Historic East Piqua
Redevelopment Area Plan
Piqua, Ohio

Prepared for:
The City of Piqua

Prepared by:
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Funded by:
U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

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Study Summary

Background

The Historic East Piqua study area encompassed the gateway district to the city which included the oxbow of the Great Miami River on either side of U.S. Rt. 36/Ash St. The assignment (funded by a grant from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry: ATSDR) focused on identifying development options, environmental and health impacts, identifying data needed to support redevelopment plans, define the steps necessary to move redevelopment plans forward, recommend strategies for land assembly, identify partnerships to aid with the redevelopment, and identify available state and federal financial assistance. The study was initiated in June of 2013 with a two day visitation to Piqua by a team of experts in redevelopment from Ohio and around the country and resulted in an Executive Summary report.

The “Blue Ribbon Committee’s” recommendations and strategies for Historic East Piqua included:

1. Pursue a mixed use redevelopment strategy within the study area including the branding and marketing of the Historic East Piqua study area
2. The highest and best land reuse within the study area would be a recreational use with small amount of new residential housing
3. Increase the recreational usage of the Great Miami River
4. Examine the potential for a new Recreation Complex (RecPlex) in study area
5. Adaptively reuse the Aerovent and former Decker Meat packing Plant
6. Rehabilitate the residential neighborhood on the north side of Ash St.
7. Examine the potential environmental and health impacts in the study area
8. Action steps necessary to facilitate development
9. Recommend additional studies in order to move development forward
10. A strategy for using partnerships in the redevelopment of the study area
11. Identify sources of federal, state, and local funding to assist in implementation
12. A strategy for land assembly through the private sector

Following completion of the "Blue Ribbon Committee" Executive Summary, Burgess & Niple prepared the detailed report and recreational survey appendices by summarizing the study process, identifying the project area issues, analyzing the market factors affecting development, examining reuse strategies, and offering recommended priorities. The recommendations in priority order are highlighted below:
Study Recommendations:

1. A fundamental strategy to all recommendations is the strategic collaboration of key development organization including the City of Piqua, Grow Piqua Now, and the Chamber of Commerce.

2. Pursue a branding and identify strategy for Historic East Piqua utilizing a collaborative approach between the City of Piqua, Grow Piqua Now, and the Chamber of Commerce.

3. Reuse within Historic East Piqua should focus on recreational reuse.

4. Undertake a master plan for Historic East Piqua with further analysis of community needs, integration of adjacent district plans, facilitation of community partnerships for individual project components, and evaluate the recommended project components for inclusion and placement in Historic East Piqua.

5. Pursue an initial economic development strategy for Historic East Piqua involving adaptive reuse of the Decker and Aerovent buildings.

6. Prepare a community health survey focused on community and district health issues such as obesity, diabetes, asthma, infant mortality rates, childhood immunization rates, and local vital statistics utilizing a college graduate health class or a consultant.

7. Implement a land bank and demolition strategy to acquire available properties and remove them within the designated study area in order to facilitate development.

8. Develop a housing rehabilitation program that establishes the administrative process for rehabilitating and stabilizing designated neighborhoods within Historic East Piqua.

9. Expand the recreational usage of The Great Miami River through engagement with the river’s special interest groups including ODNR, Miami Valley Conservancy, and other local groups.

10. Engage a consultant to conduct a community and regional survey to gauge market demand and prepare a market and financial feasibility study to determine if a new RecPlex is feasible. Note that Appendix A “Piqua Community Recreation Needs Survey” demonstrated overwhelming consensus from respondents that a new community center/RecPlex merits additional study and would be an asset to the city.

11. Adopt a “Complete Streets” policy that embraces the principles of smart growth and complete streets.
Project Overview

The City of Piqua, OH received a grant from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to investigate environmental and health issues and redevelopment options for the Historic East Piqua area in order to improve the economics, public health, and livability of the area.

The consulting firm of Burgess and Niple was contracted to manage the ATSDR grant for the City of Piqua and they in turn subcontracted Robert Colangelo, former Executive Director, National Brownfield Association (NBA) to lead a “Blue Ribbon” team of experts to provide recommendations and options for the redevelopment of the study area. While at the NBA, Colangelo developed the Site Technical Assistance for Municipal Projects (STAMP) process for assisting communities to redevelop blighted areas. He has successfully led STAMP teams to solve complex redevelopment challenges for municipal clients that include: Chicago, IL, Flint, MI, Mantua, NJ, National City, CA and Portland, OR. STAMP was developed based on the theory of rapid cognition presented in the book *Blink* written by Malcolm Gladwell.

Gladwell states that “thinking that happens in a blink of an eye is based on thin slicing information and pattern recognition. We live in a society dedicated to the idea that we’re always better off gathering as much information and spending as much time as possible in deliberation. There are lots of situations--particularly at times of high pressure and stress--when haste does not make waste, when our snap judgments and first impressions offer a much better means of making sense of the world.”

Utilizing this theory the “Blue Ribbon” team was assembled to provide the City of Piqua with an objective analysis from an outside perspective - a chance to look at their redevelopment situation and options with a fresh set of ideas that are not inhibited by the past or are biased by local constraints. This approach allows for a cost effective snapshot solution that can be further explored. The experts selected for the team were handpicked based on their individual expertise and the unique challenges presented by the Historic East Piqua study area. A list of Team Members with their contact information is presented in Table 1.

Blue Ribbon Team Members:

Charlie Bartsch - (202) 566-1054  Bartsch.Charlie@epa.gov
Senior Advisor for Economic Development, to EPA Assistant Administrator, Washington, DC
Expertise in Federal government programs and understanding of the liability relief, technical assistance and financial incentives that can be applied to redevelopment projects.

Laurel Berman, Ph.D., - (312) 886-7476  LABerman@cdc.gov
Brownfield’s Coordinator, ATSDR, Chicago
Expertise in improving the health and the environment of communities that may be adversely affected by brownfields and land reuse sites.

Robert Colangelo - (847) 387- 3797 rvc@robertcolangelo.com
Team Leader, Chicago, IL
Pioneer in Brownfield redevelopment with experience with Brownfield government programs, insurance, financing, redevelopment and valuation of impaired properties.

Dave Graham - (312) 744-3639 Dave.Graham@cityofchicago.org
Brownfield Coordinator, City of Chicago
Extensive experience in managing complex municipal brownfield projects and sustainability aspects in redevelopment.

Kirby Hoyt - (480) 286 7270 kirby@edge-industries.com
President, Edge Industries, Phoenix, AZ
Experienced landscape architect that has designed numerous sustainable projects and communities.

Randall Jostes-(314) 835-2848 rjostes@ELTransfer.com
President, Environmental Liability Transfer, St Louis, MO
Brownfield developer with expertise in large scale complex industrial redevelopments and liability transfer.

Joe Reidy- (614) 462-2207 Joseph.Reidy@icemiller.com
Partner, Ice Miller, LLP, Columbus, OH
Environmental attorney with expertise in the structuring and management of brownfield projects and Ohio government incentives.

Kim Satzger- (513) 777-6505 ksatzger@gibraltardevcorp.com
President, Gibraltar Development, Cincinnati, OH
Former President and CEO of the Port of Cincinnati Development Authority, with expertise in brownfield redevelopment, public-private partnerships, economic development, and project implementation.

Project Area
The Historic East Piqua project area shown in Figure 1 is one of the more prominent gateways to Piqua. The study area is approximately 131 acres and is located in an oxbow in the Great Miami River and is bisected by United States Route 36 (E. Ash Street) and bordered by the downtown to the West. The project area is mixed use in nature, with a variety of residential, commercial, and industrial developments of which many are economically depressed. Prior to the construction of the Great Miami River levee system in circa 1919, this area was prone to severe flooding and was devastated by the record Ohio floods of 1913. The south side of East Ash Street is characterized by smaller single family housing units that were originally designed for factory workers from 1920-1940, who could walk to work. Today, this portion of the project area is largely rental properties and has experienced significant physical deterioration. Also, on the south side are several institutional uses including a Public Works Administration era field house and stadium operated and used by the Piqua City School District for youth basketball and high school soccer events. Located at the east end of the project area there are former industrial properties. The two major industrial properties in this area are underutilized and only partially occupied by an adapted office space use, the other property is partially utilized for warehouse space. The project area north of East Ash St./US RT. 36 also is mixed use in nature, although the vast majority of the properties are residential.
Assignment

City leadership in conjunction with representatives from ATSDR and Burgess and Niple defined the assignment during the project kick off meeting.

The primary objective of the assignment was to propose development solutions that enhance the community image, improve the livability of the area, and connect to the downtown and waterfront redevelopments. Recommendations for the built environment should include a design that promotes healthy living (walkable, bikeable), with parks, open space and access to nature that attracts entrepreneurs and business that will create jobs.

- Define the highest/best use for the Historic East Piqua study area and the types of redevelopment that can be supported. This can include a phased development, demolition of buildings or adaptive reuse of existing structures and can include a combination of commercial, residential or light industrial use.

- Identify potential environmental and health impacts and how can they be measured and remediated.

- Define the steps required to move the development forward in a phased approach?

- Identify the data or information that needs to be collected to support development plans?

- What partnership(s) can be formed with public and private sector organizations to implement and fund redevelopment? (Piqua Improvement Corporation)

- Recommend how to assemble land and gain control of properties in the study area? Identify timing and ownership issues.

- Identify what federal and state incentives are available to fund redevelopment?
Project Approach

A kick-off meeting was held to define the assignment and identify expertise of team members. This was followed by two conference calls with team members to brief them on the project and review the assignment. A briefing book containing background information and an overview of Piqua was compiled and distributed to the team prior to the site visit. Upon arrival in Piqua, the team was given an extensive tour of the both the City of Piqua and the study area. The team also received presentations from the City of Piqua’s leadership team, attended a dinner and held discussions with community stakeholders, and reviewed detailed data and information on the study area before deliberating on a recommended course of action. The following is a chronology of key events.

Chorology of Events

- July 2012 Proposal Preparation and Submittal
- December 2013 Grant Award
- Feb 2013 Selection of Contractor
- April 17-18 Project Kick off Meeting
- May 10 Blue Ribbon Team Conference Call Project Briefing
- May 22 Blue Ribbon Team Follow up Conference Call
- Day 1 – June 5, 2013 Site Visit
- Day 2 June 6, 2013 Caucus and Oral Report
- August 5 – Public Meeting, held at Armory with 26 citizens in attendance
- August 12-22 – Survey of recreation centers and swimming complexes in surrounding counties
- September 20-28 Survey of Piqua Stakeholders regarding interest in RecPlex concept

An Executive Summary was prepared which summarized the STAMP findings and was shared with the city leadership and with the general public at the August 5th community meeting. Subsequently, the study team conducted additional research on the preliminary recommendations culminating in the expanded recommendations contained in this final report.

Project Area Issues

- Housing Stock
  - The south side of East Ash Street is characterized by smaller single family housing units that were originally designed for factory workers from 1920-1940, who could walk to work. Characterized by small lots and single story bungalow style housing, home ownership is estimated to be approximately 25%. Today, this portion of the project area is largely rental properties and has experienced significant physical deterioration. This neighborhood requires immediate attention to deter continued blight and economic disinvestment.

  - The north side of East Ash St. is predominately single-family residential and has a high proportion of owner-occupied units. Its physical condition, while aging presents a stable neighborhood. Conversion to rental properties has begun. The neighborhood presents an opportunity for a targeted rehabilitation program to enhance its longevity and retain its stability.
• Former Industrial Properties
  o There are several former industrial properties located at the eastern edge of the study area including the former Aerovent Manufacturing complex and the former Decker Meat Packing Plant. Both buildings have been underutilized for at least 8 years and have been relegated to warehousing and storage. It should be noted that the Decker building although not suited for industrial reuse has been utilized in recent years by the Board of Education for administrative offices. However, the Board intends to relocate its offices to a former school in the near future. Industrial reuse is unlikely due to low demand and availability of other developable industrial land. Both buildings are also functionally obsolete for modern day manufacturing. Both of these facilities will require environmental assessments to ascertain potential future reuse.

  o The Decker Plant is significantly deteriorated and the rear portion will require removal. The front part of the plant could be adaptively reused as a business or arts incubator or commercial leased space, but will require significant investment in both building systems (HVAC) and reconfiguration in order to be adaptively reused.

  o The Aerovent Complex has many additions and totals in excess of over 600,000SF. Its greatest asset is its location at the gateway to Historic East Piqua. Its scale creates redevelopment obstacles, but addressing the building in manageable sections will permit its redevelopment. The front portion of the complex has the best layout and exposure to Ash St. It should be examined for a potential community arts complex or reconfigured for smaller businesses and continued warehousing.

• Community Health Concerns
  o Specific neighborhood health data is not readily available. The City may wish to access health data through the Health Department for the neighborhood.

  o Given the age and construction of the residential housing stock in the study area, lead base paint issues are a genuine concern. The Health Department may apply for specific site specific grants that target lead base paint especially in units with children.

  o Given the age and construction of the residential housing stock in the study area, asbestos is a concern and should be addressed as units are acquired and prepared for demolition.

Market Factors Affecting Reuse Recommendations

• Industrial and commercial reuse in the study area was precluded given the large supply of existing industrial property currently available in Piqua (1000 acres of zoned industrial land and 400 acres of shovel ready land with complete infrastructure). Also, industrial use is not the highest and best use for land located in the gateway district entering into the city and would detract from the image Piqua is trying to achieve.
Additional commercial and retail reuse as a primary land use was excluded given the study area’s location between the thriving downtown district’s retail center and the Miami Valley Shopping Center at the intersection of I-75 and US Route 36 interchange. Any new retail/commercial use would cannibalize sales from existing businesses. In the future, depending upon the configuration and scale of the RecPlex development, additional support retail could be added.

New residential reuse should be focused on market rate multi-family residential, which would complement the community objective of attracting a young professional work force. At present, there remains a stagnant single-family housing market as there have been only 4 new single family housing starts in the past two years. The existing housing stock on the north side of Ash St, although aged, is in good condition that it should be addressed in a comprehensive rehabilitation program. The housing on the south side of Ash St. is severely deteriorated and should be considered for selective acquisition and demolition in order to address community health and safety concerns. Land banking within this targeted area could permit the creation of the footprint for the recommended redevelopment plan.

A community recreation survey which is attached as Appendix A, discusses the recreation needs as identified by the community stakeholders. This survey can form the baseline for undertaking a new community center/RecPlex. Preliminary market investigation and review of other major recreation centers indicates that the regional facilities are located far enough away that they would not compete directly with a Piqua RecPlex complex. This regional market review is attached as Appendix B. This initial market review indicates enough strong community interest that a more complete market feasibility study is merited.

Rising outdoor recreational activity in Piqua demonstrates a strong potential in expanding use of The Great Miami River. Linkages to the existing park and recreation and trail systems must be carefully integrated to ensure maximum recreational opportunities are realized.

Reuse Strategies
The proposed redevelopment strategies focus on the gateway corridor and main entrance into Piqua from I-75 via US Route 36 into Downtown. Located entirely within the Oxbow of The Great Miami River, this approximately 131 acre redevelopment site encompasses the thrust of the study recommendations. Given its excellent accessibility, exposure, and need for redevelopment affords an excellent opportunity for redevelopment.

1. Marketing and Branding – The redevelopment area should give consideration to use of the name “Piqua Point”, the “Oxbow”, or consider using the term “Community Campus” in order to highlight the area’s unique relationship to the river and the surrounding community. A branding campaign and marketing study of the district is suggested to create a comprehensive approach among stakeholders and community organizations including the Chamber of Commerce, City of Piqua, and Grow Piqua Now.
2. **Economic Development** - As noted earlier under the section "Market Factors Affecting Redevelopment", industrial and commercial reuse are constricted due to the significant amount of available industrial and commercial land currently available (estimated at a 1000 acres, of which 400 acres is shovel ready). In addition, retail and office space demand is limited due to the study area’s close proximity to the Downtown’s thriving business district as well as the Miami Valley Shopping Center district. Adding new retail and office within the Ash St. corridor would compete directly with these two districts and result simply in a shift of business. Accessory retail and/or services may occur as a result of the RecPlex complex. Support retail at the complex or immediately adjacent to it should be considered as the project emerges.

a. **Adaptive Reuse of the former Industrial Buildings - Decker Meat Packing Plant and the Aerovent Manufacturing Building**

i. **Decker Meat Packing Plant** – Portions of this former manufacturing plant date to the late 1800’s with the most significant front portion of the structure built around 1930. The complex experienced multiple additions from 1900 to 1950. The structure’s front portion of the building is 3 stories with a 17 bay expanse built of red brick with ceiling heights approaching 20 feet. The rear
portion of the building is in an extremely deteriorated condition and will require
demolition. The property occupies 9.7 acres of land immediately contiguous to
the Great Miami River. The Board of Education currently occupies a portion of
the front portion of the building, but has more space than its needs and
intends to relocate in the near future to an elementary school building that is
no longer needed for classes. This portion of the complex has the potential for
being adaptively reused for a business or an arts incubator. The high bay
ceilings coupled with 20-25 foot column spacing could permit artist live/work
spaces in the form of loft spaces. Also, gallery space for a community arts
organization would be possible.

A business/office incubator could be retrofitted into the front portion of the
building given that the current layout configuration is designed for office space.
Removal of partition walls would afford an opportunity to create business
space, although the vertical floor configuration is not conducive for product
assembly or manufacturing of products requiring multiple production steps.

The first step in evaluating the potential of this building is to conduct
environmental site assessments in order to determine the extent and types of
potential impacts. These investigations will permit a framing of the cleanup
costs and help identify possible scenarios for cleanup. In addition, an
architectural or engineering evaluation of the building is recommended in
order to determine which portions of the complex are usable and functional.

ii. **Aerovent Manufacturing Building** - This large one story manufacturing
complex is approximately 500,000 SF having experienced multiple
additions/ modifications over the past 40 years. The original plant was
constructed in the 1930’s; it anchors the north side of Ash St. and extends
north to the Great Miami River. It is the first major building travelers encounter
as they enter Piqua from I-75 via Ash St. which affords it excellent
transportation access and exposure. Although many of the additions at the
rear of the complex are inefficient and are not adaptable to reuse, the front
portion of the complex would lend itself to a business or arts incubator or arts
center. The one story layout has moderate ceiling height of 12-15 feet which
would permit small businesses with a non-manufacturing focus to utilize the
space. Technology and business start-up companies could be configured to
accommodate a variety of space needs. Removal of rear portions of the
building would permit new reuses such as market rate apartments or
recreational opportunities as the site has excellent exposure to the Great
Miami River.

Environmental evaluation of the complex is a necessary first step to determine
the extent and scope of potential impacts. An architectural or engineering
review of the complex is recommended in order to determine which parts of
the complex are suitable for business or arts reuse.

b. Arts and/or Business Incubator

i. Arts Incubator/Cultural Center – As discussed, the above buildings in the core of the
Historic East Piqua Redevelopment Area should be examined for adaptive reuse for
community arts. Many communities have successfully adapted older historic buildings into
community arts venues. Partnerships between visual arts and performing arts
organizations have solidified under an umbrella non-profit organization that provides
overall management and operational support. Cost savings can be realized through
sharing of office/function space, utilities, support staff, and marketing of events. Multi-
purpose space can be used for gallery space as well as performance space. A community
arts building can be phased in as funding becomes available. The arts are also potential
economic engines in their own right as “arts industries” are becoming a major visitor draw.

ii. Business Incubator – There are a wide variety of business incubators found nationally
and in Ohio. Business incubators are designed to provide a low cost operating
environment with technical support to nurture start up businesses. Typically, business
incubators permit start-up companies for typically up to five years to transition them into
the marketplace. Incubators can be focused on a variety of business start-ups from
product development to tech companies developing new software and program
applications. The Ohio Department of Development has been a strong supporter of local
communities developing business incubators or accelerators. ODOD funded the Edison
Advanced Manufacturing Centers around Ohio to promote specialty manufacturing such as
polymers-plastics, machining, welding, robotics, etc. The United States Economic
Development Administration has historically funded incubators through capital grants as
well as operating support.

3. Complete & Green Street Approach (US Rt. 36/Ash St.)– Ash Street has recently been
reconstructed with upgraded lane width, improved drainage, sidewalks, signage, and street trees.
The opportunity to expand upon this reconstruction with a complete street approach for Ash Street
would complement the reuse strategy for recreation/open space and the RecPlex proposed for the
south side of the street. The objective of a complete street approach for US 36/Ash St. is to provide
a safe, comfortable, and convenient roadway corridor for all users of all ages and abilities including
pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders. Complete streets promotes significant safety
and health considerations by encouraging walking and bicycle riding as well as slowing traffic
speeds for automobile. Pedestrian enhancement encourage carefully defined pedestrian
crosswalks, raised medians, bump out curbs, and pedestrian walk signals
a. **Sustainable Design** – As new development and redevelopment occur along this corridor, opportunities for on-site detention, improved ingress and egress, limited curb cuts, streetscape amenities (benches, trash receptacles, street trees, and street lighting), and coordinated street signage will enhance the quality of the build environment. A complete street typically includes: sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, and more. A complete streets approach can enhance area access by all modes. Complete Streets improves the efficiency and capacity of existing roads too, by moving people in the same amount of space. Getting more productivity out of the existing road is vital to reducing congestion.

In regard to sustainable green initiatives for streets, there are a number of sustainable green practices that can be utilized including permeable paving material for bikeways and sidewalks; use of bioswales for improved stormwater quality entering the The Great Miami River; solar powered pedestrian, traffic, and street lights; recycling and capture of storm water runoff for project water features such as fountains; and sustainable landscaping resistant to drought conditions. These represent a few of the emerging sustainable practices that are evolving to enhance green street and park initiatives.

b. **Health** - Obesity in America has reached epidemic proportions in recent years. The latest data show that 32% of adults are obese. The number of overweight or obese American children nearly tripled between 1980 and 2004. Health experts agree that a big factor is inactivity – 55 percent of the U.S. adult population falls short of recommended activity guidelines, and approximately 25 percent report being completely inactive. Inactivity is a
factor in many other diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Incomplete streets mean many people lack opportunities to be active as part of daily life. Walkability has a direct and specific relation to the health of residents. A comprehensive study of walkability has found that people in walkable neighborhoods did about 35-45 more minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week and were substantially less likely to be overweight or obese than similar people living in low-walkable neighborhoods.

Historic East Piqua would benefit directly from a complete street approach given the immediacy of the neighborhood to the Ash St. corridor. Increased walking and biking would definitely extend health benefits to the residents.

c. **Safety** - Complete Streets reduce crashes through comprehensive safety improvements. A Federal Highway Administration review of the effectiveness of a wide variety of measures to improve pedestrian safety found that simply painting crosswalks on wide high-speed roads does not reduce pedestrian crashes. But measures that design the street with pedestrians in mind – sidewalks, raised medians, better bus stop placement, traffic-calming measures, and treatments for disabled travelers – all improve pedestrian safety. Some features, such as medians, improve safety for all users: they enable pedestrians to cross busy roads in two stages, and reduce left-turning motorist crashes to zero, a type of crash that also endangers bicyclists. Complete Streets encourage safer bicycling behavior. Sidewalk bicycle riding, especially against the flow of adjacent traffic, is more dangerous than riding in the road due to unexpected conflicts at driveways and intersections. A recent review of bicyclist safety studies found that the addition of well-designed bicycle-specific infrastructure tends to reduce injury and crash risk. On-road bicycle lanes reduced these rates by about 50%.

d. **Economic Development** – Studies have demonstrated that complete street policies have positively impacted economic development. Increased safety through enhanced safe access, sidewalks, and bikeways create an environment in which street users and businesses alike benefit. Direct cost savings to users through gasoline reduction, time, and operation and maintenance costs to automobile is significant.

e. **Streetscape Beautification** – A key component of complete streets is streetscape beautification which directly impacts the image of Piqua. Given that Ash St. /US 36 is the main gateway into Piqua, streetscape beautification is critical to the marketing and branding component referenced above. Good design practices are linked directly to economic development growth as it encourages increased visitation and shopping.

f. **Signage** – Improved signage regulations for both the public and private sector are a very important element of complete streets. Controlling the height, width, and overall size of signs supports streetscape beautification, safety, and economic development principles.

g. **Pedestrian amenities** – This corridor would benefit from improved sidewalks, pedestrian signals, safe crosswalks, benches, and other amenities that link businesses to the Historic East Piqua neighborhoods.
h. **Bicycle** – The use of dedicated bike lanes or paths adjacent to Ash St. should be integrated with the city’s existing trail system. New bike lanes would better link neighborhoods to the downtown and Miami Valley Shopping Center as well as businesses located along Ash St. A new bike path is proposed on the interior side of the levee within the Oxbow and would link to the bike lanes on Ash St. and the existing trail system.

i. **Transit** – Although there is no current formal transit system, with the complete streets approach to the Ash ST. corridor, the opportunity for funding dramatically increases. A trolley or shuttle transit service linking the Downtown to the Miami Valley Shopping Center would be a means of gauging community demand for such service.

4. **Housing**

a. **Existing Neighborhood North of Ash St.** – The neighborhood north of Ash St. extending to the Great Miami River is characterized by single family residential and remains in sound and stable condition. There are over a hundred dwelling units located within this quadrant. The neighborhood has a significant percentage of owner occupied housing and although dating to the 1930’s reflects the care of owner occupied units. Largely wood frame two story construction, the housing has been well maintained. However, it is observed that conversion to rental units has begun. A comprehensive analysis of the affected neighborhood is recommended which could result in the City of Piqua undertaking a housing rehabilitation program. A program with low interest loans to address both life and safety code issues and also basic upgrades such as siding and remodeling to extend the useful life of this important neighborhood would be a logical next step. The rehabilitation of this important neighborhood is vital to the long term stability of both Historic East Piqua and the city as a whole.

b. **Neighborhood South of Ash St.** – This portion of the study area contains approximately 60 single family dwelling units and five commercial buildings. Many of the units have been converted to multi-family units. This neighborhood is characterized by housing that dates to the 1920’s and 1930’s that served the factory workers who could walk to their jobs. The housing stock is extremely dense on narrow small lots. It is estimated that 70% of the dwelling units are rental and the neighborhood has experienced significant deterioration. Largely of frame construction, the units are single story bungalow or Cape Cod architectural in style and have largely fallen into disrepair. In order to implement the concept plan, it is recommended that the vast majority of these units be acquired over time in phases, wherein the eastern most blocks are acquired initially using a more concentrated approach. However, as individual units become available throughout the study area, they should be acquired by the Piqua Improvement Corporation and landbanked for future redevelopment.

c. **New Market Rate Housing** – In order to achieve one of Piqua’s goals of attracting a younger professional work force to the city, it is necessary to diversify its housing
market by providing newer housing opportunities to include new market rate rental housing units. A key to placement of this type of updated market rate housing is providing it in a unique stable location. It is important to note that placement of new market rate rental units must be carefully phased and not overbuild and saturate the current market. A fresh new low-rise walk-up apartment style complex on the north side of Ash St. along and overlooking the Great Miami River is a logical location. This location could occur following the removal of a portion of the Aerovent Manufacturing complex, which dominates the northeast quadrant of the study area. In addition, a second location for market rate apartments would be at the southwest corner of the study area adjacent to the redeveloping Riverfront district. Close integration with the Riverfront District redevelopment is required. Additional opportunities for housing could present itself, but careful market expansion is recommended to gauge market interest and absorption.

5. Recreation and Open Space – Given the exceptional access and exposure to the Great Miami River combined with the strong market for additional indoor and outdoor recreational activities, inclusion of new and exciting recreational opportunities are strongly encouraged. Linkages to existing bike and hike trails, river recreation, and accessibility for the community to new active recreational opportunities make the study area an ideal location for expanded recreation and open space opportunities. Additional analysis and study of the recommendations are warranted to probe further into the health and wellness benefits that would result from expanded and refined recreation and open space.

   a. River Use - Enhance usage of the Great Miami River – Regional users along the river now total over 200,000 persons a year. Continued expansion of river and trail systems
along the river will continue to grow if the proper facilities and infrastructure are in place to facilitate expanded usage. The redevelopment plan calls for a new interior hike and bike multi-purpose trail following the levee throughout the oxbow linking into the existing city-wide trail system. As water quality continues to improve, primary water sports such as canoeing, kayaking, and even small boat rides are excellent opportunities. Fishing is also a popular sport.

b. **RecPlex** - A multi-use indoor and outdoor recreation facility could be a tremendous community and regional asset. Expanded opportunities for improving the health and wellness for Piqua is a targeted objective of ATSDR and by providing an attractive and appealing community facility, residents of Piqua would be drawn to it.

Its physical form could be an expanded community center focused on Piqua's community-wide needs. A partnership approach is the logical and most cost effective means to achieve this recommendation. The Piqua branch of the YMCA, Upper Valley Medical Center, and Piqua Board of Education are logical partners and should be engaged in discussions to determine if there are areas of mutual cooperation. The medical center could become a funding partner for the local health and wellness component including a physical therapy center. The Board of Education could gain a state of the art aquatics center. A dedicated school improvement levy is a possible partial funding mechanism to assist with the pool portion of the complex. The RecPlex could include such features such as a 25-50 meter size pool and indoor water park, indoor running track, facilities for aerobics, spinning, training and exercise equipment/weight rooms, and an indoor adventure playground for children, among other features. Expanded opportunities for programming of the arts, culture, as well as recreation could be included. Outside facilities could include adventure playgrounds, tennis, basketball, pickleball, paddleball, and walking/biking trails connected to the City system. The exact program would be determined following a detailed marketing analysis.

Appendix A discusses the recreation stakeholder survey that gathered community needs and interest towards a new RecPlex facility. The survey revealed strong community need and interest for additional indoor facilities. In particular, an expanded and modern indoor swimming pool and waterpark were referenced along with a running track, additional court game space, indoor adventure playground, and additional aerobics opportunities. Outdoor activities noted in the survey included improved adventure playgrounds, tennis and paddleball courts, additional picnicking, and walking & hiking trails. Expanded opportunities for arts, cultural, and recreation programming opportunities were also desired. The survey showed that the community would support an expanded RecPlex, but it would require collaboration between the community’s recreation delivery organizations in order for it to operate efficiently.

A regional survey (See Appendix B) of comparable indoor recreation centers was conducted among the adjacent counties covering an approximate 50 mile radius. Currently there are indoor recreation centers in Kettering, Huber Hts. and Dayton. In addition, there are outdoor splash parks in Springfield and Troy. The only privately identified RecPlex complex is Great Bear Lodge near Mason, Ohio, which is a major tourist destination attraction, but requires an overnight hotel stay in order to use the facilities. The Miami
County YMCA has two branches, one in Downtown Piqua and its newer facility near Troy. If the Piqua YMCA and its partners garner support for a new larger facility, locating it in the redevelopment area provides an excellent central location to serve not only Piqua but also the region.

A RecPlex incorporating the majority of the above program elements will require a significant capital investment. A detailed market and financial feasibility study will be required which will evaluate the use program in the marketplace and identify the financial sources and partnerships necessary to implement the facility. The study would address: market draw, user profile, regional competition, land requirement, a preliminary facility use program, ownership structure, cost, capital financing, operational costs, facility management, and phasing. Most importantly, it will enable Piqua to determine whether a regionally focused RecPlex is financially feasible or whether Piqua should focus on an expanded multi-purpose community center.

c. Amphitheater/Open Space/Farmers Market/Trail System – A key component to compliment the growing Riverfront District and Downtown activity nodes of activity would be the addition of an outdoor amphitheater/performance space. Given the unique setting along the levee and river, an amphitheater could be designed to be integrated into the levee near the RecPlex or alternatively near River Town in order to provide an outdoor performance and gathering venue. Many communities have expanded their seasonal offerings by providing a regular program of weekly concerts, plays, and musical events by having a well designed outdoor performance space if positioned adjacent to an expanded farmers market with a permanent canopy or pavilion. Complimenting the amphitheater and farmers market would be expanded open space with playfields, sculpture garden, and
green space available for unstructured free play, as well as public space to program public activities. The addition of a new internal hike/bike trail system that follows the inside of the levee within the Oxbow area will add additional trails for recreational usage as it would be designed to link into the extensive existing City system. An interior bikeway could also lend itself to competitive bike racing events.

Given the close proximity and use dependency of Historic East Piquà to Ash St. US 36 corridor, serious consideration to enhancement of Ash St. for improved safety enhancements should be pursued.

6. Health and Wellness of the Historic East Piquà

a. Reuse Strategies for health, safety, and wellness

i. Improved access to recreation and open space
   1. The addition of a new community center/RecPlex would directly relate to reducing the propensity for obesity and heart disease.
   2. Improved access to and use of the Great Miami River would encourage additional recreational and outdoor activity.
   3. New and expanded bike/hike trails to encourage increased exercise.

ii. Improve housing and sanitary conditions
   1. Remove deteriorated and dilapidated housing structures. Vacant housing units attract rodent infestations, dangerous environments for children, and detract from economically sound neighborhoods.
   2. Housing rehabilitation program – In order to extend the life of neighborhoods and improve its health and wellness it is necessary to reinvest in neighborhoods on a regular basis. A rehabilitation program involving comprehensive housing inspections, and programs to address code violations and life and safety issues as well as upgrades to roof, siding, and life style needs will extend the functional life of neighborhoods.
   3. Recommend undertaking lead based paint and asbestos surveys in both the neighborhood targeted for acquisition and the neighborhood north of Ash St, recommended for rehabilitation.
   4. Infrastructure upgrades must accompany housing rehabilitation programs in order to create the total environment for investment. It instills pride and a better sense of community.
iii. Address vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial buildings that have or may have environmental hazards associated with them.
   1. Brownfield and adaptive reuse of the Aerovent and Decker Industrial buildings are critical to the overall redevelopment of Historic East Piqua.

   2. Environmental assessments of Aerovent and Decker properties are a necessary first step in determining the properties environmental condition.

iv. Work with City of Piqua Health Department and Miami county Health Department to monitor health and wellness issues in the community including disease rates such as cancer and heart disease.
   1. Seek federal funding from department of Health and Social Services and ATSDR to gather disease statistics and study health trends in the community.

7. Recommended Priorities
   The following recommendations are listed in order of recommended priority by identifying those actions which can be achieved in the short term, those that require additional study and others that represent longer term initiatives.

   A fundamental recommendation is the strategic collaboration of the Piqua development organizations including Grow Piqua Now (GPN) and the Chamber of Commerce, to guide the project recommendations for Historic East Piqua that affect the various community organizations regarding the different initiatives that will come forward from this study. Specific to the success of these recommendations is the development of the necessary community partnerships between private corporations, non-for-profits, quasi-governmental organizations, foundations, and the affected property and business owners to affect the individual components of the Historic East Redevelopment Plan.

   a. Branding and Identify (short term) –Initial focus should be branding the redevelopment area. The goal is to enhance and improve its image and identify. Historic East Piqua is a good starting point and initial names conceived by the study team included “Piqua Point”, the “Oxbow” or “Community Campus”.

      Recommendation:
      Using a collaborative approach, resources from the above organizations can be maximized to leverage creative talents in rebranding this gateway district. An effort should be made to solicit in-kind marketing and advertising input from local professionals. Also, the city might solicit a city wide campaign to have citizens come up with a new name or engage a branding consultant.

   b. Master Plan Development (short term) – A master plan for the Historic East Piqua Neighborhood Study Area is an important next step. The master plan should refine the
findings of this report, further analyze community needs for the study area, integrate the recommendations of the plans for the adjacent districts, assist with facilitating the various community partnerships for individual project components, and evaluate the recommended project area facilities for inclusion and placement in Historic East Piqua.

Recommendation:
Engage a consultant to prepare a master plan for the Historic East Piqua Redevelopment Area, which will serve as a foundation from which the recommended projects can emanate.

c. Economic Development Strategies for the Decker and Aerovent Buildings
   i. Form a public–private partnership between the City, Grow Piqua Now, and the property owners of these two buildings to develop a realistic adaptive reuse plan for utilizing these two important gateway properties. Both buildings will require an environmental assessment to determine if there are any potential environmental issues. Both structures have the potential to be adaptively reused as a business and/or arts incubator. Alternatively, the front portion of the Decker Building could be reconfigured for office, warehousing, and loft live-work space. These two buildings are critically positioned to impact the image for both the study area and the entire city given their community gateway location. Both structures should receive an adaptive reuse study analysis to determine functional, structural, and adaptive alternative uses. Successful redevelopment of these buildings would create the initial successful building block from other redevelopment within the district could build.

Recommendation:
Pursue a partnership to explore options for attracting developers to undertake adaptive reuse of the two buildings. Undertake Phase 1 environmental assessments and adaptive reuse studies of both buildings using the recently awarded USEPA Brownfield Assessment Grant and additional funding from ATSDR.

   ii. Farmers Market – an expanded and enhanced farmers market with a permanent multi-purpose structure would provide the necessary environment to attract more farmers and visitors. Many communities have financed creative multi-purpose open air structures that facilitate ease of ingress and egress for farmers and visitors alike and can be used for other community activities such as arts and craft shows, festival, swap meets, etc. Its location could also be integrated with the Riverfront district or become a focal point for Historic East Piqua given its excellent access and exposure.

Recommendation:
Initiate dialogue between affected stakeholders for the potential of an expanded Farmer’s Market and its appropriate location

d. Health and Wellness
i. Identify health issues within the study area such as obesity, diabetes, asthma, infant mortality rates, childhood immunization rates, and review local vital statistics records for unusual causes of death.

ii. Research possible correlations between environmental and physical factors within the study area to the health issues identified above.

iii. Monitor health trends within the study area.

iv. Align community health and social services within the study area to enhance overall community health.

v. Conduct a study area community health survey to establish base line health data for the neighborhood.

Recommendation:
Prepare a community health survey relative to the issues presented above that would identify base line date for improving the health in the study area as well as the community’s overall health. The health survey could be prepared in cooperation with a University community health program. Alternatively, using the ATSDR 2nd grant, engage a consultant to conduct the survey.

e. Housing Strategies

i. Land Banking South Side – A strategy will be necessary to address opportunity purchases within the redevelopment area. Once a targeted area is designated, properties that become available in the marketplace could be pursued by the City of Piqua and Grow Piqua Now or their designee. The properties should be evaluated against the priority acquisition areas. Purchase of vacant units should be given the highest priority.

Recommendation:
Determine the organizational and management structure in order to establish policy and procedures for acquisition of properties within the designated land bank area.

ii. Demolition of acquired properties containing structures. It is critical that acquired houses/buildings be demolished at the earliest possible time. Funding will have to be dedicated to this task. Also, as properties with vacant structures that have become public nuisances could be addressed by the City or Grow Piqua Now by instituting a program in which the demolition costs are paid by the city or GPN provided the land owner is willing to transfer the property to the City or GPN.
Recommendation:
It is recommended that an-house study be undertaken to establish demolition criteria for targeted properties as well as for demolition of vacant structures deemed public nuisances.

iii. Housing rehabilitation Program – This is a very time intensive program that will require additional program study and recommendations for establishing the proper procedures, guidelines, oversight, and funding mechanisms to be implemented in order for it to be effective. A decision as to which department is best equipped to administer the program will be necessary.

Recommendation:
The City of Piqua should prepare a report outlining the organizational role and management structure necessary to undertake a housing rehabilitation program internally within the City.

iv. New Market Rate Housing (Long Term) – Locations adjacent to the river to take advantage of its views and recreational opportunities are critical. Placement in either the northeast quadrant or southwest portion of the study area adjacent to the Riverfront is recommended. Coordination with the Riverfront redevelopment district will be required to assure the best placement for market rate rental apartments targeted for younger working professionals.

Recommendation:
Although long term in nature, early identification of potential sites for new market rate housing is recommended in order to position affected neighborhood and business decisions appropriately. It will also demonstrate to developers a carefully conceived policy and commitment to building of new market rate housing.

f. Recreation/Open Space Recommendations

i. Great Miami River – Working with the river’s special interest groups including ODNR, Miami Valley Conservancy, and others, enhanced usage of the river is an important and very implementable step. Some steps such as continued water quality improvement are long term while others such as creating a boat, canoe, and kayak dock and/ or ramp are short term.

Recommendation:
Develop a task force from the above non-profit organizations to identify immediate actions steps that could result in expanded recreational, environmental, and community use of the Great Miami River.

ii. Community Center/ RecPlex – There are multiple phases associated with the recommendation for this facility. A detailed market and financial feasibility study will be necessary to determine the community and regional demand for the larger RecPlex center. Such as study would assist in determining the financial feasibility.
and market demand. At the community level, the city leadership can analyze the need and interest for an expanded community center in partnership with the previously identified organizations such as the YMCA, Upper Valley Medical Center, and the Piqua Board of Education. Determination of the community and regional need as well as the center facility program and financial feasibility are necessary prerequisite steps. These studies will assist the community partners in determining the center’s need and financial feasibility. The community center component could be expanded into the larger RecPlex if the market and financial feasibility study determine that there is demand for the larger facility.

**Recommendation:**
Engage a consultant to conduct a community and regional survey to gauge community need and market demand and prepare a market and financial feasibility study to examine if the community and regional market would support the RecPlex. The consultant would provide an estimated cost of construction as well.

iii. **Amphitheater** – this component should be located in concert with the Riverfront District redevelopment project or be incorporated into the Historic East Piqua redevelopment project. It represents a strong market draw but must be carefully designed and build to become a community wide attraction.

Recommendation: Explore alternative locations for placement of this important community venue in conjunction with the redevelopment of Historic East Piqua and the Waterfront District. Ensure that the amphitheater concept is prepared in collaboration with all affected organizations with vested interests in the facility and is integrated into all plans for the study area.

g. **Complete Streets**

i. This comprehensive approach to building and using streets is well suited for US RT. #36/ Ash St. The elements include sustainable design, health, safety, streetscape beautification, signage, pedestrian amenities, bicycle, and transit.

ii. Funding for complete streets and Green Streets can be pursued with both the Ohio Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development (Sustainable Development Initiative) among others.

iii. Complete Streets can be undertaken simultaneously with the other recommendations as funding is forecast from the above agencies.

**Recommendation:**
A complete streets policy should be drafted and put into place within the Planning and Transportation Departments in order that coordinated decision making occurs relative to the complete streets approach.
Appendix A

Piqua Community Recreation Complex Needs Survey Results
10-1-13

Note: The telephone survey was targeted to 15 community stakeholders of who 13 participated. The 2 who did not respond were affiliated with the youth sports leagues of soccer and football.

1. Are your constituent’s recreational needs currently being met by existing facilities?

a. General responses included:
   i. Not aware of any citizen complaints about indoor/outdoor facilities
   ii. Community takes full advantage of existing facilities. Recreational needs are met in large part by existing facilities
   iii. Concern that City of Piqua can afford to pay to operate and maintain new/expanded recreation facilities
   iv. Skepticism that a new recreation complex would be a regional draw
   v. Added recreational facilities must be enhancement of existing facilities currently being provided and not become competitors or duplication
   vi. Piqua Schools have outstanding facilities and generally meet the school age population demand
   vii. There exists a cultural disconnect between the middle and senior citizen age groups as they tend not to have as many recreational opportunities as the youth of Piqua.
   viii. It was felt that if there were more recreational facilities in Piqua they would be used. “If you build it they will come”

b. Indoor Facility Comments
   i. YMCA is the major provider of indoor facilities but is landlocked and needs additional capacity to expand (3 respondents)
   ii. YMCA facility is popular and used by 22% of Piquans
   iii. YMCA has some multi-purpose space available for additional programs
   iv. YMCA fee structure is not an obstacle for access by lower income population (fees can be waived)
   v. YMCA pool is in high demand and open swim times are restricted.

c. Outdoor Facility Comments
   i. Hiking/biking trails are excellent (8 respondents)
   ii. Piqua parks are excellent and generally meet outdoor recreation needs of community (8 respondents)
   iii. The Great Miami River is great asset
   iv. New skateboard and BMX venues show if new facilities provided they will be used (4 respondents)
   v. Picnicking adequate (6 respondents)
2. **What recreational needs are not being met? What don’t you like about the existing facilities?**

   a. **Indoor Needs Deficiencies**
      i. More indoor space for year round recreation activities
      ii. Expanded indoor facilities would receive increased use
      iii. Need more indoor courts for programmed activities and free play. More basketball and racquetball courts are needed (3 respondents)
      iv. YMCA pool is fully scheduled and it is difficult to find available open swim times. Several respondents felt it needs upgraded & modernized
      v. Community could use indoor walking/jogging track (5 respondents)
      vi. Increased multi-purpose space for dance, martial arts, & visual arts
      vii. Additional program space for seniors
      viii. YMCA is outdated and requires modernization (3 respondents)
      ix. New indoor water park would be desirable (8 respondents)
      x. Need for creative indoor play spaces (9 respondents)

   b. **Outdoor Needs Deficiencies**
      i. Improved recreational access to The Great Miami River (6 respondents)
         1. Beach volleyball on river side of levee behind Decker Bldg.
         2. Need to access river for canoe & kayaking; need to find ways to work around levee and use river/levee as asset
      ii. Splash pad at Pitsenbarger Park
      iii. New waterpark (5 respondents)
      iv. Amphitheater for larger outdoor performances would attract young professionals
      v. Expand hike/bike trail system- needs to be linked to existing system & schools)) (6 respondents)
      vi. Adventure Playground – nontraditional creative play areas (4 respondents)
         1. Example cited of Miami County Park District nature playground
         2. Importance of outside creative play for healthier lifestyle

3. **Would you like to see a community recreation complex built in one location for both indoor and outdoor recreational activities?**

   a. The vast majority of the respondents (12) expressed interest in exploring concept for a new recreation facility
      i. RecPlex should be in concert with YMCA (7 respondents)
      ii. YMCA should be core partner of any new facility as it is apolitical and has strong leadership (5 respondents)
      iii. YMCA wants to be at table for any discussion of new center and expressed desire to mange new facility if built
      iv. Dynamic leadership is key to moving RecPlex forward
      v. Like concept of central recreation facility for community (6 respondents)
vi. Concern that YWCA would be absorbed into YMCA and lose its identify
vii. Concern that many Piquans (families & individuals) could not afford to belong to a new center

b. Historic East Piqua would be a good location for a RecPlex (7 respondents)
   i. Historic East Piqua is a Gateway into Downtown & needs attention
   ii. Increase walking/biking links from Historic East Piqua into Downtown and to schools to the east
   iii. RecPlex at this location would enhance a positive identity for Piqua
   iv. Concern expressed that upper income groups may not go to south side of Ash St.

4. Do you see a need for expanded recreation, arts, and cultural programming in Piqua? Is there an opportunity for increased collaboration between the organizations (schools, youth sports organizations, non-profit organizations, health providers, city government, etc…) to reduce duplication of services and to maximize the use of available community resources?

   a. There is a need for collaboration and cooperation among providers (5 respondents)
   b. Arts programming should be expanded (4 respondents)
   c. Demand increasing for dance, visual arts and performing arts for all ages
   d. Concern that expanded programming for relatively small population could become spread too thin
   e. Schools could be better utilized for additional arts
   f. Educational school campus (Piqua High School & Junior High, Miami Valley Career Center, & Edison Community College) could better link its facilities
   g. Aerovent Building as an arts incubator
   h. Arts Center as a separate stand alone building is desirable but unrealistic in short term

5. Would a RecPlex afford an opportunity for meeting this expanded recreation, arts and cultural programming, and the collaborative delivery of community services and public amenities?

   a. A centralized recreation facility would expand and improve delivery of programming for the arts (7 respondents)
   b. RecPlex must build upon the existing venues of current providers and not duplicate facilities or programs
   c. RecPlex could become a community center for the arts
   d. It would be good for the cultural arts to increase their collaboration and cooperation in a central location
6. Which of the following activities would be appropriate for a new community recreation complex? (Respondents answers are aggregated into yes, no, & maybe)

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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Indoor Court Games</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Creative Indoor play areas</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Spinning/aerobics</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>j. Outdoor Playgrounds</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Additional Playfields</td>
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SUMMARY

1. Piqua has excellent outdoor recreational facilities and parks that generally meet the City’s needs.

2. There is interest in expanding recreational opportunities for all ages in order to engage the community in a healthier lifestyle.

3. Piqua’s YMCA is a well-run facility that meets many of Piqua’s indoor recreational needs. (22% of Piquans belong to Y) There is interest in expanding the Y. The Y pool while in good condition is programmed to its limit. There is definite interest in a new pool.

4. Additional indoor court and multi-space facilities are needed. An indoor walking-jogging track is desired.

5. A waterpark, preferably indoor, due to its year-round usage, would be desirable.

6. The city’s hike/bike system is held in high regard and respondents desire to see it expanded, including linkage to existing system and the high/junior high school campus.

7. The Great Miami River is a great asset but it needs to be embraced and utilized more through improved access and programming.
8. There was overwhelming consensus from the respondents that a new Community RecPlex merits additional study and would be an asset to city. There is skepticism that it can be a regional draw.

9. Historic East Piqua would be a good location for the RecPlex given its gateway location.

10. A New RecPlex must include the YMCA as partner to construct and operate.

11. Arts & cultural programs are gaining popularity in Piqua and respondents felt that the providers should collaborate as much as possible. A new RecPlex affords an opportunity to locate arts & cultural programming in one location to enhance cooperation.
Appendix B

City of Piqua
Recreation Center Survey of Surrounding Region’s Facilities

Note: The survey focused on the four county region contiguous to Piqua including Miami, Montgomery, Greene, Butler, Champaign, and Clark counties. Jurisdictions included regional colleges and universities, municipalities, YMCA’s, and private facilities. The survey excluded Cincinnati, and Hamilton, Butler, and Warren County as they were deemed not to impact the Piqua market area. The search criteria included identifying indoor recreation centers that had swimming pool facilities, indoor & outdoor water parks, as well as other recreational components including fitness center, court games, multi-purpose activities that were co-located with swimming center. Outdoor swimming pools and water parks were noted when they were associated with significant indoor or outdoor recreation facilities and were in close proximity to Piqua market. Distance to Piqua was noted for recreation centers excluding the university facilities.

Universities/Colleges:

1. University of Dayton
   a. 125,000 SF Student RecPlex
   b. 8 lane swimming @ 25 yards long; 12 foot deep diving well/ 1 meter board; and a vortex leisure pool
   c. Fitness center with complete aerobics, court games, weight rooms, cardiovascular facilities with cycling, treadmills, etc.
   d. Rock climbing wall (25 feet high)
   e. Running track
   f. Admission to University community only, except special events

2. Wright State University
   a. 140,000SF approximately
   b. Swimming pool with 6 lanes
   c. Community access to pool for open swim and lessons
   d. Fitness Center – full array of aerobics, court games, weight rooms, cycling, and cardiovascular equipment
   e. 25 foot climbing wall/limited accessibility to public
   f. Indoor track
   g. Admission to University community only, except special events

3. Miami University
   a. 50 meter swimming pool – 8 lanes/ diving well/leisure pool
   b. Pool - Community membership available
   c. Fitness center – cardiovascular, aerobics, weight rooms, court games, exercise equipment spinning, starmaster, treadmills, etc.
   d. Climbing wall
   e. Indoor track
4. Sinclair Community College –
   a. 25 meter - 7 lane NCAA regulation swim pool
   b. Recreation center with fitness facilities including: exercise equipment, court games; aerobics, multi-purpose space, indoor track
   c. Facilities not open to public due to high student enrollment

5. Wittenberg University
   a. 25 meter swimming pool( 6 lanes) with 2 diving boards
   b. Fitness center with cardiovascular, weight rooms, training rooms
   c. 4 gymnasium modules
   d. Racquet and squash courts
   e. Outdoor complex with 12 tennis courts
   f. Not accessible to general public

Municipal or YMCA RecPlex Facilities by County

Miami County –
1. YMCA Piqua Branch(Downtown) and Troy
   a. 25 yard swimming pool/ no diving/ no leisure or indoor or outdoor waterpark
   b. Gymnasium
   c. Multi-purpose space; weight rooms; cardiovascular treadmills, spinning
   d. Racquet ball courts
   e. Extensive program offerings for arts, crafts, seniors, child development
   f. Child care
   g. Community membership or guest pass

2. YMCA Troy Branch
   a. 25 yard swimming pool/ no diving/ no leisure pool or outdoor waterpark
   b. Gymnasium
   c. Multi-purpose room for aerobics, dance , and exercise
   d. Exercise room for cardiovascular equipment
   e. Youth and adult programming
   f. Distance to Piqua – 8 miles

3. Troy Aquatic Park – 460 W. Stauton Dr.(Outdoor Waterpark)
   a. Outdoor water park with 2 giant water slides
   b. Intensive water play equipment
   c. Variety of other water ;lay equipment
   d. Seasonal owned by City of Troy
   e. Distance to Piqua – 8 miles

4. Tippecanoe Aquatic Center – Tipp City, 25 Parkwood Dr.(Outdoor Waterpark)
   a. Outdoor aquatic center with lap pool and water park
b. No indoor pool associated with center

c. Distance to Piqua – 15 miles

Shelby County
1. Sidney YMCA -300 E. Parkwood St.
  a. 25 yard indoor pool/ no diving component
  b. Multi-purpose space for comprehensive recreational programming
  c. Gymnasium, court games, aerobics, and cardiovascular equipment
  d. 15.5 miles to Piqua

Montgomery County
1. City of Kettering – Recreation Complex at 1288 Glengarry Dr.
  a. 152,000 SF facility build at cost of $12.3 million via a bond issue in 2008
  b. Part of 95+ acre Indian Riffle park with outdoor courts, shuffleboard, hiking & bike trails
     sledding, fitness trails, and skate pond
  c. Kettering ice arena integrated into center
  d. 8 lane 25 yard lap pool with retractable roof – home of Kettering HS swim team
  e. 3 acre water park for year round use (indoor & outdoor)
  f. Spa/leisure pool
  g. 8,400 SF fitness center featuring gyms, court games, aerobics, and exercise equipment
  h. Distance to Piqua – 38 miles

2. Vandalia Recreation Center Sport Complex - 1111 Stonequarry Rd.
  a. $10 million investment/ 58,000SF
  b. Indoor water park/lap pool -6 lanes/ leisure pool
  c. Fitness center – cardiovascular equipment; multi-purpose rooms for aerobics, spinning,
     and special programming
  d. Climbing wall
  e. Indoor playground
  f. 2 court gymnasium
  g. Walking/jogging track
  h. Distance to Piqua – 22 miles

3. Centerville/Washington Township Recreation Center - 895 Miamisburg Road
  a. 50,000 SF Recreation Center includes a natatorium with two indoor pools and a 140-foot
     water flume slide, two gymnasiums, locker rooms, weight room, indoor running track,
     indoor climbing wall and multi-purpose rooms with kitchens.
  b. Adjacent to a 26 acre community park with 26-acre Countryside Park with a fitness trail,
     play field, historic log cabin, spacious picnic shelter and three ponds.
  c. In the same park complex, Rec West offers 29,000-square feet devoted to recreation
     programming, parties, meetings and presentations, including five sizes and types of
     rooms. Highlights include a game room and full-size theater with professional movie
     screen.
  d. Distance to Piqua – 41 miles

4. Downtown Dayton YMCA 316 N. Wilkerson St.
a. State of art wellness and fitness center – cardiovascular equipment
b. 25 yard lap pool/whirlpool/2 steam rooms and saunas
c. 2 full size gymnasiums/racquetball courts
d. Personal Aerobic and fitness training
e. Youth and child recreational programming
f. Distance to Piqua – 29 miles

5. Kettering South YMCA 4545 Marshall Rd. Kettering
   a. State of art health and wellness center - cardiovascular equipment
   b. 25 yard lap pool/aquatics program for all ages
   c. Gymnastics center
   d. Full size gymnasium
   e. Multi-purpose rooms
   f. Child and youth programming
   g. Distance to Piqua – 37 miles

6. Huber Hts. YMCA 7251 Shull Rd.
   a. State of the art health & wellness center - cardiovascular equipment
   b. 25 yard lap pool/aquatics program for all ages
   c. Full size gymnasium
   d. Indoor walking track
   e. Multi-purpose rooms
   f. Youth and adult programs
   g. Distance to Piqua – 26 miles

   a. State of the art health and wellness center - cardiovascular equipment
   b. 25 yard lap pool/warm water pool/aquatics for all ages
   c. Full size gymnasium
   d. Indoor walking track
   e. Multi-purpose rooms for aerobics, etc.
   f. Youth & adult programming
   g. Distance to Piqua – 29 miles

   a. State of art health & wellness center cardiovascular equipment
   b. 25 yard lap pool/warm water therapy pool/aquatics for all ages
   c. 2 full size gymnasiums
   d. Indoor walking track
   e. Indoor family play land
   f. Multi-purpose rooms
   g. Youth & adult programming
   h. Distance to Piqua – 42 miles

9. West Carrollton YMCA – 900 Alex Road
   a. State of art health & wellness center
   b. 25 yard lap pool/ warm water therapy pool/ aquatics for all ages
c. Full size gymnasium
d. Indoor walking track
e. Multi-purpose room
f. Youth & adult programming
g. Distance to Piqua – 36 miles

10. Huber Heights Kroger Aquatic Center (Outdoor Waterpark) 8625 Brandt Rd.
   a. 14.3 acre $6 million water park complex
   b. Water slides/ giant leisure pool/ spray ground/ leisure river/ wading pool
   c. Amphitheater, dog park, tennis courts, trails, and picnicking
   d. Operated by the Huber Hts. YMCA
   e. Private sponsors include Kroger Grocery Company and Coca-Cola.
   f. Distance to Piqua – 20 miles

11. Miamisburg – Sycamore Trails Aquatic Center 400 S. Heinkle Rd.(Outdoor Waterpark)
    a. Opened June 1997
    b. 15,800 SF heated pool
    c. 8 lane lap pool with beach entry/diving well
    d. Multiple tube rides/ interactive water spray area/ water climbing wall
    e. Distance to Piqua – 40 miles

12. West Carrollton Wilson /Water park - 1226 S. Elm St. (Outdoor Water Park)
    a. 8 lane 25 yard racing pool
    b. Diving well with 2 boards
    c. Full water park with tube rides, spray area, and other features
    d. Distance to Piqua – 35 miles

Clark County

1. Springfield YMCA – 300 S. Limetsone St.
   a. 25 yard lap pool/ steam rooms
   b. State of art health & wellness with complete cardiovascular equipment
   c. Cycling and spinning center
   d. Multi-purpose rooms for aerobics and special programs.
   e. Distance to Piqua – 34 miles

2. Splash Zone/Springfield -300 Eagle City Rd.(WaterPark)
   a. Developed and owned by national Trail Parks & Recreation District
   b. 10 acre includes 400 foot water slide /280 foot water slide
   c. 6 lane 25 yard competition swimming pool/ diving well
   d. Toddler spray pond
   e. Contiguous to major outdoor park facilities for hiking/biking, and picnicking
   f. Other recreational amenities include: Chille ice Arena (under construction); Carlton Davis Baseball Stadium; Davey Moore Athletic Complex; and Eagle city Soccer Complex as well as Splash Zone.
   g. Distance to Piqua – 30 miles
Greene County

1. Xenia YMCA – 135 E. Church St.
   a. Health and wellness center with cardiovascular equipment
   b. 4 lane 20 yard swim pool with sauna, whirlpool, and all ages aquatics
   c. Walking and running track
   d. Full gymnasium
   e. Programming for youth and adults
   f. Distance to Piqua – 45 miles

Private owned Recreation Facilities in Southwest Ohio

1. Great Wolf Lodge – Mason, King’s Island
   a. Hotel/Waterpark / hotel stay required
   b. 79,000 Sf of aquatic activity with 380,000 gallons of water
   c. Wave pool/ lazy river/ tubing
   d. Outdoor pool as well
   e. Distance to Piqua – 63 miles

2. King’s Island Resort
   a. Soak City - Waterpark
   b. 33 acres/ 50 water attractions
   c. 650,000 gallon wave pool/ Splash River
   d. No separate admissions pricing for soak City – must purchase all day pass for King’s Island
   e. Distance to Piqua – 64 miles

Summary

1. The four area University and College recreation complexes, although within a 45 minute drive of Piqua would not be a competitor to a Piqua RecPlex as they serve their own captured university population and typically do not permit outside community participation. (Miami University is an exception)

2. The six Montgomery County YMCA’s are focused on their community markets as is evidenced by their modest facility venue. The Xenia Y, Shelby Y, and the Springfield Y provide important recreation services to their communities but their service area is restricted to their immediate community.

3. In regard to recreation center that comes closest to the Piqua model, Kettering’s Recreation Complex is definitely full service and at a 152,000 SF is one of the largest community recreation centers in Ohio. Its merits a visit. It is well master planned and was phased in over time. Vandalia’s Recreation complex is also a good model to examine and although relatively close at 22 miles, it also has a community focus. It will be useful to inquire if Piqua residents frequent the Vandalia center.
4. The outdoor WaterParks seem to a popular venue in SW Ohio as Troy (12 miles), Tipp City (15 miles), Miamisburg (40 miles), West Carrollton (35 miles), Huber Hts. Kroger Aquatic Center (20 miles), and Clark County’s Splash Zone (30 miles) all have excellent outdoor facilities. Particularly noteworthy is the private sponsorship of Kroger and Coca-Cola utilized at the Huber Hts. Kroger Aquatic WaterPark and operated by the Huber Hts. YMCA. The outdoor Waterparks will require careful evaluation as they would compete in the summer with a Piqua RecPlex should it contain only an indoor Waterpark.

5. The privately owned Great Wolf Resort and King’s Island are in a different category and although would compete for Piqua’s entertainment dollar, they are not a competitor of a RecPlex.