

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

ETNA TOWNSHIP: A BRIEF HISTORY

Before the township's formation, the towns of Carthage (Etna Proper) and Wagram (Intersection of National Road and Mink Street) were surveyed and platted in anticipation of the National Road being constructed from Cumberland, MD west to Vandalia, IL. The town of Carthage was later renamed Etna in reference to the volcanic peak, Mount Etna, in Italy. The platted town was found to be the land of highest elevation between Jacksontown and Columbus. This name, Etna, was then used when the township was formed in 1833 as the last township in Licking County. Etna would prove to be a unique name, as it is the only township named Etna in the state.

In the same year the township was formed, construction began on the National Road in the township and it was finished in 1834. The new road brought many travelers through Etna Township, including settlers moving west and businessmen transporting goods back to the east. Many businesses and homes were built in Etna Township, especially in the town of Etna, because of the opportunities the National Road provided. The first



Figure 4: The construction of US 40 through Etna Township.

census after the formation of the township was in 1840, which counted a population of 803.

For the next half century, life in the township centered around the transportation-oriented pike towns of Etna, Wagram and the surrounding agricultural community. However, the

late 1800s birthed the railroads and the major growth was redirected to pursue the railroad lines. Communities with railroad lines, such as Pataskala, prospered during the railroad era, but Etna had no such lines. During this period, the National Road became less and less essential because the bulk of products and passengers were using



Figure 5: Mile markers commemorate the history of the National Road.

the rail system. By 1895, the road fell into disrepair throughout the country, and in Etna, the tollgate between Etna and Wagram (near present day Tollgate Road) was abandoned.

The dawning of the twentieth century brought prosperity and growth back to the township with the introduction of interurban trains and the automobile. The interurban railway was constructed through Etna Township as part of Columbus, Buckeye Lake, and Newark Traction Company rail line, which later became known as the Columbus, Newark, & Zanesville line. These interurban lines served mainly as commuter trains to carry passengers from city to city. The line that traversed



Etna went along the National Road from Columbus to Hebron. This line carried many Etna Township residents to work in other communities, especially in Columbus.

During this Interurban Rail period, many inventors and businessmen were busy perfecting the automobile. In the second and third decades of the twentieth century, the mass production of the automobile by businessmen such as Henry Ford began to replace reliance on the interurban rail. Thus began our country's reliance on the automobile, and the rail that ran through Etna Township was abandoned by the 1930s. However, the extensive use of the automobile brought the National Road back to life. The road was repaired and even paved in Etna Township in 1917. The United States government extended the road from Illinois to San Francisco, California. This shift in transportation brought new life to old businesses and communities that once served the travelers of the National Road. Life in Etna Township again centered around the opportunity the National Road travelers brought, and the surrounding agricultural community. By the 1950s, the National Road was widened to four lanes with a grass median strip. When the road was widened, a bypass around Etna Proper was constructed as well.

The 1960s gave rise to the interstate system, including Interstate 70, which

was opened through Etna Township in 1966. Interstate 70 is generally parallel to the existing National Road, and is located no more than one mile away from National Road (US 40) within Etna Township. The limited-access interstate highway transformed the dynamic of the National Road by relegating it to almost exclusively local traffic. Suddenly, businesses had to adjust to serving the needs of the local population rather than highway travelers. Etna Township's history is rich in transportation and that tradition has carried over, with the importance that highways such as US 40, SR 310, and I-70 continue to play in the township.

The transportation pattern over the last forty years has continued relatively unchanged in Etna Township. However, other factors over the last 40 years have altered Etna Township's history and future. One of those factors has been the aggressive annexations of Etna and Lima Township land by Reynoldsburg. The majority of the annexations occurred in a twenty-year span from the mid 1970s to the mid 1990s. These annexations, in aggregate, have taken over 1,600 acres of land on the western end of Etna Township. North of Etna Township, Reynoldsburg annexed nearly 300 acres in Lima Township. These annexations and development pressures from Reynoldsburg encouraged Lima Township and the Village of Pataskala to merge and become the City of Pataskala **6**

in 1996. Not only did this merger modify the relationship with one of Etna Township's neighboring jurisdictions, it helped steer the identity of the region with the addition of a legitimate city in western Licking County. Annexation will continue to be a major factor in shaping the future of Etna Township when considering the neighboring political jurisdictions of Reynoldsburg to the west, Pataskala to the north, and Kirkersville to the east.

Another factor that has helped shape Etna Township is the formation of the Southwest Licking Community Water & Sewer District (SWLCW&S District). The SWLCW&S District was formed in October of 1989 in order to eliminate environmental pollution problems in Etna, Harrison, and Lima Townships. Many water and sewer lines were installed along the main roads in these jurisdictions in the early- to mid-1990s. The installation of and connection to these lines allowed for the dismantling of several neighborhood treatment plants, such as Russell Heights and Royal Acres. The establishment of the water and sewer district has encouraged growth in the township and has allowed for higher density development. Today, water and sewer are available to over two-thirds of the township.

For the majority of its existence, Etna



Figure 6: Road maintenance is an important function of the township.

Township has existed as an agricultural community, with a few bustling pike towns to service National Road travelers. In the last half of the twentieth century, the township began transitioning into a suburban bedroom community with a strong agricultural presence. Due to the influx of more than a dozen new residential neighborhoods, the township grew from a population of 1,250 in 1950 to an estimated population of around 7,500 in 2010. The township is at a point in history where strong residential, agricultural, and business contingents all exist in the township and the goal is to balance them to form a self-sustaining viable community that we all can be proud to call home.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Township Roads

Care and maintenance of the township road system is the largest function of townships today. The Etna Township

Road Department maintains 49 miles of roadway. The maintenance of these roads and road right-of-ways includes paving, repairs, snow/ice removal, ditching, and mowing.

Police Protection

A board of township trustees has the authority to employ local police officers and set up a police district. Today, Ohio township police have, in general, the same authority and power the law grants to the sheriff. They are required to apprehend law-breakers in the township and county. Township police also execute warrants, writs and other legal processes throughout the county. Etna Township currently uses the Licking County Sheriff's Department for police protection and coverage.

Fire Protection

Ohio law permits townships to provide fire protection directly or by contract with townships, municipalities and other jurisdictions in order to protect lives and property efficiently. Etna Township



Figure 7: The West Licking Joint Fire District.



Figure 8: Etna Township operates and maintains High Point Park.

contracts with five other local jurisdictions (Pataskala, Reynoldsburg, Kirkersville, Jersey, and Harrison Townships) to operate the West Licking Joint Fire District for fire protection and EMS services.

Parks and Recreation

A board of township trustees may purchase, appropriate, construct, enlarge, improve, repair or equip a township park. The board may buy suitable land and material, accept a gift, use township funds or levy a tax. If an additional tax is required, it must be submitted to the voters for approval. A township park district may also be established, although the district must be approved by electors of the township, and when established, is



run by an appointed board of park commissioners. A park district is a separate political subdivision with taxing authority. Etna Township currently operates one park, High Point Park. This facility, located between SR 310 and the new township hall, features a walking path, a gazebo, an open field play area, and beautiful landscaping.

Zoning

Zoning is the regulation of the use of land and buildings that permit a community to control the development of its territory. It provides for orderly growth by protecting homes and property from harmful use on neighboring properties. Any zoning restriction must have a reasonable relationship to public health, safety, comfort, convenience, prosperity or general welfare. Ohio law provides for the submission of a zoning plan to the electors of a township and also provides for the administration, enforcement and amendment of the zoning plan if it is adopted. Etna Township has used zoning authority since 1960 when zoning was approved by township voters.

Waste Disposal

Due to the tremendous increase in population, government units across Ohio face a waste disposal problem. Townships are authorized to provide waste disposal services to residents. It may collect and dispose of garbage or it may contract with other political

subdivisions for such services. Etna Township typically contracts with one waste disposal service provider for a certain number of years.

Cemeteries

Townships in Ohio manage more than 1,800 cemeteries. Voters must approve the purchase or appropriation of land for a cemetery, but once it is established, the township trustees have the authority and obligation to sell plots, set up service fees, maintain the cemetery and provide for expansion. Etna Township currently maintains three cemeteries. The Etna Cemetery, the only active cemetery of the three, is located between the Orchard Glen and Peppertree subdivisions on the south side of Pike Street. St. Jacob Cemetery is on Palmer Road east of Watkins Road. Parkinson-



Figure 9: Etna Township is one of 20 zoned townships in Licking County. 8

Babcock Cemetery is on National Road east of Watkins Road.

Other Township Functions

Township trustees also have responsibility for ditches, drains and other surface water; line fences between adjacent properties; township hospitals or township hospital districts; and the control of weeds and brush. Trustees also have authority to erect monuments to commemorate those who died in the service of their country. The Board of Township Trustees may provide artificial lighting when it is determined that public safety requires such lighting. The township may install its own lighting system or contract with an electric company.

TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

Township Revenue

Townships receive revenue from local property taxes (although raises in property tax must be approved by voters) and from the gasoline and motor vehicle license taxes, as well as local government money from the state.

Ohio Home Rule

Townships possess only those powers expressly delegated to them by statute, or those which are reasonably implied from those delegated, which include the powers previously mentioned. In general, townships do not possess broad

police powers or the ability to provide for public health. An exception to this general rule is found in Chapter 504 of the Ohio Revised Code, which permits townships with at least 5,000 residents in the unincorporated area to adopt a limited home rule government. If adopted, limited home rule townships may exercise “all powers of local self-government,” subject to certain exceptions. Such authority is limited to the unincorporated areas of the township and resolutions of the township may only be enforced by civil fines up to \$1,000.

Township Facilities

The Etna Township Hall, located at 81 Liberty Street, is a 3,727 sq. ft. building with a meeting room, zoning office, reception area, fiscal officer’s office, conference room, kitchen, and bathrooms on 0.2 acres.

The Etna Township Garage, located at 1145 South Street, is a 3,600 sq. ft. building used for storage of equipment, with an office. There is also a 2,000 sq. ft. open shed used for storage of materials, a 1,000 sq. ft. salt bin, an area used to store mulch and debris, recycling bins, and storage of materials such as dirt and concrete on 4.263 acres.

Another property owned by the township includes 483 Laurel Drive (Reserve A of Jardin Manor), which is 4.41 acres of vacant land.



Figure 10: The Etna Township Community Center, established April 25, 2009.

Township Functions, Equipment, and Employees

The Etna Township Road Department has three full-time employees and one part-time employee during the summer. Responsibilities include paving, berming, and ditching the township roads; mowing township right-of-way and grounds; snow/ice removal; removal of debris (trees, animals, etc.) from roads; and other physical labor needed by the township. Department equipment includes a backhoe, transit, pressure washer, ditcher head, chain saw, mowers, welding torch, spreader/augers, roller, street sweeper, pallet fork, front end loader, snow plows, crack seal unit, generator, and a Ford F350 township truck.

The Etna Township Zoning Department has one full-time administrator, whose responsibilities include zoning plan reviews; inspections and enforcement

of the zoning resolution; staff reports and guidance to the BZA, Zoning Commission, and Township Trustees regarding land-use planning and zoning; zoning text writing and review. Equipment in the zoning office includes a laptop computer, zoning software, and digital camera.

Working in the Etna Township Hall are the zoning administrator and one part-time employee, whose responsibilities include all secretarial duties for the township, including filing, record-keeping, typing, phone messages, direction to various inquiries, etc.; as well as acting as clerk of the BZA, zoning commission, and township trustees. Office equipment includes two desktop computers, a laptop computer, a projector, a color printer, a fax/copier/printer, CD and MP3 audio recording equipment, and various office furniture (chairs, desks, filing cabinets, tables, etc.).

Joint Functions:

- Fire protection is supplied by West Licking Fire District, which covers Etna, Harrison, and Jersey Townships; Pataskala, Kirkersville, New Albany, and Reynoldsburg.
- Police Protection is supplied by the

- Licking County Sheriff's Department.
- Water and sewer is supplied to more than half of the township by the Southwest Licking Water & Sewer District, which provides centralized water and sewer to Etna Township, Harrison Township, and the City of Pataskala.
- Maintenance of Refugee Road is divided into segments between Etna and Harrison Townships and the City of Pataskala.

Township Trustee Appointed Committees and their Function(s)

Boards Comprised of Township Appointees Only:

Zoning Commission: Section 504, Duties of the Zoning Commission
The Commission's duties include:

1. Initiate proposed amendments of the zoning resolution.
2. Review all proposed amendments to this resolution and make recommendations to the board of township trustees as specified in Article 6.
3. Review all planned unit developments and make recommendations to the board of township trustees as provided in this resolution.
4. Review all proposed changes to the official zoning map and make recommendations to the board of township trustees as specified in Article 6.

5. Review all proposed changes to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map and make recommendations to the board of township trustees.
6. Serve as an architectural review commission to enforce compliance with any zoning standards adopted and pertaining to landscaping or architectural elements as delegated by the board of trustees per O.R.C. 519.171. **Resolution 07-07-10-02.**

Board of Zoning Appeals: In exercising its duties, the board may, as long as such action is in conformity with the terms of the zoning resolution, reverse or affirm, wholly or partly, or modify the order, requirement, decision, or determination appealed from and make such order, requirement, decision, or determination as ought to be made, and to that end shall have the powers of the zoning inspector from whom the appeal is taken. A quorum of the board and the concurring vote of a majority of the board in attendance shall be necessary to reverse any order, requirement, decision, or determination of the zoning inspector, or to decide in favor of the applicant on any matter upon which it is required to pass under this resolution or to effect any variation in the application of this resolution. For the purpose of this resolution, that board has the following specific responsibilities:

1. To hear and decide appeals where it **10**



is alleged there is an error in any order, requirement, decision, interpretation, or determination made by the zoning inspector.

2. To authorize such variances from the terms of this resolution as will not be contrary to the public interest, where, owing to the special conditions, a literal enforcement of this resolution will result in practical difficulties and so that the spirit (intent) of this resolution shall be observed and substantial justice done.
3. To grant conditional use permits as specified in the official schedule of district regulations and under the conditions specified in Article 9 of such additional safeguards as will uphold the intent of this resolution.

Economic Development Committee: An advisory committee made up of one township trustee and four Etna Township residents. The committee's goal is to attract and promote businesses to Etna Township. The committee pursues the types of business they believe are best suited for the township and facilitates communication between interested businesses and property owners.

Parks Committee: A township trustees-appointed committee that writes the rules for and use of Highpoint Park. The committee also discusses possibilities of additional parks in the township.

Etna Transportation Task Force: A committee created to explore upgrades and solutions to the transportation network with Etna Township. Originally the committee was composed of one Etna Township Trustee and four at-large members, however, the committee has broadened its focus on transportation and has correspondingly added members from Pataskala and Violet Township.

Other Boards in which trustees appoint at least one member

Joint Economic Development Zone 1 (JEDZ 1) Committee: Township trustees appoint three members to this board, including one trustee. The committee oversees the JEDZ 1 development and the generation and distribution of all funds generated through the JEDZ, which is located north of US 40 in the Etna Corporate Park.

Joint Economic Development Zone 2 (JEDZ 2) Committee: The committee oversees the JEDZ 2 development and the generation/distribution of all funds generated through the JEDZ, which is located south of US 40 in the Etna Corporate Park.

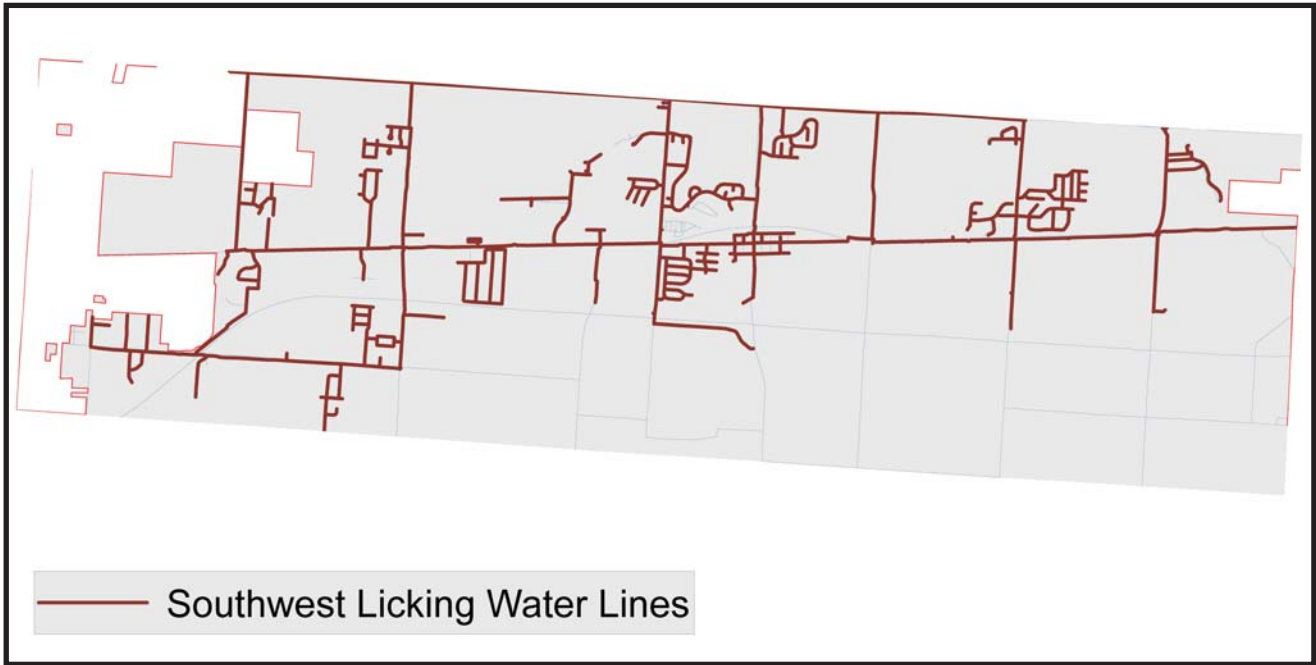
Tax Abatement Committee: Township trustees appoint one trustee to sit on this committee when a property tax abatement has been requested to review the details of the request and relay

information to their individual boards. The committee is comprised of representatives from the township trustees, the appropriate school board, and Licking County.

Tax Incentive Review Committee: The township trustees appoint two representatives to this committee. Once a tax incentive (i.e. tax abatement) has been granted to a business, this committee continually reviews the status of the abatement and whether the business has met their goals, and can also recommend removal of the incentives to the township trustees if necessary.

Pataskala Area Chamber of Commerce: All three township trustees are members, but the board typically appoints one trustee to attend the meetings. The chamber is a nonprofit organization financed by annual dues and provides information and support for area businesses. The Pataskala Area Chamber of Commerce exists to represent and promote the economic development of the Pataskala area (Southwest Licking County) through a proactive voice for its business community with meaningful benefits and leadership to its members.

Southwest Licking Water & Sewer Board: The township trustees appoint one member to this board, which oversees the legislative functions involving water and sewer facilities



Map 2: Southwest Licking Water and Sewer District's water lines in Etna Township.

in the Southwest Licking Water & Sewer District.

West Licking Joint Fire District Board: The township trustees appoint one trustee to sit on the fire board, which has legislative authority of the joint fire district. The West Licking Joint Fire District is comprised of several government entities. Each entity appoints an elected public official to sit on the fire board, so that each entity is represented in the management of the fire district.



Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Policy and Commission Committees: The trustees appoint one person to serve as the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) representative on these committees. MORPC includes 44 local governments that represent over 1.6 million citizens in the Central Ohio region. MORPC works for the overall improvement of the region, discussing regional issues and developing collaborative partnerships to address them. MORPC also serves as the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Franklin, Delaware, and parts of Fairfield and Licking Counties. In this role, MORPC develops regional plans

and policies to enhance mobility, reduce congestion, and meet air quality standards.

WATER AND SEWER SERVICES

About two-thirds of the residents of Etna Township are served by central water and sewer services provided by the Southwest Licking Community Water & Sewer District. The district was established in 1989 to eliminate environmental pollution problems present in Etna Township and other surrounding communities.

The goals of the district are to 1) Provide environmentally compliant water and wastewater services to the residents of western Licking County, 2) Provide economical water and wastewater services to the residents of western Licking County, and 3) Position the district to meet the anticipated water and wastewater needs of future commercial, industrial and residential development in western Licking County.

The district's water system currently has one water treatment facility, located at 69 Zellers Lane, which serves Etna and Harrison Townships and parts of Pataskala. The treatment facility can produce 2.4 million gallons per day by utilizing the gravity filtration ion exchange water treatment process. The source water is groundwater supply

withdrawn from the adjacent well field. The groundwater supply is delivered to the treatment facility by five wells located in the wellfield. The district currently treats and delivers some 1.1 million gallons per day to about 6,000 customers.

The water treatment process uses two 800-gpm iron and manganese removal filters, three 225-gpm ion exchange units, and one 450-gpm ion exchange unit. Chlorine is added to the filtered water to protect against possible contamination from outside influences. The water is also enhanced by the addition of a poly-orthophosphate blend. Orthophosphate forms a protective coating on the inside of pipes in the distribution system and in customer homes. The coating helps prevent copper and lead from leaching into drinking water, particularly in homes that have pipes or fixtures containing lead. Poly-orthophosphate is approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and is commonly used to improve water quality and protect water distribution systems. The district also adds a small amount of hydrofluorosilicic acid to the already naturally occurring fluoride in the groundwater to meet the minimum fluoride levels required by state law.

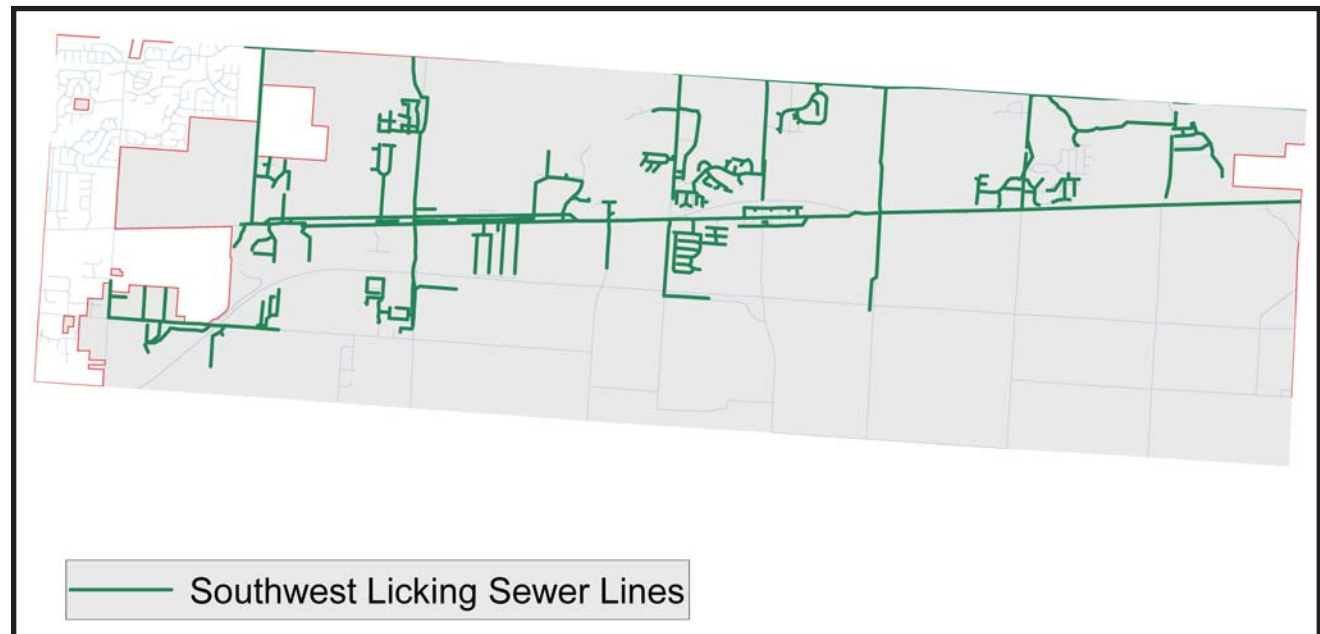
The water distribution system has five elevated water storage tanks (four at 400,000 gallons each and one at 1,000,000 gallons [Prologis]) and four water booster

stations, which provide water storage capacity and system pressure for fire protection. Currently the district owns property that contains more than 4.0 million gallons of water per day in undeveloped groundwater supply. The district's wastewater treatment facility is located at 8720 Gale Road. This facility has a permitted capacity of 2.65 million gallons per day and discharges to the South Fork of the Licking River. The facility consists of an influent pump station, influent screen facility, oxidation ditch/extended aeration basin, four final clarifiers, two return activated sludge pump stations, post aeration, UV disinfection and sludge processing and storage facilities. The wastewater collection system consists of over 160 miles of

sanitary sewers with manholes located about every 400 feet. The district also operates and maintains 43 wastewater pump stations (*source: www.swlcws.com*). The remainder of the community obtain their water and sewer through onsite well and septic systems.

SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Within Etna Township there is primarily one school district that serves the students of this community. South West Licking Local School District is responsible for educating a vast majority of the students living within Etna Township. A few homes within the township are located in the Licking Heights Local School District and the Reynoldsburg City School District. Additionally, Career and



Map 3: Southwest Licking Water and Sewer District's sewer lines in Etna Township.



Figure 11: Licking Heights High School.

Technology Education Centers of Licking County (C-TEC) offers area students the opportunity to gain career-specific training as an alternative to traditional high school education. School district boundaries do not change with annexation of land, those boundaries stay fixed.

Licking Heights Local School District

The Licking Heights Local School District is the home to approximately 3,169 students (2009-2010). It has experienced an enrollment increase of some 67 percent over the past decade. An increase of this magnitude prompted the District to initiate the process of a Facilities Plan that will layout the framework of new building needs for the future. The plan was presented to the Licking Heights School Board in November 2009. A strategic plan commenced in the spring of



2010. In 2010 a District Facility Assessment and Energy Audit was completed and made available on the district's website. The district's graduation rate of 94.1 percent and the attendance rate of 94.8 percent both exceed the state standards. Licking Heights has received an Effective designation by the State of Ohio Department of Education. Licking Heights School District operates five schools, West Elementary, Licking Heights South (2nd - 4th grades), Licking Heights North (4th -5th grades), Central Middle School, and Licking Heights High School.

Southwest Licking Local School District

The Southwest Licking Local School District is the home to approximately 3923 students (2009-2010). They have experienced an enrollment increase of approximately 32.5 percent over the past decade. The district's graduation rate of 91.1 percent and the attendance rate of 94.4 percent both exceed the state



Figure 12: Watkins Memorial High School.



Figure 13: Reynoldsburg High School.

standards. Southwest Licking Local School District operates seven schools, the Kindergarten Center, Etna Elementary School, Kirkersville Elementary, Pataskala Elementary, Watkins Middle School, Watkins Memorial High School and the SWL Digital Academy.

Reynoldsburg City Schools

The Reynoldsburg City School District is the home to approximately 5905 students (2009-2010). They have experienced an enrollment increase of approximately 6.89 percent over the past decade. The district's graduation rate of 91.6 percent and the attendance rate of 94.5 percent both exceed the state standards. Reynoldsburg City School District operates ten schools, French Run Elementary, Rose Hill Elementary, Slate Ridge Elementary, Taylor Road Elementary, Hannah J Ashton Middle School, Waggoner Road Middle School, Baldwin Road Junior High School, Waggoner Road Junior High School, and Reynoldsburg High School (source: The Ohio Department of Education). **14**