THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF OHIO TOWNSHIPS

DECEMBER 2025

CONTENTS

■ INTRODUCTION

The Ohio Township Association (OTA), founded in 1928, is a statewide organization dedicated to advancing and protecting township governance through education and legislative advocacy. Representing 1,308 townships across 87 counties, OTA serves 5,225 active members, including trustees and fiscal officers, along with 1,900 affiliate members and 1,500 active members.

Its mission is to promote efficient township operations by supporting legislation that strengthens local authority and opposing measures that undermine it, accomplished through legislative advocacy and member education. Recognizing the technical demands of township roles, OTA prioritizes training, legal compliance, leadership development, and networking to enhance governance and foster best practices.

The Ohio Township Association Service Corp, founded in 2025, aids OTA in meeting its goals and objectives for its members. OTA Service Corp. engaged Silverlode Consulting to estimate the economic contribution of Ohio's townships to the state economy.

This analysis estimates the economic impact of Ohio townships in 2024 and compares the demographic and economic characteristics of townships and municipal areas. The study uses IMPLAN, one of the most widely accepted methodologies for regional economic impact analysis and incorporates demographic and economic data from Esri and other reputable sources.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Townships play a vital role in Ohio's economy. **In 2024, economic activity associated with businesses in Ohio's townships and the spillover effects it generated across the state contributed $413.64 billion to Ohio's economy, supporting 1.8 million jobs.**

Total Township Economic Activity

Economic Output	Jobs	Value Added
$413.64B	**1.8M**	**$210.14B**

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In addition to contributing significantly to the economy of the state, the economic and demographic characteristics of Ohio's townships demonstrate thriving populations and business communities, where key indicators of economic and community vitality match or exceed those of municipal areas and the state as a whole.[1]

Education and Workforce	◆ The workforce composition in townships closely mirrors that of municipal areas, with similar shares of white-collar and blue-collar workers. ◆ The unemployment rate in townships (2.4%) is lower than that of municipal areas (3.6%). ◆ Labor force participation rates are comparable between townships and municipal areas. ◆ Educational attainment levels among township residents are similar to those of residents of municipal areas.
Income, Net Worth, and Household Spending	◆ Median household income in townships is 28% higher, average household income is 19% higher, and per capita income is 9% higher than in municipal areas. ◆ Median household net worth in townships is 117% higher and average net worth is 57% higher compared to households in municipal areas. ◆ 77% of township households have a net worth of $100,000 or more, versus 57% of households in municipal areas. ◆ Average household spending in townships is 18% higher, or $14,776 more, than in municipal areas. ◆ Township household spending equals 97% of the national average, compared to 82% for households in municipal areas.
Household Characteristics	◆ Townships average 2.54 persons per household, compared to 2.30 persons in municipal areas. ◆ The median age in townships is 43.1 years, versus 38.9 years in municipal areas.
Housing Characteristics	◆ **Owner-occupied housing accounts for 75% of homes in townships,** compared to 55% in municipal areas. ◆ The housing vacancy rate in townships is 1.2 percentage points lower than in municipal areas. ◆ Median home values in townships are 21% higher and average home values are 15% higher than in municipal areas. ◆ 40% of township homes are valued at $300,000 or more, compared to 30% of homes in municipal areas.
Tax Environment	◆ **Per capita, local taxes in townships are 57% lower,** or $504 less than in municipal areas. ◆ On a household basis, local taxes in townships are 53% lower, or $1,116 less than in municipal areas. ◆ Local taxes in townships are lower than in municipal areas primarily because commercial millage rates are an average of 21% lower, residential millage rates are an average of 17% lower, and townships do not levy income taxes.

[1] The most current available data was used for each metric. 2024 data was used whenever possible except for local tax collections (2022), household size (2020), household composition (2020), and urban/rural household data (2020).

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Economic Impact Analysis

Economic impact or contribution analysis examines how an organization, industry, or event affects a region's economy. The key metrics employed for measuring economic contribution in this study are defined below.

Economic output refers to the total value of goods and services produced. Economic output is roughly the equivalent of sales or revenue and is the sum of value added and intermediate inputs (goods and services purchased by businesses from businesses).

Value added refers to the total value of goods and services produced, excluding the value of intermediate inputs. Value added is also referred to as gross regional or domestic product.

Jobs represent the number of individuals engaged in or supported by the activity being analyzed.

Labor income refers to the total wages, salaries, and wage supplements (i.e., employer contributions to government and private pension funds) and includes proprietors' income.

State and local taxes represent the taxes paid to state and local units of government as a direct result of the economic activity being analyzed.

Federal taxes represent the taxes paid to the U.S. government as a direct result of the economic activity being analyzed.

Economic impacts or contributions are typically divided into three components: direct, indirect, and induced effects, which can be estimated using Regional Input-Output Analysis. For this study, Silverlode used IMPLAN to assess economic contribution, based upon Esri data about townships.

In this analysis, **direct economic impacts** represent economic activities of businesses located within the geographic boundaries of Ohio's townships. **Indirect and induced economic impacts** capture the ripple effects associated with these businesses which occur in municipal areas. This spillover activity represents the business-to-business and household spending which takes place outside of the townships. For example, when a company located within a township purchases materials from a neighboring city, this business-to-business spending is considered an indirect effect. Similarly, when a resident of a township has dinner in a nearby city, this spending activity is considered an induced effect. **Total economic impact** is the sum of direct, indirect, and induced effects.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Areas of Analysis

The geographic boundaries of Ohio townships, according to U.S. Census Bureau GIS shapefiles for the boundaries of Ohio and its municipal areas, is shown below. Silverlode constructed this map, or GIS shapefile, of the township area boundaries in Ohio by utilizing Census GIS data for the State of Ohio and its municipal area boundaries.

Ohio Townships and Municipal Areas

☐ Townships
☐ Municipal Areas
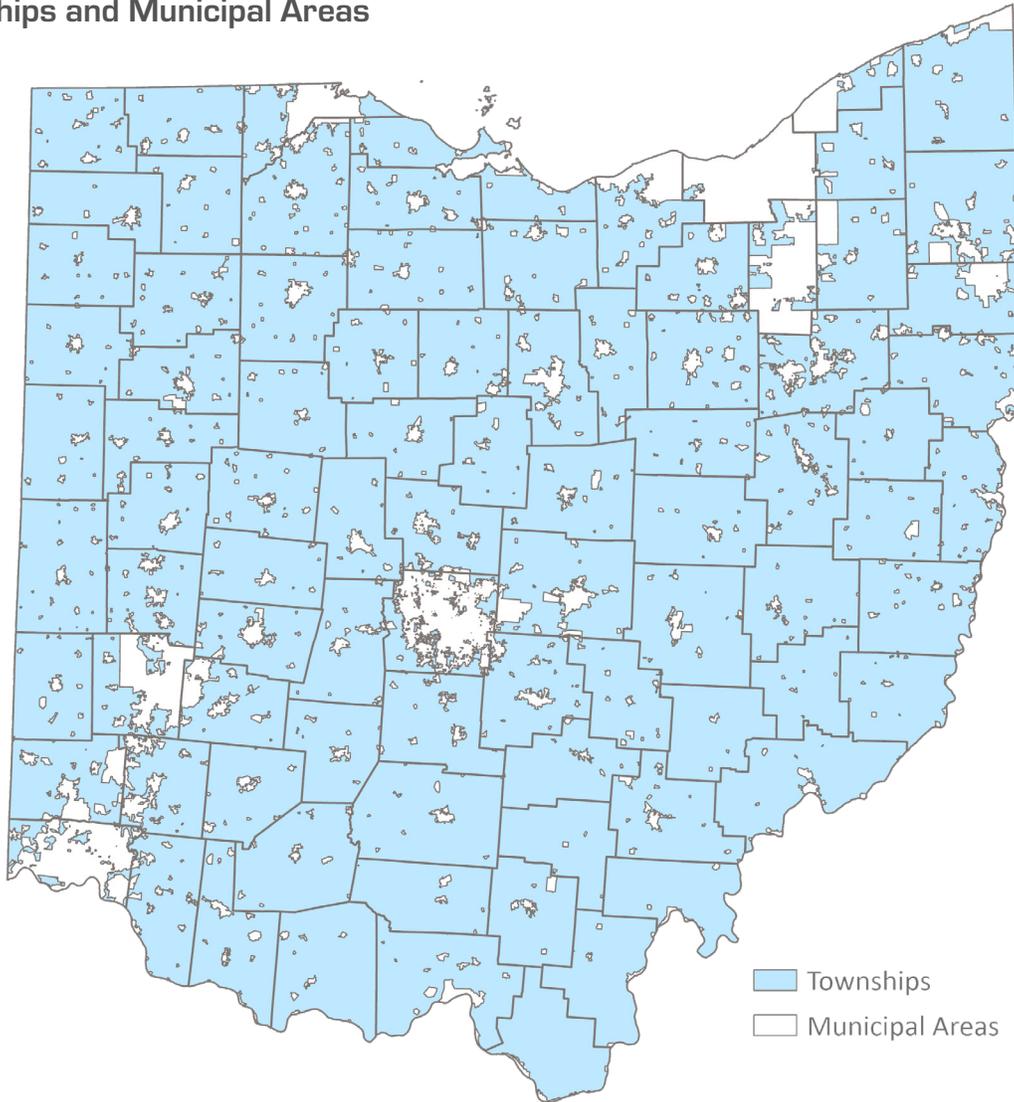
Methodology

Using the GIS shapefile for township/municipal boundaries, business employment data located in townships was compiled using Esri. This data served as the basis for the modeling of economic impacts using IMPLAN.

The most current available data was used for each economic, demographic, and tax metric. 2024 data was used whenever possible.

2024 DIRECT TOWNSHIP ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

How much of Ohio's activity is directly attributable to townships?

21% of economic output (economic activity)
20% of value added (gross regional product)
21% of jobs
18% of labor income (earnings)

Direct Township Impacts	
	$363.61 billion economic output
	$180.99 billion value added
	1,605,527 Jobs
	$90.63 billion labor income
	$17.54 billion state and local taxes
	$22.08 billion federal taxes

In 2024, businesses located in Ohio's townships accounted for $363.61 billion of economic output (economic activity) and $180.99 billion in value added (gross regional product). This represented 21% of all economic activity and 20% of value added in the state.

Businesses located in townships accounted for an estimated 1,605,527 jobs, which is associated with $90.63 billion in labor income, including benefits. Compared to the state overall, businesses located in townships accounted for 21% of jobs and 18% of labor income.

In addition, businesses located in Ohio townships generated an estimated $17.54 billion in state and local taxes and $22.08 billion in federal taxes in 2024.

The table below compares the portion of economic activity occurring within the boundaries of the townships to the total economic activity in the state.

	Townships	Ohio	Township %
Economic Output	$363,614,469,000	$1,731,060,186,000	21%
Value Added	$180,990,351,000	$926,170,068,000	20%
Jobs	1,605,527	7,526,471	21%
Labor Income	$90,626,061,000	$517,177,980,000	18%

The table below summarizes the distribution of jobs within townships by industry (two-digit NAICS), ranked by employment.

Township Jobs and Businesses by Industry

Industry	Jobs	Businesses
Retail Trade	199,753	12,024
Health Care & Social Assistance	163,672	7,209
Manufacturing	160,062	4,893
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	133,400	3,885
Accommodation & Food Services	117,593	6,341
Construction	108,532	9,938
Educational Services	99,901	2,615
Other Services (except Public Administration)*	97,557	17,911
Professional, Scientific, & Tech Services	92,336	6,720
Public Administration	70,681	3,658
Wholesale Trade	61,399	3,590
Transportation & Warehousing	57,181	2,920
Administrative, Support, & Waste Management Services	51,577	3,954
Finance & Insurance	51,663	3,393
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	51,466	2,355
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting	46,373	1,934
Information	25,417	1,405
Mining	11,324	247
Utilities	4,054	265
Management of Companies & Enterprises	1,587	150
Total	**1,605,527**	**95,407**

*The Other Services (except Public Administration) sector comprises establishments engaged in providing services not specifically provided for elsewhere in the classification system (e.g., grantmaking, dry cleaning, pet care excluding veterinary, and photofinishing services).
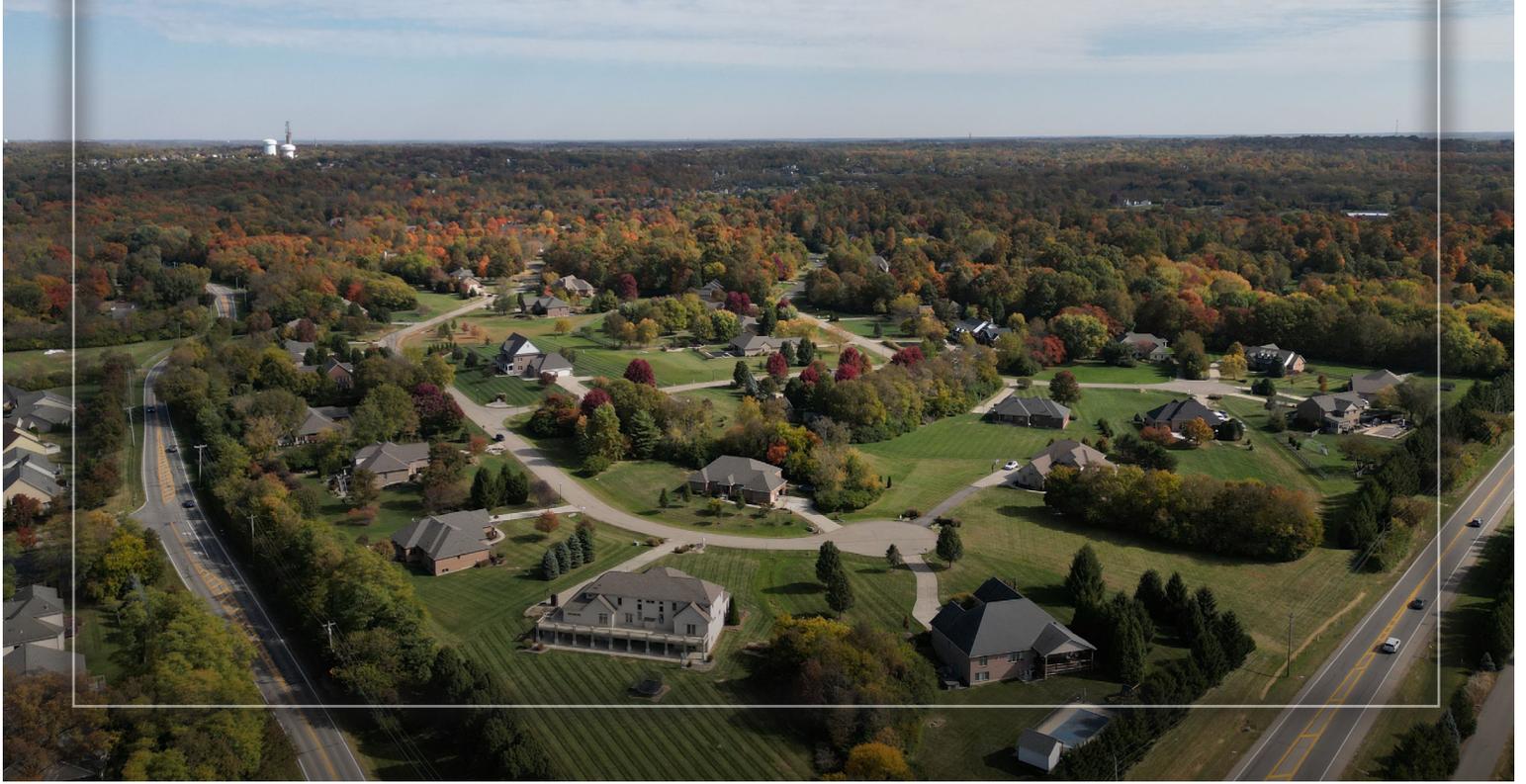
2024 TOTAL TOWNSHIP ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

How much of Ohio's activity is attributable to townships?

24% of economic output (economic activity)
23% of value added (gross regional product)
24% of jobs
21% of labor income (earnings)

Total Township Impacts

	$413.64 billion economic output
	$210.14 billion value added
	1,817,488 Jobs
	$106.65 billion labor income
	$19.56 billion state and local taxes
	$27.44 billion federal taxes

When both the economic activity of businesses located within townships (direct) and the indirect and induced effects of their activity that occurs in the municipal areas of the state are considered, township businesses supported $413.64 billion of economic output (economic activity) and $210.14 billion in value added (gross regional product) in Ohio in 2024. These contributions represented 24% of all economic activity and 23% of value added in the state.

Township businesses also supported an estimated 1,817,488 jobs statewide, generating $106.65 billion in labor income, including benefits. Compared to the state overall, township businesses accounted for 24% of jobs and 21% of labor income. In addition, businesses in Ohio townships generated an estimated $19.56 billion in state and local taxes and $27.44 billion in federal taxes in 2024.

The table below compares expanded economic activity to the total economic activity in the state.

	Townships	Ohio	Township %
Economic Output	$413,639,520,000	$1,731,060,186,000	24%
Value Added	$210,137,309,000	$926,170,068,000	23%
Jobs	1,817,488	7,526,471	24%
Labor Income	$106,651,406,000	$517,177,980,000	21%

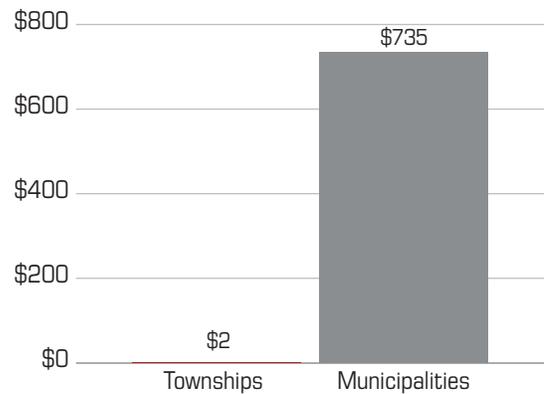# DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC, AND TAX CHARACTERISTICS OF TOWNSHIPS

Tax Environment

On both a per capita and per household basis, on average, local taxes collected in townships are significantly lower than municipalities, with township property and income tax collection representing 43% of what municipalities collect per capita and 47% of what municipalities collect per household. This means individuals in townships pay around $504 less in taxes annually, and households pay about $1,116 less. Townships are unable to charge an income tax and the small income tax revenue for townships represented in the graphs below comes from Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs).

Property Tax Revenue Collected Per Capita

Townships: $379
Municipalities: $149

Individual Income Tax Revenue Collected Per Capita

Townships: $2
Municipalities: $735

Property Tax Revenue Collected Per Household

Townships: $984
Municipalities: $355

Individual Income Tax Revenue Collected Per Household
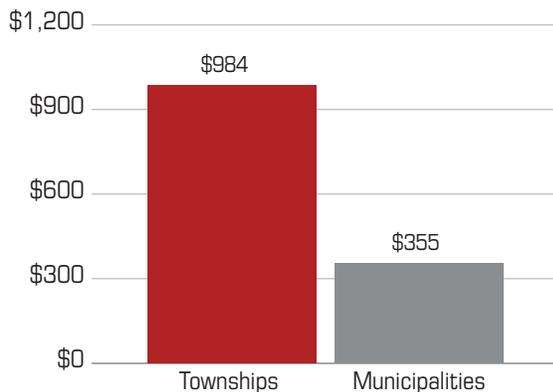
Townships: $4
Municipalities: $1,750
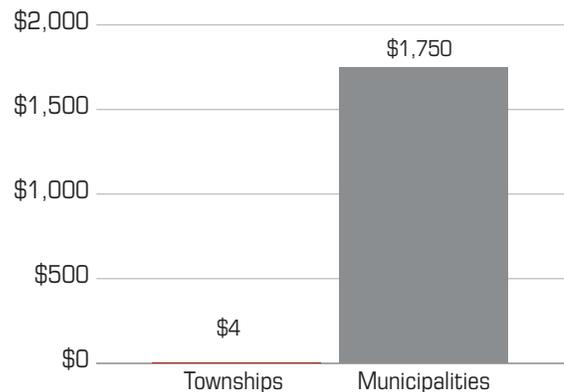
■ Property Taxes   ■ Individual Income Taxes

Source: Census of Governments, 2022

DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC, AND TAX CHARACTERISTICS OF TOWNSHIPS

Tax Environment, continued

In 2024, on average, residential and commercial millage rates in Ohio townships were approximately nine mills and 14 mills lower than those of municipalities, respectively. This translates to residential rates being about 17% lower in townships and commercial rates being about 21% lower.

Average Millage Rates

■ Residential & Agricultural Real Property Millage Rate
■ Commercial, Industrial, Mineral, & Public Utility Real Property Millage Rate
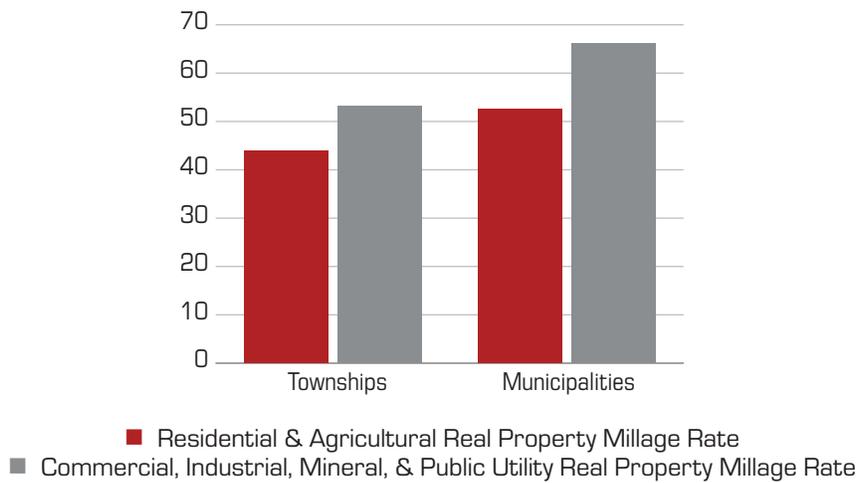
Source: Ohio Department of Taxation, 2024

DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC, AND TAX CHARACTERISTICS OF TOWNSHIPS

Workforce Composition

The workforce composition in townships closely mirrors that of municipal areas, with comparable distributions of white-collar, blue-collar, and service workers.

Occupation by Type of Work in Townships

14%
26%
59%

- White-Collar
- Blue-Collar
- Services
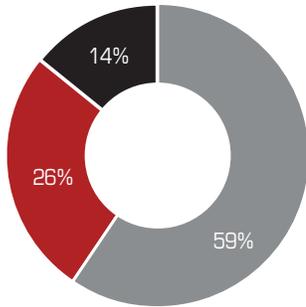
Source: Esri, 2024

Occupation by Type of Work in Municipal Areas

17%
22%
61%

Employment

As the graph on the right indicates, the unemployment rate of the labor force aged 16 and over in Ohio townships is notably only two-thirds of the rate in municipal areas.

Further, labor force participation is also comparable, with 62% of township residents engaged in the labor force versus 64% in municipal areas. Similarly, the employment-population ratio, which measures the share of the working-age population that is currently employed, stands at 60% in townships and 61% in municipal areas. These figures indicate that townships maintain strong workforce engagement and employment levels, closely aligning with municipal areas.

### Unemployment Rate of Labor Force Aged 16 and Over

Townships	Municipal Areas
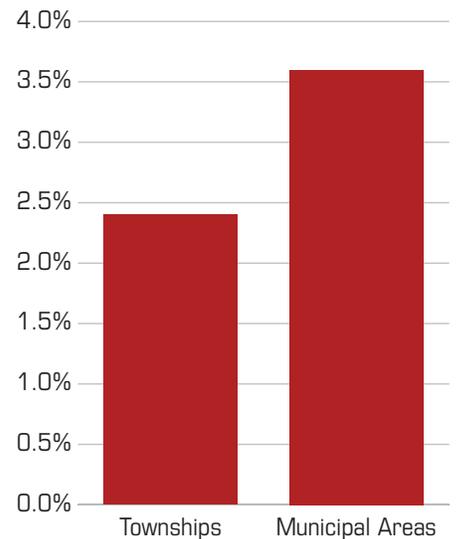
Source: Esri, 2024

DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC, AND TAX CHARACTERISTICS OF TOWNSHIPS

Income & Net Worth

Townships exhibit significantly higher household wealth and income levels compared to municipal areas. The median net worth of households in townships is more than double that of households in municipal areas, and the average net worth in townships is about 57% higher than in municipal areas. Township households and individuals also report higher incomes, with the median household income in townships being 28% higher than municipal areas.

Median Household Income, Average Household Income and Per Capita Income

- Median Household Income
- Average Household Income
- Per Capita Income

Median and Average Net Worth
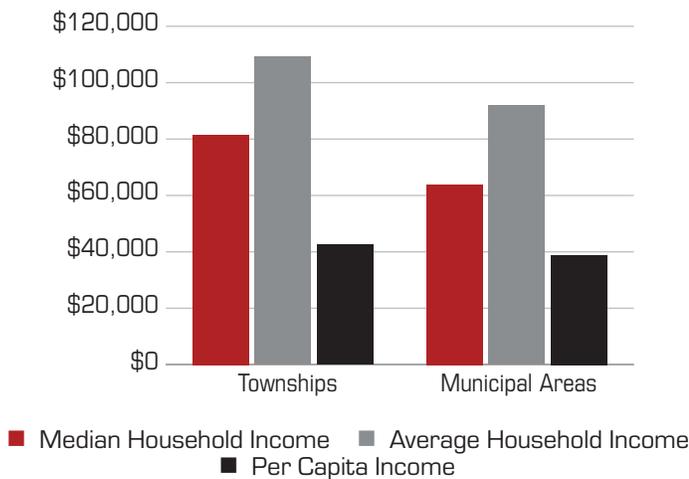
- Median Net Worth
- Average Net Worth
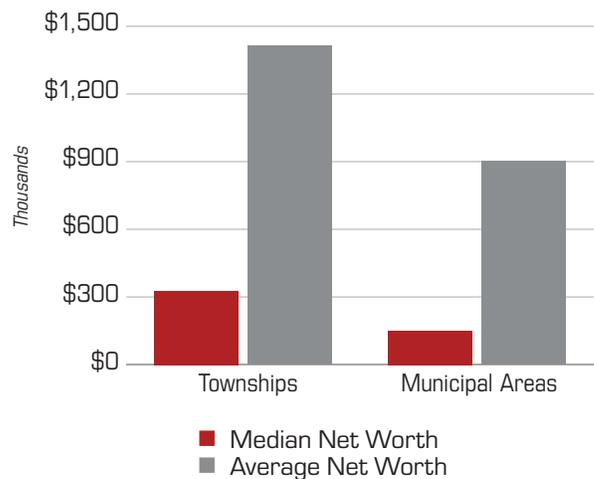
Source: Esri, 2024

The number of township households with a net worth of $2 million or more is 4.2 percentage points higher than municipal households, while the number of township households with a net worth of $15,000 or less is nearly 14 percentage points lower than in municipal areas. 77% of households in townships have a net worth of $100,000 or greater, compared to 57% of households in municipal areas.

Township Households by Net Worth
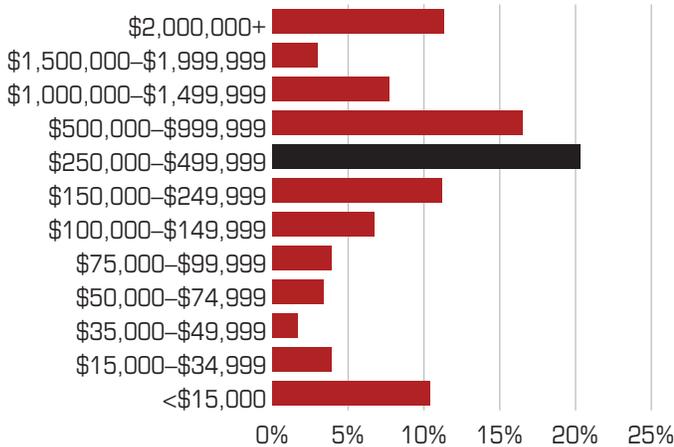
Municipal Area Households by Net Worth
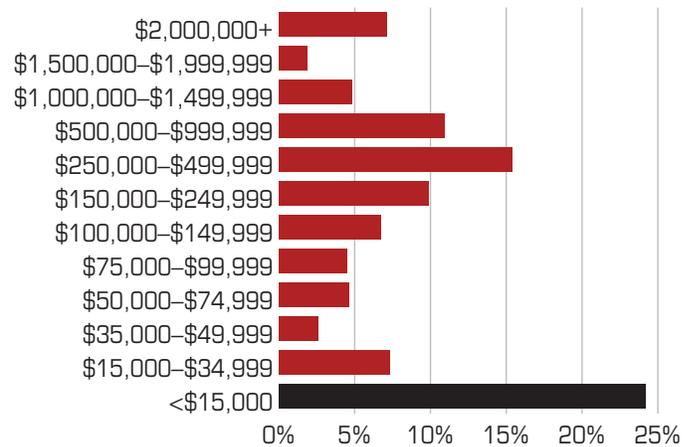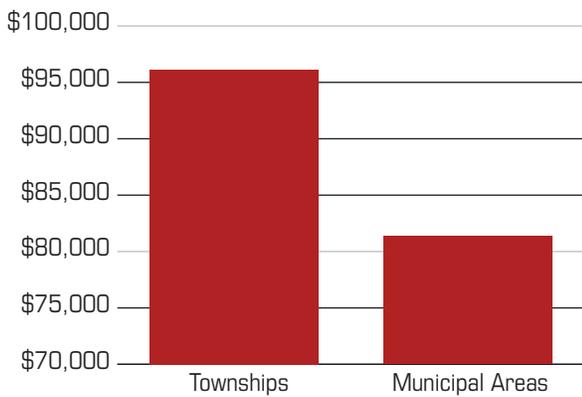

Source: Esri, 2024

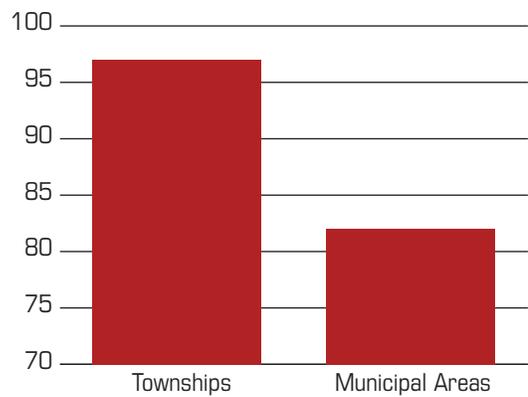# DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC, AND TAX CHARACTERISTICS OF TOWNSHIPS

Spending

The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is a household-based metric that benchmarks local spending on goods and services against a national average of 100. Across major expenditure categories—such as food, retail, housing, travel, and healthcare—township households generally align with the national average and exhibit significantly higher annual spending levels than households in municipal areas.

Household Average Spending

Spending Potential Index

Source: Esri, 2024

Housing

In 2024, median home values in townships exceeded those in municipal areas by approximately 21%, while average values were about 15% higher. Average home values in townships were around 9% higher than the statewide average of approximately $275,000.

### Median and Average Values of Owner-Occupied Housing Units
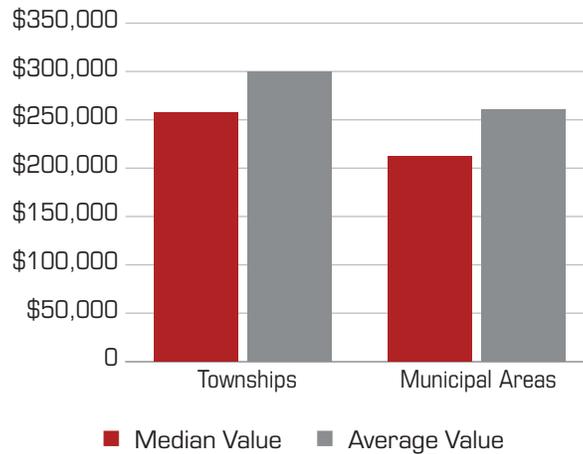
Source: Esri, 2024

In 2024, townships had a higher proportion of homes valued between $300,000 and $399,999, exceeding municipal areas by 4.4 percentage points. Overall, 40% of township homes were valued at $300,000 or more, compared to 30% of homes in municipal areas.

Owner-Occupied Housing Units by Value in Townships
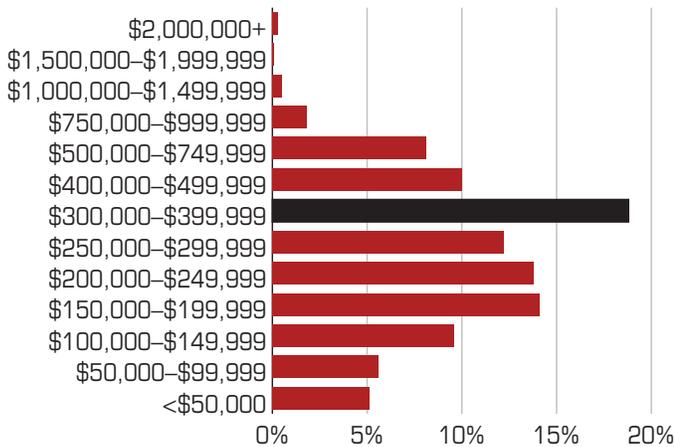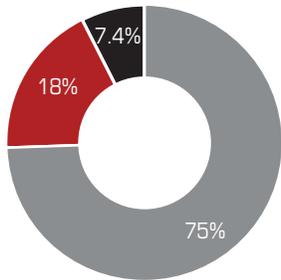
Owner-Occupied Housing Units by Value in Municipal Areas
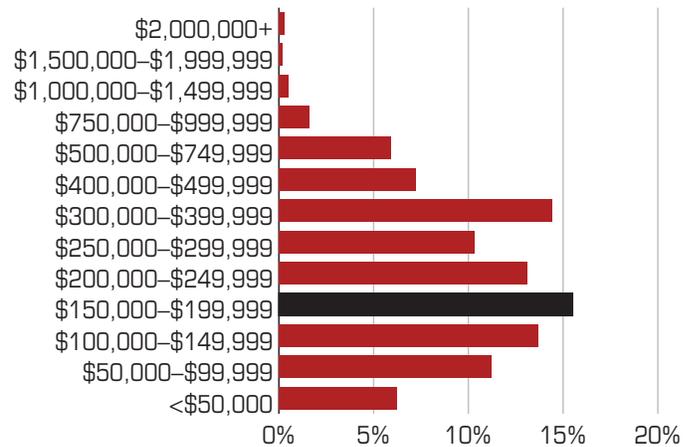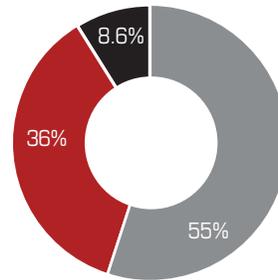

Source: Esri, 2024

Housing, continued

The proportion of housing units that are owner-occupied is notably higher in townships, representing a nearly 20 percentage point difference compared to municipal areas. Vacant housing units are lower in townships by 1.2 percentage points.

Housing Units by Occupancy Status in Townships

Housing Units by Occupancy Status in Municipal Areas

Townships: 7.4% · 18% · 75%
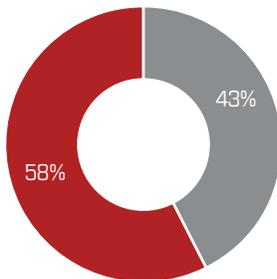Municipal Areas: 8.6% · 36% · 55%

■ Renter Occupied Housing Units   ■ Owner Occupied Housing Units   ■ Vacant Housing Units
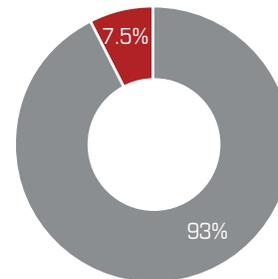
Source: Esri, 2024

To qualify as an urban area per the Census Bureau, specific housing density thresholds must be met. In municipal areas, the vast majority of housing units are classified as urban, approximately 50 percentage points higher than the share of township housing units classified as urban. **Township housing classifications are more balanced, with an almost 40/60 split between urban and rural.** This distribution reflects the prevalence of township jurisdictions that border cities or lie within areas commonly perceived as municipal boundaries, which explains why a significant portion of township housing is urban rather than exclusively rural as is often assumed.

Housing Units By Urban/Rural Status in Townships

Housing Units By Urban/Rural Status in Municipal Areas

Townships: 43% · 58%
Municipal Areas: 7.5% · 93%

■ Rural Housing Units   ■ Urban Housing Units

Source: Esri, 2020

DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC, AND TAX CHARACTERISTICS OF TOWNSHIPS

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment among residents in townships is broadly comparable to that in municipal areas. Both areas report similar proportions of individuals with an associate degree as their highest education level. The difference in townships and municipal areas between the share of residents whose highest educational attainment is a high school diploma and those with a bachelor's degree or higher is less than five percentage points in both categories.

Household Composition

Township households tend to be older and slightly larger on average compared to municipal households. According to the 2020 Decennial Census, two-person households were most common in townships (37%), whereas municipal areas were predominantly one-person households (34%). In 2024, the average household size in townships exceeded 2.5 persons, with a median age of 43, compared to a median age of 39 and average household size of 2.3 in municipal households.
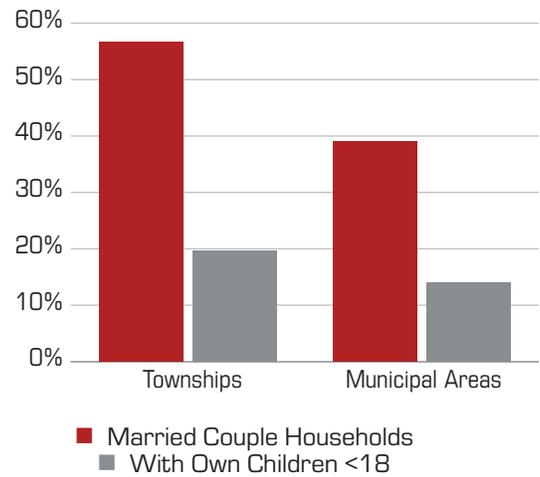
As seen in the graph to the right, per the 2020 Decennial Census, household composition differed significantly, with the share of married-couple households in townships exceeding that in municipal areas by 18 percentage points.

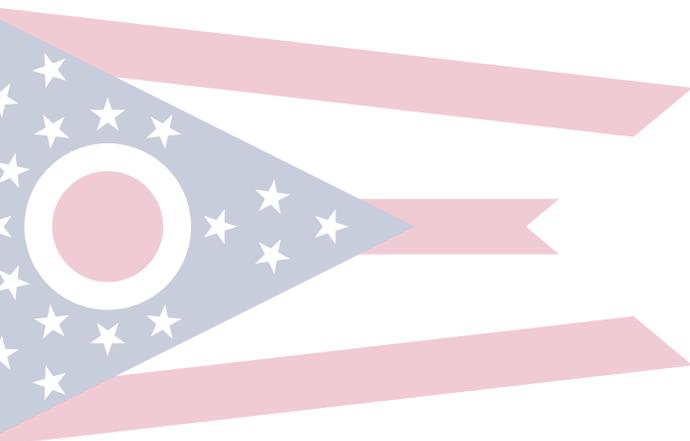**Highest Level of Educational Attainment of Population 25 Years and Older**
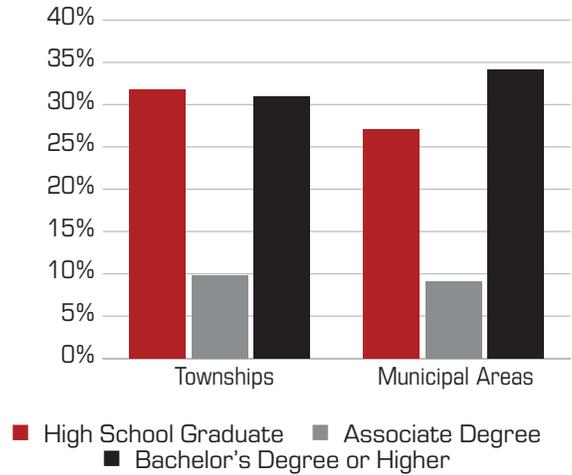
Source: Esri, 2024

Household Composition

Source: Esri, 2024

■ STUDY RESOURCES

Data on jobs, labor income, and demographics were obtained from Esri and IMPLAN.

IMPLAN

IMPLAN (IMpact analysis for PLANning), one of the most well-respected and widely used methodologies for assessing regional economic impacts, was used for this study. IMPLAN is a general input-output model initially developed by the U.S. Forest Service in the 1970s and is used by more than 1,000 universities, government agencies, and consultants to estimate the economic and fiscal impacts of investments and/or changes in one or more industries.

Data underlying the IMPLAN model is updated annually using thousands of data points from over 90 sources. The main sources for this data include:

- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)
- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) Regional Economic Accounts (REA)
- U.S. Census Bureau County Business Patterns (CBP)
- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis National Income and Product Accounts (NIPA)

2024 IMPLAN data, the most current data available at the time, was used for this study.

Esri/ArcGIS Business Analyst

Esri is the global leader in geographic information system (GIS) software, location intelligence, and mapping. Its ArcGIS Business Analyst platform delivers location-based market and community intelligence by integrating demographic, economic, business, lifestyle, and spending data with map-driven analytics. Esri was developed in 1969 and has more than one million active users, consisting of national and local government agencies, Fortune 500 companies, universities, and consultants.

Data underlying the ArcGIS Business Analyst platform is updated annually using a variety of government and other sources, including but not limited to:

- U.S. Census Bureau and the Census Bureau's American Community Survey
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Data Axle

■ ABOUT SILVERLODE CONSULTING

Silverlode Consulting was founded in 2002 by two leaders of EY's and PwC's consulting practices. As a national leader in economic impact analysis, Silverlode has helped hundreds of organizations, ranging from non-profit arts groups to multi-national corporations, to measure their impacts on their communities and communicate those impacts to their stakeholders.

By meticulously estimating and effectively communicating the jobs, earnings, taxes, and other impacts of projects, the presence of an organization, or an investment in a community, our work has helped clients to gain approvals, secure funding, and positively shift public opinion. More information about our firm and our work in economic impact analysis can be found on our website at www.silverlodeconsulting.com.