abundant natural beauty
rural & agricultural character
walkable community
alternative transportation
culture of collaboration
sustainable redevelopment
balanced housing
quality development

Park Township Master Plan — 2015
This Plan replaces in its entirety the existing comprehensive plan which was originally adopted in 1988 and updated several times through 2009 when the last update was approved. The Planning Enabling Act of the State of Michigan requires that all master plans be updated, readopted or replaced every 5 years. It was decided by the Park Township Board of Trustees to replace the existing comprehensive plan with a new master plan.

A steering committee called the “Committee of the Future” was established in April, 2010, to work with the consultants to bring forth key issues and assist in studies and surveys necessary to create a new planning document. The committee members were:

John Barwis
John Berry
Dan Bourbon
Amanda Brooks
Kris Manos
Amanda Price (Supervisor)
John Spoelhof
Doug Wassink
Dean Whittaker

The Park Township Planning Commission provided additional review and revision to this planning document and, along the Park Township Board of Trustees, adopted the final document on ____________ as provided by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

Township Board of Trustees
Gerald Hunsburger, Supervisor
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Jan Steggerda, Treasurer
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Linda Dykert
Diana Garlinghouse (through 2.17.15)
Denis Nestel (since 3.12.15)
Eric De Boer (since 3.12.15)
Nicki Arendshorst, Board Liaison

Master Plan Creative Team
Andrew E Bowman, Planning Consultant / Writer for 2015 Edition
Eva Sitek CPM, Graphic Design Redevelopment for 2015 Edition
Ed de Vries, Township Zoning Administrator / Staff Support
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Park Township Overview

Park Township is located in Ottawa County on the Lake Michigan shore and is within Holland’s metropolitan area. Consequently, it is influenced both economically and culturally by the city. While most of the 21.3 square mile township is north of Lake Macatawa a small portion is located on the south shore. It is physically separated by Lake Macatawa and the City of Holland from the rest of the township.

Park Township has diverse land uses that range along the lakeshore from areas dotted with parks, large estate homes, and historic resort communities to older, more modest homes and cabins perched atop high dunes. This setting helps shape the character of Park Township. Among its major parks are Ottawa County’s Tunnel Park, and Holland State Park, one of the most visited in the State Park system, which strongly influences the character of the north shore of Lake Macatawa. Big Red, the historic lighthouse on the south side of the Lake Macatawa Channel, has long been an iconic signature of the Township and the entire Holland lakeshore area.

Because of close proximity to Holland, Zeeland and the Grand Rapids metropolitan area, residents and businesses of Park Township benefit from widely available housing, shopping and employment opportunities throughout the region. Recreational and scenic amenities, nearby employment opportunities and strong reputable schools also draw people to the area.
About the Master Plan

Previous Planning Efforts

Park Township’s first Master Plan (called a “Comprehensive Plan”) was completed in 1972. A new plan was approved in 1988, titled “1988 Land Use and Circulation Plan.” A major update of this plan was completed in 1998 and was subsequently updated in 2004. The purpose of the 2004 update was to incorporate new data from the 2000 Census, but major changes to the recommendations of the 1998 version were not proposed. The 1998/2004 plan was based on a citizen survey conducted in 1997, but there were no new public participation initiatives as part of the 2004 update. The plan was reviewed again and reaffirmed in 2009.

The 1998/2004 plan stated that the essential purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is “To protect, encourage and retain the integrity of the rural residential character of the community.” To this end, it proposed a series of goals and objectives and a future land use plan to implement them. The Future Land Use Map adopted for that plan showed the area north of James Street, between Lakeshore Avenue and 168th Avenue as “Open Space Design Development.” This area was designated as “likely to experience increasing growth pressure.” The Plan also designates much of Sections 13, 14 and 15 as “Planned Residential Development.” This designation was intended to “encourage the flexible and innovative arrangement of residences within a development to preserve and enhance natural features and open lands without a sacrifice in residential quality or giving way to excessive density.” Because of the established growth patterns along Lakeshore Drive and James Street, these land development tools appeared to have been appropriate. However, due to the downturn in the economy, the expected residential growth has not materialized.
How this Plan was Created

To gain public input on community issues and opportunities, the draft vision and goals, and park and recreation priorities, seven public workshops were advertised to attract wide participation from the community and were held in several locations in the township. Approximately 275 people attended and in combination with facilitated town hall style discussions, participants provided input using comment cards, questionnaires and by placing comments on a series of analysis diagrams. They were also asked to prioritize and comment on the draft goals and objectives. This information was reviewed by the Committee for the Future to develop concepts for future land use, subareas and to refine goals and objectives. The public comments from each workshop are also summarized in the Appendix. The draft Master Plan, after review by the Committee for the Future, was then presented to the Planning Commission for review, adoption and final approval as provided in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.

What this Plan Entails

This Master Plan was created through a lengthy iterative process of review by the Committee for the Future, the Planning Commission, the Township Board and the citizens who provided their ideas for Park Township’s future. Chapters 2 and 3 describe basic data or findings about the township including a “Community Snapshot” which a detailed look into the demographic, economic and physical conditions of the Township, and the “Planning Framework”, which describes the public participation process and resulting vision and goals.

The plan itself begins at Chapter 4, entitled the “Community Agenda”, which presents the proposed future land use plan for the Township. This chapter includes subarea plans for each of the seven subareas and an overall Future Land Use Map to guide the Township in making land use decisions. This chapter also includes the Zoning Plan, which states how the land use designations of the Master Plan correspond to zoning districts on the Township Zoning Map.

Finally, Chapter 5, Implementation provides specific actions to implement the recommendations listed in the Community Agenda. This chapter also includes recommendations for keeping the plan current and useful for many years to come.
How to Use this Document

How the Master Plan affects you depends on your particular situation:

• If you are a property owner, you may have several interests, including not only your property, but properties that are similarly designated.

• As a homeowner, you may be interested in the properties in your immediate neighborhood and you may wish to know what uses are proposed for vacant land.

• As an owner of vacant property you may want to know what land uses are proposed for your property.

• As a resident you may be interested in the overall planning concepts, as expressed by the Goals. These statements should give you an indication of the Township Board’s and Planning Commission’s views of the township, now and in the future.

Use of the Master Plan depends on your interest in the future of Park Township. Generally, here is a procedure you should follow:

Step #1 Determine the land use designation for your property and the surrounding area.
This information is found on the Future Land Use map in Chapter 4 (page 49). This map is divided into separate land use categories. Find the land use category in which your property is located.

Step #2 Determine how the Township views development in your area.
The Community Agenda (Chapter 4) and map indicate the type of development planned for your area; it may be fairly specific, or somewhat general. This part of the Plan provides some reasonable direction to the Planning Commission, as well as information to property owners about development within the Township.
Step #3 Determine the meaning of the land use designation for your property.
In Step #1 you were asked to determine the land use designation for your property. Find the designation that applies to your property and read the description of that land use (see Chapter 4). Depending on the nature of your interest, this may be as far as you want to go. If you have a specific proposal that does not match the expectations of the Plan, you may want to look at it in more detail.

Step #4 Determine how your property is affected.
In Step #1 you were asked to determine the land use designation for your property. Find the designation that applies to your property and read the description of that land use (see Chapter 4). Depending on the nature of your interest, this may be as far as you want to go. If you have a specific proposal that does not match the expectations of the Plan, you may want to look at it in more detail.
The community snapshot is the foundation of the Master Plan. To know where to go, you first need to know where you have been and where you are. This chapter looks at some of the characteristics that make Park Township a special place, which can also be used to identify issues and trends that affect future land use.

Park Township has abundant natural features and spectacular scenic areas along Lake Michigan and Lake Macatawa. The northern part of the township is more rural and has an agricultural character with established neighborhoods of fine older homes and cottages and newer subdivisions further south. The community’s reputation, and that of its school districts, draws families to the area and with nearby Holland, Zeeland and Grand Rapids, there are abundant shopping and employment opportunities too. The township is only a few hours travel from large metropolitan areas such as Chicago, Detroit, and Indianapolis making it a draw for seasonal homes and tourists.
Natural Features

Shorelines and Dunes
Park Township is characterized by its shorelines and dune areas. The Lake Michigan shoreline contains three critical dune areas identified by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). The first is in the southerly portion of the township and includes Lake Michigan shoreline where it is adjacent to the Lake Macatawa shoreline. This dune area extends south into Laketown Township and has been developed with seasonal and year-round homes. Further north, a major dune begins in Holland State Park and continues north to encompass Tunnel Park. This dune area also includes an established residential area between the parks. The third dune area is on the lakeshore west of Lakeshore Avenue, roughly between Ransom and Quincy streets. It does not contain any major public lands and is mostly developed with homes.

Inland Waterways
Inland, Pine Creek flows into the township from Holland Charter Township and then proceeds south to Pine Creek Bay in Lake Macatawa. This corridor hosts a major riparian wetland area. Other wetlands are spread throughout the township, in low-lying areas. The Ottawa County drain system provides both natural and man-made drains that feed into Pine Creek or drain into Big Bay on Lake Macatawa. Small ponds are located in every section of the township, mostly serving as detention basins for development.

Landforms
Except for the dunes along the lakeshore, Park Township is relatively flat, especially to the east. The uplands in the northeastern part of the township includes sandy textured soils, and a high water table; the topography is relatively flat. These conditions are ideal for blueberry farming.

Land Cover
As previously noted, the southern third of the township is for the most part developed; however, there still remains significantly forested areas and open spaces. Park Township has preserved several as forest or nature preserves, as well as day-use parks. The Albert C. Keppel Forest Preserve and the Kuker-VanTil Nature Preserve, as well as parks such as Winstrom Park and Cooper-Van Wieren Park contain large stands of mature trees surrounded by residential development. Ottawa County has also preserved forest and dune lands near the Ottawa Beach cottage area and around the former South Ottawa Landfill (now Riley Trails County Park).
**Existing Land Use**

The map on page 13 shows existing land uses in the township. As a suburban and exurban community, there is no central business or shopping district; Holland’s downtown and its neighborhood commercial areas appropriately fill that role for the region. There are also no traditional industrial uses.

**Agriculture**

Farming is the dominant land use in the northeastern corner of the township, particularly in Sections 1, 2, 11 and 14. Most of the farms are nurseries and orchards, with blueberries as the dominant crop. Township residents have indicated a desire to preserve the agricultural and rural areas of the township.

**Residential**

Single family detached housing is the dominant residential land use.

There are isolated examples of multiple family residential in different parts of the township. One is located on the Lake Michigan shore, just north of Holland State Park. For the most part the market demand to provide multiple family housing on shorelines has not occurred, with few multiple family developments on either Lake Michigan or Lake Macatawa. The other multiple family developments are well inland, on Ottawa Beach Road, Lakewood Boulevard and near the east edge of the township off Butternut Drive. There is also one manufactured housing community, located just east of the West Ottawa High School campus.

**Commercial**

Park Township does not have a significant commercial area. Most commercial uses are located in its southern third of the township. Nearby commercial corridors along US 31 in Holland Charter Township, Butternut Drive, along with downtown Holland and its neighborhood centers, accommodate most of the retail and commercial needs of township residents.

Commercial uses in the south side of the township are located primarily along the lake on South Shore Drive. This includes resorts, restaurants, shipyards and other uses which serve resort communities, recreational tourists and adjacent neighborhoods.

The remaining commercial areas in the township are on Ottawa Beach Road. These include the Waukazoo Plaza and other commercial uses at the corner of Ottawa Beach Road and 152nd Avenue, and the resort oriented businesses further west toward the State Park, including marinas, restaurants and private campgrounds.

**Public and Quasi-Public**

Park Township has an abundance of natural and recreational areas. The township’s most popular destination is Holland State Park, one of the most visited parks in the State Park system with over 1.5 million visitors per year. There are two units: the beach area and a large campground. Between the two is park land owned by Ottawa County, which includes trails into the wooded dunes behind the beach, including a trail to the summit of the Mt. Pisgah dune.

Ottawa County also owns two other parks within the township. Riley Trails is a 300-acre park that includes the former Southwest Ottawa County Landfill. Although capped, it still presents an environmental issue, so trails snake around it, providing over seven miles of hiking, mountain biking and cross-country skiing trails. To the south on Lake Michigan is Tunnel Park, one of the oldest and most popular of Ottawa County parks. From the parking area, visitors enter the beach through a tunnel under the dune, or hike up a trail over the dune and walk down via a boardwalk and stair to the beach. There are also several road-end lake access areas on both Lake Michigan and Lake Macatawa.

Park Township also operates several hundred acres of parks. The largest are the 66-acre Cooper-Van Wieren Park and the 50-acre Winstrom Park. These parks provide sports fields, playgrounds and picnic areas to township residents. The Township provides both active and passive recreation, such as cross-country ski trails in the Albert C. Keppel Forest Preserve and a boardwalk along Pine Creek in the Stu Visser Trails Park. Park Township is justly proud of its extensive park system.

Other public/quasi-public land uses include multiple and large churches and several West Ottawa School District campuses. With over 2,300 students, West Ottawa High School is one of the largest in the area. The West Ottawa Public School District is regarded as one of the finest in the state and is a major draw and attraction for families looking for a great place to live.

continued...
Two other public/quasi-public uses stand out. The Ottawa County Fair has been held yearly at the Fair Grounds on Ottawa Beach Road since 1958. The fairgrounds, owned by Park Township and leased to the Ottawa County Fair Board, includes show barns and a grandstand overlooking a harness racing track. There are also campgrounds and picnic areas on the site. Opposite the fairgrounds on the north side of Ottawa Beach Road is the Park Township Airport. This general aviation airport is owned by the Township and operated by Ottawa Aviation. See the next section, Transportation, for more information.

The remaining public/quasi-public uses are churches, private schools and government facilities. The Township Hall is on 152nd Avenue, adjacent to the airport.

**Transportation**

The Transportation Map shows Park Township’s road network and non-motorized pathway system. The township is well connected to surrounding communities and regional destinations such as Holland State Park. East/west routes through the township provide access to US-31, connecting south to Holland and the southern lakeshore communities and north to Grand Haven and Muskegon. While Lake Macatawa may be a major amenity it is, however, an impediment to intra-township access. It separates Southside residents from the majority of the township to the north and makes reliance on the City of Holland street network necessary.

The Ottawa County Road Commission maintains jurisdiction over all public roads in the township though it routinely coordinates its projects with the township issues and needs. Other modes of transportation, such as private drives, multi-use paths and the airport, fall within the township’s jurisdiction but are often owned, constructed and operated by private agencies, associations or individuals.

**Functional Classification**

The township’s road network is comprised of four common types of roads; 1) County Primaries, 2) County Locals, 3) County Subdivisions, and 4) Private Drives. County primary roads are major thoroughfares intended to carry the largest volumes of traffic. County primaries include Ottawa Beach Road, Butternut Drive, Lakewood Boulevard, Lakeshore Drive (North and South), South Shore Drive and portions of West 32nd Street and 160th Avenue in the Southside area. County local roads connect subdivision and residential streets to these primary routes, while county subdivision roads are those within subdivisions dedicated to the public. Private roads are generally maintained by homeowner associations, individual property owners, or through other agreements.

**Traffic Conditions**

The Transportation Map (page 15) is based on mapped traffic counts from 2009 and shows that Ottawa Beach Road is the most heavily traveled road in the township. Unmapped data from 2013 shows even greater volumes on Ottawa Beach Rd. averaging over 15,000 daily trips. Next in volume is Lakewood Blvd which shows over 9,000 daily trips in 2013, followed by Butternut Dr. and James St, each of which are at nearly 6,000 daily trips. Other county primary and local roads in the township range from 1,500 to 6,000 average daily trips. Higher traffic volumes often lead to congestion and concerns about traffic and pedestrian safety. This is particularly true along Ottawa Beach Road, especially near Holland State Park in the summer.

High traffic volumes typically translate to a high number of traffic accidents. A recent study of Ottawa Beach Road showed that between 2011 and 2013, there were 122 traffic accidents (almost 20% of all accidents in the township). For the same period, traffic accidents in the other areas of the township primarily involved high traffic intersections (i.e. 152nd Ave. and Lakewood Blvd., Butternut Ave. and 148th Ave., 160th Ave. and Lakewood Blvd., etc.) and driveway turning movements.
Roadway improvements that include access management, opportunities for all modes of transportation, and context sensitive design can help mitigate congestion, provide increased pedestrian safety, and help reduce the potential for accidents. Recognizing the impact of land use on roadway conditions and traffic is important for making future land use and density decisions.

**Non-Motorized Transportation**
Park Township’s extensive network of non-motorized paths connects neighborhoods with key destinations and generally follow many of the major roadways (see Transportation map for locations). Bikes are currently accommodated on a mix of multi-use paths and on expanded and striped shoulders that effectively function as on-street bike lanes. Construction of new bike paths and maintenance is funded by a property tax. Presently, township staff are responsible for bike path maintenance.

While new pathways are currently not planned, a discussion of future extensions includes:

- Greenly between 152nd Avenue and 168th Avenue
- 160th Avenue between Ransom Street and James Street
- Old Orchard between South Shore Drive and 32nd Street

Non-motorized pathways that connect neighborhoods, schools, and parks add to the quality of life in Park Township. To facilitate their timely and cost-effective construction, future bike path extensions should be prioritized and included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

**Transit**
The Macatawa Area Express (MAX) is the public transit provider for the Holland/Zeeland region. The MAX serves the cities of Holland and Zeeland and Holland Township. MAX is funded by federal and state grants and a millage that applies to the City of Holland and Holland Township. Park Township is not served by public transit. Some township residents have expressed a desire to participate in the MAX and believe exploring public transportation options is prudent, considering the township’s aging population and the fact that most commercial and personal services are located outside its borders.

**Airport**
The Park Township Airport is a basic utility airport with facilities for recreational, environmental, emergency, and educational use. Established in 1934, the airport is one of the oldest continually operating airports in the State of Michigan. Park Township owns the airport and assigns all maintenance and operations to Ottawa Aviation Services, Inc.
Demographic and Social Characteristics

Data gathering is a beginning step when preparing a township master plan. Projected future growth over a range of population segments and land use types is a key indicator for understanding future demand for housing, businesses, services, and amenities. Future projections of growth should be based on projected population and aligned with planning for future land uses types and locations in the township.

The economic downturn in recent years has changed the economic landscape for all communities in Michigan. In turn, this has affected the current and projected demographics of many communities. The 2010 U.S. Census and population projections conducted in the first half of the 2010s indicates that Park Township is likely to recover some of its recent demographic trends. What follows is a thumbnail sketch of Park Township in 2010 and how it compares to Ottawa County and its neighbors. Data up to and including the 2010 Census are examined and how current estimates and projections differ from previous assumptions. In fact, the most recent Census estimates indicates that since 2010, Park Township has already exceeded 18,000 persons. This careful look at population growth, age, and other vital elements of the township’s people and its use of land provides a base for realizing a desired future.

Population traits of Park Township are changing in ways that are consistent with many other communities across the country, its population is aging. Similar to national trends and those of many of its neighbors, Park Township is also experiencing a decrease in household size. The following are a few highlights of the demographic changes experienced by Park Township.

- A 10.3% increase in population from 2010 to 2030 has been projected (17,802 to 19,638 persons). (Figure 1)
- The population aged 55 to 64 increased 65.1% between 2000 and 2010, while those aged 25 to 44 decreased 27.7%.
- The median income in the township increased just over 6% from 2000 to 2010.
Population

A projection of Park Township’s future population is helpful to determine whether current and planned land use patterns are appropriate, given a realistic assessment of the future. Since 1960, Park Township has experienced a relatively constant rate of growth; approximately 55% between 1960 and 1980 and 30% between 1980 and 2000 (see Figure 2). Population estimates completed in 2013 projected Park Township’s population to climb to 18,516 by the year 2020. Compared to census data for the year 2010, this is a 3% increase in the number of residents. In 2009, Ottawa County published revised population projections. Figure 2 lists estimates for the years 2001-2012 and projections for 2020 and 2030.

Overall, however, Ottawa County is expected to continue to grow through 2030 (and is projected to increase by almost 20%). This is in contrast to the 3% loss the State of Michigan saw between the 2000 and 2010 censuses. The majority of the county’s growth will occur in the townships, while most of the incorporated cities expect population figures to stabilize.

Census estimates for the years since 2000 predict only a 0.5% yearly population increase in Park Township and a 5.5% increase from 2000 to 2020. If 2020 projections are correct, Park Township will gain nearly 974 residents during this decade. Beyond that, projections for 2020 to 2030 indicate that about 5% growth will be experienced in Park Township.

The fall in the number of building permits (Figure 3) and home starts each year, coupled with the slow estimated rate of population increase between 2000 and 2012, indicates a slowing of community growth in that period. Signs of recovery can be seen, however, and while the change in the number of residents is an important factor in making land use decisions, an analysis of their specific characteristics adds the detail necessary to make better-informed decisions.
Age

Communities across the nation are getting older; life expectancy is increasing and households and families are getting smaller. These factors are also affecting Michigan communities. However, the state, as well as Park Township, is also experiencing a decrease in the number of young adult residents between the ages of 20 and 34 (see Figure 4). This is an interesting statistic.

As shown in the age distribution table (Figure 4) for the period 1990 to 2000, there is a significant change in the number of township residents ages 20 to 34 (10.1%). In 1990, this group of residents (ages 20 to 34) comprised 23% of the total population. In 2000, the same group made up only 16% of township residents, and by 2010, the cohort consisted of only 12%. Conversely, the number of residents in the age groups 55 to 64 has increased significantly (65.1%). This trend suggests that many township residents are leaving during young adulthood (ages 20 to 34), then they return, or others in that age bracket (ages 35 to 54) are moving to the township to start families and raise children or to retire. Once children have completed high school it appears that a significant number choose to move elsewhere. Further supporting this trend is an increase in median age from 32 years in 1990 to 35.4 years in 2000 and most recently rising to 42.1 years according to the most recent 2010 Census.
Household Characteristics

Nationally, the size of the average American household is decreasing, which is also the experience of Michigan and many communities neighboring Park Township (see Figure 6). The decline is due to a combination of several factors, including:

- An older population living alone or in smaller households.
- Declining birth rates (fewer children born per female in child-bearing years), and delays in family formation and child rearing, both of which are related to social and economic trends.
- Changing household and family structure (more single person or single parent households).

Park Township experienced a slight decrease in average household size from 2.92 in 1990 to 2.87 in 2000 and finally to an all-time low of 2.7 in 2010. This rate of change is similar to Holland and is now comparable with county figures.

Household size is relatively stable, though it decreased by 6% in the last decade. Despite this decline, household size in Park Township is still among the largest in Ottawa County (second to Holland Charter Township). On the other hand, the composition of those households shifted slightly (see Figure 7). The share of all households composed of married couples dropped by nearly 10% while the percentage of the number of single person and non-family households between 2000 and 2010 increased 40% and 18%, respectively.

Income

Between 2000 and 2010, the median household income for township residents increased by just 6%; a greater increase than most comparable communities (see Figure 8). While the median household income of the township, as a whole, increased only slightly, the number of households making $75,000 or more increased over 15% between 2000 and 2010, and those earning between $15,000 and $25,000 decreased 12%. Additional income information by age of householders can be seen in Figures 9 and 10 on the next page.
Housing

The type of housing in a community can greatly influence its population characteristics and demographic trends. It can also affect community character, particularly through residential densities, visual appearance and by the consumption of land. The mix of housing types, their age, and cost can also affect demand and determine who can afford to live there and who cannot.

As shown in Figure 11, just over 86% of all housing units in Park Township were occupied by permanent residents with very few vacant homes. However, vacancy rates did increase slightly between 2000 and 2010 (1.96% to 4.1%). According to the 2010 Census, 10% of housing units in the township were classified seasonal or recreational homes. Port Sheldon and Laketown Townships have similar rates of seasonal housing units due to their similar locations along the lake. This suggests that Park Township, while located in a resort environment, has a balance of seasonal and year-round residents similar to other Ottawa County communities.

In order to attract and retain younger residents, housing must be affordable; therefore, an important consideration is the price of owner-occupied homes. Figure 12 shows median values for single family, owner-occupied homes based on 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census data. Housing values increased at a similar rate to the State and greater than Ottawa County. The township has one of the highest median home values in the county.
Affordability

Affordability can be gauged by determining the percentage of gross monthly household income spent on housing costs (i.e. mortgage or rent). It is generally accepted that monthly housing costs should not exceed 30% of a household’s gross monthly income.

As shown in Figure 13, the total number of households spending 30% or more of their gross monthly income on housing rose 7% between 2000 and 2010 from 17% to 24%. The rate of homeowners spending 30% or more on housing costs is lower than other communities and the county (see Figure 14). While it appears the majority of township households live in homes that are affordable to them, housing is less affordable for households earning less than $50,000 annually. According to the 2010 Census, 53.1% of households making less than $50,000 per year spent 30% or more of their income for housing. While this figure is similar to comparable communities, it has risen from only 37% in 2000 and just 19% in 1990 (see Figures 13 and 14). Housing as a percentage of household income became even more expensive for households earning more than $50,000 with 12% of households in this bracket spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs (an increase of 8% from 2000).

Further examination of housing affordability highlights the difference between renter-and owner-occupied households. Owner-occupied housing may be becoming less affordable as a percentage of household income, particularly for households earning less than $50,000. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of owner-occupied households with housing costs exceeding 30% of their monthly income rose 7%, (see Figure 15). Households affected most by this increase are those earning less than $50,000 annually. In 2000, 39% of households earning $50,000 or less spent 30% or more of their income for housing. This figure jumped to 54% in 2010, more than half of Park Township residents making $50,000 or less. The increasing median home value shows further the increasing cost of housing compared to income. The median home value increased 29% between 2000 and 2010 from $158,000 to $204,100 (as shown in Figure 12). Regionally, home values rose to $165,100 for the Holland-Grand Haven metropolitan area in 2008.
While home ownership is the most common housing choice in Park Township, renting is an important option for many individuals and families. Just as affordable housing stock is important to attracting and retaining residents, affordable rental units are equally vital. Between 2000 and 2010, the total number of renting households spending 30% or more of their income on rent increased 8%, just like owner-occupied households (see Figure 16). Also similar to owner-occupied households, the number of renting households earning less than $50,000 and spending 30% of their income on rent rose slightly by 6%. Overall, the cost of renting in the township is higher than home ownership as a percentage of household income, but it may be becoming more affordable.

Even though the cost of homes has outpaced household incomes, the township may not necessarily have an affordable housing issue. Between 1997 and 2005, home values rose exponentially across the country. Many homeowners took advantage of increased home values by selling their homes and moving up to larger, more expensive houses. Homeowners who did not “move up” often borrowed against the increased equity in their homes for personal consumption, home improvements, or to pay down credit card debt. When the housing bubble burst in 2008 and unemployment began to rise sharply, many homeowners found themselves with an unmanageable debt burden. This is evident in Figure 17 by the rising number of foreclosures in Ottawa County. While annual foreclosures declined for most of Ottawa County, Park Township saw a 54% increase between 2008 and 2009, and 416 foreclosures since 2004. However, foreclosures have waned in recent years as a promising sign of economic recovery and stability.

While the future of the housing market is uncertain, home values and housing expenses as a percentage of income should stabilize. Having affordable owner- and renter-occupied housing choices is critical for an aging population as smaller families and couples seek homes that fit new and changing lifestyles.
Employment

Figures 18–20 show employment trends in the Holland/Grand Haven metro area. These data show Park Township is primarily a bedroom community. In 2011, 92.8% of township residents, age 16 and older, worked somewhere other than Park Township. Most worked elsewhere in Ottawa County (76.5%) and nearly all, (97.8%) worked within the Grand Rapids-Holland-Muskegon metropolitan area. Of the approximately 883 jobs located in Park Township, less than 25% are filled by township residents.

As expected, most township residents working in Ottawa County are employed in Holland or Holland Charter Township. In 2000, the largest employment sector was manufacturing, which employed 35.7% of township residents, followed by education, health, and social services (19.9%), and retail trade (10.5%). By 2010, the manufacturing sector only employed 22.2% of Park Township residents as education, health, and social services supplanted manufacturing as the primary employment sector in the township (25.7%). Township residents hold various occupations within these employment sectors, but most workers (42.1%) hold management or professional occupations. Fifteen percent of the population holds sales and office positions followed by 4.4% working in production and transportation related fields.

Conclusion

In spite of the recent economic downturn, Park Township remains a desirable place to live, work, raise a family and recreate. The many great assets of the township — lakes Michigan and Macatawa, its location within and near population and employment areas, the many fine parks and excellent schools — have helped to keep Park Township a stable vibrant community.
Public Involvement

Based on initial stakeholder interviews, facilitated discussions with the Committee for the Future, Planning Commission, Township Board and general public attending those meetings, key community issues and opportunities were identified and then translated into township goals and an overall vision statement describing its aspirations. In addition, a series of diagrams were prepared to illustrate the natural and manmade elements that help define the character of the township and its subareas, and that require either protection or enhancement. This information was discussed in a series of public workshops.

The vision statement was refined and the goals prioritized to reflect the public’s perspective. These elements provide structure for the Master Plan and can also help guide the community when making decisions about Park Township’s future. The vision statement and goals, and the future land use policies based upon them, are dynamic and subject to change; therefore, regular review by the Planning Commission ensures they remain current and valid, reflecting changing trends and circumstances.
Stakeholder Interviews

The public involvement process identified individuals and groups, each with a stake in the community’s future, to interview. These stakeholders were interviewed by the consultants to better understand Park Township’s strengths, as well as the issues affecting the use of land and their impact on everyday life. The results of all meeting and stakeholder discussions were compiled and categorized by the resulting topic headings.

Following is an example summary of some of the community values, issues and opportunities:

Quality of Life/Community Character
- Key Township strengths are its long history of being a desirable bedroom community and its natural beauty
- Look at the character of specific areas of the township — honor those features
- Our tourists and visitors are important — grow visitors and create a “visitor’s realm” focusing on Lakes Macatawa and Michigan

Land Use/Development
- The tough conflicts are about growth v.s. no growth
- There should really be no more new development in the Township — instead, fill what already exists
- Need a Town Center in the Township — a place to go to eat, for dry cleaning; it could have residential, but it must be a more walkable environment

Transportation/Transit/Parking
- State Park — parking is a problem, cars park all along Ottawa Beach Road creating congestion and a dangerous situation for pedestrians, bikers and drivers
- Look at the design of Ottawa Beach Road — it narrows from four to two lanes at 160th Avenue — does it have to be four lanes to the east?
- Provide connectivity

Planning/Development Policies and Regulations
- Park Township has a history of being anti-development — its codes and regulations are too restrictive
- The development process needs to be predictable and result in good design
- Define community principles

Economy/Economic Policies
- Key threats to Park Township’s sustainability are the poor economy and declining funding sources
- Look to help residents with the reality of the new economy by changing rules and regulations
- Maintain property values in the Township

Regionalism/Cooperation
- Intergovernmental coordination is an issue — need better communication between the state, county and local municipalities
- Get people to participate and build a sense of community

Government Services
- Need to address storm water quality — Township needs to be more proactive
- The Township should be a good steward of the environment
- Infrastructure — where do water/sewer/drains fit into the Master Plan?

A full summary of the stakeholder interviews can be found in the Appendix.
Public Workshops

In advance of the planning process, the Township and the Committee for the Future identified seven subareas that were defined by their distinct character, geography or land uses. The subareas were also deemed to require special attention during the master planning process. They are briefly described in this chapter and are shown on page 29. The subareas were then assessed based on attributes like their physical setting, road network, natural and man-made features and development character. All of this information was then shared with the public in a series of seven meetings, held in the summer of 2010 at different locations around the township.

Approximately 275 people took part in these meetings, which also afforded an opportunity to provide input on the Township Parks and Recreation Plan, developed concurrent with the Master Plan. Those attending participated in facilitated town hall style discussions, where ideas and concerns to consider while developing the plan were identified. Comment cards, a questionnaire, voting boxes and maps were also employed to secure additional input. This offered an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft goals and vision statement and park and recreation priorities (the prioritized goals are described in detail in the next section).

Participants in the process provided useful input. Several major issues or themes became evident, and were often repeated from workshop to workshop, including:

- Protect the Lake Michigan shoreline
- Preserve the character of tree-lined streets, like Lakeshore Avenue
- Preserve the agricultural and rural character of the township
- Preserve and enhance the historic cottage neighborhoods
- Ensure public access to Lake Macatawa
- Address access, parking, and congestion concerns along Ottawa Beach Road
- Better utilize the airport and the fairgrounds
- Promote and protect low density development in the Southside
- Plan for commercial development at Ottawa Beach Road and 152nd Avenue that fits community character
- Enhance public access to the “Big Red” lighthouse
- Do not accommodate additional commercial development west of 168th Avenue
- Construct a multi-use path along Greenly Road
- Protect Lake Macatawa water quality

Based on the public input, the refined vision and prioritized community goals formed the basis for specific sub area land use concepts, which are explored in detail in Chapter 4. In addition, several informational meetings were held by the Planning Commission in the fall of 2013 by sub areas to clarify issues and review concerns. The input gained from both sets of public involvement meetings established the foundation for the future land use plan outlined in the next chapter.
Subarea Analysis

In anticipation of the public workshops, the subareas were inventoried and analyzed. Maps included an inventory of key land uses, natural and man-made elements and character photographs. These graphics were used at the public workshops to stimulate discussion and focus issues to specific locations in the township. This input helped create the later development of land use and design concepts. Though the subarea names and locations shown in the map to the right underwent minor modifications for names and locations, the subarea plans described in Chapter 4 display the outcomes of this process.
Southside

The Southside subarea (Figure 21) is that portion of Park Township located on the south shore of Lake Macatawa. It is a study in contrasts — from small inland neighborhoods and large homes on the Lake Macatawa shore to the historic resort cottages in Macatawa Park.

The subarea is characterized by lakefront cottages, seasonal cottages, seasonal homes (large and small), large lakefront residences, and resort and water-oriented businesses. A small commercial and service corridor on 160th Avenue exists with older resort-community neighborhoods including small houses and large trees that add an almost rural feel. The most-recognized symbol of the township, the Big Red lighthouse, can be found at the end of the channel across from the Holland State Park.

This subarea shares several assets and challenges. One challenge is that it is located so far from the township hall, across the lake. South Shore Drive is one of only two major east-west roads. At the eastern boundary of the township, South Shore is a two-lane road without curbs, flanked by trees and homes. As it travels west, South Shore and its bike path become less well-defined; the green spaces transition into marina and yacht club and restaurant parking areas. West 32nd Street is the southernmost boundary of the township; indeed it is the boundary of Ottawa County and Allegan County.

A small neighborhood commercial district is located on 160th Ave. It includes a restaurant and a party store. Nearby is Virginia Park which is a well-used park and provides a ball field for the neighborhood. The Maatman Center, which can be rented for functions, is located on this property.

While continued access to Big Red was identified as a desired goal in the public workshops, currently the only way for visitors to get there is by way of a private walk hugging the channel from Lake Macatawa to Lake Michigan. Public parking is very limited. In addition, part of the walkway traverses private property and must be accessed through a security gate. Thus any options to increase public access to the lighthouse will remain a challenge. The lighthouse can also be viewed from the north side of the channel.

Southside property owners and workshop participants also expressed a desire to control and limit additional development or redevelopment in this area. While much of the southside area has residential densities typical for mid-20th century suburban neighborhoods, (approximately 3 units per acre), Macatawa Park itself has an older, more varied pattern of development, parts of which include remote parking, no sidewalks, and small lots. Additionally, there are certain sections that are much denser than three units per acre and are inconsistently served by city water. Even though a fire station shared with Holland City exists at 160th Ave, fire protection is an important consideration in Macatawa Park; for the number of homes and because of limited ingress/egress and linked water supply.
Figure 21 - Southside

This map does not represent an exact boundary outlining a planning subarea. See the Subarea Analysis map on page 29 for full extent of subareas.
North Beach

The North Beach subarea (Figure 22) is one of the most active areas in the township. Several businesses, including marinas and restaurants, are based here. The Ottawa Beach Road corridor boasts many historic homes and cottages, with the West Michigan Park Association (on State and National Register of Historic Places) and the historic Ottawa Beach pump house (planned for a local history museum) both located near the west end of the corridor.

North Beach faces unique challenges which includes respecting the character of existing developed areas and calming traffic associated with Ottawa Beach Road. With Holland State Park as a major destination, Ottawa Beach Road carries a significant amount of traffic during the short summer season. Visitors staying in nearby campgrounds add to the car and pedestrian traffic. A DNR boat launch further east poses additional parking, pedestrian and traffic challenges. Nearly all of this activity influences the quality of life experienced by current residents and great care should be exercised in balancing needs of both visitors and residents.

While the subarea has some long established commercial icons, residents of the area have expressed a desire to maintain residential character and to limit commercial development west of 168th Street. As existing commercial uses are redeveloped or upgraded, their architectural design should reflect the residential and resort character of the area.

A recent study of Ottawa Beach Road (September 30, 2014 prepared by FTC&H) includes a thorough analysis of many of these issues and provides a series of significant findings for future roadway planning.
Figure 22 - North Beach

This map does not represent an exact boundary outlining a planning subarea. See the Subarea Analysis map on page 29 for full extent of subareas.
Bayviews

This unique and heavily wooded neighborhood (Figure 23) lies between the two large bays on the north shore of Lake Macatawa, between Big Bay and Pine Creek Bay.

The homes in Waukazoo Woods are varied in style. The houses are located on winding roads, surrounded by a canopy of mature trees.

There are several road ends in the Bayviews subarea. The most developed road end is the Ashwood Preserve, on the Big Bay shore. Overall public sentiment suggests that all road end public properties are considered important assets which should be preserved. Besides the road-ends, the public space includes the small Chief Waukazoo Park. On the north side of Waukazoo Drive on the Big Bay side of the neighborhood, several vacant wooded lots exist.

Residents have expressed a desire to maintain road ends without development since significantly expanded use of these areas could be detrimental to the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods. However, this perspective must be balanced with the public interest by ensuring that reasonable and orderly access to Lake Macatawa is maintained through existing public easements.
Figure 23 - Bayviews

This map does not represent an exact boundary outlining a planning subarea. See the Subarea Analysis map on page 29 for full extent of subareas.
Lakeshore

This subarea includes the entire expanse of the Lake Michigan shore north of Holland State Park, including land on both sides of North Lakeshore Avenue. This north-south corridor (Figures 24 and 25) is characterized by a spectacular canopy of trees on either side of the road. Large homes and cottages border the lake side of the street, while newer residential developments are becoming visible on the east side of Lakeshore. Tunnel Park, one of the oldest and most popular Ottawa County Parks, is located in the Lakeshore subarea, as is Camp Geneva, an historic summer camp and retreat center.

North Lakeshore Drive is noted for its landmark trees, helping to define Park Township and drawing motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians to enjoy the experience. Over time, Park Township, its residents and the Ottawa County Road Commission will have to agree on how to best maintain and preserve the rural esthetics of this road.

The Lakeshore area has been developed, and redeveloped, over the decades, but the long narrow lots originally laid out to provide Lake Michigan access for small cottages have for the most part remained the same. An ever increasing number of smaller cottages in this area are being converted into larger homes with wider footprints and greater floor areas on several stories. New accessory structures are also continually being requested. This has led to unusual mix of seasonal and year-round residential properties with the need for very careful review of ongoing proposals for new or expanded dwellings.
These maps do not represent an exact boundary outlining a planning subarea. See the Subarea Analysis map on page 29 for full extent of subareas.
**Park Central**

The Park Central subarea (Figure 26) is not the first point of entry into the township from Holland to the east, but this area does provide a sense of “arrival” for visitors heading to the lakeshore, despite its undramatic appearance. Park Township Hall, the Ottawa County Fairgrounds, and the Park Township Airport (both airport and fairgrounds are owned by the township) lend an air of activity. A skate park and a dog park in the fairgrounds add to the interest. A small and thriving commercial area, Waukazoo Plaza, sits on the corner east and south of this important corner. This subarea also contains several neighborhoods, along with largely undeveloped Cooper-Van Wieren Park to the north.

In a recent study of this subarea, a committee of township officials, residents and area stakeholders met several times with consultants M.C. Smith & Associates, culminating in a public open house with the plans on view. Interest was shown in upgrading the appearance and safety of this area and adding new businesses to the commercial area. The plan proposes a new community focal point along Ottawa Beach road between 152nd and 168th Streets. The clustered retail shopping area on the north would be integrated with community use and recreation areas on the south side. A round-about style intersection would serve as both a visual cue of arrival and allow for efficient shunting of traffic to shopping, recreation or driving through to the remainder of the Township and Holland State Park. These plans are detailed in a separate document entitled “Park Central Subarea Master Plan” and are available for inspection at the Park Township offices.

*Figure 26 - Park Central*
**Perry Reserve**

This subarea (Figure 27) is primarily residential in nature, with most homes built in the last thirty years, along with an elementary school and township fire station. And yet, the Perry Reserve serves as an example of successful land conservation in the midst of this residential development. The Albert C. Keppel Forest Preserve and Winstrom Park are both township parks that include relatively large open spaces with active and passive recreational opportunities. The Kuker-Van Til Nature Preserve is owned by the Land Conservancy of West Michigan, and includes trails through both old and new hardwood forests. A significant wetland corridor, including a large wetland near the northeast corner of the subarea, winds through its middle. It has been noted that the wetland and utility corridors provide an opportunity to connect the parks and the natural areas with the existing roadside paths.
Uplands

Uplands, (Figure 28), is the largest subarea, encompassing most of the north half of the township. Three main land uses predominate: prime agricultural (much of which is devoted to blueberry farms), residential (a large variety of homes, including a manufactured housing development, multi-family complexes, and high-end subdivisions), and public/quasi-public uses (including schools). The rest of this subarea consists of unused agricultural fields, woodlots, parks, trails, and vacant or open lands.

Township residents have stated that they value maintaining the existing open landscape of mixed rural and agricultural use. However, the agricultural use of land in growing areas like Park Township may be difficult to maintain due to the demand for competing, incompatible land uses. Interest in extending recreation, community services or infrastructure in this area should be balanced with the needs of the agriculture community to continue farming without interference from non-agricultural neighbors.

Since this subarea is made up of such varied use types, natural features and landforms, the years ahead are of great concern to citizens and township officials. Included among these concerns are: 1) the division and development of unproductive agricultural properties, 2) potential for land use conflict between agricultural and residential activities, 3) the use of open natural areas for both passive and active recreation, and 4) the impacts of larger township-wide or regional public works projects such as storm water drainage systems or highways. It is recommended that a more detailed sub area analysis be conducted for this sub area to ensure that conflicting uses are well integrated and fit both the interests of local residents and the overall needs of the township to provide critical public services.
Figure 28 - Uplands

This map does not represent an exact boundary outlining a planning subarea. See the Subarea Analysis map on page 29 for full extent of subareas.
Issues Analysis

As an outcome of the public workshops and discussions with the Committee for the Future, township issues and opportunities were depicted on Figure 29. While most have been described in the previous Subarea Analysis a few influence the township more widely, outside the subareas.

Also shown are the general sewer and water service area boundaries. Utility services are generally provided south of James Street, but also north of James between 168th Avenue and Lake Michigan, south of Quincy Street. Service boundaries further hug the township’s east border to accommodate the area east of 152nd Avenue, north along Butternut Drive to the north border. This takes in the existing subdivision between Butternut and 160th Avenue. While the predominantly agricultural and rural lands north of James Street between 168th and 152nd are not in the service area, it is possible to provide sanitary sewer service to most of the areas on both sides of 160th Avenue, north to Quincy Street.

The ability to provide utilities impacts the development potential of vacant lands. While properties located east of Butternut Drive are in the service area, they are mostly agricultural in character. As water and sewer system extensions are contemplated, the township must recognize the potential conflicts between development pressure to encroach into this area and the goal of agricultural and rural preservation. As that goal has been expressed as a key priority the extension of utility services, especially into the northern part of the township, must be considered very carefully.

Residents also expressed a desire to extend the Stu Visser Trail along the Pine Creek corridor. Since there are vacant and open space lands along the creek north of the existing trail terminus, opportunities to extend the trail system should be considered through the township Parks and Recreation Plan, an updated version of which is available at the township offices or through the township’s website.
Figure 29 - Issues Analysis Map
A Vision for Park Township

As a result of the public participation and the issues identified, it becomes possible to outline a vision for the township. A vision is a statement that describes how the community sees its future unfolding and reflects its aspirations. Communities that address their land use challenges successfully have developed a clear sense of the past and present, as well as where they want the community to go in the future. Having a vision can motivate decision makers and residents by providing a clear sense of direction. However, it is important to recognize that the vision represents an ideal; it may not be attained in its entirety, but it can and should motivate and guide community actions. Moreover, the vision is not set in stone; it must be regularly assessed to account for change. Therefore, the vision is the starting point for the goals and strategies that follow. These, in turn, are the basis of the future land use plan. The following vision reflects the desires of the community as expressed through the public participation process:

Goals

The vision inspires particular goals that can be implemented through the Future Land Use Plan. A goal is a general statement of a desired outcome. To be effective, a goal must be realistic and achievable. The goals take the broad statements of the vision and focus them into specific outcomes, enabling us to paint a picture of the future as the residents of Park Township would like to see it. The goals below are listed in order of priority, based on input from the public workshops, and each is followed by a brief description.

Vision Statement

In 2030, Park Township will be...

...a sustainable community with a strong identity, known throughout the region for its high standard of quality, varied housing options and richness of natural assets.

Its residents and visitors alike will enjoy access to abundant water resources, wide ranging recreational opportunities and rural open spaces via an interconnected system of walks, paths and trails.
Goal 1:
Protect the township’s distinctive environmental character

Park Township is uniquely positioned amidst numerous, highly desirable, ecologically significant features of the West Michigan environment. Together, these features help define the character of the community. People are drawn to the lakeshore and dunes. They value the scenic views, access to water, open spaces and rural vistas. These outstanding environmental assets must be respected and properly maintained so that future generations may also enjoy them.

Goal 2:
Retain the township’s rural and agricultural character

While certain parts of the township are more intensely developed, the areas that are dedicated to agricultural are also highly valued aspects of the community and region. The combination of farming and associated rural character are together a part of Park Township’s heritage. Viable agriculture should be promoted and open spaces and natural features should be protected.

Goal 3:
Transform the township into a fully walkable and bike-friendly community

Park Township has more than 50 miles of bicycle and pedestrian trails. Momentum to connect neighborhoods and key destinations across the township with a non-motorized system of trails should continue.

Goal 4:
Expand and improve the use/appearance of the airport and fairgrounds

These two public uses, across the road from one another, have long been identified with Park Township. They provide valuable services to residents and the area as a whole.

Goal 5:
Improve the public’s visual and physical access to waterfronts

Park Township is in close proximity to Lake Macatawa and Lake Michigan. Its extensive shorelines are vital to the community’s future. Public access should be preserved where appropriate for non-lakefront residents while balancing the character and nature of the neighborhood.
Goal 6: Define and create an identity that distinguishes Park Township as a distinct community

Park Township’s 21.3 square miles have unique characteristics that set it apart from other communities in the region. It serves as a gateway to Lake Michigan, offers varied living environments and provides an idyllic setting for residents and visitors alike.

Goal 7: Promote alternative modes of transportation, such as transit, to link Park Township with the surrounding region

Park Township does not have an established transit system, unlike the City of Holland. The community may benefit from bus service to reduce seasonal traffic loads on Ottawa Beach Road, and potential access to shopping, employment, and cultural destinations outside the township. In addition, such a service could ferry non-driving residents, employees, or visitors to the Holland State Park from surrounding communities, as was done historically.

Goal 8: Focus commercial development within appropriate locations in the township

Park Township residents often indicate they do not want significant additional commercial development. It is generally held that nearby stores and centers outside of the township can provide adequate shopping and commercial opportunities. Future commercial use areas should only be considered as new development warrants it and only at an appropriate scale to adequately serve local neighborhoods. All commercial areas in the township should be designed in a manner that enhances the quality and character of the township and surrounding neighborhoods.

Goal 9: Define the township’s role in the context of surrounding communities and nurture a culture of collaboration

Environmental issues such as water quality, air quality and climate change do not recognize township boundaries; roads bring in traffic from afar and citizens from other communities can use services and assets. Therefore, it is important to work collaboratively with neighboring municipalities. The Macatawa Area Coordinating Council and Project Clarity are examples of this goal.
**Goal 10:**
Promote infill/redevelopment where infrastructure already exists

To help create a sustainable community, development should capitalize on the existing network of streets, utilities and services. Unplanned development in greenfield areas promotes sprawl and invites costly impacts on existing infrastructure, natural systems and open spaces. Appropriate design guidelines should be adopted to ensure that any new development maintains and enhances the character of Park Township.

**Goal 11:**
Promote balanced housing opportunities

Residents expressed strong desires to preserve and protect historic resort areas of the township. Residents also considered opportunities for housing of various types at different levels of affordability. The housing needs of an older population will become important too. The character of lower density existing development needs to be balanced with adequate opportunities for housing.
The Community Agenda describes a path for current and future land uses in Park Township. This Agenda includes the following:

- A Future Land Use map
- Descriptions of the land use designations shown on the map
- Subarea plans and specific plan elements

Recommendations for implementing the Community Agenda are outlined in Chapter 5.

Future Land Use Designations

Figure 30 shows how land should be developed, preserved or enhanced today and within the next 20 years or longer. The legend identifies the various land use designations, which are described below.

**AG: Agriculture**

The primary purpose of this land use classification is to preserve agricultural lands. The majority of citizens believed it was important to protect and preserve active agricultural lands. This was also a goal expressed in the Ottawa County Development Plan. With the County Plan, active farmlands are a preservation goal and area identified as being threatened by continued development throughout the County.

One problem or challenge related to preserving farmland is the demand for rural home sites in areas which are currently being farmed. Serious conflicts can arise between agricultural practices and non-farm residential uses.

To accommodate this increasing demand within the township, the Planning Commission will need to develop regulations which preserve active farmland but also permit only single-family, planned or clustered non-farm dwellings on unproductive parcels of land, such as wood lots or sand hills, as a special land use. The use of this technique will reduce the number of curb cuts on county roads and maximize their efficiency to move traffic. This technique must also include effective buffer areas between non-farm residences and active farming operations to minimize the impacts of standard farm operations. Another technique should include the clustering of non-farm housing in areas that are not agriculturally productive or likely to create conflict. Clustering should also be designed to limit impacts on natural features and wildlife in the area.
Figure 30 - Future Land Use Map

Data Source: Ottawa County GIS, Michigan Center for Geographic Information
**RER: Rural Estate Residential**

This classification is intended to provide for residential dwellings and uses on large lots with an overall density of one unit per two developable acres. Some limited agricultural activities which do not adversely affect residential uses, such as raising horses or nurseries, would be permitted as well as certain institutional uses such as private campgrounds. The large lots recommended for this land use classification permit residential development to occur in areas where public water and sanitary sewer are not planned. It also helps maintain the rural residential character of the township. Development within this land use designation will be subject to landscaping and setback requirements to preserve natural and undisturbed corridors. In the Rural Estate Residential designation, scenic and conservation easements will be encouraged to permit greenway connections and to preserve the rural character of the township. Public water and sewer services are not anticipated within this designation during the horizon of this plan. However, it is possible that during future planning periods, such services will be provided.

The Rural Estate Residential area may also include mineral extraction processes if sited and operated so as to maintain surrounding natural areas and minimize conflict with neighboring properties.

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**LDR: Low Density Residential**

The area contains the majority of residential development. Low Density Residential includes diverse neighborhoods from the north side of Park Township to the south side. Most of the LDR is south of James Street and includes the most heavily developed areas of the township. Typically the LDR area features single family homes, mostly on lots between 15,000 square feet and one acre.

The focus of LDR is to preserve single family character and to maintain single family dwellings as the predominant land use. Existing two-family dwellings are permitted, further development of new duplexes or the conversion of single family homes to duplexes or multi-family dwellings is discouraged.
**SR: Shoreline Residential**

This land use designation is intended to be developed at a density of one dwelling unit per acre primarily along the Lake Michigan shoreline and east to Lakeshore Drive. The primary purpose of this designation is to prevent overcrowding of the lake frontage. Other compatible uses such as parks, schools and churches are also permitted within this classification. The view-sheds of such important natural features as Lake Michigan and Lake Macatawa in this designation will be preserved by managing the scale and placement of buildings that adjoin these areas. Further, community access to important viewshed areas will be enhanced within this land use by encouraging scenic turnouts and similar amenities on public rights-of-way and greenway corridors. Public water and sewer services are not anticipated within this designation during the planning horizon of this master plan. However, it is possible that during future planning periods, such services will be provided.

**MLR: Macatawa Lakefront Residential**

The homes that front Lake Macatawa tend to be smaller, with older homes. This area is also different from neighboring homes just inland. This area should recognize the need to preserve lake views and to provide access to the waterfront. Lakefront development should be limited to single family dwellings. This includes minimum separation between buildings, maximum lot coverage requirements, and maximum heights. The key is to have low impact development that maintains neighborhood character and enhances views to the lake.

To help protect the lake, alternative stormwater management techniques are also encouraged. This includes rain gardens, “green” roofs, vegetated swales, porous paving, etc. to prevent the runoff of chemicals and decrease flooding potential. Lot coverage (all structures, drives and other impervious surfaces) should typically not exceed 35 percent of lot area and should perhaps decrease as lot size increases. Increases in lot coverage could be considered if appropriate alternative stormwater management techniques and low impact designs are employed. Accessory structures, when necessary, should not impact views from the street nor impede views from adjacent dwellings to the waterfront.

Similar to the Low Density Residential designation, older lakefront areas with small lots should be preserved; however, new land divisions should not result in lots smaller than 15,000 square feet unless a thorough infill review process has been conducted using planned development procedures to insure compatibility.
HDR: High Density Residential

This land use classification can accommodate up to eight units per developable acre for multi-family uses. Single and two family owner occupied dwelling units would also be included within this classification but at lower densities. Existing high density residential areas were developed before current zoning regulations were adopted for such uses. Within existing HDR areas, in-fill housing development will be encouraged to maximize the community’s investment in infrastructure.

Future HDR developments should be sensitive to natural features and preserve woods, slopes and wetlands perhaps by clustering buildings. Such uses should also be designed for compatibility with nearly residential land uses. Setbacks, landscaping and buffer strips should be used to help reduce any negative affects of HDR uses on areas of lower density. In addition, bulk scale and positioning of buildings must be carefully managed to preserve the aesthetics of a neighborhood and any view-sheds within the area.

Multiple family developments should be located near such amenities as shopping and recreational facilities, along major streets and must be served by public water and sanitary sewer.

C: Commercial

There are two different types of commercial land use within the township: those that serve the day-to-day service and retail needs of nearby residents and those that operate on primarily on a seasonal basis. The latter are located near Holland State Park and along Ottawa Beach Road as well as at the west end of South Shore Drive. Neighborhood shopping uses are primarily located along Ottawa Beach Road closer to the established and more populated residential areas, as well as along South Shore Drive. To maximize the community’s investment in existing infrastructure, in-fill commercial development will be encouraged and significant expansions of commercial areas will be discouraged. In new commercial development, efforts to integrate the features of the area into the development will be encouraged through site design and landscaping requirements. Design guidelines or standards, such as form-based code, should be adopted to ensure commercial uses reflect existing community character.
**RC: Resort Commercial**

Several of Park Township’s best known commercial destinations, such as the Ottawa Beach General Store, the Ottawa Beach Inn and the Eldean Shipyard, are distinctly different than the more conventional commercial uses found in the GC General Commercial designation. These uses are focused on boaters, vacationers and visitors to the beaches and waterfront parks. Included are resort and waterfront focused retail, restaurants, lodging and marina services. The RC land use designation clearly recognizes the resort-oriented character of these uses and RC designated lands are found on Ottawa Beach Road west of 160th Avenue and on South Shore Drive in the Southside on Macatawa Bay.

While the focus of the RC designation is recognizing and preserving these unique uses, residents have stated clearly that additional commercial expansion is not desirable. Therefore, expanding this designation through rezoning is discouraged.

To ensure resort-oriented character is preserved, a focus on design is important. Access to businesses should be designed so that pedestrian use is enhanced and walkers and bikers are safely separated from the traffic on the busy roads. Off-street parking should be provided where possible to lessen congestion on the streets. Signs should also be kept low and in character with surroundings to prevent visual clutter. While adherence to historic building design standards should not be mandated, nevertheless, architectural character should be appropriate to the resort character of the township, as well as the predominantly residential character along these corridors.

The private recreational vehicle parks along Ottawa Beach Road, west of 168th Avenue is within this designation. The uses and character intended by the Resort Commercial designation is the best re-use of this outdated property.

**P: Public/Quasi Public**

This classification refers primarily to lands devoted to governmental, institutional or similar activities generally deemed to be in the public interest including public buildings, schools, parks, utility rights-of-way, churches, etc. These areas vary in size based on land needs and are scattered throughout the Township.

The Park Township Airport is the largest single parcel owned by Park Township. There have been many discussions regarding the potential reuse of this property and the community has indicated a preference to maintain it as a general aviation facility serving the western Ottawa County area.

Also included in this designation are public access points to Lake Michigan and Lake Macatawa. These are generally public rights-of-way that terminate at the water’s edge. These areas should be preserved and enhanced to broaden the ability of the public to access the two important lake features. Such access point planning and development could be coordinated between the township’s Parks and Recreation Committee and the Ottawa County Parks Commission. Whenever land is preserved for active or passive recreation, or to preserve natural resources, this master plan should be amended to include the new land under this designation.
Overall dwelling unit targets should be set for each CHP area. These targets will be based on a thorough analysis of existing development patterns, characteristics of open lands, existing constraints to development, and the ability to adequately serve residents with public utilities, fire protection and the provision of other public services and amenities.

This Master Plan does not propose or specify density limitations for the areas identified as unique neighborhoods. The Master Plan contemplates that further analysis of these neighborhoods may involve addressing the density of those neighborhoods more directly. Finally, when considering future development of each of these neighborhoods, the effect the proposed future development will have on the health, safety and public welfare of each neighborhood will be of primary importance.

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**NHP: Neighborhood Heritage Preservation**

This classification is intended for several unique neighborhoods constructed in sensitive waterfront or dune areas in a time when there were no zoning ordinances regulating lot sizes or building setbacks. Therefore much of the development here occurred on small lots with homes relatively close together. Many residents living in these areas have clearly indicated they prefer low density residential zoning for their respective area, but wish to maintain what currently exists for their own parcels. This means retaining development styles which significantly differ from current zoning practices in many ways, including site layouts, building features, and a more limited use of property.

To accomplish the dual objectives of allowing residents to maintain their existing development patterns and to manage the future use of undeveloped parcels in a fair and equitable manner, new zoning regulations will need to be considered for those areas requiring them. The NHP areas shown on the future land use map must be specifically reviewed with a more detailed analysis of current development patterns and establish new regulations which do not prohibit new development, but recognize the need to preserve existing neighborhood development patterns while at the same time protecting those areas with access limitations, shoreline use, critical dunes, and prime scenic vistas.
Non-residential Uses in Residential Areas

It is recognized that it is necessary to provide for the establishment of certain non-residential land uses within residential areas subject to the implementation of measures which are designed to insure compatibility.

Such non-residential uses commonly include religious and educational institutions.
Subarea Plans and Specific Plan Elements

As outlined in Chapter 3, several subareas were identified by their unique assets to focus planning efforts. This section describes the specific elements of each subarea, including concepts to implement them.

Southside

The Southside Subarea Plan includes lands designated Low Density Residential, Inland Lakefront Residential, General Commercial, Resort Commercial, and Public/Open Space. The designations on the Future Land Use Map generally reflect current and historic uses within the subarea and major land use changes are not envisioned.

The Point West1 property, which is a new infill development in the Macatawa Park area, includes residential uses and a commercial marina. This site is designated Community Heritage Area and any redevelopment should be compatible and in character with the existing Macatawa Park neighborhood.

Specific Plan Elements

160th Avenue Commercial Neighborhood. The Black Sheep (formerly the Parkway Inn restaurant), the cluster of businesses on 160th Avenue and the Maatman Center provide a small commercial and activity node that has a rather intimate scale and serves the immediate area. Commercial uses should be limited to concise access areas where small businesses and stores can serve the neighborhood as well as limited small-scale businesses catering to visitors. The Township should further consider adopting specific use and design standards for this area to guarantee a development character and uses that are in scale with the surroundings. Examples of compatible architectural character are shown (see Figures 33 and 34 on the following page).
Southside Plan Concepts

Lake Access. The existing public boat launch off South Shore Drive, just east of Harrington Avenue, provides access to Lake Macatawa (See Figure 31). It needs improvement, however, and the concept plan for the boat launch reconfigures it. A paved boat ramp and low impact design gravel parking area for cars and boat trailers are intended to reduce runoff, which helps address Lake Macatawa water quality issues.

Eldean Shipyard. This is a section of South Shore Drive from the post office traveling west to Eldean’s Shipyard, where the public right-of-way and private property shows little separation. In this area, crosswalks or distinctly marked pavement, using paint or contrasting materials such as brick, should be considered. When the opportunity arises, curbs, gutters and tree lawns would add to both the safety and esthetics. Dedicated on-street bike lanes should be provided. The concept plan (Figure 32) shows this separation of public right-of-way from private properties.

The key idea is to implement access management, which refers to regulating the location, design, spacing and operation of intersections, driveways and median openings to a roadway. Its objectives are to enable access to land uses while maintaining roadway safety and mobility for all modes of travel, including motor vehicles, bikes and pedestrians. By directing traffic to specific access points, instead of the current situation where traffic is allowed almost unfettered movement, the safety of this street for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists will be enhanced.
North Beach

This area is dominated by Holland State Park. Many of the land uses along Ottawa Beach Road exist because of the Park and depend on it for survival. This subarea has residential, retail, entertainment and resort-oriented land uses. During the summer season, Ottawa Beach Road carries high volumes of traffic. The challenge is to preserve the area’s beachfront character while accommodating the intense activities and traffic associated with this popular destination. The Future Land Use Map designates this subarea for Residential-Low Density, High Density Residential, Historical Residential, Inland Lake Residential, Resort Commercial, and Public/Open Space land uses.

Commercial development should not be expanded here, nor should current land use patterns dramatically shift. New zoning regulations could be developed to ensure that infill development or redevelopment is consistent with the character of the existing West Michigan Park Association cottage neighborhood.

Specific Plan Elements

State Park Gateways. The new trailhead to the Mt. Pisgah Trail underscores the entrance to this key destination. Other gateways, such as to the campgrounds or to the beach are ill-defined and anti-climactic. The township should work in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ottawa County Road Commission to enhance the streetscape and create a gateway to strengthen a sense of arrival for visitors. The Ottawa County Park 12 Plan also significantly improves the visitor’s experience. A conversation with principals in the Ottawa County Recreation Department and the township explored the possibility of placing an electronic sign in advance of the State Park to inform beachgoers when the Park is near capacity, with alternative destinations. Additional signs further east, combined with shuttle service, may help relieve road and beach congestion.

Shuttle Service. Traffic congestion on Ottawa Beach Road was a dominant concern throughout the planning process. The township, with the State and the Macatawa Area Express, should explore the feasibility of a shuttle bus service between the beach and remote parking lots, like Ottawa County Fair Grounds. This is a complex and challenging issue and will require strong partnerships and a good understanding of all issues.

Ottawa Beach Area Neighborhood. The Ottawa Beach cottage neighborhood is on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. It helps shape the resort and beachfront character of this area. Efforts to ensure the integrity of the historic neighborhood, with the West Michigan Park Association, should be made. Demolition of historic homes should be discouraged; redevelopment or additions to existing homes should fit the existing neighborhood context and be guided by character-based development regulations, like a form-based code. The historic brick pumphouse that once served the long-gone Hotel Ottawa is being converted into a museum that highlights local history. This approach is consistent with these efforts.

Design Standards. Although an expansion of existing commercial uses is not anticipated in this area, many of the current businesses are aging and may soon need to be refurbished, or redeveloped. It will be important to ensure that the architectural character of the new or improved business structures continues to reflect the area’s historic beachfront charm. Again, the township should consider guidelines for site and architectural standards for any commercial development in this area (Figures 37 and 38).
North Beach Plan Concepts

Ottawa Beach Road Improvements. There are stretches along Ottawa Beach Road where there is no clear separation between the public right-of-way and private property, (as evident at the Ottawa Beach Inn restaurant). Access management principles and a redesign of the street would improve traffic flow and reduce turning conflicts. A consistent landscape pattern with trees would create a safer, more refined roadway edge and improve traffic flow (Figure 35). The recent Ottawa Beach Road Study prepared for Park Township by FTC&H provides more detailed analysis of similar improvements to Ottawa Beach Road.

A parkway lawn would separate the path from the travel lanes, add street trees and replace the once shady canopy to the corridor. There is also sufficient dimension to accommodate a striped bike lane on the south side of Ottawa Beach Road for eastbound bicyclists. This would divert some cyclists from the multi-use path onto the street making this narrow section safer for pedestrians, families and young children. These concepts should be explored in partnership with the State and the Ottawa County Road Commission and additional right-of-way should be acquired, or an easement providing enough room to allow full bi-directional, on-street bike lanes for the entire corridor. A cross section shows how the roadway, bike lanes and multi-use path could be configured, at least through this narrow zone. (Figure 36)

In addition, as a safety consideration for bikers, pedestrians and motorists alike, on-street parking along Ottawa Beach Drive should be assessed and the current random pattern civilized into dedicated and clearly defined parallel parking spaces. Parked vehicles should be barred from hanging over travel lanes by employing immovable barriers or curbs and parking regulations should be clearly marked and enforced.

Another partnering opportunity is to explore options for the State-owned property, opposite the State Park campground, that could include some additional off-street parking, enhanced access to Lake Macatawa and a fishing dock. Park Township has already given some thought to the site and prepared development concepts that have been shared with the State and the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission. Interest has been expressed to further explore the initial ideas and the potential for shared responsibilities.
Bayviews

The Bayviews Subarea is defined by its natural features: Lake Macatawa on the east and on the west, the trees that dominate its streetscapes and forested lots. Protecting the character of this neighborhood and the woods were identified as important community goals. Since so much of the area’s character is shaped by Lake Macatawa other considerations include efforts to preserve this resource and providing lake access to the public.

The Future Land Use Map designates Bayviews for both Low Density Residential and Macatawa Lakefront Residential land uses.

Bayviews Plan Concepts

Lake Macatawa Access. There are seven access points to the lake in this neighborhood, located at the ends of public rights-of-way; more than any other area with Lake Macatawa frontage. The road ends tend to be undeveloped and poorly defined. For public properties to be used, the access points must be open, visible, inviting spaces that respect surrounding homes and the residential character of the neighborhood. Several ideas were developed to accomplish these goals.

As previously described, there are several road ends in the Bayviews subarea. The most developed road end is the Ashwood Preserve, on the Big Bay shore. Overall public sentiment suggests that all road end public properties are considered important assets which should be preserved. Besides the road ends, the public space includes the small Chief Waukazoo Park. On the north side of Waukazoo Drive on the Big Bay side of the neighborhood, several vacant wooded lots exist. Residents have expressed a desire to maintain road ends without development since significantly expanded use of these areas could be detrimental to the residential character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Specific Plan Elements

Canopy Trees. The tree canopy of Waukazoo Woods is among its most defining features and, therefore, it is imperative steps are taken to avoid the loss of significant woodlots to disease and infestation. Consequently, public and private efforts should be undertaken, in concert, to prepare a plan that assesses and manages the impacts of this most recent exotic forest pest, the beech bark disease, which continues to reshape our forests. Organizations representing homeowners should work together with the Michigan State University Extension Service and other experts to become educated on the issues and to develop and implement a forest management plan not only for Waukazoo Woods, but other potentially affected areas in the township.

Historic Marigold Lodge. This historic home on Superior Point is a recognizable landmark from the lake and provides a focal point for the neighborhood. The lodge is used for seminars, banquets and other events by owner Herman Miller, its employees and their guests. Since the lodge is situated on a large parcel it could potentially be divided into smaller residential lots. Should it ever be sold for development any future changes should preserve and respect the character of both the lodge and the Waukazoo Woods neighborhood.

Expanded Parkland. Currently, only the small Chief Waukazoo Park and Township-owned fairgrounds provide inland parks for neighborhood residents. However, there are several vacant parcels containing about 7 wooded acres just north of this park, along Waukazoo Drive that, if acquired, could be developed as additional public park land. The parcels, also accessible from Chicago Avenue, provide opportunities for playgrounds, picnic areas, and outdoor game spaces, all of which would have to be carefully nestled among the trees. The township Parks and Recreation Plan has additional information about expanding park lands.
Lakeshore

The Lakeshore Subarea is a well-established neighborhood characterized by the Lake Michigan shore, large lakefront homes and cottages and the tree canopy over North Lakeshore Avenue. The Future Land Use Map designates the area for Residential - Low Density, Shoreline Residential and Public/Open Space and also includes lands east of Lakeshore Drive, shown as Rural Residential.

Land use changes are not envisioned here, as existing homes and developments are well-established. Both fit the area’s character and are expected to last well into the future. Significant new development is not expected, unless Camp Geneva is sold, which is not anticipated during the life of this Plan. Likewise, Kiwanis Park may also pose the potential for land use change in the future. However, remote as they may be, Park Township should still consider such possibilities.

Specific Plan Elements

The Tunnel of Trees. A canopy of mature trees flanks the road, providing shade and contributing to its character. North Lakeshore is under the jurisdiction of the Ottawa County Road Commission, and local governments have responded to concerned citizens regarding tree trimming and removal. Ottawa County’s Planning and Performance Improvement Department is working with Park Township’s Tree Legacy Committee to prepare an Ottawa County Tree Planting and Replanting Guidebook.

Road End Lake Michigan Access. Three township roads terminate at the lakeshore: James Street, Riley Street and New Holland Street. A fourth, narrower access leads to the lake from Lakeshore Avenue just north of Camp Geneva, near Quincy. These public lands should be evaluated in greater detail and improved similar to the concepts developed for road ends in Waukazoo Woods.

Tunnel Park. This popular Ottawa County Park is an asset to the township. Additional public parking should be explored; a shuttle from a remote location could also relieve congestion.

Kiwanis Rest Stop. The Township should consider creating similar highly valued amenities by working with other owners along pathways (churches, private campgrounds and schools may be good candidates).
**Park Central**

As noted in Chapter 3, while the Park Central Subarea is not the first point of entry into the township for most visitors, it is a primary gateway into the township’s major center of activity and provides an opportunity to create a sense of arrival. It is also the location of some of the township’s most important institutions, such as the fairgrounds, airport and the Township Hall. As such, it is an important destination for both residents and visitors. The Future Land Use Plan designates Park Central for Residential - Low Density, Multiple Family Residential, General Commercial and Public/Open Space land uses.

In 2014, the Township engaged a focus group and professional services to discuss and evaluate a conceptual plan for the Township properties located in the direct vicinity of 152nd Avenue and Ottawa Beach Road. This area includes (in part) the Park Township office complex, the Park Township Airport, the Park Township owned fair grounds, along with adjacent/contiguous properties controlled by the Township including the dog park, skate board park, and community center. The area and the project to enhance its utilization are included in the formal plan published by the Township in late 2014, is referred to as the Park Central subarea.

While the Future Land Use Plan recognizes this area’s existing uses and does not propose major changes, it does focus on the importance of established land uses, such as Waukazoo Plaza, the Park Township Airport and the Ottawa County Fair Grounds. These are all highlighted in the Plan with recommended improvements and redevelopment concepts that should be considered.

**Specific Plan Elements**

The conceptual plan and discussion for the Park Central sub area considered each of the key features as well as issues facing the Township. It was determined during the planning sessions there was overwhelming sentiment in the community to retain the Airport and enhance its operation. The plan calls for improvements to the airport features to better use, replace, and or relocation the Airport assets to achieve the outlined goals. Similarly, it was determined the Fairground and associated assets should be retained and various enhancements were explored and the options are discussed in the plan. The plan also incorporates complimentary and potential expanded uses for this area by capitalizing on the co-location of the Park Township offices, the possible relocation of the dog park and citizen gardening areas, and the consideration of year-around public enhancement areas such as an ice arena, farmer’s market location, retail expansion, access enhancements, and traffic calming features on Ottawa Beach Road. Please refer to the Park Central Plan for details and coordination with this master plan.
Airport. Like the Fair Grounds, the Park Township Airport has had a significant influence on the character and history of the community and region. While the airport is owned by Park Township it is managed by Ottawa Aviation, which has maintenance and operation responsibilities. Again, workshop participants believed the airport looks run down, particularly some of the old metal hangars and the approaches from Ottawa Beach Road. At the same time, the airport is a unique asset with a small-town, private pilot character and a charm that should be preserved. With some refurbishing and enhanced streetscapes the Airport could be made attractive without losing its unique character. Other ideas were expressed such as:

- **Build on the history of the airport by creating a brand harking back to its beginnings in the 1930s that can be used as a theme for exhibits, signs, lighting, fencing, etc.**
- **Provide a sitting area off the multi-use path, near the displayed Korean War era jet**
- **Continue to promote recreational flying activities, such as radio control flying, “fly-ins,” vintage aircraft shows, hot air balloon races, Dawn Patrol, etc.**

As the owner of the property, the Township should take an active role in promoting and improving this asset and work with the Airport Board and Ottawa Aviation to seek opportunities that pool resources so improvements can be made and events held.

Wetlands/Drain Corridor. The County drain that follows Ottawa Beach Road and then turns north about a quarter-mile east of 160th Avenue provides an opportunity to create a “green” corridor through this part of the township. Access to the wetlands via paths and boardwalks would allow residents to better connect with nature in a settled area of Park Township. The West Ottawa School District could also take advantage of such an opportunity, using it for ecological education programs for area students. In addition, a connection from the drain through the wetlands to the east could accommodate a trail to Cooper-Van Wieren Park, creating a green necklace of parks and nature areas. Via a system of multi-use paths, pedestrians and cyclists could travel from one park to the next, through a strand of green corridors. The Township, working in partnership with the County Water Resources Commissioner should identify potential pathway routes and determine areas of environmental significance.

**Bike Paths/Access to Cooper-Van Wieren Park.**

Multi-use paths crisscross the section line roads in this neighborhood, connecting with multiple destinations in the township, as well as to the City of Holland and Holland Charter Township. A new extension of the system should be explored from 160th Avenue east along Perry Street, terminating at Cooper-Van Wieren Park. This link would provide new access, particularly to the hiking trails in the southern portion of the park. A trailhead/parking area could be located here, with way-finding signs or an information kiosk that describes the trail system and recreation opportunities.
Park Central Plan Concepts

Waukazoo Plaza. The corner of Ottawa Beach Road and 152nd Avenue is an important gateway to nearby resort destinations and the surrounding neighborhoods. While the small Waukazoo Plaza shopping area, at the southeast corner of the intersection, has a unique character it still suffers from many of the same ills as more suburban-style centers. Its unadorned and vacant parking lot, lack of sidewalks, poorly defined access drives, and disjointed architecture with the adjacent gas station/convenience store certainly limits any ability for this center to currently convey a gateway entrance to a resort community. The concept plan for the Waukazoo Center (Figure 43) recommends a major facelift that would occur in conjunction with any future changes to the shopping center or gas station, triggered as part of the site plan review process. As an incentive, the extent of commercial development should be expanded to accommodate a more eclectic blend of uses compatible with a small “village center” serving nearby neighborhoods, visitors and summer residents. The Concept shows an expanded Waukazoo Plaza, accommodating new commercial/office buildings and an area for outdoor dining or public space. The convenience store/gas station should also be reconfigured so the pump canopy no longer dominates the streetscape. Existing buildings are shown as either renovated or reconstructed with an architectural character that better reflects the area (Figures 41 and 42, previous page). Such enhancements at this important corner would greatly reinforce a sense of arrival and help “brand” Park Township’s character for visitors and residents alike.

Ottawa Beach Corridor. Along the more recently constructed sections of the corridor, Ottawa Beach Road has an 80 foot right-of-way with two lanes of traffic in either direction and dedicated left turn lanes at intersections. This configuration causes the corridor to lose any sense of intimacy making it look like a wide-open raceway, also leading to higher traffic speeds and endangering pedestrians, bikers and other motorists. Given current traffic volumes it would appear the road is worthy of a “diet” and the number of lanes could be decreased, thereby slowing traffic and enhancing safety (Figure 44). Multiple options could be considered and explored with the Ottawa County Road Commission, such as one east bound and one west bound lane with a continuous center turn land and the remaining space allocated to on-street bike lanes. Another choice reflected on the multiple concept plans for the area would require a more significant investment, but would result in a tree lined boulevard, significantly changing the character of the corridor and creating a memorable community entrance. The added bike-only lanes would be striped and reserved for the serious biker, like those already found on many sections of Lakeshore Avenue in Ottawa County. A cross section of the right-of-way (Figure 45) shows how lanes could be configured.

West of 152nd Avenue, as Ottawa Beach Road passes the Fair Grounds and the Park Township Airport the right-of-way narrows to 66 feet, but it can still accommodate two travel lanes, two bicycle lanes and a boulevard. The cross-section (Figure 46) shows how this is done. Another recommendation would adjust curb cuts to properly align the entrance to the Fair Grounds with the Airport entrance. An enhanced streetscape, especially along Ottawa Beach Road in front of both the Fair Grounds and the Airport would also help soften the corridor and highlight these two important township destinations. The overall goals for any changes to the corridor should be to improve aesthetics, slow traffic, enhance safety and provide transportation options for more than just motor vehicles.
Perry Reserve

The Perry Reserve Subarea is one of the more developed areas in the township and it contains many new subdivisions, popular parks, and nature preserves. It is characterized by single family neighborhoods and the uses that serve them: schools, parks and churches. No large vacant properties that remain in this area for major new development. As such, the Future Land Use Plan does not anticipate significant land use changes and designates the area for Residential — Low Density and Public/Open Space.

Specific Plan Elements

Wetlands. Located in the middle of the large block bounded by Lakewood Boulevard, 160th Avenue, Perry Street and 168th Avenue is a major wetland area. Another large wetland, located between Lakewood Boulevard and James Street near 160th Avenue, skirts a small man-made lake near Island View Drive. Since this area may be unbuildable, the township may want to consider expanding its network of “green infrastructure” and provide links to other open spaces and natural areas.

Utility and Drain Corridors. Overhead utilities and drain corridors should be viewed as an opportunity to further interconnect key township destinations, like parks with trails and open space. Utility corridors may be another viable way to link neighborhoods or natural areas. The township should explore perhaps more rustic, unpaved walking or biking trails along these linear corridors.

Uplands

This subarea is the largest, in terms of land area. It comprises almost one-third of the northern part of the township. It is also the most sparsely populated, yet it contains one of greater Holland’s most intense and active land uses, the West Ottawa High School campus.

With its farms, woodlots and open fields, the North Country contains significant undeveloped areas. The challenge will be to balance both development and preservation.

The Future Land Use Map designates the area for Rural Preserve, Rural Estate Residential, Low Density Residential, High Density Residential and Public/Quasi Public. Land use changes are anticipated along Butternut Drive.

Specific Plan Elements

Expanded Multiple Family Designations.
The area off Butternut Drive, east of the West Ottawa High School Campus has been developed with a large manufactured housing park and two multiple family developments. Butternut is a major street that provides access to the City of Holland, with cross street connections to employment areas in Holland Charter Township. The multiple family developments that have been constructed here provide a housing alternative for those seeking lower cost alternatives and those who do not wish to maintain private property. The Plan anticipates adding to the Multiple Family land use designation beyond that proposed in the 2002 Plan.

All of the land on the south side of Butternut Drive, between the West Ottawa Schools campus and the township border, is proposed for multiple family housing.

On the north side of Butternut, land between the township line and 148th Avenue, south of Quincy Street and several lots between 148th Avenue and Butternut Drive has also been added.

continued...
With shrinking family sizes and an aging population in the township and nationwide, alternatives to single family housing are necessary. This expanded multiple family area can accommodate traditional multiple family townhome and garden apartment style development, as well as retirement housing options that would allow seniors to “age in place” in Park Township.

**Utility Corridor.** The north-south utility corridor that begins in the Perry Reserves Subarea passes through the Uplands, terminating at land owned by the City of Wyoming for its water plant. This corridor parallels 168th Avenue, which already has a multi-use path. Therefore, similar to the recommendations for the utility corridors in the Midtown Subarea, more rustic, unpaved paths that connect with natural areas could add value to this relatively isolated neighborhood. For instance, it could accommodate a cross-country trail from Riley Park up to the Ransom Street Park.

**Rural Land Preservation.** As the most actively farmed area in the township, Uplands reflects rural character and landscapes, more so than any other subarea. However, over the years development pressures have reduced the amount of agricultural land and open spaces, replacing them with housing that either stretches along county roads, or is located in new subdivisions. This context of homes interfacing with farmland has made it challenging for farmers to comply with new federal food safety regulations. Farmers are concerned with encroachment and trespass by neighbors and pedestrians and bikers using pathways, who have no appreciation for the issues they create. These include food safety and the potential for contamination (innocent or willful), liability related to the chemicals sprayed on fruit, and safety issues related to conflicts with farm vehicles. As encroachment continues and land prices increase, farmers also desire the freedom to split off lots to give to their children, or allow some limited development to enhance land values.

- **Agriculture.** The lands designated Agriculture on the Future Land Use Map are those that are, for the most part, actively farmed. Also included are adjacent single family homes on large lots, usually on lands that were previously in agricultural production. The area designated Rural Estate Residential, by contrast, contains fewer farms, but several subdivisions and open space developments with homes that are also on large lots. The following zoning requirements should be considered to provide development flexibility in the Agriculture area, while encouraging continued agricultural production and rural character:
  - Ten acre minimum lot size
  - Specifying the number of allowed lot splits based on whether the original lot meets or exceeds the minimum lot area requirement for the zoning district. For instance, for a lot meeting or exceeding the minimum lot size of the district, no more than a specified number of smaller lots could be created from the original parcel. Any additional splits of the remaining parcel would have to meet the minimum lot area requirements of the zoning district.
  - Incentivizing agricultural or open space preservation by offering, for dedicating a parcel to permanent agricultural use or open space, the ability to receive a specified number of bonus splits. The specific formula would have to be worked out as part of rewriting the zoning ordinance. The key will be to define appropriate incentives that avoid over-development.
• **Rural Estate Residential.** Densities of one unit per each five acres are recommended for the Rural Estate Residential designation and more traditional means of rural preservation should be employed. These include developments using open space clustering, PUDs, density bonuses in exchange for an increase of open space, and required development setbacks with vegetated buffers along roads that can effectively preserve rural character in areas where large-lot single family development is allowed.

• **Agricultural buffers.** Where residential and agricultural uses interface, buffers should be required on the property where development is proposed. A cluster development, or subdivision should include at least a 50 to 100 foot wide buffer along any perimeter adjacent to an agricultural use. Buffers should preserve existing vegetation where possible, but where none exists, a combination of vegetated berms and hedgerows should be employed. Where necessary to prevent potential conflicts and trespass fences, or walls should be considered.

The previous examples are possible ways to address the preservation of rural lands. However, the Planning Commission and Township Board will need to identify and test options in greater detail, working with affected parties to rewrite the zoning ordinance. The key will be to build flexibility into the code so that limited development is allowed while incentives are provide to preserve farmland and rural character. Such an approach will help achieve the goals laid out by the public; to preserve both the rural character of the township and yet allow farmers to plan for their future.
Implementation Recommendations

The Implementation Matrix, below, contains a list of actions, which are projects or tasks intended to implement the recommendations of this Master Plan. Each action is listed with the responsible parties, the time frame within which the project should be initiated and/or completed, and a project priority number. The timing for actions is also explained. Some actions may not have a specified schedule because they are based on less predictable factors such as land availability, etc.

Action Priorities

The recommended implementation actions in this Plan are listed with a “priority number” as follows:

- Priority 1 actions are those requiring immediate and concentrated efforts - the first projects that should be commenced after this Master Plan has been adopted. Any preliminary steps to implement the action (such as funding, changes in local ordinances, etc.) should be commenced immediately. Those Priority 1 actions with a longer time horizon should be revisited on an as-needed basis and incorporated into other applicable long-term planning programs, such as the capital improvements plan.

- Priority 2 actions are necessary to implement the plan, but either depend on commencing or completing Priority 1 actions, or they do not share the immediacy of Priority 1 actions. However, once begun they should be considered important and worked on until they are completed.

- Priority 3 actions implement certain elements of this plan, but are not urgent and can be delayed for a longer period of time. These actions may be more susceptible to budgetary constraints.

A master plan is intended to chapter the longer term goals and objectives of the community. This chapter outlines actions for implementing the Park Township Master Plan.
**Ordinances, Guidelines, Plans and Policies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Involved Parties</th>
<th>Priority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Analyze the current Zoning Ordinance and determine if regulations are missing, or inhibit or prevent this plan from being implemented. Prepare an assessment and recommendations.</td>
<td>Staff, Planning Commission, Township Board</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Revise/prepare a new Zoning Ordinance addressing: public participation, overlay districts, character-based zoning, rural/farm preservation, design standards and density requirements (see the recommendations of the Zoning Plan, below).</td>
<td>Staff, Planning Commission, Township Board</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Review and initiate amendments to the Zoning Map to implement the Master Plan, as needed.</td>
<td>Staff, Planning Commission, Township Board</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Review and revise the Master Plan in response to changing needs and priorities every 5 years.</td>
<td>Staff, Planning Commission, Township Board</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Implement a six-year Capital Improvements Plan that prioritizes Township projects and funding.</td>
<td>Staff, Planning Commission, Township Board</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Explore options to preserve trees, particularly in Waukazoo Woods and along Lakeshore Avenue, including funding sources, tree canopy and health analysis, tree maintenance and reforestation.</td>
<td>Staff, Planning Commission, Township Board, Michigan State University Extension, Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Work with Ottawa County to develop programs supporting land preservation, such as purchase of development rights, conservation easements, and similar tools.</td>
<td>Staff, Planning Commission, Township Board</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Study options for incentives to preserve agricultural land.</td>
<td>Staff, Planning Commission, Township Board</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Public Programs and Initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Involved Parties</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Work cooperatively with the State and County to determine the feasibility of funding and operating a shuttle service between the Fair Grounds and the State Park and Tunnel Park beaches, including bus access to the Parks.</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Ottawa County Fair Board, Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explore an overflow parking lot for Tunnel Park with the Holland Board of Power and Light and Ottawa County.</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Ottawa County Parks and Recreation, Holland Board of Public Works</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Support efforts to create a museum in the old Pump House on Ottawa Beach Road, including parking facilities.</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, State Historic Preservation Office, local preservation groups, Ottawa County Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Seek opportunities to provide public/private partnerships for pathway rest areas and similar amenities on lands adjacent to the road right-of-way.</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, owners of land adjacent to pathways</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Work to Implement Park Central Sub Area Plan and Township Parks and Recreation Plan.</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Ottawa County Fair Board, Airport Board, Ottawa Aviation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Land Acquisitions, Development, and Public Improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Involved Parties</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Seek funding and complete improvements to the public boat launch on</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Shore Drive and street end accesses to Lake Macatawa.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Work with the MDNR to improve State Park entrances including</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR),</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improved signs, gateways, and streetscapes.</td>
<td>Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Work with the MDNR and OCRC to install electronic notification signs</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR),</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in appropriate location on Ottawa Beach Road, advising visitors of</td>
<td>Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>park capacity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Explore design options and partnerships to enhance the State property</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on Lake Macatawa, opposite the State Park camp grounds, including</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>shared funding and operations.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Work with the Ottawa County Drain Commissioner and utility companies</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Ottawa County Water Resources Commission, utility</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to identify priority public use areas along the drain and utility</td>
<td>companies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corridors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Seek opportunities to allow public use of large wetland areas,</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Ottawa County Parks and Recreation, local land preservation/conservancy groups</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including boardwalks, ecology education, and nature preserves.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Transportation Corridors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Involved Parties</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Fund and implement improvements to South Shore Drive that include, tree lawns, access management, non-motorized pathways and pedestrian crossings.</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC), Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, trailway groups</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Similarly, fund and implement improvements to Ottawa Beach Road; seek easements where necessary to accommodate separated multi-use paths (with cooperation from private owners and contributors), improve the streetscape at key corridors and intersections.</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC), private property owners</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Improve non-motorized access to parks and recreation areas as recommended in the Township Parks and Recreation plan.</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Continue to evaluate the pathway system to ensure that all activity areas in the township are accessible to all legal users of the system.</td>
<td>Staff, Township Board, trailway groups</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Complete Streets**

Changes to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act in 2010 require that master plans account for “all legal users” of the transportation system within the municipality. The amended Act states that the Master Plan must include “among other things, promotion of or adequate provision for 1 or more of the following: … (i) A system of transportation to lessen congestion on streets and provide for safe and efficient movement of people and goods by motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users.”

Although this Plan does not have a specific transportation element, there is a focus on non-motorized trails and pathways, both on-street and off, to create a cohesive system and enhance connectivity between open spaces and activity centers. Several of the specific plan elements recommend expansion of the current 51-mile trail system and additional trail side amenities. Also, recent efforts initiated by Ottawa County Parks and Recreation includes bike-walkway trails along southerly portions of Ottawa Beach Road to allow for combined multi-modal opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians. Further, ideas generated for a Park Central development plan includes bike trails along Ottawa Beach Road and roundabouts that integrate well with planned retail and services.

The Township’s planned pathway system as well as support for creating multi-modal integration on various appropriate stretches of Ottawa Beach Road, conforms to the recent Complete Streets legislation.
Zoning Plan

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008) requires the Master Plan to include a Zoning Plan, which “include(s) an explanation of how the land use categories on the land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map.” The Zoning Plan matrix below summarizes the land use designations and identifies related zoning districts as currently outlined in the Park Township Zoning Ordinance, as well as providing recommendations to implement the Master Plan through the Zoning Ordinance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Land Use Plan Designation</th>
<th>Corresponding Zoning Provisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AG, Agricultural and Permanent Open Space District:</td>
<td>The AG District permits agricultural uses, single family dwellings and parks; churches, kennels and mineral extraction are allowed with special approval. The AG District has a minimum lot area of 10 acres, although a lot of record platted before 2/7/74 may be developed with a single family home if it is at least 15,000 square feet. In addition, a lot of record in existence as of 2/7/74 may be split to create one lot of no less than 1 acre or greater than 3 acres, provided that the remaining parcel is no less than 10 acres. The AG land use designation recommends a maximum density of 1 lot per each 10 acres, but would allow for smaller lots if open space, orchards or other agricultural land is preserved. The Zoning Ordinance should be evaluated to allow for land preservation techniques within the AG District.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1 Rural Estate District:</td>
<td>The R-1 District allows limited agricultural uses, single family dwellings, and supporting uses such as parks, churches and schools. The minimum lot area is 2 acres. The RR Rural Residential designation recommends a minimum density of 1 unit per each 5 acres, but allows for smaller lots if development preserves quality open spaces. The Zoning Ordinance should be evaluated to determine if changes to the R-1 District can be implemented, or if another zoning district should be created to accommodate 5-acre lots. Other requirements for preserving rural character, such as development setbacks, should be considered. In addition, the Ordinance should be amended to require any development over 11 lots to be considered as a Planned Unit Development (PUD).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-3 Low Density Single Family Residence District:</td>
<td>The R-3 District allows the same basic uses as the R-1 District. The minimum lot area in the R-3 District is 15,000 square feet. This corresponds to the recommendations for the Low Density Residential designation. The LDR designation also encourages infill development, provided that lots are not less than 15,000 square feet. Area and setback requirements for infill development should be analyzed to ensure that development on small lots of record are in character with the established neighborhoods. The mandatory PUD, as noted above, may also be an effective tool to ensure neighborhood character is preserved. Some areas designated LDR are zoned R-4, Medium Density Single and Two Family Residence District. These are generally single family homes on smaller lots. This type of development is consistent with the LDR land use designation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Land Use Plan Designation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR Shoreline Residential</td>
<td><strong>R-2 Lakeshore Residence District:</strong> All of the lands west of Lakeshore Avenue in close proximity to the lake are zoned R-2, which corresponds with the Shoreline Residential designation. The R-2 District allows single family dwellings, parks, schools and churches. The minimum lot area is 1 acre, which corresponds to the recommended density for the SR designated areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLR Macatawa Lakefront Residential</td>
<td><strong>R-3 Low Density Single Family Residence District:</strong> The lands designated Macatawa Lakefront Residential on the Future Land Use Map are all zoned R-3, with few exceptions. However, the purpose of the MLR designation is to preserve lake views and water quality. Therefore, an overlay district with additional restrictions related to building height, setbacks, location of accessory structures, drainage and use of chemicals for fertilization may help to implement the recommendations for this land use designation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDR High Density Residential</td>
<td><strong>R-4 Medium Density Single and Two Family Residence District, and R-5 Low Density Multifamily Residence District:</strong> The R-4 district allows single family and duplex development, while the R-5 District adds multiple family uses. Multiple family lots in the R-5 District must provide 4,500 square feet per dwelling unit, which is an effective density of just above 8 units per acre. This is a slightly higher density than recommended for the MF land use designation (6-8 units per acre). The Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed to determine if minimum lot area per unit should be increased. The developments designated MF on the Future Land Use Map located on Butternut Drive near West Ottawa High School are zoned R-4; this zoning district should be expanded to match the Future Land Use map. The multiple family developments south of James Street and on Ottawa Beach Road are zoned R-5. The existing zoning matches the recommendations of the MF Multiple Family Residential designation. The existing manufactured housing park adjacent to the High School campus is also located within this designation. This development is licensed by the State Manufactured Housing Commission and is subject to the rules of the Commission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Commercial</td>
<td><strong>C-1, Neighborhood Business District:</strong> The C-1 District allows most retail and service uses, and is intended to meet the needs of the nearby residents. The two areas designated GC on the Future Land Use Map are consistent with the C-1 requirements. The area on the west side of 160th Avenue, currently zoned C-2, should be rezoned to C-1 to reflect the neighborhood commercial character of this small business area. However, the Township should consider character-based requirements for these areas, such as a form based code or design guidelines, to ensure that development is consistent with the recommendations for the GC designation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Future Land Use Plan Designation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Land Use Plan Designation</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C Resort Commercial</strong></td>
<td><strong>C-2, Resort Service District:</strong> The C-2 District is intended to provide for businesses that serve travellers and marine users. Uses include most of those permitted in the C-1 District, along with hotels and marinas. Multiple family uses are permitted on lots of 4 acres or more. This Plan recommends that the uses permitted in the C-2 District be re-evaluated according to the recommendations for the RC designation. Uses should be focused on beachfront and marina oriented businesses and should not allow the more conventional retail and service uses best accommodated in the C-1 District. In addition, multiple family uses should not be allowed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P Public/Open Space</strong></td>
<td>There is no corresponding zoning district for this land use designation. Parks, schools, cemeteries, government uses, etc. are permitted or special land uses within the other zoning districts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NHP Neighborhood Heritage Preservation</strong></td>
<td>There is no district in the township’s zoning ordinance which adequately serves the need for community preservation in unique neighborhood areas along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Current zoning regulations are designed for modern development practices that more readily allow for the creation of the new residential subdivisions. However they are not well suited for maintaining the original development styles in these areas. This plan, therefore, recommends the Planning Commission consider other planning techniques, such as form based code and other planning alternatives to implement the vision for community preservation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This Master Plan does not propose or specify density limitations for the areas identified as unique neighborhoods. The Master Plan contemplates that further analysis of these neighborhoods may involve addressing the density of those neighborhoods more directly. Finally, when considering future development of each of these neighborhoods, the effect the proposed future development will have on the health, safety and public welfare of each neighborhood will be of primary importance.
Keeping the Plan Up-to-Date

Change is constant and usually unpredictable, and there may be circumstances that warrant changes to the zoning boundaries that are not consistent with the Master Plan. If and when this occurs, the Master Plan should be updated to conform to the changed circumstances. Because of the time and process required for amending the Plan, such changes should be considered carefully.

The following table contains a series of evaluation factors that may be used to determine if a proposed development warrants a change to the land use designation on the Future Land Use Plan map.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Land Use Evaluation Factors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>√ Does the proposed new classification meet the qualifications noted in the appropriate section of the Master Plan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√ Are the zoning districts and their uses that may apply to the new classification compatible with and appropriate in the vicinity of the property under consideration?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√ Have any conditions changed in the area since the Master Plan was adopted that justify this change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√ Will there be any community impacts that should be considered, such as increased traffic, or others that might create a need for additional services or improvements?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√ Are there any environmental considerations that may be contrary to the intent of the existing or proposed classification of that land use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√ Was the property improperly classified when the plan was adopted or amended? Are the qualities of the property (or area) different than those that are described in the plan?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√ Will there be any adverse effects on adjacent properties as a result of the proposed land use change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>√ What impacts will result on the public health, safety, and welfare?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes