

Master Plan 2024 - 2044

**Delaware Township
Sanilac County, Michigan**



**Adopted by the
Delaware Township
Planning Commission on:
March 5, 2024**

**Adopted by the
Delaware Township
Board of Trustees on:
July 9, 2024**

Prepared by:

**Delaware Township
Planning Commission**

and

**Wade Trim
Planning Consultant**

**Delaware Township
Sanilac County, Michigan**

Board of Trustees

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Planning Commission

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Carolyn Talaski – Secretary
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Steve Messing

Zoning Administrator

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Resolution of Adoption

DELAWARE TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE MASTER PLAN FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF DELAWARE

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the Township of Delaware, Sanilac County, Michigan, has developed a Master Plan under the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended and;

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission of the Township of Delaware, Sanilac County, Michigan, envisions the Master Plan to be used as a guide for the future development of the Township of Delaware, and;

WHEREAS, a Public Hearing was held on March 5, 2024 at the Delaware Township Hall, 7979 Maple Grove Road, Minden City, Michigan 48456, for the purpose of receiving comments regarding the proposed Master Plan, and;

WHEREAS, the Township of Delaware Planning Commission believes that the proposed Master Plan will promote public health, safety, and general welfare in the Township, and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Township of Delaware Planning Commission hereby approves the proposed 2024 Master Plan as presented.

Moved by Commissioner Ivan Messing and supported by Commissioner Steve Messing as follows:

Voting Yes: Steve Messing, Fran Smith, Ivan Messing, Carolyn Talaski, Diane Williamson

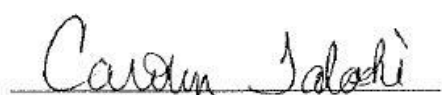
Voting No: NONE

Absent: Mark Klaus

I declare this resolution approved.

Date approved: March 5, 2024


Diana Williamson, Chair


Carolyn Talaski, Secretary

Resolution of Adoption

**TOWNSHIP OF DELAWARE
SANILAC COUNTY, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Township Board of Township of Delaware, Sanilac County, Michigan, has reviewed the Master Plan developed by the Delaware Township Planning Commission under the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended and;

WHEREAS, the Township of Delaware, Sanilac County, State of Michigan, envisions the Master Plan to be used as a guide for the future development of the Township of Delaware and,

WHEREAS, a Public Hearing was held by the Delaware Township Planning Commission on March 5, 2024, at the Delaware Township Hall, 7979 Maple Grove Road, Minden City, Michigan 48456, for the purpose of receiving comments regarding the proposed Master Plan and,

WHEREAS, the Township of Delaware Board believes that the proposed Master Plan will promote public health, safety, and general welfare in the Township, and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Delaware Township Board hereby adopts the proposed 2024 Master Plan as presented.

Moved by Keith Pierson and supported by Mark Klaus
as follows:

Voting Yes: all eyes Rick Baker, Tammy Baker
Mike Erdman, Mark Klaus & Keith Pierson

Voting No: none

Absent: none

The Supervisor declared this resolution adopted. Date adopted: July 9th, 2024

Richard Barker
Richard Barker, Supervisor

Michael Erdman
Michael Erdman, Township Clerk

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Authority to Plan

The Delaware Township Planning Commission has prepared this master land use plan under the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended. The preamble of the Act states:

AN ACT to codify the laws regarding and to provide for county, township, city, and village planning; to provide for the creation, organization, powers, and duties of local planning commissions; to provide for the powers and duties of certain state and local governmental officers and agencies; to provide for the regulation and subdivision of land.

1.2 Purpose of the Plan

In Section 7.(2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, it summarizes the purpose of a master plan:



Delaware Township Hall

The general purpose of the Master Plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and environs, development that satisfies all of the following criteria:

- a. *Is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.*

- b. *Considers the character of the...jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in term of the factors as trends in land and population development*
- c. *Will in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare...*
 - a. *A system to lessen congestion.*
 - b. *Safety from fire and other dangers.*
 - c. *Light and air.*
 - d. *Healthful and convenient distribution of population....*

Planning is a process involving the selection of policies relating to land use and development in a community. The creation of a Master Plan is the first step of this process. A Master Plan is a statement of the goals and objectives for the future physical development of a community. Comprehensive and long term in nature, the Master Plan examines all aspects of the community, whether they are physical, social, or economic. A Master Plan performs three important functions:

- Provides a general statement of the community's goals and a comprehensive vision of the future
- Provides the statutory basis for the Zoning Ordinance, as required by the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Michigan Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended
- Serves as the primary policy guide for local officials considering development proposals, land divisions, capital improvements, and other matters related to land use and development; thus, providing a stable and consistent basis for decision making.

The completely revised first section of the Master Plan serves as an Introduction, which gives an overview of the Master Plan, this amendment, and Delaware Township.

The second section is the Executive Summary, which served as a summary of the major findings and conclusions for the 2004 Master Plan but was not included in the 2023 revisions.

The Socioeconomic Profile section was completely updated in 2023 with results from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 decennial census and its five-year U.S. American Community Survey results (2017-2021) and other current noted sources.

Section 4 – Natural Resources Assessment was not altered during the 2023 revisions.



Farm fields and woodlot

An analysis of the Township's existing land uses was conducted by comparing the results from the 2004 Master Plan with changes identified by aerial photography and input from members of the Planning Commission, Township Board, and staff. These changes were reported in the revised Section 5.

The demographic and existing lands use analyses inform the development of the remainder of the Master Plan. This information is vital in understanding changes that are occurring in the Township with regards to the residents and how the land has been developing. Input from the public, guidance from the Planning Commission, and results of the Master Plan analysis is necessary to develop goals that are reasonable and appropriate for the Township.

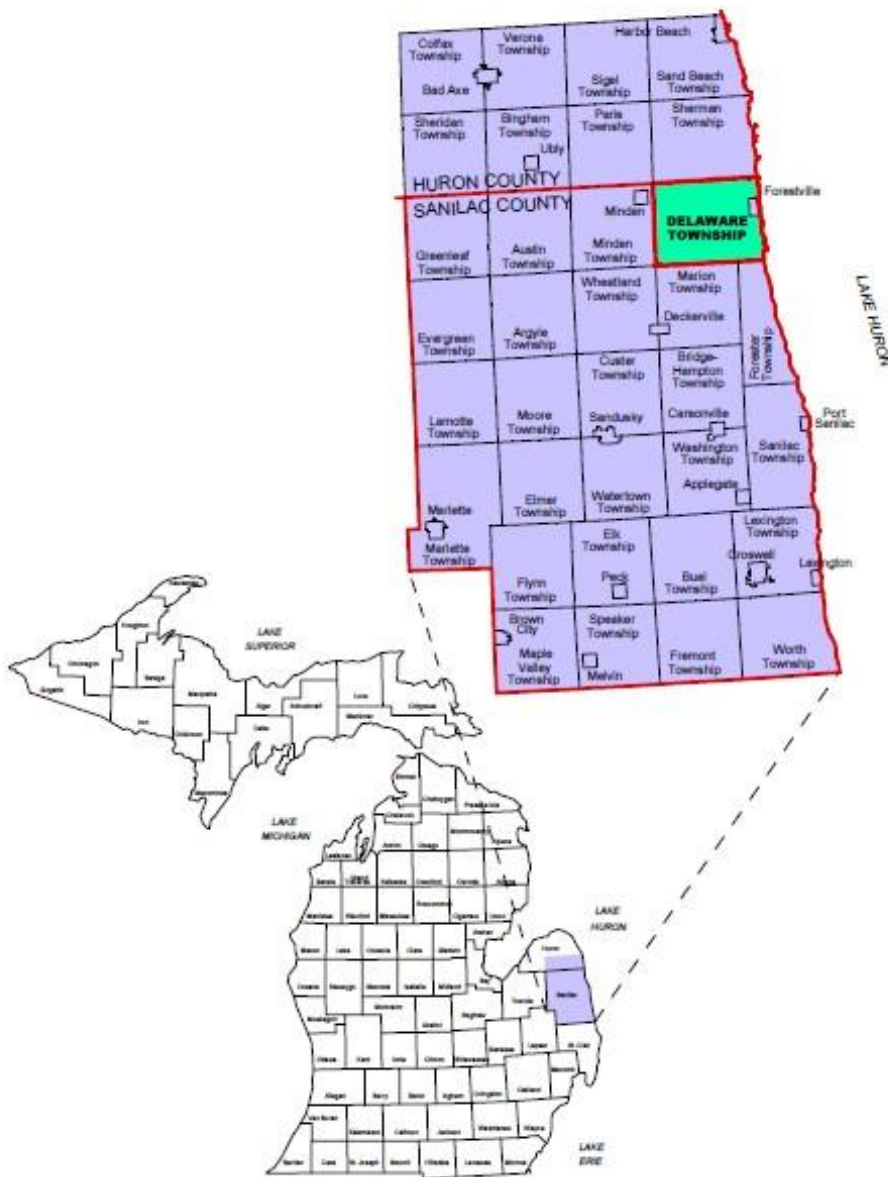
Community Goals and Objectives form the sixth section of the Master Plan. As a part of the 2023 update, this section was refocused to identify goals that fall within the purview of the Township and the Planning Commission and provide implementable objectives that are mindful of the constraints on the Township's staff, volunteers, and finances. The goals and objectives are formulated through engagement with the Planning Commission and presented to guide future development. The goals and objectives also take into account the key land use trends, population trends, natural resources, and other issues presented in the previous analysis sections.

The Future Land Use Plan forms the seventh section of the Master Plan. Based on the background information, goals and objectives, and other information such as current market trends, the Future Land Use Plan specifies the extent and location of where various types of future development should be accommodated within the Township.

Delaware Township is made up of the geographic townships T14N-R15E and T14N-R16E of Sanilac County. Four townships border Delaware, including Sherman Township (Huron County) to the north, Minden Township to the west, and Marion and Forester Townships to the south. The Village of Forestville is located within Delaware Township on the shores of Lake Huron. **Map 1** shows the geographic location of the Township.

Forestville has its own land use and planning controls, and specific recommendations are not included as a part of this Master Plan. Due to proximity and developmental history, the land uses of both the Village and the Township are intertwined with each other; therefore, some of the recommendations of this Master Plan will have impacts upon the Village. However, this plan will have no regulatory enforcement within the Village.

**Map 1
Geographic Location**



2.0 Executive Summary

Editor's note: This chapter was not revised in the 2024 updates.

The Executive Summary is provided to highlight major findings of each section for quick reference purposes.

2.1 Socioeconomic Profile

Population

- Delaware Township has seen population decreases in the last two decades. In 1980 the Township had a population of 1,071 which declined to 961 in 1990 and further declined to 930 in 2000.
- The Township's population is slowly aging, with declining population in the youngest age groups, and increasing population in the older age groups, especially the empty nester (45-64 years) age group.
- The County persons per household average has decreased steadily over the years, declining from 2.89 in 1980 to 2.27 in 2000.
- The highest percentage of the Township's population are Married Couple Families at 64.1%. This percentage is slightly higher than Sanilac County at 59.8%, and significantly higher than the State at 51.4%. The second largest household group in the Township is Single Persons Living Alone at 26.5%.

Housing

- Nearly 90 percent of the Township's housing structures are single-family homes (1 Unit Structures). The majority of the other housing units in the Township are Mobile Home or Trailer Units.

- About one-half (55.8%) of Delaware Township's housing units are vacant. Of those vacant units, 87.0% are seasonally vacant. This means that the population of Delaware Township swells significantly during peak seasons when seasonal residents arrive.
- Delaware Township has a median housing value of \$77,900 which is average compared to the surrounding Townships but is lower than Sanilac County. The State of Michigan's median housing value of \$115,600 is significantly higher than Delaware Township and all its neighbors.



Lake Huron shore dwellings

Economy

- Generally, Delaware Township's 1999 income levels (family, household, and per capita) are average when compared to the surrounding Townships and Sanilac County. However, during the past decade all three income levels for the Township increased by more than 25%, indicating strong economic growth. The income levels for Michigan are much higher than Delaware Township, but are increasing at much lower percentages.

- In terms of Educational Attainment, Delaware Township's high school graduate percentage of 76.2% is lower than the County at 79.7% and the State at 83.4%. Delaware Township's bachelor degree holder percentage of 7.6% is also lower than the County at 10.0% and State at 21.8%.
- The largest industry in Delaware Township in 2000 was Manufacturing, employing 27.0% of the Township's citizens. The second largest industry was Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry, Hunting and Mining at 20.9%.

2.2 Natural Resources Assessment

- Some minor topographical features such as hills and riverbeds are found in Delaware Township, which may pose constraints to land development. Proper procedures for reducing soil erosion and containing water runoff should be utilized when development occurs in these areas.



Delaware Township Park

- Woodlands areas are most heavily concentrated in the eastern portion of the Township near Lake Huron. In total, they cover 8.5% of the Township.

- Small concentrations of environmentally sensitive wetland areas are scattered throughout Delaware Township. In total, wetlands cover 260 acres of the Township.

2.3 Existing Land Use Analysis

- Of the 29,198 total acres of land in the Township, the highest percentage (83.4%) is Agricultural.
- The second largest land use category is Single-Family Residential comprising 7.3% of the Township.

2.4 Township Goals and Objectives

- The Goals and Objectives for the Township are based upon an analysis of the background information in this Master Plan as well as a community survey conducted on January 28, 2002.
- The fundamental community-wide goal of the Township is to “capitalize on the Township’s abundant resources for the purpose of creating an attractive community that meets the physical, social, and economic needs of its residents and businesses in an environmentally sensitive manner.”
- Another important community-wide goal of the Township is to “attract and manage new growth in a manner that will preserve the agricultural land and retain the rural character of the community.”

2.5 Future Land Use Plan

- In keeping with the Township's existing rural and agricultural character, the highest percentage (82.4%) of the Township is classified as Agricultural/Rural Residential in the Future Land Use Plan. This category is designed to preserve the area's existing rural character by protecting agricultural lands and natural resources and discouraging large-scale developments.
- The second largest category is Single-Family Residential at 12.9%. The purpose of this district is to enhance the existing single-family residences, encourage new single-family development, and to promote orderly growth resulting in a cost-effective expansion of Township services.
- Other important recommendations presented in the Future Land Use Plan include the creation of a well-defined Township Center, designation of strategic areas for new industrial and commercial developments, and the identification of three Township Entryways.

2.6 Plan Implementation

The process of carrying out the goals and recommendations of this Master Plan can be challenging. The Plan Implementation section of the Master Plan acts as a general reference guide to be used by Township officials in order to help stimulate the implementation process. The section includes a series of keys to successful implementation, implementation tools, grant and loan programs, other funding options and sources of information.

3.0 Socioeconomic Profile

Gaining an understanding of a community through socioeconomic data is an important component of the comprehensive planning process. An appropriate Master Plan socioeconomic profile will include significant data on population, housing, and economy. All of these aspects of the Township have direct impacts and influences on future land use decisions.

This socioeconomic profile uses the most recent U.S. Census American Community Survey five-year estimates (2017-2021 ACS) as well as historical decennial census data.

3.1 Population Trends

Understanding population trends is the most important factor influencing land use decisions in any community. Simply put, if the population of a community is growing, there will be a need for more housing, commerce, industry, parks and recreation, public services and facilities, or roads, or there is a large cohort of young resident, there will be an increased demand for schools, recreational activities, and other family-focused needs

1990, the Township experienced a significant decrease in population, losing 110 people or 10.3%. The population has continued to decline after the Millennium with the estimated population of 790 people in 2021. Since the high point in 1980, the Township has experienced a 26% population decline.

Table 1 compares Delaware’s population trends with the Village of Forestville, surrounding four Townships, Sanilac County, and the State of Michigan. Delaware Township and its surrounding communities all experienced population growth between 1970 and 1980, but they’ve all suffered declines since. Some communities reached their peak population in 1980 while others did not reach their population maximums until 2000.

Of the neighboring communities, Marion Township has declined the least from 1990 to the present (-7.6%). Forester Township, Forestville Village, and Minden Township are in the middle of the neighboring communities declining by -17.3%, -23.9%, and -24.9% respectively. Since its peak in 1980, Delaware Township has declined by -26.2%

Table 1

| POPULATION TRENDS | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2021 |
| Delaware Township | 967 | 1,071 | 961 | 930 | 828 | 790 |
| Forestville Village | 110 | 159 | 153 | 127 | 79 | 121 |
| Forester Township | 648 | 958 | 919 | 1,108 | 914 | 916 |
| Marion Township | 1,556 | 1,741 | 1,831 | 1,803 | 1,827 | 1,702 |
| Minden Township | 685 | 710 | 670 | 633 | 513 | 533 |
| Sherman Township (H) | 1,204 | 1,251 | 1,155 | 1,165 | 1,112 | 894 |
| Sanilac County | 35,181 | 40,789 | 39,928 | 44,547 | 44,010 | 40,829 |
| Michigan | 8,881,826 | 9,262,044 | 9,295,297 | 9,938,444 | 9,952,687 | 10,062,512 |

Source: 1970 - 2000 U.S. Census; 2010 & 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 1 shows the population trends for Delaware Township since 1970. In 1970, the Township population was 967. The Township experienced a 10.8% population increase between 1970 and 1980, reaching a population of 1,071. Between 1980 and

while Sherman Township has declined -30.3% since its peak in 2000. Sanilac County has only registered a -9.1% decline since its peak in 2000.

3.2 Age Distribution

Information on age distribution within a population can assist a community in matching public services to community characteristics and in determining special needs of certain age groups. For example, the younger population tends to require more rental housing units and smaller homes, while the elderly population may have a need for senior housing and nursing home facilities. Township policy makers may also use analysis of age distribution in order to project future service needs for housing, education, recreation and medical care. It is of equal importance in planning to anticipate which age groups are likely to increase during the planning period and which ones are declining. Examples of this are the aging “baby boomers” and their children; both forming waves of population rise and fall as they move through their lifecycles.

the *preschool* population at 0-4 years old. The *school age* population is represented by those between the ages of 5 and 19. The *young adult group* includes individuals between 20-34 years of age while the *family formation age* group is represented by persons 35-54 years of age. The last two groups are the *empty nesters* between 55-74 years old, and *seniors* who are 65 years and over.

US American Community Survey data estimates the Township’s age groups in five similar age groups in 2021. Since 2000, the 0-4 pre-school population declined 2.5%, 5-19 school age declined 2.5%, 20-44 family formation declined 4.2% while the 45-64 empty nester category increased by 9%. Without in-migration of new residents, this shrinking of the younger age groups indicate that the population is likely to continue to decline as the number of individuals reaching child-rearing years is dropping.

Table 2

| AGE DISTRIBUTION | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----|----------------|--------|----------|-----------|
| | Delaware Township | | Sanilac County | | Michigan | |
| 0 - 4 Years Old | 4.6% | 36 | 5.1% | 2,087 | 5.6% | 564,817 |
| 5 - 19 Years Old | 19.7% | 156 | 18.6% | 7,569 | 18.8% | 1,891,839 |
| 20 - 44 Years Old | 24.0% | 190 | 26.0% | 10,627 | 31.6% | 3,174,039 |
| 45 - 64 Years Old | 34.1% | 269 | 28.6% | 11,689 | 26.9% | 2,698,761 |
| 65 Years and Older | 17.6% | 139 | 21.6% | 8,857 | 17.3% | 1,733,056 |

Source: 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles

For the purpose of this report, six age groups are identified in the State of Michigan population projections report, which projects the future population by County. The results are in **Table 2**. The first age group represents

Table 2 further illustrates the aging of the Township with a median age of 47.1 years, which is almost eight years older than Michigan’s median age.

3.3 Racial Make Up

Another important characteristic of a community is its racial make-up. Knowing the racial make-up of a community helps to identify the diverse needs of its population. The census bureau separates race into six different categories: White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and Some Other Race.

Since 2000, Delaware Township has become less racially diverse, increasing from 97.4% white in 2000 to 99.2% white in 2020; however, the ethnic make-up of the Township has increased with the number of people identifying as Hispanic or Latino climbing from 1.6% in 2010 to 4.4% in 2020. These changes are contrary to Sanilac County which increased 0.1% in non-white population from 2010 to 2020 while the Hispanic or Latino population increased from 3.5% to 4.4%.

3.4 Household Size

The number of persons per household constitutes household size. Since the 1970's, the nationwide trend has been a decline in household size. This trend is occurring due to a number of reasons including: declining number

of children per family, higher divorce rates, growing number of elderly living alone, increasing numbers of individuals not having children, and the growing number of young people moving away from families to live on their own.

Knowing whether the household size is increasing or decreasing is very important. If the household size of a community is decreasing, this means that new housing units might be required. This can even be true if the overall population of a community is declining. In some municipalities, new housing units are being built to accommodate the demand for housing created by lower household sizes, in spite of declining overall populations.

Household size may be measured by number of persons living in the household. **Table 3** shows the household size in 2010 and 2021. There appears to be volatility in these numbers due to survey size within the Township and the surrounding communities, but the numbers do illustrate the trend of more 1-Person households and decline of 4-or-more person households.

The persons per household trends for Sanilac County since 1980 are shown in **Table 4**. The figure clearly shows how the number of persons per household has declined in Sanilac County in

Table 3

| | HOUSEHOLD SIZE - 2010 | | | | HOUSEHOLD SIZE - 2021 | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|------------------|
| | 1-Person | 2-Person | 3-Person | 4-or-more-person | 1-Person | 2-Person | 3-Person | 4-or-more-person |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Delaware Township | 25.3% | 55.5% | 5.5% | 13.6% | 24.2% | 39.0% | 8.6% | 28.3% |
| Forestville Village | 55.3% | 21.1% | 5.3% | 18.4% | 28.8% | 60.6% | 4.5% | 6.1% |
| Forester Township | 27.9% | 52.3% | 9.1% | 10.7% | 36.7% | 42.2% | 8.7% | 12.4% |
| Marion Township | 27.7% | 34.1% | 15.4% | 22.8% | 24.4% | 40.2% | 12.4% | 24.4% |
| Minden Township | 26.9% | 36.1% | 18.7% | 18.3% | 23.8% | 41.1% | 15.4% | 19.6% |
| Sherman Township (Hur) | 23.9% | 43.5% | 13.1% | 19.6% | 33.6% | 44.4% | 10.8% | 11.3% |
| Sanilac County | 25.8% | 39.0% | 13.2% | 22.0% | 29.4% | 37.5% | 14.0% | 19.1% |
| Michigan | 28.2% | 34.3% | 15.1% | 22.4% | 29.9% | 35.1% | 14.6% | 20.4% |

*Household size for occupied housing units

Source: 2010 & 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

the past 20 years. In 1980, the Township had a persons per household number of 2.89, which declined to 2.5 by 1990, and continued to decline until reaching 2.27 in 2000. Since 2000, the Township's household size has increased modestly to 2.36 for Delaware Township while Forestville Village has fallen to 1.83.

Table 4

| HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS (%) | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|----------|
| Household Type | Delaware Township | Forestville Village | Forester Township | Marion Township | Minden Township | Sherman Township | Sanilac County | Michigan |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Married Couple Families | 61.0% | 66.7% | 54.3% | 52.0% | 61.2% | 57.8% | 51.9% | 46.8% |
| Single Male Families | 3.0% | 0.0% | 2.0% | 5.2% | 4.2% | 2.9% | 4.6% | 4.9% |
| Single Female Families | 4.1% | 3.0% | 3.9% | 10.9% | 6.1% | 3.4% | 8.6% | 11.7% |
| Single Persons Living Alone | 24.2% | 28.8% | 36.7% | 24.4% | 23.8% | 33.6% | 29.4% | 29.9% |
| Other Non-Families | 7.8% | 1.5% | 3.0% | 7.5% | 4.7% | 2.2% | 5.5% | 6.7% |
| TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Average Household Size | 2.36 | 1.83 | 1.99 | 2.41 | 2.49 | 2.19 | 2.36 | 2.48 |

*Totals may not equal 100.0%

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

3.5 Household Characteristics

This section examines households in terms of the relationships among the persons who share a housing unit. Some households are families, consisting of two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption, while others are non-family households composed of persons living alone or with unrelated persons.

Household characteristics for the Township and other surrounding communities in 2021 are compared in **Table 4**. The highest percentage of households in Delaware Township are Married Couple Families at 61.0%, a modest decline from 64.1% in 2000. This percentage is the third highest of all the units of government compared in the table. Other significant percentages in Delaware Township include Single Persons Living Alone (24.2%) and Single Female Families (4.1%). The largest increase was in Other Non-Families, which increased from 1.4% in 2000 to 7.8% in 2021.

3.6 Total Housing Stock

Housing stock is the most basic measure of housing that refers to the type of housing units found in a community. The U.S. Census Bureau separates housing units into four different categories: 1 Unit Structures (single-family homes), Units in 2-4 Unit Structures (includes duplex units), Units in 5 or More Unit Structures (apartment units), and Mobile Home or Trailer Units. **Table 5** shows the distribution of housing units for the Township, Village, surrounding Townships, and Sanilac County in 2021.

Delaware Township has a high percentage of 1 Unit Structures (single-family homes) at 93.7%. The second highest percentage of housing structures in the Township are Mobile Home or Trailer Units at 3.7%. All of the other units of government except for Marion Township have similar percentages of 1-unit and Mobile Home or Trailer Units will Sanilac County has more multi-family units as compared to the neighboring townships.

Table 5

| TOTAL HOUSING STOCK | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------|
| | 1-Unit | 2-4 Units | 5 or More Units | Mobile Home or Trailer Units | Total |
| Delaware Township | 252 | 7 | 0 | 10 | 269 |
| Forestville Village | 64 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 66 |
| Forester Township | 429 | 0 | 0 | 31 | 460 |
| Marion Township | 538 | 42 | 31 | 66 | 677 |
| Minden Township | 203 | 2 | 0 | 9 | 214 |
| Sherman Township (Huron County) | 371 | 0 | 0 | 37 | 408 |
| Sanilac County | 14,210 | 481 | 910 | 1,485 | 17,086 |
| Michigan | 3,074,311 | 186,156 | 528,424 | 187,838 | 3,976,729 |

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

3.7 Home Ownership

The home ownership rate is a very important aspect of a community. High home ownership rates often result in communities with stable neighborhoods with less incidents of blight. Areas with higher percentages of rental housing often lead to neighborhoods with increased resident turn-over and the potential for landlords that are not directing sufficient funding into regular and periodic maintenance. The increased resident turnover and declining housing quality impact the overall appearance of the neighborhood and may drive additional disinvestment and housing turn-over.

Table 7 shows detailed Census statistics concerning owner and renter occupancy as well as vacancy rates for 2021. Vacant housing units are classified by the U.S. Census Bureau into two categories. Vacant Seasonal, and Vacant Other. Seasonally vacant units are those that are vacant during a period of time, but are occupied temporarily, typically summer months in Michigan communities. Other vacant units are those that are vacant throughout the year, often waiting to be sold or rented. Knowledge of Seasonally Vacant units is important in many Michigan communities due to the high percentage of seasonal homes and impacts their occupants' presence has on year-round and seasonal services. In addition, it is

Table 6

| HOUSEHOLD TENURE | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | 1990 | | 2000 | | 2010 | | 2021 | |
| | Owner-Occupied | Renter-Occupied | Owner-Occupied | Renter-Occupied | Owner-Occupied | Renter-Occupied | Owner-Occupied | Renter-Occupied |
| Delaware Township | 84.8% | 15.2% | 92.5% | 7.5% | 94.0% | 6.0% | 84.2% | 15.8% |

Source: 1990 & 2000 US Census; 2010 & 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 6 illustrates how owner and renter occupancy rates have increased or decreased in the thirty years. As the figure shows, the owner occupancy percentage (home ownership rate) has fluctuated during this time frame, increasing to 94.0% in 2010 but declining since. This decline is likely a result of the after-effects of the Great Recession on the US housing market. In absolute numbers, the number of owner occupied housing units increased has declined to 233 units in the Township and 49 in the Village. Conversely, the renter occupancy percentage increased from 7.5% in 2000 to 15.8% in 2021, which exceeds the 1990 renter-occupied number by 0.6%.

important for a Master Plan to consider the needs and desires of the seasonal residents and tourists as they often contribute a significant portion to the community's economy. In many communities, these part-time residents are a potential well of future residents who may choose to move year-round to the community upon retirement or after children have left their year-round homes. The Master Plan should consider their desires and wishes where possible and where they don't conflict with those of the year-round residents. Creating a balanced plan may contribute to the conversion of seasonal residents to year-round residents.

Table 7

| OCCUPANCY STATUS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|------------------|--------|----------------|--------|-----------|--------|
| Category | Delaware Township | | Forestville Village | | Forester Township | | Marion Township | | Minden Township | | Sherman Township | | Sanilac County | | Michigan | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Occupied Housing | 269 | 57.6% | 66 | 37.3% | 460 | 42.9% | 677 | 86.8% | 214 | 86.6% | 408 | 67.2% | 17,086 | 78.3% | 3,976,729 | 87.1% |
| Owner-Occupied | 233 | 86.6% | 49 | 74.2% | 430 | 93.5% | 484 | 71.5% | 189 | 88.3% | 333 | 81.6% | 13,586 | 79.5% | 2,870,693 | 72.2% |
| Renter-Occupied | 36 | 13.4% | 17 | 25.8% | 30 | 6.5% | 193 | 28.5% | 25 | 11.7% | 75 | 18.4% | 3,500 | 20.5% | 1,106,036 | 27.8% |
| Vacant Units | 198 | 42.4% | 111 | 62.7% | 613 | 57.1% | 103 | 13.2% | 33 | 13.4% | 199 | 32.8% | 4,747 | 21.7% | 589,775 | 12.9% |
| Vacant Seasonal | 163 | 82.3% | 99 | 89.2% | 570 | 93.0% | 13 | 12.6% | 19 | 57.6% | 199 | 100.0% | 3,184 | 67.1% | 272,143 | 46.1% |
| Vacant Other | 35 | 17.7% | 12 | 10.8% | 43 | 7.0% | 90 | 87.4% | 14 | 42.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 1,563 | 32.9% | 317,632 | 53.9% |
| TOTALS | 467 | 100.0% | 177 | 100.0% | 1,073 | 100.0% | 780 | 100.0% | 247 | 100.0% | 607 | 100.0% | 21,833 | 100.0% | 4,566,504 | 100.0% |

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 7 shows that Delaware Township is a community with a high percentage of seasonally vacant housing. In total, only 57.6% of all housing units in Delaware Township are occupied year-round, with the other 42.4% staying vacant at least part of the year. Of those vacant units within Delaware Township, 82.3% are seasonally vacant, and 17.7% are vacant year-round. This high percentage of seasonally vacant units means that Delaware Township's 2021 population of 790 people increases significantly during the summer months.

3.8 Age of Structures

Analyzing the age of housing units is a way to measure the physical quality of the total housing stock of a community. Generally, the economically useful age of residential structures is approximately 50 years. Beyond that age, many building systems reach their life expectancy and require replacement or maintenance costs begin to increase. Homes built prior to 1980 may also contain asbestos, lead paint, and lead water service, which may all cause health problems if not properly maintained or remediated when replaced.

Older homes may not be as desirable for modern living – smaller rooms, multiple levels, smaller windows, no in-house office – that also impact desirability. There are exceptions to this rule, however. Some older housing may have already received significant renovations or are desirable due to high quality or historic features/finishes.

For this report, housing units are divided into six categories: housing units built earlier than 1939; 1940 to 1959; 1960 to 1979; 1980 to 1999; 2000 to 2009; and since 2009. **Table 8** shows the percentage of housing units in each category for Delaware Township and the surround communities. As can be seen in the figure, Delaware Township and Michigan have contrasting distributions of housing ages. In terms of older housing (built earlier than 1939), Delaware Township has a much higher percentage at 27.4% as compared to Michigan at 14.5%. This may signify that Delaware Township's housing has a higher need for rehabilitation or repair. In terms of newer housing units (built between 1980 and 2021), Delaware Township has a higher percentage at 38.1% as compared to Michigan at 36.5%.

Table 8

| YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| | 1939 or earlier | 1940 to 1959 | 1960 to 1979 | 1980 to 1999 | 2000 to 2009 | 2010 or later |
| Delaware Township | 27.4% | 13.3% | 21.2% | 22.7% | 13.9% | 1.5% |
| Forestville Village | 19.8% | 36.7% | 15.8% | 9.0% | 13.6% | 5.1% |
| Forester Township | 14.5% | 20.2% | 29.4% | 17.8% | 11.0% | 7.0% |
| Marion Township | 27.9% | 30.1% | 22.0% | 12.8% | 3.2% | 3.9% |
| Minden Township | 38.1% | 22.6% | 18.2% | 14.2% | 5.7% | 1.2% |
| Sherman Township | 14.7% | 28.5% | 18.8% | 25.5% | 10.2% | 2.3% |
| Sanilac County | 20.1% | 20.2% | 25.1% | 22.4% | 9.2% | 2.9% |
| Michigan | 14.5% | 21.8% | 27.1% | 22.8% | 9.9% | 3.8% |

*Totals may not equal 100.0%

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

3.9 Housing Values and Rent

Analyzing housing values and rent is an important tool to assess both the quality and affordability of housing. It is of crucial importance that a community maintains both quality and affordable housing.

Table 9 shows the distribution of housing values for Delaware Township. As shown in the figure, the housing values in Delaware Township are divided into seven different ranges of value. The highest percentage of Delaware Township's housing (21.5%) falls into the value range of \$200,000-\$299,999. The second highest percentage of the Township's housing (21.0%) is found in the \$50,000-\$99,999 category. There is a good range of housing available at all prices, but 60% of the housing is priced at less than \$199,999, which is a near the peak of range that is affordable for a family making the household median income of \$63,760.

The distribution of housing and rental values for the Township, Village, surrounding Townships, Sanilac County, and the State of Michigan in 2021 are shown in **Table 9**. Also shown in **Table 9** are the median housing and rental values for each unit of government. In terms of median housing value, Delaware Township median family income is likely higher than the Village and three Townships, but lower than Minden Township, the County, and the State. Delaware Township's median rental value of \$531 is the lowest of all the units of government compared in the table.

Table 9

| Financial Characteristics | Delaware Township | | Forestville Village | | Forester Township | | Marion Township | | Minden Township | | Sherman Township | | Sanilac County | | Michigan | |
|---|-------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|------------------|--------|----------------|--------|-----------|--------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| VALUE: Specified owner-occupied housing units* | 233 | 100.0% | 49 | 100.0% | 430 | 100.0% | 484 | 100.0% | 189 | 100.0% | 333 | 100.0% | 13,586 | 100.0% | 2,870,693 | 100.0% |
| Under \$50,000 | 10 | 4.3% | 9 | 18.4% | 40 | 9.3% | 74 | 15.3% | 19 | 10.1% | 50 | 15.0% | 1,428 | 10.5% | 284,457 | 9.9% |
| \$50,000-\$99,999 | 49 | 21.0% | 17 | 34.7% | 101 | 23.5% | 241 | 49.8% | 71 | 37.6% | 45 | 13.5% | 3,523 | 25.9% | 422,975 | 14.7% |
| \$100,000-\$149,999 | 46 | 19.7% | 9 | 18.4% | 33 | 7.7% | 40 | 8.3% | 24 | 12.7% | 54 | 16.2% | 2,898 | 21.3% | 471,208 | 16.4% |
| \$150-\$199,999 | 35 | 15.0% | 2 | 4.1% | 88 | 20.5% | 65 | 13.4% | 22 | 11.6% | 64 | 19.2% | 2,312 | 17.0% | 490,400 | 17.1% |
| \$200,000-\$299,999 | 50 | 21.5% | 3 | 6.1% | 64 | 14.9% | 37 | 7.6% | 34 | 18.0% | 63 | 18.9% | 1,913 | 14.1% | 602,204 | 21.0% |
| \$300,000-\$499,999 | 33 | 14.2% | 5 | 10.2% | 72 | 16.7% | 8 | 1.7% | 5 | 2.6% | 46 | 13.8% | 959 | 7.1% | 436,850 | 15.2% |
| \$500,000 or more | 10 | 4.3% | 4 | 8.2% | 32 | 7.4% | 19 | 3.9% | 14 | 7.4% | 11 | 3.3% | 553 | 4.1% | 162,599 | 5.7% |
| Median Value | \$151,000 | | \$96,300 | | \$168,600 | | \$83,800 | | \$111,300 | | \$166,800 | | \$130,900 | | \$172,100 | |
| RENT: Specified renter-occupied housing units** | 13 | 100.0% | 17 | 100.0% | 19 | 100.0% | 162 | 100.0% | 18 | 100.0% | 57 | 100.0% | 2855 | 100.0% | 1049825 | 100.0% |
| Under \$500 | 2 | 15.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 4 | 21.1% | 33 | 20.4% | 1 | 5.6% | 17 | 29.8% | 532 | 18.6% | 109627 | 10.4% |
| \$500-\$999 | 11 | 84.6% | 17 | 100.0% | 11 | 57.9% | 114 | 70.4% | 14 | 77.8% | 12 | 21.1% | 1952 | 68.4% | 480618 | 45.8% |
| \$1,000-\$1,499 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 4 | 21.1% | 15 | 9.3% | 3 | 16.7% | 28 | 49.1% | 360 | 12.6% | 333610 | 31.8% |
| \$1,500-\$1,999 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 9 | 0.3% | 85844 | 8.2% |
| \$2,000-\$2,499 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 0.1% | 22749 | 2.2% |
| \$2,500 or more | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 17377 | 1.7% |
| Median Rent | \$531 | | - | | \$931 | | \$689 | | \$800 | | \$742 | | \$712 | | \$946 | |

*Data refers to value for owner-occupied units **Data refers to value for renter-occupied units

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

3.10 Income and Poverty

Studying income and poverty levels is a good way to measure the relative economic health of a community. Three measures of income (median household, median family, and per capita) are illustrated in **Table 10** for the Township, Village, County, State, and surrounding Townships. Household income is a measure of the total incomes of the persons living in a single household. Family income is a measure of the total incomes of a family unit. Because families often have two incomes, and do not include single persons living alone, median family incomes are typically higher than median household incomes. Per capita income is a measure of the incomes of every citizen of an area, including children. Because per capita income is based on the average of all individuals, they are much lower than family or household incomes.

Table 10 shows the family, household, and per capita income levels for the Township and surrounding units of government for 2021. Overall, the income levels for Delaware Township are in the middle in regards to the neighboring communities but less than the County and the State.

Table 10 also gives the percentages of families who were found to be below the poverty level. The percentage for Delaware Township is below the County and State averages for Total population but at 17.3%, significantly higher for those 65 years and older.

Table 10

| INCOME and POVERTY | | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Median Family Income | Median Household Income | Per Capita Income | Total Population Below Poverty Level | 65 Years & Over Below Poverty Level |
| Delaware Township | \$63,750 | \$51,726 | \$26,403 | 12.0% | 17.3% |
| Forestville Village | Not Available | \$34,500 | \$25,114 | 24.0% | 25.0% |
| Forester Township | \$62,472 | \$57,813 | \$33,936 | 16.0% | 9.5% |
| Marion Township | \$55,515 | \$48,897 | \$24,550 | 20.0% | 11.2% |
| Minden Township | \$67,188 | \$62,500 | \$26,345 | 5.2% | 6.2% |
| Sherman Township (Huron Co.) | \$56,765 | \$48,158 | \$26,624 | 8.9% | 3.5% |
| Sanilac County | \$64,435 | \$52,459 | \$28,408 | 14.9% | 9.9% |
| Michigan | \$80,365 | \$63,202 | \$34,768 | 13.3% | 8.7% |

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 13 shows the Employment by Occupation data in term of the actual occupations held by the Township employees. The Management, Business, Science, and Arts occupations were the most numerous with 27.2% of the residents with occupations in those fields while the Service sector had the least with 5.8%.

traveling to their jobs provides information about the local employment environment and the number working from home indicates either a high number of home occupations and home-based businesses or telecommuting to work.

Table 12

| EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Industry | Delaware Township | Forestville Village | Forester Township | Marion Township | Minden Township | Sherman Township | Sanilac County | Michigan |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, and Mining | 47 | 0 | 28 | 64 | 71 | 99 | 1,451 | 51,210 |
| Construction | 35 | 4 | 9 | 39 | 32 | 25 | 1,508 | 263,339 |
| Manufacturing | 76 | 9 | 55 | 177 | 70 | 70 | 4,043 | 876,706 |
| Wholesale Trade | 25 | 2 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 14 | 344 | 108,313 |
| Retail Trade | 11 | 0 | 36 | 39 | 11 | 49 | 1,850 | 506,344 |
| Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities | 10 | 5 | 14 | 21 | 8 | 9 | 674 | 213,865 |
| Information | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 113 | 59,653 |
| Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate/Rental/Leasing | 10 | 2 | 14 | 23 | 1 | 4 | 611 | 265,900 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative and Waste Management Services | 11 | 2 | 15 | 36 | 2 | 6 | 914 | 459,228 |
| Educational Services, and Health Care and Assistance | 34 | 5 | 76 | 230 | 32 | 52 | 3,292 | 1,093,193 |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services | 23 | 0 | 10 | 42 | 20 | 17 | 1,220 | 420,427 |
| Other Services, except Public Administration | 12 | 0 | 23 | 37 | 11 | 24 | 680 | 212,533 |
| Public Administration | 0 | 4 | 15 | 26 | 19 | 6 | 774 | 161,698 |
| TOTAL | 294 | 33 | 308 | 744 | 286 | 379 | 17,474 | 4,692,409 |

*Data Refers to civilian employed population 16 years and over
Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

An additional pair of statistics that is valuable in understanding a community's workforce and the stresses and strains on commuters is the time it takes to get to work and how they are getting to work. The Census Bureau tracks both by asking respondents to estimate the time required to get to work each day and how they're commuting to work. In rural communities, understanding how far people are

Table 13

| EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| | Delaware Township | Forestville Village | Forester Township | Marion Township | Minden Township | Sherman Township | Sanilac County | Michigan |
| Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations | 80 | 11 | 93 | 223 | 52 | 111 | 4,844 | 1,797,451 |
| Service Occupations | 17 | 1 | 71 | 128 | 39 | 39 | 2,857 | 792,398 |
| Sales and Office Occupations | 66 | 6 | 39 | 145 | 24 | 53 | 3,161 | 951,754 |
| Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations | 68 | 4 | 32 | 103 | 96 | 105 | 2,785 | 369,631 |
| Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations | 63 | 11 | 73 | 145 | 75 | 71 | 3,827 | 781,175 |
| TOTAL | 294 | 33 | 308 | 744 | 286 | 379 | 17,474 | 4,692,409 |

*Data Refers to civilian employed population 16 years and over
Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Due to the agrarian nature of Sanilac and Huron counties, those individuals who do not work locally in farm-based businesses are required to travel a mean travel time of 28.5 minutes.

Due to the spread-out nature of the Township's population and lack of transit options, **Table 15** shows low public transit ridership in the Township while the work from home percentage

Table 14

| TRAVEL TIME TO WORK | | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Less than 10 minutes | 10 - 29 Minutes | 30 - 59 Minutes | 60 Minutes or More | Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes) |
| Delaware Township | 12.0% | 47.9% | 33.6% | 6.6% | 28.5 |
| Forestville Village | 20.0% | 23.3% | 50.0% | 6.7% | 30.8 |
| Forester Township | 12.2% | 44.5% | 26.2% | 17.0% | 33.0 |
| Marion Township | 40.6% | 33.0% | 22.6% | 3.9% | 19.0 |
| Minden Township | 13.7% | 52.3% | 25.7% | 8.3% | 28.9 |
| Sherman Township | 23.3% | 53.7% | 16.8% | 6.1% | 23.8 |
| Sanilac County | 21.7% | 38.4% | 26.2% | 13.8% | 29.0 |
| Michigan | 13.7% | 53.1% | 26.9% | 6.3% | 24.5 |

*Totals may not equal 100.0%

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 15

| COMMUTING HABITS | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|---------|----------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| | Drive Alone | Carpool | Public Transit | Non-motorized (Walk, Bike) | Work from Home |
| Delaware Township | 79.8% | 8.6% | 0.3% | 3.1% | 8.0% |
| Forestville Village | 84.8% | 3.0% | 3.0% | 0.0% | 9.1% |
| Forester Township | 79.5% | 8.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 12.0% |
| Marion Township | 79.5% | 8.8% | 0.0% | 6.3% | 5.4% |
| Minden Township | 85.9% | 6.7% | 0.0% | 2.0% | 5.5% |
| Sherman Township | 75.2% | 7.7% | 1.9% | 4.8% | 8.3% |
| Sanilac County | 77.1% | 10.9% | 0.3% | 4.2% | 6.4% |
| Michigan | 78.8% | 8.3% | 1.2% | 2.5% | 8.3% |

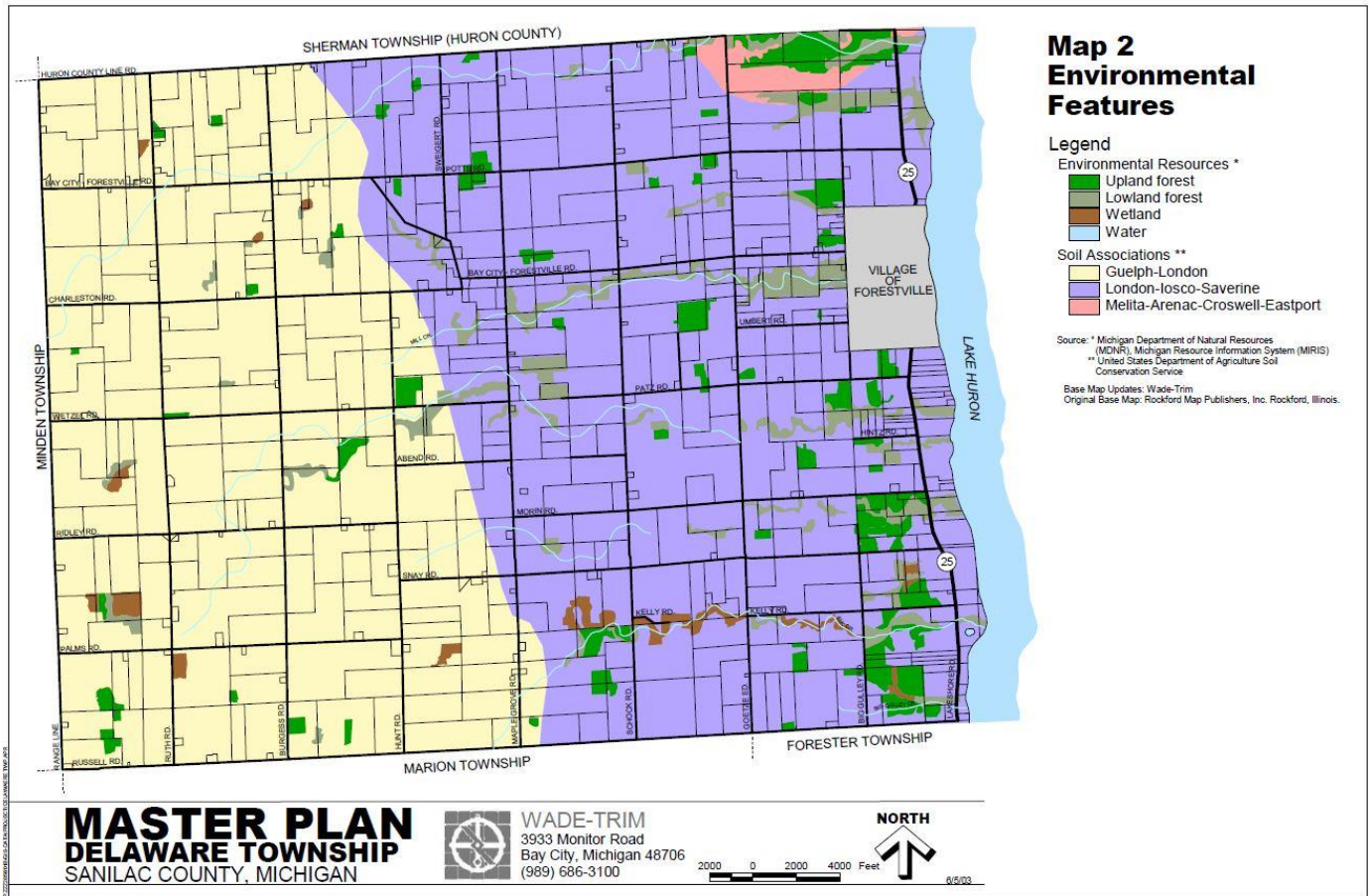
*Totals may not equal 100.0%

Source: 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Besides Marion and Sherman Townships, **Table 14** shows that the travel time for Township residents falls closely to the other communities but four minutes longer than the State average.

is in-line with the State of Michigan and exceeds the County by 1.6%

Map 2 – Environmental Features



largest recreation facility is the Delaware Township Park located on M-25. The park is owned and operated by Sanilac County and features a rudimentary boat launch site to Lake Huron.

8. Vacant

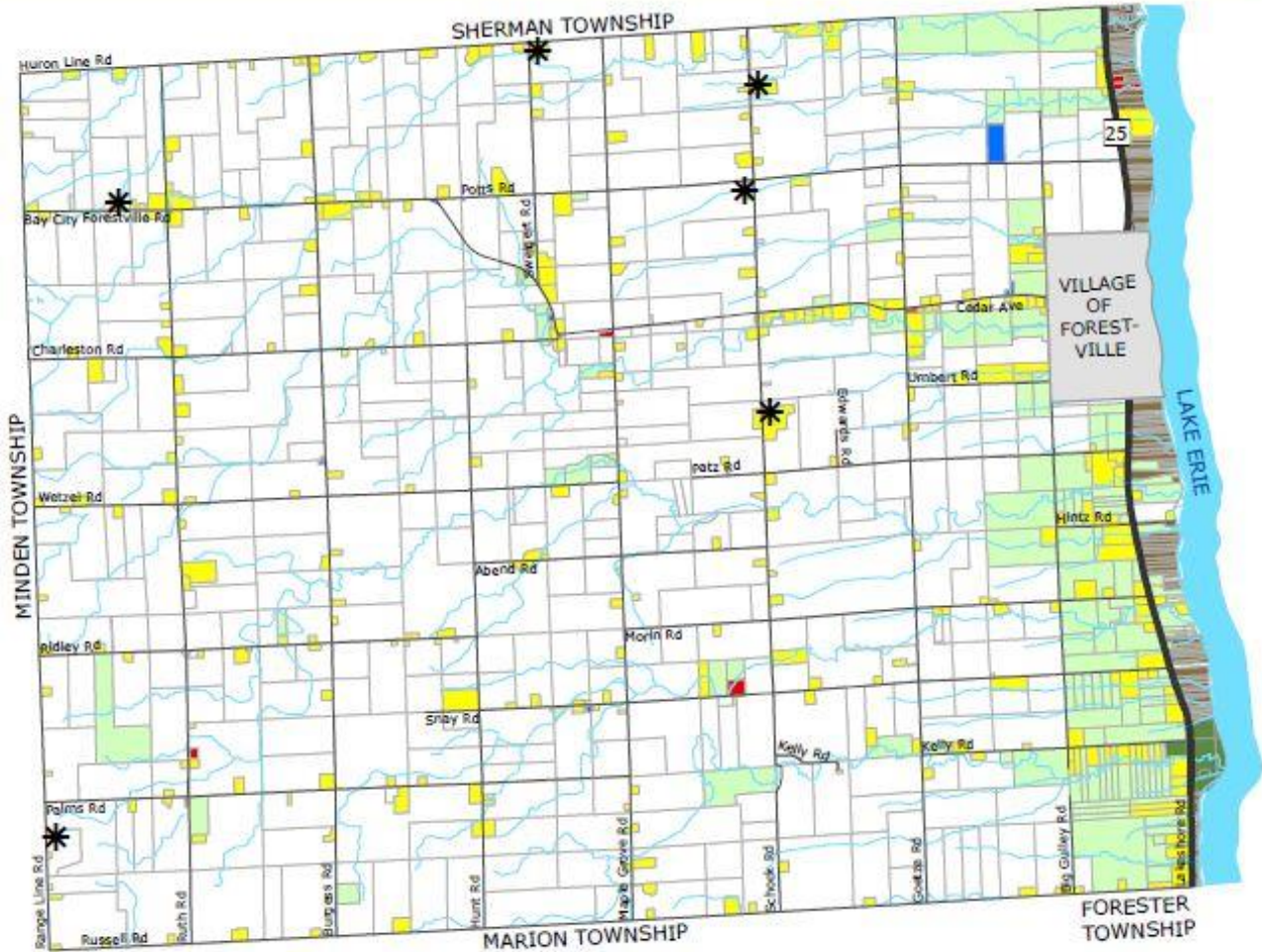
Vacant lands include undeveloped forest land, wetlands, and barren lands.

Relatively few vacant parcels are found in the Township. In total, land in the vacant and right-of-way category comprises

2,529 acres or 8.5% of the Township. Most of the vacant land is found on the eastern edge of the Township, near Lake

Huron. Only a handful of parcels within the interior of Delaware Township are vacant, but this number has increased since the 2004 Master Plan as some woodlot parcels in the interior of the Township are now identified as vacant that weren't previously identified as such. Much of the vacant land in the Township is environmentally significant because of the presence of woodlands or wetlands.

MAP 3



Delaware Township, Sanilac County Existing Land Use

Land Use:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Agriculture | Industrial |
| Low Density Residential | Public/Semi-Public |
| Straight Track Residential | Recreation |
| Commercial | Vacant |

Base Layers:

- | |
|--------------------------|
| Major Road |
| Minor Road |
| Village of Forestville |
| Animal Feeding Operation |

Source: Wade Trim, 2023
Parcel Source: Sanilac County, 2022

Miles 0 0.5 1



May 2023

These goals were vetted with the Planning Commission at the completion of the analysis portion of the project at their August 7, 2023 Planning Commission meeting. They were revised prior to the Plan's distribution to the review agencies as part of the adoption process, and the public were able to formally comment on the goals and action steps at the Public Hearing held on March 5, 2024.

6.2 Community-Wide Goals

1. **Retain the Rural Character of the Community** – many residents enjoy living in the Township due to its rural character, and the protection of this feature and the natural environment and agrarian atmosphere is paramount to this Plan, which underpins both the agricultural and tourist economy:
 - a) Review and evaluate the Future Land Use Map of the Township to reduce the locations where commercial development would be permissible and amend the Zoning Ordinance to mirror the recommendations of the Future Land Use Map
 - b) Besides new development within Township Center district, encourage all new commercial development to occur within the Village of Forestville along M-25



Agricultural character of the community

- c) Review the Township's lot split requirements to confirm that allowable lot splits are being completed in such a manner as to preserve active agricultural land
 - d) Protect active agricultural land uses that are the predominant types of land use within the Township.
2. **Protect the natural environment** - through the adoption of reasonable Zoning Ordinance requirements that respects private property rights while furthering reasonable community development objectives that protect the current agrarian character of the community:
 - a) Evaluate increasing the water body setback requirement to 75 feet and limiting the number of trees and shrubs that may be removed as part of new development
 - b) Consider adopting Zoning Ordinance measures that limit clearcutting on woodlots
 - c) Encourage the use of native landscaping and planting of canopy trees and evergreen trees that provide shade and winter windbreaks for all new developments
 - d) Explore options to limit solar energy systems to on-site systems that are accessory to a primary use and prevent utility-scale solar systems from becoming a permitted primary land use within the Township.

3. Multi-Family Residential

The multi-family residential district is intended to provide opportunities for affordable housing and alternatives to traditional single-family homes. Included in this district are duplexes, townhouses, apartments, mobile home parks, and related uses.

A proposed location for multi-family development is to the west of M-25 south of the Village of Forestville. New lands for multi-family use are needed in the Township to accommodate population groups such as the elderly (currently comprising 17.6% of the Township), single persons (currently comprising 25.3% of the Township), low-income citizens, and citizens preferring alternative housing options other than for-sale single-family homes. Nearly 170 acres (0.6%) of the Township is designated as such.

In the event that more lands are needed for multi-family uses, the following criteria should be used for evaluating the development and its location:

- In keeping with the agrarian character of the Township, the density for new developments should be kept to no more than 20 housing units per acre.
- Since multi-family development generates more traffic than single-family development, it should be located either in the Township Center area or adjacent to the Village of Forestville.

4. Commercial

This category is intended to support predominantly freestanding commercial and office uses that serve both the local and regional market. All of the existing commercial properties have been included in this category as well as a single location north of the Village of Forestville along M-25. This proposed location is to provide a location for larger regional commercial uses that is proximate to the Village's commercial uses, centered near the intersection of Cedar Avenue and Third Street/M-25.

Locations for commercial uses that were previously identified at the intersections of Bay City/Forestville and Ruth Roads and Palms and Ruth Roads have been eliminated as the changes in American retailing, existing area population, and demographics showing population loss do not merit additional commercial uses in the foreseeable future. All efforts should be targeted towards supporting centralized commercial activities within the Village. This location has a density of residential uses, sanitary sewer, and close to where most of the seasonal residents have their properties along the Lake Huron shoreline.



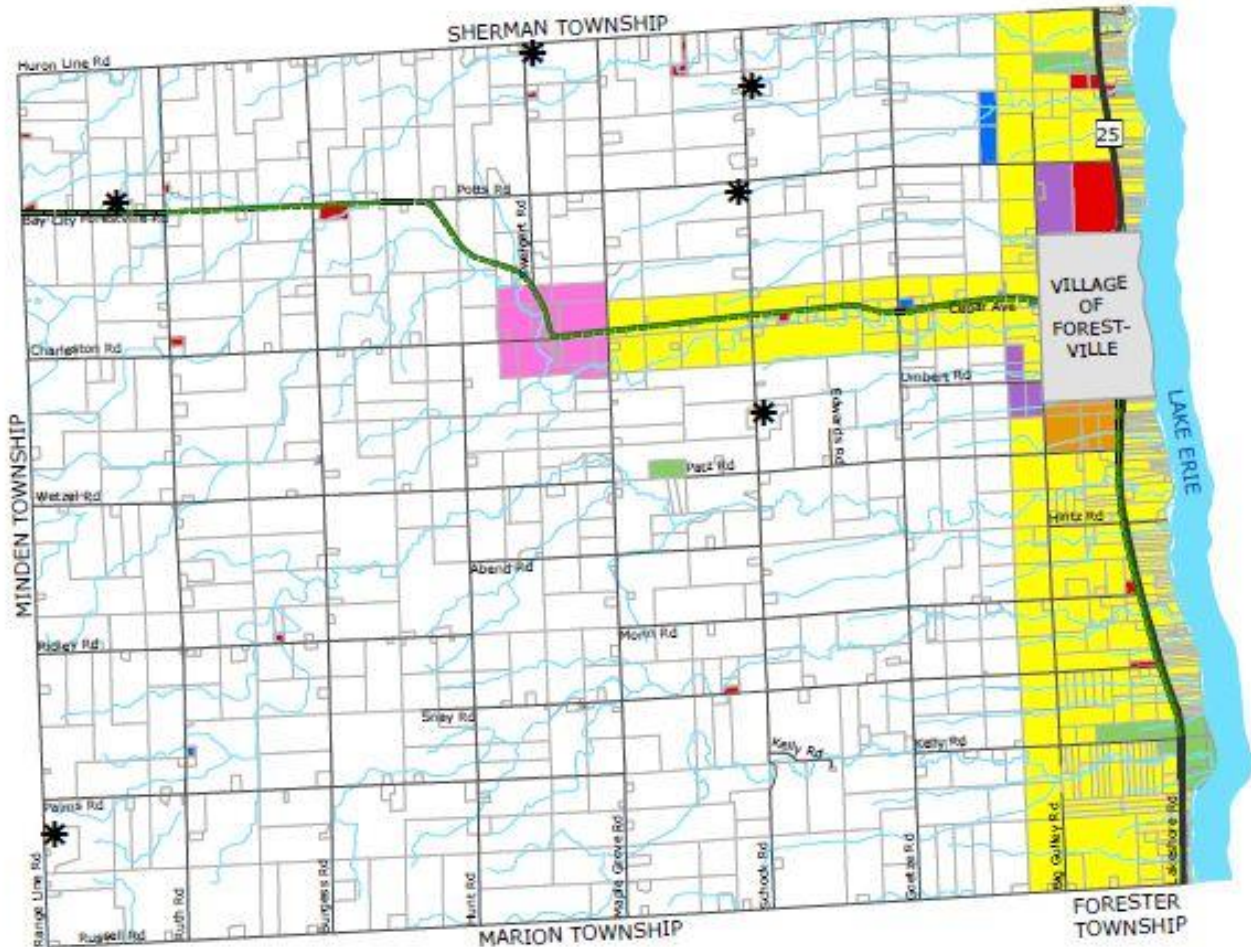
Former Charleston School

In the event that new commercial uses are proposed in the Township, the following criteria should be used:

current Master Plan every five years to determine whether any amendments or changes are necessary. If the review indicates that the plan still reflects the community's vision and conditions, the Planning Commission may complete its review internally by recording the findings within its meeting minutes. However, if significant time has passed since an

intensive review has been completed or economic, social, or land use conditions have changed in the community since the last formal master plan update, the Planning Commission would then be compelled to commence formal actions to amend its existing Master Plan or to adopt a new one.

MAP 4



Delaware Township, Sanilac County Future Land Use

Land Use:

-  Agriculture
-  Low Density Residential
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  Commercial
-  Township Center
-  Industrial
-  Public/Semi-Public
-  Recreation

Base Layers:

-  Major Road
-  Minor Road
-  Bike Trail
-  Animal Feeding Operation

Source: Wade Trim, 2023
Parcel Source: Sanilac County, 2022

Miles 0 0.5 1



May 2023

8.2 Recommendations for Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance

A second and valuable component of the Zoning Plan is identifying recommendations of the Master Plan that will require changes to the Zoning Ordinance to be implemented.

The first recommendation is that the Planning Commission have a Zoning Ordinance Audit conducted to: ensure compliance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006; compliance with various State and Federal statutes; ensure consistency with recent court cases; identify fragmented or inconsistent zoning ordinance language; identify incorrect or irrelevant cross references; recognize contradictory or redundant policies; illustrate effectiveness, or lack thereof of, Ordinance to address emerging technologies; verify effectiveness of Ordinance in addressing emerging planning trends including zoning reform efforts; assist with the development of workforce housing; and ensure effectiveness in addressing local issues and concerns.



Welcome to Delaware Township

Following the Zoning Ordinance Audit, utilize its results to draft new zoning language to ensure that the goals of the Master Plan begin to be implemented while regulations that do not support the Plan's implementation are removed. Items to be addressed through the Zoning Ordinance Audit include:

- To legally strengthen the Township's power to regulate signs, add a substitutions clause to the Sign Regulations section and include a purposes section of the sign section
- Expand the ability for farms to conduct agritourism and agribusiness operations at their properties
- Review the Use Table to determine if the setbacks and lot sizes are appropriate
- Evaluate if the current parking requirements are appropriate and to determine if the parking requirements exceed the Institute of Transportation Engineers parking standards listed in the 6th Edition of the Parking Generation Model and determine if the institution of parking maximums would be more appropriate than the current parking minimum requirements
- Consider granting the Planning Commission the power to determine if an undefined use within the Zoning Ordinance is similar to another use and may be regulated by the rules governing the listed use
- Review the number of as-a-right developments permitted within all districts and consider allowing more uses to be allowed as-a-right within the agricultural, commercial, and industrial land uses.

Master Plan topics to be addressed by Zoning Ordinance amendments include:

- Conduct review of Zoning Map and adopt rezonings to align the Future Land Use Map with the Zoning Ordinance Map
- Consider revising water body setback requirements to 75 feet
- Evaluate the Zoning Ordinance language to limits an owner's ability to clearcut woodlots prior to development
- Consider adopting landscaping requirements for commercial developments and residential subdivisions along M-25 and Bay City Forestville Road and stipulate the use of native plants for all required plantings



Lake Huron

- Consider a Zoning Ordinance amendment to allow accessory dwelling units to be allowed for all agricultural and residentially zoned parcels within the Township

- Evaluate revising the agricultural district regulations to permit some light manufacturing operations
- Review allowable lots splits within the AR – Agricultural Residential district to determine best strategies to manage these splits in a manner that balances the desire to allow reasonable splits to occur while preserving large agricultural parcels through clustering of residential uses and limiting the allowable size of “child” residential parcels within the district.

In November 2023, the State of Michigan passed new laws that restrict the ability for local units of government to limit the siting of large-scale renewable energy facilities within their borders. Throughout this Master Plan, the Township has clearly stated its desire to preserve the agricultural and rural character of the Township. The Township clearly states that it believes that large-scale utility solar facilities and large scale wind turbines located outside of the existing overlay area would adversely impact this important character defining feature of the Township. The Township will consider actions to actively limit the potential adverse impacts of large-scale renewable energy facilities.

While the Zoning Ordinance that will result from this effort will go a significant way towards implementing the many concepts of this Plan, additional efforts by the Planning Commission and the Township Board will be necessary to assist in achieving the vision created here.

9.0 Plan Implementation

Delaware Township's Master Plan is a long-range community policy statement comprised of a variety of both graphic and narrative recommendations intended to provide guidelines for making reasonable and realistic community development decisions. The Plan is intended to be employed by the Township officials, by those making private sector investments, and by all citizens interested in the future development of the Township.

The completion of the Plan and its vision is but one part of the community planning process.

Implementation actions to achieve the Plan's goals and recommendations contained in the Master Plan may only be achieved with direction action by the Township Board and the Planning Commission. For successful implementation, necessary steps must be taken by both entities so as to properly impact the Township's development for the foreseeable future.



Delaware Township's Agrarian Character

Changes made to implement this Plan will occur over the coming years and decades to impact the land use and development of the Township. These desired changes will only occur as new development is proposed or when land use policies incorporated into the Plan are implemented by the decisions of Township leadership. The revised Zoning Ordinance only impacts the future direction and appearance of new development. All existing development that becomes nonconforming with the recommended implementation changes to the Zoning Ordinance may remain so in perpetuity or until the owner decides to alter the development. At that time, the proposed alteration would then trigger that a portion of or all of the non-conformity would then have to be brought into conformity with the current requirements.

The impacts of the implementation efforts on the community will be cumulative and occur as development or redevelopment occurs. These changes will occur over an extended period of time and only through the cooperative efforts of both the public and private sectors.

Implementation Recommendations

1. Implementation of the Recommendations from the Zoning Plan and the Zoning Audit
Revise the Township's Zoning Ordinance to implement the goals of the Master Plan including preserving the existing rural character with requirements which will limit the impact of inappropriate development within the Township including increasing landscape buffering requirements within the Residential Multiple Family, Mobile Home Park, Commercial, and Industrial districts.

3. Nonmotorized Transportation Amenities

Nonmotorized transportation facilities benefits both seasonal and year-round Township residents. This Plan supports efforts to expand nonmotorized transportation options within the Township, especially in light of the growth of electronic-assist bicycles (e-bikes) that are expanding the range and desirability of riding for pleasure or for daily needs.



Sunset in Delaware Township

To assist with the expansion the nonmotorized network within the Township, the Township should pass a Complete Streets Resolution. Complete Streets are defined as streets that are designed to safely serve all roadway users (motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and others). Once the Township passes the resolution, the Sanilac County Road Commission would be compelled to consider Complete Streets designs in all of their roadway designs within the Township.

Secondly, the Township should actively support the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Sanilac County Road Commission in maintaining and improving the wide shoulders along M-25 that have been created for through cyclists.

Third, the Township should support the development of nonmotorized pathways connecting major destinations in the Township including from Forestville south to the Delaware Township Park and west from Forestville along Bay City-Forestville Road to the Township line with the intent to connect with downtown Minden City.

4. Township Welcome Gateways

In order to present a positive image for people driving into or passing through the Township, the Plan recommends the development of three Township welcome gateways. The locations for the three entryways are as follows:

- Bay City-Forestville Road at the western border of the Township
- M-25 at the northern border of the Township
- M-25 at the southern border of the Township

These design features would include an attractive sign and decorative landscaping. These decorative features would be installed within the street right-of-way or on private property through the use of easements.

Editor's note - The remainder of Chapter 9.0 Plan Implementation was not included in the 2024 Master Plan updates.

This section will serve as a reference guide for the Township as it moves through the plan implementation process.

Table 19 provides a listing of plan implementation resources included in this section. Following the table is a description of each resource.

**Table 19
Plan Implementation Resources**

| Keys to Successful Implementation | Grant and Loan Programs |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledgeable Local Officials 2. Public Support 3. Co-Development | <p>Federal</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Facilities Program 2. Public Works and Economic Development Program 3. Rural Business Enterprise Grants 4. Water and Wastewater Disposal Loan and Grant Program |
| Implementation Tools | <p>State</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 6. Land and Water Conservation Fund 7. Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund 8. Transportation Economic Development Fund 9. Transportation Enhancement Program (TEA-21) |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Zoning Ordinance 2. Subdivision Regulations 3. Enforcement 4. Capital Improvements Program 5. Michigan Certified Community Recreation Plan 6. Downtown Development Authority (DDA) 7. Special Assessment Districts | |
| Sources of Information | Other Funding Options |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Michigan Townships Association 2. County Extension Services 3. County Planning Commission 4. Regional Planning Agency 5. Other Local Officials 6. Libraries 7. Internet | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revenue Bonds 2. General Obligation Bonds 3. Local Funds 4. Local Businesses 5. Local Foundations |

to the community. The Capital Improvements Program is a major planning tool for assuring that public improvements proceed to completion in an efficient manner. The Capital Improvements Program is not intended to encourage the spending of additional public monies, but is simply a means by which an impartial evaluation of needs may be made. The Program typically is prepared for a five-year period, the first year of which is called Capital Improvements Budget.

Long-range programming of public improvements is based upon three fundamental considerations. First, the proposed projects must be selected on the basis of community need. Second, the program must be developed within the community's financial constraints and must be based upon a sound financial plan. Finally, program flexibility must be maintained through the annual review and approval of the capital budget. The strict observance of these conditions requires periodic analysis of various community development factors, as well as a thorough and continuing evaluation of all proposed improvements and related expenditures.

It is essential that in the process of preparing and developing the program, the Planning Commission be assigned a role in reviewing project proposals to assure conformity with the Master Plan and to make recommendations regarding prioritizing projects, and appropriate methods of financing.

9.2.5 Michigan Certified Community Recreation Plan

Any community can develop a community recreation plan. This plan helps to

determine a community's future recreation needs, and proposes solutions to meet such needs. In addition to this, a certified community recreation plan allows the local government to apply for grant funds through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) such as the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and Land and Water Conservation Fund.

9.2.6 Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

A local unit of government may create a Downtown Development Authority in order to halt property value deterioration, increase property tax valuation, and promote economic growth in a central business district. A DDA has the authority to create development plans, encourage historic preservation, authorize acquisition of property, and promote economic growth. A DDA may utilize Tax Increment Financing as a tool for generating revenue.

9.2.7 Special Assessment Districts

Special assessments are a fee levied by the community for the financing of local improvements that directly benefit the landowners that must pay the assessment. Taxes levied for public improvements within a Special Assessment District can be applied for such improvements as utilities, public roads, trash collection, bicycle paths, parks, sidewalks, lighting, and tree maintenance.

9.3 Grant and Loan Programs

Table 12 provides a listing of grant and loan programs organized by type of project. A detailed description of each program is included below.

Table 12
Grant Programs by Project Type

| |
|--|
| Road Improvements |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transportation Economic Development Fund 2. Public Works and Economic Development Program 3. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) |
| Road Beautification |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transportation Enhancement Program (TEA-21) |
| Water and Sewer Systems |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Works and Economic Development Program 2. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 3. Water and Wastewater Disposal Loan and Grant Program |
| Economic Development |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2. Rural Business Enterprise Grants |
| Parks and Recreation |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund 2. Land and Water Conservation Fund |
| Non-Vehicular Trails |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund 2. Transportation Enhancement Program |
| Community Facilities |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community Facilities Program |

9.3.1 Community Facilities Program

Agency

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Housing Service

Description

This program is designed to provide loan guarantees, loans, and grants to construct, enlarge, or improve essential community facilities in rural areas. Examples of these facilities are fire and rescue facilities, jails, health clinics, nursing homes, airports, city halls, libraries, community centers, and schools.

Michigan Examples

Albee Township
Township Hall
Direct Loan, \$500,000
Tawas City
Fire Hall
Direct Loan, \$750,000

Deckerville
Deckerville Community Hospital, equipment
Guaranteed Loan, \$350,000

Bay City
Health Delivery Inc, Medical Facility
Direct Loans, \$1,390,000

Contact

Rural Development Field Office
1075 Cleaver Road
Caro, MI 48723
Phone: (989) 673-7588
Fax: (989) 673-1848

Eligibility

Municipalities, counties, special purpose districts, and nonprofit corporations.

Funding Available Nationwide

FY 1999: \$210,000,000 for loan guarantees

FY 1999: \$169,475,983 for direct loans
FY 1999: \$6,500,000 for grants

9.3.2 Public Works and Economic Development Program

Agency

Economic Development Administration,
U.S. Department of Commerce

Description

This program empowers communities in economic decline to revitalize, expand, and upgrade their physical infrastructure to attract new industry, encourage business expansion, diversify local economies, and generate or retain long-term, private sector jobs and investment.

Michigan Examples

Kalkaska
Infrastructure development for industrial park
\$312,000

Reed City
Water system improvements
\$815,000

Boyne City
Water & sanitary sewer system for industrial park
\$835,000

Farwell
Infrastructure development for industrial park
\$665,000

Michigan Contact

State Office of the Economic Development Administration
Traverse City, MI
Phone: (231) 938-1712

Eligibility

Municipalities, economic development districts, higher learning institutions, and public and private nonprofit organizations.

Funding Available Nationwide

FY 1999: \$205,748,000

Average FY 1999 grant: \$829,000

9.3.3 Rural Business Enterprise Grants

Agency

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Business Services

Description

The Rural Business Enterprise Grants help to finance and facilitate the development of small and emerging private business enterprises. Costs that may be paid from grant funds include the acquisition of land, construction, utility extensions, professional services, and training fees, among others. Michigan Project Examples

Iron County

Creation of a revolving loan fund for small businesses

Ontonagon County

Technical Assistance for businesses

Created for Caring, Bay City

Technical Training

Dowagiac

Water and Sewer Connections for small businesses

Contact

Rural Business & Cooperative Development Services Office

Lansing, MI

Phone: (517) 324-5220

Eligibility

Eligibility is limited to public bodies and private nonprofit corporations in rural areas with a population of less than 50,000.

9.3.4 Water and Wastewater Disposal Loan and Grant Program

Agency

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Description

This program provides loans, guaranteed loans, and grants for water, sewer, storm water, and solid waste disposal facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 10,000 people. Loan and grant funds may be used to: a) construct, repair, modify, expand, and improve water and waste facilities, b) acquire needed land, water sources, and water rights, and c) pay development costs for these facilities.

Michigan Examples

Pinconning

New sewer treatment plant

Elsie

Sewer system improvements

Bancroft

Water system improvements

Contact

Rural Development Field Office

1075 Cleaver Rd.

Caro, MI 48723

Phone: (989) 673-7588

Fax (989) 673-1848

Eligibility

All public entities – municipalities, counties, and special purpose districts in rural areas of up to 10,000 people.

Description

Provides grants for local units of government for the acquisition and development of lands and facilities for outdoor recreation or the protection of Michigan's significant natural resources.

Michigan Examples

Bad Axe
Buschlen Park Expansion
\$136,500

Bay County
Boat Launch Expansion
\$228,000

Meridian Township
Ferguson Park Extension
\$103,875

Midland County
Pere Marquette Rail-Trail
\$117,040

Contact

Regional Operations Office
Lansing, MI
Phone: (517) 241-4128

Eligibility

Any unit of government including school districts. Local units of government must have a DNR approved recreation plan.

Funding Available Statewide

FY 2000: \$20-25 million
Individual grant: \$15,000-\$500,000 – no limits on land acquisition

9.3.8 Transportation Economic Development Fund

Agency

Michigan Department of Transportation

Description

The Transportation Economic Development Fund is a program that makes available funds for street improvements that are directly tied to economic expansion. Street construction within an industrial park is a common type of project funded with the help of the Transportation Economic Development Fund. There are six different project categories (A - F) within this fund, each relating to different project situations and municipality types.

Michigan Examples

Isabella County
Coldwater Road reconstruction
\$300,000
Oscoda County
Abbe Road reconstruction
\$146,000

Lapeer County
Graham Road reconstruction
\$248,741

Contact

Office of Economic Development
P.O. Box 30050
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (517) 335-1069

Eligibility

The different project categories (A-F) have different eligibility requirements.

Funding Available Statewide

FY 1996: \$23,424,351

9.3.9 Transportation Enhancement Program (TEA-21)

Agency

Michigan Department of Transportation

Description

Program is meant to promote transportation enhancement activities that go beyond traditional road improvements such as paving and widening. Typical projects include streetscaping, landscaping, signage, pedestrian walks, bicycle trails, scenic site acquisition, and restoration of historic transportation buildings.

Michigan Examples

Midland County
Pere Marquette Rail Trail
\$420,000

Village of St. Charles
Construction and landscaping of median islands on East Belle Avenue
\$24,000
Village of Homer
Creation of landscaped focal point in an old traffic circle
\$10,720

Contact

MDOT
Enhancement Manager
(517) 335-2622

Eligibility

Grant must be sponsored by any government unit that receives fuel tax money.

9.4 Other Funding Options

9.4.1 Revenue Bonds

Revenue Bonds are those issued for various public improvement projects that are backed by the future revenues generated from the improvements. For example, water systems are improved by the sale of bonds, which are then repaid by water rates charged to the customers of the system. Sewer systems, airports, marinas, and other public facilities are often constructed by means of revenue bonds.

9.4.2 General Obligation Bonds

General Obligation Bonds are those that are issued by a municipality or other public body that are backed by the “full faith and credit” of that body. The municipality usually pledges its taxing ability, and therefore future tax revenues, to make the payments on the bonds. Because of the “full faith and credit” issue, and therefore a low amount of risk of default by the Township, these types of bonds usually attract the lowest interest rate.

9.4.3 Local Funds

In order to receive financial assistance from grant and loan programs, a community must also contribute a matching amount of funding for any project. It would be nearly impossible to receive funds from other sources without contributing some amount of general revenue funds as well. In general, the more a community contributes to a project, the more likely that community will receive grants and loans. Also, the more money a community contributes means that they might receive a greater amount of grant and loan funding.

9.4.4 Local Businesses

Seeking the help of your local businesses may result in much needed support for various public projects in the form of cash donations, material donations, and advertising, among others.

9.4.5 Local Foundations

Similar to the local businesses, local foundations might be able to provide support for civic projects.

Michigan Government Home Page –
<http://www.michigan.gov>

Michigan Townships Association –
<http://www.mta-townships.org>

Planning and Zoning Center –
<http://www.pzcenter.com>

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
Development – <http://www.hud.gov>

U.S. Census Bureau –
<http://www.census.gov>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency –
<http://www.epa.gov>

U.S. Department of Agriculture –
<http://www.usda.gov>