

CHAPTER 6: **FACILITIES, SCHOOLS AND CITY SERVICES**

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses telecommunication facilities, gas/electric services, educational facilities, emergency services, municipal court and solid/green waste collection. Water, wastewater and storm water management are located in the utilities chapter. The omission of any discussion of services provided by other private and non-profit agencies is not intended to diminish their value.

II. FACILITIES

1.0 Telecommunication Facilities

Telecommunication facilities are privately owned and maintained throughout the City of Fairfield. Private telecommunication companies coordinate with the City to evaluate the need for modifications or expansions to their network. The City is served by Cincinnati Bell and Time Warner Cable. In addition, there are several areas throughout the City that offer free wi-fi service such as the Community Arts Center.

Wireless and cellular telecommunication towers and facilities are located throughout the City on both public and private property. The City has an ordinance that regulates the location of cellular towers in order to minimize adverse visual effects of them through proper siting, design and screening and encourages the joint use of tall structures, communication towers and support structures to reduce the number of such structures needed in the future.

2.0 Gas and Electric

Gas and electric is privately owned, constructed and maintained throughout the City. While many of the power lines are above ground, an ordinance passed in 2000 required underground construction of distribution lines in new subdivisions. City residents and businesses receive service from Duke Energy, except for a small undeveloped portion in the southwestern section of the City that is served by Butler Rural Electric Cooperative.

III. SCHOOL FACILITIES

Fairfield youth are served by the Fairfield City School District and three private institutions. See Figure 6.1. The school district covers 38.2 square miles and serves the City of Fairfield and Fairfield Township. The district educates approximately 10,000 students in a kindergarten center, five elementary schools (grades 1-4), intermediate school (grades 5- 6), middle school (grades 7-8), a freshman school and a high school. There are three private grade schools in the City - Sacred Heart, Cincinnati Christian and LaValle School.

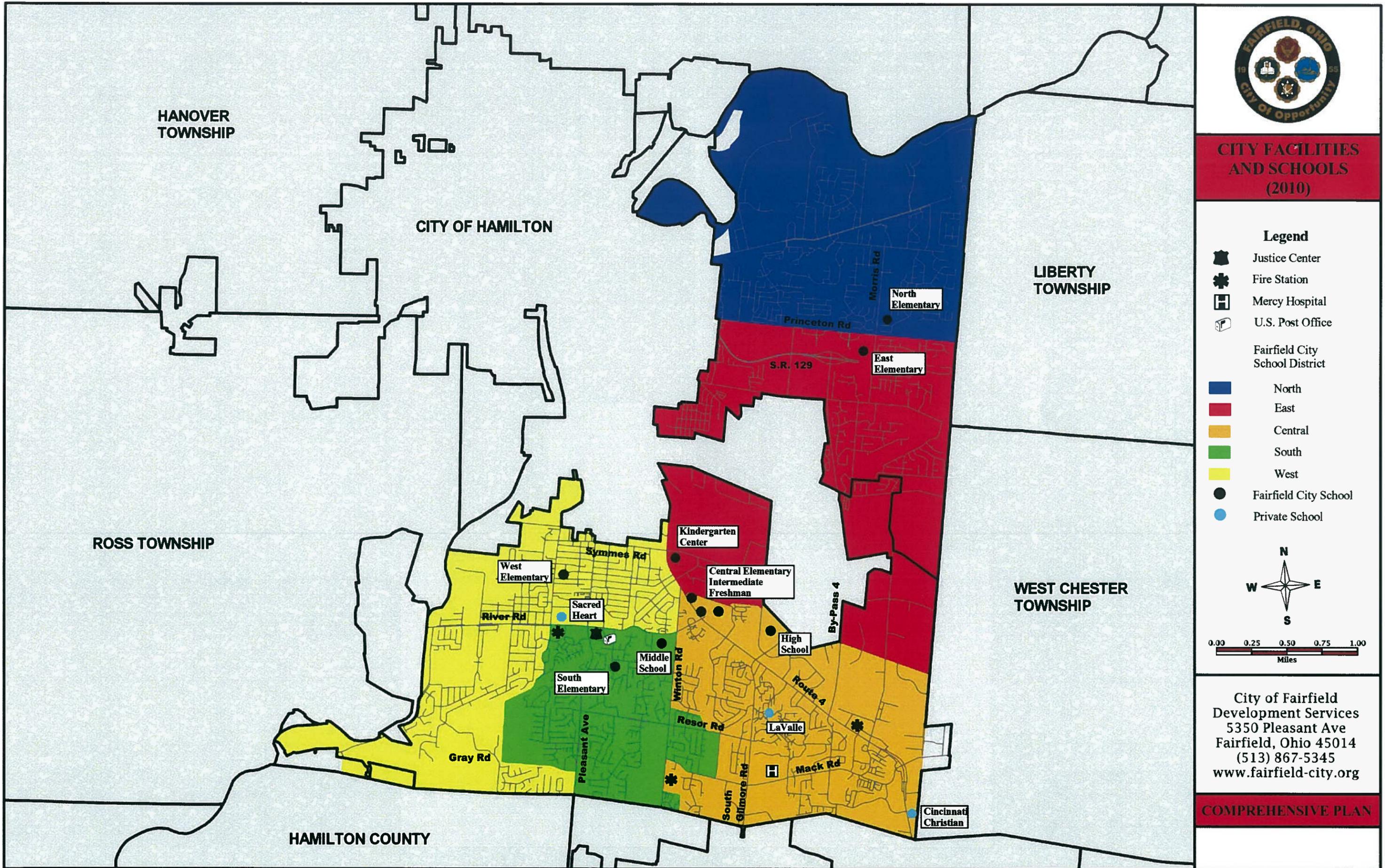
In addition to providing the traditional school program at the high school level, the district also offers an alternative program and a career technical program. The alternative program is geared towards at risk kids who are not succeeding in the regular program. Students have two options. They can attend the Options Academy, which is operated by Butler Technology and Career Development School (Butler Tech) or attend Roosevelt School in the City of Hamilton. Individualized learning programs are devised for these students to help them succeed. At the high school level, some students decide to pursue an education in technical careers. Fairfield students can either attend classes at the high school that are taught by faculty from Butler Tech or attend classes at its D. Russell Lee Career-Technology Center campus in Fairfield Township.

The 2007-2008 school year report card, which is prepared by the state of Ohio Department of Education, indicated that Fairfield School District met 27 out of 30 performance standards, giving the district an "Excellent" designation. The district has a student/teacher ratio of one teacher per 20 students for all grades. The high school has a higher than average graduation rate of 96% compared to 93% for similar districts and 87% for the state average. Sixty percent of Fairfield graduates attend a four year college or university.

As with most school districts, Fairfield must address issues related to building capacity, aging infrastructure, out-dated facilities and funding for these improvements. Recognizing the need to maintain school buildings in a manor that is conducive to learning, the state of Ohio established the Classroom Facilities Assistance Program in 1997 to assist in the funding for renovation and replacement of public school buildings. The funding and priority for inclusion in the program is based directly on the property wealth of the district. Consistent with state law, the local school district must pay a portion of the overall cost of any school funded project. The local share is determined by property valuation per pupil.

A district with a large valuation per pupil is considered to be better able to raise funds locally, so it is both lower in priority and receives a smaller state share of funding. Fairfield City School District is ranked 458 out of 612 school districts state-wide and will only be entitled to 25% in state funding for the total cost of construction. It is anticipated that state funding will be available in two years. Prior to receiving funding, the District will need to complete a School Facilities Master Plan. The Plan must state which schools are proposed for renovation, re-build or expansion. If new construction, the location of the new school and the disposition of the old school is required. Other issues to consider may be changing the grade levels at the elementary schools, building another kindergarten center, or redistricting. In order to make the best decisions, the school district will need to obtain as much input as possible from the community and to determine future student enrollment.

Enrollment projections for Fairfield City School District were developed by analyzing live birth data, historical enrollment, community school enrollment, open enrollment and housing information. Over the past ten years, student enrollment in the



school district increased by over 1,085 students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. Within the City of Fairfield, 85% of the land is built out; 655 acres remain for single-family dwellings. Within Fairfield Township, 400 undeveloped acres remain for both single-family and multi-family development. It is anticipated that the majority of new enrollment will come from Fairfield Township. This trend is occurring with an underutilization of grade schools in the City and near-to-over capacity in the Township grade schools.

Based on data analysis, it is projected that the overall student enrollment will increase by 1,375 students in grades pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade within the next ten years. It is estimated that by school year 2016-2017, Fairfield City School District will have a 11,204 student population. Figure 6.2 illustrates projected enrollments by year from the 2007-2008 school year to the 2016-2017 school year.

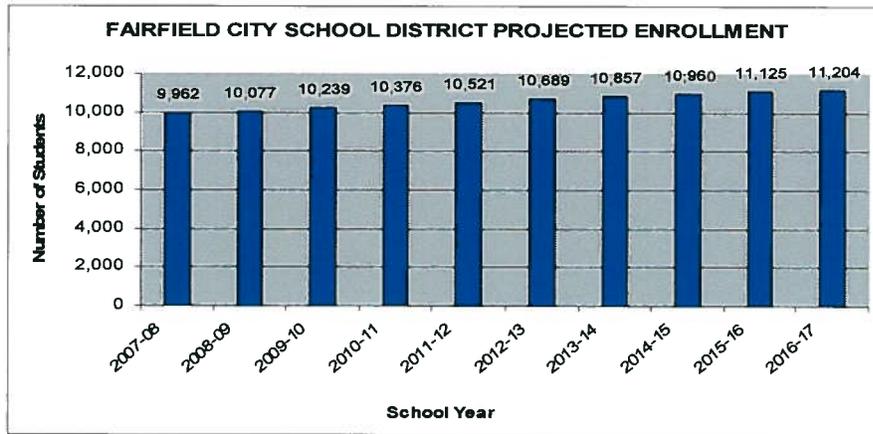


Figure 6.2

IV. CITY SERVICES

1.0 Police and Municipal Court

In 2005 the City began construction on a new 50,000 square foot police department and municipal court building in the downtown area across from the City building. See Figure 6.1. The building became operational in 2006. This location was a recommendation from the land use plan, which recommended civic uses be located in the downtown area. It replaced a 17,000 square foot outdated facility on Route 4 that was retro-fitted from a restaurant. The current staffing and new facility meets the needs of the community and will continue to do so in the future.

1.1 Police

The Fairfield Police Department consists of 61 officers that are supported by 25 civilian employees who respond to more than 23,000 calls for service annually. In addition, there are two canine units and a bike patrol division. The Department was accredited in 2003 by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

Accreditation is a coveted award that symbolizes excellence and a commitment to continual improvement. The Police Department offers a variety of community programs to educate citizens and to help ensure their safety such as the Citizens Policy Academy, D.A.R.E., Neighborhood Crime Watch and Vacation House Watch.

1.2 Municipal Court

The Municipal Court hears all traffic cases, misdemeanor criminal cases, civil cases and small claims within its jurisdiction. The Court also conducts initial appearances and preliminary hearings for felony cases. The City has one full-time judge who is elected for a six year term and a part-time magistrate. The Municipal Court hears an average of 10,000 cases a year and takes in almost \$2 million in fines and court costs.

2.0 *Fire*

The Fairfield Fire Department provides around the clock staffing at three locations within the City. See Figure 6.1. Annually the Department responds to more than 6,000 calls for service, including 4,000 medical responses. The Department employs 18 full-time firefighter/paramedics with support from 44 part-time staff members and five full-time senior officers. The Fire Department offers a variety of community programs to educate citizens and to help ensure their safety such as the Citizens Fire Academy, Fire Safety House (interactive teaching aide for children), Child Safety Seat Inspections and a Paramedic Bicycle Patrol Program. The current staffing and facilities meets the needs of the community and will continue to do so in the future.

3.0 *Solid and Green Waste*

Weekly trash service and recycling pick-up is provided by the City through a contract with Rumpke, a private company. The Fairfield community is one of the top recyclers in Butler County. In addition, the City provides free services directly to the community such as brush and limb pick-up and a leaf collection program. Leaves are collected each fall to help homeowners dispose of them and to help keep them out of the drainage system preventing potential clogs that may result in flooding.

V. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The following goal, objectives and policies provide a basic framework for all facility and service decisions that are either owned or managed by the City of Fairfield.

1.0 Goal: The City will provide and maintain excellent services, facilities and schools for all of its residents.

Objectives and Policies for Facilities, Schools and Services

Objective 1: Establish and maintain an appropriate level of fire protection and law enforcement in the City as growth-related demand for services occur.

Policy 1: Maintain high levels of cooperation with other neighboring jurisdictions involved in fire protection and emergency services to assure a high level of service in a cost effective manner.

Objective 2: Maintain an appropriate level of emergency management in Fairfield.

Policy 1: Maintain and implement an effective Emergency Operations Plan to protect people and property in Fairfield in times of emergency.

Objective 3: Continue to support the Fairfield City School District.

Policy 1: Support the School Facilities Master Plan by providing assistance during the planning and construction phases.