

# CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

## INTRODUCTION

The Existing Conditions Inventory of the Findings Report describes several characteristics of the Ohio National Road Scenic Byway that could impact the visitor's experience while traveling it. These include: traffic conditions and signs; travel trends and available visitor services such as gas, food, lodging and shopping; and land use planning characteristics.

Both transportation conditions and signs can impact the visitor's ability to safely and conveniently move along their desired route of travel. Areas of congestion can influence a negative perception of the locale and can make traveling through that area stressful and unpleasant. Similarly, intersections or roadway sections that are unsafe can make travel in the vicinity both stressful and hazardous, particularly for visitors who do not know the area and its streets well. For these reasons, this report tries to identify potential bottleneck and hazardous areas so that alternate routing and/or mitigation measures can be considered during the development of the management strategies for the Ohio National Road Scenic Byway. Two areas where the alignment of the byway is an issue, in Columbus and Springfield, are addressed as well. This report also addresses signs and outdoor advertising, since they can influence the visitor's ability to orient themselves and find their desired destinations as they travel along the byway.

Travel trends give some indication of the types of visitors that may want to travel the byway and the types of activities and services which they may expect. This report describes the typical profile of the heritage tourist. Heritage

tourists are traditionally defined as those tourists whose travel plans generally include visits to historic sites, cultural activities or festivals. Because of the emphasis of the Ohio National Road Scenic Byway on its historic features, this type of tourist most likely would be the target audience. Identifying the characteristics of the heritage tourist will help to form management strategies that will most effectively reach out to this audience and entice them to visit the byway. Identifying the visitor services that are available along the byway likewise will help to build management strategies that reflect the service needs of heritage tourists.

Finally, identifying land use planning characteristics is essential to understanding the development patterns that influence the scenery, provision of services, protected natural areas, and visual intrusions that occur along the byway. Because of the scope of this project, which reaches across ten counties, a wide variety of land use regulations and initiatives are to be expected. As management strategies are being developed, this information will be invaluable to crafting recommendations that are applicable to a variety of planning environments and/or address situations at specific locales given their particular level of land use planning.

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### TRANSPORTATION AND SIGNS

#### TRAFFIC VOLUME

Records of Average 24-Hour Daily Traffic Volume (ADT) along portions of the Ohio National Road Scenic Byway were obtained from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and from county or city engineers, when available. While ADT data is kept for state and federal routes by ODOT, such data are not kept by ODOT for county or township routes. Hence, ADT for certain sections of the route such as National Road Pike in Mt. Sterling are simply not available. However, ADT for other sections (e.g., Main Street in Springfield and CR1 in Gratiot) has been recorded by county or city engineers. This data is arranged in a series of tables by county and route number. Traffic ADT ranges from a low of around 300 in Gratiot to highs of 40,000 at the intersection of US 40 and I-270 on the west side of Columbus. In primarily rural counties such as Licking and Preble, ADT never attains the 10,000 mark.



*Traffic in Vandalia*

#### SAFETY

Traffic Crash Records for the byway were obtained from the Ohio Department of Public Safety. That department's database is cumbersome and the supplied information was

very difficult to quantify. To simplify the process of analyzing accident records, the search was restricted to accidents with injuries and deaths occurring in 1997, 1998, and 1999. Accident data are organized into a table by county, township, and municipality (see Appendix B). Note that for segments of the road where data were not available (e.g., County Route 670 in eastern Guernsey County) data for adjacent US40 are included for comparative purposes.

A total of 3,050 accidents with injuries were reported between 1997-1999 along the byway. Over one-half of this total were in Franklin County, which also has the highest ADT counts. Although data for accidents without injuries were not quantified, it was evident that about one-third of all accidents involve injuries. Hence, a rough estimate of the total number of accidents (with and without injuries) along the Ohio National Road Scenic Byway for the three-year period is 9000. Fortunately, while there were a significant number of accidents along the National Road, only 19 deaths occurred as a result of accidents between 1997 and 1999.

Comparison of the above data sets indicates, not surprisingly, that high accident rate and high ADT are positively correlated. For example, an ADT of over 25,000 is associated with 51 accidents with injuries around the intersection of US 40 and US 68 on the west side of Springfield. Similarly, there were over 1100 accidents along Broad Street in Columbus, which has an ADT between 20,000-36,000, during the three-year span. The National Road through Bexley, Whitehall, and Reynoldsburg is also significantly more dangerous than it is along rural portions of the route. Again, these high accident rates are consistently associated with traffic ADT above 25,000.

In rural areas of the route, the correlation between high ADT and high accident rate is less

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strong. For example, the most dangerous intersection along the National Road in Montgomery County is US40/CR217 (Diamond Road), where traffic ADT is measured at about 6000. By comparison, the intersection of US 40 and I-75 witnessed fewer accidents in 1997-1999, although traffic ADT at that intersection was over 22,000. Two other examples that fit this scenario are the intersection of US40/SR 56 in Madison County and the intersection of US40/CR41 in Licking County. Several other such intersections are highlighted in the table. High ADT is apparently not the culprit in these situations. Rather, some element of road design or the designated speed limit appears to be the issue.

### ALIGNMENT

The National Road in Ohio primarily is traveled via U.S. 40 from the West Virginia state line to the Indiana state line. However, in many places U.S. 40 bypasses segments of the original National Road. To the extent possible, the byway route attempts to take travelers along these bypassed segments to offer the most authentic National Road travel experience possible. In some places bypassed segments are not through routes, so travelers wishing to travel along these sections will need to turn around to get back onto the through route. In other places, U.S. 40 merges with Interstate 70 and this is the only route option for the byway. The route described below is the recommended byway route, which allows for continuous, through travel from east to west. This route does not account for any bypassed segments that are not through or any deviations from the route that could lead travelers to adjacent attractions.

- Beginning in Bridgeport, follow U.S. 40 west to Morristown.
- At Morristown, follow Main Street west through town, then follow U.S. 40 west again.
- U.S. 40 dead-ends at Stillwater Creek approximately 2.5 miles west of Morristown. Turn left to get onto I-70 west.
- Take the next exit (Exit 202) to get onto State Route 800 west, just east of Hendrysburg.
- Follow State Route 800 west to Township Route 807 west through Hendrysburg.
- Return to State Route 800 west, then veer left onto Old National Road 40A west.
- Follow Old National Road 40A west to Fairview, then turn left to get onto I-70 west.
- Follow I-70 to Exit 193, State Route 513 north.
- Immediately turn left onto County Route 690 west.
- Veer right onto County Route 6764 and cross the Salt Fork over the S-Bridge.
- Return to County Route 690 west by turning right after the bridge.
- Turn left onto County Route 75 south, crossing under I-70, then turn right onto County Route 670 west.
- Follow County Route 670 west.
- Turn right onto County Home Road north, crossing over I-70.
- Turn right onto Fairground Road east, then left onto Old National Pike west into Old Washington.
- Follow Old National Pike through Old Washington.
- Turn right onto U.S. 40 west.
- Turn right onto County Route 450 west, then right onto U.S. 40 west again.
- Follow U.S. 40 west through Cambridge, crossing over Wills Creek.
- Turn right onto County Route 430 west through Fairdale.

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- Turn right to return to U.S. 40 west.
- Follow U.S. 40 west through New Concord.
- Turn right on Norwich Drive north, then veer left onto Main Street west through Norwich.
- Turn right onto Brick Road west.
- Turn right to return to U.S. 40 west.
- Follow U.S. 40 west to just east of Zanesville.
- Turn left onto County Route 604 south, then immediately right onto Wheeling Avenue west.
- Veer left onto East Main Street west into downtown Zanesville. Main Street becomes U.S. 40 downtown.
- Follow U.S. 40 west.
- Turn right onto County Route 415 west through Mt. Sterling.
- Turn right onto U.S. 40 west.
- Turn right onto County Route 1 (Main Street) west through Gratiot.
- Stay straight onto County Route 26 west, then turn right onto U.S. 40 west.
- Follow U.S. 40 west through Bexley.
- Where U.S. 40 turns right in Bexley, stay straight, following Main Street west into Columbus
- Turn right onto Grant Street north, then left onto Broad Street west through Columbus. Broad Street is U.S. 40 in Columbus (see discussion below regarding the one-way condition on Main Street).
- Stay on U.S. 40 west to Summerford.
- Turn right onto Old U.S. 40 west through Summerford, then right to return to U.S. 40 west.
- Follow U.S. 40 west into Springfield.
- Veer left onto Main Street west and follow Main Street through Springfield (see



*Eastbound Main Street in Springfield becomes one-way at Yellow Springs Street*

discussion below regarding the one-way condition on Main Street).

- Turn left onto U.S. 40 west.
- Follow U.S. 40 west to the state line.

The original National Road alignment in Columbus and Springfield followed Main Street through these cities. During the road's heyday, travelers would have been able to follow the National Road in both directions, but today one-way conditions on sections of these streets make it impossible for modern-day travelers to do the same. In Columbus, Main Street is one-way west between Grant and High Streets. This means that travelers heading west are diverted onto Grant Street and then must follow Broad Street through the city. The preferable scenario is for two-way traffic to be restored to Main Street downtown and for the byway route to follow the original path of the National Road in both directions: Main Street to High Street to Broad Street. In Springfield, Main Street becomes one-way west between Yellow Springs Street and Spring Street. Travelers heading east must turn right onto Yellow Springs Street, left onto High Street, left onto Spring Street, then right onto Main Street to return to the National Road. The preferable scenario is for two-way traffic to be restored to Main Street so that visitors can follow the National Road all the way through

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*Billboards detract from the byway experience*

downtown Springfield in both directions.

The Action Plan addresses the one-way conditions in both cities with specific steps that should be taken to effect change and achieve the preferable route scenario. In the meantime, the byway route will follow the streets listed above to most closely follow the original National Road alignment while working within current traffic configurations.

### SIGNS

Signs play an essential role in the byway experience. They help direct visitors along the route, orient them to attractions, and inform them of the location of visitor services among other things. Too many signs can detract from the experience, however. Large and plentiful billboards can clutter the landscape and obscure scenic views. An overabundance of signs also can confuse drivers and contribute to potentially hazardous driving situations.

The Federal Highway Beautification Act, 23 U.S.C.131, recognizes the deleterious effect that billboards can have on otherwise scenic roads. It prohibits the construction of new billboards along designated scenic byways that are interstate, National Highway System or federal-aid primary roads. A billboard is a sign advertising a product that is not sold or offered on the premises of the sign. Local regulatory

controls can be stricter than federal regulations. The sign plan for the Ohio National Road Scenic Byway must comply with existing local, state and federal laws regarding the control of outdoor advertising and siting/design of directional and safety signs. An exception to these rules (the “segmented out” rule) allows for off-site signage in areas of high intensity development along the byway (designated as “non scenic” and lacking intrinsic qualities). Those areas along the byway that might be considered for segmentation to allow for the construction of new billboards will be excluded from applying for funding under the National Scenic Byways Discretionary Grant program and from participating in byway implementation actions such as the installation of trailblazer signs.

The Existing Conditions section of this report contains information about signs and sign regulation in individual counties and cities. It should be noted that according to Scenic Ohio, a 1998 state law was passed with a rider attached that made sign amortization illegal in Ohio. Sign amortization is the process by which billboards are gradually phased out over a period of years. The byway inventory maps indicate areas where billboards exist along or are visible from the byway.

One of the ways in which billboards can be reduced is by providing advertising alternatives. The Action Plan proposes a number of alternatives including byway publications and participation in the state’s Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) and Specific Service Signing (or Logo) programs. See Volume II, Chapter 4 for a summary of the requirements associated with these programs.



### **TRAVEL TRENDS AND TARGET MARKETS**

Several recent surveys have been conducted at both the national and statewide levels to gather statistics on the habits and spending patterns of heritage travelers. This growing segment of the traveling population includes people who took part in a historic, cultural, arts, or heritage activity while they were traveling. Questions that were included in the August 1998 National Travel Survey conducted by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) revealed that 46 percent of U.S. adult travelers, or 92.4 million people, had included a cultural, arts, heritage or historic activity in their travels that year. Of these travelers, 29 percent had extended their stay because of the activity. Most people (61 percent) extended their stay by part of one day, while almost a third (30 percent) had spent an extra night. Among the activities heritage travelers reported including in their visits were:

- Historic sites (31 percent)
- Museums (24 percent)
- Art Galleries (16 percent)
- Live Theater (14 percent)
- Heritage/Ethnic Festival (13 percent)

The August 1998 TIA survey results also revealed demographic characteristics of the heritage traveler. In general, heritage travelers have a higher household income than the average U.S. traveler, have a college degree, are in managerial or professional occupations, and are married. However, they share with the average U.S. traveler the characteristics of being 50 percent male and 50 percent female; 50 percent have children under 18 years of age living at home.

A 1997 TIA survey similarly targeting the heritage traveler supports these findings. That survey showed that heritage travelers tend to be somewhat older, take longer trips, spend more money during them, and stay in hotels, motels

and bed & breakfasts rather than private homes. They also were more likely to travel in April and July than the average U.S. traveler, but were less likely to do so from November to February. More heritage travelers also fly to reach their destination. As a result, the average cost per trip for the heritage traveler is \$615, compared to \$425 for the typical U.S. traveler.

Although there are a significant number of heritage travelers, the 1997 TIA survey showed that a visit to an historic place or museum, cultural event or festival did not usually provide the impetus for planning a trip. Rather, it appears that many heritage travelers incorporate these activities into their itineraries along with other activities. It should also be noted that the survey showed more people who were considered "historic travelers" than "cultural travelers." In general, historic travelers tend to take longer trips than cultural travelers, visit multiple states, fly to their destinations and travel purely for entertainment.

The benefits of heritage tourism also have been noted on a statewide level. A 1999 study commissioned by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources indicated that heritage tourism both directly and indirectly supported 55,000 jobs, \$1 billion in income earnings and \$495.1 million in statewide taxes. The study also showed that heritage tourism visits in 1996 to 1997 grew 23 percent and spending grew 15 percent, compared to a growth in domestic leisure visits of only 8 percent and spending growth of 6 percent. The Virginia Heritage Alliance produced a 1995 study showing that the local impact of heritage tourism was significant in that state. It is estimated that the City of Alexandria takes in \$8 million in lodging and restaurant taxes because of the city's historic charm. About 1.2 million tourists visit the city's eight museums. The Manassas Museum in Manassas attracts 25,000 visitors, who spend an

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*The Visitor's Center at George Rogers Clark Park*

estimated \$4.5 million locally. The study showed that, compared to other types of visitors, heritage tourists spend \$423 per trip versus \$180 per trip, stay 4.7 nights versus 3.3 nights, and visit 4.2 sites versus 2.1 sites.

A few heritage tourism lessons can be gleaned from the 1999 Pennsylvania study as well. That study showed that lack of awareness was the primary reason why people had not visited Pennsylvania for heritage tourism. Those who did visit tended to be most interest in visiting historic towns or districts, battlefields and forts, and house museums. The study also showed a high correlation between heritage travelers and outdoor recreation travelers. In terms of trip planning, the study revealed that the most frequently used travel planning tools were brochures, the American Automobile Association (AAA), friends and family, local Visitors Bureaus, and state tourism offices. Once at their destination, heritage tourists found maps and guides to be the most helpful resources and looked for activities that were family-oriented or educational. Other amenities that were rated highly for their importance were directional signs, bathrooms, parking, and food/drink facilities.

Additional tourism information for the Ohio National Road Scenic Byway is being compiled with the assistance of the Ohio Department of Development, Division of Travel and Tourism. It will be available in the near future.

### VISITOR SERVICE NODES

#### THE EASTERN BYWAY (BELMONT, GUERNSEY, AND MUSKINGUM COUNTIES)

##### BELMONT COUNTY

- (1) Bridgeport and Lansing
  - (a) Gas, fast food, banks
- (2) I-70 interchanges
  - (a) Gas, fast food
- (3) St. Clairsville
  - (a) Historic Main Street – shopping, restaurants, banks
  - (b) Outside of Main Street – big box stores, convenience services
  - (c) Farm Market
- (4) East Richland
  - (a) Gas, convenience stores



*Ebbert Farm Market east of St. Clairsville.*

##### GUERNSEY COUNTY

- (1) Fairview
  - (a) Post office
- (2) Middlebottle
  - (a) At I-70 interchange: gas, fireworks
- (3) Old Washington
  - (a) Grocery
- (4) Cambridge
  - (a) East of Cambridge, at I-70 interchange: fast food, gas, grocery, lodging

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- (b) Historic Main Street – shopping, restaurants, banks, gas

### MUSKINGUM COUNTY

- (1) New Concord
  - (a) Historic Main Street: antiques, B&B, banks, gas, ice cream parlors, restaurants
- (2) Norwich
  - (a) West of Norwich, around I-70 interchange: gas, fast food, lodging, antiques & collectibles
- (3) Bridgeville
  - (a) West of Bridgeville: around I-70 interchange, fast food, gas, lodging
- (4) Pleasant Grove
  - (a) At I-70 interchange: gas
- (5) Zanesville
  - (a) Gas, restaurants
  - (b) Shopping: pottery
  - (c) West of Zanesville: Farm Market, lodging

### **THE CENTRAL BYWAY (LICKING, FRANKLIN AND MADISON COUNTIES)**

#### LICKING COUNTY

- (1) Gratiot
  - (a) Post office
- (2) Brownsville
  - (a) Country store
- (3) Linnville
  - (a) Garden center with café
- (4) Jacksontown
  - (a) Gas, post office, pub, family restaurant, farm stand
- (5) Hebron
  - (a) Gas, food, shopping
- (6) Kirkersville
  - (a) Café, tavern, post office

#### FRANKLIN COUNTY

- (1) Reynoldsburg
  - (a) Gas, fast food, convenience stores

- (2) Whitehall
  - (a) Gas, fast food, convenience stores

- (3) Bexley
  - (a) Banks, upscale retail
- (4) Columbus
  - (a) Restaurants, shopping, gas, lodging
  - (b) Visitor center
  - (c) Around Franklin, fast food, convenience stores, big box retail, gas, lodging

#### MADISON COUNTY

- (1) West Jefferson
  - (a) Historic Main Street – restaurants, fast food, gas, grocery, shopping
- (2) Lafayette
  - (a) Antiques, tavern

### **WESTERN BYWAY (CLARK, MIAMI, MONTGOMERY AND PREBLE COUNTIES)**

#### CLARK COUNTY

- (1) Vienna
  - (a) Café
- (2) Harmony
  - (a) Antiques center, farmer's market
- (3) Springfield
  - (a) Fast food, lodging, gas, restaurants, convenience stores
- (4) Donnelsville
  - (a) Ronnie's Donnelsville Mall – convenience store at historic gas station

#### MONTGOMERY COUNTY

- (1) Vandalia
  - (a) Gas, food
- (2) Englewood
  - (a) Fast food, gas, lodging

#### PREBLE COUNTY

- (1) Lewisburg
  - (a) Restaurants, post office, banks, antiques



## LAND USE PLANNING

To examine land use characteristics and policies along the National Road in Ohio is a study in the wide assortment of the planning options available to governmental entities. Some areas have no zoning or land use plans, but in other areas there are street designs authored by nationally renowned consultant firms. In other instances the regional planning authority acts as a county's Metropolitan Planning Organization, but that is not so for all the counties. Likewise, planning or zoning may be accomplished, if at all, at the county, township, or city level, depending on the wishes of the local citizenry. Ultimately the approaches to planning, zoning, and land use along the National Road through Ohio are as diverse as the communities and counties that the byway passes through.

The National Road in Ohio does more than reflect the nature of the areas it traverses: for well over a century the presence of the National Road has played a significant role in shaping the communities themselves. The agricultural heritage of the region is clear in many portions of the road, as it stretches through land that was farmed by early settlers and is still farmed today. At the same time, vestiges of pre-settlement days are evident in natural and protected areas scattered along the corridor. Settlements and towns of varying size along the road mark important crossroads where commerce and trade took place. One such city was inundated when a dam was constructed for flood control; another such city is home to the State Capital. Residential areas have sprung up in areas all along the Road. Various degrees of boom and bust are clearly apparent and scattered along the Road, some of which hints at the impact that came with the opening of other modes of transportation, including canals, railroads and a parallel, limited-access

interstate highway. Today the National Road is a mirror of its own past, reflecting the prosperity it delivered and the people it influenced.

## ***THE EASTERN BYWAY (BELMONT, GUERNSEY AND MUSKINGUM COUNTIES)***

### **REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS**

In central Ohio the Regional Planning Organizations not only serve to coordinate activities between counties, they sometimes provide important planning assistance to the jurisdictions they serve. These organizations often, but not always, also function as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the jurisdictions in their purview. One of the primary functions of an MPO is to prepare the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for its region that includes projects and programs that will be receiving some degree of Federal funding, and for which implementation is anticipated in the next fiscal year as well as the following three years.

In the predominantly rural area of eastern central Ohio, the Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association (OMEGA) serves a region that includes Belmont, Guernsey, and Muskingum Counties. OMEGA assists local officials in preparing plans and projects that improve living conditions, reverse out-migration trends, and spur economic development. With regard to Federal spending on transportation projects, this association also serves as the MPO for Guernsey and Muskingum counties. Belmont County belongs to the Bel-O-Mar Council of Governments/MPO. Bel-O-Mar is an Interstate Regional Planning and Development Council of Governments with three member counties, two of which are adjacent to Belmont

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*The Belmont County Courthouse, St. Clairsville*

HRG

County in the state of West Virginia.

### ZONING AND LAND USE

Zoning is the exception rather than the rule in this region. The countryside alternates between relatively short stretches of commercial, agricultural, and residential uses in eastern Belmont County to wide vistas of farmland and hillsides further west. The towns of St. Clairsville, Cambridge, and Zanesville have implemented zoning within their jurisdictions, but the surrounding counties and townships have not.

St. Clairsville lies approximately five miles west of Bridgeport. The city is nearing the completion of a zoning ordinance update, which will create a National Road Corridor Overlay zone (see also the Design Guidelines Section). There are a large number of commercial enterprises in the unincorporated areas east of this town, where there is an interchange with I-70, and a regional mall has been built south of the Interstate. The retail activity detracts from the overall quality of the byway experience in this area though it helps maintain economic stability. A number of billboards have been erected along this two mile long commercial corridor, which lies outside of the St. Clairsville city limits, and diminish what might otherwise be potential scenic viewsheds.

In the city of Cambridge commercial development is the dominant land use within the byway. There is also commercial development on the outer edges of town along with a few residences. A National Register Historic District and a locally designated historic district occupy the center of town.

According to the Zanesville Comprehensive Plan, the city has a long history of development prior to zoning codes and development standards, and much of the later zoning followed and reinforced what was already built. Residential and some commercial development are the primary land uses encountered when entering the city from the east. Single-family residences in this area may be of historic interest, but many of the larger homes are in disrepair and have been divided up into apartments and boarding houses. In the downtown area commercial uses predominate. There is also a special downtown zoning region near the intersection with Fifth Street, which is intended to reflect and promote urban density and land uses. Highway commercial zoning is in place on both sides of the Muskingum River, and is primarily pre-World War II commercial strip development.

Both the City of St. Clairsville and the City of Zanesville are Certified Local Governments, which means that they have adopted historic preservation ordinances and have procedures for reviewing changes to the historic environment and nominating historic properties for designation on the National Register of Historic Places. Certified Local Governments are eligible for grants to conduct surveys, nominations, and community education initiatives and to preserve properties.

### SIGNS

Several jurisdictions along the National Road have enacted sign ordinances. The overarching goal of such ordinances is to serve the public by

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permitting signage which is appropriate and conducive to business, but that does not compromise public safety. However, there is wide variation in criteria like size, color, and placement. Several ordinances were reviewed to demonstrate the breadth of existing signage regulation along the National Road. The positive elements of existing ordinances may be brought together to create a plan that benefits both the byway and its communities.

The Signs Chapter of the City of Cambridge's zoning code is less specific than any of the other municipal codes reviewed along the National Road. While a few regulations are detailed in the code, the city empowers the City Engineer (through the permitting process) to "determine the reasonableness of the sign or signboard, having regard to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the citizens of the city." A separate application must be filed for signs proposed within the city's Downtown Historical District, which straddles the National Road through Cambridge. Like other sign permits in Cambridge, the City Engineer is tasked with the review and approval/denial of signs in the Downtown Historical District.

The City of Zanesville regulates signage within its historic districts by requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness that is under the purview of a Design Review Board. Unfortunately, none of Zanesville's three historic districts fall across (or even abut) the National Road corridor. Hence, signage along the National Road through Zanesville is regulated by the Signs Chapter of the city's zoning code. Although the city's sign code is presented as a series of tables, it is similar to most of the other municipal codes in terms of what is permitted/restricted. For example, flashing, animated, portable, and roof signs are all prohibited, while most small and temporary signs may be erected without a permit. Most signs do require a permit issued by the city's Chief Building Officer. The largest sign

permitted within the city (without a zoning adjustment) measures 378 square feet.

### MASTER OR COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

As with zoning, master and comprehensive plans are few in this three county area. Some planning functions, such as grant applications and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) administration, are handled by regional planning organizations.

St. Clairsville is a model for downtown revitalization efforts. Planning and redevelopment efforts along the byway focus on preserving the positive historic aspects of the town as well as continuing the momentum that has been generated in support of such efforts. The byway is not addressed specifically in the Master Plan for Cambridge.

The master plan for the downtown area in



*Blaine Hill Bridge is undergoing extensive public investment to stabilize it and make it accessible to the public*

Zanesville was updated in February 1995. In the City Center District, the plan calls for strengthening the mixed-use area by increasing retail and food service stores on the first floors of buildings in the district, complemented with a broad range of office uses and limited housing in the upper floors. The plan also recommends enhancing pedestrian amenities, including upgrading the streetscape, lighting, and public park facilities. The same master plan notes the

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significant concentration of automotive dealerships and after-market auto products in the area between the downtown center and the river. It goes on to recommend encouraging a broader range of land uses in the area as well as physical improvements such as quality signage, landscaping, and lighting.

### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN (CIP)**

In Belmont County, \$1 million is being used to stabilize and reconstruct the Blaine Hill Bridge. The project previously was awarded funds in 1999 for stabilization and efforts are being made to secure funds for completion of the bridge reconstruction and a study that will restore the bridge and make it publicly accessible. Guernsey County anticipates rehabilitation of the Peter's Creek "S" bridge and landscaping of the surrounding area. In Zanesville, the "Y" bridge that crosses the Muskingum River will have a new railing installed that will match the railing on the new 6th Street Bridge.

### **PROTECTED LANDS**

June 1998 marked the opening of the National Road Bikeway in St. Clairsville. A rails to trails project along the only rail-trail tunnel in Ohio, that is almost 7.7 miles in length. In the vicinity of the byway, the Salt Fork State Park, Egypt Valley Public Hunting Area, and Dillon State Park provide wildlife protection and recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

### **HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND ORDINANCES**

In 1991, the City of St. Clairsville and the Chamber of Commerce created by ordinance the Architectural Board of Review and a set of design standards in order to guide the development of the downtown, protect its resources, and protect the investments that are made to the Historic District. In addition to creating an Architectural Board of Review, an architectural assistance program was also

developed whereby district owners are afforded free architectural consultations and basic drawings to assist them as they improve their properties. As a direct result of these efforts, the historic downtown district was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in March 1996. Between 1991 and 1998 a remarkable 55% of the buildings in downtown had their facades restored or improved. Phase 3 of the Historic Downtown District Revitalization Plan was adopted in March 2000. It will continue the momentum of earlier projects by improving run-down buildings and pursuing adaptive reuse techniques.

The City of Cambridge has an Architecture and Design Commission that reviews projects and alterations in the historic district. Wheeling Avenue is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the locally designated district includes portions of the byway. The town is seeking state funds to implement a Main Street-style program that will accomplish façade restoration and infrastructure improvements such as burying utilities.

Along the byway in this region the unincorporated communities of Morristown and Old Washington are listed on the National Register of Historic places, as is the Muskingum College Campus in New Concord.

### **DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS**

The City of St. Clairsville has created a "Corridor District" overlay zone that would affect the US 40 corridor. Designed to preserve the residential character and appearance of the corridor, the overlay zone allows for the conversion of residences to office or commercial uses. Architectural standards and reviews would pertain to commercial conversions and residential structures larger than duplexes, similar to the existing review in the Historic Downtown District. The City of Cambridge hopes to implement a Main Street program, but

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it is too early in the process to determine if and what design criteria there may be.

### PENDING PROJECTS

Near St. Clairsville the future construction of Route 22, which will connect I-70 and U.S. 40 west of town, is expected to draw additional traffic and development into the already emerging area west of the city. The county's plan to provide wastewater service west of St. Clairsville is expected to fuel this development. To the east of the city there are over 200 stores, which makes the area a major retail destination. As the city's downtown will be in the middle of these two major traffic destinations/generators, it is anticipated that new development will create additional retail opportunities that will strengthen the downtown area. Cambridge is anticipating the installation of public utilities to the east of their town, which may encourage development. Zanesville's Comprehensive Master Plan proposes an access road from the County's Airport Industrial Park to the Zanesville Industrial Park. Such a connection, would cross the National Road about five miles east of Zanesville.

### ***THE CENTRAL BYWAY (LICKING, FRANKLIN AND MADISON COUNTIES)***

#### **REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS**

Of the three regions in this study, central Ohio is the most populous. The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is a voluntary association of 41 local governments that includes Licking and Franklin counties as well as the city of West Jefferson in Madison County. MORPC serves as a community resource for its members by providing planning, programming and brokerage services as necessary in the areas

of transportation, economic development, land use, environment, housing, and zoning. Also, MORPC is a designated metropolitan planning agency.

### ZONING AND LAND USE

Townships in Licking County administer their own zoning regulations. The Licking County Planning Commission works in conjunction with townships and their residents to develop comprehensive or master plans. In the eastern portion of the county there are scattered communities, such as Gratiot, Brownsville, and Jacksontown, that are primarily residential. A few areas are wooded among the agricultural uses. The loss of farmland in Franklin Township prompted officials to adopt a comprehensive plan and zoning code. Likewise, growth in Licking Township has prompted the drafting of an updated Comprehensive Plan, and when that is complete zoning will also be updated. Along the byway in Etna Township, near the intersection with Rt. 310, there is a significant land area designated for industrial zoning. Over 500 acres in size, this developing hub for manufacturing has no fewer than three access streets onto the National Road.

Franklin County is by far the most populous of the counties in this study. Within its boundaries are the cities of Reynoldsburg, Whitehall, Huber Heights, Bexley, and Columbus. Reynoldsburg is the easternmost of the cities in Franklin County, and the length of the byway is predominately commercial and office uses. In 1999 the city began the last phase of its downtown business rehabilitation work, which includes the byway. The neighboring city of Whitehall invested in itself by developing a Special Overlay District, part of its Main Street Re/Development Plan, to clean up, emphasize, and define its "downtown" area along the National Road. The town has instituted zoning overlay districts to enforce those standards through the area. The City of



## OHIO NATIONAL ROAD SCENIC BYWAY

Bexley sits east of Columbus, and the City's Redevelopment Commission has both planning and zoning powers in the downtown area. The National Road and US 40 split in Bexley. US 40 makes a jog to the north and passes through tree-lined commercial and residential areas before crossing Alum Creek and becoming Broad Street in Columbus. Bexley is in the process of completing an update of its zoning code.

As with most any large city, Columbus has a mix of uses along its primary streets. Both Broad Street and Main Street pass businesses and historic homes as well as a number of State government buildings, including the Ohio State Capitol. A number of development plans and streetscape improvements are in place or in the works, many of which are reflected in the zoning code. The City is considering changing the zoning code to incorporate neo-traditional planning techniques, and has contracted with the architecture/planning firm of Duany Plater-Zyberk to recommend changes to the existing code.

Franklin County, which handles zoning for eleven of its seventeen townships, established zoning for the unincorporated areas in 1948 and updated the code in 1966, 1996 and 1999. The zoning reflects the predominately large-lot residential development that has occurred with some commercial development at important crossroads. With a minimum residential lot size of 2.5 acres, much of the land that is not in a city or town is still used for farming.

The County government handles zoning in Madison County. The county is mostly rural with a historic Main Street in the Village of West Jefferson. The recent adoption of a Farmland Preservation Plan is driving an update of the Zoning Code.



*The business district in downtown Columbus*

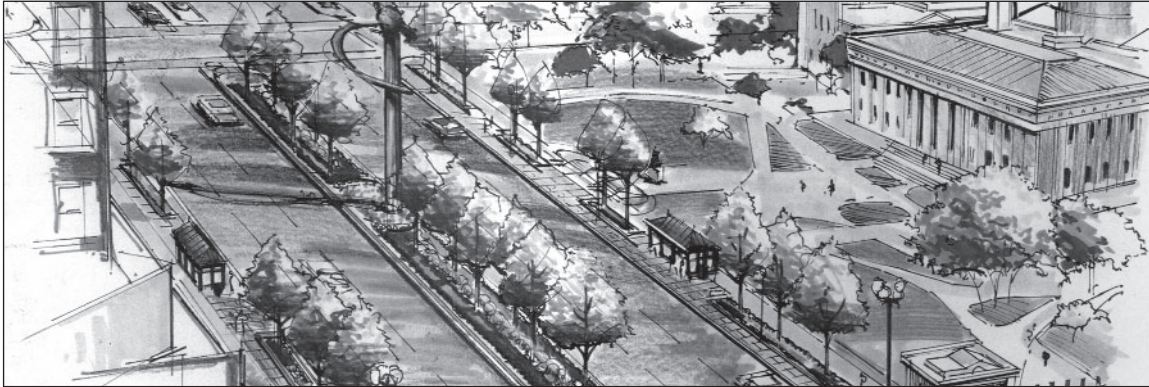
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### SIGNS

Several jurisdictions along the National Road have enacted sign ordinances. The overarching goal of such ordinances is to serve the public by permitting signage which is appropriate and conducive to business, but does not compromise public safety. However, there is wide variation in criteria like size, color, and placement. Several ordinances were reviewed to demonstrate the breadth of existing signage regulation along the National Road. The positive elements of existing ordinances may be brought together to create a plan that benefits both the byway and its communities.

Franklin County regulates signage in unincorporated areas of the county, which includes parts of Prairie and Truro townships on either side of Columbus and adjacent cities such as Reynoldsburg. Most notably, the county ordinance defers to the Columbus Graphics Code for on- and off-premise sign construction specifications. Generally, most small signs (e.g., historical markers, temporary real estate signs, "beware of dog" warnings) can be erected without a permit. Larger signs, including outdoor advertising signs, and on-site and off-site business signs, require a sign permit. Temporary political graphic signs are regulated and also require a special permit. Generally, maximum sign size is correlated with building size and sign location and is dependant upon

## ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS



*Etsall and Associates*

*The Broad Street Median Study proposes major changes to downtown's primary road*

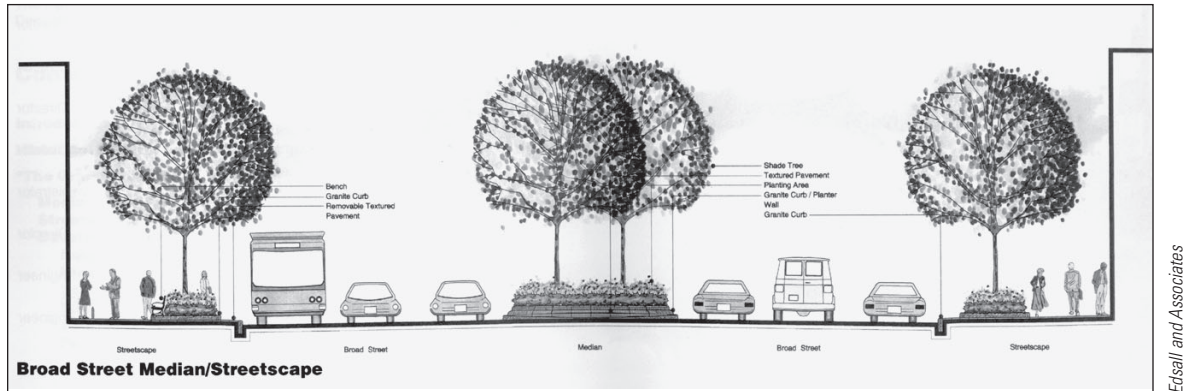
safety factors like visibility. The maximum allowable size of a sign with a setback of less than 100 feet is 300 square feet; larger signs are permitted where the setback exceeds 100 feet. Billboards facing a public street with a right-of-way (ROW) less than 80 feet may not exceed 300 square feet, although a billboard facing a road with ROW greater than 80 feet may be up to 600 square feet. Regardless of location, the maximum billboard size permitted in Franklin County is 672 square feet. While Franklin County regulates sign size and location, sign design is deferred to the Columbus Graphics Code.

While signage along the National Road through Reynoldsburg is not as distracting as that in Whitehall, it remains a management issue. Like most municipal codes, Reynoldsburg's sign regulations allow the erection of most small and temporary signs without a permit. Portable signs, flashing signs, signs with streamers, signs with mechanical/movable parts, and other similar signs are prohibited in Reynoldsburg. Although not specifically stated in the code, Reynoldsburg apparently prohibits billboards. Indeed, the largest sign that may be erected (without undergoing comprehensive sign plan review) is 100 square feet. In comparison to Whitehall, the National Road in Reynoldsburg has benefited from the city's rather "stingy" zoning code. A Streetscape Plan and Design

Guidelines/Standards is currently being developed for Main Street (US 40) from Brice Road to City Hall in Reynoldsburg. More restrictive signage guidelines apparently will be a part of these guidelines.

The Columbus Graphics Code serves as the "guiding light" for signage erected within both Columbus and unincorporated Franklin County. The general guidelines of this code specify that: (1) signs should not obscure a building's significant architectural features, (2) metric and design qualities of a sign should be compatible both with the building on which it is erected and with the surrounding neighborhood, (3) sign information should be limited to the name, address, function, and logo of the establishment, and (4) signage should be limited to a primary sign at the primary entrance and a secondary sign at a second entrance. These general guidelines provide an overview for an ordinance that is very specific about sign appearance, location, scale, etc. The code specifies what types (e.g., wall, projecting, banners) of signs are permitted and also addresses issues like color, materials, and lighting. While the Columbus Graphics Code is designed to encourage signage that is aesthetically pleasing and harmonious with the existing built environment, it does not specify a uniform sign design.

## OHIO NATIONAL ROAD SCENIC BYWAY



*Streetscaping recommendations along Broad Street would enhance the experience for cars and pedestrians*

### MASTER OR COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

As discussed above, townships in Licking County have implemented or are in the process of implementing comprehensive plans. As in many areas, such activity is usually in response to issues regarding zoning, subdivision of land, and loss of farmland to residential uses.

In Franklin County, a master plan for the Big and Little Darby Creek Critical Resource Protection District was recently created. The district is defined as an area 120 feet from and parallel to the ordinary high water mark along both banks. The stated purpose of the plan is to “limit inappropriate land uses adjacent to the creeks, preserve the high water quality and free flowing conditions of the streams, maintain natural water temperatures, preserve plant and animal habitat, and prevent streambank erosion and water siltation.” Likewise, a proposed Stream Resource Protection District would limit inappropriate land uses near streams and establish a natural buffer around them.

Columbus is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan. In addition to its Comprehensive Plan, the City of Columbus has a number of planning efforts in place. These endeavors include a Downtown Columbus Strategic Plan, Broad Street Median Study, the Franklinton Plan, the Near East Area Plan,

Hilltop I and II Reinvestment Area Report and Action Plan, the Greater Hilltop Area Plan, the Westland Plan, Grant/Washington Discovery District Plan, the Riverfront Vision, and West Columbus Interim Development Concept. Also of note is the joint planning and reciprocal plan review activities in which the City participates with other jurisdictions regarding planning matters and issues.

Madison County’s Comprehensive Plan was most recently updated in 1994, and is an expression of the development pattern the county wants to achieve over time. The stated purpose of the plan is to provide a rational way to determine appropriate land use, based on information such as soil type and drainage. Among the issues it addresses, the plan shows the locations for agricultural preservation areas, residential areas, and conservation areas. Another update that reflects the land use and zoning recommendations in the 1999 Farmland Preservation Plan is underway.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP)

Franklin County anticipates the placement of decorative railing on the Broad Street Bridge over Alum Creek in Columbus. Also slated for work as part of another project is a decorative handrail for a sidewalk adjacent to the National Trail Raceway. There are also a variety of

## ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

streetscape projects in various stages of implementation in the cities along the National Road in Columbus and the surrounding area (see the Design Standards and Guidelines section).

### PROTECTED LANDS

Licking County has been hosting a series of public information meetings to keep people informed of state activities related to farmland preservation, but there are no plans to create a farmland preservation plan at this time.

Franklin County has put together an award-winning set of ordinances as part of the Franklin County Greenways Program, one of which pertains to Water Course Protection. This is covered in greater detail in the “Design Guidelines” portion below.

In west Columbus there are efforts to conserve open space for both its natural and recreational value, especially along the banks of the major waterways. To accomplish this, Columbus seeks the protection of major waterways through dedication of land, scenic walkways, easements, development of parks, etc. The city recognizes that a forested buffer strip should be maintained along the streams. The buffer would improve the aesthetic value of the parkland, stabilize the stream bank, provide a habitat for wildlife, and aid in reduction of pollution and sedimentation.

Over the course of the last twenty years, Madison County has lost 23,000 acres of farmland to urban development and other uses; in just the last five years it has lost 1,891 acres to annexations into cities and villages. These activities prompted the County to complete a Farmland Preservation Plan in 1999. That plan recommends updates to the County Comprehensive Plan to implement a 20+- acre minimum lot size in the agricultural zone, but the most significant potential impact to the National Road is the recommendation to

increase industrial zoning along the road to avoid haphazard development elsewhere. As a result, 500 acres of land along the National Road that are currently agricultural and residential are proposed for industrial uses. The Farmland Preservation Plan goes on to oppose the creation of a Little Darby Wildlife Refuge, based on the argument that it would fragment farmland and that local regulations should address environmental issues. The County supports the implementation of a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program, if funding becomes available. If implemented, such a program could help protect views of farmland along the byway.



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*Homes in the Near East Side National Register Historic District*

### HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND ORDINANCES

Along the byway, the City of Columbus has by far the greatest number of historic districts. They include the Grant/Washington Discovery District, the Near East Side National Historic District, the Brewery District, German Village National Register Historic District, East Broad Street National Register Historic District, Jefferson Avenue National Register Historic District, Capital University National Register Historic District, and Hamilton Park National Register Historic District. Also, the City of Columbus is currently conducting a study that



## OHIO NATIONAL ROAD SCENIC BYWAY

will identify other properties of historic significance. The review of projects within these districts includes a Certificate of Appropriateness Application process, as well as various review boards and a Historic Resources Commission. Historic Preservation Office staff review each application before it is placed on the Commission's agenda.

In Madison County a portion of the byway through West Jefferson has a local designation as a historic district. The city has a Design Review Board that considers the appropriateness of changes or alterations in that area.

### DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

In Licking County, the State of Ohio took steps to reduce the high number of curb cuts in a portion of the Corridor. The state purchased right-of way and closed off driveways, in some cases creating frontage roads. New curb cuts are generally not allowed, and property owners in this area must now use existing driveways to access the National Road.

A number of the cities along the National Road in Franklin County either have or are in the process of developing various design guidelines or protection ordinances. The Reynoldsburg Department of Development is undertaking a Comprehensive Streetscape Plan for the commercial corridors and design guidelines and standards to assure quality development. In Whitehall, the Main Street Re/Development District has implemented a site development standards manual that contains guidelines on architectural treatment, signage, screening, and buffering. Also, the Main Street District Rehabilitation Grant Reimbursement Program has acquired \$150,000 in incentive grants for commercial building and property owners in the Main Street Re/Development District to undertake facade renovation and/or rehabilitation improvements. Along with

streetscape and design improvements, Whitehall has also created tax incentive districts, tax abatement programs, and Community Reinvestment Areas (CRAs) to spur revitalization efforts. Bexley has a Main Street Redevelopment Plan, and the city's Redevelopment Commission is in the process of designing guidelines for their Main Street.

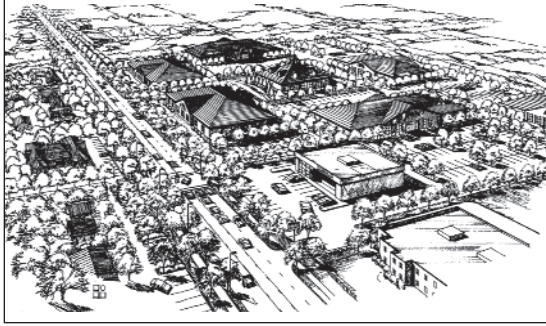
Columbus has hired the architecture/planning firm Duany Plater-Zyberk to develop amendments to the city zoning code that would better accomplish neo-traditional planning techniques. As it now stands, current zoning does not accommodate neo-traditional planning concepts, which stress a mix of land uses in compact urban areas and an emphasis on pedestrian-friendly design. The zoning and design changes would examine both infill and "greenfield" development, and is expected to be complete in late 2000.

There are many special districts along the byway in Columbus. An example is the Downtown Columbus Strategic Plan, which creates a "showpiece" pedestrian/retail corridor along Broad and High Streets. Also of interest are measures being taken in the Grant/Washington Discovery District. In that area a landscaped median strip is proposed that would divide Broad Street. Accent paving is also suggested, as are pole-mounted banners. Where buildings are set back at greater distances from the street, low level fencing, planting, and/or earth forms are recommended to reinforce edges. The Plan has been in place since 1989, and has been a significant influence on the direction of an important downtown area.

In Columbus, the Riverfront Vision's planning and design principles for the Downtown Reach/Scioto Peninsula (West Bank) area contain a number of measures intended to preserve and improve the area. The criteria specify that roadways which cross the river be redesigned to narrow vehicular travel ways, and



## ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS



*An illustrative sketch of Whitehall's Main Street Re/Development District*

recommend providing landscaped medians and adding crosswalks and signals to facilitate pedestrian crossings. Some of the improvements to the public areas include the construction of a new amphitheater, with a park redesign that accentuates sloping lawns, rows of trees, and various features to improve the appearance and usability of the area. Also anticipated is an additional pedestrian crosswalk on Broad Street to improve access for those walking along the river near the Veterans Memorial Auditorium.

Also, in Franklin County the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, in conjunction with the City of Columbus, has developed two model ordinances as part of the Franklin County Greenways Program: one for Water Course Protection and one for Scenic Byway Designation. These ordinances were initiated and funded by the City of Columbus, Franklin County Board of Commissioners, and Metro Parks. The goal of the project was twofold: first, to develop model regulations that will encourage a natural buffer zone of trees and shrubs along Franklin County waterways; and second, to preserve, maintain and enhance an additional resource component of the urban stream systems by designating certain roadways which parallel watercourses as scenic byways. The Scenic Byway Designation ordinance is an overlay zone that could stand alone or



*A sketch of the proposed landscaped gateway along Whitehall's Main Street (the National Road)*

American Communities Partnership

accompany state designation. In order to facilitate communities tailoring the ordinance to their individual needs, certain sections are left blank. The ordinance offers the option to use performance standards to define uses rather than specifying them. The ordinance offers possible development standards relating to setbacks, building heights and density, facades and design of new buildings, utility lines, access, signage, lighting, landscaping and street trees. It also tries to preserve existing landscape heritage and reinforce it as part of new development, and incorporate street trees. The ordinance goes on to suggest additional standards such as watercourse protection, sign limitations, and scenic view preservation. Also, the ordinance suggests that communities “consider balancing the values of the designated Scenic Byway with the potential for future improvements.”

### PENDING PROJECTS

Along the byway in Licking County's Etna Township, near the intersection with Rt. 310, there is a large amount of industrial zoning that is being developed in phases. Over 500 acres in size, this developing hub for manufacturing has no fewer than three access streets to the National Road.

Madison County's efforts on the Farmland Preservation Plan include the consolidation of unbuilt industrial uses throughout the County

## OHIO NATIONAL ROAD SCENIC BYWAY

into one, large industrial area. Intended to reduce the proliferation of this land use in the County, the proposed industrial area will be approximately 1,000 acres in size. The primary access will be from the National Road.

### ***THE WESTERN BYWAY (CLARK, MIAMI, MONTGOMERY AND PREBLE COUNTIES)***

#### **REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS**

In Clark County, the Coordinating Committee of the Clark County-Springfield Transportation Study serves as the MPO/Technical Coordinating Committee. For other counties, the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) acts as a voluntary association of numerous local governments and non-governmental organizations that includes Miami, Montgomery and Preble Counties. The goal of the Commission is to help these organizations work together to understand and address the public policy trends, issues and questions that face the region. The Commission's Community Services Division performs a variety of roles, and provides technical assistance to member jurisdictions in developing comprehensive plans, drafting development regulations, preparing maps and reports, conducting educational workshops on specific planning issues, and serving as facilitator for coordinating specific intergovernmental activities. MVRPC's Transportation Division and Water Quality Division also provide support to member jurisdictions. The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Miami, Montgomery and Preble Counties, as well as others.

#### **ZONING AND LAND USE**

In the western region of the National Road,

zoning is handled differently in each county. Generally speaking, zoning in this region reflects not only historic trends and agricultural uses, but also the impact of Dayton International Airport, the presence of two dams and their conservation areas, and a predominance of agricultural uses further to the west.

The Clark County Planning Commission handles planning and zoning matters for the townships in its boundaries, with the exception of the City of Springfield and a small number of townships. Throughout the unincorporated area the zoning and land use is primarily agricultural, with some commercial development. However, development pressure that results from the county's location between the cities of Springfield and Columbus is spurring the development of large-lot (one acre) residential uses in some areas. For zoning matters the County Planning Commission endeavors to follow its comprehensive plan as closely as possible.

In the City of Springfield, the business and industrial zoning along the byway is considerably built out. Business zoning dominates the Corridor as it enters Springfield from the east, followed by business/industrial uses, and then the central business district. Here the National Road becomes a downtown Main Street yet again. West of the central business district lies another business/industrial zoning area, followed by heavy industrial uses.

Bethel is the only township in Miami County to include the National Road, and the County handles zoning and planning issues. There are open viewsheds through this area predominated by farmland, with the settlement of Brandt providing some residential, commercial, and industrial development. Just east of the Great Miami River there is more commercial zoning and development. The Taylorsville Conservation Area and floodplain is to one side with single-family homes on the other as the

## ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

byway enters Montgomery County.

Montgomery County handles comprehensive and long-range planning activities for the townships in its jurisdiction, but individual townships have their own zoning codes and powers. Potential improvements to the Dayton International Airport have the potential to further impact zoning and land use issues in the vicinity.

Although a few incorporated cities have land in the general vicinity of the byway, the City of Vandalia has by far the most significant area along the western byway. Vandalia has had zoning in place since 1961. A major revision of the code was undertaken in 1986 to bring it in line with the recommendations in the 1985 Plan, which reflected the predominance of single family homes in the city. Zoning and land uses along the byway in this county tend to reflect the influence of the Dayton suburbs to the south, Dayton International Airport to the north, the Great Miami River to the east, and Stillwater River on the west. There are a number of locations where various streets intersect with the National Road in Vandalia, and historically the most intense commercial development has occurred in those places. In the area along the byway west of the I-75 interchange, there is an area of aging strip commercial zoning, and multiple curb cuts onto the arterial road have been allowed. The city anticipates using access management techniques and pedestrian improvements to assure quality redevelopment of the area. The city also recommends developing design guidelines as well as revising the area's zoning to reflect proposed land use patterns and permitted uses in downtown.

Continuing west along the byway brings one to the vicinity of the Stillwater River, a State Wild and Scenic River. In this area there are a number of conservation efforts in place, including floodplain reserves, a major nature



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*Suburban development in Brandt*

facility at the Aullwood National Audubon Center, and a large Metro Park. Zoning in this area is predominately conservation or low-density residential.

Preble County handles all zoning matters within its boundaries with the exception of the Village of Lewisburg, which has its own planning and zoning powers. Near the state line the county has a number of commercial uses, which are driven by the proximity of an interchange with I-70 immediately over the border. Unlike most of the towns along the byway, the National Road is not Lewisburg's Main Street. Residential uses are the predominant land use.

### SIGNS

Several jurisdictions along the National Road have enacted sign ordinances. The overarching goal of such ordinances is to serve the public by permitting signage which is appropriate and conducive to business, but that does not compromise public safety. However, there is wide variation in criteria like size, color, and placement. Several ordinances were reviewed to demonstrate the breadth of existing signage regulation along the National Road. The positive elements of existing ordinances may be brought together to create a plan that benefits both the byway and its communities.

The Signs and Outdoor Advertising chapter of the City of Springfield's zoning code regulates

## OHIO NATIONAL ROAD SCENIC BYWAY

signage by zoning district more closely than most of the other municipal codes enforced along the National Road. As is typical for codes of this type, the largest signs may be erected in business districts. Theoretically, one could erect a sign of up to 900 square feet in area in Springfield, although setback and other criteria govern all signs in excess of 400 square feet. Of all the sign ordinances reviewed, Springfield's is probably the most permissive in terms of signs that use neon, flashing lights, movable parts, and the like.

Vandalia's sign ordinance is also typical of a municipal code developed to address health/safety issues rather than aesthetics. The code is very specific about what types of signs are allowed with/without permits and what signs (i.e., roof, projecting, movable, flashing, animated, etc.) are prohibited. Maximum allowable sign size in Vandalia varies according to several factors, including setback, street ROW width, posted speed limit, and zoning district. The largest sign permitted anywhere in Vandalia could have an area of up to 244 square feet. Like Whitehall and Reynoldsburg, Vandalia recognizes that its sign code has degraded the appearance of the National Road corridor. The city's Comprehensive Plan Update acknowledges that the zoning code's size and height requirements are excessive and recommends the implementation of tighter sign controls in the city's commercial corridors and amendments to the zoning ordinance to address sign landscaping, lettering style, color, and materials. Such recommendations are clearly a step in the right direction.

### MASTER OR COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

The Clark County Planning Commission adopted its Crossroads Comprehensive Plan in 1999. Utilizing a specialized land evaluation system as well as other information, the County determined the areas that are more appropriate

for development than others. Clark County strives to follow this plan as closely as possible with regard to zoning and other matters. To accomplish some of the township's planning objectives, the County, the City of Springfield, and the suburban townships are considering unique agreements regarding annexations, revenue sharing, and water and sewer hookups. Properties in the unincorporated areas near Springfield that complete a water and sewer hookup follow through with the required annexation to the city, yet retain their township tax benefits. This method of obtaining city utility hookups while keeping township tax benefits is providing a strong business development incentive. Other planning issues facing the County include annexations and 'boundary creep' from the cities of Huber Heights and Fairborn, as well as supporting the agriculture preservation programs that the County has pursued.

The potential for significant changes to Dayton International Airport and the nearby road network appear to be driving a considerable degree of change at the local level. In anticipation of improvements to the airport, the City of Vandalia has annexed quite a bit of land southwest of the airport. The City of Dayton has some land not far from the byway, and the merged townships of Clayton and Randolph are not far away. The local governments, including Butler Township, anticipate taking measures in their respective comprehensive plans and zoning regulations to keep ahead of development and growth trends. Where the byway is concerned the greatest potential impact would be from the possible realignment of the National Road, and the manner in which new development is handled. This is addressed in greater detail in the Pending Projects section.

Overall no single land use dominates Vandalia, and a balance between residential, industrial and commercial/offices uses has developed over



## ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS



*The National Road in Vandalia.*

the years. The pending update to the Vandalia Comprehensive Plan gives a great deal of consideration to land uses along the National Road, which the town considers its historic downtown. The plan recommends non-intensive uses in the vicinity of the Great Miami River, and states that the area around Airport Access Road should be a mix of commercial, office, and industrial uses, with wetlands and other sensitive areas being protected. Residents and officials in the City of Vandalia consider the intersection of the National Road and Dixie Drive the traditional “Crossroads of America,” and this is also where most of the downtown commercial and retail zoning is located. The principal commercial corridor in town, the National Road contains primarily fast-food franchises, gas station chains, and aging strip centers that have individual parking lots and are not pedestrian friendly. In the draft of the 2000 Comprehensive Plan Update, it is noted that citizens, city officials and business representatives have discussed the need to develop an identity in the downtown area along the byway and create a focal point for the city.

### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)**

At this time the potential improvements to Dayton International Airport comprise the bulk of the potential CIP projects in the region. Although a number of airline carriers no longer

serve the facility, approximately one billion dollars of Federal money is anticipated for improvements that include runway expansions, a new access interchange, and relocation of the National Road.

In Miami County, Bethel Township anticipates the installation of a water line in the vicinity of Brandt. The utilities extension is being fueled by the expanding city of Huber Heights to the south.



*Taylorsville Dam in Taylorsville MetroPark.*

### **PROTECTED LANDS**

In October 1999, Clark County adopted a Farm Preservation Plan. Designed to preserve the traditionally agricultural uses in the county, the program is receiving much attention because of the County’s location between the cities of Springfield and Columbus. A somewhat controversial plan, the County wants to pursue transfer of development rights programs and other vehicles to accomplish its goals.

The Miami Conservancy District has control over both the Taylorsville Dam, which provides flood control for the Great Miami River on the eastern edge of the county, as well as Englewood Dam, which serves the same purpose for Stillwater River to the west. Both dams and their floodplains have value for their flood control as well as recreational and environmental functions. Significant MetroParks are in place around the Englewood and Taylorsville Dam areas. The Aullwood



## OHIO NATIONAL ROAD SCENIC BYWAY

Audubon Center lies adjacent to Englewood MetroPark, and the combined citing of these facilities, along with the protection that is afforded nearby floodplains, gives this area heightened environmental significance.

### HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND ORDINANCES

The City of Springfield has its share of historic districts. They include the East High Street District, South Fountain Preservation Area and National Register Historic District, a proposed Champion City Historic District, and a proposed African American Historic Preservation District. The city also has a Historic Landmarks Commission. Just off the National Road is the historic city market, a block-long building in a typical 1880's Romanesque style building that once housed the Springfield City Hall. The building is under an \$18 million renovation, and will become the Heritage Center of Clark County. On High Street, the eastbound part of the byway in Springfield, is Wescott House, a home designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1907 that has recently been purchased by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. The Foundation seeks to restore the building, and has available a wealth of original material that is stored in the home's attic.

While there are no other National Register Historic Districts in the western region of the National Road, there are areas with concentrations of historic buildings or resources. They include portions of Vandalia, Englewood (near the Stillwater River), and Lewisburg.

### DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

In Vandalia, the Comprehensive Plan update recommends creating an overlay district with specific design guidelines and standards for the National Road corridor. The city also expresses a desire to provide incentives for redevelopment, and perhaps create a city plaza on the corner of



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*The Westcott House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.*

the National Road and Dixie Drive. The update also recommends a number of other measures that could be used by the City Council and Administration to develop a plan for this area. The suggestions include adding landscaping and physical improvements to lessen the amount of asphalt in the downtown area, encouraging the renovation of facades through grant and low interest loan programs, and developing a Downtown Task Force to implement recommendations and build a support base.

### PENDING PROJECTS

The expansion of the commercial uses into Clark County from the City of Springfield is an ongoing issue. Also, there is talk of Springfield possibly annexing a considerable portion of land east of the city, out to the hamlet of Harmony.

The greatest potential impact to the byway in this area includes the possible expansion of runways at Dayton International Airport and the proposed realignment of the National Road. The City of Vandalia strongly and actively opposes such a measure and its impact.

Nonetheless, construction of a new interchange for the Airport Access Road is a possibility discussed in the 2000 Plan Update for Vandalia. The area is slated to serve as "City Center West," an area of approximately 650 acres, and is designated to be commercial/office uses. It is anticipated that, at buildout, this center could potentially contain five million square feet of leaseable area. Such an impact would require a

## ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

number of highway improvements as phased development occurs. Should the interchange and runway expansion occur, the city hopes to use its development potential as an opportunity to redefine the city's community image. Adjacent Butler Township is currently promoting the development of a town center that aims to accomplish similar objectives, and the draft Plan recommends working with the Township to link the two developments in the future. Bethel Township in Miami County is entering into a planning study to develop a Township Development Plan that will focus on the community of Brandt.