

# 2023



# COMMERCE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



Prepared by  
**Commerce Township  
Planning Commission**  
December 4, 2023



**RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION**  
of the  
**2023 COMMERCE TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN**  
by the  
**COMMERCE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**

**WHEREAS**, the Charter Township of Commerce Planning Commission has the responsibility and is empowered by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, to make and adopt a Master Plan for the physical development of the Township and to amend the Plan as needed from time-to-time, and

**WHEREAS**, the Charter Township of Commerce Board of Trustees created the Planning Commission for the purposes stated Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, and

**WHEREAS**, Charter Township of Commerce has retained a professional planning consultant to assist the Planning Commission with the technical studies necessary to make a comprehensive, new Master Plan for Commerce Township, and

**WHEREAS**, Charter Township of Commerce Planning Commission has held a public hearing on its proposed Master Plan update for the Township on December 4, 2023 at the Commerce Township Hall, and

**WHEREAS**, the Charter Township of Commerce Planning Commission finds that the new Master Plan is necessary for the continued development and the appropriate redevelopment of the physical areas of Commerce Township,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Charter Township of Commerce Planning Commission hereby adopts this Master Plan for Commerce Township, along with the text, maps, charts, graphs, and other descriptive materials contained in the Plan.

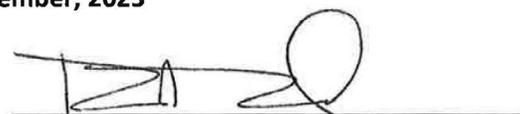
**Motion** by Phillips and supported by Loskill

**AYES:** Phillips, Loskill, McKeever, Parel, Winkler, Karim

**NAYS:**

**ABSENT:** Weber

**RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 4<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2023**



**Brian Parel, Chairperson**  
**Commerce Township Planning Commission**



## Planning Commission (PC)

Brian Parel, Chairperson  
Brian Winkler, Vice-Chairperson  
George Weber, Township Board of Trustees Representative  
Bill McKeever, Zoning Board of Appeals Representative  
Samir Karim, Member  
Joseph Loskill, Secretary  
Brady Phillips, Member

## Township Board of Trustees

Larry Gray, Supervisor  
Molly Phillips, Treasurer  
Melissa Creech, Clerk  
Robert Berkheiser, Trustee  
Vanessa Magner, Trustee  
Rick Sovel, Trustee  
George Weber, Trustee

## Planning Department

David Campbell, Planning Director  
Paula Lankford, Planner  
Anne Allard, Clerical Administrator

## Assisted by Giffels Webster

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## ENVISION YOUR FUTURE

1

The Master Plan Framework is outlined and the guiding themes of this plan are established.

## KNOW YOUR PRESENT

2

Contextual information about the Township, local residents and the economy, providing important background key to recommendations in the plan.

## PLAN YOUR SUCCESS

3

The community's long-term vision is shared through goals and objectives that will steer the development trajectory.

Two area plans, focused on specific areas of the Township where there are substantial development opportunities, are featured. The intent of the area plans is to provide a zoomed-in perspective of the unique characteristics and competitive advantages within these areas to offer prescriptive and actionable recommendations.

## IMPLEMENT YOUR PLAN

4

The zoning plan outlines the vision for future land uses and the evolution of zoning in the community to steer future decisions about development.

The actionable, incremental steps that can be taken to achieve the plan's long-term goals.

# Executive Summary

The Master Plan for Commerce Township sets forth the Township’s comprehensive and forward-looking vision to guide growth and development. This plan reflects an inclusive and collaborative planning process that engaged the community, stakeholders, and decision-makers to create a blueprint for the future. Building on the history of the Township, this plan aims to address development limitations and anticipate future needs to ensure a thriving, sustainable, and resilient community.

## Introduction

This section introduces the concept of a Master Plan and planning process, highlighting the foundational tenets that serve as building blocks for the remainder of this Master Plan update.

## **Guiding Themes**

Guiding themes were established by the Planning Commission at the beginning of the process to create a framework that would ensure alignment, clarity, and focus while establishing a common vision. The guiding themes served as the fundamental principles to guide decision-making throughout the planning process and were essential in developing the goals and objectives of the plan.

## Public Input

Extensive public input was gathered through a variety of in-person and virtual activities. Residents, businesses, and organizations contributed valuable insights to shape the plan’s direction in a manner that reflects the priorities of the Township’s population and stakeholders.

Engagement activities included a leadership advance workshop with Township staff, small-group meeting toolkits, two in-person open house events, with virtual options for remote participation, interactive mapping activities, and engaging with students in high school classrooms and an art contest. Common themes surfaced in these activities. In particular, the community expressed concerns with traffic and the impact of future development on roadways with an emphasis on prioritizing enhanced infrastructure for non-motorized transportation and greater walkability, along with a desire to preserve natural assets and views.

A full analysis of the public input collected is available in [Appendix B: Public Input Results](#).



## **Commerce Township Today**

A thorough analysis of current conditions, with essential data on Township demographics, market trends, and land use patterns, was compiled to provide insight on areas of potential growth and opportunities for improvement. It is located in [Appendix A: Existing Conditions](#).

Some key trends were observed which helped guide plan recommendations.

- Commerce Township’s senior population has increased over time. Future projections indicate this trend will continue.
- Commerce Township has become increasingly more diverse over time.
- Employment shifts include greater flexibility in the workplace, with a greater portion of the Township’s workforce working from home.
- Changes in the market have resulted in new opportunities for employment in the healthcare industry in the Township.

## Goals & Objectives

Together, the initial assessments of the plan served as the foundation for establishing the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. The goals outlining the Township's aspirations are as follows:

- **Residential Development.** To achieve well planned, safe, balanced, and pleasant high-quality residential neighborhoods that meet the needs of all residents within the Township, today and in the future.
- **Economic Development.** Promote well-located, high-quality and diverse development in strategic areas of the community while mitigating impacts of development on neighboring residential uses. Create and nurture identifiable “downtown” type commercial activity centers.
- **Transportation.** With community and regional partners, provide motorized and non-motorized access and connections to permitted uses, while managing the conditions, safety, capacity, and the flow of traffic on the surrounding transportation network.
- **Stewardship.** Create a more sustainable and resilient future for Commerce Township by identifying, protecting, preserving, and enhancing the unique and desirable natural features of the Township.
- **Community and Public Facilities.** To create a sustainable community that provides a wide variety of recreational, civic, public safety, and related services for residents and visitors alike.
- **Infrastructure.** Provide, maintain and improve the Township's existing infrastructure, including water, sewer, and other utilities needed for residents and businesses.

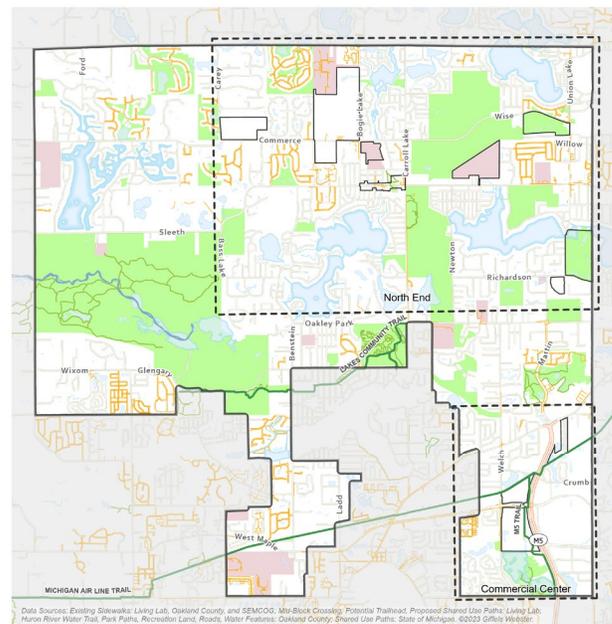
Objectives aligning with each goal are included with metrics to offer milestones to guide implementation.

## Area Plans

The North End and Commercial Center were identified as key areas of focus due to their unique features and significant development opportunities. The plan includes focused area plans with strategies to preserve their distinctive character and ensure the compatibility of future growth and development, while addressing constraints and opportunities for improvement in each area, considering opportunity sites, building form and character, transportation, and land uses.

### Commercial Center

Commerce Township's Commercial Center roughly comprises the area surrounding the M-5 Corridor, characterized by the major road corridors and higher intensity uses therein. The Area Plan includes recommendations for infill and redevelopment and non-motorized enhancements, emphasizing the importance of development that caters to people over cars. The plan includes recommendations for development styles that are compatible with the Township's character and preserve key natural assets.



AREA PLANS & NON-MOTORIZED PATHWAYS  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP

## North End

The North End is the predominantly residential portion of the Township in the northeastern portions of the Township, that includes the historic Commerce Village. The area plan seeks to focus development in contextually appropriate locations with non-motorized connectivity throughout. Development styles in the North End are recommended to reflect the Township's natural beauty and the historic character of the Village.

## Future Land Use Plan

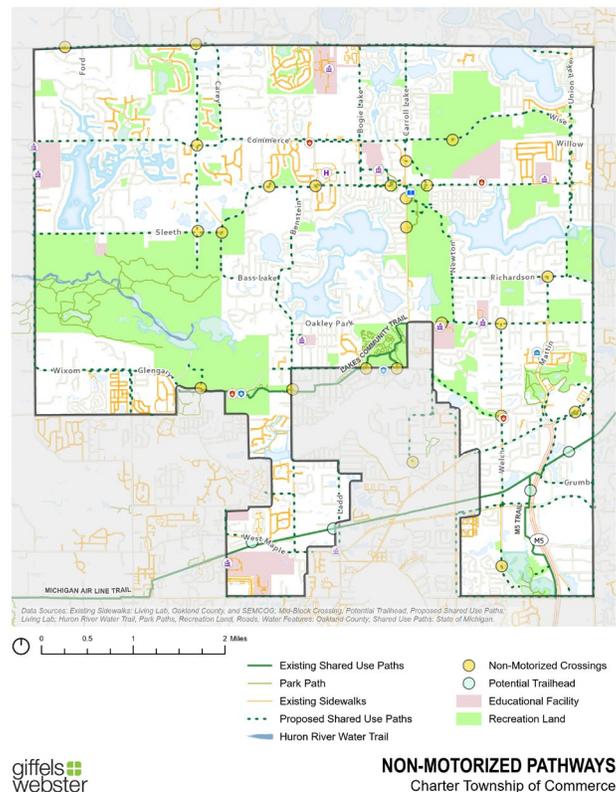
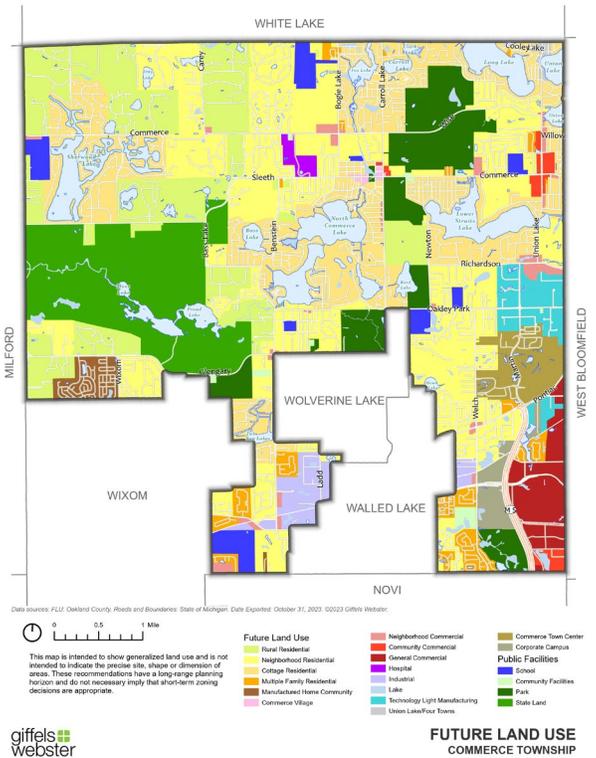
The future land use map is a crucial component of the Master Plan, visually defining the Township's development vision. By considering contextually appropriate locations for future residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, mixed-use and green spaces, the plan aims to create a balanced and sustainable environment that accommodates future growth while preserving the Township's identity.

The updated Future Land Use map includes some key changes from the Township's last Master Plan, including:

- Eliminating the Office category and incorporating offices uses in commercial mixed use categories as appropriate
- Establishing a Corporate Campus category to provide better guidance for the areas along the M-5 corridor
- Establishing a Commerce Village category to provide better guidance for the historic village center of the Township
- Refining the Four Corners Village category to the Union Lake/Four Towns category to more accurately and intentionally plan for the area
- Consolidating the Lake Front Residential single family category into the Cottage Residential category
- Consolidating Single Family Residential into the Neighborhood Residential category

## Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

The Non-Motorized Transportation Plan is an essential element of the Master Plan to plan for the overall system of streets and roads in the community to help address traffic concerns and enhance the Township's existing network.



## Implementation

The success of the Master Plan relies on effective implementation. To achieve the outlined goals and objectives, a detailed list of action items has been compiled. These forward-thinking steps include zoning updates, capital improvement recommendations, and advocacy items, among others. Regular monitoring and progress evaluations will ensure that the Township's goals are realized.

**The Master Plan for Commerce Township is a collective vision that aligns the aspirations of residents and business owners, stakeholders, and decision-makers. Through a comprehensive planning process and actionable framework, the plan will be foundational to the Township's economic, social, and environmental prosperity.**



<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Purpose .....	16
The Planning Process .....	16
Master Plan Framework .....	18
Community History .....	20
Recent Planning History .....	21
<b>Public Input .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Goals &amp; Objectives .....</b>	<b>40</b>
Goals of the Master Plan .....	41
Goal 1: Residential Development .....	42
Goal 2: Economic Development .....	44
Goal 3: Transportation .....	46
Goal 4: Stewardship .....	48
Goal 5: Community and Public Facilities .....	50
Goal 6: Infrastructure .....	52
<b>Area Plans .....</b>	<b>56</b>
Introduction .....	56
Commercial Center .....	58
North End .....	68
<b>Non-Motorized Transportation Plan .....</b>	<b>78</b>
Complete Streets .....	78
Non-Motorized Pathways Plan .....	81
<b>Future Land Use Plan .....</b>	<b>86</b>
Future Land Use Map .....	86
Future Land Use Descriptions .....	89
<b>Implementation .....</b>	<b>100</b>
Zoning Plan .....	100
Action Items .....	102
Goal 1: Residential Development .....	104
Goal 2: Economic Development .....	108
Goal 3: Transportation .....	114
Goal 4: Stewardship .....	118
Goal 5: Community and Public Facilities .....	122
Goal 6: Infrastructure .....	126



# Table of Contents: Appendices

<b>Appendix A: Existing Conditions</b> .....	<b>132</b>
Location .....	132
Demographics .....	134
Economy .....	140
Housing .....	143
Community Facilities .....	147
Natural Features .....	152
Transportation .....	160
Identity, Arts & Culture .....	167
Sustainability & Resiliency .....	169
<b>Appendix B: Public Input Results</b> .....	<b>172</b>
Leadership Advance .....	172
Neighborhood (Small-Group) Meeting Toolkits .....	173
Open House #1 (November 2022) .....	183
PictureThis! .....	192
High School Student Engagement .....	196
Open House #2 (June 2023) .....	199
Project Website Supplemental Activities .....	207
<b>Appendix C: Future Land Use Changes</b> .....	<b>212</b>
Future Land Use .....	212
Future Single Family Residential District .....	221
<b>Appendix D: Glossary &amp; List of Acronyms</b> .....	<b>224</b>
Glossary .....	224
List of Acronyms .....	227

# Table of Contents: List of Maps and Figures

## List of Maps

Map 1.	Area Plans Location .....	57
Map 2.	Commercial Center .....	59
Map 3.	North End .....	69
Map 4.	Non-Motorized Pathways Plan .....	82
Map 5.	2023 Future Land Use Map .....	87
Map 6.	Location Map .....	132
Map 7.	Regional Setting .....	133
Map 8.	Community Facilities .....	148
Map 9.	Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) Potential Natural Areas .....	154
Map 10.	Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) High Quality Habitat .....	154
Map 11.	Publicly Owned Lands .....	155
Map 12.	Wetlands .....	156
Map 13.	Tree Canopy .....	157
Map 14.	Impervious Surfaces .....	158
Map 15.	FEMA Floodplain .....	159
Map 16.	National Functional Classification .....	161
Map 17.	Existing Sidewalks and Trails .....	162

## List of Figures

Figure 1.	Benefits of Complete Streets .....	80
Figure 2.	Relationship between Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance .....	100
Figure 3.	Population History and Projection, 1960-2045 .....	134
Figure 4.	Population Projection by Age Group, 2015-2045 .....	135
Figure 5.	Racial Composition in Commerce Township and Surrounding Communities, 2020 .....	137
Figure 6.	Educational Attainment (Age 25+), 2010-2020 .....	138
Figure 7.	Percent of Population (Age 25+) with Bachelor's Degree or Higher in Commerce Township and Surrounding Communities, 2020 .....	138
Figure 8.	School Enrollment Trends, 2012-2022 .....	139
Figure 9.	Population Projection by Household Composition, 2010-2045 .....	139
Figure 10.	Forecasted Jobs by Industry Sector, 2015-2045 .....	141
Figure 11.	Building Permits by Housing Type, 2000-2022 .....	144
Figure 12.	Residential Building Permits, 2000-2022 .....	145
Figure 13.	Types of Missing Middle Housing .....	146

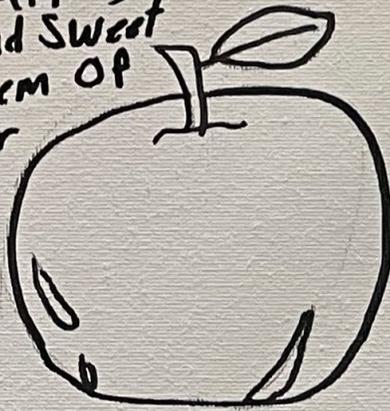


## List of Tables

Table 1. Future Land Use Categories, 2015 to 2023 .....	88
Table 2. 2023 Zoning Plan .....	101
Table 3. Implementation Action Item Types .....	102
Table 4. Implementation Matrix Columns .....	102
Table 5. Action Items: Residential Development .....	104
Table 6. Action Items: Economic Development .....	108
Table 7. Action Items: Transportation .....	114
Table 8. Action Items: Stewardship .....	118
Table 9. Action Items: Community and Public Facilities .....	122
Table 10. Action Items: Infrastructure .....	126
Table 11. Projected Population by Age, 2015-2045 .....	135
Table 12. Population Growth in Commerce Township and Surrounding Communities, 1990-2045 ....	136
Table 13. Race Distribution, 2010-2020 .....	137
Table 14. Mode of Transportation to Work, 2010-2020 .....	142
Table 15. Publicly Owned Lands, 2022 .....	152

# Introduction

Apples, apples  
good to eat  
Apples, apples  
juicy and Sweet  
Pick them off  
a tree or  
Pick em  
off at  
a store  
Apples,  
apples



We want more!



I like JAM  
Not ham, I like  
pies not flies  
I like cats  
not rats  
I like  
bres not  
fleas.

Every  
leaf speaks  
bliss to me  
fluttering from  
the Autumn  
tree.!



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Chen





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Art contest winner (12-14):  
Olivia Orow, 12

# Introduction

## Purpose

At its core, a master plan serves as a roadmap for the development of a community, considering the needs of its residents and businesses, existing structures, and the natural landscape. It outlines a strategic vision for growth and progress, aiming to make the community an even better place to live, work, and cherish.

The planning process doesn't overlook the vital aspect of property rights, where each landowner enjoys the liberty to use their land according to the guidelines set forth in a community's master plan and the provisions established in the zoning ordinance. The balance between individual rights and the broader community goals is at the heart of this endeavor. The master plan respects and integrates these rights while promoting a harmonious coexistence and collective prosperity.

With a vision for the future, Commerce Township will use this Master Plan to sustain its unique character. Implementation of the plan will not only respect the Township's heritage, but also anticipate the future needs of residents and business owners.

Although demand for development is a testament to Commerce Township's success, planning for the externalities of new growth is of high concern to the Township and Township residents. The recommendations in this plan consider where future development is likely to occur and proactive approaches that the Township can apply to reduce impacts on roads and infrastructure, natural areas, and adjacent properties.

This Master Plan is intended to reinforce the strengths of the Township and ensure that the community remains a vibrant, fun, safe, and inspiring haven for generations to come.

## The Planning Process

In late 2021, the Commerce Township Planning Commission conducted a review of the 2015 Master Plan. This review included an analysis of demographics and existing conditions along with an assessment of how the 2015 plan's goals and Future Land Use Map align with current and future trends. The Planning Commission considered the Township's strengths and weaknesses as well as developments that may be planned in the short- and medium-term. Through the review and one joint meeting with the Township Board, the Planning Commission noted that:

- Today's land use policies are based on public input gathered 20 years ago.
- While there are some areas of the Township that are mostly developed, there are at least ten parcels of various sizes that the Planning Commission recognize as having a high likelihood for development.
- The Planning Commission recognizes that development does not have isolated impacts; each potential development will have its benefits and challenges that will impact adjacent land uses and other development projects.
- The Planning Commission envisions a Master Plan Update that focuses on these parcels within the context of each other, allowing for multiple Township goals to be addressed (e.g., establishing/continuing non-motorized transportation facilities; promoting walkability; better serving aging residents, etc.).



The Master Plan update process commenced in July 2022, and for the next year, the Planning Commission continued to assemble a long-range vision for the Township in the following phases:

- Phase 1: Refinement of existing conditions analysis and geographic information systems mapping.
- Phase 2: Community engagement activities and update of vision, goals, and objectives.
- Phase 3: Development of vision for priority areas (North End and Commercial Center) and Future Land Use Map updates.
- Phase 4: Public hearing and adoption of plan.

The following trends and issues were also discussed by the Planning Commission as important to consider when planning for future development.

- **Increased workplace flexibility.** Remote work and hybrid work models have increased in prevalence in recent years. This trend has resulted in shifting commute patterns, reduced demand for office space, and increased geographic mobility among workers.
- **The rise of internet sales.** As demand for goods and services on the internet have become increasingly prevalent, demand for in-person commercial space has declined as well as an increase in the number of transportation-related occupations and vehicles making deliveries.
- **Climate resiliency.** Advancements in technology and modern development practices help communities adapt to severe weather events. Site development and design considerations should include flood risks, severe weather, and heightened temperatures. Green infrastructure and the preservation of natural features are key components of sustainable development.
- **Housing supply shortages.** Locally and nationally, the number of dwelling units is inadequate to meet rising demand for housing. Land use restrictions on density hinder new housing from being constructed. This shortage has resulted in rising home costs and a reduction in the number of affordable units.
- **Aging population.** The aging of baby boomers has increased demand for age-friendly housing and amenities, leading to the need for more accessible infrastructure and more senior living options.
- **The rise of compact mixed-use development.** As demand for commercial services and offices have declined, commercial developments anchored by residential uses have demonstrated success in maintaining occupancy.
- **Infrastructure investments.** Recent investments at the federal level have helped local and state governments access funding to repair, maintain, and expand infrastructure substantially. Improvements to infrastructure will result in opportunities to provide greater density, enhancing the values of real property.
- **Hazard mitigation.** Hazards, such as severe weather, flooding, public health emergencies, and invasive species can have significant impacts on communities, especially as the disruptions they cause are becoming more frequent and intense. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) distributes pre-disaster hazard mitigation grants that may be used for planning and project work to reduce vulnerability to hazards and long-term risks.

## Master Plan Framework

The Master Plan is the community's guide for the future – a long-range vision that helps decision makers guide land use decisions and policies related to development of public and private lands. The best master plans are those that follow a logical process, reflect public input and have actionable strategies to move the community forward. A solid framework will help keep the process on track and help people understand the expected outcome.

### Guiding Themes & Master Plan Outcomes | What do we value?

The guiding themes explain what the community values and may also include the purpose for the plan and what the community wants to achieve. As the plan moves forward, these themes should provide the guardrails for everything that follows.



#### Growth Management

We recognize the balance between providing available infrastructure along with a variety of housing choices that will allow people to make Commerce Township their home for a lifetime.



#### Economic Development

We encourage a variety of employment opportunities, and promote unique, local businesses that reflect the Township's character.



#### Community Character

We value the Township's character of natural beauty and strong neighborhoods and will strive to preserve it so people of all ages are proud to call Commerce Township home.



#### Complete Non-Motorized Transportation Network

We recognize the importance of safe roadways, bikeways, walkways, and trails that offer local and regional connections.



#### Traffic Mitigation

In this plan, we will address current traffic issues while planning for new development and explore rapidly evolving changes in travel (ridesharing, autonomous vehicles, electrified vehicles, drones, etc.).



#### Community Health

We encourage residents to have active lifestyles and support open spaces, community events, cultural venues and experiences that connect residents of all ages to Commerce Township.



#### Development of Large Sites

This plan seeks to establish an achievable vision for the development of large sites such as Bay Pointe golf course, Maple Road west of M-5, Union Lake golf course, etc.



#### Sustainability and Resiliency

It is essential to address environmental impacts of past, present, and future development and promote community resiliency.

## Vision | Where do we see ourselves in the future?

This is a long-term concept for what the community wishes to be, see or experience in the future. If we value the things we said in the principles, where does that take us?



### Vision Statement

Commerce Township will enhance the residential experience and improve the economic vitality for all Commerce Township residents and business owners. In the future, Commerce Township will continue to be a great place to live as growth is accommodated to provide economic opportunities, yet managed to protect the community's cherished natural and historic features.



The following elements will be explored in greater depth in the [“Goals & Objectives”](#) and [“Implementation”](#) chapters of this plan.

**Goals** | What does our vision look like?

**Objectives** | How do we get there?

**Metrics** | How will we know we’re making progress?

**Action Items** | What do we need to do?

## Community History

Commerce Township began as a farming village before developing into the predominantly residential setting that is reflected in today's development patterns. Some of the major events in the Township's development history are detailed below.

The boundaries of Commerce Township were drawn as part of the Grayson Land Ordinance of 1775, but were not surveyed until 1815. The first European settler was Abram Walrod, who established a homestead on the Huron River in 1825. Several other families settled in Commerce Township in the next decade, mostly along the Huron River. The first road, now known as Pontiac Trail, was built in 1833 or 1834, connecting residents to the railroad and expanding opportunities in nearby Milford and Pontiac. A grist mill was built on the Huron River in 1837 and operated until 1926; the former site of the mill is now Mill Race Park, a Township-owned passive recreation area.

At the turn of the twentieth century, Commerce Township had all of the attributes of a typical farming community—a mill, tavern, hotel and colorful characters, that have been well documented by the Commerce Historical Society. In 1918, the population was approximately 1,000 people. According to the U.S. Census, the population of Commerce Township continued to grow steadily in the first half of the twentieth century: 1,789 people in 1930, 2,957 residents in 1940 and 7,421 people in 1950.

The 1950s marked a turning point in the development of Commerce Township. Interstate 96 was constructed and replaced Grand River Avenue as the main link between Lansing and Detroit. As a result, the Township became easily accessible to the entire region, which prompted significant growth. Ford Motor Company opened a 1.6 million square foot plant at the I-96 and Wixom Road interchange, and the economic base of the community shifted from agriculture to manufacturing.

In 1957, Wixom incorporated as a village (and later as a city), taking territory from Commerce Township and Novi Township to the south. Walled Lake also incorporated as a city in 1959. By 1960, the size of the Township had decreased from its original thirty-six square miles to twenty-eight.



During the same period, many higher scale residential developments were constructed in the Township. In 1956 and 1957, a developer created Lake Sherwood subdivision, which featured a man-made lake. The Township hailed this as the type of development they hoped to see. By 1990, the population of the Township had grown to 22,156 people and 7,670 households, and throughout the 1990s, the population continued to increase by over 30 percent.

By the turn of the twenty-first century, the Township was no longer seen in the region as a summer vacation area but as prime residential real estate. Almost four thousand housing units were built between 1991 and 2000 before development cooled for a period due to the Great Recession.

Along with new growth emerged new challenges with traffic and greater demand to access residential areas north of Pontiac Trail. In 2010, the extension of M-5 (Martin Parkway) was completed to connect M-5 to Pontiac Trail, enhancing connectivity to the I-96 interchange. This new roadway was designed to maximize traffic safety and efficiency, using roundabouts at intersections, rather than streetlights, to maintain a regular flow of traffic.

In 2013, new housing permits began increasing again. Abandoned subdivisions, several of which had reverted to lenders, were purchased from the banks and developed. However, this residential growth was unable to keep up with demand. As the Township's economic base expanded, congestion from commuters and outgoing residents became a key issue affecting quality of life.



Recent planning efforts have included improving accessibility and non-motorized transportation, exploring mixed-uses and residential densities, and reconsidering land use policies that exacerbate automotive-dependency, as strategies to reduce overall congestion. Planning goals in the Township have shifted to consider the effect of growth on overall character and quality of life, informing policy and decision-making. These ideals dovetailed with a new Zoning Ordinance, which was adopted in June 2010 and specified development standards to ensure that new projects adhered with the high aspirations of the Township.

In addition to these planning efforts, the Township has taken proactive steps to offset growth-related externalities by investing in the preservation of natural features. The Township has acquired properties and worked with developers to place private restrictions on land to conserve natural areas for generations to come. 37.5 percent of the Township's land is protected and may only be used for conservation, recreational or public institutional uses (including water features).

## Recent Planning History

This Master Plan would not be possible without the culmination of past planning efforts, which helped to refine the community's trajectory and long-term vision over the course of time. While many elements of previous plans have been implemented or guide current efforts in the Township, others are no longer relevant or appropriate in the current development context. As a part of the planning process, the Planning Commission and community stakeholders were asked to reflect on the past to make intentional and effective recommendations for the future.

The 2015 Master Plan was adopted as an update to the previous 2003 Master Plan. Following an influx of new multi-family housing, the Township Board requested the 2015 update to address housing shifts and consider the effect on the Township's desired pattern of development. In addition, the Planning Commission observed an upswing in the economy, and determined the timing was appropriate to reevaluate the plan.

The 2015 update provided recommendations for several key focus areas, including the area which is now planned to be Five and Main, a central, mixed-use, town-center style development that aligns with the plan's vision. The update also included changes to the Future Land Use map intended to protect the character of single-family neighborhoods in the Township. Many of the goals and objectives of the 2015 Master Plan remain relevant today, but as development patterns have since evolved, this plan update seeks to reflect the Township's current vision and priorities.

In addition to the previous Master Plan, goals and objectives outlined in the Township's 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan were considered as a part of this update. Unsurprisingly, community engagement efforts quickly revealed that parks and access to open space are some of the most beloved characteristics of Commerce Township and a reason why residents choose to live here. As such, recommendations to strengthen community park facilities are echoed throughout this plan in alignment with the efforts of the Parks and Recreation Department. In addition, specific recommendations for trails and pathways were considered in the design of the updated non-motorized transportation plan.



# Public Input





Informational display on a table, featuring a map with various colored zones and text. A man in a blue polo shirt is pointing at a specific area on the map.

Informational display on a table, featuring a map with various colored zones and text. A man in a grey polo shirt is looking at the display.

Informational display on a table, featuring a map with various colored zones and text. A black podium with a microphone is positioned next to the table.

Informational display on a table, featuring a map with various colored zones and text. The map includes labels for 'Hollman Lake' and 'Hollman Ln'.

Man in a maroon shirt standing near a display.

Woman in a dark patterned dress standing near a display.

Man in a dark blue polo shirt standing near a display.

Person in a black and green jacket standing near a display.

Man in a pink polo shirt standing near a display.

Woman in a maroon top sitting at a long table with a computer monitor.

Informational display on a stand, featuring a map and text.

Informational display on a stand, featuring a map and text.

# Public Input

Public input is essential in the Master Plan process as it ensures that the community's vision and needs are being directly addressed.

Input should be collected and considered throughout the entire planning process from a wide range of businesses and residents, representing different ages, interests, and values. This feedback should help inform the Planning Commission and Township staff of community priorities and key issues.

The Planning Commission identified early that gathering public input should be an important aspect of the process and in order to ensure that resident sentiment aligned with Commerce Township's future vision for development, several different virtual and in-person activities were planned to solicit community feedback and better understand the priorities of residents and key stakeholders, including:

- A leadership advance workshop
- Small-group meeting toolkits
- Two in-person open house events, with virtual options for remote participation
- PictureThis! interactive mapping
- High school engagement
- Community art contest

A project website was maintained through the process to keep residents informed about the progress of the plan, and Planning Commission meetings with the Master Plan on the agenda were also open to the public.

## Public Input Themes

### Strengths

- Natural features, lakes and open spaces
- Parks and recreation opportunities
- Community programming and services
- Regional location of the Township
- Good schools
- Family-friendly
- Emerging non-motorized trail network – connections with regional trails

### Weaknesses

- Traffic congestion and safety
- Automobile oriented – lacks walkability
- Lack of downtown/things to do (food, retail, entertainment – both indoor and outdoor)
- Lack of community identity
- Lack of housing variety (either detached single-family homes or apartment complexes)



## Opportunities

- Expand non-motorized transportation network to connect areas of the Township that are developed or are likely to develop
- Invest in public spaces
- Seek sustainable development standards that protect natural resources
- Improve traffic congestion by promoting pedestrian-oriented development
- Promote development in the Commerce Village area
- Continue strategic economic development in the Five & Main area

## Threats

- Overdevelopment
- Impacts of development on the environment
- Homogenous development
- Demand on public services
- Through traffic (to other communities)

## Emerging Trends

- Aging population
- Housing affordability
- New technologies that impact the built environment like electric vehicles, alternative energies, tools for how and where we work and shop
- Working and learning from home remotely

Key findings from each activity are highlighted in this chapter, with additional results of these engagements is located in [“Appendix B: Public Input Results” on page 172.](#)

### Who did we engage?

15 Township staff/leaders

60-70 participants across 7 small-group workshops

60-65 Open House attendees

50 Online Open House participants

100 students

2,000+ total project website visitors

## Leadership Advance

On the morning of September 15, 2022, a consultant-facilitated workshop was held with representatives from Township departments/staff (e.g., Parks and Recreation, Fire, IT, etc.) who participated in an icebreaker exercise, a strengths/weakness assessment, and a small-group opportunities, threats, and emerging issues activity.

### Strengths/Weaknesses Assessment

Each staff member was given a set of post-it notes and asked to write down three strengths and three weaknesses. These post-it notes were then sorted by topic to get a general sense of agreement in real-time during the workshop.

#### Strengths

Commerce Township's robust parks and recreation system was a popular answer when attendees were asked about the Township's greatest strengths; the parks, along with open space, lakes, and natural amenities, were clearly considered the cornerstones of the community. Dodge Park #5 was singled out as a particular highlight. Other commonly mentioned strengths included the Township's non-motorized pathways and trails, the community library, and the fire department. Many comments associated with the identification of these strengths emphasized the recent improvements and investments in these Township assets. Attendees also indicated that the Township's accessible location within Metro Detroit, good schools, community programming and services, and relatively low millage rate add to its appeal.

#### Weaknesses

Traffic was identified as a key area of concern in the Township, and safety concerns and it was expressed that staff frequently hears from residents about issues stemming from traffic and congestion.

While non-motorized pathways are considered a strength in the Township, staff noted some pathway improvements that could further enhance these pathways, including better connections, lighting, and improved walkability between destinations—not only parks and recreation facilities. The attendees also mentioned some concerns with Township services and facilities, acknowledging the need for a public works department, park enhancements, and additional



Township staff discussing opportunities, threats, and emerging issues at the Leadership Advance.

indoor gathering spaces for groups besides the library. However, in addition to these desired changes, lack of funding was often cited as a limitation; attendees agreed that fiscal obstacles could make it difficult to address some of the desired Improvements.

Another concern that was frequently mentioned was the absence of a traditional downtown in Commerce and a desire for additional commercial and retail activity. Township efforts to develop Martin Parkway to mixed success has demonstrated a need to be thoughtful about developing a downtown presence. In addition, many participants acknowledged that a greater mix of uses and more price options for housing may be required to meet local real estate demand.

This activity also recognized that there is room for improvement in the Township's engagement efforts. Staff indicated a desire to promote increased participation at meetings and improved information distribution and reach.

## Opportunities, Threats, and Emerging Issues

Township staff were divided into three small groups and given time to discuss opportunities, threats, emerging issues, and trends.

### What opportunities should the Township pursue that will enhance the Township's strengths and address its weaknesses?

There was the most consensus on the need for a designated marketing and/or public relations staff member at the Township, as well as an upgrade to the Township's website. Generally, increased communication appeared to be a priority, whether that's externally with the public and important partners like the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) or internally within the Township. Connecting parks to pathways and commercial areas and providing wayfinding signage were other suggestions, reflecting the value placed on non-motorized pathways and trails, as well as improvements identified during the strengths and weaknesses assessment. Similarly, the following opportunities were suggested: addressing traffic, investing in public spaces, public works, and public safety, and seeking sustainable development standards, as well as more diligence in considering the impacts of new developments and the approval of land uses.

### What threats or potential threats need to be better understood in terms of long-range impact?

The threats that attendees discussed were largely related to overdevelopment, oversaturation, and the impacts of development and growth. Specifically, overdevelopment could impact traffic, public safety, wildlife, and deplete green spaces and natural resources. Oversaturation of development types like multi-family homes and senior living facilities might strain Township resources, but too much low-density single family and self-storage facilities are also undesirable. Attendees also deliberated the Township's preparedness for future economic development, expressed concerns of limitations on growth posed by demand for additional infrastructure capacity (e.g., water and sanitary sewers, overhead power lines), and acknowledged the Township's undersized workforce. As congestion worsens and administrative, fire, police, and maintenance staff become increasingly stretched thin, the Township may

struggle to maintain the high standard of services that the residential and business community of Commerce have come to expect.

### What emerging issues or trends should be explored as part of the Master Plan update and why?

Some of the emerging issues coalesced around the themes from the strengths and weaknesses assessment and threats and opportunities discussion of the workshop. Walkability and ideas to alleviate traffic problems by installing more roundabouts were mentioned, alongside the potential of exploring traditional neighborhood development with a greater variety of housing types and prices, and a mixture of land uses that promotes walkability.

Housing affordability has surfaced as another challenge, as the Township grapples with community preferences for single-family housing and market demand for multi-family housing. While there may be tension between these two potentially conflicting goals, it will be important to remember that there are housing alternatives that may bridge the gaps, including smaller multi-unit homes and accessory dwellings. The aging population requires particular attention in the update; as the population grows older, the Township must consider how residents can age in place and continue to provide access to services like transportation and health care. Housing opportunities within the Township will impact who lives in the Township, contributions to the workforce, and the overall tax base. Housing in specific locations near goods and services may serve today's aging population, while remaining appealing to future, potentially younger, residents.

New technologies and a changing society and environment were also discussed. Since the last Master Plan Update, consumer habits have changed with the widespread adoption of services like Amazon, Uber, and DoorDash, and there is a greater reliance on wireless communications and coverage, requiring better Wi-Fi and cellular access. The Township will have to manage conversions to energy-efficient equipment, while electric and automated vehicles will demand adjustments to existing parking facilities and more. Shifting demand for sustainable development will also impact the Township going forward and should be explored in this update.

## Neighborhood (Small-Group) Meeting Toolkits

Meeting toolkits were developed to provide an opportunity for local community groups and organizations to offer community feedback in a small, intimate setting. The toolkits included instructions and materials for a workshop discussion focused on strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for the future. The workshops were independently facilitated by each of the groups and results were submitted to the Township upon completion.

Seven small-group workshops were held in November. Meetings were held at the Richardson Center, the library, a fire station, and several homeowners associations (HOAs).

In the first exercise, participants were asked to complete a strengths and weaknesses assessment. If more than six people attended a meeting, they were asked to break into smaller groups and discuss strengths and weaknesses. Participants were then asked to reconvene as a large group and report out strengths and weaknesses discussed.

The second exercise also consisted of small-group discussions and a large group discussion. This exercise involved strategies people would pursue to protect the Township's strengths and make the improvements they feel are needed for the future.

### Strengths

The strengths identified by residents were aligned with the results from Township department leaders and staff when a similar exercise was conducted at the Leadership Advance workshop held in September 2022. Residents agree that Commerce Township's parks and recreation system are the cornerstone of the community. Open space and lakes were also commonly indicated as a strength of the community, making it clear that the natural features the Township boasts are highly valued by the community. The graph below shows how often certain topics were mentioned on the large group report out sheets.



Small-group meetings in the community using prepared meeting toolkits.

### Weaknesses

The discussion about community weaknesses resulted in varied responses, but improvements needed to sidewalk and pathway connections were frequently noted. Traffic and overdevelopment were also identified by many of the participants, as well as a need for additional retail, food, service, and entertainment options. Residents who participated in the meeting toolkits also noted that future development decisions should be reviewed by decision-makers in a thoughtful and strategic manner.

### Strategies for the Future

A wide of variety of suggestions were made by groups. Among them, included enhancing existing assets, increased cooperation, communication, and transparency in the Township, better code enforcement and development review processes, building community identity, and proceeding with the development of Five & Main.

## Open House #1 (November 2022)

A community open house was held on November 14, 2022. A summary of findings from the various activities and stations is provided below. The Open House included an hour long “developer preview” before it was open to the public to gather input from the local real estate and development community. Attendees shared answers in person with post-it notes or stickers and could also use a QR code to respond to the activities virtually.

After the in-person open house event had ended, a virtual option was shared on the Master Plan website to gather feedback from residents and stakeholders who were unable to attend in person. These virtual participants were asked the same questions as those who attended in person.

### Station #1: Check-In Table

The first station asked attendees to provide general demographic information. The results from this station indicated that in-person participants were generally older and likely to live in households without children, whereas online participants were generally younger and likely to live in households that have children in them.

#### Key Findings:

- In-person attendees generally belonged to older age cohorts than online attendees
- In-person attendees were less likely to have children at home than online attendees
- While residents who attended were largely spread throughout the Township, the Lake Sherwood neighborhood was the most well-represented geographic area in the Township, both in-person and online.

### Station #2: What is your Ideal Place to Live?

At this station, participants were asked to provide 3-5 words describing their “ideal place to live”. The responses were displayed on a word cloud, with the size of each word corresponding with the frequency that the same response was provided. Only one respondent chose to complete this activity following the in-person event. Below is a summary of the 107 words that were submitted, as well as an image of the final word cloud.



November 2022 Open House at Township Hall.

#### Key Findings:

- Answers that mentioned green space, nature, or access to green space/open space were most common, with 16 total responses.
- The next most common responses included mentions of safety or traffic/congestion, with nine occurrences each.
- Together, many of these words share a common theme of describing places that are generally lower density, include open/natural spaces, and provide an intimate small-town setting with a strong sense of community.

### Station #3: Visioning and Guiding Themes

At this station, participants were presented with the Master Plan guiding themes and asked to share support or feedback.

#### Key Findings:

- Traffic mitigation was the guiding theme respondents resonated with the most, followed by community character.
- When asked if anything was missing from the guiding themes, a few comments identified characteristics respondents wanted to preserve in the community (“preserve and improve water quality,” “preservation of lakes/water quality,” “farm/rural areas should be kept this way. This is what makes Commerce Twp desirable. No dense housing developments should be added. Roads cannot handle the additional congestion. Golf courses should be kept as such and not turned into developments.”)

## Station #4: Housing

At this station, participants were provided with an overview of different housing types and introduced to the concept of “missing middle” housing, or the range of housing types between single-family and high-density multi-family. Participants were asked to select the housing type(s) that they would most like to live in later in life and those that they feel might be attractive to first-time home buyers or those starting new families. Respondents were also asked to identify where they feel missing middle housing would be most appropriate in Commerce Township.

### Key Findings:

- The most attractive type of missing middle for later in life was “duplex, side-by-side,” followed by “cottage court”
- The most attractive type of missing middle for new families/new homebuyers was “cottage court,” followed by “duplex, side-by-side”
- Participants feel missing middle housing is most appropriate along major corridors and intersections, particularly around Martin Parkway

## Station #5: Commercial Center

At this station, respondents were asked to share their thoughts about what’s working and what needs improvement in the Commercial Center.

### Key Findings:

- The trail system was noted as something that is “working” in the commercial center. Respondents also made mention of the Commercial Center’s high-capacity road system and freeway access, as well as the natural beauty maintained through preservation
- Respondents noted that the Commercial Center should focus on commercial development rather than housing, with many citing traffic as a key consideration for new development.
- Respondents noted that the trail system should be expanded and sidewalks required in the Commercial Center.

## Station #6: North End

At this station, respondents were asked what’s working and what needs improvement in the North End.

### Key Findings

- The North End’s strengths included open spaces, larger lot sizes, access to nature and parks, and distance from the commercial and industrial areas of M-5. Respondents would like to see this area’s small-town vibe preserved.
- Respondents noted that sidewalks and trails would be desirable in the North End, as would more of a walkable environment in Commerce Village. Respondents also commented on other enhancements to the Village, with one even noting that, “you don’t even know you are in the heart of the village.”

## Station #7: Downtown

At this station, respondents were asked to share their preferences for urban development using a variety of visual concepts, including parking layout, building height, and site amenities.

### Key Findings

- Respondents preferred the appearance of parking in the back, in fact, none of the respondents answered that parking in front was their preference
- Respondents were mixed in their responses about building heights, with the same number of respondents indicating a preference for two-story commercial as three-story commercial.
- Respondents were varied in their preferences for site amenities, but trailheads were the most frequently selected amenity of the options provided (outdoor dining, public art, formal landscaping, trailheads, sitting/gathering areas).



## Station #8: Non-Motorized Transportation

At this station, respondents were asked to identify locations for trails and pathways in the Township. Additionally, respondents were asked about how additional non-motorized options would influence their automobile dependency.

### Key Findings:

- More respondents shared that trails would impact their autodependency than e-bikes, scooters, bike-shares, and safe routes to use them.
- Many respondents noted that bike lanes are desirable, or even expressed they are more desirable than sidewalks
- Suggestions for new non-motorized facilities were Township-wide, but included connections between residential areas and schools, trails/parks/recreation, or shopping areas



November 2022 Open House at Township Hall.

## Station #9: What Else?

At this station, attendees were asked to share any additional feedback or concerns. Only one respondent answered.

- “Increased sidewalks and safety paths throughout Commerce Twp but especially on the north east corner along Union Lake Road. So dangerous and heavily used by walkers and bicyclists!”

## PictureThis!

The PictureThis! page was launched in October to provide residents with a platform to share their community vision. PictureThis! is a browser-based application where residents and stakeholders can share images and comments of things they like, want to see more of, or feel are missing in the community, with location tags tying their posts to a map.

### Key Findings:

- Non-motorized transportation was highlighted in many responses, as something that respondents love, want to see more of, and feel is missing. Non-motorized transportation options were desired for better connections to parks, trails, schools/ the library, and neighboring communities
- Other recreational opportunities mentioned by respondents besides biking and walking included a skate park, disc golf, and equestrian options.
- While most commenters focused on parks and non-motorized transportation options, there were some general comments:
  - More native plantings are desirable
  - An upscale grocer is desirable
  - A roundabout at Wixom/Duck Lake/Sleeth would help relieve congestion.

## High School Student Engagement

During this planning effort, high school students who reside in and around Commerce Township were engaged through interactive presentations with Township staff and consultants. The presentations were intended to teach students about planning and inspire civic engagement, while collecting feedback on the Master Plan from a key demographic.

Three workshop sessions were set up at each of the high schools in the Walled Lake Consolidated Schools District. These sessions were intended to collect valuable input from the perspective of Commerce Township's youth, as well as to educate students on planning, key current conditions in the Township, and the important things to consider during the development of a Master Plan. The following is an overview of feedback received and the results from the three presentations are attached.

Students largely agreed that their ideal places to live are based on factors like warm weather, community, and safety. The general sentiment regarding Commerce Township was an appreciation for the Township's lakes and natural features, the community, and safety, but a lack of diversity, traffic (and potholes), and few fun things to do were identified as things they would change about the Township.

Few students reported that they consider Commerce Township to be a likely place for them to live when they are adults. The elements they feel are missing may be an important consideration as it relates to future generations making their homes in the Township. The Planning Commission should consider the students' feedback and concerns as the long-range planning effort continues.

Most of the students across high schools drive themselves to school and agreed that getting to work or school without a car could not be done (or at least done easily). They were more likely to walk to parks. When asked about places to which they could walk within 15 minutes of their homes, parks were a popular destination, but many students noted there were few places to which they could walk, with liquor stores or convenience stores also frequently mentioned.



High school class engaging in an interactive presentation with Township staff and consultants.

## K-12 Student Art Contest

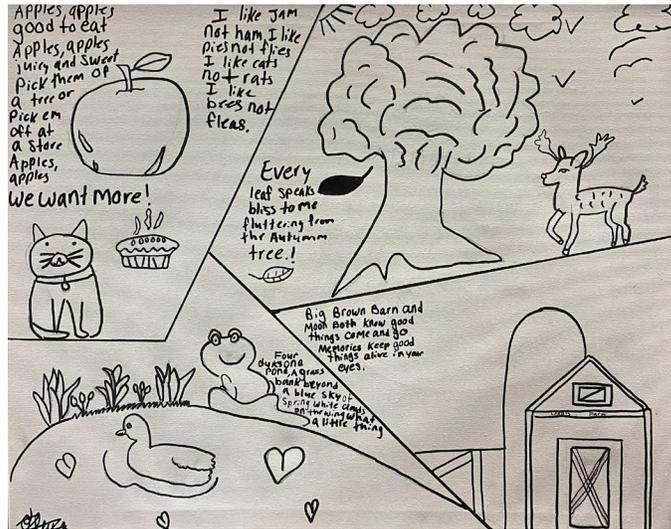
As a part of the Master Plan effort, students in Commerce Township were presented with the opportunity to participate in an art competition, to create original images in response to the prompt, “What makes Commerce Township a special place to live?” This activity was intended to help energize the youth about the Master Plan and the Township’s future vision, while stimulating imagery that reflects the things that youth love about Commerce Township.

The winning submissions are below and also featured in this plan.

5-8 age group: Jack Sommerville, 6



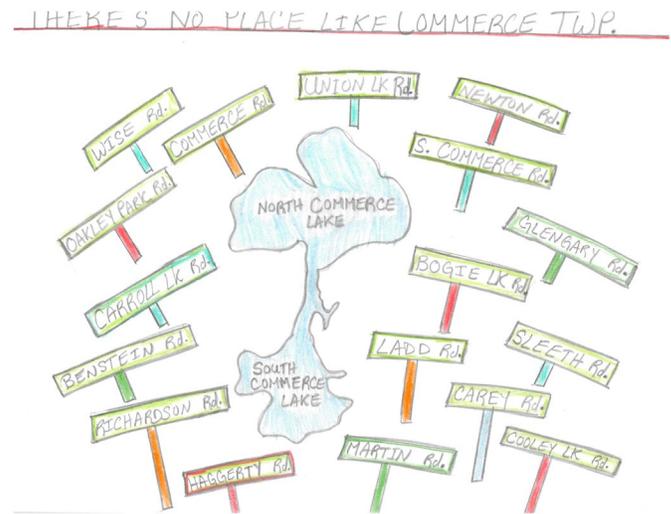
12-14 age group: Olivia Orow, 12



9-11 age group: Brently Awad, 10



15-18 age group: Timothy Awad, 15



## Open House #2 (June 2023)

A second community open house was held on June 26, 2023. Key findings from the various activities and stations are provided herein. This Open House aimed to garner feedback on key components of the plan, especially goals and objectives, area plans, and the Future Land Use Map. Attendees shared answers in person with post-it notes or stickers and could also respond to the activities virtually.

After the in-person open house event, the virtual option was shared on the Master Plan website and social media to gather feedback from residents and stakeholders who were unable to attend in person.

### Station #1: Check-In Table

The first station asked attendees to provide general demographic information.

#### Key Findings:

- The in-person and virtual respondents shared more demographic characteristics during this open house than during the initial open house, with most respondents between 35-54 or 55-64.
- Respondents were most frequently from households with two adults and one or more child under 18, both virtually and in-person.
- Respondents lived throughout different areas of the Township, but all in-person respondents who answered the question, "Where do you live?" reside in the North End.

### Station #2: Goals & Objectives

At this station, respondents were presented with the draft goals and objectives and offered the opportunity to share input on the draft objectives and provide suggestions for action items. A summary of the responses are outlined below.

#### Key Findings:

##### Residential Development

- More connections within neighborhoods and between neighborhoods and a more comprehensive non-motorized transportation network



June 2023 Open House at Township Hall.

- Concern with the capacity of infrastructure and the preservation of open space as limitations to additional growth
- Several comments emphasized the importance of preservation and access to open space

##### Economic Development

- A desire to see more pedestrian-oriented uses and fewer auto-related uses in areas of existing development and as infill/redevelopment; no more strip-mall style development
- Improvements to non-motorized transportation and roads; Preservation of natural features should be a consideration

##### Transportation

- Improve intersections with improvements to signal timing, pedestrian crossings, and roundabouts; pedestrian safety is of high concern at intersections
- Improve pedestrian safety and accessibility by improving the non-motorized network

##### Stewardship

- Remove invasive species and plant more native species
- Maintain rural aspects of the Township and protect shorelines

##### Community & Public Facilities

- Desire to see more trails in parks, equestrian facilities, a skatepark, or a community pool/fitness facilities, improved accessibility in parks and more organized community events

### **Infrastructure**

- Seek out alternatives to internet monopoly for residents. In addition, competitive bidding for sewer hook ups are desirable

### **Station #3: North End**

At this station, respondents were provided with overviews of the draft area plans for the North End, including the eight opportunity sites therein, and asked to provide comments or feedback.

#### **Key Findings:**

- Concerns were expressed about traffic and preservation as new development occurs; many emphasized prioritizations towards preservation.
- A connection (non-motorized or complete street) is desired to complete the road network through the Drive-in site to alleviate traffic congestion to Martin Parkway

### **Station #4: Commercial Center**

At this station, respondents were provided with overviews of the draft area plans for the Commercial Center, including the three opportunity sites therein, and asked to provide comments or feedback.

#### **Key Findings:**

- Respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction/consensus with recommendations for the Rock Road Properties site
- Respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction/consensus with recommendations for the Beaumont Site, with one respondent commenting that shifts towards remote work may impact the success of a corporate campus
- Respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction/consensus with recommendations for the Williams International site, with one respondent commenting that if Williams International vacates, the Township may wish to bring the structures down to attract a new set of employers
- In addition, many comments were made about desired enhancements to non-motorized accessibility in the Commercial Center

### **Station #5: Future Land Use**

At this station, respondents were provided with large posters dividing the Township into eight sections, which featured two side-by-side images: on the left, an annotated version of a map with the future land use categories from the 2015 Master Plan and, on the right, aerial imagery of the corresponding section. The posters are provided in [“Appendix C: Future Land Use Changes” on page 210.](#)

Due to the nature of the content and its complexity, it was not replicated for the online open house and only available for attendees of the Open House to respond with their direct feedback.

Only one comment was made on a poster, but casual conversations with attendees by Planning Commission members, staff, and consultants did not elicit any opposition to the proposed changes.



June 2023 Open House at Township Hall.

## Project Website Supplemental Activities

In Summer 2023, three activities were opened within the project website for visitors to provide feedback.

### Visioning, “We Want To Hear About Your Ideas for Commerce Township”

This question was asked of virtual participants who visited the Commerce Township web engagement home page. Answers to this question were limited to 140 characters to encourage respondents to answer concisely with their highest priority considerations. This resulted in 48 different short-answer responses that provided qualitative information on community priorities.

#### Key Findings:

Several key themes emerged among the responses.

Many of the key themes paralleled the subject areas of focus that align with plan goals, including:

- **Non-motorized transportation.** This theme was prevalent throughout many of the responses to this question, with 56% of all answers including mention of some type of non-motorized infrastructure. Many suggestions were for specific connections between destinations, community facilities, parks, and residential areas. Concerns about biker and pedestrian safety were mentioned.
- **Community facilities.** This theme included a comment about interest in the development of a waterfront park with an event space. In addition, a comment was made to suggest a horse farm.
- **Commercial Uses.** One respondent mentioned a desire for a grocery store besides Kroger.
- **Housing.** This theme included 5 responses, similarly, all of the responses stated a desire for less housing in the Township.
- **Preservation.** Five responses shared a common theme of preservation, with many mentioning their appreciation for the Township’s green and open spaces.
- **Roads and Infrastructure.** Five comments fell under roads and infrastructure, with suggestions for ways to enhance the driving experience in Commerce, including suggestions to maintain roads and improve traffic.
- **Administrative.** Some comments suggested improvements to Township processes to enhance the customer experience.

### Non-Motorized Transportation, “How Could Non-Motorized Transportation Be Improved in Commerce Township?”

A subpage on the project website was dedicated towards receiving feedback about how to improve Commerce Township’s non-motorized transportation network. Participants had the opportunity to participate in two activities: 1) pinning their comments to a map of the Township (11 contributions) and 2) providing ideas limited to 140 characters (18 contributions).

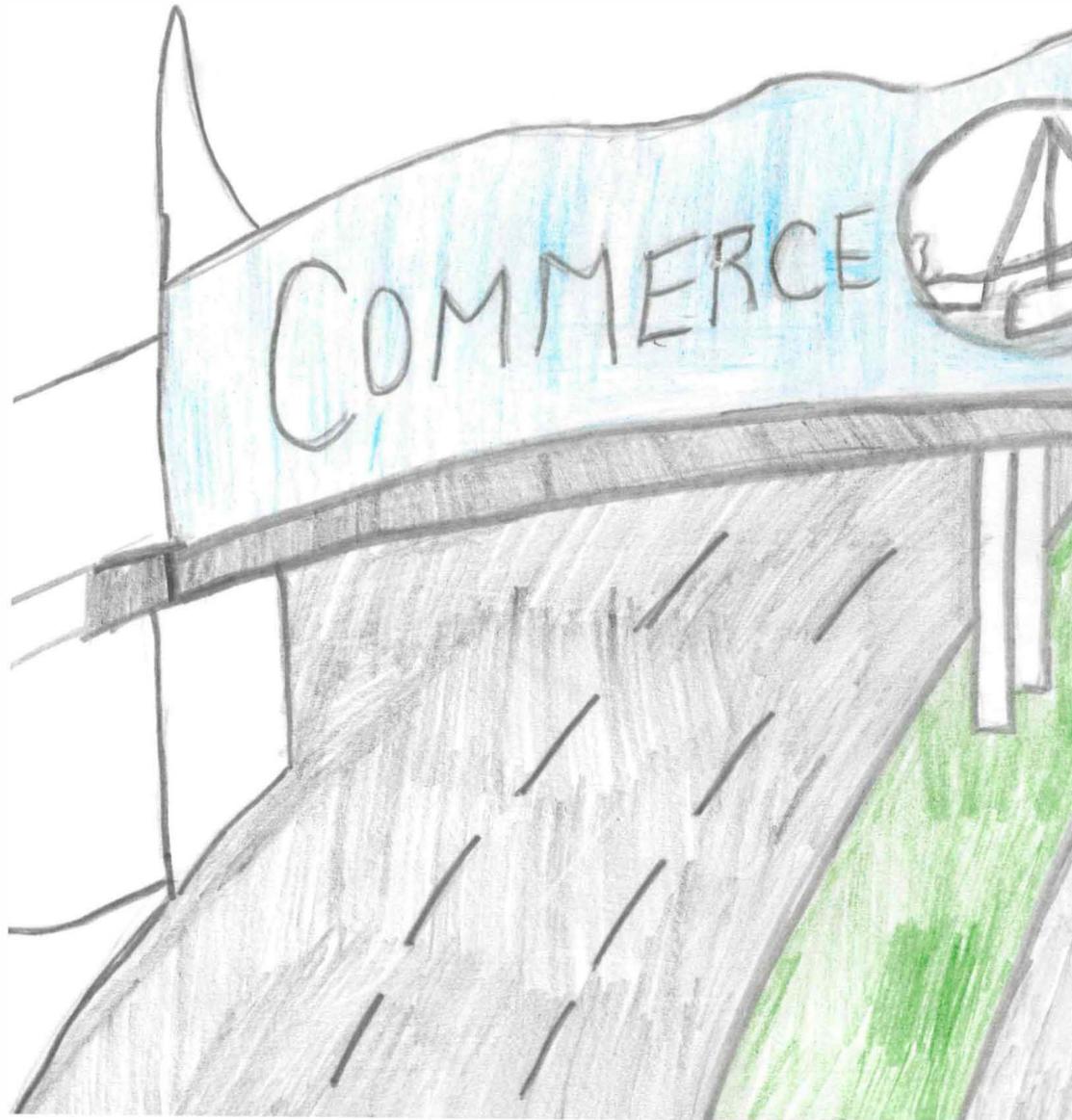
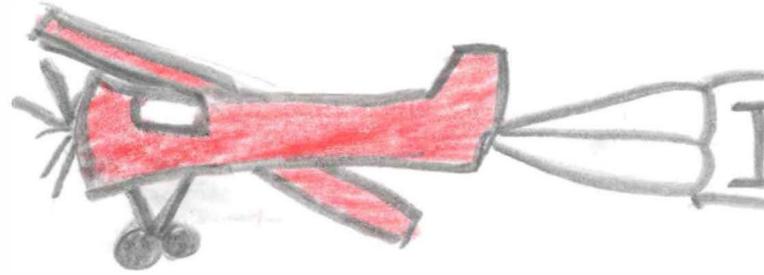
#### Key Findings:

- Most of the areas identified for non-motorized transportation by respondents have been incorporated into the [“Non-Motorized Pathways Plan” on page 81](#).
- Gaps in the network must be completed for non-motorized transportation to be safe or be an attractive alternative to driving.
- Respondents emphasized a desire for pathways between neighborhoods and other trails, parks, schools, and other destinations, with concerns such as safety and sense of community identified as reasons to construct pathways.
- Respondents emphasized a need for both pedestrian pathways and pathways to serve bikers and other non-motorized modes of transportation.



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# Goals & Objectives



I ♥ COMMERCE



Art contest winner (9-11):  
Brently Awad, 10

# Goals & Objectives

## What are goals and objectives?

Goals are general guidelines that explain what the community wants to achieve. Goals are usually long-term and represent global visions, such as “Protect the Township’s natural resources.” Goals define the “what,” “why,” and “where,” but not the “how.”

Objectives identify the milestones that mark progress in achieving goals and begin to answer “how” goals will be implemented. For example, with a goal of “protect the Township’s natural resources” and objective might be to “maintain the Township’s tree cover.”

Performance Indicators are the various measurable indicators that help communities evaluate progress towards meeting objectives. Following the previous example, if the objective is, “maintain the Township’s tree cover,” a performance indicator would be percentage of total canopy. The community should evaluate performance indicators periodically to assess trends.

Action Items are more specific and define the steps to accomplish objectives and achieve the identified goals. The most effective action strategies will include timelines and assign each task to a specific person or group. For example, one action strategy to maintain tree cover may be, “Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include requirements for tree preservation and replacement.”

The action items for the goals of this Master Plan can be found in the [“Implementation”](#) chapter.

This planning process began by developing guiding themes for the Planning Commission. These guiding themes (detailed in the [“Master Plan Framework”](#) section of the [“Introduction”](#)) informed the focus areas for the plan and then were further used to develop the following goals and objectives contained in this chapter. The guiding themes that are most relevant to the goals are noted for each goal.



## Goals of the Master Plan

The overall goals of this Master Plan are as follows:

- [Goal 1: Residential Development](#). To achieve well planned, safe, balanced, and pleasant high-quality residential neighborhoods that meet the needs of all residents within the Township, today and in the future.
- [Goal 2: Economic Development](#). Promote well-located, high-quality and diverse development in strategic areas of the community while mitigating impacts of development on neighboring residential uses. Create and nurture identifiable “downtown” type commercial activity centers.
- [Goal 3: Transportation](#). With community and regional partners, provide motorized and non-motorized access and connections to permitted uses, while managing the conditions, safety, capacity, and the flow of traffic on the surrounding transportation network.
- [Goal 4: Stewardship](#). Create a more sustainable and resilient future for Commerce Township by identifying, protecting, preserving, and enhancing the unique and desirable natural features of the Township.
- [Goal 5: Community and Public Facilities](#). To create a sustainable community that provides a wide variety of recreational, civic, public safety, and related services for residents and visitors alike.
- [Goal 6: Infrastructure](#). Provide, maintain and improve the Township’s existing infrastructure, including water, sewer, and other utilities needed for residents and businesses.



# Goal 1: Residential Development

To achieve well-planned, safe, balanced, and pleasant high-quality residential neighborhoods that meet the needs of all residents within the Township, today and in the future.

## Overview

**Pattern of Development.** Commerce Township is largely comprised of lake front cottages and single family homes, many of which are on lots one half acre or greater. Housing is dispersed throughout the Township, with predominantly residential uses in the western and northern portions.

**Character.** Housing and neighborhoods influence the character of the Township through placement of homes on lots, lot sizes, and architectural designs, materials, colors, and street designs. Commerce Township’s residential areas are bucolic, with homes scattered through beautiful natural surroundings. While lakefront lots tend to offer greater density, many of the Township’s residential areas feature large lots with large homes.

**Variety.** The housing types in Commerce Township are predominantly single-family, owner-occupied homes, but some multi-family housing options are available. “Missing Middle” housing types, such as accessory dwelling units, cottage courts, stacked flats, duplexes, triplexes, or four to six unit buildings, are less common or not currently permitted in the Township.

**Infrastructure.** Neighborhoods will be strengthened by well-maintained infrastructure, including public roads, water, sewer, and utilities. The Township has a 20-year water and sewer Capital Improvement Plan that identifies future needs, which should be kept updated as new development occurs. The Township may wish to explore ways to help residents with road improvements that will be needed in the future, using resources such as special assessments to offer a mechanism for private development.

**Connectivity.** Commerce Township’s neighborhoods lack opportunities for pedestrian connectivity in the greater non-motorized network. Although some of the Township’s subdivisions have sidewalks within, they are frequently disconnected from main non-motorized corridors.

“The mission of the planning commission should be to get the best plan for that parcel within the ordinances. The goal should not be to enable developers to put up the densest most profitable development they want.”

- Commerce Township resident



Objectives	Performance Indicators
1. Allow a mix of housing types in neighborhood settings to meet the varying needs of residents now and in the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permits issued for different housing types</li> <li>Percentage of households that pay 30% or more of income on housing</li> </ul>
2. Encourage clustered residential developments that preserve land for open space or recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ratio of acres preserved</li> <li>Acres developed for all new residential developments</li> <li>Percent of tree canopy coverage</li> </ul>
3. Ensure new housing is located such that more compact development builds upon or influences areas of higher walkability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community members who feel recent housing development has contributed to walkability (via survey); Walk Score</li> </ul>
4. Maintain and improve the quality and character of existing neighborhoods to preserve Commerce Township’s rural-suburban identity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessed values</li> <li>Community members who feel the maintenance of homes in their neighborhoods have improved or declined in the last year (via survey)</li> <li>Community members who feel the streets in their neighborhood are in good condition (via survey)</li> </ul>
5. Encourage residential developments are linked to other key destinations in the Township by non-motorized pathways and sidewalks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sidewalk miles in neighborhoods</li> <li>Percentage of new residential developments that are connected to a main non-motorized corridor</li> </ul>

**Action Items**

The corresponding action items for this goal are contained in [“Table 5. Action Items: Residential Development” on page 104.](#)



# Goal 2: Economic Development

Promote well-located, high-quality and diverse development in strategic areas of the community while mitigating impacts of development on neighboring residential uses. Create and nurture identifiable “downtown” type commercial activity centers.

## Overview

**Job Creation.** M-5 is a well-developed commercial and transportation corridor in the Township that provides many local jobs and employment, as does the Huron Valley-Sinai hospital campus. Redevelopment of vacant and underutilized sites, including those identified in the [“Area Plans”](#) chapter, can result in greater job growth along this corridor in the coming years.

**Mix of Goods and Services.** Commerce Township is located along many key transportation routes, but goods and services do not meet local demand, and residents often travel beyond the Township limits for shopping, dining, and entertainment. The upcoming Five and Main development seeks to incorporate a compatible mix of uses to help meet this demand in an accessible and central location.

**Development.** Commercial and industrial land uses are clustered in areas with regional transportation access and high visibility. As areas have transitioned from heavy industrial to less intensive uses, some former industrial sites have become inactive and redevelopment opportunities are a key priority of the Township.

“We need development that attracts retail and shopping and commercial activity. We don’t need more party stores and vape shops. We need cute stores and restaurants. And sidewalks.”

- Commerce Township resident



Objectives	Performance Indicators
1. Encourage commercial land uses that are aligned with the community's needs for goods and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track new uses that close gaps in the local market and dollars that are being spent elsewhere (via market study)</li> <li>Community members satisfaction with uses in the Township (via annual survey)</li> </ul>
2. Identify and support the community's key economic drivers to advance prosperity and economic mobility within the Township.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Top growing industries</li> <li>Number of employees in the Township</li> <li>Number of businesses in the Township</li> <li>Median household income</li> <li>Unemployment rate</li> </ul>
3. Encourage commercial and industrial buildings that are pedestrian-oriented and neighborhood-scaled using traditional building materials that are complementary with surrounding development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building permit activity in pedestrian-oriented and neighborhood-scaled zoning districts</li> </ul>
4. Create regulations that are flexible and adaptable to meet shifts in the market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-residential vacancy rate</li> </ul>
5. Provide employment opportunities for residents of Commerce Township.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of outgoing and incoming commuters</li> </ul>
6. Ensure that commercial and industrial uses are well-connected to regional motorized and non-motorized transportation networks, compatible with surrounding uses, and adequately buffered from residential zoning districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community sentiment on recent commercial development and how complementary it has been to surrounding areas (via survey)</li> </ul>
7. Encourage the gradual shift from heavy industrial uses with high external impacts to lower impact industrial uses as well as technology, office and commercial uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of Industrial Redevelopment Projects</li> <li>Investment in Industrial Redevelopment (Dollars spent)</li> <li>Total number of acres remediated</li> </ul>
8. Evaluate and improve development review processes for clarity, efficiency, and effectiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of plans approved according to the approval timeline</li> <li>Average length of approval process</li> </ul>
9. Apply placemaking strategies throughout the Township that reflect the community's natural character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investments in placemaking amenities</li> </ul>

**Action Items**

The corresponding action items for this goal are contained in [“Table 6. Action Items: Economic Development” on page 108.](#)

# Goal 3: Transportation

Promote well-located, high-quality and diverse development in strategic areas of the community while mitigating impacts of development on neighboring residential uses. Create and nurture identifiable “downtown” type commercial activity centers.

## Overview

**Pedestrian Accessibility.** Commerce Township’s transportation network is comprised of regional and local roads, highways, sidewalks, and multi-use trails and pathways. High speeds and fragmented non-motorized networks lead to high auto-dependency and congestion in the Township.

**Safety.** Commerce Township has many high-speed roads, some of which have high levels of traffic as well, presenting safety concerns for both drivers and pedestrians.

According to SEMCOG, the Township’s leading type of crash involvement is from intersections. This may be attributed to the Township’s roundabout system; however, while some users experience confusion or forget to yield to oncoming traffic, roundabouts slow vehicles and reduce fatal or severe incidents. In 2021, there were no fatal vehicle collisions in Commerce Township.

**Cooperative.** The Township’s road network includes roads under the jurisdiction of County or State road agencies, as well as some roads which are privately maintained. Township residents may access public transportation services provided by Oakland County’s People’s Express (PEX) to travel primarily in southwestern Oakland County. Collaboration with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC), and the private development community is imperative when planning strategies for improved safety and congestion mitigation.

**Mix of Uses.** The Township’s land uses are very segregated from each other. Most residential uses are in areas that are not easily walkable to commercial goods or services. This separation of uses has resulted in a built environment that requires long distances between destinations, making it difficult to travel between destinations without a vehicle.

“I love living where I can access paths and trails from my home without getting in the car. I love the pedestrian bridge across M-5. I love that my husband and I can ride our bikes into Wixom or Walled Lake for dinner. I love feeling safe enough to run along the paths by myself as a woman. I love mountain bike paths at Hickory Glen Park.”

- Commerce Township resident



Objectives	Performance Indicators
1. Improve vehicular and pedestrian safety by slowing traffic and providing safer crossings at key intersections throughout the Township.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of crashes (vehicular and pedestrian)</li> </ul>
2. Maintain, enhance, and expand the existing network of non-motorized pathways to commercial, cultural, civic, and recreational destinations in the Township.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Miles of planned non-motorized connections completed</li> </ul>
3. Develop traffic-calming solutions in appropriate areas where vehicular speeds present safety concerns for adjacent non-motorized pathways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change in average speed along road segments where calming treatments are applied</li> </ul>
4. Maintain and enhance the existing road network to improve traffic flow and capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average commute time</li> <li>• Level of Service (LOS)</li> <li>• Air quality</li> <li>• Miles of road repairs</li> </ul>
5. Foster the clustering of mixed, compatible uses to decrease vehicular trips.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk Score, Bike Score</li> </ul>

## Action Items

The corresponding action items for this goal are contained in [“Table 7. Action Items: Transportation” on page 114.](#)

# Goal 4: Stewardship

Create a more sustainable and resilient future for the Township by identifying, protecting, preserving, and enhancing the unique and desirable natural features of Commerce Township.

## Overview

**Environment.** The character of Commerce Township is distinctly defined by significant, sensitive natural amenities such as water bodies, wetlands, slopes, mature trees and natural ecosystems. This local ecosystem supports flora and fauna as well as the residents who call the Township home. The Township will engage the community with efforts to protect its local environment and protect the quality of the community's lakes and water resources from overcrowding and overuse. Particularly with respect to its many lakes, wetland and woodlands, the Township strives to adopt regulations that protect and preserve the natural environment, recognizing the way in which it supports community health, promotes a prosperous economy, and a creates a vibrant and equitable community for all.

**Sustainable Development.** The Township recognizes the importance of long-range planning combined with strategic actions to meet the current needs of residents and business owners without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs too. New development is encouraged to incorporate green building materials and sustainable design practices for site development to minimize the impact on natural resources and ecosystems.

**Resiliency.** The Township seeks to be resilient with respect to environmental hazards, recognizing ways in which ongoing, persistent stresses, that impact the community over time as well as sudden, single events that disrupt the day-to-day functioning of the community. Oakland County originally created a multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2005, which was first updated in 2012, and again in 2017. It is currently undergoing an update in 2023. Commerce Township is one of the communities participating in the plan. The plan addresses natural and manmade hazards that may threaten the county.

Sustainability and resiliency planning helps create a more equitable and inclusive community where people want to live, work, and play. Future planning should include: further refining sustainability and resiliency in the context of the Township determining areas of focus and goals, gathering baseline data related to focus areas, and setting up systems to monitor, collect, record, and analyze data.

Moving forward, planning efforts should include a public outreach process in two basic parts: education and input. Education includes making community members aware of potential threats and the process of planning for them, with an emphasis on outreach to the most vulnerable members of the community. The input process should offer the opportunity for residents and other stakeholders such as township staff, commercial property owners and business owners to engage in detailed, focused conversations regarding resiliency planning issues.



Objectives	Performance Indicators
1. Identify and preserve important natural assets in the Township.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percent of total impervious cover of the Township</li> <li>• Percent of tree canopy/cover</li> </ul>
2. Improve the quality of development to protect and enhance natural features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of trees preserved on development sites</li> <li>• Number of trees planted on development sites</li> <li>• Acres of land designated for open space or conservation</li> <li>• Acres of brownfield sites with completed remediation</li> </ul>
3. Protect water and air quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions</li> <li>• Average commute time</li> <li>• Days of good quality air</li> <li>• Number of new trees planted</li> <li>• Total energy consumption</li> <li>• Total solar generation capacity</li> <li>• Number of illicit discharges reported annually</li> <li>• Number of annual flood events</li> <li>• Days of public beach closure due to E. coli</li> </ul>
4. Encourage and enhance resident access to natural features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percent of residents within a 10-minute walk to recreational spaces</li> <li>• Resident satisfaction with access (via survey)</li> <li>• annual budget for parks and recreation</li> <li>• Number of street trees planted by the RCOC or Commerce Township</li> </ul>
5. Promote community awareness of potential environmental risks and independent resiliency strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident/Business owner awareness of risks and resources (via survey)</li> <li>• Number of residential flood events reported</li> <li>• Number of residential solar energy installations</li> <li>• Percent of vehicle sales which include electric vehicles</li> <li>• Number of permits pulled for energy efficient heating and cooling systems (i.e., geothermal)</li> </ul>

## Action Items

The corresponding action items for this goal are contained in [“Table 8. Action Items: Stewardship” on page 118.](#)

# Goal 5: Community and Public Facilities

To create a sustainable community that provides a wide variety of and awareness and access to recreational, civic, public safety and related services for residents and visitors alike.

## Overview

**Communication.** Community facilities are intended to be used as public spaces and should be promoted as such. Commerce Township is home to a range of community facilities and parks, including excellent schools, the Township Library, and its recently constructed Town Hall. The Township provides regular updates and information on the construction and development status of community facilities, programs and meetings held at community facilities, and the availability of public services.

**Accessibility.** Community facilities should be centrally located and easily accessible for residents. While many of the Township's facilities are easy to access by vehicle, limitations on the local non-motorized network hamper access for youth, seniors, and others who may not drive. The Township should continue to strive for facilities to be barrier-free and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act when financially and logistically feasible.

**Partnerships.** Community services are provided by not only Commerce Township, but also with assistance from state and federal agencies, neighboring communities, and local community organizations.

**Maintenance.** As the Township budgets for improvements and capital investments in community facilities, they must also consider the ongoing maintenance costs. The Township should prioritize the maintenance of existing assets and regularly review and inventory conditions to avoid unexpected costs or repairs.

**Programming.** Commerce Township's community facilities and parks offer programming for community members to connect, learn, and grow. The Township should strive to continue to promote and enhance its programming, while adapting its offerings to meet the shifting needs of residents.

Across the planning process, parks and recreation in Commerce Township were consistently identified as its greatest strength and improving access to community facilities emerged as a clear priority.



Objectives	Performance Indicators
1. Improve communication and awareness of the availability and scope of Township facilities and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of users/events</li> <li>• Resident satisfaction with facilities and services (via survey)</li> <li>• Social media engagement</li> </ul>
2. Encourage and enhance access to community and public facilities that meet the needs of residents, workers, and visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of users</li> <li>• Number of community facilities connected to the non-motorized network</li> <li>• Number of residents within a 10-minute walk of a recreational facility</li> <li>• Number of community facilities that are ADA-compliant</li> </ul>
3. Partner with public and private partners to provide comprehensive access to additional facilities and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Commerce Township users</li> <li>• Number of new public/private partnerships</li> <li>• Number of collaborative projects with Oakland County</li> <li>• Number of projects that involve regional collaboration</li> <li>• Total funding allocated and total funding leveraged for all matching grants for community facilities and services</li> </ul>
4. Maintain, improve and expand community facilities within the Township, as appropriate and fiscally responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual budget for capital improvements</li> <li>• Annual budget for facilities maintenance</li> <li>• Acres of public or recreational space</li> <li>• Number of amenities, access, signage, etc.</li> </ul>
5. Provide high-quality, comprehensive, and diverse programming and events that meet community needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of events</li> <li>• Attendance at community events</li> <li>• Number of different programs offered</li> <li>• Participation in Township programs by age</li> </ul>

**Action Items**

The corresponding action items for this goal are contained in [“Table 9. Action Items: Community and Public Facilities” on page 122.](#)

# Goal 6: Infrastructure

Provide, maintain, and improve the Township’s existing infrastructure, including water, sewer, and other utilities, roads, and advanced technological connectivity needed for residents and businesses.

## Overview

**Resource Management.** As noted for the Residential Development goal, the Township has a 20-year Capital Improvement Plan for future water and sewer infrastructure needs. This should be regularly updated to account for new residential, commercial and industrial development.

**Partnerships.** The maintenance and construction of new infrastructure requires cross-agency collaboration. The Township should continue to partner with state and federal agencies and neighboring communities to improve and maintain community infrastructure. The Township should also partner with regional and local community organizations that provide area residents with high-quality community services and facilities.

**Accommodate Growth.** Infrastructure should be designed to meet the current needs of the community, while also considering the potential for future growth.

As Commerce Township continues to grow in population, it has become increasingly evident that the capacity of the road network will not continue to sustain a rapid pace of growth. The Township must develop strategies to relieve congestion, while considering where strategic enhancements will improve the overall flow of traffic. The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) has jurisdiction over and oversees the maintenance of all public roadways in Commerce Township. The Township should carefully plan and work with the RCOC to determine appropriate locations for future expansions and any modifications or enhancements concerning roads.

While Commerce Township owns the water and sewer system in the Township, the office of the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner (WRC) maintains the system, which offers reassurance for the capacity and availability of services where needed.

**Renewable Energy and Green Infrastructure.** Commerce Township’s status as a rural-suburban township means the Township is well-prepared to adapt to the future needs for renewable energy sources, providing long-term economic and sustainability benefits to the community. When planning for this type of development, the Township must consider the impact to and potential loss of agricultural land used for farming.

The WRC office adopted new stormwater design standards for developments under WRC’s jurisdiction in 2021 and aims to be a leader in stormwater quality in Michigan.



Objectives	Performance Indicators
1. Ensure effective management of resources and infrastructure for all residents and businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident/business survey</li> <li>• Public safety service data</li> <li>• Change in wastewater capacity</li> <li>• Percent of roads rated “good condition”</li> <li>• Miles of road improvements</li> <li>• Number of boil advisory events</li> <li>• Number of power outages that effect 25% or more of the Township</li> </ul>
2. Pursue opportunities and partnerships with local agencies and adjacent communities to facilitate cooperative and sustainable long-term infrastructure management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households served</li> <li>• Funds allocated to another community to provide services</li> <li>• Funds allocated to Commerce Township to provide services</li> <li>• Total funding allocated and total funding leveraged for all matching grants for infrastructure</li> </ul>
3. Improve roads, water, sewer, and other infrastructure to accommodate future growth, as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident/business survey</li> <li>• Change in wastewater capacity</li> <li>• Total lineal feet of service mains added annually</li> <li>• Total county expense for water, sewer, or other utility projects in Commerce Township</li> <li>• Miles of new/improved roads, sidewalks, and pathways</li> </ul>
4. Encourage installation of alternative energy facilities, as appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of EV charging stations</li> <li>• Number of residential solar or wind energy projects</li> <li>• Number of commercial solar or wind energy projects</li> </ul>
5. Improve stormwater management to maintain the Township's water quality and natural features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acres managed by green stormwater</li> <li>• Acres of impervious surfaces</li> <li>• Percent of impervious surfaces</li> <li>• Number of annual flood events</li> </ul>

## Action Items

The corresponding action items for this goal are contained in [“Table 10. Action Items: Infrastructure” on page 126.](#)

# Area Plans





Art contest winner (5-8):  
Jack Sommerville, 6

# Area Plans

An Area Plan is a long-term plan focused on a distinct area within a community with individualized recommendations that consider the unique and unifying characteristics therein.

Area plans should enable a community to plan for key priority areas by including specific recommendations for how an area should grow and develop, seek to maintain and leverage distinguishing characters and garner a sense of place, and help to accomplish broader goals of the Master Plan.

## Introduction

At the onset of this planning process, Township staff and the Planning Commission identified a set of parcels in the Township that were not already protected from development or designated as parks, not Township-owned, and would likely be developed in the future. While the Planning Commission considered the need for a full update to the 2015 Master Plan, the commission discussed and selected priority development sites for which establishing a vision would be valuable in order to direct development in a way that reflects the community's vision for the Township's future.

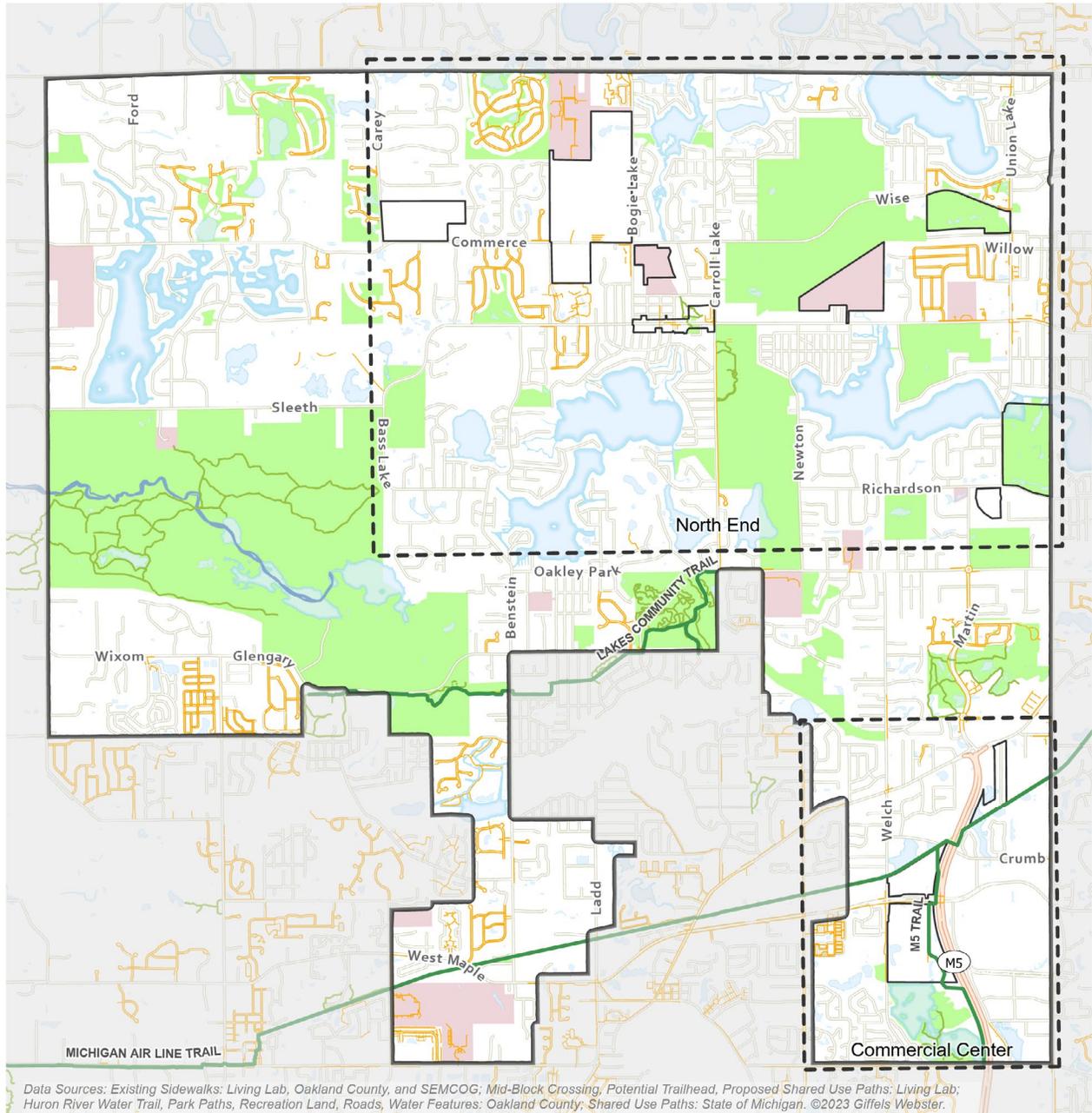
As conversations progressed, it became evident that the development sites, or "opportunity sites," were generally centered around two areas of the Township. The two areas and the sites are displayed in [Map 1](#).

The "North End" was designated by the Planning Commission as an area of interest because of its potential for connectivity. Commerce Village is the intended centerpiece of the focus area, and the opportunity sites in this area were studied for the potential linkages and access they could provide.

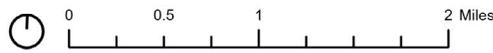
In the "Commercial Center," three privately-owned opportunity sites, with proximity to M-5, showed the potential to complement the planned downtown project Five & Main to create a strong commercial core in the Township.



Map 1. Area Plans Location



Data Sources: Existing Sidewalks: Living Lab, Oakland County, and SEMCOG; Mid-Block Crossing, Potential Trailhead, Proposed Shared Use Paths: Living Lab; Huron River Water Trail, Park Paths, Recreation Land, Roads, Water Features: Oakland County; Shared Use Paths: State of Michigan. ©2023 Giffels Webster.



- Existing Shared Use Paths
- Park Path
- Existing Sidewalks
- Huron River Water Trail
- Opportunity Sites
- Educational Facility
- Recreation Land



**AREA PLANS & NON-MOTORIZED PATHWAYS**  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP

# Commercial Center

Commerce Township's Commercial Center roughly comprises the area surrounding the M-5 Corridor, bounded by Library Drive to the north, Haggerty Road to the east, 14 Mile Road to the south, and the City of Walled Lake to the west. The Commercial Center is characterized by the major road corridors and the higher intensity uses therein. In addition, the Commercial Center includes the Robert H. Long Nature Park, as well as the Michigan Air Line Trail and the M-5 Trail, two shared-use pathways that accommodate bicyclists, walkers and runners, intersect just south of the Township's landmark pedestrian bridge.

The Commercial Center includes the "big box" retail east of M-5, which will continue to serve Commerce Township and residents in nearby communities. While this area is relatively built-out, there may be opportunities for infill/outlot development.

This area is served by the pathways, which are important connectors for the community locally and regionally, and efforts should be made to improve the pedestrian experience within these developments. Providing walkable and bikeable access to local goods and services can have a positive impact on traffic congestion and improve community health by allowing people to include exercise in their daily routines.

The commercial and industrial uses in the Commercial Center currently reflect a suburban style of development, with large parking areas and large parcels of land. The auto-centric development patterns have led to traffic and congestion issues, resulting in a need for carefully managed growth and land use planning to guide future development. With that, this area plan presents recommendations that are intentional and contextually appropriate for the corridor, with strategies for the development of key opportunity sites, non-motorized transportation, building form and character, and land uses in the Commercial Center. The opportunity sites included in this discussion were identified by staff and the Planning Commission early in the planning process as sites that were either vacant, available for sale, or underutilized. These may not be the only sites that fit into those categories, but the identified sites are of sufficient size to warrant study.

## The Commercial Center Area Plan seeks to:

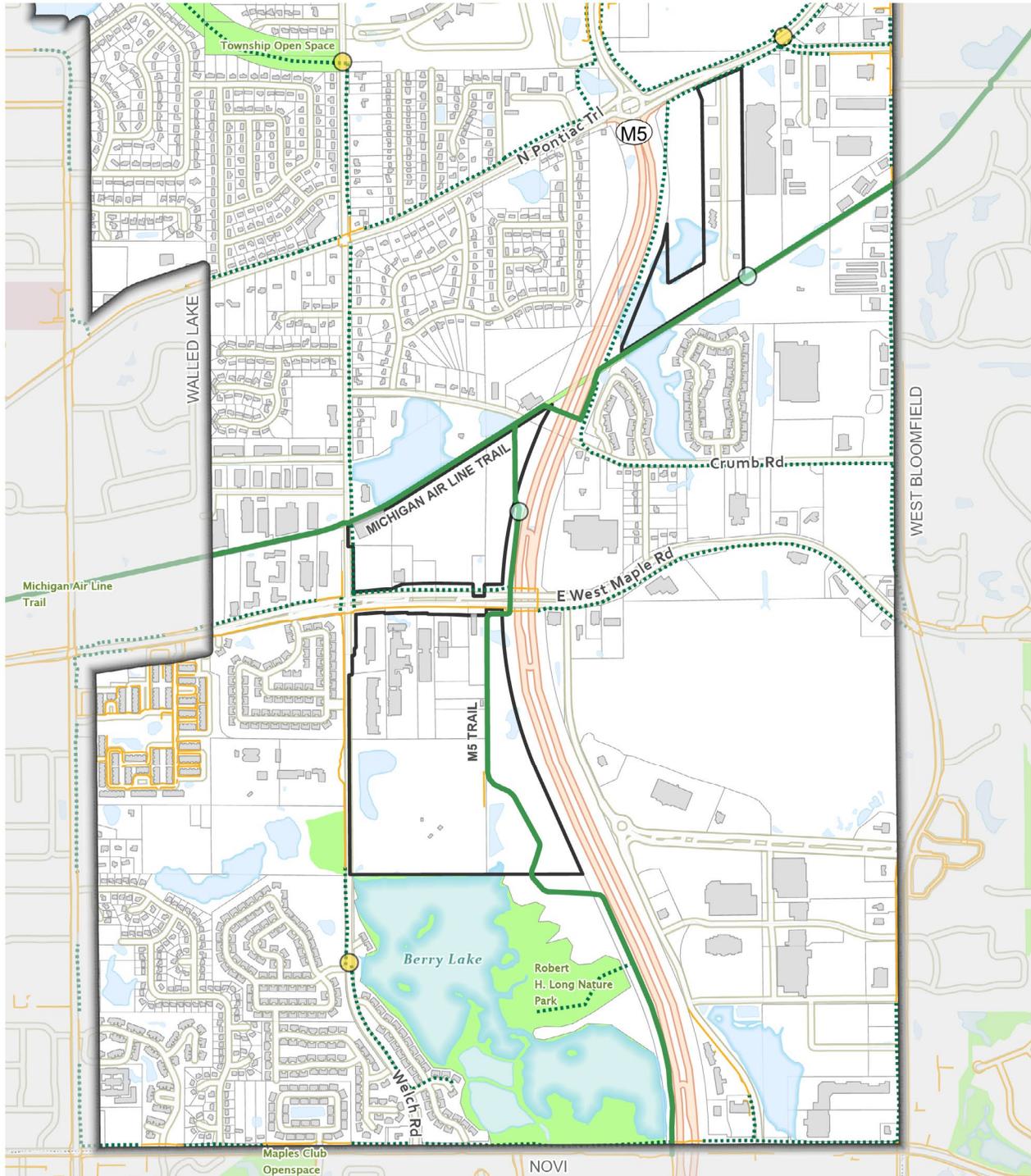
- Encourage redevelopment on opportunity sites to provide new campus-style development with uses that create high-paying jobs, generate tax base growth, and complement the commercial uses proposed at Five & Main.
- Foster enhancements to non-motorized transportation networks and implement strategies to encourage safe and accessible routes from the Five & Main development to key locations in the Commercial Center.
- Encourage development styles that take advantage of the Township's natural beauty and preserve key natural features. Enhance and embrace the Robert H. Long Nature Park and the unique character it brings to the Commercial Center.
- Avoid uses that require excessive parking areas, drive-thrus, front-facing lots or other auto-centric characteristics to reduce congestion on main corridors, including 14 Mile Road, Maple Road, Pontiac Trail and roads that are less traveled.

## Opportunity Sites

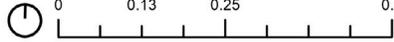
The Commercial Center has three privately-owned sites that the Planning Commission has identified as presenting unique opportunities for future development. [Map 2](#) shows the Commercial Center boundaries and the locations of the three opportunity sites. The three sites selected are all substantial in size and are not currently developed to their highest and best use. All three sites are either known or potential brownfields, and each have unique development challenges and opportunities to consider. The recommendations for each opportunity site were proposed with consideration of market conditions, surrounding uses, site constraints, and opportunities to achieve the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.



Map 2. Commercial Center



Data Source: Recreation Lands and Roads: Access Oakland. Proposed Trails, Non-Motorized Crossings, and Potential Trailheads: LivingLab & Giffels Webster. Map Exported: August 22, 2023. ©2023 Giffels Webster.



- 1. ROCK ROAD PROPERTIES
- 2. BEAUMONT SITE
- 3. WILLIAMS INTERNATIONAL

- NON-MOTORIZED CROSSINGS
- POTENTIAL TRAILHEAD
- SIDEWALKS
- SHARED USE PATHS
- PROPOSED PATHS
- OPPORTUNITY SITES
- EDUCATIONAL FACILITY
- RECREATION LAND
- BUILDING FOOTPRINTS

**COMMERCIAL CENTER**  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP

The opportunity sites may be able to take advantage of further existing strengths in the area, including high visibility and proximity to the neighboring communities of West Bloomfield, Novi, Walled Lake, and Wolverine Lake. Each site is located along M-5, traffic counts and rooftops (or households) in the area could garner interest from businesses. The adjacent communities are also projected to grow in the next 20 to 30 years according to SEMCOG's Regional Forecast. New developments like assisted living facilities have been added close to the Commercial Center,

with potential opportunities for more multi-family and mixed use development and non-motorized connections identified in recent planning efforts by these communities. The Commercial Center will have to manage challenges that stem from the current auto-oriented nature of the area as well. Traffic congestion, large parking areas and M-5 bisecting the area, create limitations for pedestrians and other non-motorized users and make it difficult to plan cohesively.

### Five & Main

The Commercial Center also includes the development area known as “Five & Main,” which is overseen by the Commerce Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA). At build-out, this area is envisioned to include housing and a “downtown”-like development with retail, office, entertainment and restaurant uses. Housing development has been underway over the past couple of years, while the retail/restaurant market has been and continues to be complicated. It is anticipated that the new housing units will make the commercial uses more viable. This Master Plan supports the vision of the Township and DDA and views other parts of the Commercial Center area as supporting the Five & Main development, whether through additional housing or employment centers.



## Williams International

The Williams International site is located southwest of the intersection of Maple Road and M-5, and north of Robert H. Long Nature Park. This 120-acre site, with preserve, is currently owned by Williams International, a company that specializes in the manufacturing of gas turbine engines. The Commerce Township site was initially where the company was headquartered, but operations expanded primarily into the city of Pontiac and portions of the site are now no longer in active use. While future plans for Williams International are uncertain, this section of the Master Plan seeks to consider potential uses and opportunities for redevelopment.

### Concepts for Redevelopment

Future uses on this site may include a research and development (R&D) campus, office or headquarters-style development, with some ancillary commercial uses to serve workers on the site. Structures on this site should use high-quality and sustainable design strategies and materials. This site's prominent location and proximity to the trail network make it an attractive location for this type of development, giving businesses opportunities to enjoy amenities unique to the area. With the likely ongoing demand by workers for remote/hybrid work options, many employers will continue looking for ways to draw people back to an office environment for several reasons, including fostering collaboration, facilitating training and nurturing a cohesive company culture. New development that fits in with natural features as well as active (trail) and passive (nature preserve) recreation can provide a compelling draw.

While it is envisioned that this parcel would be developed with a headquarters-type building, this site may serve two or more small- to medium-sized development R&D/office facilities in the surrounding development patterns.



## Beaumont Property

The Beaumont Property presents an excellent opportunity for a new headquarters, research and development campus, or other destination-use, with over 30 acres of buildable land. The location is unmatched in the Township, with substantial frontage along the prominent intersection of M-5 and Maple Road. In addition, the Air Line Trail and M-5 Trail are directly adjacent along the east and north property lines, with the intersection of both trails at the site's northeast corner. Prior to the 2008 recession, the site was intended to be developed as a hospital use, but after years of planning, it was ultimately left vacant and undeveloped. This site has hosted a range of industrial uses dating back to the 1950s and residual contamination remains present. Future development will have to include strategies to maintain compliance with the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's (EGLE) due care requirements for brownfields.

### Concepts for Redevelopment

Due to the high costs of remediation, the redevelopment of brownfield sites often requires incentives and gap financing to ensure a return on investment. One key tool to provide financial assistance for sites with significant known contamination is Tax Increment Financing (TIF), an incentive that uses the incremental tax revenue generated by improvements to help with project financing. In order for a TIF to generate enough revenue to offset the costs of cleanup, there must be a substantial improvement value associated with the development. Therefore, given the extent of known contamination on the Beaumont site, it is imperative that any proposal for development results in a substantial improvement on the overall value of the site.

In addition to potential improvement value, development of this site must be complementary to the proposed Five & Main development and should not detract from that area's position as the key location for commercial services and "urban" experiences within the Township.

The best use of this site would be a large destination or campus use, which may result in entertainment or recreation facilities, academic or research campuses, headquarters, or hospital campuses. Some complementary, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use or commercial uses may be appropriate surrounding the development, however, it is important that any development on this site is ancillary to the overall development and intended to primarily service the workers and visitors therein.

Although this site will likely require a development strategy that includes mitigating potentially contaminated land, the site's natural features should be incorporated and highlighted in the development. The northern boundary is adjacent to wetlands and wooded areas which should be preserved, and prominent views of the natural areas should be built into the site design.

The Township should continue working with MDOT on enhancements to the trail system surrounding the site. Along the M-5 Trail, a pocket park or trailhead park may be an effective development strategy for the portion of the site with impacted soil, offering a respite for trail users with amenities such as bike storage, benches, water fountains, or public art. Landscaping between the M-5 trail and the surrounding road corridor should continue to serve as a buffer and include native plantings, providing trail users the opportunity to interact with the natural surroundings.





Precedent Images





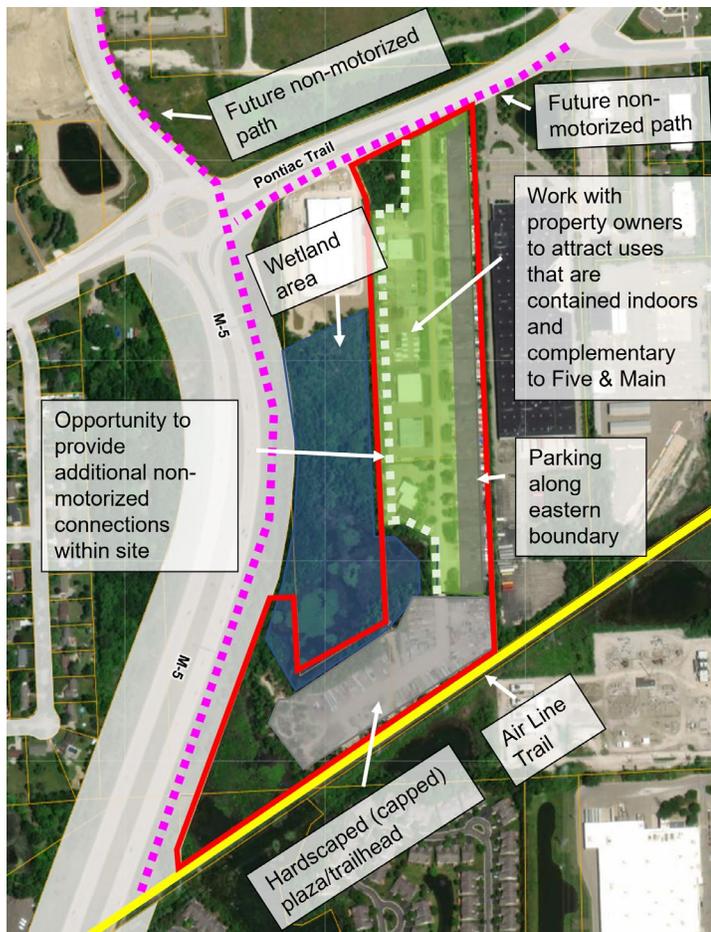
## Rock Roads Properties

The Rock Road Properties include 26 acres at the intersection of M-5 and Pontiac Trail, directly north of the Air Line Trail and across from the Five & Main development area. The site includes a variety of industrial uses, largely landscape contractors. Many portions of the site are used for outdoor storage and include vehicles, storage containers and trailers, material storage, and other items, such as scattered pallets. The storage areas are poorly screened and many items are stored in unenclosed containers. As the Pontiac Trail and M-5 intersection has transitioned to include more commercial and residential uses, the current use of the Rock Road Properties are less compatible with surrounding areas. Future development of this area should seek to include uses and amenities that complement and enhance neighboring developments, particularly that of Five & Main.

## Concepts for Redevelopment

The site's proximity to the Air Line Trail positions it well to serve as a trailhead or public space for users of the trail. A plaza located adjacent to the trail in the southern portion of the site would be enhanced by the scenic views provided by the natural wetlands surrounding this area. Additional non-motorized connections may be provided through the site, further expanding the existing and planned network. New shared-use pathways to provide a safe crossing at the Pontiac Trail roundabout will connect this site with residential neighborhoods and future development in the Five & Main development. In addition to the opportunities this site presents as a public space, the northern portions of the site are desirable for pedestrian-oriented retail, restaurant, or office uses.

Given its use as material storage, environmental investigations should be conducted prior to the development of this site. If soil or groundwater is shown to be impacted, a hardscaped cap may be the most financially feasible and safe approach to development.



## Transportation

Congestion in the Commercial Center has been identified as a primary concern by residents and community leaders. Development types that will encourage shorter trips and support non-motorized alternatives are encouraged. Safe and convenient non-motorized connections should be developed and maintained, incorporating wayfinding signage and trail amenities to enhance the experience for users. All three opportunity sites are along the perimeter of the trail system and have the potential to incorporate trail amenities into the overall design. The Rock Road Properties site would be an ideal location for a park or plaza to offer a resting area for walkers and bikers on the trail.

The roundabout at Pontiac Trail and M-5 plays a key role in the smooth and efficient movement of traffic. However, given the constant flow of motor vehicles, the intersection is challenging to cross for non-motorized users. Pedestrian-oriented enhancements to this area would help increase connectivity between the opportunity sites and the new walkable Five & Main development.

## Building Form and Character

Commerce Township is characterized by its natural beauty and open spaces, with excellent parks and recreational areas as well as many lakes, waterways and wetland areas. This character should not be diminished as development takes place. Rather, new developments should take advantage of these unique natural features by preserving them; wetlands, woodlands, steep slopes, and landmark trees can all contribute to a higher quality of life, support higher property values and reinforce the character of the community. Buildings should be positioned to complement and enhance views of natural areas and landscaping design should incorporate diverse native plantings.

In addition, buildings should be designed to minimize the visual impact created by vehicles to the extent possible. Parking is encouraged be located in the side or behind buildings, with appropriate landscaping to screen the parking area and provide compatibility with the natural surroundings. Large expanses of pavement should include landscape islands to provide visual enhancement, reduce

the urban heat island effect, and improve the management of stormwater on the site. The Township may wish to explore lowering parking standards to reduce the amount of pavement required for development and redevelopment.

## Land Use

The Commercial Center is currently a mix of the I, Industrial, TLM, Technology & Light Manufacturing, B-2, Community Business, and B-3, General Business zoning districts. In addition, there are small areas that include higher density single-family residential (R-1C, One Family Cottage Residential) and multi-family zoning (RM, Multiple Family Residential).

The Five & Main development will serve as an anchor in this district and future uses should be complementary and compatible with a walkable, retail and service-oriented “downtown” district. While industrial uses once clustered in this area, as new residents have moved to Commerce Township, the corridor has evolved to accommodate uses that are more commercial in nature. Future land uses in this corridor should support and encourage this transition in development patterns, while providing high-quality jobs for local residents that help to reduce overall commute times.

As previously discussed, the prominence of the Williams International and Beaumont Property sites offers ideal locations for large impactful uses to serve as a regional attraction, creating spillover demand for the commercial services in the study area. Potential uses may include research and development, academic, healthcare, or professional headquarters, which would be preferred. However, uses that are more entertainment-focused, such as event centers or recreational destinations may be an alternative option or supplementary to the preferred uses. The ancillary commercial and mixed-use developments surrounding these sites should include uses that are pedestrian-oriented and reduce the visual impact and pedestrian conflicts created by vehicles. The two sites may also be developed in conjunction with one another and connected by a pedestrian bridge.

## North End

The North End of Commerce Township encompasses the northern portion of the Township, spanning from Carey Road and the Proud Lake State Recreational Area to the west to Haggerty Road to the east, and from Cooley Lake Road to the north to just south of Richardson to the south. Land uses in the North End are primarily low-density residential, with some neighborhood commercial scattered throughout and more intensive commercial uses along Haggerty Road. Lakefront cottages are common, and the North End features scenic natural surroundings, with many lakes and open areas.

Despite numerous parks and recreational facilities, the area lacks a cohesive sidewalk or shared use trail network, making it difficult to get around the area without a vehicle.

Commerce Village is the historic commercial center, and is located centrally in the North End, at the intersection of W. Commerce Road and Carroll Lake Road. The Village includes scattered office and commercial uses along Commerce Road between Carroll Lake Road and North Commerce Road, with some public uses, such as Commerce Elementary, Township parks and cemeteries, and institutional uses, such as churches, are scattered throughout the Village. Union Lake Road, also hosts commercial development that includes a large format grocery store, restaurants and office uses.

With mounting demand for housing, future residential development in Commerce Township on remaining parcels should be carefully planned for and target populations currently excluded from the available supply of housing. In particular, the “missing middle” market segment, representing populations from 80% of the area median income (AMI) to 120% of the AMI, is a key demographic to consider when planning for new housing. This group includes young families and professionals and is fundamental to attract new residents who will establish roots in Commerce Township. It also includes housing for older residents who may wish to downsize from larger homes that could be made available for families.

### The North End Area Plan seeks to:

- Focus commercial development in prominent locations that are well-connected to non-motorized transportation options and complement the historic and traditional character of Commerce Village.
- Foster enhancements to non-motorized transportation networks and provide safe and efficient connections between public facilities and key landmarks.
- Encourage development styles that take advantage of the Township’s natural beauty and preserve key natural features. Cluster single-family residential development to reserve land as conservation.
- Consider a range of residential types where the transportation network supports it.

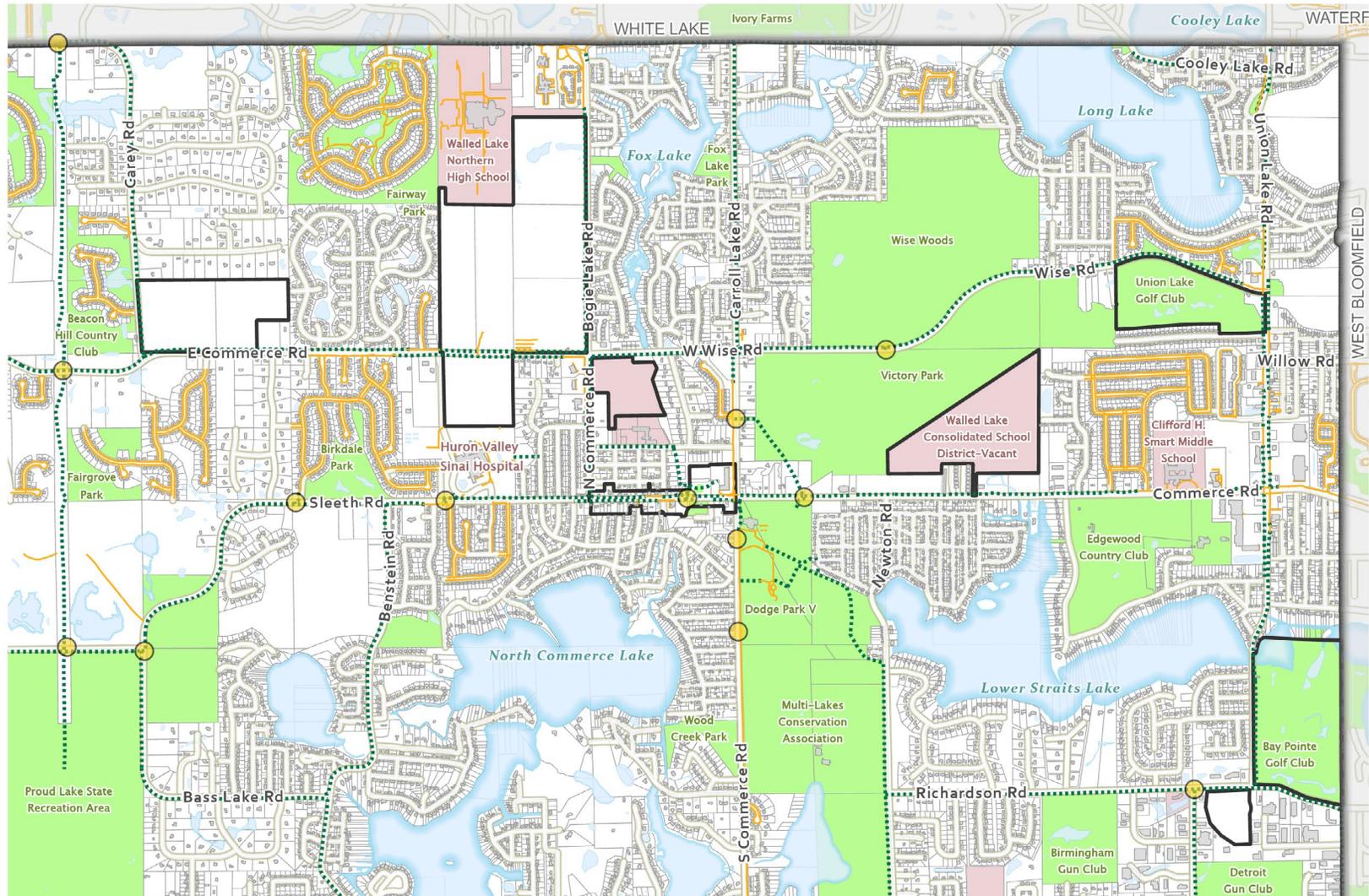
The North End’s rural character and natural features are some of the area’s greatest strengths. New residential developments in the North End should be clustered, with lots arranged in a dense, compact manner to allow for the preservation of remaining open space. While a mix of housing types and densities may be permitted in clustered developments, the total number of units should be limited not to exceed the maximum residential density that conventional zoning would allow.

This area plan seeks to address the area within the North End to provide recommendations that will encourage compatibility between new and existing residential uses. In addition, the plan offers suggestions for commercial uses and considers the design and placement of buildings.

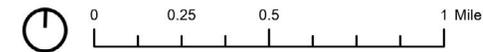
The North End Area Plan establishes a long-term vision for eight parcels that Planning Commission identified as “opportunity sites,” sites that have potential for a catalytic development or substantial conservation impact due to their extent, location, and/or market availability. In addition, the plan includes recommendations for transportation and building form and character.



Map 3. North End



Data Source: Recreation Lands and Roads: Access Oakland, Proposed Trails: LivingLab, Map Exported: August 22, 2023. ©2023 Giffels Webster.



1. COMMERCE AND CAREY
2. LONG FARM
3. WALLED LAKE SCHOOLS PROPERTY - ADJACENT TO COMMERCE ELEMENTARY
4. WALLED LAKE SCHOOLS PROPERTY - ADJACENT TO VICTORY PARK
5. UNION LAKE GOLF COURSE
6. BAY POINTE GOLF COURSE
7. DRIVE-IN SITE
8. COMMERCE VILLAGE

- SIDEWALKS
- ..... PROPOSED PATHS
- NON-MOTORIZED CROSSINGS
- EDUCATIONAL FACILITY
- RECREATION LAND
- OPPORTUNITY SITES

# NORTH END

## COMMERCE TOWNSHIP

## Opportunity Sites

The Planning Commission has selected eight sites, seven of which are privately-owned in the North End that are of interest for their development potential or market availability. [Map 3](#) shows the North End Boundaries and the locations of the three Opportunity sites. Given the North End's residential character, most of the sites selected are primarily residential in nature, however, there are opportunities for commercial, mixed-use, and mixed residential developments near Commerce Village and in other key areas. Community feedback, best practices, and the deliberations of the Planning Commission were used to guide the recommendations in the North End, with consideration of compatibility between uses, community character, site constraints, and the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.

### Commerce and Carey

The Commerce and Carey Site is comprised of 82 acres of vacant land on the western boundary of the North End at the intersection of E. Commerce Road and Carey Road. The site is surrounded by large lot residential uses on all sides. New clustered development including a range of single-family densities with scattered two- and three- unit structures, will offer much needed housing diversity in this area without disrupting surrounding development patterns. Housing should be arranged in a compact manner, with a number of units that is limited by the site's maximum density under conventional zoning. In addition, commercial development facing the Commerce Road frontage would be ideal to satisfy neighborhood-level demand for goods and services. Future non-motorized connections should connect this site to the Commercial Center along E. Commerce Road and N. Commerce Road.



### Long Farm

Long Farm is one of Commerce Township's most beloved destinations, with agri-tourism and community events, including its coveted apple orchard, cider and donuts. In previous Master Plans, the Township expressed support for Long Farm to maintain its agriculture status, but recognized that Long Farm, as a privately-owned property, may transition into development at some point in the future. This Master Plan continues to support ongoing agricultural uses and family activities on the site, with an eye to the future, should the farm cease to operate.

Given Long Farm's location between Commerce Village, Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital and Walled Lake Northern High School, the site lends itself well to residential uses targeting families and hospital employees. Future development should include a range of single-family densities, with potential for some two- and three-unit structures scattered throughout. Additional pedestrian connections should be established between the school and Commerce Road to continue enhancing the non-motorized network and provide an easy route for students to access the library, the Commerce Village area and parks.



## Walled Lake Schools Property Adjacent to Commerce Elementary

This 27-acre property is located at N. Commerce Road and W. Wise Road, directly north of Commerce Elementary School and west of the Huron River. The property is currently vacant, besides a small area on the southern portion of the lot, which is currently used, and should be maintained, as a track and field for Commerce Elementary School. Although currently owned by Walled Lake Schools, the future of this property is uncertain and a thoughtful and intentional approach to planning will help to guide future development.

The right-of-way frontage extending along both N. Commerce Road and W. Wise Road may offer unique opportunities to capture unmet demand for commercial due to the site's close proximity to the Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital campus. This area currently has limited options for hospitality, restaurants and retail, leading many patients, visitors, and hospital employees to drive, sometimes outside the Township boundaries, in search of goods and services. These are not only missed economic opportunities; the sprawling distance between the hospital and many goods and services results in additional congestion along local roads.

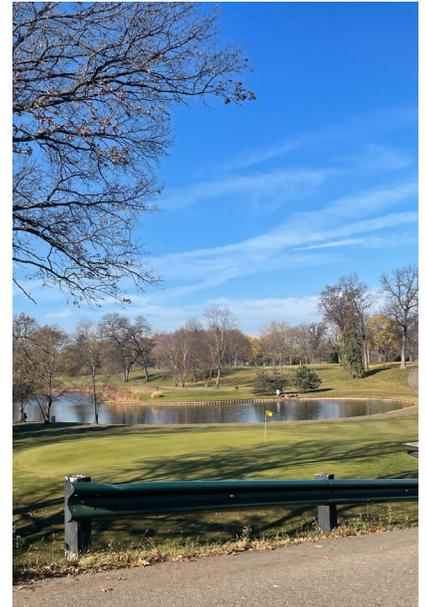
Due to the heavily wooded areas of this site, and the need for a buffer between commercial development and the elementary school, rear portions of this site should be maintained as woodlands.



## Bay Pointe Golf Club

Bay Pointe Golf Club has long served as a recreational destination for golf, with unique topography, lakefront views, and a clubhouse that also serves as a banquet facility. The 138-acre site is located between Middle Straits Lake and Lower Straits Lake, along the intersection of Union Lake Road and Richardson Road. The site spans across the Township Boundary, with the parcel including the clubhouse in neighboring West Bloomfield Township. As the market continues to push towards additional growth and development in Commerce Township and the value of land increases, it has become increasingly likely that this site will be further developed, and the Township should plan and prepare for this growth.

The site's proximity to natural surroundings, lake front views, and hilly terrain provide opportunities for market-rate, single family housing. This type of development may include lakefront lots at a density that is consistent with other areas of the North End and provide a variety of options. A developer may seek to retain portions of the golf course to serve as a recreational amenity for residents. The existing clubhouse facility may serve as an institutional, or community-based use to serve the neighborhood.



## Walled Lake Schools Property Adjacent to Victory Park

The Walled Lake Schools Property Adjacent to Victory Park spans 83 acres behind parcels along Commerce Road. The parcel is triangle shaped and includes very little road frontage, besides a segment that includes an access drive that is only about 100 feet wide. Given the site's low visibility and key natural features, including wetlands and woodlands, efforts should be directed towards the preservation of this site. While future development plans are unknown, the Township should work with Walled Lake Schools to ensure this public property remains undeveloped and the land is preserved. A conservation easement or other preservation tool may be desired.



## Union Lake Golf Club

Union Lake Golf Club comprises 62 acres along Wise Road, west of Union Lake Road. Hayes Creek meanders across the site, along the Wise Road frontage, with wetlands extending on either side. Similar to Bay Pointe Golf Club, rising land values in the area increase the probability that this site will be redeveloped into a more intensive use. The Township should plan for the future development of this site and consider compatibility with the surrounding uses in the North End.



Given the demand for housing, and the unique topological and natural features on this site, residential would be an ideal use. However, some commercial uses along the Union Lake Road frontage could provide additional goods and services within walking distance of several neighborhoods. The site's location is within walking distance of grocery, a drugstore, restaurants, and trails, presenting a perfect opportunity to provide housing for older populations. In addition, developers may seek to target other key demographic groups in need of housing, especially professionals and hospital workers, young families, and empty nesters.

Prior to any development, a wetland delineation should be completed to ensure the preservation of Hayes Creek and determine where limitations are present on the site.

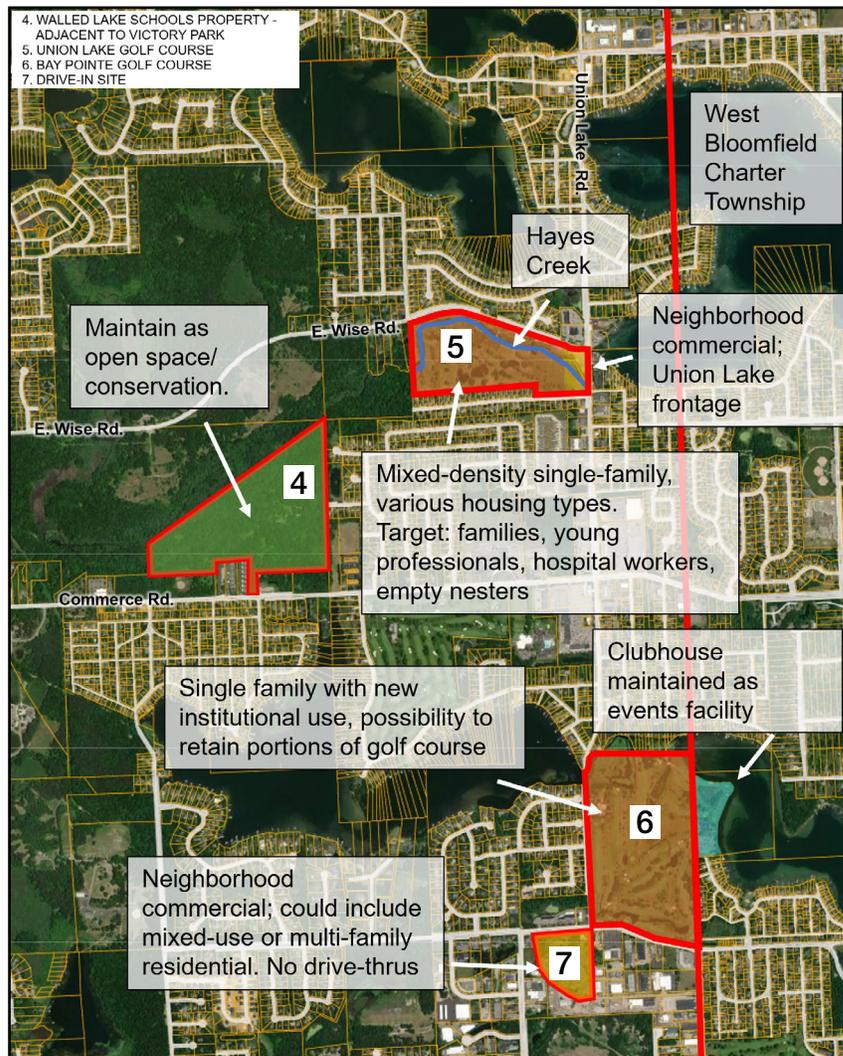
## Commerce Drive-In Site

The Commerce Drive-In Site, so-named because of its previous use as a drive-in theater and the historic Commerce sign located along its frontage, comprises 16 acres along Richardson Road, directly across from the intersection of Richardson and Union Lake Road. Currently zoned B-2, this site serves as a transition between uses that are zoned TLM (Technology Light Manufacturing) to the south and primarily residential uses to the north.



Although this site is currently vacant, its proximity to convenience retail and restaurants makes it a desirable location for future commercial or mixed-use development. The high-traffic location is surrounded by many households and is close to the hospital, making it attractive for uses that require visibility. The location's prominence means that development should be of high-quality design, with parking in the rear and a landscaped frontage.

There are some potential engineering challenges with respect to site access, and the Planning Commission should work with the developer to ensure the design is safe for pedestrians and compatible with local traffic. The Township has explored and studied the potential to realign the intersections of Martin Parkway, Richardson Road and Union Lake Road, to improve traffic congestion. However, given the expense, and the likelihood that such improvements would tend to push congestion further north, the road configuration will likely remain as-is for the foreseeable future. Improving walkability in this area may help alleviate some of the local congestion.



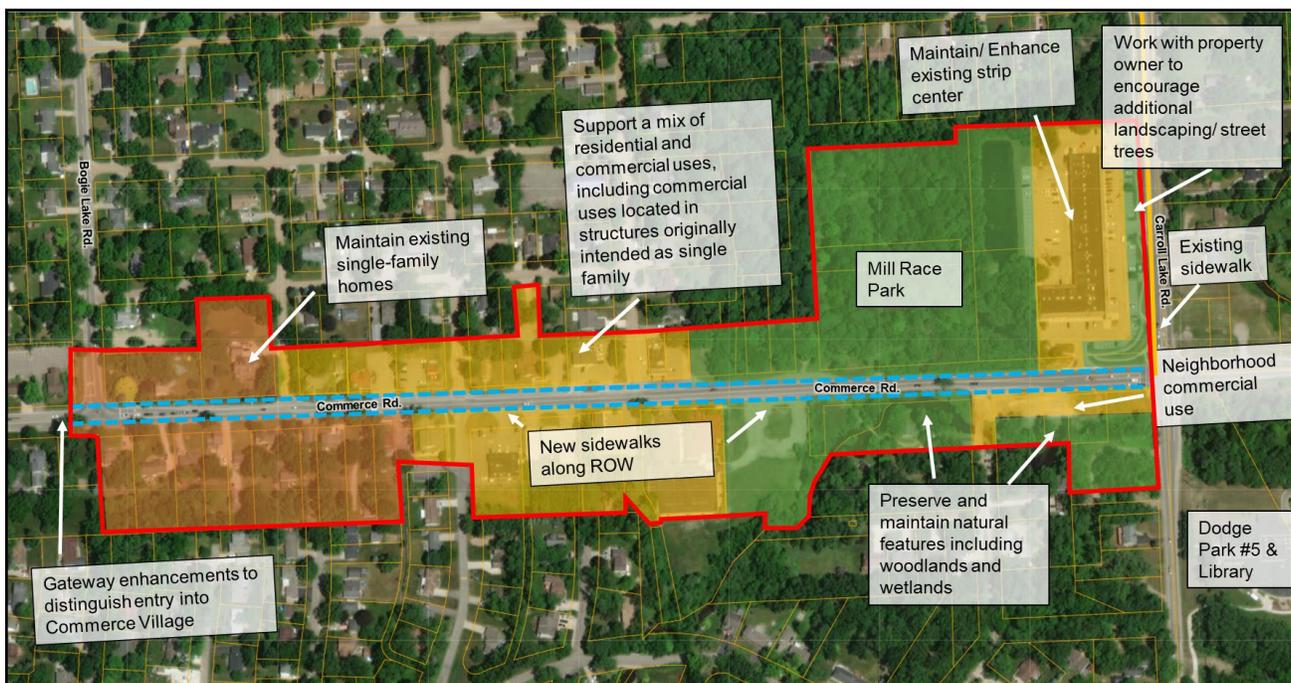
## Commerce Village

Commerce Village is the historic center of the Township and extends between Carroll Lake Road and N. Commerce Road, along West Commerce Road. The Village includes 45 parcels of land of varying uses and zoning classifications, including residential, commercial, and office. There are many structures that were previously used as single-family homes that have been converted into other commercial uses. A strip shopping center development is at the corner of Carroll Lake and Commerce Road, serving as an informal gateway into the Village. Behind the shopping center, Mill Race Park provides some local history, recreational amenities and natural beauty to the surrounding Village area.

The Commerce Village Overlay Zoning District includes the area in Commerce Village and provides a flexible option to encourage development that is walkable and enhances the Village streetscape. While the ordinance currently allows this flexibility as an option, as opposed to being required standards, the Township may consider adopting these standards as requirements to ensure that future design meets the desired character and intent for the Village.

Uses in the Village should be walkable and neighborhood-oriented, but should not convey the character of a high-density urban area. The architecture of new construction should include traditional building materials and design, and incorporate natural features and open spaces when possible, while encouraging rear parking, pathway construction, and other pedestrian-oriented amenities.

While the western portion of the Village is primarily residential, some of these lots have evolved over time to provide commercial goods and services. The Area Plan does not promote conversion to commercial activities in the western end at this time, instead focusing on the revitalization of the Village Center first. Future consideration could be given to support and encourage this transition as it supports a vibrant Commerce Village area.



## Transportation

Congestion along Union Lake and Cooley Lake Roads has long been identified as an area of concern for Commerce Township and the neighboring communities of White Lake Township, Waterford Township and West Bloomfield Township - the “Four Towns” that gave this area its name many years ago. However, while traffic flow is more stable in comparison to the Commercial Center, there is currently a shortage of non-motorized connections in the North End. Several paths have been proposed to improve connections and as those proposed paths are developed, all eight of the opportunity sites in the North End are expected to gain access to the non-motorized transportation network. Given the significant community amenities in the North End, including several parks and recreation facilities, educational facilities, the Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital, and Commerce Village and its historic qualities, connecting these assets to the strong residential neighborhoods in the area can help to mitigate congestion and provide for pedestrian and other non-motorized user safety. Improvements to non-motorized facilities in the North End can also connect to other areas in the Township as well as regional trails and enhance recreational opportunities for residents.

The Four Towns area should be addressed in partnership with neighboring communities as an opportunity to improve non-motorized transportation and support ongoing business revitalization.

## Building Form and Character

The North End’s character is reflective of its residential uses and natural surroundings. Future developments in this area should be compatible with this character, and sites should prioritize natural assets when planning for development. New developments should strive to preserve water bodies, wetlands, woodlands, and steep slopes, by focusing development on portions of the site where the impact to natural features will be minimal.

Housing in the North End may range in size and form, but should be complementary of surrounding single-family neighborhoods. Design elements that help accessibility and visitability, such as wide passages, first floor living areas, and zero-step entry should be encouraged. These improvements

are helpful for people of all ages. In addition, housing design should be designed with front-facing porches and garages setback or in the rear, creating opportunities for more “eyes on the street,” making neighborhoods safer and engaging.

Commercial developments in the North End should encourage development to be street-facing, incorporate street-trees and right of way landscaping, include sidewalks and pedestrian access, and offer parking in the rear. These design elements will help to minimize the visual impact created by vehicles, and minimize the disruption that commercial development may have on the overall residential character of the North End.

# Non-Motorized Transportation Plan



# LIKE COMMERCE TWP.



Art contest winner (15-18):  
Timothy Awad, 15

# Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

An important element of the Master Plan is a plan for the overall system of streets and roads in a community. This system provides for the movement of people and goods to and from places inside and outside the community. Road rights-of-way also provide places for utilities such as water lines, gas lines, sanitary and storm sewers, cable television lines, electrical power and telephone lines to co-locate, lowering the need for easements across private land. Because of these combined roads and utility function, the system of roads in a community can impact economic conditions, environmental quality, energy consumption, land development, and overall quality of life in a community.

Beyond non-motorized improvements, the Township has sought to address traffic concerns by working with the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to implement roadway improvements, such as the installation of roundabouts at key intersections and installation of center turn lanes.



## Complete Streets

Creating a more cohesive plan for the non-motorized transportation network in Commerce Township quickly became a priority as the planning process progressed. Multi-modal roadways, or “Complete Streets,” increase accessibility for those seeking alternatives to travel by car. Recent efforts to increase transportation options by investing in the Township’s non-motorized transportation network have been met with some success.

The area’s trail systems are not only an important recreational amenity, but also is an important transportation facility locally and regionally.

Other than ongoing maintenance to keep local streets, sidewalks (where provided) and trail surfaces in good repair, there may be opportunities to further enhance the Township’s transportation network to better serve all users. These may include the following:

### Site Design

Minor improvements within a site can improve the usability of public non-motorized facilities such as requiring safe pedestrian connections from building entrances to street sidewalks, requiring parking facilities including bike racks and/or storage lockers along with parking for motorized vehicles and considering access management within the parking lot. All bike parking should meet the APBP guidelines (Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals).

### Access Management

Typical driveway standards require alignment or minimum offsets, as well as separation from intersections and other driveways on the same side of the street to improve safety of motorists. Additional access management techniques include limiting the number of access drives on major roads, shared drives, encouraging joint access easements and maximizing corner clearance requirements especially for intersections that require special attention.

## Collaboration

Collaboration with multiple stakeholders is another important tool for successful implementation. Indeed, with road facilities connecting with and shared by adjacent communities, it is critical to have shared visions of local transportation goals. Most of the time, the roadway jurisdiction determines the combination of outside agencies that are required to be part of the stakeholder team. Local residents, surrounding municipalities, the RCOC, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), MDOT and other local non-profit agencies such as Michigan Trails and Greenways, or Rails to Trails conservancy are the potential members of a team.

“Complete Streets” is a term used to describe a transportation network that includes facilities for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and other legal users of all ages and abilities. In 2010, Michigan passed the Complete Streets legislation to encourage and justify the development of Complete Streets in communities. At that time, Michigan’s Planning Enabling Act was also amended to require master plans to address Complete Streets. Communities that adopt Complete Streets policies recognize that:

- Complete Streets provide transportation choices, allowing all people to move about their communities safely and easily.
- Complete Streets policies acknowledge the problems with current transportation facilities.
- Implementing Complete Streets strategies will make communities better places to live and work.



Figure 1. Benefits of Complete Streets

**Safety**



- Reducing pedestrian accidents by increasing the safety factor.
- Improving perceptions of the safety of non-motorized travel can strongly influence decisions about alternative modes of travel for many.
- Reducing either the width or number of travel lanes (road diet) to make space for shoulder or bike paths will improve safety.



On average, a pedestrian was killed in the US every 88 minutes in traffic crashes in 2017.

**Health**



- Walking or biking to school may result in reduced child obesity rates.
- Promoting active lifestyles. Sedentary lifestyles are associated with a host of long-term health problems.
- Sidewalks, bike paths and access to transit increase levels of physical activity.



Between 1989 and 2018, child obesity rates have risen dramatically, while the percentage of walking or biking to school has dropped.

**Access**



- A variety of transportation options allows everyone – particularly people with disabilities and older adults – to get out and stay connected to the community.
- Designing a street to accommodate those with mobility challenges may reduce overall pedestrian risk.



54% of older American living in inhospitable neighborhoods say they would walk and ride more often if things improved.

**Environment**



- Dependence on automobiles increases air and water pollution due to the emissions of motor vehicles and pollutants from the impervious surfaces of roads.
- Studies have shown that 5 to 10 percent of urban automobile trips can reasonably be shifted to non-motorized transport.



Carbon-dioxide emissions can be reduced by 20 pounds per day or more than 4,800 pounds in a year per each commuter by using transit instead of driving.

**Economy**



- Increasing consumer activity through redesign of residential and local business districts with traffic-calming measures.
- Implementing Complete Streets has proven to be an effective placemaking strategy for economic development and community revitalization.



Nearly 40 percent of merchants reported increase in sales, and 60 percent more area residents shopping locally due to reduced travel time and convenience associated with Complete Streets strategies.

## Non-Motorized Pathways Plan

While new trails have become beloved recreational assets, biking and walking remain uncommon as a primary means of travel to work. Expanding the non-motorized network with complete streets that offer connections to residential areas, public services, and employment centers will be pivotal to enhance connectivity and achieve traffic improvements.

[Map 4](#) displays a non-motorized pathways plan for the Township that was derived from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails plan, with some additions to address notable gaps, including:

- Providing connections between proposed pathways and destinations, such as park trails and schools. The plan recommends a path to connect the M-5 Trail and trails inside Robert Long Nature Center. This connection would extend across a wetland and require collaboration with EGLE. With that, this connection is sought after as indicated through a network of informal trail connections and pathways. While limitations may prevent this from being developed, it is helpful to include the connection on the plan as a part of the Township’s long-term vision.
- Complete the connection on Union Lake Road to improve safety in this important commercial corridor. This connection would cross the bridge between Middle and Lower Straits Lakes, requiring EGLE approval and structural changes to bridge the water.
- Adding non-motorized crossings within range of Pontiac Trail and M-5 to support enhanced connectivity.
- Additional non-motorized crossings were recommended in areas where proposed shared use pathways were recommended.

Additional opportunities to provide non-motorized crossings may be added as appropriate as pathways are developed.

On streets with speed limits less than 30 mph, such as through subdivisions and in Commerce Village, the use of sidewalks is recommended. This is because slower speed roads may be amenable to shared use by vehicles and bicyclists. However, on streets over 30 miles per hour where speedway traffic may present dangers, shared use paths of

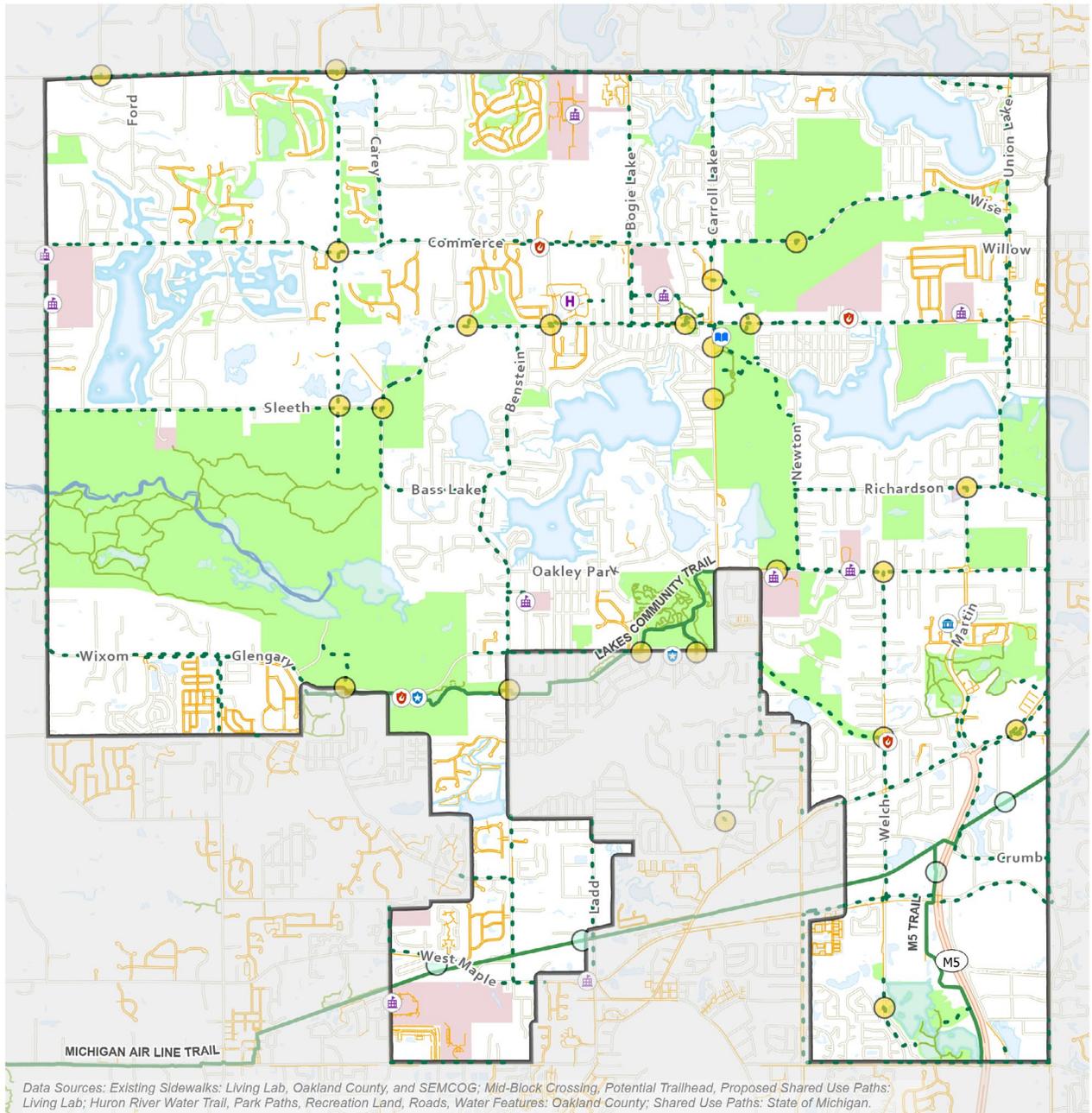
eight to ten feet in width are recommended. If a shared use pathway cannot be installed, the Township should strive to provide bike lanes or sharrows in conjunction with sidewalks.

The current network of sidewalks is often fragmented and disconnected. The non-motorized plan strives to prioritize connections that will complete the disjointed sidewalk network and fill gaps as needed. While these fragmented segments are typically sidewalks, further exploration should be done to determine whether expanded width may be feasible to serve as a shared use pathway.

Although it is not included on the non-motorized map, Five & Main is expected to include internal pathways and connect to the Township’s non-motorized network broadly, including recreational/park pathways. Visitors and residents should be able to connect easily between Five & Main and the Air Line Trail. Five & Main should include trail amenities, such as benches, wayfinding, lighting, and more to create a vibrant experience for visitors.



Map 4. Non-Motorized Pathways Plan



- Existing Shared Use Paths
- Park Path
- Existing Sidewalks
- - - Proposed Shared Use Paths
- Huron River Water Trail
- Non-Motorized Crossings
- Potential Trailhead
- Educational Facility
- Recreation Land



**NON-MOTORIZED PATHWAYS**  
Charter Township of Commerce



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# Future Land Use Plan





# Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Map illustrates where the Township intends to locate general land use categories into the future. The map is accompanied by text that describes the categories shown on the map. The text is general in nature, to allow for some flexibility, but it should also be specific enough to not only guide any zoning amendments that may be needed to realize the vision of the plan, but also to provide the Township support for land use policies and decisions (like a planned unit development (PUD) or a rezoning application).

Where the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map are out of alignment, zoning amendments may not be intended to be imminent; rather, the recommendations set a long-range planning goal for the Township.

## Future Land Use Map

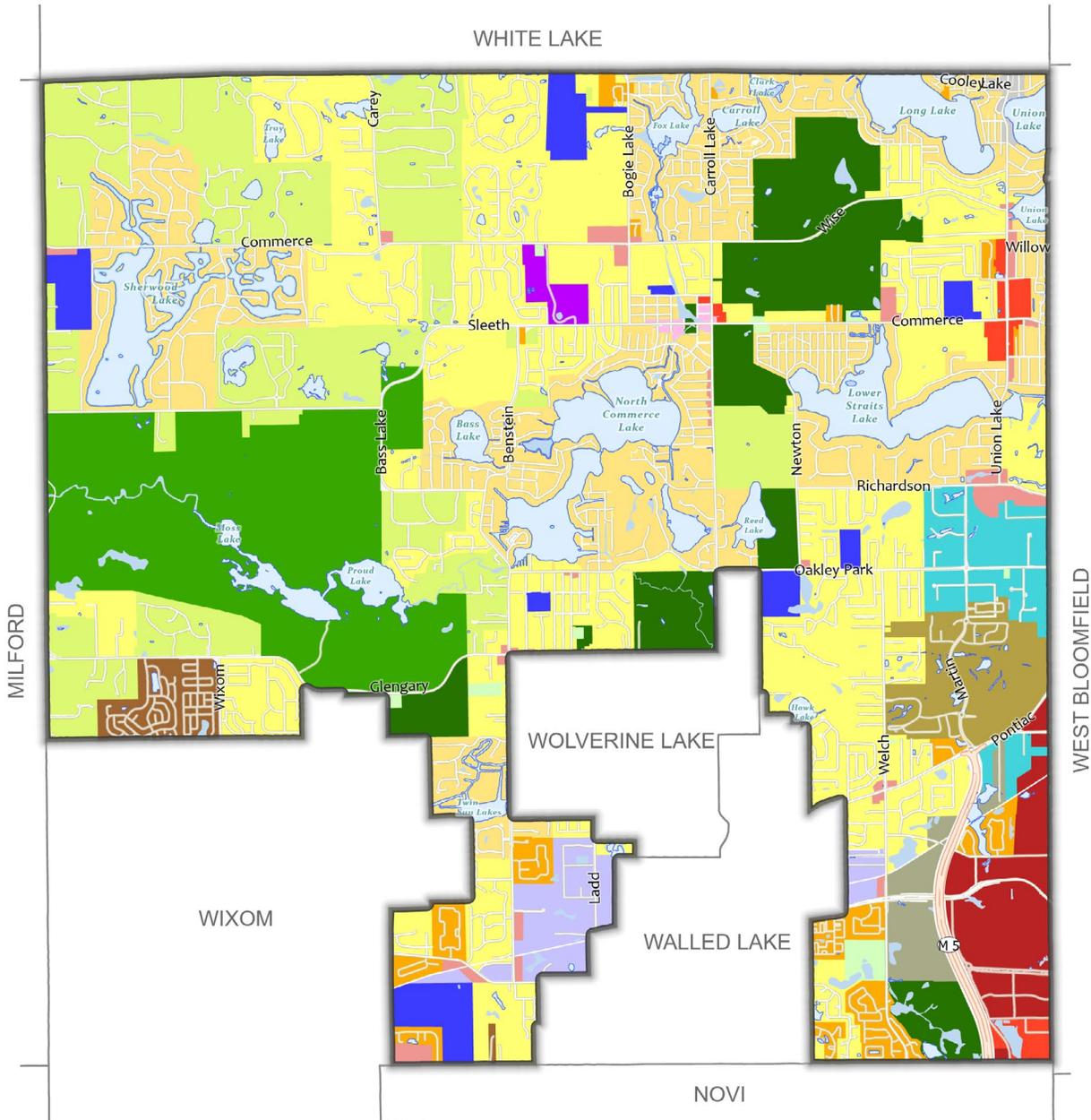
The Future Land Use Map illustrates the Township's vision for the future, as shown in [Map 5](#). The 2015 Future Land Use Maps and the changes that have been made during this update can be found in ["Appendix C: Future Land Use Changes" on page 210](#).

Below are the key changes that were made to the map during the course of this update. Detailed changes can be viewed in ["Appendix C: Future Land Use Changes" on page 210](#).

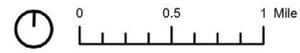
- Eliminating the Office category and incorporating offices uses in commercial mixed use categories as appropriate
- Establishing a Corporate Campus category to provide better guidance for the areas along the M-5 corridor (see also the "Commercial Center Area Plan")
- Establishing a Commerce Village category to provide better guidance for the historic village center of the Township (see also the "North End Area Plan")
- Refining the Four Corners Village category to the Union Lake/Four Towns category to more accurately and intentionally plan for the area (see also the "North End Area Plan")
- Consolidating the Lake Front Residential single family category into the Cottage Residential category
- Consolidating Single Family Residential into the Neighborhood Residential category



Map 5. 2023 Future Land Use Map



Data sources: FLU: Oakland County, Roads and Boundaries: State of Michigan, Date Exported: October 31, 2023, ©2023 Giffels Webster.



This map is intended to show generalized land use and is not intended to indicate the precise site, shape or dimension of areas. These recommendations have a long-range planning horizon and do not necessary imply that short-term zoning decisions are appropriate.

- |                             |                                |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Future Land Use</b>      | Neighborhood Commercial        | Commerce Town Center     |
| Rural Residential           | Community Commercial           | Corporate Campus         |
| Neighborhood Residential    | General Commercial             | <b>Public Facilities</b> |
| Cottage Residential         | Hospital                       | School                   |
| Multiple Family Residential | Industrial                     | Community Facilities     |
| Manufactured Home Community | Lake                           | Park                     |
| Commerce Village            | Technology Light Manufacturing | State Land               |
|                             | Union Lake/Four Towns          |                          |



**FUTURE LAND USE  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP**

Table 1 shows how the future land use categories have changed from the 2015 Master Plan, The Zoning Plan and which future land use categories correspond to the Township’s zoning districts can be found in the [“Implementation”](#) chapter.

**Table 1. Future Land Use Categories, 2015 to 2023**

2015 Future Land Use Category	2023 Future Land Use Category
Rural Residential	Rural Residential
Single Family Residential Cluster Residential Neighborhood Residential	Neighborhood Residential
Cottage Residential Lake Front Residential	Cottage Residential
Multiple Family Residential	Multiple Family Residential
Manufactured Home Community	Manufactured Home Community
Neighborhood Commercial Office Service	Neighborhood Commercial
Community Commercial	Community Commercial
General Commercial	General Commercial
Hospital	Hospital
Industrial	Industrial
Lake	Lake
Technology Light Manufacturing	Technology Light Manufacturing
Four Corners Village	Union Lake/Four Towns
Commerce Town Center	Commerce Town Center
School	School
Community Facilities	Community Facilities
Township Park	Park
State Land	State Land
-	Commerce Village
-	Corporate Campus



## Future Land Use Descriptions

The Future Land Use Map is accompanied by text that describes the categories shown on the map and support the future land use map by providing context and general direction to guide land use decisions, including new zoning standards as well as for special land uses, rezonings and other Township improvements.

### Residential

Residential land use is divided into three categories: single family residential, multiple family residential and manufactured housing community to provide a variety of housing options in the Township that support people of all ages, abilities and income levels.

The Township is predominantly developed with single family residential neighborhoods and envisions retaining this type of housing in the north half of the community; some commercial uses may help support the ability for residents to reduce vehicular trips and enjoy a more walkable environment. Multiple family residential is envisioned in the Five & Main area and along the M-5 corridor to provide more “rooftops” to support commercial and employment activity in those areas. Existing manufactured housing communities are expected to remain and be maintained and improved into the future.

Areas designated for single family residential use include single family homes, along with appropriate public and semi-public uses such as schools, community facilities, parks, and places of worship. Some residential areas may be appropriate for alternative housing types, such as accessory dwellings, duplex, tri-plex and quad-plex units, when compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and when supported by neighborhood commercial uses within walking and biking distance to reduce automobile traffic and promote community health. To preserve open space and the character of the Township, the cluster development option may be used. Residential development on arterial roads should provide a local street network that connects to adjacent neighborhoods, promoting connectivity and restricting access from arterial roads to new residential homes.

### Rural Residential

The rural residential district is designated for low-density land uses similar to existing residential development in the northwest quadrant of the Township. These areas are separate from higher intensity uses and are primarily intended for single-family homes with one or two accessory structures, one of which could serve as an accessory dwelling when the property owner lives on site. Characteristics of development may include larger homes with an emphasis on the landscaped or natural spaces between homes. Alternatively, development in the rural residential areas could be developed using cluster development option to provide for efficient development, while preserving natural resources and common open space for the enjoyment of residents. New development should provide non-motorized facilities, such as sidewalks or pathways, that connect to the larger non-motorized transportation network in the Township and region.

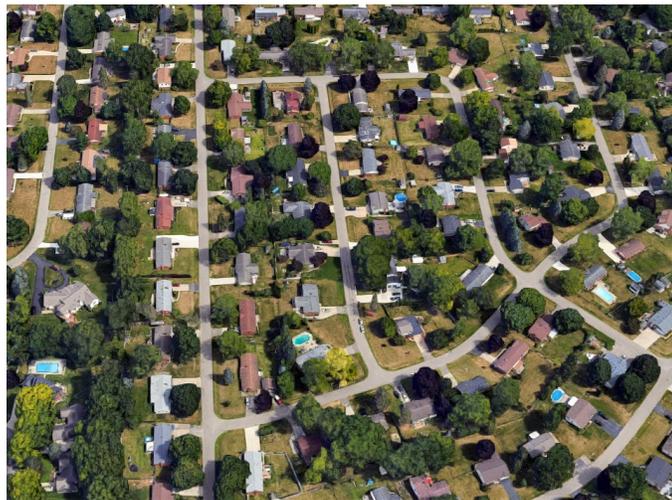
This land use is planned for low-density residential land uses with a maximum density of 2 dwelling units per acre (du/acre).



### Neighborhood Residential

The neighborhood residential classification is intended to mirror the more traditional residential neighborhoods currently found throughout the Township. A variety of housing types should be encouraged within this classification to serve people of all ages, abilities and income levels. Development closer to commercial and public/civic amenities should be laid out in a compact form that encourages walkability and connect to the non-motorized transportation network. Other housing types, including accessory dwellings, townhouses, duplexes, tri-plex and quad-plex homes could be developed in a way that complements a predominantly single-family neighborhood to provide additional housing options for younger and older residents, when located within walking distance to schools, parks and commercial areas. These dwelling types are not intended to increase the overall density of a residential development and may be appropriate if designed to be compatible with surrounding uses in terms of landscaping, open space, building mass and quality materials.

This land use is planned for 3.5 du/acre.



### Cottage Residential

Most of the homes on the Township's lakes were developed as cottages years ago. While many cottages remain, many more have been expanded or replaced with year-round primary residences. Whether homes are located on the lake or in lakefront neighborhoods, they should be maintained in good condition and be allowed to expand or redevelop in a way that is consistent with the neighborhood. This may mean larger homes on smaller lots; while such development is not discouraged, lakefront homes in particular should be designed to minimize their bulk and height on adjacent homes. Care should be taken in these neighborhoods to minimize impacts to shorelines and water quality, to protect the lakes for future generations of Township residents. New development should provide non-motorized facilities, such as sidewalks or pathways, that connect to the larger non-motorized transportation network in the Township and region.

This land use is planned for 3.5 du/acre.



### Multiple Family Residential

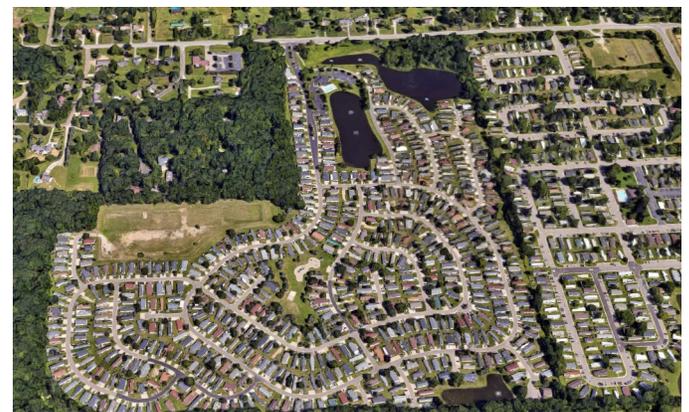
Multiple family residential uses are envisioned in areas with good access to major road networks, where compatible with surrounding uses and proximate to community facilities, including parks. There may be areas in which multiple family residential serves as a transitional use between single-family residential uses and high-volume roads or commercial areas. While existing multiple-family dwellings are somewhat scattered around the Township, new development should be strategically located to support commercial and employment-generating activities, and where the motorized and non-motorized transportation network can provide connectivity to workplaces, commercial areas and recreational amenities. Envisioned locations for multiple family residential include near the Five & Main development and the M-5 corridor.

Assisted or independent living senior facilities can also be incorporated into this district, as can senior facilities that provide a continuum of care; this type of housing should be located near public/civic uses and commercial areas to promote easy access. Multiple family residential uses should be of a high-quality design that is integrated with the character of the area. Cookie-cutter designs should be avoided.



### Manufactured Home Community

The manufactured housing designation provides for the ongoing maintenance and improvement to residential neighborhoods in the Township consisting of prefabricated housing moved to the site via road or rail. The character of these areas are to be the same as any other residential district in terms of landscaped or natural spaces and high-quality materials as appropriate. These areas should be in close proximity to schools, parks, and public safety facilities. Uses envisioned in the manufactured housing designation include detached single-family dwelling units, parks, places of worship, and community centers. Non-motorized connections should be provided within the development and along adjacent public streets to connect these neighborhoods to other Township destinations.



## Commercial

The Township envisions commercial areas to act as hubs for a variety of services and amenities that enhance the quality of life for residents. They provide residents with convenient access to retail shops, restaurants, entertainment venues, and other amenities that fulfill daily needs and foster social interactions. Commercial activities also bring visitors to the community, generate employment opportunities and contribute to economic growth. By providing spaces for businesses, commercial land uses attract investment, foster entrepreneurship, and stimulate the local economy, increasing tax revenues, job creation, and overall prosperity.

While the Township developed in a suburban manner similar to nearby communities, the vision for the future is for commercial land uses to be located in ways that encourage walkability, reduce commute times, and promote a more unique form that enhances the natural environment.

### Neighborhood Commercial

The neighborhood commercial district is planned for smaller retail and service uses that serve the local area, generally meeting the day-to-day needs of residents, such as groceries, dry cleaning, small restaurants, etc. as well as small office-service uses. The uses in neighborhood commercial should help to promote healthy neighborhoods and overall quality of life. Neighborhood commercial developments are generally limited to 3-10 acre sites with frontage on major roads.

Neighborhood commercial uses are planned within easy reach of residential areas, offering sidewalks or pathways to support access on foot or by bicycle, limiting reliance on the personal automobile for short trips. The architecture for development should be on a human scale and reflect the character of the area.

A mix of commercial and residential uses, such as townhomes, duplex, triplex or quadplex housing also may be allowed in a neighborhood commercial development, provided that the neighborhood commercial uses serve existing and future residents.



### Community Commercial

Community commercial uses serve the needs of the entire Township and include uses such as large grocery stores, hardware stores, general merchandise and larger office-service uses. These developments should be on larger parcels than traditional neighborhood commercial centers where the road network supports additional vehicular traffic. These uses are planned to continue almost exclusively in the eastern half of the Township, fronting Haggerty Road and at major intersections such as Union Lake and Commerce Roads. Existing and future community commercial businesses should be well maintained and have quality design.



## General Commercial

General commercial uses serve a regional market. Examples of general commercial uses include department stores, “big-box” home improvements centers, larger office-service uses and automobile-oriented goods and services. General commercial centers are typically anchored by one or more full-line department stores and are located on a site area of 30 acres or more, although smaller sites in these areas may accommodate more intense commercial uses than would be expected in a neighborhood or community commercial area.

General commercial uses are planned along Haggerty Road/M-5 corridor, M-5/Pontiac Trail to take advantage of the regional transportation network. Despite their automobile-oriented nature, given the location of these areas near the regional trail network, it is expected that development accommodates pedestrian and bicycle traffic by connecting to the trail network and providing related amenities such as bike racks, repair stations and visible seating.

Infill and outlot development is encouraged on existing parcels with excessive parking, to reduce the visual impact of surface parking and improve walkability between uses. Impervious surface coverage should be minimized to the extent possible to better manage stormwater in commercial areas.



## Industrial

Industrial uses are divided into two categories:

### Technology Light Manufacturing (TLM)

The TLM land use classification is to provide an environment where high tech uses and functions such as engineering, design, research and development along with light manufacturing activities can locate. Accessory uses for employees of these complexes, such as food service, health clubs and convenience stores should be incorporated into the overall design to provide goods and services for the convenience of employees on site. Most of the area designed TLM uses is located immediately north and east of the Commerce Town Center development area. Non-motorized trail connections should be provided and enhanced as an amenity to attract workers to the Township. Any outdoor storage should be limited, accessory to a principal use, and well-screened from neighboring uses.



### Industrial

Traditional industrial land uses are planned for areas with good access to regional transportation and utilities. Technology light manufacturing uses and traditional light industrial uses, such as warehousing, manufacturing, and assembly are appropriate for land planned for Industrial. Most of the industrial is concentrated along Benstein between West Maple and McCoy.

Industrial buildings should be one to two stories in height and blend with the character of the area. All building facades facing a public street, highway, or residential areas should be of a high-quality design and buffered from adjacent non-industrial uses. Outdoor storage should be minimized over time and only be permitted as an accessory use to a principal use on site.



## Campus

The Campus designation is intended to convey a comprehensive, mixed-use type development for a specific user or related users. There are two types of Campus designations envisioned: Hospital Campus and Corporate Campus.

### Hospital Campus

Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital on Commerce Road has grown over the past several years to provide needed medical care in the greater community. It is expected to continue enhancements and expansions, perhaps beyond the property currently owned by the hospital. This may include additional medical offices, housing and related retail for the convenience of campus users. New buildings should be compatible with the current hospital in terms of design and height.

Expansion beyond current hospital ownership may be considered by the Township to the north and east with neighborhood commercial uses along Commerce Road and residential uses elsewhere.

The hospital campus is an important anchor in the North End. Non-motorized connectivity is essential in this area, for campus users and those residents nearby. Primary destinations include Walled Lake Northern High School, Commerce Village, Victory Park and the Commerce Township Community Library.



### Corporate Campus

The M-5 Corridor, anchored by the future build out of the Five & Main Commercial Center, provides great access and high visibility for corporate campus developments. This land use designation is intended to facilitate the transition of this area from industrial uses into a district that supports the growth and development of leading-edge research, technology, light manufacturing businesses and corporate offices.

Two large sites, the Williams International and Beaumont project, offer ample room for development and redevelopment, along with easy access to M-5 and the regional trail network. The Township prioritizes these sites for campus development. Uses will primarily be office-manufacturing related with ancillary commercial and limited residential uses expected, when cohesively developed. Development should incorporate natural features, such as wetlands, and regional trail access to create campus developments that are unique in the region.

The Rock Road Properties site east of M-5, south of Pontiac Trail, is currently developed with stand-alone industrial uses, but with its access, visibility and proximity to the Five & Main area, could also be assembled and redeveloped for a signature corporate campus-type development over the long term. In the short term, this area could transition into commercial/neighborhood-focused industrial with pop-up retail/food trucks and recreation-related goods and services. Businesses that support activity and uses in the Five & Main and primary campus areas are also envisioned.



## Mixed Use

### Union Lake/Four Towns

The Union Lake/Four Towns Land Use Category refers to the unincorporated places known as Union Lake and Four Towns, located in the northeastern corner of Commerce Township where four townships (Commerce, White Lake, Waterford and West Bloomfield) meet.

Buildings in this area sit close to Union Lake Road, creating a sense of place. Uses in the area attract walkers and bicyclists, despite limited sidewalks and pathways. The non-motorized network should be improved for safety and aesthetics. The site of the former public boat access remains an access point for non-motorized personal watercraft (canoes, kayaks, etc) and could be enhanced further. An improved pedestrian crossing could make the property west of the site, across Union Lake Road, more attractive for development. A mixture of single-family residential uses and neighborhood commercial uses are encouraged in this area, with commercial uses fronting on Union Lake and Cooley Lake Roads.



### Commerce Town Center

The Commerce Town Center Future Land Use Category distinguishes the area as unique to the north of where the M-5 connector ends. This area is currently owned and planned by the Commerce Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and is being marketed for a mix of uses from single family residential to commercial.

The Township Hall is located within the district and is connected to a 5.5-mile trail and parkway area that includes water features and wetlands. New single and multiple family residential developments have been built in the last few years, building a critical mass of users for community commercial, office and civic uses that will create a distinctive area with a sense of place. It is anticipated that additional housing will be needed to support commercial activities.

Connectivity is essential in and around this area, providing residents throughout the Township the opportunity to enjoy an identifiable community center. In addition, new development should be focused on and enhance the natural resources found in the area, incorporating new landscape treatments to complement those existing areas.



### Commerce Village

The Commerce Village area is the historic center of the Township. Today it offers a mix of uses, from single family residential homes to local business uses. This area includes some unique landmarks, including Mill Race Park and the Byers Homestead, and is walkable from several neighborhoods as well as from Commerce Elementary School. It is envisioned that the Village will continue to develop with local businesses that serve the nearby community, as well as to be enhanced with placemaking elements, such as street lights, street trees, and furnishings, that contribute to an authentic sense of place. Sidewalks in the Village will connect to the larger non-motorized transportation network.



### Other

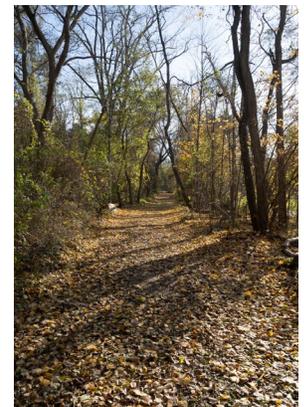
#### Schools

This land use category includes public schools that serve students of Walled Lake Consolidated and Huron Valley School districts. These schools are scattered throughout the Township and tend to be surrounded by single family residential development. While the Township has limited control of school properties themselves, it is recognized that support for walkers and bicyclists via non-motorized networks is essential. Sidewalks and pathways should connect schools to residential neighborhoods as well as to neighborhood commercial uses, providing opportunities for independence for students and the larger community. Should the use and ownership of school sites change, the Township envisions development consistent with the single-family future land use designation. The Township should engage in regular communication with local schools to be aware of facility changes or closures, and consider prospects for future private development on these sites.

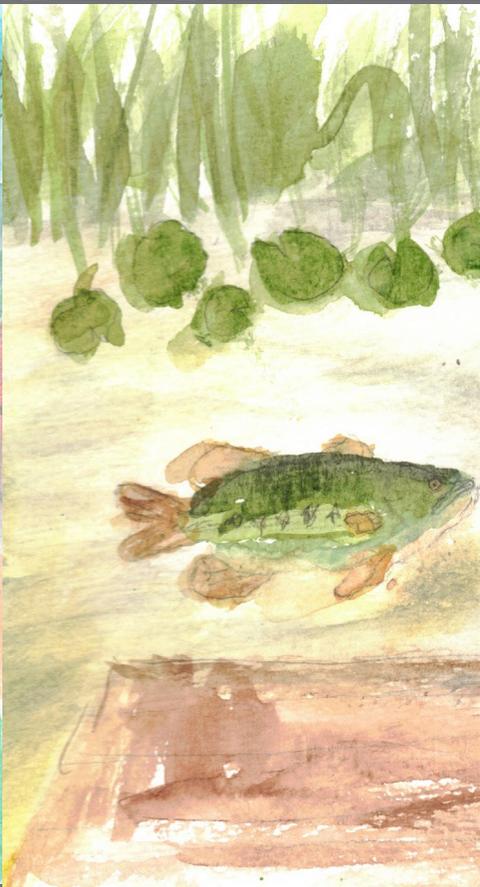


#### Park/Public Open Space & Community Facilities

The Township owns and operates several publicly owned parks and trail facilities that are included in this land use category, which also includes the Township Library and the Township's wastewater treatment plant. These facilities are envisioned to continue and be improved/expanded as needed. In addition, the Township is fortunate to have state recreation land within its borders, including the Proud Lake Recreation Area. This recreation area is expected to continue into the future. Areas reserved as open space include wetlands and key natural assets to be preserved.



# Implementation



# LONGS



Art contest honorable mentions (from top left, clockwise): Jaden Bachrach, 17; Theodore Kellerman, 7; Kendall Justusson, 7; Drew Nutter, 6; Elle Nutter, 8



# Implementation

The thoughtful preparation and adoption of any plan would be of diminished value without a program of implementation strategies. The implementation strategies of this chapter will assist the Township in putting the key recommendations of the Master Plan to work.

The implementation program is based on this plan’s goals and objectives ([“Goals & Objectives” on page 40](#)), prior planning efforts, and input received.

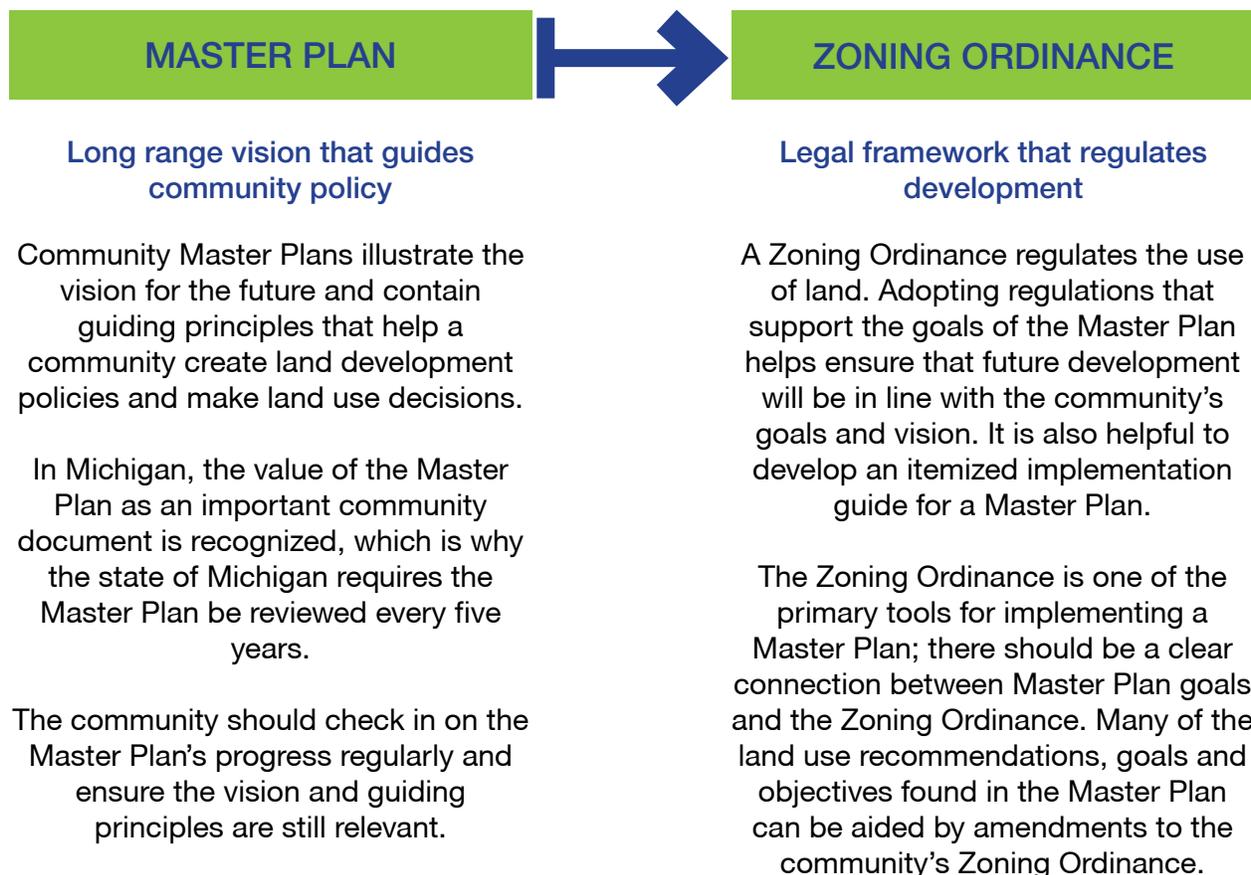
## Zoning Plan

The Zoning Plan for this Master Plan update shows how the Township’s planned long-range land use will be implemented through the use of zoning regulations.

Each future land use category should have an appropriate zoning framework for regulating development. There are a few zoning district classifications that may need to be amended to be consistent with the changes suggested in the Future Land Use Map and descriptions.

[Table 2](#) shows how the land uses of the Master Plan are intended to generally align with the Township’s zoning districts and the suggested Zoning Plan based on the changes proposed in the Future Land Use Map sections.

**Figure 2. Relationship between Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance**



**Key changes proposed for the 2023 Master Plan Update Zoning Plan:**

- Eliminating the Office zoning district and incorporating offices uses in commercial mixed use categories as appropriate
- Establishing a Corporate Campus District to provide better guidance for the areas along the M-5 corridor (see also the [“Commercial Center Area Plan”](#))
- Amending the Commerce Village Overlay District to provide better guidance for the historic village center of the Township (see also the [“North End Area Plan”](#))
- Refining the Union Lake Road Overlay District to the Union Lake/Four Towns Overlay District to more accurately and intentionally plan for the area (see also the [“North End Area Plan”](#))

**Table 2. 2023 Zoning Plan**

Future Land Use Category	Zoning District	
Rural Residential	R-1A	Large Lot One Family Residential
Neighborhood Residential	R-1B	One Family Residential
Cottage Residential	R-1C	One Family Residential
	R-1D	One Family Residential
Multiple Family Residential	R-2	Attached Residential
	RM	Multiple Family Residential
Manufactured Home Community	MHP	Mobile Home Park
Neighborhood Commercial	B-1	Local Business, Office
Community Commercial	B-2	Community Business
General Commercial	B-3	General Business
<b>Office Service</b>	<b>Ø</b>	<b>Office*</b>
Technology Light Manufacturing	TLM	Technology/Light Manufacturing
Industrial	I	Industrial
<b>Hospital Campus</b>	HF	Hospital Facilities
<b>Corporate Campus</b>	<b>CCD</b>	<b>Corporate Campus District (new)*</b>
Special Area Plans		Overlay Districts
<b>Four Corners Village</b>		<b>Union Lake Road Overlay</b>
<b>Union Lake/Four Towns</b>		<b>Union Lake/Four Towns Overlay*</b>
<b>Commerce Village</b>		Commerce Village Overlay*
Commerce Town Center		Town Center Overlay
Park	PRD	Public Recreation District
State Land	PRD	Public Recreation District
N/A	SPD	Special Purpose District

\*Updates to the Zoning Ordinance may be needed

## Action Items

Bringing plans to fruition is best done through consistent, incremental, and logical implementation of steps towards the final goals. The implementation matrices that follow are designed to show how the goals of the Master Plan are fulfilled by action items, or strategies. All boards and commissions are encouraged to read through the strategies to understand how they all work together to create a better community to live, work, and play.

In order to illustrate the connection between goals, objectives, and action strategies, each of the implementation matrices that follow align with the Master Plan goals, which are noted at the top of each matrix. Within each matrix, the action items are broken into subcategories intended to assist with identification and prioritization. Not all goals contain action items within each subcategory and some action items are repeated as they can advance more than one goal. The matrix subcategories are listed in [Table 3](#).

**Table 3. Implementation Action Item Types**

Action Item Type	Description
Zoning	These are items requiring zoning amendments and will generally be led by staff and the Planning Commission.
Advocacy	These will be items involving education of the community, including residents, business owners, property owners, developers and design professionals. They will be led by a combination of staff, boards and commissions. This may also involve Township staff and officials working with county and state officials to coordinate plans and funding, as appropriate.
Capital Improvement	These items involve large capital investments, such as equipment, projects or studies, that require inclusion into the Township’s Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs) in order to determine the most efficient time and method of completion and may involve multiple municipal departments.
Other	Other items may involve research, study, and further evaluation by staff and/or other boards and commissions.

The tables that follow assign actions to the goals and objectives, leaving room to establish priority levels for short-term, mid-term, and long-term items as the next step following adoption of this plan. This chapter should be reviewed periodically and at least annually to assess progress and adequately budget for specific strategies. Each action should have a “lead,” a board, commission, group, or individual who is responsible for project initiation and coordination.

**Table 4. Implementation Matrix Columns**

Matrix Column	Description
Action Item	The strategic actions necessary to carry out goals and objectives.
Lead Body	Identifies the primary party responsible for accomplishing the action item.
Priority / Time Frame	Identifies and prioritizes the time frame for the action item to be implemented. Generally, short time frames are intended as three years or less; medium time frames are three to five years, and long time frames are over five years. Priorities would generally be categorized as high, medium, or low.
Potential Funding Sources	Potential funding sources that could be utilized to accomplish the action item.
Potential Supporting Partners	Potential parties who may be involved in the accomplishment of the action item.
Abbreviations	PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOG = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation



After adoption, the Planning Commission will assign time frames or priorities to the action items. These time frames are intended as guides and may be adjusted as resources allow or as other issues arise. The plan should be treated as a living document and the Planning Commission is expected to make changes to the tables as needed.

## Implementation Tools and Techniques

The Commerce Township has a wide variety of tools and techniques at its disposal to help implement its long-range planning, including, but not limited to:

- Zoning Ordinance standards and Zoning Map
- Code enforcement
- Special design plans and study area plans
- Capital improvement program (CIP)
- Public-private partnerships (P3s or PPPs)
- Site plan, special land use, and rezoning review
- Special millages and assessments
- Local land trusts and conservancies
- Federal and state grant programs
- State and regional partnerships
- Tax increment financing, including existing DDA
- Tax abatements for industrial growth and commercial/obsolete property rehabilitations
- Parks and recreation planning
- Re-evaluation and adjustment of the Master Plan

## Metrics

In order to assist the Township with implementation, each objective has metrics associated with it that should be assessed annually, or as data is available. In some cases, new tools will need to be developed to help gauge success in order to garner support from both the community as well as appointed and elected officials. Metrics can be found in the [“Goals & Objectives”](#) chapter.

# Goal 1: Residential Development

To achieve well-planned, safe, balanced, and pleasant high-quality residential neighborhoods that meet the needs of all residents within the Township, today and in the future.

**Objectives:**

1. Allow a mix of housing types in neighborhood settings to meet the varying needs of residents now and in the future.
2. Encourage clustered residential developments that preserve land for open space or recreation.
3. Ensure new housing is located such that more compact development builds upon or influences areas of higher walkability.
4. Maintain and improve the quality and character of existing neighborhoods to preserve Commerce Township’s rural-suburban identity.
5. Encourage residential developments are linked to other key destinations in the Township by non-motorized pathways and sidewalks.

**Table 5. Action Items: Residential Development**

Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning</b>				
Z.1 Review and update as needed site improvement and design standards for all residential development/redevelopment with standards within the Zoning Ordinance for tree preservation, clustering options, single-family architectural variety design standards, and property maintenance.*	PC			
Z.2 Continue to require all new residential and non-residential development connect to the existing and planned regional trail system.	PC			
Z.3 Explore zoning amendments to allow two- and three-family homes in clustered single-family neighborhoods, requiring that homes are designed with features characteristic of a single-family home and compatible with surrounding areas.	PC			
Z.4 Consider updating the Zoning Ordinance to allow mixed uses with ground-floor commercial and residential above in the B-1 and B-2 zoning districts as a transitional use between residential and non-residential districts along major roadways where traffic impacts are minimized.	PC			
Z.5 Provide design standards for multi-family buildings.	PC			

\* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.

& Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.

The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:

<sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community & Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure

PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation



Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
Z.6 Explore permitting attached and detached accessory dwelling units in single family neighborhoods to support additional housing, with thoughtful provisions intended to protect neighborhood character.	PC			
Z.7 Review the Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance to ensure that a variety of housing types are allowed within walking distance of shopping, dining, entertainment, recreation, and employment options which offer goods and services for younger as well as older residents.	PC			
Z.8 Review and update lakefront zoning regulations as needed to ensure new homes and additions are compatible with existing lakefront neighborhoods.	PC			
Z.9 Review the Zoning Ordinance to consider strategies to discourage uses that are auto-oriented and exacerbate traffic and congestion as well as impede walkability; restrict these uses to high-intensity districts.	PC			
Z.10 Allow for residential mixed-use development in business districts to create opportunities that are economically viable and attractive for developers, while creating areas of greater foot traffic to strengthen local businesses.	PC			
<b>Advocacy</b>				
A.1 Support efforts to develop housing that meets the needs of all residents by encouraging the use of accessible design elements in new housing developments.	PC			
A.2 Support the development of age-friendly housing to meet the needs of the growing senior population as well as ensure housing is livable for those of all ages and abilities.	PC			
A.3 Consider conducting a housing market analysis to determine future demand for housing in Commerce Township, particularly for the Township’s aging populations.	PC			
A.4 Identify opportunities for workforce housing, particularly near the Huron Valley-Sinai hospital, Five & Main, and other large employment centers in the Township.	PC			
A.5 Explore funding that could help diversify the Township’s housing stock as appropriate (e.g. Oakland Together HTF).	PD			
<p>* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.</p> <p>&amp; Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.</p> <p>The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:</p> <p><sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community &amp; Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure</p> <p>PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation</p>				

Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Capital Improvement</b>				
<b>Other</b>				
O.1 Consider potential funding sources for all Master Plan action items that require funding. <sup>2,3,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.2 Discuss Master Plan implementation monthly as a regular agenda item on the Planning Commission meeting agenda. <sup>2,3,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.3 Prioritize zoning updates, considering sections in greatest need of revision and sections that can be updated with simple changes that have broad consensus by the Planning Commission. <sup>2,3,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.4 Complete an annual evaluation of Master Plan progress. <sup>2,3,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
<p>* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.</p> <p>&amp; Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.</p> <p>The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:  <sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community &amp; Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure                      PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation</p>				



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# Goal 2: Economic Development

Promote well-located, high-quality and diverse development in strategic areas of the community while mitigating impacts of development on neighboring residential uses. Create and nurture identifiable “downtown” type commercial activity centers.

**Objectives:**

1. Encourage commercial land uses that are aligned with the Community’s needs for goods and services.
2. Identify and support the community’s key economic drivers to advance prosperity and economic mobility within the Township.
3. Encourage commercial and industrial buildings that are pedestrian-oriented and neighborhood-scaled using traditional building materials that are complementary with surrounding development.
4. Create regulations that are flexible and adaptable to meet shifts in the market.
5. Provide employment opportunities for residents of Commerce Township.
6. Ensure that commercial and industrial uses are well-connected to regional motorized and non-motorized transportation networks, compatible with surrounding uses, and adequately buffered from residential zoning districts.
7. Encourage the gradual shift from heavy industrial uses with high external impacts to lower impact industrial uses as well as technology, office and commercial uses.
8. Evaluate and improve development review processes for clarity, efficiency, and effectiveness.
9. Apply placemaking strategies throughout the Township that reflect the community’s natural character.

**Table 6. Action Items: Economic Development**

Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning</b>				
Z.1 Review and update as needed site improvement standards, including design, landscaping, parking, and all other site standards for all nonresidential development, to reduce the visual and physical impact of vehicles and promote an attractive roadway aesthetic.*	PC			
Z.2 Explore applying the Township's design standards to development in the General Industrial zoning district, where such standards are currently not applicable.	PC			
<p>* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.</p> <p>&amp; Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.</p> <p>The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:</p> <p><sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community &amp; Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure</p> <p>PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation</p>				



Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
Z.3 Establish a new Corporate Campus zoning district to encourage concentration of new, high-quality research, technology, and corporate hubs that have regional access, high visibility, and complementary ancillary uses.	PC			
Z.4 Eliminate the Office zoning district and reclassify such parcels to a commercial zoning designation that aligns with market demand and is compatible with neighboring uses as outlined in the Township's Future Land Use map.	PC			
Z.5 Review regulations and standards for outdoor storage and consider whether additional restrictions or limitations may be desired to improve the appearance of such parcels.	PC			
Z.6 Consider adopting flexible zoning standards that incentivize development projects to meet specific Master Plan goals, such as reducing parking standards for projects that include a mixed-use component.	PC			
Z.7 Create flexible regulations to accommodate innovative and advanced technology manufacturing uses in Corporate Campus, TLM and Industrial districts, while maintaining adequate protections for surrounding property owners.	PC			
Z.8 Review and update as needed building material standards to allow modern materials that enhance and complement surrounding buildings and improve energy efficiency, while discouraging or minimizing the use of materials that are high maintenance and incompatible with surrounding buildings and the Township's traditional commercial aesthetic.	PC			
Z.9 Complete a comprehensive review of the Zoning Ordinance to identify opportunities to incorporate Master Plan recommendations and improve clarity and ease of use.	PC			
Z.10 Add graphics, images, and hyperlinking to the Zoning Ordinance to offer additional clarity and improve user-friendliness.	PC			
Z.11 Review the Zoning Ordinance process for reviewing uses that are not listed and are not similar to other uses listed in the Ordinance. This will allow for flexibility to provide for new uses that develop along with advancements in sustainability, technology and mobility.	PC			
Z.12 Review Planned Development regulations to ensure that regulatory flexibility results in a proportionate community benefit desired by the Township.	PC			

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<sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community & Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure

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Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
Z.13 Review the B-1 Local Business zoning district to ensure uses that meet the needs of surrounding residents are permitted in locations that are within walking distance.	PC			
Z.14 Review the business zoning districts and their permitted uses to align with the Master Plan's vision for these areas in the Township.	PC			
Z.15 Review the Township's overlay districts in light of the Master Plan recommendations and update as needed.	PC			
<b>Advocacy</b>				
A.1 Work with Oakland County Economic Development and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation on business attraction, expansion, and retention strategies that strengthen and enhance the Township's existing industry clusters. Explore engaging with the MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Communities program.	PD			
A.2 Create a wayfinding signage program along motorized and non-motorized transportation routes to direct residents and visitors to parks, trails, civic destinations, schools and commercial areas. <sup>3,6</sup>	PR			
A.3 Work with neighboring communities on economic development strategies in the Union Lake/Four Towns and Haggerty Road Corridor areas.	PD			
A.4 Create and support a public art program, working with partners including Huron Valley Arts.	PD			
A.5 Explore engagement with Main Street Oakland County for revitalization strategies in Commerce Village.	TB			
A.6 Encourage the redevelopment of brownfields located in the Township by supporting and promoting a variety of economic development tools, including assessment grants, the creation of a brownfield plan (TIF plan), EGLE grants, abatements (PA 146 - OPRA, PA 210 - CRA). Explore programs available through Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Services.*	TB			
A.7 Foster the preservation and aesthetic appearance of natural areas, golf courses, and recreational areas within the Township.*	PC			
* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.				
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<sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community & Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure				
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Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
A.8 Develop a Strategic Plan to consider the independence and needs of the growing aging population that resides within the Township.	TB			
A.9 Draft a Township-wide public participation plan to manage ongoing engagement with the public on planning projects and provide for effective and meaningful engagement during public hearings.	TB			
A.10 Develop an economic development strategy that reviews the local market and development context to offer recommendations for regional collaboration, tax incentives, development opportunities, infrastructure needs, business and retail attraction targets, talent supply, and feedback from applicants and the development community.	TB			
A.11 In addition to required noticing, announce key upcoming agenda items related to local development at Planning Commission and Township Board meetings during staff reports.	PC			
A.12 Conduct an annual survey of residents and stakeholders in the Township to review local perceptions of the Township's progress towards achieving Master Plan goals.	PD			
A.13 Conduct annual evaluation of progress towards achieving Master Plan goals by examining key performance metrics.	PD			
A.14 Work with property owners, developers, and the real estate community to transform the appearance of high-intensity industrial corridors, with façade improvements, landscaping, and a reduction in outdoor storage.	PC			
A.15 Explore Oakland County Department of Economic Development (OCED), Division of Planning & Local Business Development (PLBD) programs for support and coordination of economic development efforts (e.g., Environmental Stewardship, Historic Preservation Assistance, Trail, Water & Land Alliance (TWLA), and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (OCBRA)). <sup>3,4,5,6</sup>	PD			

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Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Capital Improvement</b>				
<b>Other</b>				
O.1 Provide resources for code enforcement to ensure the health, safety, welfare, and physical character of the Township is preserved, particularly for particularly for industrial uses that create substantial sound and visual impacts and those that store or use hazardous chemicals.*	PD			
O.2 Evaluate whether the Site and Architectural Design Manual for Commerce Township, prepared in 2002, should be referenced to facilitate development and redevelopment in Commerce Village and surrounding area. Make updates as needed.*	PC			
O.3 Consider potential funding sources for all Master Plan action items that require funding. <sup>1,3,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.4 Discuss Master Plan implementation monthly as a regular agenda item on the Planning Commission meeting agenda. <sup>1,3,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.5 Prioritize zoning updates, considering sections in greatest need of revision and sections that can be updated with simple changes that have broad consensus by the Planning Commission. <sup>1,3,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.6 Complete an annual evaluation of Master Plan progress. <sup>1,3,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
<p>* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.</p> <p>&amp; Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.</p> <p>The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:</p> <p><sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community &amp; Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure</p> <p>PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation</p>				



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# Goal 3: Transportation

With community and regional partners, provide motorized and non-motorized access and connections to permitted uses, while managing the conditions, safety, capacity, and the flow of traffic on the surrounding transportation network.

**Objectives:**

1. Improve vehicular and pedestrian safety by slowing traffic and providing safer crossings at key intersections throughout the Township.
2. Maintain, enhance, and expand the existing network of non-motorized pathways to commercial, cultural, civic, and recreational destinations in the Township.
3. Develop traffic-calming solutions in appropriate areas where vehicular speeds present safety concerns for adjacent non-motorized pathways.
4. Maintain and enhance the existing road network to improve traffic flow and capacity.
5. Foster the clustering of mixed, compatible uses to decrease vehicular trips.

**Table 7. Action Items: Transportation**

Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning</b>				
Z.1 Review and update as needed requirements for traffic studies associated with higher intensity development. <sup>6</sup>	PC			
Z.2 Consider areas of the Zoning Ordinance where amenities that support non-motorized transportation may be required or encouraged. <sup>6</sup>	PC			
Z.3 Review the parking schedule to ensure that parking is aligned with demand for each use and to reduce excessive impervious pavement.	PC			
<p>* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.</p> <p>The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:</p> <p><sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community &amp; Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure</p> <p>PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation</p>				



Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Advocacy</b>				
A.1 Encourage non-motorized transportation linkages via sidewalks and bike paths between commercial, residential, and recreation/open space areas of the Township as well as connect to the regional trail network.*	PC			
A.2 Engage in regular dialogue with MDOT and the RCOC to coordinate safety improvements for non-motorized transportation, needed road improvements and minimize negative impacts on existing land use patterns.* <sup>6</sup>	TB			
A.3 Advocate to local transit agencies for increased public transportation services following the recently passed County-wide public transportation millage. <sup>6</sup>	TB			
A.4 Apply for TAP grants for construction of pathways in developed areas.*	PD			
A.5 Coordinate pathway construction with existing and planned regional trail systems.* <sup>4,6</sup>	PD			
A.6 Work with property owners along Union Lake Road to improve pedestrian accessibility near the boat launch. <sup>6</sup>	PD			
A.7 Work with property owners in areas where future pathways are proposed to consider obstacles and secure any easements necessary. <sup>6</sup>	PD			
A.8 Consider the feasibility of new non-motorized connections on Township-owned property. <sup>6</sup>	TB			
A.9 Participate in further study and discussion to determine the long-term feasibility of a trail/path through the ITC Utility Corridor that traverses north/south in the northwest portion of the Township and could provide connectivity between Proud Lake Recreation Area and White Lake Township to the north. <sup>8,6</sup>	PD			
A.10 Explore Oakland County Department of Economic Development (OCED), Division of Planning & Local Business Development (PLBD) programs for support and assistance for planning and economic development efforts (e.g., Environmental Stewardship, Historic Preservation Assistance, Trail, Water & Land Alliance (TWLA), and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (OCBRA)). <sup>2,4,5,6</sup>	PD			

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Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Capital Improvement</b>				
C.1 Identify funding mechanisms to implement the Township's non-motorized transportation plan. <sup>6</sup>	TB			
C.2 Implement the Township's non-motorized transportation plan. <sup>6</sup>	TB			
C.3 Provide non-motorized linkages between Township greenspaces. <sup>4,5</sup>	TB			
C.4 Install sidewalks and other non-motorized pathway in Commerce Village along E. Commerce Road to connect public facilities, parks, shopping areas and the residential neighborhood; any right-of-way easements needed to complete this connection should be obtained.* <sup>6</sup>	TB			
C.5 Create a wayfinding signage program along motorized and non-motorized transportation routes to direct residents and visitors to parks, trails, civic destinations, schools and commercial areas. <sup>2</sup>	PR			
C.6 Prioritize sidewalk improvements that include short segments that, when completed, will connect into a larger network of non-motorized connection, particularly in high-density areas of the Township.	TB			
<b>Other</b>				
O.1 Explore how a Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant could help the Township and road agencies develop, complete, or supplement a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan and implement projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan to address a roadway safety problem.	RCOC			
O.2 Work with the RCOC to develop traffic-calming solutions that include on-street parking in the historic area of Commerce Village and for the area near Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital.*	TB			
O.3 Develop Complete Streets road construction and design standards that are compatible with the character of the surrounding land uses.*	TB			
O.4 Consider potential funding sources for all Master Plan action items that require funding. <sup>1,2,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.				
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Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
O.5 Discuss Master Plan implementation monthly as a regular agenda item on the Planning Commission meeting agenda. <sup>1,2,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.6 Prioritize zoning updates, considering sections in greatest need of revision and sections that can be updated with simple changes that have broad consensus by the Planning Commission. <sup>1,2,4,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.7 Complete an annual evaluation of Master Plan progress. <sup>1,2,4,5,6</sup>	PD			

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# Goal 4: Stewardship

Create a more sustainable and resilient future for the Township by identifying, protecting, preserving, and enhancing the unique and desirable natural features of Commerce Township.

**Objectives:**

1. Identify and preserve important natural assets in the Township.
2. Improve the quality of development to protect and enhance natural features.
3. Protect water and air quality.
4. Encourage and enhance resident access to natural features.
5. Promote community awareness of potential environmental risks and independent resiliency strategies.

**Table 8. Action Items: Stewardship**

Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning</b>				
Z.1 Continue to implement stormwater management design guidelines to ensure a more natural appearance of the required basins.*	PC			
Z.2 Consider opportunities to incorporate protections for steep slopes into the Zoning Ordinance.*	PC			
Z.3 Review and update plan review standards for environmental protection to better meet the intent of the Zoning Ordinance and this Master Plan.*	PC			
Z.4 Explore provisions or guidelines to expand tree canopy cover.	PC			
Z.5 Explore opportunities to develop new watershed, shoreline and lake protection standards.*	PC			
Z.6 Consider opportunities to incentivize energy efficiency and alternative energy in the Zoning Ordinance. <sup>4</sup>	PC			

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Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Advocacy</b>				
A.1 Seek out collaborative recreation opportunities with local school districts.	TB			
A.2 Continue membership and participation with Oakland County CISMA to combat invasive species in the county and Township.	PD			
A.3 Work with adjacent communities that share watersheds to develop a stormwater management plan to ensure water quality of the Township's lakes and rivers is maintained.*	TB			
A.4 Coordinate and collaborate with EGLE to review and improve the wetlands ordinance.*	TB			
A.5 Work with community organizations, such as conservancies or land trusts, to place conservation easements in areas where there are significant natural assets. Require a long-term maintenance plan for any new conservation areas.	TB			
A.6 Work with private developers to incorporate conservation easements into portions of new developments. Require a long-term maintenance plan for any new conservation areas.	PC			
A.7 Coordinate pathway construction with existing and planned regional trail systems.* <sup>3,6</sup>	PC			
A.8 Promote the cluster development tool as the Township's preferred development method for large residential projects.	PD			
A.9 Create a sustainability and resiliency plan to eliminate or reduce loss of life and property from shocks and hazards that may occur and protect the health, safety and economic interests of residents and business owners. This plan should include an assessment of specific hazards that may be expected to occur, including natural, manmade and health-related hazards and be consistent with Oakland County's Hazard Mitigation Plan.	PC			
A.10 Explore Oakland County Department of Economic Development (OCED), Division of Planning & Local Business Development (PLBD) programs for support and coordination of economic development efforts (e.g., Environmental Stewardship, Historic Preservation Assistance, Trail, Water & Land Alliance (TWLA), and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (OCBRA)). <sup>2,3,5,6</sup>	PD			

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Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Capital Improvement</b>				
C.1 Provide non-motorized linkages between Township greenspaces. <sup>3,5</sup>	TB			
<b>Other</b>				
O.1 Update the Parks and Recreation Plan every five years as required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR).	PR			
O.2 Continue efforts to make all community parks accessible for people of all ages and abilities.	PR			
O.3 Continue to formally adopt the Oakland County Hazard Mitigation Plan and evaluate how the plan reflects the needs of the community annually. Identify projects for which Commerce Township is eligible for FEMA hazard mitigation grants.	TB			
O.4 Consider adopting a groundwater protection ordinance focused on the monitoring, maintenance, and replacement of private septic systems.*	TB			
O.5 Identify areas in the Township where private septic systems are located and establish a timeline for connecting to the public sanitary sewer provided by the Township. Areas adjacent to or in close proximity to watercourses would be given priority.	PD			
O.6 Consider potential funding sources for all Master Plan action items that require funding. <sup>1,2,3,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.7 Discuss Master Plan implementation monthly as a regular agenda item on the Planning Commission meeting agenda. <sup>1,2,3,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.8 Prioritize zoning updates, considering sections in greatest need of revision and sections that can be updated with simple changes that have broad consensus by the Planning Commission. <sup>1,2,3,5,6</sup>	PD			
O.9 Complete an annual evaluation of Master Plan progress. <sup>1,2,3,5,6</sup>	PD			
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# Goal 5: Community and Public Facilities

To create a sustainable community that provides a wide variety of and awareness and access to recreational, civic, public safety and related services for residents and visitors alike.

**Objectives:**

1. Improve communication and awareness of the availability and scope of Township facilities and services.
2. Encourage and enhance access to community and public facilities that meet the needs of residents, workers, and visitors.
3. Partner with public and private partners to provide comprehensive access to additional facilities and services.
4. Maintain, improve and expand community facilities within the Township, as appropriate and fiscally responsible.
5. Provide high-quality, comprehensive, and diverse programming and events that meet community needs.

**Table 9. Action Items: Community and Public Facilities**

Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning</b>				
Z.1 Consider opportunities to incentivize energy efficiency and alternative energy in the Zoning Ordinance. <sup>4</sup>	PC			
<b>Advocacy</b>				
A.1 Continue to support the Richardson Center's programming to advance social connectivity among seniors.	PC			
A.2 Review and update the Township website as needed, to display information on all of the services provided by the Township, promote Township facilities, and communicate information about Township events.	PD			
A.3 Prioritize opportunities to improve non-motorized connections within public facilities, considering pedestrian connections through parking lots, around entrances, and along the frontage of streets.	PC			
A.4 Consider and plan for the future expansion and development of public facilities.	PC			
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Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
A.5 Collaborate with neighboring communities to provide shared access to public facilities.	PC			
A.6 Raise awareness of the new pickleball courts at the Richardson Center.	PC			
A.7 Develop an outreach program that keeps residents and businesses informed and engaged, such as “community walkabouts” and educational workshops.	PC			
A.8 Collaborate with parks and recreation, library, etc. to ensure that a range of programming is available for residents of all ages and abilities.	PC			
A.9 Encourage improvements to pedestrian linkages between Township greenspaces.*	PC			
A.10 Explore Oakland County Department of Economic Development (OCED), Division of Planning & Local Business Development (PLBD) programs for support and coordination of economic development efforts (e.g., Environmental Stewardship, Historic Preservation Assistance, Trail, Water & Land Alliance (TWLA), and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (OCBRA)). <sup>2,3,4,6</sup>	PD			
<b>Capital Improvement</b>				
C.1 Consider capital improvements to public facilities to support programming and events desired by the community.	TB			
C.2 Hire dedicated marketing staff committed to raising awareness about facilities and programming in the Township.	TB			
C.3 Provide non-motorized linkages between Township greenspaces. <sup>3,4</sup>	TB			
<p>* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.</p> <p>&amp; Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.</p> <p>The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:</p> <p><sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community &amp; Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure</p> <p>PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation</p>				

Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Other</b>				
O.1 Implement standards and/or strategies to improve public facilities through partnership with Township stakeholders.	TB			
O.2 Maintain the Township-owned properties in Commerce Village - Byer's Farm, Mill Race Park, the Township Cemetery and Dodge Park - as public spaces. Low-intensity public uses emphasizing the history of the Village may be developed.*	PR			
O.3 Include an active recreation plan in the next Parks and Recreation plan update to encourage the implementation of additional active recreational uses (i.e., soccer, football, baseball). The plan should include methods of financing and managing the recreational use.	PR			
O.4 Consider potential funding sources for all Master Plan action items that require funding. <sup>1,2,3,4,6</sup>	PD			
O.5 Discuss Master Plan implementation monthly as a regular agenda item on the Planning Commission meeting agenda. <sup>1,2,3,4,6</sup>	PD			
O.6 Prioritize zoning updates, considering sections in greatest need of revision and sections that can be updated with simple changes that have broad consensus by the Planning Commission. <sup>1,2,3,4,6</sup>	PD			
O.7 Complete an annual evaluation of Master Plan progress. <sup>1,2,3,4,6</sup>	PD			
* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.				
& Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.				
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<sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community & Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure				
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# Goal 6: Infrastructure

Provide, maintain, and improve the Township’s existing infrastructure, including water, sewer, and other utilities, roads, and advanced technological connectivity needed for residents and businesses.

**Objectives:**

1. Ensure effective management of resources and infrastructure for all residents and businesses.
2. Pursue opportunities and partnerships with local agencies and adjacent communities to facilitate cooperative and sustainable long-term infrastructure management.
3. Improve roads, water, sewer, and other infrastructure to accommodate future growth, as appropriate.
4. Encourage installation of alternative energy facilities, as appropriate.
5. Improve stormwater management to maintain the Township’s water quality and natural features.

**Table 10. Action Items: Infrastructure**

Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning</b>				
Z.1 Review and update as needed requirements for traffic studies associated with higher intensity development.*	PC			
Z.2 Consider areas of the Zoning Ordinance where amenities that support non-motorized transportation may be required or encouraged.	PC			
<b>Advocacy</b>				
A.1 Encourage non-motorized transportation linkages via sidewalks and bike paths between commercial, residential, and recreation/open space areas of the Township as well as connect to the regional trail network.*	PC			
A.2 Engage in regular dialogue with the MDOT and RCOC to coordinate safety improvements for non-motorized transportation, needed road improvements and minimize negative impacts on existing land use patterns.*, <sup>3</sup>	TB			
A.3 Advocate to local transit agencies for increased public transportation services following the recently passed County-wide public transportation millage. <sup>3</sup>	TB			
* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.				
<sup>8</sup> Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.				
The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:				
<sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community & Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure				
PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation				



Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
A.4 Apply for TAP grants for construction of pathways in developed areas. <sup>3</sup>	PD			
A.5 Coordinate pathway construction with existing and planned regional trail systems.* <sup>3,4</sup>	PD			
A.6 Work with property owners along Union Lake Road to improve pedestrian accessibility near the boat launch. <sup>3</sup>	PD			
A.7 Work with property owners in areas where future pathways are proposed to consider obstacles and secure any easements necessary. <sup>3</sup>	PD			
A.8 Consider the feasibility of new non-motorized connections on Township-owned property. <sup>3</sup>	TB			
A.9 Participate in further study and discussion to determine the long-term feasibility of a trail/path through the ITC Utility Corridor that traverses north/south in the northwest portion of the Township and could provide connectivity between Proud Lake Recreation Area and White Lake Township to the north.* <sup>3</sup>	PD			
A.10 Explore Oakland County Department of Economic Development (OCED), Division of Planning & Local Business Development (PLBD) programs for support and coordination of economic development efforts (e.g., Environmental Stewardship, Historic Preservation Assistance, Trail, Water & Land Alliance (TWLA), and Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (OCBRA)). <sup>2,3,4,5</sup>	PD			
<b>Capital Improvement</b>				
C.1 Identify funding mechanisms to implement the Township's non-motorized transportation plan. <sup>3</sup>	TB			
C.2 Implement the Township's non-motorized transportation plan.	TB			
C.3 Extend water and sewer service gradually and logically throughout the Township. Place priority on areas with environmental constraints (around the lakes) and existing or planned development (around the existing neighborhoods, Commerce Village and Union Lake Village). Place lower priority on areas in the northwest to prevent premature development of the more rural part of the Township.	TB			
* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.				
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The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:				
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PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation				

Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
C.4 Create a wayfinding signage program along motorized and non-motorized transportation routes to direct residents and visitors to parks, trails, civic destinations, schools and commercial areas. <sup>2,3</sup>	PR			
C.5 Prioritize sidewalk improvements that include short segments that, when completed, will connect into a larger network of non-motorized connection, particularly in high density areas of the Township.	TB			
C.6 Install sidewalks and other non-motorized pathway in Commerce Village along E. Commerce Road to connect public facilities, parks, shopping areas and the residential neighborhood; any right-of-way easements needed to complete this connection should be obtained. <sup>*,3</sup>	TB			
<b>Other</b>				
O.1 Continue efforts to maintain stormwater through the Townships recently established Stormwater Pollution Prevention Initiative (SWPPI).*	TB			
O.2 Aging septic fields are a potential source of water pollution. Consider creating an alternative financing method for installation of sanitary sewer extension for lakefront property when a SAD cannot be created in time to prevent serious water pollution.	TB			
O.3 Establish a program for identifying and evaluating areas with failing or direct discharge septic systems, followed by a method for prioritizing special assessment districts to connect residents and businesses to public water and sewer.*	PD			
O.4 Evaluate infrastructure, including broadband, water, sewer, roads and multi-use pathways, to ensure housing is connected and supported as appropriate.	TB			
O.5 Consider potential funding sources for all Master Plan action items that require funding. <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>	PD			
O.6 Discuss Master Plan implementation monthly as a regular agenda item on the Planning Commission meeting agenda. <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>	PD			
<p>* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.</p> <p><sup>8</sup> Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.</p> <p>The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:</p> <p><sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community &amp; Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure</p> <p>PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation</p>				



Action Item	Lead Body	Priority / Time Frame	Potential Funding Source	Potential Supporting Partners
O.7 Prioritize zoning updates, considering sections in greatest need of revision and sections that can be updated with simple changes that have broad consensus by the Planning Commission. <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>	PD			
O.8 Complete an annual evaluation of Master Plan progress. <sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>	PD			
<p>* Indicates an action item was originally included in the 2015 Master Plan. These items may have been clarified or adapted to fit the Township goals for this plan process.</p> <p>&amp; Indicates an action item has been added from the 2019-2023 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan.</p> <p>The following symbols are used if an action item is also included as an action item for another goal:</p> <p><sup>1</sup> Residential Development, <sup>2</sup> Economic Development, <sup>3</sup> Transportation <sup>4</sup> Stewardship <sup>5</sup> Community &amp; Public Facilities <sup>6</sup> Infrastructure</p> <p>PC = Planning Commission; PD = Planning Department; TB = Township Board of Trustees; PR = Parks and Recreation; NA = Not Applicable; RCOC = Road Commission for Oakland County; MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation</p>				

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# Appendix A

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## Existing Conditions

# Appendix A: Existing Conditions

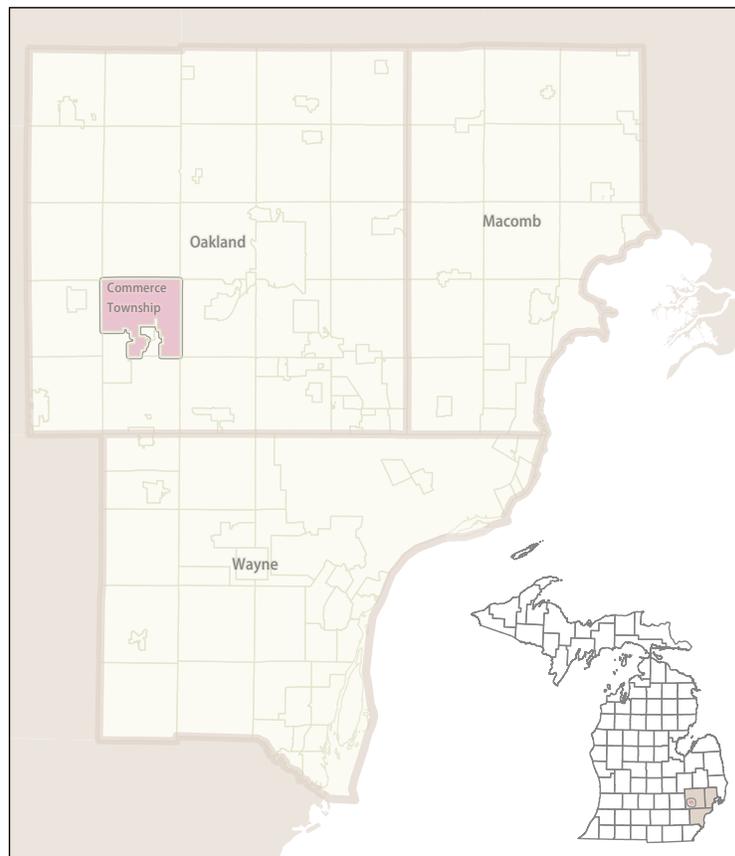
## Location

Commerce Township is located in Oakland County, in the southeastern part of the state of Michigan. The Township is surrounded by White Lake Township to the north; West Bloomfield Township to the east; Milford Township to the west; and the Village of Wolverine Lake and the cities of Wixom, Novi and Walled Lake are along its southern border.

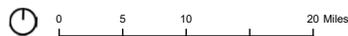
The Village of Wolverine Lake is part of Commerce Township in Oakland County, but operates separately for administration and ordinance adoption. The Village residents pay Commerce Township taxes for services, such as fire protection.

Commerce Township is just north of major transportation arteries, including I-96, I-275, and I-696, which connect the Township with the rest of the Detroit Metropolitan Area.

Map 6. Location Map



Data Source: Municipal Boundaries: Access Oakland. Map Exported: August 02, 2022. ©2022 Giffels Webster.

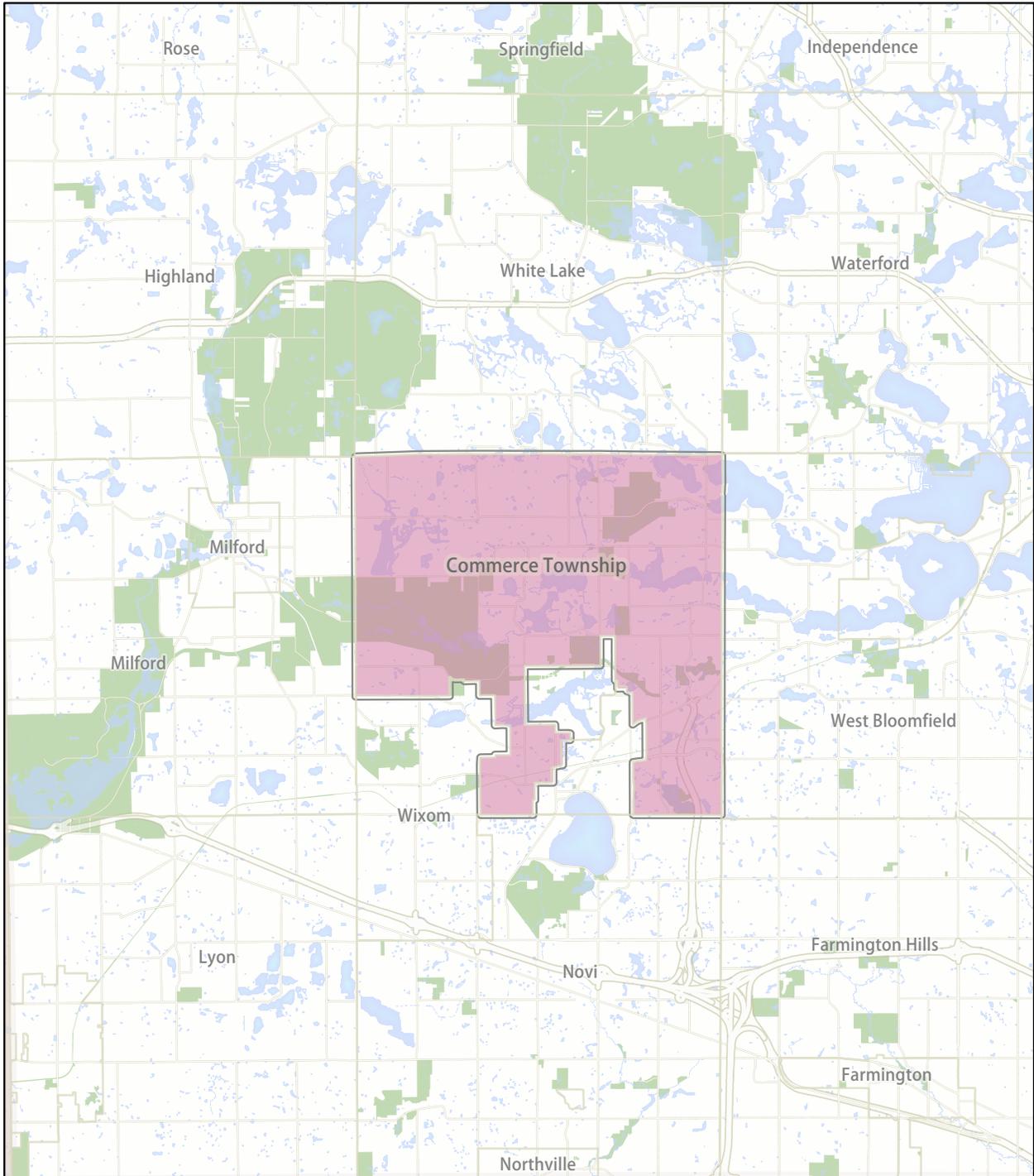


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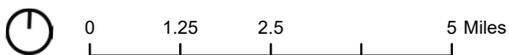
REGIONAL LOCATOR  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP



Map 7. Regional Setting



Data Source: Municipal Boundaries: Access Oakland. Map Exported: August 02, 2022. ©2022 Giffels Webster.



**LOCAL LOCATOR**  
**COMMERCE TOWNSHIP**

## Demographics

Understanding the demographics of a community is vital to sound policy making and planning. Demographics inform the trends in population, aging, migration, local economies, and much more. Master Plans rely on demographic analysis to better prepare for the issues and demands facing a community in the present and the future. The demographic makeup of a community contains valuable information that effects the types of resources, programming, and physical infrastructure required to meet the needs of residents and businesses. It should be noted that data from the 2020 Decennial Census is only partially available and for most data, the 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates is used. Since ACS data consists of estimates and not counts, the data can have large margins of error and may be less reliable.

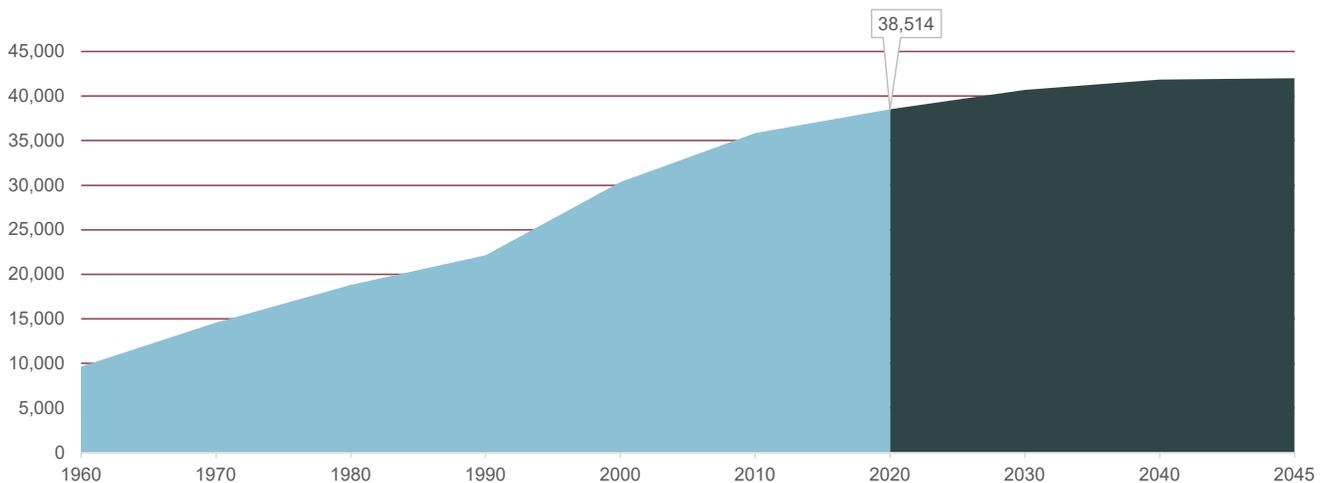
In summary,

- The population is projected to continue increase through 2045, although at a slower rate than in previous decades before 2010.
- The population is aging; median age increased by one year as the five to nine year old age cohort decreases and over 65 year cohort increases.
- The projected population forecast shows a significant increase in the 65+ age groups.
- School enrollment is declining in both the Walled Lake and Huron Valley school districts.
- Building permits for multiple-family housing units have increased in the past five years.

## Population

In 2020, the Township had a total population of 38,514, a 7% increase from the 2010 US Census report of 35,874 people. [Figure 3](#) illustrates the Township’s dramatic population growth in the 1990s and the slow growth projected through 2045.

**Figure 3. Population History and Projection, 1960-2045**



Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

## Population Forecast

Table 11 and Figure 4 provide information about the percent distribution of age groups in 2015 and projected data for the years from 2020 to 2045. The percent distribution of different age groups in Commerce Township is fairly consistent through 2045, even though the numbers indicate significant rise in the older adult population by 2045 (a nearly 70% increase in the 65-84 age group and 177% increase in those over 85 years of age), This suggests that the Township should consider policies to accommodate the needs of aging adults within the community. These policies should include not only housing, but transportation, the availability of goods and services and social/civic needs.

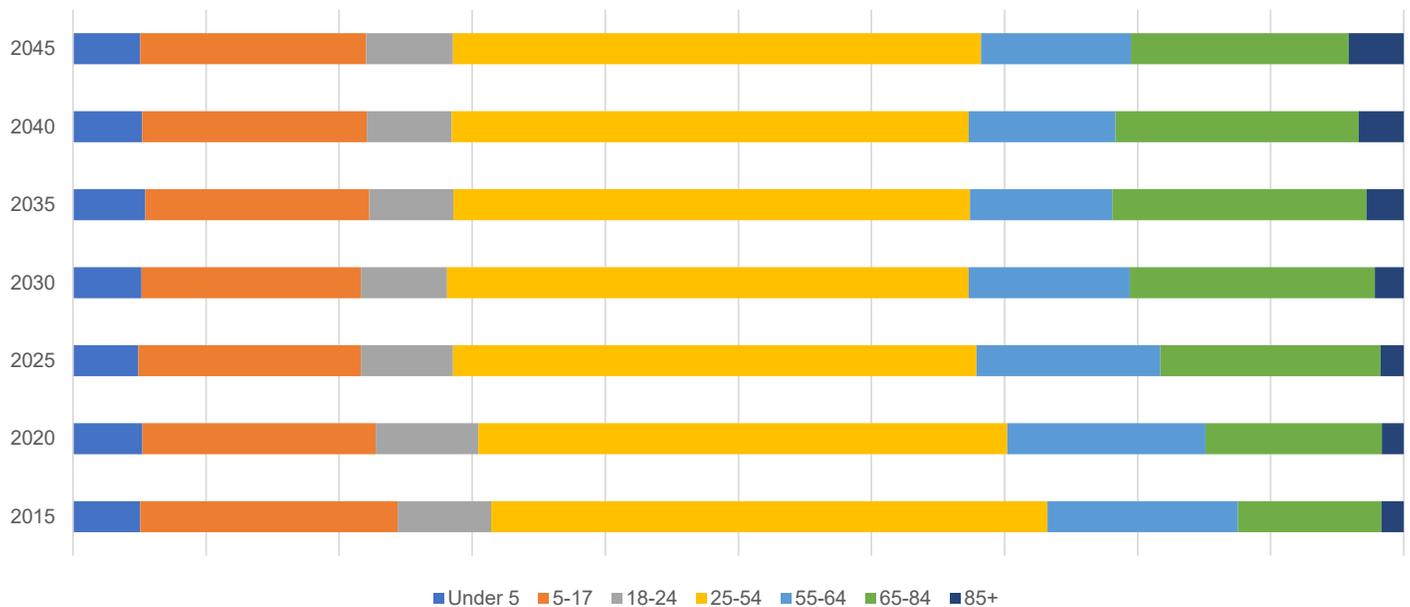
**Table 11. Projected Population by Age, 2015-2045**

Age Group	2015	2030	2045	Percent Change, 2015-2045
Under 5	1,904	2,101	2,120	11.30%
5-17	7,272	6,705	7,135	-1.90%
18-24	2,636	2,632	2,744	4.10%
25-54	15,723	15,948	16,671	6%
55-64	5,385	4,926	4,741	-12%
65-84	4,056	7,497	6,869	69.40%
85+	631	881	1,743	176.20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,607</b>	<b>40,690</b>	<b>42,023</b>	<b>11.70%</b>

Note: Population by age changes over time because of the aging of people into older age groups, the movement of people, and the occurrence of births and deaths.

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

**Figure 4. Population Projection by Age Group, 2015-2045**



Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

## Population Growth

Many communities surrounding Commerce have been experiencing an increase in population since 2000. The City of Novi is the most populated community nearby, with West Bloomfield Township a very close second. Commerce Township is third in the area, with White Lake Township fourth. Those communities will likely stay in roughly the same order through 2045, although Commerce Township is projected to have the highest percentage growth.

Many demographic trends, including changes to population, growth rates, age distribution, and income, impact future land use. National and regional trends can help provide additional information for local communities. Noteworthy national and regional trends include:

- Birth rates in the United States have been falling almost continuously for more than a decade. The 2020 Census showed the lowest birthrate in US history of 11.0 births per 1,000 people. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, for every 1,000 women of childbearing age (15-44), 55.8 of them gave birth in 2020. When compared to 2007 (69.5 births for every 1,000 women of childbearing age), this is a 20% decline in birth rates. Additionally, data from the World Bank shows fertility rates (an estimate of the total number of children a woman will ever have) also at a historically low level, at 1.7 births per woman in 2019.
- The marriage rate in the US continues to decline. According to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the rate was 5.1 per 1,000 people in 2020. A rate this low was likely impacted by the pandemic, however, it is a 1% drop from the 2019 rate, and follows a several decades-long trend of fewer marriages.
- The US population is aging. By 2030, every “Baby Boomer” will be 65 years old or older, making 20% of the US population of retirement age.
- As the population ages and fewer babies are born, the 65+ age group will outnumber the 18 and under age group for several years.

The State of Michigan experienced increasing population growth between 2010 and 2020, but the last two years have reversed this trend. While some population is due to the difference between birth and death rates, this shift is largely attributed to domestic out-migration. Oakland County is among Michigan’s top five counties with the largest residential exodus.

**Table 12. Population Growth in Commerce Township and Surrounding Communities, 1990-2045**

Community	1990	2010	2020	Percent Change, 2010-2020	2045	Projected Change, 2020-2045
<b>Commerce Township</b>	<b>22,228</b>	<b>35,874</b>	<b>38,514</b>	<b>7.40%</b>	<b>42,023</b>	<b>9.1%</b>
City of Novi	33,148	55,224	66,243	20.00%	67,417	1.8%
City of Walled Lake	6,278	6,999	7,250	3.60%	7,860	8.4%
City of Wixom	8,550	13,498	17,193	27.40%	17,066	-0.7%
Milford Township	6,610	9,561	10,570	10.60%	11,034	4.4%
Village of Wolverine Lake	4,727	4,312	4,544	5.40%	4,431	-2.5%
West Bloomfield Township	54,507	64,690	65,888	1.90%	69,854	6.0%
White Lake Township	22,608	30,019	30,950	3.10%	32,194	4.0%
Oakland County	1,083,592	1,202,362	1,274,395	6.00%	1,319,089	3.5%

Note: Population by age changes over time because of the aging of people into older age groups, the movement of people, and the occurrence of births and deaths.

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles



## Race

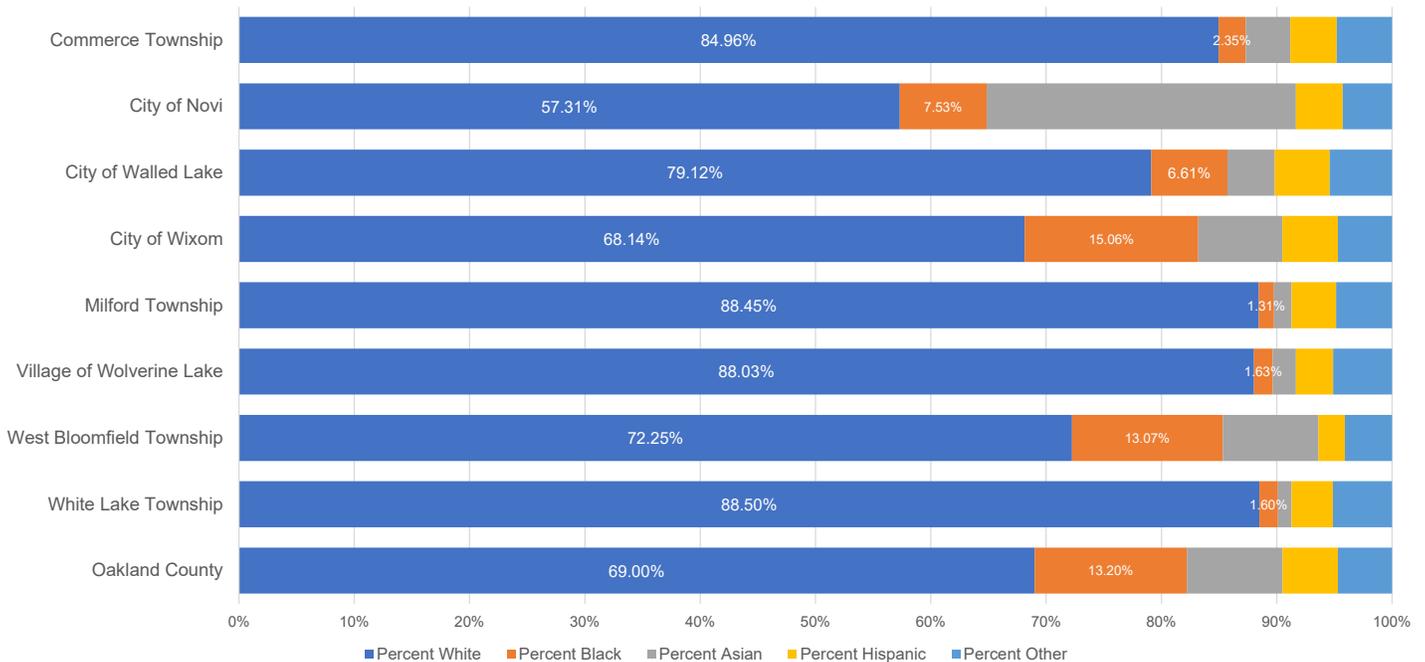
According to the latest count available from the Decennial Census, the racial composition of Commerce Township is predominately white at 85%, and has become more diverse between 2010 and 2020, detailed in [Table 13](#). The Township is similar in composition to several surrounding communities, but is notably less diverse compared to Novi, Wixom, West Bloomfield, and Oakland County at large.

**Table 13. Race Distribution, 2010-2020**

Race and Hispanic Origin	2010	Percent of Population 2010	2020	Percent of Population 2020	Percentage Point Change 2010-2020	Percent of Population Change (2010-2020)
Non-Hispanic	34,937	97.40%	36,966	96%	-1.40%	-1.4%
White	32,775	91.40%	32,723	85%	-6.40%	-7.0%
Black	608	1.70%	905	2.30%	0.70%	35.3%
Asian	930	2.60%	1,488	3.90%	1.30%	50.0%
Multi-Racial	516	1.40%	1,630	4.20%	2.80%	200.0%
Other	108	0.30%	220	0.60%	0.30%	100.0%
Hispanic	937	2.60%	1,548	4%	1.40%	53.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,874</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>38,514</b>	<b>100%</b>		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census

**Figure 5. Racial Composition in Commerce Township and Surrounding Communities, 2020**

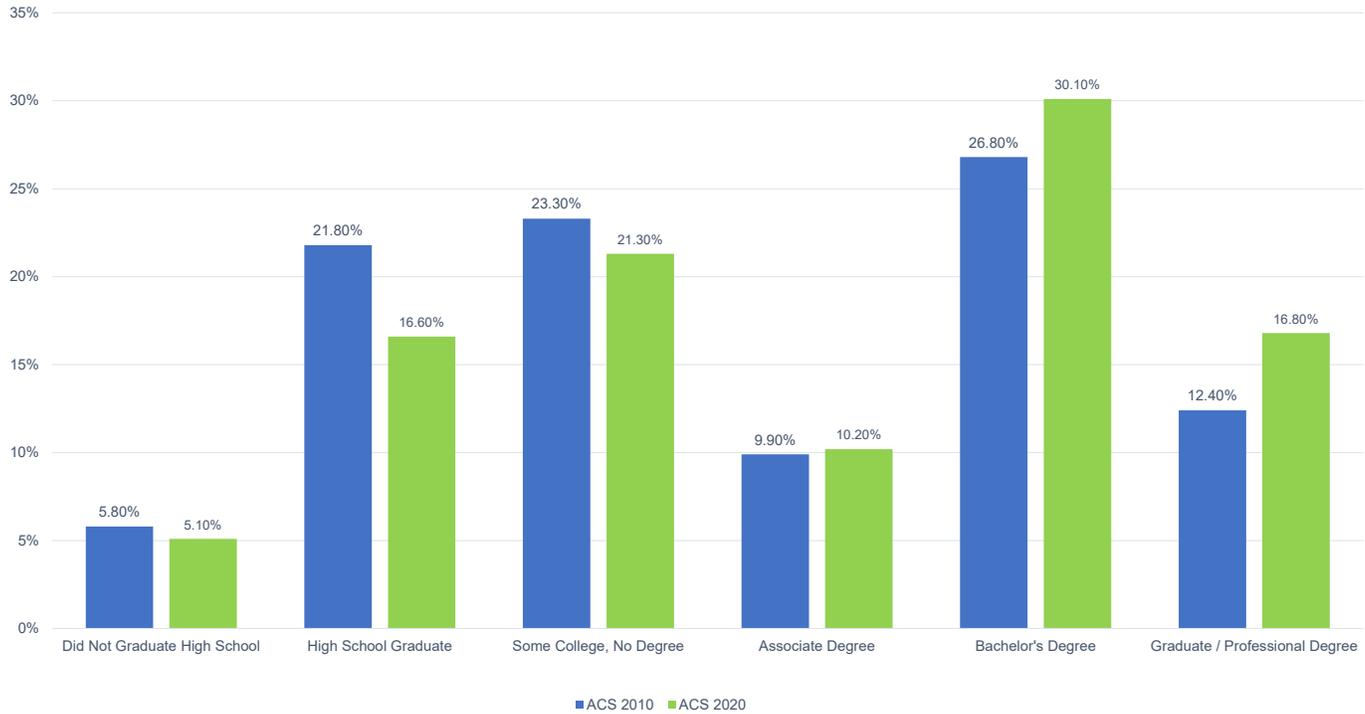


Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

## Educational Attainment

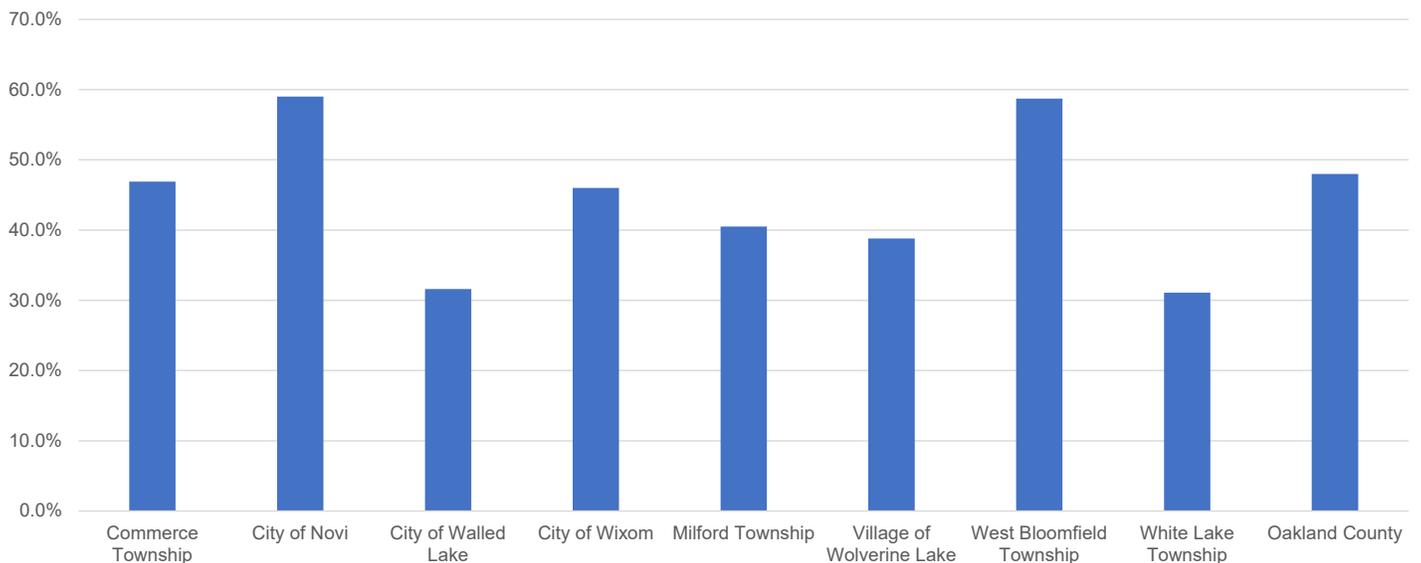
The highest levels of educational attainment result in a higher skill set and ultimately contribute to the local job growth. In general, about 47% of residents older than 25 years have a Bachelor’s degree or higher, an increase from about 41% in 2010. This is in spite of declining school enrollments over the last decade (see [Figure 8](#)).

**Figure 6. Educational Attainment (Age 25+), 2010-2020**



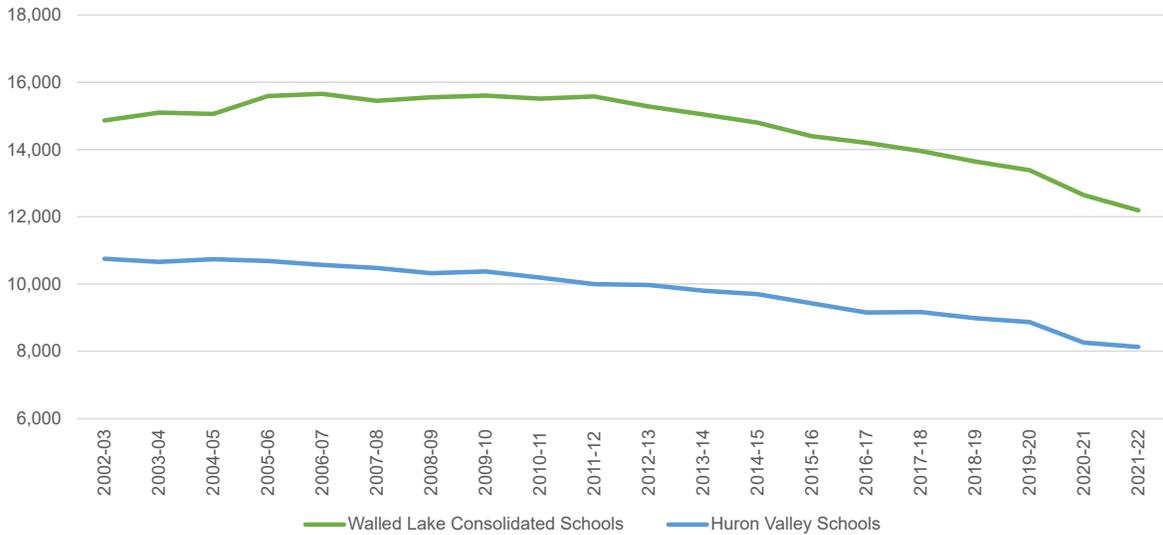
Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

**Figure 7. Percent of Population (Age 25+) with Bachelor’s Degree or Higher in Commerce Township and Surrounding Communities, 2020**



Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

**Figure 8. School Enrollment Trends, 2012-2022**



Source: MI School Data

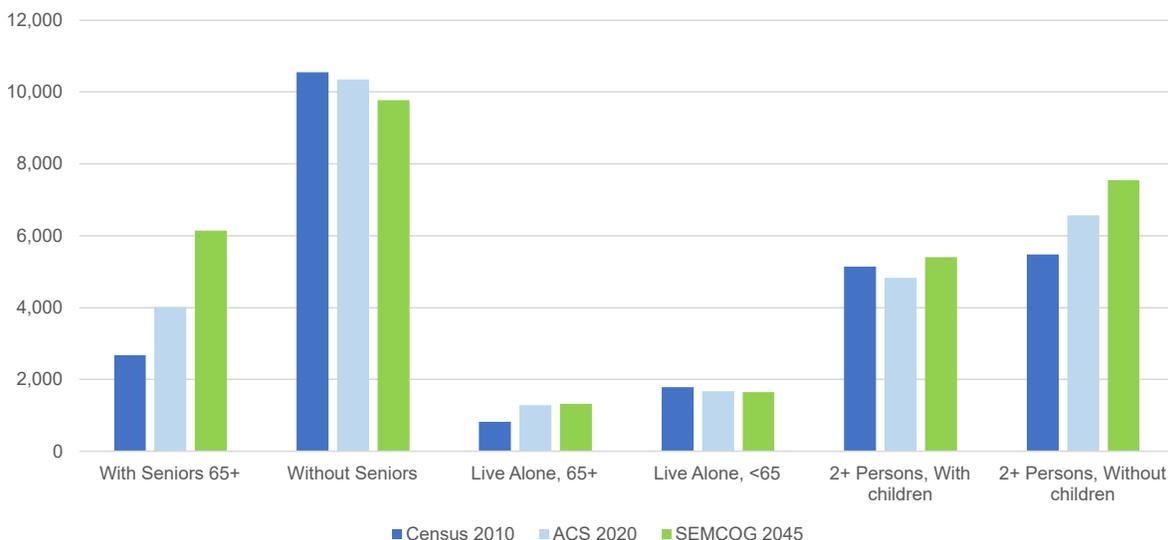
### Median Income

In 2020, the median household income was estimated to be \$98,146, up 2.3% from 2010. The number of households making \$100,000 and more has increased, but, despite the median income level rising slightly, the number of households in poverty increased by 0.1% to make up 4.3% of the Township’s households. These 2020 ACS numbers are improved from 2015-2019 estimates, suggesting there may be swings on a yearly basis, and it is important to consider how this plan can benefit all residents in Commerce Township.

### Households

In 2020, there was an estimated 14,355 households in Commerce Township, up from 13,220 in 2010. The average household size is 2.63 people, down from 2.71 in 2010, a change of about one percent. The number of households is projected to increase to 15,918 by 2045, with a higher number of households with those 65 and older and more households without children.

**Figure 9. Population Projection by Household Composition, 2010-2045**



Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

## Economy

Identifying trends in employment can help a community project future needs for land use categories and assess potential economic development opportunities. This section provides a snapshot of the Township's existing economic conditions.

The estimates provided are from the Census Bureau's Decennial Census, ACS 5-Year Estimates, and the Census Bureau's Center for Economic Studies Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics OnTheMap application. The Census data used is the latest available from the 2020 Decennial Census and the 2016-2020 5-Year Estimates.

### Jobs

The total number of jobs in Commerce Township is 20,900, which is 2.2% of the 961,000 jobs in Oakland County (compared to a resident population that is 3% of the county). According to SEMCOG, the total number of jobs in the Township in 2045 will be 21,444, a 2.5% change from 2015.

In 2045, the three largest industry sectors are projected to be as follows: healthcare services (3,281 jobs), retail trade (2,877 jobs), and informational & financial activities (2,350). The fastest-growing sectors projected from 2015 to 2045 are professional and technical services & corporate headquarters (32.4%), healthcare services (30.9%), and leisure & hospitality (20.9%). Commerce Township is home to the Detroit Medical Center (DMC) Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital, which was founded in 1986 to serve western and northwestern Oakland County, southern Genesee County, and eastern Livingston County, as well as smaller medical offices and facilities.

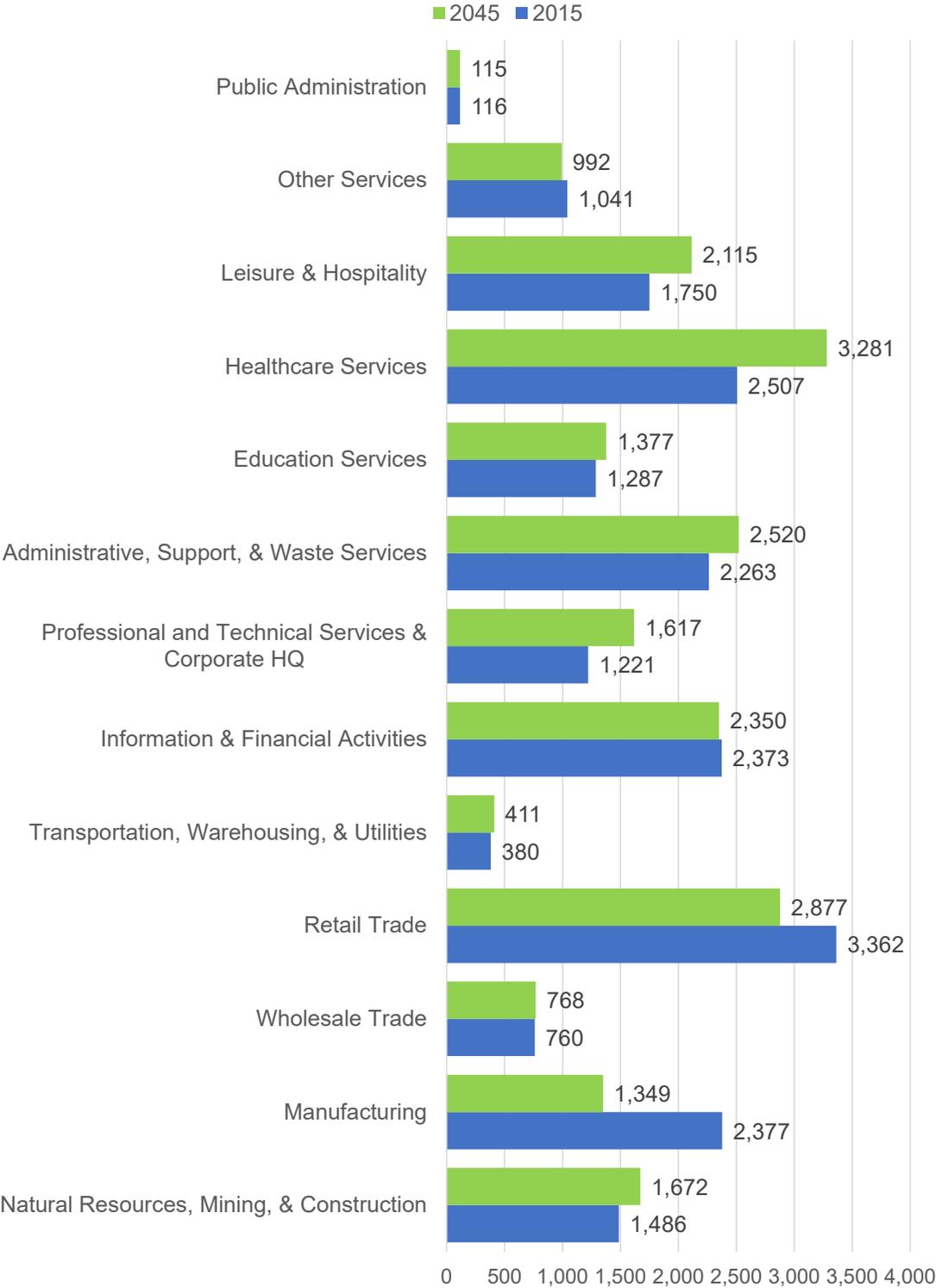
But manufacturing jobs are looking at a 43.9% decline in jobs from 2015 to 2045, while retail trade is also expected to decline by 14.4%. Manufacturing has served as the economic base of the Township since agriculture faded in the mid-20th century. The Township includes the headquarters of HoMedics, a global supplier of health and wellness products and one of the Township's largest employers. However, with Williams International moving its central office to Pontiac, manufacturing jobs will continue to decline, leaving Commerce Township with opportunities to redefine its economic development strategy in the future.

### Unemployment

The unemployment rate was fairly low at 3.7% in 2020 amidst the pandemic. Oakland County's rate was higher at 4.7%. As the Township is a bedroom community and more residents are commuting elsewhere, unemployment may be more challenging for the Township to address.



Figure 10. Forecasted Jobs by Industry Sector, 2015-2045



Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

## Transportation to Work

In the Township, the dominant mode of travel to work is by car. The percentage of workers who drove alone to work has decreased from 2010 to 2020, but it is possible the pandemic has played a role in that decrease. The number of residents who work at home is likely to increase and accommodating the growing share will be an important consideration.

The average commute time for residents who are employed was 29.02 minutes. This is fairly high in comparison to Oakland County’s average commute time at 26.81 minutes.

**Table 14. Mode of Transportation to Work, 2010-2020**

Mode	2010		2020		Percent Change, 2010-2020
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	
Drove alone	14,960	86.6%	17,149	83.8%	-2.8%
Carpooled or vanpooled	1,146	6.6%	1,597	7.8%	1.2%
Public transportation	25	0.1%	7	0.0%	-0.1%
Walked	99	0.6%	4	0.0%	-0.6%
Biked	45	0.3%	9	0.0%	-0.3%
Other Means	35	0.2%	100	0.5%	0.3%
Worked at home	965	5.6%	1,597	7.8%	2.2%
<b>Resident workers age 16 and over</b>	<b>17,275</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>20,463</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010, 2015-2019, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*

## Daytime Population

The daytime population, sometimes referred to as the commuter-adjusted population, is the number of people who are in an area during the day, as opposed to the resident population, which is the number of people who are in an area during the evening hours. This information can be helpful in determining how to allocate resources and understand needs for development and infrastructure.

Commerce Township’s daytime population was 46,552 in 2020 based on ACS numbers. Compared to a resident population of 38,989, 19% more people are present in the Township during the day.

## Inflow/Outflow

According to OnTheMap in 2019, the total number of non-residents who live outside of the Township, but are employed with private primary jobs in the Township was 10,907. On the other hand, the total number of residents living in the Township, but employed outside of it was 16,845, while only 1,247 residents are both living and employed within Commerce Township. The Township’s transportation network is significantly affected by residents traveling regionally for work, so maintaining that network is of high importance.

## Housing

Data about housing can indicate the strength of the local economy and overall community appeal. Older housing reflects the physical, historic, and social context of a community. The age of housing influences local housing policies for rehabilitation and redevelopment. Older houses require additional maintenance and upkeep, and may also require upgrades to ensure energy efficiency, barrier-free access, and increased livability for aging adults.

According to SEMCOG, there are 14,929 housing units in the Township. Of those, the overwhelming majority (87.6%) are single-family homes. The median housing value in 2020 was \$267,100. Median gross rent was estimated at \$1,604.

Between 2010 and 2020, it is estimated that the ratio of home owners and renters stayed constant at 86% owners and 9% renters, with about 5% of the homes vacant.

### Building Permits

Building permits over the past five years have been up and down, as seen in [Figure 12](#), but nowhere near the peaks of the early 2000s. [Figure 11](#) illustrates the breakdown of building permits by housing type, according to SEMCOG data. SEMCOG defines the four residential building types as follows:

**Single-Family:** A free-standing, detached building with only one housing unit. Includes single-family homes, detached condominiums, and manufactured homes not located within a manufactured housing park.

**Two-Family:** A duplex, two-family flat, or condo with two units per structure and not considered to be a townhouse or attached condominium.

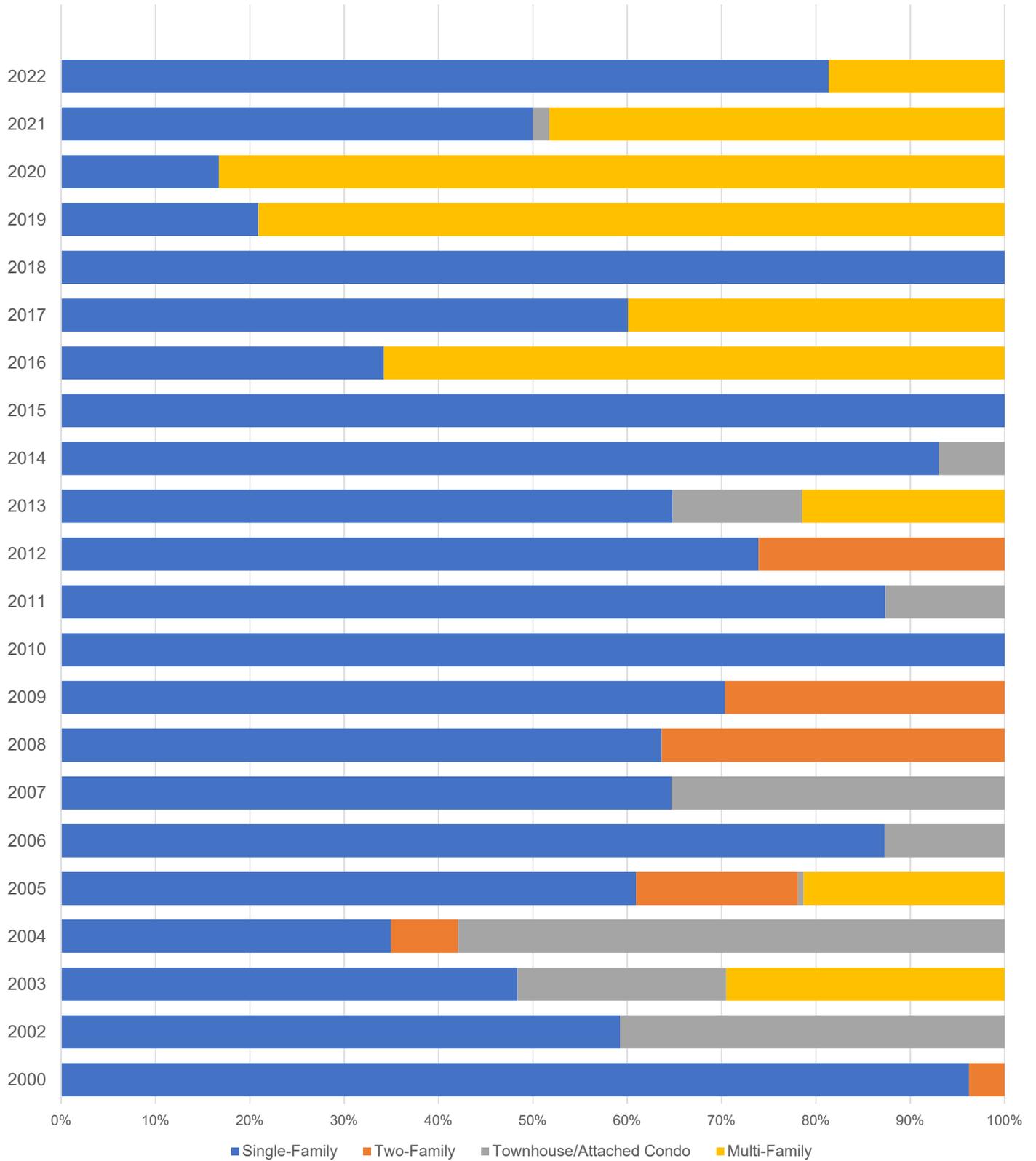
**Townhouse/Attached Condos:** Townhouses or condominiums that are attached; units can be either side-by-side or above/below each other and each unit has a separate heating system, utility meter, and direct outside entrance.'

**Multi-Family:** A residential building that contains three or more housing units, not considered to be a townhouse or attached condo, and usually has one entrance from the outside and a common hall (e.g., an apartment building).

While the majority of permits have recently resulted in new multiple family residential dwelling units, a good number of single-family homes continue to be built, as evidenced by the surge in 2022. From 2019 to 2021, the majority of new housing units have been multi-family. During this time, permits have been issued for about 400 multiple-family housing units, compared to about 150 single-family units.

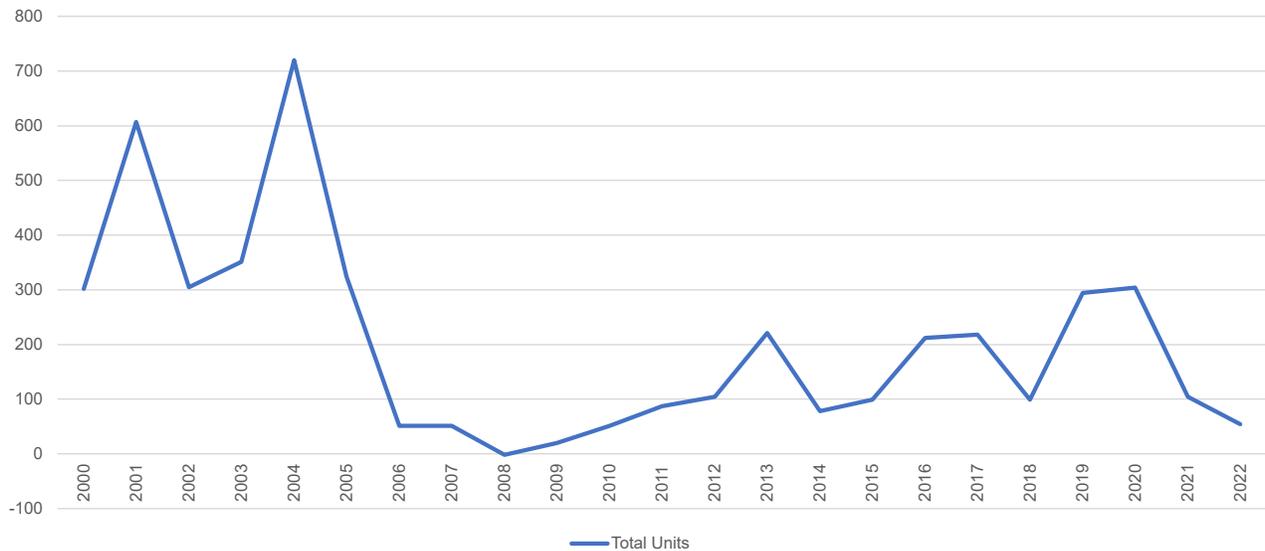
While the number of multi-family housing unit permits may seem high, it should be noted that during the previous years of 2005-2018, less than 300 multi-family unit permits were issued. This data does not identify if the units were age-restricted or general multi-family. The current rise in multiple-family dwellings is a trend seen elsewhere in the region and throughout the US. In Novi, their surge in multiple-family building permits occurred between 2017-2019 (512 permits); in West Bloomfield, the number of permits was just under 200, the bulk of which were in 2019.

Figure 11. Building Permits by Housing Type, 2000-2022



Source: SEMCOG Development



**Figure 12. Residential Building Permits, 2000-2022**

Source: SEMCOG Development

According to the National Multifamily Housing Council, the housing market needs 4.6 million apartments by 2030 to keep up with demand.<sup>1</sup> This 2018 report notes that both Baby Boomers and Millennials, who together comprise 100 million households are creating an increased demand for rental housing.

Along with high demand, supply of for-sale existing homes in Southeast Michigan was at record lows in 2021, and with increased costs, supply chain delays, and skilled trade labor shortages as well as rising inflation and mortgage rates, housing affordability is a major concern.<sup>2</sup>

## Housing Attainability and Variety

In Commerce Township, housing costs are estimated between 30-40% and transportation costs can be from 20-30% of income, according to the Center for Neighborhood Technology. This puts the total cost of housing and transportation between 50-70% of household income.

People of various incomes and experiences may choose to make Commerce Township home. Current residents who rent could be interested in staying in the community, but the entry-level purchase cost of a single-family home in the Township may be too high, causing potential lifelong residents of Commerce to relocate elsewhere. Expanding housing opportunities can empower residents to build equity towards home ownership and foster a greater sense of community.

One strategy to pursue a greater variety of housing options can be adding “Missing Middle Housing” to a community. Missing Middle Housing refers to a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes that help meet the growing demand for a walkable environment. These housing types provide diverse housing options along a spectrum of affordability, including duplexes, fourplexes, and bungalow courts, to support walkable communities and locally-serving retail. Missing Middle housing can reduce the mismatch between the available housing stock and shifting demand and can improve housing attainability.

<sup>1</sup> Apartment Supply Shortage (2018): [https://www.nmhc.org/contentassets/0662d3fe113046bb89019d0dfabfb271/apartment\\_supply\\_shortage\\_2018\\_08\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.nmhc.org/contentassets/0662d3fe113046bb89019d0dfabfb271/apartment_supply_shortage_2018_08_fact_sheet.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Residential Construction in Southeast Michigan, 2021 (2022): <https://maps.semco.org/residentialconstruction/>

## Benefits of Missing Middle Housing

- **Meets demand for size and affordability for all ages.**
  - » A practical and needed middle income and workforce housing option.
  - » Sharing land costs among multiple households makes it less expensive to purchase an individual unit than a single-family home of the same size and quality of construction.
  - » As more of our population ages, retires, and lives without children, smaller homes will be in demand.
- **Neighborhood-scaled.** The design and size make Missing Middle very compatible with detached single-family homes. The housing types are medium density but have a lower perceived density.
- **Flexible sizing.** Missing Middle housing can be used as infill, on small plots of land, or work with a location's existing natural features.
- **Historic character.** Homes that are too big for one family can be converted into multiple residences, preserving existing homes and neighborhood character while also providing more appropriately sized housing for more people.
- **Sense of community.** Family members or friends can live with or near one another while having their own space or residence at every stage of life.
- **Walkability.** Missing Middle near downtowns or mixed use areas increase walkability for residents and economic vitality for business owners and can reduce the need for a car and parking.

## Best Locations for Missing Middle Housing

- Distributed throughout an existing single-family residential block
- On the end of a block
- As a commercial corridor transition to mixed-use and residential areas
- As a transition to higher density housing areas

Sources: *Opticos Design*, "[Missing Middle Housing](#)" and *AARP*, "[Discovering and Developing Missing Middle Housing](#)"

Figure 13. Types of Missing Middle Housing



Source: *Opticos Design*

## Community Facilities

Community facilities include both physical facilities located within Commerce Township as well as services provided by the Township. Community facilities include essential facilities or services like a fire station or public utility, or may be non-essential facilities or services such as a public park or library. Both essential and non-essential community facilities play an important role in the Township’s potential for growth and resident retention. The availability of public safety services, attractive recreational and cultural facilities, and strong public school and library systems are some examples of community facilities that can help draw new people to the community and enhance the quality of life of existing residents.

### Civic and Public Facilities/Services

#### Commerce Township Hall

Township Hall is located off of Martin Parkway, replacing the old Township Hall on Fisher Avenue. The former Pinewood Golf Course Clubhouse was renovated and expanded to incorporate green design solutions such as the use of natural light and energy-efficient heating and cooling systems.



#### Commerce Township Community Library

The Commerce Township Community Library, a member of The Library Network (TLN), a consortium of 65 area libraries, serves Township and Wolverine Lake residents. The library first opened the 35,000-square-foot library, which cost \$7.2 million to build, in January 2017 following 17 months of construction. It replaced a 20,000-square-foot library, which is presently designated for Phase II of the Five & Main project. Among the many services the library provides, some highlights include a separate children’s space for story time and programs, an expanded collection with new furniture and shelving, as well as computers and desks, a laptop bar, eight quiet study rooms, reading areas, and program space for community groups. It is also situated on the northwest corner of Dodge Park 5.



#### Fire and Police

The Township is serviced by four fire stations. The Oakland County Sheriff’s Office provides police services for the residents of the Township. A substation for the Oakland County Sheriff’s Office co-exists with Commerce Township Fire Station #4. A new substation, located adjacent to Township Hall, is in construction, and will be completed in November of 2023.

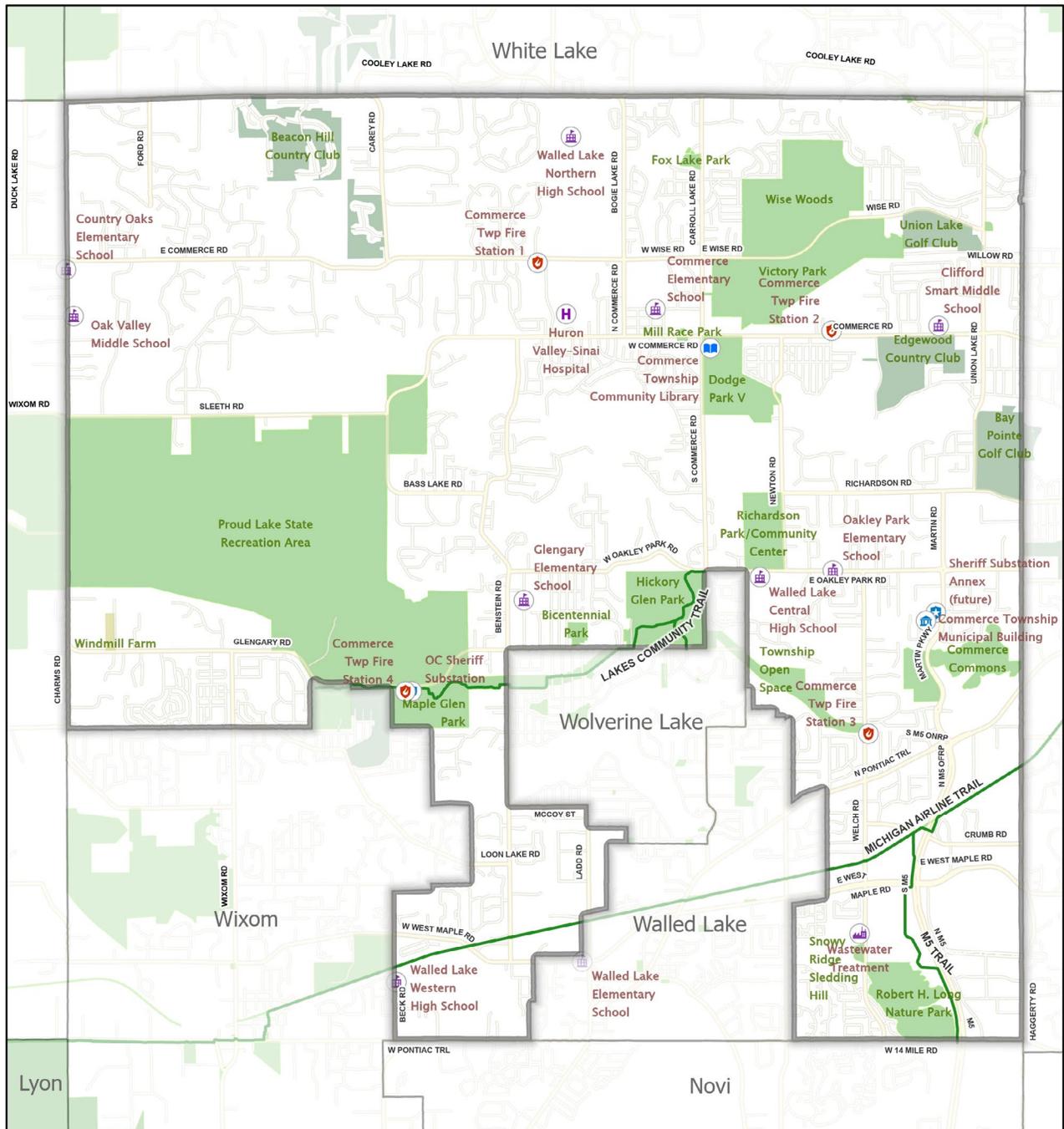
#### Water & Sewer

The Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner provides water and sewer services to the Township. Water is purchased from the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), which comes from Lake Huron watershed via the Lake Huron Water Treatment Plant in Port Huron.

#### Schools

The Township is served by Walled Lake Consolidated Schools and Huron Valley Schools for K-12 students. School enrollment trends can be found in [Figure 8](#).

Map 8. Community Facilities



Data Source: Wetlands: Landuse and Roads: Access Oakland. Map Exported: October 03, 2022. ©2022 Giffels Webster.



- Schools
- Fire Stations
- Government
- Sheriff
- Library
- Hospitals
- Parks
- Golf Courses
- Shared Use Trail



**COMMUNITY FACILITIES**  
**COMMERCE TOWNSHIP**



## Parks and Recreational Facilities

The Township is home to a significant amount of open space in the form of parkland, golf courses, and conservation lands (further detailed in the [Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan](#)), including:

### Proud Lake State Recreational Area

Located on the Huron River with 4,700 acres, the state-managed park and recreation area features dense forests, hills, a chain of lakes and vast wetlands. The area contains 130 modern campsites and two mini cabins and is a site for hiking, mountain biking, horse riding, cross-country skiing, picnicking, swimming, fishing and boat launch, and also has rowboat, canoe, paddleboat and kayak rentals.

### Victory Park

The Township acquired Wise Woods and Victory Park from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in 2012. The Township purchased the property from the State to be used for public outdoor recreation. The southern portion of the property, previously known as the Proud Lake Recreation Area - East Unit, was partially used in the 1950s as a Nike missile base by the U.S. Department of Defense. The Township subsequently named the portion of the property south of Wise Road, Victory Park. The southern portion includes woods, the former Nike missile site, open fields, streams, wetlands and informal trails.

Deed restrictions focus on conservation and wildlife habitat protection with active, outdoor recreation facilities permitted in and around the former Nike missile area on the south parcel. Parks millage money was instrumental in obtaining ownership of the property. A long-term master plan was developed for the Wise Woods/Victory Park property in 2014 with a focus on passive recreation and trails throughout both properties with more active recreation in Victory Park including a large pavilion with restrooms, parking, dog park, soccer fields, open space, playground and splash pad.

### Ralph C. Richardson Community Center and Park

The Ralph C. Richardson Community Center and Park is a focal point for recreation activity within Commerce Township. The park has wooded open space and trails, as well as field space and recreational amenities. The Community Center underwent a renovation in 2017 and 2018, and is used as a senior center and by residents and organizations for special events.



### Byers Homestead Park

The historically significant Byers Homestead Park is a small 2.32-acre park located on the south side of Commerce Road and situated along the Huron River. The property was first settled in 1825 by Abram Walrod, the first European settler in Commerce Township. Many of the historic buildings remain on the site including the primary residence that was built in 1849. The Byers homestead site was listed on the State register of historic sites on May 28, 1977. The Friends of Byers formed in 1995 in recognition of the need to protect the homestead for future generations to enjoy.

In 1998, Commerce Township purchased the property for preservation as a historic and recreational community amenity. The Friends group works closely with the Township to coordinate the preservation and maintenance of the grounds, conduct community events and assist with fundraising for maintenance and preservation.

### Dodge Park 5

Dodge Park is a community park that expands over 100 acres, located at the southeast corner of Commerce Road and S. Commerce Road. The park was donated by the Dodge family to the State and became part of the State Park system. During the 1930s, workers from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) participated in a tree planting program at the park, portions of which are still present today. In the 1990's, Commerce Township purchased the park from the State for preservation as a park site. The Commerce Township Community Library is located in the northwest portion of the property.

### Hickory Glen Park

Hickory Glen Park is located on the north side of Glengary Road in the central portion of the Township. The community park is both an active and passive park with significant field space and facilities for walking, jogging, and biking. The park spans over 150 acres.

### Maple Glen Park

Located on the south side of Glengary Road, in the south central portion of Commerce Township, Maple Glen Park was purchased in the 1960s and has since been developed primarily for baseball and softball purposes. The park includes over 115 acres of land.

### Mill Race Park

Mill Race Park is located on the north side of Commerce Road across from Byers Homestead Park. Mill Race Park is a State Registered Historical Site, formerly occupied by the Commerce Roller Mill. The property was in the original platted village in 1825. The Commerce Roller Mill was built in 1837 and operated for 90 years, serving the farming communities within the area. Processing flour and ground feed for livestock, the mill served as the center of commercial activity in the Township for many years. The site was purchased by the Township for recreational purposes in 1984.

Used primarily as a passive open space area and interpretive site, the 8-acre site includes an internal trail network with two bridges crossing the Huron River headwaters.



### Snowy Ridge Park

Snowy Ridge Park is located on the west side of Welch Road just south of the Township Wastewater Treatment Plant. The 3.5-acre park was opened in 2013 and includes the area's only sled hill and an associated parking area.

### **Bicentennial Park**

Bicentennial Park includes 9.75 acres located north of Glengary Road, behind the former Township Hall building on Fisher Avenue. The demolition of the building is intended to increase visibility and use of the park in the future. Developed for recreational purposes in 1976, during the year of the U.S. Bicentennial, this park features a variety of active recreational facilities - although most are in fair to poor condition. Amenities include one ball field, one soccer field, two sand volleyball courts, two tennis courts (not currently usable due to condition), one basketball court and one horseshoe pit. Facilities for younger children include a playscape, swingset and slide. One pavilion is available, along with picnic tables, grills and a porta-john.

### **Robert H. Long Nature Park**

The Robert H. Long Nature Park is located on the northeast corner of 14 Mile Road and M-5 in the southeast corner of the Township. This 117.5-acre nature park affords the community access to a wetland habitat and offers opportunities for the enjoyment of nature and wildlife. Dedicated in 1995, the park was a cooperative project between Commerce Township, the Township Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and a private developer donation.

### **Private Recreation**

In addition to Commerce Township's many public recreation areas, there are several private recreation spaces that serve as popular destinations and draw visitors to the area, including amenities for both indoor and outdoor recreation. Among the various private outdoor recreational uses, the most prominent ones include Edgewood Country Club, the Detroit Gun Club and Union Lake and Bay Pointe golf courses. Together, these four land uses make up over 300 acres of land in the Township.

In addition, the Township has many private indoor recreational uses, several of which are in structures originally designed for big-box retail.

## Natural Features

Soils, topography, woodlands, rivers, lakes, creeks, wetlands, and floodplains have a direct relationship with the land use in Commerce Township. Each type of land use is influenced by the Township’s natural features; likewise, natural features are impacted by development. In the master planning process, the optimum arrangement of land uses should maintain the Township’s natural resources and physical features for future generations, while balancing the needs of the community for housing and businesses.

Commerce Township is fortunate to have several treasured natural resources in the community which are enjoyed by residents both for their beauty and as opportunities for active and passive recreation.

In 2017, Oakland County prepared an update to its natural areas inventory with the help of the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI), to identify areas in the county which are dominated by native vegetation and have the potential to be “high-quality natural areas.” Commerce Township has designated Priority I, Priority II and Priority III areas within the Township’s limits which may be important to preserve. The designations are based upon a set of criteria that include size, core area, street corridor, landscape connectivity, restorability, and element occurrence. [Map 9](#) shows the priority areas of the Township.

Many of the community’s natural areas have been preserved and key parcels of land have been acquired by the Township for use and preservation. [Map 11](#) shows the lands in the Township which are publicly owned and protected from development, while [Table 15](#) offers a breakdown of the lands by acreage.

**Table 15. Publicly Owned Lands, 2022**

Category	Acres	Percent
Walled Lake Consolidated Schools	576.25	11.52%
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority	33.29	0.67%
Commerce Township	1,352.34	27.04%
State of Michigan	3,039.15	60.77%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,001.03</b>	

*Source: National Wetlands Inventory and Access Oakland*

### Wetlands

Commerce Township has many small sections of wetlands scattered throughout the Township, with larger swathes of wetlands concentrated in the central portion of the Township around Proud Lake and Bass Lake. (See [Map 12](#)). These wetlands are a valuable resource to the community, providing many important ecological services, such as:

- Protecting downstream water supplies by providing clean ground water through nutrient retention and sediment removal. Wetland vegetation traps these sediments and pollutants, thereby preventing them from being deposited in surface water bodies.
- Functioning as a natural storage basins for floodwater. Wetlands act as large sponges that absorb substantial quantities of precipitation and gradually release it when the receiving channels are able to accept it.
- Providing habitat for many types of plants and animals that thrive in the type of physical environment created by wetlands. These plants and animals provide an economic and recreational benefit as a result of hunting, fishing, and other leisure activities.

Efforts to mitigate further loss of wetlands are needed, particularly near areas with lots of impervious surface and where flooding could result in loss or damage to property.



## Tree Canopy

There are several small and large undisturbed wooded areas in Commerce Township, with areas of development concentrated primarily at the borders of the Township (see [Map 12](#)). However, the Township has a tree canopy density ranging from almost none to close to 100% in certain areas (see [Map 13](#)).

Studies have shown that trees and greenery in a neighborhood reduce stress and anxiety for residents and visitors, encourage exercise and generally make people more civil.<sup>1</sup> In addition to their aesthetic value, collectively, trees serve many useful environmental and economic purposes that should be recognized for planning. These include the following:

- Mitigating the heat island effect: Asphalt and concrete streets and parking lots increase urban temperatures by three to seven degrees. Trees provide shade and mitigate the heat island effect found in cities and areas with lots of impervious surface. In addition, trees near homes can help lower cooling costs in warmer months. Additionally, trees provide some mitigation against flooding, which is becoming more frequent regionally.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, trees can buffer harsh winds, saving energy on heating buildings in the winter.
- Filtering pollution: Trees improve air quality by producing oxygen and soaking up particle pollution.
- Increasing property value: The U.S. Forest Service estimates that trees can increase property values from 5-20%. When combined with a walkable business area, nearby home values increase by about \$3,500 in a treeless neighborhood, but more than \$22,000 in a tree-lined one.<sup>3</sup>
- Providing habitat: Trees are often home to a variety of birds and animals.

1 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2018. Urban nature for human health and well-being: A research summary for communicating the health benefits of urban trees and green space. FS-1096. Washington, D.C. 24 p.

2 <https://www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/soak-rain-trees-help-reduce-runoff>

3 Donovan, G.H.; Butry, D.T. (2010). Trees in the city: Valuing street trees in Portland, Oregon. Landscape and Urban Planning 94:77-88.

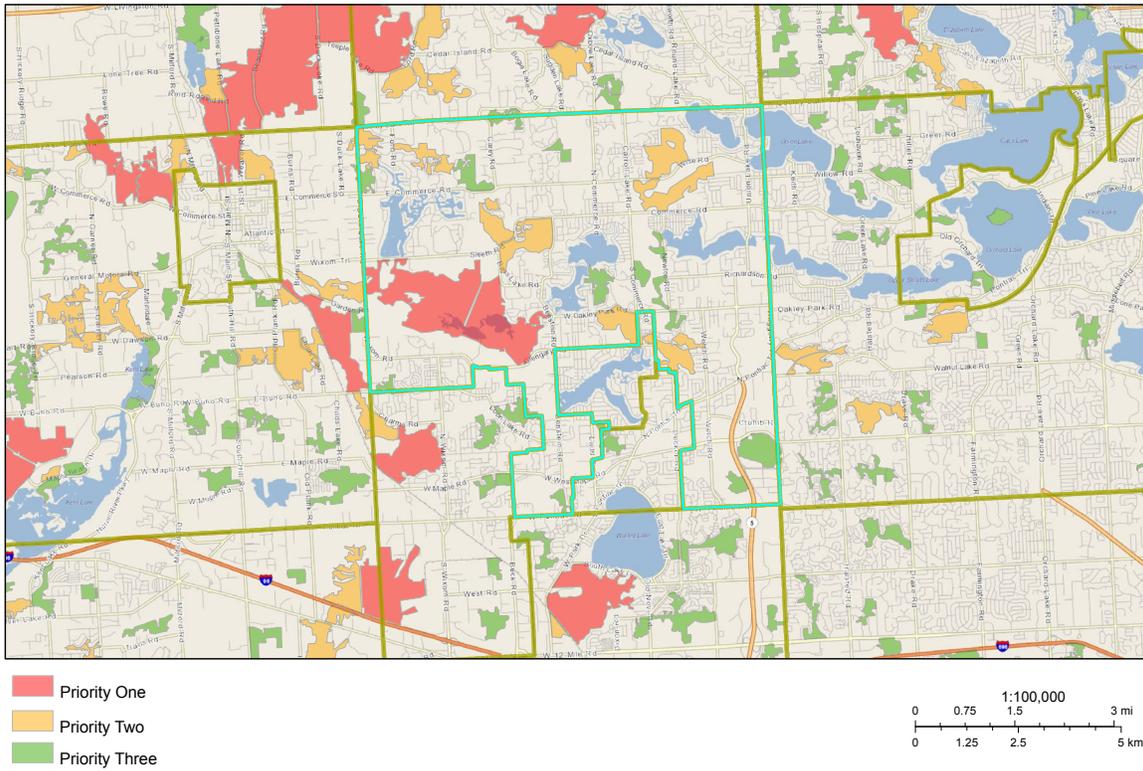
## Land Cover/Impervious Surfaces

Hard surfaces that are impermeable to infiltration, such as rooftops, parking lots, streets, sidewalks, and driveways, impact a watershed by limiting the ability of rainfall to recharge underlying soils/groundwater. In addition, the more impervious surface there is in a watershed, the more runoff and erosion occurs in stream beds from the greater flow of water. Streams degraded by high percentages of impervious surface in their watersheds are often prone to larger and more frequent floods, causing property damage as well as ecological harm. They are also prone to lower base flows which degrade or eliminate fish and other stream life, as well as reduce the aesthetics of the stream. The Township's impervious surface coverage is illustrated in [Map 14](#).

## Floodplains

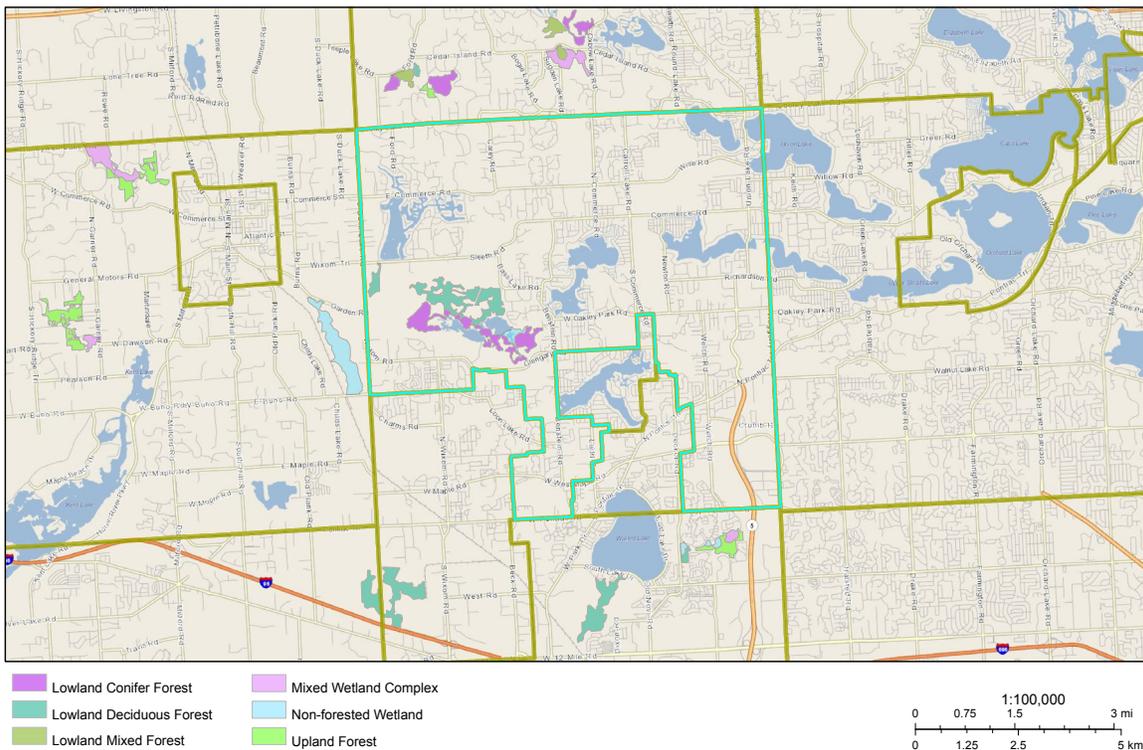
Factors such as low-lying areas, rapid growth and development, and aging infrastructure can increase the potential for flooding as areas are impacted by heavy rains or poor drainage. Though there are areas of Commerce Township with low or minor risk of flooding, there are also areas that may be more susceptible to severe or major risk of flooding, particularly near bodies of water and wetlands. [Map 15](#) is a floodplain map of Commerce Township, identifying FEMA flood zone areas within the 100-year floodplain.

Map 9. Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) Potential Natural Areas



Source: Oakland County, 2017

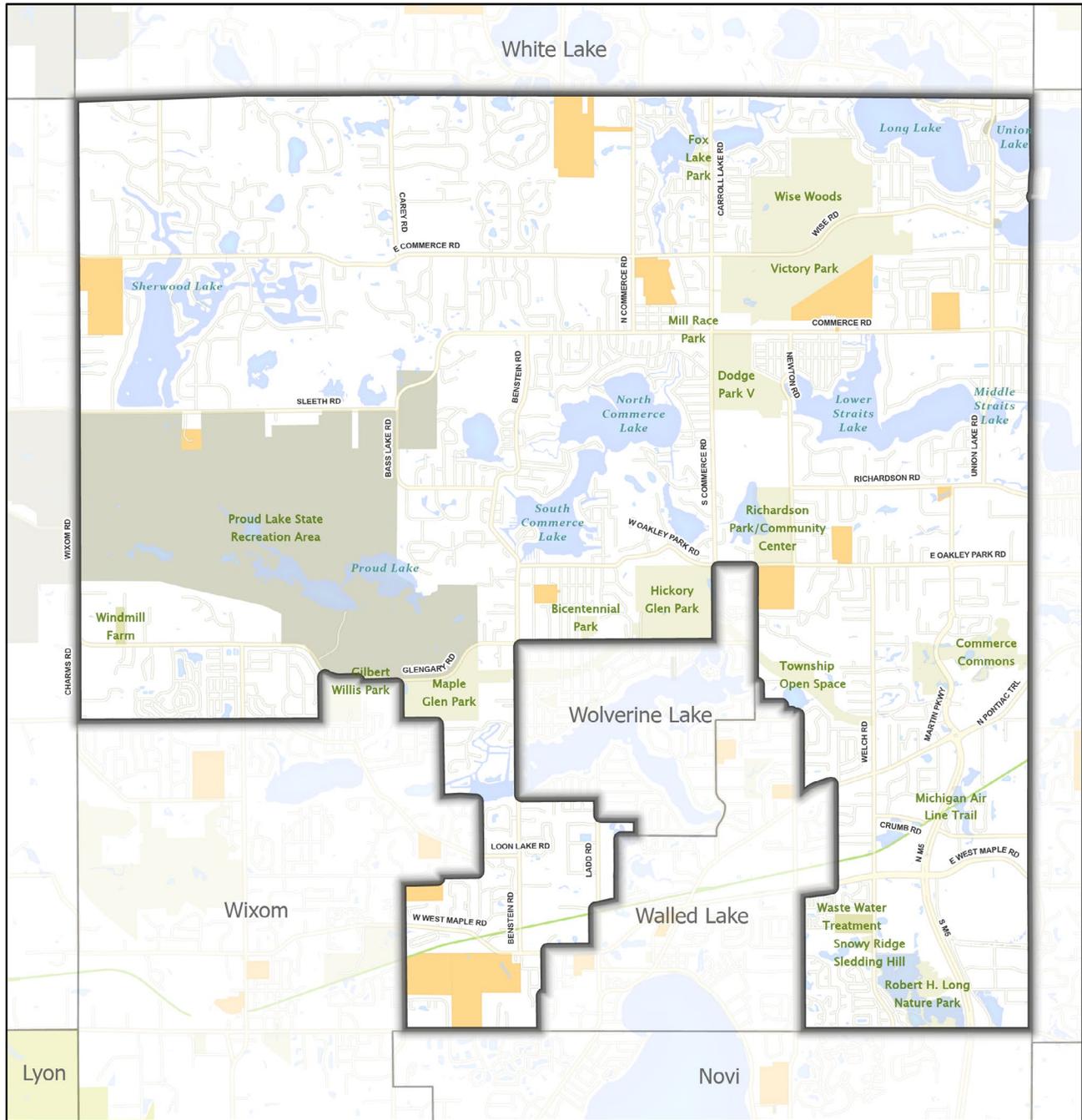
Map 10. Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) High Quality Habitat



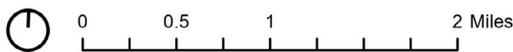
Source: Oakland County, 2017



Map 11. Publicly Owned Lands



Data Source: Wetlands: National Wetlands Inventory. Landuse and Roads: Access Oakland. Map Exported: August 02, 2022. ©2022 Giffels Webster.

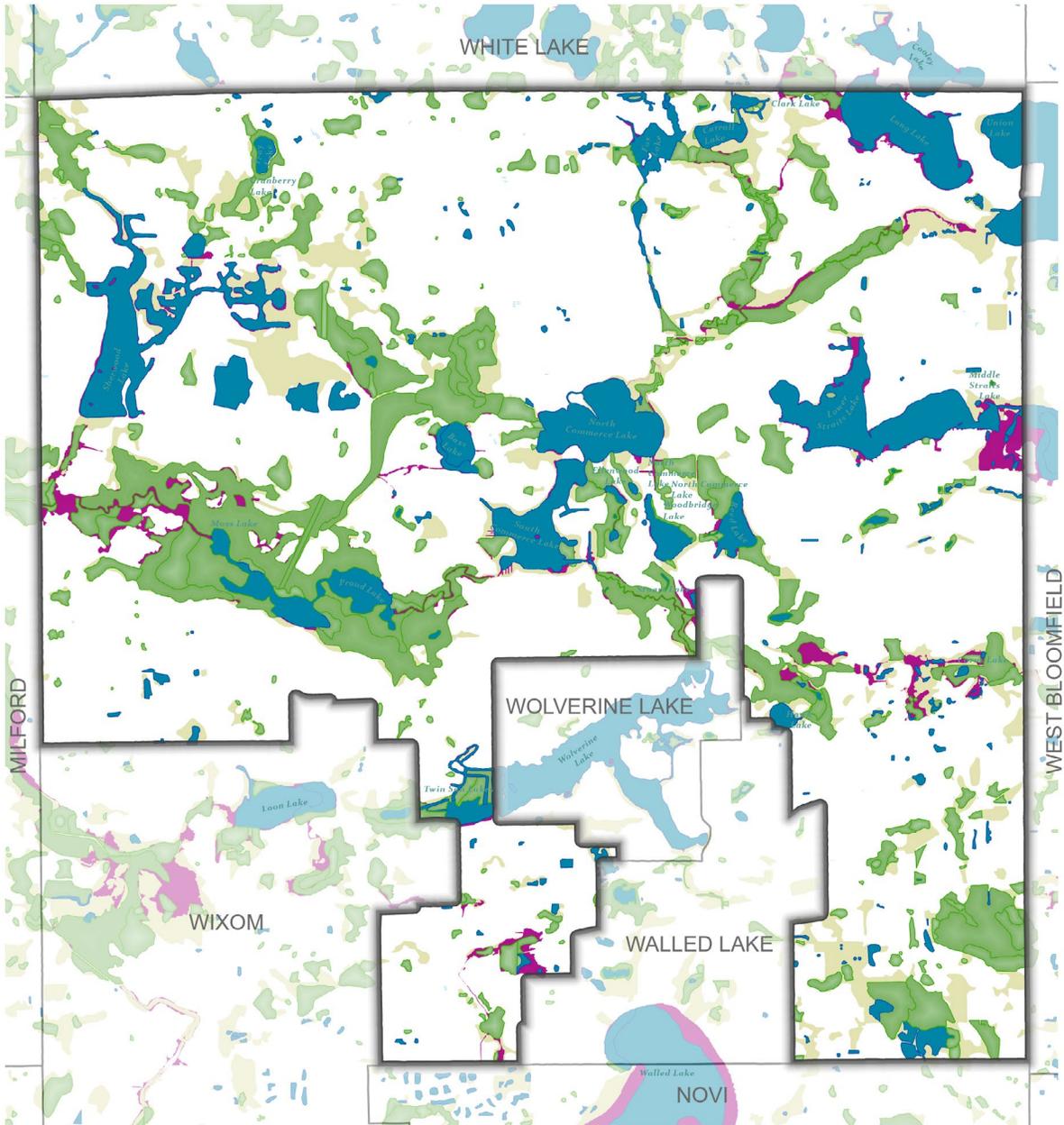


- Walled Lake Consolidated Schools
  - Commerce Township
- Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority
  - State of Michigan



**PUBLICLY-OWNED LANDS  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP**

Map 12. Wetlands



Data Sources: Wetlands and Surface Water: NWI, Version 2. Hydric Soils, NWI. Roads and Boundaries: State of Michigan.  
 Date Exported: 8/22/2023. ©2023 Giffels Webster.



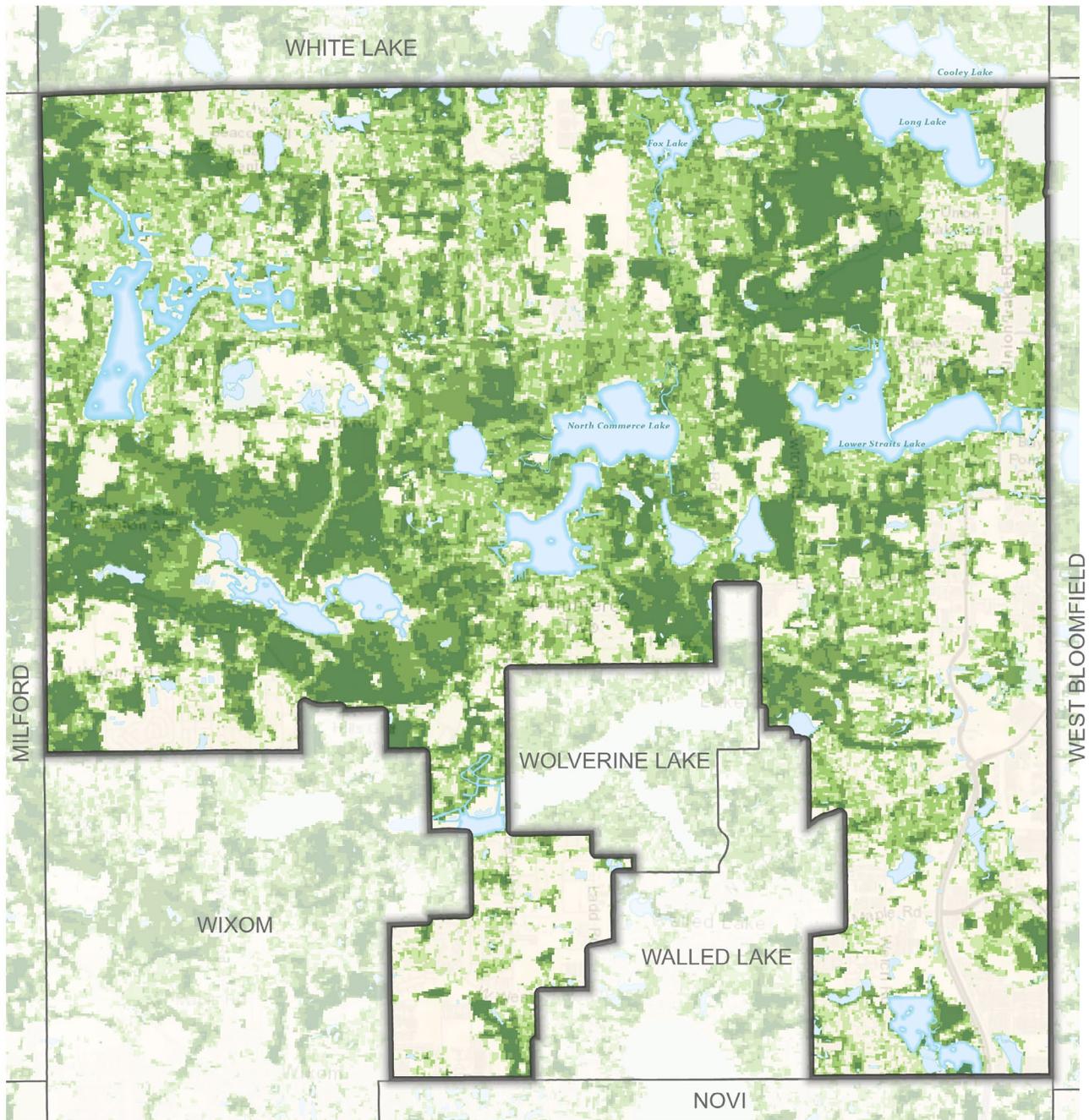
- Wetlands
- Surface Water
- Special Flood Hazard Area
- Hydric Soils



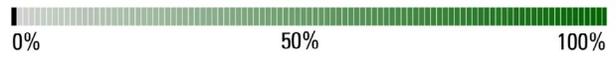
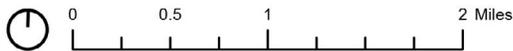
**WETLANDS**  
 COMMERCE TOWNSHIP



Map 13. Tree Canopy



Data Source: National Land Cover Data Tree Canopy; USGS. Roads and Boundaries: Michigan Open Data v17a. Map Exported: August 22, 2023. ©2021 Giffels Webster.



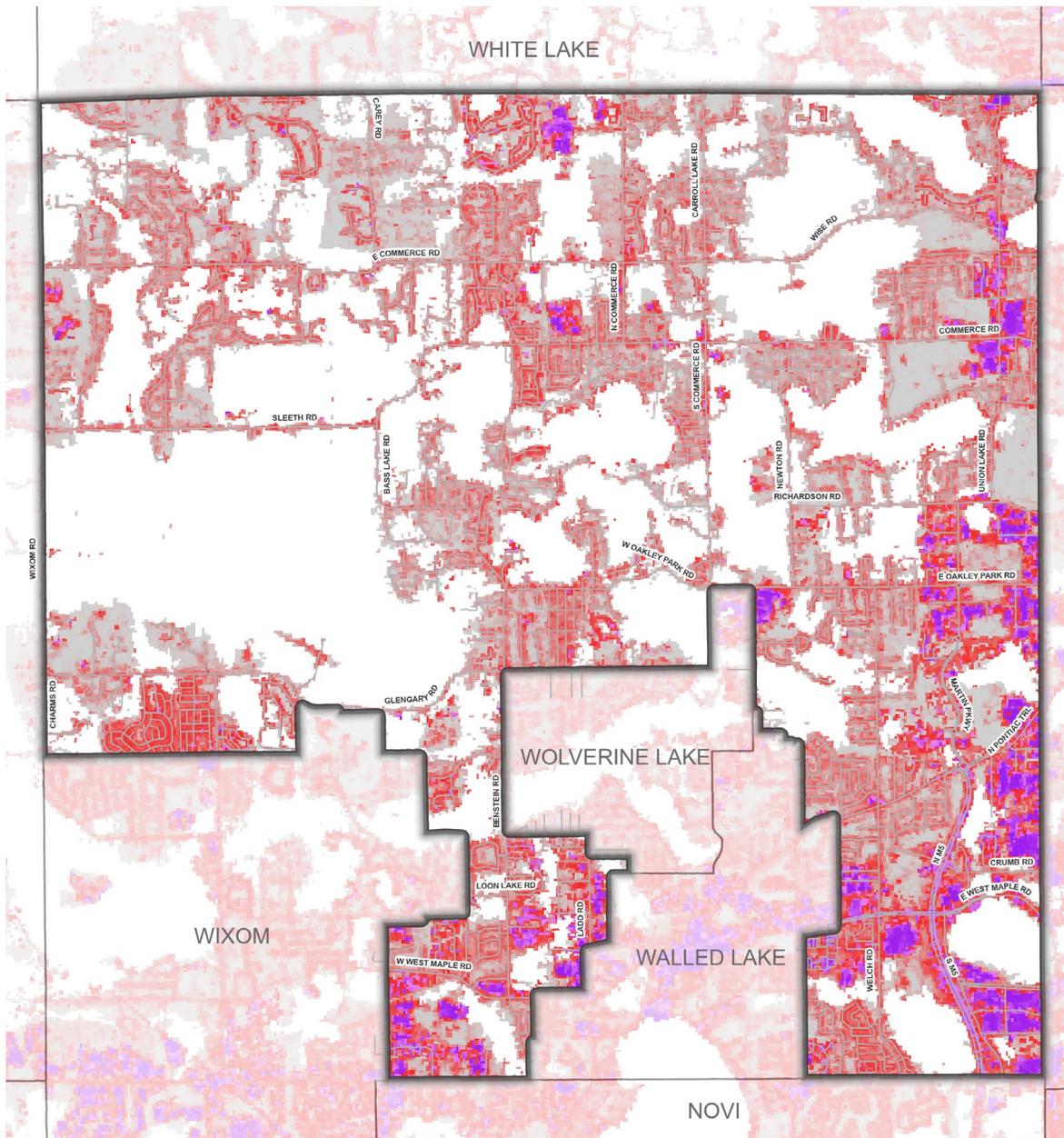
Total Tree Canopy Density: 33.1%



# TREE CANOPY

COMMERCE TOWNSHIP

Map 14. Impervious Surfaces



Data Source: Land Cover: USGS. Roads and Boundaries: Michigan Open Data v17a. Map Exported: August 22, 2023. ©2022 Giffels Webster.

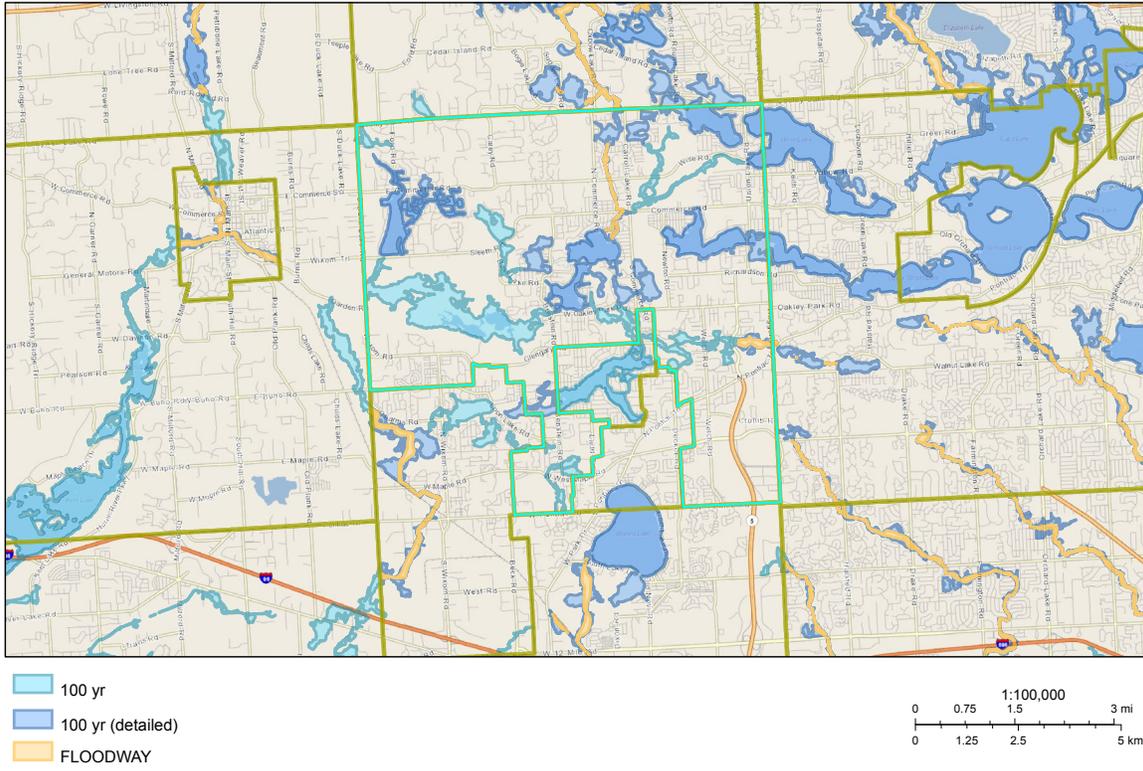


# LAND COVER & IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

COMMERCE TOWNSHIP



Map 15. FEMA Floodplain



Source: Oakland County

## Transportation

### Road Classification

Commerce Township is served by principal arterials in the southeast corner of the Township, including M-5, and several minor arterial and major collector roads in the other parts of the Township.

This road inventory describes the system using traditional transportation planning categories known as the National Functional Classification (NFC) system. These classifications were created by the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and are based on mobility and access provided by certain roads. As roads are modified over time, they may not fall neatly into one classification or another, but their functions for motorized travel can generally be understood. The Township currently has roads that fall generally into the following categories:

- **Principal Arterial.** These roadways are at the top of the classification hierarchy. The primary function of such roadways is to carry relatively long distance, through-travel movements. Examples include interstates and other freeways as well as state routes between larger cities.
- **Major Arterial.** This classification includes roadways that carry major movement throughout the area and provide access to abutting communities. Multi-lane arterials present safety concerns for motorists and non-motorists alike.
- **Minor Arterial.** The main function of minor arterial roads is to serve as routes for through traffic while providing access to abutting properties and minor intersecting streets. Minor arterials carry through-travel movements but carry trips of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators. Arterials are eligible for federal funding.
- **Major Collector.** Collector streets primarily permit direct access to abutting properties and provide connections from local streets and neighborhoods to minor arterials.
- **Minor Collector.** Minor collectors also provide access amongst varying land uses, but generally have less traffic than major collectors.
- **Local Roads.** Local roads provide access to individual properties and typically have moderate to low speeds.

### Sidewalks and Trails

The Huron River Water Trail, Lakes Community Trail, M-5 Metro Trail, and the Michigan Air Line Trail are Commerce Township's existing non-motorized networks.

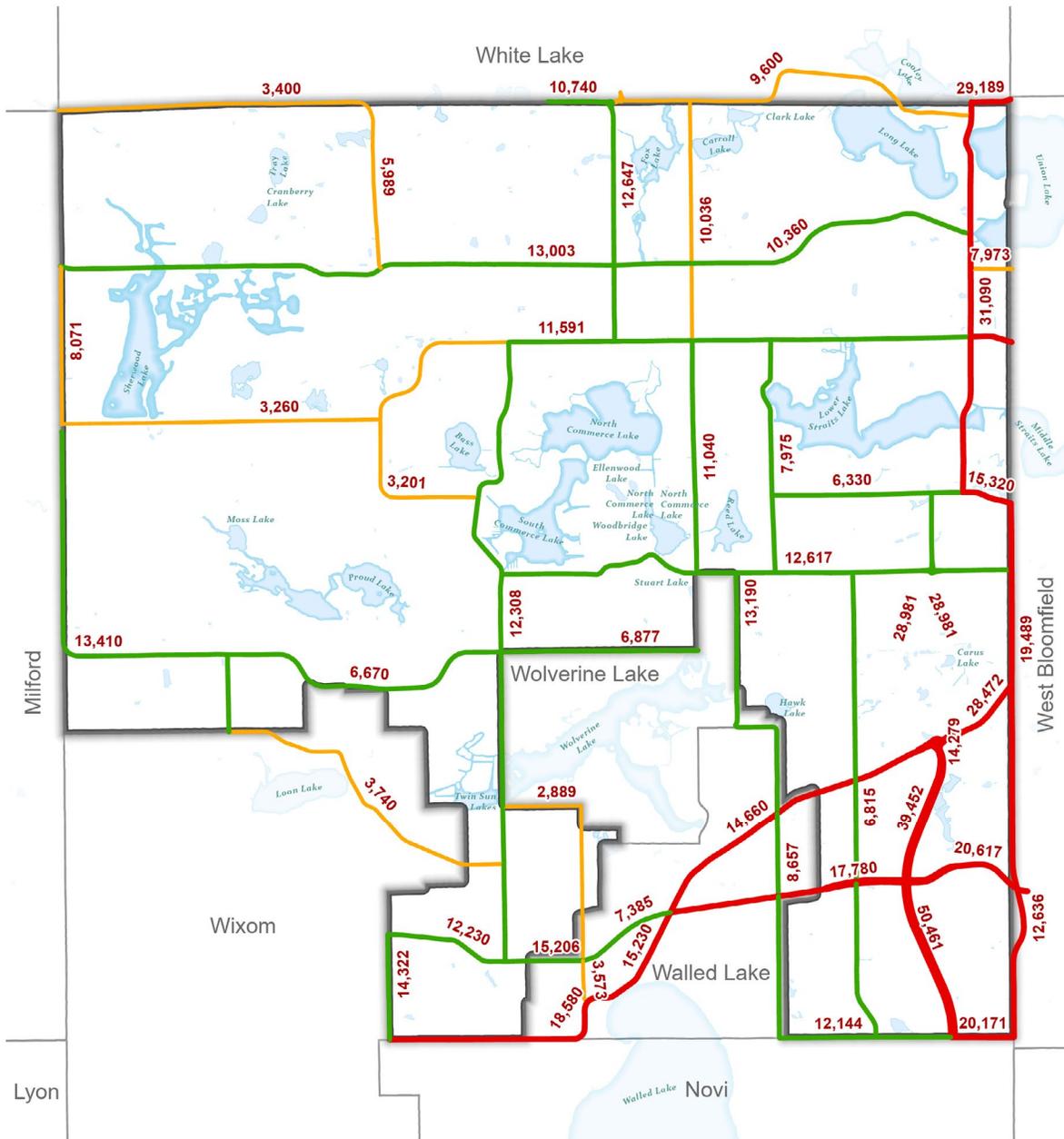
Shared use trails cover 7.7 miles in the Township (which includes the Air Line trail). There are more than 13.5 miles of sidepaths, safety paths or sidewalks along the primary roads in Commerce Township. There are also more than 18 miles of mapped park paths within Commerce Township, including hiking trails within Proud Lake State Recreation Area, loop trails and extensions into parks such as Mill Race and Dodge Park as well as the walking trails along Martin Road Parkway and the 6.5 miles of mountain bike trails in Hickory Glen Park; this does not contain the additional walking paths in Wise Woods and Victory Park.

More information can be found in the [Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan](#). The plan has an section on existing trails, which provides an inventory of trails as well as several maps showing traffic volume, pedestrian and bike crash locations, etc. It describes the benefits of non-motorized transportation, including increased mobility and equity, recreation and health, economic development and talent attraction, and improved safety, and details an action plan for the Township.

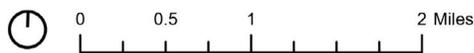
The Non-Motorized Transportation Plan chapter includes a map which shows the existing sidewalks and trails in the Township ([Map 4 on page 82](#)).



Map 16. National Functional Classification



Data Sources: Traffic Count: AADT (2019). Complete Streets: Commerce Township. Roads and Boundaries: State of Michigan.  
Date Exported: 8/22/2023 3:30 PM. ©2023 Giffels Webster.

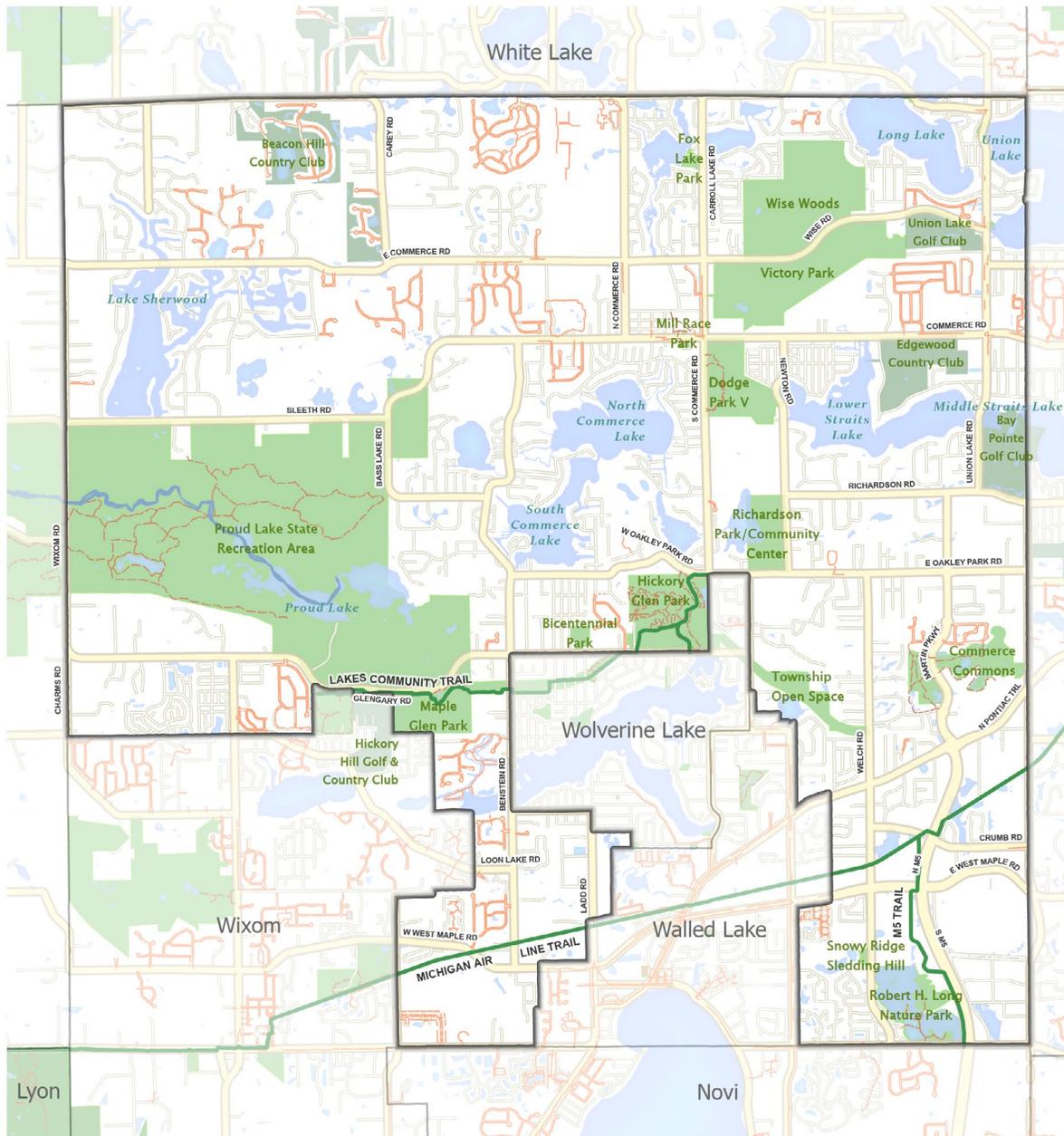


- 12,345** Traffic Counts - Observed AADT, 2019
- Principal Arterial Roads
- Minor Arterial Roads
- Major Collector Roads
- Local Roads



**ROAD CLASSIFICATION AND TRAFFIC COUNTS**  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP

Map 17. Existing Sidewalks and Trails



Data Source: Trails, Landuse and Roads: Access Oakland. Map Exported: August 04, 2023. ©2023 Giffels Webster.



- Existing Park Path
- Existing Sidewalk
- Huron River Water Trail
- Existing Shared-Use Trail



## Age-Friendly Communities

Commerce Township's growing senior population must be a consideration when planning for the future.

Across the United States, communities have been planning for their aging populations. As people get older, they have different housing, transportation, safety, health and social concerns. Fortunately for communities seeking to make strategic improvements that support older residents, many of those solutions and strategies also make a positive impact on other generations as well. Making that point clear, many communities now plan for "age-friendly communities," a term that reinforces benefits to all.

What is an age-friendly community? Simply, it is a community that is livable for people of all ages. That is the short definition of the AARP, a leading advocacy organization for the promotion of age-friendly communities. AARP is the United States affiliate of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, which began in 2006. Together, these organizations promote the idea that an age-friendly community encourages active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.

The WHO describes active aging as a lifelong process that includes the following community characteristics:

- Barrier-free buildings and streets that enhance the mobility and independence of people with disabilities, young as well as old.
- Secure neighborhoods that allow children and older people to venture outside in confidence, to participate in physically active leisure and in social activities.
- Families who experience less stress when older members have the community support and health services they need.
- Engaged older people who participate in volunteer or paid work.
- A local economy that profits from the patronage of older adult consumers.
- Civic groups and others who benefit from the skills, talents, and experiences of older adults.

The Township should also consider potential economic impacts correlated with shifts in the aging population. As this segment comprises a greater share of the population overall, a corresponding decrease in labor force participation is likely. To promote a thriving local economy, the Township should endeavor to attract families and younger generations, with infrastructure, housing, services, and amenities to meet the needs of a spectrum of ages.

Many successes in multi-generational planning can be achieved by considering and prioritizing approaches that consider the mutual needs of seniors and youth. These populations both have limited mobility and greater demand for face to face interaction, and communities should strive to create environments that are physically and socially connected, with multi-modal transportation options and great public spaces.

In addition, multi-generational benefits can be achieved when underutilized resources are considered and communities provide greater social integration. The Article, *Creating Livable Cities for All Ages: Intergenerational Strategies and Initiatives*, by William van Vliet, identified several scenarios where resource savings were achieved through intergenerational planning. For example, community education facilities could also serve as places to provide meals for seniors, and likewise, senior centers could offer day care or youth programming. In addition, social interactions between the generations can be directed to provide skills training or access voluntary caretaking services, for example, "GenerationConnect," is a national program that connects high school students with seniors to teach them technology.

A successful multi-generational plan should include three key focus areas: social connectivity, housing, and transportation.

## Social Connectivity

Communities should plan the built environment and provide services to enhance opportunities for social interactions. Isolation can cause mental and physical decline, and senior and youth populations may be especially vulnerable to these outcomes. In order to promote this type of connectivity, the Township may consider implementing the following strategies:

- **Improve access to public spaces.** Public spaces are key places for social connections to be made, especially for seniors and youth. Communities should strive for all residents to live within one quarter mile of a public space to make them easily accessible and walkable, especially for seniors and youth who often don't drive. Non-motorized connections between public spaces and neighborhoods will further enhance accessibility. In addition, public spaces should be ADA-compliant when feasible to better serve the needs of all residents, especially seniors who are more susceptible to limitations on physical mobility. Spaces that are ADA-compliant are also better prepared to accommodate parents with strollers.
- **Improve access to third places.** Sociologist Ray Oldenburg coined the term, "third places," to refer to spaces where people go for interactions outside of home and the workplace. While public spaces are one type of third place, they also could be coffee shops, art galleries, bookstores, or community centers, among others. Third places are where people go to see familiar faces and make new acquaintances. In Oldenburg's foundational work, he suggested eight hallmark characteristics of third places, as summarized below:
  - **Neutral ground.** Third places are freely-accessed and visitors are there under no obligation.
  - **A leveling place.** Economic and social status divisions are low or absent entirely.
  - **Conversation.** Typically conversation serves as the primary, but not necessarily only, activity.
  - **Open access.** Third places should be open and accommodating to those who occupy them.

- **Regulars.** Third places have regular visitors who help to define the overall character of the place.
- **Homely and non-pretentious.** Third places are without extravagance or grandiosity and are intended to offer a homely feel. Third places are accepting of individuals of all walks of life.
- **Playful.** Third places are intended to be playful and create a space to celebrate wit and banter.
- **A home-away-from-home.** Visitors foster a sense of possession and belonging in third places.
- **Community events.** Community events are a great way to activate underutilized public spaces, parking lots, or vacant land while generating opportunities for social connectivity and intergenerational interactions. Fairs, festivals, and outdoor concerts are a great way to engage a range of age groups. Communities should support local organizations that fund, plan, and promote events that increase community interactions and target all generations.
- **Intergenerational interactions.** Communities should strive to promote intergenerational interactions between younger and older generations. Opportunities like these can include mentorship programs, volunteering, or youth-led projects that involve seniors. This type of connectivity can create efficiencies for services that would otherwise rely on more costly resources.



## Housing

Age-friendly communities must provide housing opportunities for residents of varying needs and consider the appropriate mix of housing to offer places for residents of all ages. Some strategies below may be considered as the Township strives to provide the appropriate balance of housing opportunities without compromising its character or quality of life.

### Promote Visitability

As Commerce Township's population continues to age, demand for new homes that are safe and provide barrier-free access will continue to increase. Visitability, is a term coined for design strategies such as zero-step entries and wide passages that are intended to ensure homes are adaptable to meet the needs of all residents. The Township may consider using the Zoning Ordinance to encourage this type of design by incentive or consider required provisions for all new residential developments.

### Provide Housing Choices

A variety in choice is an important component of a housing market that is dynamic and offers options for all age cohorts. While families in the Commerce Township market are likely to seek a house with its own private recreational yard space, many seniors and empty-nesters may desire housing that is more appropriately sized for one or two people. The Township should consider zoning reforms and other policy changes that will result in greater choices and appropriate types to meet the influx in senior population, without sacrificing the Township's rural-suburban character.

- ADUs.** Accessory dwelling units (detached or attached) are smaller secondary units on the same lot as a principal residence. ADUs offer an easy way to add density without changing the appearance of the lot. ADUs help seniors age in place by creating new opportunities for multi-generational households. In addition, ADUs may help provide supplemental income to address affordability gaps for residents who are in the Missing Middle, making it easier for families and individuals obtain housing when looking to build roots in Commerce Township.
- Cottage courts.** Cottage courts are housing developments that emphasize smaller, individual dwellings arranged around a shared open space or courtyard. The compact and intimate design of cottage court housing encourages social interaction among residents, while reducing sprawl by maximizing land efficiency. This housing type is particularly attractive for seniors seeking to downsize while looking to maintain a strong sense of community and age-in-place. The shared open spaces between the houses often include amenities that foster social activities, such as recreational spaces or gardens. Although cottage courts provide a setting for greater social connectivity, this is balanced with individual privacy, and cottage courts are designed in a manner that grants residents their own entrance, private living areas, and sometimes private outdoor spaces.
- Duplexes and triplexes.** Duplexes and triplexes are often not permitted in single family neighborhoods, but could provide the opportunity for additional density without altering neighborhood character substantially. In existing neighborhoods, zoning changes to permit the conversion of single family homes into two or three unit structures would result in only incremental shifts within neighborhoods. By taking a slow-approach to changing neighborhood composition, any negative externalities of growth will also be felt on a smaller scale. Duplexes and triplexes are especially adaptable for multi-generational homes, and may be desirable for those seeking to age-in-place with family members in two separate private, yet connected, dwelling units.
- Senior-focused housing.** Other housing types that are designed to specifically target senior populations may be desirable in places where other higher density types of housing are permitted. Senior-focused housing may include a variety of housing types, but typically these developments have a greater density than single family homes. These developments often include amenities to promote social connectivity, offer communal meals, help with transportation needs, and provide other services to help seniors age independently. Senior group homes often have fewer amenities, but provide

social connectivity between seniors in a compact, intimate setting. Group homes may be a desirable way to permit senior-focused housing within multi-generational neighborhoods, without changing the neighborhood fabric or significantly altering the density.

### Promote a Mix of Uses and Walkability

Mixed use developments often include greater density housing types with neighborhood scale commercial goods and services to serve the residents therein. Mixed-use developments are particularly amenable to the needs of seniors and children who often do not drive, by providing increased accessibility and opportunities for walkability that are not present in other areas of the Township. These developments result in enhanced mobility outcomes and greater independence.

## Transportation

Communities that are well-connected to multiple modes of transportation promote a landscape where it is easier for seniors and children to get from here to there. Since these age-groups often do not drive, non-motorized connections are necessary to facilitate independent mobility. However, Commerce Township's fast roads, roundabouts, and fragmented sidewalk network often limit non-motorized connectivity and create safety concerns, especially for youth and seniors. Improvements to the network and enhanced connectivity will increase independence among these age cohorts. Strategies for improvements to non-motorized connectivity are discussed in the [“Non-Motorized Transportation Plan” on page 78.](#)



## Identity, Arts & Culture

### Community Identity

Community identity is an important element of a place. It helps people feel connected to the spatial and physical elements, as well as the other people there. The most evident factor in creating and maintaining a place's identity is appearance. The physical attributes of places may be the only impression people have of the community. Components of community identity, such as banners, particular sidewalk markings, or gateways can help people identify the boundaries of a specific area and connect that to specific events, experiences, or people. Other strategies for creating community identity include events (particularly if they are on a regular basis), activation of vacant and public spaces, pop-up events, and pop-up businesses. Collaboration with business owners would be helpful in creating this sense of identity and drawing people into the area.

### Civic Identity

Creating and nurturing civic identity is critical for effective and efficient local governance. Civic identity can instill pride in residents that encourages them to vote in local elections as well as participate as Township board/commission members. A solid, recognizable civic identity works with community character to support economic development—both for business attraction and retention. It can also support local institutions who may rely on people from outside the community to understand where they operate.

### Arts & Culture

The earliest human experiences include expressions of art and the creation of cultures that define a group of people. There is no one definition of art; expressions of art include the visual, such as painting, drawing, photography or sculpture, as well as the performed, such as music, theater, dance and film. Art includes the spectrum from the written word and storytelling to animation and textiles. It includes industrial design, architecture and graphic design industries. The definition of “culture” is “all that is fabricated, endowed, designed, articulated, conceived or directed by human beings, as opposed to what is given in nature. Culture includes both material elements (buildings, artifacts, etc.) and immaterial ones (ideology, value systems, languages).”<sup>1</sup>

According to the American Planning Association (APA), planners in the past have used art and culture as a “community revitalization tool,” but today, there is recognition that arts and cultural opportunities have tremendous potential to contribute to broader social, economic, and environmental aspects of community life.<sup>2</sup> The APA states that arts and culture provide a medium to:

- Preserve, celebrate, challenge, and invent community identity;
- Engage participation in civic life;
- Inform, educate, and learn from diverse audiences; and
- Communicate across demographic and socioeconomic lines.

Arts & cultural activities – vast and innumerable – support individual health and wellbeing, promote community identity through placemaking and catalyze economic development.

The City of Fort Wayne's Art Master Plan, Art for All, notes that “public art provides the intersection between our past, present, and future, and also has the power to transform a city because neighborhoods gain social, economic, and cultural value through public art.” The plan identifies the value art brings to a community:

- **Economic Value:** Enhancing the identity and character of (the community) through public art directly supports cultural tourism and economic development strategies, which can attract and retain residents.
- **Social Value:** When people see themselves reflected in their civic spaces, they have a sense of attachment that allows them to feel ownership and respect.
- **Cultural Value:** Public art has the power to create uniqueness through the reflection of the local history and culture, which gives communities a sense of place and identity. Public art provides a visual mechanism for understanding other cultures and perspectives, creating social cohesion and encouraging civic engagement. Through the reinforcement of culture, public art acts as a catalyst for unity and social engagement.

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<sup>1</sup> Toward a Culture of Health: Arlene Goldbard.

<sup>2</sup> American Planning Association (2011). The Role of Arts and Culture in Planning Practice (Briefing Papers), p. 4.

## Health and Wellbeing

Over the past several years, studies throughout the world have shown the value of arts and culture on individual and community health. In a 2018 report, the United States Department of Art and Culture (USDAC), a non-governmental grassroots action organization, cites several of these studies that include wide-ranging data to support the power of art on health and wellness. The report concludes, “we understand human connection, meaning-making, creativity, and purpose as key contributions to individual and collective well-being and therefore as powerful modes of prevention.”<sup>3</sup> The report concludes the arts can help keep us well; meet major challenges facing health and social care (aging, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health); and can help save money in the health service and social care.

## Placemaking

Placemaking means intentionally creating quality places that people seek out to live, work and play. It is a process of creating and nurturing quality places that have a strong sense of place. As it becomes increasingly easier to live and work anywhere, people will choose quality places that are:

- Safe
- Connected
- Welcoming
- Conducive to authentic experiences
- Accessible; people can easily circulate within and to and from these locations
- Comfortable; they address cleanliness, character, and charm
- Sociable; they have a physical fabric that encourages people to connect with one another
- Able to promote and facilitate civic engagement.<sup>4</sup>

Because authenticity is a critical component of placemaking, arts and culture unique to a community are key ingredients in creating quality places. The Kresge Foundation is a strong advocate for placemaking in communities and focuses on

the role that art and culture play. They establish the following guiding premises:<sup>5</sup>

- Creativity, aesthetic expression and the impulse to create meaning are evidence of our humanity and serve as community assets from which to build.
- Participation in arts and culture takes many forms and occurs in a wide range of venues—parks, community centers, churches and public spaces. People attend art events and buy art. But they also make, teach, learn and support arts and culture in myriad ways, from the amateur to professional realms.
- Our societal tendency is to focus on art products, but it is also imperative to recognize and appreciate the creative process. Process can be as important as, or in some cases, more important than art product.
- Artists have many kinds of relationships with communities, often helping people find their voice and expression or lending a different perspective when framing or devising solutions to community issues.
- Arts-and-culture activity is intrinsically important and contributes to a wide range of community dynamics, conditions and issues.
- Arts-and-culture activity in communities relies on supports inside and outside of the cultural sector.

## Economic Impact of Arts and Culture

The nonprofit organization Americans for the Art provides research data on the impact of arts and culture in communities. Their 2018 report on the economic impact of the arts (supported by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis) found that nonprofit arts and culture industries generated \$166.3 billion in total economic activity and supported 4.6 million jobs in 2015. The report notes that findings show that the arts are an “industry that supports jobs, generates government revenue and is a cornerstone of tourism.”

Economic impacts are substantial in Michigan. In 2017, the arts and culture industries added 2.8% or \$13.9 billion to the state’s economy and employed 121,330 workers (about 3% of Michigan’s employment). These workers earned wages and benefits totaling over \$7.6 billion.

<sup>3</sup> United States Department of Art and Culture (2018).

<sup>4</sup> Steuteville, R. (2014) “Four Types of Placemaking,” Congress for the New Urbanism <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/four-types-placemaking>

<sup>5</sup> The Kresge Foundation (2018). Creative Placemaking and Expansion of Opportunities: Observations and Reflections: Jackson, Maria Rosario, Ph.D.



## Sustainability & Resiliency

It is becoming critical to include concepts of resiliency and sustainability into land use plans. Though they are related, resiliency and sustainability are not the same. Sustainability is the well-established concept that focuses on decreasing or eliminating the detrimental future impacts of our current activity. Resiliency recognizes that our built environment will be subject to stresses and is the practice of designing that environment in a way that can endure those stresses. Some threats are ongoing, persistent stresses, while others are sudden shocks or single events that disrupt the day-to-day functioning of the community.

As we plan for the future, many of the challenges we will face are related either directly or indirectly to our place in larger systems, both natural and manmade. We often have little direct local control over these systems, but adapting to change and discovering our role in contributing to the health of these systems is nonetheless essential to planning for a community that can survive and thrive even in the face of the most severe challenges.

Severe weather events can have far-reaching implications for Michigan's agricultural and tourism economies, waterfront development, and communities with older stormwater management infrastructure. Within the last decade, the local area has experienced multiple heavy rain events that have led to property damage and decreased mobility and must anticipate that more flooding will occur in the future, damaging property, impairing access to parts of the Township, and creating financial distress for local residents and businesses.

Resilient communities are not only preparing for weather and climate-related shocks, but are also preparing for economic and health shocks as well. Planning for resiliency must consider that some threats are ongoing, persistent stresses, while others are sudden shocks, single events that disrupt the day-to-day functioning of the community.

As part of long-range planning, communities should understand, anticipate and plan for the local effects of regional climate trends.

## Addressing Resiliency & Identifying Vulnerable Populations

Resilient communities anticipate likely shocks, understand trends in stressors, and prepare for potential worst case scenarios. Understanding where a community is physically most vulnerable to specific events, and understanding which members of the community are likely to be most vulnerable in each case is key to effective planning. This section discusses in general terms what the community may expect in the future and what might be done to prepare for it; this plan recommends the development of a community resiliency plan.

Though an entire community will be affected by a major event such as a severe storm, flood, or long power outage, certain segments of the population are more vulnerable to the effects of such events, and in some cases are also more likely to live in locations that are more likely to be severely affected.

Planning for major events needs to consider the many dimensions of the social fabric that are heavily impacted, including the availability of medical services, government's ability to continue functioning under quarantines or stay-at-home orders, and the locations and numbers of vulnerable populations. Local police, fire, and ambulance services may be particularly taxed in a future public health emergency.

Though the most vulnerable populations will vary based on the specific event, certain population segments warrant special attention even in a general analysis:

- Low-income households
- Elderly
- Disabled
- Children

Low-income households may lack the financial resources to support quick recovery after a disaster or to prepare effectively for likely future events. The elderly and disabled may similarly lack financial resources and mobility, and may be more socially isolated than other groups. Especially in extreme heat events, the elderly and very young children are much more likely to be badly affected, including to the point of hospitalization, than the general population.

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# Appendix B

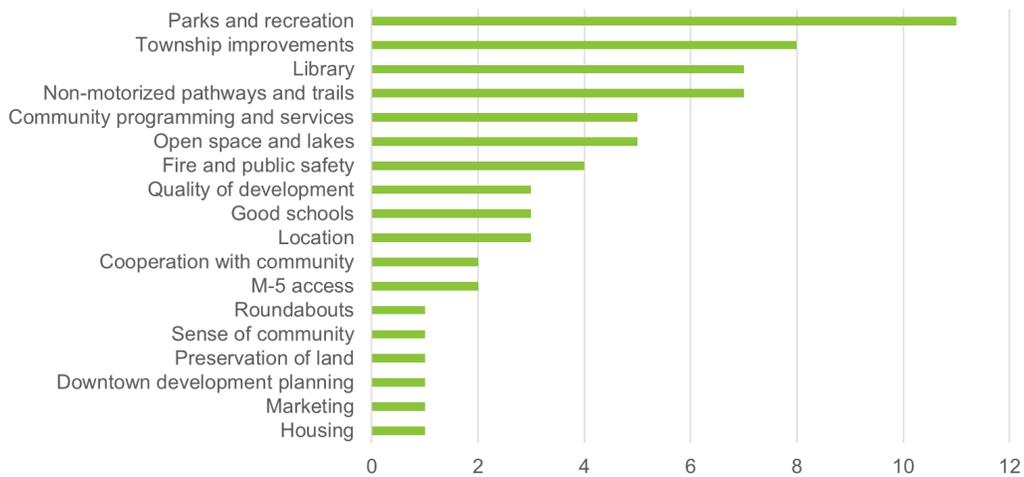
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## Public Input Results

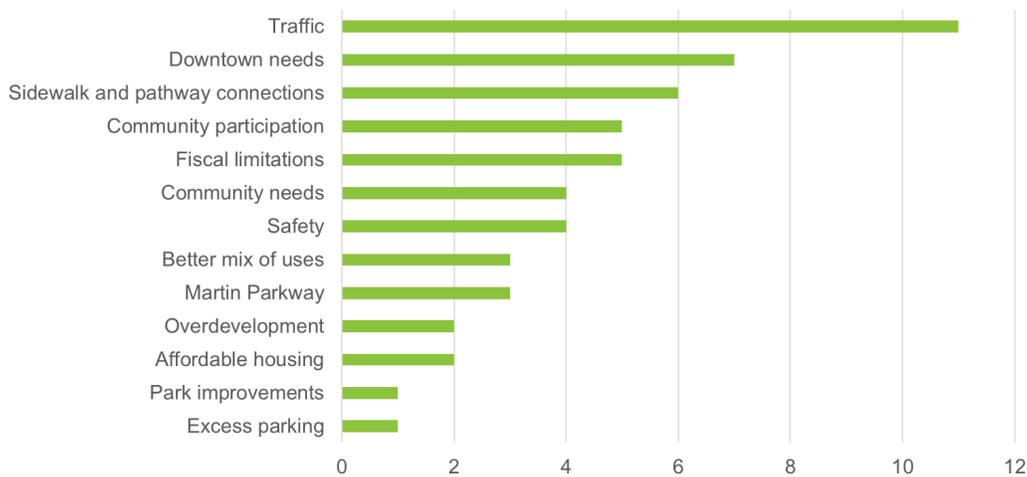
# Appendix B: Public Input Results

## Leadership Advance

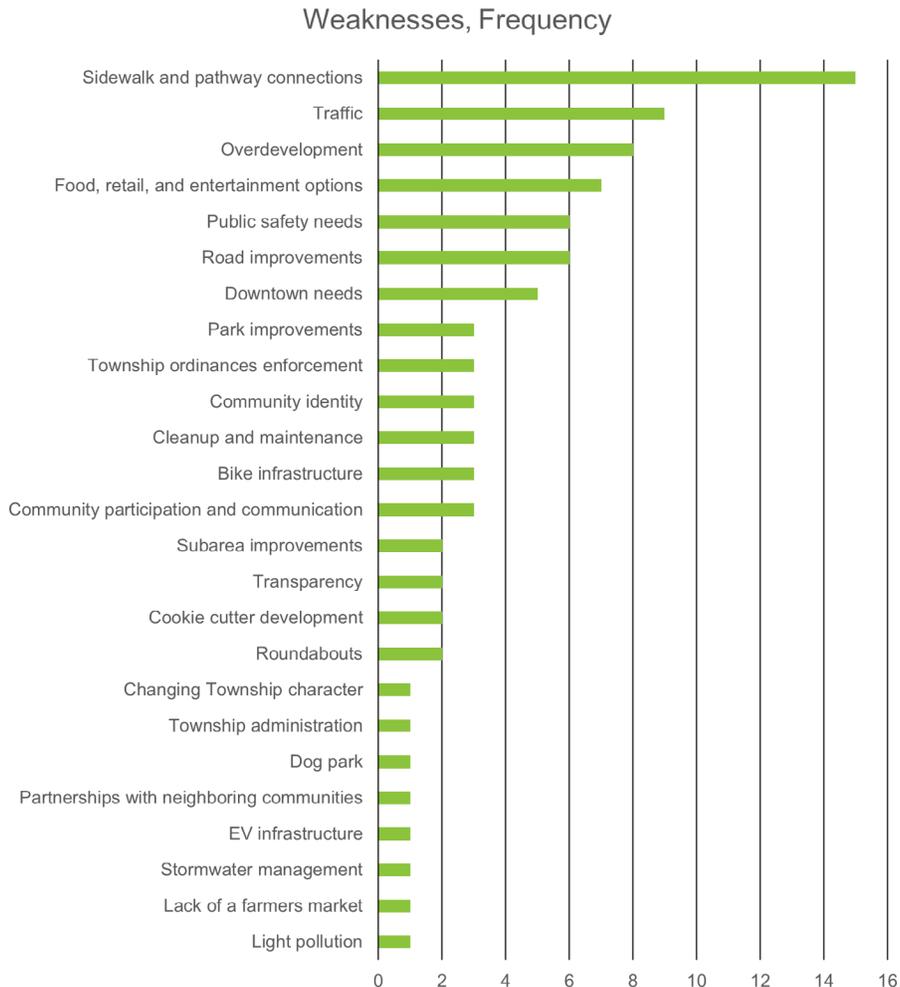
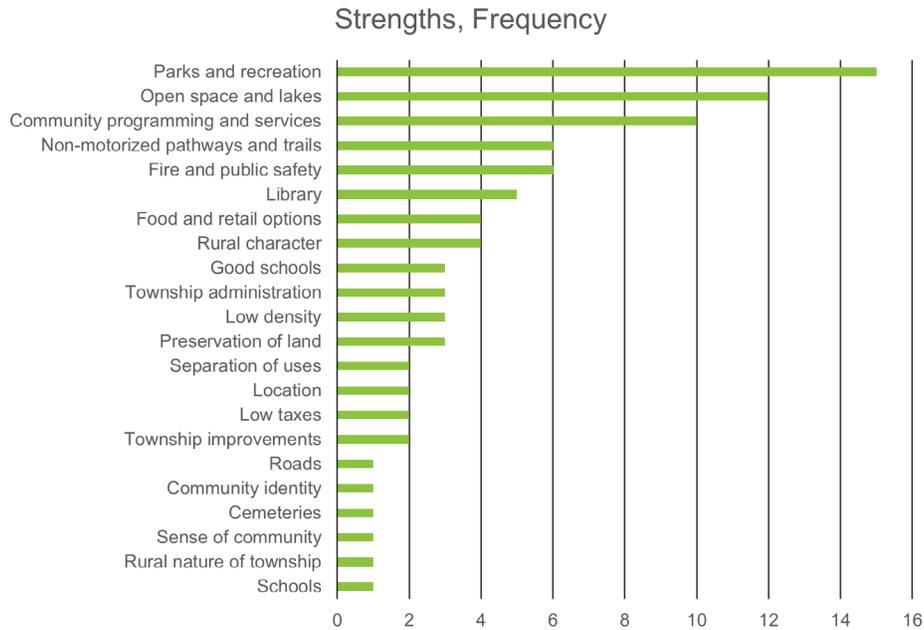
Strengths, Frequency of Mentions



Weaknesses, Frequency of Mentions



## Neighborhood (Small-Group) Meeting Toolkits



Meeting Toolkits: Strengths		
Meeting Location	Focus area (if identified)	Suggestion
Fire Department		Open spaces
Fire Department		Parks + Rec
Fire Department		Library
Fire Department		Trails
Fire Department		Senior Center
Fire Department		Fire Station 3
Fire Department		More rest. (Lots of restaurants)
Fire Department		Schools
Fire Department		Lakes
Lake Sherwood	North End	Lakes, water, water + water
Lake Sherwood	North End	Greenbelt, recreational areas
Lake Sherwood	North End	Library/Dodge Park centrally located
Lake Sherwood	North End	Golf courses preserved
Lake Sherwood	North End	New fire station
Lake Sherwood	North End	Greenspace gives up-north feel
Lake Sherwood	Commercial Center	Airline Trail
Lake Sherwood	Commercial Center	Martin Parkway + M5 separate the commercial areas from the residential + rural areas
Lake Sherwood	Commercial Center	Commercial development limited to one area
Lake Sherwood	Commercial Center	Dense traffic is kept in the commercial center
Lake Sherwood	General	Greenspace gives up-north feel
Lake Sherwood	General	Rural character with easy access to suburban amenities
Lake Sherwood	General	State parks (Proud Lake/Highland Rec) assure rural like character of northwest corner
Lake Sherwood	General	Residential property taxes are reasonable
Lake Sherwood	General	Township departments/personnel easy to work with
Lake Sherwood	General	Township seeking resident input for master plan
Library		Library
Library		Natural resources
Library		Schools
Library		Parks
Library		Big box stores
Library		Air Line Trail
Library		Fire/Police (OCS)
Library		Richardson Center
Library		Nature trails
Library		Zerbos
Library		Rural feeling of Township (open spaces) - or semi-rural
Library		Windmill Farm
Library		Low crime
Library		Low taxes
Library		Byers
Library		Wise Woods
Library		Cemeteries



Meeting Toolkits: Strengths		
Meeting Location	Focus area (if identified)	Suggestion
Library		Boat launch
Merrill Park		Increased dues
Merrill Park		Board and committees
Merrill Park		Continuing to provide research, analysis, assessments, and seeking all other realms of excellences that would bring top notch services, engagements, and beautifications for all citizens, businesses, and visitors through constant improvement and determination of community excellence
Senior Center		Senior center
Senior Center		Library (terrific)
Senior Center		Concerts (parks) w/OCC (outdoor recreation)
Senior Center		Excellent 911 service
Senior Center		Rural feeling
Senior Center		Green Space in N. end
Senior Center		Rds pretty Good - compared to S.field/Livonia
Senior Center		Pathway to library
Senior Center		No high rises
Senior Center		Friendly people
Senior Center		Good fire service
Senior Center		Parks
Senior Center		Pathways
Senior Center		Lakes
Senior Center		Open space/wildlife
Senior Center		Meals on wheels
Senior Center		Senior transportation
Senior Center		Senior trips / classes
Senior Center		Good school systems
Senior Center		Commerce Twp drive in sign (should purchase)
Treyborne Cove HOA		Low residential density
Treyborne Cove HOA		No high-rise buildings
Treyborne Cove HOA		New community library
Treyborne Cove HOA		Recycling
Treyborne Cove HOA		Lots of green spaces
Treyborne Cove HOA		At the "commercial center", ease of access to highways and shopping
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)		Lakes
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)		Parks
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)		Schools

Meeting Toolkits: Strengths		
Meeting Location	Focus area (if identified)	Suggestion
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)		Love the parks and open space



Meeting Toolkits: Weaknesses		
Meeting Location	Focus area (if identified)	Suggestion
Fire Department		Traffic - improve roadways
Fire Department		Crowding + development
Fire Department		No DPW
Fire Department		Leaf pickup
Fire Department		Fire training tower
Fire Department		Hydrants
Fire Department		More fire service
Fire Department		Improved EMS
Fire Department		Overdevelopment apts + senior facilities
Fire Department		Code enforcement
Lake Sherwood	North End	Rezoning occurs without resident input
Lake Sherwood	North End	Clear cutting trees for new subdivisions
Lake Sherwood	North End	Lack of bike trails
Lake Sherwood	North End	Enforcement of Township ordinances
Lake Sherwood	North End	People move here for rural feel - it is changing
Lake Sherwood	North End	Future developments are not transparent/communicated
Lake Sherwood	Commercial Center	Traffic congestion on Martin Parkway
Lake Sherwood	Commercial Center	Future traffic density
Lake Sherwood	General	Safety - fire + local law staffing not keeping up with growth
Lake Sherwood	General	Partnerships with neighboring communities
Lake Sherwood	General	Lack of participation w/Road Commission for attention to county roads in residential areas
Lake Sherwood	General	Broadband/internet - 1 source creates monopoly \$\$\$
Lake Sherwood	General	Lack of sufficient cell phone towers
Lake Sherwood	General	Single source for sewer hook-up creates monopoly \$\$\$
Lake Sherwood	General	Township ordinances outdated
Lake Sherwood	General	Communication to residents - no local newspaper
Lake Sherwood	General	Township map included with workshop kit does not show Lake Sherwood
Library		Sidewalks/connectivity/bike lanes/pedestrian access + crosswalks (x3)
Library		Traffic (3)
Library		Cookie cutter residential
Library		Reduction of greenspace
Library		Consistency of retail appearance
Library		Water runoff from new development
Library		Clean water - Tribar
Library		Lack of community gardens
Library		More developing than governing
Library		Light pollution
Library		Big box - not connected -> lots of driving
Library		Restaraunts - not connected -> lots of driving
Library		No community hub
Library		5 and Main - where is it

Meeting Toolkits: Weaknesses		
Meeting Location	Focus area (if identified)	Suggestion
Library		Farmer's market -> weekend best
Library		EV charging station (at library)
Library		Commerce Rd sidewalks: need sidewalks from CHS to Carrol Lake Rd.
Library		City water needed by Commerce El.
Library		Visibility of bike trails (Airline Trail)
Library		Roundabouts - traffic @ end bottleneck
Library		Overdevelopment
Library		No entertainment
Library		Not much commercial in commercial area
Library		Trails are a road to nowhere
Library		Dog park
Senior Center		Round-a-bouts M5/Martin Prky
Senior Center		Vacant Hiller store
Senior Center		Lack of trail Bogie -> Duck Lk
Senior Center		Heavy traffic
Senior Center		Loon Lake/Benstein - left turn lane
Senior Center		Selling of open space
Senior Center		Master Plan - M5 Downtown not fulfilled
Senior Center		Safe access to pathways
Senior Center		Commerce / S. Commerce crosswalk
Senior Center		Village area needs improvement - like Milford
Senior Center		Getting information to seniors on services
Senior Center		Lack of community wifi
Senior Center		Safe Path Carroll Lake Rd
Senior Center		Commerce/S. Commerce and S. Commerce/Oakley Park - Traffic light timing
Senior Center		Ladd Rd -> M5 trail - need connection
Senior Center		Property Union Lk Rd/Richardson where drive in sign is needs imp.
Senior Center		Clean up commercial area (movie theater) - commercial center
Senior Center		No public farmers market - commercial center
Senior Center		Fix Loop Rd - commercial center
Senior Center		S End Union Lk Rd needs cleaned up
Senior Center		Trash along side of rds
Senior Center		Need family amusement - commercial area
Treyborne Cove HOA		Lack of regular communication (printed/paper) with residents. Many seniors don't like or don't have access to computers.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Only one hazardous and waste collection day per year.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Traffic congestion on Maple and Haggerty roads.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Deteriorated roads.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Lack of leisure and recreational opportunities.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Lack of restaurants (not fast foot); people must go to Northville, West Bloomfield, Novi, etc.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Lack of walking and cycling trails - not enough sidewalks



<b>Meeting Toolkits: Weaknesses</b>		
Meeting Location	Focus area (if identified)	Suggestion
Treyborne Cove HOA		In general, Commerce Twp has a little bit of a "branding" gap. What comes to people's mind when you tell them you live in Commerce? (Or do you say, "I live on the far west side of West Bloomfield?") What is the first thing people think of when you say Commerce Township... The trouble is, nothing really comes to mind, either positively or negatively. So, there is no brand, no vibe that represents our community. It is just a nice, pleasant place to live, and kind of convenient to a lot of other things. (But so is Ecorse.)
Treyborne Cove HOA		Lack of a "downtown Commerce Township". The "promise" of a downtown by the different township supervisors and Boards started more than 20 years ago.
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)	General	Traffic is terrible
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)	North End	Cannot identify areas for restaurants and we want more restaurants close by
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)	North End	Sidewalks need along Commerce Road between the hospital and the library/Scarlett's Park
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)	North End	Cannot safely bike as noted under sidewalks
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)	North End	Would like to see, at the SW corner of Commerce and South Commerce, park benches AND a plaque/sign detailing the history of Commerce Township
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)	Commercial	We want a Trader Joe's or/and an upscale food market such as Papa Joe's, Market Square, Whole Foods
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)	Commercial	No complaints about having to drive for household shopping
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)	Commercial	More eyes on the stuff people leave all over their properties - clean up Commerce!!

Meeting Toolkits: Strategies for the Future		
Meeting Location	Focus area (if identified)	Suggestion
Fire Department		Stop selling township property
Fire Department		Keep open spaces
Fire Department		Keep improving parks _ trails
Fire Department		Update Twp buildings
Fire Department		Better traffic plan
Fire Department		Growing and updating twp services (police, fire, DPW)
Fire Department		Widen Union Lake Rd
Lake Sherwood		Conservancy - purchase strategic development rights
Lake Sherwood		Enhance current infrastructure (staff properly for fire, safety, ordinance enforcement; add dry hydrants to lake communities that do not have fire hydrants)
Lake Sherwood		Broadband competition (internet, cable TV)
Lake Sherwood		Home sales - require septic inspection
Lake Sherwood		Keep industrial in the industrial area
Lake Sherwood		North End bike paths to connect with Airline Trail
Lake Sherwood		Sewer hook-up - add 2 more contractors to create competitive bids + lower costs
Lake Sherwood		Limit development
Lake Sherwood		Update township ordinances
Lake Sherwood		Maintain greenspace
Lake Sherwood		Re-do the slalom course on Martin Parkway
Lake Sherwood		Involve resident input when re-zoning
Lake Sherwood		Create additional bike paths
Lake Sherwood		Require future developments to plan for/account for watershed
Lake Sherwood		Perseve the character of our community
Lake Sherwood		Avoid deforestation at new developments
Lake Sherwood		When areas such as farmland get rezoned as residential, stipulate low density only
Library		Less money for development, more for trails and pedestrian safety
Library		Consider public transportation (extend 15 Mile route into Commerce Twp)
Library		Consider zoning reform (permitting more density, walkability)
Library		Incentivize homeowners moving from septic
Library		Twp website refresh
Library		What properties does Twp own?
Library		Continuing adding trail heads / accessibility to trails
Library		More blinders (like @ Pont Trl) in high traffic areas
Library		More traffic studies esp. in relationship to new development
Library		Incentivize developer to finish 5 & Main
Library		Require developers to add sidewalks, widen roads, etc.
Library		More community input
Library		More analysis available / communication / transparency made available to residents
Library		Work w/retail storefront owners to incentivize filling existing retail



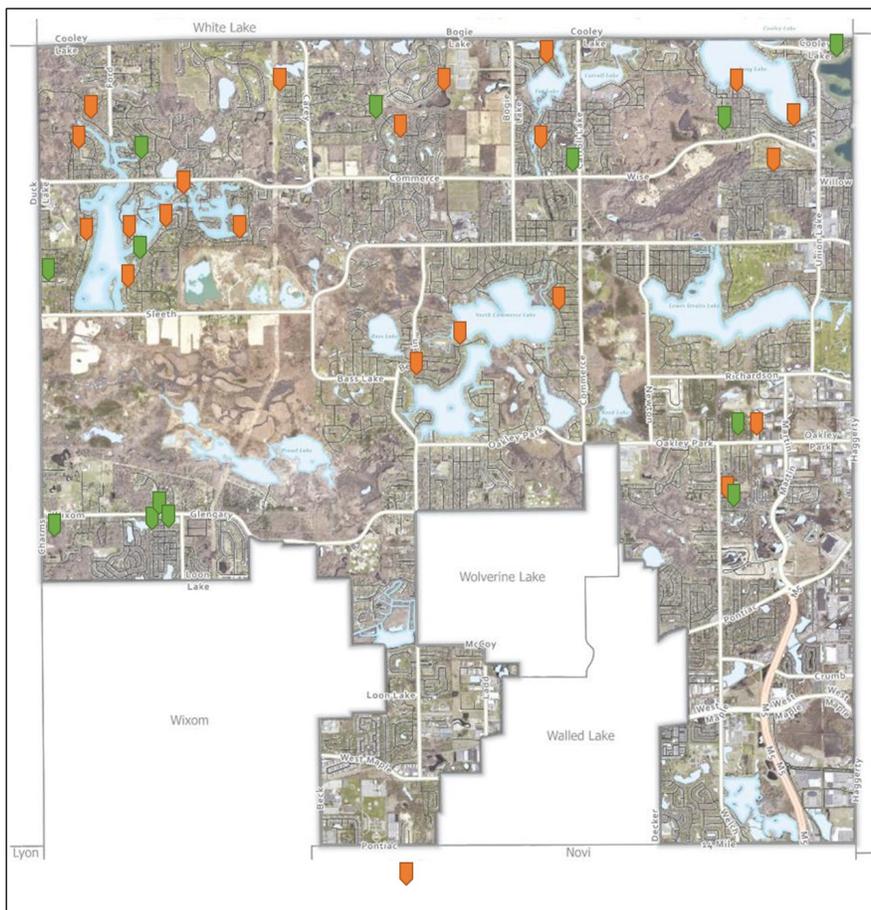
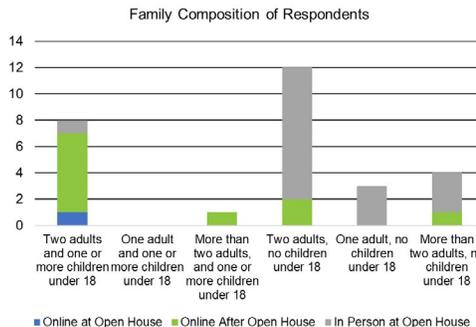
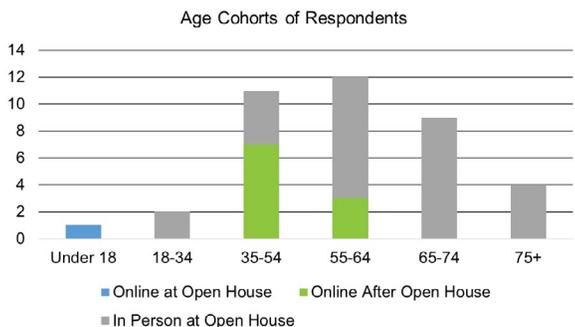
Meeting Toolkits: Strategies for the Future		
Meeting Location	Focus area (if identified)	Suggestion
Library		Enforce ordinance for building/grounds maintenance
Library		Keep adequate # of fire and OCS on staff (pay them well, good benefits, etc).
Merrill Park		Commerce Township can offer a source of identity
Merrill Park		Have a vision for the future
Merrill Park		Inventory assets
Merrill Park		Build plans on the enhancement of existing assets
Merrill Park		Use education and incentives, not just regulation
Merrill Park		Pick and choose among development projects
Merrill Park		Cooperate with neighbors for mutual benefit
Merrill Park		Pay attention to community aesthetics
Merrill Park		Have strong leaders and committed citizens
Senior Center		Preservation of green space
Senior Center		Large/Rural lots
Senior Center		Transparency in development
Senior Center		Expand pathways to parks on Wise Rd
Senior Center		Develop trails in Wise Woods/Victory
Senior Center		Accountability to development
Senior Center		Overbuilding
Senior Center		Attempt to maintain vacant buildings
Senior Center		Raise taxes on vacant buildings
Senior Center		Year round open air market
Senior Center		Make area more attractive
Senior Center		Family amusement
Senior Center		Vacant buildings
Senior Center		Continue efficient organization management
Senior Center		Big picture planning (ex OCS office)
Senior Center		Continue community programming
Senior Center		Continue to improve community outreach
Senior Center		Hold builders accountable during projects
Senior Center		Expand community center/civic center
Senior Center		Work with schools on summer food program
Treyborne Cove HOA		Develop more commercial areas in the North End so that the residents living there don't have to drive south and hence increase the congestion around the Commercial Center.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Encourage/require green buildings, homes, and neighborhoods. Promote and reward LEED certification, thus recognizing buildings that are efficient, cost-effective, and better for the environment.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Expanded roads with sustainable materials.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Expand and connect existing trails for cycling and walking. For example, continue the M5 trail all the way north.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Walking/biking trails need to lead to a common gathering place. A social center if you will - basically, to some kind of destination. [e.g., downtown Wixom; Novi "downtown" unsuccessful]
Treyborne Cove HOA		Add a fire station in the corner of Crumb and Haggerty

Meeting Toolkits: Strategies for the Future		
Meeting Location	Focus area (if identified)	Suggestion
Treyborne Cove HOA		Contribute to/apply for membership at SOCCRA. Our residents will have access to the centers for household hazardous waste, electronics, paper shredding and some recycling.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Or contribute to/apply for membership at RRRASOC which provides recycling drop-off centers and household hazardous waste collection events.
Treyborne Cove HOA		What about a food truck corner somewhere in town [e.g., Traverse City; social events, fundraisers, lessons, etc.]
Treyborne Cove HOA		Improvement in the parks and recreation department. This is such an easy way to bring people together of all ages and interest to engage in leisure activities and build a sense of community. [pickleball ideas: ambassadorshops, tournaments, learn to play sessions]
Treyborne Cove HOA		Communication with residents: mail a calendar of events every month to all residents listing all the Township activities.
Treyborne Cove HOA		Widen Haggerty Rd. between 14 Mile Rd. and Richardson Rd. Make it a 4 lane avenue.
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)		Work with the road commission to: add landscaping along the east and west sides of M-5 (similar to what Bl. Hills did along Woodward north of Quarton Road); S. of Pontiac Trail is ugly!
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)		Slow down traffic on Martin Parkway
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)		Commerce Crossings - streetlights frequently don't work
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)		Roads are pretty maxed out - slow down development
Unidentified (facilitator: Rusty Rosman)		Hold developments to higher standards



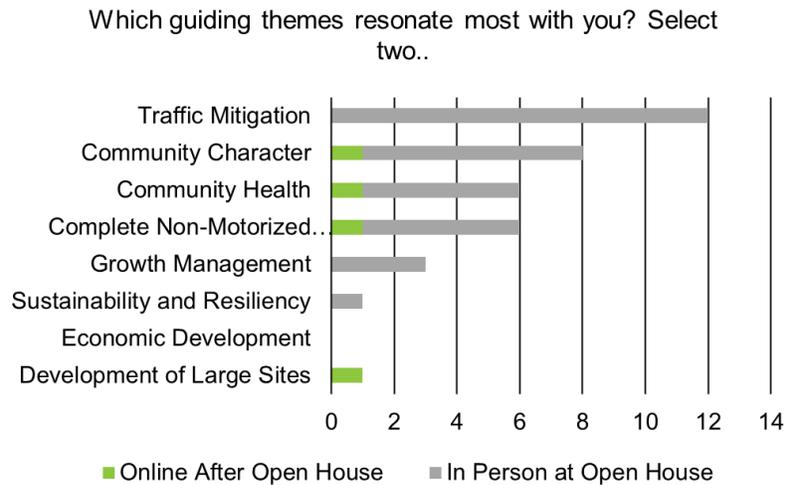
# Open House #1 (November 2022)

## Station #1: Check-In Table





### Station #3: Visioning and Guiding Themes



#### Is anything missing from the vision statement or guiding themes?

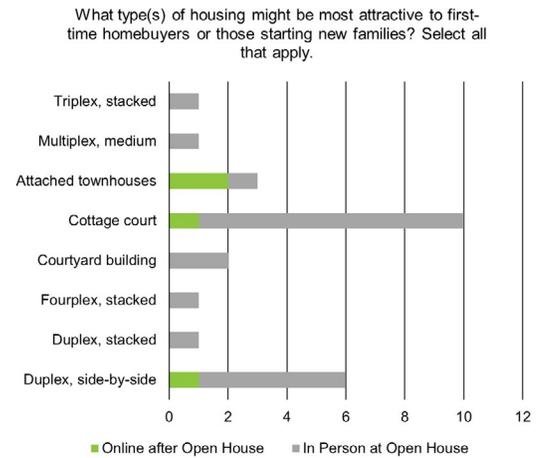
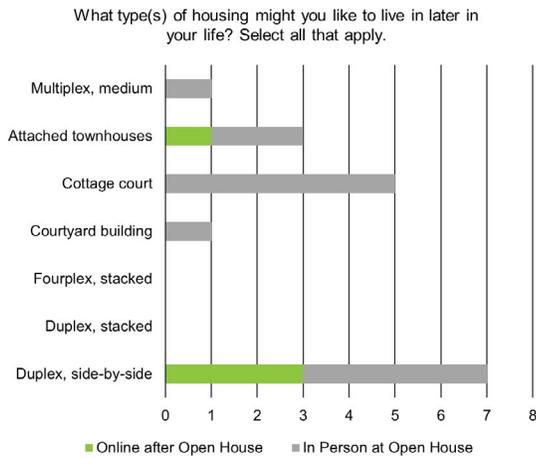
##### In person at open house:

- Preserve and improve water quality. Water quality= home value
- Preservation of lakes/ water quality
- Inclusive and diverse
- Input from residents before plans are approved

##### Online after open house:

- Farm/Rural areas should be kept this way. This is what makes Commerce Twp desirable. No dense housing developments should be added. Roads cannot handle the additional congestion. Golf courses should be kept as such and not turned into developments.
- No
- Sidewalks and safety paths are desperately needed on Union Lake Road from the new boat launch to the old boat launch.

## Station #4: Housing



Responses in orange were submitted at the in person open house and comments in green were shared during the online open house after the in-person event.



## Station #5: Commercial Center

### 1. What's working in this area?

#### In person at open house:

- Bike trail

#### Online after open house:

- I don't see what is working. What commercial business is there?
- The trails.
- 9, 10, 11 should be med/light industrial/commercial/office.
- Road system is already in place to handle a lot of traffic. Its convenient to freeway access and the mall at 12 oaks
- Natural beauty has been maintained

### 2. What needs work in this area?

#### Online after open house:

- I don't see any retail in this area. How is it commercial? It looks residential.
- Expand on trails and connect! Maybe water stations etc. an underutilized and marketed area
- Congestion. From 7:30 – 9AM and 4:30 – 6PM Welch Rd & Oakley Pk/Martin through to S. Commerce is gridlock. M-5 was built to alleviate, but dense housing defeated this purpose. Commerce & Wise and Union Lk/Richardson areas have same problem.
- I think the Township is on the right track with development

- Commercial needs to be developed. We have enough housing.

### 3. How could private property be developed in a way that strengthens the community?

#### In person at open house:

- Comedy Club/Theater Venue
- Require Sidewalks
- No new residential- too much traffic, gas station
- Require electric charging stations for new development

#### Online after open house:

- The mission of the planning commission should be to get the best plan for that parcel within the ordinances. The goal should not be to enable developers to put up the densest most profitable development they want
- Keep lot large! Sidewalks! Please god no more oil change places.
- Properties should have certain similarities so that development looks harmonious
- It could start to be built, for one. Holding the property and not building isn't what residents want.

### 4. Do you have ideas for specific parts of the Commercial Center?

#### Online after open house:

- It's a very late in the process to correct the problems now
- Family friendly and walkable
- Just got back from a trip from Scotland. All new builds there are required to have solar panels added to the building roofs.
- Model it after The Villages and find someone to develop it. If the current owner won't move forward, make him sell it and move on.

## Station #6: North End

### 1. What's working in this area?

#### In person at open house:

- Open space- Small Town Feel
- Limited Commercial/Retail Development
- Beautiful Nature Lots of Trees
- Nature
- Less traffic
- Closer to Milford
- Green Spaces
- Walking along Commerce
- Quiet
- Low commercial and Retail
- Parks
- Keep business/industrial by M-5 Corridor Only

#### Online after open house:

- Homes tend to be on larger lots which gives a more parkland feel which is what helps defines Commerce.
- When it's not rush hour, traffic flows. Roads are in good shape.
- Sidewalks and safety paths are needed from the old Union Lake boat launch to the new Union Lake boat launch, especially around the curve near the old boat launch.
- Yes leave the area as they are. Make them protected area. Traffic is already high in the area and I do not see adding lanes. There is enough homes already and we need to protect the wildlife in that area.

### 2. What needs work in this area?

#### In person at open house:

- Connecting Pathways
- Shoulders on Commerce and Other Busy Roads
- Sidewalks or Large Shoulders

#### Online after open house:

- "Traffic
- No new retail
- Sidewalks"
- Downtown Commerce lacks character. Its nice to have Byers there but you don't even know you're in the heart of the village.
- We need development that attracts retail and shopping and commercial activity. We don't need more party stores and vape shops. We need cute stores and restaurants. And sidewalks.

- We could use more restaurants downtown or a market. Something good but not super expensive.

### 3. How could private property be developed in a way that strengthens the community?

#### In person at open house:

- Tiny house community development (Be on the leading edge of this trend! Gain national attention!)
- Keep Green Spaces
- Minimize traffic from new development
- Comedy Club/Community Theater
- Sidewalks
- Gas Station
- Water/Sewer Connection

#### Online after open house:

- Large lots sizes, tree planting in subs. Maintain more of the matured trees during development.
- Require plenty of parking and sidewalks to be developed with any new construction. Limit tenants to a certain quantity of a type of store.
- Do not let them build anything turn them into parks or into protected lands.

### 4. Do you have ideas for specific parts of the North End?

#### In person at open house:

- Shared path from Carroll Lake through Sleeth to Bass Lake

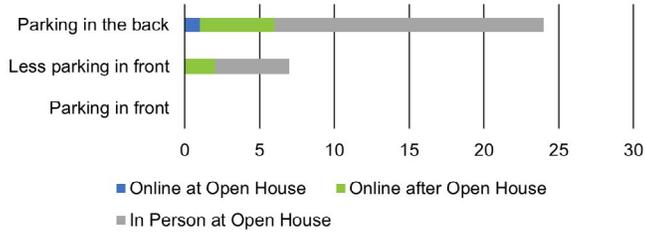
#### Online after open house:

- Enhance the village area?
- Encourage current businesses to update facades and make it look nicer.
- Yes have the empty land protected for the wildlife. Traffic is already congested.



## Station #7: Downtown

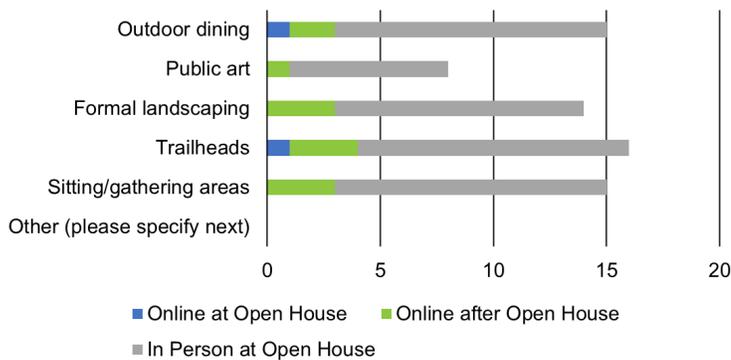
Site Layout: Select your preferred option



Building Height: Select your preferred option.



Site Amenities: Select your two most preferred options.



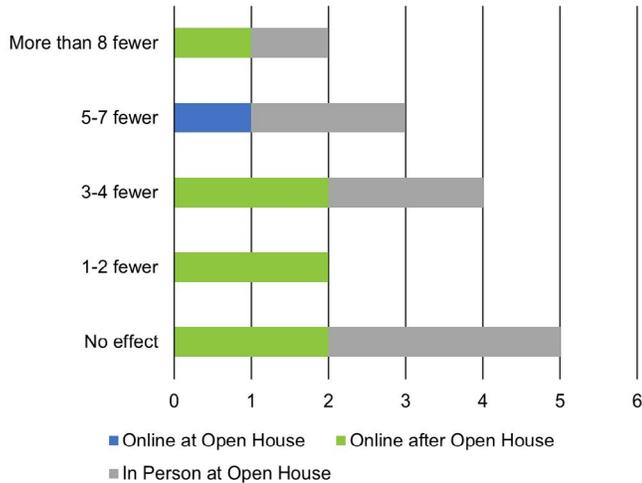
If other was selected for the previous “site amenities” question, what additional amenities would you like to see?

Online after open house:

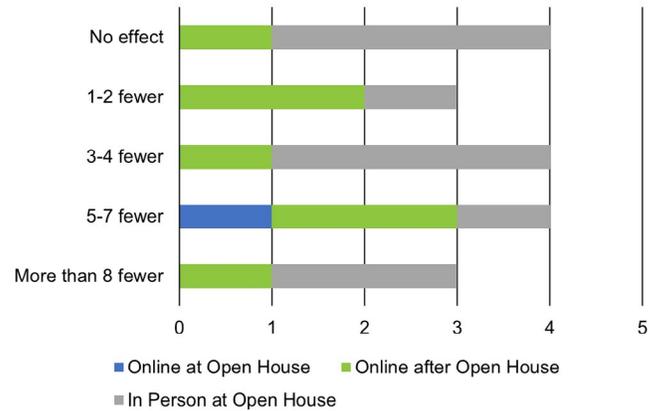
- Public gathering spaces along trails
- Using federal funds for DDA

## Station #8: Non-Motorized Transportation

If you had access to an e-bike, scooter, or bike share (and safe routes to use them), how many fewer automobile trips would you take in a week?



If there were more trails connecting neighborhoods to local goods and services, how many fewer automobile trips would you take in a week?



**Where would you like to see more trails and pathways? Describe the areas (roads and/or intersections) or place a dot on the map (in-person only).**

### In person at the open house:

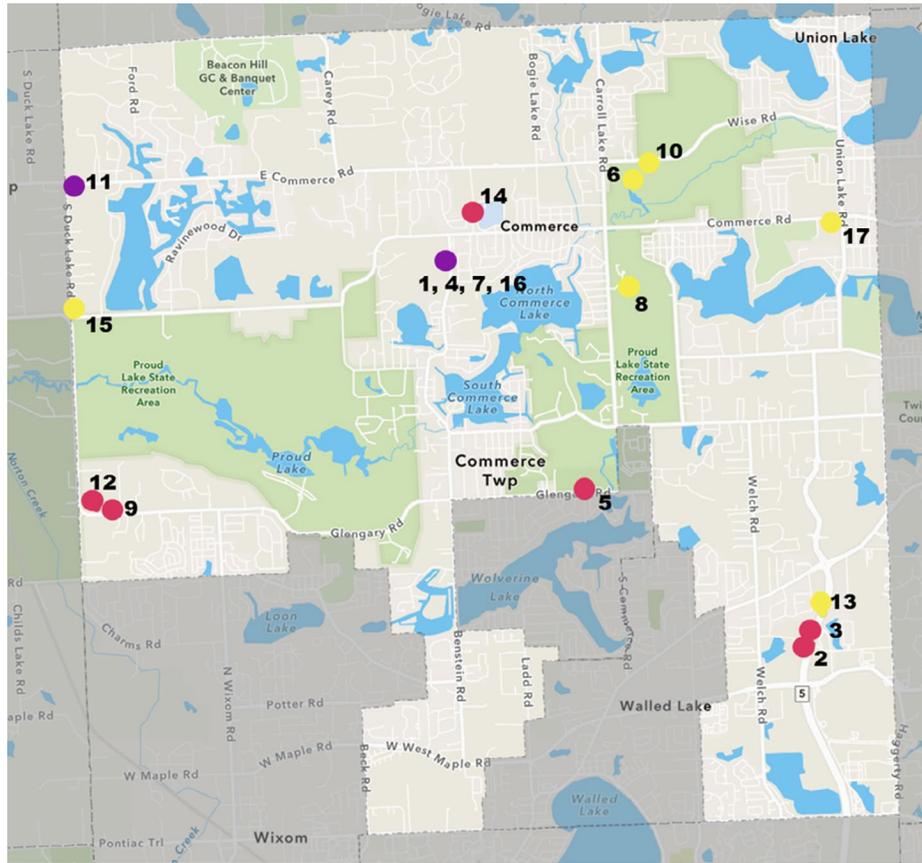
- In the winter, plow the Lakes Community Trail
- Bike Lanes! NW Corner- Sleeth, Duck Lake, Commerce
- Bike lanes to existing paths, not sidewalks
- looking for a shared-use pathway on Commerce Road in Lake Sherwood
- Bike Lanes (not sidewalks) so we can get from Lake Sherwood to existing bike paths or proud lake

### Online after open house:

- Just connecting what we have. Glen Gary trails to the rail trails etc. maybe some winter maintenance
- North, East and West up from library to connect to trail. This would allow biking towards shopping, Longs Orchard and towards Cooley Lake for those living in those subdivisions to access trail without having to ride or walk on road..
- Pavement on Glengarry from Proud Lake park entrance to the Park entrance on Wixom road to make it safe to walk on Wixom Road.
- Around and from the schools. Along Bogie Lake Rd, Carroll Lake Rd, Oakley Park, Commerce, Wise Rd
- Union Lake Road from the new boat launch to the old boat launch. Many people walk around Union Lake and a safety path is needed especially on the curve near the old boat launch.
- Along Oakley park and WeChat to connect to MALT and future downtown at m5, Pontiac trail
- Connecting Newton road to Welch Road to access trail way.



# PictureThis!



- Things respondents love about the Township
- Things respondents want to see more of in the Township
- Things respondents think are missing from the Township

1. **Sidewalks.** I would love to see more sidewalks through the Township.



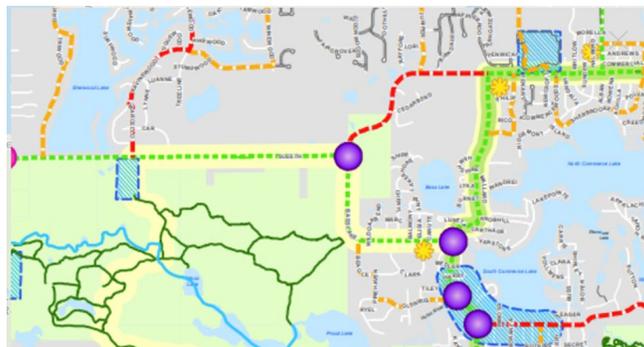
2. **The Annual M-5K along the Michigan.** The M-5K is a great run/walk every October along the scenic Michigan Airline Trail (MAIT)



3. **M-5 Non-Motorized Bridge.** The bridge over M-5 North of Maple with the wave panels and “Commerce Township” signage



4. **Sidewalks!** The plan for proposed sidepath should be expedited for safety and to allow for better access to our parks



5. **Trails.** I love living where I can access paths and trails from my home without getting in the car. I love the pedestrian bridge across M5. I love that my husband and I can ride our bikes into Wixom or Walled Lake for dinner. I love feeling safe enough to run along the paths by myself as a woman. I love mountain bike paths at Hickory Glen Park.



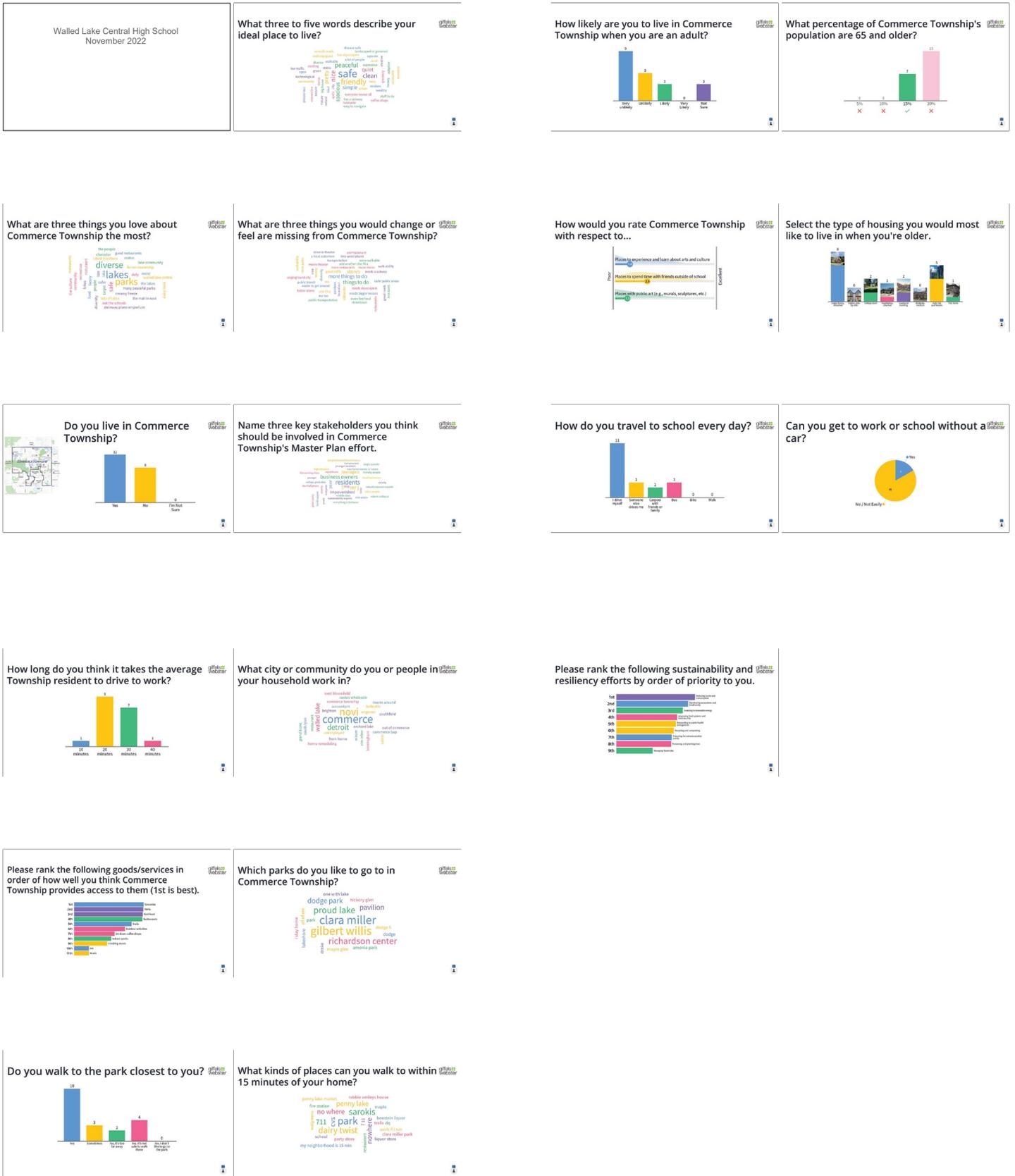
6. **More Pathways and Bike Lanes.** Commerce could continue to add pathways and bike lanes. Expand the trail near the library along Commerce Road north or west to connect our community. Add bike lane or shoulder along Oakley Park (I always see walkers and bikers there). Add sidewalks or trail along Benstein to reach the Airline trail. Recreation opportunities are everything! Keep our area outdoor focused. Limit removal of forest area for housing.
7. **Sidewalks/Bike Paths.** I would love to see more sidewalks or bike trails to connect Commerce Township with downtown Milford. Also, there is currently no safe way to ride a bike across the Huron River. A bike path or sidewalk crossing the river at Benstein, Wixom Road, or Commerce Road would be amazing. Connecting Commerce to the surrounding towns/retail hubs would greatly increase property value and promote use of the parks.
8. **Skatepark.** Commerce needs a skatepark! Many nearby towns have one but not us. Teens and young folks don't have many areas to hang out. A skatepark would help them build community, stay close to home, and stay out of trouble all while getting active.
9. **Equestrian Facility.** As people look for more real life experiences and adventures, learning a new skill or picking up an old hobby that was sidelined due to other commitments the post pandemic era has seen a shift in more people looking for more outdoor living and what a better compliment to the townships portfolio than keeping an equestrian facility in the Township. They have the foundation already there for this. I hope that the board commit to keeping and growing Windmill farm riding academy. I love that they took a step in this direction in the first place and I hope they continue to do so,
10. **Disc Golf in Wise Rd Open Area.** It would be great to see a 18+ hole disc golf course added to the former nuke missile site.
11. **Bike lane, path, or sidewalk down all of Commerce Rd.** Link Commerce Township to Downtown Milford, Kensington Metropark, and Proud Lake Trails
12. **Horses and Farming.** Windmill farm is a beautiful sight to enjoy on my drive to work, and serves a large number in our community through their horse program. I hope to see this farm around for many years to come, and perhaps find more ways to partner with schools, perhaps with farming initiatives and animal husbandry classes!

13. **Native Plantings.** Native plantings along public green spaces (especially the M-5 median) will help support native pollinators and reduce surface runoff due to increasing rainfall that is projected in the coming decades. After becoming established, these plantings will be low maintenance and would reduce costs related to maintaining the extensive turf grass present in these areas.



14. **Low Key Enjoying the Michigan Great Outdoors.** My family chose Commerce over other communities due to its larger percentage of greenspace, Walled Lake Schools, and a lack of extensive slapped up sub divisions and strip malls. I walk the trails around Huron valley hospital and like the idea of expanding them, my only request is that if you do expand the bike path/trail system, please make sure it is not by adding a bike lane to a 45 mph zone road, and that there is some separation to prevent people . It is not safe biking on the main artery roads right now. 10% of people are staring at their cell phones while driving to Milford on Sleeth (counted last summer myself for an hour). If you put up those bad bike lanes like that are in Pontiac, nobody will use them, and you will be wasting your money paving more of our greenspace The current trail around Central is a good example. Willing to pay an annual permit for trails to help expand it.
15. **Roundabout at Wixom/Duck Lake/Sleeth.** This is the perfect location for getting rid of traffic lights and simplifying a confusing intersection. Realize this is probably a county (RCOC) topic but hopefully Commerce TWP has some input.
16. **Library.** I would like safe crossings so that residents can walk to the library from their homes and Clifford SmartMiddle School.
17. **Trader Joes or Other Upscale Grocery.** We need better grocery options in the township.

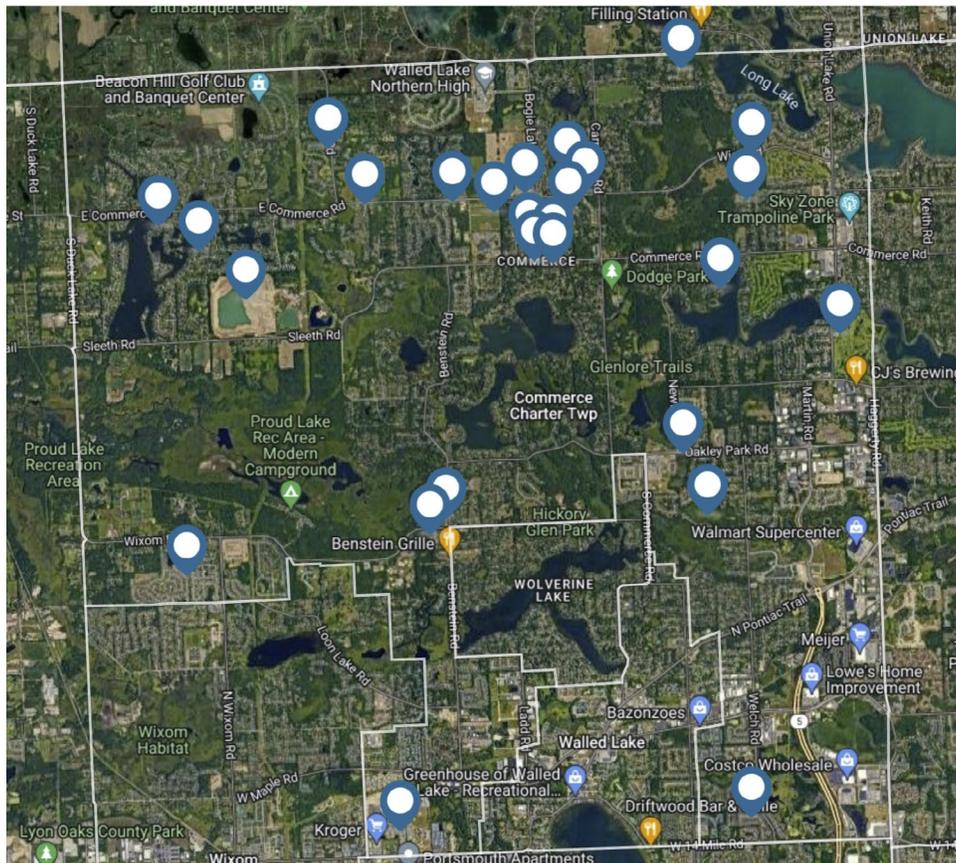
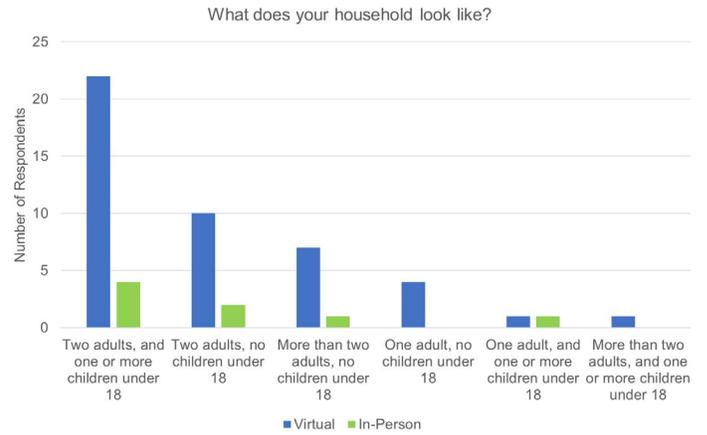
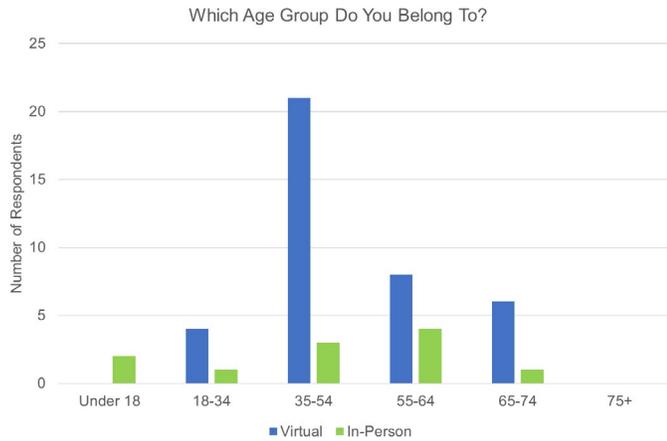






## Open House #2 (June 2023)

### Station #1: Check-In Table



## Station #2: Goals & Objectives

Goal	Please share any objectives that are missing that you would like the Planning Commission to consider.	Please share any action items that you think would help the Township accomplish their objectives and achieve the identified goals.
<p><b>Residential Development</b> To achieve well planned, safe, balanced, and pleasant high-quality residential neighborhoods that meet the needs of all residents within the Township, today and in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the plan to extend bike paths to the NW... to Oak Valley Middle School or Country Oaks Elementary School? Side walks along Commerce Road from Duck Lake Road to Bogie Lake Road will help connect the western section of the township without destroying the semi-rural environment.</li> <li>• Those sound great. I wish we had a skatepark, many surrounding communities do but it takes my husband 20 minutes to get to the nearest one. The teens around here don't have anywhere to congregate so they roam stores and annoy people at night. I would also like to see more sidewalks. In many areas there are sidewalks that don't connect and it makes it hard to get around with my stroller. I'd also love a splash pad as a mom of a toddler :)</li> <li>• Ensure infrastructure can is maintained and can handle the growth.</li> <li>• "Maintain the existing residential neighborhoods. DO NOT add any more clustered developments.</li> <li>• Maintain open space and wooded areas."</li> <li>• Consider impact on traffic conditions before building these massive subs when roads can not already handle the load.</li> <li>• the accessibility of non motorized pathways is an area of concern. walkability to schools and parks (especially with children) is outright dangerous even for an experienced cyclist.</li> <li>• the development of wooded lots and other green space is also concerning. the mature trees of the township is what gives it its character. These trees can not be replaced. the replacement trees along martin parkway are a joke."</li> <li>• Preserve land and limit housing that is displacing animals and creating more traffic and congestion and changing the character of the township.</li> <li>• Have we considered connecting the paths/sidewalks we have?</li> </ul>	

Goal	Please share any objectives that are missing that you would like the Planning Commission to consider.	Please share any action items that you think would help the Township accomplish their objectives and achieve the identified goals.
<p><b>Economic Development</b> Promote well-located, high-quality and diverse development in strategic areas of the community while mitigating impacts of development on neighboring residential uses. Create and nurture identifiable “downtown” type commercial activity centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep focus of commercial and retail development in the eastern half of the township... again to preserve the semi-rural character of the western portion of the township.</li> <li>• I don't have anything to add here really. I would love a more pedestrian friendly and oriented town and a downtown area. I know it's not really the way the township evolved but it would be very beneficial to building a more connected community.</li> <li>• “These are great. No additions or subtractions.</li> <li>• However, no more auto related businesses or CVS type businesses.</li> <li>• More quality grocery options--ie Trader Joes.”</li> <li>• need to make the area more appealing to small business. the strip mall method is not in line with the character of the township.</li> <li>• Encourage redevelopment of existing vacant or unoccupied buildings to preserve open space and reduce risk of blight.</li> <li>• utilize the industries around. Proving grounds, Hospitals. Try for tech jobs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebalance the Planning Board with more residents and a lot fewer developers. This is critical.</li> <li>• Don't be afraid of multi-family residential. More density in residential areas will help preserve the green space in the township rather than it becoming neighborhood after neighborhood.</li> <li>• Just more connecting sidewalks :)</li> <li>• Roads that can handle high traffic</li> <li>• Limit the amount of land that can be built on and create requirements to preserve trees on new builds versus clearing entire lots</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transportation</b> With community and regional partners, provide motorized and non-motorized access and connections to permitted uses, while managing the conditions, safety, capacity, and the flow of traffic on the surrounding transportation network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These objectives are so wrong in every way. Slower traffic means less throughput and more congestion. The objective should be to reduce bottlenecks and to improve time-efficient flow... as well as to dissuade distracted pedestrians (faces planted in cell phones).</li> <li>• Improve pedestrian safety by creating non-motorized sidewalks and pathways to connect existing Township neighborhoods.</li> <li>• We need a roundabout at Sleeth/Wixom and Duck Lake intersection. Or redesign it to be a 4-way intersection with Duck Lake going south into Wixom Road and Sleeth going west into Wixom Road.</li> <li>• more crosswalks and crossing gards so parents feel safe letting their kids walk to school</li> <li>• OMG. Get rid of the tarps at the roundabout at 5/PT. So ghetto looking. Put in arborvities. Also, Traverse has flowers/pavers etc. at the roundabouts. Put in wildflowers in the medians on 5 and Maple. Encourage bee/butterfly naturalization instead of paying mowers.</li> <li>• None</li> <li>• Given the lakes this is a fairly fruitless endeavor.</li> </ul>	



Goal	Please share any objectives that are missing that you would like the Planning Commission to consider.	Please share any action items that you think would help the Township accomplish their objectives and achieve the identified goals.
<p><b>Stewardship</b> Create a more sustainable and resilient future for Commerce Township by identifying, protecting, preserving, and enhancing the unique and desirable natural features of the Township.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Return the zoning for Long’s Farm to agricultural or create a new zoning classification for 3-acre manors to preserve the semi-rural aura in the western section of the township.</li> <li>• Similarly, preserve the rural aspects of the horse farm property at the bend of Wixom Trail.</li> <li>• Adopt ordinances to protect shorelines via establishment of criteria and certification of lakes for wake boarding activities. Simply, most of our lakes cannot handle the high energy waves of wake boats. Wake boarding actives should be banned from shallow, small, residential lakes wherein the wake boarding activity cannot be conducted more than 700’ from shore (a Minnesota study showed the wake boat wake size after 500’ is still as high of higher than other boat types at their peak wave height).”</li> <li>• buy up open lands to preserve the nature</li> <li>• The local parks are crowded with aggressive invasive plants that choke out everything (for example, honeysuckle and oriental bittersweet). I’d love to see some of those removed and more native species introduced, especially edible species. I’m a forager with a few years of experience and have noticed that locals don’t have much knowledge of foraging so maybe a class could be held at the library for those interested.</li> <li>• All of the above.</li> <li>• No comment</li> <li>• plenty of parks. Maybe more diversity within parks. We must have more baseball fields and soccer per per capita then 90% of the nation. No one knows of mountain biking trails etc.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Goal</b></p>	<p><b>Please share any objectives that are missing that you would like the Planning Commission to consider.</b></p>	<p><b>Please share any action items that you think would help the Township accomplish their objectives and achieve the identified goals.</b></p>
<p><b>Community &amp; Public Facilities</b> To create a sustainable community that provides a wide variety of recreational, civic, public safety, and related services for residents and visitors alike.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not reduce lanes of traffic as the existing roadways are needed to handle the growing traffic. Ann Arbor stupidly reduced lanes of traffic for bike-friendly roads, yet bicycling is a seasonal for of transportation... creating traffic volume issues during cold/wet climate weather.</li> <li>We need to partner with other communities on hazardous waste where residents can show proof of residency and drop off waste items at a central 'county' location every Saturday throughout the year from 9am to noon, items that we don't want to go into regular waste pickup.</li> <li>make public facilities accessable walking/bikes</li> <li>"Green Spaces</li> <li>Low cost equestrian facility"</li> <li>"More restroom areas for trails.</li> <li>Develop trails and parks (in conjunction with Wolverine Lake and Walled Lake--connected trails and rest/respice areas."</li> <li>Can we stop catering to the boomers. Might as well call the pickle ball courts a gift to the elderly. Be more transparent no body trusts the local government. IE horse farm debacle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace the traffic light at Sleeth/ Duck Lake with a roundabout. Add a sidewalk/bike path from Duck Lake Road eastward... either along Sleeth or Commerce Road.</li> <li>"Recreation center with pool, fitness facility, kids activities, etc.</li> <li>better advertise what's happening in the community</li> <li>better senior activities. hours are limited. why is center closed at holidays when seniors are lonely? nothing on the weekend. Not enough parking on certain days.</li> <li>more organized activities on the public fields (senior softball or a pickleball league, for exampl)"</li> <li>Would love a skatepark and splash pad</li> <li>Be transparent to the residents &amp; businesses in Commerce Twp.</li> <li>any public facility should be accessible by non-motorized means.</li> <li>what are we doing to attract working age higher income families?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Infrastructure</b> Provide, maintain and improve the Township's existing infrastructure, including water, sewer, and other utilities needed for residents and businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve value via elimination of the monopolies that exist for internet service and for sewer hook-up.</li> <li>Mandate septic testing (maybe every 4 years) to encourage sewer hook up. Make sewer hook up affordable!</li> <li>OMG. Fix our 'damn roads'. Period. End of sentence.</li> <li>No comment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Encourage WOW to add service... Comcast needs competition as they are \$10-20/month more expensive than their same service in other communities where they have to compete. We are paying \$20-40 more than WOW customers in other markets.</li> <li>Allow competitive bidding for sewer hook-up. The present costs are insanely high."</li> <li>No comment.</li> <li>the infrastructure in my neighborhood is adequate</li> </ul>

### Station #3: North End

#### Do you agree with the recommendations for these opportunity sites? What would you add or change? (Commerce and Carey, Long Farm, Walled Lake Schools- Adjacent to Commerce Elementary School)

- Yes
- Leave long farm property alone. Now and in the future. Regardless of land use, the property should remain in its current state. Traffic is terrible in the village as is. More residential homes will only devalue the origins of the village.
- More non-motorized connectivity in this area.
- Yes, I think these areas could support this development.
- Not all land needs to be developed on. I moved to Commerce to get away from highly developed areas, and I'd prefer to see these areas left alone or turned into more recreational area for our families to enjoy. I am for connecting these recreational areas to existing neighborhoods via non motorized pathways to get more people outside in a safer fashion.
- Leave Long Farm alone. No need to add more housing and use it as an open green space. That area does not need more housing and you would be ruining a Commerce landmark.
- Why are we building houses on every open land? Longs farm is a landmark and should it be developed, keeping existing structures and maintaining the open land as park space should be a top priority!!!
- I am concerned about traffic density when adding more residents without improving existing traffic flow.
- No, should maintain parks/pathways and natural areas. No more housing developments. There are not enough trails and exploration/natural areas planned to be kept.
- Traffic congestion in these areas is a problem with no solution that I can think of. They will continue to be two lane roads which cannot handle more volume. Its already difficult/dangerous to try making left hand turns out of neighborhoods located on Commerce Road between the hospital and Union Lake Road. Limit development, if it must happen single family only. No multi family, apartments, mobile homes etc.
- No. There are too many homes being added to the area. Preserve the open space as it is. Add a park or other natural space. If the Long property becomes available, seek others interested in maintaining the farm land for a CSA, farm or co-op opportunity

- sure
- No development of Longs Farm please. We like it as it is!
- Long Farm- Hardware Store, Brewery, Gas Station, Market
- Driving Circle at Commerce and Carey

#### Do you agree with the recommendations for these opportunity sites? What would you add or change? (Walled Lake Schools Property Adjacent to Victory Park, Union Lake Golf Club, Bay Pointe Golf Club, Commerce Drive-In Site)

- Yes
- No more houses in Commerce!!
- School property should be residential if it cannot be turned into active park land. Drive in should be used to ease traffic concerns in that area (OCRC plans)
- Adding additional homes in the Union Lake Golf Club site will cause additional congestion on Union Lake Road. Given the proximity to Hayes Creek, keeping as a green space would seem to benefit the community.
- Not all land needs to be developed on. I moved to Commerce to get away from highly developed areas, and I'd prefer to see these areas left alone or turned into more recreational area for our families to enjoy. I am for connecting these recreational areas to existing neighborhoods via non motorized pathways to get more people outside in a safer fashion.
- Please stop adding more residential homes. We do not need more people in this area. Traffic is already awful, this would make it worse. Especially at the Baypointe site.
- Seems like the reason people move here, for the natural beauty is all being bulldozed and built on.
- Traffic in this area is already extremely heavy. Adding more homes means more traffic. What is the plan to alleviate that problem?
- Change Commerce Drive in site to link/make safe pedestrian to Oakley Park and Martin pkwy. Currently inaccessible for pedestrians.
- Agree with keeping schools site by Victory park undeveloped. Any development on the Drive in and Bay Pointe areas will be a challenge for the roadways. The Union Lake & Richardson intersection already has significant traffic problems....due to traffic volume coming off of M-5, People trying to get in/out of car wash and CJs. Traffic flow in this area needs to be addressed before more development is considered.

- “Bay Point Golf Club is in an already very congested area. More homes will only add to this congestion. Maintaining the club house for public use and the golf course for a walking path and potentially tennis and pickleball courts or soccer fields. Public lake access and picnic areas at lake area.
- Union Lake Golf Club construction ok, but again, will add more traffic congestion and noise to an already busy area.”
- Duplexes would serve a better purpose closer to a city - like Milford
- Two acre minimum lot size
- No neighborhood commercial
- Traffic and noise already out of control bucolic

**Are there any other recommendations for the North End that the Planning Commission should consider?**

- Maintain Green Space
- No more homes in Commerce!
- non motorized connectivity along the ENTIRE area. Allow local families to safely get to all the sites.
- No recommendations. This area seems well planned out from a conceptual perspective.
- I would make efforts to connect these new sidewalks to the existing pathways we have in Commerce, such as the one next to the library that connects to Hickory Glen park, and potentially up to wise park.
- This plan is good.
- Make it into a walkable downtown area
- Be sure to preserve the history of Commerce Village.
- Would add sidewalk to be able to access the strip mall (7/11, etc.) from the Library and Dodge Park. Including crosswalks at the intersection.
- Agree with recommendations
- Agree to create a walkable downtown area with restaurants and other family oriented stores with open outdoor gathering space for sitting and eating. A pond or fountain with seating would be nice if feasible
- Yes
- I would love to see sidewalks connecting Northern High School South and along Wise Road
- Would be great to connect Martin Parkway directly to Union Lake Road through the Drive-In Site
- New sidewalks should be compatible with potential bike multi-purpose path from S Commerce towards Sleeth
- Would worry how additional “commercial” small/ market in the area would affect mom/pop shops like Annie’s.
- Where are the sidewalks and roads to support all the new housing?



## Station #4: Commercial Center

### Do you agree with the recommendations for Rock Road Properties? What would you add or change?

- Yes
- one of the ugliest streets in teh entire township. Need better way to leave this area going west bound. Airline trail connections are paramount
- No changes recommended
- I like to see more pathways connecting neighborhoods to the air line trail.
- Yes
- Agree
- For the most part, agree. There was originally supposed to be an entertainment area near here. Open air stores and restaurants would be nice here.
- yes more trails/sidewalks the better
- 
- Do you agree with the recommendations for the Beaumont Site? What would you add or change?
- All good
- Shooting for one big cohesive use seems like it will just remain empty for a long time. Subdivide it and get it in use, don't wait for the perfect solution
- No changes to recommendations
- There are so many working remotely still why do we need more corporate campuses?
- Agree, but I'd like to see the Williams site handled before anything new happened on the Beaumont site
- Agree
- Yes. Focus on attracting a top emplyer. Great location. Non-boomers want access to parks and trails at work.

### Do you agree with the recommendations for the Williams International Site? What would you add or change?

- Yes, keep the green space
- If Williams does vacate get the structures down ASAP. This can/should be your marquee site to attract a large (or large set) of employers
- No changes to recommendations
- Yes
- Agree - prioritize this above Beaumont

- Yes
- yes. More of the same try thinking outside the box. Commerce is trendy but look not far down the road at Harman International. Clean looking building large international presence high paying jobs.
- Are there any other recommendations for the Commercial Center that the Planning Commission should consider?
- None at this time
- The pathways that connect maple glen park, clara miller park (that also connect proud lake and hickory glen) come very close (less than a mile) to connecting to the air line trail via Benstein. I would love to see that finished as it would open up a ton of biking travel options for the people living in the neighborhoods that connect to these pathways.
- Sidewalks along Oakley Park between WLC and m-5!! If there is ultimately a new development on M5 the community would like to be able to access it without having to drive. Similarly with the modifications to Richardson Center. While beautiful...a lot of us are still forced to drive there due to lack of sidewalks!!!
- You briefly touched on it for some areas, but encourage all property owners along the airline trail to maintain their properties in a clean/esthetically pleasing manner, encourage planting of trees for screening when appropriate.
- Limit the size for traffic purposes

## Project Website Supplemental Activities

### Visioning, “We Want To Hear About Your Ideas for Commerce Township”

(Sorted by topic)

#### Non-Motorized Transportation

Put sidewalks, and lighting in Commerce Village. With parking. This area has been neglected for decades. And add bike trails down Bogie Lake.

More sidewalks in our town especially around our neighborhood schools.

Please create pathways to connect neighborhoods to the airline trail

I would love to be able to leave my subdivision, The Preserve, on a bike. We need a bike path along East Commerce Rd.

we'd bicycle more if safe pathways existed, it feels dangerous to ride on the road. ex oakley park, benstein or crossing at commerce/sleeth

Better connections at m5 roundabout, walkways through the intersection or via a bridge sequence. More pressure on five & main to build.

There needs to be walking paths or sidewalks from Walled Lake northern, down bogie lake road and commerce rd, to at least Farr St.

Please make oakley park road more walking accessible.

I'd love more sidewalks on main roads - sleeth, commerce, union lake.

Sidewalks that actually go somewhere. I've never seen so many useless sidewalk. They start and stop randomly.

Please pave Farr Street and add sidewalks. It's 2023, not 1903, it's time to pave it, please.

Please pave Farr Street and install sidewalks to keep our kids safe when going to and from Commerce Elementary. Invest in the children.

Please put sidewalks on Welch road. It is dangerous to walk or ride to get to the airline trail. Dad we have to drive there and park to bike

Sidewalk from Carroll lake & commerce roads to union lake & commerce roads!

As a resident, North side of Commerce Rd, would love 2 see pedestrian paths to the Library, park & a crossing light to stop traffic on S.C.

It would be nice to have a sidewalk on Pontiac trail all the way from m5 to Decker. People walk to Walmart and there is no sidewalk

A bike path on South Commerce Rd. between Oakley Park and Pontiac Trail would be ideal

More sidewalks and pathways, please!! Commerce lags way behind other communities in this respect.

Would like more non-motorized options for getting around and through the twp.

Would LOVE more sidewalks and trails especially going north. (I'm at M5 and Pontiac Trail).

We need a paved sidewalk from Oakley Park to to the cross state trail. I see kids of all ages trying to navigate the dangerous Welch Rd.

I would like to see sidewalks on Benstein Road. We live in the Twin Sun sub and we are land locked. The side of the road is too dangerous.

Please add a button for a walker to activate the crossing signs on Oakley Park, in front of Oakley Park Elementary.

In the theme of improving Commerce to be more walkable, I propose a sidewalk on Oakley Park from Welch to WLC High School.

I live at comm/comm and have 2 boys that I won't let walk to the library/dodge park because the sidewalk ends. Traffic is to busy w/out xwal



### Community Facilities

A park on a lake like Novi's Lakeshore Park with an event space, clean bathrooms, playground, beach. Entice businesses to open nearby!

How about a non-profit horse farm?

### Commercial Uses

a grocery store other than kroger!

We need ore pickle ball courts. Possibly a dedicated Bingo room. Or maybe a quite room where the boomers can get together and complain.

we can make a public lottery for when 5 and main will actually proceed.Maybe a drinking game of when a promise will be kept on the timeframe

Need to align for appropriate development of Northeast corner of Carroll Lake and Commerce

### Housing

Stop letting land turn into more houses.

stop building neighborhoods everywhere when our city does not have the roads to support the traffic they bring.

Stop building houses, there is not enough green space, traffic is horrible.

Stop building endless, huge,expensive houses. The roads aren't designed for the traffic. Improve what is already here.

Above all, we need to stop adding more subdivisions. Need more restaurants and walking/biking paths alongside roads like Wise and Bogie Lake

Preservation

Anything specific planned for the old Windmill Horsefarm site? I see the master plan includes "preservation"/ is this area staying rural?

I would hate to see the township over run with CVSs and drive thrus. I love the presence of mature trees and lush green space

No more subdivisions! You are allowing the over development of the open space/country life my family has enjoyed for three generations.

love the green space and farm land and driving down commerce rd through all the beautiful trees. Would love some sidewalks to walk and bike

Preserve the greenery in driving areas like Richardson, Commerce and Newton road, a calming drive after a long day of work cant be beat!

### Roads and Infrastructure

L turn arrow on Oakley Park E bound to S Commerce. W bound cars on Oakley Park never stop even when the light is red causing backups

Commerce needs more right turn lanes at intersections. It would ease up a lot of traffic. Would love to see this improved.

Stop building. Our roads and infrastructure cannot handle anymore strip malls or subdivisions. Wildlife is being driven into subdivisions

Trim the greenery and remove trees along north side of Commerce Rd, from Gulf Manor to Carroll Lake Rd, ten feet back from road.

We need to have a DPW to take care of our roads and parks. We have a project that is tearing up Benstein Road over the Wolverine lake bridge

### Administrative

The engagement opportunities should have been issued better, utilizing nexus instead of the only commerce site and limited postings after.

Could we have a more user friendly portal? Ie. a database where you can search for permits pulled etc?

hey lets start with something simple. Can we post meetings on youtube like during the pandemic?

## Non-Motorized Transportation, “How Could Non-Motorized Transportation Be Improved in Commerce Township?”

- Newton Road bike path
- Walking path/bike path needed to connect Forest Edge Drive with Teeple Creek Lane
- We hope more sidewalks/walking/biking paths can be created in Commerce Township. Over the past 10 years, the paving of dirt roads has created unsafe conditions for walking/bike riding, especially in the northeastern part of the township. Connecting neighborhoods with paved pathways would not only create an increased sense of community, but also provide safe pathways to increase mobility of our citizens, which has numerous positive physical and social health benefits to residents of our community. We want to ride our bikes, walk our pets, and visit our neighbors, but some areas, due to paving of dirt roads, are now unsafe for us to walk, bike, jog, and run within our beautiful community. Please consider ways to safely connect our neighborhoods that have been impacted by the recent paving projects over the past 10 years. Thank You!
- Need a bike path to get onto trails-We currently have no options for biking or walking outside of our subdivision-
- Connection from the AirT Line trail to the rest of the Commerce Trails (Hickory Glen/Maple Glen) are difficult to navigate or find, especially with families. For instance along Benstein Road or Ladd Road, you have to ride in the road or along the shoulder in order to access the bridge crossing Wolverine Lake from the Air Line Trail.
- Walkway or bike path on Benstine rd.
- Need sidewalks to access trails, schools and Parks. Including if new M5 development happens. Community would like to have access without having to drive.
- A path or sidewalk is needed on Bogie Lake road connecting the school and residents to the Byers area and Dodge Park
- There is no safe access to existing trails (airlines, lakes area trail) from neighborhoods and subdivisions. This includes access to schools, businesses, and other walkable/bikeable locations. Roads need to include bike lanes
- crosswalks into doge park
- A path is desperately needed along Union Lake Road.
- We are building more and more homes and traffic is getting worse and worse. Going to work, it often takes just as long to get out of Commerce as it does to get the rest of the way to Dearborn. I moved here because it had an “up-north” feeling with all the green space. Now we are removing the green space and adding apartments, homes, condos and confounding our traffic issues. If you are going to do it...do it right. Bring in “real” restaurants and develop a downtown (even if it is a small one). DDA is a silly name in Commerce offices since we don’t even have a downtown. Sidewalks are necessary on the main roads for safety and community. It would be nice for Commerce residents to be able to get to the rails to trails or even to the Creamy Freeze, but unfortunately there is not an easy way to get there without sidewalks. I feel we need a plan other than building more homes, condos and apartments.
- Can we start connecting the sidewalks?



# Appendix C

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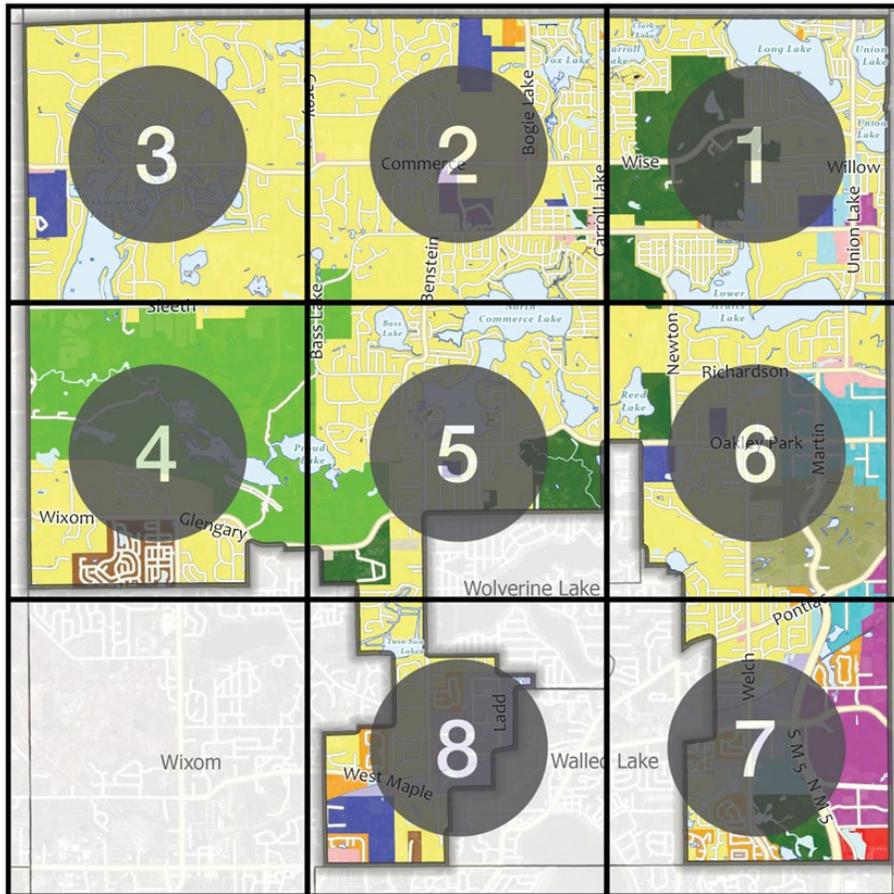
## Future Land Use Map Changes

# Appendix C: Future Land Use Changes

## Future Land Use

To better view the proposed changes of the Township's Future Land Use Map from the previous map featured in the 2015 Master Plan, the Future Land Use Map has been divided into eight sections.

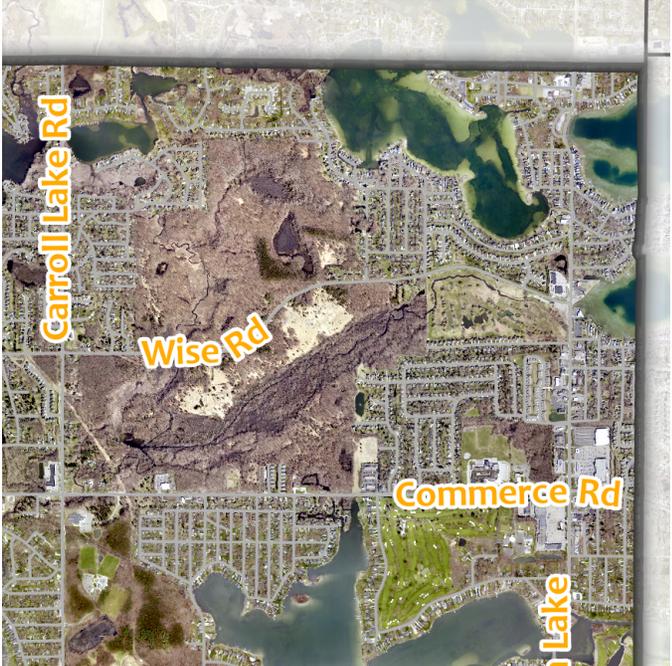
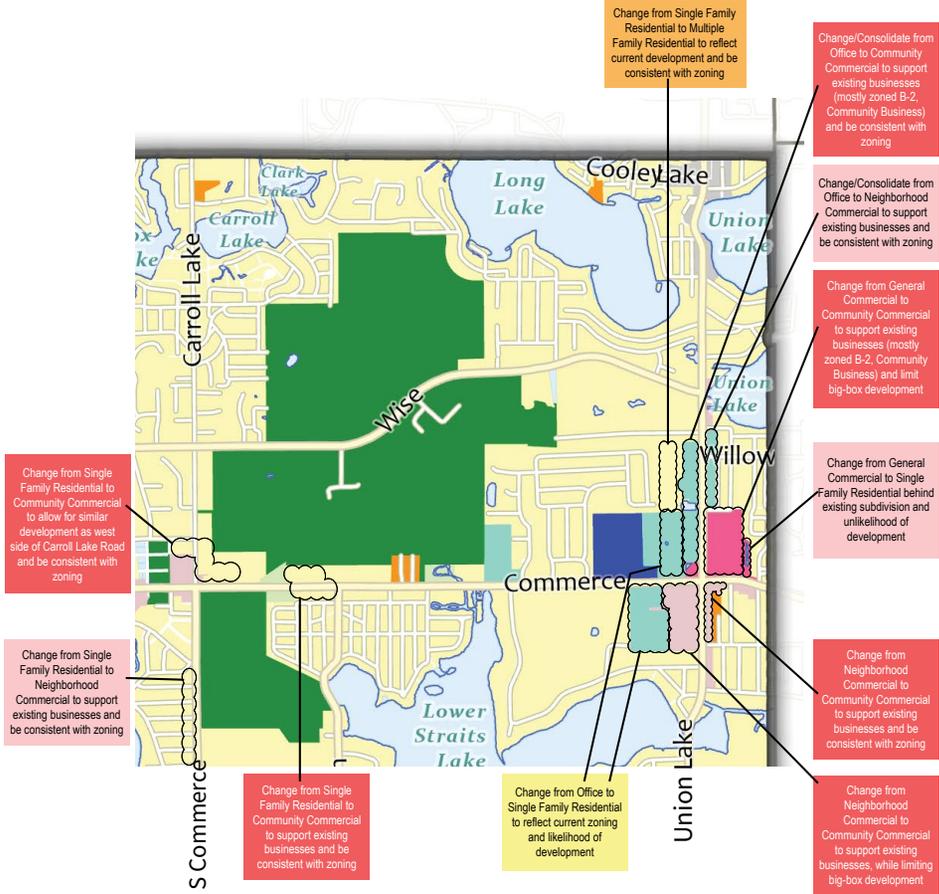
Below is an approximate illustration of each section.



# Section 1

### 2015 Future Land Use Map with annotated changes for the 2023 Master Plan

### Corresponding aerial imagery



- |                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Future Land Use</b>      | <b>Public Facilities</b>       |
| Single Family Residential   | Hospital                       |
| Multiple Family             | Industrial                     |
| Manufactured Home Community | School                         |
| Neighborhood Commercial     | Lake                           |
| Community Commercial        | Office Service                 |
| General Commercial          | Technology Light Manufacturing |
|                             | Four Corners Village           |
|                             | Commerce Town Center           |
|                             | Park                           |
|                             | State Land                     |

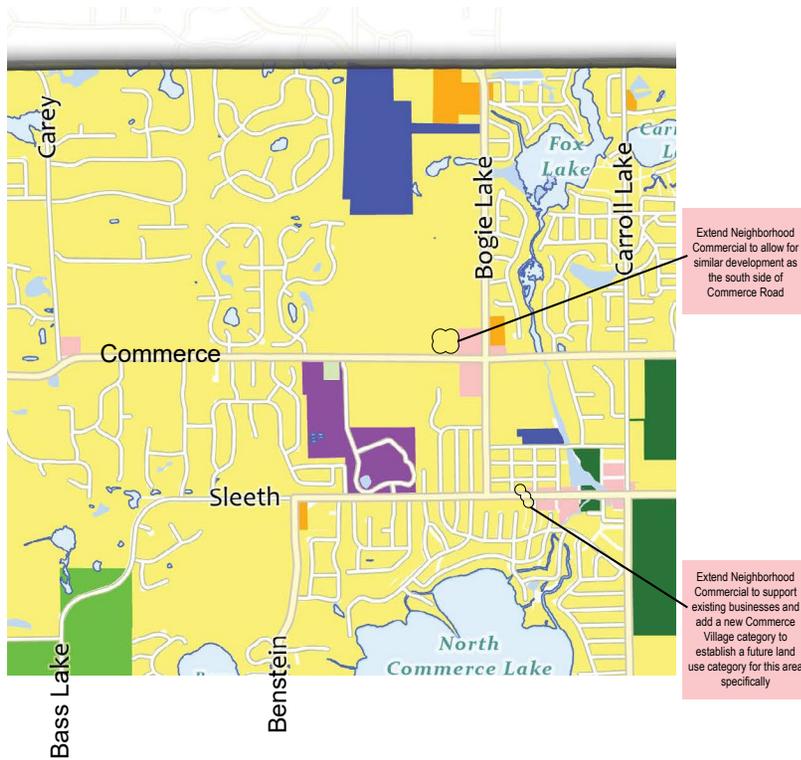
**FUTURE LAND USE  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP**

## Section 2



2015 Future Land Use Map  
with annotated changes for the 2023 Master Plan

No changes currently suggested



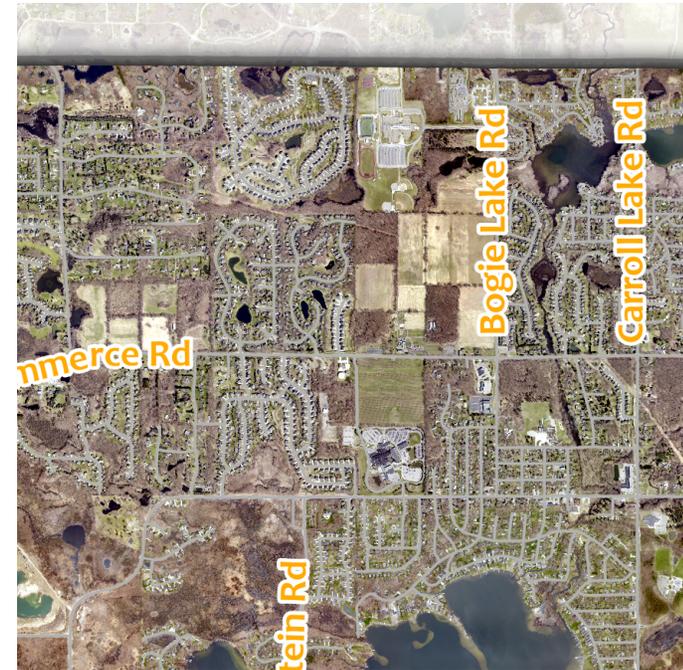
Extend Neighborhood Commercial to allow for similar development as the south side of Commerce Road

Extend Neighborhood Commercial to support existing businesses and add a new Commerce Village category to establish a future land use category for this area specifically



FUTURE LAND USE  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP

Corresponding aerial imagery

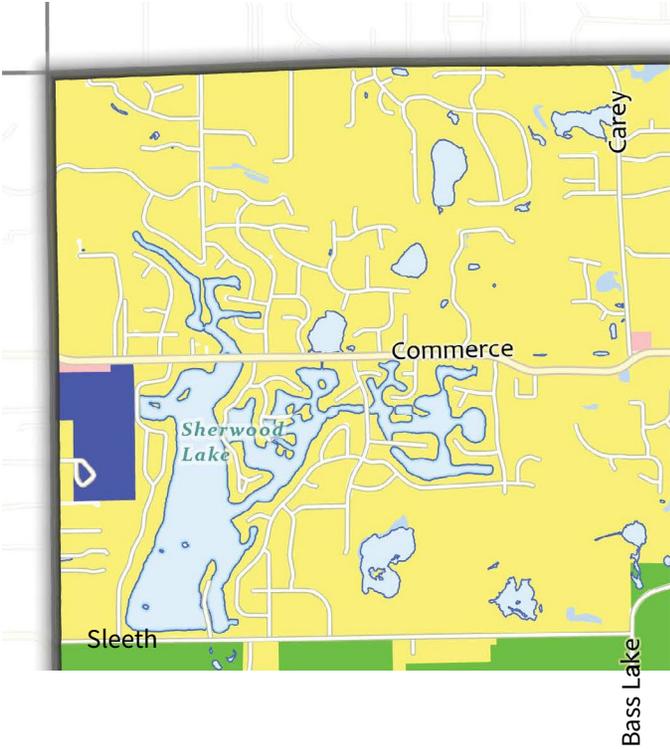


# Section 3



### 2015 Future Land Use Map with annotated changes for the 2023 Master Plan

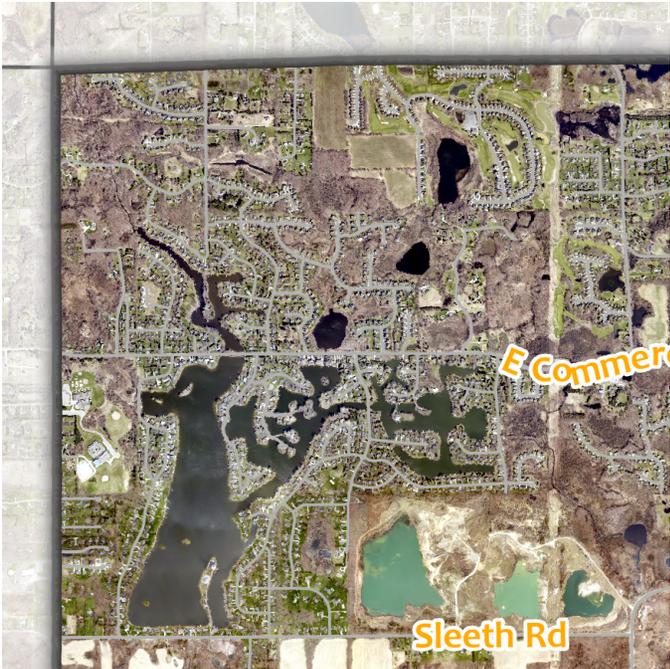
No changes currently suggested



- |                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Future Land Use</b>      | <b>Public Facilities</b>       |
| Single Family Residential   | Hospital                       |
| Multiple Family             | School                         |
| Manufactured Home Community | Industrial                     |
| Neighborhood Commercial     | Lake                           |
| Community Commercial        | Office Service                 |
| General Commercial          | Technology Light Manufacturing |
|                             | Four Corners Village           |
|                             | Commerce Town Center           |
|                             | Park                           |
|                             | State Land                     |
|                             | Community Facilities           |

FUTURE LAND USE  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP

### Corresponding aerial imagery



# Section 4



2015 Future Land Use Map with annotated changes for the 2023 Master Plan

Extend Single Family Residential to reflect that the area has been developed and be consistent with zoning



Corresponding aerial imagery

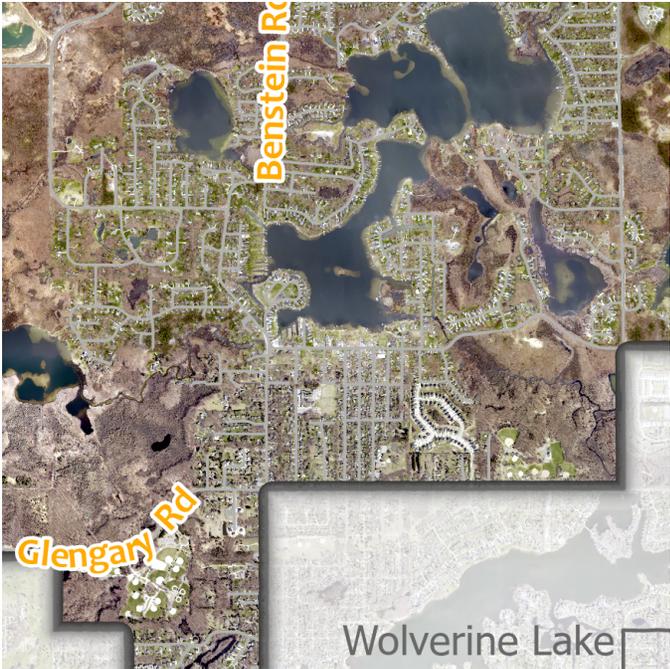
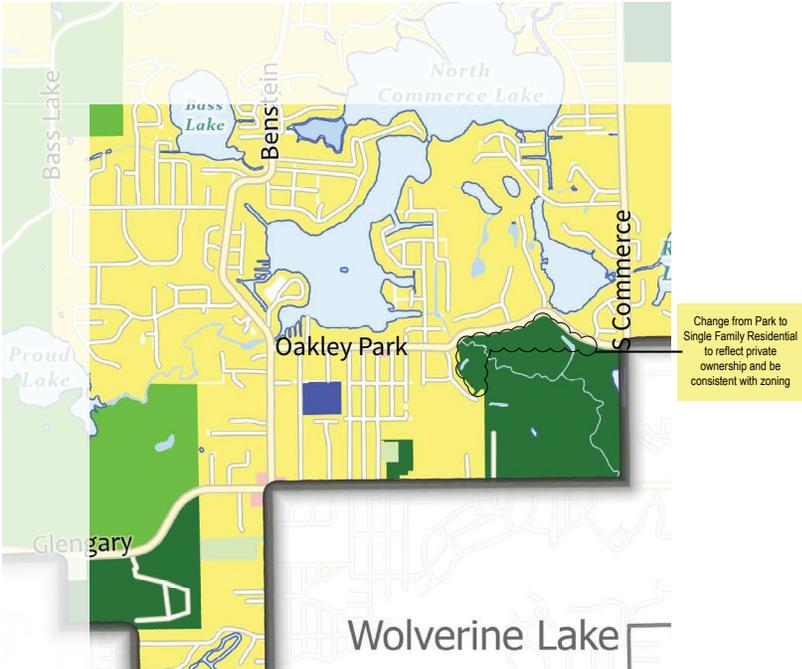


# Section 5



2015 Future Land Use Map with annotated changes for the 2023 Master Plan

Corresponding aerial imagery

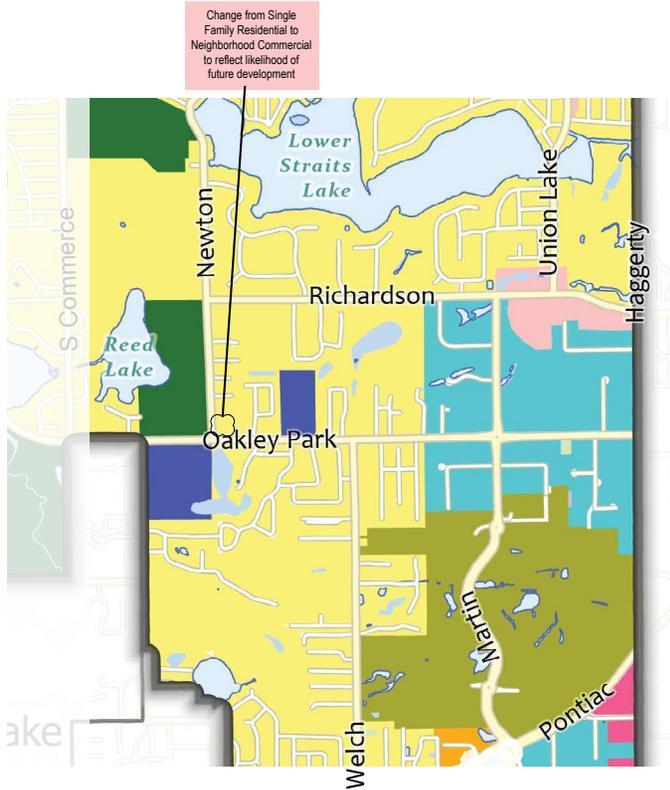


- |                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Future Land Use</b>      | <b>Public Facilities</b>       |
| Single Family Residential   | Hospital                       |
| Multiple Family             | School                         |
| Manufactured Home Community | Lake                           |
| Neighborhood Commercial     | Office Service                 |
| Community Commercial        | Technology Light Manufacturing |
| General Commercial          | Four Corners Village           |
|                             | Commerce Town Center           |
|                             | Park                           |
|                             | State Land                     |
|                             | Community Facilities           |

FUTURE LAND USE  
COMMERCE TOWNSHIP

# Section 6

2015 Future Land Use Map with annotated changes for the 2023 Master Plan

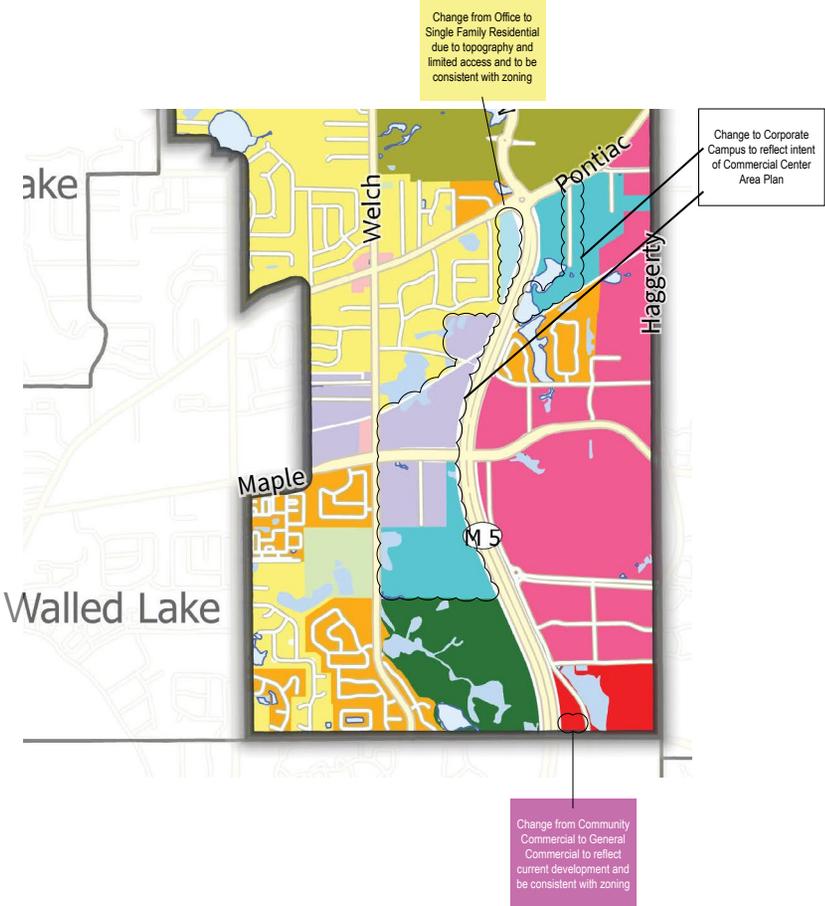


Corresponding aerial imagery



Section 7

2015 Future Land Use Map with annotated changes for the 2023 Master Plan



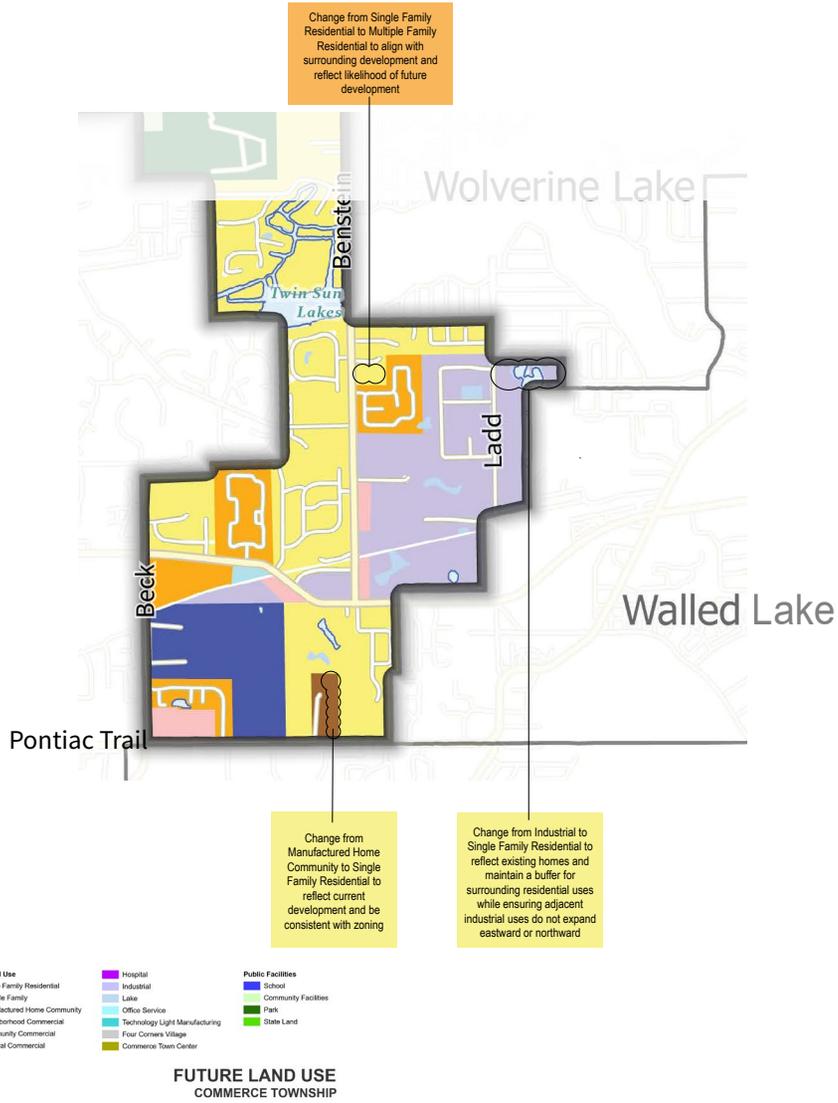
Corresponding aerial imagery



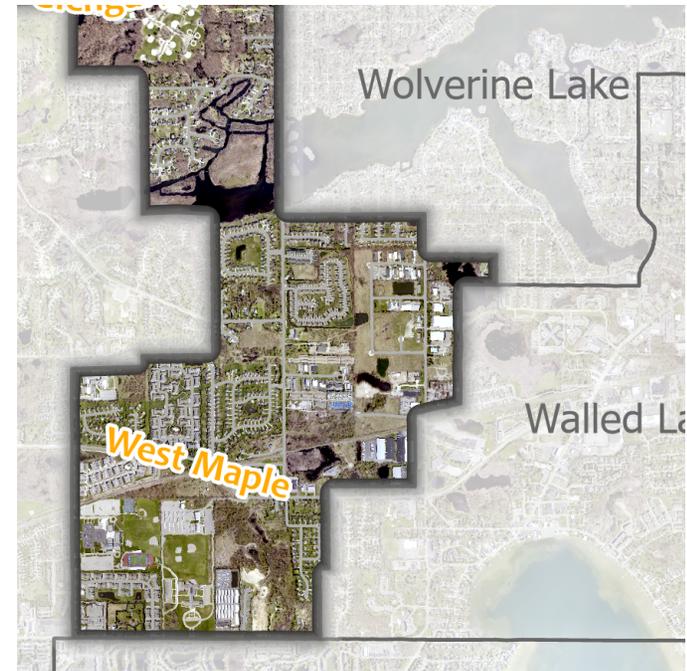
# Section 8



2015 Future Land Use Map with annotated changes for the 2023 Master Plan



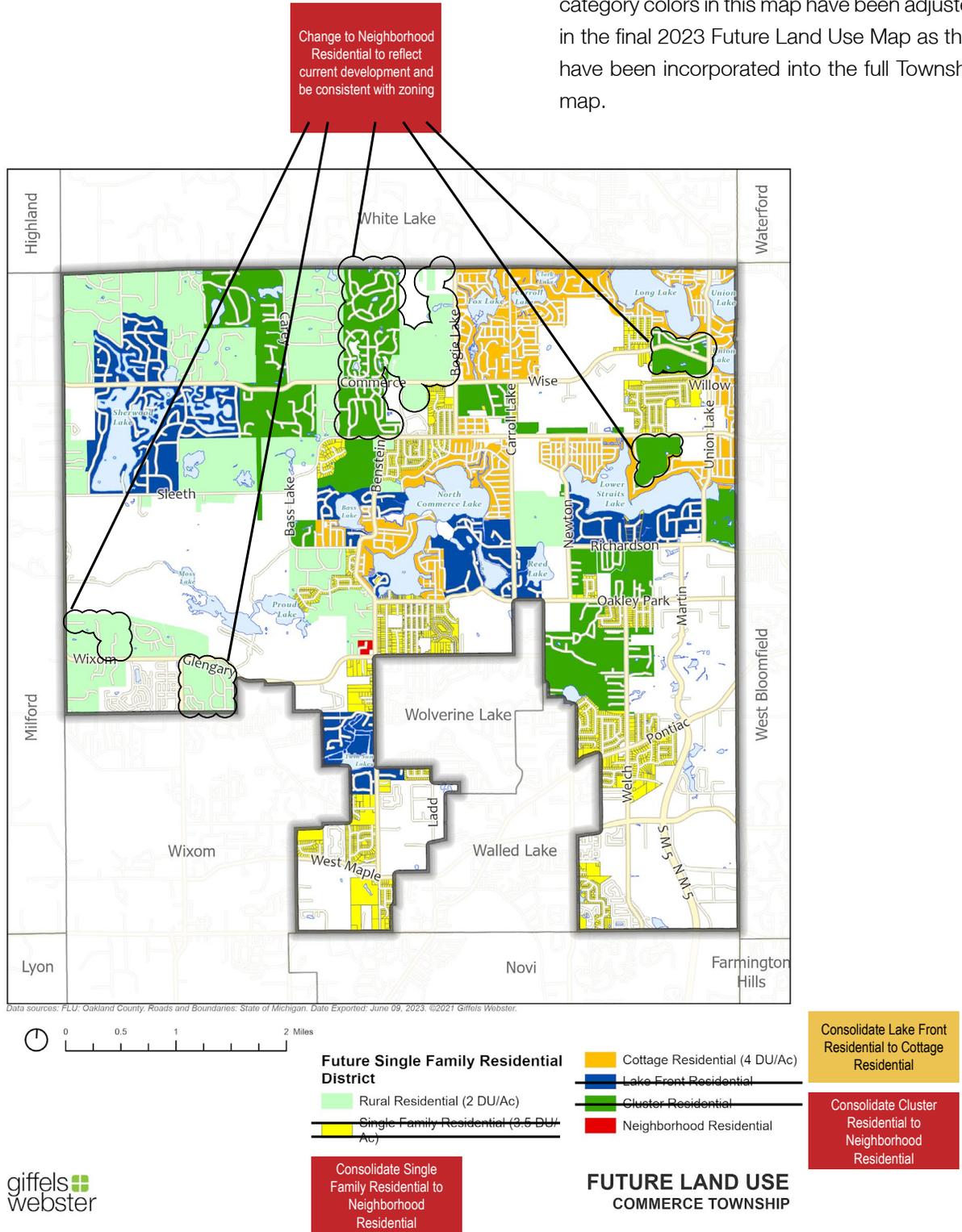
Corresponding aerial imagery



## Future Single Family Residential District

In addition to the Future Land Use Map in the 2015 Master Plan which combined all single-family residential land uses as one general “Single Family Residential Category, the plan included a separate the Future Single Family Residential District Map to illustrate the future single-family residential land use development patterns for Commerce Township.

\*Single Family Residential Future Land Use category colors in this map have been adjusted in the final 2023 Future Land Use Map as they have been incorporated into the full Township map.



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# Appendix D

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## Glossary & List of Acronyms

# Appendix D: Glossary & List of Acronyms

## Glossary

### Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Detached or attached small, independent living units that are located on the same lot as a single family home or as part of a community development.

### Action Items

Specific steps to accomplish objectives and support the wider vision of the identified goals.

### Affordable Housing

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines affordable housing as housing where the occupant is paying 30% or less of the occupant's gross income on total housing, including utilities.

### Bike Score

A measure of how bike-friendly a community is on a scale from 0-100 from "somewhat bikeable" to "biker's paradise." Visit [www.walkscore.com](http://www.walkscore.com) for more information.

### Capital Improvement Plan

A Capital Improvement Plan is a document that schedules and prioritizes future capital expenditures and designates funding sources to implement them. In Michigan, Townships are only required to adopt a Capital Improvement Plan if they operate public water or wastewater services. Cities and Townships that do have Capital Improvement Plans are to schedule projects for a period of six years.

### Cluster Development

An optional development technique that allows residential dwellings on a development site to be placed on smaller than usual lots that have been grouped or clustered in order to leave some land undivided and available as common area or open space.

### Complete Streets

A transportation network that includes facilities for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and other legal users of all ages and abilities.

### Connectivity

The number of ways and variety of options to physically reach multiple destinations, often related to street networks. Connectivity can also imply non-physical means (telephone, internet, social media, etc.) to connect and interact with others and may be referred to as social connectivity.

### Density

A measure of the amount of people inhabiting an area or development on a property. In terms of land use, density is often expressed as the number of residential units per acre of land (or another unit of measure).

### Gateways

An entranceway that announces a point of arrival. Gateways can be located on public or private property (or a combination of the two) and can be a point of interest for a community for people arriving by vehicle, on foot, or by bicycle. Gateways can be important in reinforcing community identity, creating anticipation for what is ahead, and providing a sense of place.

### Goals

General guidelines that explain what the community wants to achieve. Goals are usually long term and represent global visions such as to "Provide a range of housing choices for all ages and incomes" or "Strengthen the local economy." Goals define the "what," "why," and "where" but not the "how."



**Green Infrastructure**

The use of natural or engineered systems – such as green roofs, rain gardens, or cisterns - to clean stormwater as it moves through soils and plant roots (treatment), returned to groundwater (infiltration), returned to the air (evapotranspiration), and/or captured to irrigate plants or flush toilets (reuse). This approach is called “green infrastructure” because of the use of plants to enhance and/or mimic natural processes. Green infrastructure contrasts with traditional “gray infrastructure” which is typically built to capture and retain large volumes of stormwater collected over a large area, and convey it to the nearest waterway.

**Master Plan**

A document that contains a description of a community’s vision for its future and guiding principles that help a community create land development policies and make land use decisions. In the State of Michigan, the value of the Master Plan as an important community document is recognized, which is why the state requires Master Plans to be reviewed every five years. This review allows communities to check in on their progress and ensure the vision and guiding principles are still relevant.

**Missing Middle**

A term describing the mid-tier market segments that are often overlooked in housing development. It is often discussed in the context of density and housing typologies, but it is also applicable when considering the segment of the population with earnings too high for subsidized/affordable housing but those also cannot afford the market-rate.

**Mixed Use**

A development that typically contains residential and commercial uses in the same building or within a small area. For example, a residential building with ground floor retail is a typical mixed-use development.

**Objectives**

Milestones that mark progress in achieving goals. Objectives provide more of the “how” goals will be implemented. For example, with a goal of “Strengthen the local economy” an objective to “Provide a clear set of guidelines and expectations for developers” is something that may be measured and tracked over time.

**Pathway**

A continuous, unobstructed, route between two points intended and suitable for pedestrian, bicycle, or other non-motorized traffic. Pathways include but are not limited to shared-use pathways, trails, or sidewalks.

**Planning Commission (PC)**

Body responsible for preparing and adopting the Township’s Master Plan. Other duties include recommending policy related to land use, specifically amendments to the Zoning Ordinance that align with the Master Plan, and reviewing development and redevelopment proposals.

**Resiliency**

The practice of designing the environment in a way that can endure stresses and threats that can be ongoing and persistent or sudden disruptive shocks.

**Sidewalk**

A sidewalk is a pathway limited to pedestrian use, typically comprised of concrete flags 5’ or wider.

**Sustainability**

The ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There are three aspects to consider: the environment, social needs/people, and financial.

**Township Board (TB)**

Legislative body that passes laws and sets policy for the Township. The Township Board adopts Zoning Ordinances that provide a legal framework for redevelopment as envisioned in the Master Plan.

**Walk Score**

A measure of walkability in a community on a scale from 0-100 from “car dependent” to “walker’s paradise.” Visit [www.walkscore.com](http://www.walkscore.com) for more information.

**Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)**

While not specifically involved in the development of the Master Plan, the ZBA is authorized to permit variances or deviations from the Zoning Ordinance standards. Decisions should be consistent with the criteria related to specific properties. If the ZBA finds flaws with ordinances or their application, those concerns are forwarded to the Planning Commission for review.

### Zoning Ordinance

One of the primary tools for implementing the vision of the Master Plan; it provides the legal framework that regulates development of property. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance can range from minor changes to text all the way to the addition of new uses and creation of new districts. An amended zoning ordinance can also be supported by other policies that encourage redevelopment, upgrades to existing development, and the maintenance of property.



## List of Acronyms

<b>ACS</b>	American Community Survey	<b>OCED</b>	Oakland County Department of Economic Development
<b>ADA</b>	American Disabilities Act	<b>OPRA</b>	Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act
<b>ADU</b>	Accessory Dwelling Unit	<b>PC</b>	Planning Commission
<b>AMI</b>	Area Median Income	<b>RCOC</b>	Road Commission for Oakland County
<b>CIP</b>	Capital Improvement Plan	<b>SEMCOG</b>	Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
<b>CISMA</b>	Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area	<b>TAP</b>	Transportation Alternatives Program
<b>CRA</b>	Commercial Rehabilitation Act	<b>TB</b>	Township Board
<b>DDA</b>	Downtown Development Authority	<b>TIF</b>	Tax Increment Financing
<b>EGLE</b>	Environment, Greats Lakes, and Energy	<b>WRC</b>	Water Resources Commissioner
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency		
<b>GLWA</b>	Great Lakes Water Authority		
<b>HTF</b>	(Oakland Together) Housing Trust Fund		
<b>MEDC</b>	Michigan Economic Development Corporation		
<b>MDNR</b>	Michigan Department of Natural Resources		
<b>MDOT</b>	Michigan Department of Transportation		
<b>MNFI</b>	Michigan Natural Features Inventory		



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