

# **HENRY COUNTY COMMUNITY PROFILES**

# Henry County Community Profiles



## Purpose

The community profile assessment looks more in depth at the parts of the community; city, villages, and neighborhoods to understand what it is like to live in that specific area. By talking to those with lived experience, there is an understanding of the perceptions, insights, values, and priorities of the people who live there. Learning about the history of a place, opens an awareness of the residents' culture, beliefs, and way of life. When history, people, and sense of community are understood, there are new layers of understanding which fill in data gaps to represent health and quality of life for the people of an area in a more thorough and profound way.

## Methodology

Henry County residents live in markedly different environments. Some people live in the city in busy neighborhoods, with convenient health care, restaurants and stores, others live far distances from their neighbors, a hospital, or stores. What does it mean to one's health and quality of life if they live in Napoleon Township or Washington Township? As people have different lived experiences, the Director of Community Health determined the most effective way to show communities for this project would be to split the county into their 13 townships. To gather information on each township a representative, or key informant, from each Henry County township was interviewed. These interviews were conducted by either the Director of Community Health Services or Health Commissioner. The following topics were covered within the questions asked of key informants: general community and each of the four health priority areas identified for the 2019-2022 Community Health Improvement Plan (access to health care, economic stability, mental health, and substance misuse). The key informants were referred from residents as the person to talk to about the township. Some informants were historians. Some held government office as commissioner, trustee, or mayor. Others were longtime residents. All were leaders in their communities. These names were collected by the Director of Community Health Services and interviews were conducted with each informant.

In 5 townships, there was also focus groups conducted with residents that represented the population of the community. The focus groups were conducted in the township at a community meeting location. All focus groups were asked the same 10 questions about life in their township.

In order to gain a historical perspective, [HENRY COUNTY, OHIO Volumes I, II and III](#), compiled by The Henry County Historical Society were used. Information was gathered about the founding of each township, how it prospered, and interesting information.

The demographic information provided regarding each township was gathered from using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

## Key Findings

The 13 townships of Henry County have a common thread of desired sense of community and have unique attributes on how community is achieved. All townships shared how, where, and why they come together. The place where community came together was vitally important and not for the structure, but for commonality. Identifying a common place for belonging, sharing resources, and caring for one another defined the township. Some communities struggled to identify a place. For most, the common place was the school, library, church, or Legion Hall. For others it was not a building, but it was events such as festivals, fairs, and parades. They come together to celebrate, volunteer and care for one another.

All townships have a strong sense of pride and heritage for where they live. Some are embracing change as the population may be more growing more diverse, and others are holding on to what they have and not so open to development and growth. Many described their township as a great place to raise a family and welcome those who want to live there.

In each township profile, you will find demographic information, a historical perspective, a description of the people who live there and information about the community.

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*A special and sincerest thank you goes out to those who contributed to this project as a key informant or as a focus group participant. Your knowledge, insight, and perspective are invaluable to this work.*

*Thank you for your time and shared information.*

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# Bartlow Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



### Populations and People

Total Population: 2,187

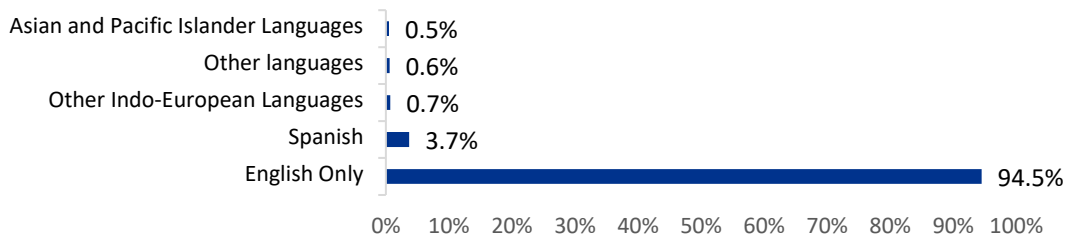
Median Age: 37.6

65 Years and Older Population: 16.0%

Veterans: 8.5%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 5.5%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

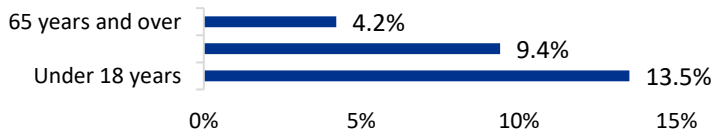


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$59,130

Poverty: 9.6%

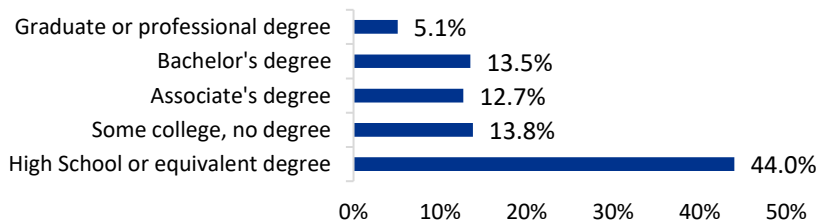
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 18.6%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)





## Employment

Employment rate: 66.8%

Average Travel Time to Work: 28 minutes

Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

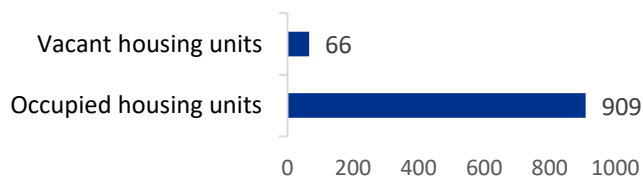


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$840

Homeownership Rate: 74.7%

Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 10.6%

Disabled Population: 12.0%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 23.8%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 9.97%

Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Bartlow Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Bartlow\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=06000000US3906904052](https://data.census.gov/profile/Bartlow_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=06000000US3906904052)

2023 Henry County Community Health Assessment  
*Bartlow Township Profile*

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

The township was named in honor of Cornelius Bartlow, the area's first settler and was organized in 1854. Bartlow township developed slowly due to being at a low point of the Black Swamp, making drainage of the water more difficult. The swamp lands covered the township in its entirety and cheaper, more desirable land was available elsewhere.

The advance of railroads brought a change to the township. Timber was cleared, roads were built, and the drainage was used to form the Deshler Reservoirs as a water source for the railroad. The construction of the Dayton and Michigan Railroad in 1856 and the Baltimore and Ohio Railway in 1873 led to a regular station stop. Having a station stop in the township led to local commerce causing the formation of a small town. The town was first called Portage; however, it was renamed in 1870 to Deshler and became incorporated in 1876.

As the land was now drained, the farms began to spring up on the fertile ground bringing German settlers. By 1875, there were 342 acres of land under cultivation. Many areas in the township remain fertile and used as farmland to the present day.

By 1888, there were three different railroads crossing in Deshler, a school with 389 students, a newspaper called "The Flag", and three churches: Methodist Episcopal, Catholic and Free Methodist. The town continued to flourish with businesses and stores.

In 1900, Deshler was quarantined for smallpox, had to have the school fumigated and several people were out of work due to illness. The early 1900s also brought entertainment with an annual traveling circus, building of a local opera house, and more developing industry within the township.

Sherwin Williams constructed a plant to produce paint rollers in 1953. In that same year the retail businessmen and Deshler Chamber of Commerce held the first Corn City Festival including carnival rides; parade; tractor rode; and displays by local merchants, industry, and farmers.

While the railroad traffic has slowed through Deshler and Sherwin Williams closed their plant in 2009, Deshler is a vital village in Bartlow Township to this day.

Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview and a community focus group. These were conducted in fall of 2022.*

### The People

Bartlow township is considered a very safe and conservative village with many of the founding German families still residents. Although the population has diminished over the years, the township is thriving with charm and is described as a "good place to raise a family." Both key informant and focus group conveyed that small town values, family centered, and a strong faith community are key aspects of Bartlow township.

It was also shared that residents enjoy the peaceful and quiet atmosphere. The quaint, friendly community has affordable homes, a resourceful community library, a grocery, as well as various other retailers. The school most children attend is Patrick Henry Schools. The school district is seen as a critical part of the fabric of this community.

2023 Henry County Community Health Assessment  
*Bartlow Township Profile*

While the focus is on the children and their development, it is also a key part of most everyone's social lives. The school provides sporting events, arts performances, and a place to walk and stay active.

Many residents continue to farm the land in Bartlow township. While a few residents continue to farm full-time, many farmers maintain other employment. Most of those jobs are outside the township with people driving to Defiance, Findlay, Bowling Green, and Napoleon. Two of the largest local employers are Graminex, a health industry producer of flower pollen extracts utilizing local farmland, and HPJ Industries, which focuses on returnable packaging, bulk container repair and recycling services.

## Community

The village of Deshler has been doing revitalization since 2017. This includes removing blighted homes, improving community parks, library, and sidewalk. The reservoirs have become a recreation destination for fishing, canoeing, walking paths, and shelter house.

Those interviewed shared church is considered to community life and serves as local organizers. The religious community works well together as there is an association of churches who provide for those in need with two food pantries and access to clothing and other needs. There is a non-denominational bible study group and a community bible school for children.

The Deshler Library is seen as a community center for the township. Located in Deshler at the edge of a community park, it provides reading and research resources, a meeting place for students to study and do homework, access to computers, and a community gathering place. The library acts as the local historian, communication hub, and is bright spot in the township for many residents.

Train enthusiasts visit the town for its unique railroad history. Especially with Presidents Eisenhower, Nixon and Reagan stopping on their campaign tours. There is a museum that the community is currently developing into a tourist attraction and community center.

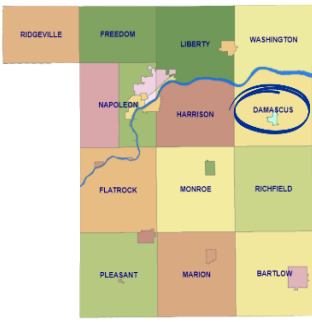
The following are local community events within the township:

- Easter egg hunts
- Fourth of July fireworks
- 5K runs
- Farmers markets
- Fishing tournaments
- Art fairs
- Parades for Memorial Day and Halloween

Key organizers of events in the township include: The Sons of the American Legion and Deshler Chamber of Commerce

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Bartlow township stay informed the following ways:

- Deshler Flag weekly newspaper
- Bulletin boards at the U.S. Post Office; Ron's Super Valu; Deshler Public Library
- Facebook pages: Deshler Chamber of Commerce and Deshler Public Library



# Damascus Township

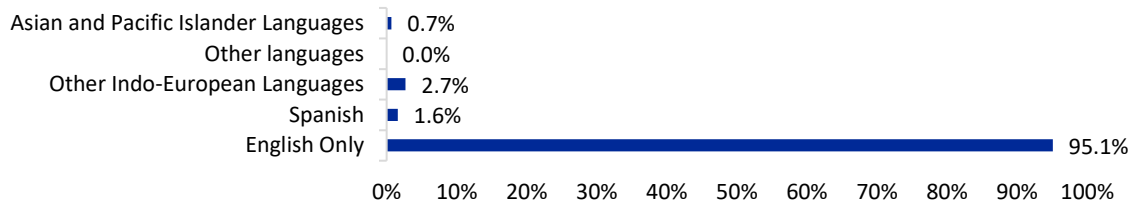
## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Populations and People

- Total Population: 1,783
- Median Age: 39.1
- 65 Years and Older Population: 16.8%
- Veterans: 7.1%
- Language other than English Spoken at Home: 4.9%

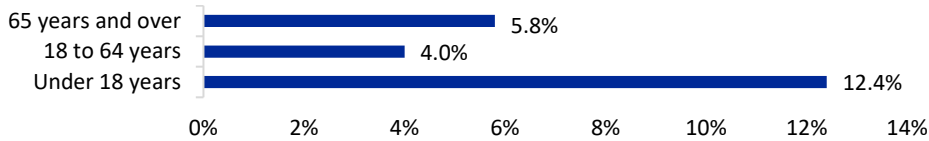
Types of Languages Spoken at Home



### Income and Poverty

- Median Household income: \$61,685
- Poverty: 6.1%

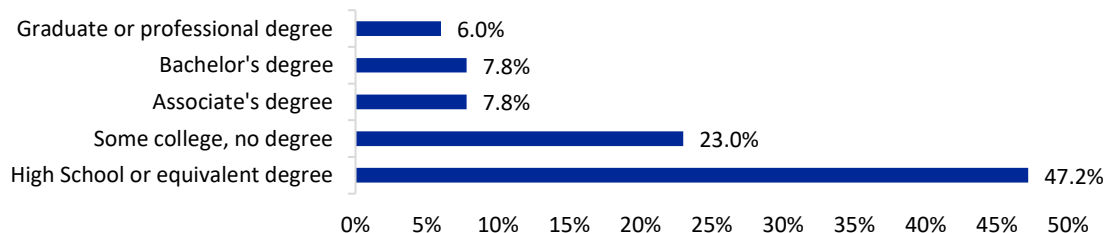
Poverty by Age



### Education

- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 13.7%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)







## Employment

Employment rate: 60.7%

Average Travel Time to Work: 27.8 minutes

### Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over



## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$714

Homeownership Rate: 82.4%

### Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 11.8%

Disabled Population: 13.1%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 21%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 5.89%

Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Damascus Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from

[https://data.census.gov/profile/Damascus\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=0600000US3906920016](https://data.census.gov/profile/Damascus_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=0600000US3906920016)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

While settlers had been in the area since 1820s, a Scottish family, The Reid's, are attributed with starting a settlement in the township in the 1830s. This settlement, called Odessa, was at the mouth of the Turkey Foot Creek along the Maumee River. The community prospered as a port on the Miami-Erie canal that connected trade and peoples from Lake Erie to the Ohio River in Cincinnati. However, those traveling the canal system brought cholera in the early 1850s causing many inhabitants to leave the area or pass due to illness. The canal became increasingly less popular with invention of the train and by the 1880s Odessa was barely inhabited.

As the railroad progressed Odessa ceased to exist, and the village of McClure prospered. This small community had cleared land, built churches and schools, and was incorporated in 1886. The Cloverleaf Railroad of Toledo, Delphos, and Burlington (now known as the Norfolk and Western) went through McClure. With the railroad, came a grain elevator and many other thriving businesses. This included poultry farms, hotels, restaurant, bowling alley, opera house, flour mill, barrel stave factory, and retail stores. In the 1890s, there were three main Protestant churches: Lutheran, Methodist and Evangelical.

The railroad provided economic opportunities as businesses had the ability to ship products to many different locations. In the mid-1950s, George Weasel, Jr, "Dude", started Tem-Cole, a radish packaging business. The name of Tem-Cole was derived from an experiment George tried on the radishes by putting nitrogen gas in the bag and refrigerating them. Tem-Cole means Temperature Controlled and was the first company to package radishes in cello bags becoming a pioneer in marketing radishes without tops. In 1976, Tem-Cole had grown to 160 employees on the farm, in the plant, offices and over-the-road drivers. The plant at McClure processed over a million pounds of radishes each week, that were delivered from the state of Florida. Tem-Cole was the busiest little plant in the world; producing over 50% of the nation's packaged radishes. During this period, McClure was known as the radish capital of the world. Tem-Cole brought employment, money, and air travel to McClure, Damascus township, and Henry County. While Tem-Cole no longer packages radishes in McClure, it is still in business today and known as TC marketing, Inc in Napoleon.

In the mid 1900s, Damascus township and the village of McClure was populated by many families. There were 9 school districts in Damascus that were consolidated to one central school in 1917. The school was seen as the focus of community life. In 1967, this central school, known as the McClure school, was consolidated with Napoleon City Schools moving children's education and events to the county seat in Napoleon, Ohio.

Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview in fall of 2022.*

### The People

Damascus township is considered to have roots in agriculture, but it has grown and been shaped by growth in progress of transportation and industry. While townships in Henry County have deep German roots, this township has Scottish, Swedish, Irish, Dutch, and many other nationalities at its core. It was shared by the key informant that because of the trading posts, canal port, railroad, and industry, Damascus township has maintained a more eclectic group of residents than the other Henry County townships.

Damascus township is still considered to be shaped by transportation as it is near US Route 6, a main route in Ohio's highway system, and parallels Interstate 80/90 through Ohio and Indiana. Many locals utilize US Route 6 for travel, including to work at local industries such as Campbell's Soup or Gerken's Paving. The key informant shared that due to the township's proximity to main highways and interstates, several residents within the township are in the trucking industry. Additionally, the key informant shared that while Damascus used to thrive on agriculture, there are currently few full-time farmers and many others have consolidated or rented their farms. Several families still farm but also hold full-time employment elsewhere.

Recreation brings an influx of population into the township with areas for camping near the Maumee River. Henry County residents and those from outside the county bring their campers to enjoy time on the river during the warm summer months. During these months, business increases due to the influx of population. The campers are mostly served by the gas station that provides alcohol, limited groceries, and prepared food.

## Community

Damascus township includes the Village of McClure. Within the village there is a post office, gas station, Dollar General, telephone company, library, a few churches, and a food establishment, House of Pizza. During the interview, the key informant mentioned that in the 1970s many of the churches had large memberships but are currently struggling with membership as the township has become less populated.

It was shared through the key informant interview, the loss of the school is considered to have greatly impacted the community of Deshler. The children of the township were divided between multiple classrooms and buildings in within the Napoleon Area School System. The lengthy bus ride and distance was seen to make it more difficult for students to participate in school events. Our informant shared this loss of community is still felt. When the consolidation occurred in 1967, many residents actively protested the consolidation of the school. Our key informant described this as a significant event in the history of the township and something people still talk about today.

Damascus township does have a local trailer park and rental properties. The churches are still seen as a vital resource for the community as they provide food pantries and community meals, including those being held at St. Paul Lutheran Church and Country Chapel Christian Union Church.

Both the Village of McClure and the township are considered a nice place to live. The library is seen as important to the community. Additionally, the American Legion is involved in the community and holds an annual Halloween costume contest and manages the community room that can be used by residents.

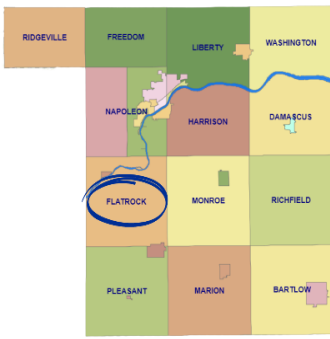
The following are local community events within the township:

- Community breakfasts/dinners held at local churches
- Halloween costume contest

Key organizers of events in the township include: American Legion, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Country Chapel Christian Union Church, and McClure Village Council

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Damascus township stay informed the following ways:

- Bulletin boards at the U.S. Post Office and churches
- Facebook page: Village of McClure



# Flatrock Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



### Populations and People

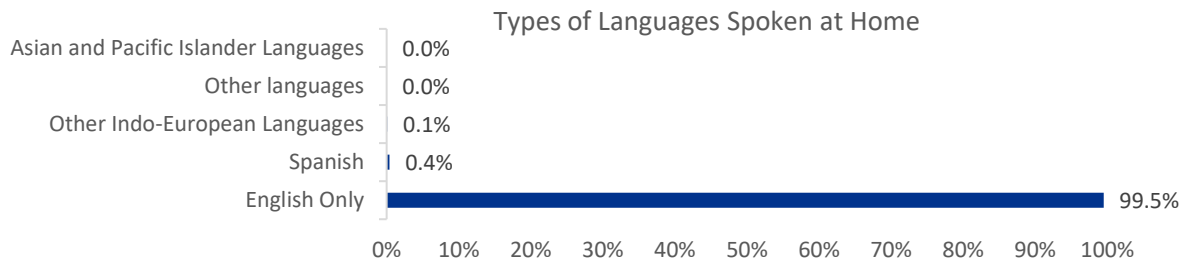
Total Population: 1,248

Median Age: 50.5

65 Years and Older Population: 25.6%

Veterans: 26.7%

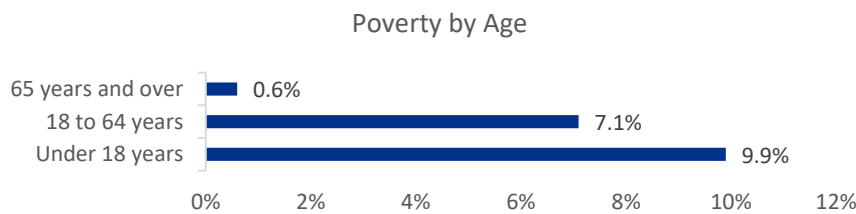
Language other than English Spoken at Home: 0.5%



### Income and Poverty

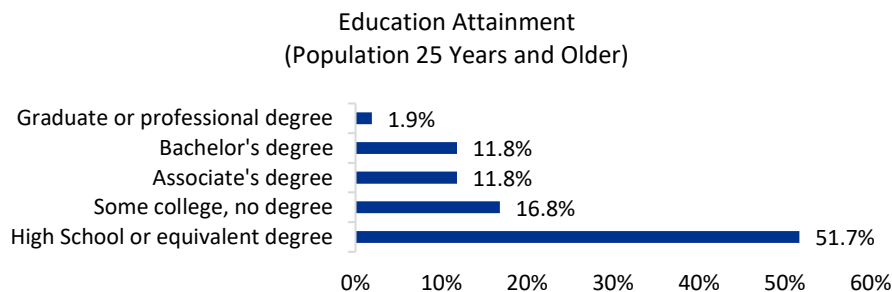
Median Household income: \$90,577

Poverty: 6.0%



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 13.7%



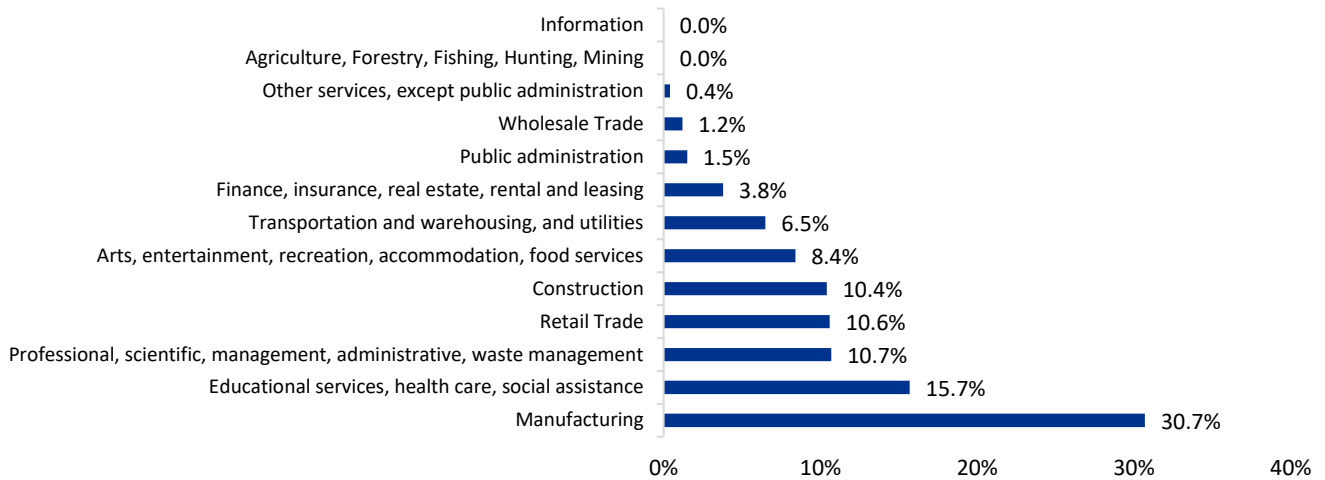


## Employment

Employment rate: 43.2%

Average Travel Time to Work: 20.9 minutes

### Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

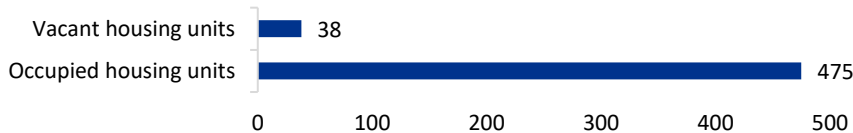


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$944

Homeownership Rate: 93.5%

### Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 1.8%

Disabled Population: 16.7%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 15.7%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 5.6%

### Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Flatrock Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Flatrock township, Henry County, Ohio?g=06000000US3906927342](https://data.census.gov/profile/Flatrock%20township,%20Henry%20County,%20Ohio?g=06000000US3906927342)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

A U.S. Post Office was established in Flatrock township in 1833 and mail was received once a month on horseback. The township was officially organized in 1835. There were more Native Americans than white settlers during the early organization of the township. The Native American camp, Snaketown, was on the south side of the rivers and settlers were establishing farms on both sides of the river, cultivating the prosperous soil. Much of the township was wilderness, but by 1850 roads were established. The Maumee Erie Canal was completed in 1845, bringing new residents to the area. By 1888 there was 469 residents in the township. By 1970, this grew to 1,560 in the township with 285 residents living in the village of Florida. The land in Flatrock township is one of the most productive and fertile lands within Henry County. It has been used to grow grain, tomatoes and other vegetables for the Campbell Soup Company plant located in Napoleon.

Girty's Island became a recreation destination from 1900 through the 1920s. There was access to the island with local ferries and later steamboats from Defiance. On the island there were a few cottages, a food stand, shooting gallery, bowling alley, race track with grandstand, and a baseball diamond. As more individuals came to the island for recreation, a pavilion for dancing and shows, a bathhouse, and a beach for swimming were developed. The largest crowd on the island was over 1,000 people on July 4, 1918.

A school was formed in Florida offering grades 1-12. However, in the late 1960s, the school consolidated with Napoleon City Schools and the school in the township was closed. In late 1970s there was a federal and state initiative designating the area of the Maumee River in Flatrock township as recreational and conservation area. This included anti-pollution efforts for the river bringing back recreational activities, such as fishing, camping, and boating, to the area.

Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview conducted in fall of 2022.*

### The People

Many of the original families that formed Flatrock Township were of German heritage, who were primarily farmers. When the canal was created, it brought more families to the area who remained in the township. While many families are still connected to families that have been in the township for generations, the key informant shared many new individuals and families have moved into the township and Village of Florida.

The Village of Florida is seen as a quiet and peaceful area with many of its residents being friendly. It is felt that the community cares for one another and provides help when its needed. The key informant shared that over the years, specifically in the Village of Florida, community has been maintained and many of the residents know each other well. Residents like living in the Village and Flatrock township as it is seen as a quiet, friendly, community with convenient access to Napoleon and Defiance. Many of the residents work outside of the township, including at Campbell's Soup in Napoleon and General Motors in Defiance.

### Community

With the closing of the canal and lack of train traffic, there are fewer businesses within the township. The key informant shared in the past there were two grocery stores, hardware store, ice cream shop, gas stations, antique shop, and a bar. Currently there is Clubhouse Pizza and a furniture building business, JAK's Barnwood Furniture, within the village of

Florida. It was shared that the closing of the school greatly affected the community as many parents were involved with the school and the sporting events, specifically basketball and baseball, were seen as big events where the entire community came to watch.

The Florida Library is seen as a gem within the township as it has a variety of events and classes throughout the year. There are two churches, Lutheran and Methodist, that are still active within the community. The river is still considered an asset for the community offering walking paths and the ability to use it for recreation. With the village being halfway between the cities of Defiance and Napoleon, it allows for ease of access to resources. The village also has its own volunteer fire department and St. Peter Lutheran Preschool that serves children ages 3-5 years old.

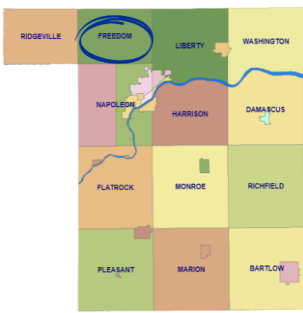
The following are local community events within the township:

- Memorial Day parade
- Summer carnival at the Methodist Church
- Truck and Treat at the Methodist Church
- Christmas party at the Fire station

Key organizers of events in the township include: Village of Florida Council

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Flatrock township stay informed the following ways:

- A newspaper that is printed after the council meetings and copies are available at the library and in community
- Facebook Pages: Village of Florida, Ohio and Florida Public Library



# Freedom Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Populations and People

Total Population: 967

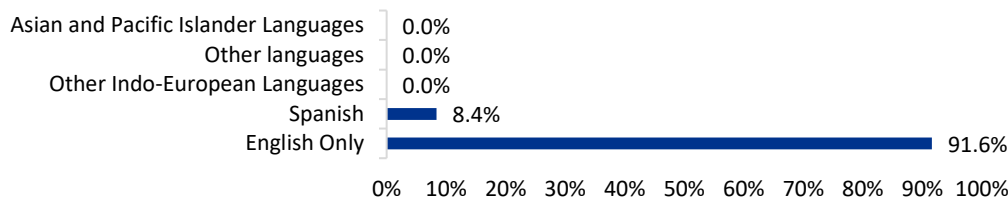
Median Age: 38.0

65 Years and Older Population: 8.1%

Veterans: 9.4%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 8.4%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

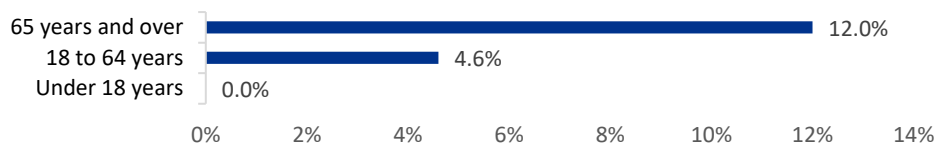


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$105, 234

Poverty: 3.6%

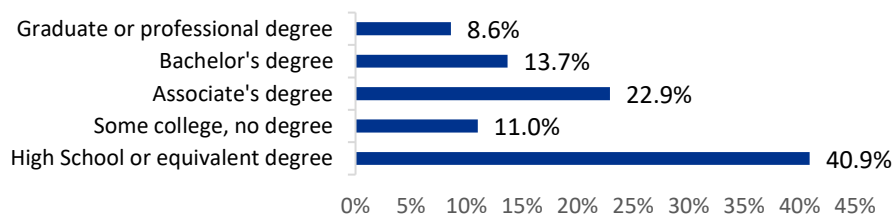
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 22.3%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)





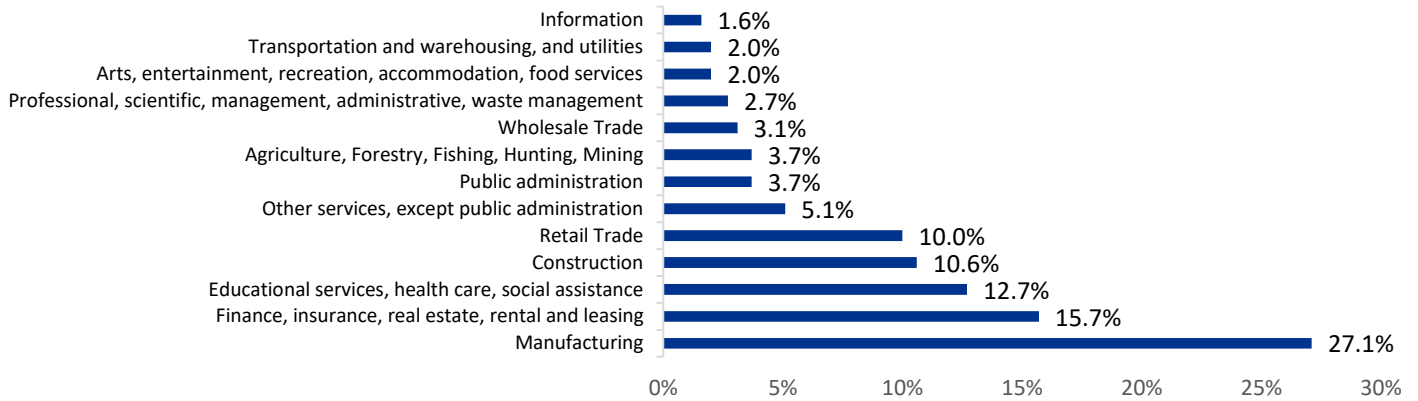


## Employment

Employment rate: 75%

Average Travel Time to Work: 20.5 minutes

Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

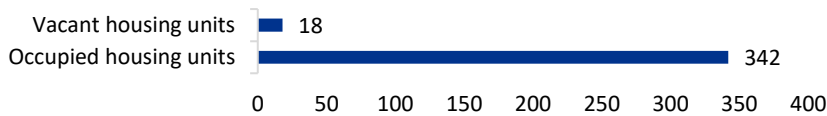


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: --

Homeownership Rate: 91.8%

Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 2.9%

Disabled Population: 14.9%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 35.1%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 5.2%

Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Freedom Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Freedom\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=0600000US3906928700](https://data.census.gov/profile/Freedom_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=0600000US3906928700)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

Freedom Township was one of the first of the five townships organized in Henry County. When Fulton County was organized in 1850, part of Freedom Township was lost to Fulton County and the township is now composed of only 24 sections of land. In 1850, Freedom Township had a population of 460. The influx of settlers in the late 1860s was mostly those of German heritage. The German influence is still there today as some residents still speak a form of German known as “low” German, which is more informal. “Low” German was referred to the language of the workers who used more slang and phrases. The population of the township grew to 1,235 in 1880.

Most land was under cultivation, except for the small Village of Gerald, where Detroit, Toledo and Ironton railroad crossed. A grain elevator was built in 1898 by Henry Baden of Hamler and sold to Frederick Gerken in 1900. The Gerald Grain and Stock Company bought the elevator in 1913. The elevator has always been the biggest business in Gerald. Other businesses opened to support the local agriculture business, such as a farm implement business and a tile company. There were also 2 beauty shops for family needs.

Originally, there were 6 one-room schools. In 1891, a township schoolhouse was built. Through the years, the townships shared a school district. However, by 1928-29 all 1 room schoolhouses were closed. St. John’s Church and School is still a community center of Freedom Township. The church was built in 1871 and the school was started in 1875. Both church and school have had many improvements made to their structures over time and both are still a vital part of the community today.

Naomi was a small community, along the Fulton-Henry County line, about one mile north of Gerald. Several businesses were started in Naomi including, a store, grain elevator, blacksmith, and cheese factory. A saloon was open for a while but closed due to prohibition. By the 1920s, the small community of Naomi was abandoned and some of the homes were moved to Gerald.

Roads in Freedom Township were probably managed like many other townships with volunteers doing much of the maintenance work. The township had six road districts and road supervisors were elected for each district. In 1860, it is noted there was a road tax of 2 mils and each resident in the road district was expected to give a few days of volunteer labor. In 1876, six steel bottom road scrapers and six plows were purchased to aid in maintaining the roads. It was not until 1895 that a building was built to store road equipment and tools. From 1910 to 1916 the mud roads were laid with stone to prepare for higher traffic volumes.

In March of 1896, a Board of Health was organized to manage contagious diseases such as diphtheria, typhoid fever, smallpox, and scarlet fever. The Board put up quarantine signs and ensured homes with disease were properly fumigated.

### Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

# Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview conducted in fall of 2022.*

## The People

The key informant shared that many of the long-term families living in Freedom Township still have German and Lutheran heritage with some newer families moving in with various backgrounds. Some individuals in the township still speak what is considered “low” German, or informal German, within their homes.

It was discussed that while small, this township is still a community where everyone knows everyone, and people take care of each other. Most people have a farming background and some still farm full-time. However, it takes a lot of land to afford the high-tech equipment now necessary to be profitable in farming. Many are farming part-time and working full-time, mostly in manufacturing or teaching. Farmers come together and support each other in planting, harvesting, and other work that needs to be done.

Many people moving to Freedom Township are looking for peace and quiet as they are middle aged with older children. Some homes are changing ownership, with residents retiring, building smaller homes, and turning the farmstead over to the next generation.

## Community

The biggest change according to our key informant was that most township families attended St. John Church and school. The church and school attendance has shifted over the years as fewer township families are attending and those outside of the township are enrolling. However, the overall population of the church and school is getting smaller.

The community members in need are supported by the church food pantry. While now closed, Country View Haven or the Henry County Home was a 40 bed Residential Care Facility designed to assist residents of Henry County on a long-term or short-term respite basis. The County Home was just across the border of Freedom and Napoleon Townships. It was a great resource for lower income and older people.

While Gerald used to be a thriving town, it is much smaller and still has a grain elevator. This used to be a place for social gatherings as there was a store and tavern close by residents visited when at the elevator. While the elevator and fertilizer business are still operating, the social aspect that came with the elevator no longer exists in the community. Due to this, church is the main community connection. St. John Lutheran Church and School has a playground, ball field, and church events organized by church leadership that are open to the community.

The following are local community events within the township:

- Trunk or treat

Key organizers of events in the township include: St. John Lutheran Church

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Freedom Township stay informed the following ways:

- Church bulletin
- Flyers at elevator



# Harrison Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Populations and People

Total Population: 1,297

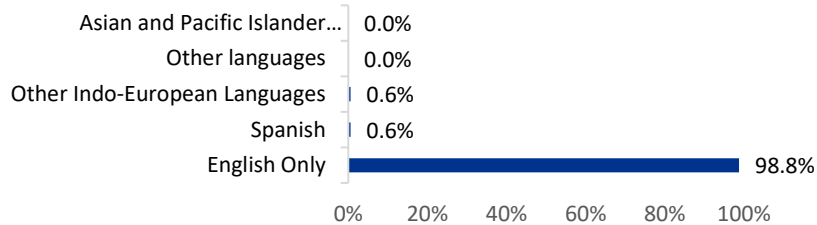
Median Age: 40.9

65 Years and Older Population: 19.6%

Veterans: 10.9%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 1.2%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

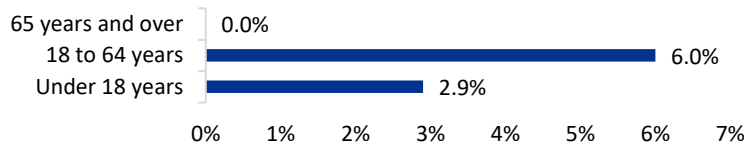


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$57,188

Poverty: 4.2%

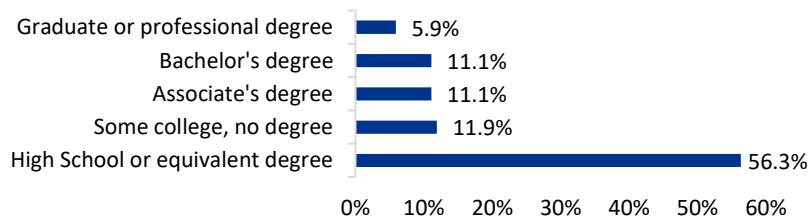
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 17.0%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)



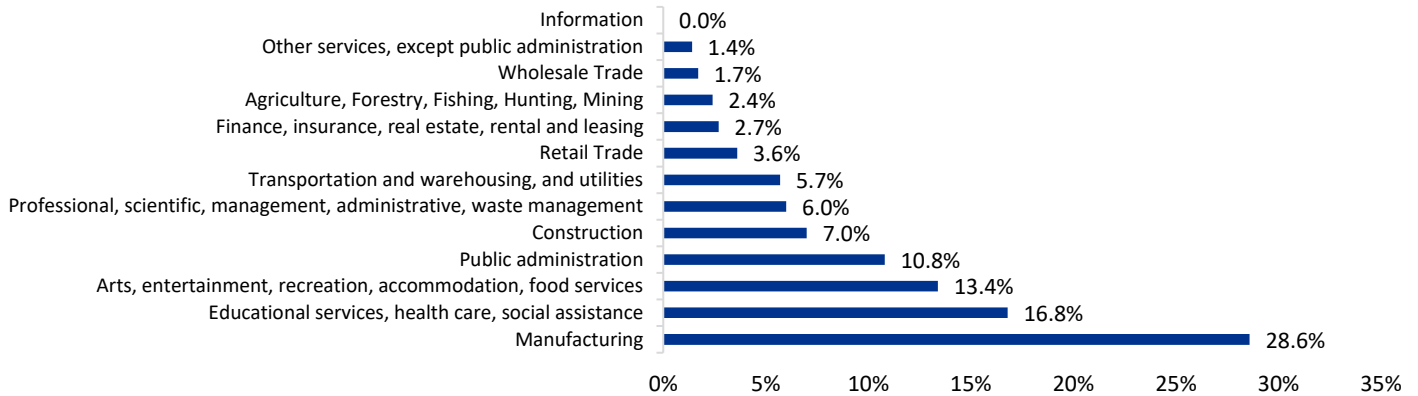


## Employment

Employment rate: 54.2%

Average Travel Time to Work: 20 minutes

Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

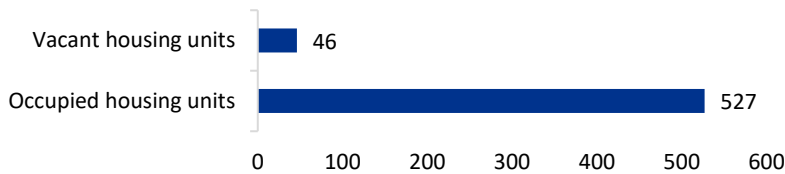


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$795

Homeownership Rate: 67.3%

Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 9.0%

Disabled Population: 10.8%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 21.0%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 5.24%

### Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Harrison Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Harrison\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=0600000US3906933866](https://data.census.gov/profile/Harrison_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=0600000US3906933866)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

The settlers came to Harrison Township by means of the Miami-Erie Canal system in the 1840s. The first to arrive in the area had English heritage and previous lived in Maine and New York. They lived mostly on the northern lands of Harrison Township near the river. There was a high quality of tillable soil lending to a great place for farming. By 1844, a settlement came to be known as the Village of Shunk. It was not until a bridge was built in Napoleon in the 1860s that growth really came to Harrison Township.

A sawmill was established on the Turkey Foot Creek near Shunk in the 1870s providing lumber to build many of the homes in the area. The clay on the south side of the Creek was excellent for making drain tile and two enterprises were set up to make the tile to drain the fields of the Black Swamp.

Churches and religion were very important in the settlers. Initially services were held outdoors or in area homes and conducted by traveling preachers. Sometimes these services were large all-day events that involved many people, picnics, and music. The building of the church structure was an important part of a community settlement. In Shunk, the first church is believed to be an Evangelical and was built about 1860. By the late 1800s more Methodists had come to the area.

In 1918, smallpox was outbreaking in eastern Henry County which prompted protective measures that prevented residents from entering Napoleon and there was a ban on public gatherings.

On June 24, 1969, there was a groundbreaking ceremony for Napoleon-Henry County Airport in Harrison Township. The airport encompasses 60 acres that were purchased by the county and city. However, the opening of the airport did not occur until December 1974. The delay was in part due to lawsuits citing planes would violate surrounding landowners air space rights. The small airport now supports local farmers in aerial spreading fertilizer.

### Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview conducted in fall of 2022.*

### The People

The key informant described the residents of Harrison Township as hardworking, mostly frugal people who are farmers or work for themselves. The population was described as changing due to small farmers having sold their farms to those who own much larger acreage. The homes on these farms then become rentals being occupied by younger families.

The most common profession within the township was described as farming, with individuals working on their own farm or a larger farm conglomerate. Other residents work for Gerken Paving or other various local businesses. Due to the aging population in this township, many residents are retired.

### Community

Harrison Township is seen to be about agriculture with both family and conglomerate farms tilling the land and producing crops. Much of the land is passed down from generation to generation. The key informant described the community as safe, a great place to live and raise a family, and has access to necessary resources with it being close to Napoleon.

Additionally, it was shared that residents in Harrison Township can feel the quiet of the country and still be able to attend events nearby. In the past, there was a larger congregation at the Sharon Methodist Church within the township and they held an annual Strawberry Festival. This event is no longer held as attendance greatly dwindled. While there are not celebrations specific to Harrison Township any longer, residents feel a part of Napoleon and participate in events and activities there. People from Harrison Township are very involved in community groups and events in Napoleon.

There are no local community events within the township.

Key organizers of events in the township include: Township trustees

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Harrison Township stay informed the following ways:

- Norwest Signal
- Defiance Crescent
- Toledo Blade



# Liberty Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Populations and People

Total Population: 2,442

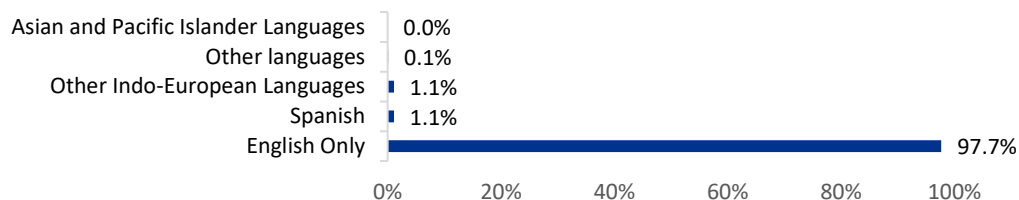
Median Age: 45.3

65 Years and Older Population: 23.2%

Veterans: 6.6%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 2.3%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

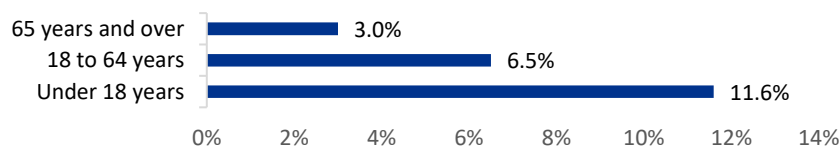


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$54, 805

Poverty: 6.7%

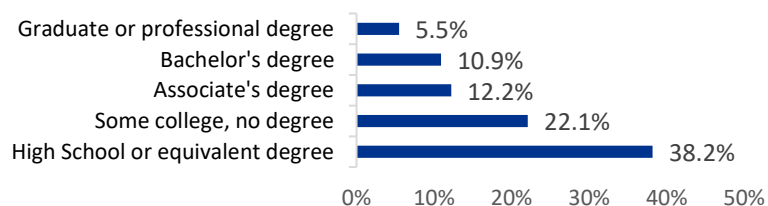
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 16.4%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)





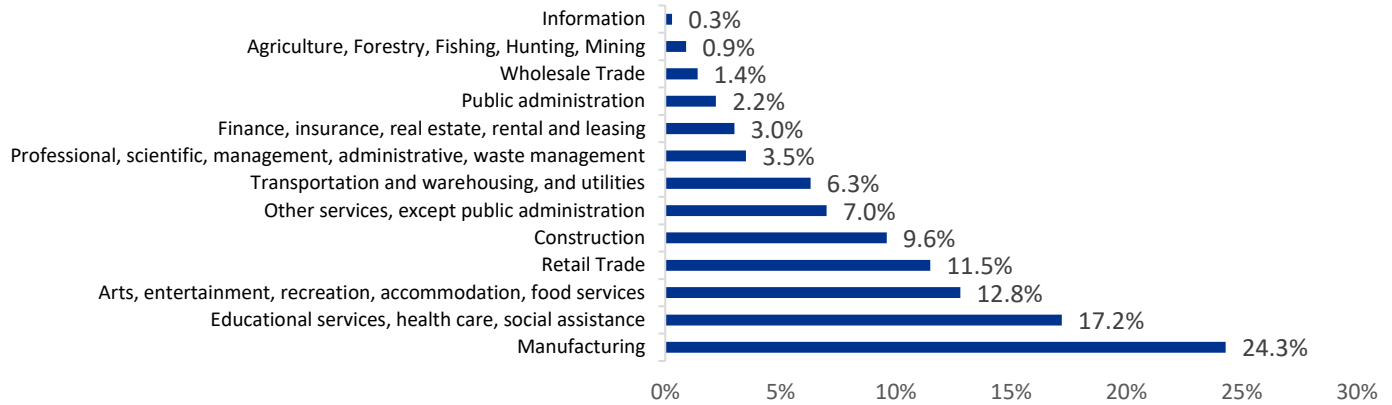


## Employment

Employment rate: 57.8%

Average Travel Time to Work: 23.7 minutes

### Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

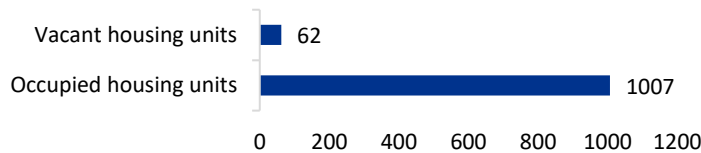


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$808

Homeownership Rate: 65.2%

### Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 5.7%

Disabled Population: 14.0%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 20.1%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 3.85%

### Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Liberty Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Liberty\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=0600000US3906943176](https://data.census.gov/profile/Liberty_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=0600000US3906943176)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

In the late 1850s, the land which is now Liberty Center was just a brushy thicket but had clusters of neighborhoods. The connection for all residents in the township was the Post Office. In 1860, the first medical practice and grocery store were established near the Wabash Railway. In 1863, the village of Liberty Center was born. The Civil War kept the new village from growing right away, as many young men joined the Ohio Volunteer Infantry, and the others were busy with farming and clearing land. The village of Liberty Center was officially incorporated in 1874.

By 1888, the Village of Liberty Center was a flourishing community with a population of between four and five hundred. There were a few stores, several saloons, and restaurants. A gristmill for flour and sawmill for lumber served the surrounding community. There were several churches: Methodist, Episcopal, German Reformed, United Brethren and Seventh Day Adventists in the township. Liberty Center was a railroad and telegraph station on the Wabash, had the third best post office in the county, and a printing office from which the Liberty Press was issued weekly. The Liberty Press has been sharing the news and informing residents since 1881. This weekly newspaper still serves the community today.

The school started in 1863 bringing great pride to the community. Three students graduated in the class of 1884. With the construction of the first brick building in 1886, the school continued to grow through the years adding classrooms, gymnasiums and eventually a separate structure for the elementary classrooms. In late 1972 and early '73 the buildings were damaged by a series of fires and for 3 months students were housed at the Migrant Center. In 1974, there was a total enrollment of 1,310 student in the school system.

Another source of pride in Liberty Township is the fire department, which was chartered in 1908 as the Liberty Center Volunteer Fire Department. The department began with a hand drawn cart that was pumped manually. Fire cisterns to supply water were established around the village. In 1926, there was a vote to change the name to the Liberty Center Community Fire Department. In that same year, a fire truck was purchased with donations raised from the townspeople. Money was also raised for firemen to build the fire house, attend conventions, and other purchases with festivals and dances attend by the community. In 1957, a building was acquired and remodeled to become the new firehouse.

Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview and a community focus group. These were conducted in fall of 2022.*

### The People

Based on the key informant interview and focus group, the township today is seen as traditional, conservative, friendly and wholesome. It is felt the Village of Liberty Center embodies its mott of “small town, big heart” as the community comes together for events and each other. Residents were described as farmers, blue and white-collar folks who want to maintain the quiet, and peaceful town in which they live. It is seen as a very rooted community where families have stayed for generations. Residents enjoy living in the country while still having the closeness of resources.

While most people are employed in manufacturing of steel, automotive, or plastics, many also farm on the side. The residents are very community minded and most everyone attends school events. Neighborhoods have block parties and are social with one another. Residents often invite others to socialize in their homes. Many residents in the community

have grown up together which leads to further connections. Based on the interviews, residents in Liberty Township are considered to have a strong sense of tradition and togetherness.

## Community

The township is seen as quiet, peaceful, and welcoming. It was shared that a sense of pride within the community continues to be the school and it is attracting people to move to the area. Younger families are looking for houses, or apartments to be able to live within the school district. The school, local businesses, and area residents greatly support each other. The sporting events are a source of entertainment for the entire community. The school provides a Senior Citizen breakfast in which students provide entertainment. The businesses and residents support the schools financially. Additionally, 4-H and FFA also bring the community together.

Churches within the township continue to be an important part of community life. St. Paul Church offers preschool and after school programming, which helps support working parents. The local United Methodist Church offers a food pantry and other churches support those in need. Often times neighbors and family assist those who are in need.

Those in the focus group felt the fire department is vital to the community where residents strongly feel the department must continue to be supported and maintained. The Liberty Center Library is also seen as a cornerstone of the community as they provide activities, a place to gather, and are involved within the community.

The Village of Liberty Center does have a café, pizza shop, gas station, ice cream shop which is open in the summer, and a Dollar General. It was mentioned the local doctor office and grocery store are now closed. A Dollar General is now in the previous grocery store location. Liberty Township is seen to have access to various resources including hospitals and medical specialists via US 24, which runs through the township.

The following are local community events within the township:

- Fall Festival
- Christmas Open House
- June Jubilee
- Spring Festival

Key organizers of events in the township include: School district, library, fire department, Village Council

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Liberty Township stay informed the following ways:

- Liberty Center Press
- Liberty Center Library
- Area Churches
- Facebook Groups: The Liberty Center Experience and Liberty Center: Around Town



# Marion Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



### Populations and People

Total Population: 1,301

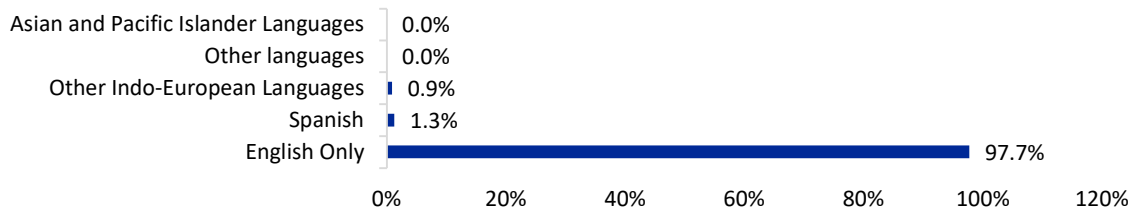
Median Age: 37.9

65 Years and Older Population: 16.5%

Veterans: 6.6%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 2.2%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

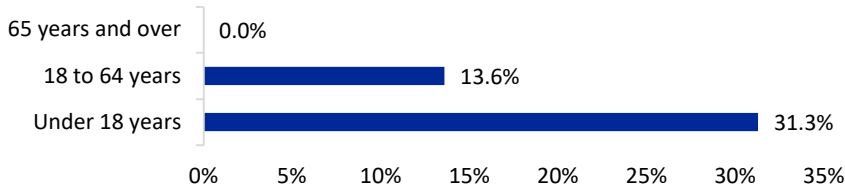


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$61,875

Poverty: 15.0%

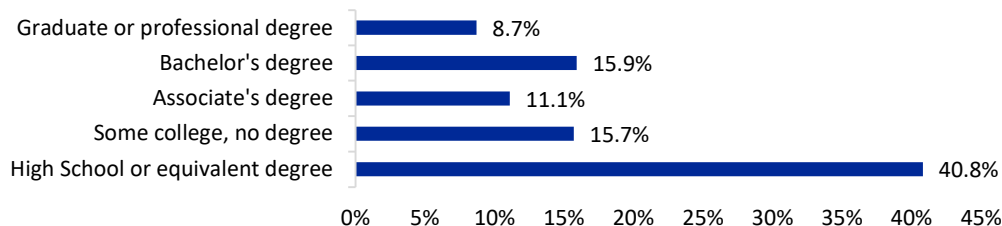
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 24.7%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)



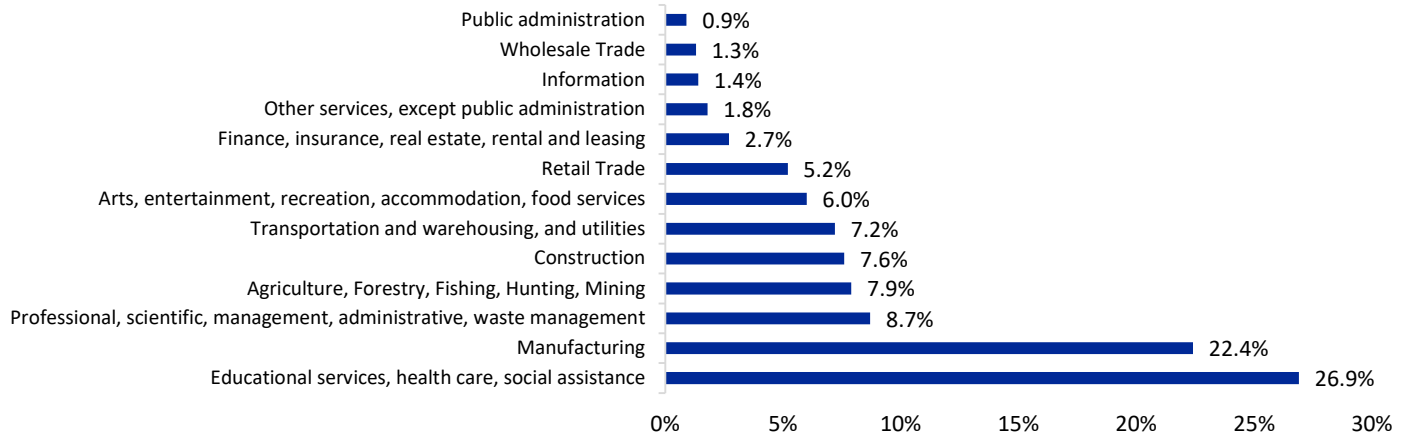


## Employment

Employment rate: 57.9%

Average Travel Time to Work: 30.5 minutes

### Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

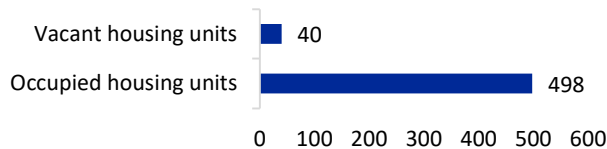


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$780

Homeownership Rate: 85.4%

### Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 3.8%

Disabled Population: 14.2%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 21.5%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 13.45%

### Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Marion Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Marion\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=0600000US3906947726](https://data.census.gov/profile/Marion_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=0600000US3906947726)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

The township was laid out in 1821 and later organized in 1847 with ten voters. Most settled along the Ridge, or County Road Y, as it was higher and drier than other locations in the area. The population in 1860 was 195 and by 1880 there were 1,202 living in the township. There were originally four villages: Edwardsville, Gallup, Woodville, and Hamler, with only Hamler remaining. Gallup survived for many years as a shipping and transportation center as it was located on the Ridge with several stockyard and livestock buyers. By 1850, settlers began to come to Marion Township looking to clear the land for farming and use the trees for building. These people were described as hunters, woodsmen, builders, and farmers. Most settlers of the township were of German and Irish descent.

The Village of Hamler grew rapidly with the addition of a sawmill to harvest the logs, building of schools, churches, stores, and medical facilities needed by the settlers. In 1888, Hamler had 500 people and now included a barrel stave factory, 2-story brick school, Catholic Church, Methodist Church, and Lutheran Church. Community infrastructure continued to improve with a new fire engine in 1890, a road scraper in 1891, a hardware store in 1908, and a bank in 1907. Hamler also had a general store, restaurants, hotel, and creamery.

In the 1850s, there were country schools in Marion Township. The one in Hamler was called Porcupine school, because of the many porcupines in the area that became nonexistent due to deforestation. Children had to walk a mile and a half to get to school and because the ground was always wet, they jumped from log to log to keep their feet dry. By 1878 a 2-room school was built but growing enrollment led to a 4-room school in 1898. This school included high school and advanced subjects of algebra and physics. The first class graduated with 3 students in 1900. The country schools merged with Hamler's school and an additional building was added to meet enrollment needs in 1953. In 1964, Patrick Henry Schools was officially formed when the Hamler school consolidated with other local school districts.

A German Heritage festival drawing crowds from all over the region was started in Hamler in 1968; known as the Hamler Summerfest. It began as a one-day event but soon grew to a three-day event entertaining crowds with traditional polka music, beer, and German food. In 1973, 13 acres were purchased to be a park and grounds for the festival. In 2023, Hamler will celebrate its 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Hamler Summerfest. The event is entirely run by local volunteers and the funds raised are used to improve the park grounds.

Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview and a community focus group. These were conducted in fall of 2022.*

### The People

Today, Marion Township is still mostly an agriculture community. Most families have roots and ties to the original settling families in the area. During the key informant interview and focus groups it was shared some children of the local farming families have left the area and the ones who have stayed are taking over the farming of the family-owned land. Of these younger farming families, it is typical for one or both spouses to be employed outside of the township or county. Many residents work at the school, in healthcare, or manufacturing. Many farmers also take on part-time work in addition to working the crops and farm.

It was shared that the people who live in Marion Township and Hamler really enjoy living in a small agricultural community. There is a feeling of control, that their voice matters, and when something happens, they can be a part of the solution. There are jobs in the area, cost of living is affordable, and it's a good place to raise a family. Like many small towns, the population is declining, and aging. There are young couples moving back to work and many have family ties that bring them here. There are also young people moving in for a different life than where they were raised in the city.

It was shared that the people who live in the township are friendly, know each other, but are welcoming to newcomers. The Village becomes like family, and everyone pulls together to support the community. Volunteering is seen as a key part of the community and there are multiple opportunities to volunteer including Summerfest and other local festivals. The community comes together through church and other smaller events as well.

The children in the township go to Patrick Henry Schools for their education. The community is also very involved with the district through education, sports, and events. The school events bring people together regardless of residents having children within the school system.

## Community

The German heritage is seen as still very strong within the township. It was shared that the community prides itself with doing things themselves and being self-sufficient. Community groups typically meet at the Hamler Branch Library, which is a part of the Patrick Henry School District Public Libraries. These libraries are open to the public and are a great resource to the township. Hamler also has a hardware store, which provides the typical hardware items and offers other specialty items as necessary. They are seen as a resource within the community as they are able to order and supply specific goods for local residents.

While there is no local grocery, residents in the township often grow their own fruits and vegetables. Additionally, Hamler has three restaurants Bier Stein, It Is Not Just Pizza, and Kline's Uptown Bar and Grill. The Justop Carryout and Gas Station also offers various food items.

A significant change to health in Hamler is the water quality. Hamler has their own public water system. Recently the plant equipment was updated and operations have been changed to better water quality. Also, a new water town was approved. Hamler Community Park Grounds and Banquet Hall is used for weddings, graduation, and family Christmas events. There are a variety of music festivals each year along with the traditional Hamler Summer Fest and Hamler Country Fest.

The following are local community events within the township:

- Summerfest
- Farmer's markets
- Community Easter Egg Hunt
- Northwest Ohio Praise Fest
- Country Fest

Key organizers of events in the township include: Hamler Men's Club, Hamler American Legion, Ladies of the Wide-A-Wake Club

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Marion township stay informed the following ways:

- Church bulletins
- Bulletin boards at the post office, library, grain elevator and churches
- Facebook Page: Village of Hamler



# Monroe Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Populations and People

Total Population: 1,083

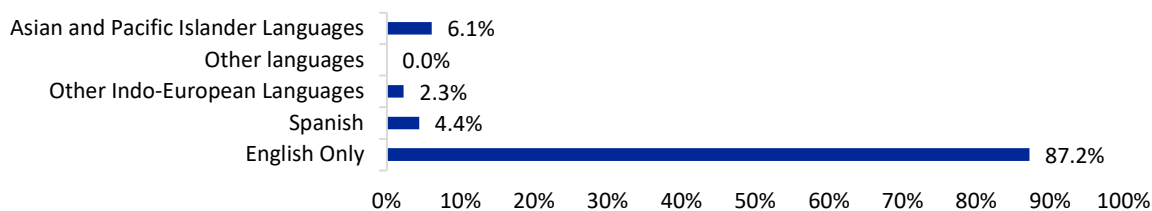
Median Age: 39.5

65 Years and Older Population: 23.1%

Veterans: 3.9%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 12.8%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

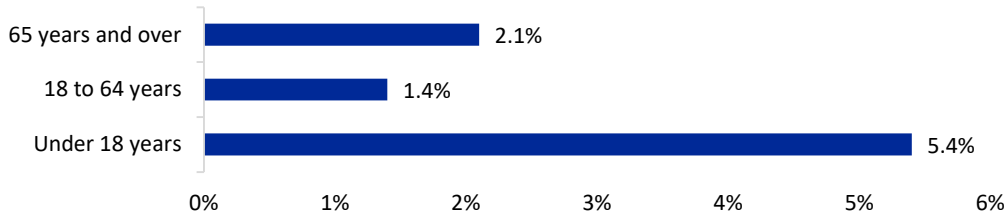


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$72,917

Poverty: 2.4%

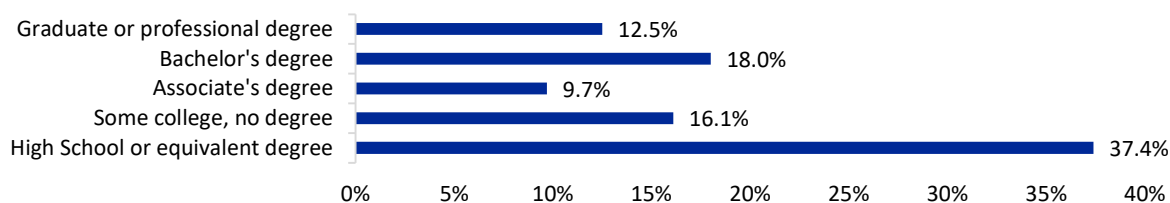
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 30.5%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)





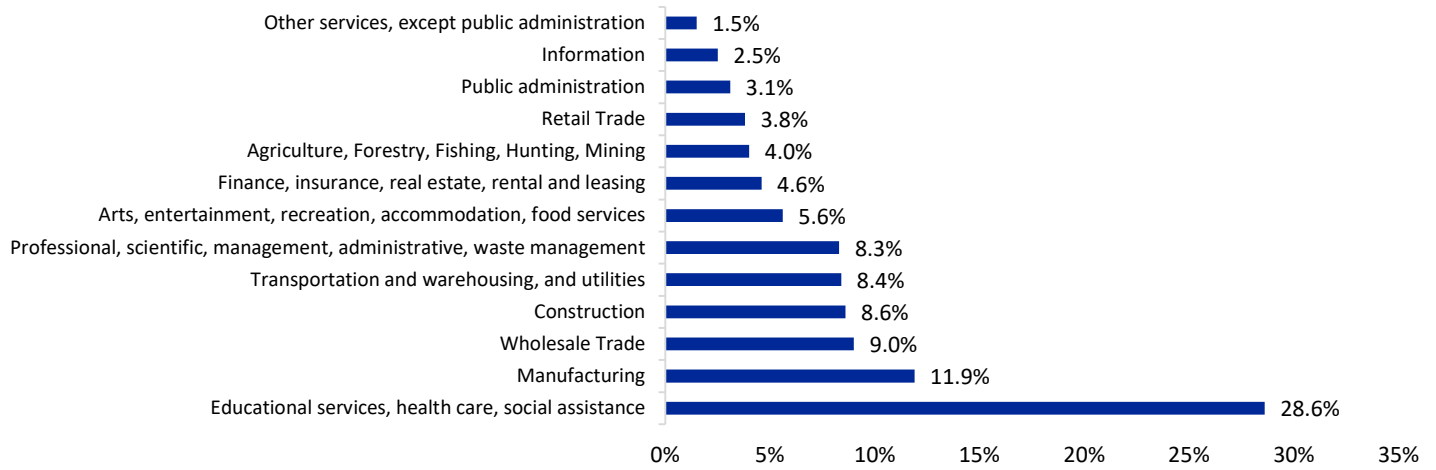


## Employment

Employment rate: 60.0%

Average Travel Time to Work: 26.5 minutes

Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

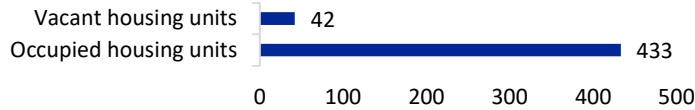


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$881

Homeownership Rate: 86.6%

Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 1.0%

Disabled Population: 9.7%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 21.6%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 6.46%

Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Monroe Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Monroe township, Henry County, Ohio?g=0600000US3906951408](https://data.census.gov/profile/Monroe%20township,%20Henry%20County,%20Ohio?g=0600000US3906951408)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

Monroe Township was established in 1850 and by 1880 there were 1,148 residents residing there. This agricultural township developed quickly during this time with nine school districts, five protestant churches, and three villages. The growth was caused by two things: prosperous, cheap farmland and railroad access. By 1888, much of the flat, level, and wet land was drained in the township and about 75% was under cultivation. The railroad was used to deliver and ship grain, produce, other goods to and from the township.

Three villages formed due to the railroad: Elery, Malinta, and Grelton. The Toledo, Delphos, and Burlington Railroad, also known as the “Cloverleaf Railroad,” connected the village, other areas in the county, and region. The trains need to stop to “refuel” with steam or coal often, therefore leading to depots in the villages. This led to growth in each of the villages where grain elevators, general stores, blacksmith, and other various businesses were established.

The Village of Elery, or Herrtown as it was once called, had a railway station, grain elevator, post office, a barrel stave mill, two grocery stores, saloon, tile mill, and other businesses. Schutzenfest, a traditional festival featuring target shooting competitions, was held in the Village of Ellery for many years bringing people to the area. In the 1970s Ellery still maintained a trucking and elevator company, a tile company, Advanced Drainage of Ohio, a flea market, and the township buildings. A popular steak restaurant, The Ellery Supper Club, drew people to the area for many years.

The small community of Grelton is located in the northeast corner of Monroe township and stretches into Harrison, Damascus, and Richfield. In 1881, it had a population of about 300 with a post office, telegraph, schoolhouse, two dry good stores, meat market, restaurant, sawmill, and hoop factory.

Malinta became the principal village with 400-450 people living there. John Bensing purchased 100 acres and started the community naming it after his daughter Lizzie Malinta Bensing. The majority of settlers were German immigrants. The train station, telegraph, and post office supported the development of the village. As the Village of Malinta was growing there were more businesses established: dry goods stores, two saloons, restaurants, shoemaker, sawmill, clay brick and tile factory, and spring factory. There were two churches in the township, one Lutheran and one United Brethern. There is record of a community band as early as 1887. There were various organizations and clubs with largest being the American Legion and Auxiliary that began after World War 1.

Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interviews in fall of 2022.*

### The People

Monroe Township residents are described as lovely, friendly, and hardworking. One key informant for the township shared Monroe Township is still a rural community with many people still in agriculture related business such as farming, grain elevator, or fertilizer production. It was shared that there are few farmers than before but much of the same land is still being tilled as agricultural technology makes the work more efficient. However, this same technology is costly and is driving more residents out of working the small family farms. Those who do farm often have other jobs to supplement farming and/or rent or sell portions of their land. Many residents are retired, and others work in manufacturing or construction companies in the region. Another key informant shared many residents live in Monroe Township for the family connection and the laid back, solitude of life in the country. Some still have ties back to the families who settled in

the area originally. Some younger families have been moving into the area, but many leave the township for their education and find work elsewhere.

Because of the location of the township, some children go to Patrick Henry while others go to Holgate. Both school districts bring residents together with their activities and sporting events. There is a strong volunteer base that helps support both schools, local community events, and area fire departments.

## Community

Today, it is mostly farming and a few local businesses such as Gilson Screen, a metal fabrication company, Pringle Company that makes air duct cleaning trucks, and JAD Machine, a metal parts producer. In the Village of Malinta, there is a bank, post office, and Klein Brothers Hardware store. It was shared that the hardware store is important to the community and other surrounding communities as they provide seeds for many area gardeners to grow their own fruits, vegetables, and flowers. The Copper Bar and Grill in Malinta is a place where many people meet for family dining and socializing. The Elery Supper Club used to be very popular among residents in the township and across the county. When it closed in 2010, it greatly reduced the traffic to the Elery area. Additionally, it was shared that since the gas station in Malinta has closed there is not as much traffic in town and people stopping to get gas.

There is a community park with playground equipment and ball fields in Malinta that is used during the summer by area children. Based on the location of the township, some residents tend to go to the Village of Holgate for various needs including groceries, parks, or community events.

The Malinta Community Historical Society whose mission is to preserve the history of Village of Malinta and Monroe Township are keeping the train history alive by restoring the railroad depot and caboose. The depot is a museum with period equipment and tools. Events are held throughout the year to fundraise and tell the stories of trains in Monroe Township.

Monroe Township maintains a volunteer fire department in Malinta. Additionally, the Henry County Landfill is located in the northern part of the township, being used by the entire county.

One event that ties the township together is the Malinta Fest in July, organized by the Malinta Festival Group. This event is sponsored for area residents, businesses, and community groups. Money raised supports Malinta community and provides scholarships to area children.

The following are local community events within the township:

- Memorial Day Parade
- Malinta Fest
- Pancake sausage breakfast 4 times a year Monroe Township Fire Dept.
- Chicken BBQ in July

Key organizers of events in the township include: Malinta Community Historical Society, churches, fire department

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Monroe Township stay informed the following ways:

- Flyers in hardware store, post office and both grain elevators
- Facebook Pages: Malinta Fest, Malinta Community Historical Society and Malinta Fire Department



# Napoleon Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



### Populations and People

Total Population: 9,750

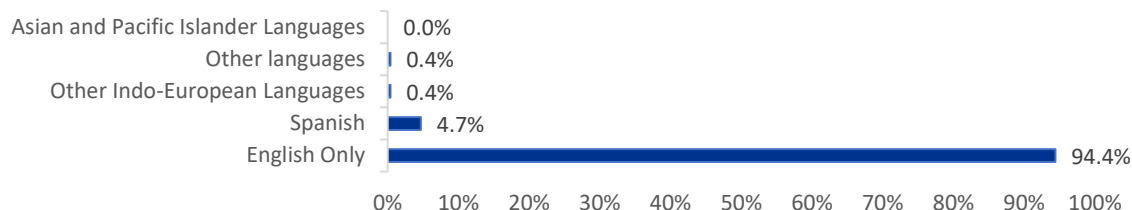
Median Age: 41.0

65 Years and Older Population: 18.7%

Veterans: 9.6%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 5.1%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

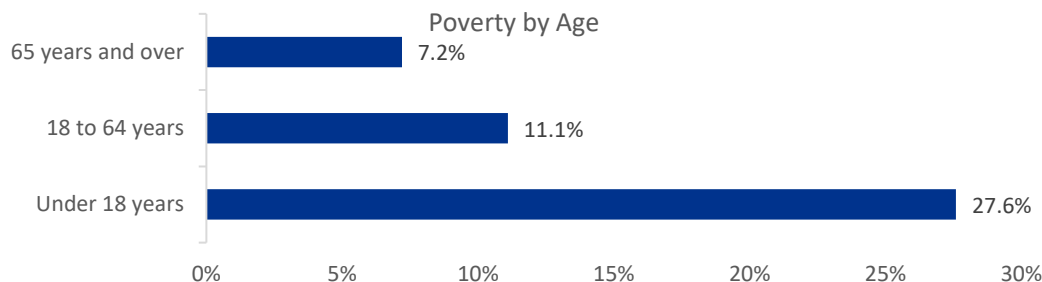


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$61,023

Poverty: 15.0%

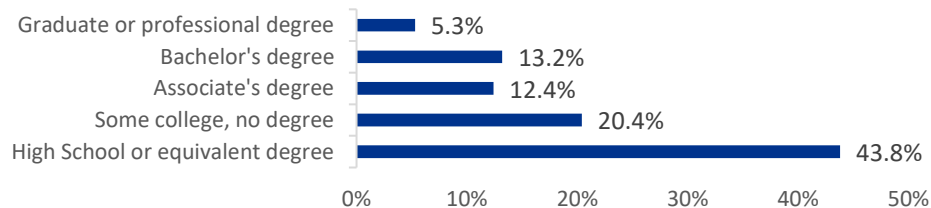
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 18.5%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)



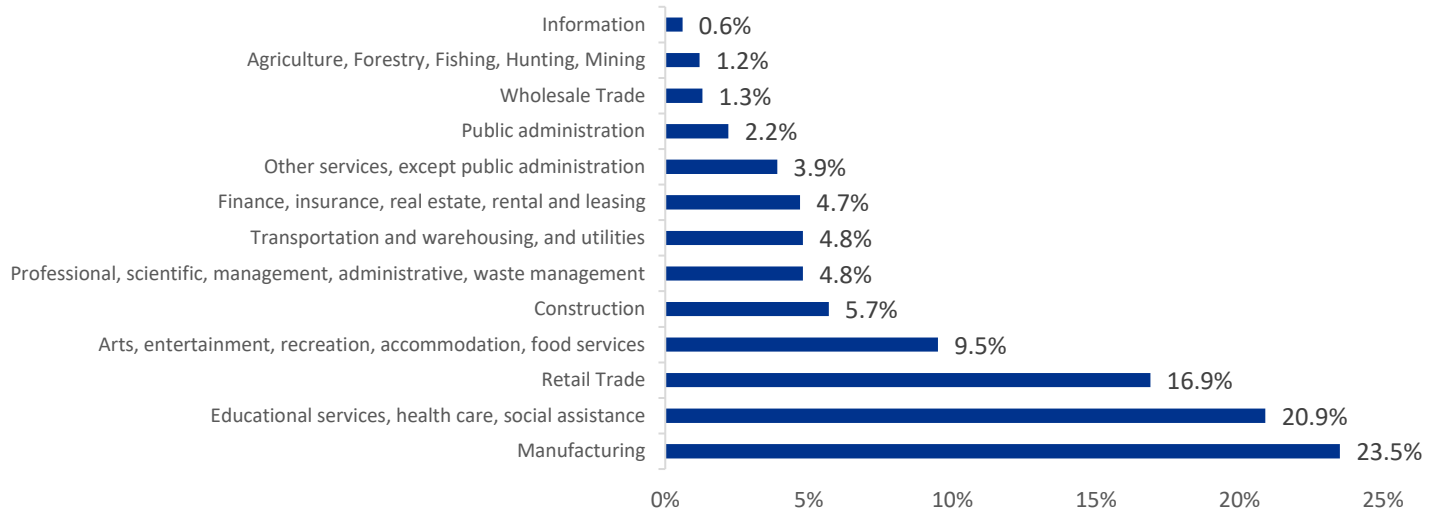


## Employment

Employment rate: 61.9%

Average Travel Time to Work: 17.8 minutes

Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

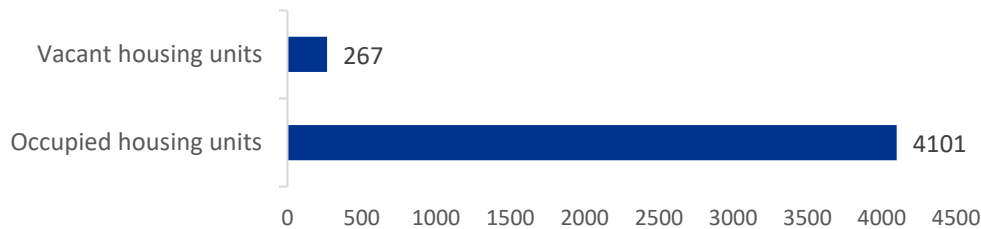


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$781

Homeownership Rate: 73.7%

Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 4.9%

Disabled Population: 12.4%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 26.8%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 9.37%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Napoleon Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Napoleon\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=0600000US3906953564](https://data.census.gov/profile/Napoleon_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=0600000US3906953564)

# History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

Napoleon Township is home to the county seat, largest town, and only city. In 1835, when Napoleon became the county seat, only a few residents had been attracted by the beauty of the location and the fertility of the soil. Napoleon was incorporated in 1863 and in that year, there were only 12 or so stores and very little manufacturing. The current courthouse was built in 1882 and is a focal point in the community. The Village of Napoleon did not officially become a city until 1950.

A fire department of any kind was not founded until the 1870s. After a block of homes, businesses, including a school, burned to the ground, the town council decided they needed more protection against fire. The Napoleon Fire Department was formed in 1879 and the town purchased a steam pumper known as "Old Betsy Jane". In 1975, the fire department moved to the current location on Riverview Avenue. There was no police department until 1942. Prior to this, the town was safe guarded by marshals, or night policeman, and deputy marshals. The postal service started in Napoleon during 1835, with rural delivery beginning in 1901 and city carriers bringing mail to homes in 1908. Drinking water was pumped out of surface wells until 1895 when municipal waterworks was created.

Until 1919, people were treated for ailments at home, even surgeries were performed on kitchen tables or floor in one's home. The S. M. Heller family left their majestic Victorian home to be turned into Henry County Hospital in 1919. By the late 1970's the hospital had 50 beds with 9 physicians on staff. In 1982 a 64,000 square foot facility with 52 beds was constructed with which has expanded over the last nine years. Today, the facilities have grown to 100,000-square feet, serving the community as a critical access hospital.

The first Henry County Fair was held in 1853 in Harrison Township and drew about 500 people. The success of this event caused a fair board to form and land to be purchased on the south side of Napoleon. The 4-H programs started in 1919 teaching leadership, agricultural, and homemaking skills.

The first Napoleon Township School was held in a small log cabin near a tavern in about 1837. Napoleon Township school districts were formed in 1858 and land was purchased for a new brick school named the Union School, which existed until 1921. Henry County Board of Education in 1937 developed a reorganization plan to create local school districts. This would eliminate township boards, and in turn, the small 1-room schoolhouses. Napoleon Schools began to accept more students through annexation of area school districts. Harrison Township was adopted into the Napoleon Exempted Village School District in 1939. Napoleon Schools accepted the transfer of Florida Local School District students in 1965. Damascus Township voted to become a part of Napoleon Schools in 1967 and Napoleon School District accepted 45.6% of Ridgeville School District students with the remaining students attending Archbold Schools in 1968.

The library began in two rooms of a resident's home in 1906 but was moved to the upper rooms of a store on Perry Street in 1907 with 225 books. With access to the Ohio State Traveling Library to supplement the collection, the library moved to various locations until 1913 when the Carnegie Library was opened.

By 1882, seven major Christian religious groups were represented in Napoleon. The earliest churches were St Augustine Catholic Church, 1845; The Episcopal Church of St. John the Evangelist, 1853; St Paul Lutheran, 1856; St. Paul Methodist Church 1860; St. Paul Lutheran in Napoleon Township, 1866; American Lutheran Church, 1882; First Presbyterian Church, 1901. St. Augustine Catholic School started in 1865 and St Paul's Lutheran School started in 1933.

Also in the township is Okolona, named for the surrounding oak trees. Local oak trees furnished railroad ties, wood for manufacturing of ships, and fuel for homes and the railroad. In 1918, there was a post office, grain elevator, various stores, saloons, and a shop for machine, electric and auto repair.

Source: Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

# Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting key informant interviews were conducted in fall of 2022.*

## The People

The Township of Napoleon includes the city to the east and rural farmland to the west. Due to this, two key informant interviews were held to gather perspectives as living in the township differs from living in the city of Napoleon.

The west side of Napoleon Township is mostly farmland with Okolona, the only remaining village. Many still have German Lutheran heritage and some families date back to the original settlers. The key informant described the residents as hardworking, self-sufficient, and willing to care for their neighbors. Some residents within the township are able to still speak the native low German language. Other aging residents within the area have chosen to stay at home with family and neighbors looking after them.

The establishment of the U.S. 24 highway has made travel easier within the county, surrounding areas, and more populous cities. The key informant stated that those living in the township felt they are close enough to amenities but far enough away that homes are not on top of each other. Those moving into the rural part of the township are younger families moving out of more congested areas. The key informant shared that these individuals are buying or building homes in the area near the farmland for the quiet and peacefulness of country living. With this movement, the population in this area of the township has become more diverse. The local farmers do work together and help where they can. Many people in the community still get together at one another's homes for gatherings. This has helped the sense of community on this side of the township to continue. While this area of the township is seen as strongly independent, the sense of community creates an environment where residents come together to help those who may be struggling.

The City of Napoleon sits primarily on the east side of the township. During the key informant interview, the residents who live within the City were described as hard-working, conscientious, and steady. Much of the community places value on getting things done and overall pride in the community. The people in Napoleon are said to enjoy living within the city because it is comfortable, safe, offers a variety of things to do, and family connections. Much like other townships, many families have lived in the area for generations. There have been a number of civic minded residents who volunteer their time to make Napoleon a better place.

The population within the city has begun to become more diverse. Some previous residents have begun moving back to the area to raise their family. The key informant noted that COVID made it easier for some to work remotely and they are opting for places like Napoleon, with more affordable housing, and proximity to family to help with childcare. There have been some who have moved to the city for employment, but it was shared that this is limited due to lack of affordable housing in the area. There are many kinds of work in the City of Napoleon including many jobs being agriculturally based, manufacturing, and service work. The number of people holding down two jobs has increased over the last 10 to 15 years as cost of living continues to rise.

Most children within the township go to Napoleon Area City Schools, however some attend one of the parochial schools for grades K-8 in the area and others homeschool. The school is a big connection for people in the township and surrounding areas. Both key informants shared that many residents support the school and their activities. Many residents go to sporting events and other activities even if they do not have a child currently enrolled. Additionally, the school sports facilities are also available to the community when not in use by the school including tennis courts, indoor swimming pool, track and practice field. This has created more ownership of the district by all members of the community.

## Community

In Napoleon Township, much of the community is centered around the City of Napoleon. However for the most western part of the county that is more rural, there is some communication connection around Okolona. While Okolona has shrunk over the years, the Okolona Tavern and grain elevator still bring people together. Additionally, families in the township gather together at their homes.

While U.S. 24 has brought more people to the township, it also brought distrust among the longtime residents according to key informants. The building of the highway split farms and personal property and divided the township itself. Homes were taken down to build overpasses and connector road that were not built or were closed. This reduced access makes farming more difficult as equipment and livestock needed to be moved back and forth on either side of the highway. This created a physical divide causing neighbors to not gather together as often. Additionally, the once quiet area has more noise nuisance with the increased truck traffic. While the highway has caused challenges, it has changed the community greatly in recent years. Local businesses, workers, and residents are able to drive or transit goods to larger cities with more commerce and entertainment. Additionally, the highway also caused individuals to relocate to or from the area.

With the City of Napoleon being the county seat, many events are held within the city limits. The township and other residents of the county come together for festivals and events such as the Feast Fest (formally Rib Fest), Fourth of July celebrations, Henry County Fair, fall festival, car shows and other events on the fair grounds. People line the streets for the parades in the city for Christmas, Memorial Day, and the Fair.

In addition to events, sports are also a big draw in the township. Napoleon Area City Schools have numerous sports teams that students participate in and are attended by residents. Outside of the school setting, the City of Napoleon park system supports a golf course with a simulator, outdoor swimming pool, playgrounds, skate park, tennis courts, little league baseball, softball, soccer, swim team, and basketball. There are also parks and areas along the river with trails, boating ramps, and fishing areas within the city. The Napoleon Library is seen as vital to the community providing a great selection books, services, and place for meeting in the community. Many utilize the library for the internet access and a quiet place to read or study.

As the City of Napoleon is the county seat, it is home to several county organizations including Senior Center, Job and Family Services, Health Department, Board of Elections, Transportation Network, HOPE Services (Board of Developmental Disabilities), Emergency Management Agency, Sheriff, Commissioners, and others. These organizations not only serve Napoleon Township but the rest of Henry County.

The following are local community events within the township:

- Fourth of July celebrations
- 5K runs
- Henry County Fair
- Feast Fest (Rib Fest)
- Parades for Memorial Day, Christmas, and fair

Key organizers of events in the township include Henry County Chamber of Commerce, county organizations, nonprofits

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Napoleon township stay informed the following ways:

- Northwest Signal newspaper
- WNDH radio station
- Information in area businesses including restaurants
- Facebook Pages: various organizational pages (City, Chamber, Health Department, School), various neighborhood Facebook groups





# Pleasant Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Populations and People

Total Population: 1,882

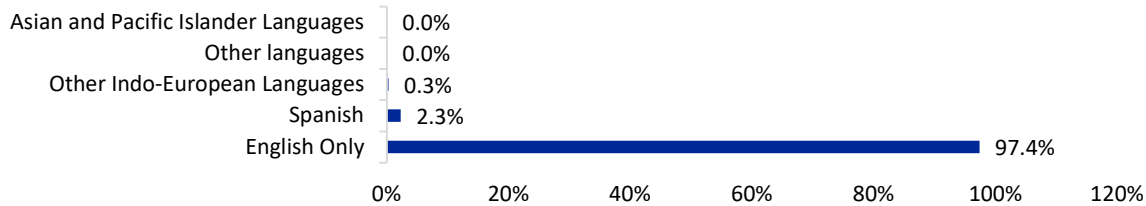
Median Age: 41.8

65 Years and Older Population: 17.8%

Veterans: 10.9%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 2.6%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

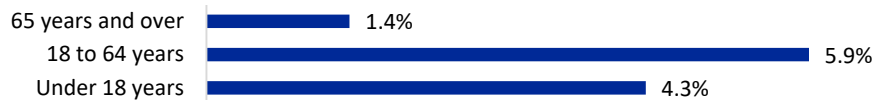


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$58,615

Poverty: 4.7%

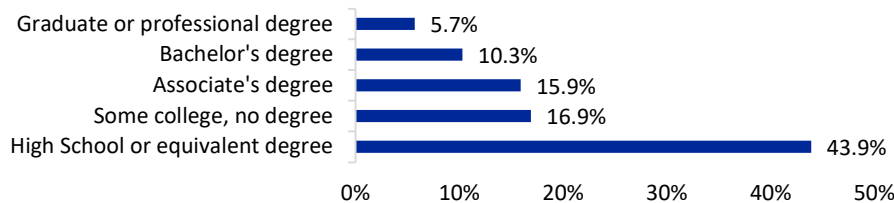
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 16.1%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)





## Employment

Employment rate: 62.2%

Average Travel Time to Work: 25.5 minutes

Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over



## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$687

Homeownership Rate: 87.3%

Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 4.2%

Disabled Population: 14.3%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 22.7%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 13.87%

Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Pleasant Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Pleasant\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=0600000US3906963296](https://data.census.gov/profile/Pleasant_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=0600000US3906963296)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

Pleasant Township saw settlers arrive in the late 1830s and a school was opened in the early 1840s. Pleasant Township was initially a part of Flatrock Township, but it separated in 1843. At this time Pleasant Township was a wilderness filled with wolves, bear, deer, turkeys, raccoons, and water frogs. Being a part of the Black Swamp, most of the area had water two to three feet deep. Despite fever and sickness, this group of hardy settlers worked hard to drain the land and established homes, churches, and towns. In 1847, a log church was built officially forming the Sacred Heart Catholic Church. Protestants also came to the area and started the German Reform Church.

West of the church, a community was forming with a post office on Ridge Road. The post office established in 1844. The village of New Bavaria was officially platted in 1882 at the site of where the railroad (Toledo, St. Louis, and Kansas City) and Ridge Road crossed. At this time the village had about 100 residents. The depot in New Bavaria provided the ability to locals to both send and receive goods from around the county. Ridge Road became a stone road in 1912 providing further access. The town continued to grow and included two grain elevators, factories for building barrel staves, blacksmith, general stores, hardware stores, two doctors, furniture store, restaurants, bar, and a livery barn where you could rent a horse and buggy for \$1.50 per day. By 1975, there was a welding shop, a gas/service station, an alfalfa mill, phone company and three taverns. The VFW was organized in the 1950s and is still providing a place for the community to meet and connect.

By 1874, the Village of Holgate was growing on the Northeast corner of the township at the crossing of the two railroads: the Baltimore and Ohio, and the Toledo, St. Louis, and Kansas City Railroad. Being at the crossings of so many people made it a great place for business. By 1888, there was a population of 1,300 with 300 school children. The school began as a 1-room schoolhouse then became a 4-room brick building that burned in a fire in 1890. A new building was built with additions through the years as population and educational needs changed. A 2-floor brick city building was built in 1890 housing the fire department, mayor's office, and jail on the first floor. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor there was one large room with a stage at the end for plays, lectures, and basketball. The 1900s brought the first bank and a motion picture theater to the area. One significant event in Village of Holgate was a celebration in 1949 honoring local man, Joe E. Brown, one of the most popular American comedians in the 1930s and 1940s. This celebration included dedicating a new ball field named for Brown, a parade, and jet plane flyover bringing over 10,000 people to the community.

About 2 miles south on the railroad line is the Village of Pleasant Bend which was established in 1879. In 1882, the population was about 100 residents, and the village had a post office and general store. There were also sawmills to turn the felled trees into lumber. In 1888, a church was built in town by Lutherans, but Methodists bought the property in 1890 and it is still operating today. By the 1900s a grain elevator, general store, and gas station were added.

Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview and a community focus group. These were conducted in fall of 2022.*

### The People

Today's township residents share the same determination and commitment that brought the settlers in the mid-1800s is still seen today in families that live in Pleasant Township. Many of the same family names are still farming. These established farming families are friendly, supportive, and helpful to each other just as they were when the township

2023 Henry County Community Health Assessment

*Pleasant Township Profile*

began. There are some newer individuals moving in but who are less involved in the community than families that have lived here for generations. Both key informant and focus group stated that those living in the township are looking for the rural, quiet, and peaceful life where there is more land than houses and more livestock than people.

There are younger generations who are remaining local to Pleasant Township. Just as in many other townships, many families still farm at varying levels and some with smaller farms typically hold a full-time job. These employers often include Campbell's Soup in Napoleon, General Motors in Defiance, or Holgate Local Schools. Newer families moving in have both parents working outside of the home, one typically at a more local employer and another outside of the township or county. There is a growing Hispanic population as families with a migrant tradition working for local farmers have made Pleasant Township home.

Pleasant Township is seen as peaceful and quiet. The focus group shared they enjoy the clean air, ability to see the stars at night, and places to walk or run. While traffic congestion is not typically an issue, the truck traffic has increased over the years, but the convenience of State Route 24 has made travel easier.

## Community

Residents shared that community life in the township centers around local Christian churches of various denominations and Holgate Local Schools.

Holgate Local Schools is a pride of the community with one preK-12 building built in 2005 on a 50-acre campus located on the northeast side of Holgate. Residents appreciate the smaller school due to its teacher to student ratio and quality education. The community has historically been hugely supportive of its school, both by supporting levies and being involved in activities for the school and the students. Residents enjoy the sporting events, music programs, and other events by the school children as it provides entertainment for the community.

Key informant and focus group shared that the community still comes together to support those in need such as: cancer, house fire or accidents. There is no longer a doctor or dentist in the township, so many go to surrounding areas for healthcare. There are several businesses still located in Holgate including Sager's Bar and Grill, Clubhouse Pizza, Holgate County Pride Grocery Store, local library, Vancrest Nursing Home, Holgate Lumber, Post Office, and a Dollar General. There is also a post office located in New Bavaria.

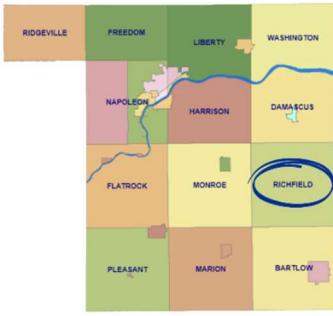
The following are local community events within the township:

- Eyes to the Skies
- Holgate Community Day

Key organizers of events in the township include VFW, Township Trustees, School District

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Pleasant township stay informed the following ways:

- Beauty shops in town
- Bulletin boards at Post Offices and Grocery Store
- Facebook page: Village of Holgate - Community Info and Updates



# Richfield Township

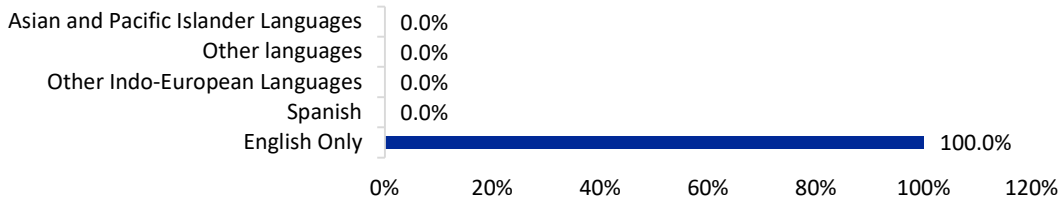
## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Populations and People

- Total Population: 635
- Median Age: 53.5
- 65 Years and Older Population: 16.2%
- Veterans: 7.8%
- Language other than English Spoken at Home: 0.0%

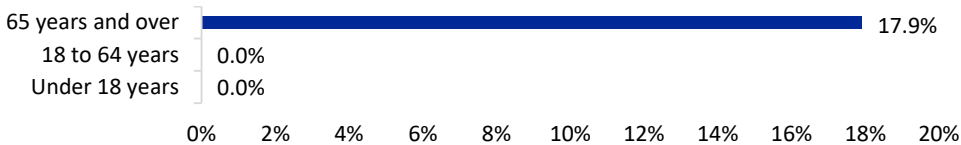
Types of Languages Spoken at Home



### Income and Poverty

- Median Household income: \$83,750
- Poverty: 3.0%

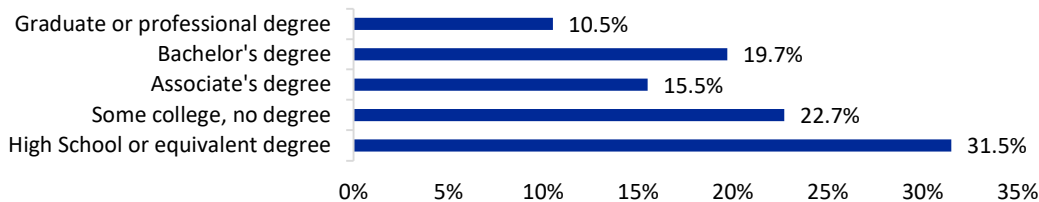
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 30.3%

Education Attainment (Population 25 Years and Older)



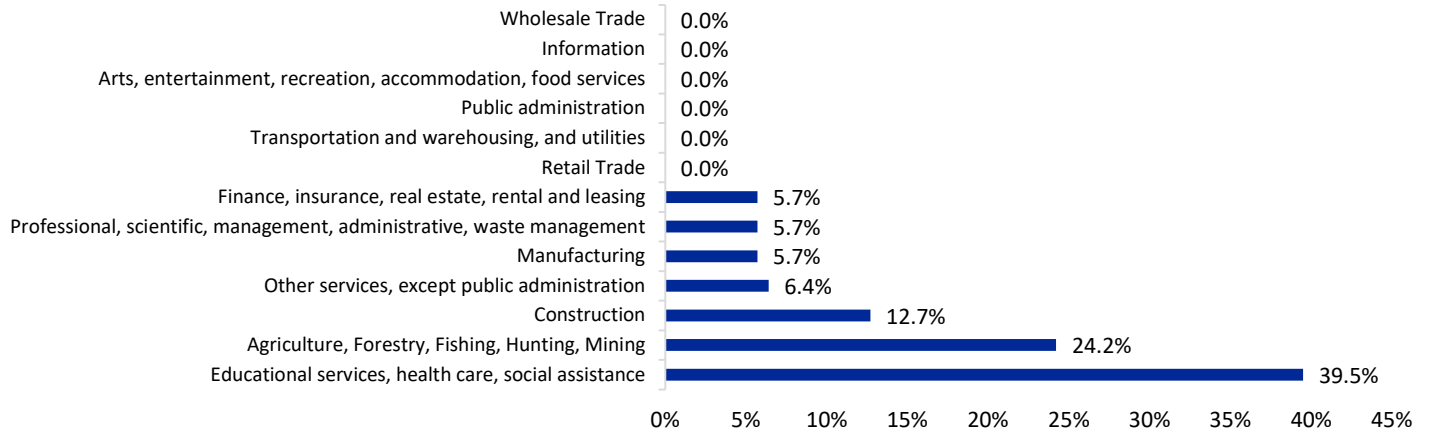


## Employment

Employment rate: 60.9%

Average Travel Time to Work: 34.3 minutes

### Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

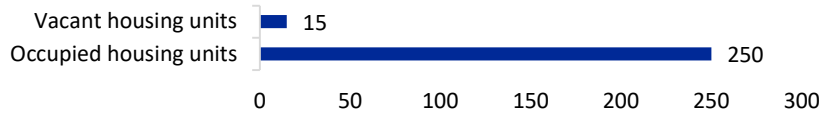


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: --

Homeownership Rate: 92.3%

### Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 7.0%

Disabled Population: 4.6%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 25.5%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 3.94%

### Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Richfield Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Richfield\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=0600000US3906966502](https://data.census.gov/profile/Richfield_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=0600000US3906966502)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

The Township of Richfield was organized as early as 1837, but few records are available today. There are records that in 1837, 11 men paid taxes in Richfield Township. Land was selling for \$1.25 an acre in 1845. At that time, there was a school but no churches. The Cloverleaf Railroad came through the township and by 1880, there was a population 857 in Richfield Township. Five years later there were eight school districts and a United Brethren Church. Richfield Township was full of productive land and primarily agricultural, as it still remains.

The town of Grelton is on the southwest corner of Richfield township. It was named for Alexander Grelle and at first was spelled "Grellton" but later one of the L's was dropped. Sawmills and barrel stave companies supported the building of the Clover Leaf Railroad and employed many people leading the small community to grow. At one time, Grelton had a depot, hotel, church, school, restaurant, two stores, and a Knights of Pythias (K of P) Lodge Hall. Grelton retains its post office, church, grain elevator, and a garage.

A little area grew called Richfield Center, later renamed Westhope, sprung up in the 1890s. In those days, merchandise was shipped to McClure or to another area town and then hauled by wagons to Westhope. There was a post office opened in Harry Andrix's General Store in the 1920s. More recently there was a school, bar, and grocery store in the town.

### Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview and a community focus group. These were conducted in fall of 2022.*

### The People

Richfield Township was described by both the key informant and focus group as a laid back, friendly, farming community. Most people live outside of any village or town and live on or near farmland. Most residents have a connection to farming whether it is their sole source of income or only part-time work. As with many other areas, younger farmers are working fulltime positions and farming part-time. Most farms are raising crops, but years ago cattle and chickens were being raised here too.

It was shared that residents enjoy living in Richfield Township as it has open space and is very quiet. Residents described the area as having lots of green space, cleaner air, and the ability to see many stars at night. Houses are far apart in the township which provides privacy and peacefulness. While the community is very small it is still close knit as residents help take care of one another. Houses do not go up for sale often and when ownership does change hands it is usually within family. Very few people rent and those who do are owners who often rent to family members.

### Community

The entire township has no town or village making it unique among the other townships. Westhope is now a group of only about 10 homes. Community members take pride in knowing their neighbors and having gatherings among themselves. While the family groups are getting smaller and a bit disjointed, it is the way they come together. Neighbors and family support each other through checking in and bringing meals.

There is one school that children primarily attend, Patrick Henry Schools, and one church, Westhope Bible Church. Both of this help creates a sense of community. It was shared that the community takes pride in Patrick Henry Schools as it provides a great education and technology preparatory classes for future generations. The school has organizations supporting the agricultural base of Richfield Township, like Future Farmers of America (FFA), 4-H and Boy Scouts. School sports are also a big part of community gathering. The focus group reported school activities is the “glue” that keeps the community together.

While Grelton is not entirely in Richfield Township, it is important to note the Four Corners Heritage Center. The museum converted the 1890 Grelton Methodist Church to showcase artifacts and share stories of people and places of Richfield, Harrison, Monroe, and Damascus townships. There are events and activities at the site in the summer.

The following are local community events within the township:

- Westhope Bible Church events

Key organizers of events in the township include: The Sons of the American Legion and Deshler Chamber of Commerce

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Richfield township stay informed the following ways:

- Facebook Group: Westhope Area Neighbors





# Ridgeville Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



### Populations and People

Total Population: 1,096

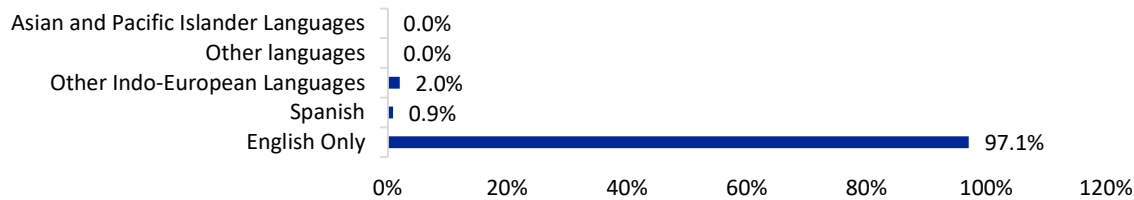
Median Age: 38.2

65 Years and Older Population: 15.6%

Veterans: 9.8%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 2.9%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

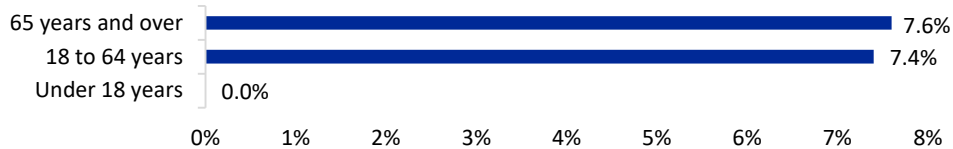


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$70,000

Poverty: 6.2%

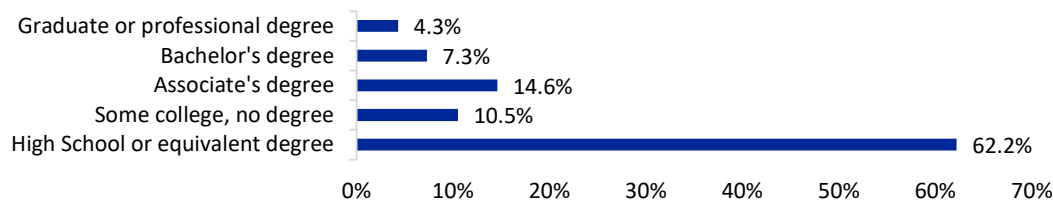
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 11.6%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)



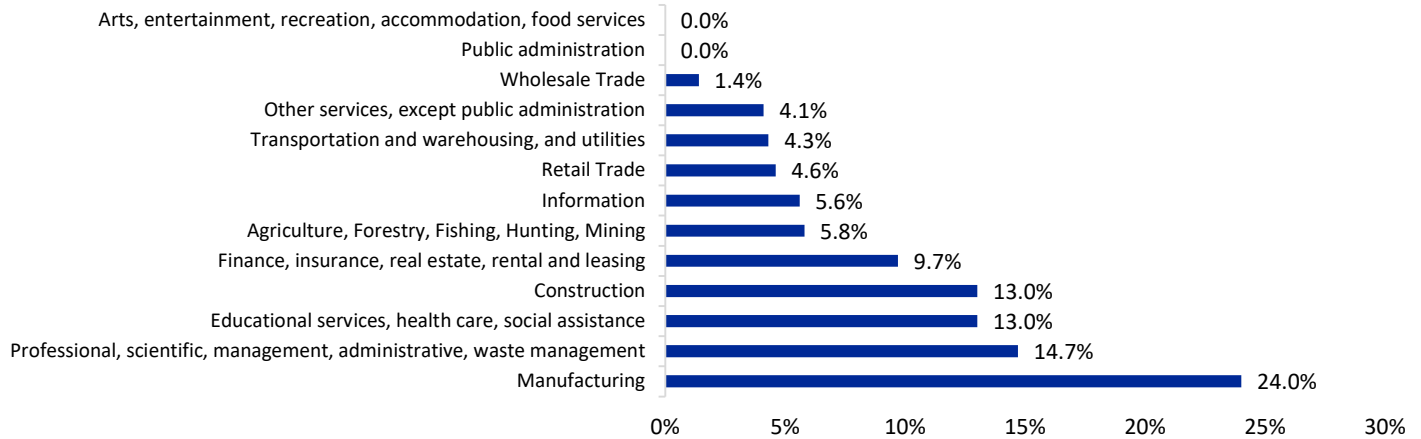


## Employment

Employment rate: 72.5%

Average Travel Time to Work: 19.5 minutes

### Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

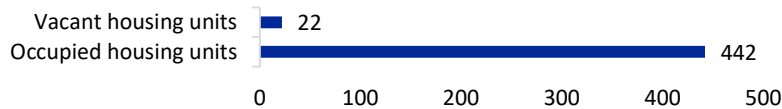


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$498

Homeownership Rate: 80.5%

### Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 0.0%

Disabled Population: 7.5%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 17.3%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 6.75%

Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Ridgeville Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Ridgeville township, Henry County, Ohio?g=0600000US3906967062](https://data.census.gov/profile/Ridgeville%20township,%20Henry%20County,%20Ohio?g=0600000US3906967062)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

First settlers to Ridgeville Township arrived in the early 1830s. It was officially established in 1841 along with the Ridgeville post office, in Ridgeville Corners. In 1859, the Methodist Church and the Congregational were established. By 1882, in addition to the sawmill, Ridgeville Corners boasted two general stores, a bicycle shop, blacksmith shop, repair shop, shoe shop, hotel, and the brick and tile yard.

In 1841, it was recorded there were 28 children (ages 4 to 20) in the township attending school. In 1867, a frame schoolhouse was built. A new building was built in 1890 with students beginning class in January of 1891. The school continued to grow and in 1923 it merged with Freedom Township school and offered a 4-year high school. In 1937, a new school was built with it needing further expansion in 1957. In 1968, the school district was divided with students transferring to Napoleon and Archbold school districts.

The Ridgeville Fire Protection Association was formed in 1928 and a firetruck was in service in March of 1929. In the 1930s, three large cisterns were built to store water for fire protection. At this time, they had no fire pump to extract the water. Water was removed and carried in 10-gallon milk cans and loaded on the fire truck when there was a fire. A new fire department was organized and named Ridgeville Township Volunteer Fire Department and a pumper truck was purchased in 1949. The Ridgeville Fire Department has continued to thrive and is a source of great pride in the community.

In the 1890s traveling entertainment came to the newly built Rowe's Hall. There were dances, ice cream socials, church dinners and many other events to bring the people of Ridgeville together. A saloon opened in 1903. Giffey Hall was built in 1916 and was an important part of the community for indoor gatherings, entertainment, dances, and weddings. In the 1930s, the Great Depression brought drastic changes as money was tight. Ridgeville still came together for threshing parties, school reunions, band concerts, and free movies shown on a big screen set up on the street on Saturday nights.

There has always been a strong military backing within the township. The American Legion Post 454 in Ridgeville was chartered in the 1920s with its first location in the basement of the hardware store and then moving to an old hatchery. A new building was built in 1975 east of Ridgeville Corners. The Legion still is a community center as it hosts many events and celebrations.

### Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview conducted in fall of 2022.*

### The People

The key informant described the people of Ridgeville Township as hard working and very involved with their community. Residents care about one another and their township. There is still strong German Protestant heritage, with most of the population being Lutheran. The people are committed to country, schools, and the overall togetherness of the residents. The community holds great pride in the fire department, the legion, and its community. In times of crisis, the people here pull together to do what needs to be done.

In the township, there are a mix of young and elderly residents. Many in the township commute outside of the area for work to places like Wauseon, Bryan, Napoleon and Archbold. There are some families that farm fulltime while many others who farm part-time while having other employment. Located in Ridgeville Township is the former Alex Products, now owned by North American Stamping Group (NASG), which supplies complex welded assemblies for the automotive industry. The company employees many locals and brings people to the area.

## Community

Today, Ridgeville Corners is still home to the post office, theater, beauty salon and barbershop. The fire department is still an integral part of the community. Giffey Hall, under the ownership of Archbold Community Theater, hosts plays and musicals. The local bar and restaurant, called the Ten Pin Tap, serves as a community meeting spot as it has been doing since the 1920s.

It was shared that the loss of the school caused a loss of community connection. A school brings sports teams, events, and gatherings that bring the community together. With some children in the township going to Napoleon and others to Archbold it created a further disconnect between the community. However, the township has worked hard on keeping the sense of community going with traditions and events. While the Ridgeville School is no longer, the community does hold an annual alumni banquet. The township has also started Christmas in Ridgeville, an event that has brought the community together.

The American Legion Post 454, in Ridgeville, is still an important part of the community. The building is used for weddings and other events within the community. Also, the Legion Post hosts fish fries, feather party (Bingo), turkey shoots, swiss steak dinners, breakfasts, and other events that keep the community coming together and supporting one another.

There are three churches in the township, St Peter's Evangelical Lutheran and Zion Lutheran Church both founded in 1904, and Christ Community Church, a non-denominational church, which began holding services at the Ridgeville Corners School in 1993. All three churches provide food pantries and other support to the community.

Additionally, Ridgeville has its own "meals on wheels" program called, "The Lunch Bunch." Organized by the Ten Pin Tap and volunteers, a hot meal is delivered to seniors. Food, typically the daily special, is prepared and packaged by the Ten Pin Tap purchased by senior recipients and this service not only provides food but acts as a welfare check for the area's seniors.

The following are local community events within the township:

- Legion hosted events
- Christmas in Ridgeville
- Memorial Day Parade
- Farm Bureau Safety Events

Key organizers of events in the township include Legion Post 454 and township trustees

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Ridgeville Township stay informed the following ways:

- Ridgeville Township Newsletter
- Bulletin board by the post office
- Fire department marquee
- Facebook Pages: American Legion Post 454 Ridgeville Corners OH, Christmas in Ridgeville, Ridgeville Corners, Ohio - Community Events and News



# Washington Township

## Township Profile

The following section is demographic profile of the township. Information was gathered using the U.S. Census 2020 Decennial Census and 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

### Populations and People

Total Population: 1,991

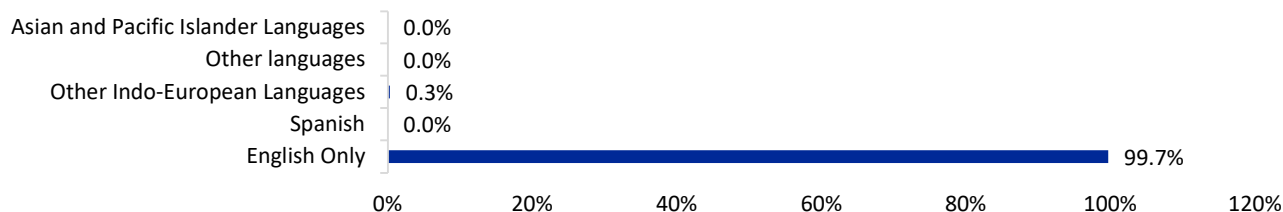
Median Age: 42.3

65 Years and Older Population: 15.7%

Veterans: 7.4%

Language other than English Spoken at Home: 0.3%

Types of Languages Spoken at Home

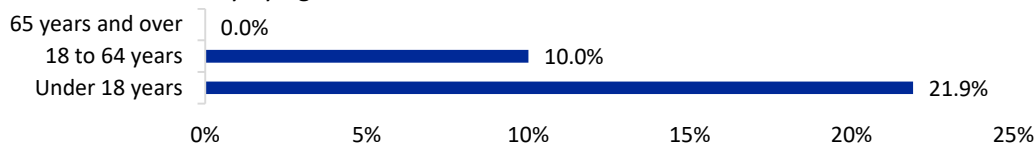


### Income and Poverty

Median Household income: \$72,917

Poverty: 10.8%

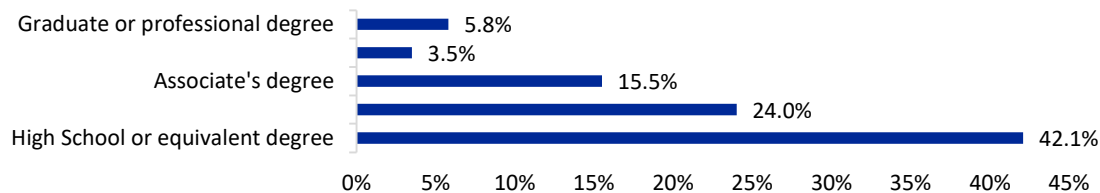
Poverty by Age



### Education

Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 9.3%

Education Attainment  
(Population 25 Years and Older)



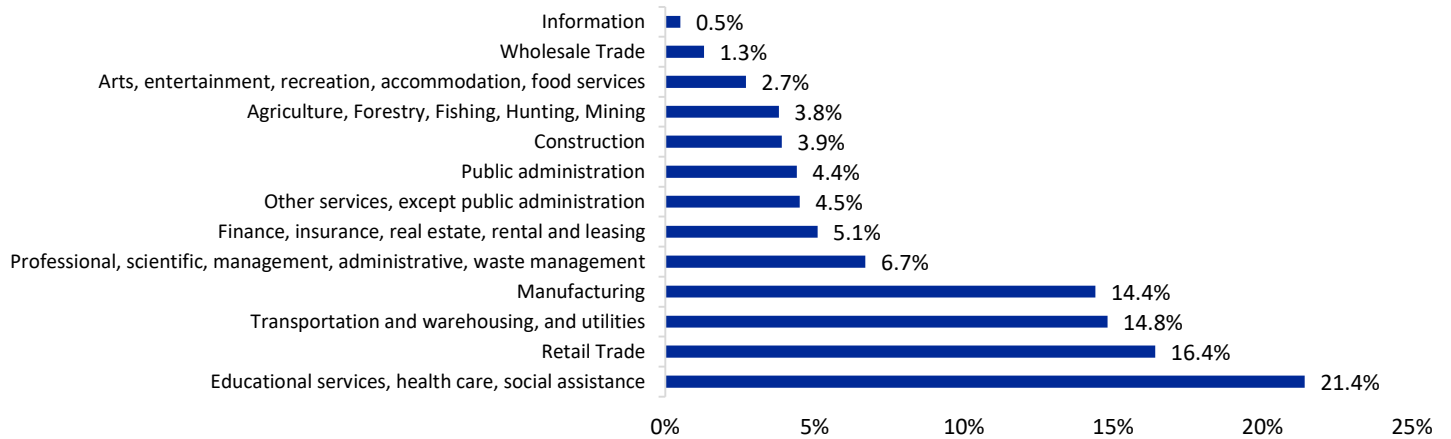


## Employment

Employment rate: 61.4%

Average Travel Time to Work: 28.9 minutes

Industry for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over

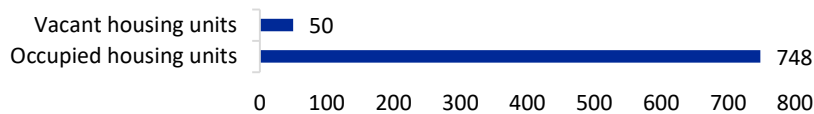


## Housing

Median Gross Rent: \$727

Homeownership Rate: 93.0%

Housing Occupancy



## Health

Without Health Care Coverage: 2.7%

Disabled Population: 12.8%



## Families and Living Arrangements

Children Under 18 years old: 21.1%



## Race and Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 3.16%

### Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.) *Washington Township, Henry County, Ohio Profile*. U.S. Department of Commerce. Retrieved January 5, 2020, from [https://data.census.gov/profile/Washington\\_township,\\_Henry\\_County,\\_Ohio?g=0600000US3906981326](https://data.census.gov/profile/Washington_township,_Henry_County,_Ohio?g=0600000US3906981326)

## History

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*The following section is a historical perspective of the township. Information was gathered using Henry County, Ohio, Vol. 1, 2, and 3 published by the Henry County Historical Society.*

The history of Washington Township was centered on the Miami-Erie Canal, which opened in 1843, and the railroads coming through the area.

Texas, a town in the township, was settled in 1849. The early settlers were of Scottish and Irish descent. The town was very prosperous due to the Miami Erie Canal. As an important trading post in the area, the town was accessible by the river and land. The founder of Texas, James Durbin, a lawyer, was also a contractor for the canal. James and his brother Thomas worked in a variety of professions as the early town was developing. There was a ferry that transported from the north to the south side of the river and back. It is noted that on Sundays and holidays, 50 to 75 rigs ferried across each day. At one time there was a barrel factory, handle factory, and brick factory in Texas; and in fact, the first brick to be made in the county came from this village. The village in its early days was the most important trading point in Henry County. It was also a formidable rival of Napoleon for the county seat.

Colton, also within Washington Township, was established in 1855 with the completion of the railroad. Colton had a population of about 200 at that time with the necessary stores, town hall, two churches, hotel, and other business to keep the population supplied with necessary items. About 1918, a fire destroyed three of the store buildings and many residents feared that the town would be demolished by the raging fire. One of the two churches burned in the 1940s, and the Wabash closed its station. Many of the businesses disappeared as the years went by. The Colton Methodist Church is still in operation, and it has served the community's spiritual needs for nearly a century. Today, this is the only church in Washington Township.

Source:

Henry County Historical Society. (1979). *Henry County, Ohio* (Vols. 1-3). Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

## Community Characteristics

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*The following section is a community perspective of the township. Information was gathered through conducting a key informant interview conducted in fall of 2022.*

### The People

The key informant shared that many people within the township choose to live there for fresh air and quiet. Some who have moved in wanted to get away from more populated areas and enjoy country life. There are more and more young people moving into the area, who either have or looking to start families. This is due to people choosing the smaller school system of Liberty Center, with sports and activities their children can participate in. The township trustees have worked to maintain the feeling of space and freedom with ensuring homes are not too close together.

Occupations among residents is varied. There are individuals who are factory workers, framers, entrepreneurs, corporate managers, or educators. There are fewer farms in the township, as small farms are becoming a thing of the past. This is due to requiring a lot of acreage and costly equipment to turn a profit. There are migrant workers who come into the township for planting and harvest. Most of them are coming from Texas and hire on with farmers who are growing produce such as pumpkins, jalapenos, cabbage, green peppers, and carrots. These products are sold to large food manufacturers out of the area.

### Community

Washington Township is described as a great community to live in and raise a family. It was shared that there is a sense of freedom and a feeling that the area is removed from external forces that can control life. The community is unique because there is planning in place for expansion in residential and commercial growth. There is work on zoning and

2023 Henry County Community Health Assessment

*Washington Township Profile*

infrastructure to build a base for the future and community leaving a good quality of life for future generations. Examples include preparing for solar fields, wind turbines, and ensuring each property is at least 2 acres to allow for homes to not be too close to one another.

Residents in the community enjoy the parks in Liberty Center and the Lucas County Metro parks that are nearby the township. There is a restaurant, Log Cabin Tavern, which is frequented by residents and those outside the township. The Methodist Church in Colton provides a food pantry to those in need. As there are no community events in the township, residents participate in festivals and school events within Liberty Center. The township hall is used for township meetings or residents may also use the fire department room in Liberty Center.

There are no local events within the township.

Key organizers of events in the township include: Township trustees

Communication within the township is vital to stay informed. Residents in Washington Township stay informed the following ways:

- Township website
- Liberty Center Press newspaper