place on these soils in Hiram.

The Sebring-Holly Canadea soils are severely limited by wetness, ponding, poor drainage, and instability when saturated. Artificial drainage is difficult to install on the flatter portions of the soil because of the lack of an outlet. The association is better suited to wetlands and ponds.



D. Protected Resources

Since the late 1940's, the rural landscape of America has slowly changed because of scattered low-density development. The gradual urbanization of the countryside has had an unfavorable effect on environmentally sensitive areas, wildlife habitats, open space corridors, farmland, and the rural character of many communities.

Many communities have sought relief from this phenomenon, which many professionals have dubbed "urban sprawl". Over the years, these communities have developed programs and zoning initiatives to protect the natural environment, preserve open space areas, help facilitate continued farming activities, and concentrate development in order to maintain the community's rural character.

Hiram has already begun to initiate measures to curb the negative impacts associated with sprawling development. The Township has already adopted zoning that requires the preservation of up to 40% of a site as a condition for certain types of developments. In addition, the efforts of other public institutions and concerned individuals have led to the preservation and protection of significant tracts of land in Hiram from development.

The Township has a total of 1,552 acres of land currently protected in some manner from the impacts associated with development or the threat of improvements to these lands has been greatly reduced for the seeable future.

Map 4-18, *Preserved Areas* identifies various properties throughout the township that are currently being preserved. These areas include OCCS of St. John and the City of Akron's Cuyahoga River Protection Zone⁴ in the northwest portion of the Township. The Hiram Biological Field Station, Camp Asbury, the conservation easement of Rolling Meadows Residential Subdivision, the Portage Park District Headwaters Hike and Bike Trail, all located in the southern portion of the Township. The Knippenberg and Groselle farms, located in the central portion of the Township have sections that are preserved in perpetuity through the Sate of Ohio's Purchase of Development Rights Program.

⁴ City of Akron is protecting their source of water supply

E. Community Infrastructure and Facilities

1. Sewer Service Areas

Within the Township, sanitary sewers are available to the properties along State Route 305 from the Nelson Township border to Wheeler Road. Also sewer service via a force main is available along State Route 82 south of the Hiram Village to the Village Gate subdivision. The sanitary sewer lines extend south along Wheeler Road onto Wrenwood Drive (see **Map 4-19**, *Sewer and Water Lines*).

The PCRSD Western Reserve Wastewater Treatment Plant located in Nelson Township services this area. Presently, the plant is operating at full capacity. The Portage County Water Resources Department does not have any current plans to expand this facility or to provide sanitary sewer lines beyond this area. Therefore, any improvements to the land outside of the sewer service area will have to rely on on-site septic systems as a method for sewage disposal.

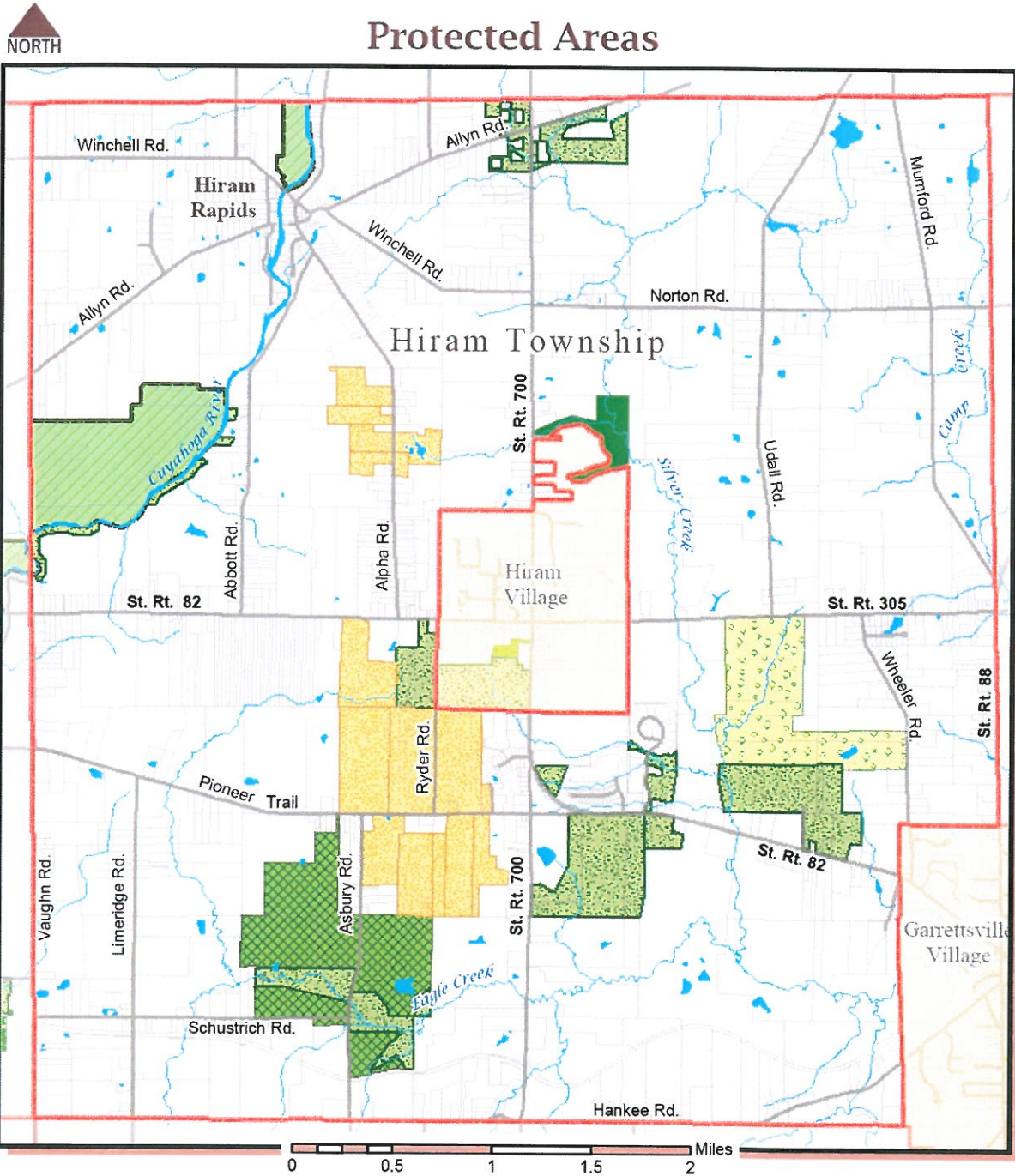
2. Central Water System/Public Wells

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency defines a public water well as a water system that serves at least 25 people or has at least 15 water connections operating at least 60 days of the year. Aside from the three wells producing water for the Village, there are 3 public water wells in the Township (see **Map 4-20**, *Public Wells*). Two of the wells are located at Camp Asbury and the other is located on the Johnson Farm. Water lines have been extended to serve the Village Gate Subdivision.

All three wells are actively monitored by the Ohio EPA. These wells only serve the individual needs of the particular site they are located on. There are no plans for the expansion of these wells to be used as part of a central water system to serve the surrounding parcels within the Township.

3. Transportation System

The roadway system of Hiram ensures a scenic journey through some of Portage County's most beautiful farmland and open spaces. This roadway system provides easy access to many favored destinations within Portage County and the surrounding communities. Numerous state routes, county roads, and township roads make-up Hiram's extensive roadway system, refer to **Map 4-21** *Hiram Township and Village Roads and Parcels*.



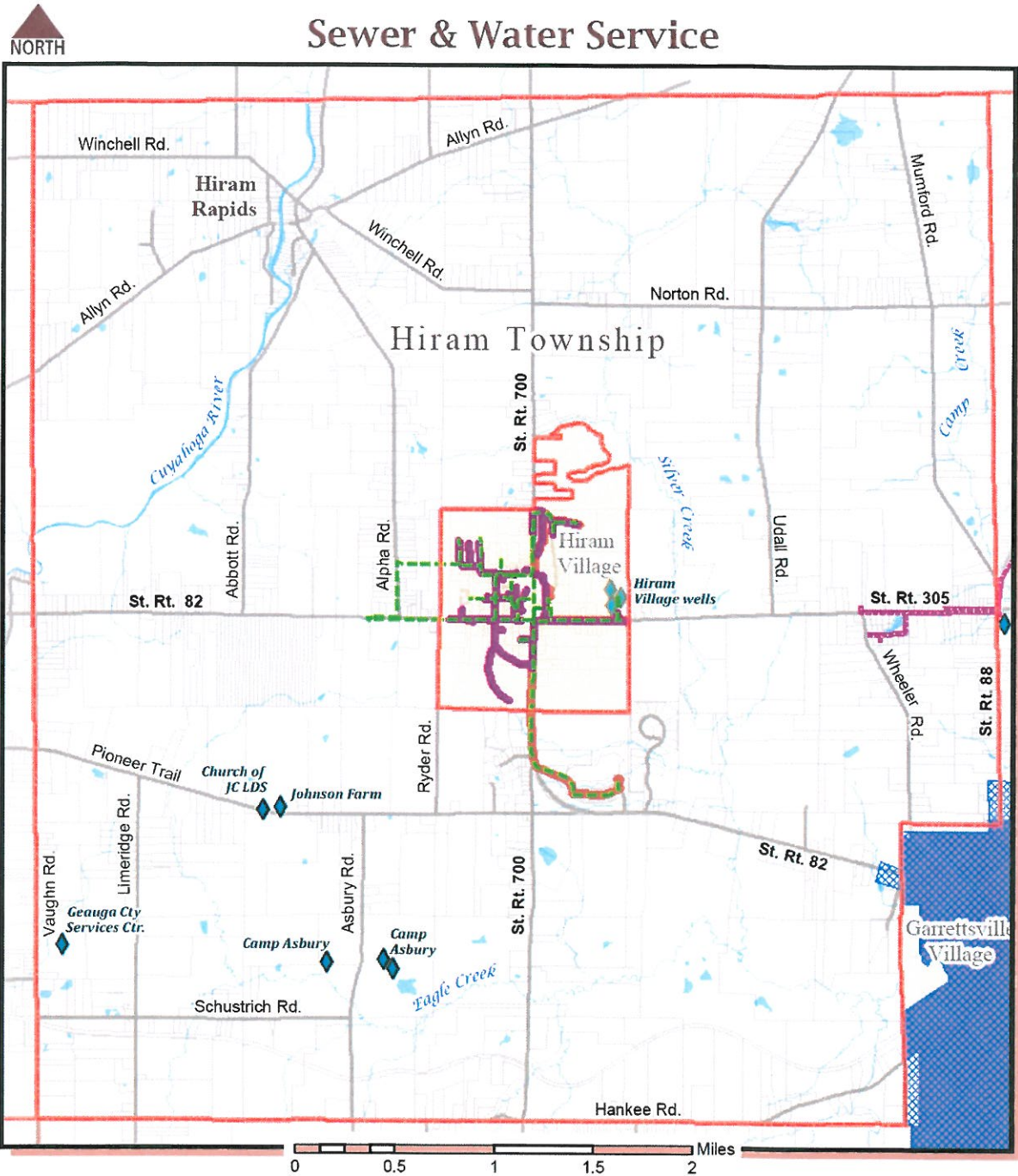
-  State nature preserve
-  Township park
-  Camp
-  Field station
-  Riparian protection (City of Akron)
-  Conservation easement
-  Deed restrictions
-  Easement preserved farmland

Source: Parcels, roads, Portage County GIS, Jan. 2012;
Protected areas compiled by Portage County Regional Planning Commission, 2012.



November 2012

Map 4-18



- ◆ Public Drinking Wells
- Hiram Village Force main sewer
- Hiram Village Gravity sewer
- Western Reserve Package Plant
- Hiram Village Water Lines
- ▒ Garretttsville Water Service Area
- ▒ Garretttsville Sewer Service Area

Source: Parcels, roads, Portage County GIS, Jan. 2012; Public wells, Ohio EPA, 2004; Sewer and water service areas compiled by Portage County Regional Planning Commission, updated 2012; Sewer lines, PC Water Resources updated by Portage County Regional Planning Commission, 2012.



Map 4-19

A. State Routes

There are three state routes (SR 82, SR 700, and SR 305) within Hiram that form the spine of the roadway network. The state routes divide the community into four quads as they pass through the center of the Village. These roads are used to access many local destinations within Hiram. In addition, these roadways enhance the mobility of Hiram's residents to employment, shopping and cultural centers with the County and Region.

These particular roadways are classified as major arterial roadways. They are the busiest traveled roads in Hiram. The AMATS's 2002-2005 Transportation Improvement Program Study indicates there is not a need to increase the carrying capacity of these roads because they are capable of accommodating present and future travel demands. Traffic volumes on these roadways are considered low.

B. County Roads

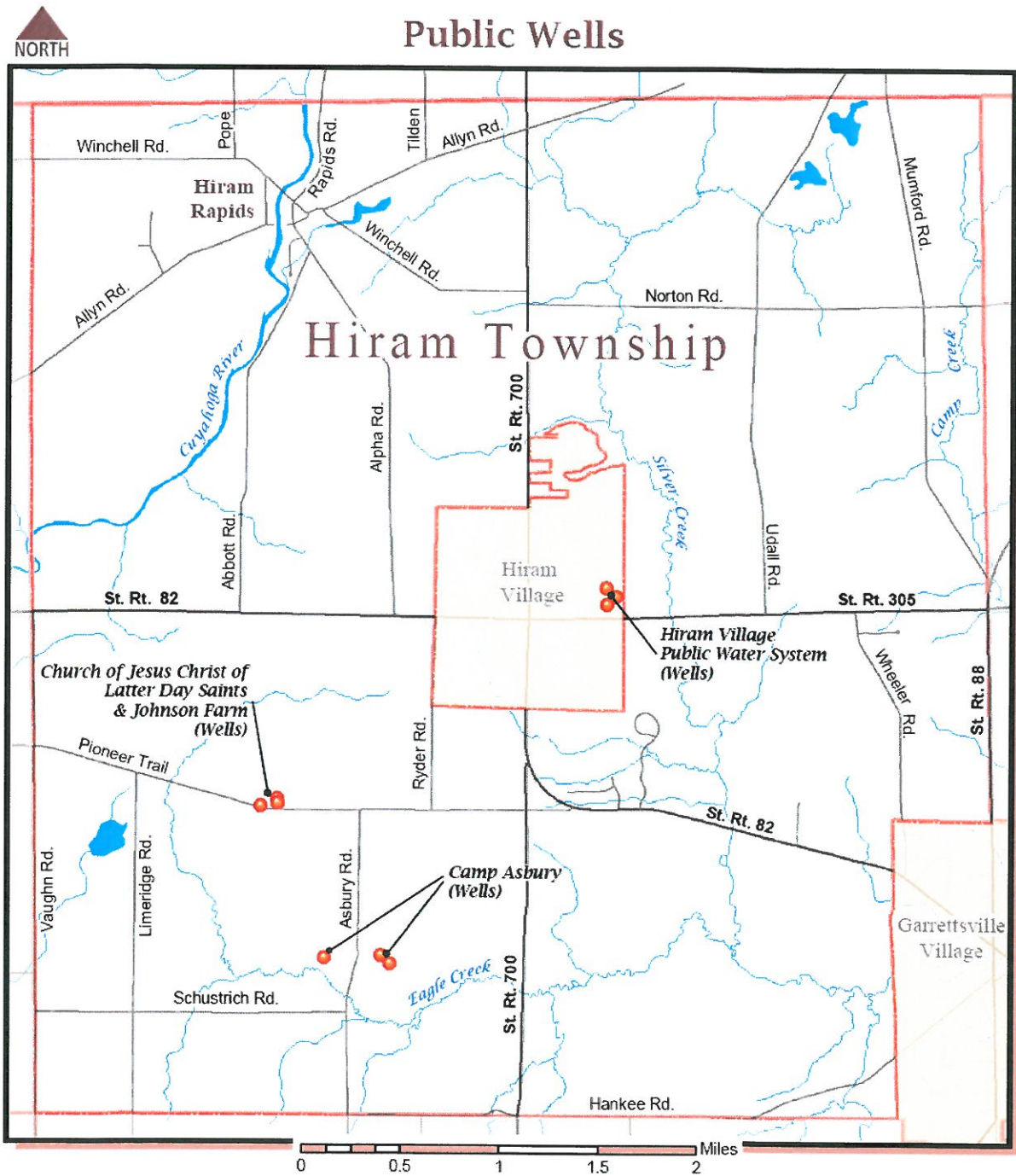
The County is responsible for the maintenance of eight (8) roads within the Township. The County's 13.5 miles of roads are transverse throughout the Hiram landscape. These roads help to link motorists with the State Routes and Township Roads that crisscross Hiram.

C. Township Roads

The Township is responsible for the maintenance of seventeen (17) different roads, totaling 18.54 miles. These roadways provide motorists with access to state and county roadways.

Many of these roadways were carved out of the wilderness by the early pioneers. Over the years, construction standards to ensure the stability and functionality of the roadways have constantly changed to keep pace with vehicle improvements and travel demands. Unfortunately, road maintenance is very costly and difficult for many rural communities to sustain.

Hiram's roadway maintenance program attempts to resolve many of the roadway deficiencies of the past (See Item 4 of this Section). Presently, no other deficiencies appear to exist. However, the Township should make certain that all future roads, typically created within new subdivisions, are designed and arranged to connect with existing and future roads, wherever possible, to ensure proper service levels and good traffic flow circulation.



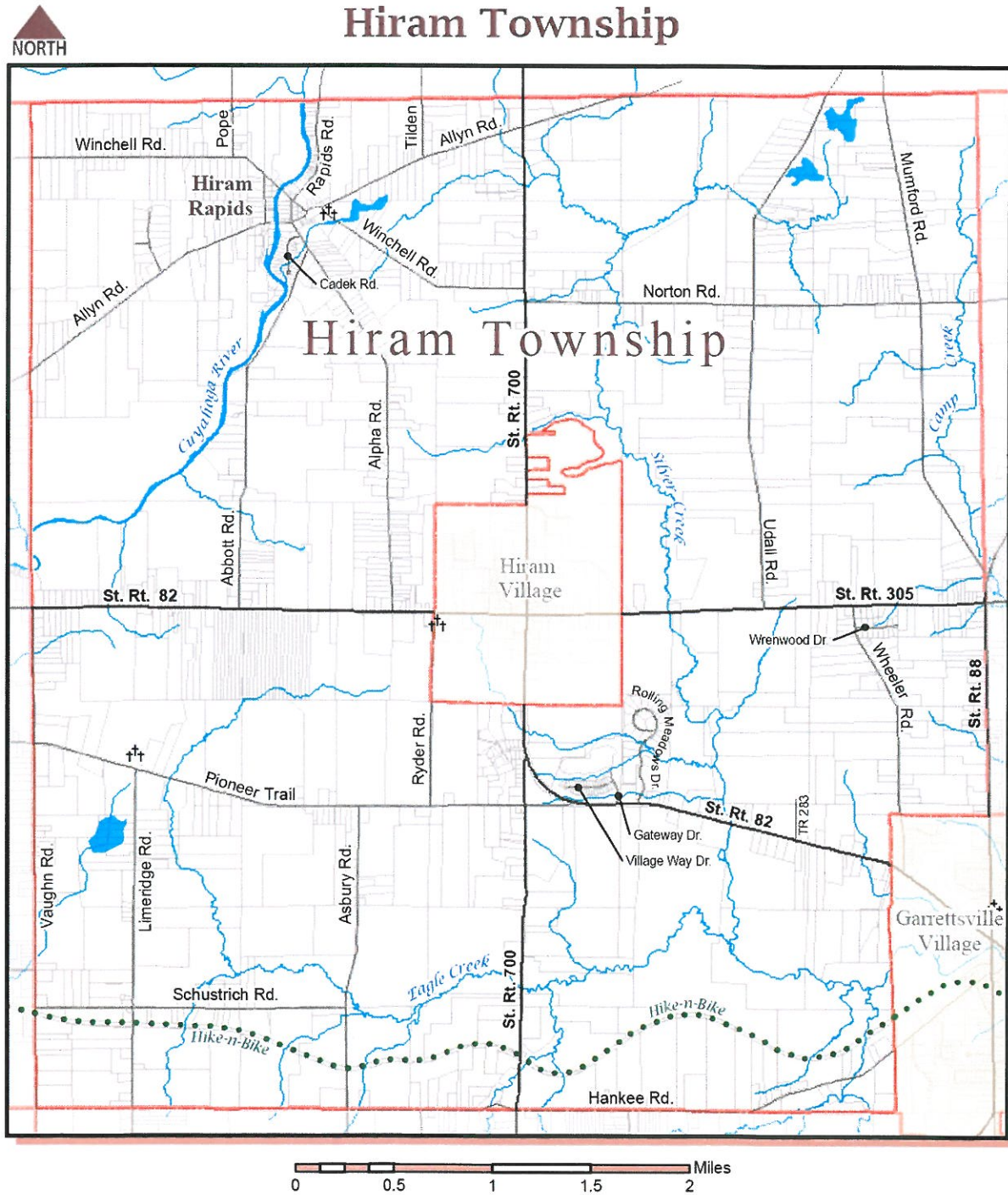
● Public Wells (2007)

Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Political boundary updated, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, June 2012;
 Public wells, Div. of Drinking & Ground Water, Ohio EPA, 2007.



September 2013

Map 4-20



Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Political boundary updated, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, June 2012;
 Trails, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, 2010.



Map 4-21

4. Proposed Roadway Improvements

The following information is a listing of the proposed roadway improvements to be completed within the next few years.

A. State Routes

According to the information provided by the Akron Metropolitan Transportation Study (AMATS), the present traffic volumes within Hiram are not high enough to justify any significant roadway improvements.

B. Township

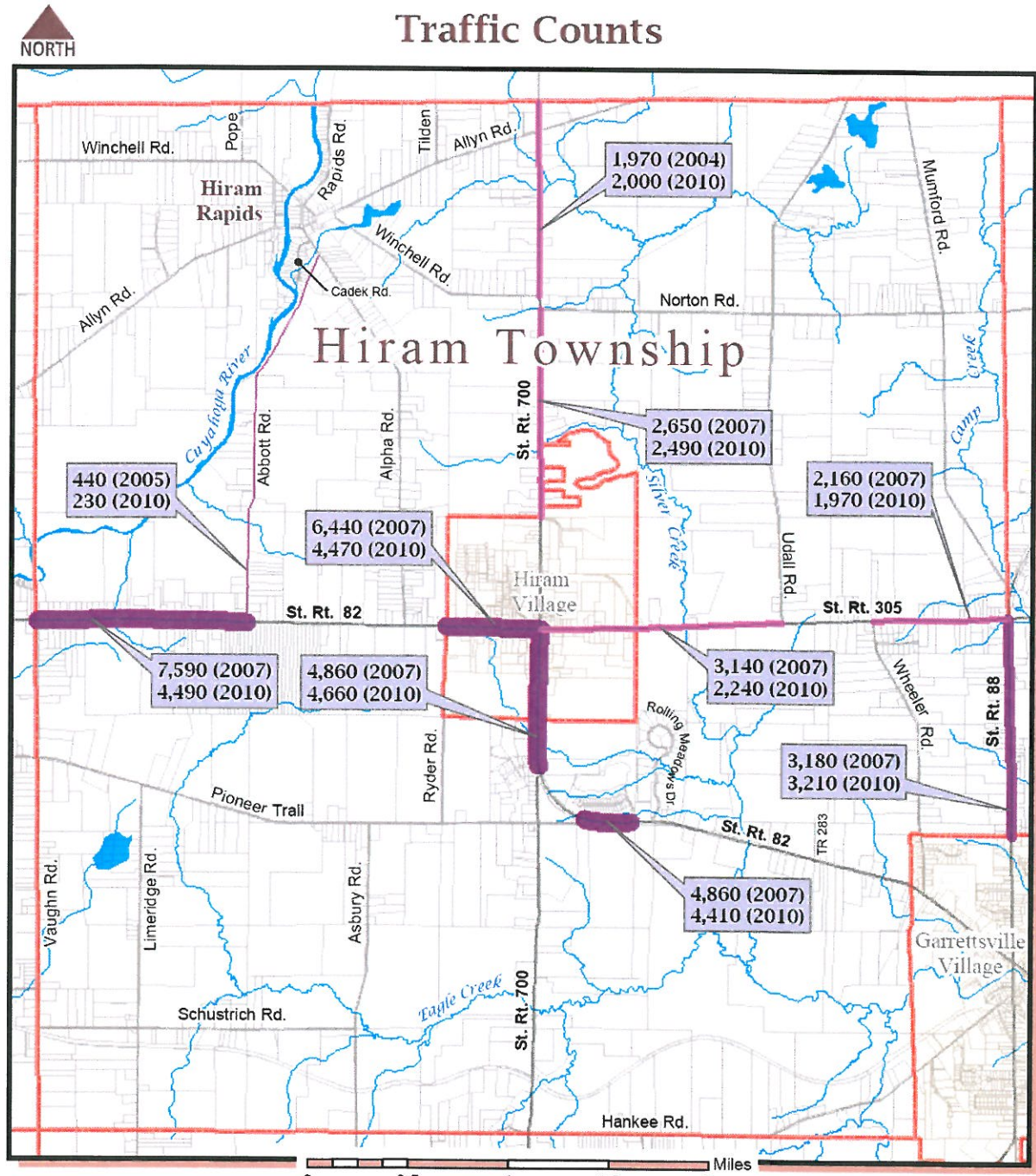
The primary objective of the Township's Roadway Department is to maintain the current level of roadway performance and any necessary repairs as required to provide safe and efficient roadways for the public. The Township's Road Department resurfaces about 7 miles of roadway each year. The majority of the Township's 18.54 miles of roadway have a paved width between 18 to 20 feet. Wherever possible, the Road Department widens the paved portion of a road to 20 feet during any resurfacing project.

Appendix B, Township Roadway Index Including Physical Characteristics & Current and Impending Improvement Projects identifies the Township's roads, their approximate length and physical characteristics, as well as current and future improvement projects.

5. Traffic Volumes

In 2007 the Akron Metropolitan Transportation Study (AMATS) conducted a study to identify the average daily traffic volumes on various segments of the state routes passing through Hiram. In 2010, AMATS conducted another traffic volume study within Hiram. In **Map 4-22**, you can see the comparison of the two studies.

The traffic studies provide useful information to gain an understanding of traffic volumes and patterns within Hiram. The traffic volumes are not high enough to justify any significant roadway improvements, such as adding additional lanes. In addition, the state roadways are rated excellent as arterial and collector roadways.



Actual counts for previous years and 2010 shown in boxes



Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Political boundary updated, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, June 2012;
 Traffic counts, Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study, various dates, received November 2012.



Map 4-22

Table 4-5 lists the daily average vehicle traffic counts for the 2001 study. In addition, the Table provides the percentage difference in traffic counts between the 1997 and 2001 AMATS Studies for similar roadway segments.

Roadway Segment	Average Vehicles per Day	% Difference between 2007 and 2010
SR 82 between Mantua Township and Abbott Rd.	4,490	-40.8%
Abbott Rd. between St. Rt. 82 and Alpha Rd.	230	-47.7%
SR 700 north of Village to Norton Road	2,490	-6.4%
SR 700 north of Norton Road	2,000	1.5%
SR 82 west of SR 700 to Udall Rd.	2,240	-40.2%
SR 305 east of Wheeler Rd to SR 88	1,970	-9.6%
SR 88 north of Garrettsville Village to SR 305	3,210	.9%
SR 700 / SR 82	4,660	-4.3%
SR 82 / Pioneer Trail	4,410	-10.2%
SR 305 Village center east to Udall Road	2,240	-28.7%
SR 305 Udall Road east to Nelson Twp.	1,970	-8.8%

In general, the 2010 AMATS Traffic Study indicates an overall decrease in daily traffic volumes on the roadway segments compared in 2007 and 2010 traffic studies.

One major source for the high volume of traffic is obviously generated by commuters passing through the Village. A second source is the number of local residents accessing the state routes from the roadways which make-up the residential neighborhoods within the Village. And lastly, the volume of daily trips generated by individuals to and from the college. All three examples lead to the concentration of traffic in this area of the community.

Generally speaking, a number of vehicles using the State Routes are passing through the Township.

6. Public Transportation

Presently, there is no scheduled route public transportation service available to Hiram residents. However, the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA) does provide a scheduled route service between Garrettsville Village and the City of Ravenna. In addition, PARTA also provides a demand response service countywide that includes Hiram area residents who have met specific eligibility requirements. A person requesting this service places a call to PARTA (usually 24 hours in advance) to schedule the service.

7. Recreation Facilities

Hiram College provides the community with many recreational amenities. The College realizes the tremendous benefit that recreation and fitness training can have on an individual's or family's quality of life. The college has instituted a program whereby local residents could obtain annual or semi-annual memberships. These memberships for the use of the facilities are available for individuals or for families. Memberships include use of field house, racquetball courts, fitness center, sauna and pool. The member fee may be unaffordable for many poor or moderate-income individuals and families.

The Township does not maintain any public parks. A bike lane is located on each side of State Route 700. The Portage Park District maintains the Headwaters Trail through the Township, which is a popular hiking and biking facility. The trailhead is located on the eastern side of State Route 700, south of the Village. The trail is part of a regional trail network with nearby trailheads established at the parks located in the Village of Garrettsville to the east and the Village of Mantua to the west.

The combined recreational facilities of the Village, Township, and County along with the facilities made available by Hiram College are well within the recommended standards for a well-rounded system of parks and recreational facilities for communities of this population size, according to the National Recreation and Parks Association standards.

As previously stated, the Township does not own any public parkland or provide any recreational facilities of its own. The Township would need to acquire an area of approximately 1 to 2 acres in size for every 1,000 people residing in the Township in order to meet or exceed the recommended standards. This area would need to be easily accessible with adequate parking facilities. In addition, the parkland would need to be improved to allow for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, playground areas with equipment, and picnicking.

8. Public Schools

The Township is located in both the Crestwood Local School District and the James A. Garfield School District. Approximately 65% of the Township is located within the Crestwood Local School District (See **Map 4-23, School Districts**).

A. Crestwood Local School District

Mantua Village, Mantua Township and Shalersville Township make up the balance of the District. As of September 2013, approximately 2,001 students were enrolled in the school system

The District maintains a total of 4 school buildings. There is a Primary School housing Kindergarten through 2nd grade, an intermediate school housing 3rd through 5th grade, a middle school housing 6th through 8th grade and a high school housing 9th through 12th grade.

As of September 2013 total enrollment numbers of the four Crestwood Local School District schools were as follows: Crestwood Primary School 436 students, Crestwood Intermediate School 403 students, Crestwood Middle School 459 students, and Crestwood High School 703 students.

B. James A. Garfield School District

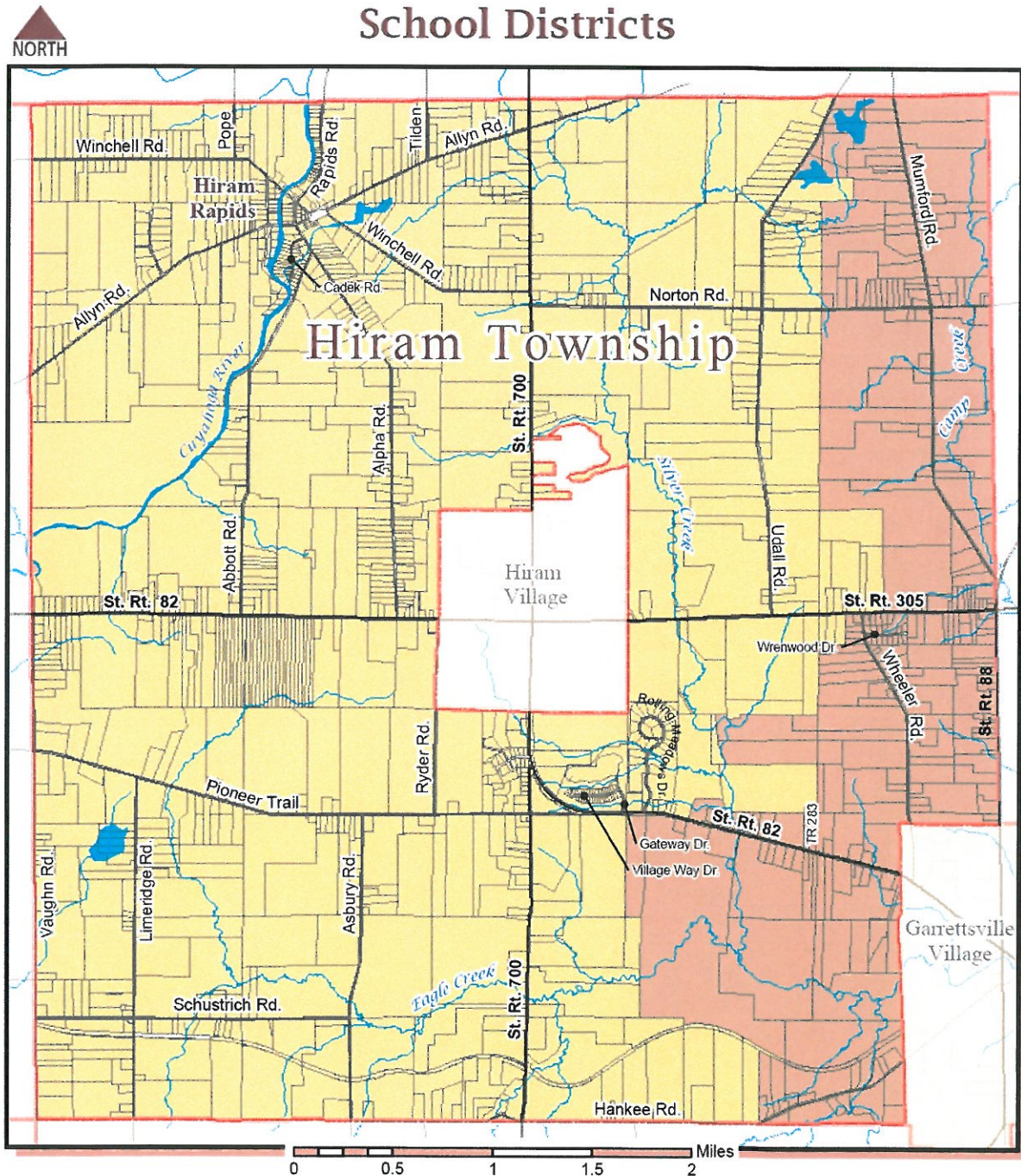
The Village of Garrettsville, Nelson Township, Freedom Township and parts of Hiram Township make up the James A. Garfield School District. As of September 2013, approximately 1,497 students were enrolled in the school system.

The District maintains a total of 4 school buildings. An elementary school building, an intermediate school building, a middle school building and a high school building. All four buildings are located in the Village of Garrettsville.

The Elementary School contains kindergarten classes through 4th grade. The Elementary School has approximately 550 students enrolled at this facility. The Intermediate School has 246 students enrolled in the 5th and 6th grades. Approximately 237 students attend 7th and 8th grade classes at the Middle School. The High School has approximately 464 students in attendance for 9th through 12th grade classes in this building.

9. Police Protection

The Portage County Sheriff's Department is responsible for providing police protection to the residents and businesses of Hiram Township. To serve and protect the County, the Sheriff has one Deputy, two Captains, three Lieutenants, three Sergeants, and 42 Patrol Officers. The Sheriff operates a central facility in Shalersville Township and three additional outposts. Dispatching for the Sheriff's Office is accomplished through the Central 911 System.



- Crestwood Local Schools
- James A. Garfield Local Schools

Source: Roads, parcels, Portage County GIS Dept., Jan 2012;
 Political boundary updated, Portage County Regional Planning Commission, June 2012;
 School districts, Tax map numbers, 2012.



November 2012

Map 4-23

10. Fire Protection

The Hiram Fire Department has proudly protected the lives and property of the community since 1897. Serving an area of approximately 24 square miles, the Hiram Fire Department provides fire/rescue and advanced life service. Presently, the department is headed by a Fire Chief and an Assistant Chief. This included a number of firefighters includes Lieutenants and Paramedics who are certified Advanced Medical Technicians trained in advanced life services. The remaining personnel are skilled in firefighting tactics and certified as Emergency Medical Technicians. A current policy of the department now requires all personnel to be trained as a firefighter and certified as an Emergency Medical Technician prior to being hired.

The Fire Station is presently located on Garfield Road (State Routes 82 and 700), approximately 1/10 of a mile south of the Garfield Road and Wakefield (State Routes 82 and 305) intersection. .

Some of the money needed to operate the Department is made available by a special fire and ambulance property tax levied in both the Village and the Township, as well as revenues generated from the income tax collected by the Village, plus an annual service fee paid by Hiram College. On a scale of 10 being the best, the Hiram Fire Department has an Ohio Inspection Rating (ISO) of 7 for the service provided for the Township.

11. Ambulance Service

The Hiram Fire Department provides ambulance service for the Hiram communities. The Hiram Fire Department response time averages 1-3 minutes in the daytime and 3-15 minutes in the evening from the time the call is received to the time the ambulance departs from the station.

F. Population, Housing, and Economic Characteristics

Trends in population and housing growth can be analyzed through a review of sources of information such as, Census statistics, building permit data, real estate sales data and lot creation records. Reliable demographic information can be very useful in identifying trends and determining the community's future growth requirements.

1. Historic Population Growth

The most current population data for Hiram is based on the 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate. **Table 4-6** represents the historic population figures for the Township. The information contained on this table is compiled from the U.S. Census Bureau's population statistics of the past 60 years.

The American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate calculated the population for Hiram Township to be 2,248 people. The 2000 population was reported at 2,296. This represents a 2.1% decrease in population between 2000 and 2011. A review of **Table 4-6**, which lists the U.S. Census population figures for the Township since 1940, shows that the Township's population has steadily increased over the past 60 years and has never seen a decrease in population as was reported by the 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate.

**TABLE 4-6
HISTORIC POPULATION GROWTH
HIRAM TOWNSHIP**

Year	Population	Percent Growth
1940	726	
1950	819	12.8%
1960	1,149	40.3%
1970	1,400	21.8%
1980	1,681	20.1%
1990	1,888	12.3%
2000	2,296	21.6%
2011	2,248	-2.1%

**TABLE 4-7
HISTORIC POPULATION GROWTH
PORTAGE COUNTY**

Year	Population	Percent Growth
1940	46,660	
1950	63,954	37.1%
1960	91,798	43.5%
1970	125,868	37.0%
1980	135,856	7.9%
1990	142,585	5.0%
2000	152,061	6.6%
2011	159,641	5.0%

The greatest growth in population occurred between 1950 and 1960. During this decade the Township's population increased by 330 residents or 40.3% over the previous decade. Throughout the 1960's and 1970's the population increased approximately 20% during each decade. However, during the decade of the 1980's, the Township's rapid population growth declined. During the 1980's, the Township's population only increased by 12%. In the 1990's the Township's population growth returned to the accelerated rate of approximately 21%.

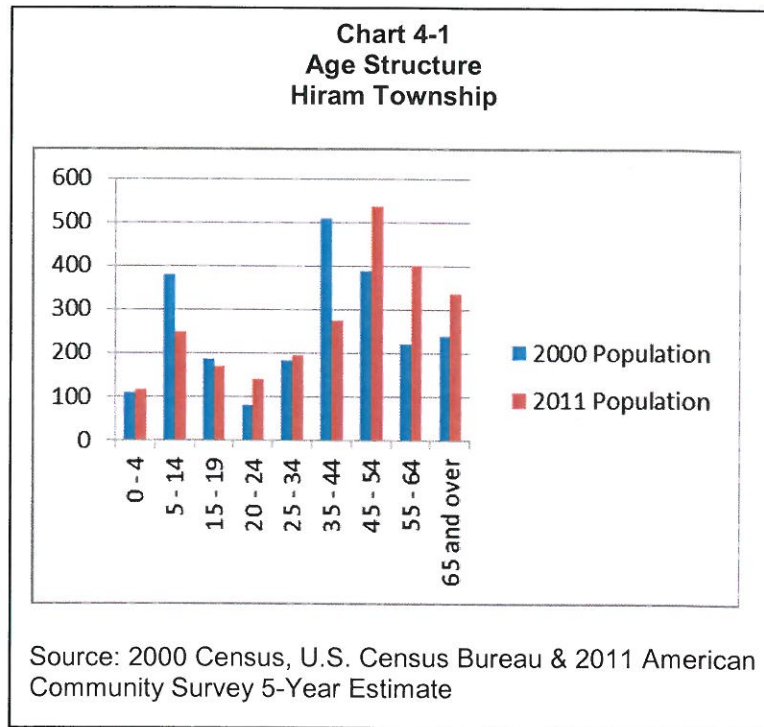
The population growth of the Township appears to resemble that of the County through the 2000 Census. According to the U.S. Census population figures, listed on **Table 4-7**, the County's population increased significantly during 1940s through the 1960s. The greatest population increase occurred during the decade of the 1960s. During the 1960s, the County's population increased by 43.5%, similar to the 40.3% growth occurring in the Township for the same time period. The County's rapid increase in population started to decline during the 1980's and 1990's when compared to the population figures of the previous decades. In 2011, the similar growth trend between Hiram Township and Portage County ceased when Hiram Township's population declined while Portage County's population continued to grow.

2. Age Structure

The 2000 Census Bureau statistics and the 2011 American Community Survey statistics reveal that the Township's population has decreased by 2.1% in the 11-year period. The age structure information listed on **Chart 4-1** indicates a slight increase in the total number of new births since 2000. However, there was a substantial loss in the number of children aged 5 – 14 between 2000 and 2011. Additionally, there was a slight increase in the number of residents in the 25 – 34 category and a substantial decline in the number of individuals representing the 35 – 44 age category during this 11 year period. This comparative analysis strongly suggests that the many young adult headed families that established themselves in the Township in 2000 have remained in the Township.

A review of the age structure data revealed there were increases in the number of residents representing all of the age categories for individuals over 44 years of age. These increases indicate that existing families are for the most part remaining in Hiram. Plus, a number of new families headed by older adults are moving into Hiram Township. An interesting observation is that the number of individuals age 65 and over has increased in the past eleven years.

This overall trend of the number of older adults within the community suggests a need for assisted living services and alternative housing choices for older persons.



3. Education Levels

The American Community Survey Statistics for the year 2011 indicated that 37.9% of the total people 25 years old or older living in the Township did not further their education beyond receiving a high school diploma. The statistics indicate that 116 of the 1,656 people did not obtain a high school diploma (7.5%). In addition, the Census information indicates that 32.3% of the 1,656 people acquired some type of College Degree. Approximately 88% of these individuals who advanced their educational experience beyond a high school diploma obtained either a bachelor's degree or higher.

Compared to data for Portage County and the state of Ohio, Hiram Township had highly educated residents. **Table 4-8** shows the Township had only 7.5% of the population over 25 not completing high school. Compare that to 9.7% for Portage County and 12.2 % for Ohio, shown in **Tables 4-9** and **4-10** respectively.

A higher population and smaller influence from the college allow data for Hiram Township to be better related to county and state data. However, the township is still having higher numbers of high school graduates than county and state totals. **Table 4-8** shows that by far, more residents of the township have a high school degree than any other level of educational attainment. Percentages for those who pursued education beyond a high school degree are close to those of the county and state.

**TABLE 4-8
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: PERSONS 25 YEARS OR OLDER
HIRAM TOWNSHIP**

	Approximate 2011 Population	Percent
Persons 25 Years and Over	1,656	100.0%
Less Than 9th Grade	16	1.0%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	107	6.5%
High School Graduate	627	37.9%
Some College, No Degree	371	22.4%
Associate Degree	68	4.1%
Bachelor's Degree	321	19.4%
Graduate or Professional Degree	146	8.8%

Source: 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

**TABLE 4-9
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: PERSONS 25 YEARS OR OLDER
PORTAGE COUNTY**

	Approximate 2011 Population	Percent
Persons 25 Years and Over	101,756	100.0%
Less Than 9th Grade	2,033	2.0%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	7,833	7.7%
High School Graduate	39,988	39.3%
Some College, No Degree	20,451	20.1%
Associate Degree	6,612	6.5%
Bachelor's Degree	15,670	15.4%
Graduate or Professional Degree	9,259	9.1%

Source: 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

**TABLE 4-10
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: PERSONS 25 YEARS OR OLDER
STATE OF OHIO**

	Approximate 2011 Population	Percent
Persons 25 Years and Over	7,688,501	100.0%
Less Than 9th Grade	261,409	3.4%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	676,588	8.8%
High School Graduate	2,721,729	35.4%
Some College, No Degree	1,576,143	20.5%
Associate Degree	576,638	7.5%
Bachelor's Degree	1,191,718	15.5%
Graduate or Professional Degree	691,965	9.0%

Source: 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

4. Household Income

Within the Township, the 2011 American Community Survey data reports the median household income was \$74,625. **Table 4-11** shows that nearly one-half of the 837-reporting households within the Township earned between \$50,000 and \$99,000 a year. Approximately, 1.3% of the total households earned less than \$10,000.00 annually. An income of \$100,000.00 or greater was reported for 173 of the 819 households. 45 households had annual income levels greater than \$150,000.00.

Poverty levels, as shown in **Table 4-12**, are well below state and county levels. Also, there is a small amount of households with incredibly high incomes as well. Thus, there are few extremes in incomes that exist.

The Township has considerably lower poverty levels when compared to the county and state. This is represented in **Table 4-12**. This should not be a surprise as poverty levels are closely related to levels of educational attainment. Going back to **Table 4-8** the township had less than 8% of individuals not completing high school. This number was much less than those of the county and state. Thus, residents are able to apply for and receive more jobs.

**TABLE 4-11
HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 2011
HIRAM TOWNSHIP**

Household Income	Households	Percent
Less than \$10,000	11	1.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	0	0.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	42	5.0%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	80	9.6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	132	15.8%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	155	18.5%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	244	29.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	128	15.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,000	30	3.6%
\$200,00 or more	15	1.8%

Source: 2000 Census, U.S. Census Bureau

**TABLE 4-12
POVERTY IN 2011**

Location	Percent of Total Pop. Below Poverty level
Hiram Township	2.7%
Portage County	11.2%
State of Ohio	10.8%

Source: 2011 American Community Survey

G. Labor Force Characteristics

According to the 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 1,971 individuals 16 years of age or older were living within the Township in 2011. Of this total, 1,514 residents made-up the Township's labor force. The Township had an 8.5% unemployment rate. The majority of the 1,514 employed Township residents were not concentrated in any single type of industry, but dispersed throughout a wide array of industry types. **Table 4-13** provides a list of the types of industries the Township's residents were employed in, as reported to the American Community Survey in 2011.

According to the information provided to the American Community Survey, the five categories of industries employing residents are as follows:

- Management, Business, Science, and Art Occupations (31.38% of the residents)
- Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations (20.27% of the residents)
- Sales and Office Occupations (19.34% of the residents)
- Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations (16.23% of the residents)
- Service Occupations (12.77% of the residents)

**TABLE 4-13
2011 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
HIRAM TOWNSHIP**

Industry	Persons	Percent
Management Occupations	170	12.27%
Business & Financial Operations Occupations	42	3.03%
Computer & Mathematical Occupations	11	.80%
Architecture & Engineering Occupations	27	1.95%
Life, Physical, & Social Science Occupations	10	.72%
Education, Training, & Library Occupations	77	5.56%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media Occupations	26	1.88%
Health Diagnosing & Treating Practitioners & other Technical Occupations	42	3.03%
Health Technologists & Technicians	30	3.16%
Healthcare Support Occupations	41	2.96%
Law Enforcement Workers (including supervisors)	12	.87%
Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations	63	4.55%
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance Occupations	41	2.96%
Personal Care & Service Occupations	20	1.44%
Sales & Related Occupations	102	7.36%
Office & Administrative Support Occupations	166	11.98%
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry Occupations	7	.07%
Construction & Extraction Occupations	149	10.75%
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair Occupations	69	4.98%
Production Occupations	201	14.50%
Transportation Occupations	14	1.01%
Material Moving Occupations	66	4.76%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

H. Residential Development Trends

1. Housing Unit Data:
1980, 1990, 2000 Census and 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate (**Table 4-14**)

Year	Total Dwelling Units	Change in Dwelling Units	Percent Change
1980	514		-
1990	859	345	67.1%
2000	836	-23	-2.7%
2011	901	65	7.78%

Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census and 2011 American Community Survey

Only 14.9% of the Township's current residential dwellings were built before 1939. **Table 4-15** shows that new home construction for the decades following World War II has been fairly uniform. **Table 4-15** indicates there are two decades with above average home construction figures. Home construction appears to average 100 new homes a decade. During the 1970's 183 new homes were built and 159 were built during the 1990's.

The increased number of new homes constructed in the 1970's coincides with the baby boom generation coming of age and financial influence to purchase homes for themselves. The increase in the number of new homes during the 1990's appears to be more closely related to localized urban sprawl from the surrounding communities as more individuals acquire greater financial freedom and being able to live farther away from where they are employed.

**TABLE 4-15
YEAR HOUSING UNITS BUILT
HIRAM TOWNSHIP**

Year Structure Built	Number	Percent
1939 or earlier	134	14.9%
1940 to 1949	27	3.0%
1950 to 1959	173	19.2%
1960 to 1969	44	4.9%
1970 to 1979	183	20.3%
1980 to 1989	103	11.4%
1990 to 1999	159	17.6%
2000 to 2004	58	6.4%
2005 or later	20	2.2%
Total	901	100.0%

Source: 2011 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

2. Residential Building Permit Data

Between 2003 and 2012, a total of 79 building permits were issued for the construction of new residential dwelling units in Hiram Township (see **Table 4-16**). An annual average of 7.9 permits for new homes were issued during this ten-year period.

**TABLE 4-16
RATE OF HOUSING CONSTRUCTION: 2008-2012
HIRAM TOWNSHIP**

Year	Residential Building Permits
2003	18
2004	13
2005	18
2006	10
2007	10
2008	2
2009	1
2010	4
2011	1
2012	2
Total	79

Source: PCRPC and County Building Department

3. Land Subdivisions in Hiram

Development activity is also indicated by the number of new building lots created from larger parcels through the minor or major subdivision process, plus those that are exempt from County Subdivision Regulations (divisions of land of five acres or more) or land that is replatted. Between 2008 and 2012, 5 new building lots of five or more acres were created, and 9 lots were created through the minor subdivision process (See **Table 4-17**).

Table 4-17
Lots Created: 2008-2012
Hiram Township

Year	Exemptions	Minor Subd.	Major Subd.
2008	0	6	0
2009	1	0	0
2010	2	0	0
2011	0	0	0
2012	2	3	0
Total	5	9	0

Source: PCRPC land division records

4. Housing Cost

As **Table 4-18** shows, the average sales price for homes in the Hiram Township area over the last 5 years is \$176,986. The sales were above the average in the years 2010 and 2011. The average sales price in 2012 was \$148,113, which made 2012 the lowest out of the five years.

TABLE 4-18
HIRAM TOWNSHIP AVERAGE HOME SALES PRICES 2008-2012

Year	Number of Reported Sales	Average Sales Price
2008	24	\$172,993
2009	18	\$154,294
2010	30	\$220,295
2011	33	\$189,237
2012	38	\$148,113
Total Average	28.6	\$176,986

Source: Portage County Auditor CAMA database, October 9th, 2013

5. New construction

The average cost for the construction of a single-family home in Hiram Township is \$210,000. That price is given for the 3 units built between 2011 and 2013. As with housing costs, the numbers are inflated because the cost of one project was unreported and one home's construction cost was relatively high. Table 4-19 lists the average costs for new residential units from the year 2011 to 2013

Year	Hiram Twp.
2011	N/A
2012	\$210,00
2013	N/A

No information available for 2011 and 2013

Source: PCRPC and County Building Department
Note: Costs do not include land costs.

I. Township Government

1. Organization, Duties, Limitations, and Opportunities

In developing implementation strategies, it is important to know what the limits and options are for the governmental units of Hiram Township.

Hiram Township

A. General Governmental Functions

Hiram Township derives its authority from the state and is limited in its authority to those powers granted by the Ohio Revised Code, Title 5. The Township is governed by a Board of 3 elected Trustees. There is also an elected Township Clerk. The Trustees may appoint a Township Administrator if they choose.

The Board of Trustees is mandated to:

- Perform an annual inventory in January of each year of all materials, machinery, tools, and township supplies in its possession.

- Plat the cemetery and sell lots to public at reasonable prices (If elected to have cemetery); Preserve and protect the cemeteries under its jurisdiction
- Maintain Township Roads
- Maintain Township Drainage Systems
- Act upon all zoning resolution amendments

The Township may perform many other functions within the limits of the resources available, based upon priorities and needs of the Township.

Other areas that the Board of Trustees may address include but are not limited to:

- Provide a cemetery, maintain it, and levy a tax to do so.
- Publishing and distributing a newsletter to keep residents, property owners and employers informed of township operations, activities, policies, etc.
- May accept donations of real or personal property for township use
- May sell, lease or transfer any real property of the Township not needed for public use to a nonprofit senior citizens organization to be used for provision of housing, health, social services, or recreational activities for the benefit of older persons.
- May lease township property for mineral extraction
- May enact regulations to:
 - Control engine noises and all vehicles parking in the township
 - Snow emergency authorization
 - Control noise where D liquor permits have been issued, adjacent to residentially zoned property
 - Control storage of junk motor vehicles on public or private property
- Township may levy a tax not to exceed five mils on the dollar for drilling an oil or gas well in the township, when authorized by a majority vote of electors.
- Trustees may purchase appropriate, construct...and equip a township hall, township park, public library buildings, bridges, ...and other places where an overhead footway is necessary and the board may acquire sites by lease or otherwise for any such improvements including lands and buildings for recreational purposes.
- Trustees may acquire, other than by appropriation, an ownership interest in land, water or wetlands, and may restore and maintain land, water, or wetlands in which it has an interest for the purposes of protecting and preserving natural, scenic, open, or wooded condition of land, water or wetlands against modification or encroachment resulting from occupation, development, or other use.
- Trustees may acquire lands and materials for park by donation, purchase by cash, installment, lease purchase, lease with option to purchase, or lease.
- Contract with county commissioners for construction, maintenance, repair or operation of water supply improvements. The Board may levy taxes and issue bonds and other forms of debt for these purposes.
- Provide for fire protection and join other political subdivisions in creation of fire district, adopt a fire code and levy a tax for such fire protection
- Contract for police protection
- Contract for Ambulance or Emergency Medical Service

- Join in creation of joint ambulance districts
- May charge fees for ambulance or ems services
- Create a Township Police District or Joint Police District and levy a tax
- Levy a lodging excise tax (on establishments with transient guests)
- May appropriate funds for: federal programs, social services for senior citizens, county office of economic development, nonprofit organizations for regional cooperation and improvement, to other political subdivisions with authority to provide water and/or sewer service to the township to construct, maintain, repair and operate water or sewer systems that service the township;
- May appropriate funds to be expended by the township or by joint agreement with one or more other political subdivisions or by private or nonprofit organizations for the purpose of encouraging economic development of the Township or area through promotion of tourism. (could include agritourism)
- May adopt, administer and enforce an existing structures code pertaining to the repair and continued maintenance of structures and the premises of such structures. The code must be fully compatible with the local residential building code.
- May adopt, administer and enforce a standard building code for the erection, construction, repair, alteration and maintenance of one, two and three family dwellings. More stringent regulations may be applied in Flood Hazard Areas to prevent or reduce hazard from flooding. (Or may contract with municipal corp or county)
- May provide for removal, repair or securing of structures that have been declared insecure/unsafe by fire department and recover the costs. Provide for abatement, removal of vegetation, refuse, debris from land if it is determined to be a nuisance.
- Require registration and regulation of transient vendors
- May designate a township police constable.
- Township and Village may jointly unite in improvement or construction of Town Hall

The Board may appoint the following Boards as per statute:

- Township Zoning Commission
- Township Board of Zoning Appeals
- Park District Board

Both the Township Zoning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals have been appointed by the Board of Trustees.

B. *Optional Limited Self Government*

Townships may adopt a limited form of self-government (limited home rule) which has some of the following benefits and obligations:

- Allows the township to exercise all powers of local self-government as long as not in conflict with general laws, requirements and prohibitions of ORC.
- *Requires* the Township to either establish a police district for the Township, establish a joint police district with another adjoining township, or contract with another governmental entity (i.e., municipality, county sheriff,) to obtain police protection services including enforcement of township resolutions (*Could contract with the Village*)
- Allows the township to adopt and enforce local police, sanitary and other regulations that are not in conflict with the general laws or otherwise prohibited;
- *Requires* the Township to appoint a law director. (full or part time)
- Where there is a conflict between a Township and a County Law, the Township law prevails.

Under limited home rule the Township may not:

- Create criminal offenses
- Impose civil fines other than authorized by ORC.
- Establish or revise subdivision regulations, road construction standards, storm water or drainage regulations, water and sewer regulations
- Establish or revise building codes
- Change the powers or duties of a township relative to agriculture, or the conservation or development of natural resources;
- Establish regulations for hunting, trapping, possession, sale or use of firearms

C. *Financial Characteristics*

Townships are limited on some fees and fines they can impose and Townships cannot enact an income tax or sales tax. Townships primarily get their revenue from the following sources:

- General Property Tax (~small amount-most goes to schools)
- Special Levy's approved by the voters: Fire, EMS, Roads
- Funds redistributed from other units of government (Intergovernmental Receipts) such as local government funds, gas tax and license plate fees proportional share
- Special Assessments-such as sidewalks (Township has none)

On **Table 4-20**, Hiram Township Changes in Revenue and Expenditures, 2009-2012, these funds, along with intergovernmental receipts and fees charged for services comprise the special revenues.

A general analysis of the Townships revenue and expenditure patterns for provision of basic services shows that from 2009-2012 that Township *revenues are continuing to increase from 2009, but not consistently increasing.* Hiram Township revenue between 2009 and 2012 decreased by 1%.

TABLE 4-20
HIRAM TOWNSHIP CHANGES IN REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES 2009-2012

	2009	2010	%Change	2011	%Change	2012	%Change
Beginning Balance	\$507,703.093	\$677,648.66		\$622,624.79		\$633,772.95	
REVENUE/TYPE							
General Fund	\$244,648.57	\$270,703.34		\$232,059.46		\$175,953.28	
Other Revenue	\$594,236.48	\$600,117.87		\$652,844.07		\$654,187.75	
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$838,885.05</i>	<i>\$870,821.21</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>\$884,903.53</i>	<i>2%</i>	<i>\$830,141.03</i>	<i>-6%</i>
EXPENDITURES							
General Fund	\$138,450.31	\$325,850.10		\$224,520.15		\$158,736.72	
Special Revenues	\$704,020.25	\$639,222.92		\$804,138.74		\$671,565.36	
<i>Totals</i>	<i>\$842,470.56</i>	<i>\$965,073.02</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>\$1,028,658.89</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>\$636,611.90</i>	<i>-39%</i>
Ending Balance	\$677,648.66	\$622,624.79		\$633,772.95		\$575,308.34	

Expenditures increased by 15% between 2009 and 2010, by 7% between 2010 and 2011 and decreased 39% between 2011 and 2012. *For the first time in the time period examined, in 2012, Hiram Township spent less to provide services than they received in revenue, but because of the sizable beginning fund balance, remain financially sound in the other years.*

2. Selected Economic Development Tools

A. Joint Economic Development Districts

Townships may enter into Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDS) contracts with adjoining⁵ municipalities to facilitate economic development and create or preserve jobs and economic opportunities and to improve the economic welfare of the people in the area of the contracting entities. The contract may provide for sharing the costs to develop and operate the JEDD. The governmental units share the fiscal benefits from economic development projects. The law encourages participating governments to engage in joint planning and land use and building regulation.

⁵ The territory of contracting parties may be separated by no more than one intervening township or Municipal Corporation that is not a contracting party.

The County may enter into an agreement with the contracting parties regarding the provision of services by the county within the proposed JEDD and may enter into an agreement with the contracting parties to extend services to the area or areas to be included in the JEDD.

A JEDD may not be created that includes territory with electors residing in it or that is zoned for residential use.

The resolution of a board of Township Trustees approving the contract creating a JEDD must be submitted to and approved by a majority of the voters of the Township before it goes into effect unless the Trustees approved the Resolution unanimously, the JEDD was proposed at the request of a majority of the landowners in the JEDD and the territory is zoned in a manner appropriate for the function of the JEDD.

Other items addressed in JEDD contracts include:

- Annexation proceedings proposing the annexation to, merger of, or consolidation with a municipal corporation of any unincorporated territory within a JEDD are generally prohibited for three years after the contract creating the JEDD is approved by a majority of the electors. The contract that creates the JEDD may prohibit any such annexation proceedings with respect to contracting municipal corporations beyond the three year period.
- The JEDD continues to exist for whatever term the contract provides and any subsequent amendments.
- The municipality provides certain services agreed upon, such as sewer and water
- The Board of Directors of the JEDD can levy an income tax within the JEDD area. The income tax may be levied based on the income earned by persons working in the JEDD and on the net profits of businesses located within the JEDD or income or net profits from the portion of the JEDD where the income tax is levied. Income tax revenue shall be used for the purposes of the JEDD or any portion of the JEDD in which an income tax may be levied and for the purposes of the contracting parties based upon the contract terms.
- The property tax may be shared.
- The governmental units may grant tax exemptions as per Enterprise Zone Law on property within JEDDs with the consent of the other contracting parties. In this case, they are not required to enter into a tax sharing agreement with the Board of Education.

B. Enterprise Zones and Community Reinvestment Areas (Incentive Programs)

Enterprise Zones are defined geographic areas where communities may want to encourage economic development and offer incentives to do so. The area, terms and incentives must be approved by the Board of Portage County Commissioners and the State of Ohio Department of Development. Businesses and industries may then apply to the County for such incentives.

An enterprise zone offers the following:

Business/Project⁶ - Local and state tax incentives for businesses that expand or locate in designated areas.

Rate/Terms - Up to 75% exemption in incorporated areas and up to 60% in unincorporated areas of the improved real estate or new tangible personal property tax valuation for up to 10 years. In some instances, local school board approval may be required. Additional state incentives are available through ODOD.

Eligibility - Business must finalize an Enterprise Zone Agreement prior to project initiation, agree to retain or create employment and establish, expand, renovate, or occupy a facility in an Enterprise Zone.

Fees - An application fee of \$500, payable to ODOD and annual monitoring fees may apply for each year the Enterprise Zone Agreement is in effect, or required to be monitored.

Ohio Enterprise Zone Restrictions

Intrastate Relocation

Ohio businesses relocating to non-distressed based Enterprise Zones are prohibited from receiving tax exemptions without a waiver from the Director of the Ohio Department of Development. Waiver requirements include:

- Business cannot physically expand at the current site to the extent necessary for the proposed project.
- Market conditions such as just-in-time supply, changes in production methods, changes in special contract provisions, or ownership changes that require a relocation of the facility for it to remain viable.
- Business is subject to a consolidation of two or more existing facilities and meets one of the following standards:
 1. At least one of the facilities involved in the consolidation is not an Ohio Operation and the project would result in at least a 25% increase in the existing employment, and at least a 25% increase in the existing value of the businesses real or personal property at the site.

⁶ www.partnersforprogress.net

2. All of the facilities involved in the consolidation are located in Ohio and the project results in at least 25% increase in the existing Ohio employment, and at least a 50% increase in the existing values of real or personal property of the Ohio facilities involved in the relocation.

Second Enterprise Zone Agreement

A business which has previously entered into an Enterprise Zone Agreement with a local jurisdiction, but within five years of the expiration of the previous agreement, seeks to relocate all or any portion of the employment positions or assets to another project site is prohibited from entering into a new Enterprise Zone Agreement with the new local jurisdiction unless the Ohio Department of Development Director issues a waiver. The conditions necessary to justify a waiver are the same as intrastate relocations.

Community Reinvestment Areas

Creation of Community Reinvestment Areas also requires local and state approvals of area, incentives and terms and offer the following:

Business/Project - Local tax incentives for businesses that expand or locate in designated areas.

Rate/Terms - Up to 100% exemption of the improved real estate property tax valuation for up to 15 years.

Eligibility - Business must undertake new real estate investment. Terms of the exemption are established by the local legislative authority when the area is created. Community Reinvestment Areas created after July 1994 require an agreement between the local jurisdiction and all commercial/industrial business prior to project initiation which includes job creation and/or retention and may require local school board approval.

C. Cooperative Economic Development Agreements

- CEDA allows municipal corporations and townships to provide government improvements, facilities and services; promote economic development; create and preserve employment opportunities and allow townships and counties to share in the benefits of economic development even if the development does not occur in the unincorporated area.
- One or more municipal corporations and board of Township Trustees may enter into agreement.
- A board of county commissioners of one or more counties may become a party to the CEDA upon written consent of each participating municipal corporation and township.
- A CEDA may provide for the joint provision of services and permanent improvements within incorporated or unincorporated areas. The agreement may also provide that services and improvements will be provided by a municipal

corporation in the unincorporated areas or by a county or township within municipal territory. Improvements include by are not limited to: sewer, roads, public utilities and land acquisition

- The agreement may include provisions under which a municipal corporation pays service fees to a township or county or a township or county pays service fees to a municipal corporation.
- Any party may issue notes, bonds, or other debt obligations for the purposes authorized under a CEDA. The agreement may provide for the allocation of payment of the principal, interest and other charges and cost of issuing and servicing such debt repayment.
- The village may issue industrial development notes, bonds or debt obligations to finance projects outside the village but within the area covered by a CEDA and payment of the principal, interest or other charges and costs of such obligations may be allocated by the CEDA
- A CEDA may provide for annexation by agreement and the CEDA may also provide periods of time during which no annexations will occur and designate areas that will not be annexed during that period.
- A CEDA may provide agreements by which the village, township or county and landowners and/or developers of land that is to be annexed agree concerning provision of public services, facilities and permanent improvements.
- CEDA may provide for application of tax abatement statutes within the area covered.
- A CEDA may allow a municipal corporation to earmark for its general revenue fund, a portion of the utility charges it collects in unincorporated territory covered by a CEDA if the CEDA does not include any matters related to annexation.
- A CEDA may provide payments in lieu of taxes to be paid to a township by a municipal corporation. These payments may be in addition to or in lieu of other payments required by law to be made to the township by the municipal corp.
- The CEDA may include other matters pertaining to the annexation or development of territory whether the territory is owned by a governmental entity, a person or private entity.
- The statute is silent on whether residential property or development may be included in a CEDA.
- There cannot be sharing of proceeds of any tax levy among the parties; however proceeds of a levy may be used to make payments agreed to in a CEDA.
- No provision to levy an income tax in unincorporated areas.
- CEDA is to be liberally construed to allow parties to enter into cooperative agreements and carry them out.
-

D. New Annexation Law

- Presents townships with opportunity to negotiate agreements with municipalities on annexation matters.
- Reimbursement to townships by municipalities when property annexed and detached from the Township. Reimbursement on property taxes for 12 years for

commercial, industrial, real personal and public utility property according to following rates:

- *Years 1-3 80% of Township taxes that the Township would have received if no annexation had occurred.*
 - *Years 4-5, 67.5%*
 - *Years 6-7 62.5%*
 - *Years 8-9, 57.5%*
 - *Years 10-12, 42.5%*
- If Municipal Corporation has granted an exemption from property tax, there can be no reduction in payments owed to the township because of that tax abatement.
 - Reimbursement for residential and retail property taxes:
 - Years 1-3 80%
 - Years 4-5 52.5%
 - 6-10 40%
 - 11-12 27.5%
 - Agreements for sharing of income taxes, sharing of services, and longer time periods for reimbursement could be negotiated.
 - Creates 3 special annexation procedures, speeds up approval when all property owners sign the petition. Land may not be detached from the township. Residents can vote for city and township officials and pay taxes to both. Inside millage is shared.
 - Municipality must adopt statement of services and approximate date of provision.
 - Requires County Commissioners to issue specific findings of fact as to whether or not requirements of the annexation have been met.
 - Gives County Commissioners more discretion than prior law as long as findings are based on the preponderance of substantial, reliable and probative evidence on the whole record.
 - Requires commissioners to consider the impact of the annexation not only for the general good of the area to be annexed, but also whether the annexation's benefits will outweigh the detriments to not only the area to be annexed, but also the area of the township within one-half mile of the area to be annexed.
 - Annexation will be expedited where:
 - All parties consent: Where all landowners sign the petition and the municipality and township agree to the annexation. The annexation petition must include a request that the special procedure be used by a certified copy of either an annexation agreement or cooperative economic development agreement. If that occurs the commissioners grant the annexation at the next regular meeting without holding a hearing.
 - *There are Annexation Agreements*
Annexation agreements are permitted for any length of time.

Agreements may provide for 15 specific items, most of which are similar to those under cooperative economic development agreements. Agreements cover such things as

- What territory may be annexed and the areas that will never be annexed, or time periods where no annexation will be made.
- Land use planning and zoning issues;
- Joint services and permanent improvements;
- Who provides what services;
- Services the municipality may provide in the township;
- Services the Township may provide in the municipality;
- Payment for services;
- Fees to each community;
- Application or the refusal to apply tax abatement statues within the area to be annexed;
- Payments in lieu of taxes
- Any other matters pertaining to the annexation or development of publicly or privately owned land.

- Annexation of land that is not excluded from a Township. If all landowners seek annexation and land is not to be excluded from the township. Land is both in the Township and the municipality. If land use in the municipality will be clearly incompatible with land uses in the Township adjacent to the area to be annexed (in the judgment of the municipality) then a buffer zone will be required. It can include open space, landscaping, fences, walls, streets, bicycle and pedestrian paths.
- Annexation for undertaking a significant Economic Development Project, defined to be industrial, distribution, high technology, research and development or commercial use. *Residential and retail uses may be included only if they are ancillary to those uses.* A significant economic development project must include total private, real and personal property investment in excess of \$10 million through land and infrastructure, new construction, reconstruction, installation of fixtures and equipment or the addition of inventory, and the project must create additional annual payroll in excess of \$1million. The director of development must certify the project meets both conditions. Investments related to ancillary residential and retail elements do not count towards the \$10 million and payment in lieu of taxes on account of tax increment financing property tax exemptions are also excluded.
- Petition by a Municipal Corporation when land owned by municipal corporation.

CHAPTER 5

GOALS, POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The establishment of goals, policies and implementation strategies is the most important part of this plan. These policies and strategies will be the guide for all future land use, conservation, development, and capital improvements decisions of these communities. The goals, policies and strategies of this chapter reflect the desire by the communities to:

- Maintain, enhance and protect the farmlands and the viability of the agriculture industry in the Township
- Preserve and enhance the rural character of the Township
- Protect and conserve environmentally sensitive areas, natural areas and open spaces of the communities from degradation.
- Protect cultural and scenic resources of the communities that are a part of their heritage and contribute to the beauty of this area and contribute to a sense of place.
- Encourage more sustainable land use patterns and practices that will make the communities more livable, directing development to the most appropriate locations, particularly to the Village where central sewer and water is available and encouraging alternative land use patterns that require less farmland to be converted to non-farm uses and that are less land consumptive.
- Enhance and strengthen partnerships with Hiram College for the betterment of the Hiram Communities and the region.

The Township desires growth and economic development to occur. The Township wants to utilize effective tools to encourage a land use pattern that preserves agriculture, open space and natural features to enhance the rural economy, the rural character and design quality of Hiram. Conventional suburban type development is not a desirable form of development and would be contrary to the goals of the Township.

CONSERVATION ELEMENT

The following goals and policy statements relate to conservation of farmland, environmentally sensitive and natural areas, open spaces, cultural and scenic resources.

A. FARMLAND

GOAL To preserve a majority of the agricultural land base in the Township for future generations.

OBJECTIVE 1 To protect large blocks of farmland and unique farmlands while providing for limited development in areas suitable for agricultural production.

POLICIES

1. The township will promote the protection and enhancement of agricultural lands that have the greatest long-term productivity potential.
2. Land in agriculture must be protected from conflicting non-farm uses to ensure continued viability.
3. Development that is compatible with the agriculture industry and the maintenance of rural character will be supported.
4. The Township will support programs and initiatives that help preserve agricultural land and help maintain and enhance the economic viability of the agriculture industry.
5. Non-farm development will be encouraged on least productive lands and in areas which can best support development due to infrastructure availability and capacity.
6. Public sewer and water lines will not be extended to areas identified on the plan as Primary Agricultural Conservation Areas.
7. Any entity proposing any utility extension or infrastructure improvements shall prepare an evaluation of said extension or improvements impact on agricultural lands to convert to non-farm uses.
8. The use of farmland preservation tools in Primary Agricultural Conservation Areas that limit the density of development, reduce conflicts between farmers and non-farmers, protect valuable farmland, and protect the base of farmland will be promoted.

STRATEGIES

1. Hiram Township will develop a Transfer of Development Rights program consistent with statutory authority which will require intergovernmental agreements and cooperation. Potential mechanisms to help facilitate this include Planned Unit Development legislation and Annexation Agreements. (See Appendix C for TDR examples)
2. Land in Primary Agricultural Conservation Areas will be designated

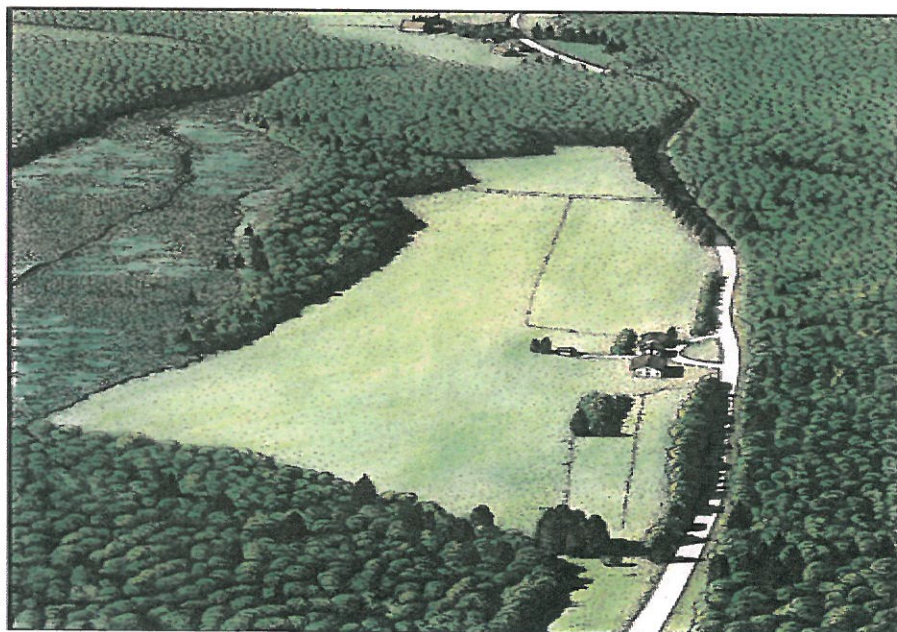
sending areas from which development rights will be sent, to designated receiving areas in the Village or selected receiving areas within the Township. Land owners participating in a TDR program will be assigned development rights at a value of 1 per 5 acres unless other value calculation determined to be more appropriate and consistent with the intent of this plan.

3. Identify and encourage farmers not in the Agricultural District program through the County Auditors Office to make application in order to provide protection against nuisance suits as well as ability to defer any payment requirement of utility tie in and assessment.
4. Identify and encourage farmers not in the Current Agricultural Use Value program (CAUV) through the County Auditors Office to make application so that property taxes will be based upon the lands agricultural value.
5. The township will work with landowners in creation of Agricultural Zoning Districts consistent with this plan, to promote the continuation of farming and to permit with some limited exceptions, only agricultural land uses and related activities. Use of Agricultural Zoning in conjunction with other tools such as PDR and TDR programs will be utilized.
6. Land use controls need to focus on incorporating incentives to encourage participation and cooperation to meet the objectives of this plan.
7. Support must be provided for continuation of the State Purchase of Agricultural Easement Program, (also known as Purchase of Development Rights Program) as well as development of a County program. Use of a County sales tax increase to fund such a program is the most favored method by Hiram residents, as opposed to real estate tax increases. The Township and other entities may choose to pursue funding for a local program, especially if a County program is not initiated within the next 3 years.
8. The communities could also explore developing a local land banking program in conjunction with or in lieu of a local PDR and or TDR program. Funding would still be an issue, but perhaps the local Hiram Community Trust or other foundation could provide seed money. The community land bank could hold the land for resale for farming purposes. The bank could establish priorities such as selling pieces for new or small farmers. They could also lease lands purchased for farming as well. The land bank could also restrict resale or lease to lower income farmers.
9. Land in Agricultural Zoning Districts will receive priority consideration for PDR and other preservation programs.
10. Residential development densities in Agricultural Zoning Districts will be

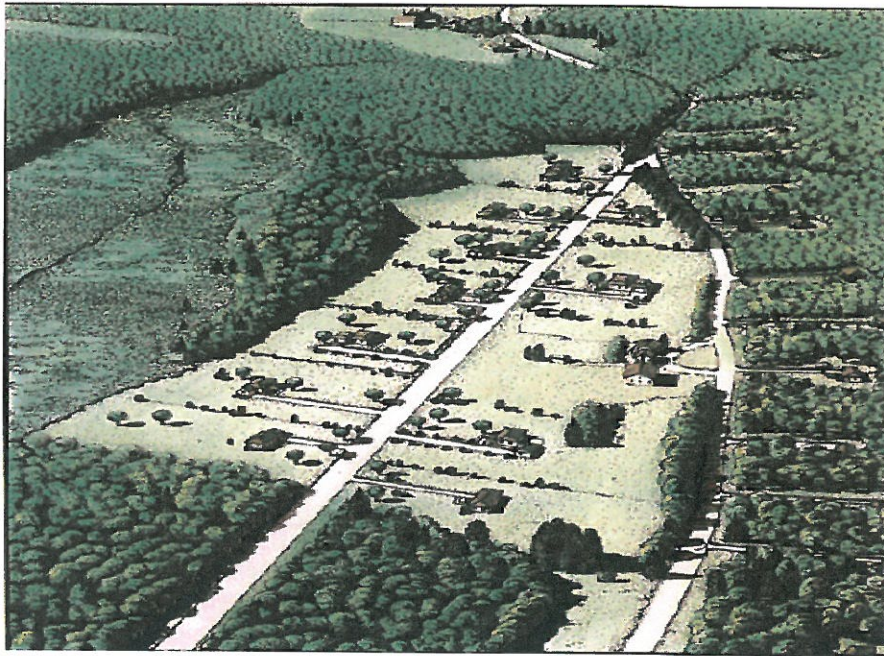
allowed to occur at 1 dwelling unit per 20 acres or vary on a sliding scale, depending upon the size of the parent parcel. An example of sliding scale: 1 house lot/2-10 acre parcel, 2 house lots/10-30 acre parcel; 3 house lots/30-80 acre parcel, etc. (*Hiram Township may want to consider some use of conservation development options in these agricultural zoning districts.*)

11. Design standards should require that non-farm development allowed in Ag Zoning Districts be located on lower quality (least productive soils) and in locations where there will be the least interference with farming operations and the least impact on the rural character of the area.
12. Nuisance notices should be posted that warn residents that farming has priority and may inconvenience non-farmers.
13. Encourage land owners to explore options and tax advantages of donation of easements to the State (Department of Agriculture), Headwaters Land Trust, Soil and Water Conservation District, or other appropriate entity allowed to hold easements, recognized by the IRS and allowed under Ohio law.
14. In areas with smaller blocks of farmland, (less than 300 acres) the Township may allow for the option of allowing conservation development on the least productive soils. An example appears on the following pages showing 3 scenarios. The first picture is a dairy farm undeveloped, the second a farm developed conventionally, the third is the same dairy farm using more creative conservation development practices, which still allow the farm to continue operations yet provide the farmer an infusion of capital. Again, incentives will need to be utilized to encourage this type of development.

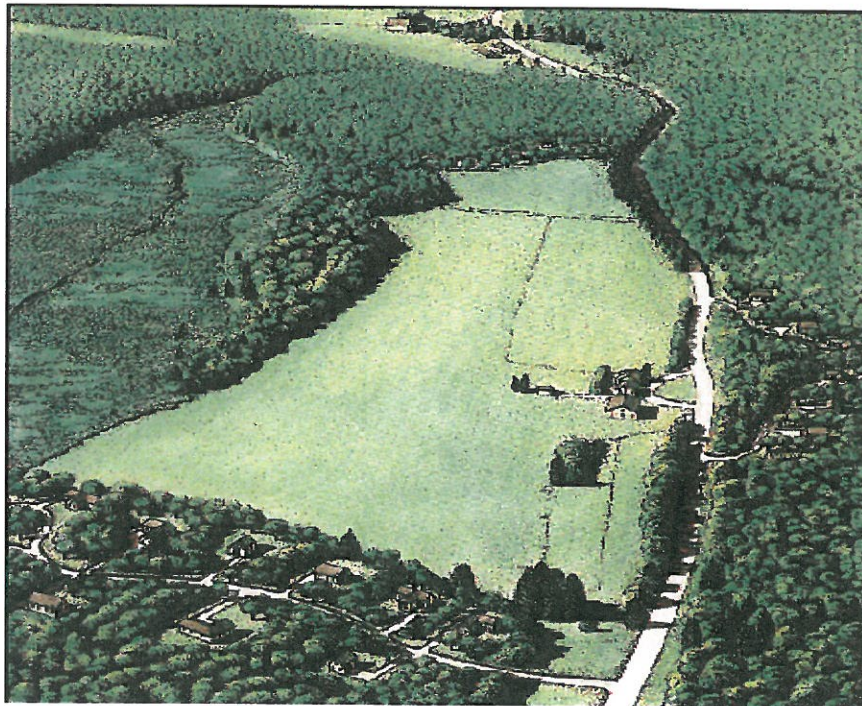
Dairy Farm Undeveloped



Dairy Farm Developed Conventionally



Dairy Farm with Conservation/Creative Development



15. Agricultural buffer zones should be incorporated into the zoning regulations which will serve to reduce the potential from impacts of non-farm uses on viable farm areas. Examples include: establishment of an area of large minimum lot sizes surrounding Agricultural Zones. This could correlate to the open space/conservation district areas; Clustering development with the open space adjacent to neighboring farms. Regulations requiring that all new development be set back at least 50 feet from the property line of farm land should be adopted to protect agricultural operations from the encroachment of non-farm uses.
16. In order to prioritize the most productive lands, the communities could consider utilizing a Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Program (LESA), which rates the relative value of land in terms of agricultural potential. It can help identify lands with present and future agricultural value. It can help evaluate the impact of proposed development on an agricultural tract. Criteria to include is determined locally, but generally will include factors such as size of site, existing or potential agricultural use, agricultural infrastructure, availability of alternative non farm land, environmental factors. Factors are awarded points that are weighted.

OBJECTIVE 2 To enhance the economic viability of agriculture in Hiram

POLICIES

1. Agriculture will be encouraged as an important part of Hiram's local economy, an important industry, and protected as an economic asset.
2. The Township will help promote and develop agricultural economic development programs that will enhance profitability to the maximum extent possible.

STRATEGIES

1. Accessory farm-related businesses that are conducted outside the home will be permitted to provide greater flexibility for farmers. A farm based business regulation permits certain on-farm enterprises and agricultural support businesses, such as food processing, equipment sales and service, which can provide jobs for farm family members and supplemental income. Farm based businesses must remain an ancillary use, secondary to the farming operation, and should not interfere with adjacent farms or cause nuisance for nearby residents. Zoning regulations will need to be modified to allow for this use.
2. The local school districts should utilize local (Hiram Township or surrounding area) agricultural products in their food services or other operations if appropriate (such as landscaping) whenever possible and should develop relationships with area farmers for direct delivery as available.

3. Local restaurants and grocers should also be encouraged to utilize local fresh produce. The Hiram/Garrettsville Chamber of Commerce could help develop and support such a "buy local" program with assistance from Ohio State University Extension.
4. The Communities should explore the viability of establishing a farmers market on the college campus in a visible parking lot, such as next to the Kennedy Center or cooperate with Garrettsville in establishing one in parking lot of local grocer or high traffic business. OSU could assist.
5. Consider working with the College to explore ways that it or others can contribute to enhancing the economic viability of the agriculture industry.
6. The Township should continue to allow for development of bed and breakfast establishments, especially on working farms. Restaurants should also be allowed in conjunction with the bed and breakfasts to showcase local farm products, limited to patrons and their guests of the bed and breakfast.
7. There is a growing market for Agritourism. Opportunities for agritourism should be encouraged. Zoning regulations should address and provide flexibility to accommodate such uses as educational tours, crop mazes, recreational opportunities, hunting opportunities, farm markets, etc.
8. Lands in agricultural uses within the Village shall be not be discouraged until such lands are needed for urban uses since the Village is the designated growth center for the Township and Village and will be the primary receiving area for a Township Transfer of Development Rights program when developed. Permanent agricultural or conservation easements on these lands within the Village will not be encouraged.

B. CRITICAL NATURAL AREAS

GOAL To enhance and protect our communities' natural heritage and resources and minimize the impacts of development and human activities upon these resources as well as protect life and property from natural hazards and disasters.

OBJECTIVE 1

Protect critical natural areas, including: steep slopes, areas with endangered species of plants and animals, water resources, wetlands, areas with severe potential for ground water pollution, and flood hazard areas, from the impacts of development and other land disturbing activities.

POLICIES

1. The Township will encourage the protection of riparian zones¹ and water bodies.
2. Land uses which have the potential to pollute surface and ground waters of the Township and Village will be precluded or restricted.
3. Development of steep slopes will be prohibited or permitted only to the extent the hazard can be managed in a manner to prevent erosion and danger to humans and properties.
4. Development of floodplains shall be regulated to preserve and maintain the capability of the floodplain to convey the floodwaters discharges and minimize danger to life and property.
5. Identified areas of significant natural and ecological value shall be protected for future generations. Where no conflicting uses are identified, resources shall be managed to preserve their original character. When conflicting uses are identified, resources shall be protected by acquisition or by plans that limit the intensity of development and promote conservation of these resources.
6. Identified wildlife habitats shall be protected and managed in accordance with State wildlife management practices. The importance of riparian vegetation as wildlife habitat shall be considered during the development review process.
7. Natural drainage courses shall not be altered or filled unless adequate alternatives and measures are taken to accommodate the storm water runoff and surface drainage in the area. (Consistent with local, state and federal laws)
8. Wetlands serve important functions in Hiram and shall be preserved to the maximum extent possible. Development in areas identified as wetlands shall be permitted only to the extent granted by State and Federal Regulatory Agencies.
9. New development in general should be limited and carefully managed in identified critical natural areas/environmentally sensitive areas. (See Map 4-13 of *Critical Natural Areas*.)
10. Private responsibility for land conservation will be promoted through education on a variety of conservation planning tools, such as purchase of development rights, donation of land (easement or fee title) to conservation/land trusts, in order to provide long-term legal protection for private land. Western Reserve Land Conservancy can play a vital role in implementing this policy.
11. Land disturbing activities such as clear cutting and leaving soils exposed for any length of time that will cause erosion and water sedimentation shall be precluded without a management plan.

STRATEGIES

1. The Township will incorporate riparian, water body and wetlands buffer requirements into their Zoning Resolution.
2. The Township should maintain and enhance the open space conservation district for areas with the greatest environmental constraints and development

¹ Riparian zones are areas on or relating to the bank of a natural course of water.

limitations. Minimal development should be permitted in these areas. Areas in the vicinity of the Cuyahoga River, Silver Creek, Camp Creek, and Eagle Creek and surrounding areas are appropriate for this type of district. Areas within flood plains are appropriate for the following types of uses: passive recreation, nature preserves, open space, greenways and trails, education (outdoor classrooms, observation, etc), and some types of agriculture. Single family residential uses should be conditionally permitted to allow for evaluation of potential impacts to these areas. Minimum lot sizes should be 5-10 acres in size for areas suitable for some residential development, keeping density low to minimize impacts. Use of building envelopes or conservation development may be most appropriate for any type of residential development.

3. Create an Environmental Protection Overlay District (or Environmental Standards) for protection of scattered environmentally sensitive areas, (including significant forested areas), that also provides standards to minimize impacts on these areas and resources.
4. In areas designated as Primary Environmental Conservation Areas, other protection methods can include:
 - Encouraging landowners to place lands in conservation easement.
 - Encouraging landowners to donate lands to land trust or appropriate public entity.
 - Development of concerted program to educate residents on tax and other benefits of land or easement donations. (Can apply to other areas as well)
 - Inclusion of these areas in the required set aside of open space in any development in zoning and subdivision regulations.
 - Purchase in fee simple by public entity or appropriate nonprofit such as Western Reserve Land Conservancy. Maximize use of grant opportunities such as the through Clean Ohio Funds, and EPA. (Loan funds for waste water/water improvements for Hiram or other communities projects can utilize interest amount that would otherwise be collected by EPA for projects benefiting water quality.)
 - Purchase of development rights
 - Zoning regulations-(see OC discussion above)

C. SCENIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL To maintain, enhance and protect the scenic and culturally significant resources, sites and buildings that contribute to the beauty of Hiram, its rural and small town character, sense of place and connects the Township to its heritage.

OBJECTIVE 1

Protect the historic sites and structures of the Township to the extent reasonable and feasible from destruction, deterioration and from becoming obscured by new development.

- POLICIES**
1. Historic, archeological and architecturally significant sites and structures identified in the National Register of Historic Places and structures designated locally as historic and important to the heritage of the community, state or country shall be preserved to the maximum extent possible.
 - Consider developing a historic walk or walking trail.
 2. New development shall respect the historic character of the area and structures that are in proximity to the proposed new development. Architectural style, building mass, lot coverage, setbacks and other attributes that impact the fit of the new development with surrounding development and landscapes shall be taken into consideration in design of new development. The Township should consider developing incentives to encourage preservation.
 3. New development and/or construction that is consistent with and sensitive to the rural and historic character and historic settlement patterns of the Township will be encouraged.
 4. Property owners will be encouraged to re-use and add on to older buildings rather than tearing them down.

STRATEGIES:

1. To protect historical areas in the Township, establish Historic Resources Conservation Overlay Districts in the following areas along with development guidelines.
 - a. *Pioneer Trail from the Township line east to Route 700*
Large historic farms and farmstead homes such as the Johnson House and Ryder House, long views and current agricultural lands characterize this important corridor.
 - b. *Route 82 Corridor East of Pioneer Trail*
This area is characterized by long views, Panorama Farms historic home and barns as well as pastureland, and Rolling Meadows conservation development with significant open space and natural areas preserved.
 - c. *Allyn Road from the Geauga County line, south west to Route 700*
This area is characterized by Greek Revival Homes both historic and new,

natural areas under conservation easement, maple tree lined rural road, long views, and Silver Creek Organic Farm.

d. *Hiram Rapids Hamlet*

This area is characterized by historic homes, and is located on the Scenic Upper Cuyahoga River.

2. Define the rural historic overlay districts that encompass 500 feet from each side of the applicable roads as well as (distance to be determined) from the intersection of Allyn, Alpha and Abbot Roads in the Hiram Rapids hamlet.
3. Designate Heritage (as well as Scenic Routes) throughout the Township and Village with appropriate markers and promote them locally, and regionally. Local Chambers of Commerce, the County Visitors and Convention Bureau would be important partners. This will also help promote agritourism and local economic development.
4. Develop Rural Design Standards that provide guidance for new development and construction to insure protection of the character of Rural Historic Areas and compatibility in design with historic structures. (Also see Rural Development Strategies.)
5. Minimize frontage development, particularly in the Pioneer Trail, Rt. 82 and Allyn Road Areas. Frontage, building spacing and similar standards that reflect the character of these areas should be incorporated into zoning to continue the historic patterns.
6. Alternatives for and incentives for use of conservation development types that take development off lot frontages should be incorporated into zoning regulations such as minor lane subdivisions. The current NOSO regulations of the Township will need to be updated to include minor lane developments.
7. Traditional platted subdivisions should be conditionally permitted or precluded in the Township.
8. Developments proposed in areas of archeological significance should be evaluated by a professional archeologist prior to land disturbance activities. High priority areas include the Cuyahoga River Corridor, the Pioneer Trail area, and the Hankee/Asbury Road Areas.
9. The Village should adopt reasonable Design Standards, easily administered, (with pictures and illustrations for examples), to insure the historic fabric of the community that makes it a special place is protected and that new development is compatible with existing historic structures and the traditional pattern of development of the village. Conventional suburban type platted subdivisions will not be permitted. (Also see Village Land Use strategies)

10. Review and evaluate areas, sites and buildings that have been identified as historic and determine those that should be nominated for National Register Listing. Currently, only 2 such buildings are listed on the National Register, the Johnson Home and Pioneer Trail and the Young Home on W. Wakefield Rd. The County or Hiram Historical Society could be of assistance. A committee of College, Township and Village representatives should coordinate this. Benefits for National Register listing include:
 - Provides prestige and community awareness of the site or building's significance.
 - Income producing properties on the National Register or part of a historic district can be aided by federal tax incentives that allow for a 20% investment tax credit for certified rehabilitation.
 - National Register listing is often a prerequisite for funding applications for restoration work through various private, nonprofit organizations such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

OBJECTIVE 2 Protect and enhance scenic views, rural lanes and other critical open space resources of the communities that are an integral part of the rural fabric.

STRATEGIES

1. Protect scenic vistas, particularly:
 - a. Ryder Rd. near Pioneer Trail, looking northeast toward the towers of Hiram College.
 - b. Along SR 88 and Norton Rd, looking westward toward Hiram Village.
 - c. Along Udall Rd., looking west toward Hiram Village.
2. Establish system of rural lanes in the Township, particularly:
 - a. Asbury Road
 - b. Hankee Road
 - c. Allyn Road
 - d. Abbot Road between Hiram Rapids and Route 82.
3. Preserve and protect important open spaces and natural areas, especially:
 - a. The Upper Cuyahoga Scenic River Corridor²
 - b. Camp Asbury and environs
4. Strategies include:
 - a. Development of Scenic Resources Overlay District that includes standards for protection and best management of these areas containing scenic views, rural lanes and vistas, and important natural areas. These standards should address items such as building placement on the landscape, building removal, plantings and tree removal, special structural height requirements, signage etc.

² Also see Critical Natural Areas Strategies

- b. Purchase or encourage donation of Scenic/Conservation Easements
- c. Landowner education programs
- d. As the township resurfaces roads, they could establish turnouts, markers and perhaps benches to stop and appreciate the views at key vistas within the right of way.
- e. Officially designate the Rural Lanes and Scenic Routes as with the Heritage Routes noted above and promote them locally and regionally.
- f. Incorporate flexibility and incentives into zoning regulations to encourage preservation of scenic resources.
- g. Given that the Headwaters Trail will be completed in the near future along the south edge of Camp Asbury, partnerships for preservation, education and recreation between the Portage Park District and Camp Asbury should be encouraged.
- h. Traffic calming methods should be employed on designated rural lanes, heritage and scenic routes such as lower speed limits and not straightening or leveling roads (the unintended speed bump).
- i. The Township could plant low maintenance trees and native shrubs within their right of ways where appropriate or encourage landowners to do so, as long as fallen leaves would not impede the road drainage functions.
- j. Coordinate with local utility companies to place utility lines underground along scenic road corridors.
- k. The Township and Village may want to prioritize scenic resources for protection in order to best target conservation efforts and resources of the community as well as for funding opportunities. (Could apply to all conservation elements). A joint conservation committee could be formed to carry out this work and pursue implementation. ISTEAs Enhancement funds may be a good source of funds for Scenic Routes recommendations.
- l. The Township could consider also designating areas in Scenic Resource Conservation Areas as sending areas for any Transfer of Development Rights program developed.

PARKS AND RECREATION

GOALS

1. To provide additional active recreation facilities such as softball fields, playgrounds, basketball courts, etc. to meet the needs of the residents.
2. To provide new and extend pedestrian and bikeways (also see transportation recommendations) to meet recreational needs.
3. Improve opportunities for passive recreations uses of natural areas and open spaces.
4. Coordination of recreational programs/facilities between the Township, Village and Schools.

POLICIES

1. The Township may work with the Village and College to pursue a comprehensive parks, recreation and trails program.
2. When new development occurs, parks and recreation lands and amenities may be set aside and developed in accordance to this plan or subsequent more detailed parks, recreation and trails plans.

STRATEGIES

1. The Township should form a committee with cooperation of the Village, College, Park District or other interested party to pursue other walking trail connections that may include public or private property and work with landowners to get easements to cross their properties. For example: connections from Rolling Meadows subdivision to the Village Center.
2. In line with above strategy, greenway trails that loop around the Township and connect to the Village should be included in the Committees evaluation. Areas such as along Silver Creek, and the Cuyahoga River east side would be well worth exploring. The College may be able to help facilitate such trails along Silver Creek area in particular. Inclusion of trails through or adjacent to active farms may also be necessary to complete the loop south of the Cuyahoga River to connect with Pioneer Trail and Asbury Rd.
3. Assist the Park District in completion of the connection of Headwaters Trail.
4. Addition of bike lanes as discussed in the Transportation recommendations.
5. Where appropriate, new development should connect to the trails system as developed.
6. If the trail along Silver Creek is developed on the east side, south of SR 305, connection to the Biological Field Station would be appropriate.
7. The Township should acquire land and develop a park for intensive recreation uses that should be 2 acres or larger in size. Ideally, if it were located in

proximity to the Village park such as south of the Township Garage or in proximity to it, the Parks could conceivably be connected by an internal drive or trail to the Village Park. The township park should be accessible by bicycle so children don't have to be driven to the park to enjoy it or the Village Park.

8. As the southeast quadrant of the community develops, a neighborhood park would be appropriate in this area as well.
9. Explore the idea of a joint community center. Neither the Township Hall or Village Hall provide ample room for large community meetings, or indoor recreational programming.
10. The College should consider a sliding scale membership fee for its recreational facilities based on household income.
11. Pursue Clean Ohio Funds, Land and Water Conservation Funds, or similar sources to aid in implementation.
12. Explore sports leagues as appropriate.
13. Pursue exploring adult education classes.

LAND USE/DEVELOPMENT

HIRAM TOWNSHIP

The Township desires to maintain an agricultural/rural residential character. Commercial, industrial and high density residential development is better suited for the surrounding areas.

GOAL To preserve and enhance the rural and historical character of the Township.

OBJECTIVE 1 To maintain the current patterns of development that are inconsistent with the goal of preserving rural and character of the Township.

POLICIES

1. The Township will support revisions to both County Subdivision regulations and their Zoning Resolution that allow and encourage the clustering of small subdivisions on parcels to reduce frontage development.
2. Conservation subdivision design which promote preservation of natural areas and open spaces will be advocated for any new residential subdivision that is proposed in areas of the Township, especially in proximity to or lands including environmentally sensitive areas.
3. All development shall its impacts to the rural and historic character and natural environment.
4. Innovative residential development designs that promote the preservation of natural features, open space, and preservation of those elements that

contribute to rural character such as preservation of long views, scenic areas, historic buildings and sites, agricultural lands, will be encouraged.

STRATEGIES

1. Areas outside of the conservation areas will remain designated for rural development.
2. Since low density by itself will not protect scenic views or rural character, incorporate Rural Design Standards into the Zoning Resolution that will address issues such as flexibility in building placement depending on the site features (such as not placing a house on a hilltop that will obliterate scenic views), site disturbance, and use of common drives. Use of building envelopes could be utilized. Add illustrations to help describe desired objectives.
3. Encourage landowners to cluster non-farm dwellings split from farm land, and other large parcels, through a density bonus, utilizing the Minor Lane Development, a type of Conservation Development where development is moved off of the frontage and homes are clustered on a common drive. A conservation easement is placed on the frontage to protect it from development.
4. Curb cuts onto rural roads should be minimized wherever possible.
5. Conservation Subdivisions, including Minor Lane Developments will be permitted uses in the Rural Residential and Open Space/Conservation District. Increases in density should be continued as incentive to develop conservation subdivisions.
6. Traditional Platted Subdivisions should be conditionally permitted or precluded.
7. Adoption of Lot Depth to Width Ratios in the Zoning Resolution would discourage "bowling alley" lots and wasting of land and resources and allow for continued agricultural use of interior parcels.
8. Encourage preservation of historic sites and buildings, including farm buildings and fence/stone rows, as part of new subdivisions.

OBJECTIVE 2 To enhance and improve the rural character and living environment of the Township.

STRATEGIES

1. Incorporate Performance Standards including Rural Lighting Standards into the Zoning Resolution.
2. Incorporate minimum landscaping/tree planting or replacement requirements for new development. Provide incentives for landowners who exceed the minimums. Vegetation and landscape features are essential elements of a rural landscape. (Consistent with other standards such as scenic resource overlay requirements)
3. Roads, lots and open spaces in subdivisions should be laid out to protect open space, farmland and critical natural areas but also to create a neighborhood and sense of place. Connections of roads and trails of subdivisions to neighboring properties and the surrounding area shall be promoted unless it would compromise critical natural areas, or other goals and objectives of this plan.
4. Educate the general public and potential developers on the importance of maintaining and enhancing the rural character and appearance of the community. This could be conveyed to the general public and landowners through workshops, or brochures.
5. The Township should consider, (in concert with the Village), development of thematically related signage standards for gateways to the communities, historic areas and buildings, scenic routes and significant natural features.

TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- GOALS:**
1. To provide a safe, healthy transportation system throughout the Township that reinforces and supports the rural and historic character of the community.
 2. To develop linkages between roads, bikeways and sidewalks to improve circulation and provide continuous connections of neighborhoods to each other and to Hiram Village, the Rapids, Garrettsville Village, educational facilities and scenic/recreational areas of the community.
 3. In future developments, to provide a road system which is designed relative to the traffic volume and to encourage a traditional road system that maintains the rural character of.
 4. To provide community facilities that meet the needs of the residents in the most cost effective manner.

- OBJECTIVE 1** Develop a network of bikeways/pedestrian facilities around the Township and Village.

POLICIES

1. The Township will support and promote a bikeway/pedestrian system throughout the communities consistent with this plan.
2. The Township will seek available funds to implement this system and partner with other entities that are integral to insuring success.

STRATEGIES

1. The Township should develop bike/walking lanes as they resurface roads. Priority areas would be:
 - Ryder, Pioneer Trail, and Asbury Road as an alternative, safer route to the Headwaters Trail from the Village.
 - Other Heritage, Scenic Routes and Rural Lanes.
 - Other Roads as noted below that provide connections to the above.
2. Alternatively, if resources are constrained, the Township could designate bike routes with markings on low traffic volume Township Roads.
3. ODOT should be asked to develop a bike lane on SR 82 west which would provide access to Ryder Rd as well as Abbot Rd, a Rural Lane that leads to Hiram Rapids and Scenic and Historic Allyn Rd; Bikelanes on SR 305 east of the Village would provide access to Udall Rd and Norton Rd, with Scenic Views, or Wheeler Rd to the Biological Field Station which has hiking trails or even into Garrettsville Village. State Route bikelanes are most critical for safety reasons as well as higher traffic volume collectors such as Pioneer Trail.
4. Utilize Transportation Enhancement or other sources of funds to help develop this system.

OBJECTIVE 2 To encourage the development a system of roads and pedestrian ways that connect people and neighborhoods as well as neighborhoods to other focal points and populations centers.

STRATEGIES

1. Encourage interconnections of roadways. Discourage construction of cul-de-sacs in new residential developments, they have the effect of isolating residents and making it difficult for routine maintenance and access by school buses and emergency vehicles.
2. In the Township, no new roads have been suggested due to the desire to maintain rural character of the community. (*Possible connection of Tilden Rd south to Winchell Rd.*)

OBJECTIVE 3 Provide mechanisms for enhancing safety for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians

STRATEGIES

1. Access management techniques should be applied to all roads.
 - For Township Roads: Provide input and support for development of County Access Management Regulations that will be part of the County Subdivision Regulations for Major Subdivisions, and adopted separately by the County for Minor Subdivisions and other divisions of land. (Rural Design Standards can also address)
2. Traffic calming measures should be utilized, in areas noted in the Township for Scenic, Rural and Historic Routes. Traffic calming is a combination of primarily physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. Traffic calming techniques include such measures as: shortening block lengths, not widening roads, and making curvilinear roads.
3. The Township should support modification to the County Subdivision Regulations that address modification to width and material specifications for roads (such as for minor lane subdivisions) in new subdivisions so that they are consistent with rural road standards.
4. To minimize curb cuts (helps preserve rural character also), driveway sharing should be encouraged in Rural Residential Areas of the Township.
5. The Township should ensure that it has a sidewalk repair and replacement program or policies that require replacement and repairs by residents or some cost sharing of such a program. An inventory of existing sidewalk repairs and replacements should be made and prioritized.

OBJECTIVE 4 To provide access to the community and region for those lacking their own means of transportation and to encourage those that do to utilize public transportation.

POLICIES

1. The Township will support efforts to provide Transit Service to and from the Village to connect to other locations within the County and Region.
2. The Township will help to promote use of PARTA as an alternative to single occupancy vehicle use.

STRATEGIES

1. The Township should work with PARTA to establish the best schedules and location of transit stops to meet the needs of the College students, faculty, staff and other year around residents.

2. Placement of PARTA service information, routes, and schedules brochures in public places would facilitate use of this system.

OBJECTIVE 5 To provide utilities to residents at reasonable rates while maintaining rural character of the Township and providing for orderly development of areas designated for growth.

POLICIES

1. *The Village will not extend sewer and water to areas outside the Village until such time as:*
 - The Township and Village amend this plan to expand growth areas.
 - A health problem exists that must be remedied by provision of sewer and/or water.
2. All utility lines will be buried underground.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT³

GOALS

1. To attract economic development that is consistent with the broader goals of this plan, tourism enterprises as well as those businesses that help to provide services and support our local and area agriculture industry or utilize local agricultural products or technologies.
2. To foster an atmosphere of support and cooperation for new and expanding businesses and industries in the Village, and agricultural and home based businesses in the Township.
3. To insure that new development and re-development is compatible with protection and enhancement of the small town character of the Village and rural character of the Township.

POLICIES

1. The Township, will cooperate with the Village and College to actively promote appropriate, sustainable economic development.
2. The Township will evaluate current and future regulations and development related policies, including infrastructure policies as to their impacts on encouraging economic growth and investment in the communities.

OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a balanced approach to economic development of our communities consistent with preservation of rural character of our Township that will result in improvements to our tax base and provide additional economic opportunities for our citizens.
2. To better utilize the resources of our Township for an economic advantage.

³ Also see Conservation Element-Farmland Preservation Strategies.

STRATEGIES:

1. The Township, Village and College should form an economic development committee that works in conjunction with the Portage Development Board, the County Tourism Bureau, and the local chamber of commerce to actively recruit the type of business and industry desired in the community and to promote the resources of the Township, Village and College to tourists.
2. The historic, scenic and cultural and recreational resources of the communities should be used to promote tourism, including agri-tourism.
3. A promotional brochure should be developed that promotes the assets and resources of the communities and college to tourists. This includes brochures, maps, walking and riding tours. (Also see conservation element, scenic resources)
4. Encourage the participation of all affected property owners and businesses in promotional and activities.
5. The communities will need to insure there are adequate bed and breakfasts, and other lodging facilities to accommodate overnight tourists. The economic development committee may wish to further define more specific types of businesses that are desired and that fit in with the expressed goals of this plan. For example, given the low population base of our communities, small, specialty or niche businesses may be appropriate.
6. The Township should update zoning-where necessary to insure that processes are clear and consistent as to time lines, requirements, expectations, and procedures. Barriers to desired development should be removed. Flexibility in regulations without compromising the goals and standards of the community should be put in place.
7. The Township in particular should encourage Home Based Businesses that have minimal impact on residential areas. As businesses grow, the business could expand/locate in commercial districts.
8. The College could provide assistance in helping entrepreneurs in developing business plans.
9. Promote re-use of historic buildings and homes and use of tax credits previously discussed.
10. Consideration of development of an annual festival event could help

stimulate tourism. (Mantua has its Potato Festival, Ravenna Balloon Affair, Kent Heritage Festival, etc). Coordination with PARTA could bring people from other more populated areas of the County to Hiram.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

GOALS

1. To continue to foster an open and cooperative atmosphere in which to have deliberative discussions and make decisions in the best interests of the Hiram Community, which includes the College.
2. To promote resource sharing and resource maximization for the benefit of the residents of our communities.

OBJECTIVES

1. To insure that the College, Village and Township communicate effectively with one another and share information and resources in a manner that will benefit all entities and residents of the Township and Village as appropriate.
2. To secure and maximize the resources available to provide services, programs and appropriate development of the communities in a sustainable manner.
3. Establish a committee "Community Evaluations and Accomplishments Committee" (CEAC).

POLICIES

1. The Township will actively involve members of the College and Village legislative bodies in its facilities, lands and where appropriate, program planning as they relate to this plan.
2. The Township should coordinate with the Village and College on resource availability and needs.
3. The Township, will coordinate with the Village and College and will cooperate in the development of policies, programs, regulations, incentives, and other mechanisms that will facilitate the implementation of this plan.
4. Work with local governmental entities to accomplish the Township's Goals and Objectives through cooperation, shared ideas and resources.

STRATEGIES

1. The Township should invite participation of council and planning commission members in its facilities and programs planning meetings, especially as they pertain to areas covered in this plan, and key college personnel should similarly be invited to College and Village meetings, even though Township and Village meetings are all public meetings. This would also include participation with adjoining communities.
2. Entities should contribute to the development of a community newsletter to communicate with residents and businesses on a regular basis.

3. The CEAC should be established and meet to discuss the Goals and Objectives of the plan to track the successes and discuss areas that may need amending as policies are completed, being implemented or need to be addressed. The CEAC should meet several times a year or as needed, but at a minimum at least annually.
4. A review mechanism should be established that provides for review and comment by all entities on proposed development and re-development to protect mutual goals and coordinate land use, infrastructure and other related decisions.
5. Entities should have meetings as needed to discuss plans, projects, needs and resources to encourage sharing of resources, avoid duplication of efforts, and facilitate cooperation. The entities should meet at a minimum of once a year to discuss successes, but also opportunities and challenges that may need to be addressed.
6. If the State does not pass Transfer of Development Rights enabling legislation in the near future, or if it does, if it does not adequately address the approach agreed to in this plan to transfer development rights from Township Agricultural and important resource lands into the Village receiving areas, the Township and Village may need to enter into some form of agreement that details agreements on land use, services and infrastructure extensions, and other important issues.
7. The Township will need to cooperate in developing the mechanisms for the TDR program to work, including revisions to Zoning Regulations that accommodate higher densities with transferable development rights in the Village or elsewhere, particularly in the high density area and Mixed Use Commercial Area. Moderate increases in density could be accommodated in the Medium density area. Commercial and Industrial areas also could accommodate increases in floor area for example instead of density.
8. Where and when appropriate, all parties will cooperate in seeking support for state and federal funds.