

Allendale Charter Township

2024 MASTER PLAN

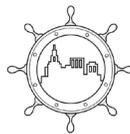
Planning Commission:

Mark Adams – Chairperson
Ray Nadda – Vice-Chairperson
Tom Zuniga – Secretary
Rick Westerling – Member
Bruce Zeinstra – Member
Joe Jacquot – Member
Todd Bronson – Member

Board of Trustees:

Adam Elenbaas – Supervisor
Jody Hansen – Clerk
David Vander Wall – Treasurer
Ken Smit – Trustee
Mikal MacDonald – Trustee
Kris Schuitema – Trustee
Bruce Zeinstra – Trustee

With Assistance By:



Fresh Coast Planning

Allendale Charter Township – 6676 Lake Michigan Drive
Allendale – Michigan – 49401
Ottawa County

**RESOLUTION
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF ALLENDALE
COUNTY OF OTTAWA, MICHIGAN**

**ALLENDALE CHARTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
RESOLUTION TO APPROVE MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Allendale Charter Township Planning Commission prepared a proposed new Master Plan and submitted the plan to the Township Board for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, the Allendale Charter Township Planning Commission made the necessary inquiries, investigations, and surveys of the appropriate resources of the Township, and considered the character of the Township and its suitability for particular uses judged in terms of such factors as the trend in land and population development; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan, as proposed, will promote public health, safety and general welfare; will encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability; will avoid the overcrowding of land by buildings or people; will lessen congestion on public roads and streets; and will facilitate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation and other public improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan, as proposed, includes the material described in the following Table of Contents, Appendices, and Maps:

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APPENDICIES

- Community Description
- Community Mapping
 - Master Plan
 - Prime Farmland
 - Soil Limitations and Groundwater Sensitivity
 - General Plan of Water System
 - General Plan of Sanitary Sewer System
 - Wetlands
 - Parks and Trails Master Plan
- Community Participation to Update Master Plan

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2024, the Allendale Charter Township Board reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to surrounding municipalities and regional planning organizations as identified in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, notice was provided to the surrounding municipalities and regional planning organizations as provided in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act; and

WHEREAS, the Allendale Charter Township Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 7, 2024 to consider public comment on the proposed new Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission found that the proposed new Master Plan is desirable and proper and furthers the use, preservation, and development goals and strategies of the Township;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED, that the Allendale Charter Township Planning Commission approves the Master Plan, as presented to the public on October 7, 2024.

The foregoing resolution was offered by Nadda second offered by Westerling.

Upon roll call vote the following voted: "Aye": Zuniga, Zeinstra, Westerling, Jacquot, Bronson, and Nadda. "Nay": None. One member absent.

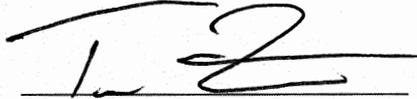
The Vice-Chairperson declared the resolution ADOPTED.



Tom Zuniga, Secretary

CERTIFICATE

I, the undersigned, the Secretary of the Planning Commission of the Charter Township of Allendale, Ottawa County, Michigan, certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Planning Commission at a regular meeting held on the 7th day of October, 2024. I further certify that public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with Michigan Act 267 of 1976, as amended, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be or have been made available as required by the Act.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Zuniga', written over a horizontal line.

Tom Zuniga, Secretary

Allendale Charter Township Planning Commission

RESOLUTION 2024-21
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF ALLENDALE
COUNTY OF OTTAWA, MICHIGAN

ALLENDALE CHARTER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
RESOLUTION TO ADOPT MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Allendale Charter Township Planning Commission prepared a proposed new Master Plan and submitted the plan to the Township Board for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, the Allendale Charter Township Planning Commission made the necessary inquiries, investigations, and surveys of the appropriate resources of the Township, and considered the character of the Township and its suitability for particular uses judged in terms of such factors as the trend in land and population development; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan, as proposed, will promote public health, safety and general welfare; will encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability; will avoid the overcrowding of land by buildings or people; will lessen congestion on public roads and streets; and will facilitate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation and other public improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan, as proposed, includes the material described in the following Table of Contents, Appendices, and Maps:

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- General Plan of Water System
- General Plan of Sanitary Sewer System
- Wetlands
- Parks and Trails Master Plan
- Community Participation to Update Master Plan

WHEREAS, on November 25, 2024, the Allendale Charter Township Board reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to surrounding municipalities and regional planning organizations as identified in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, notice was provided to the surrounding municipalities and regional planning organizations as provided in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act; and

WHEREAS, the Allendale Charter Township Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 7, 2024 to consider public comment on the proposed new Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission found that the proposed new Master Plan is desirable and proper and furthers the use, preservation, and development goals and strategies of the Township, and subsequently approved and recommended adoption to the Allendale Charter Township Board of Trustees;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED, that the Allendale Charter Township Board of Trustees adopts the Master Plan, as presented to the public, on November 25, 2024.

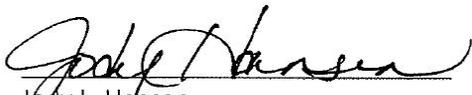
The foregoing resolution was offered by Mr. Vander Wall, second offered by Mr. Smit.

YEAS: Mr. Vander Wall; Mr. Smit; Mr. MacDonald; Ms. Hansen; Ms. Schuitema; Mr. Zeinstra; and Mr. Elenbaas (7)

NAYS: None (0)

ABSENT: None (0)

Resolution declared adopted on November 25, 2024.



Jody L. Hansen
Allendale Charter Township Clerk



Adam Elenbaas
Allendale Charter Township Supervisor

CERTIFICATE

I, the undersigned, the Clerk of the Board of Trustees of the Charter Township of Allendale, Ottawa County, Michigan, certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Trustees at a regular meeting held on the 25th day of November, 2024. I further certify that public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in full compliance with Michigan Act 267 of 1976, as amended, and that the minutes of said meeting were kept and will be or have been made available as required by the Act.



Jody L. Hansen, Clerk, Allendale Charter Township

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Introduction & Community Profile

Preface

The Allendale Township Master Plan has been prepared by the Township Planning Commission under the provisions of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008 as amended. This Plan is a policy guide that is used by township officials to guide future development and growth. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act authorizes municipalities to prepare and adopt a plan for the following purposes:

- To promote the public health, safety, and general welfare;
- To encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability;
- To avoid overcrowding of the land by buildings and people;
- To lessen congestion on public roads and streets;
- To facilitate a transportation system, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, recreation and other public improvements; and,
- To consider the character and suitability of land for particular uses.

Although the Master Plan has no regulatory power, it states specific land development and preservation goals. The Master Plan assists Township officials in making both day- to-day and long-range land use decisions. Some of these instances include but are not limited to:

- Review of rezoning and special use permits
- Review of public improvement projects
- Review of plats and site condominiums
- Providing a legal framework for zoning actions
- Managing growth while maintaining the character of the Allendale community
- Providing consistency to decision-making

This Master Plan has been developed based upon several factors: the existing natural and cultural resources of the Township; current land use trends; the need for different types of land use including industrial and commercial uses; and the desired community character as expressed through work sessions with local officials, the 2011 community citizen survey and the 2015 Community Strategic Plan supporting a town center, and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) workshop with the public.

Despite its purpose as a policy document, it is important to recognize that the Master Plan is general in scope. It is not always intended to establish the precise boundaries of land use areas or exact locations of future uses. Rather, the Master Plan is an organized approach to analyzing development issues and proposing recommendations to address these issues. Its function is to guide growth and provide a framework to ensure that future detailed decisions can be made based on a community-wide perspective. Given that the needs and desires of the community change over time, the Master Plan must be regularly reviewed and periodically updated.

Community

Physical and environmental conditions establish limitations on how some areas of the Township will develop. The physical and environmental makeup of the Township influences the population, housing, economic, and labor force composition of the community. Given the steady increase in population,

demands will continue for additional infrastructure, for the conversion of farmland, and for the preservation of the natural environment to accommodate additional residential and commercial growth. The Master Plan must therefore provide for appropriate areas to be served by public sewer and water utilities as well as establish future residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and recreational areas within the township in order to adequately address the needs of the community as a whole and prevent incompatible uses.

Allendale Charter Township is located in the central portion of Ottawa County and has a total land area of 32 square miles. The largest single category of land use is Agricultural and Rural, however there has been an increase in single family residential development, planned unit developments, and commercial developments in recent years. Allendale Charter Township is also home to Grand Valley State University and the total enrollment for the 2023 Fall academic year was 22,269 students. The area surrounding Grand Valley State University continues to grow and has been identified as an opportunity to increase the partnership between the community and University in creating a strong quality of life for its' residents.

One limitation to development has been in regard to wetlands that are regulated by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy. Land containing regulated wetlands has limited development potential, due to natural development constraints as well as wetland protection regulations and therefore it is vital for Township Officials to consider the rural character of the land and future land use. In addition, due to the overall growth in not only the Township, but Ottawa County as a whole, the Township should focus on groundwater preservation efforts in accordance with Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are recognized and used within this Master Plan as defined below:

Rural Character – is recognized as the natural features of the earth that minimize the visual exposure of buildings, structures, and other man-made features and which create scenic character. It is also recognized as the natural features of the earth that provide environmental buffers and/or habitat that is characteristic of the Township. Features are found to include:

- Woods, woodlots, forest areas, and native trees
- Wetlands
- Natural vegetation
- Wildlife habitat
- Natural field areas
- Scenic vistas

Rural Character also includes farmland, which is recognized as natural features that are organized and managed by man.

Open Space – is recognized as areas of land unoccupied by buildings, structures, or other man-made features, that are preserved to be unoccupied by buildings, structures, or other man-made features within a project. Open Space is not intended to include displays of art or other cultural features; bridges, signage, utilities, and other essential service structures; or grade level features such as ponds.

Wildlife Corridor - An asymmetrical area of natural habitat that provides passage for wildlife, colonization, and the breeding of plants and animals, throughout a development and across artificial obstacles such as dams, roads, pedestrian pathways, and railways.

Findings

Below is a summary of the findings derived from the 2019 Master Plan Update SWOT public workshop responses. The entirety of the results can be found within the Appendix:

- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Workshop (Summer 2019)
 - Participants found the library, school system, and quality of life to be the top strengths in Allendale Charter Township.
 - Participants found the high-speed limits on the roadways to be the top weakness in Allendale Charter Township. The second top weakness identified in the Township is the lack of a Town Center. Given that speeds are generally outside the authority of the Township, the lack of a Town Center was the primary weakness that the Township could directly impact.
 - Providing pedestrian bridges was identified as the top priority. The second top opportunity identified was increased communication in partnership with Grand Valley State University.
 - Overwhelmingly, public workshop participants identified the top threat to Allendale Charter Township as big box stores locating in the community.

Coupled with the Town Center findings from the SWOT workshop, public support for the same are reflected within the results from the 2011 citizen survey, which can also be found within the Appendix. In addition, the 2015 Community Strategic Plan remains active as a referenced policy document concerning the Town Center, but is not included within the Appendix.

How to Use this Plan

For each land use or attribute chapter, the plan identifies goals, recommendations, and strategies, which are the basis for future development. The goals, recommendations, and strategies are designed as follows:

- Goals – These are community objectives derived from significant public input and Planning Commission oversight.
 - These are applied most frequently during land use review to ensure a proposed development meets and is consistent with the core values of the Master Plan.
- Recommendations – These are pointed direction to achieve the goals.
 - These are applied the strongest during land use review to ensure proposed development is consistent with the intent of the Master Plan
- Strategies – In an effort to accomplish the goals and recommendations of the Master Plan, the strategies are the legislative methods to mandate certain physical form, through zoning ordinance or police power ordinances.

Chapter One

Agricultural Uses

Introduction

Although Allendale Charter Township continues to grow and develop, the community maintains its strong agricultural presence. Many active farms still exist and farming is a prevalent component of the economy and heritage of the Township. However, as generations and attributes continue to change throughout the Township, the agricultural community must evolve and recognize increasing residential, commercial, and industrial development that was attracted to the Township by the very character agriculture provides.

The Prime Farmland Soils Map classifies areas of the Township on the basis of soil suitability for general agricultural crop production. It shows the location of soils classified as prime farmland in their natural state and those that are considered prime when altered to improve drainage characteristics. It also shows those, which for a variety of reasons, are not considered prime as rated on a relative scale, by the United States Department of Agriculture. Prime farmlands are naturally endowed with the soil qualities, growing season, and moisture content necessary to sustain high crop yields under average farming practices.

As illustrated by the Prime Farmland soils map, provided in the Appendix, the highest concentration of prime agriculture lands is located within the eastern portion of the Township, however prime farmland is also scattered throughout the central and northern portions of the Township. The southeastern area has experienced significant growth, due to the expansion of Grand Valley State University and the development of non-farm single family dwellings. However, there is still a significant number of parcels that are at least 40 acres in size, that are used for agricultural use. It is envisioned that through a combination of improved state farmland preservation policies, market conditions, and local land use policies, farming will continue throughout the Township and therefore continue to represent a significant part of the economic and social fabric of the Township. In order to continue to provide an environment in which our agricultural character can thrive, the following goals, recommendations, and strategies were developed. It is important to note that the implementation of these goals, recommendations, and strategies is subject to the Michigan Right to Farm Act and may restrict the totality of their intent.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Obtain a balance between development and agriculture by anticipating and planning for the gradual transition of certain agricultural and open space lands into planned developments while minimizing the impacts of such development on ongoing farming operations
- Support agricultural operations
- Protect and preserve those elements which contribute to the rural character of the Township including woodlands, wetlands, farms and farmlands, pastures, fields, open views, the dark night sky, and architectural styles
- Prevent residential or commercial developments that are isolated from compatible zoning districts and uses as well as necessary utilities, transportation networks and other public services, which are designed to provide interconnection between developments, to protect premature development of farmland

Recommendations

- Incorporate the preservation of natural features into site development design as a function of site plan review
- Encourage crop production and livestock use to minimally impact existing open spaces.
- Encourage all farm building construction to be designed in a central or same location to preserve the most farmland as possible and minimally impact existing open spaces
- Design a “no-cut” zone along right-of-ways to protect the natural landscape, maintain open space, and rural character, as well as preserve the native drainage system and reduce flooding
- Limit the orientation of parcel development to protect the rural image and blend development with the natural landscape.
- Require clustering of housing
- Accommodate wildlife corridors within development

Strategies

- Support private conservation efforts such as county and state level farmland preservation program initiatives (e.g. purchase of development rights (PDR) and transfer development rights (TDR) programs) to assist long term farming operations
- Continue to support the enrollment of agricultural lands into the PA 116 Program
- Encourage soil conservation practices, the prudent use of fertilizers and pesticides and other means of conserving wildlife habitat, wetlands and woodlands
- Require the clustering of parcel divisions
- Create new zoning regulations to restrict the number of new lots that could be created for non-farm dwellings
- Review and revise Zoning Ordinance regulations as necessary to put into place development requirements which will contribute to keeping rural character
- Review the Agricultural and Rural Zone (AG) and Rural Estate Zone (RE) Districts and allow farming only in areas where appropriate
- Require more compact residential developments in order to maintain open lands in the Township
- Adopt Zoning Ordinance regulations that require minimum open space requirements for Planned Unit Developments (PUD)
- Require open spaces which are accessible to all persons in developments
- Develop open space incentives for developers to both help maintain the rural character of the Township and provide a buffer area between residential development and farmland
- Create development boundary that protects prime farmland soil by generally restricting residential neighborhood development, commercial development, and industrial development within that area
- Consider adoption of regulations which require the preservation of a natural vegetation filtration strip along lakes, rivers, and streams
- Consider adoption of regulations which require Wildlife Corridors within development

Chapter Two Residential Uses

Introduction

While Allendale Charter Township still has a strong agricultural presence, residential uses continue to grow as the Township further develops. Much of this can be attributed to the semi-rural character of the Township, proximity to both Grand Rapids and the Lakeshore, general quality of life, and the continued growth of Grand Valley State University.

In the 2019 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) workshop, the participants identified the growth of the residential population as one of the greatest strengths for the community. Over the years, there has been an increase in a variety of housing styles, ranging from single-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings, and student housing. While such growth is beneficial to the Allendale community, participants also identified a concern of managing the residential growth rate. Given this, there is a need to evaluate current residential development regulations to appropriately guide future development, while ensuring there will not be a negative impact on existing uses. In addition, in order to preserve the semi-rural character of the Township and quality of life that exists, there is a need for regulations to preserve open space and existing physical attributes.

As a result of the 2019 SWOT Workshop, as well as numerous planning meetings and other planning mechanisms, the following goals, recommendations, and strategies were developed.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Build a sense of community
- Provide for strong neighborhoods with a range of residential styles and densities, which incorporate into the landscape of existing neighborhoods
- Concentrate the density of residential land uses to protect open spaces and rural character
- Development along M-45 should be designed to enhance traffic safety, establish walkable access from adjacent neighborhoods and be compatible with existing and future land uses in these neighborhoods
- Protect and preserve, to the extent practicable, those elements which contribute to the rural character of the Township including woodlands, wetlands, wildlife habitats, farms, pastures, fields, open spaces and other natural areas, particularly those that are useful as water retention and ground water discharge areas and which have important aesthetic and scenic value
- Create a walkable community
- Ensure that student housing is located and designed to avoid conflicts with existing and planned single family housing
- Ensure that multi-family housing is located and designed to avoid conflicts with existing and planned single-family housing
- Preserve the natural resources and groundwater quality of Allendale Charter Township

Recommendations

- Require housing development to utilize clustering techniques
- Require that development layouts blend with the natural features and existing physical attributes
- Provide safe trails and sidewalks between destination land uses and along roadways for pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users and all non-motorized users to create a walkable and connected community
- Require higher density housing on lands that have the capacity to support such development by means of adequate public roads, public water and public sanitary sewer, and other available infrastructure
- Integrate development into the landscape of existing neighborhoods by abutting open spaces, creating a connection of roads, linking pedestrian pathways, and appropriately blending other public amenities
- Encourage, where appropriate, light pollution regulations to preserve the night sky
- Encourage, where practicable, the preservation of farmhouses, barns, fence styles, and other architectural and landscaping forms, which symbolize the architectural heritage of the Township
- Require the preservation of existing trees along the rights-of-way for future development
- Rezoning to the R-1, R-2, R-3, or R-4 Zoning District shall not occur without public water and public sanitary sewer present at the property
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new development that are in accordance with Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative
- Accommodate wildlife corridors within development

Strategies

- Revise Zoning Ordinance regulations as necessary to preserve or enhance rural character, especially in regard to Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)
- Provide development incentives within the Zoning Ordinance which require the preservation of natural features and open space accessible to all persons in site development design
- Revise the Residential Open Space Development regulations of the Zoning Ordinance so that cluster open space is more appealing to developers than the traditional subdivision design pattern in order to preserve open space in the Township
- Review the Agricultural and Rural Zone (AG) and Rural Estate Zone (RE) Districts and allow farming only in areas where appropriate
- Rezoning to the R-1, R-2, R-3, or R-4 Zoning District shall not occur without public water and public sanitary sewer present at the property
- Require the lot layout, open space, roads, pedestrian pathways, and other site features of new residential developments to be extensions of existing neighborhoods, where practicable, to reduce curb cuts, provide for greater emergency access, and result in a better neighborhood design and public safety
- Require new residential developments to incorporate a pedestrian sidewalk system that ultimately connects with abutting developments to produce a walkable and connected community
- Utilize the Planned Unit Development concept as an incentive tool for development, as a means of preserving the natural character of sites, and to encourage the provision of structured, usable open space
- Strengthen as necessary, zoning regulations limiting the number of residential units in a multi-family building to lessen the visual impact of such buildings

- Strengthen as necessary, zoning regulations to reduce the minimum square footage required for a dwelling in the R-3 Zoning District
- Strengthen as necessary, zoning regulations to restrict the construction of new multi-family housing intended specifically for college students to not extend west of 52nd Avenue
- Adopt new zoning regulations to restrict light pollution to protect the night sky of open spaces
- Strengthen as necessary, zoning regulations which create greater building setbacks, limitations on building height and size and other development standards to reduce the impact of apartments on single-family neighborhoods
- Strengthen as necessary, zoning regulations that require student housing is located close to Grand Valley State University for easier and safer pedestrian access
- Strengthen as necessary, zoning regulations to allow an increase in multi-family density and to allow taller buildings in order to allow a greater concentration of students closer to Grand Valley State University's campus and reduce the need to extend student housing west of 52nd Avenue
- Require appropriate landscaping, building setbacks, placement and design, exterior lighting, safe driveway locations, and safety measures for pedestrian transportation
- Consider adoption of regulations which require Wildlife Corridors within development

Chapter Three Commercial Uses

Introduction

The growth of Grand Valley State University and accessibility to the City of Grand Rapids via Lake Michigan Drive continues to foster extensive commercial expansion along the eastern portion of the Lake Michigan Drive corridor within the Township. Coupled with this access, the Allendale community is also supported by a significant public water and sanitary sewer system, which has been advantageous for development. While the commercial growth along the Lake Michigan Drive corridor has been significant, participants in the 2019 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats workshop, identified the character of that commercial growth as a core opportunity for improvement. Participants supported neighborhood commercial amenities such as small markets and pop-up shops in the alternative to current trends. As the Township evaluates its commercial areas, with particular regard to Lake Michigan Drive, physical character as well as other factors will need to be considered such as the location, abutting land uses, traffic patterns and volumes, availability of utilities, and projected population growth.

In an effort to continue a healthy, controlled growth of commercial development to serve the local and regional needs of the community, we have concluded that the following goals are paramount in our commercial pursuits. In addition, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Promote the development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation of commercial areas to provide attractive sites, and to encourage a diversity of enterprises which will strengthen the tax base and increase employment opportunities
- Development along Lake Michigan Drive should be designed to enhance traffic safety, establish walkable access from adjacent neighborhoods, and be compatible with existing and future land uses in these neighborhoods
- Concentrate the density of commercial land uses to protect open spaces and rural character
- Protect and preserve, to the extent practicable, those elements which contribute to the rural character of the Township including woodlands, wetlands, wildlife habitats, farms, pastures, fields, open spaces, and other natural areas, particularly those that are useful as water retention and ground water discharge areas and which have important aesthetic and scenic value
- Create a walkable community
- Preserve the natural resources and groundwater quality of Allendale Charter Township
- Encourage a building scale and design that softens the physical appearance of large commercial spaces and promotes a welcoming pedestrian relationship

Recommendations

- Intensive commercial land uses should have the resources to support such development, and be located within the boundaries of the water and sanitary sewer service areas, accessible from adequate roads, and other available infrastructure

- Continue to require development to provide for the construction of sidewalks along major arterial streets; incorporate the design concepts of “Complete Streets” into existing and future streets
- Provide safe trails and sidewalks between destination land uses and along roadways for pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users, and all non-motorized users to create a walkable and connected community
- Require that future commercial development does not intrude upon the residents in abutting single family neighborhoods
- Encourage the preservation of existing trees along the rights-of-way
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new development that are in accordance with Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative
- Accommodate wildlife corridors within development
- Improve and expand upon existing business areas that will provide functional, safe, convenient, and attractive shopping and service opportunities
- Require that development layouts blend with the natural features and existing physical attributes

Strategies

- Strengthen, as necessary, the commercial site development standards in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that the operational characteristics of commercial uses (parking lot lights, vehicle noise, lighting, emptying of dumpsters, etcetera) do not disrupt the residential uses which exist or are planned in close proximity to the commercial uses on Lake Michigan Drive
- Revise Zoning Ordinance regulations, as necessary, to preserve or enhance rural character, especially in regard to Planned Unit Developments
- Review existing regulations regarding the development of commercial properties to ensure they address contemporary uses and development practices and that they balance the need for public safety and good site design with the economic considerations of the business community
- Consider rezoning Planned Unit Developments which contain only commercial uses to the General Commercial District
- Review existing land uses along Lake Michigan Drive and potential commercial development locations, to evaluate if additional buffering should be required to minimize the impact on adjoining residential uses
- Approximately every five years, evaluate whether there is a need for more commercial zoned land in the Township
- Strengthen, as necessary, language to improve the aesthetics of building facades and streetscapes
- Ensure adequate on and off-street parking in a manner that compliments the compactness in local commercial areas
- Ensure that commercial land uses are separated from non-commercial uses with landscaping, buffered thoroughfares, or transitional land uses
- Consider adoption of regulations which require Wildlife Corridors within development
- Utilize the Planned Unit Development concept as an incentive tool for development, as a means of preserving the natural character of sites, and to encourage the provision of structured, usable open spaces

Chapter Four Industrial Uses

Introduction

A majority of the industrial land within Allendale Charter Township is located east of 56th Avenue and north of Lake Michigan Drive. These parcels are served by public water and sanitary sewer, have good access to Lake Michigan Drive, are relatively flat, and can be easily developed. Given this, Allendale Charter Township has a number of attributes to foster industrial development.

According to Lakeshore Advantage, a non-profit organization whose purpose is to provide professional economic development services to Ottawa County and its local governmental units, Grand Valley State University serves to attract businesses, as the University provides a ready source of educated employees. Lakeshore Advantage also finds a strong market for agricultural food processing facilities in Ottawa County, which could be advantageous for industrial growth within Allendale Charter Township. As a result of collaboration between Grand Valley State University and agricultural businesses, there may be opportunities to increase industrial uses within the Township.

In an effort to continue a healthy, controlled growth of industrial development, we have concluded that the following goals are paramount in our industrial pursuits. In addition, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Create a walkable community
- Development along Lake Michigan Drive should be designed to enhance traffic safety, establish walkable access from adjacent neighborhoods, and be compatible with existing and future land uses in these neighborhoods
- Protect and preserve, to the extent practicable, those elements which contribute to the rural character of the Township including woodlands, wetlands, wildlife habitats, farms, pastures, fields, open spaces and other natural areas, particularly those that are useful as water retention and ground water discharge areas and have important aesthetic and scenic value
- Preserve the natural resources and groundwater quality of Allendale Charter Township
- Promote the development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation of industrial areas to provide attractive sites to a variety of enterprises which will strengthen the tax base and provide a place of employment for area residents
- Accommodate industrial development in areas that are easily accessible by major transportation facilities, are adequately served by public utilities and services, and are well positioned to avoid conflicts with emerging residential areas

Recommendations

- Intensive industrial land uses shall be located within the boundaries of the public water and sanitary sewer service areas
- Continue to require development to provide for the construction of sidewalks along major arterial streets; incorporate the design concepts of “Complete Streets” into existing and future streets
- Encourage, where practicable, the preservation of farmhouses, barns, fence styles, and other architectural landscaping forms, which symbolize the agricultural heritage of the Township
- Require that development layouts blend with natural features and existing physical attributes
- Require the preservation of existing trees along the rights-of-way for future development
- Promote high quality industrial development through controlled access, service areas within the side or rear of buildings, screening of outdoor storage and equipment, as well as an emphasis on main building entry and landscaping
- Industrial nuances such as air pollution, water pollution, vibration, and outdoor storage of materials should be controlled by adequate site improvements
- Industrial sites should transition to adjacent uses with site design elements that are low impact
- Encourage groundwater preservation regulations for new development that are in accordance with Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative
- Accommodate wildlife corridors within development

Strategies

- Strengthen, as necessary, preservation of natural features into site development design as a function of site plan review
- Consider adoption of regulations which require preservation of a natural vegetation filtration strip along lakes, rivers, and streams
- Review existing regulations and development of industrial properties to ensure they address contemporary uses and development practices and that they balance the need for public safety and good site design with the economic considerations of the business community
- Plan for suitable land which is accessible by all season roads and public facilities for future industrial development
- Intensive industrial land uses shall be located so they are served by public water and sanitary sewer as well as paved roads
- Approximately every five years, evaluate whether there is a need for additional industrial zoned land in the Township
- Consider adoption of regulations which require Wildlife Corridors within development

Chapter Five Town Center

Introduction

A Town Center concept is intended to provide a place where people can live, shop, dine, and experience other public and private services in a centralized environment that is a safe and healthy place to gather. A Town Center will provide a pedestrian friendly, mixed-use development that is attractive and easily accessible to the greater network of streets, pathways, residential areas, and commerce within the Township. It is also intended to serve as the primary location for social interaction and community events. Further, a Town Center accommodates all modes of transportation with emphasis on the pedestrian rather than the automobile.

The previous Town Center concept was intended along Lake Michigan Drive. As Allendale Charter Township experiences continued residential growth that is driving additional commercial growth the need to reapproach the growth patterns along the Lake Michigan Drive corridor becomes increasingly important in order to achieve the Town Center concept. In particular, as redevelopment demands occur along the Lake Michigan Drive frontage and within vacant properties adjacent to Lake Michigan Drive and intersecting streets, the Township needs to direct development that is consistent with the goals and recommendations of the Town Center concept. Otherwise, development will continue to be established with a design that is less likely to support the vision of a town center and create challenges for redevelopment in the future to accomplish a town center at a later time. Since the Township owns property that is positioned near Lake Michigan Drive, the opportunity exists to control how the Town Center concept develops and maximize the opportunity to redevelop and infill surrounding areas through design methods that will accomplish a community Town Center. The Town Center concept was initially supported through the community survey in 2011 and again in the 2015 Community Strategic Plan adopted in 2003.

The success of this Town Center will likely require a partnership between local government, private developers, state and regional government, and potentially other non-governmental organizations.

To accomplish this Town Center concept, the following goals are paramount in its formation. In addition, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve the goals are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Create village character elements
 - Establish a main street that may contain side streets of equal character
 - On-street parking
 - No front yard parking
 - Zero front yard setback unless a public space is between the lot line and the building, then a small setback could be accommodated
 - Accessible pathways designed for multiple modes of pedestrian transportation, including walking, bicycling, wheelchairs, and etcetera
 - Wide sidewalks abutting storefronts designed for walking, universal access, dining, and gathering
 - Two and three-story buildings

- Residential and office uses on second and third floors
- Projecting wall signage
- See-through storefront windows
- Decorative street lighting and or building mounted lighting
- Promote residential, office, and commercial retail mixed-use, whether within the same building or in close proximity to each other as a greater community design
- Provide for the elements of Complete Streets to accommodate motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users including those with disabilities
- Encourage a building scale and design that softens the physical appearance of large commercial spaces and promotes a welcoming pedestrian relationship
- Preserve the natural resources of Allendale Charter Township

Recommendations

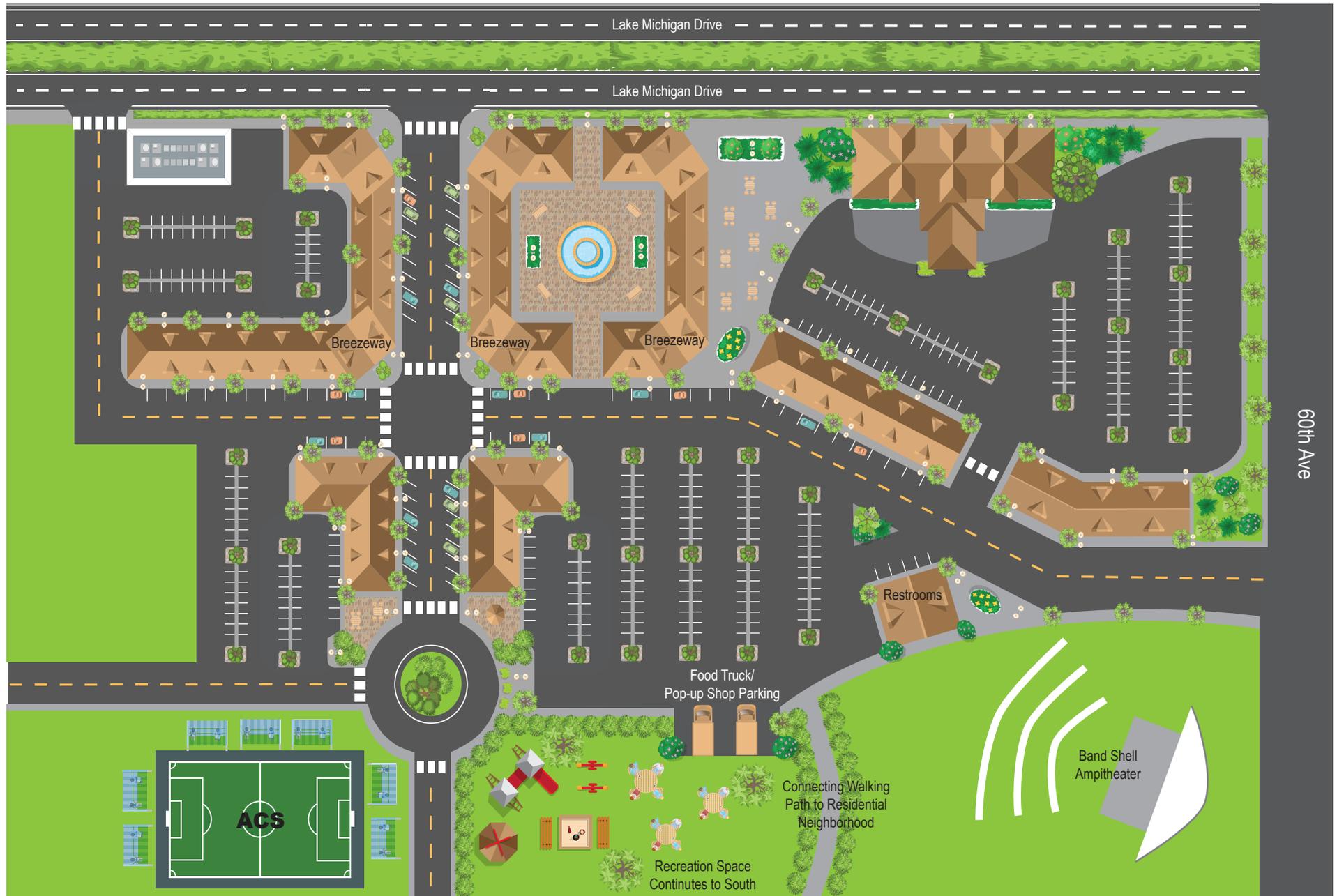
- Establish a public/private partnership to construct a main street that provides for future expansions of side streets of equal character
- Require village orientation of commercial store fronts with apartment living and or office space above stores
- Require new development to incorporate a universally designed sidewalk/pathway system that ultimately connects with abutting developments to produce a larger, accessible and connected community for pedestrians
- Require a central park, public space, or other civic amenity to accompany the village orientation
- Design connective recreational paths
- Require architectural elements for all uses to enhance roadside image
- Continue to require development to incorporate the design concepts of “Complete Streets” into existing and future streets
- Provide safe trails and sidewalks between destination land uses and along roadways for pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users, and all non-motorized users to create a walkable and connected community
- Require commercial development to blend into abutting single family neighborhoods through methods that soften the impact of the use
- Require physical design features that are welcoming and attractive to encourage the traveling public to enter the Town Center and engage with merchants, the environment, and each other.

Strategies

- Require the layout of new development, residential, commercial, or otherwise within the Town Center to be logical extensions of existing or adjacent development, where possible. This shall apply, at minimum but not necessarily limited to, lot layout, road extensions, pedestrian pathway extensions, and open spaces.
- Create a Town Center Overlay District within the Zoning Ordinance to provide for form-based codes, which include:
 - Build-to lines instead of minimum setbacks, which would require the specific location of the front of a building as either a zero front lot line or a precise setback from the front lot line, so as to create uniformity of buildings on each side of the street, as found in a typical village
 - Appropriate village height and bulk requirements

- Front Yard parking is prohibited, and parking may only be located within the street or rear yard. Rear yard parking shall be screened by buildings and or with landscaping or other elements to soften the impact of vehicles
- The accommodation of office and or residential space above storefronts
- Minimum design standards of building façade and signage
- The establishment of pedestrian friendly streetscape
- Concrete sidewalks in front of stores
- Street and wall mounted lighting
- Civic amenity elements
- Provide design incentives, such as additional building height beyond the maximum permitted, to encourage private investment in public utilities, civic amenities, or other improvements that are necessary for the collective public good
- Require connective public spaces in addition to those required by the form-based codes

Allendale Charter Township Town Center Concept



- Reverse angle parking on Main Street
- Incorporate bike lanes for complete streets
- Wide sidewalks abutting storefronts
- Two and three story buildings
- Residential or office on upper stories allowed
- Pedestrian access to adjoining parcels
- Projecting signs
- See-through front windows

Fresh Coast
Planning



Chapter Six Public & Recreational Facilities

Introduction

Public and recreational facilities are a vital component of community life within the Township. Access to public resources provides an opportunity to meet your neighbors, utilize space economically, and increase your overall health, among other benefits. Allendale Charter Township contains a variety of public and recreational facilities, including the Allendale Community Park, two Ottawa County park facilities, the Bass River State Recreation Area, and a growing number of non-motorized pathways. A description of each of the facilities can be found below:

Allendale Community Park

Allendale Charter Township operates the Allendale Community Park located behind the Township Offices. The 40-acre park consists of a handicapped accessible playground and restroom facilities, Little League and adult softball diamonds, soccer fields, splash pad, fishing pond, picnic shelters, basketball, tennis courts, fitness court, pickleball court, a band shell, and concession stand. The Knowlton House Museum and Veterans Memorial Garden of Honor are also part of the Community Park.

Ottawa County Parks

Two Ottawa County parks facilities are located within the Township. Kuits Bayou consists of 80 acres adjacent to the Grand River, and is accessible only by boat. Eastmanville Bayou consists of 157 acres adjacent to the Grand River, and includes a boat launch, three miles of trails, picnic areas, and a barrier-free canoe/kayak launch.

State of Michigan Parks

The Bass River State Recreation Area, a 1,665-acre facility, is located in the northwest portion of the Township adjacent to the Grand River. The area consists of open meadows, open brush land, mature hardwoods, small ponds and 300-acre Max Lake. The park is used primarily for boating, hiking, cross-country skiing, and mountain biking, horseback riding, and hunting. The facility contains six miles of trails.

Non-Motorized Pathways

In 2002, the Township prepared a Path and Greenway Master Plan that proposed a non-motorized trail system utilizing Ottawa County drain easements. Additional roadside non-motorized pathways as well as additional sidewalks were also recommended by the plan. Since then, the Allendale Charter Township Non-Motorized Pathways Plan has also been incorporated into the Ottawa County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan to further enhance the regional network of non-motorized pathways.

In conjunction with the Allendale Charter Township Parks and Recreation Plan, we have concluded that the following goals are principal for maintaining the long-term success of the public and recreational facilities of Allendale Charter Township. In addition, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Create a walkable community
- Preserve rural character
- Provide a range of recreation opportunities and facilities to meet the needs of citizens of all ages
- Preserve the natural resources and groundwater quality of Allendale Charter Township
- Continue the expansion of non-motorized pathways throughout the Township
- Develop new parks and public spaces within the Township

Recommendations

- Provide safer pedestrian crossing locations on M-45
- Require pedestrian and bikeway connections to adjacent properties and trails where feasible
- Provide safe trails and sidewalks between destination land uses and along roadways for pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users, and all non-motorized users to create a walkable and connected community
- Continue to require that site plans for new developments incorporate recreation design such as trails and bike paths
- Coordinate land use decisions with the goals of the Allendale Charter Township Parks and Recreation Plan
- Continue to require development to provide for the construction of sidewalks along major arterial streets; incorporate the design concepts of “Complete Streets” into existing and future streets
- Continue to incorporate the preservation of natural features into site development design as a function of site plan review
- Continue to identify future linkages with regional trail systems including, the Green River Greenways Trails, into site development design as a function of site plan review
- Encourage groundwater preservation practices for new development that are in accordance with Ottawa County’s Groundwater Sustainability Initiative

Strategies

- Identify and pursue funding sources for the construction of sidewalks and trails
- Integrate the Allendale Charter Township Parks and Trail Master Plan into the Master Plan
- Cooperate with State and County agencies regarding plans for the use of the Bass River Recreation Area and Grand River Greenway Trail
- Update the Allendale Charter Township Parks and Recreation Plan every five years in order to continue to be eligible for state and federal recreation funding programs
- Encourage citizen participation to determine needed and desired improvements, and expansions to public facilities and recreation
- Utilize the Capital improvements Program as the means to implement the street plan elements of the Master Plan, as identified by Michigan Public Act 134 of 2010, and establish official Township policy for implementation of bike path and other recreational path construction in cooperation with the Ottawa County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation where appropriate

- Pursue recreation funding from the Department of Natural Resources through the Township Parks and Recreation Plan in accordance with the Department of Natural Resources rules and qualifications

Chapter Seven Public Utilities

Introduction

A critical component in planning for the future of Allendale Charter Township is evaluating the expansion of public utilities to ensure safe and orderly growth for Township residents. Allendale Charter Township maintains sixty-seven (67) miles of water main lines and fifty-one (51) miles of sanitary sewer lines. Water for Allendale Charter Township is purchased from the City of Grand Rapids which it obtains from Lake Michigan. The Township system includes two elevated water storage tanks. A 250,000 gallon tank is located behind the Township office and a 200,000 gallon tank is located on the campus of Grand Valley State University. In those areas where public water and sewer are not available, private well and septic systems are often viable. In order to control growth and protect groundwater as much as possible within the Township, all high density residential, commercial, and industrial development must be located within the public utility boundaries.

The municipal water system within the Township is intended to parallel the sanitary sewer system and is being extended on a regular basis consistent with area growth and development trends. Areas of the Township that are not served by municipal water currently rely on private well systems, which are placed and installed under the direction of the Ottawa County Health Department. The Township does not anticipate that municipal sanitary sewer or water service will be provided throughout the entire Township in any foreseeable planning period. Accordingly, the Master Plan focuses development towards the areas where the feasibility and timing of municipal sewer and water service can best be anticipated. Emphasis is given to system expansions consistent with the locations planned to support the highest density of residential, commercial, and industrial development.

Consequently, in an effort to continue to develop appropriate public sewer and water services for the residents and visitors of Allendale Charter Township, we have concluded that the following goals are paramount in our public utility pursuits. In addition, recommendations regarding these goals as well as strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Preserve the natural resources and groundwater quality of Allendale Charter Township
- Develop adequate public utilities that will ensure balanced, orderly growth, for the safety and well-being of Township residents
- Concentrate the majority of new growth to avoid sprawl, protect farmland, and minimize its effects on the majority of the Township where future public utilities could gain a foothold by being cost effective

Recommendations

- Intensive land uses should be located within the boundaries of the public water and sanitary sewer service areas.
- Provide public water and sanitary sewer services in areas of the Township identified for higher density residential, commercial, and industrial concentrations

- Encourage groundwater preservation regulations for new development that are in accordance with Ottawa County's Groundwater Sustainability Initiative
- Rezoning to the R-1, R-2, R-3, or R-4 Zoning Districts should not occur without public water and public sanitary sewer present at the property

Strategies

- Consider the adoption of regulations which require intensive industrial, commercial, and residential land uses to be located so they are served by public water and sanitary sewer
- Consider adoption of regulations which require the preservation of a natural vegetation filtration strip along lakes, rivers and streams to preserve the water quality within the Township
- Support a general atmosphere of cooperation among adjoining units of government, school district, and other public agencies to maximize utilization of public investments Coordinate with regulatory agencies to ensure adequate protection of groundwater sources, where practicable
- Rezoning to the R-1, R-2, R-3, or R-4 Zoning District shall not occur without public water and public sanitary sewer present at the property
- Assist the Township Board of Trustees with updates to the Capital Improvements Plan
- Design commercial and industrial incentives which encourage private investment in public water and/or sewer expansion

Chapter Eight Transportation

Introduction

The road system within Allendale Charter Township is influenced by a number of agencies, from the Township itself, the Ottawa County Road Commission, and the Michigan Department of Transportation. The road system within the Township not only provides internal and external circulation of traffic, but also influences the shape and intensity of land.

For planning purposes, it is useful to recognize that various roads within Allendale Charter Township can have different functions. An understanding of these functions can lead to decisions as to the desirable use of each road segment, road right-of-way widths, building setbacks, and adjoining land use. Below is a brief description of the different road types that are important to consider in Allendale Charter Township.

Arterial Streets

Lake Michigan Drive, also referred to as M-45, is a State of Michigan highway that runs through the center of the Township from east to west spanning from Grand Rapids and terminating at Lakeshore Drive in Grand Haven Charter Township. This road is also classified as a major arterial street. Lake Michigan Drive within Allendale Charter Township is a four-lane boulevard from the east Township border transitioning to a two-lane roadway just west of 68th Avenue. The principal function of arterial streets is to provide traffic movement for higher volumes of vehicles.

County Primary Roads

Paved County Primary roads include 68th Avenue, Warner Street west of 68th Avenue, 48th Avenue south of Lake Michigan Drive, 96th Avenue south of Lake Michigan Drive, and Fillmore Street. This class of streets serves major movements of traffic within and through the Township. While these roads are mainly designed to move traffic, a secondary function is to provide access to adjacent properties.

County Local Paved Streets

County Local Paved Streets provide internal traffic movement within specific areas and connect those areas with the major arterial system. Generally, they are not continuous for great length. Paved Local County Streets include 54th Avenue, 60th Avenue, 64th Avenue, Alger Street, portions of Pierce Street, 96th Avenue, 84th Avenue, 78th Avenue, 76th Avenue, Rich Street and all of Lincoln Street. Unpaved County Local Streets include Warner Street east of 64th Avenue, 88th Avenue, portions of 92nd Avenue, 74th Avenue, Pierce Street, 84th Avenue and 52nd Avenue.

Local Streets

The sole function of these streets is to provide access to immediately adjacent property particularly within residential subdivisions. In developed areas, while they make up a major percentage of the streets within the community, they facilitate a small proportion of the overall vehicular traffic.

Multi-Modal Transportation

While roadways are the predominant method of transportation throughout Allendale Charter Township, it is necessary to emphasize alternative methods of transportation as well. The prevalence of bicycling and walking continues to increase as alternative modes of transportation are available, with positive impacts for both the environment and health of Township residents and visitors. It is important to ensure that travelers that are not in vehicles have safe routes throughout the Township as well, connecting places of residence, business, recreation, and education.

Another mode of transportation which is available in the Township is The Rapid bus service, which provides daily bus service between the Grand Valley State University campus within the Township, and the downtown Grand Rapids campus.

Future Streets

The Master Plan Map illustrates locations of future streets which are intended to connect to existing major north south roads and provide alternative routes to disperse traffic. The locations are general and are illustrated so that measures can be taken to ensure that road connections can be made during review of development plans.

As Allendale Charter Township continues to grow, the transportation network will also continue to become more complex. Given this, it is imperative to consider the impact of residential, commercial, and industrial development on the existing transportation infrastructure when reviewing land use plans. In that regard, we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for planning for effective modes of transportation within Allendale Charter Township. In addition to the goals, recommendations and strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Maintain and plan for a safe, efficient, and functional roadway system
- Ensure balanced, orderly growth of sidewalks, bike paths, roadways, and other transportation routes to create logical transportation extensions and connections

Recommendations

- Provide safe trails and sidewalks between destination land uses along roadways for pedestrians, bicyclists, skaters, wheelchair users, and all non-motorized users in order to create an accessible and connected community, to reduce vehicle trips and simply improve the quality of life for Allendale Charter Township residents
- Continue to require development to provide for the construction of sidewalks along major arterial streets
- Incorporate the design concepts of “Complete Streets” into existing and future streets
- Development along Lake Michigan Drive should be designed to achieve traffic safety, walkable access from adjacent neighborhoods and compatibility with existing and future land uses in these neighborhoods

- Encourage continued shared usage of non-residential driveways, where practical
- Encourage the continuation of limited access points to developments
- Consider the ability of existing roadway conditions to handle projected traffic volumes resulting from new development when reviewing site plans and rezoning requests

Strategies

- Strengthen as necessary, access management standards to better regulate driveway locations and vehicle turning movements
- Continue to work with the Michigan Department of Transportation to lower the speed limit on Lake Michigan Drive through the boulevard portion to create safer conditions for both vehicles and pedestrians
- Collaborate with The Rapid bus service to identify opportunities to extend the public bus service west of 48th Avenue
- Plan land uses along major Township roads such as 48th Avenue and 68th Avenue which will preserve the primary function of these roads which is the safe and efficient movement of traffic
- Consider the ability of existing roadway conditions to handle projected traffic volumes resulting from new development when reviewing site plans and rezoning requests
- Pursue funding programs to repair and replace existing streets and sidewalks in disrepair and to expand the sidewalk system in areas of existing development where sidewalks do not exist
- Work with the Ottawa County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation to promote road improvement policies consistent with the goals of the Master Plan
- Utilize the Capital Improvement Program as the means to implement the street plan elements of the Master Plan, as identified by Michigan Public Act 134 of 2010, and establish Township policy for implementation of street construction in cooperation with the Ottawa County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation, where appropriate

Complete Streets Analysis

Legal Basis for Complete Streets Analysis

In August of 2010, PA 33 of 2008 (the Michigan Planning Enabling Act) was amended to require that local master plans include consideration of additional elements related to transportation. These elements include safe and efficient movement of people and goods by not only motor vehicles but also by bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal users including persons with disabilities. Additionally, the amended Act defines street as “a street, avenue, boulevard, highway, road, lane, alley, viaduct, or other public way intended for use by motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, and other legal uses.”

In December of 2010, PA 33 of 2008 was further amended to require that local master plans also take into consideration the location, character, and extent of public transit routes and public transportation facilities in the preparation of the master plan, and to coordinate with public transportation agencies in the planning process.

In Allendale Charter Township, the following analysis was performed of existing transportation facilities, and recommendations were developed to insure adequate transportation for all users.

Existing Conditions

Sidewalks

Allendale Charter Township is a predominantly rural township served by Ottawa County primary and local roads. Lake Michigan Drive traverses the Township from east to west. Commercial development is concentrated along the Lake Michigan Drive Corridor, while residential development is located along County primary and local roads, within residential subdivisions served by both private and public roads, and within multi-family developments that serve primarily the student population associated with Grand Valley State University (GVSU).

Sidewalks occur on both sides of Lake Michigan Drive (with minor exceptions west of 68th Avenue) for the length of Lake Michigan Drive from the Grand River to just west of 74th Avenue. While Lake Michigan Drive contains a median that extends most intersections, pedestrian crossings with accessible curb ramps are located within the median to facilitate pedestrian or bicycle crossing at 48th, 56th, 60th, and 68th Avenues.

Sidewalks constructed within the Ottawa County road right-of-way are subject to specific construction standards as required by statute and as adopted by the Ottawa County Road Commission.

Bicycle Lanes

No designated bicycle lanes exist within the Township. However, families and young children use the sidewalk network to bicycle. Along many of the paved roads, no room exists on the current paved width to add a bicycle lane. In some cases, especially where recent paving has occurred, room exists to add a marked bicycle lane. Many of the roadways within the Township are gravel, and therefore are not candidates for bicycle lanes until or if they are paved.

A paved shoulder of at least four feet or greater is striped on Lake Michigan Drive. This lane is not necessarily designated for bicycles, and some conflict may exist where deceleration lanes are present, or where vehicles must pull onto the shoulder. However, the striped lane does provide space for cyclists who do not wish to bike in the travel lane.

Non-Motorized Trails

Allendale Charter Township has one non-motorized trail on the west side of 48th Avenue, between Pierce Street and Lake Michigan Drive. In addition, the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission has incorporated the Township's 2002 Path and Greenway Master Plan into the County's overall non-motorized trail plan, referred to as the Grand River Greenway. The plan proposes linking greenways, Township parks, and other Township facilities such as schools via pathways along County drain easements and via additional roadside paths and sidewalks. The proposed trail system also proposes to link to the County's proposed greenway trail along the Grand River corridor.

The Ottawa County Road Commission has a policy whereby they recommend that the construction of separated sidewalks or non-motorized facilities are designed to safely accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists with respect to the motorized traffic. Non-motorized facilities may not be designed as "exclusively" for bicycles as they are for all users.

The Ottawa County Road Commission has adopted policies and procedures for the construction on non-motorized facilities on County roads, as well as policies for paved shoulders. Specific construction standards are required for non-motorized facilities within the County road right-of-way. Providing for non-motorized facilities is the responsibility of the local unit of government. In addition, it is the policy of the County to not designate paved shoulders as bicycle or pedestrian facilities. Where additional paved shoulder width is requested, the requesting party will bear the cost of the construction of the additional paved shoulder.

In addition, in 2020 Allendale Charter Township was working to draft the Allendale Charter Township Parks and Recreation Plan, which addresses the development of creating an interconnected non-motorized path system within the Township.

Public Transportation

The Rapid (Interurban Transit Partnership) is the authority that provides a variety of public transportation services for the Grand Rapids metro area and beyond. It is organized and operates under Michigan Public Act 196 of 1986. The activities of The Rapid are overseen by a 15-member board of directors that represent the six municipalities in The Rapid service area.

The Rapid offers a GVSU Campus Connector that provides service from the Pew Campus located in downtown Grand Rapids to a major location on the GVSU campus, including service to several multi-family student living communities. The Campus Connector includes stops along Lake Michigan Drive en route to Allendale Charter Township and on return to the downtown campus.

All of The Rapid's regular route buses are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments, including those who use wheelchairs. All Rapid buses have low floors for level boarding or are lift equipped. In addition, the Rapid operates fixed route, demand-response services for seniors age 65 and over, and people with disabilities called GO! Buss which is available in the Allendale Charter Township regular route service

area. To qualify for GO! Bus, an individual must complete an Americans with Disabilities application for or a “proof of age” application. A low cost fee is charged.

Several private agencies within Ottawa County provide transportation for senior, low-income, or disabled individuals. These agencies vary from free to fee-based services. Agencies that serve the Township include Love in the Name of Christ, located within the Township; Pioneer Resources in Muskegon; and Ambu-Care West Michigan.

Due to the continued development and growth within Allendale Charter Township, it is vital to consider the impact of residential, commercial, and industrial development on the existing non-motorized transportation infrastructure when reviewing land use plans. In that regard, we have concluded that the following goals are paramount for planning for effective modes of non-motorized transportation in Allendale Charter Township. In addition to the goals, recommendations and strategies to achieve success are provided below.

Goals, Recommendations, and Strategies

Goals

- Ensure balanced, orderly growth of sidewalks, bike paths, roadways, and other transportation routes to create logical transportation extensions and connections

Recommendations

- As development proposals are reviewed, the Allendale Charter Township Parks and Trail Master Plan should be consulted, once adopted. The approval of development proposals should include conditions that require either the trail or sidewalks to be constructed or that easements be approved with the site plan for future trail construction
- Any future trails or sidewalks should be constructed to ensure access for all legal uses including those with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Accessibility from transportation facilities to parks, schools, and the library, and other Township facilities must meet the requirements of the ADA
- Consider the addition of bike racks at commercial areas within the Township to accommodate those traveling by bicycle

Strategies

- Consider the construction of a non-motorized pathway along Pierce Street between 48th Avenue and 68th Avenue. Identify other suitable locations along roadways for a non-motorized path system
- Since it is not the policy of the Ottawa County Road Commission to designate paved shoulders as any special facility such as a bike path, Allendale Charter Township should continue to plan for off-road non-motorized facilities that are constructed for all users. When located within a County road right-of-way, non-motorized facilities are subject to construction standards adopted by the Ottawa County Road Commission
- Provide bike racks at key locations in the Township such as public facilities and parks to facilitate those traveling by bicycle

- Provide designated locations along major roads, such as Lake Michigan Drive, to accommodate for safe pedestrian crossings

Chapter Nine Implementation

Introduction

In order for the Master Plan to serve as an effective guide for the continued development of Allendale Charter Township, it must be implemented. Primary responsibility for implementing the plan rests with the Township Board, the Planning Commission, and the Township staff. This is done with a number of methods. These include ordinances, programs, and administrative procedures.

This implementation must come from the decisions of the Township Board and Planning Commission to provide needed public improvements and to administer and establish regulatory measures relative to the use of land.

The private sector, which includes individual landowners as well as developers, is also involved in fulfilling the recommendations of the Master Plan by the actual physical development of land and through the rezoning of land. The authority for this, however, comes from the Township. Cooperation and coordination among individuals, private developers, and public agencies is, therefore, important in successful implementation of the Master Plan.

Zoning and Land Use Regulations

Zoning represents a legal means for the Township to regulate private property to achieve orderly land use relationships. Zoning is the process most commonly used to implement community plans. The zoning process consists of an official Zoning Map and accompanying Zoning Ordinance text. The official Zoning Map divides the community into different districts within which certain uses are permitted. The Zoning Ordinance text establishes permitted uses and regulations to control densities, height, bulk, setbacks, lot sizes and accessory uses, among other physical and linear attributes. The Zoning Ordinance also sets forth procedures for special approval provisions and regulates accessory structures such as signs. These measures permit the Township to control the quality as well as type of development.

The Planning Commission and Township Board should periodically review and make any necessary revisions to the zoning regulations based on the Strategies of this plan to ensure that the Goals and Recommendations of the Master Plan are instituted. Further, the Zoning Ordinance requires systematic and frequent updates to address needs resulting from changing trends, case law and state statutes.

Relationship of Master Plan Classifications to Zoning Districts (Zoning Plan)

Complementing the text of the Master Plan is its map, which identifies land use classifications by which the Township organizes and intends future improvements and uses. These classification terms are intentionally general in nature so as to not necessarily be specific to one use or type of uses permitted by the Zoning Ordinance and its map. In other words, while the land use classifications are related to the Zoning Districts identified on the Zoning Ordinance map, as shown in the table below, specific future uses are determined by numerous natural and man-made features of the landscape such as public utilities, topography, soils, road improvements, surrounding uses, existing densities, and etcetera, as well as other planning considerations such as compatibility, public safety, access, and etcetera. Consequently, while the land use classifications of the Master Plan Map are designed to serve as a guide for future uses, they are not considered to be a mandate for immediate improvements, public, private, or otherwise.

Ultimately, while the Master Plan Map identifies areas for future uses, the feasibility of a proposed use is determined by the aforementioned, and the Zoning Ordinance with its regulations regarding height, area, bulk, location, etcetera for each of its Zoning Districts.

Terminology

Table of Master Plan Classification Terms & Zoning Ordinance Map District Terms

Master Plan Map Classification Terms	Zoning Ordinance Map Districts
Agricultural (AG)	Agricultural and Rural (AG)
Rural Estate (RE)	Rural Estate (RE)
Low Density Residential (LDR)	Low Density One-Family Residential (R-1)
Moderate Density Residential (MOD)	Medium Density One-Family Residential (R-2)
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	Low Density Multiple Family Residential (R-3) and Mobile Home Park (R-5)
High Density Residential (HDR)	Medium Density Multiple Family Residential/Office (R-4)
Town Center (TC)	[Future Overlay]
Office (OC)	Office (O)
General Commercial (GC)	General Commercial (G-C)
Service Commercial (C-3)	Service Commercial (C-3)
Industrial (I)	Industrial (I)

Relationship of Master Plan Map Classification Terms to Master Plan Chapters

Several Chapters of this Master Plan identify the goals, recommendations, and strategies regarding future land uses within the Township. While the goals, recommendations, and strategies will likely always evolve, the intended uses related to the chapter titles will remain the same. Those chapter titles can generally be related to the Master Plan Map terms as provided in the table below.

Master Plan Map Classification Terms	Master Plan Chapters
Agricultural (AG)	Agricultural Uses
Rural Estate (RE)	Agricultural Uses
Low Density Residential (LDR)	Residential Uses
Moderate Density Residential (MOD)	Residential Uses
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	Residential Uses
High Density Residential (HDR)	Residential Uses
Town Center	Commercial Uses & Residential Uses
Office (OC)	Commercial Uses
General Commercial (GC)	Commercial Uses
Service Commercial (C-3)	Commercial Uses
Industrial (I)	Industrial Uses

Master Plan Classification Terms

The following is a description of land use Classifications identified within this Master Plan.

Agricultural

The Agricultural Classification recognizes lands which are best suited for farming based on location, current utility served areas, soil type, parcel size, and active farm operations. This classification consists of agricultural land, but provides opportunities for very low density residential design, to preserve natural features and provide open space buffers between such areas and active farms thereby helping preserve rural character. Public water and sanitary sewer are not envisioned within this Classification. Agricultural lands are intended to provide for the continuation of existing agricultural uses while also allowing a gradual transition of certain lands to low density development.

Rural Estate (RE)

The Rural Estate Classification is intended to serve as a transition from residential subdivision-type development to a more rural setting and the farmed areas in the Agricultural Classification. It provides for very low residential density to preserve natural features and open spaces. Public water and sanitary sewer are not intended in these areas. Residential Open Space developments pursuant to the Zoning Ordinance are appropriate in this classification.

Low Density Residential (LDR)

The Low Density Residential Classification comprises most of the residential land use component within Allendale Charter Township and correlates with the permitted density of the R-1 Zoning District. The LDR Classification recommends a density greater than Agricultural but less than the Moderate Density Residential Classification. LDR planned areas should be served by public water and sanitary sewer.

Moderate Density Residential (MOD)

The Moderate Density Residential Classification correlates with the permitted density of the R-2 Zoning District. The MOD Classification recommends a density greater than LDR but less than Medium Density Residential to provide a transition between use densities. MOD planned areas should be served by public water and sanitary sewer.

Medium Density Residential (MDR)

The Medium Density Residential Classification recommends a density greater than MOD but less than High Density Residential to provide significant clustering and transition between use densities. The MDR Classification correlates with the permitted density of the R3 Zoning District. MDR planned areas require connection to public water and sanitary sewer.

High Density Residential (HDR)

The High Density Residential Classification recommends the highest residential density within the Township to provide concentrated development and access to urban amenities and services. The HDR-Classification correlates with the permitted density of the R-4 Zoning District in which multifamily dwellings are the

principal use. HDR planned areas are located in close proximity to Grand Valley State University and transient housing should not extend west of 52nd Avenue. HDR planned areas require connection to public water and sanitary sewer.

Town Center (TC)

The Town Center Classification recommends a pedestrian friendly, mixed-use development of commercial and residential uses that are traditional of a village downtown. Residential density is expected to be the equivalent of the R-4 Zoning District for those portions of multi-story buildings that contain residential uses on the upper floors. Commercial uses are intended for street level occupancy but can also exist within the upper floors, or both for the same use. The Town Center Classification recommends the creation of a Town Center Overlay District within the Zoning Ordinance to provide for the legislative requirements of the district. The area planned for the Town Center shall be connected to public water and sanitary sewer.

Office (OC)

The Office Classification is intended to provide for commercial entities that are typically limited to professional and business office use that are small in size relative to retail or other commercial uses. The Classification serves as a transitional area between residential and larger, more intense commercial uses.

Commercial (GC)

Commercial Classification uses typically serve the local and regional market, are automobile-oriented, and benefit from increased visibility and accessibility. Commercial uses generate large volumes of traffic. Outdoor display and storage of goods are also common characteristics of uses in this land use classification, although design standards should be developed to manage the intensity, location, and environmental impact of such displays. It is the intent of the Township that parcels will not be rezoned to accommodate this classification until adequate infrastructure is present. This may include, but is not necessarily limited to, public water and sanitary sewer as well as roads.

Service Commercial (C-3)

While the Service Commercial Classification provides for limited commercial retail sales, the intent of this classification is to separate significant warehousing, distributing, and storage operations from traditional commercial uses and residential areas. These types of uses typically require higher volumes of semi-truck traffic and outdoor activity, which cause increased conflicts between motorists, pedestrians, and other site users than in sites that are primarily retail. Most uses in this classification will not require public water and sanitary sewer services.

Industrial

It is recognized that industrial development is important to the economy and tax base of the region. The areas designated for Industrial Classification are located for easy access and where utilities are either available or are in the process of being established. Similar to the Commercial Classification, it is intended that these parcels will not be rezoned to accommodate this classification until adequate infrastructure is present. This may include, but is not necessarily limited to, public water and sanitary sewer as well as roads.

Master Plan Map

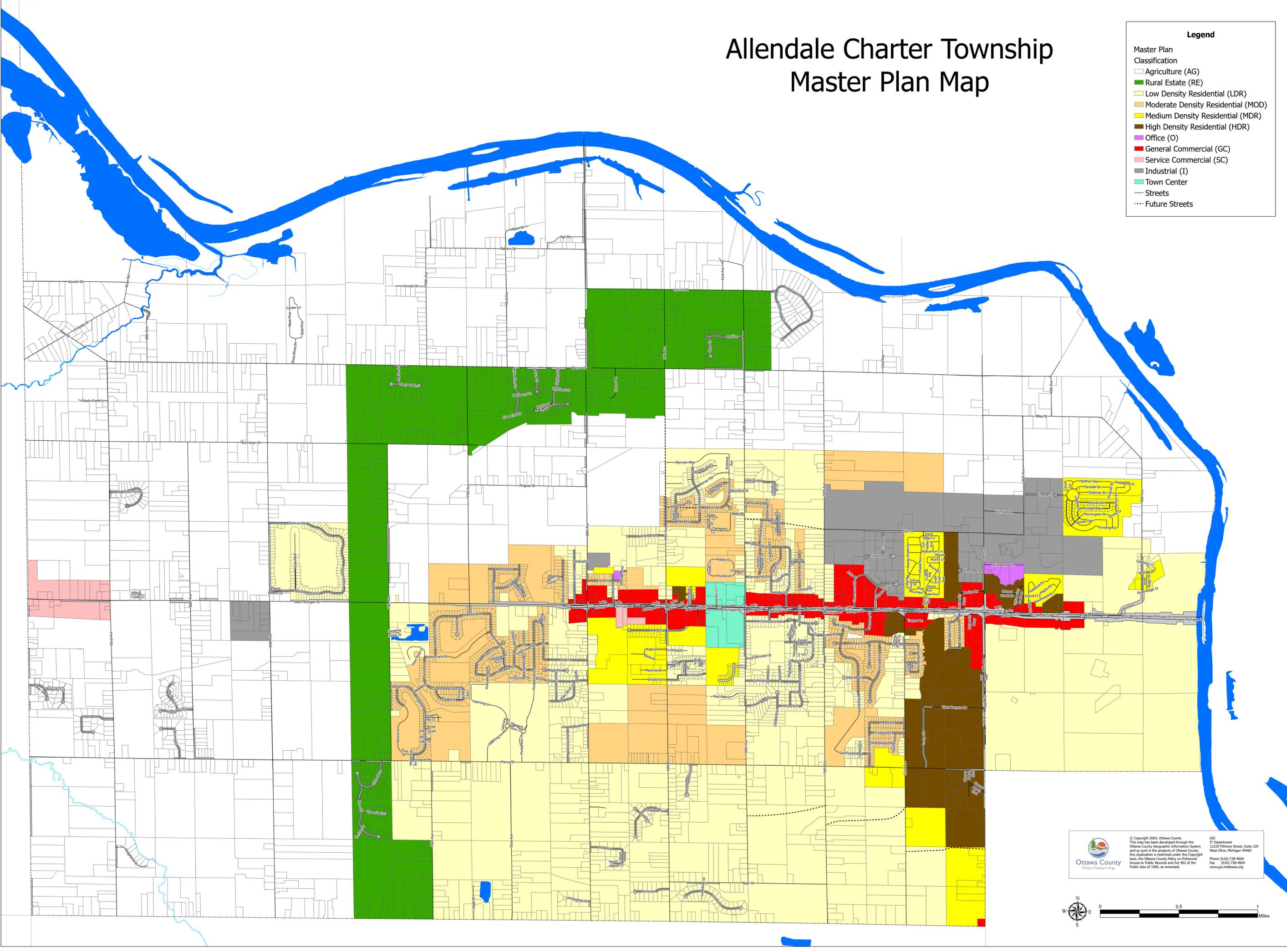
Within Chapter Eight and the Appendix is the Master Plan Map of Allendale Charter Township.

Allendale Charter Township Master Plan Map

Legend

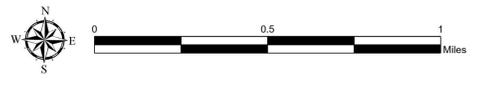
Master Plan Classification

- Agriculture (AG)
- Rural Estate (RE)
- Low Density Residential (LDR)
- Moderate Density Residential (MOD)
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- High Density Residential (HDR)
- Office (O)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Service Commercial (SC)
- Industrial (I)
- Town Center
- Streets
- Future Streets



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Appendix

Available within this appendix is the following data:

- Community Description
- Community Mapping
- Community Participation to Update Master Plan

Community Description

Social and Economic Characteristics

Population

It is important to understand the physical, social, and economic characteristics of the Township in order to understand our past, as well as guide future policy decisions. It should be noted that while this Plan was written in 2020, the full results of the 2020 US Decennial Census are not anticipated to be released until 2023. Therefore, the US Decennial Census results included in this Appendix are from the 2020 Decennial US Census & 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

According to the 2020 US Census figures, the population of Allendale Charter Township is 26,582 persons. This is a population growth of 28.37% or an increase of 5,874 persons since the 2010 US Census. This growth is significantly higher than the growth experienced by Ottawa County as a whole, and a majority of the other surrounding Townships.

Table 1
Population of Allendale Charter Township, 1970-2020

Year	Population	% Change
1970	3,554	*
1980	6,080	71.07%
1990	8,022	31.94%
2000	13,042	62.58%
2010	20,708	58.78%
2020	26,582	28.37%

Source: US Decennial Census.

Figure 1
Population, Allendale Charter Township, 1970-2020

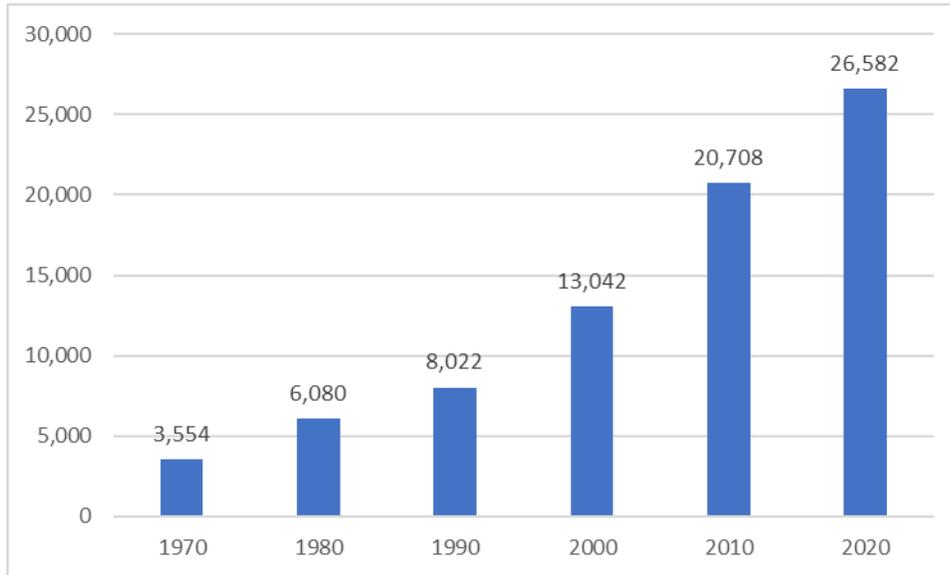


Table 2
Population of Allendale Charter Township, Ottawa County, State of Michigan, and Surrounding Townships, 2000-2020

	2000	2010	2020	2010-2020 Change (#)	2010-2020 Change (%)
Allendale Charter Township	13,042	20,708	26,582	5,874	28.37%
Blendon Township	5,721	5,772	7,081	1,309	22.68%
Georgetown Charter Township	41,658	46,985	54,091	7,106	15.12%
Polkton Charter Township	2,335	2,423	2,565	142	5.86%
Robinson Township	5,588	6,084	6,382	298	4.90%
Tallmadge Charter Township	6,881	7,575	8,802	1,227	16.20%
Ottawa County	238,314	263,801	296,200	32,399	12.28%
Michigan	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331	193,691	1.96%

Source: US Census Bureau Census, Decennial Census.

Grand Valley State University

Allendale Charter Township is home to Grand Valley State University established in 1960, situated on 1,280 acres between Lake Michigan Drive and Pierce Street east of 48th Avenue. Classes are also offered at the University’s Robert C. Pew Campus in Grand Rapids, Meijer Campus in Holland and through specialized centers at Muskegon, Traverse City, and Detroit. Total student enrollment for the Fall 2020 semester was 23,350 students as shown in Table 3 of this Appendix.

From 2010-2020, Grand Valley State University experienced a 5.3% decrease in growth or 1,312 students. It is important to note that the enrollment numbers include the Holland, Muskegon, Allendale, and Grand Rapids campuses.

Table 3
Student Enrollment, Grand Valley State University, 2010-2020

	2010 - 11	2020 - 21	Change 2010-2020 (#)	Change 2010-2020(%)
GVSU Student Enrollment	24,541	23,350	-1,191	-4.85%

Source: Grand Valley State University website: <https://www.gvsu.edu/ia/history-of-enrollment-degrees-awarded-7.htm>

Group Quarters

Group quarters include nursing homes, residential treatment homes, correctional facilities, university living centers, dormitories, and other group living arrangements. As evidenced in Table 4, the non-institutionalized population living in group quarters represents a significant portion of residents in Allendale Charter Township; adding 3,649 persons or 17.6% of the total population.

Table 4
Population of Group Quarters, Allendale Charter Township, 2010-2020

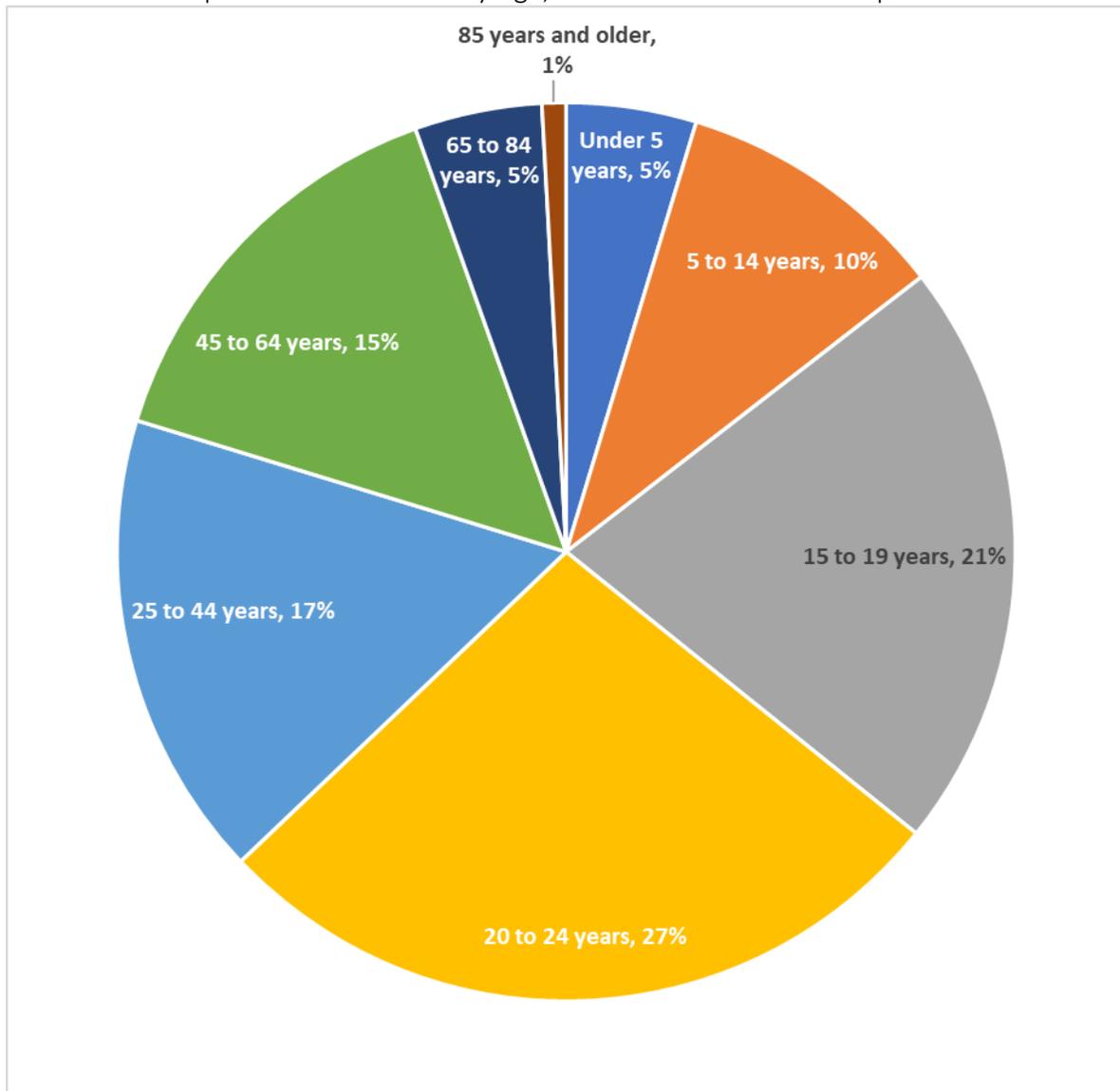
	2010	% of Total Population	2020	% of Total Population	Change 2010-2020 (#)	Change 2010-2020 (%)
In group quarters	3,702	17.90%	4,661	17.53%	665	21.90%
Institutionalized	53	0.30%	61	0.23%	-4	-7.00%
Non-Institutionalized	3,649	17.60%	4,599	17.30%	669	22.50%

Source: US Decennial Census

Population Distribution by Age

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of the population by age in 2020. The largest age group in Allendale Charter Township is the 20 to 24 year old age group which makes up 27% of the total population. Age distribution has remained constant from 2010 to 2020, with the exception of a comparatively significant growth of 15–24-year-olds. This is most likely due to the increased enrollment of students entering GVSU. The age groups under 5 and 5 to 19 were the only groups to experience a small decrease of approximately 1%.

Figure 2
Population Distribution by Age, Allendale Charter Township 2020



Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

Housing

The total number of housing units in Allendale Charter Township increased by 2,053 units or by 35.2%. Occupied housing units rose by 1,854 units from 2010 to 2020, while the total percentage of vacant housing units increased from 4.2% in 2010 to 5.5% in 2020. These statistics not only suggest a strong residential development climate but also indicate strong housing occupancy rates. Owner occupied housing increased by 0.4%, while renter occupied housing decreased by 1.79%. This could be a signal that the mix of owner occupied and renter occupied housing in Allendale is stabilizing. It could also be a skewed finding because many student renters went home during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Another trend evidenced from 2010 and 2020 US Census data is a slight increase in family households and a slight decrease in non-family households. Family households increased by 1.25% while non-family households decreased by 1.25%. The average household size remained fairly constant while the average family size dropped from 3.28 to 3.25 or a reduction of 0.9%.

The majority of owner occupied housing is valued in the \$200,000 to \$299,999 range and comprise approximately 43.39% of all owner occupied housing units. Collectively, owner occupied housing units valued from \$150,000 to \$499,999 make up over 80% of the total occupied housing units in Allendale Charter Township.

Table 5
Housing and Household by Type, Allendale Township, 2020

	Estimate	Percent of Total Housing Units	Percent of Occupied Housing Units
Total Housing Units	7,889	100.00%	-
Total Households (Occupied Housing Units)	7,448	94.41%	100%
<i>Average Household Size</i>	2.96	-	-
Non-family Households	3,065	38.85%	41.15%
Family Households	4,383	55.56%	58.85%
<i>Average Family Size</i>	3.25	-	-
Married-Couple Family	3,337	42.30%	44.80%
Households with own children of the householder under 18 years	2,386	30.24%	32.04%
Owner Occupied Housing Units	4,268	54.10%	57.30%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	3,180	40.31%	42.70%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

Table 6
 Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units*, Allendale Charter Township, 2020
 Income and Employment

Value	Number	Percent
Owner-occupied units	4,268	100%
Less than \$50,000	115	2.69%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	69	1.62%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	307	7.19%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	906	21.23%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	1,852	43.39%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	969	22.70%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	32	0.75%
\$1,000,000 or more	18	0.42%
Median (dollars)	\$ 227,900	-

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

Income and Employment

Table 7 summarizes employment in Allendale Charter Township and compares it to employment in Ottawa County. According to the 5-year estimates of the 2020 American Community Survey, Allendale Charter Township and Ottawa County have similar percentages of their population in the labor force however, Allendale has a higher unemployment rate.

Allendale Charter Township has lower median and mean incomes than the county. With the median household income in Allendale Charter Township being \$13,668 (or 19.7%) lower than Ottawa County.

Table 7
Employment Status, Allendale Charter Township and Ottawa County

	Allendale Township		Ottawa County	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Population 16 years and over	22,167	-	225,342	-
In labor force	15,469	69.78%	154,479	68.55%
Employed	14,335	64.67%	149,046	66.14%
Unemployed	1,134	5.12%	5,433	2.41%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

Table 8
Income, Allendale Charter Township and Ottawa County

	Allendale Township Estimate	Ottawa County Estimate
Median household income	\$ 55,646	\$ 69,314
Mean household income	\$ 67,419	\$ 87,410
Median family income	\$ 80,902	\$ 83,527
Mean family income	\$ 90,417	\$ 101,536
Families and people whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level	8%	4.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

Table 9

Occupations by Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over Allendale Charter Township

	Estimate	Percent
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	13,397	100%
OCCUPATION		
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	4,079	30%
Service occupations	3,216	24%
Sales and office occupations	3,246	24%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	1,090	8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	1,766	13%
INDUSTRY		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	191	1%
Construction	667	5%
Manufacturing	1,886	14%
Wholesale trade	288	2%
Retail trade	1,685	13%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	507	4%
Information	109	1%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	566	4%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	847	6%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	3,814	28%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	2,096	16%
Other services, except public administration	533	4%
Public administration	208	2%
CLASS OF WORKER		
Private wage and salary workers	11,785	88%
Government workers	1,176	9%
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	427	3%
Unpaid family workers	9	0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

Community Mapping

Following are the community maps as well as their established purpose, which are incorporated as part of the Master Plan. These maps are not intended to be limited to their purposes provided below rather than establish a minimum relationship to the Master Plan.

1. **Master Plan Map** – creates future land use classifications and delineates boundaries for certain uses of land
2. **Prime Farmland Map** – classifies areas of the Township on the basis of soil suitability for general agricultural crop production
3. **Soil Limitations and Groundwater Sensitivity** – illustrates soil limitations for Septic systems
4. **General Plan of Water System** – establishes existing public water system to illustrate feasibility of supporting a proposed use
5. **General Plan of Sanitary Sewer System** – establishes existing sanitary sewer system to illustrate feasibility of supporting proposed development
6. **Wetlands Map** – documents different classes of wetlands
7. **Parks and Trails Master Plan** – illustrates the Township’s existing and proposed pathways and greenspaces

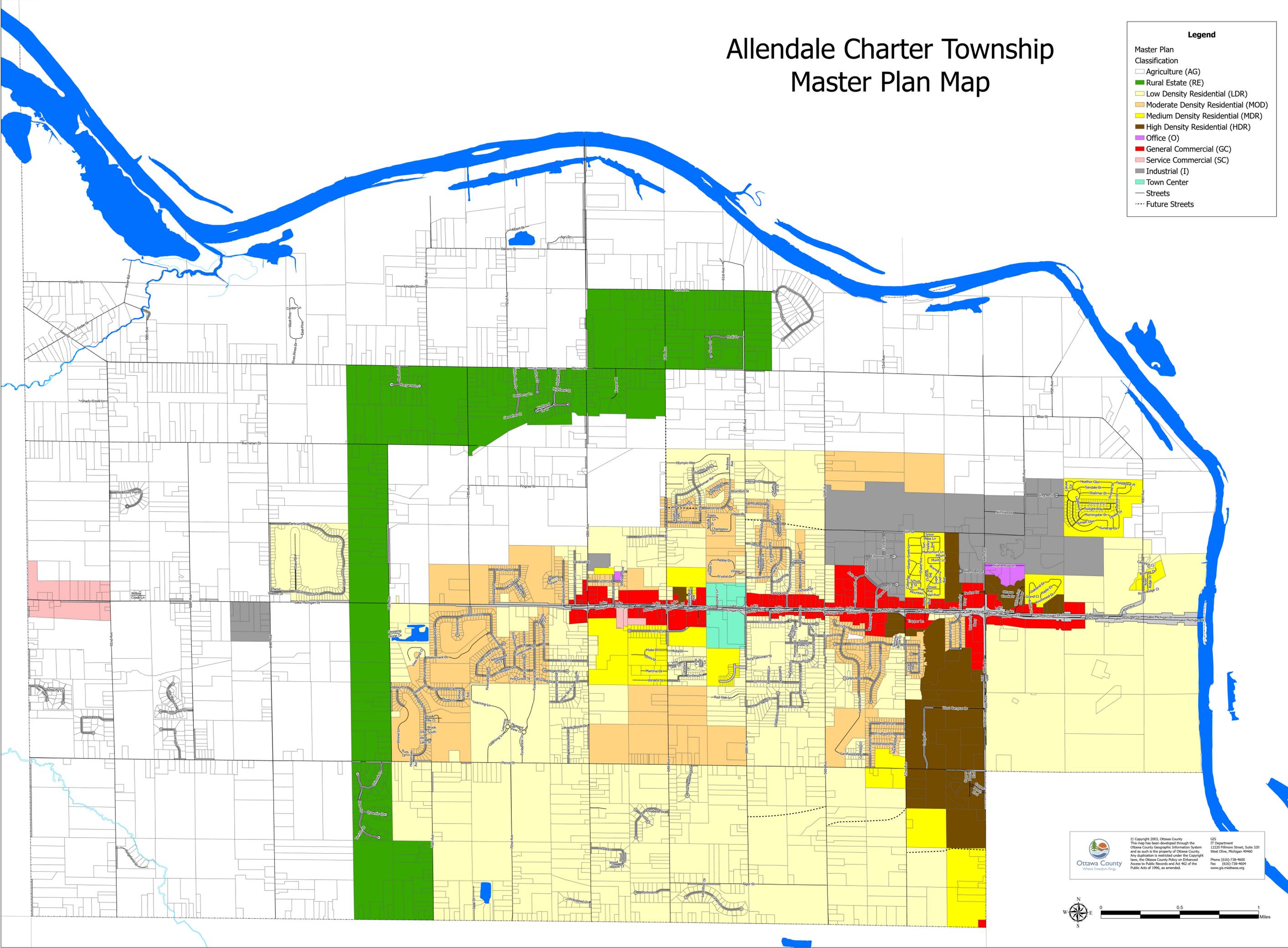
MAP #1 – Master Plan Map

Allendale Charter Township Master Plan Map

Legend

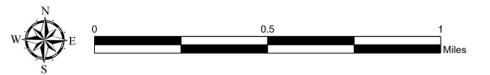
Master Plan Classification

- Agriculture (AG)
- Rural Estate (RE)
- Low Density Residential (LDR)
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MAP #2 – Prime Farmland Map

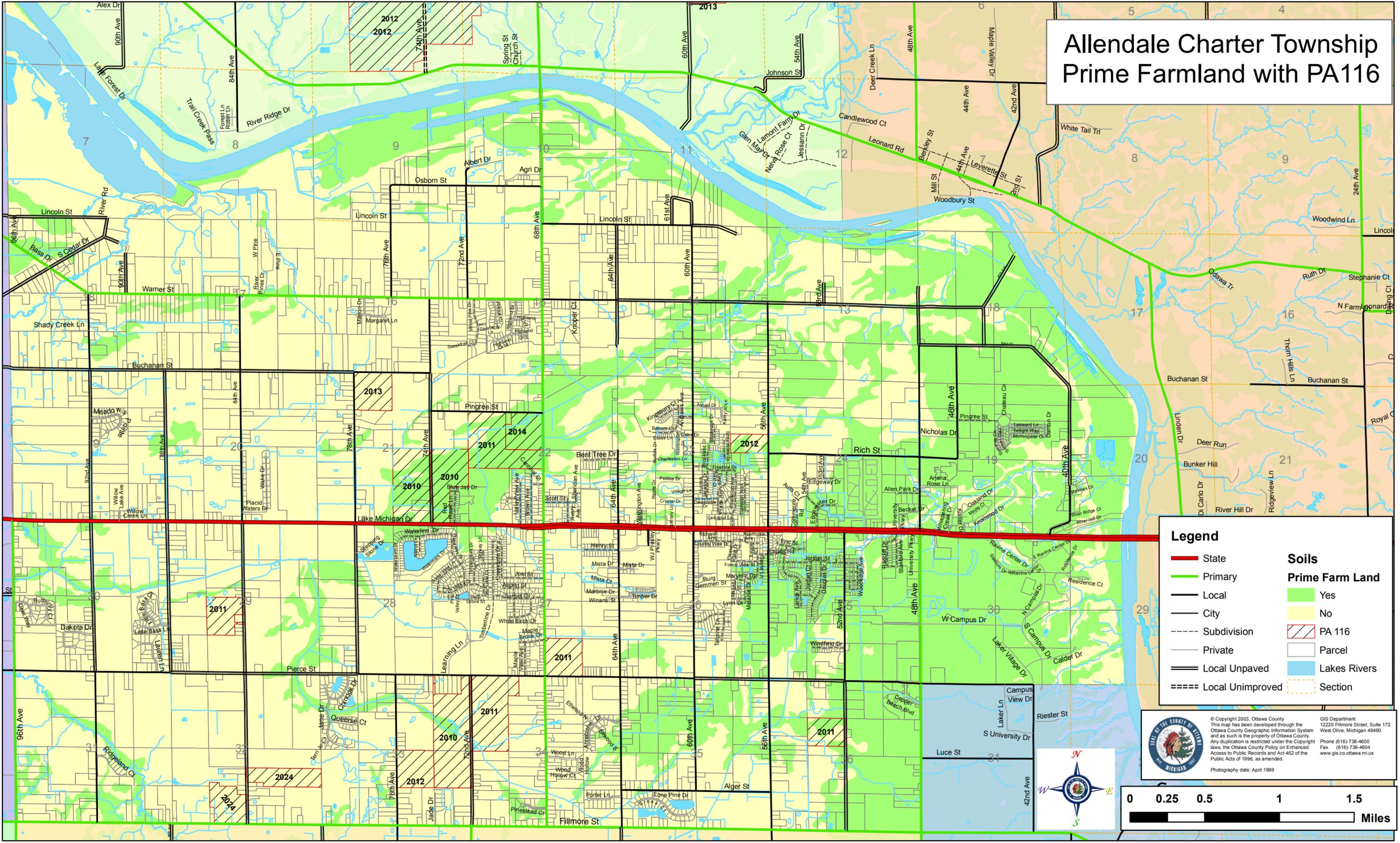
The Prime Farmland Map illustrates the location of prime farmland soils within Allendale Charter Township. These soils are defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as soils which are best suited for feed, forage, fiber, and oil seed crops and which produce the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources. Certain areas may be prime farmland only when well drained or not flooded during growing season.

Most of this soil type is located in the eastern portion of the Township which is mostly developed with only a few active farm parcels. Prime farmland soil is also located in the central portion north of Lake Michigan Drive between 74th and 56th Avenues.

Map 2 also illustrates lands enrolled in the State of Michigan Farmland Open Space Preservation Program also known as P.A. 116. Under this program, property owners agree to relinquish their non-farm development rights for a period of at least 10 years in exchange for tax credits. The date of enrollment termination in the program is also shown.

Typically, a large amount of land enrolled with long termination dates is an indication that farming will be a major component of future land use in a community. In Allendale Charter Township there is a relatively small amount of land enrolled in the P.A. 116 program as a percentage of the total acres and most of these parcels will be coming out of the program in the next few years.

Allendale Charter Township Prime Farmland with PA116



Legend

- State
- Primary
- Local
- City
- - - - Subdivision
- Private
- = Local Unpaved
- = Local Unimproved

Soils

Prime Farm Land

- Yes
- No
- PA 116
- Parcel
- Lakes Rivers
- Section

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Photography date: April 1999



MAP #3 – Soil Limitations and Groundwater Sensitivity

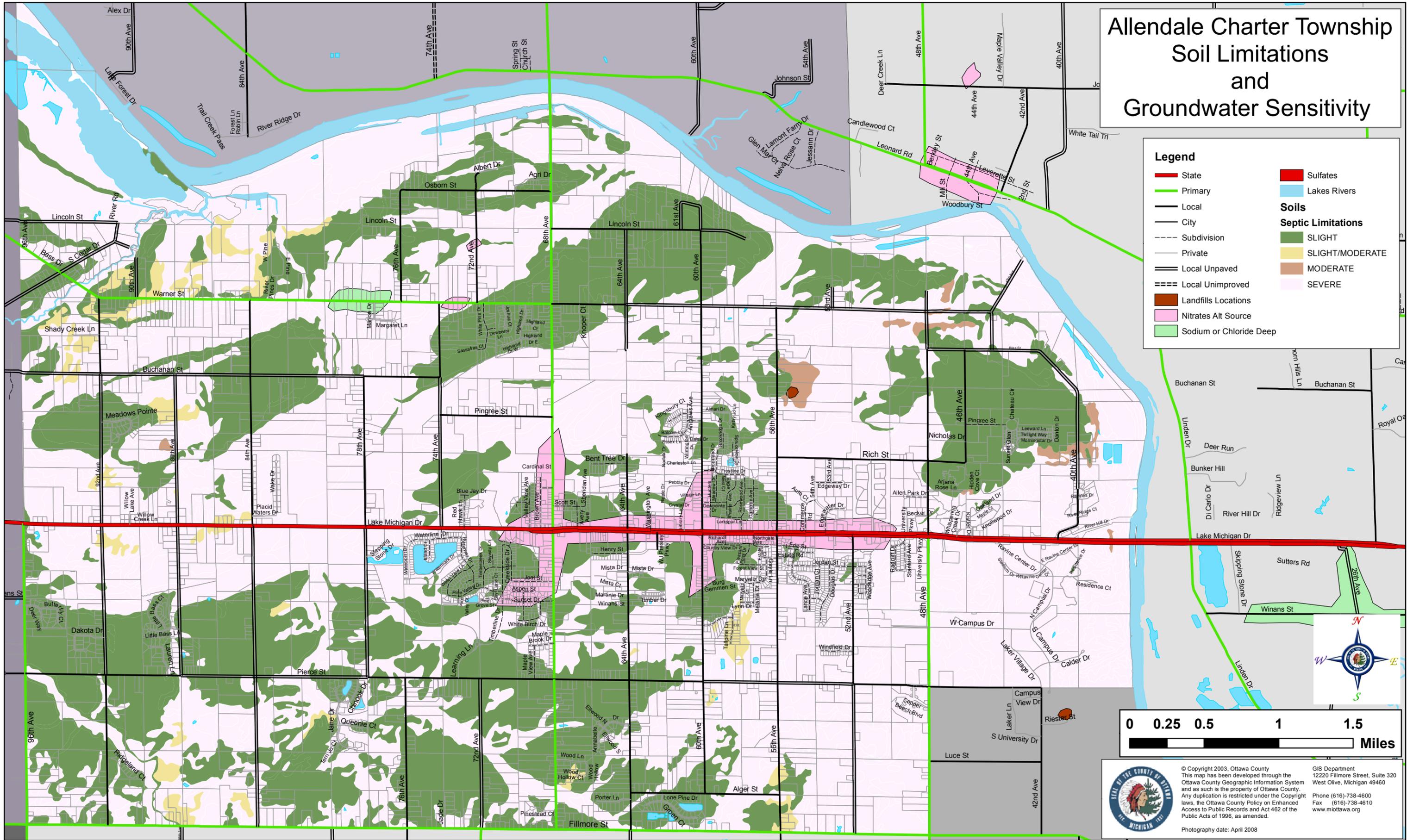
The Limitations and Groundwater Sensitivity Map illustrates limitations for septic systems. This map was based on the U.S. Department of Agricultural Soil Survey which lists the soil types within five feet of the surface. Consequently, onsite inspection would be needed to determine if a particular site would be suitable for a septic system. However, in planning areas for specific densities (minimum lot sizes) this type of soils map is useful. Larger lots should be planned for areas with moderate to severe septic system limitations as there will be a greater chance of locating an area or a lot which is suitable for a septic system.

In Allendale Charter Township the majority of land has severe limitations for septic suitability due to rapid or poor infiltration or septic effluent. Much of this area east of 78th Avenue is included within the Allendale Sanitary Sewer District.

Allendale Charter Township Soil Limitations and Groundwater Sensitivity

Legend

- | | |
|---|---|
|  State |  Sulfates |
|  Primary |  Lakes Rivers |
|  Local | Soils |
|  City | Septic Limitations |
|  Subdivision |  SLIGHT |
|  Private |  SLIGHT/MODERATE |
|  Local Unpaved |  MODERATE |
|  Local Unimproved |  SEVERE |
|  Landfills Locations | |
|  Nitrates Alt Source | |
|  Sodium or Chloride Deep | |

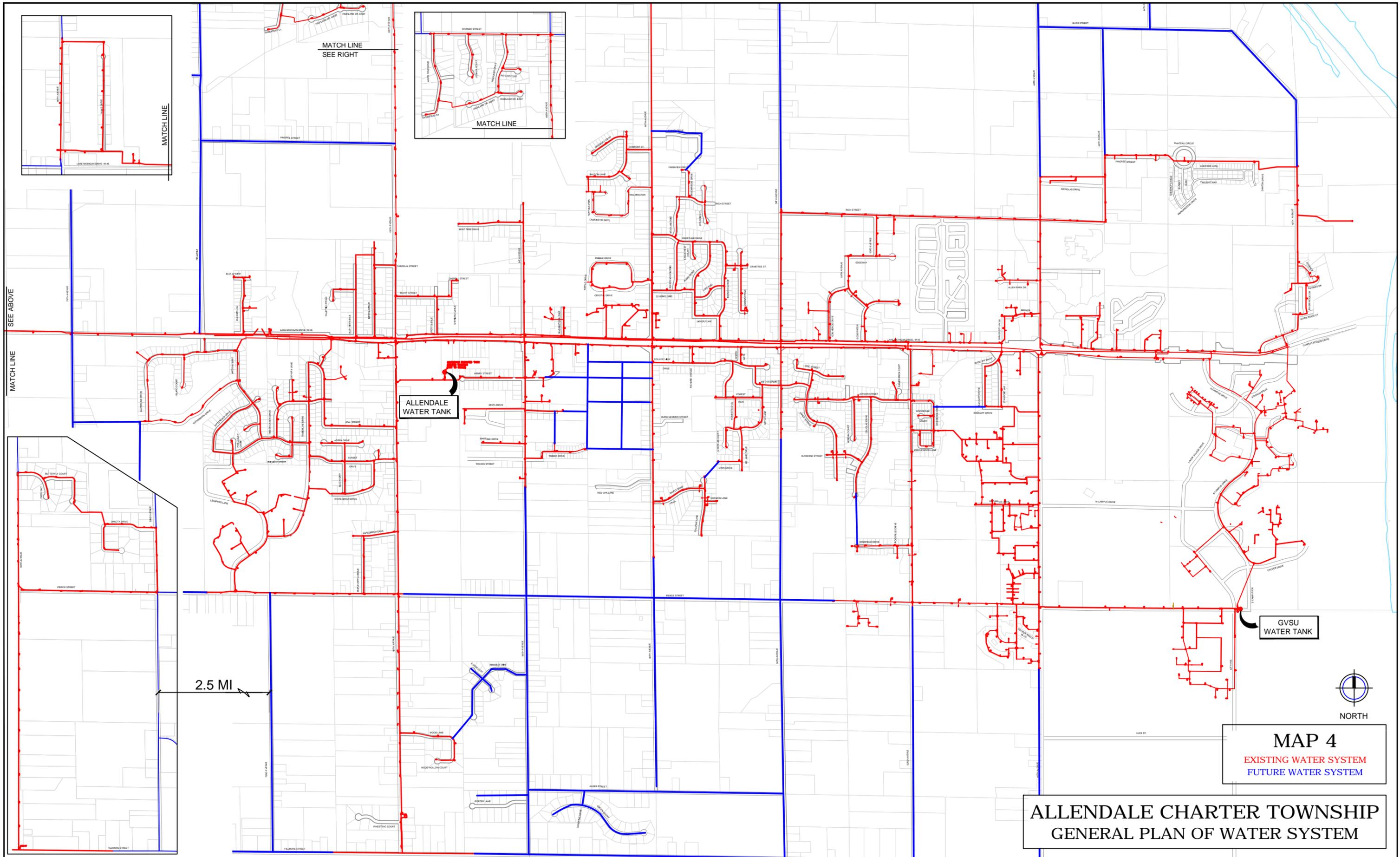


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MAP #4 – General Plan of Water System



MATCH LINE
SEE RIGHT

MATCH LINE

MATCH LINE

SEE ABOVE

MATCH LINE

ALLENDALE
WATER TANK

GVSU
WATER TANK

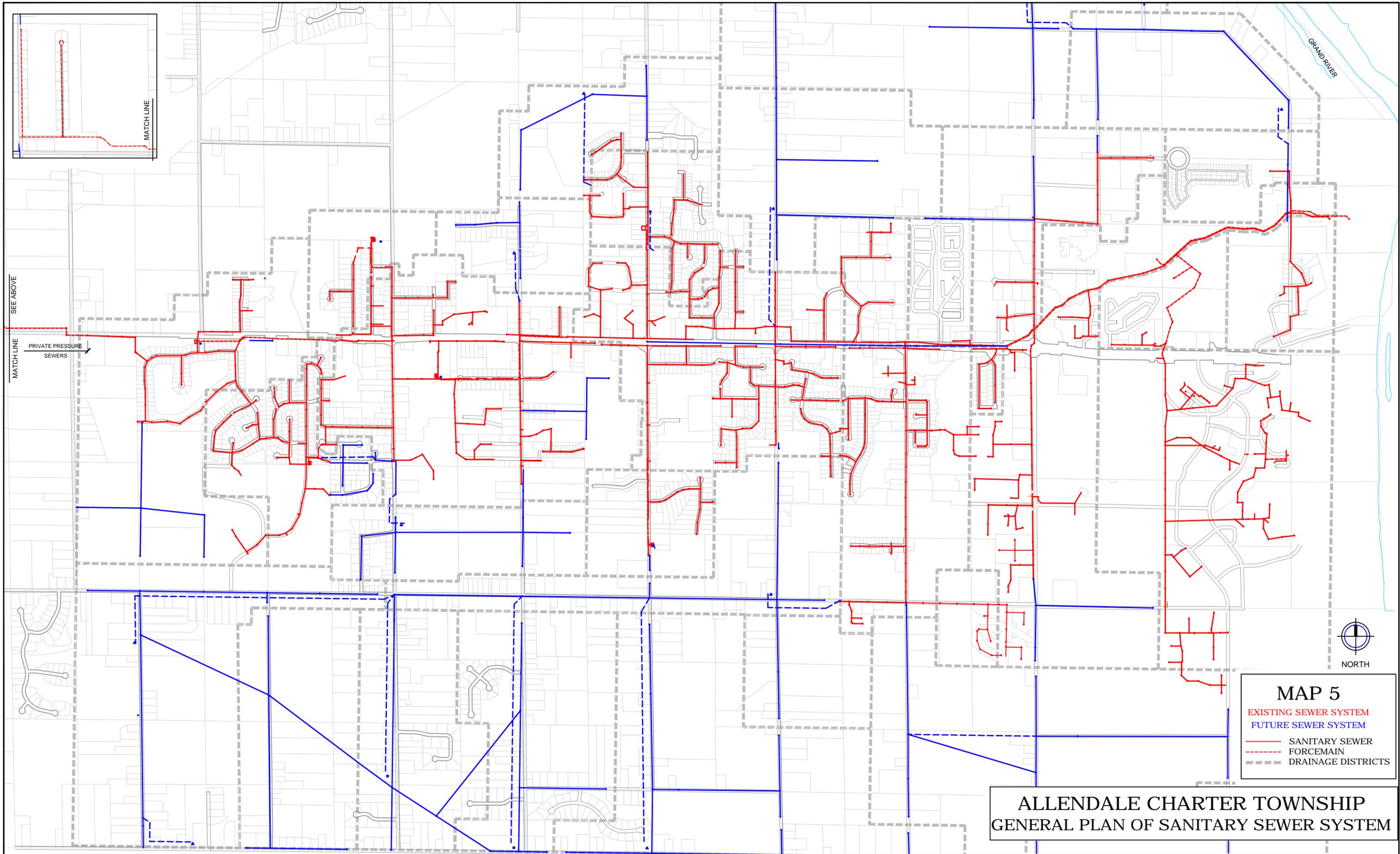
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MAP 4
EXISTING WATER SYSTEM
FUTURE WATER SYSTEM

**ALLENDALE CHARTER TOWNSHIP
GENERAL PLAN OF WATER SYSTEM**

MAP #5 – General Plan of Sanitary Sewer System



Map #6 – Wetlands

The Wetlands Map shows the location of different classes of wetlands within the Township. Many of these wetlands are located adjacent to streams throughout the Township and along the Grand River. Wetlands not only provide natural habitat for wildlife, they also function as a filter for storm water that eventually finds its way to the surface water. The plant materials, in and near the edge of wetlands, filter the water by capturing many of the nutrients that are detrimental to the health of surface water.

The largest concentration of wetlands is associated with the Bass River basin in the northwestern portion of the Township. Other wetland pockets are scattered throughout, all typically associated with creeks and streams. Preservation of land abutting wetlands must also be recognized for its contribution to the natural landscape.

Floodplains are relatively flat stream valley floors, which are periodically overrun by the stream at high water after heavy rainfall or rapid snowmelt within the stream's watershed area. The Federal Emergency Management Agency determines the 100-year floodplain regions. In Allendale Charter Township the 100-year floodplain is located along the Grand River and a short distance upstream along two of the major creeks near the Grand River.

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy regulates wetlands that are contiguous to lakes, streams, drains, and ponds, as well as those that are greater than five acres in size. Land containing regulated wetlands has limited development potential due to natural development constraints as well as wetland protection regulations.

The terrain within the Township is primarily flat with an elevation varying from 600 to 690 feet and an average elevation of 626 feet.

Surface Water. The most significant water feature in Allendale Charter Township is the Grand River. Its location forms the northern and eastern boundaries of the Township and its meandering path allows for an irregularly shaped boundary. Much of the land adjacent to the Grand River is within the 100 year floodplain. A series of tributaries feed the Grand River, the largest of which is the Bass River. Bass Creek, Little Bass Creek, and Ottawa Creek are among the other tributaries.

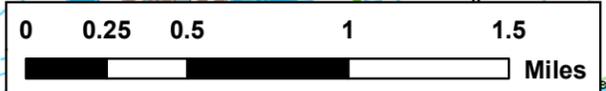
Allendale Charter Township Wetlands Map

Legend

	State		CLASS
	Primary		Aquatic Bed
	Local		Emergent
	City		Forested
	Subdivision		Open Water/Unknown Bottom
	Private		Scrub-Shrub
	Local Unpaved		Unconsolidated Bottom
	Local Unimproved		Unconsolidated Shore
	Parcel		Lakes Rivers

N. W. I. 1983

N.W.I. 1983 Source
 NWI digital data files are records of wetlands location and classification as defined by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This dataset is one of a series available in county coverages containing ground planimetric coordinates of wetlands point, line, and area features and wetlands attributes. The digital data as well as the hardcopy maps that were used as the source for the digital data are produced and distributed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's National Inventory project.

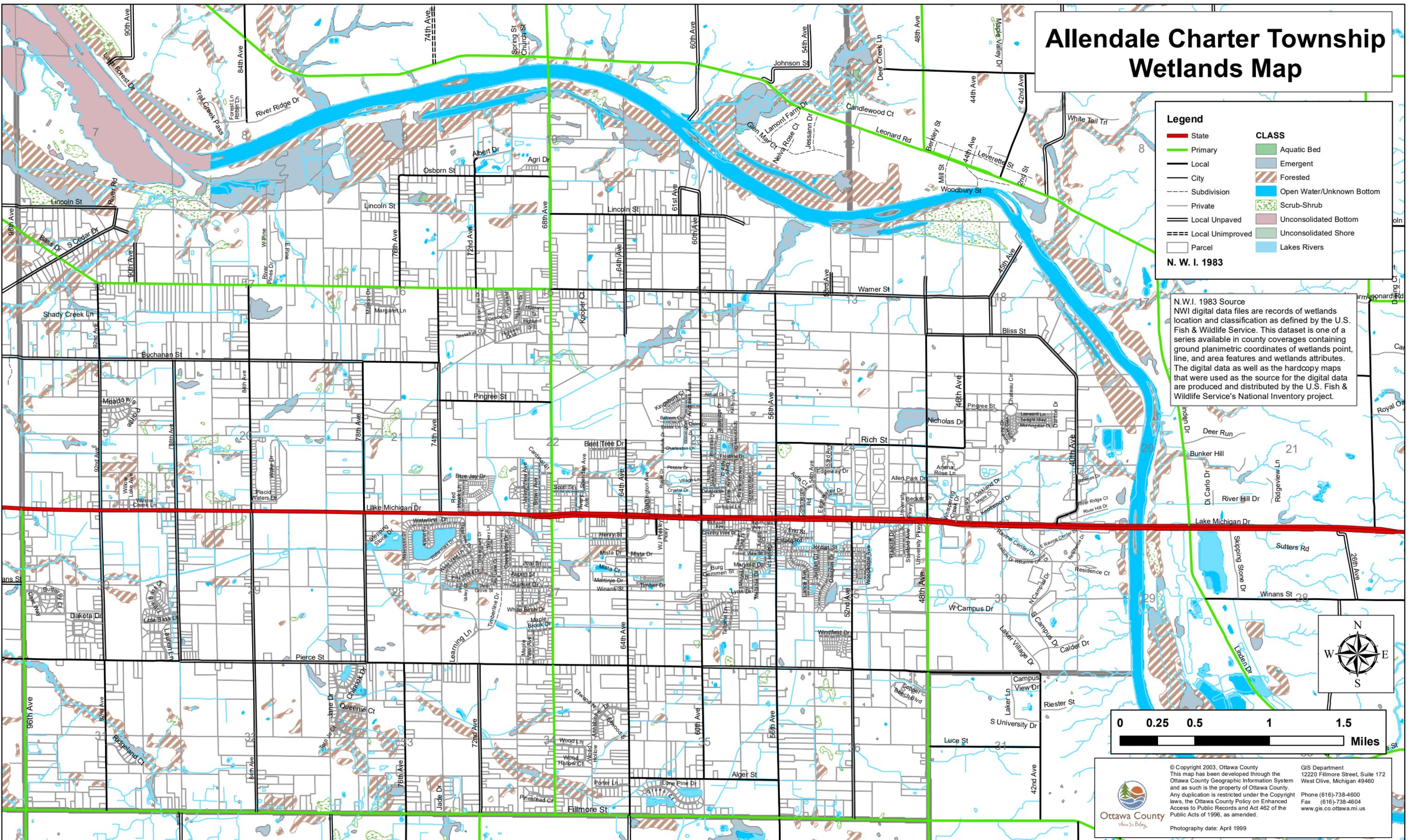


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Allendale Charter Township Master Plan Map - Wetlands

Legend

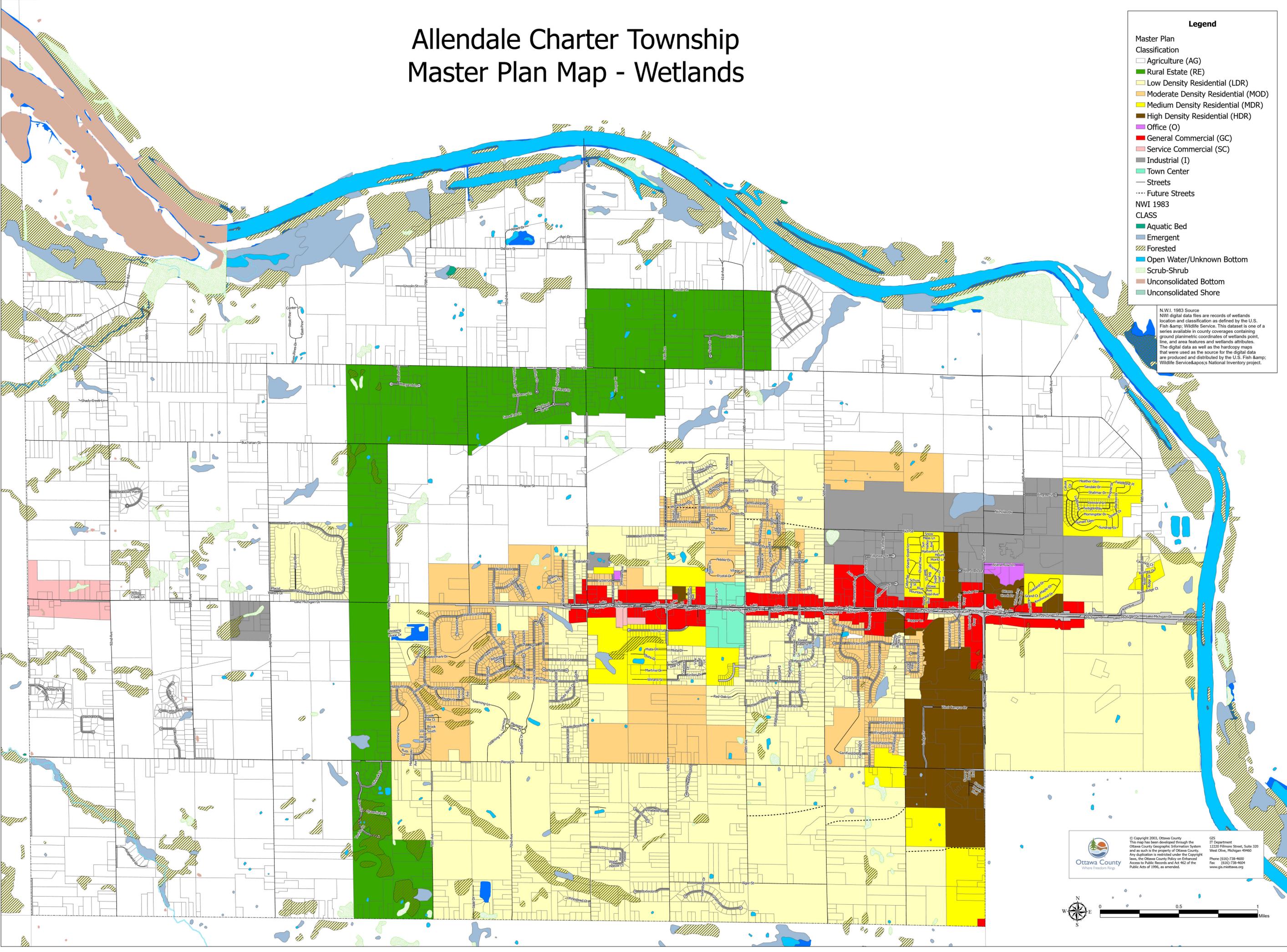
Master Plan
Classification

- Agriculture (AG)
- Rural Estate (RE)
- Low Density Residential (LDR)
- Moderate Density Residential (MOD)
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- High Density Residential (HDR)
- Office (O)
- General Commercial (GC)
- Service Commercial (SC)
- Industrial (I)
- Town Center
- Streets
- Future Streets

NWI 1983
CLASS

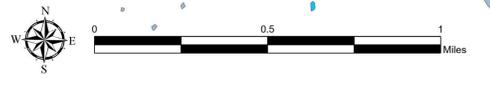
- Aquatic Bed
- Emergent
- Forested
- Open Water/Unknown Bottom
- Scrub-Shrub
- Unconsolidated Bottom
- Unconsolidated Shore

N.W.I. 1983 Source
NWI digital data files are records of wetlands location and classification as defined by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This dataset is one of a series available in county coverages containing ground planimetric coordinates of wetlands point, line, and area features and wetlands attributes. The digital data as well as the hardcopy maps that were used as the source for the digital data are produced and distributed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's National Inventory project.



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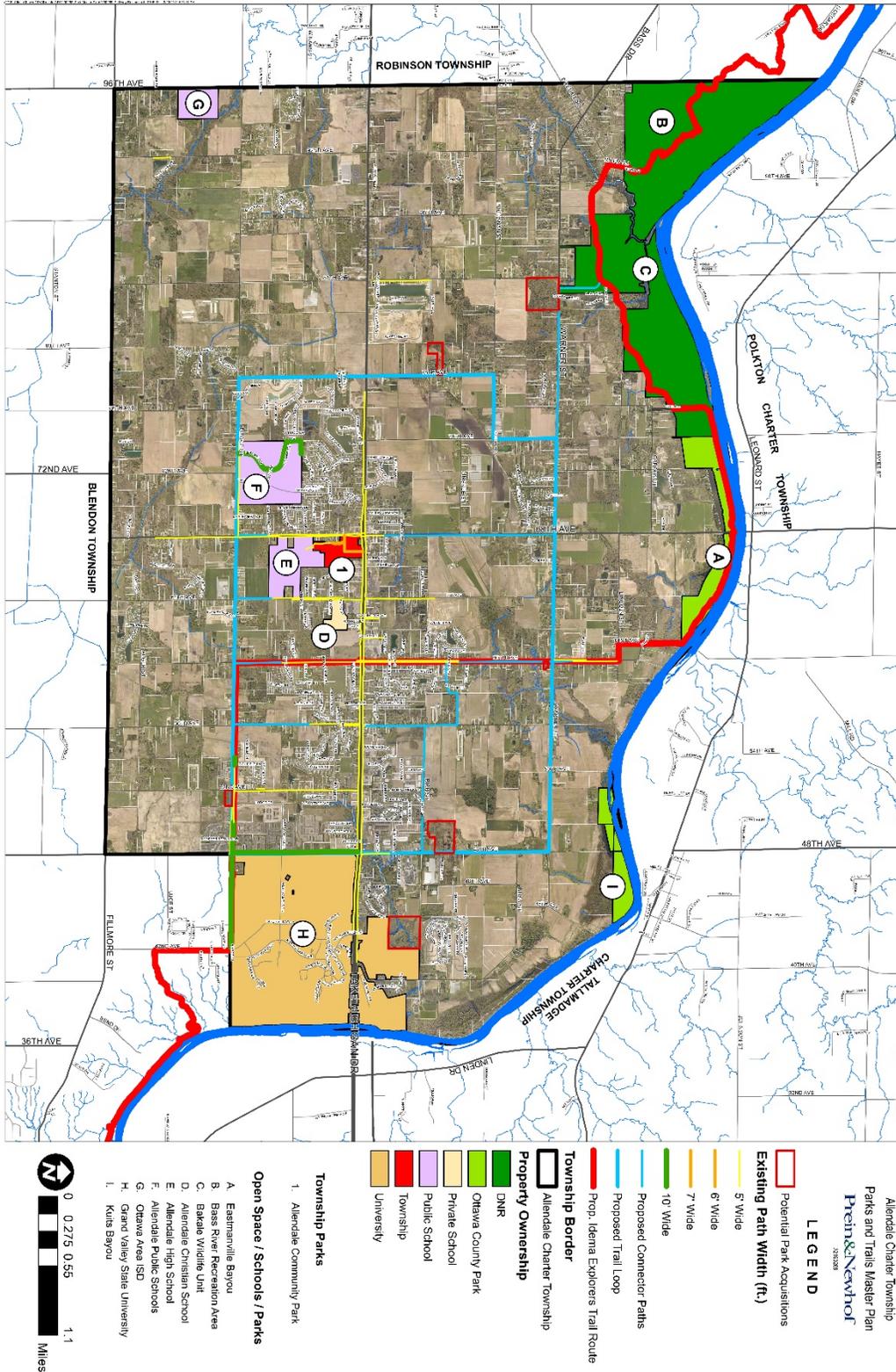
GIS
IT Department
12228 Fillmore Street, Suite 320
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www.gis.mtottawa.org



MAP #7 – Parks and Trails Master Plan

Appendix B

Allendale Charter Township Parks & Trails Master Plan



Community Participation to Update Master Plan

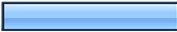
During the previous Master Plan update in 2013, the Planning Commission sought the opinions of Township residents through a citizen survey and through a community values discovery workshop. A total of 345 online surveys and 35 paper surveys were completed for a total of 378 surveys. The survey results are located on page xx of the Appendix. While the survey results were instrumental in composing the 2013 Master Plan, the Planning Commission also conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Workshop in 2019 to provide the public an opportunity to provide further input during the 2020 Master Plan Update. The SWOT Workshop results are located on page xxi of this Appendix.

Allendale Master Plan Citizen Workshop Results of Workshop Held on November 16, 2011

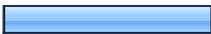
1. You are a: (check all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Township resident		85.4%	298
Business owner/manager		9.2%	32
GVSU student		14.9%	52
	Other (please specify)		32
		answered question	349
		skipped question	29

2. What are the most pressing issues facing Allendale Township? (Check no more than 3)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Availability of public transportation		26.1%	92
Not enough housing choices		6.5%	23
Traffic speeds on M-45		19.5%	69
Crime		4.8%	17
Maintaining the rural character of the Township		44.5%	157
Impact of GVSU		38.0%	134
The need for more business services and more shopping opportunities		61.2%	216
	Other (please specify)		83
	answered question		353
	skipped question		25

**3. Which of the following concerns you most regarding Grand Valley State University?
(Check no more than 3)**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Location of college student housing		36.8%	123
Too much college student housing		29.9%	100
Traffic		31.1%	104
Availability of public transportation		24.3%	81
Students not being part of the Allendale Township community		43.7%	146
Interaction between local businesses and college students		38.0%	127
	Other (please specify)		55
answered question			334
skipped question			44

4. What would make Allendale Township a better place to live? (Check no more than 4)

		Response Percent	Response Count
More off –road trails for walking and biking		45.7%	161
Bicycle lanes on major streets		26.1%	92
More sidewalks on major streets		34.9%	123
More sidewalks in subdivisions		14.8%	52
More parks / Improve existing parks		29.0%	102
More and safer pedestrian crossing locations on M-45		31.8%	112
More access to the Grand River		18.2%	64
More police patrols		9.9%	35
Better north–south roadways		16.8%	59
Broader range of businesses and restaurants		54.8%	193
More community festivals, concerts, and similar events		35.8%	126
	Other (please specify)		64
		answered question	352
		skipped question	26

5. Of the following, which would you be willing to support with additional property tax millage? (Choose all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Dedicated bus route on M-45 (GVSU to 68th)		35.0%	100
Increased police patrols		29.0%	83
Park facilities and programs		58.0%	166
Library		44.1%	126
Fire Department		44.8%	128
answered question			286
skipped question			92

6. Do you support the Town Center concept recommended in the 2003 Master Plan for the area north and south of M-45 between 64th Avenue and 60th Avenue? (See map below) (Family Fare, Heritage Town Square, Metro Health Office Building) The Town Center concept is a mix of schools, shops, plazas, different housing types, central open space arranged in a village-like pattern. This was strongly supported in 2003 by Township residents as a way to create an identity for the Township and a walkable community neighborhood. In preparing an update for the 2012 Township Master Plan the Planning Commission would like to know if this is still a viable concept.

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, I support this concept		75.7%	249
No, I do not support this concept		24.3%	80
answered question			329
skipped question			49

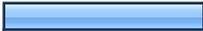
7. Please categorize the following in terms of importance:

	Important	Not As Important	Response Count
Preserving farmland	67.1% (214)	32.9% (105)	319
Improving/maintaining road conditions	90.6% (299)	9.4% (31)	330
Increasing rental housing opportunities for seniors and non - student residents	19.2% (61)	80.8% (256)	317
Improving fire protection	59.9% (190)	40.1% (127)	317
Improving police protection	53.6% (172)	46.4% (149)	321
Improving parks and recreation facilities	66.4% (215)	33.6% (109)	324
Enforcing zoning regulations	55.5% (178)	44.5% (143)	321
Enforcing rental housing maintenance regulations	68.6% (223)	31.4% (102)	325
Engaging GVSU as a community member	71.7% (236)	28.3% (93)	329
Establishing pedestrian and bike trails	69.2% (227)	30.8% (101)	328
Adding additional street lighting in subdivisions	34.9% (111)	65.1% (207)	318
Preserving rural character and views	66.6% (213)	33.4% (107)	320
Lowering the speed limit on M-45	26.9% (87)	73.1% (236)	323
Supporting local businesses	94.5% (312)	5.5% (18)	330
		answered question	341
		skipped question	37

8. Please indicate your rating of the overall performance for each of the following Township services

	Poor	Average	Good	Response Count
Police Protection/Response	1.2% (4)	40.4% (132)	58.4% (191)	327
Fire Protection/Response	0.9% (3)	34.2% (111)	64.9% (211)	325
Recreation Programs and Services	14.3% (47)	63.4% (208)	22.3% (73)	328
Zoning Enforcement	23.8% (77)	62.8% (203)	13.3% (43)	323
Code Enforcement	19.6% (62)	66.9% (212)	13.6% (43)	317
Library	6.1% (20)	48.5% (159)	45.4% (149)	328
Water Utility Services	4.7% (15)	60.6% (192)	34.7% (110)	317
Waste Water Treatment	9.7% (31)	61.0% (194)	29.2% (93)	318
			answered question	333
			skipped question	45

9. The parcels fronting on M-45 from just east of 56th Avenue to 64th Avenue are largely occupied by single family houses with a few undeveloped parcels. Should these parcels which front on M-45 be: (Choose one)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Planned for commercial, office and service uses		29.9%	100
Planned for residential uses such as multi-family, attached condominiums and townhouses		5.1%	17
Planned for a mix of commercial, office and residential uses		43.7%	146
Planned or retained for single family houses		21.3%	71
		answered question	334
		skipped question	44

**10. Future multi-family housing developments which primarily serve GVSU students should:
(Choose all that apply)**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Not be located west of 52nd Avenue		49.7%	165
Be located and designed to avoid conflicts with existing and planned single family housing		58.4%	194
Not be located west of 56th Avenue		25.6%	85
Be allowed to have a higher density with taller buildings in order to allow a greater concentration of students closer to the GVSU campus and reduce the need to extend student housing further west of existing locations		53.0%	176
		answered question	332
		skipped question	46

2019 Allendale Charter Township Master Plan Workshop Results Summary

Allendale Charter Township – Master Plan Update 2019

Public Input Workshop Results

Overview

The following information was obtained from a public workshop held at the Allendale Charter Township Hall on July 24, 2019. The public workshop was designed to elicit generalized public input for the Master Plan process. As such, attendees were provided a brief overview of the master planning and zoning processes, as well as the role of the Planning Commission in Allendale Charter Township. The fifteen (15) attendees then divided into two (2) groups to complete a SWOT Analysis and a prioritization of the SWOT results, as described below.

This report is categorized in the following three (3) parts, detailing the public input processes:

Part 1 –SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

As aforementioned, at the public workshop the fifteen (15) attendees were divided into two (2) groups to complete a SWOT Analysis. Each group brainstormed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the Township, compiling their thoughts through a group facilitator.

Part 2 –Prioritization of SWOT Results

Once each group completed their separate SWOT analyses at the public workshop, the responses of the groups were analyzed for common themes. If a strength, weakness, opportunity, or threat was common to both groups, it was added to a prioritized SWOT analysis. Workshop participants were then asked to rank those themes. For instance, as you will note below, there were six (6) common strengths identified from the separate group SWOT analyses. Participants were then asked to prioritize from those common strengths what they believed to be the top three (3) strengths in the Township. This methodology was also applied to the weaknesses, opportunities, and threats categories.

Part 3 – Comments

General comments were elicited from participants in a variety of ways. Comment sheets and comment post cards were provided to attendees at the public workshop to allow for additional input on the Master Plan. Also, contact information for providing comments was available through the Master Plan website and Facebook pages. The only comment received was in the form of a post card, which is detailed below.

Part 1 – SWOT Responses (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) – Group Exercise

Strengths

- Library
- School system (public & parochial)
- Proximity to Lake Michigan
- Growth of residential population
- Grand Valley State University
- Township Park/recreational opportunities
- Unique architecture; character of buildings
- Semi-rural character
- Quality of life
- Location & accessibility
- Opportunities for younger families
- Future utility expansions are well-planned
- Current tax rate
- Sidewalks along Lake Michigan Drive
- Music in the Park
- Partnerships among local organizations
- Lake Michigan Drive corridor design standards (lighting, parking setbacks)
- Township responsiveness
- Helpful community

Weaknesses

- Narrow streets with high rates of speed
- Attractiveness – should be more inviting
- Residents leave Allendale to go to work
- Lack of lodging
- Alcohol restrictions at events
- Lack of daycare options
- Government does not listen to community input
- Increased traffic due to new developments
- Student housing expanding past 52nd
- Lack of pedestrian access/safety
- Lack of Town Center
- Too many fast food restaurants
- Traffic & pedestrian safety along Fillmore/56th
- Lack of school summer programming
- Small businesses are geographically spread out (not concentrated in one (1) location for ease of shopping)
- Lack of public private partnerships
- Lack of complete sidewalks along 48th
- Lack of right turn lanes/traffic calming
- Lack of programming & activities (“a place to hang out”) for teenagers

Opportunities

- Small pop-up shops
- Public transit
- More traffic signals for better access to Lake Michigan Drive
- Slow traffic down
- Plan for Town Center in a better location
- Better commercial developments
- Pedestrian over-walks crossing Lake Michigan Drive
- Bike paths
- Buried utilities
- More parks, including a dog park
- Better communication and partnerships between Township and GVSU

- Coordinate more community events
- Seek larger employers
- Traffic calming measures along Lake Michigan Drive
- Expansion of bus service
- Complete planned network of sidewalks
- Create opportunities for small businesses
- Growth rate could be opportunity to expand Allendale services
- Public private partnership to create Town Square

- Create smaller neighborhood commercial amenities (small markets, etc.)
- Bike path along Grand River
- Utilization of riverfront property
- Rezone areas for green space for parks/recreation/gardens/preservation
- Create environmentally-friendly ordinances
- Create regulations requiring green infrastructure

Threats

- Traffic volume and speed
- Developments are typically closer to GVSU
- Over-regulation
- Lack of industry
- Lack of hospitality
- Lack of arts
- Growth rate needs to slow down and be managed

- Vacancies in multi-family rental properties
- Non-supportive business atmosphere
- Large-scale commercial development (big box stores)
- Increasing taxes
- Water supply & quantity

Part 2 – SWOT Responses (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) – Prioritized Responses

Strengths – participants given 3 votes to utilize

- Library (6 votes)
- School system (6 votes)
- Quality of life (6 votes)
- Central location (4 votes)
- Grand Valley State University (4 votes)
- Township Park/recreational opportunities (4 votes)

Key Finding: Participants found the library, school system, and quality of life to be the top strengths in Allendale Charter Township. Each strength received 20% of the participant vote.

Weaknesses – participants given 2 votes to utilize

- High speed limits (11 votes)
- Lack of Town Center (7 votes)
- Lack of pedestrian access/safety (3 votes)
- Restaurant types (3 votes)

Key Finding: Participants found the high speed limit to be the top weakness in Allendale Charter Township, receiving nearly 46% of the participant vote. The second top weakness identified in the Township is the lack of Town Center, receiving 29% of the participant vote. Given that speed limits are generally outside of the authority of the Township, the lack of Town Center was the primary weakness.

Opportunities – participants given 3 votes to utilize

- Pedestrian bridges (9 votes)
- Increased communication with GVSU (8 votes)
- Traffic calming (6 votes)
- Small business unity/support (5 votes)
- Create destination venues (5 votes)
- Parks/recreation (4 votes)
- Town Center concept location (3 votes)
- Expansion of busing (1 vote)

Key Finding: Providing pedestrian bridges was identified as the top priority, receiving nearly 22% of the participant vote. The second top opportunity identified was increased communication and partnership with Grand Valley State University, receiving nearly 20% of the participant vote.

Threats – participants given 1 vote to utilize

- Big box store(s) (10 votes)
- Non-supportive business atmosphere (5 votes)

Key Finding: Overwhelmingly, public workshop participants identified the top threat to Allendale Charter Township as big box stores locating in the community. Nearly 67% of the participant vote identified that as the top threat.

Summary of prioritized SWOT responses: Public workshop participants highly value the resources and quality of life that Allendale Charter Township currently offers, particularly with the potential for increasing the partnership between the community and Grand Valley State University. There appears to be preference for maintaining the rural character of the area though, by limiting big box store development, creating a Town Center, and focusing on vehicular safety and pedestrian accessibility within the community.

Part 3 – Comments

Post Cards – Distributed at Public Workshop

Name	Contact Information	Comment
Don Aneleya (last name illegible)	Not provided	I thought the workshop was conducted very well. The facilitator was very good at eliciting input from the attendees. I hope the Planning Commission considers the ideas generated at the workshop.