



BATH TOWNSHIP QUARTERLY

SUMMER 2009

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 3

An official newsletter published by the Bath Township Board of Trustees as a service to Bath Township residents under the authority of the Ohio Revised Code, Section 9.03

A Letter From the Trustees

The Bath Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan, adopted in 1998, has been extensively used by the Bath Township Trustees over the past eleven years to guide development of the township. Because it has been such a valuable tool, the trustees have decided to update the plan to encompass recent state legislation, court decisions, and new approaches to land use planning. Therefore the trustees have appointed a committee including: Maryellen Burnham, Ken Ertel, Chris Esker, Hal Horton, Steve Katz, Jeff Kerr, Susan Locke, Bruce McMakin, Maryanne Rackoff, Kurt Schloss, William Weber, Susan Poulos, Elaine Marsh, William Funk, Elaine Goodrich, Donald Jenkins, and James Nelson to review and oversee the updating of the Comprehensive Plan. The firm of McBride, Dale, Clarion, of Cincinnati, was selected as the consultants. Their first meeting was held on June 15.

This is your community. It is imperative in the development of the update of the plan to have input from those that live and work in the township. Such input in 1996 was valuable in drafting the original plan and it has served the trustees well in their decision-making responsibilities since then. Therefore, we request that you review the material presented in this Quarterly and consider what we could do better. Please answer the enclosed survey and send us your thoughts concerning additions or changes that you believe necessary for the township's land use plan of the future.

With great appreciation,

James Nelson Elaine Goodrich Donald Jenkins

BATH TOWNSHIP IN REVIEW 1998-2008

AS we look back over the recent history of Bath Township, two major events took place in 1998 that helped to shape the future of Bath Township. First, in January, the township trustees adopted the Bath Township Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Comp Plan). Second, in November, the Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) contract with Akron and Fairlawn was approved by the voters. Now is an appropriate time to look back and evaluate the impact of these two events as a base for looking forward to the future.

JEDD

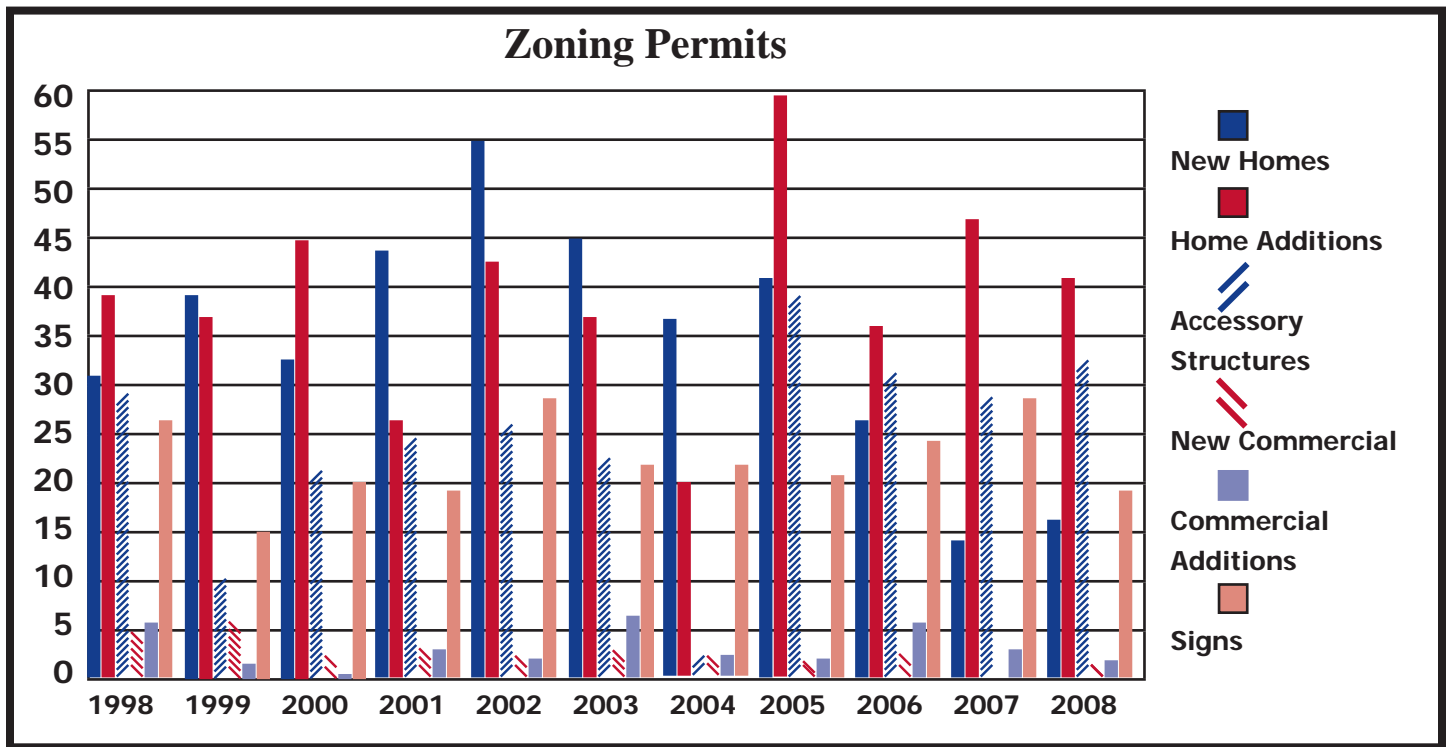
The passage of the JEDD in 1998 has allowed the township to exist without any further annexations for 99 years while imposing a 2% income tax on businesses in the limited JEDD district. Since 1998 the township has received promised revenues from the JEDD agreement and placed those monies in trust for future rural preservation needs. Also, an additional .25% income tax imposed recently by Akron is being shared among the township, Fairlawn, and Akron. The JEDD is administered by a nine member board including the three Bath Township trustees and the mayors and two councilmembers from Akron and Fairlawn.*

Zoning

The Comp Plan has been instrumental in enacting many changes to the Bath Township Zoning Resolution. As recommended, Design Guidelines were created for the Cleveland-Massillon Road Corridor and Bath Township to protect and stabilize the general appearance of buildings, structures, landscapes and open areas. The guidelines help maintain the historic and rural characteristics of the township and are used extensively by the Appearance Review Committee.

In 2000, a major amendment to the Zoning Resolution was passed. The most significant change was the inclusion of Open Space Subdivision regulations, which required subdivisions in residential areas (R-1, R-2, R-3) to maintain 50% of the total land area dedicated to permanent green space. Conventional subdivisions would need Board of Zoning Appeals approval in the same districts. A Natural Resource Study was completed which recommended a riparian corridor to protect Bath's streams. The township was the first in the

continued on page 2



Zoning continued

county to adopt regulations for Riparian Corridors which required new structures to be set back seventy-five feet from named watercourses and forty feet from unnamed watercourses. Steep Slope Regulations were also adopted to control development on an 18% or greater slope and prohibit the creation of new lots that have an overall grade that exceeds 30%.

Other actions:

- In 1998, a Nextel tower at the intersection of Cleveland-Massillon Road and Ghent Road was removed.
- In 2000, Firestone Trace was approved for 129 houses

Scenic Byway

The Comp Plan recommended that a local system of scenic roadways be established. Bath Township’s committee requested that the Ohio Department of Transportation’s Scenic Byways designate all county roads as the Heritage Corridors of Bath based on their scenic and historic qualities. In 2000, 34.5 miles were approved. Later an additional 3.6 miles were awarded the distinction. This special recognition designates the township’s scenic byway as one of twenty-six Ohio Scenic Byways. The committee also wrote a management plan in 2001 which was updated in 2006.

Other actions by this committee:

- In 2002, a map and brochure funded by a grant (Ohio Scenic Byway) were created.
- The organization of the Bath Business Association for local entrepreneurs was facilitated and is dedicated to enhancing the rural, scenic, and historical identity of the hamlets.

consistent with the Open Space Subdivision regulations. Another twelve houses were approved later.

- Over eleven years only one rezoning took place on Hametown Road near Route 18 changing R-2 (residential of one unit/2½ acres) to R-4 (residential of up to 4 units/acre) allowing condominiums to be built.
- In 2005, Bath was recognized as one of twenty communities in a national publication, Nature Friendly Communities, written by Christopher Duerksen and Cara Snyder. Zoning has two employees – an inspector and an administrative assistant, and is funded by fees and the general fund. *



- A barn stone wall was built at Bath School.
- Wye Road Bridge design was reviewed.
- The hamlet signs funded by a grant (Ohio Scenic Byway) were designed and placed.
- The Building Doctor Clinic, a program of the Ohio Historical Society, was sponsored.
- Shrubs, bulbs, or trees were planted at Hammond’s Corner, Bath Center, Wye Road Bridge, and the Bath Community Activity Center’s underpass.
- Beginning in 2002, seven annual barn socials, which encourage preservation of these historic structures, have taken place.
- Recognition awards were presented to homes and businesses exemplifying the scenic byway mission.

The management plan received a merit award from the Ohio Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects in 2004. Bath received one of four Scenic Ohio Awards in 2006 for compliance with the plan. *

Historic Preservation Committee

The Comp Plan proposed the creation of three Historic Districts within the Cleveland-Massillon Road Corridor. Hammond’s Corners Historic District, Four Corners Area by the Historic Town Hall, and Ghent Village Historic District were recommended for inclusion in an Historic Overlay District. In 2007, a committee was appointed to facilitate preserving the unique past, guiding future development, and enhancing the exceptional quality of life and historic rural character of Bath. They have submitted a Multi Properties Document (MPD) to the National Registry of Historic Places. This documented township history will act as a cover sheet for future applications. It will also help protect Bath from further incursions of cell towers and widened roads near historic sites. *

Parks

The Comp Plan was very concerned about the lack of active and passive public space in Bath Township and noted severe deficiencies in available park land. It made several recommendations to improve the situation and Bath moved forward to fill those needs.

Bath Nature Preserve (BNP)

In 1996, the township approved by 70% a twenty-year bond issue for the purchase of a portion of the Firestone estate property. Plans were made to increase the green space owned by the township. Ultimately the township purchased a 411 acre tract of land with this money which is now the Bath Nature Preserve. In addition, three grants (Recreational Trails, Transportation Enhancement from ODOT, and Summit County Community Grant) were used to fund the one and one-half mile North Fork Trail which traverses the preserve. The North Fork Trail received a Superior Award of Excellence for 2006 from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA).

Since 2002, the University of Akron has used a portion of the property for research and educational purposes, while helping fund the maintenance of the preserve. They also host informative walks/talks for Bath residents through the spring and fall.

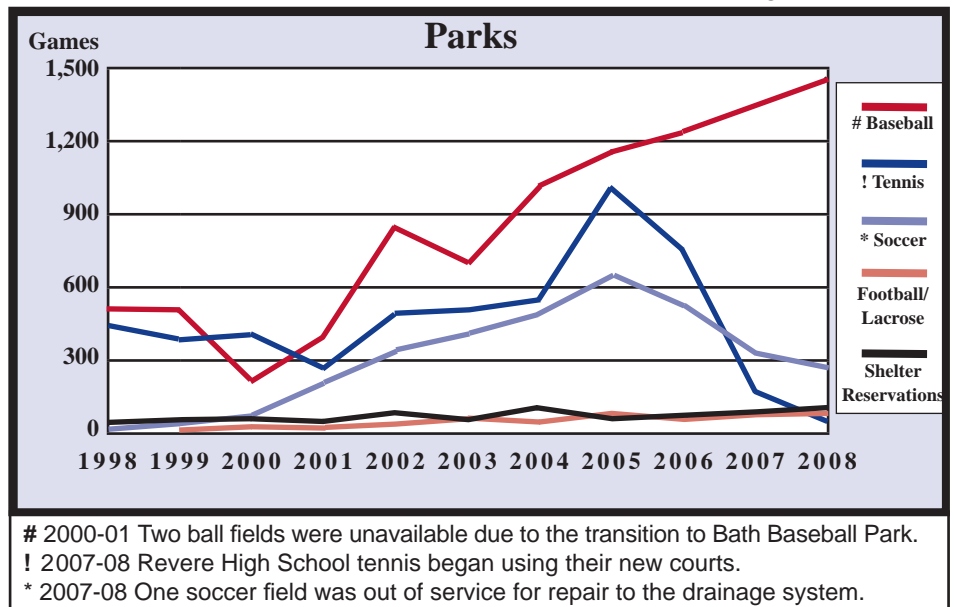
Bath Baseball Park (BBP)

In 1998, land was donated by the developer of Firestone Trace for the Bath Baseball Park which now has eight fields. Development was funded through a NatureWorks Grant and a donation by the Walter W. Bettinger II Foundation. The Park Board gathered donations from various organizations for the playground while the Revere Baseball and Softball Association built the shelter/concession stand and batting cages.

Bath Community Activity Center (BCAC)

In conjunction with the new baseball fields developed on Everett Road, the township constructed an additional soccer field at the BCAC as well as a football/lacrosse field. These two fields and the resurfacing of the basketball court, four tennis courts, driveway and parking areas were paid for with a NatureWorks grant. A concession and viewing stand were built by the Revere Youth Football Association. The first of the annual Bath Community Days was held in 1998 and has continued for the past eleven years. Since 2006, the Park Board has sponsored a community event at this park including the Ohio Ballet, two concert nights, and a movie night.

The township was honored with the OPRA Superior Award of Excellence for 2005 for the rehabilitation of BCAC and the building of BBP, as well as an Honorable Mention for 2008 for the “Green” Award for the Chief Logan Trailhead.



Bath Hill Park (BHP)

The community survey taken for the Comp Plan clearly indicated that the southeast corner of Bath needed a neighborhood park. A committee of residents from this area helped to develop plans for this site. Four acres of land the township owned, plus land that became available and was purchased with inheritance taxes, were designated for this purpose. In 2000, a NatureWorks grant funded a playground, two tennis courts, half basketball court, picnic area, and restrooms.

In 2007, Summit Soil and Water Conservation District recognized Bath for environmental awareness and community leadership in promoting excellence in water quality and wild life habitat improvement.

The park system has three employees and is funded by one ¾ mill levy. There is also a bond levy of .61 effective mills for the purchase of the Bath Nature Preserve that has ten more years to be collected. The current bond rating is Moody’s Aa3 and Standard and Poor’s AAA. *

Administration

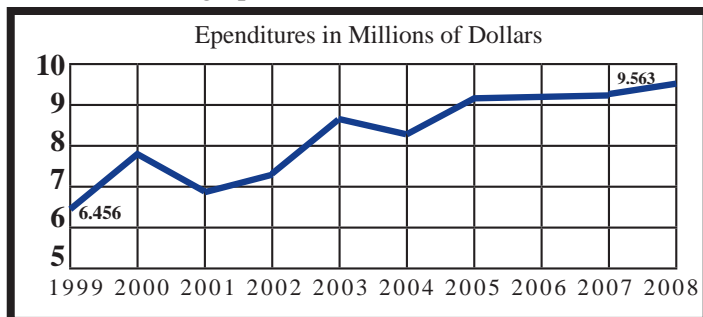
Administration has three full time employees, including the administrator who oversees the budget and day to day operations, his administrative assistant, and a budgetary accountant/payroll clerk. Administration and other areas are funded by the general fund of 2.1 mills.

- *Solid Waste* The Township has contracted with a waste hauler since 1994. In 1997 there were 1448 customers. In 2008, there were 2450 customers with 3658 tons of solid waste collected of which 367 tons were recycled. By law, the township must periodically rebid this contract. Currently the curbside fee is \$46.50 a quarter. The senior rate is \$42.75. Garage door service is offered at \$88.50 and \$76.50 quarterly for seniors. This fee is only used for this service.
- *Webpage* In 1999 the township set up a Webpage, www.bathtownship.org, which continues to expand.
- *Memorial Day* Memorial Park was dedicated on July 4, 2000 to recognize those Bath Township citizens who have served their country in a time of war. The Memorial Day Observance has become an annual event.
- *Project Pride* Since 2001, a Saturday in April has been set aside for volunteers to help clean up the road rights of way.
- *Hazardous Waste and Shredded Paper Recycle Program.* These programs were started in 2005 and 2007 respectively with an annual collection taking place. *

Revenues and Expenditures

By law the township must exercise fiscal responsibility which means that expenditures cannot exceed revenues. The Fiscal Officer is responsible for accounting for the revenues and expenditures of the township. Over the past ten years every fund has ended with sufficient cash to operate.

Using the outside audit data, total annual expenditures are indicated on the graph. *



Census

In 1990 the census indicated Bath's 23 square miles had a population of 9015. The 2000 census placed Bath at 9635 residents. It is anticipated that Bath will grow to 10,200 for the next census in 2010. Full build out for the township sets the population at 12,087 according to the Comp Plan. *

Service

This department grew from three employees supplemented by a Master Lease program in 1998 to 10 full-time employees, including an administrative assistant, when the Master Lease program was discontinued in favor of full-time employees. The department is funded by two levies totalling 3.4 mills property tax, gasoline tax, and license taxes.

In 2004, the department developed a program to record history as well as planning a maintenance schedule for pavement resurfacing, reconstruction and drainage for all roads, as well as replacement of culverts.

- *Roads* Township road mileage has increased from 54 in 1999 to 62 in 2008. Summit County maintains 50 miles of roads and ODOT maintains 8 miles of highway in Bath Township. Improvements on township roads are budgeted at \$1.0 to \$1.5 million a year.
- *Buildings and Grounds* Significant changes have occurred. In 2000, a basement at Bath Township Center was renovated as the Trustees' Meeting Room and a salt barn was built on Ira Road. In 2004, Bath purchased the Summit County Garage on Ira Road. Currently the township leases back eight of the eleven bays and one salt barn to the county. In 2006, Bath built Stony Hill Fire Station jointly with Copley to replace a smaller joint fire station. These projects were completed with no additional taxes.
- *Cemeteries* All five cemeteries have been improved with Moore's Chapel, Bath Center, and Ira Cemeteries receiving major landscape upgrades and Stony Hill Cemetery receiving major restoration work. Moore's Chapel Annex was opened in January of 2002. This addition made lots available to current or former Bath Township residents, many of whom had been on a lengthy waiting list. To date, 246 grave and 21 cremation lots have been sold in the new annex. Each grave costs \$400 and a cremation lot is \$250. Over the past five years, an average of 21 burials per year have taken place.
- *Snow and Ice Removal* Costs for snow and ice control, depending on the winter, range from \$55,000 to \$156,000 for salt per winter season, averaging \$105,000 a year over the last seven years. Labor, equipment and salt bring that average total to \$250,000 annually. *

Sewer and Water District

The Bath Township Sewer and Water District is an independent entity administered by a committee that oversees water and sewer connections. The district's plan governs the use of water wells and septic tanks in the district which covers most of the residential area of the township. *

Home Rule and a Recreation Center

In 2000 the electorate voted down limited Home Rule. A survey sent out in 2002 indicated no support for tax money being used to build a recreation center. *

BATH TOWNSHIP INPUT SURVEY

We would appreciate it if you could fill out this comprehensive land use plan survey and return it by August 15. Simply fold, tape, and mail this document or go online at <http://www.bathtownship.org>. If you miss the date, still send in your answers as everyone's input is needed. Feel free to use additional paper.

If you would be interested in participating in the comprehensive plan process, please provide your contact information below. The following information will only be used in conjunction with this planning process.

Name: _____

Address: _____

(optional)Phone: _____ Email: _____

- 1. What do you enjoy most about living in Bath Township?**

- 2. What, if anything, do you dislike about living in Bath Township?**

- 3. What do you think are the most pressing long-range (10 years) issues facing Bath Township?**

- 4. What do you think are the greatest challenges facing Bath Township?**

- 5. What do you think are the greatest opportunities for Bath Township, around which this plan should be built?**

- 6. If you could identify only one problem to be solved by this planning effort, what would it be?**

- 7. If you could identify only one improvement to the community, what would it be?**

I. How satisfied are you with the following township services?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Did Not Use
Police services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency Medical Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land Use & Zoning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nuisance enforcement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of streets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trash removal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snow removal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Township parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quarterly newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Bath Township
 3864 W. Bath Road
 Akron, OH 44333

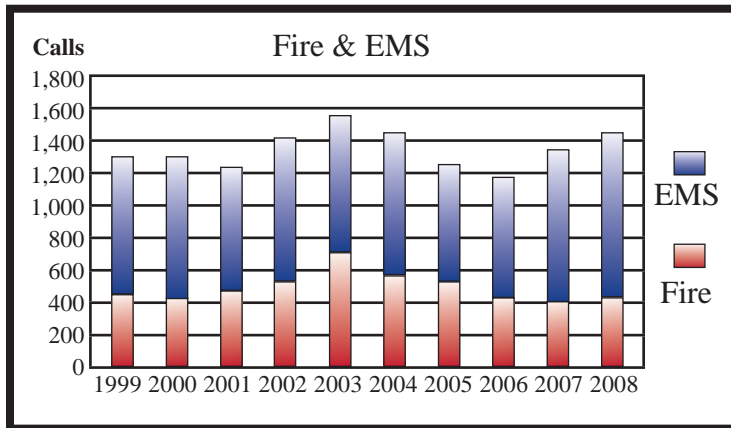
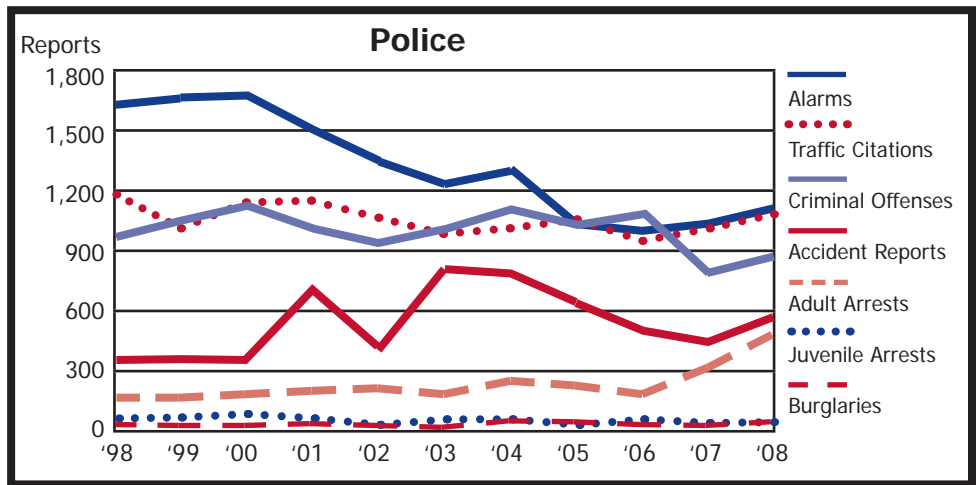
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Bath Township Comprehensive Plan Review Committee
Bath Township
3864 W. Bath Road
Akron, OH 44333

Police

The Comp Plan has had a positive effect on keeping crime numbers at a low level. In 1998, the township had 19 full time officers and six dispatchers. Today there are 20 full time police officers, an administrative assistant and six dispatchers. The department has eight marked and four unmarked vehicles. The department is funded by three levies for a total of 6.15 mills.

A review of the statistics is presented in the graph.*



Fire

The Bath Fire Department grew from seven full time fire-fighters in 1998 to ten full-time fire-fighters in 2008. This department counts heavily on its 29 volunteers to answer calls and fill in duty shifts. Another 28 professional fire-fighters, working full time at other departments, substitute for Bath and Copley at the Stony Hill Fire Station. Stony Hill Station, a joint venture with Copley Township, was built in 2006. The department has thirteen emergency response and support vehicles. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer please call 330-666-3738.

The fire department is funded by three levies for a total of 4 mills and also non-resident billing of ambulance use which brings in an additional \$100,000 a year.*

Friends of Yellow Creek

In 2006, a committee was appointed to oversee the implementation of the Yellow Creek Watershed Action Plan to improve water quality and manage storm water as the Comp Plan recommended.

Other actions by the committee:

- Educational materials were prepared covering watershed friendly lawn care, rain gardens, and indigenous species to use in landscaping.
- They planned two rain gardens constructed at the BCAC donated by Bath Gamma Garden Club and Merrill Lynch.
- Five-hundred willow saplings and 200 white oaks were planted along North Fork Creek funded by Kiwanis and Mrs. Steiner.
- They facilitated repair of Crystal Lake Dam which improved drainage around the lake. This project was handled by the homeowner's association.
- A grant (Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Clean Water Act 319) was received to fund stream bank restoration along a portion of Bath Creek within the Bath Nature Preserve which is scheduled for completion this year.*

Bath Township Museum

In 1999, in preparation for the centennial celebration of the Historic Town Hall a grant (Community Development Block Grant) was received to upgrade the building to become handicapped accessible and to renew the landscaping. In 2005, a group of dedicated volunteers hosted a 100 year celebration for the Historic Town Hall. Through donations, they then transformed this hall that had been rented for various meetings, into a museum with the help of a grant (Ohio & Erie Canal Association). In furthering their mission the Bath Township Museum volunteers have hosted seven exhibits, facilitated the writing of two books (Yellow Creek Mills and How Transportation Influenced the Development of Bath Township), conducted six cemetery tours, one schoolhouse tour, recorded family oral histories, created a historical research library, and provided an information center about Bath Township. The current exhibit is "Preserving the Past: Bath Township Schools." Museum hours are Monday and Wednesday 9 to 11:30 a.m. and Sunday 1 to 4 p.m.*

Services for Residents

Bath Township offers the following special services for residents. Call 330-666-3736
 "Life Line" for seniors or disabled residents ~ Seniors' (65) discount rate for trash collection: **Administration**
 "We Care" for seniors who wish a daily phone check: **Dispatch**
 Smoke detector check ~ Driveway marker replacement: **Fire Department**
 Vacation house check: **Police Department**



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Office Hours:

Monday - Friday - 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Elaina E. Goodrich
Trustee

James N. Nelson
Trustee

Donald M. Jenkins
Trustee

Sharon A. Troike
Fiscal Officer

William E. Snow, Township Administrator

Meeting Dates for Board of Trustees:

Monday, July 13, 2009	7:00 p.m.
Monday, July 27, 2009	4:00 p.m.
Monday, August 10, 2009	7:00 p.m.
Monday, August 24, 2009	4:00 p.m.
Monday, September 8, 2009	7:00 p.m.
Monday, September 21, 2009	4:00 p.m.
Monday, October 13, 2009	7:00 p.m.
Monday, October 26, 2009	4:00 p.m.

Comprehensive Land Use Review Committee Survey Enclosed

This committee was appointed in 2008 to review the current Comp Plan. In order to understand the community's needs, the committee is requesting each residence to comment on the future direction the township should move toward by answering the enclosed survey. If you have further comments, contact the township. For updates see the Comp Plan Webpage www.bathtownship.org.

SUMMER EVENTS

MUSEUM "Preserving the Past: Bath Township Schools" presented at the Historic Town Hall is open Monday and Wednesday mornings 9:00-11:30. Both Stony Hill Schoolhouse, at 49 Hametown Road, and the Historic Town Hall are also open 1:00-4:00 p.m. every Sunday.

JULY 11-12 BATH HORSE SHOW This weekend event offers over seventy classes of horsemanship at the Bath Horse Show grounds across from Revere High School. The proceeds go to the Bath Fire Department Inc. to help pay for equipment for the fire department.

JULY 19 HERITAGE CORRIDORS OF BATH ROAD RALLY The Bath Business Association and scenic byway committee are sponsoring a road rally beginning at Bath School and ending at Hale Farm & Village where dinner will be served. \$10/car and \$12/person for dinner.

JULY 24 FREE CONCERT NIGHT At 7 p.m., Tony Fortunato and the Emperors of Swing's twelve piece ensemble will play R&B, Jazz and Swing for the public. The event is organized by the Park Board and funded by Bath Volunteers for Service.

AUGUST 1 COMMUNITY DAY Beginning at 7:30 a.m., breakfast will be served at Bath Church by the Bath Richfield Kiwanis. At 11 a.m. the parade, with over sixty units, steps off south on Cleveland-Massillon Road between Ira and Bath Roads. Then the community gathers at Bath Community Activity Center for a fun filled extravaganza. The events and treats enjoyed in the past are back plus a few new twists.

SEPTEMBER 9 BARN SOCIAL The Heritage Corridors of Bath's eighth annual barn social will take place at a local barn to encourage preservation of the historical structures in Bath Township.

SEPTEMBER 27 BATH CENTER CEMETERY TOUR A tour of the grave markers of teachers and administrators that lived and worked in Bath and are buried in Bath Center Cemetery is planned to coincide with the museum presentation on Bath Township Schools.

NOVEMBER 1 HALLOWEEN TRICK-OR-TREAT will be held on Sunday from 5-7.