

## **Planning Foundation**

A key component of any comprehensive planning strategy should be an understanding of how the township has grown and developed into the community that it is and how the community wants to continue to grow in the future. Accomplishing this task means evaluating how the township has changed historically through an inventory of the existing conditions and trends. This inventory creates a foundation for which the township can use in future decisions related to planning and zoning. This section incorporates general background on the township's population, housing, and economy.

### **EXISTING LAND USE**

An assessment of how the land is currently being used is an important piece of information that must be evaluated in any land use planning effort. The existing land use map, on the following page, was developed through property information and aerial photography available from the Summit County Auditor's Office. This map categorizes properties in Springfield Township within the following land use categories:

### Agricultural or Undeveloped

Properties that are maintained as farmland, either crops or for the raising of livestock, or are properties that are not currently used for any use listed below. Large residential properties with more than five acres also fall within this category due to the potential for future development.

### Single-Family Residential

Residential properties where there is a single detached dwelling unit located on a single parcel.

### Two- and Three-Family Residential

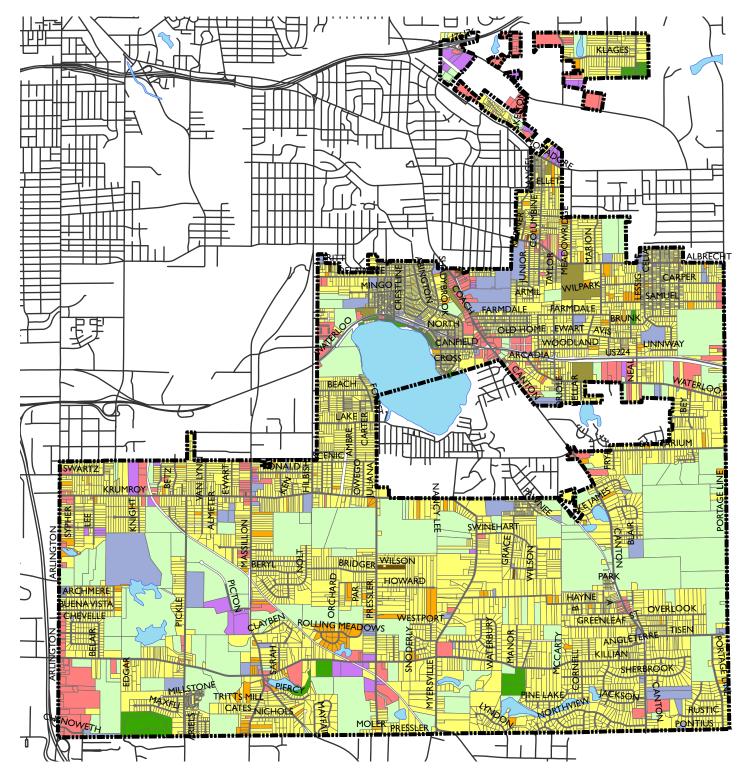
Residential properties where there are two to three dwelling units, in an attached structure, located on a single parcel.

### Multi-Family Residential

Residential properties where there are four or more dwelling units, in an attached structure, located on a single parcel. This category may include apartment buildings, townhomes, duplexes, two-family homes, and other attached housing.

### Mobile or Manufactured Home Park

Residential developments where there are multiple mobile or manufactured housing units located on a single parcel, including any associated uses.



#### Springfield Township - Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update **Existing Land Use** Agricultural or Undeveloped Commercial and Office Single-Family Residential Industrial Two- and Three-Family Residential Parks and Recreation Multi-Family Residential Public and Institutional Mobile or Manufactured Home Park 1,500 3,000 6,000 9,000 12,000 Feet



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### **Commercial and Office**

Commercial uses include those establishments where the primary use is the provision of goods and services to the general public in a neighborhood or suburban commercial center. This may include grocery stores, general retail stores, banks, gas stations, restaurants and similar uses.

Office uses include those establishments that provide executive, management, administrative, medical, dental, or professional services in either small or large-scale office buildings.

#### **Industrial**

Industrial uses include establishments for the manufacturing and production of goods and/or services with little to no commercial or office use related to the main industrial use.

### **Public and Institutional**

Public and institutional uses are properties and structures used for the provision of services related to the general public or institutions. These uses include religious places of worship, schools, government buildings, and other public uses.

### **Parks and Recreation**

Parks and recreational uses are properties used for public open space and recreational uses such as playgrounds, ball fields, horse trails, and other local or regional parklands.

# POPULATION AND HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

In order to understand the development pressures and issues facing Springfield Township, it is important to evaluate trends in population and housing over the past few decades. The following is a brief analysis of population and housing characteristics within Springfield Township.

### **POPULATION**

Springfield Township's population growth rate has remained relatively stable since 1990, with an average, over the last two decades with an average annual growth rate of less than a quarter of a percent a year since 1990. Table 1 illustrates the growth rates of all of the townships in Summit County along with nearby municipalities as a comparison. While Springfield Township's growth rate appears fairly slow, it is in fact growing whereas a number of communities, including Akron, have experienced a decrease in population.



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**Table I: Population Growth Rates** 

COMMUNITY	1990	2000	1990-2000 AAGR*	2007	2000-2007 AAGR*
Summit County	514,990	542,899	0.53%	543,487	0.02%
City of Akron	223,182	217,074	-0.28%	207,934	-0.61%
Bath Township	8,804	9,635	0.91%	10,190	0.80%
Boston Township	1,892	1,664	-1.28%	2,072	3.18%
Copley Township	11,114	13,641	2.07%	14,042	0.41%
Coventry Township	11,094	10,900	-0.18%	10,869	-0.04%
Franklin Township/ New Franklin	14,910	14,530	-0.26%	14,963	0.42%
City of Green	19,134	22,817	1.78%	23,447	0.39%
Village of Lakemore	2,680	2,561	-0.45%	2,830	1.44%
Village of Mogadore	2,949	2,951	0.01%	2,966	0.07%
Northfield Center Township	3,944	4,931	2.26%	5,015	0.24%
Richfield Township	5,010	5,424	0.80%	6,184	1.89%
Sagamore Hills Township	6,520	9,340	3.66%	9,527	0.28%
Springfield Township	14,787	15,168	0.25%	15,324	0.15%
Twinsburg Township	1,880	2,153	1.37%	2,554	2.47%

<sup>\*</sup> AAGR = Average Annual Growth Rate

Source: U.S. Census and U.S. Census Estimates

Another aspect of population growth that may lead to lower than expected growth rates is a trend in smaller households that has impacted the population of communities across the nation. In the last few decades, while the overall number of households has continued to increase, the average size of those households has decreased due to an aging population (increased empty-nesters) and smaller family sizes, in some cases. Springfield Township is no exception with a minor decrease in the average household size from 2.63 persons per household in 1990 to 2.53 persons per households in 2000.

Given the information above, it is possible to forecast the potential future population of the township if it is assumed that the township will continue to grow in a manner similar to historic trends. Assuming that the township will continue to see an average annual growth rate of approximately 0.15 percent per year, that trend would lead to a total population of approximately 15,572 in 2025, a total growth of just over 400 people in the next 20 years.



## Table 2: Building Permits by Year

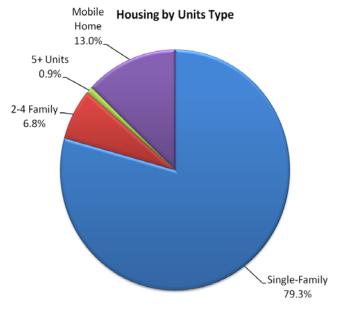
YEAR	# OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR NEW UNITS			
2000	34			
2001	35			
2002	23			
2003	36			
2004	35			
2005	32			
2006	21			
2007	12			
2008	6			

### **HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS**

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of dwelling units in Springfield Township increased 6.6%, from 5,857 units to 6,243 units based on U.S. Census data. This is an average of about 38 new units per year. Since 2000, the average number of building permits issued for new units decreased to approximately 26 units per year, with a significant decreased in the last three years due to the declining economy. The township's larger annual increase in dwelling units as compared to population reflects the decreasing household size described in the previous section. Springfield Township's average number of permits for new units is in line with most of the other townships and larger communities in Summit County with the exception of Copley Township and the City of Green, which have both experienced an average of over 120 building permits per year since 2000.

In addition to understanding the trends in the number of dwelling units, it is also important to have a better understanding of the characteristics of the housing stock as it can demonstrate a deficiency in a particular type of housing as well as identify where the township may start to see long-term maintenance issues.

In 2000, 79% of all housing units in Springfield Township were detached single-family dwellings (See the figure below.). The next greatest concentration of dwelling unit types was mobile homes (13%), typically considered a similar housing unit type as single-family detached housing. This ratio is considerably higher that then county's average of 1% of all county dwelling units. On the other hand, the number of multi-family dwelling units in the township is considerably lower than the county and other similar communities. Small-scale multi-family uses, with two to four units per structure, comprises just under 7% of the township's housing while higher-intensity multi-family comprises less than 1% of the township's housing.





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Table 3: Comparison of Housing by Unit Types in 2000

Community	SINGLE- FAMILY	2-4 Units	5+ Units	MOBILE HOMES
Summit County	71.0%	13.5%	14.4%	1.1%
Boston Township	72.5%	3.7%	0.4%	23.4%
Copley Township	70.5%	10.4%	18.9%	0.2%
Coventry Township	80.5%	13.5%	4.8%	1.2%
City of Hudson	87.5%	4.7%	7.5%	0.3%
Village of Lakemore	88.4%	7.2%	1.3%	3.1%
Village of Mogadore	88.2%	3.2%	8.6%	0.0%
Richfield Township	94.6%	4.5%	0.9%	0.0%
Springfield Township	79.3%	6.8%	0.9%	13.0%
Source: LLS Census	17.5%	0.8%	0.9%	13.0%

Source: U.S. Census

Information on the breakdown of the housing stock based on unit types is important because it can begin to demonstrate where the township may have too much of one type of housing and/or where the township is lacking another type of unit. It is clear from the comparison of Springfield Township to a selection of other communities in the county (See Table 3.) that the Springfield Township has one of the largest percentages of mobile homes, with the exception of Boston Township, but has a much smaller percentage of the traditional multi-family housing types. This information was used in the development of the housing goals for both the previous plan and this plan update.

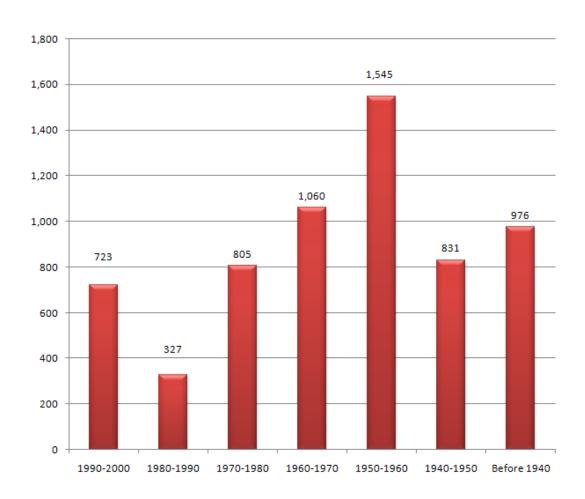




# Comprehensive Land Use Plan Planning Foundation

One issue the township will need to be aware of as they progress is the age of the housing stock. The forecasts for the township do not demonstrate significant increases in the number of new dwelling units over the next 20 years so an increasing percentage of the housing stock will continue to age. Over 70% of the township's dwelling units were built before 1970. While this does not mean the housing stock is old, outdtated, and deteriorated, it does signal that there could be mainteanance issues over the lifespace of this plan. As such, the township needs to continue to monitor and evaluate the condition of the housing stock to ensure long-term neighborhood stability.

### Year Structure was Built





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### **EXISTING PLANNING EFFORTS**

In addition to the township's 2002 plan, there are a number of county and regional plans that affect Springfield Township. The following is a brief highlight of several plans that relate to the goals, objectives, and recommended actions in this plan. There are a number of other very detailed plans such as the Summit County Engineers Capital Improvement Plan and the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study's Transportation Improvement Plan that are not highlighted below but are key to the future of Springfield Township nonetheless.

# <u>Summit County, Ohio General Land Use Development Plan</u>

In 2006, the county adopted a general land use development plan that, like this plan, is intended to provide guidance for future development throughout the county. This plan looks at development from a regional perspective with guidance on issues such as cultural/historic resource preservation, demographics, housing, land use, natural resources, utilities and storm water management, economic development, and transportation. The Springfield Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan should be used in concert with the Summit County General Land Use Development Plan as the county's plan provides supplemental information not detailed in this plan (e.g. background information on historic and natural resources) but that were accounted for due to the county's extensive planning efforts. Additionally, the county is an agency that the township should continue to coordinate planning efforts with, particularly related to issues where the township has minimal authority (e.g., subdivision regulations, water, sewer, etc.).

### Natural Resources Study, Summit County, Ohio

This study documented and evaluated all of the natural resources in Summit County including wetlands, floodplains, riparian corridors, topography, groundwater, woodlands, and numerous other vital resources. The planning effort resulted in a number of planning recommendations and potential tools available to the county and its local jurisdictions including several tools, such as land acquisition and zoning amendments, that are available to Springfield Township.

### Summit County Trail & Greenway Plan

The Summit County Trail & Greenway Plan, completed in May 2001, identifies regionally significant trail and greenway opportunities within the county. These corridors will link natural and cultural resources together as a countywide system to meet recreational, educational, environmental and economic development objectives. The plan serves as a framework around which individual communities such as Springfield Township can prepare local recreation plans. This plan, which is shown in map form in Appendix A, identifies a proposed priority greenway along the



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Tuscarawas River that will connect the southern area of Springfield Township to the Ohio and Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Additionally, the county has plans to develop proposed trails along several of the key roadway corridors to improve overall connectivity.

# JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (JEDD)

In 1994, Springfield Township residents voted to enter into a Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) agreement with the City of Akron. The purpose of the JEDD was threefold:

- To create or preserve jobs and employment opportunities;
- To improve the economic welfare of people in the City of Akron, the township, and in the JEDD; and
- To promote regional cooperation.

The JEDD agreement is valid for an initial term of 99 years (until the end of 2093), with the option of two successive 50-year renewal periods. Per this agreement, the City of Akron agreed to construct water feeder mains and trunk sewers per a 5-year schedule. Services are provided according to an agreed upon fee schedule. In addition, a mutual aid agreement for police, fire, and/or EMS services was established.

### Township Service Area

Specific non-JEDD residential areas have been designated as a township service area for potential city water/sewer service. Construction of water and sewer to these non-JEDD areas subject to: (1) petition by 75% of users with township and city approval; and (2) engineering and legal feasibility. Such infrastructure shall be subject to the following:

- Tap-in fee or other capital user fee to be charged to water/sewer users; The city or township shall not require non-petitioners to pay for services.
- Other properties in the township may be added to the township service area if the majority of property owners in an area petition the township trustees.
- Water and sewer facilities to be owned, operated and maintained by city, unless otherwise determined by the city.

### Income Tax

Effective January 1, 1995, the City of Akron will administer and collect income tax per the tax agreement with the JEDD Board per the following:

- Pledge revenues, as necessary, within first 6 years to fund the city's share of township water/sewer design, acquisition and construction.
- The Initial tax rate was be 2% until 2005. After 2005, the tax rate is equal to the municipal income tax



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- Revenues from any increase above 2% to be paid with 1/3 of the revenue going to the township and 2/3 of the revenue going to the city.
- All property tax revenues are distributed to the township as they were prior to the JEDD agreement.

### Annexation and Zoning

As part of the JEDD agreement, the City of Akron agreed not to annex any land during the life of the contract without consent of township and to support the detachment of certain designated property. In return, Springfield Township agreed:

- To oppose annexation, merger, or consolidation of property without consent of city.
- To maintain the existing level of property zoned for business, commercial or industrial uses within the JEDD district; and
- To oppose establishment of enterprise zones, granting of tax exemptions, and/or use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) without consent of city.

If the township wishes to rezone non-residential property that is not yet within the JEDD, it must notify the city of the proposed change and designate replacement property of the same character, and receive the city's approval.