

# Charter Township of Lenox Master Plan 2026

# Draft

Draft as of January 19, 2026



Welcome to the Lenox Township, Michigan Master Plan—a shared vision for the future of our community that reflects the voices, values, and aspirations of our residents. This plan serves as a roadmap to guide thoughtful growth, preserve our unique character, and enhance the quality of life for all who live, work, and play here. Grounded in collaboration and driven by data, the master plan outlines strategic goals for land use, housing, transportation, sustainability, economic development, and community well-being. Together, we are shaping a resilient and vibrant future that honors our past while embracing the opportunities ahead.

#### Elected Officials

Anthony Reeder, Supervisor  
Michelle Gurley, Clerk  
Jennifer Sutherland, Treasurer  
Joseph Marino  
Joseph Rosseel

#### Planning Commission

Eric Suddon, Chair  
Vice Chair, Tanya Muylaert  
Robert Pannell, Secretary  
Michelle Gurley, Township Board Liaison  
Olu Jabari  
Genevieve Rodzik  
Karen Turchi



Cassin Planning Group, LLC

**Lenox Township  
Macomb County, Michigan  
Resolution Adopting Master Plan**

Whereas the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, provides that the Planning Commission may prepare a Master Plan for the use, development, and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

Whereas the Planning Commission notified each municipality contiguous to the Township, the Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development, and each public utility company within the Township for purposes of notification of its intent to adopt a Master Plan; and

Whereas the proposed Master Plan was submitted to the Township Board, who authorized the distribution of the proposed Plan; and

Whereas the proposed Master Plan was distributed to each municipality contiguous to the Township, the Macomb County Department of Planning & Economic Development, and each public utility company within the Township, for purposes of notification, review, and comment; and

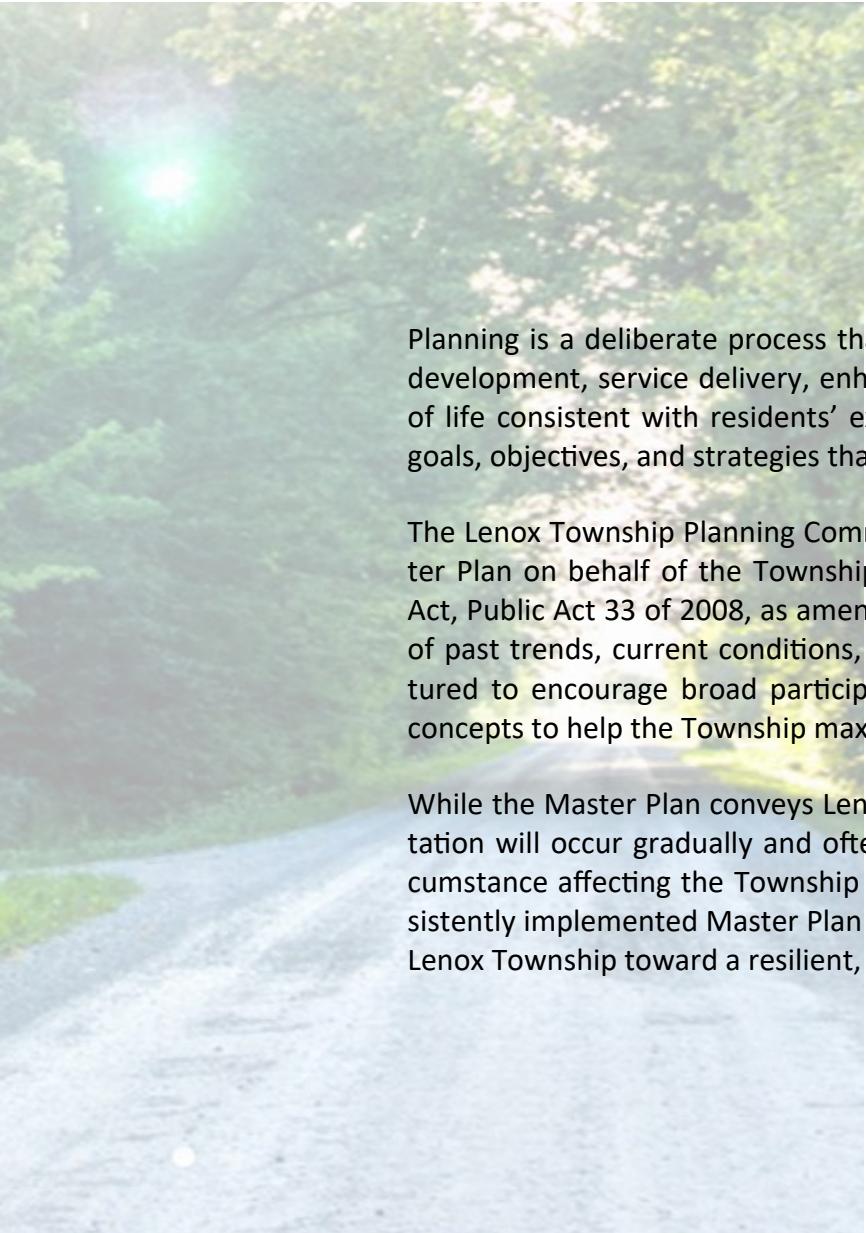
Whereas, on \_\_\_\_\_, 2025, after proper public notice, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed Master Plan, during which members of the public were allowed to comment on the proposed Plan and written comments received were discussed.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Lenox Township Planning Commission hereby approves and adopts the Master Plan, as per the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008.

Adopted by the Lenox Township Planning Commission on \_\_\_\_\_, 2025.

# Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	5
<i>Community Snapshot</i>	9
<i>Existing Land Use</i>	41
<i>Transportation &amp; Mobility</i>	45
<i>Housing Affordability</i>	55
<i>Township Goals and Policies</i>	61
<i>Future Land Use</i>	67
<i>Zoning Plan &amp; Implementation</i>	79



# Chapter 1

## Introduction

Planning is a deliberate process that entails the thoughtful selection of policies governing land use, development, service delivery, enhancement of community character, and preservation of a quality of life consistent with residents' expectations. The purpose of this Master Plan is to articulate the goals, objectives, and strategies that the Township and its residents seek to pursue.

The Lenox Township Planning Commission is charged with the preparation and adoption of the Master Plan on behalf of the Township. This authority is derived from the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended. The planning process has included a comprehensive analysis of past trends, current conditions, and potential future scenarios. The process has also been structured to encourage broad participation, facilitate the exchange of ideas, and generate innovative concepts to help the Township maximize its opportunities.

While the Master Plan conveys Lenox Township's long-term vision for the community, its implementation will occur gradually and often in ways that may differ from initial projections. Not every circumstance affecting the Township can be foreseen. Nevertheless, a thoughtfully prepared and consistently implemented Master Plan will enable the community to make informed decisions that guide Lenox Township toward a resilient, prosperous, and sustainable future.

## HOW IS IT USED?

The Master Plan serves several essential functions and is intended for use in a variety of planning and decision-making contexts, including the following:

**Foundation for Regulatory Actions**— The Master Plan provides the statutory basis for zoning and land-use decisions. Pursuant to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Public Act 2006 of 2008, as amended), zoning ordinances must be based on a plan that addresses the community's needs for natural resources, housing, recreation, industry, commerce, services, and other land uses, while ensuring that such uses are appropriately located within the Township.

**Framework for Community Programs and Decision-Making**—The goals and policies established in the Master Plan guide the Planning Commission and Township Board when considering zoning actions, subdivision approvals, capital improvements, and other land-use matters. In this way, the Plan promotes consistency and provides a long-term framework for local decision-making.

**Basis for Future Planning Studies**—While no Master Plan can anticipate every issue in detail, it identifies key needs and areas requiring additional analysis. Where appropriate, the Plan recommends further studies that may lead to more focused strategies, programs, or implementation actions to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

**Reference Document for Stakeholders**— The Master Plan serves as an important resource for residents, property owners, developers, business owners, prospective residents, and local boards, commissions, and agencies. It clearly communicates the Township's long-term vision, development priorities, and planning policies in an accessible and organized manner.

**Guide for Long-Term Development**— As a comprehensive statement of long-range goals and policies, the Master Plan provides a foundation for evaluating public and private development proposals. It is intended to promote coordinated, orderly, and sustainable growth while shaping the Township's physical, social, economic, and environmental future.

## COMMUNITY INPUT

Community participation is a fundamental component of an effective and credible planning process. For the goals, policies, and recommendations of the Master Plan to be both meaningful and achievable, it is essential to establish a shared community vision that reflects the values, priorities, and long-term aspirations of Lenox Township residents.

To support this objective, the Lenox Township Board initiated an online community survey to actively engage residents and solicit input on a broad range of land-use and community development topics. The survey generated responses from 108 residents, providing valuable insight into public perspectives on future land development patterns, housing options, community services, and overall quality of life.

The feedback received through this outreach effort played a critical role in informing the direction of the Master Plan. Resident input helped identify key issues, opportunities, and areas of concern, directly influencing the goals, policies, and implementation strategies outlined in this document. As a result, the Master Plan reflects not only professional planning analysis but also the collective voice of the community, establishing a clear and community-supported framework to guide Lenox Township's long-term growth, development, and preservation efforts.



# LENOX TOWNSHIP

Michigan

Lenox Township is in the process of updating its Master Plan.

The Plan is essential because it allows the Township to plan for future growth and development. More importantly, by obtaining your input, we can better address the current and future needs of our residents, businesses, and visitors.

Please take a few minutes to complete this short survey!

Thank you very much for your time!

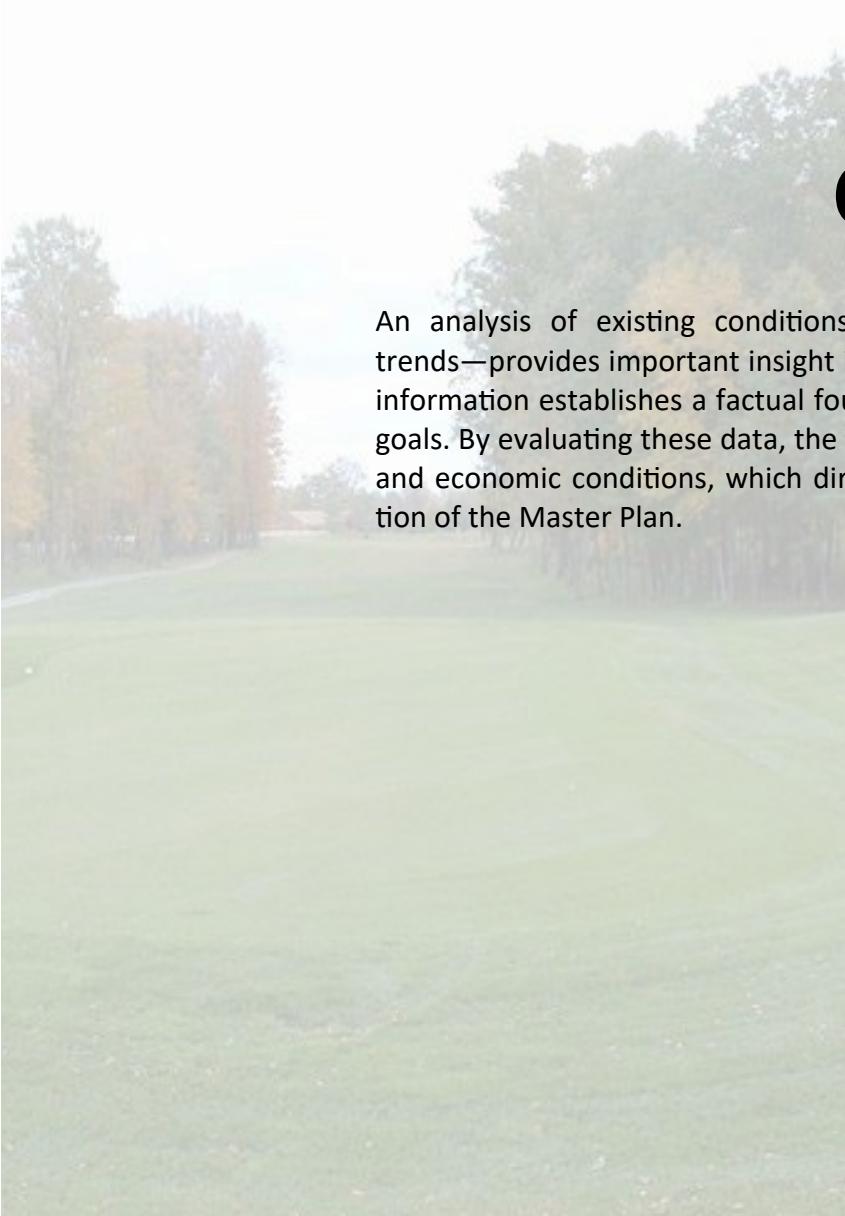
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Terms of Service | Privacy Notice

Anonymous

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# Chapter 2

## Community Snapshot

An analysis of existing conditions—including population, housing, employment, and economic trends—provides important insight into Lenox Township’s character and historical development. This information establishes a factual foundation for identifying community needs and shaping long-term goals. By evaluating these data, the Township gains a clearer understanding of changing demographic and economic conditions, which directly inform the policies, recommendations, and strategic direction of the Master Plan.

## LOCATION

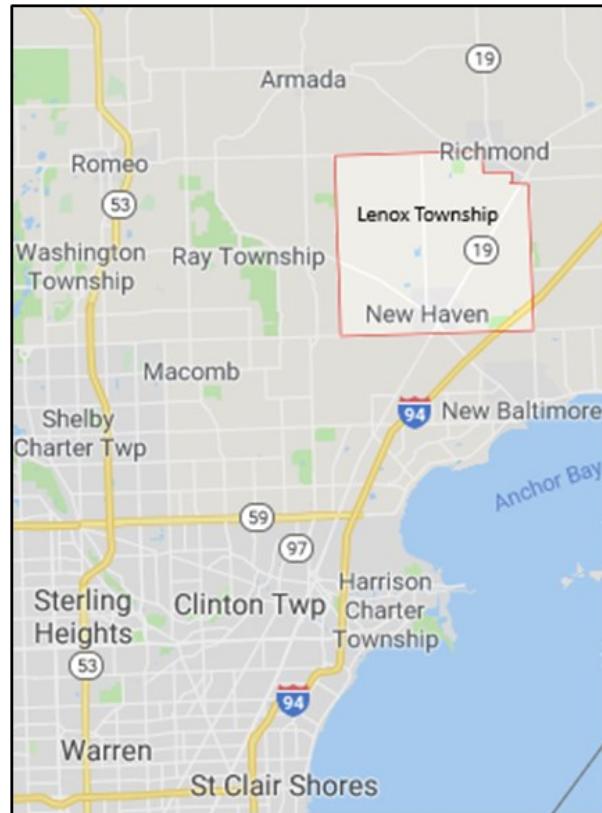
Lenox Township is located along the eastern edge of Macomb County, approximately 40 miles north of downtown Detroit and 25 miles south of Port Huron. The Township benefits from convenient access to Interstate 94 via New Haven Road and 26 Mile Road, which provide regional connectivity to the Detroit–Windsor international border crossing to the south and the Port Huron–Sarnia international crossing to the north.

The Village of New Haven is located in the south-central portion of Lenox Township. The Township is bordered by the City of Richmond and Richmond Township to the north, Casco Township to the east, Chesterfield Township to the south, and Ray Township to the west.

## PLANNING INFLUENCES

In planning for long-term growth and development, Lenox Township must consider not only its own vision and objectives but also the policies and land use strategies of surrounding jurisdictions. Because the Township shares boundaries with four townships, one city, and one village, coordinated planning and an understanding of neighboring communities' goals are essential to promoting compatible land uses, minimizing potential conflicts, and supporting effective regional cooperation.

The following section provides a review of the adopted plans of these adjacent communities, with an emphasis on identifying potential implications for Lenox Township.

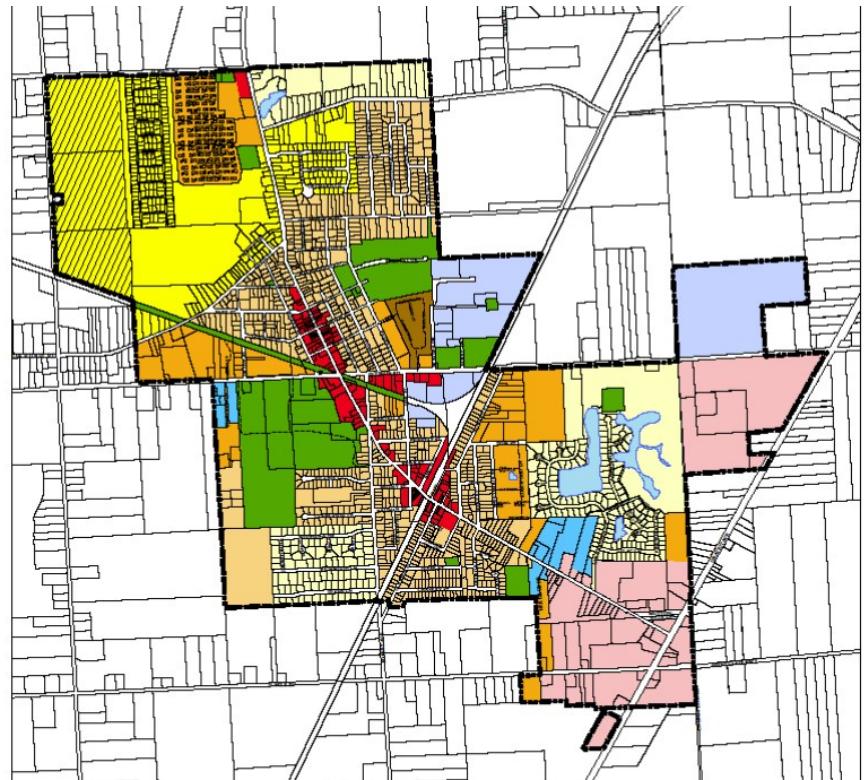
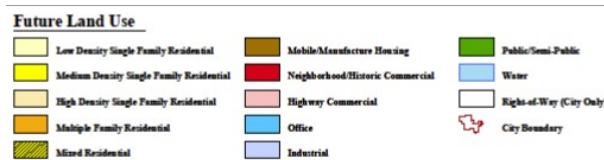


## ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

Five communities share a common boundary with Ira Township. These include the City of New Baltimore, Chesterfield Township, Cassco Township, Cottrellville Township and Clay Township. China Township and Lenox Township adjoin Ira across common intersections. Relevant planning policies of these communities are summarized as follows.

### City of Richmond

The City of Richmond adopted its Master Plan in 2023. In the area adjacent to the shared boundary with Lenox Township, the City's Future Land Use Map designates land primarily for single-family residential development beginning approximately one-half mile east of Gratiot Avenue, with commercial uses planned along the Gratiot Avenue corridor.



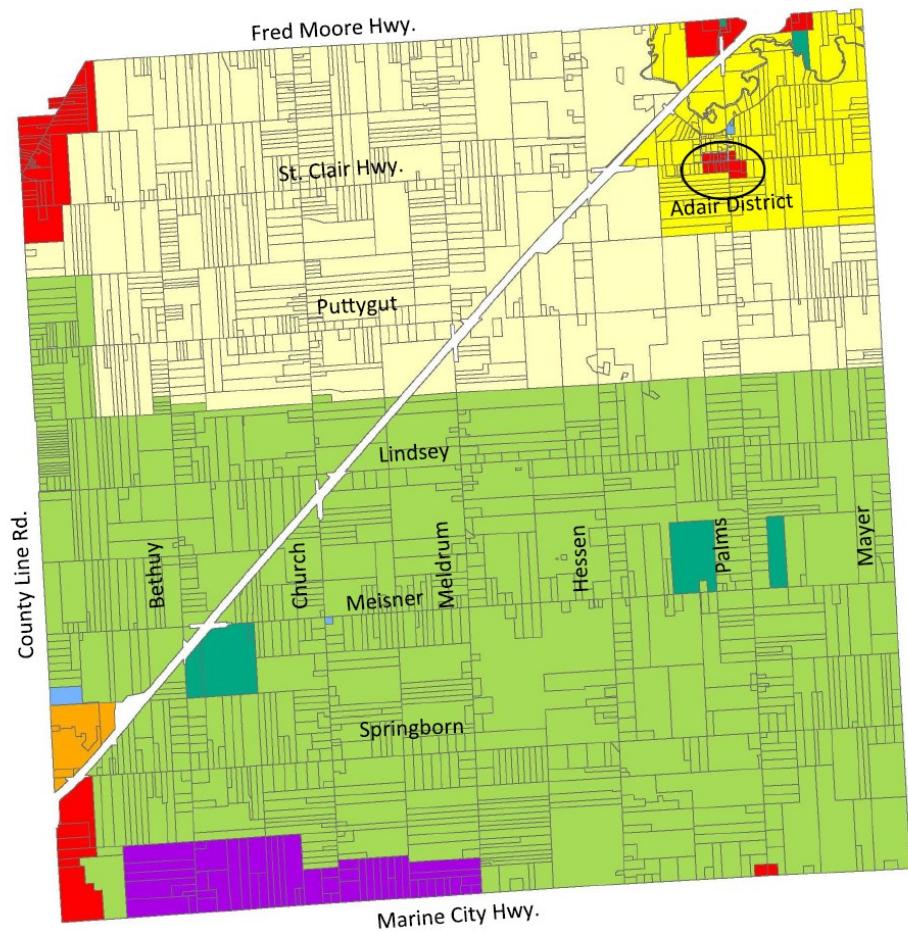
City of Richmond Future Land Use Map

## Casco Township

Casco Township shares Lenox Township's eastern boundary. Casco Township adopted a new Master Plan in 2024 that designates commercial land uses along County Line Road between Marine City Highway (26 Mile Road) and Interstate 94, as well as along County Line Road north of 31 Mile Road. The remainder of the shared boundary is planned for residential uses, which is generally consistent with Lenox Township's existing land use pattern.

The planned commercial designations in Casco Township may influence future development pressures along County Line Road, including increased traffic volumes, infrastructure demands, and opportunities for regional commercial activity. As a result, continued coordination between Lenox Township and Casco Township will be important to promote compatible land uses, ensure efficient transportation access, and protect the residential character of adjacent areas.

- Agricultural Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Moderate Density Residential
- Manufactured Housing Commu
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public
- Recreation

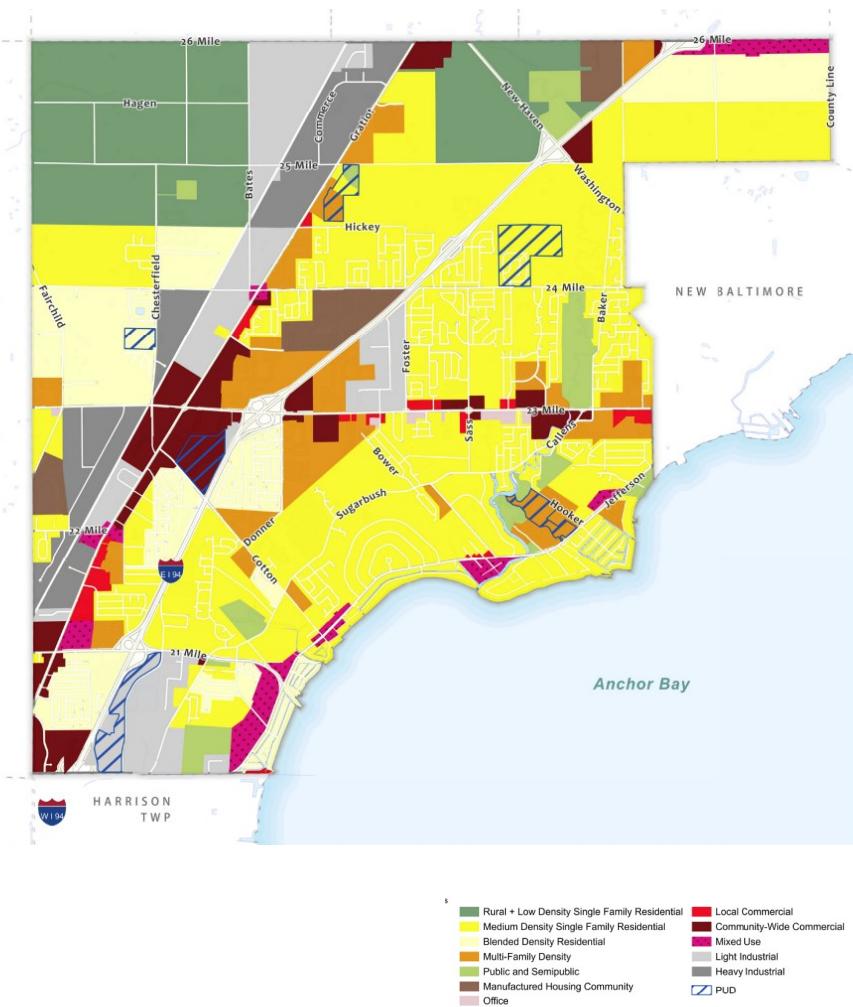


Casco Township Future Land Use Map

## Chesterfield Township

Chesterfield Township's northern boundary adjoins the southern boundaries of Lenox Township and the Village of New Haven. Chesterfield Township adopted its current Master Plan in 2021.

Chesterfield Township's Future Land Use Map designates agricultural uses west of Interstate 94 and commercial uses east of the freeway, which is consistent with the established and planned land use patterns in Lenox Township. This alignment promotes continuity along the shared municipal boundary and supports coordinated regional planning. Maintaining consistent future land use designations helps minimize potential land use conflicts, encourages compatible development, and strengthens long-term planning efforts across jurisdictional boundaries.



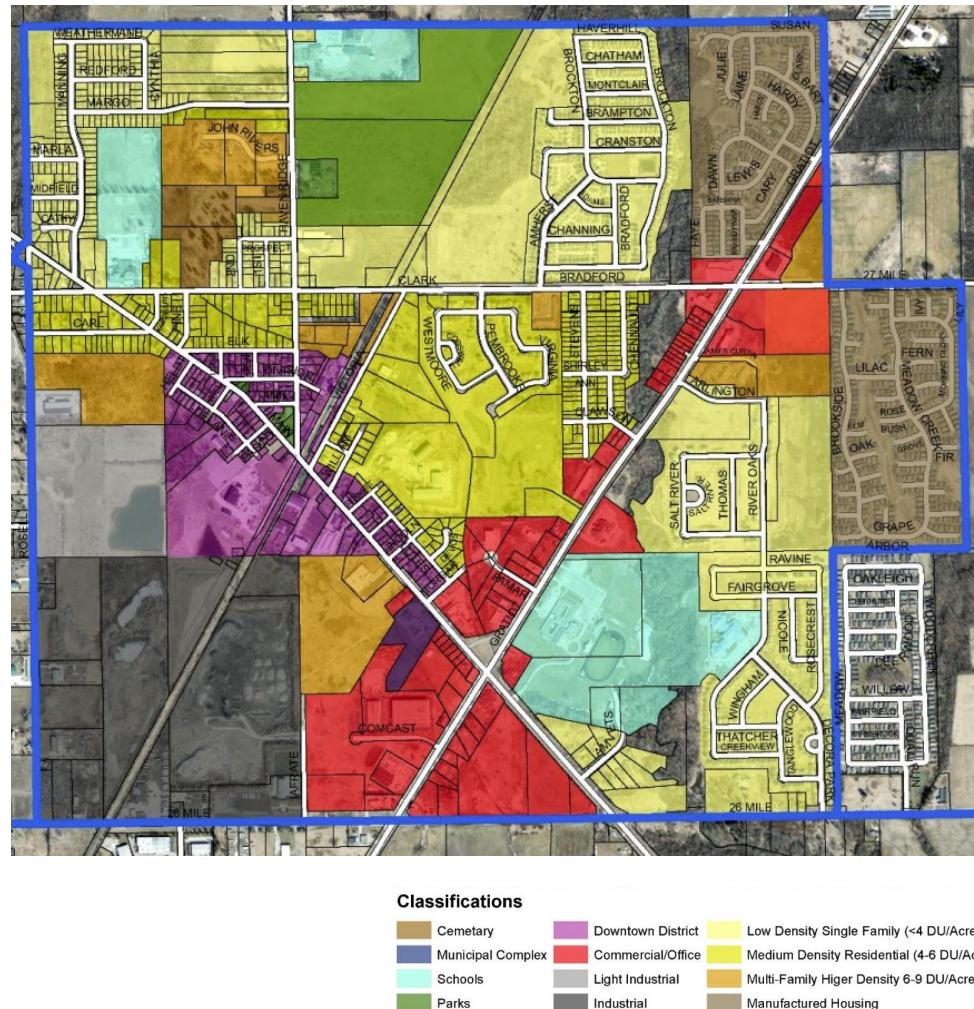
Chesterfield Township Future Land Use Map

## Village of New Haven

The Village of New Haven adopted its Master Plan in 2015. The Village's shared northern boundary with Lenox Township is characterized primarily by residential uses, reflecting a generally compatible land use pattern between the two communities.

Along the western boundary with Lenox Township, land uses include a mix of residential and industrial development. This area will require continued coordination to ensure that future growth maintains an appropriate balance between residential quality of life and industrial activity.

The shared eastern boundary is also predominantly residential in character, further reinforcing consistency between the land use patterns of the Village and Lenox Township. Overall, the Village of New Haven's land use framework aligns well with that of Lenox Township, supporting coordinated and cohesive development along their shared boundaries.



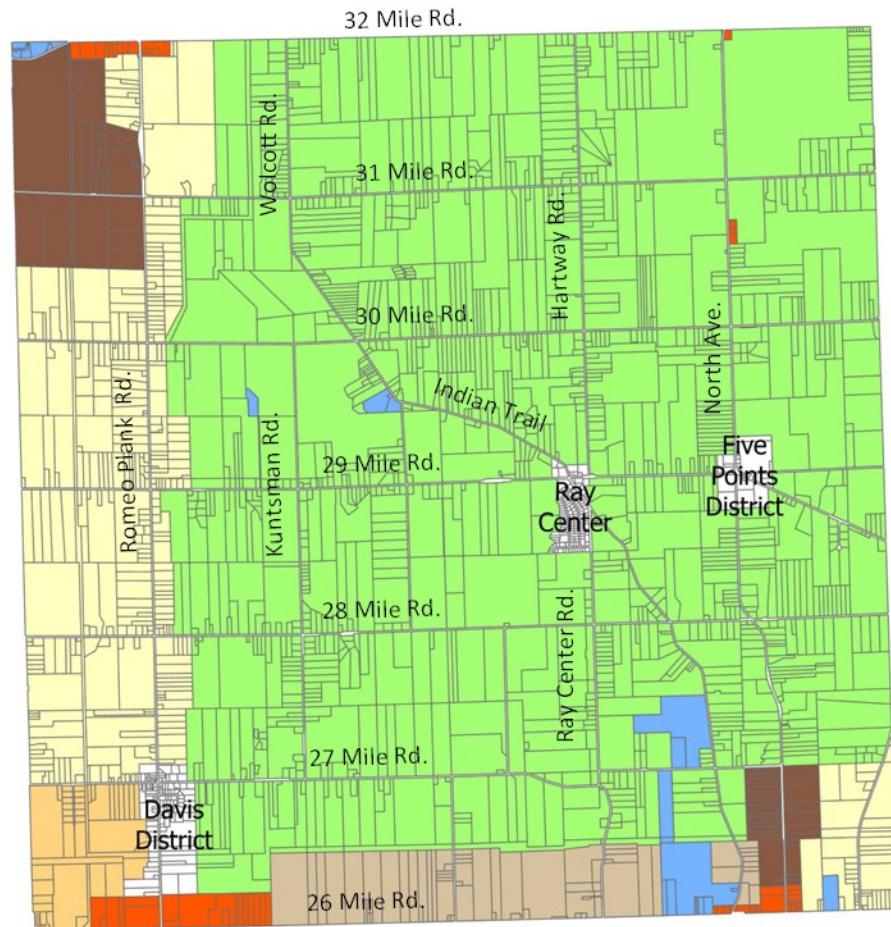
Village of New Haven Future Land Use Map

## Ray Township

Ray Township borders the western edge of Lenox Township. Ray Township adopted a new Master Plan in 2024 that designates agricultural and low-density residential uses along the entire shared boundary. These land use designations support the preservation of rural character, limit development intensity, and maintain a compatible transition between the two communities.

This consistency in future land use planning reinforces long-term land use compatibility, reduces the potential for conflicts, and supports coordinated growth patterns that respect the agricultural and residential character shared by both Ray Township and Lenox Township.

- █ Agricultural
- █ Single Family
- █ Multiple Family
- █ Flexible Residential
- █ Public
- █ Commercial/Office
- █ Industrial



Ray Township Future Land Use Map

## Richmond Township

Richmond Township re-certified its Master Plan in 2022. The Township shares its southern boundary with Lenox Township along 32 Mile Road. Along this corridor, land use designations north of 32 Mile Road—adjacent to Lenox Township’s northern boundary—are primarily agricultural west of the City of Richmond and industrial east of the City of Richmond.



Richmond Township Future Land Use Map

### Adjacent Community Land Use Summary

Community	Master Plan Year	Shared Border with Lenox Township	Future Land Use Designations Along Shared Border
Casco Township	2024	Eastern boundary	Commercial along County Line Road (26 Mile Rd to I-94, and north of 31 Mile Rd); remainder primarily residential
Chesterfield Township	2021	Southern boundary (shared with Lenox and Village of New Haven)	Agricultural west of I-94; Commercial east of I-94
Village of New Haven	2015	Within Lenox Township	Northern boundary primarily residential; Western boundary mix of residential and industrial; Eastern boundary predominantly residential
Ray Township	2024	Western boundary	Agricultural and low-density residential along entire boundary
Richmond Township	2022 (recertified)	Northern boundary	Agricultural west of City of Richmond; Industrial east of City of Richmond
City of Richmond	2023	Northern boundary	Single-family residential beginning ~½ mile east of Gratiot Ave; Commercial along Gratiot Ave corridor

## POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Between 2000 and 2024, Lenox Township's population increased from 5,362 to approximately 6,250 residents, representing moderate but consistent growth over more than two decades. This trend suggests gradual residential development rather than rapid expansion, reinforcing Lenox Township's role as a lower-density community within eastern Macomb County. Population forecasts indicate that this pattern is expected to continue, with the Township projected to reach approximately 6,902 residents by 2050. This level of growth aligns with existing land use policies that emphasize agricultural preservation, low-density residential development, and the protection of rural character.

## Population Trends for Lenox & Surrounding Communities

	2000	2010	2020	2024	2050 Forecast
Lenox Twp.	5,362	5,828	6,022	6,250	6,902
Richmond City	4,896	5,733	5,875	5,726	6,799
Richmond Twp.	3,416	3,665	3,544	3,365	4,262
Casco Twp.	4,748	4,107	3,990	4,210	3,782
Chesterfield Twp.	37,405	43,381	45,376	46,063	51,677
New Haven	3,071	4,642	6,097	6,617	6,817
Ray Twp.	3,740	3,739	3,780	3,773	4,373
Macomb County	788,149	840,978	881,261	874,928	962,485

## HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Average household sizes have declined nationwide, decreasing from 2.62 persons per household in 2000 to 2.53 in 2020. Michigan has experienced an even more significant reduction, from 2.75 to 2.48 over the same period, with local communities reflecting this trend. In Lenox Township, the 2020 Census reported a decline in average household size from 2.71 in 2010 to 2.60 in 2020. Projections from SEMCOG indicate that this figure will continue to decrease, with an estimated average household size of 2.46 in 2024.

## Lenox Population & Household Data 2000-2050

	2010 Census	2020 Census	2024 Estimate	2050 Forecast
Population	5,828	6,022	6,250	6,902
Households	1,676	1,789	2,004	2,271
Persons per Household	2.71	2.60	2.46	2.46

Source: SEMCOG

## AGE CHARACTERISTICS

Between 2000 and 2023, the Township experienced a noticeable increase in older age groups. Residents aged 50 to 69 grew substantially, rising from 976 in 2000 to 1,525 in 2023, while the population aged 70 to 84 more than doubled during the same period. The 85-and-over cohort also increased, though it remains a relatively small share of the overall population. These trends indicate a maturing population and suggest a growing need for age-friendly housing options, accessible services, and healthcare-related amenities.

At the same time, younger age cohorts have shown mixed patterns. The number of residents under age 5 has remained relatively stable, while the 5 to 9 age group increased significantly by 2023, reflecting recent growth among young families. The 10 to 19 cohort declined modestly from its 2010 peak, which may indicate smaller household sizes or shifts in family composition. The 20 to 29 age group has remained relatively stable over time, suggesting that Lenox Township continues to retain some young adults, potentially due to local employment opportunities and housing affordability.

The largest age group—residents aged 30 to 49—declined gradually between 2000 and 2023, consistent with broader regional trends as this cohort ages into older categories. Despite these shifts, the Township's median age increased from 36.0 in 2000 to 41.5 in 2010, before decreasing slightly to 39.9 in 2023, indicating a modest rebalancing of the age structure in recent years.

Overall, the age distribution suggests that Lenox Township is transitioning toward an older population while still maintaining a presence of young families and working-age residents. These trends have important implications for future planning related to housing diversity, public services, recreation facilities, and long-term community sustainability.

Population Counts by Age Brackets

	2000 Census	2010 Census	2023 Estimate
Under 5	215	252	210
5–9	232	285	446
10–19	572	654	536
20–29	721	727	743
30–49	2,181	1,992	1,856
50–69	976	1,506	1,525
70–84	245	343	619
85+	20	69	89
Median Age	36.0	41.5	39.9

Source: SEMCOG, American  
Community Survey



## RACIAL COMPOSITION

The racial composition of Lenox Township has become modestly more diverse over time. Between 2010 and 2023, the White population declined slightly, while the Black and Hispanic populations experienced measurable increases. Smaller gains were also recorded in the multi-racial population, while the number of residents identifying as other races decreased. Overall, these trends indicate gradual demographic diversification within Lenox Township, reflecting broader regional patterns and underscoring the importance of inclusive planning and community services that respond to a changing population.

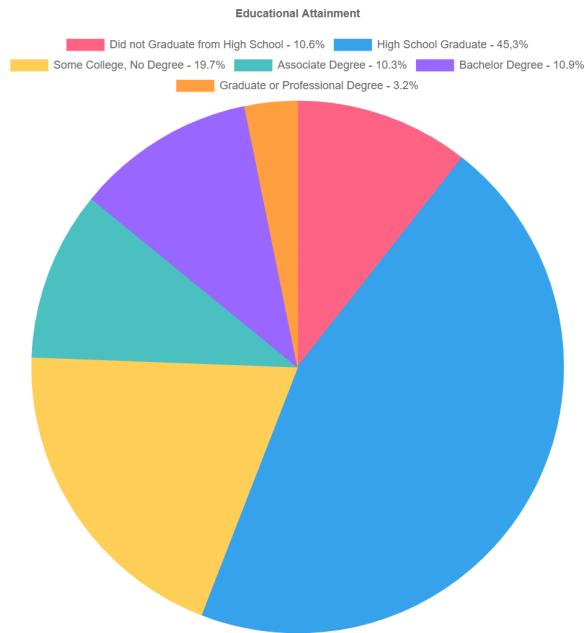
### Population by Race

	2010 Census	2023 A.C.S.	Change
White	4,798	4,670	-128
Black	732	898	+166
Hispanic	175	313	+138
Multi Racial	63	66	+3
Other	34	10	-14

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational attainment is a critical indicator of a community's socio-economic well-being. Research consistently demonstrates a strong correlation between higher levels of education and increased economic prosperity. As residents pursue degrees and professional credentials, opportunities for job growth and economic advancement expand.

The adjacent chart illustrates the educational attainment of Lenox Township residents, as reported in the most recent American Community Survey. In 2022, 14.1 percent of residents held a Bachelor's degree or higher, a figure notably lower than the 22.0 percent reported for Macomb County overall.



Source: SEMCOG, American Community Survey

## HOUSING TYPE

Owner-occupied housing remains the predominant tenure type in Lenox Township and has remained largely stable, increasing slightly from 1,510 to 1,518 units. This stability reflects a strong base of long-term residents and an ongoing preference for owner-occupied, single-family housing.

Renter-occupied units increased more notably, rising from 166 to 238 units. Although rental housing continues to represent a relatively small share of the overall housing stock, this growth suggests a gradual diversification of housing options. The increase may reflect changing household needs, including smaller households, younger residents, and seniors seeking lower-maintenance living arrangements.

Vacant housing units declined from 146 to 129, indicating improved occupancy rates and potentially stronger demand for existing housing. Collectively, these trends point to a stable housing market in Lenox Township, characterized by modest growth, a strong owner-occupied base, an expanding rental presence, and declining vacancy levels.

## HOUSING VALUES & RENT

Consistent with nationwide trends, the median housing value in Lenox Township decreased by over 18% between 2010 and 2023. Median rents, however, have increased by 52.4% during the same period.

Occupancy		
	2010	2023
Owner Occupied Units	1,510	1,518
Renter Occupied Units	166	238
Vacant Units	146	129
Total	1,822	1,866

## Housing Values & Gross Rent

	2010	2023	Change
Median Housing Value	\$266,786	\$218,200	-18.2%
Gross Median Rent	\$942	\$1,436	+52.4%

Source: SEMCOG

## EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

SEMCOG estimates that there were 2,276 jobs in Lenox Township in 2025, representing a 297-job increase from 2020.

The chart below illustrates the number of jobs held by Lenox Township residents by industry sector. In 2025, the largest number of jobs was in the Retail Trades sector, followed by Public Administration.

	Employment in Community	
	2020	2025
Lenox Township	1,979	2,276
Casco Township	1,000	1,101
Ray Township	1,394	1,604
Macomb Township	20,798	23,481
Ira Township	1,714	1,983
Village of New Haven	1,494	1,678
City of Richmond	2,847	3,189
Richmond Township	1,292	1,466
<b>Macomb County</b>	<b>415,735</b>	<b>458,200</b>

Lenox Resident's Employment by Industry Sector

	2020	2025
Natural Resources, Mining, & Construction	173	208
Manufacturing	56	72
Wholesale Trade	55	62
Retail Trade	499	518
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	162	192
Information & Financial Activities	104	127
Professional and Technical Services & Corporate HQ	55	74
Administrative, Support, & Waste Services	154	169
Education Services	7	7
Healthcare Services	33	137
Leisure & Hospitality	137	142
Other Services	99	109
Public Administration	445	459
<b>Total Employment Numbers</b>	<b>1,979</b>	<b>2,276</b>

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

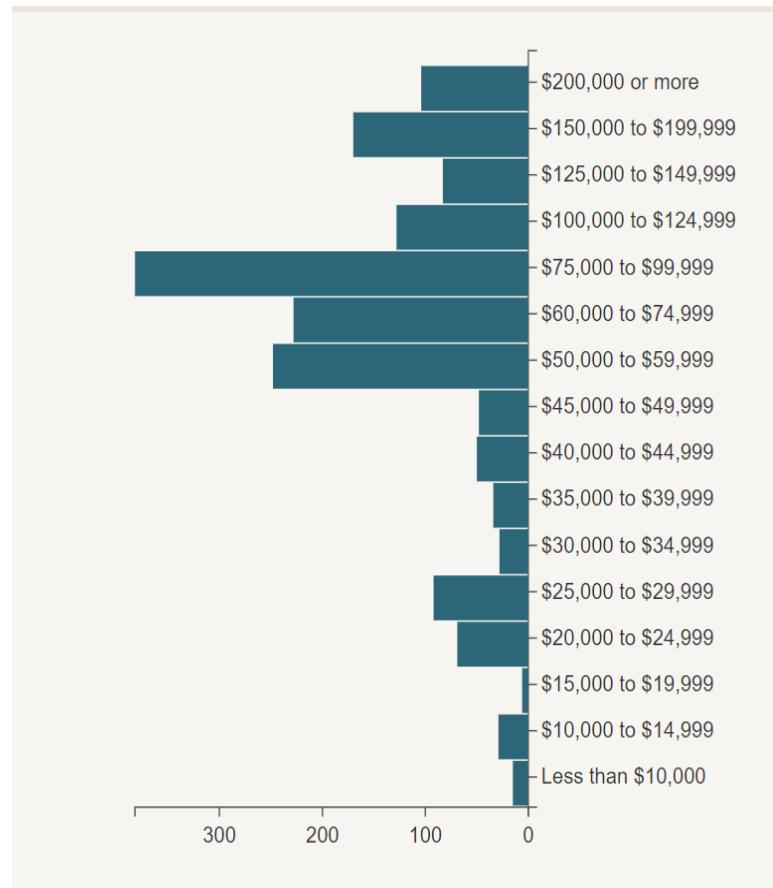
The corresponding chart illustrates contrasting household income trends between Lenox Township and Macomb County from 2010 to 2023. In 2010, Lenox Township's median household income (\$85,580) was substantially higher than the countywide median (\$75,452), reflecting the Township's historically strong income profile.

By 2023, however, Lenox Township experienced a notable decline in median household income, decreasing by \$12,180 to \$73,400. In contrast, Macomb County's median household income remained relatively stable over the same period, increasing modestly by \$942 to \$76,399.

As a result, Lenox Township's median household income, which once exceeded the county average, now falls slightly below the Macomb County median. This shift suggests changing economic conditions within Lenox Township and highlights the importance of monitoring income trends as part of broader planning efforts related to housing, land use, and community services.

### Median Household Income 2010—2023

	2010 Median Household Income	2023 Median Household Income	2010 – 2023 Change
Lenox Township	\$85,580	\$73,400	-\$12,180
Macomb County	\$75,452	\$76,399	+\$942



Source: SEMCOG

## TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Traffic volumes and safety are some of the primary measures of the performance of individual roads in the road system and how a road network interacts as a whole. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) publishes limited traffic count data for Lenox Township.



## TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

Traffic accidents result from a range of factors, including roadway design, driver behavior, and weather conditions. Of these, improper driving is the most common cause. The primary forms of improper driving include excessive speed, failure to yield the right-of-way, and following other vehicles too closely. Alcohol and drug use also play a significant role, contributing to more than half of all fatal traffic accidents in the United States.

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) tracks and reports accident data by intersection. Based on SEMCOG's most recent data, the intersections listed below experienced the highest number of traffic accidents in Lenox Township between 2019 and 2023.



### Lenox Township Highest Frequency Accident Intersections

2019-2023

- 26 Mile / Marine City Highway and County Line Road
- 26 Mile and the Eastbound I-94 Ramp
- 32 Mile and Lowe Plank Road
- 26 Mile and the Westbound I-94 Ramp
- 26 Mile and Burdon Road
- 26 Mile and Frost Road
- 26 Mile and Millstone Park Blvd.
- 26 Mile and Quail Run Blvd.
- 27 Mile and County Line Road
- Meisner Road and County Line Road

Source: SEMCOG

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

**Township Administrative Offices**—The Lenox Township Civic Center is located at 65770 Gratiot Ave. (west side of Gratiot, north of 29 Mile Road). In addition to the township's governmental offices, the property features a newly renovated senior citizen center and a large park with both passive and active recreational facilities.

**Fire**—Lenox Township is served by a volunteer fire department. There are two fire stations within the community, one on Gratiot, and one on Division Road (32 Mile Road).

**Emergency Medical Services**—Owned jointly by Lenox and Richmond Township, the Richmond Lenox EMS provides service to the entire Township. An EMS station is located on Gratiot Avenue on property jointly used by the Lenox Fire Department and the Public Works Department.



Police Protection—Lenox Township contracts with the Macomb County Sheriff's Department for police services.

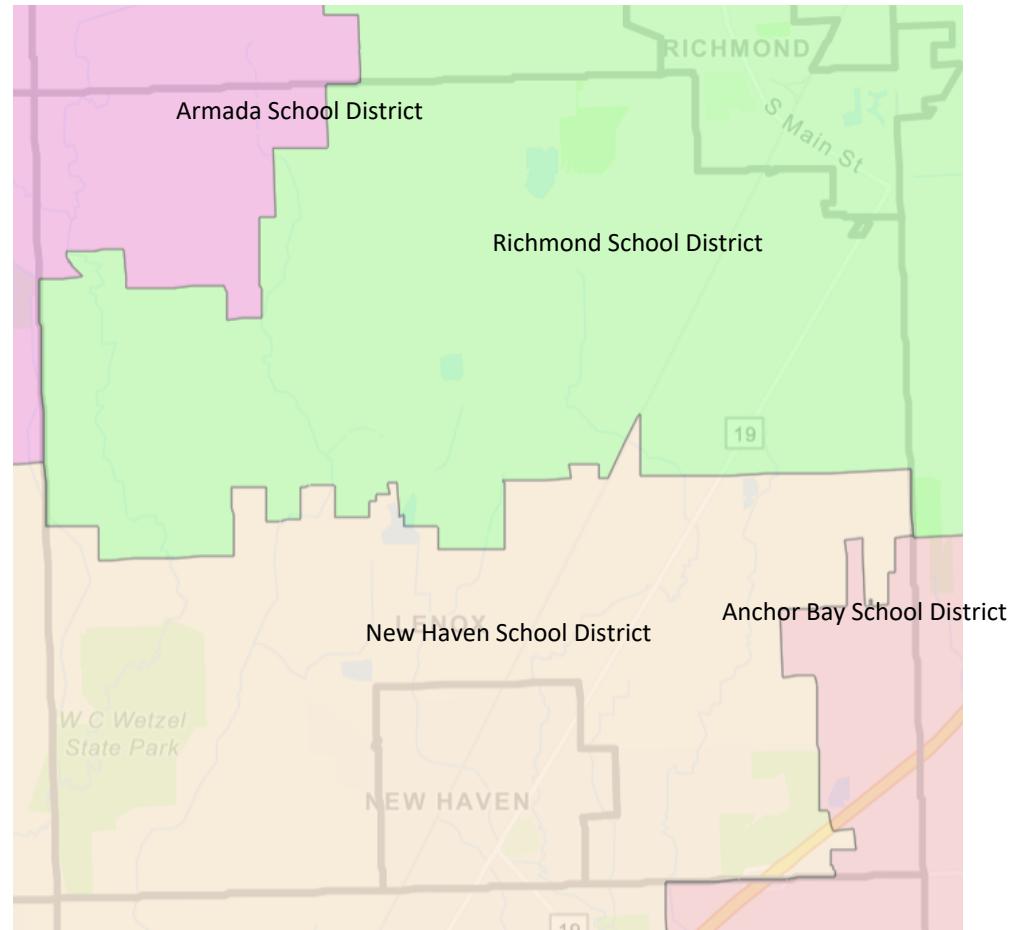
School Districts—Lenox Township is served by four school districts: Richmond, Anchor Bay, New Haven, and Armada. Currently, there are no public schools within the Township.

Water and Sewer— The Township has an agreement with the City of Detroit to provide water service. The area served is primarily along the Gratiot corridor and eastward to County Line Road.

The Township currently provides sanitary sewer service along Gratiot, and along 26 Mile Road east of Gratiot. Most of the Township, east of Gratiot, is planned for sanitary sewer service.

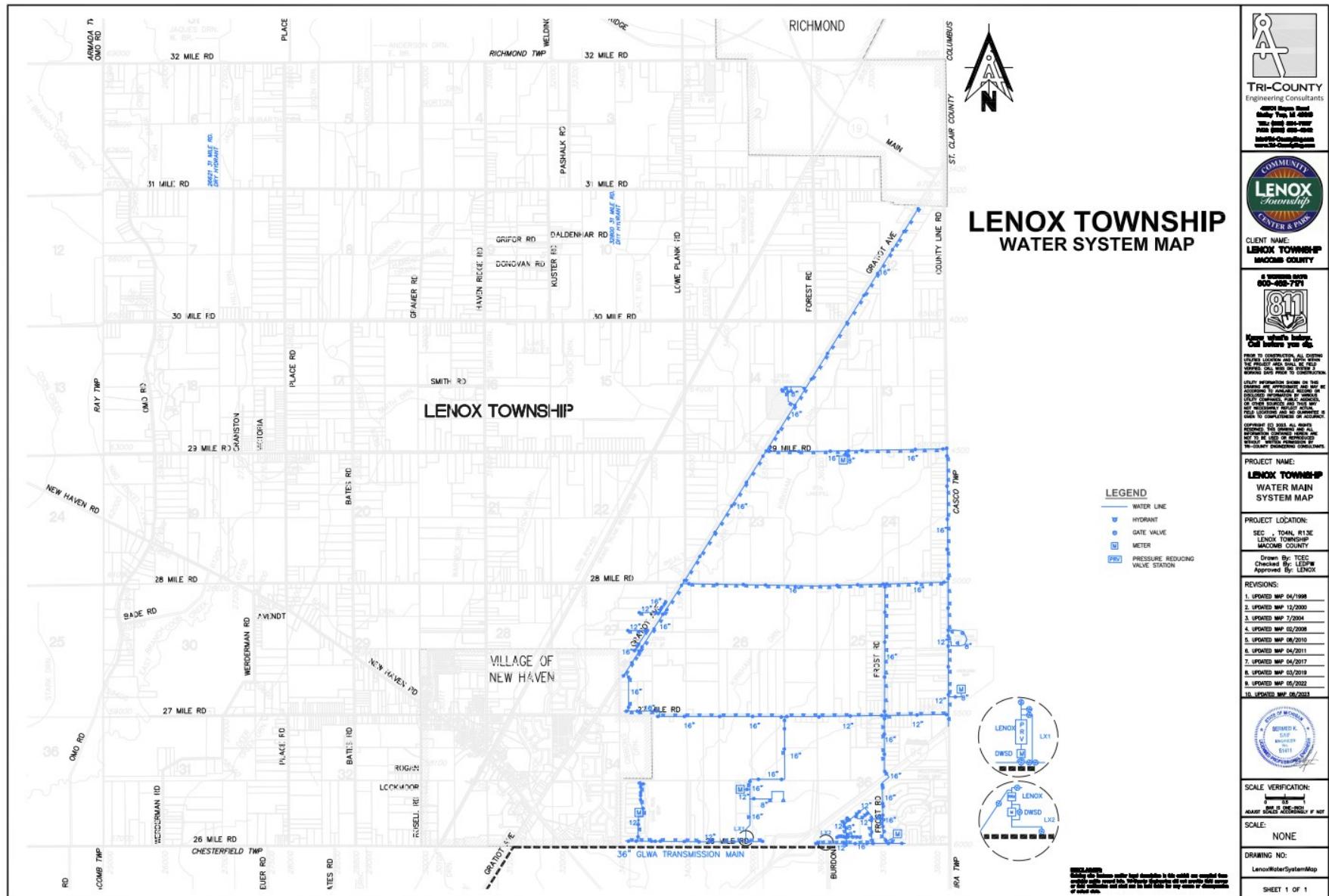
The Township's Water and Sewer Master Plan Maps are shown on the following pages.

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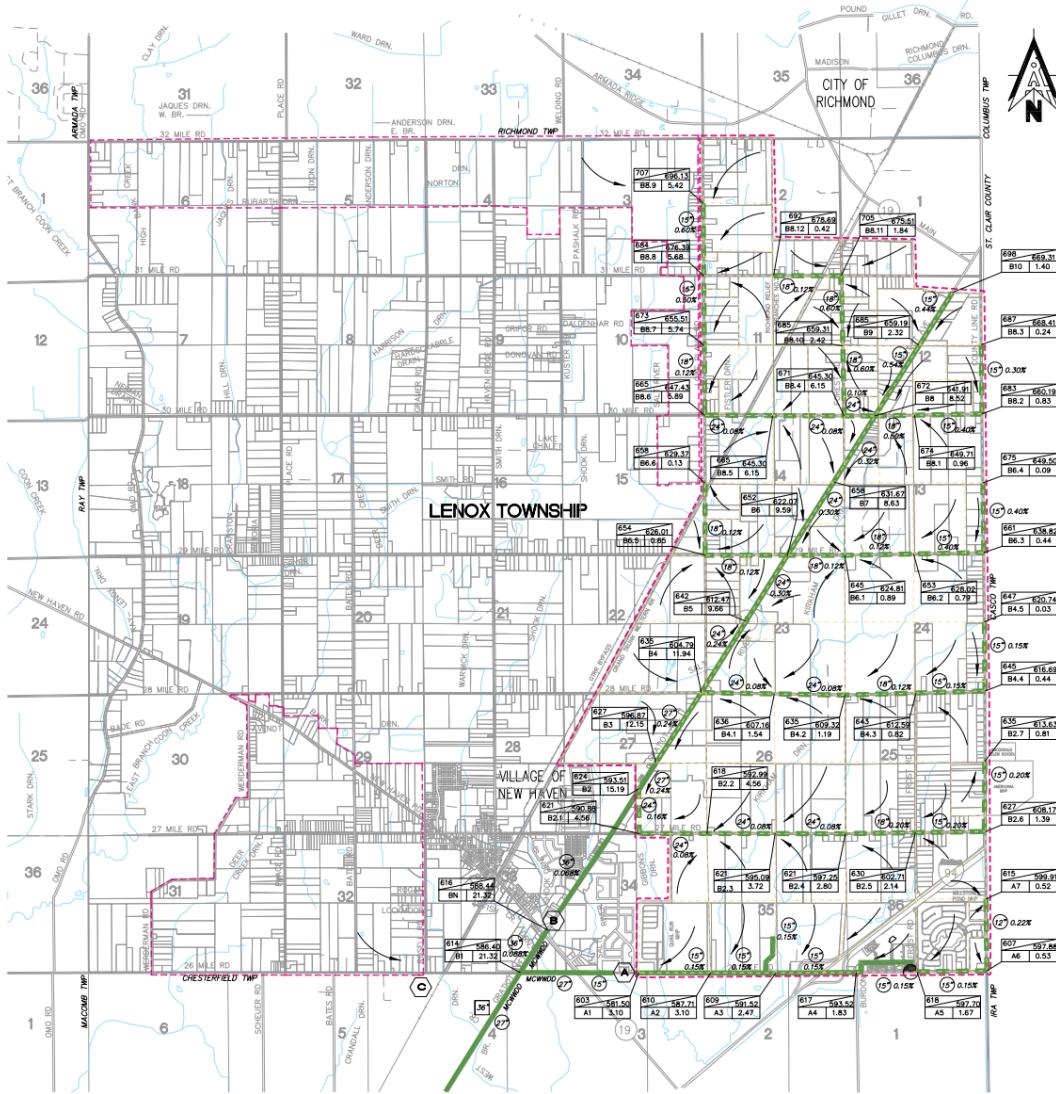


Lenox Township School Districts

Source: Macomb County Planning & Economic Development



Source: Tri-County Engineering

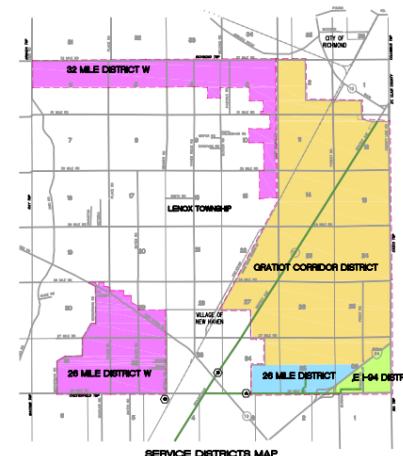


# LENOX TOWNSHIP

MACOMB COUNTY, MICHIGAN

# SANITARY TRUNK SEWER SYSTEM MASTER PLAN

STUDY DATE: NOVEMBER, 1986  
STUDY UPDATED: OCTOBER, 2003  
STUDY UPDATED: MAY, 2008  
STUDY UPDATED: AUGUST, 2013  
STUDY UPDATED: OCTOBER, 2017  
STUDY UPDATED: JUNE, 2023



ESTIMATED POPULATION PROJECTIONS PER TOWNSHIP SECTION							
SEC NO	ULT POV	RES POV	TOT ULT POV	SED POV	ULT RES POV	TOT ULT POV	POV
1	351	351	19	0	0	0	
2	2,478	2,764	20	0	0	0	
3	1,734	1,734	21	0	0	0	
4	2,934	2,824	22	256	841	2,934	
5	3,661	3,661	23	845	1,215	3,661	
6	1,036	1,234	24	409	917	1,036	
7	0	0	25	2,405	3,401	0	
8	0	0	26	1,754	2,356	0	
9	0	0	27	985	5,607	0	
10	0	0	28	0	0	0	
11	2,595	3,976	29	0	0	2,595	
12	3,301	6,666	30	0	0	3,301	
13	1,766	1,887	31	1,791	2,139	1,766	
14	1,741	1,773	32	989	3,633	1,741	
15	96	96	33	0	0	96	
16	0	0	34	851	2,289	0	
17	0	0	35	2,419	3,899	0	
18	0	0	36	2,135	5,010	0	
				TOTAL	36,534	58,965	



## Tri-County Engineering Consultant

46701 Hayes Road  
Shelby Twp, MI 48315  
TEL: 989-394-7007

InfoTHI-CountyEngines  
www.Thi-CountyEngines.com

**LEGEND:**

- EX OR PROPOSED CONNECTION TO MACOMB COUNTY WASTEWATER DISPOSAL DISTRICT**
- EX OR PROPOSED PUMP / LIFT STATION (\* = TEMPORARY)**
- EXISTING GROUND ELEVATION / PROPOSED HYDRAULIC GRADIENT  
POINT DESIGNATION (NODE) / ULTIMATE CAPACITY REQUIRED IN CFS  
(PROPOSED HYDRAULIC GRADIENTS BASED UPON LENOX TWP. LOCAL DATUM)**
- SIZE & SLOPE OF FUTURE SANITARY SEWER**
- SIZE & SLOPE OF EXISTING SANITARY SEWER**
- EXISTING SANITARY TRUNK SEWER**
- PROPOSED SANITARY TRUNK SEWER**
- LIMITS OF SANITARY TRUNK SEWER SERVICE DISTRICT**
- LIMITS OF SANITARY TRUNK SEWER SUB-DISTRICT**
- SERVICE ARROW**

Source: Tri-County Engineering

## PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Lenox Township is located within a region recognized for its extensive parks and recreational resources. Southeast Michigan has a longstanding commitment to parks and recreation, offering facilities that range from large regional park systems to protected wildlife and conservation areas. Together, the State of Michigan and the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Authority have established a comprehensive network of recreational amenities designed to serve residents and visitors of all ages, abilities, and interests.

Within the five-county region surrounding Lenox Township, there are sixteen state parks and recreation areas encompassing more than 50,000 acres. These facilities provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities, including hiking and biking trails, swimming, fishing, boating, picnicking, camping, nature preserves, and cross-country skiing. Within Macomb County, the Wetzel State Recreation Area—located along 27 Mile Road in Lenox Township—is the county's only state park. Wetzel State Recreation Area offers activities such as cross-country skiing, hunting, snowmobiling, hiking, radio-controlled aircraft flying, and wildlife observation, serving as a significant recreational asset for the Township and the surrounding region.

### Lenox Township Civic Center Park

The Township's 89-acre Civic Center Park offers a wide range of recreational amenities, including soccer fields, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, pickleball courts, hockey facilities, basketball courts, a fitness court, playground equipment, a walking trail, restrooms, picnic pavilions, a concession stand, and paved parking areas. In addition, the park is home to a newly renovated Senior Citizens Activity Building.



## PINE TREE ACRES LANDFILL

Pine Tree Acres is a Type II non-hazardous municipal solid waste landfill and the only active facility of its kind in Macomb County. The landfill began operations in 1987 and primarily serves communities in southeast Michigan, with limited service to municipalities in Ontario, Canada. Pine Tree Acres is regulated by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy and works closely with its host community, Lenox Township, to ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations.

Pine Tree Acres also captures landfill gas to generate renewable energy through two on-site energy facilities. These plants produce enough electricity to power more than 19,000 homes. In addition, captured landfill gas is converted into renewable natural gas (RNG), which is used to fuel vehicles, including those operated by Waste Management.

Size of Facility: 742 acres

Permitted Footprint: 377 acres

Refuse Tons Processed Annually: 3 million

Ownership: Waste Management of Michigan



Aerial Photo of Pine Tree Acres Landfill

## NATURAL FEATURES

Natural features exert important influences in shaping development and character of a specific area. They are nature's contribution to the Township's environment. Collectively, these features can determine the overall physical character of the community.

When integrated thoughtfully into development proposals, physical features serve to enhance the character and appearance of the constructed environment. Conversely, ignoring physical features, or misusing them can have significant, long-term consequence.



## FARMLAND PRESERVATION

Preserving farmland in Macomb County is more than a land-use issue—it's a vital strategy that strengthens the region's economy, protects the environment, and supports the county's agricultural heritage and future.

Over the last several years, Macomb County has made measurable progress in farmland preservation. Between 2017 and 2022, the county gained over 5,600 acres of farmland. During the same period, the market value of its agricultural products rose by an impressive 46%, climbing from \$79 million to \$116 million. Agriculture and food processing now contribute an estimated \$343 million annually to the county's economy. These gains illustrate how preserving farmland directly supports economic growth by keeping land productive, creating jobs, and encouraging local food production.

Preservation also helps build a more resilient and sustainable local economy. When farmland is protected from development, it keeps the entire farm-to-table supply chain local—from growers and processors to distributors and consumers. This local loop not only ensures food security but also boosts employment across various sectors related to farming and food.

At the same time, farmland preservation plays a key role in protecting Macomb County's environment and quality of life. As suburban development continues to spread, preserved farmland acts as a buffer against urban sprawl. These open spaces offer essential ecological benefits: they absorb stormwater, help manage flooding, maintain soil health, support biodiversity, and improve air and water quality. Instead of being paved over for housing developments or commercial buildings, farmland remains a living landscape that sustains both nature and people.

Preservation also supports the next generation of farmers. With the average age of farmers in Macomb County above 50, keeping land available and affordable is critical. Programs that protect farmland from development make it easier for young or beginning farmers to access land and establish careers in agriculture.

In addition, preserved farms often serve as hubs for agritourism. Orchards, vineyards, lavender fields, and cider mills throughout the county provide more than just produce—they offer experiences. Many farms welcome visitors for U-pick activities, farm dinners, seasonal festivals, and photo sessions. These attractions bring people closer to agriculture, foster appreciation for local food systems, and provide supplemental income for farm families.

The State of Michigan has recognized the importance of preserving farmland and offers a variety of incentives for landowners. Through programs like PA 116 (the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Program), landowners can voluntarily enter into agreements to keep their land in agricultural use for at least 10 years. In return, they receive Michigan income tax credits and are exempt from certain special assessments for infrastructure like water or sewer lines.

These tax benefits can be significant. For example, a landowner with a \$20,000 household income and \$2,000 in property taxes could receive a \$1,300 tax credit under PA 116. For those interested in long-term preservation, donating development rights to create a permanent conservation easement may qualify for federal charitable tax deductions and a reduction in property taxes, as the land's assessed value reflects its agricultural (rather than development) potential.

In 2025, Macomb County's preservation efforts were further supported by a \$135,000 grant from the Michigan Agricultural Preservation Fund. These funds are used to purchase development rights from willing landowners, ensuring the land remains in agriculture permanently.

Ultimately, preserving farmland in Macomb County is an investment in the county's future. It maintains the balance between growth and conservation, strengthens the rural character of the region, supports a thriving agricultural economy, and ensures that fertile land is available for generations to come.

### Promote Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)

PDR is a technique that can preserve agricultural land in perpetuity, benefiting the landowner through financial compensation for agreeing to preserve the use of the land, and benefiting the community through the preservation of a valuable economic and environmental resource.

### The Michigan Farmland Preservation Program

The Michigan Farmland Preservation Program offers funding support for local PDR programs and also has a range of voluntary agreements that landowners can enter into:

- ◆ Farmland Development Rights Agreements. Offers tax benefits and special assessment exemptions in exchange for farmland preservation.
- ◆ Conservation Easement Donations. Permanently restricts redevelopment of farmland or open space through an agreement with the State of Michigan.
- ◆ Local Open Space Easements. Temporarily restricts redevelopment in exchange for Open Space Easements.
- ◆ Designated Open Space Easements. Similar to Local Open Space Easements, but the agreement is entered into with the State of Michigan.

## Prime Farmland Characteristics

**Soil composition and structure** that supports root development, water infiltration, and nutrient availability, typically characterized by favorable texture, depth, and organic matter content.

**Adequate natural drainage** or the ability to be drained without excessive cost, reducing the risk of crop damage from prolonged saturation.

**Favorable moisture-holding capacity** that supports crop growth during dry periods without excessive irrigation requirements.

**Low erosion potential**, allowing long-term cultivation without significant loss of topsoil when managed using accepted conservation practices.

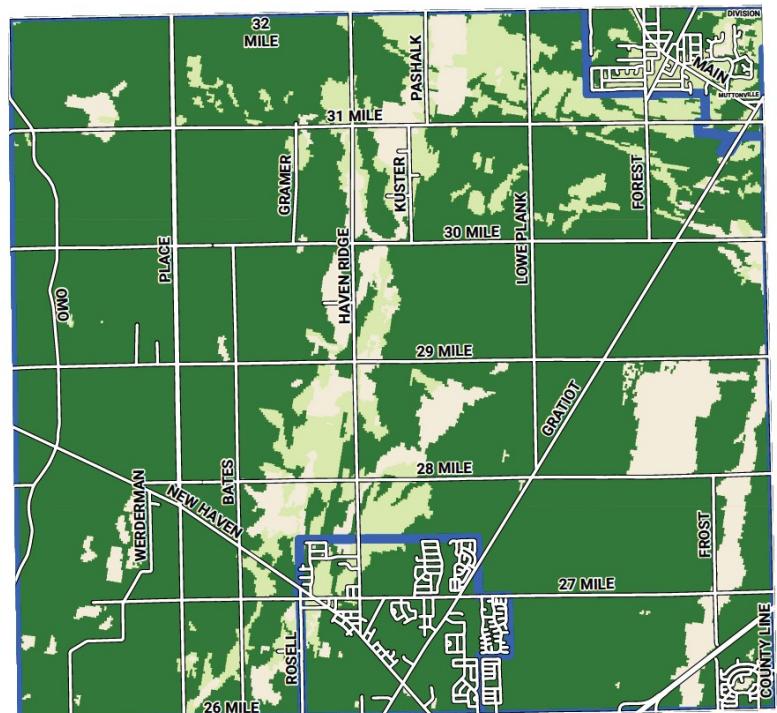
**Minimal salinity, sodicity, and flooding hazards**, ensuring reliable agricultural production under normal farming conditions.

**Suitable climate and growing season**, when combined with soil characteristics, support consistent agricultural yields.

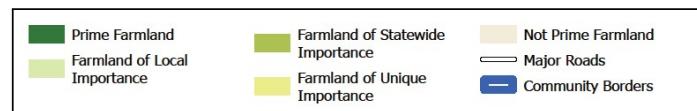
**Long-term agricultural viability**, making these lands a critical resource for local and regional food systems and rural economies.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – *Prime Farmland Definition and Criteria*, as defined in the Farmland Protection Policy Act (7 CFR Part 657).

LENOX TOWNSHIP  
USDA FARMLAND CLASSIFICATION MAP



Source: USDA Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO)



## Woodlands

Woodlands can be found throughout the township, and offer many benefits aside from scenic value. Many of these woodlands are found in and around wetlands and waterways, provide stabilization, filtration, and creating a hospitable habitat for many native plants and animals.



## Wetlands

Lenox Township contains wetlands located along numerous waterways. Wetlands represent critical natural resources that provide a variety of ecological, economic, and recreational benefits, including:

- ◆ **Protection of downstream water supplies** through the filtration of nutrients and removal of sediments, thereby contributing to the replenishment of clean groundwater.
- ◆ **Floodwater management** by functioning as natural storage basins. Acting much like large sponges, wetlands absorb significant volumes of seasonal precipitation and gradually release it when downstream channels are able to accommodate the flow.
- ◆ **Habitat provision** for a diverse range of plant and animal species uniquely adapted to wetland environments. These ecosystems support biodiversity while also offering economic and recreational value through hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and other outdoor activities.



Potential Wetlands

## Wetland Mitigation

Lenox Township is home to several wetland mitigation projects, which are designed to compensate for wetland losses associated with development by creating new wetland areas that offset the acreage removed. The long-term implications of these projects are mixed. On one hand, they contribute to the preservation of open space and, in some instances, provide natural amenities that enhance community character and offer recreational or ecological benefits to residents. On the other hand, wetland mitigation projects can reduce Township revenues over time. Because most mitigation sites are established as conservation easements and administered by nonprofit organizations, they are typically removed from the Township's tax rolls.

While the Township supports wetland mitigation as an important environmental strategy, it also recognizes the need to carefully manage the extent and location of such projects. Ensuring that mitigation areas do not become overly concentrated in any one part of the community is in the Township's long-term best interest, both to maintain a balanced tax base and to support diverse patterns of development.

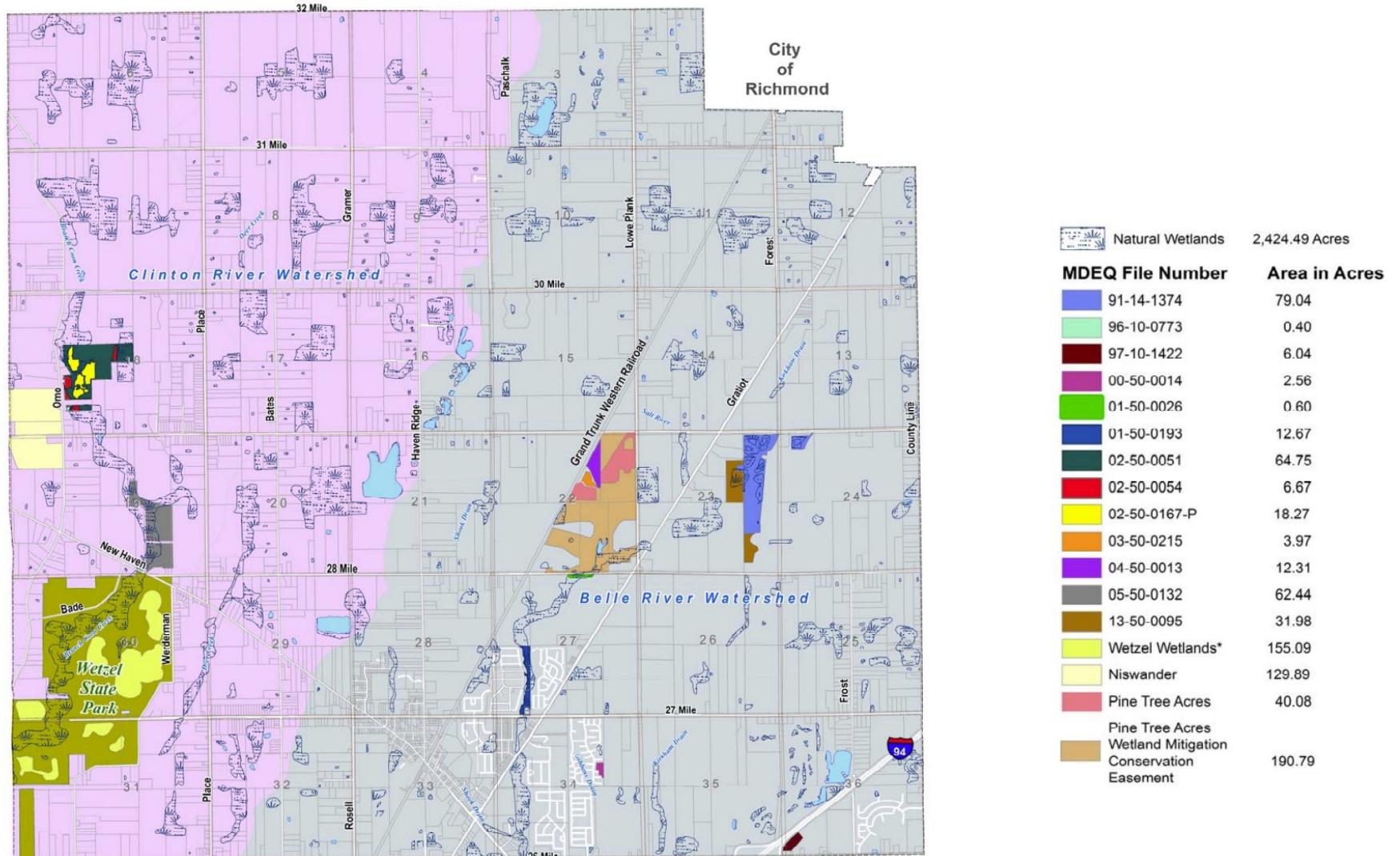
The adjacent Table illustrates the amount of land in Lenox Township that is currently devoted to wetland mitigation.

Table 4.5 Acres of Natural and Created Wetlands in Lenox Township (Including New Haven), by Section and by Watershed

	Acres	Natural Wetland Acres	% Natural Wetlands	Created Wetland Acres	% Created Wetlands	Created and Natural Wetland Overlap Acreage	Total Wetland Acres	% of Section that is Wetlands
Section 1	85	0.47	0.55%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.47	0.55%
Section 2	419	34.86	8.32%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	34.86	8.32%
Section 3	673	95.32	14.17%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	95.32	14.17%
Section 4	635	11.09	1.75%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	11.09	1.75%
Section 5	684	77.09	11.26%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	77.09	11.26%
Section 6	889	120.64	13.57%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	120.64	13.57%
Section 7	931	139.09	14.95%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	139.09	14.95%
Section 8	702	77.45	11.03%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	77.45	11.03%
Section 9	655	66.20	10.10%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	66.20	10.10%
Section 10	692	53.04	7.67%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	53.04	7.67%
Section 11	671	90.26	13.44%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	90.26	13.44%
Section 12	610	57.24	9.39%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	57.24	9.39%
Section 13	662	36.06	5.45%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	36.06	5.45%
Section 14	672	38.74	5.76%	0.01	0.00%	0.00	38.75	5.77%
Section 15	685	37.32	5.45%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	37.32	5.45%
Section 16	674	72.37	10.73%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	72.37	10.73%
Section 17	683	99.45	14.57%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	99.45	14.57%
Section 18	933	100.12	10.74%	169.22	18.14%	22.45	246.89	26.47%
Section 19	921	111.19	12.07%	113.26	12.29%	29.23	195.22	21.19%
Section 20	672	131.78	19.61%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	131.78	19.61%
Section 21	670	68.65	10.25%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	68.65	10.25%
Section 22	680	28.25	4.15%	247.10	36.33%	20.93	254.42	37.41%
Section 23	669	105.53	15.78%	103.50	15.48%	30.01	179.02	26.77%
Section 24	669	24.58	3.67%	7.71	1.15%	2.91	29.38	4.39%
Section 25	674	70.37	10.44%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	70.37	10.44%
Section 26	671	23.02	3.43%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	23.02	3.43%
Section 27	694	67.70	9.76%	13.26	1.91%	9.65	71.31	10.28%
Section 28	677	51.55	7.62%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	51.55	7.62%
Section 29	682	60.83	8.92%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	60.83	8.92%
Section 30	946	131.46	13.89%	123.97	13.10%	0.00	255.43	26.99%
Section 31	937	66.77	7.13%	31.12	3.32%	0.00	97.89	10.45%
Section 32	677	64.60	9.55%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	64.60	9.55%
Section 33	672	32.00	4.76%	0.00	0.00%	0.00	32.00	4.76%
Section 34	691	53.05	7.67%	2.56	0.37%	0.00	55.60	8.04%
Section 35	665	37.14	5.59%	0.11	0.02%	0.02	37.23	5.60%
Section 36	669	52.09	7.79%	5.93	0.89%	2.22	55.79	8.35%
Totals*	24,890	2,387.36	9.59%	817.74	3.29%	117.42	3,087.68	
Belle River Watershed	13,533	1,015.60	7.50%	380.02	2.81%	65.74	1,329.89	9.83%
Clinton River Watershed	11,375	1,372.31	12.06%	437.55	3.85%	51.68	1,758.18	15.46%
Totals*	24,908	2,387.91	9.59%	817.57	3.28%	117.42	3,088.07	

\* Draft data

## Lenox Township Wetlands and Wetland Mitigation Sites



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# Chapter 3

## Existing Land Use

The physical environment of a community is shaped by a variety of factors, with land use serving as the most influential. Land use describes the spatial arrangement of activities—such as residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial, and open space uses—and the relationships among them. Together, these patterns define the Township's physical character and identity, influence how residents experience their community, and directly affect overall quality of life, including convenience, safety, environmental quality, and neighborhood cohesion.

Land characteristics and natural features are central to the land use planning process. Elements such as topography, soils, wetlands, waterways, vegetation, and existing development patterns establish the physical framework upon which future growth and investment occur. These features influence where development is most appropriate, the intensity and form it should take, and the infrastructure needed to support it.

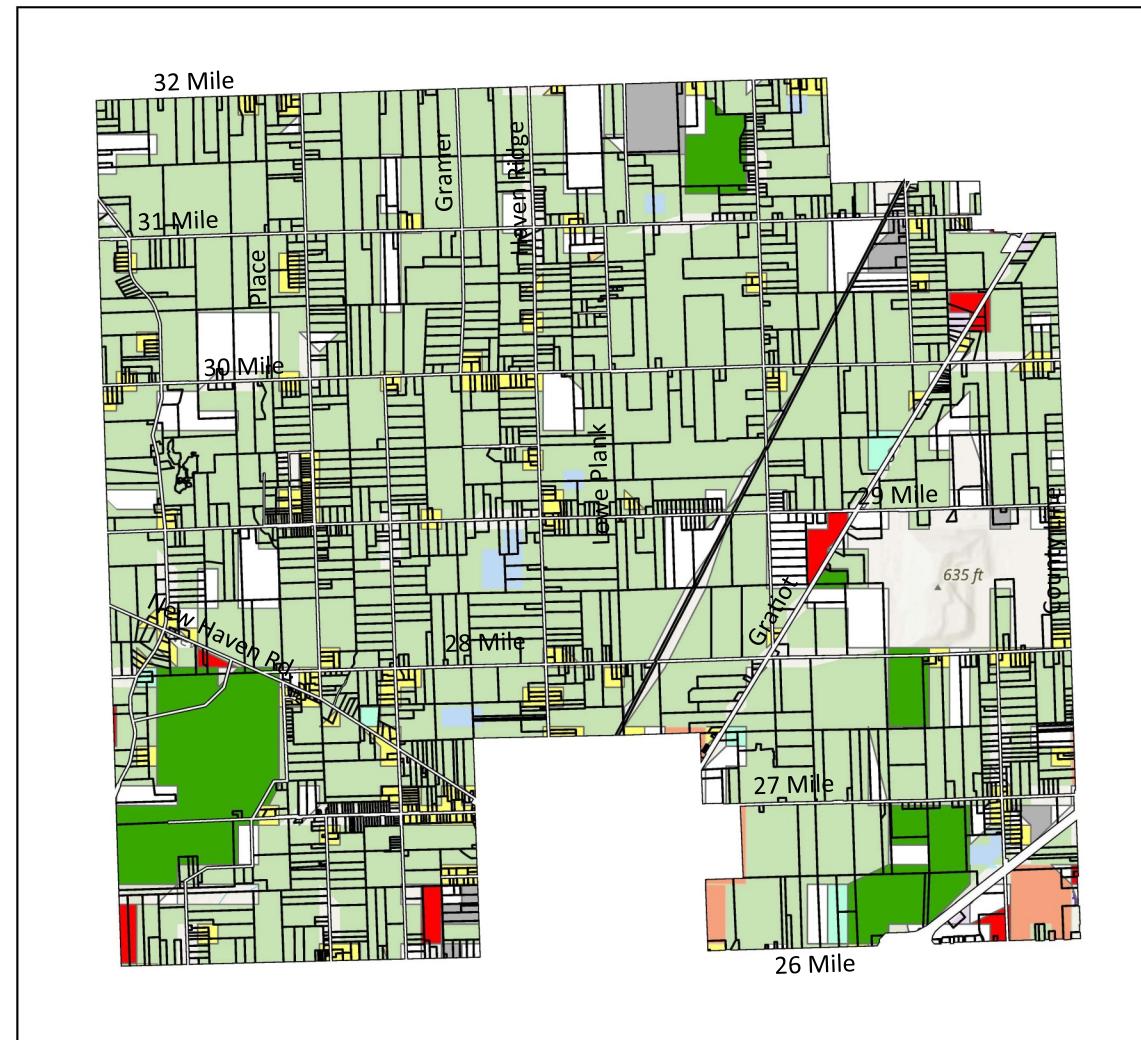
In communities that remain largely undeveloped, such as Lenox Township, these physical characteristics play an especially important role in shaping future land use decisions. Thoughtful consideration of the Township's natural and physical features allows growth to occur in a manner that respects environmental constraints, preserves community character, and promotes efficient, sustainable, and well-coordinated development over the long term.

- Agriculture
- Single Family Residential
- Multiple Family Residential
- Mobile Home
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Public / Semi-Public
- Recreation



Cassin Planning Group

Source: Macomb County Planning & Economic Development Department, SEMCOG



## Lenox Township Existing Land Use Map

## EXISTING LAND USE

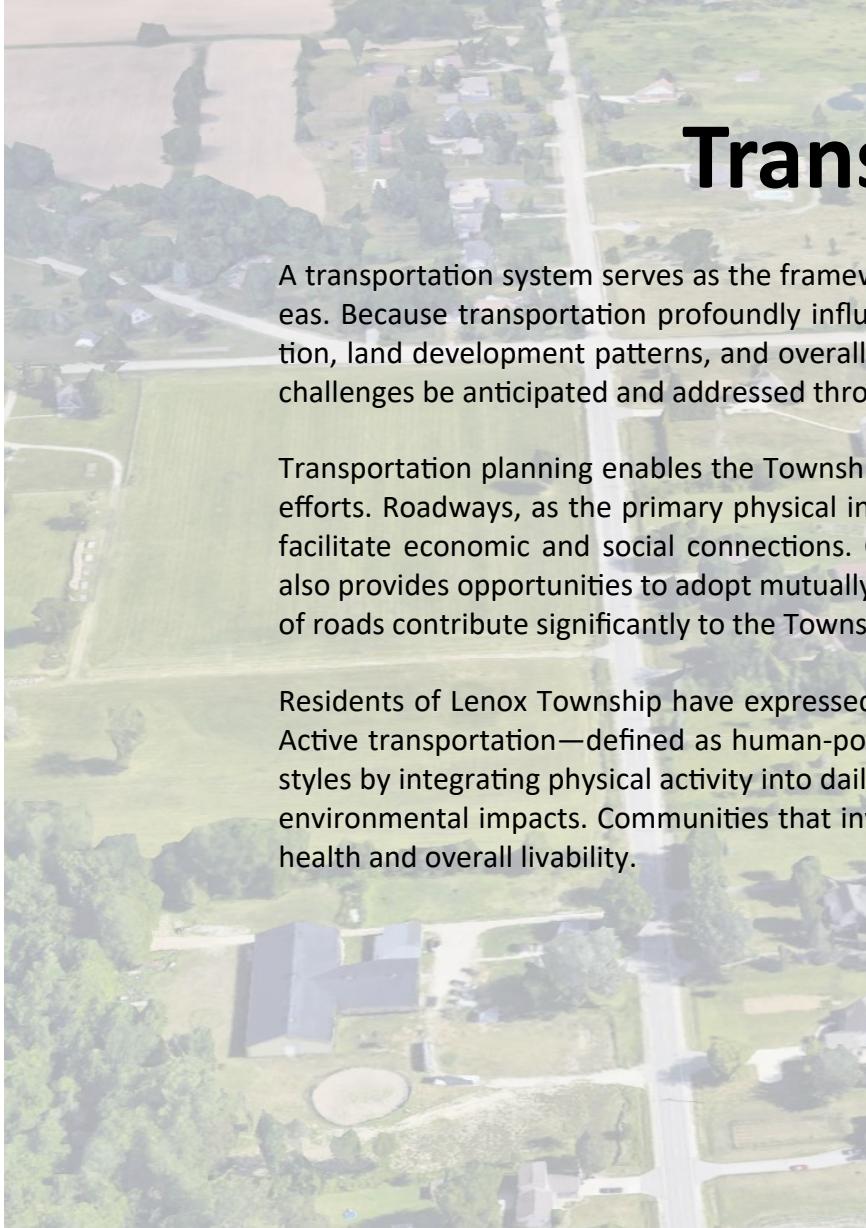
Lenox Township remains primarily a rural community. Agricultural and rural residential uses account for 70% of all land within the Township. Single-family land use comprises 4.5% of the total land area, and public land use comprises 4.6% of the total land area.

2020 Existing Land Use Categories	Acres
Single Family Residential	1,064
Multiple Family Residential	7
Manufactured Housing	180
Agricultural/Rural Residential	16,343
Mixed Use	16
Retail	121
Office	16
Hospitality	73
Medical	7
Institutional	151
Industrial	122
Recreation/Open Space	885
Golf Course	450
Cemetery	1
Extractive	111
Roads & Utilities	924
Vacant	2,000
Water	139
Not Parceled	720
Total	23,329



Source: SEMCOG

<b>Agricultural</b>	This classification is applied to all land used for crops and permanent pasture land. In addition, other agricultural activities, such as boarding stables, tree and shrub nurseries, and similar types of specialized agricultural activities, are included. Large lot single-family homes are also included in this category.
<b>Single Family Residential</b>	Includes single-family dwelling units, including accessory buildings, on smaller-sized lots.
<b>Multiple Family Residential</b>	Included in this category are apartments and multi-plex units, where two or more separate residential units occupy a single building or lot.
<b>Manufactured Housing</b>	Includes planned manufactured home communities and their related accessory buildings and recreational structures.
<b>Commercial &amp; Office</b>	Includes retail sales, personal service establishments, and medical, professional, and general business offices.
<b>Industrial</b>	Includes uses, with or without buildings, where materials are processed, fabricated, assembled, or manufactured, or where equipment and materials are stored outdoors.
<b>Public / Quasi Public</b>	Public uses include public schools and government buildings. Quasi-public uses include facilities such as churches, private schools, and private recreational areas.
<b>Recreation</b>	This category includes golf courses, sportsmen clubs, parks, campgrounds, and other commercial recreation uses.



# Chapter 4

## Transportation & Mobility

A transportation system serves as the framework for the movement of people and goods across geographic areas. Because transportation profoundly influences economic vitality, environmental quality, energy consumption, land development patterns, and overall quality of life, it is essential that future transportation needs and challenges be anticipated and addressed through the Master Plan process.

Transportation planning enables the Township to align its local initiatives with broader regional and state-level efforts. Roadways, as the primary physical infrastructure of the transportation network, link communities and facilitate economic and social connections. Coordinating local planning with regional transportation systems also provides opportunities to adopt mutually supportive land use policies. In addition, the design and condition of roads contribute significantly to the Township's overall image and identity.

Residents of Lenox Township have expressed an interest in expanding opportunities for active transportation. Active transportation—defined as human-powered travel such as walking and cycling—supports healthier lifestyles by integrating physical activity into daily routines while simultaneously improving air quality and reducing environmental impacts. Communities that invest in active transportation infrastructure strengthen both public health and overall livability.

## ROAD CLASSIFICATION

A critical component of the Master Plan process is the development of a comprehensive framework for the community's roadway network. This network supports the efficient movement of people and goods both within the Township and to surrounding areas. In addition to transportation functions, road rights-of-way serve as corridors for essential utilities—including water, gas, sanitary and storm sewers, cable, electricity, and telecommunications—allowing these services to co-locate and thereby reducing the need for easements across private property.

Because of their dual role in transportation and utility provision, road systems exert significant influence on economic vitality, environmental quality, energy consumption, land development patterns, and the overall quality of life within a community.

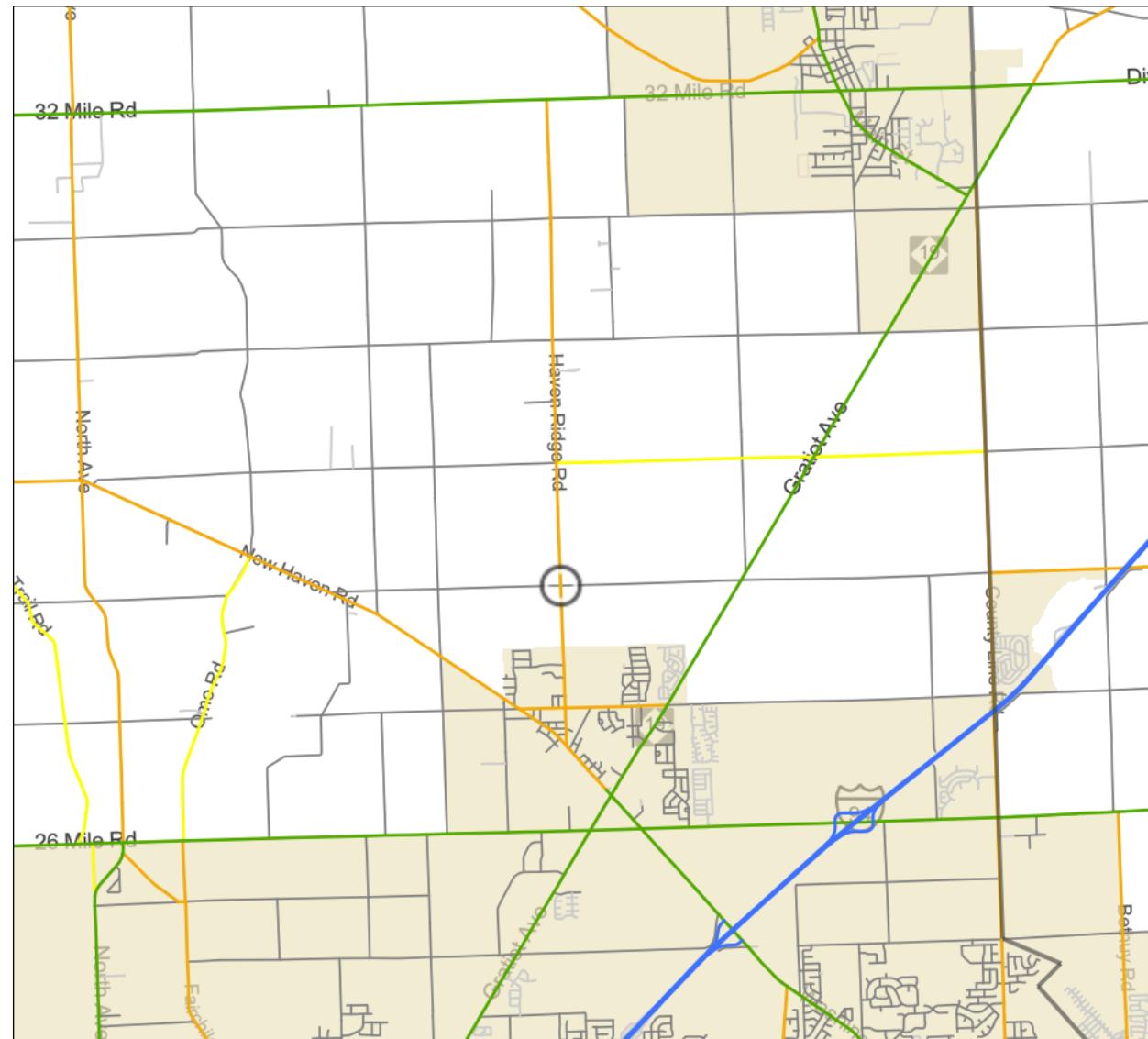
Transportation planning traditionally recognizes several categories of roadways as defined under the **National Functional Classification (NFC) System**, established by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. These classifications are based on the balance of mobility and access provided by each roadway type and serve as an important foundation for coordinated transportation planning.

Roads are classified as follows:

- ◆ **Interstate.** Provides major “through traffic” between municipalities and states .
- ◆ **Principal Arterial Roads.** Primary function is to carry relatively long distance through travel movements and/or to service important traffic generators, such as airports or regional shopping centers.
- ◆ **Minor Arterial Roads.** Similar to Principal Arterial Roads with trips carried being shorter distances to lesser traffic generators .
- ◆ **Collector Roads.** Funnel traffic from residential or rural areas to arterials. Collector Roads also provide some access to property .
- ◆ **Local Roads.** Primary function is to provide access to property, i.e., residential neighborhoods or rural areas.

### Roads by National Functional Classification

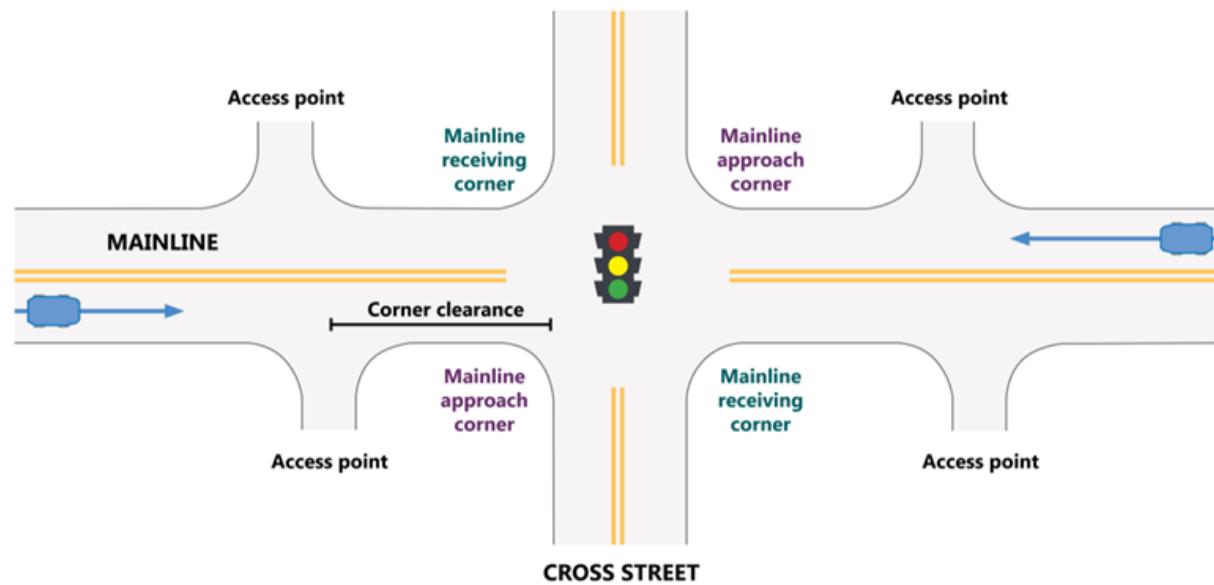
- Interstate Freeway
- Other Freeway
- Other Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local Road



## ACCESS MANAGEMENT

**Access management** and **internal circulation** are essential components of a safe and efficient roadway system. The capacity and longevity of regional and major thoroughfares can be enhanced through careful application of access controls and coordinated circulation among adjacent sites. Such measures help reduce the number of access drives and conflict points, thereby improving both safety and traffic flow. At this stage, the Township has the ability to establish access management standards to guide the placement and design of access drives. If not adopted proactively, these standards will become increasingly difficult to implement as development pressures intensify.

The principle underlying access management is that property owners along designated roadways—particularly commercial, office, and industrial uses—are entitled to reasonable access, but not unrestricted access. A range of standards may be employed by the Township to achieve this balance, including regulated driveway spacing, limitations on the number of access points, and the use of shared driveways. Collectively, these strategies support safer, more efficient traffic operations while preserving roadway capacity.



## COMPLETE STREETS

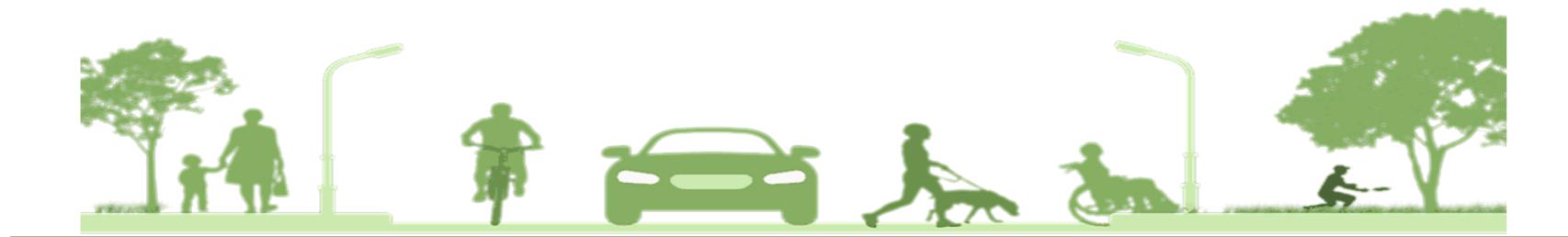
Michigan's Complete Streets legislation was enacted in 2010 through Public Act 134 and Public Act 135. These acts also amended the Michigan Planning Enabling Act to require that Complete Streets be considered in the preparation of community Master Plans. The legislation defines Complete Streets as "roadways planned, designed, and constructed to provide appropriate access to all legal users, whether by car, truck, transit, assistive device, foot, or bicycle." It further establishes new responsibilities for local, county, and state transportation agencies to ensure that the needs of all legal users—including pedestrians and bicyclists—are addressed in transportation planning and implementation.

In response, the Macomb County Department of Roads is developing Complete Streets guidelines to provide local communities with a practical framework for implementation. These guidelines are intended to serve as a design resource for a wide range of projects that improve transportation access, safety, and connectivity for all users and modes of travel, consistent with the Complete Streets planning approach.

### ***Complete Streets Benefits***

*Complete Streets provide a number of benefits such as:*

- ◆ *Improved safety for all users, including pedestrians and bicycles.*
- ◆ *Improved human health by encouraging walking and bicycling*
- ◆ *Decreased car traffic, reducing the dependence on gasoline and petroleum products, and improved air quality*
- ◆ *More transportation options*



## CONNECTED AND AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES

Connected and autonomous vehicle (CAV) technology is anticipated to fundamentally reshape transportation systems in the coming decades, with profound implications for community planning and design. Autonomous vehicles—commonly referred to as driverless or self-driving cars—have already been tested and deployed on public streets and highways, signaling the gradual integration of this technology into everyday mobility.

The widespread adoption of CAVs has the potential to influence land use, infrastructure investment, and the overall design of communities. Reduced parking demand may allow for the repurposing of large surface parking lots into more productive uses, such as housing, green space, or commercial development. Roadway design standards may also evolve, with potential reductions in lane widths, modified intersection configurations, and greater emphasis on accommodating shared mobility services.

In addition, CAV technology may alter patterns of commuting and goods movement, expanding accessibility for underserved populations, improving roadway safety, and increasing efficiency in the transportation network. However, these benefits must be weighed against potential challenges, including increased traffic volumes, data security concerns, and the equitable distribution of emerging technologies.

As this technology continues to advance, it is important that communities such as Lenox Township monitor developments in CAV integration and proactively consider the long-term impacts when updating policies, infrastructure plans, and land use regulations.

## ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

As electric vehicle adoption increases, consumer expectations are evolving. Retail locations that offer EV charging may attract more customers by allowing drivers to charge vehicles while shopping. Longer dwell times associated with charging can also support increased retail activity. Businesses that invest in EV charging infrastructure may gain a competitive advantage by improving convenience and responding to changing market demand.

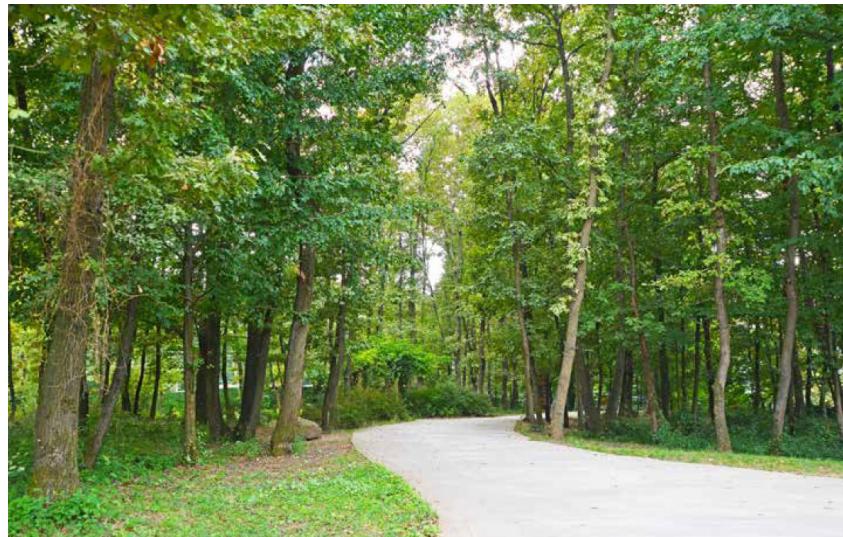
In the future, the Township may wish to consider zoning regulations that require EV charging stations in large-scale parking lots.



## TRAILS

Macomb County's non-motorized trail network forms a critical component of the region's recreational and transportation infrastructure, offering over 180 miles of interconnected trails that link communities, parks, and natural areas.

The Macomb Orchard Trail, a 23-mile paved corridor extending from Richmond to Dequindre Road, serves as the backbone of the system. This route follows a former rail line and passes through orchards, woodlands, and small-town centers, while providing amenities such as restrooms, benches, and repair stations. Importantly, the trail directly connects to the Clinton River Trail and to the broader statewide system, including the Iron Belle Trail and the Great Lake-to-Lake Trail, which expands access far beyond county boundaries.



For Lenox Township, these regional connections are especially significant. The Township's proximity to the northern end of the Macomb Orchard Trail in Richmond places it near one of the county's primary trailheads, positioning Lenox to benefit from increased recreational tourism and improved access to regional destinations. Additionally, nearby assets such as Wetzell State Recreation Area and Wolcott Mill Metropark provide opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking within a largely natural setting, complementing the Township's rural character while supporting diverse forms of outdoor recreation.

Beyond paved trails, Macomb County's extensive river systems and Lake St. Clair shoreline also support water trails that are increasingly popular for kayaking and canoeing. These blueways contribute to a broader vision of interconnected recreational resources that enhance quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

The ongoing role of Macomb County Planning and Economic Development in coordinating trail development, securing funding, and assisting communities ensures that the system continues to expand and strengthen.

For Lenox Township, this creates opportunities to align local land use and transportation planning with regional trail initiatives, improving connectivity, supporting economic development, and promoting environmental stewardship.

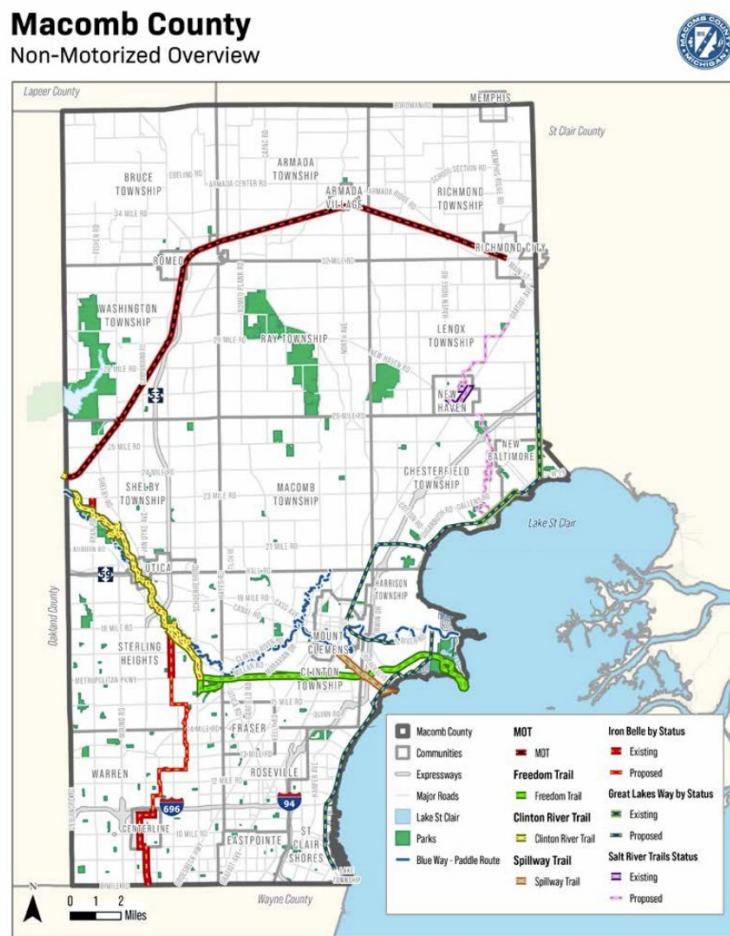
**Macomb Orchard Trail** — A 23 mile linear trail system that starts at 24 Mile Road and Dequindre in Shelby Township and travels northeast to the City of Richmond.

**Stony Creek Huron-Clinton Metropark Trail** — This trail, situated within the Metropark, features 6.1 miles of paved trails and 14 miles of unpaved trails suitable for mountain biking and hiking.

**The Freedom Trail** — The Freedom Hill Trail begins in Sterling Heights at Freedom Hill County Park. It heads east for approximately 10 miles, traversing the communities of Clinton Township and Harrison Township, ending at Lake St. Clair Metropark.

**Lake St. Clair Metropark Trail** — This trail features 3 miles of paved hiking and biking pathways with panoramic views of Lake St. Clair Metropark, as well as 1.5 miles of flat nature trails.

**The Clinton River Trail** — The trail runs primarily along the Clinton River, showcasing some of Macomb County's true natural beauty. This trail traverses Sterling Heights, Utica, Shelby Township, and ends at the Macomb Orchard Trail.



## TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Macomb County recently adopted a 2025–2029 Parks and Natural Resources Master Plan. While the plan recognized the importance of the county's trail network, it also identified "development gaps" in the network that should be addressed. As it pertains to Lenox Township, these include:

1. A trail along County Line Road, connecting the City of New Baltimore to 32 Mile Road, and ultimately to the Macomb Orchard Trail.
1. A connection along Gratiot Avenue from the Village of New Haven to the Lenox Township Civic Center.



## ACCESSIBILITY

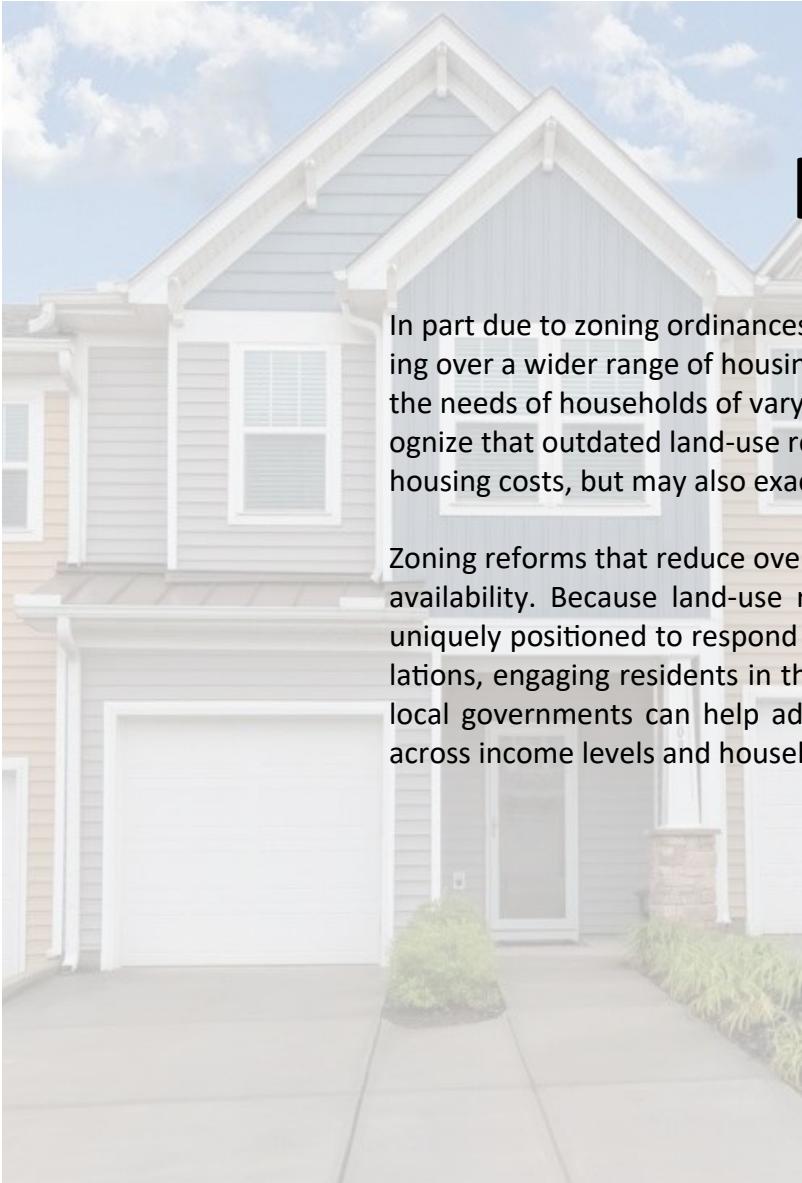
In Lenox Township, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides a foundation for ensuring that every resident—regardless of ability—can participate fully in community life. As the Township continues to grow and plan for the future, integrating ADA principles into the Master Plan reflects a commitment to inclusion, accessibility, and high quality of life for all who live, work, and visit here.

For Lenox Township's public facilities, parks, trails, and transportation corridors, ADA compliance means designing and maintaining environments that are safe, navigable, and welcoming. Accessible sidewalks and road crossings, barrier-free building entrances, improved signage, and thoughtfully designed recreational spaces help support mobility and independence for residents of all ages and abilities. These features not only address legal requirements but also enhance everyday community experiences—from visiting Township Hall to exploring local parks.

Lenox Township's rural character and ongoing development make proactive ADA planning especially important. As new residential areas, commercial uses, and public amenities are built, integrating accessibility from the outset ensures that growth remains equitable and forward-thinking. ADA considerations also support the Township's aging population, enabling older adults to remain active and engaged within the community.

Incorporating ADA goals throughout the Master Plan strengthens Lenox Township's commitment to dignity, inclusion, and opportunity. By prioritizing accessibility in Township operations, public engagement, infrastructure investment, and community programming, Lenox Township can ensure that its future development remains both sustainable and welcoming—creating a community where all residents can participate fully and confidently.





# Chapter 5

## Housing Affordability

In part due to zoning ordinances that have historically emphasized detached single-family housing over a wider range of housing types, the Township currently lacks sufficient housing to meet the needs of households of varying sizes and income levels. Community leaders increasingly recognize that outdated land-use regulations not only limit housing supply and contribute to rising housing costs, but may also exacerbate existing socio-economic disparities.

Zoning reforms that reduce overly restrictive provisions can play a key role in expanding housing availability. Because land-use regulation is primarily a local responsibility, municipalities are uniquely positioned to respond to these challenges. By updating zoning codes and related regulations, engaging residents in the process, and removing barriers to new housing development, local governments can help address housing shortages, and improve access to housing choice across income levels and household types.

## LOCAL STRATEGIES TO INCREASE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND SUPPLY

Zoning reform represents an important strategy for increasing both the supply and affordability of housing. As zoning authority rests primarily with local governments, municipalities and other local jurisdictions play a critical role in mitigating the restrictive effects that conventional zoning practices can have on homebuilding. Through targeted amendments to zoning codes and related regulations, proactive community engagement and education, and the removal of unnecessary barriers to residential development, local governments can advance meaningful solutions to the housing shortage.

**The Michigan Association of Planning's Zoning Reform Toolkit identifies a variety of strategies that have been used by some local governments to address housing affordability. These strategies are provided for informational purposes and may serve as a general reference as Lenox Township considers housing issues within the community.**

### Allow Residential Development in Commercial Zoning Districts

Existing commercial districts and corridors represent strategic opportunities to expand housing choice and advance placemaking objectives. The designation of mixed-use zoning along these corridors is among the most effective strategies for accommodating higher-density residential development in locations that transition appropriately from established lower-density neighborhoods. Across Michigan, many commercial corridors remain zoned exclusively for commercial uses, often extending for thousands of feet or several miles along major roadways. By contrast, national best practices in planning and urban design demonstrate that the most vibrant and sustainable commercial areas are typically concentrated nodes—generally one or two square blocks in size—with active ground-floor commercial uses complemented by residential or other supportive uses located above, behind, or on adjacent side streets. Such mixed-use patterns promote walkability, create a sense of place, and strengthen long-term economic vitality.

In Lenox Township, public water and sewer infrastructure is primarily concentrated along major commercial corridors, making these areas particularly well-suited for higher-density residential development. Integrating housing into these locations would leverage existing infrastructure capacity, support smart growth principles by reducing sprawl, and expand attainable housing options within the community. Higher-density development in these locations can also advance broader public policy objectives, including improved housing affordability, enhanced transportation efficiency, and the creation of more sustainable, connected, and resilient neighborhoods.

## Expand Allowable Uses in Residential Zoning Districts

Modern zoning ordinances contain a wide range of regulations, including setbacks, minimum lot sizes, lighting requirements, and other development standards. Each ordinance also establishes mapped zoning districts accompanied by a list of permitted uses within each district. Expanding the range of housing types allowed within these districts—particularly as permitted uses by right, but also as special land uses—would increase the availability of land for diverse forms of housing.

Allowing additional housing types within residential neighborhoods directly contributes to increased housing supply and improved housing affordability. Research demonstrates that restricting land available for medium- and higher-density development artificially limits supply, thereby increasing housing costs. Furthermore, when the majority of residentially zoned land is reserved exclusively for detached single-family homes, personal choice is constrained, and the housing needs of diverse household types are not adequately met.

## Reduce Minimum Lot Width and Area Requirements

Lot width requirements establish the minimum standard for the frontage of a parcel, defining the amount of roadway access necessary to accommodate a given land use. Lot area requirements, by contrast, set the minimum standard for the overall size of a parcel. Together, these two standards frequently determine whether a parcel is considered buildable and represent a significant factor influencing the ultimate cost of housing.

Historically, neighborhoods were characterized by a diverse mix of lot sizes and housing types. Smaller cottages were commonly constructed on compact lots, while larger estate homes occupied more expansive parcels. In many older neighborhoods, these varying lot sizes and housing forms were seamlessly integrated within the same block or between adjacent blocks. The post–World War II suburban zoning model, however, shifted toward uniformity by establishing districts with standardized minimum lot widths and areas. This regulatory approach significantly reduced opportunities for the construction of smaller, more affordable homes.

A commonly cited rule of thumb is that the value of a home is approximately three times the value of the land on which it sits. In high-demand areas, large minimum lot requirements can inflate land costs to the point where the development of modest homes becomes financially infeasible. Consequently, larger lot standards often contribute to higher overall housing costs and may function, whether intentionally or inadvertently, as an exclusionary mechanism by limiting the availability of smaller, more affordable housing options.

## Reduce or Eliminate Minimum Dwelling Unit Size

Most communities establish minimum dwelling unit sizes for various housing types. For instance, single-family homes are often required to be at least 1,200 square feet, while multi-family units typically range from 400 to 800 square feet, depending on local regulations.

Although multiple factors influence the cost of housing, unit size is a significant determinant. Accordingly, when a community mandates that all detached single-family homes meet a minimum size of 1,200 square feet, it is, in effect, limiting the range of housing choices available to residents. Such requirements, while intended to maintain certain standards, can produce unintended consequences. For example, they may restrict opportunities for individuals such as older adults seeking to downsize into a smaller residence or young professionals entering the housing market for the first time. Minimum dwelling unit size standards, therefore, play an important role in shaping both the affordability and diversity of housing options within a community.

## Allow Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) provide an important housing option that supports aging in place and accommodates the evolving needs of households. An ADU is a self-contained housekeeping unit located on the same lot as a single-family dwelling. ADUs may be attached to or detached from the principal residence but are generally required to be compatible in scale, design, and character with the surrounding single-family neighborhood. Increasingly, communities are recognizing the value of ADUs, as they can provide supportive yet independent living arrangements for family members, including young adults and seniors.

Because ADUs may not always be occupied by family members, appropriate regulatory standards are necessary to ensure neighborhood compatibility. Such standards may include design requirements that match building materials and architectural character with the principal structure. Many ordinances also require that the primary residence be owner-occupied, ensuring the property is maintained at a standard consistent with other single-family homes in the district. In all cases, the ADU must remain clearly secondary and subordinate to the principal use of the property as a single-family residence.



## Promote Aging in Place

Aging in place refers to the ability of individuals to remain safely, independently, and comfortably in their homes or communities as they grow older. Most residents express a strong preference to remain in familiar surroundings as they age. Today's older adults are living longer, are generally healthier and more active, and often remain engaged in the workforce and community life for extended periods. To support a complete and fulfilling lifestyle, senior housing options should be located in areas that offer a strong sense of place and convenient access to community amenities, such as walkable downtowns, connected neighborhoods, community services, and open spaces.

Beyond safety and independence, many older adults seek opportunities for social interaction, physical activity, and continued engagement with their community. Pedestrian-oriented environments, accessible public spaces, and proximity to services play an important role in supporting these goals. Aging in place promotes mobility, accessibility, social connection, and overall well-being, benefiting not only individuals but the broader community as well.

Meeting the needs of an aging population will require a greater diversity of housing options. These may include smaller, more manageable dwelling units, housing within walkable and accessible neighborhoods, and residences integrated into existing or planned mixed-use areas. Providing such options allows older adults to remain within their community as their housing needs change, rather than being forced to relocate elsewhere.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately one-third of homeowners no longer carry a mortgage, a condition more common among older households. This provides many seniors with increased discretionary income that can be spent locally, supporting businesses and contributing to the Township's economy. In addition, older residents frequently contribute to community life through volunteerism and civic engagement, offering valuable experience and institutional knowledge.

Despite these benefits, zoning regulations in many communities present barriers to aging in place. Conventional zoning practices often separate residential areas from everyday services and limit housing development primarily to single-family homes. As a result, older adults may have few opportunities to downsize within their own neighborhoods when maintaining a larger home becomes impractical. Zoning ordinances may also restrict adaptive housing solutions, such as accessory dwelling units, caregiver apartments within garages or basements, or multigenerational housing arrangements. Similarly, adult children seeking to modify their homes or provide nearby housing for aging parents may face regulatory constraints. Addressing these barriers through thoughtful zoning and land use policies can help support aging in place and enhance housing choice across the community.

## Streamline Development Approval Procedures

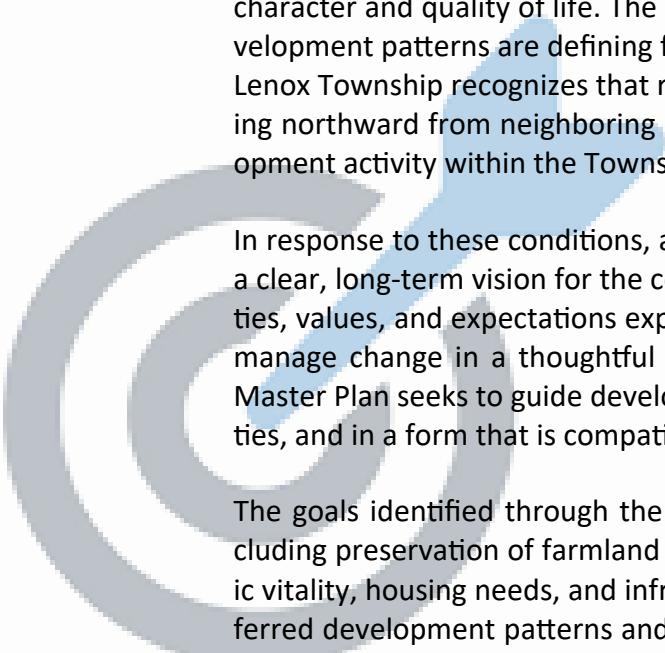
Time is a critical factor in development, and lengthy local approval processes often contribute to higher housing costs. A portion of development expenses arises from project design and the approvals process itself. When local decision-making becomes highly subjective, it introduces greater political influence, which can result in delays, increased holding costs, uncertainty regarding project viability, and frustration for developers. If excessive modifications are required that reduce the number of units from the original project pro forma, financial feasibility may be compromised. These increased costs are typically passed on to future homeowners or renters rather than absorbed by the developer, thereby reducing housing affordability and limiting access for households that might otherwise qualify.

To mitigate these challenges, zoning ordinances should be drafted in clear, straightforward language. Routine site development requests and uses permitted by right should be administered primarily by the zoning administrator. More complex site plans or special land use applications may require review by the planning commission. However, legislative bodies need not be directly involved in the review of site plans or special land use requests, as these are administrative functions appropriately handled by staff or the planning commission. The elected body should only engage when legislative action is required—such as amendments to zoning ordinance text or maps, or the approval of development agreements.



# Chapter 5

## Township Goals and Policies



Lenox Township places a high value on its rural heritage and is committed to preserving its pastoral character and quality of life. The Township's open landscapes, agricultural lands, and low-density development patterns are defining features that contribute to its identity and appeal. At the same time, Lenox Township recognizes that regional growth trends—particularly development pressures extending northward from neighboring communities—will increasingly influence future land use and development activity within the Township.

In response to these conditions, a central purpose of the Lenox Township Master Plan is to articulate a clear, long-term vision for the community's future. The Plan establishes goals that reflect the priorities, values, and expectations expressed by residents, while also acknowledging the practical need to manage change in a thoughtful and proactive manner. Rather than resisting growth outright, the Master Plan seeks to guide development so that it occurs in appropriate locations, at suitable intensities, and in a form that is compatible with the Township's rural character.

The goals identified through the planning process are intended to balance competing interests, including preservation of farmland and open space, protection of established neighborhoods, economic vitality, housing needs, and infrastructure capacity. Together, these goals provide direction for preferred development patterns and serve as the foundation for policies and implementation strategies outlined in the Master Plan. By grounding future land use decisions in a shared community vision, Lenox Township can accommodate growth while safeguarding the character and qualities that residents value most.



## Agricultural / Open Space

### Goal:

Maintain the rural character and preserve the local characteristics of Lenox Township as a viable, stable agricultural industry by encouraging the retention and preservation of farmland and agricultural production as well as the preservation of general open space in the undeveloped areas of the Township.

### Policies:

- ◆ Guide development to foster the responsible use of land, preserve farmland and natural features, and make the best use of existing public services, utilities, and infrastructure.
- ◆ Direct non-agricultural uses away from areas of the Township ideally situated and conditioned for agriculture.
- ◆ Encourage and support open space and agricultural operations through preservation programs, such as P.A. 116 (Michigan Farmland and Opens Space Preservation Act), Purchase of Development Rights, Conservation Easements, or other means to maintain the viability of agriculture and open space in the Township.
- ◆ Protect existing farmland, open space, and natural feature views along public roads.
- ◆ Encourage the continuation of existing agriculture activities.
- ◆ Encourage new residential development to take a form where residential lots can be designed to allow continued agriculture and open space on the remainder of the acreage.



## Natural Resources

### Goal:

Systematically preserve open space and greenways to maintain the quality of life in Lenox Township, to preserve critical environmental areas, and maintain rural character.

### Policies

- ◆ Guide development to foster responsible use of land, preserve farmland and natural features, and make best use of existing public services, utilities, and infrastructure.
- ◆ Preserve an interconnected system of riparian corridors, woodlands, tree rows, and open spaces.
- ◆ Protect the water quality of the Township's lakes, ponds, streams, and drainage ditches.
- ◆ Consider the impact of all proposed developments on waterways, wetlands, woodlands, other natural resource areas, and groundwater recharge areas.



## Residential Development

### Goal:

Guide residential development in a manner which will create, preserve, and enhance a quality living environment for existing and future Township residents and workers.

### Policies:

- ◆ Foster the responsible use of land, preserve farmland and natural features, and to make best use of existing public services, utilities, and infrastructure.
- ◆ Provide diversity in housing stock while retaining an attractive rural character.
- ◆ Strongly encourage clustered development to preserve open space and retain the Township's rural character.
- ◆ Limit residential development in areas where conditions are least capable of supporting development. Evaluate each development based upon the suitability of soils, impact on woodlands, wetlands, floodplains, water bodies, and infrastructure capacity, such as roads and utilities.
- ◆ Provide a range of housing choice.
- ◆ Encourage affordable housing.



## Commercial and Industrial Development

Goal:

Guide commercial and industrial development in a manner that will create, preserve, and enhance a quality environment for existing and future residents.

Policies:

- ◆ Guide development to foster the responsible use of land, and make best use of existing public services, utilities, and infrastructure.
- ◆ Encourage commercial and industrial development to areas currently served by public sewer and water.
- ◆ Allow for the moderate expansion of commercial and office uses within established commercial areas, along paved roads.
- ◆ Discourage piecemeal, scattered development and uncoordinated strip development. Where individual parcels of land are to be developed for commercial or industrial uses, coordination with adjacent properties including common parking and driveways, shall be encouraged in order to reduce the number of access points onto public roads.
- ◆ Encourage high quality site and building designs that include the latest “green” technology.

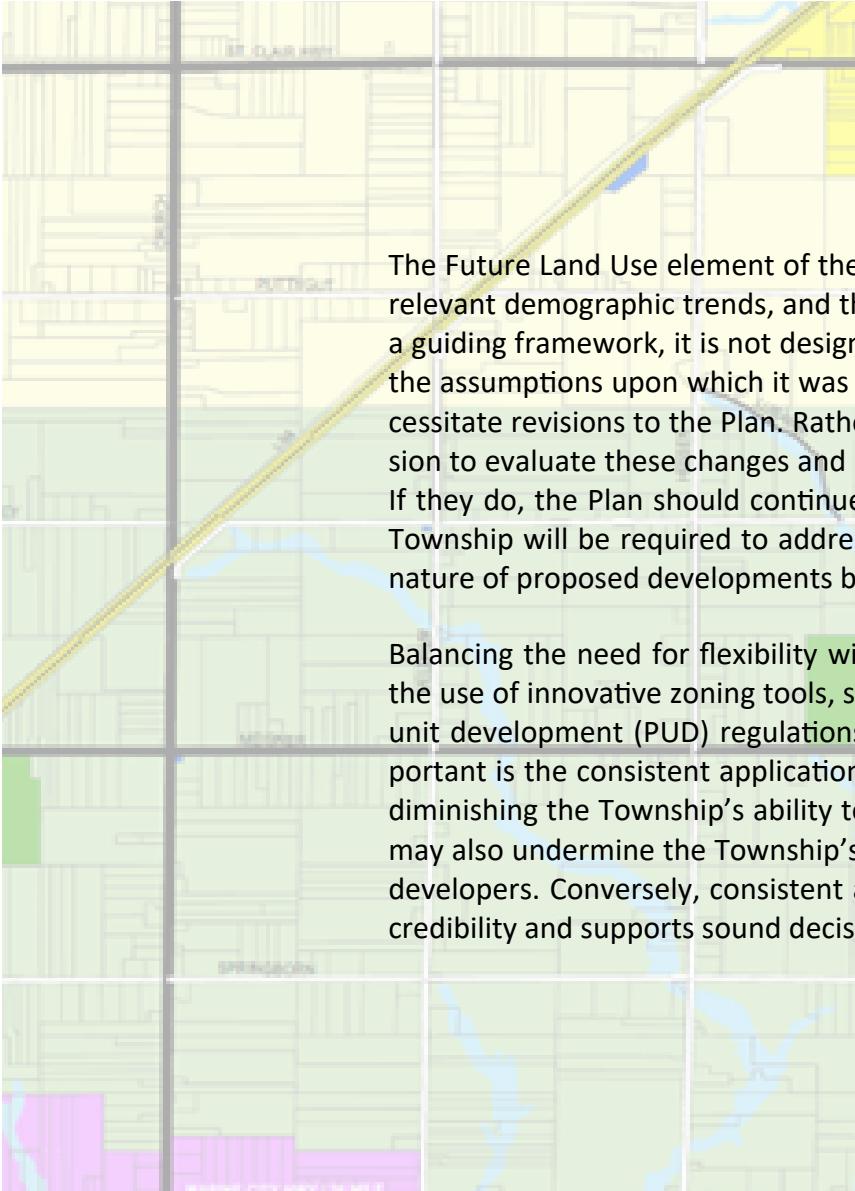


## Transportation

Goal: To provide a variety of safe, efficient modes of transportation to meet the needs of residents.

Policies:

- ◆ Maintain a transportation network that maximizes the capacity of existing roads while maintaining rural roadways, and facilitating the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians throughout the Township.
- ◆ Evaluate the impact of traffic generated by existing development, and work toward improvements concurrent with new development.
- ◆ Enable access management standards for new development.
- ◆ Coordinate transportation improvements with the Macomb County Department of Roads.
- ◆ Coordinate with Macomb County to provide non-motorized opportunities for pedestrian activity such as walking, jogging, and bicycling.



# Chapter 6

## Future Land Use

The Future Land Use element of the Master Plan is intended to reflect existing development patterns, relevant demographic trends, and the Township's long-term vision and goals. While the Plan serves as a guiding framework, it is not designed to be applied rigidly, as changing conditions may alter some of the assumptions upon which it was originally based. Such changes, however, do not automatically necessitate revisions to the Plan. Rather, it is the responsibility of the Lenox Township Planning Commission to evaluate these changes and determine whether the guiding principles of the Plan remain valid. If they do, the Plan should continue to serve as the basis for decision-making. As growth occurs, the Township will be required to address increasingly complex zoning issues resulting from the pace and nature of proposed developments by residents and property owners.

Balancing the need for flexibility with the Township's commitment to managing growth may require the use of innovative zoning tools, such as farmland and open space preservation techniques, planned unit development (PUD) regulations, overlay districts, and other regulatory mechanisms. Equally important is the consistent application of the Master Plan. A plan that is not actively implemented risks diminishing the Township's ability to rely on it as a basis for decision-making. Inconsistent application may also undermine the Township's position in the event of legal challenges from property owners or developers. Conversely, consistent and deliberate adherence to the Plan strengthens the Township's credibility and supports sound decision-making in matters of rezoning and other land use issues.

## FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map designates areas of the Township for specific planned uses. It is important to note that the Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map and does not, in itself, alter the zoning of any property. Rather, it serves as the foundation for the Township's Zoning Map and Zoning Ordinance, providing the framework through which long-range planning goals are translated into regulatory tools. The boundaries depicted on the Future Land Use Map are intended to be generalized and do not necessarily correspond to individual parcels. This distinction is critical when evaluating requests for rezoning, as the map is intended to guide, rather than prescribe, regulatory decisions.

The Future Land Use Map identifies seven primary land use categories: Agricultural–Low Density Residential, Moderate Density Residential, Flexible Residential, Office/Retail, Highway Business, Industrial, and Public/Quasi-Public. In addition, the map designates a special planning area known as the I-94 Development District.



## Agricultural - Low Density Residential

This category encompasses land designated for farming and livestock-related activities and is also compatible with low-density residential development. These areas are well-suited for ancillary agricultural uses and agritourism activities, such as farm markets, roadside stands, wineries, bakeries utilizing goods primarily grown on-site, and petting farms. The minimum residential parcel size within this designation is two (2) acres.

The Township acknowledges the critical role of farming and agriculture in its economy and community character and seeks to ensure that these uses are not displaced by future development pressures. Participation in farmland preservation programs and other initiatives that protect agricultural land is strongly encouraged.

### Typical Permitted Uses:

- Crop production and livestock farming
- Orchards, vineyards, and nurseries
- Barns, silos, and storage for equipment or feed
- Animal husbandry and equestrian facilities
- Low Density Single-family detached housing
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Schools, parks, and churches

### Key Characteristics

- More compact development.
- Greater housing variety and affordability.
- May allow for small-lot subdivisions, detached condominiums, and cluster housing.

### General Development Standards

- Lot size: Typically 2 acres or more.
- Setbacks: Large front, side, and rear yard requirements.
- Building Height: Typically 2 stories, except agricultural buildings.
- Density: Very Low



## Moderate Density Residential

This land use designation provides for residential areas with a balance between density and livability—offering more housing options than the agricultural residential category.

Areas designated for Moderate Density Residential are intended to accommodate primarily residential development with densities up to four dwelling units per acre. These areas would ideally be provided with public water and sewer service.

### Typical Permitted Uses:

- Single-family detached housing
- Manufactured Housing
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Schools, parks, and churches

### Key Characteristics

- More compact development.
- Greater housing variety and affordability.
- May allow for small-lot subdivisions, detached condominiums, and cluster housing.

### General Development Standards

- Lot size: Typically 1 acre or less.
- Setbacks: Moderate front, side, and rear yard requirements.
- Building Height: Typically 2 stories.
- Density: Moderate



## Flexible Residential

The Flexible Residential Land Use designation is designed to accommodate a wide variety of residential developments, unique in project design and consistent with the characteristics of a site. This land use category would allow for innovation and creativity in the development of the special features of the site, which could include the location and types of structures, a mix of densities, and allowances for housing serving a range of incomes. The maximum density allowed in this area would be 10 units per acre.

### Typical Permitted Uses:

- Single-family detached housing
- Apartments and townhouses
- Manufactured Housing
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Schools, parks, and churches

### Key Characteristics

- More compact development
- Greater housing varieted and affordability
- May allow for small-lot subdivisions, detached condominiums, cluster housing, and multiple family housing.

### General Development Standards

- Setbacks: Small front, side, and rear yard requirements.
- Building Height: Typically 2 stories
- Density: Up to 10 units per acre



## Office / Retail

Office / Retail is intended to provide areas for a mix of professional offices, service-oriented businesses, and limited commercial uses that serve both local residents and the broader community. The district is designed to accommodate employment centers, customer-oriented services, and small-scale retail in a manner that supports economic development while minimizing land use conflicts with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The Future Land Use Map proposes commercial/office land at the northwest corner of the Township near the City of Richmond, at the southeast corner of the Township near County Line Road and 26 Mile Road.

### Typical Permitted Uses:

- Professional offices (medical, legal, financial, and administrative).
- Retail business of limited scope.
- Eating and drinking establishments
- Institutional or civic uses (libraries, education/training centers..
- Service-oriented businesses (banks, salons, fitness centers, clinics)

### Key Characteristics

- Low- to mid-rise buildings (usually 1–2 stories)

- Moderate traffic and activity levels, less intense than industrial or regional retail areas
- Intended to serve both local residents and employees.

### General Development Standards

- Landscaped parking areas and moderate building setbacks.
- Buffering and screening when adjacent to residential areas.
- Controlled signage and lighting to maintain a professional appearance.



## Highway Business

The Highway Business land use category is designed to provide areas near highways or major transportation routes for light to medium commercial and industrial uses that rely on road access for the transport of goods, raw materials, and employees. These zones are designed to support economic development while ensuring compatibility with surrounding land uses.

### Typical Permitted Uses:

- Warehousing and distribution centers
- Light manufacturing and assembly plants
- Truck terminals and freight handling
- Contractor yards
- Wholesale trade businesses
- Auto body shops and vehicle storage
- Limited outdoor storage (often screened)
- Ancillary office space connected to industrial use

### Key Characteristics

- Highway access: Proximity to major roads is essential for operational efficiency.
- Noise and emissions: Regulations may limit heavy industry to reduce impacts.
- Infrastructure: Requires strong transportation infrastruc-

ture, utilities, and drainage.

- Land use compatibility: Often buffered from non-industrial zones to prevent conflicts.
- Environmental review: May be required depending on the use and size of operations.

### General Development Standards

- Lot size: Larger parcels to accommodate trucks, loading docks, and equipment.
- Setbacks: Greater front and side yard setbacks for safety and vehicle maneuvering.
- Height restrictions: Often more flexible than commercial zones.
- Parking/loading: Adequate on-site parking for employees and designated truck loading areas.
- Screening/buffering: Required when adjacent to residential or commercial areas.
- Signage: Typically modest, functional, and business-oriented.



## Industrial

The Industrial Land Use category is designed to accommodate industrial operations whose external physical effects are not experienced beyond the property line. This category is intended to include manufacturing, assembly, warehousing, storage, and other similar uses. In certain situations, the Township may allow commercial uses within the land use category, provided such uses are complementary to the industrial area.

### Typical Permitted Uses:

- Light and heavy manufacturing
- Warehousing and distribution centers
- Assembly and fabrication operations
- Research and development (R&D) facilities
- Vehicle repair and maintenance
- Construction and contractor yards
- Utility and service infrastructure

### Key Characteristics

- Larger lot sizes to accommodate buildings, truck access, and loading areas.
- Building heights often higher than commercial or residential districts.
- Minimum setbacks for buildings, parking, and loading zones.

- Outdoor storage typically regulated (screening/fencing requirements).
- Direct access to major highways.

### General Development Standards

- Setbacks: Moderate to large, especially near residential or commercial zones.
- Height limits: Flexible to accommodate industrial structures.
- Parking/loading: Adequate space for employees, visitors, and freight vehicles.
- Lot coverage: High coverage allowed, but with storm-water management.
- Screening: Landscaping or fencing often required along public-facing areas or adjacent zones.



## Public / Quasi-Public

Land in this category is found throughout the Township. This category includes government buildings, churches, schools, parks, cemeteries, and other public land uses. These uses are scattered throughout the Township, and are typically located on residential and agricultural zoned land.

### Typical Permitted Uses:

- Government buildings (e.g., city halls, courthouses)
- Police and fire stations
- Public schools and libraries
- Churches and places of worship
- Private schools and universities
- Hospitals and medical clinics
- Cemeteries
- Nonprofit or charitable organizations
- Cultural institutions (e.g., museums, theaters)

### Key Characteristics

- Serves as community infrastructure or civic support
- Often centrally located or integrated within neighborhoods.
- Uses may generate high public traffic (e.g., events, services).
- May require conditional use permits or public hearings, especially for quasi-public uses.

### General Development Standards:

- Setbacks & Height: Vary depending on context; usually more flexible for institutional design
- Lot size: Often large parcels for buildings, parking, and open space
- Parking: Required based on use (e.g., school vs. church)
- Design standards: May emphasize compatibility with adjacent residential areas

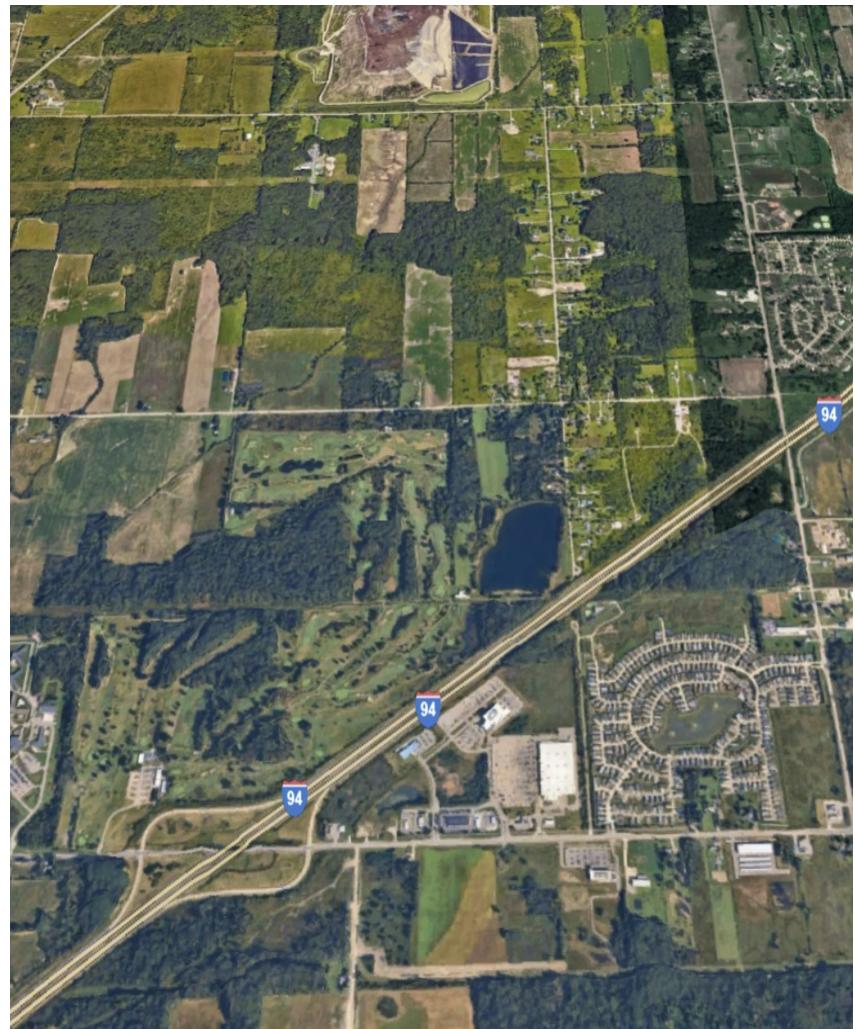


## Interstate 94 Development District

The I-94 Development District is generally proposed west of I-94, between 26 Mile Road and 28 Mile Road, with the potential for expansion based on future demand. Due to its strategic location along the Interstate and its position approximately midway between the Canadian border crossings at Detroit and Port Huron, the area is ideally suited for mixed-use development.

The Development District is designed to be flexible with respect to permitted land uses, while more prescriptive in establishing expectations for design quality and development standards. Many of the uses currently permitted within the Township's zoning districts may be appropriate within this corridor, provided they are developed in a manner consistent with the intent of the district.

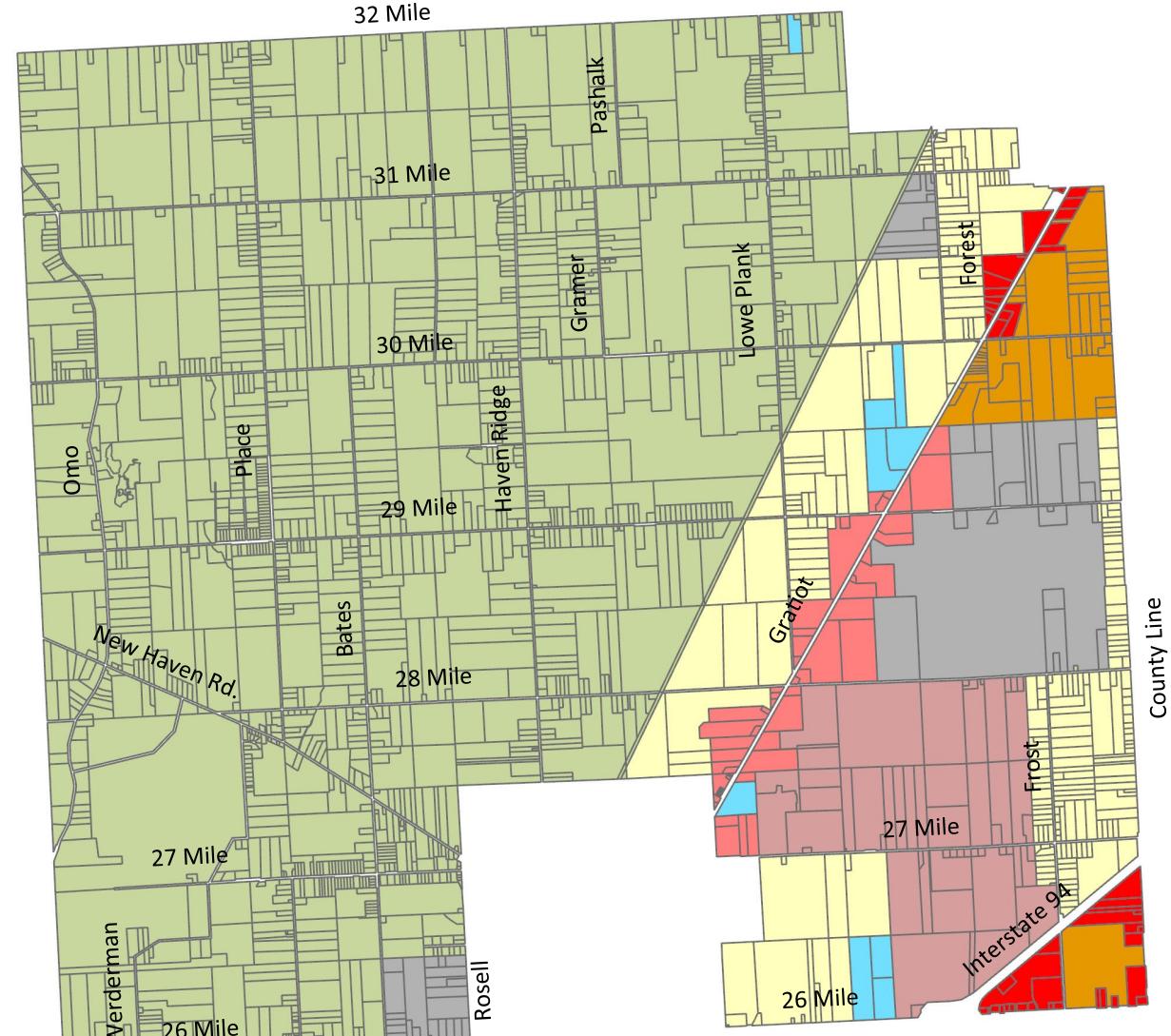
The overarching purpose of the I-94 Development District is to foster economic growth, expand employment opportunities, and strengthen the Township's tax base through the development and redevelopment of land adjacent to the Interstate. Regulations governing this area should promote mixed-use development, eliminate blighted or underutilized properties, incorporate innovative planning practices, ensure safe and well-integrated vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, improve environmental quality, remediate degraded sites, and provide an attractive and compatible transition between residential and nonresidential areas.



- Agricultural - Low-Density Residential
- Moderate Density Residential
- Flexible Residential
- Highway Business
- Office - Retail
- Industrial
- Public / Quasi Public
- I-94 Development District

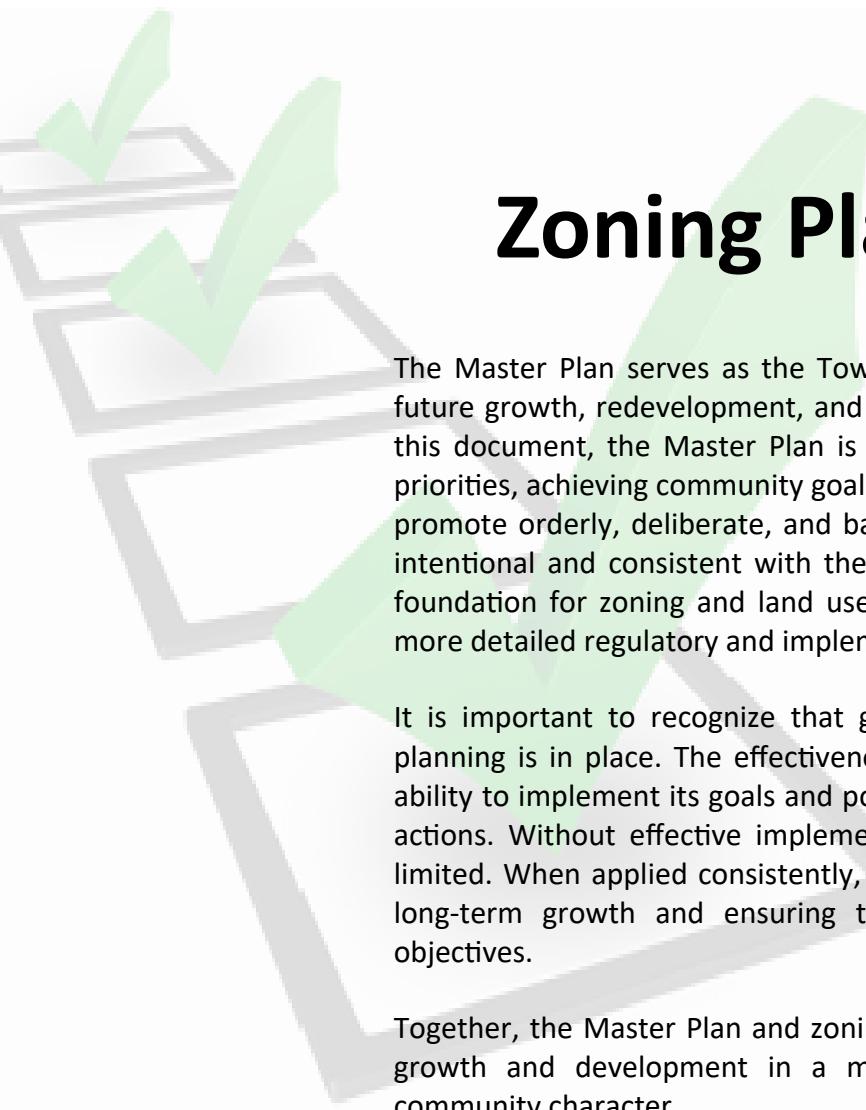


Cassin Planning Group



## Lenox Township Future Land Use Map

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# Chapter 7

## Zoning Plan & Implementation

The Master Plan serves as the Township's formal statement of goals and objectives for guiding future growth, redevelopment, and land use decision-making. As described in the introduction to this document, the Master Plan is the Township's officially adopted framework for establishing priorities, achieving community goals, and implementing planning policies. Its primary purpose is to promote orderly, deliberate, and balanced change, allowing growth to occur in a manner that is intentional and consistent with the Township's long-term vision. As such, the Plan provides the foundation for zoning and land use decisions and establishes the policy framework upon which more detailed regulatory and implementation measures are based.

It is important to recognize that growth and change will occur regardless of whether formal planning is in place. The effectiveness of the Master Plan therefore depends on the Township's ability to implement its goals and policies through clear and consistent programs, regulations, and actions. Without effective implementation, the Plan's influence on future development will be limited. When applied consistently, however, the Master Plan becomes a critical tool for shaping long-term growth and ensuring that development aligns with the community's vision and objectives.

Together, the Master Plan and zoning regulations provide an integrated framework for managing growth and development in a manner that supports the Township's long-term goals and community character.

## MASTER PLAN REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

The Lenox Township Master Plan serves as the Township's primary policy framework for guiding reasonable and practical development decisions. The Plan establishes clear goals, policies, and recommended actions that address a broad range of land use and community issues, while organizing implementation within a manageable five-year planning horizon.

The Township must remain committed to maintaining the integrity of the goals and objectives set forth in the Master Plan. In accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008), the Plan is required to be reviewed, revised, or reaffirmed at least once every five years. To ensure continued relevance and effectiveness, the Master Plan should be applied consistently and reviewed annually to determine whether conditions have changed and whether amendments are necessary.

While the Master Plan is intended to be adaptable, amendments should be considered only after careful evaluation of both short-term needs and long-term impacts. The Township Board and Planning Commission are responsible for thoroughly reviewing proposed amendments to determine whether they are consistent with the Plan's goals and policies and whether they will provide lasting benefits to the residents of Lenox Township.



Charter Township of Lenox  
Master Plan 2026

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MASTER PLAN MASTER PLAN AND ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning is a regulatory mechanism for controlling the classification and regulation of land use, carrying the force of law. The Zoning Ordinance governs land uses based on current conditions.

The Master Plan, along with its maps and policy statements, is intended to guide land use decision-making over the long term. The Master Plan represents a community's vision, while the Zoning Ordinance outlines the rules that govern the path to achieving that vision.

State law requires that the Zoning Ordinance be based on a plan. Therefore, the Master Plan forms the basis upon which zoning decisions are made. With a Master Plan in place, zoning decisions consistent with the plan are presumed by the courts to be valid. Without a Master Plan, the courts may find the community's argument to be weaker, leaving the community more vulnerable to a ruling inconsistent with its vision.

Master Plan	Zoning Ordinance
Provides general policies, a guide.	Provides specific regulations, the law.
Describes what should happen over the next 10 - 20 years, not necessarily the recommended use for today, with updates required every 5 years.	Describes what is, and what is not, allowed today.
Adopted under the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended).	Adopted under the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended).
Flexibility to respond to changing conditions.	Fairly rigid, requires formal amendment to change.

## ZONING PLAN

A Zoning Plan is a required element in a Master Plan. The Zoning Plan describes the relationship between the future land use categories in the Master Plan and the comparable zoning ordinance districts. Not to be confused with the zoning ordinance, the zoning plan provides generalized recommendations for aligning the zoning ordinance with the future land use vision.

Future Land Use Designation	Corresponding Zoning Districts
Agricultural Residential	A—Agriculture, REC—Recreation, FP—Floodplain
Moderate Density Residential	R—Single Family Residential. MH—Manufactured Housing. REC—Recreation, FP—Floodplain
Flexible Residential	R—Single Family Residential. MH—Manufactured Housing. RM—Multiple Family Residential, REC—Recreation, FP—Floodplain
Office / Retail	OS—Office Service, NB—Neighborhood Business, CB—Community Business, GB—General Business, FP—Floodplain
Industrial / Highway Commercial	LI—Light Industrial, HI—Heavy Industrial, GB—General Business, FP—Floodplain
Public / Quasi Public	All Districts
I-94 Development District	OS—Office Service, CB—Community Business, GB—General Business, LI—Light Industrial, HI—Heavy Industrial, FP—Floodplain

## ZONING ADJUSTMENTS

Upon adoption of the Master Plan, the following amendments should be made to the Zoning Ordinance and Map:

### Lenox Township Zoning Map

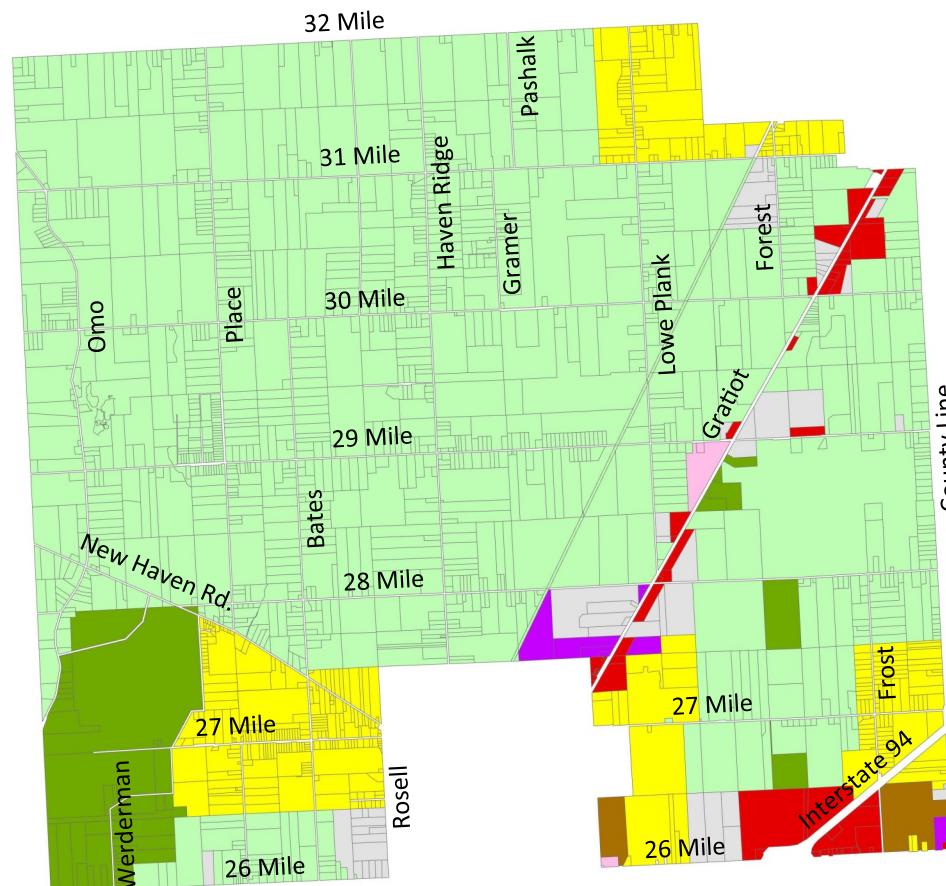
#### Zoning Districts

- A, Agricultural
- R, Single Family Residential
- RM, Multiple Family Residential
- MH, Manufactured Homes
- OS, Office Service
- NB, Neighborhood Business
- CB, Community Business
- GB, General Business
- LI, Light Industrial
- HI, Heavy Industrial
- REC, Recreation



Scale: 1:22,500

January 23, 2025



## IMPLEMENTATION

The Planning Commission's thoughtful preparation and adoption of any plan would be for naught without a program of implementation strategies to bring the Plan to life. The following section attempts to identify specific plan recommendations with an appropriate implementation technique and the parties involved to facilitate that recommendation. These techniques should be referred to frequently and used systematically so that the outcome is a consistent program of implementation over the life span of the Master Plan.

ACTION STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
Work with county and state agencies to develop an effective farmland preservation program for the Township.	1-3 years	Planning Commission Township Board
Maintain large lot sizes in areas planned for agricultural use.	Continuous	Planning Commission Township Board
Review and revise Zoning Ordinance regulations to eliminate standards that result in unnecessary loss of open space.	Continuous	Planning Commission Township Board
Monitor engineering and drainage issues for new residential homes to ensure that they do not negatively impact existing development.	Continuous	Township Administration
Work closely with Waste Management to ensure that any nuisances emanating from the Pine Tree Acres Landfill are quickly mitigated.	Continuous	Township Administration

ACTION STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
Raise awareness with property owners and businesses to ensure the proper maintenance of their properties.	Continuous	Township Administration
Enforce property maintenance through effective code enforcement.	Continuous	Township Administration
Establish regulations and guidelines to ensure the preservation of the existing housing stock within the Township	3-5 years	Planning Commission Township Board
Encourage the development of senior housing options which would allow residents to “age-in-place”.	1-3 years	Planning Commission Township Board
Provide space for active and passive recreation.	Continuous	Township Administration
Maintain and improve Township recreation facilities to ensure that they meet the needs of residents.	Continuous	Township Board

ACTION STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
Collaborate with the Macomb County Department of Roads to accommodate increases in traffic volumes through road maintenance, intersection improvements, signalization improvements and the upgrading of the road network.	Continuous	Township Administration
Collaborate with the Macomb County Department of Roads to preserve future rights-of-way within the Township.	Continuous	Planning Commission
Collaborate with the Macomb County Department of Roads to develop access management guidelines.	Continuous	Township Administration Planning Commission
Collaborate with the Macomb County Department of Roads to develop policies that promote “Complete Streets”.	Continuous	Township Administration Planning Commission
Collaborate with the Macomb County Department of Planning and Economic Development and the Macomb County Department of Roads to provide connection links from Lenox Township to nearby pathways and trails.	3-5 years	Township Administration
Review and amend the zoning ordinance as needed to improve access and connectivity throughout the Township.	Continuous	Planning Commission

ACTION STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
Accommodate commercial, office, and service facilities through business zoning in proximity to existing commercial areas, and along paved roads.	Continuous	Planning Commission
Allow industrial development only in areas where sufficient services and infrastructure are available	Continuous	Planning Commission Township Board
Encourage the use of pre-application conferences with developers to ensure that all Township ordinances and policies are considered at the beginning of site design.	Continuous	Planning Commission Township Administration
Review and enhance the Zoning Ordinance screening and landscaping requirements for commercial and industrial sites.	1-3 years	Planning Commission Township Board
Developed a Highway Commercial Zoning District	1-3 years	Planning Commission Township Board
Develop an I-94 Corridor Development Overlay Zoning District	1-3 years	Planning Commission Township Board

ACTION STRATEGY	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
Develop a Flexible Residential Zoning District	1-3 years	Planning Commission Township Board
Amend the Zoning Ordinance to regulate the location and number of wetland mitigation sites within the Township.	1-3 years	Planning Commission Township Board
Review and update the zoning ordinance and development regulations to remove barriers to accessibility and ensure consistency with ADA requirements.	1-3 years	Planning Commission Township Board
Conduct a Zoning Ordinance Audit to identify areas for improvement	1-3 years	Planning Commission
Continue to review and update the Master Plan to ensure its relevancy.	Continuous	Planning Commission

## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

This section identifies tools and programs that will be useful in implementing the Master Plan.

### Zoning Ordinance Amendments

The Township's most effective tools for implementing the land use arrangements outlined in the Master Plan are zoning standards and zoning districts. A zoning ordinance is intended to be a flexible document, catering to the evolving ideals and needs of the community. The experiences communities undergo in the application of their zoning rules and the review of unusual new land uses constantly change the body of professional knowledge related to planning and zoning standards. Periodic review of the zoning ordinance will result in the application of the most up-to-date standards in the design of new uses and the maintenance of existing developments. Review sessions may be appropriate at least annually unless otherwise needed throughout the year.

### Form-Based Zoning Codes

Form-based regulations are applied in relation to the context of a site and are guided by three primary factors: street type, site type, and building form. Site context is determined by the existing and desired characteristics of an area, including its size, configuration, street patterns, location, and intensity of use. Because each site context is unique, a customized approach is often required. Building form standards govern the relationship of buildings to their lots, adjacent buildings, and the street. These standards typically address building height, placement, configuration, parking location, and other key design elements. In conventional zoning districts, by contrast, building form and arrangement are primarily dictated by setback and height requirements.

Form-based codes require a more comprehensive analysis of property size, shape, and dimensions at the time the code is adopted. Unlike conventional districts—where design standards are often applied reactively and focus on mitigating nuisances rather than achieving visual or functional improvements—form-based codes establish proactive, consistent guidelines. Conventional zoning often produces inconsistent outcomes, as sites are reviewed individually and at different times, resulting in a lack of cohesion across the community.

## **Overlay Zoning**

Overlay zoning allows the Township to enforce an additional set of regulations on special areas within an existing zoning district. In an area where an overlay zone is established, the property is placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones.

## **Planned Unit Development**

The Planned Unit Development (PUD) involves the use of special zoning requirements and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. Planned developments typically achieve a higher quality of development than might otherwise be possible.

## **Conditional Rezoning**

Conditional zoning allows the Township to approve a rezoning contingent upon the developer fulfilling conditions attached to the rezoning approval. Conditional rezoning allows flexibility in site design, and may also ensure that undesirable uses will not occur on a particular site if rezoned. This tool should not be used as the sole implementation method for flexible use areas, but it may be appropriate for difficult sites where a rezoning would be acceptable if properly designed. The use of conditional rezoning would assure the Township that certain design and use standards would be met in the new development if rezoned.

## **Complete Streets**

Transportation impacts an entire community in a multitude of ways, including how handicapped individuals can move around the community without barriers, how people are able to safely use non-motorized paths to move without the need for a vehicle, and how goods and services are delivered. To ensure all transportation users are considered, the Township should adopt a Complete Streets policy.

## **Brownfield Districts**

The Brownfield Redevelopment Financing Act, Public Act 381 of 1996 (Act 381, as amended) establishes finance methods to fund environmental response activities at contaminated properties. This program provides municipalities with the tools to develop and implement Brownfield redevelopment financing plans. Properties eligible for Brownfield Act financing include blighted or functionally obsolete structures. Eligible activities include infrastructure improvements, demolition, lead or asbestos abatement, and site preparation. The Township may establish one or more of its own Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities or utilize the Macomb County Brownfield Authority.

## **Special Assessments**

Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefited by specific public improvements, such as paving and drainage improvements, to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the benefits afforded to the property affected.

## **Bonding**

Bonds are one of the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for specific community projects and are paid off by the public with property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for the construction of projects that generate revenue, like parking structures. These bonds are then retired using income generated by the project.

## **Downtown Development Authorities**

Downtown Development Authorities (DDA) are quasi-public development corporations that provide downtown management services. Allowed activities include funding infrastructure projects, conducting marketing activities, purchasing and developing property, underwriting enhanced maintenance and public safety services within the district, and conducting district man-

agement activities. These services develop desirable environments for businesses and residents while implementing economic development projects. A variety of financing techniques are available to DDAs, including bond issues, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), operating millages, and public and private contributions. When a Tax Increment Finance district is established, the state-equalized value of all properties in the district is recorded. Every year thereafter, the property tax revenue generated by any increase in the taxable value is captured by the DDA to finance improvements set forth in the development plan. Often, bonds are issued to finance capital improvements, and a portion of the tax increment revenues are used to repay the bonds. The DDA tool has been used by numerous communities of all shapes and sizes in the State of Michigan.

### **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)**

CDBG is an annual allocation of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to local governments for a wide range of community development activities, including housing rehabilitation, public and neighborhood improvements, and economic development activities that primarily benefit low and moderate-income persons or eliminate slums or blight within the community. The Township of Lenox receives limited funding from Macomb County,

### **MNRTF Grants**

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) offers grants for park development and land acquisition, with a minimum 25% match required from the community. Eligible projects include the acquisition of land or rights in land for recreational uses, protection of land for environmental importance or scenic beauty, and development proposals for public outdoor recreation or resource protection purposes (e.g., picnic areas, beaches, boating access, fishing and hunting facilities, winter sports areas, playgrounds, ball fields, tennis courts, and trails). Indoor facilities are considered only if their primary purpose is to support outdoor recreation. Examples include nature interpretive buildings and park visitor centers. Outdoor recreation support buildings, such as restrooms and storage buildings, are also eligible. Eligible local government recipients must have a current recreation plan that has been approved by the Department of Natural Resources.

### **Capital Improvement Plan**

The Township's role in providing and financing community facilities will undoubtedly increase in the future. An orderly procedure

for planning and financing such facilities can be achieved through the adoption of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) attached to the annual budgeting process. The CIP is a schedule of projects developed for a six (6) year period and contains estimated costs and sources of funding. While the Planning Commission is involved in larger-scale capital improvement planning for infrastructure improvements as it relates to land use, the Township Board has responsibility for yearly capital improvement planning. This includes detailed budgeting, staff assignments, and strategic planning.

A Capital Improvement Plan is coordinated with the Master Plan so that funds are devoted to projects that will benefit the greatest number of Township residents and visitors. Capital improvement plans consider the funding and timing of all municipally related capital goods needs, including such items as roadways, utilities, parks and recreation, municipal building expansion/development, etc.



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