

A. Overview

The Existing Conditions and Trends Element summarizes base line data regarding current conditions in the City of Sandusky and provides certain forecasts regarding the future, especially in the area of population. The following sections are addressed:

1. Regional Context
2. Historic Development
3. Land Use
4. Planning
5. Development Regulations
6. Natural Environment
7. Community Facilities and Services
8. Housing
9. Economic Development
10. Transportation
11. Utilities

B. Regional Context

Sandusky, Ohio is located in northern Ohio on the edge of Lake Erie between Cleveland and Toledo and serves as the seat of government for Erie County. Sandusky is accessed by Interstate 80/90 and S.R. 2, both providing east-west access south of the City, as well as by US. 6, US. 250, S.R. 101 and S.R. 4 providing east-west and north-south corridors through the City. Sandusky Bay borders the northern boundary of the City and Lake Erie is located directly north and east.

A. Population

Erie County and its adjacent counties of Huron, Lorain, Ottawa and Sandusky comprise a five-county region which reported a population of 526,479 in 2000 U.S. Census, and increase of approximately 4 percent since the 1990 U.S. Census. Table 1 below illustrates the percentage change of population from 1990 to 2000 by county. Notice that Huron County experienced the greatest percentage increase in population while Sandusky County experienced a decrease in population.

Table 3.1 Regional Change in Population (1990-2000)

County	1990 Population	2000 Population	Percentage Change
Erie	76,779	79,551	3.6%
Huron	56,240	59,487	5.8%
Lorain	271,126	284,664	5.0%
Ottawa	40,029	40,985	2.4%
Sandusky	61,963	61,792	-0.3%

According to the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) the regional population of these five counties is projected to be 554,559 by 2030, resulting in an increase of approximately 5.3 percent or 28,080 persons. Specifically, Erie County is projected to have a 2030 population of 83,061 or 15 percent of the regional population.

1. Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria PMSA

Erie County is located directly west of the Cleveland-Lorain-Elyria Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA). This PMSA is comprised of Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina Counties and reported a 2000 population of 2,250,871, an increase of 2.2 percent since the 1990 Census.

2. Toledo MSA

Erie County is located east of the Toledo Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The Toledo MSA is comprised of Fulton, Lucas, and Wood Counties. According to the 2000 Census, this MSA has a population of 618,203, an increase of 0.66 percent since 1990.

B. Employment

The five-county region had 171,725 employees 16 years of age and older in 1994, as reported by the Bureau of the Census. Erie County contributed 17.1 percent (29,327 employees) to the regional total. Leading industries for the region were:

1. Manufacturing accounting for 36.2 percent or 62,197 employees.
2. Services accounting for 25.7 percent or 44,213 employees.
3. Retail trade accounting for 21.6 percent or 37,141 employees.

Employees in Erie County constituted 13.8 percent (8,595) of the regional manufacturing industry, 19.3 percent (8,544) of the services industry and 20.2 percent (7,487) of the retail trade industry. These figures are comparable to the corresponding state figures of 23.1 percent, 31.4 percent and 17.6 percent.

C. Agriculture

As reported by the 1992 Census of Agriculture, approximately five percent (3,471) of the state's farms were located in the five-county region. Farmland covered 62.4 percent (759,443 acres) of the total land area. This figure is higher than the state figure of 54.4

C. Historic Development

1. Early Settlers

Among the earliest inhabitants of the present day Sandusky area were Wyandot, Ottawa and Seneca Native American tribes. Under an English charter of Charles II, Connecticut claimed what is now northeast Ohio in 1662. Known as the Connecticut Western Reserve, the boundaries of the land extended from the Pennsylvania border west to Seneca and Sandusky Counties and from Lake Erie south to the 41st degree North Latitude. Fort Sandusky was established by the British at the site of Venice in 1761. The fort was destroyed by fire set by Native American tribes two years later. In September, 1781 several Connecticut cities were invaded and burned by the British and Tories. The Connecticut Legislature allotted 500,000 acres at the west end of the Western Reserve to the fire survivors ("sufferers") and their families on May 10, 1792, establishing the Fire Lands. The Fire Lands included what is today Erie and Huron Counties, Ruggles Township in Ashland County and Danbury Township in Ottawa County.

2. Sandusky's Founding

The first Anglo-American settler to Sandusky was John Garrison, who arrived in Sandusky in 1810 and established the first merchant business. The first plat of Sandusky, known as Portland at the time, was recorded by Zalmon Wildman in 1816. The name was changed to Sandusky in 1818, using the Wyandot word "Sa-undustee" meaning water. Sandusky was designated as the Erie County permanent seat of justice in 1840, two years after the County had been organized and established. The original plat was amended in 1852, when the eastern section of Sandusky was added by John G. Camp, John G. Camp, Jr. and Jacob A. Camp. This area was referred to as Camptown. Construction of the Erie County courthouse, located in Sandusky, was completed in 1874.

3. Transportation and Growth

Ohio's evolving transportation network, beginning with water and continuing through the development of canals, railroads and major roadway corridors, supported growth in Sandusky. The following is a brief overview:

A. Water Transportation

Realizing the potential for growth and development with its location on Lake Erie, Sandusky officials competed with Cleveland and Toledo for terminal status of a canal connecting Lake Erie and the Ohio River in 1822. The City was not successful, however the opening of the Erie Canal linking Lake Erie and New York City in 1825 did benefit Sandusky. An increase in the number of passenger and cargo steamboat operations utilizing the port of Sandusky enhanced its rate of growth.

B. The Railroad Age

Although transportation on the Lake and canal systems had been successful, the railroad provided a quicker and more economical means of transportation. Several major railroads passed through or originated in Sandusky. Construction of the Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad began in 1835. By 1848 the line from Sandusky to Springfield was joined with the Little Miami Railroad, providing service between Sandusky and Cincinnati. The Monroeville and Sandusky City Railroad was constructed in the 1840s and service on the Junction Railroad, running between Maumee and Cleveland, began in 1853. Consolidation of the Lake Erie and Louisville Railroad in 1880 resulted in the Lake Erie and Western Railroad. The Columbus and Sandusky Short Line Railroad Company became partially operational in 1891, with through service to Columbus beginning two years later. Streetcar service began in the late 19th century. As the automobile became more widely used, streetcar service started to decline and became obsolete by 1939.

C. Epidemics

Sandusky suffered several Cholera outbreaks during the 19th century. The first epidemic occurred in 1832, killing 30 to 35 persons. The 1849 epidemic was the most detrimental to the Sandusky population. Hundreds of deaths resulted, while thousands of residents left the City permanently to avoid contact with the disease. As a result, the City experienced a dramatic decline in population from 5,600 to 1,500 in the middle of the 19th century.

D. Underground Railroad Activity

Sandusky's location as a Lake Erie Port and railroad terminus made it a major terminal on the Underground Railroad. Known by the code name "Hope", Sandusky was the final United States stop for many escaping slaves on their way to Canada.

E. Economic Development and Prosperity

The location of Sandusky on Lake Erie enhanced and supported a strong local economy based on natural resources. Success was achieved early on in the lumber industry. Various mills were established, with the first flour mill opening in 1810. By the 1840s the commercial fishing industry was growing and Sandusky became a major freshwater fish market through the latter half of the 19th century. The ice industry was a great success as well. Fishermen began freezing fish in 1867. During the winter months from the 1870s until approximately 1900, the frozen Sandusky Bay provided ice fields, upon which blocks of ice were cut and stored in shore ice houses for year-round use. Both the fishing and ice industries significantly enhanced development of the eastern section of Sandusky.

Other industries contributing to the local economy included the following:

1. The grape and wine industry, introduced in the 1850s.
2. Several limestone and sandstone quarries.
3. Cigar manufacturers.
4. Window glass manufacturers.
5. Automobile factories prior to the establishment of the assembly line.

Among significant companies in Sandusky were the Sandusky Paper Company (established in 1881), the American Crayon Company (established in 1890) and the Sandusky Foundry and Machine Company (established in the late 19th century).

Cedar Point has played a significant role in the history of Sandusky. Used by fishermen as early as the 1840s, it quickly became a place for recreational activities. The first roller coaster was opened in 1892. Five years later George Boeckling purchased the property and constructed the Breakers Hotel which opened in 1905. The next 40 years at Cedar Point were characterized by growing popularity and attendance, followed by a decline in the number of visitors in the 1940s and 1950s. With the building of Causeway Drive in 1959 (and the widening of the route in 1974), Cedar Point regained its popularity and continues to be a significant regional tourist attraction drawing three million visitors per year.

Sandusky Historical Timeline

Pre-1662	Wyandot, Ottawa and Seneca Native American tribes occupied the Sandusky area.
1662	Connecticut claimed the land comprising the 14 current northeastern Ohio counties and was known as the Connecticut Western Reserve.
1761	Fort Sandusky was built by the British at the site of Venice.
1763	Fort Sandusky was destroyed by fire set by Native American tribes.
1781	The Connecticut towns of Danbury, East Haven, Fairfield, Greenfield, Groton, New Haven, New London, Norwalk and Ridgefield were destroyed by fire resulting from an invasion by the British and Tories.
1792	500,000 acres of land - including the site of Sandusky - were allotted by the Connecticut Legislature to "sufferers" of the Connecticut fires. This land became known as the Fire Lands.
1810	The first flour mill was built at the mouth of Cold Creek.
1810	John Garrison was the first Anglo-American settler in Sandusky and started the first merchant business.
1817	The first plat was recorded by Zalmon Wildman and was named Portland.
1818	Portland was renamed Sandusky for the Wyandot word "Sa-undustee" meaning water.
1820	The first record of the Underground Railroad in Sandusky.
1822	Sandusky bid for canal terminus status of the canal linking Lake Erie and the Ohio River, but lost out to Cleveland and Toledo.

1832	The Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad Company was chartered on January 1, 1832. Construction began on September 17, 1835. The railroad became operational on May 11, 1838.
1832	First appearance of cholera in North America killed 30-35 people in Sandusky.
1838	Erie County was established on March 16, 1838, with Sandusky designated as the permanent county seat of justice in 1840.
1840s	The Monroeville and Sandusky City Railroad was established.
1840s	The commercial fishing industry began in Sandusky.
1849	A cholera epidemic killed hundreds of Sandusky residents, while thousands left the City permanently to escape the outbreak.
1850s	The grape and wine industry began in Sandusky.
1852	The original plat of Sandusky was amended with the addition of the eastern section of the City, known as Camptown.
1853	Service between Maumee and Cleveland through Sandusky began on the Junction Railroad.
1867	The freezing of fish began in Sandusky.
1870-1900	Ice fields on Lake Erie during the winter months provided year-round refrigeration.
1874	Construction of the Erie County courthouse in Sandusky was completed.
1880	Consolidation of the Lake Erie and Louisville Railroad resulted in the Lake Erie and Western Railroad.
1891	Partial service of the Columbus and Sandusky Short Line Railroad began on November 12, 1891. Service to Columbus began on April 17, 1893.
1905	The Breakers Hotel opened at Cedar Point, already a popular recreation and resort area.
1959	Causeway Drive was built. It was widened in 1974.

D. Land Use

1. Planning Area Structure

Generally, four planning attributes help an initial overview of a city's planning area structure. These attributes influence future development and revitalization efforts. The planning area structure includes: entry points, major approaches, activity centers and major land use clusters.

A. Characteristics

1. Entry Points

Entry points are key locations at which residents and visitors enter a community. These places convey the first images of a community. In Sandusky, they are located at the intersections: Cleveland Road (SR 6) at the City Limits, Columbus Avenue and Perkins Avenue, Fremont Avenue (SR 6) and SR 2, Hayes Avenue (SR 4) and Perkins Avenue, Milan Road (US 250) and Perkins Avenue, Venice Road (SR 6) and Tiffin Avenue (SR 101) and Tiffin Avenue (SR 101) at the City Limits.

2. Major Approaches

Major approaches of a city encompass different modes of transportation such as railroads, major streets, highways and watercraft. They also provide visual impressions about a community. In Sandusky, major approaches include: Cleveland Road (SR 6), Columbus Avenue, Hayes Avenue (SR 4), Milan Road (US 250), Venice Road (SR 6), Sandusky Griffing Airport and Sandusky Bay. In addition, two railways run east-west and north-south respectively through Sandusky.

3. Activity Centers

Characteristic of activity centers are increased levels of human activity associated with recreation, shopping, health care or other activities. They are important aspects of a community's quality of life because they serve as points of civic exchange. The following six major activity centers are located in the City: Cedar Point Amusement Park, waterfront and central business district, Firelands Community Hospital, Sandusky Plaza and the old Foodtown Plaza.

4. Major Land Use Clusters

A foundational element in every community is its existing land use. Major land use clusters define the current physical character of the City, such as residential, commercial and industrial concentrations. This depiction is general in scope and a detailed land use survey follows later in the chapter. Generally, a majority of the residential land use is concentrated within a mile of the City's central business district. Major open space is located throughout the western area of the City at Mills Creek Golf Course and along Sandusky Bay. Commercial development is concentrated around three areas: the central business district, Perkins Avenue, and Cleveland Road near Causeway Drive. Generally, Sandusky has four industrial land use clusters which are concentrated along the City's east and west waterfront. In addition, two industrial clusters are located in the area of Superior Street and Venice Road and West Monroe Street and Olds Street.

B. Development Constraints and Opportunities

Sandusky's growth is affected by the urban design variables and land use clusters. Together, these attributes may cumulatively prove to be an opportunity or a constraint on development in Sandusky.

1. Development Constraints

Generally, in each of Sandusky's gateway areas there is no identity or sense of entering the City. These highly visible areas do not promote a positive image or identity for Sandusky. Two physical barriers in Sandusky include the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks and Perkins Avenue. These linear barriers disrupt the physical layout of the City. Automobile-oriented land use clusters located along Cleveland Road and Perkins Avenue bring increased traffic to those areas.

2. Development Opportunities

Activity centers, the waterfront, vacant land and vacant industrial areas serve as key development opportunities. Activity centers which serve as development opportunities for the City and its neighborhoods include the central business district and Cedar Point. The availability of infrastructure and land create prospective development sites in the western area of the City. In addition, available infrastructure and access to industrial sites along the waterfront create potential redevelopment sites. The waterfront provides a strong identity and catalyst for the economic base for Sandusky and can spark further redevelopment efforts.

2. Land Use

A. Overview

Sandusky totals about 14.9 square miles (9,536 acres) which includes about 9.1 square miles of land (5,835 acres) and 5.8 square miles of water (3,700 acres). Land use maps were prepared using aerial photographs and field work. Within Sandusky, land use is depicted in seven categories in order to assess existing land use relative to zoning. These include residential, business and commercial, industrial, Cedar Point, public facilities, institutional and undeveloped.

These broad categories contain subcategories of land use which are depicted on the enclosed maps.

Residential land uses encompass the largest percentage of the City's area with 48.6 percent. The largest category, single-family uses, occupies about 2,400 acres and the smallest residential land use area is mobile homes with 55 acres. A unique residential land use located along the waterfront is boathouses which encompass 20 acres (in some cases there is a dwelling unit while in others there are only boat storage sheds). The second largest acreage for a land use category is attributed to vacant and undeveloped land (17.5 percent or 1,073 acres). Business and commercial uses occupy 17.4 percent of the City's area. Cedar Point accounts for five percent of that total and port commercial (three percent), general commercial (three percent) and retail (three percent) total nine percent. Tourist oriented land uses account for 118 acres (two percent) of the City. Industrial uses occupy six percent (317 acres) of the City.

Please refer to the following table for a tabulation of land use acreage and the overall percentage compared to other categories.

Table 3.2
Existing Land Use (1997)

<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Single-Family	2,400	41.0
Two-Family	82	1.3
Multi-Family	234	5.0
Boat House and Garages	20	0.3
Mobile Homes	55	1.0
Residential Total	2,791	48.6
Retail	184	3.0
Office	75	1.0
Personal Service	21	0.3
Motels/Hotels/Restaurants	118	2.0
Recreation (theaters, etc.)	6	0.1
Cedar Point	300	5.0
Port Commercial	167	3.0
General Commercial	185	3.0
Business Total	1,056	17.4
Industrial	242	5.0
Port Industrial	75	1.0
Industrial Total	317	6.0
Public Facilities	478	8.5
Institutional	65	1.0
Vacant Land	1,073	17.5
Vacant Industrial Buildings	55	1.0
Totals	5,835*	100.0

*This total includes transportation, river and stream corridors.

B. Residential

A majority of the City's residential land use consists of single-family uses, located primarily between Mills Street on the west and Cleveland Road and Ogontz Street along the east. In addition, two-family and multi-family uses are dispersed throughout the area between Camp Street, Jefferson Street and Sycamore Line north of Norfolk Southern Railroad.

Single family lot splits are occurring outside of the central city along Bardshar and Venice Roads. Generally, there are three mobile home parks located in the City. One is located near Fremont Avenue and Venice Road, another east near the city limits north of Cleveland Road and one near George Street and Monroe Street. Boathouses are residential land uses located along portions of the waterfront. These boathouses are generally north of First Street and east of Meigs Street.

C. Commercial

Commercial uses encompass a broad set of categories ranging from port commercial to personal service. Major retail and general commercial activities are located along two corridors, Perkins Avenue and Cleveland Road. A large retail center is located at Cleveland Road and Sycamore Line. In addition, the central business district provides a variety of retail goods. Personal service uses are dispersed in neighborhoods north of the Norfolk Southern Railroad. Uses catering to the tourism of the area are concentrated along Cleveland Road near the Causeway entrance to Cedar Point. Restaurants and hotels are characteristic of that area. The downtown waterfront and Causeway entrance are areas containing port commercial uses such as marinas.

D. Industrial

Generally, there are two primary areas containing a large percentage of industrial land uses. The first is south of Monroe Street, near Olds Street and the second is south of Venice Road east of George Street. In addition, industrial uses (including vacant structures) are located along the western waterfront of the downtown and along First Street east of downtown. Another land use category is port industrial, which encompasses a large portion of land along the waterfront just west of downtown. The Norfolk and Southern Railroad leases one city-owned dock, however, two others are empty.

E. Cedar Point

Land use identified as Cedar Point is limited to the amusement park area.

F. Public and Semi-Public

These land uses include parks, schools, churches and municipal facilities. Two of the larger public uses are the Mills Creek Golf Course and Kiwanis Park. Primary public facilities in the downtown include several parks and the Erie County Courthouse area. Sandusky High School and stadium is a third public facility which encompasses a substantial amount of acreage. A large number and variety of churches are located within the City.

G. Institutional

Hospitals and nursing homes are examples of institutional land uses. Generally, there are three institutional uses, the Providence Commons on Fremont Avenue, and Providence (Hayes Avenue and Buchanan Street) and Firelands (Hayes Avenue and Decatur Street) hospitals which are located north of the high school.

H. Vacant

Generally, large tracts of vacant and undeveloped land are located to the west of downtown area and include old railroad rights-of-way. Smaller tracts of undeveloped land include vacant lots (infill sites) in the older residential areas. There are several significant vacant industrial buildings with redevelopment potential, such as the Tri-Cor and Chesapeake buildings.

I. Comparison with Zoning

It is important to note that in many communities, land is used differently than what it is zoned. In many communities, there are often inconsistencies between existing land use and the zoning regulations. A comparative analysis reveals that the amount of acres developed for single family

land uses exceeds the amount of land zoned for that use (RS, R1-75, R1-60, R1-50, R1-40). This may be explained by the location of single family use in nonresidential districts either as a permitted use or nonconforming land use. Multi-family development also exceeds the amount of land zoned for that use (RMF), 20 percent of land zoned for two-family use is developed as such. While 85 percent of land available for commercial uses is developed, only 25 percent of the available industrial land is developed.

J. Trends

Over the past twenty years single family land use has increased by 78 percent. The largest increase in residential land use is attributed to multi-family development. The second largest increase is attributed to single-family development. Business land uses increased in the City by 42 percent and there is a decrease in the amount of industrial acreage by 19.5 percent. While the single-family land use percentage increased, similarly, the amount of vacant land decreased by 51 percent. It is important to note that in the 1997 assessment, transportation is included within each category and as a result, changes in land use may not be as severe as the 1971 Plan.

E. Population

The population figures presented below are from the 2000 US Census.

1. Characteristics

Consistent with past trends, Sandusky's population has continued to decrease. From 1990 to 2000, Sandusky's population decreased by approximately 6 percent while Erie County's population increased by 3.6 percent during that same decade.

A. Income and Poverty Levels

In 2000 the median household income in Erie County was \$42,746, an increase of 40 percent over the 1990 median household income of \$30,470. The 2000 median family income was \$51,756. The median earnings for male full-time year round workers was \$39,249 while the median earnings for female full-time year round workers was \$23,697.

Only 78.4 percent of the households reported earnings while 28.5 percent of the households with earnings receive social security income and 21.6 percent receive retirement income. Two percent of the households with earnings received public assistance income.

In 2000 the median household income in Sandusky was \$31,133, an increase of 38 percent over the 1990 median household income of \$22,532. The 2000 median family income was \$37,749, substantially lower than the County median family income. The median earnings for male full-time year round workers was \$31,269 while the median earnings for female full-time year round workers was \$21,926.

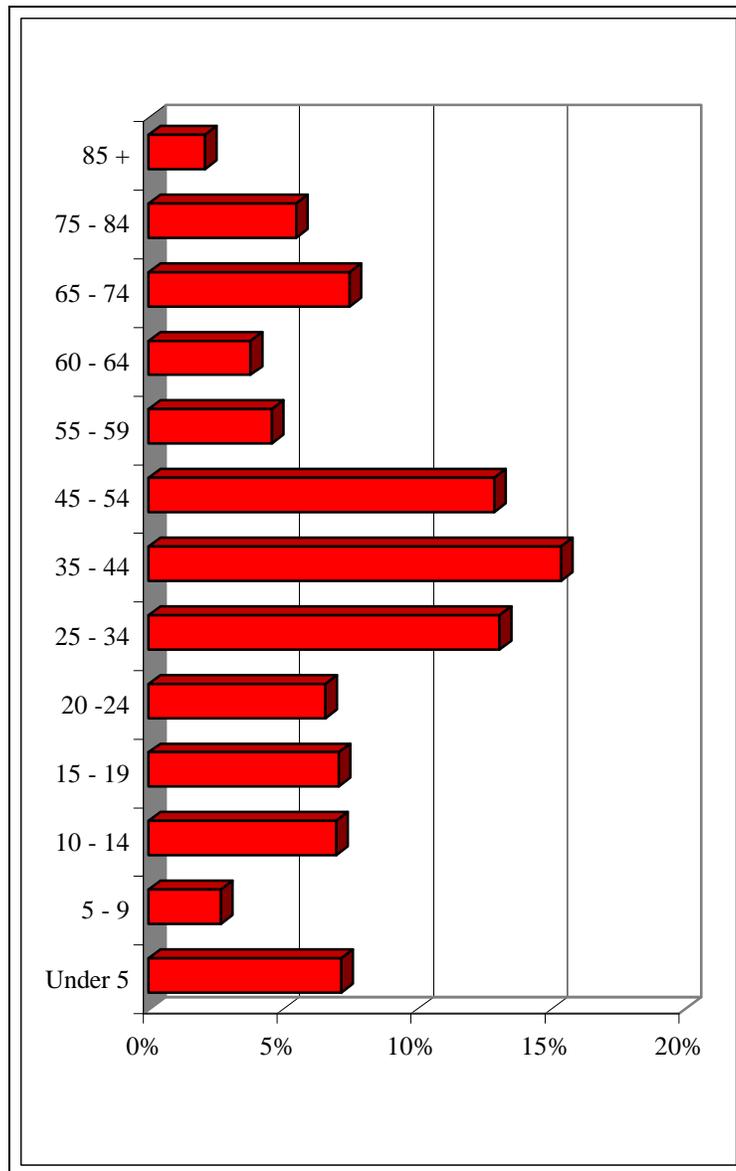
Only 76.8 percent of the households reported earnings while 28 percent of the households with earnings receive social security income and 17.6 percent receive retirement income. Almost 4 percent of the households with earnings received public assistance income.

Approximately 12.2 percent of the families in the City were below the poverty status in 1999. Of the 566 families with female head of households, 30.4 percent were below poverty level.

B. Age

According to the 2000 Census, the median age of the population is 36.2 years. Approximately 25.8 percent of the population is under the age of 18 and 15.1 percent of the population is 65 years of age or older. In 1990, approximately 26.9 percent of the population was under the age of 18 and 14.7 percent of the population was 65 years of age or older. Chart 1 shows a breakdown of the 2000 population by age group.

Chart 3.1 - 2000 Population by Age Groups



C. Gender

Of the total 2000 population, 47.2 percent was male while 52.8 percent was female. In 1990, 47 percent of the population was male while 53 percent was female. Therefore, there were no significant shifts in the gender of the population of Sandusky during the past decade.

D. Race

From 1990 to 2000 the percent of nonwhite population in the City increased by approximately 5 percent from 20.6 percent of the total population in 1990 to 25.7 percent of the population in 2000. The percentage of persons classified as black increased from 18.9 percent of the total population in 1990 to 21.1 percent of the population in 2000. The percentage of persons classified as Hispanic or Latino also increased from 2.3 percent of the total population in 1990 to 3.1 percent of the total 2000 population. In addition, 2.4 percent of the population was classified as belonging to two or more races in 2000.

2. Trends

Population trends illustrate a community's past population growth. Population increases impact the availability of public facilities and services, transportation systems and a community's overall physical environment. Sandusky's population has undergone a cumulative change of 1.3 percent (389 persons) between 1950 and 1990, increasing from 29,375 in 1950 to 29,674 in 1990. This cumulative change is far less than the Erie County figure of 46 percent (24,214) and the state figure of 36 percent (2.9 million). Please refer to the following population figures for Sandusky.

**Table 3.3
Population Trends (1950-2000)**

Year	Population	Change	Percent
1950	29,375	n/a	n/a
1960	31,989	2,614	9%
1970	32,674	685	2%
1980	31,360	-1,314	-4%
1990	29,764	-1,596	-5%
2000	27,844	-1,920	-6%

3. Forecasts

Population forecasts are created through different methodologies and a variety of factors may affect the forecasts. They may be based on a ten year population rate, proportion of the county's population or a development activity rate. The following population estimates have been prepared using different forecast methodologies.

A. 1990 - 2000 Rate

The 1990-2000 decade rate is based upon the difference in population between the beginning and end of the last decade as report by the U.S. Census Bureau. According the Table 3.3 above, the City of Sandusky's population decreased by 6 percent during that decade. A disadvantage of this method is that it does not include a broader historical perspective. Applying the 1990-2000 rate results in the following forecast for Sandusky, Table 3.4 below:

**Table 3.4
1990-2000 Rate Forecast**

Year	Population	Change	Percent
2000	27,844	n/a	n/a
2010	26,173	-1,671	-6%
2020	24,603	-1,570	-6%
2030	23,127	-1,476	-6%

B. 1960 - 2000 Rate

The 1960-2000 rate is the average decade rate of change during these four decades. Using populations for the past forty years, this rate incorporates a broader historical perspective. Applying the forty year average decade rate of change results in the following forecast for Sandusky, Table 3.5:

Table 3.5
1960-2000 Rate Forecast

Year	Population	Change	Percent
2000	27,844	n/a	n/a
2010	26,910	-934	-3%
2020	26,007	-903	-3%
2030	25,134	-873	-3%

C. Proportional Forecast

County level population forecasts are prepared by ODO through 2030. The County level forecast accounts for birth and death rates and well as in migration and out migration statistics. In 2000, Sandusky was 35 percent of Erie County's total population of 79,551. Applying this same percentage to the Erie County population forecasts results in the following, Table 3.5:

Table 3.6
Proportional Forecast

Year	County Population	Sandusky Population
2010	81,424	28,498
2020	82,404	28,841
2030	83,061	29,071

The proportional forecast shows an increase in the City's population over the next three decades. However, historically the City's population has been decreasing while the County's population has been increasing.

D. Build-out Forecast

Table 3.7 below shows the high and low population forecasts for 2010, 2020, and 2030. Trends may be identified using the high and low population estimates for future years.

Table 3.7
Build-out Forecast

Year	Low	High	Difference
2000	27,844	n/a	n/a
2010	26,173	28,498	2,325
2020	24,603	28,841	4,238
2030	23,127	29,071	5,944

4. Estimated Impacts

The importance of forecasting a city's population is the ability to then assess the physical impact of future population. Future land use demands are one way to assess the physical impact of a city's population. Decision-makers can then use these estimates for selecting a preferred growth scenario.

A. Residential Land Use

The majority of population forecasts completed for the City indicates that population will decrease during the next three decades. Concurrently, if population decreases, the amount of residential development will also decrease. Using the 2000 Census average household size of 2.31 and the 2030 high build-out forecast figure, the City could have the need for 531 additional

dwelling by 2030. This figure does not distinguish between single family and multi-family units. In addition, this figure must be adjusted for vacancy rates. The amount of land required to meet this demand would depend on the type of residential development as well as the density of that development. For example, multi-family dwellings would require less land in order to meet the housing demand than single-family dwellings.

Conversely, if population continues to decrease in the City, the net result will be an increase in the number of vacant dwellings. However, this would provide opportunities for the redevelopment of residential areas making them more attractive to prospective homebuyers.

B. Parkland

Parkland needs is another measure of the physical impact from population increase. According to the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, there were approximately 245 acres of parkland, including land where recreational facilities are located. Based on the 2000 population of 27,844, and using a national standard of ten acres of parkland per thousand residents, the City is currently deficient in the amount of parkland provided to the residents. If population increases to 29,071 persons by 2030, the City will need to add an additional 45 acres of parkland in order to meet new demand and alleviate the existing parkland shortage. Conversely, if population continues to decrease, the City will not need to increase the amount of parkland provided in the long-term.

C. Labor Force

Another measure of the City's forecasted population is the impact on City revenues. In 2000, there were 13,954 persons over sixteen years of age in the labor force, or 64.7 percent of the population. Using the above percentage and assuming a population increase, in 2030, there will be approximately 18,809 persons in the labor force, resulting in the need for additional jobs. This does not account for shifts in the population; for example, as the residents' age increases, the number of retirees increases, eliminating the need for additional jobs. In addition, the labor force may seek employment in other areas of the County or region, also alleviating the need for new job creation within the City of Sandusky. Therefore, population may increase without the need for additional jobs.

F. Development Regulations

Development regulations are tools that shape the physical characteristics of a city. In Sandusky, they include: Sandusky Zoning Code and Map, Chapter 33 - Downtown Review District Regulations, Chapter 153 - Subdivision Regulations and Chapter 154 - Mobile Home Code. Chapter 171 - Existing Structures Code also plays a role.

1. Sandusky Zoning Code

The Sandusky Zoning Code regulates land use under two generalizations that include traditional zoning provisions and progressive provisions such as P.U.D.'s. The traditional provisions categorize land use by type (e.g. residential, commercial) into districts and allow for permitted uses and conditional uses. Conditional uses are permitted in zoning districts subject to certain conditions. Other traditional provisions include flood plain control.

Generally, the zoning ordinance can be characterized as cumulative, meaning that uses permitted in one district are permitted in subsequent districts. The Zoning Code establishes six broad zoning districts ranging from residential districts to agricultural, public facilities and manufacturing districts. In some districts, multiple purposes are found.

A. Public Facilities District

Permitted uses include facilities for governmental, civic, educational, religious, welfare, recreational, and transportation activities.

B. Agricultural District

This district permits single-family residences and farming activities. At the present time there are no Agricultural Zoning Districts located within the City of Sandusky.

C. Residential Districts

The Zoning Code establishes eight residential zoning districts requiring a variety of densities, lot sizes and types of land uses. This information is summarized in the following table.

In addition, public facilities are permitted as conditional uses in all residential districts.

Table 3.8
Residential Zoning Standards

<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>(d.u.*/Net Acre)</u>	<u>(Square Feet)</u>	<u>Examples of Permitted Uses</u>
Suburban (RS)		20,000	One-family dwellings
One-Family-75 (R1-75)	3	12,000	Same as (RS)
One-Family-60 (R1-60)	5	7,500	Manuf. homes and (R1-75) uses
One-Family-50 (R1-50)	7	6,000	Same as (R1-60)
One-Family-40 (R1-40)	9	4,800	Same as (R1-50)
Two-Family (R2F)	10-15	2,750-4,300	Two-family and (R1-40) uses
Multi-Family (RMF)	10-21	2,000-4,300	Apartments and same as (R2F)
Residential-Business (R-RB)	---	---	Home offices, hotels and (RMF) uses

*Note: D.U. refers to dwelling unit.

Source: Zoning Code of the City of Sandusky.

D. Business and Commercial Districts

There are eight types of business districts as follows:

1. **Automobile Parking (P)** - Parking areas are only permitted when such an area is not used for vehicle storage or repair and are accessory or adjacent to higher density residential, commercial and industrial uses.
2. **Local Business (LB)** - Permitted uses include those residential uses that are in the "least restrictive contiguous district." In addition, retail goods and services permitted include stores selling baked goods, meats, groceries and a variety of personal services.
3. **Roadside Business (RB)** - Permitted uses include those identified in the LB District in addition to hotels, automotive services and amusement and recreation services.
4. **General Business (GB)** - Uses permitted include those in the RB District as well as photographic and print shops, state liquor stores, restaurants and bars.
5. **Commercial Recreation (CR)** - Permitted uses include one and two-family dwellings, boathouse and amusement equipment such as beaches, golf courses and marinas.
6. **Commercial Amusement (CA)** - Permitted uses include those permitted in the CR District except for the restriction of residential uses unless they are ancillary to primary uses of the CA District. Multi-family uses are permitted as conditional uses under certain circumstances. The primary focus of this district is the amusement park.

7. **Commercial Services (CS)** - This district includes those permitted uses in the CA District and laundries, research laboratories and contractor shops. Performance standards include keeping service operations enclosed in structures, restrictions for discharging liquid wastes and emissions of toxic fumes or fly ash.
8. **Downtown Business (DB)** – This district includes single, two and multi-family residential uses above the first floor as well as all stores and services permitted in the General Business District. The following public uses are also permitted - governmental, civic, educational, religious, recreational and transportation.

E. Manufacturing Districts

There are two manufacturing districts. These districts were established to provide appropriate and convenient districts, with sufficient areas for manufacturing, to promote employment and strengthen the economy of the community.

1. **Limited Manufacturing (LM)** - Uses permitted include those of the GB and CS District and manufacturing includes such uses as aircraft, automobiles and machine tools.
2. **General Manufacturing (GM)** - Permitted uses are those identified in the LM District in addition to manufacturing, metal ore refining, stockyards and storage of slag plies and petroleum products. Performance standards act as conditions for the certain uses to be located within this district and include restrictions against vibrations, fumes, and fences to help minimize the impacts of land uses permitted in this district.

F. Planned Unit Developments

Progressive zoning elements of the Code apply to planned unit developments, which are to provide a maximum choice of living environments, a more useful pattern of open space and a development pattern which preserves and utilizes open space.

2. Sandusky Zoning Map

The City has 20 zoning districts. Residential zoning accounts for about 41percent of the City's zoned area. According to the 1999 Comprehensive Plan, residential zoning accounted for 47 percent of the zoned areas. Following completion of the 1999 Comprehensive Plan a new zoning classification, Downtown Business District (DBD) was created. Approximately 3.3 percent of the zoned areas are now zoned DBD. The amount and proportion of acreage by zoning district is shown on Table 3.9 below.

Table 3.9
Acreage per Zoning District

Zoning Classification	Acreage	Percent
Agricultural	0	0.0%
Suburban Residential (RS)	231	4.3%
One-Family - 75 (R1-75)	358	6.7%
One-Family - 60 (R1-60)	369	6.9%
One-Family - 50 (R1-50)	97	1.8%
One-Family - 40 (R1-40)	460	8.6%
Two-Family (R2F)	361	6.8%
Multi-Family (RMF)	246	4.6%
Residential-Business (RRB)	53	1.0%
Automobile Parking (P)	48	0.9%

Existing Conditions and Trends

Local Business (LB)	48	0.9%
Roadside Business (RB)	82	1.5%
General Business (GB)	199	3.7%
Commercial Recreation (CR)	787	14.8%
Commercial Amusement (CA)	305	5.7%
Commercial Services (CS)	198	3.7%
Limited Manufacturing (LM)	277	5.2%
General Manufacturing (GM)	500	9.4%
Public Facilities (PF)	535	10.0%
Downtown Business District (DBD)	175	3.3%
Total	5329*	

The following discussion provides a broad overview of Sandusky's zoning pattern.

A. West Planning Area

The West Planning Area encompasses the western portion of the City in the area of Sandusky Bay to the north, George Street to the east and the city limits (Margaretta Township) to the south and west. The Residential Suburban district occupies a large portion (about half) of this area. Much of the area north of Venice Road and in the eastern portion of this area is zoned for manufacturing uses. A large area around the Barrett Road and Fremont Avenue intersection is zoned Roadside Business.

B. Central Planning Area

The Central Planning Area includes the area between George Street to the west, Perkins Avenue to the south, Sandusky Bay to the north and Meigs, Monroe, Hancock, Scott and Campbell streets along the east. Much of the area between Tiffin Avenue and the waterfront is zoned for General Manufacturing. A large percentage of the City east of Tiffin Avenue and south of the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks is zoned for residential use and public facilities. However, much of the frontage along Perkins Avenue is zoned for General Business. Frontage along Hayes Avenue is zoned for Local Business at the intersection of Tyler Street. A large portion of the area between Shelby Street, Monroe Street and Meigs Street is zoned for Two-Family Residential use. Lot frontage along West Market Street and Washington Street is zoned for General Business. Warren Street is zoned for Commercial Services and the waterfront is zoned for manufacturing on West Water Street and Public Facilities and Commercial Services on East Water Street.

C. East Planning Area

The East Planning Area encompasses the portion of the City south and east of Meigs, Monroe, Hancock, Scott and Campbell Streets. Most of the frontage along Cleveland Road is zoned for General Business. A low percentage of this area is zoned manufacturing as compared to the other planning areas; the manufacturing areas are located between First and Third streets. R1-60 and R1-40 Residential zones occupy a majority of this planning area.

D. Cedar Point Planning Area

The Cedar Point Planning Area largely contains two types of zoning categories. The majority of the Chaussee is zoned R1-75, while the extreme eastern end is zoned multi-family for the Point Retreat Condominiums. The largest portion of this planning area is Commercial Amusement, for Cedar Point Amusement Park; there are smaller areas zoned Commercial Recreation and Automobile Parking.

3. Downtown Design Review District Regulations

The purpose of the design regulations is for the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and overall aesthetic improvement of the community. These guidelines have been applied to the eight block area bounded by Hancock Street on the east, Washington Street to the south, Decatur Street on the west and Sandusky Bay to the north.

Overseeing the design review regulations is the City's Department of Community Development which reviews and acts on all Certificates of Appropriateness. The regulations apply to exterior changes to any structures or objects in the district. Criteria for evaluating applications include historical and architectural value, significance and design. In addition, the City also considers the arrangement, texture, material and color of building or sign materials and proximity of other properties in the area. The Department of Community Development is assisted in this review by a volunteer advisory committee, the Downtown Design Review Committee.

4. Subdivision Regulations

Sandusky's subdivision regulations were enacted to assure coverage of the substantive and procedural aspects for subdividing land, such as design standards, site improvements and platting procedures. In order to set basic design principals and requirements, the regulations cover the design of streets, blocks, easements and lots. For example, streets in multi-family developments are to be designed to provide adequate services to dwelling units and the service entrance is not to be located more than 100 feet from a street or service drive. These requirements may be modified for developments along shorelines.

5. Mobile Home Code

This chapter of the Sandusky Code was created to regulate the establishment of mobile home parks. A mobile home park is defined as any site, lot, or tract of land upon which 3 or more mobile homes are or may be parked. The minimum area for such parks is ten acres and the density is 10 homes per net acre. Specific requirements for the park include a minimum property width of 250 feet, front yard set back of 25 feet and a concrete pad 10 by 40 feet in size. Other requirements address site improvements, sanitary standards and sewer and water connections.

G. Planning

1. Overview

This section summarizes the most recent planning completed by the City and County.

2. Sandusky Comprehensive Plan (1971)

In 1971, Sandusky's first comprehensive plan was completed. The plan was intended to serve as a tool to guide future development in Sandusky. An important component of that plan was the goals and principles for each major land use subject. These were:

A. Residential

Keep major traffic routes outside of residential areas, eliminate noncompatible uses, incorporate natural features into the design of neighborhoods and locate high density residential near major roads and the central business district.

B. Commercial

Provide adequate off-street parking, develop setbacks that allow adequate sunlight at the street level, use buffering between residential and commercial areas and develop parking garages in the central business district instead of surface parking lots.

C. Industry

Provide adequate setbacks and buffering between residential and industrial areas, provide sufficient off-street parking areas, adopt an ordinance covering air pollution and noise emissions, establish criteria for locating industrial uses such as flood-free and level land and provide adequate access and utility service.

D. Public and Semi-Public

Locate buildings in a park-like setting or use landscaping in urban areas and along major arterials.

The proposed development plan identified three primary land use recommendations. The first recommendation was to concentrate retail in six areas: the Central Business District, Cleveland Road and Causeway Drive, Venice Road and Tiffin Avenue, Cleveland Road and Sycamore Line, Perkins Avenue, and Fremont Avenue and Venice Road. The second recommendation was for industrial land use to be primarily located along the waterfront north of Tiffin Avenue extending west past George Street. In addition, the City's waterfront near First Street to Causeway Drive and the area south of the Norfolk Southern Railroad near Rockwell Street were proposed for industrial land uses. Lastly, public open space was proposed for the waterfront area east of Causeway Drive.

3. Port Development Plan (1991)

The City of Sandusky prepared the Port Development Plan to guide future development along the City's waterfront. The plan is intended to "preserve and enhance the character of the city." The plan focuses on marketing opportunities, physical issues, development programming and regulatory issues. The four specific purposes of the plan were:

- A. Provide a long range plan that will guide near and long term land use development and regulations along the waterfront and improve opportunities for land and water access to the area.
- B. Provide a market basis for waterfront development opportunities including economic impact analysis and economic gain to the city.
- C. Provide a feasibility study regarding the construction of shoreline protection measures and a new breakwater.
- D. Provide background information regarding commercial shipping and the future of city owned docks.

In terms of physical planning, the following principles directed the planning process:

- A. Waterfront continuity, identity and experience.
- B. Diversified land use.
- C. Reinforcing concentrated core development.
- D. Transportation links.
- E. Preserving environmental and cultural features.

From a land use standpoint, the plan recommended a concentration of commercial and office uses in the downtown, with continued industrial uses to the west and residential to the east of downtown. The waterfront was to continue with water-related activities, including marinas, public parks and shipping facilities. Marina-related uses were recommended in several key locations. Preservation of views of Lake Erie was strongly recommended at key locations downtown and at public park sites.

Some of the key physical recommendations were the following:

- A. Designate and develop Columbus Avenue as the downtown's front door. Designate and develop other direct and secondary routes. Improve signing and "gateway" features at key locations.
- B. Develop a maximum of 450 additional boat slips southeast of Sadler Boat Basin. Relocate Erie Sand and Gravel and redevelop site for commercial shipping. Develop a marina along First Street. Develop transient docks close to downtown.
- C. Create a continuous pedestrian and bicycle route along waterfront, linking access areas. Make improvements to recreational facilities. Sign waterfront access points.
- D. Within 1,500-foot radius of Columbus Avenue and Shoreline Drive develop: increased specialty retail, hotel/conference center, additional commercial and small office, seasonal overflow parking, streetscaping and facade improvements.
- E. Develop commercial shipping port and related industrial uses at Coal Docks One and Two. Develop a Foreign Trade Zone.
- F. Relocate City Hall to downtown and reuse site.
- G. Encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in several key areas: Tiffin/Shelby area, West Washington/E. Washington area, Shoreline Drive area, Cove area, and First Street/Cedar Point Causeway area.

In 1996, the City and the Sandusky Port Development Plan Implementation Committee completed a five-year review and revision of the Port Development Plan, which listed completed projects and re-evaluated and prioritized others. The City completed a linear park design study, the Bayfront Corridor Plan, in 1997.

4. Sandusky Neighborhood Plans

In order to address different land use issues in the City, several neighborhood studies have been undertaken by the Planning Staff. The following overview discusses the land use aspects of those studies.

A. Hancock Street Neighborhood, Background Profile and Strategic Plan (1996)

Crime, housing conditions and land use conflicts prompted this study. The planning area was bounded by East Monroe Street, Wayne Street, Scott Street and Franklin Street. Issues of the study related to land use included the conversion of residential uses to business uses and the lack of off-street parking. Implementation strategies identified for these issues included rezoning portions of the study area to Single-Family Districts (R1-40) and the acquisition of vacant properties by the city to create additional parking in the area.

B. Southside Neighborhood Land Use Study (1996)

This study focused on the area of Mills Street, Norfolk Southern tracks, Camp Street and Buchanan Street and was initiated by the Planning Commission to review the existing land uses in that area. Recommended zoning changes included rezoning property under the Two-Family Residential District and Commercial Services District to the R1-40 district.

C. Butler Street Corridor Study (1996)

The project area was Butler Street, U.S. 250, Huntington Avenue, Cleveland Road and involved a review of existing land use and zoning practices. Staff recommended to maintain the existing zoning on the south side of Butler Street, encourage land assembly for future development, require that future development use alternative access for properties fronting on Butler Street and investigate the traffic flow situation in the study area.

D. Causeway Drive Area Background Profile and Land Use Plan (1994)

Undertaken in 1992, this plan was initiated by the Sandusky Planning Commission to examine zoning in the area of First Street and Causeway Drive. Underlying planning principles of the study included the preservation of neighborhood scale, conservation of natural elements, establishment of gateways and utilization of vistas and views. The plan recommends Cedar Point office and dormitory uses adjacent to Causeway Drive, single family uses west of Austin Street and water-related commercial and residential activities along the waterfront. In order to implement the plan, the proposed zoning scheme primarily consisted of Commercial Recreation Districts (CR) and Single-Family Districts (R1-40).

E. Seven Block Area Rezoning - Camp, W. Jefferson, Fulton, Lawrence and W. Adams (1994)

This rezoning study resulted from the Planning Staff's multi-family housing study. As a result of the small number of lots with an adequate lot area to develop multi-family dwellings, staff recommended rezoning the area from RMF-Residential Multi-Family to the (R2F) Two-Family Residential District. The City Commission adopted the rezoning in August, 1994.

F. Multi-Family Housing Sites (1994)

The study focused on the availability of multi-family housing sites. Staff reviewed existing and potential redevelopment and undeveloped sites, and prepared site development standards. These standards included lot grading, screening of driveways, open space, buffer zones and clustering of dwelling units.

G. South Depot Street and East Area Zoning Map Amendments (1993)

The location of nonconforming uses in manufacturing districts was the underlying issue of this report. In the South Depot Street area, staff recommended rezoning portions of this area to more restrictive districts to accommodate the residential uses located there and to ensure compatible development in the area. Staff recommendations for the East End area included rezoning portions from industrial to the (CR) district in order to allow existing nonconforming uses. The proposed rezonings were approved and enacted by the City Commission in March, 1994.

H. Six-Block Rezoning Study (1985)

The study was an attempt to rezone the six block area of Camp Street, Jefferson Street, Monroe Street and Central Avenue and was initiated by property owners in the area. Generally, the property owners petitioned to rezone the area from Multi-Family Residential (RMF) to Two-Family Residential (R2F). This petition was supported by the City's Planning Staff because the request conformed to the Zoning Code. The rezoning was adopted by the City Commission in September, 1985.

5. Erie County Comprehensive Development Plan (1995)

Completed in 1995 and adopted in May 1996, the Erie County Comprehensive Development Plan presents a strategy for managing land use and focuses on issues which affect local communities. These include regulatory considerations, population, housing, economic development, transportation and rural planning. Implementation strategies are identified in the plan for each respective issues. Some relevant issues which pertain to Sandusky are:

A. Residential Development

The plan recommends for the area south of Perkins Avenue extending east along the City boundary for residential land use. Residential infill is recommended for the Venice area at the west end of Sandusky. Multi-family development is to be developed in areas of adequate water

and sewer capacity and utilized as a transitional land use between low density residential and commercial areas.

B. Commercial Development

The plan recommends new commercial and infill development in appropriately zoned areas, such as Cleveland Road, Sandusky Plaza and Sandusky central business district. The plan also recommends commercial land uses along the south side of Perkins Avenue between SR 4 and Pipe Creek.

C. Industrial Development

The plan recommends adoption of a site plan review process to improve the visual impact of industrial areas. The City should consider the recommendations of port development studies to facilitate the location of industrial uses in such areas.

D. Sewer

Proposed sewer recommendations include the construction of a relief sewer at Tiffin Avenue across from the Margareta Industrial Park to SR 4 at Strub Road.

E. Cedar Point

Efforts should focus on improving traffic in the area of US 6 between Butler Street and the Causeway. Proposed recommendations to mitigate traffic problems include sign control, street improvements and the possible extension of Strub Road to US 6 in the vicinity of the airport.

H. Natural Environment

1. Overview

Sandusky is located within a part of Ohio that has an abundance of natural resources. A review of these reveals obvious constraint and opportunities for development.

A. Natural Constraints

Wetlands, coastal erosion areas, poorly drained soils and floodplains serve to constrain development. Only a few areas along the City's streams are located in proximity to floodplains which may adversely affect different types of development. Poorly drained soils are located in the eastern and western portions of the City. The few coastal erosion areas are unsuitable for development because of the potential instability of building structures. Also, development in proximity to wetlands may adversely impact wildlife habitats located there as well as existing water quality unless some type of wetland mitigation is utilized. Because of the City's topography, the channeling of stormwater also serves as a constraint.

B. Natural Opportunities

Development and revitalization opportunities exist because of the location of wetlands and the City's position on the coastal zone. Wetlands under the management of different interest groups act as an amenity for different types of development and as an attraction for wildlife enthusiasts and tourism. Developments often integrate wetlands into their sites to create open space for residents. These areas serve passive recreation needs. As a coastal city, the waterfront is a strong amenity for different types of port development. Benefits of a port location include increased visibility to popular pedestrian areas and view corridors of the water. Examples of port development include industrial areas that rely on water transportation, residential areas which take advantage of scenic views and commercial activities such as cruise operators.

2. Features

A. Geology and Soils

Erie County is characterized by the lake plain, till and outwash plains and natural features resulting from its coastal location. Erie County soils were formed in glacial till and deposits of alluvium. Glacial till consists of different sizes of stones and pebbles. Alluvium deposits are stratified layers of soil that result from streams and flooding. Three general soil classifications encompass the Sandusky area:

1. Poorly drained soils on old lake beds.
2. Well drained beach areas.
3. Well drained to poorly drained areas on uplands.

Specifically, four soil associations are identified by the Erie County Soil Survey for the Sandusky area. First, the Toledo-Fulton Association encompasses the eastern portion of the City. As a result of a clay subsoil and level topography, this association is characterized by poorly drained soils. Second, Lewisburg, Castalia-Millsdale Association is located within the central area of the City. This association is characterized by a deep level of bedrock and ranges in drainage characteristics to well drained to poorly drained. Thirdly, the Del Rey-Lenawee Association encompasses a majority of the waterfront extending east to the causeway. As a result of a silty clay stratification, this association is poorly drained. Lastly, the Marsh and Beaches Association is characteristic of the eastern portion of the City extending from the causeway to the Cedar Point peninsula. Well drained, this association includes the Lake Erie beach areas.

B. Topography and Drainage

The County's elevation ranges from 870 feet to 576 feet in areas along the coast. Generally, most of Sandusky is located on 0 to 6 percent slopes. Streams in Erie County drain into Lake Erie. These streams include Cold Creek, Mills Creek and Pipe Creek acting as the primary drainageways in Sandusky.

C. Coastal Zone and Wetlands

Sandusky is located in Ohio's Lake Erie coastal zone which includes over 262 miles of mainland and island shores. The City has about 60,000 lineal feet of waterfront. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources has identified a landward extent of Sandusky's coastal area as being generally located north of Shoreline Drive. Cedar Point is also located within the landward extent of the coastal area. It is important to note that determining the extent of the coastal boundary is not uniform and varies according to different attributes including: lake erosion, lake flooding, beaches, water quality, estuaries and coastal wetlands.

The combination of level topography, poorly drained soils and location along the Lake Erie coast create conditions for wetlands. There are about 7,000 acres of wetlands in Erie County. While they may not be wet year-round, wetlands serve different functions such as controlling floods and as wildlife habitats. The U.S. Department of Interior has generally identified wetlands in the Sandusky area. These are located along coastal areas identified as Lacustrine ecological systems, Riverine ecological systems along inland streams and Palustrine ecological systems.

D. Floodplains

Floodplains in Sandusky are located along each of the above streams. At the west side of the City, floodplains extend from Sandusky Bay along the main branch and east branch of Cold Creek. West of the downtown, floodplains extend along Mills Creek between the bay and Perkins Avenue. East of downtown, floodplains generally extend inward from the bay to First Street and US 6 and along Pipe Creek. Much of the property along Cedar Point peninsula appears to be in the floodplain.

E. Species Habitat

As a coastal city, Sandusky contains marshes and other environmentally sensitive areas that provide habitats for a variety of plants and animals. Wildlife in the area include muskrat, waterfowl, rabbits, squirrels, fox, raccoons and skunks. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Natural Areas and Preserves identified quite a few species of plants and animals in the area that are either endangered, threatened, special interest or extirpated (no longer in the state). Where Cold Creek empties into Sandusky Bay, the Division identified the threatened Threehorn Wartyback mussel. In the downtown waterfront area, the Division identified an endangered species of bird, the Common tern. East of the airport, eagle nesting is found.

The Big Island water treatment plant provides habitat for plants and animals. Known as the Pipe Creek Wildlife Area, this area is located in the northeast area of the City, consisting of diked marshland. Generally surrounded by Sandusky Bay, the area was developed to mitigate the loss of wetlands to private development. Specific wildlife identified in this area include puddle ducks, Canadian geese and other wetland related species. In proximity to Big Island, Lake Whitefish was also identified.

I. Community Facilities and Services

1. Education

A. Sandusky City School District

In 1997 the Sandusky City School District enrollment was 4,479 and in 2003 the school district enrollment was approximately 4,316. Since the 1999 Comprehensive Plan was completed there has been no change in the number or size of school facilities. Table 3.10 illustrates school enrollment figures by building for both 1997 and 2003. While the majority of facilities have experienced a small decrease in enrollment, Barker Special Needs School experienced a 2.5 percent increase in enrollment since 1997. Other schools experiencing an increase in enrollment include Madison Elementary School, Osborne Elementary School, and Sandusky High School.

Table 3.10
Comparison of School Enrollment (1997-2000)

Building	1997	2003	Difference
Adams Junior High School	357	314	-1.0%
Barker Special Needs School	26	140	5.4%
Campbell Elementary School	215	196	-0.4%
Hancock Elementary School	419	332	-1.9%
Jackson Junior High School	313	287	-0.6%
Madison Elementary School	210	227	0.4%
Mills Elementary School	359	308	-1.1%
Monroe Elementary School	267	200	-1.5%
Ontario Elementary School	390	349	-0.9%
Osborne Elementary School	262	316	1.2%
Sandusky High School	1,273	1,282	0.2%
Venice Heights Elementary School	388	365	-0.5%
Total	4,479	4,316	

B. Parochial Schools

Parochial schools serving the Sandusky area include Holy Angels School, St. Mary's Elementary, St. Mary's Central Catholic and Sts. Peter and Paul School.

C. Other School Districts

The following three school districts are located around the City of Sandusky: Margaretta Local School District, Perkins Local School District and Huron City School District. Sandusky City Schools provides vocational education for Sandusky students as one of only 22 comprehensive High Schools in Ohio. EHOVE serves the adjoining school districts with their vocational education services.

D. Sandusky Public Library (114 W. Adams Street)

Established in 1895, Sandusky Library is an association library serving residents within four school districts encompassing 102.9 square miles. These include those mentioned previously and Kelley's Island School. Total, the library serves a population base of 52,000 of which 43,000 people are registered patrons of the library system. The main library building located in downtown Sandusky has 70 employees.

In addition to the more than 125,000 books and library materials, the library is a member of CLEVNET which allows for electronic access to 24 public libraries in Northeastern Ohio. In addition, free Internet access is available through the library. About 67 percent of library funding is from state income tax and 24 percent is from property tax within the Sandusky, Perkins and Kelley's Island School Districts. Other branches of the library are in Castalia and on Kelley's Island.

E. Follett House Museum (404 Wayne Street)

This facility is an archival research center and local history museum used in conjunction with the Sandusky Library. The house is the former home of Oran Follett and was built between 1834 and 1837.

3. Safety Services

A. Division of Police

Currently the police department includes 56 full time officers, 22 part time reserve officers, one part time civilian officer, one part time parking enforcement officer, and 12 support personnel. The Police Department provides a variety of programs to the community including a citizen police academy, DARE, We C.A.R.E. (child adult respect encounters), and a seat belt safety program. The Police Department no longer participates as a member of the Sandusky Dive Rescue Team.

B. Division of Fire

The Sandusky Fire Department is staffed by 58 full-time employees. There is one fire chief, one assistant chief, four battalion chiefs, six captains, seven lieutenants and 39 firefighters. There is one civilian personnel. The department has three facilities: the headquarters located at 600 West Market Street, Station 3 located at 2034 Fifth Street, and Station 7 located at 3816 Venice Road.

A facility development master plan for the fire department was completed in 1996. The scope of the study was to evaluate existing fire department facilities and develop recommendations for improvements to the department. Important elements of the study included response times, safety and community growth. The study's recommendations included replacing the central

facility with a new facility at an as-yet undetermined site and improvements to the other two stations on each side of the City. The east side facility would serve as the headquarters for the department, a training center and fire and emergency medical services crew. The study substantiated the need for improvements to the west side facility as a result of residential and industrial growth.

4. Cultural Resources

A variety of cultural resources are located in Sandusky and include: the Merry-Go-Round Museum, the State Theatre, the Maritime Museum, the Eleutheros Cooke House Museum, the Follett House Museum, and Cedar Point Amusement Park.

J. Parks and Recreation

The City of Sandusky maintains 27 park and recreation areas. A variety of both active and passive activities are included with the City's park system. The most recent additions to the park system are Dorn Park located on Sandusky's west side and a new skate park. Dorn Park includes baseball diamonds, a walking trail, and playground equipment. Currently the City is in the process of constructing a multi-use path in the downtown along the Sandusky Bay and constructing an additional sled hill at Mills Creek Golf Course. The Recreation Department and Department of Engineering are also in the process of studying the proposed Lions Park beach restoration.

The Department of Recreation continues to offer numerous recreational activities and programs for all ages. In addition, the Department works with local organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club to coordinate joint programs and activities. The Department of Recreation also sponsors a summer food program in partnership with the Erie/Huron CAC.

3. Sandusky Park and Recreation Master Plan (1978)

Completed in 1978, the master plan inventoried Sandusky's existing parks and recreation facilities. The plan identified objectives and important elements to implement each objective, such as the scope of improvements, estimated improvement costs and source of funding. The basic implementation objectives included:

- A. Revitalize existing parks
- B. New park development on existing land resources
- C. Development of citywide "special" facilities
- D. Future growth through land acquisition and development
- E. Capital funding strategy
- F. Increase scope of recreational program services

K. Housing

1. Existing Conditions and Trends

A. Overview

The general housing characteristics of the City of Sandusky presented in this section were obtained from the 2000 U.S. Census. General characteristics, housing density, age of housing, migration patterns and cost of housing data provide an indication of the status of the City's housing.

B. Erie County (including the City of Sandusky)

1. Number of Housing Units

From 1990 to 2000 the number of housing units increased from 32,827 to 35,909 respectively. The City of Sandusky comprised approximately 37 percent of the County's total housing units in 2000. Of the 2000 housing units in the County, 88.4 percent were occupied. Of the 11.6 percent of the housing units that were vacant, approximately 6 percent of those were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. In 2000 the homeowner vacancy rate was 1.6 percent while the rental vacancy rate was 9.3 percent.

2. Types of Households

In 2000, 68.6 percent of the occupied households were family households with 30.4 percent of those households with children less than 18 years of age. The average family size was 2.97 persons. Female-headed households accounted for 11.2 percent of the family households, a significantly lower percentage than the number of female-headed households in the City of Sandusky. Of the 31.4 percent non-family households, 27 percent were householders living alone. 10.8 percent of householders living alone were persons over the age of 65 years.

Approximately 72 percent of the occupied housing was owner occupied while 28 percent were renter occupied. The average household size of owner occupied units was 2.55 persons while the average household size of renter occupied units was 2.18 persons.

3. Age and Size of Housing Units

While no single decade dominates housing unit construction in the County, the decade from 1980 to 1990 experienced the slowest growth in new construction. Approximately 49 percent of the housing units were constructed prior to 1960 while 30 percent were constructed between 1960 and 1970 and 21 percent between 1980 and March 2000.

Almost three-fourths of the County's housing is single-family while twenty-five percent are multi-family units. Of the multi-family units, a very small percentage is structures containing ten or more units.

4. Cost of Housing

In 2000 approximately 43.3 percent of the owner occupied housing units were valued under \$99,999 while 45.1 percent were valued between \$100,000 and \$199,999. The 2000 median value of owner occupied housing units was \$109,800, a significant increase over the 1990 median owner occupied housing value of \$65,100. The 2000 median gross rent of renter occupied housing units was \$498 per month, an increase over the 1990 median gross rent of \$286.

5. Affordability

Housing costs as a percentage of household income services as an indicator of housing affordability. With the commonly accepted affordable housing standards of 25 percent of less of annual income, households with costs greater than 25 percent have been characterized as those with housing affordability problems.

Approximately 74 percent of the owner occupied households and 50.9 percent of the renter occupied households had housing costs less than 25 percent of their household income. Only 12.8 percent of owner occupied households had costs greater than 35 percent; 24.2 percent of renter occupied household had costs greater than 35 percent.

C. City of Sandusky

1. Number of Housing Units

From 1990 to 2000 the number of housing units decreased from 13,416 to 13,323 respectively. During that same time period, the number of vacant housing units increased from 1,357 to 1,472. Of the 1,472 vacant housing units reported in 2000, only 3.5 percent were for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. The 2000 homeowner vacancy rate was 2 percent while the rental vacancy rate was 9.6 percent.

2. Type of Households

In 2000, 59.6 percent of the occupied households were family households with an average family size of 2.99 persons. Of the family households, 28.9 percent had children less than 18 years of age. Females headed 16.4 percent of the family households. This is an increase in the 1990 percentage of female head of household families. Of the 40.6 percent non-family households that existed in the City in 2000, 34.9 percent were householders living alone. 38 percent of the householders living alone were persons 65 years of age or older.

In 2000, 56.5 percent of the occupied housing units were owner occupied while 43.5 percent were renter occupied. The percentage of owner-occupied units in the City is substantially lower than the number of owner-occupied housing units countywide. The average household size of owner occupied units was 2.42 persons per unit while the average household size of renter occupied units was 2.17.

3. Age and Size of Housing Units

More than half of all of Sandusky's housing was built prior to 1950. Only 4.2 percent of the existing housing units were constructed between 1990 and March of 2000.

4. Cost of Housing

In 2000 the majority of owner occupied housing units were valued under \$99,999. The 2000 median value of owner occupied housing units was \$75,400, a significant increase over the 1990 median owner occupied housing value of \$48,800. The 2000 median gross rent of renter occupied housing units was \$468 per month, an increase over the 1990 median gross rent of \$273.

5. Affordability

Housing costs as a percentage of household income services as an indicator of housing affordability. With the commonly accepted affordable housing standards of 25 percent or less of annual income, households with costs greater than 25 percent have been characterized as those with housing affordability problems. Approximately 73 percent of the owner occupied households and 48 percent of the renter occupied households had housing costs less than 25 percent of their household income.

6. Residence in 1995

Almost 55 percent of individuals lived in the same house in 1995 as in 2000. Of those that lived in a different house, 31.7 percent lived in the same county. Since the population of the City has been slowly decreasing during the last decade, it is likely that individuals who currently reside in the City limits are just relocating to other parts of the County.

**Table 3.11
Residence in 1995**

Residence in 1995	Percent
Same house in 1995	54.7%
Different house in the U.S	44.7%
Same county	31.7%
Different county	13.0%
Same state	8.6%
Different state	4.3%
Elsewhere in 1995	0.6%

2. Comprehensive Housing Improvement Strategy and Consolidated Plan

In 2004 the City completed an update of the Comprehensive Housing Improvement Strategy (CHIS). The CHIS is targeted to individual households and neighborhoods with housing needs. By completing a CHIS, the community is eligible to apply for CHIP funds from the Ohio Department of Development Office of Housing and Community Partnerships. The City could receive up to \$500,000 every other year in CHIP funds. Starting July 1, 2004 the City becomes an entitlement community and is therefore eligible to receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds directly from HUD. In order to receive these funds the City had to prepare a Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan is a five-year plan similar to the CHIS. The Consolidated Plan contains the City's one-year action strategy that must be updated annually. This year's action strategy contains thirteen action items with activities in housing, community development, and economic development. This year's allocation from HUD is approximately \$967,000. In addition to this funding the City has revolving loan funds for housing and economic development.

L. Transportation

1. Findings

The east-west connector appears to be the most critical transportation problem. This is certainly not a new problem. The SR 2 bypass is too far south of town to afford the City much relief. Meanwhile, traffic bottlenecks are common in the City, primarily from local traffic. With the City's position on Lake Erie, land routes for the connector are invariably limited to the south which would introduce jurisdictional discussions with strong township governmental units.

2. East-West Connector

The most significant transportation challenge for the City is convenient east-west traffic flow. The masonic emblem design of the arterial streets, as they were laid-out by City founders, does not promote good vehicular movement from present day residential areas to typical commercial/industrial areas. Although this is frustrating for local residents, it creates even more problems for visitors because of the irregular nature of the street orientation.

Perkins Avenue, the south dividing line between the City and neighboring townships, affords the area the only direct east-west route. Perkins Avenue is heavily congested during all seasons of the year. Cedar Point Amusement Park only adds to the problem (14,000 vehicles/day), but fortunately the park's traffic peaks occur between 9 am and 11 am and late in the evening, not during traditional A.M. and P.M. peak traffic periods.

Other roadway candidates to address the east-west connector problem have been studied but all have shortcomings. The difficulties are as follows:

- A. Strub Road does not connect to SR 6.
- B. SR 2 is too far south of town to provide much relief.
- C. Other streets in town all have difficult intersections or are not oriented in the proper direction.
- D. The east-west railroad right-of-way, although primarily grade separated, cuts-off everything else.

Currently an overpass over Venice Road is in the design phase. This overpass should improve east-west traffic flow by alleviating congestion in this area. Other recent improvements to City streets include improvements to Water Street and Huron Avenue. According to the City Engineer improvements are still needed to Cleveland Avenue, George Street, Edgewater Drive, and Ferndale Drive to Venice Road.

3. Parking Problems

The City is also plagued by heavy use of on-street parking, which reduces roadway capacity. This is due to the fact that there are many small residential lots in town without space for off-street parking. Many of the original 66' x 192' city lots were divided four ways to accommodate four houses. Today the problem is compounded by duplexes and rental (48% of total housing units). Automobiles dominate the landscape.

4. Other Transportation Issues

- A. The City has 53 traffic signals, many of which are coordinated. A formal central traffic-control center would help traffic flows.
- B. The Sandusky Transit System (STS), a City and County operated transportation partnership, is an on-call service available to the general public. In 1997, STS expanded to provide service to Perkins, Huron and Margaretta Townships. In 2003 the Sandusky Transit System (STS) provided 29,942 rides to the public collecting \$71,818 in tick sales. In addition, the STS contracted with the Board of MR/DD and provided an additional 44,670 rides.
- C. The City is open to proposals for one-way street pairs if it will help traffic flow and not add to street confusion.
- D. Car pooling is not presently encouraged and should be promoted.
- E. Access management on thoroughfares and arterials should be implemented.
- F. Mid-block parking lots (12-15 cars) should be investigated to alleviate on-street parking problems.

5. Jurisdictional Challenges

In a larger sense, a problem facing the entire region is the multi-jurisdictional formation of local governmental units. Authority is divided among the City, Erie County and local townships in a geographically tight area. This situation has probably worked against the City in terms of transportation management. Sandusky is involved in a joint study with the County focusing on access along Perkins Avenue.

6. Tourism

On-going redevelopment of the City lakefront area is underway. The confusing City street system impacts this program. Visitors have a difficult time finding their way around. Better signing would be

beneficial. Currently, individual signs direct traffic to various single purpose venues, such as to the Merry-Go-Round Museum, ferries and parks, even though they are all close to the central business district. Perhaps a consolidated signage system combined with better visibility would improve the situation.

Another tourist related issue is that people often park their cars and either depart on ferry boats or stay in isolated pockets on the waterfront without venturing into the central business district and helping the local economy. This could be addressed with a water taxi service or a van or shuttle service which would help “turnover” tourism on a three- to four-hour basis.

M. Utilities

1. Findings

As a lake community, proximity to water is part of daily life, especially given the flat topography of the City of Sandusky. Stormwater management is vital to the economic well being of the area from both a residential viewpoint and for tourism and recreation. Any management program should be addressed on an area wide basis. The City is vulnerable to excessive stormwater runoff from the south outside the corporation limits, as well as to internal problems.

2. Stormwater

A. Inadequate Facilities

Areas of the City, both built and undeveloped, have inadequate stormwater facilities. No stormwater regulations are in effect. A City stormwater master plan is needed along with adequate regulations.

Some sections still have combined (storm and sanitary) sewers.

B. Topographic Circumstances

Storm drains outlet into several creeks which flow from south of the City to the lake/bay. Rushing water is not a problem; rather the flat topography promotes standing and pooled water. The City receives the runoff from areas outside the City located south of town.

It is difficult to install new stormdrains because blue limestone bedrock is near the surface, which costs about \$100 per cubic yard to excavate. A unique flooding problem to Sandusky and other lake/bay communities is periodic wind-induced water level increases.

C. Other Stormwater Topics

1. Wet detention ponds are preferred over dry facilities-plagued by weeds, mosquitoes.
2. Some parking lots have oversized underground piping for stormwater storage which is “orificed” to lake and bay. Added capacity is needed.
3. The City prefers grass swales for storm water management because they filter-out suspended material and oils.
4. Regulatory floodplain issues are covered by land use ordinances. Enforcement is necessary.
5. The 100-year regulatory flood level near the lake is 577.2 feet. The flood plain ordinance for buildings is 2.0 feet higher at 579.2 feet. Enforcement is necessary.

3. Private Utility Analysis

A. Current Situation

All franchised utilities generally have cooperative arrangements with the City. Most utility lines are within the public right-of-way. If the utilities are impacted by street improvements, the utilities move the affected lines at no cost to the City. Utilities are also generally extended to serve new customers as a routine course of utility administration.

The decorative street lights in the central business district are owned by the City, but all other street lighting fixtures are owned by Ohio Edison. The rental is favorable to the City. As the City continues to redevelop the central waterfront, emphasis should be placed on the removal of large utility poles and lines in that area.

B. City Policy

The City should continue to maintain cooperative relationships with utility facilities. Public franchise fees should remain where they are. Utilities should not be reviewed as potential revenue sources. The City should keep lines of communications open with utilities.

N. Economic Development

1. Introduction

Sandusky is strategically located on Lake Erie, just north of State Route 2. The City is approximately 50 miles east of Toledo and about 60 miles west of Cleveland. Cedar Point is located in Sandusky and serves as a major landmark identifying Sandusky.

2. Planning Issues

Sandusky faces many economic development issues common to other large and small central cities across the state. The interviews conducted with local business executives helped to identify the leading ones facing the city.

A. Tight Land Supply

Sandusky is showing strong signs of being land-locked from a development standpoint. This appears to be a concern for both industrial and commercial development within the city.

B. Development on City's Periphery

New development is much stronger in the surrounding township area than it is in the central city. This is true for residential, commercial, and industrial development activities. Retail business growth outside the city has been very substantial along US 250. This outside retail development has negatively impacted Sandusky's downtown central business district. Direct access to Route 2 and the availability of land in the surrounding area are two major factors contributing to this trend.

C. Unrealized Tourism Impact

While the city clearly receives significant economic benefit from tourism activities generated by Cedar Point and the recreational use of Lake Erie, much of this impact is lost to the surrounding area because the city's downtown area does not offer sufficient retail and service opportunities to attract visitors to the area.

D. Further Diversification of Tourism Industry Needed

Sandusky is impacted by the seasonality of its tourism industry, which is closely tied to Cedar Point visitors and various recreational uses (boating, fishing, skiing, swimming, etc.) of Lake

Erie. While some effort have been made to diversify local tourist activities, much greater attention must be given to this issue in the future.

E. Industrial Activities Expanding But Require Additional Work Force and Real Estate Resources

Sandusky has been successful in industrial development. Many of its existing manufacturers are expanding, but they are experiencing difficulties in acquiring the land and work force resources they require to grow. If these problems are not addressed, they could lead to the loss of some of these plants in the future. The new 45-acre industrial park located in the west planning area, will help in part to respond to this situation, provided that it is designed and developed in line with local companies' future real estate needs. Some companies face transportation barriers, which could limit their future growth in the city; this especially effects those blocked in by older rail lines.

F. Mature Industrial Base That Needs Modernization and Diversification

Many of Sandusky's existing companies belong to mature industries, which is not bad, but it points to limited diversity within the manufacturing sector in the City. The City should consider the development of an overall master plan for industrial development areas in the City. Manufacturers experience significant physical development problems limiting their ability to grow and add new jobs, income, and taxes to the local economy.

G. Greater Future Attention to Higher Quality Job Creation

Many people are concerned that Sandusky is not creating a sufficient number of higher-paying and more stable jobs. This concern is the greatest related to tourism activities, but it is also a growing concern in the industrial sector. The skill levels of workers must be improved to attract higher quality and higher paying employers. Expansion of the Firelands College/Bowling Green State University campus to a four-year program would help to improve this situation.

H. Retention and Attraction of Young People/Workers

Concern is beginning to grow because Sandusky is not retaining its existing younger population, and local employers are concerned about problems they encounter in attracting young professionals and skilled workers to their companies. While Sandusky is relatively close to Cleveland amenities and those in other major Ohio cities, Sandusky should do more to provide an environment that is attractive to young professionals.

I. Need to Continue Business Retention and Expansion Effort

While the City is directly involved in existing industry assistance, and it receives services from the Greater Erie Marketing Group, a more comprehensive program is needed to address the competitive needs of local companies. Greater attention should be given to the upgrading of manufacturing technology used by local companies, making the local manufacturing work force more competitive, and increasing export sales by local manufacturers. Partnerships with the local educational institutions and the Ohio Department of Development should be continued to work toward this goal.

3. Economic Base

A. Recent Trends

Between 1992 and 1997 the number of manufacturing, wholesale, and retail jobs decreased. However, the number of service jobs increased by 144 percent. Table 3.12 below illustrates the percentage change in the number of employees by the major industry sectors.

Table 3.12
Percentage Change in Number of Employees by Industry Sector

	1992	1997	Percentage Change
Manufacturing	5,500	5,205	-5.4%
Retail	4,095	3,016	-26.3%
Wholesale	1,233	883	-28.4%
Services	2,264	5,529	144.2%

In 1997 the manufacturing industry employed the largest number of individuals in both the City and Erie County. Sixty-six of the 117 manufacturing establishments that were in Erie County were located in the City of Sandusky. There were 9,176 individuals employed in the manufacturing industry in Erie County with 57 percent of those individuals employed in the City. Countywide the manufacturing industry had annual payroll receipts of \$409,211,000. City annual manufacturing payroll receipts were 223,405,000.

B. Manufacturing Base

Sandusky and Erie County are strong manufacturing centers. In 1982, Sandusky had 78 of Erie County's 128 manufacturing plants, for a 61 percent share. Sandusky's share dropped to 59 percent (76/128) in 1992, and it declined again in 1996 to 55 percent (72/131) of the county's total. The Sandusky area's largest manufacturing operations include 14 with 120 or more jobs:

Table 3.13
Major Manufacturing Employers in City and County

<u>Employer</u>	<u>Employees</u>	
Delco Chassis	2,000	County
Ford Motor Company	1,450	County
Routh Packing	315	County
Sandusky Plastics	300	City
Stein Inc.	300	City
Sandusky International	275	City
Sandusky Register	250	City
Dixon Ticonderoga	220	City
Sandusky Vinyl	200	City
Sealmaster	150	County
Union Chain	130	City
G&C Foundry	125	City
Industrial Nut	120	City

Historically, Sandusky has had a mix of larger branch manufacturing plants and smaller locally-owned manufacturing companies. In recent years, many of the larger branch plants have experienced employment declines, suggesting that the City needs to rely more on locally-headquartered manufacturing operations for future industrial job growth. The City's mid-point location between Toledo and Cleveland has been advantageous to the growth of automotive manufacturing supplier facilities. Plants in Erie County and Sandusky compete in this market, as well as other national and international markets.

4. Employment

A. Recent Trends

Employment growth is the most common measure of economic development performance used by communities nationwide. Employment data for smaller economic areas, like Sandusky, is not published as regularly or in as much detail as county-level data. Therefore, the consulting team had to estimate the city's major sector job growth for 1996. Table 3.14 identifies how well employment grew in the city's major economic sectors over the past 14 years.

City manufacturing jobs grew by 1,600 during the 1982-1996 period, however these jobs declined by 300 between 1992 and 1996, according to our estimates. Retail jobs have declined from 4,798 in 1987 to 4,095 in 1992, and then they continued their local decline to 3,680 in 1996 in the City due to consolidation, national franchise competition, and the relocation of retail businesses to the outlying areas closer to interstate highway access.

Wholesale jobs grew between 1982 and 1987, and continued to grow slightly between 1987 and 1996. Service type employment has declined in Sandusky, migrating to the areas closer to interstate access. The City's retail and service job losses are in contrast to the national and state growth in these two sectors in the past two decades. We suspect that some of the problem in Sandusky relates to the migration of these type jobs away from the downtown.

Table 3.14
Sandusky Major Industry Sector Employment Trends

	<u>Manufacturing</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Wholesale</u>	<u>Services</u>
1982	3,600	3,619	860	2,126
1987	4,100	4,798	1,188	2,936
1992	5,500	4,095	1,233	2,264
1996 (Estimated)	5,200	3,680	1,354	2,075

Source: U.S. Economic Census, Donald T. Iannone & Associates analysis.

B. Competitor City Growth Comparisons

Sandusky competes with several other regional cities for new job and economic opportunities. Three cities have been selected as general benchmarks: 1) Vermilion; 2) Fostoria; and 3) Tiffin. Table 3.15 presents employment growth estimates for these cities in the past four-year period, since the end of the last recession.

Sandusky was a weak job performer in all sectors compared to its three competitors. It represented 80 percent of the total loss of manufacturing jobs across the cities, 0 percent of the gain in retail and service jobs, and only 7.1 percent of the total gain in wholesale jobs across the cities during the 1992-1996 period. Of the cities, Tiffin had the best job performance across all four sectors. Vermilion gained jobs in the two industry sectors (retail and services) for which data were available. Fostoria gained jobs in three of the four sectors assessed (retail, services, and wholesale.)

Table 3.15
Competitor City Employment Change Comparison, 1992-1996

<u>Community</u>	<u>Manufacturing</u>	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Wholesale</u>	<u>Services</u>
Sandusky	-300	-415	4	-189
Vermilion	NA	305	NA	98
Fostoria	-200	198	18	240
Tiffin	125	76	34	156
Total	-375	164	56	305

C. Residential Workforce Characteristics

The following summarizes characteristics of employed Sandusky residents. The data are presented in tables and graphs at the end of this chapter.

1. Labor Force

According to the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), in 2002 there were approximately 247,300 people 16 years of age and older employed in the civilian labor force of Erie, Huron, Lorain, Ottawa, and Sandusky Counties. Erie County contributed 16.5 percent or 40,900 employees to the civilian labor force. Huron County had the highest unemployment rate in 2002, 8.1 percent while Erie County had the lowest, 5.4 percent. The manufacturing sector continues to employ the highest number of individuals while the service and government sectors also contribute greatly to the regional economy.

The agricultural industry still plays a key role in the regional economy. In 2002, there were approximately 772,000 acres in farms in the five county region. Total cash receipts from these farm operations totaled approximately \$287,859,000. Erie County had approximately 90,000 acres in farms accounting for 55 percent of the County's total land area.

In the City of Sandusky, the percentage of population 16 years of age and over in the civilian labor force has not fluctuated greatly from 1990 to 2000. In 2000 64.7 percent of the population 16 years of age and over was in the civilian labor force compared to 64 percent in 1990. Of the 64.7 percent in the labor force, 4.3 were unemployed.

2. Educational Attainment

As reported in the 1990 Census, nearly 30 percent (5,452) of Sandusky residents aged 25 and older had received less than a high school diploma. Ten percent (1,802) had attained at least a bachelor's degree. Twenty-six percent of the County's residents holding at least a bachelor's degree were Sandusky residents.

3. Occupation

Approximately 19 percent of the employed civilian population worked in management, profession, or related occupation while 21.1 percent of the population worked in service occupations. Less than 1 percent of the population was employed in farming, fishing, or forestry occupations. Sales and office occupations as well as production, transportation and material moving occupations employed the largest percentage of the population, 24.9 percent and 27.1 percent, respectively.

The agricultural, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining industries employed the lowest percentage of the population while manufacturing industries employed the highest. Education, health and social services as well as retail trade followed manufacturing.

4. Industry

The service and retail trade industries were comprised of 52 percent (4,066 and 2,785 respectively) of employed Sandusky residents 16 years of age and older, as reported by the 1990 Census. Forty percent of County residents in the service and retail trade industries resided in Sandusky. The manufacturing industry accounted for 28 percent (3,719) of employed Sandusky residents.

5. Place of Work and Travel Time

According to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, in 2003 Erie County had approximately 37,497 individuals working in the County. Of that number approximately 26.3% were in-commuters. Approximately 37,016 individuals who were living in Erie County

were employed. Approximately 25.3% of those individuals were out-commuters. Comparing those two figures, Erie County had a positive net flow of approximately 481 commuters. The surrounding counties of Huron, Lorain, Ottawa, and Sandusky all had a negative net flow of commuters.

The mean travel time to work for those living in the City of Sandusky was approximately 16 minutes indicating that a large percentage of residents in the City of Sandusky are also employed within the City. Approximately 1.4 percent of the workers 16 and over worked at home.

5. County Economic Performance

This section examines employment and unemployment trends in Erie, Huron, and Seneca counties as a backdrop to economic conditions in Sandusky.

A. Employment Trends

Erie County's total employment grew from 28,814 jobs in 1982 to 36,355 in 1992, and to 43,305 jobs in 1996. This 14,491 job-gain represents a 50 percent growth over the 14-year period, and a 3.6 percent average annual growth rate over the period. By comparison, total jobs grew at a 4.1 percent average annual rate in Huron County, and a 1.1 percent average annual rate in Seneca County during the 1982-1996 period.

Manufacturing jobs represented 31 percent of Erie County's total jobs in 1982 and 1987, 26.9 percent in 1992, and 23.9 percent in 1996. By comparison, Huron County's manufacturing jobs represented nearly 40 percent of its total jobs in 1996, and manufacturing jobs equaled 30.8 percent of the county's total jobs in 1996.

Erie County's largest manufacturing industries in 1994 were:

1. SIC 35 - Industrial machinery and equipment (2,507 jobs)
2. SIC 30 - Rubber and misc. plastics (1,125 jobs)
3. SIC 36 - Electrical equipment (1,080 jobs)
4. SIC 20 - Food and kindred products (500 jobs)
5. SIC 34 - Fabricated metal products (391 jobs)
6. SIC 33 - Primary metals (390 jobs)
7. SIC 39 - Misc. manufacturing (369 jobs)
8. SIC 345 - Screw machine products (193 jobs)

The county's largest non-manufacturing industries in 1994 were:

1. SIC 5812- Eating places (2,663 jobs)
2. SIC 531 - Department stores (942 jobs)
3. SIC 541 - Grocery stores (740 jobs)
4. SIC 799 - Misc. amusement and recreation services (686 jobs)
5. SIC 805 - Nursing and personal care facilities (647 jobs)
6. SIC 701 - Hotels and motels (417 jobs)
7. SIC 866 - Religious organizations (185 jobs)

B. Unemployment Trends (1990-1994)

According to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services the unemployment rate for Erie County in March 2004 was 7.4 percent. Both the Ohio and United States seasonally adjusted unemployment rate and for that same time period was 5.7%. The City of Sandusky had average annual unemployment rates of 7.3% and 6.3% in 2003 and 2002 respectively.

6. County Employment Forecast (1997-2010)

This section presents a general employment forecast for Erie County, based upon expected changes during the 1997-2000, and 2000-2010 time periods. While an actual employment forecast for the City of Sandusky is not technically feasible, a qualitative outlook for future City job growth is provided, in light of the trends forecast for Erie County. First, available statewide growth forecasts are reviewed as a backdrop for the county employment forecast.

A. Ohio Economic Outlook

Ohio's favorable economic performance coming out of the 1980s has been a surprise to many local and national economists. The state has experienced a high level of internal expansion by existing industries, which has fueled job growth across the state, including growth in many of the state's smaller rural and non-metropolitan economies. State business climate improvements over the past six years have helped position the state for substantial new investment. The Ohio Department of Development tracks recent business investment projects in Ohio's 88 counties. Over the last three years, 2,433 investment projects occurred in Ohio. These projects fueled \$16.5 billion in new business investment, and they created more than 104,160 new jobs statewide. Almost 1,600 (66 percent) of these total investment projects involved manufacturing operations. Nearly 230 of the projects involved international investment.

1. Employment Forecast

The following employment forecasts have been prepared for two periods, 1997-2000 and 2000-2010:

1997-2000 Period: Total state employment is forecast to grow at a 1.38 percent average annual rate during the 1997-2000 period. Manufacturing jobs are expected to decline at a 0.35 percent annual rate over the same period, while non-manufacturing employment will grow at a 1.83 percent average annual rate.

2000-2010 Period: Total employment is expected to grow at a 0.88 percent average annual rate during the period. Manufacturing jobs are forecast to decrease at a 0.67 percent average annual rate during the period, while non-manufacturing jobs will grow at a 1.27 percent average annual rate during the decade. Compared to the 1997-2000 period, manufacturing jobs are expected to increase their rate of decline statewide, and non-manufacturing jobs will grow at a somewhat slower rate during the 2000-2010 period.

2. 1997-2000 Gross State Product Growth

Ohio's gross state product is forecast to grow at a 4.18 percent average annual rate during the 1997-2000 period. This suggests that the state's economic output will rise from its present level of \$302.5 billion to \$341.8 billion in the year 2000. This state economic growth rate is just slightly ahead of the 4.0 percent annual inflation rate expected over the same time period. At this time, a published longer term gross state product forecast is not available from the major econometric forecasting firms.

3. Erie County

An employment forecast was prepared for Erie County by the consulting team. The forecast indicates that total jobs in the county will increase from their current 43,305 level to 49,887 in

the year 2000, and to 66,350 in the year 2010. Between 1992 and 1996, total jobs grew at a 4.78 percent average annual rate. Total jobs in Erie County are expected to grow at a 3.8 percent average annual rate during the 1996-2000 period, and at a 3.3 percent average annual rate during the 2000-2010 period.

Manufacturing jobs are expected to increase to 10,414 in 2000 and to 11,560 in the year 2010. Service and construction jobs are expected to grow the most in the future; both will stay considerably above the county's total job growth rate.

Table 3.16
Erie County - Forecasted Industry Annual Growth Rates

<u>Sector</u>	<u>1992-1996</u>	<u>1996-2000</u>	<u>2000-2010</u>
Total Employment	4.78	3.8	3.3
Manufacturing	1.51	1.2	1.1
Wholesale/Retail Trade	3.15	3.1	2.9
FIRE	2.57	2.3	2.2
Services	9.21	5.8	5.5
Government	2.07	1.5	1.5
Construction	17.3	5.25	5.1
Transportation/Utilities	4.82	3.5	3.5

Note: FIRE stands for financial, insurance and real estate

3. Implications of the County Growth Forecast for Sandusky

Countywide jobs will grow favorably over the next decade or more. Sandusky will benefit somewhat from this growth, but not nearly as much as the unincorporated parts of the county. Manufacturing and wholesale jobs are expected to fare better in the years ahead than retail and service jobs in Sandusky. Sandusky is expected to retain its dominant share of the county's manufacturing job base, while it is expected to see further declines in its shares of retail and service jobs. The location of tourism attractions and highway access are expected to be driving factors in future retail and service employment location within the county in coming years. County manufacturing jobs will seek new production sites and qualified workers, which could threaten the City's existing manufacturing base if these factors are not strengthened in the future.

7. County Employment Forecast (1997-2010)

A. Personal Income Trends

Erie County had total personal income of \$1.65 billion in 1994 (current and real dollar value), compared to \$1.08 billion in Huron County, and \$1.07 billion in Seneca County. Since 1982, Erie County's total personal income increased by \$830 million (current dollars), and by \$391 million (1994 real dollars). The county's per capita personal income rose from \$10,505 to \$21,205 on a current dollar basis, and from \$16,133 to \$21,205 on a real 1994 dollar basis.

B. Retail Trends

Total retail sales in Erie County were \$810 million in 1996, compared to \$445 million in Huron County and \$432 million in Seneca County. A significant portion of Erie County's retail sales are believed to be tied to tourist activities, which in Erie County had total effective buying income of \$1.17 billion in 1996, compared to \$718 million in Huron County, and \$733 million in Seneca County. Erie County has 616 total retail businesses, versus 342 in Huron County and 352 in Seneca County.

C. Public Fiscal Trends

As reported in the City of Sandusky Financial Report, 1996, the General Fund consisted of a total revenue of \$13,092,323, an increase of 6.14 percent (\$757,832) from the 1995 figure. Ninety-three percent (\$12,118,439) of the revenue was comprised of funds acquired from property tax, income tax, local and state levies, court fines and license and permit fees. General fund expenses in 1996 totaled \$12,445,450, an increase of 2.01 percent (\$244,715) from the 1995 expense total. Expenses were allocated into O. and M. funds of \$11,669,000 and capital improvement funds of \$776,000. The following summarizes 1995 assessed valuations and property tax rates of direct and overlapping governments per \$1,000 assessed values, as presented in the City of Sandusky Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, 1995. Figures from 1986 have been provided to reveal trends occurring over the 10-year period.

1. Assessed valuations totaled \$355,600,885 in 1995. This figure is represented by an increase of 37 percent from the 1986 assessed valuation total of \$259,663,552.
2. The City tax rate per \$1,000 assessed value was \$4.25 in 1995. There was no change in the rate over the 10-year period.
3. The 1995 school tax rate of \$63.10 per \$1,000 assessed value increased 35 percent (\$16.25) from the 1986 rate of \$46.85.
4. The County tax rate per \$1,000 assessed value was \$7.80 in 1995, an increase from the 1986 figure of \$5.40 of 44 percent (\$2.40).
5. Sandusky residents paid a cumulative total (City, school and County tax rates) of \$75.15 per \$1,000 assessed value in 1995, resulting in an increase of 33 percent (\$18.65) from the 1986 cumulative total of \$56.50.

D. Development Trends

The following summarizes recent development trends in Sandusky:

1. Commercial and Industrial Development

Construction permit data provided by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD), Office of Strategic Research reveal the number of new structures and estimated costs of transient accommodation, industrial, office/bank/professional and stores/customer service buildings constructed in the City of Sandusky between 1990 and 1994. The number of commercial/retail and industrial buildings constructed between 1990 and 1994 totaled 127, with a total estimated cost of \$38,098,955. The construction was characterized by a fluctuating trend, with the greatest number of structures built in 1991 (37) and the fewest number constructed in 1994 (15). The following provides a summary of the new commercial/retail and industrial construction by classification:

- A. Hotels, motels, tourist cabins and other non housekeeping shelter** - Seven structures containing 421 units were constructed between 1990 and 1994, with an estimated cost value of \$13,516,433 accounting for 36 percent of total commercial/retail and industrial construction cost.
- B. Industrial buildings** - Twenty-seven industrial buildings were constructed in Sandusky during the five-year period. Total costs were estimated at \$13,744,230 or 36 percent of the total commercial/retail and industrial construction cost. Fifty-two percent (14) of the structures were constructed in 1990.
- C. Office, bank and professional buildings** - Fifty-six office, bank and professional structures were built between 1990 and 1994, totaling costs of \$7,272,257 or 19 percent of the total commercial/retail and industrial

construction estimated cost. Sixty-eight percent (38) were built between 1991 and 1992 with a decline from 22 to 5 between 1991 and 1994.

- D. Stores and customer service buildings** - Thirty-seven stores and customer service buildings were constructed between 1990 and 1994. ODOT reported a cumulative estimated cost of \$3,566,035 or nine percent of the total commercial/retail and industrial construction estimated cost. The greatest number of structures built occurred in 1993, with 14 structures or 38 percent of the 37 built.