Chapter 4. Regional Profile

Introduction: The US Census Bureau completed their 2020 Census that provided much of the data that informs this report. Additionally, the American Community Survey is a nationwide survey completed by the Census Bureau that provides the most recent data for sections of this report. It is also important to note, the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) county-level population control totals will be reflected in the final adopted Transportation Plan and air quality conformity determination and associated travel demand modeling procedures. Any variation from the ODOD county-level population control totals, for the Transportation Plan and Conformity Determination, will require substantial documentation, including interagency consultation. ODOD population control totals are not required for transportation and land use alternatives scenario planning. For ease of data reporting, although portions of Ottawa County are not included in the planning area, whole county numbers may be reported based on depth of data collection.

## 4.1   Historic Conditions, Comprehensive Plans, and Land Use

Regional History: Erie County and portions of Ottawa County were originally part of the Firelands, a land tract tracing its heritage back to the Revolutionary War. During the war, numerous Connecticut residents were burned out of their homes by British soldiers and as compensation, the Connecticut Assembly awarded the citizens 500,000 acres in the westernmost portion of the Western Reserve, which became known as the Firelands. . Erie County was established in 1838 when it was split from Huron County by the state legislature and included the Marblehead Peninsula. Two years later, portions of Erie, Lucas and Sandusky County were further subdivided to create Ottawa County in 1840. The region developed into a a center for transportation and trade through the creation of the Mad River and Lake Erie Railroad in 1835 and the Milan Canal in 1839. The City of Sandusky, the Erie County seat, was uniquely platted in the shape of the Masonic symbol in 1818. Because of its location on Lake Erie and the number of railroad lines that went through the city, Sandusky and Huron became a major terminal on the Underground Railroad. The City of Vermilion established itself as a major shipbuilding port due to its location on at the mouth of the Vermilion River on Lake Erie. With the opening of the man-made Milan Canal, the inland Village of Milan became a canal town with a link to the Huron River and Great Lakes. For a time, Milan was a leading Great Lakes port, however, with the advent of the railroad, Milan's canal and warehouses were eventually abandoned. The City of Port Clinton, the county seat of Ottawa County, was plotted and established in 1828 in an effort to encourage canal development along the portage river. The canal was never established, but trade in the region grew with the discovery of accessible limestone and gypsum that began to be quarried from the area peninsula. Today, the Lake Erie Ports of Huron and Sandusky provide access to Great Lakes shipping and world ports through the St. Lawrence Seaway, with railyards playing an important role in the east coasts rail system.

Relationship between Transportation and Land Use: The organization of daily life has created a demand for travel. The demand for publicly accessible transportation connections between geographic locations grew into a desire for faster and more comfortable travel. The result of this demand has been the development of extensive transportation networks and technological advances in the means of transportation. These transportation improvements in turn have impacted daily activities, where geographic distances are less of an impediment than in the past. Not long ago, walking distances defined the geographic relationship between daily activities. The destination of one's work, shopping, social and religious institutions needed to be within a reasonable walking distance of one's home. These distances were a function of time and the location of one's home and one's daily destinations were tied to how much time people were willing to take to travel between destinations. These "time budgets," were defined by the transportation system and the transportation modes available. Households still make travel decisions based on on-time budgets. However, the development of automobiles and the corresponding roadway infrastructure has made it possible to travel much greater distances within an allotted time, allowing daily activities to be located much farther from one's home.

Just as the transportation system impacts location and destination decisions the mix and design of destinations greatly impact the demand for the transportation system. Improved transportation systems allow greater accessibility between dispersed land uses. In turn, dispersed land uses require more travel and thus more demand for transportation infrastructure. The importance of land use and transportation should not be underestimated. Land use patterns and development decisions are often seen as controlled solely by market forces, leaving public agencies to respond to the transportation demand created in their wake. However, public land-use policies directly affect private land-use decisions such as zoning regulations and minimum parking requirements. Therefore, land-use policies need to be considered with the impact of transportation just as transportation policies need to be considered with land use. Transportation systems and land use patterns have a well-documented reciprocal relationship. As communities have grown, the demands for transportation system improvements have also grown. However, these transportation improvements have also provided more convenient access to land farther out, thus spurring further growth. The automobile has impacted land use patterns more than any other transportation system over the past half-century.
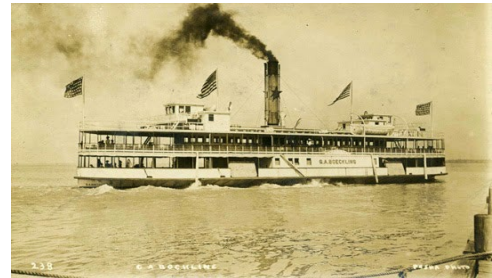
GA Boeckling[1]
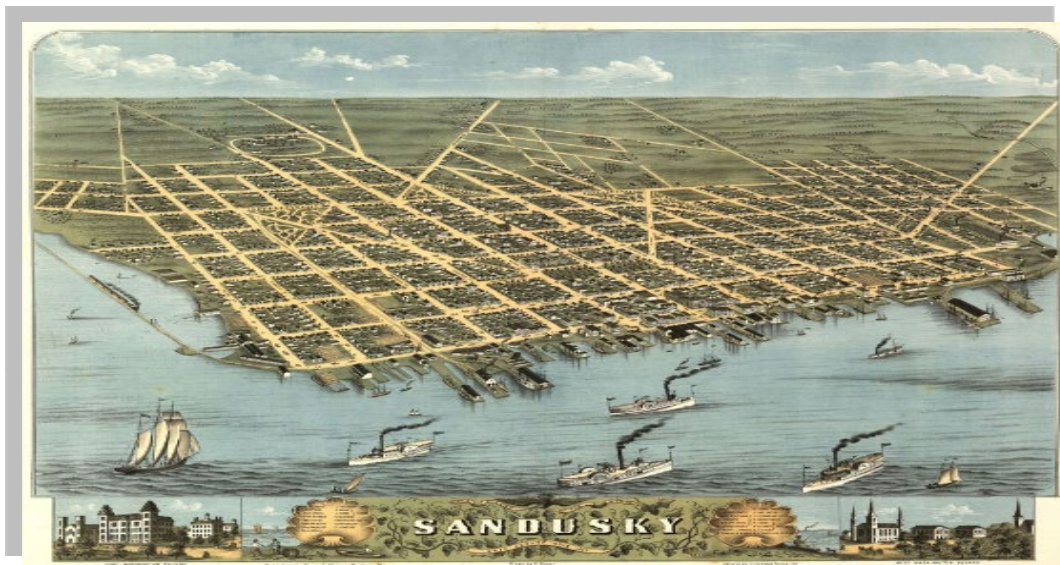

Columbus Avenue in Sandusky[1]
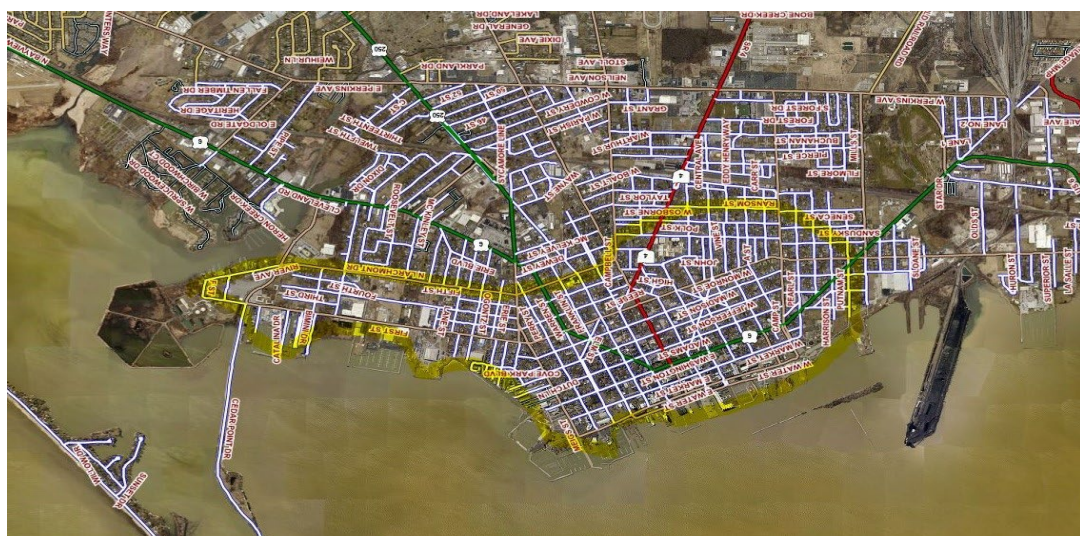

Ferry Boat Service[1]

Lake Erie Railroad in Vermilion

Lithograph of Sandusky in 1870:
Urban area end near Scott, Fifth
and Mills Streets[1]

Same Area Present Day–
Yellow Lines show the
Approximate 1870 Urban
Boundaries

Figures 4-1.2: Land Use Changes

4.2   Existing Conditions

Geography: Following the 2020 Census, the Sandusky urbanized area was expanded to include the city of Port Clinton in Ottawa County. With the change, the ERPC MPO expanded to include the eastern portion of Ottawa County, and became a multi-county planning agency. Together, Ottawa and Erie County are two of the eight coastal counties in Ohio, with a combined land area 495 square miles, 149 miles of coastline, and the Sandusky Bay connecting the counties geographies.

Erie County has a land area of 255 square miles, water area of 371 square miles, and a population density of 292 people per square mile.[1] Erie County consists of approximately 55 miles of shoreline along Lake Erie. Erie County is bounded by Lorain County to the East, Huron County to the South, Sandusky and Ottawa Counties to the West and Lake Erie to the North. The majority of the county land use consists of cropland (51%) and forests (18%), with developed areas accounting for an additional 19%.[2] The transportation network in Erie County consists of 26 interstate highway miles, 42 US highway miles, and 114 state highway miles. There are 623 county, township, and municipal road miles, three small public-use airports, two shipping ports, and 78 miles of rail line.[3] The City of Sandusky, incorporated in 1824, is the largest city in Erie County and serves as the county seat.

Ottawa County has a land area of 255 square miles, water area of 330 square miles, and a population density of 158 people per square mile.[4] Ottawa County consists of approximately 94 miles of shoreline along Lake Erie and Sandusky Bay shore, and is bounded by Erie County to the east, Sandusky County to the south, and Wood and Lucas County to the West. Lake Erie borders the county to the north. The majority of the county consists of cropland (59%) and wetlands (13%), with developed areas making up 15% of the land use. The transportation network across the county includes 4 interstate highway miles, 140 state highway miles and 546 miles of county, township and municipal road miles. There are 5 commercial airports, and includes the Ottawa-Erie International Airport, a shipping port, over 115 miles of rail lines, and ferry services providing access to the Lake Erie Islands. The county seat is located within the MPO planning area in the City of Port Clinton, which was incorporated in 1828.

Population: Across the region, there has been a consistent decrease in population within the MPO planning area of 1.8%. The current population count in the metropolitan planning area is 100,623, with 75,622 individuals in Erie County, 18,979 individuals in Ottawa County, and 6,022 individuals in the City of Vermilion within Lorain County. Cities and villages in particular have seen a trend down in total population between the 2010 and 2020 census. Of the identified political jurisdictions in the urban areas, the City of Vermilion, and townships of Huron, Perkins, and Catawba showed minor growth, while the rest lost population. It is noted that population loss was minor with an estimated loss of fewer that one hundred residents in the following political jurisdictions: the City of Port Clinton, villages of Bay View, Marblehead, Kelley's Island, Berlin Heights, Castalia, Milan, and townships of Vermilion, Erie, Portage, Oxford, Groton and Milan. (**see Figure 4-1.1**).

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[1] http://www.city-data.com/county/Erie_County-OH.html accessed 5/2024

[2] Ohio Department of Development, Erie County Profile, 2023

[3] ODOT, Erie County Regional Freight Plan, 2023

[4] https://www.city-data.com/county/Ottawa_County-OH.html accessed 5/2024

Political Jurisdiction	County	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	ACS (2022)	Change 2010-2020	Percent
Erie County*	ERIE	85033	82423	85468	82929	81640	81624	-1289	-1.6%
Ottawa County	Ottawa	40076	40029	40985	41428	40364	40367	-1064	-2.6%
Ottawa County within MPO	Ottawa	19621	19550	19218	19563	18979	18978	-584	-3.0%
City of Sandusky	ERIE	31360	29764	27844	25793	25095	24964	-698	-2.7%
City of Huron	ERIE	7123	7030	7958	7149	6922	6882	-227	-3.2%
City of Vermilion**	ERIE	11012	11127	10868	10594	10659	10459	65	0.6%
City of Port Clinton	Ottawa	7223	7106	6346	6056	6025	6024	-31	-0.5%
Perkins Township	ERIE	10989	10793	12578	12202	12390	12348	188	1.5%
Catawba Township	Ottawa	3402	3148	3157	3599	3711	3703	112	3.1%
Danbury Township	Ottawa	3735	3665	3872	4264	4059	3969	-205	-4.8%
Vermilion Township	ERIE	4393	4051	4638	4945	4857	4628	-88	-1.8%
Huron Township	ERIE	2156	2267	2572	3548	3802	3778	254	7.2%
Margaretta Township	ERIE	4759	4601	4662	4497	4258	4156	-239	-5.3%
Bay View Village	ERIE	804	739	692	632	608	710	-24	-3.8%
Marblehead Village	Ottawa	679	745	759	903	865	962	-38	-4.2%
Kellys Island Village	ERIE	121	172	347	312	256	221	-56	-17.9%
Bay Township	Ottawa	940	1276	1365	1458	1142	1226	-316	-21.7%
Erie Township	Ottawa	1518	1454	1382	1221	1147	1113	-74	-6.1%
Portage Township	Ottawa	1568	1600	1553	1291	1217	1284	-74	-5.7%
Put In Bay Village	Ottawa	146	141	149	138	154	89	16	11.6%
Put in Bay Township	Ottawa	410	415	635	633	659	608	26	4.1%
Oxford Township	ERIE	1198	1150	1079	1201	1140	1129	-61	-5.1%
Groton Township	ERIE	1235	1245	1360	1427	1379	1461	-48	-3.4%
Florence Township	ERIE	2119	2101	2500	2448	2470	2382	22	0.9%
Berlin Heights Village	ERIE	756	691	685	714	651	731	-63	-8.8%
Castalia Village	ERIE	973	915	982	852	774	757	-78	-9.2%
Berlin Township	ERIE	2725	2628	3017	3009	2799	3434	-210	-7.0%
Milan Village***	ERIE	1181	1056	1025	1004	997	1001	-7	-0.7%
Milan Township	ERIE	2129	2093	2661	2602	2583	2583	-19	-0.7%
Total	ERPC MPO	104654	101973	104686	102492	100619	100602	-1873	-1.8%

*Includes Vermilion in Lorain County
**Includes Lorain and Erie County
***Only includes Erie County portion of Milan

Figure 4-2.1: Largest Places Population Changes

Sex and Age: Overall the largest population cohorts in the planning area tend to be aged older, and consists of those aged 55-59, 60-64, and 65-70. It was noted that the approximately 25% of the population is aged 65 years and older, and 19% is under 18 years. The median age in Erie County is approximately 44.8 years, and in Ottawa County it is 49.8 years.[5] This is discussed further in **Section 4.4**. It is assumed that the typical 65 year old today will to age 85, and one out of every three 65-year-olds today will live at least to age 90. About one out of seven will live at least to age 95.[6] As noted in **Figure 4-1.2,** there are larger numbers of older population cohorts than younger across the planning area. Although this is true for the state of Ohio also, the region's pattern starts decreasing at a steeper level showing a decrease from those 50 and younger; which means that there will be a disproportionately older population in the coming years compared to the younger population.

Another important demographic characteristic of the population is gender structure. Gender can be used as an indicator of population and as a future planning tool as females typically live longer than males. According to data compiled by the Social Security Administration, A man reaching age 65 today can expect to live, on average, until the age of 84. A woman turning age 65 today can expect to live, on average, until the age of 86.[7]

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[5] Ohio Office of Policy, Research and Strategic Planning, 2018
[6] https://www.ssa.gov/planners/lifeexpectancy.html accessed 5/2024
[7] https://www.ssa.gov/planners/lifeexpectancy.html accessed 5/2024

*ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan*

Across the planning area at the time of 2020 census, the female population was 51,251 (50.9%), while the male population was 49,372 (49.1%)
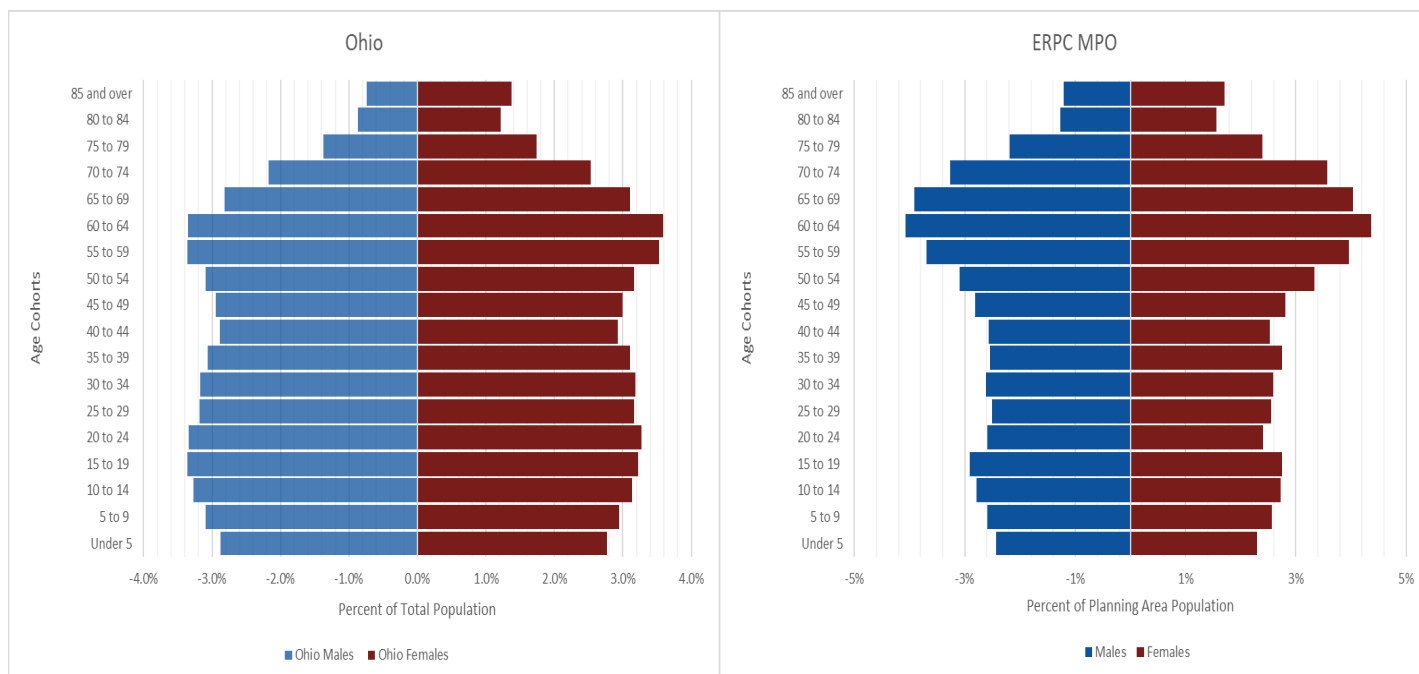
Figure 4-2.2: Population Pyramids

Density: The majority of the region's population is located within the urban areas as identified in the map below. The population by census block groups is shown below in **Figure 4-2.3**. Nearly three-fourths of the population lives within urbanized areas or in urban clusters, focused primarily in Port Clinton, Sandusky, Huron and Vermilion. Outside the urbanized areas, census block groups are quite large. Therefore, the population map may be mistakenly interpreted suggesting a greater concentration of people in rural areas. Housing density information is a useful consideration in the evaluation of various transportation facilities. Transportation improvements that serve more households per unit of improvement will generally produce greater utility, all else being equal. For example, public transit service in a higher density residential area can serve more households per vehicle mile of service than transit service in a lower density residential area. Similarly, a mile of sidewalk or trails in a high-density area can serve more people than in a low-density area.
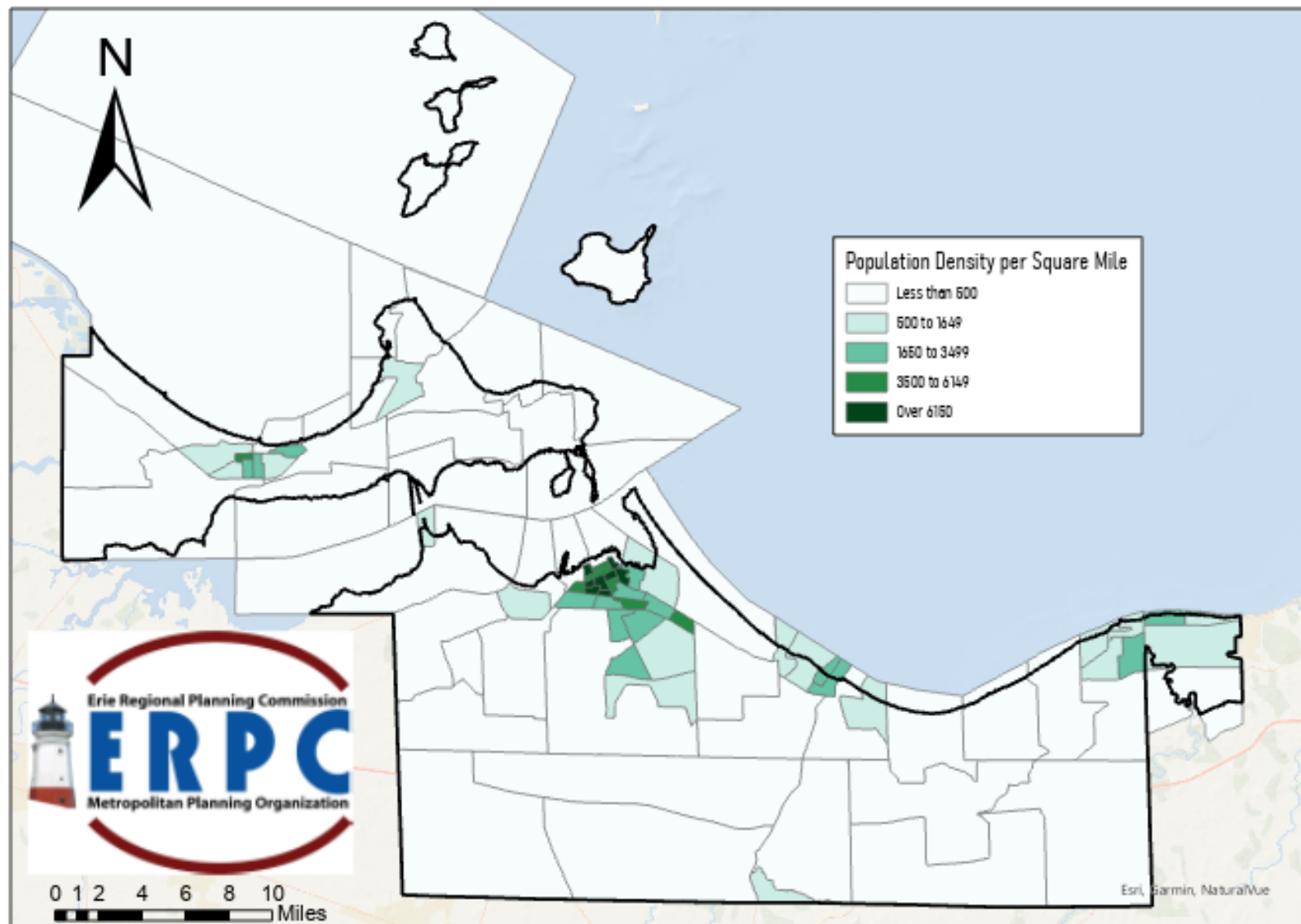
Population Density per Square Mile
- Less than 600
- 600 to 1649
- 1650 to 3499
- 3500 to 6149
- Over 6150

Figure 4-2.3 Population Density by Block Group
ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Map prepared by Erie Regional Planning Commission, and is intended for illustrative purposes only. Erie County, Ohio assumes no responsibility or liabilities for any errors or omissions contained here in.

Erie County 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Education: The population within the planning area consists of 92% of residents having at least graduated high school and approximately 27% having a Bachelor's degree or higher (see **Figure 4-1.4**). Within the planning area, there are several colleges including Bowling Green State University's Firelands Campus and Resort and Attraction Management Campus, and Ohio Business College. There also is a vocational school, EHOVE.

Education

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
Total Population 25 yrs or older, 2022*	54,257	30,571
No high school degree	4,419	2,109
High school graduate	49,838	28,462
Associates degree	5,151	2,959
Bachelor's degree or higher	14,360	8,221
Graduate or professional	4,931	2,964
Percent of Total		
No high school degree	8.1%	6.9%
High school graduate	91.9%	93.1%
Associates degree	9.5%	9.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	26.5%	26.9%
Graduate or professional	9.1%	9.7%

Figure 4-2.4: Education[8]

Household Types: The majority of households within the planning area consists of married couple families followed by non-family households. Of these households, 23% have children at home under the age of 18, while households with individuals age 65 and over account for 39% of residences. The average household size is 2.23 persons per households in 2022 across the planning area., [9]

Homeownership: Owner-occupied housing units consist of 74% of housing units across both counties, while the remaining 26% are rental units. Approximately 27% of housing units were surveyed as vacant. The regions lake access paired with the area's tourist attractions has resulted in increased seasonal homes, at 20% of the units, and 75% of the total vacant housing stock. The median housing value is $203,400. The median costs of a monthly mortgage payment is $1,412 and the median gross rental cost per unit is $934.

Employment: Erie and Ottawa County enjoys a diverse economic base. Staff found that as of May 2022 the total population age 16 to 64 was 44,977 in Erie County, with 35,755 civilian employees, and 23,661 in Ottawa County with 19,043 civilian employee's active in the labor force.

Job Types: Between Erie County and Ottawa County, Education, Health Care, and Social Assistance has the largest share of the job sector of civilian employees at 23%. Manufacturing makes up 18% of the job sectors, followed by retail trade at 11%. Worker classes are shown below in **Figure 4-1.5,** with job sector break downs in **Figure 4-1.6.**

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[8] Headwater Economics, 5/2020
[9] Ohio Office of Research accessed 5/2020

Figure 4-2.5: Worker Class[10]

(Image from DataUS.IO, data from ACS 5-year estimate, Accessed 6/2024)

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
Civilian employees > 16 years, 2022*	35,755	19,043
Ag, forestry, fishing & hunting, mining	541	182
Construction	1,885	1,511
Manufacturing	6,310	3,336
Wholesale trade	716	404
Retail trade	3,907	1,887
Transport, warehousing, and utilities	2,186	1,203
Information	660	155
Finance and ins, and real estate	1,610	1,108
Prof, mgmt, admin, & waste mgmt	2,156	1,337
Edu, health care, & social assistance	8,355	4,361
Arts, entertain, rec, accomod, & food	4,351	1,887
Other services, except public admin	1,800	1,015
Public administration	1,278	657

Percent of Total

Ag, forestry, fishing & hunting, mining	1.5%	1.0%
Construction	5.3%	7.9%
Manufacturing	17.6%	17.5%
Wholesale trade	2.0%	2.1%
Retail trade	10.9%	9.9%
Transport, warehousing, and utilities	6.1%	6.3%
Information	1.8%	0.8%
Finance and ins, and real estate	4.5%	5.8%
Prof, mgmt, admin, & waste mgmt	6.0%	7.0%
Edu, health care, & social assistance	23.4%	22.9%
Arts, entertain, rec, accomod, & food	12.2%	9.9%
Other services, except public admin	5.0%	5.3%
Public administration	3.6%	3.5%

High Reliability: Data with coefficients of variation (CVs) < 12% are in black to indicate that the sampling error is relatively small.
Medium Reliability: Data with CVs between 12 & 40% are in orange to indicate that the values should be interpreted with caution.
Low Reliability: Data with CVs > 40% are displayed in red to indicate that the estimate is considered very unreliable.

Figure 4-2.6: Job Sectors of Civilian Employees[11]

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[10] ACS Five Year Class Of Worker By Sex For The Full-Time, Year-Round Civilian Employed Population 16 Years And Over, 2018
[11] Headwater Economics, 5/2020

Largest 15 Employers				
	Erie County		**Ottawa County**	
#	**Name**	**Employees**	**Name**	**Employees**
1	Cedar Point*	6500	Materion Corporation	672
2	Firelands Regional Medical Center	2000	Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station	548
3	Kalahari Resort	1228	Luther Home of Mercy	402
4	Erie County	700	LogistiQ	379
5	Sandusky City School	650	Magruder Hospital	343
6	Meijer Department Store	475	United States Gypsum	280
7	Great Wolf Lodge	350	Northern Manufacturing	151
8	Ohio Veterans Home	350	Avery Dennison	145
9	Walmart Department Store	350	Bassett's Market	138
10	Perkins School System	320	Genoa Retirement Village	119
11	Providence Care Centers	250	Riverview Industries	104
12	City of Sandusky	236	Fenner Dunlop	96
13	Corso's Flower and Garden Center	200	Genoa Banking Company	82
14	Mucci Farms	200	Otterbein Marblehead	65
15	News-2-You	178	Signature Label	63

Erie County 2024 AFIS Report, Accessed 5/2024

*Seasonal Peak Employment, 400 Year round

Ottawa County Improvement Corporation, Accessed 5/2024

Figure 4-2.7: Top Regional Employers and Employee Numbers[12]

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[12] Erie County Economic Development Corporation, 2020

Wages by Industry

Employment and Wages in 2022	Ottawa County				Erie County			
	Wage & Salary Employment	% of Total Employment	Avg. Annual Wages (2023 $s)	% Above or Below Avg.	Wage & Salary Employment	% of Total Employment	Avg. Annual Wages (2023 $s)	% Above or Below Avg.
Total	13,671		$52,130		36,050		$48,636	
Private	11,395	83.4%	$51,366	-1.5%	31,219	86.6%	$47,205	-2.9%
Non-Services Related	2,974	21.8%	$66,780	28.1%	7,326	20.3%	$60,481	24.4%
Natural Resources and Mining	195	1.4%	$61,312	17.6%	757	2.1%	$52,363	7.7%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting	82	0.6%	$39,261	-24.7%	710	2.0%	$50,126	3.1%
Mining (incl. fossil fuels)	113	0.8%	$77,313	48.3%	47	0.1%	$86,159	77.2%
Construction	714	5.2%	$66,599	27.8%	1,016	2.8%	$60,295	24.0%
Manufacturing (Incl. forest products)	2,065	15.1%	$67,358	29.2%	5,553	15.4%	$61,621	26.7%
Services Related	8,404	61.5%	$46,015	-11.7%	23,915	66.3%	$43,095	-11.4%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	2,400	17.6%	$68,422	31.3%	6,387	17.7%	$44,028	-9.5%
Information	33	0.2%	$54,537	4.6%	393	1.1%	$55,646	14.4%
Financial Activities	430	3.1%	$59,642	14.4%	973	2.7%	$73,609	51.3%
Professional and Business Services	459	3.4%	$48,449	-7.1%	1,691	4.7%	$58,456	20.2%
Education and Health Services	1,832	13.4%	$42,887	-17.7%	4,644	12.9%	$55,949	15.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,845	20.8%	$28,230	-45.8%	9,019	25.0%	$29,822	-38.7%
Other Services	404	3.0%	$34,286	-34.2%	798	2.2%	$35,207	-27.6%
Unclassified	1	0.0%	$83,936	61.0%	10	0.0%	$18,513	-61.9%
Government	2,276	16.6%	$55,954	7.3%	4,831	13.4%	$57,880	19.0%
Federal Government	255	1.9%	$88,472	69.7%	240	0.7%	$82,990	70.6%
State Government	172	1.3%	$65,055	24.8%	790	2.2%	$64,353	32.3%
Local Government	1,849	13.5%	$50,623	-2.9%	3,801	10.5%	$54,949	13.0%

Figure 4-2.8: Erie County Local Job Sectors and Average Wage[13]

Unemployment: Erie County has an unemployment rate of 4.4%, for 17th highest county in the state according to the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services annual average. Ottawa County has an unemployment rate of 4.8%, the 6th highest in the state. [14] Unemployment rates were severely impacted during and immediately after the COVID pandemic beginning in 2020. The region's tourism sectors were heavily impacted by nationwide lockdowns and resulted in higher than average unemployment rates for not only the planning area, but all of Ohio as well. In standard years, the counties see unemployment rates vary between the slower winter seasons and busier tourist seasons during the summer months, and have largely began to return to pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, unreliable transportation can be a huge barrier to employment. For example, historically, low-income residents across the country live near urban centers, while the majority of the jobs they qualify for are in the suburbs. Public transit is often designed to take suburban residents from a central point outside the city into various areas within the city- but more often than not, city residents aren't able to take public transit to jobs in the suburbs.[15] Erie County is fortunate to have the Sandusky Transit System, which may be assisting with keeping the unemployment rate low since it covers the entirety of the county.

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[13] ACS Wages and Employment ACS Five Year, 2018
[14] https://ohiolmi.com/Home/Lausbycounty?page85851=1&size85851=48&sort85851=Rate&sortdir85851=desc accessed 5/2020
[15] http://www.vehiclesforchange.org/unemployment-problem-complicated-by-public-transit/ accessed 5/2020

Year	Erie County	Ottawa County
As of 4/2025	6.3% (11th in state)	7.4% (1st in state)
2024	4.8% (30th)	6.0% (6th)
2023	4.4% (17th)	4.8% (6th)
2022	4.9% (16th)	5.2% (7th)

Figure 4-2.9: Unemployment Rates[16]

Income: According to the ACS 2022 the median household income in Erie County was $65,171, while Ottawa County was $69,515. Additionally, 37% of households in Erie County and 41% of households in Ottawa County received Social Security. The average income from Social Security across both counties was $22,255. 73% of households received labor earnings as listed in **Figure 4-1.9** across both counties. These income sources are not mutually exclusive; that is, some households received income from more than one source. With the relationship to transportation, something to consider is that transportation is the second-largest expense for most households after housing. Living closer to a workplace allows for greater disposable income which can improve the quality of life. In places with fewer transportation choices, savings on housing costs can be more than offset by increased transportation expenses. When applying this concept to transportation and land use planning more compact development could be explored. Compact, connected communities also allow residents to use less energy and spend less money to get around by making fewer or shorter car trips, or using other less expensive modes of transportation like bicycling, walking, or transit.[17] As reported in 2024, Ohio households spend $13,781 per year on transportation costs, or approximately 27% of income. This is higher than the national average (22%).

Household Earnings

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
Total households, 2022*	32,103	17,995
Labor earnings	23,953	12,570
Social Security (SS)	11,885	7,400
Retirement income	9,796	6,171
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	1,624	˙632
Cash public assistance income	˙1,149	˙276
SNAP (previously Food Stamps)	3,716	1,182
Percent of Total^		
Labor earnings	74.6%	69.9%
Social Security (SS)	37.0%	41.1%
Retirement income	30.5%	34.3%
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	˙5.1%	˙3.5%
Cash public assistance income	˙3.6%	˙1.5%
SNAP (previously Food Stamps)	11.6%	6.6%

^ Total may add to more than 100% due to households receiving more than 1 source of income.

Figure 4-2.10: Household Earnings[18]
(orange denotes a possible inaccurate estimate)

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[16] https://ohiolmi.com/Home/RateMapArchive accessed 5/2020
[17] http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/fact_sheets/transandhousing.pdf accessed 5/2020
[18] Headwater Economics, 5/2020

Low-Income Populations: Low-income populations are defined as a person whose household income is at or below the US Department of Health and Human Services poverty guidelines. The guidelines for 2024 are $15,060 for an individual; $20,440 for a 2 person household; $25,820 for a 3 person household; and continues to $52,720 for an eight person household. More information can be found at: aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines
The highest concentration of those in poverty in the MPO area are located in in the City of Sandusky (**see Figure 4-1.11**).

No Vehicle Households: For some, not owning a vehicle represents a lifestyle choice. Such individuals may live in locations where car ownership is particularly expensive or impractical, and there are plentiful transportation alternatives for accessing jobs and meeting other household needs. Census data has shown that the majority of these zero-vehicle households face economic constraints to automobile ownership. Not only are cars themselves expensive, but households with lower incomes may also face higher costs for financing a car. Used cars offer a cheaper sticker price but tend to incur higher annual operating costs. Not owning a car may impart further economic disadvantage as well, as workers with cars work more hours per week than those without cars, enabling them to earn higher incomes.[19] Within the planning area, 3.9% of households do not have a vehicle available. This percentage is lower than the State of Ohio's rate of no vehicle households at 7.4%. The majority of households who do not have a vehicle available are located within the City of Sandusky, near the urban core or housing for seasonal employment at Cedar Point. (**see Figure 4-1.12**)

Minority Population: According to the 2022 ACS, 13% of the total population in the MPO area consists of minorities. The largest group is identified as black, or African American at 7%. The majority of minorities are located within the City of Sandusky. Annually, a demographics analysis examines this area for any possible negative environmental impacts when undergoing any transportation projects, and includes seeking out and considering the needs of low-income and minority households per 23 CFR 450.316 (**see Figure 4-1.13).**

Elderly Populations: The elderly population is defined as individuals aged 65 years and older. According to the 2022 ACS, the 65 and overpopulation consist of 24% of the population (**see Figure 4-1.14**) The majority of those aged 65 or over are located on Kelleys Island, Huron Township, and the Cedar Point peninsula on the eastern edge of the City of Sandusky.

Disabled Population: The US Census defines a disability as a long-lasting physical, mental or emotional condition. This condition can make it difficult for a person to do activities such as walking, climbing stairs, dressing, bathing, learning, or remembering. This condition can also impede a person from being able to go outside the home alone or to work at a job or business. There is a concentration of disabled populations within the Cities of Sandusky and Vermilion (**see Figure 4-1.15**). Across the planning area, approximately 15,499 people have disabilities, or 15% of the population.[20] Of those who are disabled, 50% of respondents reported ambulatory difficulties; 38% reported cognitive difficulties; and 34% noted disability related to independent living difficulty.

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[19] https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0818_transportation_tomer.pdf accessed 5/2020
[20] ACS Five Year Disability Characteristics, 2018

Limited English Speaking Ability: Within Erie County, 2,278 people, or 3.2% reported speaking another language other than English.[21] In Ottawa County, 1,132 people, or 2.9% speak another language other than English. A person with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) is one who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. ERPC strives to reach out to all sectors of the population including those who cannot speak English very well. It is noted the eastern side of the City of Sandusky, Perkins Township, and Portage Township have a higher concentration of populations with limited English speaking ability (**see Figure 4-1.16**). This may be attributed to the various tourism-related industries located in these areas that frequently employ J1 students and workers from abroad. Depending on the time of year there are many different populations (Filipinos, Jamaicans, Ukrainians, Argentina, Peruvians, etc.) from all over the world that temporarily call the region home during the tourist season. The majority of the housing units established for these visitors are located within these areas.

- 461, or 50% of people that reported English as their second language felt that they spoke English "less than well"

- 1,268 people reported speaking Spanish as their primary language. 36% of those speakers reported speaking English "less than well"

- 908 reported speaking an Other Indo-European derived language as their primary language. 22% of those speakers felt they spoke English "less than well"

- 522 reported speaking Asian and Pacific Islander derived language as their primary language. 39% of these speakers reported speaking English "less than well".[22]

Demographics Analysis: Annually, ERPC staff conducts a demographics analysis of the projects occurring within the planning region, including identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse effects of the agency's programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations to achieve an equitable distribution of benefits and burdens. ERPC intends to not adversely affect any specific population of our community. To assure this, all the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects that the MPO helps fund are evaluated. The identification of targeted population areas was completed by assessing averages for poverty (11.5%), minority (13.2%), 65 years and older (24.0%), disability status (15.6%), limited English proficiency (3.1%) and zero vehicle household (3.9%) levels in the county based on regional averages. Demographic information was compiled from the 2022 Five Year American Community Survey data. To calculate poverty levels with the available data, demographic data on a census tract level was utilized. The data was reviewed to identify areas where the targeted populations were double the regional average. These target areas have been mapped along with capacity expansion projects, maintenance projects, and transportation enhancement projects to aid in the impact analysis. Subjective analysis for each project includes completing an environmental justice analysis matrix considering potential impacts that a project could have on an identified environmental justice area.

To analyze impacts for the projects in the ERPC MPO region, staff reviewed the projects using the long-range travel demand model for the Sandusky-Port Clinton Urbanized Area that was developed by the
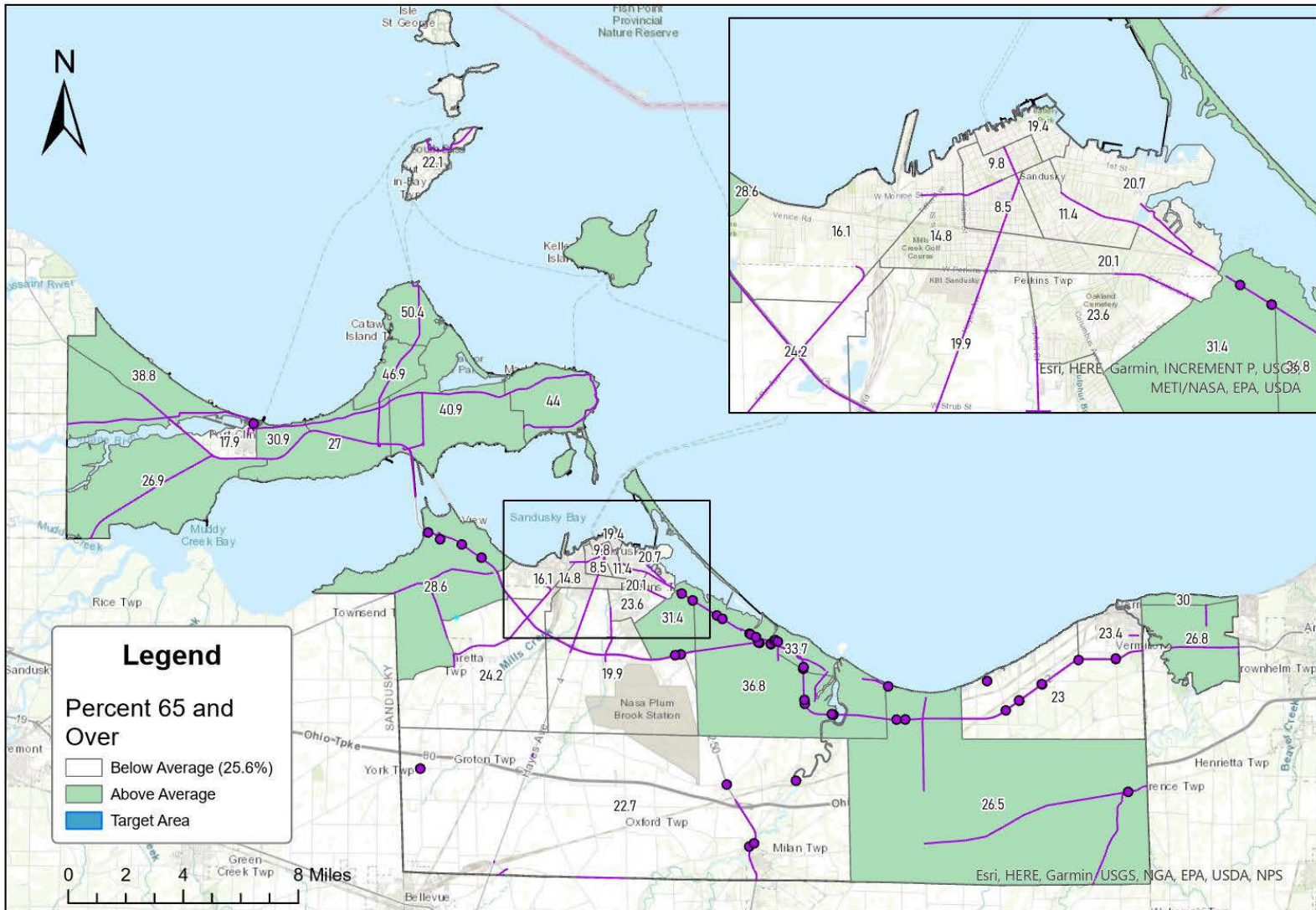
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[21] ACS Five Year Language Spoken At Home, 2018
[22] ACS Five Year Language Spoken At Home, 2018

Modeling and Forecasting Section of ODOT's Office of Statewide Planning and Research. The model aided in quantitatively evaluating the effectiveness of the projects and their impact potential to the targeted populations. The MPO region was divided into over 400 traffic analysis zones (TAZs) based on the review of census data, residential patterns, employment, education, recreational locations, and travel characteristics. Travel times were used to analyze the results of project implementation to assess accessibility to the generator zones for both targeted and non-targeted populations. Travel times to identified destinations for eleven traffic analysis zones where poverty, minority, 65 years and older, limited English proficiency, disability, and households with no vehicles available were two times above the county averages were compared against five TAZs within the county averages. Results show an average decrease in travel times (-0.3 minute) for target zones as compared to average travel times for those non-high rate zones. Programmed projects improved travel times for those identified target areas and did not negatively affect the target groups. The total average travel time difference for identified higher rate TAZs and non-identified TAZ areas show an overall decrease of 18 seconds. 82% of projects in the TIP for FY 2024-2027 for the ERPC MPO region can be considered system preservation projects while the other 18% are all projects that include sidewalk installations. Preservation type projects include resurfacing, culvert replacement, signal projects, and overall general maintenance of the transportation system. These types of projects have little or no adverse impact on the population. The factors listed above were considered upon review of the projects to measure the impact upon the targeted areas:

- Bodily impairment, infirmity, illness or death

- Air, noise, and water pollution and soil contamination

- Destruction or disruption of man-made or natural resources

- Destruction or diminution of aesthetic values

- Destruction or disruption of community cohesion

- Destruction or disruption of a community's economic vitality

- Destruction or disruption of the availability of public and private facilities and services

- Vibration

- Adverse employment effects

- Displacement of persons, businesses, farms or nonprofit organizations

- Increased traffic congestion

- Isolation

- Exclusion or separation of minority or low-income individuals within a given community or from the broader community

- The denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of, benefits of DOT programs, policies, or activities.

In summary, the MPO is dedicated to identifying any adverse or negative impacts on a population as a result of a project and will consider possible alternatives should a disproportionately high and/or adverse human health or environmental effect be of concern.

Target Area: Population 65 and Over
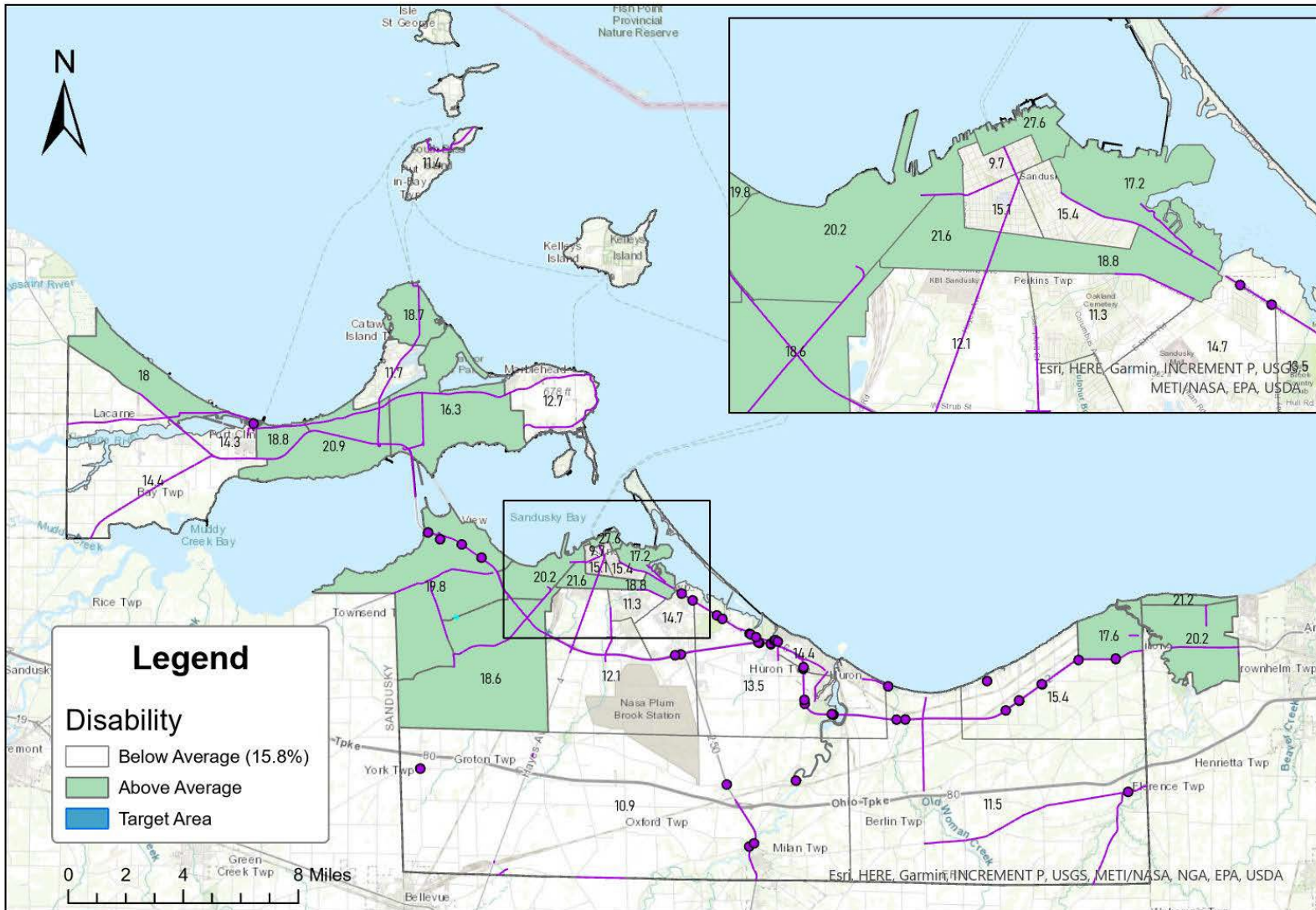
ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Legend

Disability

- ☐ Below Average (15.8%)
- ☐ Above Average
- ☐ Target Area

Target Area: Individuals with Disabilities

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Legend

Limited English
Proficiency
Households

☐ Below Average (0.6%)
🟩 Above Average
🟦 Target Area

0 2 4   8 Miles

Created By:
Erie Regional Planning Commission
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Source: 2023 US Census Bureau 5-Year ACS, ODOT TIMS
December, 2024

Target Area: LEP - Housholds
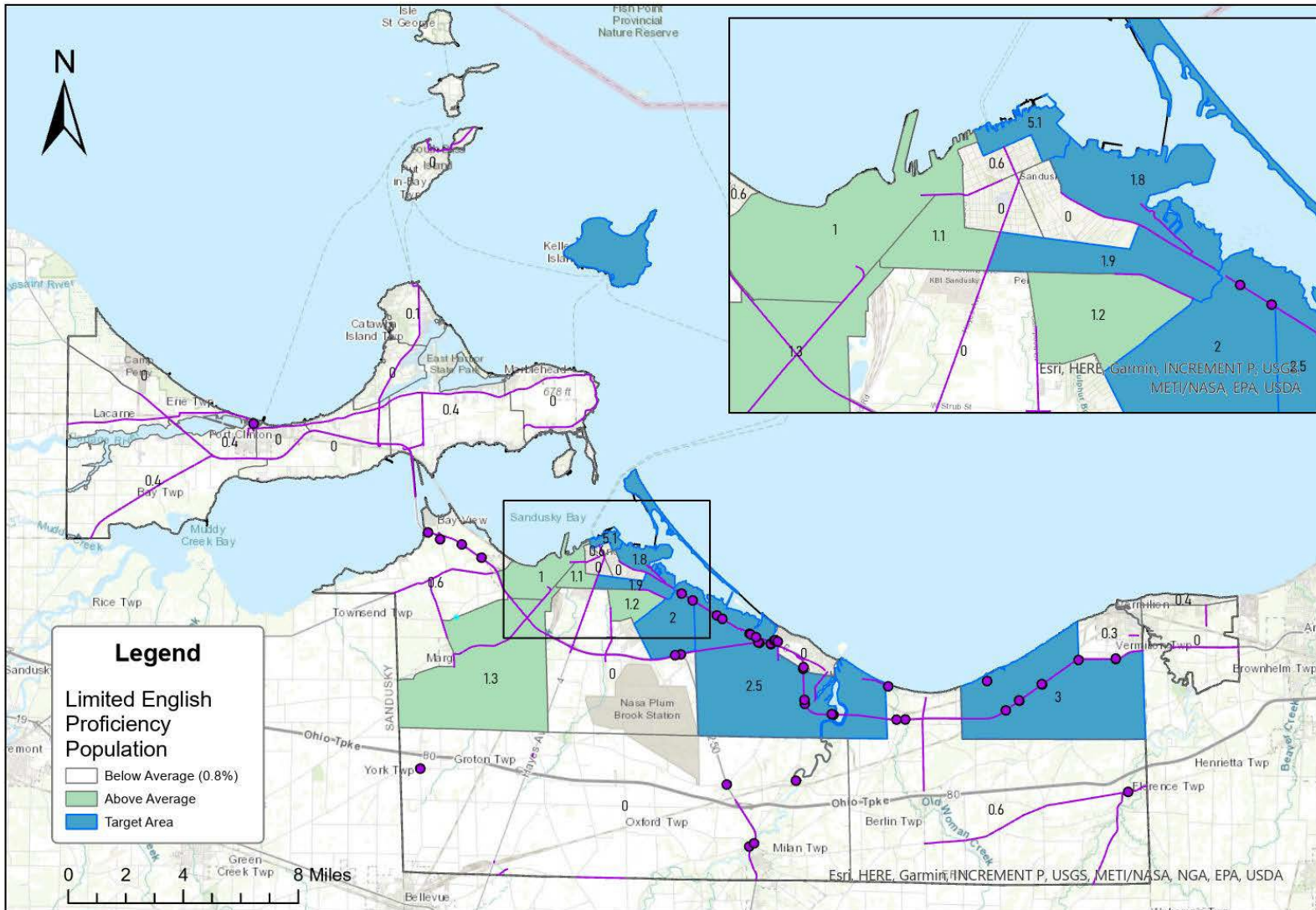
ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Legend

Limited English
Proficiency
Population

☐ Below Average (0.8%)
☐ Above Average
☐ Target Area

0   2   4   8 Miles

Created By:
Erie Regional Planning Commission
Metropolitan Planning Organization
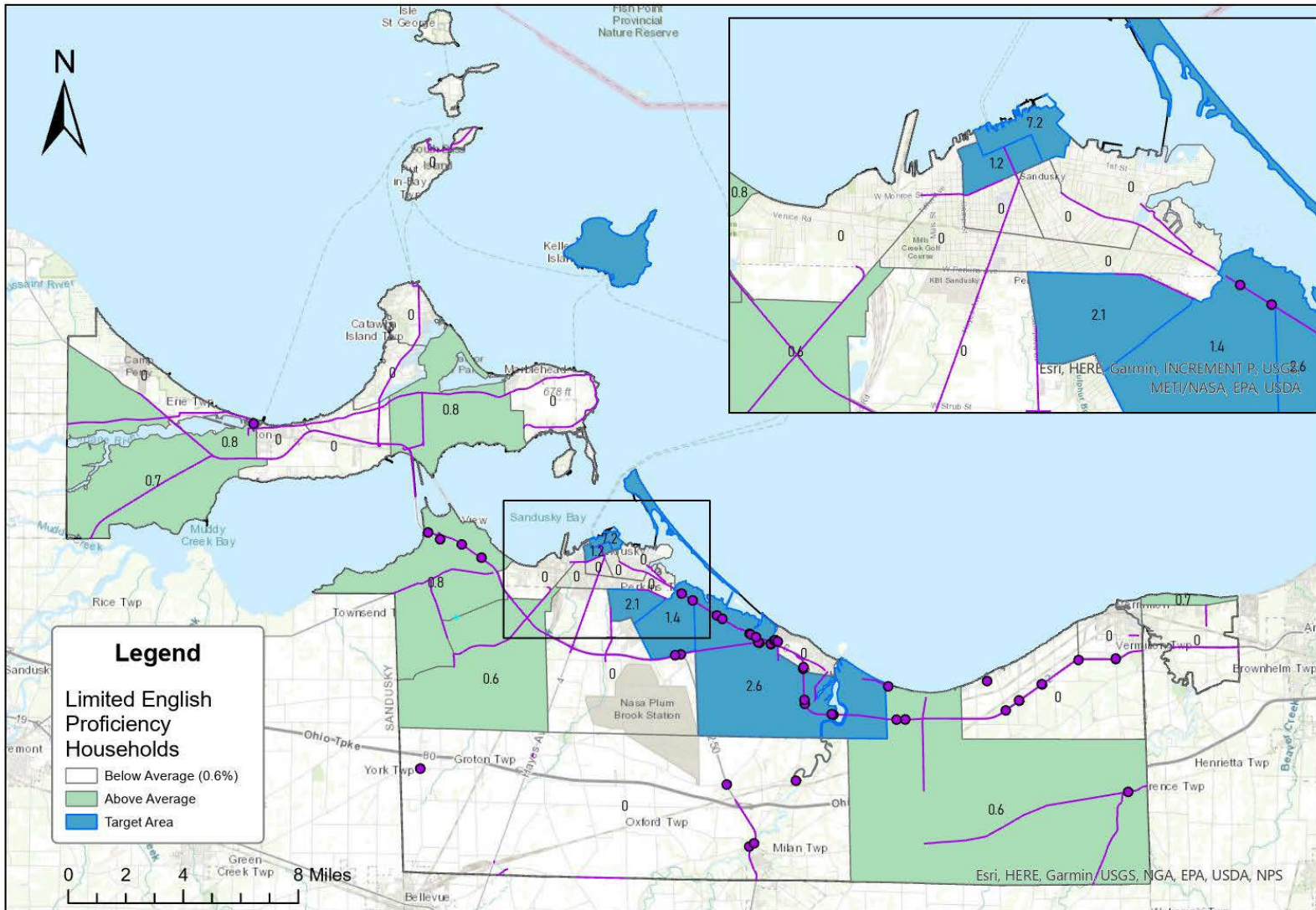Source: 2023 US Census Bureau 5-Year ACS, ODOT TIMS
December, 2024

Target Area: LEP - Population
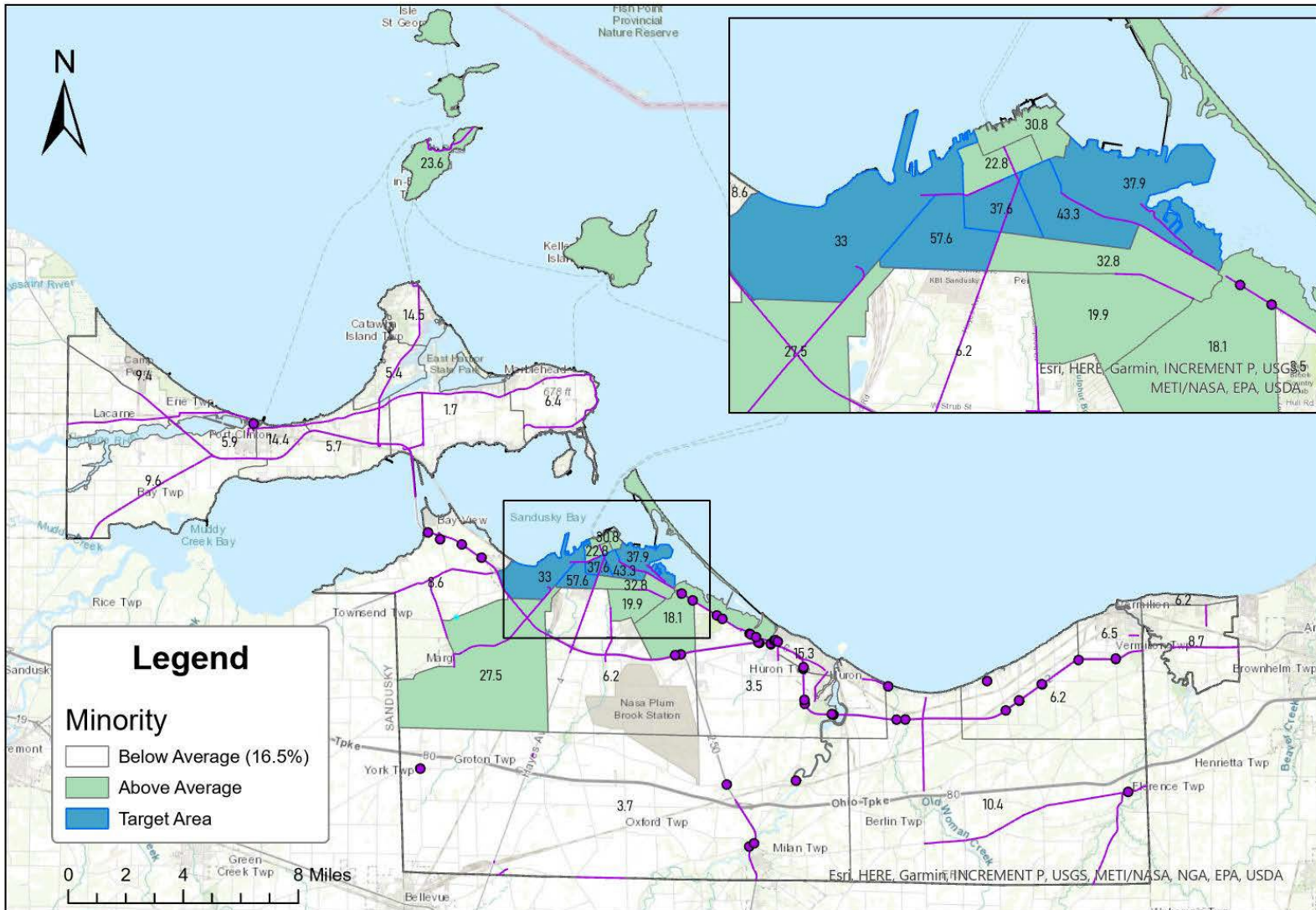
ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Target Area: Minority Populations
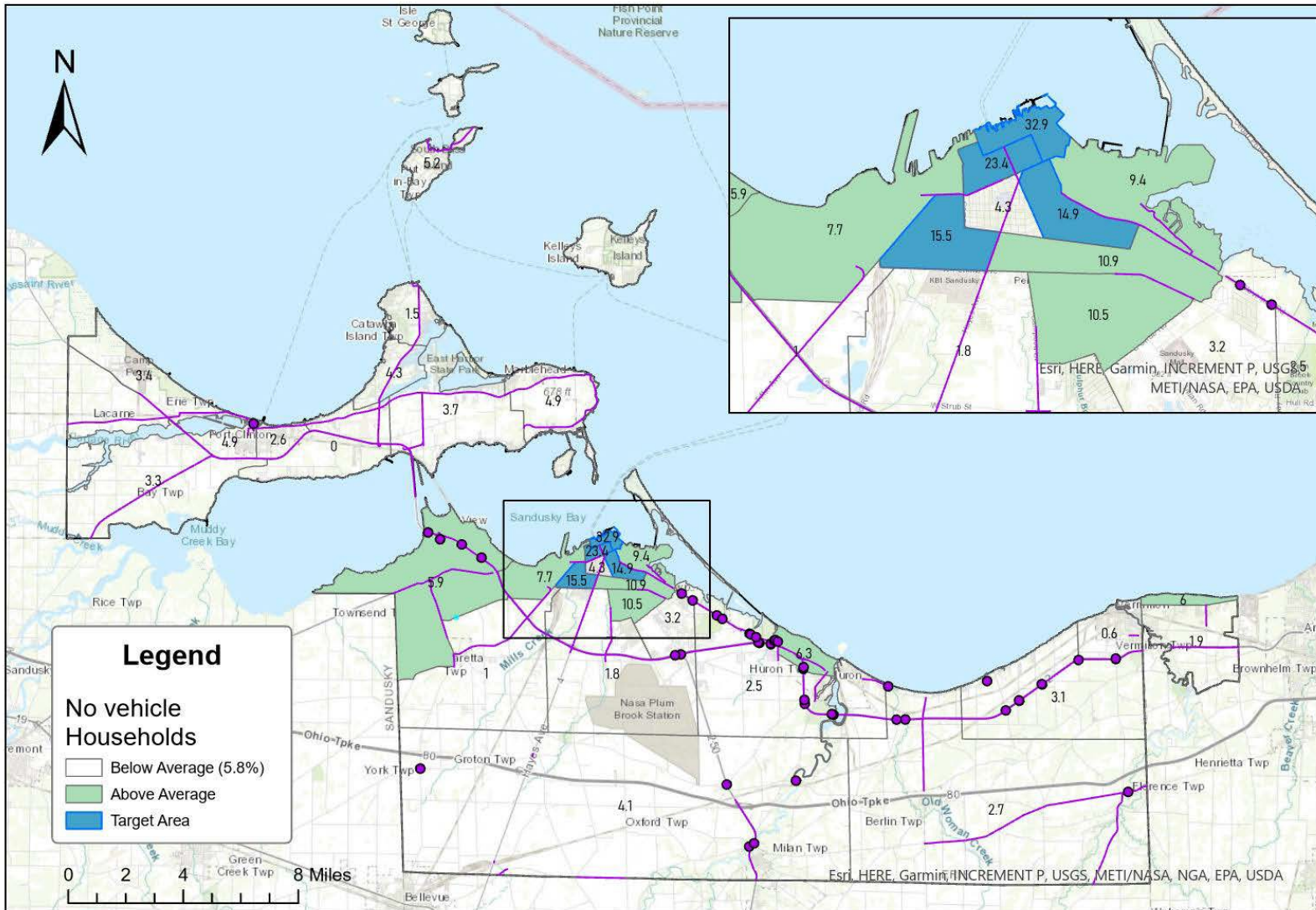
ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Legend

No vehicle Households

- ⬜ Below Average (5.8%)
- 🟩 Above Average
- 🟦 Target Area

0 2 4   8 Miles

Target Area: No Vehicle Households

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan
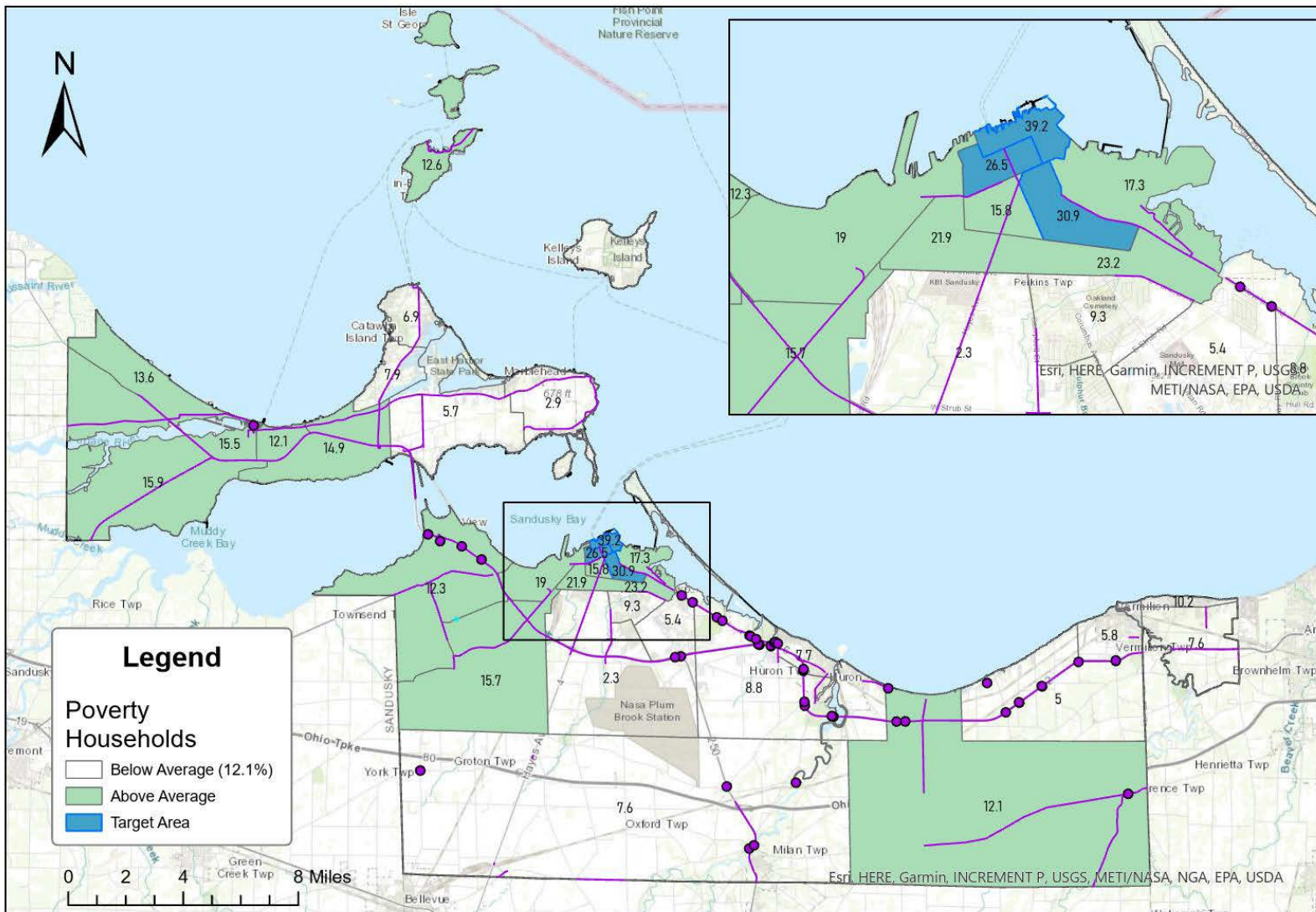
Target Area: Poverty Households

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Legend

Poverty Population

- [ ] Below Average (11.7%)
- Above Average
- Target Area

Target Area: Poverty Population

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan
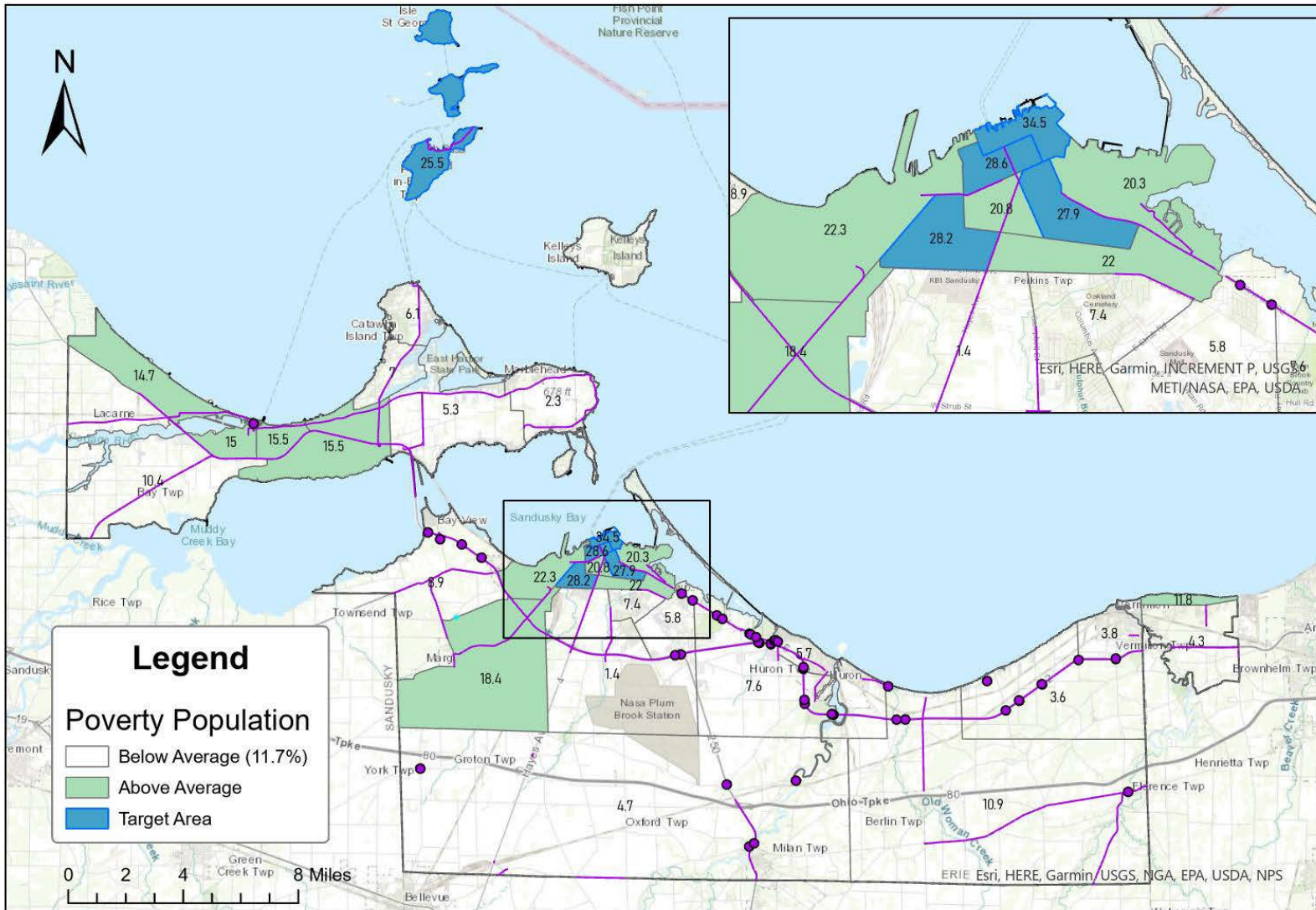
4.3 Economic Conditions

	Millions in Current Dollars		
	Erie	Ottawa	Ohio
2011	4,987	1,792	541,315
2012	5,216	1,921	548,291
2013	5,457	1,950	577,890
2014	5,529	1,872	606,729
2015	4,953	2,042	616,279
2016	5,002	1,992	631,606
2017	5,018	2,101	648,574
2018	5,089	2,114	676,721
2019	4,601	2,221	702,055
2020	4,133	2,137	697,868
2021	4,593	2,394	759,626
2022	5,310	2,483	825,990
2023	5,627	2,723	884,834

Figure 4-3.2: Gross Domestic Product, All Industry Sectors[23]

Tourism: Erie and Ottawa County's location on the southern shores of Lake Erie makes it an attractive destination for both tourists and residents. Lake Erie Shores and Islands is the visitor's bureau in the area and consists of data from multi-communities including Berlin Heights, Castalia, Elmore, Genoa, Huron, Kelley's Island, Marblehead, Middle Bass, Milan, Oak Harbor, Port Clinton/Catawba, Put-In-Bay, Sandusky and Vermilion which collaboratively make up the Lake Erie Shores and Islands. Annually, more than 11 million trips are made to Lake Erie Shores and Islands.[24] In addition, one-third of the total tourism sales in Northwest Ohio ($8.3 billion in 22 counties) are generated in the Lake Erie Shores and Islands region's two counties, Erie and Ottawa.[25]

The region is home to many attractions and recreational opportunities from the city offerings to lakes and rivers. The Lake Erie Islands, via boat, plane or ferry, offer a variety of attractions, including state parks, boutique shops and nightlife, and historic sites such as Perry's Monument on Put-In-Bay and Glacier Grooves on Kelly's Island. Lake Erie's coastline and the park facilities offer natural areas and historic resources for tourists and residents to enjoy. Lake Erie is known for its excellent walleye fishing, and has seen consistent growth in out of state anglers and an increase in licensed carter boat captains. Cedar Point is a premiere amusement park, featuring 17 roller coasters and consistently one of the most visited parks in North America. Kalahari Resort in Sandusky is home to Ohio's largest indoor water park. The 174,000 square foot Kalahari Resort includes a 215,000 square feet convention space as well as 890 rooms. Other attractions in the area include the Great Wolf Lodge, Castaway Bay, Merry-Go-Round Museum, Marblehead Lighthouse, and Sawmill Creek Resort.

SportsForce Park was completed in 2017 and continues to grow. In 2020, the Cedar Point Indoor Sports Complex opened, and features ten full-size basketball courts, which can convert to 20 full-size volleyball courts, a championship arena with retractable seating, sports medicine facility, fitness area, and family activities center, and as of 2023, an E-Sports center that features tournaments and summer camps.[26]

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[23] Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Department of Commerce, 6/2024
[24] State of Tourism, 2018 LESI
[25] Economic Impact of Tourism research, 2017
[26] https://www.shoresandislands.com/download/travel-guide accessed 5/2020

Tourists destined for Erie County primarily arrive by automobile as indicated by a survey conducted by Lake Erie Shores and Islands. Other available modes of transportation include rail service to Sandusky provided by Amtrak and bus service provided by Greyhound. According to the Lake Erie Shores and Islands, the top five reasons for visiting Erie County were: the Lake Erie Islands, beaches, lighthouses, historic sites, and Cedar Point. The survey stated that the majority of tourists are between the ages of 35 to 54.[27]

Economic Impact of Tourism in Erie County: Tourism is an integral and driving component for the Erie County economy. There is a diverse composite of economic activities, including transportation, recreation, retail, lodging, and the food and beverage sectors. LESI reported that in 2021 tourists support over 14,008employees creating $394 million in wages and generates over $353 million in state and local taxes. Tourism is an integral and driving component of the both counties economies. Tourism-generated local taxes save Erie County households $4,749 and Ottawa County households $1,629 on average annually.. [28] Historically, manufacturing was a major employer in the area. In the 1980s the Services sector started to dominate the economy (**see Figure 4-2.2**). Currently, the travel and tourism make up 27% of local employment with accommodations and food consisting of almost 15% (**see Figure 4-2.1**).

Travel & Tourism Sectors

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
Total Employment, 2022	36,050	13,671
Travel & Tourism Related	~10,278	~3,205
Retail Trade	1,198	~337
Gasoline Stations	482	171
Clothing & Accessory Stores	226	~39
Misc. Store Retailers	490	127
Passenger Transportation	~3	~7
Air Transportation	0	~2
Scenic & Sightseeing Transport	~3	5
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	3,776	~677
Performing Arts & Spectator Sports	88	~8
Museums, Parks, & Historic Sites	80	~89
Amusement, Gambling, & Rec.	3,608	580
Accommodation & Food	5,301	2,184
Accommodation	1,623	333
Food Services & Drinking Places	3,678	1,851
Non-Travel & Tourism	25,772	10,466

Percent of Total

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
Travel & Tourism Related	~28.5%	~23.4%
Retail Trade	3.3%	~2.5%
Gasoline Stations	1.3%	1.3%
Clothing & Accessory Stores	0.6%	~0.3%
Misc. Store Retailers	1.4%	0.9%
Passenger Transportation	~0.0%	~0.1%
Air Transportation	0.0%	~0.0%
Scenic & Sightseeing Transport	~0.0%	0.0%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	10.5%	~5.0%
Performing Arts & Spectator Sports	0.2%	~0.1%
Museums, Parks, & Historic Sites	0.2%	~0.7%
Amusement, Gambling, & Rec.	10.0%	4.2%
Accommodation & Food	14.7%	16.0%
Accommodation	4.5%	2.4%
Food Services & Drinking Places	10.2%	13.5%
Non-Travel & Tourism	71.5%	76.6%

The major industry categories (retail trade; passenger transportation; arts, entertainment, and recreation; and accommodation and food) in the table above are the sum of the sub-categories underneath them and as shown here do not represent NAICS codes. These data are from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages which does not include the self-employed. Estimates for data that were not disclosed are indicated with tildes (~).

Figure 4-3.1: Employment[29]

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[27] LESI, 2013 Visitor Survey
[28] State of Tourism, 2018 LESI
[29] Headwater Economics , 5/2020

Change in Erie/Ottawa County Employment: 2001-2024

Description	2001 Jobs - Erie County	2024 Jobs - Erie County	2001 Jobs - Ottawa County	2024 Jobs - Ottawa County	2021 Total Jobs	2024 Total Jobs	2001-2024 % Change
Manufacturing	9,157	5,302	2,837	2,195	11,994	7,497	-37%
Government	5,939	5,155	2,461	2,466	8,400	7,621	-9%
Retail Trade	4,939	5,080	2,297	1,656	7,236	6,736	-7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,579	4,653	1,297	1,699	5,876	6,352	8%
Accommodation and Food Services	4,476	5,487	2,030	2,336	6,506	7,823	20%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,922	4,157	632	780	3,554	4,937	39%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	2,436	1,447	1,095	862	3,531	2,309	-35%
Construction	1,786	1,396	830	994	2,616	2,390	-9%
Wholesale Trade	1,439	1,082	239	193	1,678	1,275	-24%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	981	878	365	365	1,346	1,243	-8%
Transportation and Warehousing	893	847	633	524	1,526	1,371	-10%
Finance and Insurance	775	851	392	337	1,167	1,188	2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	702	824	271	307	973	1,131	16%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	564	1,268	455	190	1,019	1,458	43%
Information	542	339	145	50	687	389	-43%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	414	400	244	218	658	618	-6%
Educational Services	337	333	85	141	422	474	12%
Utilities	209	80	869	581	1,078	661	-39%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	165	85	116	108	281	193	-31%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	35	272	46	21	81	293	264%
Unclassified Industry	16	<10	<10	<10	16	<10	Insf. Data
Total	43,305	39,946	39,946	39,946	83,251	79,892	-4%

Figure 4-3.3: Changes in Employment: 2001-2024[30]

Change in Erie/Ottawa County Employment: 2024-2034

Description	2024 Jobs - Erie County	2034 Jobs - Erie County	2024 Jobs - Ottawa County	2034 Jobs - Ottawa County	2024 Total Jobs	2034 Total Jobs	2024-2034 % Change
Accommodation and Food Services	5,487	5,233	2,336	2,348	7,822	7,581	-3.1%
Manufacturing	5,302	4,818	2,195	2,314	7,497	7,132	-4.9%
Government	5,155	4,998	2,466	2,511	7,621	7,508	-1.5%
Retail Trade	5,080	5,229	1,656	1,702	6,735	6,931	2.9%
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,653	4,525	1,699	1,758	6,352	6,283	-1.1%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	4,157	4,384	780	821	4,938	5,206	5.4%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	1,447	1,431	862	958	2,308	2,388	3.5%
Construction	1,396	1,318	994	1,050	2,390	2,368	-0.9%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,268	1,478	190	136	1,458	1,615	10.8%
Wholesale Trade	1,082	1,061	193	184	1,275	1,244	-2.4%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management	878	730	365	381	1,244	1,111	-10.7%
Finance and Insurance	851	984	337	351	1,187	1,335	12.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	847	820	524	511	1,371	1,331	-2.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	824	874	307	319	1,132	1,193	5.5%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	400	413	218	217	618	630	2.0%
Information	339	363	50	69	389	432	11.1%
Educational Services	333	311	141	212	474	523	10.2%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	272	307	21	24	293	331	13.0%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	85	88	108	109	193	197	2.0%
Utilities	80	79	581	574	661	653	-1.1%
Unclassified Industry	<10	17	<10	<10	<10	17	Insf. Data
Totals	39937	39460	16021	16550	55958	56009	0.1%

Figure 4-3.3: Changes in Employment: 2024-2034[31]

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Legend

Land Cover

Open Water · Developed Open Space · Developed Low Intensity · Developed Medium Intensity · Developed High Intensity · Barren Land · Deciduous Forest · Evergreen Forest · Mixed Forest · Scrub/Scrub · Grassland/Herbaceous · Pasture/Hay · Cultivated Crops · Woody Wetlands · Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands

Map prepared by Erie Regional Planning Commission, and is intended for illustrative purposes only. Erie County, Ohio assumes no responsibility or liabilities for any errors or omissions contained here in.

Figure 4-3.3 Existing Land Cover
ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

USA NLCD Land Cover

- Open Water
- Perennial Snow/Ice
- Developed Open Space
- Developed Low Intensity
- Developed Medium Intensity
- Developed High Intensity
- Barren Land
- Deciduous Forest
- Evergreen Forest
- Mixed Forest
- Dwarf Scrub
- Shrub/Scrub
- Grassland/Herbaceous
- Sedge/Herbaceous
- Lichens
- Moss
- Pasture/Hay
- Cultivated Crops
- Woody Wetlands
- Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands

0 1 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Map prepared by Erie Regional Planning Commission, and is intended for illustrative purposes only. Erie County, Ohio assumes no responsibility or liabilities for any errors or omissions contained here in.

Figure 4-3.3 Existing Land Cover

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Land Use, Ownership, and Agriculture: The majority of the planning area consists of privately held land (95%) with the state owning a small portion (approximately 2.4%) (**see Figures 4-3.5**). The majority of the land is made up of mixed cropland (57%) and urban areas (17%). (4%) (**see Figure 4-3.7**). The region has seen a consistent growth un urban, suburban and exurban residential development acres since 2000.[32] Farming is prevalent in the region with oilseed and grain being the most common crops followed by aquaculture and numerous fruit farmers (**see Figures 4-3.8 and .9**).

Land Ownership

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
Total Acres*	160,559	160,503
Private Lands	154,106	151,984
Conservation Easement	959	1,290
Federal Lands	0	4,618
Forest Service	0	0
BLM	0	0
National Park Service	0	23
USFWS	0	4,028
Military	0	567
Other Federal	0	0
State Lands	3,993	3,632
State Trust Lands*	0	0
Other State	3,993	3,632
Tribal Lands	0	0
City, County, Other	2,460	269

Percent of Total

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
Private Lands	96.0%	94.7%
Conservation Easement	0.6%	0.8%
Federal Lands	0.0%	2.9%
Forest Service	0.0%	0.0%
BLM	0.0%	0.0%
National Park Service	0.0%	0.0%
USFWS	0.0%	2.5%
Military	0.0%	0.4%
Other Federal	0.0%	0.0%
State Lands	2.5%	2.3%
State Trust Lands**	0.0%	0.0%
Other State	2.5%	2.3%
Tribal Lands	0.0%	0.0%
City, County, Other	1.5%	0.2%

* Does not include most water.

** Most state trust lands are held in trust for designated beneficiaries, principally public schools. Managers may lease and sell these lands for a diverse range of uses to generate revenues for the beneficiaries.

Figure 4-3.5: Land Types[33]

Number and Size of Farms

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
Number of Farms, 2022	317	590
Land in Farms (Acres), 2022	77,157	119,544
Average Farm Size (Acres)	243	203
Approximate Land Area (Acres)	160,954	163,112
Approximate Percent of Land Area in Farms	47.9%	73.3%

Figure 4-3.7: Farms [34]

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[32] Headwater Economics, 5/2020
[33] Headwater Economics, 5/2020

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Forest, Grassland, and Other Land Cover

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
Total Acres (2019*)	160,559	160,503
Forest	28,549	5,479
Grassland	1,731	2,539
Shrubland	188	53
Mixed Cropland	89,140	95,648
Water	4,080	8,617
Urban	29,835	24,814
Other	7,036	23,354
Percent of Total		
Forest	17.8%	3.4%
Grassland	1.1%	1.6%
Shrubland	0.1%	0.0%
Mixed Cropland	55.5%	59.6%
Water	2.5%	5.4%
Urban	18.6%	15.5%
Other	4.4%	14.6%

Figure 4-3.6: Land Types[35]

Types of Farms

	Erie County, OH	Ottawa County, OH
All Farms, 2022	317	590
Oilseed & Grain Farming	151	318
Vegetable & Melon Farming	10	7
Fruit & Nut Tree Farming	25	20
Greenhouse, Nursery, etc.	19	7
Other Crop Farming	33	171
Beef Cattle Ranch. & Farm.	15	14
Cattle Feedlots	3	3
Dairy Cattle & Milk Prod.	0	0
Hog & Pig Farming	1	0
Poultry & Egg Production	13	9
Sheep & Goat Farming	12	9
Animal Aquaculture & Other Animal Prod.	35	32
Percent of Total		
Oilseed & Grain Farming	47.6%	53.9%
Vegetable & Melon Farming	3.2%	1.2%
Fruit & Nut Tree Farming	7.9%	3.4%
Greenhouse, Nursery, etc.	6.0%	1.2%
Other Crop Farming	10.4%	29.0%
Beef Cattle Ranch. & Farm.	4.7%	2.4%
Cattle Feedlots	0.9%	0.5%
Dairy Cattle & Milk Prod.	0.0%	0.0%
Hog & Pig Farming	0.3%	0.0%
Poultry & Egg Production	4.1%	1.5%
Sheep & Goat Farming	3.8%	1.5%
Aquaculture & Other Prod.	11.0%	5.4%

Figure 4-3.8: Farms Types [36]

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[34] Headwater Economics, 5/2020
[35] Headwater Economics, 5/2020
[36] Headwater Economics, 5/2020

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Legend

Future Land Use

- Agricultural/Rural Residential
- Open Space/Park Land
- Recreation Commercial
- High Density/Recreation Commercial
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Planned Unit Development
- Public Facility/Institutional
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Mineral Aggregate/Landfill Operations
- Transportation Services
- Municipalities

0 1 2 4 6 8 10 Miles

Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, METI/NASA, NGA, EPA, USDA

Map prepared by Erie Regional Planning Commission, and is intended for illustrative purposes only. Erie County, Ohio assumes no responsibility or liabilities for any errors or omissions contained here in.

Figure 4-3.9 Future Land Use Map
ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

ERPC MPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Local Land Use: Land use descriptions from the major urban areas in the planning area are described below.

City of Huron: Major land use clusters consists of residential, commercial, industrial, and open space.

- **Residential land** use primarily **extends east and west along the coast**, **north of US 6,** and along **Main Street**.

- **Commercial** areas are located along **Cleveland Road**, including the Commercial Plaza Shopping Center located at the intersection with **Berlin Road**, and along **Rye Beach Road** from Bogart Road to Cleveland Road.

- **Industrial areas** are located west of the **central business district** in the city and the southeast portion of the city east of **River Road** and north of **Sprowl Road** extending to the lakefront. The **Sawmill Industrial park** and **Huron Corporate Park** are located west of the city on the north side and south side of the railroad tracks, respectively.

- **Major open spaces** include **the Huron Boat Basin, Nickel Plate and Lake Front Beach,** and **Fabens Park**. **Sheldon's Marsh** is located west of the city and **Old Woman's Creek National Estuarine Preserve** to the east. **Thunderbird Golf Course** is in the township adjacent the city.

- **Major approaches include Cleveland Road (US 6), SR 2, Berlin Road, SR 13,** and **Huron-Avery Road**. In addition, two railways run east-west and north-south through Huron.

- **Major activity centers** include **the waterfront** and the shops and restaurants along **Main Street** beginning at US 6 and continuing north along the Huron River.

Perkins Township: Major land use clusters of residential, commercial, and industrial development.

- Generally, the **commercial/retail** development of the township is concentrated along **Perkins Avenue** and **US 250 (Milan Road)**.

- **Commercial development areas** were identified on **Hayes Avenue and Old Railroad Road** on the west side of the township, on **Columbus Avenue** immediately **north of SR 2** and along **Perkins Avenue**.

- Central Perkins Township primarily features a large number **Institutional land uses.** The eastern half of the **Columbus Avenue** corridor is home to township and county offices, the Erie County Fairgrounds and Sandusky Cemetery, as well as the Ohio Army National Guard Recruiting Center and Ohio Veterans Home bordering **Strub Road** and **Columbus Avenue.**

- South of **Strub Road** is the **industrial** Wagner Quarry, separating the township from residential land uses on its west end and US 250 commercial corridor to the east..

- The township is largely **residential** between **Campbell Road** and **Columbus Avenue** and the far eastern portion of **Perkins Avenue**. The portion of the township **south of SR 2** is a mixture of single-family development, NASA Plumbrook, and agricultural or undeveloped lands except for US 250.

- **Major approaches/corridors** include **SR 6, SR 4, SR 2, Perkins Avenue**, and **Columbus Avenue**.

- **Entry points** are located off of **SR 2** at **US 250** and **SR 4.**

  -**US 250** is the commercial focal point of Erie County. Located between SR 2 and Perkins Avenue it is a **regional shopping center** as well as **strip commercial development**. Traffic on the US 250 Corridor includes a mix of traffic that requires the roadway to serve multiple purposes. The mix of traffic includes the following: A large influx of seasonal **tourist traffic**; local traffic from residential/retail/commercial areas; Commercial traffic from the quarry; traffic from a multitude of businesses; and pedestrian/bicycle traffic.

  -The second major access to Perkins Township is **SR 4** (Hayes Avenue) at SR 2. **Hayes Avenue** has become a health care corridor.

- **Major activity centers** are as follows:

  - Along **US 250** there is a major commercial development, and several hotels including **Great Wolf Lodge** and Water Park, **Sandusky Mall**, **Lakecrest Shopping Center**, **Park Place Center**, Outback Plaza, the **Crossings Plaza** and Meijers Center. Government facilities include the **Ohio Soldier's and Sailor's Home**, **Township Fire Station,** and recreation facilities consisting of Pelton Park. **Perkins Plaza** east of US 250 is also developed as a commercial area. **Kalahari Water Park** is located near the southeastern edge of the township.

  -**SR 4/Hayes Avenue** consists of a multitude of **commercial and health care businesses**.

  -**Campbell Street** includes government, school, and commercial facilities. **Thorworks** is located off the northern portion of Campbell Street.

  -**Perkins Avenue** east of the SR 4 has a variety of commercial businesses. The **Perkins Plaza** is located on the south side of Perkins Avenue near Columbus Avenue.

City of Port Clinton: Major land use clusters consists of residential, commercial, industrial, and open space.

• **Residential land** use primarily occurs south of the railroad tracks that bisect the city from east to west, and east along **Perry, Second and Third Street**.

• **Commercial** areas are located east along **Perry Street**, including the Port Clinton Plaza Shopping Center. The **Central Business District** is along **Madison and Jefferson Street** in the city center north of the railroad tracks. The city north of the **Portage River** is primarily marinas with commercial businesses catering to Lake Erie services.

• **Industrial areas** are located on the east end of the city along **Buckeye Boulevard.** Additional heavy manufacturing is along the south side of the Portage River on the cities west end. The **Lake Erie Business Park** is 6 miles northwest of the city and provides major manufacturing.

• The cities position along the **Portage River** and **Lake Erie** includes increased access to **Major Open Space,** including at the **Waterworks Park in Perry Street** and numerous marinas along the Portage River.

• **State Route 2 and State Route 53** bypasses the city along the south, providing major access points at the cities east and west ends. **State Route 163** runs along the coast east to west along the front of the city.

• **Major activity centers** include **the waterfront** and the shops and restaurants along **Madison Street** beginning at State Route 163.

City of Sandusky: Major land use clusters in the city consist of residential, commercial, industrial, and open space. Residential land uses to encompass the largest percentage of the city's area.

- A majority of the **residential land use** is concentrated within a mile of the **Sandusky's central business district,** on the **west side** of the city and **north of Perkins Avenue** on the eastern half.

- **Major open space** is located through the western area of the city at **Mills Creek Golf Course** and along **Sandusky Bay**. There are numerous parks located throughout the city with the largest being **Shoreline Park**, **Battery,** and **Lions Park** in addition to **the Boat Marina** and **Jackson Street Pier**.

- **Commercial development** is concentrated around three areas: the downtown **central business district;** along **US 250** starting at the overpass; and along **Perkins Avenue** from Mills Street to US 250. Additional commercial corridors are on both the east and west ends of the city on **Cleveland Road/US 6**.

- **Industrial clusters** are concentrated along the **western waterfront** and along the western portion of US 6 including **Venice Road** and along the railroad that traverses the city. There is

also an industrial park located south of Venice Road. **First Street** on the east side also has a cluster.

- **Major activity centers** include **Cedar Point Amusement park**, **waterfront,** and **central business district**, Firelands Community Hospital, **Jackson Street Pier,** and the Sandusky Plaza.

- **Major approaches** include **Cleveland Road/Venice Road (US 6), Columbus Avenue, Hayes Avenue (SR 4**), and **Milan Road (US 250)**. Two railways run east-west and north-south through Sandusky.

- **Key entry points** are located at the intersections of **Cleveland Road (US 6)** at the City Limits, **Columbus Avenue** and **Perkins Avenue**, **Fremont Avenue (US 6) and SR 2**, **Hayes Avenue (SR 4)** and **Perkins Avenue**, V**enice Road (US 6)** and **Tiffin Avenue (SR 101)** and **Tiffin Avenue (SR 10**1) at the City Limits.

City of Vermilion: Major land use clusters consist of residential, commercial, industrial, and open space.

- **Residential land use** primarily extends **east and west along the coast** and on the **western side** of the city west of the river. Future residential development has been discussed in the southeastern portion of the City and on the southwest end in Vermilion Township north of State Route 2.

- M**ajor approaches** include **US 6, SR 2,** and **SR 60**. In addition, two railways run east-west through the city.

- **Commercial** areas are primarily located along **US 6/Liberty Avenue** and **SR 60**.

- **SR 60** has developed with a **mixed-use of residential/commercial** north of SR 2 and **farmland/residential south** of SR 2**. Sailorway Campus** is also located off SR 60. A large portion of this development is located in **Vermilion Township**.

- **Industrial** areas are clustered towards the **east end of the city.** There is an industrial park located off **Sunnyside Road** on the east end of the city.

- **Open spaces** include **Sherod Park, Main Street Beach, Showse Park** located along the lakefront**, Exchange Park** and **Victory Park (located** off Main Street**), a pocket park (located** off Liberty Avenue), and **agricultural land** in the southeastern portion of the city.

## 4.4   A Glimpse Into the Year 2050

Population and Households: By the year 2050, the Ohio Department of Development projects that both Erie County and Ottawa County will see declining populations. This assumption is based on the loss of manufacturing jobs in the region, which will minimize in-migration while maximizing out-

migration to areas with job growth. The planning area currently has a large population reaching retirement age with a smaller younger population beneath it. By 2050 this difference will be even more evident. From 2010 to 2022, the median age of Erie County residents has already increased by 2.3 years to 44.8 years, and Ottawa County has seen a larger increase at 4.5 years to 49.8 years. Statewide, since 2010 the median age has increased to 39.6 years (**see Figure 4-4.1**). Ohio is projected to continue experiencing a decline in population, with a composition of residents that is shifting older, and the ERPC MPO planning area outpaces the statewide projections for aging population. Projections range for 65 and over populations between 24-26% in 2050, versus an 18% estimated population statewide,^{insert Miami citation,} with Ottawa County home to the highest percentage of people over the age of 60 in the state of Ohio. The age of both counties is in part due to large out-migration due to slowed job growth in the manufacturing sector, along with the regions prominence as a retirement destination due to desirable amenities and communities along Lake Erie. In the future, the transportation system will have many of its users coming from an older demographic and will require a different approach then what has traditionally been done in the past. (**see Figure 4-4.2**).
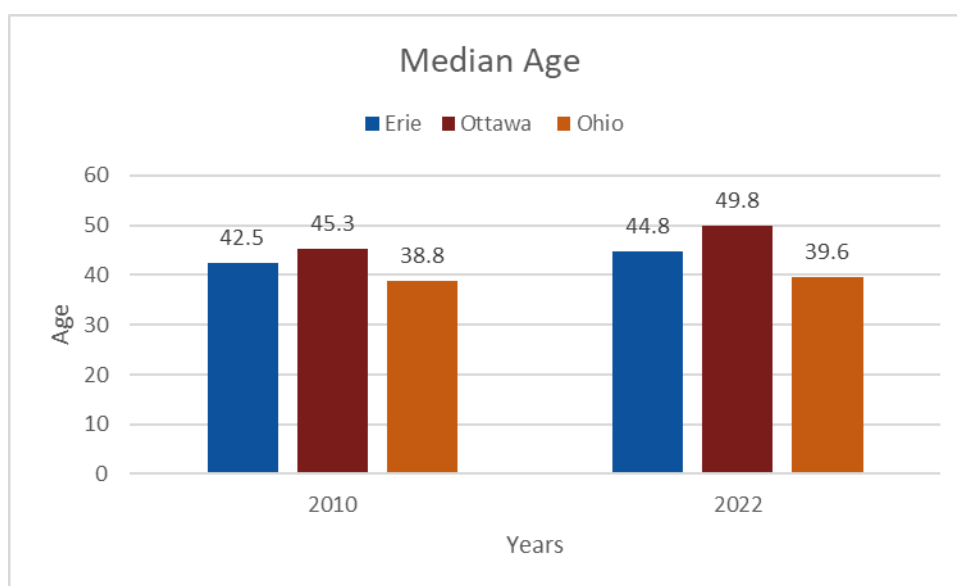
Figure 4-4.1: Median Ages[37]

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[37] Headwater Economics, 5/2020
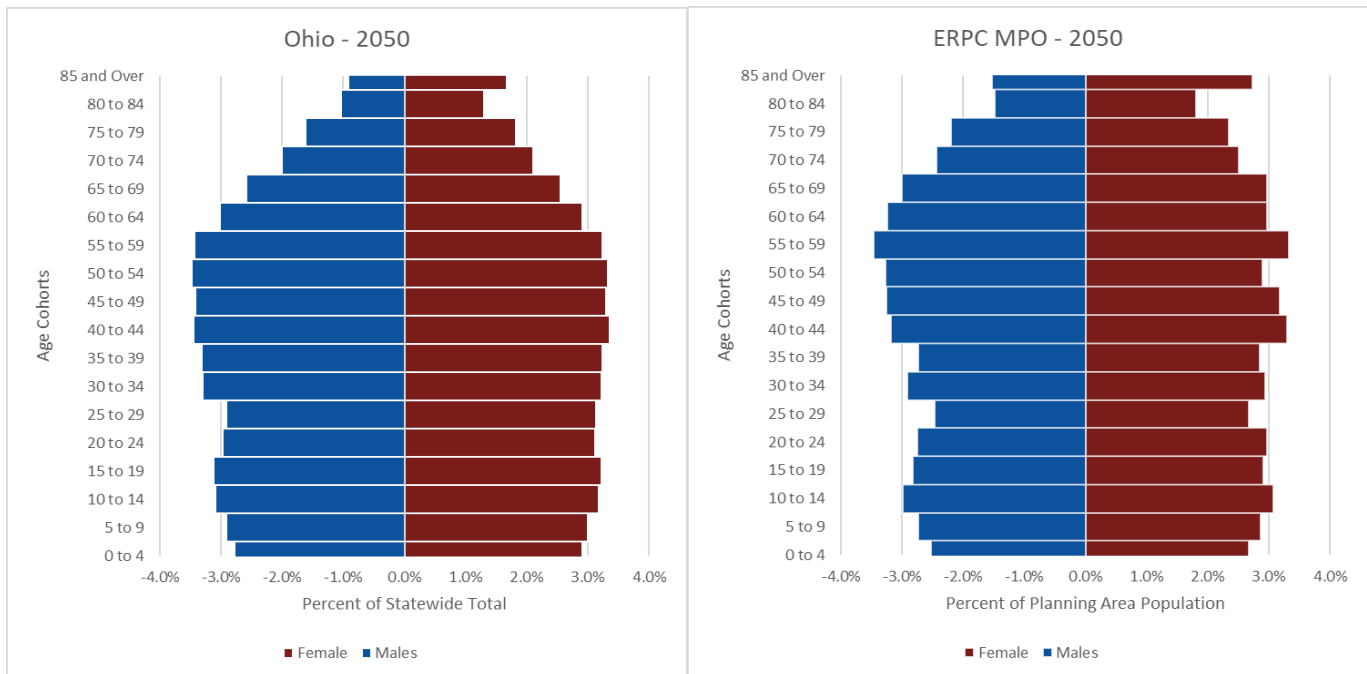
Figure 4-4.2: 2050 Population Pyramids Projection Erie County (left) and Ohio (right)

Elderly Population: While limited population growth is projected for Erie County, several different services will emerge as a result of an aging population. It is important to remember that many older adults live active lives, are safe drivers, and can use public transit. There is no universally accepted age at which people are no longer safe drivers, even though chronic conditions and disability, which occur more frequently in old age, certainly impact that skill. Accessible transportation services are critical for enabling older adults to live independently. The vast majority of older adults, nearly 90%, according to AARP – choose to age in place in their homes and communities. Successful community living requires access to medical and other essential services. While the health impact of reduced access to needed medical services is obvious (missed appointments, emergency hospital visits, lack of continual care), social isolation due to lack of transportation can also have an equally negative effect on health and mental health. Without accessible, reliable, and affordable transportation, many older adults could face the possibility of placement in a long-term care facility.[38]

Erie County is fortunate to have the **Sandusky Transit System** which provides many of the needed services for a reduced rate for applicable seniors.[39] Besides **Serving Ours Seniors**, a private, non-profit, geriatric social service agency funded through the Erie County Senior Services tax levy, volunteers and donations assist local seniors with staying healthy, obtaining food, and medicine, paying utility costs and obtaining transportation. [40] The **Ottawa County Transit Authority (OCTA)** provides curb-to-curb service on a reservation basis to help cover county transportation needs, including reduced fares for seniors in the county. Across the planning area, it is anticipated that ridership numbers, and those seeking Serving Our Seniors services, will continue to climb as the population ages. In addition, best practices in planning and design is changing versus historic patterns of development, where policies encouraging complete streets and protections for vulnerable road

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[38] https://www.nadtc.org/about/transportation-aging-disability/unique-issues-related-to-older-adults-and-transportation/ accessed 5/20
[39] http://www.ci.sandusky.oh.us/residents/sandusky_transit_system/index.php accessed 5/20
[40] http://www.servingourseniors.org/about/history/ accessed 5/20

users are increasing transportation options, improving health outcomes and lowering financial burdens that seniors can be adversely affected by.

Some options to assist seniors with staying mobile and having the ability to age in place locally include:

Sandusky Transit System's Fixed Routes: Six different routes run seven days a week in the City of Sandusky and Perkins Township.

Ottawa County Transportation Authority Dial-A-Ride: A curb-to-curb service at an agreed-upon time.

Sandusky Transit System's Dial-a-ride: A curb-to-curb service at an agreed-upon time.

Volunteer transportation programs: Through Serving Our Seniors and through GoOhio ride share[41] which is not active in the planning area, but in the adjoining counties.

Assisted transportation: A service used by older adults who need more than a ride, assisting the door to the car or an "escort" to stay with them throughout the trip.[42] The Sandusky Transit System provides paratransit services to qualified individuals for those who live near a fixed route, but cannot physically access it. Drivers also assist riders onto the bus when needed and attendants ride free.

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[41] https://gohiocommute.com/#/ accessed 5/20
[42] http://trimet.org/pdfs/publications/elderly-and-disabled-plan.pdf, 2012 accessed 5/20