

Billings Township Master Plan

Planning Commission Adoption: May 27, 2010

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**Billings Township,
Gladwin County, Michigan**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

Following this introduction is an overview of the elements of this Master Plan, and observations about the future of the Township. These materials provide a context for the balance of the Plan.

NEW MICHIGAN PLANNING ENABLING ACT

On March 13, 2008, the Governor signed into law Public Act 33, which is the new Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA). This Act replaced the former Township Planning Act (as well as the municipal and county planning acts) and became effective September 1, 2008. The new MPEA consolidated and updated planning provisions from all three existing Michigan planning enabling acts.

One of the changes incorporated into the new Act was a requirement that the local plan be called a “master plan,” rather than the various names typically used; including “comprehensive plan,” “growth management plan,” and “general development plan.” To comply with the new MPEA, this updated document will be referred to as the “Billings Township Master Plan.”

REFERENCES

This is intended to be the plan referred to in the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (Public Act 110 of 2006, as amended) as the basis for the Billings Township Zoning Ordinance; and as provided in the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008, as amended) to serve as the Master Plan for the Township. The required zoning plan elements are found in Chapter 9 of this Plan, and the following separate special plan elements and sub-area plans are also incorporated by reference and made part of this Master Plan:

- ***All Bright Shores Estey Road Corridor Plan***
- ***Billings Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan***

DESCRIPTION OF THE MASTER PLAN

Relation to Past Plans

This Master Plan builds on the foundations of the previous Billings Township Master Plan, prepared in 2000 by the Township Planning Commission with the assistance of the East Central Michigan Planning & Development Regional Commission.

The Planning Commission reviewed the 2000 Master Plan and determined that conditions within and affecting Billings Township have changed enough to warrant an update of strategies and policies with respect to agriculture, economic development, natural resources, development and population trends, and land uses.

This Plan remains guided by a common vision of the future, which is detailed through a comprehensive series of goals, objectives, and policies. The Plan includes a list of

proposed implementation steps (See Chapter 9, Zoning Plan, and Chapter 10, Plan Implementation).

This Master Plan will, upon adoption by the Planning Commission and Township Board, replace the 2000 Township Master Plan.

Principal Features of the Plan

This Master Plan can be described as a policy-based plan. In developing this document, it was the intent of the Planning Commission to work with Township residents, business owners, officials, and other stakeholders to:

1. Encourage public participation in the planning process;
2. Identify what residents of Billings Township want the Township to be like in ten (10) to 20 years through a visioning session process;
3. Catalog Township strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for the future;
4. Identify potential issues and threats facing the Township in coming years;
5. List the major planning and development-related issues which will have enduring effects on the Township, and which will affect the physical character of the Township in the years ahead;
6. Develop goals, objectives, and policies seek to address the fundamental issues which the Planning Commission and Township Board expect the Township to face within the foreseeable future; and
7. Develop specific strategies to implement the policies and recommendations of this Master Plan.

Because the Plan concentrates on goals, objectives, policies, and strategies, it follows that the Plan is, for the most part, general in nature. That is, the Plan identifies various issues and the approaches that will be followed to resolve or address them during the planning period.

The Plan provides the framework for Planning Commission and Township Board decisionmaking with regards to land use, public improvements, and future development. It is not the intent of the Plan that the designation of any area for a specific use would entitle a property owner within that area to a zoning change. Such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis at the time the question arises, and within the context of the Plan, applicable zoning, and any other applicable development regulations.

The Plan recognizes that the future is uncertain and cannot be predicted, and that current perceptions of future conditions will change. The major issues may change over time, and strategies and policies appropriate to respond to them will have to be modified or replaced. The Planning Commission intends to review (at least once each five years), refine, add to, or otherwise update this Master Plan as necessary. The Plan may be amended if analysis indicates an amendment is appropriate. Detailed policies for

specific areas of the Township may also be appropriate, or required, in the form of sub-area plans.

FUTURE OF BILLINGS TOWNSHIP

The Township has developed as a residential, agricultural, and recreational community. Decisions made in surrounding townships, Gladwin and Midland counties, the State of Michigan, and public and private actions related to the Tittabawassee River watershed will continue to have an impact upon Billings Township and the quality of life experienced by Township residents. This interrelationship, especially as related to watershed planning and development, emphasizes the need for inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination.

Change usually appears to be gradual, but can be dramatic. Thus far, Billings Township's development has been gradual. The Township is fortunate to have many outstanding natural features still intact that enhance our community, and can continue to do so with proper protective measures and planning.

With careful attention to the goals and objectives of this Master Plan, and through the implementation of Plan policies and strategies, Billings Township has the opportunity to work proactively to protect the unique rural, recreational character of the community while also building a future that incorporates the best characteristics of the 21st century, respects our heritage, and protects our natural environment.

Chapter 2 COMMUNITY PROFILE

This section contains an overview of the historical and regional context of Billings Township, and the social and economic factors that shape our community. The topics covered here include population growth and composition, income levels and economic characteristics, housing data, and other relevant factors.

SETTLEMENT

Gladwin County is located in the northeast central section of Michigan's lower peninsula. The county was named in 1831 for British Major Henry Gladwin of Fort Detroit who led the only fort in the Midwest to withstand the assaults of Chief Pontiac's five-month siege in 1763, when Pontiac resisted the settlement of Michigan and Ohio. The first settlers to the area were Marvel Secord and his family who, in 1861, canoed up the Tittabawassee River through the future site of Billings Township north to the mouth of the Sugar River, just a few miles from where the City of Gladwin exists today.

The County of Gladwin was officially organized in 1875, but remained untamed until the 1880's, when many lumber towns were established here because of the thick white pine forests. Later, oil was discovered near the Beaverton area.¹

School House on the grounds of Gladwin County Historical Society, Gladwin, MI
The Billings Township School District #2 building donated in 1986.
It was dismantled and transported in sections to the historical site,
reconstructed, and opened to the public in 1988.



photo taken June 2004 by Bob Frei, Beaverton, MI

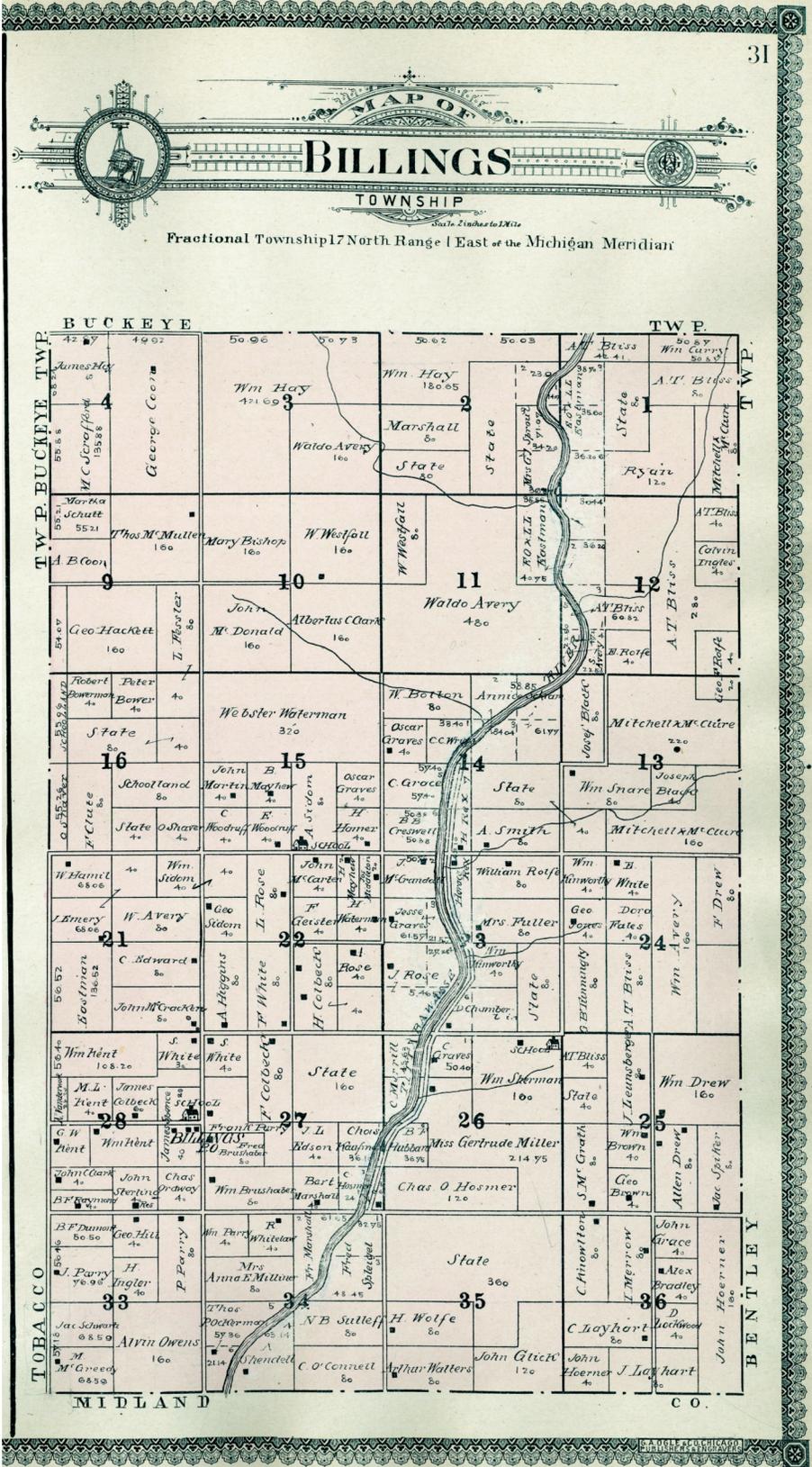
REGIONAL CONTEXT

Billings Township is approximately 22 square miles in area and consists of 24 sections of land, smaller than a standard Michigan township. The Township is located in the southern tier of Gladwin County townships bordering Midland County. This is a predominantly rural, forested and agricultural area near the center of Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

The Township is bisected north to south by the Tittabawassee River, which rises to the north in Roscommon County, flows through Gladwin, Midland, and Saginaw counties, and empties into the Saginaw Bay as a major tributary of the Saginaw River.

¹ Adapted from the official Gladwin County website 3/14/2008. <http://www.gladwinco.com>.

MAP 2.1 - BILLINGS TOWNSHIP, 1906²



² Standard Atlas of Gladwin County, Michigan. Geo. A. Ogle & Co., 1906, pp. 30-31.

Climate

The region enjoys a relatively mild climate moderated by the Great Lakes. The average daily high temperature in July, the warmest month, is 82 degrees F. The coldest month, January, has an average daily low temperature of 12 degrees F. The area experiences about 30 inches of precipitation each year, with most of this occurring as rainfall. Snowfall averages about 44 inches per year, but is subject to wide annual variations. Prevailing winds are from the southwest and are generally strongest in March.



Highways

The M-30 state highway forms the western boundary of the Township, and provides access to the US-10 expressway located about 15 miles south of the Township. In addition, the Township is located about 15 miles west of exit 181 on the I-75 interstate highway. Together, these highways provide the community with convenient regional access.



Location

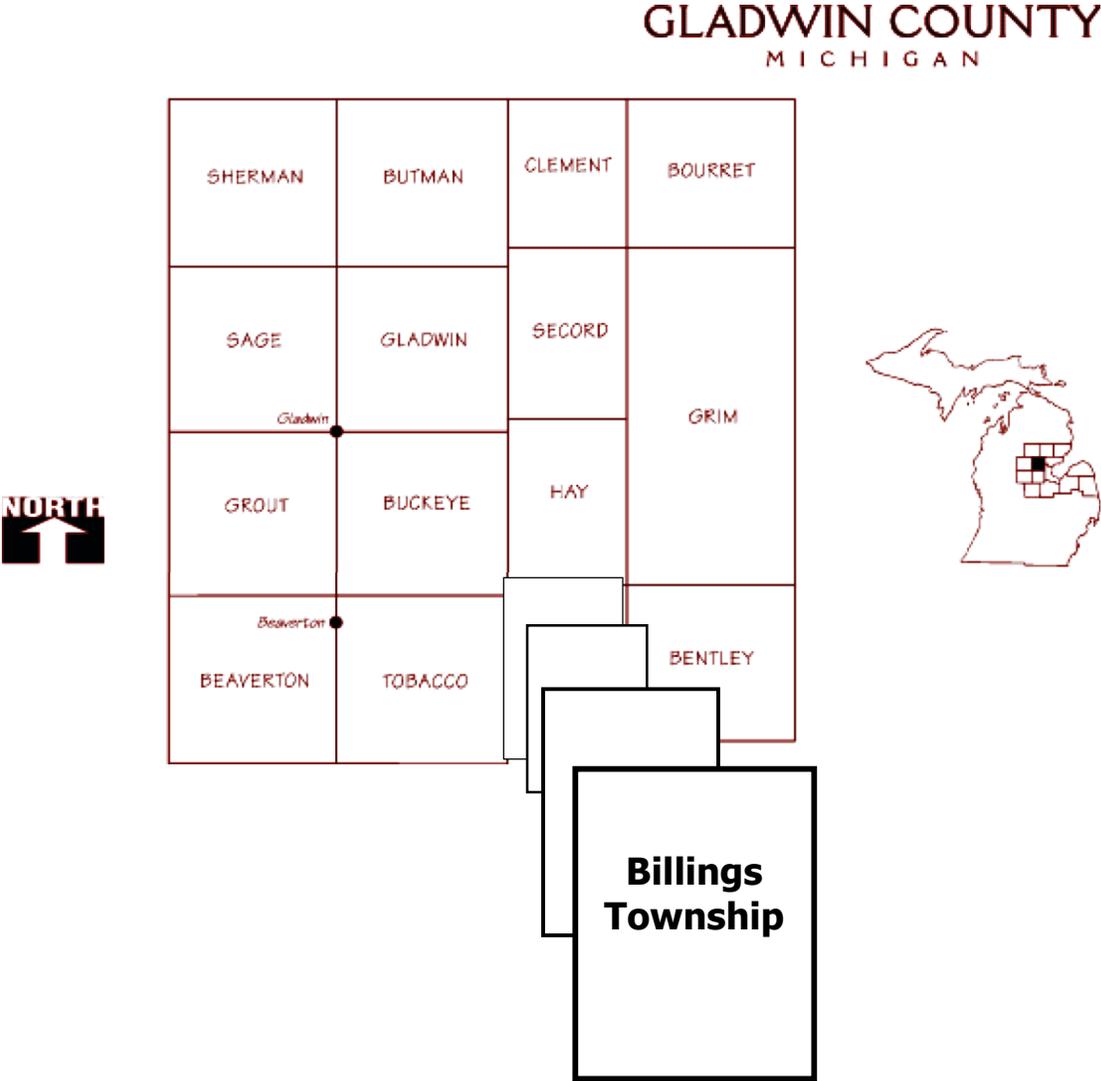
The Township is bounded on the north by Hay Township, on the east by Bentley Township, on the west by Tobacco Township, and on the south by Hope Township in Midland County. The Township is located approximately 20 miles north of the City of Midland and 25 miles east of the City of Clare. Billings Township is also within commuting distance of Bay City (32 miles), and Saginaw (40 miles) to the southeast. The county seat (City of Gladwin) is located about 12 miles northwest of the Township.



Schools, Economy, and Recreation

Billings Township is located within the Beaverton Rural School District, headquartered in the City of Beaverton about eight (8) miles to the west. The cities of Beaverton and Gladwin provide the nearest commercial and industrial centers. The region's economy includes auto parts manufacturing, thermoform, RV manufacturing, wood products, construction and agriculture. Tourism plays a special role in area waterways, with the Wixom Lake impoundment on the Tittabawassee River creating opportunities for boating, fishing, canoeing and sightseeing. State Forest land occupies much of the eastern half of the Township, providing opportunities for hiking, hunting, and snowmobiling.

MAP 2.2 - REGIONAL LOCATION



Source: East Central Michigan Planning & Development Regional Commission, Consultant

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

As part of the master plan process, the Township’s population and housing characteristics were analyzed and compared with those of neighboring communities and Gladwin County totals to gain insight and perspective concerning the Township’s past, present, and future. Population estimates, household size, age and occupational characteristics were analyzed, and total housing units and persons per household were reviewed to find the Township’s unique housing characteristics and trends.

Understanding historic changes provides an important base for understanding how the Township will evolve over the next ten to twenty years. Demographic analysis is essential to determine what physical, social and economic changes may occur in the future. Population projections provide the basis for creating and evaluating the goals, objectives, and land use recommendations of this Plan.

The 2000 U.S. Census found the population of Billings Township to be 2,715 people (**Table 2.1**), an almost 18% increase over the 1990 U.S. Census population. This growth rate is similar to the overall County growth rate during the same period. Billings remains the largest township in Gladwin County by population, absorbing the largest number of new residents (410) of any community in the county.

Table 2.1
Population Trends, 1990-2000
Billings Township, Gladwin County, & Surrounding Municipalities

Community	1980	1990	2000	Percentage Change	
				1980-1990	1990-2000
Billings Township	2,076	2,305	2,715	11.0%	17.8%
Bentley Township		751	859		14.4%
Grim Township		100	129		29.0%
Hay Township		1,173	1,402		19.5%
Buckeye Township		996	1,333		33.8%
Tobacco Township		2,220	2,552		15.0%
Hope Township (Midland Co.)		1,220	1,286		5.4%
City of Gladwin	2,479	2,682	3,001	8.2%	11.9%
City of Beaverton		1,150	1,106		-3.8%
Gladwin County	19,957	21,896	26,023	9.7%	18.8%
Midland County		75,651	82,874		9.5%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Age Characteristics

A comparison of 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census data indicates that Billings Township is experiencing a significant aging trend. Despite an increase in overall population, U.S. Census data shows a nearly 12% drop in the number of school-age children (19 and under) between 1990 and 2000, and a 22% drop in preschool children (**Table 2.2**). Census information also shows a significant deficit in the number of singles and young families of prime childbearing age in Billings Township as compared to the general U.S. population (**Table 2.4**). Billings Township children make up at least 35% of the Beaverton Rural School District’s total student population (1,397).³ If this decreasing student population trend continues, it may seriously impair the ability of the school district to provide educational services to the area.

The fastest growing segments of the population during the 1990's were people in the 40 to 59 age brackets and the elderly. Similar trends are seen across the United States as the “baby boomers” (born 1946-1964) have begun to reach retirement age. In Billings Township, these trends have resulted in increasing number of former “weekenders” becoming full-time residents. The median age of Township residents is now over 44 years, nine years older than the State of Michigan’s median age of 35.5 (**Table 2.3**). With an aging population, additional services for senior and elderly residents may be needed.

Table 2.2
1990 to 2000 Age Group Comparison
Billings Township

Age Group	1990	Percent of Total	2000	Percent of Total	Percentage Change 1990 to 2000
Under 5	150	6.5%	117	4.3%	-22.0%
5 to 19	568	24.6%	516	19.0%	-9.2%
20 to 29	278	12.0%	198	7.3%	-28.8%
30 to 39	309	13.4%	339	12.5%	9.7%
40 to 49	249	10.8%	417	15.3%	67.5%
50 to 59	271	11.8%	431	15.9%	59.0%
60 to 69	361	15.7%	375	13.8%	3.9%
70 to 79	206	8.9%	222	8.2%	7.8%
80 and Above	63	2.8%	100	3.7%	58.7%
TOTAL	2,305	100.0%	2,715	100.0%	17.8%
19 and Under	718	31.1%	633	23.3%	-11.8%
21 and Above	1,712	74.3%	2,046	75.4%	19.5%
62 and Above	567	24.6%	592	21.8%	4.4%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

³ 9/26/2007 student population count, Beaverton Rural School District website. <http://www.brs.cgresd.net/schoolboard/data.php>.

Table 2.3

**Median Age, 1990 - 2000
Billings Township & Gladwin County**

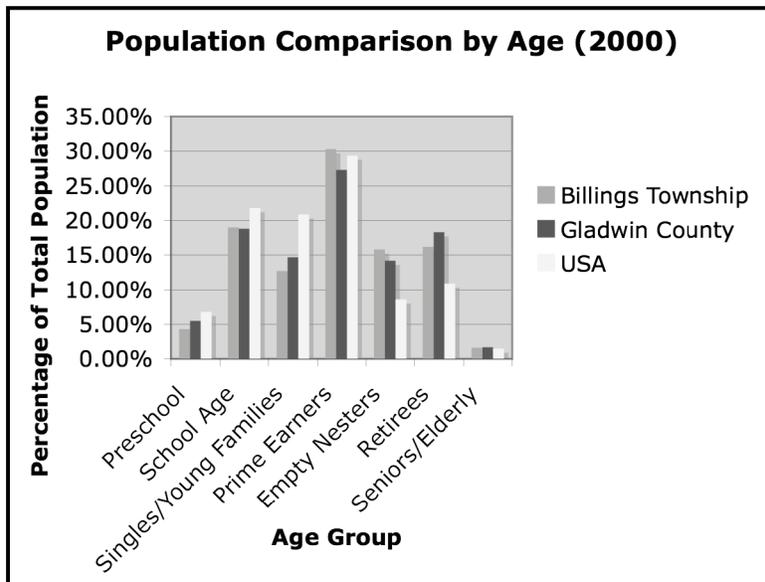
Community	1990	2000	Percent Change
Billings Township	39.9 years	44.5 years	11.5%
Gladwin County	35.5 years	42.3 years	19.2%
Michigan	32.6 years	35.5 years	8.9%

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

Table 2.4 - Comparison of Population by Age, 2000

Age Groups By Years	Billings Township	Gladwin County	USA
Preschool (Under 5)	4.3%	5.5%	6.8%
School Age (5 to 19)	19.0%	18.8%	21.8%
Singles and Young Families (20 to 34)	12.7%	14.7%	20.9%
Prime Earning Years (35 to 54)	30.3%	27.3%	29.4%
Empty Nesters (55 to 64)	15.8%	14.2%	8.6%
Retirees (65 to 84)	16.2%	18.3%	10.9%
Seniors and Elderly (85 and Above)	1.6%	1.7%	1.5%
19 and Under	23.3%	24.3%	28.6%
21 and Above	75.4%	73.6%	70.0%
62 and Above	21.8%	22.5%	14.7%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census



HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Population figures clearly indicate the growth pressure Billings Township is experiencing. The range of available housing, types of households, and other household characteristics offer another important measure of the community.

Table 2.5 indicates that more than one-fourth of Township households consist of persons living alone, including more than ten percent (10%) living alone aged 65 and older. Married couples with school age children constitute less than one (1) household out of six (6) in the Township.

The number of persons per household in Billings Township has dropped about 4.5% since 1990, reflecting a national trend. At 2.31, the number of persons per household is less than the national figure of 2.59; most likely due to the larger percentage of empty nesters and single-person households in the Township (**Table 2.6**).

Table 2.5
Household Characteristics, 2000
Billings Township and Gladwin County

Type of Household	Billings Township	Percent	Gladwin County	Percent
Total Households	1,172	100.0%	10,561	100.0%
Family Households	791	67.5%	7,616	72.1%
Married Couple Family Households	634	54.1%	6,387	60.5%
- with own children under 18 years	191	16.3%	2,091	19.8%
Female Headed Family Households	108	9.2%	847	8.0%
Non-family Households	381	32.5%	2,945	27.9%
- Persons Living Alone	307	26.2%	2,532	24.0%
- Persons Living Alone, 65 & Older	118	10.1%	1,183	11.2%
Households with Persons 65 and Over	346	29.5%	3,282	31.1%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 2.6
Comparison of 1990 and 2000 Persons Per Household,
Billings Township and the United States

	Billings Township		United States	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Persons per Household	2.42	2.31	2.63	2.59

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census

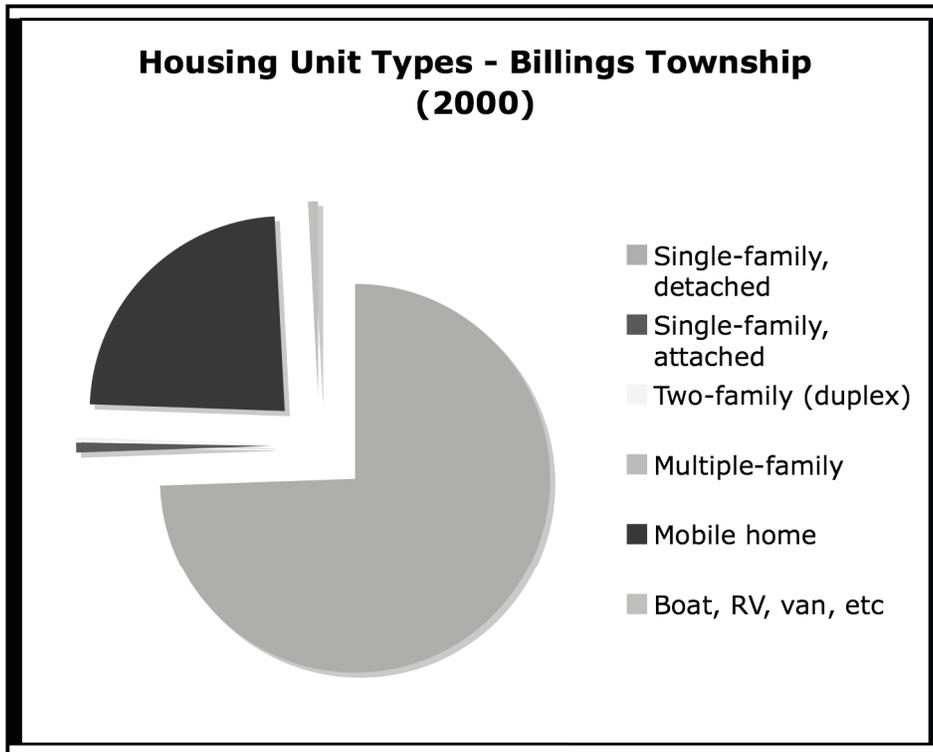
Housing Profile

It is vital for a community to provide a wide range of housing choices to serve the needs of all residents, and to allow for a more diversified population. Without a wide variety of housing opportunities young single adults, young families, and senior citizens on fixed incomes may have difficulty finding affordable housing. **Table 2.7** shows the range of available types of housing in Billings Township. As noted below, the Township is primarily composed of single-family detached homes (74%) and mobile homes (almost 24%)

Table 2.7 - Tenure by Type of Housing Unit

Type of Housing Unit	Total housing units	
	Number	Percent
Single-family, detached	1,592	74.4%
Single-family, attached	18	0.8%
Two-family (duplex)	5	0.2%
Multiple-family	0	0.0%
Mobile home	507	23.7%
Boat, RV, van, etc	18	0.8%
Total	2,140	100%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

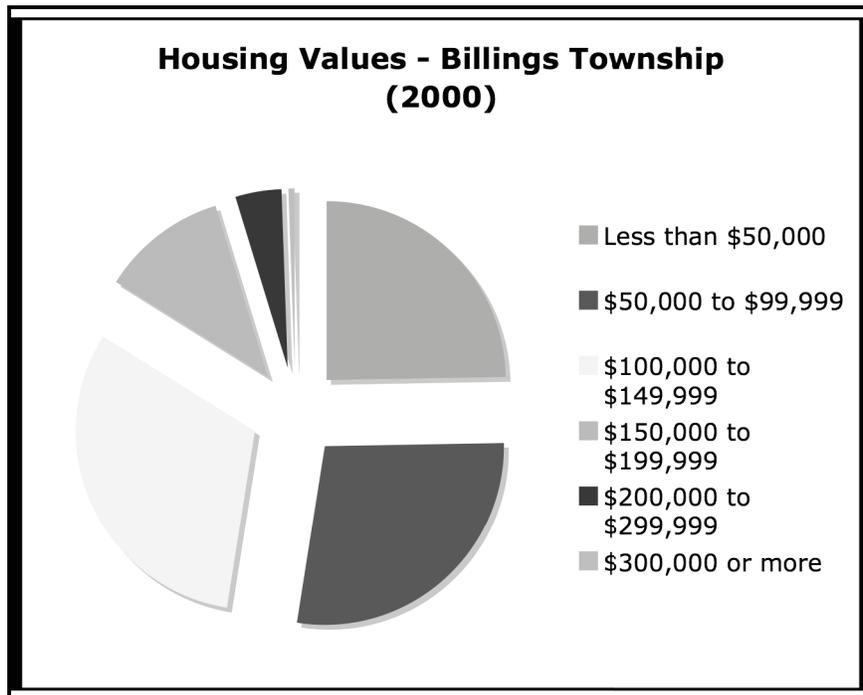


Median Housing Cost

In addition to providing for a range of housing choices, housing affordability must be considered to maximize housing opportunities for all residents, and to allow for a more diversified population. **Table 2.8** shows the range of housing values for owner-occupied housing in Billings Township. The median cost of housing in Billings Township was \$94,400 in 1999, and more than 80% of the Township’s owner-occupied home cost less than \$150,000 in 1999. While home values across Michigan increased significantly between 2000 and 2005, Billings Township remains an affordable community in which to purchase a home.

**Table 2.8
Owner-Occupied Housing Value,
Billings Township, 1999**

Value	Number	Percent
Less than \$50,000	179	24.6%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	203	27.8%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	230	31.6%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	82	11.2%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	31	4.3%
\$300,000 or more	4	0.5%
Median Housing Value (dollars)	\$94,400	
Source: 2000 U.S. Census		



ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Income and employment data are useful in examining local economic conditions. **Table 2.9** shows that per capita income in the Township and Gladwin County increased significantly between 1989 and 1999, and at a faster rate than the State of Michigan as a whole. However, per capita income and median family income remain below the overall state levels. According to 2000 U.S. Census data, 12.4% of Township residents (333 people) lived below the poverty level with regards to annual income, which is identical to the U.S. average.

Table 2.10 shows employment data for Township residents. Average commuting time to work is 44.2 minutes, nearly double to statewide average of 23.2 minutes. The longer commute times reflect the high percentage of Township residents who are employed outside the Township. However, approximately 4.6% of Township residents worked at home in 1999, which is higher than the percentage statewide (3.4%). Billings Township has experienced growth in the number of home-based businesses in recent years.

Table 2.9 - Income Status (1989 - 1999)

Unit	Per Capita Income 1989	Per Capita Income 1999	Change	1999 Median Family Income
Billings Township	\$9,716	\$17,999	85.3%	\$37,292
Gladwin County	\$8,972	\$16,614	85.1%	\$37,090
State of Michigan	\$14,154	\$24,097	70.2%	\$57,996
Source: 2000 U.S. Census				

Table 2.10 – Employment Status (1999)

Status	Number	Percent
Population 16 years and over	2,249	100%
- currently employed in labor force	943	41.9%
- worked at home	43	4.6%
Average travel time to work	44.2 minutes	
Occupation:		
Management, professional, and related occupations	177	18.8%
Service occupations	131	13.9%
Sales and office occupations	242	25.7%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	7	0.7%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	157	16.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	229	24.3%
Class of Worker:		
Private wage and salary workers	798	84.6%
Government workers	95	10.1%
Self-employed workers	50	5.3%
Source: 2000 U.S. Census		

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

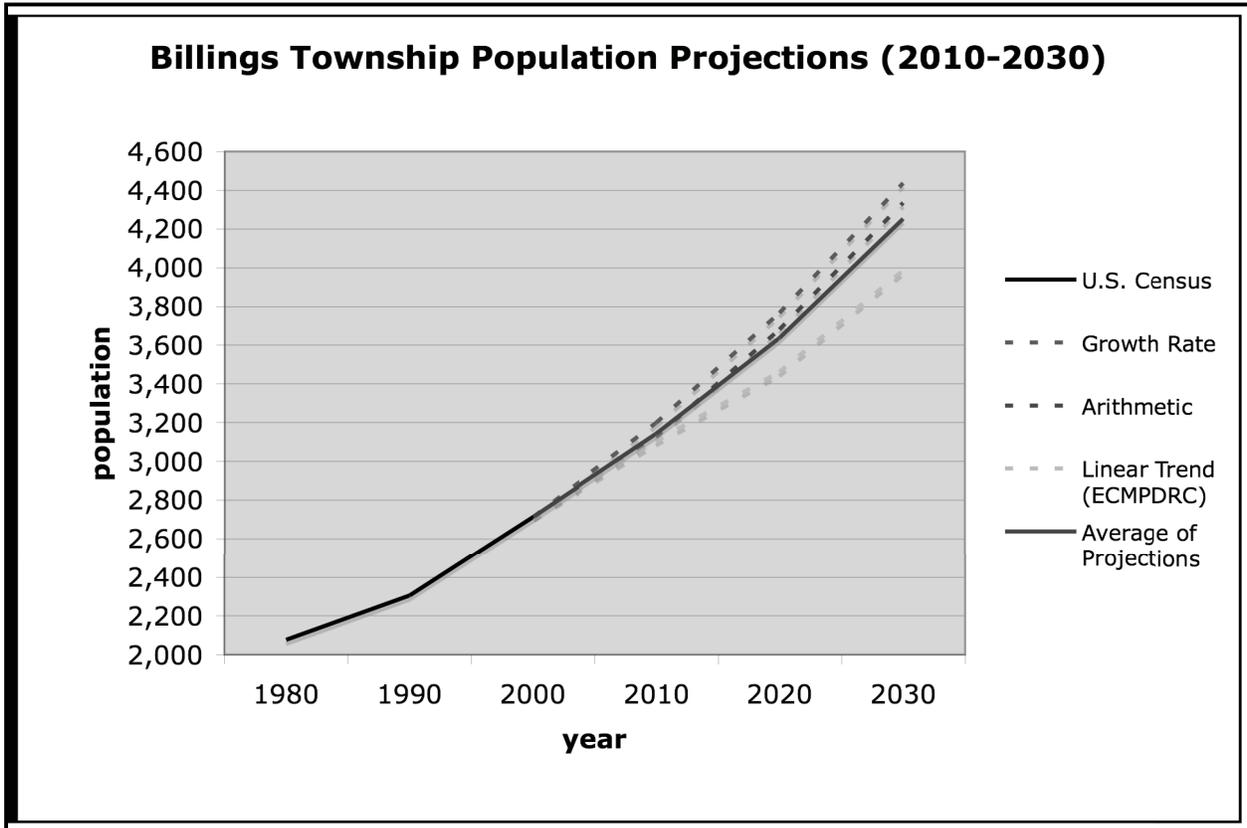
Forecasts of population growth can be prepared based on the assumption that previous trends and land use policies will continue. There are several accepted techniques for projecting future population growth. We have applied the growth rate method [projecting the current rate of growth (17.8%) into the future], and the arithmetic method [projecting the actual increase in population (410 persons between 1990 and 2000) into the future] (**Tables 2.1 and 2.11**).

We have also included in **Table 2.11** population projection prepared by the East Central Michigan Planning and Development Regional Commission (ECMPDRC), which is based upon the linear trend extrapolation method and staff observations of current factors contributing to population. An average of the various projections has also been calculated.

Table 2.11 - Population Projections - Billings Township

Method	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
U.S. Census	2,076	2,305	2,715			
Growth Rate				3,198	3,767	4,437
Arithmetic Increase				3,125	3,681	4,336
ECMPDRC Projection				3,103	3,461	3,985
Average of Projections				3,142	3,636	4,252

Sources: U.S. Census, East Central Michigan Planning & Development Region 7, Consultant calculations



Forecast Limitations

Many outside factors affect local population growth, including the health of the regional, state, and national economy; in- and out-migration trends; and aging of the U.S. population. Regional and state economic conditions, including Michigan's multi-year economic recession, will have a significant impact on how much population growth the Township will experience over the next ten (10) to 20 years. Changing conditions at the local level can also affect future population.

- The current (2008-2009) economic downturn will likely cause stagnation and even a short-term drop in population growth, which may be reflected in the upcoming 2010 U.S. Census figures.
- One of the most important local factors affecting Billings Township's future growth are the changing local conditions associated with completion of the new Township sanitary sewage treatment and disposal system. The long-term effects of the new public sewer system on population levels and residential development activity are difficult to accurately forecast at this time, but such systems have the long-term potential to increase the trend of converting seasonal cottages and vacant "recreational" lots to year-round residences. The availability of public sewer service may also attract new residential construction within the sewer district.
- The Township's future land use policies and regulations related to dwelling unit density, agricultural land and open space preservation, and economic development will also, in part, determine the future Township population.

All of the above factors combine to significantly increase the level of uncertainty with regards to forecasts of future Township population. At a minimum, an extended economic recession in Michigan will likely delay future population growth by several years.

Chapter 3 PHYSIOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS

This Chapter describes the Township as it is today (2009), in terms of natural features, land cover and development patterns, wetlands and watercourses, soil types, utilities, and transportation infrastructure.

LAND COVER

Billings Township consists of 24 sections of land, covering an area of about 14,819 acres or just over 23 square miles. State forestland occupies approximately 1,500 acres in the eastern portion of the Township. 54-percent (54%) of the Township is forested land, 18-percent (18%) is in active agriculture, and approximately eight percent (8%) are urban areas (residential and commercial). Wetlands and waterbodies cover about thirteen percent (13%) of Billings Township, with open land (grass and scrub vegetation) make up the remaining land cover [approximately seven percent (7%)]. Taken together, the forested, agricultural and open land categories make up 80 percent of the Township, emphasizing its rural character.

Land Cover Categories

The Township's major land cover categories are also shown on a series of maps. This information is presented as follows:

- **Map 3.1 State-Owned Land**
- **Map 3.2 Woodlands** (including hardwoods, conifers, and tree farms)
- **Map 3.3 Agricultural Lands** (including cropland and pasture) and Open Fields
- **Map 3.4 Urban Land** (including residential and commercial uses)
- **Map 3.5 Existing Land Uses**

Woodlands and State-Owned Land

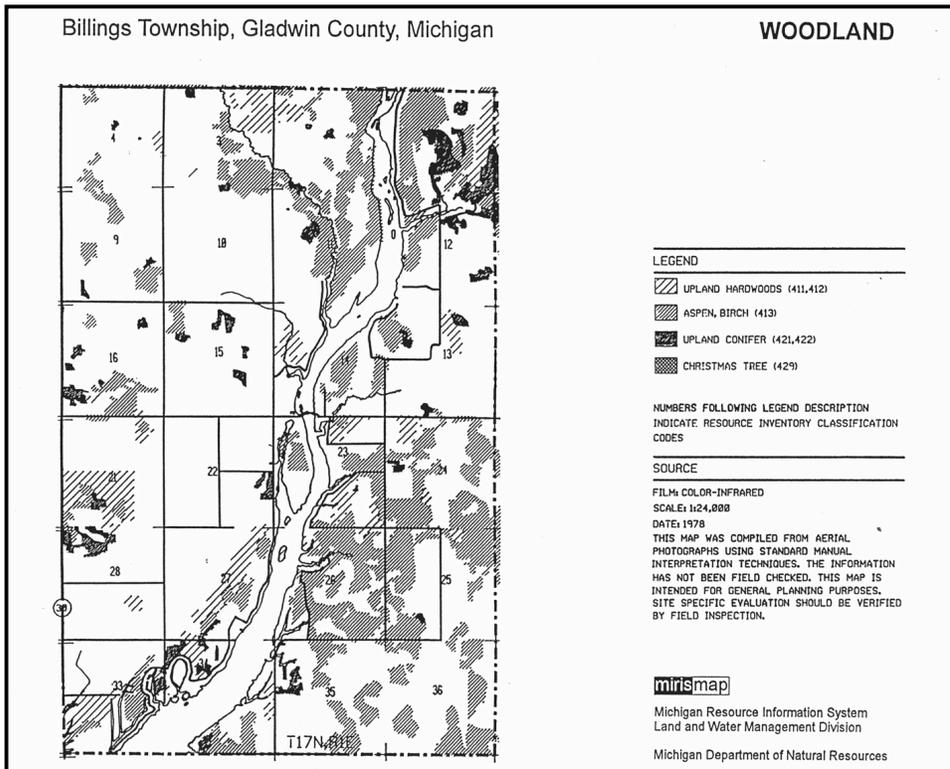
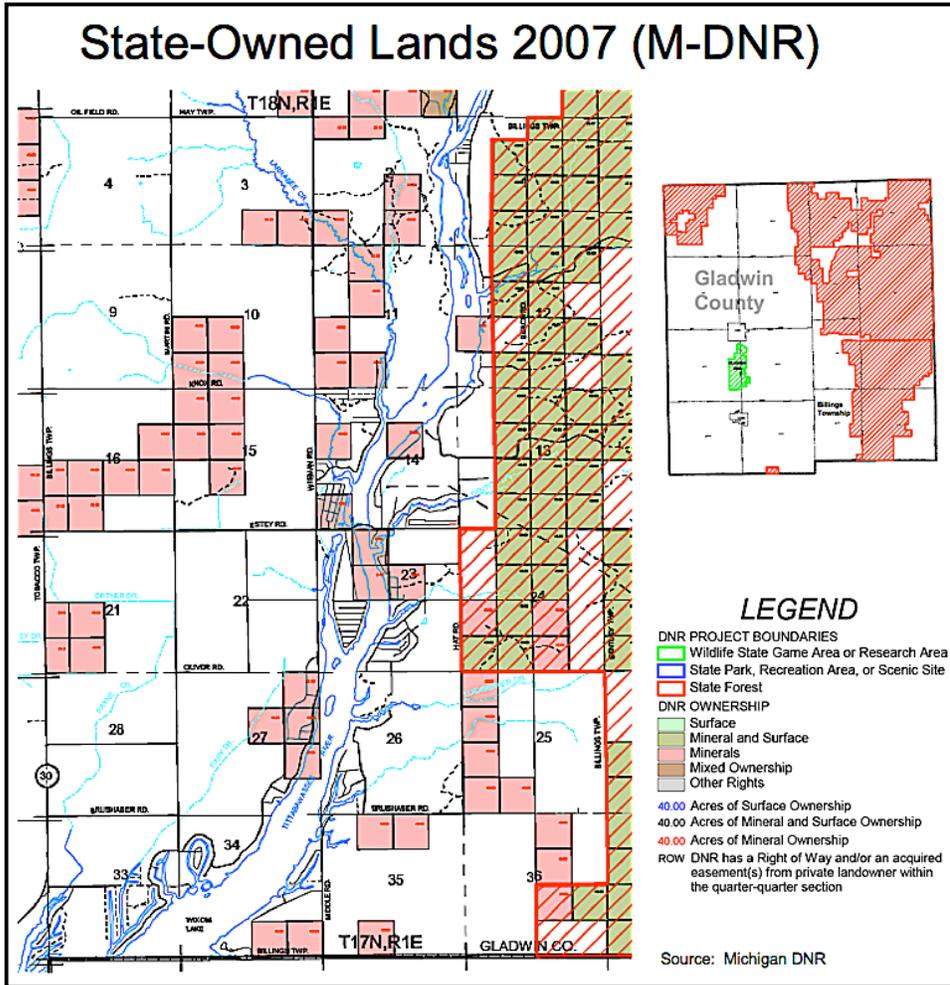
Forested land is the single largest land cover category. Most of the wooded land consists of lowland hardwoods, as well as aspen and birch forest.

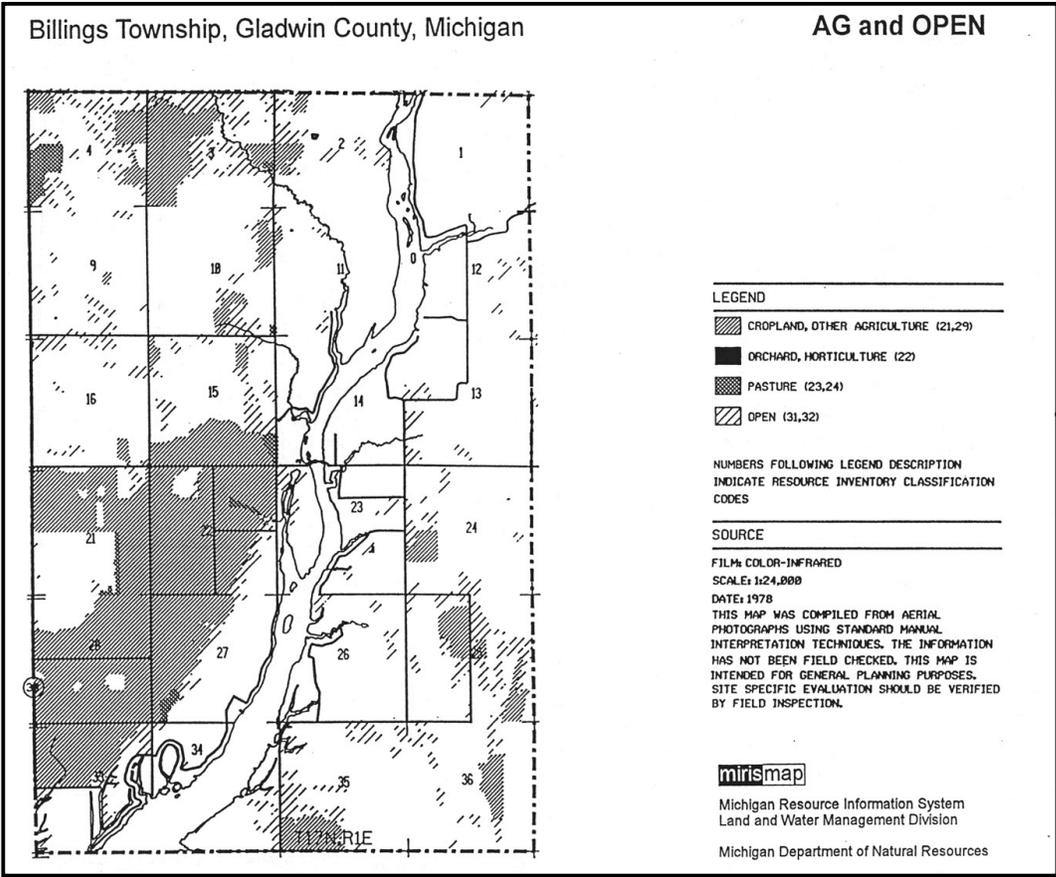
Urban Land

Residential development is most concentrated near the Tittabawassee River and Wixom Lake. Residential uses consist almost exclusively of single-family dwellings, and include both year-round and seasonal homes. Commercial development is concentrated primarily in the unincorporated hamlet of All Bright Shores at the juncture of Estey Road and the Tittabawassee River, near the geographic center of the Township. Some additional commercial businesses are located along the M-30 corridor at the Township's western boundary.

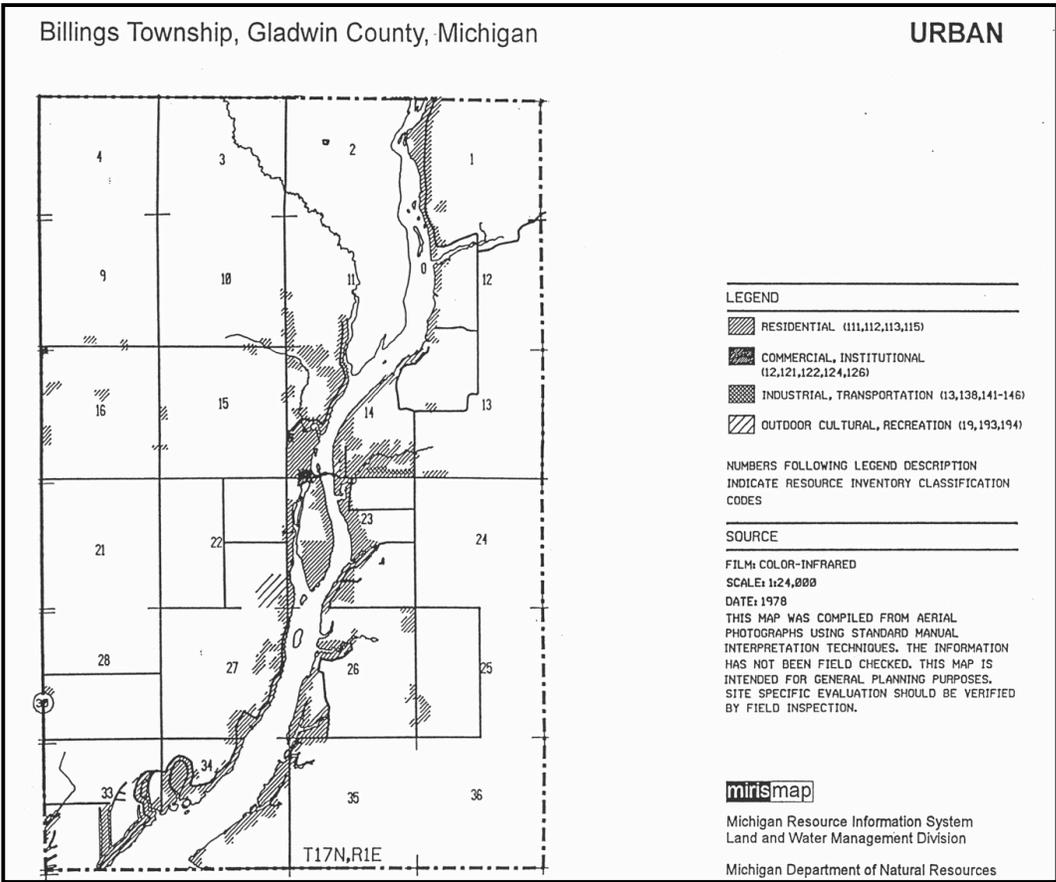
Agricultural Land and Open Land

Agricultural lands are the Township's second largest land use and make up about 18 percent (18%) of the total area. Most of these areas consist of cropland. Open lands are undeveloped areas covered with grass and shrub vegetation that are not devoted to any particular use. These areas make up 7.5 percent of the Township.





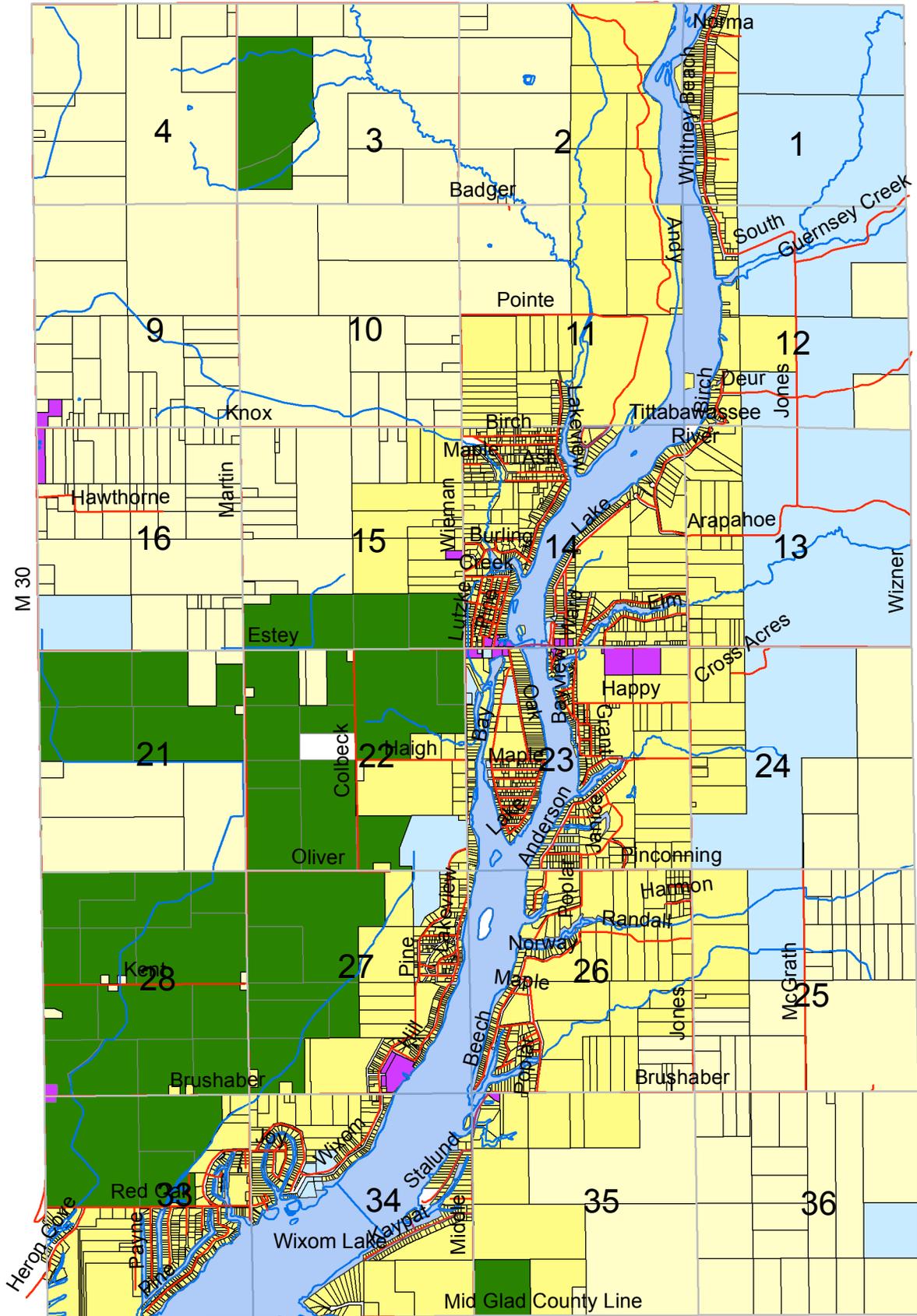
**MAP 3.3 -
AG LANDS
AND OPEN
FIELDS**



**MAP 3.4 -
URBAN
LANDS**

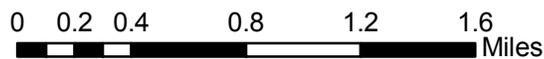
Billings Township Existing Land Use Map

Howard



Legend

- River
- Roads
- Section Lines
- Hydrography
- Classes**
- Agricultural Uses
- Waterfront Residential Uses
- Commercial Uses
- Public/Quasi Public Uses
- Rural Residential Uses



Map Provided by Building Place
Rodney Nanney, AICP

Water Resources and Wetlands

Wetlands occupy about eight percent (8%) of the Township's land area. They mainly consist of shrub-type vegetation such as alder and dogwood, forested wetlands, and areas that consist of emergent wetland plants. The majority of wetlands identified on **Map 3-6** generally occur within existing woodlands or near major water bodies, smaller streams and drainage courses.

Billings Township is within the Saginaw River Basin and is drained by the Tittabawassee River and its tributaries. Drainage is generally toward the south. Streams in the Township include Lorrabee Creek, Guernsey Creek, Denton Creek, and Payne Creek, as well as numerous small creeks and drains. As previously mentioned, the Tittabawassee River and Wixom Lake are the major water resources in the Township.

Waterbodies, consisting of permanent lakes and streams, make up slightly more than five percent of the Township. The major water bodies are the Tittabawassee River and Wixom Lake, which is formed by a dam on the river. Streams within the Township include Lorrabee Creek, Guernsey Creek, Denton Creek, Payne Creek, and numerous other small streams and drains. Although water bodies make up a relatively small part of the Township's total area, they represent a tremendous recreational resource and a focal point of residential development.

Soils

Billings Township, like many rural communities, has no municipal water or sewer systems. Accordingly, the intensity of development that may take place is largely dependent on the capability of soils to accommodate water wells and septic systems. The ability of the local soils to support construction of building foundations and roadways is also an important factor in development.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has classified the soils within Billings Township as five major associations. These associations have also been placed in the following groups:

Sandy and loamy soils on lake plains. This category includes the Iosco-AuGres-Ingalls and the Rubicon-Ocqueoc-Ingalls associations. These soils range from well-drained to somewhat poorly drained, and they have a sandy subsoil. Soils in this class are generally found along the Tittabawassee River in the northern half of the Township, and in the southeast corner of the Township.

Sandy soils on lake plains, outwash plains, and moraines. These are represented by the Crowell-AuGres-Rubicon association. These soils range from well-drained to somewhat poorly drained. They have a sandy subsoil and they are located on lake plains. This association occurs in a band that runs diagonally through the center of the Township from northeast to southwest.

Loamy soils on lake plains. These include the Ugly-Brimley-Bruce and the Hettinger-Bowers-Iosco associations. These soils range from well-drained to very poorly drained. They have a loamy subsoil and occur on lake plains. These associations are found in the eastern and western portions of the Township, beyond the more sandy soils that occur in the center of the Township.

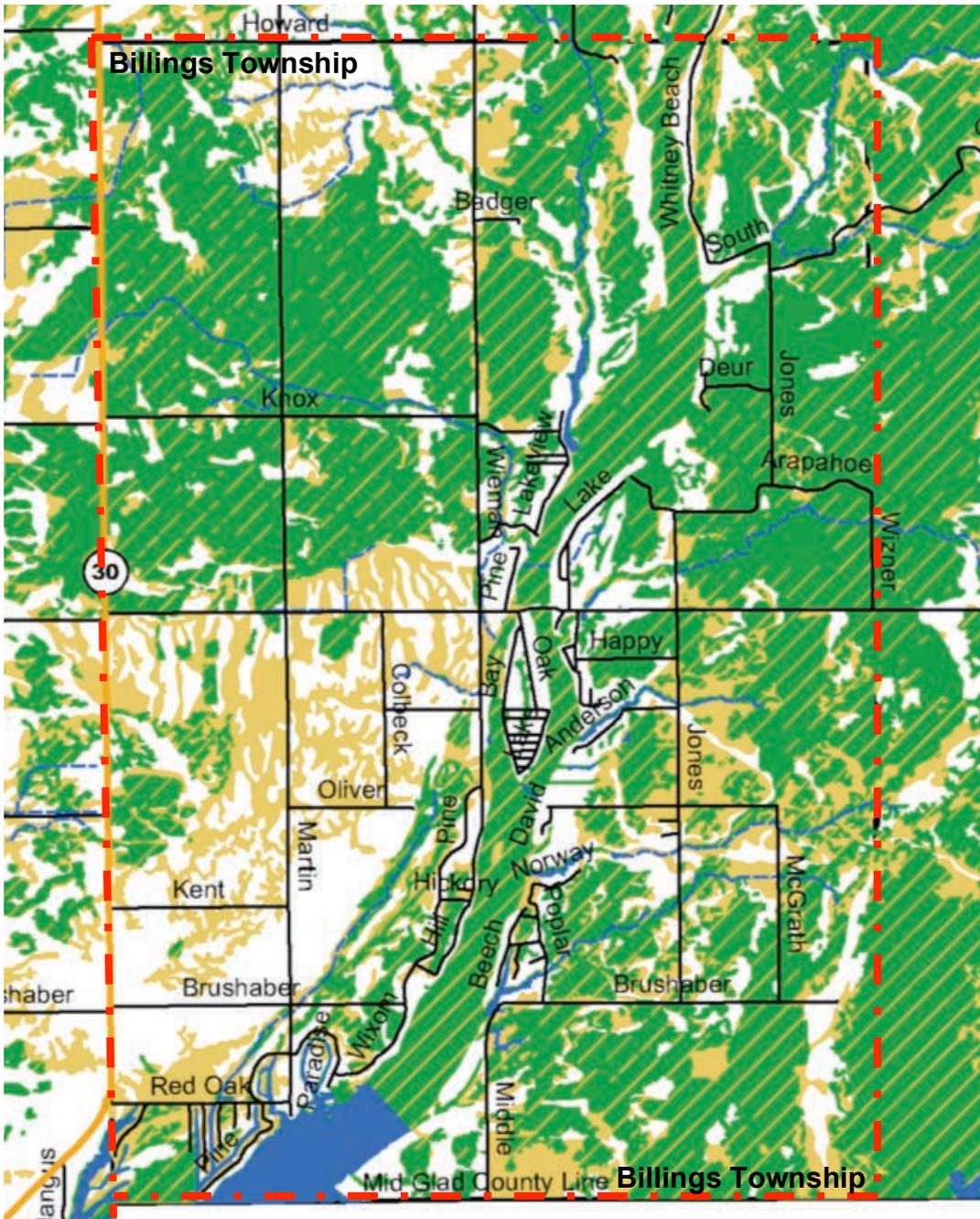
General soil associations found in the Township are shown on **Map 3.7**, and a more detailed illustration of soil types is depicted on **Map 3.8**.

Billings Township Detail Area

Gladwin County Final Wetlands Inventory

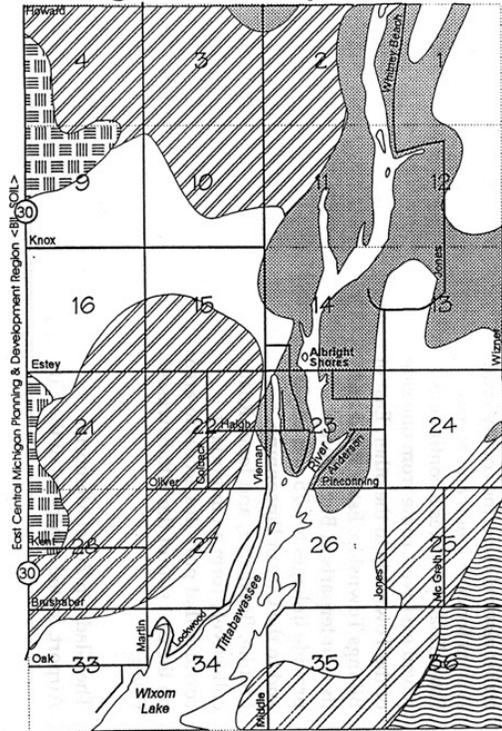
Legend

-  Interstate Highways
-  US Highways
-  State Highways
-  Railways
-  Open Water
-  Rivers
-  Drains
-  Wetlands as identified on NWI and MIRIS maps
-  Soil areas which include wetland soils
-  Wetlands as identified on NWI and MIRIS maps and soil areas which include wetland soils
-  County Boundary



Areas shown as wetlands, wetland soils, or open water on the map are potential wetlands and deserve further site investigation to verify if wetlands are actually present. This map may not identify all potential wetlands in a county (it may show wetlands that are not actually present and it may not show wetlands which are actually present). This map represents existing information that suggests the probability that a wetland may or may not exist in a given area and cannot be used to identify regulatory jurisdiction.

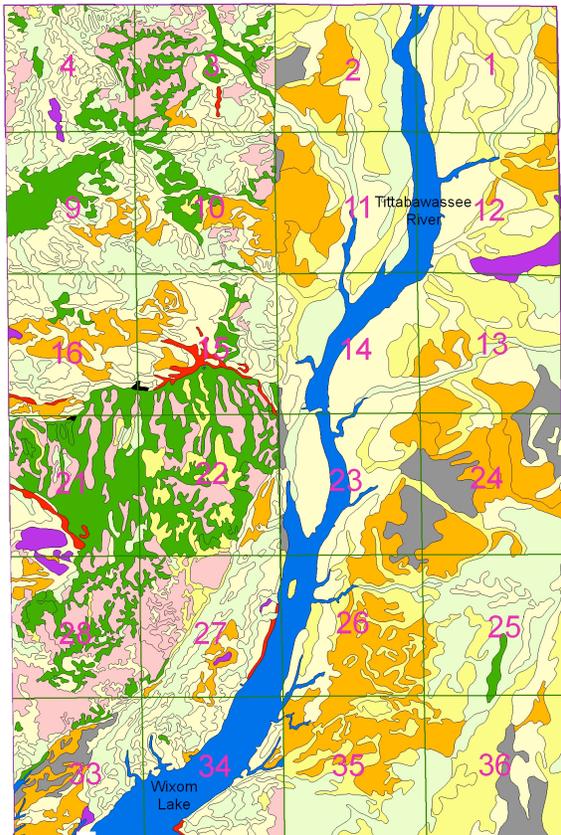
Map 3.7 - General Soil Associations
Billings Township



Billings Township - Gladwin County, Michigan
GENERAL SOIL MAP

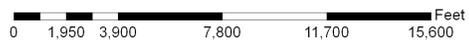
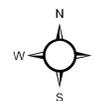
- SANDY AND LOAMY SOILS ON LAKE PLAINS**
- ALLENDALE-PICKFORD-PINCONNING ASSOCIATION: LEVEL SOMEWHAT POORLY DRAINED TO VERY POORLY DRAINED SOILS THAT HAVE A SANDY TO CLAYEY SUBSOIL AND CLAYEY UNDERLYING MATERIAL.
 - IOSCO-AUGRES-INGALLS ASSOCIATION: LEVEL SOMEWHAT POORLY DRAINED SOILS THAT ARE DOMINATELY SANDY.
 - RUBICON-OCQUEOC-INGALLS ASSOCIATION: LEVEL TO UNDULATING, WELL DRAINED TO SOMEWHAT POORLY DRAINED SOILS THAT HAVE A SANDY SUBSOIL.
- SANDY SOILS ON LAKE PLAINS, OUTWASH PLAINS AND MORAINES**
- CROSWELL-AUGRES-RUBICON ASSOCIATION: LEVEL TO SLOPING, WELL DRAINED TO SOMEWHAT POORLY DRAINED SOILS THAT HAVE A SANDY SUBSOIL; ON LAKE PLAINS.
- LOAMY SOILS ON LAKE PLAINS**
- UBYL-BRIMLEY-BRUCE ASSOCIATION: LEVEL, WELL DRAINED TO POORLY DRAINED SOILS THAT HAVE A DOMINATLY LOAMY SUBSOIL; ON LAKE PLAINS.
 - HETTINGER-BOWERS-IOSCO ASSOCIATION: LEVEL TO UNDULATING, SOMEWHAT POORLY DRAINED TO VERY POORLY DRAINED SOILS THAT HAVE A LOAMY TO SANDY SUBSOIL; ON LAKE PLAINS.

Map 3.8 - Detailed Soils Map



Billings Township Soils Map

- Legend**
- Section Lines
 - Soil Type**
 - Sand
 - Sandy Loam
 - Loamy Sand
 - Loam
 - Silt Loam
 - Muck
 - Steep Slopes
 - Water
 - Mixed Soils
 - Excavation/Extraction
 - Roscommon Soils



PUBLIC WATER AND SANITARY SEWERAGE SYSTEMS

Surfacewater drainage into the Tittabawassee River and its tributaries includes substantial runoff from agricultural lands, as well as from the Township's Waterfront Development Area (see **Map 6.1**). Water quality concerns in the Tittabawassee River led to a state mandate requiring the Township to construct and maintain a sanitary sewerage system and wastewater treatment and disposal facility covering the All Bright Shores area and a portion of the designated Waterfront Development Area. The designated public sanitary sewer service area is depicted on **Map 8.1**.

There are no public water supply systems in the Township, and residents rely on groundwater for their drinking water and other water supply needs. Individual wells range from 30 to 400 feet below the surface. Perched groundwater is generally present throughout the Township within five (5) feet of the surface.

A heavy clay barrier exists between the upper perched groundwater and the deep aquifers that are used to supply water. This has generally prevented widespread contamination of groundwater. However, the Central Michigan District Health Department has reported some instances of contaminated wells, including some impacts from oil and gas development in the northwest portion of the Township.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Billings Township is directly served by state highway M-30. The arterial highway runs north and south along the Township's western boundary, linking the Township with the City of Gladwin (via M-61), and the City of West Branch and I-75 (about 36 miles north). M-30 also links the Township to Clare, Midland, Bay City, and Saginaw via the US-10 freeway about 20 miles to the south near Sanford in Midland County.

Recent (2008) traffic counts obtained from the Michigan Department of Transportation (see **Map 3.8**) estimated average daily traffic (ADT) on M-30 to be 4,200 to 6,400 vehicles per day south of the Township in Midland County. Further north, traffic counts for M-30 drop to 2,400 to 3,300 vehicles per day.

Within Billings Township, vehicular traffic also relies on the county road system for circulation and access. Estey Road provides the only continuous paved east-west arterial route and only river crossing in Billings Township. This route extends east through Bentley Township and into Bay County, ultimately allowing access to I-75/US-23 and the City of Pinconning. East of the Tittabawassee River, Middle, Brushaber, Jones, and Whitney Beach Roads collectively form an important north-south arterial corridor through the Township.

The Gladwin Zettel Memorial Airport, located southeast of the City of Gladwin, is a general aviation facility that serves the area. The closest commercial passenger airport is MBS International, roughly 40 miles away in Freeland, between Midland and Saginaw.

The Tittabawassee River also served as a significant transportation corridor for travelers and movement of goods during the period of exploration and early settlement of what would be come Billings Township. While it is used primarily for recreation purposes today, waterfront residents still regularly use the waterway and its system of residential canals for local travel by boat in the summer and/or snowmobile in the winter.

WAYFINDING AND LANDMARKS

As part of the Planning Commission’s visioning session, participants completed a wayfinding/mapping exercise. The purpose of the exercise was to better understand how Billings Township residents, business owners, and other stakeholders “see” the Township:

- What are the landmarks or physical features (buildings, natural features, etc.) that people commonly use to orient themselves as they travel through the Township?
- Which areas of the Township are well defined or poorly defined in people’s minds?
- How do people see the Township in relation to the surrounding region? Where are the “walls” or hard boundaries?

The Exercise

Directions for the exercise were simple. A blank piece of paper was provided with the following direction:

Draw a map of the Township as if you were giving directions to a friend. The map may extend beyond the Township as far as necessary. Include on the drawing and labels whatever you feel is needed for your friend:

- **More detail or less**
- **All or part of the Township**

Maps drawn by the participants varied considerably in detail, scope, and land area depicted. Because of the high level of attendance at the visioning session, the results offer a clear collective vision of the Township.

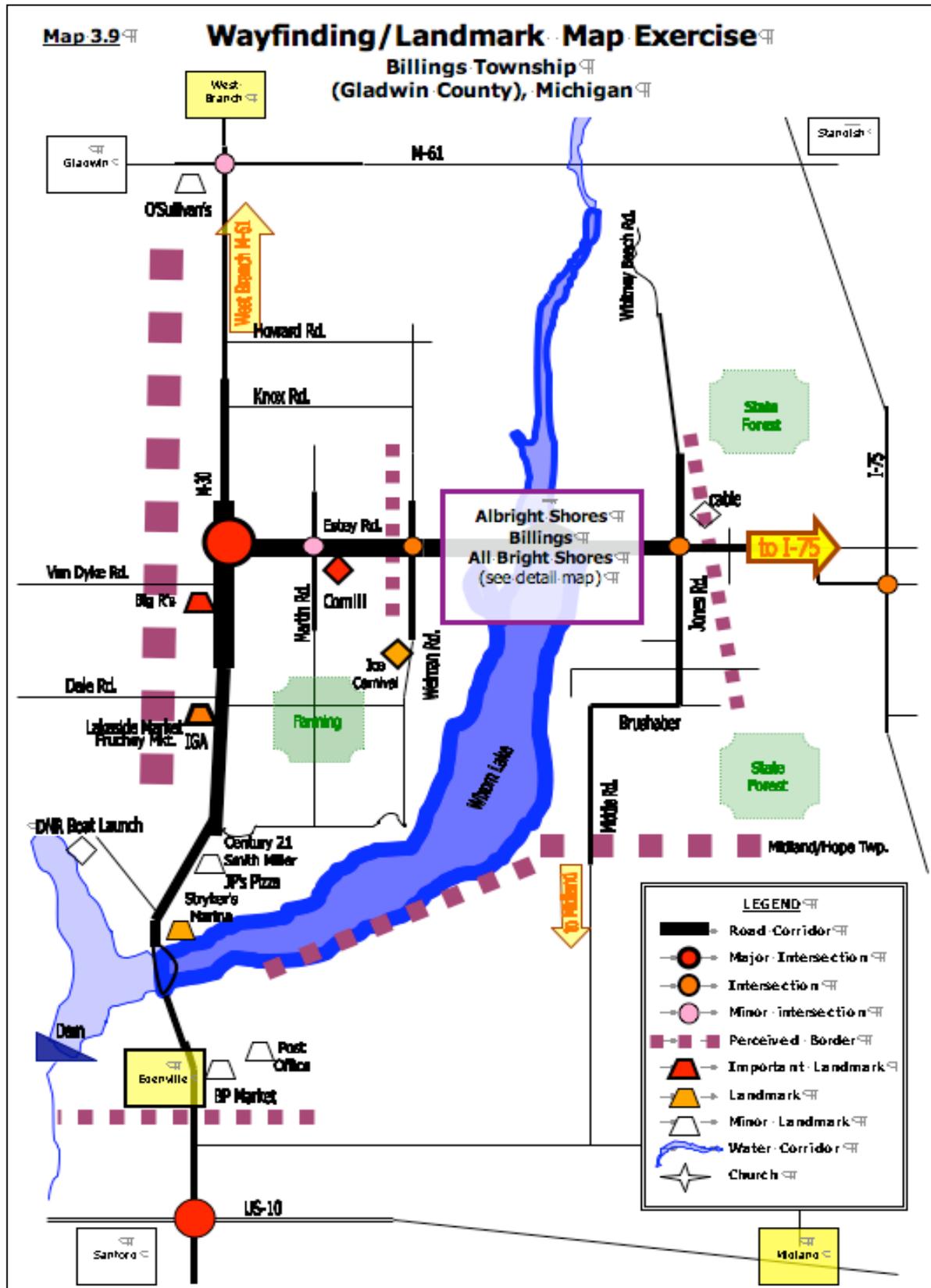
The Results

The cumulative results of this wayfinding/mapping exercise are depicted on **Map 3.9**, with an expanded detail of the All Bright Shores area shown on **Map 3.10**. All landmarks, travel routes, and notes included on the participants’ individual maps are shown on the **Maps 3.9 and 3.10** with the following defining characteristics:

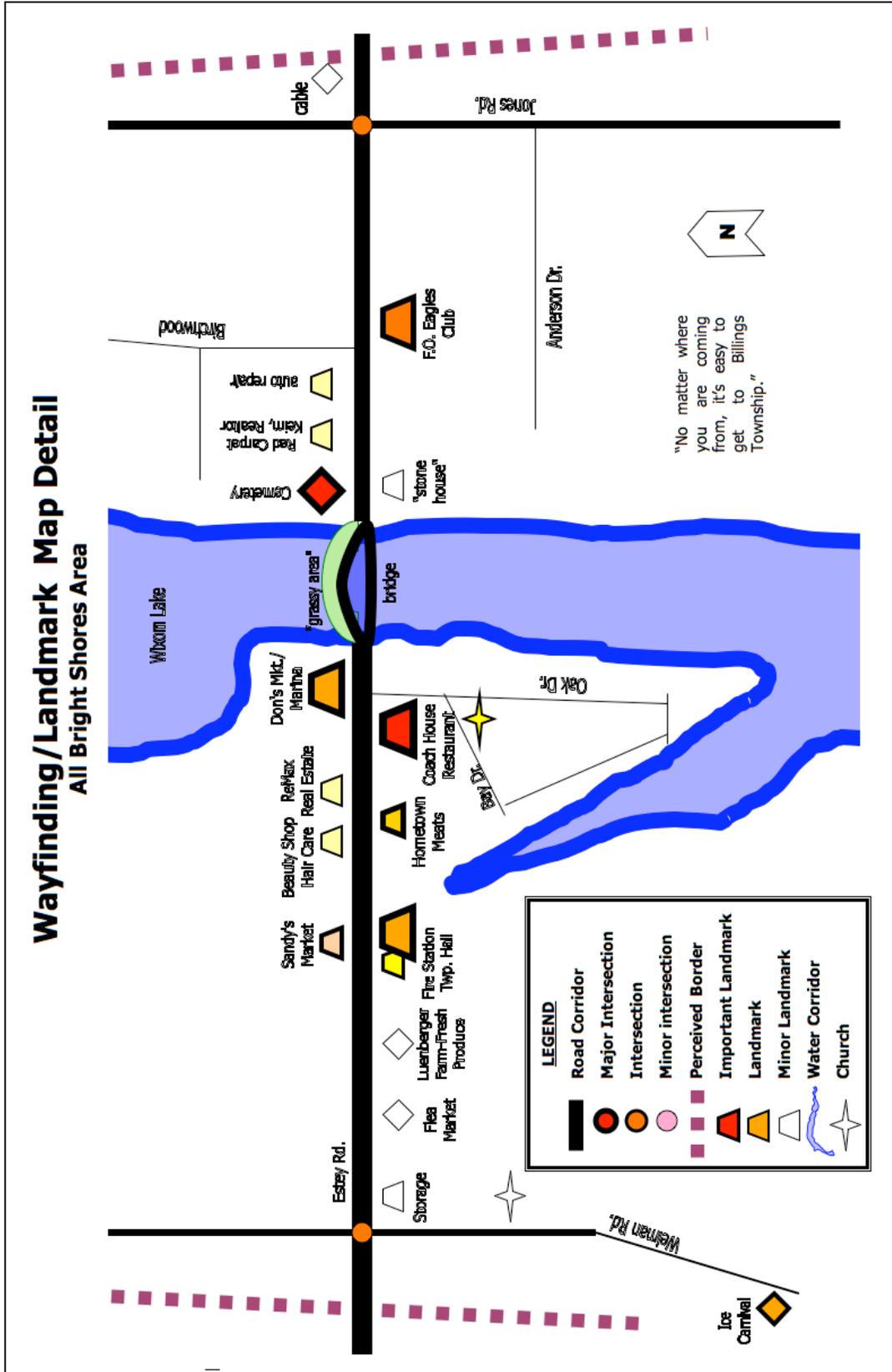
- For roads, boundaries, the river, and other linear features, a narrow line width indicates a map element that only appeared on a few wayfinding maps.
- A wide line width indicates a popular map element that appeared on many individual maps.
- For intersections, buildings, and businesses, color was used to indicate the relative importance of the landmark, with red used for popular landmarks and yellow used for minor ones.

WAYFINDING MAPS AND FINDINGS

The Planning Commission’s findings with regards to wayfinding and landmarks in the Township follow **Maps 3.9 and 3.10**:



Map 3.10 - Wayfinding/Landmark Map Detail: All Bright Shores Area



Findings and Conclusions

The Planning Commission made the following findings with regards to the results of the wayfinding/mapping exercise as depicted on **Map 3.9** and **3.10**:

- Tittabawassee River/Wixom Lake was the most recognized Township landmark.
- Estey Road between M-30 and Jones Road is the most popular travel route depicted on wayfinding maps.
- The connection between All Bright Shores and I-75 to the east was a popular map element, but the actual travel route to I-75 was shown on few maps.
 - Because this route involves several roads and turns, it may be a good route to consider working with Gladwin and Bay counties to improve wayfinding signage directing motorists west to All Bright Shores and east to I-75.
- Estey Road at M-30 was the most popular intersection - it appeared on nearly 100-percent (100%) of the wayfinding maps.
 - This intersection should be a high priority location for the installation of new "Welcome to Billings Township" signage, including a changeable message board for announcements and events.
 - It would also be an excellent location for new wayfinding signage that would direct motorists on M-30 to the local All Bright Shores businesses.
- M-30 forms a strong border, with almost no landmarks or travel routes shown to the west of the state highway.
- Midland, Edenville, and West Branch were depicted on multiple maps that included areas beyond the Township borders, but the county seat of Gladwin appeared on only one individual map and the nearby City of Beaverton did not appear at all.
- The state forestlands along the east side of the Township were shown on a few maps, but their location was very vague. The same was true for the active agricultural area on the west side of the Township, with the exception of the "corn for sale" at Estey Road and Martin Road.
 - The popularity of the "corn for sale" suggests that a local farmers' market could be a popular addition to the community.
- All Bright Shores was a very popular mapping choice, with enough participants choosing to only depict landmarks within this area of the Township that it became necessary to provide a separate All Bright Shores detail map.
- The Coach House restaurant and the Township cemetery were the most recognized landmarks, appearing on the majority of maps that included All Bright Shores.
- None of the participants' maps included the southeast or northeast corners of the Township. These areas include state forestland and have poorly defined road networks.
 - The state forestlands are an untapped resource for Billings Township.
 - A non-motorized, recreational trail network connecting the state forest lands to All Bright Shores, Wixom Lake, and surrounding townships could be a significant economic and recreational asset for the Township.

Chapter 4 MAJOR ISSUES

State and local trends and changing conditions in and around Billings Township raise major issues affecting the future of our community. It is important to identify and address these issues in the Master Plan to effectively plan for the next 20 years. The following major issues were identified during the Planning Commission’s visioning session and follow up discussion, and through evaluation of regional trends, existing conditions in the Township, and current community planning issues faced by other Michigan communities.

The issues are briefly described below, and measures to address them are set forth in the following chapters of this Plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A substantial amount of discussion and written comments received in response to the Planning Commission’s visioning session focused on economic issues. Typical comments included:

- “Excessively high taxes”
- “Very few jobs”
- “Not enough business”
- “Poor economic conditions and unemployment”

Need to Attract and Retail Young Families and Young Adults

Demographically, Billings Township is becoming a retirement community. While in some ways beneficial, this trend may also have serious consequences for local schools, churches, and businesses.

Young adults are a key demographic for businesses because they tend to have significant disposable income and fewer financial obligations. Young families are the future of any community, both in terms of raising the next generation, and in the energy they bring to the neighborhood in which they live. These population cohorts also provide entry-level workers for our businesses, home-buyers in our neighborhoods, and customers in our local stores.

Between 1990 and 2000, the Township experienced significant drops in the percentages and actual numbers of children and young adults, according to U.S. Census figures. The median age of Billings Township residents also increased more than eleven percent (11%) during this period. These are strong indicators that the Township is losing its young people to other communities, and is attracting fewer young families as new residents. Another indicator is an average commute time of over 44 minutes (see Chapter 2, Community Profile),

which shows what many residents already know: Residents must leave the Township and commute to jobs in Midland, Bay City, Saginaw, and elsewhere.

To attract and retain young adults and young families in Billings Township, it will be necessary for the Township Board to take a more proactive and strategic approach to local economic development and business growth.

Need to Diversify the Tax Base

Billings Township is a rural, recreation-oriented community with a small but important commercial tax base. Like many Michigan communities, it is facing budget challenges associated with stagnant or declining property tax revenues. In addition, Township has had to face the difficult challenge of developing and maintaining a public sanitary sewerage system to comply with water quality requirements in the Tittabawassee River watershed.

A more proactive approach to local economic development is needed to provide high quality local jobs; diversify and expand the tax base; and make the most efficient use of the Township's investment in its sanitary sewer infrastructure while protecting and enhancing the Township's rural/recreational character.

AGRICULTURE AND THE RURAL ECONOMY

The principal threats to local agricultural land in Michigan and the Township are rural non-farm housing replacing active farm fields; the incompatibilities that arise from locating non-farm housing close to active agriculture; and increasing property tax burdens on farmland. These factors are causing significant loss of farmland across Michigan, and may have long-term impacts on the health of local agriculture in the Township:

Loss of Large Agricultural Parcels to Lot Splits for Non-Farm Residences

Agriculture, at least long-term commodity farming operations (wheat, corn, soybeans, and similar farm commodities), cannot compete successfully with new housing development for the same land, or even for the same general area. New non-farm dwellings near active agricultural operations:

- Increase potential for adverse off-site impacts and resident complaints due to noise, odor, and dust typical of commercial agriculture;
- Increase potential for traffic conflicts and accidents involving farm equipment, and decrease the ability of farmers to easily transport equipment to non-contiguous parcels; and
- Increase costs for the farmer, including higher property taxes and increased risk of crop damage or loss.

Financial pressures on farmer-landowners may also result in the incremental sell-off of portions of their properties as rural residential lots. Often, these lot splits create strips of non-farm residences with multiple driveway approaches along

county roads, which may adversely impact both traffic safety and the rural character of the area.

Lack of Agricultural Support Services

The presence of only a few non-farm residences can adversely affect the stability of an agricultural area. As more non-farm housing is developed, other agricultural landowners make decisions to sell out and relocate away from development. Investment in local farm equipment and supplies decreases, resulting in a corresponding loss of the local support services farmers need to prosper, such as farm markets, implement dealers and repair shops, large animal veterinarians, feed and grain mills, etc. Without such support services in close proximity, commercial or commodity farming becomes unsustainable.

Changing Character of the Agricultural Economy

The predominant character of agriculture is changing in some areas of Michigan from a commodity farming model to more specialty farming and “value added” agricultural activities such as corn mazes, ‘U-pick’ operations, roadside stands, and local farm markets. The Township responded to this trend with changes to the Township Zoning Ordinance that allow farmers to diversify their income sources by adding these types of activities.

Some “value added” income sources for farmers have the potential to adversely impact neighboring land uses. For example, the State of Michigan’s ongoing push for increased use of alternative and renewable energy sources encourages farmers to “farm the wind” by constructing wind turbines or leasing land for commercial ‘wind farms.’ More recently, the Michigan Corn Growers Association supported a proposal to require Michigan townships to allow equipment and storage facilities for on-site ethanol production of up to 100,000 gallons per year as a use “by-right” in agricultural zoning districts.

HOUSING

Communities across Michigan are facing significant challenges with older residential neighborhoods, including abandoned properties, crime, blight, and conversions from owner-occupied to predominantly rental properties:

- Foreclosed, abandoned, and bank-owned properties create opportunities for vandalism, theft, and crime;
- Deferred maintenance, such as a lack of winterization or weatherization of vacant homes, can lead to structural damage, black mold, insect infestations, and other blighting conditions that affect neighbors and the Township as a whole;
- Elderly residents may not have the resources or family support needed to adequately maintain their property as they have in years past;

- The conversion of formerly owner-occupied homes to rental properties can lead to a loss of neighborhood cohesion and character, and a lower standard of property maintenance; and
- Changing ownership patterns, family structure, and the aging of the population can lead to increased feelings of isolation among neighbors and a belief that “nothing can be done” about these issues.

Even in healthy older neighborhoods with solid housing stock there is a need to upgrade obsolete infrastructure, including insulation, electrical systems, broadband Internet access, and heating/cooling systems to improve energy efficiency and better serve the needs of current residents.

TRANSPORTATION

The principal arterial roads in the Township are M-30, Estey Road, and the Middle Rd./Brushaber Rd./Jones Rd./Whitney Beach Rd. corridor. Access to the Township from I-75 and US-10 is adequate. However, results from the “Wayfinding/Landmark Map” exercise (see **Map 3.9**) indicate that existing signage and landmarks at major intersections are inadequate to direct motorists to key locations in the Township.

An expanded pedestrian circulation/non-motorized transportation system will also be an important issue in the next 20 years. On- and off-street bicycle pathways are needed along arterial and collector roads to reduce pedestrian/vehicle conflicts, promote all-season tourism, and provide a safer environment for children. The pattern and density of future development in the Waterfront Development Area should take this issue into account.

SANITARY SEWER SERVICES

Publicly-Owned and Operated Sewer System:

The Township presently provides public sanitary sewer services within a designated sewer service area. This service area is depicted on **Map 8.1**, and there are no plans at this time to extend such services to any other areas of the Township. Extension of public sanitary sewer services outside of the designated sewer service area would require revision of this Plan. Such revisions should only be pursued after careful consideration of the tangible and intangible costs and benefits of specific development proposals in these areas.

Private Community Wastewater Systems:

Part 41 of Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, as amended, the State of Michigan is authorized to issue permits for private wastewater disposal systems that serve more than one property (“private community wastewater system” or “PCWS”). Such private systems have increased in popularity among developers because they can increase the development potential of land not located within

areas served by traditional sanitary sewer lines and treatment facilities. The PCWS option has been used by some developers in other Michigan communities to justify increased residential densities and smaller lot sizes in otherwise rural areas. The long term challenges of using PCWS to treat and dispose of sewage include:

- Potential impacts on ground and surface waters of the Township;
- Inconsistent or deferred maintenance by responsible parties (homeowners' associations or equivalent); and
- Failure of such systems, with the resulting need to extend public sanitary sewer lines into areas not planned for such services.

The potential for such systems to adversely impact neighboring properties and the waters of the Township is significant. Where such systems are permitted, the PCWS design, construction, and operation should be closely monitored.

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Visioning session participants identified the Wixom Lake waterfront and State Forest land as two significant Township strengths. However, the "Wayfinding/Landmark Map" exercise results (Chapter 3) show that state forestland is not recognized as a prominent or highly visible landmark in the community. In addition, some participants viewed public access to Wixom Lake as difficult for those that do not own waterfront property.

Public parkland along the waterfront and additional public access to Wixom Lake would improve access to the lake for non-waterfront landowners, and may increase visitor/tourism-related business in the Township. An all-season recreational trail system connecting state forestlands to the All Bright Shores commercial area could also be highly desirable improvement that could also have benefits for Township businesses.

The Township has prepared a Parks and Recreation Plan identifying Township parks and recreation facilities and how local recreation needs should be met. An adopted Parks and Recreation Plan opens up opportunities to secure state and private grant funding to support Township recreation initiatives and park improvements. To be effective, this plan should be adopted and endorsed by the Township Board.

SHARED PUBLIC SERVICES

Public Schools

A public school system in the community that is highly regarded academically is an important asset. The school district's quality is often a very important factor for families deciding where to live. The Township is served by the Beaverton Rural School District, and currently contributes about 1/3 of the total number of

students in the district. However, the trend towards fewer children and young families in the Township may have serious long-term consequences for the school district.

There are no public school facilities in the Township, but the district does control a large parcel at the Estey Road/M-30 intersection. Proactive discussion between Township and school district officials about the potential for productive future use of this property to benefit both the school district and the community could also offer an opportunity for the Township to collaborate with the district on other issues of mutual concern.

Police, Fire, and Other Government Services

Crime and the perception that crime may be increasing in the Township was identified as a “threat” to the Township by visioning session participants. Also, the need for police and fire protection and general government services will continue to increase with future population growth, and as more seasonal properties are converted to year-round use.

The Gladwin County Sheriff currently provides police services to the Township, while the Township’s Fire Department serves the residents of both Billings and Bentley townships. However, the cost of these and other local government services continues to increase, while local governments across Michigan are experiencing stagnant or reduced revenues from property taxes.

Sharing some public services between two or more townships can also be a way to provide public services (such as improved police services or a local recreation program) to residents that would otherwise be outside the Township’s budget. For these reasons, the Township Board may determine in the future that there is a need to consider expanding the Fire Department shared services model to develop a shared police department and/or explore opportunities to share other public services with surrounding municipalities.

WATER QUALITY

The Tittabawassee River and Wixom Lake waterway is the dominant natural feature of Billings Township. Protection of surface water quality involves making sure that the water that flows off the land and into the river and lake is as close as possible in quality to the rain or melted snow that fell on a woods or meadow. It is best if water runoff flows to the river slowly, much of it percolating into the soil and reaching the main waterway as groundwater, clear and cool.

Where development occurs near the river and lake, it should be required to minimize surface water runoff, and provide natural buffering along the waterfront to protect water quality.

Chapter 5 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

This section of the Master Plan presents the goals and objectives that have been developed to provide a strong and coherent direction for the future development of Billings Township. The formulation of these statements evolves from the desire to remedy existing problems, to maintain positive features, and to provide an attractive and functional community environment in the future. Desired land use arrangements and proposed implementation strategies are a natural outgrowth of established goals, objectives, and policies.

Some additional benefits of establishing these goals and objectives (policies) for the Township are:

- **Consistency** - A comprehensive list of statements concerning a variety of planning issues can help avoid arbitrary decisionmaking in the future.
- **Efficiency** - Clearly stated policies help to reduce the time spent on individual topics while providing sound planning principles to assist in the process.
- **Coordination** - Established policies provide a single framework to guide actions by the Township Board, Planning Commission, and the public.
- **Stability** - Policies tend to be general and long-range in nature. As such, they remain stable under a variety of changing community conditions.
- **Basis for Decisions** - Established policies are necessary to provide a reasonable basis for adopting local land use controls such as zoning. Furthermore, clearly stated policies are helpful to the courts if called upon to judge the fairness of specific land use regulations.

GENERAL LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: Arrange future land uses in a manner that will preserve the natural features and rural character that make Billings Township an attractive place to live.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth:

1. Make provisions to accommodate future residential, commercial, and other types of development in appropriate locations.
2. Encourage the managed, sensible growth of the Township through good planning and appropriate development controls.
3. Maintain Billings Township as a residential agricultural, and lake recreation-oriented community.
4. Encourage the preservation of agricultural lands, existing farming operations, significant natural features, and open space along road corridors.
5. Discourage the placement of land uses that are incompatible with existing natural features and surrounding development.

AGRICULTURE AND THE RURAL ECONOMY

Traditional agricultural operations have a long heritage in Billings Township. This commitment to long-term agricultural use shows the need for the Township to continue to protect agricultural lands and the rural economy of the Township.

GOAL: Protect the rural, agricultural economy of the Township and promote agriculture as a predominant land use in the rural areas designated as Agricultural Preservation Areas in this Master Plan.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth.

A. PERMANENT PROTECTION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Permanent protection of strategic open space and agricultural lands from development.

Policies:

1. Land Trusts and Conservancies. Public or nonprofit land trusts and conservancies with the power to buy development rights for agricultural lands and establish conservation easements shall be encouraged to operate in the Township.
2. Conservation Easements. Donation or sale of permanent conservation easements for protection of agricultural lands by a public or private entity empowered to hold them shall be encouraged.
3. Planned Unit Development. Use of the planned unit development (PUD) option for new residential development shall be encouraged to establish permanent easements on common lands for open space or permanent protection of off-site agricultural lands.

B. PRESERVE THE RURAL, AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY OF THE TOWNSHIP

1. Traditional production of row crops, landscape stock, wildflowers, u-pick fruit, and similar agricultural pursuits are encouraged, along with a range of value-added agricultural pursuits, such as farm markets and roadside stands.
2. Ownership of land by local farmers or entities committed to long-term agricultural use of the land shall be encouraged.
3. A system of low-speed, low-traffic roads should be retained to permit movement of farm equipment between noncontiguous farm parcels.
4. Support farmer participation in a transfer of development rights (TDR) program to permit farmers to realize income from the development rights of portions or all of their farmland land while retaining agricultural or open space values.
5. Adopt assessment policies that reflect the agricultural value of land in agricultural use by designating farmed parcels in the agricultural land classification.

6. Adopt a Capital Improvement Plan that allocates no funds for paving roads serving agricultural lands or extending public sanitary sewer or water lines into designated agricultural preservation areas.

C. COORDINATE POLICY WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Encourage Gladwin County, the State of Michigan Department of Agriculture, MSU-Extension, and other agencies to:

1. Develop a county-wide program to assist farmers who want to buy, sell, or rent farmland to or from other farmers;
2. Work with state legislators to initiate legislation that would benefit the agricultural industry, in particular this includes use value assessment, and stronger State support for local farmland protection efforts;
3. Encourage the State of Michigan to promote agriculture as a target industry for tourism and economic development; to promote development of new agricultural markets; and to encourage food processing businesses to locate in mid-Michigan; and
4. Encourage Michigan State University to develop new research facilities in the area which focus on sustainable and value-added agriculture, greenhouse production for Michigan's winter-time food needs, specialty farming, management of small woodlots, and ways to make Michigan more self-sufficient in food products.

D. LIMIT DEVELOPMENT AND NON-FARM LAND USES

1. Promote the use of conservation subdivision regulations for future residential development in the Township, to cluster new houses on smaller lots and maximize the amount of farmland and open space preserved.
2. Division of land in this area for residential purposes, even on very large lots, shall be discouraged.
3. The Township will assist any landowner of large agricultural parcels to find options to capture the development value without conversion to a non-farm use.
4. Extension of public sanitary sewer or water service and use of private community wastewater treatment systems for non-farm residential development in designated agricultural preservation areas shall be prohibited.
5. The Township should establish or work with Gladwin County to provide a local Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program to provide an opportunity for a market-based, permanent protection of agricultural lands in the Township.
6. The Township should consider allowing transfers of development rights (TDR) from agricultural parcels into the designated sanitary sewer service area as part of new residential development.

7. The Township should arrange future land uses in a manner that will preserve prime farmlands and agricultural infrastructure, strengthen the area’s rural economy, and protect the Township’s predominantly rural character.
8. Residential land uses may be permitted on agricultural lands with the stipulation that, in order to preserve agricultural activities, residential lots are:
 - a. Taken from land unsuited for farming.
 - b. Clustered to allow continued agricultural use of the remainder of the acreage.
 - c. Require that a buffer of existing or new natural features be created between housing sites and agricultural acreage so that residential use will not interfere with agricultural activities. Under certain circumstances fencing may also be required.
 - d. Require that a natural buffer of existing or new vegetation be created between housing sites and highways to preserve and enhance the visual character of rural areas.
 - e. Permit only agricultural or open space use of the acreage outside of the residential cluster through application of conservation easements.
9. Ecologically sound recreational land uses may be permitted when these uses provide a buffer between agricultural uses and adjacent residential areas.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USE AND HOUSING

GOAL: Provide for residential development in a manner that results in both housing and neighborhoods that are safe, healthy, and attractive, while also providing a wide choice and adequate supply of dwelling units.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth:

A. GENERAL

1. Reserve sufficient land for both dispersed and more intensive residential development in convenient, economical, and environmentally sound locations.
2. Consider making allowances for innovative development techniques (such as conservation development and clustering) that would permit development at higher densities, while also using the available land more efficiently and preserving natural features.
3. Encourage the development of housing opportunities for all economic levels.
4. Encourage regulatory measures that are necessary to ensure that both new and existing housing meets appropriate health and safety standards.

5. Encourage basic housing standards to ensure the compatibility of future housing with the existing housing stock.
6. Preserve and protect wetlands, woodlands, and agricultural lands from adverse developmental impact to the maximum feasible extent.

B. HOUSING CONDITION

Improve the condition and character of existing housing stock in the Township.

Policies:

1. Rental housing inspection. The Township should consider establishing an ordinance and certification process to require periodic private inspection and recertification of rental homes in the Township, including sewage disposal, electrical, fire safety, and mechanical systems.
2. Seek grant funding for neighborhood stabilization. The Township should actively seek out and apply for grant funding to improve housing and stabilize neighborhoods.
3. Removal of dilapidated housing. The Township should consider working in cooperation with the Gladwin County Building Official and the Township Attorney to actively seek demolition and removal of dilapidated and unsafe housing in the Township.
4. Private inspections. The Township should encourage private inspections of dwelling units before sale, including Central Michigan District Health Department inspections of existing septic systems.

C. AGING-IN-PLACE

Improve the ability of Township residents of all ages, including the elderly, to remain in their homes and/or continue to live in the Township.

Policies:

1. Senior and elderly housing. The Township should consider working with a developer and/or regional agencies and service providers to develop a senior and elderly housing facility to serve Township residents.
2. Senior and elderly support services. The Township should consider working with area churches, regional agencies, and service providers to establish and/or expand support services to senior and elderly Township residents, including daily telephone check-ins, meals on wheels, exercise programs, and senior center activities.

D. NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Strong, cohesive neighborhoods that contributes to a positive Township identity.

Policies:

1. New neighborhood associations. The Township should consider working with Township residents to establish and/or re-activate neighborhood or subdivision associations as volunteer problem-solving and community organization groups to foster improvement of existing residential areas of the Township.
2. Community Stability. New residential development shall be compatible in density and character with existing residences and neighborhoods in the immediate area.
3. Neighborhood Design. New residential development shall be organized around natural features or recreational amenities, and shall be interconnected by pathways and road connections to existing neighborhoods to the maximum extent feasible.
4. Subdivision Ordinance. The Township should consider adoption of new Subdivision Regulations with specific neighborhood design standards to ensure that future development of new subdivision plats is consistent with the desired character of the Township.

E. LAND CAPACITY AND CONSERVATION

Policies:

1. Avoid agricultural land uses. Residential development shall be encouraged to locate away from the Township's agricultural lands.
2. Land capacity. Land capacity shall be considered when determining the appropriate density of development, including soil suitability for septic systems and basements; presence of sensitive natural features, and similar factors.
3. Conservation of site features. Dwelling units shall be placed on portions of the site most suited to development in order to preserve natural features. See Natural Features Land Use Section of this Chapter.
4. Environmental protection during development. Measures that protect the environment during and after development shall be instituted and implemented. Examples include soil erosion and sedimentation control measures and fencing off important vegetation prior to construction.

COMMERCIAL AND OFFICE/SERVICE LAND USES

GOAL: Encourage sound commercial and office/service business development that is integrated with surrounding land uses to serve the needs of Township residents, and compatible with the Township's character.

DEFINITIONS:

- *Agricultural-oriented commerce. Commercial establishments that serve as agricultural outlets, including markets, orchards, nurseries, greenhouses, self-harvest, and agricultural co-ops.*
- *Neighborhood commercial. Small, residential-scale commercial enterprises that serve the day-to-day convenience needs of a localized market generally consisting of the surrounding neighborhoods. The type of businesses may include convenience stores, dry cleaners, laundromats, day-care centers, beauty and barber shops, and other similar small-scale establishments.*
- *General commercial. Retail establishments, including those in the neighborhood commercial areas and those oriented to comparison shopping, including clothing, department, furniture and appliance stores; medical and dental offices and related laboratories; funeral homes, agricultural sales, automobile and other large equipment services, and trade offices; commercial recreation, such as theaters, bowling alleys, and miniature golf courses; and radio and television broadcast studios. General commercial may also include small-scale offices targeted to professionals and businesses that serve area residents.*
- *Highway commercial. Commercial establishments that are intended to serve the motoring public, such as automobile service stations, motels, and restaurants. This category also includes adult- and sexually-oriented businesses, but does not include facilities whose primary purpose is to serve the trucking industry, such as truck stops, transfer facilities, or warehouses.*

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth:

A. AGRICULTURAL–ORIENTED COMMERCE

Encourage agricultural-oriented commerce in the Township to provide diversified income sources for farmers.

Policies:

Allow roadside stands, open-air farmers' markets, plant nurseries, and similar value-added agricultural commerce in agricultural areas of the Township.

B. CHARACTER OF COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Commercial development should reflect the character of and be integrated with adjoining residential areas.

Policies:

1. Organize commercial development into compact, unified centers of activity that complement the scale and character of existing businesses.
2. Piecemeal or scattered commercial development should be avoided and uncoordinated commercial strip development shall be prohibited.

3. Coordinate new development and expansion of existing businesses with adjacent properties, including cross connections for pedestrians and vehicles, common parking, and shared driveways where feasible.
4. To the extent sites permit, commercial developments should feature buildings and landscaping that are attractive as viewed from the road.
5. Parking areas shall be located, designed, and landscaped to minimize the visual impact, with preference given to placement of parking at the side or rear of the site.
6. All public streetlights, commercial lighting, and lighted signs shall be designed to minimize light pollution.

C. COMMERCIAL CLUSTERS

1. Encourage the development of commercial centers or clusters through clustering of new commercial zoning and new businesses adjacent to existing commercial centers at the following locations:
 - a. All Bright Shores (Estey Road between Weiman Road and Jones Road), as the most appropriate location for new commercial and mixed residential/commercial development;
 - b. M-30 at Knox Road, as the most appropriate location for new highway commercial businesses; and
 - c. M-30 at Brushaber Road, as a location for limited commercial development that does not adversely impact adjacent agricultural land.
2. Discourage "spot" commercial development outside of existing commercial centers, and discourage "strip" commercial development along M-30 and other Township road corridors.

D. APPEARANCE

Improve the appearance of the Township's business districts by:

1. Encouraging beautification efforts in All Bright Shores through amenities such as lighting, signage, and landscaping.
2. Defining vehicle ingress-egress points to Estey Rd. businesses as part of planned road improvements.
3. Developing building design and appearance standards to ensure that any future commercial development is in keeping with the desired character of the community.

E. HOME-BASED BUSINESSES

Encourage entrepreneurship through development of home-based businesses in a manner that protects the residential character of Township neighborhoods.

F. BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Encourage the development of an All Bright Shores area business association to promote Township businesses, coordinate advertising, and improve commercial opportunities in the Township.

G. TOURISM ECONOMY

Strengthen year-round tourism-oriented commerce in the Township.

Policies:

1. Expand the All Bright Shores business district. The Township should expand the depth of the All Bright Shores business district to provide adequate land area for new commercial development.
2. New tourism-support business priorities. The Township should work with local business owners to establish:
 - a. a rental/vacation home security business;
 - b. a smoke-free restaurant;
 - c. a new tavern or brewpub;
 - d. bicycle and recreational equipment rentals; and
 - e. expanded grocery selections.

H. MEDICAL SERVICES

Encourage the incremental development of a medical office/clinic facility and related medical support services in All Bright Shores.

Policies:

1. Temporary medical offices. The Township should consider developing a partnership with a regional medical center to establish part-time medical services or a temporary medical clinic in Billings Township, using the Township Hall, a temporary building, or other available space in All Bright Shores.
2. Pharmacy drop-off. The Township should encourage area pharmacies to partner with one or more Billings Township businesses to maintain a prescription drug pick-up/drop-off location to better serve Township residents.
3. New Medical Center. The Township should consider developing a partnership with a regional medical center to develop a permanent branch location or medical clinic in All Bright Shores.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT CENTER LAND USES

GOAL: Encourage development of research, business, light industrial, and similar employment centers that are compatible with the Township's character, integrated with surrounding land uses to serve the demonstrated needs of Township residents,

and that neither create hazards for the Township’s environment nor create adverse impacts on existing residential or agricultural land uses.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth:

A. GENERAL

Employment centers located to maximize their benefit to the Township and to minimize potential adverse impacts on the Township and its environment.

Policies:

1. Natural Features. Employment centers shall be permitted only where adverse impact to natural features will be avoided.
2. Roads. Employment centers shall have direct access to M-30 and/or Estey Road where the road system is adequate to serve the anticipated traffic.
3. Adjacent Land Uses. Employment centers shall be located only in areas of the Township where adverse impacts on existing or proposed residential or agricultural areas or roads will be avoided.

B. NEW AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND BUSINESS PARK

Encourage the development of a state-of-the-art regional agricultural research and business center to provide a location for agricultural support businesses (farm implement sales and service, bulk feed and fiber stores, storage facilities, and similar operations), commercial greenhouses, an agricultural business incubator, and agriculturally-oriented research and education facilities.

There are two locations in the Township suitable for such an operation (see Chapter 6, General Development Plan):

1. M-30 and Dale Rd. (vacant non-farm acreage on the east side of M-30)
2. Northeast corner of M-30 and Estey Rd. (Beaverton Schools property)

Policies:

1. Replace Industrial district. The Township should delete the IND zoning district and replace it with provisions within the planned unit development (PUD) district regulations that reflect the desired character and mix of land uses envisioned for a new agriculturally-oriented research and business park.
2. Partnerships. The Township should consider developing partnerships with Michigan State University, MSU-Extension, the Michigan Farm Bureau, and other organizations to facilitate development of this facility.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

GOAL: Provide community facilities and services to adequately serve Township residents, to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, and to enrich the quality of life in the most efficient, effective, and economical manner possible.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth.

A. NEW DEVELOPMENT

1. Direct future development into designated areas where public facilities and services can be efficiently and economically provided in the future, should the need and opportunities arise.
2. Ensure that future development does not exceed the capabilities of public services and facilities required to serve the development.
3. Develop a Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for the Township.

B. FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Continue to develop the partnership with Bentley Township and consider partnerships with other adjacent communities for coordinated and efficient fire and emergency response in a manner that maximizes service to Billings Township residents.

C. RECREATION

Complete and adopt a Parks and Recreation Plan for the Township.

Policies:

1. Grant opportunities. The Township should actively seek out and apply for MDNR and other grants to develop appropriate recreation facilities to serve the needs of Township residents.
2. Conversion of Ice Carnival facility. The Township should consider taking actions to reduce the impact to neighboring residents from racing/competition activities on the Ice Carnival property, which may include negotiation with the operators to reduce and/or relocate such activities, and to make improvements needed to minimize noise, light, and other impacts. The ideal facility on this site would be one that provides year-round economic and recreational benefits to the community while having minimal adverse impacts on its neighbors.
3. New Township park. The Township should consider taking action needed to ensure that the Township will have eventual control of the Ice Carnival property for the purpose of developing the property as a Township park with appropriate recreation facilities to serve the needs of the community.
4. Community recreational development on Wixom Lake. The Township should work in cooperation with Gladwin and Midland counties and the MDNR to develop a formal water park on Wixom Lake similar to the Sanford Lake Water

Park. Currently, there is a long tradition each summer of hundreds of people with boats using private property just over the county line in Midland County as a "Pontoon Alley" gathering space. The water park should include public restroom facilities, and may include public launch facilities, picnic areas, and a swimming area or beach.

D. POLICE PROTECTION

Improve police response and reduce crime in the Township.

Policies:

1. Improve communication and awareness of Township neighborhoods and enforcement issues. The Township should consider inviting the Gladwin County Sheriff's Department to have deputies assigned to the area periodically attend Township Board meetings and/or local business and neighborhood group meetings to report on local police activities and discuss enforcement priorities with Township officials and residents.
2. New Township substation. The Township should work with the Gladwin County Sheriff's Department to provide a seasonal or permanent police substation at the Township Hall or another appropriate location in Billings Township.
3. Future police services. The Township should consider exploring options for development of a regional police department with surrounding communities.

E. GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

Provide for government and civic centers which best serve the needs of Township residents.

Policies:

1. Township Hall. The Township Hall should continue to function as the center of government and civic activities in the Township. The Township Board should consider the need for an appointed staff person (superintendent, office manager or similar) to be available on-site for Township business, with regular daily office hours at the Hall.
2. Library services. The Township should consider working with an area public library to establish a branch location and/or seasonal bookmobile services in the Township.

F. TOWNSHIP COMMUNICATION.

Use new technology and existing communication resources to disseminate public information to Township residents and business owners, and to improve the public image of the Township.

Policies:

1. The Township should prepare and distribute press releases to local news outlets regarding important Township events, milestones, and successes.
2. The Township should consider establishing and maintaining a website for posting of announcements, the Township calendar, agendas and meeting minutes, ordinances, and permit application forms.

EDUCATION

GOAL: Maximize educational opportunities for Township residents of all ages.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth.

Improve communication and coordination of planning efforts with the Beaverton Rural School District to best serve the educational needs of Billings Township residents.

Policies:

1. School District Property in the Township. The Township should work with the school district to facilitate development and use of the approximately 80 acre parcel owned by the school district on the northeast corner of M-30 and Estey Road in a manner consistent with the district’s plans and this Master Plan.
2. School Activities in the Township. The Township should work with the school district to improve coordination of school services to Township residents, and to encourage the school district to develop school facilities as neighborhood activity centers by permitting their use for civic, educational, and recreational activities.

WATER QUALITY AND WIXOM LAKE

GOAL: Protect, maintain, and enhance the quality and natural state of surface waters and wetlands in Billings Township.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth.

A. WETLAND AND SURFACE WATER PROTECTION

Protection of the quality of wetlands and surface water.

Policies:

1. Storm Water Runoff. Storm water runoff shall be managed to retain the same quantity, temperature, velocity, and purity of water as that from an undeveloped landscape.
2. Land Use. Land use patterns shall be established that limit potential adverse impact on water features, including:
 - a. preventing topographical disturbance, including grading and/or filling;
 - b. preventing bio-chemical pollution;

- c. protecting existing vegetative buffers; and
 - d. reducing impervious surfaces and separating them from surface waters by vegetative areas.
3. Erosion. Erosion shall be controlled during construction and after construction by limiting stripping of vegetation, soil removal, and regrading; minimizing the duration of exposure of disturbed areas; and requiring establishment of permanent vegetation or other techniques to prevent erosion.
 1. Shoreline buffers. The Township should expand development of an educational program in cooperation with the MDNR and the Wixom Lake Improvement Board to promote voluntary use of natural vegetative buffers along the private shoreline of Wixom Lake to minimize fertilizer runoff and improve water quality.
 2. Flood Plain. Development should be restricted within the 100-year flood plain of existing watercourses or wetlands.

B. REGIONAL WIXOM LAKE ORGANIZATION.

Encourage the creation of a regional association of counties, townships, and law enforcement agencies in the Wixom Lake basin to improve water quality, educate waterfront landowners, provide more efficient and effective weed control and eradication, and improve law enforcement on the water.

OUTDOOR RECREATION LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Protect, maintain, and enhance the natural resources and environmental features of Billings Township.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth.

1. Preserve the quality and natural state of environmentally sensitive areas, including forested land, and wildlife habitat
2. Protect the Township's residents from development that would degrade environmental quality.
3. Protect the Township's residents from development that would degrade the aesthetics, natural appearance, or character of the community.
4. Make effective use of state forest lands for recreation and wildlife habitat.

Policies:

1. Cluster development that protects significant natural features by placing development on less-sensitive areas of the property shall be encouraged.
2. Land uses in rural areas of the Township shall be designed and developed in ways that minimize the potential for adverse impact from development on significant natural features.

3. Establishment of conservation easements and deed restrictions on those portions of sites with significant natural features to permanently protect those natural features shall be encouraged.
4. Add standards to the site plan review section of the Zoning Ordinance to ensure designs that minimize negative impacts on wildlife habitat and the natural links that facilitate movement of wildlife.

COMMUNICATION AND OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES

GOAL: Utilities that serve the public health, safety, and welfare and that serve to protect the Township’s environment.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives are set forth.

A. BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS

Robust capacity and a variety of options for broadband Internet access should be available to Township residents and businesses.

Policies:

The Township should consider working with area business groups and other organizations to encourage Internet providers to extend high capacity cable and fiber optic lines to the Township, and to provide broadband Internet access for all Township residents and businesses.

B. CELLULAR TELEPHONE SERVICE

Robust capacity and a variety of options for cellular telephone service should be available to Township residents and businesses.

1. The Township should consider working with regional cellular telephone services to secure additional antennae on the Township Hall tower.
2. The Township should consider developing a tower master plan to identify appropriate locations for cell towers to serve Township residents.

C. CABLE/FIBER OPTIC TELEVISION SERVICE

Robust capacity and a variety of options for cable or fiber optic television service should be available to Township residents and businesses.

1. Cable. The Township should encourage the existing Charter cable provider to modernize and improve infrastructure in the Township, including high capacity digital cable TV and broadband Internet/telephone services.
2. The Township should also seek opportunities to promote competition in cable and fiber optic TV and broadband Internet/telephone services.

RECREATIONAL LAND USE

For a review of recreation facilities, goals, objectives, and strategies please see the Billings Township Parks and Recreation Plan, which is hereby incorporated and made a part of this Master Plan.

Chapter 6 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This section describes the key elements of **Map 6.1**, Future Land Use; and the associated “Hamlet Center” detail (**Map 6.2**). This is a generalized map that depicts a range of desirable future land uses. Each general category is described in the text of this Chapter. Policies to guide decisions on future land uses are found in Chapter 5, Goals, Objectives, and Policies; and in Chapter 9, Zoning Plan. More specific classifications of land use and density are found on the Township’s Official Zoning Map and in the text of the Billings Township Zoning Ordinance.

FUTURE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

Following is a list of the future land use designations described in this Chapter and **Maps 6.1 and 6.2**:

- **Agricultural Preservation Areas**
- **Recreation-Conservation Areas**
- **Public Quasi-Public Lands**
- **Rural Residential Areas**
- **Waterfront Development Areas**
- **Planned Manufactured Housing Park Area**
- **Hamlet Center**
- **Neighborhood Business Centers**
- **Planned Business Research Areas**

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AREA

Agriculture is an important component of the local economy. The Agricultural Preservation Area designates lands intended to be reserved for agricultural purposes, including crop farming, specialty farm operations, tree farms, value-added agricultural tourism and educational activities, agricultural-support services, and related rural land uses, subject to zoning ordinance standards designed to minimize impacts on the Township’s rural character.

This is the area planned for long-term preservation of farmland and the agricultural economy of the Township, and generally contains the highest quality topsoils for farming purposes (primarily loamy sand and loam) in the Township (see **Map 3.7** Billings Township Soils Map). These land areas are predominantly occupied by active farm operations, along with a limited number of non-farm rural residences.

The intent of this designation is to:

- Discourage the encroachment of non-farm dwellings and other land uses that are incompatible with active farm operations and agricultural land uses;
- Encourage permanent preservation of farmland and discourage division of large contiguous parcels (40 acres or more) of agricultural land into non-farm residential lots;

- Minimize excessive and unnecessary public expenditures caused by scattered demand for urban levels of public services in otherwise rural areas;
- Prohibit extension of public water and/or public sanitary sewer services into Agricultural Preservation Areas; and
- Protect areas of the Township for agricultural production, distribution and accessory uses.

The planned maximum residential density range within the designated Agricultural Preservation Areas shall be one (1) dwelling per 20 to 40 acres of land. Land divisions to create new residential lots in these areas should use the rural “Open Space Preservation Option” in the Township Zoning Ordinance to maximize the preservation of prime farmlands while permitting a limited number of new rural dwellings.

“Strip residential development,” consisting of multiple land divisions for non-farm residential lots along county road rights-of-way, shall be discouraged. The rural character of public roads within the Agricultural Preservation Areas should be protected to ensure that agricultural equipment can be easily moved between non-contiguous farm parcels.

Roadside views of agricultural lands and rural open space help to define the rural character of Billings Township. The open character of rural road frontage should be protected by requiring new structures to be set back away from road rights-of-way. New non-farm residential lots should also be arranged with frontage along new local streets or private roads designed to serve the development.

Where non-farm residential lots directly front on arterial and collector roads in the Township (see **Map 7.1**, Transportation Plan), access management techniques should be used to minimize the number of new driveways (see Chapter 7, Transportation Plan).



RECREATION-CONSERVATION

The Recreation-Conservation designation identifies lands intended to remain rural in character and land use. These land areas generally contain soils that are less suitable for crop farming, but may be suitable for tree farms or other agricultural activities. These land areas are designated as Recreation-Conservation to provide for low-density rural residential uses, and to conserve rural open space for private hunting, outdoor recreation, and other purposes compatible with the Township’s desired rural character.



These land areas are predominantly occupied by rural residences, natural woodlands and tree farms, wetlands, open fields, and formerly farmed parcels now returning to a natural state. The intent of this designation is to:

- Minimize excessive and unnecessary public expenditures caused by scattered demand for urban levels of public services in otherwise rural areas;
- Prohibit extension of public water and/or public sanitary sewer services into Recreation-Conservation Areas; and
- Protect areas of the Township for rural open space, hunting, outdoor recreation, and other purposes compatible with the Township’s desired rural character.



The planned maximum residential density range within the designated Recreation-Conservation areas shall be one (1) dwelling per 10 to 20 acres of land. Land divisions to create new

residential lots in these areas should use the rural “Open Space Preservation Option” in the Township Zoning Ordinance to maximize the preservation of rural open space.

“Strip residential development,” consisting of multiple land divisions for non-farm residential lots along county road rights-of-way, shall be discouraged. The rural character of public roads within the Recreation-Conservation Areas should be protected, since roadside views of rural open space and forestland help to define the rural character of Billings Township.

The character of rural Township roads in these areas should be protected by requiring new structures to be set back away from road rights-of-way. New rural residential lots should also be arranged with frontage along new local streets or private roads designed to serve the development. Where new residential lots directly front on arterial and collector roads in the Township (see **Map 7.1**, Transportation Plan), access management techniques should be used to minimize the number of new driveways (see Chapter 7, Transportation Plan).

RURAL RESIDENTIAL

The lands designated as Rural Residential are primarily intended for low-density residential uses to be served by individual private well and septic systems. These Rural Residential Areas provide for an environment of predominantly single-family dwellings on large lots in a rural setting, along with other associated uses and facilities that serve area residents.

The planned maximum residential density range within the designated Rural Residential Areas shall be one (1) dwelling per two (2) to ten (10) acres of land.

The Rural Residential Areas of the Township are located in areas of the Township with existing lots consistent with the planned maximum residential density above, and in areas abutting the Waterfront Development Area and the Township’s sanitary sewer service area (see **Map 8.1**). The Rural Residential Area is intended to serve as a transition area between the more developed and more rural areas of the Township.

The character of rural Township roads in these areas should be protected by requiring new structures to be set back away from road rights-of-way. New rural residential lots should also be arranged with frontage along new local streets or private roads designed to serve the development. Where new residential lots directly front on arterial and collector roads in the Township (see **Map 7.1**, Transportation Plan), access management techniques should be used to minimize the number of new driveways (see Chapter 7, Transportation Plan).

WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT AREA

The lands designated as Waterfront Development are primarily intended for moderate density residential uses to be served either by the Township’s public sanitary sewer system, a private community wastewater treatment and disposal system, or individual private septic system. The Waterfront Development Area consists primarily of existing subdivision lots less than an acre in size. Some neighborhoods in the Waterfront Development Area were originally established as locations for second homes and cabins for downstate residents, but in recent years have turned over to more permanent residences.

This area is intended to provide for a range of low density housing choices, encouraging the development and maintenance of suitable neighborhoods for families and children, providing

suitable land uses in waterfront areas, protecting water quality, prohibiting uses of land that would adversely impact residential neighborhoods, and discouraging uses that would generate traffic on local streets in excess of normal traffic generated by the neighborhood.

The planned maximum residential density range within the Township’s Public Sanitary Sewerage Service Area (see **Map 8.1**) of the designated Waterfront Development Area shall be two (2) to four (4) dwellings per acre. This density standard shall apply only to parcels connected to and served by the Township’s wastewater treatment and disposal facility.

For all other parcels in the Waterfront Development Area that are either outside of the Township’s designated Public Sanitary Sewerage Service Area (see **Map 8.1**) or are served by private community wastewater systems (PCWS) or individual septic systems, the planned maximum residential density range shall be one (1) to two (2) dwellings per acre.



Where new residential lots directly front on arterial and collector roads in the Township (see **Map 7.1**, Transportation Plan), access management techniques should be used to minimize the number of new driveways (see Chapter 7, Transportation Plan).

This area is intended to also provide a suitable location for multiple-family residential land uses. In addressing these housing needs, multiple-family residential land uses should be designed and located in consideration of the following objectives:

- Such uses shall be located within the Township’s designated public sanitary sewer service area.
- The location of such uses shall be compatible with nearby single-family residential neighborhoods, recreational areas, and agriculture areas.
- Such uses shall have direct access to a collector or arterial road, as defined in this Master Plan.

PLANNED MANUFACTURED HOUSING PARK AREA

The designated Planned Manufactured Housing Park Area is intended to provide for the location of manufactured housing park land uses, as defined by the Mobile Home Commission Act, P.A. 96 of 1987 (as amended) and the Manufactured Housing Commission General Rules. It is intended that manufactured housing parks be provided with necessary community services and other associated uses and facilities that serve the park's residents in a setting that provides a high quality of life for residents.

It is the intent of the Township to ensure that manufactured housing parks are developed and maintained in a manner consistent with the desired character of the Township and in compliance with the Township's Zoning Ordinance.

HAMLET CENTER

The designated Hamlet Center (All Bright Shores) area along Estey Road is intended to encourage the continuation and further development of a mixed residential-commercial-office environment with a village-like scale and character. Land uses in this area are intended to be compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods in All Bright Shores, and to serve the needs of Township residents and visitors. This Hamlet Center is the also the geographic and social heart of the Township, and provides services that support waterfront and rural recreational activities in the surrounding region.



- This area is now served with a public sanitary sewer system, which could be an attractor for additional residential, mixed-use commercial/ residential, and other business development.
- The existing small-scale character of existing land uses should be retained.

- An overall design theme should be established for new non-residential buildings in the Hamlet Center area. Two story buildings are encouraged. Limited commercial on the ground floor with residential on the top floor is a compatible design along Estey Road.
- The scale of new commercial buildings should be kept consistent with existing structures in the area, and with a rural village-like character. The size of parking lots and the number of parking spaces should be limited, so that parking lots will not dominate the visual character of the area.
- That every reasonable effort be made to provide a compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.



NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS CENTERS

The small red areas depict designated Neighborhood Business Centers outside of the “Hamlet Center.” These are existing commercial zoned or occupied properties along the M-30 state highway corridor, and are not expected to expand significantly in land area. These areas are primarily intended to serve the local commercial and small business needs of Township residents, but may also include limited highway commercial land uses.

Examples of land uses planned for Neighborhood Business Centers include retail, food services, professional, administrative, and executive offices, insurance, financial, real estate and other professional services, workshops and studios, personal services (such as dry cleaning pick-up/drop-off, cafes and coffeehouses, banks, barber shops, and beauty salons), and medical offices and clinics.

Commercial uses will be confined to these designated areas and the Hamlet Center area. Strip commercial development without controlled vehicular and pedestrian access points and consolidated parking, will not be permitted.

PLANNED BUSINESS-RESEARCH AREAS

The lavender/purple areas designate appropriate locations for Planned Business-Research Centers in Billings Township. These areas are intended to provide locations for new business operations, new employment centers for Township residents, and a more diversified Township tax base. Three (3) separate locations have been designated on **Map 6.1** as Planned Business-Research Centers (see A, B, and C below). This Plan identifies two (2) different types of

business-research developments as appropriate for the proposed location(s) and consistent with the desired character of the Township:

1. **A state-of-the-art regional agricultural research and business center** to provide a location for agricultural support businesses (farm implement sales and service, bulk feed and fiber stores, storage facilities, and similar operations), commercial greenhouses, an agricultural business incubator, agriculturally-oriented research and education facilities, and accessory support businesses intended to serve the needs of area employees.
2. **A medical office/clinic facility or branch of a regional medical center**, along with a pharmacy, optometry or ophthalmology center, medical laboratory, medical support services, and associated office space.

Each of the three (3) identified Planned Business-Research Center locations (A, B, C) have unique characteristics that must be taken into account when considering more intensive “employment center” development of the type described above:

Site “A” would be a suitable location for a regional agricultural research and business center. It is surrounded to the north, east, and south by productive farmland soils, but the site consists predominantly of sandy soils. The site recently was cleared of trees, apparently as part of a tree farm operation. The site is located on M-30 at the Dale Rd. intersection. Across M-30 to the west in Tobacco Township are commercial businesses, including a grocery store and hardware store.

Site “B” also could be a suitable location for a regional agricultural research and business center. However, possible use limitations associated with the original transfer of ownership to the Beaverton Rural School District may restrict the use of the property to uses that are in keeping with the educational mission of the district. This issue should be explored with the school district. If use limitations exist, it may be possible to partner with Michigan State University or another public or non-profit agricultural research entity to develop the property as an agricultural research and education facility in cooperation with the Township and the school district.

Site “C” would be a suitable location for a medical office/clinic facility or branch of a regional medical center. Both sites labeled with a “C” are within the Township’s Public Sanitary Sewer Service Area, and close to the population center of the Township. Convenient to M-30 with quick access to surrounding townships, development of a medical center at this location would provide significant benefits to the Township, All Bright Shores businesses, and the surrounding region.

It is anticipated that future development within these Planned Business-Research Centers will take place under the Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations of the Township Zoning Ordinance. It is further recognized that attracting new operations and new development suitable for these areas will require the Township to take proactive action to collaborate with regional and state economic development agencies (see Chapter 10, Plan Implementation).

PUBLIC QUASI-PUBLIC LANDS

The light blue color designates Public and Quasi-Public Lands in the Township, including:

- Lands currently under public ownership, including the state forestlands along the east side of the Township;
- Major Township facilities, such as the Township Hall/Fire Station and new wastewater treatment plant in Section 25;
- Areas planned for parks and recreation facilities, such as various waterfront road ends and reserved parkland within older subdivisions; and
- Parcels occupied by or planned for quasi-public land uses, such as churches and other institutional uses as defined in the Township Zoning Ordinance.



The Township's Park and Recreation Plan will reflect in more detail the location of existing and planned parkland in the Township.

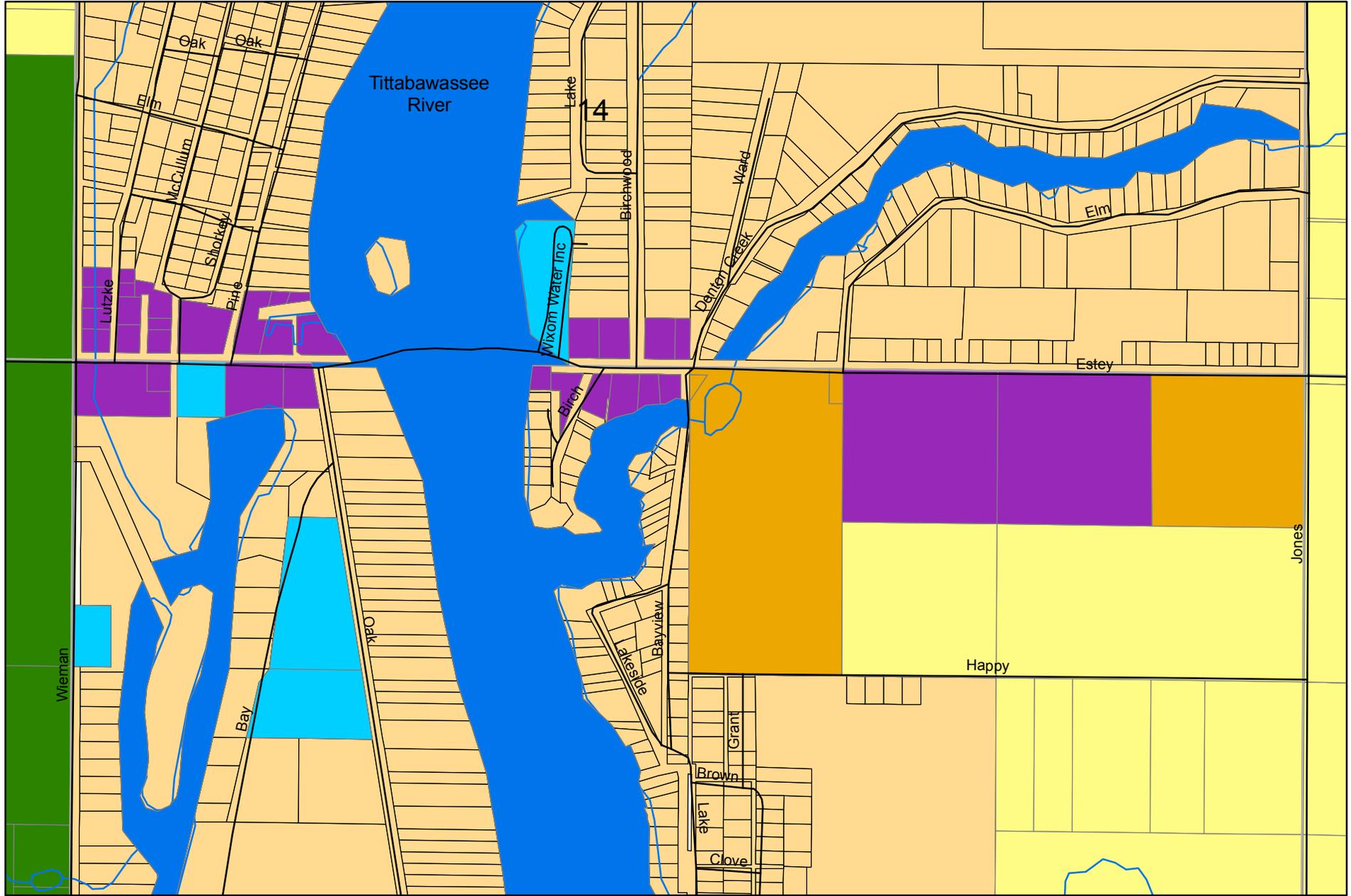


The Township Hall (above, right), churches (above), and the new Township wastewater treatment plant (see Chapter 8, Utility Plan) are examples of public and quasi-public facilities in the Township.

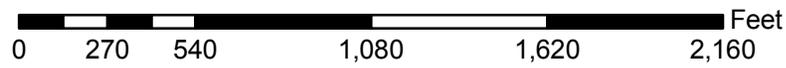
FUTURE LAND USE MAP

Map 6.1 (next page) depicts future land use designations for the Township as a whole. **Map 6.2** (following page) shows a detail of the future land use designations for the "Hamlet Center" (All Bright Shores) area of the Township:

Billings Township Future Land Use Map Hamlet Center Detail (All Bright Shores)



- Legend**
- Roads
 - River
 - Hydrography
 - Section Lines
 - Recreation
 - Agricultural Preservation Area
 - Planned Manufactured Housing
 - Park Area Hamlet Center
 - Planned Business Research Area
 - Public Quasi Public Lands
 - Neighborhood Business Center
 - Rural Residential
 - Waterfront Development



Map Provided by Building Place
Rodney Nanney, AICP

Chapter 7 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

An integral part of the Master Plan is the Township’s internal transportation network. The degree to which land uses interact effectively is dependent upon this concept. The primary objective is to develop a roadway network, which provides safe, convenient and efficient vehicular circulation. The implementation of a functional transportation network depends upon a close cooperation between private developers, Township, County and State officials, and a strict adherence to sound planning principles and standards.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

GOAL: A safe, efficient transportation system that facilitates movement within the Township while minimizing adverse impacts of traffic, especially of regional traffic, flowing through the Township.

OBJECTIVE: To accomplish this goal, the following objectives and policies are set forth:

A. HIERARCHY OF ROADWAYS

A hierarchy of roadways to provide convenient vehicular circulation, to minimize congestion, and to minimize traffic on gravel roads.

Policies:

Roadways should be designed and constructed according to the following functional classification system:

- 1. Primary roads;
- 2. Collector roads; and
- 3. Local roads.

B. PRIMARY ROADWAYS

Primary roadways carry the highest traffic volumes in the Township and serve both regional and local traffic. Primary roadways connect local roadways with adjoining communities.

Policies:

- 1. Designated primary roadways shall meet the minimum Gladwin County Road Commission or MDOT standards for right-of-way width, pavement, etc.
- 2. Use of shared driveways and curb cuts, where feasible, to minimize access points to primary roadways. Access improvements shall conform to access

management standards of the Michigan Department of Transportation and Gladwin County Road Commission.

C. COLLECTOR ROADWAYS

Collector roadways primarily serve local traffic and distribute traffic from local roadways to primary roadways.

Policies:

1. Designated collector roadways shall meet the minimum Gladwin County Road Commission standards for right-of-way width, pavement, etc.
2. New or extended collector roads should be constructed as part of new residential development in the Township.

D. LOCAL ROADWAYS

The primary function of local roadways is to provide access to abutting properties. Local roadways are intended to primarily serve local traffic, rather than regional or through traffic.

Policies:

1. Designated local roadways shall meet the minimum Gladwin County Road Commission standards for right-of-way width, pavement, etc.
2. All public roadways not otherwise designated under this Plan or the standards of the Gladwin County Road Commission will be considered to be local roads.

E. IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING ROAD SYSTEM

Safe and convenient vehicular circulation with minimal impacts on existing land uses.

Policies:

1. New development shall only be permitted where there is sufficient unused capacity in the existing public road system to accommodate projected traffic from the new development. To support a new development, the developer shall be responsible for making satisfactory arrangements with the Gladwin County Road Commission to improve deficiencies in an existing road per County Road Commission standards.
2. The Township should work with the county road commission to coordinate future road and utility improvements, and to ensure that when a road is resurfaced the entire length is completed.
3. The Township will work with residents to encourage the use of special assessment districts to fund upgrades and improvements to existing private roads in older subdivisions.

4. Replace the existing Estey Road Bridge with a new structure designed for three traffic lanes and separate pedestrian/bicycle/snowmobile crossing pathways. The new bridge shall be elevated sufficiently to allow clearance for pleasure boats and other craft on Wixom Lake.
5. See the All Bright Shores Corridor Study, which is hereby incorporated and made a part of this Master Plan, for specific policy recommendations for improvements to Estey Road within the All Bright Shores area.

F. ROAD SYSTEMS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

All new development shall provide safe and convenient vehicular circulation that is properly integrated with existing or planned abutting public and private roads.

Policies:

1. Impact on Existing Road System. Because of the limited availability of state/federal road improvement funding, the Township is unable to ensure that new development will have adequate and convenient vehicular access. Budget limitations should be taken into consideration during the planning process, and new developments should be appropriately scaled to existing road conditions.

New developments shall be required to provide street improvements that conform to Gladwin County Road Commission standards on county roads, and MDOT standards along M-30, as well as applicable standards in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure safe and convenient traffic flow.

2. Access. The design of new development projects and new curb cuts on primary roads shall conform to the concepts and standards outlined in the MDOT Access Management Guidebook, and as required by either the Michigan Department of Transportation or the Gladwin County Road Commission. The use of shared driveways and curb cuts between adjoining businesses shall be encouraged, and required where feasible, to reduce the number of new curb cuts.
3. Residential Road System. Plans for new development should provide for extension of roadways into new development areas where such extension is determined by the Township to be necessary for the continuity of the local road system.
 - a. Public streets should interconnect residential areas, and new development shall interconnect with existing neighborhoods.
 - b. Residential developments intended to be isolated from the rest of the community by a system of private streets and absence of street connections with adjacent parcels should be discouraged.
 - c. New residential developments shall be served by at least two means of regular public ingress and egress, except where natural conditions prevent such access.

- d. New or extended collector roads should be constructed as part of new residential development in the Township.
4. Road Standards. Roadways in new developments shall meet appropriate Gladwin County Road Commission standards and specifications, as well as those in the Township Zoning Ordinance.
5. Private Roadways.
 - a. Private roads should only be permitted as part of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) project.
 - b. Private roads should be discouraged, except for short lengths where the Planning Commission determines that no future connection to adjacent lands is feasible.
 - c. Private roads should not be approved unless a maintenance agreement conforming to Township ordinances has been approved and recorded with the County Register of Deeds.
 - d. The Township should consider establishment of a stand-alone Private Road Ordinance to ensure proper maintenance of existing subdivision roads.
6. Financing Road Improvements. Roads within new developments shall be funded through developer financing with subsequent dedication to the public. Where road improvements are needed to serve more than one property, the work shall be funded through developer financing, or through special assessment districts for all adjacent properties that substantially benefit from the road improvements.

G. PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE/SNOWMOBILE CIRCULATION PATHWAYS.

A system of multi-use and year-round trails or pathways (pedestrian, bicycles, snowmobiles, etc.) throughout the Township to connect between residential areas, waterfront areas, state forestlands, other areas of the Township, and adjoining communities. Because such a system is intended to provide non-motorized transportation and recreation and in some cases to bring people closer to nature, it is not expected that all of the trail/pathway system would be paved.

Policies:

1. Adopt and periodically update a Capital Improvement Plan that includes planned non-motorized trail/pathway improvements.
2. The Township should work with MDNR and the county road commission to create and improve bicycle, snowmobile, ORV, and walking pathways throughout the Township.
3. The Township should work with MDNR to create a new State of Michigan trailhead adjacent to the new Billings Township Sewer Plant off Pinconning and Jones Roads. The trailhead would include public rest rooms utilizing available

sewer utilities. The trailhead would connect to the State’s snowmobile trails, ORV trails, and future cross-country trails, and could also be a trailhead for hunters to state land.

4. A cohesive internal pedestrian/bicycle circulation system should be required within new residential developments, as well as along abutting primary and collector roads.
5. The development of a safe, year-round non-motorized circulation system to link areas of the Township with each other and with adjacent communities should be investigated. Such a system could begin in the All Bright Shores hamlet and radiate outward, or begin by extending along the M-30 and Estey Road corridors.
6. The Township will work with the Gladwin County Road Commission and MDOT to seek road improvements that include striped on-street bicycle paths at least four feet in width on paved primary and collector roads.

H. UNRESTRICTED WATERWAY TRAVEL

Travel on Wixom Lake, the Tittabawassee River, and tributary canals unimpeded by hazards, debris, or low bridges.

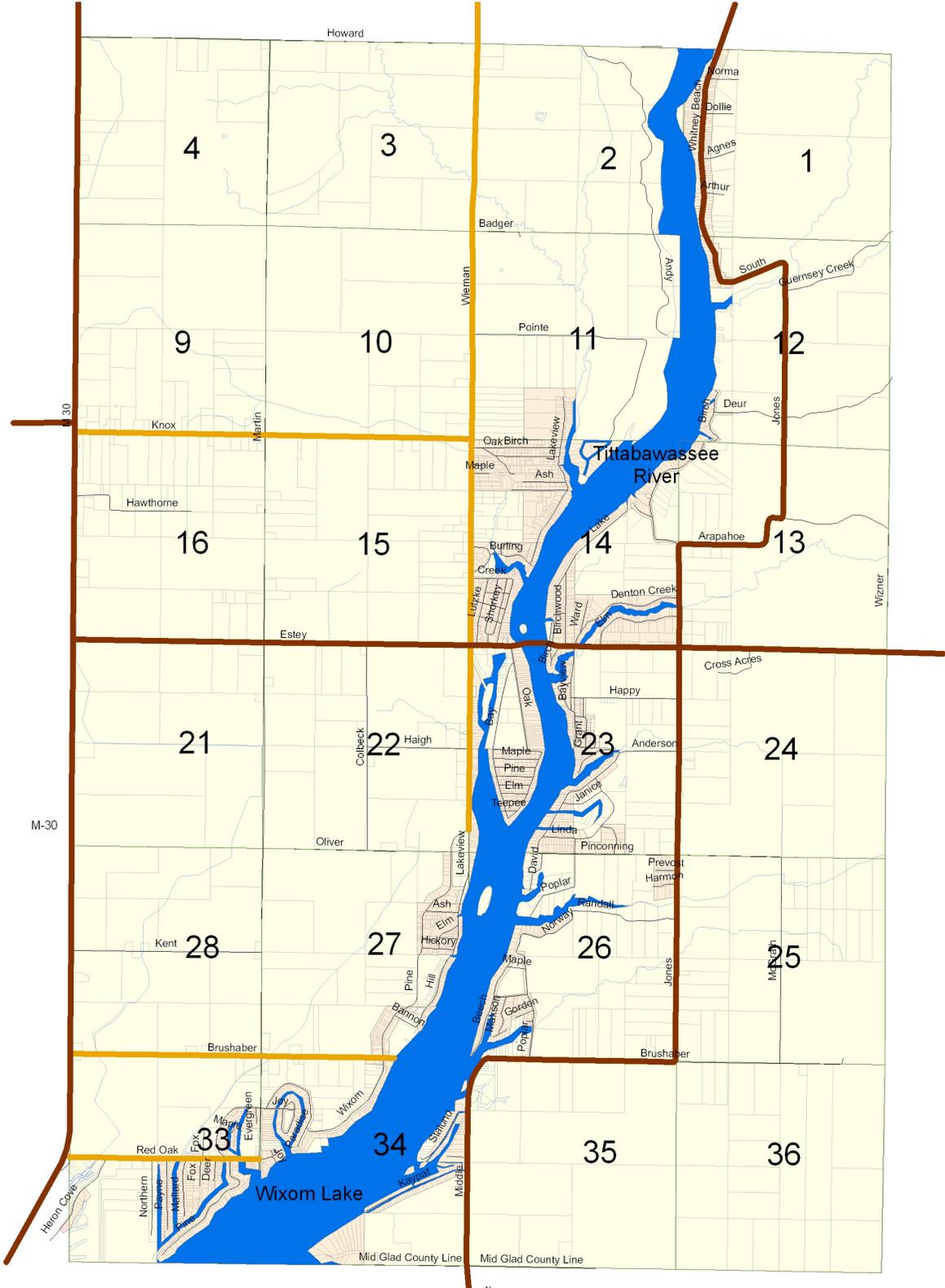
Policies:

1. The Township should work with the MDNR and the county to establish water trails for canoeing and kayaking along the shoreline of Wixom Lake. Such facilities could include public campsites, rest areas, and public landing sites spaced out along the shore.
2. The Township should consider working with the Wixom Lake groups, the surrounding Townships that abut the waterway, and Gladwin and Midland counties to create a multi-jurisdictional organization with the authority to plan for and implement improvement projects for the waterway, including enhanced public safety patrols and clean-up/weed control efforts.
3. The Township should consider working with the Gladwin County Road Commission to develop a long-range plan and identify potential funding sources to construct a new Estey Road bridge over the Tittabawassee River that has sufficient clearance for houseboats.

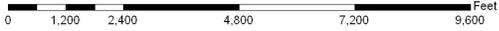
TRANSPORTATION PLAN MAP

Map 7.1, Billings Township Transportation Plan, on the following page depicts the primary, collector, and local roads of the Township, as determined by level of use and road character. These designations may differ somewhat from the designations of the Gladwin County Road Commission.

Billings Township Transportation Plan



- Legend**
- Arterial Road
 - Collector Road
 - Section Lines
 - Local Road



Map Provided by Building Place
Rodney Nanney, AICP

Chapter 8 UTILITY PLAN

This section of the Master Plan presents goals, objectives, and policies for the establishment and extension of public and private utilities in Billings Township. This new chapter is a necessary step in part to address the long-range planning, development, and fiscal issues raised by the state-mandated construction of a new public sanitary sewerage system and wastewater treatment and disposal plant to serve a portion of the Waterfront Development Area.

In addition to policies for public sanitary sewage treatment and disposal, this Chapter addresses Township planning needs and policies for other public and private utility services, including potable water, electricity, stormwater management and drainage, and natural gas. Specific policies and recommendations associated with future development of private wastewater treatment systems in the Township are also included.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

GOAL: Utilities that serve the public health, safety, and welfare and that serve to protect the Township's environment.

OBJECTIVES: To accomplish this goal the following objectives and policies are set forth.

A. GENERAL

The location, design, and screening of such systems will minimize adverse impacts on Township residents, businesses and natural features.

Policies:

All distribution systems, including overhead lines and all easements or rights-of-way for overhead or underground utility lines and pipes, shall meet the following criteria:

- a. They shall be located so as to avoid disruption of existing trees, wetlands, and other natural features.
- b. They shall be located so as to minimize disruption or adverse impacts on land use or parcel ownership.
- c. Surface-mounted equipment shall be judiciously placed as part of a landscape design so as to be attractively and effectively screened.
- d. Substations shall be adequately screened and set back from roadways to minimize visual impacts.

B. PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER

Management of the Township's public sanitary sewer system will direct development away from areas designated for agricultural land uses.

Policies:

1. Adopt and periodically update a Capital Improvement Plan that adequately addresses the sanitary sewer needs of the Township.
2. Publicly-owned sanitary sewer lines and facilities shall be limited to only the designated sanitary sewer service areas of the Township. Extension to any other area shall require prior amendment to the Master Plan.
3. Extension of the sewer system shall be permitted only if such extension will not adversely affect the financial and functional integrity of the Township and the sewer service districts.
4. Long-term maintenance costs shall be minimized by prohibiting construction of lift stations when gravity alternatives are available.
5. Private community wastewater treatment systems shall be prohibited within the designated sanitary sewer service areas of the Township.
6. All new development in the designated sanitary sewer service areas of the Township shall be required to connect to public sanitary sewer system.



Figure 8.1 Billings Township wastewater treatment and disposal plant.

C. PRIVATE COMMUNITY WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES

There is currently one private community wastewater treatment system (PCWS) constructed in Billings Township, but none in operation. The PCWS for the Harbor Cove of Gladwin site condominium development on Northern Trail in Section 33 is complete,

but no new homes have been constructed within the project as of 2009. This system operates as a secondary treatment and common drainfield for the development (each lot will still have an individual septic tank).

New PCWS may be acceptable under limited circumstances in areas of the Township planned for rural residential uses outside of the designated public sanitary sewer service area (see **Map 8.1**).

Policies:

Private community wastewater treatment system (PCWS) shall only be permitted where the following conditions are met:

1. Location. Privately constructed community sanitary sewage treatment systems shall be prohibited within the designated sanitary sewer service areas of the Township.
2. PUD. Privately constructed community sanitary sewage treatment systems shall be prohibited except in Planned Unit Development (PUD) projects.
3. Approval Required. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Township Board, and Central Michigan District Health Department approval is required for the system.
4. Discharge. To minimize downstream impacts on the Tittabawassee River/Wixom Lake watershed, discharge of treated wastewater from private community wastewater systems into the surface waters of the Township/State of Michigan shall be prohibited.
 - a. Filtered discharge through naturalized wetlands or similar means will be strictly limited and carefully considered before approval.
 - b. Subsurface discharge will be limited only to locations where soil and other site conditions are conducive to such discharge without impacting groundwater resources.
5. Compatibility of Development(s). The development(s) to be served by the system will be consistent with the adopted Master Plan in terms of use and density.
6. Liability and Removal. The Township will be indemnified from any costs or liability for the design, construction, operation, maintenance, repair and/or replacement of a community wastewater system, and will retain the right to require abandonment and removal of a community wastewater system upon extension of publicly owned sanitary sewer lines to the development.
7. Expansion. Any expansion or alteration of a private community wastewater system will be subject to review and approval from the Township and appropriate agencies.

8. Open Space Preservation. Development will include significant preservation of important wetlands, natural features, open spaces or agricultural lands in the Township. “Significant preservation” should include, at a minimum, the permanent conservation of fifty percent (50%) of the land proposed for development.
9. Adequate Reserve. Adequate replacement reserve will be provided should the private community wastewater system fail or improperly function. This should include a financial contingency sufficient to provide for future operation and maintenance, reservation of additional land area(s) for replacement facilities, and provision of adequate reserve capacity.
10. Buffering. Extensive buffering will be provided from all abutting properties to minimize noise, light, and odor impacts from system operation.
 - a. Buffering shall include both adequate separation distance and provision of fencing and extensive landscaping using plant materials with year-round screening characteristics.
 - b. A private community wastewater treatment system shall be separated from drinking water wells and groundwater recharge areas to prevent contamination or degradation of groundwater.
 - c. A private community wastewater treatment system shall satisfy all isolation distances required by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Central Michigan District Health Department, or other agencies with jurisdiction.
11. Connection to public sewer system. Any property permitted to develop with a Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Township Board, and Central Michigan District Health Department shall be required to abandon and remove the private system and connect with publicly owned sanitary sewer lines should they become available in the future.

D. PUBLIC WATER

Protect the Township’s groundwater resources to ensure that private, on-site wells remain the primary source of potable water for Township residents.

Policies:

1. No public water supply system. The Township should not develop or accept ownership of any public water supply system. Service to any area of the Township should only be considered in the future if determined to be necessary to address health, safety, and environmental issues for existing development.
2. No private community wells outside of the All Bright Shores area. The Township should not permit new development that would require the use of a community well to provide potable water to more than two (2) parcels or principal buildings,

with the exception of future commercial or mixed commercial/residential development in All Bright Shores along Estey Rd.

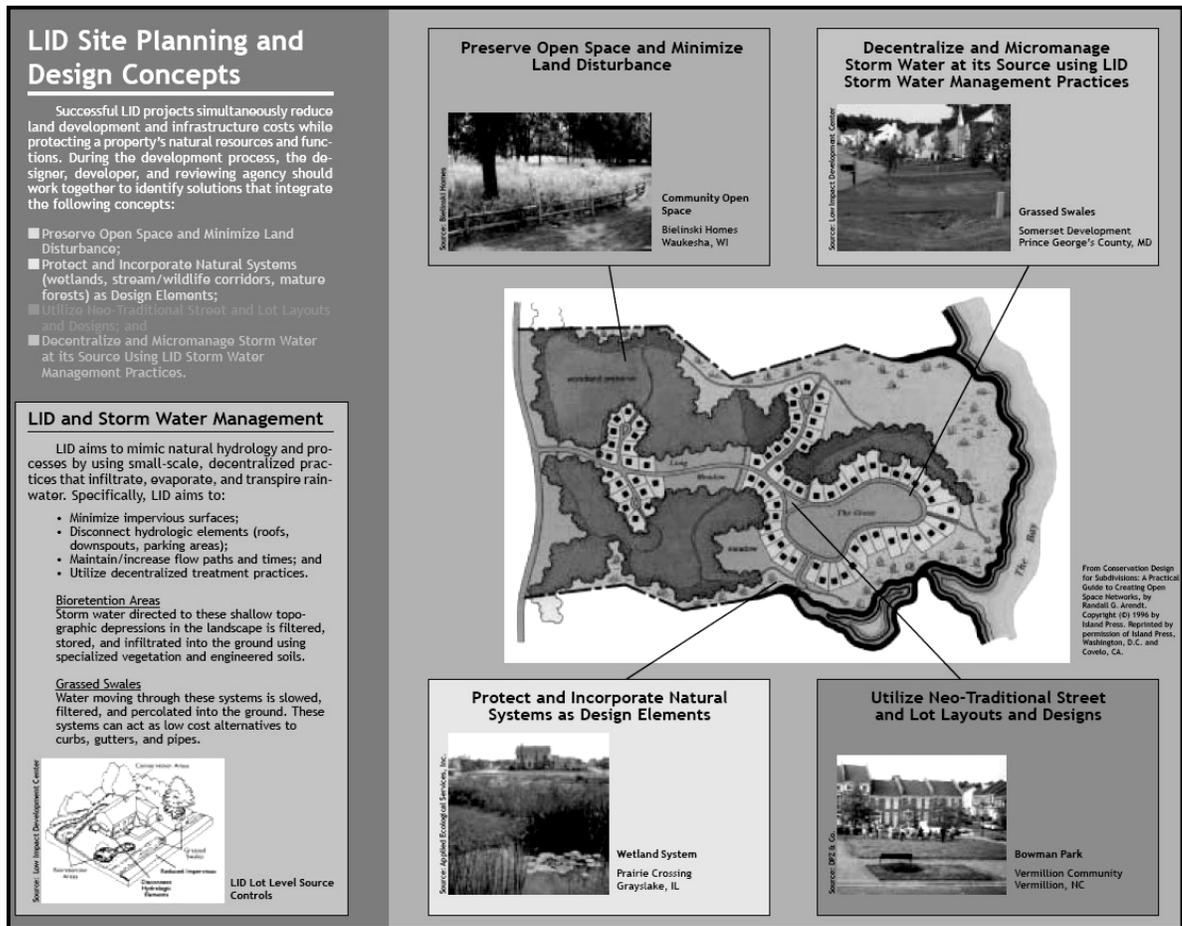
E. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND DRAINAGE

Stormwater run-off shall be managed to protect groundwater resources and improve the water quality in Wixom Lake.

Policies:

1. Low Impact Development. Each new development project in the Township shall incorporate an integrated arrangement of low impact development techniques into the site design (see **Figure 8.2**).

Figure 8.2 Low Impact Development Summary



2. Limit runoff from new development. The drainage system shall limit storm water run-off from any development area to that which existed under undeveloped, natural conditions in terms of volume, velocity, and water quality. Storm water discharge to adjoining properties shall be adequately controlled to prevent any negative impacts to adjoining properties.

3. Pollution prevention. Drainage systems shall be located and designed to filter and prevent sediments, fertilizers, and other pollutants in surface run-off from entering watercourses and groundwater aquifers.
4. Appearance. Stormwater management facilities for new development, such as retention/detention basins, should be landscaped to enhance the appearance of the development, or be designed to function as natural wetlands.
5. Development plan. A storm water management system shall be incorporated into the development plan for each project on private property, or as part of an area-wide drainage system, or as a combination of the two. A storm water management system shall be designed to control the volume, quality, and rate of storm water run-off and, where appropriate, to recharge the groundwater supply.

F. ELECTRICITY

Robust electricity capacity should be available to Township residents and businesses.

Policies:

New substation. The Township should consider working with Consumer’s Power to secure development of a new substation in the Township.

G. NATURAL GAS

Natural gas service should be available to all Township residents and businesses.

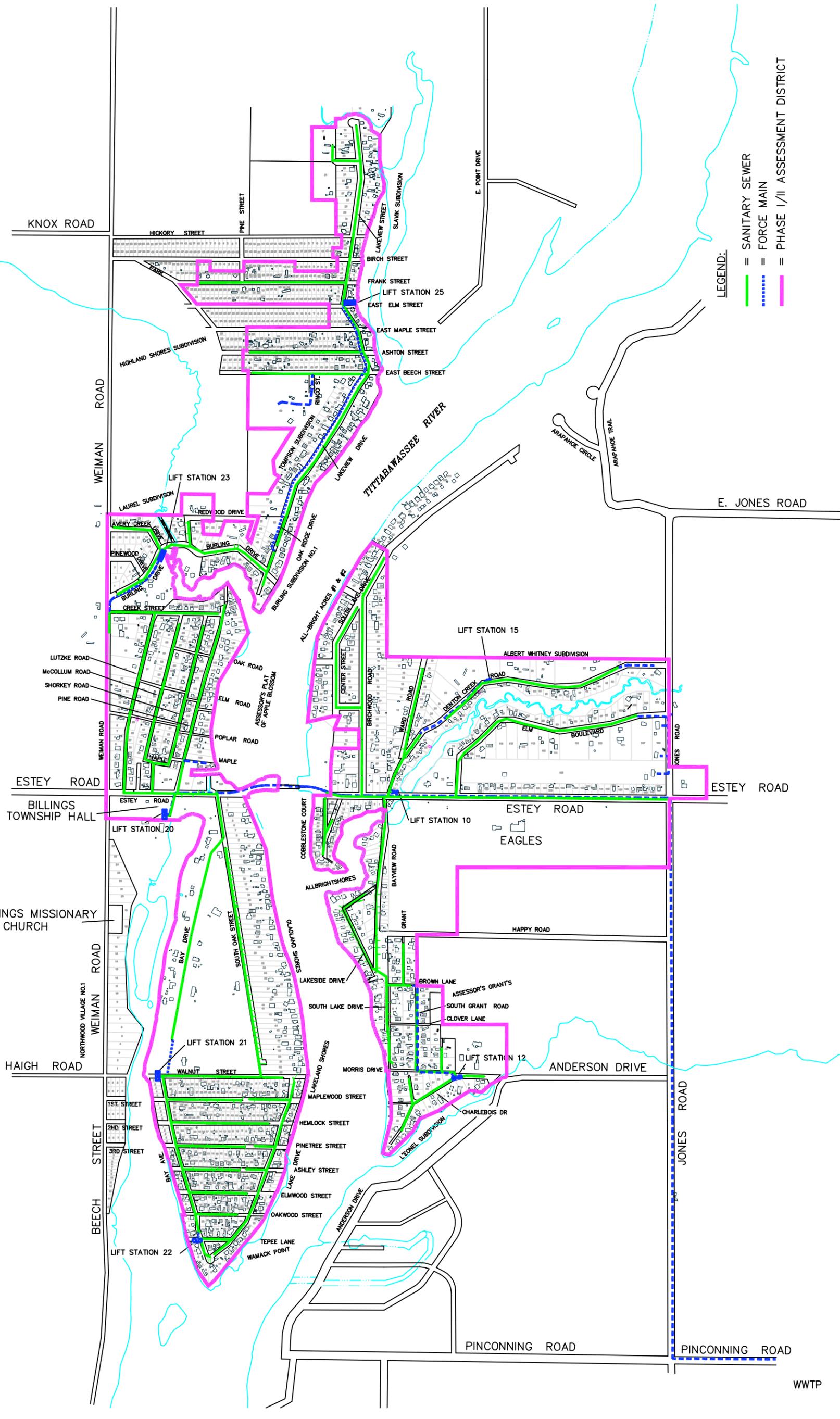
Policies:

The Township should seek out opportunities to work with the utility company to plan for future extension of natural gas service to existing Township neighborhoods.

PUBLIC SANITARY SEWER SERVICE AREA PLAN

The designated Billings Township Public Sanitary Sewer Service Area for the Township’s wastewater treatment and disposal plant, which is located in Section 25, is defined and delineated as depicted on **Map 8.1** of this Chapter.

The Township has no current plans to expand this service area or to provide public sanitary sewage treatment and disposal services to lands outside the designated Public Sanitary Sewer Service Area during the ten (10) to 20 year scope of this Master Plan (also referred to as the “planning period”).



- LEGEND:**
- = SANITARY SEWER
 - - - = FORCE MAIN
 - = PHASE I/II ASSESSMENT DISTRICT



PROJECT NUMBER
BT14129

SHEET 1
OF 1

ASSESSMENT HEARING #1 MAP FOR:
**BILLINGS TOWNSHIP
PHASE I/II SAN SEWER PROJECT**
GLADWIN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

DATE
07/10/06

SCALE: NO SCALE
DRAWN BY: WBL
CHECKED BY:
APPROVED BY:

GOVE ASSOCIATES, INC.
1601 Portage Street
Kalamazoo, Michigan
(269) 385-0011

ARCHITECTS
ENGINEERS
PLANNERS
SURVEYORS

ISSUE &
REVISION
BLOCK



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WWTP

Chapter 9 ZONING PLAN

Zoning is the division of a community into districts for the purpose of regulating the use of land and buildings, their height and bulk, the proportion of the lot that may be covered by them, and the density of development. Zoning is enacted under the police power of the State for the purpose of promoting health, safety and general welfare and has long been supported constitutionally by the U.S. Supreme Court and the Michigan courts.

The Township Zoning Ordinance is one of the most important tools available to implement the policies of the Billings Township Master Plan related to the use and development of land. The purpose of zoning is to assist in orderly development and growth. It is also used to protect property values and investments. Because of the impact it can have on the use of land and related services, local zoning regulations must be built upon the foundation of a Master Plan and “zoning plan.”

The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act requires a zoning plan be prepared as the basis for the zoning ordinance. It must be based on an inventory of conditions pertinent to zoning in the township and the purposes for which zoning may be adopted. The zoning plan identifies the zoning districts and their purposes, as well as the basic standards proposed to control the height, area, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises in the Township. These matters are regulated by the specific terms in the Zoning Ordinance.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE MASTER PLAN

This Master Plan sets forth the goals, objectives, and policies for future growth and development in the Township. It includes specific strategies for managing growth and change in land uses and infrastructure in the Township, and will be periodically reviewed and updated at least once each five (5) years. This Chapter is the Zoning Plan, which, along with the rest of the relevant parts of this Plan, is intended to guide the implementation of and future changes to the Township Zoning Ordinance.

ZONING DISTRICTS

Table 9.1 – Zoning Districts

Table 9.1 lists the nine (9) proposed zoning districts in the Township Zoning Ordinance.

The specific purposes of each district are listed in the Zoning Ordinance.

DISTRICT NAME	SYMBOL
Agriculture-Conservation District	A-1
Single-Family Residential District	R-1
Island Overlay District	IS-I
Multiple-Family Residential District	R-M
Manufactured Housing Park District	MHP
Local Commercial District	C-1
Highway Commercial District	C-2
Industrial District	IND
Public/Semi-Public Services District	PSP

DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS

Table 9.2 lists the proposed dimensional standards table for each district of the Zoning Ordinance. The supplemental regulations and standards are listed in the Zoning Ordinance.

Table 9.2 – Dimensional Standards

STANDARDS		DISTRICTS								SUPPLEMENTAL PROVISIONS OR EXCEPTIONS	
		A-1	R-1	IS-1	R-M	MHP	C-1	C-2	IND		PSP
BUILDING HEIGHT (feet)	Maximum (feet)	35	35		35	see Section 5.105 (Manufactured Housing Parks)	35	35		35	Section 4.203
LOT STANDARDS (per unit)	Minimum Width (feet)	100	100	100	150		100	150	150		Section 4.301
	Minimum Area (acres)	1.0	0.5	0.5	3.0				1.0		Section 4.302
YARD or SETBACK STANDARDS (feet)	Minimum Front Yard	40	25	25	40		25	30	30	25	Section 4.201 Section 4.204
	Minimum Side Yard	20	10	6	40		20	20	30	20	Section 4.202 Section 4.204
	Each Side Yard										Section 4.203 Section 4.204
Minimum Rear Yard	40	25	25	40	25		25	30	25	Section 4.203 Section 4.204	
MINIMUM PRINCIPAL BUILDING SEPARATION (feet)		20	12	12	20						Section 4.202
MINIMUM GROSS FLOOR AREA (square feet/unit)		950	950	1,200						Section 4.301	
MINIMUM LAND AREA PER UNIT (acres/unit)		40.0	0.5	0.5	0.1					Section 4.301	

RECOMMENDED ZONING ORDINANCE CHANGES

Because this Master Plan incorporates new policies on land uses, infrastructure improvements, and other measures related to further improving quality of life in the Township, there are changes to the Zoning Ordinance that should be made to make it fully consistent with this Plan. In other words, as the principal tool for implementing this Plan, policy of the Plan should be reflected in the zoning requirements. Following is a list of recommended changes to the regulations and standards of the Billings Township Zoning Ordinance, in accordance with the policies of this Master Plan. These changes should be pursued as the need or opportunity presents itself, but before the Township initiates action to implement new Plan policies.

1. Delete the existing Industrial (IND) zoning district, which is not shown on the zoning map, and update the Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations to provide a "Planned Business-Research" development option.
2. Delete the RA Residential Accessory Overlay District.
3. Consider the establishment of a separate rural residential zoning district.
4. Consider the establishment of a separate residential zoning district for lots in the Public Sanitary Sewer Service Area (**Map 8.1**).
5. Revise the Official Zoning Map to rezone the C-1 zoning classification at the intersection of Middle Road and Brushaber Road to an appropriate residential zoning district.

6. Add standards to the site plan review section to ensure future residential development includes site designs that:
 - Employs Low Impact Development techniques for stormwater management; and
 - Minimizes impacts on wildlife habitat and the natural links that facilitate movement of wildlife.
7. Revise Section 11.03 (Private Roads) to restrict new private roads in the Township to approval under the Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations.
8. Revise Section 11.04B (RV Parking, Occupancy, or Camping on a Vacant Lot in a Residential District) to expand the off-season permit time to the full season, and to require that permitted RV units be brought to the Township Hall to prove road worthiness before receiving a permit.
9. Consider revising Section 5.210C to permit limited additional lot splits in the Agricultural-Conservation District for non-farm purposes.
10. Revise Article 3 (Land Use Table) to add public wastewater treatment and disposal plants as a permitted use in the PSP (Public Semi-Public Services) District.
11. Revise the Zoning Ordinance to add regulations for private community wastewater systems (PCWS) and restrict such systems to new PUD projects.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH ZONING

Following is a list of zoning-related tools and techniques that can be used by the Township to implement the policies of this Master Plan:

Rezoning to Implement the Master Plan

The land use classifications on the Future Land Use Map provide the basis for evaluating future rezoning requests. Zoning actions that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map usually receive deferential and favorable judicial review if challenged. The Master Plan should be the principal source of information in the investigation of all rezoning requests.

Although the Future Land Use map is not a zoning map, it will be used as a guide to Zoning Map changes. The key to Plan implementation is the timing of the zoning map changes, as initiated by the Planning Commission or by petitioners. Rezoning of land to a more intensive zoning district should only take place in conjunction with the availability of public services and infrastructure to serve all of the potential land uses in the proposed district.

The Planning Commission and Township Board should also keep in mind that this Master Plan is based upon a ten (10) to 20 year long planning period. Future land uses for undeveloped land should be phased-in over a period of time consistent with infrastructure and land capacity, and with the policies of this Plan.

An annual or biennial appraisal of the Township Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map should be conducted by the Planning Commission with the assistance of the Township Planning Consultant. The review should ensure that environmental, land use, circulation, and all other

elements of this Plan are adequately reflected in the ordinance text and map, and that no changes to the Plan or ordinance are necessary.

Site Plan Review

Each time the Planning Commission reviews a site plan for compliance with the Township Zoning Ordinance, another step is taken in the process of implementing the policies of this Master Plan. Development review and approval is an important implementation tool to ensure that new construction and changes to existing sites are consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Planned Development

Planned Unit Development (PUD) involves the use of special zoning requirements and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. PUD projects should achieve a higher quality of development than might otherwise be possible. Use of the PUD option for large-scale residential development, mixed-use projects, and planned business-research center developments is recommended to achieve development in accordance with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Performance Standards

Rather than simply regulate development on the basis of dimensional standards, some communities are establishing performance standards to regulate development based on the permissible effects or impacts of a proposed use. Performance standards should be used to supplement conventional zoning standards for the purposes of regulating noise, dust, vibration, odor, glare and heat, safety hazards, and environmental impacts, such as air and water pollution. The complexity of the performance standards should be based in part on the capacity of Township officials to administer and enforce the standards. Performance standards can be particularly useful in achieving environmental and resource protection goals.

Incentive Zoning

Incentive zoning allows a developer to exceed the dimensional limitations in the Zoning Ordinance if the developer agrees to fulfill conditions specified in the Ordinance. Incentive zoning should be considered to promote innovative land planning techniques identified in the Plan. For example, a possible increase in density can be used as an incentive for developments that implement rural open space zoning standards.

Overlay Zoning

Overlay zoning allows the Township to impose a new set of regulations on a special area within an existing zoning district. In an area where an overlay zoning is established, the property is placed simultaneously in the two zones, and the property may be developed only under the applicable conditions and requirements of both zones. Thus, the overlay district regulations supplement the regulations of the underlying zoning district. Overlay zoning has been used in other communities to address special conditions and features, such as historic areas, wetlands, and other environmentally sensitive areas, without disrupting the underlying zoning plan.

Site Design Standards

Beyond the standard regulations to implement the future land use plan, the ordinances can be revised to allow for more flexibility and creativity in design. Innovative site design involves the use of special zoning standards and review procedures that provide design and regulatory flexibility, so as to encourage innovation in land use planning and design. High quality developments that help to preserve and maintain the existing agricultural character in the Township can be implemented only if the regulations and standards are adopted which promote the most innovative and creative design techniques.

Development Agreement

Although there is no explicit legislative authority for such agreements, many Michigan communities have used development agreements to achieve a mutual understanding between the developer and Township concerning the conditions under which development can occur. Development agreements are often negotiated as part of a planned development approval, allowing the community and developer to address complex issues that cannot be adequately addressed on a typical site plan. Development agreements might prove useful to achieve desired developments in the Township, especially if or when a mixed use development is proposed.

Form-Based Zoning and Building Composition Standards

Although there is no explicit legislative authority for form-based zoning, a growing number of Michigan communities are adding building design and appearance standards to local zoning ordinances. The intent of form-based zoning is not to mandate certain architectural styles or materials, but rather to achieve a more uniform streetscape where adjacent buildings share common design elements, height, number of stories, and other characteristics.

**Chapter 10
PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

To be effective, this Plan must be used as part of daily decisionmaking in the Township. Policies in the Master Plan are implemented, for the most part, by day-to-day administrative actions of the Township officials and staff, decisions made by the Planning Commission, and the actions of the Board of Trustees. A government agency might undertake a major project called for in the plan, such as construction of a new bridge or acquisition of a tract of land for public use, but these are infrequent events and are not the primary means of policy implementation.

Although the Township may have responsibility to prepare and maintain this Plan, it is impossible for one unit of government to implement all elements of a plan alone. Plan implementation necessitates coordination with the various governmental entities with some jurisdiction in the Township. For this reason, the Billings Township Master Plan should be viewed both as a communication tool and as a reference document for policy implementation.

The following is a summary of additional Plan implementation tools available to the Township:

ZONING ORDINANCE

See Chapter 9, Zoning Plan.

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The policies of this Master Plan can be implemented in part through careful review of proposed subdivision plat and site condominium development projects:

Subdividing, or platting, is a more complex method of land division and is regulated by the Land Division Act and any Township subdivision regulations. This method of subdividing involves technical review by the Township Planning Consultant, Planning Commission recommendation, and Township Board action on the various stages of the plat. This process is aimed primarily at zoning compliance, compliance with the Master Plan, proper vehicular and pedestrian circulation, future street extensions, buildable lots, proper relationship with neighboring properties, and provision of all public facilities and utilities.

The Township’s review should be coordinated with those of county and state agencies. Subdivision review should be used as a means for the Township to ensure that proper infrastructure planning and construction occur without public expense and that natural features are protected.

The site condominium process is an alternative to the subdivision plat, but the end result is intended to be equivalent to a platted development. Since the issues and interests are the same from the Township’s point of view in either approach to land division, the Township’s review process for site condominiums should be as similar as possible to that exercised in subdivision review.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM (CIP)

One of the most important non-regulatory tools the Township has available to implement this Plan is a “Capital Improvements Program” (CIP). The Township can use a CIP to implement Master Plan recommendations for new or expanded public facilities, plan for major expenditures, ensure that public funds are used wisely and as efficiently as possible, and most importantly - to be prepared with "shovel-ready" projects when unexpected sources of funding appear.

What are Capital Improvements?

Capital improvements are physical facilities that require substantial investments to construct/develop, and are intended to last/be used for a long period of time. Typical project examples include:

- fire engines, bulldozers, and similar large equipment purchases;
- treatment plants, water and sewer lines, landfills, street construction or reconstruction, and similar infrastructure improvements;
- libraries, schools, government buildings, and similar building projects; and
- replacement, expansion, or major repair of existing facilities and equipment.

"Gray area" projects that could also be considered “operating” expenses outside the scope of a CIP include vehicle and small equipment purchases, repairs, and remodeling projects.

What is a Capital Improvements Program?

A CIP identifies the community's capital needs; ranks them by priority; coordinates their scheduling over a specific number of years; and determines the best funding method(s) to pay for them. The first year of the CIP is the capital budget, and as each year is completed a new year is added at the end. Many CIPs are organized into three (3) sections:

1. Overview of the CIP process, along with a list of the benefits the community will derive from the capital improvements;
2. Financial data, including charts outlining historical revenue and expenditure data, projected revenue, expenditure, and debt service; and a
3. Description of projects recommended for funding in the CIP period, including a justification for a project's inclusion in the CIP, the project's relationship to the community's master plan and other long-range plans, and how the project will be financed within the community's fiscal capacity.

The CIP should cover a six (6) year period, updated annually, with the first year representing the community's capital budget. The document lists the proposed capital improvement projects and expenditures by:

- Location, date of construction, and relationship to other existing and proposed facilities;
- Cost, means of financing, and sponsor; and
- Priorities over the CIP time period and geography of the Township.

Per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended), any municipality with jurisdiction may prepare and adopt a CIP, but it is typically mandatory for most cities and villages and for those Michigan townships that "alone or jointly with 1 or more other local units of government owns or operates a water supply or sewage disposal system." For this reason, Billings Township is required to prepare a CIP.

What are the Benefits of Using a CIP?

The CIP is a tool to enable and improve the local government's ability to balance its capital needs and available financing over a multi-year period. A CIP helps to ensure that new public facilities and infrastructure improvements meet Master Plan goals and objectives; spreads large capital expenses over time and break large projects into phases; and brings plan recommendations for public facilities to reality.

An up-to-date CIP will alert residents and developers of the Township's intention to make certain improvements in particular places at particular times. This helps coordinate private investment, minimize inappropriate development proposals, and restricts development from occurring at a too rapid rate.

Also, the process of adopting and updating a CIP minimizes the potential for poorly planned or unnecessary public improvements and expenditures, and increases opportunities for public input on and public support for proposed capital improvements.

- Not every public project is a good idea, even if it seemed that way at first glance.
- Some "good ideas" cost more than their benefits. A public facility may turn out to be unnecessary, over-designed, or may not meet the community's actual needs. This usually becomes apparent during the CIP process.
- Use of the CIP "tools" by the municipality enables private businesses and citizens to have some assurance as to when public improvements will be undertaken.

FINANCING

Successful implementation of these projects will depend on the ability of the Township to secure the necessary funding for community planning and project implementation. Besides the Township's General Fund, there are an ever-changing range of potential federal and state government sources, community foundations, and other sources for grant funding and loans which the Township may be eligible for to complete a particular project.

The first step is to develop a capital improvements program (see above) to identify potential projects, anticipated costs, and potential sources of funding. Once a specific project has been identified, the Township Planning Consultant will work with Township officials to identify the most appropriate sources of grants and other revenues to supplement local funds. The following are some examples of potential financing tools available to the Township:

Dedicated Millage

Special millages can be used to generate revenues for a specific purpose. For example, one Michigan community has a special land acquisition fund that is supported by a one-quarter mill property tax. A land acquisition fund would be a useful tool to promote open space preservation in the Township.

Special Assessments

Special assessments are compulsory contributions collected from the owners of property benefited by specific public improvements (paving, drainage improvements, etc.) to defray the costs of such improvements. Special assessments are apportioned according to the assumed benefits to the property affected. Special assessment funding might prove useful to implement certain utility and road improvements.

Bond Programs

Bonds are one of the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for a specific community project and are paid off by the general public with property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenues. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project.

MDNR Recreation Grant Programs

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) and the Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI) grants are available for park development and land acquisition. The Township could use the MNRTF program in to finance parkland acquisition and development. In the future, the Township may wish to seek MNRTF funding for acquisition of land principally for open space and natural resource preservation purposes and CMI funds for development projects.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Important economic development-related goals of the Master Plan include integrating employment centers with surrounding land uses in a manner that serves the demonstrated needs of Township residents; strengthening the rural economy of the Township; and diversifying the Township’s tax base. To achieve these goals, the Township will focus on the following economic development strategies:

1. Business-Research Centers. The Township will work in cooperation with regional and state economic development agencies to encourage development of the Township’s Planned Business-Research Centers (see Chapter 6, General Development Plan) consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of this Plan.
2. All Bright Shores. The Township will promote and encourage the development of the All Bright Shores commercial area in accordance with the policy recommendations of this Plan.
3. Rural Economic Development. The Township will encourage the private purchase or donation of development rights to permanently preserve agricultural land. The Township will also encourage farmers to diversify their income sources through development of value-added agricultural tourism and entertainment activities consistent with Zoning Ordinance requirements.
4. Home Occupations. There has been a revival in home entrepreneurship over the past decade. Home occupations are those where entrepreneur works from home, and can, within certain limitations, be almost any type of business. Some develop as people perform services elsewhere, but use part of their home as an office. Many tend to be

service or direct marketing/sales oriented. Starting up a new business from home offers cost savings, and may increase the potential for success.

The economic impact of a home-based business is like that of any other successful business operation, even if on a smaller scale. Sales of products and services generate income from which supplies, equipment, and labor are purchased and increased disposable income becomes available to spend in the Township. Since owners of home occupations work in the Township, it is likely that more purchases will also be made locally, which benefits other area businesses.

The Township will continue to permit limited business activities that do not adversely impact the residential character of the property or neighborhood. The Township will also encourage owners of highly successful and growing home occupations to relocate their operations to nearby office and commercial zoning districts when they exceed zoning limitations in the residential districts.

PLAN MONITORING PROGRAM

To be effective, the planning process must be continuous, and must be part of the day-to-day decisions that affect the physical character of the Township. The Master Plan is a representation of the Township's policies for the future. If the Master Plan is to perform its proper function, it must be reviewed regularly and updated as conditions warrant.

The Master Plan must be evaluated regularly by the Planning Commission to ensure that Township policies are consistent with the objectives of the Master Plan. A comprehensive review of the Plan is required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act at intervals no longer than five (5) years. To better ensure that the Plan is kept current, periodic reviews are recommended on an annual or biennial basis.

Benefits of a Monitoring Program

There are several benefits to the Township from a regular monitoring program.

1. The Master Plan will be kept up-to-date.
2. Regular review of the Plan by Township officials has the potential over time to broaden the area of community agreement on basic development policies. The process invites reconsideration of alternatives to major decisions and encourages exploration of new issues and secondary questions.
3. Regular review of the Master Plan will keep knowledge of the plan's policies and recommendations current in the minds of Township officials.
4. Along with the Master Plan's use in day-to-day decision making, a regular review process will ensure that the Plan is a living document, and that its policies will not be frozen in time.
5. A regular monitoring program will show the extent to which the Township is actually implementing the policies of the Master Plan; and will help to determine whether the Plan's policies are still desirable and appropriate in light of changing circumstances.

Description of the Program

The basis of the maintenance program will consist of an annual or biennial review by the Planning Commission. Such review might result in a change to a portion of the Plan reflecting either a policy area or a geographic area. The results of the review will be forwarded to the Township Board in a report, along with recommendations for action, if needed. The following should be among the elements studied by the Commission:

1. Development proposals approved or denied, rezoning petitions, site plans, and subdivision plats.
2. Land use regulations, and Zoning Ordinance and subdivision ordinance amendments made or expected to be needed in the future.
3. Building permits issued for new construction by land use category, and estimates of the current Township population.
4. State equalized evaluation by the assessor’s categories; track changes in agricultural and development classifications.
5. Completed and planned transportation improvements.
6. Land divisions, other than in approved subdivision plats and condominium developments.
7. Major zoning and land use or development changes in adjoining townships, and those that are likely to occur in the coming year.
8. Federal, state, and county policy changes that affect the Township, and that are likely to occur in the coming year.
9. Major land use-related decisions of the Township Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, recent changes in state land use legislation, and precedent-setting planning and development-related court decisions.
10. Other items of information, as determined by the Planning Commission and Township Board.

PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT

The necessity of citizen participation and understanding of the planning process and the Plan cannot be over-emphasized. A carefully organized public education program is needed to build support for and ease implementation of planning proposals. Residents’ failure to support planning efforts, special assessments, zoning, or public improvements is more often than not the result of public misunderstanding of long-range plans. To organize public support most effectively, the Township must emphasize the reasons for the planning program and encourage citizen participation in the adoption of the Plan and the continued planning process.

Public education can be achieved through an informational program involving talks by the Township Planning Consultant and other experts, preparation of newspaper articles, and presentations at public meetings on current issues. Periodic community opinion surveys should be considered as another means by which Township officials can gauge changing attitudes and priorities.

A significant share of the responsibility of implementing this Master Plan rests on private efforts. Even one resident can have substantial influence in determining the appearance of the Township and influencing public opinion. The influence of an alert and informed citizenry may well compensate in a large part for limitations in the authority vested in the Township.

LAND ACQUISITION

Land acquisition is an important supplement to land use regulations as a means of managing growth and protecting natural resources. Land acquisition can be used to control the use of a specific acquired parcel, or it can be used to influence the general growth of the Township. Local land acquisition programs are generally funded either by local property taxes (such as a dedicated millage or general fund revenues) or by grant programs.

There are several approaches to acquiring interest in land to advance the goals of the Master Plan. Generally, the Township can take direct action to acquire property interest or it can rely on private voluntary land protection efforts.

Direct Action by the Township

If the Township takes direct action, it can acquire property in fee simple or it can acquire a partial interest through acquisition of easements. Fee simple acquisition provides the greatest level of control over the use of a parcel, but it also is the most expensive method of acquisition. In addition to the acquisition costs, fee simple acquisition removes property from the tax rolls, resulting in a decrease in property tax revenue.

Easements are distinct property rights that may be sold separately from other rights to the Township. Easements are effective for preserving sensitive lands, providing public access along rivers or greenways, and allowing property owners to obtain income, estate, and property tax benefits for land stewardship while they continue to live on their land.

There are two Michigan statutes that address the issue of conservation easements. The Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (Public Act 116 of 1974) provides for dedication of an easement to a public entity, such as the Township or State. The Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement Act (Public Act 197 of 1980) gives a third party, such as a land trust, the right to enforce an easement. This act assumes that the easement will be perpetual.

Private Voluntary Land Protection Efforts

Instead of taking direct action, the Township can encourage and rely on private voluntary land protection efforts. Property owners can voluntarily donate land or easements in the interest of conserving natural resources or natural features; or to facilitate the natural resource protection program, private land trusts can be voluntarily established to make use of a variety of land acquisition and conservation techniques. Like local government, land trusts typically rely on fee simple acquisition and acquisition of easements. Other than acquisition at full market value, private tools available to preserve land include:

- Donation of land or bargain sale (acquisition at below full market value),
- Options to buy (often used to secure a parcel of land while funding is being obtained),

- Rights-of-first-refusal (used to tie up a parcel without having to purchase it immediately),
- Leases (temporary control without the expense of acquisition),
- Pre-acquisition by a land trust (the land trust serves as the intermediary for the public agency, such as the Township), and
- Conservation investment (in essence, a real estate syndication for the purpose of resource protection).

LAND CONSERVANCY INVOLVING THE GOVERNMENT

Private donations of land to the government

Landowners are sometimes willing simply to donate land to the Township for open space or natural area preservation purposes. The landowner has the satisfaction of seeing the parcel of land preserved, and also may obtain some benefits on income taxes, estate taxes, and property taxes. The Township obtains the benefit of preserving the land.

Private donations of conservation easements to the government

Landowners are sometimes willing to donate a conservation easement on a parcel of land, which involves the transfer to the government of a partial interest in a parcel of land for the purpose of preserving its natural amenities. The landowner might retain the right to continue to occupy the land, for example, but the right to use it for particular uses (e.g., to build houses on it or change its scenic character) has been donated to the government. The landowner would have the satisfaction of seeing the parcel of land preserved, and may also obtain some benefits on income taxes, estate taxes, and property taxes. The Township obtains the benefit of preserving the land, and avoids some of the costs of maintaining the property.

Private donation of land to the government, with the right to use the land until the donor's death

A landowner sometimes wants to retain full title to a parcel of land and be able to continue to use it, until his or her death, but wishes to have the land transferred to the government at that time (or some other specified time). The landowner can thereby gain some tax benefits, but continue to use the land until his or her death.

Governmental purchase of conservation easements

A landowner may not be willing to donate a conservation easement, but may be willing to sell such an easement to the government. The landowner might retain the right to continue to occupy the land, for example, but the right to use it for particular uses (e.g., to build houses on it or change its scenic character) has been sold to the government. The landowner would receive some payment for the easement, and may obtain some benefits on estate taxes and property taxes. This alternative would cost the Township some revenue, but the cost would be less than the purchase of all the rights to the land.

Governmental leasing of land

A landowner may not wish to lose permanent title to a parcel of land, but may be willing to lease it to the government for public use for a specified period of time.

Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (PA 116 of 1974) or Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement Act (PA 197 of 1980).

These two state laws can be used by private citizens and local government to protect land for specified periods of time. The landowner can thereby reduce the property taxes on the land, and the government gains the benefit of maintaining the land as open space.

LAND CONSERVANCY THROUGH A PRIVATE ENTITY

Most of the transactions between a landowner and the government can also occur between the landowner and a private land conservancy organization such as The Nature Conservancy, the American Farmland Trust, and the Trust for Public Land. The conservancy organization would then either manage the land itself or convey it, at some future date, to a governmental agency when public funds become available.

Private donations of land to a conservancy organization

Landowners are sometimes willing to donate land to a conservancy organization for open space or natural area preservation purposes. The landowner has the satisfaction of seeing the parcel of land preserved, and also may obtain some benefits on income taxes, estate taxes, and property taxes. The conservancy organization obtains the benefit of preserving the land.

Private donations of conservation easements to a conservancy organization

Landowners are sometimes willing to donate a conservation easement on a parcel of land, which involves the transfer to a conservancy organization of a partial interest in a parcel of land for the purpose of preserving its natural amenities. The landowner might retain the right to continue to occupy the land, for example, but the right to use it for particular uses (e.g., to build houses on it or change its scenic character) has been donated to the conservancy organization. The landowner would have the satisfaction of seeing the parcel of land preserved, and may also obtain some benefits on income taxes, estate taxes, and property taxes. The conservancy organization obtains the benefit of preserving the land, and avoids some of the costs of maintaining the property.

Private donation of land to a conservancy organization, with the right to use the land until the donor's death

A landowner sometimes wants to retain full title to a parcel of land and be able to continue to use it until his or her death, but wishes to have the land transferred to a conservancy organization at that time (or some other specified time). The landowner can thereby gain some tax benefits, but continue to use the land until his or her death.

Conservancy organization purchase of conservation easements

A landowner may not be willing to donate a conservation easement but may be willing to sell such an easement to a conservancy organization. The landowner might retain the right to continue to occupy the land, for example, but the right to use it for particular uses (e.g., to

build houses on it or change its scenic character) has been sold. The landowner would receive payment for the easement, and may obtain some benefits on estate taxes and property taxes.

Conservancy organization leasing of land

A landowner may not wish to lose permanent title to a parcel of land, but may be willing to lease it to a conservancy organization for public use during a specified period of time.

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

A planning tool growing in popularity for the preservation of natural features is “transfer of development rights” (TDR). In Michigan, this can be accomplished through use of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process and the preservation of “off-site” open space within the Township’s designated Agricultural Preservation Area as part of a development project with the Public Sanitary Sewer Service Area.

Using TDR, a developer may, with Township agreement, develop a parcel at a higher density than zoned if they purchased the development rights from a land owner in the designated Agricultural Preservation Area. An appropriate plan would set a cap on the density allowed, ensuring a land owner does not purchase a large amount of development rights and attempt to create a development not appropriate for the community.

There are many benefits related to the transfer of development rights:

- The agricultural landowner obtains the highest and best use of their land.
- The developer obtains the benefits of developing more residential units than would otherwise be permitted.
- The Township permanently preserves the agricultural and natural features of the Township, and future residential development in the community occurs in the areas that are prepared for higher density development.

PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

A local or county “purchase of development rights (PDR) ordinance” can be a useful tool to implement Master Plan policies associated with preservation of agricultural land and the rural economy. The intent is to preserve farm land by the public purchase of a landowner’s development rights in exchange for an agricultural conservation easement that permanently restricts development. Billings Township could adopt a local PDR ordinance, or could seek to have the county establish and maintain a PDR program.

APPENDIX A

BILLINGS TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN UPDATE "SWOT" SURVEY (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)

A. TOWNSHIP'S STRENGTHS

First, consider the strengths of Billings Township. What makes it unique or attractive as a place to live, work, visit, or play? What sets it apart from other communities? In your opinion, what are the most important strengths of Billings Township?

- Water
- Hunting areas
- Waterfront & state land is appealing to vacationers or retirees from down state
- Probably low crime rate compared to many municipal areas
- People
- Business
- People & Businesses
- Small village
- People to care what happens to the other people
- Right now township has no strengths
- The lake and the people who have lived and struggled in the area supporting our stores restaurants all year long. The lake is basically our only asset
- The fact: it's a small country lifestyle and we like it that way
- Few places to go
- None that I can think of at this time
- It (Billings twp) is losing its country lake appeal
- By the water fishing, boating, watersports
- Wixom lake front
- Local township zoning
- Albright shores sewer system
- Casual living retirement community
- Private boat launch, access to lake
- Waterway summer & winter
- State lands
- Sewer system on main corridor
- Very good fire dept.
- Room for growth
- The beauty of extensive waterfront
- Generally a quiet community with little actual crime

- Present government is doing fair job
- Wixom lake
- Waterfront
- Water, fishing & watersports
- Retirement community
- Large diverse population
- Good roads
- Ice carnival
- Lake, lake, lake
- Water small community close to larger community
- Sewer could bring in new business to area
- Fire dept.
- Close to expressways
- Great planning com. Est.
- Fishing
- It is located on the water: all water sports are available such as boating, skiing, fishing, swimming and hunting the people who enjoy these watersports are fun to be around
- Also an excellent fire team and dive team
- Locality closeness of this twp to state land for those enjoying nature
- Wixom lake this twp dominates this lake for those who enjoy the aquatics of lake life
- Billings twp fire dept. probably one of the best around in this area
- It is the "near north;" most (other) good water recreation is further north (so we) can draw people from down state when gasoline is high-priced
- Excellent fire department and EMS
- Many good, shallow places for little people to swim without rough water
- Near through road (M-30 with new bridge)
- Wixom Lake – Great views, water sports, recreation, fishing
- State Forest – Hunting and on personal land
- Beauty of farmers' fields and forests – Great corn, Luenberger's farm
- Many Billings residents are on water (or have access) so there's a bond with the lake activities
- Albright Shores is bordering Wixom Lake – great views from the bridge and land north of bridge

B. TOWNSHIP'S WEAKNESSES

Now that you've determined how wonderful the Township is, it's time to look for the weaknesses. In your opinion, what are the most problematic or challenging Township weaknesses?

- Sewer system
- No public access to swim or picnic
- Excessively HIGH TAXES
- Roads are poorly maintained

- Township officials have no regard to the opinions of the residents
- Very few jobs
- Township board
- Not letting the people vote on issues (2)
- Cleaning up the area
- Taxes are not equal – land is not assessed the same
- Need to upgrade electricity & cable
- Township officials
- Taxing people out of their houses
- Less caring people in township we are a township not a big city leave it to the country not city
- Two numerous to mention
- Township board does not know what they are doing
- Township board only care about selves, not the township or its residents
- The people of the board and new people living up here trying to make our rural area into a city most people don't want the sidewalk lights and other plans – they believe they are over taxed already
- Lack of commotion
- Leadership
- Understanding the needs of the township
- Fact they are trying to make it like a city
- Not letting a vote on what is to be started on
- The people need more say in what happens here
- Board has too much power.
- Expensive sewer pushed on the people – they just need to have bad septic's fixed.
- We are bankrupting our people
- Used to be a good place to live
- This is supposed to be a rural area, the board is trying to make it a town?
- We are here because we wanted to live in the country!
- Low law enforcement, as is speeding in the neighborhood
- Can't think of any places for employment in the township
- Organized conflicts in community
- Township official recalls
- Change at no cost for low income
- Low / no income housing
- No effective community leadership
- No effective business leadership
- No jobs
- People not wanting to move forward
- No rain water systems (curb & gutter)

- No walking sidewalks or bridge across lake for people
- Failure to keep a consistent board
- Unusual amount of dissention among residents
- Failure of community to come together
- Blight in community
- Need to stop confrontation at board meetings
- The leadership and small town closed minded population
- Unable to stay within boundaries for the low income residents
- We are not a metropolis but we are a community that deserves honesty and not sneaky meetings & back door politics
- Honest competent leadership (we have none)
- Negative outlook
- Constant political bickering
- Little business
- No police security
- The cost to live here, cost outweighs the benefits
- Not enough business
- No cell phone services
- Road that needs paving or widening
- Blight
- Small lots
- The items that associate with blight, people collect all kinds of things that sometimes are considered as junk
- Too many people wanting to make it a city setting would be better left as a rural community
- Too many committees once again
- Infringement on those that have been here 20+ years who planned on a quiet community to live their lives and raise their families
- Too many weedy places in bay – too many stumps in the water
- Lack of trust among people – ref. the township board
- Platting is into too small lots, some 40-50 feet wide
- Poor quality water for drinking
- Perceived lower than most of the state in education of seniors
- There's no place for pedestrians to walk safely or bicycles to ride safely
- There's no marked crosswalk to get from the north and south sides of Estey Road in Albright Shores
- There's no public bathroom for visitors
- There's no identifiable driveways for any of the businesses (along Estey Road), so a driver has to be very alert to cars pulling out anywhere and everywhere

C. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE TOWNSHIP

What is going on in the area, region, or state that could benefit the Township? What changes do you anticipate that might have potential for the Township? What opportunities are there within the Township to make things better in some way? In your opinion, what are three opportunities from which Billings Township can potentially benefit in the future?

- More things for kids
- Less politics
- More recreation for everyone
- Cleaning up area
- Fix the roads
- Would like cell phone service
- New township officials
- Make the bridge more safer to drive across put something for the fisherman to fish off
- People do not have a voice in the matter any more
- Working together
- Listening to the people
- Work & listening to the resident great opportunistic can be reached as the people want to advance
- Nothing, no jobs, no opportunities for the young or young families to stay
- Taxes continuing to rise – property values dropping
- Lower taxes
- Stop the street – sidewalk and the vision for now until the residents get back on their feet.
- Put in walk way by bridge to get kids off it
- Change the board people to someone who wants to please the people
- Fix the things that need fixing at the place needed, don't make everyone pay for what a few need
- Let us be the small rural community we came here to enjoy
- Albright shores corridor master plan
- 5 years park and recreation master planning
- Senior citizen high-rise housing (similar to Beverton & Gladwin)
- Estey being make a AA road
- No vision for the future
- Tremendous potential for growth
- Could be leading township in Gladwin
- A nice marina with a park
- No weeds in the lake and basically cleaned up
- Windmills for energy this could also be sold back to consumers energy for reverse to the township
- Flowers and sidewalks
- Paved streets
- Fishing guides for visitors
- Explore alternative energy sources (exp. Windmills)

- Harness energy from our water (turbine)
- Encourage new businesses to move to Billings
- Sewers will attract new business
- Provide police protection
- Improve water access and quality
- Sewer could bring more money into township
- Gladwin is a growing community and working to bring new business to area
- The ice carnival grounds are almost ready to go to the township and the would give township a park and recreation area
- Very good for our first master plan (strengths)
- More feedback from public (weaknesses)
- Maybe republican control over local govt. without all the democrats figuring out ways to increase taxes and drive out the working people
- Do away with sewer project before it destroys all those whose have been here for years
- Elect local govt. & committees to actually listen & work for the community
- Get better cell phone reception, faster ISP and related services
- Establish and enforce consistent zoning
- Clean up the water
- Establish boating speed limit and enforce
- With sewer in, there's more potential for new businesses and services
- Possible post office
- More businesses – ex. Curves Exercise Place
- Potential for grants, donations for beautification and improvements
- With (Estey) road resurfacing in near future open up opportunity to widen the road and add sidewalks
- Opportunity for public bathrooms on small grassy area adjoining north section of bridge
- Walk/bike path in state forest woods by Jones or down Jones and Pinconning

D. THREATS TO THE TOWNSHIP

Finally, we need to consider threats to the future of the Township. Like opportunities, threats can be internal or external. In your opinion, what are the three most threats that the Township is facing or will face in the future?

- Losing people due t higher taxes
- No jobs
- Lack of jobs is causing families to leave not just this area, but the state
- Any increase to our taxes will cause hardships to people of all ages
- Sewer project did NOT clean up the water as intended and is a hardship to many taxpayers
- Taxes
- Lying
- Sewers

- Losing your house do to taxes and sewer
- Members of the board because they do not care about our township
- Taxation
- Township bankruptcy
- Scared of losing home
- Present township board
- Township board overspending
- Taxes to high
- No voice in town spending meeting
- People leaving
- They are taxing us out of our homes
- We can't afford all of this modern stuff we are just simple folk and like country living
- They are taking our land and running the poor out
- Threats – people are going to be bankrupt with the bills being imposed on them
- Losing their homes – spending their retirement for things not included when we moved here
- Losing the country environment
- An honest township board that will work for the people
- "CAVE" people run the township (township government failure)
- No grants without community consensus
- Aging senior citizen population (limited income)
- Main corridor expansion
- Sewers
- No growth
- Lack of interest by residents in local government
- No pride in community
- We need a board that listens and works together and more knowledgeable
- Loss of population
- Population loss
- Pollution of our water
- Crime
- Unqualified personnel on township board may result in county taking over
- Poor economic conditions and unemployment
- Criminal / felon population is significant
- Lack of jobs
- Lack of money coming into township
- We need to stop recalls, the negative attitudes are killing this township against the sewers etc.
- We have too much back stabbing and accusing and non-factual information flowing
- Current govt control of twp

- Expansion in order to expand you have to have room to expand meaning you're forcing someone out
- Sewer project will eventually destroy this community and the lake
- "small views" township govt. has been a problem. No plan to get better
- Some are concerned that taxpayers dollars will be used for improvements in the Master Plan, even though some feel it'd be worth it
- Some are afraid of change
- Willing volunteers will be needed to plan and meet deadlines, write grants – they'll need support – concern that they may not get the backing, encouragement, and enough people to do the work

E. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Please include any additional comments below:

- When times are tough, all luxuries are given up because it takes every penny you can earn to pay for gas groceries and household expenses
- Luxuries such as traveling and eating out are not an option, therefore even entertaining street scape project is STUPID & ABSURD
- Create jobs for people
- Create activities or a place for teens & young people
- I have to pay over \$2400 a year for your sewer system to clean up the lake, yet I'm not allowed a place to even go and swim since I do not own a boat or waterfront property
- If you put a spot where you could walk or fish were the old fridge was on Don's side only
- Hardships on all people who live here
- We don't need to spend more money for visitors
- Community picnics to honor the history of this township would be nice especially for us newcomers.
- Welcome packet with maps hospitals, shopping, township events & board
- Without educated leadership properly & honestly guiding our township nothing will succeed
- Our township is in need of help!!
- We are running in the wrong direction
- If things don't change with the board going into election, another recall is coming
- Work and employment opportunities
- Concerts in the park
- Community theater
- This may seem like whining to you, but I'm living paycheck to paycheck just trying to survive and keep what is mine, mine
- I don't need anymore taxation and add expenses to my stretched to the limit budget
- We have a responsibility as residents of Billings Township to provide safe paths for pedestrians and bicycle traffic and public bathrooms at a minimum

APPENDIX B

Results of Small Group Discussion During the 9/18/2008 Visioning Session

Votes	Work and Employment Opportunities in the Township
28	Medical center, Medical clinic / pharmacy
18	Fast food restaurant, McDonalds / fast food
12	Restaurant / bar - water accessable
11	Silicone metal plant
10	School - dance, gymnastics, karate
10	Small Manufacturing
5	Elderly services (day care), Adult foster care facility / daycare for seniors
4	Bank
4	Better educated people
4	Create off-water industrial zone est. zones for mobil homes, multiple family dwelling
3	Car wash
3	Good restaurant
2	Community center
2	Give available jobs to people in township
2	Post office
2	Snowmobile trailhead
2	Tourism (charter / boat / bed & breakfast)
2	Workout Center
1	Marina
1	Paddlewheeler
1	RV park, picnic area, descent boat launch
1	Water accessable restaurant
	Accessability for elderly
	Antique shops
	Baseball team
	Daycare c play yard
	DEA office
	Golf course
	Laundrymat
	Maintain quaintness / promote right kind of employment
	Mass transportation
	More little shops / stores (crafts / antiques)
	Museum
	Music & art center
	No growth without employment
	No Industrial
	Pontoon, paddleboat, canoe rentals
	Recreational parks
	Small strip mall
	Teen center
	Township government
	Watertoy rental

APPENDIX B

Results of Small Group Discussion During the 9/18/2008 Visioning Session

Votes	Future Road Extensions, Bridges, and Foot/Bicycle/Snowmobile Pathways
35	Extend red oak
15	Foot bridge over N or S of bridge / Toilet facilities / Fishing platforms - handicap facilities
13	Safe walkway / bike path
11	Legalize - roads - public or non-public??
11	Possible camping sites
11	Public access for ORV & snowmobile machines
6	Foot path on N side of bridge
5	Foot bridge on N side of bridge
5	Public safe walkway on bridge (Estey rd.)
3	Campgrounds in township
2	Maps for township to township RV authorized roadways
2	ORV on public roads recreation facilities
2	Problem w/golf carts & all unauthorized
2	Recreational Parking
2	Snowmobile crossing to prevent road wear on W of bridge on Estey rd.
2	Speed limits throughout township
2	Use public lands for bike path
2	Widen road from Martin to Sones rd for corridor plan
1	Albrigt shores public parking
1	Improve road right-a-ways for bicycles & foot traffic
	Bike paths
	Boat launches or public access
	Liability on rightaways for s. mobile - PRV's
	ORV entrance to state lands
	RV parking

APPENDIX B

Results of Small Group Discussion During the 9/18/2008 Visioning Session

Votes	Water Quality, Drainage, and the Wixom Lake Shoreline
23	Clean up lake - blue, weeds, bring back birds
15	Curb & gutters (main street - Estey)
13	Raise bridge - 7'
11	Pontoon alley - maintain size / boat access only - connection with Midland
10	Public bathroom IN Albright shores
4	Make water blue - clean lake recreational boat
4	Marked public access, improved road ends
4	Public park on Wixom lake, pontoon alley
3	Dredge - boat marina, Don's (behind the coach house)
3	Fishing pier
2	Beach on lake
2	Beach, park, store - zoning
2	Behind Coach House - Gilbert Island (culvert to make Island)
2	Natural waterfront
2	Preserve water, some natural waterfront
2	Walk bridge for going over bridge
1	Bridge / walk over bridge / pier to fish off
1	Educate people on how to do water front
1	Enforcement of septic system zoning
1	How do we pay for things without raising taxes
1	More weeds - control main lake
1	Public launch w/parking
1	Reduce nutrients to lake
1	Sewer - shoreline
1	Speen limit on lake
1	Storm drain
1	Water front sewer
	More boat launches
	Slow down boats - speed limit
	Water quality - weeds / zebra mussels

APPENDIX B

Results of Small Group Discussion During the 9/18/2008 Visioning Session

Votes	Housing Choice, Quality, and Conditions in the Township
33	No high rises
20	Yard waste at sewer plant compost
15	Gill towers
15	Single homes
7	Compost at sewer plant & give to residence in the spring
7	Enforcement of zoning & ordinances
6	Enforce zoning
3	Cell tower & better internet service
3	Senior home / high rise wanted
3	Single family homes
3	Single family trailers & modular are ok
2	Grass & clean yards needed
2	Single family no apts.
2	Yard waste pick-up
1	Affordable housing
1	Better pick-up of trash and large items
1	Better utilities (gas, water)
1	Cable performance problem
1	Internet
1	OK with mobil & modular
1	Rental inspection
1	Schools are terrible
1	Street signs - back of
1	Take care of seniors
1	Underground utilities - lines
	Better weed control
	Cable
	City water
	Low income housing new (like habitat for humanity individual homes)
	No condos
	Over restrictions - need less
	wide variety of homes