



Master Plan



Shelby Township Master Plan

SHELBY TOWNSHIP, OCEANA COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Adopted April 2025

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Purpose and Intent	2
Fundamentals of a Master Plan	2
Key Planning Trends.....	3
Regional Context	5
History	7
Public Participation Summary.....	9
Public Participation Method	9
Summary of Key Findings	10
Population and Economic Analysis	15
Demographic Context.....	15
Population	16
Age	17
Ethnicity.....	18
Households	18
Education and Employment	19
Commuting.....	20
Housing Analysis	23
General Overview	23
What Influences Housing Demand?	24
What Influences Tenure Choice?.....	25
What Influences Housing Type Choice?.....	25
Existing Land Uses.....	29
General Overview	29
Land Use Categories	31
Land Use Issues	33
Transportation.....	35
Overview.....	35
Road Classifications.....	36
Oceana County Airport	39
Community & Recreational Facilities	41
General Overview	41
Government Facilities.....	42
Township Utilities	43
Parks and Recreation Facilities	46

Natural Features	49
General Overview	49
Natural Features	50
Existing Conditions Summary of Key Findings	57
General Conclusions	57
Future Land Use	59
General Overview	59
Future Land Use Considerations	60
Future Land Use Concept	62
Future Land Use Categories	64
Zoning Plan	73
Relationship Between Future Land Use & Zoning.....	73
Agricultural District Recommendations	74
Residential District Recommendations	74
Mixed Use Recommendations.....	75
Commercial District Recommendations.....	75
Industrial District Recommendations	76
Other Recommendations.....	76
Supporting Housing Readiness	79
Housing Development Considerations	79
Action Plan	83
General Overview	83
Planning and Development Themes	84
Goals and Actions	85

List of Maps

Map 1: Regional Location	6
Map 2: Existing Land Use	32
Map 3: Transportation System	38
Map 4: Wetlands	52
Map 5: Prime Farmland	55
Map 6: Future Land Use.....	63

Introduction



The Shelby Township Master Plan is the culmination of efforts of the Township Planning Commission, Township Board, and residents of Shelby Township.

The Master Plan defines issues and topics that are most important to the community. Resident, business owner, and community input was encouraged through a community survey, Planning Commission meetings, and a public hearing. An analysis of the existing features of the Township was conducted to illustrate some of its defining characteristics. The analysis includes a survey of the existing land uses in the Township; population, economic and housing statistics; and a description of the physical constraints, natural resources, and circulation patterns within the community.

Based on all gathered information and with input from the community, goals and actions were developed which outline the growth and development patterns for the community over the short, medium, and long-term. This Plan and the goals and actions contained within is developed and intended to be a guide for land use decisions made by the Township for the next ten to fifteen years.

As conditions change over time, the Township may find that the Master Plan needs to change as well. Amendments are likely as it is impossible to perfectly predict exactly what will happen in the near future.

Keeping the Master Plan up-to-date will ensure that it stays relevant and useful to accurately reflect and address trends in land use, preservation, development, housing, and other important features of the Township.

Purpose and Intent

This document is intended to fulfill State requirements and provide the functions of a Master Plan. The Shelby Township Master Plan is a crucial planning and guiding document for a community. Not only does the Master Plan provide imperative information about the current conditions and trends in the community, but also presents a vision for the future of the Township and a corresponding action-oriented plan for accomplishing that vision.

An integral part of the master planning process is the public involvement that identifies the community's desires for its future and its long-term vision for growth and development. The goals and actions are the heart of the Master Plan and present the vision and the manner in which it will be achieved.

Fundamentals of a Master Plan

At its most basic and fundamental level, a community master plan is a policy guiding document. Not only does a master plan reflect a comprehensive vision for a community, but it also serves as the key building block to implement policies, programs, and procedures to achieve a long-term community vision. Whether the vision is for agricultural preservation, conservation of rural character, and/or a guide to target growth and development areas, a master plan influences the overall vision of a community and land use fabric for years to come.

It is the intent that the recommendations, programs, policies, and other aspects of this Plan will be initiated by the Shelby Township Planning Commission, with support and input from the Township Board and, most importantly, the Township residents, business owners, and taxpayers. This Plan represents the overall vision, priorities, and direction for Shelby Township over the next 10+ years.



However, it should be acknowledged that master plans are also intended to be living documents. As such, the Planning Commission intends to continually monitor this Plan to ensure that decisions made at the local level accurately reflect the spirit of this document. Changes and updates will be made if deemed necessary. This document does not effectively rezone any property in Shelby Township, but merely provides a vision for the future composition of land uses and recommended policies to achieve the overarching land use vision.

In general, this Master Plan serves as a tool for the Planning Commission to reference when new development opportunities arise (in addition to other elements such as housing and infrastructure goals and environmental sustainability) in the Township. Further, this Plan is intended to be a resource for future investment in areas such as nonmotorized transportation connections, capital improvements programming, developing public-private partnerships, and other elements.

Key Planning Trends

Considering the long-term view of this Plan, the Township should consider broad planning and development trends that are occurring at the regional level and on a wider scale. By considering these important trends, the Township can effectively and proactively plan for the future of the community, as well as get ahead of upcoming trends and important quality of life considerations to ensure Master Plan relevancy, longevity, and applicability. In turn, this will help the Township to attract and retain residents and businesses and continue into a sustainable future.

AARP LIVABILITY GUIDELINES

An important planning shift to consider throughout the implementation of this Plan, is the best practices and recommendations from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Communities should examine current policies and planning practices that shift toward livability. In this context, livability is an overarching term meaning the *“high-level performance measure of neighborhood design factors that are critical to high quality of life for people of all ages.”* Planning for all ages is a sound method of planning for people with all abilities. To achieve livability, a community must work toward the following four goals:

1. **Compactness** (walkable, less automobile dependent)
2. **Integration of land uses** (residential development within close proximity to places of employment, and neighborhood commercial nodes)
3. **Housing diversity** (varying types of housing for all ages and incomes)
4. **Transportation options** (easily available bike infrastructure, sidewalks, ridesharing, etc.)

Compactness

Having areas of compactness is an integral component of a livable community. In a broad sense, compactness simply means the proximity of varying land uses. For example, in a compact community, residents would live within walking distance to basic needs (e.g., groceries, civic buildings, etc.) school, and entertainment options such as parks, restaurants, and shopping. Compact communities tend to have successful businesses and higher property values. Given that Shelby Township is a rural community, much of the compactness best practice is achieved within the Village of Shelby and the Village of New Era along with immediately surrounding parcels in the Township. While it is likely not feasible (or recommended) to achieve compactness throughout the Township, there are certainly opportunities to focus mixed land uses within close proximity to the Village limits.

Integration of Land Uses

Integration of land uses describes the planning practice to encourage a variety of uses within close proximity of one another. For example, residents in a livable community may live within biking distance to work or school, as well as shopping centers or grocery stores. Integrated land uses encourage live, work, play opportunities within the same area. Additionally, these areas should be close to public transit, outdoor recreation options, and other community features. Compactness and the integration of land uses are closely related themes.

In the context of Shelby Township, integration of land uses can be addressed and potentially achieved in small pockets within the Township, located along current commercial corridors and parcels immediately adjacent to the Villages. For example, in many rural communities, the land use composition of both commercial and light industrial uses is very similar in character to one another. This Plan examines opportunities to integrate and support economic development initiatives and housing opportunities while recognizing the importance of balance with rural preservation. This is also achieved by the “Rural Mixed Use”

land use vision, where a mixture of horizontal land uses are planned to accommodate such integration of land use goals.

Housing Diversity

Housing diversity is one of the many methods used to create a livable community with a high quality of life. Housing diversity encourages a varied choice of housing stock and price points. For Shelby Township, this means an analysis of appropriate housing types, such as multi-family units (with appropriate density), two-family units and duplexes, senior independent living, townhomes, workforce housing, and single-family homes and “traditional” neighborhoods. This Plan recognizes the need to address the shortage of housing options (on a regional and Statewide scale) and addresses areas in the Township where housing development, of varying types and densities, is most appropriate and supported.

Transportation Options

A livable community includes the accessibility of a multitude of transit options for people with all different types of physical capabilities and ages. In this context, transportation options include automobiles, bikes, walking, buses, ridesharing, and more. Given the Township’s rural setting, much of the Township’s alternative transportation options are available through recreation opportunities, such as the Hart-Montague Trail or expanded road shoulders for cycling. This Plan explores the potential for a connected nonmotorized travel network throughout the Township – including opportunities to connect the Township’s nonmotorized system to the greater Oceana County region.

FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Shelby Township is most widely known for its prominent place in the region for agricultural production. Most notably, the Township is an important resource in the region for orchards and fruits. A growing concern nationwide is the steady decline of significant agricultural lands and productions. This Plan recognizes the need to preserve and protect the Township’s agricultural presence. This theme is explored more in the Future Land Use Chapter and a common theme throughout this Plan.



Regional Context

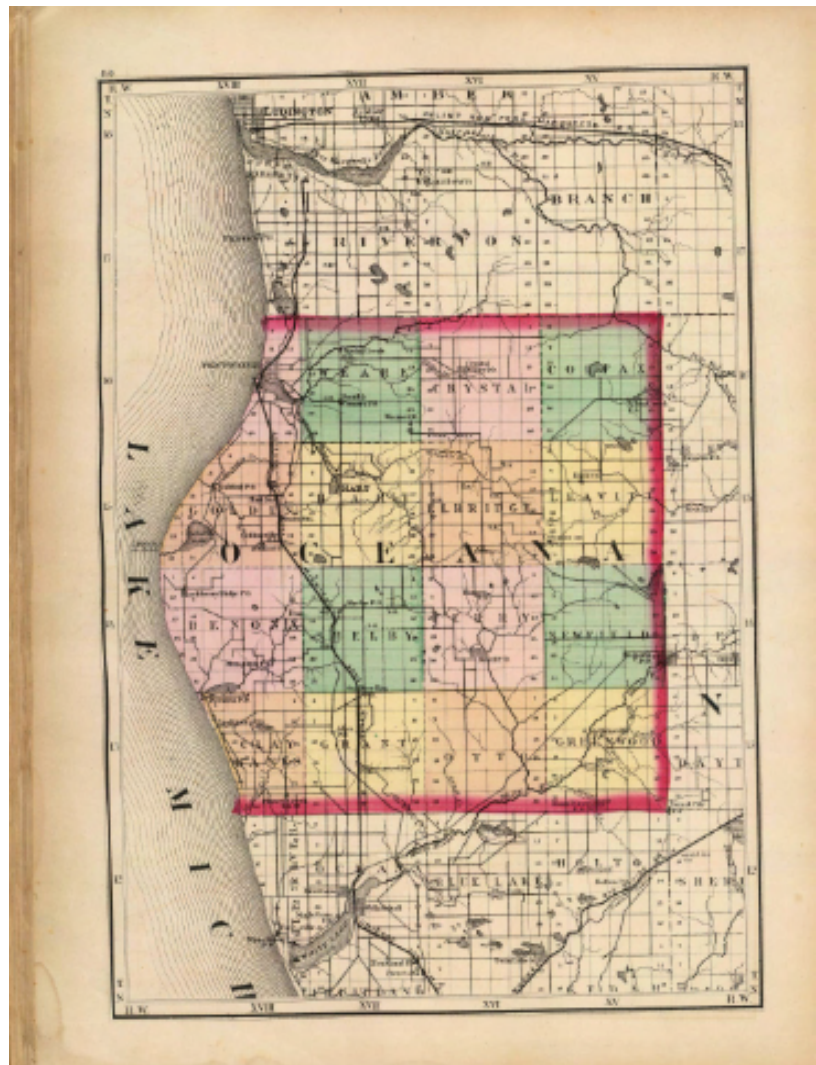
Shelby Township is located in central Oceana County in the western part of Michigan. Its location offers a prime opportunity for residents and visitors to enjoy Lake Michigan and Silver Lake State Park. Its fertile agricultural land has also contributed to its reputation as the fruit capital of west Michigan, as its farms have become leaders in tart cherries, asparagus, and apples.

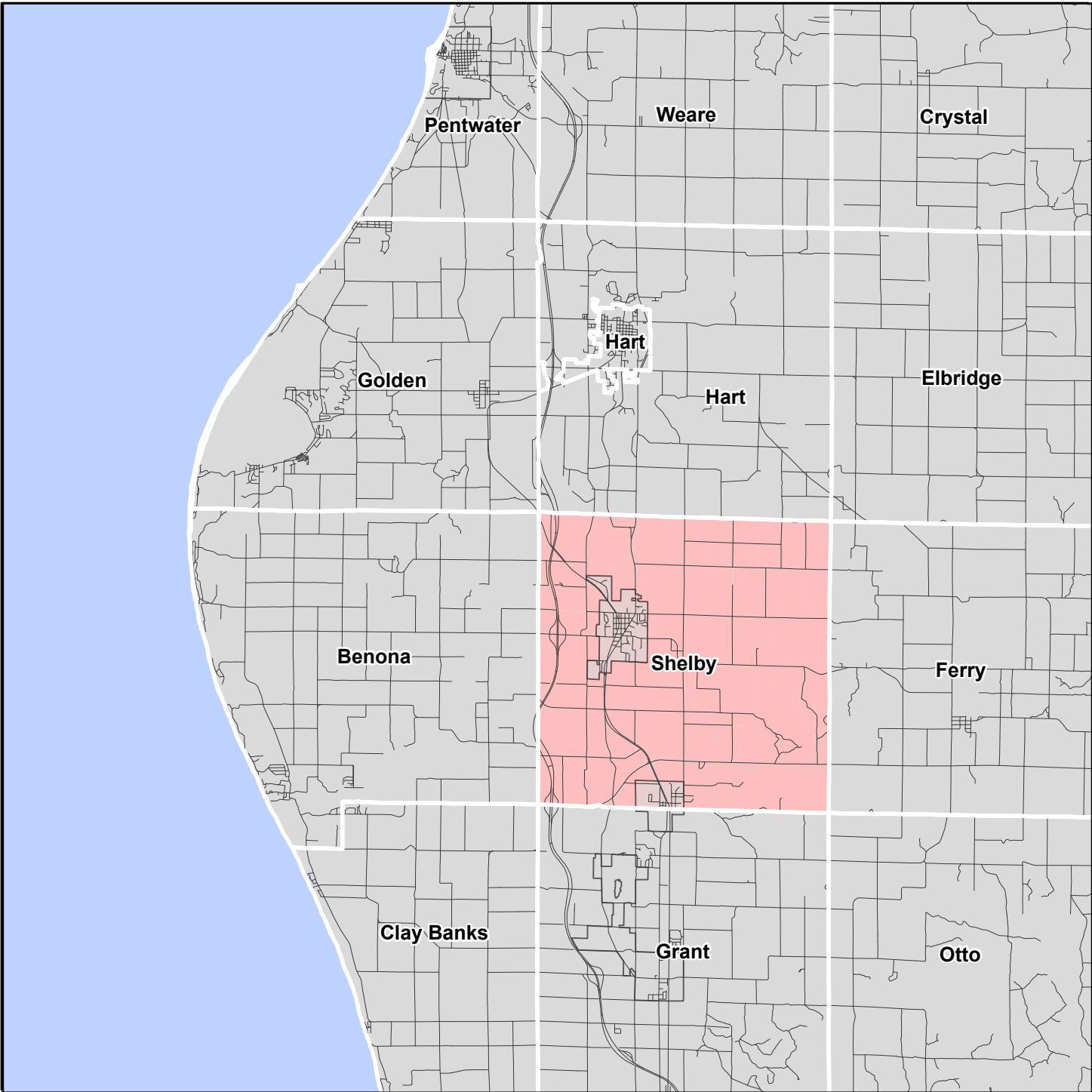
Further, given Oceana County's picturesque landscape, shoreline on Lake Michigan, inland lakes, hilly scenery, and other desirable factors, the County has quickly become a regional destination for vacationers and tourists. According to the Oceana County Press, the County generated approximately \$132 million in tourism spending in 2021. In turn, the County generated around \$16.2 million in State and local tax revenue. That is all to say, that Oceana County, and the Shelby Township community has experienced an uptick in tourism over the years, and that trend is likely to continue. Thus, contributing to the area's land use fabric and associated amenities.

While agriculture has remained a strong industry in the Township, the area also has convenient access to Whitehall and Muskegon, which are the major employment areas in the region. Grand Rapids is the largest metropolitan area nearby, with a notable commute via U.S. 31 and I-96.

U.S. 31 is located near the western boundary of Shelby Township, serving as the primary north-south transportation corridor. Two highway exits at Shelby Road and M-20 provide quick access to employment, tourism, and entertainment destinations. Before the construction of U.S. 31, Oceana Drive was the primary access route through Shelby Township and Oceana County. While its role has become less prominent after the construction of the interstate, it remains an important corridor for traffic between the Village of New Era, the Village of Shelby, and the City of Hart.

Shelby Township's boundaries are arranged in a six-mile by six-mile square, typical of Michigan townships. However, a portion of the Village of New Era and the entirety of the Village of Shelby are located in the Township. Because the Village of Shelby is surrounded by Shelby Township, the village often serves as the focal point of the Shelby Community and contains the Township Hall, a library, post office, and hospital. Together, they are often referred to as the Shelby Community.





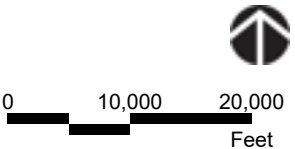
Regional Location

Shelby Township, Oceana County, MI

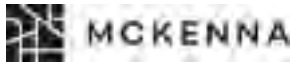
May 10, 2024

LEGEND

- Shelby Township
- Surrounding Municipalities
- Lake Michigan



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Oceana County 2024. McKenna 2024.



History

Churchill Corners was the first settlement established in 1866 as a small nucleus of development in Section 18 of Shelby Township. This settlement was later moved to the modern-day Village of Shelby. The Shelby community, like much of West Michigan, had roots in lumbering, agriculture, and tourism—all of which were tied to Lake Michigan. During the lumbering era, civilization came rapidly to Shelby. The first school appeared in 1862, the first sawmill was built in 1871, and by 1872 a north/ south railroad came through town. The fertile soil for agriculture and extensive forests created favorable conditions for trade. By 1874, Passenger Pigeons (now extinct) were actively hunted and brought wealth that helped stimulate local businesses.

Churches, hotels, banks, a fire department, and a library appeared by 1907. The hospital was organized in 1925. During World War II, a prisoner of war camp was located at present-day Getty Park in the Village of Shelby.

In more recent years, Shelby Township has become renowned for its agricultural production of tart cherries, asparagus, and apples. In 1984, Peterson Farms was established in the township and has since become one of the leaders of frozen fruits in the United States. Rich soil, scenic beauty, and proximity to many natural features continue to attract residents and visitors to the area.



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Public Participation Summary

Public Participation Method

In April 2024, Township staff mailed a postcard to each resident, business, and taxpayer of record in the Township. The postcard explained the Master Plan process and included a QR code and survey link to an online community survey. The postcard was a success in soliciting widespread community participation, in which **328 total responses were received**. This equates to about 8% of the Township's total population, or about 10.5% of the Township's population aged 16 and older.

The survey gauged respondent's temperature and reaction to various important planning topics such as farmland and rural preservation, future commercial development, future residential development, parks and recreation amenities, and other insights.

Summary of Key Findings

A general summary of key findings of the community survey include:

- Most respondents and Township residents are supportive of the Township's efforts to expand and enhance parks and recreation amenities. This can include both active and passive recreation as well as nonmotorized facilities.
- In general, respondents are supportive of new housing development/growth in targeted areas, specifically surrounding the Village of Shelby. This may necessitate creating an "urban services boundary" that permits public utility extensions, or rezonings, within the Township. This is related to the potential of varied housing density requirements.
- Many respondents noted support for the Township to engage in efforts to expand housing types in the Township, such as medium density housing or "missing middle" housing.
- Respondents indicated general support for business/commercial growth concentrated along Shelby Road, Oceana Drive, and M-20.
- Depending on the program type, it is likely the community would support programming for farmland preservation. This can translate to zoning requirements, allowing targeted housing density, purchase of develop rights programs/policies, expanded uses in the AG District to allow supplemental income for farmers, and other related mechanisms.
- Preservation of natural/rural character – while balancing with targeted development/economic development – should be a component of the Master Plan.
- Some respondents feel that the current housing stock in the Township are in need of repairs and/or upgrades. To address this, the Township could consider enhancing or clarifying zoning ordinance enforcement procedures, or partnerships with local housing agencies to connect residents to resources that can assist with aging in place efforts, home repairs, or other similar activities.
- Many residents are concerned with any potential tax increases as a result of new development or programs in the Township.

GENERAL LIKES AND DISLIKES

This section asked, in general, what the respondents like about the Township and what they would like to change. Below is a summary of their responses:

What do you *like most* about Shelby Township?

- Small town, rural atmosphere
- Proximity to Lake Michigan and natural scenery
- Quiet and peaceful, minimal noise and traffic
- Small and close-knit community of kind and friendly people
- Trails and parks, outdoor activities like farming, hunting, and fishing
- Good schools, a nice library, the hospital
- Safety
- Affordability, growth and improvements, small businesses and shops, and downtown area
- Activities

What would you *change* about Shelby Township?

- Improved internet access
- Increased affordable housing
- More commerce, especially downtown. Incentives and support for small businesses, shops, and dining on Main Street (this is located in the Village)
- Community services like daycares, structured activities for children, community programming, educational classes
- Activities for families like movie theaters, roller skating rinks, public pools
- The roads, parking
- Degrading buildings and homes
- Lower taxes
- Control overgrowth
- Water department
- Restraints and gas stations
- More connection between the Village and the Township, communication and advertisement of local activities and offerings

BUSINESS/COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The next section of the survey was about business and commercial development. The following are general statements regarding respondents' opinions on the options of business and commercial uses, both present and what they would like to or not to see.

- **47.92% of respondents want the township to find a middle ground between strictly regulation land divisions and development** to preserve rural character and allow landowners the freedom to develop.
- **57% would like to see more businesses along Oceana Drive and Shelby Road.**
- Some of the other responses were:
 - Focus on building/improving areas currently zoned for commercial only
 - Preserve **by restricting large national corporations**
 - **New businesses along M-20**
 - Utilize empty buildings or new businesses, invest in current businesses
 - Don't place restrictions on development within the Village, create a vision for the Village and support endeavors that will lead to it
 - Do not restrict or target anything, allow for natural growth, free market
 - **Mix of restoration and maintaining agricultural and historical grounds** as well as inviting new businesses
 - In response to the types of businesses people would like to see, **70.86% would like to see lodging and entertainment businesses like restaurants and hotels**
 - **56.95% would like to see small-scale retail businesses** like clothing and home furnishings.
 - Some of the other responses included professional offices (47.35%), industrial businesses (44.37%), and personal services (42.72%).

HOUSING

The next section of the survey was about housing. The following are general statements regarding respondents' opinions on the options of housing, both present and what they would like to or not to see.

- The majority of respondents want to **target new housing developments surrounding the Village of Shelby** limits or to allow most landowners to subdivide their land and build additional new houses and neighborhoods.
- When asked if the housing options meet the needs of the residents, **34.74% responded with yes, 23.16% were unsure**. Some of the comments included:
 - » Housing is rundown
 - » Cost of living is too high, no affordable housing for kids to leave home
 - » New homes of all sizes should be on big lots, not stacked on top of each other
 - » Not enough housing
 - » Need more options of sizes and types for different stages of life
 - » Retirement options are missing
- **44.29% of respondents are supportive of the Township exploring opportunities to implement “missing middle” housing**, 30.10% said it depends on where.
- The **majority believes that accessory dwelling units (ADUs) should be allowed** with either minimum regulation, or some regulations and rules.
- When it comes to public water and sewer utilities, over 50% think the Township should encourage expansion wherever feasible.

PARKS

The following responses are regarding the adequacy of parks and trail infrastructure in the Township.

- 72.46% of respondents think that Shelby Township should continue to pursue opportunities for new parks and recreation amenities.
- Most would like to see passive recreation or conservation areas, senior and youth programs, neighborhood parks and playgrounds, followed by bike trails or expanded road shoulders. Other responses include:
 - » Public pool or splash pad
 - » Track, gym, or exercise equipment
 - » Focus on maintaining what we already have
 - » Spaces to grill and enjoy the outdoors
 - » Dog parks
 - » Trails for off road vehicles
 - » Skate park/rink
 - » Natural playground
- Respondents voted relatively evenly on the things they would like to see in Shelby Community Park with the exception of **public art and concessions being the lowest voted categories**.

- **66.05% of respondents said they never visit Shelby Township Bark Park** and most have no opinion.
- **30.73% would be interested in a new sports or recreation facility** with the majority voting for a walking track, exercise classes, and basketball court followed by a volleyball court, tennis/pickleball court, or batting cage.
 - » In regard to where future facilities should go, residents responded with:
 - New Era Village
 - Any of the unused grade school locations, like New Era or Thomas Read
 - Shelby Road or Oceana Drive
 - Hart
 - Next to the new park or the bike trail
 - Old apple juice plant
 - Within walking distance to schools and neighborhoods

NATURAL FEATURES

The following general statements are regarding the natural features of Shelby Township including farmland and rural areas:

- **43.96% think the Township should actively pursue farmland preservation policies and programs,** 42.12% said it depends on the program type.
- **42.80% said they would support the expansion of permitted uses in the Agricultural zoning district** to allow for farmers to pursue options to collect supplemental income.



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Population and Economic Analysis



Demographic Context

Shelby Township and the Village of Shelby are closely integrated as a community since the Village is surrounded by the Township. The Census Bureau considers villages in Michigan to be dependent upon the townships in which they are located. Therefore, the population count for a village is included in the Township total. In Shelby Township, this means the entire population of the Village of Shelby and the appropriate portion of the Village of New Era are included in Township values. Trends in the villages also impact trends in the Township. Village totals can be assumed to be incorporated in the Shelby Township totals unless specifically stated otherwise.

Further, the Township contracted the Bowen National Research group to assist with demographic updates as they relate to the Township's housing status and conditions. The results of the demographic analysis are exclusive to Shelby Township. Therefore, some of the data and information utilized in this Chapter derive from the results of the analysis conducted by Bowen National Research.

Population

The Table below compares total population counts for the comparison communities between the years 2000 and 2020. In general, the Township has experienced an overall population increase over the sample period. Further, Shelby Township experienced the highest population growth over the entire sample year period and comparison communities in the region. The Village of Shelby experienced the highest population growth over a 10-year period, between 2000-2010 with a 7.9% increase. However, the population subsequently dropped between 2010-2020. According to the US Census data described below, it can be concluded that Shelby Township experienced the most consistent steady population increase over the last 20 years.

Population increases can have overall impacts on various aspects of a community. This can include a need for more housing units, more housing typologies and options, expanding parks and recreation needs, more development pressure for commercial and employment centers, and other similar land use themes. The Table below includes a breakdown of population growth between years 2000-2020.

Community	2000	2010	2020	2000-2010 % Change	2010-2020 % Change	2000-2020 % Change
Shelby Township	3,951	4,069	4,109	+3.0%	+1%	+3.8%
Hart Township	2,026	1,853	2,028	-8.5%	+9.4%	+0.1%
Ferry Township	1,296	1,292	1,271	-0.3%	-1.6%	-1.2%
Grant Township	2,932	2,976	3,002	+1.5%	+1.5%	+2.3%
Benona Township	1,520	1,437	1,425	-5.8%	-0.8%	-6.7%
Village of Shelby	1,914	2,065	1,964	7.9%	-4.9%	+2.5%

Source: US Census

According to a study conducted by Bowen National Research in 2023, the following key findings as they relate to the Township's population and people were identified:

- "Minorities comprise 23.8% of the Township's population, which is much larger than Oceana County (16.5%), but less than the State of Michigan (26.1%).
- Married persons represent 55.4% of the adult population in Shelby Township, which is lower than the share reported for Oceana County (57.1%) but higher than the State of Michigan (49%).
- Approximately 11.3% of the population lives in poverty, which is lower than Oceana County (12.0%) and the State of Michigan (13.3%).
- The annual movership rate (population moving within or to Shelby Township) is 13.6%, which is higher than Oceana County (10.0%) and the State of Michigan (12.7%)."

More information on demographic analysis for Shelby Township can be found in Addendum E: Community Overview, as written by Bowen National Research.

Age

The table below includes an age breakdown of the residents of Shelby Township. The median age in the Township is 36.2 years old. Given this, it can be deduced that the Township has a relatively young population. This is consistent with the overall population increase data as described above, in that it is likely that the average household in the Township contains younger families with multiple children or multiple generations under the same roof.

To put age data into context, the age groups in the Township can be grouped into several “age cohorts.” The age cohorts include:

- Infants/preschool: 5.3% of the Township population
- School-Aged: 24.2% of the Township population
- Young Families: 24.3% of the Township population
- Mature Families: 24.2% of the Township population
- Retirement: 22.1% of the Township population

As the Table below demonstrates, the age group with the highest percentage of the Township’s population includes children aged 5-14 years old. This is consistent with the overall younger median age of the Township. It should be noted that this finding of a younger population is unique compared to other rural communities in the region and State of Michigan. In general, rural communities tend to be comprised of older folks and an aging population.

Age Group	Total Population	Percentage
Under 5 years	218	5.3%
5-14 years	646	15.7%
15-19 years	348	8.5%
20-29 years	565	13.8%
30-39 years	431	10.5%
40-49 years	480	11.6%
50-59 years	519	12.6%
60-69 years	567	13.8%
70+ years	340	8.3%

Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

A younger population can have several planning implications that are significant for this Master Plan update. As previously noted, a younger population is aligned with a growing population in that there is a great need for more housing opportunities, more housing typologies, and more opportunities for workforce housing. Further, a younger population can indicate more pressures for parks and recreation amenities, commercial and entertainment land uses (such as restaurants, breweries, etc.), more pressure for school enrollment, and a higher need for public amenities such as library programming.

Lastly, another important feature to consider regarding the Township’s age breakdown is the near-even percentage of the age cohorts as described above. The Township has a very healthy age distribution, in that there is not one age group that drastically outweighs the others. The Township has a very healthy stock of residents of all stages of life. This also contributes to the steady population increase. It is likely that many individuals are raised in the Township and tend to stay there throughout the duration of adulthood and retirement.

Ethnicity

Persons of Hispanic descent have a strong presence in the community and have played an important role in the local economy and agriculture. It should be noted that the US Census classifies Hispanic or Latino origin as an ethnicity, not a race. As such, the racial context of the Township is predominately white. When considering ethnic makeup, that is the notable population of individuals with Hispanic or Latino origin.

In 2020, 32.9% percent of the population (1,350 residents) was estimated to have Hispanic or Latino origin. It should be noted that the US Census classifies Hispanic or Latino origin as an ethnicity, not a race. As such, the racial context of the Township is predominately white. When considering ethnic makeup, that is the notable population of individuals with Hispanic or Latino origin.

Ethnicity	Total Population	Percentage
Hispanic or Latino	1,350	32.9%
White	2,569	62.5%
Black or African American	18	0.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native	23	0.6%
Asian	9	0.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	0.0%
Some Other Race	16	0.4%
Two or More Races	123	3.0%
Total	4,109	100%

Source: 2020 US Census

Households

According to Addendum E: Community Overview, a study conducted by Bowen National Research, the following data and trends as they relate to households in Shelby Township have been identified. Please note that this data below excludes the Village of Shelby within the counts.

The Table below includes an analysis of the number of households and household trends within Shelby Township from 2010-2020. Additionally, the Table below includes a projection of the anticipated households in year 2027. According to the data below, the Township experienced an overall decrease in the number of households between the years 2020-2022 and it is projected to remain the same, without growth or decline, into year 2027.

This data and projection, as related to the general population counts in 2020, can indicate that there may be a presence of households with multiple people and multiple generations – given that the number of households did not experience a substantial increase, but the population has been steadily climbing. This can also relate to the Township’s younger population composition. According to Bowen National Research, “the lack of projected household growth is likely attributed to, in part, the lack of available rental and for-sale housing on the market.”

	2010 Census	2020 Census	% Change 2010-2020	2022 ACS Estimated	% Change 2020-2022	2027 Projected	% Change 2022-2027
Shelby Township	716	726	+1.4%	722	-0.6%	722	0.0%
Oceana County	10,174	10,320	+1.4%	10,266	-0.5%	10,300	+0.3%
State of Michigan	3,872,302	4,041,552	+4.4%	4,055,460	+0.3%	4,067,324	+0.3%

Source: 2010, 2020 US Census, ESRI, Urban Decision Group, Bowen National Research

Education and Employment

Educational attainment is also related to various aspects of a community, such as age, income, housing values, commuting times, and other facets. The Township's educational attainment is described below. As the Table indicates, the highest percentage of the Township's adult population 25 years and older have a high school diploma, but not a college degree. This is consistent with many communities in the region, and across the State of Michigan. Overall, the Township is an educated community.

Educational Attainment (Population 25 years and over)	Percentage of Residents
Less than high school graduate	8%
High school graduate (or equivalent)	25.5%
Some college or associate degree	18.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	11.7%

Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

The following Table includes the percentage of employed Township residents aged 16 and older per industry sector. This is not an analysis of what jobs are available in the Township, but the industries in which currently employed residents work. This analysis can indicate whether the Township should consider targeting specific industries for future commercial or industrial development, where market gaps may exist, ties to income and poverty levels, and other economic indicators.

As shown in the table below, the highest percentage of employed residents aged 16 and older are employed in the manufacturing industry. This finding is very consistent with other communities in the region as well as the State of Michigan, being a heavy manufacturing state. However, uniquely to Shelby Township is the percentage of residents employed in the agricultural industry – which is the second highest percentage of individuals employed in the Township.

Industry Sector	Percentage of Employed Residents 16 and Older
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	18.1%
Construction	9.9%
Manufacturing	24.2%
Wholesale Trade	3.6%
Retail Trade	7.8%
Transportation, warehousing, logistics	1.4%
Information	0.0%
Finance and insurance, real estate and leasing	3.3%
Professional scientific, management, and administrative	5.4%
Educational services, healthcare, and social assistance	15.0%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food service	3.9%
Other services	5.9%
Public administration	1.6%

Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Commuting

Additionally, analyzing commuting patterns are significant to understanding how Township residents work and travel. According to the 2022 ACS 5-Year estimates, the highest percentage of employed residents travel less than 10 minutes to get to work (about 30.5%). The second highest percentage travel between 10-14 minutes to get to work. This can indicate that many Township residents both live and work in Shelby Township. Due to the Township's prevalent agricultural land uses, this finding is consistent with the general fabric of the Township. A notable number of individuals work in the agricultural or manufacturing industry, thus it is likely that they are employed in the Township.

Further, due to the Township's general location, a notable distance from larger urbanized centers, such as Muskegon, Whitehall, Grand Rapids, it is also likely that Township residents tend to work within very close proximity to home, given that other employment centers are not very close for a daily commute.

According to Bowen National Research, the following patterns and trends relating to median household income in the Township were identified and outlined in the Table below.

	2010 Census	2022 ACS Estimates	% Change 2010-2022	2017 Projected	% Change 2022-2027
Shelby Township	\$40,000	\$63,077	+57.7%	\$71,713	+13.7%
Oceana County	\$37,021	\$28,499	+58.0%	\$66,009	+12.8%
State of Michigan	\$46,042	\$65,522	+42.3%	\$75,988	+16.0%

Source: 2020, 2020 US Census, ESRI, Urban Decision Group, Bowen National Research

As the Table above suggests, the median household income in Shelby Township is projected to increase approximately 13.7% between the years 2022-2027. Further, the Township experienced an overall growth of median household income between the years 2010-2022, significantly higher than the State of Michigan. The median household income in Shelby Township is also significantly higher than that of Oceana County and more aligned with the State.

Various aspects of the community can be deduced while using income data. For example, income levels are directly related to consumer trends and market trends. Income levels and trends can indicate where residents of the Township typically spend excess income and can also indicate areas where market gaps may exist. Income levels are also directly related to housing costs and the number of residents who may be considered “housing burdened”.



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Housing Analysis



General Overview

The topic of housing has continued to be an ongoing discussion throughout the State of Michigan and across the Nation. With housing and rental costs continuing to rise, above and beyond associated incomes, it is significant to identify tangible and realistic housing opportunities in all communities, regardless of the context – urban, suburban, or rural. In Shelby Township, a majority of the housing stock is comprised of either accessory residential uses to agricultural productions, or large lot residential with accessory buildings. Therefore, in order for the Township to identify real-life solutions to address the housing gap in a meaningful way, it is necessary to understand current housing trends as well as solutions that are realistic and applicable to the Township in a rural context.

What Influences Housing Demand?

A number of demographic and preference factors influence housing demand. Population growth is a key factor in driving demand, but the number of households being formed is a more direct determinant of housing demand. Four key factors that influence the overall level of demand for housing are:

- **Longevity.** As life expectancy increases, people remain in their homes longer. This reduces the supply of housing units that are available to new households. In 1960, the average life expectancy was 69.8 years; today it is 78.5 years.
- **Single-Person Households.** This trend is linked to longevity, as the majority of single person households are older women who have outlived their partner. However, later marriage age and increased rates of divorce also accounts for some of this increase. Single person households are less likely to own their housing units than multi-person households.
- **Hidden Demand.** High unemployment rates and a shortage of available housing or unaffordable housing (either as a result of a high housing value to income ratio or a high cost of borrowing) can result in people continuing to live with parents or relatives, moving back in with parents or relatives, or sharing houses with others. With the advent of improved remote-work technology, some workers have chosen to work from home or only commute part-time. This trend has increased housing demand in rural communities like Shelby, where the appeal of large lots and rural character outweighs long commute times.
- **Migration.** Higher net rates of inward migration result in greater demand for housing. On the other hand, outward migration reduces demand for housing.



What Influences Tenure Choice?

Projecting the overall volume of demand is only part of the story. To properly consider how future demand might be met requires analysis of how overall demand might translate into demand for owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing. A different range of factors influence tenure choice:

- **Affordability.** This refers to how affordable owner-occupation is, and it is a factor that has particularly significant implications for first-time buyers. There is strong evidence to suggest that a high price-to-income ratio creates barriers to home ownership, and that an economic slowdown reduces demand for new housing.
- **Mortgage Market.** Closely linked to housing affordability is the cost of borrowing and access to financing for owner occupation through the mortgage market. Without access to obtainable mortgages, owner-occupancy is not possible. When housing prices are growing strongly, lenders are more willing to lend – including offering higher loan-to-value ratios and reduced down payment requirements. During the housing bubble of the 2000s, these practices tilted to excess, and ultimately resulted in the economic crash of 2008 as households with untenable mortgages began defaulting in high numbers. Since then interest rates have remained low by historical standards, but as of the early 2020s, they are poised to rise.
- **Confidence.** When confidence is high and there is an expectation of rising incomes and housing equity growth, demand can remain high even when housing is unaffordable and the cost of borrowing is high. Under these conditions, unaffordable housing prices can result in reduced savings rates rather than reduced demand for owner occupation as households choose to funnel money into homeownership rather than saving. The relationship also works in reverse, and during times of economic uncertainty households are less likely to commit to homeownership.

What Influences Housing Type Choice?

Beyond tenure preference, there are also preference considerations in how people choose to live – for instance, large lot, small lot, attached, or multi-family housing. Several factors influence housing choice.

- **Age.** People have different preferences for housing throughout their lives. Young, single people tend to prefer smaller units in high densities, families prefer larger lots, and retirees congregate in areas where their needs can be met.
- **Household Size.** Household size makes a big difference in housing type choice. Larger households, especially families, choose large units, often on large lots. Single people tend to prefer smaller units. Household size has been steadily dropping nationally over the past few decades, but housing type supply has not followed this trend, leading to a demand for more, smaller units.
- **Neighborhood Preferences.** People have preferences for certain amenities and characteristics in their neighborhoods. Some prefer to be near retail, while others prefer more natural space. These preferences play out in housing type preference, as people pick housing types that fit their preferred neighborhood identity.

HOUSING TYPES

Of the existing housing units in the Township, in 2022 homes in the Township generally consist of the following types:

Housing Type	Total Number of Units
1 unit detached	1,260
1 unit attached	15
2 units	64
3-9 units	81
10-19 units	24
20+ units	16
Mobile Home	150

Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

As common in most communities, the largest percentage of housing units in the Township is comprised of single- family detached units. This equates to about 78% of the Township’s total housing units. However, it is also noteworthy that the Township (as well as the Village of Shelby and New Era) have additional housing types. There is a notable number of units within the 3-9 unit range. The Master Plan will take into account other opportunities for the Township to support additional housing units of varying appropriate densities.

AGE OF STRUCTURE

As the Table below demonstrates, the largest number of homes in the Township were constructed between the years 1980 to 1999 – which is fairly common throughout the State. However, that amount is fairly close to homes constructed between 1960-1979 as well as homes constructed before 1939. These trends relate to the steady increase of the Township’s population, younger and multi-generational families living in the Township, and legacy homes, such as old farmhouses.

The age of current housing units can translate into future policymaking in considering supporting options for aging in place, rental inspection programs, repair assistance programming, or other policies.

Year Structure Built	Number of Units – Townshipwide
2020 or Later	0
2010 to 2019	23
2000 to 2009	170
1980 to 1999	384
1960 to 1979	323
1940 to 1959	237
1939 or Earlier	302

Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Further, housing values can also highlight information relating to the current housing status in a community. For example, median housing values can indicate the general affordability of housing in the community. This can also indicate an approximate amount of residents that can be considered “housing burdened” in which an excess of 30% of their total monthly income is spent on housing alone.

OWNER AND RENTER CHARACTERISTICS

In 2020, Shelby Township has a total of 1,623 housing units. Of that number, approximately 1,455 units are classified as occupied, and 168 units are classified as vacant. This equates to about 90% and 10%, respectively.

According to the 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the total number of housing units is approximately 1,610 units. Of the total number of units, approximately 80% are owner-occupied and 20% are renter occupied. A healthy distribution of owner and renter occupied units contributes to the overall condition and status of a community's housing stock. However, it is common in rural communities to have a significantly higher percentage of owner-occupied units than renter occupied units. This can relate to longer travel and commute times to work, less public transportation options, multiple generational families living in the same home, and other factors. If the percentage of renter occupied units were to increase, it would likely not have a great effect on the Township's housing stock or affordability.

For additional information relating to the owner and renter characteristics in the Township, refer to Addendum E: Community Overview, as developed by Bowen National Research, 2023. According to this data, a key conclusion gathered states, *"Overall, the data suggests that the households in Shelby Township, particularly renter householders, are much more likely to be affected by overcrowding, and owner households are more likely to have incomplete facilities (e.g., plumbing or kitchen) as compared to the County and the State."*

RENT AND HOUSING VALUES

According to the 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the median monthly rent paid is approximately \$705 per month. This, coupled with about 12.6% of the Township's population below poverty level, can determine that there is a notable percentage of Township residents who can be considered "housing burdened."

In 2022, the median home value in the Township was \$124,900. In 2010, the median home value was \$104,800. This is an overall increase of \$20,100 over the 10-year time period. Of course, this is a common trend as seen in the State and Nationwide. Other Townships surrounding Shelby, such as Benona, have a slightly higher median value, likely due to its location on Lake Michigan.

According to the Bowen National Research data, *"the renter-occupied housing in a market is generally classified as one of two categories, multifamily apartments or non-conventional rentals. Multifamily apartments are typically properties consisting of five or more rental units within a structure, while non-conventional rentals are usually defined as rental properties with four or less units within a structure."* Data analysis arrived at the following conclusion, *"Typically, healthy well-balanced markets have rental housing vacancy rates generally between 4% and 6%. As such, it appears the Shelby Township market has a shortage of multifamily apartments, which may represent a potential future development opportunity."*

Further, regarding non-conventional rental housing, Bowen National Research also notes that, *"...a disproportionate share of the overall rental housing stock in Shelby Township is comprised of non-conventional rentals,"* In this context, non-conventional rentals include renter-occupied single-family homes, mobile homes, duplexes, units over storefronts, and other similar type housing units.

Given this conclusion, this Master Plan explores opportunities for additional new housing types to be supported in the Township to address the housing gaps and needs of the community.

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Existing Land Uses



General Overview

The general pattern of land use in Shelby Township is molded by several key parameters, including the large percentage of agricultural and vacant land, the proximity to major transportation corridors such as US-31. From the time of its organization, agriculture has been the predominant land use in Shelby Township.

However, over the years, large lot residential has also become an increasingly frequent land use in the Township. Currently, the greatest percentage of land area is classified as agricultural with accessory residential dwellings. Rural Residential is the second largest land use within the Township. These lots are generally large in size (multiple acres) and do not consist of primarily agricultural uses with accessory residential. Alternatively, these lots are comprised of primarily residential uses with perhaps some accessory agricultural, such as small personal hobby farms.

Further, many of the residential land uses in the Township are the result of land divisions occurring on otherwise predominately agricultural land. This is a very common land use in rural areas, given that many farmers and agricultural producers split off land for their own residential uses, or for family.

TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS & NETWORKS

The land use pattern is also shaped by the location of major transportation corridors and connecting networks. Most commercial and industrial growth in the Township has occurred around the immediate periphery of US-31 and Oceana Drive. These corridors continue to be an important development consideration for the Future Land Use Plan, as most residents of Shelby Township leave the Township for shopping, medical services, restaurants, and other similar needs.

LAND DIVISION PATTERNS

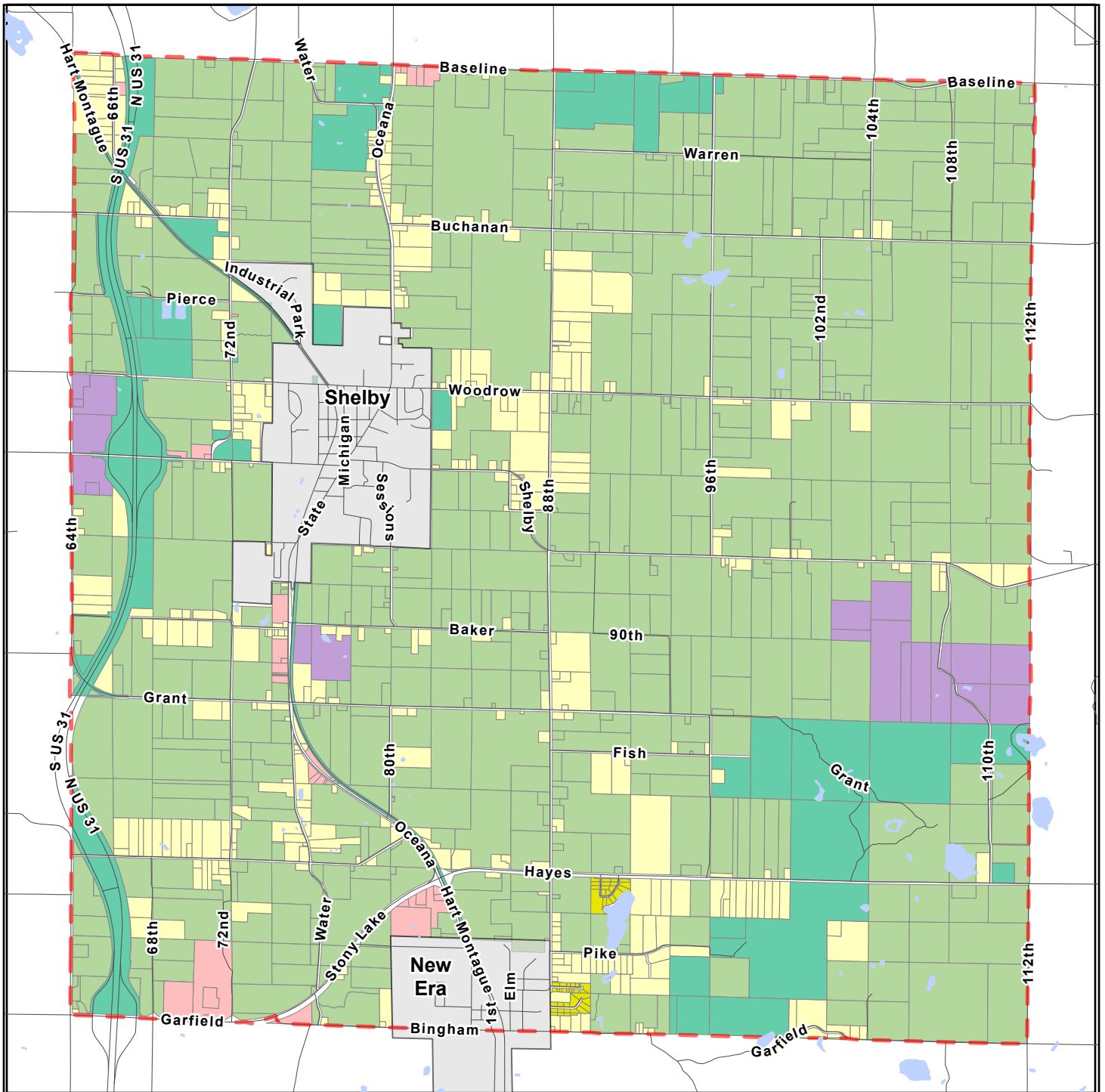
Lot splits have had a greater impact on the character of development than any other factor. As a consequence, three distinct single-family development patterns/lifestyles have become predominant in the Township:

- **Single-family farm households.** The general characteristic of these lots agriculture in nature with accessory single-family dwellings. This also includes multiple buildings necessary for farming operations and potentially migrant housing.
- **Conventional single-family subdivision-style development,** which has occurred on a limited scale, primarily in the southern part of the Township. The characteristics of these parcels include smaller lots and homes that are closer together along a cul-de-sac or small private road.
- **Large-lot single-family parcels** which are most often split off larger agricultural parcels. The use on these parcels generally include primarily single-family residential without the presence of agricultural activities.



Land Use Categories

1. **Agricultural/Open Space.** Agricultural lands are parcels of land actively used for commercial agricultural purposes. The primary land use in Shelby Township is centered around agricultural uses and agricultural production with accessory residential. This category also includes open space, which is characterized by large lots without any physical improvements or developments. This category also is inclusive of agri-tourism uses, such as u-pick operations, farmers markets, or farm stands.
2. **Rural Residential.** In general, this land use category consists of single-family dwellings located on large lots. These lots likely do not have active farmland or agricultural production land uses. Rural Residential land uses are likely the result of a land division from adjacent farmlands. Additionally, Rural Residential land uses include any hobby farms, but farming is not the primary use of the parcel. Many Rural Residential lots have multiple buildings, such as a primary residential home and accessory structures, such as pole barns and sheds.
3. **Single Family Residential.** Single Family Residential land uses are improved single land parcels or portions of parcels having one family detached dwelling units. The residential land use category includes acreage parcels and subdivision - style lots. The fabric of these areas generally consists of smaller-sized lots compared to the Rural Residential lots and have a more traditional neighborhood appearance.
4. **Commercial.** Commercial land uses are improved parcels where products, goods or services are sold at retail, or are used for professional services, such as medical and dental centers, financial institutions, professional offices and business offices. These uses are generally located along US-31 as well as south of M-20 and west of Oceana Drive. The popular Lewis Adventure Farm & Zoo has likely been one of the key drivers of Commercial land uses within this area. Because of the regional popularity and intensity of Lewis Adventure Farm & Zoo, the existing land use designation has been identified as more closely related to Commercial than Agricultural.
5. **Industrial.** Industrial land uses are parcels devoted to the assembling, fabricating, manufacturing, packaging, warehousing or treatment of products, wholesaling, storage and/or servicing of heavy equipment. The Township does not have a strong Industrial presence. Some of the Industrial land uses in the Township are related to mineral mining extraction processes as well as general industrial businesses located within close proximity to US-31.
6. **Public/Semi-Public/ROW.** This Existing Land Use Category includes the areas designated for parks and recreation, government owned properties, and right-of-way. Because US-31 is a major corridor, much of the surrounding land uses are designated as right-of-way. A large area of land in the Township is owned by the US Department of Agriculture, which has also been designated as Public/Semi-Public. Other lands located within this designation generally consist of Township-owned properties, Township parks, and the Hart-Montague Trail.



Existing Land Use

Shelby Township, Oceana County, MI

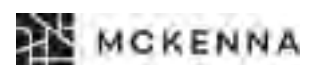
May 20, 2024

LEGEND

- Agriculture/Open Space
- Rural Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public/ROW
- Bodies of Water
- Shelby Township

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Oceana County 2024. McKenna 2024.



Land Use Issues

This analysis has uncovered several land use issues which could, over time if unaddressed, affect the quality of life, function, and attractiveness of the community.

Random Single Family Residential Growth and Land Use. A significant amount of new, high-quality residential development is occurring on large acreage parcels scattered throughout the Township rather than within planned subdivisions. This pattern of growth allows residents to experience a comfortable rural lifestyle, unencumbered by the urban characteristics of a subdivision. However, over the long term, this pattern of residential land use could lead to large scale loss of agricultural land, inefficient use of land located to the rear of the frontage parcels, and difficulty in providing public services in a cost-effective manner.

Protection of Natural Features and the Rural Character. People move to Shelby Township because of its natural features and rural character. As more and more people move into the Township, though, the natural features are altered, and rural character may slowly diminish. The challenge is to enforce guidelines in order to achieve proper balance between new development and preservation of the existing rural character. Shelby Township has a considerable amount of open land worthy of being preserved.

Protection of Agricultural Lands. One important decision that a rural community must make is whether to pursue the preservation of rural character and open space, or the preservation of agriculture. The retention of rural character, if it involves non-farm residential development and fragmentation of agricultural lands, may not preserve agriculture. Rural open space does, however, provide a good buffer between areas of good agriculture and more developed areas.

If agricultural preservation is the goal, other land uses (residential or otherwise) should not be allowed to infiltrate large contiguous blocks of agricultural land. The fragmented development makes the land less attractive to future agriculture, particularly as farms consolidate. Fragmented lots of farmland are more difficult to farm, because of loss of efficiency and other concerns, such as complaints from residential neighbors regarding noise, dust and odors.

Transportation Relationships and Land Use. Most Township residents work and shop in other communities. As population growth continues, there will be an increase in the demand for services. Consequently, it is essential that there be a balanced relationship between the transportation system and overall land use pattern. Special attention must be focused on linkages to the broader regional network. Most of the roads within the Township are gravel roads, and even the paved roads lack turn lanes and passing lanes. Congestion could occur if residential development is permitted without adequate collector roads to carry traffic to and from the major road corridors.

Relationship to Adjacent Villages & Townships. In some respects, the Township, the Village of Shelby, and the Village of New Era have formed a symbiotic relationship. For example:

- With the limited amount of commercial development in Shelby, Township residents are likely to do their shopping in one of the Villages.
- Public water/sewer availability in both Vilages heavilly influcence land use patterns in the Township.
- The development and economic well-being of Shelby Township, the Village of Shelby, and the Village of New Era, as well as the surrounding townships depend, in part, on important policy decisions that lie ahead related to the mutually beneficial relationships.

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Transportation



Overview

The road system is of vital importance for the overall well-being of Shelby Township and its residents. At its most basic level, the road system provides the means of moving people and goods within and through the Township. Automobile transportation is the predominant mode of transportation for Shelby's residents. The road system serves many additional functions as well.

Roads and road rights-of-way provide locations for public utilities, such as gas, electric, telephone lines and water and sewer lines. Roads provide the means by which emergency and public services are delivered to residents. Roads provide access to parcels of land, thereby enabling development and perhaps reducing the possibility of preserving large, undisturbed tracts of open lands. Finally, the road system establishes the basic form of the Township.

Because of the many functions of the road system, transportation has a significant impact on the economy, environmental quality, energy consumption, land development, and the general character of the Township. Accordingly, it is prudent to understand the transportation system and identify its deficiencies and to prepare alternatives to address those deficiencies, as applicable.

Road Classifications

The purpose served by each road or highway in the circulation system is often described through a road classification system. Road classifications may identify the type and volume of traffic that are appropriate for each segment of the road network (functional classification) or based on the entity that owns and/or maintains the road (jurisdictional classification). The classification establishes expectations among residents, Township officials, and transportation engineers concerning the characteristics of each road.

For the purposes of transportation planning, the Michigan's "Act 51" road funding system includes the following road categories, shown on the map on the following page.

The roads in Shelby Township are maintained largely by the Oceana County Road Commission or the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

It is also a priority for Shelby Township to keep roads in acceptable and safe condition and continually monitor road maintenance activities and needs. Over recent years, since the update of the previous Master Plan, the Township has invested funds and fostered partnerships with local funding agencies and road agencies to secure financing and implementation of much needed road improvement projects along major road corridors in the Township. Throughout the duration of this Plan, the Township will continue to monitor road conditions and keep abreast of funding opportunities to invest in road improvements.

UNLIMITED ACCESS US AND STATE HIGHWAY

These are regional thoroughfares that carry traffic long distances, in addition to local traffic. Perhaps one of the most frequently traveled north-south routes in West Michigan is US-31. In Shelby Township, there are two (2) on/off ramps to access US-31. The first of which is at M-20 (south) and the second of which is located at Shelby Road (north). US-31 is classified as a Freeway or Expressway. This classification is also important to the agricultural businesses in the Township, as US-31 is a major route to provide regional highway access to transport goods and services. US-31, in total, spans north-south from Ludington to Holland. The route provides access to numerous communities including Pentwater, Muskegon, Whitehall, Grand Haven, West Olive, and Holland.

MINOR ARTERIALS

Minor arterial roads interconnect with the principal arterial system and provide trips of moderate length with a lower level of traffic volume. Minor arterial roads place more emphasis on access to lesser traffic generators than do principal arterials. The only Minor Arterial Road in Shelby Township is M-20 (also known as W. Stoney Lake Road west of Oceana Drive or Hayes Road east of Oceana Drive).

MAJOR COLLECTOR

There are several Major Collector Roads in Shelby Township. These include Baseline Road, Oceana Drive, Shelby Road, W. Hayes Road, S. 64th Avenue, and 88th Avenue. Major Collector Roads are those that are intended to carry traffic from local residential streets to nearby highways and arterial roads.

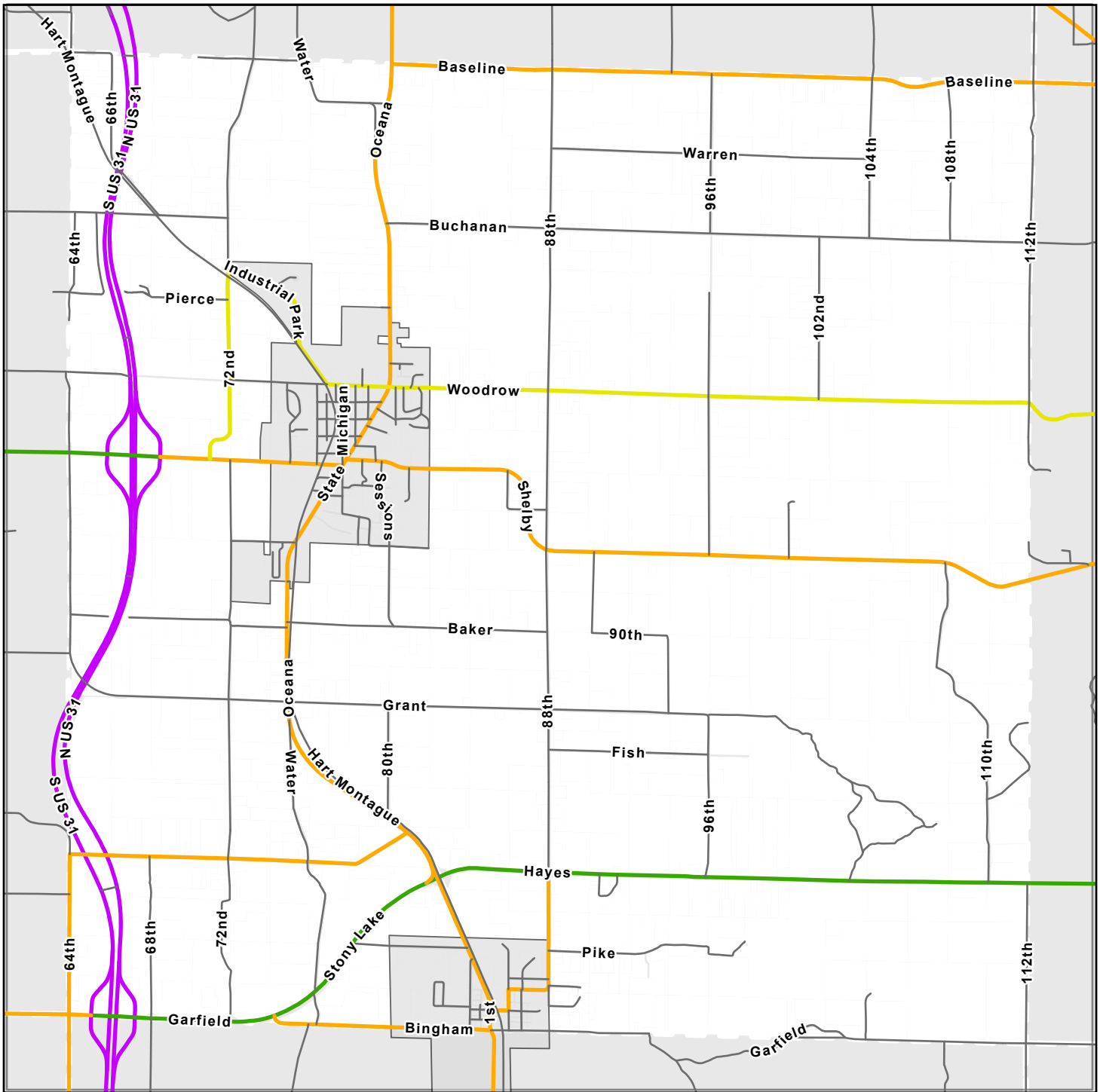
MINOR COLLECTOR

Minor Collector roads are used to connect neighborhoods to arterial roads and major collector roads. In Shelby Township, there are two (2) minor collector roads. These include Woodrow Road and 72nd Avenue.

LOCAL ROADS

Local roads primarily provide direct access to abutting properties and to collector and arterial streets. Movement of through traffic on local roads is usually discouraged. All of Shelby's public roads that do not fall into another category are local roads. These roads are typically low speeds, low traffic, and provide access to residential homes and streets. Examples of local roads in Shelby Township include Fish Road, Warren Road, Baker Road, and other similar roads.





Transportation System

Shelby Township, Oceana County, MI

May 10, 2024

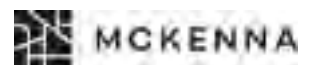
LEGEND

- 1 - Interstate
- 2 - Freeways and Expressways
- 3 - Principal Arterial
- 4 - Minor Arterial
- 5 - Major Collector
- 6 - Minor Collector
- 7 - Local



0 2,000 4,000
Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: MGCI 2022. McKenna 2024.



Oceana County Airport

The Oceana County Airport is also present in the Township, serving corporate clients and numerous private craft as a CO4 airport. This airport contains two runways, one with an asphalt surface and the other a turf surface, both of which are in good condition. In 2020, there were 22 aircraft based on the field, 21 of which were single-engine airplanes. Generally, half of the aviation traffic is transient, and the other half is local general aviation.



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Community & Recreational Facilities



General Overview

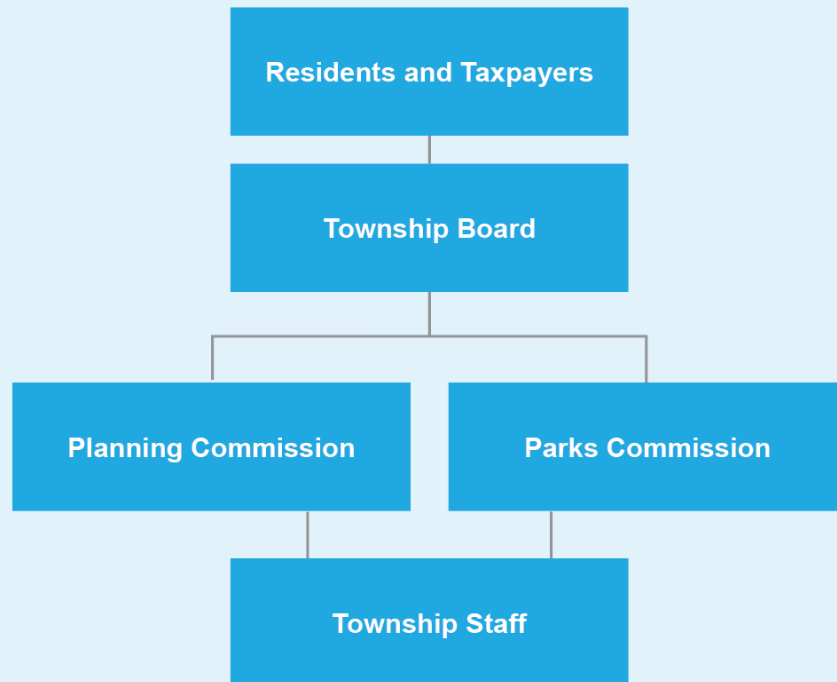
One of the primary purposes of municipal government is to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the community through the delivery of services. Shelby Township has established partnerships with surrounding communities to serve its residents, including the Village of Shelby, the Village of New Era, Hart Township, Grant Township, Ferry Township, and Benona Township.

The majority of community services are offered in the Village of Shelby boundaries, while the Township maintains a more rural landscape. The Shelby Township Hall is located within the Village of Shelby, as well as other community services such as a library, post office, public schools, and the Mercy Health Lakeshore Campus Hospital. The Village contains Thomas Read Elementary School, Middle School, and Shelby High School, which serve the majority of Shelby Township, Benona Township, and large portions of Ferry and Otto Townships. The Village's development allows Township residents to maintain a rural lifestyle while also being close to essential services and facilities.

Government Facilities

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION

The existing Township Hall is located at 204 N. Michigan Avenue, in the Village of Shelby. The Village of Shelby offices are just a few doors down from the Township offices. The general organization of Shelby Township government is illustrated by the following graphic below.



FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION SERVICES

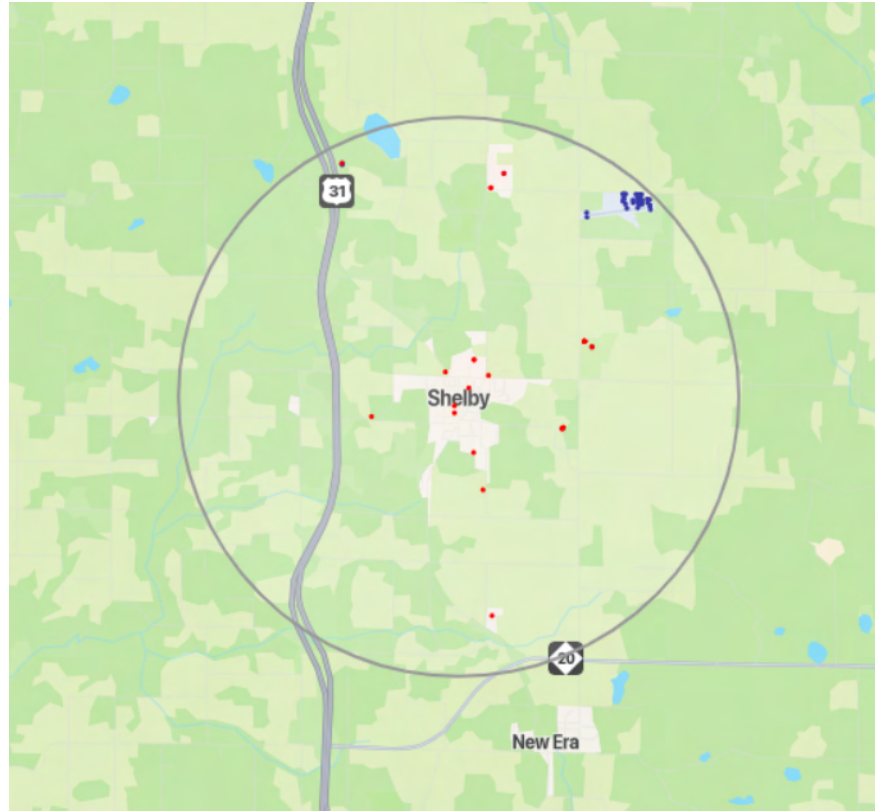
Oceana County provides police services for all Townships in the County. The Oceana County Sheriff's Department includes staffing of deputies and corrections officers and provides service 24 hours a day and 7 days per week. The Village of Shelby contains a fire station for the Shelby- Benona Fire Department. This Fire Department services Shelby and Benona Townships. The station is active in the local community and employs a fire safety educator who visits third-grade classrooms each month to deliver a fire safety message.



WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS

Wireless voice and data service is also an important part of the modern economy and lifestyle. While wireless providers consider detailed coverage data proprietary, the communications research company AntennaSearch reports wireless communications transmitters throughout the Township, though slightly more concentrated near Village of Shelby limits. The map below indicates the location of cell towers within the area.

Improved wireless service may come to the township in the form of “small cell” technology. Small cells, which are generally located on poles of 40 feet or lower, are less expensive to install and less of an aesthetic blight on the landscape than traditional cell towers (which are usually 150-200 feet tall). The State of Michigan has already enacted legislation (including an amendment to the Zoning Enabling Act) to speed the roll out of small cells, which may hasten their installation in Shelby Township and similar communities.



PUBLIC WATER AND SANITARY SEWER SERVICE

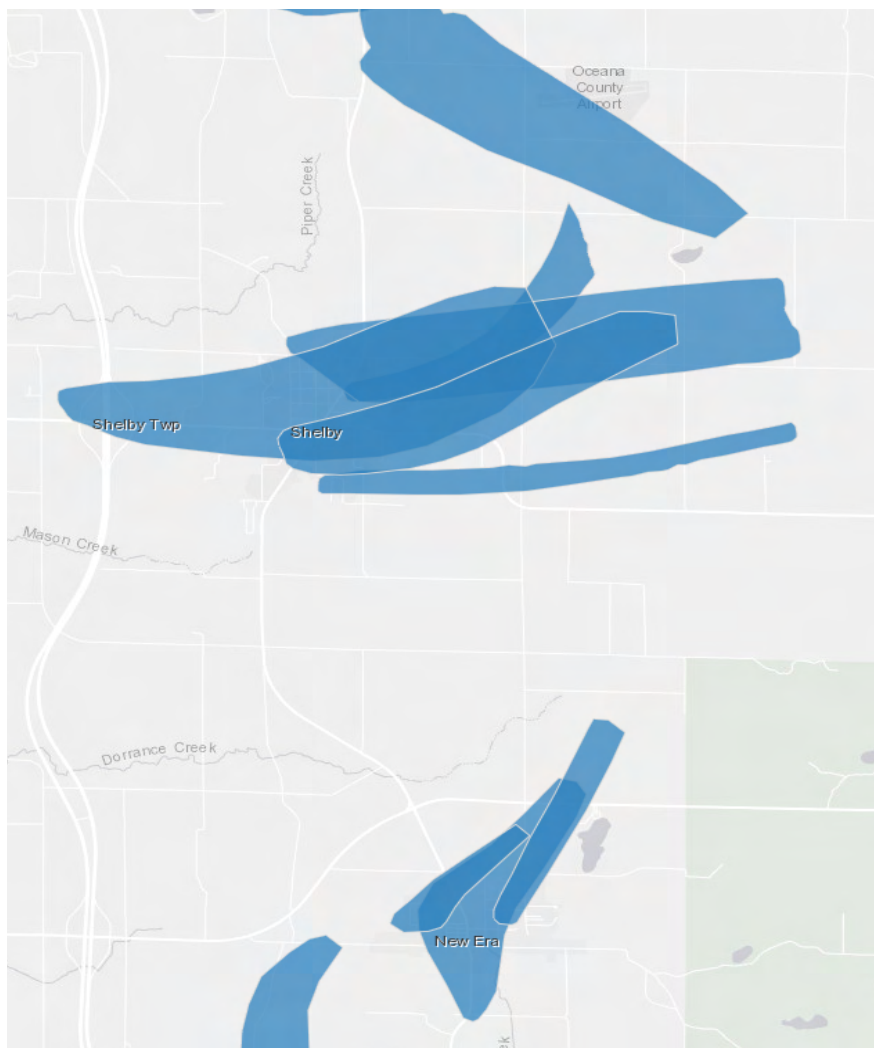
Public water and sanitary sewer are generally limited to the Village of Shelby, while the Township residents are almost entirely on private wells and septic systems. These are of various ages and conditions. Any substantial development requiring public utilities in the Township should be closely coordinated with the Village of Shelby to ensure an adequate and efficient provision of services. This may include the identification of potential annexation areas or working with the Village to define an “utility service boundary” area that designates where utility extensions may be supported in the future.

WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS

Shelby residents in areas not served by the public sanitary sewer system must utilize septic systems. Most the residential parcels in the Township have their own personal septic system, given the lack of water/sewer available in the Township.

Areas not served by the public water systems must utilize a well. Most of the parcels within Shelby Township include a well/septic setup for water and waste services. The Village of Shelby includes a municipal water/sewer system. However, when parcels are “hooked up” into the system, said parcels tend to be annexed into the Village.

According to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), the Shelby Community has several wellhead protection areas (see blue areas indicated on the map below). According to EGLE, a wellhead protection area “A Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA) is the surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or well field, supplying a public water system, through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach such water well or well field. It is that area which contributes groundwater to a public water supply well.” In this context, the term “contamination” as used by EGLE likely is related to land uses associated with agricultural operations.



Further, according to EGLE, “An important aspect of wellhead protection is the general acceptance of the concept by community leaders and the development of land use and land protection measures which support wellhead protection. One means of providing for intelligent land use development is the incorporation of the wellhead protection concept and the WHPA into a community's Master Plan. Incorporation in the Master Plan aids community leaders in recognizing the extent of the WHPA and the need to set goals and objectives for community development which serve to protect the PWSS. This approach provides a mechanism for the effective use of local regulations in support of wellhead protection. Such support may come through the development of community wide zoning provisions, the development of a local site plan review process, or development of local standards for operation and maintenance of facilities located in the WHPA.” As such, this Master Plan explores these concepts further, in targeting appropriate land uses to areas that have been identified by EGLE as wellhead protection areas.

EGLE is the primary responsible organization for leading efforts in source water protection. Thus, EGLE manages the Source Water Protection Program. This Program assists communities with using groundwater and surface water for municipal drinking water supply systems, in protecting the water source. The goal of the Program is to minimize potential for contamination, by means of identification and protection of the area that contributes water to municipal water supply.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Shelby Township maintains a park committee, which oversees aspects of park and recreation development such as maintenance, acquisition, and funding. With guidance from the parks committee, the Township created a 5-Year Park and Recreation plan to help instruct future parks and recreation efforts in the Township. This plan also makes the Township eligible for grants and funding from the Michigan DNR.

The Village of Shelby also maintains a park committee, which prepares recommendations for funding to the Village Council. The Village Council is responsible for the operation and maintenance of parks and recreation in the Village through its annual budget process. Shelby Township reimburses the Village for any cost-sharing that may occur. Because the Village contains elementary, middle, and high schools, improvements to these facilities are often funded by the school district. Other community parks are often funded through general funds or donations of time, materials, labor, or in-kind services.

Shelby Township's natural beauty offers opportunities to enjoy nature, open space, and different types of recreation. The Township owns all the cemeteries in the Shelby community and has plans for a new park in the Township. The proposed park is located on Buchanan Road, near 72nd Avenue, and designed to provide opportunities for exercise and to enjoy nature in a well-maintained area. The concept includes trail connections, play structures, and several new sports fields. The Township also contains the Oceana Golf Club, which offers a public golf course in the community. This course was established as the first 18-hole golf course in Oceana County, offering scenic views in the Township's rolling countryside. A PGA professional is also on staff and the facility offers a five-hole putting green, cart rentals, and pro shop.

The Village contains all other parks in the Shelby community. Aside from school facilities, the most popular are Monument Park, Getty Park, and the grounds of the Department of Public Works.

Just beyond the Township boundaries are many recreational options. Several Oceana County parks are located in surrounding townships, including Gales Pond, Mill Pond, Marshville Dam, and Doolittle County Parks, along with the Flip City Disc Golf Park. The Township is also a short drive away from Lake Michigan and Silver Lake State Park, the Pentwater River State Game Area, and the Huron-Manistee National Forest. These surrounding parks and natural areas offer abundant options for recreation in the broader region.



HART MONTAGUE TRAIL

The William Field Memorial Hart-Montague trail also meanders through Shelby and is a highlight of the community, providing regional recreation opportunities and attracting outsiders to the community. This trail provides access from the Township north to the City of Hart and south through the Village of Rothbury and eventually the City of Whitehall. It also provides an opportunity for transportation between the Village and Township of Shelby. This trail has the opportunity to provide economic stimulus to the Shelby community through its regional connections. Further, areas surrounding the Trail may be an appropriate location for targeted residential density, or commercial development, given the Trail's regional significance.



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Natural Features



General Overview

Some of Shelby's defining characteristics are its large areas of natural landscape, productive agricultural lands, scenic vistas and rural countryside. Natural features protection can provide many benefits to Shelby Township residents including the following:

Environmental Benefits. The most obvious benefit of natural features is the aesthetic and psychological benefit of their beauty that is restful to the eye and rejuvenating to the spirit. The environmental benefits of natural resource protection are well documented. These benefits include plant and wildlife habitat protection, surface water storage (flood control), surface water quality protection and groundwater aquifer recharge, soil erosion prevention and air quality enhancement through particle filtration and oxygen creation. Additional advantages to natural resource protection include energy conservation through natural woodland evaporative cooling and winter wind buffering.

Recreational Benefits. There are also recreational benefits to preserving natural areas, such as providing opportunities to walk, run, hike, or observe nature. By protecting natural areas, the Township can contribute to the improvement of community health and social structure.

Economic Benefits. Permanently protected open space has been shown to increase the value of neighboring land. People will often pay higher prices for the benefit of living next to protected land. Furthermore, while permanently protected lands have limited tax value, these open spaces demand fewer services like road maintenance and schools than highly developed lands. Similarly, development that respects existing topography, woodlands and wetlands tends to be more desirable and adds value to the homes or other uses within the development.

Educational Benefits. Natural areas can become outdoor classrooms to help children and adults alike become more knowledgeable about the world's natural systems and the interrelationship between different ecosystems.

Natural Features

Some of the important natural features that shape the Township's environmental character, land uses and quality of life are discussed below.

TOPOGRAPHY

The rolling countryside of Shelby reveals impressive views across numerous orchards, fence rows, and woodlots. Elevations range from between 660 to over 1,000 feet above sea level. The area is part of West Michigan's fruit belt and within 12 miles of Lake Michigan. This topography and rich agricultural soil are largely reminiscent of Michigan's past glacial activity. As great ice sheets advanced and retreated across this area, they left behind ridges of unsorted rock material known as moraines. Today these are often visible as rolling ridges that contain various sizes and types of rock material. As the glaciers retreated, their meltwaters also left behind sorted materials and often contributed to considerable deposits of sand. The combination of materials left behind by glaciers provided a fertile land now used for agriculture. The township's remaining glacial topography now provides a place for the countryside scenes and a quiet, historic village that makes Shelby Township a special place.

WATER FEATURES

Although located near Lake Michigan, Shelby Township has limited surface water. Dorrance Creek, in the southwest quadrant of the Township, is the most prominent natural system. The headwaters of Piper (Stony), Mason, and Robinson Creeks are also found in the township. Despite the presence of many farms in the area, large expanses of creek beds have not been altered to enhance drainage, probably because much of the area is light, well-drained, sandy soil. Stream floodplains and wooded wetlands of the area remain in an essentially natural state, which adds to the beauty of the Township. Browns Pond, Zeek, Pigeon, and Helldiver Lakes are small water bodies within or near federal land in the southeast quadrant of the township.

Wetlands are often found along lakes and streams. Because the Township has limited surface water and sandy soil, it also has few wetlands present. Wetlands are characterized by acidic soil, specific vegetation, and a prolonged presence of water. A few small areas of wetland exist primarily in the southwest quadrant of the Township.

Although there are few visible water features in the Township, precipitation travels both across the surface and underground towards Lake Michigan. The direction of water flow is determined by watersheds. A watershed is an area of land where all water flows to the same stream, river, or lake. Stony Creek and the White River are the main features that drain water from Shelby Township, eventually emptying into Lake Michigan.

WETLANDS

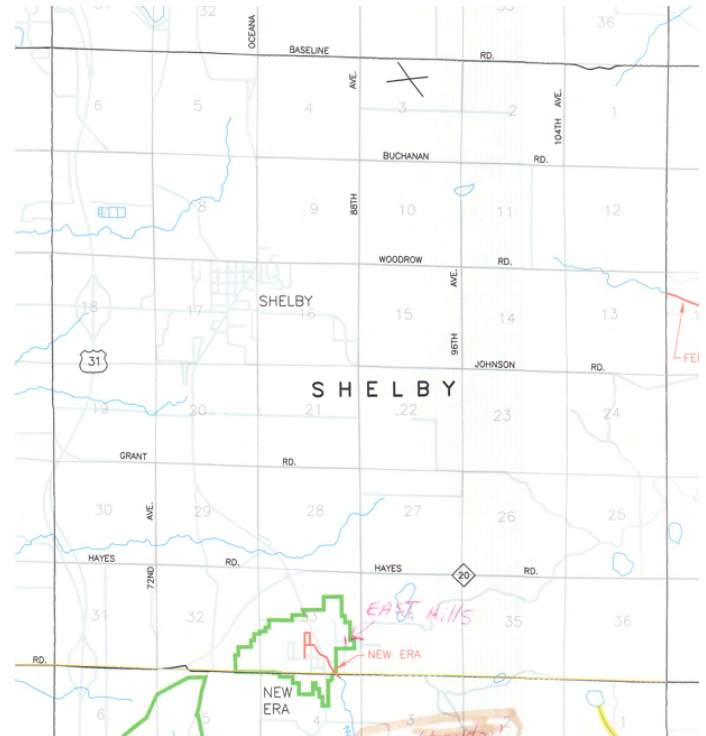
Wetlands are transitional environments between land and aquatic systems where water is at or near the surface, or the land is covered by shallow water. They are an important link in the preservation of clean natural water systems. Wetlands function to store surface water to prevent flooding, filter the water and recharge the groundwater table.

Wetlands exhibit one or more of the following attributes:

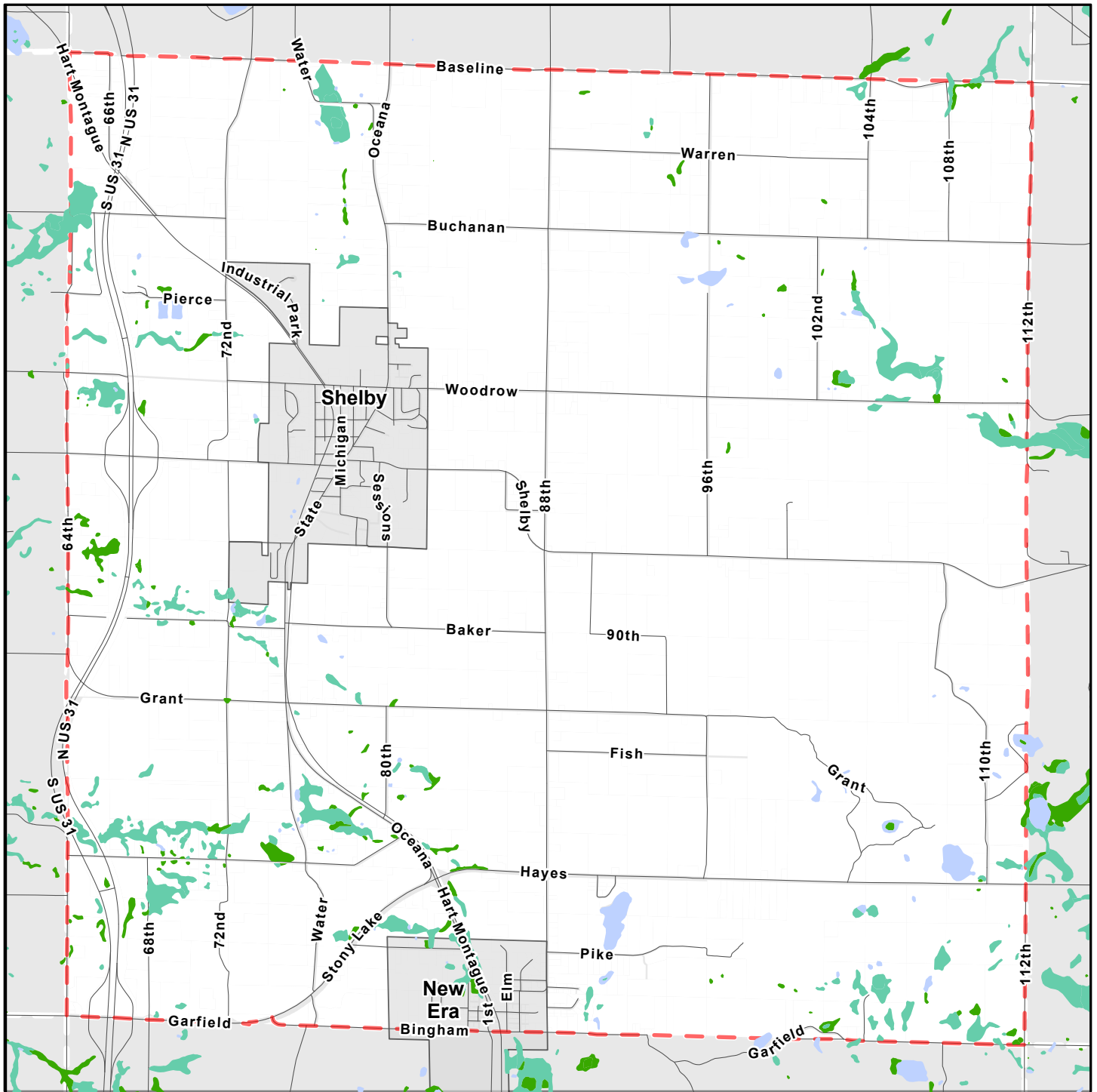
1. The substrate is predominantly undrained hydric soil
2. The substrate is non-soil and is saturated with water or covered with shallow water at some time during the growing season, and/or
3. The land supports aquatic plants, at least periodically

In Michigan the primary protection for wetlands comes from the Michigan Wetlands Protection Act, P.A. 203 of 1979, (now Part 303, Wetlands Protection of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, P.A. 451 of 1994). The State law does not protect wetland areas that are less than 5 acres in area, unless those areas are part of a larger wetland or water system or are determined to be essential to the preservation of the State's natural resources by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (ELGE). More stringent wetland regulations may be adopted by the local government, which then must assume the responsibility for enforcement.

In Shelby Township, there are limited wetland areas. These are largely classified, by the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) as either freshwater emergent wetland, freshwater forested/shrub wetland, or pond/lake. A majority of the Township's wetland areas, as identified by the NWI, are located on the periphery of the Township, around the southwest quadrant and northwest quadrant. Few other wetland areas are located on the east side of the Township but are less prominent.



Source: Oceana County Drainage Map



Wetlands

Shelby Township, Oceana County, MI

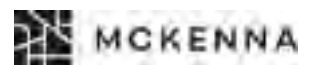
May 20, 2024

LEGEND

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Pond/Lake
- Shelby Township
- Villages

0 1,500 3,000
Feet

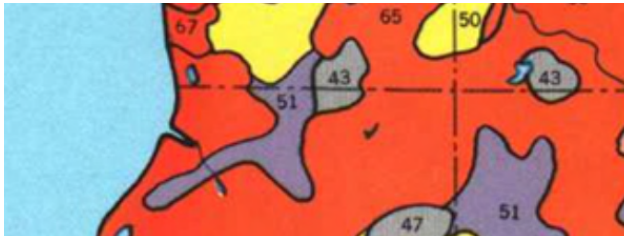
Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: ESRI 2024. McKenna 2024.



Lake Michigan greatly influences the climate experienced in Shelby Township. During the winter, lake effect snow is generated from cold air passing over the relatively warm water in the lake, generating clouds and moisture that eventually precipitate as snow in the Township. The lake also moderates the year-round climate so that there is a smaller temperature range and fewer extreme temperatures than places further inland. The closest NOAA climatological data for Shelby Township is available from a station located in Muskegon. The total annual snowfall in 2020 was 28.5 inches, while the annual average snowfall is about 74 inches. The average temperatures in 2020 were recorded as follows for each season:

- ## SOIL

- **Alfisols:** these soils contain clay minerals that have good water retention and supply moisture and nutrients to plants. These soils are often productive for crops.
- **Entisols:** these soils contain material that was recently deposited or in areas where the rate of deposition/erosion is faster than the soil can develop. These are common in dunes, floodplains, or on steep slopes.
- **Histosols:** these are soils with high organic content and are often saturated year- round. They are often found in bogs, peats, or mucks.
- **Inceptisols:** these are soils typically found in many different climates and with a wide variety of characteristics. They have a moderate rate of development.
- **Mollisols:** these are dark-colored soils that have high organic content and are generally rich and fertile.
- **Spodosols:** these soils form when organic matter is stripped away from weathering processes. They are typically acidic and infertile.



Source: Michigan State University Soil Association Map



AGRICULTURE AND PRIME FARMLAND

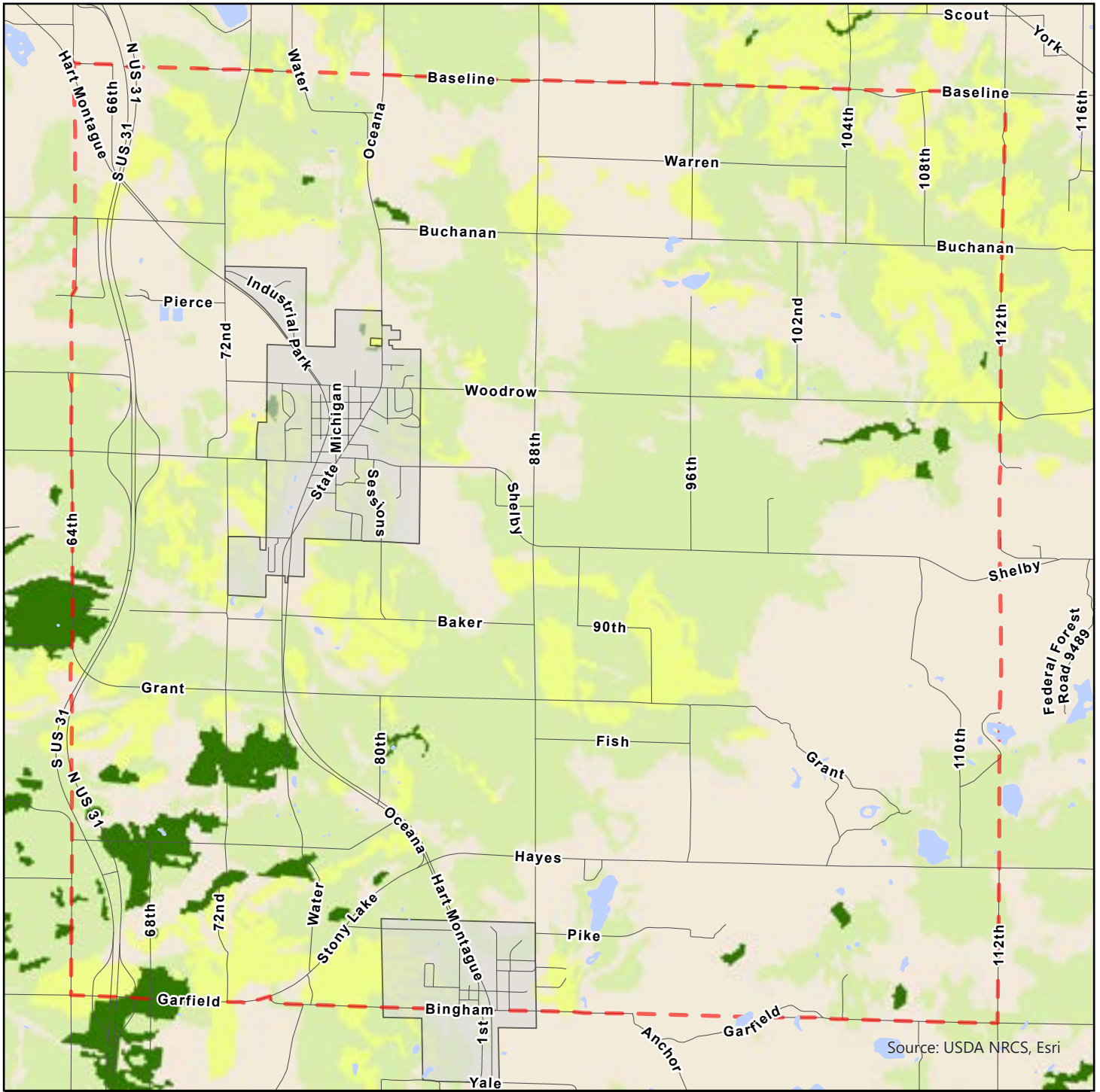
Shelby Township still contains relatively large tracts of land in agricultural production. The preservation of these large, contiguous tracts of land is important to maintaining agricultural viability. The Township's history is founded in agriculture and the Township remains a leader in the cultivation of tart cherries, sweet cherries, peaches, asparagus, and apples. Referred to as "the fruit capital of west Michigan," Shelby Township's agricultural production has served as a major local industry. The presence of Peterson Farms strengthens the Township's agricultural identity, as they are one of the largest frozen fruit processors and sliced apple producers in the United States.

Further, Shelby Township is home to some of the region's most popular and frequently visited agri-tourism attractions. Most notably, the Lewis Adventure Farm and Zoo is located in Shelby Township, near the intersection of US-31 and M-20.

Given the Township's rich agricultural history and productive fruit land, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and National Resource Conservation and Service (NRCS), the farmland in Shelby Township can be categorized as the following:

- **Prime Farmland** – southwest corner of the Township - land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses.
- **Farmland of Local Importance** – all throughout the Township – areas that are either currently producing crops, has capability of production, or is used for the production of confined livestock.
- **Farmland of Unique Importance** – Central and northeast corner of the Township - land used for producing high-value food and fiber crops. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture necessary to produce high quality crops or high yields of crops.





Prime Farmland

Shelby Township, Oceana County, MI

May 17, 2024

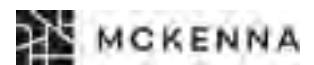
LEGEND

- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Local Importance
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Farmland of Unique Importance
- Not Prime Farmland
- Bodies of Water
- Shelby Township

0 1,500 3,000
Feet



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Oceana County 2024. McKenna 2024.



ENDANGERED SPECIES

According to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), there is one (1) endangered species located in Oceana County. This includes the Karner Blue butterfly. This is a small silvery butterfly.



OCEANA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The Oceana Conservation District is a local unit of state government organized under Act 297 (PA 1937), as amended. The Conservation District was established officially in 1972. According to the Oceana Conservation district website



"...The District is governed by a five-member, locally-elected Board of Directors. Conservation districts in Michigan were formed to provide natural resource management services that help residents conserve their lands and our environment for a cleaner, healthier, economically-strong Michigan. We address local concerns including: water quality, soil conservation, erosion control, land use/forest management, nonpoint source pollution, invasive species management, habitat improvement, etc."

This Oceana District is also responsible for local programming, ranging from youth recreation programming to senior nature walks and education programming. The District is also in charge of various programming relating to farmland preservation, forestry, invasive and native species management, critical dune preservation and permitting, and more. The Oceana Conservation District is an important environmental and ecological resource in Oceana County that contributes to the preservation of the Township's natural features.

Existing Conditions

Summary of Key Findings



General Conclusions

Through the above analysis of the Township's existing land uses and facilities, the following key observations are important considerations to planning for the future of Shelby Township:

- Partnerships with the Village of Shelby are likely necessary in planning for future utility and infrastructure needs. This may be significant to establish a growth boundary, or utility service boundary as to determine areas where residential, commercial, or industrial growth may be appropriate.
- There may also be opportunities to establish priorities for enhancing broadband internet and cell network connectivity in the Township – where gaps exist.

- The Township has an excellent commitment to parks and recreation resources and facilities. Throughout the duration of this Plan, the Township should continue to monitor these facilities and enhance these facilities as necessary to continue the Township's status of a place with unique and scenic rural character.
- There may be opportunities to utilize the large portion of the Hart Montague Trail located in the Township for economic development. This can include establishing new commercial businesses along the Trail, as well as residential land uses and neighborhoods.
- A vast majority of the Township's existing land use fabric consists of agricultural production or rural residential. As such, the Township should further explore mechanisms, as described in this Plan, to ensure the protection of these valuable agricultural resources and permit agricultural producers the opportunity for secondary income.
- The Township should consider zoning mechanisms (as further described by this Plan), to place parameters around lot splits, minimum lot sizes, and other factors to ensure that rural residential land uses do not impede on agricultural productions.
- While rural preservation is a key theme explored throughout this Plan, there are opportunities to expand the Township's housing stock and business opportunities, especially along the Township's major road corridors, such as US-31, Oceana Drive, and Shelby Road.

Natural features are one of many considerations in the preparation of a future land use plan for Shelby Township. There are several management strategies that might be appropriate to protect priority areas or to consider when balancing development proposals with the natural environment. Some possible techniques are as follows:

- **Land Acquisition.** Public purchase of undeveloped, priority parcels could ensure the protection of natural areas. Similarly, private landowners may donate land to a local land conservancy for permanent preservation in exchange for a tax write-off.
- **Purchase of Development Rights.** Townships have the ability to regulate and permit the purchase of development rights on a parcel in order to encourage the owner to leave the parcel as open or agricultural land.
- **Environmental Protection Ordinances.** Townships may adopt and implement specific regulations to protect natural resources, if determined appropriate. Some examples are as follows:
 - » **Wetland Ordinance.** Some communities have established local wetland ordinances to supplement EGLE's regulations. Wetlands as small as two acres in area may be locally regulated. The ordinances typically require a professional wetland delineation and jurisdictional assessment on parcels identified on the municipality's wetland inventory map at the time a development is proposed.
 - » **Woodland Ordinance.** Likewise, many townships have ordinances to protect woodlands and trees, typically requiring replacement for removed vegetation.
 - » **Fertilizer Ordinance.** Regulations can be established to prohibit homeowners from over application of lawn fertilizers that may contaminate the water supply.
 - » **Open Space Development.** The Township Zoning Ordinance currently provides for Planned Unit Developments and the Open Space option, consistent with PA 177 of 2001, the Open Space Preservation Act. These provisions offer a mechanism to protect natural features on land by clustering development in the less environmentally sensitive areas.

Future Land Use



General Overview

Shelby Township's land use plan represents the long-range vision for growth, development, and redevelopment. As a representation of the preferred land use arrangement for the community, it identifies and defines the future land use categories as well as the appropriate locations for various uses. The Plan reflects the Township's goals and priorities. The Master Plan is intended to manage and enhance the desirable components of the Township, while controlling adverse impacts that may accompany growth.

The key concepts of the Township's Master Plan are as follows:

- Promote an efficient and well ordered land use pattern.
- Economize community facilities with sustainable development.
- Preserve and enhance the natural scenic, rural character of the Township.
- Remain a predominantly agricultural community, relying on adjacent communities for most commercial goods and services.
- Targeting any new commercial or residential growth to the periphery of the Village of Shelby and New Era, where utility extensions may be appropriate, and to the Township's main transportation corridors.
- Offering opportunities for flexible development and redevelopment to occur in areas where development is most appropriate, and already occurring. For example, surrounding the Oceana Drive and M-20 area.

Future Land Use Considerations

Based on the analysis, goals, and objectives established in this Plan, the following is a summary of considerations that have been identified and are pertinent to the recommended Future Land Use pattern in Shelby Township.

EXISTING LAND USE

Existing developments are subject to change over time, particularly when it involves only a few nonconforming parcels. Existing land use is more difficult to change when it involves numerous parcels of land under separate ownership. The Future Land Use Plan must recognize and adapt to the relative permanency of certain existing land uses.

UTILITIES

Intensive development in the absence of public utilities creates the potential for public safety and environmental problems. Consequently, higher density residential, commercial, office and industrial uses shall be located only where connection to public utilities is reasonably feasible.

ROADS

The road system in Shelby Township is mostly comprised of higher speed County roads, and revenues for new road construction are relatively limited. Under such circumstances, a compact development pattern is preferred so that road funds can be efficiently used, and rural character can be retained where roads are not present. Further, road systems, such as private roads in agricultural districts, can contribute to a loss in productive agricultural lands over time.

COMPATIBILITY WITH SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

One of the goals of the Future Land Use Plan is to organize the Township with compatible land uses adjacent to each other. The Plan must take into consideration adjacent land uses in other communities as well. Analysis of land uses in the adjacent communities reveals that neighboring Townships plan low density single family and agricultural uses along their borders with Shelby Township.

Compatibility with the Village of Shelby, Village of New Era, and the adjoining Townships has significance in planning for future land use and zoning decisions in Shelby Township, considering aspects such as housing opportunities, utilities, complimentary land uses, and other elements.

NATURAL BORDERS BETWEEN LAND USES

A defensible plan demonstrates sound reasoning for boundaries between land uses. Accordingly, natural boundaries between land uses are an important consideration. In Shelby Township, such natural boundaries may include roads, existing land use and lot patterns, productive agricultural lands, tourist areas, and others. These natural boundaries include planning for land use patterns that will accommodate landscape buffers, if necessary, to separate land uses.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

The Township should strive to protect the features that give the community its appealing rural character, including woodlands and woodlots, wetlands, lakes, drainage courses, rolling topography and wildlife corridors.

Ground and surface water impacts are important considerations in determining the future land use pattern. Protection of the quality and quantity of the groundwater supply is important because the majority of the Township's land area is served by well water. Protection of ground and surface water resources must address both land use patterns and the functionality of land uses. In terms of land use patterns, the objective is to preserve the hydrologic cycle and the natural interrelationship of groundwater and surface waters. The Future Land Use Plan proposes lower density development in areas not serviced by sewer and targets new development or higher density in areas that may be easily accessible by water/sewer extensions.

Groundwater contamination can also result from leaking septic systems, improper floor drains, improper storage of hazardous substances, leaking underground storage tanks, above ground spills, overflowing of tanks, condensation from air emissions, and improper waste disposal. Many of these sources of contamination can be addressed in site plan review. Site plan applicants should be required to disclose locations of tanks, floor drains and connections, etc. and implement the best available technology to alleviate potential impact.

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Historic and culturally significant community resources such as historic homes and structures or places of significance should be considered when making land use decisions. These historic and cultural features create a sense of continuity and place for the community and often cannot be replaced once lost.



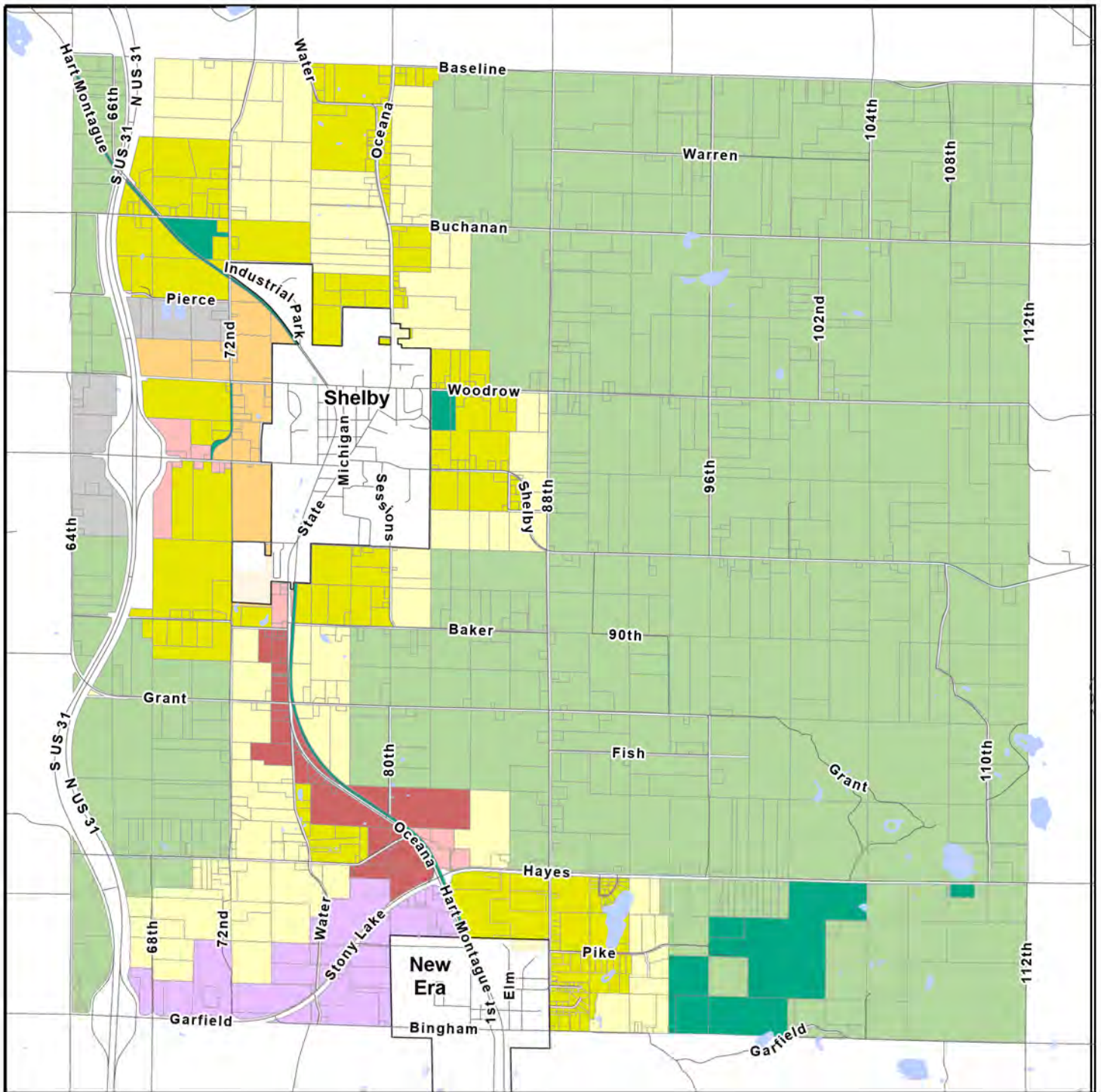
Future Land Use Concept

BASIC CONCEPT

The basic concepts for the Future Land Use Plan are as follows:

- The Township shall limit the amount of non-residential development, recognizing the availability of such development in surrounding communities.
- New commercial development shall generally be confined to the Shelby Road corridor, especially US-31.
- New commercial development should also be generally concentrated south of M-20 and west of Oceana Drive.
- New housing development should be generally confined to areas surrounding the Village of Shelby and the Village of New Era.
- The low density residential and agricultural use of land shall be located primarily in the eastern portion of the Township. This will facilitate the preservation of open space, rural character and wildlife habitat, and minimize the need to extend the existing public water and sewer system.
- The natural features, agricultural lands, and the high priority natural areas throughout the Township shall be protected where possible. This will preserve the scenic, natural character of the Township.





Future Land Use

Shelby Township, Oceana County, MI

February 11, 2025

LEGEND

- Agriculture/Rural Residential
- Low Density Residential A
- Low Density Residential B
- Medium-High Density Residential
- Rural Mixed Use
- General Commercial
- Commercial-Light Industrial
- Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public

0 1,500 3,000
Feet



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: Oceana County 2024. McKenna 2024.



MCKENNA

Future Land Use Categories

The following land use categories are displayed on the Future Land Use Map and are described below:

AGRICULTURE/RURAL RESIDENTIAL

The Agriculture/Large Lot Residential category is intended to provide areas for agricultural uses such as hobby or commercial farming, and areas where residents can live in rural surroundings. Land uses included in this category are single family dwellings, farming, horticulture, and accessory uses associated with farming. This category dominates the east side of the Township (from 8th Avenue to the Township-line), and the westernmost side of the Township.

Lands that are designated Agricultural/Large Lot Residential have value as open land, (whether for natural or agricultural use), and may reflect previous lot split and residential development activity. The Township lends itself to large areas of the Agricultural/Large Lot Residential future land use classification because of its significant natural features, its rural farmland, and its wooded and wetland areas.

The Plan encourages continued use of these lands for agriculture for as long as economically feasible or desired by the owners. At the same time, the Plan also acknowledges that previous land use decisions have resulted in land divisions for residential use, thus it is not likely that parcels will be reassembled for future agricultural use.

The areas planned for the Agriculture/Large Lot Residential category will not have public water and sewer during the life of this Plan.

This category is most closely aligned with the Township's existing AG, Agricultural and RR, Rural Residential Districts.



Existing and planned land use character

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL “A”

The Low Density Residential “A” designation plans for single family dwellings. Typically, residential development in this category will be large lot subdivisions. Long term, agricultural uses are not expected to be maintained in this district. Large lot subdivisions should include neighborhood connections through sidewalks or bike infrastructure, internal sidewalks on both sides of the street, and preservation of existing natural features, such as mature growth trees.

Lands that are designated Low Density Residential “A” are in areas where the intent is to allow residential lots with potential connections to public utilities extending from the Village. Further, it is the intent of this Category to provide space for a seamless transition from large lot residential development(s) to the rural eastern areas of the Township. This land use pattern is intended to create a transect of development, spanning outward from the Village boundaries to agricultural lands.

The Low Density Residential “A” category lends itself to a residential planned unit development style of development in order to promote innovative residential lots and neighborhoods, to preserve natural features and wildlife habitats, and provide open recreation space for residents. Public water and sewer may be available to serve some, but not all, of the Low Density Residential “A” areas.

This category is most closely aligned with the Township’s existing RR, Rural Residential District.



Existing and planned land use character. Note: large lot residential uses, accessory buildings, small-scale farming operations, access on main roads.

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL “B”

The Low Density Residential “B” designation is intended to address the need for a residential land use category with slightly higher density than the Low Density Residential “A” category.

Low Density Residential “B” areas are located generally on the northwest side of the Township, spanning from the Village of Shelby periphery to the Township-line. Further, a pocket of these residential land uses are planned just east of the Village of New Era, where smaller lot/higher density residential development currently exists.

Several factors distinguish this category. One factor is the proximity of this land area to the higher traffic volumes and development along Shelby Road and M-20. A second factor is the desire to maintain consistency of the future development densities with the established density pattern. Further, these areas are intended to be “contained” between US-31 and the lower Low Density Residential “A” areas. Again, the intention of this category is to create the transect of density and residential land uses, spanning out from the Village of Shelby and New Era, as well as the highway, and then increase in density closer to the active agricultural lands.

The Low Density Residential “B” category strongly encourages an innovative planned unit development type of configuration that will create recreation space and will preserve and provide open space. Similar to other categories, high quality natural features in this area should be protected, while encouraging attractive residential development in creative site plan configurations.

This land use is a transitional residential classification between the Low/Medium Density Residential, the Rural Mixed Use planned areas, and the planned Low Density Residential “A” lands. Agricultural uses are not expected in this district.

Public water and sewer may be necessary to serve developments of cluster type housing with smaller, or no, individual lots.

This category is most closely aligned with the Township’s existing R-1, Low Density Residential District.



Existing and planned land use character. Note: traditional residential neighborhood design, connected streets, preservation of mature growth trees, smaller lot sizes.

MEDIUM-HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

The Medium-High Density Residential category includes single family, two family dwelling units, or multifamily units. This land use category is planned for areas adjacent to the Village of Shelby, where higher density development already exists. Multi-family units should be concentrated strictly on areas that can provide public utility infrastructure, close proximity to the Village, and appropriate road connections to major corridors. As in, not all parcels within this category are suited for multifamily development.

Medium-High Density Residential is an intermediate residential density classification. The emphasis in the Medium-High Density Residential areas is to acknowledge the existence of large undeveloped lots that may include a single-family home without farming activities. These homes will also have close access to US-31. In these areas, smaller lot sizes with a traditional residential neighborhood fabric are encouraged. Residential neighborhoods should have nonmotorized connectivity and should support the preservation of natural features to the highest extent possible.

This area may also accommodate planned unit developments that include a variety of housing types, ranging from single-family residential to low-density multi-family residential. Subsequent zoning requirements should dictate maximum permitted density.

These land areas should generally have public water and sewer available, in any proposed development that includes subdivisions or higher density. Residential planned unit developments and open space provisions are encouraged in these areas if public water and sewer facilities are provided.

This category is most closely aligned with the Township's existing R-2, Medium Density Residential and R-3, High Density Residential Districts.



Planned land use character. Note: rural cluster residential development to preserve undeveloped space, smaller residential lot sizes, nonmotorized connectivity. Other housing types, such as duplexes and apartment units may also be appropriate in the right context.

Sources: Architectural Designs (right). Organo (top).



RURAL MIXED USE

Shelby Township includes popular regional agri-tourism destinations, such as Lewis Adventure Farms and Zoo, within its borders. These regional facilities include both agricultural and commercial characteristics. Further, the Township has also experienced outward growth as a result of this popular destination, in conjunction with close proximity to the highway, M-20, and the Village of New Era. As such, the “Rural Mixed Use” category is intended to address and include a variety of appropriate land uses to capture existing residential development as well as new development. It is also the goal of this category to support economic development activities in the Township, targeted to a specific area.

Appropriate land uses within this designation include “horizontal” mixed uses rather than vertical mixed uses. In this context, horizontal mixed uses refer to the support of varied land uses located adjacent to one another. For example, this may include the commercial operations of the Lewis Adventure Farm and Zoo (with ancillary properties), adjacent to residential homes and neighborhoods, adjacent to light-commercial uses such as professional offices, professional services, or retail stores. In the Rural Mixed Use category, all such land uses would be appropriate.

Future development in this area should consider nonmotorized connectivity to the adjacent Village of New Era, as well as connectivity between commercial businesses to nearby neighborhoods. This category is intended to offer development flexibility with higher emphasis on building and site design elements, such as robust landscaping, reduced parking areas, attractive signage and lighting, and consideration to site driveways and access.

This category proposes a new zoning district.



*Existing and planned land use character.
Note: Rural architecture appropriate for the natural setting, reduced setbacks from the main road, less expansive parking areas, appropriate site landscaping.*

Source (right): Brick & Batten



GENERAL COMMERCIAL

The General Commercial category is intended to provide a mix of uses such as convenience goods, retail, restaurants, entertainment venues, institutional uses, government, offices, personal and business services, and live-work units.

Traditional architectural features, quality building materials, decorative lighting and extensive landscaping are encouraged, to convey a sense of permanence and importance for the businesses.

Under this plan, smaller pockets of this land use category are planned along Shelby Rod and Oceana Drive. Appropriate land uses, such as “Neighborhood Commercial” to reflect their less intense proposed nature, are also encouraged here. Strip commercial development, in any location, is contrary to this Plan. Commercial development shall address the convenience needs of Shelby Township residents and complement larger scale commercial operations located along the Township’s major road corridors.

This category is most closely aligned with the Township’s existing C-2, General Business District and C-3, Highway Business Districts.



Existing and planned land use character. Note: Site open space preservation, outdoor seating opportunities, preservation of existing businesses, and high-quality building and site materials.

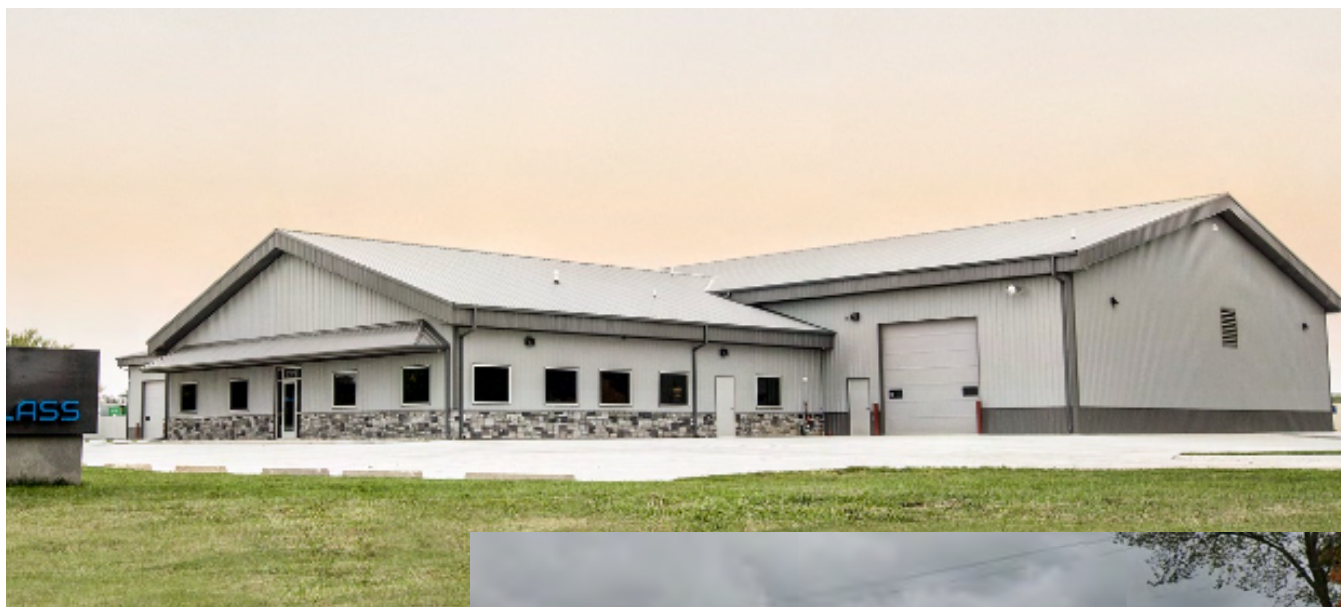
Source (right): Country-style restaurant exterior, Tripadvisor

COMMERCIAL-LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

This land use category is planned to accommodate uses that carry both general commercial and light industrial qualities. Large scale businesses and light industrial land uses are both appropriate here. Examples of permitted uses may include light manufacturing (of little nuisance potential), warehousing, light assembly, and automobile-oriented uses. Additionally, higher intensity general commercial land uses are also appropriate here, such as regional stores that provide goods and services to the region. This land use category would also support office uses. Outdoor storage is not encouraged.

It is further the intent of this category to offer flexibility in land uses to not only accommodate the mixture of current land uses in these areas, but to also encourage economic development incentives by allowing varied land uses. However, no matter the development context, high quality building and site design should always be required.

This category is most closely aligned with the Township's existing C-2, General Business District and C-3, Highway Business, and IND, Industrial Districts.



Existing and planned land use character. Note: high-quality building and site design materials. Country Dairy is an example of an agricultural enterprise, with desirable rural commercial architectural elements.

Source (top): Raves Buildings



INDUSTRIAL

The Future Land Use Map acknowledges existing industrial uses and provides for limited expansion adjacent to existing industrial areas but does not provide for large scale industrial growth.

The Industrial plan classification is intended to permit industrial uses that do not produce negative effects such as excessive noise, glare, odor, fumes, dust or pollution. This category does not encourage any business that processes raw materials or needs a significant amount of outdoor storage.

Furthermore, it is the intent of the Future Land Use Plan to encourage industrial uses that are environmentally friendly with no negative impacts. High technology and knowledge-based uses are desirable for their low environmental impact characteristics. High architectural standards shall apply to the design of both the site and the architecture with significant, attractive landscaping incorporated to buffer adjacent uses.

Industrial land uses shall be located where there is adequate public access, sufficient separation from adjoining lower intensity uses, future availability of public water and sewer services, adequate utilities, and access to adequate infrastructure.

This category is most closely aligned with the Township's existing IND, Industrial District.



Planned land use character. Note: Site landscaping elements, windows, high-quality building materials, variation in exterior building materials.

Source: Alliance Steel Building Systems

PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC

The Public/Semi Public category is comprised of public and semi-public land uses. Public/Semi-Public uses include cemeteries, schools, and government uses. This category also includes parks and recreation uses.

This category applies to all zoning districts.



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Zoning Plan



The following table represents the Shelby Township Zoning Districts that would appropriately implement the vision of the Future Land Use categories as described above. Rezoning requests should be reviewed against this table to determine whether the requested district is supported by this Plan.

Relationship Between Future Land Use & Zoning

Future Land Use Category	Zoning Districts
Agriculture / Rural Residential	AR, Agricultural Residential RR, Rural Residential
Low Density Residential A	RR, Rural Residential
Low Density Residential B	R-1, Low Density Residential
Medium-High Density Residential	R-2, Medium Density Residential R-3, Multiple Family Residential
Rural Mixed Use	New District
General Commercial	C-2, General Business C-3 highway Business
Commercial-Industrial	C-2, General Business C-2, Highway Business IND, Industrial
Industrial	IND, Industrial
Public/Semi-Public	All Districts

Agricultural District Recommendations

The following recommendations pertain to the Township’s agricultural zoning district:

- Consider best practices for agricultural preservation, including but not limited to:
 - » Minimum lot size requirements
 - » “Sliding scale” for property splits
 - » Open space development
- Home-based businesses should be moved to the Accessory Uses table.
- Remove NP uses from Section 5.02. If a use is not permitted, then it should not be listed.
- Define Agricultural Support Services.
- Remove Table 5-2, this contains redundant information described elsewhere in the Ordinance. Further, submittal deadlines can be handled through internal Township policy without having to amend the Zoning Ordinance if policy changes.
- Review and expand on permitted uses in the AG District to support supplemental income opportunities for farmers.
- Review and expand on permitted housing types permitted in this district (e.g., accessory dwelling units).
- Prohibit PUDs and private roads in the AG District.
- Consider developing policies related to farmland preservation, such as a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program.

Residential District Recommendations

The following zoning recommendations pertain to the Township’s residential zoning districts:

- Develop a separate chapter for each of the residential districts.
- Relocate the home based business to accessory use table.
- Remove Section 6.03 – this information is redundant and can be covered in the site plan review Chapter. Application submittal deadlines and policies should be removed from the Zoning Ordinance in the event that policy changes.
- Review and update minimum lot size requirements for RR and R-1 Districts and review permitted uses for each.
- Consider allowing accessory dwelling units in all residential districts, excluding R-3.
- Review and update cluster/open space development requirements.
- Review and update residential PUD requirements.

Mixed Use Recommendations

The following recommendations pertain to the proposed new Rural Mixed Use Zoning District:

- Create a Rural Mixed Use Zoning District, considering the following permitted uses:
 - » Hotels and lodging
 - » Restaurants
 - » Offices and professional services (e.g., salons, medical, dental, etc.)
 - » Residential (single and two-family)
 - » General retail small-scale commercial
- Consider building and site design requirements:
 - » High-quality building exterior and building frontages
 - » Rural design consistent with new development in the region
 - » Landscaping and lighting
 - » Parking lot location (side or rear)
 - » Signage

Commercial District Recommendations

The following zoning recommendations pertain to the Township's commercial zoning districts:

- Remove references to C-1, as this only pertains to the Village.
- Separate C-2 and C-3 into its own District chapter.
- Allow Assembly or manufacturing facility under 10,000 square feet as a permitted use in C-3.
- Permit commercial daycares in both C-2 and C-3 by right.
- Review and update site development requirements, such as landscaping, lighting, parking, location of parking, and other elements as appropriate.
- Remove farm markets from Table 8-1.
- Remove video and rental sales from Table 8-1.
- Permit drive-thrus in C-3.
- Remove Table 8-2 and include site plan submittal requirements in the Site Plan Review Chapter. Submission deadlines should be internal Township policy.
- Review and requirements specific to certain land uses, and expand as needed.

Industrial District Recommendations

The following recommendations pertain to the Township’s industrial zoning district:

- Remove Table 9-2 and include site plan submittal requirements in the Site Plan Review Chapter. Submission deadlines should be internal Township policy.
- Review and update permitted uses to allow higher-intensity commercial land uses in this District, as appropriate.
- Review and update site development requirements, such as landscaping, lighting, parking, location of parking, building material, and other requirements.
- Relocate parking requirements to a standalone parking chapter with a comprehensive table of parking requirements per use.

Other Recommendations

The following list includes other general zoning ordinance recommendations:

- Include provisions related to uses that can have higher nuisance potential in a standalone Chapter (currently located within the Special Land Use Chapter). Some of these may include:
 - » Agri-tourism uses
 - » Bed and breakfasts
 - » Hospitals
 - » Vehicle repair establishments
 - » Senior housing
 - » Junkyards and landfills
 - » Motels and hotels
 - » And more
- Definitions – remove all irrelevant definitions from the ordinance.
- Include a summary table explaining the provisions for non-conforming lots, uses, and structures.
- Standards for Landscaping and Screening should consider the following:
 - » Reorganize the landscaping chapter to include general landscaping standards at the beginning.
 - » Include more specific requirements for commercial and industrial landscaping considering the following elements:
 - Defined parameters around what conditions require site screening.
- Remove any references to specific fees. These can be handled by the Township Board through policy.
- Ensure all applicable State and federal laws are adequately addressed. This can include provisions for the following uses (and other popular topics):
 - » Home occupations
 - » Child daycare homes
 - » Adult foster care group homes
 - » Short-term rentals
- Include hyperlinks to applicable sections.
- A summary table of all districts and uses.

- A summary table of schedule of regulations for all districts.
- Organize subsections in alphabetical order to allow for ease of use (e.g., General Provisions).
- Include the article in the heading of each page for easier navigation/orientation.
- Include a Purpose and Provisions of Districts section.
- Include a “Standards for Use” chapter (or something similar) to organize each use and its standards rather than just the Special Land Uses or have a separate section for each special land use so that it is included in the table of contents.
- Include a Review Standards in one separate section rather than repeating throughout the document.
- Include a Parking and Loading Requirements section. This will be included in an easy-to-read table format.
- Include a Planning Commission and Township Board section within the Site Plan Review chapter.
- All amendments should be included in the official document.

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Supporting Housing Readiness



Housing Development Considerations

A number of factors are important when considering the Township's potential for future population and housing stock growth.

Image example (top) of a large-lot rural residential neighborhood. Source: Shutterstock

Image example (right) of a small cottage-like bungalow court housing development. Source: NWMLS, Zillow



TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The Population Analysis revealed that most of Shelby Township's labor force works outside of the community. Most major commercial services, such as grocery stores, home furnishing and clothing stores, and other similar frequently visited retail stores are located outside of the Township.

Additionally, virtually no transit exists in the area. As a result, Shelby Township is a highly automobile-oriented community. As such, development of the residential sector should be closely tied to the capacity and development of the road system. Under ideal circumstances, residential areas should be in proximity to major roads with easy connections to freeways or State highways to serve commuters. In this context, targeting residential development along the periphery of the Village of Shelby and within close proximity to regional corridors would likely be an appropriate approach to supporting new housing in the Township.

CAPACITY OF THE SOILS TO SUPPORT SEPTIC SYSTEMS

The appropriate density of development is generally closely related to sewage disposal and water quality concerns. Public sanitary sewers do not serve any parcels within the Township, and conventional individual on-site septic systems require a larger parcel of land for an adequate disposal field, compared to a subdivision lot served by sewers. The type of soil and subsoil affects the amount of area needed and the possibility of polluting nearby surface water or wells.

Private engineered septic systems (such as mound systems), however, located on a parcel and designed to serve one residence are gaining acceptance at the State and County level. These engineered individual on-site septic systems permit development on parcels which previously would not have been buildable due to unsuitable soil conditions. Engineered septic systems are still relatively new, so their long-term reliability is unclear. Nonetheless, the use of engineered septic systems means that soil suitability should be less of a factor in determining the potential future density of development in the Township.

Community septic or sewage disposal systems (privately owned public sewerage systems) are another option to serve potential residential development. These systems are privately owned and designed to serve the residents of a subdivision or other limited grouping of parcels, outside of the reach of municipal systems. These systems may also permit the development of previously undevelopable land, as the treatment facility can be in the most appropriate location on the parcel or grouping of parcels.

WATER QUALITY

Another consideration related to soils and water quality is the presence of groundwater recharge areas and wetlands. Development that increases stormwater runoff – decreasing the recharge rate of underground aquifers – or that increases the risk of groundwater contamination can damage existing residents' wells.

EFFICIENCY OF DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The efficiency of development patterns has two primary facets:

1. **Public services can be delivered much more efficiently and cost effectively where development is compact.** Large lot development on conventional lots is the most costly type of development to provide with public services, such as public sewer and water service, roads, and fire coverage, as more infrastructure must be provided for each housing unit. That is not to say that large lot residential homes are discouraged in the Township, but new housing opportunities for higher density neighborhood development should be targeted to more appropriate areas of the Township. Large lot residential development is the most frequently demonstrated land use in the Township and does contribute to the Township's rural character. However, in approving future large lot housing development (and lot splits) the possible degradation of productive agricultural lands should be considered.

2. **Large lot development takes land out of the open space and agricultural base at a faster rate than any other type of development.** On a typical large single-family lot only a portion of the lot is actually put to use. From one perspective, this is an inefficient way to house a given population. Individual homeowners may choose to preserve most of their own land in its natural condition, but contiguous areas of open space large enough to maintain agriculture or high-quality habitat are difficult to preserve.

In recognition of the above concerns, the Township should continue to encourage larger housing developments to use cluster housing or residential planned unit developments (RPUD) in order to reduce development impacts. These strategies allow a developer to preserve a portion of the site as open space and arrange homes more compactly on the remaining land, rather than requiring strict minimums on individual lots. Flexibility in requirements such as minimum lot size, minimum unit size, setbacks, and other factors are important considerations for encouraging housing readiness.

NATURAL FEATURES

Just as natural features such as wetlands can limit the development potential of a site, inconsistent development sprawl can also have negative consequences on these features.

- Development that replaces fields, forests, and other open space with less permeable surface, like buildings, driveways, and manicured lawns, can increase runoff after heavy rainfall or snow melt, contributing to flooding of streams and lakes and degradation of surface water quality.
- Development that fragments farmland can limit the productivity of the remaining fields, relative to large areas of contiguous farmland. By increasing the need to transport equipment between fields while also adding to the congestion on adjacent roadways, fragmenting farmland can remove fields from productive use even without developing them.
- Development that fragments wooded areas and other open spaces can degrade the remaining habitat, reducing the Township's ability to host diverse wildlife and also increasing the chance of wildlife conflicts with people – such as automobile crashes involving deer.

Aside from the state and federal regulatory protection afforded to certain natural features, some communities make special efforts to prevent unusual or valuable natural features from being developed, recognizing that they serve both an aesthetic and functional purpose.

For example, floodplains, wetlands, and woodlands are often reserved for recreational amenities and common open space rather than for residential development. Efforts to preserve and emphasize existing natural features, when made a goal of the Master Plan and subsequent ordinances, can help maintain the character of the Township.

Access is another important consideration with respect to natural features. Conventional single family development segments resources, such as lakefront and open space, into individual lots, both minimizing access to the broader public and limiting the utility to the individual owner. Other types of development, such as open space or cluster development, can facilitate protection of and access to natural resources. These forms of development can also provide areas of open space sufficient to support larger-scale recreation than a private lawn, such as playgrounds, playing fields, or nature trails.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES

There are regional development pressures that will affect development in Shelby Township. Economic growth has drawn new households into the West Michigan and Lake Michigan coastal region and fostered new housing construction. Throughout the duration of this Plan, the Township should keep abreast of regional housing development trends to ensure that new housing is being appropriately supported in areas best suited for it.

Additionally, the State of Michigan, and most notably, West Michigan, has experienced an influx of new residents moving from the western United States. As climates and natural disasters, such as hurricanes and wildfires, continue to shift, it is likely that population growth trends will continue. As such, pressure for new housing development across the region is likely to be a result.

RELEVANT REGIONAL STUDIES

In 2023, Oceana County commissioned a housing study conducted by Bowen National Research. The purpose of the report was to evaluate the housing needs of Oceana County and recommend priorities to address those identified needs. The report identified the following key findings (the following bullet points are conclusions as exactly stated in the report):

- *Overall household growth in the PSA (primary study area) (Oceana County) has been positive through 2020, and despite a slight decline through 2022, positive growth is projected through 2027.*
- *The PSA has a large base of senior households that is expected to experience significant growth over the next several years, while smaller but notable growth is also projected for older millennial households (ages 35 to 44).*
- *In Oceana County, over 3,400 people live in poverty and approximately 2,000 adults do not have a high school diploma, which contributes to the likely challenges that residents may experience with housing affordability.*
- *Most renter and owner household growth in the PSA is projected to occur among moderate and higher income households, while lower income households (earning less than \$30,000 annually) will continue to comprise relatively large shares of area households.*
- *Housing quality and affordability remain challenges for area households, as evidenced by the fact that a total of 434 occupied housing units in the PSA (Oceana County) are considered substandard and 2,168 households are housing cost burdened.*
- *There is limited available inventory among multifamily rentals and pent-up demand for housing serving lower-income renter households.*
- *Non-conventional rentals, such as houses, duplexes and mobile homes comprise the majority of rental housing in the county, most of which is not affordable to most low-income households and has limited availability.*
- *Vacation rentals and seasonal/recreational housing represent a notable segment of the county housing stock and has a significant influence on the local housing market.*
- *Overall, there is a relatively limited amount of for-sale housing available for purchase in Oceana County, particularly among product priced below \$200,000.*
- *Housing development costs in the county appear to be similar to other counties in the region, while local zoning ordinances appear to favor single-family development.*
- *Oceana County has an overall housing gap of 1,384 units for rental and for-sale product at a variety of affordability levels.*

Action Plan



General Overview

The effectiveness of this Master Plan is determined by how the goals and actions are implemented. Steps for achieving the goals and actions should be clearly defined to guide future planning actions. Therefore, the following implementation strategies are intended to help prioritize actions and incrementally achieve the goals and actions envisioned by this Plan.

It is recognized that the following implementation strategies may be long-term in nature and will involve the cooperation of several entities over many years. While a Master Plan is often viewed primarily as a tool for Township leaders, its implementation requires commitment and participation from the entire community.

Implementation is the key to the success of the Township's Master Plan. This Action Plan presents tools and techniques that citizens, community leaders, and Township staff can use to achieve the recommendations of the Master Plan.

Planning and Development Themes

Preservation of Natural Features. Preservation of the abundant natural features in the Township should be a prevailing objective in all future development. Shelby Township is fortunate in that it is well-endowed with natural features, such as wetlands, woodlands, open spaces, and farmland.

Housing. Quality attainable housing and understanding zoning options to implement housing (where appropriate) and to achieve the general recommendations of the 2023 Addendum E: Community Survey Conclusions and Recommendations, as developed by Bowen National Research.

Economic Development. While it is understood that the Township's primary land use is intended to remain agricultural and rural residential, providing opportunities for economic development, such as supporting flexible commercial and light industrial land uses, supporting the longevity of prime agricultural productions, and other facets can contribute to the overall economic health of the Township for years to come.

Planning Innovation. Permit innovation in land use planning where innovation would accomplish the following:

- Implement the goals set forth in the Master Plan more effectively.
- Result in better use of the land in accordance with its intrinsic character (for example, preservation of rural open space).
- Result in development that is compatible with surrounding uses.
- Produce recognizable and substantial benefits for the community that would not otherwise be achieved.

Innovation should not be encouraged as a means to increase the intensity of development or to simply develop land in a manner that otherwise would not be permitted.

Implementation. Adopt or amend policies and regulations necessary to implement the Master Plan. To this end, adopt appropriate amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to guide the development of the Township. Pursue grant opportunities, as appropriate, to provide and improve facilities in the Township.

Goals and Actions

GOAL: RURAL AND FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Protect and Preserve the Township's natural rural setting and resist the encroachment of development into areas of prime agricultural lands and businesses.

ACTIONS

1. Accommodate growth in housing and population without sacrificing the rural character of the Township or the quality of the natural resources.
2. Protect existing agricultural areas and natural features in the Township in order to preserve the rural character of the Township.
3. Support a system of organized land uses to provide housing choices, where new development and redevelopment areas respect and integrate with existing neighborhoods and contexts.
4. Adopt local regulations to preserve the significant, existing natural features in the Township.
5. Discourage non-farm development in the areas designated as Agricultural in the Future Land Use Plan.
6. Allow value added agriculture related uses to enhance the incomes of farm families in other ways besides development.

Acquire Land

Land acquisition can be used to control the use of a specific acquired parcel, or it can be used to enhance the general character of the Township. Local land acquisition programs are generally funded either by local property taxes, (such as a dedicated millage or general fund revenues), or by grant programs.

There are several approaches to acquiring interest in land to advance the goals of the Master Plan. Generally, the Township can take direct action to acquire property interest, create regulations to require land protection or it can rely on private voluntary land protection efforts.

1. **Direct Action by the Township.** If the Township takes direct action, it can acquire property in fee simple or it can acquire a partial interest through acquisition of easements. Fee simple acquisition provides the greatest level of control over the use of a parcel, but it is also the most expensive method of acquisition. In addition to acquisition costs, fee simple acquisition removes property from the tax rolls, resulting in a decrease in property tax revenue.
2. **Easements.** Easements are distinct property rights that may be sold separately from other rights. Easements are effective for preserving sensitive lands, providing public access to greenways, and allowing property owners to obtain income, estate, and property tax benefits while they continue to live on their land.
3. **Private Voluntary Land Protection Efforts.** Instead of taking direct action, the Township can encourage and rely on private voluntary land protection efforts through one of the following means:
 - » Donation of land or bargain sale (acquisition at below market value).
 - » Option to buy (often used to secure a parcel of land while funding is being obtained).

- » Right-of-first refusal (used to tie up a parcel without having to purchase it immediately).
- » Leases (temporary control without the expense of acquisition).
- » Pre-acquisition by a land trust (where the land trust serves as the intermediary for the public agency, such as the Township).
- » Conservation investment (essentially real estate syndication for the purpose of resource protection).

State of Michigan Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program (Formerly known as PA 116).

Public Act 116 of 1974 allows farmers to enroll in a limited contract, a farmland development rights agreement, with the State to keep their land in agricultural or open space use. In exchange for enrollment, farmers are allowed special tax breaks in the form of exemptions from special assessments and a tax credit through their state income tax to relieve some of the burden of their property tax payments. The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program discusses six possible methods for preserving farmland and open space. The preservation methods are as follows:

1. **Farmland Development Rights Agreements.** A temporary restriction on the land between the State and a landowner, voluntarily entered into by a landowner, preserving their land for agriculture in exchange for certain tax benefits and exemptions for various special assessments. (Commonly known as PA 116).
2. **Conservation Easement Donations.** A permanent restriction on the land between the State and a landowner, voluntarily entered into by a landowner, protecting their land for either open space or agriculture.
3. **Agricultural Preservation Fund.** A fund established to assist local units of government in implementing a local purchase of development rights program.
4. **Local Open Space Easement.** A temporary restriction on the land between the local government and a landowner, voluntarily entered into by a landowner, preserving their land as open space in exchange for certain tax benefits and exemptions for various special assessments.
5. **Designated Open Space Easement.** A temporary restriction on specially designated lands between the State and a landowner, voluntarily entered into by a landowner, preserving their land as open space in exchange for certain tax benefits and exemptions for various special assessments.
6. **Purchase of Development Rights (PDR).** A permanent restriction on the land between the State and a landowner, voluntarily entered into by a landowner, preserving his/her land for agriculture in exchange for a cash payment for those rights. Currently PA 116 funding is not available for a PDR program in Oceana County, but a PDR could be initiated either on the County or the Township level.

Conserve Open Space

Shelby Township should continue to encourage the conservation of open space through easements, land donations, open space subdivisions, PUD's and flexible development options in the Zoning Ordinance.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Future Allocation of Commercial Land. Base the future allocation of commercial land in Shelby Township on residents' actual needs for shopping and other commercial facilities. It is not intended that Shelby Township's commercial sector serve a regional market.

Commercial District Development. Continue the W. Shelby Road and Oceana Drive Corridor as the primary location for new commercial development and mixed use development including commercial, office and institutional uses, so as to prevent undesirable strip development.

Design. Encourage the design of commercial uses to reflect thorough and careful analysis of the site and to improve the aesthetics of the community.

- Encourage architecture that is clean and uncluttered; provide buildings that have traditional character. Implementation of traditional design concepts is encouraged.
- Prohibit large signs.
- Encourage attractive, functional landscaping.
- Discourage excessive or spill-over lighting.
- Require loading, parking, and storage areas to be located behind buildings or on the sides with screening, preferably with landscaping or a combination of landscaping and walls.
- Require the interior of parking areas to be landscaped to provide visual relief to large paved areas.
- Emphasize pedestrian access between and within sites.
- Encourage sustainable design.

Linkages between Commercial Developments. Encourage construction of service drives or access easements and pedestrian/bicycle linkages between adjoining developments for the purposes of traffic safety and the reduction in conflict between vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Transitions and Screening. Plan for transitional uses between commercial uses and adjoining residential uses. Contain impacts from commercial uses within the commercial district itself. Require commercial developments to be screened from adjoining residential areas.

Maintenance. Encourage improvement or redevelopment of neglected commercial properties.

GOAL: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Support and maintain the presence of existing businesses in the Township. This can include defining approaches for adaptive reuse of underutilized commercial properties and promote new development that is attractive and compatible with surrounding land uses.

ACTIONS

1. Coordinate the intensity of commercial development with available infrastructure, public facilities, and services (public water and sewer, roads, emergency services, etc.).
2. Explore opportunities to support agri-businesses and assist with grant programs, such as those from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD), and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).
3. Review and revise the Township's zoning ordinance as necessary to allow for appropriate development, redevelopment, and sustainable business facilities.
4. Increase communication with developers and the public to market local business opportunities, development projects, and natural assets.
5. Work with area attractions (e.g. Lewis Farms, Double JJ Resort, Silver Lake State Park, etc.) to promote Shelby Township as an agricultural destination.
6. Emphasize the Township's local setting, its proximity to Lake Michigan, and its exceptional agricultural production to market new and existing businesses and residences.

GOAL: HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Support and offer attractive and attainable housing options that serve residents of all ages and abilities while preserving the Township's natural setting.

ACTIONS

1. Consider residential development available for both rental and owner-occupied tenure. This can translate to various housing development incentives, such as tax abatement programs and policies, lowering development fees, and streamlined development processes, or a mechanism for donations of land. This could also be addressed through programs such as a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), in which property owners can sell “development rights” of agricultural land to land that is ripe for development.
2. Emphasize development projects that consider a variety of housing types and affordability levels. This includes considering target markets, such as young families, workforce housing, young professionals, senior living, aging in place, and other types.
3. Develop connections and point-source resources for assisting with housing affordability and attainability. This can connect potential developers to housing advocacy groups, investors, or other stakeholders.
4. Establish communications with housing organizations and professionals that can assist with identifying capacity and locations for housing developments of appropriate typologies and densities – which is explored further in this Future Land Use Plan.
5. Identify possible sites for future housing developments and assess how to achieve more appealing development conditions, such as land preparations, pre-development assistance, or infrastructure.
6. Foster a housing infill program that promotes new development on vacant or underutilized properties, stabilizes neighborhoods, and aligns with the rural character of the community.
7. Coordinate residential density with the availability of public utilities and potential for utility expansion, while protecting the rural and agricultural character of the Township.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Density. The Township’s development pattern should consist of a “transect” of density, with the highest residential densities near the Village of Shelby and the Village of New Era. Specific areas are also designated for preservation or low density due to insufficient infrastructure, existing farmland to be preserved, and preservation of rural character.

Land Use Compatibility. Strive to achieve a land use pattern that separates residential areas from incompatible land uses or requires ample buffer zones to alleviate incompatibility.

Preservation of Natural Features. Design new residential developments to be compatible with the underlying natural features of the site. Preserve significant topographic features, tree stands, wetlands and watercourses, and other natural features intact wherever possible.

Housing Alternatives. Work toward providing a sufficient supply of attainably priced housing alternatives in the Township or nearby communities to meet the needs of all population segments, including the elderly and

young families. Consider Traditional Neighborhood Development and Planned Unit Development as design options.

Farmland Preservation. Encourage continued agricultural activity. When reviewing development plans, explore alternative layouts to minimize conflict with nearby farming operations.

Residential Open Space. Promote the inclusion of preserved open space in new residential developments.

High Quality Design. Encourage new residential development with high standards of housing design and construction.

GOAL: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Protect, preserve, and enhance the unique and desirable natural amenities of Shelby Township.

ACTIONS

1. Prevent environmental degradation of the natural resources in the Township.
2. Require new development to maintain and/or enhance the quality of the air, soil, surface water, and groundwater.
3. Encourage environmental sustainability elements into new development proposals.
4. Potential for impact on the natural environment will be a consideration of approval when reviewing development applications in areas including or surrounding sensitive areas or requiring the use of wells.
5. Require that all natural features be clearly delineated on site plans submitted for approval.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Protection of Natural Features. Promote the wise use of natural resources such as wetlands, wooded areas, scenic views, farmlands, and unique wildlife habitats, and the preservation of groundwater recharge areas. The Township wishes to protect the features that give the community its appealing scenic, rural character and to establish natural resource protection as a planning priority that serves as a basis for other planning and development goals and policies.

Pollution Control. Take reasonable steps to prevent surface and ground water pollution, soil contamination, air pollution, light pollution and noise pollution. Consider addressing up-to-date performance, environmental, stormwater and waste management standards and implement them throughout the Township.

Intergovernmental Cooperation. Continue to cooperate with federal, state, and county agencies for the purposes of enforcing environmental regulations, as applicable.

Zoning Techniques. Utilize zoning techniques such as Residential Planned Unit Development, Commercial Planned Unit Development, and open space community development to encourage development that is sensitive to the environment and promotes a quality of life for residents.

GOAL: TRANSPORTATION

Support and maintain the Township's existing road network.

ACTIONS

1. Continue to coordinate with surrounding townships, the Village of Shelby, the Village of New Era, the Oceana County Road Commission, and the Michigan Department of Transportation on enhancements of the road system.
2. Identify key road corridors for general upkeep and maintenance improvements, such as repaving, paving, or patchwork, in conjunction with a desired improvement schedule to coincide with the Road Commission's short-term and long-term plans.
3. Seek grant opportunities available to the Township, such as through MDOT, to obtain funding for road improvement projects.
4. Continue to support and enhance the US-31 access area (W. Shelby Road) for high-quality development, compatible land uses, and economic opportunities.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Road and Street Classifications. Preservation of a rural road network, consisting of an inter-connected system of local and collector roads, thoroughfares, and arterial roads, is a primary objective of transportation planning in Shelby Township.

Ensure Private Road Maintenance. Continue to require and enforce private road maintenance agreements in the Township. Discourage private roads in situations where long term maintenance cannot be reasonably assured.

Need for New Roads. Work toward construction of new roads only where there is a documented need for the purposes of traffic safety or to alleviate traffic congestion. Locate and design new roads to minimize impact on significant natural features and to reduce the loss of rural open space.

Land Use/Transportation Relationships. Strive toward a balanced relationship between the Township's transportation system and the overall land use pattern. Analyze new development proposals to determine the amount of traffic that will be generated and how the increased traffic will affect the transportation system.

Land Use/Transportation Friction. Alleviate the friction between land use and traffic through careful planning and scrutiny of development proposals. Encourage the use of service drives or access easements to provide access to adjoining properties, and to limit the number of driveways onto main roads. Continue to implement access management techniques for commercial and industrial development.

Road Aesthetics. Preservation of rural character should be a primary consideration in any road construction project. Roads should be visually pleasing to motorists, pedestrians, and persons who view the roads from adjoining land. Require ample landscaping along the frontage of all roads. Encourage commercial and industrial uses to maintain their driveway approaches.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Transportation. Develop pedestrian/bicycle safety paths that link residential areas with recreation areas, commercial areas, regional bike trail plans, and other attractions.

GOAL: RECREATION

Continue to develop and define the Township's role in the Oceana County region as a popular destination for parks and recreation amenities.

ACTIONS

1. Look for ways to support connections to the Hart-Montague Trail and other recreational opportunities, such as through bike racks, signage, and additional trail connections where appropriate.
2. Continue to support, enhance, and maintain Township-owned recreational facilities, such as the Bark Park, Shelby Township Community Park, and others.
3. Consider opportunities for right-sized passive recreation in the Township, such as natural preserve open space areas, for low-maintenance recreation facilities. This can include simple facilities for walking, hiking, bird watching, and other similar activities.
4. Ensure that the Township has an updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan on file with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) so the Township is eligible for grants.

GOAL: PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, AND POLICY

Review the Master Plan Every 5 Years

The Master Plan is not intended to be static. Conditions change over time. It is important that the Planning Commission periodically review the Master Plan to ensure that it is still relevant and that it still reflects the vision of the community. Also, by State law, the Master Plan must be reviewed at least once every 5 years.

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