

# 2024 Master Plan

March 6, 2024

Prepared with assistance from

**giffels**   
webster



**WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
CLINTON COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION  
WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN, MARCH 2024**

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission has the responsibility and is empowered by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008, as amended, to make and adopt a Master Plan for the physical development of the Township and to amend the Plan as needed from time-to-time; and

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Board created the Planning Commission for the purposes stated in the in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008, as amended; and

**WHEREAS**, Watertown Charter Township has retained a professional planning consultant to assist the Planning Commission with the technical studies necessary to update the adopted Master Plan for Watertown Charter Township; and

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission has held a public hearing on its proposed amended Master Plan for the Township on January 10, 2024, at the Watertown Charter Township Hall; and

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission finds that the amended Master Plan is necessary for the continued development and the appropriate redevelopment of the physical areas of the Township;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission hereby adopts this amended Master Plan for Watertown Charter Township, dated February 21, 2024, along with the text, maps, charts, graphs, and other descriptive materials contained in the Plan, including the Future Land Use Map, and including the following attachments: Watertown Township Sanitary Sewer System Map, and Watertown Township Public Water Mains Map.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDERED**, that an attested copy of the adopted Master Plan shall be certified to the Watertown Charter Township Board of Trustees, the Clinton County Planning Commission, local utilities, and all other entities as required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008, as amended.

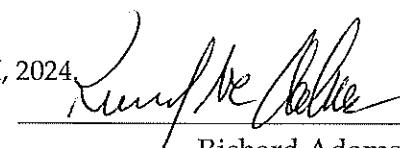
Motion by Zay, supported by Powers, to adopt Resolution No. 03-06-2024-01.

AYES: Wiesner, Powers, Ball, Adams, Openlander, Turcotte, Overton, Zay

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Davis

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 6<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH, 2024.



Richard Adams, Chair

Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission

# Acknowledgments

## Township Board of Trustees

John Maahs, Supervisor

Carolyn Brokob, Clerk

Sue Biergans, Treasurer

Chad Cooley

Todd Hufnagel

Holly Madill

Ronald Overton

## Planning Commission

Richard Adams, Chair

Beth Ball

Joseph Davis

Charles Openlander, Zoning Board of Appeals Representative

Ronald Overton, Board of Trustees Representative

Andrew Powers

Richard Turcotte

John Wiesner, Secretary

Ulrika Zay, Vice-Chair

## Township Staff

Jennifer Tubbs, Township Manager

Andrea Polverento, Planning Director

Melanie Wright, Planning & Zoning Assistant

Lisa Winans, Assistant

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# Purpose of a Master Plan

This Master Plan update represents an opportunity to affirm and update the course for new development and redevelopment in Watertown Township as identified and described in the 2016 Master Plan. This Plan contains the community's vision, goals, objectives, strategies, and opportunities, and it is intended to guide future decision-making processes related to land use and development, conservation, sustainability, and resiliency, as well as overall community quality of life.

The Master Plan addresses future land uses, community development, and other community features in a coordinated fashion. It portrays a clear statement of community goals and objectives, establishes a vision of the future, and includes plans to achieve the vision. If followed carefully, the Master Plan will have a lasting impact on the built and natural environment. Decisions made when the Plan is developed will likely be implemented over short-term, medium-term, and long-term timelines as specified in the Implementation Plan.

The Master Plan is long-range in its view and is intended to guide development in the Township over a period of 10 to 20 years, with reviews and any necessary updates occurring every five years to maintain consistency with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008. The information and concepts presented in the Master Plan are used to guide local decisions on public and private uses of land and the provision of public facilities and services. A sound Master Plan promotes a land use pattern that reflects a community's goals. It establishes long-range general policies in a coordinated and unified manner, which can be continually referred to in decision-making.

Lastly, the Master Plan aims to provide a complete picture of the historic and ongoing land use and development-related issues facing Watertown Township so that the reader has a full understanding of what is occurring within the Township.

**Frequent review and analysis of the Master Plan will strengthen the relevance and validity of local planning and zoning policies.**



# Summary of Master Plan

## THE PLACE

This section describes the Watertown Township and its context locally. It also includes a summary of how land is used as well as information about the population. It is helpful to review this section to understand where the Township is today.



Location & Context

Regional Planning Influences

Demographics

Economy and Workforce

Natural Features

Community Facilities

Existing Land Use

## THE PEOPLE

This section summarizes public input collected during the planning process. It also outlines the vision, goals and objectives for the long-term future of the Township.



Public Input Summary

Goals and Objectives

## THE PLAN

This section includes long range plans for land use and housing development within the Township and provides contextual background for a Complete Streets policy and sustainable principles. It also includes the future land use map - an illustrated guide to how land will be used in the next 10 to 15 years.



Future Land Use Plan

Housing Plan

Complete Streets

Sustainability & Resiliency

## THE PROGRAM

This section includes a zoning plan - the road map for changes needed to the Zoning Ordinance that regulates development. Action strategies that support the goals of the Plan are included with priorities and designated lead body to move implementation forward.



Zoning Plan

Action Strategies



## Location & Context

# Location & Planning Context

## Location

Watertown Township is located northwest of the City of Lansing in southern Clinton County and at the heart of the Tri-County Region (Ingham, Eaton, and Clinton Counties) (refer to “Map 1.1. Watertown Township: Location” on [page 1.3](#)). In Clinton County, the Township is bordered by Eagle Township to the west, Riley Township to the north, and DeWitt Charter Township to the east. To the south, the Township is bordered by Delta Charter Township in Eaton County. The City of Lansing and Lansing Charter Township are directly to the southeast in Ingham County.

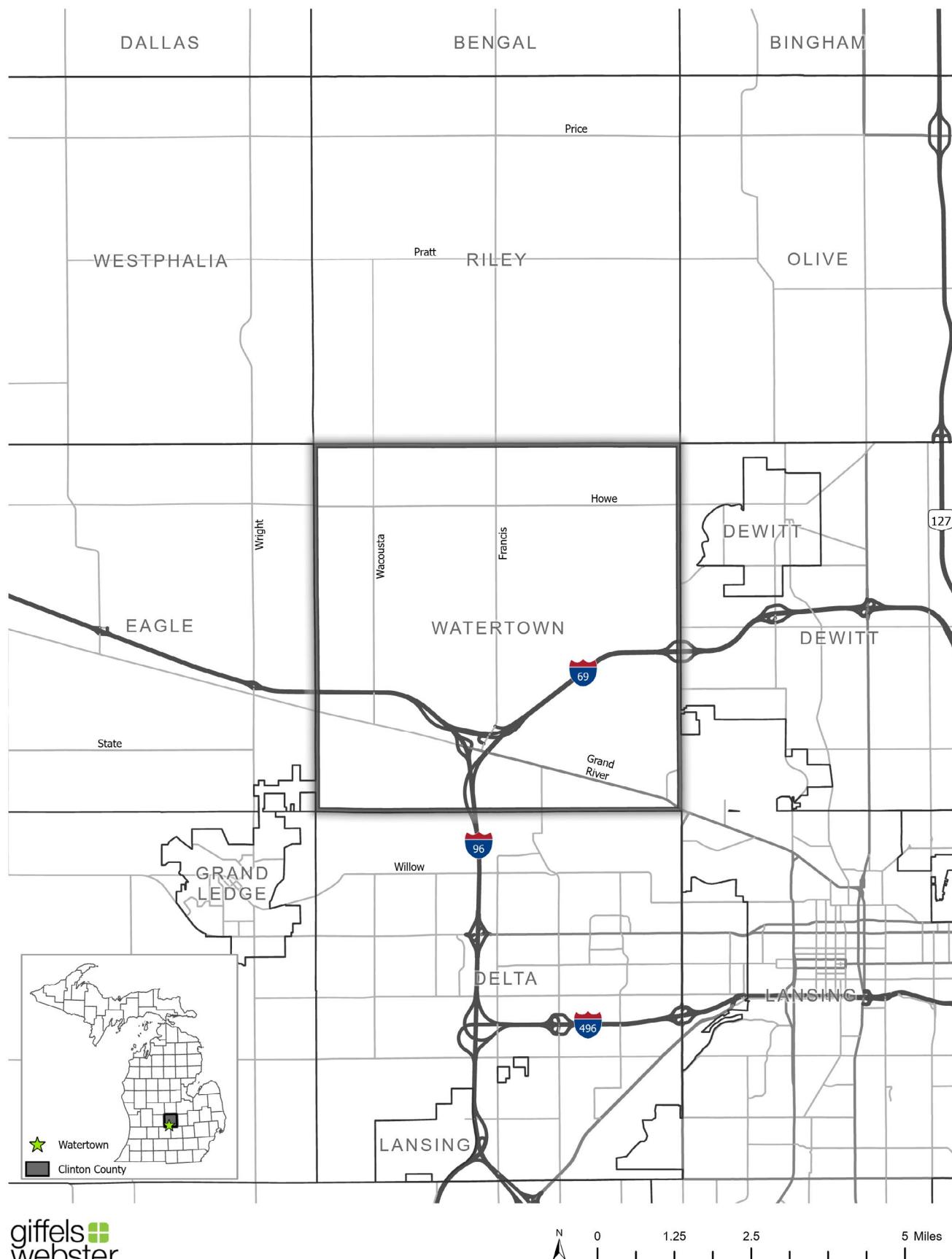
The Township is also located between the smaller cities of DeWitt and Grand Ledge. Its open spaces and natural features offer a country atmosphere for those who prefer a rural or small town setting. However, given its proximity to Lansing, the Township is well-positioned to accommodate future growth and development of the Lansing metropolitan area. Watertown Township is conveniently located between Lansing’s Capital Region International Airport to the east and Abrams Municipal Airport to the west.

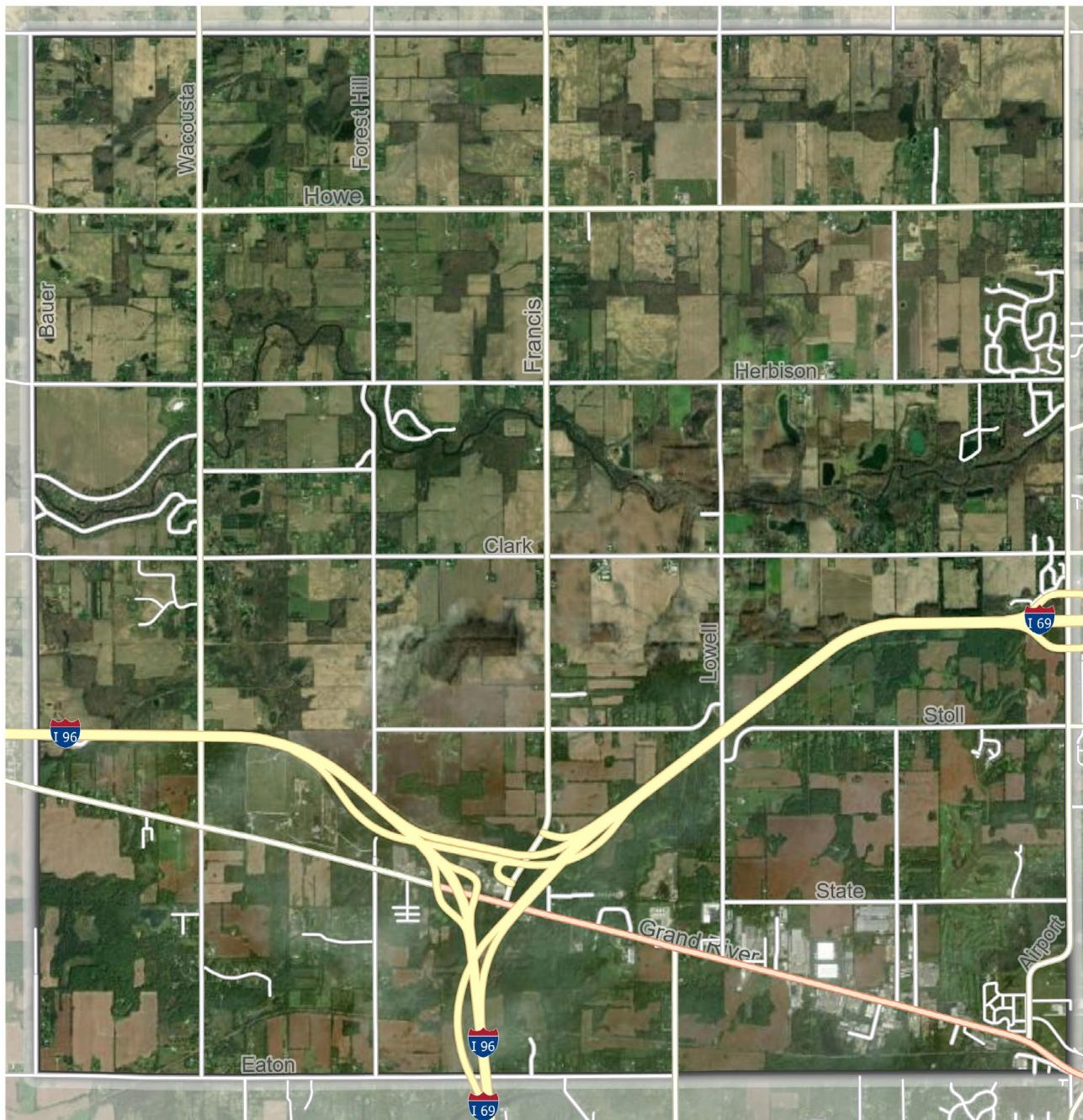
The Township is situated approximately halfway between Grand Rapids and the Detroit Metropolitan area at the intersection of Interstate 69 and Interstate 96. Its location at the crossroads of these two major interstates affords the Township a ready connection to Grand Rapids, Detroit, Flint, and Battle Creek, as well as Indiana and Illinois. Watertown Township is also uniquely positioned in the middle of the international trade route between Chicago and the Detroit and Port Huron connections to Ontario, Canada.

Five school districts serve Watertown Township: Grand Ledge Public Schools, Waverly Community Schools, DeWitt Public Schools, Lansing Public School District, and St. Johns Public Schools. Township residents are within minutes of a number of opportunities for higher education in and around the Lansing area, including Michigan State University, Lansing Community College, Cooley Law School, and Olivet College, Davenport University—Lansing, Spring Arbor University—Lansing Campus, and Central Michigan University—Lansing Center. Convenient access to Interstates 69 and 96 provides residents the ability to easily commute to additional colleges and universities.

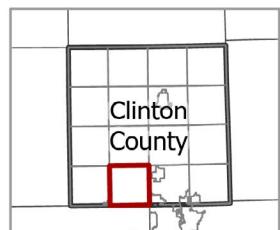
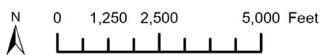


## Map 1.1. Watertown Township: Location





Imagery: Earthstar Geographics Roads: Michigan Open Data v17a. Map Exported: June 27, 2023. ©2023 Giffels Webster.



## Planning History and Context

### Previous Master Plan

Watertown Township adopted a Master Plan in 2009, which was amended in 2016.

The 2016 update refined the 2009 goals and objectives into four broad goals to facilitate improved clarity:

1. Strengthen Community Identity
2. Encourage Economic Development
3. Improve Connectivity
4. Protect the Environment

The update also retained the future land use categories from the 2009 plan, while adding a new Flexible Development category designed for specific locations within the Township that could accommodate a mixed-use or single-use development to provide flexibility in allowing future development which is compatible with existing uses.

Smart Growth principles have played a significant role in the development of previous Master Plans, and continue to inform how Watertown approaches the goals articulated in this update. The Principles of Smart Growth are provided on the following page.

### Other Plans

In 2009, the Township also adopted the Watertown Charter Township Non-Motorized Circulation Plan. The plan's mission was to develop and maintain a designated circulation route/network throughout the Township which provides safe and functional opportunities for alternative modes of transportation including, but not limited to walking, horseback riding, and bicycling, while respecting the Township's rich rural heritage. The Township identified three primary areas of focus due to their greater residential and commercial density relative to surrounding areas: Wacousta village and two residential areas along Airport Road (one north of I-69 and one south that was in the development state at the time).

In 2019, the Township adopted the 2019-2024 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to serve as a tool to guide and assist the Township's Board of Trustees, management and staff in turning long-range planning into actual improvements, identifying major capital improvements, a timeline for implementation, and budget and revenue sources for the improvements.

### Recent Planning Context

Since the 2016 update, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a considerable impact for communities everywhere. This update explores some of those impacts like remote and hybrid work becoming more prevalent, a greater need for broadband/high speed internet to serve school-aged children, working adults, and older adults, and other impacts on land use, the economy, and transportation in the Township.

The Watertown Township Board of Trustees is aware that ongoing considerations for a large-scale industrial facility are underway in Eagle Township, directly abutting the southwest corner of the Township. Watertown Township recognizes that this potential future development could have a significant impact on the future land use in that vicinity in our Township. However, given that Eagle Township and/or Clinton County had suspended consideration of the County's Future Land Use Map at the time of this plan's finalization in April 2023, Watertown Township has proceeded with the adoption of this plan assuming no large-scale industrial development is pending in that area. Watertown Township cautions all current and future landowners in the Township's southwest quadrant to keep abreast of ongoing discussions in neighboring jurisdictions when making land use decisions. In the event a significant change is made in the Future Land Use Map for Eagle Township, Watertown Township will review its Master Plan and explore any changes to the Future Land Use Map and/or supporting text that may be needed at that time.



## Principles of Smart Growth (Included in 2009 Master Plan)

**Create Walkable Neighborhoods.** Walkable communities are desirable places to live, work, learn, worship and play, and therefore a key component of smart growth.

**Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration.** Growth can create great places to live, work and play -- if it responds to a community's own sense of how and where it wants to grow.

**Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices.** Providing quality housing for people of all income levels is an integral component in any smart growth strategy.

**Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place.** Smart growth encourages communities to craft a vision and set standards for development and construction which respond to community values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation.

**Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective.** For a community to be successful in implementing smart growth, it must be embraced by the private sector.

**Mix Land Uses.** Smart growth supports the integration of mixed land uses into communities as a critical component of achieving better places to live.

**Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas.** Open space preservation supports smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, improving our communities quality of life, and guiding new growth into existing communities.

**Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices.** Providing people with more choices in housing, shopping, communities, and transportation is a key aim of smart growth.

**Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities.** Smart growth directs development towards existing communities already served by infrastructure, seeking to utilize the resources that existing neighborhoods offer, and conserve open space and irreplaceable natural resources on the urban fringe.

**Take Advantage of Compact Building Design.** Smart growth provides a means for communities to incorporate more compact building design as an alternative to conventional, land consumptive development.

Source: [www.smartgrowth.org](http://www.smartgrowth.org)

## Regional Planning Influences

# Regional Planning Influences

Factors outside of the Township's borders are essential to consider in the planning process. The long-range goals and activities of neighboring communities and the County may impact the Township's planning efforts, particularly near the Township's borders.

## Clinton County. 2022

Since its adoption in 2002, Clinton County has updated their land use plan in 2008, 2016, and 2022. The plan consists of goals, objectives, and development policies for the 13 unincorporated townships in the county. Watertown Township is not within the planning and zoning jurisdiction of the County and therefore not subject to the County Comprehensive Plan. However, Watertown Township's neighbor to the north, Riley Township, and its neighbor to the west, Eagle Township, are both covered by the County plan. Watertown Township is also considered in general as part of the review and update.

The southern border of Riley Township and the eastern border of Eagle Township, adjacent to Watertown Township, are planned for agricultural preservation, rural low-density and rural/transitional. A small area between I-96 and Grand River Avenue is planned for Mixed Use, which is described as a growth area that can accommodate retail services, offices, entertainment, mixed uses, and single-family and multiple-family residential uses.

The County's plan describes Prime Agriculture as intended for farming, large lot low-density residential, and other agricultural businesses. The transitional designation is rural land with existing low-density residential development where the land is not suitable for agricultural purposes; these areas provide a transition from agriculture to residential use. Rural-Low Residential includes rural, low-density residential areas experiencing a growth rate at one dwelling unit per acre that may offer smaller lot sizes while continuing to maintain a rural character.

## Tri-County Regional Planning Commission. 2005

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC) serves Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham County. The TCRPC prepared a Summary Report titled Regional Growth: Choices for Our Future in September 2005. This report promotes a "Wise Growth" scenario in which new development would be directed to existing urbanized areas. The adopted regional land use policy map illustrates strengthened city and village centers, focused and clustered growth areas, and minimal development in rural areas to preserve agriculture and open space.

## Delta Charter Township. 2013

The Delta Charter Township Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2013. The northern edge of Delta Township, adjacent to Watertown Township, is planned for Single-Family Residential uses (refer to Figure 4). Hawk Meadow Park, located one half mile east of Ingersol Road, is planned for Parks and Recreation use.

## DeWitt Charter Township. 2018

The DeWitt Charter Township Comprehensive Development Plan was adopted in August 2005 and updated in 2012 and 2018. The western edge of DeWitt Township, adjacent to Watertown Township, is planned for a mix of uses. The area north of the Looking Glass River is planned primarily for Single-Family Residential uses with low and medium densities. A small Neighborhood-Oriented Commercial node is planned for the southeast corner of Airport and Cutler Roads. The area south of the Looking Glass River and north of I-69 is planned for Community Oriented Commercial and Office uses. South of I-69 is planned for Medium Density Single-Family Residential uses. The southwestern portion of DeWitt Township, where the Capital Region International Airport is located, is planned for Institutional and Airport Commercial uses.



## Capital Region International Airport. 2006

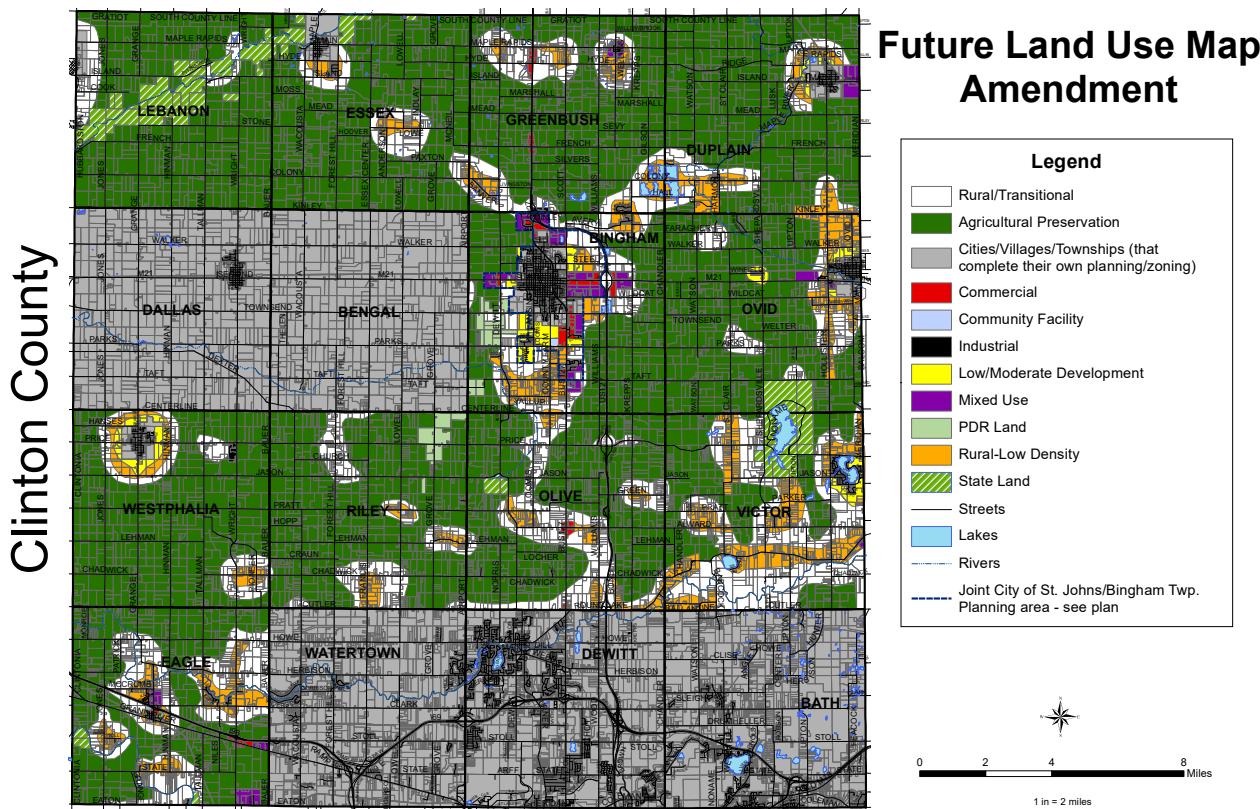
The Capital City Airport Master Plan was developed in 2006 by the Capital Region Airport Authority. The Plan establishes a preferred alternative for future facility improvement and expansion to meet forecasted aviation activity at the airport. The recommended Airport Development alternative illustrates “future” and “ultimate” improvements that include construction of a new passenger terminal complex and additional parking facilities, extension of existing runways, construction of a new runway, and expansion of cargo and general aviation areas and facilities. Future improvements include those planned for the short-term to meet current demand as well as those planned for the long-term to meet expected demand in the next five to 20 years. Ultimate improvements, such as a new runway, are those for which a demand is not foreseen within the planning period but that could materialize with increased demand or beyond the planning period.

### **Recommended land use and zoning controls.**

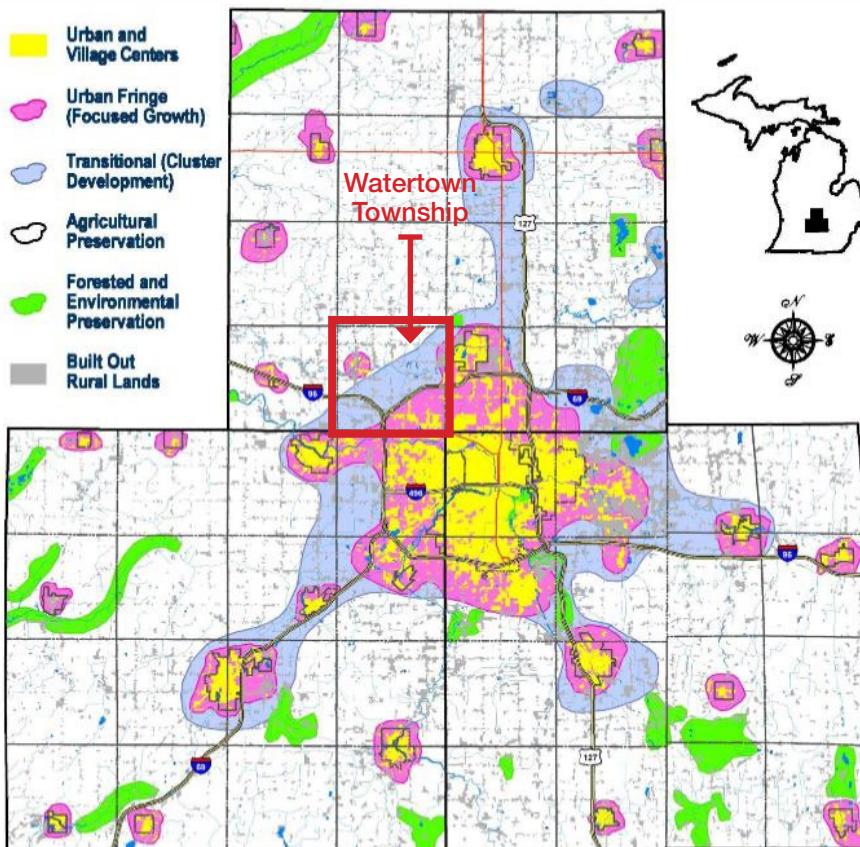
The Airport Master Plan defined recommended land uses for the area surrounding the airport to promote compatible development in the airport environment. The Capital Region Airport Authority has also adopted the Capital City Airport Zoning Ordinance to provide additional safety and protection to the users of the airport and to the people who live and work in its vicinity. This ordinance defines off-airport height zoning necessary to protect the navigable airspace surrounding the airport. This height zoning is overlay zoning to existing zoning defined by the local government agencies. The existing development west of the Capital Region International Airport along S. Airport Road includes low density single-family large lots, the 27-hole Royal Scot Golf Course and bowling alley, and Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens. The Airport Master Plan proposes a potential runway expansion of southwest area of W. Stoll Road and S. Airport Road intersection.



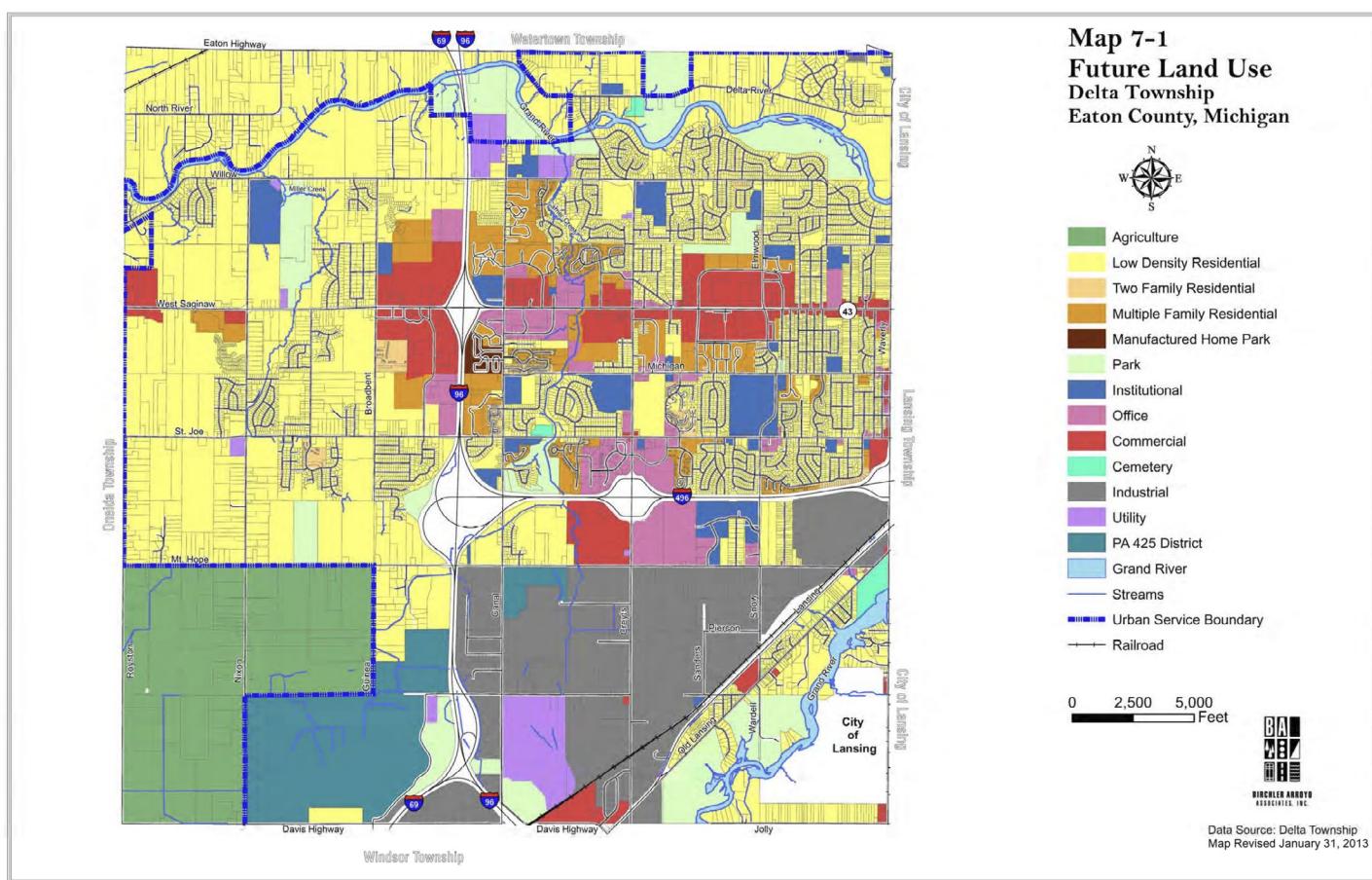
Map 1.3. Clinton County: 2022 Future Land Use Map



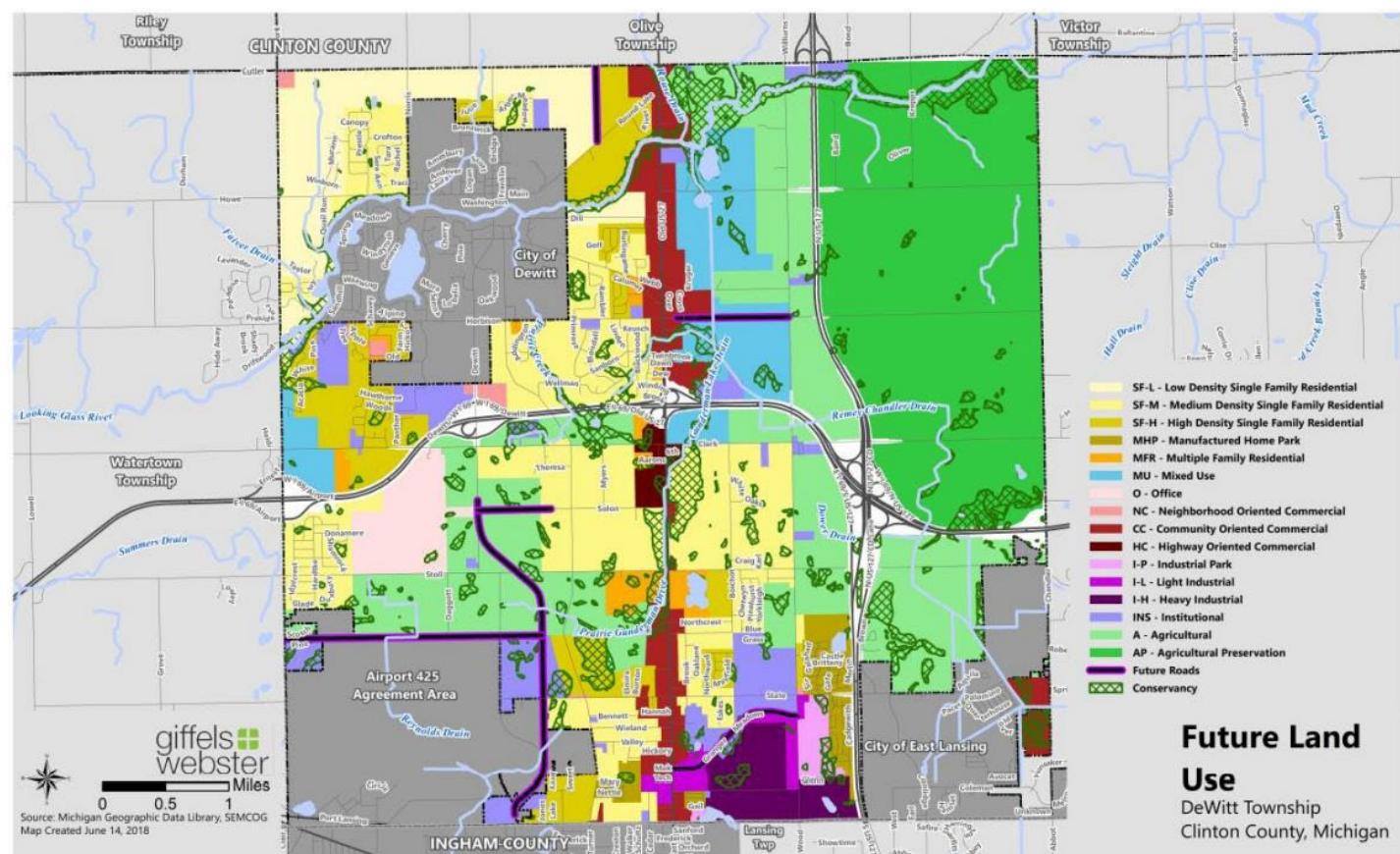
Map 1.4. Tri-County: 2005 Adopted Regional Policy Map



Map 1.5. Delta Township: 2012 Future Land Use Map

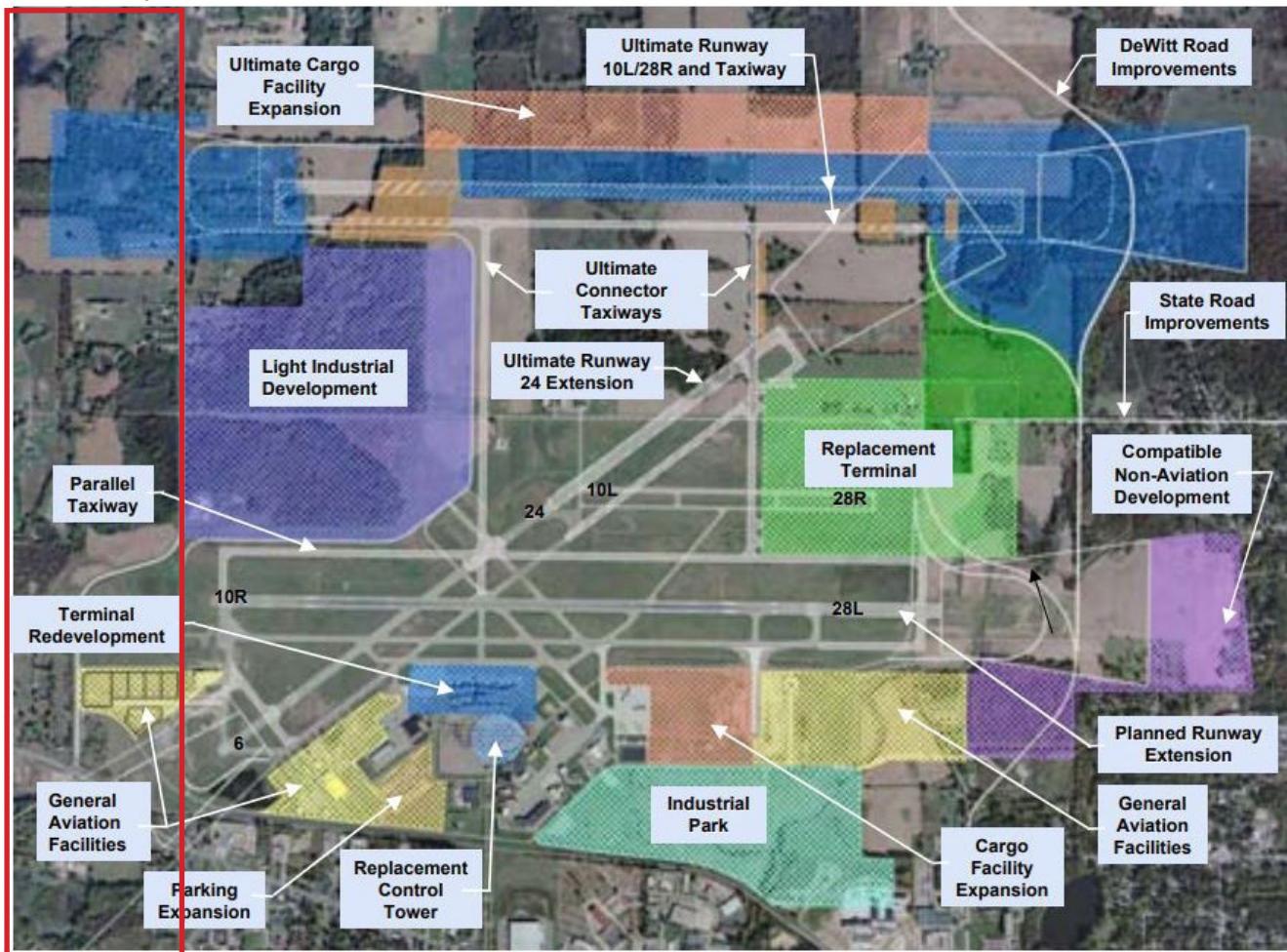


Map 1.6. DeWitt Township: 2018 Future Land Use Map



Map 1.7. Capital Region International Airport: Preferred Development Alternative

## Watertown Township



Source: Capital City Airport Master Plan Update

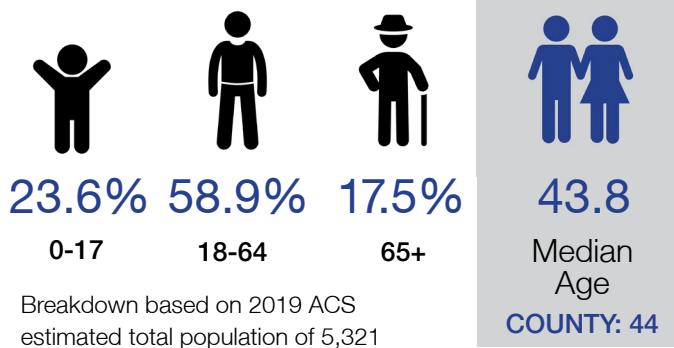


## Demographics

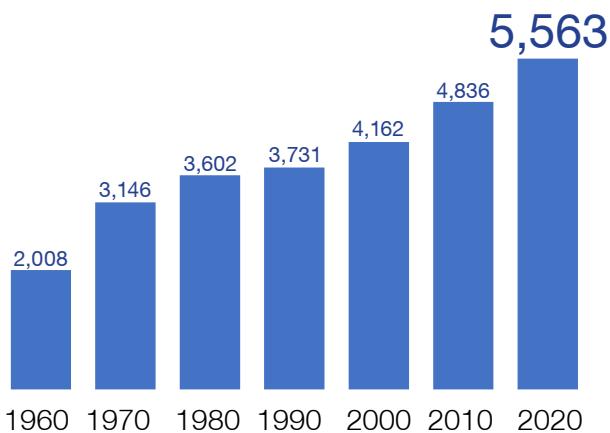
# Demographics

Understanding the demographics of a community is vital to sound policy making and planning. Demographics inform the trends in population, aging, migration, local economies, and much more. Master Plans rely on demographic analysis to better prepare for the issues and demands facing a community in the present and the future. The demographic makeup of a community contains valuable information that affects the types of resources, programming, and physical infrastructure required to meet the needs of residents and businesses.

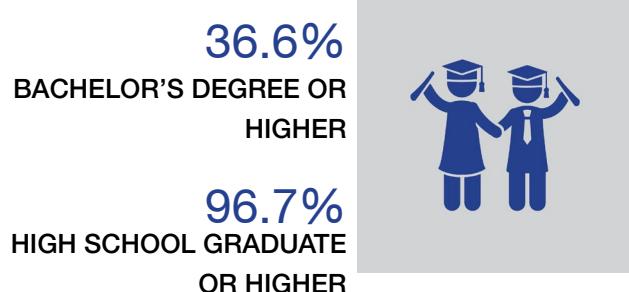
## POPULATION AGE



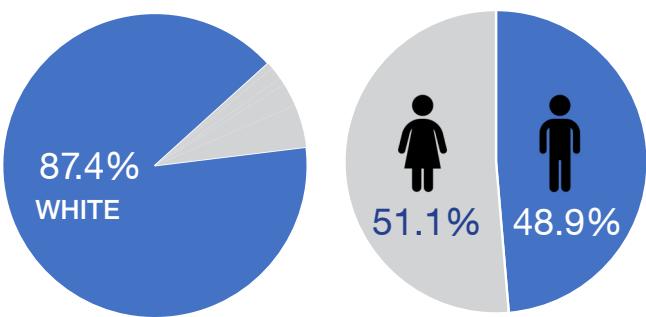
## POPULATION GROWTH



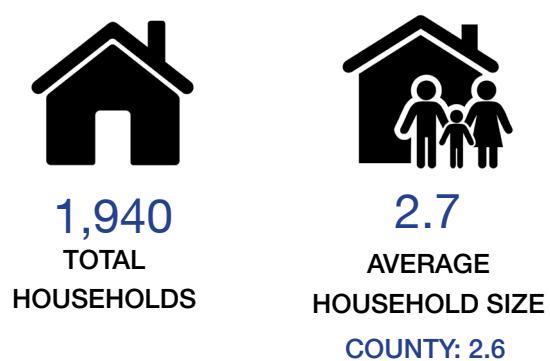
## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



## POPULATION RACE & GENDER



## HOUSEHOLDS



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates



## Population

Proper planning for the future must consider the composition of the population and consider its likely future composition. Understanding where Watertown Township has been and where it is likely to go is essential to projecting future needs.

Based on the 2020 US Census, Watertown Township has a total population of 5,563. At the time this plan was prepared, the complete dataset was not yet available. Therefore, the latest demographics information that is used in the following sections is largely taken from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates, which is a representative sample.

### Population Trends

Compared to the state of Michigan, Clinton County has been growing at a significantly larger rate in the last 20 years. While the state has only seen an annual 1.4% increase in population, Clinton County's population has increased 22.2% and Watertown Township increased 34.4% in that time, with an average annual growth rate of 1.49%.

Table 1.1. Population Trends (2000 - 2020)

Community	2000	2010	2020	Average Annual Growth Rate
Watertown Township	4,140	4,836	5,563	1.49%
Clinton County	64,753	75,382	79,128	1.01%
Michigan	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331	0.07%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census

Like many communities in Michigan, Watertown Township saw a rapid increase in its older age groups. The Township also had a fairly large increase in school-aged children in the early half of the decade which has settled at 19%, suggesting a need to plan for those populations.

Table 1.2. Watertown Township: Age (2010- 2019)

Characteristic	2010	2015	2019
Median age	41.5	44.3	43.8
Ages 65+ (%)	12.8	14.5	17.5
Ages 5 to 17 (%)	13.8	19.2	19.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

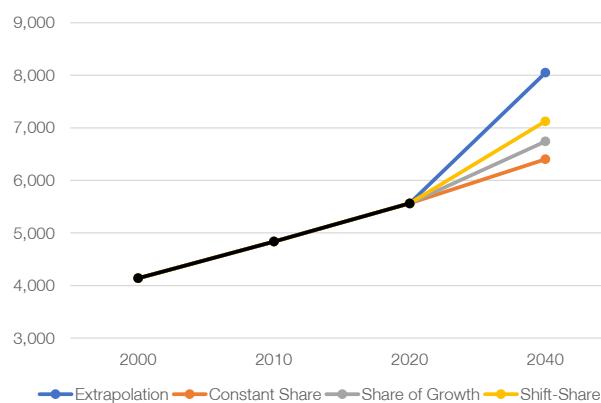
### Population Forecast

According to the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, the projected population for 2045 is 5,602. This estimate suggests the population growth of the Township would slow or decline by the year 2045. However, using population numbers from the Census in 2000, 2010, and 2020 and a projected population estimate for Clinton County in the year 2045 from the State of Michigan's Department of Technology, Management and Budget's report, "Michigan Population Projections by County through 2045," four common projection methods were used to calculate projection estimates for Watertown Township in 2045:

- Extrapolation: This method assumes future growth will occur at the average historic annual percent change rate, resulting in a population of 8,048.
- Constant-share: This method assumes the Township's share of the County's population will grow at the 2020 level, resulting in a population of 6,400.
- Share-of-growth: This method assumes the Township's share of the County's population will grow along with the share from 2000 to 2020, resulting in a population of 6,741.
- Shift-share (Township's share of the county's population will change by the same annual amount as the average annual percent change from 2000 to 2020), 7,125 people.

The availability of a range of housing options for residents of all ages and at all income levels will be a key factor in extrapolating and anticipating future population growth.

Figure 1.1. Watertown Township: Population Projection



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census & State of Michigan's Department of Technology, Management and Budget; projections prepared by Giffels Webster



## Surrounding Communities

The demographic composition of Watertown Township incorporates data about race, age, housing, population trends, income, education, and employment. This section compares the Township's demographic characteristics to neighboring townships that share a border with Watertown Township and the cities of Lansing, DeWitt, and Grand Ledge.

**Table 1.3. Surrounding Communities: Population Growth (2000-2020)**

Community	2000	2010	2020	Percent Change 2000 to 2010	Percent Change 2010 to 2020
Michigan	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331	-0.6%	2.0%
Clinton County	64,753	75,382	79,128	16.4%	5.0%
DeWitt (city)	4,843	4,507	4,776	-6.9%	6.0%
DeWitt Township	12,044	14,321	15,073	18.9%	5.3%
Eagle Township	2,313	2,671	2,776	15.5%	3.9%
Riley Township	1,767	2,024	2,020	14.5%	-0.2%
<b>Watertown Township</b>	<b>4,140</b>	<b>4,836</b>	<b>5,563</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>
Delta Township, Eaton County	29,757	32,408	33,119	8.9%	2.2%
Lansing (city), Ingham County	114,070	109,563	107,637	-4.0%	-1.8%
Grand Ledge (city), Eaton and Clinton County	7,810	7,786	7,784	-0.3%	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

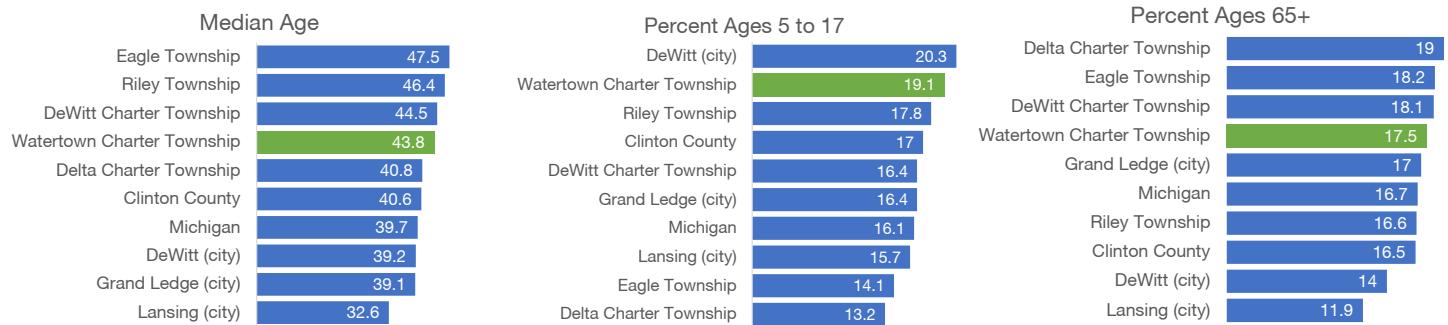
## Population Growth

Watertown Township and the surrounding townships have experienced growth since 2000, especially from 2000 to 2010, which is contrary to the statewide rate and its population decline. The population growth slowed in the ensuing decade, where Watertown Township's growth rate outpaced other communities.

## Older and Young Adult Populations

Compared to surrounding communities, the Township has more children as well as a higher percentage of older residents. The population is aging and planning for the future should consider the needs of both ends of the age spectrum.

**Figure 1.2. Surrounding Communities: Median Age and Older/Young Adults (2019)**



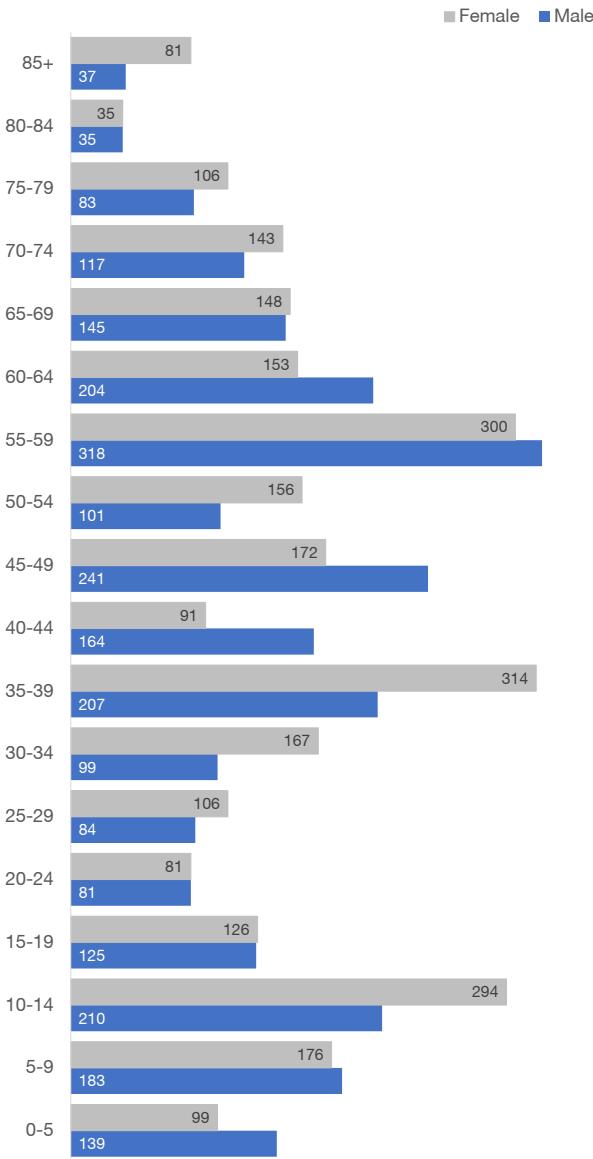
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates



## Population Cohort Analysis

It is essential to understand the population's composition by age and sex to have proper insight into demographic conditions and socio-economic trends.

Figure 1.3. Watertown Township: Population Distribution by Age and Sex (2019)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

## Race

As of 2020, the racial composition in the Township is predominantly white at 87.4%. Overall, Michigan and the nearest major city, Lansing, are much more diverse. The Township has become slightly more diverse in the last decade, however, the Hispanic population has decreased in that time. Watertown Township's racial distribution is consistent with most of the surrounding townships and the county.



87.4%  
White

Table 1.4. Watertown Township: Race (2010-2019)

Race and Hispanic Origin	2010		2020		Percent Change 2010-2019
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
Non-Hispanic	4,644	96.0%	5,318	95.6%	-0.4%
White	4,415	91.3%	4,864	87.4%	-3.9%
Black	64	1.3%	84	1.5%	0.2%
Asian	62	1.3%	96	1.7%	0.4%
Multi-racial	83	1.7%	254	4.6%	2.9%
Other	20	0.4%	20	0.4%	0.0%
Hispanic	423	8.7%	245	4.4%	-4.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,836</b>		<b>5,563</b>		

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010 - 2020



## Households

As of 2019, there were a total of 1,940 households in Watertown Township. The average household size of 2.7 is somewhat higher than surrounding suburban communities.

**Table 1.5. Surrounding Communities: Average Household Size (2000 - 2019)**

Community	2000	2010	2019
Riley Township	2.9	2.8	2.8
Eagle Township	2.8	2.6	2.8
<b>Watertown Township</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.7</b>
DeWitt (city)	2.9	2.6	2.6
Clinton County	2.7	2.6	2.6
DeWitt Township	2.5	2.5	2.5
Michigan	2.6	2.5	2.5
Lansing (city)	2.4	2.3	2.4
Delta Township	2.3	2.3	2.2
Grand Ledge (city)	2.4	2.3	2.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

**Table 1.6. Surrounding Communities: Number of Households (2000 - 2019)**

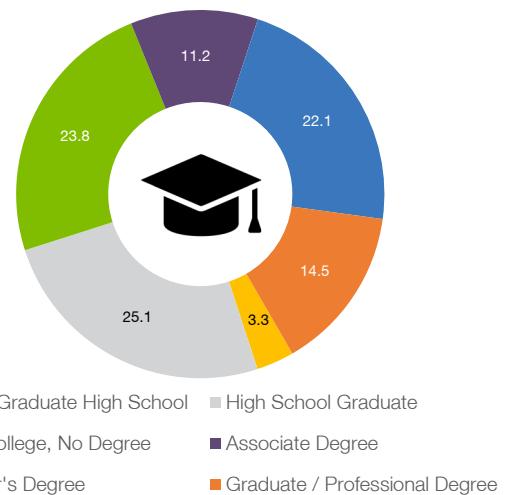
Community	2000	2010	2019
Michigan	3,785,661	3,843,997	3,935,041
Lansing (city)	47,551	46,436	47,037
Clinton County	23,653	28,321	29,728
Delta Township	12,559	14,105	14,738
DeWitt Township	4,839	5,797	6,017
Grand Ledge (city)	3,262	3,490	3,634
<b>Watertown Township</b>	<b>1,469</b>	<b>1,871</b>	<b>1,940</b>
DeWitt (city)	1,624	1,685	1,785
Eagle Township	848	1,023	968
Riley Township	611	683	685

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

## Educational Attainment

Higher levels of educational attainment lead individuals to more career opportunities. More advanced skill sets can benefit the quality of a community's labor pool and make communities more economically prosperous. In the Township, residents 25 years and older have higher than average rates of educational attainment compared to neighboring communities.

**Figure 1.4. Watertown Township: Educational Attainment (2019)**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates



1| THE PLACE

## Economy & Workforce

# Economy and Workforce

Identifying trends in employment can help a community project future need for land for certain use categories and assess potential opportunities for economic development. This section provides a brief overview of the Township's existing economic base.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates

## WORKFORCE



**3,150**  
TOTAL JOBS

### TOP 5 INDUSTRIES (2018)

- 47% MANUFACTURING
- 11% WHOLESALE TRADE
- 9% CONSTRUCTION
- 6% TRANSPORTATION AND WAREHOUSING
- 6% RETAIL TRADE

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, OnTheMap 2018

## INCOME



**\$82,542**  
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

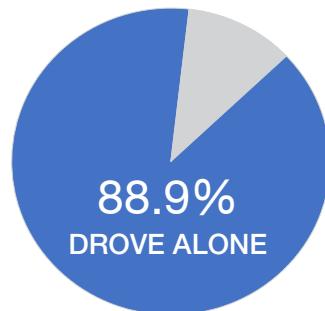


**4.1%**  
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



**3.7%**  
POVERTY RATE

## TRANSPORTATION

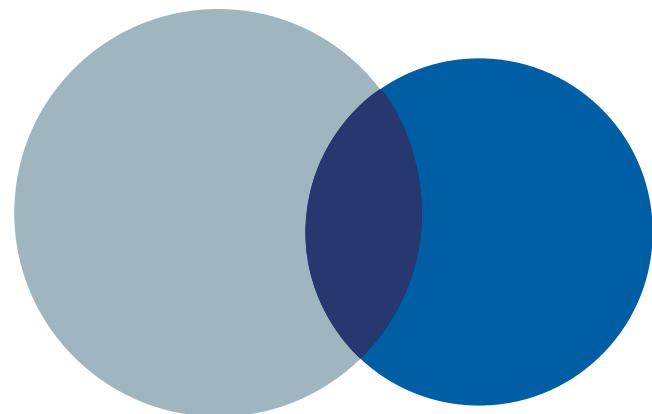


**26.2**

AVERAGE COMMUTE  
TIME IN MINUTES

COUNTY: 24.6

## INFLOW-OUTFLOW



3,000 - Employed in Watertown Township, live outside  
2,471 - Live in Watertown Township, employed outside  
150 - Employed and live in Watertown Township

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, OnTheMap 2018



## Industry and Employment

In 2018, Watertown Township produced a total of 3,150 jobs. The chart below shows the distribution of employment sectors for the Township. Manufacturing is the major contributor to the Township economy accounting for almost half of all jobs (47%). This is consistent with the existing land use distribution within the Township, with industrial areas concentrated in the southeast corner of the Township.

A total of 2,621 residents are employed. Of these, only about 150 are employed within the Township. In the past decade, the unemployment rate in the Township was at its peak in 2015 (8.1%). It has been steadily decreasing since that time.

Table 1.7. Watertown Township: Employment Sectors

NAICS Industry Sector	2018	
	Count	Percent Share
Manufacturing	1,487	47%
Wholesale Trade	341	11%
Construction	295	9%
Transportation and Warehousing	195	6%
Retail Trade	187	6%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	136	4%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	111	4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	100	3%
Accommodation and Food Services	86	3%
Public Administration	51	2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	45	1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	42	1%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	31	1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	26	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,150</b>	

Figure 1.5. Watertown Township: Job Distribution (2018)

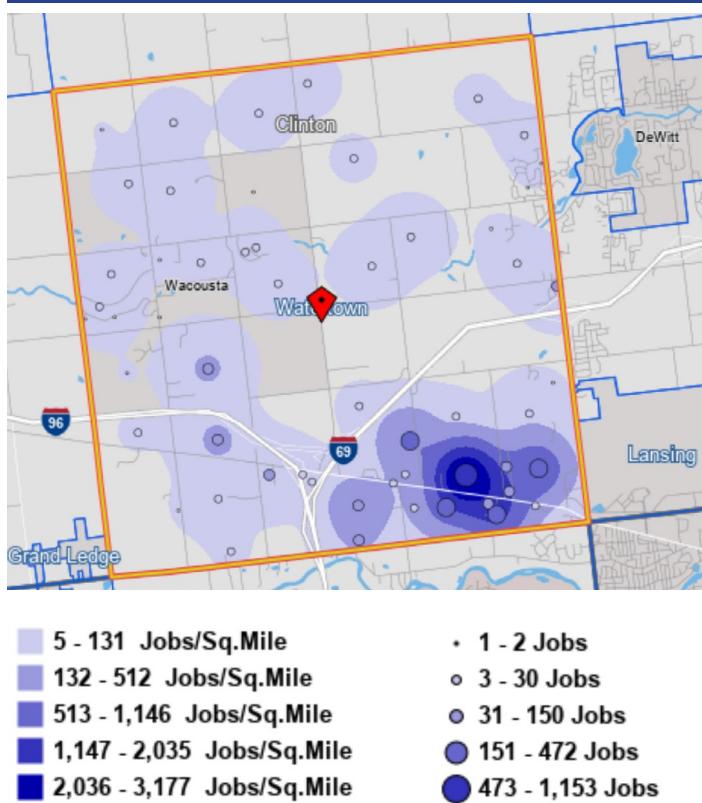
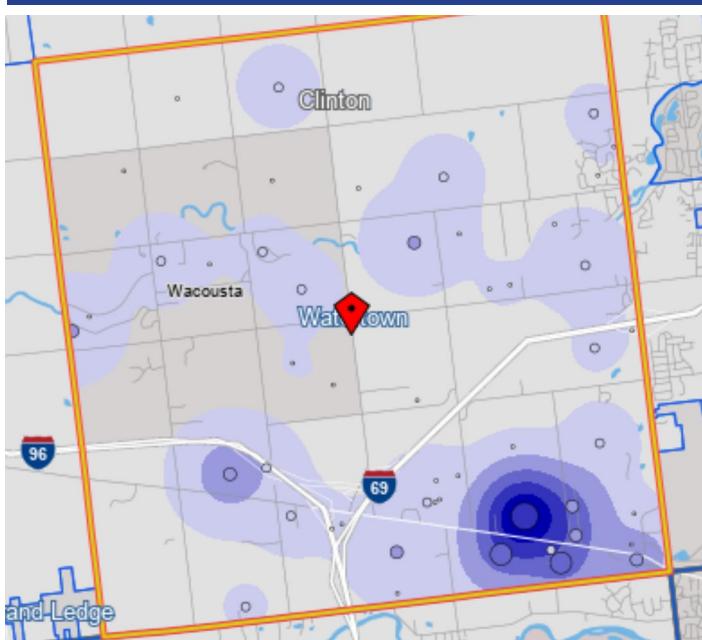


Figure 1.6. Watertown Township: Job Distribution (2010)



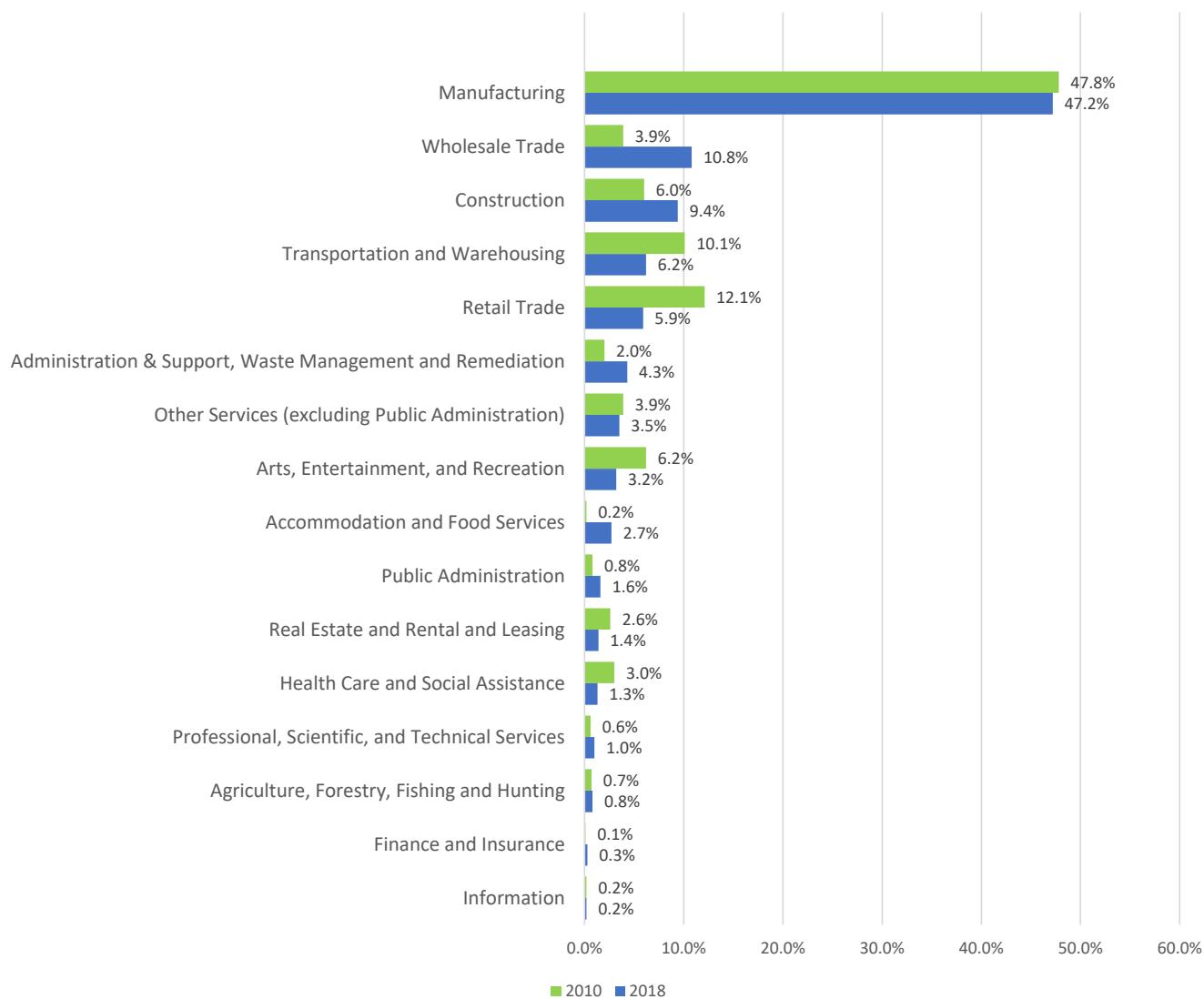
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, OnTheMap 2018



## Industry Sector Growth Pattern

The distribution of jobs within various industry sectors in the Township stayed relatively consistent between 2000 and 2018. The retail industry decreased in its share while others picked up slightly. The manufacturing sector continues to be the dominant industry for jobs in the Township.

Figure 1.7. Watertown Township: Industry Sector Growth Patterns (2010-2018)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, OnTheMap 2018

## Workforce

Median household income is one of the important metrics in determining the standard of living in a community. The median household income of the Township is \$82,542 with a poverty rate at 3.7%.

**Table 1.8. Watertown Township: Resident Workers Profile Summary**

Characteristic	Number of Workers	Percentage
<b>Age Distribution</b>		
Age 29 or younger	529	20%
Age 30 to 54	1,426	54%
Age 55 or older	666	25%
<b>Salary Distribution</b>		
\$1,250 per month or less	491	19%
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	634	24%
More than \$3,333 per month	1,496	57%
<b>Sex Distribution</b>		
Male	1,255	48%
Female	1,366	52%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
Less than high school	143	6%
High school or equivalent, no college	520	20%
Some college or Associate's degree	747	29%
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	682	26%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, OnTheMap 2018*

## Transportation

In Watertown Township, the primary mode of travel to work is by personal vehicle (approximately 89%) which is similar to national trends. In 2018, the mean travel time for Watertown Township residents is about 26.2 minutes, which is less than the County mean (24.6) and similar to national mean (26.1).

As noted previously, almost 95% of the jobs in the Township are held by non-residents, with most residents employed outside the Township.



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## Natural Features

# Natural Features

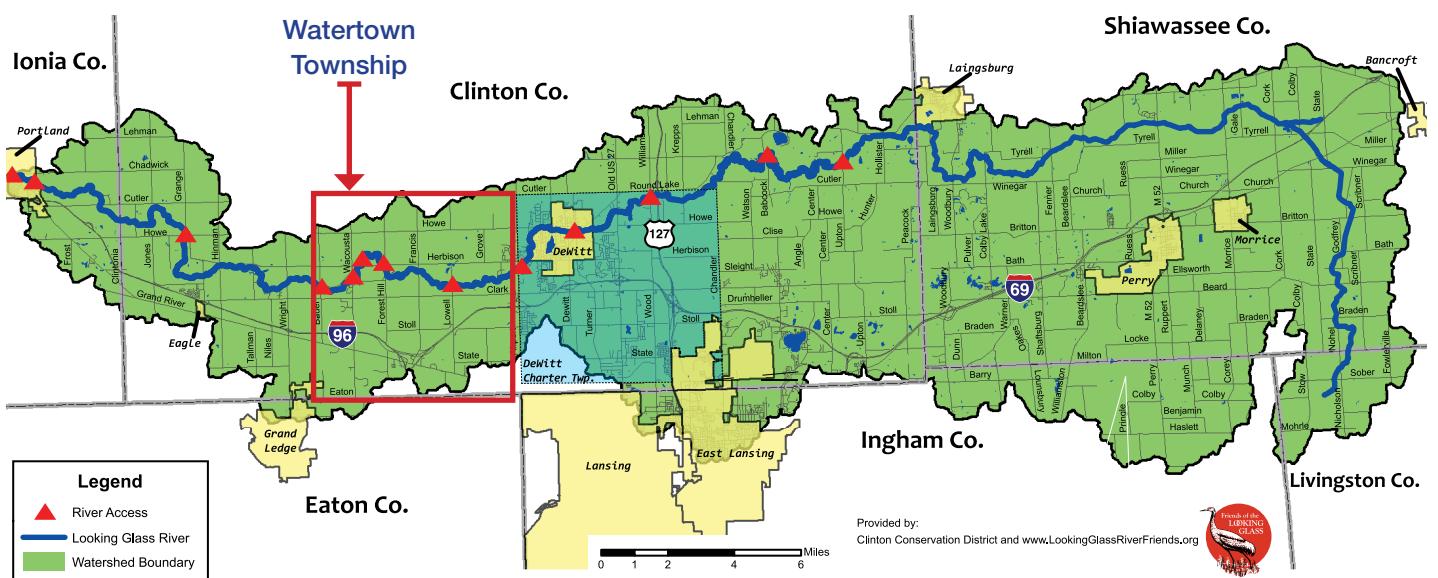
Natural features of a community impact land use planning. Bodies of water, soil types, woodlands, and topography determine the types of developments that are appropriate and supportable. An in-depth understanding of natural features allows decision-makers to put in place plans that can preserve biodiversity and ecosystems while ensuring that development is safe and sustainable. The location of natural features also determines where development can occur within the community without harming the physical environment.

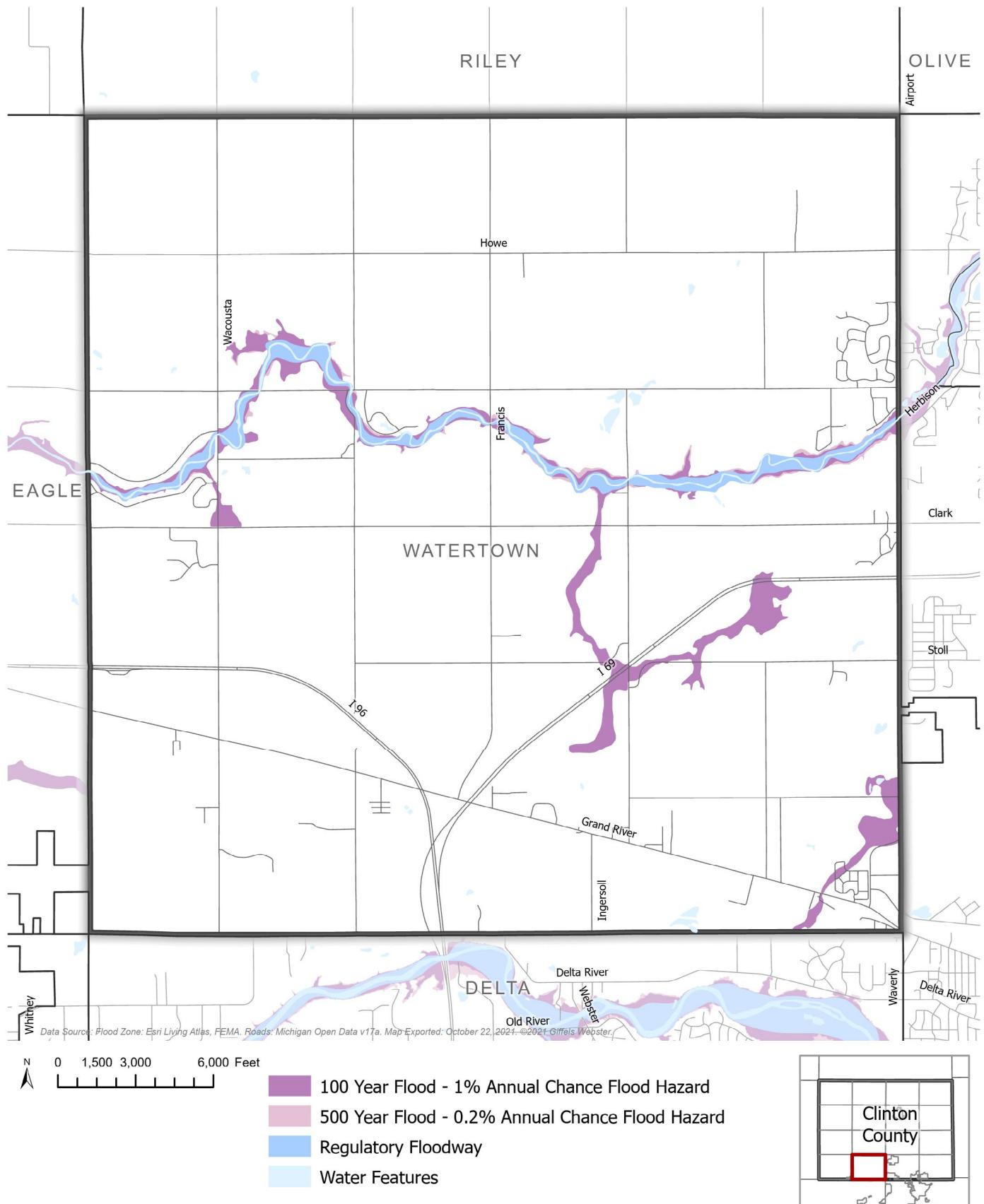
# Rivers and Watersheds

Mapping watersheds, wetlands and other water bodies helps communities identify which areas of a community may need protection to ensure proper storage and drainage of water. In Watertown Township, the Looking Glass watershed encompasses the majority of the Township.

The Looking Glass River is a significant scenic and riparian resource that runs through the Township. The headwaters of the Looking Glass River lie far to the east in Livingston County, and the river discharges into the Grand River in downtown Portland (Ionia County).

### Map 1.8. The Looking Glass River and Watershed





## 100- AND 500- YEAR FLOOD HAZARD

WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP



## Wetlands

Wetlands are present through the Township, but are predominantly located in the vicinity of the Looking Glass River.

There are various types of wetlands (e.g., emergent, shrub-scrub, floodplain forested, etc.), which can range in quality and be important in determining and leveraging protection of high-quality wetlands.

Generally, wetlands contribute to the following:

- Protect downstream water supplies and provide clean ground water as a result of nutrient retention and sediment removal. Wetland vegetation traps these sediments and pollutants, thereby preventing them from being deposited in surface water bodies.
- Function as effective natural storage basins for floodwater. Wetlands can be considered large sponges that absorb large quantities of seasonal precipitation, gradually releasing it when the receiving channels are able to accept it.
- Protect the shoreline from erosion caused by wind and wave action and effectively serve as environmental shock absorbers.

## Woodlands

The total tree canopy density within the Township is approximately 20 percent, mostly located within the river corridor. Preservation and expansion of the tree canopy (in non-agricultural areas) is important for environmental, aesthetic and economic reasons, and the effects of development on existing woodlands in the Township should be minimized.

## Soil

Soil characteristics contribute to the suitability of land to support various types of land uses, including roads, buildings, utilities and agriculture.

- **Bearing Capacity.** The ability to support the weight of roads, buildings or vehicles.
- **Erodibility/Stability.** The susceptibility of the soils to erosion hazards and the ability to accept weight without causing mass movement such as mud flows and slides.
- **Drainage.** The capacity of soils to receive and shed water. This characteristic is especially important for determining the ability of soils to absorb stormwater. Soil drainage characteristics are influenced by particle composition and water content.
- **Resource Value.** The economic worth of the soil for agricultural purposes, or as a fill or mined material.

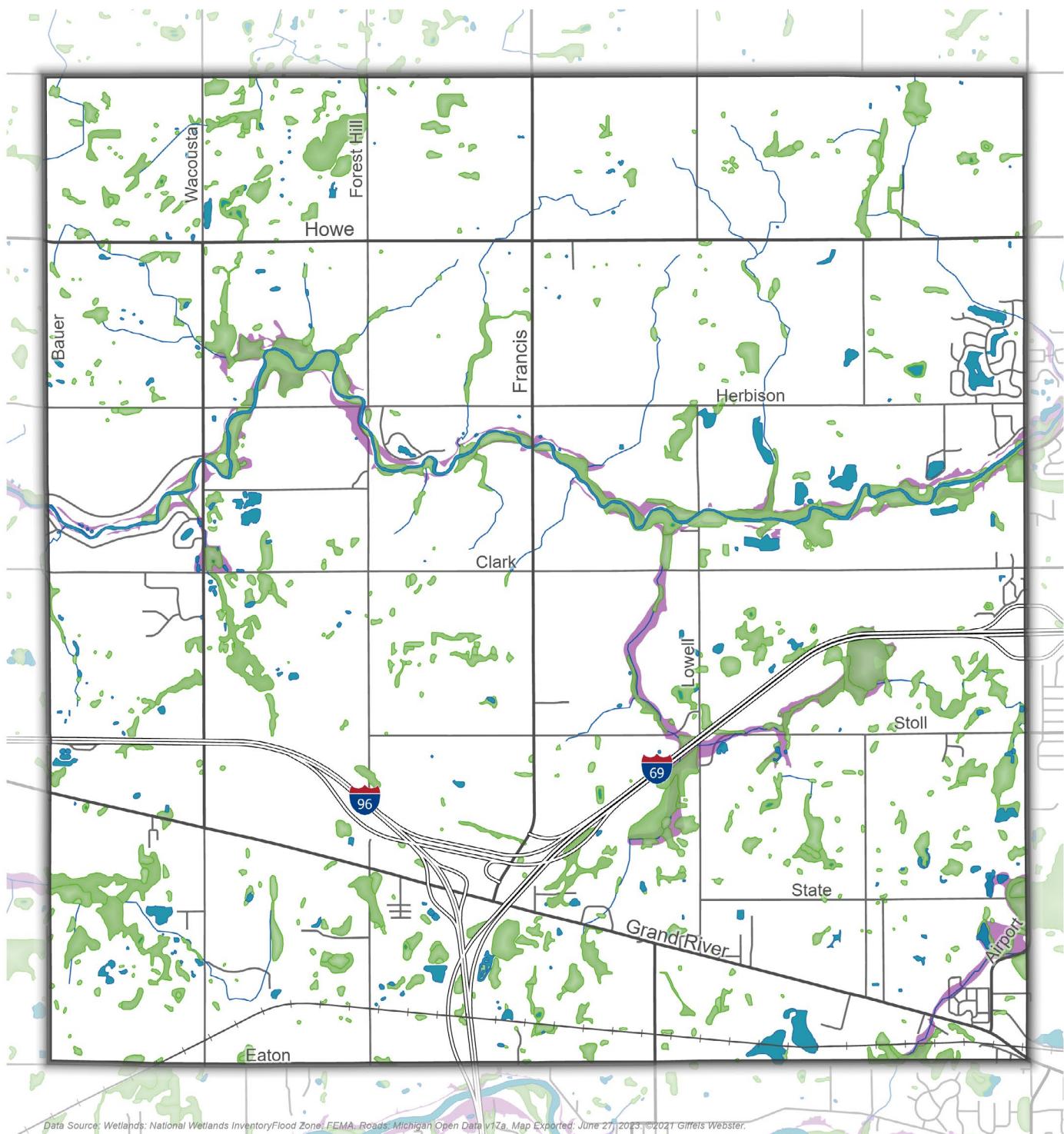
## Quaternary Geology

The Township's geological makeup impacts how groundwater is affected and how the land will interact with the built environment. The majority of the Township is composed of end of moraines of medium-textured till. The area surrounding Looking Glass River is glacial outwash sand/gravel and post-glacial alluvium. The rest of the Township includes medium-textured glacial till.

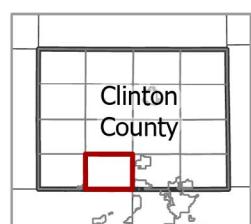
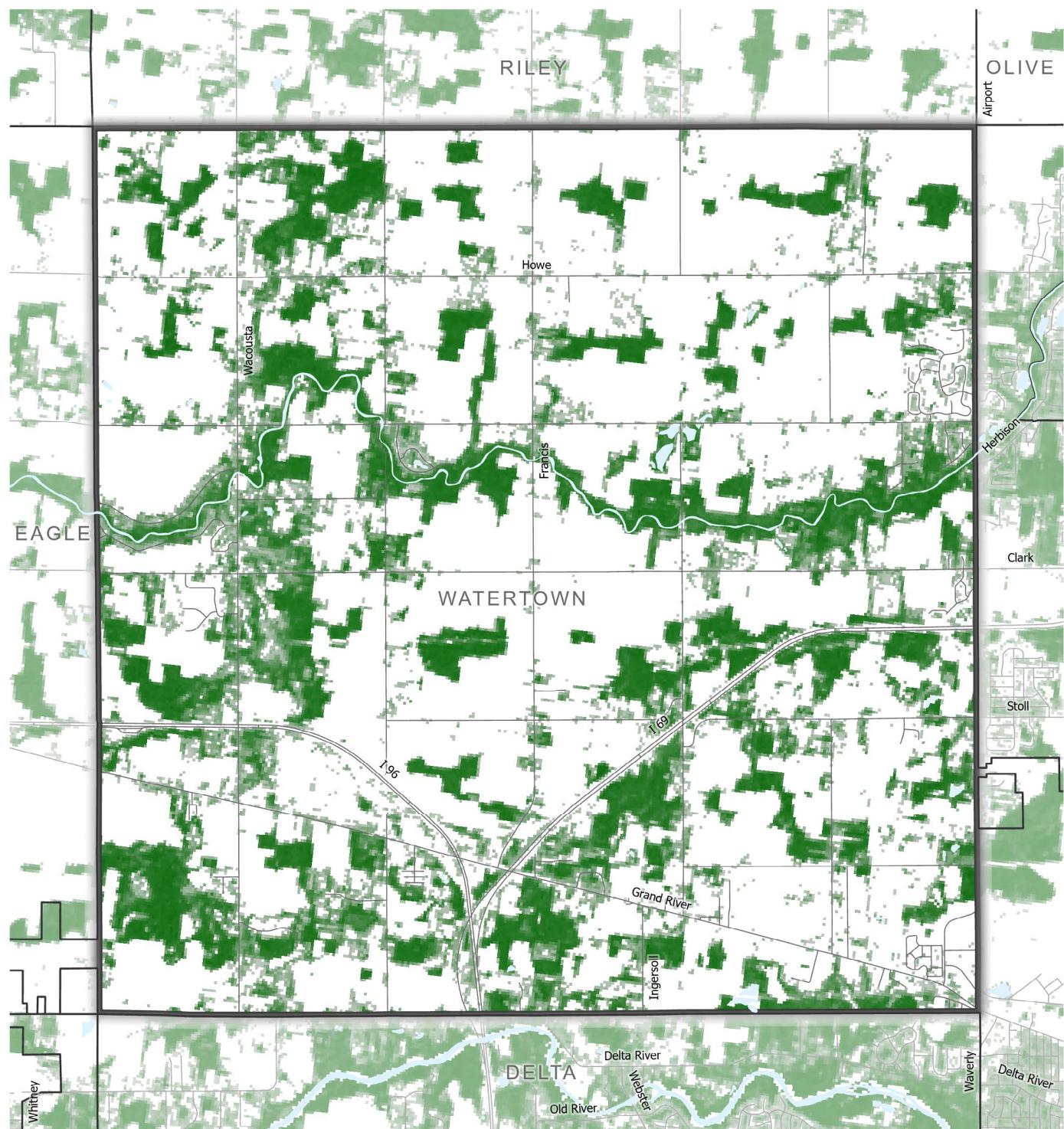
In 2022, a Groundwater Quality Report for Watertown Charter Township was conducted by collecting samples from 21 wells to assess their condition. The Township will be able to use the results of the report to make planning decisions about groundwater/well water quality in the coming years.

The following pages include maps that provide an overview of some of the major natural features in the Township. As development occurs, the Township should consider the impacts to important natural features.



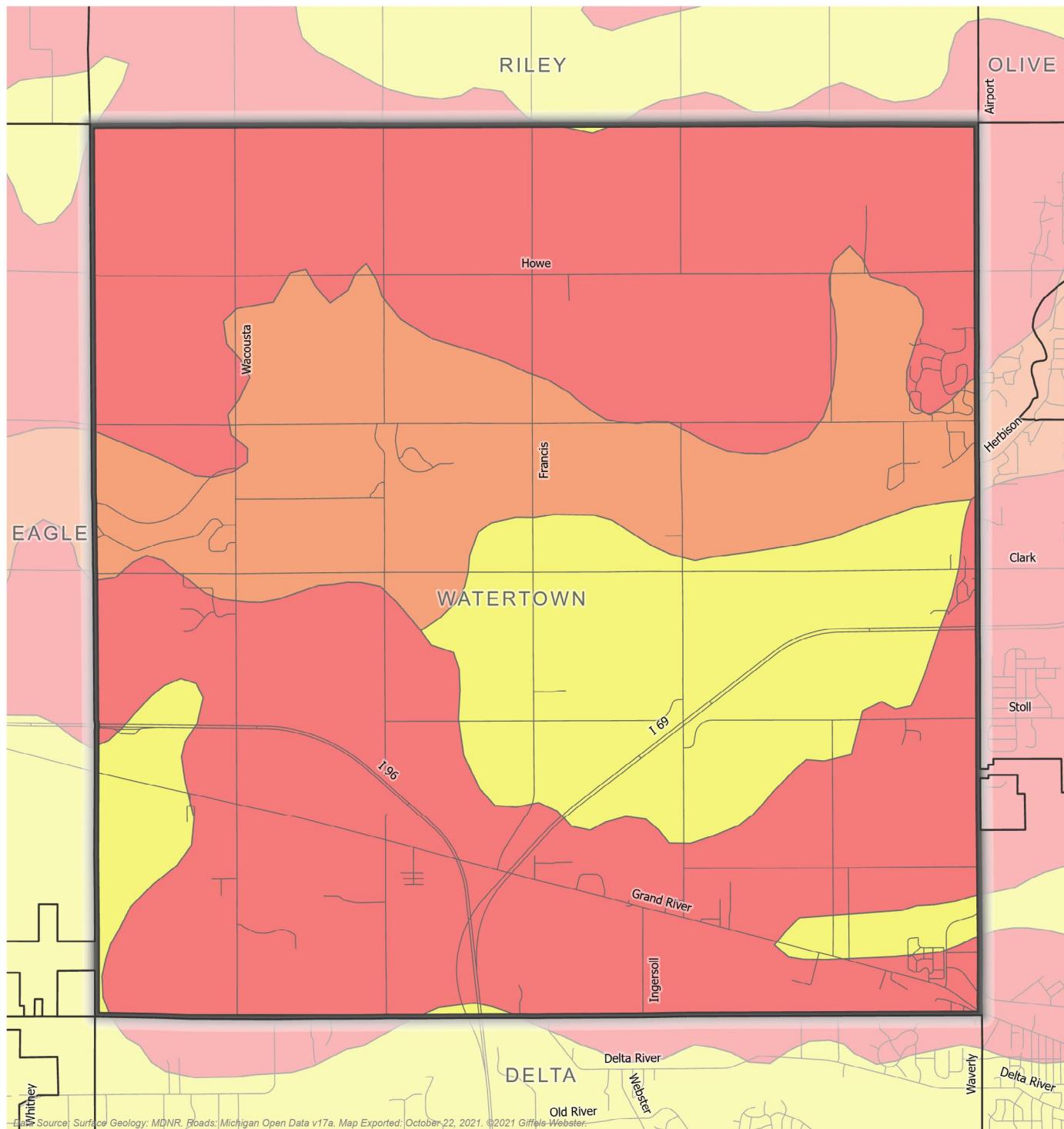


Map 1.11. Watertown Township: Tree Canopy

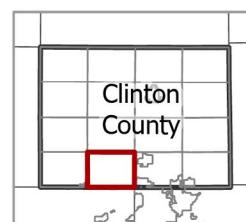


## TREE CANOPY

WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP



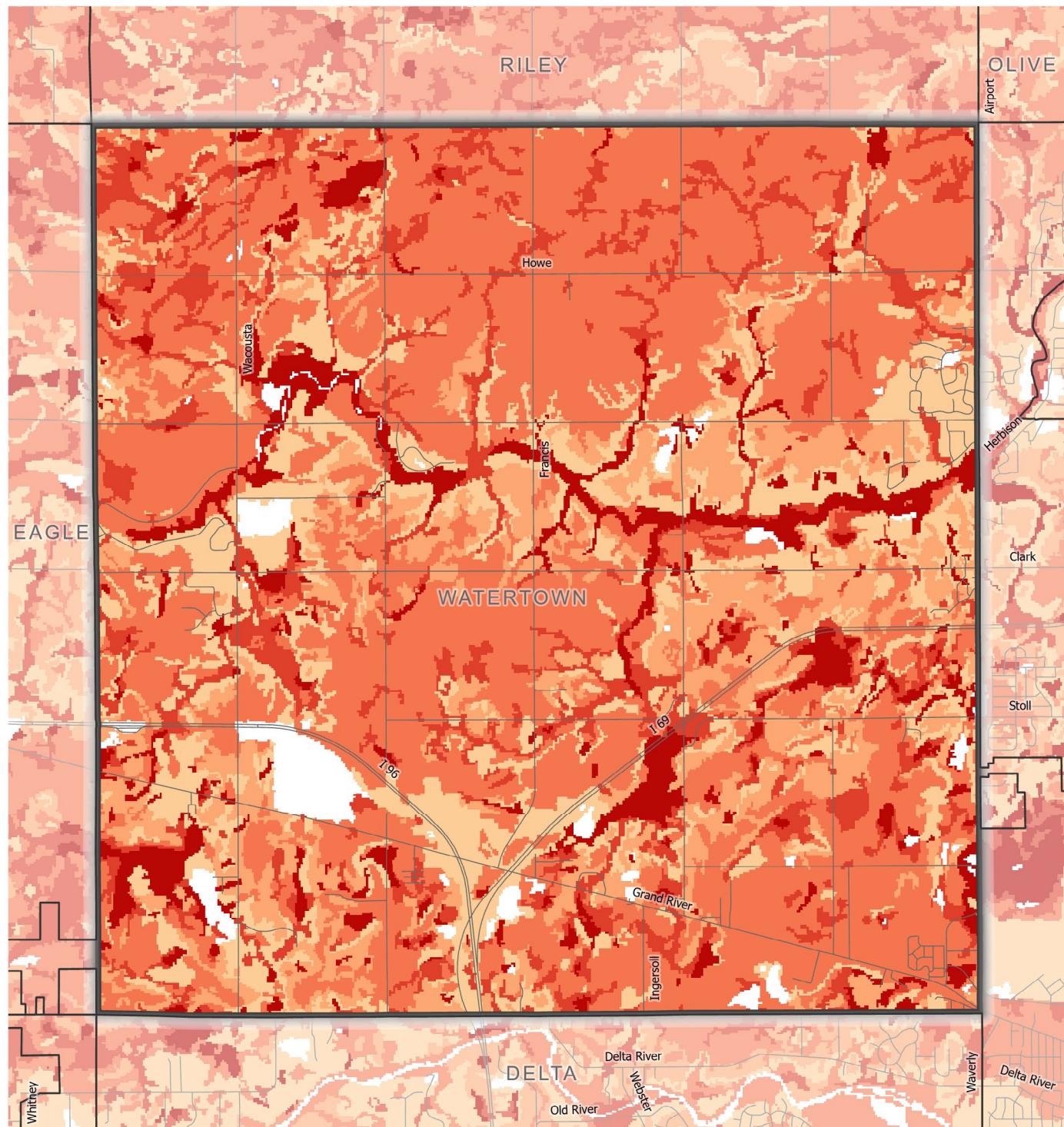
- End moraines of medium-textured till
- Glacial outwash sand and gravel and postglacial alluvium
- Medium-textured glacial till



## SURFACE GEOLOGY

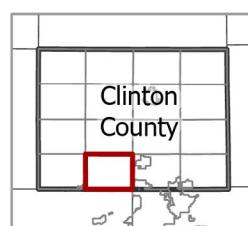
WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP

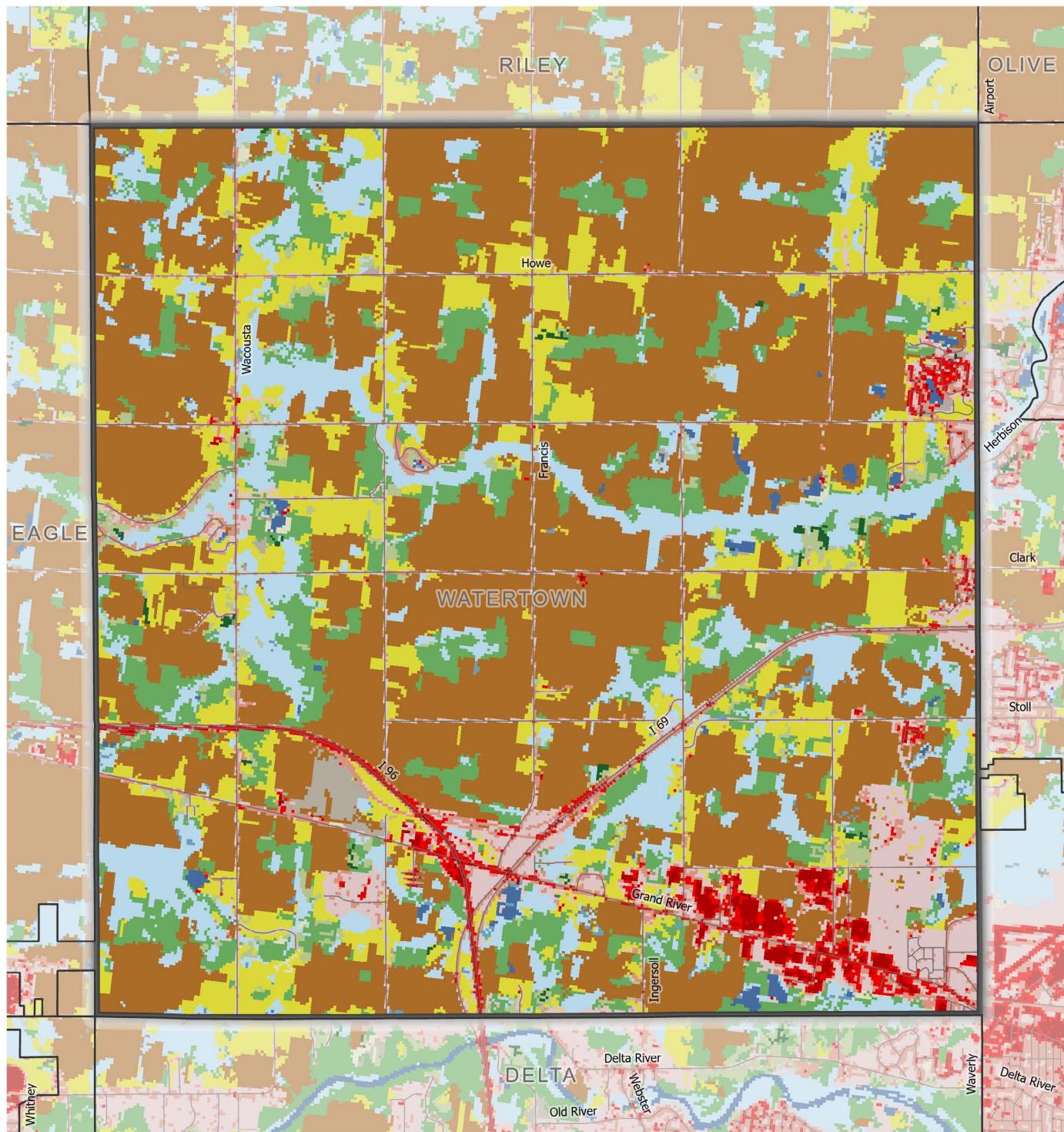




N 0 1,500 3,000 6,000 Feet

Excessively Drained	Somewhat Poorly Drained
Somewhat Excessively Drained	Poorly Drained
Well Drained	Very Poorly Drained
Moderately Well Drained	Subaqueous





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## Community Facilities

# Community Facilities

## Services

### Township Hall

The Township Hall is located on the east side of Wacousta Road, north of Herbison Road. Currently, the Township supports a 24-hour recycling center located at the Township Hall, via a public-private partnership with Granger Waste Management.

### Fire

The Looking Glass Regional Fire Authority (LGRFA) was established in 2001. The LGRFA was formed as a cooperative agreement between Eagle Township and Watertown Township. The LGRFA contracts with Delta Township to provide fire and emergency services and maintains facilities on Grand River.

### Police

The Township receives police service from the Clinton County Sheriff's Department. The station is located at 1347 E. Townsend Road in St. Johns.

### Schools

Five school districts serve Watertown Township: Grand Ledge Public Schools, Waverly Community Schools, DeWitt Public Schools, Lansing Public School District, and St. Johns Public Schools. All school buildings that serve the Township are located outside the Township, except Wacousta Elementary school located on Herbison Road, west of the Township Hall.

## Recreation

### Community Center

The Wallace F. Watt Community Center sits just behind the Township Hall. The barrier-free facility has a maximum occupancy of 125 people with a kitchen and restrooms. The gym includes two basketball hoops and a shuffleboard area.

### Parks

**Heritage Park** has its entrance behind the Township Hall. The park has access to the Looking Glass River and has an artesian well, walking trails, tennis and pickleball courts, a volleyball pit, fire pit, and horseshoe pit as well as a pavilion and playground equipment.

**Gloria Miller Looking Glass Valley Park** is located next to the Wacousta Cemetery and is visible from Wacousta Road. The park provides a canoe landing and fishing dock, the Jack Huntoon Pavilion, a volleyball pit, basketball court and playground equipment. In the winter months, an ice-skating rink is installed.

### Watertown Parkway Property

The Township acquired excess land from the Michigan Department of Transportation following the construction of the I-69/I-96 interchange. Today, the Township owns approximately 135 acres of land, a complex of open green space which includes woodlands. In partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Wildlife Program, a 15-acre prairie planting was installed and is being managed for wildlife and pollinator habitat. Additionally, a significant feature of the property is the open ditch Watson and Summers drain which traverses the entire property.



The Jack Huntoon Pavilion at Gloria Miller Looking Glass Valley Park



## Utilities

### Water

Lansing Board of Water & Light (BWL) is a municipally-owned public utility that provides water services to the Township. The BWL is governed by a board of commissioners that is comprised of eight voting-members who represent the City of Lansing and three non-voting members who represent the outlying cities and townships that are served.

### Sewer

The Township's sewer needs are served by the Southern Clinton County Municipal Utilities Authority (SCCMUA), which is a Michigan Municipal Corporation. SCCMUA discharges into the Looking Glass River in Clinton County. SCCMUA serves the Townships of Bath, DeWitt and Watertown, as well as the City of DeWitt.

### Private

Consumers Energy, the Lansing Board of Water and Light and Tri-County Electric Cooperative provide electric service to the community. Trash removal services are provided by Granger, Waste Management, and LeBron Trash Hauling. Township residents have access to internet providers such as Comcast, Frontier, WOW!, and T-Mobile.

### Well & Septic

The Mid-Michigan District Health Department regulates private wells, septic tanks and drainfields for those residents who are not able to access public sanitary sewer and public water.

## Other

There are several important destinations which are not Township-owned or operated, but are places for the community and visitors to gather, which are located primarily on Wacousta Road near Herbison Road and the Looking Glass River, including the Wacousta General Store, the Wacousta-DeWitt Masonic Lodge 359, the Wacousta Cemetery, the Holiday Haven Girl Scout Camp (east side of Wacousta Road just north of the Looking Glass River) and Mill Run Girl Scout Camp (west side of Wacousta Road on Looking Grass Brook), and Clayworks Pottery studio.

Residents have access to neighboring community libraries: the DeWitt District Library and the Grand Ledge Area District Library. Proximity to DeWitt, Grand Ledge, and Lansing offer residents with a variety of opportunities as desired.

Additional recycling opportunities may be available through the Clinton County Department of Waste Management and the Granger Disposal Center of Lansing, and the Township also holds a yearly Dump Your Junk Day.



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## Roadway Systems

# Roadway Systems

The function, efficiency, and safety of roadway movement in Watertown Township can be improved by understanding the classification of roads and how they enable the movement of traffic as well as access to specific sites.

## National Functional Classification

National Functional Classification (NFC) is a Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) term for the Highway Functional Classification values. The Federal Highway Administration, or FHWA, developed the Highway Functional Classification method for all public roads. The NFC consists of the classification names, listed below, in order from the highest mobility function, which emphasize through-traffic mobility, to the lowest, which emphasize property access. Many additional factors affect the function of a route, including speed limit, traffic volume, geography, design, average trip distance, statewide percentages, and routes with relative significance to other area roads. The values from the highest mobility function to the lowest include: Interstate, Other Freeways, Other Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, Major Collectors, Minor Collectors and Local. All classifications, except for rural minor collector and local roads, qualify for federal aid through the Surface Transportation Program.

### Interstate

The Township has two interstate freeways, I-69 and I-96, within its borders, and two freeway interchanges.

### Principal Arterial

Grand River Avenue east of the I-96/I-69 interchange is a principal arterial roadway. It serves as the main roadway through the Township's light industrial and commercial zones.

### Minor Arterial

Grand River Avenue west of I-96/I-69 interchange, Airport Road on the east border of the Township, and Ingersoll Road are minor arterial roads. Airport Road and Grand River Avenue are the main gateways to Capital City Airport from outstate Michigan.

### Major Collectors

Howe Road, Francis Road, and Wacousta Road north of Grand River Avenue are designated as major collectors.

### Minor Collectors

Wacousta Road, north of Howe for one mile is designated as a minor collector.

Source: MDOT





## Michigan Transportation Fund, Act 51 of 1951, as amended

Act 51 designates roadways eligible for returns from the Michigan Transportation Fund. These roadways are state trunklines, county roads, and city/village roads.

All state trunklines are designated as Act 51 roadways, and are under the jurisdiction of MDOT.

The Township has within its borders two interstate freeways, I-96 and I-69, and two freeway interchanges that serve the Township. Interstate BL-96 (Business Loop) passes through the Township connecting the interstate highways to Lansing.

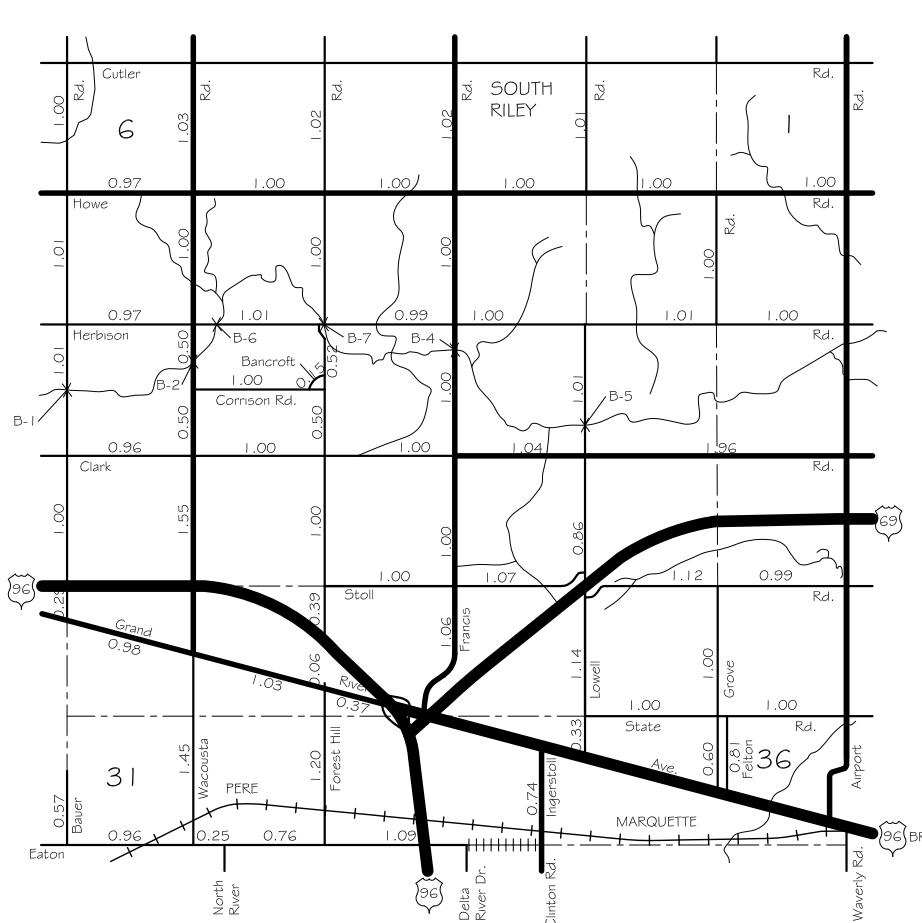
Under Act 51, county roads can be classified as either primary or local roads. City and village streets can be classified as either major or local streets. Primary roads and major streets are selected by the counties, cities and villages on the basis of the greatest general importance to each respective local agency.

Watertown Township has 21.75 miles classified as county primary road. This includes all of Francis, Howe, and Ingersoll Roads. Portions of Wacousta and Clark Roads, and Grand River Avenue, are also classified as county primary roads. All of the remaining roads in the Township owned by the Clinton County Road Commission are classified as county local roads.

The Clinton County Road Commission is responsible for maintenance within the Township for all county primary and county local roads. Watertown Township does not have any city streets within its borders.



Map 1.16. Watertown Township: Clinton County Road Commission Road Map



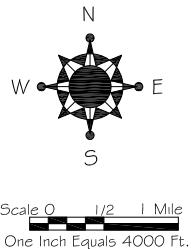
LEGEND

SECTION LINE	-----
CORPORATE LIMITS	- - - - -
STATE TRUNKLINE	██████████
COUNTY PRIMARY	████████
COUNTY LOCAL	████
ADJACENT COUNTY	
CITY OR VILLAGE	————
STREET	—

PRIMARY ROAD SYSTEM IS 21.75 MILES

LOCAL ROAD SYSTEM IS 39.14 MILES

T. 5N R. 3W



PREPARED BY  
CLINTON COUNTY RD. COMM.

WATERTOWN 19-15

Map source: Clinton County Road Commission. Errors contained herein are attributable to the Clinton County Road Commission.



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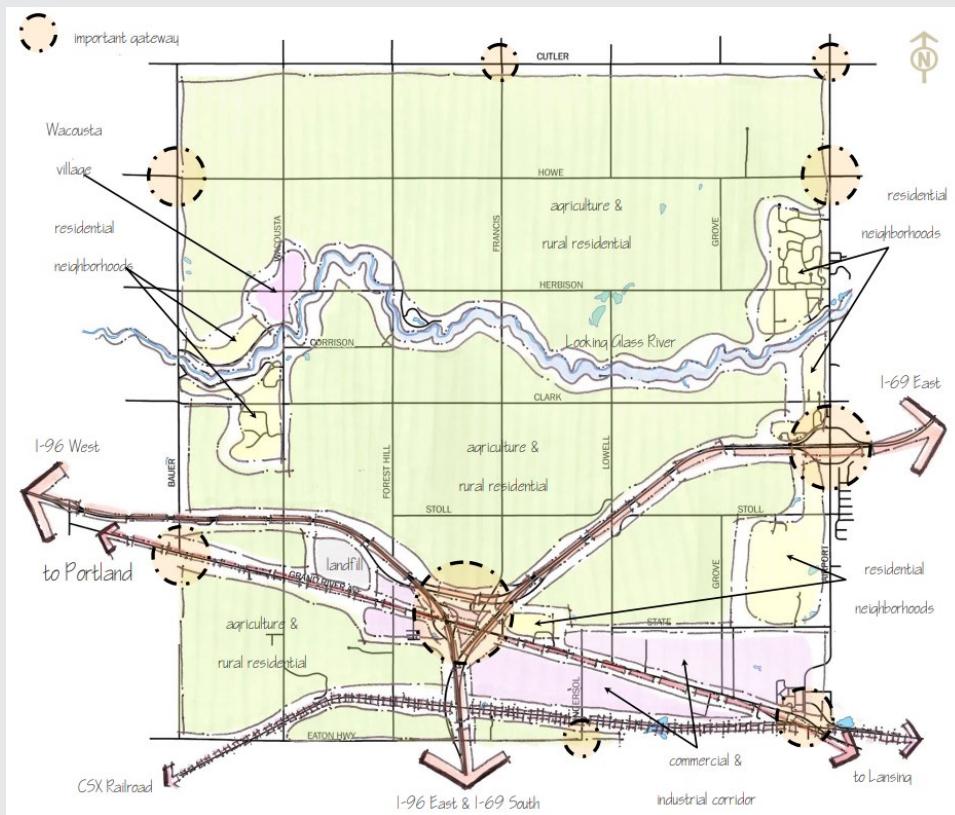
## Existing Land Use

# Existing Land Use

## Land Use

- Watertown Township is comprised of primarily agricultural lands, open spaces, and rural, large-lot single-family homes located along the main roads.
- Smaller-lot single family residential neighborhoods are located mainly on the eastern & western edges of the Township. On the west side of Airport Road, north of I-69, the Lakeside Preserve, Westwinds, and Rosewood Hills developments are home to nearly 400 households. South of I-69 along the west side of Airport Road are the developing subdivisions of Nottingham Fields and the Links at Royal Scot. Along the Looking Glass River on the west side of the Township are older developments on Looking Glass Brook Drive, Riverside Drive, and Hummingbird Lane. Other smaller developments including Watertown on the Meadows, Klein Farm Estates and Somerset Hills, and the Summer Lane subdivision are scattered throughout the Township.
- The majority of commercial and industrial uses in the Township are located within the Grand River Avenue corridor, primarily east of I-69. Development in this corridor includes commercial establishments and industrial uses.
- The Township's Light Industrial district provides Watertown Township with a solid industrial tax base. Its proximity and access to interstate and rail transportation make this a prime location for additional industrial development.
- The Granger Sanitary Landfill, located between I-96 and Grand River Avenue and between Wacousta and Forest Hill Roads, encompasses over 178 acres of the Township's land area.

Map 1.17. Watertown Township: Gateways



Source: 2016 Master Plan

## Gateways

Watertown Township is conveniently located at the intersection of I-69 and I-96, with interchanges located at Airport Road and Grand River Avenue.

These two interchanges not only provide excellent access to the freeways, but they also serve as important gateways into Watertown Township.

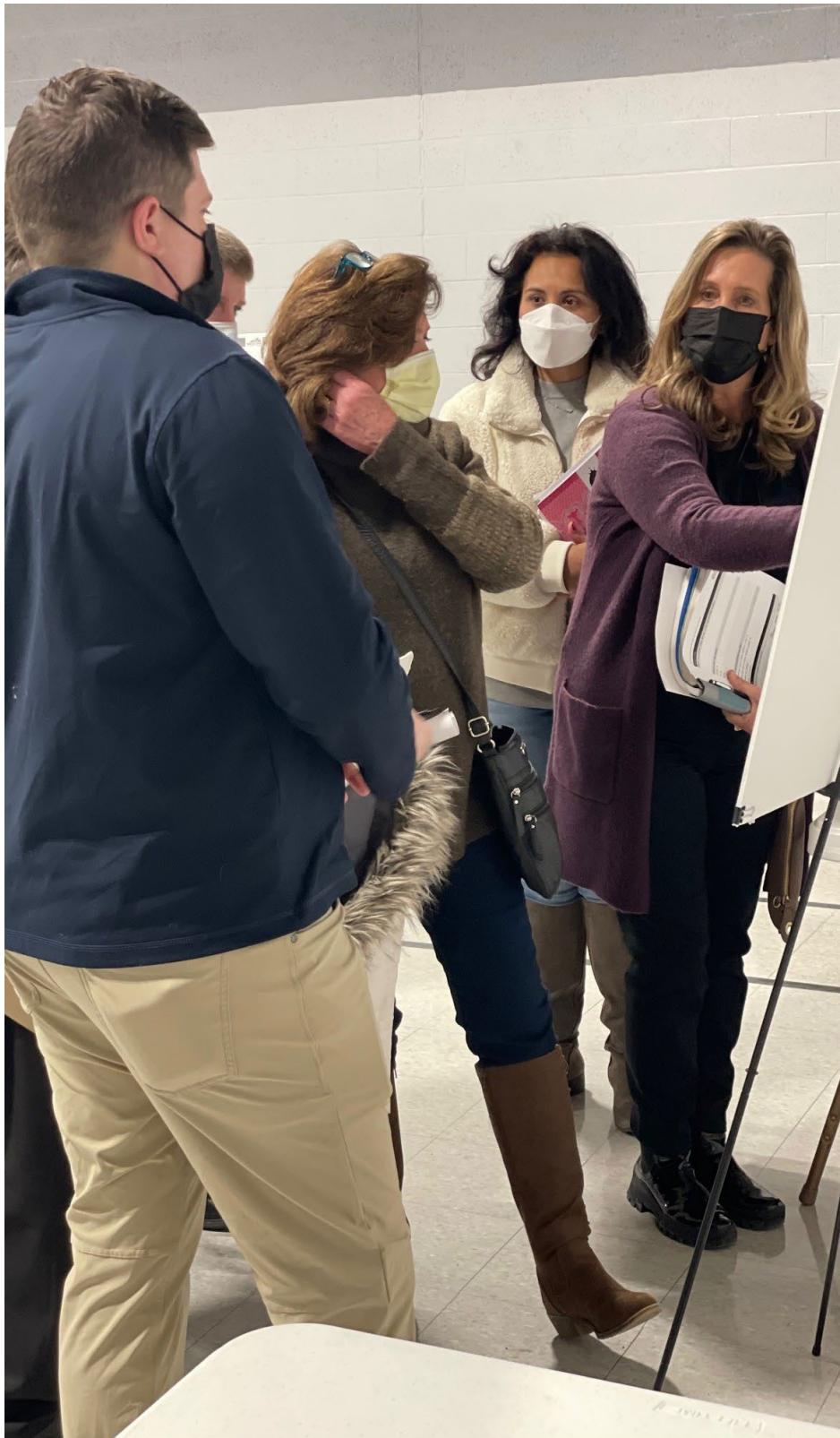
Grand River Avenue is also an important gateway into the Township from the east and west.

These gateways provide an opportunity for the Township to install welcome signage.



## Public Input

# Public Input



Community input is a critical component of the planning process. For this Master Plan update, the Planning Commission started by reviewing the results of an online survey conducted by the Township in 2019.

To supplement the survey, the Township hosted an open house at the Township Hall on January 25, 2022. This was supplemented by a four-day “virtual open house,” using an online platform. The in-person and online events included the same information and allowed participants to learn about the community and provide input on several prompts. Input was gathered on four topics as listed below:

1. Goals
2. Future Land Use
3. Housing
4. Transportation & Connectivity



Over 30 residents attended the meeting, along with several members of Township boards and commissions. Staff and consultants engaged in conversations about the topics presented on the open house posters. The summary of the virtual open house survey was consistent with the conversations from the in-person open house. A majority of attendees reported to be between 35 years to 74 years old, with a household made up of two adults and no children. A summary of the feedback is presented below. Refer to ["Open House Results"](#) in the Appendix for more detailed results.

## Goals

The attendees were asked to prioritize the draft goals discussed by the Planning Commission. All goals were rated as important or very important with 'environmental protection and sustainability' noted as a high priority. Additional comments on this topic were consistent with the 2019 survey.

## Future Land Use

A total of seven changes to the 2016 Future Land Use Map identified by the Planning Commission were presented for public input. The input and general comments indicated agreement with the changes proposed. Refer to the Future Land Use section for more details.



## Housing

For this Master Plan update, the Planning Commission proposed a new goal focused on improving housing quality and variety. "Missing middle housing" was discussed early on in the process. Missing middle housing is a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood.

At the open houses, the community was asked about adding housing types that fall into the missing middle category, including duplex, triplex and quadplex homes. Participants seemed to agree that the options in the current Zoning Ordinance to allow certain missing middle housing types is adequate.

Other housing types presented included accessory dwelling units (ADU), smaller homes, and agrihood communities. These housing types generated more interest than missing middle housing. Several respondents encouraged the Planning Commission to explore how and where agrihood communities might fit in certain areas of the Township. They appeared favorable to ADUs with or without an owner on site and were neutral about allowing small homes in single-family districts. Additional discussion is included in the Housing section.

## Transportation & Connectivity

The respondents were asked to identify any problem areas within the Township that should be addressed in the future. Safety concerns along Wacousta Road were expressed. Additional feedback was sought on a proposed non-motorized loop adjacent to Clark, Wacousta, and Herbison Roads connecting Township parks. The respondents were excited about the potential of this loop. This is discussed in more detail in the Complete Streets section.





This presentation fills me with so many ideas! I really liked the option of ADU's! The bike loop is awesome, but safety would be a huge concern, bikes and cars shared the road on Airport rd with the hills. What about adding a splash pad somewhere?

The non motorized path along Clark rd will be very dangerous for the reason of all the blind hills and the rising and setting sun in motorists eyes! The traffic on Clark rd goes way to fast for this!

Small homes are excellent opportunity for decay without any real contribution to tax base

Above are snippets of public input received from the online open house.

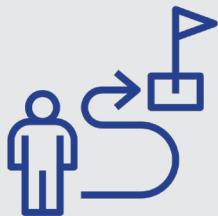
## Goals & Objectives

# Goals & Objectives



## Goals

Goals are general guidelines that explain what the community wants to achieve. Goals are usually long-term and represent global visions such as to "Encourage economic development" or "Strengthen community identity." Goals define the "what," "why," and "where," but not the "how."



## Objectives

Objectives identify the milestones that mark progress in achieving goals and provide more of the "how" goals will be implemented. For example, with a goal of "Encourage economic development," an objective to "Develop strategies to maintain and enhance the Township's industrial and commercial use," is something that may be measured and tracked over time.



## Action Items

Action items are more specific and define the steps to accomplish objectives and attain the identified goals. The most effective action strategies will include who will tackle that task and when it should be accomplished. For the above example objective of developing strategies to enhance industrial and commercial uses, one action strategy might be "Coordinate land use decisions with community facility and utility planning." This may be assigned as a staff item to be completed within one to three years.



# 2024 Master Plan Goals

In 2016, the Planning Commission refined the goals from 2009 into four broad goals to facilitate improved clarity. While the goals are still valid to the Township's current growth and development, this update provides an opportunity to review and update the objectives and action items based on current development trends and vision. In addition to the four categories, an additional category is introduced to address the housing needs of the Township.

## 1 | Strengthen Community Identity.



Strengthen the Township's rural character and community identity by preserving agricultural land and open space, ensuring the long-term stability of residential areas and neighborhoods, and preserving historic resources. Provide opportunities for residents to interact through cultural and recreational events and programs that highlight Watertown Township's rural character.

## 2 | Encourage Economic Development.



Enhance the Township's economic climate by encouraging a diverse mix of agricultural, commercial, and industrial uses in appropriate locations near Township resources, including existing utilities, the Capital Region International Airport, and transportation networks. Target job growth to sectors and industries that emphasize a livable wage for their employees.

## 3 | Improve Connectivity.



Build a non-motorized transportation network that connects residents to meaningful destinations throughout the Township. Prioritize linkages that promote the public health and safety of Township residents as well as linkages that reinforce the Township's community identity. Encourage improvements to communications infrastructure, including broadband, to provide for enhanced opportunities for residents and business owners to connect to each other and to the greater community.

## 4 | Environmental Protection and Sustainability.



Conserve and protect the natural resources, open spaces, and environmental assets of the Township. Encourage development of land in a sustainable manner that protects the environment for current and future generations.

## 5 | Housing Quality and Variety.



Ensure the availability of a wide range of attractive housing choices for individuals and families of all types. Encourage development policies that allow aging in place. Retain existing residents and attract new residents.

## Goal 1 | Strengthen Community Identity.

Strengthen the Township's rural character and community identity by preserving agricultural land and open space, ensuring the long-term stability of residential areas and neighborhoods, and preserving historic resources. Provide opportunities for residents to interact through cultural and recreational events and programs that highlight Watertown Township's rural character.

### Objectives

1. Manage growth to reduce encroachment of non-farm uses into viable agricultural lands by discouraging the premature conversion of agricultural lands into residential and suburban development.
2. Promote development that minimizes negative impacts on neighboring properties and land use conflicts by encouraging site design and buffering techniques and guiding appropriate transition between residential and non-residential uses.
3. Encourage the preservation of farmhouses, barns, silos, and other architectural features that symbolize the Township's rural and agricultural history.
4. Minimize light and noise trespass.
5. Provide public safety services that provide reasonable protection to Township residents.
6. Preserve and enhance the character of Wacousta through the preservation, rehabilitation, and reuse of historic structures.
7. Plan for creating and expanding additional outdoor recreational opportunities by acquiring parkland, when available, for long-term use, in areas that best serve population concentrations.
8. Install branded welcome signage at the Township's major entry points and gateways.

### Measures of Success

1. Positive responses to periodic Township surveys increase.
2. Number of training sessions offered or attended by Township's board and commission members increases.
3. Number of outdoor recreational opportunities increases.
4. Number of participants in community events increases.



## Goal 2 | Encourage Economic Development.

Enhance the Township's economic climate by encouraging a diverse mix of agricultural, commercial, and industrial uses in appropriate locations near Township resources, including existing utilities, the Capital Region International Airport, and transportation networks. Target job growth to sectors and industries that emphasize a livable wage for their employees.

### Objectives

1. Develop strategies to maintain and enhance the Township's industrial and commercial uses by attracting light manufacturing facilities that are job generators and identifying appropriate business locations for small commercial nodes.
2. Consider existing and proposed industrial areas when allocating land for future development to avoid premature growth and industrial sprawl.
3. Plan for appropriate development in proximity to the Capital Region International Airport.
4. Plan for long-term public improvements using growth management principles.
5. Improve infrastructure in the Township, including internet access, for Township residents and businesses.
6. Encourage development where existing utilities are provided.
7. Provide sanitary sewer and stormwater service to areas in need, in coordination with the sewer master plan.
8. Coordinate land use decisions with community facility and utility planning.
9. Strengthen marketing efforts to attract new businesses to the Township in general and Wacousta that are compatible with the rural character and community identity.
10. Cooperate with regional business groups to identify economic development issues and opportunities.

### Measures of Success

1. Number of commercial and industrial building permits increases.
2. Annual updates to capital improvement program continue.
3. Number of jobs in the Township increases.
4. Number of residents who work in the Township increases.



## Goal 3 | Improve Connectivity.

Build a non-motorized transportation network that connects residents to meaningful destinations throughout the Township. Prioritize linkages that promote the public health and safety of Township residents as well as linkages that reinforce the Township's community identity. Encourage improvements to communications infrastructure, including broadband, to provide enhanced opportunities for residents and business owners to connect to each other and to the greater community.

### Objectives

1. Establish facilities and programs that strengthen the bond between the Township's east and west population centers by promoting community-wide events and activities.
2. Identify and protect scenic views throughout the Township and establish connectivity between such locations.
3. Encourage new public access opportunities along the Looking Glass River.
4. Implement the recommendations of the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and create a complete transportation network that ensures safe travel throughout the Township.
5. Prioritize the development of sidewalk and bicycle paths that link residents to schools and recreational facilities.
6. Protect the capacity and function of existing arterial and collector streets by regulating land use and implementing appropriate access management techniques.
7. Explore improvements to ride-sharing, park and ride infrastructure, transit opportunities, and bus services to encourage alternative modes of transportation for the Township residents and workers.
8. Encourage the expansion of broadband internet within the Township.

### Measures of Success

1. Complete street policy adopted.
2. Number of new sidewalks or pathways built with new developments increases.
3. Number of segments completed within the proposed east-west non-motorized loop increases.
4. Positive responses to periodic Township surveys increase.



## Goal 4 | Environmental Protection and Sustainability.

Conserve and protect the natural resources, open spaces, and environmental assets of the Township. Encourage development of land in a sustainable manner that protects the environment for current and future generations.

### Objectives

1. Conserve the natural resources, wooded areas, open spaces, and environmental assets of the Township.
2. Encourage land development in a sustainable manner that protects the environment for current and future generations.
3. Preserve and protect landmark trees, encourage planting new trees, and eliminate invasive plant species in the Township.
4. Promote the preservation of the Looking Glass River corridor through standards that regulate riparian setbacks, appropriate land uses, and dimensional standards.
5. Protect and minimize the negative impacts and disturbances to surface water, groundwater, wetlands, riparian areas, natural drainage, sensitive topography, woodlands, native plants, and wildlife.
6. Encourage the use of low-impact development techniques and building designs that are environmentally sensitive, energy-efficient, and developed with a high level of aesthetics.
7. Encourage outdoor recreational opportunities that protect the natural resources and reflect the community's rural identity.

### Measures of Success

1. The amount of open space in the community remains constant.
2. Tree cover is maintained or increases.
3. Impervious surfaces decrease.
4. Water quality improves in local bodies of water.



## Goal 5 | Housing Quality and Variety.

Ensure the availability of a wide range of attractive housing choices for individuals and families of all types. Encourage development policies that allow aging in place. Retain existing residents and attract new residents.

### Objectives

1. Encourage the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of housing.
2. Encourage the maintenance and preservation of the existing housing stock through housing rehabilitation programs and code enforcement.
3. Ensure the availability of a wide range of attractive housing choices for individuals and families of all types. Retain existing residents and attract new residents.
4. Promote the use of alternate housing developments, planned unit development, and cluster housing as a means of encouraging efficient use of land and preservation of natural and open spaces.
5. Allow for high-density single-family residential growth in areas where community services, including public safety, utilities, and transportation networks, are provided.
6. Provide opportunities for a mix of housing that serves residents of all ages and interests through a variety of lot sizes and dwelling configurations.
7. Encourage residential developments to be designed as neighborhoods that connect residents with natural open space, recreation areas, and other important destinations within the Township.
8. Ensure new development is of high quality and design.

### Measures of Success

1. The variety of housing types (single-family, two-family, etc.) increases.
2. There is a range of housing at various price points.
3. There is a range of alternative development options available in the Zoning Ordinance.



## Future Land Use Plan

# Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Map in this chapter is a representation of the Township's preferred long-range future land use arrangement. The map identifies general locations for various land uses envisioned by the Planning Commission. The Future Land Use Map, along with the entire Master Plan document, is a guide for local decisions regarding land use. The boundaries reflected on the map are not intended to indicate precise size, shape or dimension. In addition, where the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map are out of alignment, rezoning may not be intended to be imminent; rather, the recommendations set a long-range planning goal. Descriptions of the future land use categories illustrated on the map follow.

The 2024 Master Plan retains all the land use categories from the 2016 Master Plan update, except 'Village Gateway Overlay,' which is no longer relevant and minor changes to the descriptions. A summary of land use descriptions is provided on the following pages, with 2024 additions noted in red. More detailed descriptions from the 2016 plan are included in the ["2016 Future Land Use Descriptions"](#) section of the Appendix.

## Residential

### Agriculture and Rural Residential.

- Primarily agricultural land uses, farm dwellings, and non-farm dwellings that are in keeping with the rural and agricultural character
- Single-family homes, 0.2 to 0.5 dwelling units per acre (1 to 2.5 dwelling units per 5 acres)
- Private well and septic facilities
- Agricultural Preservation
  - Maximum lot size of two acres
  - Preservation of open space and/or farmland required as a condition of development
  - Lands should be enrolled in P.A. 116 and those designated as prime or unique farmland by the United States Department of Agriculture



### Low Density Residential.

- Single-family and two-family homes
- Maximum density of 1.0 dwelling units per acre
- Located outside of the Township's agricultural lands with convenient access to the freeways and Grand River
- Areas should not require extension of public water and sanitary sewer service



## Medium Density Residential.

- Maximum density of 2.0 dwelling units per acre
- Located along the Township's eastern boundary where public water and sanitary sewer service is already available
- Areas within the Wacousta area where more "rooftops" (households) could be added to support these commercial districts
- Transition between the mix of non-residential and residential land uses planned to the east in DeWitt Township and the agricultural and rural residential land uses to the west in Watertown Township

## High Density Residential.

- Attached and detached residential uses up to a maximum density of 8.0 dwelling units per acre
- Transition between the planned Local Business node at the freeway interchange and the surrounding Medium Density Residential neighborhoods

## Manufactured Housing Park.

- Area for expansion of the existing park and/or development of a new modern manufactured housing park
- Density of approximately 5.0 dwelling units per acre

## Business and Industrial

### Local Business.

- Small scale neighborhood-oriented commercial uses
- Located along Airport Road abutting the I-69 interchange
- Serve needs of the surrounding residential neighborhoods
- Could accommodate limited highway-oriented commercial uses
- Character and scale that is consistent with a neighborhood commercial node
- Buffered from residential areas by landscaping and screening and/or lower intensity transitional land uses such as offices

### Principal Business.

- Larger scale retail and office developments and auto-oriented uses that meet the needs of the entire community
- Located along Grand River Avenue with convenient access to I-69 and I-96
- Appropriately buffered from residential areas by landscaping and screening and/or lower intensity transitional land uses such as offices

### Industry and Technology.

- Range of uses including warehousing, storage, light manufacturing, large office complexes and parks, and research and development
- Southeastern portion of the Township in appropriate proximity to the railroad, freeways, Grand River Avenue, and Capital Region Airport
- Appropriately buffered from residential areas by landscaping and screening and/or lower intensity transitional land uses such as offices



## Other

### Recreation.

[renamed from “Open Space” in 2024]

- Open space and recreational uses including golf courses, parks, and cemeteries
- Heritage Park and the Holiday Haven and Mill Run Girl Scout Camps are now also included in this category to be consistent with how other open space and recreation uses are designated [2024 addition]

### Landfill.

- Granger Sanitary Landfill site

### Airport.

- Land owned by the Capital Region International Airport

## Mixed Use

### Village Center.

- Mix of land uses including small scale retail, office, high density residential, public and quasi-public, and parks and open spaces
- Intended to strengthen the sense of place and enhance the existing town or village form while reflecting the area's rural character

### Flexible Development.

- Mixed-use or single-use development, including commercial, light industrial and office uses
- Flexible land uses, yet compatible with existing uses
- Service the commercial demand generated by the workforce of current and future industrial uses
- Driven by industrial demand, to be harmonious with the overall area
- Properties with frontage on Grand River Avenue, generally between Bunker Hill Drive and Airport Road



## Overlay Land Use Designations.

In addition to the underlying land use recommendations, the Future Land Use Map designates three focus areas with the following overlay classifications:

### Looking Glass River Corridor.

- Significant scenic and riparian resource that runs through the Township primarily between Clark and Herbison Roads
- River protection, appropriate use, and ecological management is key

### Grand River Avenue Corridor.

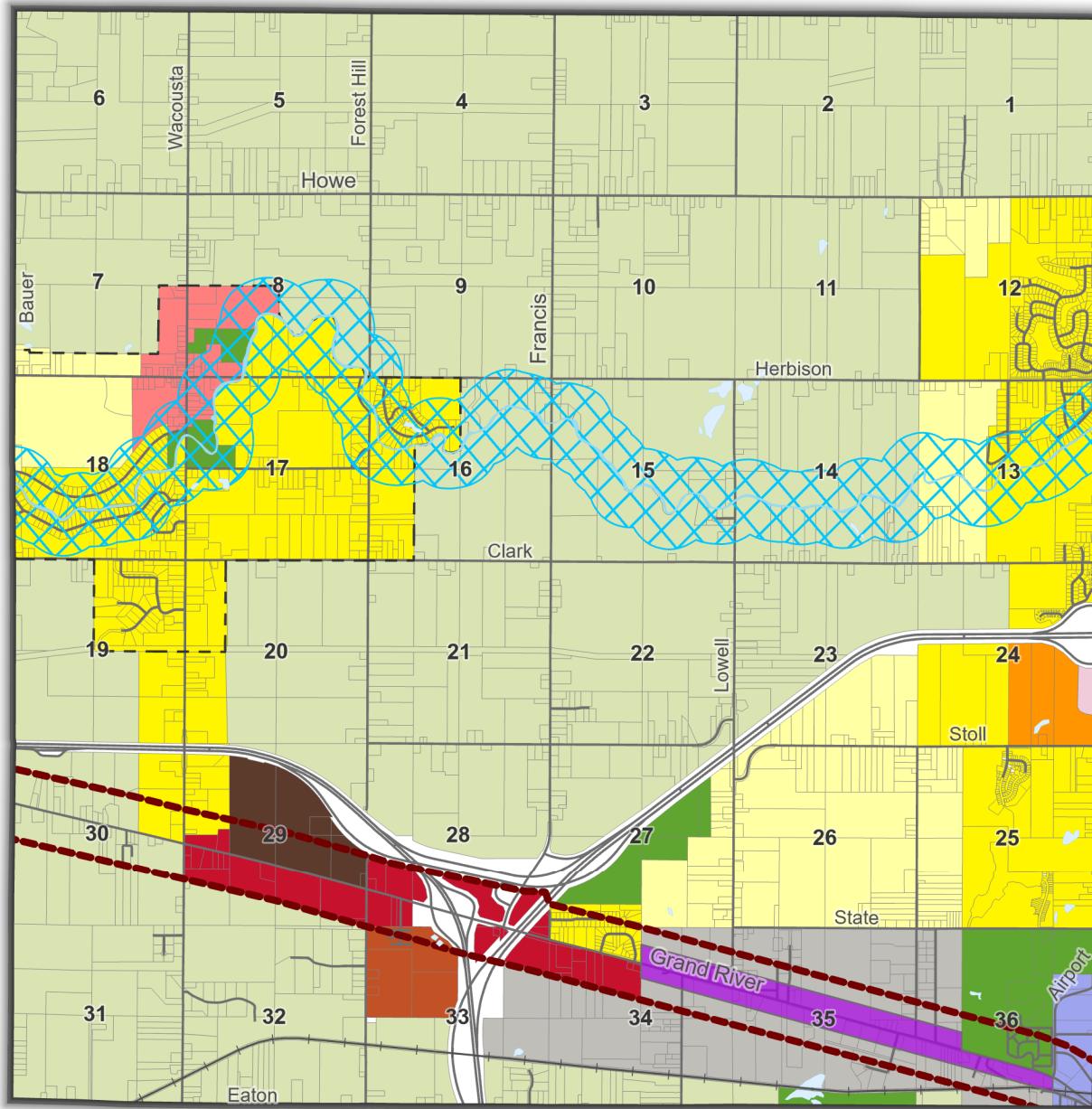
- Grand River Avenue connects Watertown Township to the City of Lansing to the east and Portland to the west
- Majority of the Township's existing non-residential uses, including industrial and highway-oriented commercial uses as well as the Granger Sanitary Landfill
- Development in this area should be well designed to portray an attractive image of the Township
- Continue to encourage frontage roads and service drives to minimize driveways while accommodating growth [added in 2024]

### Wacousta.

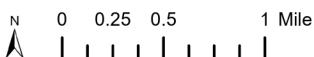
- Identified by the community as an area of special interest and historical value



Map 3.2. Watertown Township: 2024 Future Land Use Map



Data Source: FLU: Watertown Roads: Michigan Open Data v17a. Map Exported: January 31, 2024. ©2024 Giffels Webster.

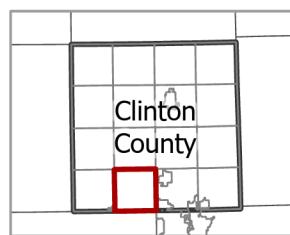


#### Future Land Use

- Agriculture and Rural Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Manufactured Housing
- Local Business

#### Focus Areas

- Flexible Development
- Grand River Ave Corridor
- Looking Glass River
- Wacousta Area



## Housing Plan

# Housing Plan

The 2024 Master Plan introduces a new goal to ensure the availability of a wide range of attractive housing choices for individuals and families of all types. The overall intent of the Housing Plan is to outline a strategy to ensure that the housing needs of Township's current and future residents will be met. This chapter highlights three housing strategies that are consistent with a rural community like Watertown Township. As a near-term implementation item, the Township should further explore these concepts to determine the most appropriate housing strategies for the Township and its residents.



## Current Housing

The Township is comprised of primarily agricultural land, open space, and rural large-lot single-family homes located along the main roads. The majority of the Township's smaller lot single-family neighborhoods are located along the west side of Airport Road and in several older neighborhoods along the Looking Glass River on the west side of the Township.

Beginning in 2005, the Township first saw a decline in residential and commercial construction coinciding with a national recession and overall decline in the housing market. This trend continued as the percent of homes built between 2010 to 2013 was 14% less than in the previous decade. Construction has increased since that time, but growth rates have not returned to the early 2000s high.

Ninety-five percent of housing in the Township are detached single-family homes. Over half of housing stock in the Township was built before 1980 and may require additional maintenance and upkeep as well as upgrades to ensure energy efficiency, barrier-free access and increased livability for aging adults. With approximately 20% of the total population currently over the retirement age, it is likely that the demand for age-friendly single-family homes and non-single-family housing will increase in the next decade.

Figure 3.1. Watertown Township: Age of Housing (2019)

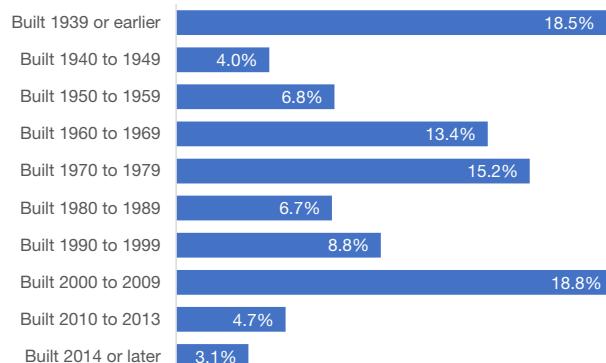


Figure 3.2. Watertown Township: Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units (2019)

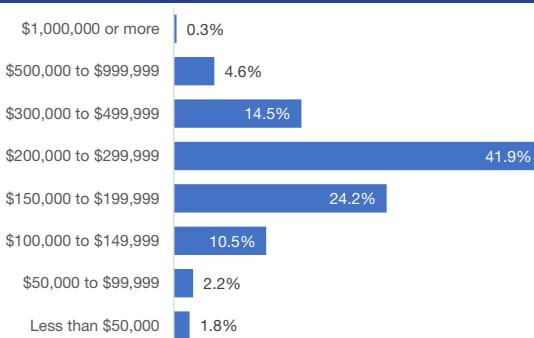


Table 3.1. Watertown Township: Housing Characteristics (2019)

	Watertown Township	Clinton County		
	Estimate	Percentage	Estimate	Percentage
<b>Median housing value</b>	\$196,000	N/A	\$172,800	N/A
<b>Median gross rent</b>	\$908	N/A	\$839	N/A
<b>Total housing units</b>	2,035	N/A	31,736	N/A
<b>Occupied housing units</b>	1,940	95.3%	29,728	93.7%
<b>Owner-occupied (homeownership rate)</b>	1,761	90.8%	23,779	80%
<b>Renter-occupied</b>	179	9.2%	5,949	20%
<b>Vacant housing units</b>	95	4.7%	2,008	6.3%
<b>Single-family units</b>	1,937	95.2%	25,323	79.8%
<b>Multi-family units</b>	12	0.6%	4,105	12.9%
<b>Mobile home or other</b>	86	4.2%	2,308	7.3%
<b>Built 2014 or later</b>	39	1.9%	828	2.6%
<b>Occupied housing units, householder moved into unit 2019 or later</b>	193	11%	2,275	9.6%
<b>Occupied housing units with four or more bedrooms</b>	771	39.7%	8,497	28.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2015-2019 5-Year Estimates



## Opportunity # 1

## Missing Middle Housing



Missing Middle Housing is a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes that help meet the growing demand for walkable communities. The majority of Missing Middle Housing types have 4-8 units in a building, or 4-8 units on a lot in the case of a cottage court. Most Missing Middle building types are 2 to 2.5 stories in height, with the exception of the cottage court at 1-1.5 stories. They have a maximum of one off-street parking space per unit.

Figure 3.3. Missing Middle Housing

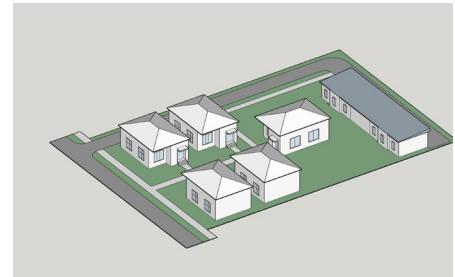
Attached Townhouse (3+ units)



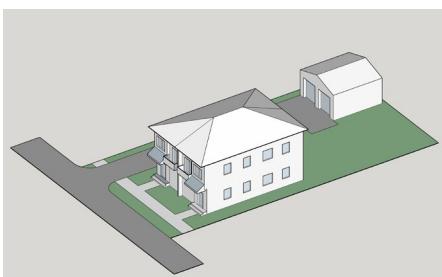
Multiplex Medium (5-12 units)



Cottage Court (single-unit buildings)



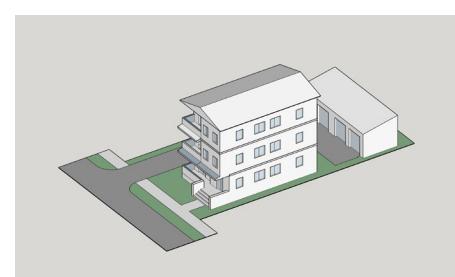
Duplex Side-by-side (2 units)



Courtyard Building (6-12 units)



Triplex Stacked (3 units)



Duplex Stacked (2 units)



Some of these missing middle housing types are allowed as either a permitted use or a special land use in the R-2 single-family zoning district. Public input gathered at the open house suggested missing middle housing may not fit in additional low density single-family districts. The Township may wish to revisit permitting other housing options in districts where they are not currently allowed in the future, depending on population aging and growth trends and how they may fit in existing residential neighborhoods as an opportunity to create diverse housing options for residents that may be more affordable, promote walkability in key areas, and be mindful of the natural environment.

Source: Prepared by Giffels Webster



## Opportunity # 2

### Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

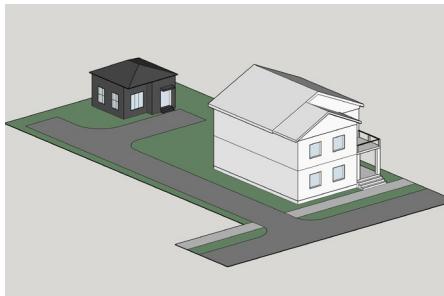
Accessory dwellings are additional living quarters located on the same lot as an existing single-family home. Some of the benefits of accessory dwellings include the opportunity to:

- Provide a home for a loved one in need of care
- Provide housing for relatives or friends
- Feel safer by having someone living nearby
- Have a space for guests
- Increase the value of the primary home
- Create a place for a caregiver to stay
- Earn extra income from renting to a tenant

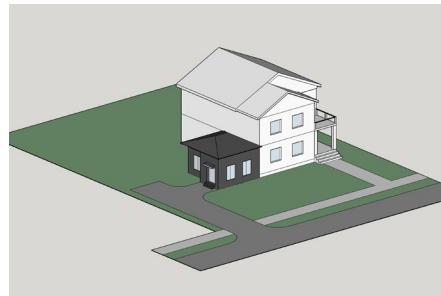
In some suburban-type housing developments with attached garages, accessory dwelling units may be easily incorporated as additions to the principal home. Whether attached or detached, owner occupancy of one of the units should be required. The Township may also consider phasing in ADUs by permitting only a small number per year to observe implementation and fine-tune regulations accordingly.

Figure 3.4. Accessory Dwelling Unit Types

Detached ADU



Attached ADU



Above the garage ADU



## Opportunity # 3

### Tiny Homes

Smaller homes are attractive to people seeking to simplify their lifestyle, own their own home, live closer to nature and/or live in a community with like-minded people. Tiny homes may be:

- A primary dwelling located on rented or owned property
- Various shapes and sizes
- Made from virgin or recycled materials
- Constructed on-site by certified builders, or assembled on-site with prefabricated or modular components, or created from do-it-yourself kits
- On wheels or on a permanent foundation
- Simple to elaborate and may include multiple levels
- Connected to municipal utilities or self-sufficient and “off-grid”

Because of their flexibility, tiny homes may be a way to add more housing choices to serve a variety of needs.



## Opportunity # 4

### Agrihoods

Agrihoods are a type of residential development that are built around a working farm which can include livestock, orchards, vineyards, and row crops. These developments are found around the country vary in total acreage, number of home sites, and farm size. Agrihoods generally result in larger areas preserved for community farming and smaller development footprint.

#### Example: Prairie Crossing in Grayslake, Illinois

Prairie Crossing is a widely acclaimed “conservation community” or “agrihood” located 40 miles northwest of Chicago in Grayslake, IL. This development was conceived to preserve the rural atmosphere when an aggressive development plan was proposed. Prairie Crossing includes single-family homes, most of which have views of the working farm, meadows, stables, or lakes. The homes are designed in the farmhouse style, and residents take care of the horses, have access to freshly-grown produce, eggs, and other farm products from multiple producers.



Source: [www.prairiecrossing.com](http://www.prairiecrossing.com)



## Complete Streets

# Complete Streets

Complete Streets is a term used to describe a transportation network that includes facilities for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and other legal users of all ages and abilities. In 2010, Michigan passed Complete Streets legislation to encourage and justify the development of Complete Streets in communities. At that time, Michigan's Planning Enabling Act was also amended to require comprehensive plans to address Complete Streets.

While the Township is rural in character, there are opportunities to expand the transportation network to provide for additional users. Many of the guidelines included are intended to broadly illustrate how to improve connectivity.

Ten Principles of Complete Streets Policy		
<b>VISION</b>	<b>Vision and intent</b>	Includes an equitable vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets. Specifies need to create complete, connected, network and specifies at least four modes, two of which must be biking or walking.
<b>DESIGN</b>	<b>Diverse users</b>	Benefits all users equitably, particularly vulnerable users and the most under-invested and under-served communities.
	<b>Design</b>	Directs the use of the latest and best design criteria and guidelines and sets a time frame for their implementation.
	<b>Land use and context sensitivity</b>	Considers the surrounding community's current and expected land use and transportation needs.
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>Performance measures</b>	Establishes performance standards that are specific, equitable, and available to the public.
	<b>Commitment in all projects and phases</b>	Applies to new, retro-fit/reconstruction, maintenance, and ongoing projects.
	<b>Clear, accountable expectations</b>	Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval and public notice prior to exceptions being granted.
	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	Requires interagency coordination between government departments and partner agencies on Complete Streets.
	<b>Project selection criteria</b>	Provides specific criteria to encourage funding prioritization for Complete Streets implementation.
	<b>Implementation steps</b>	Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy.

*Data Source: National Complete Streets Coalition (NCSC)*



Map 3.3. Proposed Non-Motorized East-West Loop



Through the planning process, the Planning Commission identified a need to connect the west and east parts of the Township, especially to provide access and connect to the Township parks. In this effort, access for all ages and abilities will be a key consideration in the design of facilities, with a focus on meeting ADA compliance.

As implementation items, the Township may wish to consider the following:

- 1 Promote rural non-motorized usage by way of pedestrian/cyclist signage along Herbison Road (existing gravel road) from Airport Road to Wacousta Road.
- 2 Construct paved pathway or trail along Clark Road from Airport Road to Wacousta Road.
- 3 Create a non-motorized loop to provide access to Wacousta and connect Township parks.
- 4 Encourage investment in non-motorized infrastructure along Airport Road between Howe Road and Clark Road.
- 5 Encourage the use of MDOT and utility rights-of-way for non-motorized uses.

Figure 3.5. Elements of Complete Streets

The graphic below illustrates elements of complete streets - but not every street needs to contain every element. In Watertown Township, many of these elements are not appropriate, but provided here for future reference and education. Throughout a community's transportation network, there may be opportunities to provide facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and users of transit (where applicable).

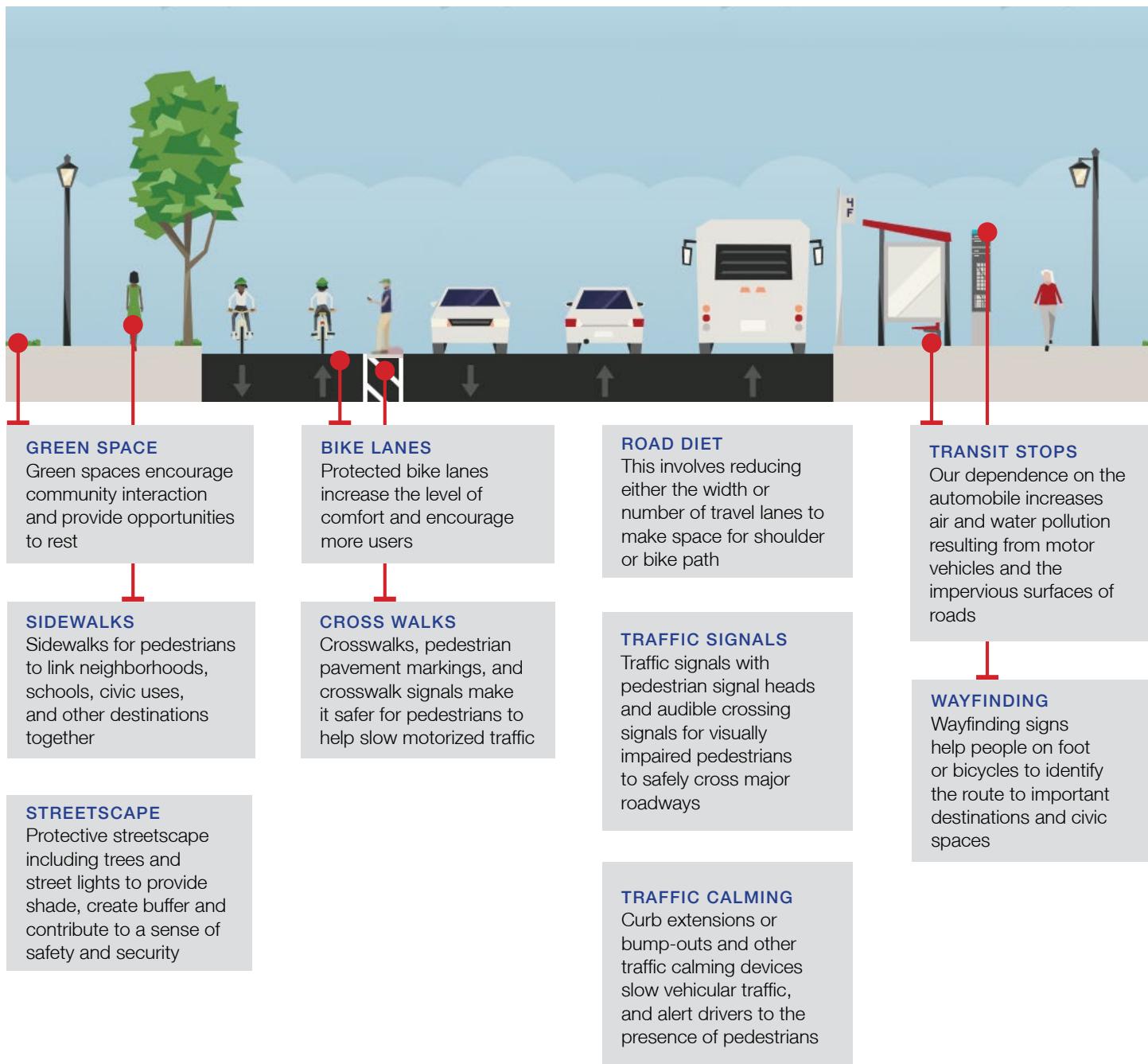


Image Source: Street Mix; Exhibit prepared by: Giffels Webster

Figure 3.6. Benefits of Complete Streets

## Safety



1. Reduce pedestrian accidents by increasing the safety factor.
2. Improve perceptions of the safety of non-motorized travel, which strongly influences decisions about alternative modes of travel for many.
3. Reduce either the width or number of travel lanes to make space for shoulder or bike paths will improve safety (road diet).



On average, a pedestrian was killed in the US every **88 minutes** in traffic crashes in 2017

## Health



1. Promote walking or biking to school to lower child obesity rates.
2. Encourage activities to counteract a sedentary lifestyles, which have been shown to be associated with a host of long-term health problems.
3. Add sidewalks, bike paths and access to transit to increase levels of physical activity.



Between 1989 and 2018, **child obesity rates** rose dramatically, while the percentage of walking or biking to school dropped



**54%** of older American living in inhospitable neighborhoods say they would walk and ride more often if things improved



Carbon-dioxide emissions can be reduced by **20 pounds per day** or more than 4,800 pounds in a year per each commuter by using transit instead of driving

## Access



1. Address equity concerns by designing facilities that are safe, accessible, and welcoming for all users, particularly for the elderly, the disabled, and children.



Nearly **40 percent** of merchants reported increase in sales, and **60 percent** more area residents shopping locally due to reduced travel time and convenience

## Environment



1. Reduce dependence on the automobile to lower air and water pollution resulting from motor vehicles and the impervious surfaces of roads.
2. Promote a shift away from automobile travel. Studies have shown that 5 to 10 percent of urban automobile trips can reasonably be shifted to non-motorized transport.

## Economy



1. Design residential and local business districts with traffic calming measures to provide safe pedestrian access and increase consumer activity.
2. Implement Complete Streets policies as placemaking strategies for economic development and community revitalization.

## Design Considerations

The usage rate of any non-motorized facility by diverse groups of users depends on the level of comfort the path provides. Level of comfort typically depends on various stress factors such as vehicular traffic speed, volume and the time of the day. Safely designed pedestrian/bicycle lanes lead to more users and less accidents. It is envisioned that shared use paths and bike routes will likely be the primary types of bicycle facilities in the Township for the foreseeable future.

Figure 3.7. Diverse Group of Users

### Interested, but Cautious Riders



#### SHARED USE PATHS

1. Shared use paths are used by pedestrians as well as bicycle users
2. They are typically 10 feet min. width with 5-10 feet planted buffer
3. Ideal traffic speeds less than 25 miles per hour
4. Pavement surfaces should be based on anticipated usage volumes

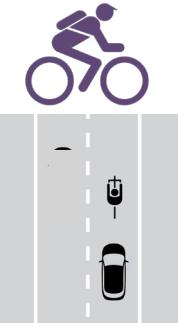


### Strong and Fearless Riders



#### BIKE ROUTES

1. Identifying a specific route as a 'Bike Route' is the simple alternative when immediate infrastructure improvements to roadway network are not feasible
2. Wayfinding signage such as 'share the road' or directional signage can be installed to guide the users to destinations or other connections
3. Traffic calming measures may be required to manage speeds



Prepared by Giffels Webster

Data Source: Mineta Transportation Institute & Roger Geller for the Portland Office of Transportation

## Sustainability & Resiliency

# Sustainability & Resiliency

It is becoming critical to include concepts of resiliency and sustainability into land use plans. Though they are related, resiliency and sustainability are not the same.



**Sustainability** is the well-established concept that focuses on decreasing or eliminating the detrimental future impacts of our current activity.



**Resiliency** recognizes that our built environment will be subject to stresses and is the practice of designing that environment in a way that can endure those stresses. Some threats are ongoing, persistent stresses, while others are sudden shocks or single events that disrupt the day-to-day functioning of the community.

As we plan for the future, many of the challenges we will face are related either directly or indirectly to our place in larger systems, both natural and man-made. We often have little direct local control over these systems, but adapting to change and discovering our role in contributing to the health of these systems is nonetheless essential to planning for a community that can survive and thrive, even in the face of the most severe challenges. Resilient communities are not only preparing for weather and climate-related shocks, but are also preparing for economic and health shocks as well. In 2020, we saw the impacts of a global pandemic on local community health, education, recreation, commerce, technology and social connectivity. These impacts touched everyone's lives in big and small ways and may have lasting impacts in our communities.

## Effects of Climate Change

A changing climate has far-reaching implications for Michigan's agricultural and tourism economies, waterfront development, and communities with older stormwater management infrastructure.

As the frequency and intensity of severe weather events continues to increase, communities will experience economic disruption. For instance, while the frost-free season has nominally increased, farmers in many of Michigan's agricultural communities have not benefited, due to abnormally late frosts (such as those in mid-May, 2020) or heavy rain events, both of which have damaged early crops or delayed planting of late crops. Rising temperatures and more very hot days may affect the timing of summer festivals and tourism.

Communities must be prepared to anticipate the local effects of regional climate trends. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, climate change is already impacting many sectors of our communities. At a minimum, increases in air temperature and precipitation, combined with other factors, have caused impacts in the Great Lakes region including:

- Increased risk of heat-stress to equipment, infrastructure, and people, especially those who work outdoors or are otherwise vulnerable
- Increased flooding and coastal erosion
- Reduction in water quality due to increased occurrences of toxic algae blooms
- Changes to the usability of water infrastructure like docks and piers
- Economic impact to industries like forestry, fishing, crop production, tourism, manufacturing, energy production, and recreation
- Expanded commercial navigation season as ice coverage continues to decline on the Great Lakes



## Sustainable Development Strategies

This Master Plan recognizes the importance of additional planning efforts needed to ensure the Township is resilient and sustainable. Future planning should include a public outreach process in two basic parts: education and input. Education includes making community members aware of potential threats and the process of planning for them, with an emphasis on outreach to the most vulnerable members of the community. The input process should offer the opportunity for residents and other stakeholders such as municipal staff and business owners to engage in detailed, focused conversations regarding resiliency planning issues. It is important for the community to engage in vigorous outreach through multiple channels to get people involved.

### Mitigating Risks

Next to placing land into various zoning districts, site plan review is the most powerful planning and natural resource protection tool. Easily enforced, site plan review is a way for communities to ensure what is approved on a site plan is what will be built. When large projects are proposed or when small projects are proposed in or adjacent to sensitive natural resources, some communities require applicants to submit an environmental assessment, which details the impact of the proposed development on natural resources. Communities that have plans and zoning regulations based on a solid environmental inventory are able to set the threshold for future environmental assessments at a defensible level. Without such a basis, an environmental assessment may be considered arbitrary, as there is little context for the requirement. An environmental assessment can be a valuable source of information, and in some cases an important tool for ensuring that new development is designed in such a way that unavoidable environmental impacts are properly mitigated. Environmental assessment can also be viewed as an affirmative tool for helping a local government meet its responsibility for preventing pollution, impairment or destruction of the environment.

### Stormwater Management

The Township's existing water features play an important role in managing stormwater. Several creeks and streams connect the Township's natural water system and then convey stormwater runoff.

Maintaining these natural features can be a component of low-impact development (LID), which is an approach to development that focuses on mimicking the natural water cycle and flows to manage stormwater runoff and related adverse impacts. LID practices also aim to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces.

### Impervious Surfaces

Because development replaces pervious ground with impervious pavement and buildings, water runs off the surface rather than permeating naturally through the ground. As stormwater drains across pavement, it picks up pollutants such as automobile fluids, fertilizers, and sediment and conveys them into a storm drain. If a storm drain is directly connected to a creek, the creek receives polluted water which, in turn, can degrade water quality and wildlife habitat. This, in turn, degrades streams and water quality unless managed in an ecologically-sound manner.

Because stormwater heats up the longer it sits on hot, impervious surfaces, it can also impact aquatic organisms that depend on cool or cold-water habitats. Stormwater may speed erosion along stream banks and impair a stream's ability to support aquatic vegetation and wildlife.

Ordinance standards that limit impervious surface coverage, or regulate materials used to construct impervious surfaces, can address this through site plan review, or through standard permitting at the individual site level.

### Natural Shoreline Dynamics

Runoff is one of the primary concerns regarding the shoreline dynamics and water quality of inland lakes and rivers. Runoff can carry fertilizer and other undesirable substances into the water, some of which can cause an overgrowth of aquatic plants and alter the natural ecosystems in these lakes. It is crucial to protect natural ecosystems by managing development on the shoreline and in local watersheds. Communities can create best practices to protect riparian areas from erosion and runoff damage by encouraging the use of permeable pavement and growing native plants along the shoreline and in the watershed.



## Encouraging Alternative Energy Opportunities

Watertown Charter Township has long been at the forefront of protecting natural resources, particularly the Looking Glass River. As the Township experiences the effects of changing weather patterns, increased flooding and droughts, and an increasing population seeking access to all types of resources, the Planning Commission has sought to be strategic about ways it can encourage and permit various types of alternative energy opportunities. This can decrease the need for fossil fuels, and offer residents and business owners a range of options should they wish to install solar panels or wind turbines. While large scale wind energy is unlikely to be permissible due to the proximity of the Capital Region International Airport and smaller private landing strips throughout the Township, small wind energy facilities are permitted in most zoning districts.

Beginning in 2019, the Planning Commission began reviewing and researching ways to encourage alternative energy installations, in particular, solar energy facilities, within the Township. Following a comprehensive review of local and regional solar energy ordinances, participating in several educational trainings on the subject, and being thoughtful about the benefits and risks to Township residents and business owners, the Planning Commission recommended a comprehensive solar energy strategy to the Board of Trustees via an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. In the spring of 2020, the amendment was unanimously approved by the Board of Trustees.

Since 2016, more than a dozen Township residents have installed ground-mounted solar energy systems, and many more have installed rooftop solar panels.

Under the Township's new Zoning Ordinance requirements, larger, commercial-scale solar energy facilities are permitted in some agricultural zoning districts, and as an accessory use in the LI – Light Industrial District.



*Solar array installed on Forest Hill Road.*

The Planning Commission should also consider offering incentives for parking lot solar installations in the commercial and industrial district. Consideration should be given to the specific site conditions when encouraging this type of alternative energy facility. The Planning Commission should also consider whether electrical vehicle charging stations should be required for new commercial and industrial construction.

As the Township considers ways to implement sustainable development strategies in the future, being open to alternative energy and other emerging technologies will be critical.

## Supporting the Use of Native Species

Pursuant to goals and objectives previously adopted in the Township's master plan, in 2021, the Planning Commission adopted an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to require that 75% of trees, shrubs, and other plantings required under the landscaping and screening requirements be native Michigan species. To assist in the implementation of this requirement, a list of web resources are provided to act as a guide to contractors, landscape architects and business owners to consider when designing required landscaping. This resource is not meant to serve as an exhaustive list, other sources and species will be considered by the Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator, but serve as a tool for all members of the community when making planting decisions.

Encouraging the widespread use of native plants and trees is important, and equally, or perhaps more so, is the identification and elimination of invasive plant species. While a survey of the Township's parkland in 2019 by the Mid-Michigan Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area program did not identify any invasive plants on Township property, there are plenty of invasive plants, including phragmites, in widespread areas throughout the Township.

As the Planning Commission seeks to improve the sustainability and resiliency of the natural features and environment, native species are crucial to this endeavor. Native plants have been proven to require less fertilizer and fewer pesticide applications, require less water due to their deep root systems, and improve stormwater management and water infiltration. They reduce air pollution by sequestering carbon. Native plantings near the Looking Glass River and wetlands can reduce water pollution and stream degradation, and can help with flood control. Further, they are well-suited to provide food and shelter for native wildlife and birds. Native plant species attract a variety of beneficial native insects and provide for pollination. Native species promote the stewardship of our natural heritage while being affordable, easy to obtain, and provide benefits to landowners large and small. The Township should seek to continue to model best practices and require development to do the same wherever possible.



Showy goldenrod, a local native flowering perennial herb.

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## Zoning Plan

# Zoning Plan

The Zoning Plan shows how the Township's long-range land use will be implemented through the use of zoning. The intent of the Zoning Plan is to highlight specific key or priority areas where existing zoning is significantly lacking appropriate standards or would inhibit development in accordance with the Master Plan.

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MASTER PLAN AND ZONING ORDINANCE

### Master Plan

**Long range vision that guides community policy**

Community Master Plans illustrate the vision for the future and contain guiding principles that help a community create land development policies and make land use decisions. In Michigan, the value of the Master Plan as an important community document is recognized, which is why the state of Michigan requires the Master Plan be reviewed every five years. The Township should continue to check in on their progress regularly and ensure the vision and guiding principles are still relevant.

### Zoning Ordinance

**Legal framework that regulates development**

A Zoning Ordinance regulates the use of land. Adopting regulations that support the goals of the Master Plan helps ensure that future development will be in line with the community's goals and vision. It is also helpful to develop an itemized implementation guide for a Master Plan. The Zoning Ordinance is one of the primary tools for implementing a Master Plan; there should be a clear connection between Master Plan goals and the Zoning Ordinance. Many of the land use recommendations, goals and objectives found in the Master Plan can be aided by amendments to the Township's Zoning Ordinance.

*@Giffels Webster, Inc.*



A specific Zoning Plan outlines steps that can be taken toward implementation through amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. The table below shows how the future land uses of the Master Plan generally align with the Township's zoning districts.

Table 4.1. Zoning Plan	
2024 Future Land Use Category	Zoning District
<b>Housing</b>	
Agriculture and Rural Residential	AP Agricultural Preservation District AG Agricultural District
Low Density Residential	RR Rural Residential District R-1 Single-Family Residential District
Medium Density Residential	R-2 Two-Family Residential District
High Density Residential	R-3 Multiple-Family Residential District
Manufactured Housing Park	MHP Manufactured Home Park District
<b>Business &amp; Industrial</b>	
Local Business	B-1 Local Business District
Principal Business	B-2 Business District
Industry and Technology	LI Light Industrial District
<b>Other</b>	
Open Space	
Landfill	
Airport	
<b>Mixed Use</b>	
Village Center/Wacousta	VSC Village Service Center District
Flexible Development	New district to be created
<b>Industrial</b>	
Looking Glass River Corridor	LGR Looking Glass River Overlay District
Grand River Avenue Corridor	GR Grand River Avenue Overlay District



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## Action Strategies

# Action Strategies

## Implementation Matrices

In order to illustrate the connection between goals, objectives and action strategies, each of the implementation matrices that follow align with the goals, which are noted at the top of each matrix. Within each matrix, the action strategies are broken into subcategories intended to assist with identification and prioritization. Not all goals contain action strategies within each subcategory and some strategies are repeated as they can advance more than one goal. The matrix subcategories include:

**Table 4.2. Implementation Action Strategy Types**

Action Strategy	Description
Zoning	These are items requiring zoning amendments and will generally be led by staff and the Planning Commission.
Advocacy	These will be items involving education of the community, including residents, business owners, property owners, developers and design professionals. They will be led by a combination of staff, boards and commissions. This may also involve Township staff and officials working with county and state officials to coordinate plans and funding, as appropriate.
Capital Improvement	These involve large capital investments, such as equipment, projects or studies, that require inclusion into the Township's Capital Improvement Plans in order to determine the most efficient time and method of completion and may involve multiple municipal Township departments.
Other	Other items may involve research, study and further evaluation by staff and/or other boards and commissions.

The tables that follow assign actions to the goals and objectives, leaving room to establish priority levels for short-term, mid-term, and long-term items as the next step following adoption of this plan. This chapter should be reviewed periodically and at least annually to assess progress and adequately budget for specific strategies. Each action should have a "lead" (a board, commission, group, or individual) who is responsible for project initiation and coordination.

**Table 4.3. Implementation Matrix Categories**

Matrix Categories	Definitions
Action Strategy	The actions necessary to carry out goals and objectives
Lead Body	Identifies the primary party responsible for accomplishing the action strategy
Time Frame	Identifies and prioritizes the time frame for the action strategy to be implemented.
Supporting Partners	Identifies other parties involved in the accomplishment of the action strategy
Abbreviations	Staff PC - Planning Commission BOT - Township Board of Trustees NA - Not Applicable

**After adoption, the Planning Commission will assign time frames or priorities to the action strategies. These time frames are intended as guides and may be adjusted as resources allow or as other issues arise. Generally, short time frames are intended as three years or less; medium-to-long time frames are more than three years.**



## Goal 1 | Strengthen Community Identity.

Strengthen the Township's rural character and community identity by preserving agricultural land and open space, ensuring the long-term stability of residential areas and neighborhoods, and preserving historic resources. Provide opportunities for residents to interact through cultural and recreational events and programs that highlight Watertown Township's rural character.

Type of Action Strategy	Lead Body	Time Frame	Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning Action Strategies</b>			
Plan a branding and identification program, including gateway and wayfinding signage.	PC		Staff, BOT
Consider developing sub-area plans, such as a Wacousta Area Plan, and annually assess the need for other sub-area plans.	PC		Staff, BOT
Amend the Village Service Center Zoning District to permit and achieve the vision of the Wacousta Area Plan.	PC		Staff, BOT
Update standards for streetscape, landscape and façade for residential and non-residential developments within the Township.	PC		Staff, BOT
<b>Advocacy Action Strategies</b>			
Work with the Clinton County Road Commission to retain vegetation and preserve a rural appearance along rural roadways	Staff		BOT
Inventory the Township's historic structures and resources.	Staff		BOT
Develop an annual survey for the business community to better understand their needs and how the Township can provide support.	Staff		BOT
Develop an annual survey for residents to better understand their needs and how the Township can provide support.	Staff		BOT
Foster relationships with local non-profit organizations, such as the Looking Glass Garden Club, Scout troops, Lions Club, etc., in order to provide more community interaction and social activities.	Staff		BOT
<b>Capital Improvement Action Strategies</b>			
Plan for the future of the Township's parks.	BOT		Staff
<b>Other Action Strategies</b>			
Continue to encourage educational opportunities for the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and staff to ensure they are knowledgeable about current planning and zoning practices and to keep updated on emerging topics.	Staff		BOT

Staff | PC - Planning Commission | BOT - Township Board of Trustees | NA - Not Applicable



## Goal 2 | Encourage Economic Development.

Enhance the Township's economic climate by encouraging a diverse mix of agricultural, commercial and industrial uses in appropriate locations near Township resources, including existing utilities, the Capital Region International Airport, and transportation networks. Target job growth to sectors and industries that emphasize a livable wage for their employees.

Type of Action Strategy	Lead Body	Time Frame	Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning Action Strategies</b>			
Develop and adopt a Grand River Corridor Plan to address landscaping, signage, access management, and building placement in the corridor.	PC		Staff, BOT
Evaluate and amend, if necessary, the Grand River Avenue Overlay District.	PC		Staff, BOT
Create Township gateway features along Grand River Avenue at the Township's boundaries.	PC		Staff, BOT
Assess the Zoning Ordinance and amend it as needed to provide for small neighborhood uses, including retail, food establishments, and office spaces, adjacent to residential areas to encourage walkability and minimize traffic congestion.	PC		Staff, BOT
Adopt, when needed, an Office zoning district.	PC		Staff, BOT
Review and revise allowable land uses and related standards in industrial districts to align with potential expansion of cargo operations at the Capital Region International Airport.	PC		Staff, BOT
<b>Advocacy Action Strategies</b>			
Work to recruit new and retain existing commercial, industrial, research, and technology uses in the Township.	Staff		BOT
Foster good communication and partnerships with local agencies, utilities, and other organizations to ensure full compliance with all regulations and requirements before, during, and after development activities.	Staff		BOT
<b>Capital Improvement Action Strategies</b>			
Continue to annually review the Capital Improvements Plan in accordance with state law.	PC, BOT		Staff
Encourage and plan for the extension of high-speed internet in areas not currently served.	BOT		Staff
Encourage and plan for the extension of natural gas and other energy options in areas not currently served.	BOT		Staff
Plan for the extension of public water and sanitary sewer in accordance with adopted infrastructure plans.	BOT		Staff

Staff | PC - Planning Commission | BOT - Township Board of Trustees | NA - Not Applicable



## Goal 3 | Improve Connectivity.

Build a non-motorized transportation network that connects residents to meaningful destinations throughout the Township. Prioritize linkages that promote the public health and safety of Township residents as well as linkages that reinforce the Township's community identity. Encourage improvements to communications infrastructure, including broadband, to provide for enhanced opportunities for residents and business owners to connect to each other and to the greater community.

Type of Action Strategy	Lead Body	Time Frame	Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning Action Strategies</b>			
Update parking standards to allow adaptive reuse of unused parking areas, facilitate the installation of electric vehicle infrastructure, and accommodate the recent trends of drive-up and curbside pickup uses while mitigating the impacts on pedestrian circulation.	PC		Staff, BOT
Assess and update existing standards for new sidewalks and pathways associated with the construction of recent developments in the Zoning Ordinance.	PC		Staff, BOT
<b>Advocacy Action Strategies</b>			
Work with developers, the Michigan Department of Transportation, and the Clinton County Road Commission to achieve safe and efficient access to properties along all roads in the Township.	Staff		BOT
Partner with road agencies, utilities, and public and private landowners to facilitate communication about and encourage the implementation of the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan.	Staff		BOT
Ensure that parks and recreation facilities are accessible for residents of all ages and abilities by conducting an accessibility audit and incorporating needed upgrades into future recreation plans.	Staff		BOT
Adopt a Complete Street policy.	Staff		BOT, PC
<b>Capital Improvement Action Strategies</b>			
Consider integrating non-motorized projects with larger street infrastructure projects to allow for lower construction costs.	BOT		Staff
Create a non-motorized loop to provide access to the Wacousta area and connect Township parks as shown in "Map 3.3. Proposed Non-Motorized East-West Loop" on <a href="#">page 3.15</a> .	BOT		Staff
Promote non-motorized usage by way of pedestrian/cyclist signage along Herbison Road (existing gravel road) from Airport Road to Wacousta Road as shown in "Map 3.3. Proposed Non-Motorized East-West Loop" on <a href="#">page 3.15</a> .	BOT		Staff
Plan for non-motorized opportunities along Clark Road from Airport Road to Wacousta Road as shown in "Map 3.3. Proposed Non-Motorized East-West Loop" on <a href="#">page 3.15</a> .	BOT		Staff

Staff | PC - Planning Commission | BOT - Township Board of Trustees | NA - Not Applicable



## Goal 4 | Environmental Protection and Sustainability.

Conserve and protect the natural resources, open spaces, and environmental assets of the Township. Encourage development of land in a sustainable manner that protects the environment for current and future generations.

Type of Action Strategy	Lead Body	Time Frame	Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning Action Strategies</b>			
Assess the Zoning Ordinance standards for stormwater management to ensure alignment with best practices.	PC		Staff, BOT
Assess the Zoning Ordinance standards for alternative energy systems to ensure alignment with best practices.	PC		Staff, BOT
Encourage the use of native species for landscaping and stormwater management purposes.	PC		Staff, BOT
Promote the use of grass swales, natural on-site detention, and native vegetation, rather than typical suburban elements, in rural residential areas.	PC		Staff, BOT
Enforce the minimum riparian setback standards that require native vegetation buffer strips and restrict clearing, construction, and development along the Looking Glass River.	Staff		PC, BOT
<b>Advocacy Action Strategies</b>			
Develop incentives to encourage developers to utilize energy-efficient and environmentally sensitive materials and practices.	Staff		PC, BOT
Encourage low-impact development stormwater management techniques, such as bioretention.	Staff		PC, BOT
Utilize existing state and federal wetland inventories in planning and decision-making.	Staff		BOT
Avoid extension of public water and sanitary sewer services into planned agricultural areas.	PC, BOT		Staff
Partner with and support stakeholder groups and agencies to promote public education regarding aggressive and invasive species within the Township.	Staff		PC, BOT
Provide educational materials regarding the importance of well and septic systems maintenance.	Staff		NA
Support groups and organizations which seek to protect and improve recreational use of the Looking Glass River.	Staff		BOT
<b>Capital Improvement Action Strategies</b>			
Promote the enrollment of lands into the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (PA 116 of 1974) in areas planned for long-range agricultural use.	BOT		Staff
Update Township facilities to assist residents during extreme weather events in order to build a resilient community.	BOT		Staff

Staff | PC - Planning Commission | BOT - Township Board of Trustees | NA - Not Applicable



## Goal 5 | Housing Quality and Variety.

Ensure the availability of a wide range of attractive housing choices for individuals and families of all types. Encourage development policies that allow aging in place. Retain existing residents and attract new residents.

Type of Action Strategy	Lead Body	Time Frame	Supporting Partners
<b>Zoning Action Strategies</b>			
Research, evaluate and consider Zoning Ordinance amendments that provide a range of housing opportunities for all age groups.	PC		Staff, BOT
Evaluate and amend, if necessary, the residential zoning districts to permit a range of housing choices at densities consistent with the goals and intent of the Master Plan.	PC		Staff, BOT
Assess the Zoning Ordinance and amend as needed to reinforce appearance standards for new development.	PC		Staff, BOT
Review the Residential Cluster Option standards in conjunction with constructed projects to gauge how they have the intended open space preservation; evaluate if any refinements to standards are needed.	PC		Staff, BOT
<b>Advocacy Action Strategies</b>			
Promote cluster development and open space preservation.	Staff		PC, BOT
Develop a property inventory by working with property owners to provide information on available properties.	Staff		BOT
Pursue strategies to make Watertown Township an "Age-Friendly Community," including expanding public transportation, attracting goods and services that support a variety of ages in the community, promoting community health strategies, and encouraging social and civic engagement for people of all ages.	Staff		PC, BOT
<b>Capital Improvement Action Strategies</b>			
Evaluate infrastructure, including broadband, water, sewer, roads, and multi-use pathways, to ensure housing is connected and supported as appropriate.	BOT		PC, Staff

Staff | PC - Planning Commission | BOT - Township Board of Trustees | NA - Not Applicable



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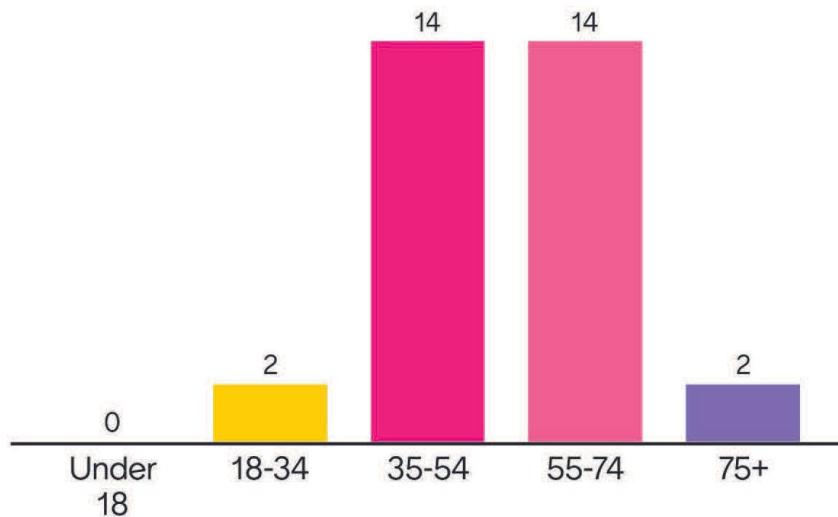
A | APPENDIX

## Open House Results

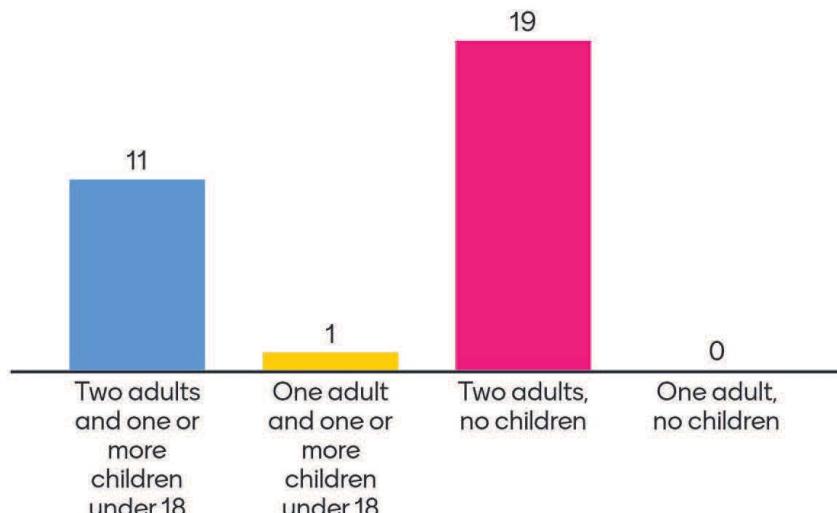
Where do you live? Place the pin in the approximate location.



What is your age group?



# What does your household look like?



31  
1

# How would you prioritize these goals?



19  
1



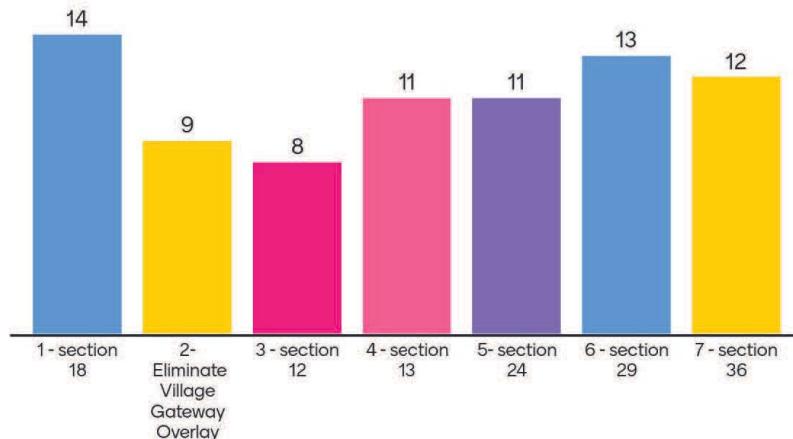
Are they any items that are missing in these descriptions? If yes, please let us know why?



Community center	No	Cellur service needs improving
I value living in an agricultural and rural community and thought that could be more of a focus.	Township commitment to public greenspace.	I wish where the general store is we had a restaurant and other small shops
Regarding the goals, I have no additional goals to add.		



Do you agree with the changes proposed on the 'Draft Future Land Use Map? Refer to the map for numbered changes? (Click all that apply)



# If no, please let us know why?



I do agree with adding more recreation areas and I wish more were being added

Good stuff

Don't want to eliminate agricultural areas

The Wacousta Road corridor off of Grand River Hwy is an important 'village gateway'. It's also an obvious gateway that is a natural fit.

It is an important gateway that is heavily used, which would make a good place to show off the natural features of our township as well as a good place for future development.

Please keep our township and county more rural focused.

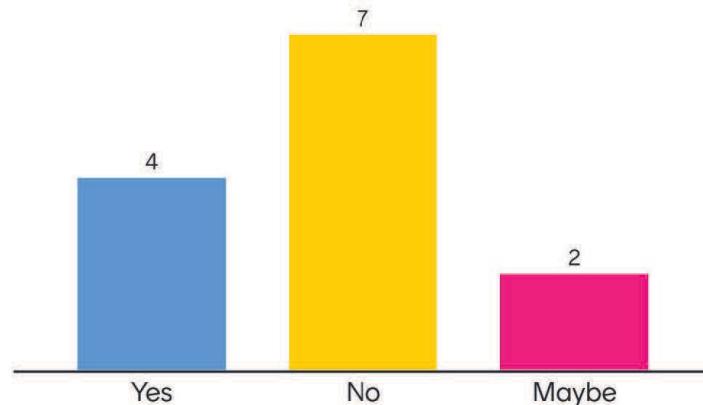
For section 5-20; in the 18 to 19 area; there is a road in that section this is not built. I would like to see the plan reflect fewer homes developed. Currently there are 16 proposed but not built; nor is the road constructed.

People live out here because there is space, no congestion and open land. Lets keep it that way :)

8



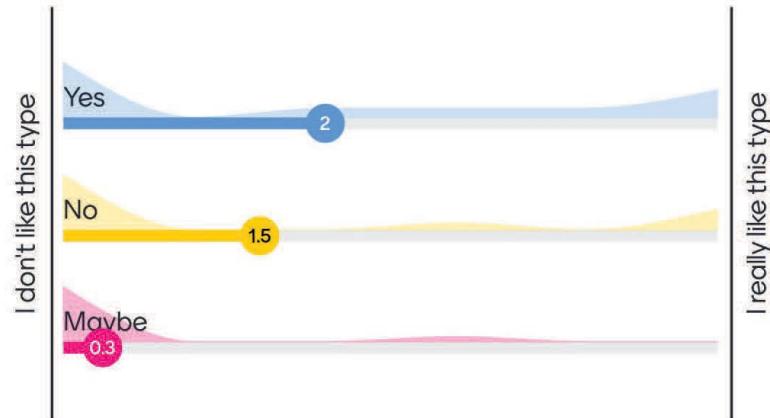
Do you think these housing types might be a fit in R-1 district? Refer to the Zoning map poster for R-1 district areas.



13

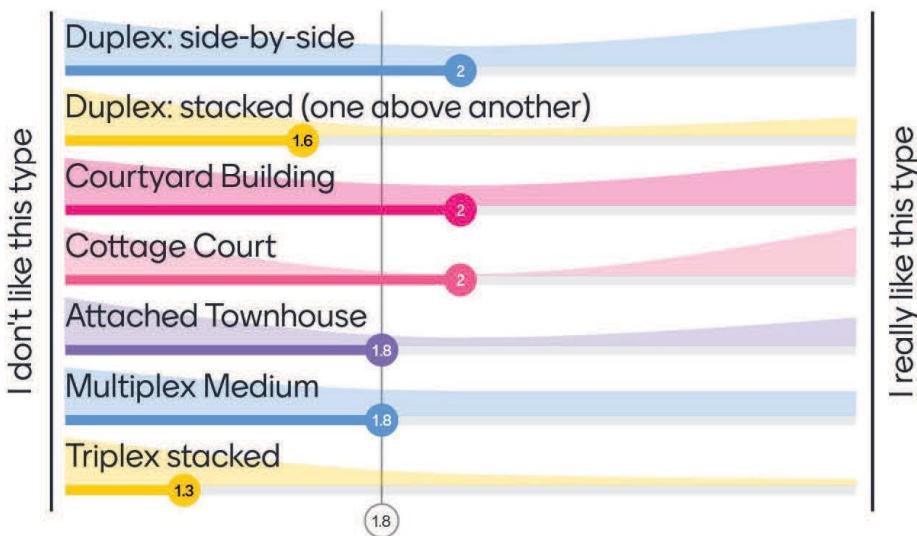


Do you think these housing types might be a fit in R-2 district? Refer to the Zoning map poster for R-2 district areas.



12  
1

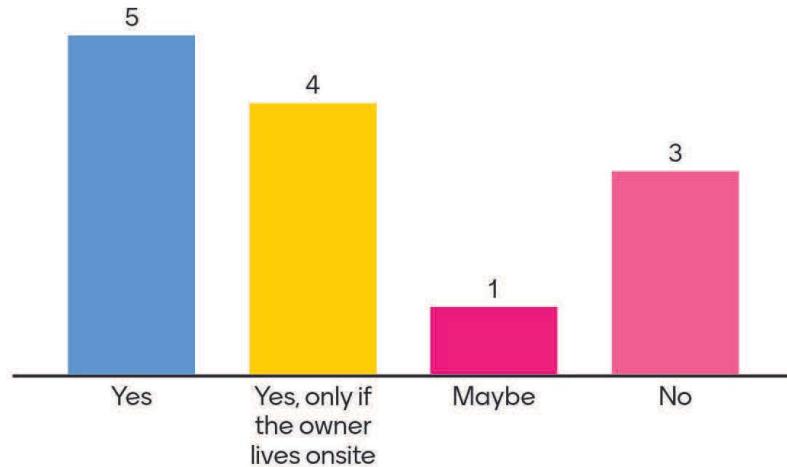
What do you think of these housing types?



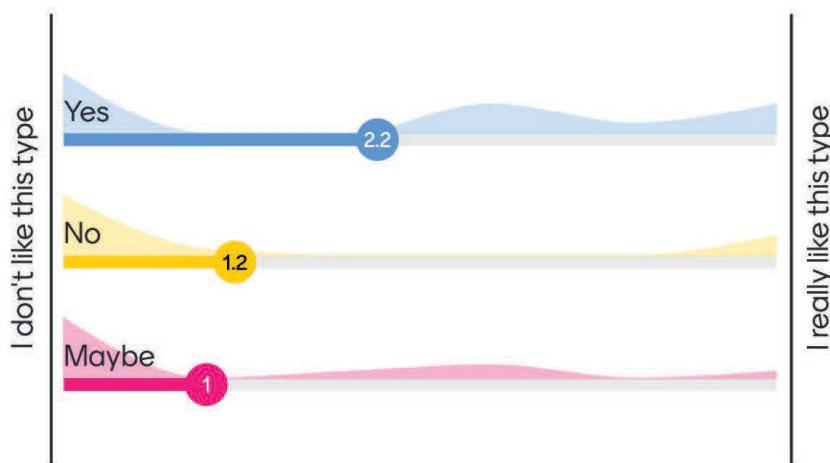
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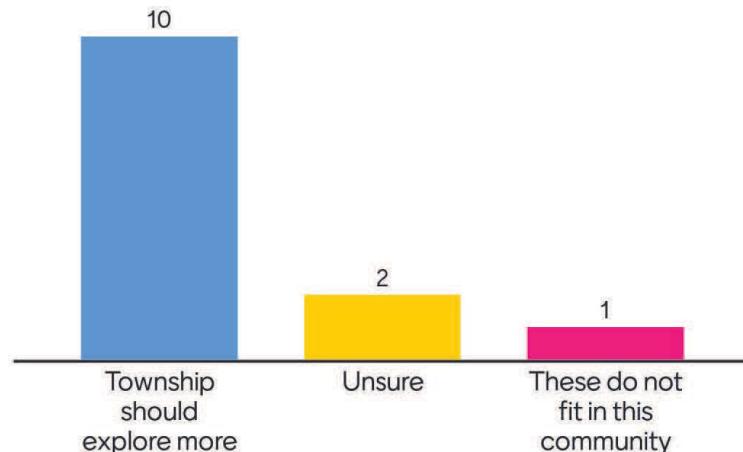
## Do you think that the Township should consider allowing ADU's in single family districts?



## Do you think 'small homes' might be a fit single family districts?



# What are your thoughts about Agrihood communities?



## Are there any problem areas (roadway network) within the township that should be addressed in the future?



No	Herbison paved from Bauer because it is a school route from North Town to elementary	Wacousta Rd is currently very unsafe to walk on. A sidewalk or even just more stop signs would be very appropriate, please do this :)
Need more paved shoulders	Not really	The speed limit on Wacousta Road between Riverside and the Township Hall is too high.
The speed limit is too high on Wacousta Road from Riverside to the Township Hall.	No non-moto connections east to west	I think creating walking paths is a great idea. I would suggest instead of a non-motorized walkway down Clark Road, it instead go down Howe Road so to connect downtowns of Wacousta and Dewitt. Add a path to connect to Lakeside Preserve too.



## Are there any problem areas (roadway network) within the township that should be addressed in the future?



I would like to see the pathway extended down Wacousta Road

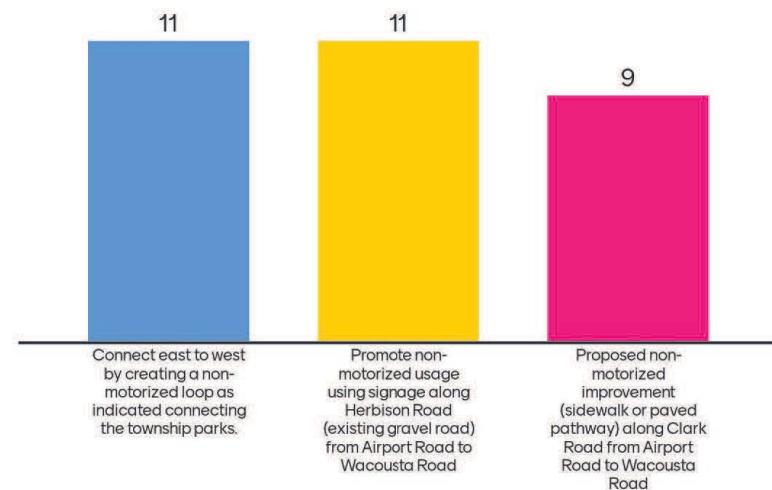
Some kind of pathway going down Wacousta Rd to the Township Hall from Clark Road

I would like to see more paved walking trails off to the side of the road and even in some of the public wooded areas. Many walk Clark Road - it would be safer.

None

13

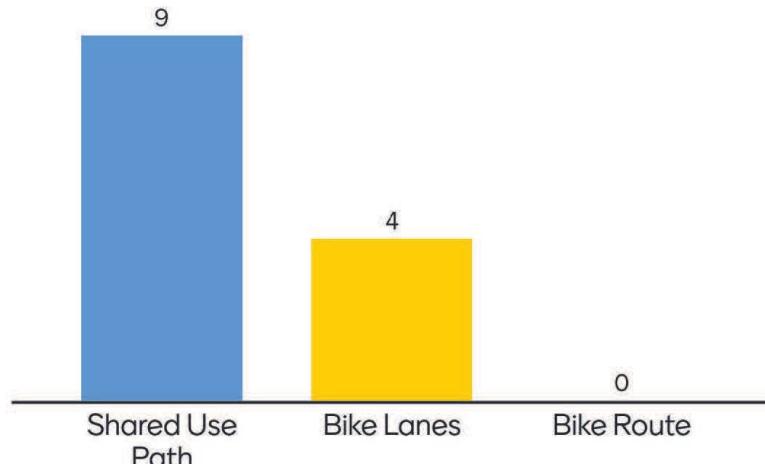
## Let us know if you agree with the proposed improvements. Select all that apply



13



# What is your preferred type of cross-section along Clarke Road?



13

## Is there anything else you'd like to share?



This presentation fills me with so many ideas! I really liked the option of ADUs! The bike loop is awesome, but safety would be a huge concern, bikes and cars shared the road on Airport rd with the hills. What about adding a splash pad somewhere?

The non motorized path along Clark rd will be very dangerous for the reason of all the blind hills and the rising and setting sun in motorists eyes! The traffic on Clark rd goes way to fast for this!

Small homes are excellent opportunity for decay without any real contribution to tax base

3



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## 2016 Future Land Use Descriptions

The 2016 Master Plan Update retains the bulk of the land use categories, but adds in one new category: Flexible Development. This land use category is designed for specific locations within the Township that could accommodate a mixed-use or single-use development, including commercial, light industrial and office uses. This district is intended to provide for flexibility in allowing future development which is compatible with the existing uses, and could service the commercial demand generated by the workforce of current and future industrial uses. This district allows for strategic positioning of targeted uses, driven by industrial demand, to be harmonious with the overall area without adversely affecting surrounding properties. To reduce traffic concerns, the areas designated within the Township for this classification include properties with frontage on Grand River Avenue, generally between Bunker Hill Drive and Airport Road.

**Agriculture and Rural Residential.** Areas planned for Agriculture and Rural Residential are intended to accommodate primarily agricultural land uses, farm dwellings, and non-farm dwellings that are in keeping with the rural and agricultural character. Residential development in these areas should be limited to single-family homes at an overall density generally in the range of 0.2 to 0.5 dwelling units per acre. Agriculture and Rural Residential areas are not intended to be served by public water or sanitary sewer services.

Recognizing that some lands are particularly well-suited to agricultural uses, it is the Township's intent to minimize the encroachment of non-farm uses into these prime agricultural areas. In order to discourage the consumption of prime agricultural land by large-lot residential development, the Township should zone these areas Agricultural Preservation, limit density, maintain the maximum lot size of two acres, and require the preservation of open space and/or farmland as a condition of development. Areas best suited for Agricultural Preservation are those enrolled in P.A. 116 and those designated as prime or unique farmland by the United States Department of Agriculture.

While Grand River Corridor is primarily planned for more intensive uses, it is the intent of the Master Plan to retain the existing agricultural area along Grand River Avenue west of Wacousta Road. This area offers travelers on Grand River a view of the Township's agricultural land and rural character.

**Low Density Residential.** The area planned for Low Density Residential is intended to accommodate single-family and two-family homes up to a maximum density of 1.0 dwelling units per acre. Located outside of the Township's agricultural lands with convenient access to the freeways and Grand River, this area is an ideal location for residential development. Future development within these areas, however, should be at a low density that does not require extension of public water and sanitary sewer service.



**Medium Density Residential.** Areas planned for Medium Density Residential are intended to accommodate residential uses up to a maximum density of 2.0 dwelling units per acre. Planned Medium Density Residential areas are primarily concentrated in two key areas: 1) along the Township's eastern boundary where public water and sanitary sewer service is already available, and 2) within the Wacousta area and Village Gateway areas.

Along Airport Road, this designation provides a transition between the mix of nonresidential and residential land uses planned to the east in DeWitt Charter Township and the agricultural and rural residential land uses to the west in Watertown Township.

In and around Wacousta, medium density residential development serves to support extension of public utilities to the village area and will provide additional rooftops needed to support nonresidential uses in the Village Center. Development of this area should be designed in a manner that is sensitive to and provides for an appropriate transition to the outlying agricultural and rural residential areas.

**High Density Residential.** The area planned for High Density Residential is intended to accommodate a variety of attached and detached residential uses up to a maximum density of 8.0 dwelling units per acre. Development of this area should be designed in a manner that provides for an appropriate transition between the planned Local Business node at the freeway interchange and the surrounding Medium Density Residential neighborhoods.

**Manufactured Housing Park.** The area planned for Manufactured Housing Park is intended to accommodate expansion of the existing park and/or development of a new modern manufactured housing park at a density of approximately 5.0 dwelling units per acre.

**Local Business.** The area planned for Local Business is intended to accommodate small scale neighborhood-oriented commercial uses, such as financial institutions, personal service establishments, professional offices, and small restaurants and coffee shops. Located along Airport Road abutting the I-69 interchange, this area is intended to primarily meet the convenience service needs of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. This area could accommodate limited highway-oriented commercial uses; however, development of such uses should be of a character and scale that is consistent with a neighborhood commercial node. Local Business areas should be appropriately buffered from residential areas by landscaping and screening and/or lower intensity transitional land uses such as offices.



**Principal Business.** The areas planned for Principal Business are intended to accommodate larger scale retail and office developments and auto-oriented uses that meet the needs of the entire community. Located along Grand River Avenue with convenient access to Interstate 69 and Interstate 96, uses within the Principal Business area will serve Township residents, pass-by travelers, and surrounding communities. Principal Business areas should be appropriately buffered from residential areas by landscaping and screening and/or lower intensity transitional land uses such as offices.



**Village Center.** The area planned for Village Center is located at the heart of Wacousta. The Village Center is intended to accommodate a mix of land uses including small scale retail, office, high density residential, public and quasi-public, and parks and open spaces. Development within the Village Center should be designed to strengthen the sense of place and enhance the existing town or village form while reflecting the area's rural character.

**Industry and Technology.** The areas planned for Industry and Technology are intended to accommodate a range of uses including warehousing, storage, light manufacturing, large office complexes and parks, and research and development. These areas are located in the southeastern portion of the Township in appropriate proximity to the railroad, freeways, Grand River Avenue, and Capital Region Airport. Industry and Technology areas should be appropriately buffered from residential areas by landscaping and screening and/or lower intensity transitional land uses such as offices.

**Landfill.** The area designated as Landfill encompasses the Granger Sanitary Landfill site.

**Airport.** The area designated as Airport encompasses the land owned by the Capital Region International Airport.

**Open Space.** The areas planned for Open Space are intended to accommodate open space and recreational uses including golf courses, parks, and cemeteries. (Note: Due to its location within the Village Center area, Heritage Park is not specifically designated as Open Space on the Future Land Use Map; however, it is the intent of the Master Plan that Heritage Park be maintained as a public park and open space.)

#### **2016 Addition: Flexible Development.**

**Flexible Development.** This land use category is designed for specific locations within the Township that could accommodate a mixed-use or single-use development, including commercial, light industrial and office uses. This district is intended to provide for flexibility in allowing future development which is compatible with the existing uses, and could service the commercial demand generated by the workforce of current and future industrial uses. This district allows for strategic positioning of targeted uses, driven by industrial demand, to be harmonious with the overall area without adversely affecting surrounding properties. To reduce traffic concerns, the areas designated within the Township for this classification include properties with frontage on Grand River Avenue, generally between Bunker Hill Drive and Airport Road.





Tubers enjoying the Looking Glass River as it runs through Watertown Township.

In addition to the underlying land use recommendations, the Future Land Use Map designates four focus areas with the following overlay classifications:

**Looking Glass River Corridor.** The Looking Glass River is a significant scenic and riparian resource that runs through the Township primarily between Clark and Herbison Roads. The Looking Glass River Overlay classification is intended to identify the River as an important community asset and encourage its protection, appropriate use, and ecological management.

Riparian corridors, such as the Looking Glass River, provide critical wildlife habitat and movement corridors; serve important ecological functions such as water filtration, stormwater storage, and flood control; offer opportunities for active and passive recreation; and tie communities together.

A number of best practices, tools, and techniques are available to assist in the protection and enhancement of the River corridor. A Riparian Corridor Plan can establish the policy framework for future regulatory measures and detail recommended strategies for leveraging the opportunities the River offers the Township and its residents. Such a plan should focus on how best to utilize the diverse ecological and cultural aspects of the River as it flows through the Township. It should identify the range of functions provided by and community values associated with the River, and how those benefits can best be managed and leveraged so the River corridor truly becomes a community asset. The Plan should include both land-based recommendations for protecting the functional values of the River and branding and identity-based recommendations for raising public awareness and engagement.

**Wacousta.** Wacousta is situated at the crossroads of Wacousta and Herbison Roads and is the Township's historic settlement or hamlet. It is unincorporated but commonly referred to as Wacousta Village or, more generally, the Wacousta area. It has many key components of a place: government center (Township Hall), public gathering spaces (Township parks), elementary school, library, place of worship, significant natural feature (Looking Glass River), recreation opportunities (gymnasium, ball fields, canoe landings), residential neighborhoods, and businesses (including the Wacousta General Store). While the Township is challenged by multiple school district boundaries and zip codes resulting in a lack of common identity among its residents, Wacousta presents a unique opportunity for creating a true sense of place within Watertown Township. By developing, adopting, and implementing a Wacousta Area Plan, the Township can clearly articulate its future vision for the Wacousta area and identify specific action strategies to build upon the assets already present within the village area. Such an area plan can illustrate the preferred physical "town" form and neighborhood characteristics, detail streetscape improvements such as street lights, sidewalks and crosswalks, and establish concepts for gateway identification and enhancement. See Figure 11 for additional information.

**Village Gateway.** Slightly "off the beaten path," the Wacousta area currently lacks visibility from Grand River Avenue — the Township's most heavily traveled roadway. The Village Gateway overlay classification is intended to identify this area as an important gateway to Wacousta and encourage future development in a manner that provides for a noticeable transition — or gateway — into the Village. Future land uses within this overlay area are primarily planned for Medium Density Residential; however, a more detailed Wacousta Area Plan should provide recommendations for additional development characteristics such as front setbacks and right-of-way plantings unique to the Gateway overlay area.

**Grand River Avenue Corridor.** Grand River Avenue is an important thoroughfare through the southern portion of the Township that connects Watertown Township to the City of Lansing to the east and Portland to the West. The corridor encompasses the majority of the Township's existing nonresidential uses, including industrial and highway-oriented commercial uses as well as the Granger Sanitary Landfill. The Grand River Avenue Corridor overlay classification is intended to recognize the significance of this corridor — its access to both freeways, visibility, volume of traffic, and concentration of existing and planned nonresidential land uses. Development in this area should be well designed to portray an attractive image of the Township and ensure a safe and efficient transportation corridor. Development and adoption of a detailed Grand River Corridor Plan can establish the policy framework for refinement of the Grand River Avenue Overlay District in the Zoning Ordinance. Future amendments to the Overlay District could specify additional regulations for development and redevelopment within the corridor, such as access management techniques, building placement and materials, signage, parking, screening, and landscaping standards. As indicated on the Future Land Use Map, existing agriculture and rural residential uses west of Wacousta Road should be retained in order to preserve views of the Township's agricultural land and rural character from this important corridor.





Examples of gateway features with rural character (above and below).



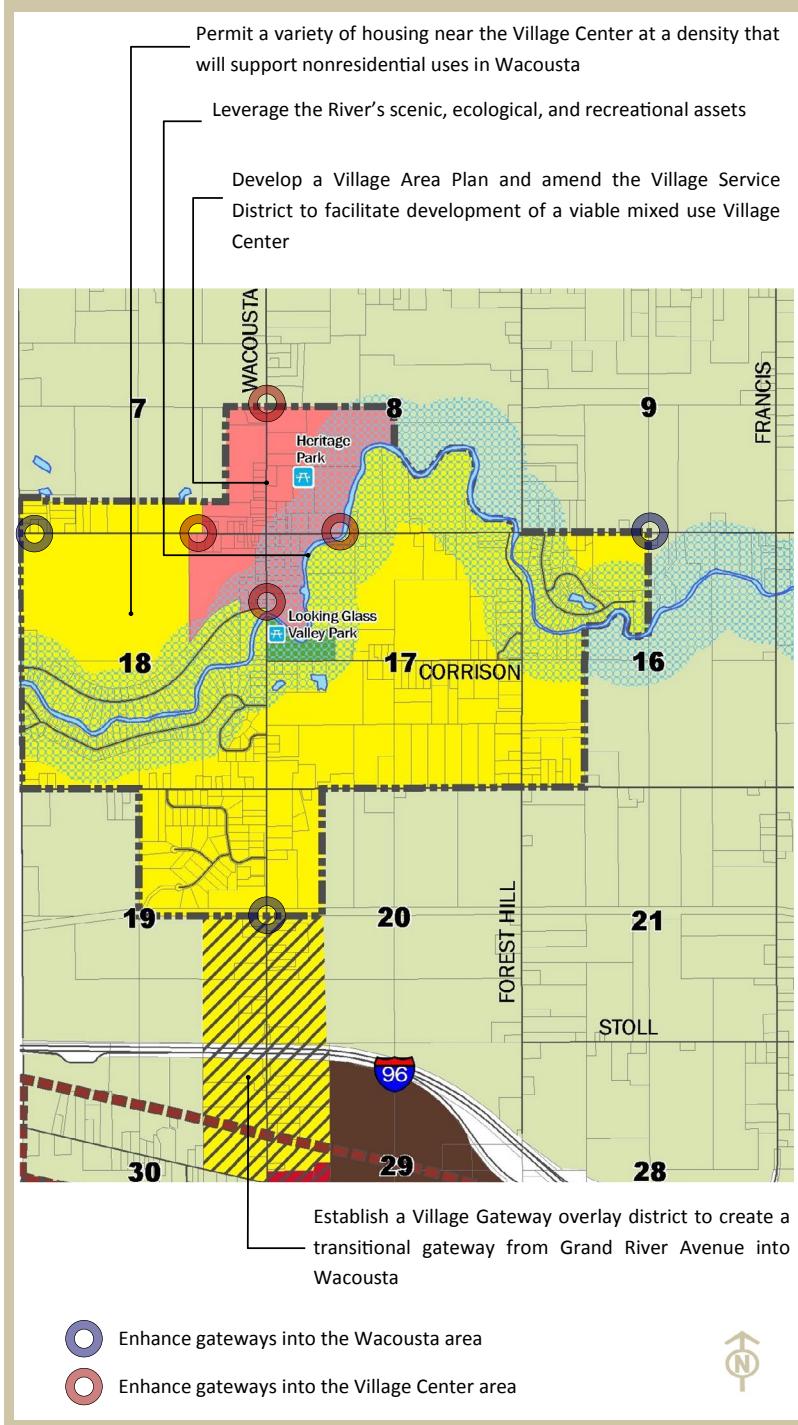
Wacousta presents a unique opportunity for creating a true sense of place within Watertown.



Examples of crosswalk and building placement that create a pedestrian-oriented village atmosphere (above and below).



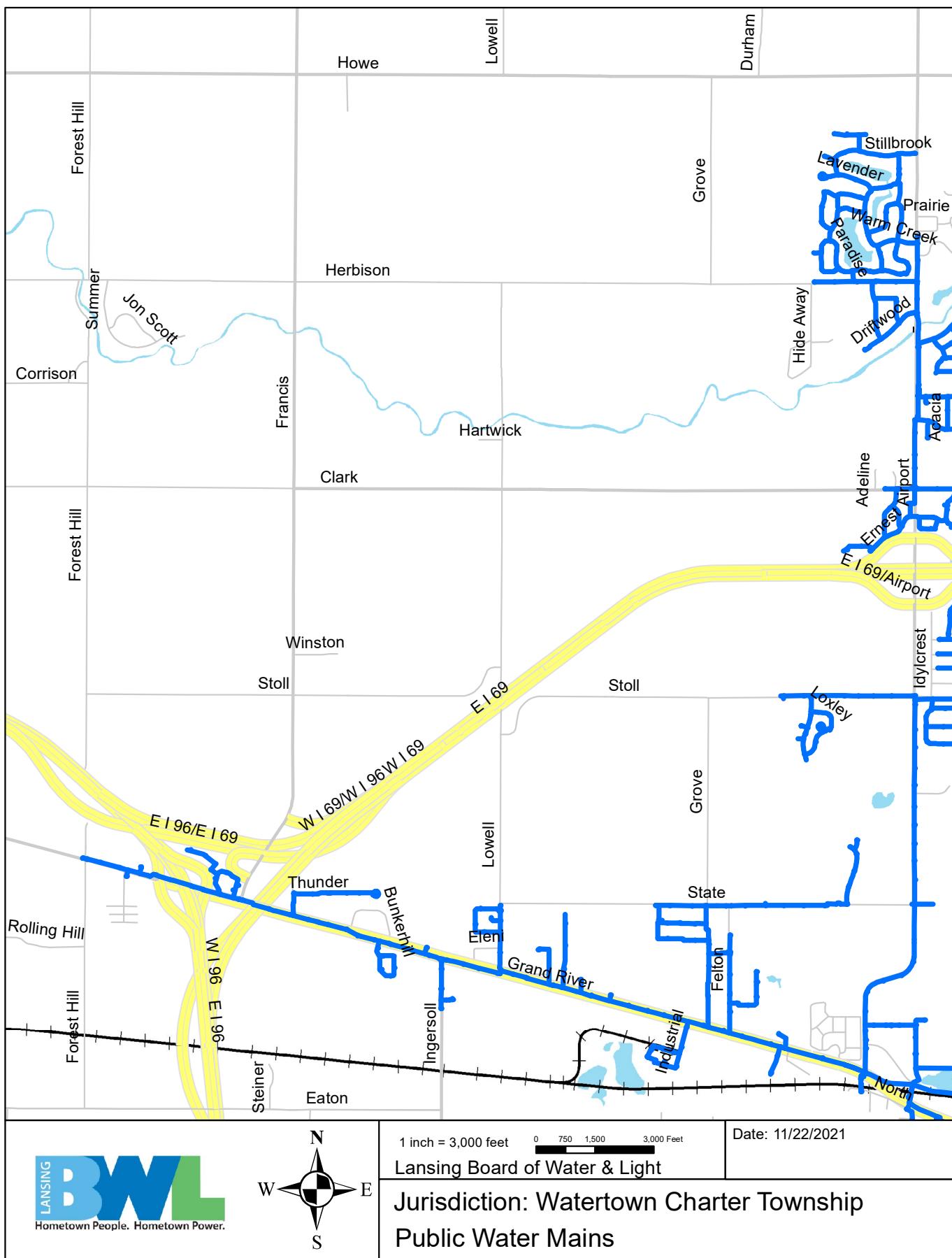
Figure 11. Wacousta and Gateway Focus Area Recommendations.



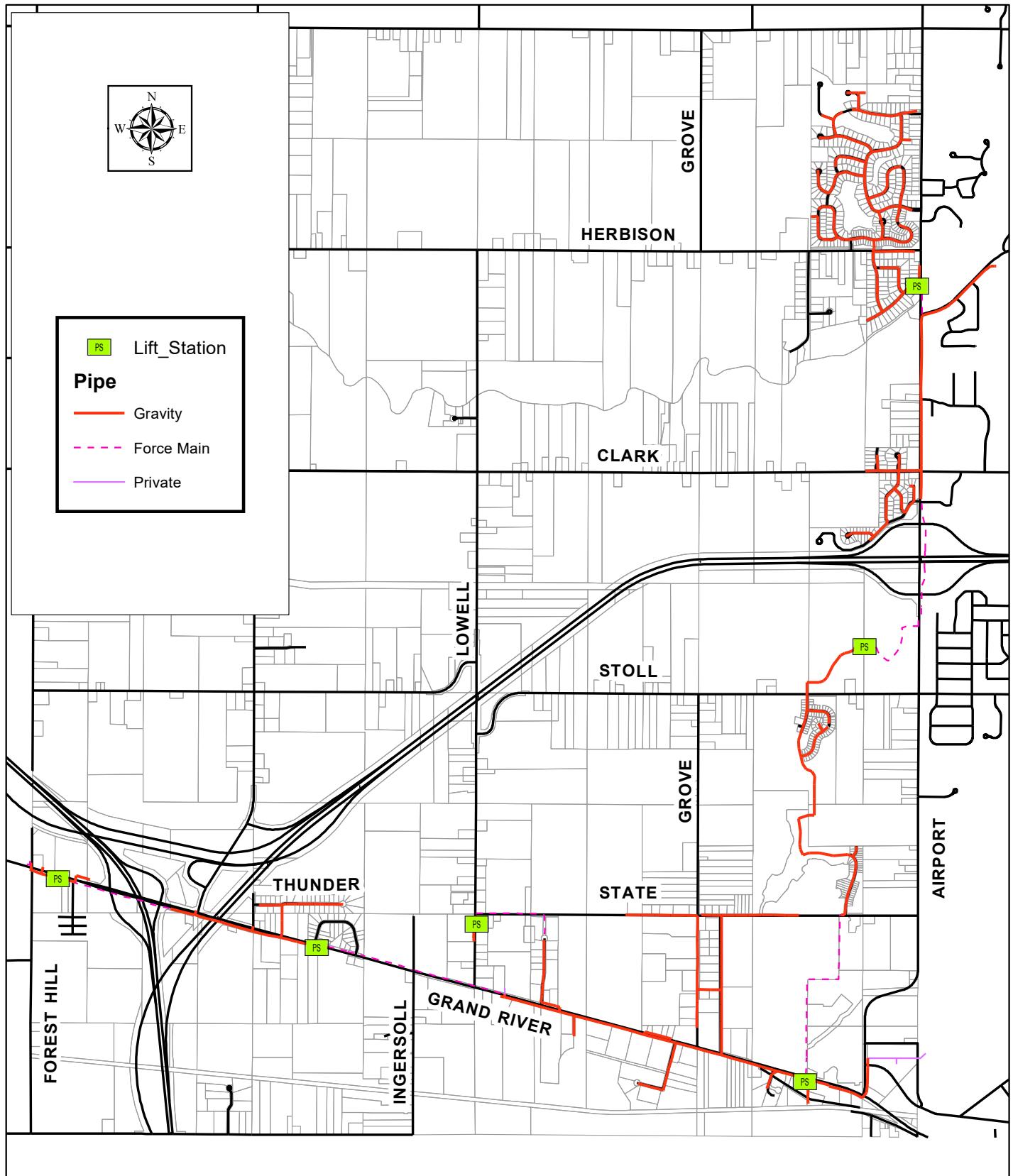
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## Water & Sewer Maps

Map A.1. Watertown Township: Public Water Mains



# Watertown Township Sanitary Sewer System



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**Township Board of Trustees  
Resolution of Adoption**

**WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
CLINTON COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

**RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION  
WATERTOWN CHARTER TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN, MARCH 2024**

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission has the responsibility and is empowered by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008 as amended, to make and adopt a Master Plan for the physical development of the Township and to amend the Plan as needed from time-to-time, and

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Board created the Planning Commission for the purposes stated in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Act No. 33 of Public Acts of 2008 as amended, and

**WHEREAS**, Watertown Charter Township has retained a professional planning consultant to assist the Planning Commission with the technical studies necessary to draft a new Master Plan for Watertown Charter Township, and

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission has held a public hearing on its proposed Master Plan for the Township on January 10, 2024, at the Watertown Charter Township Hall, and

**WHEREAS**, the Watertown Charter Township Planning Commission finds that the new Master Plan is necessary for the continued development and the appropriate redevelopment of the physical areas of the Township, and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Watertown Charter Township Board of Trustees hereby adopts this Master Plan for Watertown Charter Township, dated March 2024, along with the text, maps, charts, graphs, and other descriptive materials contained in the Plan, including the Future Land Use Map, and including the following attachments: Watertown Township Sanitary Sewer System Map, and Watertown Township Public Water Mains Map.

**CERTIFICATION**

I, the undersigned duly qualified Clerk of Watertown Charter Township, Clinton County, Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution duly adopted by the Township Board of Trustees of the Charter Township of Watertown, County of Clinton, Michigan at a regular meeting held on March 18, 2024 at 7:00PM EST and that said meeting was conducted and public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with the Open Meetings Act, being Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976.

I further certify that the following Members were present at said meeting: Supervisor Maahs, Clerk Brokob, Treasurer Biergans, Trustee Hufnagel, Trustee Cooley, Trustee Overton, and Trustee Madill. Absent: None



A motion to adopt the foregoing resolution was made by Clerk Brokob and seconded by Trustee Cooley. A vote on the foregoing resolution was as follows:

Roll Call Vote: Those voting AYE were, Brokob, Hufnagel, Maahs, Cooley, Biergans, Overton, Madill.

Absent: None

Resolution Declared: Adopted



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Carolyn Brokob, Clerk

Date: March 18, 2024





ASSISTED BY:

Giffels Webster - 1025 East Maple, Suite 100 | Birmingham, MI 48009

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