



Existing Conditions

3/10/2022

The following report provides a detailed analysis on several community topics: demographics, land use, transportation, community facilities and services, housing and neighborhoods, open space and recreation, historic preservation and more. This report is a summary of the baseline conditions and trends that will inform and support recommendations for the City of Chillicothe Comprehensive Plan. This plan will be guided by a community-derived vision and set of supportive goals. The Steering Committee will work to meld the conclusions of the public process with the principal findings of this series of technical reports. For questions on this report, please contact the project manager for Choose Chillicothe, Brian Ashworth, Senior Planner with planning NEXT, at <u>brian@planning-next.com</u>.

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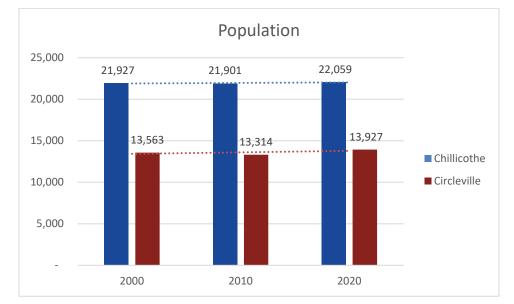
1. PEOPLE

The people section of the report will examine demographic trends within Chillicothe. For context, the analysis will compare the city to similar geographies in the region and the state of Ohio. This section focuses on the existing conditions of the people of Chillicothe. Through this analysis the population and household trends in the City can become better understood. This section also contains an overview of the demographic trends of the people of Chillicothe.

1. POPULATION

KEY FINDINGS

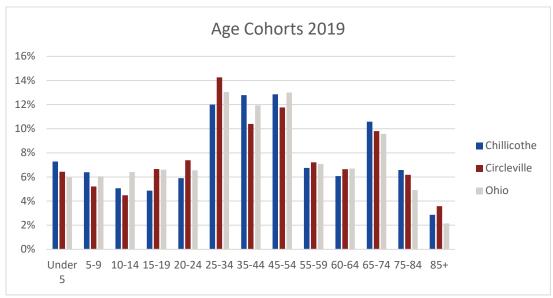
Between 2010 and 2020, Chillicothe's population experienced very slight growth. The population of Chillicothe has increased very slightly in the past 10 years but is growing slower than the State of Ohio as a whole. Between 2010 and 2020 there has been a 0.7% increase in the total population of the City. For reference, the State of Ohio has experienced a 2.3% increase and the City of Circleville (a similar community in the region) has experienced 4.6% population growth in the last 10 years.



2. AGE

KEY FINDINGS

The youngest and oldest age groups have experienced the most growth. Overall, the City of Chillicothe has a growing population of seniors who have unique housing and transportation needs. The median age of Chillicothe remained mostly unchanged over the last 10 years, but the City has experienced a significant decrease in the 10-19 and 45-54 age ranges. This has largely been offset by increases in the under 5, 5-9, and 65-74 age ranges. In comparison, the State of Ohio has experienced a general decline in populations younger than 55 and a large increase in populations older than 55. The exception is the 25-34 age group which also experienced significant growth in Ohio. When comparing Chillicothe to Circleville, the key difference is that Circleville has experienced very significant growth in the 20-35 age range.



3. FAMILY UNITS

KEY FINDINGS

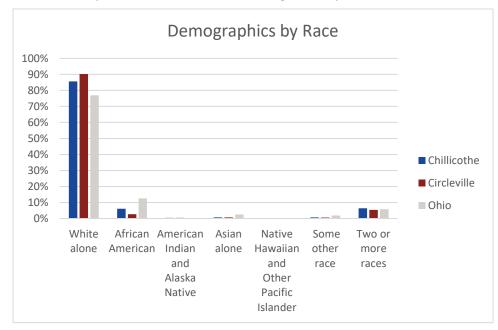
Household size is decreasing. Between 2010 and 2019 the average household size in Chillicothe decreased slightly due to the increase in size of older populations who don't have children. This change is in line with broader trends in the State of Ohio and nation. In total, Chillicothe saw an increase of 135 households with 1 or more people 65 years and over and a decrease of 109 households with 1 or more people under the age of 18.

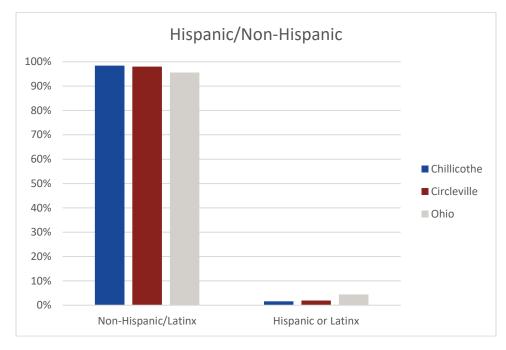
4. **DIVERSITY**

KEY FINDINGS

Chillicothe has become more diverse within the past 10 years. The percent of non-white residents was 12% in 2010 and 14.5% in 2020. The largest percent increase demographic was Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander. The State of Ohio has also seen a very significant percentage increase in the number of people who identify as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; however, they still make up a very small part of the total population. The largest numerical increase were people who identify as two or more races. There was also an increase

in the number of people who identify as Asian alone and Native American. These trends are very similar for the City of Circleville and the State of Ohio. People who identify as two or more races has increased significantly at both the city and state level. The population of people who identify as Hispanic or Latinx has increased significantly at the state level.





5. LIFELONG LEARNING

KEY FINDINGS

- » Adult education levels have been climbing since 2000. Though still slightly below the state average of high school education or higher, the percentage has risen by 15% since 2000.
- » K-12 schools underperform despite elevated spending per student. School district has below average high school graduation rates and test scores. Chillicothe City School District has a higher student to teacher ratio and increased spending per student than area schools.
- » Having two educational institutions in a community this size is a unique asset.

K-12 SCHOOLS

K-12 schools underperform despite elevated spending per student. Chillicothe City School District offers K-12 education to students in Chillicothe. According to the US News school rankings, Chillicothe High School has a scorecard of 78. These scores are based on college readiness, AP participation, graduation rates, and math and reading proficiencies. Test scores in math were well below the state average, but slightly exceeded the state average in language and reading. Chillicothe's graduation rate is well below the state median at 79% while its college readiness is 29. On average, Chillicothe spends approximately \$22,500 a year per student, which is much higher than the state average of \$13,200. Chillicothe has a higher-than-average student-teacher ratio at nearly 25 kids.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Having two educational institutions in a community this size is a unique asset. There are two postsecondary schools in the area, Ohio University-Chillicothe and Pickaway Ross Joint Vocational School District. The two institutions awarded 350 total degrees in 2019, with most degrees concentrating on healthcare. Ohio University has a significant campus that educates over 2,000 students annually from its campus west of downtown. Their physical grounds also offer amenities to the city by way of an auditorium and event space.

Adult education levels have been climbing since 2000. Approximately 89% of age-appropriate residents have at least a high school graduate level education, which is very near the state figure of 90%. Chillicothe has seen a significant increase in this figure since 2000 with 15% more residents obtaining high school degrees or beyond. There are fewer residents in the city with a bachelor's or higher degree than the state average, but they still make up 20% of the community and again the figure is climbing in recent years.

6. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

KEY FINDINGS

Residents are offered access to some of the best healthcare facilities in the country. The Adena Regional Medical Center is ranked in the top 5% in the country. Ross County ranks high in access to quality care options including mental health providers, preventable hospital stays, and mammograms.

- » Ross County ranks amongst the least healthy counties in Ohio. With low life expectancy, low access to quality foods, and high obesity rates, the population ranks below the state and nation averages.
- The Community Health Improvement Plan is a valuable tool to monitor and improve public health. This 2021 document establishes a robust set of goals and objectives towards improving mental and physical health potential for all community members.

HEALTH OUTCOMES

Ross County ranks amongst the least healthy counties in Ohio. The county's average life expectance is only 75.3, nearly two years below the state of Ohio (77.0), and three and a half years below the nation's average (78.8). Pickaway County's average life expectancy is 75.5. There are multiple discrepancies present within Ross County concerning financial situations, demographics, and more. The Community Health Needs Assessment notes that life expectancy can vary by up to 11 years from one neighborhood to another.

22% of adults in Ross County reported their health as fair or poor. This is again compared to Pickaway County at 19% and Warren County at 14%. For both of the last two points, it is important to note that southern Ohio is hit particularly hard by these figures with both Scioto and Pike both at the bottom of the lists. Similarly, 29% of residents in Ross County are overweight and 36% are obese. Both figures are considerably higher than the state and national averages.

HEALTH FACTORS

Some of the factors that drive these poor health outcomes include smoking rates, obesity, food availability, level of physical activity, drinking, accidental deaths, and teen births. Each of the factors listed are contributors to the physical environment and personal habits of residents in Ross County. Physical activity and nutrition play an important role in overall health and are proven to reduce the risk of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. Almost half of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) reported consuming one or less servings of fruit and vegetables, and only a quarter of respondents say they exercise more than 30 minutes per week. Commuting patterns also contribute to physical wellbeing with 85% of Ross County travelers driving alone to work and doing so for longer commutes than the average Ohioan. Not only does the sedentary nature of commuting solo inhibit residents physically but has environmental and traffic impacts. The survey also asked respondents about depression and anxiety with 38% admitting to feeling depressed or anxious. Only 10% say they have reached out to a mental health specialist even though Ross County has a very high ratio of specialists to residents as compared to the state of Ohio.

Alcohol consumption ranks low compared to the state average, though drug overdose deaths continue to be the leading cause of accidental death at 46 deaths each year per 100,000. Smoking rates are also increased as compared to the state, specifically those earning less than \$25k per year. The Ross County Health District, Adena Health Systems, and others in the region offer addiction and rehabilitation programs to assist residents.

HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Residents are offered access to some of the best healthcare facilities in the country. The presence of Adena Health and it's supporting network offers quality facilities for both physical and mental care opportunities. Ross County ranks highly in the ratio of mental health providers, preventable hospital stays, and mammogram screenings. This available care access well exceeds that afforded to the rest of the state's 88 counties. Overall access to care is certainly bolstered by the presence of Adena Health and their 4,000 employees.

Starting in downtown Chillicothe, the Adena Health System has been serving southern and south-central Ohio since the late 1800s. Today the network has almost 350 beds and provides services in nine counties around Chillicothe with the main facility located just north of Chillicothe. The Adena Regional Medical Center has over 250 beds, an emergency department, surgical suites, cardiac care, outpatient surgery, consultation offices, and more. Due to the offerings and quality of care, the facility ranked as one of the top 250 hospitals in the nation, placing it in the top five percent of all hospitals.

The Ross County Health District strives to improve the health and safety of Chillicothe through education, prevention, policy, and partnerships. The District is the result of a merger in 1979 between the Chillicothe Health Department and the Ross County General Health District. Now, the District and its 55 employees comprise five divisions: environmental health, health promotion and quality improvement, public health nursing, Women Infants and Childrens (WIC), and administration. The District also is a major source for countywide health data and monitoring, administering grants, and a public resource for information. Both the Adena Health System and the Ross County Health District collaborate through a joint venture called Partners for a Healthier Ross County (PHRC). These two entities are joined by 19 other regional organizations such as school districts, YMCA, Recovery Council, and more to improve health in the community. PHRC focuses on spreading information to as many as possible, and annually produces a county health report.

COMMUNITY HEALTH PLAN

The Community Health Improvement Plan is a valuable tool to monitor and improve public health. In 2021 the Partners for a Healthier Ross County developed a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which serves as a roadmap to address the many health challenges in the community. The plan is a thorough set of goals and objectives which identifies partners to implement and monitor the community's health standards. The CHIP's main components are: focus on health priorities to improve overall health, utilize evidence-informed strategies to improve health outcomes and services, and an evaluation to track, report, and analyze progress.

"All people within the region are empowered and inspired to reach their fullest physical and mental potential in a clean and safe environment through positive community collaborations." - CHIP vision statement

2. PLACE

The place portion of the report will address the existing land use, development form and connectivity, housing and characteristics of Chillicothe. The City is just over 10 square miles in Ross County, Ohio along the Scioto River. Through this analysis, a comprehensive inventory was developed of the types of existing land uses and how much is represented to understand the potential for future development growth. This section also outlines the community character types, another method of assessing the community's land use portfolio, assesses current growth potential for specific land uses, evaluates the zoning regulations responsible for governing land development, and identifies the community assets to leverage community growth.

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KEY FINDINGS

- There is a notable residential profile and neighborhood type. Nearly 40% (over 2,300 acres) of the city's incorporated land is residential with the majority being single family detached housing in gridded neighborhoods.
- Industrial use casts a large shadow but has a small footprint. Due to the paper mill's proximity to historic downtown and the large smokestack, it looms large in the public eye. However, industrial land makes up only 7% of the city's incorporated land. This is disproportionately lower compared to the amount of jobs/dollars that the land use earns through tax income.
- » Physical barriers, natural and man-made, subdivide the city and restrict development. Topographic changes west of historic downtown (on-the-hill), the Scioto River, the railroad tracks, and highway systems all create physical barriers between neighborhoods and limit growth opportunities.

1. EXISTING LAND USE

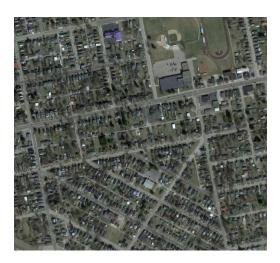
RURAL

This land use category refers to areas of the city that are used for farming, consist of large natural areas, or have large-lot residential homes of generally over an acre in size. These areas are predominantly located at the western extremities of the city, providing a transition between the city's growth areas and the rural character. There is an estimated 650 acres of rural land use today which accounts for 11% of the city's total incorporated land area. Although farming is included in this category, some of the rural land is either considered vacant agriculture or natural areas. Most agriculture production occurs outside the city limits in townships or unincorporated areas of the county.



SINGLE FAMILY

This category refers to areas composed of residential homes from single-family detached units. Multi-family residential (duplexes and buildings with three or more units) is not included in this land use category. The age and character of residential housing varies by neighborhood. A gridded street network with homes close to the roadway on small lots exists in a majority of the residential development in the North and East portions of town. Topographic and environmental constraints have created different development patterns 'onthe-hill' with larger lots and less connectivity between neighborhoods. Approximately 2,300 acres of land is defined as residential, which accounts for almost 39% of the city. Of



this acreage, 7% is currently vacant, which includes undeveloped parcels and uninhabited homes.

Like many older cities in the region, Chillicothe has seen outward growth from its downtown. The oldest homes are located adjacent to the historic district and the epicenter of Chillicothe. Through the mid-1800s, neighborhoods expanded outwards following the grid street pattern. There was a shift after the 1940s when new subdivisions began shifting towards curvilinear street networks with cul-de-sac's, defined neighborhood entrances, and integrated open space areas to accommodate modern housing. This pattern is most easily seen on-the-hill with separate housing developments on larger lots. Previously average lots had been quarter acre in size, but as housing demands shifted (matching a national trend), lot size was closer to half acre.

Most recently, the city has seen residential construction at the Western edge along US Route 50. Homes in this section of town have provided diversity in the types of units available, though their character and pattern follow the more recent trend of one-off developments, with limited connectivity. Due to the various natural

and manmade features, there is limited availability to expand residential land. Topographic features in the northeast and west constrict accessible development and waterways limit connectivity in the South and North.

MULTIFAMILY

This category focuses on medium to high density residential areas composed of duplexes, multi-unit buildings, and multibuilding developments. This includes attached townhomes, apartment buildings, and other similar housing types. Multifamily is one of the smallest land uses in Chillicothe today with only 205 acres, or less than 4% of the city. The larger multifamily buildings constructed in more recent years have been located at the edges of the community in the west and north, though there are some smaller instances mixed in the more traditional single-family neighborhoods.



COMMERCIAL

This category refers to the activity centers and corridors providing a variety of goods and services for the community including retail, restaurant, shopping centers, and some mixed-use. These areas range in size and building design from small local businesses integrated in neighborhoods to large shopping centers surrounded by shared parking lots. This variety of commercial land is also influenced by the market research of individual businesses with each community encouraging a balance of commercial types.

Chillicothe has two prominent types of commercial development; the first is neighborhood scale commercial which is intended to serve those within a walking distance or close proximity and the second is region scale commercial which is intended to serve the entire city and the larger southern Ohio region. These types of commercial developments are major destinations which typically have several commercial uses paired together in a shared center or collection of multi-tenant buildings. A significant portion of commercial land is located along North Bridge Street in the northern portion of the city.



This category has roughly 1,049 acres of land today, accounting for 18% of the city. While this represents a small portion of the city, these commercial areas provide many essential services to the community and draw visitors to the region. The North Bridge Street commercial sector is nearing buildout with few open spots with road frontage to expand. Due to this and other factors, the western US Route 50 has seen increased commercial activity in recent years and has additional land availability.

INDUSTRIAL

This category refers to the largest employment-focused areas of the city including a range of small to very large manufacturing, assembly, and warehousing uses. These sites typically locate near major thoroughfares like the state routes and rail corridors (and more historically the riverways) to support their shipping and operational needs. The South and East portions of the city see the majority of the 435 acres devoted to Industrial. Though this use is low proportionally, its impacts financially and aesthetically are significant. The paper production facility draws the most attention with its iconic red-and-white smokestack.

INSTITUTIONAL

This category covers a wide variety of land use forms due to the unique functions included. This category has publicowned land (city, county, and state), religious organizations, school district property, educational institutions, and other similar tax-exempt properties. This does not include parkland that is owned by the city and county as those serve a different benefit to the community. An estimated 280 acres of institutional land exists in Chillicothe today, which represents 5% of the city.

Chillicothe does have a somewhat unique amount of Institutional land due to its role as the county seat and regional draw for governmental uses. Similarly, school



districts require sufficient land to accommodate the educational facilities and recreational needs of students. These properties are located throughout the city but are typically coordinated with other institutional uses such as city or county-owned facilities.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

This category emphasizes the passive and active spaces for recreational and entertainment use by the community. These are dispersed across the city at a variety of scales from small neighborhood gardens to large community parks. Some are owned and maintained by the City, County, or State while others are under private ownership as amenities for employees or specific residents. Publicly owned open space is protected from future development while private areas supplement the public network through additional connections and greenways. These places usually include a



wide array of amenities for use by the community. Bicycle trails, playgrounds, walking paths, fitness areas, sport courts, and community pavilions are just a few of the amenities typically integrated into open spaces. Natural features like creeks, rivers, ponds, wetlands, and woods are preserved through conservation efforts from public and non-profit organizations. These areas include only places that are preserved and protected

from development typically through city ownership and management. An estimated 825 acres of land or approximately 14% of the city is designated as parks and open space today.

EXEMPT

Lastly are properties labeled as exempt. These parcels are free from tax collection and are often owned by government agencies such as the State of Ohio, City of Chillicothe, Ross County, Board of Education, and similar. Examples include schools, hospitals, churches, government buildings, etc.

RIGHT-OF-WAY

The remaining acreage not accounted for in the existing land uses represents right-of-way for the transportation network. This is land within the city limits that does not have formal zoning which includes local streets, major thoroughfares, and county and state roads. Public components of the streetscape such as sidewalks, tree lawns, and medians are also considered part of the right-of-way. These areas vary considerably in size based on the thoroughfare needs to meet travel demand.

2. CHARACTER TYPES

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

Downtown Chillicothe is the historic, civic, and cultural center of the community. The area is defined by a grid street pattern composed of short blocks with several intersections providing access to the surrounding area. Streets accommodate moderate traffic at slow speeds with on-street parking on both sides. Buildings are located close to one another or directly attached near the street frontage with a pedestrian area defined between the building and right-of-way. Many buildings contain multiple uses with restaurants or retail on the ground floor and office space or residential units above.





Core Traditional Neighborhood areas are found in the older portions of town, south and west of the river but below the hill. The predominant use in this character type is single family residential, supported by locally scaled commercial services. These areas include early historic residential neighborhoods with a diversity of housing styles within each subdivision. They are characterized by grid-like street networks with multiple intersections that connect between neighborhoods and small building setbacks. Typically, streets are two lanes with street



parking, which limits travel speeds. Architectural style shifts moving away from the historic city center, but street pattern and lot size remain.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD, EDGE

Edge Traditional Neighborhoods areas are typically found onthe-hill and feature almost exclusively single-family residential. These areas include more modern housing styles with larger lot sizes than the Core Traditional Neighborhood. Homes in this character type sit farther back from the street, include more driveways, and often have street-facing garage doors. Streets in these neighborhoods are two lanes with low travel speeds but include less street parking than Core. These areas are more vehicular focused and lack walkability amenities such as sidewalks, promoting more trips by vehicle.



SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

Predominantly single-family housing areas generally developed in car-focused patterns with long blocks and curvilinear streets and fewer intersections than the two traditional neighborhood types. These areas feature a variety of housing types including some more modern attached dwellings, but housing styles are consistent within subdivisions. Suburban Neighborhoods have limited connectivity between residential types and non-residential uses, promoting more trips by vehicle. These areas also lack sidewalks, inhibiting walkability.



CORRIDOR COMMERCIAL

Commercial development which includes a wide range of retail, offices, and services in a generally car-oriented pattern. To accommodate the number of users, buildings typically feature visible surface parking lots and have large building setbacks. In some cases, specifically along North Bridge Street, larger buildings are located behind smaller lot uses at the street front. This type of development tends to serve the larger region, is typically located along major



corridors or intersections, and may include shopping centers or big-box stores. Due to the timing of their development and proximity to major interchanges, several of these serve as gateways or first impressions for the city.

INDUSTRIAL

Industrial areas apply to large or intense operations including factories, plants, and assembly warehouses. They are characterized by large, single-story buildings set back a considerable distance from the street. These areas typically have access to rail or highway corridors for business operations and require large parcel sizes to conduct operations.



CIVIC AND INSTITUTIONAL

Civic spaces include school campuses, large civic uses, healthcare campuses, and city/county/state owned facilities. These sites often have a unique development pattern to match the operational needs of the specific entity. Smaller institutional users are easily integrated into residential neighborhoods, while larger campuses are organized into a single development with standalone properties. These can occur as individual properties or span several parcels to support the singular institution.



RURAL EDGE

Rural Edge areas are found along the outer edge of the city limits adjacent to Townships or unincorporated land. These areas may include a mix of single family residential with small farms or natural areas. Individual homes are typically located on large lots about one-acre in size or larger. These areas are characterized by one or two local streets in a curvilinear pattern with homes setback a considerable distance from the street frontage.



OPEN SPACE RECREATION

Park spaces are dispersed across Chillicothe as both passive open spaces and active park facilities. These include small gardens and community parks integrated into traditional neighborhoods, and large parcel parks such as Yoctangee Park. They are characterized by their incorporation of natural features, landscape and hardscape designs, recreational amenities, and connectivity to the active transportation network. These range in scale, design, and location to support a variety of the community's recreational programming needs.

3. GOVERNING BODIES

The city's development is managed by three distinct reviewing bodies: City Council, Planning Commission, and the Board of Zoning Appeals. Each has specific powers and duties through the zoning code to review and apply regulations for land management then providing their recommendation or voting decision. A brief description of the powers and duties for each reviewing body is outlined in the following section.

CITY COUNCIL

City Council is the governing body for all city leadership, serving as the legislative entity for the code of ordinances. Seven members are elected by the residents of Chillicothe to serve two-year terms with the potential for re-election. Within the zoning code, City Council is primarily responsible for reviewing and approving amendments to the zoning code or official zoning map. As these documents represent the legal framework for land development, City Council is the final reviewing entity in determining an amendment.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission is the primary reviewing board for the city's zoning code and is composed of a seven-member body appointed by the mayor. Each member serves a six-year term on the commission. As the primary reviewing entity, the Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing and determining the majority of development applications. Certificates of appropriateness, conditional uses, development reviews, and designation of individual landmarks and historic districts are all under the purview of the commission's review. The commission is also responsible for making recommendations on zoning code and map amendments to City Council as part of the two-step public process for legislative changes. Similarly, the Planning Commission serves as the guiding entity for implementing the city's comprehensive plan recommendations pertaining to community character and development. Their review and application of the zoning code seeks to align new development with the future vision of the community.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

The Board of Zoning Appeals represents the specialized reviewing body for the city and is composed of seven members appointed by the mayor with City Council approval. The board is responsible for reviewing specific applications that pertain to appeals of previous development reviews or variations from the zoning code due to unique circumstances. Administrative decision appeals, changes in non-conforming uses, and variances to the zoning code are the three review duties of the board. These development applications are to address disparities between the zoning code or application of zoning regulations under previous development reviews. This board serves as a unique complement to the Planning Commission in applying the regulations of the zoning code to new and existing development.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

The Design Review Board reviews the appropriateness of development proposals, specifically in downtown Chillicothe and is composed of a seven-member body. All members are appointed by the mayor and approved by City Council. These members are intended to have significant background or training in the

fields of historic preservation, architecture, design, or a related field to engage in productive and reasoned review of development proposals matching the character of Chillicothe.

4. HOUSING

On January 1st, 2021, Ross County Community Action Commission, in partnership with the Hope Partnership Project and Adena Health System, released a professional service request for proposals (RFP). The RFP solicited applications from professional firms to conduct an assessment and evaluation of the City of Chillicothe's and Ross County's current inventory of affordable and special housing. The requested scope of work also included an assessment of housing gaps and an analysis of socio-economic conditions that contribute to housing challenges in the region. Additionally, the firm asked to perform the evaluation was asked to conduct a market analysis, including analyzing poverty rates, evictions, foreclosures, tax delinquency and other housing related metrics. The RFP requested firms with the ability to conduct the analysis and recommend areas of needs to address gaps, including laws, zoning, programs, and processes. The project is funded through a grant, the Human Resource Services Administration Rural Community Opioid Response Program, administered by Adena Health System. The Ross County Community Action Committee and its partners (Housing Assessment Team) selected Thomas P. Miller and Associates, based out of Indianapolis, Indiana to conduct the housing analysis.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

According to the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), affordable housing is generally defined as "housing in which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including utilities." Families that pay more, are considered by HUD to be cost burdened. Other definitions assert that affordable housing is housing that a household can pay for, while still having money left over for other necessities like food, transportation, childcare, and healthcare. However, these definitions are oftentimes subjective and vary across households and across regions. No matter the definition of affordable housing, there's no question that access to affordable and suitable long-term housing is a necessity for individuals, families, and communities to thrive.

Overwhelmingly across all stakeholder interviews, participants expressed a county-wide need for housing at all price points. Stakeholders indicated a need for affordable, middle, high-end, and specialized housing across the city and county. The data provides further contextual information. For example, the data shows that 47% of the population can afford rental units priced above \$900 per month. However, only 5% of the rental units available in the market are priced at or above that figure. The project team infers that this is creating downward pressure on lower income individuals and families, and that due to the limited supply of higher-end rental units, renters with higher incomes are occupying cheaper units, reducing the number of options for individuals whose budget allows only for low-cost units. As residents earning annual wages at or above \$50,000 are forced to rent cheaper units than they can afford, the supply of housing is reduced at every price point. A similar phenomenon occurs with owner-occupied homes. Increasing availability of higher priced housing units will in turn increase affordable and livable homes and more completely meet the community's housing needs.

Additionally, by analyzing the data and speaking with key stakeholders, the project team also suggests that a large portion of the housing stock is underutilized, or worse, uninhabitable without significant reinvestment. The age of the housing stock supports this inference; more than 32% of the homes in the city were built before 1940. Many of these homes are likely in disrepair and in need of significant renovation. The moderately high vacancy rates, between 10-12% further strengthen this assertion. To stabilize existing housing units in the area, their condition must be improved. Deferred maintenance will compound the issue, and without support from the public sector, the existing housing stock will reduce an already limited supply of affordable housing units.

Another contributing factor to the unaffordability of housing is the limited financial ability of the population. Many residents work in low-skill, low-earning occupations, and a low annual income limits their purchasing power. In Ross County, about 46% of households fall below the \$50,000 annual income threshold. Perhaps more concerningly, 15.4% and 13.6% of households earn less than \$15,000 annually in Chillicothe and Ross County, respectively. The community's limited financial ability is a part of the housing affordability problem, and one that needs to be addressed moving forward. It's interesting to note that no households which earn more than \$50,000 per year in Ross County are considered cost burdened. A more highly educated, skilled, and financially secure population will have greater access to housing options.

Finally, it's apparent Ross County and Chillicothe need more specialized housing options. This includes emergency, recovery, transitional, supportive, and senior housing. While most residents understand and acknowledge the need for these housing developments, few could identify suitable locations. As indicated in the demographic report, the population has diverse needs, and those should be proactively addressed in the housing development strategy.

5. MOBILITY

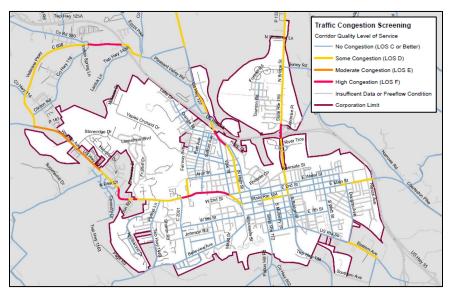
KEY FINDINGS

- » Congestion, Safety, and Bike/Pedestrian Accommodations Along the N Bridge Street Corridor. Continue to support efforts to better manage traffic, congestion, safety, and multi-modal access along the N Bridge Street (OH-159) corridor, the City's busiest street.
- A Growing Deferred Maintenance Backlog. Until only recently, only funding for street resurfacing was encumbered—leaving curbs, drainage systems, lighting, and other roadway elements without funding to maintain. Further, given the age of most roads, it's anticipated that a sizable amount of deferred maintenance is present, and a lack of adequate funding means the backlog is growing. City staff plan to start an asset management program for streets and determine appropriate budgets to address the maintenance backlog.
- Addressing Physical and Psychological Barriers Between the East Side and both Downtown and Community Schools. Bridge Street (US-50, OH-159, OH-104) and a Norfolk Southern Railroad are barriers which partially limit access between east-side neighborhoods and both downtown and community schools.

- Address Overly Wide, Under-Utilized Streets. Excess pavement generates excess maintenance expenses and can contribute to speeding and other undesirable outcomes. Each under-utilized street presents an opportunity to use this space to support other street users, provide more parking, or add more greenspace.
- Need for Improved Access Management and Aesthetics Along Several Gateway and Retail. Corridors Several corridors around town have a high concentration of commercial driveways and highway-oriented retail, including E Main Street near the US-35/US-23 interchange; N Bridge Street between Main and Riverside streets, and US-35 north to Mt. Logan Farms Drive (Sam's Club); N High Street (OH-104) near Buckeye and Orange streets; and US-50 between Stoneridge Drive and Polk Hollow Road.

VEHICULAR CONGESTION

Vehicular congestion is an issue in several areas of the City; however, most areas of congestion simply cause delay and do not substantially affect prosperity. To analyze, B&N staff performed a corridor quality level of service (QLOS) analysis to predict areas of congestion. To perform this analysis, information such as the average daily traffic volume, number of travel lanes, and the presence of a median and/or left turn lanes must be known. Available data was obtained from Ohio Department of Transportation's Traffic Information Management System (TIMS) database, combined, and then analyzed against QLOS criteria to estimate degrees of congestion, shown in red below. The Bridge Street corridor (OH-159) is the most significant of these areas. At present, ODOT District 9 is studying options to widen the street and provide pedestrian accommodations from the Scioto River bridge north through the interchange with US-35 up to approximately Winona Boulevard. Other areas of congestion include Western Avenue (US-50) near Delano Avenue, Western Avenue through the sharp curve down into the western commercial strip, as well as N High Street (OH-104) near Vine and Orange streets.



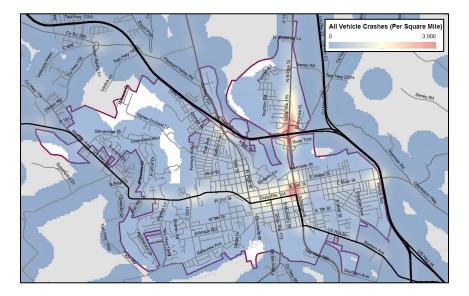
STREET OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Beyond the QLOS screening, several areas were noted as having poor operational characteristics. These include too many driveway access points and therefore turning vehicles—N Bridge Street between Main and Water Streets, E Main Street between Vincent Street and the US-35 interchange, and to a lesser extent Western Avenue (US-50) through the western commercial strip. An excess of drive access points typically reduces vehicular capacity for through motorists, can increase the risk for crashes, and typically make an area less safe for pedestrians and bicyclists due to turning vehicles. E Main Street was also identified as a corridor with poor operational characteristics as the number of through lanes change multiple times through the corridor, often ending with drop right or left turn lanes, and a lack of dedicated left turn lanes which can interrupt the follow of traffic. City staff indicate these are just some of a number of issues they hope to address the next time the road is resurfaced.

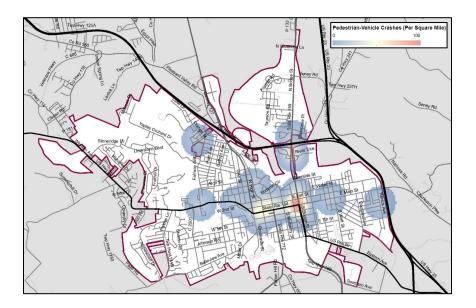
The city Engineer did indicate a key focus of his department is developing asset management and maintenance interval data for streets, including resurfacing but also repair of drainage, sidewalk, and other deteriorating items. To date, there have been funds available for resurfacing but not for other components of the street. His hope is to time this work to occur with or just after utility work to reduce overall costs and prolong the lifespan of improvements. Of note, the City's efforts to try to get a better handle on its deferred maintenance backlog, establish a budget based on need, and fix long-standing issues show that City staff are trying to be more proactive when it comes to maintaining and improving its transportation system.

SAFETY

Like the assessment of vehicular congestion, planners obtained vehicular crash data for the Chillicothe area for the five-year period 2016-2020 from the Ohio Department of Transportation. Spatial heat maps were produced to show areas with a high density of crashes, including all crashes and a subset, crashes which involved a pedestrian. Over the five-year period, there were approximately 3,700 crashes within or along corridors immediately adjacent to the city, 28 of which involved pedestrians. The first map below shows the heat map for all crashes. Two areas along N Bridge Street (OH-159) show a high concentration of crashes, between Main and Water streets, and between the US-35 interchange and Winona Boulevard. The second map below shows the heat map for pedestrian-involved crashes. The area with the highest concentration of



pedestrian-involved crashes was Main Street (US-50/OH-104) between Hickory and Bridge (US-50/OH-104) streets.

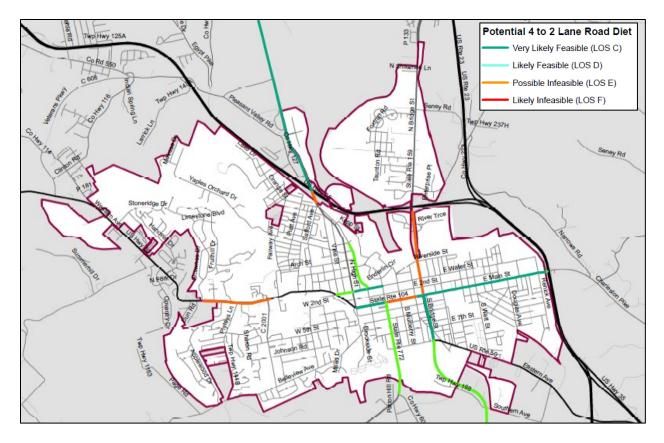


STREETS IN SUPPORT OF PLACE

Over the past 20 years, steps have been taken to try to improve how area streets support downtown Chillicothe and its sense of place. Angled parking was added to portions of N Paint Street in the early 2000s and later in the mid-2010s south of Main Street. These changes made it easier for visitors to park near their destination and reduced the number of vehicular travel lanes—calming the street. Today, parking is relatively plentiful downtown, but some may need to park a block or so from their destination. To help address this issue, the City charges for parking using parking meters or a mobile app. Most recently, W 2nd Street was converted from one way westbound to two-way operation. Many expressed concerns about this project but City staff report they're not aware of any crashes or other issues since the change was implemented in 2021. These efforts show how City staff are striving to improve conditions, not just maintain what always has been.



Continuing this theme, wide streets were evaluated to see which if any are under capacity—or have much less traffic than they can convey at a reasonable amount of congestion. Under capacity streets are often wider than necessary. Operationally, this can encourage motorists to speed, make it harder for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the street, and provide an opportunity to allocate more space to parking, pedestrians, bicyclists, and street trees. Streets with more than two travel lanes were evaluated for whether they could convey the volume of traffic they currently carry with two travel lanes and a center turn lane. Sections of six streets presumably will operate at Level of Service C or D with two lanes, including Main Street (High to Paint, Bridge to US-35), High Street (north of US-35), Paint Street (south of Main), Water Street (Western to Paint), Bridge Street (south of Main) and Yoctangee Parkway. Practically, reducing the number of travel lanes can help reduce maintenance costs, calm traffic, and provide space for other users and uses.



TRANSIT

Chillicothe operates a Federal Transit Agency (FTA) 5311 rural transit agency of which provides a combination of fixed route and on-demand services within and around the city. The agency also provides Medicaid transportation to help ensure recipients have transportation to medical appointments. The agency completed over 77,000 trips in 2021 with a staff of 35, and vehicle fleet including 23 16-passenger buses and three passenger vans.

In 2021, the agency participated in the Bloomberg Harvard Innovation Track, a leadership initiative program in partnership with the Centre for Public Impact. The project tasked an interdisciplinary team to solve problems related to providing transit services, heavily engaging residents, and transit riders on potential solutions. As a result of the program, a transit system redesign to include fewer yet more efficient fixed routes and more on-demand services was put into place in January 2022. The changes, along with free fares, are being implemented on a trial basis but feedback to date shows increased ridership and customer satisfaction. Agency staff say if they can afford it, they'd like to make the changes permanent.

Financially speaking, the agency is on a solid footing and has a rainy-day fund. It is also looking to continue improving its services and expand its service hours—currently 6am to 9pm Monday to Friday, and 10am to 6pm on Saturdays.

6. ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Active transportation involves all the ways that people get around without a personal motorized vehicle; it includes walking, biking, using wheelchairs or mobility devices, skating or skateboarding, and more. People use active transportation to get to work, run errands, connect to transit, and for pleasure or exercise. It can provide a multitude of community benefits, such as improving public health, reducing congestion and pollution, enhancing economic activity, and building a sense of place. This section examines the current state of active transportation in Chillicothe and opportunities for the future.

KEY FINDINGS

- » Need and demand for greater active transportation opportunities are high. A large contingent of the city does not have access to a vehicle, public health is low, and many households are cost burdened or historically disadvantaged.
- Supportive programs are helping build an active transportation culture in the City. Programs like Book-a-Bike and others help to foster alternative transportation thinking and offerings to those who may not otherwise be able to take part.
- Plenty of physical barriers. Major roadways, railroads, rivers, and topography present barriers to walking and biking.
- » Chillicothe's previous and current planning efforts lay out a vision for a complete and connected active transportation network. The Ross County Active Transportation Plan represents a significant effort towards advancing these initiatives.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES

Need and demand for greater active transportation opportunities in Chillicothe are high. Currently, 4.9% of workers use walking, biking, public transportation, or other means to get to work, and 3.2% work from home. However, these data do not capture the many short trips to other destinations or for recreation that may be taken by residents. 11% of households do not have a vehicle available for transportation, making active transportation and transit crucial to their mobility. 18% of the population experienced poverty in the past 12 months and may be overly burdened by the cost of owning and operating a personal vehicle. 22% of residents have some type of disability. In addition, 34% of Ross County residents are physically inactive, and the county is ranked among the least healthy in Ohio. Active transportation could provide an opportunity for Chillicothe residents to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives, leading to greater health outcomes.

In its 2020 Walk.Bike.Ohio Policy Plan, the Ohio Department of Transportation conducted analyses on the relative need and a demand for active transportation opportunities throughout Ohio. The demand analysis incorporated the factors of employment density, population density, commute mode share, park density, presence of colleges/universities, retail employment density, and poverty to understand what areas of the state have a high potential to support active transportation trips. Scores within Chillicothe range from 2 (moderate) to 4 (very high) out of 4, with the highest demand found in the neighborhood north of Western Ave and west of High St.

Similarly, the need analysis identifies areas with concentrations of people that have been "historically disadvantaged or are otherwise considered vulnerable to unsafe, disconnected, or incomplete active transportation networks". The factors included in the analysis were presence of minority groups, youth, older adults, poverty, no high school diploma, limited English proficiency, and no access to a motor vehicle. In Chillicothe, the scores are mostly between 3 (high) and 4 (very high) out of 4, with the highest need found east of High and south of Main. This information may help the city in prioritizing its efforts to enhance active transportation opportunities.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES

Chillicothe has a small but growing active transportation network that can be built upon for greater connectivity. One of the city's current assets is around 4 miles of shared use path along the northern edge of the city, which connects to the Paint Creek Recreational Trail extending west to Washington Courthouse. The city built the first bike lane in the County on Yoctangee Blvd, and added another lane in 2021 on Piatt Ave. It also added shared lane markings on low-volume, low-speed streets such as Allen Ave, Mill St, and Watt St, and on key connectors such as Water St and Paint St, beginning to build a connected bicycling network. The city's relatively dense and historic street network supports walkability and features sidewalks in much of the city, with recent or ongoing projects to fill key gaps on N Bridge St, Plyleys Lane, S Watt St, Western Ave, and Belleview Ave. Recently upgraded streetscape features in the Downtown, such as several new high-visibility crosswalks and curb extensions, support walkability and pedestrian safety.

SUPPORTIVE PROGRAMS

Supportive programs are helping build an active transportation culture in the city. The Ross County Public Library recently started a Book -a-Bike program offering free bike rentals, with options including recumbent bikes and bike trailers to help serve a variety of travel needs and body types. A second option for bicycle lending is based at the VA hospital to the north of the city. The Chillicothe Transit system has bicycle racks available on buses and at several key locations along its routes. The Ross County Mobility Management program helps people in the County access transportation options and have played a big role in promoting walking and biking as an option. The Ross County Parks District offers educational programming such as bicycle safety education, and Chillicothe High School has a bicycle club that organizes bike rides and helps students learn about bicycle maintenance and safety. These and other programs help educate people about transportation options and encourage them to try other modes.

MAJOR ROADWAYS

Major roadways, railroads, rivers, and topography present barriers to walking and biking. Two US Highways (35 and 50) and two County Roads (104/N High St and 159/N Bridge St) cross the city and create barriers for connectivity. These high-capacity roadways typically include limited sidewalks and infrequent safe crossing opportunities and can feel intimidating and unsafe to walk or bike across or along. There is a significant history of bicyclist and pedestrian crashes on these roadways. Many important retail and employment destinations, such as grocery and hardware stores, are located on N Bridge St, which lacks any sidewalk and bicycle facilities north of the bridge. The Scioto River, crossed by a single bridge, and the railroads further segment the city. Finally, hilly terrain on the western side of town shapes the roadway network and can restrict the possibilities to add sidewalks and other facilities.

DRIVER OF ECONOMY

Chillicothe's location provides opportunities to develop as an outdoor recreation economy. In addition to providing city residents with healthy and sustainable transportation options, developing the bicycling network could provide an opportunity for Chillicothe to become an outdoor recreation destination. Nearby County and State parks are regional destinations for mountain biking, and an upcoming Comprehensive Mountain Biking Plan will look at opportunities to enhance and expand those assets. Chillicothe also lies at the intersection of two planned State Bike Routes - a statewide network of signed routes using on-and off-road bike facilities connecting communities to promote intrastate travel, recreation and tourism. These connect south to Portsmouth, north to Columbus, west to Xenia and east to Athens.

COMPLETE NETWORK PLANNING

Chillicothe's previous and current planning efforts lay out a vision for a complete and connected active transportation network. The 2020 Ross County Active Transportation Plan focuses primarily on recommendations within the City of Chillicothe, along with connections to surrounding destinations in the county. The recommended bikeways, sidewalks and crossing improvements in the plan would improve safety and connectivity for people walking and biking in the city. The top short-term priorities identified include:

- City of Chillicothe Comprehensive Plan
- Increase Bike Lanes
- Increased Sidewalks and Sidewalk Repairs throughout County
- Bike and Pedestrian Education and Policy Development
- Expansion of Bike Share Programs
- Increased Signage and Wayfinding Demonstration Projects
- Repair and Maintenance of Current Trails
- Improved Crosswalks and Signals
- Add Bike Facilities on Trails and at Parks
- Implement Transit Pedestrian Facilities

Since the plan's adoption in 2021, work has already begun on several recommendations, including the addition of on-street bicycle facilities, crossing improvements, new sidewalks, and expansion of the bikeshare program. The City also plans to develop a Complete Streets policy that will guide transportation investments to incorporate all modes and users.

7. INFRASTRUCTURE

This section focuses on the services and utilities currently provided by the city. Coverage, availability, and some needs are reviewed.

KEY FINDINGS

- Emergency services are well-equipped for the community. Both the Fire and Police departments provide specialties and the appropriate training or certifications to address all types of emergency situations.
- Property crime is declining but remains a significant concern. Of the almost 1,700 cases reported in 2019; nearly 80% of them were theft related incidents which has declined almost 20% since the peak in 2006¹.
- » Utilities systems are robust but overdue for upgrades. The entire city has access to utility connections; however, many of these systems are beyond their need for improvements with the most recent investments being more than 20 years old.
- The city is proactive in managing its infrastructure assets. While several systems are older, the city has already begun planning and securing funding to begin modernizing its utility systems in preparation for future growth.

POLICE

The police department operates out of a single facility located downtown with a staff of 49 members including the police chief, three captains, six sergeants, 30 officers, seven dispatchers, and two clerks². This equates to 1.81 officers per 1,000 residents which is lower than the national average of 2.25 officers per 1,000 residents. The city operates with several Specialized Units that address specific needs of the community and include the Detective Division, Narcotics, SWAT, K9, Bike Patrol, Crash Reconstructionist, DARE, School Resource Officer, Negotiator, and Training Instructors.

Crime statistics reveal that the City is most vulnerable to property crimes, a crime where a person's property is stolen or damaged. In 2019, approximately 1,680 crimes were reported in Chillicothe and of this total, nearly 80 percent were theft related incidents³. The second largest reported crimes were burglaries accounting for 10 percent of all incidents. The national average theft crime rate is 1,569 cases per 100,000 residents; Chillicothe's rate is nearly four times higher than the national average at 6,170 cases per 100,000 residents. However, this has decreased significantly over the last 10 years from the peak in 2006 with almost 8,900 cases per 100,000 residents⁴. This trend is similar with other types of property crime, showing an overall decrease in the number of annual cases.

FIRE⁵

The City's Fire Department operates with a total of 49 members including the fire chief, assistant chief, three captains, and six lieutenants. This department serves 22,000 residents providing 2.22 firefighters per 1,000 residents which is significantly higher than the national average range of between 1.54 and 1.81 firefighters per capita⁶. Three fire stations provide coverage for the city with the main station located downtown while

¹ https://www.statista.com/statistics/191247/reported-larceny-theft-rate-in-the-us-since-1990/

² https://files4.1.revize.com/chillicotheoh/Auditor/2020%20CAFR.pdf

³ https://www.city-data.com/crime/crime-Chillicothe-Ohio.html

⁴ https://www.statista.com/statistics/191247/reported-larceny-theft-rate-in-the-us-since-1990/

⁵ https://www.chillicotheoh.gov/departments/public_safety/about_us.php

⁶ https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/files/News-and-Research/Fire-statistics-and-reports/Emergency-responders/osfdprofile.pdf

the other two are located in the southwest and northeast portions of Chillicothe. The department responds to approximately 6300 calls per year or roughly 17 calls per day. All firefighters are trained as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and over 75 percent are certified Paramedics who can provide life support in medical emergencies. The department operates several fire prevention programs including a Fire Safety Inspection program, Fire Code Enforcement, senior citizen and childhood education and the SAFE (Smoke Alarms For Everyone) and SHIP (Senior Home Inspection Program) programs.

Previous leadership considered an additional outpost being constructed at the west end of the city. Due to shifts in traffic incidents and the number of calls along North Bridge, current administration would rather see added capacity at that end of the city's network.

UTILITIES

Water

The city receives its drinking water from seven deep wells located in Yoctangee Park in close proximity to the water treatment facility. The city has a license to operate the water distribution system with emergency connections to the Ross County Water Company and Chillicothe Correctional Institute. This facility, operating since 1992, provides over 132 miles of water line connections with a capacity of seven million gallons. The storage capacity serves over 9,350 customers, being a combination of residential and commercial properties. The City's facility is equal in terms of overall storage capacity to the entire Ross County Water Company system which has two distribution plants servicing 12,000 customers across the county.

Wastewater

The City of Chillicothe operates its own wastewater treatment plant serving the city limits. The plant was initially constructed in 1938 and received major upgrades in 1984 and 2002. The facility has a capacity of 3.6 million gallons per day and serves approximately 24,000 people. The collection system consists of 100 percent separate sanitary sewers with no bypasses, sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs), or combined sewer overflows (CSOs) in the collection system. This has been an Ohio EPA-approved treatment program and is assessed annually for operations with current standards. Recently, the city was awarded a \$5 million grant from the state to upgrade the facility, allowing for future development growth and addressing outdated infrastructure. The anticipated cost for the entire project is \$40 million to bring the facility up to modern standards, having been nearly 20 years since the last major improvement.

Fiber / Internet

Typical to most communities, the City does not provide fiber or internet service. Six private companies offer internet service with three of them offering coverage to the entire City. This offers a diverse range of options for the community with each provider covering more than half of Chillicothe. Download speeds range from basic options (25 mbps) to high-speed (100+ mbps) internet that has both commercial and residential service connections. Several of the private companies also offer high-speed fiber connections, connecting the community to emerging technologies. This includes the City's rural areas located along the city limits along with downtown and other major activity centers.

Other Utilities

Chillicothe is served by both private natural gas and electricity companies. Just Energy offers options for residents and businesses to connect with a single service provider. Columbia Gas of Ohio also provides dual connections of gas and electricity for the community with a large coverage area. These ensure that the City is well connected to utilities for both residential neighborhoods and commercial or industrial districts.

8. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This section focuses on the civic and cultural facilities available to residents of Chillicothe. This encompasses both City operated facilities along with private or non-profit institutions who offer services to the local community. Facility location, services, programming, connectivity, and accessibility were assessed to understand the civic structure of the City. Topics such as community health and education are evaluated under separate sections of this analysis.

KEY FINDINGS

- The City has a strong, long standing community support network. Many of the community facilities not only provide a diverse range of services such as childcare, fitness, and homeless support but have also been a part of the community for several decades.
- » Majority of community facilities have a presence downtown. Almost all civic and cultural facilities have their main location in the downtown core, emphasizing the importance of downtown to the community.

CITY ADMINISTRATION

The City of Chillicothe operates out of the administration building located at 35 S. Paint Street in downtown. Most departments and public facilities are within the administration building while the Police Department and Fire Departments are led from separate stations. The majority of City operations are located in Downtown Chillicothe, within the core of the community and accessible to residents, businesses, and visitors.

CARVER COMMUNITY CENTER

The community center has been a supporting resource for the City since 1945. Established to support the City's African American youth, the center focused on providing essential resources for the community in a central location moving into downtown in 1973. This included a diverse array of programming such as recreational opportunities, educational programs, and social services. While recreational opportunities have grown elsewhere, the center still serves as a connection to several educational and social programs. This ranges from childcare services to offering preschool and after school programming for the community. Public meeting spaces promote social gathering and homeless programs support the population with food and connection to essential services. The center operates with a small full-time staff and an approximate \$160,000 annual budget that is composed of grant funding, donations, and fees for childcare and facility rentals.

YMCA ROSS COUNTY

The Ross County YMCA offers a variety of programming and has served as the hub for a network of community services since 1917, originally as part of Camp Sherman. The main location in Chillicothe facilitates programming across three additional sites, sport fields and venues, in Ross County serving an estimated 5,500 members between 2019-2020. The YMCA provides programs based on three focus areas including youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. Specific programs include childcare, after school programs, day camps, fitness facilities and courses, and recreational opportunities for members. The majority of funding comes from membership fees (57%) with the second largest source being other supporting programs (35%). The YMCA has experienced significant investment and expansion over the years with a \$1.5 million facility expansion in 1996 and most recently a new playground construction in 2015.

LIBRARY

The Chillicothe & Ross County Public Library system operates nine branches across the County including six community branches and three supporting school locations. Chillicothe is home to two of these facilities, the main library and northside branch, located immediately north and south of downtown. These facilities offer a variety of educational resources and e-learning opportunities for the community along with public meeting spaces for social events. The library system also connects to public events across the county through a community calendar and communication network.

FARMERS MARKET

The Chillicothe Farmers Market began in 2002 after several years of independent organization. Launching with 15 vendors downtown, the market has since grown to include over 50 local vendors offering products from fresh produce to local plants to arts and trade goods. The market operates on a year-round basis with summer and winter schedules, occurring every Saturday morning for several hours. As of 2020, the market also offers online ordering and pick-up for local items, providing ease of access to fresh food and locally made products.

9. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

A review of Chillicothe's existing assets reveals a wide range of historical sites, districts, architecturally significant buildings, and Native American sites.

KEY FINDINGS

» Historic assets are spread throughout the community and connect with the larger network of tourism in the region. With buildings dating back to the 1700s, a rich political background, connections to the Miami Erie Canal, and burial mounds over 2000 years old, there is a rich history within the community that can be leveraged. There is currently no central clearinghouse for preservation resources and funding. This presents challenges to those looking to pursue projects or perform necessary maintenance.

ORIGINS

Chillicothe's sense of place and overall identity is inextricably tied to its history. This rich, unique history stems from connections to important figures, events, and periods from the community's past. These types of historical assets help to set Chillicothe apart from other communities within the Southern Ohio region and have far reaching impacts on economic development and tourism.

The region that is now Ross County was inhabited for thousands of years prior to European settlement by Shawnee Native American Peoples and their ancestors. The City of Chillicothe's origin story can be traced back to General Nathanial Massie, who originally plotted the community in 1796. Chillicothe became the first capital of Ohio when it became a state in 1803. The City again served as the State's capital from 1812 until 1816 when the capital moved permanently to Columbus. Throughout the mid to late 1800s Chillicothe became an important port community on the Ohio and Erie Canal as well as an important paper production City. In 1913 a record flood destroyed most of the city. During WWI Chillicothe became the home of Camp Sherman where over 100,000 men were trained.

Historic assets are spread throughout the community and connect with the larger network of tourism in the region. A review of Chillicothe's assets reveals a range of historic sites, districts, architecturally significant sites, and cultural sites. Preservation of these assets over the decades has allowed Chillicothe to stand out historically in the region.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES HIGHLIGHTS

Chillicothe's sense of place and overall identity is inextricably tied to its history. This rich, unique history stems from connections to important figures, events, and periods from the community's past. These types of historical assets help to set Chillicothe apart from other communities within the Southern Ohio region and have far reaching impacts on economic development and tourism.

Chillicothe Old Residential District

Located south of downtown, the primarily residential district is roughly bounded by 4th, Mulberry, Walnut, and 7th Streets. This area features over 40 homes for their importance historically and/or architecturally and was home to several of Chillicothe's historic figures. Designation was granted for this district in 1973.

Chillicothe Business District

Including most of the current downtown, the district is roughly bounded by 4th St, Water St, Walnut St, and Hickory St. This section of town was given designation in 1979 to preserve architecture which remained intact after both the Great Fire of 1852 and the decades of redevelopment since. Styles included in this district are Greek revival, Early Gothic revival, Italianate, Second Empire, and Queen Anne. Notable buildings include the Miller House, the Warner Hotel, and the Carlisle Block.

Adena Mansion

The Adena Mansion was built for Thomas Worthington and sits on the hilltop west of Chillicothe. The home and property were designated to the National Register in 2003 after a remodel, largely due to it being one of the architect's, Benjamin Latrobe, last remaining intact buildings. The large property included the first Adena burial mound found in the area. The site is also home to the view featured on the State of Ohio seal, a sweeping vista looking towards Mt. Logan.

ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMMING

Ross County Historical Society

The Ross County Historical Society was founded in 1896 to commemorate the centennial of the founding of Chillicothe, Ohio and to preserve and promote the study of the history of the city, Ross County and the surrounding region. One hundred and twenty-five years later, the Society's mission remains much the same. The RCHS conducts educational programs for people of all ages, saves and preserves for posterity historical artifacts and documents, and operates three museums and a library.

Downtown Chillicothe

Downtown Chillicothe is a non-profit 501c3 organization which was incorporated in May 2018 and began its program in August 2018. The group's goal is to work with existing city groups to help revitalize the historic downtown. They provide support to downtown business owners, investors, and the community at large, by helping to create an inviting downtown atmosphere, harnessing local economic opportunity, highlighting the uniqueness of the area, encouraging local businesses to market cooperatively and most importantly, creating an encouraging environment for business owners, entrepreneurs, innovators, and localists alike. There are three committees within Downtown Chillicothe, each with specific tasks and goal sets; Design Committee, Promotions Committee, and Economic Vitality Committee.

Preservation Resources and Funding

There is currently no central clearinghouse for preservation resources and funding. While Chillicothe has active players that focus on the protection of historic assets, there is no central clearinghouse for resources and funding. Much of this knowledge is disseminated at the state level by Heritage Ohio, Ohio's official historic preservation organization that administers the Main Street Ohio Program. Better coordination and communication at the local level can ensure that those interested in pursuing preservation or renovation projects in Chillicothe have the information needed to be successful. With limited developable land downtown, Chillicothe will need to protect its unique sense of place. Outside developers may not always share the same level of admiration for local historical assets as the residents do.

10. WORLD HERITAGE

KEY FINDINGS

- The world heritage site designation cannot be taken for granted. There are only 24 in the United States, and this will be the first in Ohio. Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks will be on the same list as the Taj Mahal and Great Wall of China.
- Increased funding availability is a plus for the individual sites and will bring added exposure to the City of Chillicothe. It is critical to leverage the UNESCO designation as a city to extend the stays of visitors.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The world heritage site designation cannot be taken for granted and is a major accolade for the city/region. The Hopewell Culture National Historical Park contains a collection of six Hopewell ancient mounds. Nowhere else in the world is there such a concentration. It is thought that Chillicothe was the cultural epicenter of eastern North America for the Hopewell community. Artifacts documented in excavations have discovered materials from all corners of the continent located here. The national historical park site in combination with seven other sites within a 30-mile radius of Chillicothe are in the process of becoming a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage site.

STATUS

The World Heritage Program of UNESCO was established to encourage the permanent protection of cultural and natural treasures around the globe. As of 2021, there are only 1,154 sites across the entire globe. The pyramids of Giza, the Great Wall of China, Machu Picchu, and the Taj Mahal are examples of the significance the designation is afforded to. The United States has 24 and includes the likes of Yosemite, the Statue of Liberty, Independence Hall. The Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks originally submitted an application to UNESCO in 2008, received an official nomination in 2021, and are tentatively slated for acceptance in 2023. If successful, this would be the first World Heritage Site in Ohio.

BENEFITS

Increased funding availability is a plus for the individual sites and will bring added exposure to the City of Chillicothe. Receiving UNESCO designation signifies a level of cultural importance on the global stage. The additional awareness locally, regionally, nationally, and globally all aid in the historic preservation strategies and steps taken to ensure future generations are offered the same opportunities to learn and enjoy the Hopewell culture. Beyond awareness, obtaining world heritage site designation offers access to grant and funding opportunities to complete preservation work, conduct research, and more.

As a city, by Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks obtaining global recognition it is a chance to capitalize on an increase in tourism traffic to the region and city. Though most around the city know of the mounds, and maybe even take it for granted, there is not much of a framework in place to support an increase in traffic. It will be important for the city and its businesses to try and extend the stays of visitors that might otherwise spend two hours at the national historical park and then be on their way. Similarly, the visitor experience needs to be considered between downtown Chillicothe and the current park location. There is not a holistic approach to branding and directional signage for the UNESCO site. These and more will be important to best leverage the world heritage designation.

11. PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

This section reviews the parks, trails, protected areas, and open space amenities within Chillicothe. Total acreage, available recreation opportunities, and service area of each distinct park were reviewed to gain insight into the existing conditions. Current planning efforts and projects were also considered to understand the nature and direction of future improvements. Budget and expenditures were also considered. This analysis provides a basis for recommendations as its findings are considered in light of other related topic areas.

KEY FINDINGS

- Residents are afforded excellent local access to park lands. Roughly 60% of Chillicothe is within a half mile of a city park and is well beyond the national standard for parks per resident and acres per resident. Parks of various types are well distributed throughout the community.
- Canopy coverage is significant and should be protected. Topographic features in the community have afforded preserved areas less suitable for development. Almost 17% of Chillicothe is covered by tree canopy but urban forest needs attention.

HISTORY AND GROWTH OF PARKS

As is the case in older communities, the current day prized possessions often originate on unwanted grounds. Yoctangee Park is similar as it currently resides on land that was regarded as "Old Bed." Having previously served as the bed of the Scioto River, a water source, and armory location, it may have been difficult to envision the same 42 acres being so well loved in 2022.

The city is well endowed in the region with environmental assets. Great Seal State Park, the Scioto River, and the larger Appalachian Mountains offer an aesthetic backdrop, natural and recreation benefits, and tourist opportunities. The city's Parks and Recreation Department along with the Ross County Parks District have worked to continually extend and provide connections to the Paint Creek Trail. The city offers its residents easy access to quality facilities throughout the community in both passive and active forms.

EXISTING PARKS

Chillicothe has a diverse set of park types and sizes. The City of Chillicothe Parks and Rec Department owns and operates 14 parks totaling over 300 acres spread across the community. Roughly 60% of that acreage is active parkland, meaning there are sporting fields, playgrounds, etc. The other 40% are passive with meadows, forested areas, wetlands, and more. The park network offers many access points to connect with the Paint Creek Path. The department operates on an annual budget of \$800,000 and staffs 17 employees (year-round and seasonal help included). The Ross County Park District also operates six properties in the area, with the Coppell Sports Complex existing inside the city limits, adding recreational fields, and serving as home to the Chillicothe Youth Soccer League.

There are several additional open space assets to the community beyond playgrounds and softball fields. The Adena Mansion property is operated independently, collecting a fee upon entry to the grounds. Several large

cemeteries are located in the community including the Grandview Cemetery with its National Register designation for its historic importance. Views from that location on the hill are some of the best in the area.

Residents are afforded excellent local access to park lands. Even without the Adena Mansion property, Chillicothe is well above the national standard of acres per 1,000 persons. The national standard is established by the National Recreation and Parks Administration and is 10 acres per 1,000 persons, but Chillicothe has 96 acres per 1,000. Similarly, Chillicothe's park system is impressive in the residents per park category with 1,500 people per park, compared to the national standard of 2,000. In the more walkable portions of the community, there is easy access to park space. Citywide, almost 40% of the community is located within ¼ mile of a park. Roughly 60% is located within a half mile walk to a park facility operated by the City.

NATURAL OPEN SPACE

Natural open space takes many forms in Chillicothe. As defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), "any open piece of land that is undeveloped (has no buildings or other built structures) and is accessible to the public." In Chillicothe this includes; parks operated by any entity, community gardens, cemeteries, burial mound sites, schoolyards, playgrounds both public and privately owned, public plazas, public seating areas, and vacant lots.

Open space is an asset in the community beyond recreation. Most notably, open space provides significant environmental benefits, such as conserving biodiversity, improving air quality, and managing flood risks. Sensitive areas such as floodplains that do not allow for major development can become excellent sites for amenities such as trails or passive recreation. These improvements generally have a ow impact on the environment, and they offer community members the opportunity to enjoy the natural beauty of the city. Open space in parks may also provide residents with outdoor recreational opportunities and places for community members to gather. By preserving open space, communities may also maintain an aesthetic that capitalizes on natural beauty.

Canopy coverage is significant and should be protected. According to the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, almost 17% of Chillicothe is covered by tree canopy, totaling over 1,000 acres. This figure compares to 14% in Lebanon and 6% in Circleville. It is important to note that properties in the northwest portion of the community are heavily forested and bolster the city's overall figures. In contrast, Chillicothe has a high percentage of impervious surfaces, which totals over 30%. This again compares to 17% in Lebanon and 23% in Circleville.

A tree canopy analysis was conducted in 2013 by the Ohio State University and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The study outlines the many benefits to increased canopy (urban heat island, energy costs, carbon sequestration, stormwater management, air quality improvements, aesthetic improvements, and more) and also identifies improvements to be made in Chillicothe's urban forest. It is clear that the Shade Tree Commission and similar groups are passionate and knowledgeable about the benefits, explaining those benefits to the community and developers will benefit the city in the long run before aging species start failing.

The Tree Commission provides a formal body focused on the community forest. The Tree Commission regularly works to preserve and enhance the urban forest existing in Chillicothe. Their mission statement, "...to maintain and improve the community forest of the City through sharing of expertise, guidance, and recommendations to the city administration and property owners for the protection of healthy trees, planned pruning, tree risk assessment, and planting in public rights-of-way, and open spaces." The commission is a valuable group to educate residents, elected officials, investors, and developers about the importance of Chillicothe's tree canopy.

12. THE ARTS

The Arts section reviews the art organizations and public art examples within Chillicothe. Discussions with arts stakeholders and review of public art locations were considered to understand the nature and direction of future improvements.

KEY FINDINGS

- Strong but separate arts organizations. There are a lot of passionate arts community members offering access to the arts, but there could be better collaboration between entities.
- » Limited but growing public art. Few public art examples exist in the city, but each has strong ties to the community.

ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

There are a few organizations in Chillicothe devoted to the arts. The Chillicothe Art League is a group of artists and art enthusiasts who organize and host up to ten events a year including speakers, exhibitions, and an outdoor art festival called Earth Gathering. The Pump House Center for the Arts serves as not only a physical gallery and event space for the community, but also organizes events, shares information, and resources.

Local live theater is an asset for Chillicothe. Several organizations, like the Chillicothe Civic Theatre, are active in the community hosting events and drawing people not only to downtown, but to participate and volunteer. Though there could be better collaboration between organizations, each are working hard towards a common goal of providing entertainment opportunities for people of all ages. Tecumseh is located just outside the city limits but functions in a similar way, drawing over 60,000 visitors annually.

PUBLIC ART

There are a few murals located around town. The oldest of which is the Mailpouch Tobacco ad from 1880 which was uncovered after a fire-damaged building was torn down adjacent to the painting. Though it is difficult to enumerate the importance of public art on a community, establishing an aesthetic that people enjoy visiting is vital in creating place. Arts events like Earth Gathering and gallery hop style nights drive

traffic to the area and support local artists and businesses. Public art within the city acts as markers of the community, developing character and adding to the city's identity.

3. PROSPERITY

The prosperity portion of the report will analyze the health and diversity of the local economy along with the resident's personal property. Additionally, this portion will analyze the relative performance in education and health.

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT⁷

The Economic Development section reviews the overall performance of the city's economy including employment and wages, industry structure, workforce, and visitors.

KEY FINDINGS

- » Chillicothe has more jobs than workforce and the resident labor pool works in a different industry than most of the jobs offered in Chillicothe. This suggests that for some, living in Chillicothe is a lifestyle decision.
- » Given the mix of in-commuters and the types of jobs available in the city, this may suggest a housing affordability problem for those working in Chillicothe.
- » Demographic changes are shifting the workforce in important ways through aging as well as the increasing role of females in filling jobs in the city.
- » There is some evidence of a growing small business base and creative sector that can help build wealth and jobs in the city if the momentum can be continued and they remain in the city.
- The visitor geography is currently highly concentrated in south central Ohio with only 5% of visitors coming from more than 50 miles away. This may change in important ways with World Heritage status. The visitor experience is also likely to change spanning across a wider area of the city given where the hotels and other attractions and amenities exist.

- ES-202 data (unemployment insurance eligible payrolle counts) is the most typical but not available
- Self-employment data is only reported at the county level with approximately a 2 year lag
- Developing baseline economic data for Chillicothe came from several sources including:
 - OntheMap.gov (3 year lagging ES202 data but only at broad industry categories)
 - Longitudinal Employee Household Dynamics data set (LEHD.gov) (3 year lag)
 - County Business Patterns (2 year lag March only snapshot)
 - City tax information
- Therefore, the for purposes of the comprehensive plan focus should be on comparative <u>direction</u>, <u>trend</u>, and <u>order of magnitude</u> of economic performance rather than the "decimal points".

 ⁷ Ohio does not report out labor market data information at the city or town level except for Cleveland and Columbus which makes consistent, comparative data difficult

Critical to Chillicothe's economic future is maintaining an emphasis on quality of place with a range of lifestyle options and a range of quality housing options.

EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

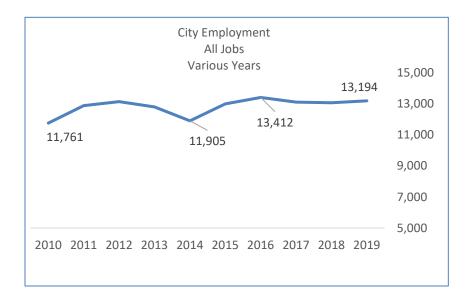
Employment

Chillicothe has more than 13,000 jobs⁸ in the city limits. The city represents approximately 44% of the total job base of Ross County, and 44% of the job base of the Chillicothe Micropolitan Area.⁹

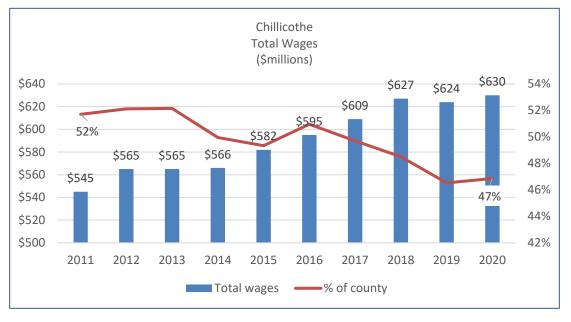
The city has added almost 2,000 jobs since 2010, a 12% increase, on par with the region. This is substantially faster than statewide employment growth of only 9.5%. Employment peaked in 2016.

⁸ Exclude self-employment

⁹ Source: OntheMap.gov is a federal Census tool that combines a series of data sets including ES202 data (unemployment filings) to provide insights into regional labor dynamics. As noted earlier, Ohio does not track labor market information at the city level.



Wages in the city were estimated from the city's income tax withholding data. Based on withholdings the city's wage base has steadily increased by 15% since 2011 from \$545 million to \$630 million. By contrast the county's total wage base grew by 27% during that same period. The city's wage based has decreased as percentage of the county's. In 2011 Chillicothe represented 52% of the county's wage base versus only 44% in 2020.

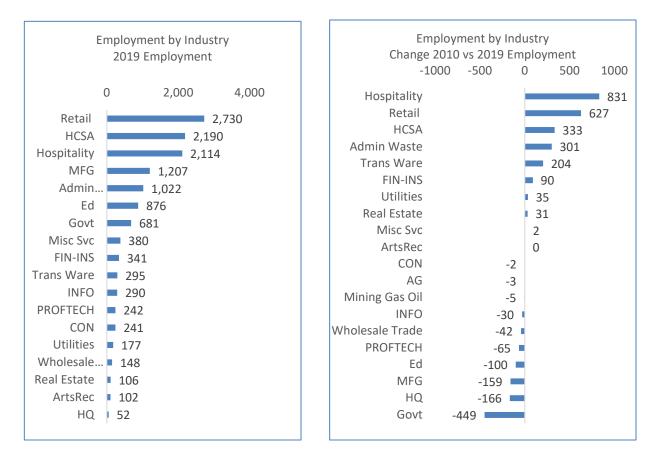


It should be noted that the calculations are based on different estimates of wages. The county numbers were based on bls.gov wage reports from the unemployment system. As noted above, because of lack of comparable data, the city's wage base calculation is based on withholdings. Accordingly, the specific numbers should be considered with caution. However, given the significant

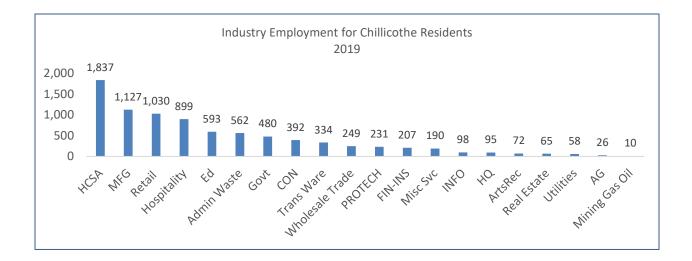
and consistent apparent decline in the relative level of city wages, this is an increasingly important fiscal issue.

INDUSTRY

Retail is the largest industry in the city providing 2730 jobs or approximately 21% of all jobs. Combined with healthcare and social services (HCSA) and the hospitality industry (hotels and restaurants) these three sectors represent 53% of total employment in Chillicothe. The top 3 employment sectors also led the way in growth adding 1491 jobs between 2010 to 2019, while government jobs have had the largest decline.



However, Chillicothe residents work in a different set of industries from those found in the city. For example, retail employs over 2700 people, however, slightly more than 1000 Chillicothe residents work in retail. Healthcare and social services is the largest employer of residents totaling more than 1800. Manufacturing is the second largest employer of residents while only the city's fourth largest employer.



Entrepreneurship is a key part of Chillicothe's economic base, however, there are limited ways to measure it. Because of the limited ability to measure as well as differing definitions a series of indicators were used. Chillicothe saw an increase on individual income taxes which are different from withholdings from wages and salaries. This tax increased by \$23m increase from 2010 to 2020. ¹⁰ Income tax from net profits of businesses and individuals as a percentage of the income base has increased from 19% in 2010 to 22% in 2020, suggesting that entrepreneurship is increasingly important to the city.

Another measure is microbusiness density. Micro businesses are businesses with fewer than 10 employees. County level data is the only measure available. Ross County has 2.6 microbusiness per 100 people.¹¹ The US average is 3.7. This suggests an area of opportunity.

Chillicothe has a small but active creative community. One way to measure this is to look at online market access platforms such as Kickstarter and ETSY.¹² There were 26 Kickstarter campaigns identifying Chillicothe as their home location. Twenty-five were arts-based with only one being product-based. No local ETSY stores were found identifying Chillicothe as their home location.

¹⁰ City income tax information

¹¹ Venture Forward by GoDaddy https://www.godaddy.com/ventureforward/explore-the-data/

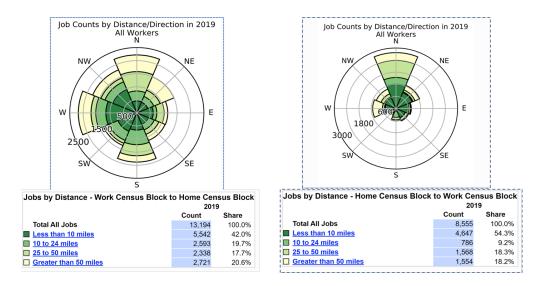
¹² Kickstarter is an online crowd funding platform. ETSY is an online transaction platform for crafts people and makers.

WORKFORCE

Chillicothe has an active labor force of approximately 8500 people. Chillicothe has approximately 2000 more jobs than it has citizens in the workforce. Labor INFLOW – OUTFLOW measures people working in the city versus residents leaving the city for work. Chillicothe's labor needs (workforce) are met by the region – and the city's employment needs (jobs for residents) are also met by the region.



Labor Shed measures how the geography and distance from which the workforce is drawn. Employers in the city pull from a wide area. 20% of workers commute more than 50 miles. Conversely, city residents primarily commute to the north with over 18% driving more than 50 miles.



Incoming Chillicothe workers predominately (64%) live in Ross County. Significant portions commute from surrounding counties such as Pike County – the 2nd largest source of workers for Chillicothe. This

may suggest that for certain classes of workers given the industry mix in the city, concerns about housing affordability may be an issue.

By contrast more than 25% of Chillicothe residents finding employment outside the city head toward the larger metropolitan areas with the largest flow to Franklin County. This may suggest that Chillicothe residence may be a quality of life decision.

There are a several additional important points to consider about the workforce:

FOR THOSE WORKING IN CHILLICOTHE:

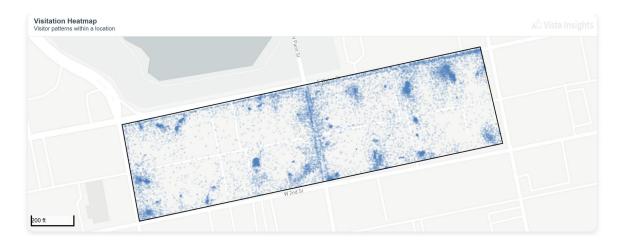
- The workforce is getting older 24% of the workforce was over 55 in 2019 versus 19% in 2010
- Women increasingly represent the majority of the workforce 56% of the workforce is female in 2019 versus 53% in 2010
- Jobs appear to be requiring less education 39% of workers had at least some level of college in 2019 versus 43% in 2010

FOR THOSE LIVING IN CHILLICOTHE:

- The city resident workforce is getting older at a slightly slower rate than the incoming workforce. In 2019 approximately 24% of the workforce was over 55 versus 20% in 2010
- Unlike the commuting in pool male / female split is roughly the same employment splits have floated around 50/50 over the 10 year period
- Chillicothe resident workers have a higher level of education than those commuting in both 2019 and 2010 show 43% of the workforce with at least some college

TOURISM AND VISITOR ANALYSIS

Cell phone data¹³ was used to help understand visitor tendencies and information. The study area is found below and was mapped for March 1, 2019 to March 1, 2020 to exclude COVID impacts.



Based on the data:

- Weekends have the most visitors, but other parts of the week other than Sunday do not show a significant drop;
- Afternoons were the busiest parts of the day;
- Visitors were concentrated along north / south street access points (Mulberry & Water, Paint & Main); and
- 70% of visitors are from approximately 20 miles of downtown Chillicothe

As tourism continues to increase and the pending World Heritage status, these statistics are likely to change with visitors likely coming from a much broader area. Focusing on visitor experience across different parts of the city, providing a range of tourism products and amenities, and extending stays, are critical for maximizing tourism opportunities in the city

¹³ NEAR.COM VISTA INSIGHTS

4. MAP GALLERY

This section provides a comprehensive list of all the maps included in the technical analysis memo. The maps are included in order of appearance in the document, a list is included below for reference. All maps are formatted to an 8.5x11" page layout.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT (LU)

LU.1 City Context LU.2 Existing Land Use LU.3 Existing Character Types LU.4 General Zoning Districts

MOBILITY (MO)

MO.1 Street Typologies & Projects MO.2 Average Daily Traffic Counts MO.3 Walkability Score

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION (AT)

AT.1 Infrastructure AT.2 Ross County Active Transportation Plan

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES (FS)

FS.1 Emergency Service Area FS.2 Police Service Area

HISTORIC PRESERVATION (HP)

HP.1 Historic Locations and Districts

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES (OS)

OS.1 Park Access OS.2 Land Cover

