



NOVEMBER 2026 BALLOT ISSUE

Limited Home Rule

A Plain-Language Guide for Monclova Township Trustees

What it is, what it changes, and what it means for Monclova.

Status: On the November Ballot

NOV

2026

General Election

Second time on the ballot — the same question failed in November 2024.

- **Nov 2024**

Voters rejected the first Limited Home Rule ballot question.
- **Jul 6, 2026**

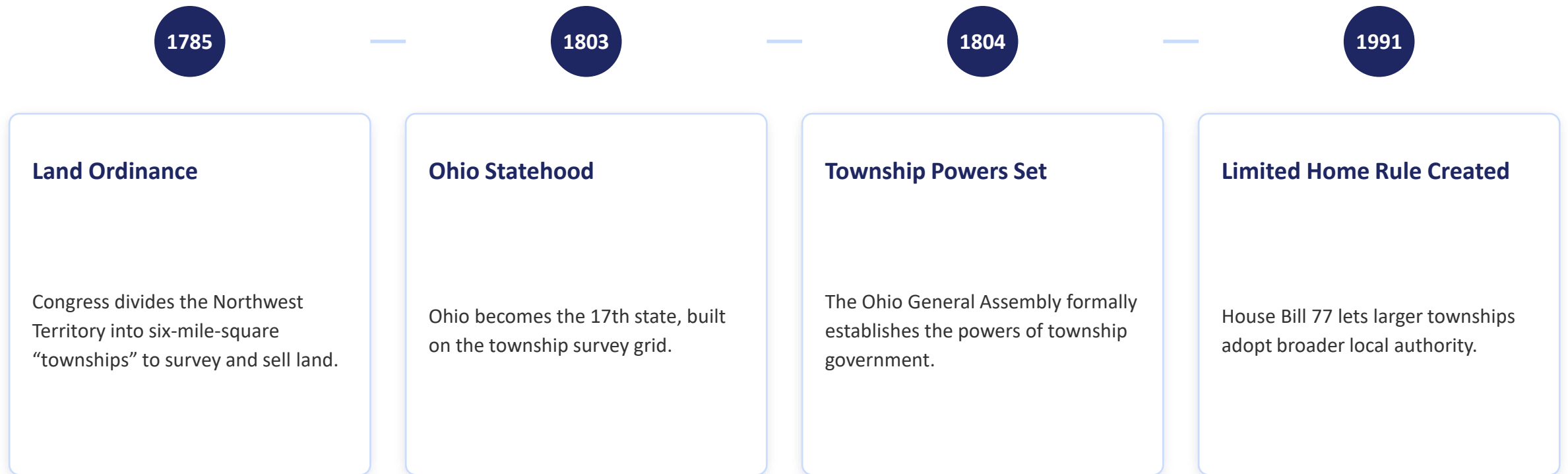
Trustees voted to place the question on the ballot again.
- **Nov 3, 2026**

Voters decide Issue — Monclova Township, Limited Home Rule.
- **Jan 1, 2027**

If approved, Limited Home Rule takes effect.

33 of Ohio’s 1,308 townships currently operate under Limited Home Rule.

Origins of Township Law



Townships were built to govern wide, thinly settled land — not the traffic, growth, and property issues Monclova manages today.

Larger townships might have outgrown the Township structure

1800

45,365

residents in the entire State of Ohio



Township government was designed for a frontier state

2026

~15,000

residents in Monclova Township alone



Modern population and density

Limited Home Rule in 30 Seconds



What Does Not Change

- Monclova remains a township
- No new taxing authority
- No criminal penalties
- No zoning changes
- Same elected officials



What Changes

- Civil citation authority for certain code violations
- Broader nuisance and property maintenance authority
- Law director authority
- Additional local self-governance powers under ORC 504

The key issue: Local Control vs. State Control



Limited Home Rule expands local decision-making authority within limits established by Ohio Law

Standard Township

- Limited to a specific list of powers written into Ohio law
- Must ask the state to expand what it can regulate
- Quality-of-life issues must involve County Prosecutor

Limited Home Rule Township

- Broader authority to self-govern locally, without waiting on Columbus
- Still bounded by state general law — not unlimited power
- Local civil prosecution authority

Better Enforcement, Still a Township



Stays the Same

- Monclova remains a township — not a city or village
- Same trustees, same form of government
- Same elected officials and their existing duties
- Zoning stays governed under its own separate law



What's Added

- A local civil citation process for code violations
- Authority to adopt targeted rules — nuisances, noise, property upkeep
- A law director who can act directly, without routing through the County
- Faster, more effective, local response to everyday complaints

The 3-Year Period



ORC 504.03

A built-in check-in point



What are the powers?



Local regulations

Adopt and enforce police, sanitary, and similar rules not in conflict with state law.



Voter initiative & referendum

Gives Township residents the same ballot-initiative rights City residents already have.



Right-of-way management

Establish access management controls over Township roads and rights-of-way.



Water & sewer service

Supply water and sewer service to the unincorporated area of the Township. Limited Home Rule does not automatically establish township-operated utility systems.



Targeted regulations

Regulate matters like adult-oriented businesses and residency of sex or child-victim offenders.



Enforcement tools

Enforce local rules through civil fines or, where health/safety is at risk, injunctive relief.

In plain terms: Monclova could handle problems like nuisance conditions, unsafe properties, and basic local rules — in-house.

These powers exist today in 33 other Ohio townships — this isn't untested territory.

What Is Limited?

Under Limited Home Rule, the Township cannot:

-  Exercise any power that conflicts with state general law
-  Create criminal offenses or penalties — or send anyone to jail
-  Alter powers over agriculture, or conservation of natural resources
-  Create new taxes beyond what state law already authorizes
-  Change, combine, or eliminate the Township's form of government
-  Regulate hunting, trapping, fishing, or possession of firearms

What Is Limited? (continued)

A few more boundaries worth knowing:

-  Can't set its own building code once the County already has one
-  Can't rewrite zoning — zoning stays under its own separate law (ORC 519)
-  Can't set new water or sewer rules beyond specific statute sections
-  Can't set subdivision, road, or storm-water rules outside ORC 504.21

Takeaway: LHR expands enforcement tools — it does not hand the Township new taxing, criminal, or zoning power.

Zoning Remains the Same

Limited Home Rule does not alter zoning authority under ORC Chapter 519.



Zoning Resolution remains in place



Zoning Commission remains



Board of Zoning Appeals remains



Public hearing process remains



ORC Chapter 519 remains controlling law

Zoning decisions continue exactly as they do today — no new authority, no new process.

What This Means for Monclova



A Real Property Maintenance Code

Today, Monclova's options for enforcing exterior property upkeep are limited. LHR opens the door to a comprehensive exterior property maintenance code with real teeth.



A Local Civil Citation Process

Code enforcement officers could issue civil citations — tickets, not criminal charges — directly to property owners, with fines up to \$1,000 per violation.

What This Means for Monclova (continued)



Faster nuisance response

The Township law director could bring nuisance actions directly — without waiting in line behind other cases at the County Prosecutor’s office.



Zoning stays put

Adopting LHR does not hand the Township new zoning power — the existing Monclova Zoning Resolution keeps working the same way.



Expanded Local Enforcement Authority

Limited Home Rule provides additional enforcement tools while remaining subject to Ohio Law — not a new layer of taxes or bureaucracy.

Civil vs. Criminal

CIVIL — What LHR Uses

- Handled like a ticket, not a criminal case
- Fines only — capped at \$1,000 per violation
- No jail time, ever, under an LHR resolution
- Violator can admit, deny, or ignore — with a court hearing if needed
- Unpaid fines can lead to a property lien

CRIMINAL — Off-Limits to LHR

- Townships cannot create criminal offenses under LHR
- Criminal law stays with the State and County courts
- Township cannot prosecute criminal cases itself
- No arrest or jail penalty can attach to an LHR resolution

Civil Fine Procedure Under Limited Home Rule

Township resolutions adopted under Limited Home Rule are enforced through civil fines — not criminal penalties.

1 Adopt a Resolution With a Fine Provision



Trustees adopt a resolution establishing the violation and fine amount. Fines may increase for repeat offenses, but can never exceed \$1,000.

2 Citation Is Issued



A township peace officer (ORC 504.16) issues a citation stating the violation, date/time/location, fine amount, and the 14-day response and hearing rights. Filed with the court and served under the Civil Rules.

3 Recipient Responds Within 14 Days



The recipient notifies the Township Fiscal Officer within 14 days — either admitting the violation and paying the fine, or denying it.

4 Court Hearing, If Denied or Unpaid



If denied or unpaid, the Fiscal Officer notifies the court. A hearing follows under the Rules of Civil Procedure — the township must prove the violation by a preponderance of the evidence, or the case is dismissed with costs to the township.

5 Collection & Enforcement



Payment is due to the court clerk within 10 days. Unpaid judgments are collected like other civil judgments; the Township may place a property lien once a judgment is final and unpaid.

Practical Impact for Monclova

Truck parking, property maintenance, or nuisance regulations would be enforced through this civil citation and court process — coordinated among the law director, fiscal officer, and the appropriate court.

Simplified Pros & Cons: The Pros



Real enforcement tools for property maintenance and nuisance issues



Faster, local decisions — no waiting on state law changes



Residents gain the same initiative & referendum rights City residents have



Township resolutions prevail over conflicting County resolutions



Longer financing terms for equipment and property purchases



An authority structure currently utilized by other Ohio townships under Limited Home Rule

Potential Drawbacks and Considerations

 Enforcement is limited to civil fines — no jail-term backing

 No new taxing power comes with LHR

 Added cost: a law director, and possibly local police expenses

 More formal process for resolutions — two readings, journal-keeping

 Collecting unpaid fines can be slow and resource-intensive

 If Township and municipal rules conflict, the municipality's wins

Common Myths & Facts

 **MYTH** Limited Home Rule turns Monclova into a city.

 **FACT** Monclova remains a township with the same form of government.

 **MYTH** Trustees gain the ability to create new taxes.

 **FACT** Limited Home Rule does not create new taxing authority.

 **MYTH** Limited Home Rule allows criminal prosecution.

 **FACT** Enforcement remains civil, not criminal.

 **MYTH** Limited Home Rule changes zoning.

 **FACT** Zoning remains governed by ORC Chapter 519.

Perrysburg Township

Wood County — already operating under Limited Home Rule



Enforceable Property Maintenance Code

Sets local building standards under ORC 504.13.



Direct action

No waiting for county prosecutor

Perrysburg Township shows LHR in practice next door — same tools Monclova would gain.

Sylvania Township

Lucas County — how a neighboring LHR township actually uses it

- ✓ EV charging station regulations
- ✓ A property maintenance code
- ✓ A noise resolution
- ✓ Solicitation regulations
- ✓ Nuisance conditions — wildlife feeding & stray animals

Currently under evaluation: a short-term rental resolution — no formal action taken yet.

Important Note:

Perrysburg Township and Sylvania Township have the same power, but use them differently.

That's what is meant by local control.

What Happens Next



The Limited Home Rule ballot issue asks voters whether Monclova Township should operate under the authority provided in ORC Chapter 504. The issue does not determine how future trustees will exercise that authority; it determines whether the authority becomes available to the Township.