

Watertown Charter Township Non-Motorized Circulation Plan

2009

Prepared by
Watertown Charter Township Non-Motorized Circulation Plan Committee
<http://www.twp.watertown.mi.us>

Board of Trustees

Deborah Adams
Melissa Freeman
John Maahs
Ken Mitchell
Janice Thelen
George Weitzel
Dale Westrick

Planning Commission

Beth Ball
Donald Hartwick
Keri Kittmann
Francis McNamara
Charles Openlander
Ronald Overton
Richard Turcotte
Ulrika Zay

Non-Motorized Circulation Committee

John Maahs
Holly Madill
Ronald Overton
Ulrika Zay

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Executive Summary

Watertown Township is primarily a rural community yet is located very near to one of Michigan's most populous metropolitan areas: Lansing. While the City of Lansing experienced population losses during the past two decades, Watertown Township has experienced an average *increase* of 13% population growth in the same time period. While it is still primarily agriculturally-based, the far eastern and southern portions of the Township have and are expected to continue to experience significant growth and development. In the last five years alone, more than 200 new homes have been built in the Township. In the past two years, requests for rezoning have increased and at least 750 new units are slated to be built in the next five years.

With residences comes traffic, of all kinds. Two recent surveys revealed a concern among residents of increased residential traffic and subsequent safety when walking, biking, and driving. As more people are using non-motorized circulation patterns to travel, there is an increased desire at the Township level to provide safe modes of travel for all of its citizens.

The Watertown Township Board of Trustees tasked a committee with exploring the need for a non-motorized circulation plan within the community in November 2005. The mission, goals, and objectives that form the foundation for the plan were developed from a joint public meeting between the Watertown Township Board of Trustees and Planning Commission on November 1, 2005.

With a solid foundation firmly in place, the committee then set out identifying the project list. Committee members inventoried the existing non-motorized transportation network and examined points of interest (i.e. major roadways, schools, recreation opportunities). The inventory of existing facilities and circulation routes quickly identified gaps. The committee brainstormed ways to fill those gaps and provide continuous circulation routes. This draft plan reflects those ideas.

MISSION

The mission of the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan is 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 goals, outlined further in the next section, are to:

1. Enhance the overall health, safety, and welfare of the community
2. Enhance the Township's sense of community
3. Create choices
4. Promote education regarding the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and the Designated Circulation Route

5. Enhance recreational opportunities within the Township
6. Implement the plan and enforce it through ordinances and other Township policies

Township officials recognize this as a ground-breaking and delicate endeavor for the community and hope to bring a spirit of progressiveness to the plan. The Non-Motorized Circulation Plan has an eye toward the future through its long-term vision, but also seeks to preserve the rural character of the Township that is so important to residents.

Township officials also know that any such plan must be enforceable and implementable, even if phased. The community recognizes that the Designated Circulation Route may not be complete for several years and until such time, gaps in the route will persist.

PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

When thinking about the Township from the perspective of circulation, the ultimate goal is to afford non-motorized circulation to all township residents and visitors. It is obvious however, that the plan will need to be accomplished in a balanced and phased approach, recognizing that some areas of the Township are better suited to non-motorized circulation than other more rural and agricultural areas. Thus it is important to start in places where a population density sufficient to support various non-motorized and pedestrian strategies exists and therefore where circulation is most likely to occur or be generated from. Those areas are typically the ones with the most residential activity.

Watertown Township has three very obvious “pods” or areas with 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 is in the development stage).

Wacousta village will be the initial focus because it has more existing circulation networks to work with, a concentrated population and a core business district.

Non-motorized circulation within and around the North and South Airport Road Pods may be more difficult to implement because of their linear nature and because Airport Road is a major county arterial. They will be the secondary phase, but it is important to note that they represent a significant population density within the township.

Because the South Airport Road Pod is still in the development phases, at this time there are only recommendations for this area. But because it is still in the early stages of development, it will be important to keep these recommendations at the forefront of the development to ensure that a non-motorized circulation route is established alongside developments.

While this plan recognizes three primary areas for implementing non-motorized circulation patterns, eventually it will be important to link these areas to each other, thereby uniting the individual circulation routes. These linkages will likely be striped bike lanes or paved shoulders on existing north-south and east-west arterials with appropriate speed limits.

Introduction

It is interesting to reflect on the demographics, geography, and history of Watertown Township in light of a non-motorized circulation plan. Watertown Township is primarily a rural community yet is located very near to Lansing, one of Michigan's most populous metropolitan areas. Twenty years ago, Township leaders may have laughed at the need for a non-motorized circulation plan, but much has changed since then.

While the City of Lansing experienced population losses during the past two decades, Watertown Township has experienced an average of 13% population growth *increase*, in the same time period. While it is still primarily agriculturally-based, the far eastern and southern portions of the Township have and are expected to continue to experience significant growth and development. In the last five years alone, more than 200 new homes have been built in the Township. In the past two years, requests for rezoning have increased and at least 660 new units are slated to be built in the next five years.

With residences comes traffic, of all kinds. It is difficult to quantify the increased use of roadways for non-motorized transportation uses, however, there is enough anecdotal evidence to form a non-motorized circulation plan to accommodate current users and plan for future use as well. Recently, two surveys have been conducted in Clinton County that bear some significance to this issue.

In late 2007, the Clinton County Greenspace Committee circulated a survey to help understand citizens' preferences about parks and recreation opportunities. While only eight percent of respondents were from Watertown Township, the results can be extrapolated to summarize the preferences of all area residents.

The survey found that area residents are active in many types of outdoor recreation activities, and grouped them into four categories, one being trail activities. It was found that participation in this type of activity was high, and included such things as walking/hiking, bicycling on roads, walking dogs, running/jogging, and inline skating. The survey also documented the attributes residents preferred in a park system, of which safety and security rated high. The complete results of this survey are included as Appendix A.

Watertown Township also conducted a survey in late 2007 that solicited input from local residents on a wide range of issues. The general consensus among Township residents is that enough is being done to maintain existing parks and recreation facilities, and that enough recreational opportunities are offered. Respondents felt the quality of the existing parks system was good, and overall had a positive opinion of the parks committee. While residents may find the parks system to be good, there is always the opportunity for improvement. Residents were not supportive of any tax increases or millages which might support such improvements; however low cost projects from the Township General Fund or larger scale projects which might be funded by a grant may be explored. Linking recreation opportunities in a non-motorized way could contribute to greater usage of the parks as a result, and could lead to greater health benefits for Township residents. The complete results of this survey are included as Appendix B.

Both recent surveys revealed a concern among residents of increased residential traffic and subsequent safety when walking, biking, and driving. As more people are using non-motorized circulation patterns, there is an increased desire at the Township level to provide safe modes of travel for all of its citizens.

While the increase of households in the Township drives most of the need for this circulation plan, it is also important to note that non-motorized transportation is gaining in popularity. In addition to using non-motorized transportation for recreation purposes, some people advocate its potential role in economic development, and its contribution to cleaner air and less fuel consumption. There are two other important benefits of non-motorized circulation:

- Research suggests that communities are safer (i.e. less crime occurs) when its residents are outside and share interactions. Community interaction in public places not only helps fight crime by having watchful eyes out and about but helps foster a sense of community among its residents.
- According to the Trust for America's Health and the Centers for Disease Control, Michigan has the ninth highest level of obesity in the nation, at approximately 27 percent of the population, significantly higher than just twenty years ago. This trend is on the rise and not just for adults, for our children too. While we tend to think of public health in terms of disease, it is increasingly thought of as the well-being of mind, body, and emotions. Physical activity promoted through a non-motorized transportation plan can not only provide an efficient means of transporting oneself, but can also reduce stress and keep our bodies healthy.

It wouldn't be a balanced examination of non-motorized circulation without also mentioning the challenges that accompany non-motorized transportation. Obstacles to non-motorized circulation include lack of facilities or routes, weather, number of users relative to capital expenditures, land use patterns, funding, the time and/or distance it may take between destinations, and again, safety. Many residents are concerned that trails through or near their property will lead to an increase in litter, the dumping of trash, petty crime, a loss of property values, and loss of privacy. While there are many studies, especially regarding rail-trails, that this unlikely, and in most cases the existence of the trail in fact may increase property values, the perception still persists, and is difficult to change.

Overall, residents are already walking, biking and hiking on Township roads, in parks and along the Looking Glass River. It would be prudent, timely, and an asset to the Township to link these opportunities and make them safer for all types of users.

Process

The sections of this report truly represent the process that was used to create it. It has taken nearly three years from concept to plan, including a nine-month sabbatical during its course. The Watertown Township Board of Trustees tasked a committee with exploring the need for a non-motorized circulation plan within the community in November 2005. Committee membership, meeting dates, minutes, and other information is listed in Appendix C.

Committee members set out to discover what existed in established township ordinances, policies, and documents to begin drafting the plan. This was done to ensure that any non-motorized circulation plan complimented other Township policies in both language and intent.

The mission, goals, and objectives that form the foundation for the plan were developed from a joint public meeting between the Watertown Township Board of Trustees and Planning Commission on November 1, 2005.

With a solid foundation firmly in place, the committee then set out identifying the project list. Committee members inventoried the existing non-motorized transportation network and examined points of interest (i.e. major roadways, schools, recreation opportunities). The inventory of existing facilities and circulation routes quickly identified gaps. The committee brainstormed ways to fill those gaps and provide continuous circulation routes. This draft plan reflects those ideas.

The committee was careful to recognize Watertown Township's role in a regional context and participated in the Clinton County Greenspace Commission, recognized the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's Regional Growth plan, and coordinated efforts and ideas with the Clinton County Road Commission and DeWitt Township.

The next phase of the plan was to seek public input on the draft plan and priorities for implementation to ensure that the resident's interests and concerns are addressed. Once the public comment and revision phase is complete, the plan can be finalized and adopted by the Township and incorporated in the Capital Improvements Plan. The timeframe for this to be completed is spring 2009.

Township Ordinances

One doesn't need to look far to form the platform for a shared vision and understanding of a non-motorized circulation plan. All that is needed is to turn to existing township documents that outline the township's view on the subject.

Much of the ground work for creating a non-motorized transportation plan has already been done through years of hard work by staff and township officials. Language supporting, justifying, and detailing the township's preferences in relation to non-motorized transportation can be pulled directly from the township's subdivision ordinance, zoning ordinance, and comprehensive development plan. ***It is the intent of Watertown Township that this non-motorized circulation plan be consistent with any existing Township ordinance, plan, or policy.***

Below is a review and analysis of existing township documents as they relate to non-motorized circulation.

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

Article II: Generally

Section 14-9: Purpose

- To promote the overall health, safety, and welfare of the community.
- Provide for orderly growth and harmonious development of the community.
- Secure adequate traffic circulation through coordinated street systems with proper relation to existing streets and highways, adjoining subdivisions and vacant land, and public utilities. *Note: street is later defined as a right-of-way which provides for vehicular and pedestrian access to abutting properties. Therefore these goals could easily be applied to alternative transportation modes as well.*

Section 14-78 Pedestrianways

- (a) Sidewalks: Sufficient right-of-way shall be provided so that sidewalks may be installed on both sides of the street.
- (b) Crosswalks: Right-of-way for pedestrian crosswalks in the middle of long blocks shall be required where necessary to obtain convenient pedestrian circulation.

Section 14-117 Required Public Improvements

- (j.1.) Sidewalks and Crosswalks: Sidewalks shall be required on both sides of the street. Where the average width of lots, as measured at the street frontage line or at the building setback line, is over 100 feet, sidewalks on one side may be considered by the Township. Sidewalks shall be constructed in accordance with requirements of the county road commission.
- (j.2.) Crosswalks, when required by the Township, shall have easements at least ten feet in width and include a paved walk at least five feet in width, located

generally along the centerline of the easement, dedicated as a public pedestrian walkway.

- (k) Street lighting: streetlights shall be required to be installed throughout the subdivision. The township board shall approve the design and style of the streetlights which shall conform to the requirements of the public utility providing the lighting and to the requirements of chapter 28.

ZONING ORDINANCE

Article 1: In General

Section 28-2 Purpose:

(a) This Ordinance is based upon the Watertown Charter Township Comprehensive Development Plan and is designed to accomplish the following objectives:

- (1) To promote the public health, safety and general welfare
- (8) To reduce hazards to life and property
- (9) To facilitate the adequate provision of a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, education, recreation, and other public requirements.

Division 2: Site Plan Review

Section 28-82 Review Standards

The following standards shall be utilized in reviewing all site plans. These standards are intended to provide a frame of reference for the applicant in the preparation of site plans as well as for the reviewing authority in making judgment concerning them. These standards shall not be regarded as inflexible requirements. They are not intended to discourage creativity, invention, or innovation.

- (2) Safe, convenient, uncontested, and well-defined vehicular and pedestrian circulation shall be provided for ingress/egress points and within the site. Drives, streets, and other circulation routes shall be designed to promote safe and efficient traffic operations within the site and at ingress/egress points.
- (3) The arrangement of public or private vehicular and pedestrian connections to existing or planned streets in the area shall be planned to provide a safe and efficient circulation system for traffic within Watertown Charter Township.
- (8) ...In addition, sidewalks or similar walkways may be required if determined to be necessary or appropriate for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles.

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Chapter Three: Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

Transportation Goal:

- Develop and maintain a transportation network throughout the Township which...provides safe and functional opportunities for alternative modes of transportation including walking, horseback riding, and bicycling.

Transportation Objectives:

- Provide for safe vehicular traffic on, and pedestrian traffic along, major roadways.
- Promote development of sidewalk and bicycle paths along designated major roads and linked to schools and recreational facilities as a safety measure and to expand recreational opportunities.

Transportation Implementation Strategies:

- Develop a community-wide trail system which is tied into the capital improvements program.
- Investigate the feasibility of upgrading road shoulders for bicycle, roller blade, and pedestrian use.
- Require walking paths or sidewalks in all high density residential developments.

Housing and Residential Development Objectives:

- Encourage major residential development to be designed as neighborhoods, including development amenities such as bike paths, pedestrian paths, natural open space, recreation areas, and path linkages with other portions of the Township.

General Administration: Implementation Strategies

- Develop community task forces, which require only temporary commitments to draw in more of the Township citizenry on topic-specific issues (e.g. “Trail System Development Task Force,” or “Conservation Easement Task Force”). Include staff support, clear expectations for input, and ending dates for service.

Chapter Four: Future Land Use Plan

Introduction

The Future Land Use Plan provides a comprehensive overview of the community’s desired future development pattern. It is the intent of this Plan to:

- Develop and maintain a transportation network throughout the Township which...provides safe and functional opportunities for alternative modes of transportation including walking, horseback riding, and bicycling.

Mission

The mission of the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan is 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 goals, outlined further in the next section, are to:

1. Enhance the overall health, safety, and welfare of the community
2. Enhance the Township's sense of community
3. Create choices
4. Promote education regarding the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and the Designated Circulation Route
5. Enhance recreational opportunities within the Township
6. Implement the plan and enforce it through ordinances and other Township policies

Township officials recognize this as an important endeavor for the community and hope to bring a spirit of progressiveness to the Plan. The Non-Motorized Circulation Plan has an eye toward the future through its long-term vision, but also seeks to preserve the character of the Township that is important to residents.

Township officials also know that any such plan must be enforceable and implementable, even if phased. The community recognizes that the Designated Circulation Route may not be complete for several years and until such time, gaps in the proposed routes will persist.

Goals and Objectives

The goals listed below occur with ***bold and italics***, objectives appear with *italics only*, and implementation strategies are listed in “normal” type.

I. Enhance the overall health, safety, and welfare of the community

- A. People of all ages and abilities will be able to move within and through the Township without a motorized vehicle.*
- B. Provide Township residents and visitors with a variety of exercise patterns and uses.*
 - 1. Create contiguous circulation patterns that allow for the Surgeon General’s recommendation of 30 minutes of exercise per day to be accomplished.
- C. Alleviate conflict, where possible, between multiple types of non-motorized circulation users (foot, bike, horse, roller blade, etc.).*
- D. Promote development of sidewalk and bicycle paths along designated major roads and linked to schools and recreational facilities as a safety measure and to expand recreational opportunities.*
- E. Improve the safety of those currently using roadways for non-motorized circulation.*
 - 1. Secure adequate non-motorized circulation through a coordinated network with proper relation to existing streets and highways, adjoining subdivisions and vacant land and public utilities.
- F. Separate motorized transportation from non-motorized circulation.*
 - 1. Investigate the feasibility of upgrading road shoulders for bicycle, roller blade, and pedestrian use.
 - 2. Provide for safe vehicular traffic on, and pedestrian traffic along, major roadways.
- G. The arrangement of public or private vehicular and pedestrian connections to existing or planned streets in the area shall be planned to provide a safe and efficient circulation system for traffic within the Township.*
- H. Require sidewalks on one or both sides of the street in any new or pending residential development, where appropriate.*
 - 1. Ensure that external and internal circulation is linked and contiguous through the development and that linkages to nearby subdivisions are developed and maintained.

- I. Require right-of-way for pedestrian crosswalks in the middle of long blocks to obtain convenient circulation in any new or pending residential development.*
 - 1. Crosswalks, when required by the Township, shall have easements at least ten feet in width and include a paved walk at least five feet in width, located generally along the centerline of the easement, dedicated as a public pedestrian walkway.
- J. Safe, convenient, uncontested, and well-defined vehicular and pedestrian circulation shall be provided for ingress/egress points and within the residential development. Drives, streets, and other circulation routes shall be designed to promote safe and efficient traffic operations within the site and at ingress/egress points.*
- K. Work with the Clinton County Road Commission to adjust speed limits according to their relationship to the designated circulation route and implement road improvement practices that are consistent with this plan and the Drain Commission's objectives.*
- L. Ensure the protection of natural features and habitats when implementing elements of the plan.*

II. Enhance the Township's Sense of Community

- A. Ensure the development of any Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and/or Designated Circulation Route is a community-driven process.*
 - 1. Regularly publish news articles on the progress of the committee and plan.
 - 2. Specifically encourage participation from landowners with large road frontage at all steps of this process.
- B. Link neighborhoods and subdivisions so residents can meet and interact with one another.*
- C. Foster a sense of cooperation among Township officials and residents through the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan process.*
- D. Encourage regional cooperation as it pertains to linkages, destinations, and uses.*
 - 1. Foster a cooperative approach with neighboring jurisdictions.
 - 2. Participate in the Clinton County Greenspace Commission.
 - 3. Seek input from neighboring jurisdictions on a Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and Designated Circulation Route.
 - 4. Seek input from the Mid-Michigan District Health Department, Clinton County Community Development Department, Clinton County Road Commission, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, and the Michigan Department of

Transportation on a Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and Designated Circulation Route.

E. Ensure that any Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and Designated Circulation Route recognizes and respects the diverse character of the Township. Any such Plan and/or Route shall:

1. Recognize that a one-size fits all approach is not an appropriate methodology.
2. Respect the rural character of the Township.
3. Equitably balance the diverse opinions, needs, and desires of the Township citizenry.

III. Create Choices

A. Supply a variety of modes for movement within and through the Township.

B. Create safe non-motorized circulation options.

C. Provide a variety of ways to enjoy the rural character and beauty of the Township.

D. Provide destination-oriented circulation.

E. Supply “opt-out” avenues for those who do not want to participate.

F. Ensure that any Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and subsequent implementation does not pose a burden on individuals who reside along a Designated Circulation Route.

IV. Promote Education Regarding the Non-motorized Circulation Plan and the Designated Circulation Route

A. Develop community task forces, which require only temporary commitments, to draw in more of the Township citizenry on the topic. Include staff support, clear expectations for input, and ending dates for service.

1. Include members of the public on any related subcommittee.
2. Post committee and task force vacancies on the Township Web site.

B. Seek public involvement throughout the planning of the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan.

1. Survey Township residents to determine their needs, desires, and preferences with respect to a Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and a Designated Circulation Route.
2. Hold periodic public information meetings on the progress of the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and/or Designated Circulation Route.

3. Specifically encourage participation from landowners with large road frontage at all steps of this process.
- C. Create and disseminate throughout the Township materials on healthy lifestyles, information about the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan and the Designated Circulation Route. Any such materials should:*
1. Encourage proper use of the Designated Circulation Route
 2. Identify parking areas
 3. Provide safety tips for all types of users
 4. Explain the health benefits of an active lifestyle
 5. Regularly publish news articles on the progress of the committee and plan

V. Enhance Recreation Opportunities within the Township

- A. Promote the development of sidewalk and bicycle paths along designated major roads and linked to schools and recreational facilities as a safety measure and to expand recreational opportunities*
- B. Establish a riverwalk trail that is part of the Designated Circulation Route*
- C. Connect parks to each other and ensure that they are linked with the Designated Circulation Route*
- D. Integrate scenic areas/drives into the Designated Circulation Route*

Non-motorized Project List

When thinking about the Township from the perspective of circulation, the ultimate goal is to afford non-motorized circulation to all township residents and visitors. To achieve this, however, this plan will need to be accomplished in a balanced and phased approach, recognizing that some areas of the Township are better suited to non-motorized circulation than other more rural and agricultural areas. It is important to focus on places where a population density sufficient to support various non-motorized and pedestrian strategies exists and therefore where circulation is most likely to occur or be generated from, typically those areas with the most residential activity.

Watertown Township has three very obvious “pods,” or areas with greater residential and commercial density relative to surrounding areas: the Wacousta village and two residential areas along Airport Road (one north of I-69 and one south that is in the development stage). While later sections will address the dynamics of each pod, it is important to note a few differences between these pods that dictate different circulation approaches.

- Wacousta is the only local business district within the township. While there is commercial activity along Grand River Avenue, it is corridor in nature, not a compact, district-type activity. The speed limit and volume of traffic along Grand River Avenue also do not lend themselves to non-motorized opportunities.
- The Airport Road corridor is the Township’s easternmost boundary and is very different from the Wacousta village. Again, the North Airport Road pod is linear and corridor-like in nature. Being on the easternmost boundary also implies that ties to neighboring DeWitt Township will be crucial to circulation patterns. Certainly there are several destinations for those pods that lie in the neighboring township.
- The South Airport pod is currently in the development stage. Two new subdivisions are in the early stages of development, with a third multi-family and commercial development also possible in the next five years. While much of the planning of these new neighborhoods is complete, considerations must be made along the way to consider non-motorized linkages between the developments wherever possible. It will be crucial to monitor and suggest any non-motorized opportunities as they become available.

OUTLINE AND PROCESS

The next sections will outline the details of each pod including an inventory of existing non-motorized transportation network, points of interest (i.e. major roadways, schools, recreation opportunities), and the circulation plan for that pod.

The first step in any planning process is to determine the starting point. In this case, an inventory was conducted in the fall of 2007 of existing facilities that were conducive to non-motorized modes of transportation. This included sidewalks, trails, cross-walks, paved shoulders, bridges, etc. It also included an identification of all the attractions, places, facilities, and locations that are destinations for people.

Once the existing amenities were identified, routes and mechanisms to connect them were then explored. First, existing networks were used to connect amenities. This process lent itself to quickly identifying gaps. Township officials then brainstormed various routes and means of filling the gaps and ensuring connectivity. Thus, the plan for each pod was created.

Watertown Township also may have the opportunity to be along the yearly DelMac cycling route from Lansing to the Mackinaw Bridge. Routes are not released however, until the day of registration. This would not only be an opportunity to accommodate cycling through the township but also may provide some economic development opportunities as well.

PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The priorities for implementation are expressed in the order of the pods' presentations. The Wacousta village will be the initial focus because it has more existing circulation networks to work with, and a concentrated population with a core business district.

Non-motorized circulation within and around the North and South Airport Road Pods may be more difficult to implement because of their linear nature and because Airport Road is a major county arterial. They will be the secondary phase, but it is important to note that they represent a significant population density within the township.

Because the South Airport Road Pod is still in the development phases, at this time there are only recommendations for this area. But because it is still in the early stages of development, it will be important to keep these recommendations at the forefront of the development to ensure that a non-motorized circulation route is established alongside developments.

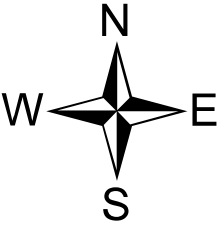
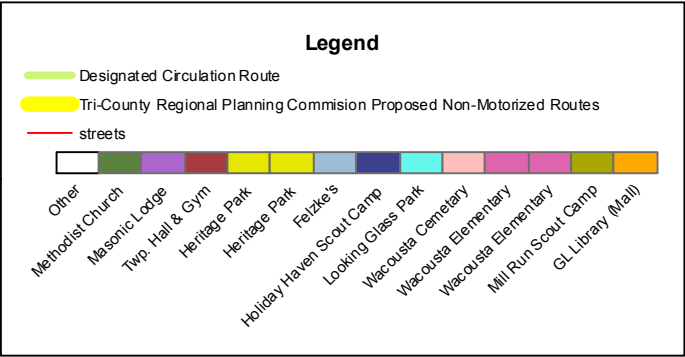
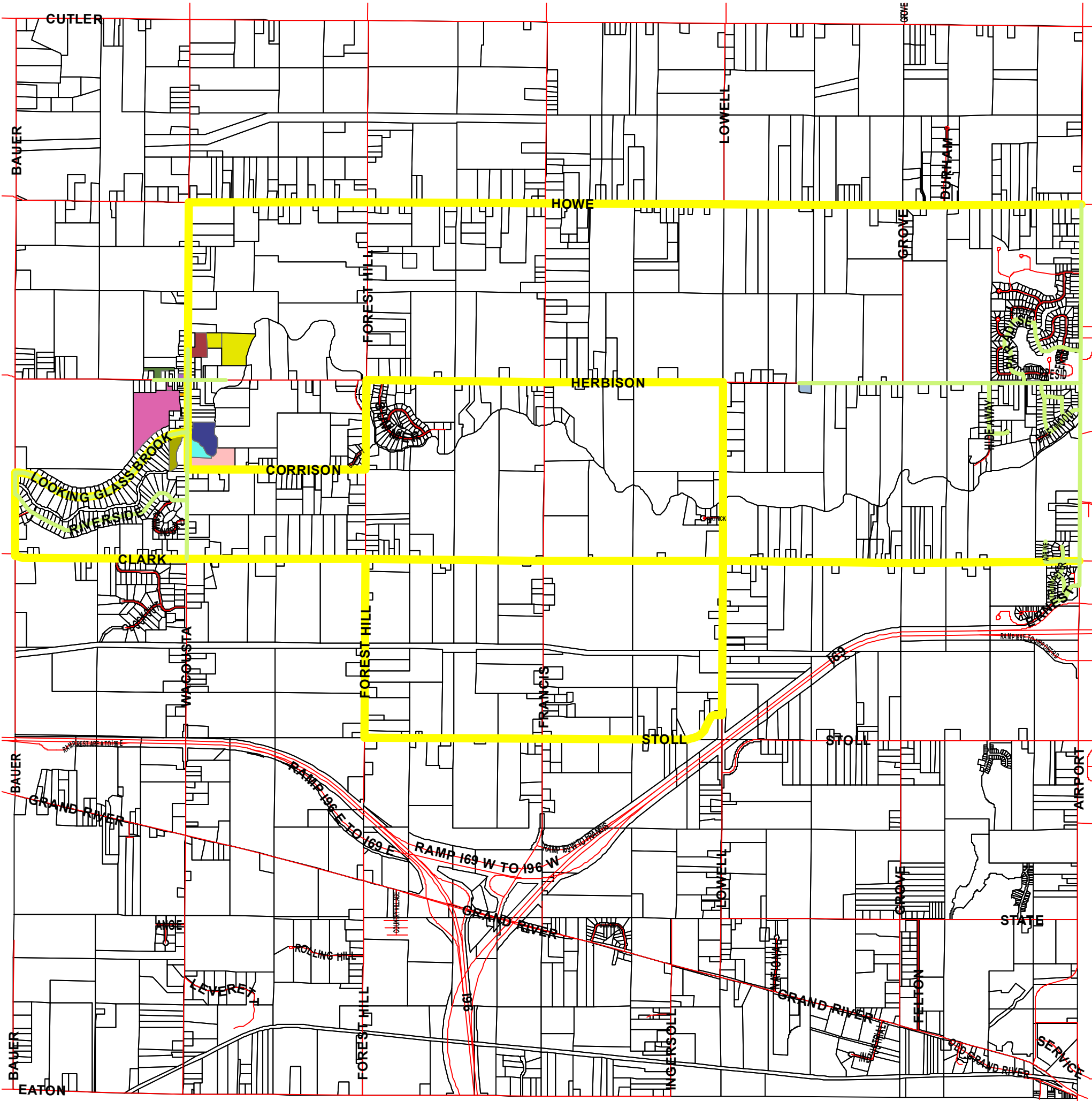
While this plan recognizes three primary areas for implementing non-motorized circulation patterns, eventually it will be important to link these areas to each other, thereby uniting the individual circulation routes. These linkages will likely be striped bike lanes or paved shoulders on existing north-south and east-west arterials with appropriate speed limits. Please see the Connectivity section of this report for further details.

LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE

At this time, very little funding is available from the Township for the development or maintenance of a designated circulation route. While there is the potential for future funding, the route must be developed in a manner which creates as little maintenance work as possible, to ensure the long-term viability of the route. This Plan should be utilized as much for shaping the vision of what non-motorized transportation can be in Watertown Township, as well as for applying for local, state and federal grant monies that can be used in all aspects of the route development, including long-term maintenance. In addition, it should be a high priority to use eco-friendly materials wherever possible in the installation of non-motorized infrastructure.

Watertown Township

Designated Circulation Route



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Wacousta Village Pod

The Wacousta village area¹ rests near the western border of the Township, but is situated in the center from a north-south perspective. There are four subdivisions within the vicinity that represent approximately 300 households. At the heart of the community is a small business district which includes a township hall, church, elementary school, library, general store, and pottery studio.

INVENTORY

Streets

Wacousta Road is paved throughout the Wacousta area approximately 22' wide, mostly without paved shoulders. There is a short section of paved shoulder on the west side south of Herbison Road across from the Wacousta General Store. There are very old sidewalks along the west side from the Watertown Township Hall to the Wacousta Branch of the Grand Ledge Library and resuming along the frontage of the house on the corner of Looking Glass Brook. These sidewalks were originally 4' wide, but are in disrepair and overgrown. In addition, there is a short stretch of modern sidewalk along the west side, south of Clark Road in front of the Klein Farm subdivision that includes the houses fronting on Wacousta Road. This sidewalk is 5'-wide and in good repair, but isolated.

Herbison Road is paved to the east as far as Francis Road and to the west past the Wacousta Elementary School to the Wacousta United Methodist Church. It is generally 20' without paved shoulders. There is an old sidewalk on the north side of the street from the corner of Wacousta Road, past the school to the church. This is also 4' wide, but is in disrepair and overgrown.

Hummingbird Lane is paved between Wacousta Road and Riverside Drive with sidewalk along the inside of the road that ends near Riverside Drive, but stops short of Wacousta Road. It has no paved shoulders but is curbed.

Looking Glass Brook and Riverside Drive are both paved roads without sidewalks or shoulders.

Corrison Road runs between Wacousta Road and Forest Hill Road and is gravel.



Looking Glass Brook Drive

Klein Farm Lane, Lookout Circle and Summer Ridge Circle are internal to the Klein Farms subdivision, paved, but without shoulders or sidewalks.

¹ The Wacousta village area is not an incorporated Village entity. The term village is still used however to prompt the reader with the relative size of the area and a "sense of place" that is typical of small, rural communities.

Summer Lane and Jon-Scott Drives support a residential subdivision off Herbison Road just over one mile from the corner of Wacousta and Herbison Roads. The streets are paved, without shoulders or sidewalks.

Bridges

There are three bridges in the immediate Wacousta area and a fourth further east on Herbison Road just past Forest Hill.

- Wacousta Road Bridge has 10' lanes, 2' paved and marked shoulders', and a 4' raised sidewalk on both sides.
- Bauer Road Bridge is 27.5' wide with 10' lanes and marked paved shoulders just over 3' wide.
- Herbison Road (nearest to Wacousta) is 24' wide with 10' lanes and 7' paved shoulders. In addition, there is considerable paved shoulder 'taper' leading to and from the bridge.
- Herbison Road (furthest from Wacousta just past Forest Hill Road) is a narrow, old bridge without paved shoulders or sidewalk. This bridge will likely need to be replaced in the next five years.

Trails

There are several hiking trails located in Watertown Township Heritage Park behind the Township Hall. These are mowed grassy trails.

Crosswalks

There are no marked crosswalks in the Wacousta village area.

Street Lights

There are presently street lights along Wacousta Road with some gaps. They are regularly spaced from Herbison to Corrison Roads to the south and skip from the intersection of Herbison Road to the Township Hall to the north. There is a small stretch of lights just south of Clark Road along Wacousta Road in front of the Klein Farm development. From Wacousta there are lights westbound along Herbison Road past the school to the church.

Speed Limits/Signs

Current speed limits drop from 55 MPH to 35 MPH as one approaches Wacousta along Wacousta Road from both the north and south. In the Wacousta area proper, it drops to 25 MPH. These speed limits are compatible with pedestrian and non-motorized transportation. There are no speed limit signs signaling the decrease in permitted speed along Herbison Road.



Wacousta Elementary School Signage, to the right you can see the "legacy" sidewalk along Herbison Road leading to the school.

ATTRACTORS

These are locations, businesses, and places of activity that attract citizens of the Township and visitors from elsewhere. They are places that people travel to and from for various reasons and are all located in and around the Wacousta area.

- Heritage Township Park
- Looking Glass Valley Park
- Watertown Township Hall and Gymnasium
- Wacousta Elementary School
- Wacousta United Methodist Church
- Wacousta Masonic Lodge
- Wacousta Branch of the Grand Ledge Library
- Wacousta General Store and Restaurant
- Wacousta Cemetery
- Looking Glass River
- Fabiano's Grocery and Deli
- Canoe Landings – Looking Glass Valley Park (wood and concrete), Heritage Township Park (wood and concrete), Forest Hill Road near Herbison (natural)
- Harlow's Canoe Livery – Riverside Drive at Bauer Road
- Holiday Haven Girl Scout Camp, Michigan Capital Council – East side of Wacousta Road just north of river
- Mill Run Girl Scout Camp, Michigan Capital Council – West side of Wacousta Road on Looking Glass brook



Looking Glass Valley Park, and the shops and library along Wacousta Road.

NON - MOTORIZED CIRCULATION PLAN FOR WACOUSTA

Non-motorized circulation for the Wacousta village area can essentially be divided up into two systems: Riverside Drive/Looking Glass River and Heritage Park loops. The Riverside/Looking Glass loop is approximately three miles and consists of paved residential streets with 25 MPH speed limits, which encourage pedestrian use on the streets. The Heritage Park loop is approximately two miles worth of mixed trail surfaces (sidewalks, paved shoulders, and park or trail land).

Paved Shoulders

The least intrusive way to provide for safe pedestrian circulation in and about Wacousta would be with paved shoulders. Ideally, these would be 4-feet wide on both sides of the road. They should extend along Wacousta Road from the driveway to the Township Hall and Park, south to Clark Road. In addition, they should extend along Herbison Road from the church, east to the first bridge over the Looking Glass. These shoulders should be delineated with appropriate striping by the county road commission.

Speed Limits

While existing speed limits in the Wacousta village area are sufficient, there need to be additional speed limit signs along Herbison Road denoting the existing speed limits and where they change.

Street Lights

Street light installation locations should be discussed with property owners who may be impacted prior to the installation. Every effort should be made to mitigate any impact the lights may have on property owners. In addition, effort should be made to use energy efficient light bulbs, such as LED or others, to reduce the impact on the environment, and street lights should meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, section 28-577.

The primary consideration for street light installation would be to fill the gaps that exist along Wacousta Road from the Township Hall to Clark Road. This would entail approximately two lights north of Herbison and several to the south between Corrison and Clark Roads.

The secondary tier of street lighting needs includes connecting the gap along Wacousta Road from Clark Road to the lights at Klein Farms and to install lights along Herbison Road eastbound from Wacousta Road to the first bridge over the Looking Glass River.

Trails/Easements

While sidewalks and paved shoulders would connect most of the Wacousta pod with adequate non-motorized circulation, the addition of a few easements would provide an enhanced trail network and create a robust circulation pattern. The recommended easements are as follows:

1. Along the Looking Glass River from the Heritage Park canoe landing to Herbison Road. Coupled with paved shoulders along Herbison Road, this would provide a circular trail along Herbison and Wacousta Roads, through the park and along the river.
2. Near the library on Wacousta Road to the elementary school to provide a pedestrian/non-motorized alternative to vehicles.
3. Looking Glass Brook to the Wacousta Elementary School, also to provide a pedestrian/non-motorized alternative to vehicles and school busses.

Crosswalks

To enhance the safety of users, especially schoolchildren, serious consideration should be given to installing a crosswalk across Wacousta Road near the south end of the Township Hall to provide access to Heritage Park for students walking from Wacousta Elementary School. This is a heavily traveled route by children, and despite a 25mph speed limit on Wacousta Road in the village area, a striped and signed crosswalk would alert drivers that children may be in the area.

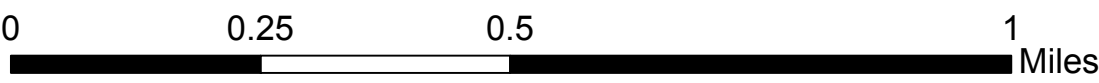
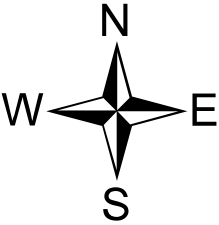
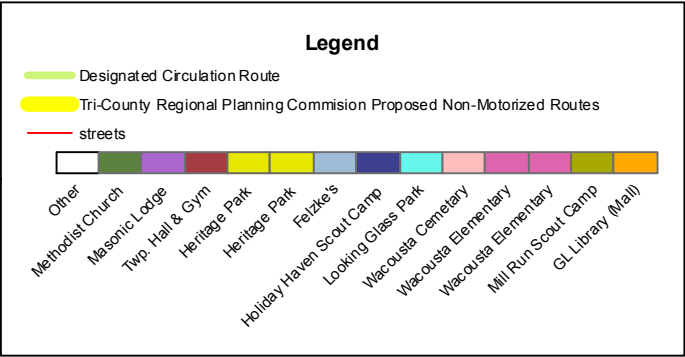
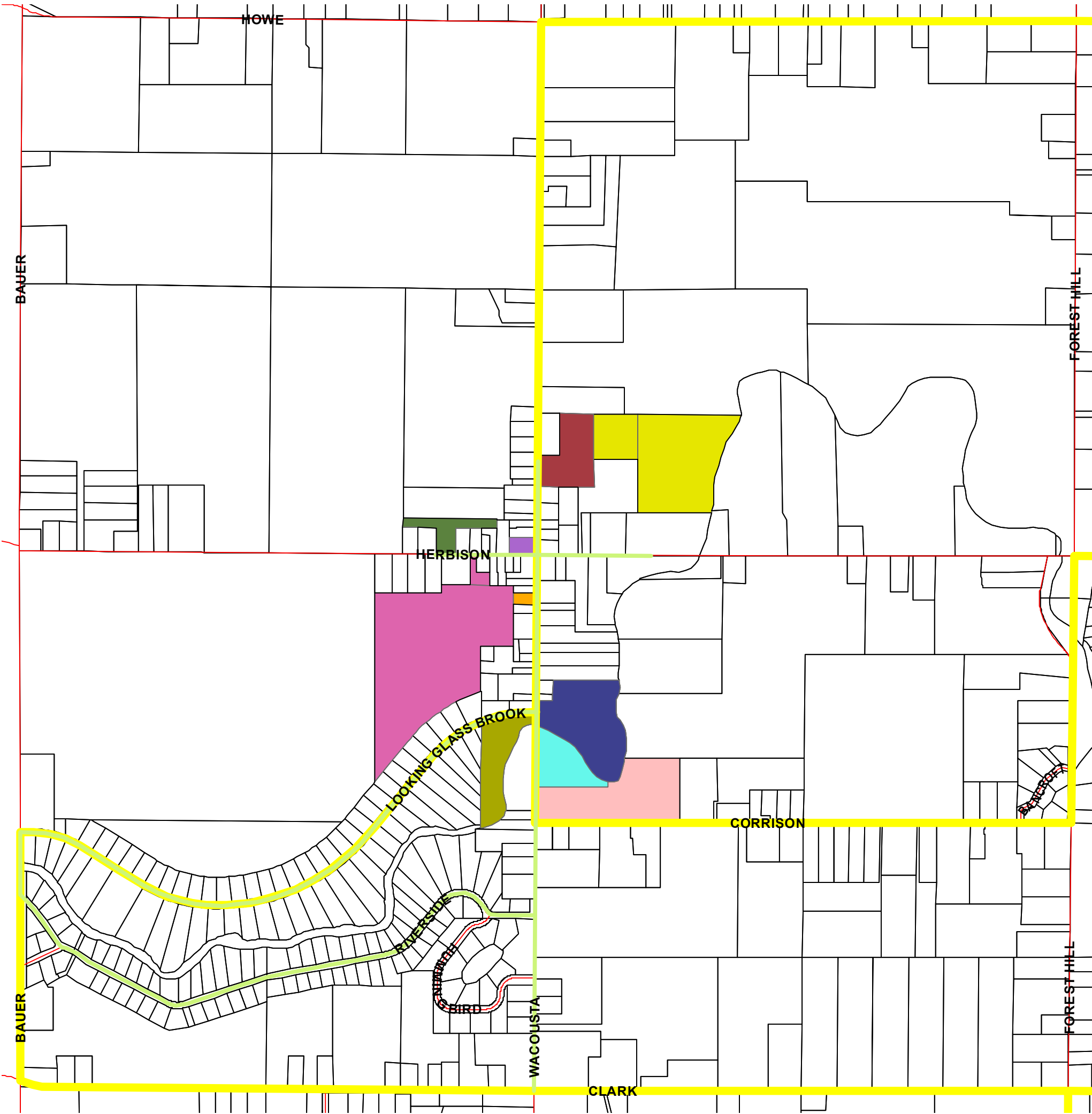


Students walking from Wacousta Elementary School on Herbison Road, to Heritage Park, behind the Township Hall on Wacousta Road. Left, students walk on deteriorating sidewalks. Right, students cross Wacousta Road with help from adults.



Students wait for Granger personnel to access the recycling bins before proceeding safely into Heritage Park.

Wacousta village Pod



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North Airport Road Pod

As previously stated, the north Airport Road corridor is the Township's easternmost boundary and lies near the center from a north-south perspective. The north Airport Road corridor pod is linear and is comprised of residential areas only. There are three clustered subdivisions around Herbison Road that are home to approximately 200 households. There is another cluster of three subdivisions around Clark Road that combine for approximately 70 additional households.

This plan would be remiss if it didn't mention the significance of amenities in neighboring DeWitt Township and the City of DeWitt. To the extreme north of this pod is Howe Road, a main arterial into the City of DeWitt. There are two additional clustered subdivisions (Willow Creek Farms and Riverwalk Estates) around North Herbison Road directly across from the Lakeside Preserve subdivision in Watertown Township. South Herbison Road is the main artery into the DeWitt community and has designated bike lanes. This route leads into the library, YMCA, shopping complex, schools, as well as to a multitude of residential complexes and subdivisions. Near the south of this pod around Clark Road, DeWitt Township plans commercial development with zoning for potential users including banks, restaurants, expressway services, and a grocery store. Just across Airport Road into DeWitt on Herbison are also two parks, one small area with access to the Looking Glass River, and a large natural area (Padgett Park) with walking trails near the Clean Water Facility.

INVENTORY

Streets and Subdivisions

Airport Road is paved throughout the corridor approximately 22' wide, without paved shoulders. There are turn lanes located at the intersections of Howe, Herbison, and Clark Roads, and into the Ridge Rock complex in DeWitt Township to the east. Airport Road is lighted only along Westwinds subdivision and at the intersection with South Herbison Road.

Herbison Road is paved from Airport Road west as far as Hideaway Lane approximately 22' wide.

Hideaway Lane is a private, paved drive serving the Hidden Lakes Estates subdivision. This lane is approximately 22' wide and is lighted. It does not include any sidewalks, paved shoulder, or curb and gutter system. The lane is a long cul-de-sac but it does connect to Carmine Court, another cul-de-sac. Neither of these streets have outlets.

Lakeside Preserve subdivision contains numerous completed and planned streets including Warm Creek, Paradise Drive, Chartreuse, Mahogany, and Chancellor Drives and Lavender and Stillbrook Lanes. There are three access points to the subdivision: two off Airport Road and one off Herbison Road. All streets internal to Lakeside Preserve are paved to 30' width, posted with a speed limit of 25 MPH, curbed and



guttered, and lit with street lights. Some cul-de-sacs exist. Five-foot sidewalks adorn the interior of the complex but are not fully connected. Connections are made as houses are developed. Other *private* amenities include ponds, boat slip with parking, sand volleyball pit, basketball and tennis courts with parking.

There are no perimeter sidewalks or connections to other neighborhoods.

Westwinds subdivision contains four surface streets: Westwind, South Wind, and Shady Brook Lanes and Driftwood Drive. There are two access points to the subdivision: one off Airport Road and another off Herbison Road. All streets internal to Westwinds are paved to 22' width, posted with a speed limit of 25 MPH, and lit with street lights. Driftwood Drive is a dead-end road that runs parallel to the Looking Glass River.



There are no internal or external sidewalks, curbs or gutters, recreation areas, or connections to other neighborhoods.

At the entrance to the subdivision at Airport Road, the first lot to the south is owned by the township and houses a transfer station. The Township Parks and Recreation Plan is currently being updated, and this update may bring recommendations as to how this area could be utilized from a non-motorized and recreation standpoint as well. It is important that non-motorized transportation be considered when these recommendations are developed.

Clark Road is paved throughout the corridor approximately 22' wide, without paved shoulders. There are turn lanes located at the intersection of Airport Road along with a traffic light. The intersection at Clark and Airport Roads is supremely positioned to demonstrate and showcase a collaborative effort between DeWitt and Watertown Townships.

Rosewood Hills subdivision consists of Cordaleigh Drive, Cherish Lane and Ernest Way. In addition, there is a condominium element of the subdivision with a private road, Keepsake Lane. There are two access points into the subdivision: one off Airport Road and another off Clark Road. All streets internal to Rosewood are paved to 28' width, posted with a speed limit of 25 MPH, have curb and gutter, and lit with street lights.

Five-foot sidewalks adorn the interior of the complex but are not fully connected. Connections are made as houses are developed. Other *private* amenities include basketball and tennis courts with parking.

There are no perimeter sidewalks or connections to other neighborhoods.

Watertown on the Meadows I subdivision consists only of Heidi Lane, a wide cul-de-sac road that opens onto Clark Road. This street is paved to 32' width at its narrowest point, has curb and gutter, and is lit with street lights. Five-foot sidewalks do connect all interior lots.

There are no recreation areas, perimeter sidewalks, or connections to other neighborhoods including each other.

Watertown on the Meadows II subdivision consists only Adeline Drive, dead-end road that opens onto Clark Road. This street is paved to 27' width, has curb and gutter, and is lit with street lights. Five-foot sidewalks do connect all interior lots.

There are no recreation areas, perimeter sidewalks, or connections to other neighborhoods including each other.

Bridge

There is one bridge that traverses the Looking Glass River in this corridor on Airport Road between the two Herbison Roads near Westwinds neighborhood. It has 10' lanes, 2' paved and marked shoulders, and a 4' sidewalk on both sides. In addition, there is considerable paved shoulder 'taper' leading to and from the bridge.

Trails

There are no hiking trails within this pod.

Crosswalks

There are no marked crosswalks in this pod.

Speed Limits/Signs

Current speed limits on the main roads within this pod are as follows: Airport Road is a marked 50 MPH, while Herbison and Clark Roads are an unposted 55 MPH. Internal subdivision streets are 25 MPH with the exception of Heidi and Adeline Lanes which have no posted speed limits.

ATTRACTORS

The primary destinations within this pod itself would be the individual subdivisions. However, there are many amenities to neighboring DeWitt Township and City that these residents could utilize and therefore will be included within this pod.

■ Lakeside Preserve Subdivision

Lakeside Preserve, seen below, has interior sidewalks only.



- Westwinds Subdivision
- Rosewood Hills Subdivision
- Watertown on the Meadows I & II Subdivisions
- DeWitt Public Library
- Schavey Road Plaza (restaurants, offices, YMCA, stores)
- DeWitt schools
- Looking Glass Riverfront Park (includes canoe landing)
- Herbison Road bike lanes provide access to four-mile sidewalk route around the City of DeWitt
- Redeemer United Methodist Church
- Looking Glass River

To the extreme north of this pod is Howe Road, a main arterial into the City of DeWitt, where schools, parks, and the business district would attract residents. South Herbison Road is the main artery into the DeWitt community and has designated bike lanes. This route leads into the library, YMCA, shopping complex, schools, as well as to a multitude of residential complexes. Near the south of this pod around Clark Road, DeWitt Township plans commercial development including banks, restaurants, expressway services, and a grocery store.

NON-MOTORIZED CIRCULATION PLAN FOR NORTH AIRPORT ROAD POD

Paved Shoulders

The least intrusive way to provide for safe pedestrian circulation in and about the North Airport Road pod would be with paved shoulders. Ideally, these would be 4-foot wide on both sides of the road. They should extend along Herbison and Clark Roads to Airport Road. The neighborhoods that abut these shoulders could gain access to each other via marked and signed crosswalks. These shoulders should be delineated with appropriate striping by the county road commission.

A form of access, in cooperation with DeWitt Township, should be provided both along and across Airport Road that will ensure the safety of the users.

Speed Limits

With improved non-motorized circulation within this pod, existing speed limits should be reexamined and probably lowered along the main roads of Herbison, Airport, and Clark Roads.

Street Lights

Street light installation locations should be discussed with property owners who may be impacted prior to the installation. Every effort should be made to mitigate any impact the lights may have on property owners. In addition, effort should be made to use energy efficient light bulbs, such as LED or others, to reduce the impact on the environment, and street lights should meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, section 28-577.

The pod subdivisions are adequately lit. The only necessary considerations for further lighting would be along Airport, Herbison, and Clark Roads however; these improvements should only be implemented concurrently with non-motorized circulation enhancements.

Trails/Easements

While sidewalks and paved shoulders would connect most of this pod with adequate non-motorized circulation, the addition of one easement connecting the two Watertown on the Meadows subdivisions would provide an enhanced and safer circulation pattern.

Crosswalks

Linkages between the Lakeside Preserve, Westwinds and Hidden Lakes subdivisions would enhance the safety of users crossing Herbison Road. Consideration should be given to installing crosswalks in the area in the future.

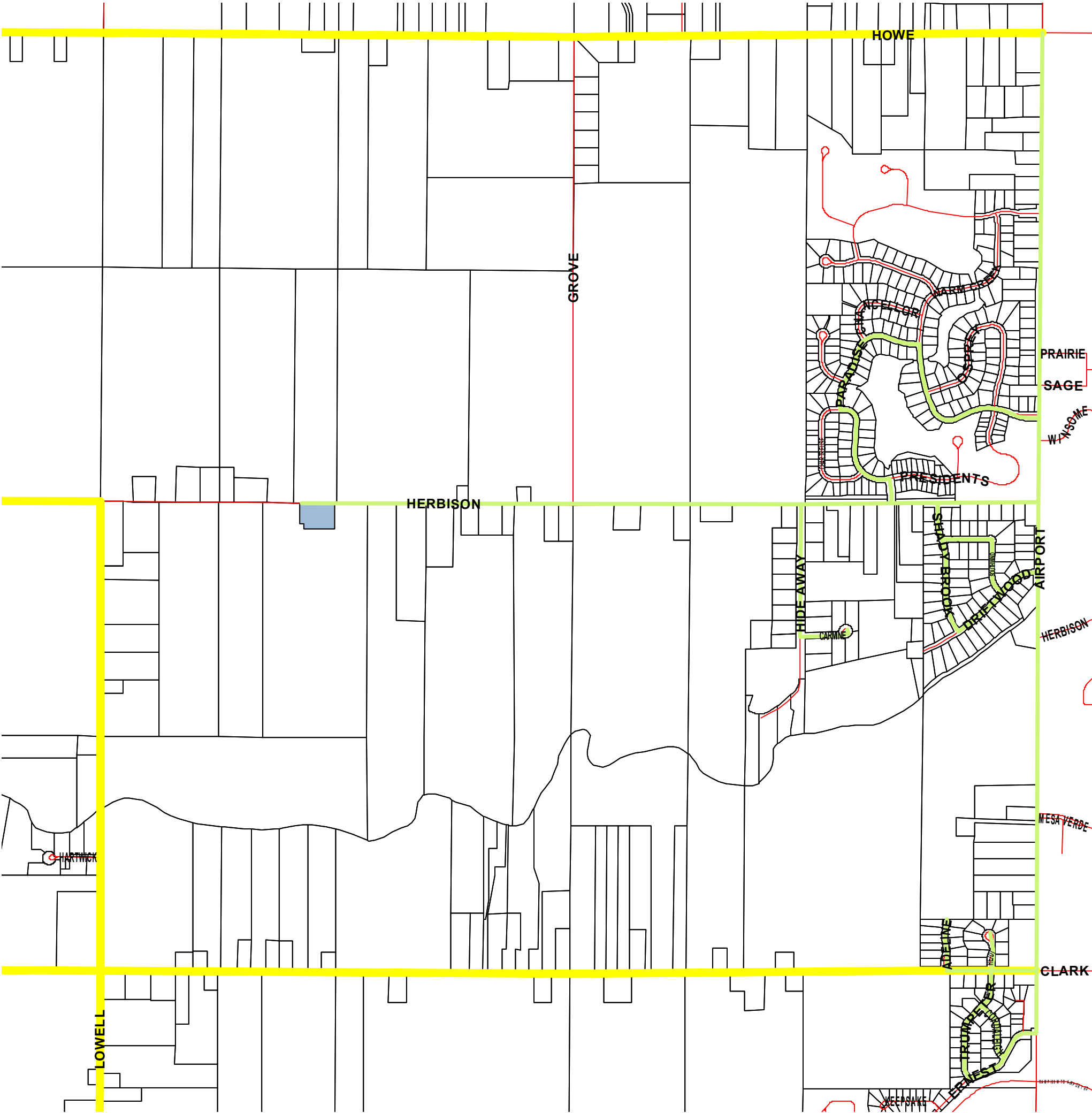
Sidewalks

There are no perimeter sidewalks along the developed subdivisions. Installing these would further help link the subdivisions and provide for more walking alternatives.



Photo, right: Where the sidewalk ends, Herbison at Airport Road

North Airport Pod



Legend

Designated Circulation Route

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission Proposed Non-Motorized Routes

streets

Other

Methodist Church

Masonic Lodge

Twp. Hall & Gym

Heritage Park

Heritage Park

Feijze's

Holiday Haven Scout Camp

Looking Glass Park

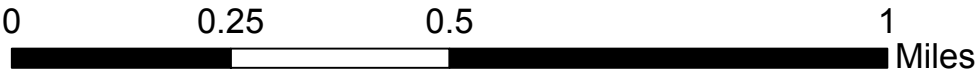
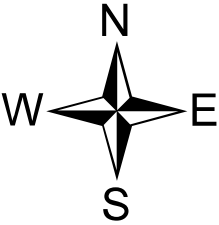
Wacousta Cemetery

Wacousta Elementary

Wacousta Elementary

Mil Run Scout Camp

GL Library (Mail)



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South Airport Road Pod

The South Airport Road Pod runs linear along Airport Road. The South Pod is south of I-69 from Stoll to State Roads. This pod is very different from the previous ones as it is currently under development. While the elements of the previous pods do not exist entirely it is still important to communicate the desires for non-motorized circulation within this developing pod.

Currently, there are three concentrated housing areas planned along the western side of Airport Road. These subdivisions (Nottingham Fields and The Links at Royal Scot) are in various stages of development from the planning phases to initial construction. It is anticipated that these residential areas would create more than 450 new households and create the demand and need for non-motorized circulation in and around this pod. While there is some uncertainty with this project, a multi-family development with some commercial/office space is also planned in this area. As the development process continues with the project, non-motorized opportunities should be taken into account.

INVENTORY

Streets

Airport Road is paved throughout the corridor approximately 22' wide, without paved shoulders.

Stoll Road is paved from Airport Road and to Grove Road and gravel beyond. The paved portion of the road does contain 2' wide paved shoulders. There are no marked speed limits or street lights. **Nottingham Fields Parkway** and **Loxley Lane** within the Nottingham Fields subdivision are also paved with sidewalks and streetlights.

State Road is currently gravel. There are no marked speed limits or street lights. Paving from Airport Road west to The Links at Royal Scot will likely occur in the spring or summer of 2008.

Trails

There are no hiking trails located within this pod.

Crosswalks

There are no marked crosswalks within this pod.

Street Lights

There are presently street lights along Airport Road at major intersections only. Streetlights are planned in each of the developing subdivisions.

Speed Limits/Signs

Current speed limits on the main roads within this pod are as follow. Airport Road is marked 50 MPH and slows to 40 MPH as it approaches the airport. Stoll and State Roads are an unposted 55 MPH.

ATTRACTORS

It is likely that this pod may include a few mixed-use developments, meaning that some areas will combine both low- and high-density residential and commercial land uses. The mixed-use development concept would encourage non-motorized circulation between residential and commercial uses. At least one is in the planning phases north of Stoll and west of Airport Roads. There is the possibility of another in the same vicinity to the east of Airport Road within DeWitt Township.

In addition, several large subdivisions exist on the eastern side of Airport Road in DeWitt Township. Most do have interconnecting sidewalks. It is likely that both Watertown and DeWitt Townships would work together to connect these subdivisions across Airport Road for enhanced circulation between subdivisions, commercial activities, and communities.

NON-MOTORIZED CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOUTH AIRPORT ROAD POD

While planning for development and construction of this pod is currently underway, it is premature to include a plan for this area. It is however important to note several recommendations concerning non-motorized circulation to other Watertown Township entities and DeWitt Township as the development progresses.

- Require interior circulation patterns within developments
- Require exterior circulation patterns surrounding developments. An alternative is to establish an escrow account for perimeter circulation to which developers can contribute in lieu of creating exterior circulation patterns. However, the compensation must be enough to allow for actual construction and/or acquisition of these patterns.
- As existing roads are altered to accommodate development, work with the Clinton County Road Commission to:
 - Create paved shoulders and/or designated bike lanes,
 - Establish appropriate speed limits from a non-motorized circulation perspective, and
 - Establish appropriately located crosswalks.
- Require adequate and appropriate lighting along circulation routes.
- Consider the use of non-conventional trails and easements to connect destinations.

Speed Limits

With improved non-motorized circulation within this pod, existing speed limits should be reexamined and probably lowered along the main roads of State, Stoll, and Airport, Roads.

Street Lights

The pods subdivisions will likely be adequately lit. The only necessary considerations for further lighting would be along Airport, State, and Stoll Roads however; these improvements should only be implemented concurrently with non-motorized circulation enhancements.

Street light installation locations should be discussed with property owners who may be impacted prior to the installation. Every effort should be made to mitigate any impact the lights may have on property owners. In addition, effort should be made to use energy efficient light bulbs, such as LED or others, to reduce the impact on the environment, and street lights should meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, section 28-577.

Connectivity

Much of the ground work for creating a non-motorized transportation plan has already been done through years of hard work by Township staff and officials. Language supporting, justifying, and detailing the township's preferences in relation to non-motorized transportation were pulled directly from the township's subdivision ordinance, zoning ordinance, and comprehensive development plan. ***It is the intent of Watertown Township that this non-motorized circulation plan be consistent with any existing Township ordinance, plan, or policy.***

INTRACONNECTIVITY

As was stated previously, the initial focus of this plan (and implementation) is to create circulation patterns within each of the pods. Later phases will address connecting the pods and creating circulation thoroughfares through the Township.

This plan is meant to be a long-range, dynamic report that will change over time to meet the ever-changing needs of the Township and its residents. The Township recognizes that opportunities to implement this plan will likely not be linear, and will therefore leave gaps in circulation routes. It is important to consider that while this may be the case, this report lays the foundation for such plans and allows the Township to be opportunistic when implementation methods arise, standardizes those methods within best practices, and codifies the desires of the citizens with regard to non-motorized circulation. Working with the Clinton County Road Commission will be vital to implementing interconnectivity plans.

East-West Connections

Keeping those principles in mind, the connecting routes between pods will likely be via paved shoulders and narrower lanes with new striping. Watertown Township recognizes the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission's Regional 2030 Transportation Plan's (TCRPC plan) East-West connection through the township by Clark Road as the best and possibly easiest route to implement. Alternate East-West routes can be found in Howe Road (according to TCRPC plan) and Herbison Road, although portions are unpaved.

North-South Connections

This plan recognizes the Airport Road corridor as a needed North-South connector, but acknowledges that it poses special challenges because it is a major county arterial. Sidewalks are likely the safest form of transportation for non-motorists along either side of the road, but crossing it poses certain safety challenges that will require creativity and care when exploring specific non-motorized plans and implementation methods.

Also reflecting TCRPC plan's North-South connector in Wacousta Road will make connections within the Wacousta village pod and through the Township.

INTERCONNECTIVITY

In addition to ensuring continuity within Township plans, it is also important to do the same with neighboring and overarching jurisdiction plans such as

- DeWitt Township (a committee is currently in the formation stages to address non-motorized circulation),
- City of DeWitt
- Delta Township
- Clinton County (Clinton County Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan: 2008-2012 located at http://www.clinton-county.org/greenspace/documents/FINAL_2008-2012GSCPLan.pdf), and
- Tri-County region (several documents located at <http://www.tri-co.org/>).
- Eagle Township
- Riley Township

Both Clinton County and the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission have non-motorized circulation plans that encompass Watertown Township. While Watertown Township has provided the mechanisms for circulation within the Township, these plans provide sound transportation *through* it on a macro scale. On a micro scale, Watertown Township and neighboring communities will need to work closely together to ensure that access to destinations is accomplished.

There also may be opportunities to connect into the Capital Area Transit Authority or the Clinton Area Transportation System by providing park-n-ride lots with bussing services.

HERITAGE RIVER TRAIL



An important component of a non-motorized circulation plan and also of the Watertown Township landscape is the Looking Glass River that traverses the township, and county. In recent years, the Michigan Department of History, Arts, and Libraries has created a statewide blueprint for Heritage River Trails. These trails recognize Michigan's rivers not only as the transportation modes they are but also as recreational and historical markers of our society. One feature of a designated trail is historical markers that are placed along the route with accompanying guidebooks noting important historical features. These can be developed into important community economic development efforts as well.

The Grand River watershed, which encompasses the Looking Glass River as a tributary, is a designated Heritage River Trail. The Looking Glass River is slated for "development" in the second of four phases allowing the Grand River to reach designation.

Best Management Practices

Seek to have the shoulders paved on all cross township corridors whenever the CCRC is slated to repave those specific roads.

Petition the CCRC to narrow the driving lanes on corridor roads when they are painting or re-paving those roads.

Advocate for the preservation of trees along township roads whenever possible including both new paving and re-paving in order to maintain shaded routes.

Explore the concept of adding 'rest stops' along cross township corridors which might consist of shade trees and a bench.

Explore the possibility of having intersections along these corridor routes lit with a single centered light.

Watertown Township recognizes the importance of such a designation and supports the Heritage River Trail. As the Looking Glass River phase of the project progresses, it will actively seek to support the plan and to connect it to this non-motorized circulation plan to create a holistic, robust, and varied transportation experience.

Potential Resources

Ultimately, the goal of any plan is to become implemented. Oftentimes, a variety of resources are required to implement a plan. This section of the report offers several potential resources for implementation of a non-motorized transportation plan.

United States Department of Transportation

- In 1991, Congress passed the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act (ISTEA), and ushered in a new era of transportation law and funding. States were given much more flexibility in deciding how to use their federal transportation dollars, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities gained prominence in states' transportation plans. The next national law, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), continued many of the policies introduced in ISTEA. Many states now pay significant attention to the needs of cyclists and walkers, often with Departments of Transportation partnering with Departments of Health to promote healthy, active transportation. Within this framework, Safe Routes to School projects can hope for both financial and policy support. The following information was taken from a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) publication entitled "A Summary: Bicycle and Pedestrian Provisions of the Federal Aid Program."

Michigan Department of Transportation Enhancement Program

This program was established in 1992 by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) as a result of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 and reauthorized by the 1998 Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). TEA-21 requires that a minimum of 10 percent of Surface Transportation Funds be used for the Transportation Enhancement Program. In 2003, Michigan received \$25,000,000 in federal Transportation Enhancement funds. Eligible activities do include nonmotorized activities including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, preservation of abandoned railway corridors, and pedestrian and bicycle safety and education activities.

The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness

The Governor's Council on Physical Fitness Health and Sports is devoting resources to promoting active communities. One of the best ways we do this is through our Promoting Active Community Award: Community Self-Assessment Inventory.

Developed in partnership with the Michigan Department of Community Health, communities use this tool to:

- Provide strategic analyses of the community's policies and zoning, pedestrian and bike facilities and programs, worksites, schools and public transportation.
- Gain recognition for achievements in removing barriers to make it easier for people to be active.
- Educate and motivate community leaders and citizens to make relevant improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle environments.

Communities who complete the assessment will earn one of five levels of awards to be given at an annual conference. In addition, participating communities will also receive automated reports, including a community report of achievement with comparative data to other communities of similar size.

Michigan State University's Urban Planning Partnerships Program

Urban Planning Partnerships (UPP) is an outreach initiative within Michigan State University's Urban and Regional Planning Program and is an initiative based within MSU Extension. UPP partners with communities to carry out a community's desired planning-related project through undergraduate and/or graduate students who work under the direction of University professors.

UPP seeks to facilitate timely research and outreach on urban policy and planning issues in Michigan communities. The current target cities for UPP are Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Lansing, Pontiac, and Saginaw; however, UPP works with other areas as resources allow. Watertown Township recently worked with a group of students through the UPP Program to update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Active Living by Design Program

Active Living by Design is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is a part of the UNC School of Public Health in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. This program establishes innovative approaches to increase physical activity through community design, public policies and communications strategies. Active Living by Design is funding 25 community partnerships across the country to demonstrate how changing community design will impact physical activity.

Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Program

Michigan's Safe Routes to School Program is managed by the Michigan Department of Transportation with support from the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness. The program aims to encourage children to walk to school, to make it safer for them to do so, and to assist with planning for infrastructure improvements to facilitate these goals. Schools create a team to inventory existing infrastructure, assess safety, and develop an action plan to implement changes. The Michigan Department of Transportation and the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness support these efforts by providing an SR2S Handbook, training, tool kits, newsletters and phone assistance. The SR2S Program has many funding sources, but its main source is the federal SAFETEA-LU program, and requires no local matching funds.

Suggested Implementation Strategies

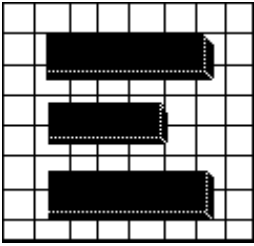
General and specific recommendations to fully implement the Watertown Township Non-motorized Circulation Plan are summarized below. Many of these recommendations will require additional action and research by developers, local agencies, Township staff, the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees.

- Work with the county road commission to develop a timeline and action plan to
 - Implement improved road striping
 - Examine areas where new crosswalks could be striped and signed
 - Explore paving road shoulders cost estimates and implementation timelines
 - Identify projects that fit the goals of this plan and the Capital Improvements Plan *as* they are updating roads
- Develop a Township Sidewalk Ordinance (See Appendix D for samples).
- Work to ensure access to the designated circulation route by all uses, including those who may be handicapped. Research ADA requirements and seek input from such users on improvements.
- Work to ensure and improve the safety of all uses by developing a set of safety standards in cooperation with the county Sheriff's Department.
- Seek opportunities for grants to fund larger-scale projects.
- Seek to purchase easements which would allow for fewer gaps in the designated circulation route.
- Continue to communicate with surrounding communities to discuss linkages and enhance opportunities.
- It is important to reiterate the goal of promoting on-going education regarding the Non-motorized Circulation Plan. As with any planning endeavor, citizen input is not just important, it is necessary to ensure that plans reflect the desires of the residents. Including residents on committees, holding public meetings and hearings, surveying residents, and encouraging participation from those landowners along any proposed route are just a few steps that can be taken to provide this safeguard. Additionally, not only will the Township want to provide safety tips for all types of users and appropriate signage as the plan is implemented, but education about the proper use of any circulation pattern will be a key to its success.



Appendix A: Results of Watertown Charter Township Survey

In late 2007, the Watertown Charter Township Board of Trustees developed a survey with assistance from EPIC - MRA, a Lansing-based public opinion research and analysis firm, to determine the opinion of township residents on a broad range of issues. Many of these issues relate to parks and recreation, as well as non-motorized transportation. The analysis of this survey is attached.



EPIC ▪ MRA

4710 W. Saginaw Highway
Suite 5
Lansing, MI 48917
517/886-0860
800/545-8249
Fax 517/886-9176
e-mail: epicmra@acd.net

Watertown Township Survey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Educational
- Political
- Industrial
- Consumer
- Market
- Research
- Analysis

Methodology

In the fall of 2007, approximately 2000 surveys were mailed to residents of Watertown Township. A list of all addresses were obtained from the township tax rolls as well as being garnered from registered voter lists; the latter being done to capture as many non-owners of property as possible. The 2000 addresses were then randomly selected, ensuring that each of the four township geographical quadrants was as equally represented as possible.

The mail out packets, issued via First Class mail in and oversized envelope, contained a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and urging participation. In addition, a postage-paid return envelope bearing EPIC ▪ MRA's address was also included for the respondent to easily return the questionnaire.

Over the course of three weeks following the initial mail-out, returns were compiled until a cut-off date was met. In all, 458 returns were compiled – a very respectable return rate of better than 23 percent – producing results with an overall margin of error of $\pm 4.6\%$.

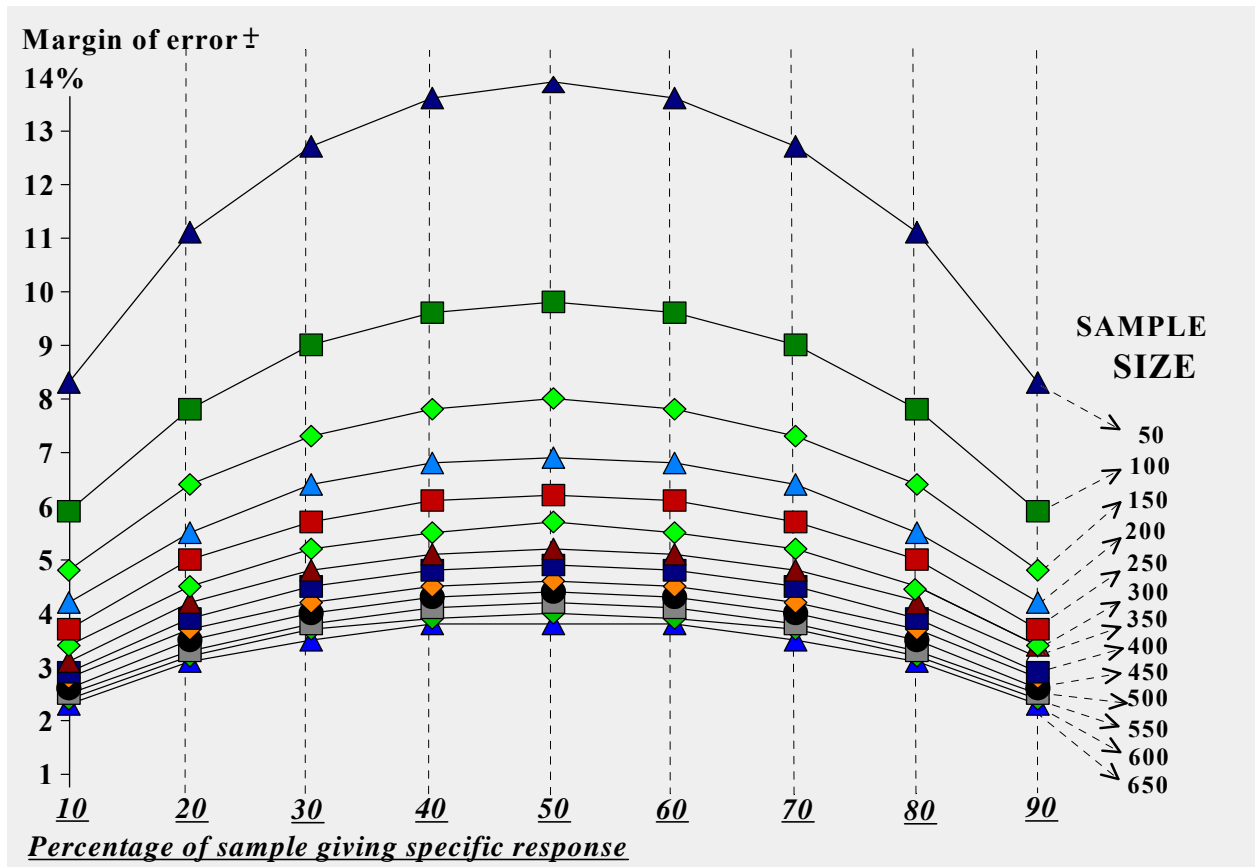
Generally, in interpreting survey results, all surveys are subject to error; that is, the results of the survey may differ from that which would have been obtained if the entire population was interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends on the total number of respondents that are asked a specific question. The table below represents the estimated sampling error for different percentage distributions of responses based on sample size.

For example, 52 percent of respondents indicated that the township should do “More” to protect farm land and open space (Question #35). As indicated in the chart below, this percentage would have a sampling error of plus or minus 4.6 percent. That means that with repeated sampling, it is very likely (95 times out of every 100), that the percentage for the entire population would fall between 47.4 percent and 56.6 percent, hence 52 percent ± 4.6 percent.

EPIC ▪ MRA SAMPLING ERROR BY PERCENTAGE (AT 95 IN 100 CONFIDENCE LEVEL)

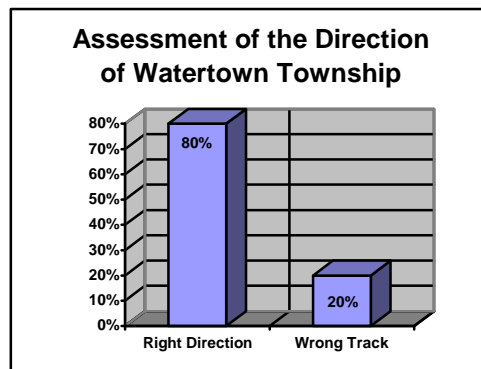
Percentage of sample giving specific response

| | <u>10</u> | <u>20</u> | <u>30</u> | <u>40</u> | <u>50</u> | <u>60</u> | <u>70</u> | <u>80</u> | <u>90</u> |
|--------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| SAMPLE SIZE | % margin of error \pm | | | | | | | | |
| 650 | 2.3 | 3.1 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 3.1 | 2.3 |
| 600 | 2.4 | 3.2 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 4 | 3.9 | 3.7 | 3.2 | 2.4 |
| 550 | 2.5 | 3.3 | 3.8 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 3.8 | 3.3 | 2.5 |
| 500 | 2.6 | 3.5 | 4 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4 | 3.5 | 2.6 |
| 450 | 2.8 | 3.7 | 4.2 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 3.7 | 2.8 |
| 400 | 2.9 | 3.9 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 3.9 | 2.9 |
| 350 | 3.1 | 4.2 | 4.8 | 5.1 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 4.8 | 4.2 | 3.1 |
| 300 | 3.4 | 4.5 | 5.2 | 5.5 | 5.7 | 5.5 | 5.2 | 4.5 | 3.4 |
| 250 | 3.7 | 5 | 5.7 | 6.1 | 6.2 | 6.1 | 5.7 | 5 | 3.7 |
| 200 | 4.2 | 5.5 | 6.4 | 6.8 | 6.9 | 6.8 | 6.4 | 5.5 | 4.2 |
| 150 | 4.8 | 6.4 | 7.3 | 7.8 | 8 | 7.8 | 7.3 | 6.4 | 4.8 |
| 100 | 5.9 | 7.8 | 9 | 9.6 | 9.8 | 9.6 | 9 | 7.8 | 5.9 |
| 50 | 8.3 | 11.1 | 12.7 | 13.6 | 13.9 | 13.6 | 12.7 | 11.1 | 8.3 |



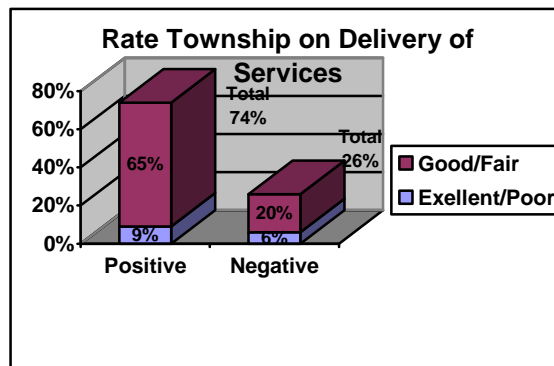
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & SURVEY OVERVIEW

Watertown Township residents are, by a very wide majority, well-pleased with the condition and governance of the place they call home. This assertion is borne out in one of the very first questions asking residents to indicate whether the township is headed in the, “Right Direction” or, if it is off on the, “Wrong Track”. In response, a resounding four out of five respondents selected, “right direction.”



It is difficult to understate the significance of this result when one considers the same question regarding the direction of the state posed at roughly the same time to statewide voters found only about one-third reporting “right direction”.

Another indication of resident satisfaction can be found in the rating respondents give in assessing how the Township is doing in delivering basic services. Nearly three quarters (74%) gave a “Positive” rating of excellent or pretty good, compared to the 26 percent who issued a “Negative” rating of only fair or poor.



Attention is drawn to the fact, however, that the intensity of residents “Positive” feelings is somewhat tepid, in that only nine percent of respondents issued an “excellent” rating. This suggests a holding back in enthusiasm toward township government that shows up elsewhere in the survey.

The small town, rural atmosphere is cited by a clear majority of residents as what they like most about Watertown Township. This sentiment is in keeping with a plurality of respondents (32%) who identified “Growth”, in response to an open-ended question, as the biggest problem the township must address.

Personal contact with Township offices also scored high with respondents. Eighty percent of those who had reason to contact an office – with a call, a personal visit, or otherwise – reported being “Satisfied” with the experience, 62% were “Very Satisfied”, with the response they received.

More evidence of citizen satisfaction is found in batteries of questions asking respondents to issue a “Positive” or “Negative” rating to a list of township services, and a list of township offices.

In the area of services, seventeen separate items ranging from the “provision of fire protection”, through “cemetery upkeep”, to “senior citizen programs” were presented and respondents were asked to give each a rating. As can be seen from the roster below, nine of the seventeen items received a majority “Positive” rating, with none receiving a majority “negative”. Put another way, to the extent a service did not receive a majority “Positive”, the difference did not result in a negative rating but rather, the difference showed up in the “Undecided” category.

Rating of Services

| | <u>POSITIVE</u> | | | <u>NEGATIVE</u> | | | undec |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|-------|
| | <u>EXCEL</u> | <u>GOOD</u> | Total | <u>FAIR</u> | <u>POOR</u> | Total | |
| Fire protection | 24% | 55% | 79% | 8% | 3% | 11% | 10% |
| The quality of the park system | 16% | 55% | 71% | 7% | 2% | 9% | 20% |
| Maintenance of township property | 16% | 55% | 71% | 6% | 1% | 7% | 22% |
| Police protection | 8% | 59% | 67% | 18% | 6% | 24% | 9% |
| Recycling | 20% | 44% | 64% | 15% | 14% | 29% | 7% |
| Ambulance services | 14% | 49% | 63% | 8% | 3% | 11% | 26% |
| Snow and ice removal | 8% | 53% | 61% | 24% | 9% | 33% | 6% |
| Street and road maintenance | 4% | 55% | 59% | 26% | 11% | 37% | 4% |
| Cemetery upkeep & maintenance | 22% | 36% | 58% | 3% | 1% | 4% | 38% |
| Animal control | 5% | 43% | 48% | 16% | 7% | 23% | 29% |
| Building code enforcement | 9% | 38% | 47% | 11% | 3% | 14% | 39% |
| Recreational programs and activities | 6% | 40% | 46% | 12% | 6% | 18% | 36% |
| Zoning code enforcement | 6% | 38% | 44% | 17% | 6% | 23% | 33% |
| A quality library system | 10% | 33% | 43% | 14% | 5% | 19% | 38% |
| Youth programs and services | 4% | 30% | 34% | 13% | 6% | 19% | 47% |
| Ditch cleaning | 3% | 29% | 32% | 20% | 13% | 33% | 35% |
| Senior citizen programs & services | 3% | 25% | 28% | 14% | 5% | 19% | 53% |

As for township offices, a similar pattern is observed. That is, respondents were presented with a list of thirteen offices and asked to issue a “Positive” or “Negative” rating for each. Like the battery on services, no office received a majority negative rating, even when the responses were re calculated by removing “undecided” responses, as is illustrated below:

**POSITIVE/NEGATIVE RATINGS OF TWP. OFFICES
AMONG THOSE EXPRESSING AN OPINION**

| | <u>POSITIVE</u> | | | <u>NEGATIVE</u> | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| | <u>EXCEL</u> | <u>GOOD</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>FAIR</u> | <u>POOR</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| Clerk's Office | 22% | 62% | 85% | 11% | 4% | 15% |
| Parks & Recreation Committee | 13% | 68% | 81% | 14% | 5% | 19% |
| Treasurer's Office | 24% | 59% | 73% | 12% | 5% | 17% |
| Township Supervisor's Office | 10% | 61% | 71% | 21% | 8% | 29% |
| Building Inspector's Office | 11% | 59% | 70% | 18% | 12% | 30% |
| Township Manager's Office | 10% | 55% | 65% | 24% | 11% | 35% |
| Township Trustees | 7% | 58% | 65% | 23% | 12% | 35% |
| Zoning Board of Appeals | 8% | 55% | 63% | 25% | 12% | 37% |
| Board of Review | 9% | 52% | 61% | 26% | 13% | 39% |
| The Township Board | 7% | 54% | 61% | 29% | 10% | 39% |
| Planning Commission | 7% | 53% | 60% | 26% | 14% | 40% |
| Township Assessor's Office | 8% | 50% | 58% | 27% | 15% | 42% |
| Planning & Zoning Office | 10% | 49% | 56% | 28% | 19% | 44% |

In an attempt to give township officials some direction about citizen priorities, a battery of 25 services commonly provided by local governments were presented and respondents were asked to indicate whether Watertown was doing:

“Enough”
“Too much” or,
 if ***“More”***

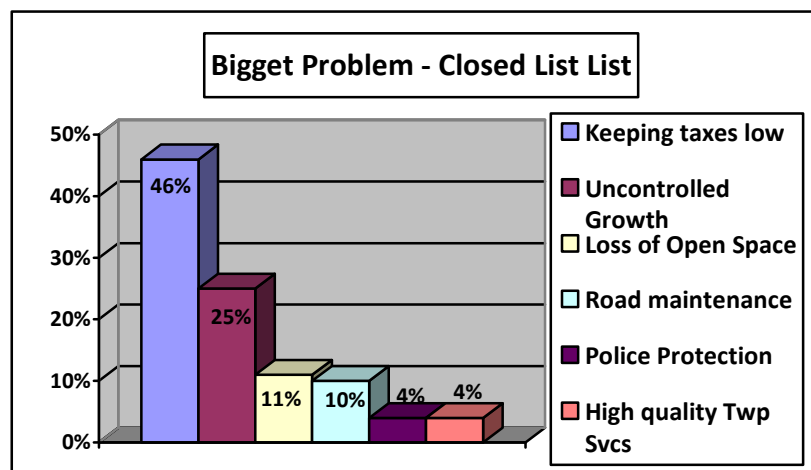
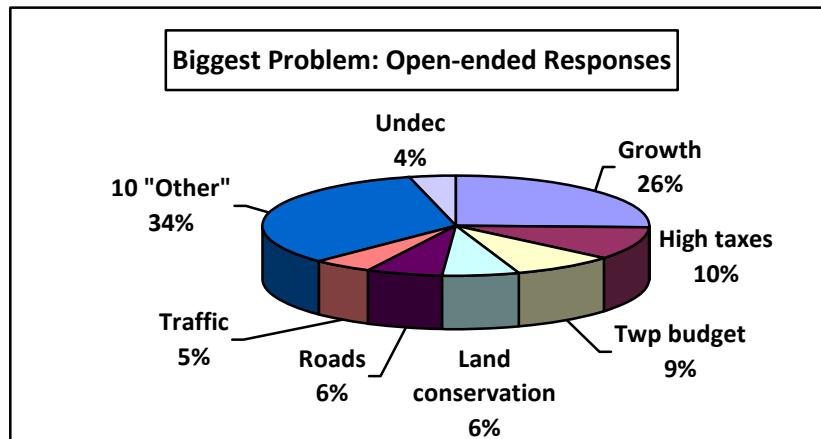
needed to be done for each item.

As the table below illustrates – and consistent with results discussed earlier – the top items residents believe “More” should be done involve maintaining the Township’s rural, small-town atmosphere:

RANK ORDER: HIGHEST TO LOWEST “MORE”

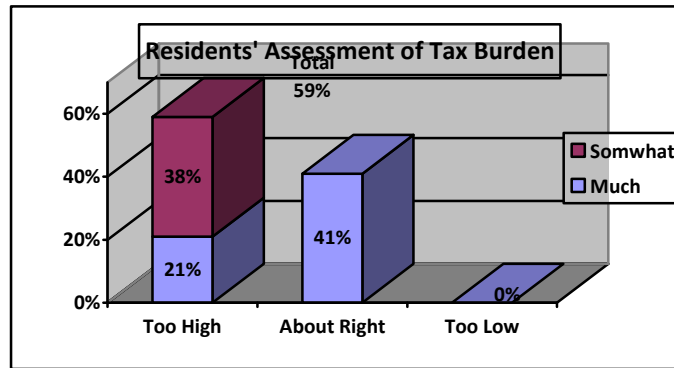
| | MUCH | SOME | MORE Total | Enough | Too Much | undec |
|--|------|------|-----------------------|--------|-------------|-------|
| Protecting prime farmland and open space | 22% | 30% | 52% | 30% | 6% | 12% |
| Keeping as much of the rural character and historic township landscape as possible | 18% | 30% | 48% | 40% | 5% | 7% |
| Controlling speeding cars on township roads | 21% | 24% | 45% | 44% | 4% | 7% |
| Preserving as much wildlife habitat as possible | 17% | 28% | 45% | 42% | 4% | 9% |
| Controlling population growth and development | 19% | 25% | 44% | 37% | 6% | 13% |
| Preserving natural vegetation in the township | 16% | 26% | 42% | 39% | 5% | 14% |
| Keeping residents informed about problems, issues, programs and events | 15% | 24% | 39% | 54% | 1% | 6% |
| Maintaining township roads | 12% | 26% | 38% | 56% | 2% | 4% |
| Protecting wetland areas in the township | 13% | 23% | 36% | 42% | 6% | 16% |
| Providing fair and accurate property tax assessments | 14% | 18% | 33% | 52% | 7% | 8% |
| Controlling the excessive use of pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals | 14% | 18% | 32% | 39% | 2% | 27% |
| Attracting businesses to the area | 12% | 20% | 32% | 40% | 11% | 17% |
| Preventing excessive soil erosion in the area | 12% | 19% | 31% | 46% | 2% | 21% |
| Providing public police protection | 8% | 23% | 31% | 58% | 2% | 9% |
| Providing the right budget priorities | 10% | 18% | 28% | 38% | 1% | 33% |
| Providing clean, affordable drinking water | 10% | 12% | 22% | 39% | 3% | 36% |
| Offering enough activities for young people | 6% | 14% | 20% | 44% | 5% | 31% |
| Limiting leaf and rubbish burning | 9% | 10% | 19% | 57% | 12% | 12% |
| Making emergency medical response available | 4% | 15% | 19% | 63% | 3% | 15% |
| Working cooperatively with other local units of government and county government | 6% | 12% | 18% | 47% | 2% | 33% |
| Offering enough recreational opportunities | 4% | 14% | 18% | 59% | 5% | 18% |
| Working with neighborhood groups | 5% | 12% | 17% | 37% | 3% | 43% |
| Providing programs for senior citizens | 4% | 12% | 16% | 39% | 4% | 41% |
| Providing effective fire protection | 4% | 10% | 14% | 74% | 5% | 7% |
| Maintaining parks and recreational facilities | 3% | 8% | 11% | 76% | 4% | 9% |

Another overarching feature of the data is the high sensitivity reported by respondents to taxes. In a list of six “. . . problems many are concerned about . . .”, offered to respondents, “*Keeping taxes and fees low*” was the option selected by a large plurality of 42 percent, with the next highest being, “*Uncontrolled growth & development*” in a distant second at twenty five percent. The reader is reminded that “Growth” ranked first in an open-ended question presented just prior to the closed list where the issues of taxes easily outdistanced it.



The tax sensitivity is exhibited in two follow-up questions: The first asking respondents to assess their tax burden *vis a vis* what they receive in services; and a second, asking them to choose between statements that pit tax rates against service level and quality.

In the first follow-up, a very large 59 percent majority believe their taxes are “Too High”, with a large proportion of them saying they are “Much” too high. This is a level seldom, if ever, recorded in an EPIC ▪ MRA survey over the past fifteen years.



Similarly, 75 percent of respondents opted for the statement: *“In light of the current budget situation in the township, it is important to keep taxes as low as possible, even if it means reducing township services and programs.”*, over a statement that urged maintenance of services even if it means raising taxes.

An important side note to the analysis above is the fact that 73 percent of residents admitted not fully understanding that the Township retains for its general fund use, less than 15 percent of the taxes it collects for itself and on behalf of other governmental entities such as school districts and the county.

Further direct evidence of residents’ sensitivity to tax increases is found in two separate questions posing hypothetical ballot issues calling for a millage increase. The first described the current manner in which the Looking Glass Regional Fire Authority responds to emergency medical calls. Specifically, that the Authority sends first responders but that private ambulance services actually transport the victims. The question then asks if the respondent would “vote” Yes or No on a 2 mill increase used exclusively to fund Watertown’s portion of the first responders in the authority, thus relieving the general fund from paying for this item. The statement explicitly excluded funding for a township ambulance service.

By more than three-to-one (77% to 23%), reported they would turn down such a request at the ballot. In a follow-up open-ended question asking why a respondent reported that they would vote No, *“Tax Increase”* easily topped the list of reasons at sixty percent.

The second hypothetical ballot question called for a 3 mill increase to fund not only first responders, but also a township ambulance service. As might be expected, the rejection of this hypothetical 3 mill increase was rejected even more resoundingly than the previous 2 mill defeat, with a 78% percent No, to 22 percent Yes, outcome.

The notion of establishing a township police force was also posed to respondents. Although no specific millage amount was offered, the nine-out-of ten residents expressing a desire to continue to receive police service from the county sheriff's office speaks for itself in that regard.

The reader is reminded that residents highly value the rural character of the township and in several different parts of the survey, cite "growth" and related issues as being a top concern and something the township needs to be aware of. Even with this deeply held sentiment, sensitivity to taxes again becomes manifest.

Even when respondents are presented with a proposal that is clearly close to their hearts, the aversion to taxes is stronger. When asked if they would favor or oppose a program to pay farmers to preserve farmland and not sell it for development, a 55 percent to 45 percent majority reported they would "Favor" such a program. However, when a price tag of 1 mill is presented as being necessary to pay for the program, respondents reject the proposed increase in taxes by a strong 62 percent to 38 percent margin.

CONCLUSIONS

Watertown Township residents prize the rural, small town character of their community and would like to see it stay that way. However, this sentiment is not strong enough for them to indicate approval of any proposal that would increase rates of taxation in order to preserve farmland and open space. Indeed, an aversion to any sort of assessment increase – no matter how worthy the purpose – is the hallmark of the several questions that went to the issue of taxes, both directly and indirectly.

There is no sentiment whatsoever for increasing the rate of assessment for a dedicated fund for fire service or a combination fire and ambulance service. These hypothetical ballot questions, which were resoundingly rejected, were followed by a question about the establishment of a township police department. Even though no price tag was attached, over ninety-percent expressed the opinion that the township should continue to receive its police protection from the county sheriff's patrol.

Another pervasive theme throughout the findings is the residents' relative comfort level with the status quo. They issue high positive ratings (albeit not overly enthusiastic) for the job the township does in providing basic services, and among those reporting having contacted a township office, the respondents reported being very satisfied with the experience.

With the exception of items relating to the ever-present desire to preserve the rural character of the township, few of the other twenty-five government service items offered to respondents were identified as being something the township needed to do "More" about. Indeed, in most cases where an item did not break 50 percent as having "Enough" being done, the alternative of wanting "More" to be done did not replace it, but rather, there was a high percentage of "Undecided".

A plurality of residents report receiving most of their information from the Township newsletter, followed by the Grand Ledge Independent and the Dewitt/Bath Review. To the extent there are misconceptions among the citizens (e.g. the percentage of taxes the township keeps from what is collected), these vehicles would appear to be the most effective methods for communicating.

####

Appendix B: Clinton County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Needs Assessment

In 2007, the Clinton County Greenspace Committee conducted a survey of county residents regarding their use and preferences of parks and recreation facilities and activities in the area. The following is a synopsis of the survey results and the recommendations of the committee.

CHAPTER 4: CLINTON COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Dr. Charles Nelson and Kristen Steger

Introduction

The Clinton County Board of Commissioners established the first park and recreation commission in the County's history in December 2000. It appointed a 10-member commission and named it the Green Space Commission (GSC) in recognition of its role in addressing park, recreation and open space concerns for Clinton County. It was established under the authority granted to counties by Michigan Public Act 261 of 1965. The GSC's first official meeting was in March 2001 and it has met on a regular, monthly basis since that time.

A key first order of business in 2001 was to understand the park, recreation and open space needs of Clinton County residents. To that end, a need assessment survey was conducted with the approval of and funding allocated by the Clinton County Board of Commissioners. All GSC members as well as all members of the Clinton County Board of Commissioners and the County Administrator reviewed the questionnaire and procedures for the survey's administration. The initial survey cover letter also provided accurate information to residents about Clinton County's park, recreation and open space assets. These included what the State of Michigan and some local jurisdictions provide for park, recreation and open space opportunities in Clinton County.

Since the time that this needs assessment was conducted in late 2001/early 2002, the Clinton County set major priorities in its first plan for Parks, Recreation and Open Space. Those priorities included providing water based recreation opportunities and non-motorized trail and transportation opportunities. As part of the 2007 Clinton County Needs Assessment, a report was provided to the 1,000 registered voters randomly selected for the sample as follows:

Summary of the 2003-2007 Clinton County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan and Actions Related to the Plan

Chuck Nelson, Clinton County Green Space Commission Chair

August 20, 2007

1. The county's first park, recreation and open space plan was developed during 2002 and adopted in November of 2002 by the Clinton County Board of Commissioners. Much of it was based on the response of citizens to a questionnaire similar to this one, sent to a sample of 1,000 registered voters during 2002. From the 57% who responded, it was clear that voters wanted the county to develop a park, recreation and open space plan that focused on providing a system of non-motorized trails and transportation opportunities, public access to water based recreation opportunities (e.g. area rivers) and the conservation of open space and nature. They also encouraged the county to seek public and private grant dollars to help fund this acquisition and development.

Those directions were the centerpiece of the 2003-2007 Plan that has guided the county the past 5 years and will soon be out-of-force. Key actions based on the plan include:

1. The 2006 acquisition of Motz Park, a 42-acre site on DeWitt Road (just south of French Road) that includes a 17 acre lake. The majority of the purchase price was paid for with a \$258,000 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant (money set aside per Michigan's Constitution from oil and gas leases and royalties on state-owned land to only be used to buy and develop public outdoor recreation opportunities). Searles Construction, Clinton County Pheasants Forever and the Clinton County Road Commission have been most helpful in establishing vegetative cover to control erosion. Currently, the County has a development grant application under review with the DNR for \$466,000 from the MNRTF as part of a \$660,000 development plan. The grant would fund facility development at Motz County Park including a swimming beach, bathhouse, picnic pavilions and other recreational facilities. A pledge of \$50,000 in the form of a 1:1 challenge grant has been received from county resident and business person Leon Searles. However, based on state MNRTF rules, no development using the challenge grant monies may be performed prior to the receipt of the MNRTF development grant if the money is to be used as match. This has restricted the County's ability to immediately develop the site. The County is looking forward to a successful MNRTF grant award to finance the development of Motz Park.
2. In 2005, representatives from the Clinton County Green Space Commission, in cooperation with others from Ionia and Shiawassee Counties, approached the Meijer Foundation for a grant to acquire and develop a non-motorized rail-trail on the 42 mile abandoned rail right-of-way that parallels M21 from Owosso to Ionia. This property is owned by the Straits Corporation and 24 miles are in Clinton County. The Meijer Foundation was most gracious and agreed to a grant of \$1.125 million for the three counties, which could be used on a per mile basis by the individual counties (\$26,785 per mile) or jointly if a multi-governmental organization was created. The stipulations of the grant are that funds be matched at the rate of one or more dollars (which can be from other grant sources such as the MNRTF or federal Transportation Enhancement Funds) for every three Meijer dollars and that the trail's name includes "Fred Meijer". Further, the Meijer Foundation also allowed that Meijer monies remaining after development could be used for a trail maintenance endowment fund. Currently, the State of Michigan is in the process of purchasing the entire ROW and is working with the counties to develop a management agreement under which the individual counties or a multi-county organization would develop and manage the trail. All acquisition funds have come from Federal Transportation Enhancement dollars and the MNRTF, with only \$50,000 of Meijer Foundation funds and \$11,200 of Clinton County Green Space budget and \$7,800 from the other two counties spent on title review. In 2006 the Clinton County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing concerning the potential rail-trail. Over 200 people attended, showing strong support for the trail's acquisition, development and operation.
3. A river access site on the Maple River in Duplain Township (French and St. Clair Rds.) was purchased by Clinton County to facilitate canoeing, kayaking and fishing on the Maple. Development will take place in 2008. This helps link the park in the Village of Ovid (where county funds were used to gravel the canoe launch to protect against erosion and improve access) and the DuPlain Township Park in the Village of Elsie at the dam. Further downstream, the Michigan DNR provides multiple access points on the Maple. The Green Space Commission is also assisting the Friends of the Maple River and the Village of Maple Rapids to develop an additional access site in Maple Rapids the village would operate.

4. In cooperation with the Clinton County Road Commission, Green Space Commission members and volunteers in 2007 are helping measure road and shoulder widths on county roadways identified by the Green Space Commission and the Road Commission as valuable for bicycling and other non-motorized transportation uses. Approximately 100 miles of roadway have been identified as valuable for non-motorized transportation and will be measured. This will help guide the expenditures of funds the county Road Commission already annually receives from the state for the sole purpose of non-motorized transportation improvement.

Presently, Clinton County operates one park, Motz Park, and the 4-H Fairgrounds. Motz Park is currently undeveloped but is open to the public and encompasses 42 acres with a 17 acre lake located within the park. The 4-H Fairgrounds are undergoing considerable renovation and expansion to meet growing recreational needs for community uses of gathering spaces, outdoor expositions and educational events and sites for outdoor recreation including environmental interpretation and non-motorized trails (including opportunities for equestrian use). The focus of this 2007 needs assessment was to inform citizens about the progress made on the 2003-07 plan and ask their guidance in development of the 2008-12 plan.

Methods

A mail survey of 1,000 randomly selected registered voters was conducted. The voters were selected from a list maintained by Clinton County of all households with one or more registered voter. The list contained the names and addresses of approximately 21,000 households with the registered voter with the highest alphabetical order name listed. This means that a household with 3 registered voters had the same chance as a household with one registered voter to be sampled. Using the software program Microsoft Access, a random sample of 1,000 households with the name and address of a registered voter for each was selected. This amounted to approximately 5% of the households in the county with one or more registered voters being randomly sampled.

A sub-committee of GSC members designed the 18-question survey with review by the entire GSC, the Chair of the Clinton County Board of Commissioners and the Clinton County Administrator. It was first mailed to the sample with an accompanying cover letter, a summary of the 2003-2007 plan and actions related to that plan and a business reply envelope on August 20, 2007. A reminder postcard was sent to all non-respondents on September 13, 2007. A second mailing of the survey with a revised cover letter and business reply envelope was mailed on September 20, 2007 to non-respondents. Those sampled were promised confidentiality, had the purpose of the survey clearly presented and were apprised of appropriate contacts for questions or concerns. A cutoff date of October 4, 2007 to accept responses was applied as results were scheduled to be available at the end of October. A copy of the survey instrument, cover letter and the postcard reminder is available in Appendix A.

Data was entered and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Open-ended comments at the end of the survey were recorded verbatim with some effort to improve spelling. They are provided in Appendix A.

Results

Of the 1,000 names, 64 had invalid addresses according to the US Postal Service, typically due to *forwarding order expired, no such person, address unknown or deceased*. Of the remaining 936, 391 (41.7%) responded and completed the questionnaire. Another seven (7) responded they weren't completing the questionnaire, as they felt it was not appropriate for them or they had no interest.

Importance of Outdoor Recreation

When asked to rate the importance of outdoor recreation to their household, 51% of the respondents felt that outdoor recreation is very important to them, 32% that it was moderately important, 11% that it was slightly important and 5% that it was unimportant.

Current Activities of Residents

Residents are active in a wide variety of outdoor recreation pursuits in Clinton County. In terms of sports, one or more household members are most likely to participate in golf, playground activities or baseball/softball (Table 4). For trail activities, participation rates are generally higher than sports with almost three fourths of the households involved in walking/hiking and forty-three percent in bicycling on roads/trails (Table 5). For water based activities, more than half swim and fish in Clinton County (Table 6). Concerning more general activities, scenic driving, nature viewing and picnicking are done by half of households (Table 7). For special event activities more than half of households attended outdoor fair/festival and art/craft show (Table 8) and for winter activities almost one-third participated in sledding/tobogganing (Table 9). In terms of all the outdoor recreation activity reported, half or more of the reporting households had one or more participants in walking outdoors, swimming, fishing, viewing nature, taking scenic drives, attending an outdoor fair or festival, attending an outdoor craft show and picnicking.

Table 4. Percentage of resident households with one or more members participating in selected sports during the past year in Clinton County.

| Games and Sports activity | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Golf | 38.3% |
| Playground activities | 37.8 |
| Baseball/softball | 26.1 |
| Outdoor basketball | 25.1 |
| Soccer | 14.5 |
| Beach volleyball | 11.9 |
| Tennis | 10.7 |
| Disc golf | 4.8 |

Table 5. Percentage of resident households with one or more members participating in selected trail activities during the past year in Clinton County.

| Trail activity | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Walk/hike | 73.1% |
| Paved road/trail bicycling | 43.4 |
| Walk pet | 36.8 |
| Run/jog | 21.8 |
| Mountain biking | 17.3 |
| In-line skating | 9.9 |
| Horseback ride | 8.4 |

Table 6. Percentage of resident households with one or more members participating in selected water activities during the past year in Clinton County.

| Water activity | Percentage |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Swim | 62.9% |
| Fish | 53.6 |
| Sunbathe | 41.4 |
| Canoe/kayak | 36.5 |
| Power boat | 27.7 |

Table 7. Percentage of resident households with one or more members participating in selected general recreation activities during the past year in Clinton County.

| General recreation activity | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Scenic drive | 65.0% |
| Nature observation/wildlife viewing | 63.2 |
| Picnic | 50.0 |
| Camp | 43.9 |
| Hunt | 36.8 |
| Mushroom/berry picking | 27.7 |
| Archery shoot | 19.5 |
| Skeet/target shoot | 16.5 |

Table 8. Percentage of resident households with one or more members participating in selected special event activities during the past year in Clinton County.

| Special event activity | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Attend outdoor fair/festival | 65.7% |
| Attend outdoor art/craft show | 58.1 |
| Attend outdoor concert | 45.7 |

Table 9. Percentage of resident households with one or more members participating in selected winter recreation activities during the past year in Clinton County.

| Winter recreation activity | Percentage |
|----------------------------|------------|
| Sled/toboggan | 32.7% |
| Ice skate | 18.8 |
| Cross country ski | 15.2 |

Most Important Activities

Residents were asked to list their first and second most important activity that they participated in, in the past 12 months. The two most important activities to residents was walking/hiking (22.5%) and paved road/trail bicycling (11.9%). The two second most important activities to residents were also walking/hiking (10.9%) and paved road/trail bicycling (8.2%) (Table 10).

Table 10. First and Second Most Important Activities.

| Most Important Activity | First Most Important | Second Most Important | Either First or Second Important |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| | Percentage | Percentage | Percentage |
| Walk/hike | 22.5% | 10.9% | 33.4% |
| Paved road/trail bicycle | 11.9 | 8.2 | 20.1 |
| Camp | 5.2 | 3.9 | 9.1 |
| Swim | 5.2 | 6.9 | 12.1 |
| Fish | 4.9 | 6.3 | 11.2 |
| Hunt | 4.9 | 3.6 | 8.5 |
| Playground activities | 4.6 | 5.9 | 10.5 |
| Nature observation/wildlife viewing | 4.6 | 5.3 | 9.9 |
| None | 4.0 | 4.3 | 8.3 |
| Water activities | 3.3 | 2.3 | 5.6 |
| Walk pet | 2.7 | 3.3 | 6.0 |
| Picnic | 2.4 | 2.3 | 4.7 |
| Trail activities | 2.4 | 3.3 | 5.7 |
| Golf | 2.1 | 2.3 | 4.4 |
| General activities | 1.5 | 2.3 | 3.8 |
| Attend outdoor fair/festival | 1.5 | 2.6 | 4.1 |
| Canoe/kayak | 1.5 | 2.6 | 4.1 |
| Horseback ride | 1.5 | 0.7 | 2.2 |
| Attend outdoor concert | 1.2 | 3.3 | 4.5 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|--------|-----|
| Scenic drive | 1.2 | 1.3 | 2.5 |
| Games and sports | 1.2 | - | 1.2 |
| Baseball/softball | 1.2 | 0.7 | 1.9 |
| Run/jog | 1.2 | 2.0 | 3.2 |
| Snowmobile | 0.9 | - | 0.9 |
| Special events | 0.9 | 2.3 | 3.2 |
| Mountain biking | 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.9 |
| Dog park | 0.6 | - | 0.6 |
| Power boat | 0.6 | 1.0 | 1.6 |
| Disc golf | 0.6 | 0.7 | 1.3 |
| Ice skate | 0.6 | 0.7 | 1.3 |
| Beach | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.6 |
| Family activities | 0.3 | - | 0.3 |
| Cross country ski | 0.3 | 1.6 | 1.9 |
| Sled/toboggan | 0.3 | 1.6 | 1.9 |
| Attend outdoor art/craft show | 0.3 | 1.3 | 1.6 |
| Soccer | 0.3 | 1.3 | 1.6 |
| Archery shoot | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.6 |
| Skeet/target shoot | 0.3 | 0.7 | 1.0 |
| Beach volleyball | - | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| Natural area preserve | - | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Nature trails | - | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Sport courts | - | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Sunbathe | - | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Winter activities | - | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Mushroom/berry picking | - | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Outdoor basketball | - | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Total | 100.0% | 100.0% | NA |

Attributes Preferred in a County Park System

Residents, when choosing a park or other recreational site for their household, rated cleanliness, safety and security and the presence of natural features such as trees and wildlife as the most important attributes (Table 11). The specific activities offered, the programs available and the price were less important. However, all of the attributes except programs had a majority of respondents rate them as extremely or highly important.

Table 11. Importance rating of selected attributes in choosing a park for Clinton County residents. ^(a)

| Attribute | Mean rating | Percent | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| | | Extremely important | Very important | Moderately important | Slightly important | Not important |
| Cleanliness | 4.5 | 64.6% | 28.8% | 4.5% | 0.5% | 1.6% |
| Safety and security | 4.4 | 61.9 | 23.0 | 11.9 | 1.1 | 2.1 |
| Wildlife/trees/nature | 4.1 | 35.7 | 44.7 | 15.6 | 1.9 | 2.1 |
| Friendly staff | 4.0 | 32.3 | 42.0 | 19.7 | 3.2 | 2.7 |
| Facilities (shelters, courts, etc.) | 3.9 | 26.8 | 42.2 | 24.1 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| Overall beauty of site | 3.9 | 23.5 | 50.3 | 22.5 | 1.3 | 2.4 |
| Price of admission | 3.8 | 30.1 | 30.3 | 29.8 | 6.4 | 3.5 |
| Not crowded | 3.8 | 26.4 | 36.1 | 30.7 | 4.0 | 2.7 |
| Activities available (swim, etc.) | 3.6 | 25.5 | 34.9 | 25.2 | 7.5 | 7.0 |
| Programs (nature ed., events, etc.) | 3.2 | 9.5 | 28.2 | 38.5 | 16.0 | 7.9 |

^(a) Rating scale: Extremely important = 5; Very important = 4; Moderately important = 3; Slightly important = 2; Not at all important = 1

Clinton County Directions

Residents were asked to rate their level of support for three (3) different directions Clinton County could take regarding land acquisition. The highest support was to acquire land for foot/bike trails with acquiring land for open space/green space conservation being the second highest. When the question was reversed to ask about support for not acquiring land for outdoor recreation, only 14% of respondents supported no acquisition of land for public outdoor recreation or open space (Table 12).

Table 12. Support rating for selected directions for Clinton County land acquisition. ^(a)

| Direction | Mean rating | Percent | | | | |
|--|-------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| | | Strongly support | Moderately support | Neither support nor oppose | Moderately oppose | Strongly oppose |
| Acquire land for foot/bike trails | 4.1 | 46.9% | 28.8% | 18.4% | 2.6% | 3.4% |
| Acquire land for open space/green space conservation | 4.0 | 38.3 | 32.3 | 23.2 | 2.6 | 3.6 |
| Acquire land for water based recreation | 3.8 | 32.0 | 31.5 | 26.6 | 4.7 | 5.2 |
| Do not acquire land for public outdoor recreation or open space conservation | 2.1 | 6.0 | 7.9 | 23.4 | 20.2 | 42.5 |

(a) Rating scale: Strongly support=5; Moderately support=4; Neither support nor oppose=3; Moderately oppose=2; Strongly oppose=1

Cooperation with Townships, Cities and Villages in the County

Residents were told that Clinton County Green Space Commission had partnered with some townships, villages and cities over the past five (5) years to develop or improve recreation opportunities, including providing technical assistance in planning and grant application preparation. Residents were then asked whether they thought that Clinton County should continue and expand this cooperation of which almost three fourths of residents (74.7%) thought that they should while nineteen percent (19%) were not sure and four percent (4%) did not think that this cooperation should continue.

Visitation of Clinton Counties Website

Residents were given the URL to the Clinton County website for Green Space/Park and Recreation and asked whether they had visited this site prior to receiving the questionnaire. Only four percent (3.6%) had visited the website. Of those respondents forty-seven percent (46.7%) thought that the website was “good” while thirty-three percent (33.3%) thought that it was “OK”. This suggests that the website needs greater visibility among County residents.

General Direction Options

Residents were highly supportive of park development options that provided access to local rivers, streams and lakes, and the development of non-motorized trails (Table 13). Eighty-four percent (84%) supported the development of additional non-motorized trails and 81% of additional access to local waters. There was very little opposition with only 5% opposing trail development and 3% opposing water access site development. Non-motorized transportation cooperation was supported by 58% of respondents, with 35% neutral and 8% in opposition.

Table 13. Rating of support for selected situations for development of a Clinton County park system. ^(a)

| Option | Mean rating | Percent | | | | |
|--|-------------|------------------|--------------------|---------|-------------------|-----------------|
| | | Strongly support | Moderately support | Neutral | Moderately oppose | Strongly oppose |
| Non-motorized trails (walk, bicycle, etc.) | 4.3 | 57.4% | 26.4% | 11.4% | 1.3% | 3.6% |
| Access to local rivers/streams/lakes | 4.3 | 49.0 | 32.3 | 15.9 | 1.0 | 1.8 |
| Non-motorized transportation cooperation with County Road Commission (road biking) | 3.8 | 28.6 | 29.1 | 34.6 | 3.4 | 4.2 |

^(a) Rating scale: Strongly oppose=1; Moderately oppose=2; Neutral=3; Moderately support=4; Strongly support= 5

Residents were then asked in an open-ended question what one most important additional direction they would suggest for Clinton County besides the options listed above. Ninety-one (91) residents responded to this question. The most common suggestion just reiterated more/better non-motorized trails (18.6%). The second most stated direction was for the County to build more facilities/parks in general (10.8%) (Table 14).

Table 14. Additional important directions for Clinton County to take.

| Direction | Percent |
|--|---------|
| More/better non-motorized trails | 18.6% |
| More facilities/parks | 10.8 |
| Better maintenance/cleaner | 8.4 |
| More activities/education | 7.8 |
| None/nothing/don't know | 7.8 |
| More water access | 7.2 |
| More conservation/protection | 4.8 |
| Water park/splash pad | 4.8 |
| Camping facilities | 4.2 |
| More/better motorized trails | 3.6 |
| More hunting areas | 3.0 |
| Acquire more land | 2.4 |
| Dogs parks/pet friendly facilities | 2.4 |
| Options in question eight are the most important | 1.8 |
| Better handicap access | 1.2 |
| Other (a) | 10.8 |
| Total | 100.0% |

(a) Includes: bathroom in the city park open when the park is open, not simply when there is a festival or fair going on; clean water for people to drink while hiking; close down all county activities in park, recreation and open space and disband any boards or commissions involved in this; do not spend tax dollars, grants, etc.; eliminate the thinking that we need designated bike lanes on rural/urban roads. Bicycles are covered under state law as vehicles. What we need is better training/enforcement of existing laws and regulations for bicyclists and drivers; finding ways for park development to be privately funded; I am all for this as long as monies are not taken away from more important opportunities; I don't like bikes on roads; It's too bad the railroad tracks are gone. Recreation and educational trips would have been great; Limit spending of short funds on recreation; Limited commercial development; Publication of any new/additions/changes/map; safety; saving money, excessive taxes; teach road etiquette; try to get more public input; west.

4-H Fairgrounds

One long-term county asset with recreational benefits is the 4-H Fairgrounds. Since the previous plan there have been significant renovations and improvements to the fairgrounds. However, many of these improvements have included infrastructure such as upgraded utilities that are not readily visible to the public. Residents were asked if they visited the fairgrounds in the past 12 months. Almost half (48.7%) reported that they had. Of those respondents that had visited the fairgrounds, seventy-eight percent (78.2%) rated the fairground changes as very good or good (rating scale: 1=very good; 2=good; 3=OK; 4=poor; 5=very poor). The mean rating was 1.9. Respondents were then asked in an open-ended question what the most important reason was for their rating. The two most commonly stated responses were the new buildings/facilities (15.6%) and the better access/layout/sidewalks (14.8%) (Table 15). Respondents who had visited the fairgrounds in the past 12 months were then asked an open-ended question about what one most important additional improvement that could be made at the 4-H fairgrounds. The most common response was more parking/better access (18.7%) (Table 16).

Table 15. Reasons for rating of changes at 4-H Fairgrounds.

| Reason | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| New buildings/facilities | 15.6% |
| Better access/layout/sidewalks | 14.8 |
| Appearance/attractiveness | 11.5 |
| Clean | 9.8 |
| Not aware of the changes | 9.0 |
| Programs/activities | 7.4 |
| Better parking/roads | 5.7 |
| Not clean | 3.3 |
| More green space | 3.3 |
| Doing a good job | 3.3 |
| Lack of parking | 2.5 |
| Changes were needed | 2.5 |
| Other (a) | 11.5 |
| Total | 100.0% |

- (a) Includes: 4-H member; children are our future; I attended girls baseball games at this site/not fair; important to family; kids (2); it was find the way it was; larger not better; more food options/more fans; need more publication of what's going on; our children and grandchildren come to attend with us; to get something I like in the area; we just moved to Michigan.

Table 16. One most important additional improvement to 4-H Fairgrounds.

| Improvement | Percentage |
|---|------------|
| More parking/better access | 18.7% |
| Don't know/nothing/not sure/keep up the good work | 18.7 |
| Renovate Smith Hall | 7.7 |
| Better/more bathrooms | 6.6 |
| More activities/programs/shows | 6.6 |
| Better bleachers/benches/tables | 5.5 |
| More/better shelter for animals | 5.5 |
| More space/land/buildings | 5.5 |
| Better maintenance | 4.4 |
| Camping facilities | 3.3 |
| Renovate Peck Hall | 2.2 |
| Water fountains | 2.2 |
| More non-motorized trails | 2.2 |
| Youth activities | 2.2 |
| New horse area | 1.1 |
| Other (a) | 7.7 |
| Total | 100.0% |

(a) Includes: as a school for nature; keep the road off Townsend Rd. to Sickles St. open during the day; leave it alone; lower prices; needs more shade (tree planting); space should have been bought centrally located so that all Clinton County area residents could use this for larger events such as Mint Festival, OX roast, car shows, etc.; things for the A/C in the food building.

Demographics of Respondents

The majority of respondents (59.5%) were female. Respondent ages ranged from 19 - 105, with the average being 51.7 years. Of the respondents, the largest age group was 45-55 (22.2%) (Table 17). Of the respondent households, 19.7% had one person 19 or over, 65.2% had two and 15.1% had from three to six. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the respondent households had children under 18, while 63% had no children in the home. Of those households with children, 35% had one child, 37% had two, 19% had three and 9% had four to six. Eight percent (7.7%) stated that there was in individual who lived in the house that had a disability

that impairs participation in major life functions such as work or recreation. These demographics closely parallel those found in the 2000 Census for Clinton County households.

Respondents often had considerable longevity in Clinton County. The average respondent had lived in Clinton County 29 years, with 30% residing 10 or fewer years, 13% residing 11-20 years, 15% residing 21-30 years and 42% residing 31-95 years. In terms of location in the county, DeWitt City/Township, Bath/Bath Township and the City of St. Johns accounted for 44% of the respondents. The rest were more widely distributed over the county (Table 18). When asked if they owned their own home, 93% responded affirmatively.

Table 17. Age.

| Age Group | Percentage |
|-----------|------------|
| 19 | 0.5% |
| 20-24 | 1.9 |
| 25-34 | 14.3 |
| 35-44 | 18.8 |
| 45-54 | 22.2 |
| 55-59 | 7.9 |
| 60-64 | 10.6 |
| 65-74 | 15.9 |
| 75-84 | 6.1 |
| 85 + | 1.9 |
| Total | 100.0% |

Table 18. City/Township/Village.

| City/Township/Village | Percentage |
|--------------------------|------------|
| DeWitt City/Township | 20.5% |
| Bath Township/Village | 12.3 |
| St. Johns City | 11.3 |
| Ovid Village/Township | 5.8 |
| Westphalia Village | 4.5 |
| Bingham Township | 4.2 |
| Greenbush Township | 3.9 |
| Victor Township | 3.9 |
| Fowler Village | 3.7 |
| Watertown Township | 3.4 |
| Duplain Township | 2.9 |
| Essex Township | 2.9 |
| Olive Township | 2.6 |
| Eagle Township | 2.6 |
| Elsie Village | 2.4 |
| Dallas Township | 2.1 |
| Riley Township | 1.8 |
| Bengal Township | 1.6 |
| Maple Rapids Village | 1.6 |
| East Lansing | 1.3 |
| City of Lansing/Township | 1.3 |
| Lebanon Township | 0.8 |
| Laingsburg Village | 0.8 |
| Wacousta Village | 0.5 |
| Grand Ledge | 0.5 |
| Eureka Village | 0.3 |
| Haslett | 0.3 |
| Hawks Nest | 0.3 |
| Hubbardston Village | - |
| Total | 100.0% |

Open-ended Comments

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were provided an opportunity for additional comments concerning parks, recreation and open space. Of the 391 respondents, 138 (35.3%) provided such comments. These comments are found in Appendix A.

Discussion

Most Clinton County residents are interested in parks, recreation and open space issues and are actively involved in outdoor recreation pursuits. They are supportive of the directions of acquiring and developing water based recreation and non-motorized trails. This approach focuses on nature based recreation opportunities, the conservation of open space and its values for environmental quality, wildlife and agriculture and the current recreational habits and interests of Clinton County residents. Many respondents noted that Clinton County is losing the rural, agricultural and natural resource attributes that make it a desirable place to live, work and raise a family. They believe now is the time to take steps to insure that open space and its values are a significant part of Clinton County's future and a key feature of this region's quality of life.

The next challenge is to effectively respond to the needs expressed by the range of residents through a comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan for the future that builds on the natural resource assets of the county, is fiscally sound and meets the needs of current and future residents. This will require continued interaction and dialogue with the broad range people and interests in Clinton County.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the Clinton County Board of Commissioners for their support and funding of project expenses. County Administrator Ryan Wood and his staff provided logistic support in selecting the sample, printing address labels and with some aspects of mail processing. Finally, special thanks to all residents who took time to respond to the survey and provide their thoughts and opinions. The GSC plans to share the results widely across the county in a number of public forums including those with local units of government, civic organizations and other public and private recreation providers in the County and region.

Appendix C: Non-Motorized Circulation Plan Committee Members & Meeting Dates

| Member | Service | Affiliation |
|------------------------|---------------------|---|
| Jean Husby | 10/24/05 - 11/20/08 | Board of Trustees and Planning Commission |
| John Lanese | 10/24/05 - 9/27/06 | Parks and Recreation Committee |
| Johnny Maahs | 10/24/05 - 12/31/08 | Board of Trustees and Planning Commission |
| Holly Madill | 10/24/05 - 12/31/08 | Planning Commission and Citizen Member |
| Nancy Noyola | 7/25/07 - 12/31/08 | Parks and Recreation Committee |
| Ronald Overton | 10/24/05 - 12/31/08 | Planning Commission |
| Andrea Zeeb Polverento | 9/27/06 - 12/31/08 | Staff |
| Gloria Strahan | 10/24/05 - 9/27/06 | Planning Commission and Citizen Member |
| Rich Trent | 10/24/05 - 9/27/06 | Staff |
| Ulrika Zay | 7/25/07 - 12/31/08 | Planning Commission |

| Schedule of Meetings | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Joint Meeting: November 1, 2005 | | |
| September 27, 2006 | | |
| July 25, 2007 | | |
| August 22, 2007 | | |
| September 26, 2007 | | |
| October 24, 2007 | | |
| January 30, 2008 | | |
| February 27, 2008 | | |
| March 26, 2008 | | |
| April 30, 2008 | | |
| May 21, 2008 | Joint Meeting with Board of Trustees and Planning | |
| January 28, 2009 | Commission: August 14, 2008 | |

Community comments on the draft of the Non-Motorized Circulation Plan were accepted from August 14, 2008, until November 30, 2008.

A copy of all comments received is available in the Planning and Zoning office and will remain in the permanent file.

Appendix D: Sidewalk Ordinances

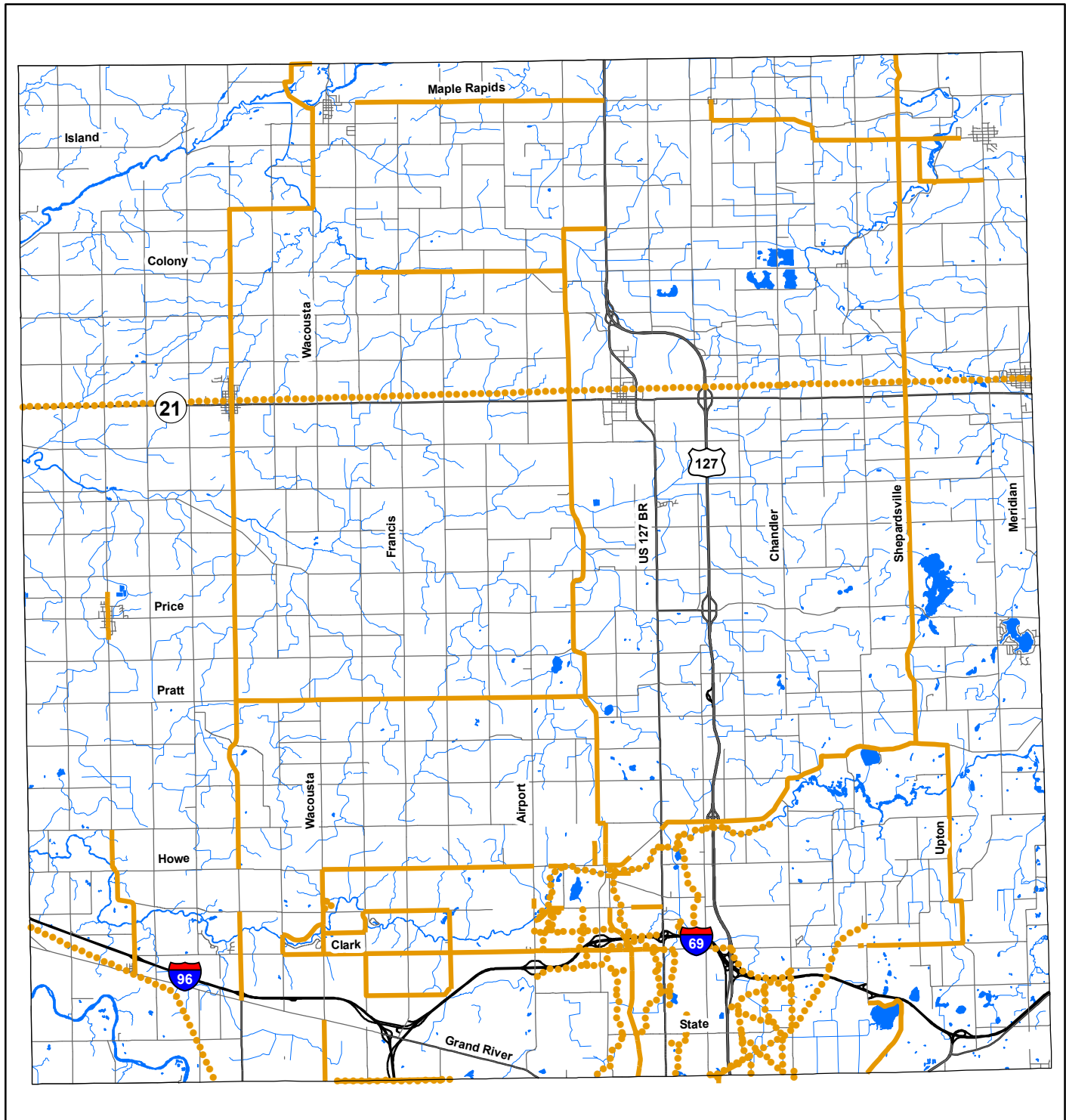
While sidewalks are referenced in many township ordinances, there is no single ordinance that ties them all together. A comprehensive sidewalk ordinance that takes into account the following will be an asset in negotiating non-motorized opportunities with future developers:

- A. Purpose of the sidewalk: To contribute to the health, safety and welfare of all residents of the community.
- B. Definitions: To eliminate confusion, and to spell out any specific construction requirements.
- C. Responsibilities for maintenance: To ensure that the sidewalks are properly and safely maintained by the proper entity.
- D. Ice, snow and/or obstruction removal: To ensure that the sidewalks are maintained free of hindrances that could contribute to injury.
- E. Specifications: To determine where sidewalks are required, the criteria for this requirement, and to provide an opportunity for appeal.
- F. Liability: To ensure that in case of injury, the matter will be handled expeditiously.
- G. Enforcement: To provide that the regulations of the ordinance are maintained as required.



Appendix E: Regional Non-Motorized Maps

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission Proposed Non-Motorized Routes for Clinton and Eaton Counties, Heart of Michigan Trail Maps follow. These published routes provide a great starting point for Watertown Township and others to plan for linkages and a great trail network in the future.

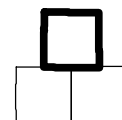
Clinton County Proposed Non-Motorized Routes



Legend

- Off Road Non-Motorized Facility
- On Road Non-Motorized Facility
-  Body of Water
-  Stream

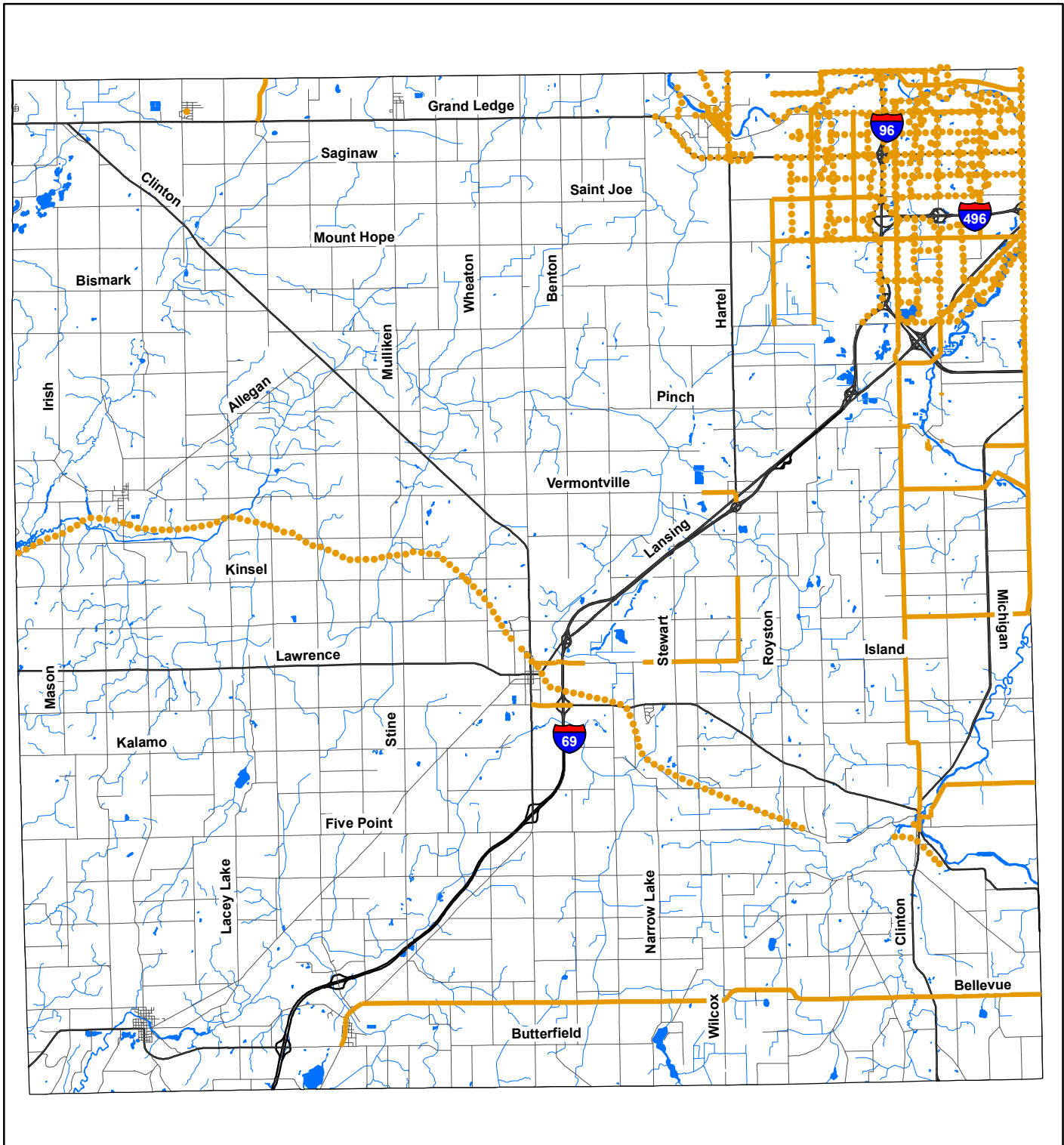
0 1 2 3
Miles





50 Years of Service
1956 - 2006
www.mtcrpc.org

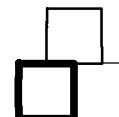
Eaton County Proposed Non-Motorized Routes



Legend

- Off Road Non-Motorized Facility
- On Road Non-Motorized Facility
- Body of Water
- Stream

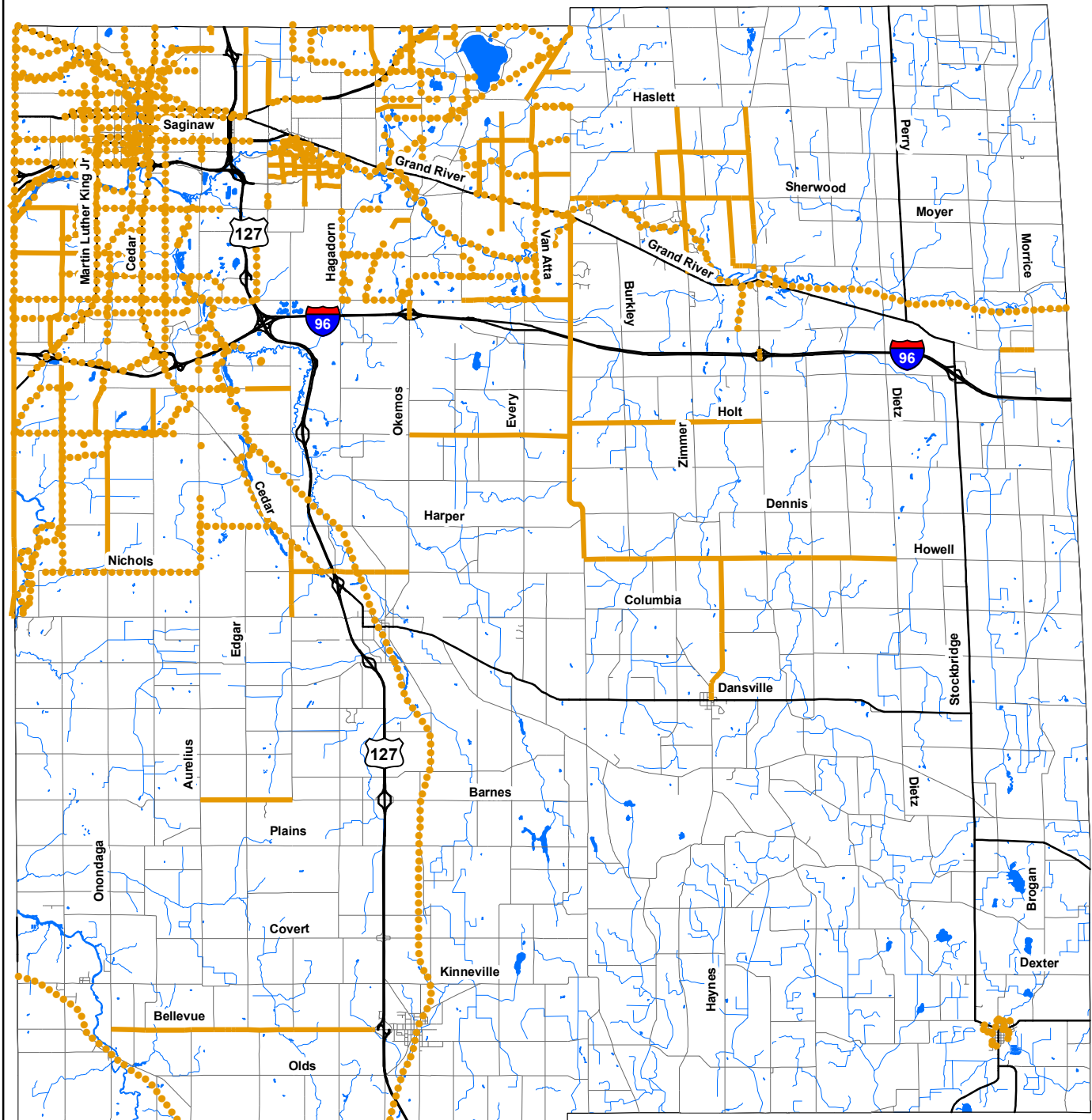
0 1 2 3
Miles





Source: Local Jurisdictions, July, 2005
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, 2008

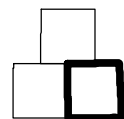
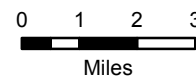
Produced By: Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
February 5, 2008

Ingham County Proposed Non-Motorized Routes



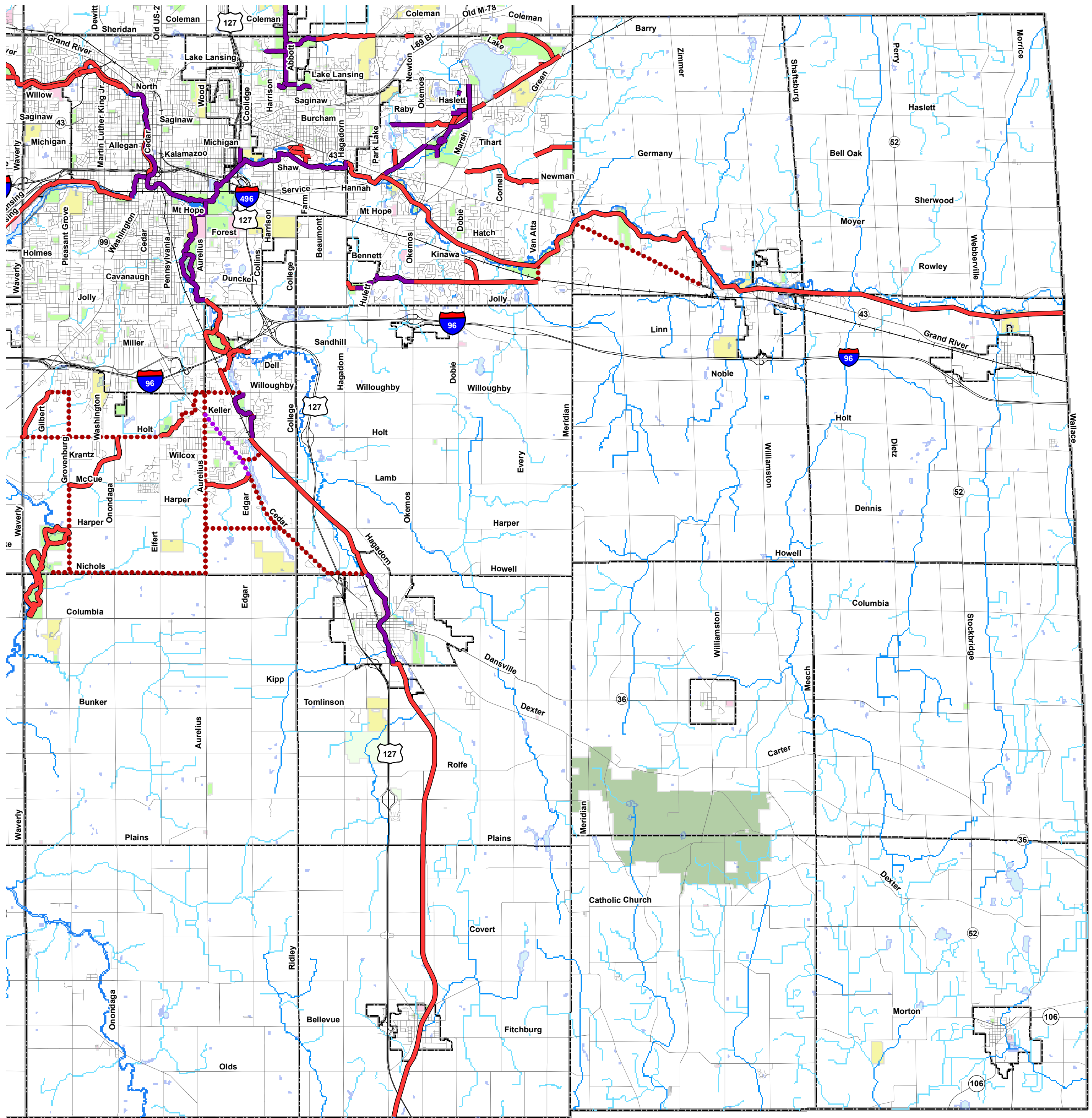
Legend

- Off Road Non-Motorized Facility
- On Road Non-Motorized Facility
-  Body of Water
-  Stream



**Heart of Michigan
Trails and Greenways Partnership**

Ingham County



- Existing Trail
- Existing Road Corridor Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Proposed Road Corridor Trail
- Community Boundary
- Local Park
- Private Park
- State Park
- Golf Course
- Cemetery



0 2.5 5
Miles