

# GUILFORD TOWNSHIP

## COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN



GUILFORD TOWNSHIP  
MEDINA COUNTY, OHIO  
2025 COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

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## GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Guilford Township would like to acknowledge the following former members for their work on the original plan:

|                    |                         |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| William Cunningham | Zoning Commission       |
| Jack Webb          | Board of Zoning Appeals |
| Evelyn Detwiler    | Interested Citizen      |
| Melvin Detwiler    | Township Clerk          |
| Lynn Harris        | Trustee                 |
| Bonnie Harris      | Board of Zoning Appeals |
| Dr. Thomas Lehner  | Zoning Commission       |
| Pamela Payn        | Zoning Commission       |
| Thomas Yannayon    | Zoning Commission       |
| John Detwiler      | Zoning Inspector        |
| Earl Gordon        | Zoning Inspector        |
| John Wanko         | Trustee                 |
| John Friedt        | Board of Zoning Appeals |
| Ray Lee            | Zoning Commission       |
| Gene Fulton        | Trustee                 |
| Richard Knepp      | Zoning Commission       |
| Jerry Newcomer     | Board of Zoning Appeals |
| Darla Payn         | Zoning Commission       |
| Daniel Weltzien    | Zoning Commission       |

The Boards and Trustees of Guilford Township extend their gratitude to the **Medina County Department of Planning Services** and the various **Medina County agencies**, whose assistance made the development of this plan possible.

The Boards and the Trustees of Guilford Township wish to thank the **Medina County Department of Planning Services** and the various **Medina County Agencies** without whose help this Plan could ever have been formulated.

**ZONING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING** ----- June 12, 2025  
**TRUSTEES PUBLIC HEARING** ----- July 1, 2025  
**EFFECTIVE DATE** ----- August 1, 2025

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**Guilford Township Zoning Commission  
Resolution to Adopt Guilford Township’s Development Plan Update**

The Guilford Township Zoning Commission, Medina County, Ohio, held a Public Hearing, June 12, 2025 at 7:00 PM at the Township Hall, 3800 Greenwich Rd., Seville, OH 44273 with the following members present: Shannon Colonna, Rick Garrison, Trevor Jones, Isaac Kaufman, Jim Krahl, and Debbie Ruprecht.

Trevor Jones moved the adoption of the following Resolution:

**WHEREAS** The Guilford Township Zoning Commission with the help of the Guilford Township Board of Zoning Appeals, Guilford Township Trustees and various interested Township residents, by way of a survey, have written a Comprehensive Development Plan, and

**WHEREAS**, The Plan has been reviewed and approved by the Medina County Department of Planning Services, and

**WHEREAS**, The Plan outlines the goals for the future development and Zoning Districts for Guilford Township, to the best of our ability, now therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED;** That the Guilford Township Zoning Commission, Medina County, Ohio go on record to approve said Plan, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED;** That the Zoning Secretary certifies a copy of the Guilford Township Development Policy Plan to the Guilford Township Board of Trustees for its early adoption at a regular meeting.

Debbie Ruprecht seconded the adoption of the resolution.

**Roll Call:**

- Shannon Colonna – Yes
- Rick Garrison – Yes
- Trevor Jones – Yes
- Jim Krahl – Yes
- Debbie Ruprecht - Yes

# GUILFORD TOWNSHIP DEVELOPMENT POLICY PLAN

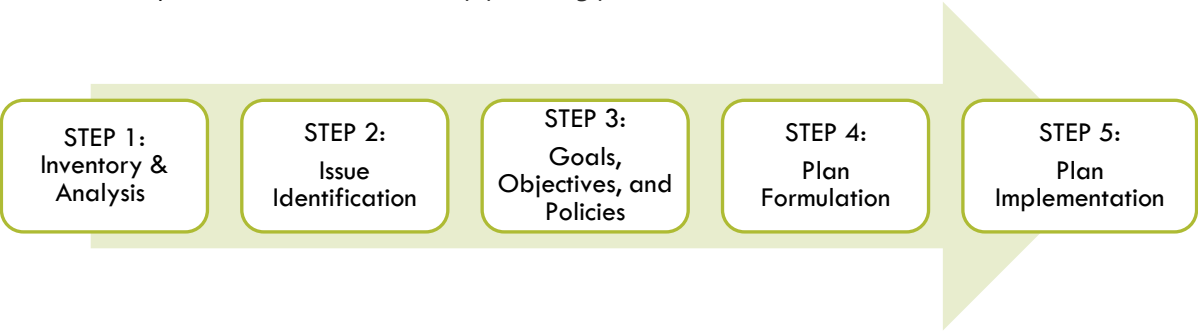
## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 AN EXPLANATION FOR THE PLAN

#### History

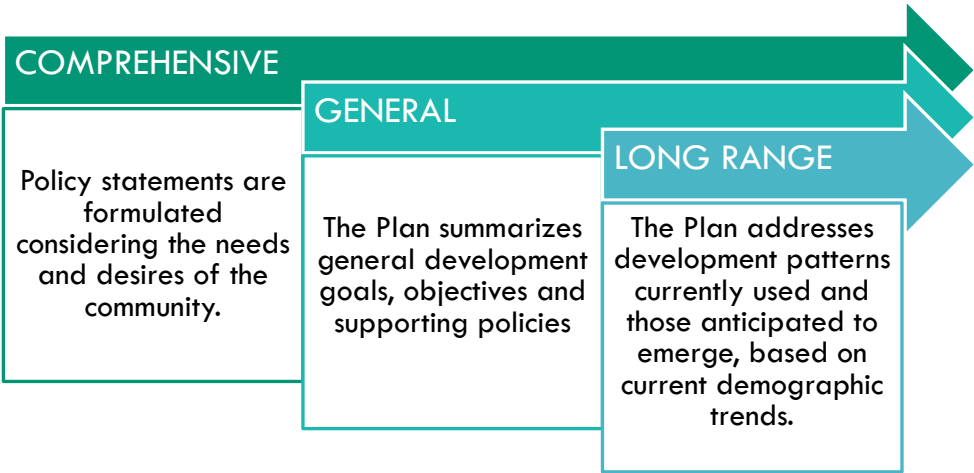
The Guilford Township Comprehensive Development Plan, referred to as the "Plan," was first initiated in the 1980s as part of the township's comprehensive planning process. The Plan is designed to be a dynamic, evolving document that serves as a guiding resource for both the township and the public. Its purpose is to inform decisions related to land use, development, the natural environment, and the conservation of resources, ensuring a balanced approach to growth and preservation.

The Plan is a product of a basic five step planning process.



#### Plan Characteristics

The essential characteristics of the Plan are that it is comprehensive, general, and long range.



While the Plan itself does not change any laws or ordinances of the Township, it does provide criteria for making changes to the township Zoning Code, or Zoning Regulations, and the Zoning Map. It also

serves as a point of reference in decision making concerning land use and zoning issues, helping to ensure consistency and alignment with the township's long-term vision.

### **Purpose of the Plan Update**

This document represents the 2024 update of the Plan, superseding all previous versions and establishing the Township's current policies for land use and development.

As the township continues to grow and develop, foresight is essential to ensure that new growth is orderly and maintains the quality of life in the Township. The Plan can be an indispensable guide to ensure that this happens and help determine the best use of the Township's land, water, and other resources. Responsible and conscientious planning is vital to the future of Guilford Township.

As development occurs, it is expected that certain policies contained in the Plan will need to be reevaluated to ensure their continued relevance. Periodic updates may be necessary to address new challenges and opportunities that arise, keeping the Plan current and adaptable to changing circumstances.

## **1.2 WHAT IS THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

1. The Plan encompasses the entire geographic area of the Township and pertains to all functions that affect the physical development of the Township.
2. The Plan is used to guide the future growth of the Township through general policies.
3. The Plan conveys advice to not only Township Trustees, zoning, and planning officials, but also to developers and others in the private sector.
4. The Plan is long-range and provides a perspective of the Township's future and can be used as a development guide.
5. The Plan is flexible and is subject to periodic review to ensure the major goals of the Plan are being met.
6. The Plan is based on an understanding of the physical, economic, and social characteristics of the Township. These factors shape the development of the Township and form the basis for land use decisions.
7. The adoption and use of the Plan lays a coordinated and unified foundation for zoning and other decisions that often must be made on a year-to-year, if not more frequent basis.

## **1.3 WHY THE TOWNSHIP NEEDS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The advantage of having a comprehensive development plan in place is to encourage development in areas that can sustain growth and to discourage development in those areas that are not suitable for development. Areas that are not suitable for development would include flood plains and other environmentally sensitive areas.

Uncontrolled development can lead to the following problems:

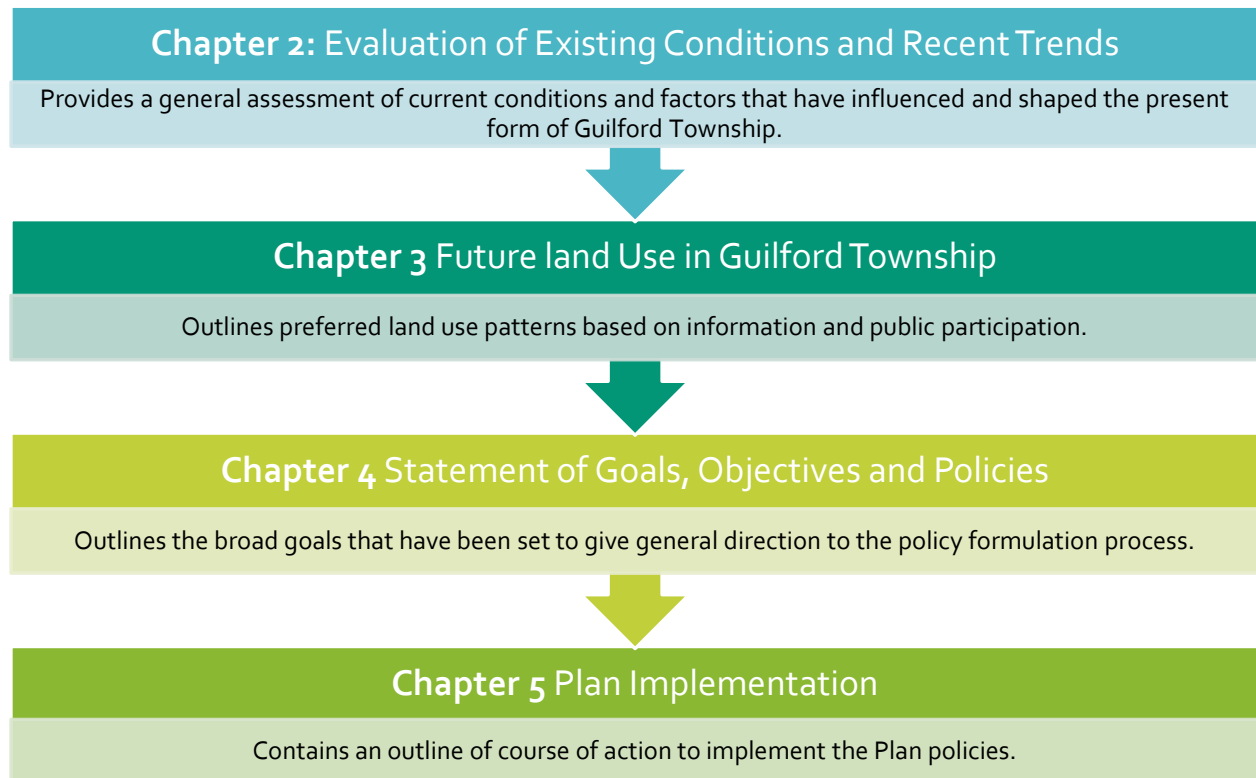
1. Excessive costs for the extension of public utilities, (sewer, water) and services, (police and fire protection, road maintenance, school bus transportation, etc.)
2. Damage to environmentally sensitive areas, (natural reserves, streams, flood plains, lakes, etc.).
3. Loss of valuable agricultural land and recreation areas.
4. Congestion, pollution, and energy waste due to a poorly conceived transportation system.

The purpose of having such a plan is to prevent development problems and prevent their occurrence in the future by planning with an awareness of the limitations of our land, water, and socio-economic resources.

Additionally, periodic review and updates of the Plan creates an opportunity for public officials to allow citizens to participate in the determination of what the future development of their community should be. Through survey questionnaires and public meetings, Township citizens will have a chance to express their opinions on how the Township should develop.

#### 1.4 ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

This Plan summarizes the results of the five-step planning process, and Guilford Township's current planning goals and policies, and is divided into four areas:



# CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS & RECENT TRENDS

## 2.1 PRESENT LAND USE

Guilford Township is approximately 5 miles by 5 miles, or 16,073.9 acres. Based on the 2007 tax year, the County Auditor listed the total acreage in the Township as 14,752.093 acres, including the Village of Seville and the portion of Rittman City that lies within Guilford Township.

The Zoning Commission reviewed parcel information provided by the Medina County Auditor's Office<sup>1</sup>, and made the following observations:

### PRESENT LAND: ACREAGE

For zoning purposes, township land is divided into three districts: Residential, Commercial, and Industrial. Land in any of these districts may be used for Agricultural uses.

- **Commercial and Industrial** uses constitute about 4%, or 483.83 acres. Most commercial and industrial lots are 5 acres or less. This type of land use outside of the Village of Seville and the City of Rittman is limited due to the lack of central water and sewage treatment plants. Many of the commercial and industrial sites that are best suited for these purposes have been annexed by the Village of Seville or the City of Rittman.
- **Residential** uses constitute about 29%, or 4,052 acres. All residential lots in the Township, outside of the Village of Seville and the City of Rittman, have wells and septic systems.
- **Agricultural** uses make up about 64%. This includes land not suitable for farming, such as wooded, wetlands and steeply sloped areas.
- There are also almost 400 acres, or about 3 % of the total acreage, of County **Park and Recreational Land** within the boundaries of the Township.

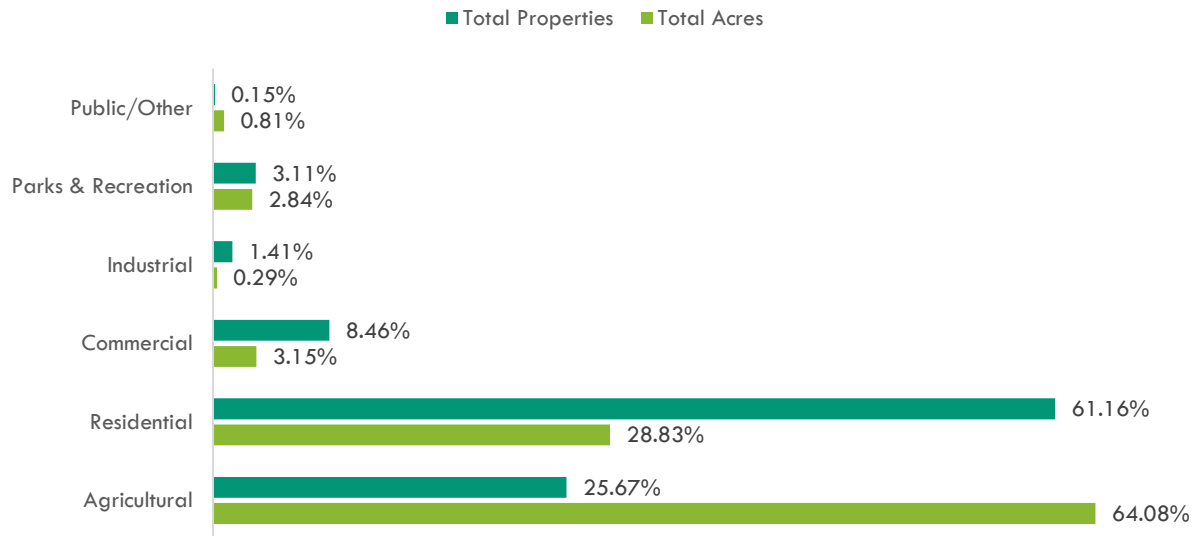
### PRESENT LAND USE: NUMBER OF PROPERTIES

- **Commercial:** Currently 174 properties have a Commercial use classification
- **Industrial:** Currently 3 properties have an Industrial use classification.
- **Residential:** Currently 1,258 properties have a Residential use classification
- **Agricultural:** Currently 528 properties have an Agricultural use classification.
- **Public/Other:** Currently 64 Properties have a Public/Other use classification. This includes public utilities, cemeteries, churches, and land owned by the state, county or township.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Guilford Parcel Extract provided by Medina County Auditor's Office

## Land Use Distribution by Total Acres and Number of Properties



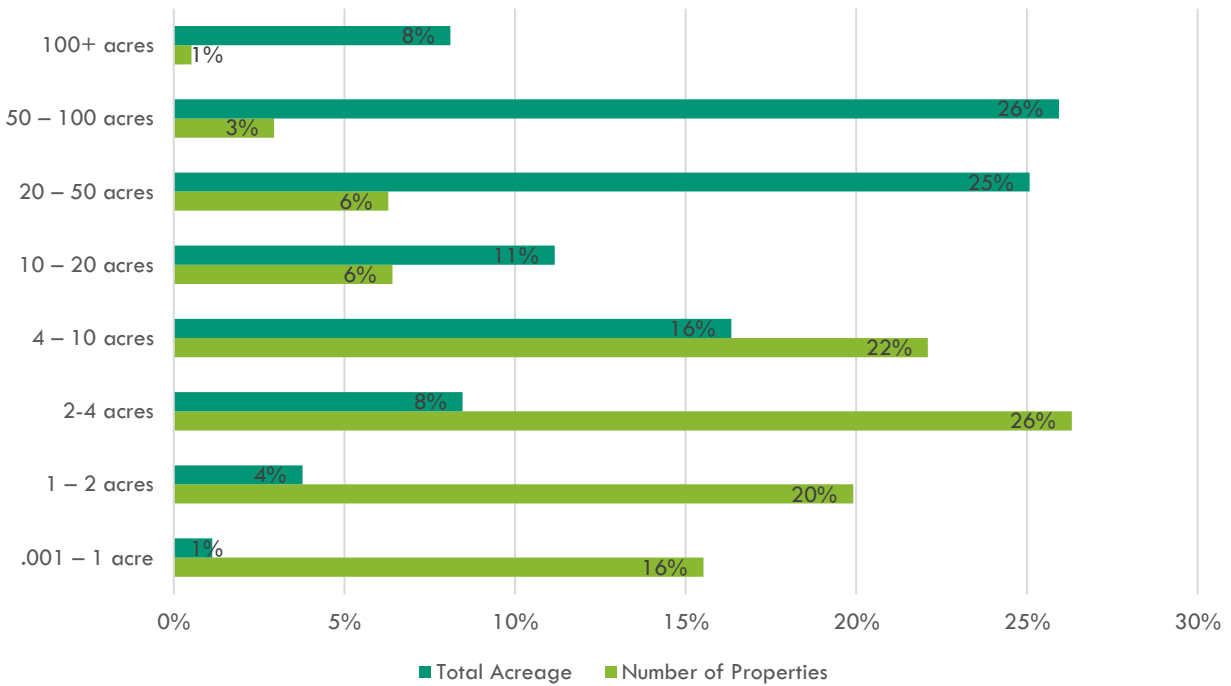
| Category       | Total Acres | Category       | Total # Properties |
|----------------|-------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Agricultural   | 9,007       | Agricultural   | 528                |
| Residential    | 4,052       | Residential    | 1,258              |
| Commercial     | 442.73      | Commercial     | 174                |
| Parks and Rec. | 399.23      | Parks and Rec. | 29                 |
| Public/Other   | 114.51      | Public/Other   | 64                 |
| Industrial     | 41.1        | Industrial     | 3                  |

### PRESENT LAND USE: LOT SIZE

- Current zoning regulations require a 4-acre minimum for new development.
- The majority of lots, or 61.7 %, in the Township are less than 4 acres.

| Number of Lots by Lot Size* |                          |                           |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
|                             |                          | Total Acreage             |
| <b>.001 – 4 Acres</b>       | <b>TOTAL: 1,070 Lots</b> | <b>TOTAL: 1,879 Acres</b> |
| .001 – 1 acre               | 269 Lots                 | 159 Acres                 |
| 1 – 2 acres                 | 345 Lots                 | 530 Acres                 |
| 2-4 acres                   | 456 Lots                 | 1,190 Acres               |
| <b>4 – 20 Acres</b>         | <b>TOTAL: 494 Lots</b>   | <b>TOTAL: 3,866 Acres</b> |
| 4 – 10 acres                | 383 Lots                 | 2,297 Acres               |
| 10 – 20 acres               | 111 Lots                 | 1,569 Acres               |
| <b>20+ Acres</b>            | <b>TOTAL: 169 Lots</b>   | <b>TOTAL: 8,311 Acres</b> |
| 20 – 50 acres               | 109 Lots                 | 3,525                     |
| 50 – 100 acres              | 51 Lots                  | 3,646                     |
| 100+ acres                  | 9 Lots                   | 1,140                     |

### Lot Size Distribution by Number of Lots



- Although the majority of lots are smaller than 4 acres, the majority of land, or 59.3%, is on lots over 20 acres.

*\* Note: As of August 2024, there were 2,056 lots in Guilford Township. Of those, 132 are .001 acre lots classified as 'Commercial: Vacant Land' in Sky Park and 80 are classified as 'Mineral: Oil and Gas Rights'. These lots are excluded from the above statistics and tables on lot size because they are not considered developable lots.*

## 2.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

### POPULATION

According to data compiled by the Ohio Department of Development<sup>2</sup>, the population of Guilford Township is estimated to be 3,098, and the population of the Village of Seville is estimated to be 2,350 in August of 2024. These numbers show that the population of Guilford Township has decreased by approximately 3.3% since the last update to the Plan.

<sup>2</sup> <https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/development.ohio.gov/research/pop2/20230829-2022-cities-villages-and-townships-by-county.pdf>

**Change in Population From 2010 to 2022<sup>3</sup>**

|                   | 7/1/2022<br>Estimate | 7/1/2021<br>Estimate | 2010<br>Estimate <sup>4</sup> | 2010-2022<br>Difference |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Medina County     | 183,512              | 183,338              | 172,503                       | +11,009<br>(+6.4%)      |
| Guilford Township | 3,098                | 3,091                | 3,203                         | -105<br>(-3.3%)         |
| Seville Village   | 2,350                | 2,345                | 2,296                         | +54<br>(+2.4%)          |

Census data for Medina County and the Village of Seville show continued increases in both population and the number of households since 1990. In contrast, Guilford Township has seen a slight increase in the number of households but an overall decrease in total population since 2000, with the population dropping from 3,287 in 2000 to approximately 3,076 in 2020. This modest growth in households, despite the population decline, can be attributed to factors such as a smaller average household size and an aging population.

Several factors have contributed to the broader population growth in the surrounding areas. Proximity to major highways such as I-76 and I-71 provides residents with convenient access to employment, shopping, and entertainment, making the area attractive for commuters. Many people also choose the area for its more rural character, seeking to raise families in a quieter environment away from the busier urban centers. While projections in the early 2000s suggested Guilford Township might approach a population of 6,200 by 2010, the township's population has remained much smaller, reflecting slower growth than anticipated.

| Population and Households from 1990 - 2020 <sup>5,6</sup> |            |            |            |            |            |            |            |             |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
|   | 2020       |            | 2010       |            | 2000       |            | 1990       |             |
|   | Population | Households | Population | Households | Population | Households | Population | Households  |
| Medina County   | 182,470    | 71,647     | 172,332    | 65,143     | 151,095    | 54,542     | 122,354    | 41,792      |
| Village of Seville  | 2,335      | 1,038      | 2,296      | 917        | 2,160      | 808        | 1,810      | 633         |
| Guilford Township   | 3,076      | 1,176      | 3,203      | 1,173      | 3,287      | 1,146      | 2,963      | Unavailable |

<sup>3</sup> <https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/development.ohio.gov/research/pop2/20230829-2022-cities-villages-and-townships-by-county.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/development.ohio.gov/research/pop2/20230829-2022-cities-villages-and-townships-by-county.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/development.ohio.gov/research/census/Population-and-Household-Counts-for-Governmental-Units-2010-2000-and-1990.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image/upload/development.ohio.gov/research/census/Population-and-Household-Counts-for-Governmental-Units-2010-2000-and-1990.pdf>

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## DEMOGRAPHICS

Guilford Township's demographic landscape has evolved significantly over the past two decades. According to the 2000 census, the township was predominantly white, with 98.6% of the population identifying as such, and only small percentages representing other racial or ethnic groups. The median household income at that time was \$51,875, and the median home value was \$144,700. This snapshot of the community reflected a mostly homogenous and middle-income population, with relatively low diversity in both race and income levels.

Fast forward to 2020, and while the township remains predominantly white (95%), it has become more diverse, with individuals identifying as Black or African American, Asian, or of two or more races making up a small but growing portion of the population. Hispanic or Latino residents now account for 1.3% of the population. Economic indicators have also seen significant change, with the median household income rising to \$103,377 and the median home value increasing to \$280,200, reflecting broader economic trends and a strengthening housing market in the region. These changes highlight Guilford Township's slow but steady diversification and its economic growth over the past two decades.<sup>78</sup>

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## POPULATION TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS

The *State of Ohio Population Projections Report 2023* identified Ohio as being in the early stages of sustained population loss due to several key factors, including an aging population, declining fertility rates, and stagnant migration patterns. This population decline, which began in the fall of 2020, is projected to accelerate, resulting in the loss of approximately 675,000 residents by 2050—a reduction of 5.7% of the state's total population. Medina County, though expected to experience a more gradual decline, is still forecasted to see its population decrease by 0.76%, reaching 181,084 by 2050. These demographic changes present significant challenges for local planning efforts, economic vitality, and the provision of community services, underscoring the need for adaptive strategies to manage these shifts effectively.

One of the most prominent trends contributing to these population changes is the aging of Ohio's population. By 2030, one in five Ohioans will be aged 65 or older. The baby boomer generation, those born between 1946 and 1964, remains the most populous generation but no longer exerts the demographic force it once did.

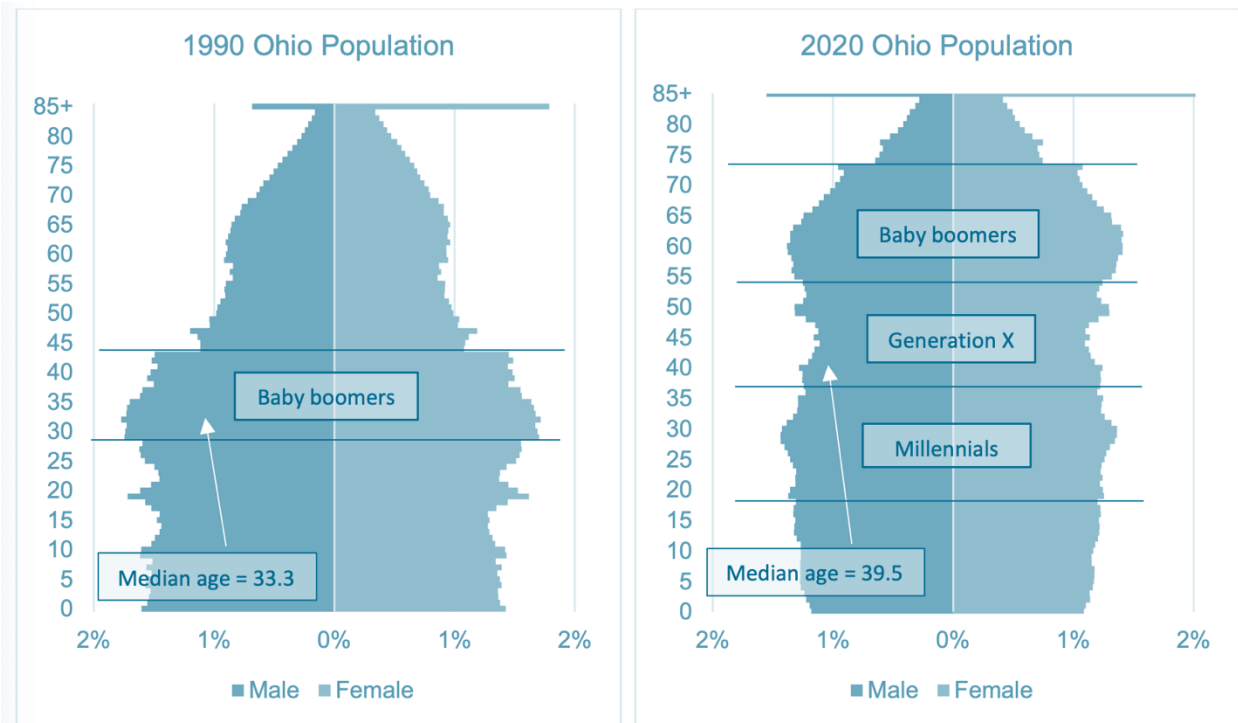
The implications of an aging population are far-reaching. As the senior demographic grows, there will be increased demand for healthcare services, long-term care facilities, and age-friendly housing options. Additionally, this aging trend will impact the workforce, potentially creating labor shortages in essential sectors like healthcare, education, and skilled trades. Communities will also need to adapt infrastructure to meet the needs of older residents, ensuring accessibility to healthcare, transportation, and recreational services. Local planning efforts, including in Guilford Township, must address these evolving demographic realities to promote a sustainable future.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://censusreporter.org/profiles/06000US3910332676-guilford-township-medina-county-oh/>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.citypopulation.de/en/usa/ohio/admin/medina/3910332676\\_\\_guilford/](https://www.citypopulation.de/en/usa/ohio/admin/medina/3910332676__guilford/)

The following chart illustrates Ohio’s aging population, with the median age increasing from 33.3 to 39.5 years. This shift toward an older population is expected to continue.



## 2.3 DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

### AGRICULTURAL USES

For many years, agriculture was the backbone of Guilford Township. In 1986, the township had 9,614.7 acres of farmland spread across 298 farms participating in the Current Agricultural Use Valuation (C.A.U.V.) program, with 25% of those farmers, or 75 individuals, identifying as full-time farmers. However, this number has drastically declined over the years. As of the most recent count, only 29 residents, or approximately 1% of the township's population, still listed their occupation as full-time farmers. Between 1990 and 2000, the amount of farmland decreased by 874.1 acres. By 2003, the number of farms participating in the C.A.U.V. program had dropped to 187. This trend of declining farmland and fewer full-time farmers is expected to continue, driven by development pressures, rising land costs, and an aging farming population. These changes reflect a broader shift away from agriculture as a primary livelihood in the township.

The decrease in farmland in Guilford Township, Ohio, can be attributed to several common factors affecting rural and suburban areas:

1. **Urbanization and Development:** As nearby urban areas grow, there's often pressure to convert agricultural land into residential, commercial, or industrial uses. This trend is particularly strong in regions experiencing population growth or economic expansion.

2. **Economic Factors:** Farmers might sell their land due to economic pressures, including fluctuations in commodity prices, high operational costs, or difficulties in sustaining farming activities. This can lead to land being repurposed for other uses.
3. **Aging Farm Population:** Many rural areas face a challenge with an aging farming population and a lack of younger people entering the profession. This can lead to farmland being sold or developed rather than being maintained for agricultural use.
4. **Property Taxes and Zoning Changes:** Changes in property taxes or zoning laws can make it more financially attractive for landowners to sell their land for development rather than continuing agricultural use.
5. **Infrastructure Improvements:** As infrastructure such as roads and utilities improve, it can make previously rural areas more appealing for development, further reducing the amount of land used for farming.

Local government and community planning efforts often try to balance development with the preservation of agricultural land, but these factors can significantly impact farmland availability.

## NEW HOUSE AND OTHER BUILDING PERMITS

The following table summarizes the number of new house permits issued in the area in recent years.

| Township        | New Single-Family Home Building Permits |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |     | Total |
|-----------------|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|-------|
|                 | 2010                                    | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |     |       |
| Guilford        | 2                                       | 4    | 3    | 3    | 4    | 8    | 3    | 5    | 6    | 0    | 4    | 2    | 5    | 6    | 55  |       |
| Westfield       | 5                                       | 0    | 3    | 3    | 1    | 1    | 4    | 7    | 31   | 0    | 3    | 6    | 8    | 10   | 82  |       |
| Wadsworth       | 9                                       | 9    | 12   | 16   | 10   | 10   | 15   | 12   | 16   | 2    | 6    | 24   | 15   | 5    | 161 |       |
| Montville       | 57                                      | 41   | 44   | 52   | 62   | 82   | 86   | 99   | 59   | 3    | 9    | 26   | 42   | 35   | 697 |       |
| Lafayette       | 9                                       | 1    | 11   | 9    | 16   | 19   | 48   | 49   | 68   | 4    | 2    | 20   | 17   | 44   | 317 |       |
| Sharon          | 15                                      | 16   | 39   | 27   | 32   | 39   | 28   | 33   | 33   | 3    | 15   | 39   | 22   | 30   | 371 |       |
| Seville Village | 1                                       | 0    | 4    | 3    | 10   | 14   | 9    | 18   | 23   | 0    | 5    | 17   | 45   | 73   | 222 |       |

| Building Permits by Type Issued Since 2012 in Guilford Township <sup>9</sup> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |       |         |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|---------|
| Type of Construction   | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | Total | Average |
| DWELLING - SINGLE  | 2    | 4    | 3    | 4    | 8    | 6    | 3    | 5    | 6    | 0    | 4    | 2    | 3    | 50    | 3.85    |
| ACCESSORY BLDG   | 1    | 0    | 0    | 3    | 7    | 4    | 6    | 6    | 12   | 0    | 5    | 8    | 7    | 59    | 4.54    |
| DECK   | 5    | 2    | 2    | 3    | 3    | 2    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 0    | 1    | 3    | 0    | 31    | 2.38    |
| COMMERCIAL   | 1    | 1    | 2    | 0    | 0    | 2    | 0    | 8    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 1    | 16    | 1.23    |

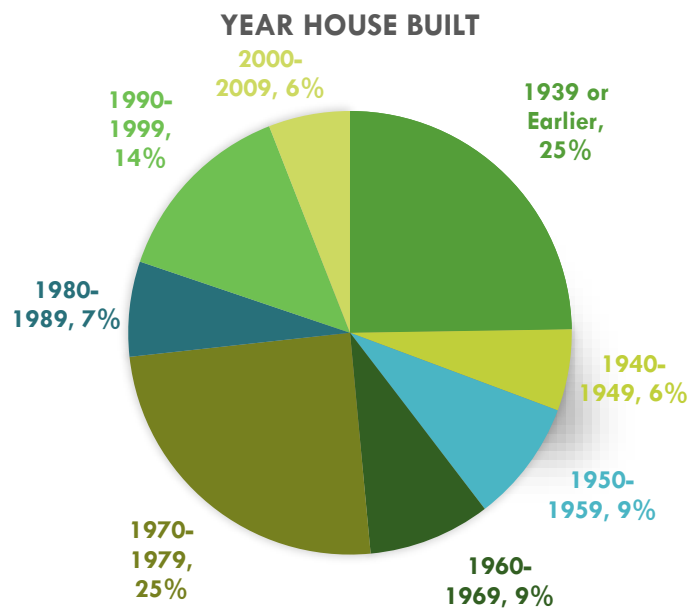
<sup>9</sup> Medina County Building Dept

|           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |     |       |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|-----|-------|
| ADDITIONS | 4  | 10 | 4  | 4  | 4  | 6  | 3  | 4  | 9  | 1 | 1  | 3  | 3  | 56  | 4.31  |
| SEPTIC    | 2  | 2  | 4  | 3  | 1  | 3  | 5  | 6  | 6  | 0 | 0  | 4  | 4  | 40  | 3.08  |
| TOTAL     | 15 | 19 | 15 | 17 | 23 | 23 | 21 | 32 | 36 | 1 | 11 | 21 | 18 | 252 | 19.38 |

## HOUSING VALUES AND INVENTORY

### Housing Trends

- Appreciation Trends:** Over the past decade, housing values in suburban and rural areas, including Guilford Township, have generally seen an upward trend. This increase is driven by factors such as historically low interest rates, a desire for more space (particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic), and limited housing inventory. Guilford Township has seen similar appreciation in home values, reflecting broader regional trends in Medina County. However, the rate of appreciation can vary based on local market conditions, including economic shifts and housing demand.
- Market Fluctuations:** Housing values are subject to economic conditions and external shocks. Significant events like the Great Recession or the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted real estate markets nationwide, including in Guilford Township. For example, the pandemic initially caused market disruptions, but the resulting demand for suburban and rural homes drove up prices in many areas. While some regions have seen rapid price increases, Guilford Township's housing market remains influenced by broader economic conditions and fluctuations.
- Housing Stock:** Approximately one quarter of the homes in Guilford Township were built before 1939, with another quarter constructed between 1940 and 1970. A further quarter were built between 1970 and 1980, and the remaining quarter since 1980. However, with new construction slowing and 75% of homes now over 40 years old, preserving and maintaining the existing housing stock has become essential to sustaining property values. As new homes are built, the larger size and higher value of these properties will contribute to the township's tax base, but the focus on existing homes remains critical as demand for township services grows.



## Inventory Trends

1. **Inventory Levels:** Over the past decade, the housing inventory in Guilford Township and similar rural areas has decreased due to high demand and slower new construction. This limited inventory has contributed to rising home prices, as fewer homes are available on the market. The township's proximity to major highways has also made it attractive to commuters, further fueling demand for housing in the area.
2. **New Construction:** The amount of new construction plays a crucial role in shaping inventory trends. Guilford Township's zoning regulations, such as the four-acre minimum lot size, have limited the potential for dense housing developments. While new homes are still being built, these restrictions contribute to lower inventory levels compared to more densely populated or urban areas where development is less restricted.
3. **Market Segments:** Different segments of the housing market in Guilford Township follow unique trends. For example, single-family homes dominate the local market due to zoning restrictions and the rural character of the area. The township's market trends reflect the continued appeal of rural living, but at the cost of lower overall housing inventory and fewer opportunities for large-scale housing projects.

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## HOUSING ANALYSIS & PROJECTION

Owner-occupied, single-family homes dominate the housing landscape in Guilford Township, with most properties located on privately owned lots along the township's main roads. The limited availability of public water and sewer infrastructure and the zoning regulation requiring a minimum of four acres for new buildings has shaped the development pattern, favoring low-density housing. Rising land values have made housing less affordable, further reinforcing the importance of preserving and maintaining the existing housing stock to support property values and township services.

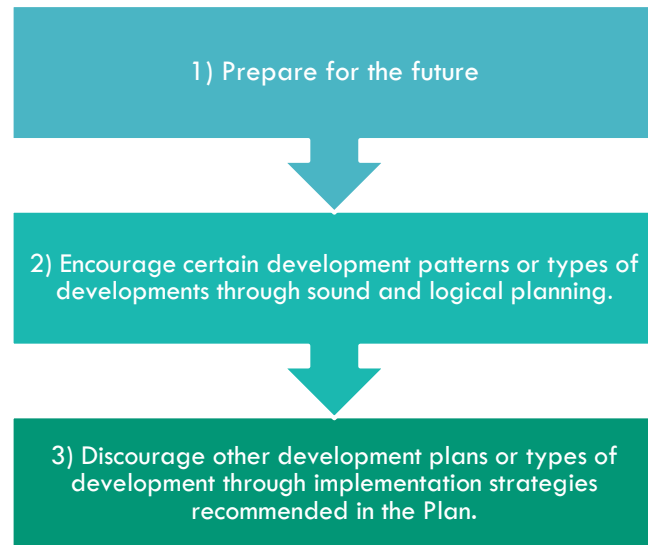
As demand for rural living increases, the township may need to explore ways to maintain its rural character while ensuring long-term property values. This could include promoting policies that encourage the preservation of farmland, open spaces, and historic homes. Rather than increasing density, focusing on enhancing existing infrastructure and supporting sustainable practices in housing maintenance and improvements can help balance population growth with the township's desire to avoid large-scale development.

# CHAPTER 3: FUTURE LAND USE FOR GUILFORD TOWNSHIP

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The Plan serves as a vital tool for officials and residents to manage change positively in Guilford Township. It provides guidance for day-to-day land use decisions, with its primary implementation occurring through the Zoning Code and Map, both of which align with the Plan's concepts. By adapting and utilizing the Plan, township officials, along with the Medina County Planning Commission and other county and state authorities, can ensure that public and private developments are evaluated in accordance with the township's long-term goals.

The overall functions of the Plan are to:



## 3.2 CONSIDERATIONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2021 the Guilford Township Trustees and Zoning Commission conducted a survey to get feedback from Township residents in preparation for reviewing the Plan. Residents were encouraged to share their thoughts about Guilford Township and its future development.

The Township received 324 responses out of 1,156 surveys. The survey results were used as a reference by the Zoning Commission as they considered updates to the Plan.

### A. AGRICULTURAL LAND

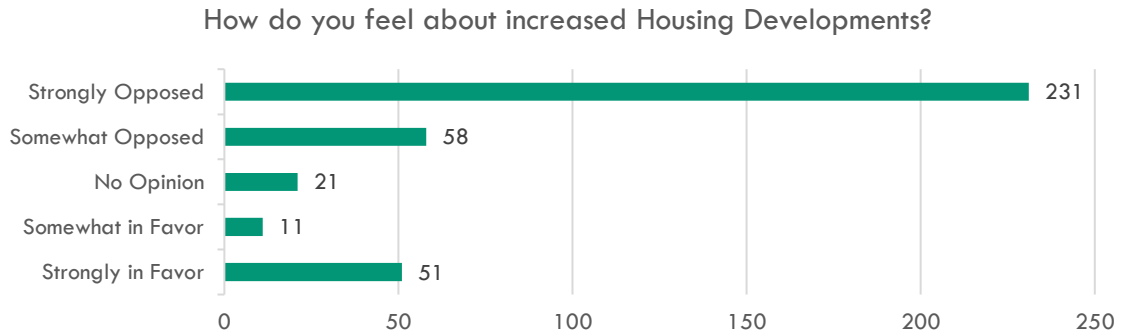
- ◇ 98.8% of the survey responses indicated that they wanted the Township to remain an agricultural/residential area.
- ◇ The survey asked what decision brought them to Guilford Township, and 83.7% selected Country Living.
- ◇ Residents were asked to share additional comments or thoughts for shaping the future of the township, and there were multiple comments indicating a desire for agriculture, peace and quiet, and 'country living'.

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## B. RESIDENTIAL

98.8% of the survey responses indicated that they wanted the Township to remain an agricultural/residential area.

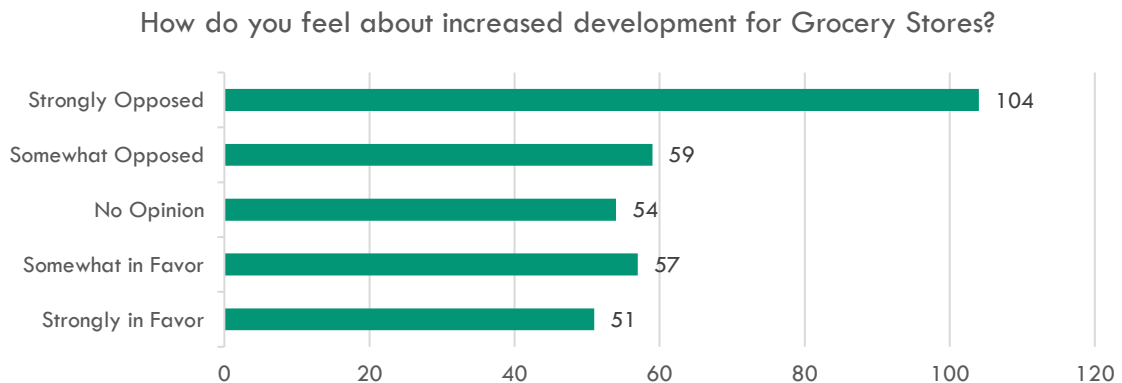
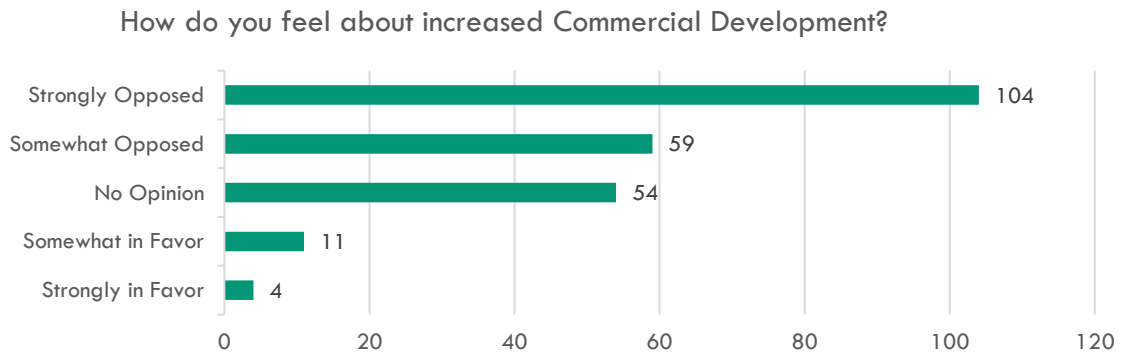
The majority of responses indicated that residents are strongly opposed to new housing developments.



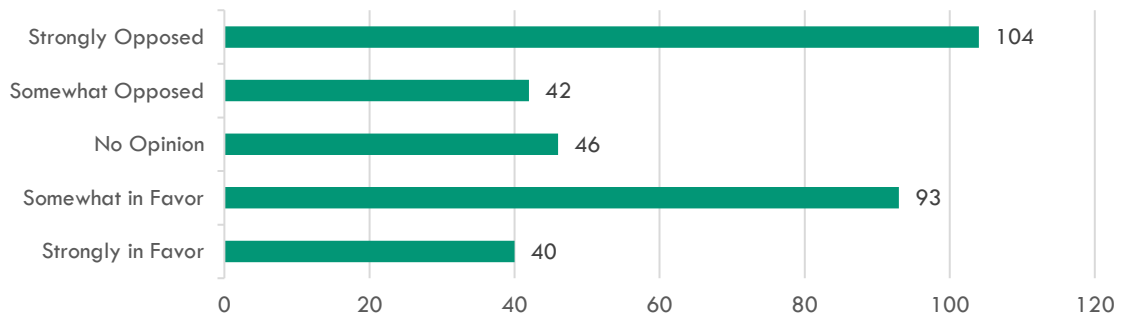
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## C. COMMERCIAL

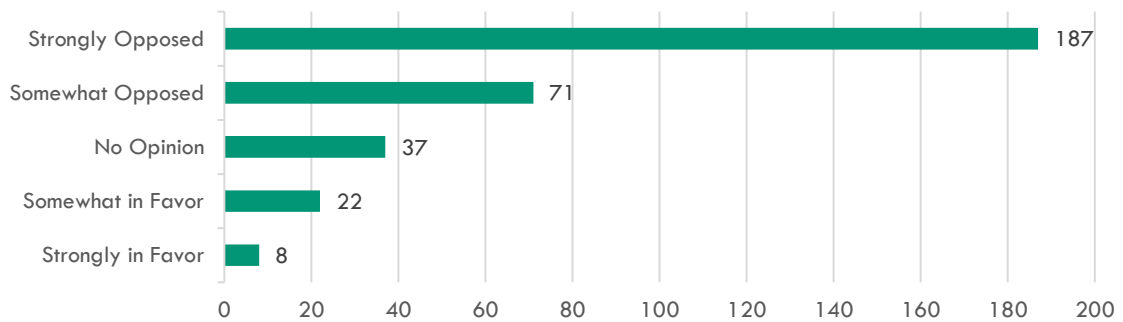
The majority of residents were strongly opposed to commercial development in the survey results. There was less opposition for restaurants or grocery stores.



How do you feel about increased development for Restaurants?



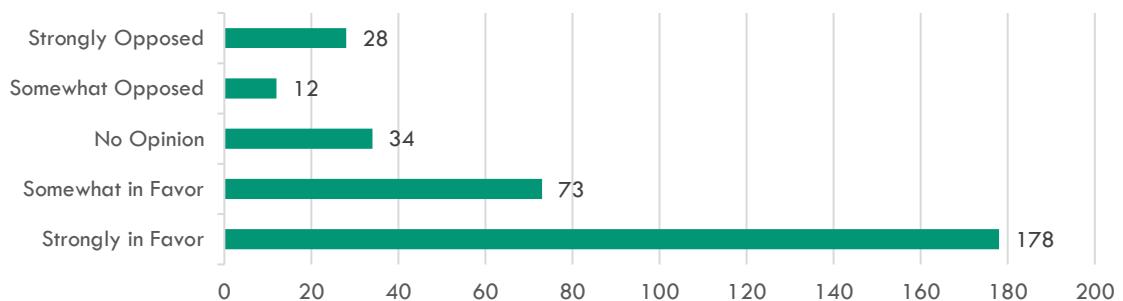
How do you feel about increased development for Shopping Areas?



**D. RECREATION**

- ◇ The majority of residents responded that they were strongly in favor of increased development for parks, which is the only type of development with that level of support.
- ◇ Residents were asked to share additional comments or thoughts for shaping the future of the township, and there were multiple comments indicating a desire for more community recreational space, including walking and biking paths.

How do you feel about increased development for Parks?



### 3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE LAND USE

The following section presents the recommended land use plan for Guilford Township. The Plan is based on the information compiled herein and the results of a questionnaire mailed to all residents of the Township in the year 2002. It includes recommendations for agriculture, commercial, industrial, recreational, and other types of development in the community.

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#### A. AGRICULTURAL LAND

1. One of the objectives of the Plan is to preserve, at least as much as possible, the existing base of agricultural land.
2. The development of agricultural lands for non-agricultural uses should be discouraged.
3. Except for the existing Commercial and Industrial zones, the entire Township should be planned for either agricultural or low density rural residential uses.
4. An Open Space Development Plan, as defined in Section 9-39, of the Guilford Township Zoning Resolution, has been developed and should be used as the primary method of residential development. The required open space may then be made available to local farmers.

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#### B. RESIDENTIAL

1. The majority of residents responded that they are strongly opposed to increased development of housing subdivisions.
2. Residential development is planned at relatively low densities to protect the water table, reduce septic pollution, and preserve the rural character of the township.
3. Permitted residential dwellings will predominately be single-family dwellings.
4. Based on current Guilford township zoning, a typical lot size for a single-family structure with on-site sewage disposal would be four (4) acres.
5. The Plan does not envision the creation of central water and/or sanitary sewers in the near future, and a low density rural residential zoning plan will help ensure the availability of water and a clean environment to all residents of the Township.
6. An Open Space Development Plan, as defined in Section 9-39 of the Guilford township Zoning Code, has been developed and should be encouraged for residential development. The required open space should then be made available to local farmers.

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#### C. COMMERCIAL

1. At the present time, commercial zones in Guilford Township are along Rt. 3, North of Seville Village; along certain areas of Greenwich Rd; and at the intersection in River Styx. Since building lots are relatively plentiful within the Commercial Zone, no further expansion of commercial zones within the Township have been proposed.
2. New business, which is defined in Section 7 of the Guilford Township Zoning Resolution, should be suited to the Township's needs.

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#### D. INDUSTRIAL

1. Industrial development within the Township is extremely limited due to the lack of central water and sewer; therefore, future industrial development in Guilford Township should be of a light manufacturing variety.

2. The existing Industrial Development Zone, bordering the Village of Seville would be the best location for new industry.

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#### E. RECREATION

1. Guilford Township owns no recreational land; however, Medina County has built and maintains two parks within the Township boundaries: Hubbard Valley Park and River Styx Park. In addition, there are several private recreational facilities within the township, including Buffalo Creek Retreat.
2. Considering the support for future development of parks and recreational space, the Township should cooperate with the Medina County Park District to maintain this space and explore opportunities for expansion or additional space.

### 3.4 DEVELOPMENT PLANNING CRITERIA

To effectively guide the location of future land uses and community facilities in Guilford Township, it is essential to consider both the general goals of the community and the specific needs of different land uses. This approach ensures that various land uses are compatible and harmonious with one another. These guiding criteria must be translated into Zoning Resolutions, which Township officials can use to direct and manage the development of the Township effectively.

#### A. AGRICULTURE

While agriculture in Guilford Township is no longer as dominant as it once was, it remains a key land use and an important part of the township's economic base. A major objective of the Plan is to preserve this agricultural environment. Large lot requirements and Open Space Development initiatives have been established to support this goal. The township should explore additional methods to encourage agriculture while discouraging large-scale housing developments.

#### B. RESIDENTIAL CRITERIA (ALL TYPES)

It is the intent of the Residential zone to encourage single family dwellings that preserve the rural character and natural resources of the Township.

The following development criteria should be considered when developing a business lot within the Residential Zone:

1. Modern engineering techniques allow for most lots to be developed, but factors such as soil bearing capacity, drainage, access, and flood plains must be considered when designing lots.
2. In the absence of central water and sewer systems, lots should be large enough to support water table recharge and proper sewage disposal.
3. A single-family dwelling with on-site sewage disposal requires a minimum of four acres, 210 feet of road frontage, and a 75-foot setback.
4. If water table levels continue to decline, increasing lot sizes may become necessary.

#### C. COMMERCIAL

It is the intent of the local business zones to encourage development of convenience businesses designed to meet the daily needs of the people of Guilford Township.

The following development criteria should be considered when developing a business lot within the Commercial Zone:

1. Location should be outside of floodplains and away from areas with drainage problems.
2. Sites should be large enough to accommodate the intended use while avoiding "spill-over" into adjacent parcels.
3. Commercial uses should be compatible with adjacent land uses or include buffer zones to be separate from other incompatible land uses.

4. Commercial uses generally, but not always, require central sanitary sewer and water facilities, and therefore, should be located near present existing development areas where those facilities are available.
5. Locations should be on arterial highways near an arterial intersection or limited access highways.
6. Strip development should be discouraged due to its inherent unsightly characteristics and the traffic hazards that result from uncontrolled access points.
7. Commercial developments that use excessive well water and require large on-site sewage disposal systems should be discouraged.

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#### D. INDUSTRIAL

Guilford Township is primarily an agricultural and residential community. To promote the general welfare of the Township, industrial development should be conditionally zoned to align with the Township's needs and the designated industrial site. Industrial or manufacturing uses may be permitted, provided they are not noxious, hazardous, or offensive due to the emission of odor, dust, smoke, gas, flame, or vibration.

The following criteria should be considered when designing an industrial building lot within the Industrial Zone:

1. Location should be outside of floodplains and outside of areas with drainage problems.
2. Industrial plant sites should be of a size to provide adequate space for off-street parking, buffer zones, and the movements, both in and out, of delivery trucks.
3. The industrial user should be encouraged to connect to central water and sewer where possible, and when not possible, should be encouraged to make only limited use of well water and sewage disposal systems.
4. Additionally, industrial uses in Guilford Township are encouraged to be clean, quiet, and free of hazardous or objectionable elements. Industrial uses should be contained within structures and generate minimal industrial traffic.

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#### E. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

The primary goal for recreation and open space is to ensure adequate recreational opportunities for the community. The standard guideline for recreation is 10 acres of recreational land per 1,000 residents. With a population of approximately 3,500, excluding the Village of Seville, Guilford Township requires about 35 acres of recreational land. Given the presence of two County parks, a golf course, and several private recreational facilities, the Township appears to meet this standard and provides sufficient recreational opportunities for its residents.

The following criteria should be considered for additional Parks and Recreational space in the Township.

1. Recreational lands and open spaces, either public or private, should also utilize land unsuitable for other forms of development due to environmental constraints.
2. Any new recreational uses should also include proper setbacks to avoid conflicts with neighboring land uses.

3. Recreational uses should be restricted to tracts of land large enough to sufficiently accommodate the intended use. Sufficient parking and sanitary facilities should also be provided on the site.
4. The development of non-structural recreational uses: i.e., ball fields, hiking trails, picnic areas, should be encouraged. Their placement in areas designated as floodplains should be encouraged.
5. Additions to the Medina County Park Districts should be in areas with unique physical features that would be the focal point of the park.

## CHAPTER 4: GOALS AND POLICIES

Policy planning or development of goals and policies provides the basic framework for the preparation of the Plan. This document provides explicit guidelines for plan implementation, a standard for measuring future effectiveness, and a tool for the evaluation of development proposals. The information and public preferences assessed during the policy planning process provide a rational basis for generating goals and policies stated herein.

There are several benefits to the preparation and adoption of development goals and policy statements, which are listed below:

- 1) The policy planning process encourages greater public understanding and communication, and thus participation in the planning process.
- 2) Policy planning allows greater involvement in the planning process by elected and appointed officials.
- 3) Policy planning brings together under a single framework, those agencies and organizations that may have an impact on development.
- 4) Policy planning enhances stability and consistency of development within communities. Specific recommendations and proposals may change as the community grows and develops; however, policies and goals will remain relatively unchanged.
- 5) Policy planning provides a guide to local governmental bodies responsible for adopting land use controls, to boards and commissions authorized to administer land use regulations, and to courts which may ultimately be called upon to judge the reasonableness of legislation and the fairness of its administration.
- 6) In Guilford Township, policy planning helps to maintain environment as a setting for an orderly, tranquil, rural residential community.
- 7) Policy planning promotes the public interest of the entire Township, rather than the interests of individuals.
- 8) Policy planning allows the Township to determine its own fate, and to manage, rather than react, to change.
- 9) Policy planning provides a long-range context for decisions concerning short-range actions.

The goals, objectives, and policies stated below are based, in large part, on a 2020 survey of Township residents. This survey and its results can be found in the appendix.

- A **Goal** is a broad, ideal, and slow-to-change expression of community desires and aspirations. Goals provide guidance in the planning process for developing policies.
- An **Objective** specifically states what is to be accomplished in furtherance of a goal. An objective is a point or level of attainment and ideally has two characteristics: it is measurable and attainable. To be measurable it is desirable that operational objectives state numerical amounts, distances, or dimensions; as this is not always possible, it is often necessary to state relationships instead.
- A **Policy** is a course of action which is designed to achieve or attain an objective.

## GUILFORD TOWNSHIP GOALS

Three broad goals have been determined for Guilford Township.



### Maintain Rural Character

- Preserve the existing base of agricultural land, thereby maintaining the rural residential atmosphere.



### Community Services

- Maintain a level of community facilities and services to meet the needs of the population.



### Strategic Land Planning

- Protect the natural environment, by guiding the location and development based on the natural capabilities and limitations of the land.

The following details the objectives and policies that have been established to meet these goals.

## GOAL 1

### PRESERVE THE RURAL RESIDENTIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS OF THE TOWNSHIP.

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#### OBJECTIVE 1: PRESERVE THE EXISTING BASE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND.

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1. Agriculture shall be encouraged in the Township through Open Space Development and other farmland preservation tools.
2. Property owners should be encouraged to create, preserve, and make available to farmers usable areas for agriculture.
3. Township officials should seek input from the farming community on challenges and opportunities within the Township.

#### OBJECTIVE 2: PRESERVE THE PREDOMINANTLY RURAL, SMALL-TOWN ATMOSPHERE OF THE TOWNSHIP.

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1. New residential development shall be planned at densities which will not result in public health hazards to the rest of the community.
2. Sewer and water utility services extensions shall be severely discouraged.
3. There shall be no further expansion of the commercial and industrial zones within the Township.
4. Priority should be given to development that provides extensive common open space and preserves environmentally sensitive areas.

#### OBJECTIVE 3: ENSURE THE CONSERVATION OF HOUSING STOCK IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

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1. Encourage healthy and safe property conditions which lead to secure property values.
2. Residential development should be encouraged in areas unsuitable for farming.
3. Identify blighted properties and pursue corrective measures to enhance community character.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of standards that guide decisions made by township boards and revise as needed to preserve the character of neighborhoods.

## GOAL 2

### MAINTAIN A LEVEL OF COMMUNITY SERVICES ADEQUATE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE POPULATION.

---

#### OBJECTIVE 1: CONTINUE TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY SAFETY AND SECURITY BY SUPPORTING FACILITIES AND SERVICES NECESSARY TO PROTECT, SUSTAIN, AND RECOVER FROM EMERGENCY EVENTS

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1. Ensure proper funding for Fire and EMS Departments for the upkeep or replacement of equipment, training, and salaries of personnel.
2. Ensure proper funding for the maintenance and upkeep of the Township's roads, equipment, buildings, training, and salaries of personnel.
3. Maintain the Townships thoroughfare network to ensure the safe, orderly, and convenient movement of vehicles.

#### OBJECTIVE 2: PROVIDE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ADEQUATE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE TOWNSHIP AND NEARBY COMMUNITIES.

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1. Support the efforts of the State of Ohio and the Medina County Park District in the development of recreational lands in and near Guilford Township.

#### OBJECTIVE 3: USE ZONING TO DIRECT DEVELOPMENT IN THE TOWNSHIP THAT IS SUITABLE FOR THE COMMUNITY.

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1. Residents will be encouraged to participate in the development of the township Zoning Code and Map.
2. The Township Zoning Code will be based on the current Comprehensive Development Policy Plan.
3. The Township Zoning regulations will be reviewed and updated as needed.
4. The Plan should be updated regularly to properly respond to changing Township conditions, including, demographic shifts, changes in Township land use distribution, and changes in Township preferences.
5. Examine the need for continued enforcement of zoning regulations and recognize that the additional workload for such enforcement may create a need for additional staffing.

## GOAL 3

### PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BY GUIDING THE LOCATION AND TIMING OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

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#### OBJECTIVE 1: ENCOURAGE THE PROTECTION OF FLOODPLAINS AND NATURAL DRAINAGE SYSTEMS FROM IMPROPER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES.

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1. Regulate any land use in the Township from physically obstructing, interfering, or altering any portion of a floodplain or natural drainage system.
2. Discourage construction of habitable structures in the floodplain, following recommendations of the Medina County Mitigation Plan.
3. Discourage residential development on sites of poor drainage characteristics, and/or encourage Open Space Development in these areas.
4. Prohibit new development within federally defined wetlands and floodplains.

#### OBJECTIVE 2: GUIDE THE LOCATION AND TIMING OF NEW DEVELOPMENT ON THE BASIS OF THE NATURAL CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE LAND.

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1. Maintain a minimum lot size of at least four acres for building lots that require wells and onsite sewage disposal systems.
2. Discourage any new development that may result in public health hazards for the rest of the community because of adverse soil or geologic characteristics.

#### OBJECTIVE 3: ENCOURAGE LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT THAT PRESERVES AND CONSERVES NATURAL FEATURES AND RESOURCES.

---

1. Development should be reviewed by the Township considering its potential to protect natural topography, vegetation, open spaces, and other features unique to the Township.
2. Encourage the preservation of woodland tracts, river corridors, and wetlands.
3. Consider adopting zoning regulations that promote the use of green building practices. Green building techniques such as the use of permeable asphalt, natural roofs, and rain gardens should be encouraged as part of new planned development.

## CHAPTER 5: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation a plan's recommendation is the most important process guiding community development. Implementation links the plan, an essentially idealized set of guidelines, with actual development itself.



### 5.1 FORMAL PLAN ADOPTION

- The first step is the formal adoption of the Plan by both the Guilford Township Zoning Commission and the Guilford Township Board of Trustees. This is the official guide for future growth of the Township through general policies. Plan adoption will provide the public and stakeholders with a formal publicized report that explains what the Township's development policies are and foster a better understanding of how and why these policies were derived.

### 5.2 UPDATE ZONING CODE

- The second step in implementing the Plan is to review, revise, and update the Township's Zoning Code. This step is an important legislative action concerning the location, density, height, bulk, and setbacks for the various uses of land in Guilford Township.
- Zoning Code enhancements will aid Plan implementation by establishing zoning districts which may guide growth and enhance property values. Any development requiring zoning changes will be reviewed and evaluated according to its impact on the community.
- The Guilford Township Zoning Code is a useful tool in property development and should be consistent with the guidelines set forth in the Plan and Map.

Amendments to the zoning code should be judged on:

- If they will improve the conditions of the community as a whole and,
- If the proposed amendments are consistent with the guidelines set forth in Plan and Map.

### **5.3 MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE EFFECTIVE ZONING ENFORCEMENT**

- A third step to effectively implementing the Plan is to ensure compliance with the zoning code. Any zoning resolution is only as good as its administration and enforcement.
- Zoning administration and enforcement must be thorough, fair, and equitable to avoid the possibility of property owner hardships.

### **5.4 ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT ESSENTIAL COMMUNITY SERVICES**

- In addition, the Township can implement the Plan by supporting the provisions of essential community services. The placement of utility lines (i.e., water and sewer lines), road improvements, parks, and service buildings can influence growth. The placement of such facilities should be consistent with the criteria established in the Plan.

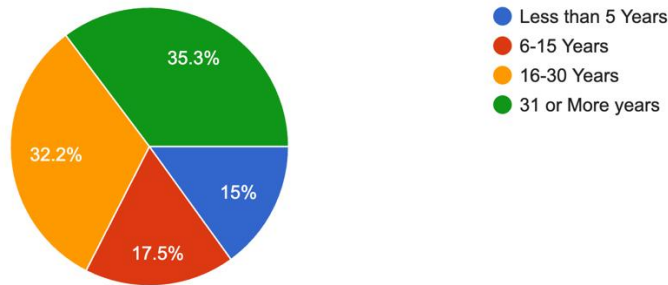
### **5.5 PERIODIC PLAN REVIEW AND PLAN UPDATING**

- Implementation should not be considered the final step in the planning process. The Plan is a guide for making development decisions and is part of a continuing planning process. This corresponds with a general need to continuously revise the Plan as local conditions change and to work toward its implementation.
- Changing land use policies, revised population projections, new land suitability/capability data, and changing development trends all provide a basis for amending the Plan.
- A complete review of the Plan should be made approximately every ten years to determine if changes are warranted. This review should also consider the input of the citizens of Guilford Township, possibly using questionnaires, surveys, or public meetings, to determine if the Plan meets the needs and wishes of the Township as a whole.
- Between review periods, proposed changes in the Plan should be considered when elements of the Plan become unworkable due to unanticipated changes in the community. Interim changes to the Plan should conform to the Plan's stated goals, objectives, and policies.

# APPENDIX I: TOWNSHIP SURVEY SUMMARY

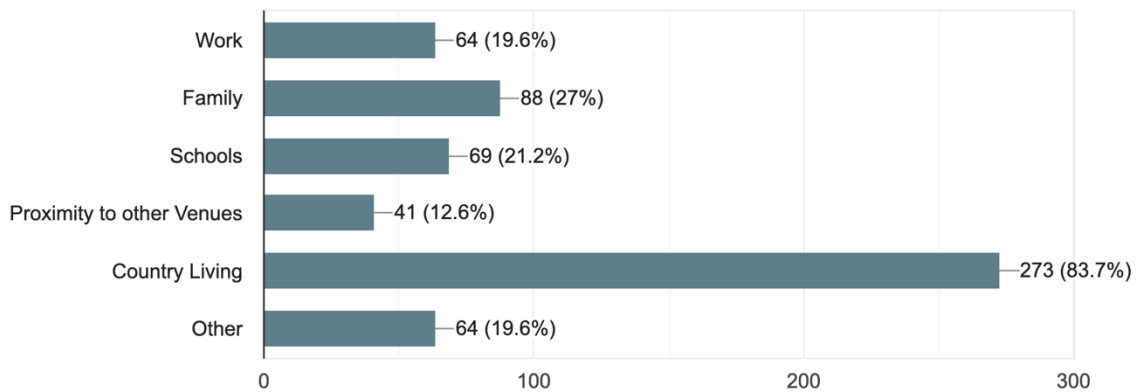
How long have you lived in Guilford Township?

326 responses

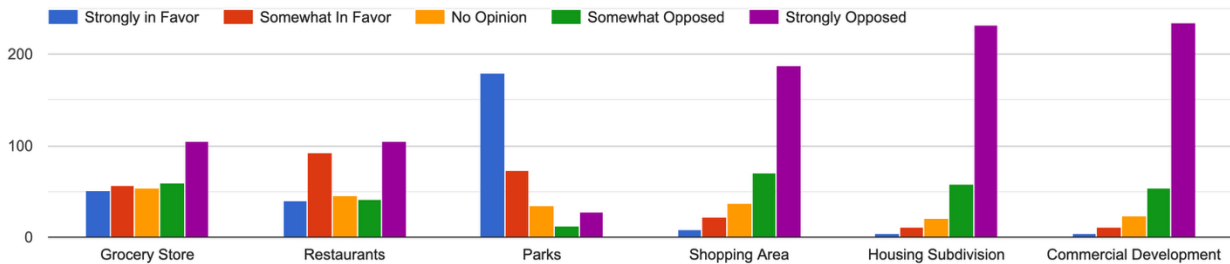


What decision brought you to Guilford Township? (Select all that apply)

326 responses

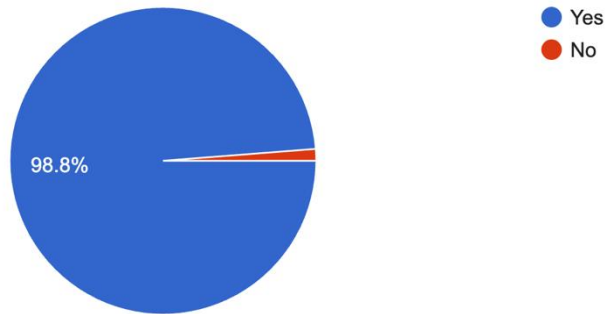


How do you feel about increased development of the following land uses?



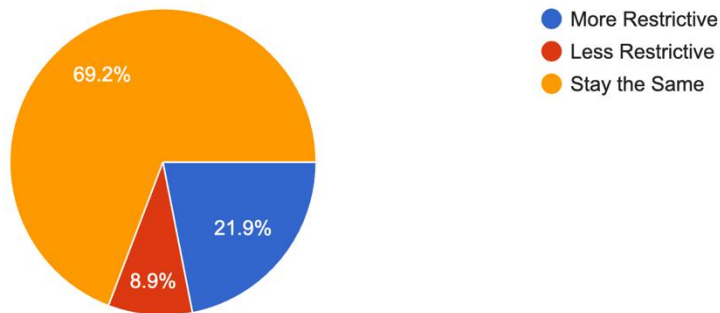
Would you like the Township to remain an agricultural/residential area?

324 responses



Are you in favor of more or less restrictive zoning laws?

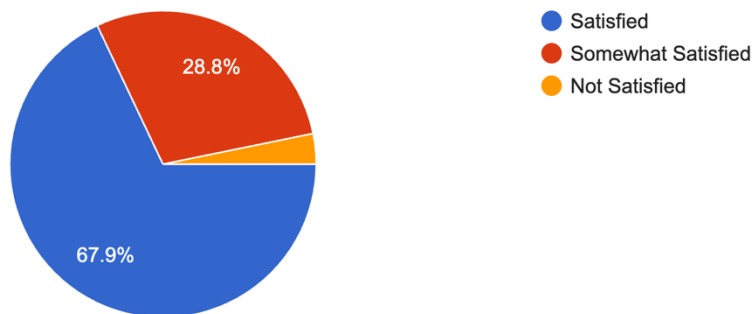
315 responses



The Comprehensive Plan can be viewed here:

<https://www.guilfordtownship.us/comprehensive-pl... zoning regulations and goals, as stated in 2010?>

312 responses



How happy are you with the quality of life in Guilford Township?

319 responses

