

SAYBROOK TOWNSHIP
2024 COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN UPDATE

DRAFT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The creation of the Saybrook Township Comprehensive Plan Update has been a rewarding nine month process full of teamwork, collaboration, and education. The resulting Saybrook Township Comprehensive Plan is the collaboration of community voices!

The purpose of the Plan is to provide both a vision and a practical road map that will be used to guide the future of Saybrook Township.

Thank you to all of the individuals and organizations for their time and energy to this effort:

Steering Committee Members: Mark Astorino, Joan Billman, Peggy Carlo, Dean Moore, Kathleen Kennedy, Larry Laurello, Amy Nagle, Zak Pearson, Joseph Petros, Rusty Shafer, and Daryl Upole

Saybrook Township Trustees: Robert Brobst, Tom Pope, and Dan Claypool

Saybrook Township Administration: Jim Hudson, Zoning Inspector, Larry Johnson, Fiscal Officer, Lori Zebrasky, Office Manager, Michelle Halman, Administrative Assistant

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ABOUT THE PLAN

Saybrook Township has taken steps to update the Township Comprehensive Plan previously adopted in 2007. With increased interest in tourism within the County, and Saybrook residents strategizing to maintain the Township's small-town character and community connections through an updated zoning code, the time is now to review previous planning documents and outline the Township's next steps for the future.

Saybrook Township's Plan Update is a Comprehensive Plan that will provide a strategic guide for future decisions to address the most pressing needs of the Township and improve the quality of life enjoyed by current and future residents. The Plan outlines the Vision, Goals, Policies and Strategies, and short-term and long-term priorities for addressing key goals.

The Plan is divided into four sections.

Section 1 | Creating the Plan

Describes the planning process and highlights the purpose of the plan, previous efforts and public involvement.

Section 2 | Overview

Highlights existing conditions and trends that will impact planning decisions and issues and opportunities that need to be addressed in the coming years.

Section 3 | Aspirations

Reviews the vision statement and goals.

Section 4 | Policies & Strategies

Provides detailed descriptions of the policies and strategies for achieving the future Saybrook envisions.

The intent of this Plan is to be as concise, accessible, and user friendly as possible. With that in mind, much of the data, research, and analysis that was gathered and conducted in support of the policies in this plan are available as appendices.

A comprehensive plan must remain current and relevant. It is essential that the Township monitor the outcomes of this plan and proactively review and update the goals, policies and strategies to ensure it serves as an appropriate guide.

As a compilation of the Township's collective goals and consensus on policies and priority action steps, this document serves several purposes both for the Township's policymakers as well as for private property owners, businesses, and future investors:

- Recommends zoning text updates.
- Guides future decisions for rezoning.
- Helps identify future capital improvements for fiscal planning.
- Provides predictability for current residents and businesses.
- Helps private property owners make decisions about investments in the Township.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A Comprehensive Plan is an important tool with a long-range outlook (10-20 years) utilized to guide policy development, zoning decisions, and the overall vision and goals of a community. The Plan, and the process used to create it, serves a number of important functions:

- Educate people about the Township's strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities available to build on these strengths and improve in areas most in need;
- Establish principles for growth and development;
- Discuss how key resources will be protected and enhanced;
- Provide a rationale for future direction and policies;
- Recommend priorities for funding and new investment; and
- Guide community leaders, property owners and investors in making decisions.

This plan focuses on several different issues including, land use, housing, economic development, tourism, transportation, services, and preservation of community character and land. Through the plan process, the Township is looking to create actionable goals that will make a substantial impact over the next couple of decades. The plan addresses pressing issues that concern current residents, and the needs of the Township to ensure sustainable and manageable growth and change as well as preservation of community character.

It is important to note that the Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document, not a set of regulations or mandated laws. However, one of the primary implementation tools is the Saybrook Township Zoning Resolution. Yet, while the Plan includes recommendations for zoning changes, adoption of the plan does not change the zoning regulations. For any changes to be made to the Saybrook Township Zoning Resolution, the Township Trustees and Township Zoning Commission must undertake a wholly separate process, including more detailed technical analysis, as well as drafting, reviewing and refining the zoning amendments (text and map), and holding the required public hearings.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

This plan is representative of community-wide input and conversations focused on identifying characteristics of the community that make it unique, challenges or weaknesses the Township may face, and strengths and opportunities to grow.

The planning process began September 2024 and consisted of four phases.

Phase I | Assess- The first phase included conversational interviews with key stakeholders, one meeting with the Steering Committee, collection and analysis of existing conditions, and review of existing plans and policies.

Phase II | Prioritize- Phase two of the planning process goes even more in depth. During this period, there was a second meeting with the Steering Committee, formulation of preliminary goals and a vision statement, as well as identifying appropriate development options for the Township.

Phase III | Implement- Verdantas met with the Steering Committee, and created a draft of implementation steps and strategies to accomplish identified goals of the community. During this phase, a community open house was held to receive feedback from the community. A community-wide survey was also launched.

Phase IV | Finalize- All feedback from the community was implemented into the final comprehensive plan update and the plan is delivered to the Township.

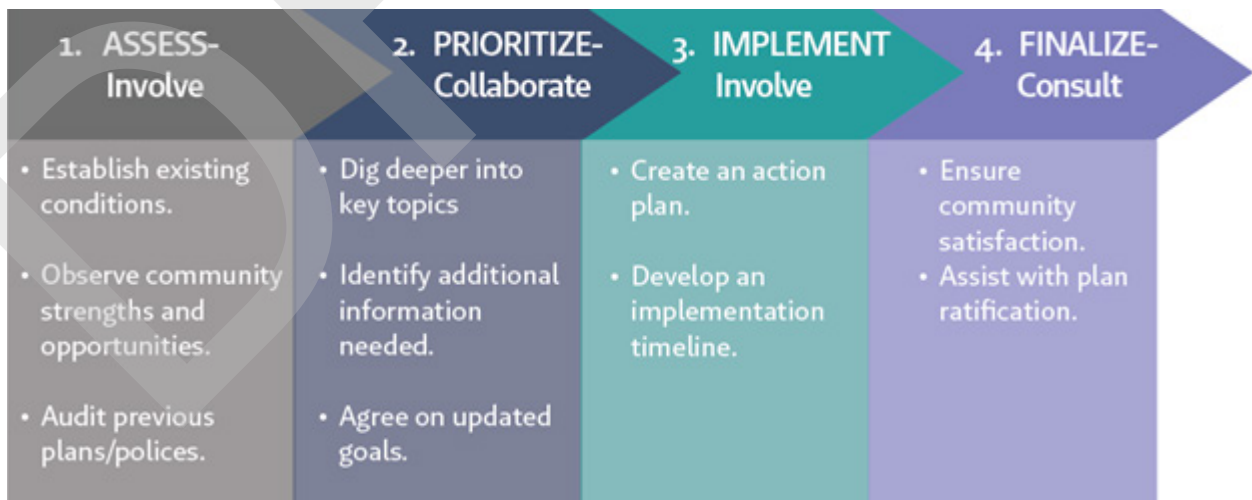


FIGURE 1.1- Plan Process.

PARTICIPANTS, MEETINGS & PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement is an essential piece of the planning process. The purpose of community engagement is to gain input from residents, property owners, and other stakeholders with an interest in the future of the Township to better understand community character and Township priorities. A greater understanding of community members’ goals and priorities helps to create a plan tailored to Saybrook Township.

The creation of a community engagement strategy at the beginning of the planning process ensures that the greatest number of people are reached and given the opportunity to provide feedback on the plan. Offering different mediums of engagement allows for a greater cross-section of Township residents representing different identities and groups to get involved in the planning process.

The engagement strategy for Saybrook Township involved several techniques to gain feedback. The Township formed a Steering Committee of residents and stakeholders to help guide the plan process. A community open house was held to give residents and stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback on the plan’s vision and goals and ask questions to planning staff, the Steering Committee and Township Trustees. Finally, a community survey was distributed to gain additional insight from Township residents and those who could not attend in-person events.

Meeting	Schedule			
Kickoff Meeting	September 5th			
Steering Committee #1	October 16th			
Steering Committee #2		November 13th		
Steering Committee #3			January 9th	
Community Open House			February 15th	
Steering Committee #4				March 12th
	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4

FIGURE 1.2- Project Schedule.

Steering Committee

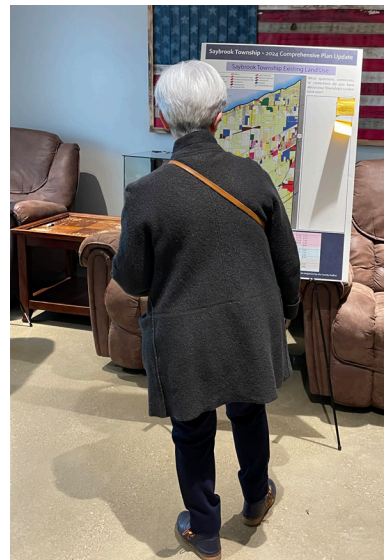
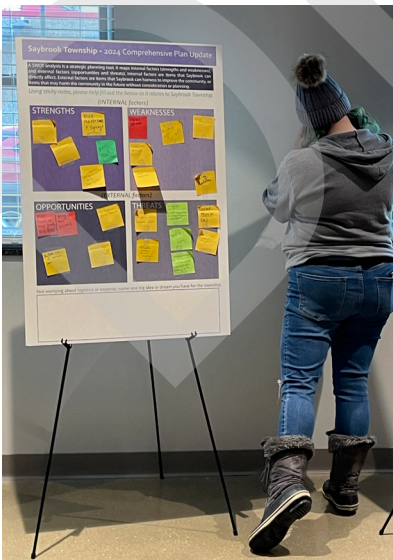
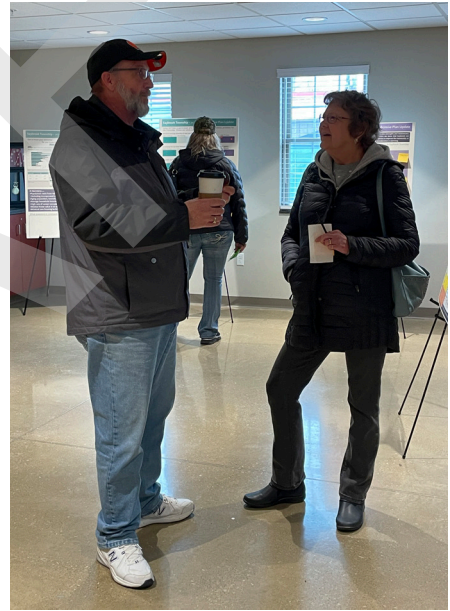
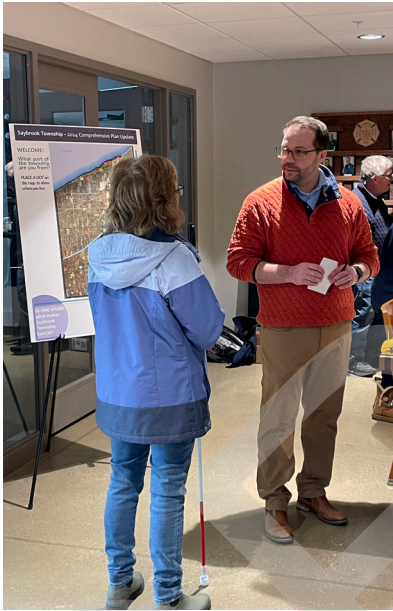
The Steering Committee for Saybrook Township consisted of eleven (11) invested members. The Committee had a vested interest in the Township as they are residents, business owners, or Township and elected officials. It is vital for a Steering Committee to be comprised of individuals with diverse backgrounds and unique perspectives. Members gathered four (4) times during the planning process, in accordance with each phase, to provide input and further tailor the plan to Saybrook Township. Planning staff facilitated the meetings with informative slideshows and interactive activities as ways to harbor feedback. During these meetings, staff covered many topics including vision and goals, future land use, and township zoning, to name a few. Some meetings required members to complete “homework” outside of meeting times to ensure meetings could run as smoothly as possible.

Steering Committee Roles & Responsibilities



Community Open House

The Community Open House was held at the Saybrook Township Fire Department #2 on Saturday, February 15th, 2025. The event lasted three (3) hours during the late morning and early afternoon. Planning staff interacted with approximately 45 members of the community who were eager to provide input. Both informative and interactive boards were displayed during the engagement event and planning staff were available to answer any questions. Interactive boards required community members to use sticky dots and/or sticky notes as ways to provide feedback on the Plan Update's proposed vision and goals and other priority items. See Appendix B for a full summary of the Community Open House.



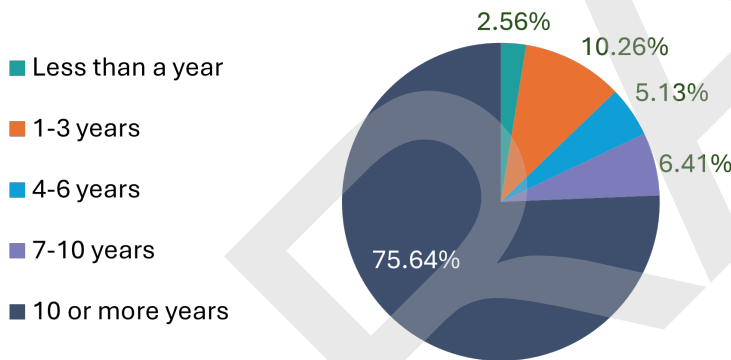
Survey

Another form of engagement that Saybrook Township used was an online and printed survey. Some topics included public services, housing types, vacant structures, connectivity, and Township priorities. Questions were a mixture of short answer, multiple choice, multiple answer, and ranking. Additionally, respondents were asked to fill out a “Demographics” section to give planning staff a better understanding of who the survey reached and if it was representative of the whole community. The following paragraphs review the main takeaways of the survey, a full report can be found in the Appendix C.

A bulk of respondents were Saybrook Township residents, that were highly educated, with almost 55% of respondents obtaining their bachelor’s degree or higher. Respondents tended to be longtime residents, living in the area for 10 or more years, and 80% of respondents did not have children under the age of 18 living in their home.

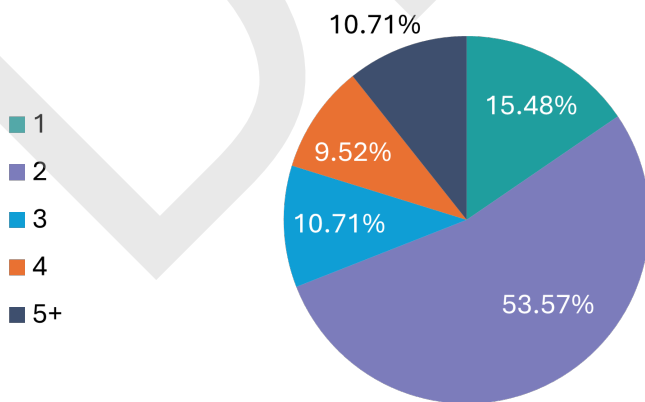
How many years have you lived in Saybrook Township?

FIGURE 1.3- Survey respondents.



How many people live in your household?

FIGURE 1.4- Survey demographics.



Several of the questions in the survey focused on commercial land uses and blighted structures as those issues were noted early on by both Steering Committee members and residents. Survey results indicated that vacant commercial properties on US 20 should be redeveloped into retail spaces and 77% of respondents noted they like the idea of small community retail in the Township. Additionally, when asked what they would like to see in Saybrook Township in the next 10 years, 82% of respondents noted they want to see the revitalization or reuse of properties with blighted and/or abandoned commercial structures. Finally, when asked to rank community issues based on their impact on Saybrook Township, 51% of respondents indicated that vacant and/or blighted commercial and retail spaces were the most important.

Other questions asked participants which types of housing were needed in the Township, with respondents indicating detached single-family homes as the needed housing type. Residents seem content with services including police, fire, and snow removal, but noted a lack of recreational opportunities and walkability in the Township. Despite this, residents are happy living in the Township as 68% of respondents noted that the quiet atmosphere is important to them and 43% of respondents appreciate the close proximity to I-90 and the slower lifestyle of the Township.

The survey was successful in gaining resident feedback on a variety of topics and learning about what residents find most important to the community's character.

How do you feel about small community retail entering Saybrook Township?

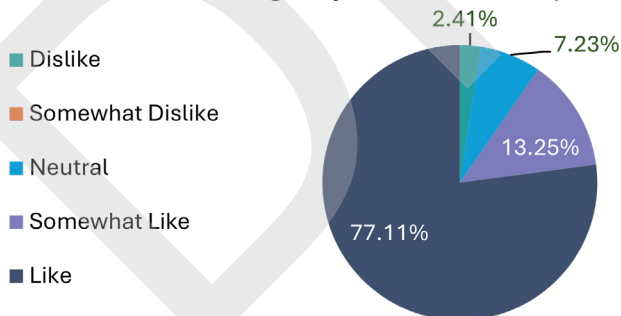


FIGURE 1.5- Survey response, community retail.

Saybrook has a recognizable and marketable brand that draws people to the community.

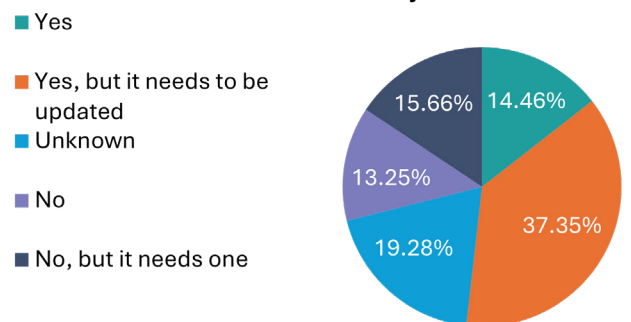


FIGURE 1.6- Survey response, community brand.

PAST PLANNING EFFORTS

Saybrook Township Comprehensive Plan 2007

The Saybrook Township Comprehensive Plan was Adopted in 2007 and consists of seven chapters with an appendix. Goals of the plan are broken down into three general topic areas as identified below:

1. Demographics, Housing, and Economy
2. Environmental Features
3. Community Facilities and Infrastructure

There is one goal for each topic area followed by a dozen action steps that act as a “To-Do” for the township to complete these goals. Listed below are the goals for each topic area as well as several of the action steps noted in the plan.

Demographics Housing and Economy – Provide for well planned, clearly defined, and safe residential, commercial, and industrial areas of the Township.

- Develop a comprehensive business attraction and retention strategy
- Foster a balanced tax base
- Expand areas where research and development uses are permitted
- Encourage residential developments which utilize conservation or cluster development techniques to preserve open space and other environmental features
- Improve the appearance of the Township
- Coordinate with adjacent communities regarding the establishment of intergovernmental alliances such as Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs) and Cooperative Economic Development Agreements (CEDAs)
- Provide for mixed use development along US 20 corridor
- Promote redevelopment of existing brownfield sites
- Work with the County to initiate a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) for suitable areas
- Take advantage of the Township's proximity to Lake Erie
- Encourage development the preserves lake views

Environmental Features – Preserve and conserve environmental features for future Township residents.

- Identify and preserve areas that contain rare and/or endangered species
- Discourage development in flood prone areas
- Support open space preservation and connectivity
- Protect riparian corridors
- Protect steep slopes
- Protect wetlands
- Promote green building practices
- Minimize lakeshore erosion
- Promote agricultural preservation within the Township
- Promote sound stormwater management and erosion control
- Minimize impacts on the Coastal Management Area

Community Facilities and Infrastructure- Provide for safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the Township.

- Promote increased park and recreation opportunities throughout the Township
- Maintains and improve roadway safety
- Support construction of railroad overpasses along SR 45
- Develop an access management plan for Township roads
- Coordinate and partner with the County Department of Environmental Services regarding expansion of sanitary service areas in the township
- Continue to work collaboratively with the County to identify funding sources and provide financial support for expansion of water service to unserved or undeserved areas of the Township
- Coordinate with ODNR to identify and develop opportunities for increased public access to the lake
- Support increased pedestrian circulation opportunities
- Enhance roadway appearance
- Support historic preservation
- Promote safe pedestrian travel

Many of the sentiments expressed in 2007 are still true in 2025, however, an updated series of goals with many of the previous goals adapted or amended, will continue to steer the Township towards a promising future.

All In! Ashtabula County Plan

Ashtabula County began its comprehensive plan update in 2020 with final adoption occurring in 2022. Prior to its update, the County plan had last been completed in 2003. A county-wide comprehensive plan is similar to a Township plan in that it's a long-range document made up of actionable goals. However, a county-wide plan covers a much larger jurisdiction with its goals and actions steps fulfilling the needs and aspirations of all the townships and cities contained in its boundaries. It is important for Saybrook Township's comprehensive plan to align with the spirit of the County plan, but with goals more specifically tailored to the Township and its residents.

Ashtabula County's plan notes its natural resources and rural setting as elements that make the County unique. Similarly, Saybrook Township seeks to maintain its rural character and preserve its natural features to promote tourism. Additionally, both the County and the Township want to boost the economy by welcoming job opportunities and increasing tourism. Based on their goals and visions, it is evident that Ashtabula County and Saybrook Township have the same vision and ideals for the future. The most applicable goals from the County plan are summarized below:

- **Rural Preservation:** The plan seeks to preserve its rural character by directing new development towards incorporated areas and places with sewer, encouraging zoning bonuses, promoting the viticulture district, create a strategy for conservation easements, and annually monitoring farmland percentages.
- **Natural and Recreational Amenities:** The plan aspires to ensure the best use of land, water, and natural resources for public use and enjoyment. It recommends doing this by creating a database for all parks and natural resources in the County, adopting a stream setback code, improving connectivity of the County's railway system, supporting bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and investing in lakeshore recreational amenities.
- **Local Economy:** This goal strives to spark the economy through housing and tourism opportunities and job creation. This section recommends pursuing grant opportunities, creating a centrally located farmer's market, utilizing economic development incentives, promoting the "shop local" initiative, identify areas that support multi-family housing, and continuing job training opportunities.

Ashtabula County Coastal Management Plan

This plan focuses specifically on goals to manage and maintain the County's coastline for future generations. The plan looks at types of development, transportation options, and accessibility to Lake Erie that can benefit residents and visitors without harming the coast. Listed below are goals mentioned in the plan that especially pertain to Saybrook Township as a lakefront community within the County.

- **Economic Development:** The plan wants to empower communities within its boundaries to implement their own comprehensive plans and address issues in key development areas. Additionally, the promotion of local food and development of environmentally friendly lodging facilities will encourage tourism and promote local character.
- **Transportation:** The plan notes the importance of waterway transportation methods including commercial cruise ships specific to Ashtabula County, personal boat and kayak resources, designated water trails, and ferries. Additionally, the plan also wants to diversify transportation in areas near the coast by introducing trolleys, golf carts, and increased biking infrastructure.
- **Erosion and Flooding:** To combat impacts of erosion and flooding, the plan suggests continuing monitoring lake levels with state and federal agencies, allow for continuous dredging, encourage communities to adopt a stormwater utility program, and put erosion control measures in place.



OVERVIEW

Context

Saybrook Township is located in Ashtabula County in northeast Ohio. It is one of the 27 townships in the County and is known for its natural beauty, small-town atmosphere, and proximity to natural features such as Lake Erie and Red Brook.

As the Township remains a desirable place to live and continues to be a spot for tourists it is important that infrastructure and development can continue to support the Township. This can lead to challenges in providing for and balancing the needs of long-time Township residents, newer residents, and the ever-growing tourist population.

This chapter highlights the various trends and existing conditions that have helped shape the current character of Saybrook Township and may impact the Township’s future. An analysis of factors, such as the Township’s location within the region, natural resources, demographics and housing and economic development trends, all provide an understanding of the context for formulating Saybrook Township’s goals.

Population:

Saybrook Township’s population has remained relatively steady since the 1990s. The significant jump in population seen in the graph below is due to the change of Census reporting methods. The population of 5,957 from the 2000 Census is the Township’s population without incorporated areas included. Data points after 2000 include the incorporated areas of the Township via annexation of Ashtabula City.

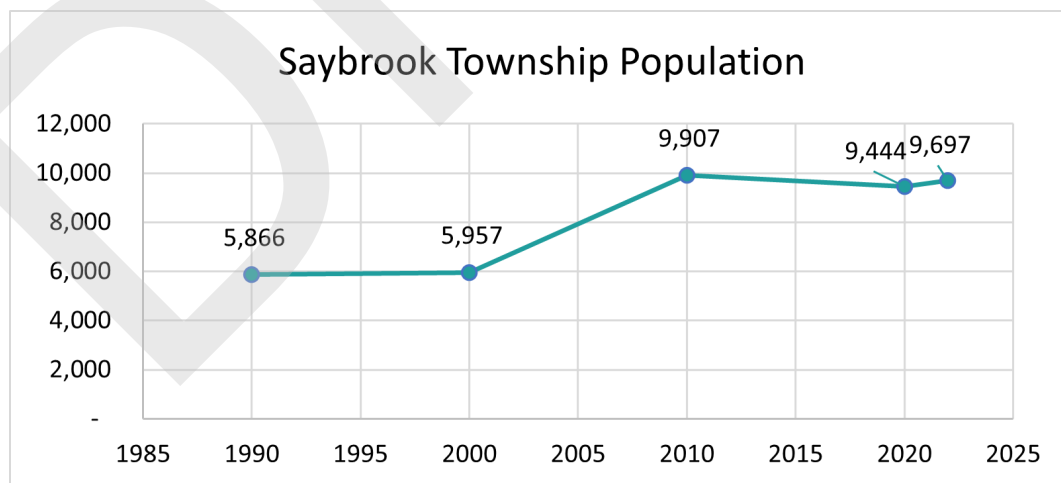


FIGURE 2.1- Saybrook Population.

In contrast to Saybrook’s relatively stable population, Ashtabula County’s population has been steadily declining since 2000. Between 2000 and 2020, the County population dropped by approximately 5,000 people. By 2050 the population is predicted to continue to decrease to 85,569 residents, a total loss of more than 16 percent from 2000. As of the 2020 Census, the County population is 97,574.

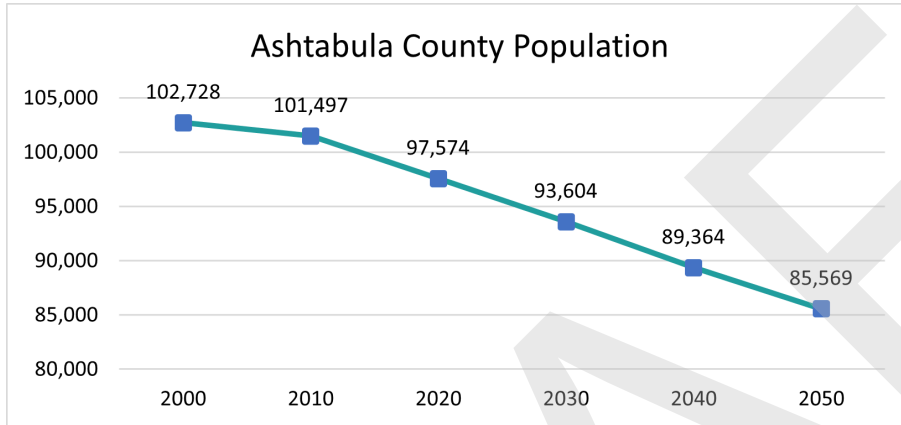


FIGURE 2.2- Ashtabula County Population.

Like most communities in Ashtabula County and throughout the Northeast Ohio region, Saybrook’s population is aging. The median age of Township residents is 50.9 years old. Meaning the Township median age is older than the County’s median age of 42.6 years.

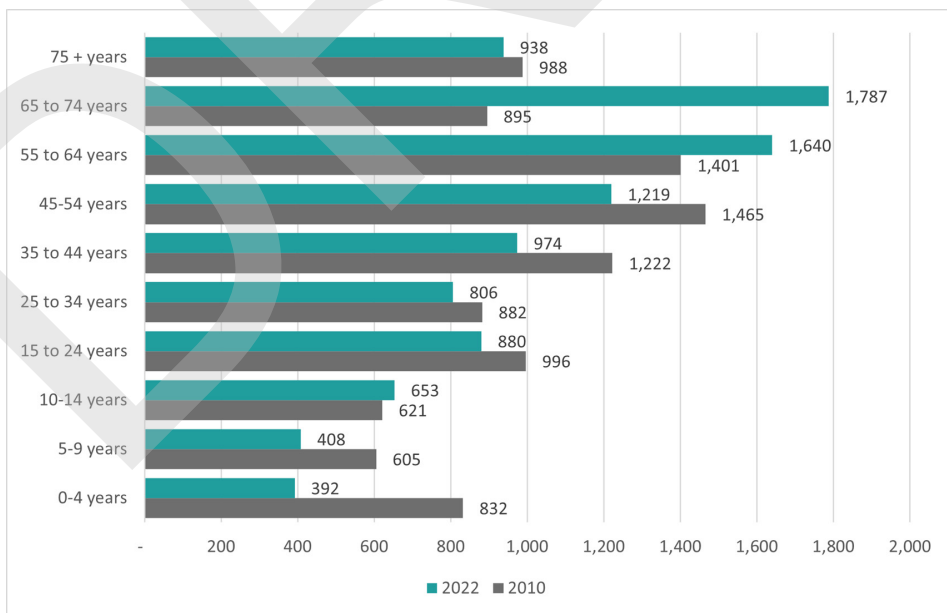


FIGURE 2.3- Township population by cohort.

National trends of individuals living longer and having fewer children are magnified in Saybrook Township and Ashtabula County. Roughly 18% of Saybrook's population falls in the 65 to 74 age range. Furthermore, the Township is not retaining or attracting young families with children. In 2010, almost 14.5% of the population was comprised of young children between the ages of 0 and 9 years old. However, as of 2022, only 8.2%, a mere 800 children, in the same age range are growing up in Saybrook Township.

Households/Housing Units:

There are two methods of examining housing statistics in Saybrook. The first is the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). Conducted every year, the ACS samples a subset of individuals and, in combinations with other information like the last decennial census, then develops datasets. Most of these datasets have a certain margin of error, as they are not exact counts. Despite being estimates, the numbers are generally quite close.

The other method is the Ashtabula County Auditor's Office. The County Auditor's Office tracks all parcel and tax data associated with all lands in the County. Parcel datasets are constructed by the Auditor's Office, and includes specific information on individual parcels, such as appraised value, year built, number of stories, etc. This is also the primary source for land use data, as each parcel is coded with a specific value that indicates how the land is used. Auditor's data is generally quite accurate; however, it is only as good as the data that can be found. For example, not all housing units are official, and not all housing units contain only one family or dwelling unit. Therefore, the number of housing units reported does not necessarily correlate to the actual number of housing units.

According to the Ashtabula County Auditor, there are 3,055 housing structures in unincorporated Saybrook Township. In examining the era of home construction, we can understand the development patterns across time and the growth rate of the township. From 1940 to 1969, the largest housing construction boom took place in the township. During that span, over a third of all existing housing units in Saybrook Township were built, some 34.9%. Construction slowed down in the period from 1970 to 1989, with just 325 homes built. Since 1990, about 28% of existing homes having been constructed, or 855 units. The average year a house was built is around 1960.

The typical housing unit in Saybrook, according to the Ashtabula County Auditor, is single story. Most homes have two or three bedrooms, with the largest subset being three-bedroom homes. Tables 2.4 and 2.5 demonstrate some of Saybrook Township's housing data.

ACS provides data on more specific housing data points. Saybrook Township has an impressive homeownership rate of 79.9% with only 15.9% of total homes sitting vacant. The median home-value for owner-occupied homes is \$140,900, slightly higher than that of Ashtabula County, \$139,000.

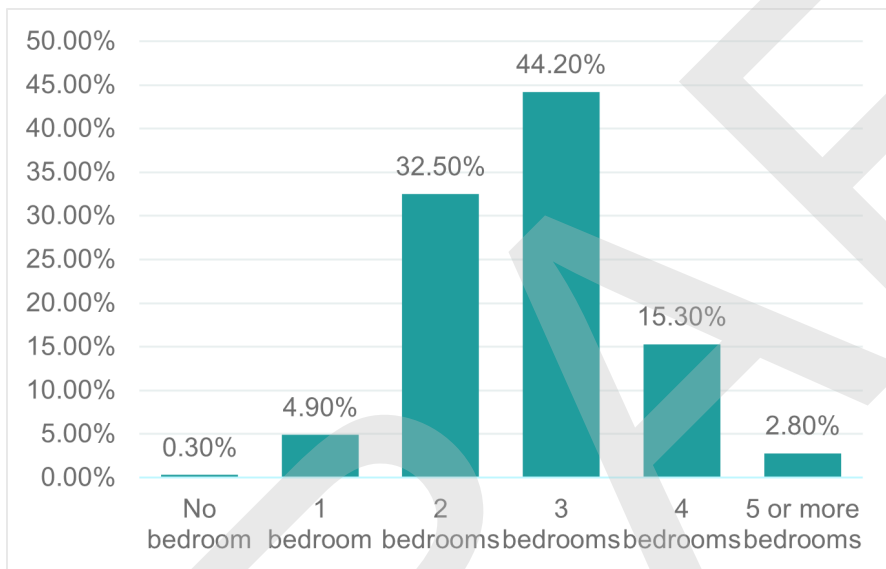


FIGURE 2.4- Bedrooms in Township homes.

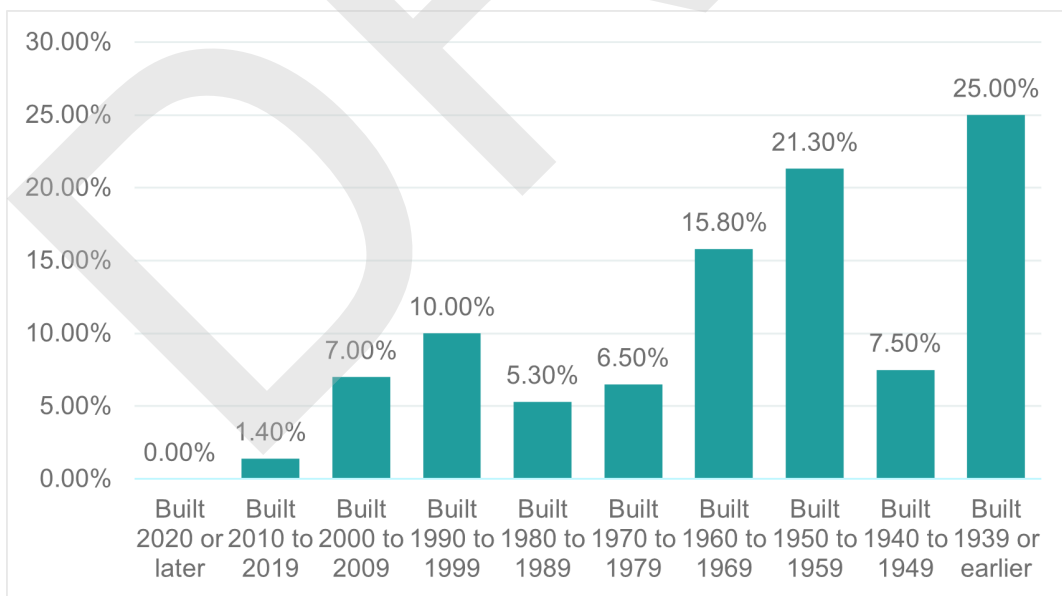


FIGURE 2.5- Housing year built.

Approximately 17.5% of housing units are vacant. Those vacant units are unoccupied for a variety of reasons, as identified by the ACS. The majority of vacant units, approximately three quarters (72.6%) are vacant for seasonal occupancy. Vacant for “seasonal, recreational, or occasional use” typically means for rental as a short-term rental, especially in the local context of Saybrook. In terms of magnitude, short-term rentals represent 12.7% of all housing units. Vacancy of 12.7% of housing units in any market will drive up housing costs through reduction of inventory, and that effect will be far more pronounced in smaller markets and sub-markets like Saybrook Township.

ACS further provides information on people and populations in the township. Despite having very few young children, 22.7% of households have at least 1 person under the age of 18 years old living in the home. Many communities across the nation are seeing an increasing number of people living alone, approximately 30.3% of occupied housing units are single-person households. However, roughly 16.5% of those households are single-person households 65 years and older. This is unsurprising due to the aging population in the community.



Income and Employment:

According to the 2022 Census, the median household income in Saybrook Township is \$58,900, higher than Ashtabula County's median income of \$51,737. In addition, at \$33,678 the Township's per capita income is also higher than the County's per capita income of \$25,568.

Approximately ninety percent (90.8%) of Township residents are a high school graduate or higher. This is within the margin of error of the County's high school graduation rate. However, in Saybrook 23.3% of residents have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher whereas only 18.8% of County residents have received their bachelor's degree or higher. Saybrook has a greater percent of residents with their associate's, bachelor's or graduate or professional degree than Ashtabula County as a whole.

Examining the working population more generally, approximately 56.4% of the population 16 years of age and older are in the civilian labor force. The Township has an unemployment rate of 9.5%. There are several occupation sectors that make up the working force in the Township. Around one fourth of residents work in educational services, health care, and/or social assistance. The next most common occupation is manufacturing with almost 17% of the workforce employed in that sector. The last two most popular sectors are retail trade as well as arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and/or food service totaling 15% and 13% of the employed population. According to US Census, On the Map data, though the Township provides approximately 1,270 jobs, only 6.4% of residents live and are employed within the township. This is not uncommon for Ashtabula County residents as the median work commute for the County is 25.8 minutes and the Township is 20.9 minutes.

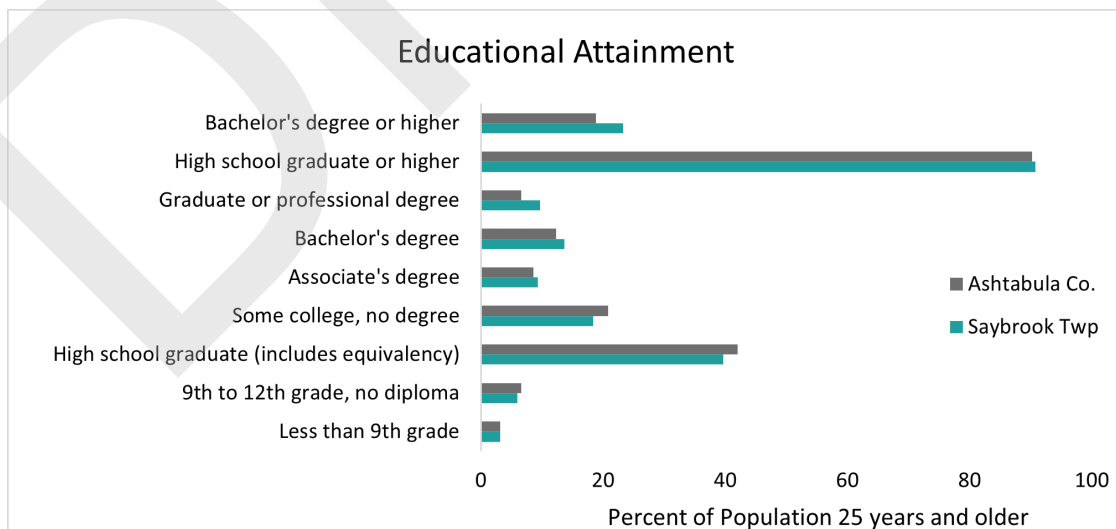


FIGURE 2.6- Educational attainment.

Saybrook Adult Residents-
Top 5 Most Common Occupations

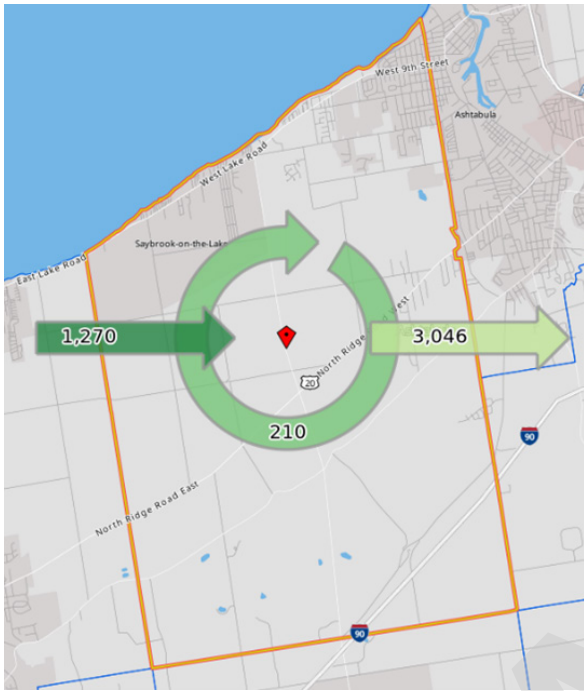


FIGURE 2.7- On The Map employment data.

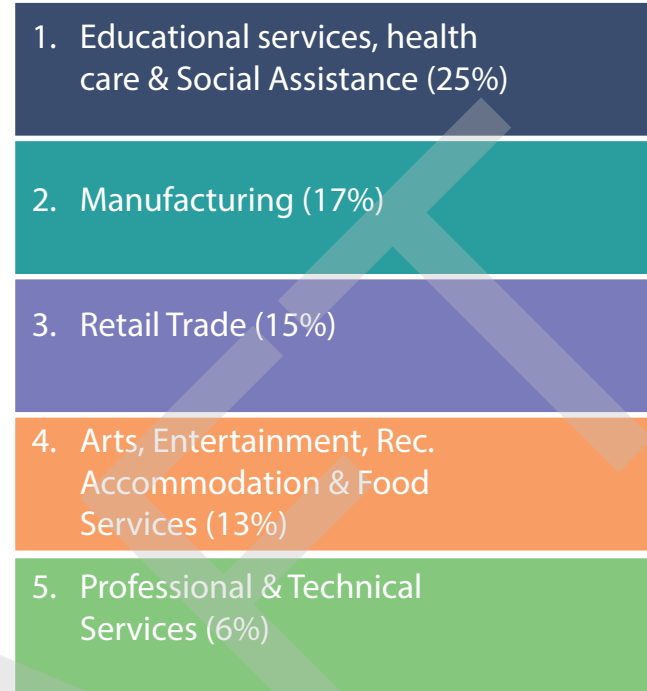


FIGURE 2.8- Township resident's occupations.

	Median Household Income	
	2022	2010
Saybrook Twp.*	\$58,900	\$47,865
Ashtabula Co.	\$51,737	\$42,139

FIGURE 2.9- Median Household Income.

	Per Capita Income	
	2022	2010
Saybrook Twp.	\$33,678	\$23,638
Ashtabula Co.	\$25,568	\$19,898

FIGURE 2.10- Per Capita Income.

ECONOMY

Commercial

With many big box commercial companies declaring bankruptcy nationwide, Saybrook Township has struggled to maintain its commercial presence. As a Township that previously had several anchoring big box stores, including Kmart, Big Lots, Tops and others, the Township has struggled to reinvent its commercial market in today's economy.

As it is today, Saybrook Township has a limited commercial presence. Commercial development is scattered throughout the Township development primarily centered along Route 20. One of the Township's greatest reported struggles by residents and leadership are the vacant and blighted commercial retail properties surrounding the Rt. 45 and Rt 20 intersection and along the Rt. 20 corridor in buildings such as Saybrook Plaza and Crossroads Plaza, the former Edward's Grocery.

Saybrook Plaza houses one of the Township's largest commercial entities and employers, Giant Eagle. At one time, the plaza had numerous larger retail tenants, including Peebles Department Store, Family Dollar, and Big Lots. However, over the last ten years, these stores have either closed within the Township, or filed for bankruptcy, indicative of the tenuous condition of retail across the United States, with the distressed economic condition of Ashtabula County making the trends appear more pronounced.



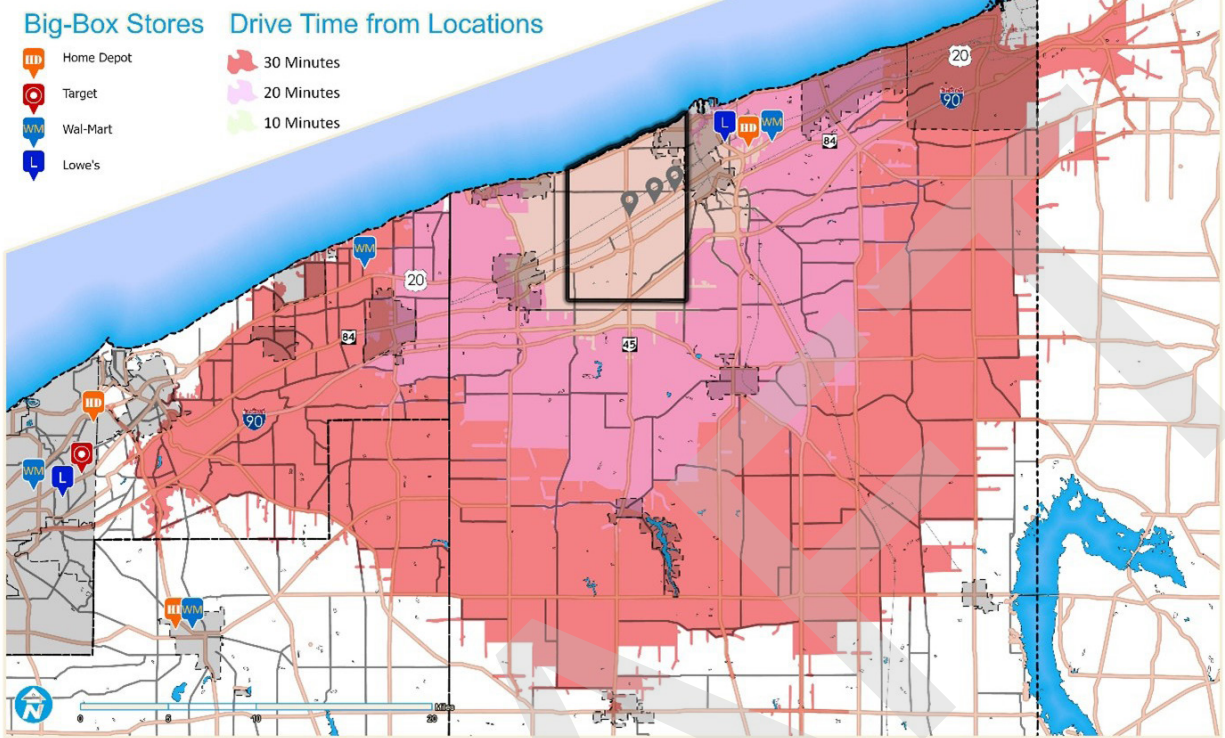
Spaces in Saybrook Plaza, and the Crossroads Plaza (Edward's Grocery Plaza) on Rt. 20 sit with most retail spaces vacant. In particular, the former Edwards Grocery Plaza is in poor condition, as is the former Kmart across the street currently used for industrial storage and shipping, and the property where Nichols Plaza was torn down across from Iten defense. These blighted properties are more than just an eyesore to Township residents but should also be considered hazardous and a safety concern.



Saybrook likely will not attract large retail tenants, much less larger anchors, especially given the retail anchors and big box stores already located within a 30-minute driving distance. Map 2.1 shows the location of the three distressed retail plazas within Saybrook, overlaid on drive times of 10, 20, and 30 minutes. The map demonstrates the proximity of four major big-box retailers to Saybrook, illustrating the difficulty in attracting such users, as those users typically have minimum catchment areas built into their site selection process.



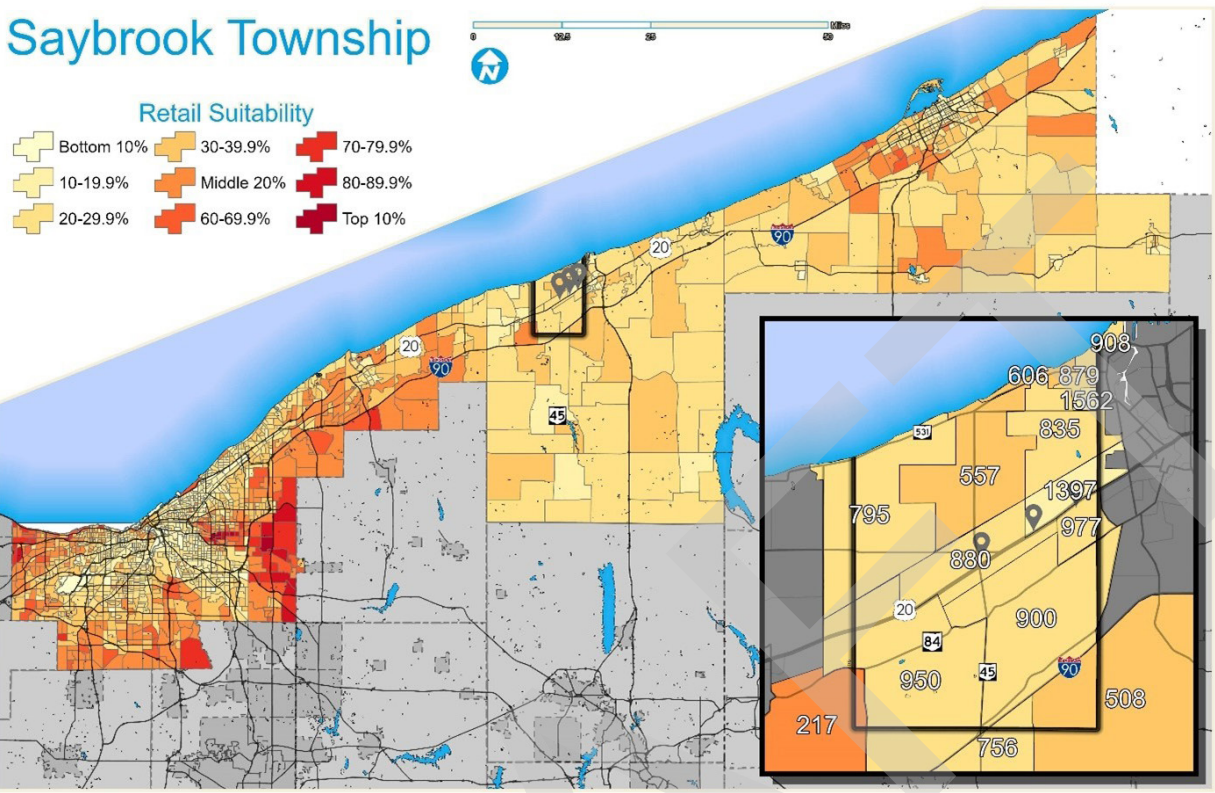
Saybrook Township



MAP 2.1- Drive time to big-box stores.

An analysis was conducted for retail suitability based on census block groups. A retail suitability analysis examines all socio-economic indicators of a particular geography (in this case, census block group), geographic location, and environmental conditions, to determine how suitable a given geography is for retail commercial uses. Saybrook census block groups were compared against block groups from the four-county area in which Saybrook residents go for their shopping needs. Of the roughly 1,600 block groups, most of those located within Saybrook scored in the bottom half for retail suitability, and none scored within the top 30%. Thus, Saybrook is not generally suitable for commercial retail.

Saybrook Township has a cluster of hotels and motels in the southwest corner of the Township near Interstate-90 and as well as a couple along State Route 20. The motels along State Route 20 are small and in mediocre condition. There are a variety of small businesses along this main throughfare with many automobile-related businesses.



MAP 2.2- Retail Suitability Analysis.

Manufacturing

Saybrook maintains a steady manufacturing presence with active industrial properties in Kister Court along Rt. 45, most notable Plastpro, and Iten Defense on Rt. 20. While manufacturing employs fewer workers than previously, due to technological developments, Saybrook Township continues to provide desirable manufacturing positions for residents from across the County and further distances. Kister Court, the largest industrial subdivision in the Township still has several vacant, shovel ready, lots that have access to utilities, should the Township work to attract new tenants.



Tourism

In 2023, Ashtabula County saw nearly 20 million tourists, generating \$855 million in total economic impact, and supporting nearly 4,100 jobs. Ashtabula County ranked in the top 20% of Ohio Counties for tourism revenue in 2023, generating over \$100 million in tax revenue, including \$51 million in local and state taxes. According to the Ashtabula County Visitor's Bureau, that included \$57.6 million in directly-generated household income, putting money straight in the pockets of County residents as a result of tourism. Locally, Saybrook benefits from its location within this maturing tourism region. Sandwiched between Lake Erie and the Grand River Valley, it is becoming a popular place for visitors to stay while exploring the area.

Saybrook is immediately adjacent to the Village of Geneva-on-the-Lake, a long-popular local and regional tourist destination. With many bars, restaurants, attractions, and the Geneva Lake Lodge State Park, the Village attracts substantial numbers of visitors during the summer months. Because of its size, the Village lacks the necessary beds to support its own tourism industry. Similarly, Saybrook is quite close to the Grand River Valley, a popular wine region. Spanning portions of Lake and Ashtabula Counties, an estimated 750,000 people visited the over 30 wineries in 2023, making it a premiere tourism destination in northeast Ohio. With so many visitors, the Grand River Valley struggles to meet lodging demand in the same way Geneva-on-the-Lake does. This, coupled with its location on Lake Erie, has led to Saybrook Township being home to a growing location for tourists and summer residents to stay while visiting the County.



Transient or Short-Term Rentals

Transient, or short-term rentals (STRs), known by many as “Airbnbs”, are those rentals lasting less than thirty days. STRs often fill the gap in bed demand for emerging, under-developed, or distant destinations. In the context of Ashtabula County, STRs are filling a gap in available beds due to a shortfall in traditional accommodations. In the local context of Saybrook, STRs are almost exclusively single-family homes, and are offered year-round for rent. Year-round rental offering means that a home is not available for occupancy by a homeowner or long-term renter, leading to its removal from the long-term housing market. As more residences transition from occupied homes to transient rental housing, the social conditions and fabric of the community can be negatively affected. Additionally, clusters of STRs can create nuisances and strains on local services often related to loud guests, large numbers of cars, and accumulation of trash.

It is important to note, however, that STRs are not all bad. When offered as home sharing, or part-time whole-homes, STRs provide a benefit for homeowners. The additional money gained from use of extra space, or use of the home while out of town or in a second residence, can help homeowners maintain their properties and even make improvements, helping to beautify the neighborhood.

Determining the exact number of STRs in a given location is difficult without a significant investment in time and money to gather data from Airbnb. To prevent STRs from being located without a reservation, Airbnb and other hosting sites like VRBO give approximate locations, making identification and enumeration even more challenging. To fill this void, web scraping services can provide detailed information, scraping listings and geolocating STRs more precisely. These programs are not perfect, but estimate that at present there are 74 active STR listings in the Township. All of these listing are entire homes, with the majority located along the lakeshore. Units throughout the township bring in an average nightly rate of \$195, and are occupied 51% of the time, with revenue and occupancy spiking in the summer months.

Outside of STRs, Saybrook currently lacks the amenities to benefit from Ashtabula County's tourism economy on a significant scale. While they have a growing number of STRs, the Township in its current state acts as an overnight stop, rather than a place to spend money. There are very few restaurants or retail establishments in the Township, meaning money is not spent in the community. In addition, the tourism destinations are outside of the Township. Lake Erie, a significant draw for visitors, has few access points from which visitors can enjoy. Therefore, Saybrook can expect to see a continued expansion of vacationers coming to stay in the Township, but with limited expanded tourism action beyond lodging with additional action or development.

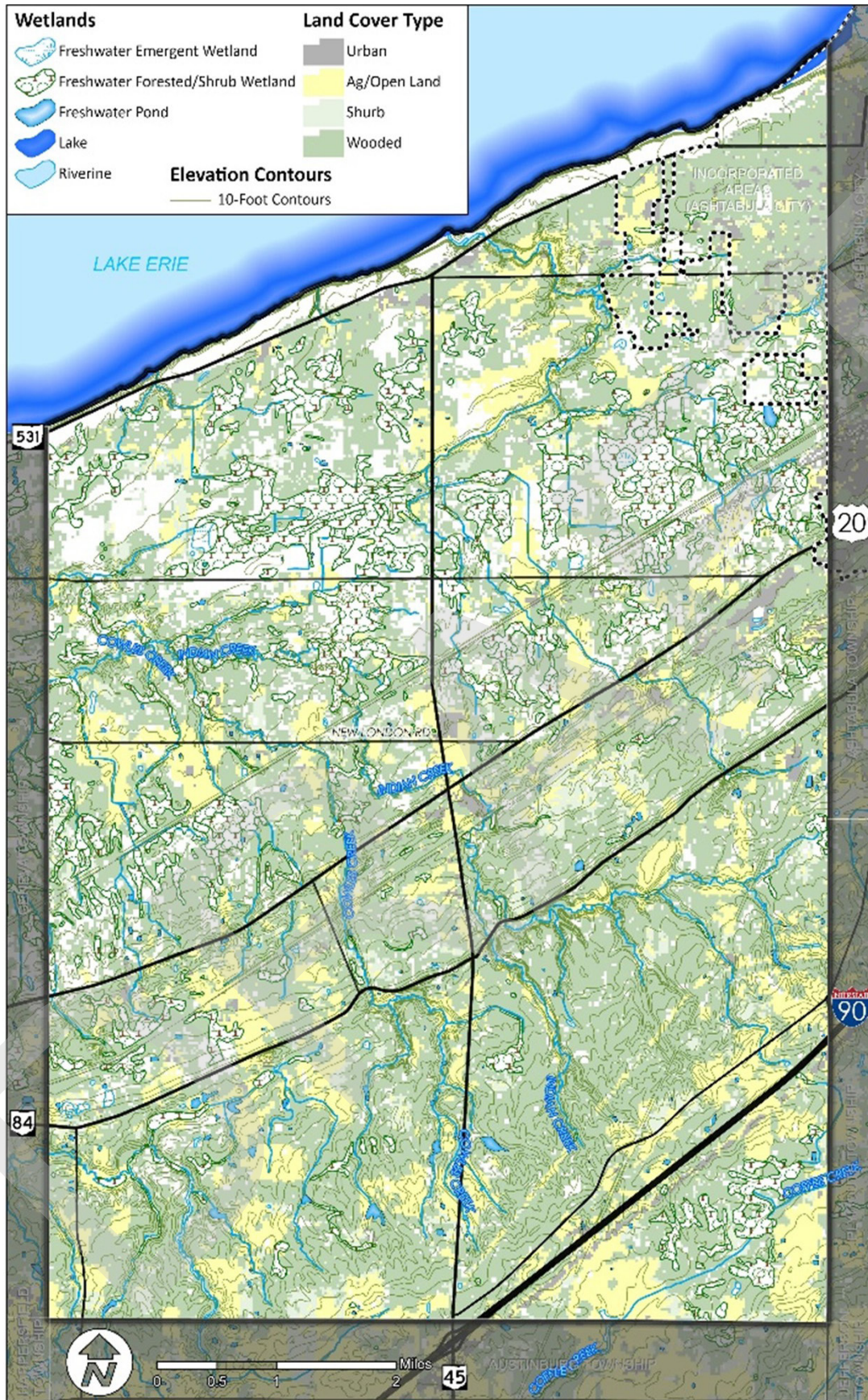


ENVIRONMENT

Saybrook Township is located in a highly attractive and environmentally rich area, especially with the Township's northern boundary of Lake Erie. Preservation of significant environmental features should be a goal of the Township in order to provide greater opportunities for recreation for residents and visitors. The natural environment also plays a large role in planning for future development. Environmental features, such as topography and soils, can often pose constraints that limit development. Other environmental features may not pose significant constraints to development but may make land inappropriate for development due to the valuable functions and benefits that natural resources provide. Environmental analysis provides a basis for wise land use decisions and serve as a base line for environmental planning. The preservation and restoration of environmental features, commonly referred to as green infrastructure, within communities is essential to maintaining natural ecological processes that affect air and water resources, habitat and species diversity.

Drainage Network and Watersheds

All water on land eventually drains into a stream, river, pond, or lake. A watershed is the total land area that drains into a particular stream or river. As smaller streams come together and form larger rivers, their associated watersheds also join. A watershed is a dynamic system that includes land, soils, plants, wetlands, water bodies, and land cover. These factors all affect the water flowing through the watershed to the streams and rivers, influencing flooding, erosion, and water quality. Watersheds are delineated by the US Geological Survey using a nationwide system based on surface hydrologic features and hydrologic units (HU) that represent the area of the landscape that drains to a portion of the stream network. Saybrook is in the Lake Erie Basin meaning that the terminus of township waterways is Lake Erie. Within the Lake Erie Basin, the township is drained by portions of the Chagrin-Ashtabula Rivers Drainage basin and the Grand River Drainage Basin. The township has portions of six watersheds including Ashtabula River Above Mouth, Lake Erie Tributaries (between Indian Creek and Ashtabula River, including Red Brook), Cowles Creek, Coffee Creek, Indian Creek, and Hubbard Run (tributary of Ashtabula River). See Map 2.3.



MAP 2.3- Saybrook Township Environmental Features.

Wetlands

Wetlands are areas of land that are completely saturated with water for all or part of the year. The US Army Corps of Engineers identifies wetlands based on three criteria: the presence of vegetation that can survive in prolonged periods of wet soil, presence of hydric soil, and presence of water.

Wetlands are essential to ecosystems as they help to improve water quality through the removal of nutrients, organic matter, and sediments. They also help to recharge aquifers, control flooding, and act as a habitat for several uncommon species.

Map 2.3 shows the different types of wetlands present in Saybrook Township and includes any larger bodies of water such as lakes and ponds. It is important that these wetlands are identified as development should not occur on wetlands and structures located around wetlands should be appropriately setback from this natural resource so as not to cause harm.



Groundwater Resources

Groundwater resources are important to understand because they supply public drinking water to residents on wells and their hydrologic connection to surface waters. There is an interchange between surface water and groundwater. Groundwater is recharged from infiltration. Given that some Saybrook Township residents depend on groundwater for drinking water, it is critical to protect groundwater resources and watercourses from which recharge is received.

Geologic formations that are capable of yielding enough water to support a spring or well are called aquifers. The ability of an aquifer to transmit and store water is influenced by the material from which the formation was made, such as gravel, sand or bedrock. The aquifers in the Township include the Painesville Lacustrine Aquifer, Painesville Beach Ridge Aquifer, Pymatuning Thin Upland Aquifer, and Lake Erie Tributary Alluvial Aquifer. The two aquifers that can provide the most water per minute are also the smallest. They are the Painesville Beach Ridge Aquifer and the Pymatuning Thin Upland Aquifer. According to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, a majority of the Township contains aquifers that are capable of sustaining up to five gallons per minute.

Coastal Management Area

The portion of the Lake Erie coast in Saybrook Township is designated by the State as a Coastal Management Area, see Map 3-3 Coastal Management and Groundwater Pollution. The Coastal Management Area falls under the jurisdiction and authority of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Office of Coastal Management (ODNR-OCM). The ODNR-OCM is charged with ensuring that federal agency activities, which may have a foreseeable effect on any land, water, or natural resource within the Coastal Management Area, are consistent with the enforceable policies of the State's federally approved Coastal Management Program. For reference, federal agency activities include activities, development projects, licenses, permitting, and financial assistance.

According to the ODNR-OCM, the goal of the Coastal Management program is:

1. To preserve, protect, develop, restore, and enhance Lake Erie's valuable resources;
2. To manage coastal activities that affect the resources; and
3. To foster the resources' sustainable use for the benefit of all Ohio citizens.

The ODNR-OCM works collaboratively with political subdivisions in the Coastal Management Area and is active in protecting Lake Erie through education and financial assistance. The Coastal Management Area may have particular relevance to the Township in providing opportunities for increased public access to Lake Erie. As a result of areas of the Township being designated in the Coastal Management Area by the ODNR-OCM, the Township is eligible for grant funding to acquire land and construct infrastructure improvements that enable increased public access to Lake Erie. Within the Coastal Management Area, the State has separately designated the Coastal Erosion Area, which includes land close to Lake Erie that is anticipated to be lost due to erosion in a 30 year period if no preventative action is taken. To promote wise land use, the State has adopted rules and requires permits for certain types of development in the Coastal Erosion Area. While State and Township goals for the Coastal Erosion Area are complementary, State law (ORC 1506.06.G.2) would prevent the Township from using a property's Coastal Erosion Area designation as a basis for not issuing any permit required by law. This limitation should be carefully considered by the Township when updating zoning regulations to implement Plan recommendations.



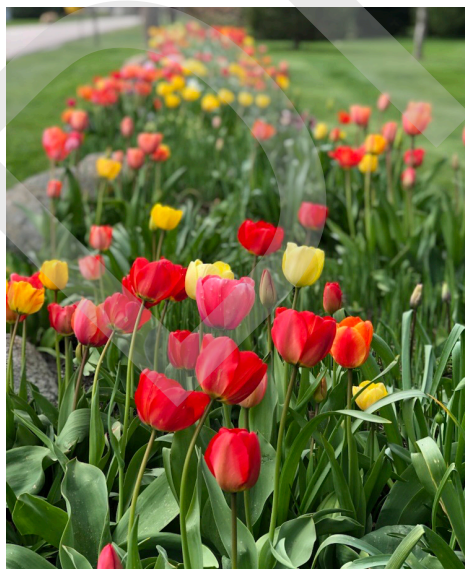
Soils Suitable for Septic

It is useful to evaluate the soil capability for septic systems, because sanitary sewer service is not available in portions of Saybrook Township. Ideally, land with very poor suitability for septic systems should be served by centralized sanitary sewer or alternative sewage disposal systems.

Soils in Saybrook Township

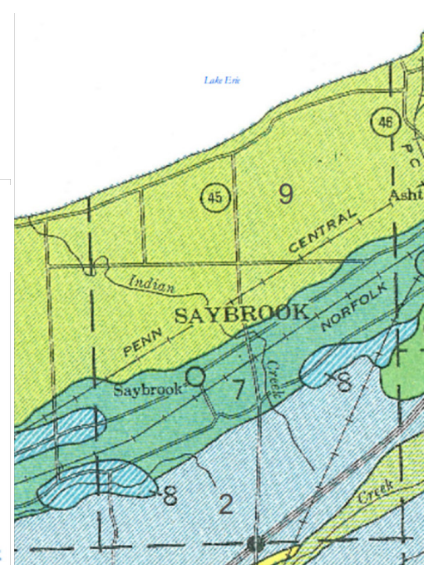
Soil surveys in Ashtabula County, conducted by the USDA Soil Conservation Service, identify six (6) soil associations in the Township with distinct patterns, drainage, and relief. A summary of the associations is as follows:

- Plateau-Sheffield Association: a silty soil with a deep and rather level to slightly sloping pattern with poor drainage.
- Plateau-Pierpont Association: a silty soil with a deep and moderately steep pattern, with somewhat poor to moderate drainage.
- Canadice-Caneadea Association: a clayey soil with a deep and moderately steep pattern with poor drainage.
- Elnora-Colony-Kingsville Association: a sandy soil with a deep a nearly-level to moderately steep pattern which ranges from being well-drained to poorly drained.
- Otisville-Chenango Association: a gravelly soil that is near level to steep in pattern and is well-drained.
- Conneaut-Swanton-Claverack Association: a silty and sandy soil that is deep and level to sloping in pattern, and with moderately to poor drainage.



Soil Associations

2	Platea-Sheffield
4	Platea-Pierpont
6	Canadice-Caneadea
7	Elnora-Colanic-Kingsville
8	Otisville-Chenango
9	Conneaut-Swanton-Claverack



MAP 2.4- Local Soil Associations.

Land Use & Development Patterns

Existing land uses, recent development trends, and the current zoning regulations directly influence community character, the environment, aesthetics, transportation needs and the school system.

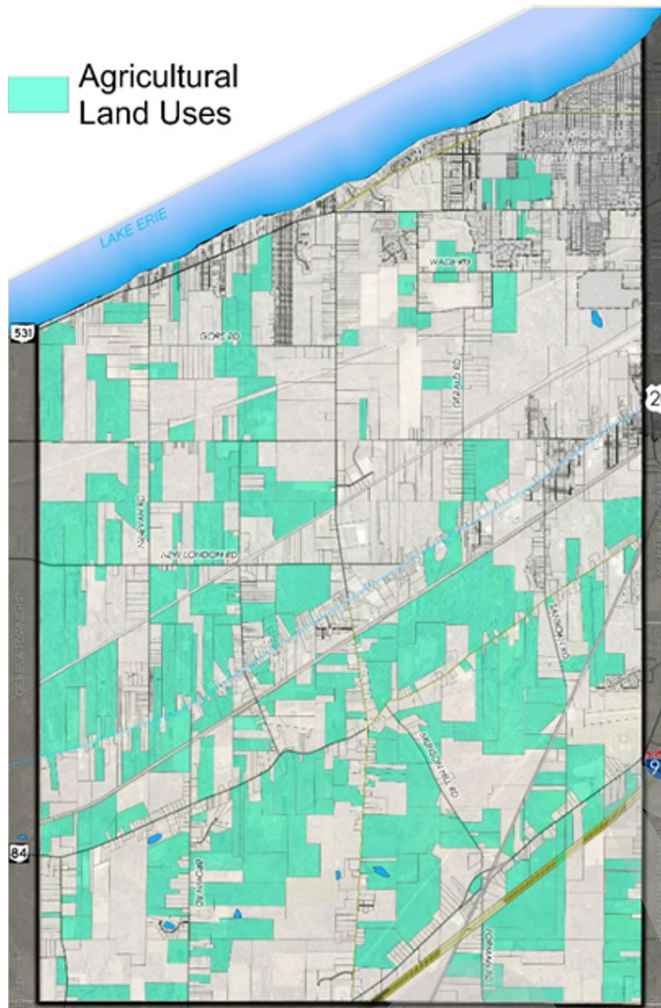
Development Potential

The most basic way to determine development suitability of land is to understand access to utilities. In the case of Saybrook, central water and sanitary sewer utilities are the most consequential utilities, as electricity is readily accessible, and both heating fuel and natural gas service are available.

Separating out vacant parcels, as defined by the Ashtabula County Auditor's Office, we look for those parcels within 250 feet of central water and sewer utility connections. Map 2.7 visualizes those parcels with access to water, sewer, and both. There are many parcels with access to public water service, spread throughout the Township, but centered in the largest parcels towards the north. In looking at centralized sewer service, there are fewer parcels with adequate access.

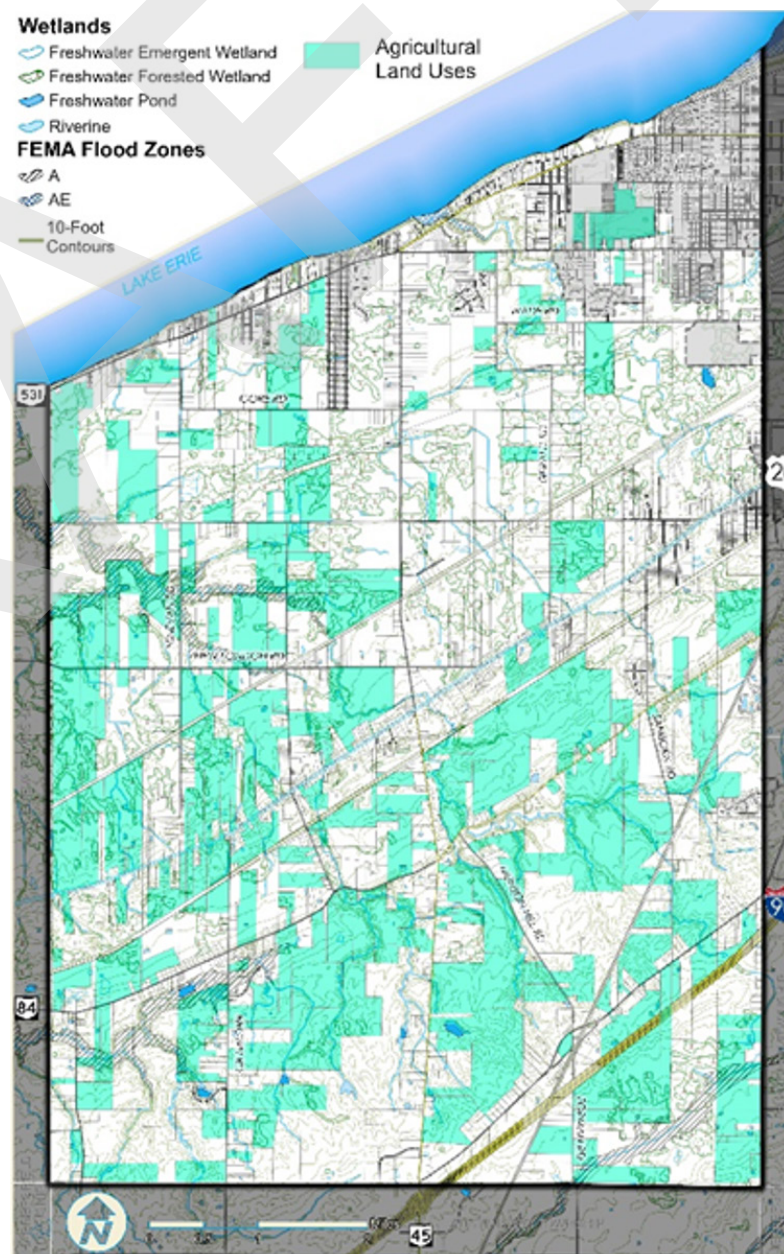
Aside from utility access, parcels are also evaluated for development potential based on natural features. Saybrook Township is a healthy mix of rural, suburban, and natural. Creeks, runs, streams, wetlands, floodplains, and rolling hills cut through all parts of the Township. Map 2.8 shows those parcels with utility access against existing wetlands, floodplains, and slopes. This map makes it clear that most of the undeveloped parcels with utility access are encumbered by at least one of these environmental factors. Such factors make land development more expensive and more difficult, reducing the likelihood of development on the property.

Given the agricultural nature of the Township, land that is not developed and not encumbered by difficult terrain, wetlands, or flooding tends to be in agricultural production. Map 2.5 shows those parcels dedicated to agricultural production in Saybrook Township. Agricultural lands are mostly flat and are less encumbered by wetlands and floodplains than vacant properties. Map 2.6 demonstrates the location of agricultural properties in relation to those environmental hazards.

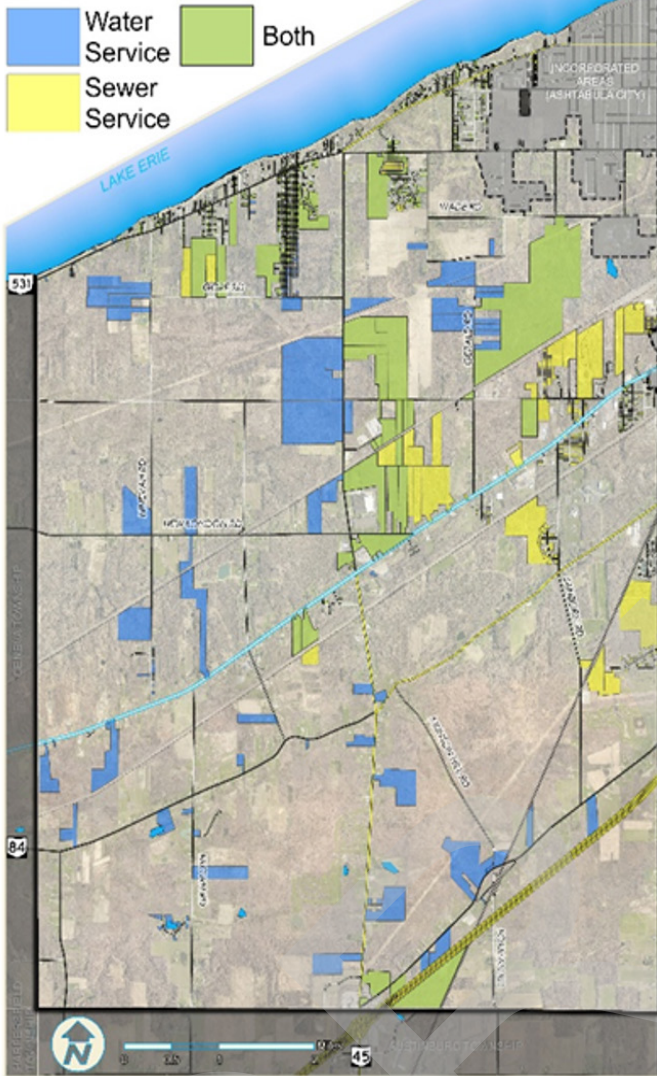


MAP 2.5- Agricultural Land Uses.

MAP 2.6- Agricultural uses with wetlands.



Parcels within 250' of...



MAP 2.7- Parcels with utilities.

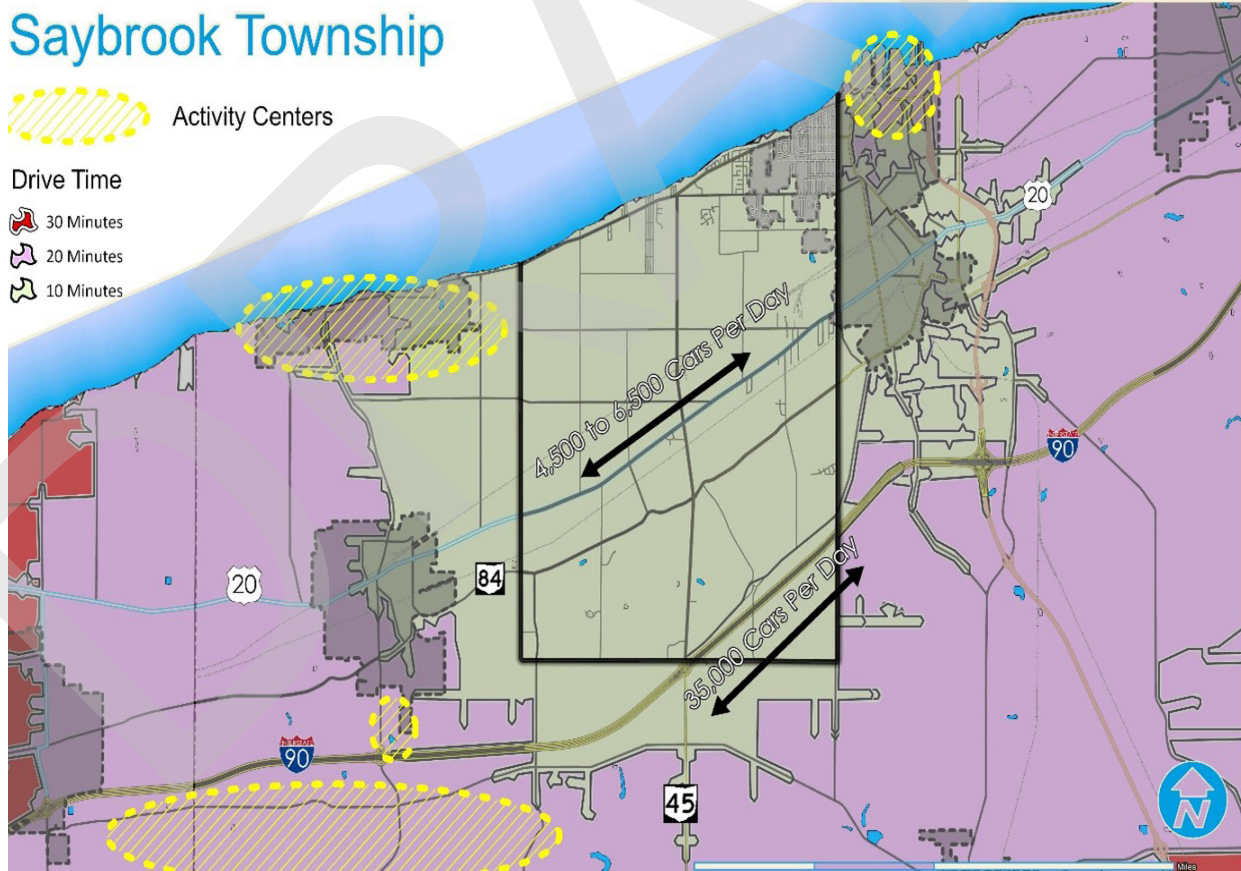


MAP 2.8- Parcels with utilities & development constraints.

Given the desire of the Township to reinforce rural values through maintenance of agriculture, and to preserve open spaces, the development of these vacant and agricultural properties on a large scale is not viable. Instead, the Township should focus on its existing assets, namely those commercial properties along the U.S. 20 corridor, and near the SR-45/I-90 interchange. The conditions present along this corridor, namely access to utility services and transportation infrastructure, mean re-development can happen easily and for less cost than greenfield development, where environmental remediation and construction of infrastructure would be required.

Map 2.9 demonstrates the benefits of re-development along the U.S. 20 corridor, as well as development at the SR-45/I-90 interchange. U.S. 20 sees between 4,500 and 6,500 vehicles per day, while 35,000 vehicles travel past SR-45 along I-90 each day. Also shown is the location of four distinct activity centers in the area. Existing tenants and services in those activity centers must be taken into consideration when marketing available properties within the Township to attract stable and desirable businesses. Alternatively, the Township could seek partnerships and funding from the State of Ohio to acquire and demolish those blighted commercial properties to make way for new development that can leverage ready utilities and infrastructure.

Aside from commercial development, the U.S. 20 corridor is ripe for development of market rate multi-family and attached single-family housing. Given its reputation as a desirable place to live within the region, Saybrook would have no trouble attracting residents who would also help provide a base for more stable commercial development.



MAP 2.9- Retail potential.

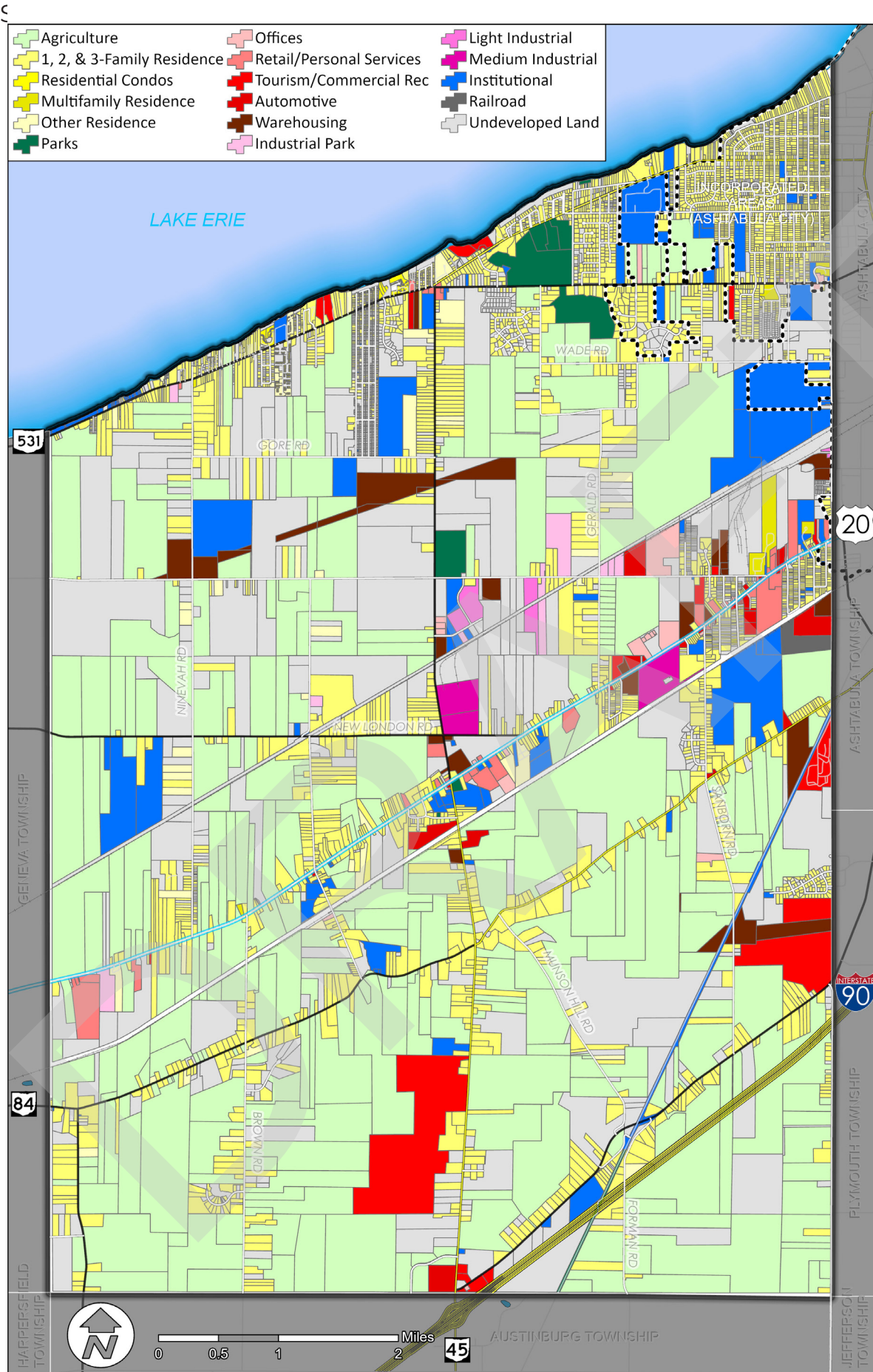
Current Land Use

Examining current land use is an effective method for understanding the existing conditions within the Township. The Ashtabula County Auditor's Office provides specific land use codes for each unique property within the county. These land uses are classified in two different ways; by land use type, i.e. commercial, residential, industrial, etc., and by use code, i.e. single-family residential, retail under 5,000 square feet, medium industrial, etc.

Within Saybrook Township, there are two primary and significant land use types. Agricultural land uses, including crop farming and animal husbandry/rearing, make up nearly two-thirds of land uses in the township at 11,535 acres. Residential land uses are the other major land use type, taking up just under a quarter of the Township, roughly 4,150 acres. The remaining land uses are a mix of exempted uses (government, conservation, etc.), industrial, commercial, and some lands that are unclassified.

In breaking down the more specific land use codes, the largest remains agriculture. There are over 6,660 acres of actively farmed agricultural lands in the Township. The next largest land use is vacant agriculture, with about 4,850 acres. For residential land uses, specific types are broken out by the type of residence. 1, 2, and 3 family residential is the most prevalent by far; there are relatively few instances of other residential uses. This indicates that residential developments in the township are low-density detached homes.

Commercially, recreation is the largest type of use. This includes golf courses and marinas. Retail and automotive are the other major commercial use classes. These uses are centered around the U.S. 20 corridor, and to a lesser extent the I-90 / SR-45 interchange and the SR-45 corridor. Industrially, there is limited development in Saybrook, with only 225 acres mixed between light and medium industrial uses, as well as industrial parks. Warehousing uses, sitting somewhere between industrial and commercial uses, occupy about 330 acres in the Township. Warehousing uses are often controversial in communities, as they offer lower-paying jobs in larger amounts. Additionally, the buildings are often quite large, taking up significant land and becoming somewhat of an eyesore to some.



MAP 2.10- Current Land Use.

Agricultural Uses	Acres	% of Category	Total %
Ag	6685.8	58.0%	36.2%
Vacant Ag	4849.2	42.0%	26.2%
Total	11535.0	-	62.4%
Residential Uses	Acres		
1,2, & 3 Family	2965.3	69.9%	16.0%
MH	83.3	2.0%	0.5%
MF	48.2	1.1%	0.3%
Nursing Homes & Other Res	184.6	4.4%	1.0%
Vacant Res	960.4	22.6%	5.2%
Total	4241.8	-	23.0%
Commercial Uses	Acres		
Offices	22.7	2.1%	0.1%
Retail	154.9	14.2%	0.8%
F&B/Personal Svcs	15.2	1.4%	0.1%
Tourism & Comm Rec	457.7	42.0%	2.5%
Automotive	116.0	10.6%	0.6%
Misc Commercial	58.3	5.3%	0.3%
Vacant Comm	266.0	24.4%	1.4%
Total	1090.8	-	5.9%
Industrial Uses	Acres		
Warehousing	332.9	39.2%	1.8%
Industrial Park	84.1	9.9%	0.5%
Light Industrial	44.9	5.3%	0.2%
Medium Industrial	96.9	11.4%	0.5%
Vacant Ind	291.2	34.3%	1.6%
Total	850.0	-	4.6%
Institutional Uses	Acres		
Institutional	569.8	77.0%	3.1%
Park District	52.9	7.2%	0.3%
Churches & Cemeteries	116.9	15.8%	0.6%
Total	739.6	-	4.0%
Utility and Transportation Uses	Acres		
Railroad	25.2	100.0%	0.1%
Total	25.2	-	0.1%
Grand Total	18482.4		

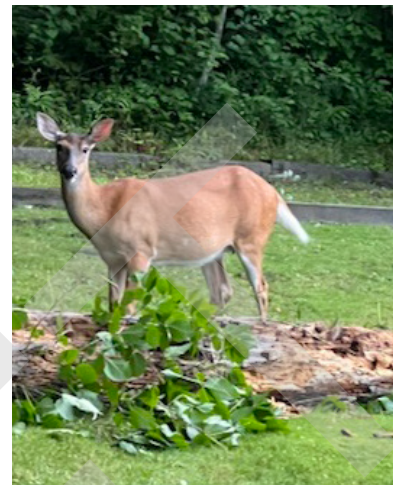


FIGURE 2.11- Current land use breakdown.

Existing Zoning

The Saybrook Township Zoning Resolutions are the primary tools to guide and regulate future development. The zoning regulations dictate how much and what type of development can occur on all land in the Township, and the zoning map indicates the areas of the Township where each of the districts is applied (see Figure 2.12 on pg. 47). These regulations in turn affect the location, kind, and amount of growth in Saybrook Township. Zoning provides numerous benefits and can be a powerful tool to improve the aesthetics of a community, protect the environment, and enhance the overall quality of life.

The Saybrook Township Zoning Resolution includes 13 zoning classifications: 5 residential districts, 1 special recreation district, 2 commercial districts, 3 Industrial districts, a research and development district, and a planned unit development district. While the Zoning Resolution has 13 classifications, not all are assigned on the current zoning map.

According to Saybrook Township's zoning map, 50.4% of the Township is zoned for 1, 2, and 3 family residences. The purpose of these residence types is to maintain a low-density community. As visible in Map 2.11, many of the areas zoned residential are specifically zoned Low Density Residential. Because Saybrook Township prides itself on being a rural community with a small-town atmosphere, it makes sense that housing is on large lots and neighbors are spread out from one another. Two and three family homes do add some density, but because these types of housing are so minimal across the Township, they don't alter the overall character of the community.

The next most widely used zoning type is agricultural with 20.6% of land being utilized for that purpose. Due to the character of the community, agricultural land being one of the most common zoning classes is expected. The remaining four zoning types include commercial with 13.9%, medium industrial covering 12% of the Township, light industrial at 2.3%, and finally Multi-Family Residential taking up only a mere 0.7% of the Township's land.

Zoning and Land Use Disconnect

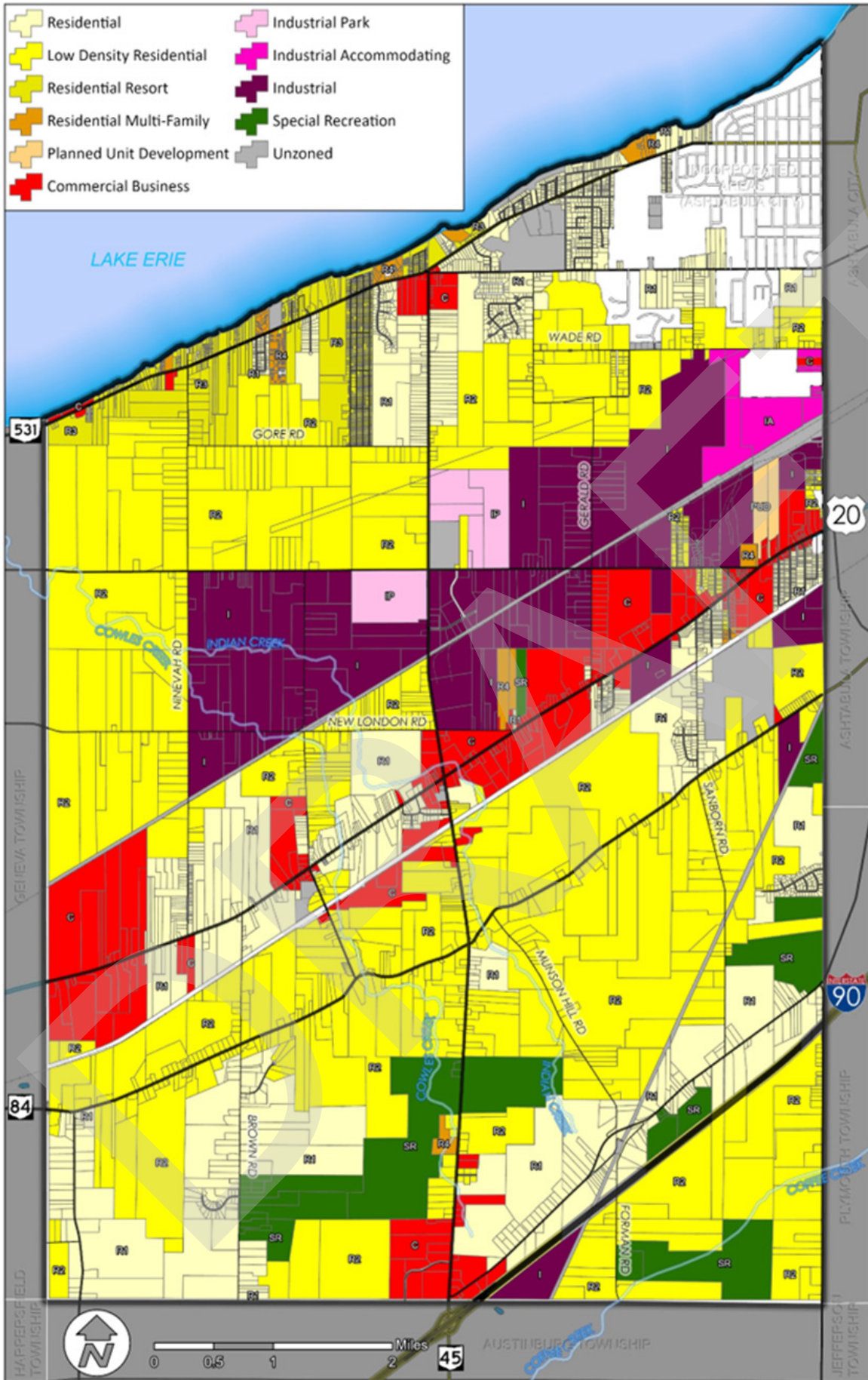
While representing different principles, zoning and land use should align in most cases. That is, zoning should match the uses currently occurring on a property, and conversely land use should reflect those uses allowed under the zoning district. There are instances where the two don't align which generally fall into one of three categories. Some land uses predate the current zoning code, meaning they are legally non-conforming uses, sometimes called "grandfathered". In other instances, a use variance may have been granted, allowing divergence from zoning code due to extenuating circumstances. Finally, the uses may simply be non-conforming with zoning code, with no prior allowance or approval.

Figure 2.13 demonstrates the existing disconnect between current land uses and zoning districts. Uses are listed in generalized groups, shown based on whether or not those uses align with those allowed under the zoning district. In a general sense, the zoning districts in the Township align with current uses. The major exception is agricultural uses, which are not listed as permitted anywhere in the Township.

There are also some residential uses located in certain zoning districts which do not allow residential development. These uses are relatively minor but still reflect a lack of coherence between the zoning code and the existing developments patterns. The same can be said for some commercial uses, some of which are located in residential districts.

Zoning Type	Acreage	Percentage
Agricultural	3841.40	20.6%
1, 2, & 3 Family Residential	9383.00	50.4%
Multi-Family Residential	132.80	0.7%
Commercial	2593.30	13.9%
Medium Industrial	2242.10	12.0%
Light Industrial	430.50	2.3%
TOTAL	18623.10	

FIGURE 2.12- Land by zoning type.



MAP 2.11-
Current Zoning.

Land Use	Zoning										Grand Total
	C (Commercial)	I (Industrial)	IA (Industrial Accommodating)	IP (Industrial Park)	PUD	R-1 (Residential)	R-2 (Residential - Agricultural)	R-3 (Residential Resort)	R-4 (Residential Multi-Family)	SR (Special Recreation)	
Agriculture	573.46	481.24				1396.04	3812.56	124.23		298.25	6685.78
Agriculture - Vacant	186.72	813.89		246.21	21.72	637.89	2616.51	60.60	32.80	232.90	4849.25
Residential - 1, 2, & 3 Family	135.20	222.18	2.08	2.05		1246.24	1077.15	202.72	58.07	19.57	2965.25
Residential - Manufactured Home	27.57	9.43				11.57	30.25	4.54			83.35
Residential - Misc	9.97	24.01				67.28	34.41	26.58	6.92		169.18
Residential - Multi Family	6.90				28.06	1.36		0.73	11.13		48.17
Residential - Nursing Home	15.43										15.43
Residential - Vacant	65.43	64.15	3.25			280.14	426.70	112.30	2.64	5.74	960.35
Commercial - Recreation	6.06	1.65						4.55	6.05	377.24	395.55
Commercial - F&B / Service	12.93					0.45		1.84			15.22
Commercial - Office	22.14					0.53					22.68
Commercial - Retail	149.35					0.24		5.29			154.89
Commercial - Tourism	22.87							4.40		34.80	62.06
Commercial - Automotive	72.98	38.72			0.99	3.28					115.96
Commercial - Misc	13.81	37.91				0.54	6.05				58.31
Commercial - Vacant	83.61	8.63	6.96			16.00	150.83				266.02
Self-Storage	17.64	10.42									28.06
Warehousing	35.00	73.25		2.04			194.47				304.76
Industrial - Light		44.87									44.87
Industrial - Medium		96.92									96.92
Industrial - Vacant	18.44	245.81					26.94				291.19
Industrial Park	20.23	63.90									84.13
Exempt	69.70	26.72	153.66			153.29	330.43	5.03	0.78		739.61
Railroad		25.20									25.20
Grand Total	1565.46	2288.88	165.95	250.29	50.77	3814.85	8706.30	552.81	118.38	968.49	18482.19
Non-Compliant Land Uses		479.59	2.08	2.05	29.05	1400.54	3812.56	136.64	6.05	298.25	6166.82

PART 2

Figure 2.13- Zoning & land use disconnect.

Community Services/Facilities

There are over 150 acres of parks and protected open space in Saybrook Township. In addition to three Township Parks, there are several other parks and nature preserves in the Township that are owned and maintained by other entities.

Parks and Open Space

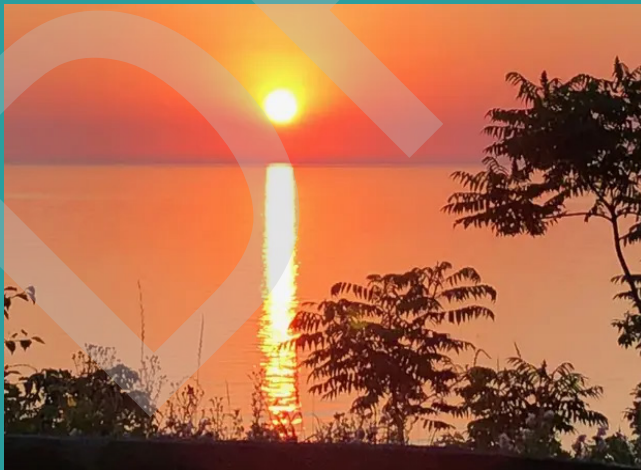
Saybrook Township Park Board



The Saybrook Township Park Board oversees and maintains three (3) parks in the Township. The parks are vastly different ranging from spaces of active recreation to nature preserved parks.

LAKEFRONT PARK

Lakefront Park, also fondly known as Saybrook Park, is located on the bank of Lake Erie at 5941 Lake Road West. Purchased by the Township Park Board in 1918, it has been a popular visiting place for residents and tourists since before that time. Lakefront Park has amenities for people of all ages including a concession stand, pavilions with electric (2), playground, restrooms, basketball courts, sand volleyball court, a baseball diamond, and walking track. The park hosts many events during the summertime including concerts, and can also be reserved for private events. The beauty of the Lake and its magnificent sunrises continually draw visitors back to the park.



BIG OAK NATURE PARK

Spanning over 30 acres, the Big Oak Nature Park is naturally beautiful. It has been under the steering of the Saybrook Township Park Board for approximately a decade for the purpose of protecting the plant and animal life that resides there. A walking path made of wood chips is located throughout the park to increase accessibility to visitors. The park has small streams, wetlands, and a massive swamp white oak tree that is believed to be among the oldest trees in Ohio.



TRUSEDDELL MEMORIAL PARK



Truesdell Memorial Park is a small space located next to the Saybrook Cemetery. The Township was donated the land and gazebo by the William Truesdell family. The park is easily identified by a white gazebo surrounded by beautiful landscaping and seating. Like Lakefront Park, this space can also be reserved for private events including weddings and photography sessions.

Ashtabula County Metroparks

Ashtabula County Metroparks Board of Commissioners consists of five (5) people who uphold the mission to conserve, preserve, and protect parks and natural resources in Ashtabula County. One of the parks under the steering for the Metroparks Board is located in Saybrook Township.



WESTERN RESERVE GREENWAY TRAIL

The Western Reserve Greenway Trail spans 50 miles through Ashtabula County and Trumbull County. The trail is intended for walking, biking, skating, running, and hiking, and is open during all months of the year. No cars are allowed on the trail, ensuring the safety of pedestrians. The trail passes through part of Saybrook Township and allows people to gaze at the natural beauty of the Township and County as the trail runs along farms and wooded areas.



REDBROOK

Redbrook Metropark is approximately 146 acres in size and was once the location of the Ashtabula Harbor country club and golf course. Now, the park is full of paved trails, forests, and meadows. This space acts as both a park and a preservation to protect Red Brook. Despite its preservation, the park is able to accommodate many activities including running, fishing, and winter sports such as sledding and cross-country skiing.



PART 2



MAP 2.12- Parks & Recreation.

Recreation Facilities

Additional Recreation Opportunities

Redbrook Boat Club is a private marina located off Lake Road. The Club features beach access, a boat ramp, a fish cleaning station, and a club house for members.

Maple Ridge Golf Course is a public golf course in Saybrook Township and one of the oldest in the area. The 18-hole course covers approximately 6,000 yards and includes two challenges. The site features a snack bar, equipment repair, and pro shop.

Township Facilities

Administration Office

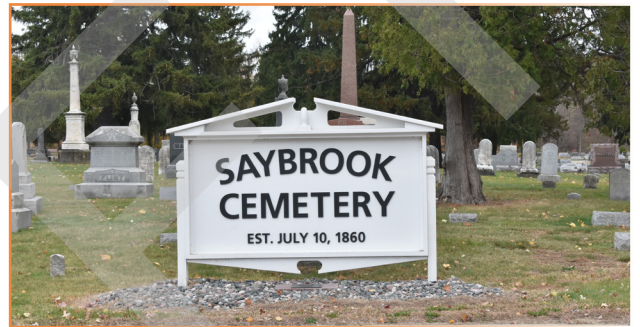
The Township Administration Office is located at 7247 Center Road. The building includes administration work, the zoning department, and the road department. The building is also host to important Township



meetings including Trustee meetings, BZA meetings, and Zoning Commission meetings.

Fire Stations

Saybrook Township has two (2) fire departments located at 5714 North Ridge Road West and 2235 Center Road. Fire services have 3 engines, two ambulances, one fire command vehicle, and one grass truck.



Cemetery

The Saybrook County Cemetery is located at 7300 Center Road across from the Administration Office. The cemetery was established in 1860.



Township Services

Police Protection

The County Sheriff's office provides police protection for all unincorporated areas in Ashtabula County. While Ohio Revised Code gives Townships the ability to levy and fund their own police department, Saybrook relies on the Ashtabula County Sheriff for basic law enforcement coverage. Because Saybrook has no local police, the county sheriff is, per Ohio Revised Code, responsible for preservation of public peace as a basic service without additional charge.

Aside from basic law enforcement services as provided by the Ashtabula County Sheriff's Office, there is a local post of the Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSP) in the township on U.S. 20. While OSP does not provide direct law enforcement services, nor do they answer basic calls for service, they provide three important safety services: traffic enforcement, traffic crash investigation, and additional law enforcement presence.

Fire, EMS and Water Rescue

Saybrook Township's provides professional Fire and Emergency Medical Services. The Township Fire Department also has a water rescue team. The department has both full time and part-time personnel that includes a Chief, Captains, and Firefighters who are either trained as EMTs or Medics. Water rescue Services has a part-time Commander and Vice- Commander and approximately 12 volunteer members.



Waste Disposal

Residential recycling drop off is located at Township Hall and Lakeside Intermediate Campus. These drop-off containers are large blue front-loaded containers with clear signage. The containers are provided by the Ashtabula County Solid Waste Management District. These drop-offs are provided in areas where curbside recycling pick-up is not an option.

Yard Waste Pick-Up

Yard waste pick-up is a service available all year round to Township residents. Leaves and grass clippings are the only contents eligible for this service and must be placed in bio-degradable bags.

Garbage Pick-Up

Each resident is responsible for arranging a contract with a garbage disposal company of their choice for curbside pick-up.

YOUR RECYCLING MATTERS

ACCEPTED MATERIALS:

 <p>PAPER & CARDBOARD Flattened Cardboard, Magazines, Junk Mail, Newspaper, Office Paper</p>	 <p>PLASTIC CONTAINERS Kitchen, Laundry, Bath: Bottles and Containers (Caps Attached)</p>
 <p>METAL CANS Aluminum, Tin and Steel Cans, Foil, Pie Tins</p>	 <p>GLASS Glass Jars and Bottles (Caps Removed)</p>

MATERIALS NOT ACCEPTED:

					
DO NOT Bag Recyclables (No garbage)	NO Plastic Bags (Return to retailer)	NO Food or Liquid (Empty all containers)	NO Tangles (No hoses, toys, wires, chains, or electronics)	NO Clothing or Linens (Use donation programs)	NO Motor Oil or Antifreeze Containers

Please Do Not Leave Recyclables Outside of Containers!

WHEN IN DOUBT, LEAVE IT OUT!

www.ashtabulacounty.us/recycle
440-576-1530

Ashtabula County Solid Waste District 



Schools

Saybrook Township is served by the Ashtabula Area City Schools, School District. The District is comprised of 1 high school, 1 junior high school, 2 intermediate elementary schools, and 3 primary elementary schools. The school has approximately 3,000 students. The schools are uniquely situated in a campus-style environment. The 5 elementary schools are located off of Wade Avenue in Saybrook Township. The elementary schools have a shared central space along two side streets in which the schools are directly located. The junior high school and high school are located together on a separate campus off of Sanborn Road in Saybrook Township.

Saint John School is a private Catholic school pre-k through 12th grade that also serves area residents. St. John currently has the largest private school enrollment in Ashtabula County with approximately 600 students across all grade levels. The school is centrally located in Saybrook Township off Depot Road.



INFRASTRUCTURE/UTILITIES

Roadway Network

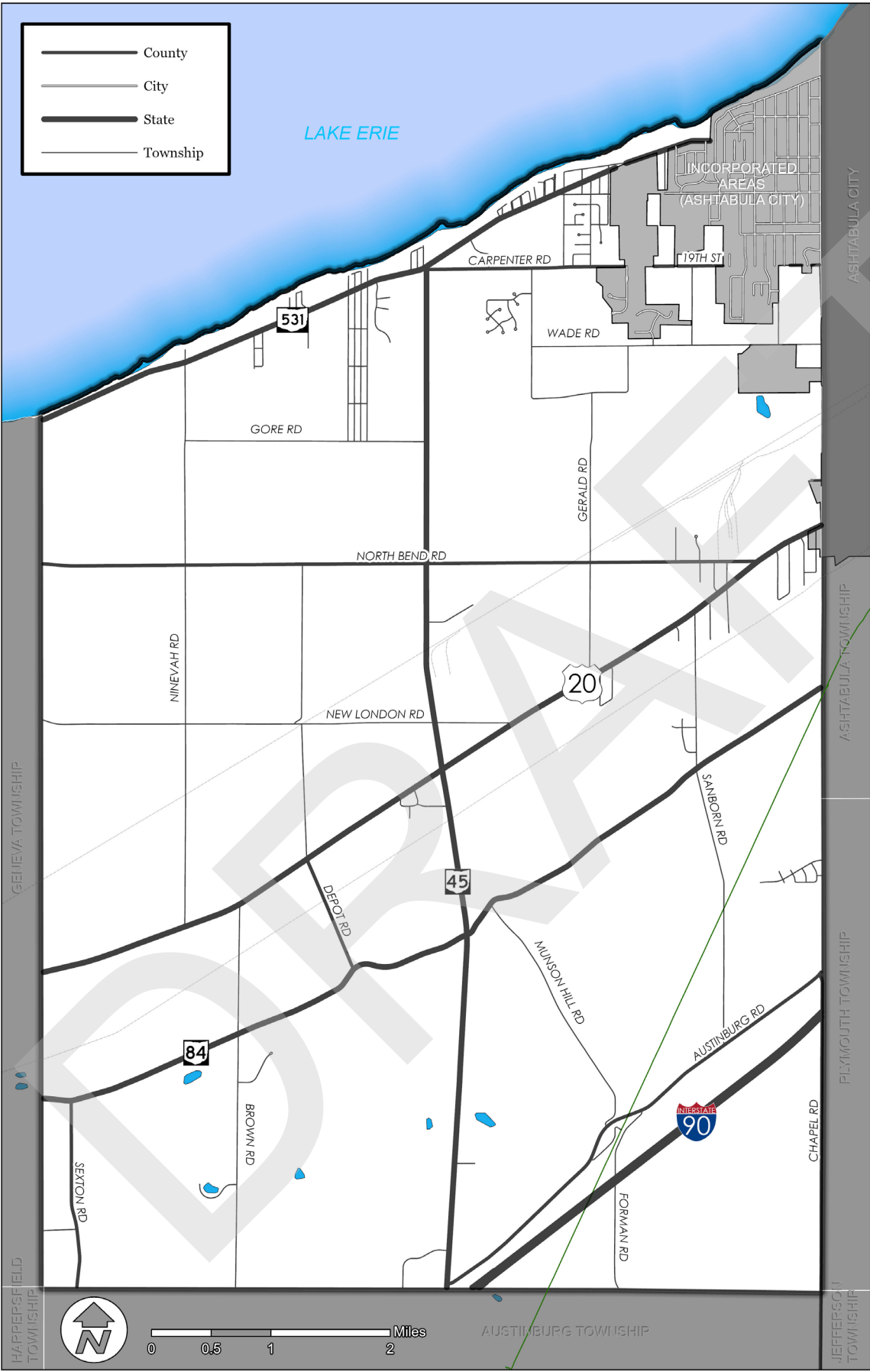
There are several ways to describe the transportation system. The U.S. Department of Transportation classifies roads based on how they function, often which also dictates their physical characteristics and influences the amount of traffic they carry. They are also classified by ownership and maintenance responsibility, such federal, state and county highways and local (township) roads.

There are several major roadways that run through Saybrook Township. Route 531, locally known as Lake Road, runs east to west across the northern edge of the Township encompassing an area known as Saybrook-on-the-Lake. State Route 20 and Route 84 both centrally bisect the Township east to west. Route 20 acts as the commercial hub of the Township due to its central location and connectivity to surrounding townships. State Route 45, also known as Center Road, runs through the middle of the Township north to south. In addition to having several major roadways, Saybrook Township also has easy access to Interstate 90 in its south-east corner. Saybrook Township is well connected, making traveling to neighboring communities and major cities such as Cleveland simple.

Saybrook Township has approximately 87.1 miles of public roads. These roads are owned and maintained either by the State, County, or the Township. The State owns approximately 28 miles, the County owns approximately 13 and the Township owns 46 miles, comprised of a combination of rural/farm roads and streets within residential neighborhoods/subdivisions. There are also several residential streets that are privately owned and maintained, approximately 12 miles.

Freight Accessibility & Mobility

The CSX Railroad is an active rail line that runs east to west, centrally, through the Township. Norfolk Southern is another active rail line that travels east to west across the central portion of the Township. In addition to the rail line through the Township, Norfolk Southern has a terminal, the Norfolk Southern Harbor Terminal, in Ashtabula County. Both railroads heavily service the eastern half of the United States each with approximately 20,000 miles of railroad in their network. These railroads are very active with trains passing through Saybrook Township daily.



MAP 2.13- Roads by ownership.

Public Utilities

Water and sewer services in Saybrook Township are provided by the Ashtabula County Department of Environmental Services or Ashtabula City, serviced by Aqua Ohio. Maps of the areas in the Township currently served by public water and sanitary sewer are shown on Map 2.14.

County-owned water lines are located along the following major roadways in the Township.

- Entire length of SR 45
- Entire length of SR 531
- US 20 from the western Township boundary east to approximately 1,600 F east of SR 45
- SR 84 from the western Township boundary east to SR 45
- Sexton Road, south of SR 84 to the southern Township boundary
- Brown Road, south of SR 84 to Fox Run
- Depot Road between New London Road and SR 84
- New London Road from Ninevah Road to approximately 1,500 F east of SR 45
- North Bend Road, west of SR 45 to Gerald Road
- Entire length of Kister Court
- Ninevah Road- south from SR 531 approximately 4,000 F, and north from US 20 approximately 3,100 F
- Gore Road- west from SR 45 approximately 1,500 F
- Carpenter Road from SR 45 to Stowe Road
- Entire length of Renko Road

Sanitary sewer service is currently provided in the Township as follows:

- US 20 from the Ashtabula City boundary, west to Depot Road. Sanitary sewer service extends south from US 20 to SR 84 along Sanborn Road, and south from US 20 to approximately half way between US 20 and SR 84 along Depot Road and SR 45. (Provided by the City of Ashtabula)
- North Bend Road, west of SR 45 to US 20. (Provided by the City of Ashtabula)
- SR 531 from the Ashtabula City boundary, west to approximately 750 F west of Ninevah Road. Sanitary sewer service also extends south from SR 531 along SR 45 to Gore Road and east of SR 45 along Carpenter Road to Ashbrook Drive. Wastewater treatment in the above areas is (Provided by the City of Ashtabula)
- SR 45 from the southern Township boundary (north of the I-90/SR 45

interchange) approximately 1,500 F and along Ashtabula-Austinburg Road east of SR 45 for approximately 1,500 F. (Provided by Ashtabula County)

- Elmwood Drive from the eastern Township boundary to the western limit of Elmwood Drive. (Provided by Ashtabula County)

Still, many of Saybrook’s residents rely on home sewage treatment systems for wastewater treatment and wells and ponds for water access. The Township does not anticipate any additional areas to be served by sewer or water in the immediate future by Ashtabula County. Future development facilitated by a Joint Economic District (JED) with the City of Ashtabula could extended services from the City elsewhere in the township, but there are no known JED targets at the point of this plan’s adoption.

Saybrook Township

All Sewer Mains



MAP 2.14- Existing sewer mains.

Issues & Opportunities

Through the planning process, key community strengths (assets) were identified that will be leveraged, as well as the various challenges that must be addressed as the Goals, Policies, and Strategies are formulated. During the Open House, residents identified the following as key strengths and weaknesses of the Township:

Some of the goals and action steps in this plan will directly play to the Township’s strengths and address the weaknesses to help create a stronger Township. Based on the information above, Saybrook Township has good services and maintenance but lacks diversity in land use and housing style. Clearly identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Township ensures that the plan is representative of residents’ voices.



ASPIRATIONS

VISION

A vision statement is an essential piece of a comprehensive plan. The vision statement is a “big-picture” concept that captures what community members most value about their community, and the shared image of what they want their community to become. It inspires community members to work together to achieve their vision. A thoughtful vision statement helps form a forward-looking strategic framework that provides a holistic perspective necessary to make rational and often incremental decisions on community issues as they arise.

The following statement represents Saybrook Township’s vision for the future:

Saybrook Township is an active, connected community with deep pride and a rich history. While maintaining this neighborly, small-town feel, the Township will welcome new residents, businesses and visitors with equal enthusiasm and appreciation. Building upon existing strengths, the Township will explore and pursue solutions and opportunities to enhance the quality of life for all residents and those who come to work, play and stay.

This vision statement highlights the elements that make the Township special. There is a clear desire to maintain the current character of the community while also being open to new residents, tourism, and development. The Township wants to use its strengths to help further fulfill the needs of its current and future population while creating innovative solutions for its current challenges. Saybrook’s Steering Committee crafted the vision statement with the assistance of the consulting team. During the Open House, community members had the opportunity to give their input on the vision statement to further tailor it to the Township’s overall vision for the future. The final vision statement is representative of Township residents and stakeholders.

The following section outlines goals for the Plan that provide the framework for policies and strategies that will help achieve this vision.

GOALS

Goals are general statements of desired outcomes of the community. While often broadly written, goals should be stated and paired with specific objectives that can be measured so that it is possible to assess whether progress has been made in achieving them. Similar to the vision statement, the following goals were established by the Steering Committee with guidance from the consulting firm. Participants at the Open House contributed to these goals through their interaction with display boards.

The following six categories and their accompanying goals support the aspirations in the vision statement and frame a clearer picture of what the future of the Township should look like.

This section includes policies and detailed strategies related to each of the goals, which are considered to be the best means to achieve the Township's vision. These policies address a number of planning elements such as future land use, economic development, natural features, open space, utilities, and transportation.

Some strategies are a continuation of ongoing activities, others can be achieved with redirection of available resources while others will need to be addressed through cooperative efforts between the Township and other public entities or through public/private partnerships.





HOUSING

Focus on maintaining and preserving existing housing stock while investigating new housing construction in select areas.



LAND USE

Planned and progressive land use maintaining or complementing existing development patterns with an emphasis on infill development and adaptive reuse.



TRANSPORTATION

Target problem areas of the transportation network, while maintaining appropriate level of service and promoting roadway safety throughout the Township.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Foster a robust and sustainable economy, while enhancing, not disrupting current Township character.



COMMUNITY CHARACTER & PRESERVATION

Honor the long standing history of the township and maintain close neighborly ties and small-town life style.



PUBLIC SERVICES

Provide appropriate public services and amenities.



Goal A. HOUSING.

Focus on maintaining and preserving existing housing stock while investigating new housing construction in select areas.

Saybrook Township has a strong housing base with well-kept neighborhoods and home values higher than the County average. Maintaining and preserving the Township's housing stock is the priority to continue to foster Saybrook's bedroom community feel and residential character. At the same time, increasing housing choices (with a variety of housing styles, size, etc.) will retain and attract residents.

Saybrook has an aging population. Providing single-story or low-maintenance housing is an important strategy to accommodate aging individuals who wish to stay in the Township full-time or even part-time. This type of housing can also attract young adults or new families to the Township who may be looking for smaller first-time homes or convenient housing options in a desirable community. These alternative housing options will be strategically located in specific areas of the township, primarily in the proposed activity center area along Route 20 (see Land Use- Goal B.) and will not disturb existing neighborhood developments.

A.1 Preserve and protect the character, quality, and integrity of existing single-family neighborhoods

A.2 Provide an appropriate mix of alternative housing options in limited locations.

A.3 Consider allowing housing alternatives that make it easier for older residents to age in place, while retaining the single-family character of the neighborhood.

A.4 Protect the integrity and quality of all housing by ensuring that the existing housing stock and neighborhoods are well maintained and continue to retain their value, encourage new investment, and attract new residents.

A.5 Address large scale coastal erosion problems on a neighborhood/ community level to save shoreline housing.



GOAL B. LAND USE.

Planned and progressive land use maintaining or complementing development patterns with an emphasis on infill development and adaptive reuse.

Various land use areas are depicted on the Future Land Use Plan. These areas indicate the types of development, and the places that will be created, that are anticipated in Saybrook Township over the next 20 years or so. Each land use area is characterized by a range of uses, both existing and envisioned. A description of land use type is provided below. (See Map 3.1 for Proposed Future Land Use).

NOTE: The depicted Future Land Uses described below are intended to show the preferred pattern of development. These uses do not depict specific zoning districts, rather they are conceptual in nature and are intended to assist the Township in making future decisions about potential zoning map changes. Though each recommended land use is geographically delineated on the map, the boundaries are intentionally generalized. When making decisions about zoning specific sites or contemplating new initiatives, decision makers are encouraged to use the Future Land Use map as a guide while taking into account economic, environmental, and social factors.

B.1 Educate the Township and its board members about Land Use Planning & Zoning.

B.2 See that proposed development and zoning changes align with the plan's future land use map.

B.3 Strategize building-out existing residential & industrial subdivisions prior to supporting new development.

B.4 Rewrite the Township zoning text to support ease of use, address modern day trends, and ensure enforcement consistency.

B.5 Protect large lots and agricultural use in existing areas.

B.6 Continue to focus medium to higher density uses on the Northern portion of the Township and along major corridors like Rt. 531 & Rt. 20.

Parks/Conservation & Recreation

Parks and conserved land are essential to maintaining the character of Saybrook Township. Parks create the open space needed for residents of all ages to enjoy the outdoors and beautiful landscape while conserved land protects the extensive natural resources that make Saybrook Township unique. The use of parks and conserved land help to preserve the rural community by limiting the available space for development. Additionally, this land use can provide additional outdoor opportunities for residents and visitors.



Lakefront District

The Lakefront District gets its name as the area where cottage homes were first built in the Township in close proximity to Lake Erie as summer homes. The Township has several neighborhoods west of Rt. 45 along Lake Erie that have unique and historic backgrounds and require extra consideration due to limited lot sizes, private roads and utility access. Many of these homes now serve residents full-time and have been winterized or added on to. However, under the current zoning amendment, a majority of lots are non-conforming. By calling out this area as its own Future Land Use District, appropriate measures can be taken in updating the Township Zoning code to account for these essential and exceptional neighborhoods to become more conforming and have additional options and freedom when renovating and updating homes.



Single Family Residential

Single Family Residential is the most common land use in Saybrook Township. It's classified by detached single-family homes on lots ranging from ¼ acre-2 acres. The purpose of this land use class is to maintain the medium-density housing that currently exists in Saybrook and provide residents with a quiet place to live away from the main thoroughfares. The Single-Family Future Land Use should continue to be areas primarily served by sanitary sewer and water.



Residential Agriculture

Residential Agriculture supports the growing of crops and managing typical farm animals. This land can include single-family homes on large lots or agriculture-related buildings, not served by sanitary sewer. Agri-business or agri-tourism are supported in these areas.



Activity Center

The Mixed-Use Activity Center is to be focused mainly along Route 20. The purpose of this land use is to provide residents with an area consisting of both small-scale commercial, retail, office, and residential spaces. These areas act as a one-stop place for residents to get their goods and services. The Mixed-Use Activity Center will increase walkability and connectivity in the Township with higher density and buildings along the street frontage. Housing in this area will be higher density as well with attached single-family housing and patio homes aligning with the character of this use.



Institutional Uses

Institutional uses often consist of government buildings, medical buildings, places of worship, and educational buildings. All of these uses are essential in communities so it's important that they exist in an area that is appropriate for them. Institutional uses in Saybrook Township are found clustered along the central and western sides of the Township. These areas won't be mixed use but may include commercial and office spaces on either side. It's important that these places are functional and support any surrounding businesses without taking away from the community character or any potential development opportunities.



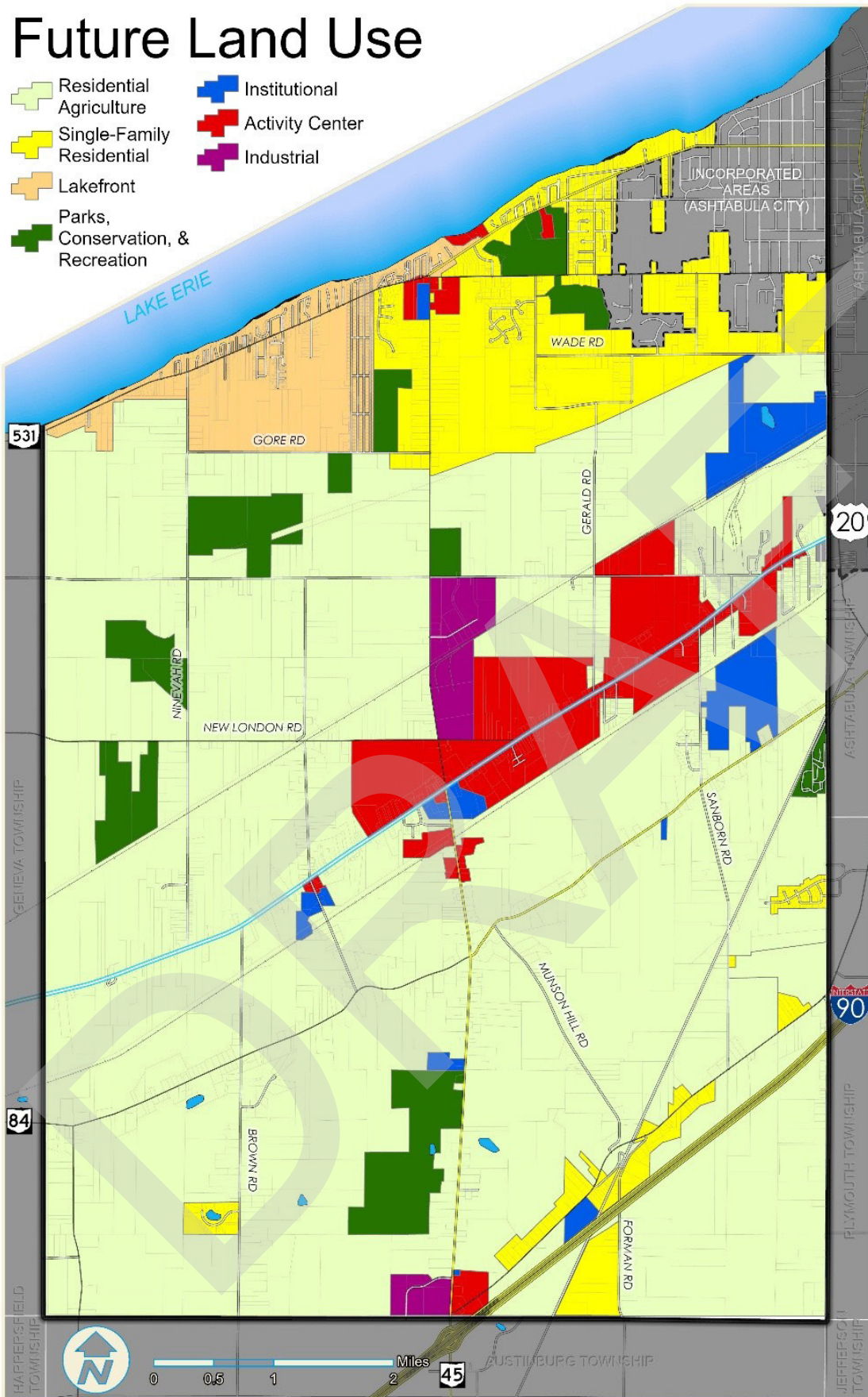
Light Industrial

Light industrial uses are often for storage facilities, autowork, and small production or manufacturing facilities. These uses often appear next to railroads and already existing industrial uses. Saybrook Township does not have a need for many light industrial areas, but the land use category is important to have for the few companies that fall into this use.



Future Land Use

- Residential Agriculture
- Single-Family Residential
- Lakefront
- Parks, Conservation, & Recreation
- Institutional
- Activity Center
- Industrial



MAP 3.1- Future Land Use Map.



Goal C. TRANSPORTATION.

Target problem areas of the transportation network, while maintaining appropriate level of services and promoting roadway safety throughout the Township.

Township residents have expressed key areas of concern regarding the transportation network, including dangerous intersections, high speed areas and blocked train track crossings. In summer months, roadway hazards increase with congestion due to tourist traffic, especially along Lake Road.

C.1 Maintain a safe and efficient transportation network.

C.2 Study Rt. 45 corridor for appropriate countermeasures to address congested or stopped traffic.

C.3 Encourage multimodal transportation, including bike trails & pedestrian ways.



Goal D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Foster a robust and sustainable economy, while enhancing, not disrupting, current Township character.

Economic development goals should center around supporting local businesses and adaptive reuse of existing commercial properties. Economic development can include housing. Creating a mixed-use activity center along Rt 20 east of Rt 45 could increase economic activity, while maintaining the neighborhood character and bedroom community atmosphere of other parts of the township. Additionally, economic development strategies should take advantage of the County's growing tourism market, and make Saybrook the place to stay for visitors looking to visit Geneva-on-the-Lake and the wineries in the Grand River Valley.

D.1 Intensify efforts to attract new development to existing industrial parks and commercial buildings.

D.2 Identify/address challenges for new development at the I-90 interchange.

D.3 Address blighted commercial/light industrial properties along the Rt. 20 corridor.

D.4 Harness existing community amenities and natural resources to attract visitors and new residents.

D.5 Understand Saybrook's assets and strengths within the existing tourism network in Ashtabula County.

D.6 Promote small -scale community retail in strategic areas.



Goal E. COMMUNITY CHARACTER & PRESERVATION

Honor the long standing history of the Township and maintain close neighborly ties and small-town life style.

From the first steering committee meeting to the closing of the community-wide survey and open house, Saybrook’s strong community character and spirit were made evident. Residents pride themselves on close connections with neighbors, proximity to family within the Township and County, and resounding small-town feel. The Township’s agricultural land and lakefront neighborhoods create a variety of land uses, lot sizes and homes, that township residents appreciate and expect to preserve equally. This Plan’s purpose is not to change the already existing strong community character, but to build on and preserve the essential elements that make the Township so special.

E.1 Maintain and enhance Saybrook Township's unique character.

E.2 Promote the preservation/conservation of critical natural areas, concentrations of large, wooded areas, and other important environmental resources.

E.3 Promote better communication amongst the Township and residents.

E.4 Develop an update of Township Policies and Procedures manual.



Goal F. PUBLIC SERVICES

Provided appropriate public services and amenities.

Saybrook is known throughout the County for the Township's outstanding Fire, EMS & Water Rescue. Residents are quick to praise the Township for well kept roads and other services like leaf pick-up. Continue to serve residents in this high-quality manner, while also remaining a fiscally responsible.

F.1 Continue to upgrade and enhance the recreational amenities at Saybrook Township Parks as demand dictates and funding allows.

F.2 Continue to support and invest in Fire, EMS, & Water Rescue services.

F.3 Continue to provide additional services including leaf pick-up & recycling drop off.

F.4 Continue to maintain high quality road maintenance and plowing.

F.5 Maintain the fiscal health of the Township.



POLICIES & STRATEGIES

Strategic Action Plan

It is intended that this Comprehensive Land Use Plan be used by the Township, as well as property owners and developers when deciding where, when, and how to make investments in Saybrook Township. A viable implementation program is one that sets forth specific action items to ensure that the recommendations in Section 3 are acted upon. This section examines ways to make these goals and objectives discussed in Section 3 a reality for the Township.

The action steps generally fall into four categories:

1. Regulatory control: adopting/revising regulations and enforcement procedures, primarily the Township Zoning Resolution.
2. Administrative actions: including enacting or expanding programs.
3. Capital improvement projects.
4. Partnerships and collaboration: including taking intentional action to collaborate with other organizations, and/or influencing county-level or other governmental agencies.

Regulatory Control

Zoning is the most important tool the Township has to implement the land use policies. During the course of this planning process, the Steering Committee discussed a number of zoning items. A list of suggested areas for exploration upon embarking on a township zoning resolution are listed below. These suggestions are intended to serve as a guide for further investigation as a more detailed evaluation will be required by the Township.

- Eliminate, assign or understand the intent of any “floating districts”- those districts that are written about in the Zoning Amendment, but are not currently applied in the Township Zoning Map
- Rectify, to the best of the Township’s ability, conflicting land uses and zoning districts
- Develop a zoning district or overlay that addresses the unique concerns of lots along Lake Road, West of Route 45
- Ensure text regulations are up to date on issues such as alternative energy generation, and marijuana growing, production and sale
- See that the text is reader friendly, so that residents, developers and township staff have no trouble interpreting regulations

- Understand HB 315 and the new opportunities it provides Ohio Township's to update and regulate zoning codes
- Address property maintenance and enforcement issues

Administrative Actions & Programs

Some of the following strategies do not include adopting or modifying laws but rather establish or redirect Township efforts. Some goal elements may require additional studies that go beyond the scope of a comprehensive planning process. These studies are identified for future consideration.

Capital Improvement Projects

A capital improvement is the addition of a permanent structural change or the restoration of some aspect of a property that will either enhance the property's overall value, increase its useful life or adapt it to new uses. For local governments, capital improvement projects are investments in buildings and infrastructure, including the construction, repair, or replacement of buildings, roadways, bridges, and parks. Capital improvement projects are necessary to sustain, support, and grow healthy and functional communities and economies.

Partnerships and Collaboration

The Township is responsible for some of the implementation strategies. However, given the Township's limited authority and public budget constraints, many actions will require the coordinated efforts of individuals and organizations representing the public, private, and civic sectors. This includes working closely with County agencies, such as the County Engineer and the County Solid Waste District and Ashtabula County Environmental Services, which is responsible for providing public services to Saybrook Township. Additionally, according to the Urban Land Institute, public/private partnerships are "the most effective means to intervene in an uncertain market." From an economic development perspective, partnerships share the financial risks between public and private entities. While the use of public funds in private development is often controversial, research indicates that communities that invest in strategic projects receive returns in jobs and recurring tax revenues.

Funding Support

Funding for Township improvements and services will always be a challenge given the constraints of the Ohio Revised Code and how Townships in Ohio can be funded. However, with a plan and place and the understanding of where to look, funding does not have to be as monumental of a barrier that it is sometimes made out to be. Any government entity today must leverage funding from a variety of sources, including federal, state, and local government programs, institutional/foundational support, and private partners. Saybrook must explore both traditional financing strategies and innovative methods to keep the township in good fiscal health and implement priority projects. The following are some funding mechanisms beyond property tax collected, that can be used as a starting point to explore funding strategies and opportunities.

1. **Levy-** Ohio townships can impose a tax to fund expenses related to parks and recreational, fire service and other services and resources for residents.
2. **Partnerships-** Collaborating with non-profit organizations, private businesses, philanthropic foundations, healthcare entities, and other neighboring jurisdictions can provide additional funding and resources for the Township.
3. **Joint Economic Development District (JEDD)-** A Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) is a special-purpose territorial district created by contract between municipal corporations and townships in Ohio. The primary goal of a JEDD is to encourage economic development, create jobs, and improve the economic welfare of citizens.
4. **Tax Increment Financing-** Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a public financing tool that can be used to support community improvements. A TIF allows for the increase in assessed value (increment), of property in an established Tax Improvement District (TID), to be exempt from property tax and reinvested into the development project. In the context of parks and recreation, TIF can be used to finance costs related to public

infrastructure, land acquisition, demolition, utilities, and more. This mechanism allows municipalities to stimulate growth through targeted public investments financed by future tax revenues. Using a TIF is a way for the city to enhance its parks and recreation facilities without raising property taxes.

Funding Opportunities & Grant Technical Assistance & Management

The below programs exist as of the date of plan adoption. Funding programs can shift or terminate on the Federal, State and local level with limited or no notice.

State and Local Funding Opportunities & Grant Technical Assistance

HB 315- House Bill 315 includes a provision for township zoning grants. The bill directs the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) to make grants to townships to update their zoning codes. The total amount available is \$1.5 million

Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program (ODD)- Ashtabula County Lead Entity, County Land Bank

Brownfield Funding- There are several brownfield funding opportunities for cleanup and redevelopment projects in Ohio

- Ohio Brownfield Fund
- Abandoned Gas Station Cleanup Program

Costal Management Assistance Grant (CMAG)

Ashtabula County Solid Waste District Community Grants (microgrant funding availability determined each fiscal year)

Ashtabula County Civic Development Cooperation (CDC)

Ashtabula Foundation

The Robert S. Morrison Foundation

Federal programs with State Applications*

- Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Recreational Trails Program
- ODNR NatureWorks
- Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC)
- National Resource Assistance Council (NRAC) Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Grant

Federal Funding Opportunities*

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
- Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP)- U.S. DOT
- Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN)- U.S. DOT
- Rural and Tribal Assistance Program- U.S. DOT
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)- HUD

PLANNING PARAMETERS

During the planning process, the Steering Committee noted and discussed a number of factors that influence the level of control the Township has to create its own destiny. These factors are important to keep in mind in both the understanding of the goals and objectives as well as the implementation of the policies and strategies.

- Saybrook Township, like all Townships in Ohio, is a statutory local government that may exercise only those powers specifically delegated to it by the Ohio Revised Code. In comparison to the authority of municipal government (villages and cities), there are several limitations placed on Townships. For example, townships cannot adopt subdivision regulations and must rely on the County to review and approve the subdivision of land; most of the major roads in the Township are owned and maintained by either the state or the county; Townships cannot hold their own public utilities like sewer and water. Therefore, in many cases, Saybrook Township must lobby for and exert influence on a number of other entities to help fulfill the goals in this Plan.
- Like every form of local government, Saybrook Township government must operate in a fiscally responsible manner if it is to be sustainable over the long run. Yet, unlike cities and villages, it does not have the authority to impose a local income tax and must rely heavily on property taxes and funding from approved levies.
- The Township can regulate development in various ways, but it must also rely on individuals and businesses to build and invest in the Township.
- A sustainable community is achieved through partnerships with the business community, citizens and local governments; as well as with the numerous other governmental and non-profit entities that provide services to Township residents.
- Saybrook Township and the City of Ashtabula have certain shared history including Joint Economic Districts (JEDs) and a shared school district. Recognizing the benefits of neighboring with a municipality and leveraging appropriate planning and development strategies in partnership, will be necessary for the prosperous future of both entities.



APPENDIX

Priority Rating- *** High priority, **Medium Priority, * Lower Priority

Cost Estimate \$\$\$ High Cost, \$\$ Medium Cost, \$ Low Cost

ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status	Priority	Cost	Timeframe	Lead/Partners/Funding Support
Goal A. HOUSING. Focus on maintaining and preserving existing housing stock while investigating new housing construction in select areas.					
A.1 Preserve and protect the character, quality, and integrity of existing single-family neighborhoods.					
A.1.1 Continue to discuss the role of transient/short-term rentals, with a study of existing units and usage within the township.	In-Progress	***	\$	Short-term	Township
A.1.2 Maintain current low-density development standards in residential districts.	Not-started	**	\$	Immediate	Township
A.1.4 Establish working relationship and policy with County Prosecutor on action steps to enforce property maintenance.	Not-started	***	\$	Immediate	Township/County
A.1.5 Help LMI residents access funding and grant sources for property repairs & maintenance (CHIP, LeadSafe Ohio, etc.).	Not-started	*	\$	Short-term	Township/County
A.2 Provide an appropriate mix of alternative housing options in limited locations.					
A.2.1 Decrease or eliminate minimum square footage requirement.	Not-started	*	\$	Immediate	Township
A.3 Consider allowing housing alternatives that make it easier for older residents to age in place, while retaining the single-family character of the neighborhood.					
A.3.1 Explore the allowance of accessory dwelling units within selected sewered locations.	Not-started	*	\$\$	Short-term	Township
A.4 Protect the integrity and quality of all housing by ensuring that the existing housing stock and neighborhoods are well maintained and continue to retain their value, encourage new investment, and attract new residents.					
A.4.1 Work with County Prosecutor and Landbank to remove vacant blighted residential structures.	Not-started	***	\$\$\$	Short-term	County, Landbank, Township
A.4.2 Integrate new authority under HB 315 to civilly enforce zoning penalties	Not-started	**	\$\$	Longterm	
A.5 Address large scale coastal erosion problems on a neighborhood/community level to save shoreline housing.					
A.5.1 Develop Coastal Resilience Plan to identify critical infrastructure and high erosion areas.	Not-started	**	\$\$	Longterm	USWF/OLEC
A.5.2 Protect critical public infrastructure with Erosion Emergency Assistance Grant or Coastal Management Assistance Grants	Not-started	**	\$\$	Longterm	ODNR
A.5.3 Provide opportunities for residential shore protection through development of or joining existing Coastal Erosion Special Improvement District	Not-started	**	\$\$\$	Longterm	Lake County SID

ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status	Priority	Cost	Timeframe	Twp/Partners/Funding Support
Goal B. LAND USE. Planned and progressive land use maintaining or complementing existing development patterns with an emphasis on infill development and adaptive reuse.					
B.1 Educate the township and its board members about Land Use Planning & Zoning.					
B.1.1 Host yearly ZBA and Zoning Commission education workshops that are open to the public.	Not-started	***	\$\$	Short-Term	Township/County Prosecutor
B.2 See that proposed development and zoning changes align with the plan's future land use map.					
B.2.1 Align future land use and zoning changes	In-Progress	***	\$\$	Immediate	Township
B.3 Strategize building-out existing residential & industrial subdivisions prior to supporting new development.					
B.3.1 Consider requiring via zoning new residential and business construction to concentrate in areas where development already exists and utilities are readily available, including infill development and adaptive reuse along the Rt. 20 Corridor.	Not-started	**	\$\$\$	Longterm	Township
B.4 Rewrite the township zoning text to support ease of use, address modern day trends, and ensure enforcement consistency.					
B.4.1 Create a comprehensive list of current zoning code issues and concerns.	In-Progress	***	\$	Immediate	Township
B.4.2 See that the Zoning text update matches current land use and future land use planning.	In-Progress	***	\$\$	Short-term	Township
B.4.3 Meet with cottage neighborhoods and understand how the current zoning code does or does not serve their needs.	In-Progress	**	\$	Short-term	Township
B.4.4 Make decisions on allowances for small scale alternative energy facilities.	Not-started	***	\$	Short-term	Township
B.4.5 Decide how the township would like to regulate the growing, production and sale of marijuana.	In-Progress	***	\$	Short-term	Township
B.5 Protect large lots and agricultural use in existing areas.					
B.5.1 Preserve Open Space and Critical Habitats				Short-term	Township
B.6 Continue to focus medium to higher density uses on the Northern portion of the Township and along major corridors like Rt. 531 & Rt. 20.					

Goal/Objective/Strategy

Status

Timeframe

Twp/Partners/Funding Support

Goal C. TRANSPORTATION. Target problem areas of the transportation network, while maintaining appropriate level of service and promoting roadway safety throughout the Township.

C.1 Maintain a safe and efficient transportation network.

C.1.1 Develop Transportation Safety Action Plan	Not-started	*	\$\$\$	Short-term	Twp/County
C.1.2 Develop and maintain roadway asset management plan	Not-started	**	\$\$\$	Longterm	Twp/County
C.2 Study Rt. 45 corridor for appropriate countermeasures to address congested or stopped traffic.					
C.2.1 Work with County and ODOT to conduct feasibility study for Rt. 45 & Lake Rd. roundabout	Pending	**	\$\$\$	Longterm	Twp/ODOT
C.2.2 Conduct feasibility study for overpass of Rt. 45 Norfolk Southern & CSX Railroads	Pending	**	\$\$\$	Short-term	Twp/ODOT
C.3 Encourage multimodal transportation, including bike trails & pedestrian ways.					
C.3.1 Feasibility study for Rt. 45 and Route 20 Corridor Studies	Not-started	**	\$\$\$	Longterm	
C.3.2 Develop Connectivity Plan	Not-started	**	\$\$	Longterm	
C.3.3 Collaborate with existing Parks to connect to adjacent neighborhoods	Not-started	**	\$\$\$	Short-term	Natural History Museum, Kent State
Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status			Timeframe	Twp/Partners/Funding Support
Goal D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Foster a robust and sustainable economy, while enhancing, not disrupting current township character.					
D.1 Intensify efforts to attract new development to existing industrial parks and commercial buildings.					
D.1.1 Establish marketing materials for existing sites	Not-started	**	\$	Short-term	Growth Partnership, County Port Authority
D.1.2 Work to certify existing site on Statewide inventories such as SiteOhio	Not-started	**	\$\$	Short-term	Growth Partnership, County Port Authority
D.2 Identify/address challenges for new development at the I-90 Interchange.					
D.2.1 Collaborate to identify sites and barriers to develop such as missing critical infrastructure	Not-started	**	\$		Growth Partnership, County Port Authority
D.3 Address blighted commercial/light industrial properties along the Rt. 20 corridor.					
D.3.1 Identify and increase enforcement of commercial blight and vacant structures	Not-started	***	\$\$\$	Short-term	Landbank, County Prosecutor
D.3.2 Leverage Brownfield assessment and demolition grant funding.	Not-started	***	\$\$\$	Longterm	
D.3.3 Engage an economic development group to identify marketable sites and an attraction strategy	Not-started	***	\$\$	Short-term	Growth Partnership, County Port Authority
D.4 Harness existing community amenities and natural resources to attract visitors and new residents.					
D.4.1 Strengthen partnership with Metroparks and opportunities for recreation at Redbrook Metropark.	Not-started	**	\$	Immediate	Metroparks, Township
D.4.2 Consider off-season tourism draws like sledding, cross-country skiing, agri-tourism, or year-round fishing.	Not-started	**	\$\$	Short-term	Township
D.5 Understand Saybrook's assets and strengths within the existing tourism network in Ashtabula County.					
D.5.1 Identify Tourism Assets and define role in County Tourism Strategy	Not-started	**	\$\$	Short-term	ACCVB
D.5.2 Collaborate with County and ACCVB to ensure all short term rentals are identified and conforming with Bed Tax withholding	Not-started	***	\$	Short-term	ACCVB and County
D.5.3 Develop placemaking strategy along Route 45 and improve visual appeal of Route 45 and 90 corridors	Not-started	**	\$\$\$	Long-term	Township
D.6 Promote small-scale community retail in strategic areas.					
B.6.1 Conduct a retail market analysis to identify and target appropriate retailers for the market space	Not-started	**			
Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status			Timeframe	Twp/Partners/Funding Support
Goal E. COMMUNITY CHARACTER & PRESERVATION.					
E.1 Maintain and Enhance Saybrook's unique character.					
E.1.1 Create a township brand including logo, colors and additional unifying strategies.	Not-started	***	\$\$	Short-term	Township
E.2 Promote the preservation/conservation of critical natural areas, concentrations of large, wooded areas and other important environmental resources.					
E.2.1 Develop a stormwater model for the Township	Not-started	**	\$\$\$	Short-term	
E.2.2 Adopt Stormwater standards that meet Ohio EPA minimum standards	Not-started	**	\$\$	Short-term	
E.2.2 Continue to raise awareness and support of other entities' efforts to obtain open space funding for the acquisition of natural areas for conservation.	Not-started	**	\$	Immediate	Township
E.2.3 Follow environmental best management practices for publicly owned property and encourage private property owners to do the same (this is especially important for forest management).	Not-started	**	\$	Short-term	Township
E.2.4 Encourage preservation and conservation of privately owned critical natural areas within the Township and increase public awareness of conservation organizations and options such as conservation easements, lease & management easements, and land acquisition by a conservation organization.	Not-started	*	\$\$	Immediate	Township
E.3 Promote better communication amongst the Township and residents.					
E.3.1 Consider an electronic or mailed newsletter.	Not-started	***	\$\$	Immediate	Township
E.3.2 Discuss feasibility of a Saybrook Community Picnic or event each summer	In-Progress	**	\$	Short-term	Township
E.3.3 Develop a stronger online presence.	Not-started	***	\$	Immediate	Township
E.3.4 Assign a volunteer, committee, part-time staff member or intern to assist with community outreach.	Not-started	**	\$\$	Immediate	Township
E.3.5 Vary Township meeting days and times and to allow for more accessible public participation.	Not-started	**	\$	Short-term	Township

E.3.6 Make meeting minutes and/or recordings readily available for the public.	Not-started	***	\$	Immediate	Township
E.4 Develop an update of Township Policies and Procedures manual.					
Goal/Objective/Strategy	Status			Timeframe	Twp/Partners/Funding Support
Goal F. PUBLIC SERVICES. Provide appropriate public services and amenities.					
F.1 Continue to upgrade and enhance the recreational amenities at Saybrook Township Parks as demand dictates and funding allows.					
F.1.1 Develop a parks master plan.	Not-started	**	\$\$\$	Long-term	
F.1.2 Host quarterly joint township, park board meetings.	In-Progress	***	\$	Short-term	Township
F.1.3 Work in partnership with the Township Park Board to support their funding needs.	In-Progress	***	\$	Immediate	Township, Park Board
F.2 Continue to support and invest in Fire, EMS & Water Rescue services.					
F.2.1 Continue to work on recruitment of qualified and committed staff.	In-Progress	**	\$	Immediate	Township
F.2.2 Continue to augment water rescue services/improve access point at Redbrook	Not-started	**	\$\$\$	Short-term	Twp/RBC/County
F.3 Continue to provide additional services including leaf pick-up & recycling drop-off.					
F.3.1 Work with Ashtabula County Solid Waste District to streamline frequently used recycling drop-off.	In-Progress	***	\$	Short-term	County, Township
F.4 Continue to maintain high quality road maintenance and plowing.					
F.5 Maintain the fiscal health of the township.					

DRAFT

Public Engagement Report

Project: Saybrook Township Comprehensive Plan Update
Community: Saybrook Township, Ohio
Event: Saybrook Township Community Open House
Location: Saybrook Township Fire House #2
Attendees: ~45
Date/Time: Saturday, February 15, 2024
Staff: Sarah Jammal, AICP, Jim Hockaday

Stakeholder Groups Present
Residents
Township staff
ZBA & Zoning Commission Board Members
Township Park Board

General Event Goals and Outcomes	
Stated intention of the public engagement event	To spread awareness of the Saybrook Township Comprehensive Plan update and receive feedback from residents on the plan vision and goals.
Engagement type	Open House
How did the meeting inform the community about the project?	Verdantas provided eight visual and interactive posters and staffed the event to have one-on-one conversations with residents.
Did the event meet the intended goals of the engagement?	Exceeded expectations.

Approximate Number of Interactions: 45
Questions/Comments from Interactions
What is the purpose of this plan?
How will this plan affect township zoning?
Discussion in support and opposing ZBA decision on Depot Rd.
Compliments of services, Fire & EMS, roads maintenance and plowing
Appreciation that the township is including the public in the plan.
Will the public be able to give feedback once the plan is completed, prior to ratification?

General Summary

Staff arrived with posters, supplies to facilitate engagement and coffee. Township Trustees and Steering Committee members provided additional refreshments. Ashtabula County District Library set up a table to connect residents with additional resources. Posters informed residents about what a comprehensive plan is, provided opportunities for interaction with questions regarding strengths/weaknesses of the township, ranking of township priorities, and spaces for any

questions or comments. Another poster allowed participants to place a sticky dot on the approximate location of their household in Saybrook Township.

The weather prior to the event was poor, with snow and ice. Despite this, residents arrived right at 11:00AM to engage with plan materials and tour the Fire Department. A steady stream of community members arrived to participate until around 12:30, then there was a brief lull, with visitors picking up again around 1:00pm until the end of the event at 2:00PM.

Attendees were all Saybrook residents. Of those who placed a dot on the map to indicate their residence, a large group were from the north part of the township along Lake Rd. Another group was centralized around Depot Rd. south of Rt. 20. All participants engaged with the materials presented. Boards were covered with dots and sticky notes by the end of the event and many small groups had conversations around the room discussing the township.

Residents had a wide range of knowledge regarding the purpose of a comprehensive plan but were responsive and understanding of the need for an update in Saybrook Township. Most residents who spoke to staff about the planning process questioned when a zoning update would come and expressed that the code needed to be updated.

Residents interacted with the “Township Priorities” board the most which entailed placing sticky dots to rank several township priorities. This makes sense with the overall layout and atmosphere of the event as the sticky dots were the fastest and easiest way to give input.

The remaining pages in this report record the exact comments of community members from the feedback boards. Verdantas staff found the following items were repeated the most often or rated most highly:

1. Residents were pleased with township services and road maintenance.
2. *Addressing property maintenance issues and blighted structures* were rated as the highest priority (+16) with *Economic Development strategies featuring tourism opportunities and infrastructure* as the second (+8).
3. *Increased diversity in housing types* was the lowest, scoring priority statement (-2).
4. Of note is that voting for priorities was overwhelmingly positive. Only one statement received a negative score.
5. Issues regarding zoning enforcement, ZBA decision making, and property maintenance appeared as feedback to many different questions asked.
6. An overpass was mentioned on several occasions with reference to the train tracks on Rt. 45 and transportation issues and the congestion and low visibility at Rt. 45 and Lake Rd.
7. Residents were pleased with the township fire and EMS and road maintenance.

Note: When tabulating voting of priorities, staff compare the highest priority votes and lowest priority votes and take the difference to understand the intensity of each statement.

Staff and community members noted that hosting the event at the Fire Station was a huge draw and stated that the venue would be a fantastic location for future community events.

Engagement Boards Transcribed-

Census Data/Existing Conditions:

Sticky dots were placed on the following items:

- Ashtabula County Population Projection
- Median Home Value Owner-Occupied table (2 sticky dots)
- Median Household Income
- Number of Vacant Housing Units (2 sticky dots)
- Number of Total Housing Units
- High rate of owner-occupied homes (79.9%) (3 sticky dots)
- Median home value is on par or slightly higher than the county (2 sticky dots)
- Minimal New Housing built since 2008 (2 sticky dots)

What questions or comments do you have about the above data?

- Does the township have specific guidance for short-term rentals/Airbnb? (1 sticky dot)

Goal Setting – Township Priorities:

Maintain existing diversity of land use (mix of rural to higher density) (+2)

Not a priority	Low Priority	Neutral	Medium Priority	High Priority
0	1	2	8	2

Increasing the tax base through development (+2)

Not a priority	Low Priority	Neutral	Medium Priority	High Priority
0	3	1	2	2

Economic Development strategies featuring tourism opportunities and infrastructure (+8)

Not a priority	Low Priority	Neutral	Medium Priority	High Priority
0	2	0	6	8

Additional or improved Twp. services and amenities (road maintenance, fire protection, parks, etc.) (+2)

Not a priority	Low Priority	Neutral	Medium Priority	High Priority
0	1	2	8	2

Increased diversity in housing types (ex. One-story ranch or bungalows, townhomes, etc.) (-2)

Not a priority	Low Priority	Neutral	Medium Priority	High Priority
5	5	4	2	3

Address property maintenance issues and blighted structures (+16)

Not a priority	Low Priority	Neutral	Medium Priority	High Priority
0	1	1	1	16

Expand on your votes above or tell us your other priorities for the township.

- Blue Zones
- Partner with Land Bank to remove blighted structures?
- Increase tax base with vacant Ind/comm. prop utilization
- Removal of blighted structures
- Have a grocery store in Saybrook
- Saybrook roads are maintained better than neighboring communities
- KSU tuition grants for Twp. residents
- Bid on trash removal to lowest bidder. We have so many trash trucks on Chestnut, they are tearing our roads up
- Better development of available land and rezoning of rural areas (i.e. lots of land with trailer)

SWOT Analysis:

- Strengths
 - Road Maintenance (x3)
 - Road Maintenance and signage
 - Excellent Township work
 - Snow Removal
 - Road department, fire department and services, school facilities
- Weaknesses
 - ODOT streets
 - Tourism draws
 - Retail development (x2)
 - Billboards on 20
 - House sqft should be 1400 sqft
 - Not enough 1-level housing
 - Aging population
 - More stores (2 sticky dots)
 - Zoning, i.e. State of Ohio
- Opportunities
 - More focus on high quality real estate
 - Bring in new business (x2)
 - Better use of available land
 - Land for available development along Route 20
 - Recreational opportunities
 - Tax abatement for new business
 - Parks with access to public pools encourages water safety. Would love park facility with a splash pad or public pools like Lake, Geauga, Cuyahoga counties
- Threats

- Lumber Co.'s stripping our forested areas
- Lake erosion control of public coastline
- Railroad – need overpass
- Non-residents influencing zoning regulations. Our own BZA listening to them over residents to supercede our zoning regulations (x2)
- Extremely important to the health of our 5 children as week as the school that backs up to the tracks
- Coastal erosion (x2)
- Erosion
- Annexation by Ashtabula City (x1)

In the next 10 years:

- What aspects of the township are critical to preserve?
 - Article 8, Section 850, the phrase “Killing and dressing of flesh or fowl” must remain in the zoning regulations (x2)
 - Maintain the banning of killing and dressing of flesh or fowl (x2) (1 sticky dot)
 - We need an area for killing and dressing of flesh or fowl
 - Quiet place to live (x2)
 - The park (x1)
 - Protect our property values (x2)
 - The roads potholes
- What issues would you like to see resolved?
 - Route 20 between 45 to city limits – is there a plan to attract new development? 45/20 intersection?
 - Timely access to meeting minutes
 - Changing and/or abolishing “East Geneva Lakelands” and have it just be Saybrook and all zoning rules be the same
 - Trains – road overpass
 - Potholes
 - Roads/How about a round-about at 45? Terrible Intersection
 - Township meetings need to be in the evening (1 sticky dot)
 - The ditch at the northeast corner of Carpenter at 45 is a hazard and needs filled in. Also, the fruit stand at pie shop blocks view of cars going West on Lake and turn 45
- What concerns do you have related to township zoning?
 - Need sewer on at 20
 - Stricter zoning for homes and additions
 - Increase sewer coverage
 - Enforcing property maintenance issues, i.e. junk cars, etc. (1 sticky dot)
 - Stricter zoning for bed/breakfast properties
 - Large land/space with small housing/mobile/trailers and cleanliness
- What items or actions would enhance the township for residents and visitors?
 - Recreational opportunities
 - Parks with hiking, nature center, access to pool or splash pad
 - Township has no public access to beach/Lake Erie except township park; can't access water there
 - Retail shops

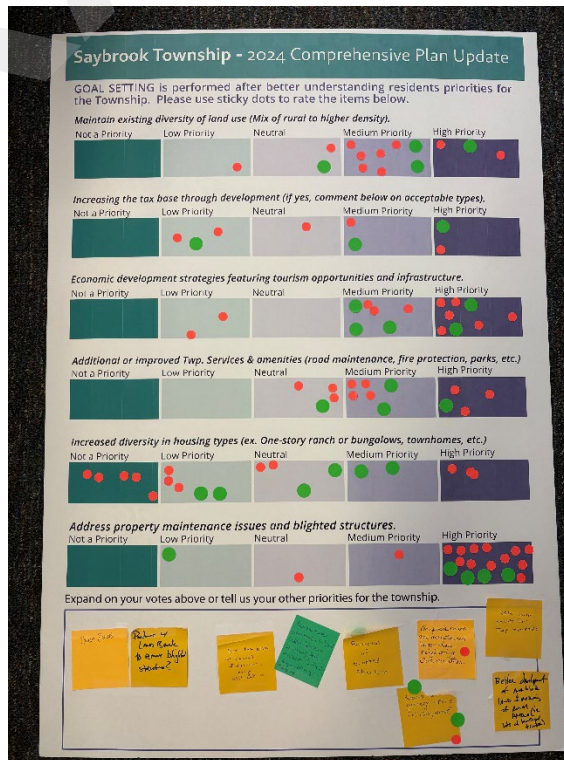
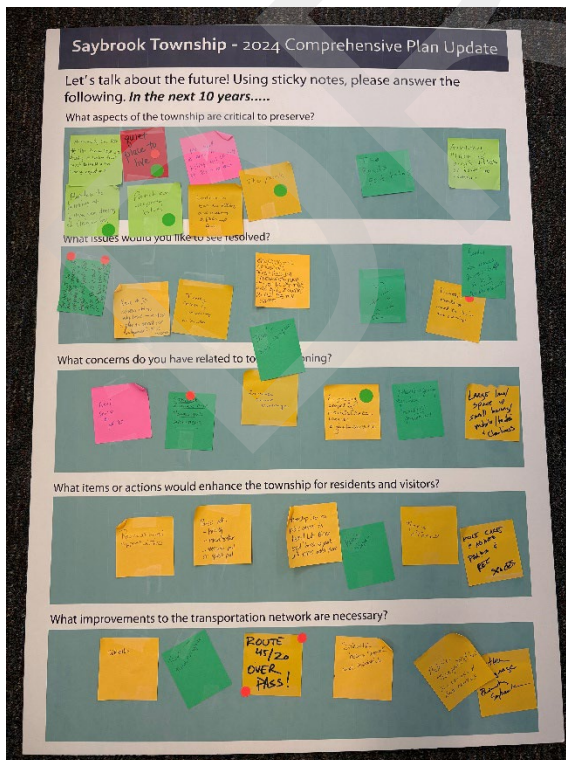
- More stores
- More care and added parks and rec spaces
- What improvements to the transportation network are necessary?
 - Sidewalks
 - Trains – need overpass
 - Route 45/20 overpass
 - Sidewalk between Saybrook and Ashtabula
 - Public transportation, increased bus routes
 - Better signage promoting Saybrook

Existing Land Use Board

- What questions, comments, or corrections do you have about your Township's current land uses?
 - Does township advertise vacant industrial/comm. prop.?
 - Need grocery store, winery
- Sticky dots placed on the following categories: total agricultural use (59.1%), Retail use (0.7%), and vacant commercial land (1.5%)

Photographs of Boards Asking for Participation

To visualize how the process worked and participation level. All sticky notes and dots are recorded in the pages above to be more legible.

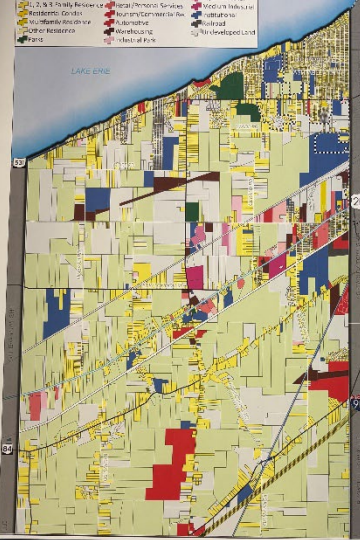


Saybrook Township - 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

Saybrook Township Existing Land Use

- Residential Single-Family
- Residential Medium-Density
- Residential High-Density
- Office
- Community Center
- Public Use
- Light Industrial
- Medium Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Unimproved Land

What questions, comments, or corrections do you have about your Township's current land uses?



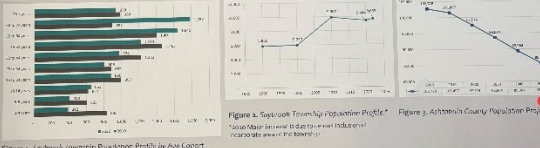
Handwritten notes on a yellow sticky note: "I would like to see more..."

Category	Area	% of Category	Total %
Agricultural	1,741.8	83.7%	15.0%
Forest	4,846.8	13.4%	38.2%
Open	1,160.3	58.1%	32.8%
Residential	6,000	28.1%	16.3%
Commercial	38.5	0.2%	0.2%
Industrial	1,271.8	6.1%	3.5%
Public	100.0	0.5%	0.5%
Unimproved	100.0	0.5%	0.5%
Water	100.0	0.5%	0.5%
Other	100.0	0.5%	0.5%

Saybrook Township - 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

Get to know your township!
Do you know the following about Saybrook Township???

Place a sticker or note under findings that surprise you.



Category	Saybrook Twp.	Antrim Co.
Population	5,616	248,928
Median Age	50.9	40.5
Median Household Income	\$47,895	\$42,178
Population Density	248.9	24.8

In Summary....

- Population rates have remained stable with approx. 9,697 Residents (Including incorporated areas of township)
- Aging population, township median age is 50.9
- Average household income slightly exceeds the County median
- High rate of owner-occupied homes (79.9%)
- Median home value is on par or slightly higher than the County
- Minimal new housing built since 2008

What questions or comments do you have about the above data?

Handwritten note on a yellow sticky note: "I would like to see more..."

DRY

Final Survey Report

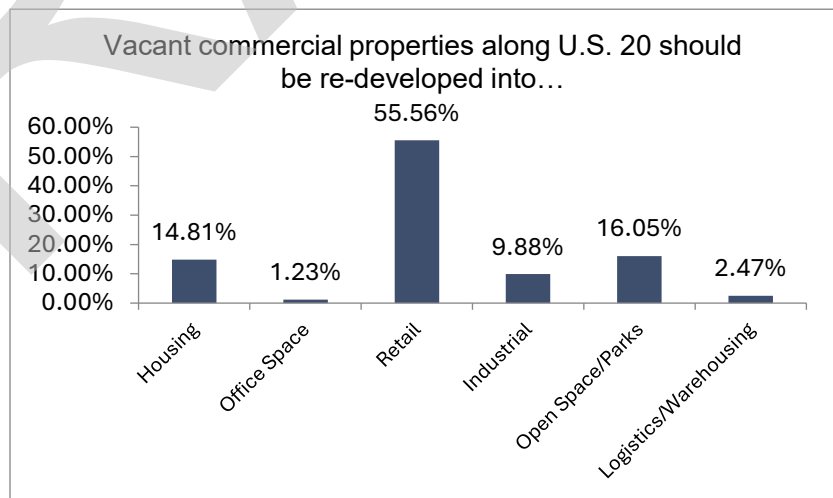
Date	June 3, 2025
To	Saybrook Township Steering Committee
From	Connor Roehrig & Sarah Jammal, AICP, WEDG

Survey Data

The Saybrook Township Comprehensive Plan Update planning process had a strong public engagement strategy. One part of that strategy was a community wide survey, with the intent to gather input relating to Township vision, goals, challenges, strengths, and priorities. The survey consisted of twenty-one questions that were a mixture of multiple choice, ranking, and short open-ended questions. All survey questions were optional, and respondents' identity remained anonymous. The survey received a total of eighty-five responses.

Ninety three percent (93%) of respondents were Saybrook Township residents. When asked to provide two to three words that describe the Township, the most popular answers were quiet, peaceful, safe, lake, pleasant, and family. Additionally, when asked to rank elements that are important to maintain the existing community character, two answers became evident. 80.72% of respondents indicated that natural resources including Lake Erie and Redbrook were important to maintaining community character. Parks and open space was a close second with 56.10% of respondents ranking this feature as important to community character. One question gave the statement "Saybrook is..." with seven options to fill in the blank. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the seven options. Of those seven options, Saybrook Township can confidently be described using three of the phrases. According to 92.68% of respondents, Saybrook Township is "a desirable place to live" and "a nice place to grow old and retire" with 92.59% indicating that Saybrook Township is "a good place to raise a family".

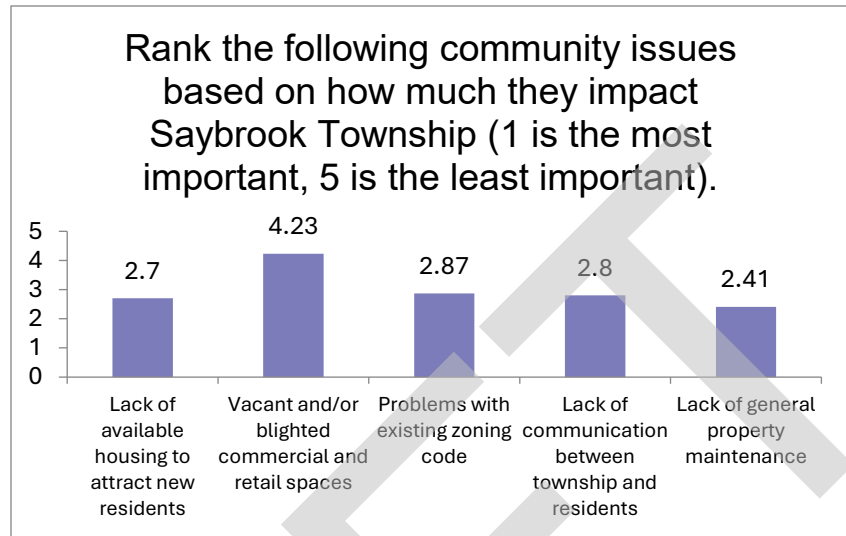
Several questions in the survey discussed residential and commercial development. Respondents seemed to strongly agree on the topic of development with 55.56% of respondents noting that vacant properties along US 20 should be redeveloped into retail spaces. Additionally, 77.11% like the idea of small community retail entering the Township. Finally, respondents were asked to rank various styles of housing,



indicating which styles were most needed in the Township. Detached single family homes were the noted as the most needed style with 40% of respondents indicating that detached single family homes on 5+ acre lots were the most needed. 25% of respondents marked that detached single-family homes on 1-4 acre lots and detached single-family homes on lots less than 1 acre are most needed in the Township. Housing styles that were higher density including townhomes and condos, were unpopular among respondents.



When asked to identify the most impactful issue, 50.60% of respondents indicated that vacant and/or blighted commercial and retail spaces were the most important with another 32.53% noting the issue was highly important but not the most important. Later in the survey, respondents were given three statements and asked to rank their level of agreement with the statement. The statements were written as scenarios to provoke thought in the respondents. When



given the following statement, “Creating a more viable economy and more vibrant community in exchange for a shift in small town feel”, 19.28% of respondents felt positively about the statement with another 36.14% feeling somewhat positive about the statement. When given this statement, “Most of the Township’s economy becomes reliant on tourism and short visits (AirBNBs, hotels)”, no respondents felt positively about the statement with 32.93% feeling neutral toward the statement and 31.71% feeling somewhat negative towards the statement. Next, respondents were asked to again, rank their level of agreeability for three statements. When given the statement, “Saybrook Township has a wide range of businesses to meet all residents’ needs”, 9.64% of respondents indicated they agreed with the statement, with 30.12% noting they somewhat disagree and 20.48% indicating they disagree. Another statement, focused on parks and open space stated, “Parks and open spaces in Saybrook Township allow for a multitude of activities.” 20.48% of respondents agreed with this statement with another 38.55% noting that they “somewhat agree”.

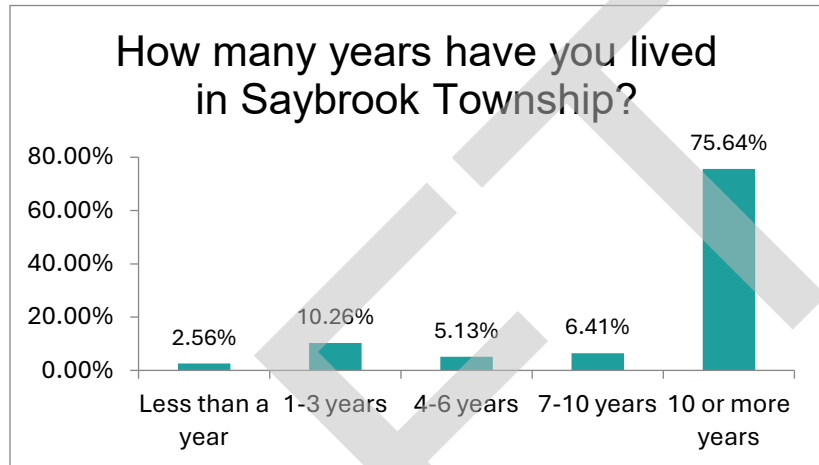
Residents of Saybrook feel confident about emergency services in the Township with an overwhelming 64.63% marking they feel positive about fire and EMS services. 46.99% feel positively about their Sheriff’s Office Patrol, and 54.88% of respondents are content with emergency response times. Residents also indicated they feel positively about snow plowing services with 57.32% indicating such. When asked about transportation and connectivity in the Township, 52.44% of respondents disagreed with the following statement, “Saybrook Township has well-connected sidewalks that encourage walkability. Just under one-third of respondents agreed that “Roadways in Saybrook Township are safe for everyone to use.”

When asked, “What would you like to see in Saybrook Township in the next 10 years?”, one response stood out. 81.71% of respondents indicated that they want to see the revitalization or reuse of properties and/or abandoned commercial structures. The next most popular answer, noted by just over 57% of respondents, was the desire for the preservation of open space and agricultural land in the future. One question asked participants to pick three aspects of quality of life that are most important to them. The top three answers were as follows: quiet atmosphere (68.29%), slower lifestyle (41.46%), and proximity to I-90 and access to Cleveland/Erie (41.46%). One final question gave respondents the following statement: “Saybrook Township has a recognizable and marketable brand that draws people to the community”. 37.35% of respondents marked “yes, but it needs to be updated” with another 19.28% indicating “unknown.”

Discussion

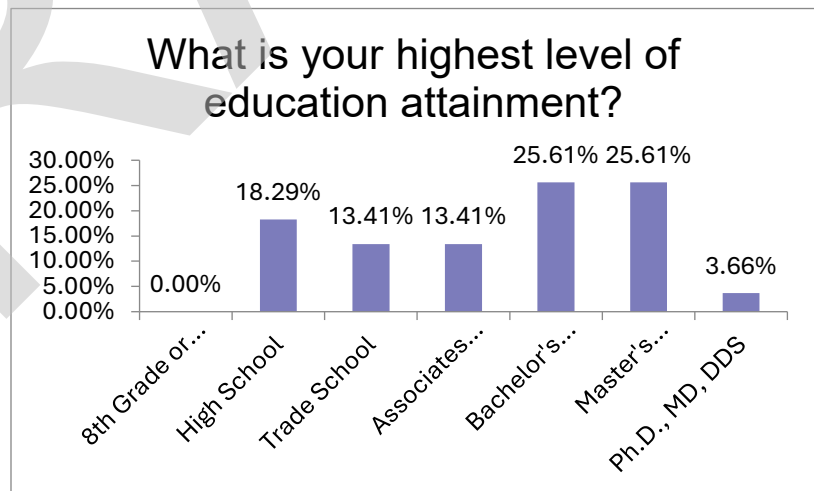
This survey was taken by 85 unique people. The survey was designed to allow only one response, multiple responses from the same device are not possible. Of the twenty-one questions, seven of them focused on respondent demographics.

An overwhelming majority, 92.77% of respondents, live in Saybrook Township, with just over 75% of them living there for ten or more years. The next most common response was 1-3 years, marked by just 10.26% of those living in the Township. Of those that indicated they didn't live in Saybrook Township, just under 5% live in Ashtabula County, outside of the Township, 1 response lives in Ohio but outside of Ashtabula County and 1 respondent lives outside of Ohio altogether.



Looking at other demographic information, there is a clear trend in those who took the survey. More specifically, most respondents (53.57%) indicated there are two total people who live in their household with another 15.48% indicating they are the only ones in their household. Nearly 80% of respondents noted there is no one under the age of 18 living in their household. Knowing that Saybrook Township has an aging population, these responses make sense but may not be completely representative of the community as the survey failed to reach those that have children at home, typically a middle-aged and young adult age range.

Many of those taking the survey pursued higher education with approximately 50% of respondents obtaining their bachelor's or master's degrees and another 3.66% earning their PhD, MD, or DDS. When asked about their industry of employment, 64.20% of respondents indicated "Other" as the option best describing their situation. This can indicate a few things, the respondents' industry wasn't represented as an answer choice, the respondent was retired, or the respondent was not employed at the time they took the survey. The final demographics question asked the respondent about their annual household income. Just over one-third of respondents indicated they earned \$150,000 or more per year with the next most popular answer, indicated by approximately one-fifth of respondents, making between \$35,000 and \$74,000 per year.



Conclusion

Upon analysis of survey results, the survey provides good information on the Township's priorities, issues, and goals for the future. Abandoned and blighted commercial structures and connected pedestrian infrastructure are challenges that the Township faces that respondents want to see resolved. This information will be reflected in the final plan document. The survey also made it clear that residents love and appreciate the single-family homes and low-density character of the Township and want that character maintained in the future.

Focus should be given to commercial revitalization while maintaining the small-town feel of the Township. The preservation of open space and natural resources are also a priority for residents that should be thoroughly discussed in the plan with clear goals to maintain such invaluable features of the Township.

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Planner

