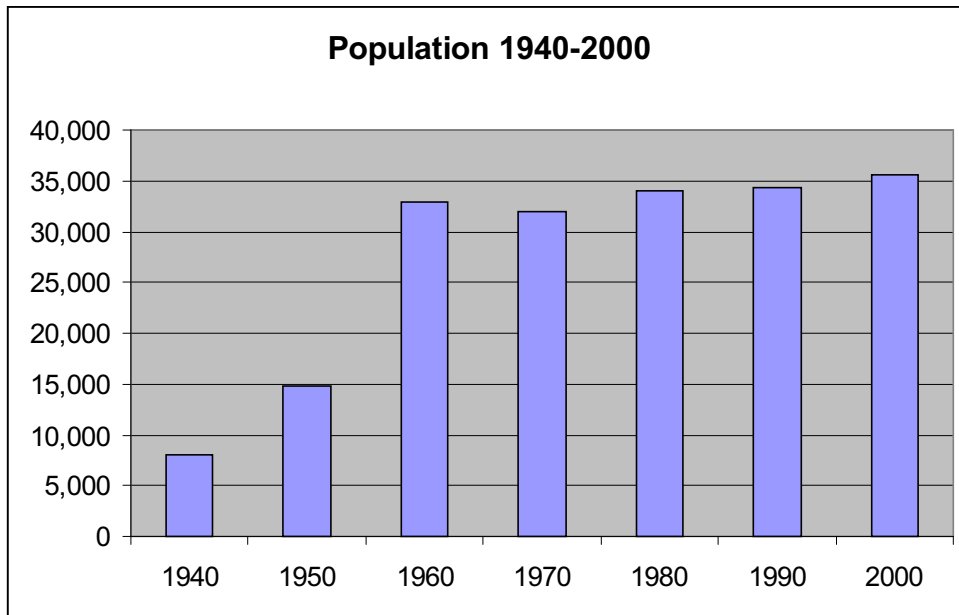


Demand Capacity Analysis

A demand capacity analysis attempts to balance and compare forecasts of change with the capability of a community to accommodate that change. For Plain Township, the change indicator is population. The following section discusses growth scenarios and the capacity of the Township to accommodate that growth.

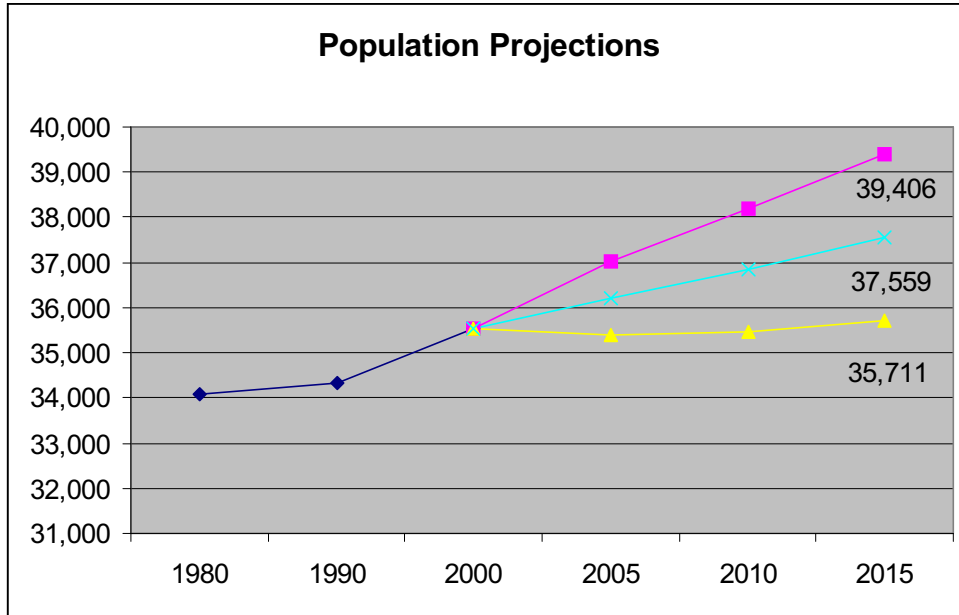
Population Growth

As the chart and table below illustrate, Plain Township experienced a population boom during the 1950's. Since that time, the population has fluctuated just slightly. From 1980 to 1990, the population grew less than one percent (0.07%) compared with Stark County, which experienced a three percent loss. The US Census Bureau's 2000 population count for Plain Township is 35,543—a 3.6% increase from the 1990 population. This is the highest rate of growth in the Township since the 1970s.



	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Population	8,096	14,821	32,931	31,945	34,084	34,318	35,543
Percent Change		83.1%	122.2%	-3.0%	6.7%	0.7%	3.6%
Annual Rate of Growth		6.2%	8.3%	-0.3%	0.7%	0.1%	0.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



	2000	2005	2010	2015
Housing Permit Projection	35,543	37,006	38,206	39,406
Ohio State Univ. Projection	35,543	35,400	35,457	35,711
Average Projection	35,543	36,203	36,832	37,559

Source: PKG Consultants, Ohio State University

The many variables at work in Plain Township make projecting future population challenging. Three different values are presented above for the purposes of this plan.

The first projection uses building permit data to predict how many additional housing units will be built over the next thirteen years. Future population is calculated by multiplying the number of projected housing units by the number of persons per household (2.38 according to the 2000 Census). This projection assumes that development will continue at its current rate. As the chart above illustrates, this results in a straight-line trend, which continues the moderate building boom of the 1990s. This projection yields a population of 39,406 in 2015.

The second projection is derived from the current percentage of Stark County's population that lives in Plain Township. In 2000, Plain Township held 9.4% of Stark County's population. Assuming this share of the county population remains stable, a Township population projection can be derived from a county projection. The Ohio State University (OSU) provides county population projections through the Department of Human and Community Resource Development. The most recent Stark County profile report predicts a 2015 population of 379,000, which results in a Plain Township population of 35,711. However, this projection does not account for the 2000 Census. Stark County and Plain Township both grew at a faster rate during the 1990s than had been predicted. As a result, the projection provided by OSU will likely be lower than the actual population.

The third projection is an average of the two previous projections. This blends the two methods together, accounting for the historic slower growth rates with the building boom in the 1990s. While growth is not likely to slow as much as the OSU projection predicts, economic variables are at work, which are slowing the growth rates experienced by communities during the last ten years. Plain Township’s 2015 population is likely to fall close to this predicted figure of 37,559 people. However, based on the completion of new sanitary sewer lines in the northeast portion of the township and water service to the north-central portion of the township, this population figure could increase to closer to 39,000 over the next fifteen years.

Land Use Capacity

The following table illustrates the current land use breakdown in Plain Township.

Acres by Land Use		
<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percentage of Total</i>
Suburban Residential	5,398	42.14
Rural Residential	631	4.92
Multi-Family Residential	340	2.65
Mobile Home Park	34	.27
Commercial	503	3.92
Industrial	608	4.75
Institutional	307	2.40
Recreational	505	3.94
Agriculture	3,422	26.72
Undeveloped	263	2.06
Woodlands	798	6.23
Total	12,809	100.00

The following table analyzes the land available for development by zoning district within Plain Township. This data is derived from PKG land use mapping and field surveys to determine different land uses. For the purpose of this analysis, any property over two acres in size which is currently vacant, in agricultural use, or wooded is considered available for development.

The Adjusted Acres subtracts 23% from the total amount of land in each zoning district to account for environmental constraints, land consumed by public rights-of-way, and other site planning problems. Minimum lot size is taken from the current Plain Township Zoning resolution. Certain zoning districts (R-3 Multiple Family) provide for different minimum lot sizes depending on what kind of construction is proposed. To account for a possible blending of building types in these zoning districts, this analysis averages the different lot sizes together where more than one minimum lot size is provided for in a district.

Land Available for Development by Zoning District

	<i>Total Acres</i>	<i>Adj. Acres</i>	<i>Min Lot Size (sq. ft.)</i>	<i>Lot Capacity</i>	<i>Population</i>
R-R Rural Residential	2,310.82	1,779.33	20,000	3,875	9,223
R-1 Single Family	1,738.50	1,338.65	10,000	5,831	13,878
R-2 One and Two Family	407.13	313.49	10,500	1,301	3,095
R-3 Low Density Multi Family	57.17	44.02	10,000	192	456
R-4 High Density Multi Family	--	--	--	--	--
R-5 Mobile Home Park	--	--	--	--	--
R-6 Planned Unit Development	--	--	--	--	--
S-1 Suburban Office	--	--	--	--	--
B-1 Neighborhood Business	20.36	15.68	15,000	46	
B-2 General Business	113.41	87.33	20,000	190	
I-1 Light Industrial	173.82	133.84	20,000	292	
I-2 General Industrial	168.58	129.81	20,000	283	
Total	4,989.79	3,842.14			26,653

Lot Capacity refers to any building, which could be constructed in each respective zoning district. In the I-1 district, Lot Capacity refers to industrial buildings. In the R-1 district, it refers to the number of houses that could be constructed. When all the potential development area under current zoning within the Township is accounted for, an additional 26,653 people could be accommodated at maximum build out. This is using the 2000 Census data of 2.38 people per household.

Therefore, under the current zoning resolution, there is more than ample room to accommodate projected population growth in Plain Township until 2015. The most optimistic of the three population projections predicts only an additional 3,863 people in the Township. The more likely scenario is the projection of a total population of 37,559, or 2,016 additional people. However, this could change dramatically depending on economic conditions and private market conditions.

What this means is Plain Township has options available for how it wants to grow and develop. Every acre of open land does not have to be given over for development in order to accommodate increased population. It is worth noting that the majority of land available for development in the Township is zoned for relatively low-density residential uses. Because of current zoning and subdivision control regulations, leaving this zoning in place almost guarantees a standard development pattern, which may or may not be sensitive to environmental constraints, rural character, service provision, and other needs of the Township.