

Section 2. Community Profile

The Community Profile summarizes the County's history and existing environmental and socioeconomic conditions. Environmental and socioeconomic factors include geography, topography, climate, population, economic, and land use and development trends.

2.1 *History of Cuyahoga County*²

Cuyahoga County's history extends back thousands of years, back to the earliest inhabitants who settled the area around 2000 BCE. Between 800 BCE and 1000 CE, the Adena and the Hopewell Mound Builder tribes flourished in the region. Later, the Wyandot, Huron, Shawnee, Miami, and Delaware tribes populated the area. It is their word, describing a twisted, crooked river, for which Cuyahoga County is named.

In the Seventeenth Century, as Europeans began to settle North America, moving west, the land nearest the southern shore of Lake Erie was given to the colony of Connecticut by King Charles II in 1662. This would be known as the Connecticut Western Reserve. Over a century later when the United States declared independence from England, Connecticut gave up all land except for the Western Reserve. In 1787, though, the Reserve was absorbed into the Northwest Territory, and was officially sold in 1796 for 40¢ an acre, for a total of \$1.2 million.

General Moses Cleaveland was hired to survey the newly-purchased area. During their journey, the group took canoes to explore the shoreline of Lake Erie, where they came across the mouth of a crooked river. They knew that this was a location where a city could be planned and built. They mapped out a small village around a common green area, New England-style. The name of the town was to be called Cleaveland, named for the leader of the expedition. A newspaper misprint in 1831 would drop the letter "a" from the name.

In March of 1803, the State of Ohio was officially formed, becoming the 17th of the Union. After the state's formation, one of the more vexing problems for the government was the creation of counties. Several large "parent" counties were formed, that would later be split apart depending on the size of their populations. On May 1st, 1810, Cuyahoga County was split off from Geauga County, which in turn had been separated from Trumbull County in 1806. The village of Cleaveland became the County Seat. Cuyahoga County was again reduced in size with the creation of Huron and Lorain Counties, and again in 1840 when Lake County was formed. The final change to the County's borders came in 1843 with a shuffle of land between Geauga and Cuyahoga. Despite one last external change, municipal boundaries within the County continued to shift well into the Twentieth Century.

Just after the turn of the Century, the County thrived alongside the booming automotive industry, with many of the earliest manufacturers calling the City of Cleveland home. After the Great Depression shook the nation, with industry-heavy cities taking the brunt of economic collapse, the County flourished up until the 1960s and 1970s when civil unrest and the infamous fire on the Cuyahoga River, pushed many residents of Cleveland to the suburban communities surrounding it. As a result, the County hit its peak census population in 1970 and has seen a trend of negative growth since.

In recent years, the economy of the County has begun to revitalize, once again becoming a hub behind major innovation, now with an emphasis on health care. As of 2014, one in five

² <http://www.cuyahogacounty.us/en-us/history.aspx>

employees within Cuyahoga County work in the field of Health Care and Social Assistance. The Cleveland Clinic and University Hospital have helped to establish the region as one of the forefront leaders of oncology, cardiopulmonary, and biomedical research.

The County Seat is located in the City of Cleveland. Unlike many other counties, Cuyahoga does not have a commission, but rather the Cuyahoga County Council. The Council is comprised of 11 members, including a president and vice-president. Each member represents a district within the County.

2.2 *Geography, Topography, and Climate*

2.2.1 Geography

Cuyahoga is located in northeastern Ohio along Lake Erie, and is bordered by Lorain, Medina, Summit, Geauga, and Lake Counties. According to the United States Census Bureau, Cuyahoga County has a total of 1,246 square miles, 459 of which are land, and 786 of are water. A significant portion of the county extends into Lake Erie. The County has three major rivers that run through it, including the titular Cuyahoga River, Rocky River, and the Chagrin River, with numerous minor streams and tributaries connecting to them. Though all three major rivers run through the County, the Chagrin River empties into Lake Erie in the adjacent county, Lake County.

Cuyahoga County is split into 59 municipalities, including, the City of Bay Village, the City of Beachwood, the City of Bedford, the City of Bedford Heights, the Village of Bentleyville, the City of Berea, the Village of Bratenahl, the City of Brecksville, the City of Broadview Heights, the City of Brooklyn, the Village of Brooklyn Heights, the City of Brook Park, the Village of Chagrin Falls, Chagrin Township, the City of Cleveland, the City of Cleveland Heights, the Village of Cuyahoga Heights, the City of East Cleveland, the City of Euclid, the City of Fairview Park, the City of Garfield Heights, the Village of Gates Mills, the Village of Glenwillow, the City of Highland Heights, the Village of Highland Hills, the Village of Hunting Valley, the City of Independence, the City of Lakewood, the Village of Linndale, the City of Lyndhurst, the City of Maple Heights, the Village of Mayfield, the City of Mayfield Heights, the City of Middleburg Heights, the Village of Moreland Hills, the Village of Newburgh Heights, the City of North Olmsted, Olmsted Township, the Village of North Randall, the City of North Royalton, the Village of Oakwood, the City of Olmsted Falls, the Village of Orange, City of Parma, the City of Parma Heights, the City of Pepper Pike, the City of Richmond Heights, the City of Rocky River, the City of Seven Hills, the City of Shaker Heights, the City of Solon, the City of South Euclid, the City of Strongsville, the City of University Heights, the Village of Valley View, the Village of Walton Hills, the City of Warrensville Heights, the City of Westlake, and the Village of Woodmere.

There are several interstates that cross the County. The Ohio Turnpike, otherwise known as I-80, and I-90 cross the County east-west, along with the auxiliary highways of 480 and 490. Running north-south are I-71 and I-77, with I-271 as the auxiliary bypass highway. Several United States Highways run through the County, as well, including US-6, US-20, US-42, US-322, and US-422. The County is also home to three airports, including a major international hub: the Cuyahoga County Airport, the Cleveland Hopkins International Airport, and the Cleveland Burke Lakefront Airport.

2.2.2 Topography

Near the shoreline, the County is part of what is known as the Erie Lake Plain ecoregion. This ecoregion is a nearly level coastal strip of lacustrine deposits punctuated by beach ridges and

swales. Its lake-modified climate sets it apart from other nearby ecoregions and its annual growing season is often several weeks longer than inland areas. Urban-industrial sites, ports, fruit-vegetable farms, and nurseries have developed along the plain.

In the western and eastern portions of the County is the Low Lime Drift Plain ecoregion. In contrast with the relatively flat Erie Lake Plain region, this ecoregion has a rolling landscape composed of low rounded hills with scattered end moraines and kettles. This type of terrain incorporates much of Cuyahoga County as well as counties as far north as Ashtabula County, and as far south as Perry County. This ecoregion is distinct from the unglaciated, wooded, hilly country that makes up eastern Ohio and much of West Virginia. Its soils are usually less naturally fertile and urban-industrial activity, as well as dairy, livestock, corn, and soybean farming are common; many ridges and lowlands are wooded. The growing season is shorter than the Erie Lake Plain and progressively decreases away from Lake Erie.

The Erie Gorges ecoregion makes up the south-central part of Cuyahoga County. The terrain here is a uniquely steep, dissected area along the Chagrin, Cuyahoga, and Grand rivers. Local relief can exceed 500 feet, rock exposures occur, and fluvial erosion rates are high. Originally, mixed mesophytic forests were common on well-drained sites; today, woodland, recreational areas, scattered farms, and housing is dominant.³

2.2.3 Climate

Cuyahoga County receives rainfall in line with national averages, though it has twice the average national snowfall. The number of days with any measurable precipitation is approximately 87 days a year, and on average there are 163 sunny days per year in Cuyahoga County. The July average high temperature is around 82.3°F and the January average low temperature is 20.13°F. The Cuyahoga County comfort index⁴, which is based on humidity during the hot months, is 54 out of 100, coinciding with average comfort index for the U.S. which is also 54. See Table 2-1 for a complete summary of average climate information.

Table 2-1 Cuyahoga County Climate Summary Table

Climate Measurements	Cuyahoga County, Ohio	United States
Avg. Annual Rainfall (in.)	38.97	39.2
Avg. Annual Snowfall (in.)	60.8	25.8
Avg. Annual Precipitation Days	87.2	102
Avg. Annual Sunny Days	163	205
Avg. Annual July High	82.3°F	86.1°F
Avg. Annual Jan. Low	20.13°F	22.6°F
Comfort Index (higher=better)	54	54
UV Index	3.7	4.3
Avg. Elevation FT.	855	1,443

Source: <http://www.bestplaces.net/climate/county/ohio/cuyahoga>

³ <https://www3.epa.gov/>

⁴ This comfort index provides a general idea for how comfortable your time outdoors will be. The index is calculated on a number of weather factors, including temperature, probability of precipitation, humidity, wind speed, and cloud cover. The higher the comfort index, the more comfortable the climate is perceived by general populations across the U.S. One would expect to see a higher index with shirt-sleeve temperatures, minimal chances of rainfall, relatively low humidity, light winds, and fair skies. On the contrary, the lower the index values one would see cool, damp, and windy conditions.

2.3 Population, Occupancy, and Demographics

Population and demographic information provides baseline data about Cuyahoga County. Maintaining and reviewing up-to-date data on demographics will allow the County to better assess magnitudes of hazards and develop more specific mitigation plans.

2.3.1 Population

2.3.1.1 County Population⁵

Table 2-2 County Baseline Demographics

Demographic	2014
Total Population	1,259,828
Male	602,698
Female	664,815
Race and ethnicity	Residents
White/Caucasian	809,281
Black or African American	375,406
Asian American	34,255
Hispanic	64,518
Two or More Races	30,926
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	2,978
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	211
Total	1,259,828
Previous Years' Populations	Residents
2014*	1,259,828
2010	1,280,122
2000	1,393,978
1990	1,412,140
1980	1,498,400
1970	1,721,300
1960	1,647,895
1950	1,389,532

Based on figures provided by the United States Census Bureau, Cuyahoga County has a residential population of 1,259,828. With a land total of 457 square miles, the population density is 2,800 people per square mile. The racial makeup of the County is approximately 64% White/Caucasian, 30% Black or African-American, 5% Hispanic, 2.7% Asian, and 2.5% who are two or more races. American Indian, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders together equal about 0.25%.

⁵ <http://factfinder.census.gov/>

The following chart is a comprehensive list that details the actual population of Cuyahoga County in 2010, the American Community Survey estimate for 2014, the estimated change in population between 2010 and 2014, the total number of housing units, the number of housing units occupied, and the area (in square miles) for each municipality.

Table 2-3 Profiles of Cuyahoga County Municipalities

Municipality	Municipality Type	2010 Population	2014 Population Estimate	Population Change 2010 – 2014	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Land Area (SqMi)
Cuyahoga County	County	1,280,122	1,259,828	-1.6%	619,863	534,721	460.3
Bay Village	City	15,651	15,435	-1.4%	6,317	6,043	4.5
Beachwood	City	11,953	11,797	-1.3%	5,239	4,857	5.2
Bedford	City	13,074	12,805	-2.1%	6,986	5,826	5.3
Bedford Heights	City	10,751	10,675	-0.7%	5,705	4,883	4.6
Bentleyville	Village	864	859	-0.6%	311	300	2.6
Berea	City	19,093	18,986	-0.6%	8,182	7,447	5.8
Bratenahl	Village	1,197	1,175	-1.8%	813	660	1.6
Brecksville	City	13,656	13,469	-1.4%	5,601	5,240	19.6
Broadview Heights	City	19,400	19,254	-0.8%	8,044	7,572	13.0
Brooklyn	City	11,169	10,947	-2.0%	5,128	4,851	4.3
Brooklyn Heights	Village	1,543	1,532	-0.7%	594	564	1.8
Brook Park	City	19,212	18,886	-1.7%	7,905	7,687	7.6
Chagrin Falls	Village	4,113	4,039	-1.8%	2,010	1,983	2.1
Cleveland	City	396,815	389,521	-1.8%	212,269	166,650	78.4
Cleveland Heights	City	46,121	45,181	-2.0%	22,157	19,530	8.1
Cuyahoga Heights	Village	638	621	-2.7%	258	229	3.3
East Cleveland	City	17,843	17,432	-2.3%	12,689	7,982	3.1
Euclid	City	48,920	47,893	-2.1%	25,909	22,191	10.7
Fairview Park	City	16,826	16,481	-2.1%	7,938	7,531	4.7
Garfield Heights	City	28,849	28,229	-2.1%	13,115	11,422	7.2
Gates Mills	Village	2,270	2,245	-1.1%	944	905	9.1
Glenwillow	Village	923	926	0.3%	416	363	2.8
Highland Heights	City	8,345	8,366	0.3%	3,222	3,170	5.1
Highland Hills	Village	1,130	992	-12.2%	308	235	2.0
Hunting Valley	Village	589	593	0.7%	322	272	7.1
Independence	City	7,133	7,136	0.0%	2,789	2,688	9.5
Lakewood	City	52,131	50,926	-2.3%	27,526	24,573	5.6

Municipality	Municipality Type	2010 Population	2014 Population Estimate	Population Change 2010 – 2014	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Land Area (SqMi)
Linndale	Village	179	177	-1.1%	73	63	0.1
Lyndhurst	City	14,001	13,733	-1.9%	6,482	5,985	4.4
Maple Heights	City	23,138	22,735	-1.7%	11,458	9,758	5.2
Mayfield	Village	3,460	3,413	-1.4%	1,478	1,410	4.0
Mayfield Heights	City	19,155	18,849	-1.6%	10,199	9,318	4.2
Middleburg Heights	City	15,946	15,751	-1.2%	7,072	6,764	8.1
Moreland Hills	Village	3,320	3,306	-0.4%	1,331	1,279	7.3
Newburgh Heights	Village	2,167	2,109	-2.7%	1,050	883	0.6
North Olmsted	City	32,718	32,130	-1.8%	14,577	13,462	11.7
North Randall	Village	1,027	1,011	-1.6%	534	455	0.8
North Royalton	City	30,444	30,327	-0.4%	13,078	12,511	21.4
Oakwood	Village	3,667	3,696	0.8%	3,679	3,417	3.5
Olmsted Falls	City	9,024	8,883	-1.6%	3,706	3,486	4.1
Olmsted Township	Township	13,513	13,363	-1.0%	5,996	5,571	10.0
Orange	Village	3,323	3,280	-1.3%	1,377	1,334	3.8
Parma	City	81,601	80,015	-1.9%	36,310	33,400	20.1
Parma Heights	City	20,718	20,330	-1.9%	9,503	8,936	4.2
Pepper Pike	City	5,979	6,205	3.8%	2,368	2,167	7.2
Richmond Heights	City	10,546	10,495	-0.5%	5,549	4,848	4.4
Rocky River	City	20,213	20,433	1.1%	9,791	8,822	4.7
Seven Hills	City	11,804	11,702	-0.9%	5,100	4,879	4.9
Shaker Heights	City	28,448	27,790	-2.3%	12,882	11,447	6.3
Solon	City	23,348	23,075	-1.2%	8,721	8,262	20.4
South Euclid	City	22,295	21,869	-1.9%	9,571	8,925	4.7
Strongsville	City	44,750	44,654	-0.2%	18,282	17,403	24.7
University Heights	City	13,539	13,203	-2.5%	5,412	4,666	1.8
Valley View	Village	2,034	2,014	-1.0%	772	711	5.6
Walton Hills	Village	2,281	2,249	-1.4%	934	909	6.9
Warrensville Heights	City	13,542	13,286	-1.9%	6,979	6,097	4.1
Westlake	City	32,729	32,424	-0.9%	14,732	13,547	15.9
Woodmere	Village	884	868	-1.8%	452	417	0.3

2.4 *Employment*

According to the United States Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD), there are a total of 725,457 persons employed in the Cuyahoga County workforce as of 2014. The County has a strong reputation of being a leader in health care innovation because of the work that takes place at the Cleveland Clinic. Of those employed, the top five industry sectors by employment see approximately 20% of the workforce in Health Care and Social Assistance, 10% work in Manufacturing, 9% work in Retail Trade, 8% work in Accommodation and Food Service, and 7% work in Educational Services. The median income for Cuyahoga County residents is \$44,203. The top three largest employers are the Cleveland Clinic with 32,251 employees, University Hospitals with 14,518 employees, and the United States Office of Personnel Management with 11,254 employees.

2.5 *Land Use and Future Development Areas*

According to the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, Cuyahoga County will soon become the first “built-out” county within the State of Ohio. In 1948, approximately 26% of the County’s land was developed. In the post-World War II era, suburban communities grew rapidly, and by 2002, nearly 90% of the County was developed. Over half of Cuyahoga County is single-family housing, coming to a total of 54% of the land space, and 221.5 square miles. The next largest land use is Green Space, with 57.25 square miles, which accounts for about 14% of all land space. Industrial uses take up 43.12 square miles, accounting for 11% of land space. Overall, there is very little agriculture; only 3.4 square miles of agricultural land exist, making up 0.8% of land space.

In 2002, the Cuyahoga County Greenspace Plan and Greenprint was published as part of a goal of achieving a balance between urban development and a sustainable environment. “Unlike the past 50 years, where economic growth and new housing options were tied to the development of ‘greenfield’ sites at the edge of the urbanized area, the future health of the County will be based upon its attraction as a sustainable, desirable, and healthy place to work, live, and play,” the 2002 Plan states. The original Plan functioned as a web-based inventory of maps that showed the location of parks, greenspace corridors, waterways, roadways, trails, and included community centers, activity centers, and town centers. As time passed, this data slowly began to become outdated. In June of 2015, the Plan was updated to accommodate advances in technologies. Recent developments in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) now allow the Plan to function as a live document that can be updated regularly and is fully interactive. As such, it can now reach a larger potential audience of users.

The web-based tools that the Greenprint offers will allow urban planners, watershed coordinators, economic development directors, land protection specialists, and other planning and design professionals to promote more effective land use decisions and best practices that:

- Protect people and property from flooding and stormwater events,
- Protect biological diversity,
- Develop a regional trail and greenway system; and
- Provide places where residents can recreate for health and fitness.

The Cuyahoga County Planning Commission greenspace vision for the County seeks to:

- Build off of the County’s unique geography and natural history;
- Emphasize the environmental, community and economic importance of greenspace;
- Inspire decision makers to make greenspace a priority in the community;
- Promote connecting neighborhoods in the County to greenspace and the County’s natural resources; and

- Encourage the “regreening” of the more urban portions of the County to make them more desirable places to live.⁶

This plan was created with the development of Cuyahoga County in mind. As the County’s populations and land uses have changed, their vulnerability to hazards have also changed. Because the population has decreased in recent years, the vulnerability to the population has changed. The County and its jurisdictions have also continued to push redevelopment plans and comprehensive plans, making the area more resilient to hazards.

Additionally, each jurisdiction in the County completed a Risk Evaluation to determine how they perceived their change in vulnerability to each hazard. These are available in Appendix D.

The map on the following pages details land uses for the County as of 2014.

⁶ Source: <http://planning.co.cuyahoga.oh.us/>

**Cuyahoga County
Hazard Mitigation Plan**



**Land Use by Parcel in
Cuyahoga County (2014)**

- Land Use**
- Green Space
 - Agriculture
 - Retail
 - Office
 - Government
 - Institutional
 - Multi-Family Housing
 - Single-Family Housing
 - Industrial
 - Utility
 - Transportation
 - Cuyahoga County

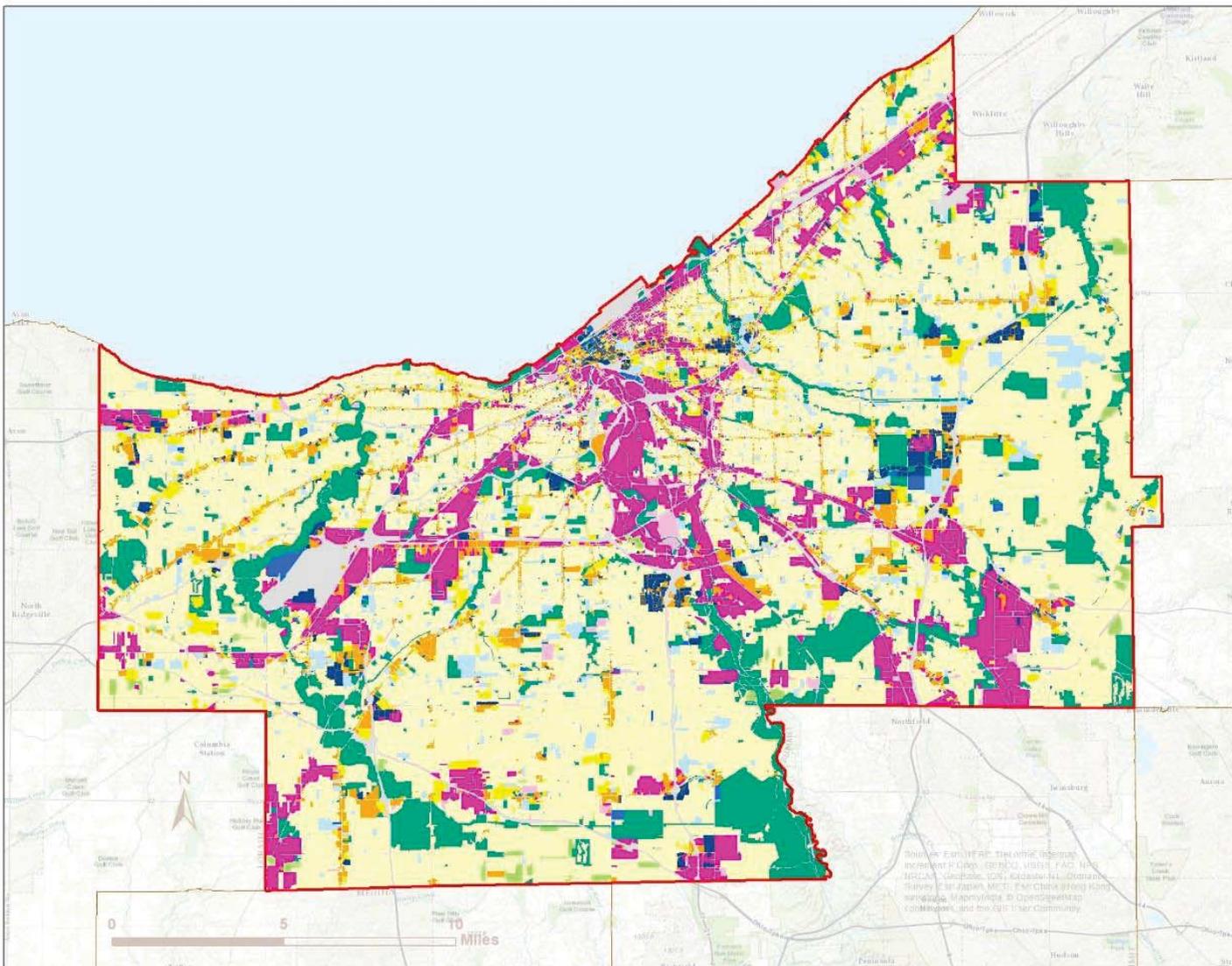


Figure 2-1 2014 Cuyahoga County Land Use

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