Through the initiative of Planning Director Michele Boni, The Ohio State University’s City and Regional Planning Department was engaged to coordinate an update to Orange Township’s 2010 Land Use Plan (http://orangetwp.org/Index.aspx?NID=189). As an OSU MCRP alumnus, Ms. Boni knows firsthand the quality planning work produced throughout Central Ohio by these talented students. After several organizational meetings during the spring and summer, it was decided that the Autumn 2017 Graduate Comprehensive Planning Studio would take on this challenge.

With only 15 weeks to work, eight graduate students from a variety of backgrounds were entrusted with this important project. They completed key research that provided a baseline of knowledge; they gathered significant community input and delved into issues that have real impact on the residents; they made numerous informal visits to the area and held public meetings during the first weeks of September, October, November, and December. Several guest speakers in various areas of expertise were brought in for the benefit of the students. These efforts, combined with input from community leaders and stakeholders, provided the students with fundamental knowledge of Orange Township. Because of these intense efforts, I believe their recommendations are both legitimate and essential to secure the future of this growing community!

It has been a privilege for me to lead these outstanding young professionals in this effort. The Township Trustees, Staff, residents, and other stakeholders have been welcoming, helpful and candid, which facilitated a superior product. The project’s website - www.planningorange.weebly.com - included a survey that generated a statistically valid response. A new Twitter account - @PlanningOrange - helped spread the word about the project via social media and advertise public meetings. Media coverage from the Delaware Gazette as well as This Week News generated excitement about the project.

This document consists of original writings, exhibits and recommendations based upon professional research and legitimate community input. It is my sincere hope that the goals, objectives and ideas within this document will be implemented for the benefit of Orange Township residents and businesses for generations to come.

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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

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Principal, Ford & Associates Architects
Through this plan, we will create a thriving, inclusive, and balanced community, in which residents are proud to live, work, and play.

Planning Orange Themes

Thriving: Orange Township is thriving economically, socially, and academically. The success of Orange Township’s economic development is made clear through the many commercial and industrial entities within the area. It is home to thousands of residents, who value the open space and walking paths provided by their neighborhoods. Academically, Olentangy School District is state-renowned for its exceptional education and amenities.

Inclusive: People of all ages, nationalities, and backgrounds are able to take part in the amenities offered to them by the natural features, social fabric, and economic strength of Orange Township.

Balanced: The Township strives for a balanced development pattern and hopes to continue that trend through this plan. Preserving social amenities and natural resources while encouraging future businesses and supporting residents is one of the core themes for this plan.
What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Comprehensive planning is a process that is used to create goals and a long-term vision that will guide future growth and development in a community. Comprehensive plans look at the issues and opportunities that the community will likely face within the next ten to twenty years, and provide solutions for these issues while taking advantage of the opportunities. The comprehensive planning process often uses input from residents and other stakeholders to determine the strengths, weaknesses, and trends as a way to help establish goals and a vision for the community. These plans are often broad, but are still used as a reference by planning and zoning departments when making decisions on growth and development issues.

Comprehensive planning has always been important for Orange Township. The most recent update to the plan was the 2010 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which was published by the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission in July 2010. The Planning Commission met with the Orange Township Zoning Commission and the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) to update the goals of the 2001 Comprehensive Plan by having them assign a value to certain issues to help decide which were the top priorities. The 2010 Comprehensive Plan presents well-documented goals and actions for Orange Township to help guide development pressures. However, the plan did not provide a distinct vision statement or an implementation strategy to help the Township achieve these goals. A community can have a forward-thinking plan that envisions an exciting future, but such a plan will not come to fruition without providing strategies to achieve the goals it presents.

In the seven years since the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission created the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, Orange Township and Delaware County have become one of the fastest growing areas in the state of Ohio and the nation. As a result of this growth, Orange Township has become one of the most desirable communities in Central Ohio to live and work in. Although the goals and recommendations in the 2010 plan are still relevant, it is important to reassess the issues and concerns facing the Township. This comprehensive plan update will focus on the issues of community image, housing, zoning and land use, economic development, transportation, utilities and infrastructure, community facilities, and natural resources and conservation.
The Comprehensive Planning Process

The update or creation of a comprehensive plan is a daunting task, but if approached correctly it can be accomplished in a timely manner. The three major steps of creating a comprehensive plan are:

- Collecting and analyzing data;
- Creation of goals, strategies, and a vision
- Creation of the document.

This comprehensive plan update was created by a team of students from the Ohio State University’s Masters of City and Regional Planning Program who worked in collaboration with the Zoning Department and community stakeholders from Orange Township. The team has met with Township officials and community members, held public meetings, and provided a survey to gather data. This data helped develop the goals, strategies, and vision that are representative of all members of the community.

Previous Comprehensive Plans

- Comprehensive Land Use Plan (2010)
- Comprehensive Plan (2001)
- Elmer Comprehensive Plan (1991)

Other Influential Plans

- Delaware County Economic Development Plan (2017)
- Delaware County Historic Preservation Plan (2017)
- Delaware County Transportation Plan (2017)
- Delaware County Open Space and Recreation Plan (2015)
- Delaware County Land Use Policy Framework Plan (2013)
- Parks, Trails, and Greenways Master Plan (2008)
- Parks Trails and Greenways Master Plan (2003)
- Delaware County Thoroughfare Plan (2001)
- ODOT U.S. 23 Access Management Study
- Countywide Comprehensive Plan (1993)
How Do You Plan for a Township?

Townships are relatively small pieces of land (usually no larger than thirty-six square miles). They are created to designate land ownership or to establish a form of local government. Within the United States, there are two different types of townships.

The first type of township is a survey township. These townships were created as the United States expanded. The federal government used survey townships to survey and sell public land, as well as to designate property ownership. For example, the Land Ordinance of 1785 established survey townships in what would eventually become Ohio. As the states and Native Americans relinquished lands in the Northwest Territory to the federal government, surveyors were to divide the territory into individual townships. Each township was to be square. Each side of the square was to be six miles in length, and the completed square would include a total of thirty-six square miles of territory. The Township would then be divided into one-square mile sections, with each section encompassing 640 acres. Each section received its own number. Section sixteen was set aside for the use of the public schools. The federal government reserved sections eight, eleven, twenty-six, and twenty-nine to provide veterans of the American Revolution with land bounties for their service during the war. The government would sell the remaining sections at public auction. The minimum bid was 640 dollars per section or one dollar for each acre of land in each section. From time to time, townships were surveyed that measured only five miles on a side or which had other variations on the usual form of thirty-six one square mile sections.

The other type of township is known as a civil township; Orange Township falls into this category. Typically, a board of township trustees oversees the Township. The major issues that a civil township government addresses are cemetery maintenance, trash collection, road upkeep, and snow removal. Civil townships are most common in rural areas, but even large cities sometimes expand around townships or parts of townships. Townships are commonly annexed into a municipality as a town or city develops and expands. For example, Mill Creek Township in Hamilton County, Ohio no longer exists, as several cities, most notably Cincinnati, absorbed the Township by annexation, acquisition or other means.

In 2000, 16,504 civil townships existed in the United States. These townships existed in twenty states, primarily states in the Northeast and Midwest. Over the course of Ohio’s history, at least 1,340 townships have existed within the state. Civil Townships, such as Orange Township, have legal limitations regarding township governance. Orange Township is not designated as a home rule township, meaning
it is a statutory township that does not have inherent power, only those that are delegated or reasonably implied by the state. Chapter 504 of the Ohio Revised Code details qualifications for townships to adopt limited home rule government and enforce more powers of self-governance.

Because of the statutory designation of Orange Township, Ohio Revised Code may be referenced when looking to justify land use action. Section 519.02 outlines the purposes for zoning and that zoning resolutions must be made “in accordance with a comprehensive plan”. In 2004, Ohio House Bill 148 expanded the purposes of zoning for townships by allowing them to zone “in the interest of the public health, safety, convenience, comfort, prosperity, or general welfare,” whereas prior, it was limited to the purposes of health, safety, and morals. The bill also removed “morals” from enabling legislation for zoning and enabled authority to adopt reasonable residential landscaping and architectural standards, excluding exterior building materials.

Ohio Senate Bill 18, adopted 34 days after Ohio House Bill 148, removed general welfare zoning authority for residential land use regulation, reducing township authority to regulate density by limiting its justification to health and safety. Senate Bill 18 was found unconstitutional in 2005 by Franklin County Court of Appeals, Tenth Appellate District, No. 07AP-738 and in Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority Board of Trustees v. State of Ohio, 2008-Ohio-2836.

This document makes recommendations that are specific and legally suited for Orange Township.
Overview

This narrative presents a summary of the current conditions and demographic characteristic forecasts for Orange Township. Significant findings are presented along with a summary of the data. The current conditions data helps give insight into the patterns that will affect the Township’s future.

The primary sources of information were provided by the 2010 US Census, 2015 US Census, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Ohio Development Services Agency, and the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission (DCRPC). This sections addresses the following:

Current Conditions Sections
- Key Demographic Findings
- Population Characteristics
- Population Forecasts
- Transportation
- Economic Conditions

Key Demographic Findings

Current Population: Orange Township had an estimated population of 28,117 in 2015, that represented about 9,545 households.

Population Trend: Orange Township has consistently grown since 1960, with little data showing any population decline over the decades.

Future Population: The Township’s population is projected to continue to grow to over 37,038 by the year 2040. This increase is attributable to the proximity of the City of Columbus, which is projecting to have a population over 1 million within the city alone by the year 2020.

Age Distribution: In 2015, the median age for the Township was estimated at 35. This median age, along with the population growth from the year 2010 to 2015, is estimated to be caused by young families moving to the Township.

Regional Comparison: Orange Township's population shares many characteristics to neighboring townships in Delaware County. The Township is predominately white, well-educated, and middle class. Orange Township's population is distinguished from others in Delaware County in that it is growing faster, has higher education rates, and maintains a relatively young age.
All regions are similar and are likely to share common trends and patterns. Dominant age groups are 5-19 and 25-44. This shows that the population primarily consists of grade school students and younger working class families. The Olentangy School District and major regional employers are most likely the magnets pulling these people to Orange Township.
Population Forecasts

Future population forecasts are based on understanding historic trends combined with development and demographic trends. The following forecast has been calculated by the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission (DCRPC), based on the Housing Unit Method, and has been projected up to the year 2020:

- Orange Township has grown 16.37% from 2010 to 2015 based on American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
- Contributing factors for the current population growth include: attractive cost of living, high performance schools, access to jobs, Colleges/Universities diverse economic profile, and a large healthcare economy.
- Given the proximity of Orange Township to the City of Columbus and the quality of public schools located within Orange Township, it should be expected that the projected populations for the area are to hold true, if not surpassed.
Transportation

Transportation is a major concern for residents of Orange Township. Below are some of the main transportation issues that affect the area.

- **Traffic:** Heavy traffic along the US-23 corridor is of high concern, especially during the morning and evening peaks. Other roads with high traffic volumes include The Polaris Commercial Loop; Powell Road from SR-315 to Polaris Parkway; Orange Road; Old State Road.

- **Mode Share:** Commuting alone by automobile is the primary mode of transportation in and around Orange Township; it is also the least efficient mode. It requires the most amount of space while moving the least amount of people. The second highest mode share is carpooling, followed by walking to work.

- **Work Destinations:** Most residents in Orange Township generally have average commute times that range from 18 to 27 minutes. Primary work destinations are mostly based in Columbus, with nearly half of all workers commuting to the City. Other prominent job destinations include Westerville, Dublin, Worthington, and Delaware.

![Fig. 6](image-url) Job Locations in Orange Township
Economic Conditions

The economic conditions in Orange Township have improved since the 2010 Land Use Plan when the area and the nation were recovering from a recession. This improvement has happened through successful economic development ventures, improved transportation systems, a growing region, and a population increase in the area.

Employment:

The current economic conditions in Orange Township are believed to be sound and well-founded. That is due to a strong workforce, a multitude of job opportunities, and a steadily growing population. There are over 2,000 employers within the Township; this signifies that there are a variety of employment opportunities for residents that live within and around the area. This is also made clear by the unemployment rate in Delaware County that was listed at 3.8% as of August 2017, the lowest such rate among its neighboring counties. Income and wages are above average for Delaware County and its residents, as the average employee brings home $850 or more per week. The majority of Orange Township residents fall into the $100,000 - $149,000 income bracket, with $200,000 and above as the second highest earning category. The majority of residents within Orange Township have occupations in either management or sales positions.

Orange Township holds many top employers, which include Mount Carmel and Olentangy Schools. However, a large percentage of Orange Township residents commute outside of the area for work.

Zoning and Land Use:

According to Delaware County, the occupied land use mix of Orange Township as of 2015 consisted of 32% residential, 10% agriculture, 7% commercial, 3% industrial, and 5% institutional. Additionally, rivers and lakes make up 11% of the land, while parks and open space accounts for 18% of the total land in Orange Township. The remaining 14% of land is vacant. It is important to note that the largest amount of land use is designated for residential use, which brings in a vast proportion of tax revenues. Property tax is the most prominent revenue source that funds Orange Township’s public services and operations. This means there is a significant share of tax revenue being reinvested back into the community, mostly for the school district and infrastructure improvements.
Delaware County Largest Private Sector Employers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Business Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JP Morgan Chase &amp; Co.</td>
<td>10,197</td>
<td>Financial Services back office, software development, data center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kroger Co.</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>Great Lakes distribution center of supermarket retailer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHL Supply Chain</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>Americas HQ, logistics services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Showa, Inc.</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>Manufacturing and R&amp;D of shock absorbers and power steering systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vertiv Co.</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>HQ, manufacturing of power equipment for industrial and data centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McGraw-Hill Education</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Distribution of education publications, development of digital learning products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optum</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>Insurance and workers compensation office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Auto Parts</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>Auto parts distribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG Industries</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>Paint and resins manufacturing, R&amp;D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JEGS High Performance</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>HQ and distribution of auto and truck parts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Delaware County Census Employment Data

*Civilians employed 16 years and older

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>+/-19</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>+/-112</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,187</td>
<td>+/-218</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>+/-152</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>1,856</td>
<td>+/-298</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and warehousing, and utilities</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>+/-150</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>+/-123</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing</td>
<td>2,444</td>
<td>+/-343</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services</td>
<td>2,028</td>
<td>+/-292</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services, and health and social assistance</td>
<td>3,071</td>
<td>+/-336</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services</td>
<td>1,021</td>
<td>+/-204</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services, except public administration</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>+/-211</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>+/-155</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>