

Economic Development

This section of the Comprehensive Plan will examine household and family income information, employment information and related trends in the local economy. It will also contain a brief analysis of future economic development planning as it relates to land use.

Median household income was briefly discussed in the section on housing. As of the 2000 Census, Clinton and Buffalo Townships median household income was higher than the state or nation, and significantly higher than the County. Income can rise or fall based upon a number of factors. In Clinton and Buffalo Townships, in-migration is a major factor in income changes. Income also changes due to inflation, employment and overall prosperity. One difficulty is that local data is not always available between Census years. The most recent Census updates at the State level estimate income growth and change in 2003. The most recent household income estimate for Pennsylvania is \$42,933, rising from a constant dollar estimate of \$37,758 in 1999. (Constant dollars account for adjustments for inflation) It indicates real income growth in Pennsylvania during the past few years.

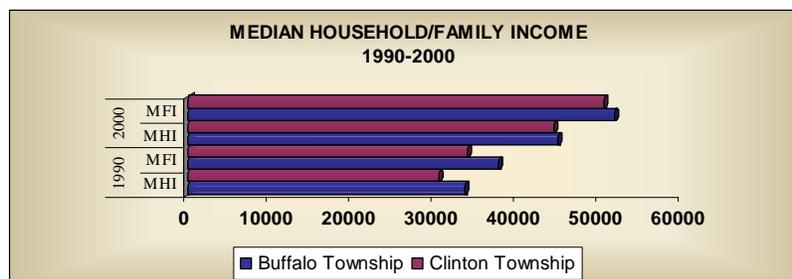
If Buffalo experienced that same rate of income growth, its Median Household Income would be \$48,229 in 2003 and Clinton Townships Median Household Income would be \$47,608.

In order to find out if income changes are a result of in-migration or income growth among existing residents, it is necessary to compare the 1990 and 2000 Census returns.

**TABLE 9-1
 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD/FAMILY INCOME
 1990-2000**

PLACE	1990		2000		HOUSEHOLD CHANGE 1990-2000
	MHI	MFI	MHI	MFI	
Clinton Township	\$30,536	\$34,038	\$44,494	\$50,625	+ 13,958
Buffalo Township	\$33,750	\$37,804	\$45,074	\$51,886	+ 11,324

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table DP-3, Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics - 2000

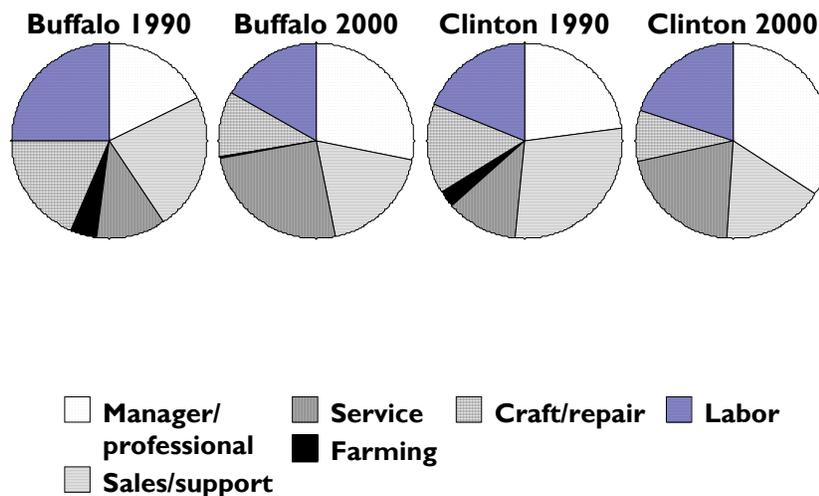


In terms of raw counts, both communities gained significantly. If the 1990 MHI was projected to 2000, Clinton Township calculates to \$40,896 and Buffalo to \$45,201. In the case of Buffalo Township, household income kept pace with inflation. In Clinton Township's case, growth in local incomes surpassed inflation. Workforce changes most likely caused such substantial growth.

**TABLE 9-2
 OCCUPATION OF EMPLOYED PERSONS 16 AND OVER
 1990-2000
 BY PERCENT**

OCCUPATIONAL GROUPING	BUFFALO		CLINTON	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Managerial/professional	17.7	28.3	22.8	34.2
Sales/support	22.8	18.6	28.8	17.0
Service	11.8	25.1	11.8	20.2
Farming	4.2	.3	2.9	0.0
Craft/repair	18.3	11.0	15.0	8.6
Labor	25.2	16.7	18.7	19.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Table DP-3, Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics - 2000



During the 1990's the occupational groupings of residents in both Townships changed significantly. As of the 2000 Census, nearly one (1) in three (3) employed persons in each Township had professional or managerial occupations (attorneys, scientists, bankers, etc.). There was a significant decline in farm occupations, indicating that farmers were increasingly seeking off-farm work. Service occupations also rose significantly, though this parallels sector changes in the economy on a state and national level as well. It seems that especially in the case of Clinton Township, immigration has caused major changes in the composition of the work force.

Some places are employment centers, some are "bedroom communities," and some have elements of both. The nature of this status can affect everything from traffic patterns to tax base and public service costs. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) estimates and projects places of residence and work, based upon Census data and traffic patterns. In these projections, Buffalo and Clinton Townships will both see growth as a workplace. Particularly swift growth is projected for Clinton Township, due to its hosting of a major regional business/industrial park. It must be noted that these forecasts are prepared for transportation planning purposes, and are even more subject to future changes than population projections. With this caveat, Clinton Township is identified by SPC as the 9th fastest growing employment numbers (by percent) in the entire ten County region. Buffalo Township is projected to have the 9th highest (by percent) retail employment growth in the entire region.

Year	Buffalo Twp. Total Employment	Change	Clinton Twp. Total Employment	Change
1997 estimate	1,609		483	
2002 Estimate	1,876	+267	1,508	+1,025
2010 Projected	1,909	+33	1,850	+342
2020 Projected	1,874	-35	1,577	-273
2025 Projected	1,877	+3	1,498	-79

Based upon the information relative to tax and cost of service ratios that were presented in the housing analysis portion of this plan, this is potentially very good news for each township. Commercial

growth in Buffalo Township would offset the cost of public services which were caused by rapid residential development. The targeted nature of business park development in Clinton has great promise to enhance, rather than detract from the traditional rural economy and country setting of the township.

Economic Development Planning: Nearly every rural Pennsylvania community dreams of a successful business park to provide local residents with jobs and establish a long term tax base for local government. Clinton Township is one of the handful of communities which have fulfilled that dream. The ideal in local economic development planning is to achieve both the import of capital from elsewhere and the retention of capital within the community for as long as possible. The Victory Road business park represents a public investment of over \$10,000,000 for infrastructure and site development. The park has been one of the most successful Keystone Opportunity Zone sites in Western Pennsylvania. Parcels have been sold and developed for a number of uses, including major a regional grocery distribution center for the Aldi's chain, the Castcon-Stone building (Which won an American Institute of Architects Green Building Award), and an cooperative venture to sort, brand and distribute locally grown sweet onions. Buffalo Township also has some enviable industries locally present, in particular Oberg Industries. However, the success of The Victory Road Business Park is also an indicator that it is now time for the communities to begin planning for another long term business park site.

In a series of land use planning meetings, both communities identified the northwestern quadrant of the Pa. Routes 356/28 interchange as the Plan's highest priority for future development of a business park or related uses. This area has the best ability to handle significant traffic impact without substantial off-site improvements, is highly visible, within public sewer service areas, and not under significant environmental constraints. The attached concept sketch shows how a well planned development would fit into the existing area.

The second development priority identified by this plan is continued agribusiness development in Clinton Township. At one point, a major agribusiness project was under consideration for Victory road, and this could be resurrected under slightly different form. The Smart Agriculture Initiative also identified a number of smaller agro-economic endeavors that both townships endorse. These center around efforts to "shorten the food chain" This means fewer intermediary steps between local farmers and consumers. When this happens, consumers often get a bargain on high quality produce and

farmers gain a much better price. The difficulties in doing this are typically regulatory and organizational. Practical means to “shorten the food chain” include:

- Roadside stands
- Farm markets
- Pick your own - opportunities for people to learn about farming
- Ag tourism (Bed and breakfasts, accessory campsites, farm vacations)
- Community supported agriculture (Subscription sale of produce)
- Value added - promote cooperative for onions - farmers’ market
- Community kitchens (helping farmers create products and still meet commercial kitchen regulations for processing and packaging)
- Websites/mailorders even farm related links to the Township websites
- Raise community awareness about ag: TV talk shows/news reports
- Selling to institutions

While it is an uphill battle, many communities are learning that changes in agro-economics are one of the best farmland preservation measures.