

SECTION 5

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation systems are vital for moving people and goods and serving existing businesses. They also play a major role in guiding the location and type of development. The following Section provides an overview of the transportation network in Wadsworth Township, and outlines improvements that are planned for the future.

Existing Conditions

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK












The transportation network in a community consists of the pathways and facilities used to move people and products from one location to another. The network includes but is not limited to the following:

- Facilities for automobile and truck transport
- Railways, rail stations, and intermodal facilities
- Waterways and ports
- Airways and airports
- Bicycle circulation facilities
- Pedestrian pathways

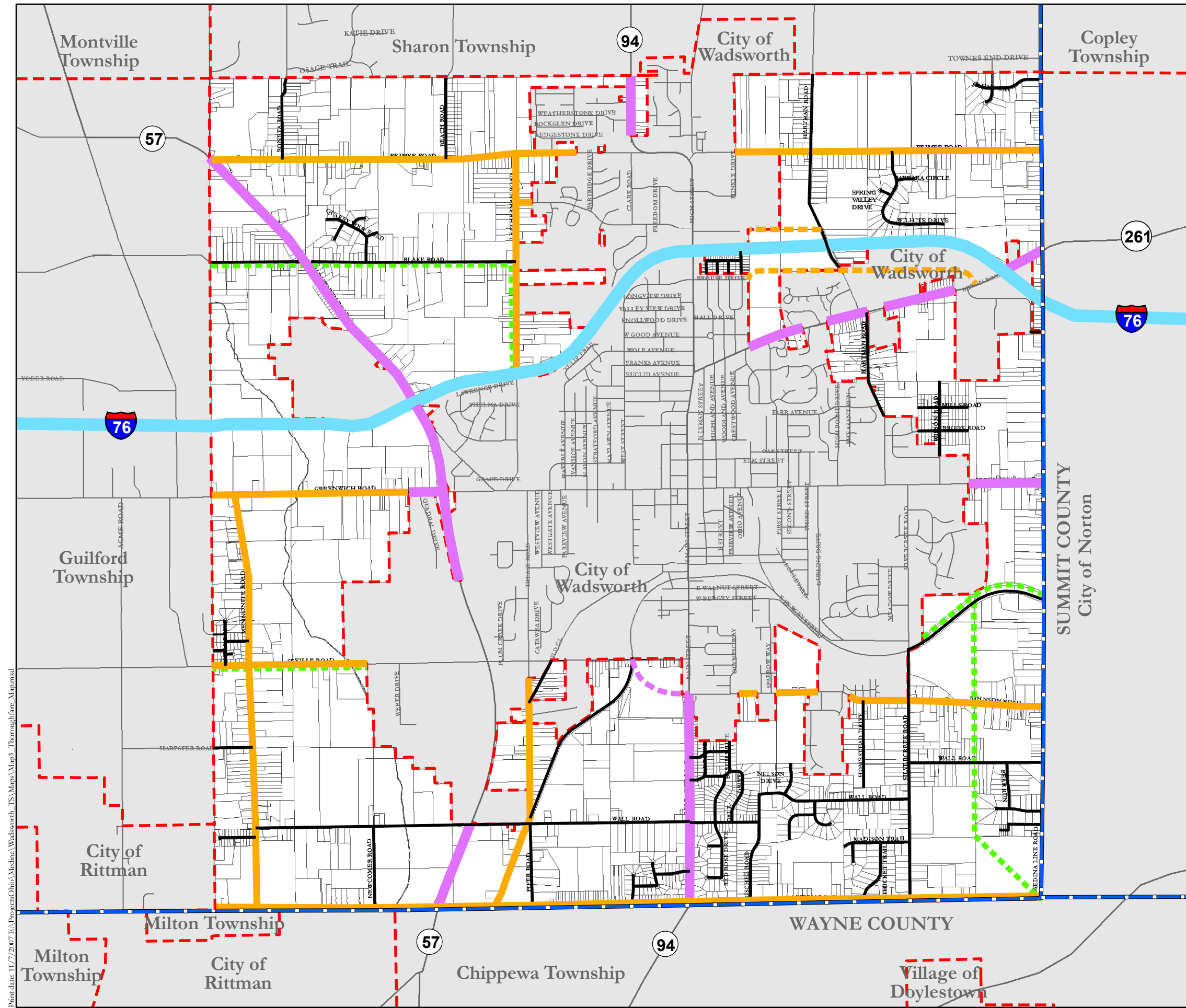
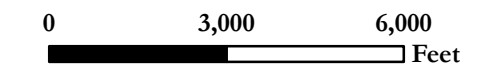
Each of these modes of transportation will be considered in the following subsections. The location of the facilities referenced above that are present in Wadsworth Township are displayed graphically on *Map 3 Thoroughfare Plan*.

Map 3 Thoroughfare Plan

Wadsworth Township,
Medina County, Ohio

-  County Boundary
- Existing Road Classification**
-  Freeway
-  Arterial
-  Proposed Arterial
-  Collector
-  Proposed Collector
-  Local
-  Township/ Village/ City Boundary
-  Conceptual Trail
-  Surrounding Area
-  Parcels

Base Map Source: Medina County GIS, 10/04/2006
 Data Source: Ohio Department of Transportation, 10/13/2004
 Medina County Park District, 2001
 City of Wadsworth Comprehensive Plan Update 1996- Transportation Map Update 2003-2004.



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FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ROADS

Functional classification is the process of grouping streets and highways into classes, or systems, according to the character of service they provide. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) promulgates the classification scheme. The designation of federal functional classification is made at least once every ten years following the decennial census taken by the U.S. Census Bureau, or whenever required by federal regulation. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Functional Classification Committee works in conjunction with ODOT District Offices and various local government entities to establish the classifications of Ohio roadways. The federal functional classification of rural and urban roads includes the following:

Freeway System

The freeway system includes interstate highways, freeways, and expressways. Roadways are designated as freeways when they serve one or more of the following purposes:

- Travel to and through urbanized areas
- Travel to and through small urban areas
- National defense (roads designated by the Federal government as part of the National Strategic Highway Corridor Network (STRAHNET))
- Interstate and regional commerce
- Access to airports, seaports, and major rail terminals or intermodal transfer facilities
- Access to major public facilities

The “freeway” classification consists of thoroughfares with restricted access such as expressways and the Federal Interstate Highway System. The freeway system serves the major centers of activity in a metropolitan area, and has the highest traffic volume corridors and facilitates the longest trips. Interstate 76 (I-76) is the only freeway located in the Township, and is identified on *Map 3 Thoroughfare Plan*.

Arterial System

The arterial highway system provides a high level of mobility at high speeds and accounts for the largest proportion of total travel. Roads are designated as arterials when they serve one or more of the following purposes:

- Travel to and through urbanized areas
- Travel to and through small urban areas
- Regional commerce
- Access to airports, seaports, and major rail terminals or intermodal transfer facilities
- Access to major public facilities
- Access to minor public facilities

Arterials generally have higher design standards than other roads, often with multiple lanes and some degree of controlled access. Examples of arterials include U.S. and State Routes. The arterial system serves the major centers of activity in urban metropolitan areas as well as population

concentrations in rural areas. Arterials facilitate movement between arterials and collectors. The arterial system normally carries a high proportion of the total vehicular travel and most trips entering and leaving urban areas. Arterials located in the Township are identified on *Map 3 Thoroughfare Plan* and include the following:

- ❖ Akron Road (Wadsworth City east boundary east to Medina Line Road)
- ❖ Greenwich Road (Wadsworth City west boundary east to Wadsworth Road, and Wadsworth City east boundary east to Medina Line Road)
- ❖ Mount Eaton Road (Wadsworth City south boundary south to Eastern Road)
- ❖ Ridge Road (Township north boundary south to Wadsworth City north boundary)
- ❖ Wadsworth Road (Township west boundary south to Wadsworth City north boundary, and Wadsworth City south boundary south to Eastern Road)

Collector Road System

Collectors are typically two-lane roads that link major land uses to each other and arterials. They are designed for shorter trips at lower speeds and provide a lower degree of mobility than arterials. Roads are designated as collectors when they serve one or more of the following purposes:

- Interconnection of major thoroughfares
- Interconnection of minor thoroughfares
- Access to concentrated land use areas
- Access to diffused land use areas

The collector system provides traffic circulation within residential, commercial, and industrial areas. Unlike arterials, collector roads may penetrate residential communities, distributing traffic from the arterials to the ultimate destination for many motorists. Collectors also channel traffic from local streets onto the arterial system. Collector streets in the Township are identified on *Map 3 Thoroughfare Plan* and include the following:

- ❖ Eastern Road (Township west boundary east to Medina Line Road)
- ❖ Greenwich Road (Township west boundary east to Wadsworth City west boundary)
- ❖ Johnson Road (Wadsworth City boundary east to Medina Line Road [two sections])
- ❖ Leatherman Road (Reimer Road south to Wadsworth City north boundary)
- ❖ Mennonite Road (Greenwich Road south to Eastern Road)
- ❖ Reimer Road (Wadsworth Road east to the Wadsworth City west boundary, and Wadsworth City east boundary east to Medina Line Road)
- ❖ Rittman Road (Wadsworth City south boundary south to Eastern Road)
- ❖ Seville Road (Township west boundary east to Wadsworth City west boundary)

Local Street System

Local streets represent the largest element in the road network in terms of mileage. All public road mileage below the collector system would be considered local. Local streets provide basic access between residential and commercial properties, connecting with higher order highways. Examples of roads meeting the purpose described above include those located within a residential subdivision or less traveled Township roads. According to the Medina County Engineer's 2005 Annual Report, Wadsworth Township is currently responsible for maintaining 22.47 miles of Township roads.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

The functional classification of roads according to Federal standards serves a variety of purposes, from impacting funding allocations to establishing speed limits and intersection design. For the purpose of this Plan, the functional classification of roads has two broad implications.

First, as communities grow, roads with lower classifications can evolve into roads serving the function of a higher class roadway. As a result, roads designed and previously functioning as local roads begin to convey volumes of traffic more closely associated with collectors or arterials. The Township should coordinate with the Medina County Highway Engineer to determine traffic thresholds, based upon average daily traffic counts, for each functional classification. Such thresholds would play an integral role in planning for future transportation improvements throughout the Township. Increasing use of local roads beyond their intended design capacity often leads to increasing congestion and risk of traffic incidents. The Township should monitor traffic count and accident data on an annual basis and advise ODOT and the County of any roadways which represent safety and congestion concerns.

Second, access management is an ongoing concern for all roadway classifications. The management of existing curb cuts along developed roads can be extremely difficult. The Township should consider developing an access management plan for highly traveled roadways. In addition to developing an access management plan, the Township should review its site plan requirements to limit curb cuts. The Township should also encourage ODOT and the Medina County Highway Engineer to limit and manage access points along arterials in the Township.

The 1996 City of Wadsworth Comprehensive Plan Update includes a Transportation Map Update for 2003-2004. This map shows multiple proposed future roadways within Wadsworth Township. These proposed future roadways include arterials, collectors, and local roads. Some of the proposed roads include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ❖ Arterial road connection between Seville and Johnson Roads;
- ❖ Collector road connection between Great Oaks/Park Center and Hartman Road; and
- ❖ Collector road connection between West Street/Brouse Drive and Akron Road.

The above proposed roads are shown on *Map 3 Thoroughfare Plan*. The Township may wish to consider the above proposed roadways when making future land use and transportation decisions.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Medina County Public Transit (MCPT) operates a demand-based service that is available Monday through Friday. This service allows residents to arrange for pick-up and drop-off throughout Medina County, including Wadsworth Township.

RAIL TRANSPORTATION

Industrial Rail Access

Wadsworth Township is traversed by an active Conrail Railroad. The Conrail Railroad runs parallel to Rittman Road in the south and continues north into the City of Wadsworth, crossing Seville Road. The Conrail line leaves Wadsworth City and re-enters the Township east of Silver Creek Road, crossing the eastern Township boundary into the City of Norton.

Passenger and Commuter Rail Service

Once a year the Orrville Railroad Heritage Society sponsors the “Medina Loop” passenger train excursion from the City of Orrville (Wayne County) to the City of Medina, which is the only time that passengers are served by Medina County rail lines. The nearest Amtrak stations are located in Elyria and Cleveland, which are approximately 48 and 41 miles away, respectively.

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Wadsworth Municipal Airport (WMA) is a general aviation airport located in and owned by the City of Wadsworth. WMA is located on Airport Drive, south of the Seville Road/Weber Drive intersection in the southwest portion of the City. WMA is home to 149 aircraft and has an average of 112 aircraft operations per day. Approximately 71 percent of all aircraft operations are local general aviation, 28 percent are transient general aviation, one percent air taxi, and less than one percent is military operations. The City of Wadsworth is in the process of completing a Master Plan for WMA, scheduled to be completed in 2007. The Township should monitor the planning process in regards to its impact on adjacent Township land uses.

According to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) information, as of September 28, 2006, and posted on the AirNav website (<http://www.airnav.com/airport/3G3>), the following airports also provide air service to the Township. For reference, the information shown in parentheses is the distance from WMA in nautical miles (nm):

- Skypark Airport, *private* (five miles west);
- Medina Municipal Airport (eight nm north);
- Wayne County Airport (10 nm southwest);
- Akron Fulton International Airport (13 nm east);
- Akron-Canton Regional Airport (15 nm east);
- Kent State University Airport (18 nm northeast); and
- Cleveland Hopkins International Airport.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

The Medina County Park District's *Medina County Bike/Hike Plan* (Phase I, 2001) identifies two conceptual trails that would traverse Wadsworth Township. The first conceptual trail would run east and west between Lodi and Wadsworth into Summit County and connect to the Towpath Trail in Barberton. The second conceptual trail would run north and south, providing connections to Silver Creek Metro Park in the south and the Hinckley Reservation and the Emerald Necklace Trail in the north. These proposed pathways would connect Wadsworth Township to the Buckeye Trail, which traverses almost 1,435 miles throughout Ohio. Refer to *Map 3 Thoroughfare Plan* for the location of these conceptual trails in the Township.

The Township should consider cooperating with the City of Wadsworth to improve an old trolley line that travels from near Wadsworth City Hall east to Summit County and connects to the City of Norton. The Township and City could work together to construct and connect the paths inside of their respective jurisdictions. The pending Parks and Recreation Plan for the City of Wadsworth suggests that constructing the path would “improve the connections between parks, neighborhoods, commercial and commercial uses as well as to the towpath trail.”

Pedestrian trails, bicycling trails, and other green space connections should be used to provide a cohesive appearance and act as traffic-calming mechanisms within the Township boundaries. The Township should consider developing a detailed bicycle and pedestrian pathway plan to strengthen connections and improve opportunities for connections to future regional trails. Such plan should identify opportunities to connect existing and future residential neighborhoods with future neighborhood retail shopping centers, schools, parks, open spaces, and other cultural and civic places within the Township, the City of Wadsworth, and the region. The Plan should also identify regulatory land use tools to assure that future developments consider and incorporate the community's pedestrian pathway system.