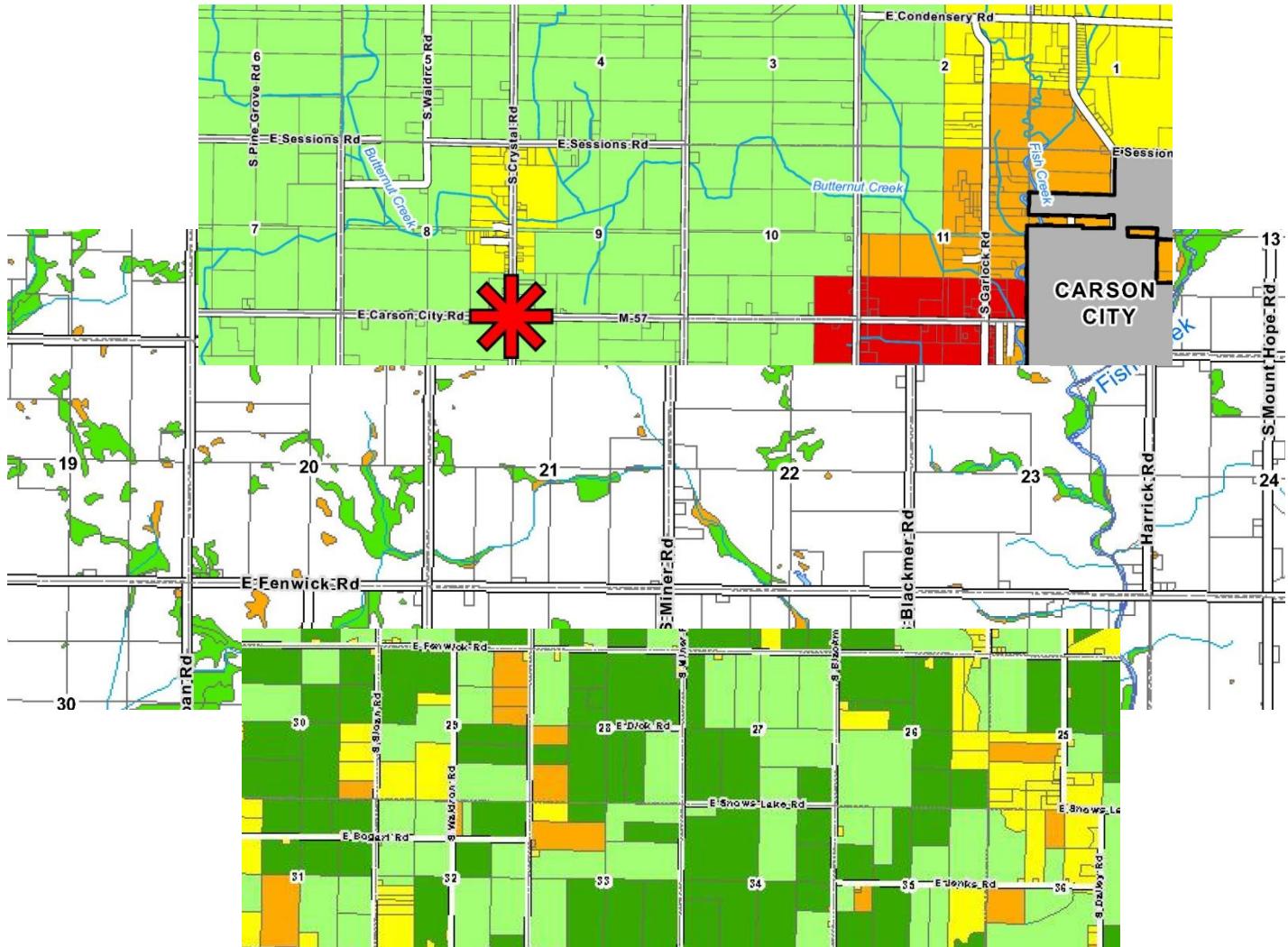


BLOOMER TOWNSHIP

MASTER PLAN

May 18, 2018



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BLOOMER TOWNSHIP

MASTER PLAN

May 18, 2018

Prepared By The
BLOOMER TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION

Under The Direction Of The
BLOOMER TOWNSHIP
BOARD of TRUSTEES

With The Assistance Of
Mark A. Eidelson, AICP
Landplan Inc.

Planning Commission Approval
October 16, 2018

Board of Trustees Approval
November 19, 2018

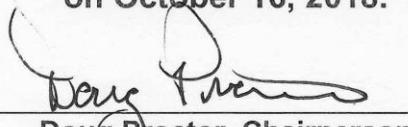
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MONTCALM COUNTY, MICHIGAN

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Statements of Approval

Bloomer Township Planning Commission

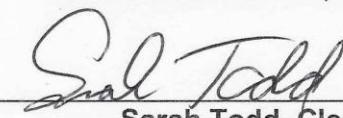
This is to certify that this Master Plan
dated May 18, 2018 is the
Bloomer Township Master Plan
approved by the
Bloomer Township Planning Commission
on October 16, 2018.



Doug Proctor, Chairperson
Bloomer Township Planning Commission

Bloomer Township Board of Trustees

This is to certify that this Master Plan
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approved by the
Bloomer Township Board of Trustees
on November 19, 2018.



Sarah Todd, Clerk
Bloomer Township Board of Trustees

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Chapter One

OVERVIEW

Introduction

This Chapter provides an overview of the Bloomer Township Master Plan and the Master Plan's role, importance, preparation process, and principal policies. Understanding the fundamentals of the Master Plan will enable township residents and officials to appreciate the role it plays in ensuring the future welfare of the community, its residents and its resources.

What is the Master Plan?

Purpose / Enabling Authority

Just as individuals and families plan for their future well-being, so must municipalities. This Master Plan is a "plan" – it is a specific tangible document consisting of text, maps, and figures that establishes a plan for how growth, development and preservation should be guided to enhance the future welfare of Bloomer Township.

The following key words and phrases can generally describe the Master Plan:

FUTURE ORIENTED: The plan concerns itself with long-range planning to guide and manage future growth and development, and the manner in which the township should evolve over the next ten to twenty years in response to growth, development and preservation interests.

GENERAL: The plan establishes broad principles and policies to address future land use and public services.

COMPREHENSIVE: The Plan is comprehensive in that it addresses all principal types of land use and the practical geographic boundaries of each.

DYNAMIC: The Plan is intended to be continually evolving in light of the aspirations of local residents, changing conditions, and new strategies to manage growth.

This Master Plan was prepared by the Bloomer Township Planning Commission under the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A 33 of 2008, as amended).

Purpose of the Master Plan

Section 7(2) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MCL 125.3807) provides:

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

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

This Master Plan is not a law or regulatory document, but a *"policy plan"* to be implemented through, in part, zoning and other regulatory and non-regulatory tools. For example, though the Master Plan is not a zoning ordinance, the Master Plan's recommendations and policies serve as a basis for updating the current Bloomer Township Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning Ordinance Must be Based on a Master Plan

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, which provides Michigan municipalities with the statutory authority to adopt zoning regulations, requires that a municipality's land development regulations "...shall be based upon a plan designed to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, to encourage the use of lands in accordance with their character and adaptability, to limit the improper use of land, to conserve natural resources and energy..."

The Bloomer Township Master Plan addresses this statutory requirement and ensures a strong legal foundation for the township's zoning program.

Elements of the Master Plan

This Master Plan consists of the following key components:

Chapter One (Introduction) presents an overview of the purpose and role of the Plan, the process followed in its preparation, key planning policies, and a summary of township conditions.

Chapter Two (Planning Issues, Goals and Objectives) presents important planning issues facing the township today, and associated goals and objectives that address these issues.

Chapter Three (Future Land Use Strategy) presents future land use policies and divides the township into various planning areas, with land use policies attached to each planning area.

Chapter Four (Coordinated Public Services) presents policies addressing the coordination of public services with the planned future land use pattern and the township's overall welfare.

Chapter Five (Implementation) presents key measures to implement the policies of the Plan.

The Appendices present an overview of existing conditions and trends in the township, addressing cultural features such as roads, land use, and public

services (Appendix A); natural features such as soils, topography, and water resources (Appendix B); and demographic features such as population growth, employment, and education (Appendix C).

Importance and Application of the Master Plan

The importance and application of the Bloomer Township Master Plan are demonstrated in:

- the long-term interests of the township
- the day-to-day administration of the township's planning and zoning program

Long Term Interests

There are a number of interests shared by residents and officials today that can be expected to continue for years to come and be similarly shared by future residents and new officials. Some of these important interests include:

- Protecting the township's rural character.
- Protecting the quality of life.
- Protecting the township's natural resources, including farmland, woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife.
- Minimizing tax burdens.
- Ensuring appropriate land use and adequate services to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors.
- Ensuring compatibility with the use and development of neighboring properties.

The Master Plan supports these long-term interests by providing a future-oriented strategy that seeks to further these interests. Chapter Two establishes goals and objectives, and Chapter Three establishes future land use strategies, to secure these and other long-term interests.

Day-To-Day Administration

In addition to furthering the long-term interests of the township, the Master Plan also plays an important role in the day-to-day planning and zoning efforts of the township:

- **Advisory Policies:** The Plan is an official advisory policy statement that should be readily shared with existing and prospective landowners and developers. The Plan informs everyone of the long term intentions of the township regarding land use and encourages development proposals more closely integrated with the official policies of the Plan.

- Regulatory Programs: The Plan establishes a practical basis for the township to revise, update, or otherwise prepare regulatory programs intended to ensure that the policies of the Plan are implemented.
- Review of Land Development Proposals: Chapter Two includes a list of township goals and objectives that should be reviewed when consideration is given to future proposed rezoning requests, site plans, and related land use proposals, to further establish a record upon which the proposal can be evaluated. Chapter Three provides policies regarding the planned future land use pattern in the township – valuable reference points upon which land use proposals should be evaluated.
- Public Services Improvements: The identification of a planned future land use pattern enables the township to prioritize areas in need of current or future public services improvements and plan accordingly. Chapters Four and Five provide important guidance in this area.
- Intergovernmental Coordination: This Plan provides the basis for township officials to communicate effectively with neighboring communities regarding both the impact of their planning and zoning actions and opportunities for mutual gain through coordinated land use and public services efforts.
- Factual Reference: This Plan includes a factual overview of trends and conditions in the township. This factual profile can educate local officials and residents and aid in the review of development proposals, encourage constructive discussion of planning issues and policies, and serve as a base line for future studies.

How The Plan Was Prepared

This Master Plan was prepared according to a purposeful set of sequential tasks. One of the first tasks undertaken by the township was the administration of a community-wide mail survey to gain insight into local perceptions about the township and aspirations for the future regarding land use and public services.

The Planning Commission's initial efforts were also directed at establishing a database about the township for use during the planning process. This involved a review of physical and cultural conditions in the township including soils, topography, road network, existing land use patterns, public services, and demographic characteristics.

The Planning Commission then directed its efforts to identifying important planning issues facing the community and established a set of goal and objective statements to address each and guide the development of the Plan.

Several alternative future land use patterns and strategies were then developed based on the data collected and the goals and objectives statements. The Planning Commission studied these alternatives and developed a concept upon which to base the policies of the Plan. The Planning Commission assembled a complete draft of the Plan suitable for presentation to the community. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the draft Plan and subsequently finalized the Plan for approval.

Throughout the development of the Plan, the township followed the procedural requirements of the Planning Enabling Act including notification of neighboring communities of its intent to prepare a plan, and the township's subsequent solicitation for input on the draft plan.

Some Themes from the Community-Wide Master Plan Survey

- Preserve environmental resources
- Preserve rural character
- Preserve farmland.
- Some but not necessarily expansive commercial and industrial growth.
- General satisfaction with emergency Services

• 65% or more of respondents find these to be important in making Bloomer Township a desirable place to live:

Reasonable taxes
Quality of schools
Local employment opportunities
Local consumer services
Emergency services
Rural character/country living
Farmland and natural resources

Overview of Planning Policies

This Plan presents a coordinated strategy that addresses growth, development and preservation. The Plan supports the continuation of Bloomer Township as a predominantly rural and agricultural community.

The area surrounding Carson City is where more suburban and urban residential growth is to be guided. Commercial growth is to be limited principally to the M-57 corridor extending west from Carson City to the Blackmer Road intersection area. The M-57/Crystal Road intersection area is intended to provide opportunities for both commercial and industrial uses, and industry is to also be accommodated to the southwest of Carson City. The balance and vast majority of the township is planned for agriculture and comparatively low density rural residential lifestyles.

Public services improvements are to be focused in those areas of the community where heightened growth and development are anticipated, most particularly in the area of Carson City.

Bloomer Township Overview

The following is a brief overview of Bloomer Township. A more detailed review of the township's trends and conditions is in Appendix A, B, C, and D.

Bloomer Township is a rural community of 1,442 persons (2010 U.S. Census) excluding the 2,492 inmates housed in the Carson City Correctional Facility. The township is located in the southeast corner of Montcalm County in the lower central region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. The township is generally square in shape, excluding the presence of Carson City in its northeast quarter along its east edge. The township's exterior boundaries are approximately six miles by six miles and, excluding Carson City, the township is approximately 35.2 square miles in area.

Regional access to Bloomer Township is provided by M-57, which travels east and west through Carson City and Bloomer Township. In addition, the township sits in the approximate middle of a square formed by Interstate 96, US-127, M-46 and M-66. Regional access is also available from several regional public airports including the Gratiot Community Airport near Ithaca and the Capital City Airport in Lansing.

Like the predominant character of the regional area, Bloomer Township is characterized by abundant open spaces including farmland, woodlands, and wetlands. Agriculture accounts for approximately

75% of the township's acreage, and woodlands, wetlands and other open space areas account for an additional 16%. The balance of the township is devoted principally to scattered single-family residences.

The 2010 Census recorded 541 dwelling units, 493 households and an average household and family size of 2.9 and 3.2 persons respectively. In 2010, 64.1% of the households included a married-couple.

A five member Township Board governs Bloomer Township. Government administration and services are funded principally by a millage. Bloomer Township residents receive fire protection from the Carson City Fire Department. Ambulance service is provided by Montcalm County Emergency Services. Police protection services are provided principally by the Montcalm County Sheriff's Department, and the State Police provide emergency services along M-57 and elsewhere during times of particular need.

The township does not operate any recreation facilities and it owns and maintains a single cemetery. The entire Bloomer Township area is served by a single public school district – Carson City - Crystal Area Schools. All public school facilities are located within Carson City except for a 10-acre recreation field in the township, along E. County Line Road approximately one-quarter mile north of M-57. Several comparatively small private education facilities also serve the community.

There is no public sanitary sewer or water service in Bloomer Township except for a limited number of residences in the immediate area of Carson City and the correctional facility, all of which are served by the city's sewer system.

Bloomer Township's topography is largely level to gently rolling in character. The majority of the township reflects grades of 0% to 3% and the balance of the township is comprised principally of grades not exceeding 6%. The vast majority of the township is characterized by loam and sandy loam soils. Approximately 65% of the township is classified as "prime farmland" by the Natural Resources Conservation Service

The most significant water resources in Bloomer Township are the Fish Creek and Butternut Creek. Fish Creek enters the township in its northeast corner and flows south through the eastern periphery of the township before exiting the township in its southeast corner. Butternut Creek flows through the northern half of the township before emptying into Fish Creek along the west side of Carson City.

Chapter Two

PLANNING ISSUES, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The primary goal of this Plan is to establish a basis for future land use and public services. To effectively plan for the township's well-being with regard to future land use and public services, it is beneficial to identify important planning issues facing the community and clarify its long term goals and objectives. This chapter discusses important planning issues facing the Bloomer Township community and presents associated goals and objectives.

Planning Issues, Goals & Objectives

A number of key planning issues are apparent today. These issues vary in scope and are clearly inter-related. The future quality of life and character of the township will be largely shaped by the township's strategy to address these issues.

Each issue presented in this Chapter is followed by a set of goal and objective statements. Planning goals are statements that express the township's long range desires. Each goal has accompanying objectives that are general strategies that the township can pursue to attain the specified goal.

The Importance of Goals and Objectives

- **Bloomer Township Vision:** The goals and objectives provide current and future residents with an overview of the intended future character of the community.
- **Shape Policies:** The goals and objectives identify and outline the basic parameters that should be used in guiding land use and public services policies.
- **Evaluate Development Proposals:** The goals and objectives serve as references upon which future rezoning and land development decisions can be evaluated.

POLICIES

identify the strategy for future land use and public services.

GOALS and OBJECTIVES
shape the Plan's
POLICIES.



Goals
are
Bloomer
Township's
long range
desires.



Objectives
are ways
Bloomer
Township
can reach a
goal.

Goals, Objectives, and Policies of the Plan

The planning issues and associated goals and objectives presented on the following pages are divided into major categories:

- Growth Management and Public Services
- Community Character
- Natural Resources and the Environment
- Farming
- Housing
- Commercial Services, Industry and Economic Development
- Circulation
- Regional Coordination

The planning issues presented in the following pages are not intended to be all inclusive. Rather, they are presented as the primary issues that the community must address as it establishes a future for itself. These issues will evolve over time and should be reexamined periodically and the appropriate modifications made.

The objectives listed on the following pages should not be interpreted as limitations on the township's efforts to reach its goals. The township's commitment to the following objectives does not preclude it pursuing other objectives that it determines are beneficial. In addition, the objectives listed are not time specific. The township may choose to act on certain objectives within a shorter time frame than others.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT and PUBLIC SERVICES

Bloomer Township is a very desirable place to live for many, with abundant natural resources and open spaces; good access to highways and more distant employment centers; and is of an overall rural character. It is reasonable to expect the township's positive growth between 1970 and 2000 to continue into the future as Michigan comes out of the economic downturn of 2007 and the years that followed.

The township's character and quality of life will be impacted by the way the township chooses to manage growth and development. Successful growth management includes:

- minimizing unnecessary loss or degradation of natural resources including farmland, woodlands and water resources
- coordinating the amount and rate of new development with adequate public services including emergency services
- accommodating growth and development in a manner that preserves the desired character of the community and its environmental integrity
- encouraging economic development compatible with the character of the township
- ensuring compatibility between adjacent land uses

It must be recognized that tax revenues dictate, in part, the extent and quality of public services. Although development will increase the township's tax base, the same development will place additional demands upon public services. Contrary to traditional planning wisdom, research has shown that development does not necessarily "pay its way," particularly as it applies to traditional single family residential development. Farming and commercial and industrial development has been shown to typically have a more positive impact upon the economic stability of a community. Maintaining the current quality of public services, let alone the pursuit of improvements, can be challenging.

GOAL: *Guide future development in a manner that assures land use patterns compatible with public facilities and services and the cost-effective use of tax dollars, preserves the township's natural resources and rural character and minimizes conflicts between differing land uses.*

Objectives

1. Develop a rational land use strategy that provides an appropriately balanced scope of uses and which considers the constraints and opportunities presented by the township's natural features and public services and facilities.
2. Preserve the township's natural resources in a manner that enables reasonable use of land while discouraging unnecessary destruction or loss of natural resources including farmland, woodlands, wetlands and water resources.
3. Guide development into areas where public facilities and services have adequate capacity to accommodate the anticipated growth and increased development intensities, and/or where the provision or expansion of public facilities is cost effective.
4. Discourage public services improvements that will have the effect of encouraging development at a rate beyond the township's ability to ensure adequate public health, safety, and welfare, or development in areas of the township not designated for such growth.
5. Wherever legally permissible, require new developments to pay the township for the direct and indirect public services costs associated with that development. These costs should not be imposed on existing residents except where public interests and benefits may be at stake.
6. Continually monitor local attitudes about public facilities and services and provide regular opportunities for substantive public input on growth and public services issues.
7. Separate incompatible land uses by distance, natural features, or man-made landscape buffers that adequately screen or mitigate adverse impacts.
8. Evaluate rezoning petitions, site plans, and other development decisions according to the policies, goals and objectives of this Plan.
9. Update zoning and other tools to implement the Plan's policies, goals and objectives.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Bloomer Township can be described as quiet and rural. *"Rural character"* is a subjective quality, but is typically associated with an overall perception of limited development, and extensive open spaces. The township's rural character is largely shaped by abundant farmland and pockets of woodlands, wetlands and other open spaces.

The township's character is also shaped by the presence of Carson City in its northeast quarter. As one travels near the city, traffic levels are somewhat higher, the rural open spaces are replaced with residential streets and areas of commerce, and there is a more "hustle and bustle" atmosphere.

M-57 is the most heavily traveled thoroughfare in the township and for many, this corridor defines the character of the community including both stretches of farmland and open spaces and, closer to the city, commercial development.

Though located about two miles away from M-57 and Carson City, the Carson City Correctional Facility is another significant element of the township's character, in regard to land use, employment and its visual presence.

The diversity of the area's character contributes to the area's desirability as a place of residence. The preservation of the township's unique character and identity is an important part of its long term welfare. Preservation efforts can protect property values, minimize negative impacts between adjacent land uses, and enhance the overall quality of life.

GOAL: *Protect and enhance the character of the township in a manner that encourages a sense of identity, an overall rural character along with more urbanized elements, and an atmosphere that defines the community as a desirable place to live.*

Objectives

- 1) Encourage development designed in scale with the immediate surroundings and the dominant rural character of the community, through reasonable standards addressing density, building size and height, and other development features.
- 2) Introduce appropriately designed and landscaped signage along key entrances into the township, which highlight the township's identity and place within the region.
- 3) Encourage the placement of signs or markers at designated historic sites, buildings and areas, to highlight the historic resources and identity of the township.

- 4) Work with Carson City and other local communities to emphasize, for the benefit of the public, the unique character of the region and the assets that each community offers in shaping the desirability of the area as a place to live and do business.
- 5) Encourage development that actively strives to preserve natural open spaces (woodlands, wetlands, and fields) as part of a development project.
- 6) Consider rural character preservation interests as one of the relevant factors in determining appropriate development densities throughout the township.
- 7) Encourage the maintenance of historically significant structures.
- 8) Encourage a structurally sound housing stock and the rehabilitation or removal of blighted structures and yard areas.
- 9) Encourage the preservation of the township's natural resources including their visual character, environmental integrity, and recreational value.

See also "Natural Resources and the Environment" below for additional objectives addressing community character.

NATURAL RESOURCES and the ENVIRONMENT

One cannot speak of community character preservation in Bloomer Township without acknowledging the tremendous impact its natural resources play in defining the community's character. These resources are comprised principally of its abundant farmland acreage in addition to its many small streams and drainage ways, pockets of forested lands of both an upland and lowland character, and wetlands. These elements are important in shaping the character of Bloomer Township and also provide vital environmental roles including wildlife habitats, flood control, water purification, groundwater recharge, and air quality enhancement. These same resources play a role in recreation in the community including hunting. Input received during this Plan's preparation suggests that residents strongly support the preservation of the township's natural resources.

Of particular concern is the preservation of the environmental integrity of the township's streams and drainage ways due to their impact on public health, safety and welfare. Proactive site development practices are critical in this regard, including the prevention of stream bank erosion and sedimentation of water courses, maintaining shade-producing

stream bank vegetative cover, minimizing the discharge of pollutants into surface waters, and minimizing impervious surfaces.

Increased environmental knowledge, awareness, and education, when incorporated into a comprehensive planning strategy, can minimize the potential for environmental degradation.

GOAL: *Preserve the integrity of the township's natural resources including its streams and drainage ways, wetlands, woodlands, farmland resources, and groundwater.*

Objectives

- 1) Document and periodically update resource inventory data such as wetlands, woodlands, and sites of contamination, for use in land planning studies and land use and development decisions.
- 2) Encourage land development that actively strives to preserve natural open spaces as part of the development plan, including woodlands, wetlands and streams, and recognizes the importance of preserving environmental corridors across multiple parcels and the community as a whole.
- 3) Ensure that the quantity and quality of new development does not unreasonably create increases in air, noise, land, and water pollution, or the degradation of land and water resource environments including groundwater.
- 4) Discourage the expansion of public utilities into areas dedicated to resource protection.
- 5) Guide more intensive land uses away from environmentally sensitive areas and important natural features.
- 6) Ensure that all development is in compliance with applicable local, county, state, and federal environmental regulations.
- 7) Review proposed development in light of its potential impact upon on-site and regional natural resource areas.
- 8) Explore the acquisition of important open space resources for recreation and environmental preservation purposes.
- 9) Encourage the use of conservation easements to preserve important open spaces in association with land development projects.
- 10) Educate the public about measures that help to protect the environmental integrity of area wetlands, stream corridors and ground water resources including management of yard waste and fertilizer use, minimizing impervious surfaces and the discharge of pollutants into the soil, maintenance of drainage way vegetation,

avoidance of erosion, and properly operating septic systems.

- 11) Update zoning provisions to address resource preservation measures including preservation of stream bank and corridor vegetation, minimizing impervious surfaces, preserving natural drainage patterns, and protecting against ground water contamination.

FARMING

Farming has always been a fundamental part of the Bloomer Township landscape since its settlement. Today, it occupies approximately 75% of the township's land area. There exists a demonstrated and increasingly critical need in the state for land devoted to agricultural use. Farm operations produce the food and fiber that our society relies on as well as the society of other countries. Agriculture has long been recognized for contributing to the economic stability of local communities and is a leading industry in Michigan. Farmland has been found to be one of the few land uses in rural areas that typically produce more revenue than the cost to provide such land with public services.

However, competing land uses, particularly residential uses, frequently result in escalating land prices that undermine the economic viability of local farm operations. This is especially critical for the next generation of farmers who may not be able to afford to buy farmland or otherwise maintain an existing family farm. In addition, land use conflicts between farm and non-farm residents frequently heighten as residential encroachment increases.

The importance of farmland preservation is illustrated by the considerable attention the matter has received by the state legislature including the "P.A. 116" program and the authorization of the purchase of development rights (PDR) and the transfer of development rights (TDR).

PDR enables a farmer to voluntarily sell the farm parcel's development rights to a governmental body interested in purchasing the rights, in turn for placing the farm in a perpetual open space status. TDR enables a farmer to transfer (through sale) the farm parcel's development rights to another parcel in a planned growth zone, under a procedure specified in the local zoning ordinance. Both PDR and TDR provide landowners the opportunity to better realize the development value of their land without having to actually develop it, and the land is placed in a protected status. Under both programs, all other private property rights remain intact.

Input received during this Plan's preparation suggests that residents strongly support the preservation of the township's farmland resources.

Ultimately, effective farmland preservation is dependent upon the management of the number and size of new non-farm lots, to avoid both the excessive encroachment of residential uses and the wasteful conversion of excess tillable land for each home site.

The township recognizes the economic and other challenges facing the local farming community. The township also recognizes the economic benefits of local farming not only for its productive capacity and contribution to the local economy, but for its limited demand on public services infrastructure. The challenge before the township is to encourage farmland preservation while, at the same time, accommodate limited opportunities for reasonable alternatives that do not undermine the long-term welfare of farming community-wide.

GOAL: *Encourage the continuation of local farming operations and the long-term protection of farmland resources.*

Objectives:

- 1) Identify areas that are supportive of long-term farming and designate such areas for agriculture as a primary use.
- 2) Minimize potential land use conflicts in designated agricultural areas by limiting the encroachment of non-farm land uses while similarly providing flexibility for the conversion of limited farmland to reasonable alternative uses.
- 3) Discourage the wasteful consumption of farmland resources due to unnecessarily large residential lot size requirements, while still exercising strategies that limit the extent of new residences in agricultural areas.
- 4) Support P.A. 116 farmland preservation agreements.
- 5) Explore the viability of a voluntary PDR or TDR program in the township.
- 6) Discourage the extension of municipal utilities (such as sewer and water) into designated agricultural areas.
- 7) Minimize obstacles to the farming community that unnecessarily hinder local farm operations and "value-added" income sources, such as agri-tourism, farm markets, corn mazes, and other revenue generating activities that do not cause unreasonable impacts on surrounding properties.

HOUSING

Residential development will likely be the major land use change in the coming ten to twenty years and it will have the greatest long-term impact on the township's natural resources, demand for public services, and overall community character.

Bloomer Township is interested in providing reasonable options for additional and varied housing opportunities. Opportunities for rural and suburban residential lifestyles are plentiful as soil conditions generally support home sites of approximately one acre or more in size. The lack of municipal sewer and water service significantly restricts opportunities for more varied and affordable housing. However, private community sewer systems may be a reasonable alternative in some instances.

Not only does the establishment of suburban and urban development areas facilitate varied housing opportunities to meet the varying housing and lifestyle needs of current and future residents, it also limits the extent of residential encroachment into less prudent areas such as farm areas. In addition, research has documented that higher density housing, including multiple family development, typically has lower public services costs than less dense single family suburban housing.

Whether of low or higher density, the proper placement and design of residential areas is critical if such development is to have limited impact upon the character of existing residential areas, the community's dominant rural character, and the cost-effective delivery of public services.

If Bloomer Township's population grows by 400 persons during the next 20 years, approximately 225 acres of farmland and other undeveloped land would require conversion to residential use to accommodate the additional 160 dwellings (based on an average lot size of 1.0 acre and a household size of 2.5 persons). However, the same 160 dwellings can consume as much as 1,600 acres (almost 8% of the township) or more if located on large lots of ten acres or more in size. This less efficient development pattern can dramatically accelerate the rate at which the township's farmland and other natural resources are converted to residential use including accessory yard/lawn areas.

It must also be recognized that small acreage zoning across the entire township without any density limitations, such as one acre zoning, provides for a build-out population of approximately 12,000 dwellings and nearly 30,000 persons. This build-out population is based on all land being developed at an average density of 1 dwelling per acre, exclusive of

wetlands and future road rights-of way. Such a growth pattern over an extended period of time will have dramatic effects on community character, natural resources, taxes, and public services demands.

GOAL: *Provide a healthy residential environment in which persons and families can grow and flourish, and which recognizes the opportunities and constraints of the township's public services and natural features, and preserves the overall rural and single family housing character of the community.*

Objectives:

- 1) Encourage the continued dominance of single family housing of an overall low density.
- 2) While maintaining single family housing of an overall low density as the primary housing option, provide opportunities for alternative housing to meet the varying preferences of current and future residents, including small lot single family dwellings, senior citizen living arrangements, and small-scale multiple family housing, provided adequate measures are available for potable water and sewage disposal.
- 3) Coordinate higher density housing areas with locations that have greater access to improved thoroughfares, necessary public services, emergency services and/or within walking distance of consumer services.
- 4) Discourage strip residential development along the frontage of existing state and county roads such as M-57 and Blackmer, Mt. Hope, Condensery, Crystal and Fenwick Roads, to minimize traffic safety hazards and congestion and preserve the existing rural character of the road corridors.
- 5) Encourage residential development that incorporates in the site planning process the preservation of on-site natural resource systems and open spaces, and the preservation of the township's rural character.
- 6) Encourage opportunities for special housing for senior citizens to enable their continued stay in the township, including apartments, assisted living arrangements and nursing homes.
- 7) Encourage a housing stock that ensures affordable housing to all, including starter homes, while also ensuring all dwellings are of appropriate design to complement nearby conditions and the community as a whole.
- 8) Discourage uses and structures in residential areas that undermine the residential character and peacefulness of such areas, such as commercial

- 9) Encourage the rehabilitation of blighted homes and properties.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES, INDUSTRY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bloomer Township includes approximately 30 businesses of a commercial or industrial character, excluding the many commercial farm operations and businesses carried on as part of "home occupations." About two-thirds of these businesses are located along the one and a quarter mile segment of M-57 between Carson City and Blackmer Road. Commercial development includes such uses as general retail, vehicle repair, restaurant/tavern, pharmacy, lumberyard, real estate office, mini-storage, bank, carpet sales, snow equipment sales and an oil/propane delivery service. Industrial activity is much more limited and includes a boat manufacturer, a cabinet manufacturer, a pickle processing plant and a cement manufacturing facility.

The township exhibits conditions that do not support substantial commercial and industrial development including the lack of public sewer and water, a limited local and regional population base, and the presence of numerous urban centers in the regional area that offer the necessary infrastructure and services, including Carson City. However, the presence of M-57 offers improved opportunities for access and visibility – important factors for most traditional commercial activity such as retail sales, offices and consumer services. Year-round access is very important for many industrial enterprises.

Addressing commercial and industrial expansion includes considerations of need, location and character.

The township's approximately 30 acres of commercial land (office, retail and service) is far more than the approximately five to ten acres commonly recommended for the smallest of commercial centers serving a population of 3,000 to 4,000 persons – a population far greater than Bloomer Township's non-inmate population of approximately 1,150. In contrast, input received during this Plan's preparation suggests that residents support expansion of commercial and industrial activity.

It must also be recognized that commercial and industrial development can improve the community's overall economic stability and provide additional local employment opportunities.

Commercial uses can vary significantly in character. The character of Bloomer Township does not support commercial uses of a "big box" nature or similar uses that draw from a more regional market and which contribute to excessive traffic levels and public services demands. Similarly, intensive industrial uses that result in excessive public services demands, or produce external impacts such as noise, odors and similar features, are not compatible with the current and desired future character of the community.

GOAL: *Encourage economic stability through opportunities for commercial and industrial development of a comparatively limited scale and intensity, and which caters to the needs of the local population and supports the desired character of the community.*

Objectives

- 1) Encourage business centers that exhibit an attractive appearance and foster an inviting character.
- 2) Encourage commercial and industrial development that is in character and scale with the township's rural character and surrounding land uses, considering such features as building size and height, architectural design, setbacks, signage, lighting, landscaping and screening, and open spaces.
- 3) Direct commercial development of a retail, service, office and similar character, toward segments of the M-57 corridor, other primary thoroughfares, and/or where such services are conveniently located to planned residential growth areas.
- 4) Direct industry to segments of the M-57 corridor and/or other primary thoroughfares.
- 5) Limit commercial uses to those that cater to local consumer needs and the highway traveler, or are otherwise of a character that do not generate excessive traffic levels and demands for public services.
- 6) Limit industrial uses to those that are predominately characterized by assembly activities and similar "light" operations that do not require the processing of raw materials, nor negatively impact surrounding land uses and the community as a whole.
- 7) Encourage industrial uses within industrial park settings, characterized by ample open spaces and landscaping.
- 8) Encourage commercial development that facilitates multiple businesses on a single site, in a unified and orderly manner, rather than strip development along road frontages and the

accompanying frequent driveways and traffic hazards.

- 9) Encourage economic development through the marketing of the special assets of the greater Bloomer Township and Carson City area including the township's rural character and opportunities for agri-tourism.
- 10) Encourage economic stability in a manner that balances development with the preservation of the township's natural resources.
- 11) Discourage commercial and industrial encroachment into residential areas.
- 12) Maintain reasonable controls on commercial and industrial uses such as noise, odors, glare, vibration, and similar operational features.
- 13) Provide opportunities for home-based occupations under conditions that will support the desired character, appearance, and quality of life for surrounding residential areas.

CIRCULATION and MOBILITY

As new residential and non-residential land uses are introduced into the township, demands on the roadway network will increase. Even low density residential development can significantly increase local traffic levels, and unpaved roads can accommodate only limited levels before they necessitate constant and costly maintenance. Increased traffic demands can be minimized through the coordination of road improvements with the planned future land use pattern and designated growth and development areas. The extent to which higher intensity land uses, including commercial and industrial uses, are in comparatively close proximity to improved thoroughfares will minimize future maintenance costs and traffic levels along other roads of lesser infrastructure.

Maintaining adequate vehicular circulation is not solely dependent on the road system itself. The future pattern of residential lot splits and subdivisions will have a significant impact upon the functioning of the township's roads. Residences "stripped" along the existing county road frontages can be debilitating:

- the increased number of driveways directly accessing the county roads increases the level of congestion and safety hazards
- travel times are increased
- the township's rich rural panoramic views of woodlands, fields, and other open spaces, as experienced from the roads, may be reduced to images of driveways, cars, and garages

Community circulation extends far beyond just accommodating vehicular traffic. More and more attention is being focused on ensuring road systems take into consideration all potential user needs including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons restricted to wheel chairs, and persons of all ages and physical conditions. Similarly, the value of circulation systems between communities that facilitate non-motorized travel have also been recognized as an important part of long range planning. Well planned and designed community and inter-community circulation systems can limit the reliance on the automobile and enhance environmental conditions, the health of local residents, and the quality of leisure time.

Aside from M-57 under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), all of the township's public roads are under the jurisdiction of the Montcalm County Road Commission, and all road improvements must pass through the Road Commission.

GOAL: *Maintain a transportation network throughout the township that encourages efficient and safe travel, by vehicular, pedestrian, and other non-motorized modes, consistent with the rural character of the community and coordinated with the planned future land use pattern.*

Objectives

- 1) Identify priority road segments for systematic maintenance and improvement, based upon the planned future land use pattern and existing and projected traffic patterns.
- 2) Discourage high-traffic generating land uses and development patterns along the township's secondary roads.
- 3) Pursue access management measures to minimize the potential for traffic congestion and safety hazards, including limitations on the number, size, and shape of new land divisions and limitations on curb cuts.
- 4) Encourage future residential lot split patterns that maintain the integrity of the township's roadway network and rural character.
- 5) Work with the Montcalm County Road Commission to discourage road improvements that will increase growth and development pressures in areas of the township not specified for such growth.
- 6) Encourage the inclusion of pedestrian/bicycle paths in association with new residential subdivisions and non-residential development to facilitate safe and convenient non-motorized movement for all potential users.

- 7) Encourage the linking of residential and commercial centers through pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- 8) Maintain communication and cooperative efforts with the Montcalm County Road Commission and MDOT to improve opportunities for safe non-motorized travel along road segments.
- 9) Encourage the development of non-motorized linkages between the township and nearby village centers including Carson City, as part of a coordinated regional circulation system.

REGIONAL COORDINATION

Bloomer Township exists within a regional network of communities, none of which are islands unto themselves. Bloomer Township abuts the principal townships of Crystal, North Shade, North Plains and Bushnell, and nearly fully surrounds Carson City. Bloomer Township and nearby municipalities can greatly benefit by cooperatively pursuing common goals in the areas of land use and public services where mutually beneficial. Planned land uses, public services and preservation efforts should take into consideration conditions in these abutting communities. Land use planning efforts should seek to establish a land use pattern compatible with surrounding conditions provided the goals of Bloomer Township are not undermined.

GOAL: *Guide future development and public services in a manner that recognizes the position of Bloomer Township within the larger region and the mutual impacts of local planning efforts.*

Objectives

- 1) Where practical, identify a planned future land use pattern that seeks to ensure compatibility among land uses along municipal borders.
- 2) Encourage the vitality of downtown Carson City through appropriate restrictions on the character and extent of commercial uses in Bloomer Township.
- 3) Maintain a meaningful communication program with area municipalities and county agencies to discuss local and area-wide public facilities and services needs, land use conditions and trends, preservation goals and objectives, planning issues including vehicular and non-motorized modes of travel and recreation, and mutually beneficial strategies to address short and long-term needs.

Chapter Three

FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY

Introduction

Bloomer Township's principal planning components are contained in the Future Land Use Strategy, as discussed in this Chapter Three, and the Coordinated Public Services presented in Chapter Four. The Future Land Use Strategy identifies the desired pattern of land use, development and preservation throughout the township. Chapter Four presents guidelines regarding public services to help ensure that public services are coordinated with the planned land use pattern and the achievement of the Plan's goals and objectives.

Implementation of the policies of this Chapter and Plan rests with regulatory and non-regulatory tools – most importantly the Bloomer Township Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance generally regulates the type, location, bulk, and intensity of land development. The township may also utilize other supporting regulatory and non-regulatory tools to further the implementation of the policies of this Plan. Chapter Five discusses implementation strategies in more detail.

The foundation on which the Future Land Use Strategy is rooted is the goals and objectives in Chapter Two including:

- ***guide future development in a manner that ensures land use patterns compatible with public facilities and services***
- ***encourage compact growth and development areas***
- ***encourage the cost-effective use of tax dollars***
- ***encourage the preservation of farmland, natural resources and rural character***

The Future Land Use Strategy is based on an analysis of the township's natural and cultural features such as community attitudes, existing land use, road network, existing and nearby public infrastructure, and environmental features including wetlands. Also considered were conditions in neighboring municipalities. The opportunities and constraints presented by these conditions were evaluated in the context of the goals and objectives in Chapter Two to arrive at a planned future land use pattern.

Planning Areas

The Future Land Use Strategy divides the township into planning areas and identifies the predominant land use pattern planned for each. These areas collectively formulate the planned land use pattern. These areas are as follows:

- Agricultural Area
- Rural Residential Area
- Suburban Residential Area
- Commercial and Industrial Areas
 - M-57 Commercial Corridor
 - M-57/Crystal Road Commercial-Industrial Area
 - Garlock Road Industrial Area

It is not the intent of this Plan to identify the specific land uses that should be permitted in each of these planning areas. This Plan presents broad-based policies regarding the dominant land use(s) to be in each. Specific permitted land uses will be determined by the zoning provisions of the township based on considerations of compatibility.

There may be certain existing uses that do not "fit" with the planned future land use pattern. This should not be necessarily interpreted as a lack of township support for the continuation of such uses. Zoning regulations will clarify this matter.

Boundaries: The approximate boundaries of the planning areas are illustrated on the Future Land Use Map at the end of this chapter. The boundaries are described as approximate. There is frequently room for discretion at the exact interface between the boundaries of two planning areas and appropriate uses at these points of interface. However, the approximate boundaries presented in this Plan have been considered carefully. The specified boundaries of the planning areas are purposeful. These areas are not intended to incrementally evolve into extended strip corridors or other expanded development zones contrary to this theme. Significant departures are strongly discouraged except for unique circumstances and only when the public health, safety and welfare will not be undermined.

It is important to recognize that neither the Future Land Use Map nor the explanatory text of this chapter is intended to stand on its own. Both the policy discussions and map are inseparable and must be viewed together.

Appropriate Site Development: Irrespective of the particular planning area, all nonresidential development should be of such character and design so as to encourage compatibility with adjacent and nearby land uses and the desired rural character of the township including site layout, principal buildings and accessory facilities. Such compatibility should be based on, in part, appropriate signage; building height, size, and bulk; setbacks; and landscaping and screening. Special care must be exercised during all phases of the review and approval of specific development proposals to ensure that proposed uses, buildings and other site modifications, and their interface with surrounding properties, enhances their compatibility.

The establishment of private “community sewer systems” serving new neighborhoods is not a valid basis for development densities contrary to the policies presented in this chapter.

Site development should incorporate the inclusion of nonmotorized travel and measures to enhance the safety and comfort of nonmotorized travel along road corridors and elsewhere.

Agricultural Area

Farming plays an important role in the history and character of Bloomer Township, contributes important food and fiber to local and regional populations, encourages economic stability, and is an important source of income.

The Agricultural Area includes somewhat more than three-quarters of the township. The Agricultural Area is comprised nearly entirely of farmland and farming operations, along with scattered residential properties typically ranging from two to ten acres in area, along with open space areas including wetlands and woodlands. The intent of the Agricultural Area is to provide opportunities for farming and encourage the preservation of farmland resources and the long-term viability of local farming, providing opportunities for residential home sites on a limited basis only. Agriculture is intended to be the primary use of the acreage in this Area.

Lands in the Agricultural Area are largely characterized by conditions that enhance their long term agricultural economic viability including:

- the presence of active farm operations
- acreage contained within parcels commonly approaching 40 acres or more
- limited encroachment by residential subdivisions and similar neighborhood developments, and other non-agricultural land uses
- enrollment of parcels in the P.A. 116 Farmland and Open Space Protection Program
- farm parcels adjacent to other farm parcels considered to offer similar opportunities for enhanced economically viable farming operations

It is intended that development densities in the Agricultural Area be low. Limited densities are supported by a number of factors including, in part:

- the township's commitment to protecting its farming industry and minimizing land use conflicts between farm operations and neighboring land uses
- the township's commitment to managing growth, providing cost effective public services, and limiting suburban and urban development densities to specific and compact portions of the community
- the township's commitment to protecting its natural resources and rural character
- the presence of a market for low-density rural lifestyles

Key policies of the Agricultural Area are:

1. The primary use of land should be agriculture, resource conservation and other open space areas, and home sites associated with farm operations.
2. Secondary uses should typically be limited to non-farm home sites, and those uses that are uniquely compatible with the environmental and/or rural character of the Area such as kennels, golf courses, shooting ranges and extraction operations.
3. Maximum development densities should be limited, being one non-farm dwelling per approximately 40 acres.

Prospective new residents in the Agricultural Area should recognize that the traditional noises and agricultural operations associated with responsible farm operations are a significant component of the Agricultural Area and will continue on a long term basis. Bloomer Township does not consider such activities and operations as nuisances. The township supports the long term continuation and protection of responsible farm operations and the local farming industry. Local developers and real estate agents should disclose this information to prospective buyers of land.

The Agricultural Area encourages the continuation of all current farming activities as well as the introduction of new agricultural operations. All farming activities are encouraged including the raising of crops and livestock and the erection of associated structures, provided that they meet Department of Agriculture and Rural Development requirements for "generally accepted agricultural management practices" and any requirements of applicable township ordinances.

In light of the township's interest in maintaining the quality of life for existing households, reasonable care should be exercised in accommodating specialized agricultural operations that may have heightened impacts on surrounding land uses such as large concentrated livestock operations.

Rural Residential Area

Rural Residential Areas are limited to areas in the northeast corner and southeast quadrant of the township, and the Butternut area. These areas are characterized by conditions that significantly lessen their viability for long-term farming operations

including reduced parcel sizes, more marginal soil conditions, increased degree of residential encroachment, and/or proximity to existing settlement areas (Butternut and Carson City) and urban services (Carson City). The Rural Residential Area encourages the continuation of existing farming operations while, at the same time, provides greater opportunities for low-density residential development than the Agricultural Area, and in a predominantly rural setting. The Rural Residential Areas recognize these existing rural settlement areas and provide for further opportunities for rural residential lifestyles in addition to the continuation of farming.

It is intended that development densities in the Rural Residential Area be comparatively low, in recognition of the township's commitment to managing growth, providing cost effective public services, limiting more suburban and urban development densities to specific and compact portions of the community, and protecting its natural resources and rural character.

Like the Agricultural Area, potential new residents in the Rural Residential Areas should recognize that the traditional noises and agricultural operations associated with responsible farm operations are present and may continue on a long term basis.

Also like the Agricultural Area, there may be some existing small settlement areas in the Rural Residential Area which are of a higher density than recommended for this Area. These settlement areas are not to serve or be interpreted as future growth and expansion zones and for this reason, are not included in the Suburban Residential Areas discussed in the following pages.

Suburban Residential Area

The Suburban Residential Area is located immediately north of Carson City and provides for residential development of a more suburban and urban character than planned elsewhere in the township.

The Suburban Residential Area is characterized by numerous conditions that support its appropriateness for future higher-density residential growth including the presence of existing urban and suburban development patterns, the presence of Carson City and its increased levels of public services and facilities including education and recreation facilities and emergency services, nearby consumer services, enhanced road infrastructure including M-57 and Mount Hope Road, and increased opportunities for sanitary sewer service expansion.

Key policies of the Suburban Residential Area are:

1. The primary use of land should be single-family and two-family residences, including opportunities for comparatively higher density small-lot subdivisions where adequate provisions are made for potable water and sewage disposal.
2. Secondary uses should be principally limited to alternative living arrangements such as townhouses, apartments, retirement centers, and similar housing options, along with uses that directly support and enhance desirable residential areas such as schools, religious institutions, and recreation facilities.
3. All living arrangements should ensure healthy environments including sufficient open space and safe motorized and non-motorized circulation.
4. Maximum development densities should typically not exceed one dwelling per approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ acre, provided adequate measures are in place for sewage disposal and potable water.
5. Development densities approaching four or more dwellings per acre may be reasonable but only after special review proceedings to determine if the proposed development densities are appropriate on the proposed property. Minimum guidelines that should be considered are:
 - adequate infrastructure and public services including sewage disposal and potable water
 - environmental limitations presented by site conditions
 - anticipated impacts on existing neighborhoods and opportunities for minimizing negative impacts through appropriate design measures
 - developments should be of limited size, or be subject to phasing, to ensure that the desired character of the community is preserved and public health, safety and welfare will be maintained.

Commercial and Industrial Areas

The Future Land Use Strategy establishes several planned areas for the accommodation of commercial and industrial growth.

- The M-57 Commercial Corridor extends from Carson City west along M-57, to approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile west of Blackmer Road, and extends approximately 1,200' to the north and south.
- The M-57/Crystal Road Commercial-Industrial Area is located at the intersection of M-57 and Crystal Road, and extends approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile from the intersection in a radial manner.

- The Garlock Road Industrial Area occupies the vast majority of Section 14.

These areas are considered appropriate for commercial and/or industrial growth and are characterized by one or more conditions that support such growth, including the proximity of M-57, the proximity of Carson City and/or other primary thoroughfares, the presence of existing development patterns of similar character, and in the case of the Garlock Industrial Area, the general absence of residences in the immediate area and the proximity of the city's sewage treatment facility.

There are existing residences in some of the planned commercial areas. The Plan supports the continued presence of these residences while, at the same time, supports the incremental conversion of such residences and/or residential lots to commercial use should there be interest by the respective land owner.

Prospective residents to these planned commercial areas should recognize that nearby properties may transition into commercial uses, subject to township review and approval.

Other key policies of the Commercial and Industrial Areas are:

1. Primary commercial uses are to be limited to uses that address day-to-day needs of the local population, seasonal visitors and highway travelers, including retail sales, offices, personal services, and eateries..
2. Secondary commercial uses include those that provide additional benefits and which may cater to a more regional population and/or are of a size, scale or intensity that increases the potential for negative impacts. Such uses are to be subject to special review proceedings. Dwellings above commercial storefronts is recommended as a means to provide varied housing opportunities, evening security, and nearby consumers.
3. Industrial uses are to be principally limited to those of a low intensive character such as assembly of pre-manufactured products, sheet metal fabrication, auto body and engine repair, and communication and information technologies.

4. Site development practices should carefully consider adjacent land uses and minimize visual and other negative impacts in association with building size and placement, parking and circulation, and other accessory features on the site including solid waste stations, lighting, storm water management and signage.

Preservation of Natural Resources

Bloomer Township includes areas of woodlands, wetlands and water courses. In light of the importance of these resources, the Plan supports their protection. Preservation should take precedence over the unnecessary disturbance and/or destruction of these resources. These resources are vital parts of the township's environment, provide important environmental benefits including habitats for wildlife, flood control, groundwater recharge and discharge, and surface water purification. In addition, they provide special opportunities for recreation and contribute to the township's overall rural character and desirability as a place of residence and business.

The presence of such resources in areas designated for development should be recognized in the deliberation of rezoning, site plan, and similar proposals. Land uses requiring state and/or federal permits (especially for wetland or floodplain alterations) should not receive final township approval until satisfactory evidence has been submitted verifying the acquisition of all necessary permits. Where a portion of a parcel contains environmentally sensitive areas, development should be directed elsewhere on the site where practical alternatives exist.

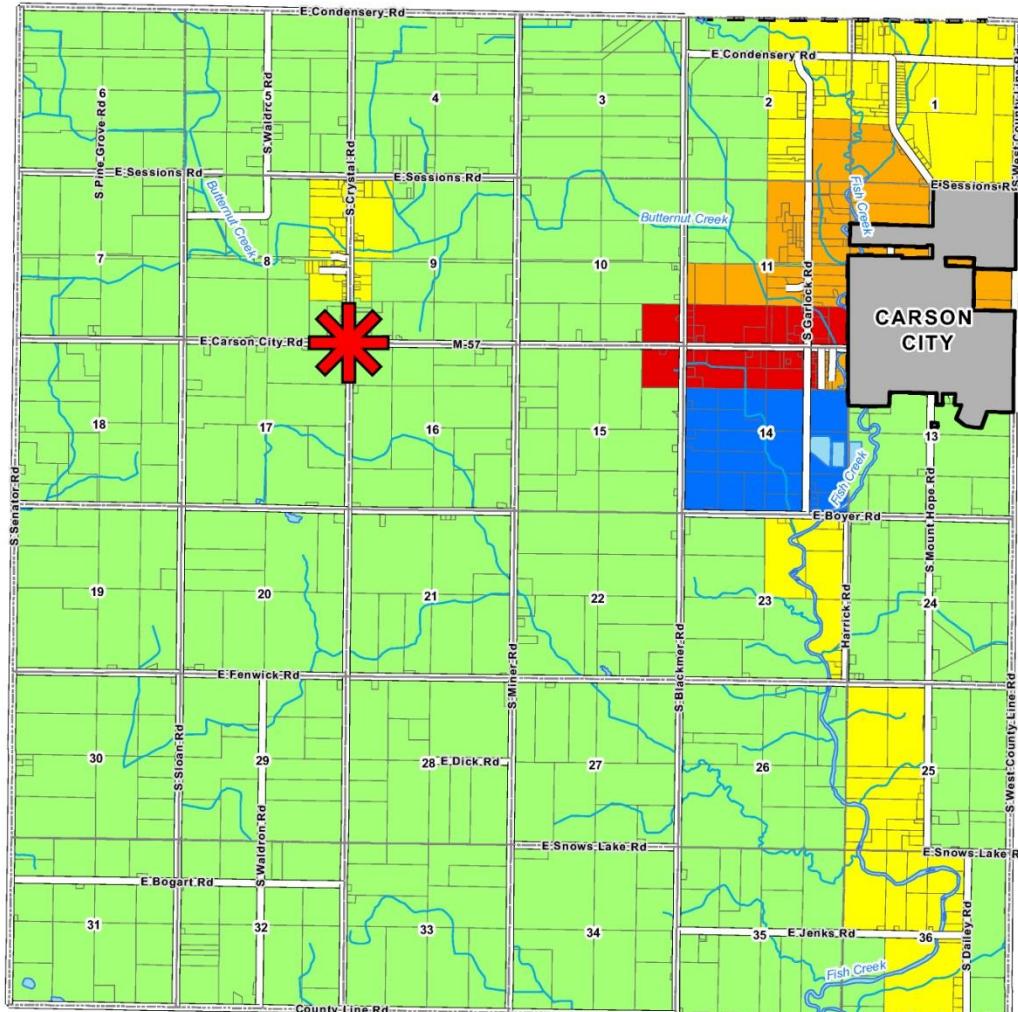
Phased Zoning

This Plan recommends that the rezoning of land to a more intensive zoning district be done in a phased or incremental manner only. For example, while the Plan may identify township locations that are appropriate to accommodate suburban residential development, the Plan does not recommend "across the board" or immediate rezonings of such land. The Plan recommends that rezonings to more intensive districts occur incrementally over time to ensure:

- adequate public services
- managed growth and development
- proper review of rezoning requests as they pertain to specific sites
- rezonings are in response to a demonstrated need
- no unnecessary hardships upon a landowner as a result of property assessments and/or the unintended creation of nonconforming uses and structures

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Future Land Use Map Follows*

BLOOMER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



BLOOMER TOWNSHIP MONTCALM COUNTY, MICHIGAN

May 18, 2018

MASTER PLAN FUTURE LAND USE

Legend

- Agricultural Area
- Rural Residential Area
- Suburban Residential Area
- M-57 Commercial Corridor
- M-57/Crystal Road Commercial-Industrial Area
- Garlock Industrial Area



LANDPLAN
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Source: Data provided by Montcalm County and the State of Michigan. Mid-Michigan Mapping Solutions, LLC, does not warrant the accuracy of the data and/or the map. This document is intended to depict the approximate spatial location of the mapped features within the Community and all use is strictly at the user's own risk.

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Michigan South FIPS 2113 Feet Int'l

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Chapter Four

COORDINATED PUBLIC SERVICES

Introduction

Chapter Three describes the planned pattern of land use throughout the township. Chapter Four discusses the public services strategy to be coordinated with the planned pattern of land use. The character and feasibility of land use and development is influenced by the extent to which public services are available. In addition, the character of public services can directly impact the perceived quality of life among residents in the community.

An important principle of the Future Land Use Strategy is that no new development should occur in the township unless public services are adequate to meet the needs of that new development.

On the other hand, public service improvements and the increased development that may result from such improvements should not jeopardize the township's preservation interests and commitment to managed growth and development. Thus, it is important that future public service improvements be coordinated with the planned pattern of future land use as described in Chapter Three.

Circulation and "Complete Streets"

As growth and development occurs, demands on the road network will increase. The additional residential development anticipated in this Plan will result in higher traffic levels. This increased traffic may lessen the level of service along some of the township's road segments. Conversely, it must be recognized that road improvements may well attract new development which, in turn, will place additional demands on the road network.

The township's road infrastructure currently fulfills its function reasonably well for vehicular traffic. This is due, in large part, to the existing low development density throughout most of the township, the presence of M-57 through the central regions of the community, and the paved status of other important thoroughfares such as Crystal, Mount Hope, and Blackmer Roads.

However, opportunities for safe pedestrian and non-motorized travel are comparatively limited. Safe pedestrian and non-motorized travel has received greater and greater focus within the planning arena, on local, regional, state and federal levels. The provision of opportunities for safe and comprehensive pedestrian and non-motorized travel has been found to encourage health in individuals, provide alternative means of recreation, and lessen congestion, air pollution, and the consumption of fossil fuels. The importance of safe and comprehensive pedestrian and non-motorized travel led to the Michigan Legislature amending the Planning Enabling Act in 2010 to require a "complete streets" element in a master plan. Placing the automobile as the sole design factor for roads is no longer the "norm."

"Complete streets" generally refers to the design of roads that take into account the circulation needs of all potential users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users. The "complete streets" program emphasizes safety along roads for all users and users of all age groups. While recognizing that there is no single "complete streets" design solution that applies to all roads in all communities, the program emphasizes the need for new roads to be designed, and existing roads be improved, to facilitate their safe and efficient use by all prospective users within the context of the particular community's needs and character.

As a rural community, implementation of a "complete streets" program differs than that of an urban center such as Carson City. While an urban community may pursue sidewalks, bike lanes or paved shoulders, bus lanes, convenient public transportation stops, median islands, frequent and well marked cross-walks, and other measures, rural communities such as Bloomer Township typically have fewer options and frequently focus on paved shoulders. However, even in rural communities, the feasibility of implementing a wider scope of "complete streets" measures increases in the community's planned residential and non-residential development areas.

The Montcalm County Road Commission has jurisdiction over local public roads except M-57, which is under the authority of the Michigan Department of Transportation. Still, the township has the opportunity to provide input regarding road maintenance, design and improvements.

Circulation/Complete Streets Policies:

1. Greatest priority for road improvements will be assigned to those road segments whose current conditions present imminent danger to the public health, safety and welfare, such as in the case of road impasses and flooding.
2. Functional classification of roads will dictate the priority of improvements when all other conditions are generally equal. The functional importance of the roads in the township, from highest to lowest, is: a) M-57 b) county primary roads, particularly those segments servicing the Future Land Use Strategy's Suburban Residential, Commercial and Industrial Areas; c) county local roads, particularly those segments servicing the Future Land Use Strategy's Suburban Residential, Commercial and Industrial Areas, but excluding roads in a platted subdivisions and similar neighborhood developments; and d) minor roads, such as local subdivision roads and similar neighborhood development roads.
3. No new roads or road extensions should be undertaken except upon a clear finding of need to ensure public safety and welfare or to provide access to new development projects, such as the provision of access to lots in new subdivisions.
4. All roads will be designed and constructed to County Road Commission standards except upon a finding that, in specific instances, such standards do not justify the impact on the natural environment and rural character of the community or are otherwise unnecessary, and different standards will not undermine public safety and welfare including the long term stability of the road infrastructure.
5. All proposed future road construction will be evaluated carefully for local and regional impacts on traffic flow, congestion, public safety and land use. New road construction will be coordinated with other local and regional road improvements to address traffic movement in a unified, regional and comprehensive manner.
6. The township will explore the development of a non-motorized circulation plan to encourage the provision of trails and linkages between neighborhoods, schools, and other activity centers in the community, including to minimize pedestrian travel in vehicle lanes along M-57, in association and coordination with Carson City. (See also "Recreation" section in this Chapter.)
7. The township will work with the County Road Commission to incorporate "complete streets" measures in road construction, maintenance and improvements.
8. The township will evaluate proposed developments within the context of "complete streets" to ensure all users of a development are afforded safe and efficient travel within and between development sites including neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas.

Sewage Disposal and Potable Water

Public sewer and water service in Bloomer Township is restricted to a very limited number of home sites and businesses in the immediate area of Carson City, from where such services emanate. Nearly all township residents rely on private wells and septic systems for potable water and sewage disposal.

As development densities increase, so does the need for public sewer and water. Industrial, commercial, and higher density residential land uses generally have greater sewage disposal and potable water needs than can often be met by traditional on-site facilities. Failure to provide adequate sewer and water facilities can lead to severe health and environmental problems, while the premature provision of these services can lead to accelerated and unmanaged growth and development.

Many of the township soils present severe limitations to on-site sewage disposal. Improperly operating septic systems can contaminate potable groundwater resources, lakes and streams and this poses a public health threat. This condition highlights the critical relationship between land use, development intensities, and adequate measures for sewage disposal and potable water.

Sewage Disposal and Potable Water Policies:

1. All on-site sewage disposal and potable water facilities will be constructed and maintained in accordance with the requirements and standards of the Mid-Michigan District Health Department, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and other applicable public agencies.
2. The township will support the extension of public sewer and water in the planned Suburban Residential Area, where initiated by private sector interests and in coordination with the policies of the Suburban Residential Area.

3. Public sewer and water services will not be introduced into planned agricultural areas except in response to a significant public health threat and where no other practical means of addressing the threat is available.
4. Any expansion of public sewer and/or water service, and associated infrastructure, will occur in a phased and incremental manner to ensure effective growth management.
5. The introduction or expansion of public sewer and/or water should be based upon sound engineering principles and infrastructure design that will facilitate incremental increases in demand on the system while, at the same time, will not create excessive capacity that will encourage expansion into planned agricultural and rural residential areas.

Storm Water Management

As buildings, parking lots and other impermeable surfaces associated with new development cover more of the township's land surface, the quantity of storm water runoff increases. The vegetated landscape that previously absorbed and slowed much of the water associated with storms is replaced by impervious surfaces. Unless specific preventive measures are taken, this condition encourages flooding, soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution of water resources.

Attention should also be directed to ensuring adequate drainage of farmlands. Storm water management is not a development issue only. While development can pose increased flood potential, improper maintenance of county drains and roadside ditches, and filling of wetlands, can increase flood conditions in agricultural and rural areas.

Though flooding, soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution may originate from site-specific circumstances, their impact can extend to adjacent properties and more regional areas including other downstream communities. Storm water management aims to minimize flood conditions and control the quality and quantity of runoff that is discharged into the watershed system (streams, rivers, wetlands, lakes, etc.) from a development site.

Storm Water Management Policies:

1. Increased runoff that may occur as a result of development will be appropriately managed to ensure that the quality of the water runoff discharged does not undermine the integrity of the township's surface and ground water resources.
2. Proposed land uses will not be permitted if the level of service currently provided by existing storm water management infrastructure and/or existing drainage patterns will be decreased, unless necessary improvements to such infrastructure or natural drainage courses are first made.
3. New and existing land uses shall comply with all local, county, state, and federal regulations regarding storm water management and soil erosion, including the regulations of the Montcalm County Drain Commissioner, except where local officials determine less stringent standards in site-specific instances are appropriate and will not undermine the public health, safety and welfare.
4. Storm water management measures will emphasize "green infrastructure" – planned networks of natural lands, functioning landscapes and other open spaces that minimize alterations to the natural landscape and lessen the reliance on storm sewer and similar "grey" infrastructure.
5. All development will be reviewed within the context of its impact on drainage corridors and surface and groundwater resources, including wetlands, to ensure discharge practices do not undermine the environmental integrity of these resources.
6. The Township will maintain regular communication with the Montcalm County Drain Commissioner and Road Commission regarding drains and roadside ditches in disrepair.

Emergency Services

Bloomer Township receives fire protection from the Carson City Fire Department. Ambulatory service is provided principally by Montcalm County Emergency Services. Police protection services are provided principally by the Montcalm County Sheriff's Department, funded through a county-levied tax. The State Police also provide emergency services, limited primarily to the M-57 corridor and elsewhere during times of particular need.

As community growth and land development increases, so does the demand for emergency services. It is important that the township ensure that adequate fire and police protection services are available to existing and future residents and property.

The community survey undertaken as part of the development of this Master Plan suggests that police and fire protection is currently viewed as satisfactory. Commonly referenced industry standards regarding fire protection suggest a maximum service radius from a fire station in low density residential areas of approximately 3 miles, and an approximately 3/4 to 2 mile service radius in commercial, industrial, and high density residential areas. There are extensive portions of the township that are not within these recommended ranges – with the township's northeast region being the best served. Mutual aid agreements with surrounding municipalities may address these deficiencies. There are no widely accepted standards for police protection levels and is frequently measured as a function of public satisfaction.

Police and Fire Protection Policies:

1. The township will require the provision of fire protection infrastructure (wells, water lines, etc.) for all new developments which are of such size and density that on-site infrastructure is considered critical. On-site fire protection infrastructure will generally be considered necessary for residential developments that concentrate building sites on lots of approximately one-half acre or smaller.
2. The township will continually monitor police and fire protection needs and services to minimize and/or prevent emergency services deficiencies, and explore improving service levels. Considerations for expansion of services will include both the expansion of joint services with neighboring municipalities and the establishment of independent operations.

Recreation

Bloomer Township does not operate any local recreation facilities. Local residents do have access to park facilities in Carson City and other nearby communities, and a number of regional recreation opportunities including the Flat River State Game Area eight miles to the west, the Ionia State Recreation Area 15 miles to the southwest, and the Gratiot-Saginaw State Game Area 25 miles to the east. Residents also have access to outdoor recreation fields and facilities that are part of local school systems.

The well-being of the township's residents is affected by the availability of recreation opportunities, and the type and availability of nearby recreation facilities are particularly important.

The community survey undertaken as part of the development of this Master Plan suggests a considerable interest among residents for expanded recreation opportunities in the township, and demands for recreation opportunities will likely increase with population growth.

Recreation Policies:

1. The township will periodically monitor the extent to which area residents are satisfied with the scope and accessibility of recreation opportunities in the local area.
2. Should sufficient public sentiment warrant, the township will pursue the development of a MDNR-approved five year recreation action plan that provides a specific action plan aimed at providing needed township facilities and enable the township to compete for state and federal recreation grants to provide such opportunities.
3. Where there is a demonstrated demand for recreation improvements, and as financial resources may become available, the township will strive to provide recreation facilities in a manner that recognizes the prevailing needs of its residents.
4. The township will strive to coordinate recreation improvements with the efforts of Carson City and consider joint endeavors where advantageous.
5. The township will encourage the provision of open space and recreation areas within future residential development projects such as platted and condominium subdivisions, to facilitate close-to-
6. The township will pursue cooperative efforts to facilitate nonmotorized access ways between Carson City and nearby township commercial and residential settlement areas.

Information and Technology Access

Our society has been dramatically molded by advanced technology including wireless communications, the internet and computer programs and applications. Availability of reliable cellular phone service and high-speed internet access (broadband) is now commonly linked to quality of life measures. Local, regional and global economies rely heavily on these tools including persons and entrepreneurs who work from their home. Emergency services are greatly enhanced when access to such technology is readily available including the generation of and analysis of data to improve efficiency and levels of service. Personal communications and leisure time are significantly linked to cellular phones and internet surfing. Personal and business research and consumer purchasing through the internet is a regular practice in many households. Entrepreneurs, businesses and job-seekers consider access to

information and technology services in selecting places to locate.

Rural areas frequently experience a reduced level of access to reliable cellular service and high-speed internet access. Bloomer Township is no different in this regard, as approximately one-quarter of the respondents to a survey conducted as part of the development of this Master Plan identified cellular, cable, internet and/or broadband service as being unsatisfactory.

Technology and Information Access Policies:

1. The township will communicate with local broadband providers to explore impediments to enhanced services and options to improve services.
2. The township will communicate with local municipalities to explore joint efforts to attract broadband providers and improve services on a regional level and in a coordinated manner.
3. The township will periodically evaluate zoning provisions to minimize impediments to cellular service while, as the same time, ensuring potential negative impacts of cellular towers for area residents are minimized.

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Chapter Five

IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

This Master Plan establishes a strategy for growth, development and preservation in Bloomer Township. The Plan is comprised of graphic and narrative policies intended to provide basic guidelines for making reasonable, realistic community decisions. It establishes policies and recommendations for the proper use of land and the provision of public services and facilities. The Plan is intended to be used by local officials, by those considering private sector developments, and by all residents interested in the future of the township.

This Plan is a policy document. As a policy document, the Plan's effectiveness is directly tied to the implementation of its policies through specific tools and actions.

The completion of the Plan is one part of the planning process. Realization or implementation of the goals, objectives and policies of the Plan can only be achieved by specific actions, over an extended period of time, and through the cooperative efforts of both the public and private sectors.

Implementation of the Plan may be realized by:

- encouraging knowledge, understanding, and support of the Plan by residents and the business community, and the continued communication with and involvement of the citizenry
- providing a program of capital improvements and adequate, economical public services to accommodate desirable development.
- pursuing an action plan to address the objectives presented in Chapter Two
- regulating the use and manner of development through up-to-date reasonable zoning controls, subdivision regulations, and other regulatory and non-regulatory tools
- maintaining a current master plan

The purpose of this Chapter is to identify important implementation tools available to the township.

Public Support, Communication and Community Involvement

Citizen participation and understanding of the planning process and the goals, objectives and policies of the Plan are critical to the success of the township's planning program. The participation and understanding by local citizens can greatly improve implementation. Improvement may be found in citizen support for bond proposals, special assessments, zoning decisions, and development proposals.

In order to organize public support most effectively, the township must emphasize the necessity of, and reasons for long-range planning and the development of the Master Plan.

Specific actions to be undertaken to encourage public understanding and support of the township's planning program, and the continued communication with and involvement of the citizenry, are as follows.

1. Ensure that copies of the Master Plan are available at the township hall and on the township's web site.
2. Post the Future Land Use Map in the township hall where it is clearly visible.
3. Post a regularly updated listing of current events pertaining to planning and zoning matters at the township hall and on its web site.
4. Through public notices, newsletters, township hall postings, web site postings, and other means, apprise residents of:
 - the planning efforts of the township
 - meetings that will address development and public service improvement proposals as the projects move through review
 - proposed developments and land use decisions under consideration, and where individuals may acquire additional information on such matters
5. Periodically hold special meetings for the specific purpose of discussing the township's planning efforts and providing residents with the opportunity to share concerns and suggestions.

6. Encourage “neighborhood watch” programs in each neighborhood to promote safety, cooperation and communication.
7. Maintain regular and continued communication with neighboring communities and encourage coordination of planning efforts.

As the township grows and increased demands for public services and infrastructure improvements surface, the benefit of a comprehensive capital improvement program will similarly grow.

Capital Improvements Programming

The use of capital improvements programming can be an effective tool for implementing the Master Plan and ensuring the orderly programming of public improvements. In its basic form, a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is a complete list of all proposed public improvements planned for a six year period (the time span may vary) including costs, sources of funding, location, and priority. It is a schedule for implementing capital improvements that acknowledges current and anticipated demands, and recognizes present and potential financial resources available to the community. The CIP 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 importance of CIPs is highlighted by the fact that Sec. 65 of the Planning Enabling Act strongly endorses capital improving planning for all communities, and mandates that a township prepare an annual six-year CIP if the township owns or operates a water supply or sewage disposal system.

The CIP outlines the projects that will replace or improve existing facilities, or that will be necessary to serve current and projected land use development within a community. Advanced planning for public works through the use of a CIP ensures more effective and economical capital expenditures, as well as the provision of public works in a timely manner. Few communities are fortunate enough to have available at any given time sufficient revenues to satisfy all demands for new or improved public facilities and services. Most communities are faced with the necessity of determining the relative priority of specific projects and establishing a program schedule for their initiation and completion.

This Master Plan does not recommend specific increases in public services or infrastructure, and includes no recommendations for sewer or water expansion, the acquisition of specific park sites, or the construction of a fire station or library. Still, regularly prioritizing even “minor” community improvements is an important part of planning.

Objectives Action Plan

The objectives presented in Chapter Two serve as strategies to reach the goals of this Master Plan, also presented in Chapter Two, and to put in place the policies of Chapter Three (Future Land Use Strategy) and Chapter Four (Public Services Strategy). Some of the objectives require comparatively short periods of focus for successful implementation (one or several years) while others may require a longer implementation period and continued maintenance as a regular annual effort each and every year.

The Chapter Two objectives are of limited value unless they are routinely and regularly reviewed and an annual action plan is developed to identify those objectives to pursue in the coming year and each subsequent year, and the recommended township entity that is best suited to take the lead in furthering the selected objective(s).

Undertaking the implementation of an excessive number of objectives during a year is likely not realistic and may lead to very little being accomplished. Identifying a realistic set of annual objectives to direct efforts toward will lead to a more successful long-term implementation program.

The Planning Commission and Township Board should meet annually:

- to prioritize objectives to be pursued in the coming several years and those that should take priority in the immediate year ahead
- to identify the entity to take charge in the respective objective’s implementation
- to identify the steps to be taken for the objective’s implementation
- to identify from where funding is to be provided (if funding is necessary)
- to report on the status of implementation efforts during the previous year

Prioritization of the objectives should be based on such factors as public safety, economic stability and growth, comparative need, comparative impact community wide, and the number of residents and/or businesses that benefit.

Development Codes and Programs

Zoning Ordinance

A zoning ordinance is the primary tool for implementing a Master Plan. A zoning ordinance regulates the use of land. The ordinance divides a community into districts and identifies the land uses permitted in each. The districts prescribes minimum standards that must be met such as minimum lot area, lot width, and building setbacks. Since 2006, zoning regulations for Michigan communities are adopted under the authority of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, P.A. 110 of 2006 (as amended).

The purpose of zoning, according to the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, is to (in part): "regulate the use of land and structures; to meet the needs of the state's citizens for food, fiber, energy, and other natural resources, places of residence, recreation, industry, trade, service, and other uses of land; to insure that use of the land shall be situated in appropriate locations and relationships; to limit the overcrowding of land and congestion of population, transportation systems, and other public facilities."

Bloomer Township has had local zoning in place for more than 40 years. Its current ordinance was adopted in 1992 and it has been amended from time to time. With the adoption of this Master Plan, the township's zoning ordinance should again be carefully reviewed to identify amendments that may be beneficial to implement the policies of the Plan and facilitate efficient day-to-day zoning administration.

Adoption of zoning regulations by the Township Board provides the legal basis for enforcement of zoning provisions. The ultimate effectiveness of the various ordinance requirements is dependent on the overall quality of ordinance administration and enforcement. If administrative procedures are lax, or if enforcement is handled in an inconsistent, sporadic manner, the result will be unsatisfactory. The Planning Commission, Township Board, and staff are responsible for carrying out zoning/development related functions including the review of development plans and site inspections. These functions can require special expertise and a substantial investment of time to ensure that these essential day-to-day functions are met and appropriate development is facilitated.

Bloomer Township Zone Plan

The following pages present a Zone Plan. The Zone Plan establishes a foundation for the township's zoning regulations. The Zone Plan is comprised of three elements. *The Michigan Planning Enabling Act requires that a Master Plan include a Zone Plan.*

Zone Plan – Part One

Part One of the Zone Plan presents **guidelines for the presentation of zoning districts** in the Bloomer Township Zoning Ordinance to implement the Future Land Use Strategy presented in Chapter Three of the Master Plan including the Future Land Use Map.

Zone Plan – Part Two

Part Two of the Zone Plan presents **guidelines for basic site development standards** for the zoning districts to implement the Future Land Use Strategy presented in Chapter Three of the Master Plan including the Future Land Use Map.

Zone Plan – Part Three

Part Three of the Zone Plan identifies **important ordinance elements** that the Bloomer Township Zoning Ordinance should include, and be maintained, to ensure its ease of use and effectiveness in advancing the goals, objectives and policies of the Master Plan. The ordinance should be reviewed within the context of these elements.

Zone Plan – Part One
Table of Recommended Zoning Districts and Relation to Future Land Use Map

The following table presents general guidelines for the presentation of zoning districts in the Bloomer Township Zoning Ordinance, to implement the Master Plan's Future Land Use Strategy (including Future Land Use map) including the principal types of uses envisioned for each district. Secondary uses identified in the table, or others specified in the Zoning Ordinance, should typically be subject to comprehensive review to determine if the proposed use is appropriate on the subject site based on, in part, compatibility with surrounding land uses, environmental conditions, road infrastructure, and public services. The Zoning Ordinance may incorporate other more specialized overlay or other districts to address such matters as uses and development in floodplains, along surface waters, and/or "planned unit development" provisions as authorized by the Zoning Enabling Act.

Zoning District (example names)	Primary Relationship to Future Land Use Map	Primary Intended District Uses	Examples of Potential Secondary District Uses
<u>FM</u> Farmland	Agricultural Area	Farming and farm residences	Non-farm residences, extraction operations, golf courses, kennels, shooting ranges, campgrounds and utility substations
<u>RR</u> Rural Residential	Rural Residential Area	Farming and single-family residences	Kennels, bed and breakfasts, extraction operations, day care centers, religious institutions, utility substations, campgrounds and other outdoor recreation facilities
<u>R-1</u> Low Density Residential <u>R-2</u> Medium Density Residential	Suburban Residential Area	Single and two-family residences of incrementally greater density, ranging from 1 dwelling per 30,000 sq. ft. (R-1) to 1 dwelling per 10,000 sq. ft. (R-2)	Religious institutions, cemeteries, outdoor recreation facilities, and utility substations
<u>R-MHC</u> Manufactured Housing Community	Suburban Residential Area	Manufactured housing communities	Religious institutions, nursing and convalescent facilities, and utility substations
<u>R-MF</u> Multiple Family	Suburban Residential Area	Multiple family developments	Religious institutions, nursing and convalescent facilities, assisted living facilities, and utility substations
<u>CS</u> Community Services	M-57 Commercial Corridor and M-57/Crystal Road Commercial-Industrial Area	Retail, office and personal service uses catering to the local population	Banquet halls, clubs, indoor recreational facilities, day care centers, funeral homes, gas stations and commercial development of a large scale including "big box" developments.
<u>I-1</u> Light Industrial	Garlock Road Industrial Area and M-57/Crystal Road Commercial-Industrial Area	"Light" industrial uses such as assembly of pre-made parts, tool and die, saw mills and laboratories	Manufacturing, junk yards, warehousing, truck terminals, and fuel storage

Zone Plan – Part Two
Table of Zoning District Site Development Standards

The following table establishes general guidelines for the basic site development standards of the zoning districts intended to implement the Future Land Use Strategy in Chapter Three (including the Future Land Use Map). The table's standards establish a realistic concept for each district. All guidelines below are approximate and serve as a framework for detailed Zoning Ordinance standards.

Conditions may suggest divergences from the guidelines to resolve conflicts or otherwise ensure the public health, safety and welfare, such as exceptions to the height guidelines for special buildings and structures, exceptions to the setback guidelines where neighboring uses may suggest more stringent standards such as a commercial use adjacent to a residential lot, or more stringent lot width standards as part of an access management program.

Zoning District (example name)	Minimum Lot Area	Minimum Lot Width and Frontage	Maximum Building Heights	Maximum Building Coverage	Minimum Yard Setback		
					Front	Side	Rear (each)
FM Farmland	40 acres ¹	600 ft.	35 ft.	15% – 25% ²	50 ft.	20 ft.	50 ft.
RR Rural Residential	1.5 acres	250 ft.	35 ft.	20%	50 ft.	40 ft.	75 ft.
R-1 Low Density Residential	30,000 sq. ft.	100 ft.	35 ft.	20% – 25%	40 ft.	20 ft.	25 ft.
R-2 Medium Density Residential	10,000 sq. ft. ³	80 ft. ³	30 ft.	30%	25 ft.	15 ft.	25 ft.
R-MHC Manufactured Housing Community	Conformance with Rules and Regulations of the Michigan Manufactured Housing Commission						
R-MF Multiple Family	1 acre	200 ft.	35 ft.	35%	50 ft.	30 ft.	50 ft.
CS Community Services	1 acre	150 ft.	35 ft.	75%	75 ft.	25 ft.	30 ft.
I-1 Light Industrial	2 acres	200 ft.	35 ft.	75%	75 ft.	25 ft.	40 ft.

Footnotes

1. Very limited number of minimum 1 to 2-acre splits are reasonable according to appropriate standards.
2. Applies to residential lots and other non-farm parcels.
3. Minimum lot areas and widths assume availability of sanitary sewer.

Zone Plan, Part Three – Important Components of the Bloomer Township

Zoning Ordinance. The following identifies important general elements that the Bloomer Township Zoning Ordinance should include to ensure its ease of use and effectiveness in advancing the goals, objectives and policies of the Master Plan. The ordinance should be periodically reviewed within the context of these elements:

1) Procedural Matters/Plan Review

The Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed to ensure it includes clear and comprehensive step-by-step provisions addressing procedural matters such as the application process and approval standards for zoning permits, amendments, matters that come before the Zoning Board of Appeals, and enforcement efforts.

The zoning permit application procedures should include clear requirements for the submittal of necessary plans illustrating proposed modifications to a site, to enable officials to determine compliance with all standards of the Ordinance.

The provisions should ensure such plans include comprehensive information pertinent to the development such as the delineation of existing natural features, the extent of alterations to such features, and the salient features of the development including buildings, parking, screening, lighting, trash storage and disposal, grading and storm water management.

The Zoning Ordinance should include a comprehensive set of approval standards addressing such matters as access management and vehicular/pedestrian circulation, emergency vehicle access, natural resource protection, utilities, storm water management and compatibility with surrounding conditions.

2) District Provisions/Special Land Uses

The ordinance should include a clear and comprehensive presentation of zoning districts including the purpose, authorized uses, and development standards for each. To this end, the districts should differentiate between uses authorized "by right" versus as "special land uses."

Uses permitted by right are the primary uses and structures specified for which a particular district has been established. An example may be a dwelling in a residential district.

Special land uses are uses that are generally accepted as reasonably compatible with the primary uses and structures within a district but,

because of their particular character, may present potential injurious effects upon the primary uses in the district or are otherwise unique in character, and it may not be appropriate in certain situations or on certain parcels. An example may be a kennel in a residential district.

Special land uses require special consideration in relation to the welfare of adjacent properties and to the township as a whole, and may not be appropriate in all locations.

3) Site Development Standards

In addition to the standards presented in the Zoning Ordinance for each district, such as minimum lot area, width, and setbacks, the Ordinance should be reviewed to ensure it presents clear and comprehensive standards addressing more general site development issues such as:

- a. Proper access to ensure public safety and welfare including access management along thoroughfares, emergency vehicle access, and non-motorized circulation.
- b. Off-street parking and loading to ensure adequate facilities are provided on a development site and design features encourage safe and efficient circulation for all.
- c. Landscaping and screening provisions that ensure new development (commercial, industrial, institutional, etc.) is compatible with surrounding conditions and supportive of the desired character of the community.
- d. Sign regulations to ensure local signage does not contribute to traffic safety hazards, visual clutter, confusion for vehicle drivers, visual blight, and decreased property values.
- e. Environmental safeguard provisions to ensure new development minimizes disturbances to the township's natural resources including storm water management.

4) Nonconformities

The Zoning Ordinance should address lots, uses and structures that are nonconforming due to changes to the zoning ordinance, and the extent to which such lots, uses and structures can be replaced, expanded, enlarged, or otherwise altered.

5) *Site Condominium Regulations*

The Zoning Ordinance should address site condominiums. Site condominiums come in many forms, but they typically involve residential developments that look identical or nearly identical to platted subdivisions. The principal differences between the two is that while privately owned lots comprise the entirety (or near entirety) of a platted subdivision, site condominiums are comprised of privately owned (or rented) building envelopes where there are no "lot lines" and greater portions of the development are commonly owned. Site condominiums are not comprised of "lots" in the traditional sense. Zoning regulations must clearly address this form of development and correlate site condominium development with "lot" regulations to ensure such development is subject to the same review procedures and standards as otherwise applicable to other residential development of similar physical character (platted subdivisions).

6) *Clustering / Open Space Developments*

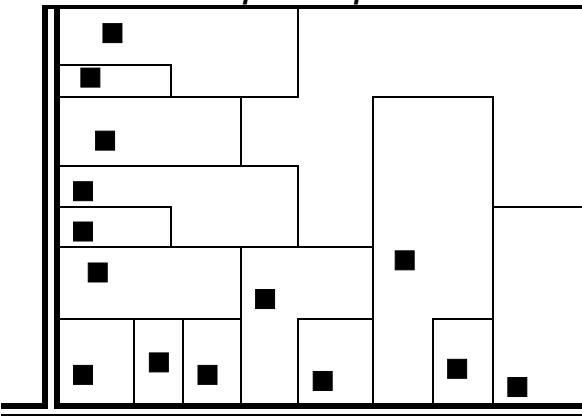
As a tool to facilitate the conservation of important natural resources and ecosystems, this Plan supports what are commonly referred to as "cluster developments" and "open space developments" in association with platted subdivisions, condominium subdivisions, and similar neighborhood developments. This development option is a beneficial alternative to large lot "rural sprawl," which consumes open space and creates lots that are too small for farming or meaningful habitat protection.

"Clustering" provides for the grouping of smaller lots than what is normally permitted, on only a portion of the development parcel, so that the balance of the parcel can be retained as open space and for the preservation of important environmental resources. Clustering provisions must recognize the specific requirements of Sec. 506 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act.

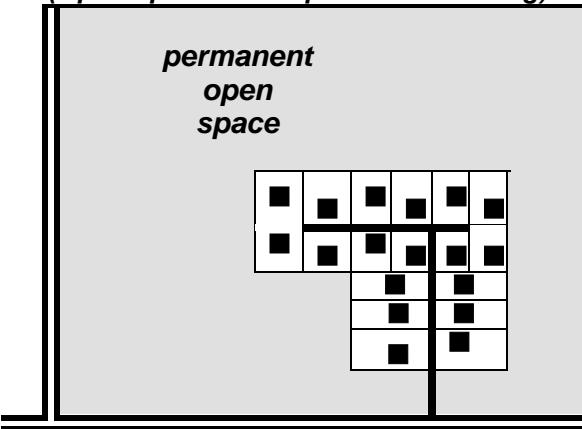
As much as 50% or more of a site, and preferably the most environmentally significant, may be preserved in its existing natural state, with individual house lots occupying the remaining acreage. These "open space" areas can be reserved by the use of conservation easements, deed restrictions, or similar tools. A critical component of clustering should be the inclusion of new interior roads to serve the new lots, rather than stripping new dwellings along existing road frontages.

More traditional strip residential development along the township's major roads is illustrated in Example A below. This is the easiest form of development but it impacts public safety due to the many driveways directly accessing the road and it can significantly undermine the rural character of the township. Example B, illustrating an open space development, improves public safety along the road, and more effectively preserves the existing character of the community including its open spaces and environmental resources and habitats. Clustering can also save infrastructure costs by reducing the length of roads and utility lines.

***Example A
Strip Development***



***Example B
(Open Space Development / Clustering)***



One of the most effective means to encourage the open space development option is through more flexible development standards than otherwise available, such as standards pertaining to permissible densities, lot sizes, and setbacks. This Plan supports appropriate incentives to facilitate this preferred form of development provided such incentives are not contrary to the principal policies of the Plan including the intended character of

each Area comprising the Future Land Use Strategy. Accordingly, moderate increases in recommended maximum development densities presented in Chapter Three may be reasonable.

7) Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)

“Planned unit development” provisions in a Zoning Ordinance typically permit a more flexible form of development that normally permitted by the district in which the site is located or the other districts established in the Ordinance. PUDs are expressly authorized by the Zoning Enabling Act with the intent to facilitate development that, in part, encourages innovation in land use and variety in design, layout, and type of structures constructed; achieves economy and efficiency in the use of land, natural resources, energy, and the provision of public services and utilities; encourages useful open space; and provides better housing, employment, and shopping opportunities. PUDs are sometimes used as a means to facilitate residential cluster development discussed in (6) above, but are frequently used to facilitate development that provides a mix of housing units and nonresidential uses in one unified site design. The specific PUD provisions of an ordinance dictate the character and scope of development that may occur under such a development option.

8) Special Issues:

A very beneficial part of a zoning ordinance, commonly referred to as “Supplemental Provisions” or “General Provisions,” can be used to address a host of land use issues that have relevance to the particular community. The particular scope of issues addressed under such a portion of a zoning ordinance should be tailored to the particular community. Common issues addressed under “General Provisions” include, but are not limited to, some of the following:

- conditional approvals
- moving buildings
- essential services
- one dwelling per lot
- single family dwelling standards
- temporary dwellings
- accessory uses, buildings, and structures
- outdoor furnaces
- home occupations
- keeping of livestock (dwelling related)
- roadside stands
- outdoor swimming pools
- outdoor display, sales, and storage
- outdoor recreational vehicle storage
- temporary non-residential buildings/uses
- building height exceptions
- setback exceptions

9) Clarity

The clarity of a zoning ordinance’s wording and organization will greatly impact the ability of officials to administer the ordinance in a consistent manner, validly enforce the ordinance’s provisions, and facilitate a user-friendly document for officials, applicants and the general public. This clarity must be reflected in the wording of individual provisions as well as linkages between chapters including the avoidance of conflicting provisions.

10) Compliance with Current Law

The Zoning Ordinance’s provisions must comply with current law to ensure its validity and the ability of officials to enforce the Ordinance. The Township Zoning Act, under which Bloomer Township first adopted its first zoning regulations, was repealed in 2006 and replaced by the Zoning Enabling Act (Public Act 110). The township’s zoning regulations should be coordinated with the Zoning Enabling Act and periodically updated to address any subsequent changes to the law and important court decisions.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

A transfer of development rights (TDR) program is another option the township may explore in an effort to preserve farmland resources and open space. A TDR program would enable a farmer in the planned agricultural area to voluntarily sell the farm parcel’s development rights to another parcel owner in the planned Suburban Residential Area, under the management and authority of the township. TDR provides landowners the opportunity to realize the development value of their land without having to actually develop it. The result is the long-term preservation of farmland resources, open space, and rural character, and the cost-effective delivery of public services.

A TDR program would focus on transferring development rights from the planned Agricultural Area to the Suburban Residential Area. Key objectives of such a program should include:

- Limit residential encroachment in important Agricultural/Rural Residential Areas, identified as “preservation” areas.
- Enable farmers to realize a portion or all of the development value of their land by establishing a mechanism to transfer/sell their development rights to interested landowners of parcels in the designated “development zone,” being the Suburban Residential Area.
- Allow the owners of land in the Suburban Residential Area the opportunity to develop such land with heightened densities to capture

the investment of their purchase of the transferred development rights from the farmer in the Agricultural/Rural Residential Area.

Subdivision and Land Divisions Ordinances

When a developer proposes to subdivide land, the developer is, in effect, planning a portion of the township. To ensure that such a development is in harmony with the Master Plan, the subdivision or resubdivision of residential and nonresidential land must be adequately reviewed. A subdivision ordinance establishes requirements and design standards for the development of plats including streets, blocks, lots, curbs, sidewalks, open spaces, easements, public utilities, and other associated subdivision improvements. The Land Division Act, P.A. 571 of 1996, as amended, provides the authority for municipalities to adopt local ordinances to administer the provisions of the Land Division Act including the platting of subdivisions.

With the implementation of a subdivision ordinance, there is added insurance that development will occur in an orderly manner and the public health, safety and welfare will be maintained. For example, subdivision regulations can help ensure developments are provided with adequate utilities and streets, and appropriately sized and shaped lots. Adopting a local ordinance addressing the creation of subdivisions can encourage a more orderly and comprehensive manner for the review and approval of subdivision plats.

Of equal importance is a "land division ordinance." While a subdivision ordinance addresses unified residential developments of multiple units (plats), much of the development in Bloomer Township is in association with incremental land divisions for the purpose of establishing individual home sites. A land division ordinance assures that these incremental divisions meet certain minimum zoning ordinance standards such as lot area and width. The Land Division Act referenced above also provides municipalities with the authority to adopt a land division ordinance. Land division ordinances can ensure consistency in review and approval practices.

Other Special Purpose Ordinances

While zoning and subdivision regulations are the most frequently used tools for the regulation of land use and development, the control of land use activities can extend beyond their respective scopes. Special purpose rules and regulations can complement zoning and subdivision regulations and further the implementation of the Master Plan. Such ordinances may address matters pertaining to noise, public nuisances, outdoor assemblies, junk, weeds, and other activities. Township officials should evaluate the scope of the township's current special purpose ordinances and determine what new ordinances, and/or amendments made to current ordinances, may be beneficial to further implement the Master Plan.

Maintaining a Current Master Plan

Successful planning requires the maintenance of a current Master Plan. The Master Plan should be updated periodically. The Plan must be responsive to changes in the community if it is to be an effective community tool and relied upon for guidance. Periodic review of the Plan should be undertaken by the Planning Commission, Township Board, and other officials to determine whether the Plan continues to be sensitive to the needs of the community and continues to chart a realistic and desirable future.

Community changes that may suggest updates to the Plan include, but need not be limited to, changing conditions involving available infrastructure and public services, growth trends, unanticipated and large-scale development, and changing community aspirations. The following page outlines important considerations for the periodic evaluation of the Master Plan.

The importance of maintaining a current Plan is reflected in the Planning Enabling Act's requirement that a Planning Commission review its Master Plan at intervals not greater than five years and to document the Commission's findings.

Amendments to the Plan, or the preparation of a wholly new Plan, should follow the minimum procedures delineated in the Planning Enabling Act in addition to measures the township believes will enhance the planning process.

Important questions to be asked during a review of this Master Plan should include, at a minimum:

- Does the Plan present valid and current inventory data (Appendices and elsewhere)?
- Does the discussion of planning issues and specific goals/objectives continue to be appropriate today?
- Do the future land use and public services policies of the Plan continue to reflect preferred strategies to address development, preservation and public services?
- Have there been any new and/or significant development projects that have raised concerns about the township's future, or the future of a particular area of the township, that may suggest changes to the Master Plan's goals, objectives and/or policies regarding development, preservation and public services?
- Have there been any other major changes in the township that were not anticipated under the current Master Plan?
- Have any specific development decisions been made (such as rezonings and site plan approvals) that may have appeared contrary to the Master Plan and, if so, do such decisions suggest the need to revise the Plan to be more responsive to local conditions?
- Have any text amendments been made to the Zoning Ordinance that suggest Master Plan revisions in association with the Plan's goals, objectives and/or policies?
- Is the character of local growth and development (residentially, commercially and other) since the Plan was adopted (or last updated) in keeping with Plan's vision (goals, objectives, and policies)?
- Are there significant discrepancies between the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map, recognizing that the Zoning Map is current law and the Future Land Use Map portrays the future vision?
- Are there conditions and/or trends in Carson City and other surrounding municipalities, particularly along Bloomer Township's borders, which may suggest modifications to the township's policies addressing future land use and public services?
- Does the Master Plan comply with current law?

Appendix A

CULTURAL FEATURES

Regional Context

Bloomer Township is a rural community of 1,442 persons (2010 U.S. Census) excluding the 2,492 inmates housed in the Carson City Correctional Facility. The township is located in the southeast corner of Montcalm County in the lower central region of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. The township is generally square in shape, excluding the presence of Carson City in its northeast quarter along its east edge. The township's exterior boundaries are approximately six miles by six miles and exhibit the congressional township boundaries (based on the U.S. Public Land Survey System) characteristic of the majority of townships in Lower Michigan. Excluding Carson City, the township is approximately 35.2 square miles in area. Carson City occupies approximately 1.1 square miles and had a 2010 population of 1,093. The nearest city with a population approaching 10,000 or greater is Alma (9,200), 23 miles northeast. Principal surrounding townships are Crystal to the north, North Shade to the east (Gratiot County), Orleans to the south (Ionia County), and Bushnell to the west.

Approximate driving distances to more regional urban centers of a population of 30,000 persons or more, within approximately 150 miles, are:

Lansing, MI:	114,000 persons	50 road miles south
Grand Rapids, MI:	188,000 persons	55 road miles southwest
Saginaw, MI:	51,500 persons	60 road miles northeast
Flint, MI:	102,450 persons	70 road miles east
Detroit, MI:	713,800 persons	135 road miles southeast

The regional landscape within fifty miles of Bloomer Township, and Michigan's lower central region in general, is dominated by agriculture, woodlands, wetlands and other open spaces, and scattered residential development, in addition to periodic small villages and cities and other similar urbanized pockets.

Access and Circulation

Regional Access

Regional access to Bloomer Township is provided by M-57, which travels east and west through Carson City and Bloomer Township, connecting the northern Flint area to the east with the northern Grand Rapids area to the west. In addition, Bloomer Township sits in the approximate middle of a square formed by four other highways. The most significant of these are Interstate 96, 20 miles to the south, and US-127, 14 miles to the east. M-46 passes within 14 miles to the north and M-66 passes within six miles to the west. Exit #109 along US-127 to the east provides direct access to M-57, as does M-66 to the west. Regional access is also available from several regional public airports including the Gratiot Community Airport near Ithaca and the Capital City Airport in Lansing.

Local Roadway Network

Bloomer Township's local public road network generally exhibits the near square mile grid that dominates much of the Lower Michigan rural landscape. All public roads are under the jurisdiction of the Montcalm County Road Commission (MCRC) except M-57, which is under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation (state highway).

In compliance with the requirements of Michigan Public Act 51 of 1951, the MCRC classifies all roads under its jurisdiction as either *"primary"* or *"local"* roads. Primary roads are considered the most critical in providing regional circulation throughout the county and between counties. The classification of roads by the MCRC has important financial implications with regard to maintenance and improvements. Under Michigan law, townships have no responsibility for funding road improvements and maintenance. The MCRC is responsible for local road maintenance and must maintain and improve primary roads at its own expense. However, state law limits the participation of Road Commissions to no more than 50% of the cost for improvements (versus maintenance) to local roads. Requests by local townships for local road maintenance levels beyond those considered adequate or feasible by the MCRC, and requests for improvements to local roads, frequently require local funding. In reality, nearly all Michigan townships are actively involved in funding road maintenance and improvements.

The road segments in Bloomer Township that the MCRC classifies as *"primary"* are limited to:

- Condensery Road
- Fenwick Road
- Mount Hope Road
- Crystal Road
- East County Line Road, south of Snows Lake Road
- Snows Lake Road, east of Mount Hope Road
- Senator Road, south of M-57

All other public road segments in the township are classified as *"local"* (excluding M-57).

All primary roads are paved except Crystal Road south of Fenwick Road. All local roads are of a gravel surface except for about 20 miles of paved road located principally in the township's east half.

Also of importance is the functional classification of township roads as established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA). The FHA classifies road segments according to the extent to which the road is intended to facilitate traffic movement over long and short distances versus access to abutting property. This classification is referred to as the National Functional Classification (NFC). The relative hierarchy of the classification as applied to Bloomer Township follows.

Interstates and Other Freeways are at the top of the NFC hierarchical system and frequently include freeways and state highways between major cities. Interstates and freeways function to primarily facilitate long distance travel including access to important traffic generators such as major airports and regional shopping centers. *There are no roads in Bloomer Township classified as interstates or freeways.*

Principal arterials function similarly to interstates and freeways except that they facilitate shorter travel distances and access to lesser traffic generators. Principal arterials frequently include state highways between large cities. *There are no roads in Bloomer Township classified as principal arterials.*

Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials except they carry trips of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators. Minor arterials frequently include state highways between smaller cities. *M-57 is the only road classified as a minor arterial.*

Major collectors function with a much greater focus on providing access to property rather than long distance travel, and frequently funnel traffic from residential or rural areas to arterials. *Major collectors in Bloomer Township are identical to those classified by the MCRC as “primary” roads and are limited to.*

- Condensery Road
- Fenwick Road
- Mount Hope Road
- Crystal Road
- East County Line Road, south of Snows Lake Road
- Snows Lake Road, east of Mount Hope Road
- Senator Road, south of M-57

Minor collectors are similar to major collectors except for the still greater focus on providing access to property rather than long distance travel. *There are no roads in Bloomer Township classified as minor collectors.*

Local Roads serve primarily to provide access to adjacent properties and minor collectors. *Local roads in Bloomer Township include all public roads not noted above.*

Federal aid for road projects is limited to roads classified as *major collectors or higher*. Roads classified as minor collectors have only limited eligibility and roads classified as local roads are not eligible for federal funding.

Land Use and Development

The landscape of Bloomer Township is very rural in character and comprised nearly entirely of farm operations, woodlands, wetlands, and scattered residences. Commercial and industrial businesses are present, principally along M-57 to the west of Carson City. Table A-1 provides a breakdown of general land use/cover.

Table A-1
Approximate General Land Use/Land Cover Allocation, 2016

Land Use / Land Cover	Approximate Acreage	Approximate Portion of Township
Agriculture	16,900	75.0%
Open Spaces such as woodlands, wetlands, meadows and scrub lands	3,700	16.4%
Residential, assuming an average of 2.0 acres of yard area per home site	1,100	4.8%
Public road right-of-ways	590	2.6%
Public/Semi-Public other than roads (churches, cemeteries, schools, correctional facility, utilities, township hall, etc.)	160	0.7%
Industrial	45	0.2%
Commercial	30	0.1%

Table is based on aerial imagery, township records and “windshield” survey.

A review of some of the more significant characteristics of land use and development in the township follows.

Agriculture

Farming operations occupy approximately 74.7% of the township's area. The approximately 16,850 farm acres are evident in all areas of the township. Agriculture accounts for approximately 50% or more of the area of each of the 35.2 square mile sections comprising the township and among one-third of the township's 35.2 square mile sections, agriculture comprises about 90% or more of the section. The majority of these sections are located in the central third of the township between Crystal and Blackmer Roads.

In an effort to better protect Michigan's farming interests, Public Act 116 of 1974 was adopted by the state and has since been amended and made part of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. The Act establishes a program whereby farmers can enroll their properties to gain property tax relief provided the farmland is maintained in an agricultural/open space status. The minimum enrollment period in the program is seven years and many landowners opt to enroll for a much longer period. Bloomer Township acreage enrolled in the PA 116 program in 2016 comprised approximately 8,680 acres – 38.5% of the township. Approximately half of the enrolled acreage is located in the central third of the township between Crystal and Blackmer Roads. Approximately one-third of the current 112 enrollments extend to year 2050 or beyond, including nine enrollments that extend to year 2070 and beyond.

Residential Development and Land Division

The 2010 Census recorded 541 dwelling units in the Township, an increase of 21 since the 2000. The 2014 American Community Survey (2014 ACS, Census Bureau) revealed that 97.6% of all dwellings in the township were single family dwellings, approximately 15.7% of which were mobile homes. 91.1% of the dwelling units were occupied and of the occupied units, approximately 83.8% were owner-occupied. The balance was occupied by renters. Of the 8.9% of the units that were vacant (48), about two-thirds were for sale or rent, or for seasonal, recreational or occasional use only.

The 2014 ACS reported that approximately 17.2% of the dwelling units were constructed since 1990. This proportion is significantly lower than that of the county (30.0%) and state (23.0%), indicating that Bloomer Township has witnessed a comparatively lower rate of residential growth in recent times. The median value of the owner-occupied housing stock in the township was \$105,600, 11.4% greater than the county as a whole and 28.4% less than the state. See Table A-2.

According to the 2014 ACS, the housing stock had an average of 6.6 rooms per dwelling and 73.4% of the dwellings had three or more bedrooms. Bottled, tank or LP gas accounted for 46.1% of the dwellings' heat source, wood accounted for 20.4% of the heat source, and utility gas accounted for an additional 15.4% of the heat source. The balance relied principally on fuel oil, kerosene and electricity.

TABLE A-2
Selected Housing Characteristics

Source: 2010 Census and 2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

DWELLINGS	BLOOMER TOWNSHIP	MONTCALM COUNTY	STATE OF MICHIGAN
Year Built (%)			
1990 or later	17.2%	30.0%	23.0%
1950 to 1989	46.4%	45.0%	53.1%
Before 1950	36.4%	25.0%	23.9%
Median Value/Owner Occupied	\$105,600 ¹	\$94,800	\$147,500
Median Monthly Owner Costs Among Mortgaged Dwellings	\$1,109	\$1,056	\$1,349
Median Monthly Owner Costs Among Non-Mortgaged Dwellings	\$397	\$388	\$461
Median Rent Payment	\$846	\$687	\$709

Residential development in Bloomer Township exhibits two principal forms. The first and original form, and vastly dominant in land area, is the large-acreage farmstead. During the early half of the 1900s, large parcels of 80 to 160 acres and more characterized the land division pattern in the community. The original homes were occupied, in part, by farming families including those in the timber industry. Many of these original homesteads are still evident today. While this large-tract land division pattern continues to comprise the vast majority of the township's landscape today, the prevailing agricultural parcel size has decreased to about 40 to 80 acres.

The second principal form of residential development, and which comprises less than 2% of the township's land area, is residences located on parcels of 10 acres or less and fronting on the township's principal road network (section-line and similar roads). This form of housing evolved as some of the original large tracts were incrementally split up. This land division pattern began to show itself in the middle of the 1900s though this pattern is not nearly as present in Bloomer Township as it is across much of the state where local farm acreage has declined. This development pattern is most noticeable along Mount Hope Road to the north of Carson City, along Garlock Road north of M-57, and in the Butternut area. This trend of parcel splitting along a township's section-line roads is commonly referred to as *strip development*. This development pattern has been of increasing concern in the transportation and land use planning arena due to its negative impacts on traffic safety, congestion, farmland preservation, and rural character preservation.

Commercial and Industrial Development

Bloomer Township includes approximately 30 businesses of a commercial or industrial character, excluding the many commercial farm operations and businesses carried on as part of "home occupations."

About two-thirds of these businesses are located along the one and a quarter mile segment of M-57 between Carson City and Blackmer Road. About half of the balance is located along the one-mile segment of Garlock Road north of M-57, just to the west of Carson City. The remaining businesses are scattered in the more outlying areas of the township.

Commercial development includes such uses as general retail, vehicle repair, restaurant/tavern, pharmacy, lumberyard, real estate office, mini-storage, bank, carpet sales, snow equipment sales and an oil/propane delivery service. Of the approximately 30 businesses in the township, only a limited number are of an industrial character. These principally include a boat manufacturer on Crystal Road near Sessions Road, a cabinet manufacturer along Boyer Road near Garlock Road, a pickle processing plant along Garlock Road near Carson City, and a cement manufacturing facility along M-57 near Blackmer Road. Also present are various substations and utility providers such as Consumers Power, DTE Energy, Tri-County Electric Coop and Wolverine Power Supply, in addition to home-based occupations carried on within private residences.

Carson City Correctional Facility

Aside from farm operations, the Carson City Correctional Facility is the single largest facility in Bloomer Township. Located at the southeast corner of the Blackmer/Boyer Roads intersection, the facility covers approximately 100 acres and was opened in 1989. The facility houses males of 18 years of age and older and includes security levels I, II and IV. The facility consists of seven housing units and a total of approximately 1,250 beds, nearly all of which are double-bunked.

Community Facilities and Services

Township Administration

A five member Township Board governs Bloomer Township. Township offices are located in the Township Hall on the south side of M-57, just west of Blackmer Road. The hall includes approximately 2,500 sq. ft. of floor area and houses a meeting room, administrative areas, and restrooms. Government administration and services are funded by a millage.

Cemeteries

Bloomer Township owns and manages one cemetery, the Bloomer Township Cemetery, located on the east side of Miner Road about a quarter-mile north of Fenwick Road. Several other cemeteries are present in association with religious facilities including the Vickerville Church Cemetery.

Education

The entire Bloomer Township area is served by the Carson City - Crystal Area Schools. The school district includes a Lower Elementary School that provides services to children of three years of age through third grade, an Upper Elementary School, and a High School. All facilities are located within Carson City except for a 10-acre recreation field in the township, along E. County Line Road approximately one-quarter mile north of M-57. There are several comparatively small private education facilities located in the township including the Sunny Meadow School, Fellowship Baptist Academy and Fish Creek School.

Sewage Disposal and Potable Water

Bloomer Township does not operate any public sewer or water system. The closest services are in Carson City. The city's sewer service extends to two township properties on S. Division and S. Second Streets. The city's sewer treatment facility is located in Bloomer Township, to the southwest of the city. Nearly all township residents rely on private septic systems for sewage disposal. Similarly, nearly all township residents rely on private on-site wells for potable water. The principal exceptions are approximately twelve properties in the immediate vicinity of Carson City, about half along Mt. Hope Road, that receive public water service from the city.

Emergency Services

Bloomer Township receives fire protection from the Carson City Fire Department, which is located on Main Street in Carson City. The fire department serves the entire township. Fire protection services are funded through annual payments from its general fund in addition to a user fee. Ambulatory service is provided principally by Montcalm County Emergency Services, a county service funded by a county-levied tax and, in the case of ambulance runs, a user fee. Police protection services are provided principally by the Montcalm County Sheriff's Department, funded through a county-levied tax. The State Police also provide emergency services, limited primarily to the M-57 corridor and elsewhere during times of particular need.

Recreation

Bloomer Township does not operate any local recreation facilities. Local residents do have access to park facilities in Carson City and other nearby communities, and a number of regional recreation opportunities including the Flat River State Game Area eight miles to the west, the Ionia State Recreation Area 15 miles to the southwest, and the Gratiot-Saginaw State Game Area 25 miles to the east. Residents also have access to outdoor recreation fields and facilities that are part of local school systems.

Appendix B

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Geology & Topography

During the Paleozoic era of geological history, Montcalm County and the state as a whole was inundated by successive warm, shallow seas during which large amounts of sediment were deposited. These deposits subsequently lithified to form bedrock. The bedrock of Bloomer Township is composed principally of the Red Beds along with pockets of the Saginaw Formation. The Red Beds bedrock consists primarily of sandstone, shale, and clay. The Saginaw Formation consists of sandstone with interbedded shale, limestone, coal and gypsum. The Ice Age brought four successive continental glaciers across the Great Lakes area. As these ice sheets moved southward from Canada, they scoured and abraded the surface of the land leaving behind deeper valleys and more rounded hilltops. The advancing glaciers carried large quantities of rock materials scraped and gouged from the land's surface. These materials were then deposited during the melting of the ice to form drift materials covering the bedrock below. While the depth to bedrock exceeds 800 feet in some parts of Michigan, the depth of the drift layer in Bloomer Township ranges from approximately 275 to 350 feet.

The township's topography is largely level to gently rolling in character. The majority of the township reflects grades of 0% to 3% and the balance of the township is comprised principally of grades not exceeding 6%. About 13% of the township reflects grades in excess of 6% though it is only in rare instances where the grades exceed 12% and these areas are small in area. Topographic elevations in the township range from approximately 700' to 850' above sea level. The highest regions of the community are along its western and northern periphery, with its highest area being in the center of Section 18. The lowest elevations are generally found in the township's southeast quarter along the Butternut and Fish Creek corridors, most particularly where Fish Creek exits the township in Section 35 (about 700' above sea level).

The character of an area's geology and topography can have bearing on development and land use planning. Bloomer Township's topography does not generally present challenges for development. It is generally recommended that development be restricted in intensity where grades exceed approximately 12%, and be strongly discouraged where grades exceed 18%. As grades increase in severity, significant challenges arise for septic systems and there is an increased potential for soil erosion and sedimentation of water courses and wetlands. Construction costs frequently increase.

Drainage & Water Resources

The most significant water resources in Bloomer Township are the Fish Creek and Butternut Creek. Fish Creek flows from the Stanton area through Sidney, Evergreen and Crystal Townships before entering Bloomer Township in its northeast corner (Section 2), and flows south through the eastern periphery of the township before exiting the township in Section 35. Butternut Creek flows from the southwest corner of Crystal Township through the northern half of Bloomer Township before emptying into Fish Creek along the west side of Carson City. Numerous smaller tributaries collect runoff and empty into these two creeks. Together, Fish Creek, Butternut Creek, and their tributaries drain nearly the entire Bloomer Township area.

Fish Creek flows south and empties into the Maple River several miles south of Hubbardston in Ionia County, and the Maple River empties into the Grand River near Muir six miles further southwest. The Grand River ultimately empties into Lake Michigan near Grand Haven.

Bloomer Township is void of any natural lakes or ponds in excess of ten acres in area.

Drainage in Bloomer Township is also facilitated through a network of wetland areas that collect and store runoff. Wetlands are discussed in more detail on the following page.

Lands abutting or in close proximity to drainage courses, such as streams, ponds, and lakes, are subject to flood conditions where the drainage courses do not have the capacity to accommodate the rate of runoff from a single heavy rainfall or numerous lighter rainfalls over a relatively short period of time. The Federal Emergency Management Administration has not undertaken a flood hazard area study for Bloomer Township. Historically, flooding has not been a particular issue of concern in Bloomer Township. This is due in large part to the comparatively limited development (impervious surfaces), the network of drainage courses and wetlands that carry and store runoff, and the predominantly loamy soils that facilitate the absorption of rainfall. Improperly managed land development practices can impact flood conditions both locally and in the communities downstream.

Groundwater

As runoff flows across land surfaces and travels through drainage courses, a portion of the runoff seeps into the ground and collects in great quantities in the underlying soils and deeper bedrock. These reservoirs of water are referred to as aquifers and serve as the sources of drinking water for nearly all residents of Bloomer Township. Wells in Bloomer Township typically extend into the glacial drift only and not the bedrock further below. The glacial drift in the Montcalm County area is considered to be a reliable source of potable water.

As in many Michigan communities, it is not uncommon for well water to be “hard” – containing comparatively high levels of mineral deposits including calcium, magnesium and iron. Hard water is generally considered not to present health risks to humans but can cause staining and have an odor. “Water softening” devices are commonly used to address this condition.

Aquifers can be “*confined*” or “*unconfined*” systems. Confined systems have an impermeable soil layer (typically clay) above them which acts to confine the aquifer and protect the aquifer from contaminants seeping into the subsurface above the confining soil layer, such as petroleum products, fertilizers, and improperly disposed household liquids. Unconfined systems do not have this protective layer of clay soil and are much more prone to contamination. Even confined systems can be contaminated due to hazardous material entering the groundwater as a result of groundwater flows from non-confined aquifers. Local well logs suggest that while a confining layer of clay is present across much of Bloomer Township, this clay layer is not present across the entire township and this condition poses increased opportunities for ground water contamination. Particularly shallow wells, drawing from the glacial drift above the bedrock and where a confining clay layer is not present or is otherwise fragmented, are especially vulnerable to groundwater contamination.

Contamination of ground water resources can originate from a number of sources including, but not necessarily limited to poorly operating septic drain fields, floor drains that discharge to the outdoors, the storage of hazardous and toxic substances without the necessary safeguards, the improper disposal of fuels and oils, excessive use of fertilizers, and improper disposal of wastes by industrial, commercial and residential activities. Thus, the protection of groundwater quality requires appropriate land use management.

Woodlands and Wetlands

Bloomer Township includes approximately 3,700 acres of woodlands, wetlands, and meadow/scrublands, or 16.4% of the township's area. About two-thirds of the woodlands are of a wetland character including oak, red maple, and willow, and the balance are of an upland character including maple, elm, beech and cherry. There are approximately 520 additional acres of freshwater emergent wetlands. There are a total of approximately 2,505 acres of wetlands in the township. The township's woodlands and wetlands are scattered across the community, with the majority being within or near the Fish Creek and Butternut Creek corridors and their tributaries.

Of particular significance is the network of interconnected wetlands and upland woodlands in the Fish Creek corridor. The network is important because of the vital role these resources play in flood control, runoff purification, groundwater recharge, wildlife habitats, recreational opportunities, and supporting the rural character of the township.

Wetlands are environmentally sensitive resources and can experience degradation and destruction due to changes in water levels, erosion and sedimentation, filling, dredging, and draining. The degradation or pollution of a wetland area can have a destructive impact upon wetlands and related woodland resources distances away due to the frequent physical linkages between these resource areas. In addition to the environmental constraints wetlands pose for development, they present severe physical constraints for land development due to flooding and instability of soils.

Because of the important environmental role of wetlands, they are protected by the Michigan Environmental and Natural Resources Protection Act, Part 303. Wetlands are regulated by the state if they meet any of the established criteria including, but not limited to, wetlands connected to one of the Great Lakes or located within 1,000 feet of one of the Great Lakes, wetlands located within 500 feet of an inland lake, pond, river or stream, and other wetlands of five acres or more in area. The law requires a permit be obtained from the state for depositing fill in a wetland, dredging or removing soil from a wetland, constructing or operating a use in a wetland, or draining surface water from a wetland. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality will not issue a permit unless it finds, in part, that there would be no unacceptable disruption to aquatic resources and that the proposed activity is wetland dependent or no feasible and prudent alternatives exists.

Soils

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), has prepared a soil survey for Montcalm County. The survey reveals that, like much of the county as a whole, the vast majority of Bloomer Township is characterized by loam and sandy soils. Soils classified as "loam" typically have near equal proportions of sand, silt and clay.

According to the NRCS, nearly the entire township presents severe limitations for on-site sewage disposal (septic systems). A primary concern in this regard is the soil's ability to absorb and break down the leachate from the septic drain field before it reaches underground water supplies. The limitations presented by the soils are typically due to soil wetness and/or a reduced ability to provide the necessary filtering capabilities. The latter is particularly applicable where soils are very sandy or gravelly and enable the leachate to drain into the soils below at an accelerated rate. Soil limitations on septic systems can often be overcome with increased lot sizes and/or specially engineered systems at additional cost. "Mound" systems provide for raised drain fields, above the normal ground elevation, as a means of modifying the soil conditions below to provide adequate drain field conditions.

The Mid-Michigan Health Department is responsible for issuing permits for on-site sewage disposal. A permit will not be issued unless all Department requirements have been met.

Township soil conditions are more forgiving in regard to general building construction such as dwellings with and without basements, with a noticeably greater degree of soil limitations being "moderate" or "slight."

It should be noted that while a site may be classified by the NRCS as presenting a particular limitation to septic systems and building construction, on-site investigation may show the classification to be less than fully accurate and/or show that the deeper soils (more than five feet deep) present different characteristics than the upper layer soils and thus, varying limitations. On-site investigations should be carried out before specific land development projects are initiated.

Approximately 65% of the township is classified as "prime farmland." The NRCS generally defines *prime farmland* as land that is, under proper management, particularly well suited to food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is capable of producing sustained high yields. Prime farmland soils comprise approximately 25% or more of each of the township's 35.2 sections except Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 14 and 36. The eastern third of the township reflects an overall lesser extent of prime farmland soils as compared to most of the balance of the township, particularly from the township's north edge south to approximately one-half mile south of M-57.

Appendix C

DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

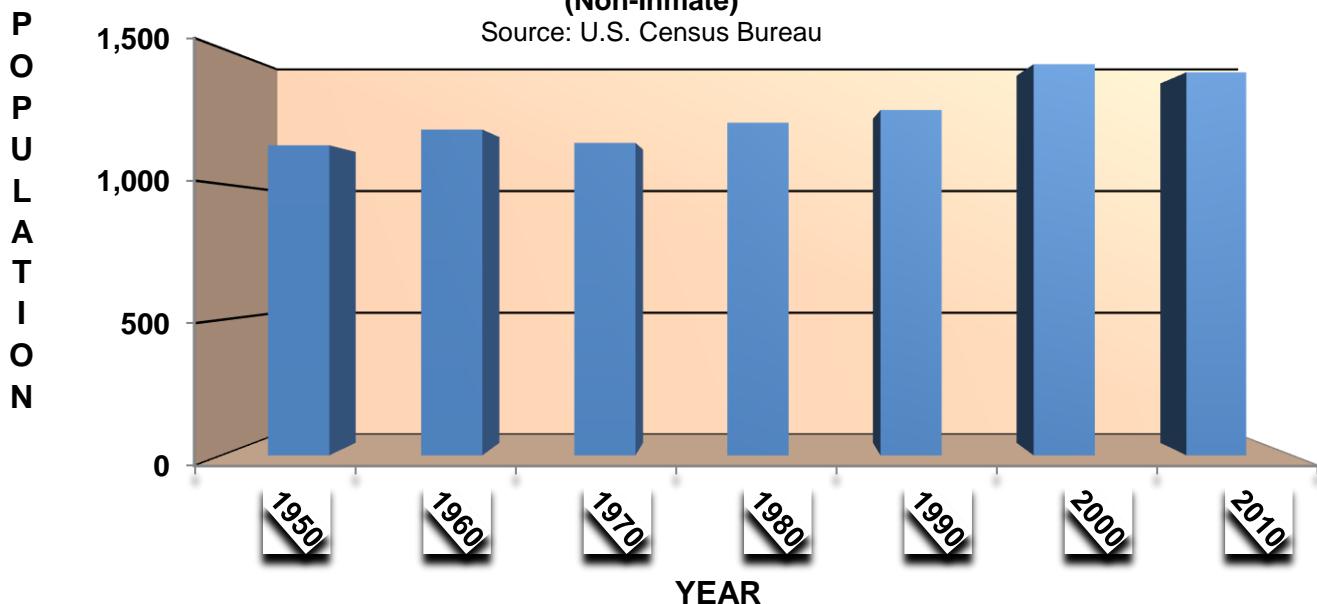
Population Growth Trends

The 2010 U.S. Census recorded a Bloomer Township population of 3,904 persons, 63.8% of which was comprised of institutionalized persons in association with the Carson City Correctional Facility. The 1,412 non-inmate population recorded in the 2010 Census reflected a 2.1% decrease from its 2000 non-inmate population of 1,442. The state-wide population decline during the same ten year period was a reflection of the economic and housing market decline across the nation and particularly evident in Michigan. Michigan as a whole experienced a 0.5% decline in population during this period -- the only state to witness a population decline.

The township's 2010 non-inmate population of 1,412 was a 23.5% increase over its 1950 population of 1,143. Twice during this 60-year period the township witnessed decreases in population – a 4.1% decrease during the 1960s and a 2.1% decrease between 2000 and 2010. The township's strongest growth occurred during the 1990's when it witnessed a 13.3% increase in population. In contrast, Montcalm County has witnessed continuous positive growth since 1950, resulting in an overall growth rate of 104.2% and growing from a population of 31,013 in 1950 to 63,342 in 2010. Michigan's population increase during this same 60-year period was 55.1%. See Figure C-1 and Table C-1.

FIGURE C-1
Bloomer Township Growth
(Non-Inmate)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



The varying growth rates of the township and county since 1950 have resulted in a 40.5% decrease in the proportion of Bloomer Township residents (non-inmate) comprising the total county population. The township's population comprised 3.7% of the county population in 1950 and 2.2% of the county's population in 2010.

TABLE C-1
Population Trends & Growth Rates Comparison

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

(previous ten-year growth rate indicated by "%")

YEAR	BLOOMER* TOWNSHIP	MONTCALM COUNTY	STATE of MICHIGAN
1950	1,143	31,013	6,371,766
1960	1,201 5.1%	35,795 15.4%	7,823,194 18.6%
1970	1,152 -4.1%	39,960 11.6%	8,881,826 11.9%
1980	1,226 6.4%	47,555 19.0%	9,262,078 4.1%
1990	1,273 3.8%	53,059 11.6%	9,295,297 0.4%
2000	1,442 13.3%	61,488 15.9%	9,938,444 6.9%
2010	1,412 -2.1%	63,342 3.0%	9,883,640 -0.5%

* Township population excludes Carson City/Village and institutionalized persons.

The township's overall rising population has increased population density. Its land-based population density was 32 persons per square mile in 1950 and 40 persons per square mile in 2010, 50 persons less per square mile than that of the county as a whole (90 persons). By comparison, the City of Greenville, the county's largest city (2010 population of 8,481) and one of the more densely populated communities in the county, had a population density in 2010 of 1,338 persons per square mile.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Estimating future population growth can provide important insights into identifying future land use and public services needs. Projecting the growth of a community's population over a prescribed period of time is not an exact science. The many unpredictable factors that affect growth make population projections somewhat speculative. Because of the severity of the housing and financial market that surfaced in 2007, both in Michigan and nationally, projecting population growth at this particular time is uniquely challenging. By using several projection techniques, a range of growth estimates can be generated. These shed light on potential growth scenarios provided planning policies and land development regulations do not limit or encourage growth any more than in the past.

The historical trend assumes the township will grow 5.6% every ten years – the same average 10-year growth rate for the township between the years 1970 and 2010. The low growth trend assumes the township will grow at a rate 25% less than that of the historical trend rate, or 4.2% every ten years. The very low growth trend assumes the township will grow at a rate 50% less than that of the historical trend rate, or 2.8% every ten years. The high growth trend assumes the township will grow at a rate 25% greater than that of the historical trend rate, or 7.0% every ten years. The historical or low growth trends may be the most likely over the next 20 years given current economic conditions in Michigan. See Table C-2.

TABLE C-2
Bloomer Township Population Projections

Projection Trend	Population In 2010	2020 Projection	2030 Projection	2040 Projection
Very Low Growth Trend (2.8%)	1,412	1,452	1,492	1,534
Low Growth Trend (4.2%)	1,412	1,471	1,533	1,597
Historical Growth Trend (5.6%)	1,412	1,491	1,575	1,663
High Growth Trend (7.0%)	1,412	1,511	1,617	1,730

SOCIAL and ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

RACE

The 2010 Census showed Bloomer Township to have a comparatively diverse racial composition, with 66.6% of the township population classified as “white.” This rate was 16% and 29% less than that of the state and county respectively. (Table C-3). The township’s diversity is not typical of rural Michigan communities and is largely due to the presence of the Carson City correctional facility. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Justice classified 65% of the national inmate population under state jurisdiction as “Black” or “Hispanic.” Excluding the inmate population, Bloomer Township’s racial profile is more aligned with neighboring townships. The proportion of persons classified as “White” in the principal four adjacent townships was an average of 96.5% in 2010.

TABLE C-3
Race Profile Comparison, 2010 (By Percent) *
Source: 2010 U.S. Census

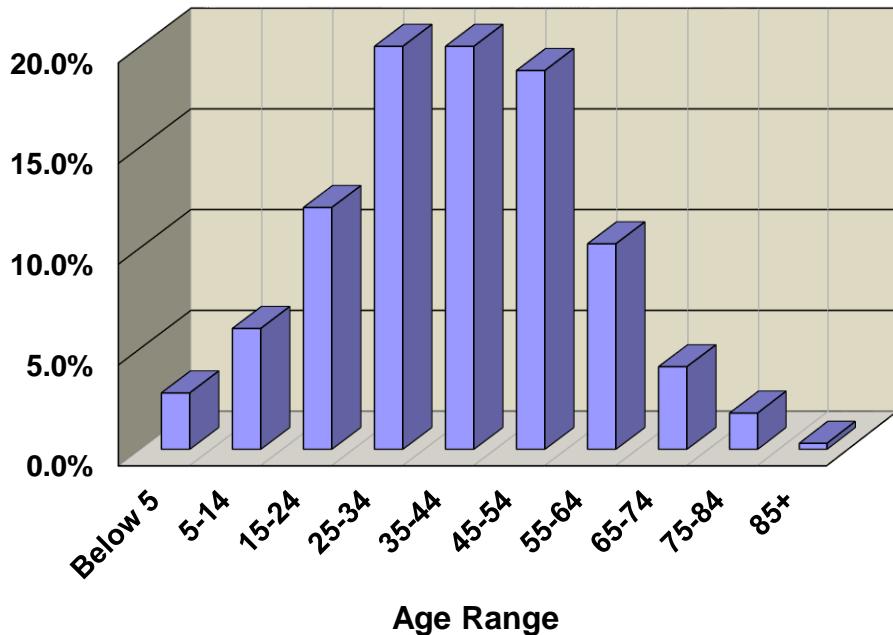
RACE	BLOOMER TOWNSHIP	MONTCALM COUNTY	STATE of MICHIGAN
ONE RACE ONLY:			
White	66.6	94.3	78.9
Black/African American	32.0	2.3	14.2
American Indian, Alaska Native	0.5	0.5	0.6
Asian	0.2	0.4	2.4
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.0	0.0	0.0
Some Other Single Race Only	0.2	0.9	1.5
TWO or MORE RACES	0.5	1.5	2.3

* This table includes persons in correctional facilities which, in the case of Bloomer Township, accounts for 63.8% of the total Bloomer Township population.

AGE

Bloomer Township’s overall age composition in 2010 was very different than that of the county and state as a whole – due to the township’s inmate population. 63.2% of the township’s population was between 25 and 54 while the ranges for the county and state were 41.1% and 39.9% respectively. According to the Department of Justice, 69.2% of the inmates in the national state and federal correction facilities in 2013 were between the ages of 20 and 44. The comparatively high rate of township residents within this age range results in comparatively low rates of persons in the child and senior citizen age groups. For example, the 16.4% of the township’s population that was older than 54 years of age was noticeably lower than the county (26.6%) and state (26.4%).

FIGURE C-2
Bloomer Township Age Profile
(including inmate population)
Source: 2010 U.S. Census



The township's median age of 38.6 years in 2010 was slightly below that of the county (39.3) and state (38.9). It is unclear what impact the inmate population has on the township's overall median age, with approximately 85% of the inmate population (in 2014) being between the ages of 25 and 64. Interestingly, the median age of the township's combined inmate and non-inmate population was within the range of the principal four adjacent townships in 2010 – between 37.1 and 42.5.

TABLE C-4
Age Profile Comparison (By Percent, except where noted)
Source: 2010 U.S. Census

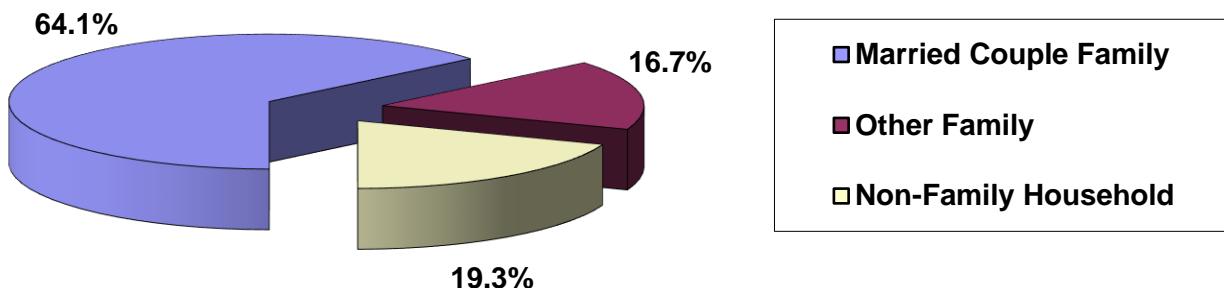
AGE	BLOOMER* TOWNSHIP	MONTCALM COUNTY	STATE of MICHIGAN
Under 5 yrs.	2.8	6.1	6.0
5 – 14 yrs.	6.0	13.6	13.3
15 - 24 yrs.	12.0	12.8	14.3
25 - 34 yrs.	21.3	12.1	11.8
35 – 44 yrs.	22.9	13.5	12.9
45 - 54 yrs.	18.8	15.5	15.2
55 - 64 yrs.	10.2	12.4	12.7
65 - 74 yrs.	4.1	8.1	7.3
75 - 84 yrs.	1.8	4.4	4.5
85 yrs. or more	0.3	1.7	1.9
Under 18 yrs.	10.8	24.1	20.8
65 yrs and over	6.1	14.1	13.8
Median Age	38.6 yrs.*	39.3 yrs.	38.9 yrs.

* Table includes persons in correctional facilities, accounting for 63.8% of the total Bloomer Twp. population, 4.6% of the total Montcalm Co. population, and 1.1% of the state population.

Households and Families

The 2010 Census recorded 493 township households, 80.7% of which were family households. The 493 households reflected an increase of 5 households since the 2000 Census. The township's 2010 average household size of 2.9 persons was noticeably higher than that of the county (2.6) and state (2.5). The township's 2010 average family size of 3.2 persons was also higher than that of the county (3.0) and state (3.1).

FIGURE C-3
Bloomer Township Household Type
 Source: 2010 U.S. Census



64.1% of the township households in 2010 included a married-couple. This proportion is 18% greater than that of the county (54.1%) and 34% greater than of the state (48.0%). Of the 16.7% of township families not comprised of a married couple, six out of ten were headed by a female. With the township reflecting a comparatively high proportion of married-couple families, it is not surprising that the 19.3% of all township households comprised of non-family households was 34% to 43% less than the county (29.3%) and state (34.0%). Of the township's non-family households, 85% were comprised of the householder living alone. See Figure C-3 and Table C-5.

TABLE C-5
Household Type and Size Comparison
 (by percent, except where otherwise noted)

Source: 2010 U.S. Census

	BLOOMER TOWNSHIP	MONTCALM COUNTY	STATE of MICHIGAN
HOUSEHOLD TYPE			
Married-couple family	64.1	54.1	48.0
Other family:	16.7	16.6	18.0
(Male householder)	4.7	5.2	4.8
(Female householder)	12.0	11.4	13.2
Non-family household	19.3	29.3	34.0
AVERAGE PERSONS Per HOUSEHOLD	2.9 persons	2.6 persons	2.5 persons
AVERAGE PERSONS Per FAMILY	3.2 persons	3.0 persons	3.1 persons

Labor Force and Prosperity

The township's civilian labor force in 2014 was comprised of approximately 858 persons. The three principal employment industries for employed township workers were: 1) education, health and social services; 2) retail trade; and 3) manufacturing. These three industries alone accounted for 60.0% of township workers' employment. While education, health and social services was also a leading employment industry for the county and state as a whole, the 33.9% of township workers in this industry was approximately 50% greater than the county and state due to the presence of the correctional facilities. The 6.6% of township workers employed in the agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining industries was almost six times greater than that of the state (1.2%) as a whole and about twice that of the county (3.4%). See Table C-6.

For those township residents who commuted to work in 2010, the mean travel time was 25.9 minutes, compared to 29.9 and 36.0 minutes for the county and state respectively. This is a reflection of the comparatively greater employment opportunities in nearby urban centers and the presence of M-57 that facilitates lower travel times. 4.8% of the township's workers worked from their place of residence compared to 3.4% for the county and 6.2% for the state.

TABLE C-6
Employment by Industry Comparison
(employed persons 16 years and older, by percent)
Source: 2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

INDUSTRY	BLOOMER TOWNSHIP	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	STATE of MICHIGAN
Education, health, and social services	33.9	21.1	22.4
Retail trade	13.1	12.9	11.6
Manufacturing	13.0	22.0	18.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, waste management, other services not listed (excluding public administration)	8.0	11.0	13.5
Public administration	8.0	4.7	3.7
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining	6.6	3.4	1.2
Construction	6.6	6.5	5.6
Art, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food services	6.0	6.2	9.0
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	3.6	5.1	4.2
Finance, insurance, and real estate	1.2	2.8	5.7
Wholesale trade	0.0	2.5	2.9
Information	0.0	1.7	1.9

The prosperity of the Bloomer Township work force is variable based on the factors measured by the U.S. Census. The township's median family income of \$54,583 was between that of the county (\$50,314) and state (\$60,635) but its per-capita income of \$13,463 was about one-third less than the county (\$19,371) and about one-half that of the state (\$25,172). In contrast, its median household income of \$50,000 was substantially greater than that of the county (\$40,739) and the state (\$48,700). The 9.6% of the township residents that were below poverty level was below that of the county and state and its 12.3% of persons below poverty level was also lower than that of the county (18.9%) and state (14.5%). See Figure C-4 and Table C-7.

FIGURE C-4
Income Characteristics Comparison, 2014
Source: 2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

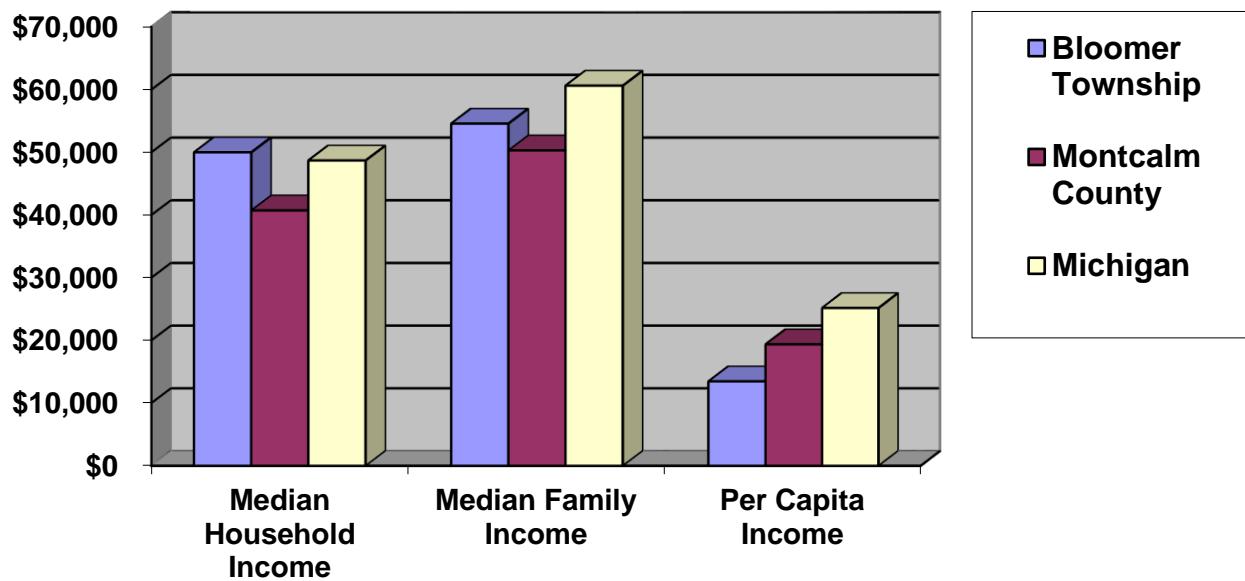


TABLE C-7
Income Characteristics Comparison
Source: 2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

INCOME CHARACTERISTIC	BLOOMER TOWNSHIP	MONTCALM COUNTY	STATE of MICHIGAN
Median household income	\$50,000	\$40,739	\$48,700
Median family income	\$54,583	\$50,314	\$60,635
Per capita income	\$13,463	\$19,371	\$25,172
Families below poverty level	9.6%	13.7%	10.3%
Persons below poverty level	12.3%	18.9%	14.5%

Education Attainment

89.1% of Bloomer Township residents of 25 years of age or higher had attained an education level of high school graduation (or equivalent) or higher, and 10.3% had attained a bachelor's or graduate degree (including professional degree). Formal education levels for Bloomer Township residents in 2014 were noticeably lower than that of the county and the state. While a high school diploma (or equivalent) was the highest level of education attained by 53.5% of township residents of 25 years of age or higher, the county and state proportions for the same level of education were 39.1% and 31.8% respectively, meaning that a greater portion of county and state residents pursued a college education after high school. While 10.3% of township residents of 25 years of age or higher had acquired a bachelor's degree or higher level of education, the county and state proportions for the same level of education was 13.4% and 24.5% respectively. See Table C-8 and Figure C-5.

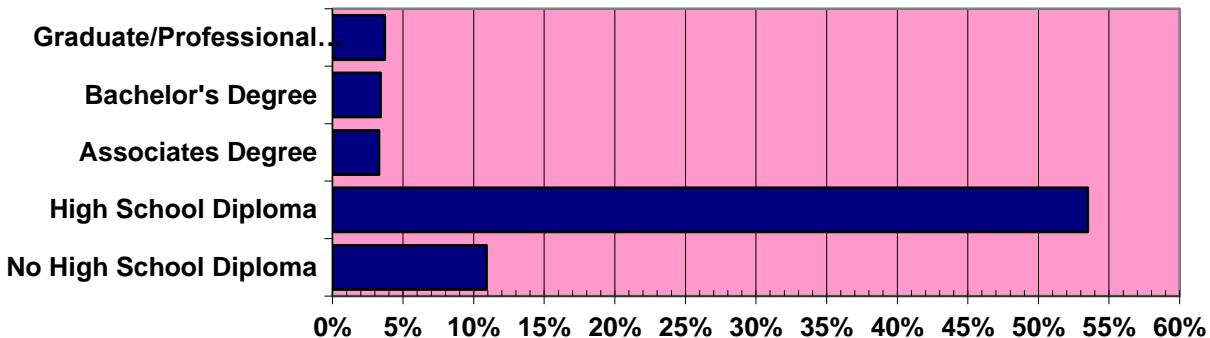
TABLE C-8
Highest Level of Education Attainment Comparison
 (for persons 25 years of age and higher, by percent)

Source: 2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

HIGHEST EDUCATION ATTAINED	BLOOMER TOWNSHIP	MONTCALM COUNTY	STATE of MICHIGAN
Less Than 9th Grade	6.6	3.6	3.7
9th to 12th, no diploma	4.3	9.3	8.9
High School Diploma	53.5	39.1	31.8
Some college, no degree	24.7	25.5	23.1
Associates Degree	3.3	9.2	8.0
Bachelor's Degree	3.4	8.6	15.2
Graduate/Professional Degree	3.7	4.7	9.3
High school graduate or higher	89.1	87.1	87.4
Bachelor's degree or higher	10.3	13.4	24.5

FIGURE C-5
Highest Level of Education Attainment, Bloomer Township
 (for persons 25 years of age)

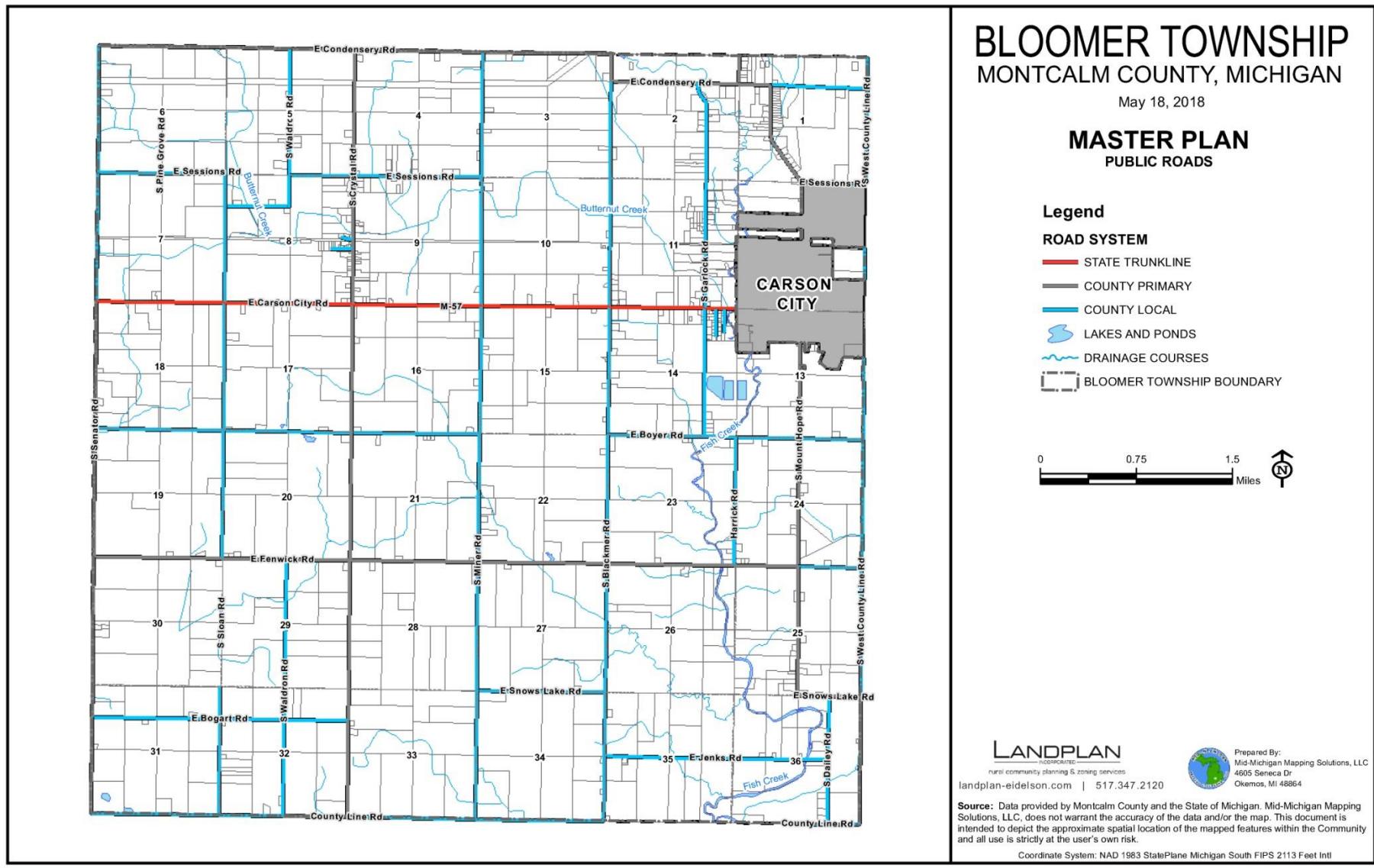
Source: 2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau



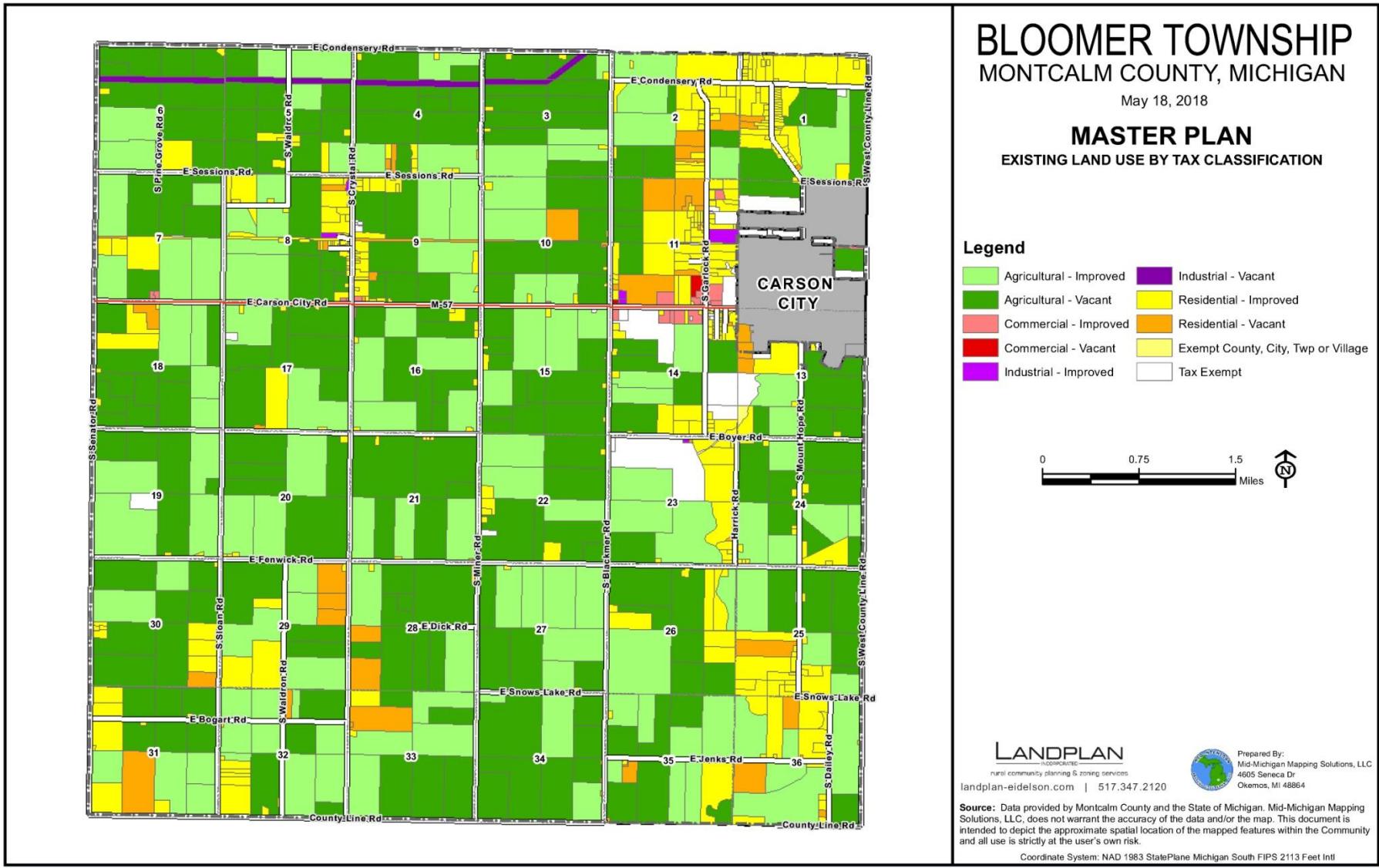
Appendix D INVENTORY MAPS

Public Roads
General Existing Land Use
Water Resources

BLOOMER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



BLOOMER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



BLOOMER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

