



BROWNSTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP



2025

**Master
Plan**



Acknowledgements

This Master Plan is a result of invaluable input, expertise, and collaboration between many organizations and individuals. It would not have been possible without their assistance, guidance, time, and dedication to the updates to this Master Plan.

Township Board

Supervisor Sherry A. Berez
Clerk Maureen Brinker
Treasurer Michael D. Eberth
Trustee Steven R. Allen
Trustee David L. Chapman
Trustee Roger Jones
Trustee Patrick J. Killian

Planning Commission

Karen Armatis, Chairperson
Trustee Steven Allen (Twp Board Representative)
Michael Brock
Dennis Burgor (liaison to ZBA)
Kimber Dorton
Paul Swift
James Wallace

Master Plan Advisory Committee

Steven Allen – Board of Trustees
Carmine Avantini – CIB Planning
Michael Brock – Planning Commission
David Chapman – Board of Trustees
Dennis Clanton – Brownstown DDA
Brian Peters – Township Manager
Sue Trussell – Brownstown DDA
Coleen Tuokkola – Recreation Commission
Jessica Zilka – Zoning Board of Appeals

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	7	Population Trends and Projections	18
Description and Purpose of Master Plan	7	Housing Trends	19
According to the Act	8	Household Trends and Projections	19
Introduction to Brownstown Charter Township	9	Age and Ethnicity	20
Master Plan Process	9	Education and Income	21
Existing Conditions Report	10	Housing Trends	22
Public Participation	10	Housing Unit Type and Tenure	22
Analysis and Recommendations	10	Existing Land Use	23
Future Development	10	Employment	25
Chapter 2: Public Involvement	11	Conclusions	26
Workshops	11	Chapter 5: Historical Setting	27
Focus Group Sessions	11	Chapter 6: Environmental Conditions	28
Business Owners	11	Environmental Conditions	28
Seniors	12	Existing Conditions	28
Young Professionals	12	Geology	28
Master Plan Review Committee	13	Topography	28
Public Open House	13	Soils	28
Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, & Objectives	14	Map 1: Environmental Conditions	29
Vision Statement	14	Hydrology	30
Goals and Objectives	14	Wetlands	30
Residential	14	Special Environmental	33
Commercial	15	Methods to Protect Natural Features	34
Town Center	15	Clustered Open Space Development	34
Industrial	16	Natural Feature Setback	34
Natural Environment	16	Storm Water Management	35
Transportation	16	Restoration of Wetlands	36
Community Facilities and Recreational Amenities	17	Woodland Protection	36
Chapter 4: Community Profile	18	Overlay Zoning District	37
Introduction	18	Purchase of Open Space	37
Economic factors	18	Chapter 7: Transportation Plan	38
		Transportation Conditions	38
		Map 2: Transportation Conditions	39
		Relationship Between Transportation and Land Use	40

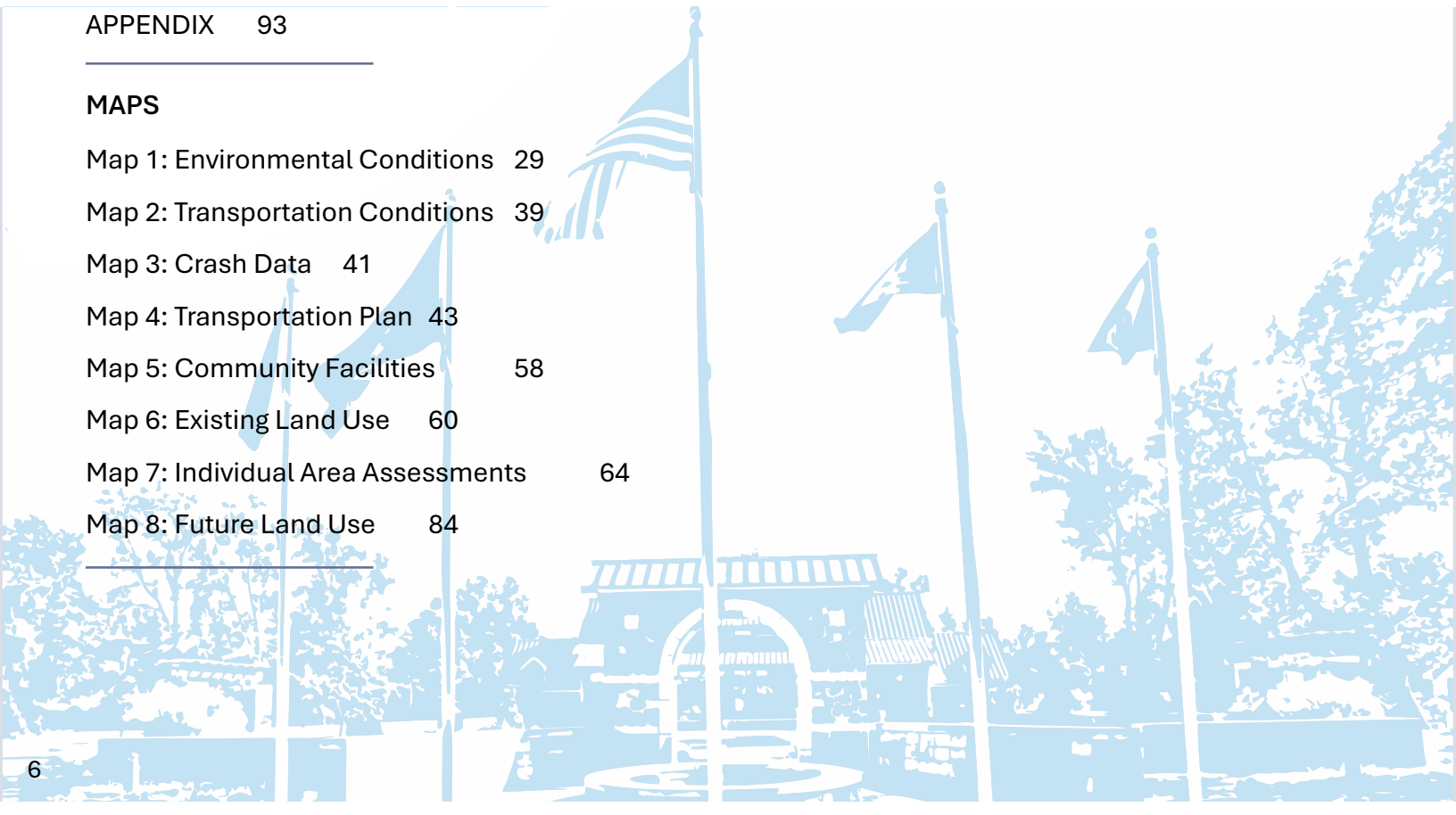
Map 3: Crash Data	41	Chapter 9: Existing Land Use	59
Functional Classification	42	Map 6: Existing Land Use	60
Map 4: Transportation Plan	43	Existing Land Use Categories	61
Roadway Improvements	44	Single-Family Residential	61
Residential Roads	44	Multiple-Family Residential	61
Access Management	44	Commercial and Office	61
Number of Access Points	45	Industrial	62
Alternative Access	46	Institutional	62
Driveway Spacing and Location	47	Recreation and Leisure	62
Spacing from Other Driveways	48	Vacant/Undeveloped	62
Minimum Lot Widths	48	Chapter 10: Individual Area Assessment	63
Traffic Impact Analysis	49	Township-Wide	63
Streetscape	50	Character	63
Chapter 8: Community Facilities, Recreation and Utilities	51	Identity	63
Educational Facilities	51	Transition Areas for Land Use	63
Taylor School District Facts	51	Map 7: Individual Area Assessments	64
Woodhaven-Brownstown School District Facts	51	Southern Section	65
Gibraltar School District Facts	51	Commercial Character	65
Police Protection	52	Residential Redevelopment	65
Library Services	53	Infill Development	66
Parks and Recreation	53	Central Section	66
Parks	53	Transitions/Buffers	67
Recreation	55	Access Management	67
Community Utilities	55	Northern Section	68
Sanitary Sewer	55	Compatibility and Concentration of Land Use	69
Downriver Utility Wastewater Authority (DUWA)	55	Character	69
South Huron Valley Utility Authority (SHVUA)	56	Chapter 11: Town Center	70
Water	56	Brownstown Town Center	70
Township Campus	57	Retail Development	70
Electricity /Telecommunications	57	Residential Development	72
Downtown Development Authority	57	Town Center Design Process	72
Map 5: Community Facilities	58	Town Center Plan	73
		Town Center Zoning	74

Chapter 12: Future Land Use	76
Factors Considered	76
Future Land Use Categories	77
Single-Family Residential	77
Multiple-Family Residential	78
Commercial	79
Industrial	80
Civic	80
Park	81
Natural Resources	81
Town Center	81
General Development Principles	82
Streetscape Principles	82
General Building Guidelines	83
Map 8: Future Land Use	84
Chapter 13: Zoning Plan	85
Zoning Plan	85
Chapter 14: Implementation Plan	87
Potential Township Implementation Funding Sources	91

APPENDIX 93

MAPS

Map 1: Environmental Conditions	29
Map 2: Transportation Conditions	39
Map 3: Crash Data	41
Map 4: Transportation Plan	43
Map 5: Community Facilities	58
Map 6: Existing Land Use	60
Map 7: Individual Area Assessments	64
Map 8: Future Land Use	84





Chapter 1: Introduction

Description and Purpose of Master Plan

A Master Plan is a long-term plan for the physical development of a community and addresses a wide range of issues, including land use, transportation, housing, economic development, and environmental protection. Master plans help to guide growth and development in a way that is sustainable and equitable and can also help to protect community character and natural resources.

A thorough master plan ensures logical development patterns that will result in a desirable community to live and work. The plan can also encourage residents, business owners and developers to make investments with reasonable expectations of what will happen in the future.

The plan is a guide for the intensity and arrangement of land uses and promotes design that complements the unique character of the Township. The plan strives to provide a complementary mix of land uses intermingled with natural features to create a sustainable, livable community.

The master plan goals, and future land use plan will assist Township leaders as they make decisions with long-term implications for the community. While the impact of these decisions may not be apparent to property owners or residents immediately, the results of each decision will become visible over time.

Sensible, data-driven planning is necessary to ensure mistakes are not made that will be difficult to eliminate in the future. The plan should be viewed as a blueprint for the future and a mechanism to ensure each decision fits as part of the larger vision.

Legal Basis for Plan

The Township's master plan is prepared under the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Public Act 33 of 2008, which authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a master plan. The MPEA requires that a Township's master plan be reviewed at least once every five years to account for changing conditions in the Township and changes in community goals.

The master plan process includes:

- Presenting a future land use map to guide development over time with a balanced land use pattern.
- Providing a legal basis for zoning and other regulations for the type, intensity and timing of development.
- Ensuring that significant natural features are preserved as development occurs.
- Addressing situations where adjacent land uses are not compatible.
- Recommending improvements to intersections and roadway sections due to rapidly increasing traffic volumes.
- Responding to the needs and desires of residents.
- Supporting sustainable land use patterns with the goal of achieving a diversified tax base that will support public facilities and services.
- Coordinating with the County on anticipated land use changes and necessary infrastructure improvements.

According to the Act:

The general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and its environs, development that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- (a) Is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.*
- (b) Considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development.*
- (c) Will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.*
- (d) Includes, among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following:*
 - (i) A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets and provide for safe and efficient movement of people and goods by motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users.*
 - (ii) Safety from fire and other dangers.*
 - (iii) Light and air.*
 - (iv) Healthful and convenient distribution of population.*
 - (v) Good civic design and arrangement and wise and efficient expenditure of public funds.*
 - (vi) Public utilities such as sewage disposal and water supply and other public improvements.*
 - (vii) Recreation.*
 - (viii) The use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability.*

Comparison of Master Plan to Zoning

The master plan provides general direction on future development patterns in the Township. Some master plan recommendations will be implemented through amendments to the zoning ordinance text and map. However, the master plan itself does not change the zoning ordinance or zoning of any property. Some of the differences between the master plan and the zoning ordinance are:

Master Plan	Zoning Ordinance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides general policies, a guide ▪ Describes what should happen in the future over the next 5-20 years, not necessarily the recommended land use for today ▪ Adopted under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended ▪ Includes recommendations that involve other agencies and groups ▪ Flexible to respond to changing conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specific regulations, the law ▪ Describes what is and what is not allowed today, based on existing conditions ▪ Adopted under the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended ▪ Deals only with development related issues under Township control ▪ Fairly rigid, requires formal amendment to change

Introduction to Brownstown Charter Township



Map 1: Brownstown Township (Regional Map)

The Township is a growing community located in southeast Michigan, south of the city of Detroit in Wayne County. The Township’s appeal centers on its accessibility, natural features and strong community involvement, evidenced by its continued, steady growth. With direct access from I-75 and US-24 and nearby Detroit Metropolitan Airport, the Township is in the position to provide employment and residential opportunities. As shown on Map 1, the Township is part of the “Downriver” region, bordering the Cities of Riverview, Trenton, Woodhaven and Gibraltar to the east, Taylor and Southgate to the north, and Flat Rock, Rockwood, Monroe County and Huron Township to the south and west.

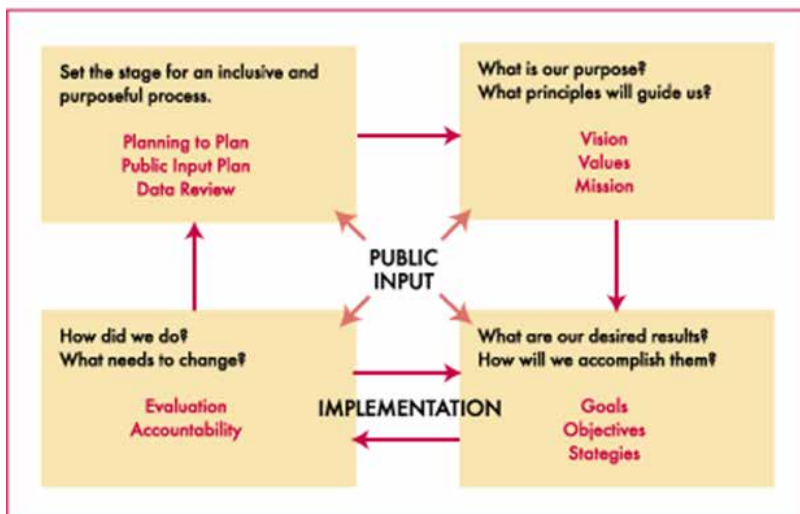
Brownstown is unique in its physical layout. Portions of the original, thirty-six (36) square mile Township were annexed to adjoining cities in the 1960’s. Since becoming a Charter Township, Brownstown eliminated the possibility of further annexation and

what remains today is a segmented Township, comprised of three areas that total approximately twenty-three (23) square miles. The northern portion of the Township is the largest and provides the greatest potential for development and growth. The central and southern portions of the Township are smaller in size and are more developed than the northern portion. Efforts in these areas will focus on improving community character and encouraging infill and redevelopment options, with a central vision in mind, to enhance and draw upon the many favorable attributes of these areas.

The Lake Erie Metropark, located in the southern portion of the Township, provides a unique natural area and the potential to implement a recreational or maritime character that could be emphasized in that area. The central portion of the Township is primarily residential and is home to many residents that are active in the community. Engaged residents are key to implementing many of the strategies in the master plan.

Master Plan Process

Elements of the Planning Process



The master plan represents a long-term effort by the Planning Commission, Township officials, residents, community organizations and business owners. The Township established a Master Plan Review Committee to help direct development of the plan. The review committee was comprised of members from the Township Board, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Township staff, Parks and Recreation Commission, Downtown Development Authority, and resident and local business representatives. Development of the plan involved collection and analysis of data on population, land use, environmental factors,

transportation, infrastructure and socioeconomic conditions. The recommendations of the plan are based upon this information and input from the public. The process is more specifically described as follows:

■ Existing Conditions Report

The first step in the planning process was to obtain a snapshot of the area's physical features and demographics as they exist today. The current conditions of the Township provide an understanding of what the area's strengths and weaknesses are and serve as a basis for future recommendations.

■ Public Participation

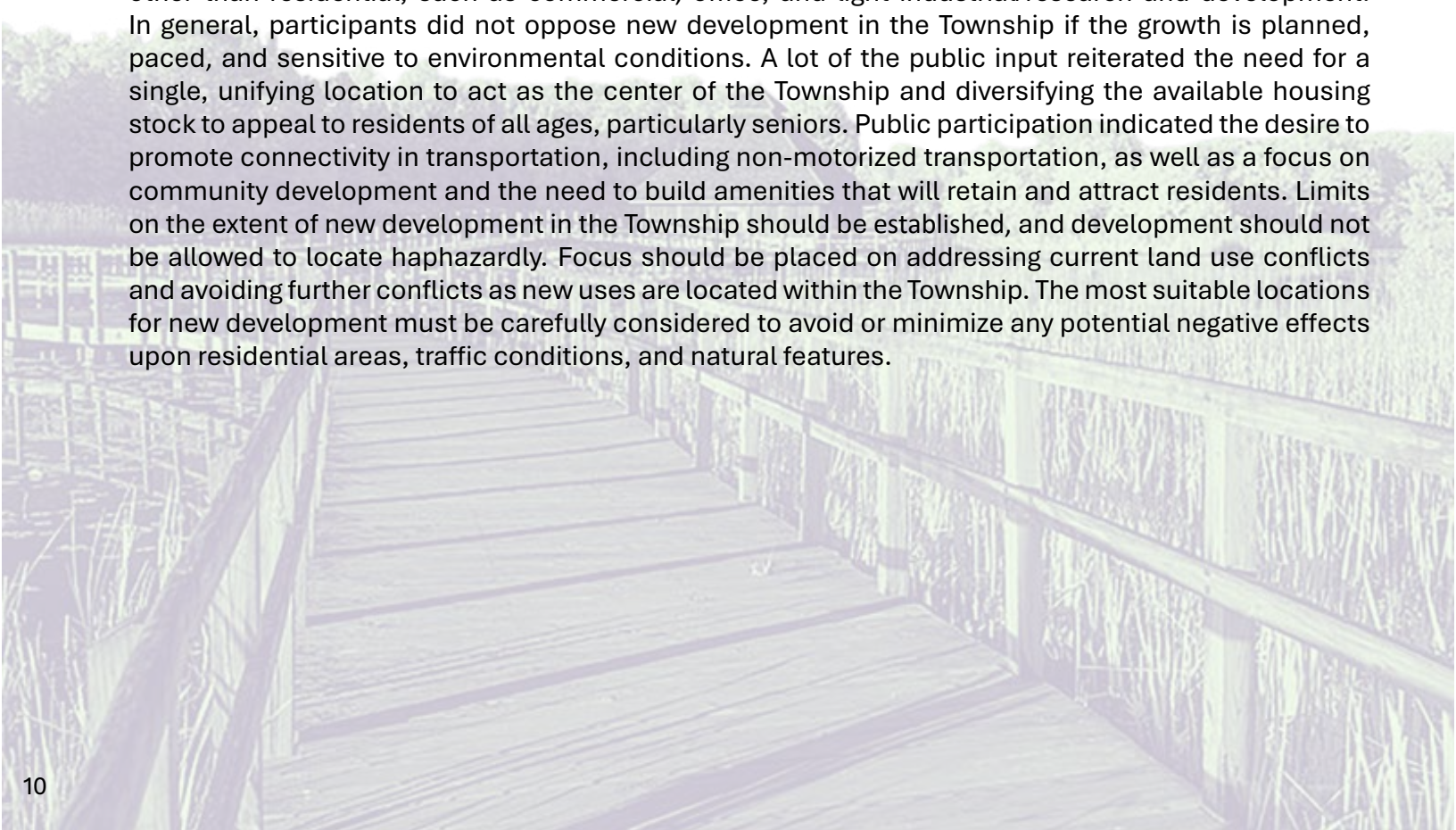
The Master Plan Review Committee designed a process that would gather input from a multi-level public involvement effort. The process began with a series of three (3) public workshops and three (3) focus group sessions, aimed at those who might not be able to attend evening meetings. These focus groups were held with business owners, seniors and young professionals. After establishing a draft master plan, the review committee held a public open house in February 2025 to gather feedback on the work so far. The feedback gathered from these meetings is presented in Chapter 2, Public Participation.

■ Analysis and Recommendations

Based on the data collected from the existing conditions, community profile, public participation and input from the review committee and staff and consultants, recommendations were made for the future of the Township. This information was presented to the Township for review and comment in a draft version of the plan.

■ Future Development

Township residents recognize that there will be a demand for new development, much of which is likely to be residential in nature. Residents also realize that the Township must plan for land uses other than residential, such as commercial, office, and light industrial/research and development. In general, participants did not oppose new development in the Township if the growth is planned, paced, and sensitive to environmental conditions. A lot of the public input reiterated the need for a single, unifying location to act as the center of the Township and diversifying the available housing stock to appeal to residents of all ages, particularly seniors. Public participation indicated the desire to promote connectivity in transportation, including non-motorized transportation, as well as a focus on community development and the need to build amenities that will retain and attract residents. Limits on the extent of new development in the Township should be established, and development should not be allowed to locate haphazardly. Focus should be placed on addressing current land use conflicts and avoiding further conflicts as new uses are located within the Township. The most suitable locations for new development must be carefully considered to avoid or minimize any potential negative effects upon residential areas, traffic conditions, and natural features.





Chapter 2: Public Involvement

Workshops

A multi-level public involvement effort was utilized to ensure that the desires of residents, property owners, and businesspeople were being considered. This effort began with a series of three (3) public workshops held in each of the three sections of the Township. A complete list of comments can be found in the Appendix of this Plan. Some of the key points that were brought up by participants at the workshop which have an influence on the Master Plan include:



- The need for a single, unifying location that acts as the center of the Township, which can be accomplished with the Town Center.
- Community development and amenities, such as attracting families, neighborhood parks, recreation opportunities, beach access, etc., are priorities.
- Against distribution centers and high semi-truck traffic.
- Infrastructure improvements are good for the Township moving forward.
- Environmental and aesthetic improvements are sought.
- Connectivity and transportation, including bike paths, sidewalks, cell service, and transportation options, are valuable.
- Environmental and aesthetic improvements, such as green spaces, blight elimination, waterfront utilization, lighting, etc., are encouraged.

Focus Group Sessions

The public workshops were followed by a series of three (3) focus group sessions, aimed at obtaining feedback from those that might not attend the evening workshop sessions. Separate focus group sessions were held with Business Owners, Seniors, and Young Professionals. Some of the key themes from each group are summarized on the following page.

Business Owners

- Can utilize both indoor and outdoor recreation to attract new residents and support existing ones.
- Creating a community identity and the promotion of Brownstown is needed.
- More elaborate entryway signage is needed.
- A Town Center will benefit the community with additional residential, dining, shopping, etc.
- Emphasis on the need for median-income housing and tools that cater to different income ranges.

- Minimum lot sizes make it challenging for downriver communities to develop and there is a market for smaller lot sizes.
- The new Detroit bridge will significantly impact the entire I-75 corridor, especially trucking.
- The market potential for Downriver communities is often underestimated and there is a lack of office space.



Seniors

- The senior alliance survey and session discussion highlighted that many seniors feel very lonely.
- Strong need for housing, particularly affordable options for fixed-income seniors; consider options like the CSI co-op and the Baldwin House (a 55+ apartment in Brownstown).
- Although the Del Web project offers smaller, low maintenance housing units they are cost prohibitive for many and lower cost alternatives are needed.
- Seniors desire smaller (less than 1500 sq. ft.) ranch-style homes with features like first-floor laundry, attached garages, and low maintenance yards.
- The gap between single-family homes and independent living/assisted living needs to be addressed.
- Seniors require safe and affordable transportation.

Young Professionals

- Residents appreciate the quality of the local school district, which contributes to a sense of community and educational opportunities.
- Builders constructing expensive buildings can make it difficult for small businesses to afford commercial spaces.
- Small businesses struggle with developing vacant sites due to costs associated with underground work and utilities.
- There's a significant shortage of housing, which impacts both residents and potential newcomers.
- Young adults in their 20s find it challenging to afford living in Brownstown, and there aren't many entertainment options.
- The absence of safe pathways connecting neighborhoods and segmented areas affects walkability.

Master Plan Review Committee

A master plan review committee was established by the Township to work with the consulting team and review the draft sections of the master plan. The group consisted of Planning Commissioners, DDA Board members, and citizens from the community. They held regular meetings with the consultants and offered insights and opinions into the work that was being conducted. These sessions helped ensure that the direction of the Master Plan would reflect the feedback and opinions of the community.



Public Open House

After establishing a draft of plan, the Township held a public open house in February 2025 to gather feedback on the updated Master Plan. Over 30 members of the public were in attendance as well as members of the Planning Commission, Township Board, Township staff, officials, committee/board members, and the consulting team. The public open house was organized into stations offering information about different aspects of the plan.

Attendees were supplied with a survey form and were asked to respond to questions about each station. In addition to the survey forms that were collected, the consultant team and review committee fielded general comments and questions throughout the three-hour open house. The majority of responses expressed a general concern about conservation of green space and existing natural areas, impacts of the Town Center development on surrounding neighborhoods, and impacts to traffic and public services of new development.



Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, & Objectives

A community vision was formulated by the Township and summarizes the aspirations of its residents for Brownstown Township's future. This section breaks this vision down into categories and provides more detailed descriptions for its implementation. For each category, a goal statement is provided, followed by specific objectives. For each objective there is a list of action policies that will assist in accomplishing the objectives, and ultimately the goal. The following set of goals, objectives and policies give the comprehensive plan the philosophical guidance it needs to address the present issues and advance the plan and community into the future.

Vision Statement

Brownstown Township will provide a well-balanced mixture of land uses that is appropriate to the unique needs of each of its three geographic areas, while providing better connectivity between these areas with respect to: identity; quality of development; infrastructure; natural environment; and public facilities and recreational amenities.

Goals and Objectives

Residential

Goal: Ensure that new residential development is of the highest possible quality, protects the character of established neighborhoods and provides an appropriate balance of housing types based upon demographic trends and projections.



- Adopt residential design standards dealing with size, setbacks and architectural character.
- Provide for continued residential growth within the ability of the community to economically provide the necessary infrastructure and services.
- Require that new development set aside open space/recreational areas and non-motorized connections with abutting developments.
- Require that new development be compatible with the character of existing, nearby neighborhoods.
- Encourage the development of “Middle Housing” like townhouses, flats, live work, etc. to attract residents of all ages to the community. Examine the existing housing stock and identify areas/neighborhoods with homes in need of improvement or repair and encourage reinvestment.
- Adopt stronger residential landscaping requirements.
- Identify locations for specialized senior housing.
- Encourage and maintain the level of safety of all residential neighborhoods.
- Minimize the intrusion and impact of industrial uses on residential neighborhoods.

Commercial

Goal: Encourage and facilitate an appropriate mixture of high-quality commercial uses that will provide services and goods for citizens.

- Provide suitable sites for the growth of business in keeping with a growing population.
- Define areas for development as community-wide commercial.
- Provide retail and services that are convenient to neighborhoods but are of limited intensity to ensure compatibility.
- Actively recruit potential specialty-type commercial uses.
- Develop and redevelop sites along commercial corridors, offering a greater variety of low impact uses.
- Enhance the image of heavily traveled business corridors.
- Develop stronger building design and landscaping guidelines/requirements.
- Encourage the cleanup of blighted areas and the upgrade of nonconforming sites.
- Establish community marketing efforts to encourage new investment.



Town Center

Goal: Create a vibrant, mixed-use center in the Brownstown DDA District that will serve as a focal point for the community and attract a wide range of businesses, housing, and people from different age groups.

- Allow higher density housing development in the Town Center area.
- Provide a mix of owner- and renter-occupied housing in an urban environment.
- Encourage the development of “Middle Housing” like townhouses, flats, live work, etc. to attract residents of all ages to the community.
- Attract specialty retail uses that offer goods and services not found in traditional shopping centers.
- Integrate entertainment uses into the retail fabric to attract people from outside the Town Center.
- Create parking standards that are appropriate for a traditional town center and utilize shared parking standards.



Industrial

Goal: Promote and assist industrial uses that will help to diversify the tax base of the Township and provide additional employment opportunities for citizens.

- Encourage the development of industrial areas in locations that will limit potential impacts upon nearby uses.
- Educate current and prospective businesses on the availability of tax incentives.
- Target and recruit specific industrial development to capitalize on accessibility to the transportation network.
- Develop stronger building design and landscaping guidelines/requirements.
- Re-evaluate existing land use designations to determine feasibility in the market.
- Protect abutting residential properties through the transition of land uses and adequate buffering.
- Provide for the upgrade of nonconforming sites as site plan requests are submitted to the Township.
- Industrial sites must have access to major thoroughfares with capacity for volumes and safety.



Natural Environment

Goal: Protect and preserve open space and natural areas.

- Implement new techniques and apply current tools for the protection of natural features, such as woodland and wetland preservation and clustered residential development.
- Promote the integration of natural features into site design.
- Follow Best Management practices for stormwater management.
- Coordinate storm water system maintenance with Wayne County.

Transportation

Goal: Improve the safety, physical condition and appearance of neighborhood street networks that are in need of improvement and improve connectivity for both motorized and non-motorized transportation between the three geographic areas of the Township.

- Coordinate maintenance and improvement projects with Wayne County and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).
- Ensure that new and expanding development is within the capacity of the road system.
- Preserve capacity and safety of arterial streets through the use of stronger access management techniques.

- Adopt and enforce design standards to improve the appearance along roadways.
- Require street connections between neighborhoods and stub roads to vacant residential property that may be developed in the future.
- Require sidewalks and sidewalk connections between existing neighborhoods with all development and encourage new sidewalks where there are none.
- Identify additional funding opportunities for non-motorized transportation facilities and include site plan requirements in the zoning ordinance.
- Promote infrastructure for vehicle electric charging stations to allow for expansion as the demand dictates.



Community Facilities and Recreational Amenities

Goal: Maintain and improve public services, buildings and spaces, and recreational amenities within the Township to meet the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors.

- Investigate the capacity of public and emergency services to ensure that the level of service can be maintained or improved with the projected population growth.
- Improve and maintain the Township’s sewer and water system and its capacity to meet the long-term needs of the Township, its residents, and businesses.
- Maximize use, accessibility, and variety of existing recreational facilities and evaluate ways to increase recreational opportunities to meet the needs of all age groups.
- Identify potential locations for additional public recreation facilities.
- Reinvestigate opportunities for the purchase of significant open and natural areas.
- Adopt stronger requirements for both active and passive recreation areas within new residential development.
- Identify areas for nature trails/bike paths that link the citizens to community facilities and resources.
- Adopt and enforce design standards for landscaping, signs, lighting, and similar elements to create an identity for the Township and connection between the three geographic areas.
- Develop stronger building design and landscaping guidelines/requirements for public buildings and facilities.
- Provide a pedestrian bridge or safe at-grade crossing over Telegraph Road, to connect the municipal complex with the Town Center.





Chapter 4: Community Profile

Introduction

The planning team generated a community profile using data from the US Census, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), and other sources. The profile offers baseline information about existing conditions in Brownstown Township and was used to inform the planning process.

Data collection focuses on:

- Population characteristics
- Housing trends
- Existing land use

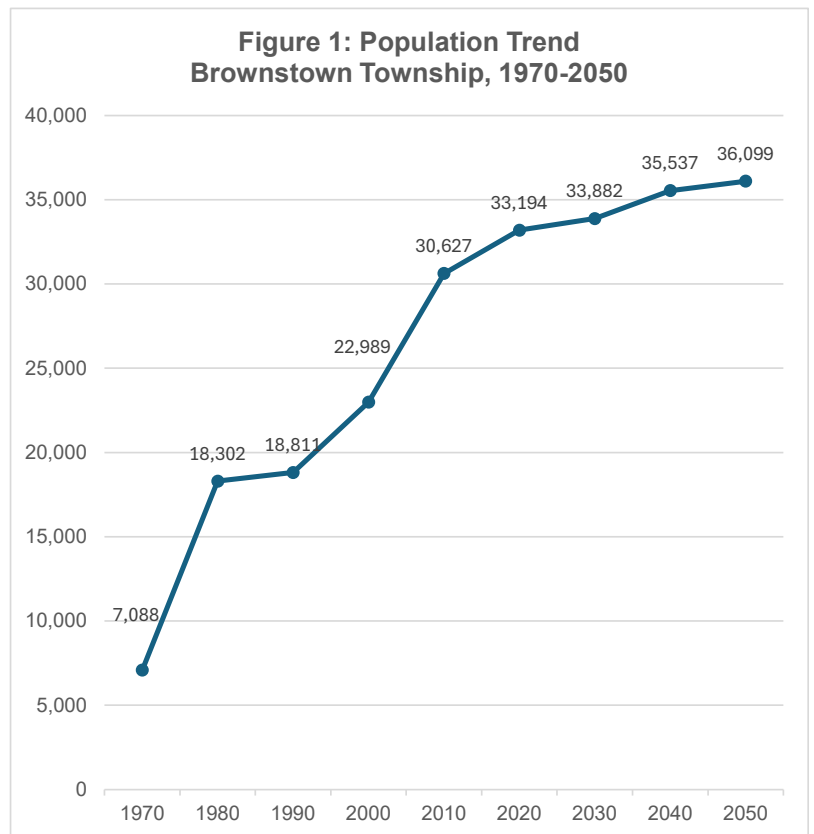
Economic factors

This profile provides several key findings that will offer a basis for understanding trends and influences on the Township’s growth and development patterns and this data will be utilized throughout the plan to support the recommendations.

Population Characteristics

Evaluating population characteristics provides an understanding of Brownstown Township today. This information also helps determine the Township’s potential future needs. Demographic characteristics provide insight into the Township’s population, in terms of size, age, households, ethnicity, educational attainment, and income.

Exploring the age, type, and value of the current housing stock, existing land use and the labor force can help the Township formulate strategies to accommodate growth. Trends and projections indicate how the Township may change in the future.



Source: US Census and SEMCOG

Population Trends and Projections

Like many Michigan suburbs, Brownstown Township began as a small community but experienced a population surge beginning in the 1980’s and the population has continued to increase (see Figure 1).

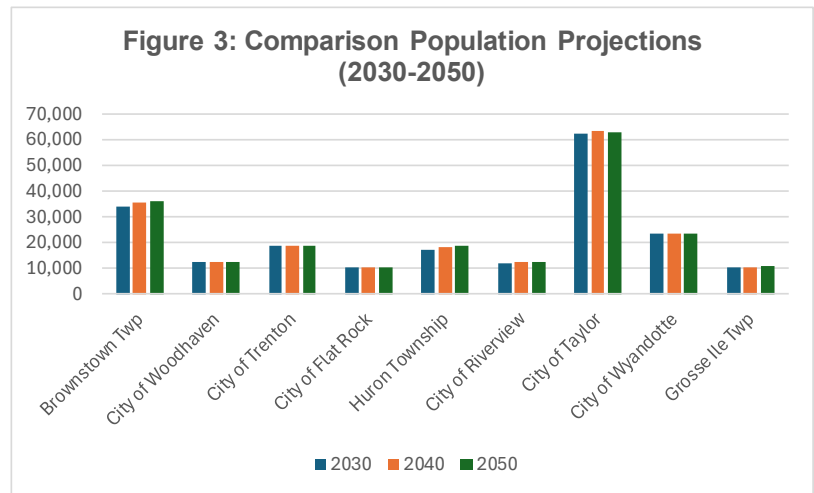
This growth is in contrast with some surrounding communities, which have mostly experienced much slower growth, or in some cases, population decline (see Figure 2) in the last decade.

Figure 2: Population Trends, Comparison Communities			
Community	2010	2020	Percent Change 2010-2020
Brownstown Township	30,627	33,194	8.38%
City of Woodhaven	12,875	12,941	0.51%
City of Trenton	18,853	18,544	-1.63%
City of Flat Rock	9,878	10,541	6.71%
Huron Township	15,879	16,944	6.70%
City of Riverview	12,486	12,490	0.03%
City of Taylor	63,131	63,409	0.44%
City of Wyandotte	25,883	25,058	-3.18%
Grosse Ile Township	10,371	10,788	4.02%
Wayne County	1,820,584	1,793,561	-1.48%

Source: Census and SEMCOG

This trend of population decline is consistent with what happened in Wayne County, which lost nearly 1.5% of its population over the same time span. Only Huron Township and the City of Flat Rock have experienced comparable population growth to Brownstown Township. It should be noted that Brownstown’s population growth, as compared to surrounding communities, can be partially attributed to Brownstown having larger amounts of undeveloped land that allowed room to grow over this period, much of which was developed for residential use.

The most up-to-date estimate information from the US Census and SEMCOG reflects a Township population of 33,309 as of July 2023. SEMCOG projections show that Brownstown Township can expect continued population growth, estimated to be 36,099 by 2050, while many surrounding communities will continue to see a population decrease as land reaches saturation of development (see Figure 3).

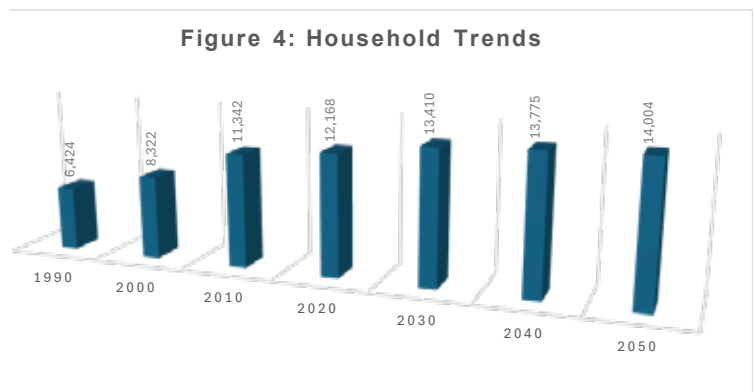


Source: US Census

Housing Trends

Household Trends and Projections

Census data also looks at households, or the residents of each housing unit and how they are related(see Figure 4). Consistent with the population growth trend, the Township has seen a steady increase in the number of households between 1990 and 2020 and this number is projected to continue to increase gradually through 2050.



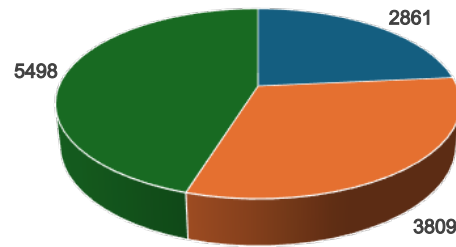
Source: US Census and SEMCOG

In keeping with national trends, average household size in the Township has declined from 2.69 people in 2010 to 2.56 people in 2022. SEMCOG projections estimate that the average household size in Brownstown Township will be 2.56 people in 2050, indicating that household size can be expected to plateau.

For comparison, the average household size in Wayne County was 2.69 in 2010 and 2.50 people in 2020. SEMCOG projections show that average household size in the county will be 2.48 people in 2050.

The term “family” refers to a group of two or more people who reside together and who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Currently, 45% of households in the Township are families without children (those 17 years of age and younger) and 24% of households consist of people who live alone. Only 31% of households are families with children (see Figure 5). SEMCOG estimates that by 2050, 69% of Township households will not have children living in the home, which is about the same rate as today.

Figure 5: Household Type, Brownstown Township (2022)



■ Live Alone (24%) ■ Family With Children (31%) ■ Family Without Children (45%)
Source: US Census and SEMCOG

Age and Ethnicity

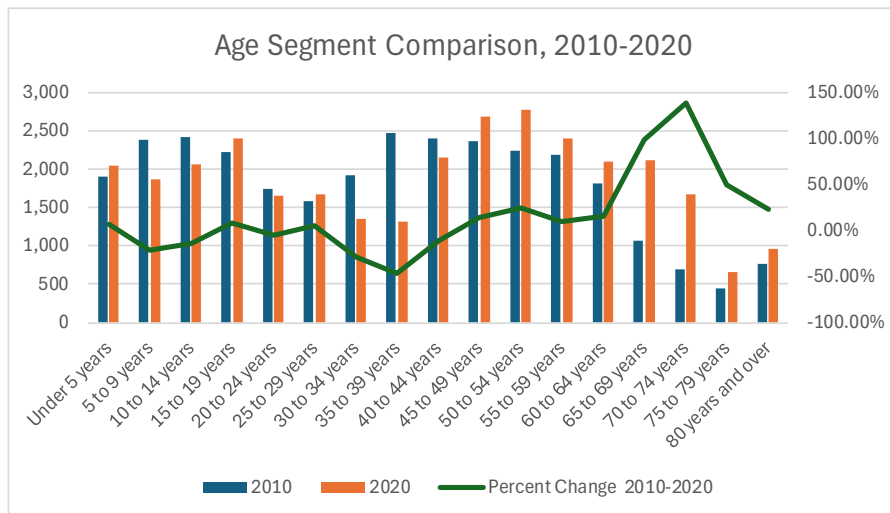


Figure 6, Source: US Census

The median age in Brownstown Township increased from 37.6 in 2010 to 43.1 years of age per 2022 Census estimates. For comparison, this is older than the median age in Wayne County, which was 37.7 years for the same period. The data indicates that the sectors of the population with the largest percentage increase between 2010 and 2020 were 65 years of age or older (see Figure 6). For example, Census data shows that the number of residents between 70 and 74 years of age experienced 138.1% growth, the highest over the decade (from 702 to 1,673). The second largest increase was in residents between 65 and 69 years of age with a rise of 97.84% (from 1,069 to 2,115). This demographic shift should be incorporated into how the Township plans for a significant portion of the population that may want to age in place.

By comparison, the sector of the population with the largest percentage decrease between 2010 and 2020 was residents between the ages of 35 to 39 years of age, which was reduced by 46.73% over the decade (from 2,467 to 1,314). The second largest decrease was seen in the sector of residents between 30 to 34 years of age, which went down by 28.99% (from 1,914 to 1,359) in that ten-year period. This demographic change should be examined if the Township has a goal of retaining younger families, as should the decline in residents between the ages of 5 and 14 years of age.

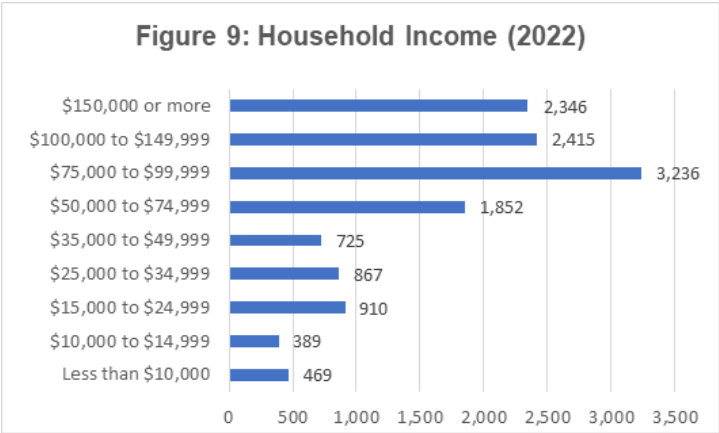
The majority (77%) of the Township’s population in 2022 identified as White according to the US Census, while 8.7% of residents identified as Black, 6.5% as Asian, 3.3% as Hispanic and 4.3% as multi-racial (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Population by Ethnicity (2022)		
Race	Brownstown Township	Wayne County
White	77.0%	48.7%
Black	8.7%	37.4%
Asian	6.5%	3.4%
Hispanic	3.3%	6.3%
Multi-Racial	4.3%	3.6%
Other	0.1%	0.6%

Source: US Census

Education and Income

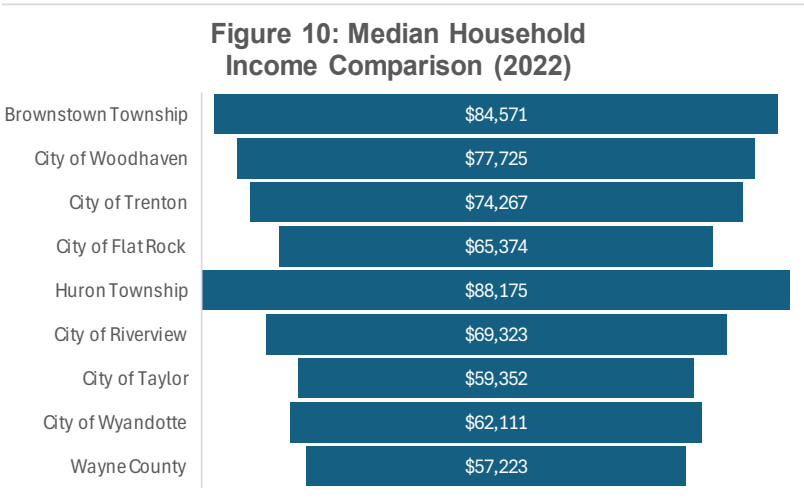
Residents of Brownstown Township have a level of educational attainment on par with Wayne County residents (see Figure 8). Most Township residents have completed high school and a substantial amount of completed some post-secondary education. The median household income in 2022 was \$84,571 with most households earning in the range of \$75,000 to \$99,999 (see Figure 9). This is in contrast with Wayne County, where the median household income was \$57,223. When compared to neighboring communities, Brownstown Township has the highest median household income except for Huron Township (see Figure 10).



Source: US Census and SEMCOG

Figure 8: Educational Attainment (2022)		
	Brownstown Township	Wayne County
Did Not Graduate High School	8%	12%
High School	30%	30%
Some College, No Degree	24%	23%
Associate Degree	11%	9%
Bachelor's Degree	17%	16%
Graduate or Professional Degree	10%	10%

Source: SEMCOG



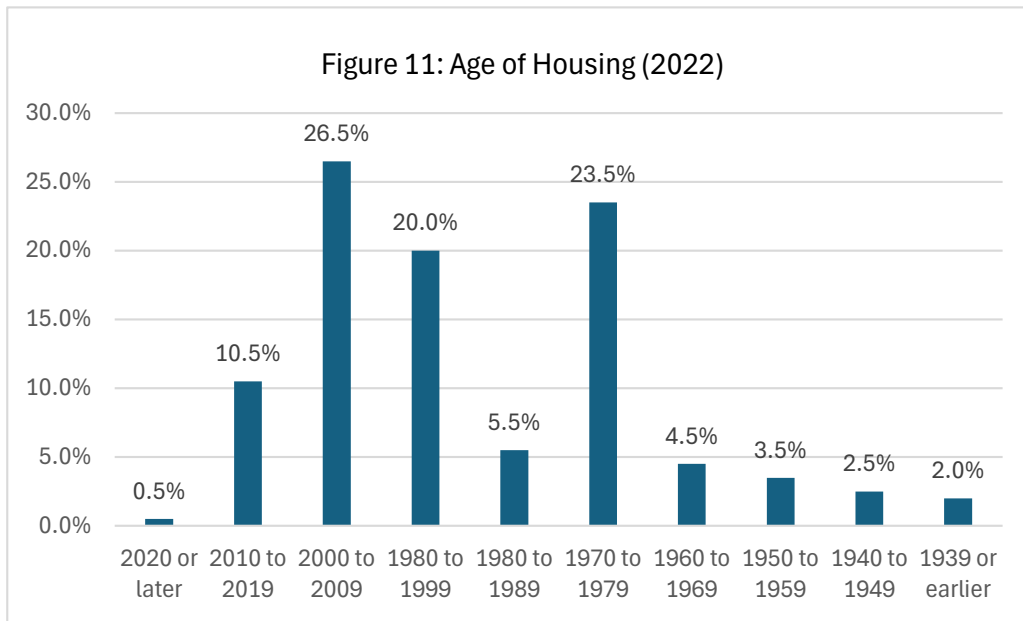
Source: US Census and SEMCOG

Housing Characteristics

The Township’s housing stock was analyzed to establish specific information about residential land uses. Housing characteristics include the number of units, housing type, and tenure, as well as housing values.

Housing Trends

Population characteristics and trends have demonstrated that the Township is growing and as the population has grown, so have the number of housing units. Looking at the age of housing (see Figure 11), the Township saw a substantial period of growth beginning in the 1970s.



the Township saw a substantial period of growth beginning in the 1970s.

This period of growth accelerated between 1980 and 2009, with 20% of the housing stock being built between 1980 and 1999 and 26.5% built between 2000 and 2009. Growth has continued at a slower pace, with 10.5% of the housing stock built between 2010 and 2019.

According to building permit data collected by SEMCOG, between 2010 and 2024, there were 1,473 permits issued in the Township for

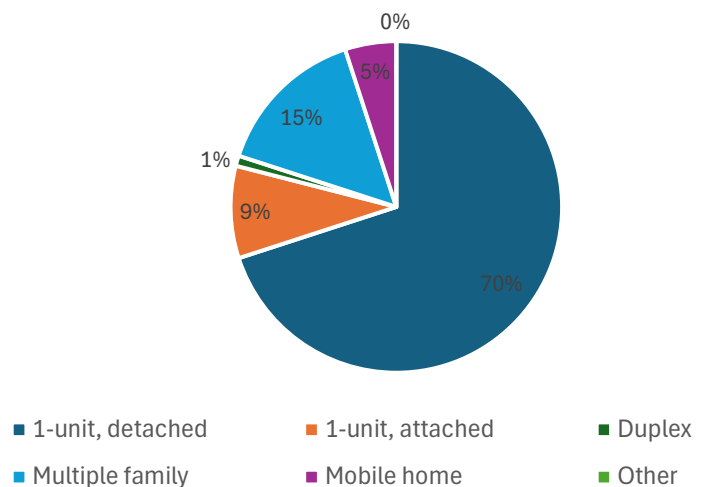
Source: US Census and SEMCOG

residential construction. Single-family residential accounted for 1,004 of these building permits, 84 permits for attached condominiums and 385 permits for multiple-family units. While it is a smaller subsection of the housing stock, multiple-family units have increased since 2010, creating more variety in the existing housing stock.

Housing Unit Type and Tenure

The majority (70%) of the existing housing stock in the Township is single-family (see Figure 12). Of the 12,544 housing units counted in 2022, 75% percent of these units are owner-occupied. Renter-occupied units account for 22% and 3% of units are vacant. By comparison to Wayne County, 56% of housing units are owner-occupied, 31% are renter-occupied and 15% are vacant.

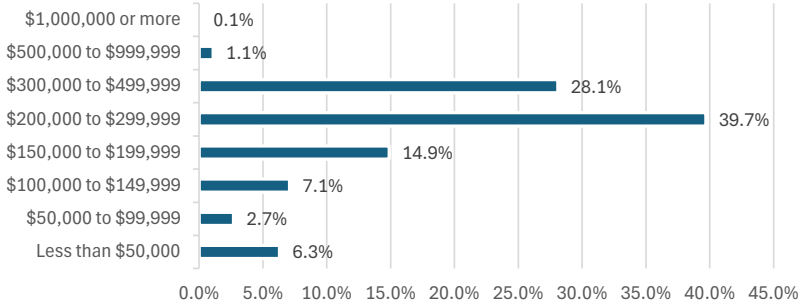
Figure 12: Housing Unit by Type



Source: US Census and SEMCOG

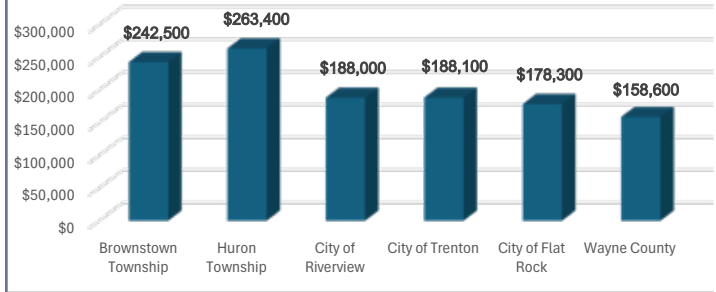
Housing Value

Figure 13: Housing Values



Source: US Census and SEMCOG

Figure 14: Median Housing Value Comparison (2022)



Source: US Census and SEMCOG

A breakdown of housing values by price range (see Figure 13) shows 39.7% of homes in the Township are valued between \$200,000 and \$299,999. A sizeable portion of homes (28.1%) are valued between \$300,000 and \$499,999.

Data shows that housing values in the Township are substantially higher than most neighboring communities (see Figure 14). The median home value in Brownstown Township was \$242,500 in 2022. For comparison, the median home value in Wayne County was \$158,600 during the same period.

Existing Land Use

Land use describes how a particular piece of property is being used. Planning for future use is important because it shapes a community’s character and quality. To create a vision for the future, it is crucial to assess the current situation.

Land Use Trends

This section evaluates the existing land use patterns in the Township. The consultant team analyzed GIS data (see Figure 15) to create a snapshot of the Township’s current conditions as it pertains to land use and provides a breakdown of uses by acreage.

Figure 15: Existing Land Use (2024)		
	Acres	Percent of Total
Single-Family Residential	4,384.4	34.4%
Vacant/Undeveloped	3,110.0	24.4%
Recreational and Leisure	1,675.1	13.2%
Industrial	1,236.4	9.7%
Institutional	497.6	3.9%
Multiple-Family Residential	473.4	3.7%
Agricultural	448.3	3.5%
Commercial	427.8	3.4%
Extractive	340.7	2.7%
Transportation, Communication and Utilities	139.5	1.1%

Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, Wade Trim

General descriptions for each land use are as follows:

- **Single-Family Residential:** Single family homes make up the predominant land use in the Township. Specifically, this use includes detached single-family homes on individual lots.
- **Vacant/Undeveloped:** These are sites that have no structures and have not been developed for any purpose.
- **Recreational/Leisure:** These sites include opportunities for recreation and social activities that are offered by both private and public entities. Lake Erie Metropark accounts for approximately 1,600 acres of land in this category and includes nearly 3 miles of shoreline along Lake Erie.
- **Industrial:** This category includes light assembly, processing, and storage uses, as well as heavy industrial facilities and equipment supply and storage.
- **Institutional:** Institutional uses include schools, churches, and community facilities such as government offices and fire and police stations.
- **Multiple-Family Residential:** This category includes residential structures with two or more dwelling units that are attached via a common wall or floor.
- **Agricultural:** Any land area whose land use activity is primarily agricultural in nature.
- **Commercial:** This category includes any use that is designed for business, warehouses, retail, restaurants, and other similar commercial purposes.
- **Extractive:** Land uses that extract natural minerals and/or conduct mining activities.
- **Transportation, Communication and Utilities:** This designation includes roads, rights-of-way, utilities, and utility corridors and similar uses.



Existing land use data indicates that Brownstown Township is primarily a bedroom community, meaning people reside in the Township and commute to other places for work. Single-family residential accounts for 4,384.4 acres or 34.4% of the Township and is the largest category of land use. Multiple-family housing represents a much smaller land use in the Township at just 473.4 acres or 3.7%.

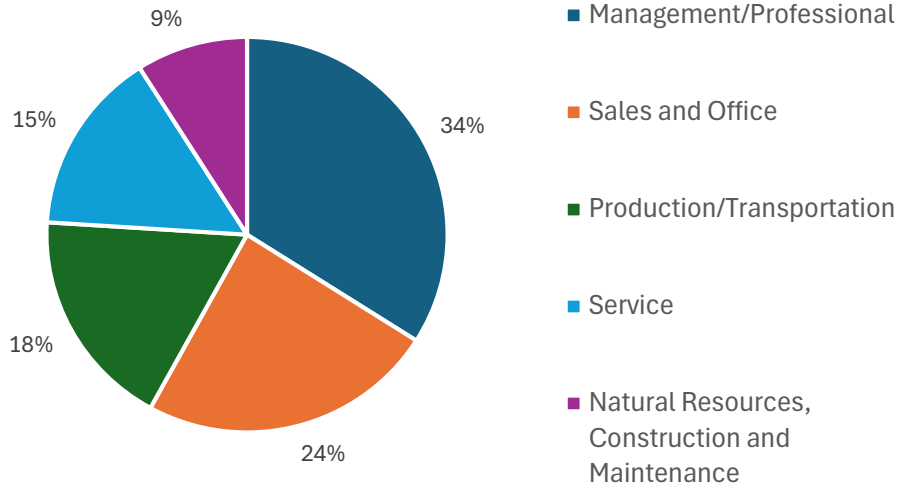
The second largest category of land use in the Township is vacant/undeveloped land, comprising 3,110.0 acres or 24.4% of land. Recreational and leisure uses account for 1,675.1 acres or 13.2% of land. Industrial is also a key category of land use, accounting for 1,236.4 acres or 9.7% of land use. Commercial uses (retail, restaurants, strip malls and similar uses) account for 427.8 acres or 3.4% of land. The large amount of vacant/undeveloped land in the Township suggests that the area could experience significant levels of growth in the future. Careful analysis of vacant sites is necessary to understand their potential future use.



Employment

From 2010 to 2020, the number of Township residents in the labor force increased by 5.19% (see *Figure 16*). Of those employed (the Census counts the civilian workforce over the age of 16), the highest percentage (34%) worked in management and professional services, followed by sales and office (24%) and production/transportation (18%) (see *Figure 17*). For clarity, the Census categorizes management and financial occupations, computer, engineering and science, educational and legal occupations as “management.” This category also includes educators, healthcare practitioners, and other technical occupations.

Figure 17: Employment by Industry (2020)



Source: US Census and SEMCOG

Figure 16: Labor Force Status, Brownstown Township (2010-2020), Source: US Census

	2010	Percent 2010	2020	Percent 2020	2010-2020 % Change
Population 16 years +	21,988	--	25,197	--	14.59%
Population in labor force	15,161	68.95%	15,948	63.29%	5.19%
Civilian labor force	15,161	68.95%	15,923	63.19%	5.02%
Employed	13,303	60.50%	15,290	60.68%	14.93%
Unemployed	1,858	8.45%	633	2.51%	-65.93%

Source: US Census and SEMCOG

Conclusions

Brownstown Township continues to be a desirable place to live, as the past Census data and future population growth projections demonstrate. Data also indicates that as the population grows, the composition of residents will continue to change. For example, the median age in the Township has gone up, and the sector of residents between the ages of 65 and 74 has increased dramatically in the last two decades.

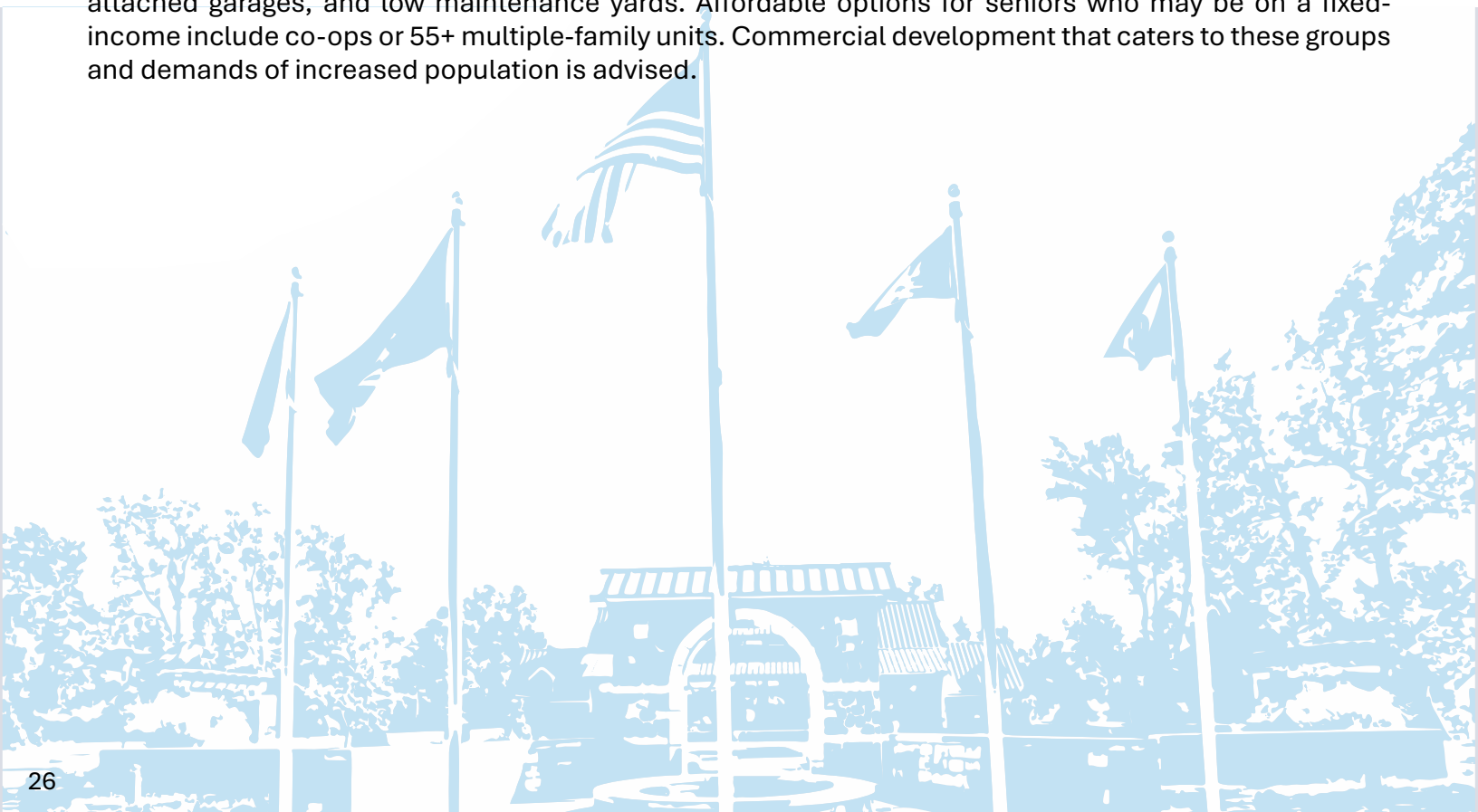
As is the trend nationally, household size has declined and SEMCOG data suggests that it will plateau in the Township at around 2.56 people by 2050. Currently only 31% of households in the Township are families with children (under the age of 17) and projections show this number is expected to remain the same in the future.

With median household income and property values that are well above the county-wide average, in addition to the substantial amount of undeveloped land, the Township seems poised for investment and development. As interest and demand for different housing types grows, a main goal of the Township should be to provide a diverse housing stock while maintaining the essential character of the community.

The Community Profile suggests that single-family residential has been traditionally preferred by residents. As the population ages and household size gets smaller, there will likely be more interest and demand in a variety of housing options including site condos, townhouses and multiple-family residential that support both younger residents and older residents wanting to age in place.

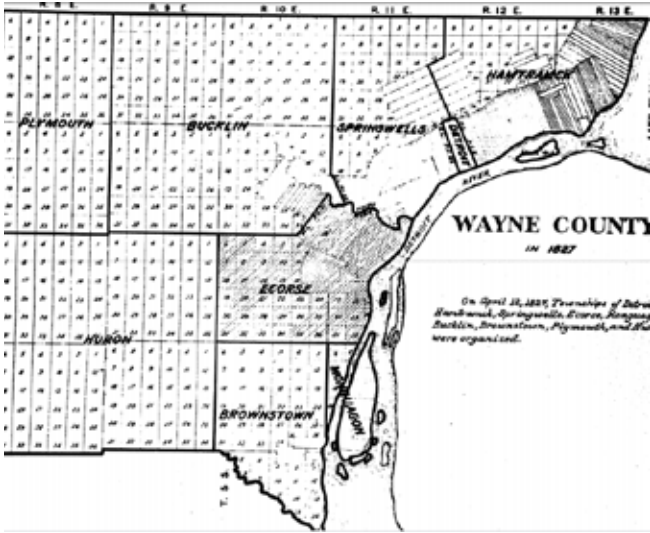
Feedback at the young professionals focus group session indicated that young adults in their 20s find it challenging to afford living in Brownstown. This applies especially to housing costs. Providing a wider range of housing types will help eliminate this barrier for young professionals. Smaller housing units, townhouses, and stacked flats can be constructed in the Town Center area and introduce entry-level pricing that is more affordable than single-family houses on large lots.

Input gathered from the senior focus group also indicated that prospective buyers in the older age groups will be looking for smaller (less than 1,500 sq. ft.) ranch-style homes with features like first-floor laundry, attached garages, and low maintenance yards. Affordable options for seniors who may be on a fixed-income include co-ops or 55+ multiple-family units. Commercial development that caters to these groups and demands of increased population is advised.





Chapter 5: Historical Setting



Brownstown was one of the original nine townships established in Wayne County. Part of the then Michigan Territory, Brownstown was established in 1827, ten years prior to the admittance of present-day Michigan into the Union. Historically, Brownstown covered some 43 square miles and in recent history, through a series of annexations to neighboring cities, has been whittled down to a size of 23 square miles. Brownstown Township was officially organized on April 5, 1827, when Moses Roberts was elected its first supervisor.

The area now known as Brownstown began as an Indian settlement near Gibraltar and Jefferson roads. The area was a historical site for meetings of native tribes in the “Northwest Territory” during the late 1700’s and early 1800’s.

Much speculation exists regarding the origin of the name “Brownstown”. Area historians believe it was derived from Adam Brown, the brother of a General in the Commonwealth’s militia. Early court records and newspapers support that Adam Brown was captured by the Wyandot Indians in 1764 at 8 years of age. He subsequently grew to become a respected member of the Wyandot community. Adam Brown’s signature appears on several early treaties, which indicates his position of tribal leadership.



War of 1812 monument

On August 5, 1812, a skirmish from the War of 1812 occurred in Brownstown near what is now Jefferson Ave. and Middle Gibraltar Rd. Known as the “Battle of Brownstown”, a cannon monument was dedicated in 1908 by Dr. Hal Wyman to mark its significance in history.

The community now known as Brownstown was once a part of French Canada. Eventually, as the French influence dissipated, the area eventually fell into British hands and finally came under American rule after the British defeat in the War of 1812. It is said that, after the defeat of the British, Adam Brown and his family relocated to Amherstburg, Canada, and he died in 1827 in Anderdon Township, Canada.



Martin/DuChene farmhouse, home to the Brownstown Historical Museum.

The territory of Brownstown was populated by many settlers from central New York state and New Jersey who came by way of the Erie Canal and Lake Erie steamships after the years following the War of 1812. The promise of good farmland, offered then at a rate of \$1.25 an acre, provided the strong attraction needed to bring settlers to the area.

Many of the historical accounts, and a few direct excerpts in this section, were derived from information provided by the Brownstown Historical Society.



Chapter 6: Environmental Conditions

Environmental Conditions

The natural environment is a critical element of the physical basis upon which the community develops. The various components to the natural environment function, change, and interact as part of the ecosystem. These natural functions need to be maintained in a balanced state, while still allowing the community to grow in a controlled manner. Development within the Township should be directed to areas that can best sustain the physical changes to the landscape without offsetting the community's natural balance. Those areas which are not well adapted to development, or if developed may have major impacts on other parts of the community, should be protected. Environmental conditions are detailed on Map 1.

Existing Conditions

Geology

The geology of Brownstown Township was directly affected by glacial movements which occurred during the Ice Age. These movements formed lakes and moraines, left lake sediment deposits and generally created much of the topography of present-day Michigan. The proximity to Brownstown Township to present day Lake Erie was not always what it is today. During several epochs, the Township and many other surrounding communities were submerged under water. Prehistoric Lakes Maumee II, Whittlesey and Lundy all once covered the area. The glacial movements which formed, reshaped and altered these lakes into present day Lake Erie left behind lake sediments which constitute many of the soil properties within the Township. Underlying the glacial lake plain and marshes at the surface are layers of glacial drift materials and then bedrock. The bedrock primarily consists of dolomite, with some sandstone in the vicinity of Point Mouillee.

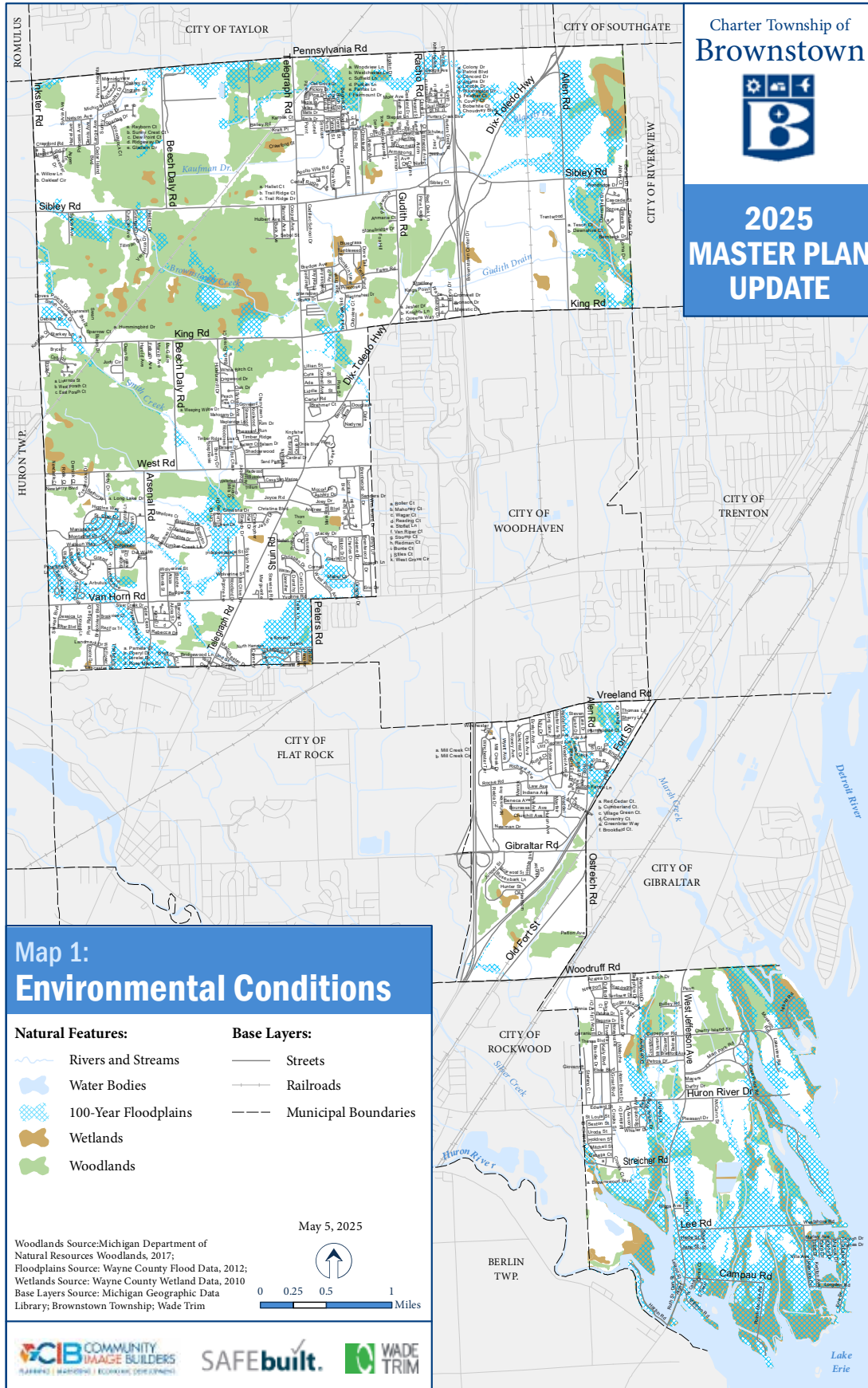
Topography

Brownstown Township, like many other communities along and near the western shore of Lake Erie, is characterized by a nearly level topography. This level terrain is a result of the Township resting on lake plains associated with the glacial lakes previously described. Elevations vary from approximately 572.0 feet above sea level along the Lake Erie shoreline, to roughly 620.0 feet in the northwest portion of the Township, in Sections 6 and 7.

Soils

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, soils in Brownstown Township are generally composed of clay, sandy clay, sand, and peat. These are glacial till or lakebed deposits, and due to their poor draining capacity, soils in the Township's south and central portions possess severe limitations for urban and intensive recreational uses, as well as moderate limitations for farming. Nevertheless, there are methods available, primarily in engineering design, that can help mitigate the soils' innate limitations to maximize their usability. These include construction of drainage ditches and drain tile fields. The surface soils can be classified generally as poorly to somewhat poorly drained, with seasonal high groundwater tables. During periods of intense rainfall and snowmelt, the poorly drained Township soils and the high groundwater table conditions limit excess precipitation from percolating into the ground, resulting in extensive surface runoff.

Map 1: Environmental Conditions



Hydrology

Southern Brownstown Township's eastern boundary is formed by the shoreline of Lake Erie. Although it is the second smallest of the five Great Lakes, Lake Erie is the 11th largest lake in the world, covering 9,940 square miles of surface area. Lake Erie provides the Township with four miles of shoreline. Other natural water bodies include several lagoons located in the southeastern portion of the Township, associated with the Huron River. Brownstown Township is comprised of several watersheds including the Lower Huron River Watershed, part of the larger, Huron River Watershed, and the Combined Downriver Watershed, which includes Brownstown Creek and Detroit River, and the Blakely, Frank and Poet drains. Other creeks and drains provide additional surface drainage within Brownstown, including Smith Creek, Morrison Drain, and Silver Creek, each of which flows through the Township, eventually discharging into either Lake Erie or the Huron River. The Huron River forms the southern boundary of Section 23 and 24 of the Township. With its headwaters at Big Lake in Oakland County, the Huron River flows through and alongside parts of Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw, Monroe and Wayne Counties, the watershed also includes drainage from Ingham and Jackson Counties.

The creeks and drains in Brownstown Township are perennial in nature and tend to be slow and muddy due to the low relief of the lands through which they flow. The drains within the Township are also prone to flooding, especially during the spring. Development within these flood prone areas must be carefully managed. Floodways exist along and near the Huron River, Lake Erie, Blakely Drain, Smith Creek, Silver Creek, Brownstown Creek, Morrison Drain, Reh Drain, Sherman Drain, Lee Drain and the Jones Drain.

Wetlands

Wetlands are transitional areas between the aquatic ecosystems and the surrounding upland areas. They are low areas which are intermittently covered with shallow water and underlined by saturated soils. Vegetation, which is adapted to wet soil conditions, fluctuation in water levels and periodic flooding can be found in wetlands. Wetlands are linked with the hydrologic system, and as a result, these wetland systems are vital to the environmental quality of Brownstown Township.

Wetlands serve a variety of important functions which not only benefit the natural environment but also the community. Some of the primary values which wetlands contribute are as follows:

- Mitigate flooding by detaining surface runoff
- Control soil erosion and sedimentation loading in rivers and lakes
- Provide links with groundwater
- Improve water quality which is degraded by nutrients and chemicals from fertilizers and pesticides; polluted urban runoff from roads, parking lots, industrial and other commercial activities; treated effluent from wastewater treatment facilities; and erosion and sedimentation resulting from agricultural and construction activities
- Function as highly productive ecosystems in terms of animal life habitat and vegetation
- Serve a variety of aesthetic and recreational functions

Huron River Watershed



Combined Downriver Watershed



Wetland areas are valuable as natural buffers between residential and commercial land uses. They contribute significantly to the aesthetic character of the community. By incorporating wetlands as part of the future development, open and green space is maintained and the natural setting retained.

Future development in areas surrounding wetlands can significantly impact wetland resources. Therefore, developers and Township officials should evaluate alternative designs to minimize potential impact. This is best done by initially considering wetland resources as constraints to development. The relative weight of these constraints must also account for other environmental and socio-economic constraints. If impact is unavoidable, then mitigation should retain or enhance the wetland values being lost.

Any wetlands greater than five (5) acres in size or contiguous with a waterway are regulated by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) through the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended. Any activity which requires these regulated wetlands to be filled or drained requires a permit from the MDEQ. Permits will generally not be granted unless the issuance is in the public interest and necessary to realize the benefits derived from the activity. If a wetland fill permit is granted, mitigation, such as creating new wetlands within the same drainage way or enhancement of existing wetlands is required.

Wetlands are working landforms that provide wildlife habitat, water purification, flood containment, tourism and recreation. Wetlands are located throughout many parts of Brownstown Township, with the largest concentration located along the shorelines of the Huron River and Lake Erie. Most of these areas exist within the southern portion of the Township, near the Lake Erie Metropark and the Pointe Mouillee State Game Area. These wetland areas serve as significant habitat areas that are valuable to the overall ecology of Lake Erie.

Wetlands play a very important part in the hydrological and ecological systems. In addition to providing fish and animal life habitat, wetlands maintain and stabilize groundwater supplies, reduce the dangers of flooding and improve water quality.



Welcome To
Lake Erie
Metropark
Marina

NO FUEL SOLD

Woodlands

Woodlands act to moderate certain climate conditions, such as flooding and high winds by protecting watersheds from siltation and soil erosion caused by storm water runoff or wind. Woodlands also improve air quality by absorbing certain air pollutants and are beneficial for buffering excessive noise generators. The many benefits that woodlands provide to the community are further described below:

Woodlands improve air quality by absorbing certain air pollutants and are beneficial for buffering excessive noise generators.

Quality of life: The woodlands of Brownstown Township contribute to the quality of life for Township residents. The woodlands and trees contribute to the peaceful, natural atmosphere. Trees provide a visual barrier between individual properties and neighboring properties, an essential factor for preserving the quality of residential areas and property values.

Influence on micro-climate: Woodlands play an important role in moderating ground-level temperatures. Tree canopies buffer the ground surface from the sun's heat and wind. Temperature extremes during winter months can also be moderated with the help of trees.

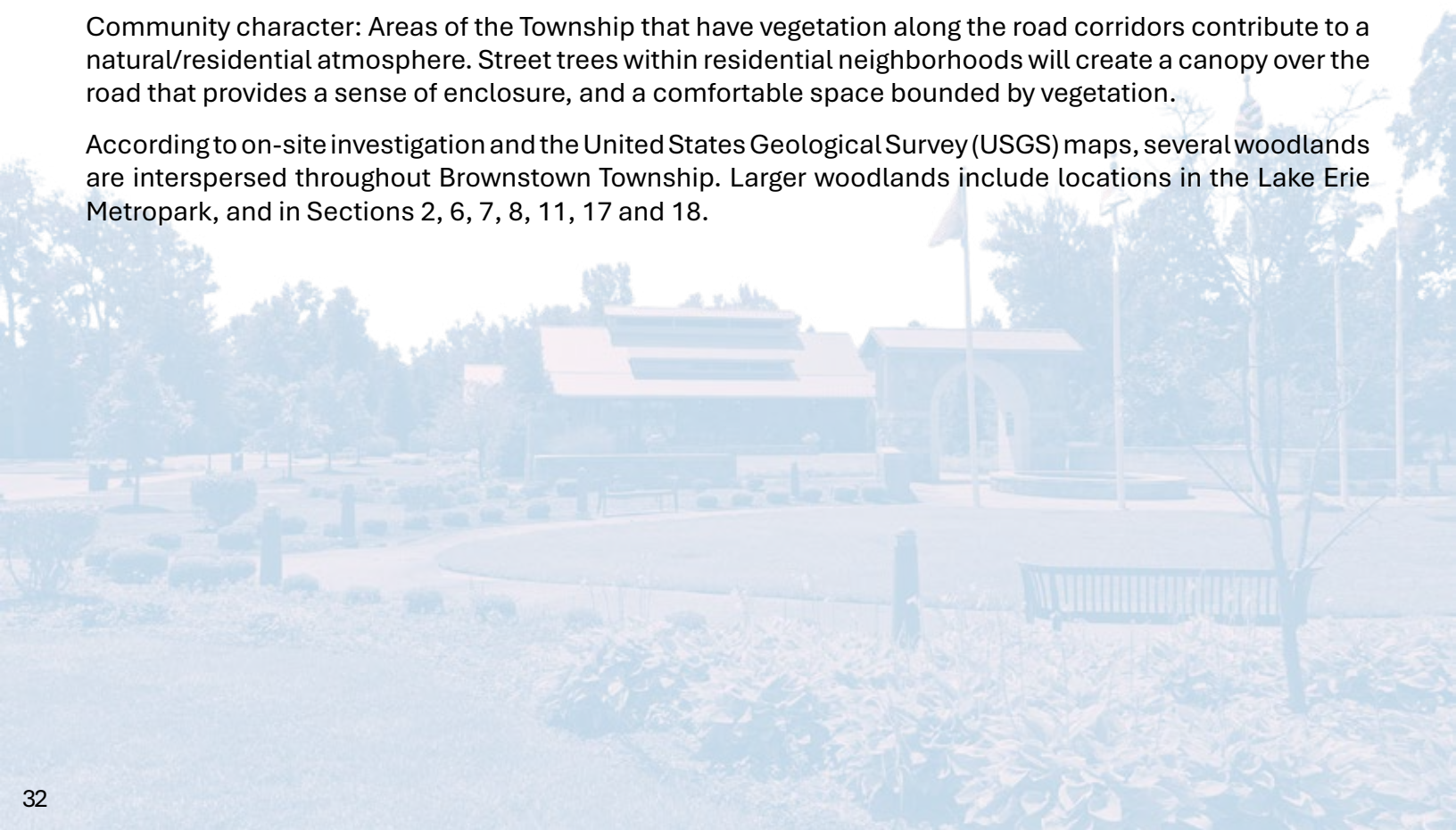
Reduction in air pollution: Woodlands absorb carbon dioxide and return oxygen to the air. Tree leaves filter pollutants from the air, removing ozone, chlorine, hydrogen fluoride, sulfur dioxide and other pollutants. Large and dense stands of trees serve as a noise buffer as well.

Reduction in soil erosion: Woodlands and other vegetation stabilize soils and help prevent soil erosion. The vegetation absorbs the energy of falling rain and the web of roots of all types help hold soil particles in place. Wooded wetlands provide the additional benefit of trapping and holding storm water runoff. Dense vegetation can help slow flood surges and flows.

Wildlife habitat: Woodlands provide essential shelter and food for deer, raccoon, rabbits, pheasants and other birds and animals. The opportunity to observe wildlife in a natural setting has educational benefits for Township residents.

Community character: Areas of the Township that have vegetation along the road corridors contribute to a natural/residential atmosphere. Street trees within residential neighborhoods will create a canopy over the road that provides a sense of enclosure, and a comfortable space bounded by vegetation.

According to on-site investigation and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) maps, several woodlands are interspersed throughout Brownstown Township. Larger woodlands include locations in the Lake Erie Metropark, and in Sections 2, 6, 7, 8, 11, 17 and 18.



Special Environmental

An unknown resource to many area residents, Brownstown Township is home to one of the most significant natural features known to exist in Michigan. Its location near the Great Lakes presents the region with a unique geological history. Glaciers that once covered the area created shallow lakebeds that have since receded to leave a prairie complex containing several hundred species of plants and providing habitat to several endangered or threatened animal species.

This unique and diverse ecosystem, known as the Greater Sibley Lakeplain Prairie Complex, is appreciated by numerous environmental groups as being one of the most significant, diverse and endangered ecosystems in Michigan. Others argue its importance on a federal scale, and in the Michigan Natural Features Inventory of 1995, the Greater Sibley Lakeplain Prairie is named a “globally rare habitat,” and one of the highest quality lakeplain remnants in the world. The inventory catalogs one hundred ninety (190) plant species within the Greater Sibley Lakeplain Prairie Complex and the site has the highest Floristic Quality Index (which measures the diversity, number and quality of plants) of all the lakeplain prairie sites surveyed.

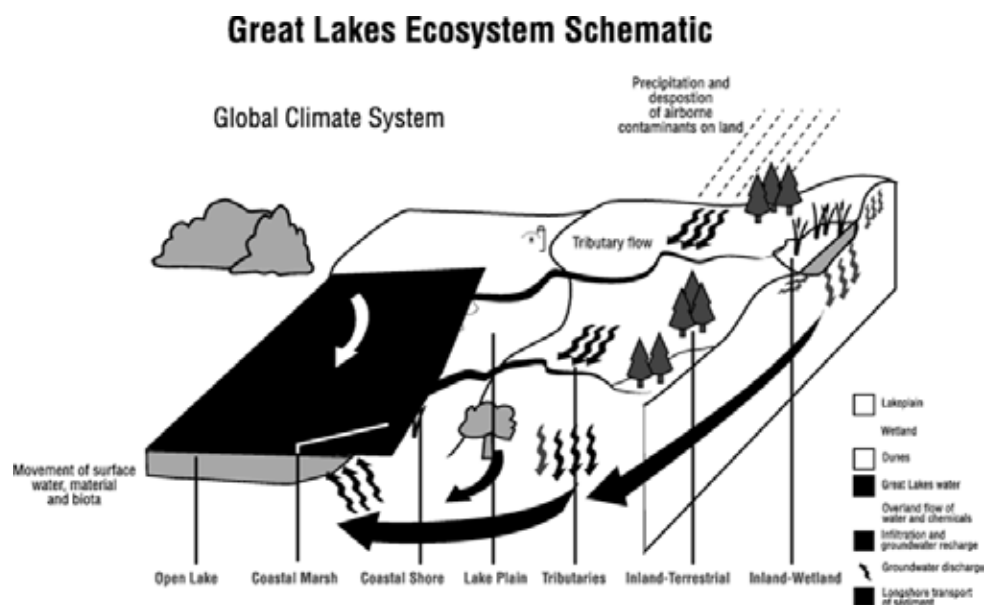
Photo courtesy of Friends of the Detroit River



Historically, the lakeplain prairie covered approximately one hundred fifty-eight thousand (158,000) acres of land in Michigan. Only three such areas remain today, one in the Saginaw Bay area, one near southern Lake Michigan, and this prairie located in southeast Michigan. Today, the lakeplain complex covers over seven hundred (700) acres, with the prairie land containing approximately two hundred (200) of those acres. While the complex spreads into neighboring communities to the north and west, the largest portions are located in Brownstown Township, near Sibley Road. The Greater Sibley Lakeplain Prairies are broken into several areas, the largest portion of which is bound by Sibley Road to the north, King Road to the south, Telegraph Road to the east, and Inkster Road to the west.

A more detailed study was conducted by King and MacGregor, Inc. (dated 10/19/00) on behalf of a property owner who owns approximately four hundred (400) acres of land in this area. The study found that twenty-four and eight hundredths (24.08) acres of lakeplain prairie and three (3) threatened plant species on the property. The study also notes that such ecosystems are subject to change over time. Other smaller sections are located near Beech Daly and West Roads; Telegraph Road and the Penn Central tracks; southwest of King and Telegraph Roads; and southeast of King and Inkster Roads.

Lakeplain prairie ecosystems are typically located between bodies of water and the tributaries that support them, and they perform an essential function in the global climate system by



replenishing groundwater, filtering sediment, and providing critical habitat. They are characterized by seasonal water fluctuations and tall grasses with clay and sandy soils, only portions of which remain wet throughout the year. These ecosystems are excellent stormwater managers, holding floodwaters in its shallow pools that slowly percolate into the ground water or evaporate into the air.

Township Goal:
Protect and preserve open space and natural areas.

These waters are also safe havens for all sorts of aquatic life that retreat inland during times of flooding. Most plants that live in the complex are sensitive to dramatic fluctuations in water levels, making future development a major threat to the delicate balance that allows the ecosystem to flourish. The State of Michigan lists seven (7) threatened and seven (7) endangered plants that thrive in the lakeplain prairie, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that lakeplain systems such as this “support the highest number of globally significant biodiversity elements in the Great Lakes basin.”

Also important to note are the areas of the Township that are part of the American Heritage River and International Wildlife Refugee along the Detroit River. Future planning for these areas must consider the environmental significance of the feature and should respect their sensitivity by employing preservation techniques such as cluster residential, Low Impact Development (LID), or planned unit development (PUD) options. Other preservation options include restoration, land acquisition, land management, public education and involvement. Brownstown Township may pursue grants or community millages in the future to help fund any land acquisition efforts.

Methods to Protect Natural Features

This plan consistently emphasizes the importance of natural resources. The master plan must address both the quality and the quantity of land use within the Township. Consideration of natural features during the site planning and development process will help improve and protect the area’s existing natural resources.

Protection of Township resources requires the adoption of policies directed toward the specific resource issue including drainage, and groundwater quality, natural topography, and vegetation. Resource protection regulations can be incorporated in subdivision, zoning, and other special purpose regulations. Some of the options for protecting natural features while development occurs are described below:

Clustered Open Space Development

Utilizing clustered development is one of the most effective means of preserving existing vegetation and other valuable natural features. Specific standards can be applied to Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations and site plan review to require preservation of open space, vegetative cover, and natural topography. Clustering should also be utilized to preserve greenway corridors, buffers, and natural open space. In addition to preserving natural features, the regulations can require the provision of landscaping and buffer strips to enhance the natural character of a site.

Natural Feature Setback

The Township should enact zoning standards for setbacks from Lake Erie, rivers, streams, canals, drains, and wetlands, which should apply to all zoning districts. Development near water features such as streams and wetlands, affects the function of the water feature. Wetlands are particularly dependent on the interaction between the wetland and the surrounding upland. In addition to the hydrologic function, waterways are natural open space corridors that serve as animal life habitat. Development immediately adjacent to a water feature can have the effect of increasing the disturbance to this natural ecosystem and reducing the water feature’s ability to perform its natural function. Alternatively, maintaining a protected buffer from these features can also help repair impacts of existing development upstream.

Hydrologic functions such as infiltration, frequency, and volume of discharges, and groundwater recharge can be maintained with the use of reduced impervious surfaces, functional grading, open channel sections, disconnection of hydrologic flow paths, and the use of bioretention/filtration landscape areas. LID also incorporates multifunctional site design elements into the stormwater management plan. Such alternative stormwater management practices as on-lot micro-storage, functional landscaping, open drainage swales, reduced im-perviousness, flatter grades, increased runoff travel time, and de-pression storage can be integrated into a multifunctional site design.”



Restoration of Wetlands

Prior to current wetland legislation, many wetlands were filled, drained and otherwise altered for development or agricultural activity. Drains and agricultural tiles may have been installed to drain surface water from wetlands so the land could be farmed.

The location of these altered wetlands can be identified through analysis of soil conditions. Although the hydrology of the site has been altered, the native soils will still exhibit coloration and textures associated with hydric conditions. Also, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources has mapped pre-settlement land cover (vegetation) based on historic survey records.

Township Objective:
Implement tools for the protection of natural features, such as woodland and wetland preservation and clustered residential development.

Where development is proposed, wetlands can be restored as part of the drainage and open space design of the development. Hydrologic restoration may involve the removal of fill material and slowing discharge to man-made drainage ways. Restoration may also involve covering the soil surface with peat and re-establishing hydrophytes (wetland vegetation). Where damaged or filled wetlands exist within a proposed subdivision, a condition of approval may be the restoration of the natural system as part of the stormwater system for development.

Woodland Protection

Preservation of woodlands as part of any development is vital to maintaining the natural community character. Continued development threatens the existence of significant patches of woodland in the Township. Woodlands are protected through the ordinance and incentives to preserve existing trees and requirements to replace removed trees. This ordinance requires existing woodlands be inventoried during the site plan review process and developers are required to make every effort to preserve significant wooded areas. These wooded areas must also be protected during construction.

Site inspections and other methods of enforcement from the Township are necessary to ensure compliance with regulations and appropriate implementation. Significant woodlands need to continue to be protected including:

- Forested areas that account for significant woodlands.
- Linkage strips where rows of trees create linear corridors and buffers between uses.
- Trees along roads, which help preserve the community character.
- Significant, individual landmark trees.

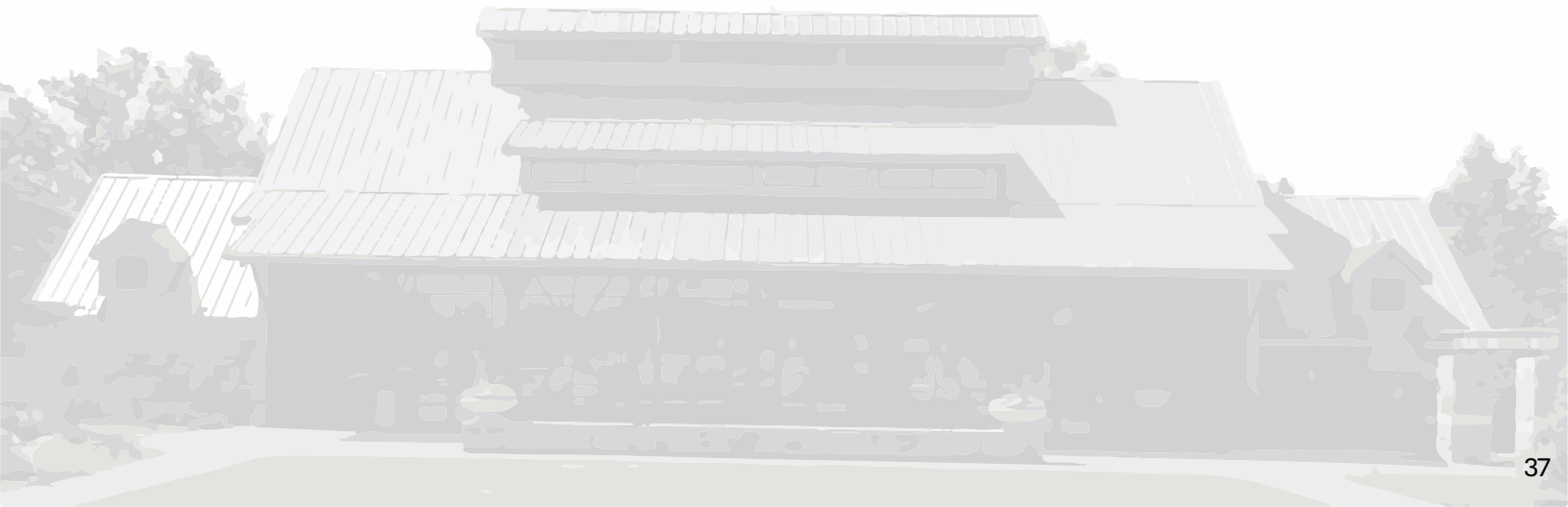
Overlay Zoning District

The interrelation of the environmental component of the master plan with the land use segment is most visible with the establishment of land use categories. Within areas identified as having significant and fragile natural resources, lower impact/density development is recommended, used in conjunction with clustered development. Certain portions of the Township are characterized by significant natural features such as the Greater Sibley Lakeplain Prairie Complex, major woodlands, critical stream corridors, large wetland complexes, and extensive animal life habitat.

The impact to these areas can be minimized through Overlay Zoning Districts that limit the intensity of development and require clustered development to preserve these critical natural areas. Other regulations, such as protection of significant woodlots, vegetative corridors, or other significant environmental areas can also be incorporated into the overlay district or may become a general ordinance.

Purchase of Open Space

While there are several neighborhood parks located in Brownstown Township, there is the possibility to increase the amount of parkland and open space. Where possible, the Township should pursue the purchase of significant open spaces. These can include areas of significant natural importance, or vacant land located in areas that can serve as local or regional parks. The Township should inventory all existing parks and identify a plan for future parkland acquisition and development in their Parks and Recreation Master Plan.





Chapter 7: Transportation Plan

A major factor in future planning for Brownstown Township is the transportation system. The roadway system has been a crucial component in the development of the community with I-75 and other regional arterials such as Telegraph Road and M-85 intersecting the Township. Transportation facilities need to be considered in relation to traffic volumes and roadway congestion, safety, non-motorized transportation, land use relationship and intensities, impact on community character, environmental impacts, air quality, noise, and fiscal constraints.

Transportation Conditions

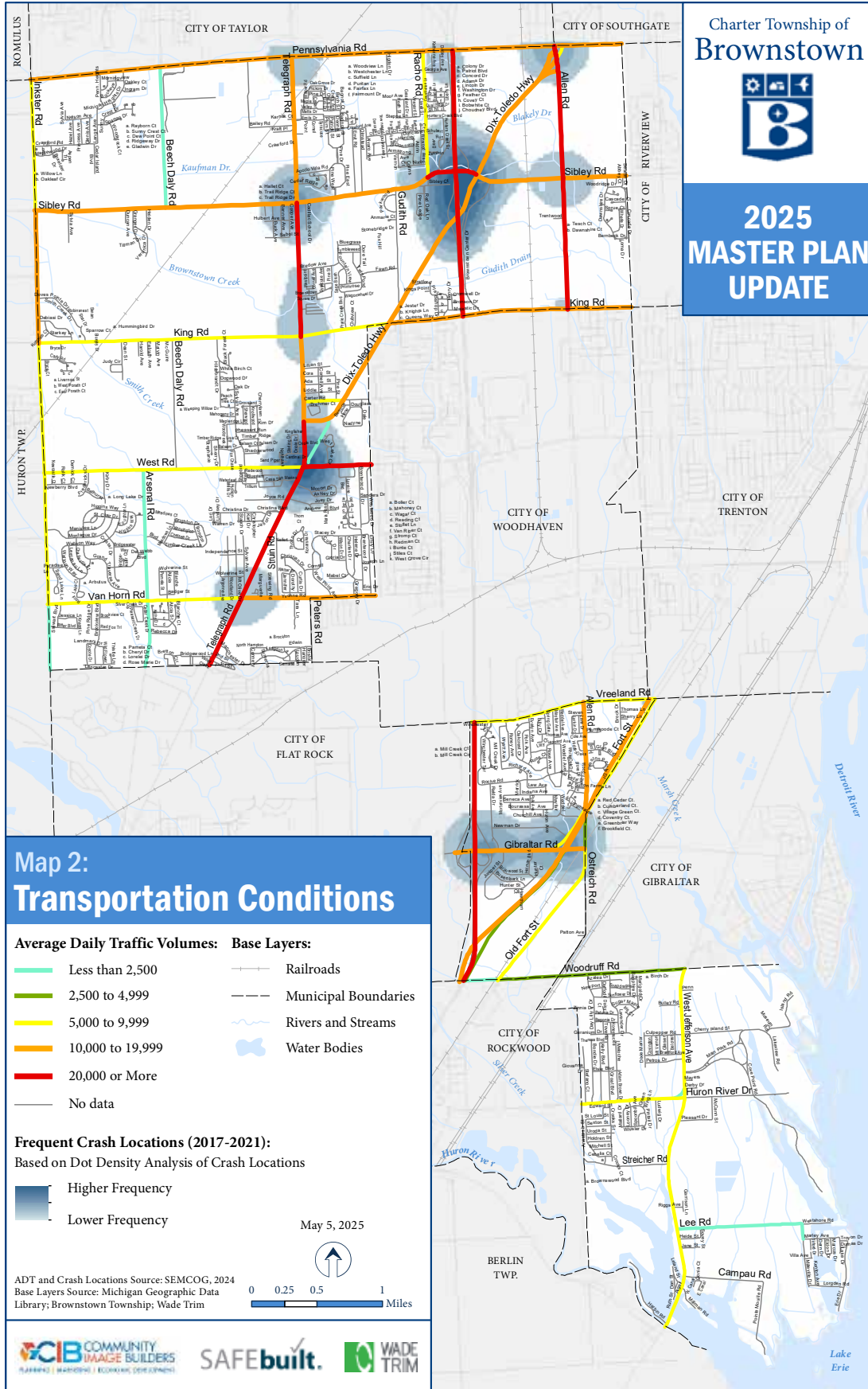
Average daily traffic volumes are a key metric for analyzing and forecasting traffic counts. This measure can be especially helpful for the planning and design of infrastructure and determining road safety. Data about average daily traffic volumes was obtained from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) 2024 traffic data. Average daily traffic volumes (2024) and frequent crash locations (2017-2021) can be found on the Transportation Conditions map (see *Map 2*). The map demonstrates that Allen Road, Telegraph Road (between Sibley and King Roads), Telegraph Road (south of Dix-Toledo Highway), portions of Sibley Road and West Road, and I-75 experience the highest average daily traffic volumes (20,000 or more vehicles).

This map also details higher and lower frequency crash locations across Brownstown Township. The area around the intersection of Sibley Road and I-75 and the intersection of Telegraph and West Roads shows the highest frequency of crashes in the Township.

Data regarding the severity of traffic crashes was also obtained from SEMCOG for Brownstown Township. The crash data presented is from the year 2022. In addition to the locations of crashes, Map 3 depicts where the most serious crashes occurred in the Township.

Township Goal:
Improve the safety, physical condition, and appearance of neighborhood street networks that are in need of improvement and improve connectivity for both motorized and non-motorized transportation between the three geographic areas of the Township.

Map 2: Transportation Conditions



Relationship Between Transportation and Land Use

A thoughtful master plan must consider plans for land use in the context of transportation planning. Future traffic patterns within the road network will be closely related to specific land uses. The intensity of land uses should, in part, be considered in relationship to the suitability of the transportation system. Future traffic volumes will be dependent upon the amount, type, and intensity of development. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) provides the estimated traffic generated by several land uses that could be anticipated to increase in the future (see *Figure 18*). The fractional numbers represent an average (e.g., 0.94 of single-family homes will have someone leaving during the PM peak hour).

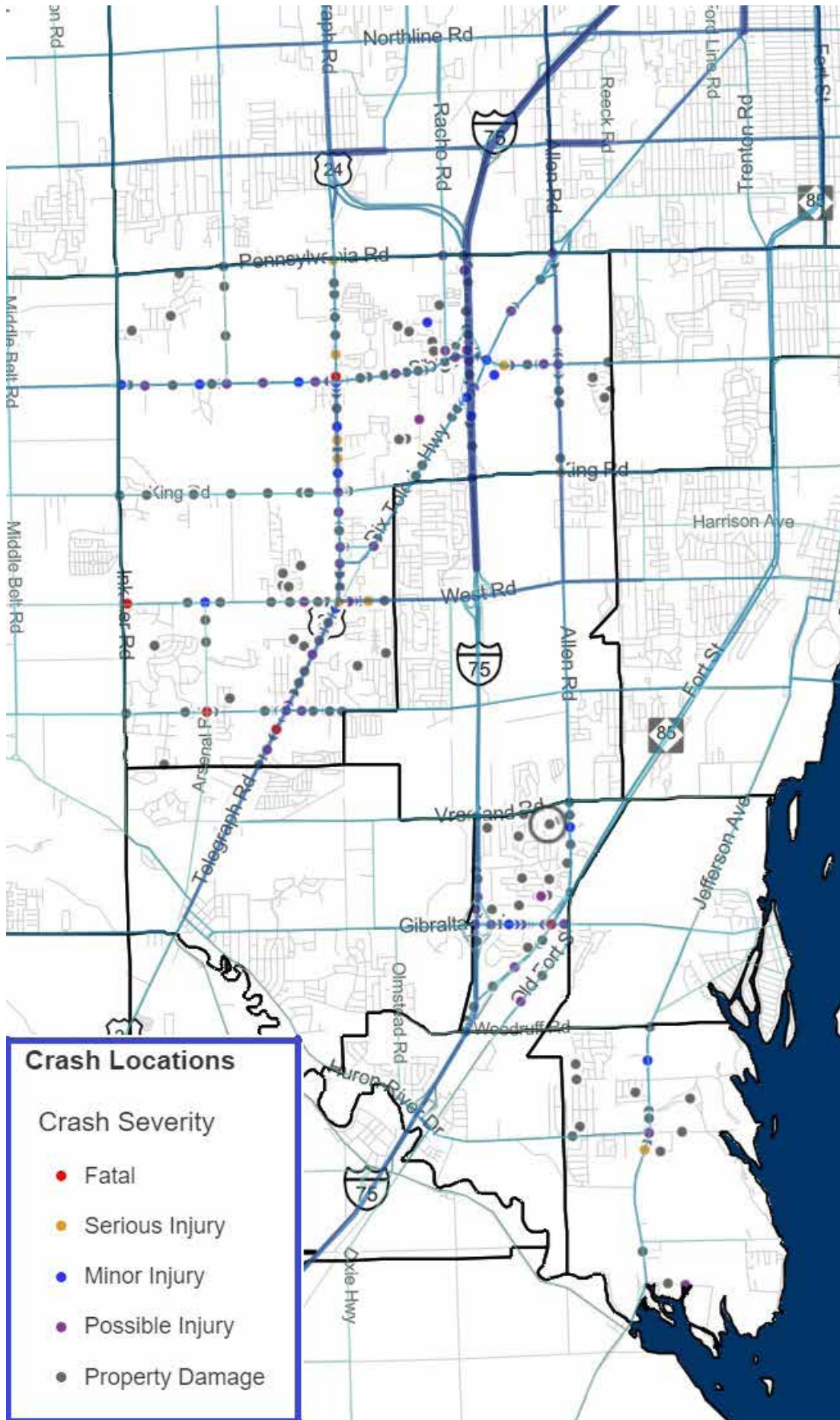
Figure 18: Traffic Volumes Comparison of Trip Generation Rates	
	Trips in Peak Hour (PM)
Residential (per unit)	
Single Family	0.94
Apartment (low rise)	0.51
Assisted Living Facility	0.48
Congregate Care Facility	0.18
Senior Adult Housing (detached)	0.30
Residential Planned Unit Development	0.69
Office (per 1,000 sq. ft. gross floor area)	
General Office Building	1.44
Medical/Dental Office Building	3.93
Commercial (per 1,000 sq. ft. gross floor area)	
Convenience Store	49.11
Drive-In Bank	21.01
Fast Casual Restaurant	12.55
Fast Food Restaurant with Drive-Through	33.21
Service Station (per pump)	13.91
Shopping Center (less than 300,000 sq. ft.)	3.40
Strip Retail Plaza (less than 40,000 sq. ft.)	6.59
Supermarket	8.95
Industrial (per 1,000 sq. ft. gross floor area)	
Light Industrial	0.65
Manufacturing	0.74

Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers, *Trip Generation Manual*, 11th Edition

Note: A trip is one-way movement, 10 trips = 5 in, 5 out

Map 3: Crash Data, Brownstown Township (2022)

Source: SEMCOG



Functional Classification

Management of the roadway system in Brownstown Township can be improved through the establishment of a classification of roads and planning and designing these facilities for their specific purpose. A functional system or hierarchy of roads provides for movement of traffic as well as access to specific sites.

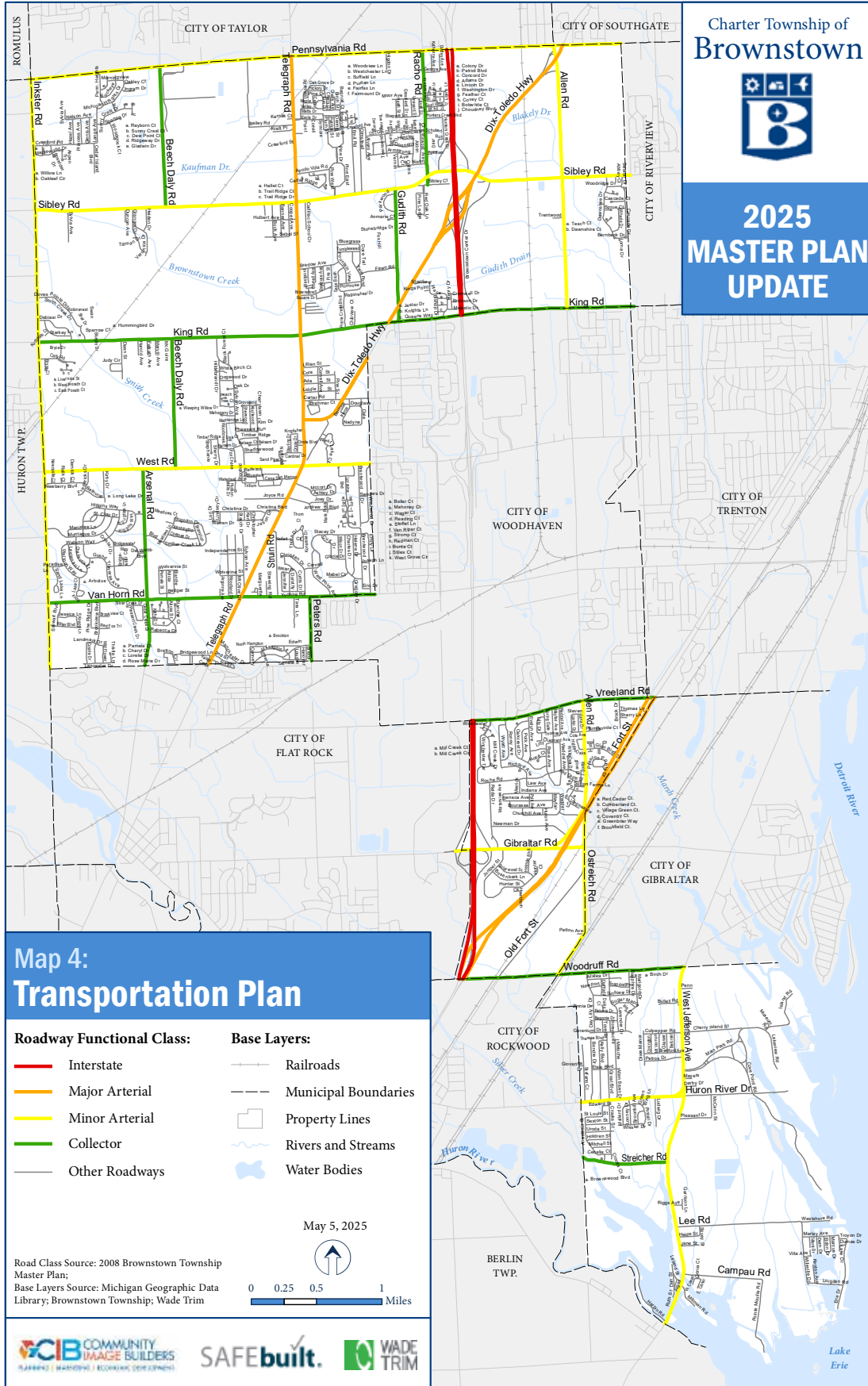
Township Objective:

Ensure that new development is within the capacity of the road system.

This hierarchy ranges from major arterials, which primarily provides for travel to areas outside of the Township, to local subdivision streets, which serve to access individual homes. The roadway system in Brownstown Township consists of five different road classifications which are depicted on the Transportation Plan (see Map 4) and are described briefly below.

- **Interstate:** I-75 serves as the principal route between Detroit and Toledo. It provides access from Brownstown Township to many of the major activity centers throughout the region.
- **Major Arterial:** Major arterials provide movement through the Township and like an Interstate, provide major traffic links between communities. The primary function of these roads is to move large volumes of traffic and access to these roads must be properly managed to maintain safe and effective movement. Arterials in the Township consist of Telegraph, Dix-Toledo Highway, and Fort Street. These roadways are all designated as state trunklines and are under the jurisdiction of MDOT.
- **Minor Arterials:** Minor arterials provide access to important traffic generators, such as employment/shopping centers, and to areas outside of the Township. Like major arterials, the primary function of these roads is to move large volumes of traffic, therefore, access to these roads must be properly managed in order to maintain safe and effective movement. Minor arterials in the Township consist of Allen, Gibraltar, Inkster, Ostreich, Pennsylvania, Sibley, and West Roads, as well as Huron River Drive and West Jefferson Avenue.
- **Collectors:** The collectors serve to gather traffic from local roads and subdivision streets of residential neighborhoods and deliver it to arterial roads. Collectors also serve to provide access to abutting properties. Collectors include King, Van Horn, Peters, Vreeland, Woodruff, Streicher, Beech Daly, Racho, Gudith, and Arsenal Roads.
- **Local Streets:** Local streets primarily provide access to individual properties and homes. These roadways are generally short and provide connections to collector streets.

Map 4: Transportation Plan



Roadway Improvements

Over time, traffic levels will increase, creating capacity deficiencies. While there is significant need for roadway improvements, this should be supplemented with transportation management practices that will help maintain the capacity of the network. Transportation management practices described later in this chapter, such as access management, can be used to maintain the efficiency of the transportation network. The approach of managing the system combined with targeted improvements limits costs and minimizes impacts to the community character.

Township Objective:
Coordinate maintenance and improvement projects with Wayne County.

SEMCOG’s Vision 2050 Regional Transportation Plan identifies several future roadway improvements in the Township on their project list, including:

- M 85 North of Van Horn Rd to GTW RR crossing, cold milling and resurfacing
- Allen Road (King to Sibley), cold milling and resurfacing

Residential Roads

The typical pavement width for local residential streets within a subdivision is 27 feet, back-to-back of curb. This width allows for two travel lanes with parking on one side of the road. At limited locations where there are two cars parked across the street from one another, there will be a single lane in the center of the road requiring two oncoming cars to slow down and yield for one another.

Township Objective:
Require street connections between neighborhoods and stub roads to vacant residential property that may be developed in the future.

With any new roadway development, roads should be required to tie into the existing road network. This maintains a system of interconnected streets, which maintains the efficiency of the overall road network. The use of cul-de-sacs and other dead-end streets should be discouraged except in areas where natural features, such as wetlands, or existing adjacent development patterns preclude through streets. With a connected street system, motorists are provided with multiple routes, which help to reduce driving distances and diffuse traffic. Providing road connections between adjacent subdivisions allows for the movement between neighborhoods without the need to access major roads. It also provides alternative means for residents within the subdivisions to access the major road network at locations that are most efficient for traveling to their destination, shortening trips and thereby minimizing traffic impacts to the major road network. Connected streets also provide continuous routes that enhance non-motorized transportation. With connected streets, special consideration needs to be given to network design to discourage use by through traffic that does not have an origin or destination within the local neighborhood.

Access Management

Widening and intersection improvements are not the only way to improve traffic operations along a road. One technique to help preserve capacity and promote safety while delaying or avoiding the need for widening is access management. Access management involves comprehensive controls to minimize conflict points, reduce the potential for crashes and help preserve the road’s ability to carry traffic. Access management protects the public investment in the roadway by minimizing congestion and crash potential but still provides property owners with reasonable, though not always direct, access.

Access management involves a series of tools to reduce traffic conflict points, and thus preserves capacity and improves safety. Access management standards regulate the number, spacing and design of access points, and require the use of shared access systems where practical.

Access management is implemented generally either as part of road reconstruction or improvements or application of standards as sites are proposed for development or redevelopment. Consequently, access management requires a joint effort between Wayne County and the Township in terms of both standards and review. Accordingly, Township development regulations can be important tools for implementing access management concepts.

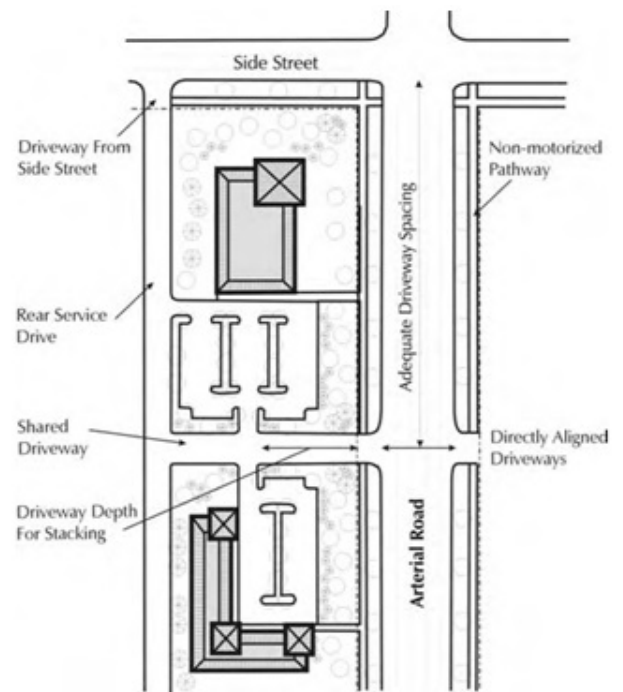
Wayne County and Brownstown Township need to work together to evaluate their standards and procedures for access management. These guidelines generally relate to a subdivision or site plan of a particular development that is being reviewed at the local level, but also include the public right-of-way area, which is under the jurisdiction of the road agency (either MDOT or Wayne County). Thus, implementation of guidelines will require coordination with those two agencies so that driveway permits are not granted until the access requirements of the Township are met through the site plan approval process. MDOT and several counties spent considerable time and money developing the Access Management Guidebook. The Township should work with Wayne County and MDOT towards these recommendations, which are summarized as follows:

Number of Access Points

The number of access points should be limited to one where practical. Every effort should be made to limit the number of driveways and encourage access from side roads, service drives, frontage roads, cross-access easements, and shared driveways. Along major roads, access points should be properly spaced from one another and from intersections with other major roads. Access points should also be aligned with those across the road or properly offset following the accepted standards or guidelines. Some recommended guidelines for major roads are as follows:

- Enforce requirements for the inclusion of a Traffic Impact Analysis with site plan review.
- Access to a parcel should consist of either a single two-way driveway or a pair of one-way driveways.
- Certain developments generate enough traffic to consider allowing more than one driveway. Where possible, these second access points should be located on a side road or shared with adjacent uses.
- Require a basic assessment for smaller projects and a detailed assessment for larger projects.
- For larger parcels with major road frontages of at least three hundred (300) feet, an additional driveway may be warranted; additional driveways should only be considered following a traffic impact study which demonstrates the need for additional access.
- Where parcels have frontage on both a major road and a side road, access should be provided off the side road.

Sample access management best practice.



Alternative Access

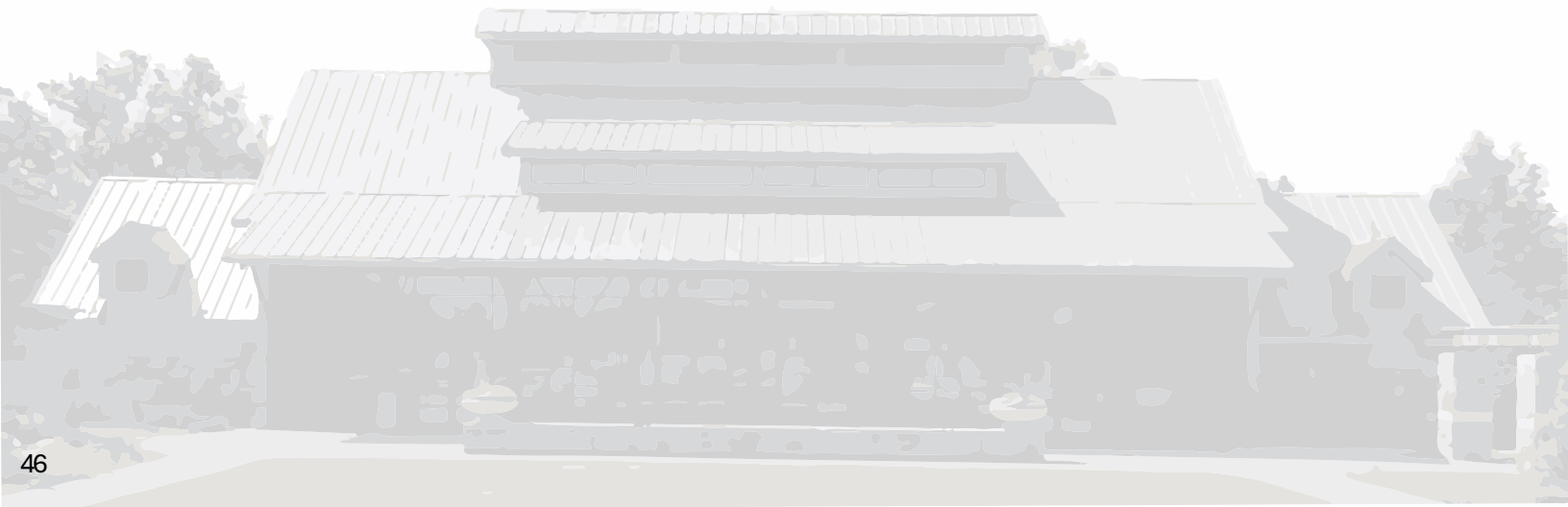
Along major roads, alternative access concepts such as shared driveways, rear service drives, frontage roads, and connection of parking lots through cross-access easements should be encouraged. In some cases, certain turning movements should be limited, especially left turns, where safety hazards may be created, or traffic flow may be impeded. Left turns may be allowed in some situations if improvements are made to the road, such as the installation of a turn or passing lane, or where there is a lack of a more appropriate location to enter or exit using a left turn.

Township Objective:
Preserve capacity and safety of arterial streets through the use of access management techniques.

In areas within one-quarter (¼) mile of existing or future signal locations, access to individual properties should be provided via these alternative access methods rather than by direct connection to a major road. Ideally, this should be through a rear service drive (a rear service drive has adequate depth for on-site stacking, compared to a “frontage” road).

On sites with access to rear service drives, additional access to individual properties may be allowed through direct connection to the adjacent major road, provided that movements at these driveways are restricted to right turns into and/or out of the site and are appropriately spaced as discussed later in this section.

In areas where frontage roads or service drives are recommended but adjacent properties have not yet been developed, the site should be designed to accommodate a future drive, with access easements provided. The government body may temporarily grant individual properties a direct connection to a major road until the frontage road or service drive is constructed. This access point should be closed when the frontage road or service drive is constructed.



Driveway Spacing and Location

The spacing of driveways from intersections and other driveways will assist in the reduction of turning movement conflicts. Some general guidelines are as follows:

- **Spacing from Expressway Ramps:** A minimum of 600 ft. is recommended between expressway ramps and any driveway.
- **Spacing from Intersections:** The minimum distance, on the same side of the road, between a driveway and an intersecting road should be based upon the following table. In these cases, a right-turn-in, right-turn-out driveway could be considered for access, with left turns accommodated through frontage roads or service drives.

Figure 19: Recommended Driveway Spacing from Intersection

Type of Road Driveway is Accessing	Type of Intersecting Road	Minimum Spacing for a Full Movement Driveway	Minimum Spacing for a Driveway Restricting Left Turns
Arterial road	Expressway ramp	600	600
	Another arterial	300	125
	Median opening	N/A	75
	Collector or local	200	125
Collector road	Any road	125	75
Local street	Any road	75	50

Source: MDOT

Changes to these guidelines should only be considered if it can be demonstrated by a traffic impact study that the driveway operation will not result in conflicts with vehicles at the adjacent intersection. These guidelines can also generally be applied to spacing from access points on the opposite side of the road. Preferably, major access points should be aligned with, or two hundred fifty (250) feet from, major access points on the opposite side. The actual dimension will vary depending upon existing and expected turning movements.

Spacing from Other Driveways

Minimum and desirable driveway spacing requirements should be determined based on posted speed limits along the parcel frontage, as shown in *Figure 20, Driveway Spacing Guidelines*. The recommended values provided in the table are based on the sight distance necessary to allow an exiting vehicle to enter the major road traffic stream without causing oncoming traffic to decrease their speed by more than 10 mph and should be required where parcel size permits. The minimum values in the table are based on the distances required to avoid conflicts between vehicles turning right or left from adjacent driveways.

Figure 20: Driveway Spacing Guidelines		
Posted Speed (mph)	Driveway Spacing* (in feet)	
	Minimum	Recommended
30	150	185
35	175	245
40	200	300
45	315	350
50+	350	455

* As measured from the centerline of each driveway. Note: Spacing on boulevards may be adjusted

To prevent left turn conflicts, new driveways should be aligned with existing driveways across the road or offset a sufficient distance from driveways across the road in accordance with the minimum spacing standards listed in the table. In the case of expansion, alteration, or redesign of existing development where it can be demonstrated that pre-existing conditions prohibit adherence to the minimum driveway spacing standards, the driveway spacing requirements could be modified, but the driveway spacing should not be less than sixty (60) feet.

Minimum Lot Widths

The Township zoning ordinance could be amended to require larger lot widths for commercial properties fronting on major arterials. This will ensure that lots have adequate width to meet the above access spacing standards. There could be a provision to allow the minimum lot width requirement to be reduced or even waived where a system of shared driveways and service drives are installed in conjunction with the partitioning of a larger parcel to ensure that the resulting lots can be developed meeting the above driveway spacing standards.

Implementation of the above access recommendations will help to preserve the capacity and useful life of roads. Travel time and congestion will decrease. Crash potential will be reduced. While individual landowners may see the regulations as a burden, a well-managed access system in the long term improves access to properties and maintains travel efficiency, thereby enhancing economic prosperity of local business. A strong access management program also helps coordinate land use and transportation decisions to improve the overall quality of life in the community.

Traffic Impact Analysis

Increases in traffic over time may begin to place a strain on the road system. One procedure to help ensure that traffic impacts are properly evaluated during the development process is to require a traffic impact study. A traffic impact study allows for the evaluation of a development's potential impact on the local road system and the identification of roadway improvements needed to mitigate the traffic impact, such as adding additional turn lanes or re-timing a traffic signal. Key components to consider include:

- A basic traffic assessment may be requested for smaller projects, unless they are determined to not impose significant traffic impacts. A traffic assessment should be required to evaluate site access points for uses that are expected to generate at least fifty (50) directional (one-way) trips in the peak hour or five hundred (500) trips in an average day. The assessment needs to include an evaluation of the design of the site access points in relation to these expected trips. This assessment will ensure the design will accommodate traffic entering and exiting the site without negatively impacting traffic flow on the adjacent road.
- A more detailed traffic impact study should be required for larger developments that will generate higher volumes of traffic, such as more than one hundred (100) peak hour directional trips or seven hundred fifty (750) or more trips on an average day. This study needs to include an evaluation of traffic impacts at each of the site's access points and nearby intersections.

The traffic impact study should include the information and procedures recommended in the handbook *Evaluating Traffic Impact Studies* prepared by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). Trip generation rates should be based on the most recent edition of *Trip Generation* published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). The traffic impact study should address site access issues, such as the potential to share access or use service drives. The study should analyze options to mitigate traffic impacts, such as changes to access or improvements to the roadway.



Streetscape

Significant road corridors in the Township should be treated as design elements, representing the quality and character of Brownstown Township. This will distinguish the Township from other communities located along the route. Streetscape enhancements can also be utilized as a unifying element in the community to define Brownstown Township as a unique place.

Roads classified as arterials should be considered for streetscape enhancements, as these roads typically carry through traffic moving into and out of Brownstown Township and have the greatest impact on the perceived quality of the area. It's important that existing woodlands along collector roads and residential streets be preserved to maintain the residential character and enhanced through the addition of landscape greenbelts.

With new developments, landscape greenbelts should be provided along roadways. For commercial sites where visibility from the road is important, the landscape greenbelts should be designed to enhance the aesthetics of the site and soften views of the parking lot with canopy trees and shrub plantings within a greenbelt along the road frontage. For industrial developments, a greater amount of landscaping may be needed to compensate for the scale of buildings and evergreen trees may be necessary for screening. With residential developments where individual dwelling access streets internal to the development, greenbelts along a major road will include berms with a mixture of trees, evergreens and shrubs to screen views of the backs of homes and to enhance the privacy of the residences.

In addition to greenbelts, streetscape enhancements can include street trees. Street trees should be provided between the curb and sidewalk for all new residential developments. Along major roads that are improved with an urban cross section that has curb and gutter with sidewalks, street trees should be planted along the road. This would be the case in the new Town Center.

Ornamental streetlights are also an important element to streetscape design. They provide aesthetic enhancement and improve the comfort and safety of the roadway for pedestrians. Ornamental streetlights can serve as a strong unifying element for certain districts or areas such as the new Town Center. Ornamental streetlights should also be required in new residential developments.

- Community entrance signage may be provided at entrance locations to the Township to help further define the Township as a unique place.
- All streets need to be considered from a multi-modal perspective and be designed to serve all users travelling by car, truck, transit, bicycle, wheelchair, or foot. Sidewalks and non-motorized pathways need to be included as part of the streetscape. Sidewalks should be required along all new residential streets. Non-motorized pathways should be required along major roadways. Specific recommendations for non-motorized pathways are included in *Chapter 8, Community Facilities, Recreation and Utilities*.



Chapter 8: Community Facilities, Recreation and Utilities

To ensure the continuance of high-quality community facilities and services, the Township needs to adequately plan for future development patterns and ensure adequate public services for the entire community. Responsible planning of the community’s land uses and residential densities requires an accurate assessment of community facilities. This process establishes whether the appropriate infrastructure is available to support the demands of new development.

Township Goal:
Maintain and improve public services, buildings and spaces, and recreational amenities within the Township to meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

Educational Facilities

It is important to provide adequate educational services to ensure quality education for existing and future students. Planning the future development of the Township should involve an understanding of the need for educational services for residents of all ages.

The children of Brownstown Township are served by three different school districts. The northern portion is served predominantly by the Woodhaven-Brownstown School District, with a small percentage of children attending the Taylor School District. The central and southern portions are served by the Gibraltar School District. Some basic information on each district is included below; however, since these districts do not exclusively serve Brownstown Township, nor do students from Brownstown exclusively attend one single district, no significant conclusions were drawn from this data.

Taylor School District Facts:

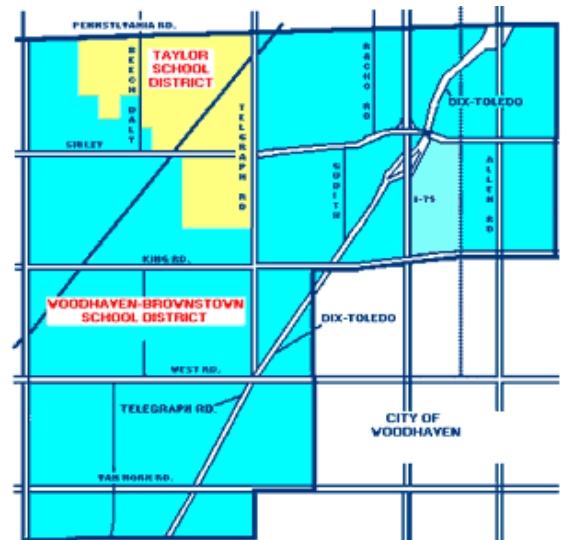
- The district enrolled 5,424 students in the 2022/2023 school year
- 2021/2022 graduation rate was 69.97%
- The district operates one high school, two middle schools, eight elementary schools, the Taylor Virtual Learning Academy, Johnson Early Childhood Center, and the Career Technology Center.

Woodhaven-Brownstown School District Facts:

- The district enrolled 5,603 students in the 2022/2023 school year
- 2021/2022 student graduation rate was 81.77%
- The district operates 6 elementary, 2 middle, and 1 high school.

Gibraltar School District Facts:

- The district enrolled 3,630 students in the 2022/2023 school year
- 2021/2022 graduation rate was 91.48%
- The district operates four elementary schools, one middle school, one high school and the Lakeshore Virtual School.



The central and southern portions of Brownstown are served by the Gibraltar School District.

The statewide four-year graduation rate for 2021/2022 was 69.97%. Given the relatively high graduation rates in the school districts serving the Township, the residents can be assured they are served by excellent schools. The Township should continue to work with the local school districts to notify them of planned and anticipated development. Their input should be sought on all residential projects so they may plan appropriately to serve new residents. The Township can also work with the school districts when locating new schools or facilities.

Police Protection

The Township is served by the Brownstown Police Department, which provides essential law enforcement services, ensuring community safety with 38 full-time sworn officers, 8 emergency communications dispatchers, and two civilian professionals. It operates through two divisions: Patrol/Operations and Support Services.

The Patrol/Operations Division, the most visible aspect of police services, includes general law enforcement duties such as responding to calls for service, traffic enforcement, and proactive patrol, and investigating misdemeanors and felonies through its detective bureau.

The Support Services Division handles Emergency Communications Dispatch, School Liaison Officers, and Accreditation Management. The dispatch center manages calls for both Brownstown Township and the City of Trenton. Two School Liaison Officers serve Woodhaven High School and Brownstown Middle School, where they assist with safety initiatives and community outreach programs like Safety Town and Cop on the Block.

The Police Department operates out of a 35,000-square-foot facility on King Road, built in 1999. It houses administration offices, a 24/7 dispatch center, records bureau, an indoor gun range, employee amenities and a 10-cell holding facility, with support by the 33rd District Court.

Community safety remains the top priority. To sustain high service levels, the Department should continue to plan for future workforce expansion and facility upgrades to accommodate the needs of our growing community while continuing to foster public engagement through community programs

Township Objective:

Investigate the capacity of public and emergency services to ensure that the level of service can be maintained or improved with projected population growth.

Fire Protection

The Brownstown Fire Department has four fire stations located across the Township. Two of these stations are staffed 24 hours per day, every day of the week with a minimum of four firefighters/paramedics at each station, and one station is staffed part-time with a minimum of two firefighters/paramedics. The Department is staffed with 30 career firefighters/paramedics. The Department's headquarters at Station Number 1



opened in January 1997 and the building houses all administrative offices and serves as the Department's training center. The fire chief, deputy chief, fire inspector, and administrative staff work from this office.

The Fire Department offers a range of services and education to the community. This includes fire suppression, fire prevention and fire investigation, advanced life support emergency medical services, hazardous materials first response, and other special operations. The Fire Department utilizes the latest technological equipment available to the fire service and they answer approximately 4,100 emergency calls for service each year. The Department is also charged with enforcing fire code standards on existing buildings. When existing buildings that do not comply with existing fire codes are altered or expanded, they must be brought up to existing fire code standards.

The Township should consider future expansions to the fire station network and the need for additional equipment based on population growth and land use patterns. Potential funding sources need to be identified, and a program developed to guide future improvements to the Fire Department. In addition, the Fire and Police Departments should continue to work together to utilize the current resources in the most efficient way possible.

Township Objectives:

- Maximize use, accessibility, and variety of existing recreational facilities and evaluate ways to increase recreational opportunities to meet the needs of all age groups.
- Identify potential locations for additional public recreation facilities.
- Reinvestigate opportunities for the purchase of significant open and natural areas.
- Identify areas for nature trails/bike paths and links to community facilities and resources.

Library Services

While not physically located in Brownstown Township, the Trenton Veterans Memorial Library serves Brownstown and other nearby communities. The library is over 21,000 square feet, giving the ability to expand its book collection to over 90,000 volumes. Patrons have access to the Internet, electronic information, increased programming for children and access to Trenton's historical documents. The Library Board is comprised of residents from all participating communities including Brownstown.

Parks and Recreation

Brownstown's Parks and Recreation Department provides a range of passive and active recreational opportunities for residents. The *Brownstown Township 2022 Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan* states that "Parks, recreation and open space are important elements of all communities and reflect positively on the quality of life for residents...In addition to the human benefits of recreation and open space, there are also important environmental benefits such as water resource protection, reduced vehicular traffic and plant and wildlife protection."

Parks



The plan notes that the Township has 24 parks on approximately 168.6 acres of public land, and that the Township also owns several undeveloped green spaces. The center of much of the Township's recreational activity is Thorn Park, located on the Township Campus next to Township Hall on Telegraph Road. The Parks and Recreation Department is also located in the Community Center.

In addition to Township-owned parks and recreational facilities, the plan also gives an overview of other local and regional parks nearby. These include school facilities, commercial/private facilities, county regional facilities, as well as state parks. Notable points of interest include the Pointe Mouillee State Game Area, the Lake Erie Metropark and part of the Southeastern Michigan International Wildlife Refuge, all located in the southern portion of the Township. These natural areas provide an opportunity for hiking and quality bird watching, especially since bald eagles are known to nest along the Lake Erie shoreline. In addition, Brownstown's Detroit River-Lake Erie shoreline is part of the southeastern Michigan International Wildlife Refuge.

Inventory of Brownstown Township Parks (2022)	
	Size in Acres
Neighborhood Parks	
Capitol Park	4.2
Chantham Park	13.7
Culpepper Park	0.4
Dawnshire Park	5.2
Fairway Villa Park	6.7
Fort-Gib Park	4.0
Hunter Park	4.0
Labo Island	0.5
Plumwoode Park	3.7
Sleepy Hollow Park	4.8
Woodland Heights Park	18
Community Parks (Township Campus)	
Arsenal Park	19.8
Thorn Park	26.22
Prairie Creek Park	18.68
Event Center	20.94
Natural Resource Areas	
Flowers Creek Open Space	15.4

Source: Brownstown Township 2022 Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan

Non-motorized modes of transportation should continue to be a priority for the Township, especially developing a comprehensive pathway system. The Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative provides a vision for a regional non-motorized pathway for the region. Plans call for a regional pathway system connecting downriver communities and Wayne County through a network of trails and greenways, as well as regional and statewide system of greenways. The *Brownstown Township 2022 Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan* notes that the Downriver Linked Greenways system consists of four primary segments:

1. Hines Drive / Rouge Gateway
2. I-275 Corridor
3. Metroparks / Flat Rock / Brownstown
4. I-75 / Detroit River

In addition to these four primary segments, the Downriver Linked Greenways will continue north through the City of Detroit, along the Detroit River, south to Monroe and Toledo, and west to Ann Arbor. This route will connect local parks to the emerging regional and statewide network of trail systems.

Additional efforts to link internal sidewalks and pathways should also be sought by the Township, especially between large population centers and important civic or commercial uses. To this end, the Township Zoning Ordinance was modified to require eight-foot-wide asphalt paths along all major roadways within

Brownstown Township. Residential development projects are required to provide sidewalks to safely link residents to main roadways, schools, and parks.

The Parks and Recreation Department should continue to monitor the availability of funds and land for future parks and open spaces. Much emphasis by residents is given to the protection of the Township's natural resources. Therefore, the Township should begin to allocate some funding toward the protection of its most significant resources. The Township should also continue to periodically update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to identify opportunities, barriers, priorities, and possible funding sources for future parks and recreation facilities.

Recreation

The Brownstown Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of recreation activities for residents of all ages. Community events include movies and concerts in the park, Brownstown Summer Fest, vintage baseball games put on by the Brownstown Volunteers Vintage Base Ball Club, and Halloween and holiday events like pet pictures with Santa.

There are many programs, clubs, events, and trips specifically for senior citizens to participate in. With much of the programming taking place at the Community Center, senior citizens can utilize Meals on Wheels or lunches in-person at the center as well as the Brownstown Senior Bus, a program administered by the Brownstown Recreation Department and funded by SMART (Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation) grants that provides valuable transportation for residents. The center is home to many weekly and monthly activities that promote travel, enrichment and social connections for senior citizens. There is also a planned renovation for the Community Center to construct a dedicated senior center, with plans to begin construction in 2025.

Community Utilities

Brownstown Township's Department of Public Works' (DPW) primary function is to provide a well-maintained water and sewer system. The DPW maintains the water and sewer system by cleaning and maintaining the sanitary and storm sewers, detention basins, repairing water main breaks when they occur, and performing the annual flushing of water mains and draining fire hydrants to make sure that they are ready in case of an emergency. The DPW is also responsible for issuing permits for new water service, installation and expansions and maintaining up-to-date maps and service line records.

Municipal water and sanitary sewer services are essential components that contribute to the overall quality of life. The condition, maintenance and growth of these types of public facilities are a crucial component in the managed and healthy growth of the Township. Overall, the water and sewer facilities in the Township are in good condition and are capable of handling future township development.

Sanitary Sewer

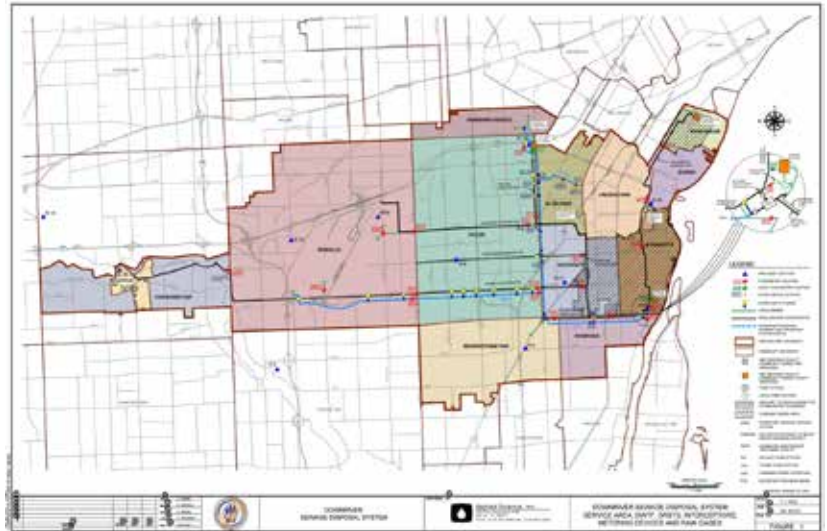
Downriver Utility Wastewater Authority (DUWA)

The Downriver Sewage Disposal System (DSDS) consists of a wastewater treatment plant located on a 34 acres site in the City of Wyandotte, along with several miles of interceptor pipe and a wet weather tunnel system, which is used to convey wastewater from 13 communities, serving approximately 350,000 people including Brownstown Township. DUWA serves an approximate ten square mile area of the Township north of West Road. In 2008, the 13 DUWA communities purchased the system from Wayne County.

The Wayne County Department of Environment's website reports the history of the system, noting its origins during World War I in the 1920's. Sewer lines were extended to the outlying communities along the Detroit River. The system was still in its infancy, with most of the raw sewage traveling through open drains into the Detroit River. The system to treat raw sewage was developed in the 1930's with an original capacity of

30 million gallons per day. Historically, the years following World War I were when most of today's suburban development occurred in the United States. Southeast Michigan was no exception, and the sewer system was expanded in the 1960's to accommodate expanding growth areas, predominantly in the Downriver area. In 1975, the system was expanded again to add a secondary treatment facility, which more than tripled the previous capacity to 100 million gallons per day.

Source: Downriver Utility Wastewater Authority



During the 1970's and 1980's, various local communities upgraded their individual systems, mostly to improve flow, provide excess flow storage, and separate sanitary sewer collection from stormwater collection. Improvements between the late 1980's and early 2000's were generally made to meet changing state and federal requirements.

As of 2021, the system was processing 60 million gallons per day on an annual average at its wastewater treatment plant, with the ability to handle 225 million gallons per day during wet weather events. It also has a 15-million-gallon wet weather storage tunnel that is used to retain excess wastewater during wet weather events.

South Huron Valley Utility Authority (SHVUA)

The South Huron Valley Utility Authority (SHVUA) is located in southern Wayne County and serves approximately 90,000 residents in the communities of Brownstown Township, Huron Township, Van Buren Township, Flat Rock, Gibraltar, South Rockwood (Monroe County), Woodhaven, and Romulus (sewage transport only). The system was originally operated by the Wayne County Department of Public Works. In 1999, the ownership and operation were transferred to the South Huron Valley Utility Authority. The Authority consists of one appointed representative from each of the seven communities with purchase capacity within the Wastewater Treatment Plant. In Brownstown Township, the system serves the entire south and central portions of the Township, as well as that part of the northern portion lying south of West Road. They own and operate the South Huron Valley Wastewater Treatment Plant, located on West Jefferson Road between Huron River and Lee Roads, in the southern portion of the Township. Sewer lines in this district run along most major roads, and serve developed and undeveloped areas, allowing for the possibility of increased development in the area.

Water

The Township's public water is supplied through the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA). All water and sewer mains extend to Township boundaries, where they connect to the GLWA transmission lines. The sewer is split between DUWA and SHVUA. To increase the system reliability, which currently provides single source feeds in some areas, future development areas will be required, where practical, to complete water main loops. This will allow for multiple feed sources in the event of a water main break. The Township Department of Public Works continues to plan for appropriate water main configurations to continually improve the system reliability.

Township Campus

The Township Campus is located at the southeast corner of Telegraph and King Roads. Situated directly on the corner is Thorn Park, home to the Community Center, a splash pad, softball and soccer fields, tennis courts, a playground, as well as a shelter with changing rooms and concessions. Township Hall and the Department of Public Works are south of the park, as is the Brownstown Animal Shelter and Dog Park. Further east down King Road is the Brownstown Event Center, which has an outdoor event space, community gardens, and paved walking trails. The Brownstown Police Department is located east of the Event Center.



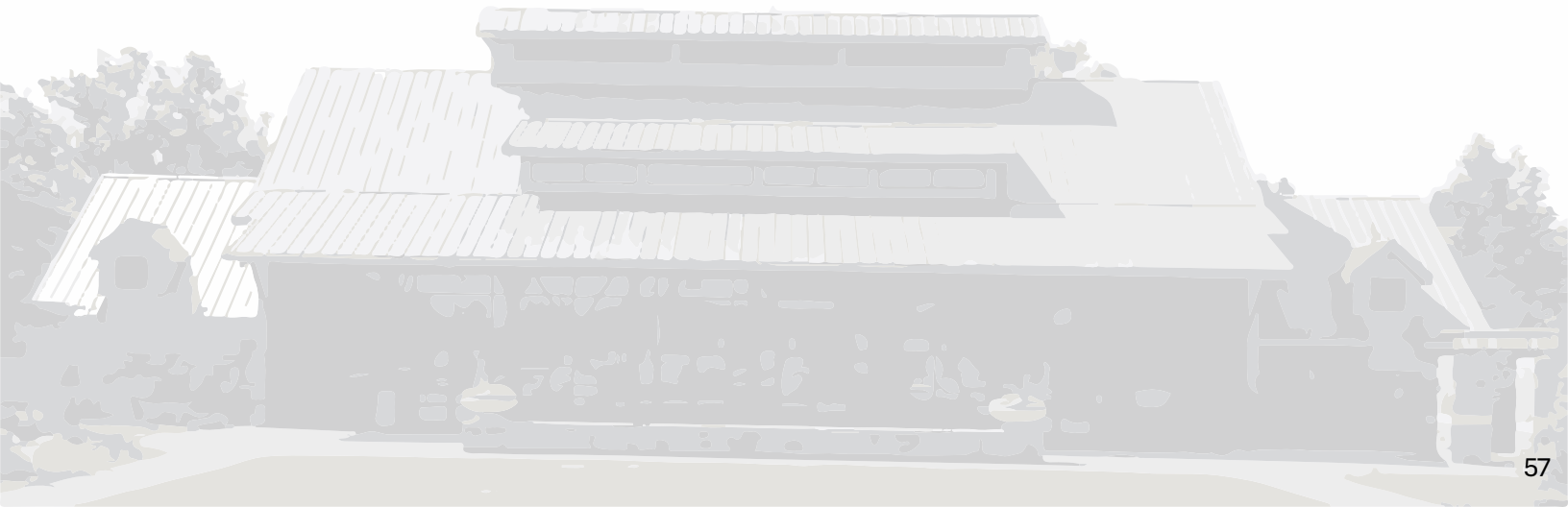
Electricity /Telecommunications

Affiliates of DTE Energy and Consumers Energy are the predominant suppliers of electrical and gas services, respectively. As new development occurs, or as the need for maintenance or upgrading calls for, any new electrical lines should be buried underground. This allows for the lines to be out of sight and helps protect views by minimizing electrical poles and wires.

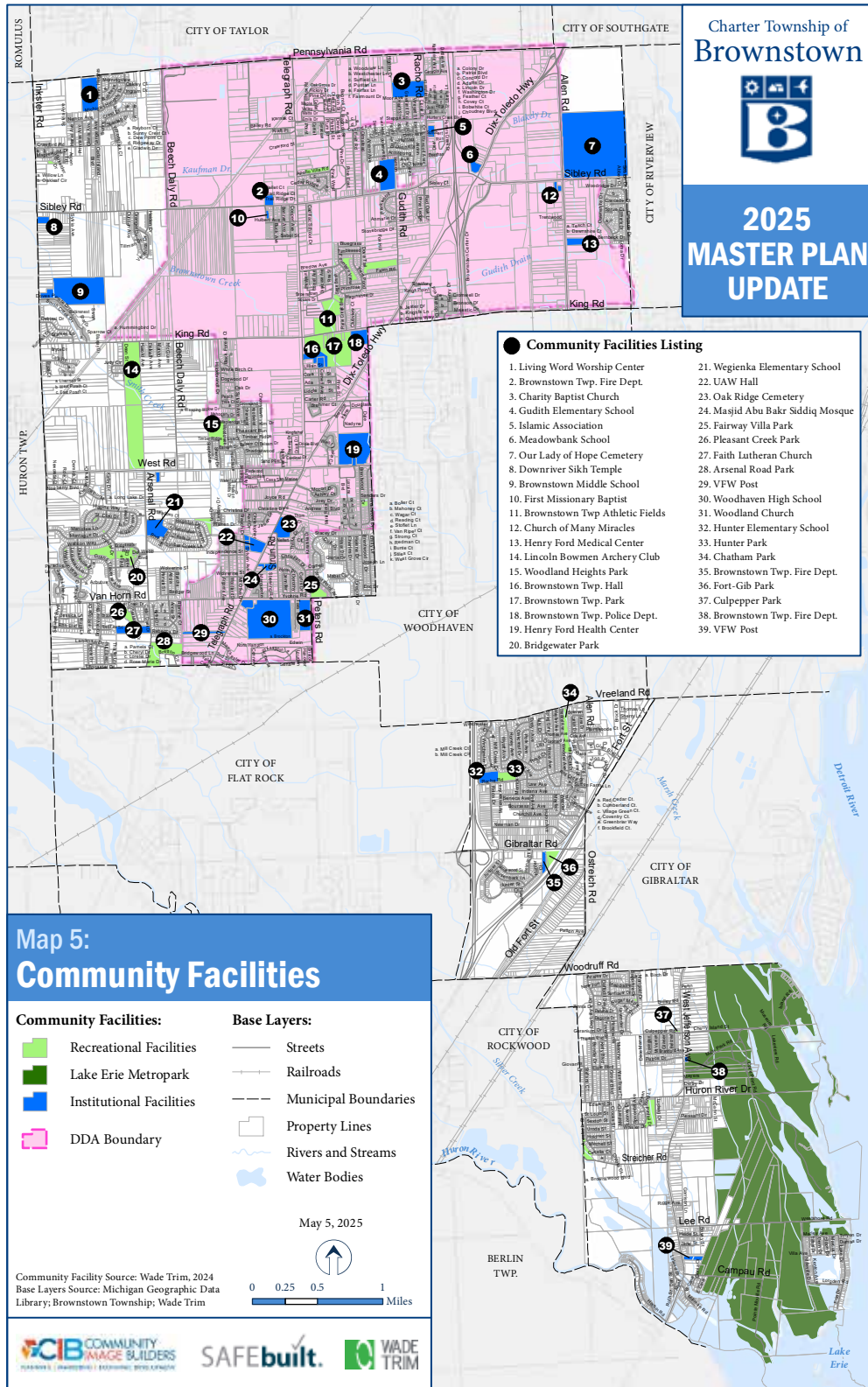
Where reasonable, the Township should encourage the construction of new broadband and wireless telecommunication facilities. These efforts should be focused in areas not currently served and should not encourage development of towers within close proximity to minimize the visual impact of towers. In addition, collocation of services and providers should be required before new tower structures are approved.

Downtown Development Authority

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) District and Plan were established by the Township Board in 1993. A nine-member DDA is appointed by the Board to implement the plan and oversee the associated improvements. Funding for DDA projects is captured from tax increases within the District since the base year of 1992. The stated purpose of the DDA Plan is “to prevent deterioration, promote economic growth, improve utilities and public facilities, and create financing to enhance and further the purposes stated.”



Map 5: Community Facilities

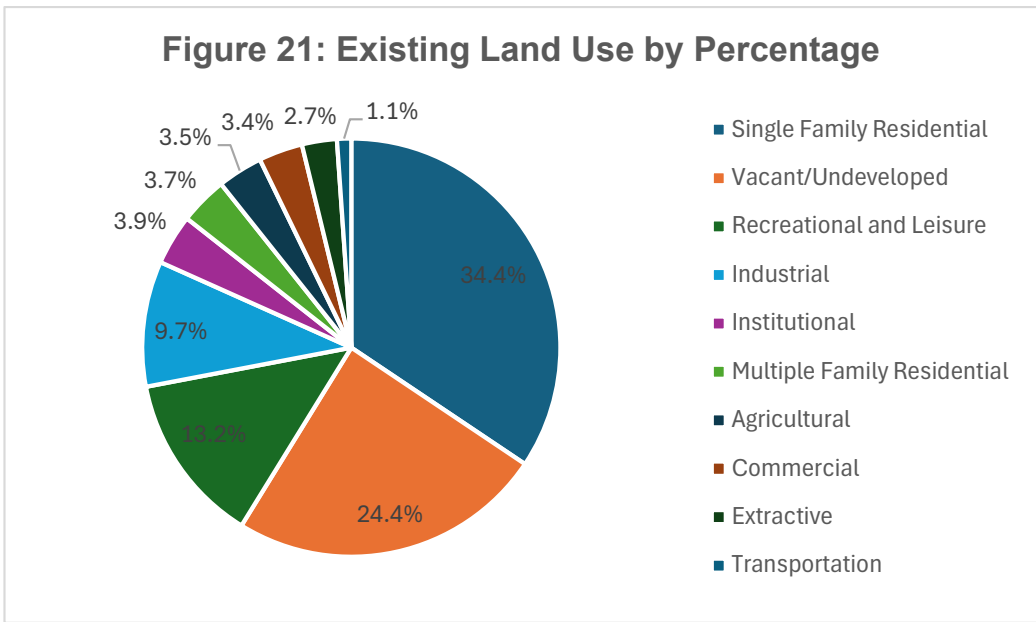


Chapter 9: Existing Land Use

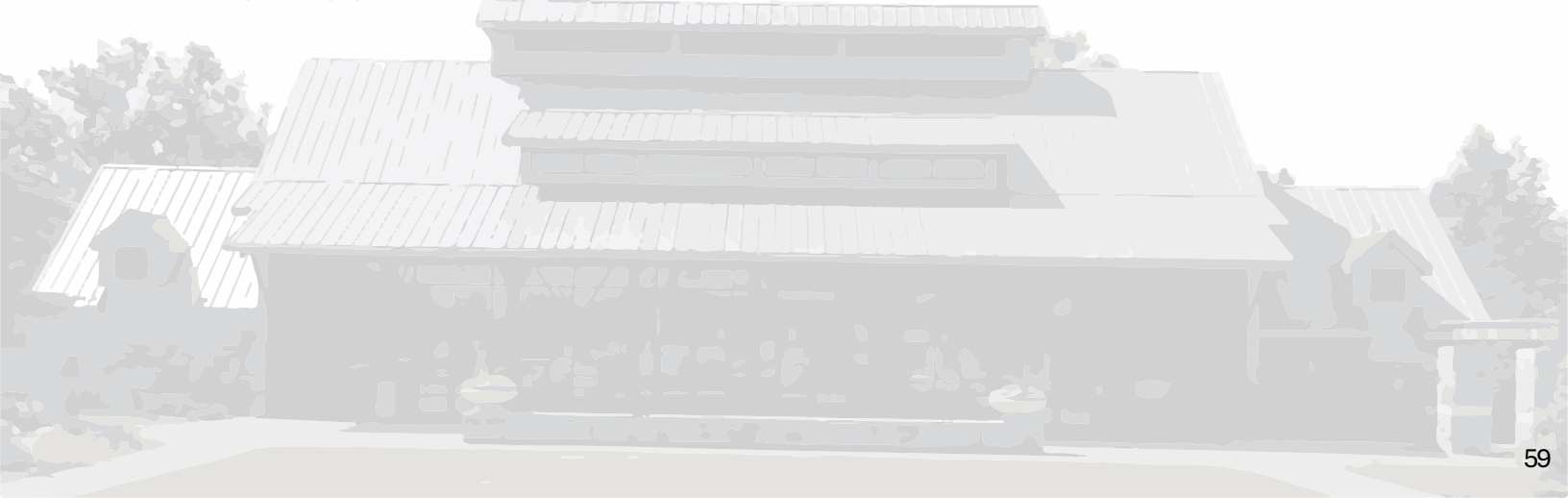
Identifying and examining existing land use patterns is a crucial step in preparing a master plan. Documenting the Township’s historic land uses and current patterns and trends, helps the community focus on areas with potential for future growth and ensure that sound decisions are made moving forward. Land use patterns develop according to geographic location, land use and zoning policies, environmental, economic, social, and cultural influences. The location of a building, the routing of a street or highway, construction of sanitary sewers and many other factors affect and influence the shape of existing and future land use patterns.

During the planning process, it is important to quantify existing land use categories and examine how land use has changed over time. This chapter reviews specifically at where development is occurring, and what type of development is happening in the Township. Existing land uses are depicted on the Existing Land Use Map and Figure 21.

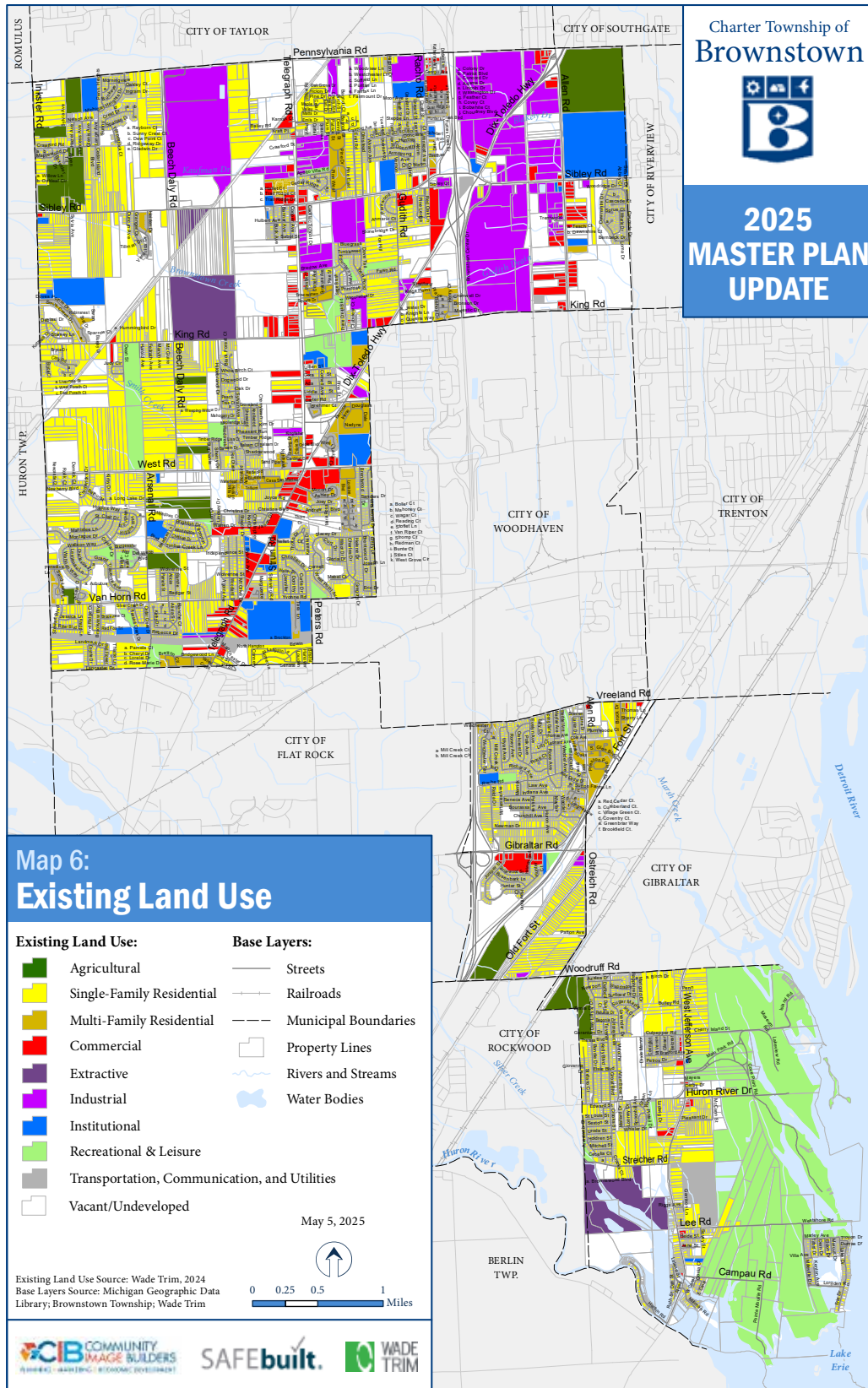
The figure on this page illustrates the percentage of land dedicated to each use category. Just as in the previous Master Plan, the largest category of land use is single-family residential, which currently accounts for 34% of land in the Township. The second largest category is vacant/undeveloped land which comprises almost one quarter of land in the Township. The third largest category is recreational and leisure uses, which makes up 13% of land in the Township. Finally, the fourth largest category is industrial uses, which account for nearly 10% of land in the Township.



Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, Wade Trim



Map 6: Existing Land Use



Existing Land Use Categories

Single-Family Residential

Single family residential uses account for nearly thirty-five percent of the Township.

Single-family residential is the single largest land use in Brownstown Township. This is typical of most townships. Single-family housing accounts for 34.4% (384 acres) of land. Housing in Brownstown Township includes a variety of types, values, and densities. Most homes in Brownstown Township were constructed in the 1970's, with another surge in the years between 1980 and 2010. Nearly 20% of the housing stock in the Township was built between 1980 and 1999 and an additional 26.5% was built between 2000 and 2009.

As detailed in Chapter 3, home values in Brownstown Township are among the highest of nearby communities. Given the substantial amount of vacant/undeveloped land, Brownstown has an opportunity to continue providing new housing opportunities to benefit from housing trends, which have changed in recent years. Existing land use patterns suggest that single-family residential has been traditionally preferred by residents in Brownstown Township.

Feedback gathered during public involvement throughout the master plan process indicates that the type of single-family homes that both young adults and senior citizens are looking for has started to change. Young adults indicated that they found housing in the Township cost-prohibitive, while many senior citizens desired smaller, ranch-style homes with low maintenance yards that would allow them to age in place. Providing a wider range of types of single-family homes will help to meet the needs of both groups. For example, smaller housing units can be constructed in the Town Center area. This would introduce entry-level pricing that is more affordable and more manageable than single-family houses on large lots.

Multiple-Family Residential

Multiple-family residential currently comprises 3.7% (473 acres) of the total land use of Brownstown Township. This category includes buildings that contain more than two dwelling units including converted homes, apartment buildings, townhouses, and senior housing. Multiple-family developments are scattered throughout the Township and are predominantly apartment buildings. Just like with single-family residential, feedback gathered during the planning process suggests that encouraging a range of multiple-family residential options would encourage population retention and growth, particularly among young adults and seniors. For example, more affordable multiple-family options for seniors, who may be on a fixed income, include co-ops or developments for adults 55 years of age or older. A focus group with senior citizens revealed a need for housing that would fill the gap for those who do not want or cannot manage a single-family home but are not ready to move to an independent or assisted living facility. Another example of how housing needs could be met are townhouses and stacked flats which could be constructed in the Town Center area, appealing to both young adults and senior citizens.

Commercial and Office

Commercial land, including office, makes up 3.4% (427 acres) of the land in the Township. Commercial development in the north section of Brownstown follows the high-traffic corridors of I-75, Dix-Toledo Highway, and Telegraph Road. Though generally located in these areas, commercial uses are somewhat dispersed and do not constitute a central commercial core or traditional downtown. The Town Center would offer a unifying center of the Township, while also providing additional residential, dining, and shopping options. A focus group for young professionals found that they would like to see more entertainment options, which should be considered for future commercial development.

Due to the Township's desirable access to several commercial corridors, there are many transportation-related businesses in the area. A smaller community and medical and office-related uses has formed along Allen Road, creating an office corridor on the east side of Allen between Sibley and King Roads. In the middle section of the Township, there is a regional commercial area located on the south side of Gibraltar Road between I-75 and Fort Street (M-85) with a grocery store, other retail and services, as well as gas stations and restaurants. There is a minimal amount of commercial in the southern portion of the Township.



Industrial

Industrial uses account for 9.7% (1,236 acres) of land in Brownstown Township. These properties provide important employment opportunities and a tax base to support improvements to capital facilities and municipal services. One example is the Ford Parts Re-Distribution Center, located in the northern portion of the Township, off Pennsylvania Road. Another is a large facility located on the east side of I-75, south of Sibley Road where there are several warehouse facilities. This and other large-scale industrial uses dominate the township's industrial base. However, several distribution, manufacturing, and related offices are also located throughout the Township.

Institutional

This land use category includes township, state and federal buildings, schools, churches, and other public or quasi-public buildings and accounts for 3.9% (497 acres) of land in the Township. The Township has several facilities at the southwest corner of Telegraph and King Roads, where the Township Hall, Community Center, and Animal Shelter are located around the 26-acre Thorn Park. The Brownstown Event Center and Police Department are located further east on King Road. Brownstown has a full-time fire department with four fire stations throughout the Township. Brownstown is served by three school districts: Taylor School District, Woodhaven-Brownstown School District, and Gibraltar School District, and there are many schools are located throughout the Township.


Recreation and Leisure

Private open spaces and recreational opportunities in Brownstown are varied in type and location, making up 13.2% (1,675 acres) of land in the Township. Public spaces owned by Brownstown Township include 24 parks on approximately 168 acres of public land. Other neighborhood parks provide recreational opportunities in the central and northern portions. The *Brownstown Township 2022 Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan* notes that the Township also owns several undeveloped green spaces.

Water-related recreation is a focus of the southern portion of the Township, where the Lake Erie Metropark and associated boat launches and parks are located. Lake Erie Metropark is home to trails for hiking and biking, a golf course and miles of shoreline along Lake Erie.

Vacant/Undeveloped

Approximately 24.4% (3,110 acres) in the Township can be categorized as vacant/undeveloped. There are a number of vacant parcels located throughout the Township, with the largest tracts predominantly located in the northern portion of the Township. Much of this land is wooded, environmentally sensitive, or in agricultural production, yet they still present opportunities for future development except for protected open space/nature areas.



Chapter 10: Individual Area Assessment

During the development of this plan, the master plan review committee discussed various areas of the Township that needed further discussion to determine the desired future for them. It is important to include this discussion in the plan so future residents and business owners know the rationale behind the visions and goals established. As the discussion progressed, it became clear that more general topics should also be discussed.

Several areas of the Township were identified for discussion with the review committee. While many components contribute to the character of Brownstown, the following have been identified as key factors, either in general or for a specific portion of the Township. A brief description of each topic or location is included in this discussion, followed by some suggested concepts or tools that can be used to further the goals of this plan for each specific area. Since Brownstown Township maintains three distinct areas: a northern, a central, and a southern portion, and since each area is influenced by different land use patterns, this chapter discusses all the areas or topics of interest as they relate to each other.

Township-Wide

Character

A primary concern of residents is to establish a more significant unifying character for the community. Brownstown Township is faced with a unique condition where the segmentation of the land areas into three distinct areas could require a different vision and character for each. Use of streetscape elements and design guidelines can help accomplish desired character for each part of the community, as well as provide a unifying thread between the three. Development of a marketing plan will also help residents and those outside the community understand the assets of the Township. This marketing effort can be built upon the results of the housing and retail analysis completed by Land Use|USA. These reports look at the housing and retail demand potential of the community and can be used to build a marketing strategy around Brownstown as a single entity.

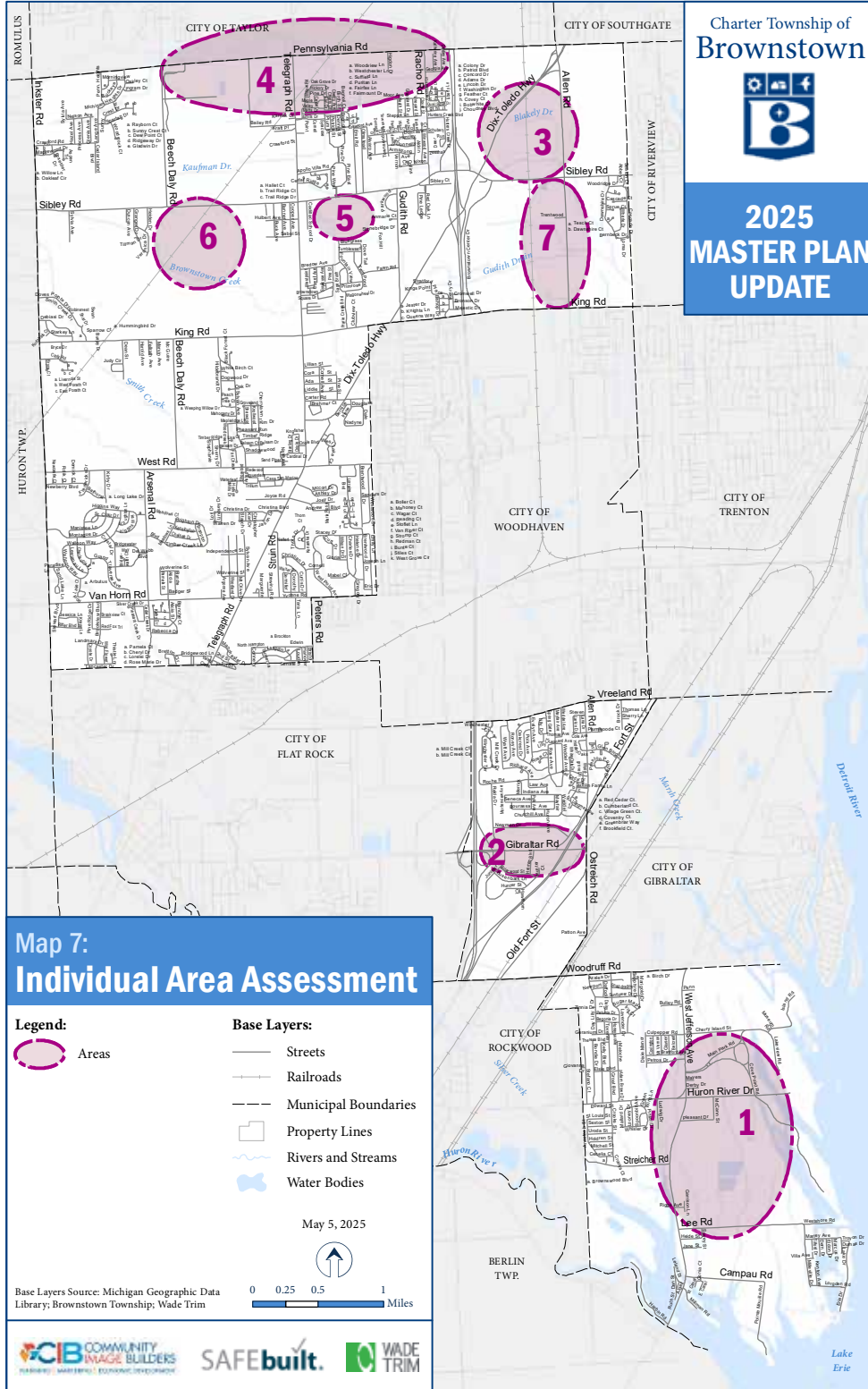
Identity

The perception of a community is determined in large part by first impressions and the appearance of entryways. The same can be said for major corridors that are travelled heavily on a daily basis, like Telegraph Road. Coordinated entry signs and associated landscaping should be implemented. The Township can also work with abutting communities to ensure that appropriate land uses and high-quality development are located near or adjacent to the entryways to Brownstown.

Transition Areas for Land Use

It is important to establish appropriate transitional land uses to prevent conflict and keep commercial and industrial uses from encroaching into established residential areas. Primary areas include the commercial and single-family residential areas along Gibraltar Road and the corridors of Telegraph and Sibley Roads. A standard argument is that the road is too busy for residential land uses, but throughout Michigan there are many examples of high-quality residential areas that front busy roads. By maintaining distinct separation between the commercial or industrial and single-family residential areas, deterioration of these strong neighborhoods can be avoided. Use of transitional zoning districts, overlay zones that allow more flexible use of existing residential structures, high-quality buffering of noise and other impacts, and design guidelines are all ways that Brownstown can either require or encourage a more compatible use of land.

Map 7: Individual Area Assessments



Southern Section

The southern portion of the Township is illustrated in Map 7 and shows the general area north of South Huron River Road and east of I-75.

Areas of Interest:

1. Lake Erie Metropark and surrounding neighborhoods

The existence of Lake Erie Metropark, along the shore of Lake Erie in the southern portion of the Township, creates an opportunity for reinvestment into unique neighborhoods and commercial areas. The area contains a mix of single-family residential zoning districts, with some commercial along W Jefferson Avenue, and does not project a clear vision for its future. Development trends in the communities to the west are influencing this section of Brownstown. Goals for this area should include emphasizing the waterfront aspect to help create a sense of place and maintain an emphasis on recreation.

Commercial development should focus on supporting the maritime uses and activities to foster the area character.



Topics of Interest:

Commercial Character

There currently exists scattered commercial development along West Jefferson Avenue. This pattern of development is not conducive to a vibrant commercial area. It is important for businesses within one market area to portray a unified character, so people feel a sense of place when shopping, eating, or recreating. To help revitalize the commercial areas, future commercial development should be encouraged in areas adjacent to or within the existing commercial sites, with the possibility of concentrating commercial at the intersections of W. Jefferson with Huron River Dr. and Lee Rd. Use of infill development principles, described below, and efforts to establish a specific character for the area, are two tools that can help achieve these goals. Since the southern portion of Brownstown is predominantly residential, care must be taken to ensure compatibility between land uses, especially near West Jefferson Avenue, where neighborhood commercial uses are planned. There is a general lack of connectivity between neighborhoods and major commercial areas, especially for pedestrians, which reinforces the need for a well-integrated neighborhood shopping area. Use of berms, fences, or transitional zoning can help buffer residential uses from emerging commercial areas.



Residential Redevelopment

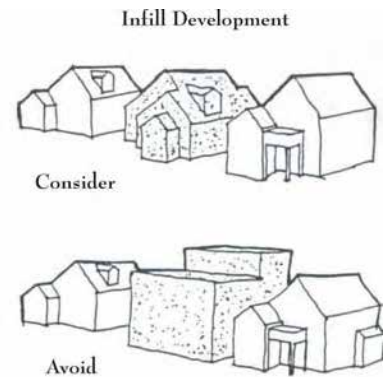
As with other waterfront residential areas, the neighborhoods in this area of Brownstown are experiencing reinvestment and redevelopment in some of its waterfront residential areas, as described above. In some instances, redevelopment of waterfront residential lots is fragmenting the existing character of the neighborhoods and reducing valuable views of the



water. Residents should be encouraged to reinvest in their existing homes, rather than reconstruct them, as a way to continue and build upon the emerging character of the area. Architectural and development guidelines could be established so new homes will blend into the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood. This is particularly important along the waterfront, where newer homes are typically larger and more modern-looking than the more established homes. New zoning regulations could help minimize the blocking of water views, and continued enforcement of existing setbacks, height and lot coverage requirements can help prevent overdevelopment of waterfront lots.

Infill Development

Infill development is intended to encourage development within existing developed areas. While infill is typically associated with commercial or downtown areas, it can be used in residential areas as well. To accomplish this, design guidelines and zoning standards must be established for new building construction and renovation of existing structures. These standards can address issues such as scale, proportion, window openings, exterior materials, etc. and respect the architecture of surrounding buildings. Infill construction can reduce the negative impacts on property values by reducing the probability that sharply contrasting development of neighboring properties will affect property sales. Infill development can also enhance the vitality of a commercial area by increasing the commercial mass while increasing the likelihood that a visitor will patronize multiple businesses in one trip. In residential areas, the most important benefit of infill regulations is to maintain the neighborhood character so new residences will not stand out amongst the older homes on the block.



Central Section

The central portion of the Township is illustrated in Map 7 and shows the general area east of I-75 between Vreeland and Woodruff Roads.

Areas of Interest:

2. Gibraltar Road corridor (between I-75 and Fort Street)

This stretch of Gibraltar Road encounters heavy traffic volumes during peak travel times, given its immediate proximity to I-75 and the commercial area on the south side of the road. While heavy traffic is expected in areas like this, the existence of a strong residential neighborhoods on the north and south sides of Gibraltar Road creates a potential land use conflict. These neighborhoods are two of the larger cohesive residential areas in Brownstown and have evolved into quaint neighborhoods with mature street trees and a highly involved citizenry. Heavy traffic in the area causes hazardous driving conditions, particularly for residents that must drive this corridor on a regular basis. Transitional techniques could be established to help buffer the impacts of Gibraltar Road from the residential neighborhoods. Roadway improvements, traffic lights, or access management strategies could help reduce the number of driveways and access points and minimize capacity issues. What is clear is the need for creative, cooperative planning efforts that involve both the residential and business communities. The possibility of a Planned Unit Development approach is described in greater detail under the Transitions/Buffers section below.



Topics of Interest:

Transitions/Buffers

- Residential neighborhoods located in growing areas are susceptible to increased traffic and encroachment of intense uses into the area. Buffer zones are necessary in these cases to help mitigate the impacts upon lower intensity uses. Typically, buffers are successful in mitigating impacts such as noise and light, but do not adequately address larger issues like traffic or safety. Ample buffer zones should be required for non-residential uses that directly abut residential uses.
- Transitional zones can help address larger issues in areas experiencing significant change. Transitions are intended to gradually evolve the change in uses from one to another over time. The central portion of Brownstown contains residential uses that are experiencing negative impacts from non-residential growth that surrounds them. This area is particularly vulnerable to larger influences since much of the traffic that travels along Gibraltar Road is generated outside of the Township's boundaries. It is important to establish positive working relationships with neighboring communities to ensure a compatible land use pattern along this corridor, including the use of transitional zones where existing uses are inappropriate at the jurisdictional boundaries.



Access Management

Control of the location and spacing of driveways or access points along the main roads will improve safety and help preserve the roadway's ability to carry traffic. Access management guidelines have two functions, to protect the public investment in the roadway by minimizing congestion and crash potential and to provide property owners with reasonable access to property. The goal of access management is to provide standards that will facilitate traffic operations and improve public safety along major roads. Access management looks at the following factors:

- **Number of Access Points:** Because the number of driveways allowed along major roads will affect traffic flow, ease of driving, and crash potential, the number of driveways on a major road should be limited. Alternative access should be provided from side streets wherever possible and cross-access connections made, where possible.
- **Sight Distance:** Proper sight distance needs to be provided at driveways and intersections to ensure a vehicle can safely enter or exit the traffic stream.
- **Driveway Spacing:** Driveways need to be adequately spaced from intersections and other driveways to assist in the reduction of turning movement conflicts.

Northern Section

The northern portion of the Township is illustrated in Map 6 and shows the general area north of Van Horn Road and west of Inkster Road.

Areas of Interest:

3. Old Chemical plant site (west side of Allen Road, north of Sibley Road)

This brownfield site was once home to a chemical plant and contains a large tract of wetlands associated with the Blakely Drain. Redevelopment options for the site are restricted due to site contamination as well as other environmental regulation restrictions. The property was rezoned from I-1, Light Industrial, to I-2, General Industrial district, given the environmental conditions which would likely make it difficult to be redeveloped for commercial or light industrial use. Given the size and nature of this site, the western corridor along Allen Road (between Pennsylvania and Sibley) has been identified as a potential area for heavier industrial uses for future use.



4. Pennsylvania Road Corridor (between Beech Daly and Allen Road)

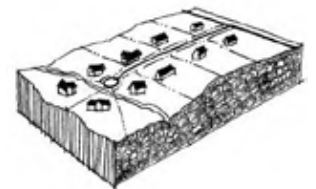
This stretch of Pennsylvania Road is anchored by the Ford Parts Re-Distribution Plant on the west end. The conflicting zoning designations in the area, including I-RT Industrial-Research Technology, I-1 Light Industrial, R-3 One-Family Residential, MHP Mobile Home Park and B-2 Community Business, have caused some land use conflicts. Environmental conditions could restrict development options, as a large portion of land contains wetlands and/or floodplain areas. Future planning for this area should involve the neighboring community to the north and could consider the land uses on the north side of Pennsylvania Road to avoid further land use conflicts.

5. South of Sibley Road east of Telegraph

Much of the area on the south side of Sibley Road east of Telegraph is currently zoned both General Business (where fronting the road) and Light Industrial (towards the rear of the property). This is of particular interest as these commercial and industrial zoned parcels abut growing residential areas, creating opportunity for land use conflicts. While many of these parcels have been vacant or minimally used in line with the zoning designation, industrial uses are not the ideal use of land adjacent to residential areas. This area has been designated in the future land use as predominantly intermediate lot residential, maintaining some of the commercial along Telegraph. This area could be considered for a mixed-use development, consisting of light-intensity commercial uses along the Sibley and Telegraph Road frontages, with residential behind.

6. Vacant area south of Sibley Road and east of Beech Daly

Many of the properties in the area south of Sibley, from Beech Daly extending east almost to Telegraph, are part of the Greater Sibley Lakeplain Prairie Complex, described in the Environmental conditions section of this plan. This ecosystem is significant on a local, state, and federal level as being highly endangered or threatened. This site is predominantly wooded, contains several wetlands, and is transected by an arm of Brownstown Creek. The area has some cleared land on Sibley Road and the entire area includes land currently zoned for commercial, light industrial, and residential uses. Due to the environmental sensitivity of this area, it has been designated on the future land use map primarily for residential uses. The majority of development in the area should be concentrated using



Example of Traditional and Cluster Development

cluster development options. What remains should be carefully developed, if at all, into a planned unit development (PUD), or preserved in its entirety through land acquisition, or other conservation measures.

7. Allen Road Corridor (between Sibley Road and King Road)

Allen Road, in this portion of Brownstown, is mostly commercial or light industrial in nature. The west side is zoned General Business and has over time developed into a commercial area of heavy intensity. The east side has developed into medical offices and other less intense commercial uses. The Township wishes to encourage more of the high-quality businesses that have located there recently. Within the future land use plan, the east side of Allen Road has been designated for office use so future development will be compatible with what currently exists on the east side. The west side is designated as general commercial, focused on future development that is compatible with the area and serves as a transition between the office uses to the east and the higher intensity industrial uses to the west.



Topics of Interest:

Compatibility and Concentration of Land Use

Massing of commercial, industrial and office uses can help create a local economy of businesses that work collectively to attract patrons. The northern portion of Brownstown currently sees a haphazard land use pattern where many of these uses are intermingled. This creates a disjointed vision for the area and can produce conflicts between incompatible uses. The goal of this Plan is to concentrate industrial uses, which are typically not compatible with other uses, into the northern area of the Township where the roads and utilities can support the heavy truck traffic and intensity of use. Commercial uses should be concentrated around the proposed Town Center at Telegraph and King Roads, with neighborhood commercial “nodes” strategically placed to serve area residents. In general, residential uses are planned in areas of environmental sensitivity, where use of cluster and open space development options can be used to protect them.

Character

Collaborative streetscape and building design can help unify main corridors into a character unique to the area. Commercial developments along Telegraph should be encouraged to include landscaping, unified signage, and architectural enhancements to help establish the desired character. In many areas, access management principles could be applied to help traffic flow, which in turn will improve the perceived quality of the roadway. Typically, a community strives for a single character; however, in the case of Brownstown Township, each segment can maintain its own identity. In this northern portion, it is recommended that all land uses reflect a similar architectural quality to create an attractive character. Another effort would be to cluster similar uses together, like retail commercial, and keep incompatible uses, like heavy automotive, in separate areas.

Chapter 11: Town Center

Brownstown Town Center

An area has been designated for the creation of the Brownstown Township Town Center, where Telegraph Road, West Road and Dix-Toledo Highway converge. This area is planned to become a mixed-use town center with retail businesses, restaurants, entertainment venues, neighborhood service establishments, and traditional residential neighborhoods. During the planning process, both residential and retail market demand studies were prepared by Land Use|USA, with the following recommendations:



Retail Development

The above cited analysis revealed demand for approximately 135,000 square feet of retail space in the Town Center, excluding apparel, clothing, and related boutique shops. With the planning and design of the New Town Center, it is critical to include mid-sized anchors, such as a grocery store, performing arts center, culinary arts center with commercial kitchen, and/or family arcade and fun center. To avoid cannibalizing existing grocery stores, the new market will need



to focus on a unique merchandise mix, such as local produce, organic food, vitamins and supplements, ethnic imports, and/or specialty categories like meat/cheese/deli, bakery, florist, and wine.

There also is a significant opportunity for new restaurants that offer unique and entertaining dining experiences. Examples include a Sushi Restaurant, Hibachi Grill, Build-Your-Own Burgers, outdoor Pig Roast, and entertainment combined with dining (Bocce, Fowling, Arcade, etc.). In general, American consumers seem to have an insatiable appetite for restaurants, especially when combined with some element of family entertainment. A cluster of three or more quality eateries can collectively serve as an anchor for the New Town Center.



The Study also found that based on the Population and Per Capita Income of all residents living within Brownstown Township, it should be able to sustain at least 600 retail merchants, businesses, restaurants, and other types of revenue-generating entertainment and recreational venues. Based on the detailed inventory assembled during this Retail Market Study, existing retailers and businesses represent less than half of that potential. This implies significant retail leakage on the order of -50% or more. It also indicates a market opportunity to intercept that leakage with the development of new retail projects, including the envisioned New Town Center.

Office Development

Although the Retail Study did not specifically address the office market, there is a general understanding that some small-scale office development may be attracted to the Town Center. This can take the form of upper floor suites or even stand alone, multi-story office buildings. Following the impacts of the pandemic, there is less demand for large-scale office space as people either work from home or are in a hybrid situation. There is still demand for smaller offices, especially with a retail or professional orientation like financial services, real estate, insurance, attorneys, etc. Co-workspace is also a viable option as at-home workers look for a change in environment, especially for in-person meetings. This allows for the use of office space and conference rooms when needed, typically at an hourly or daily rate.

Residential Development



Residential uses will provide a variety of housing types including upper floor lofts above commercial uses, traditional townhouses, brownstones, stacked flats, and cottage-style and traditional single-family homes on smaller lots. The Residential Demand Market Study prepared by Land Use|USA projects demand for approximately 305 small cottage-style houses and attached single-family units per year through 2030. During this same period there is potential for approximately 135 other new residential housing types mentioned above to be captured by the Town Center development.

Town Center Design Process

As indicated in the Public Involvement Chapter, a series of public workshops and focus group meetings were held. Those sessions resulted in a number of observations and comments that directly related to the need for an attractive Town Center that would serve as the hub of the Township. Some of the key parameters identified include:

- The need to attract young people to the Township.
- Improving the supply of housing for empty nesters, including moderately priced cottage style units on one level.
- Offering a variety of housing types to complement the large lot, single-family units that are plentiful in Brownstown Township.
- The need for amenities such as public spaces, specialty shopping and retail, restaurants with patios, that are in walkable areas.

The Township also conducted a Town Center design workshop utilizing the talents of planners and designers from Smith Group and CIB Planning. The goal was to create a revised design for the Town Center area that built upon previous efforts, while taking into consideration comments from the public, relevant market information from Land Use|USA, an updated evaluation of site constraints, and current trends in downtown development. A high priority during visioning sessions and consultation with Land Use|USA, the Town Center area has the potential to become an activity center for the community that will provide a defined sense of place for the Township. Some of the takeaways from that session include:



- Designing a north-south street through the Town Center that connects West Road to King Road, providing residents and visitors alternate exits beside Telegraph Road. This road will also give residents and visitors a less “highway-like” road travelling north and south in that area.

- Creating a public space or building where the Town Center street from Telegraph intersects with the proposed north-south street.
- The mixed-use buildings must also be located along Telegraph Road, as shown on the design plan, leading into the entry to the Town Center.
- Additional suburban-style retail could be allowed northward along the Telegraph Road frontage, from the Town Center mixed-use buildings north to King Road. They should, however, have buildings close to the road with parking to the rear. They should also be buildings with limited depth and provide transition to the residential properties to the rear.
- Office space should be encouraged, but only on upper floors or in stand-alone office buildings.
- Houses should back up to the existing homes to the west, providing a proper transition from the mixed-use development.
- Townhouses should face the public green space area and be located in close proximity to the mixed-use development.

Town Center Plan

The plan shown here meets the above standards and also presents design creativity in a fashion that is also implementable by developers. Although the central mixed-use area is shown in detail, much of the residential area to the north is designated for low- and medium-density residential use. It is difficult to know what the development potential for these areas is until more site-specific evaluation is completed. Wetlands and other constraining natural features may be present and while residential development might be constrained, potentially in a cluster-style layout, additional recreational uses may be feasible.

Likewise, it is difficult to know how stormwater management will be addressed until a more site-specific evaluation is conducted. It is anticipated that stormwater will be handled through area detention basins that will service multiple developments versus one for each property. This approach is common for traditional developments like the Town Center and maximizes the potential for the use of land.

Once the development and layout of the town center is solidified, it sets the stage for construction. This plan needs to be adopted and tied to the TC, Town Center District, possibly with some zoning amendments. It must be a requirement that the plan be generally followed, taking into consideration site constraints. One of the keys to starting development of the Town Center is overcoming the high cost of project infrastructure, like new roads and sewer/water lines throughout the development. The Implementation Chapter of this plan will identify strategies for closing the financial gap and seeing this project through to construction.



Town Center Plan



Town Center Zoning

The current zoning designation of TC, Town Center is specifically designed to create a traditional downtown development in this area and not elsewhere in the Township. The intent is for this area to be transformed into a pedestrian-friendly, walkable area with sidewalks connecting all uses and community parks and plazas integrated into the fabric of the Town Center area. The TC, Town Center District does allow the Planning Commission to review dimensional waivers instead of the need to request variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). This gives the Commission the ability to work with developers to achieve higher-quality development while still meeting the intent and vision for the Town Center.



The Town Center must also integrate development along Telegraph Road into the plans to ensure proper transition from an active four lane road into a traditional, pedestrian-friendly development. Consideration should be given to removing some of the Telegraph Road frontage property that is currently zoned TC, Town Center, and creating a transitional zoning district or even a design overlay. Many of the design requirements for the TC District do not apply to highway and suburban-style development, which discourages new investment in that style of development. A transitional overlay district could provide for buildings close to the road, like Town Center buildings, but still be suburban in style with parking to the side and rear.

As the Town Center Concept Plan was created, there was a recognition that many properties along Telegraph Road are not currently owned by the Brownstown DDA and are even occupied by existing buildings and businesses. The overlay zoning would allow these businesses to continue to operate, recognizing that over time they would be acquired and redeveloped per the Town Center Plan. Until that time, the Township should view them as “placeholders” and encourage maintenance and upkeep, until such time that the market supports redevelopment to a higher and better use.





Chapter 12: Future Land Use

The future land use plan establishes land use categories, illustrates the location of planned land uses, and provides strategies for implementation. This section also provides a rationale for the placement of preferred land uses and the intensity of those uses. The plan serves as the primary policy guide for future land use decisions, investment in public improvements, and coordination of public improvements and private development.

The plan presents an idealized future indicated by the growth patterns in the Township. The plan, however, also provides the practical guidance local decision-makers need regarding today's issues. It is the intent of the plan to assist in the orderly development of the Township, assist the community in maintaining and enhancing its pleasant natural environment and spark a vision for the future.

Future Land Use Considerations:

1. Land Use Relationships & Compatibility
2. Existing Uses
3. Impacts to Residential Neighborhoods
4. Land Use Patterns at Township Boundaries
5. Enhancement of Community Character

Factors Considered

Brownstown Township has a number of opportunities and limitations which will influence the future development of the Township. Positive influences on growth include excellent access from I-75, M-85, and Telegraph Road, as well as abundant employment opportunities and availability of land. While not a dominant visual aspect of the Township, the location of the Lake Erie Metropark along the shores of Lake Erie in the southern portion of the Township is a tremendous attribute which can attract high quality development. Development opportunities are most prevalent in the northern portion of the Township, where the community may benefit from high-quality, well-planned residential and town center commercial/mixed-use development. Additional industrial opportunities will continue, as the economy of Brownstown has established a vibrant and active industrial community. Limitations on growth in the Township include the somewhat scattered existing development patterns and high traffic volumes. While high traffic volumes are a draw for commercial uses, it can discourage residential development. The scattered development patterns do not present any strong character or unified vision for Brownstown, which will partially be addressed by the proposed Town Center.

It is important to consider a number of factors when locating future land uses. The future land use plan should guide the future development pattern of the community into a logical arrangement which maintains the character of the community, protects the environment and ensures adequate services and land for all types of land uses.

These factors include:

- Consistency with existing land use patterns.
- Diminishing incompatible land use relationships.
- Preservation of natural features and consideration of the effects of development on the environment.
- Maintenance of aesthetic qualities that contribute to the community character and quality of life.
- Positive incorporation of natural amenities.
- Existing planning policies and zoning regulations.
- Availability of infrastructure including utilities, roads, and community facilities.
- Market conditions for various land uses.
- The goals and objectives of the plan that express the community character desired by residents.

Future Land Use Categories

When determining future land use areas, several factors were considered, including the desires of area residents and business owners, relationships between residential and non-residential (commercial, industrial, institutional, etc.) uses, compatibility of uses with transportation facilities, consideration of existing uses and development patterns at the Township borders, and a desire to enhance the character and visual quality of the Township.

The future land use plan can generally be described as having a few distinctive components that when viewed together form an overall vision for the Township over the next 20 years. Residents, property owners, and business owners participated in workshops and focus group sessions conducted as part of the master plan process, in addition to a public open house. In summary, participants expressed desire for a mix of land uses to meet their needs, with emphasis on residential uses, the need for a central area, connectivity and other amenities, and the protection of natural features. The future land use plan has been developed to accommodate the range of housing and commercial services needed to serve residents, and to preserve the values held closely by Township residents. Below is a description of each of the future land use categories found on Map 8.

Future Land Use Categories Include:

- Large, Intermediate and Small Lot – Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Mobile Home Park
- Neighborhood and General Commercial
- Town Center
- Office
- Research & Technology
- Industrial
- Civic
- Park/Cemetery
- Natural Resources

Single-Family Residential

The predominant land use within the Township is single-family residential. This trend is expected to continue, and large portions of the Township are dedicated to this use in the future. Existing residential densities range between two or fewer units per acre up to five units per acre, and residents have expressed a desire for a more diverse housing stock including senior and “missing middle” housing, while still preserving the character the of the Township. With this in mind, the future land use plan reflects three primary densities:

Large Lot Residential – This designation represents planned densities of two dwelling units or fewer per acre, which is compatible with the current R-E Residential Estate zoning district.

Intermediate Lot Residential – This designation provides for planned density in the range of two to four units per acre, which corresponds with the current zoning classifications of R-1 and R-2 One-Family Residential.

Small Lot Residential – This designation denotes a planned density of up to four or five units per acre, which is consistent with the current R-3 One-Family Residential zoning district.

Key factors when locating these densities include natural features, existing development patterns, distance to primary transportation facilities, and the proximity to commercial and employment areas. These factors suggest large lot residential predominantly in the northern portion of the Township, where sanitary sewer and water services may be extended to support new development, and small lot residential in established residential areas located near commercial and transportation facilities in the central and northern portions of the Township. The southern portion will maintain the intermediate densities that are currently found in that area. Intermediate lot residential is also located throughout the Township and acts in some ways as a transition between the other residential densities.

While single-family residential predominantly consists of detached single-family homes, the Township may also allow the development of attached single-family units through the use of cluster developments or Planned Unit Developments focused on preserving open spaces or important natural features.

Due to an aging population, Brownstown residents have stated the need for senior-focused housing as an increasing priority for the community. While some senior housing is provided via attached dwelling units, the goal is to have independent senior or empty nester living for the retired population that will provide predominantly small, ranch-style homes with smaller yards or shared common space to reduce maintenance needs. Notably, Brownstown does have some existing exclusively senior housing developments, including apartments near King and Dix-Toledo Roads, and Bridgewater, a single-family senior living neighborhood located near the intersection of Inkster and West Roads. A key theme expressed through community input was the need for a range of affordability in senior housing options. In addition to the existing neighborhoods, a variety of housing types and price points are encouraged as the population of Brownstown continues to age. It is expected that as market demands increase, more senior housing will be developed, and will be incorporated at similar densities to their surrounding neighborhoods.



Multiple-Family Residential

Areas designated in the future land use plan for multiple-family residential development are found throughout the Township. This designation includes attached condominiums and apartments with an anticipated density ranging between 6 to 15 units per acre. Those areas currently developed as multiple-family residential retain their designation. Future multiple-family development is focused in areas surrounding the proposed town center and highway corridors. Other multiple-family areas are located near the employment centers and commercial nodes in the northern portion of the Township. Multiple-family designations are located in areas where they can help support business districts and where public utilities and road infrastructure are in place to support the intensity of the use. Multiple-family also serves as a transitional land use between non-residential and single-family residential uses.



Commercial

Existing commercial uses are somewhat scattered throughout the Township. This fragmentation can cause a decline in the success of businesses and inhibits the emergence of a unified character. The future land use plan strives to reverse these trends by concentrating commercial areas into meaningful centers and by helping to establish a character through architectural guidelines and landscaping requirements.

Accessibility and availability of land are the two primary reasons business owners say they located in Brownstown Township.

Commercial uses include retail, office, and service establishments whose primary market area covers the overall Township, and some regional commercial that serves a larger market. The land use designations are divided between:

- Neighborhood Commercial;
- General Commercial;
- Office; and
- Town Center (described in greater detail in the preceding chapter).

Commercial designations are located in areas of special interest or where existing development trends suggest they are needed. Neighborhood commercial designations are located within proximity to areas planned for large residential populations and are intended to serve the immediate vicinity so as not to create unnecessary additional traffic. The neighborhood commercial designation is compatible with the



B-1, Local Business, zoning district. A more concentrated core of neighborhood commercial is planned near the entrance to the Lake Erie Metropark, in the southern area of the Township. It is anticipated that future commercial uses in this area will support use of the park, and vice versa, as well as the surrounding neighborhoods. This strategic location also offers an opportunity to create a unique character for the area, drawing upon the maritime uses and activities that occur there. The character of the area must be protected, and the Township may wish to utilize design regulations to do so. The Township also desires to encourage live/work activities within this designation, especially in the concentrated area across from the Metropark.

More regional commercial nodes, which are designated as general commercial, are located in the central and northern portions of the Township, where existing higher density residential development and major transportation corridors dictate their need. These areas tend to be focused at intersections of major roads, as well as along the Telegraph Road and Dix-Toledo Highway corridors. The general commercial classification is compatible with the B-2, Community Business, and B-3, General Business, zoning districts. Most of the future commercial is located in the northern portion of the Township.

Most noteworthy is the Township's desire to establish a Town Center in this area that will act as a gathering place for commercial, social, and residential activity. The Township has also seen a dramatic increase in requests for new gas service stations/mini marts. Since these are special land uses in the commercial districts, evaluation of the review criteria should include a market analysis indicating unmet demand. This will help prevent the closing of existing stations that currently serve the community.

The office designation is intended to accommodate medical and professional offices that provide valuable and needed services to the residents of the Township and beyond. For example, professional office uses have developed into an attractive and vibrant subset of Allen Road, south of Sibley. This office area on the east side of Allen Road has created a successful corridor for office-related uses.

The east side of the Allen Road corridor is the primary area for the Office designation, while other office uses are expected to be incorporated throughout the Township to act as a transitional use between potentially conflicting land uses.

Industrial

The Township prides itself on a strong industrial base, which greatly benefits from the vast transportation routes through the community. Industrial uses included in this category can range from more traditional manufacturing and warehousing to other uses that support those larger establishments by providing trucking, transfer, maintenance, and research/development services. Industrial uses are divided into the following two land use categories:



Research and Technology – Uses intended for this designation include technology-related fields, light manufacturing, and office that will complement the existing industrial base in the Township. This designation is also intended to permit limited commercial activities to service the larger industrial area. This future land use designation is compatible with the I-RT, Industrial Research Technology zoning district.

Industrial – This designation is intended to provide areas for a broad range of industrial uses, ranging from light manufacturing to more intensive industrial uses. This designation is compatible with the I-1 Light Industrial and I-2 General Industrial zoning districts.

Commercial uses that are more industrial in nature should be located in the northern portion of the Township, where an established industrial community is present. Higher intensity uses are encouraged along the I-75 corridor and along the designated industrial corridor on the west side of Allen Road. Supporting research and technology development activities are located along the Pennsylvania Road corridor.

It should be noted that while the future land use encompasses all industrial in one category, the I-1 and I-2 zoning districts differ in intent and intensity of permitted uses. Future industrial development should take into account compatibility with surrounding uses, capacity of infrastructure, and truck routes (particularly with respect to access to/from I-75).

At the northeast corner of the Township, there is a designated industrial area north of the Our Lady of Hope Cemetery. Due to its proximity to residential uses in Southgate (to the north) and Riverview (to the east), this area should be limited to lighter industrial uses compatible with the I-1 zoning district.

Particularly growing industrial uses are those related to logistics and distribution, such as trucking terminals, large warehousing and distribution facilities, truck/trailer parking and storage, and similar uses. These uses and similar heavier industrial uses are more compatible with the I-2 zoning district. Efforts should be made to limit these to appropriate areas, where not in conflict with surrounding land uses and in close proximity to I-75. New development and expansion of existing businesses should incorporate design features that offset the potential impacts of these higher intensity uses. This can be done through architectural features, landscaping, and appropriate screening for outdoor activities, though expansion of nonconforming and/or incompatible uses is not advised.

Civic

Areas designated as civic include a variety of Township facilities, governmental facilities, and schools. These areas are generally established and integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods. Any redevelopment or expansion for institutional uses within these areas will need to maintain the proper relationship with the surrounding residential areas.

Park

Locations are designated throughout the Township for active recreation facilities and neighborhood parks. These locations include the Township-owned recreation facilities described in the existing land use section of this plan, as well as area cemeteries, golf courses, and the Lake Erie Metropark. It is anticipated that as the population grows in Brownstown, so too will the need for recreational facilities and open space. Common themes from the community engagement sessions included desire for community amenities such as neighborhood parks, recreation opportunities, and non-motorized transportation facilities such as bike paths.

Natural Resources

The southern portion of the Township contains an expansive extractive facility. Over the past few years, portions of the site have been reclaimed and this trend is projected to continue. Although the extractive use will remain in place for some time, the reclamation of its land provides a great opportunity for future development in this area. While redevelopment may not occur during the time frame of this plan, it is an important area for future considerations. The area should take advantage of the unique natural resources and activities in this portion of the Township and provide a complementary mixture of uses. Once mining is complete and the land is reclaimed, a development that combines a variety of outdoor recreational activities and residential could provide another asset to this distinctive area.

Town Center

A high priority during public input sessions, the planned Town Center area of the Township has the potential to become an activity center for the community that will provide a defined sense of place for the Township. An area has been designated for the Brownstown Township Town Center where Telegraph Road, West Road, and the Dix-Toledo Highway converge. This area is planned to become a mixed-use town center with local businesses, neighborhood service establishments, and traditional residential neighborhoods. During the planning process, retail and residential market demand studies revealed a demand for approximately 135,000 square feet of retail space in the Town Center area and projected demand for approximately 305 small cottage-style homes and attached single-family units. Residential uses will provide a variety of housing types including apartments on upper floors above commercial uses and single-family homes on smaller lots. A mixture of “missing middle” housing types could complement neighborhoods of single-unit homes to create a walkable, thriving place to live and play. This would include units such as tri-plex, four-plex, bungalow courts, live/work and flats.

The current zoning designation of TC, Town Center, is compatible with this area, which is intended to facilitate a downtown area with mixed-use buildings, complemented by surrounding residential development within a walkable distance. This area will be pedestrian-friendly with sidewalks to integrate uses, community parks, and plazas with the broader fabric.

Working with Township officials and staff, the master plan review committee, the Downtown Development Authority, and using the information provided in a market analysis performed by Land Use|USA, a plan for the Town Center has been developed. The proposed design includes a north-south street connecting West Road to King Road, a gateway entrance to the area at the Dix-Toledo and Telegraph corner, commercial development focused along Telegraph, and a town square area with townhomes fronting the public green space area.

This area is planned for higher density development and a mixture of uses; however, for this type of development to be successful, it must be properly designed and developed. For that reason, the Township has established detailed standards for the layout, architecture, neighborhood form, and streetscape elements that must be incorporated into any development in the town center. Below are some general guidelines on how this area should develop.

General Development Principles

The following design guidelines will help implement the vision of the Brownstown Town Center:

- Streets should be narrow, well-defined by street trees and sidewalks.
- A variety of housing types should be provided within the area.
- Buildings should front the street at a build-to line (or maximum front yard setback), rather than a minimum setback.
- Attached and small lot housing types should have parking loaded from the back through alleys, rear lanes, or auto courts.
- Buildings facing each other across the street should be of similar height, scale, and lot disposition.
- Buildings facing each other across a green, park or other open space can be of different height, scale and lot disposition.
- Phases should be undertaken from mid-block to mid-block or alley to alley so that streets are completed on both sides.



Streetscape Principles

A vibrant town center rests on the ability to create the proper setting through street design and amenities. Building scale, walking distances, parking and character are integral to creating a pleasant, inviting streetscape.

To accomplish this, the following principles were identified:

- All streets shall have sidewalks and be designed to encourage walking, biking, and other forms of non-motorized transportation.
- Drive lanes should be narrowed with curb extensions near intersections to minimize the walking distance between curbs.
- All crosswalks shall be clearly marked and composed of a material contrasting in texture and color with the street pavement.
- Streets should be the minimum feasible, taking into consideration the street's purpose and the need for emergency access.
- Streets should provide on-street, parallel parking.
- Streetlights of an ornamental design should be provided.
- Street trees should be planted to complement the building design and provide shade to the road and sidewalks.



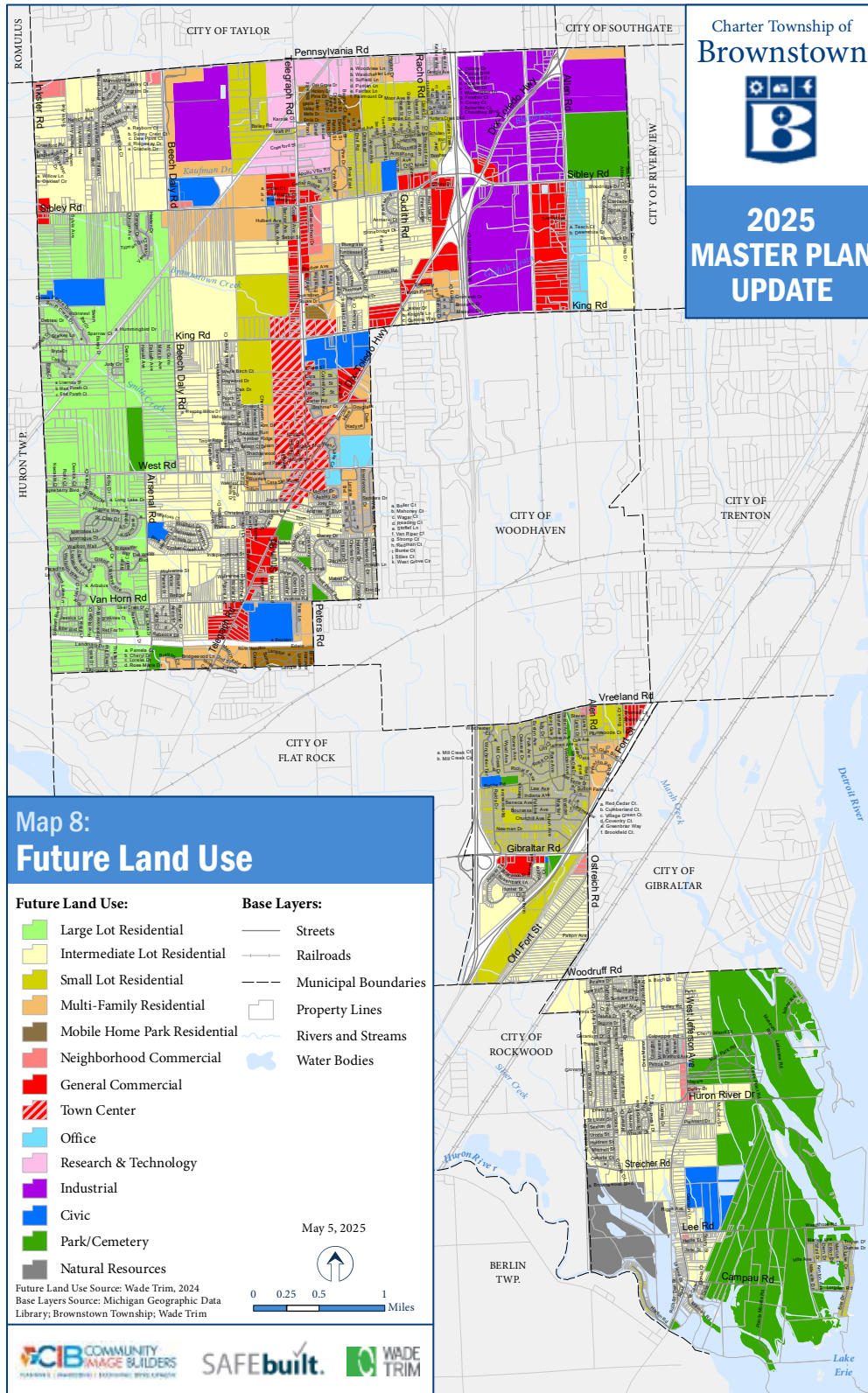
General Building Guidelines

In order to contribute to a strong sense of place, the building design should complement the street design, walkable scale, and architectural character of Brownstown. To accomplish this, the following building guidelines are established:

- The architectural character, color, horizontal scale and vertical scale (1½ to 3½ stories) of the buildings should reflect the vernacular architecture of small-town Michigan. Front facades of commercial/mixed-use buildings should incorporate clear glass panels and doorways.
- The regulating mix of building types should be oriented toward block development that encompasses both sides of the street, rather than along streets on one side that may fragment the streetscape.
- Bays, porches, balconies and entrance elements are highly encouraged and should be included where possible.
- Pitched roofs at a 10:12 pitch are encouraged. Parapet walls should be used to screen low-slope roofs.
- Building materials shall be of a high quality for all buildings with brick being the primary material, along with Hardie Plank for residential structures. The use of EIFS and vinyl siding should be limited to architectural detailing and located on facades not visible from the street, and other materials such as exposed concrete, pressure treated wood siding, and mill-finish aluminum roofing should not be permitted.



Map 8: Future Land Use





Chapter 13: Zoning Plan

Zoning Plan

While there are many programs and activities important to the overall implementation of the Master Plan, zoning is the single most significant mechanism for achieving the desired land use pattern and quality of development outlined in earlier chapters. The Zoning Plan provides a useful guide relative to the inconsistencies between current zoning patterns and proposed future land use designations.

Because the future land use map is a long-range vision of how land uses should evolve over time, it should not be confused with the Township's zoning map, which is a current (short term) mechanism for regulating development. Therefore, not all properties should be immediately rezoned to correspond with the plan. The Future Land Use Plan is intended to serve as a guide for land use decisions over a longer time period (5 to 15 years).

The plan categories correspond to zoning districts, but there is some generalization. The following table provides a Zoning Plan indicating how the future land use categories in this Master Plan relate to the zoning districts in the Zoning Ordinance. In certain instances, more than one zoning district may be applicable to a future land use category.

Zoning changes in accordance with the plan should be made gradually so that change can be managed. The Future Land Use map as well as the plan's goals, objectives, and development recommendations should be consulted to judge the merits of a rezoning request. In review of rezoning and development proposals, the Township should consider the following sequencing standards:

Any rezoning or development proposal must be compatible with the Master Plan as a whole and be able to stand and function on its own without harm to the quality of surrounding land uses.

There must be sufficient public infrastructure to accommodate any proposed development or the types of uses that would be allowed under the requested zoning change. This must include sufficient sewer and water capacity, transportation improvements as determined by a traffic impact study, and all other necessary infrastructure improvements provided concurrently with the development.

The environmental conditions of the site should be capable of accommodating the types of development or potential uses allowed with a zoning change. The impact on natural features should be minimized to the maximum extent practical with the most important resources preserved.

Rezoning needs to be linked as closely as possible to the timing of development and land use change. Premature rezoning without a specific development proposal and site plan should be avoided to minimize land use conflicts, property value decline, and maintenance and safety problems.

Sites proposed for rezoning to accommodate change in land use need to have sufficient width and area to facilitate development that satisfies the design guidelines of this plan, requirements of the zoning ordinance, and not create odd parcel configurations.

Zoning Plan	Zoning Districts												
Future Land Use Categories	R-E Single Family Residential Estate												
	R-1 Single Family Residential												
	R-2 Single Family Residential												
	R-3 Single Family Residential												
	RM-1 Multiple Family Residential												
	RM-2 Multiple Family Residential												
	MHP Mobile Home Park												
	B-1 Local Business												
	B-2 Community Business												
	B-3 General Business												
	OR-1 Office Retail												
	TC Town Center												
	I-RT Industrial Research Technology												
I-1 Light Industrial													
I-2 General Industrial													
WM Waterfront Marina													
ME Mining/Extraction													
Large Lot Residential													
Intermediate Lot Residential													
Small Lot Residential													
Multi-Family Residential													
Mobile Home Park													
Neighborhood Commercial													
General Commercial													
Office													
Town Center													
Research and Technology													
Industrial													
Civic													
Park/Cemetery													
Natural Features													



Chapter 14: Implementation Plan

This plan contains several strategies and recommendations that will work towards meeting the community’s goals. These ideas, however, will remain as such without systematic and consistent implementation. The program outlined in this Chapter demonstrates methods which will turn this plan into reality.

The following table provides a summary list of the recommendations contained in this plan and alternative implementation tools for each.

Plan Recommendation	Implementation Mechanisms
Residential	
Ensure new residential development is of the highest possible quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the established residential zoning district standards and determine whether new districts or modified standards may be appropriate. • Require that new development set aside open space/recreational areas. • Adopt stronger residential landscaping requirements. • Encourage and maintain the level of safety of all residential neighborhoods. • Continue to require all new developments to have sidewalks on both sides of the street.
Protect the character of established neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt residential design standards dealing with relative size of dwellings and architectural character. • Require that new development be compatible with the character of existing, nearby neighborhoods. • Examine the existing housing stock and identify areas/neighborhoods with homes in need of improvement or repair and provide programs to encourage reinvestment.
Balance of housing types based upon needs as determined by demographic trends and projections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for continued residential growth within the ability of the community to economically provide the necessary infrastructure and services. • Identify locations for specialized senior housing and establish a zoning district specifically for senior housing. • Allow for a wide variety of housing types, also known as the Missing Middle, in the zoning ordinance. This would include Tri-plex, Four-plex, Bungalow Courts, etc. and alternate housing types in the Town Center and other higher density residential zoning districts.

Commercial	
<p>Encourage a mix of high-quality commercial uses that will provide services and goods for citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide suitable sites for the growth of business in keeping with a growing population. • Define areas for development as community-wide commercial. • Provide retail and services that are convenient to neighborhoods but are of limited intensity to ensure compatibility. • Continue design and pursue development of the Town Center area. • Actively recruit potential specialty-type commercial uses, especially in the Town Center as identified by the retail analysis. • Evaluate existing zoning requirements related to gas station uses, as there is growing interest in development of this land use. • Utilize office and lower intensity commercial districts as a means of transition between more intense uses and residential neighborhoods. • Enhance the image of major business corridors. • Develop stronger building design and landscaping guidelines/requirements. • Encourage the cleanup of blighted properties. • Provide for the upgrade of nonconforming sites until redeveloped in conformance with the zoning ordinance.
Industrial	
<p>Promote and assist industrial uses that will help to diversify the tax base of the township and provide additional employment opportunities for citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage the development of industrial areas in locations that will limit potential impacts upon nearby uses. ▪ Educate current and prospective businesses on the availability of tax incentives. ▪ Target and recruit specific industrial development to capitalize on accessibility to the transportation network. ▪ Develop stronger building design and landscaping guidelines/requirements. ▪ Only allow logistics and distribution uses to be located on roads with three or more lanes.
Environmental Conditions	
<p>Preserve and protect significant natural features</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish an overlay district for special environmental features. • Limit the intensity of development and population in areas with significant natural features. ▪ Encourage clustered development to maximize use of appropriate, developable land. ▪ Enact zoning standards for a natural feature setback from rivers, streams, canals, drains, and wetlands, which should apply to all zoning districts. ▪ Require the protection or restoration of wetlands and their associated uplands during the development process. ▪ Evaluate woodland protection regulations and require an inventory of existing woodlands during site plan review and requires that developers preserve certain trees and areas of significance.

Storm Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage the preservation of natural drainage ways over development of constructed facilities. ▪ Provide onsite storm water detention with controlled discharge. ▪ Require the preservation of existing natural features that perform storm water management functions, minimization of impervious surface, direction of storm water discharge to open grassed areas and careful design of erosion control mechanisms. ▪ Require wet ponds and storm water marsh systems rather than constructed detention ponds and underground storage of stormwater. ▪ Endorse design methods such as cluster developments or Low Impact Development (LID) which provide strategies to improve the quality of receiving waters by encouraging on site storage and treatment of stormwater. ▪ Provide design requirements for ponds in the Stormwater Ordinance and prohibit fencing. ▪ Require the restoration of wetland areas disturbed or filled as a result of development.
Preservation of Natural Topography and Vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adopt standards in the subdivision plat regulations and site plan review to require preservation of tree cover, the provision of landscaping and buffer strips and the minimization of site grading. ▪ Implement Planned Development and other regulations to encourage preservation of open space, vegetative cover and natural topography.
Purchase of Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Actively pursue the purchase of significant open spaces. ▪ Pursue the goals and objectives of the 2021-2026 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, including securing land for recreational growth in areas of residential growth.
Inventory of Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inventory wetlands, wooded areas, and waterways needs to be established with a ranking system of environmental significance
Flexible Regulatory Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adopt creative regulatory tools that encourage mixed use, cluster or low intensity development that offer incentives to developers.
Transportation	
Maintain connectivity of residential roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require new roads to connect to the existing road network. ▪ Discourage use of cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets, except where necessary to avoid impact to a natural feature.
Increase traffic flow and efficiency on major roadways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop regulations to implement access management concepts. ▪ Coordinate with MDOT and Wayne County to establish standards and procedures. ▪ Limit the number of access points to one where practical. ▪ Require adequate spacing of driveways. ▪ Encourage use of alternative accesses such as shared driveways, service drives, frontage roads and connected parking lots. ▪ Consider limiting turning movements in cases where safety hazards may be created or traffic flow impeded. ▪ Require larger lot widths for commercial properties fronting on major arterials. ▪ Promote a lower speed limit on Telegraph Road between King and West Roads, to support development of the Town Center.

<p>Ensure that development will not adversely impact existing roadway system and surrounding land uses in terms of vehicular traffic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enforce requirements for the inclusion of a Traffic Impact Analysis with site plan review. ▪ Require a basic assessment for smaller projects that are not expected to generate more than 50 peak hour trips or 500 daily trips. ▪ Require a detailed assessment for larger projects that would generate more than 100 peak hour trips or 750 daily trips. ▪ Establish standards for Traffic Impact Analyses, as recommended in the handbook, “Evaluating Traffic Impact Studies,” published by MDOT and SEMCOG. ▪ Regulate residential densities and the location of traffic intense uses to minimize need for road widening.
<p>Community Facilities, Recreation and Utilities</p>	
<p>Maintain and improve public services, buildings and spaces within the township to meet the needs of residents, businesses and visitors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate the capacity of public and emergency services to ensure that the level of service can be maintained or improved with the projected population growth. ▪ Improve and maintain the township’s sewer and water system and its capacity to meet the township’s long-term needs.
<p>Continue to enhance and build upon the existing recreation system that respects the residents’ desires for more natural resource protection and pathway development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maximize use, accessibility, and variety of existing recreational facilities and evaluate ways to increase recreational opportunities to meet the needs of all age groups. ▪ Identify potential locations for additional public recreation facilities, especially near the Town Center. ▪ Reinvestigate opportunities for the purchase of significant open and natural areas. ▪ Adopt stronger requirements for both active and passive recreation areas within new residential development. ▪ Develop a comprehensive pathway system as recommended in the 2021-2026 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
<p>Promote an identity for Brownstown Township</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adopt and enforce design standards for landscaping, signs, lighting, and similar elements to create an identity for the township and connection between the three geographic areas. ▪ Develop stronger building design and landscaping guidelines/requirements for public buildings and facilities. ▪ Create a marketing program for the Township that will create a unified image for the community, including highly visible entryway signage

Potential Township Implementation Funding Sources

The following are brief descriptions of alternative funding sources for implementation of the Master Plan:

Special Assessment: Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefited by specific public improvements (paving, drainage improvements, etc.) to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the assumed benefits to the property affected. Special assessment funding might prove useful to implement roadway paving, streetscape improvements, secondary access drives in districts fronting on arterial streets and to construct new roads, as necessary and appropriate. These programs are particularly helpful for improving and upgrading older local roads.



Bond Programs: Bonds are among the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for specific community projects and are paid off by the general public via property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenue (i.e. parking structures, etc.). These bonds are retired, or serviced, using income generated by the project.



Tax Increment Financing: Brownstown Township currently has an active Downtown Development Authority (DDA) with a Tax Increment Financing/Development Plan in place. Tax increment financing is authorized by Michigan Public Act 57 of 2018 and provides the DDA with the resources to implement development plans and projects. When a tax increment finance district is established, the stated equalized assessment value of all properties within the district is recorded. Every year thereafter, the property tax revenue generated by any increase in the total stated equalized value is “captured” by the organization responsible to finance improvements established in the overall development plan. The development plan is a required document illustrating all proposed improvements within the district.

Often, revenue bonds are used to finance the improvements, and the tax increment revenues are used to repay the bonds. This tool could also prove to be a valuable tool for roadway improvements within the township. Another option is to provide for project-specific tax increment financing, which allows future increment from a specific project to be committed back to the developer over a period of time. This allows the financial “gap” or shortfall to be closed and makes the project financially feasible. This commitment can be made to prospective developers who can then build the additional funding into their pro formas and borrow against the commitment.

Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU): This Act establishes a fund for transportation enhancement activities. Funds from the Surface Transportation Program are set aside for these activities and can include a number of transportation enhancement activities including historic preservation, landscaping and beautification, pedestrian pathways, roadway improvements and other similar projects. Each year funds become available for allocation based on a competitive needs basis. Requests are solicited and screened for application completeness at the local level, screened for project merit at the regional level and finally selected for action at the State level by the Michigan Department of Transportation. This program is an established resource which the township should also consider, particularly to fund bike path construction.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund: MNRTF provides funding assistance for state and local outdoor recreation needs, including land acquisition and development of recreation facilities. This assistance is directed at creating and improving outdoor recreational opportunities and providing protection to valuable natural resources. These are grants between \$15,000 and \$400,000 with a required minimum local match of 25 percent. This grant is ideal for implementing land acquisition and park development goals in the future.

Land and Water Conservation Fund: LWCF provides funding assistance for communities to acquire and develop land for outdoor recreation. The minimum award is \$30,000 and the maximum of \$500,000. The eligibility criterion emphasizes preservation of natural resources such as waterways. This grant is ideal for land acquisition that is intended for passive recreation and open space in the future.

Michigan Natural Resources Tree Planting Grants: Through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, there are three tree planting grant programs that will assist in funding landscape enhancements at the parks and re-forestation projects.





Appendix

Public Participation Sessions

Charter Township of Brownstown Joint Meeting

Master Plan Community Engagement Facilitation

June 19, 2023

What do we want to preserve? What do we want to change? How can we enhance what we like about the community?

Mike Brady—southern and eastern section are left out—things situated in northern section—very important to get feedback from those two other sections

Treasurer: Likes idea of pocket parks and wants to see greenbelt entering subdivisions for example—area intentionally left green to provide open space for use and drive up property values—valuable, useable space

Last master plan was not a failure

Do we help attract developers and work with them? What can we do through the DDA to attract businesses—market analysis will tell us what makes sense here—demand and potential—creating a town center

We need a drawing card—nothing that says who we are and why you should come—what is their identity?

It takes patience and persistence—Fenton downtown is an example (Railway)

Issues with enforcement

Businesses open before site plan inspections—making sure we're following ordinances and have good ordinances in place—development agreements state they must follow through

Can we make sure we take the good from the existing master plan?

Presentation in each section of township presenting concepts for what we'd like to see—town center mentioned

Public engagement—go talk to people in south and spots in north—we're doing that with the 3 segments

Collaboration with high schools, specifically Gibraltar and the other two—youth liaison, specifically teens

Are we modeling after other communities—don't want to imitate but learn from other communities—be authentic

Value development at the end—in all three—differences and similarities—how to connect them

Outreach—have kids in elementary take flyers home to mom/dad, church newsletters, local park advertisements, utilize functions at the park to canvas there—do these meetings on Saturdays and not weekdays

Three unique quadrants, one shared momentum

Three unique segments/sections, one shared vision

A united community of Three unique segments/sections, [one community united]

Next steps—proposal approved—timeframe is a year—public involvement is September

Its great to listen but there must be follow through—identify things that we can get moving on quickly

South end—rural, no businesses, need bike paths and better parks/rec—lack of trust there—worried about invasion of property—be more persistent—identify something that will draw them in and south will be the more difficult—how to get the south section involved and build trust

Center—mixture, more business

North—mix

*local food truck presence, be at a sporting event, utilize the volunteers in this room to help with feedback and promotion of event

Goal: Regain people's trust

Let them know how tax dollars are being spent, sharing across three sections—south may see that their taxes are going to the north side which contributes to the lack of trust—need transparency.

MDOT—telegraph road plan to have it rebuilt is delayed until 2025—widening and adding left turn lane

May upgrade water mains, bike paths, sidewalks

*we need to keep communicating like this for getting input—reach out and show we are listening

BROWNSTOWN MASTER PLAN

Stakeholder Engagement Session – Business owners

March 13

- Perception of one of the more elite areas in downriver
- Curtis – missing median-income housing, tools that will allow DDA to provide resources for different income ranges, if not supporting middle of the range will become stagnant; more elaborate entryway signage; syndicate 3 different types of development
- Danny – minimum lot sizes make it really hard for downriver communities to develop
 - There is a market for smaller lots (40-ft lots)
- Scott Christie (CMAC) – were leasing building across street from Ashley Capital, BT allowed phasing of development of current property
 - Fully looped property for emergency circulation; through process of ordinance updates
 - Railroad (county came in to add islands for railroad without gate) – BT helped with issue and get resolved, appreciate opportunity to help participate
 - Inquire with railroad about improvements – *working with other govt agencies
- Brakeman General Development – working with Archdiocese for Our Lady of Hope site; take into account context, changing conditions (i.e. covid – office buildings aren't in demand anymore, the way land is used is changing)
 - Good place to work and live
 - Tight market in industrial spaces – bring some more industrial land, more jobs
- John Harwood – new bridge will impact whole 75 corridor, especially trucking, more 3rd party logistics companies looking in this area; have to be thoughtful about where these go
 - People don't realize what downriver market has to offer – very friendly, good place to do business (lower taxes, Woodhaven school expansion)
 - Whole region will be impacted by bridge changes
- Scott Christie – office buildings sitting empty is changing, businesses are changing to require people to be back in office (large organizations)
- John Harwood – downriver is low on office space, hasn't been a lot of development of substantial size in a long time

- Dennis Camarrata (Big Bear) – BT has always been helpful with any issues that have; concept of “downtown Brownstown” – would really prosper from a downtown Town Center feel, dining, shopping, etc.; have seen pockets of residential areas blow up overnight over past
- Town Center –
- Township-owned property – looking for idea of what people would like to see
- Danou – Concern about speed limit (50 mph) along Telegraph corridor – how does that play into wanting to build up streetscape
- 40-acre Township-owned property – question about wetland issues? Brian – have mitigated that site already; a lot of available properties now have wetlands, residential has been utilizing PUDs to work around, will need to work hand in hand with state and county
 - Have better line of communication now than in past years with state and county (county drain)
- Vocational educational programs? – do have them through the high school
- Curtis – building up what we already have, have the personality just need a way to show it and market it
- Biggest challenges facing right now –
 - Frtiz – over-regulations, employees (laborers & skilled trades), young talent
 - Dennis (DDA Board) – heard the problem of employees from different small businesses
 - Rob Young – lot of discussion about West Rd & Telegraph (Kroger)
 - Ethan Wiseman – big industrial developer, comes down to land and availability, lot of good sites left have issues (zoning, wetland); have to be able to work hand in hand to provide for the need once those easy sites are gone
 - Traffic along Telegraph, turning conflicts
- John Evans (DCFC) – amenities such as Thorn Park, public safety are what brought back here, those are the things that will attract people
 - Opportunity for indoor recreation space, focus on open space/recreation opportunities; focal point that’s beneficial to residents but also to draw in others to the community
- Robert Danou – came from real estate family, BT in unique situation that have land, want to gain attraction; fact that own 40 acres puts Twp in great position
- Derrick Danou – connection from ballpark area to 40 acres
- Question of timeline for Twp TC development – plan/concept hopefully to be done at end of year
- Danou – how much does Brownstown want Brownstown to change?

BROWNSTOWN MASTER PLAN

Stakeholder Engagement Session – Senior Citizens

March 22

- Lots of groups represented – Travel Club, Pleasure Seekers, Meals on Wheels, etc.
- Senior alliance survey noted that a lot of seniors said they are very lonely
- Senior center is in the works to be remodeled
- Like that Brownstown is welcoming to others that are not residents of Brownstown, especially in senior programs
- Cindy (Senior Coordinator) – noted that sees a need for housing, affordable housing
 - Consider things like CSI co-op, noted Baldwin House (in BT, 55+ apartment)
- Cindy (Senior Coordinator) – consider partnering with local businesses; food concerns/needs
- Cindy (Senior Coordinator) – there is a need for safe, affordable transportation for seniors
 - They are looking to hire more bus drivers
 - They are working on expanding the transportation program

Topic: Housing

- Desire for smaller ranches
- Del Webb is an older adult community in Brownstown, but is higher price point
- Things people are looking for: smaller yards/low maintenance, 1st floor laundry, attached garage, 2-bedroom, less than 1500 sq ft
- Surrounding communities are very connected
- Feel there is nothing in between single-family homes independent living & assisted living
- Redwood – space is good but expensive
- Need something affordable for fixed-income seniors
- Like that Brownstown is not congested
- Ed Smith – 3 stages of retirement: go-go, slow-go, and no-go
 - For housing, we are lacking the most in the “slow-go” category
- See how other communities are providing this

Topic: Transportation

- Have own SMART grant – curb to curb service
- Challenges – need more drivers
- Buses that are used for senior activities/trips – limited in the number of people that can be transported (i.e. wheelchairs)
- Some seniors need more than just curb-to-curb – need help getting to the door, carrying groceries, etc.
 - Challenge that some programs do not allow drivers to go beyond curbside

Topic: Programming/Community Services

- Way to help combat the loneliness that many seniors feel
- Focus on promoting programs
- Consider ways to help seniors do home improvement (i.e. grant program?)
- Seniors used to be able to call for sidewalk clearing (this was through Wayne County) → could look into setting up a volunteer program?
- Planned renovation of rec center will include Senior Center, dedicated senior space
- Senior Center will allow seniors to always have a space to come to anytime, and have things to, i.e. multi-purpose rooms, TV going, games, puzzles, etc.
 - Gets them out of their house, keeps them active
- Concept of 3rd Place for seniors – have it continuously open
- Provides opportunities for socializing (i.e. have coffee together after exercise classes)
- Looking for more evening programming
- Discussion of buddy system, where seniors can carpool to classes/activities

Topic: Development in Brownstown

- Strongly feel that development of cannabis shops should be limited

Brownstown Master Plan Stakeholder Engagement Session with Senior Citizens

Feedback and common themes:

1. Representation and Loneliness:

- Various senior groups were discussed and represented, including the Travel Club, Pleasure Seekers, and Meals on Wheels.
- The senior alliance survey and session discussion highlighted that many seniors feel very lonely.

2. Community Services and Loneliness:

- Programs should combat loneliness among seniors.
- Promoting programs and considering home improvement grant programs can help.
- Exploring volunteer programs for sidewalk clearing could enhance community services.

3. Senior Center Remodeling and Inclusivity:

- The senior center is in the process of being remodeled.
- Seniors appreciate that Brownstown is welcoming to non-residents, especially in senior programs.

4. Affordable Housing Needs:

- Strong need for housing, particularly affordable options for fixed-income seniors; consider options like the CSI co-op and the Baldwin House (a 55+ apartment in Brownstown).

5. Housing Preferences:

- Seniors desire smaller (less than 1500 sq. ft.) ranch-style homes with features like first-floor laundry, attached garages, and low maintenance yards.
- The gap between single-family homes and independent living/assisted living needs to be addressed.
- Del Webb, although an older adult community, is at a higher price point.
- Redwood offers good space but is expensive.

6. Safe and Affordable Transportation:

- Seniors require safe and affordable transportation.
- Brownstown is working on expanding its transportation program and hiring more bus drivers (hiring drivers is a current challenge).
- Discussion of buddy system, where seniors can carpool to classes/activities

7. Planned Renovation of Recreation Center:

- The planned renovation of the recreation center will include a dedicated Senior Center.

Main Themes:

1. Representation and Loneliness

Senior Groups: Various groups like the Travel Club, Pleasure Seekers, and Meals on Wheels were represented.

Loneliness: Many seniors feel very lonely, as highlighted by the senior alliance survey.

2. Community Services and Loneliness

Combating Loneliness: Programs should focus on reducing loneliness among seniors.

Promoting Programs: There is a need to promote existing programs and consider home improvement grant programs.

Volunteer Programs: Exploring volunteer programs for services like sidewalk clearing could enhance community support.

3. Senior Center Remodeling and Inclusivity

Remodeling: The senior center is being remodeled to better serve the community.

Inclusivity: Seniors appreciate that Brownstown is welcoming to non-residents, especially in senior programs.

4. Affordable Housing Needs

Housing Demand: There is a strong need for affordable housing options for fixed-income seniors.

Housing Preferences: Seniors prefer smaller ranch-style homes with features like first-floor laundry,

attached garages, and low-maintenance yards.

Housing Gap: There is a gap between single-family homes and independent living/assisted living options.

5. Safe and Affordable Transportation

Transportation Needs: Seniors require safe and affordable transportation.

Program Expansion: Brownstown is working on expanding its transportation program and hiring more bus drivers.

Buddy System: Discussion of a buddy system where seniors can carpool to classes and activities.

6. Planned Renovation of Recreation Center

Dedicated Senior Center: The planned renovation of the recreation center will include a dedicated senior space, providing opportunities for socializing and staying active.

BROWNSTOWN MASTER PLAN

Stakeholder Engagement Session – Young Professionals

April 10

Attendees (partial list)

- Jenn Tucker – SEMCA, Brownstown resident
- Keylee Ravida – First Merchants Bank
- Kristi Stamey – Woodhaven-Brownstown School District, Brownstown resident
- Eric Hussey – Huzzy’s car wash
- Blaine LeBlanc – landscaping business
- Eric Hussey – Real Estate 3000
- Sabrina Niebrzydowski – Top Notch salon, BT resident
- Lindsey Dennis – Advantage One Credit Union, BT resident
- John Santoro – vacant property owner, part of Rotary
- Shannon Perry – Cycle Trip

Themes from introductions: many have kids, main theme – love for Brownstown

Topic: What people love about Brownstown

- School district
- Natural/open spaces (parks, trails), nature
- Feels like home
- Not super congested like Woodhaven
- Concern about over-populating

Topic: Pain points, potential threats

- Builders putting up buildings that small businesses can’t afford to be in
- Average rent cost right now: \$20-\$22 per square foot (noted that Woodhaven is more expensive, up to \$30 per sq ft)
- Assistance for developing vacant sites because small businesses can’t afford
 - i.e. underground work, utilities
- Big issue of not enough housing
 - Brings more traffic, but at least people will stay in the area
- Taxes – ways to be able to help small business owners with taxes

- i.e. if can be lower if leaser is paying the taxes; grants, etc.
- Not a lot of opportunities for young people, young 20s – not a lot to do, difficult to afford living here
- No non-motorized connectors to connect neighborhoods and segmented areas
- Walkability factor (especially kids getting to schools) – if their school is not in their neighborhood, can't safely get to schools
 - Sidewalks
 - Connectivity/walkability especially around schools
- Need for downtown area, community feel

Topic: Housing

- Housing is missing/lacking on all levels
- Older folks (parents) are looking to downsize and there's nowhere to go
- Affordable housing for new families wanting to live in the area
- Ownership vs. rental
- Rent is also very high in this area
- Brian Peters – Telegraph is being re-done by MDOT, this is the time to indicate if expanded infrastructure, i.e. bigger water main, expected growth, etc. is needed
- In great position that have land left to develop
- Have grown at a good/comfortable pace

Topic: Vision/Things you'd like to see

- Trader Joe's – healthier food options, nutrition shops
- Stigma that there is no money in this area is frustrating
- Brian Peters – hard for national brands to understand BT (unique area, has 7 zip codes)
 - Township is putting together metrics (i.e. demographics & statistics) – can be used as marketing for businesses
- Feel that we don't have the demographic that something like Trader Joe's is looking for – need to attract that demographic and show we have it
- Brian Peters – have good connections (Dix-Toledo, 75), utilize those and market

Topic: Town Center

- Dix-Toledo & Telegraph; DDA bought property back from Kroger, 40 acres → working on development concept for that area
- Idea of a central location, downtown-type feel; focal point of community
- What would like to see:
 - Small businesses, small-town feel (i.e. Wyandotte), bring in more young people
 - Walkability
 - Activities/things to do, boutique shopping, restaurants
 - Public space, where Township can have sponsored events
 - Plymouth as example – park in the middle, with businesses around
 - Patios, nice outdoor seating; areas to walk around
- Potentially mixed-use with residential
- Question about liquor licenses left available – there are some available (??)

Topic: Magic wand – one thing for Brownstown to have in future

- Driving range
- Recreation domes (i.e. Legacy in Brighton) – travel sports, indoor/year-round recreation
 - With that comes the other things you need to support the use – restaurants, overnight accommodations

- Nothing too loud, not too much pollution
- Ed Smith – downriver is a mindset

1. Assets of Brownstown:

- **School District:** Residents appreciate the quality of the local school district, which likely contributes to a sense of community and educational opportunities.
- **Natural/Open Spaces:** The presence of parks, trails, and natural areas is cherished by residents. These green spaces provide recreational opportunities and a connection to nature.
- **Feels Like Home:** Brownstown has a welcoming atmosphere that makes people feel at home. This sense of belonging is essential for community well-being.
- **Less Congestion:** Unlike neighboring Woodhaven, Brownstown is not overly congested. This likely contributes to a more relaxed and peaceful environment.

2. Pain Points and Potential Threats:

- **Small Business Challenges:** Builders constructing expensive buildings can make it difficult for small businesses to afford commercial spaces.
- **High Rent Costs:** The average rent cost per square foot is \$20-\$22, with Woodhaven being even more expensive at up to \$30 per square foot.
- **Assistance for Developing Vacant Sites:** Small businesses struggle with developing vacant sites due to costs associated with underground work and utilities.
- **Housing Shortage:** There's a significant shortage of housing, which impacts both residents and potential newcomers.
- **Tax Relief for Small Businesses:** Exploring ways to lower taxes for small business owners, such as having the leaser pay taxes or providing grants.
- **Limited Opportunities for Young People:** Young adults in their 20s find it challenging to afford living in Brownstown, and there aren't many entertainment options.
- **Lack of Non-Motorized Connectors:** The absence of safe pathways connecting neighborhoods and segmented areas affects walkability.
- **Walkability Around Schools:** Ensuring safe sidewalks and connectivity around schools is crucial for children's safety.

3. Housing Situation:

- **Housing Gap:** Brownstown faces a shortage of housing across all levels, affecting various demographics.
- **Downsizing Challenges:** Older residents looking to downsize struggle to find suitable options.
- **Affordable Housing:** There's a need for affordable housing to accommodate new families.
- **Ownership vs. Rental:** Balancing ownership and rental options is essential for a diverse housing market.
- **High Rent Prices:** Rent costs remain high in the area.

4. Vision and Aspirations:

- **Trader Joe's and Healthier Food Options:** Residents desire access to healthier food choices, including nutrition shops like Trader Joe's.
- **Challenging Stigma:** Overcoming the perception that there's no money in the area is a priority.
- **Unique Identity:** Brownstown's seven zip codes make it a distinctive community, but national brands may struggle to understand its uniqueness.

Additionally, the ongoing redevelopment of Telegraph by MDOT presents an opportunity to address infrastructure needs and accommodate expected growth.

Consistent Themes from Young Professionals:

1. Love for Brownstown

School District: High appreciation for the quality of local schools.

Natural/Open Spaces: Parks, trails, and natural areas are highly valued.

Community Feel: Brownstown feels like home and is less congested compared to neighboring areas.

2. Pain Points and Potential Threats

Small Business Challenges: High rent costs and expensive buildings make it difficult for small businesses to thrive.

Housing Shortage: There is a significant lack of housing, affecting both current residents and potential newcomers.

Limited Opportunities for Young People: Young adults find it hard to afford living in Brownstown and there are few entertainment options.

Connectivity Issues: Lack of non-motorized connectors and walkability, especially around schools.

3. Housing Situation

Downsizing Challenges: Older residents struggle to find suitable downsizing options.

Affordable Housing: There is a need for more affordable housing for new families.

High Rent Prices: Rent remains high, making it difficult for many to afford living in the area.

4. Vision and Aspirations

Healthier Food Options: Desire for stores like Trader Joe's and other nutrition shops.

Town Center Development: Interest in creating a central location with a small-town feel, walkability, and public spaces for community events.

Infrastructure Improvements: Opportunities to address infrastructure needs during the redevelopment of Telegraph by MDOT.

Feedback and common themes shared by Business Owners in Brownstown Township:

1. Perception of Elite Area:

- Some business owners perceive Brownstown Township as one of the more elite areas in the downriver region.

2. Amenities and Attracting New Residents:

- Opportunity for indoor recreation space, focus on open space/recreation opportunities; focal point that's beneficial to residents but also to draw in others to the community.
- Identity and promotion of Brownstown Township is needed.
- Brownstown Township is seen as a good place to work and live.
- More elaborate entryway signage is needed.
- A Town Center will benefit the community with additional residential, dining, shopping, etc.

3. Housing Diversity and Resources:

- Emphasis on the need for median-income housing and tools that cater to different income ranges.
- Supporting middle-income housing is crucial to prevent stagnation.

4. Challenges with Lot Sizes:

- Minimum lot sizes make it challenging for downriver communities to develop.
- There is a market for smaller lot sizes.

5. Development Phasing and Ordinance Updates:

- Community appreciation for flexibility in allowing phased development and addressing issues related to the railroad.
- Balancing context and land use is essential.

6. Industrial Land and Jobs:

- Increasing industrial space would create additional jobs.

7. Impact of New Bridge:

- New bridge will significantly impact the entire I-75 corridor, especially trucking.
- 3rd party logistics companies looking in this area
- The region as a whole will experience changes due to the bridge project.
- Downriver's market potential is often underestimated.

8. Office Space and Business Trends:

- Office buildings sitting empty are changing.
- Businesses are shifting to require people to return to the office (especially large organizations).
- Downriver lacks substantial office space development.

The focus group notes from the session with business owners in Brownstown Township on March 13 highlight several consistent themes:

Perception and Identity

- **Elite Area:** Brownstown Township is perceived as one of the more elite areas in the downriver region.
- **Community Image:** There is a need for more elaborate entryway signage and better promotion of the township's identity.
- **Good Place to Work and Live:** The township is seen as a favorable place for both living and working.

Housing and Development

- **Median-Income Housing:** There is a significant need for median-income housing and resources to support different income ranges to prevent stagnation.
- **Lot Sizes:** Minimum lot sizes pose challenges for development, with a market for smaller lots being identified.
- **Phased Development:** Flexibility in allowing phased development is appreciated, particularly in addressing issues like those related to the railroad.

Industrial and Office Space

- **Industrial Land:** Increasing industrial space is seen as a way to create more jobs.
- **Office Space:** There is a lack of substantial office space development, with a trend of businesses requiring employees to return to the office.

Infrastructure and Impact of New Bridge

- **New Bridge:** The new bridge will significantly impact the I-75 corridor, especially for trucking and logistics companies.
- **Traffic and Safety:** Concerns about traffic along Telegraph and the need for better traffic management were noted.

Community and Amenities

- **Town Center:** The concept of a Town Center with residential, dining, and shopping options is seen as beneficial.
- **Recreation Opportunities:** There is an opportunity to enhance indoor recreation spaces and open spaces to attract residents and visitors.

Challenges

- **Regulations and Workforce:** Over-regulation and issues with finding employees, particularly in skilled trades and young talent, are major challenges.
- **Land and Zoning Issues:** Many good sites for development face issues like zoning and wetlands, requiring collaboration with state and county agencies.