

# *"Pioneering the Future"*

## *Marietta City Comprehensive Plan*



**October 1, 2003**

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# INTRODUCTION

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## ***Background***

The Development Advisory Board (DAB) was created by the City of Marietta to prepare a City Comprehensive Plan as one of the stipulations of the *Moratorium on the Construction or Continued Construction of the City of Marietta Municipal Building*, passed by the community on November 6, 2001. This moratorium reads:

Concerned electors of the City of Marietta, whose signatures are attached hereto, endorse and support, through this Initiative Petition, the placement of a moratorium measure on the ballot of the November 6, 2001 General Election. The initiative, if adopted by the electors of the City of Marietta, would require the City of Marietta, through its elected administrative and legislative representatives, to place a moratorium on the construction or further construction of a Municipal Building for a period of twenty-four (24) months from the date the results of General Election are certified by the Board of Elections. The moratorium would require, and allow adequate time for, elected officials and community representatives to complete work on a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Marietta to include: (1) the evaluation of several sites and the selection of an appropriate site for the proposed Municipal Building Complex; (2) the provision for adequate parking for said Complex; (3) an evaluation of and provision for adequate space, including expansion space, for the Police and Fire Departments; (4) an evaluation of the space requirements of the Municipal Court; and (5) a provision for both internal and external expansion space for the Complex and each of its components. While the Moratorium only applies to the construction of the Municipal Building, it would allow sufficient time to consider and resolve, through the Comprehensive Plan process, other issues which directly impact on or are directly impacted by the proposed construction of a Municipal Building including: (1) the resolution of the use of the Armory Property; (2) the resolution of issues related to the Smith Trust Fund; (3) the construction of a municipal swimming pool; (4) the construction of a recreation center; and (5) the construction of a multi-tiered parking garage on the site of the Parking Partners parking lot.

The DAB was convened according to Ohio revised Code 143.03. Members of the DAB were nominated by Mayor Joe A. Matthews and confirmed by the City Council on January 3, 2002. The DAB had its first meeting February 5, 2002 and subsequently held regular bimonthly meetings on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Other meetings are described under Public Outreach. This Plan represents the product of the DAB's deliberations.

## ***Goals of the plan***

This comprehensive plan is not intended to be a simple list of 'answers' or 'solutions' to long-standing community issues – ultimately these can only be resolved through the actions of City Officials and ballots of the electorate. A comprehensive community plan cannot identify a single, 'right' path to a desirable future; however, it does establish a trajectory toward particular community visions. In order to set its feet upon a particular path, a community needs to know its current situation and where it wants to go. Thus, in preparing this comprehensive plan, we have endeavored to identify the characteristics and values that make the Marietta community unique, and to envision possibilities for the future. Based upon public feedback, we believe that the core values and visions presented herein are consistent with the fundamental values and desires of the

community. The recommendations will help move the community toward a future that is consistent with these values. Nevertheless, details must be worked out and clarified before many of these recommendations can be implemented. It will be up to public officials and community members to turn recommendations into initiatives.

One might question if it is possible to ever prepare an absolutely ‘comprehensive’ city plan; or if this were possible, would the sheer volume of the document encumber its usefulness? It is also possible to envision an almost infinite number of “good ideas” that could be recommended to improve the functioning of a community. We have endeavored to prepare a concise and readable document that addresses the most important issues confronting the Marietta Community. By circulating for public input the various sections as they have been prepared, we hope that significant issues have not been missed. Yet, oversights may have occurred, and for these we apologize. However, a city comprehensive plan should not be a static document, but rather subject to periodic review and revision. This will be one of the ongoing functions of the Development Advisory Board, and updating of the plan will provide the opportunity to address new issues as they arise.

### ***Public Outreach***

The Development Advisory Board has taken great care to contact and listen to various groups and individuals about issues of importance to our community now and in the coming decades. The ideas and recommendations presented here have been ‘prefiltered’ through public review in community meetings and newspaper columns. We hope our efforts to maintain open lines of public communication will serve as a model for future planning activities by the City and community groups.

The DAB has held semi-monthly meetings since February 2002, which have been open to the public and attended by citizens and the media. Other public meetings have included public forums:

March 20, 2002 Graham Auditorium, WSCC

October 23, 2002 Graham Auditorium, WSCC

March 27, 2003 Graham Auditorium, WSCC

October 1, 2003 Graham Auditorium, WSCC (presentation of final document)

and neighborhood meetings:

December 9, 2002 2nd Ward

December 10, 2002 4th Ward

January 7, 2003 1st Ward

January 8, 2003 3rd Ward

The DAB has made presentations to or had meetings with the Marietta Noon Rotary, MAMA, the Chamber of Commerce, Marietta Lions Club, CAPS, Justice Center Planning group, Citizens for a Marietta Community Center (CMCC), Historic Preservation Advocates, and the Board of Education. Information and updates on our progress have been presented to the public in numerous columns written by board members and news articles in local newspapers.

## ***Organization of the Plan***

The City Comprehensive Plan is framed around eight focus areas:

- Business and Economic Development
- Education
- Natural Environmental
- Historic Perspectives
- Infrastructure & Services
- Public Health and Safety
- Recreation and Transportation.

We have also included a ‘Cross Category’ section for issues that do not fit well into these categories.

For each focus area there are sections that address:

- **Community Assets:** Community Assets are the significant beneficial resources of our community. These are not intended to be exhaustive lists, but rather a broad sweep of the most important community assets.
- **Issues of Concern:** Issues of Concern are areas of deficiency or community dissatisfaction. These are not intended to be exhaustive lists, primarily focusing upon more fundamental challenges confronting the community today.
- **Core values:** Core Values are essential community characteristics that should be preserved or enhanced during future development. At the most fundamental level, Core Values comprise a value system upon which a community can draw when making difficult decisions about community development – significant community development initiatives should be compatible with the community’s core values.
- **Vision Statements:** Vision Statements describe character of the community that we desire in the next 10 to 20 years. They are a set of goals toward which the community can set a course and against which it can gauge progress. The community should not make development decisions that move it away from achieving its visions.
- **Recommendations:** Recommendations are the specific set of projects, policies and strategies that can help the community progress toward its long-term visions. Each set of recommendations is preceded by a brief narrative summarizing key issues in the Marietta Community.

We recognize that some topics could have been placed into alternative focus areas; for example, recommendations pertaining to air and water quality in Public Health and Safety could also have been discussed under Natural Environment, and sidewalk maintenance might have been discussed under Public Health and Safety rather than Transportation. In some cases, topics are cross-referenced among the focus area sections.

## ***Supporting Documents***

The Marietta Community is fortunate that many relevant studies have been performed in recent years. We have drawn upon many of these documents and other resources in preparing this plan. In order to prepare a more concise document, we have chosen to reference the supporting literature in the plan and store the original reference materials in the Development Advisory Board Archive in the City Development Office. We encourage community members to examine these resources.

## ***Implementation***

We believe that the most important first step will be for the community to adopt a long-term planning approach to community development. Effective long-term planning will require that elected officials:

- 1) identify all the major projects that it would like to pursue over a selected time frame,
- 2) assure that development proposals are consistent with the core values and long-term goals of the community,
- 3) establish reasonable cost estimates for the projects,
- 4) prioritize projects based upon need and importance to the city vision,
- 5) determine the current, best strategy for funding each project, and,
- 6) establish an anticipated timeline for initiating and completing each project.

The constraints of financial and human resources are the obvious challenges to implementing an ambitious, forward-thinking, comprehensive plan. However, many of the recommendations set forth in this plan do not involve significant, or any, capital investment. Some initiatives will involve significant financing, and the community must be willing to invest in its future. Implementing other recommendations will involve only public discussion and new legislation. Many challenges before the community do not have a single solution (there are, for example, various projects that can help advance community economic development). The community should seek to achieve now what can be done, and develop strategies for achieving long-term goals. Major long-term plans will need to be tailored in light of short-term contingencies; however, short-term contingencies should not be used as rationales for making decisions with long-term implications.

The DAB believes that the Marietta community is anxious to implement a comprehensive plan. There are important roles and responsibilities for all members of the community if we are to do so successfully. We are encouraged that citizens and community groups have already become champions and advocates for some of the recommendations in this plan. We hope that other recommendations will find similar ‘grass roots’ support. All of the members of the Marietta community should make the effort to become informed about community issues—the argument that ‘I wasn’t told’ is insufficient, since acquiring knowledge is an active not a passive process. Pertinent information is provided to the public through a variety of media channels, and citizens must make a reasonable effort to seek and understand this information. Public participation also necessitates civil, informed discussion of the issues, not personal attacks and name-calling. Participants in community discussions should assume that

everyone involved is seeking the betterment of the community—the debate should focus on the issues, not the persons involved. Planning of community projects should include invitations for participation by all stake-holders.

Inevitably, the lions-share of responsibility must rest upon City Officials. The Small Town Planning Handbook offers the following advice:

“Citizen action is important, but it cannot defeat official action. Citizens must have the support and cooperation of elected officials. Poor government abounds and is surely one of the major reasons, along with typically poor voters turnouts, for the problems of small towns. The solution lies squarely within the political arena.” (Daniels, et al, 1995).

Successful implementation of this plan will require leadership from elected officials, who must set the agenda and devise the strategies for achieving long-term objectives. City Officials must seek new avenues for communicating with the public. It is not uncommon for City Officials to decry that legislation often passes through committee meetings and council readings before they hear criticism from the public. Yet, from the public perception, public hearings and committee meetings are perceived as poorly publicized and scheduled at inconvenient times, and Council meetings offer little opportunity for a dialog between City Officials and the public. Constructive dialog between City, County and Township officials is also essential. Marietta does not exist in a bubble; it influences and is impacted by surrounding areas. Some of the most important issues, such as the need for future land development planning, can only be resolved by cooperation between elected officials from all of the agencies.

Both citizens and City Officials must avoid a “Marietta will never change” mentality, for adopting this mindset will result in a self-fulfilling prophesy. The basic principles of self-governance and self-determination that operate in other communities apply to Marietta as well. If we believe in our potential we can achieve what others have done, and with our community assets, we can achieve much more.

For the future, the Development Advisory Board sees its roles in revising and updating the city comprehensive plan, advocating for implementation of its recommendations, facilitating discussions of city development proposals, and giving the public periodic ‘status reports’ on progress toward plan implementation.

## ***Acknowledgements***

We would like to acknowledge the help and support that we received from many groups and individuals in the community: Mayor Joe Matthews and the Marietta City Council for their support and contributions to our work; Development Office Director Mike Gulliver for serving as our communications liaison, and the staff of the Development Office for graciously fulfilling a steady stream of information requests; Directors and members of the various other City Departments who took time to help educate the Board about the operation of their Offices and the challenges that they must confront; the Community 20/20 organization for providing a good foundation upon which we developed this plan; the Marietta Times and Community Leader for providing generous press space so that we could communicate our work and efforts with the Marietta Community; and the numerous citizens and organizations who have made valuable contributions to our deliberations and provided important feedback on drafts of the plan.



### ***Community Assets***

- Marietta offers a beautiful historic downtown district.
- Marietta has a strong proactive Tourist & Convention Bureau and Chamber of Commerce.
- We have many well-known large corporations represented in the area.
- Local hands-on access to Economic Development Department at the State, County and City levels.
- We have a number of colleges within the region to draw a diverse pool of potential employees.
- Implementation of foreign trade zone will increase local economy exponentially.
- We have an exceptional quality of life for various needs (retire, start a business, move a business, buy a business, find a job, etc).
- The expansion of Route 7 has and will allow for economic growth.
- There is funding available through development sources for retention & new business.
- Unique access to city via river, rail and interstate.
- The city has immediate and abundant access to recreation opportunities within the Wayne National Forrest.
- Various websites offer exposure to city via the Internet.
- We have an ongoing Retention & Expansion program for local business.

### ***Issues of Concern***

- Opportunity for securing “living wage” employment is diminishing.
- Economic development along Rt 7 is not sustainable or beneficial without a landuse plan.
- Concerns about air quality & industrial pollution discourages relocation to the area.
- Historic character of the downtown business area is deteriorating.
- Deficiency in downtown attractions downtown such as restaurants and entertainment.
- Poor condition of the walking bridge threatens connection between East-side and West-side business areas.
- Inadequate parking in proximity to some business areas.
- Due to lack of infrastructure we have limited/marginal sites to offer potential incoming industry and/or retail businesses.
- Inconsistent business hours among downtown merchants discourages patronage.
- County is representative of just 2% of the state’s industry so state funding is a low priority.
- Growth of “big box” retail stores will impact small business.
- Deficiency in downtown residential space.
- The area lacks adequate airport access.



## ***Core Values***

- Resources that attract business, talented people and commerce. (Resources include Colleges, Chamber, Tourism and Convention Bureau, Econ Dev. Depts, Recreation.)
- Designated historic districts that highlight the community's historic qualities and exceptional quality of life.
- City access via river, rail and interstate.
- Careful implementation of government programs available for expansion (Foreign Trade Zone, Port Authority, etc.).
- Adequate living-wage opportunities in industrial and retail sectors.

## ***Vision Statement***

Careful management and innovative expansion of our community resources will sustain and advance our local economy. The community offers unique opportunities to draw talented people, new ideas and business ventures. There are programs and qualified agencies in place designed to implement the economic growth of the area in terms of business, recreation, education and general quality of life. Economic development sustains the vitality of the business community in harmony with the continued high quality of life of the community.

## ***Narrative and Recommendations***

There has been positive change in the economic outlook for Marietta in recent years. Considerable investment has been made in the appearance of the downtown business areas on both sides of the river with removal of power lines, installation of new sidewalks and curbs, and planting of trees. Local business organizations such as the Marietta Area Merchants Association, Historic Harmar Bridge Company and Friends of Front Street sponsor activities such as *Merchants and Artists Nights*, *Outdoor Living Days* and *Red White and Bluefest* that attract people to the downtown area. Local business associations have funded decorative flower planters that line the streets, and the 2003 Telesis class is starting a 'Bridge of Flowers' project to enhance the historic train bridge. The city periphery has attracted national chain outlets (such as Lowes and WalMart), significantly adding to the retail sales within the city. Indeed, a recent study of Marietta and the surrounding area found that "Based on this initial retail market analysis, Marietta's local economy is found to be healthy and robust" (Irwin and Reece, 2002). The recent establishment of a Foreign Trade Zone and Port Authority should help advance regional commerce.

Washington County's tourism-based economy has fluctuated in recent years (Rovelstad & Associates and Longwoods International Economic Impact Study, 2000-2001). Achieving sustainable growth will require strengthening the market niche of the downtown business district. Large outlet stores along the city perimeter will likely retail most of the convenience goods in the Marietta region, whereas the downtown business area will continue to be based largely upon tourism and retail of specialty items. As

astutely noted in the retail market analysis, “These two aspects of the retail economy support each other. Economic development efforts should continue to support both these (sic) parts of the retail economy and not sacrifice one for the other” (Irwin and Reece, 2002). Promotion of the downtown business district will require initiatives that strategically build upon the strengths already present in the community, and to a large degree this means historic preservation.

Preserving core qualities of the community also means that the Marietta community should not sacrifice quality-of-life for indiscriminate economic growth. Economic development should be planned so that newly developed areas of the city reflect existing city qualities. This will help promote development of new, clean industry and living wage employment opportunities. Yet, Marietta’s economic projections cannot be based on the assumption that major new employment opportunities will arrive to save us. It is important to recognize also that while area heavy industry and utilities are significant suppliers of jobs, their emission-intensive operations impact water and air quality creating an economic liability for the area.

Ultimately, the Marietta community’s long-term economic prospects are linked to all the focus areas of this comprehensive plan. The Community cannot take an insular view of cause and effect. The community relies upon historic qualities to promote tourism; therefore, it is clear that long-term viability of this economy will be linked to historic preservation. Successful economic competition in the 21st century also requires understanding and acting upon the connections between economic development and other city/community qualities, such as availability of modern transportation and public healthcare systems, dependability of city infrastructure, caliber of the local school systems, and environmental quality. These are important considerations that businesses will consider when deciding whether to locate or expand in this area. Perceived inadequacies in any of these other focus areas detract from opportunities for long-term community economic growth.

Finally, it is of interest to note that fundamentally, the recommendations for economic development of this plan resemble those put forth almost 20 years ago in a contracted Downtown Development Strategy (Woolpert Consultants, 1984). While some of the recommendations of this report such as improving the overall image of the downtown have been acted upon, most have not. Many of the same issues that existed in the early 1980s continue today, as do the opportunities for their resolution.

### ***Our recommendations are for the City to:***

- **Establish a board that will have principal responsibility for marketing and promoting regional commerce opportunities.** It is necessary that commercial development opportunities be vigorously promoted in the Marietta area. Currently there is no coherent strategy by which this occurs. It is essential that some agency or organization, possibly the Chamber of Commerce assume this responsibility. Some of the ways in which this agency or organization could promote economic development include 1) maintaining an inventory of available commercial real-estate, commercial incentive programs, community development standards, and other information of value to prospective new businesses; 2) marketing of economic

opportunities, 3) working with local educational institutions to provide educational opportunities for local business owners and workforce training, 4) establishing benchmarks and goals through which economic status of this region can be compared that of other communities, 5) helping to secure capital financing for business startups. This agency or organization should work in close concert with the Washington County Economic Development Office.

- **Strengthen the ties between the historic business districts on the East and West sides of the Muskingum River.** Business districts on the east and west sides of the Muskingum river must strengthen their ties. A larger central business district is economically stronger than a smaller district, particularly for a tourism-based economy. It is, therefore, reasonable to expect that Front St./Putnam St and Harmar business districts will advance or decline together. The greatest opportunity for strengthening this linkage lies in the Harmar Railroad Bridge, which represents the single most direct conduit across the river. This bridge can be a major tourist attraction and offers the single most practical avenue for extending the bike path across the river. The recent work of Telesis to demonstrate the 'Bridge of Flowers' concept is encouraging; however, major investment will be necessary for the city to see all the benefits a fully restored bridge could provide. Two recent studies have assessed the condition of the bridge potential costs of restoration (Collins, 2001; Lock One Inc, 2001), and the more pessimistic assessment suggests restoration costs of over one million dollars. This is an attainable goal and the community should support and facilitate all efforts by the nonprofit Historic Harmar Bridge Company to secure funding.

Secondly, downtown business associations should become more united in the promotion of downtown economic development. While multiple organizations within the same community are not inherently bad, they become counter-productive when parochial interests obscure and obstruct cooperation. The economic vitality of the downtown business district will succeed or crumble as a whole.

- **Establish a Historic Central Business District.** The Community must accept fully that preservation of the historic character of the downtown business district is the key to its long-term community economic survival. To this end, Marietta should demarcate and promote a Historic Central Business District, as have other cities that draw heavily upon tourism. Such a District would describe, protect, and promote development and architecture that will support this economic imperative, and an ambience that is attractive to patrons of the business district.
- **Promote development and activities that bring people to the downtown business area.** The city promotes economic strength by giving people reasons to come to the downtown business district. The presence of a theater (progress toward the restoration of the Colony Theater is a positive step), restaurants, and services will spin-off retail activity. However, to promote tourism and casual shopping, incentives should be created that encourage development of retail stores on the first floor of downtown commercial properties. Strong business areas encompass residential housing and do not lead to its destruction or exclusion; thus, the city should revise zoning laws and

create incentives to foster residential housing in and near business districts. However, all development in the downtown area should foster the historic character of the area.

- **Address parking issues for the downtown business area.** The city cannot continue to tear down buildings for parking, and must plan now for future parking needs. Two issues should be addressed:
  - o Zoning ordinances that currently couple parking space requirements to business square footage need to be revised. Current parking requirement for new businesses need to be based on the actual business needs.
  - o Begin to plan now for future parking expansion. We do not advocate for building of a parking garage at Parking Partners because it would not be an aesthetic improvement and is not the most convenient location. We believe that the alley space between Front and Second Streets and Putnam and Butler streets affords the better location for parking expansion. A parking garage established in this site would serve the greatest sector of the downtown business community, particularly the parking-deprived Putnam Street area, and while having the least impact of the character of the district itself. We would hope that local business owners, who benefit most directly, could facilitate this plan with reasonable accommodations. The city should contract a feasibility study for such a plan.

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# *EDUCATION*

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## *Community Assets*

### Primary and Secondary Education

- Four elementary schools are located throughout the community.
- Passage of three recent levies and a bond issue show community support.
- A variety of educational alternatives (Post Secondary Education Options –PSEO, private schools, open enrollment, etc).
- Rivers, Wayne National Forest, Broughton Nature Preserve, and Camp Hervida provide outdoor educational opportunities.
- Regionally recognized extracurricular programs.
- State recognition for parent participation in volunteer program
- Many teachers have higher degrees and National Board Certification.
- Local businesses participate in “Partners in Education” program.

### Higher Education

- We have state, private and vocational institutions in the city, providing local job training and continuing education opportunities.
- Local colleges provide cultural and scholarly qualities to community.
- Provide student teachers to local school system.
- Higher institutions contribute to community recreational opportunities.
- Telesis program offers local leadership training.
- Significant contribution to local library holdings.

## *Issues of Concern*

- Inadequate financial support for academic programs and technology. (Per student expenditure is below the state average.)
- Declining enrollments in public school system due to demographics, increased home schooling, net loss from open enrollment program, and PSEO participation.
- State rating of academic success at ‘Continuous Improvement’.
- School closure is reducing number of neighborhood schools.
- Feeling in the community that citizens have not been afforded an opportunity for participation in long-term planning for the school system.
- Security measures need improved technology.
- High school students do not feel part of decision-making process.
- A limited number of Advanced Placement (AP) classes and no magnet school for academically gifted students.

## ***Core Values***

- Public educational standards that exceed state averages.
- Adequate maintenance of public school facilities.
- Adequate funding of academic and extracurricular activities.
- Schools within easy access of all neighborhoods.
- Equitable educational opportunities for gifted and challenged students.
- Life-long learning opportunities in vocational, private and public higher education.
- All members of the community are treated with dignity and respect.

## ***Vision Statement***

Educational opportunities and achievement in Marietta are widely recognized and attract people and businesses to the area. The school system receives adequate financial support through state and local sources. The public school system educational programs prepare students of all abilities to make contributions to their communities through subsequent college, vocational or other training opportunities. There is a close relationship between the public school system and the local institutions of higher education.

## ***Narrative and Recommendations***

The Marietta area is well endowed with educational opportunities. Within the community are institutions that serve traditional post-secondary, vocational, and continuing educational needs. These institutions afford diverse career- and job-training opportunities, fostering an important foundation for future economic development. Through booster clubs and other volunteer activities, the public school system has received wide support from the community. The Marietta City School system, like many in the state, has suffered financial strains in recent years. The problems have arisen from a variety of causes, including recent cutbacks in state funding, changes in the commercial inventory tax code, regional demographic trends, students taking advantage of new educational options such as PSEO, and the City's use of tax incentives. Some of these factors lie outside the immediate control of the community, some within. Thus, long-term planning for improvements to the community educational system can and should involve broad community discussion.

The community has much to be proud of in its public school system, and has shown support in the last decade repeatedly with the passage of school levies and bond issues, Partners in Education Program, and volunteer involvement. In particular, these efforts have helped build exceptional extra-curricular programs and meet basic facilities maintenance needs. The PSEO and Open Enrollment programs are a mixed blessing, providing new educational opportunities for students but creating added financial burdens for the school system. Curricular changes have yielded better academic performance in recent years although there is still much room for improvement. The Marietta School System is currently rated by the State under Continuous Improvement (Ohio Department of Education, 2003a), meeting 9 of 27 indicators (the rating system includes five categories: Excellent, Effective, Continuous Improvement, Academic Watch, and Academic Emergency). All of the public school systems in Washington County are also rated at continuous improvement, and among the ten school systems across the state that

are most similar to Marietta, six are rated as Continuous Improvement (three are rated at effective and one at excellent). Statewide for the 2002–2003 academic year, 35% of school districts received effective or excellent ratings and (Ohio Department of Education, 2003b). The state mandated three-year Continuous Improvement Plan (Marietta City School District, 2000-2001) should help the community improve its rating.

The Marietta City Board of Education is to be commended for taking decisive actions in response to short-term financial imperatives. While the recent school closings and financial cutbacks have helped the school system meet immediate budgetary shortfalls, long-term issues remain to be resolved. One of the most important issues will be the fate of the remaining neighborhood elementary schools. In this regard, the community must weigh the importance to community character of maintaining the remaining neighborhood elementary schools. We perceive this to be a community core value, but only the community can act in a way that makes it so. There are other pressing financial needs in the school system as well, including technology upgrades and maintenance, which cannot be ignored. Since the area is not likely to receive an external funding windfall anytime in the foreseeable future, the community will need to bear more of the financial burden of the school system if the long-term goals are to be met.

The School Board has begun to implement a Five-Year Plan (Marietta City School District, 2003) that begins to address the challenges confronting the district. The plan and its rationale were presented to the community at a public meeting earlier this year. It should be noted that there have been dissenting opinions from the public concerning the availability of information and opportunities for public involvement in the planning process.

Financing of education and economic development are intimately linked, and the community must plan strategically and have ordinances to protect tax revenues needed by public school system. For example; for lack of land development ordinances, the City unnecessarily sacrificed tax revenues during the recent Lowes development project. In applying TIF to the Lowes development, potential revenue for the school system was diverted for uses that should have been financed by the developer, there was collateral loss of tax revenue with the consequential closing of Wolohans, while relatively few high-salary jobs were brought to the area.

### ***Our recommendations are for the City to:***

- **Reduce or eliminate tax incentives for retail and commercial store development.** There is a place for tax incentives, however, economic benefit to the community is far greater from industrial development than retail and commercial outlets, and tax incentives for retail development may yield diminishing returns. Land-use development ordinances should include requirements of developers to finance infrastructure upgrades so that tax revenues are not diverted through use of TIFs.
- **Support future levies and bond issues for the public school system.** Current political and economic trends suggest that additional funding for the public school system will have to come primarily from local sources. While residents who do not currently have children in the school system often feel that they have little to gain from tax dollars there invested, the quality of the educational system is one of the

most important foundations upon which economic growth of the community is built, and the benefits of a strong school system extend broadly throughout the community.

- **Become more involved in long-term planning for the public school system.** For a chronically under-funded school system, public participation in the planning process is the single most effective means of fostering community support. Community members should attend School Board meetings and public presentations, but understand that difficult financial challenges have necessitated changes in the operations of the local school system. Citizens must be open to and respect the difficult decisions that school officials must make to resolve these problems. We encourage the school officials to make more readily available to the public the Five-Year Plan, Continuous Improvement Plan and other supporting information. The school system might post this information on the Web, as do other communities, or make it available in the public library. School Officials should also invite public involvement in the planning process. Marietta has a strong history of public involvement, and this, with effective leadership, could be rallied to help the community achieve long-term goals.



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# *HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES*

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## *Community Assets*

### Residential neighborhoods:

- Plentiful sidewalks and tree-lined brick streets with stone curbs in historic residential areas.
- Existing historic district encompasses varying architectural styles.
- Historic residential areas provided with easy access to city parks by the city founders.
- Public School buildings preserved and renovated for continued use in neighborhoods.
- Historic street lights enhance the historic character of the community.

### Historic downtown:

- Historic commercial structures house retail, office and residential space.
- Three historic theaters located in the downtown area.
- Historic Governmental buildings still serve the public.
- The Putnam Bridge complements historic character of the community.
- Most merchants wish to associate themselves with the historic character of the business district.
- Historic character affords economic gains from tourist trade.
- Local organizations exist that can help promote and preserve historic character.

### Natural History:

- Earthworks of previous cultures preserved within the City (mounds, etc.)
- Museums that depict the history of the area.
- Local Natural History Society is proactive in providing public education.

### Historic Icons:

- Various stern (paddle) wheel vessels in the Muskingum and Ohio River Valley.
- Historic statues, monuments and cemetery's.
- Public lands and parks set aside for recreational and aesthetic purposes.
- Underground Railroad sites, ways and markers.
- Historic private college campus and associated structures.

## ***Issues of Concern***

- There is a continual loss of historic buildings in the central business district and residential areas.
- There is continual erosion of the historic character of the central business district and residential neighborhoods through nonconforming new construction.
- Historic monuments are in need of repair and preservation.
- Current policy toward brick streets does not address their maintenance and restoration.
- Ordinances protecting earthworks, mounds and archaeology sites need updating.
- Underground Railroad sites, ways and markers currently underutilized and publicized.

## ***Core Values***

- A strong respect for the historic character of the business district and the surrounding neighborhoods on both sides of the Muskingum River.
- Prevalence of architectural styles appropriate to the area's historic context.
- Brick streets and streetlights with a historic demeanor.
- Preservation of historic homes, buildings, monuments and earthworks.
- Museums and attractions that feature the area's history.

## ***Vision Statement***

Marietta is the nationally recognized gateway to the history of the Northwest Territories. The Historic Business District supports a thriving tourism industry and is the hub of community activity through restaurants, theatre, casual walking, and shopping. The historic quality spreads outward through the residential neighborhoods along brick streets lined with trees and homes with a strong historic demeanor. The historic character of the community survives through restoration of historic structures, protection of historic areas, as well as historically appropriate new construction.

## ***Narrative and Recommendations***

Historic character is unlike any other quality of a community. Whereas modernization is a desired goal in all other areas of community structure, from city services and infrastructure to health care services and transportation, historic character resides in the preservation of something that already exists. The economic gain from historic character to a community like Marietta far exceeds the aggregate market value of individual structures—it is more than the sum of the parts—yet, the market value of each individual structure grows with historic preservation in the surrounding neighborhood. Furthermore, unlike other community qualities, once lost, historic character cannot be replaced by new construction.

Marietta is the guardian of a history important at state and national levels. We were the first settlement in the Northwest Territories and a connector in the underground railroad. Campus Martius, prehistoric earthworks and numerous historic houses,

structures, and monuments are among the legacies in which we take pride. Marietta has few assets comparable in value to its historic character, and over the last several decades this has obtained elevated importance to the area's economy (Rovelstad & Associates and Longwoods International, 2000-2001) and to citizens' perception of quality of life. A promotional ad for Marietta reads: "*Marietta –Where Ohio's History Resides*" (Marietta, Washington County Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2003). Certainly historic character is the single most important attraction for tourism.

A community will always have its history, but possibly not the tangible manifestation of that history. Indeed this is what many other communities have already lost. In recent years a variety of programs have helped improve Marietta's appearance, including removal of utility lines in the downtown business district, installation of historic-looking street lamps, the Paint Marietta and Façade Improvement programs, and a policy of brick streets protection. These are important and valuable efforts; however, improving the appearance of a community is different than preserving architectural heritage. The recent reinventory of the Marietta Historic District showed that some areas (e.g., Marietta's South Side and the Cisler Terrace district) no longer qualified for historic designation (Hoy, 2001). Overall, the historic character of the community deteriorated in the last several decades as historic buildings were razed and architecturally inappropriate renovation and new construction proliferated. Loss of historic architecture can potentially undermine Marietta's tourism industry, the specialized economic 'niche' of the downtown business area, and the sense of distinctiveness that citizen's feel for living in the community.

The historic quality that brings people and business to the city does not emanate from any single structure or neighborhood, but rather in the ambience of the whole, and its preservation will require businesses and homeowners to make significant investments in the restoration of historic structures. This will only happen if the property owners have confidence that historic preservation of the surrounding community will afford long-term return on these investments. Thus, a supportive community policy can act as a catalyst for historic preservation. Marietta can only gain by preservation of its historic character and has much to lose with its erosion.

We perceive two key aspects of Marietta History that warrant attention. One is publicly owned historic monuments for which a system of oversight and maintenance is needed to avoid crisis-driven reactivity such as that currently spurring efforts to arrest deterioration of the Gutzon Borgum *Start Westward* monument. Preservation of privately owned historic buildings also will be important. Over 2,300 communities have established historic districts and 75% of these have design guidelines (Fine and Lindberg, 2003). Historic preservation guidelines currently exist in FEMA guidelines and the Community Action restoration program, and there currently is much interest among citizens for expanded protection. This will require careful planning to balance individual property rights and the community common-good; since many other communities have resolved such issues, we believe that Marietta can do so also.

## *Our recommendations are for the City to:*

- **Establish Historic Preservation Legislation.** The three primary goals of historic preservation should be to: 1) decrease the potential for unnecessary destruction of historic buildings, 2) assure that renovation of historic homes is architecturally appropriate for the surrounding area, and 3) assure that new construction is architecturally appropriate for the surrounding area. Restraining the conversion of single-resident homes for multi-occupancy is another issue that might be considered. Marietta should consider all mechanisms that further these goals, including revised zoning ordinances, public education, incentive programs, and historic preservation legislation that applies to the exterior of buildings in the designated historic districts. The Proposed Historic Preservation Ordinance (Hoy, 1999) previously submitted for adoption deserves reconsideration by City Council.
- **Apply for participation in the Certified Local Government Program.** The CLG program (National Park Service and The National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, 2000) provides support and guidance for communities to preserve their unique historic character. Funding from the CLG program can provide incentives for historic preservation and act as seed money for securing larger grants. Participation in this program requires that the City have acceptable historic preservation legislation.
- **Create a Historic Monuments Commission.** Marietta is home to many historically significant monuments, including earthworks, sculptures, and memorials (Marietta Historic District, 2001). These monuments are an important reflection of the City's heritage and deserve appropriate preservation to prevent deterioration like that which affected the *Start Westward* monument. This could be achieved by formation of a City Commission of concerned citizens who would establish a proactive monitoring and maintaining monuments on public property.
- **Support Colony Theatre renovation.** The efforts, planning and progress-to-date achieved by the Hippodrome/Colony Historical Theatre Association are commendable (Bentz, C.H., and Associates, Inc., 2002). The community and City Administration should provide all possible support for the efforts to restore the colony theatre, which can serve as an important catalyst for economic growth in the downtown area
- **Set a deadline for deciding the best use for the Armory building and lot.** While we support in principle restoration of the Armory on Front St., the community cannot wait indefinitely for a viable use for this structure to develop. The Citizens Armory Preservation Society (CAPS) is to be commended for its efforts to prevent hasty razing of this building and find potential uses for it (Project Bullseye, 2000); however, the city needs to set a deadline for presentation of a qualified business plan, and in the interim develop several alternative uses for the site with cost estimates.

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## ***INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES***

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### ***Community Assets***

- High degree of accessibility of City Officials and Departments.
- Full-time paid Police, Fire Department and EMS services.
- City has its own water supply with excess capacity.
- Waste Water & Water Departments are self-funded.
- Marietta is the Washington County seat and hosts numerous Federal, State and County offices and departments.
- Historic Government Buildings, (i.e. City Building, Administration Building, Annex Building, etc.).
- City Government Complex centrally located and close to downtown.

### ***Issues of Concern***

- Lack of, or inefficient use of space in existing Government Buildings.
- Inadequate upkeep of some Government facilities (i.e. Buildings, parks, etc.).
- Inadequate staffing levels in some Departments.
- Police Department & Justice Department have insufficient facilities.
- Inadequate land-use and city services planning.
- Existing electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems are reaching or have reached their useful life expectancy.
- City Government complex currently located in the 100 year flood plain.
- Various city facilities do not comply with handicap accessibility per ADA requirements.
- Major capital expenditures are needed to maintain and/ or expand municipal utility services (i.e. Water, Waste Water, etc.).
- Due to development over many years the storm sewer system is at capacity and / or exceeds capacity at times.

### ***Core Values***

- City officials and service departments that are readily accessible and responsive to community needs.
- Sufficient space for and staffing of city service departments in well-maintained government buildings.
- Sufficiency of police, fire protection, and emergency services.
- Well-maintained municipal utility infrastructure that includes storm-sewer, water, electrical, natural gas, wastewater systems, and information technology.
- Long-term planning that anticipates and meets future demands on city services.

## ***Vision Statement***

Marietta is a vibrant, well-maintained city. Citizens and businesses understand the importance of vital city services and provide sufficient financial support through taxes to maintain and modernize these systems. City government reciprocates through careful planning and anticipation of city service needs. The results are city buildings that reflect the historic context of the city while meeting the service needs of the current century, and modern municipal utilities designed to meet current and projected needs. Land-use planning ensures that municipal services are adequate to support new development.

## ***Narrative and Recommendations***

City infrastructure and services are essential to a functional community. Citizens are particularly sensitive to the quality of city infrastructure as a particularly visible usage of tax dollars. City infrastructure must also, and increasingly, meet the expectation and mandates of external agencies. Thus, the city has important obligations in overseeing city-managed infrastructure (e.g., municipal buildings, water treatment facilities, street and parks, etc), and ‘people’ services (e.g., Administrative offices, Engineering, Health Department, Police and fire protection, etc). With a few exceptions, the infrastructure of Marietta is reasonably sound, and current and previous city officials are to be applauded for effectively running the City. City employees are to be particularly commended for the quality of service that they provide, sometimes with a bare minimum of resources. Recent progress includes upgrading of city information technology capabilities and contracting of an IT director.

Staffing and space requirements of city departments were projected in the facilities study for the proposed City Hall Complex (DLZ Ohio, Inc/Freeman White, 2001). However, the staffing requirements to effectively run certain departments have been underestimated, in particular the Engineering Department and the Lands, Buildings and Parks Department. The Engineering Department, with a staff of four, is often subject to unwarranted criticism as it endeavors to manage an ever-increasing workload of engineering projects, inspections and code enforcement. The Lands, Buildings and Parks Department, with a fulltime staff of only three, does not have the resources to adequately maintain city facilities (including parks, recreation equipment, and city buildings). This department also provides support for the Recreation Department in the maintenance of park recreation equipment (needs of the Recreation Department are addressed in the Recreation focus area).

The city municipal water system, drawing from seven production wells located in an aquifer near the Muskingum River, appears to have adequate capacity to meet current and projected future demand (Water Treatment and Distribution Dept, 2002). However, the wastewater facility often runs near capacity and is subject to serious system deterioration. Although a significant system overhaul has not occurred since 1987, a Facilities Master Plan is currently under contract and should provide guidance for the next major overhaul of the system.

In light of broad community support and commitment toward building a new Justice Center (Gegner Architects, 2002; Gehlauf and Associates, 2003) several assumptions and conclusions of the City Hall Complex Facilities Study (2001) need reconsideration. Construction of a new Justice Center will free space in City Hall,

making more feasible the renovation and use of existing buildings for other administrative offices. Increasing the staffing and developing new facilities for the Fire Department are issues that need resolution and are addressed under Public Health and Safety. Unfortunately, city buildings have not been adequately maintained—buildings maintenance is the only area of city infrastructure that does not have a five-year plan—compounding the challenges (and costs) of future renovation.

### ***Our recommendations are for the City to:***

- **Build the proposed new Justice Center.** A feasibility study (Gegner Architects, 2002) for a new Justice Center was completed in 2002. Focus Group discussions (Gehlauf and Associates, 2003) were conducted in 2003 to assess public sentiment. These discussions and other evidence indicate strong support within the community for the building of a new Justice Center. While building the Justice Center at Parking Partners does have some advantages, for several reasons the proposed site behind City Hall should be pursued. On one hand, construction at the Parking Partners site will cost significantly more and, from a comprehensive planning standpoint, the City must reserve fund raising potential for other projects (such as an indoor Recreation Center). The current proposal allows most of the construction cost to be borne by the Court system itself. Furthermore, the need for new court facilities is critical and the City can little afford to further delay the planning process. Planning and design of the new Justice Center should honor Community Core Values set forth in this plan. Every opportunity should be taken to share information and progress with the public and to invite public input. In the construction of this facility, the City should model the design standards the community should expect in other future developments, both public and private. The building should be architecturally appropriate for the community, reflecting a strong historic aspect. Every effort should be made to avoid demolishing houses for parking lot construction. Parking lots serving the facility should implement design standards advocated for in this plan, including adequate green buffer zones and internal green spaces.
- **Begin planning now for renovation of the city buildings at 301, 304, and 308 Putnam Street.** In light of progress toward construction of a Justice Center, planning for renovation of existing city buildings should begin now. Unfortunately, this should require a new facilities study, for which the fundamental issue should be how to renovate space in the existing buildings to best meet the current and anticipated needs through 2025. Related issues that should be addressed include:
  - 1) Developing a more coherent system of document archival. The city invests significant public funds in studies and reports that should remain readily accessible to city officials and the public. Paper still forms the major means of information archival for city operations in an increasingly ‘electronic’ world. Rather than using valuable office space for document storage, a centralized archive should be established, and digitization of some documents should be considered. A ‘library’ of contracted studies, planning documents,

budgets, and other documents of potential public interest should be established. Document storage might be moved off site.

- 2) Upgrading of administrative Information Technology. Digitally interconnected departments and email service should be standard.
  - 3) Addressing handicap accessibility deficiencies in city buildings. The city is over ten years delinquent in meeting handicap accessibility per ADA requirement, and this should be a priority issue.
- **Perform a new administrative staffing analysis and address administrative staffing needs.** The Lands, Buildings and Parks Department needs additional staffing--facilities cannot be adequately maintained if there is inadequate staffing, and preventative maintenance should be considered an essential part of the process. The expanded community services provided by the Engineering Department also indicates a need for additional staff. At the bare minimum, the Recreation Department should be allowed to fill the second fulltime position already promised; additional staffing is likely necessary to effectively run the aquatic center.
  - **Adopt an improved system for prioritizing infrastructure maintenance.** The city needs a more effective system for identifying, prioritizing, and funding maintenance of city facilities. Anticipated maintenance and preventative maintenance should be identified and prioritized projected 5 to 10 years into the future. City facilities should not be allowed to deteriorate, as was case for the Jackson pool, without a plan for maintenance or replacement. Administrative Departments should adopt a standardized format for planning documents and common system for prioritizing needs, such as identifying proposals as *essential*, *desireable*, *acceptable*, *deferrable* (Daniels, Keller and Lapping, 1995) or some similar methodology. Planning documents should be made readily available to the public.
  - **Modify the financing of city enterprise utilities (municipal water and wastewater systems) to allow long-term planning of maintenance and upgrading.** These operations are funded through the fees charged to users. We believe that the fee schedule for these operations should provide sufficient funding to meet a schedule of anticipated maintenance and upgrading projected over a 20 year period. These systems should have an established plan for upgrading and not be allowed to deteriorate as has occurred for the wastewater treatment facility.
  - **Contract for a study of the storm sewer system to assess its current condition and capacity now and for future needs.** The location of much of the city on the floodplain creates special challenges to storm water discharge. There are several areas that are now particularly prone to flooding, even before the Ohio and Muskingum Rivers breach their banks. The potential for flooding is being accentuated in lower areas as new developments are raised above the 100 year floodplain level. Federal requirements will also soon place greater obligations on municipalities like Marietta to manage runoff water. It is time for Marietta to include this issue in its long-term planning agenda.



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## ***NATURAL ENVIRONMENT***

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### ***Community Assets***

- The geographic location is diverse and favorable.
- City perimeter and surrounding areas are rural in nature, with close proximity to Wayne National Forest.
- There are several large and small parks around the city.
- City streets designed with green space in large ROWs with lawn strips.
- City has significant, well-maintained urban forest and active maintenance program.
- Presence of two major and several minor waterways.
- The city has riparian (riverbank) areas that serve both human and natural functions.
- We have close proximity to Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge.
- This is a nationally recognized site of high mussel diversity.
- City owns and protects a wetland.
- Paint Swap Day and Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day sponsored by local industries.

### ***Issues of Concern***

- City growth is causing ‘urban sprawl’ into surrounding rural areas and encroachment upon natural areas.
- Washington County is annually ranked near the top among Ohio counties for worst air quality.
- Within the city there is a continued loss of green space to impervious surfaces (concrete, pavement, etc).
- New parklands are not planned or developed as city expands.
- Presence of EPA designated toxic waste sites in city and surrounding area.
- Subdivision development has no requirement for sidewalks and lawn-strip.
- There are numerous point (industrial, sewage, etc) and nonpoint (street, agricultural, etc) source discharges into rivers.
- There has been degradation of riverbanks, which have no conservation plan.
- Presence of trace levels of TCE (tri-chloroethelene) in municipal water supply.
- Increased recreational use of rivers threatens ecosystems.
- Loss of wetlands and raising of flood plain increases risk of flooding for remaining land.

## ***Core Values***

- Clean air, clean water and clean land.
- Tree-lined and grass-lined streets.
- Abundant greenspace and parks throughout the city.
- The integrity of natural areas, including land, riverbank and waterways.

## ***Vision Statement***

People are attracted to Marietta and the surrounding area by a high standard of environmental quality that sustains healthy human existence and wildlife. Marietta's understanding of the importance of a healthy human environment shows in its grass and tree-lined streets, abundant parks, and advocacy for the environmental health of the entire mid-Ohio Valley. Marietta opposes uncontrolled sprawl, and recognizes that open space and greenways contribute to both human quality of life and a healthy economy. The City's concern for wildlife is reflected in its care for natural areas, which includes waterways, riverbanks, wetlands and forests.

## ***Narrative and Recommendations***

Marietta has a responsibility for the protection and betterment of the natural environment within the city limits and in the surrounding area. There is a strong interest among area residents for environmental issues, reflected in strong, consistent participation in recycling programs and the annual Washington County Household Hazardous Waste Day, and in media coverage of local environmental issues. However, like many other communities, Marietta has not done much to actively foster environmental protection through local public policy, and like those other communities, Marietta has experienced significant deterioration in environmental quality. Since recommendations concerning air and water quality are in the section on Public Health and Safety, this section will focus on land use issues.

The historic layout of the city with its wide lawnstrips and large parks suggests that the founding fathers understood the importance of green space to the community. While many of these areas remain intact and support a significant urban forest, subsequent development has lacked similar vision. There has been an incremental loss of community green space in the older residential neighborhoods and business district through nonessential coverage of city right-of-way and archaic design of parking lots. (These practices have also created expansive impervious surface areas from which water flow often exceeds the capacity of the storm water system —see Infrastructure Section). Furthermore, subdivisions have been allowed to develop without an expectation for lawnstrips, sidewalks or parks — qualities that add much to the character (and property value) of the older neighborhoods.

Marietta's riverbanks are among the major defining characteristics of the community. Indeed, the Ohio and Muskingum riverbanks serve several critical functions for the human community and wildlife, and form the visual frontispiece of Marietta. Yet, lack of attention and planning has caused deterioration of the city's riverbanks, and left many in eroded or unsightly condition. Care of the riverbanks should be a city priority.

### *Our recommendations are for the city to:*

- **Develop a 'Green Space Protection and Development' ordinance.** It is doubtful that any modern guide to community planning does not emphasize the importance and need for green space protection (as examples see Ardenndt, 1994; Daniels, et al., 1995). Thus, Marietta should develop ordinances that afford stronger protection of green space in city right-of-way and during development projects, set standards for green space and buffer zones for parking lots, and as part of subdivision planning, require lawnstrips and sidewalks, park space and greenways.
- **Require greenspace, greenways and natural areas as part of land-use planning of new development areas.** An insight of Marietta's founding fathers, it is again clear to city planners that greenspace is an essential part of community development. Thus, land use planning along the city periphery should require incorporation significant greenspace. Without it, urban sprawl of the worst kind will occur, as has already begun along the City's east side. City planning should preserve natural areas that can serve as parks and for refuge of wildlife. The availability of green 'corridors' through new areas of development also provides location for placement of walking paths and bike trails.
- **Develop a comprehensive plan for managing riverbanks and parks and cemeteries.** A plan should be developed that stabilizes areas currently prone to erosion, such as the Muskingum Riverbank along Kiwanis park; assures adequate direct and visual access to river views; protects natural, undisturbed areas that serve wildlife; and assures that the riverbanks look as good from a river vantage point as from above. Although trees in the parks are managed by the City Tree Commission, currently, there is no plan for management and replanting of the trees in publicly owned cemeteries, a situation that will lead to the loss of character of these areas.

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## ***PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY***

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### ***Community Assets***

- Good representation of social service organizations and health agencies.
- Increasing involvement of public safety leaders with new development of business and residential areas for things such as access roads, fire hydrant location, etc.
- Active Hazardous Household Waste Group that provides resources for disposal of hazardous household chemicals, paint, etc.
- Medical staff specialties within the community provide citizens with a range of health care options.
- Immunization Coalition as well as other groups work together through the city and county health department.
- Two community hospitals within the city limits.

### ***Issues of Concern***

- High percentage of population with little or no health insurance places burden on social services.
- There is a ‘perceived’ poor quality of water supply.
- There appears to be no clear separation of manufacturing vs. commercial zoning.
- Access problems for Emergency Medical Services within the city.
- Pedestrian safety in downtown and school areas during high traffic time.
- Fire and police department staffing inadequacies and concerns for future growth.
- Existing three fire stations may not be sufficient to serve future growth.
- Social stigma of public health access.
- Insufficient public awareness of bioterrorism issues.
- Insufficient public awareness of issues for indigent/homeless/mental illness.

### ***Core Values***

- Safe neighborhoods free of crime.
- Safe streets and highways.
- Access to quality health care within our community.
- Quality Fire and Police Service.
- Clean drinking water.
- Public resources available in times of disaster, emergencies.

## ***Vision Statement***

Marietta provides a safe, crime-free environment, in which citizens can enjoy peace of mind. City neighborhoods boast wide streets with sidewalks for pedestrian traffic. Public service organizations collaborate to meet the ever growing health and human service needs of the community. The Washington County Community Health Council continues to strategically plan for health and human services in both private and public sector to address a diverse population.

## ***Narrative and Recommendations***

An essential responsibility of government is to provide high quality fire/emergency and police protection, and to ensure healthful air and water quality. Providing for the basic health and safety needs of citizens has always been a priority for the Marietta community. A diverse array of health and human service agencies currently offers much needed services such as free or reduced dental care, immunizations and well-baby checks, hearing clinics, and prescription assistance. Citizens are able to receive health care within the community without having to travel for essential services. Planning is needed to ensure that these services will meet the future needs of the community, such as for the growing elderly population. A proactive approach is necessary to ensure healthful water quality, and particularly, air quality in the area.

Public welfare interest groups have had recent successes in securing basic funding with community endorsements of Senior Citizens, 911 Emergency System, and Developmental Disabilities levies. The need for public healthcare in the future will undoubtedly increase. As in many communities, there is a growing societal and public health problem with illicit drug usage among adults and teenage citizens. The 2000 census for Marietta and Washington County showed population growth for the County of only 1.6% and a 3.4% population decline for the City between 1990 and 2000 (Irwin and Reece, 2002; US Census). A key year in recent Washington County history was 1994-1995 when more citizens moved out than into the county (Ohio Department of Development, 2002). During this same time period the area has seen growth of the 65-plus age population. National growth projections for this age group are staggering, and senior populations in this area are expected to mirror national trends. The American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging predicts that the 65-plus age group will increase by 135% over the next 50 years, raising the 65-plus population in Marietta from 2500 to over 3400. People over 85, those most likely to have chronic care needs, are the fastest growing age group (Administration on Aging, 2002; American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging).

While the aging population continues to grow, so does the area covered by the service departments of the city. Annexation of city land has increased the area of protection by 43% in the past 30 years (Marietta Fire Department Plan, 2002). Marietta provides this protection through paid police and fire/emergency services—one of only two communities within Washington County that provides paid fire protection. The ability of emergency services to meet community needs have been particularly stretched by the changing demographics.

Air quality in the Mid-Ohio Valley poses a significant health concern. While changes in Federal environmental standards have led to reductions in emissions by local industries, the air quality in Washington County still compares poorly with that of other regions at both state and national levels. At a national level, Washington County ranks among the worst counties in emissions of carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and volatile

organic compounds (VOCs); total environmental releases; land releases; and the health risks created by these pollutants (Environmental Defense, 2003). At the state level, Washington County has consistently had the highest or second highest total emissions over the last decade (Ohio EPA, 2002). Peak ozone levels have been higher than in New York City and Boston (Ohio Environmental Council, et al., 2000), and recent monitoring in Marietta has recorded levels of airborne PCBs significantly higher than those of neighboring cities (ORSANCO, 2002). While the poor area air quality in the Mid-Ohio Valley generates national attention, there is also reason for concern about water quality. The aquifer that supplies Marietta's municipal water is highly susceptible to contamination. The presence in municipal water sources of toxic pollutants such as trichloroethylene (TCE) in Marietta and ammonium perfluorooctanoate (C8) in neighboring communities have created public concern. The City currently employs a diversionary well to reduce TCE (from an unknown source) in municipal water. The health implications of groundwater C8 contamination are still unclear. Overall, air and water quality do not represent an asset for this area; they discourage movement of new citizens and businesses into the area.

### ***Our Recommendations are for the City to:***

- **Develop a plan that allows fire/emergency services to meet national standards now and with future projections.** Planning for fire/emergency services should reflect type and frequency of runs as opposed to total runs. While annual fire runs over the past 12 years have fluctuated between a high of 379 and low of 287, actual growth in total responses over the past 12 years reflects the increase in emergency medical services (EMS) calls. The state of Ohio does not mandate that local career fire departments follow the National Fire Protection Act (NFPA; National Fire Protection Association, 2001); however, this act provides national benchmarks to which the City should compare its performance. According to NFPA Article No.1710, first response providers should arrive within four minutes of the fire. Marietta does not currently meet this benchmark, and aging population, population growth, and future land annexation will all further stretch the deficiency. To better meet community needs:
  - EMS should be expanded to meet national benchmarks. EMS staffing should allow the City to meet the standards of NFPA 1710, which calls for a four minute response time for Basic Life Support and 8 minutes for Advanced Cardiac Life Support. The City should consider all possible strategies for funding this service.
  - Additional fire stations should be considered as part of future land-use planning and involve a cost-benefit analysis. Model plans are available from other communities (e.g., City of Wichita, 2000). It is recommended that Total Reflex Time to a fire be evaluated using a method that accurately measures travel times from fire stations to additional locations. The City should invest in available software that can help in the decision making by evaluating census maps, GIS mapping, safe travel speeds, and future community growth.
  - Other measures that reduce demand on fire and emergency services should be considered. For example, the city should reevaluate the sprinkling requirements for new and renovated structures. Sprinkling requirements will decrease the severity and speed of a fire, potentially reducing manpower and response time needs. Additionally, the city should consider an enforced electrical inspection that ensures that residential buildings meet fire safety codes.

- **Ask the Ohio EPA to determine the source and risks posed by the elevated levels of PCBs recorded in Marietta’s air.** PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) are well documented as serious chemical pollutants. The recent ORSANCO (2002) finding that levels of airborne PCBs in Marietta are significantly higher than in surrounding communities is of great concern. Especially in conjunction with the various other air pollutants of the mid-Ohio valley, the presence of PCBs creates a more dangerous mixture that should not be ignored. Should it be determined that this presents a health hazard, then remedial action should be sought.
  
- **Pass a resolution endorsing and supporting the Ohio Environmental Council “Hometown For Healthy Air” Campaign.** (Ohio Environmental Council, 2003) Air quality in the Mid-Ohio Valley is among the worst in the country, and Marietta should affiliate itself with other progressive communities that understand that public and economic health are connected with environmental quality. Passing a resolution in support of this campaign allows Marietta to take a leadership role among communities in the mid-Ohio Valley in taking a stand on regional air quality, and thereby distinguishes and better positions itself to attract new, higher technology corporations to the area.
  
- **Take additional measures to ensure clean and safe drinking water for the citizens of Marietta:**
  - Sewer and water line inventory should be updated to accurately reflect location, age and condition of water and sewer lines within the city.
  - New development and construction that create a potential risk of groundwater contamination should require a plan to protect the water supply.
  - The city should enact a communications plan for adequate and timely notification of boil advisories due to water breaks or line flushing.

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# ***RECREATION***

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## ***Community Assets***

- Local rivers provide abundant boating recreation opportunities, supported by the Marietta Harbor, several boathouses, landing and docks.
- Surrounding rural areas including the Wayne National Forest provide scenic, hiking and camping opportunities.
- There are many local recreational service providers, including the YMCA, local colleges and schools, O'Neill Center, Betsey Mills Club, Marietta Roller Rink, etc.
- Strong public and private libraries.
- Well supported outdoor sports programs and facilities for area youths, including baseball, soccer and football.
- Marietta is home of the Washington County Fair.
- The Sternwheel Festival.

## ***Issues of Concern***

- Public outdoor recreational facilities are not well maintained, including riverbanks poorly maintained, outdated or poor quality equipment, irregular trash removal, deteriorating structures, and lack of public restrooms.
- Several recent studies have identified a wide range of indoor recreational needs, including gymnasium space, weight/cardiovascular/exercise room, senior citizen activities, cultural facilities, teen center, aerobic dance facilities.
- Outdoor and indoor pool facilities are inadequate or outdated.
- No established bike lanes or bike paths.
- Limited number and poor maintenance of local hiking trails.
- Skateboard facility is under-utilized.
- Low level of staffing and financial support for City Recreation Department.

## ***Core Values***

- A sufficiently broad spectrum of recreational opportunities encompassing indoor and outdoor activities.
- Community wide festivals, local fairs, and cultural and theatrical events.
- Recreational opportunities available for citizens of all economic levels and ages.
- Proactive maintenance of city-owned recreational facilities.

## ***Vision Statement***

Marietta provides recreational opportunities that are a model for other communities. While encouraging development of privately-owned facilities, the city provides affordable public facilities for use by residents of Marietta and the surrounding area, as well as by visitors. Marietta also provides for 'recreation of the mind' through its support for theatrical, musical, artistic and other cultural activities.



## ***Narrative and Recommendations***

The availability of modern, diverse recreational facilities contribute to the economic attractiveness and public well-being of a community. Although little development of significant new recreational facilities has occurred in Marietta for several decades, recently there has been encouraging progress along several lines (e.g., planning of a bike path and new pool). However, this momentum must be sustained to address other existing community needs, revitalize worn existing facilities, and to prevent future stagnation. The Recreation Department is to be commended for supporting a wide-range of programs, recreational activities and special events (Marietta Recreation Department Report, 2002). It is of concern that although promised a second fulltime position, the Recreation Department has not been allowed to fill the position; however, it is reasonable to expect that Recreation Department staffing will be increased with planning of the new aquatic center.

At the time of writing this Comprehensive Plan, much progress has been made toward construction of a new outdoor aquatic center, with a completion date set for July 2004. Successful completion of this project will remedy the closing of the Jackson Park pool due to deterioration and absence of planned replacement. However, this project has been pursued as a default alternative to building a larger, Community Center that also would have provided indoor recreational facilities— a proposal defeated at the ballot by city residents. While the reasons for failure of the proposal are debatable, the continued deficiency in indoor recreational facilities is not; nor is the desire for such facilities among area residents.

In the last 5 years there have been several studies of area recreational facilities and citizens' attitudes toward recreational needs. These studies include "Community Recreation Improvements Study" (Brailsford and Dunlavel, 2000), and the "Community Recreation Center Feasibility Study" (Ballard\*King and Associates, 2002 ). Ballard\*King and Associates inventoried the recreation service providers in the Marietta market area and concluded that these were inadequate to meet the community need. These studies pointed to deficiencies in a wide range indoor recreational facilities needed for various age groups.

A need for additional recreational facilities among area residents has been documented in a phone survey of Washington County residents by a Marietta College class (Marketing Research Class, 2000). A survey of Marietta High School Students (Young Democrats, 2002) found additional recreational facilities to be the most desired community improvement. A large number of Community meetings during the last few years have uniformly shown strong community support for additional recreational facilities. Indeed, preceding its defeat at the ballot in November 2001, the debate about the proposed Community Center centered largely on the funding mechanism and not the need. The recent construction of a recreation center on the Marietta College campus has provided new recreational opportunities for a particular sector of the community; however, a need for and strong public interest in additional indoor recreational facilities exists in Marietta and needs to be a central element of city planning.

The Recreation Department does a good job inventorying the condition of facilities and scheduling necessary maintenance on a yearly basis. However, there is little funding or staffing for preventative maintenance, and essentially no planned

replacement, with the result that much of the park recreational facilities are in a perpetual ‘fatigued’ condition.

***Our recommendations are for the city to:***

- **Complete the bike path project; and then pursue its expansion.** This project is far along the planning process, with funding is secured, and has wide public support. The bike path will provide a valuable new recreational activity, encourage healthy life styles, and provide an alternative transportation conduit through the city. Although the current plan only will complete the path from the Putnam Bridge to Indian Acres, expansion of the bike path should be vigorously pursued, and this issue is further discussed in the Transportation section.
- **Complete the swimming pool project at Indian Acres and establish plan to assure adequate maintenance.** This project is far along in the planning process and sufficient financial resources are available. There is a clear and pressing need for a new pool to replace the aged facility at Jackson Park. Yet, to avoid mistakes of the past, the city must assure that financing will be adequate to provide for future maintenance and upgrading of the facility.
- **Reinitiate now the planning process for a community indoor recreation center.** The community currently has the best window of opportunity to accomplish this goal: the YMCA and the City both need new facilities, the City has the land, the YMCA has managerial expertise and fundraising ability, and interest rates are favorable. There is overwhelming evidence that the community needs, desires and would benefit from an indoor recreation center. The most promising avenue toward its construction appears to be through a cooperative arrangement with the YMCA. Other communities have built shared facilities and therefore this approach is also feasible in Marietta. The planning of the facility should begin immediately with the drafting of a mutually acceptable collaborative operating agreement between the City and the YMCA. Quite likely the size of the facility will need to be scaled back from that proposed by Ballard\*King and Associates; however, aesthetic considerations should remain a priority.
- **Provide additional resources for maintenance of parks, riverfronts and recreational facilities.** From the riverbanks, to parks and picnic facilities, there is evidence of neglect and disrepair—as would be expected of any responsible property owner, the city must assume responsibility for the care of its lands and facilities. The City should critically assess the resources needed to maintain its public areas in admirable and not merely passable condition. Understaffing within the Lands, Buildings and Parks Department and Recreation Department (as noted in the Infrastructure and City Services section) should be addressed.

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# TRANSPORTATION

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## *Community Assets*

- We have good access to the U.S. north/south interstate network (Rt. 77) and satisfactory access to an east/west corridor (Rt 50.)
- Marietta serves as a hub for various State and County routes to outlying communities.
- There are two Muskingum River crossings and two Ohio River crossings located within the City.
- Presence of alleys reduce traffic and parking on city streets.
- Presence of sidewalks throughout most of downtown and historic residential districts.
- Community action bus lines (CABL) serve a variety of clients including outlying rural areas.
- Access to the Wood County Regional airport provides service to the Pittsburgh hub.
- Two rivers provide navigable service for commerce, recreation and industry.
- Brick streets in historical neighborhoods and historic downtown area add to the aesthetics of the community.

## *Issues of Concern*

- Routes 7 and 60 pass through residential district.
- Brick streets are not adequately maintained.
- Increased traffic and lack of access planning is creating severe congestion on SR 7 north.
- There are many sidewalks in need of repair and many areas that lack sidewalks.
- Pedestrian safety needs are not consistently addressed throughout the city.
- City lacks designated bike routes and bike lanes along streets.
- Only limited mass transport (air, train, bus) to other major metropolitan areas.
- The driveway access permit process does not adequately prioritize safety in the City.
- City suffers from various surface drainage and under drain issues.
- Roads on hillsides, particularly Harmar are prone to landslide activity.
- Policy for vacating public lands (such as unopened alleys) for private use is inconsistent.

## *Core Values*

- Multi-modal transportation system that serves the community needs
- Street and highway system that effectively manages traffic loads
- Adequate parking
- Pedestrian safe community
- Well maintained streets and alley system
- Adequate access to affordable and reliable public transportation

## ***Vision Statement***

The Marietta region has a multi-modal transportation system linking the area with a global economy while preserving Marietta's small-town character and the rural nature of the surrounding areas. Streets are tree-lined and have well-maintained sidewalks. Bridges at the city perimeters effectively divert heavy commercial traffic around the central business and residential areas of the city. The transportation system in the Historic Downtown District is particularly well planned and facilitates easy flow of automotive traffic, bicycles, wheelchairs and pedestrians. Coordination with local, state and federal agencies, prevents urban sprawl and traffic congestion, and is integrated into an overall land use development plan.

## ***Narrative and Recommendations***

The City of Marietta has been a transportation hub throughout its history. Water transportation brought our forefathers to the confluence of the Ohio and Muskingum rivers and helped to establish Marietta as an early economic center. Today, Marietta has a much more diverse system of transportation that encompasses autos, buses, pedestrians, bicycles, boats and air (Zande and Associates, 2002).

The Ohio River is navigable by commercial, including barge tows and recreational vessels. The Muskingum River, reaching rural areas of the county just north of the City, is navigable by light commercial and recreational vessels. The Little Muskingum is limited to seasonal, recreational small craft activity. A landing/launch area is located downtown at the levy and is mainly used for multi-passenger vessels. Recreational public access boat land/launch facilities are located in Indian Acres Park. The Marietta Harbor located downtown serves recreational boaters and gives good access to the historic downtown, City parks and various monuments.

Certainly, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century roads and highways have the greater role in the commerce and transportation. State and county highways of particular significance to the area include Interstate 77, US 50, and SRs 7 and 60. State Routes 26, 550 and 676 are all classified as collectors and connect Marietta to the rural parts of Washington County. Although US 50 is located to the south of the City, it is an important east/west conduit into the area. Nationally this route begins in Washington, D.C. and terminates in Sacramento, CA. Recent completion of sections of US 50 from Coolville to Athens and Corridor D through Parkersburg will extend four-lanes from Clarksburg, WV to western Ohio. Interstate 77 is a four-lane limited access highway facility extending from Cleveland, OH to Columbia, SC, bordering the east Marietta Corporation limit. Since completion of Interstate 77 in 1968, the community has experienced urban sprawl-like growth and land development near its intersection with SR 7. How the City plans and manages future growth is a concern not only for the citizens, but for the safety of the traveling public as well.

There are approximately 73 miles of streets with the Marietta corporation boundary (Marietta Engineering Office, 2001). Citizens contribute to the management of transportation issues through the Traffic Commission and Brick Streets Commission. Overall, the city streets are well maintained, although alleys vary considerably in their condition. Vehicular parking is an issue in both commercial and residential areas and

interfaces with several components of this Comprehensive Plan; a recommendation for a new downtown parking facility is presented in the Cross-Category Recommendations section. The construction of large numbers of curb-cuts (street-access routes), excessively large curb-cuts, and poorly positioned curb-cuts have created safety issues for both vehicles and pedestrians, contributed to urbanization of the City, and deteriorated aesthetics of neighborhoods.

All of the bridges that support traffic flow across the Rivers are of relatively modern construction. The Historic Harmar Bridge, limited to pedestrian usage, is in a deteriorated condition. Planned major projects impacting the City will be the rehabilitation of the Washington Street Bridge and widening of SR 7 north of Marietta should ease traffic congestion and increase safety for drivers and pedestrians (Wood-Washington-Wirt Interstate Planning Commission, 2000). Significant truck traffic flow proceeds along SR 60 through Marietta to SR 7. There have been discussions of developing a north Muskingum River crossing to help redirect this traffic out of the residential areas and to create a new economic corridor.

Non-motorized transportation is important to the community. The U.S Census identified 12-20% of the homes in the census tracts in the central Marietta community as “zero-car” households (Zande and Associates, 2002). The historic layout of Marietta provided the central neighborhoods of the community with satisfactory sidewalks for pedestrian traffic. However, existing sidewalks in some areas are not well maintained, in a number of places commercial development has eliminated sidewalks, and more recently developed areas often lack sidewalks. The proposed bikeway facility is under final design development at this time for a connection from downtown, north to Indian Acres Park. The community would benefit from the expansion of this system in the future (Alternate Transportation Advocacy Committee, 1997).

Public transportation includes cab and bus service. The Community Action bus lines (CABL), a subsidized local transit system operated by local government agencies, serves a variety of clients including serving some of the outlying rural areas. The City of Marietta and Washington County are both served by Mid-Ohio Regional Airport (previously known as the Wood County Airport), located 5 miles south of Marietta. A small commercial passenger commuter operation by US Airways Express flies about 5 trips per day to the hub of Pittsburgh, PA. The airport is a self-sufficient facility receiving no subsidy from Wood County. It also serves local and enthusiast pilots and has some flight instructional programs (Wood County Airport Authority, 2003). Air travel as such is not a major economic force in the area, but expanded service could help stimulate economic development. Wood County officials have recently reached out to Washington County for new perspectives and to present a more unified cooperative front when trying to attract new service providers and Congressional support for airport initiatives. A bi-state governing body will be created with daily operations remaining the responsibility of Wood County and policy issues such as marketing and promotion residing with the regional Authority.

## *Our Recommendations are for the City to:*

- **Develop a long-range plan for an expanded ‘Shared Use Path’ (Walking/Bike Path) system.** Walking and riding a bicycle are valuable modes of transportation and should be given full consideration when addressing transportation issues in the City and immediate surrounding communities. The current plan to develop a bike path along the Muskingum River is an excellent start, and the City’s long-range plans should envision additional connector routes from the Marietta downtown to the Devola and Reno areas, the west side of Marietta (over the Historic Harmar Bridge) and Washington State Community College. Toward Reno, consideration should be given to creating a green corridor along the Ohio River under Interstate 77 through the old rail pass way built into the embankment.
- **Support development of a north Muskingum River bridge, but only in conjunction with a land-use development plan.** There have been previous efforts to secure funding for construction of a new bridge over the Muskingum River north of the City to create a new economic corridor in the county and divert through-traffic away from the residential neighborhoods in Marietta; however, previous proposals have not met public approval at the ballots. We believe that future efforts should be coupled to creation of a land-use plan worked out between City and County agencies. The plan should clearly identify the nature of the development that would be allowed to occur along the proposed new economic corridor and prevent urban sprawl.
- **Develop a process to expand and better maintain the brick street system.** The City would gain much from the restoration of historic brick streets. Bricked streets reduce speed, enhance safety and promote livability (Burden, 2001). Although restoration would be expensive, brick streets are more durable than asphalt and easier to repair. The City Brick Streets Commission could spearhead this initiative beginning with an updated inventory of brick streets and their conditions, developing a long-range plan for potential brick street restoration, and seeking funding opportunities. Also, “scabbed” areas in brick streets (patches of asphalt, concrete or other non-brick material) should be restored to the original brick surface.
- **Develop a better process for prioritizing maintenance of the alley system.** Many citizens are frustrated because of the poor condition of alleys and difficulty in understanding when repairs will occur. It appears problems lie in the lack of a long-term plan for alley repairs. To remedy this problem, alleys should be inventoried and evaluated according to a standard set of criteria, and a maintenance plan and schedule be developed and publicized.
- **Improve and expand the city sidewalk system and enforce pedestrian right-of-way.** Sidewalks provide a safe and efficient mode of transportation. They influence the essential character of a community and should be a requirement of all new subdivisions. In many areas, existing sidewalks are in poor condition. An inventory of city sidewalks should be developed to allow monitoring of sidewalk condition and maintenance. The City should assume greater responsibility for sidewalk

maintenance or enforce existing ordinances requiring maintenance by residents. The city should take measures to restore sidewalks in areas where they have been eliminated by commercial expansion into the city right-of-way. New pedestrian crosswalk signs should be reinstalled and maintained, and violators should be cited.

- **Revise vehicle access (curb-cut) ordinances to emphasize safety and greenspace preservation.** We believe that curb-cuts should no longer be routinely issued in residential neighborhoods where, historically, they have not existed. In other areas, the width of curb-cuts should be kept to a minimum set by established standards. Safety issues and impacts on traffic flow should be priority considerations when considering permits for curb-cuts. Land-use planning of service roads in newly developed commercial areas should be implemented to reduce traffic congestion and hazards.
- **Develop standards for traffic flow patterns and pedestrian movements within large parking lots.** Parking lots merge movements of pedestrians and vehicles, and confusing traffic flow patterns create hazards to both. The inclusion of grassy islands and trees not only softens the harsh urban environment created by parking lots, but also helps clarify traffic flow patterns and creates pedestrian walkways. Design standards should be developed that parking lots should be required to meet.
- **Advocate for expanded service to the Mid-Ohio Regional Airport.** The city should encourage the newly created regional Port Authority to help bring in new grants and to advocate for improved and or competitive service for the area.

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## ***CROSS-CATEGORY RECOMENDATIONS***

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There are several recommendations that we believe cut across several focus areas or which are process-oriented for city governance and citizen involvement in city projects.

- **Prepare a comprehensive land-use development plan.** Essentially all aspects of city planning –e.g., economic development, infrastructure planning, police and fire services, greenspace management, etc.—are influenced by the effectiveness of land-use planning. Land-use planning needs to be applied to regions within the city corporate borders and to areas of anticipated future development along the city perimeter. We believe that the essence of land-use planning already exists in the city zoning ordinances, although these should be revisited as part of a comprehensive land-use planning initiative. The most important pressing need for land-use planning is for areas outside the city borders where most future economic growth will occur. It is crucial to the quality of life in the city and surrounding areas that this future growth does not result in continued urban sprawl such as that along Pike Street and Route 7 east of the City. No community benefits from urban sprawl, and the City, Township and County Officials must work together to develop a mutually beneficial plan.
- **Improve the methods used to obtain public involvement in community projects.** City government and community groups pursuing projects should employ effective strategies for obtaining public involvement. This will require using tools for public involvement that effectively achieve the intended objectives (Ohio Department of Transportation, 2002). For example, strategies that communicate information to a general audience often are not effective when trying to determine a public consensus. Appendix 2 provides a summary of different public involvement tools and the communication objectives for which they are most appropriate. Involving more ad-hoc citizens committees helps to bring the efforts of the most knowledgeable and enthusiastic members of the community to bear on a particular project, while relieving some of the burden of project development from City Officials.
- **Review requests to vacate public lands and right-of-ways in context of city long-term planning.** There have been a number of instances in the past in which the city has been asked to vacate land and unopened streets or alleys. We recommend that all such lands be reviewed for potential uses in city long-term planning. Proposals to vacate such lands should be reviewed in context of the City Comprehensive Plan and receive a full public hearing.
- **Review policies concerning the issuance of variances.** This topic has broad implications for the fairness in which City Ordinances are applied. A summary of 135 decisions on variance applications between March 2001 and March 2003



indicated 126 variance approvals, several over neighbor's objections. Marietta was reprimanded by FEMA several years ago for too readily issuing floodplain variances, a lesson that should elevate awareness and concern about lax policies toward variances. Issuance of variances should not be routine; when they become routine then either variances are being issued without sufficient rigor or the underlying ordinances are defective. City elected officials should determine where the problem lies and make the necessary corrections.

- **Seek first right-of-refusal on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintenance building on Post Street.** Located at the confluence of the Ohio and Muskingum Rivers, this facility occupies a strategic site in the city downtown, a site that could provide new economic and recreational opportunities for the community. The City should make clear a desire to assume ownership should the Corps of Engineers decide to vacate this property.

... **and lastly:**

- **Replace the “Pet Defecation” signs in public areas.** These signs are an embarrassment to the community. The wording “Permitting pet defecation is prohibited” is crude and somewhat illogical (the act cannot be prohibited) and the widely varied height of the signs is inexplicable (one at the Mound Cemetery appears directed to the pets themselves, another in Sacra Via Park to birds). We suggest new signs with more pleasant wording such as “Please pick up after your pet: City Org 920.03” installed at a height convenient to pet owners.

## Appendix 1: Demographic Overview



These data describe current demographic characteristics for the City of Marietta (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). An overview of demographics for Washington County (Ohio Department of Development, 2002) is provided with the resource documents for this plan.

### Overview of Marietta Demographic Characteristics

Total Population	NUMBER	PERCENT
	<b>14515</b>	
<b>SEX &amp; AGE</b>		
Male	6757	46.6%
Female	7758	53.4%
Under 5 years	788	5.4%
5 to 9	837	5.8%
10 to 14	866	6.0%
15 to 19	1259	8.7%
20 to 24	1314	9.1%
25 to 34	1573	10.8%
35 to 44	2075	14.3%
45 to 54	1960	13.5%
55 to 59	680	4.7%
60 to 64	590	4.1%
65 to 74	1196	8.2%
75 to 84	962	6.6%
85 and over	415	2.9%
Median Age	38.4	
18 years and over	11476	79.1%
Male	5199	35.8%
Female	6277	43.2%
<b>RACE</b>		
White	13979	96.3%
Black or African American	157	1.1%
American Indian/Alaskan	67	0.5%
Asian	103	0.7%
Other	209	1.4%

### BABY BOOM

<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>5904</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Family Households	3503	59.3%
With own children under 18	1605	27.2%
Married Couple Family	2502	42.4%
With own children under 18	999	16.9%
NonFamily Households	2401	40.7%
Householder living alone	2075	35.1%
Householder 65 & older	860	14.6%
 <b>HOUSING TENURE</b>		
<b>Occupied housing units</b>	<b>5904</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Owner occupied	3493	59.2%
Renter occupied	2411	40.8%
 <b>TOTAL HOUSING UNITS</b>	<b>6572</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
1 unit detached	4303	65.5%
1 unit attached	139	2.1%
2 units	521	7.9%
3 or 4 units	453	6.9%
5 to 9 units	256	3.9%
10 - 19 units	283	4.3%
20 or more	273	4.2%
Mobile Home	344	5.2%
Boat RV Van	0	0.0%
 <b>YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT</b>		
1999 to March 2000	71	1.1%
1995 to 1998	224	3.4%
1990 to 1994	194	3.0%
1980 to 1989	306	4.7%
1970 to 1979	813	12.4%
1960 to 1969	790	12.0%
1940 to 1959	1342	20.4%
1939 or earlier	2832	43.1%
 <b>SPECIFIED OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS</b>	<b>3110</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>VALUE</b>		
Less than \$50,000	695	22.3%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	1595	51.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	543	17.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	90	2.9%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	115	3.7%
\$300,000 to \$499,000	72	2.3%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0.0%
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0.0%

	Number	Percent
<b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b>		
<b>Population 16 years and over</b>	<b>11,859</b>	<b>100.0</b>
In labor force	7,116	60.0
Civilian labor force	7,116	60.0
Employed	6,227	52.5
Unemployed	889	7.5
Percent of civilian labor force	12.5	(X)
Armed Forces	0	0.0
Not in labor force	4,743	40.0
<b>Females 16 years and over</b>	<b>6,505</b>	<b>100.0</b>
In labor force	3,527	54.2
Civilian labor force	3,527	54.2
Employed	3,190	49.0
<b>Employed civilian population 16 years</b>	<b>6,227</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>OCCUPATION</b>		
Management, professional, and related occupations	2,145	34.4
Service occupations	1,128	18.1
Sales and office occupations	1,626	26.1
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	6	0.1
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	402	6.5
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	920	14.8
<b>INDUSTRY</b>		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	55	0.9
Construction	431	6.9
Manufacturing	831	13.3
Wholesale trade	129	2.1
Retail trade	801	12.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	171	2.7
Information	54	0.9
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	265	4.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	491	7.9
Educational, health and social services	1,858	29.8
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	598	9.6
Other services (except public administration)	363	5.8
Public administration	180	2.9

<b>INCOME IN 1999</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Households</b>	<b>5,908</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Less than \$10,000	799	13.5
\$10,000 to \$14,999	629	10.6
\$15,000 to \$24,999	1,105	18.7
\$25,000 to \$34,999	923	15.6
\$35,000 to \$49,999	946	16.0
\$50,000 to \$74,999	787	13.3
\$75,000 to \$99,999	341	5.8
\$100,000 to \$149,999	233	3.9
\$150,000 to \$199,999	72	1.2
\$200,000 or more	73	1.2
Median household income (dollars)	29,272	(X)
<b>Families</b>	<b>3,515</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Less than \$10,000	320	9.1
\$10,000 to \$14,999	220	6.3
\$15,000 to \$24,999	640	18.2
\$25,000 to \$34,999	525	14.9
\$35,000 to \$49,999	624	17.8
\$50,000 to \$74,999	587	16.7
\$75,000 to \$99,999	284	8.1
\$100,000 to \$149,999	200	5.7
\$150,000 to \$199,999	53	1.5
\$200,000 or more	62	1.8
Median family income (dollars)	36,042	(X)
Per capita income (dollars)	18,021	(X)
<b><i>Median earnings (dollars):</i></b>		
Male full-time, year-round workers	30,683	(X)
Female full-time, year-round workers	22,085	(X)

## Appendix 2: Public Involvement



The following table comes from the Ohio Department of Transportation Guide to Public Involvement (2002). We believe that it provides a useful summary of public involvement tools and the objectives for which they are most appropriate. The entire manual is available on line at <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/oes/>.

### Public Involvement Objectives and Tools

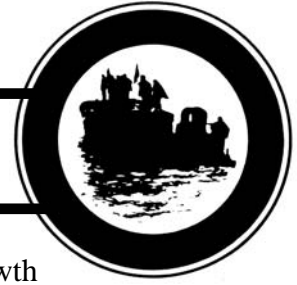
#### TOOLS

OBJECTIVES	TOOLS																						
	Advisory Group	Brochure or Pamphlet	Direct Mail	Display	Fact Sheet	Field Office	Focus Group	Hot Line	Interviews with Key Staff	Interviews with Opinion Leaders	Media Kit	Neighborhood Meetings	Newsletter	News Release	Open House	Personal Contact	Public Hearing or Meeting	Public Service Announcement	Small Mtgs with Interest Group	Speakers Bureau	Summit	Videos	Workshop
Encourage Public Participation	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Encourage Interaction Between Public and Agencies	Highly	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Encourage Interaction Between Public and Stakeholders	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Enhance Agency Credibility	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Expedite Decision Making	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Fulfill Legal Requirements	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Gather Information and Opinion from a Specific Audience	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Gather Information and Opinion from a General Audience	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Provide Information to a General Audience	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Provide Information to a Specific Audience	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Resolve Direct Conflicts	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Understand Public Consensus	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal

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