

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF TEXAS

2014 Master Plan Update

DRAFT

ADOPTED BY THE TEXAS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION ON: _____

APPROVED BY THE TEXAS TOWNSHIP BOARD ON: _____

INTRODUCTION

The following plan is intended to serve as a 5-year Update to the original comprehensive plan adopted in 1999. The Plan was last updated in 2007 and this new 2014 "master plan update" is intended to follow the new *Michigan Planning Enabling Act*, which was adopted as P.A. 33 of 2008. This update includes the new 2010 Census data, with a *Demographic Profile* primarily related to housing alternatives for a growing population.

Since this last five-year update, a substantial amount of progress has been made on the original list of items from the 1999 Plan and the prior update. This list was as follows:

- 1) Evaluate and Revise the Zoning Ordinance
- 2) Revise and Expand Planned Unit Development (PUD)
- 3) Inventory Key Natural Features
- 4) Survey of Farmland Owners
- 5) Develop Farmland Preservation Programs
- 6) Promote the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)
- 7) Coordinate Capital Decisions with the Plan
- 8) Develop Sewer Policy to Guide Development
- 9) Establish a Natural Area Conservancy
- 10) Prepare a Sub-Area Plan for Texas Corners
- 11) Develop a Plan for Non-Motorized Connections
- 12) Develop a Geographic Information System (GIS)
- 13) Improve Public Understanding of Growth Management Benefits

Directed at *implementation* of this list is the continued update to the Zoning Ordinance, which has now been revised as a more user-friendly *Clearzoning* ordinance. This new ordinance, which replaced the prior ordinance without changing the basic content, allows for online access and hyper-linked sections, which gives the user more direction in terms of definition of terms and access to both permitted and special exception use information. Graphics are also used to better explain or interpret the text. More recent amendments have been based upon other items on this implementation list.

The use of PUD has been expanded for use in both the Agricultural and Resource Conservation areas of the Township. A new "RC" Resource Conservation District was established to better assist in preservation of open space and natural resources. While not yet implemented through map amendments, this new district can be used in conjunction with many non-profit preservation areas in the Township, such as Pretty Lake Vacation Camp, Roat-Kiwan Boy Scout Camp, the City of Kalamazoo's Al Sabo Preserve (wellfield area) and even the grounds around the adjoining Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC). A new wellhead protection ordinance has also been drafted to assist with preservation efforts.

New wetland and floodplain mapping has been incorporated into this plan update. This layer of mapping data has been utilized, with the wellhead data (Time-of-Travel zones), to better define open space and these resource conservation areas. There are additional

areas, some within the western and southern *Agricultural* designation area, that have been revised based upon this new data.

An analysis of how to better designate agricultural areas has been included and has led to an expansion of this designation north of I-94, west of the existing residential areas (zoned "R-1"). A small area in the northwest corner of the Township (Stadium/Michigan at 1st Street) has been retained based upon existing development, but the intent of this change was to reflect the fact that this is an area of larger parcels, not served by public services and difficult to develop based upon right-of-ways cutting through and "landlocking" some parcels.

The Planning Commission has also worked to provide the foundation for the Township's first Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This 6-Year program (the 1st year serving as the annual budget proposal for capital expenditures) will be based on input from Township staff and committees directed at Public Safety, Parks and Recreation and other elements, such as Roads. The Planning Commission will then look at such recommendations within the overall context of the master plan, coordinating projects where the plan, or sub-area benefit, may align with new development potential. This program may need to stimulate greater focus on the provision of sewer and water facilities in the near future.

The Corner's Business District (CBD) has been the primary commercial "sub-area" for concentration of ordinance amendments and new planning. The Downtown Development Authority (DDA), which has the same boundary as the *Central Commercial* designation, contracted with a firm (Viridis) to develop a new DDA Master Plan, which is being adopted as part of this plan update. In addition, the zoning ordinance has been amended in support of a new Mixed Use Site Condominium provision to allow for implementation of the Plan's greater density and intensity (See Option 3 Concept Plan). As part of this DDA Master Plan, the provision has also been made to incorporate new types of access, with "access connectors" allowing for more flexibility on private property and new public road options being considered by the Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) specific to this unique type of development area.

These new options also fit well with the Township's *Complete Streets* policy, which includes review of all non-motorized options at the time of any new expenditure for roads or related improvements. Increased focus on non-motorized connections has also been included in this plan update, with the intent to support an internal system, connecting residential development areas with the CBD or other community facilities, such as the Township Parks. In addition, having this system expand externally upon extensions to the Township boundaries allows for regional connections, such as the recent project along Texas Drive that will connect to the City of Portage system. Ultimately, cooperation with adjoining communities (north through Oshtemo Township to the Kalhaven Trail and west to the Village of Mattawan and Antwerp Township) will serve to make internal and external segment connections an ongoing priority. Increased focus on pedestrian and bikepath development and maintenance has been enhanced by the recently adopted Sidewalk and Pathway Ordinance.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

In 2013, Texas Township, in conjunction with three other Townships, undertook a community survey. This survey was conducted by Cobalt Community Research and was based upon a series of study goals. These goals included three elements linked to this planning process: (1) Planning and Zoning Regulations; (2) Future Service Opportunities; and (3) Parks and Recreation. These were several different methods utilized, including a random sample of 1500 residents (from voter records) . Generally, the results revealed that the residents were satisfied with the community, would recommend it to others as a place to live and anticipated remaining in the community. The community image also scored well in terms of being a safe place to live, physically attractive and growing responsibly).

In terms of planning and zoning, residents supported increased restrictions on nuisance-related issues (blight, noxious weeds, noise, etc.) and wanted to see less signage along the roads. In most other instances, they believed current regulations were adequate. If regulations were to be reduced, they cited garbage collection and leaf burning as possible issues to address. In addition to increased police services and road maintenance, parks and recreation scored very highly for service improvements. When asked specifically as to type, expansion of nature trails and the bike path system scored the highest.

Overall, the survey response should lead to better decision-making direction, with support for many of the services now in place and expanded services in public safety, road maintenance and parks and recreation. The Township's committee structure and capital improvement programming (CIP) process should assist with keeping public input on the forefront of these survey recommendations.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

This element of the Plan provides the background data related to population, housing and the potential for future development. It is based upon the United States Census, which allows for some interpretation based upon the nature of the survey and other national and state trends that influence the results. From the perspective of the Plan, population and housing growth may lead to further expansion of areas for new residential development. If "growth management" is the focus or if limited growth is anticipated over time, there may not be the need for increased capacity in residential land use designations.

Population

Table 1 provides a breakdown of population change for the Township over the last 20 years. While the intent of the master plan is a 20-year look into the future, the past plays an important role in the overall direction for the community.

Table 1 - Population

1990	2000	Change % 1990-2000	2010	Change % 2000-2010	% Change (1990-2010)
7,711	10,919	3,208 +42%	14,697	3,778 +35%	6,986+91%

The Township's large population growth between 1990 and 2000 (3,208 persons) was followed by an even larger increase between 2000 and 2010 (3,778 persons), even though the percentage declined from roughly 42% to 35%. It is anticipated that this number would have even been higher if economic conditions had not deteriorated during the last 4 years of the decade, with new residential permits declining rapidly from a peak in 2005. Overall, there was a virtual doubling of the population over the 20-year period, as Texas Township became the fastest growing Township in Kalamazoo County.

Sex/Age Breakdown

Of the 2010 population of 14,697 persons, there were 7,313 males and 7,384 females, a virtual 50/50 split. The number of persons age 65 & over (1,536 or almost 10% of the population) was below that for the county as a whole (12%). The national trend toward an aging population opens up opportunities for more senior housing options. The desire of the younger generations to live in more urban settings, whether for employment or for amenities more suited to their lifestyle, also supports expanded commercial development as part of a residential community.

Generational Profile

Much of what is now presented for age breakdown is linked to generational categories. These categories are an attempt to somewhat define people, despite a broad mix of varying personal characteristics. From the perspective of marketing for housing, services or other economic needs, these five categories, shown in Table 2, provide the opportunity to determine where a community may wish to target growth in population through a mix of housing choice.

Table 2

GENERATION	BIRTH RANGE	AGE RANGE *	CENSUS GROUP*
Silent Generation	(1925-1945)	(65-85)	(65 & Over)
Baby Boom	(1946-1964)	(46-64)	(50-64)
Gen X	(1965-1976)	(34-45)	(35-49)
Gen Y	(1977-1987)	(23-33)	(25-34)
New Millennial	(1988-)	(00-22)	(0-24)

* These age ranges are based on the Census year of 2010. The Census grouping is how the age breakdowns can best be combined to most closely match the categories.

Initially, it should be noted, that no one person fits this exact generational profile in terms of target marketing. Within the *Silent Generation* there are many people living active

lives in their own homes, while many are now residents of active retirement communities, and still others are living in assisted living facilities and nursing homes. With housing choices limited in some communities, this population may need to "retire" elsewhere to find needed services, such as medical care, or simply choose to relocate to be closer to family or for a warmer climate.

The *Baby Boomers* are probably the most profiled category, likely because of their size but also because of the post World War II growth in the media and marketing directed at this generation. As with their parents generation, they have varying types of housing expectations, although most continue to live in single family homes, whether in subdivisions or on larger parcels. In most instances, they make up a large percentage of people who own homes in rural areas. They are also the population that will support retirement communities, often as second homes, and increased demand for medical services. Their existing and future reliance on much needed services, as well as personal wants, may influence community makeup for many years to come.

The *Generation X* population is more difficult to define, although they now encompass those in their prime working and parenting years. They are also the population expected to take up the demand for housing that may be shed by the *Silent Generation*. In a more robust economy, it is this group that may have more options as to housing, yet their lower population numbers may reduce their ability to support the services of the large Baby Boom cohort.

The *Generation Y* population, also known as the *Baby "Boomlet"*, brings forth a young generation that enjoys much of the trappings of being raised by the baby boomers. This includes educational pursuits and expectations in life, that may not always follow those same steps of their parents. In many instances, they are either not having children or deferring marriage and/or childbirth until later in life. This group is in their early working years and they are most often associated with the desire for a more urban existence. It is this group that will shape community development in the years ahead, through housing decisions and lifestyle choices.

The *New Millennials* are, as of yet, not a target of housing demand and supply, but it is anticipated that this category will follow their older *Generation Y* counterparts and seek a more urban existence. Whether a community can attract this group, which is primarily in their educational years, will be dependent upon the housing type (apartments) available, as well as commercial services and activities.

Table 3

GENERATION	CENSUS GROUP	2010 TEXAS TWP.	% OF TOT. (14,697)
Silent Generation	(65 & Over)	1,536	10%
Baby Boom	(50-64)	3,345	23%
Gen X	(35-49)	3,369	23%
Gen Y	(25-34)	1,345	9%
New Millennial	(0-24)	4,232	29%

As can be seen from Table 3, the Township has a very young population and the potential for continued growth is high as new families seek to locate in the Township based upon school district and/or other amenities. An additional key will be to provide housing options which allow the older generations (those 50 & Over) to "age in place", whether downsizing to condominium units or other housing options.

Housing

While population statistics reflect the total increase or decrease occurring in a community, the analysis of housing statistics is often the key to land use planning for new residential development. Table 4 provides a breakdown between housing units and households, which are defined as "occupied" housing units. It also lists the number of vacant units, with a very low 5% vacancy rate at the time of the Census survey, as well breakdown of owner and renter occupied units.

Table 4 - Housing

	Housing Units	Households	Vacant Units	% Vacant
2010	5,528	5,231	297	5%
	Owner-Occ.	% Household	Renter Occ.	% Household
2010	4,753	91%	478	9%

The nature of housing, in relation to population change, is often linked to population per household. Based upon a population of 14,697, there are 2.81 persons per household, which reflects the larger family sizes in the community. This number increases to 2.85 for owner-occupied units. There were 1,141 people living in the rental units, for a renter occupied of 2.39 persons per household.

Population Projections

There are numerous methods of conducting population projections but they can be categorized in primarily three ways. One category focuses on the natural increase in population associated with the number of births exceeding the number of deaths. An often used method is the "cohort-survival" method, using the age/sex breakdown for that community and projecting: a) the number of potential births from the base of females in the 15 to 44 "fertility" age range; and b) the number of anticipated deaths based upon average life expectancy. This method is most often based on the current census of population.

A second category relates to the net population increase associated with the immigration (or in-migration) of people into the community minus the out-migration that may occur. This becomes much more difficult to calculate. Adding this projection to the natural increase, sometimes referred to as the "cohort-component" method, provides for both categories to be utilized in one projection.

A third approach is simply to use the pattern over the past to project the future population. This "trend" or "growth rate" method to project future population tends to remove the fluctuations from economic related cycles that may influence a 10-year period. Based upon the increase in population over the last twenty (20) years (6,986 persons or a 91% increase from 1990), it may be possible to use a 22.75% growth rate for each 5-year period (est. 3,344 persons) over the next 20 years, with this based upon the following assumptions:

- A. The Township will be influenced by development pressure from the north, west and from the east, with a range of housing options from land division to plats and site condominium projects, as well as multi-family housing, possible within mixed use development projects.
- B. This projection may be higher than what is feasible within the growth boundary for single family residential development, but higher density housing inside the boundary and allowance for use of PUD (Planned Unit Development) and OSP (Open Space Preservation) projects (outside the boundary -within the "A" Agricultural District) may balance this difference.

Table 5 - Population Projections

2010 Census	2015 Projection	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection
14,697	18,041	21,385	24,729	28,073

This projection would lead to roughly 13,376 new residents, with this equating to approximately 5,350 new housing units (at 2.5 persons per unit) over the 20-year period.

TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

This element of the Plan incorporates by reference the role of the Planning Commission within the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process. In addition to this, the Township has a number of plans relating to development of facilities within the road right-of-way and/or just outside this right-of-way, including a new Sidewalk and Pathway Ordinance (Effective June 2013). It is the goal of the Township to provide for non-motorized facilities as part of an overall *complete streets* policy. This defines that all modes of transportation should be considered when any improvement is proposed within a right-of-way.

This initial part of this element is directed at the road system in support of vehicular movement and other non-motorized systems in support of alternative movement. In general, these "off-site" improvements are made within the public right-of-way, which may be 66-feet in width for county roads or could be up to 100 feet for county primary roads or 120-feet for state trunklines. A standard lane width of 11-feet is utilized for purposes of this analysis.

Motorized: For two-lane county roads, the paved surface may be anywhere from 22-feet, with 2-3 foot gravel shoulders on each side, to 28-feet, where speeds or vehicular turning movements may be greater. The addition of a designated turn lane then expands this to 33-feet or more. With 5 lanes, this paved surface may be 55-feet and curbed, leaving 11 feet of right-of-way in support of non-motorized allowance. The Texas Township Road Committee has established, via a special millage, a road maintenance program for the secondary road system. These funds can be used to match the County's PAR funds, with a listing of proposed projects based upon road conditions.

The Township has also recently adopted a zoning ordinance amendment to support alternative road design and private access connectors/cross access agreements between properties within the Corners Business District (CBD). The intent here is to allow for a higher density of development, with this "mixed-use site condominium" option providing the mechanism for such build-out. This option is also directed at reducing vehicle speeds and allowing for greater non-motorized use by pedestrians and bicycle riders.

Non-Motorized: While such improvements have been a part of road right-of-ways for decades, a federal directive, entitled "complete streets", has been adopted by many states and communities. This directive is to consider all modes of transportation within the right-of-way any time new roads or improvements to roads are undertaken. These modes of transportation include motorized elements, such as public transit, but mostly focus on non-motorized options, whether they be *sidewalks* for pedestrian movement, *bikelanes* for bicyclists, or *pathways* that may support multi-use applications. The Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) is pursuing greater policy directives as to non-motorized options and may use some different terminology (where noted) For purposes of this review, the following options are defined:

Sidewalks are typically 4-5 feet in width and are usually concrete. Reduced width (4 feet) may be found within residential locations, but 5-feet is typically preferred in commercial locations. Ideally, such sidewalks are placed either at or within 1-foot of the right-of-way boundary and separated from the road surface by some landscape strip. Safety is the critical element, allowing for pedestrian movement that is clearly separated from the motorized surface. The intent of the Sidewalk Pathway Ordinance and any approvals for site plans, plats or site condominium developments is that the sidewalks and pathways be constructed whether they connect to current facilities or not at the time of development.

Bikelanes are typically 3-4 feet in width and are usually within the paved surface of the road. The only separation that exists is the white line identifying the lane with a bike logo and signage identification along the route. These lanes are intended to allow riders to "share the road", with a balance between speed and safety. The Kalamazoo County Road Commission (KCRC) regulates public roads within the Township, with their preference for "paved (widened) shoulders" to allow for more alternative access. They may not prefer that such shoulders be signed as bike lanes for safety/liability purposes.

Pathways or bikepaths are typically 8-10 feet in width and are usually asphalt surfaces. These paths are separated from the road surface and may replace the sidewalk location in

the last 10-feet of the right-of-way. Where such right-of-way is not available, these paths may follow purchased or granted easements through private property. Safety is the critical element, with separation from the road surface and additional width to allow for both pedestrian and bicycle movement. The Township's Parks and Trails Committee makes recommendations as to priority segments for new development, with most recent efforts funded through KCRC, MDNR and MDOT grant programs.

Trails are generally a combination of surfaces that may, or may not, be located within a road right-of-way but could follow the same direction or be completely separate in their intent. Other natural right-of-ways, such as rivers, are often the focus, or abandoned right-of-ways are utilized, such as the "rails-to-trails" movement for abandoned track surfaces. These surfaces dictate whether they are utilized for traditional bikepaths or are unpaved and limited to hiking or mountain biking options. Equestrian and cross-country skiing use are often accepted on these surfaces. Connections of these non-motorized systems are often associated with the intended destination, whether it be for work or recreational pursuits. Health advocates promote walking and biking while economic conditions may dictate that some people do not have other options (vehicular resources). Trails could also serve as the preliminary design for improved pathway system. It is recommended that such locations, when effectively utilized and connected, provide for a 10-foot easement that could support enhanced funding options.

Sewer/Water: The Township has an extensive network of sewer and water lines, with connection to the City of Kalamazoo systems. In addition, the City of Kalamazoo has a wellfield (Al Sabo Preserve) within Texas Township that is further described in the Resource Conservation section of this plan. (Current maps included for reference). The Township Engineer will begin to review the potential for expansion of the utility system within specific sub-areas, with initial focus on the 9th Street/O Avenue area.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN/ZONING PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan is based upon the need to provide sufficient capacity for future development in support of growth outlined within the population projections for the community. This element also serves as the foundation for the zoning ordinance and is directed toward implementation through capital improvement programming. A new zoning plan element has been added to this section in order to identify those zoning districts deemed compatible or consistent with each plan designation.

This element of the plan is presented in both a narrative form as well as on the Future Land Use Map. Each land use designation is described in terms of density (residential) or intensity of use. While the Plan is intended to be general, and sometimes flexible, in its implementation, it is guided by the concept of more intensive development within a growth boundary where public services can most efficiently be extended. The nature of the plan is based upon a twenty year time horizon with updates every five years or upon a change in condition that may warrant such review and possible amendment.

The following eleven (11) designations represent specific categories of land use that may be implemented through amendments to the zoning districts map (rezoning) or through actual layout and design considerations during site plan review and approval. The "Institutional" designation has been deleted due to no specific zoning district in which to implement such designation. Those uses for which it was intended (schools, churches or similar non-profit entities) are permitted in a range of other zoning districts and the corresponding or contiguous designation has been utilized for that purpose. References to preservation of open space, planned unit development, conservation easements or similar terminology are intended to describe characteristics of development options that may serve to implement the goals and objectives of the Plan.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION

This land use designation supports the preservation of open space within public or private facilities where protection of the natural environment is balanced by opportunities for passive or active recreation or other limited development. The primary purpose of the areas designated Resource Conservation is to foster the protection of these natural features with as little disturbance as possible. A secondary purpose is to allow for public and private facilities that may support community-based activities, such as schools, churches or non-profit entities that promote outdoor recreation, such as the Pretty Lake Vacation Camp and the Rota-Kiwan Boy Scout Camp.

Wellhead Protection: One large landholder within this Resource Conservation area is the City of Kalamazoo. The Al Sabo Preserve area is the location for a city wellfield and protection of that groundwater resource is in the best interests of the entire community. Toward that end, the Township has adopted a Wellhead Protection Ordinance that closely mirrors the regulations established by the City of Kalamazoo within their ordinance, including all performance standards. As part of this intent, there are mapped areas representing the 1-Year, 5-Year and 10-year Time of Travel zones. These zones are shown on the Master Plan Map, with the 5-Year designation balancing out the need for protection intended by both the 1-Year and 10-Year areas stipulated within the wellhead ordinance. It is understood that such area can support new development subject to these standards, with the range of existing and potential uses within the 10-Year boundary subject to existing designations.

Wetland/Floodplain: New mapping has also been included identifying wetland and floodplain areas, some of which are inside this large resource conservation area (around Al Sabo), while other areas exist outside the growth boundary along the Township's west and south boundaries.

Township Parks: The Township has recently purchased a centrally located 65-acre site (south of O Avenue and east of 6th Street) that may support the need for additional park land. The Township's 5-Year Recreation Plan has identified the need for more acreage based upon the demands of the Township's growing population. This land also abuts the Consumer's Energy right-of-way, that could be used for pathways connecting to other

facilities owned by KVCC to the north (the Groves/EBT) and to the east (College campus).

Zoning Plan: The Township has recently adopted a new "RC" Resource Conservation District, which is considered the only zoning classification that would be deemed consistent and compatible with this designation. Listed uses (such as the schools/churches or other non-profit facilities) may also be permitted in other zoning districts, in which case the underlying zoning could remain without generally conflicting with the intent of this designation.

AGRICULTURE

This land use designation is intended to support the preservation of farmland while allowing for limited residential development through open space preservation or traditional land division options. While compatibility may not naturally exist between agricultural operations and encroaching residential development, the intent is that development will be through scattered sites or where layout and design considerations can minimize such conflict. It should be emphasized that these areas are intended to support agriculture as part of the local economy and preservation of these areas is the primary goal.

The area designated is primarily in the southern and western portions of the Township, directed at compatibility with more rural development in Prairie Ronde and Antwerp Townships. An expanded area has been provided in the northwest corner of the Township due to many landlocked parcels currently in active agriculture. It is not anticipated that public utilities will be extended into this area during the life of this Plan and protection of groundwater supplies will be based upon this scattered site approach.

Zoning Plan: Implementation of this designation is through the "A" Agricultural District and it is anticipated that maximum density for residential use will be at one unit per every two acres. While overall density (within the planned area) will be substantially less than this, consideration is given to supporting splits or development where the maximum land area is preserved for agriculture. Open Space Preservation (OSP) and Planned Unit Development (PUD) are zoning options that can be utilized in support of residential development with a focus on agricultural and open space preservation.

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

This land use designation is intended to provide for residential development at a density range of between one unit per every 1.5 acres to three units per acre. This range allows for development within areas that may or may not be served by public utilities yet are within the anticipated growth area during the life of the Plan. The primary use of land will be single family residences on individual lots or sites, often through development of subdivision or site condominium projects.

In most instances, this designation defines the growth area for the Township and should be considered the area for public utility expansion over the next twenty years. While many areas planned for Low Density Residential are presently zoned “R-2” Residential, this more intensive zoning reflects existing utility service areas as well as proximity to commercial and industrial development areas of the Township, with this more compatible with the Medium Density Residential designation.

Zoning Plan: Implementation of this designation is primarily through the “R-1” Residential district, although the “R-2” Residential district may be compatible where public utilities and surrounding land use support more intensive development. An “R-1A” District was adopted to provide transition between these districts and compatibility within the middle of this density range. It is intended that the “R-1” District would serve as the perimeter of this Low Density designation, where this is abutting and within approximately 1/8 to 1/4 mile of the Agricultural designation. The “R-1A” District would provide for transition between the “R-1” and “R-2” Districts, depending upon the availability and distance to public utilities. The “R-2” would only be compatible where abutting existing “R-2” zoning along two boundaries or along one boundary where public utilities are in place and can be extended to serve the development.

MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

This land use designation is directed at supporting single family development on smaller lots and introducing two-family dwellings in areas of transition to more intensive land use. The density range is from three (3) to five (5) units per acre and is dependent upon connection to public utilities.

Areas planned for such use are adjoining *development* areas centrally located or along major thoroughfares within the Township. Such development may also be useful for infill projects in order to support more intensive development inside the growth area.

Zoning Plan: The “R-2” Residential District is considered most compatible with this designation, with the “R-3” Residential (Single and Two-Family) District generally consistent where conditions support such density of residential use. Use of Planned Unit Development (PUD) may be beneficial in preserving open space where higher densities of development may impact upon adjoining development of a less intensive nature.

HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

This land use designation supports the development of two-family, multiple family and mobile home park uses based upon residential density of between five (5) and ten (10) units per acre. Such development allows for a diversity of housing options and may provide support with housing needs for local employers or students attending local colleges or universities.

Zoning Plan: The “R-4” Residential (Multiple Family) District is considered the most compatible, with the “R-5” and “R-6” (Mobile Home Park) Districts generally consistent

based upon surrounding land use and zoning. The Township provides a number of areas for such development based upon proximity to business areas and access to major thoroughfares.

OFFICE

This land use designation is often associated with providing a transition area between residential and commercial development areas. While such use is integrated into both commercial and industrial (business technology) designations, it may also serve to define where more intensive development is not compatible based upon impact to adjoining residential development areas.

Zoning Plan: This land use designation is implemented through the “O-1” Office District, which is considered the only specific district compatible with this designation. Consideration may be given to using this designation when Neighborhood Commercial or High Density Residential designations are deemed too intensive based upon adjoining residential land use. Such an approach is utilized west of 9th Street between N Avenue (residential) and Beatrice Drive (industrial) development.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

This land use designation is utilized to support commercial services in areas where the type of adjoining residential land use may define the scope of such services. In most instances, uses include retail business that may be supported by pedestrian movement as well as vehicular access. These could be stand-alone locations or within small shopping centers, such as at 12th Street and Texas Drive.

Zoning Plan: The “C-1” (Local) Commercial district is considered most compatible, with the “C-2” (General) Commercial and “C-3” Shopping Center Districts generally consistent where adjoining more intensive land use or where residential development can effectively be screened or buffered from a site development perspective.

CENTRAL COMMERCIAL

This designation is directed at the establishment of a central business district for the Township, located at Texas Corners, generally the area around the intersection of Q Avenue and 8th Street. This designation area is consistent with the boundaries of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). This 5-Year Update, by reference, adopts the recently approved DDA Master Plan, with Option 3 selected for both new development and redevelopment of existing sites where feasible. The density of residential use and intensity of retail/office use will enable this area to serve as the central focus of new commercial business most compatible with pedestrian and non-motorized access from adjoining single family residential areas.

Zoning Plan: The “CBD” (Corners Business District) is considered the only zoning district compatible and consistent with this designation. Residential access to recreational

facilities, the Township Hall and commercial services is proposed to be linked by sidewalks and bike trails, providing pedestrian movement more oriented to a “downtown” environment. Restaurants and shops, with shared parking potential based upon hours of operation, may add to this mix and become an attraction for expanded development within this area of the Township. The recently adopted CBD Mixed Use Site Condominium regulations will allow for the implementation for a wide range of development options.

REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

This land use designation provides for a wide range of commercial uses, with a focus on vehicular access from patrons within the Township as well as through traveling through the community. Accessibility from I-94 and its interchange at 9th Street provides the primary location for such development within the Township.

Zoning Plan: The “C-3” (Shopping Center) and “C-4” (Highway) Commercial districts are both considered compatible with this designation. The mix of uses is quite broad and typically focuses on providing sufficient parking and access to move patrons quickly from the roadway to avoid traffic conflicts and congestion. Access management guidelines are especially encouraged in these areas due to potential conflict with turning movements as well as pedestrian and non-motorized transportation needs.

BUSINESS & TRAINING

This specialized land use designation seeks to broaden the Township’s role in economic development and training by supporting business, industry and job training for area students and residents. Proximity to I-94 provides for ease of access to employees as well as students, with this enhanced by the connection along 9th Street to Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC).

Zoning Plan: This designation is compatible with and implemented through the “EBT” Education, Business and Technology Park district. While such development can support large scale business and industry, site development in a campus-like setting allows for increased compatibility to residential areas not often associated with typical industrial development.

INDUSTRIAL

This land use designation provides for a broad range of business and industry to locate in the Township. The area designated, north of I-94 along 9th Street, is also consistent with a similar pattern of development to the north in Oshtemo Township.

Zoning Plan: This designation is implemented through the “I-1”, “I-2” and “I-3” Industrial districts. Compatibility is defined by the nature of surrounding land use to the subject site and the mix of businesses in the area.

COMPATIBILITY WITH ZONING

Throughout this Future Land Use Plan element, reference has been made to the zoning districts that are considered most compatible with a given land use plan designation. In most instances, the zoning district most compatible is that which is considered least intensive or at the lower density range for residential use. Other zoning districts may be identified as generally consistent based upon surrounding land use or adjoining plan designations or zoning districts.

The need to define this compatibility is based upon the need and time frame associated with amending the plan in response to requests for zoning ordinance map amendments. In most cases, a “rezoning” request is initiated by a private party (typically the owner) to change the zoning classification to allow for a more intensive land use. Such request may be incompatible with the land use designation in the Plan and may lead to an application for amendment being required, in order to preserve the integrity of the Plan as an unbiased guide for future development of the Township.

When a request is made for a rezoning to a classification that is less intensive than the Plan designation, the concern is based upon whether sufficient capacity remains within the Plan to support that intensity of use in other locations. If so, the Planning Commission may determine that a plan amendment is not necessary based upon a less intensive use than anticipated, which is generally consistent based upon surrounding land use for areas not presently developed.

To determine the need to undertake a plan amendment, the Planning Commission, in coordination with the Township Board’s decision to authorize distribution of a Notice of Intent, should rely on these references in the Future Land Use element as to compatibility and general consistency. This requirement is based upon the desire for implementation of the Plan through the zoning ordinance and for educating the public (and applicants for rezoning) about the importance of the Plan within the overall development process.

IMPLEMENTATION

Once this Master Plan Update is adopted, the intent will be to work toward implementation of the Plan through more specific actions. Typically, these actions would focus on a closer look at sub-areas of the Township, design characteristics or on amendments to the Clearzoning ordinance. In addition, the Planning Commission has become a primary reviewer of projects through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The following have been identified as potential actions directed toward implementation of this plan over the next 5 year period and beyond:

9th Street/O Avenue Sub-Area: This area of the Township has the most diverse mix of uses and zoning districts, including the most intensive business use and the highest density of residential use. It is generally bisected by I-94, with a focus on the regional attraction for business development, with supporting hotel, restaurant and related uses. Unique to this area is the large Business & Training development "The Groves", which is

owned and supported by Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC). This large campus also transitions into recreational land to the south. As part of this planning effort, consideration will be given to connecting the medium to higher density housing to these facilities through non-motorized connections (primarily bikepath and sidewalk improvements).

Design Guidebook: The Township has implemented some design guidelines with the Corners Business District (CBD) and will now look to carry this forward to other development areas. The intent will be to provide the development community with some options for more detail oriented design characteristics, including lighting, landscaping, signage or similar amenities that may be presented on the site plan.

Zoning Ordinance (Clearzoning) Amendments: There is an ongoing process of reviewing the zoning ordinance for possible amendment based upon comments received during the review and approval of projects. Often, the Planning Commission will initiate these amendments following such review based upon the desire to better support flexibility or to tighten down language that did not provide clear direction or interpretation.

Capital Improvement Program: This 6-year program provides guidance to the Township Board related to a prioritized project list that can assist within the annual budget process as well as support future development efforts. The Planning Commission serves in an advisory role in reviewing projects and coordinating such projects with the Township's Master Plan, Recreation Plan and related longer-term planning efforts.