Charter Township of Oxford

2019 Master Plan

Chris Nordstrom

ADOPTED: SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Township Staff

Deanna Cushing, Deputy Supervisor

Adopted by Planning Commission

September 12, 2019

Assisted by

Carlisle | Wortman
ASSOCIATES, INC.

Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc.
Community Planners and Landscape Architects
Ann Arbor, Michigan

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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

The Oxford Township Master Plan serves as the Township's primary planning document and articulates a vision for future growth and development within the Township. Oxford Township derives its authority for the preparation of a Master Plan from Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended. The Act states:

> *A master plan shall address land use and infrastructure issues and may project 20 years or more into the future. A master plan shall include maps, plats, charts, and descriptive, explanatory, and other related matter and shall show the Planning Commission's recommendations for the physical development of the planning jurisdiction.*

This document represents a revision and update of the Oxford Township Master Plan, adopted in 2011. Since 2011, a number of changes have occurred within the Township and surrounding areas. To ensure that development policies reflect current Township conditions, it is essential that the Master Plan is periodically reviewed and updated. Current state legislation requires that master plans be reviewed every five years.

The Oxford Township Master Plan presented herein excludes the Village of Oxford, which is responsible for adopting a separate master plan.

What is Planning?

Planning is a process involving the conscious application of policies relating to community-wide land use and growth/development issues. The Master Plan is the official document which establishes policies for the future physical development of the Township. It should be reiterated that Act 33 of 2008 identifies the Township Planning Commission as the agency charged with the responsibility to "make and adopt" the Master Plan. However, as the elected governing body of the Township, the Board of Trustees may adopt a Resolution of Concurrence which makes clear that the Board is in agreement with the goals, objectives, and policies that are summarized in the Plan.

How is the Plan to be Used?

The Master Plan serves many functions and is to be used in a variety of ways:

1. Most importantly, the Plan serves as a general statement of Oxford Township's goals and policies and provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's plan for future development.

2. The Plan serves to direct daily decision-making. The visions outlined in this Plan are intended to guide the Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees and other Township bodies in their deliberations on zoning, land division, capital improvements, and other matters relating to land use, transportation, and development.

3. The Plan provides the statutory basis upon which zoning decisions are made. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Public Act 110 of 2006, requires that zoning ordinances and zoning maps be based upon a plan designated to promote public health, safety, and general welfare. It is important to note that the Master Plan and accompanying maps do not replace other Township Ordinances, specifically the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

4. The Plan attempts to coordinate private development and public improvements. For example, public investments such as road or sewer and water improvements should be located in areas identified in the Plan as resulting in the greatest benefit to the Township and its residents.

5. Finally, the Plan functions as an educational tool, providing citizens, property owners, developers, adjacent communities and public agencies a clear indication of the Township's proposed direction for the future.

Therefore, the Oxford Township Master Plan is a statement of general goals and policies aimed at the coordinated development of the Township. In this capacity, the Plan establishes the basis upon which zoning, and land use decisions may be made. However, it must be understood that the Master Plan does not itself place any legally-binding restriction upon private property; this responsibility falls to the Zoning Ordinance.

Planning Process

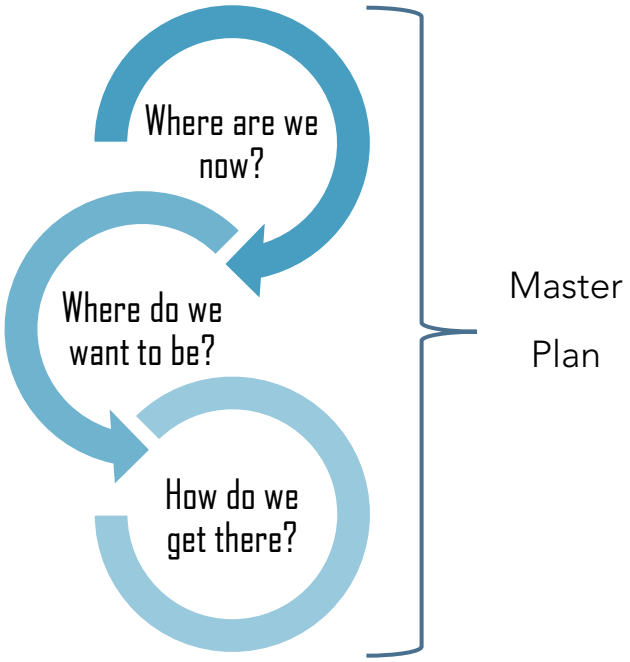
The Master Planning process consists of three main phases, which are described below and illustrated in Figure 1.

1. Where are we now? The first phase involves a review of demographics, economic conditions, natural resources, and the physical context of the Township to provide a foundation for the planning process. In this phase, Township resources are inventoried, updated, and mapped to document existing resources and assess their conditions.

2. Where do we want to be? The second phase in the planning process consists of developing goals, objectives and strategies to support the community's vision for growth. Goals are general statements that provide a focus for future discussions; objectives are more specific planning statements used to qualify the goals and provide more detailed direction for planning efforts; while strategies are very specific, action-oriented statements.

3. How do we get there? The final phase involves updating the future land use map to present the desired arrangement of land uses within the Township. The Zoning and Implementation Plan acts as a bridge between the future land use map and Township policies and sets an action plan for realizing the Master Plan's visions.

Figure 1. – Planning Process



Public Input

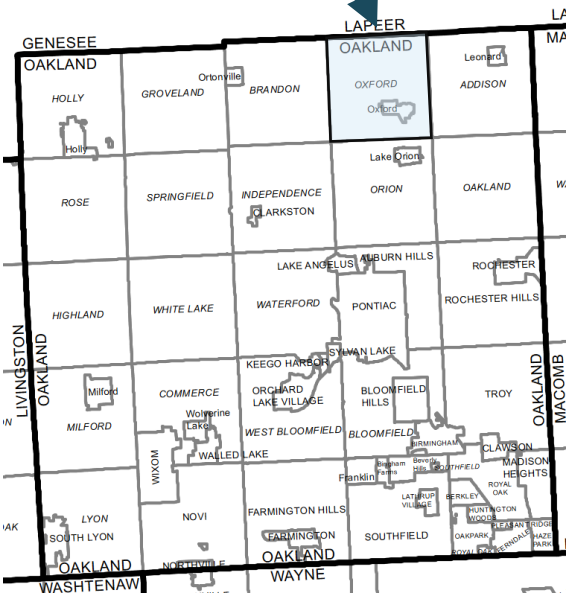
In keeping with the Township's longstanding planning philosophy and best practices for local land use planning, officials turned to Township residents and the business community to help shape the Master Plan's goals, objectives, and strategies. The Township utilized an online survey through SurveyMonkey to gather public comments regarding land use, transportation, public facilities, and other related issues. The survey was available to Township residents from March 10th to May 15th, 2017, and contained questions relating to residential and commercial development, rural and agricultural preservation, road improvements, natural resources, non-motorized transportation, and public facilities. Over 350 surveys were completed, providing a solid basis for formulating goals and objectives.

Regional Context

Oxford Township is located in northeastern Oakland County, as illustrated in **Map 1**. The Township is approximately 35 square miles in area, excluding the Village of Oxford. Oxford Township is bordered by Addison Township to the east, Orion Township to the south, Brandon Township to the west, and Metamora Township (Lapeer County) to the north. Downtown Detroit is located approximately 35 to the southeast of Oxford Township. Other nearby urban centers include Pontiac (12 miles) and Flint (25 miles).

Map 1. *– Oxford Township Location*

Southeast Michigan



Oakland County

BACKGROUND STUDIES

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BACKGROUND STUDIES

Previous Plans and Studies

Oxford Township adopted the previous Master Plan on December 14, 2011; this document represents an update of the 2011/2012 Plan, and includes input from a process ranging from 2017-2019. In addition, the Township previously adopted several sub-area plans and various other plans and studies. Each of these studies were evaluated and referenced, where appropriate, in this Master Plan update. The studies evaluated included the following:

1. Parks and Recreation Master Plan, February 2016
2. Open Space and Greenway Plan, August 13, 2003;
3. East Central Sub-Area Plan, March 15, 2001;
4. Sanitary Sewer Master Plan, July of 1999;
5. Engineering Study and Master Plan for Oxford Township Water System, August 1998;
6. Design Standards and Construction Specifications Manual, 1998;
7. M-24 Corridor Plan, incorporated into the 1995 Master Plan;
8. Central Sub-Area Plan, September 15, 1994

Growth and Development Trends

The Charter Township of Oxford is located within the northeastern portion of Oakland County. The Township is bounded on the north by Metamora Township in Lapeer County, on the east by Addison Township, on the south by Orion Township, and on the west by Brandon Township. The Village of Oxford is located within the central portion of the Township.

The Township is located within an expanding and prosperous market region, with access to several large commercial centers. The Township's proximity to M-24 (Lapeer Road), I-75, and the cities of Auburn Hills, Pontiac and other central Oakland County communities, ensure the viability of the Township.

Prior to the 1920s, the Village of Oxford was established as the commercial center for the predominantly rural/agricultural area. The Township's rise in popularity began in the 1920's, immediately following Lake Orion's boom as a resort community. The area's natural and man-made lakes proved to be an attractive asset to the growing population. However, the predominance of agricultural uses has remained, with the greatest concentration located in the northeast quadrant of the Township. This particular area is closely associated with the Metamora Hunt, an equestrian

establishment centered in Metamora Township. By 1970, the population of Oxford Township had grown to 5,953 persons; as of July 2015, the population had increased to 17,408 persons. A summary of the Township's population and housing characteristics is provided on the following pages.

Population and Housing

In order to compare both population and housing figures from 1990 through 2010, information was collected from the U.S. Census and Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). As a means of comparison, population and housing data was also collected for adjacent townships and select villages. Like many northern Oakland County communities, the Charter Township of Oxford's population and housing figures have increased substantially since 1990.

Trends

Population and housing growth in the Charter Township of Oxford and surrounding communities has been substantial over the past few decades. Neighboring townships have also experienced similar increases in population. These increasing numbers reflect the continuing trend of suburbanization among Oakland County's population.

Population – **Table 1** depicts population trends between 1990 and 2010 and a forecasted population for 2030. Per the U.S. Census Bureau, the Charter Township of Oxford grew 34% between 1990 and 2000 and 28% between 2000 and 2010. As shown below, the Village of Oxford experienced a 12% population increase between 1990 and 2000; however, between 2000 and 2010, the population reduced by 3%. Overall, the Township, including the Village of Oxford, grew by 89.8% over the past two decades. Comparatively, Oakland County as a whole experienced an 11% population increase during this same period.

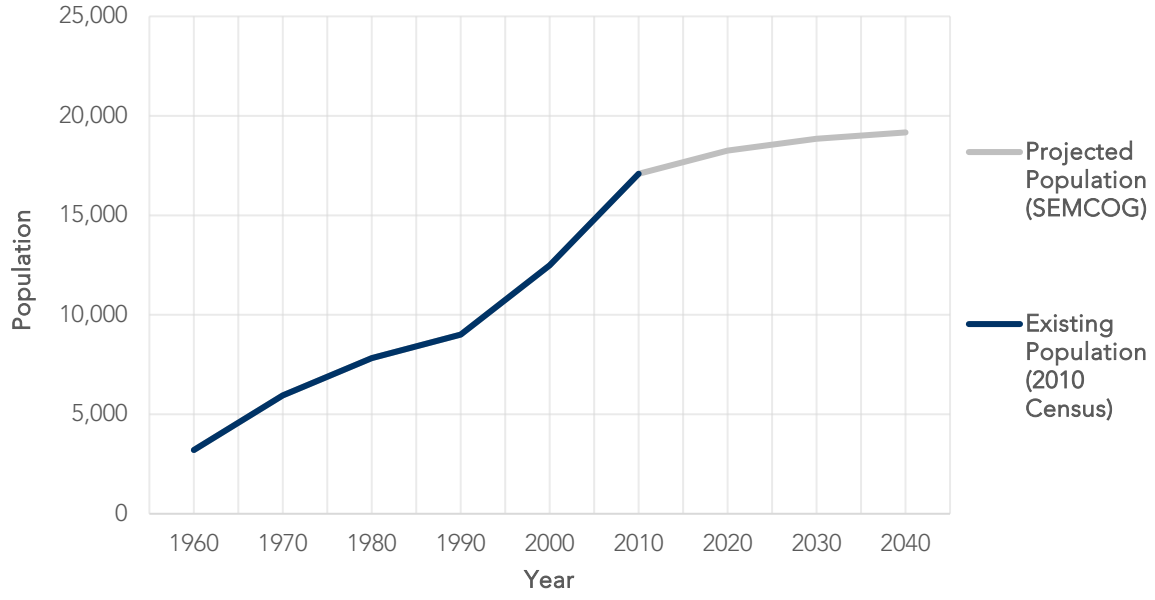
Only a very small portion of the Township's growth can be attributed to births, as most of the growth rate is a result of in-migration. Per SEMCOG, Oxford Township will likely experience moderate but constant population growth until 2040. As demonstrated in **Figure 2**, the projected population is estimated to be approximately 19,167 persons by the year 2040.

Table 1. – Population Trends, 1990-2010

Community	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010	2045 Forecast
Oxford Twp.	**9,004**	**12,485**	**39%**	**17,090**	**37%**	**19,449**
Village of Oxford	2,929	3,540	12%	3,436	-3%	2,890
Addison Twp.	4,785	6,125	28%	5,948	-3%	6,008
Village of Lenard	357	332	-7%	403	21%	348
Brandon Twp.	10,799	13,230	23%	13,733	4%	14,811
Village of Ortonville	1,252	1,535	23%	1,442	-6%	1,064
Independence Twp.	24,722	32,581	32%	34,681	6%	39,922
Oakland Twp.	8,227	13,071	59%	16,779	28%	25,924
Orion Twp.	21,047	30,749	46%	32,421	5%	37,032
Lake Orion	3,057	2,715	-11%	2,973	10%	3,295
Metamora Twp. (Lapeer Co.)	3,096	4,184	35%	4,249	2%	Unknown
Oakland Co.	1,083,592	1,194,156	11%	1,202,362	.07%	1,319,089

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and SEMCOG 2045 Forecast produced in 2018.

Figure 2. – Oxford Township Population Trends and Projections, 1960-2040



Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles and U.S. Census Bureau

Housing – Per the 2010 U.S. Census, the number of housing units in Oxford Township rose 38% from 2000, from 4,672 to 6,467 (see Table 2). This increase is significantly greater than the 7% increase for all of Oakland County and is the highest among all adjacent townships.

Table 2. – Housing Unit Trends, 1990-2010

Community	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	2010	% Change 2000-2010
Oxford Twp.	**3,184**	**4,672**	**46.7%**	**6,467**	**38.4%**
Village of Oxford	1,192	1,476	23.8%	1,468	-0.5%
Addison Twp.	1,711	2,161	26.3%	2,382	10.2%
Village of Lenard	122	129	5.7%	162	25.6%
Brandon Twp.	3,694	4,718	27.7%	5,150	9.2%
Village of Ortonville	478	572	19.7%	574	0.3%
Independence Twp.	8,746	12,357	41.3%	13,709	10.9%
Oakland Twp.	2,823	4,529	60.4%	6,075	34.1%
Orion Twp.	7,654	11,517	50.5%	12,515	8.7%
Village of Lake Orion	1,355	1,320	-2.6%	1,483	12.3%
Metamora Twp. (Lapeer Co.)	1,283	1,430	11.5%	1,806	26.3%
Oakland Co.	432,684	492,006	13.7%	527,255	7.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Per the U.S. Census, the average Oxford Township household contained 2.85 persons per occupied housing unit (not per total housing units) in 2000; this number fell slightly to 2.82 in 2010 (see Table 3). Most surrounding communities also experienced a decline in household size; however, like Oxford Township, all remained higher than Oakland County as a whole.

Housing Units vs. Occupied Housing Units

While the two terms sound familiar, the U.S. Census assigns different definitions to "Housing Units" and "Occupied Housing Units":

A **housing unit** is a house, apartment, group of rooms, or a single room occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. This definition includes vacant units.

An **occupied housing unit** is occupied if a person or group of persons is living in it at the time of the interview, or if the occupants are only temporarily absent, such as on vacation. The persons living in the unit must consider it their usual place of residence or have no usual place of residence elsewhere.

Source: www.census.gov

Table 3. – Household Size and Occupied Housing Units, 2000-2010

Community	2000		2010	
	Persons Per Occupied Housing Unit	Occupied Housing Units	Persons Per Occupied Housing Unit	Occupied Housing Units
Oxford Twp.	**2.85**	**4,385**	**2.82**	**6,063**
Village of Oxford	2.52	1,402	2.57	1,335
Addison Twp.	2.99	2,050	2.75	2,161
Village of Lenard	2.68	124	2.63	153
Brandon Twp.	2.96	4,475	2.86	4,799
Village of Ortonville	2.86	537	2.82	511
Independence Twp.	2.77	11,765	2.70	12,825
Oakland Twp.	3.01	4,341	2.90	5,777
Orion Twp.	2.78	11,046	2.78	11,673
Lake Orion	2.27	1,198	2.28	1,304
Metamora Twp. (Lapeer Co.)	2.73	1,533	2.64	1,609
Oakland Co.	2.53	471,115	2.49	483,698

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Characteristics

Population – Population characteristics play an important role in determining both the Township's development potential and future needs. **Figure 3** depicts the 2010 population of Oxford Township compared to the surrounding Townships and Oakland County. Age composition is an important characteristic, as noted in **Table 4**. Note that the listed population for the identified Townships includes villages located within their boundaries.

Household Size

Household size is a measurement of the number of people per household. Trends in household size can provide communities with insight into changing demands for household types (i.e. larger single-family dwellings vs. smaller attached townhomes).

An important national trend to consider is the rise of one-person households. In 1970, approximately 17% of all households were one-person households. By 2010, the percentage of one-person households had increased to nearly 28%. Between 2000 and 2010, the average household size for the State of Michigan decreased from 2.56 to 2.49 persons per household.

Source: www.census.gov

Figure 3. – Percent of Population by Age, 2010

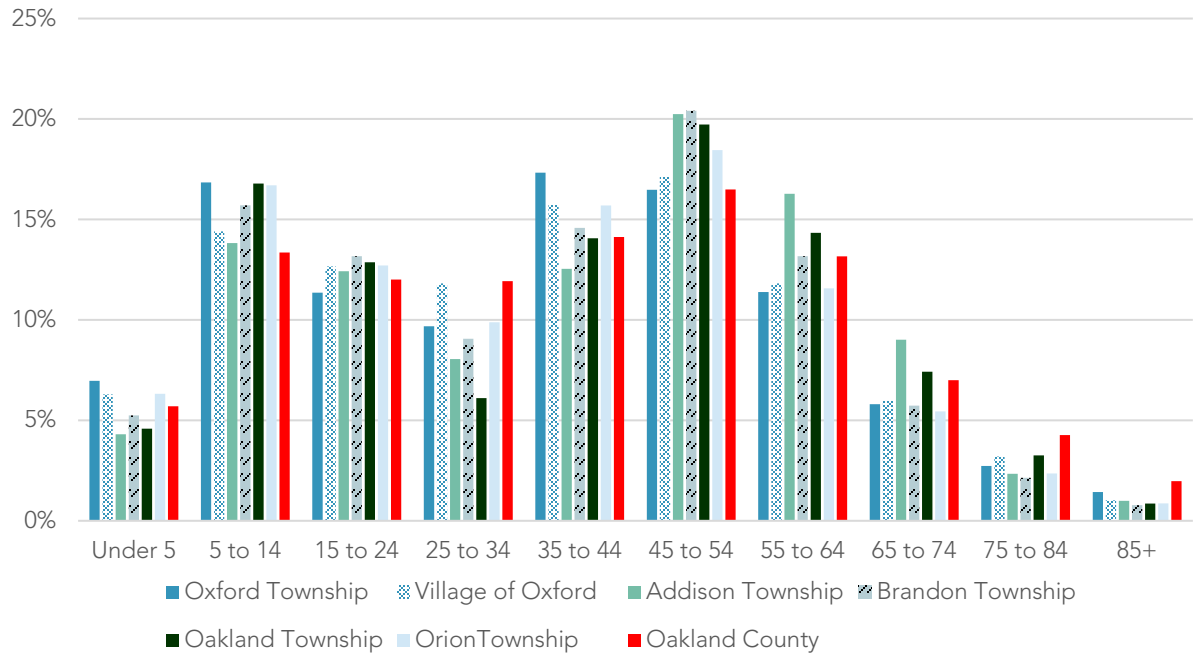


Table 4. – Age Group Comparison, 2010

	Oxford Township		Oakland County	
Age Group	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5	1,191	7.0%	68,506	5.7%
5 to 9	1,516	8.9%	77,140	6.4%
10 to 14	1,362	8.0%	83,450	6.9%
15 to 19	1,200	7.0%	81,049	6.7%
20 to 24	740	4.3%	63,344	5.3%
25 to 29	742	4.3%	71,670	6.0%
30 to 34	913	5.3%	71,717	6.0%
35 to 39	1,388	8.1%	80,354	6.7%
40 to 44	1,573	9.2%	89,478	7.4%
45 to 49	1,435	8.4%	98,381	8.2%
50 to 54	1,380	8.1%	99,877	8.3%
55 to 59	1,069	6.3%	86,571	7.2%
60 to 64	877	5.1%	71,701	6.0%
65 to 69	647	3.8%	50,320	4.2%
70 to 74	345	2.0%	33,783	2.8%
75 to 79	259	1.5%	27,347	2.3%
80 to 84	208	1.2%	23,917	2.0%
85+	245	1.4%	23,757	2.0%
TOTAL	**17,090**	**100%**	**1,202,362**	**100%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The Township's age composition is described below:

Preschool: A total of 7% of the Township's population is below the age of five (5) years; this is a greater percentage than Oakland County (at 5.7%) as a whole.

School-Age Children: In 2010, nearly 24% of Oxford Township's population was between five (5) and nineteen (19) years old, representing the third-largest cohort. This number is expected to increase within the near future in response to the aging of the children of "baby boom" parents.

Family-Forming: Persons between the ages of 20 and 34 constitute the group known as the family-formers. Family-formers represent 13.9% of the population (2,395 persons) in Oxford Township. This group is expected to fuel the increase in preschoolers in the upcoming years. This is also the group that can be expected to spend the largest amount of money in the community for household items, food, clothing, etc.

Mature Families: The largest proportion of the Township's population is between the ages of 35 and 54. This group will tend to have children within the Oxford Township educational system and will be concerned with the quality of education available. Currently, this group represents approximately 5,776, or 33.8%, of the population, but with the aging of the family forming group, the mature families group has become an overwhelming majority.

Mature Adults: Today, the population of Oakland County (and the nation as a whole) is typically characterized as aging, but Oxford Township has comparatively fewer people aged 55 or older. The group between 55 and 69 years of age is commonly referred to as the "empty nesters;" they are parents whose children have left the household. Approximately 15.2% of Oxford Township's population is within the 55 to 69-year-old age cohort. To ensure that this population is enticed to remain within the community, the placement of housing near recreation and shopping areas is encouraged.

Seniors: Only 6.1% (1,057 persons) of Township residents are over 69 years old. This is below the County proportion of 9.1%. However, this percentage can be expected to increase.

Housing – Housing characteristics indicate that growth in the Township's housing stock has exceeded general population growth (see Table 5). While population increased by 28% from 2000 to 2010, the number of housing units increased by 29%. Housing unit characteristics are described below.

Age of Housing: As of 2010, 53% of residential structures within the Township were less than 30 years old, whereas the remaining 47% were more than 30 years old.

Owner-Occupancy: The Charter Township of Oxford has a high percent of owner-occupied housing. Per Census data, 87.5% of the Township's housing stock was owner-occupied and 12.5% renter-occupied in 2010. This compares with Oakland County at 72.6% owner-occupancy and 27.4% renter-occupancy.

Table 5. – Characteristics of Occupied Housing Units

2010		Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied	
Community	Total Occupied Housing Units	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Oxford Twp.	**6,063**	**5,306**	**87.5%**	**757**	**12.5%**
Village of Oxford	1,335	854	63.9%	481	36%
Addison Twp.	2,161	2,006	92.8%	155	7.2%
Village of Lenard	153	135	88.2%	18	11.8%
Brandon Twp.	4,799	4,491	93.6%	308	6.4%
Village of Ortonville	511	365	71.4%	146	28.5%
Independence Twp.	12,825	10,525	82.1%	2,300	17.9%
Oakland Twp.	5,777	5,388	93.2%	389	6.7%
Orion Twp.	11,673	9,592	82.2%	2,081	17.8%
Lake Orion	1,304	765	58.7%	539	41.3%
Metamora Twp. (Lapeer Co.)	1,609	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Oakland Co.	483,698	350,988	72.6%	132,710	27.4%

Source: Census Bureau

Population Projections

Township leaders can reference population projects to estimate the community's future housing needs. These projections can extend up to thirty (30) years in the future; beyond that timeframe, however, projections may be of little value due to possible changes in the economy, trends in household size and the character of the community in general.

Migration and employment are the most important factors in determining population growth. While local government has little control over births and deaths, migration to or from the Township can be influenced by employment opportunities and community

desirability. Development policies have the greatest effect on the level and location of future growth.

The Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) has prepared detailed population projections for southeastern Michigan communities. The results of the most recent SEMCOG Regional Development Forecast (2012) provide a basis for projecting future populations and are illustrated in Table 6. Utilizing the projected growth rate provided by the SEMCOG population forecast, the Township's population is projected to reach approximately 18,865 by the year 2035 (a 51.10% increase from 2000). The total number of household units is projected to increase from 4,385 in 2000 to 7,362 by 2035 (an increase of 67.9%). As a result of these projections, persons per household equates to approximately 2.56, a rate consistent with the 2010 figure.

Table 6. – Population Projections, 2000 – 2045

COMMUNITY	Census		Projections		% Change in Population	
	2000	2010	2035	2045	2000-2010	2035-2045
Oxford Twp.	**12,485**	**17,090**	**18,865**	**19,449**	**36.88%**	**3.09%**
Village of Oxford	3,540	3,436	2,953	2,890	-2.94%	-2.18%
Addison Twp.	6,107	5,948	6,064	6,008	-2.60%	-0.93%
Village of Leonard	332	403	344	348	21.39%	1.16%
Brandon Twp.	13,230	13,733	14,786	14,811	3.80%	0.17%
Village of Ortonville	1,535	1,442	1,096	1,064	-6.06%	-2.92%
Independence Twp.	32,581	34,681	39,174	39,922	6.45%	1.91%
Oakland Twp.	13,071	16,779	24,858	25,924	28.37%	8.31%
Orion Twp.	30,748	32,421	36,570	37,032	5.44%	1.26%
Lake Orion	2,715	2,973	3,203	3,295	9.50%	2.87%
Metamora Twp. (Lapeer Co.)	4,184	4,812	Unknown	Unknown	15.01%	Unknown
Oakland Co.	1,194,156	1,202,362	1,301,621	1,319,089	0.69%	1.34%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; SEMCOG Regional Development Forecast, 2019

As noted, population growth is anticipated to continue within the Township at a much faster rate than that of adjacent communities and Oakland County. Oxford Township has the second-highest projected population growth rate within the area (after Oakland Township), while the Village of Oxford is projected to experience a moderate increase in population over the same thirty-five (35) year time frame.

Economic Characteristics

An analysis of the local economy includes an evaluation of the existing tax base and employment sectors. An understanding of the local economy is important to develop a long-range plan for commercial and industrial use of land compatible with other land uses. Township economic policies should also foster and encourage sound employment opportunities for the local population, improve the Township tax base, and coordinate the overall physical development of the Township. To arrive at a viable and desirable plan, the economic base analysis must combine the existing situation with sound planning concepts, projections of the business market, and the aspirations and goals of the community.

Tax Base

Per the 2017 Oakland County Equalization Report, the Township's tax base is predominately residential, with 86.1% of the 2017 real property valuations stemming from residential properties. This is a 9.1% increase from 2010, where 77% of real property valuations came from residential properties. The increase in the strength of residential property valuations is significant considering the low percentages reported during the housing market collapse between 2008 and 2010.

Since 2010, real property valuations stemming from commercial and industrial properties have decreased significantly. The 2017 State Equalized Value (SEV) numbers reported a 3.38% decrease in commercial property taxes and a 5.8% decrease in industrial property taxes. However, the Township has experienced a 30% increase in total property taxes since 2010. SEV trends are denoted in Table 7.

Table 7. - Comparative Real SEV for Oxford Township, 2005-2017

Classification	Total Real SEV			% of Total		
	2005	2010	2017	2005	2010	2017
Agriculture	$4,075,680	$4,366,350	$4,833,160	0.42%	0.60%	0.51%
Commercial	$106,284,060	$95,306,580	$91,200,190	11.02%	12.99%	9.61%
Industrial	$75,353,420	$70,255,410	$35,844,130	7.81%	9.58%	3.78%
Residential	$779,126,280	$563,491,560	$816,811,610	80.75%	76.83%	86.1%
TOTAL	**$964,839,440**	**$733,419,900**	**$948,689,090**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Oakland County Equalization Reports, 2010-2015

Table 8, below, reveals additional SEV related data. The table depicts a comparison of SEV data to neighboring communities.

Table 8. – Real SEV Comparison, 2017

Community	Total Real SEV	% OF COUNTY
Oxford Twp.	**$948,689,090**	**1.44%**
Addison Twp.	$402,944,360	0.61%
Brandon Twp.	$598,808,570	0.91%
Independence Twp.	$1,846,424,090	2.81%
Oakland Twp.	$1,564,237,150	2.24%
Orion Twp.	$1,891,910,490	2.89%
Oakland Co.	$65,554,572,199	

Source: Oakland County Equalization Report, 2017

Employment

The labor force in the Charter Township of Oxford is a mix of "blue collar" and "white collar" workers, with a majority in management, sales and office occupations and production, transportation, and material moving occupations. Although the Township is predominantly a bedroom community whose residents work elsewhere, it is not without a significant local employment base. Some of the Township's largest employers include: Oxford Community Schools, Meijer Inc., Crossroads for Youth, Levy Group, Oxford Forge, Inc., and MSP Industries.[1]

[1] Oxford Community Schools. (2016). *2015-2016 Financial Statement.* Retrieved from Oxford Community Schools Website and Munetrix: www.munetrix.com.

Natural Resources

The natural features discussed below are illustrated on the Natural Resources Map (Map 2).

Geology, Groundwater, Topography and Soils

The Oxford area is characterized by glacial geology typical of much of southeastern Michigan, with glacial outwash sand and gravel occurring along glacial end moraines. Given the permeability of these geological circumstances, much of the Township provides valuable groundwater recharge functions.

The glacial geology of the area has resulted in topography that ranges from nearly level to gently rolling. The rolling topography of the Township allows for beautiful backdrops and scenic vistas. Areas with significant topographical relief are often prone to destabilization and soil erosion when developed. Fertile soils, primarily used for agricultural purposes, are located within the northern portions of the Township.

Lakes and Streams

The Township contains a significant number of small lakes, including natural lakes and those created through extractive operations. The majority of these lakes are located to the west and east of the Village of Oxford. The lakes to the west of the Village are connected in large part via surface water links. A large percentage of the waterfront area surrounding the Township's lakes has been platted and developed with relatively dense single-family developments (2 units per acre or greater).

In addition to inland lakes, the Township contains several streams and drains. While some of the streams and drains are managed under the authority of the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner, some represent natural waterways of high importance. The lowland area in the north-central portion of the Township forms a valuable headwaters area for the Flint River, which flows to the north. Portions of the Paint Creek, another regionally-significant waterway, can be found in the southwest corner and south-central area of the Township.

Wetlands

Wetlands are lowland areas characterized by constant or intermittent inundation, hydric soils, and specific vegetation types. They are often found in association with other water features, such as lakes, ponds, or streams, but can also exist on their own in depressions. Wetlands serve a wide variety of purposes, such as wildlife habitat, flood control, water filtration, groundwater recharge, and scenic and recreation uses. These natural features are scattered throughout the Township. The largest wetland area is

located around Oakwood Road in the northeast quadrant of the Township, with the rest scattered primarily west of M-24 (Lapeer Road).

Woodlands and Tree Rows

Woodlands and tree rows provide wildlife habitat areas, recreational value, and substantial contributions to the scenery of the Township. Significant woodlands exist in the southernmost portions of the Township, as well as the east-central and north-central areas and are included in the Potential Conservation/Natural Area designation on Map 2, Natural Features. Much of this wooded area exists in combination with wetlands and remains intact today because they are of little agricultural or extractive use. Extensive networks of tree rows remain in both the northwestern and northeastern areas of the Township.

Michigan Natural Features Inventory

The Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) maintains a continuously updated information base, the only comprehensive, single source of data on Michigan's endangered, threatened, or special concern plant and animal species, natural communities and other natural features. MNFI has responsibility for inventorying and tracking the State's rarest species and exceptional examples of the whole array of natural communities. MNFI also provides information to resource managers for many types of permit applications regarding these elements of diversity.

In 2004, the Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services Department worked with MNFI to identify potential conservation/natural areas within the County. The conclusions of the study were the identification of high, medium and low-ranking areas within each municipality. These rankings are based upon a set of criteria that include size, core area, stream corridor, landscape connectivity, restorability and element occurrence.

Based upon the study, the Charter Township of Oxford has three (3) areas identified as priority one conservation areas (highest ranking), with numerous smaller areas ranked as priority two and priority three. The larger of the priority one ranked areas is located at the northern end of the Township, and encompasses Oakwood Park and the Horseshoe Lake State Game Area. Another priority one area is located within the southwest corner of the Township, portions of which have been designated as recreation and conservation land to ensure they are preserved. These and other natural resources and their linkages should be considered for preservation through land use controls and conservation development alternatives.

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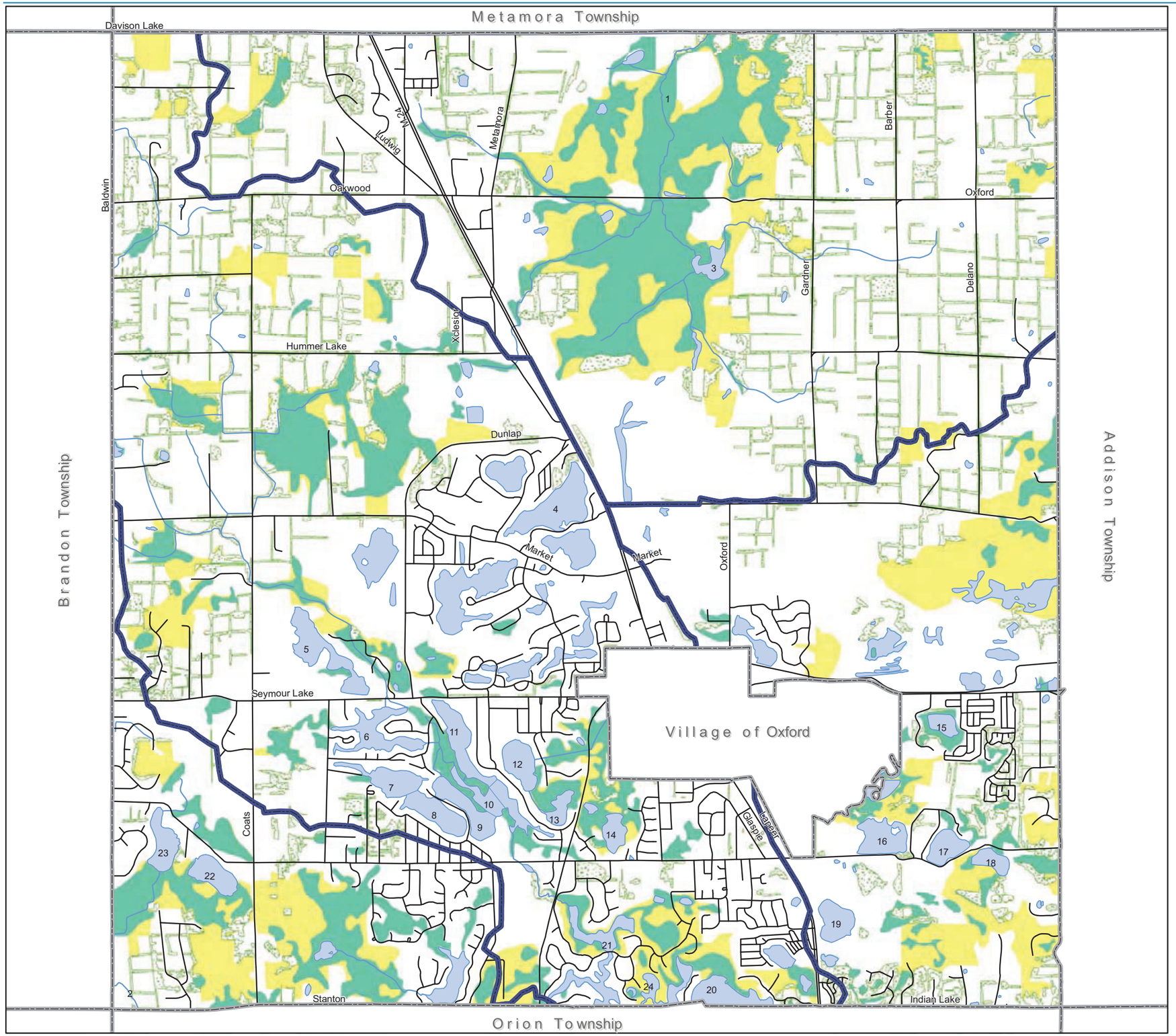

Watershed
Ponds and Lakes
Streams and Rivers
Tree Rows
Wetlands
Potential Conservation / Natural Areas

1 - South Branch Flint River
2 - Paint Creek Drain
3 - Horseshoe Lake
4 - Stony Lake
5 - Whisper Lake
6 - Lake Mickleson
7 - Squaw Lake
8 - Clear Lake
9 - Long Lake
10 - Cedar Lake
11 - Tan Lake
12 - Davis Lake
13 - Park Lake
14 - Powell Lake
15 - Parker Lake
16 - Tullamore Lake
17 - Handsome Lake
18 - Grampian Lake
19 - Bailey Lake
20 - Manitou Lake
21 - Indianwood Lake
22 - Pine Lake
23 - Fish Lake
24 - Little Cedar Lake

MAP 2
NATURAL FEATURES

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
March 28th, 2018

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Invasive Species (Phragmites)

Phragmites astralis is an invasive wetland grass that can grow up to fifteen (15) feet tall and spread between thirty (30) and fifty (50) feet per year. The invasive species has spread rapidly throughout Michigan's coastal and interior wetlands, threatening ecological health and reducing property values. Due to their aggressive growth rate and height, phragmites can crowd out native wetland plants, reduce access to recreational areas, and block lakefront views. In addition, dry phragmites material is highly flammable and can create fire hazards.

While difficult to remove, invasive phragmites can be controlled through combined management techniques including the use of herbicides, mowing and prescribed fires. However, an MDEQ permit is required to treat phragmites using herbicides for most inland lakes and wetlands. Clear steps must be taken to properly rid an area of phragmites;

Several Michigan communities have recently enacted phragmites ordinances that address the control and removal of the invasive plant. Many of these example ordinances focus on removing the invasive plant along the shores of the Great Lakes. However, there are examples of ordinances that address the removal of phragmites from inland lakes and wetlands. Oxford Township may wish to explore developing a phragmites ordinance that addresses the control and removal of phragmites from inland lakes, wetlands and drainage areas.

Phragmites, an invasive species, can crowd out native wetland plants, reduce access to recreational areas, and block lakefront views.

Transportation and Traffic

The relationship between land use and transportation is a critical element of land use planning. Roads provide the access necessary to land uses and are an important determinant of community character. Residential streets need to provide safety and interest, and slow down through-traffic movements. Major thoroughfares, however, must be able to transport vehicles through an area with as little interference as possible.

From a planning perspective, this Master Plan must take into consideration the impacts that the transportation network has on land uses and development patterns, and vice versa. Therefore, future planning must include:

- Improving the connectivity of the road network;
- Improving safety for all modes of travel, including non-motorized transportation;
- Providing mobility and access through transportation choices; and
- Incorporating environmental considerations into decision making.

While road jurisdiction within the Township falls under the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC), the transportation element of this Master Plan is still useful in a variety of ways. This section promotes a better understanding of the strong relationship between transportation and land development patterns.

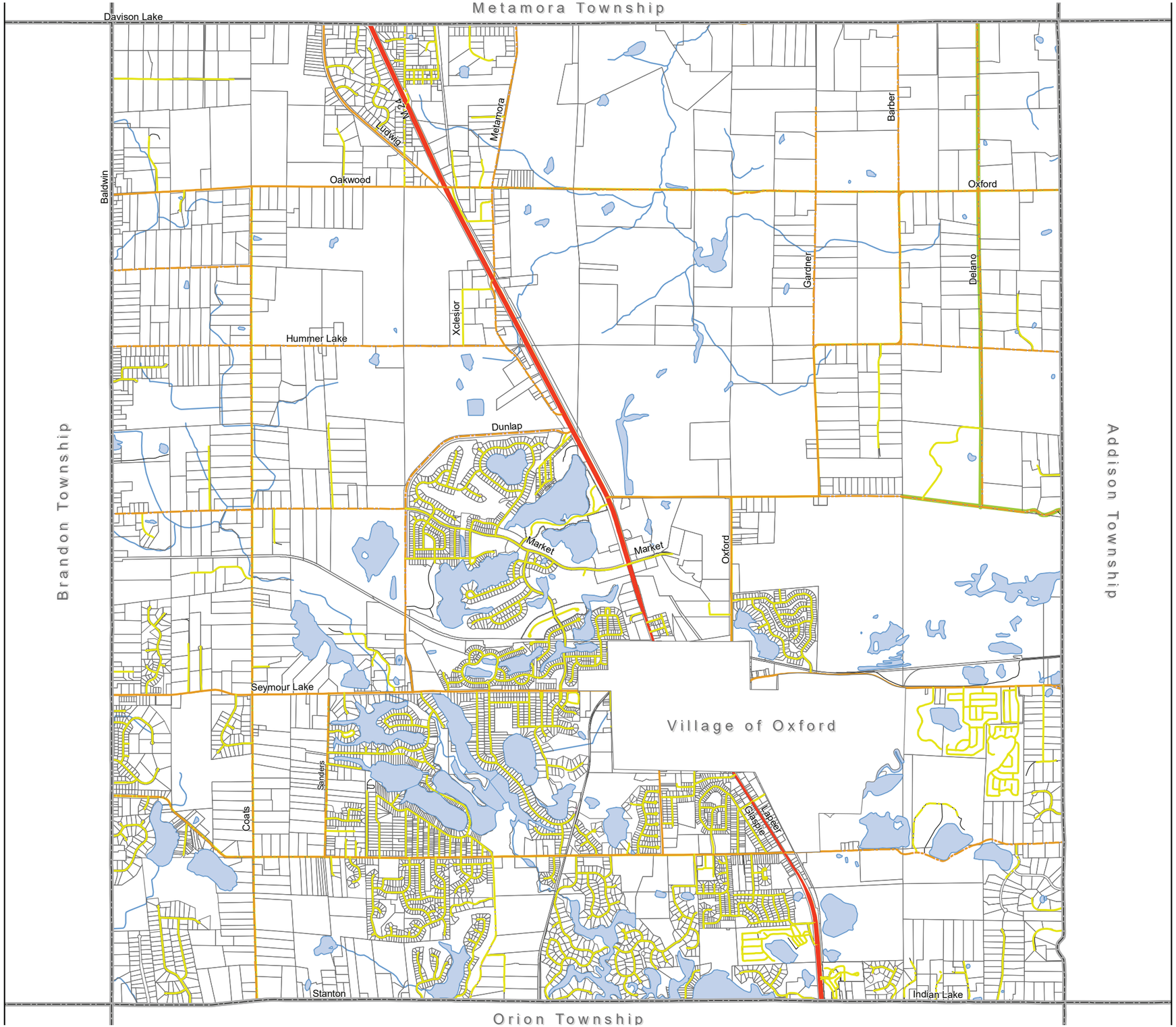
Roadway Classification and Responsibility

Roadway classifications are used to group streets and highways into classes, or systems, according to the character of traffic service they are intended to provide. Administrative jurisdictions identify roads in terms of governmental responsibility for construction and maintenance. Roadway classifications are also used to determine eligibility for state funding and federal aid. The RCOC utilizes a distinct classification system, while MDOT utilizes the federally-used National Functional Classification (NFC) system.

County Classifications

Act 51 of the Public Acts of 1951, as amended, tasks county road commissions with classifying county primary and local roads. The classifications developed by the county road commissions are subject to Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) approval. Roads designated as primary roads must be of the greatest importance, while local roads provide for intra-community travel. The determination of a primary or local road is based on traffic volumes, primary generators of traffic served, and other factors. Map 3 illustrates the county classification system.

Several roads within the Township are classified as “natural beauty” roads. These roads are designated as part of the Natural Beauty Roads Act, Act 150 of 1970. The goal of the Natural Beauty Roads Act is to identify and preserve designated roads in a natural, essentially undisturbed condition. Widening, mowing, spraying, and other maintenance or improvement activities may be restricted on these roads.



State, Paved
Major, Paved
Major, Gravel
Minor, Paved
Minor, Gravel
Natural Beauty Road

MAP 3
COUNTY ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 14. 2019

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National Functional Classification

Map 4 on the following page depicts the hierarchy of transportation routes within the Township based upon the National Functional Classification (NFC) system. NFC is a transportation planning tool which has been used by federal, state and local transportation agencies since the late 1960's. The NFC designation determines whether a road is eligible for federal funds, either as part of the National Highway System, or through the Surface Transportation Program. NFC classifications include:

Principal Arterials: Principal arterials are at the top of the NFC hierarchy. The primary function of these roadways is to carry relatively long distance, through-travel movements. Examples include interstates and other freeways, as well as state routes between larger cities.

Minor Arterials: Minor arterials tend to accommodate slightly shorter trips than principal arterials. There is some emphasis on land access and they may carry local bus routes and provide for intra-community travel, but generally do not penetrate neighborhoods.

Major Collectors: Major collectors provide access to and mobility within residential, commercial and industrial areas and connect local roads to arterials. Major collectors generally carry more traffic than minor collectors.

Minor Collectors: Minor collectors also provide access to and between varying land uses, but generally have less traffic than major collectors.

Local Roads: Local roads provide access to individual properties within the Township and typically have moderate to low speeds. Most roads within the Township are classified as local roads.

Natural Beauty Roads

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the County Road Association of Michigan have developed a list of guidelines and criteria for designating natural beauty roads. These criteria include:

Character of Road: Must have outstanding natural features along its borders, including native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, grasses or natural vistas.

Length: Normally a minimum of one-half mile.

Roadside Development: Should have little to no development.

Function of Road: Should function as a local access road.

Speed: Intended to be low speed roads (25 – 35 mph).

Source: www.michigan.gov/dnr

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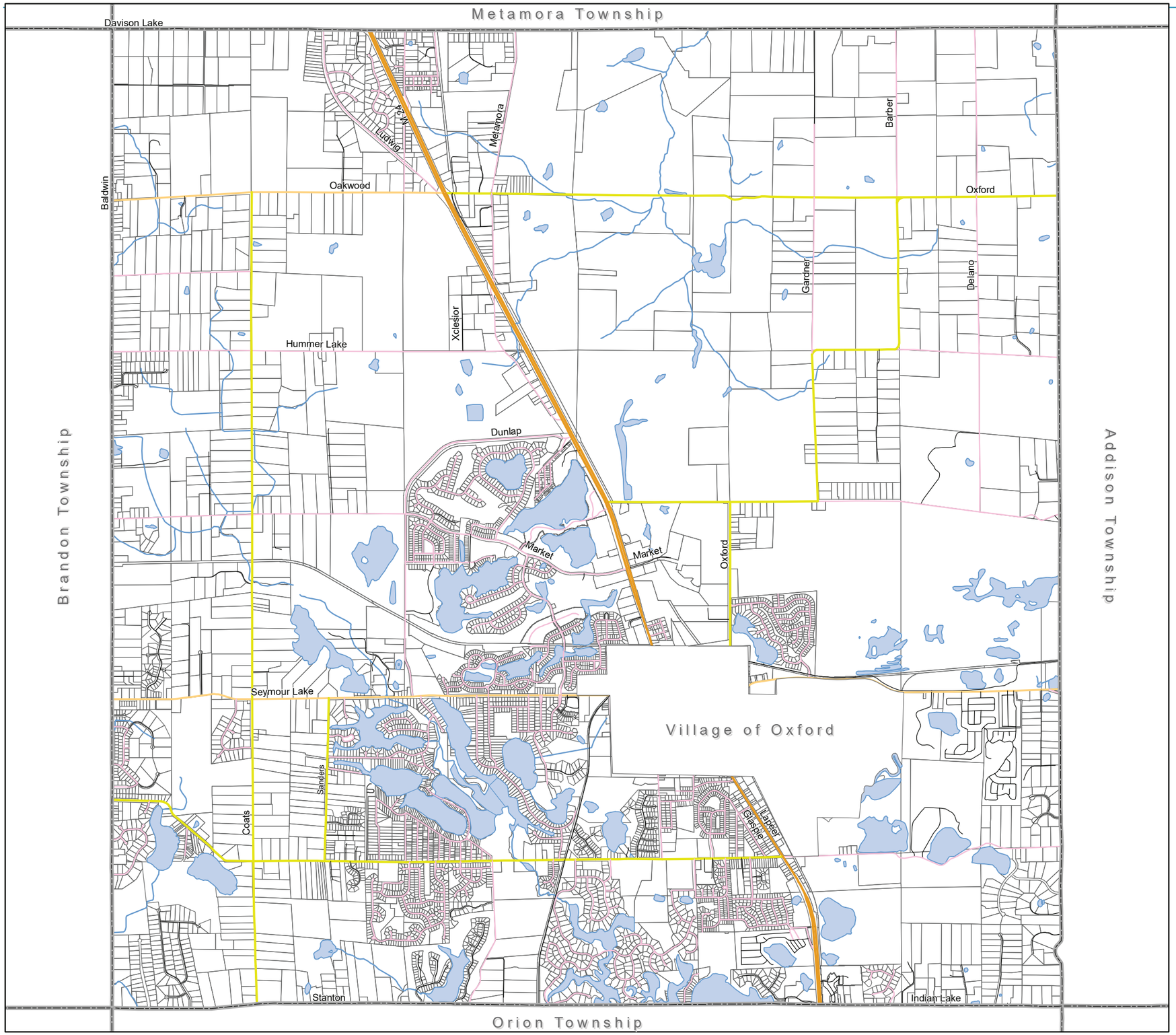

1 - Interstate
2 - Freeway
3 - Major Arterial
4 - Minor Arterial
5 - Major Collector
6 - Minor Collector
7 - Local
0 - Other/Private

MAP 4
NATIONAL FUNCTIONAL ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 14, 2019

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Traffic and Crash Counts

Traffic Counts

SEMCOG periodically conducts traffic studies to monitor and evaluate traffic volumes throughout Southeast Michigan. Counts taken within Oxford Township are provided in Table 9. Traffic counts are measured in Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), which is the total volume of vehicle traffic of a road for a year divided by 365 days. Table 9 lists the Township's most heavily-traveled roads, with counts taken since 2000.

Table 9. – Traffic Counts

Road	Direction	Location	AADT
Lapeer	SB	S. of Drahner	20,481
Lapeer	SB	N. of Drahner	19,196
Lapeer	SB	N. of Minnetonka	18,670
Lapeer	NB	N. of Drahner	18,532
Lapeer	NB	N. of Minnetonka	17,747
Washington	SB	N. of First	16,620
Washington	NB	N. of First	16,037
Lapeer	SB	N. of Ray	15,951
Lapeer	2-WAY	Thomas Rd. to Davison Lake	15,513
Lapeer	NB	N. of Ray	14,694
Lapeer	SB	S. of Oakwood	13,700
Lapeer	NB	S. of Oakwood	12,846
Baldwin	2-WAY	Seymor Lake (W. Leg) to Seymor Lake (E. Leg)	11,192
Lapeer	SB	N. of Oakwood	9,841
Drahner	2-WAY	Pontiac to Lapeer	9,774
Lakeville	2-WAY	Oxford Limits to Barr	9,199
Baldwin	2-WAY	Drahner to Seymour Lake	8,826
Baldwin	2-WAY	Stanton to Drahner	8,495
Seymour Lake	2-WAY	Granger to Pontiac	8,312
Drahner	2-WAY	Newman to Pontiac	8,305
Seymour Lake	2-WAY	Coats to Dunlap	7,708
Seymour Lake	2-WAY	Baldwin to Coats	7,307
Baldwin	2-WAY	Seymour Lake to Granger	7,279
Baldwin	2-WAY	Granger to Hummer Lake	6,580

Road	Direction	Location	AADT
Drahner	EB	W. of Lapeer	5,923
Baldwin	2-WAY	Hummer Lake to Oakwood	5,877
Lakeville	2-WAY	Barr to Hosner	5,877
Oakwood	2-WAY	Coats to Lapeer	5,422
Oakwood	2-WAY	Baldwin to Coats	5,324
Drahner	WB	W. of Lapeer	5,116
Drahner	2-WAY	Sanders to Newman	4,768
Ray	2-WAY	Lapeer to Oxford	4,767
Oxford	2-WAY	Ray to Lakeville	4,563

Source: SEMCOG

As denoted in the table, most traffic in the Township moves in a north-south direction along the M-24 (Lapeer Road) or Baldwin Road corridors. In comparison to the volume of north-south traffic, there is much less cross-Township traffic in an east-west direction. The principal east-west corridors include Drahner Road, Seymour Lake Road/Lakeville Road and Oakwood Road.

High-Crash Intersections

Table 10 indicates the intersections with the greatest number of recorded crashes within the Township. The top crash locations all involve Lapeer Road.

Table 10. - High-Crash Intersections, 2012-2016

Local Rank	County Rank	Intersection	Annual Crash Average
1	52	Lapeer @ Drahner	30.4
2	191	Lapeer @ Oakwood	17.8
3	371	Lapeer @ Ray	12
4a	908	Lapeer @ Indian Lake	6.2
4b	908	Lapeer @ Oakdell	6.2

Source: SEMCOG

Community Facilities and Services

The responsibility of providing public services to residents of the Charter Township of Oxford is shared by several public entities, including the Township government itself, various Oakland County departments, various State offices, the Oxford and Lake Orion School Districts, and others. The adequacy of public facilities has a direct influence on the Township's ability to attract new residents, businesses, and industries. Often, a community's quality of life is directly related to its schools, parks, libraries, public buildings, public utilities and police and fire facilities. This section will concentrate on public facilities in which the Township has control (see Map 6), with the recognition private facilities and facilities controlled by other public bodies play a role in improving quality of life.

Township Buildings

The Township administrative offices and meeting facilities are located at 300 Dunlap Road, west of the Village of Oxford. The Parks and Recreation Department is located at Seymour Lake Park, 2795 Seymour Lake Road.

Police

The police department, located in the Oxford Sub-Station at 310 Dunlap Rd., houses the contracted employees from the Oakland County Sheriff's office. In 1989 the Police Department, along with the Fire Department, were governed by the Oxford Emergency Safety Authority and served both the Township and the Village of Oxford. Since 2001, the Township has contracted with Oakland County that now provides contracted service exclusively for Township residents.

Fire

The Oxford Fire Department occupies two (2) fire stations which serve both the Township and Village residents. The headquarters is located at 96 North Washington Street (M-24) and the branch fire station is located at 1565 West Drahner Road. In total, the Fire Department has two (2) pumper-tankers, three (3) front line engines, one (1) 95-foot ladder tower, one (1) heavy duty rescue truck, four (4) rescue ambulances, two (2) grass fire vehicles, and two (2) command/medical vehicles. Through the operational tax levy, the Township also employs thirty-eight (38) firefighters who are a combination of career and paid-on-call volunteers. Full-time employees include the Chief and fifteen (15) firefighters.

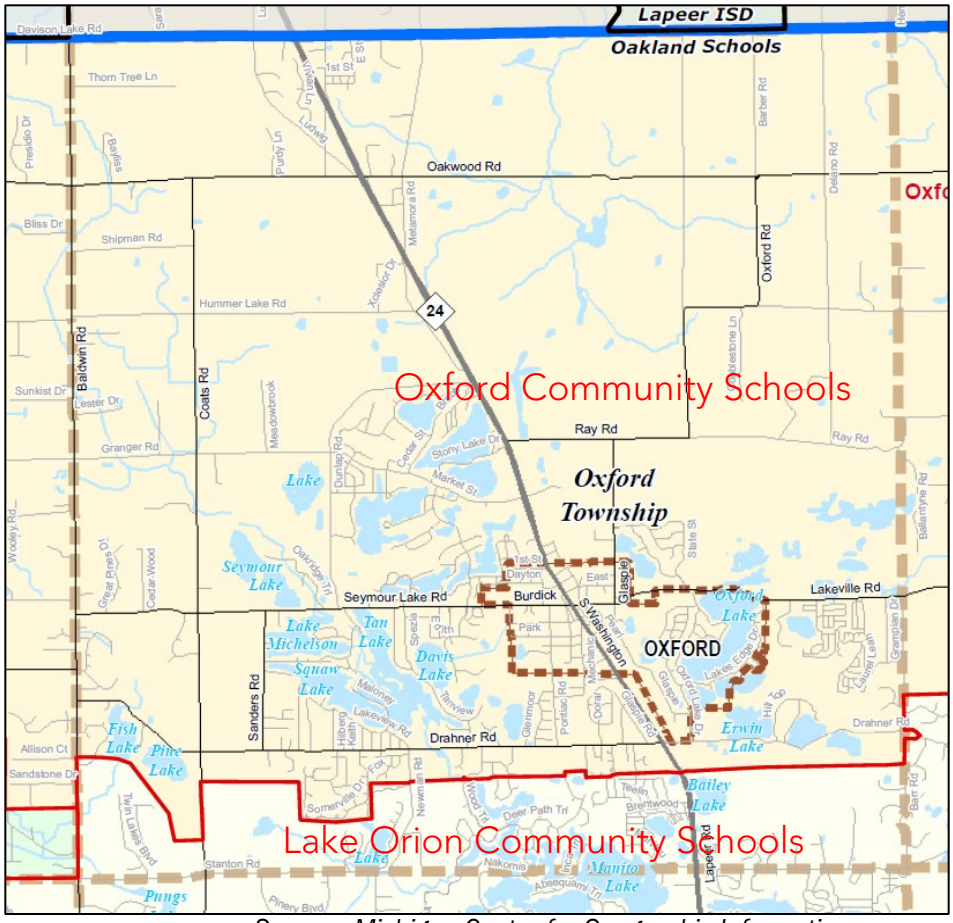
Schools

The Charter Township of Oxford is served by two (2) school districts: Oxford Community Schools and Lake Orion Community Schools. A total of seven (7) schools are located within the Township: five (5) elementary schools, one (1) middle school, and one (1)

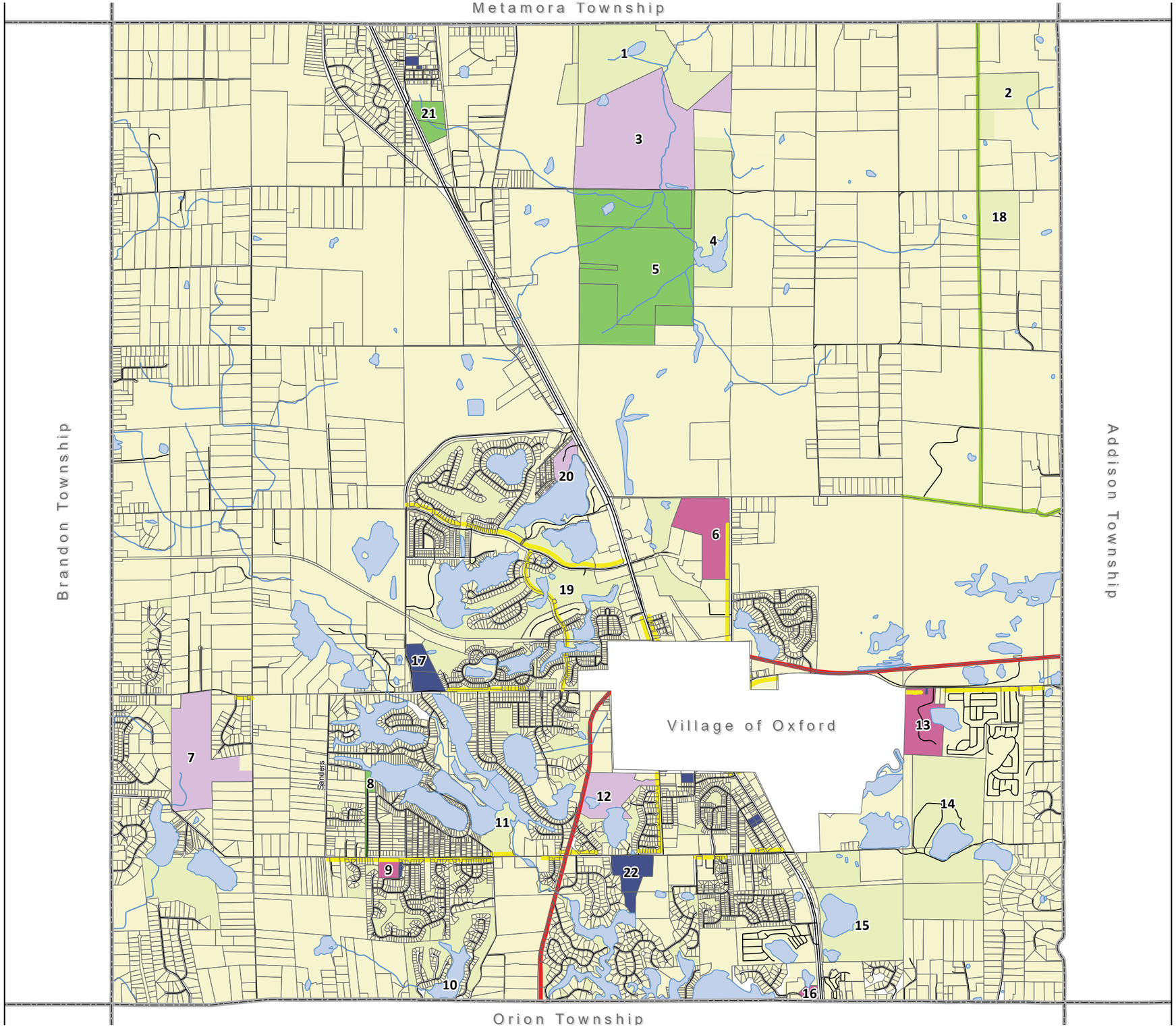
high school. All of these schools are operated by the Oxford School District (see Table 11 and Maps 5 and 6).

In addition to the traditional public schools, the Oxford School District offers alternative styles of learning, which are listed on the following page.

Map 5. – School District Map



Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information.



Natural Beauty Road
Polly Ann Trail
Township Safety Path
Institutional Establishment
State Owned
Private Owner
Municipality
Educational Institution

1 - Devils Ridge Golf Course
2 - Win-Again Farms
3 - Oakwood Lake Park
4 - Detroit Sportsmans Congress
5 - Horseshoe Lake State Game Area
6 - Oxford High School
7 - Seymour Lake Park
8 - Squaw Lake Access
9 - Clear Lake School
10 - Paint Creek Golf Course
11 - Christ the King Church Camp
12 - Powell Lake Park
13 - Lakeville Elementary/Oxford Middle School
14 - Crossroads for Youth
15 - Oxford Hills Golf Course
16 - Oak Hollow Christian School
17 - Township Offices
18 - Old Gold Farm
19 - Boulder Pointe Golf Course
20- Stony Lake Park
21- MDNR Wetlands
22 - St. Mary's Retreat House

MAP 6
COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 14. 2019

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Table 11. - Oxford Township/Village School Locations and 2016-2017 Enrollment

Map Number	School	Location	Enrollment
1	Clear Lake Elementary	2085 W. Drahner Rd.	477
2	Daniel Axford Elementary (K-2)	74 Mechanic St.	390
3	Lakeville Elementary	1400 Lakeville Rd.	368
4	Oxford Elementary (3-5)	109 Pontiac St.	442
5	Oxford Middle School	1420 Lakeville Rd.	1,133
6	Oxford High School	745 North Oxford Rd.	1,645
7	Oxford Bridges High School	1420 Lakeville Rd.	52
8	Oxford Virtual Academy (K-12)	176 S.Washington St.	260
9	Oxford Early College (5-Year Plan)	10 N. Washington St.	183

Source: MISchoolData.org

Senior Citizens Program

The Senior Citizens Program offers activities at the Parks and Recreation office located at Seymour Lake Park. Activities include bingo, social lunches, cards, and planned trips. Funding for these activities often comes from federal, state and local sources.

Library

The Library, administered by a six (6) member Board elected by Township residents, is located in the Library complex on Pontiac Street. The Library serves over 9,500 patrons and maintains over 65,000 items in their collection. Through The Library Network (TLN), interlibrary loans are available, providing an even wider selection of books, films, videos, and computer programs. Meetings rooms are also available for public use at the library.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

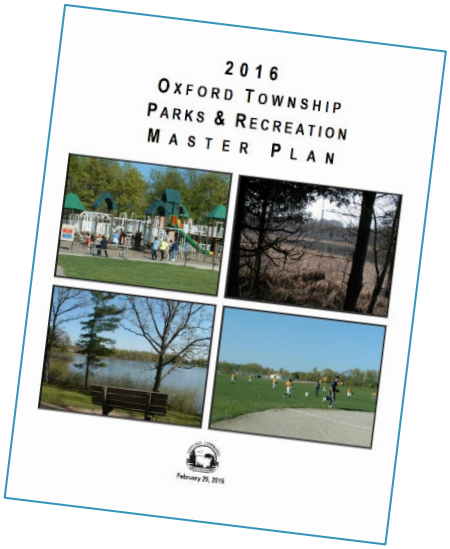
Recreation is an integral part of the Master Plan for a community. Existing parks and recreational facilities for the Charter Township of Oxford are inventoried in **Table 12; Map 6**, Community Facilities, depicts their locations within the Township.

Table 12. - Recreation Facilities Inventory

Facility	Acres	Amenities
Oakwood Lake Park	300	Trails, rustic facilities
Stony Lake Park	13	Swimming beach, beach house, boat launch, pavilions and play equipment
Seymour Lake Park	125	Sports fields and maintenance facilities, splash park, pavilion, fitness trail, sledding hill, disc golf
Powell Lake Park	56	Trails and boardwalks with connection to Polly Ann Trail
Scripter Park*	40	Beach, open picnic area, playground, baseball field
Oxford Centennial Park*	0.4	Open picnic area
Horseshoe Lake State Game Area**		Undeveloped
MDNR Squaw Lake Access**		Public access from Drahner Road to Squaw Lake

Source: Oxford Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2016
* Village of Oxford facilities
** State facilities

The Oxford Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan, adopted in 2016, guides future parks and recreation planning and management efforts within Oxford Township. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is the official document used by the Township Parks and Recreation Commission and the Township Board to guide decisions regarding the community's recreation facilities and programs. The Plan considers existing facilities within the Village and Township and documents the demand for additional improved park facilities and recreation program. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan culminates with the formulation of goals and objectives as well as a specific action and implementation plan.



Other Recreational Facilities

In addition to the municipal facilities noted above, there are numerous private recreational facilities within the Township. These private facilities include golf courses, sportsmen's clubs, religious camps and equestrian facilities. There are also recreational amenities located within the public-school campuses and within the residential developments of the community. These facilities comprise a large portion of the Township and complement the public facilities provided by the Township. The uses and opportunities available within these facilities will be evaluated as part of the land use plan for the Township.

Regional Trails

Oxford Township is home to approximately four (4) miles of the Polly-Ann Trail. The non-motorized Polly-Ann Trail stretches from Orion Township to Kings Mill in Lapeer County, and is intended to be utilized by pedestrians, equestrians, cyclists, and cross-country skiers alike. The trail is operated and maintained by the Polly Ann Trail Management Council with representation from Oxford Township. A portion of the Polly-Ann trail serves as part of the state-wide Iron Belle Trail system, which stretches from Belle Isle in Detroit to Ironwood in the western Upper Peninsula.

Water System

Prior to the mid 1990's, Oxford Township operated four (4) individual public water systems. Due to a contamination issue, one wellsite was abandoned and replaced with an elevated storage tank. Additionally, as a result of development pressures, the remaining three (3) well sites were inter-connected. The Township then began negotiating with the City of Detroit Water and Sewerage Department to potentially become the Township's water supplier. For a number of reasons, the Township made the decision to remain with the existing ground water system it had in place.

A Water System Master Plan was completed in 1998. The plan identified areas of the system that were deficient, established necessary water system improvements to enhance the overall system, and created a water service district which identified areas in the Township that would receive public water service (see Map 7). Many of those water system improvements were made, and the water district is currently in good condition. The maintenance operation of the system includes frequent flushing of watermains. The Oxford Township water supply system is overseen by the office of the MDEQ and WRC. One compliance requirement from the MDEQ is to provide a periodic submittal of the overall system status. Oxford Township most recently completed this report in 2014.

Sewer System

In 1997, a sanitary sewer district service area was established (see Map 7). The sewer service area includes the majority of the area contained within the water service district. In 1999, Oxford Township commissioned an initial study of the existing sanitary sewer system and evaluated the boundary of the sewer district. Since that time, additional updates to the study have been performed, with the most recent update in 2014. The Township has a specified amount of flow, or purchase capacity, that it can contribute to the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner's (WRC) Paint Creek Interceptor. The Township has spent the past few years completing a review of the sanitary sewer data available from the WRC. This data was compared with Township and County records on the number of connections to the system and the estimated number of residential equivalency units (REUs) currently discharging into the Township's sewer system

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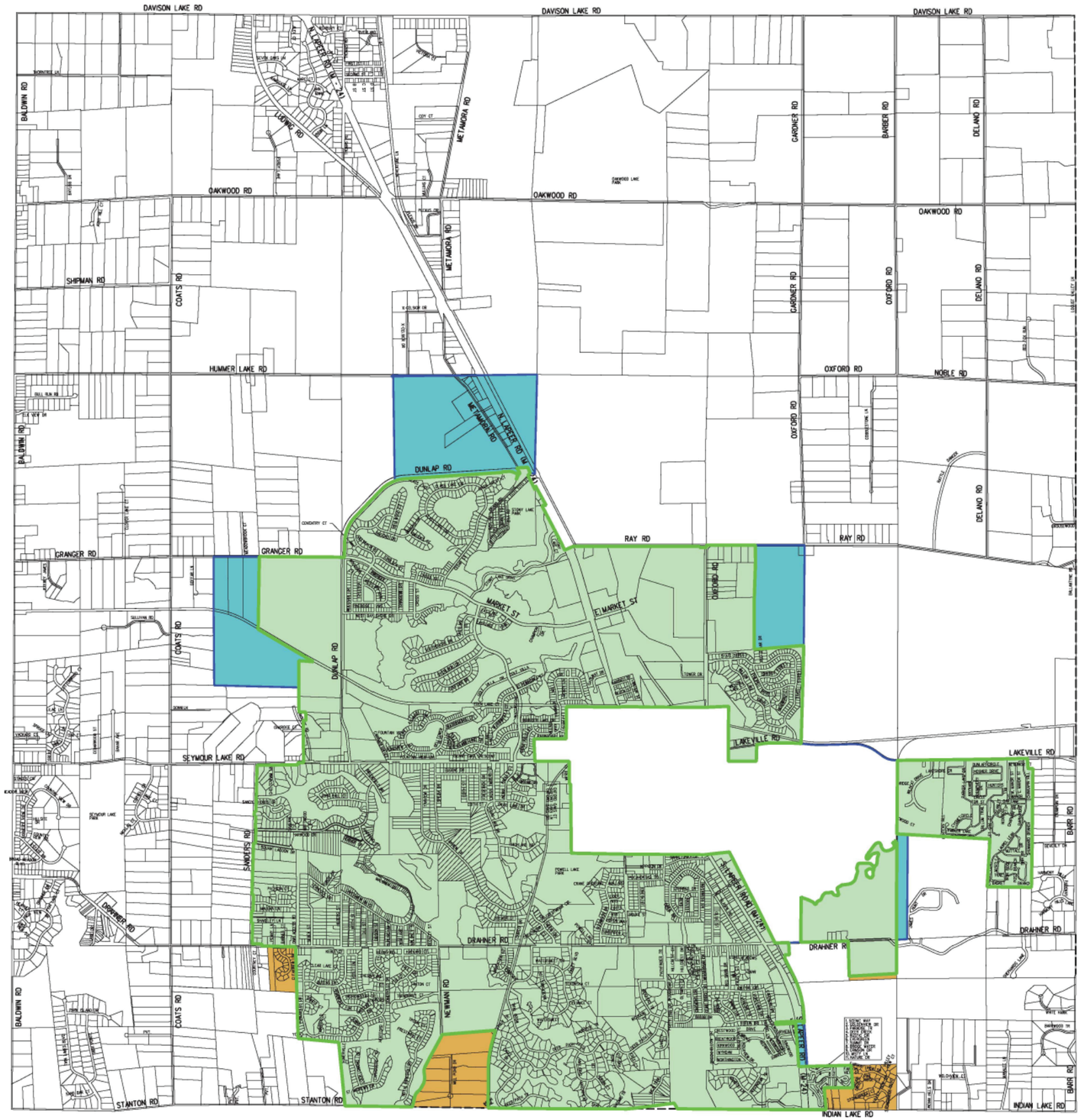

OXFORD TOWNSHIP

Map 7.
WATER & SEWER DISTRICTS

N

SCALE: 1" = 1500'

LEGEND

- WATER & SEWER DISTRICT
- WATER DISTRICT ONLY
- SEWER DISTRICT ONLY

MAP 7
WATER & SEWAGE DISTRICTS

SHARPE ENGINEERING

LAST UPDATED: DECEMBER 2015

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Existing Land Use

A basic element in master planning is the consideration of existing land use types and patterns. Land use data from the Township, County, and SEMCOG were inventoried. The result of this inventory is presented on **Map 8** while the classifications used in compiling the inventory data is provided below.

Classifications

The Existing Land Use Map (**Map 8**) inventories the following land use categories.

Vacant – This category includes all remaining land that is presently unused, idle, or agricultural land lying fallow.

Agriculture – This classification applies to all land use areas used for crops and permanent pasture land. In addition, this group includes such agricultural activities as horse breeding farms, green houses, and similar types of specialized activities.

Single Family – This classification includes areas containing single-family dwelling units and accessory structures.

Mobile Homes – This category identifies planned mobile home parks and any concentration of two or more individual mobile home units, including related accessory buildings.

Multiple Family – This category includes two-family (duplex), apartments and multi-plex type of units where two or more separate residential units occupy a single building on a lot.

Commercial/Office – This category includes areas where professional and business offices are found. Retail sales and service businesses are also placed in the commercial/office category.

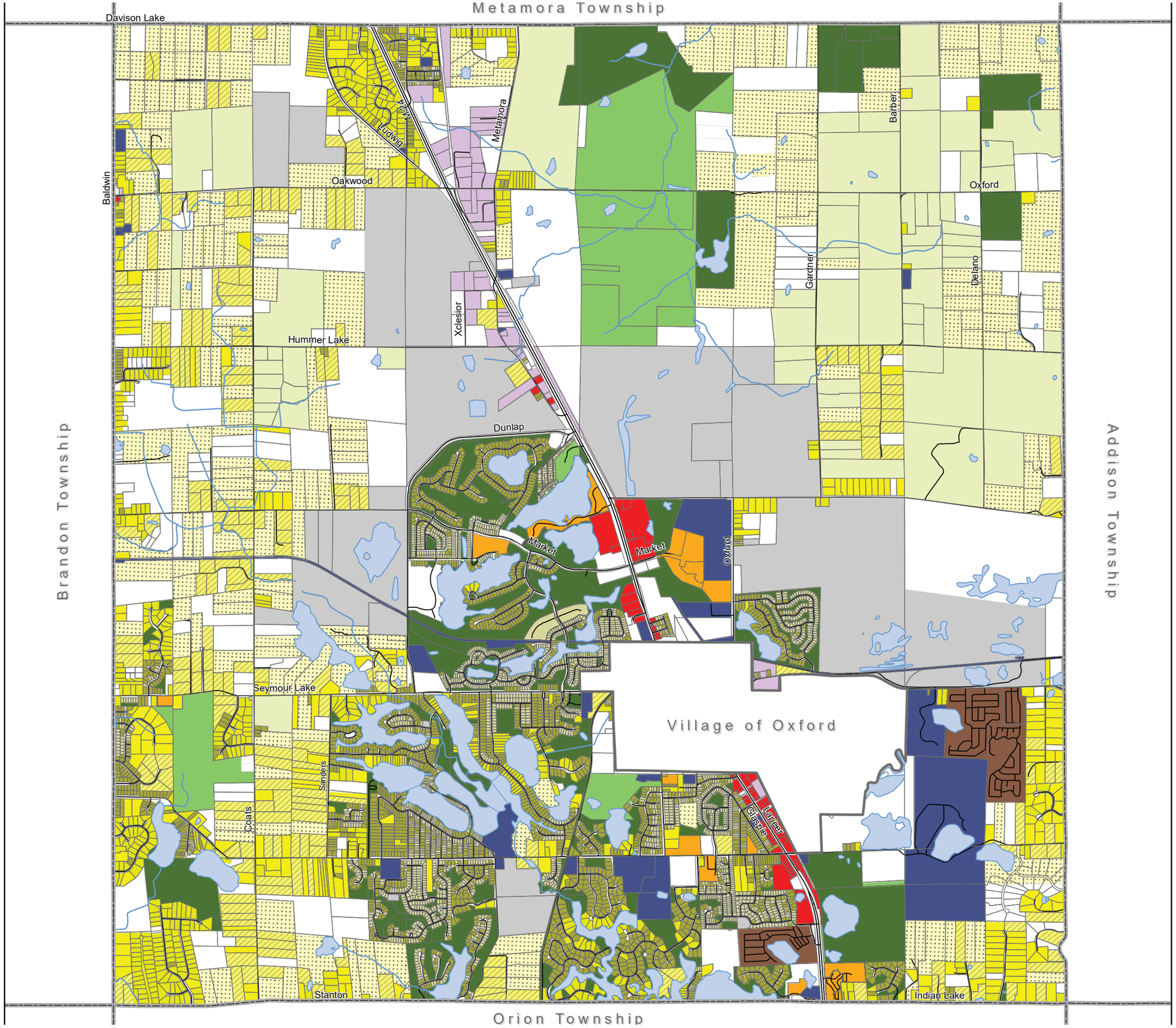
Industrial – This category includes uses with or without buildings where materials are processed, fabricated, assembled, or manufactured, or where equipment, materials, or wastes are stored out-of-doors.

Extractive – This category includes topsoil, sand, gravel, peat or other types of soil and mineral removal operations.

Public/Institutional – This category includes areas and facilities such as public schools, libraries, and government buildings are considered public uses. Institutional uses include churches, private schools, hospitals, private cemeteries, utility sites and similar institutional uses as Crossroads for Youth (previously Camp Oakland) and others.

Recreation and Conservation – This category includes lands for which the primary purpose is outdoor recreation or natural area conservation. This classification is split into public and private recreation, and includes public or private-owned parks, golf courses, or areas of which the primary purpose is preservation and conservation of undeveloped natural areas.

Transportation, Utility and Communications – This category includes improved land containing above or below-ground utility or communication facilities, including transmission lines, booster and transformer stations, county drains, detention/retention basins, and railroad yards.



- Public Recreation
- Private Recreation
- Agricultural
- Single Family, 10 acres or greater
- Single Family, 5 to 9.9 acres
- Single Family, 2.5 to 4.9 acres
- Single Family, 1 to 2.4 acres
- Single Family, 14,000 to 43,559 sq. ft.
- Single Family, less than 14,000 sq. ft.
- Mobile Home Park
- Multiple Family
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public Institutional
- Extractive
- Vacant

MAP 8
EXISTING LAND USE

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 14. 2019

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Patterns

The acreage contained within each of the existing land use classifications is noted in the following table along with the resulting changes since 1988. 1988 is the latest year that Oakland County completed a land use extrapolation. However, the County completes a county-wide existing land use inventory every year based on a number of factors, including recorded deeds, plats, tax maps, surveys, assessing records, and other public records. The table is intended to generalize the types of land uses found within the Township, along with the approximate break down by use category.

Table 13. - Generalized Land Uses, 1988, 2003,2010 and 2015

Use Category	1988 Acreage	2003 Acreage	2010 Acreage	2015 Acreage	2010-2015 % Change
Vacant	10,515	5,204	3,185	3,227	1.3%
Agriculture	4,395	635	2,663	2,729	2.5%
Single Family	1,777	7,808	6,899	6,782	-1.7%
Mobile Home	N/A	226	225	225	0.0%
Multiple Family	137	42	117	101	-13.7%
Commercial/Office	85	107	108	120	11.1%
Industrial	1,319	260	263	263	0.0%
Extractive	N/A	2,025	2,661	2,658	-0.1%
Public/Institutional	426	263	301	298	-1.0%
Recreation and Conservation	740	2,541	2,640	2,645	0.2%
Transportation, Utility and Communication	110	61	67	80	19.4%
Water	1,075	1,342	1,344	1,344	0.0%
Road Right-of-way	1,074	1,173	1,213	1,213	0.0%
Total	**21,653**	**21,687**	**21,686**	**21,685**	

Source: 1988 Oakland County Planning Division,2003 Oakland County GIS & 2010-2015 Oakland County Land Use and Zoning

Trends

The following land use trends have been observed since 1988. These trends have been adapted from those made within the previously-adopted 2011 Master Plan:

Vacant – 69.3% of the vacant land in 1988 has been developed, primarily for residential uses. The remaining vacant land is scattered throughout the Township; however, the majority can be found in the area immediately north of the Village.

Agriculture – In 1988 agricultural land accounted for 20% of all land in the Township. By 2003, farmed agricultural land had been reduced to approximately 635 acres (3%). By 2015, a significant increase of agricultural

land was documented in the northern portion of the Township and has rebounded by 330% since 2003. Based on a review of aerial photography, significantly more land is being used for agricultural purposes. Still, the remaining farmland, predominantly within the northeast quadrant, has the potential to remain undisturbed or transition into an alternate agricultural use. Since 2010, agricultural land use has increased by 2.5%.

Single Family – Between 1988 and 2003, the greatest change in land use resulted from the 339% increase in single-family land uses. In 2003, just over 7,800 acres of land (36%) were occupied by single-family uses. Between 2010 and 2015, the percentage of land dedicated to single-family residential uses remained at around 32%

Mobile Home – Per the 1993 Master Plan, 25% of the Township's total housing units were contained within two (2) mobile home parks; a total of 860 mobile home sites existed in 1993. Those parks remain, but were expanded prior to 2005 to encompass a larger area of land within the southeast quadrant of the Township. Since then , there has been little growth of mobile home sites in the Township.

Multiple Family – Multiple-family land area calculations decreased significantly from 1988 to 2003, but have since increased due to new phases of existing multiple family developments. Between 2003 and 2010, land dedicated to multiple-family land uses increased by approximately 178.5%. Despite this growth, between 2010 and 2015, land dedicated to multiple-family uses accounted for less than 1% of total Township land area.

Commercial/Office – These areas consist of a mix of general, medical and business service offices, restaurants, food and drug stores, personal and entertainment services, and a variety of general retail stores. A majority of commercial and office uses are scattered along the M-24 corridor with the greatest concentration located south of the Village. Between 2010 and 2015, the Township experienced a minor increase in commercial/office land area coverage (11.1%).

Industrial – As illustrated in **Table 13**, the Township's industrial land area decreased by nearly 80% between 1988 and 2003. Because the 1988 County land use analysis did not have a separate category for extractive operations (instead including them in the industrial land use category), the loss may not be as significant as noted. It can be assumed that a significant portion of the industrial land included the extractive operations located throughout the Township. The remaining industrial uses are located in close proximity to M-24 and/or an alternative principal east/west corridor. Since 2010, the Township has not experienced any new major industrial growth.

Public/Institutional – The Township lost 38% of its public/institutional land between 1988 and 2003. However, based upon analysis of the 1993 existing

land use study, much of the public/institutional land was re-categorized to the recreation and conservation designation. Some of these areas have been taken over by the Township Parks and Recreation Department. In either case, the land remains undeveloped and for public use. Since 2010, a 1% decrease in public/institutional land has occurred.

Recreation and Conservation – Since 2010, a slight increase of .2% in recreation and conservation land area has occurred. These changes can be primarily attributed to the expansion of the existing facilities. The majority of the recreation and conservation areas are associated with, or in close proximity to, the lakes within the southern half of the Township. There are several recreation and conservation areas located to the north of Granger/Ray Roads, the largest of which is the 300 acre Oakwood Park. Together, recreational/conservation land accounts for 12.1% or 2,645 acres, of Township land.

Vacant & Transitional Lands

An analysis of vacant and transitional lands – those lands which are either unused at this time, or whose current use is unlikely to continue indefinitely – is valuable in determining where land use change is most likely to occur. The Vacant and Transitional Lands map represents an inventory of large properties that are either vacant or are likely to convert to other uses in the coming years (see **Map 9**). The Map also includes private recreation areas which have the potential to be sold and developed for non-recreational uses.

Oxford Township contains a large amount of land used for extractive purposes. Once these large-acreage parcels are no longer used for mineral extraction, they are likely to transition to a new land use (i.e. single-family residential). The Vacant and Transitional Land Use map is intended to focus attention on these parcels to ensure that an appropriate future land use designation is chosen (Map 8).

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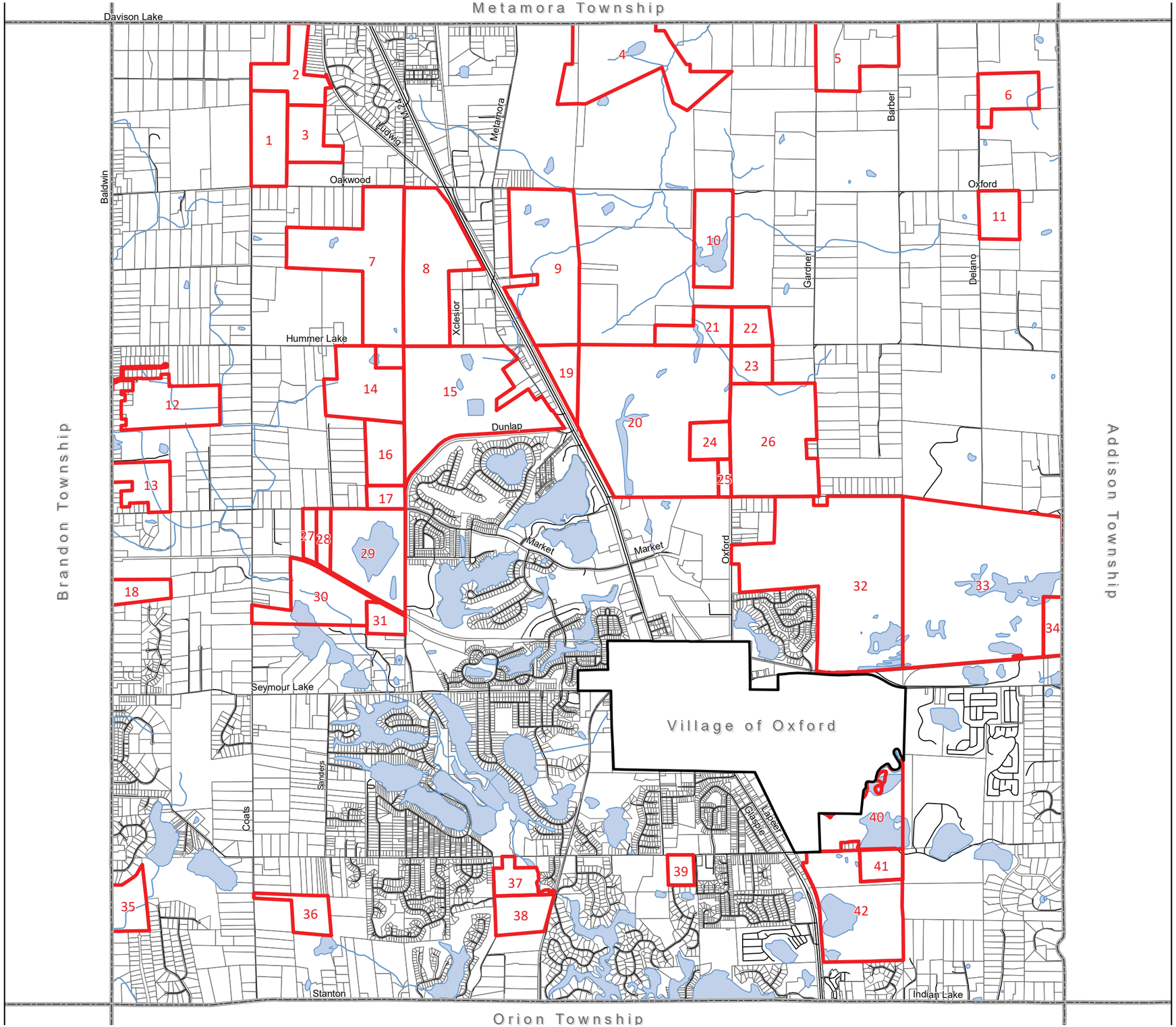

Vacant and Transitional Land Uses

Ponds and Lakes

Streams and Rivers

MAP 9
VACANT AND TRANSITIONAL LAND USE

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 14. 2019

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Table 14. - Vacant and Transitional Lands Index

Property Number	Acreage	Parcel ID	Existing Land Use
1	83.69	405300001	Extractive
2	75.32	405176001	Vacant
3	59.03	405300004	Extractive
4	203.38	404200001, 404200002, and 403100004	Private Recreation
5	138.08	402200004	Transitional
6	130.31	401400004 and 401200008	Private Recreation
7	235.53	408200002	Vacant/Extractive
8	201.93	409101001	Extractive
9	237.65	409200008	Vacant
10	90.34	410200004	Public Recreation
11	47.82	412200008	Agricultural
12	108.33	418100061	Vacant
13	56.55	418300014	Vacant
14	117.01	417200005	Vacant
15	286.28	416100001	Extractive
16	60.66	417400003	Vacant
17	21.79	417400004	Extractive
18	31.45	419100011	Vacant
19	43.02	416226001	Vacant
20	484.86	415100001	Extractive
21	54.79	410400004	Vacant
22	37.17	411300004	Vacant
23	38.16	414100001	Extractive
24	36.52	415400001	Extractive
25	11.48	415400002	Extractive
26	233.83	414300001	Extractive
27	16.98	420100008	Extractive
28	20.28	420100009	Extractive
29	153.13	420200001	Extractive
30	110.84	420300011	Extractive
31	25.43	420400001	Extractive
32	499.02	423200002	Extractive
33	573.88	424100001	Vacant/Extractive
34	27.18	424426001	Vacant
35	44.69	431100002	Vacant
36	39.86	432100013	Vacant
37	34.61	433201003	Extractive

38	49.89	433251001	Extractive
39	19.13	434200025	Vacant
40	114.27	426400008	Vacant
41	32.13	435200004	Vacant
42	198	435200001 and 435200003	Private Recreation

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

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GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Goals and objectives formulated by the community establish the framework for public and private decision-making. While goals and objectives tend to be general in nature, strategies set forth a detailed approach or position to be taken when resolving a planning issue. Strategies are specific actions aimed at achieving particular goals and objectives. Clearly-defined strategy statements can go far to minimize arbitrary decisions and substantiate intelligent, objective decisions. The goals, objectives and strategies outlined in this chapter provide the basis for wise and consistent public decisions regarding development and land use planning in Oxford Township.

Public Input

In order for the goals of the Master Plan to be achieved, consensus on fundamental planning issues must be reached. An online Master Plan survey was provided on the Township's website via SurveyMonkey. The survey was available online for public comment from March to May of 2017. The survey contained questions regarding residential development, motorized and non-motorized transportation, public facilities, and economic development, among other categories. Nearly 350 respondents participated in the survey, the results of which can be found in the appendix.

Several key opinion trends emerged from the Master Plan survey. These trends include:

- *In terms of residential land use, nearly half of all respondents indicated a preference for larger lot, lower-density development*
- *In terms of commercial development, respondents indicated a preference for new essential retail and services, specialty shops/boutiques, and sit-down restaurants in appropriate locations.*
- *Nearly two-thirds of all respondents stated that the development of non-motorized connections within the Township is important or very important.*
- *Most respondents indicated that the community's rural character is one of the most favorable features of Oxford Township.*

The opinions obtained from the survey have been incorporated into the goals, objectives and strategies of this Master Plan.

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

The goals, objectives and strategies in this chapter reflect a composite of those found in the 2011 Master Plan, 2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and various other plans previously adopted by the Township. Effort has been made to eliminate initiatives which have already been achieved, and to eliminate redundancy between similar statements found in the various plans. Items raised by the public in the Master Plan survey have also been incorporated into this new set of goals, objectives and strategies.

In terms relevant to community planning, goals, objectives and strategies give the Master Plan the guidance it needs to address present issues and advance plans into the future. These terms are defined as follows:

Goals: Overall broad statements that provide a focus for future decisions.

Objectives: More specific planning statements used to qualify the goals and provide more detailed direction for planning efforts.

Strategies: Very specific, action-oriented statements that will help achieve the goals and objectives. Strategies provide justification to draft new ordinance or regulations or finance specific capital improvements.

The goals within this chapter are separated into nine categories:

1. Community Character
2. Residential Land Use
3. Commercial Land Use
4. Industrial Land Use
5. Mixed Land Use
6. Natural Resources and Environment
7. Open Space and Greenways
8. Transportation
9. Utilities

Community Character

Goal: Development and redevelopment activities should make a positive contribution to the Oxford community, preserving and enhancing the special characteristics of the Township while promoting a balanced approach to land use that is responsive to both demographic and economic factors.

Objective #1: Preserve and promote the scenic rural character of the Township's outlying areas.

Strategies:

1. Encourage the incorporation of rural and natural elements in all new developments, including historic and landmark structures (barns, houses, etc.), tree rows, etc.
2. Require an inventory of existing physical conditions and resources with all development applications, including trees, existing buildings, topography, and other physical elements.
3. Preserve native topography to maintain the scenic character of the landscape.
4. Retain large lot residential patterns in the northwest and northeast corners of the Township to maintain and promote equestrian operations central to the identity of Oxford.
5. Preserve existing tree rows and woodlands wherever possible, possibly through an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, including tree protection and replacement standards.
6. Set back and cluster development away from major roadways, where appropriate, to preserve rural, agricultural, and natural viewsheds.
7. Avoid road paving and widening to the greatest degree possible in the northwest and northeast quadrants of the Township, especially along natural beauty roads.

Objective #2: Preserve and promote the traditional village character in areas adjacent to the Village of Oxford.

Strategies:

1. Promote development patterns surrounding the Village of Oxford that are consistent with traditional neighborhood development.
2. Seek physical connections to the Village, such as roads, pedestrian ways, etc., wherever possible.

3. Promote seamless transitions from the Village to outlying areas with regard to development style and form.
4. Where possible, protect historic structures from damage or destruction.
5. Encourage a close working relationship with the Village of Oxford to ensure consistency of new development.
6. Encourage the improvement of roadways with street trees, way-finding signage, bicycle accommodations, and other amenities that promote pedestrian activity.
7. Encourage the creation of high-quality community gathering places, common areas, and public open spaces.
8. Incentivize residential developments that promote walking, bicycling, and alternative forms of transportation as a means of accessing services, food, retail, employment, education, recreation, and other destinations.

Objective #3: Capitalize on the opportunity offered by the reclamation of extractive sites to promote the lakefront, resort-style of development common to the Oxford area.

Strategies:

1. Require reclamation of extractive sites in a manner that enhances property values and ensures appropriate re-use.
2. Encourage the establishment of new lakes and other water features, as well as interesting topography, as extractive properties are reclaimed.
3. Analyze parcels currently utilized for extractive purposes to determine appropriate future land uses and, if necessary, appropriate future residential densities.

Objective #4: Ensure that the M-24 corridor puts forth an attractive appearance that adequately reflects the village, resort, and rural character found throughout the Township.

Strategies:

1. Develop landscaping and streetscaping standards to be applied throughout the M-24 corridor, and ensure consistency with MDOT standards
2. Promote the use of access management techniques such as shared drives, cross-access, service drives, etc. in developments along M-24, and ensure consistency with MDOT standards.

3. Work with MDOT to ensure that improvements to M-24 are compatible with the character of Oxford by identifying a liaison and including MDOT officials in relevant planning matters.
4. Preserve scenic and rural views and vistas as part of developments proposed along M-24.
5. Discourage outdated strip mall designs along M-24 in favor of more compact forms of commercial development, keeping with the character of the Village of Oxford.
6. Buffer existing and future industrial development from view along M-24.
7. Eliminate or limit the number of billboards along the M-24 corridor.

Objective #5: Address existing concerns related to the compatibility of adjacent land uses, and prevent conflicts between future land uses from occurring.

Strategies:

1. Consolidate intense land uses in specific locations of the Township, allowing for adequate land use transition to more sensitive areas of the Township.
2. Require screening and buffering of commercial and industrial land uses adjacent to residential areas.
3. Gradually replace or relocate incompatible land uses from sensitive areas (neighborhoods, village downtown, schools, etc.).
4. Examine areas where industrial uses and industrial zoning abut residential land uses/zoning and explore additional measures to reduce visual and sound impacts.

Objective #6: Establish urban service boundaries which will discourage the extension of public sewer or water service into areas of the Township ideally situated for open space, natural features, rural and equestrian uses, or large-lot residential. Consider traffic impacts of new development and the cumulative impacts on roads.

Strategies:

1. Carefully evaluate the Township's remaining large tracts of property and extractive lands to determine the limits of dense residential and commercial growth.
2. Discourage the extension of public sewer and water outside of the established urban service boundary, except where such extension would be necessary from an environmental standpoint.

3. Consider areas adjacent to or contiguous to the established urban service boundary as preferred areas for planned expansion, thereby eliminating leap-frog development.
4. Where sewer or water service is currently unavailable, expansion shall only occur in accordance with the Township's urban service expansion policy, as discussed later within the Master Plan.
5. Consider traffic impacts for new development and the level of service (LOS) for intersections.

Residential Land Use

Goal: **The density, type and character of residential development in Oxford should meet the housing needs of Township residents while maintaining and enhancing the traditional village and resort-style of development found in the Oxford area.**

Objective #1: Allow for a range of housing opportunities at different densities and styles while remaining consistent with the character of surrounding areas, and taking into consideration the availability of public utilities and the natural capacity of the land.

Strategies:

1. Consolidate higher residential densities in areas adjacent to the Village and M-24 corridor, within the urban service boundary.
2. Incorporate a mix of residential uses and densities into developments near the Village to provide for the various housing needs of Township residents.
3. Explore the creation of a mixed residential/commercial district in areas adjacent to the Village of Oxford to encourage infill development in a traditional village neighborhood pattern.
4. Avoid higher residential densities in environmentally-sensitive areas of the Township.
5. Explore the creation of several multi-family zoning districts with varying densities.
6. Correspond higher residential densities with existing and planned utilities and existing and planned road capacity.
7. Provide a variety of senior housing opportunities, ranging from independent, reduced-maintenance living to assisted living facilities to ensure that residents can continue to age in place within the Township.
8. Review Planned Unit Development (PUD) eligibility and bonus density criteria to ensure that residential densities are consistent with existing

residential patterns Ensure that PUDs offer exceptional design and clear benefits to the Township as a whole.

Objective #2: The design and character of future residential land uses should promote the village, resort, rural and natural landscapes traditionally found in the Oxford area.

Strategies:

1. Appropriate architectural styles should be promoted.
2. Open space, wildlife corridors, and agricultural features should be preserved in new residential developments.
3. Employ innovative design techniques (such as clustering and traditional neighborhood design) in new residential developments to preserve open space and natural areas.
4. Preserve and replicate the resort character of certain areas of the Township trough the reclamation of extractive sites.

Aging in Place

In 2010, almost 3.4 million people in Michigan were over age 50 (34.2% of the state population). Whereas the traditional retirement living arrangement typically involves relocating into large retirement or nursing facilities, the term "aging in place" is rooted in the idea that older Americans want to remain in their homes and within their communities as they grow older.

In addition to safety and independence in one's private home, today's and tomorrow's active seniors are also looking for rich social environments and access to pedestrian amenities and open space. Eight important components for "aging in place" include:

- Aging & Disability Resource Centers
- Arts & Culture
- Diverse Housing Options
- Parks & Open Space
- Preventative Health & Medical Service
- Transportation
- Universal Design
- Volunteer Opportunities and Civic Engagement.

For more information and resources on Aging in Place, see the Michigan Municipal League's May 2013 issue of *The Review at:* https://www.mml.org/resources/publications/mmr/

Source: www.census.gov

Commercial Land Use

Goal: Commercial development within Oxford Township should meet the needs of Township residents, while promoting Oxford's unique character.

Objective #1: Commercial land uses in the Township should be compatible with those found in the Village.

Strategies:

1. The Village downtown must remain a focal point of local history and cultural heritage, as well as an appropriate place for specialty shops and offices.
2. Commercial development along the M-24 corridor should be compatible with what is already available in the Village of Oxford.
3. New commercial and office development should be directly related to serving the Township's population, providing services that will allow Township residents to shop and work closer to home.

Objective #2: Commercial and office uses should be located primarily along M-24 and in proximity to the Village of Oxford; however, limited retail and service operations serving neighborhood areas should be considered along other major thoroughfares.

Strategies:

1. Consolidate commercial land uses into clustered nodes along the M-24 corridor and within large-scale developments instead of allowing continuous strip development.
2. Explore the development of a mixed-use commercial, office, and light-industrial district on North Lapeer Road with a flexible list of uses, design-oriented standards and performance standards.
3. Provide local/neighborhood commercial uses, where appropriate, to serve the convenience needs of local residents.
4. Maintain physical and visual separation between commercial/office development and residential areas, while promoting pedestrian connections between them.

Objective #3: Promote well-planned and well-designed commercial development that integrates with existing and future residential and commercial land uses within the Township and Village.

Strategies:

1. Review existing PUD zoning standards to ensure greater flexibility and creativity in mixing commercial and residential land uses.
2. Encourage the use of compact, pedestrian-oriented forms consistent with traditional development patterns.
3. Explore the development of a mixed-use residential, commercial, and office district near the periphery of the village of Oxford to encourage infill development in a traditional neighborhood pattern.
4. Encourage the use of high-quality, traditional architecture and building material in new commercial developments adjacent to the Village of Oxford.
5. Ensure connectivity between the Village of Oxford and the Township's commercial uses by encouraging the establishment of pedestrian ways with street trees, bicycle accommodations, and other amenities promoting pedestrian activity.

Objective #4: Require street design that creates public space that is safe and welcoming for pedestrians.

Strategies:

1. Encourage street-oriented buildings; locate parking lots in rear of retail and business centers.
2. Provide pedestrian-scaled lighting.
3. Encourage building transparency by requiring abundant windows, a variety of building materials and colors, and projections/recesses along building facades facing the street.
4. Where parking lots are located between commercial buildings and streets, require or encourage the creation of pedestrian pathways from the safety path and the entrance and ensure that visual screening is provided.
5. Increase street connectivity.

Objective #5: Encourage the use of green building design, energy-efficient buildings, and sustainable developments

Strategies:

1. Consider providing incentives to projects that utilize energy-efficient design or sustainable practices.
2. Promote the use of green building technologies and solar energy and encourage building renovations and new building projects to achieve green building certification, such as LEED.

Industrial Land Use

Goal: Industrial development in Oxford Township should be sited to minimize impacts on land uses of lesser intensity, and designed to make a positive aesthetic contribution to the Township.

Objective #1: Industrial land uses in the Township should be located or relocated to minimize conflicts between incompatible land uses, while remaining concentrated along the M-24 corridor.

Strategies:

1. Identify areas where industrial land uses and industrial zoning abut residential properties and promote adequate buffering and screening and appropriate land use transitions.
2. Ensure that future industrial sites have access to suitable roads.
3. Explore the development of a mixed-use commercial/industrial district on North Lapeer Road with a flexible list of uses, design-oriented standards and performance standards.

Objective #2: Industrial land uses in the Township should make a positive aesthetic contribution to the community.

Strategies:

1. Attract clean, high-tech and research-related industrial uses.
2. Encourage the use of high-quality design and materials in the development of new industrial land uses.
3. Utilize ample berming and landscaping to buffer industrial uses from the roadway and other land uses.

4. Orient overhead doors and other visually-intensive use areas away from the roadway.

Objective #3: Encourage the use of green building design, energy-efficient buildings, and sustainable developments

Strategies:

1. Consider providing incentives to projects that utilize energy-efficient design or sustainable practices.

2. Promote the use of green building technologies and solar energy and encourage building renovations and new building projects to achieve green building certification, such as LEED.

Mixed Land Use

Goal: Allow for a flexible mixture of land uses in appropriate areas of the Township to encourage the clustering of complementary uses, discourage outdated strip development practices, promote economic development, exercise economies of density, encourage pedestrian activity, and reduce vehicle miles traveled.

Objective #1: Explore the development of a mixed-use commercial, office, and light-industrial district on North Lapeer Road.

Strategies:

1. Develop a flexible list of compatible permitted land uses, including light industrial, commercial, and office uses.
2. Promote development in well-landscaped, campus-like settings.
3. Establish design standards that improve the visual quality of development and create unified, attractive mixed-use areas.
4. Promote the use of green building technologies and solar energy and encourage building renovations and new building projects to achieve green building certification, such as LEED.

Objective #2: Explore the development of a mixed-use residential, commercial, and office district at the periphery of the Village of Oxford to complement downtown Oxford commercial uses, add new neighborhood commercial, and serve as a transitional use to nearby single-family residential and agricultural areas.

Strategies:

1. Develop a flexible list of compatible permitted land uses, including residential, neighborhood commercial, and office.
2. Permit horizontal and vertical mixtures of uses, including commercial/office on the first floor and residential uses above.
3. Ensure that mixed-use residential/office/commercial developments are well-served by existing and planned infrastructure, including roads and utilities.
4. Establish design standards that improve the visual quality of development and ensure appropriate visual transitions between commercial and lower-density residential areas.

Natural Resources and Environment

Goal: **Protect the Township's natural and environmental assets to sustain Oxford's high quality of life for future generations.**

Objective #1: Protect Oxford's natural resources from the adverse effects of development, for both ecological purposes and human enjoyment.

Strategies:

1. Continue to enforce natural feature buffers required by the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Regulate the application of lawn chemicals adjacent to Township waterways.
3. Reduce the amount of impervious surface located within parking lots.
4. Promote best-practices in stormwater management.
5. Encourage selective grading of development sites to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, as opposed to mass grading.
6. Promote proper management of woodlands to enhance health and quality.
7. Consider tree protection and replacement standards to the Zoning Ordinance.
8. Pursue a means of public access to water bodies in new developments.

Objective #2: Prevent and clean up pollution throughout the Township and protect Township residents from exposure to hazardous material.

Strategies:

1. Obtain air quality improvements through restrictions on burning and regulations governing emissions.
2. Protect surface waters through restrictions on lawn chemicals, septic location, stormwater management and boating limitations.
3. Educate the public on the impact of lawn chemicals on the Township's water resources.
4. Regulate potentially hazardous land uses to prevent adverse impacts to neighboring properties.
5. Coordinate with State and Federal authorities to achieve acceptable levels of environmental clean-up on polluted property to prevent the spread of contamination; ensure that Township regulations are consistent with state and federal statutes and guidelines.

Objective #3: Support the use of renewable energy technology, such as solar energy systems, throughout the Township.

Strategies:

1. Update the Zoning Ordinance to include provisions for solar energy systems, which may include reasonable placement and dimensional restrictions.
2. Provide information and education to help property owners and developers easily navigate permitting processes as they relate to solar and other renewable energy systems.
3. Work with developers and partner with local companies to encourage implementation of solar technology and other renewable energy systems in the layout and construction of new development.

Open Space and Greenways

Goal: Promote a network of connected open spaces and greenways that preserves important natural areas, water resources, wildlife corridors and habitat, and the rural, scenic character of the Township, while providing for the recreational needs of the community.

Objective #1: Preserve valuable, contiguous open space within residential developments.

Strategies:

1. Review planned unit development (PUD) provisions in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure creative means of preserving open space, including the preservation of non-contiguous open space provided for under P.A. 228 of 2003.
2. Encourage developers to utilize the open space preservation and/or planned unit development options, rather than the conventional subdivision/condominium process.
3. Promote open space in new residential developments that is contiguous with that of adjacent developments or public land.
4. Preserve existing tree rows in residential developments, especially in the northwest and northeast quadrants of the Township.
5. Preserve those areas identified as “potential conservation/natural areas” by the 2004 Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services Report of the same name or other updated reports.
6. When considering future residential developments, review them for consistency with the Township’s Open Space and Greenways Plan and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Objective #2: Protect valuable natural areas and wildlife habitat, as well as connections between such areas, throughout the Township.

Strategies:

1. Research available funding sources and apply for federal, state and local grants for the acquisition of property or conservation easements in the Township’s prime natural areas.
2. Develop relationships with local and regional land conservancies for assistance in land acquisition efforts.
3. Educate local landowners on the importance of land preservation.

4. Purchase property or conservation easements in areas identified as "potential conservation/natural areas" by the 2004 Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services Report of the same name and other updated reports, especially when adjacent to existing protected lands.
5. Seek detailed field inventories of selected Potential Natural Areas.
6. Coordinate land acquisition efforts with the Township's need for additional parkland.
7. Promote and accommodate the use of native landscaping.
8. Protect existing tree rows and other corridors through new residential developments for wildlife circulation.
9. Protect natural buffers along aquatic corridors for wildlife circulation.

Objective #3: Establish community-wide and regional greenway connections that link important natural areas, parks, institutional facilities, residential areas, the Village of Oxford and other adjacent communities.

Strategies:

1. Research available funding sources and apply for federal, state and local grants for the development of important regional connections.
2. Coordinate with private land owners, land conservancies, developers, recreation and environmental groups, and other public agencies in the development of regional greenway connections.
3. Develop greenway segments that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities, consistent with the Safety Path, Open Space and Greenway Plan discussed within this Master Plan.

Transportation

Goal: Improve and expand the Township's transportation system to allow safe and efficient travel for motorized, non-motorized and pedestrian users, while promoting important connections to the Village of Oxford and other neighboring communities.

Objective #1: Maintain and/or improve the Township's road network to provide adequate safety, capacity and efficiency wherever necessary, in a manner that is consistent with the character of the area.

Strategies:

1. Coordinate changes in land use with the necessary road improvements identified in the Township Roads Master Plan contained within this Master Plan.
2. Coordinate with the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to ensure that road improvements and maintenance enhance the efficiency and safety of transportation routes in the Township.
3. Maintain gravel roads ensure safety and preserve community character.
4. As roads are improved, ensure that the historic character of the Village and rural areas of the northern portion of the Township are protected.
5. Explore educational opportunities relating to new transportation technologies such as autonomous and connected vehicles, and the potential impacts that these technologies could have on transportation networks and land use patterns.

Objective #2: Promote orderly, efficient access to developing land, and improve circulation throughout the Township and the region through the extension and maintenance of roadways.

Strategies:

1. Extension of roadways should be done to achieve the Township's intended pattern of development rather than promote unwanted or premature development.
2. Extension or addition of major thoroughfares should be consistent with the Township Roads Master Plan contained within this Master Plan.
3. Analyze the capacity of the local road network when identifying appropriate land uses and density.

4. New development that will overburden the existing network should be responsible for the cost of road improvements necessary to serve their projects.
5. Promote cross-access to reduce the traffic impact on primary roads.

Objective #3: Develop and maintain a network of safety paths throughout the Township that connect the community's natural, residential, recreational, institutional, and commercial resources to provide safe, barrier-free pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

Strategies:

1. Research available funding sources and apply for federal, state and local grants for the development of the Township's safety path network.
2. Consider a millage for the development and maintenance of the Township's safety path network.
3. Prioritize and stage construction of safety path segments to serve the greatest number of residents as soon as possible, in accordance with the Township's Safety Path Master Plan contained within this Master Plan.
4. Ensure that safety path segments are barrier-free.
5. Coordinate with the Village of Oxford in the development of safety path segments entering the Village.
6. Coordinate with the Polly Ann Trail Management Council in the development of safety path segments entering the trailway.
7. Continue to require the development of safety path segments along the frontage of new developments in areas planned for safety path extension.
8. Conduct annual inspections of the Township's safety path system to identify and prioritize maintenance needs.

Objective #4: Provide adequate routes for gravel mining operations and other heavy truck traffic while minimizing the impacts of such traffic on the Village downtown, residential neighborhoods, and other sensitive areas.

Strategies:

1. Maintain appropriate road facilities to serve mining traffic.
2. Explore the adoption of a haul route ordinance identifying the preferred routes for mining and similar heavy truck traffic.
3. Clearly identify the special truck/haul route with appropriate traffic control signs and devices.

Goal: Provide safe and comfortable routes for walking, bicycling, and public transportation; enable convenient and active travel as part of daily activities to reduce pollution and meet the needs of all users.

Objective #1: Integrate Complete Streets design features into road design and construction to create safe and inviting environments for all users to walk, bicycle, and use public transportation.

Strategies:

1. Include infrastructure for safe crossings, refuge islands, crosswalks, pedestrian signals and other accommodations to meet the needs of people of all abilities and ages.
2. Provide pedestrian-oriented signs, pedestrian-scale lighting, benches and other street furniture, bicycle parking facilities, and comfortable and attractive public transportation stops and facilities.
3. Encourage street trees, landscaping, and planting strips, including native plants where possible, to buffer traffic and noise and protect and shade pedestrians and bicyclists.
4. In all street projects, include infrastructure that improves transportation options for pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation riders of all ages and abilities.
5. Encourage and develop guidelines for sidewalks within new residential developments.

Objective #2: Promote bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation rider safety.

Strategies:

1. Identify physical improvements that would make bicycle and pedestrian travel safer along current major bicycling and walking routes and the proposed future network, prioritizing routes to and from schools.
2. Collaborate with schools, the senior center, the Village of Oxford, and other agencies to provide community education about safe travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation riders, and others.

Utilities

Goal: Provide sufficient public utilities to support the Township's desired pattern of development in an efficient, fiscally-responsible manner.

Objective #1: Plan for the expansion of public sewer and water facilities in an orderly fashion to support the Township's desired density/development pattern and to protect public health.

Strategies:

1. Residential densities should relate to existing and planned utilities.
2. Coordinate public sewer and water expansion with the boundaries of the planned urban service areas.
3. The expansion of public sewer and water service, in conjunction with existing and planned road capacity, should be used as a tool for implementing preferred patterns of development.
4. Public utilities should not be used to induce premature or undesirable development within the Township.
5. Township-sponsored sewer and water improvements should be limited to those situations dictated by public health and environmental concerns.

Objective #2: Avoid burdening existing tax payers with the cost to extend public utilities and other infrastructure to new development.

Strategies:

1. Where Township policies dictate areas of higher densities, require the cost of utility systems to be borne by the developer.
2. Investigate the possibilities of connecting Oxford Township to nearby established utility systems.
3. Explore the cooperative provision of water and sewer service with the Village.

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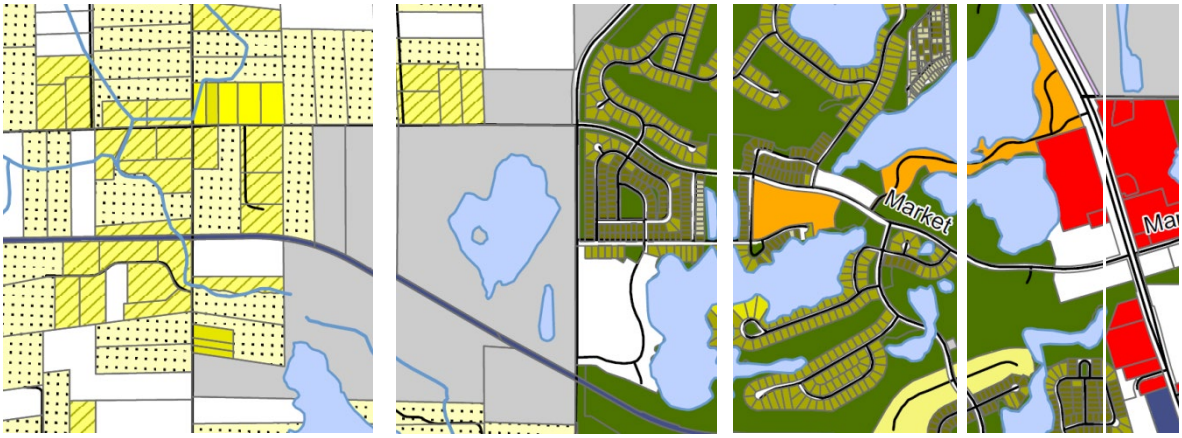
LAND USE PLAN



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LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan chapter defines the framework for growth, translates land use goals into a narrative, and provides a rationale for the placement of land uses and density within the Township. This chapter presents guiding factors for growth followed by a discussion of future land use categories (as denoted on the Future Land Use map), future road rights-of-way, and open space and greenways.

The Land Use Plan is formulated to guide local government officials on land use decisions, public investments, and private development. Similar to the Master Plan as a whole, the Land Use chapter is intended to be a working document that will promote the orderly development of the Township, assist the community in its effort to maintain a pleasant living environment, and spark a vision for the future.

Guiding Factors

A number of factors guided the development of the Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map and helped to dictate the location and extent of various uses and densities.

These factors include:

- Urban Service Areas
- Road System Capacity
- Natural Capacity of the Land
- Proximity to the Village of Oxford
- Adequacy of Commercial and Industrial Land
- Management of the M-24 Corridor
- Maintenance of Outlying Rural/Agricultural Areas
- Reclamation of Extractive Sites

Urban Service Areas

The distribution of land uses and residential densities depicted on the Future Land Use Map is directly related to availability of public utilities (sewer and water), transportation infrastructure and capacity, and services such as police and fire protection. To allow for the orderly and coordinated development of Oxford Township, the Master Plan makes use of "Urban Service Areas." Urban Service Areas are intended to represent areas within the Township where sanitary sewer and public water systems are either currently in place or are anticipated to be expanded in the near future. Urban Service Areas also represent areas of the Township where transportation infrastructure and public services can accommodate higher-intensity uses and higher residential densities. Therefore, the proposed Urban Service Areas intentionally correspond with and guide the location of higher-density areas.

Map 10 depicts two (2) types of Urban Service Areas: Primary Service Areas and Secondary Service Areas.

> The **Primary Service Area** represents portions of the Township that are currently served by public sewer and water or are located within an existing sanitary sewer district. These areas are generally characterized by single-family and multiple-family residential uses at higher densities, commercial uses, industrial parks, and mixed-use centers located in close-proximity to the Village of Oxford. The Primary Service Area generally adheres to the current extent of the Township's sanitary sewer district boundary.
>
> The **Secondary Service Area** represents portions of the Township that are not currently served by sewer and may or may not be hooked up to the public water system but are anticipated for future sewer expansion and/or moderate-density development. These areas are generally located on the fringe of the Primary Service Area and have access to sufficient transportation networks. However, it is recognized that sewer services can only be expanded if adequate capacity and funding exists.

The Urban Service Areas effectively mark the separation between planned urban/suburban areas and more rural areas. Those portions of the Township located outside of the Urban Service Areas are intended to be maintained at a low density and exhibit rural characteristics, and any development within these rural areas should be designed to protect and be consistent with existing natural features and agricultural and equestrian uses.

The boundaries of the Urban Service Areas are not intended to be static; they should be evaluated on a regular basis along with other updates to the Master Plan. Guidelines must be established to determine whether to expand the Urban Service Area to include a piece of property or larger areas of land. In determining whether to modify the boundaries of either the Primary or Secondary Service Areas, the following should be taken into consideration:

- Amount and capacity of undeveloped or under-developed land currently within the Primary or Secondary Service Area boundaries, which should be used to satisfy the demand for development prior to expanding either boundary;

- Projected population growth within the Township and demand for certain land uses;
- The ability to extend public water and sewer infrastructure;
- The capacity and condition of the road network to support the new service areas;
- The ability of the Township, County and other public agencies to provide necessary services to the new growth areas and the additional resulting population;
- The impact that higher-density development will have on natural features, agricultural and equestrian uses, and rural character; and
- Consistency with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.

In the interest of maintaining orderly, coordinated development, greater consideration shall be given to expanding the Primary Urban Service Area to include properties that are immediately adjacent to the existing boundaries, rather than creating new, isolated areas (also known as "leapfrogging"). Lack of adherence to these considerations may have the impact of reducing the volume of sanitary sewer capacity available for areas within the current Urban Service Area boundaries, thus undermining the orderly manner in which the Charter Township of Oxford desires to develop over the life of this Master Plan.

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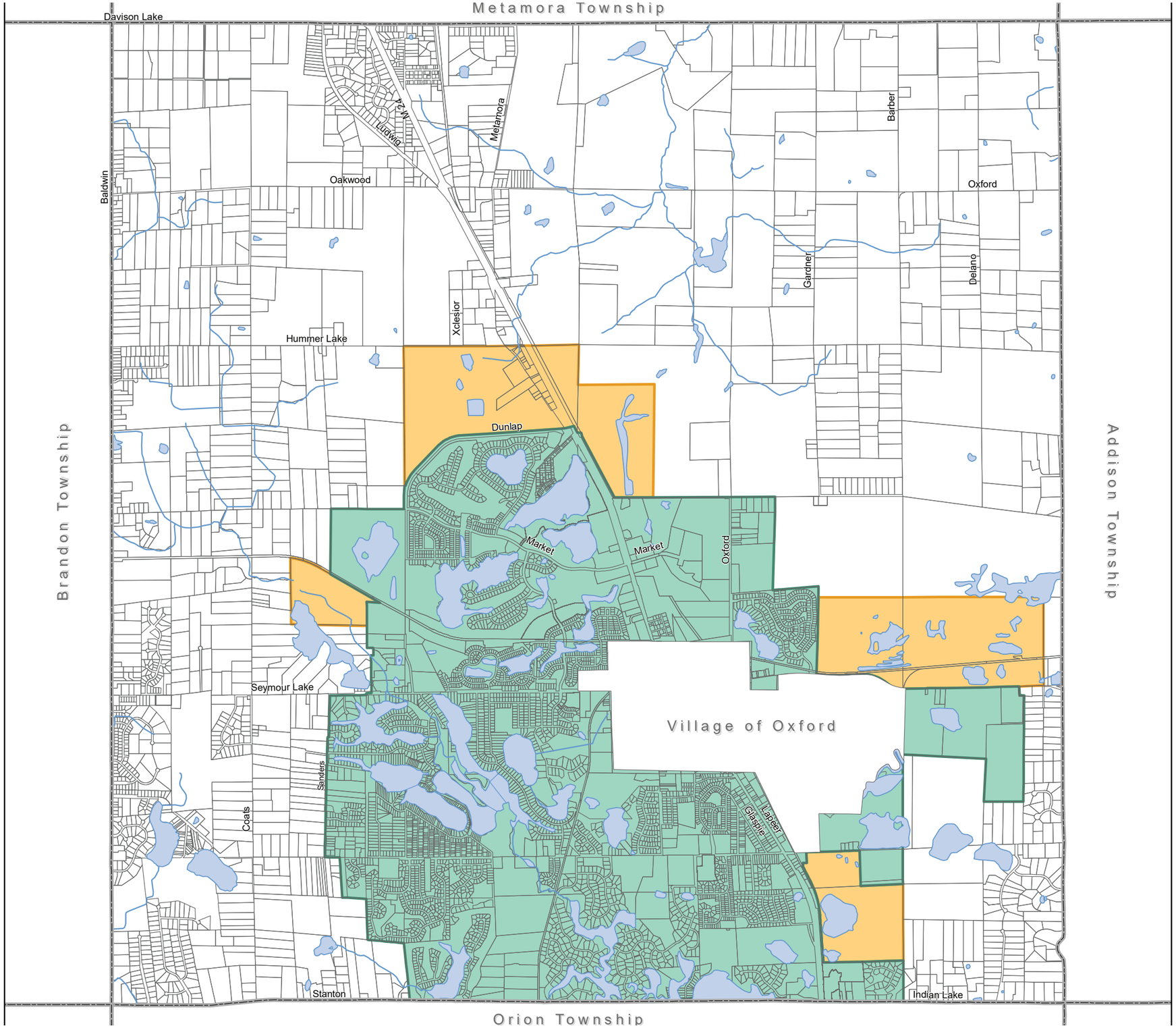

Primary Urban Service Area

Secondary Urban Service Area

MAP 10
URBAN SERVICE AREAS

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 14. 2019

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Road System Capacity

As with other forms of infrastructure, road capacity directly impacts future land use locations. As illustrated within the Urban Service Area Map and the Future Land Use Map, outlying areas of the Township are planned to remain primarily rural-residential and agricultural in nature. The gravel road systems found in these portions of the Township warrant existing and planned low-density land use patterns. Properties located adjacent to major paved roads (such as M-24, Drahner, Seymour Lake, and Lakeville) are generally anticipated to accommodate more intensive land uses, including non-residential and moderate to high-density residential uses. To enhance future vehicular circulation, locations for potential future road extensions have been determined. Please refer to the *Future Roads and Rights-of-Way Plan* later in this chapter for a more detailed discussion of this topic.

Natural Capacity of the Land

In addition to man-made infrastructure, the natural landscape can be favorable to certain land uses, yet unfavorable to others. The most dense or intensive land uses are typically limited to areas along M-24 and current extractive sites where land disturbance has already interrupted natural systems. Very low densities are planned to be maintained in the northwestern and northeastern quadrants of the Township in response to soil constraints and a desire to minimize impervious surfaces and reduce stormwater runoff. In addition to the arrangement and intensity of land uses prescribed in the Future Land Use Plan, the Safety Path, Open Space and Greenway Plan section identifies several measures meant to balance the Township's development objectives with its desire to preserve its natural resources and scenic character.

Proximity to the Village of Oxford

In recognition of the significant value offered by the Village of Oxford, areas within the Township adjacent to the Village should complement and be consistent with the Village's traditional character in terms of density, mix of uses, building placement, and architecture. This Master Plan recognizes the importance of the Village of Oxford as a prime commercial and office center.

Adequacy of Commercial and Industrial Land

While it is important to ensure that adequate commercial and industrial land is available to provide needed services, jobs, and tax revenue, it is equally important to avoid setting aside excessive acreage for future commercial and industrial uses. Excessive areas planned for commercial or industrial uses (beyond that which could be supported by the market) are likely to remain vacant or underutilized, and may negatively impact the overall character of the Township. For this reason, the Future Land Use Plan anticipates only the limited expansion of commercial uses outside of

areas presently planned for commercial/industrial uses. Additionally, the planned flexible Industrial/Commercial Mixed-Use and Village Mixed-Use future land use designations intend to accommodate a variety of land uses to respond to the ebb and flow of the market, while ensuring consistency with adjacent land uses.

Management of the M-24 Corridor

Because M-24 serves as the main corridor through Oxford Township and presents motorists with a "first glance" of the Township, this Master Plan recognizes the importance of managing both the functional and aesthetic aspects of the M-24 corridor. The Future Land Use map generally assumes that M-24 is capable of handling traffic generated by commercial and industrial development. However, without careful access management standards, Oxford Township risks the aesthetic degradation commonly associated with strip commercial development and haphazard growth. For these reasons, commercial and office uses along M-24 are intended to be consistent with the development pattern and style of the Village, while office, research, industrial, and mixed-use uses located farther north are envisioned to be buffered from the roadway using landscape screening and setbacks.

Maintenance of Outlying Rural and Agricultural Areas

Equestrian living and productive agricultural farmland are long-lived in the Charter Township of Oxford, particularly in association with the historic Metamora Hunt. Rural uses of this nature continue to thrive in the Township's northeastern and (to a somewhat lesser degree) northwestern quadrants. Because of the important contribution made by the equestrian/agricultural lifestyle to the overall character of the Township, it is imperative to protect these areas from the encroachment of incompatible development. For these reasons, the outlying areas of the Township are planned for low-density residential and agricultural land uses. The Master Plan also calls for additional land use preservation techniques such as deep setbacks, clustering, and preservation of productive farmland and scenic features.

Reclamation of Extraction Sites

A large quantity of land within the Township is currently utilized for extractive purposes. By directing development pressure toward these extraction areas, disturbed land can be redeveloped into viable land uses while simultaneously maintaining the Township's outlying equestrian and agricultural landscape. In many cases, extractive site reclamation results in the creation of man-made lakes suited for waterfront, resort-style residential development. For these reasons, the most intensive future land uses identified on the Future Land Use map occur either within the Primary Urban Service Area or Secondary Urban Service Area, which contains hundreds of acres of extractive property. Table 15 summarizes the status of all extractive sites located in the Charter Township of Oxford, while Map 11 denotes their location.

The pace at which the Township's various extractive sites are depleted will have a significant bearing on the timing and location of future development. Several important conclusions can be reached by comparing the future land uses depicted on the Future Land Use Map with the location and number of years remaining for each of the Township's extractive sites. In general, much of the developed portion (Primary Urban Service Area) of the Township is bounded by extractive property. The Koenig Property, east of the Primary Urban Service Area, is the extractive site with the most imminent development potential, followed by the site known as Mickelson South.

Table 15. - Status of Township Extractive Sites

Map Number	Site	Status
1	Koenig Sand and Gravel	Near completion
2	Sandman	Mining complete.
3	Iafrate/Great Lakes (Levy)	Work has not begun
4	American Aggregates (Levy)	At least 40 years left
5	Mickelson South (Levy)	Mining finished
6	Mickelson North (Levy)	At least 5 more years of excavation
7	American Aggregates (Levy)	Future reserves

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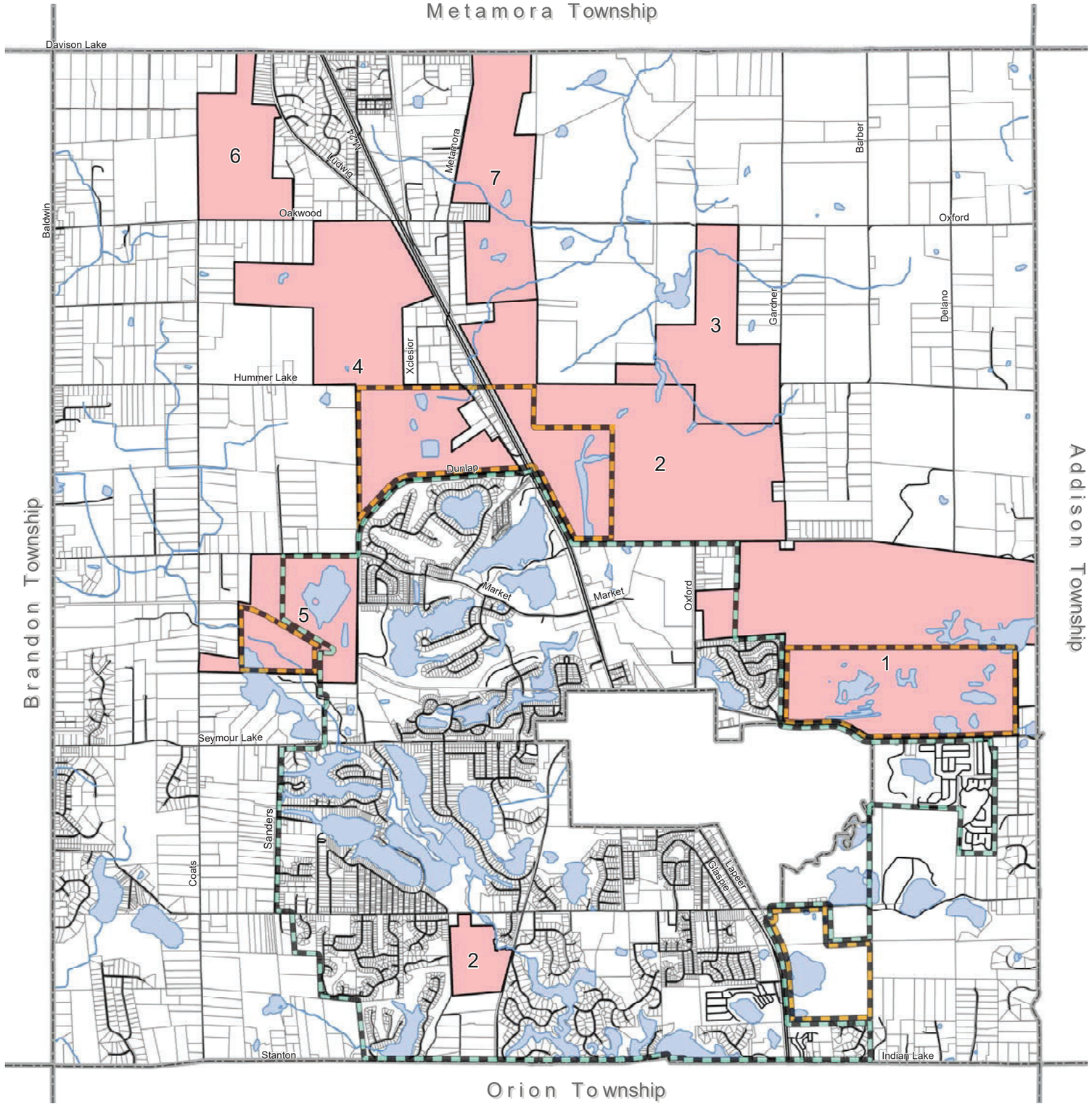

Primary Urban Service Area

Secondary Urban Service Area

Extractive Sites

1. Keonig Sand & Gravel
2. Sandman
3. Iafrate/Great Lakes
4. American Aggregates of Michigan
5. Mickelson South
6. Mickelson North
7. American Aggregates of Michigan

MAP 11
Extractive Sites

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 18, 2017

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Because the sites north of Dunlap and Ray Roads are a minimum of 10 to 15 years from completion, portions of these extractive sites could be set aside for commercial, retail and industrial development. The most intensive development envisioned for these areas on the Future Land Use Plan is not likely to occur for some time. Thus, development pressure is likely to arise to either side of the Township's Primary Urban Service Area before property to the north becomes available; this assumes that the entire site is held until all extraction is complete before it is sold, which may not be the case with every site. Because of the important role that extractive sites play in guiding future development, the Township should continue to monitor their status. Reclamation and end use plans should be reviewed and coordinated with the Township's Master Plan. Reclamation of former extractive land is critical for both environmental and safety reasons, and should include re-grading, slope stabilization, and reestablishment of vegetation.

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map illustrates the desired distribution and locations of land uses throughout the Township, and, in doing so, offers a graphic demonstration of the goals and policies contained within this Master Plan. The land use designations depicted on the Future Land Use Map are described as follows:

Hunt Country Agriculture

The Hunt Country Agriculture designation seeks to preserve the agricultural and equestrian character of the northeastern quadrant of the Township, where pleasure riding, horse raising and related farming activities continue in association with the historic Metamora Hunt. This area is characterized by large tracts of land, fenced pastures, productive farmland and riding trails. Tree-canopied natural beauty roads are also found in these areas of the Township, which contribute greatly to the overall character of the area. Development within the Hunt Country Agriculture designation should preserve the open expanses of pasture and other scenic elements, and should be characterized by large lot sizes (**20-acre minimum**), deep setbacks, clustering of home sites, and preservation of farmland. Land located within this designation will most likely be served by well and septic.

Hunt Country Estates

The Hunt Country Estates designation seeks to preserve the agricultural and equestrian character of outlying areas of the Township in a similar manner to the Hunt Country Agriculture designation. Unlike the Hunt Country Agriculture designation, however, these areas are somewhat more fragmented. As such, development within the Hunt Country Estates designation feature many of the same characteristics as Hunt Country Agriculture areas (large lot sizes, deep setbacks, clustering and preservation of scenic features); however, minimum lot size should be **10 acres**. Land located within this designation will most likely be served by well and septic.

Acreage Estates

The Acreage Estates designation seeks to maintain low residential densities that continue to be conducive to hobby-farming and the equestrian lifestyle. As with the Hunt Country Agriculture and Estates designations, large lot sizes, deep setbacks, clustering and preservation of key scenic features should be maintained. Minimum lot size should be **5 acres**. Land located within this designation will most likely be served by well and septic.

Rural Residential

The Rural Residential designation is intended for those areas of the Township where large-lot residential development exists or is desired, but where existing or adjacent parcel sizes are insufficient to qualify for either the Acreage or Hunt Country Estates designations. Large lot sizes (**2.5-acre** minimum) and/or clustering should continue to be employed to promote an attractive rural setting. Property located within the Rural Residential designation will most likely be served by well and septic.

Suburban Residential

The Suburban Residential designation seeks to promote a spacious residential setting of a common suburban density – one (1) unit per acre, or roughly **one (1) acre** minimum lot sizes. Clustering of home sites is recommended for these areas, allowing for the preservation of natural areas and scenic features typically attributed to areas of much lower density. These areas may be found within or outside of the Township's Urban Service Areas and sanitary sewer district, driven in part by whether percable land or sewer capacity is available.

Village Residential (9,000 - 25,000 sq. ft. Lot Size)

Intended primarily for the core areas of Oxford Township in proximity to the Village of Oxford (Primary Urban Service areas), the Village Residential designation is intended to provide residential settings of a greater density, focused on creating high-quality neighborhood settings of a more traditional character. Three distinct minimum lot sizes are anticipated for these areas – **25,000, 12,000 and 9,000 sq. ft.** – which correlate to densities of approximately **1.5, 3, and 4 units per acre**, respectively. To achieve the traditional neighborhood character intended for these areas, emphasis should be placed on streetscaping and architecture (street trees, prominent front porches, sidewalks, smaller setbacks, de-emphasized garages, architectural variety, etc.). Provision of pedestrian and recreational amenities is also critical to the quality of these residential areas. Developments of this density should be located within water/sewer service districts and limited to the urban service areas.

Multiple Family Residential

The Multiple Family Residential designation is intended to provide areas in the Township for buildings containing multiple dwelling units, such as apartments, attached condominiums, or townhomes. These areas are meant to be higher in density than detached single-family homes. Given these densities, it is important that multiple family developments are sited within sanitary/water service districts and within the Urban Service Area boundaries. In order to achieve consistency with the traditional development pattern associated with the Village of Oxford, attention should be paid to

architectural style, creation of meaningful public space, and the provision of pedestrian and recreational amenities in new multiple family developments.

This Plan calls for two Multiple-Family Residential designations with varying densities, dependent upon the provision of infrastructure, transportation capacities, and adjacent land uses and densities:

> **Multiple-Family Residential (Medium-Density):** Maximum **four (4) dwelling** units per gross acre.
>
> **Multiple-Family Residential (High-Density):** Maximum **eight (8)** dwelling units per gross acre.

Manufactured Housing Community

The Manufactured Housing Community designation is intended to contain planned communities of manufactured housing, whether they are mobile home parks or mobile home condominiums. The overall density of these areas should not exceed six **(6) units per acre**, or other densities as determined by State law. Given these densities, it is imperative that attention be paid to the provision of open space and pedestrian amenities in order to create a desirable living environment.

Village Commercial

The Village Commercial designation includes sites for existing or future commercial development compatible with the character of the Village of Oxford. To achieve this, commercial buildings should have a strong relationship to the sidewalk and road; parking should generally be placed at the side or rear. Village Commercial areas should primarily serve the day-to-day shopping and service needs of Township residents. As such, large-format retailers ("big-box" users over 65,000 sq. ft.) and regional shopping centers should be carefully regulated.

Village Mixed-Use

The Village Mixed-Use designation is intended to support and complement downtown Oxford by promoting a mixture of compatible neighborhood commercial, office, and residential land uses. The intent is to allow for both a horizontal mix (separate buildings) and vertical mix (same building) of uses. Single-use buildings should be planned as an integrated development, offering a variety of uses in close proximity to one another; conversely, in the case of vertical mixed-use, neighborhood commercial and office uses should be promoted on the first floor with residential above to facilitate an active street front. Residential density should not exceed **eight (8) units per gross acre**. Design guidelines should be developed and incorporated to ensure an attractive

transition from commercial to single-family areas. Envisioned residential uses include lofts, apartments, townhomes, mixed-use buildings, and senior housing.

Office/Service

The Office/Service designation is meant to include existing and future sites for general and professional offices, banking and financial establishments, and other similar uses. As with the Village Commercial designation, new office and service buildings should have a strong relationship to the sidewalk and road and utilize architectural styles compatible with those found within the Village of Oxford. Parking should generally be placed at the side or rear.

Research/Office

The Research/Office designation is intended to promote the development of high-tech, research and development, and corporate office types of uses. Such uses are envisioned to be situated in attractively-landscaped, campus-like settings. Because these uses are not expected to generate the high truck volumes or produce the environmental impacts often associated with conventional industrial development, Research/Office uses are generally acceptable in proximity to residential areas (given careful consideration of performance standards, screening, and buffering).

Light Industrial

The Light Industrial designation is intended for industrial development having limited environmental and external impacts (light manufacturing, warehousing, etc.). Light industrial development should be well buffered (through setbacks and landscape screening) from adjacent residential areas and major roadways. Such uses are intended to be enclosed within a building and any external effects are not to be experienced beyond property boundaries.

General Industrial

The General Industrial designation is intended for industrial uses having greater external impacts (noise, vibration, truck traffic, etc.) than light industrial development. Because of the potential impacts on adjacent property, only one area in the Township is identified as General Industrial on the Future Land Use Map (the existing Xcelsior Drive off Lapeer Road). Environmental impacts from these uses should be regulated through performance standards in the Zoning Ordinance.

Industrial/Commercial Mixed Use

The Industrial/Commercial Mixed-Use designation is intended to promote a mixture of compatible light industrial, research/office, and commercial uses within a planned setting. The Township should seek and promote economic development initiatives for these areas, and promote Low-Impact Design (LID) and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building practices. Given the planned mixture of uses, safe and complementary vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns, natural resource preservation and landscape screening and buffering, and appropriate relationships between land uses should be promoted.

Public/Institutional

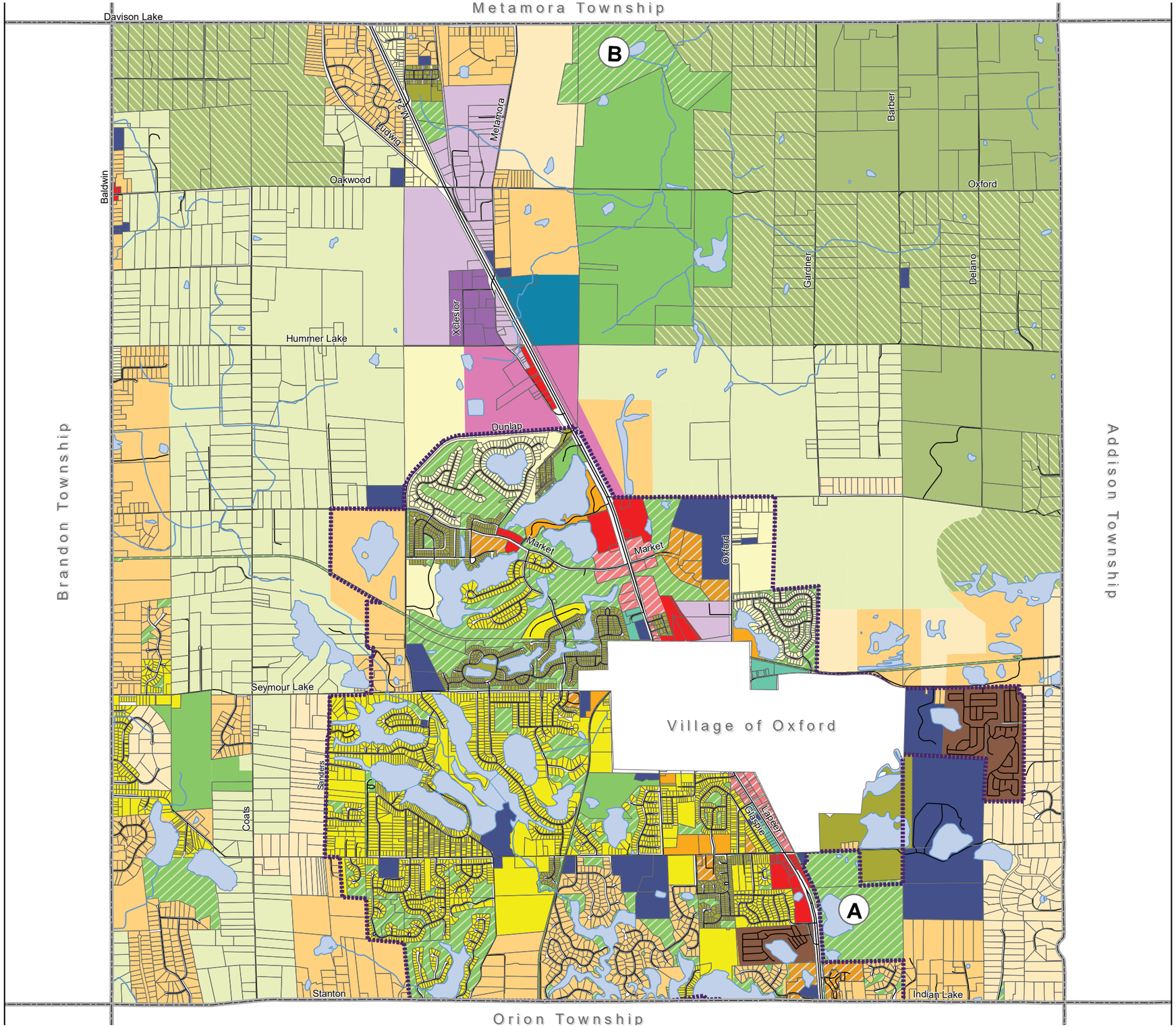
The Public/Institutional designation covers a wide spectrum of public and quasi-public uses, including municipal buildings, utilities, police and fire facilities, schools, churches and related institutional uses. Treatment of these areas should be sensitive to adjacent uses, particularly residential.

Private Recreation/Conservation and Alternate Future Land Use Designations

Private Recreation/Conservation areas are located where existing private recreation facilities are in operation (i.e. private golf course, private conservation easement, etc.). These uses are scattered throughout the Township. Note that the Future Land Use Map includes alternate future land use designations for several Private Recreation/Conservation areas. The Master Plan recognizes that private recreation areas (i.e. golf courses) may be sold or closed due to economic conditions, and may not be maintained as private recreational land in perpetuity. Therefore, the alternate future land use designations signify appropriate land uses (in addition to recreational) for these sites in the event that the property is sold/closed. Alternate future land use designations are based upon consistency and compatibility with adjacent existing and future land uses.

Public Recreation/Conservation

Public Recreation/Conservation areas include public park, conservation areas, public golf courses, and other publicly-owned open spaces, as well as existing or potential public recreational greenway corridors. The preservation of additional open space and conservation areas is addressed in the Open Space and Greenway Plan section of this chapter.



- Public Park/Conservation
- Private Park/Conservation
- Hunt Country Agricultural - 20 acres
- Hunt Country Estates - 10 acres
- Acreage Estates - 5 acres
- Rural Residential - 2.5 acres
- Suburban Residential - 1 acre
- Village Residential - 25,000 sq. ft.
- Village Residential - 12,000 sq. ft.
- Village Residential - 9,000 sq. ft.
- Multiple Family Medium Density
- Multiple Family High Density
- Mobile Home Park
- Industrial /Commercial Mixed Use
- Village Mixed-Use
- Village Commercial
- Office/Service
- Research/Office
- Public/Institutional
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial
- Primary Urban Service Area

Alternative Future Land Use

- (A) Rural Residential
- (B) Hunt Country Estates

MAP 12
FUTURE LAND USE

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 14. 2019

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Future Roads and Rights-of-Way Plan

The Future Land Use Plan discussed previously in this chapter identifies areas for future growth and development to address housing, shopping, and employment demand. In order to accommodate such growth, however, the Township's infrastructure needs must also be addressed. The Township's Roads Master Plan, developed in 2004, identifies the need for various improvements in the current road system. The Roads Master Plan recognizes that the extension, connection or widening of various roads throughout the Township may be necessary to facilitate safe and efficient vehicular circulation as the Future Land Use Plan is implemented.

In planning for the construction of new roads or improvement of existing roadways, complete streets infrastructure and design features should be evaluated and incorporated to create safe and inviting environments for all users to walk, bike, and use public transportation. Features of complete streets include sidewalks, safety paths, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes and infrastructure that facilitates safe crossings of road rights-of-way (such as curb ramps, crosswalks, refuge islands, and pedestrian signals). Additional design features such as pedestrian-oriented signage and lighting, benches, bicycle facilities, and street trees can improve the safety and comfort of users.

The Future Roads and Rights-of-Way Plan (**Map 13**) identifies planned right-of-way widths of existing roads and potential extensions to enhance circulation throughout the Township. The various potential road extensions are discussed below. While Oxford Township does not have direct jurisdiction over its roads, the Township is in the position to influence road agency policy (Road Commission for Oakland County and the Michigan Department of Transportation) and promote consistency between future land uses and transportation networks.

Thomas Road Extension

In the event of future residential and industrial development north of Waterstone on the west side of M-24, additional routes for north-south travel will likely be necessary. The extension of Thomas Road – from Oakwood Road south to Dunlap – is envisioned to play this role. This connection would provide an alternate means of reaching the Village of Oxford from the northwestern area of the Township, while providing a distinct separation between the future light industrial developments and residential uses planned for this area.

Hummer Lake Road Extension

The extension of Hummer Lake Road from Metamora Road to Gardner Road could facilitate east-west circulation through the northern areas of the Township, while providing access to future office and research uses planned near M-24. The envisioned

extension entails an additional crossing of M-24, which would require coordination with MDOT.

M-24 – North Oxford Road Connector

To supplement the existing means of east-west travel in proximity to the Village of Oxford, it is envisioned that an additional connection between M-24 and North Oxford Road will be developed through the eastern portion of Waterstone.

Ray Road – Lakeville Road Connector #1 and #2

As property to the northeast of the Village of Oxford is developed, additional north-south routes will be necessary to ease the burden on North Oxford Road and provide additional alternatives to M-24 for local travel. Two connections between Ray and Lakeville Roads are envisioned to accomplish this: 1) A southerly extension from the Ray Road/N. Oxford Road intersection; and 2) A southerly extension from the Ray Road/Delano Road intersection. In addition, these roads may also be used to physically separate the various densities of future residential in this area, which are intended to step down in density moving west to east. The easternmost of these road connections is shown in proximity to a high-quality natural area near the Ray Road/Delano Road intersection and should be routed in such a way that these natural features are not impacted.

Lakeville Road – Drahner Road Connector

In order to relieve congestion on the roads in the Village of Oxford (particularly Burdick and Glaspie), a bypass route is envisioned to allow travelers from the eastern and northeastern portions of the Township to circumvent the Village while heading south. The possibility of extending Barr Road farther south from Lakeville Road to Drahner Road should be explored to accomplish this bypass route.

Westlake at Waterstone

A new connection to Dunlap Road is envisioned in conjunction with the Westlake phase of the Waterstone development, allowing access to and from Market St.

Complete Streets

On August 1st, 2010, the State of Michigan legislature signed into law the Complete Streets amendments to the State Trunkline Highway System Act (Act 51 of 1951) and the Planning Enabling Act (Act 33 of 2008). The law provides an approach to transportation planning and design that considers *all* street users – vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities – during the various planning and design stages of a transportation project. It also requires that the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and local road commissions consider the community's goals and desires for road projects within their boundaries.

Complete Streets provide facilities that allow all users, irrespective of their age or abilities, to use the street as a mode of transportation. A Complete Street allows bicycles, pedestrians, transit users, and those with disabilities to easily and safely use roads within their community. Complete Streets policies help to ensure that community engineers and planners design roadways to accommodate all users and transportation modes, not just motorists.

Facilities that make a street "complete" depend upon the existing conditions and the intended users. It's never a "one-size-fits-all" scenario. Examples include curb ramps, audible or tactile signals for blind pedestrians, longer crossing times, and bike lanes that are free of obstacles.

Benefits of Complete Streets

The National Complete Streets Coalition is a non-profit organization that promotes the development and implementation of policies and practices that ensure that streets are safe for people of all ages and abilities. The organization lists a number of benefits that complete streets can provide to a community. Complete streets can:

- Encourage healthy and active lifestyles.
- Provide children with opportunities to reach nearby destinations in a safe manner.
- Provide alternatives to sitting in traffic.
- Better integration of land use and transportation.
- Reduce pedestrian risk.
- Help to create a livable community.

For more information, visit smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/

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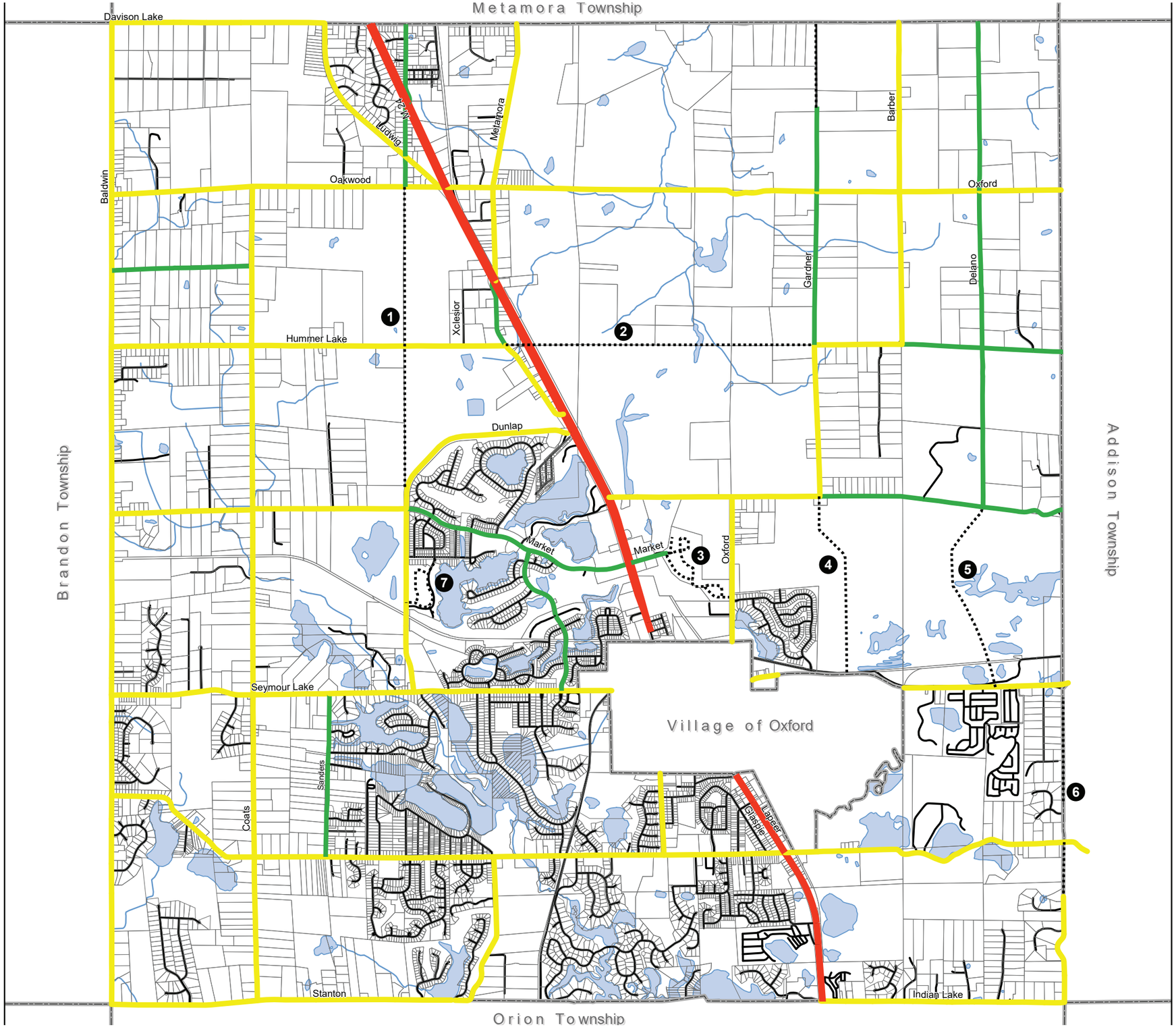

Variable State Route
120' Right-of-Way
86' Right-of-Way
60'-66' Right-of-Way
Future Roads

1. Thomas Rd. Extention
2. Hummer Lake Rd. Extention
3. M-24 - Oxford Rd. Connector
4. Ray Rd. - Lakeville Rd. Connector #1
5. Ray Rd. - Lakeville Rd. Connector #2
6. Barr Rd, Extension
7. Westlake at Waterstone

MAP 13
FUTURE ROADS AND RIGHT-OF-WAY

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 18. 2017

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Safety Path, Open Space and Greenway Plan

As the land uses envisioned on the Future Land Use Plan are realized, it is imperative that they are accompanied by a comprehensive system of safety paths, greenways and open space preserves to ensure that the high-quality of life presently associated with Oxford Township is maintained. Proposed open space preserves, greenway corridors, and safety paths are shown on the Safety Path Master Plan (Map 14), and the Open Space and Greenway Plan (Map 16). Each of the elements illustrated on these maps are discussed within the following sections. Open spaces associated with private development projects are also discussed.

Safety Paths

The Safety Path Master Plan (dated November 2015) calls for the extension of safety paths along several public roadways, with priority given to several areas. The priority safety path segments are highlighted in the table below.

Table 16. – Priority Safety Path Extensions

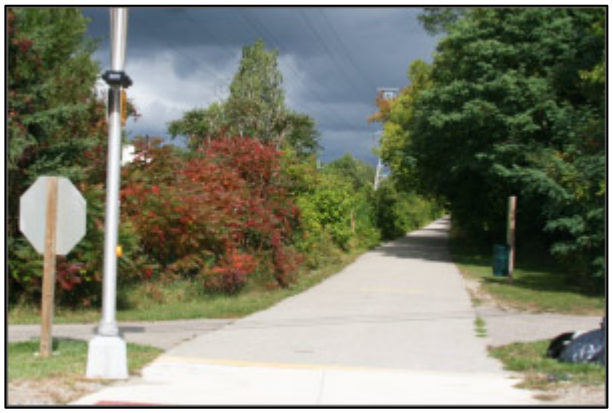
Priority Number	Street	Side of Road	From	To
1	Seymour Lake Rd.	South	Dunlap Rd.	Baldwin Rd.
2	Lapeer Rd. (M-24)	East/West	Oxford Village	Drahner Rd.
3	Lakeville Rd.	South	Chinkapin Rill	Barr Rd.
4	Old RR ROW	-	E. Drahner Rd.	Indian Lake Rd.
5	Lapeer Rd. (M-24)	West	Market St.	Stony Lake Park
6	Ray Rd./Oxford Rd.	South/West	Lapeer Rd. (M-24)	Oxford Rd.
7	Dunlap Rd.	East	ITC Corridor	Market St.
8	Sanders Rd.	East	Seymour Lake Rd.	Squaw Lagoon Dr.
9	Sanders Rd.	East	Squaw Lagoon Dr.	W. Drahner Rd.
10	E. Drahner Rd.	North	Oxford Lakes Dr.	Barr Rd.

Source: Charter Township of Oxford Safety Path Master Plan, November 2015

The proposed network of safety paths was influenced by the distribution of existing and future residential development, the presence of existing safety paths, and the location of community destinations (parks, schools, nature areas, shopping, etc.), and was further guided by the Township's Open Space and Greenways and Transportation goals and objectives. Much of the Township's current network of safety paths is fragmented, extended only across the frontage of recently-developed property. Thus, many of the safety path segments proposed within the Safety Path Master Plan require only the connection of existing small segments. In some cases, however, existing but deteriorated lengths of path may require replacement.

Polly-Ann Trail

Oxford Township contains approximately four (4) miles of the Polly-Ann Trail, a regional non-motorized trailway spanning between Orion Township and Kings Mill in Lapeer County. The trail enters the Township from Orion Township in the south, traverses through the Village of Oxford, and travels east along Lakeville Road toward Addison Township. A segment of Oxford Township's portion of the Polly Ann Trail is planned for the Iron Belle Trail, a state-wide trail stretching from Belle Isle in Detroit to Ironwood in the western Upper Peninsula.



A portion of the Polly-Ann Trail traverses through Oxford Township, connecting Orion Township to the south and Addison Township to the east.

Greenways

The Open Space and Greenway Plan (**Map 16**) involves the development of five greenways within the Township: the Ortonville-Oxford connector via the ITC utility corridor, the Flint River Aquatic Corridor, the Paint Creek Aquatic Corridor, the Flint River Greenway, and the Flint River/Village Connector Greenway. Each is described below:

Ortonville-Oxford Connector – This greenways segment, connecting the Village of Oxford with the Village of Ortonville via a DTE utility corridor, has been identified as a critical element of the regional trails network by the Oakland County Trails Master Plan. Establishment of this greenway will require fundraising efforts and coordination with utility franchises for the acquisition of the corridor. Collaboration with Brandon Township should be sought to concurrently implement both communities' segments.

Flint River Aquatic Corridor – Not necessarily intended to be a pedestrian/recreationally-oriented greenway, protection of this corridor is sought to protect this tributary of the Flint River and its sensitive headwaters located within Oxford Township. Establishment of this greenway will require coordination with the MDNR, Devil's Ridge Golf Course, and other adjacent property owners for the acquisition of necessary land or easements. Collaboration with Metamora Township should also be pursued to extend the Township's preservation efforts.

Paint Creek Aquatic Corridor – Similar to the Flint River Aquatic Corridor above, the small portion of the Paint Creek located along the southern edge of the Township should be buffered to the extent possible to protect this valuable waterway.

Flint River Greenway – To complement the Flint River Aquatic Corridor discussed above, this greenway segment is meant to offer a pathway that skirts the significant wetland areas surrounding the South Branch of the Flint River.

Like the aquatic corridor, establishment of this greenway will require coordination with the MDNR, Devil's Ridge Golf Course, and other adjacent property owners. Collaboration with Metamora Township should also be pursued to extend the Township's preservation efforts.

Flint River/Village Connector– This greenway segment is proposed to provide a northerly scenic and recreational connection from the Village of Oxford and Polly Ann Trail to the protected areas around the South Branch of the Flint River (and the related Flint River Greenway) as well as the future safety path along M-24. This greenway is proposed to follow the westernmost Ray Road/Lakeville Road connector, and then travel cross-county to the Flint River. Because this greenway does not follow an established corridor or roadway, close coordination and negotiation with appropriate property owners along the proposed greenway will be necessary.

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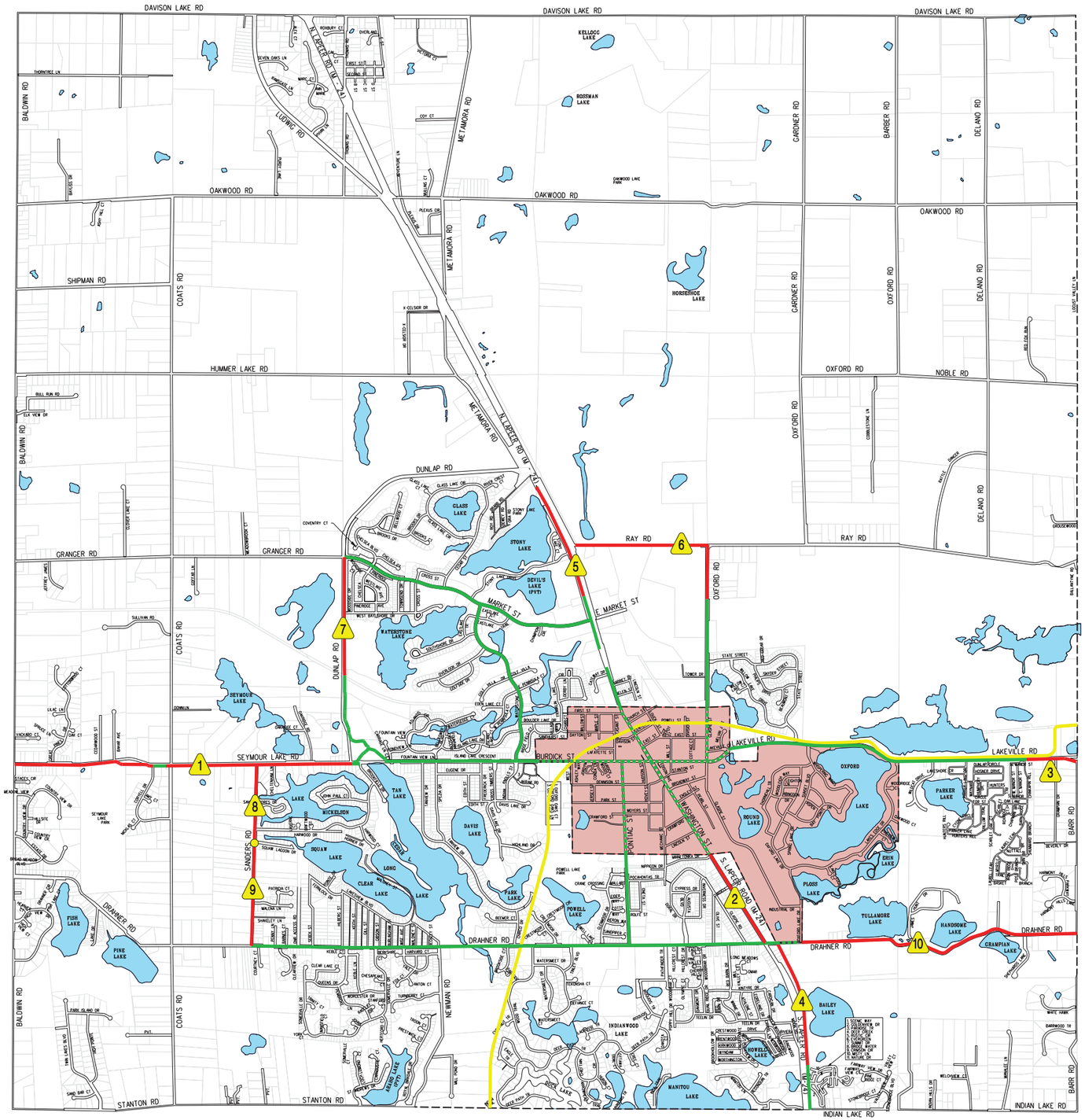

LAST UPDATED: NOVEMBER 18, 2015

Map 14.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF OXFORD SAFETY PATH MASTER PLAN

Priority	Street	Path Location (Side of Road)	From	To	Approximate Length
1	Seymour Lake Rd.	South	Dunlap Rd.	Baldwin Rd.	9375'
2	Lapeer Rd. (M-24)	East & West	Oxford Village	Drahner Rd.	6200'
3	Lakeville Rd.	South	Chinkapin Rill	Barr Rd.	1500'
4	Old RR ROW	-	E. Drahner Rd.	Indian Lake Rd.	3800'
5	Lapeer Rd. (M-24)	West	Market St.	Stony Lake Park	3500'
6	Ray Rd. / Oxford Rd.	South / West	Lapeer Rd. (M-24)	Oxford Rd.	5500'
7	Dunlap Rd.	East	ITC Corridor	Market St.	3500'
8	Sanders Rd.	East	Seymour Lake Rd.	Squaw Lagoon Dr.	2400'
9	Sanders Rd.	East	Squaw Lagoon Dr.	W. Drahner Rd.	3000'
10	E. Drahner Rd.	North	Oxford Lakes Dr.	Barr Rd.	8400'

LEGEND

- EXISTING SAFETY PATH
- EXISTING VILLAGE SIDEWALK
- PROPOSED SAFETY PATH
- POLLY ANN TRAIL
- PRIORITY (1)

N

SCALE: 1" = 1500'

OXFORD TOWNSHIP

SHARPE ENGINEERING

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Potential Conservation/Natural Areas

In 2004, the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) prepared the "Oakland County Potential Conservation/Natural Areas Report" for Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services. The MNFI maintains the state's only comprehensive, continuously-updated database of endangered, threatened, or special concern plant and animal species, natural communities, and other natural features. Their report identifies places dominated by native vegetation that have various levels of potential for harboring high-quality natural areas and unique natural features. The MNFI identifies many wetland and woodland areas within Oxford Township as potential conservation/natural areas. These areas are considered likely to provide a wide variety of critical ecological services; however, only actual field investigation can determine this.

Based on a variety of criteria, the MNFI report ranks the delineated areas as high, medium or low priority. It is important to note that even the "low" priority natural areas are of significant value. As such, for the purposes of this Plan, the various rankings have been removed; please refer to the report itself for the MNFI's methodology and resulting rankings. The MNFI report did identify two areas of high-priority within Oxford Township. These include the Flint River headwaters area, and the vicinity south and east of the intersection of Ray and Delano Roads. As such, these areas should be given the greatest consideration for conservation/preservation efforts.

The high-priority areas can be treated in several ways. First, these areas can be the object of conservation-oriented land acquisition activities; the outright purchase of sensitive lands is the most direct approach to preservation. Secondly, these areas can be the focus of open space preservation required within individual land development projects. Lastly, these areas highlight properties whose owners should receive conservation education materials

Green Infrastructure

In 2008, Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services conducted a visioning workshop with Oxford Township to discuss the future of the Township's green infrastructure network. Green Infrastructure is an interconnected network of open spaces, natural areas, and waterways, with a focus on conservation values in concert with land development. A green infrastructure network supports native species, sustains natural ecological processes, maintains air and water resources, and contributes to health and quality of life. Conserving green infrastructure can produce economic benefits for communities, businesses, and residents, and provide a framework for sustainable development. The map on the following page is a culmination of the visioning session held at the Township. The areas are broken up into four (4) distinct classifications, as follows:

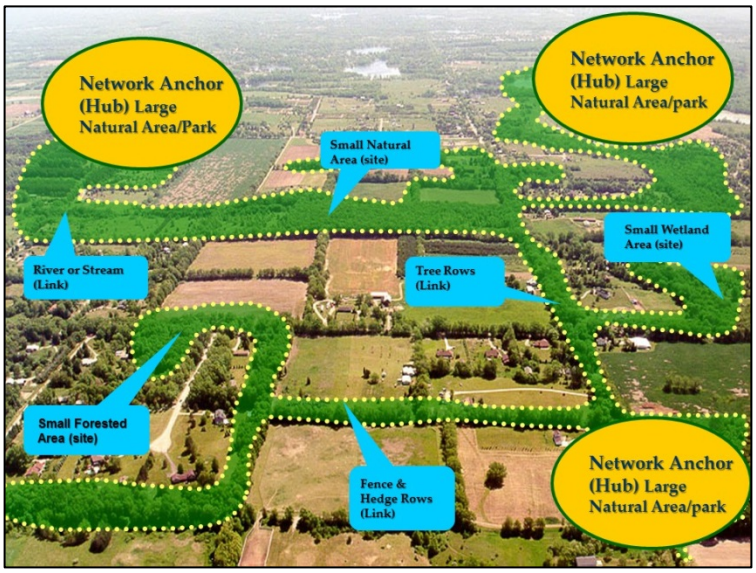
Hubs – Hubs anchor the network and provide an origin or destination for wildlife. Hubs range in size from large conservation areas to smaller parks and preserves. Hubs provide habitat for native wildlife and help maintain natural ecological processes.

Sites – Sites are smaller ecological landscapes that can serve as a point of origin or destination or incorporate less-extensive ecologically important areas.

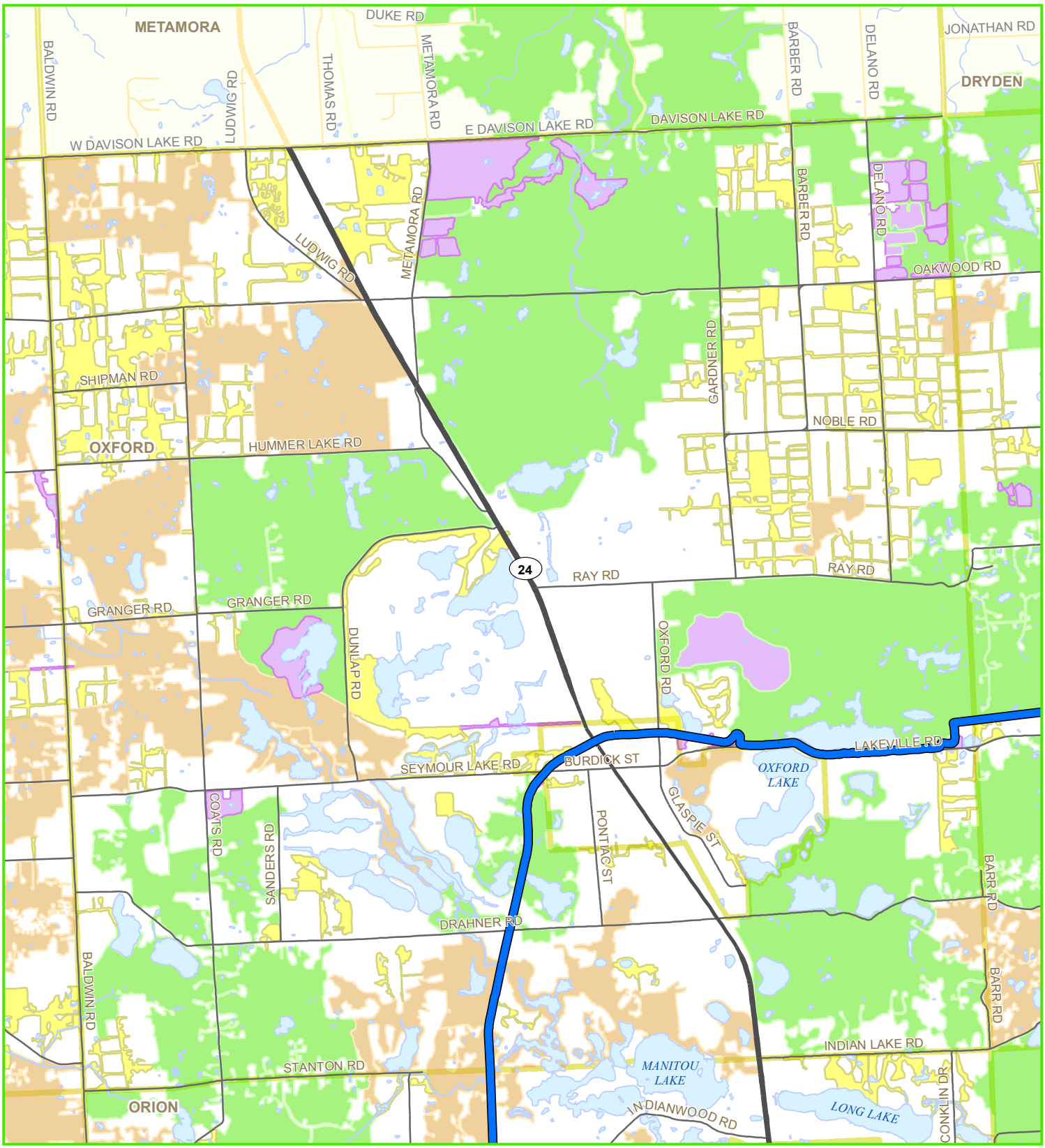
Links - Links are the connections that hold the network together and enable it to function. They facilitate movement from one hub to another.

Other – Areas not classified as hubs, sites or linkages, but with some importance to the network.

Figure 4. – Green Infrastructure Illustration



Source: Huron River Watershed Council



Green Infrastructure

OAKLAND COUNTY MICHIGAN

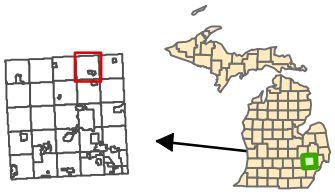
L. Brooks Patterson, County Executive

Environmental Stewardship Program
Planning & Economic Development Services

The information provided herewith has been compiled from recorded deeds, plats, tax maps, surveys and other public records. It is not a legally recorded map or survey and is not intended to be used as one. Users should consult the information sources mentioned above when questions arise.

Map 15. Oxford Township Green Infrastructure

- Hub
- Site
- Link
- Other Restoration Link
- Municipal Boundaries
- Recreational Link



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Woodland Network Opportunity

Areas identified as presenting a "woodland network opportunity" include all of the Township's tree rows and minor woodlots. Significant land throughout the northwest and northeast areas of the Township contain these features, forming the loose network across the north half of the Township. Through the preservation and enhancement of these areas, the Township has the opportunity to establish a comprehensive network of wildlife corridors, while at the same time preserving a portion of the scenic and agricultural heritage of the Oxford area. The identified tree rows, when contained within a proposed development, should be preserved to the greatest degree possible.

Open Space within Developments

Although not explicitly identified within the Open Space and Greenway Plan map, the importance of open space within private developments is unquestionable. While these private open spaces may not be the largest or contain the most sensitive environmental areas, private open space often represents the closest natural areas to residents within residential developments. Thus, these areas may make the greatest difference in Township residents' everyday lives. Corridors of undeveloped land through otherwise developed areas also provide critical wildlife sanctuary.

Open space provided within private developments should be designed to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- Coordination with adjacent open spaces to provide contiguous expanses of open areas;
- Preservation of areas identified as "potential conservation/natural areas;"
- Preservation of buffers along internal or adjacent watercourses, lakes, or wetland areas;
- Preservation of existing tree rows and woodlots representing a "woodland network opportunity;" or
- Buffering or screening of development from view along rural or scenic roadways.

While it may be difficult to achieve every objective within a single development, many can be realized through creative project design. As the Planning Commission and Township Board work with developers, careful evaluation and prioritization may be necessary on a project-by-project basis.

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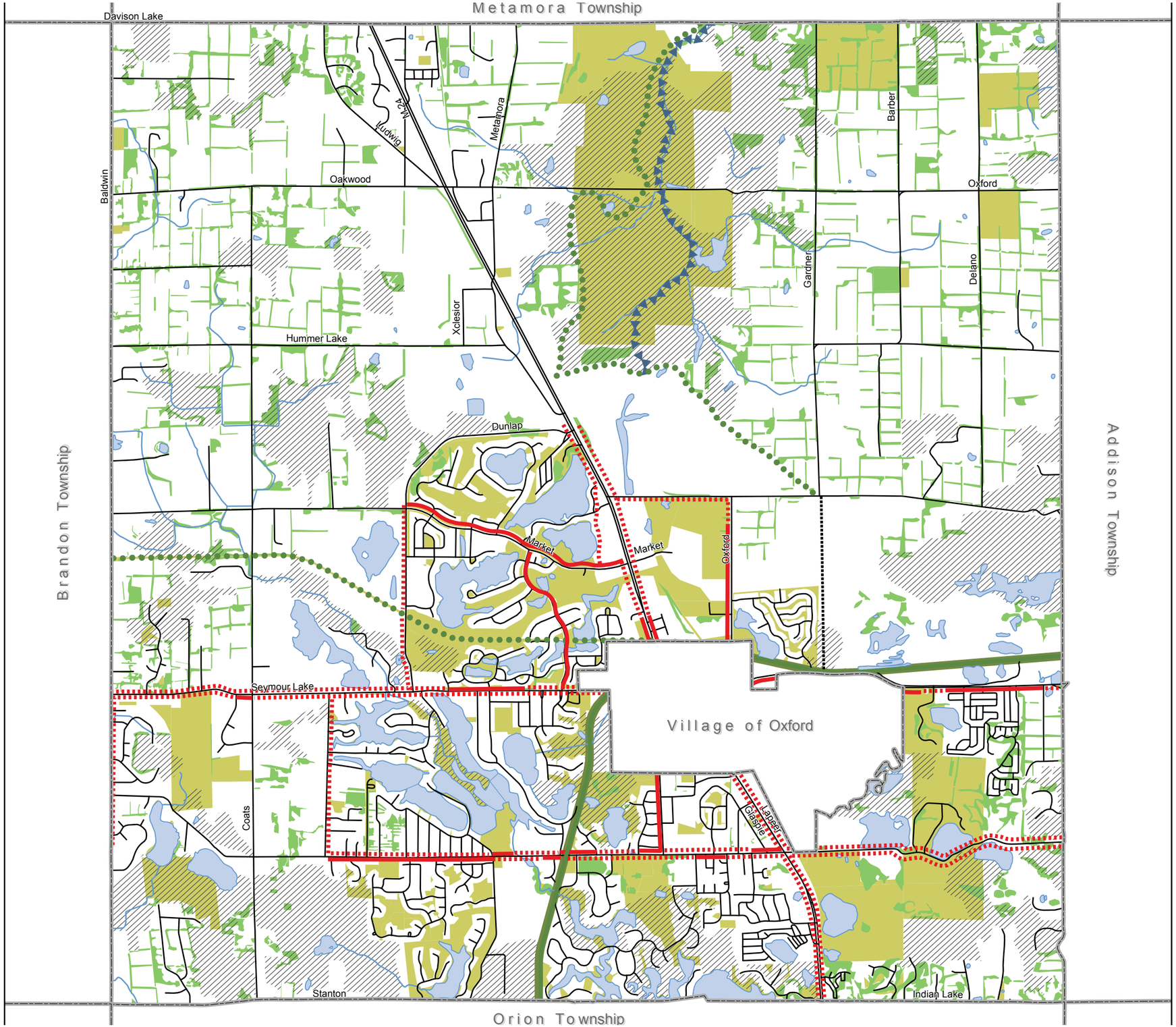

Existing Greenway
Proposed Greenway
Existing Safety Path
Priority Safety Path
Aquatic Corridor
Future Road Extension
Potential Conservation / Natural Areas
Woodland Network Opportunity
Public/Quasi-Public/RecreationalLands
Ponds and Lakes
Streams and Rivers

MAP 16
OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAY PLAN

Oxford Township, Oakland County

N

0 0.5 1 Miles

Source: Oxford Township, Oakland County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
October 18, 2017

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ZONING AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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ZONING AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementation strategies determine how the Master Plan's guidelines and recommendations are to be put into practice and become reality. The purpose of this chapter is to identify tools that the Township can use to implement or continue to employ the recommendations of the Master Plan. Where applicable, specific actions to be pursued are provided.

Public Support, Communication, and Community Involvement

The success of the Master Plan will depend heavily on the public's understanding of the planning process and the Plan's specific goals, objectives and strategies. An engaged population will be more likely to recognize complex land use issues and understand zoning decisions and development proposals. The Township must effectively communicate the importance of long-range planning and encourage citizen participation in ongoing planning efforts.

Specific actions which will help to develop an understanding of, and support for, the Township's planning process include:

- Ensure that copies of the Master Plan are readily available for viewing at the Township Hall and on the Township website.
- Ensure that copies of the most recent adopted Zoning Ordinance are readily available for viewing at the Township Hall and on the Township website.
- Post the Future Land Use Map in the Township Hall where it is clearly visible.
- Post a regularly-updated list of current events pertaining to planning and zoning matters in the Township.
- Notify residents of meetings that will address development and public service improvement proposals. Notifications should be provided through multiple sources including a Township newsletter, Township Hall postings, the Township website, local newspaper, and other means.
- Hold periodic meetings to discuss planning efforts and provide opportunities for public input.
- Promote opportunities for civic involvement such as participation in community advisory boards, neighborhood watch programs, and similar institutions.
- Develop concise pamphlets/brochures that emphasize the most important visions of this Master Plan and have them available at Township Hall.

Zoning Plan

Zoning is the development control that is most closely associated with planning. Originally, zoning was intended to inhibit nuisances and maintain property values. This intent continues; however, zoning should serve additional purposes, including:

- Promote orderly growth in a manner consistent with land use policies and the Master Plan.
- Promote an attractive physical environment by allowing for variation in lot sizes, architectural features, and appropriate land uses.
- Accommodate special, complex, or unique uses through mechanisms such as planned unit developments, special land use permits, or overlay districts.
- Guide development to prevent future conflicting land uses (i.e. heavy industrial uses next to residential areas).
- Preserve and protect open space and significant natural features in accordance with the Master Plan.

The Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map, in themselves, should not be considered as the major long-range planning policy of the Township; rather, the Zoning Ordinance and Map should implement the Master Plan's vision.

Land Use and Zoning Correlation

The Zoning Plan describes the relationship between the future land use categories and Future Land Use Map contained within this Master Plan and the zoning districts contained within the adopted Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, the Zoning Plan discusses innovative zoning techniques that can be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance and identifies specific zoning adjustments that can be made to further align the Zoning Ordinance with the Master Plan. Not to be confused with the Zoning Ordinance, the Zoning Plan provides recommendations for linking the Township's Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, and land development ordinances with the future land use vision.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008) requires Zoning Plans to be included within the Master Plan. The table on the following page provides a comparison between the future land use designations identified within this Master Plan and the associated zoning districts contained within the existing Township Zoning Ordinance.

Table 17. – Future Land Use/Zoning Correlation

Future Land Use Category	Associated Zoning District
Public Park/Conservation	R, Recreation
Private Park/Conservation	R, Recreation
Hunt Country Agricultural (20 acres)	AG, Agricultural (20 acres)
Hunt Country Estates (10 acres)	SF-3, Suburban Farms (10 acres)
Acreage Estates (5 acres)	SF-2, Suburban Farms (5 acres)
Rural Residential (2.5 acres)	SF-1, Suburban Farms (2.5 acres)
Suburban Residential (1 acre)	R-3, Single-Family (1 acre)
Village Residential (25,000 sq. ft.)	R-2, Single-Family (25,000 sq. ft.)
Village Residential (12,000 sq. ft.)	R-1, Single-Family (12,000 sq. ft.)
Village Residential (9,000 sq. ft.)	R-1A, Single-Family (6,000 sq. ft.)
Multiple-Family Medium Density	RM, Multiple-Family
Multiple-Family High Density	RM, Multiple-Family
Mobile Home Park	MHC, Manufactured Housing Community
Industrial/Commercial Mixed-Use	NONE
Village Mixed-Use	NONE
Village Commercial	C-1 Local Commercial C-2, General Commercial
Office/Service	O, Office
Research/Office	RO, Research-Office
Public/Institutional	Various Districts
Light Industrial	I-1, Light Industrial
General Industrial	I-2, General Industrial

Zoning Techniques

The Township Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed to ensure that it is consistent with the goals, objectives and strategies of the Master Plan. The Township has identified specific areas of the Zoning Ordinance that should be reevaluated, including Planned Unit Development (PUD) regulations, clustering, and conditional rezonings. Additional innovative zoning techniques such as overlay zoning may be implemented to meet the goals of the Master Plan.

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)

Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) are large, integrated developments that are tied to a specific plan. Treated in a similar manner as a rezoning, PUDs have a number of advantages over conventional development. In particular, PUDs offer a degree of flexibility not typically available with conventional subdivision and zoning methods. For example, PUDs can allow for a mix of land uses, reduction of lot size, increase in height, or other waivers from conventional zoning regulations in exchange for public benefits. The flexibility permitted by the PUD process, especially lot through lot clustering, can allow for the preservation of significant areas of open space and natural features. Additionally, the PUD option gives a community more discretionary power in the approval process.

Despite these advantages, communities must be careful to find a delicate balance between the desire to be flexible and the need to spell out concrete PUD standards. Clear eligibility criteria should be stated. The PUD option is currently available in all Oxford Township zoning districts.

Overlay Zoning

Overlay zones are special districts which supplement, but do not replace, the underlying zoning districts and regulations. Overlay zoning may be used to address special conditions and features, such as historic areas, wetlands, and other environmentally-sensitive areas, or can encourage specific types of development, such as form-based or mixed-use, without disrupting the underlying zoning plan. Overlay zones are especially useful when an area containing unique opportunities or constraints spans across several different zoning designations. Essential elements of overlay zones for natural resource protection include: protection of vegetation and trees; setbacks from sensitive areas such as wetlands and streams; percentage requirements for open space preservation; and avoidance of critical habitats. Overlay zones may also be utilized to implement building design or streetscaping requirements for a certain area of the community.

Density Transfer

The concept of density transfer involves moving (transferring) proposed development density from one part of a site to another part that is more suitable for development. The process typically results in a portion of the site remaining undeveloped and the developed portion having a higher net density, although the overall gross density of the site will not be increased. Density transfers may be used to preserve natural features such as wetlands, woodlands, open space, or stream corridors, while permitting a reasonable use of the remainder of the property. This method is applicable to larger parcels and should only be used in conjunction with larger planned developments, such as PUDs. Density transfers should meet the following standards:

1. All lands involved in the transfer should be located within the same municipality and the owner should have fee simple title to the lands;
2. All lands involved should be contiguous;
3. The total number of dwelling units permitted by the underlying zoning district should not be exceeded.
4. The transfer should be made as part of a single PUD or a similar large-scale development; and
5. The land that receives the transfer of density should, with the additional dwelling units, be compatible with adjacent existing and planned uses.

Conditional Rezoning

Conditional rezoning is a technique permitted by the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (MZEA) which allows an applicant to voluntarily attach conditions to a rezoning request which would further restrict the use of the property. For example, an applicant may wish to submit a rezoning request to an intense industrial category, with an added voluntary condition that the property will not be used for outdoor storage. Such conditions may be narrower than what is permissible under the Zoning Ordinance. However, the technique cannot be used to loosen the regulations of the underlying zoning district. In order to protect the community from the other uses that could be permitted by the more intense category, the applicant can **voluntarily** propose conditions that would prohibit the use of the property to more intense uses.

Zoning Adjustments

In reviewing the Future Land Use/Zoning Correlation table, several inconsistencies can be identified. The following zoning adjustments should be considered to further align the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Multiple-Family Density

The Land Use Plan identifies two tiers for multiple-family density – medium-density (4 dwelling units per acre) and high-density (8 dwelling units per acre). However, the adopted Zoning Ordinance only contains one multiple-family district (RM) which permits up to 10 dwelling units per acre. The Township should explore splitting the existing RM zoning district into two districts to account for the various multiple-family densities depicted on the Future Land Use Map.

Village Mixed-Use District

Consider the creation of a new mixed-use residential, commercial, and office zoning district, or overlay district, on Lapeer Road adjacent to the Village of Oxford. The new district should permit a variety of complementary uses and permit horizontal and vertical mixing of uses. The district should incorporate "form-based" elements or establish design standards to improve the quality of development and to promote a smooth transition to downtown Oxford. Design standards should encourage side/rear-yard parking and promote pedestrian connectivity and pedestrian amenities.

Industrial/Commercial Mixed-Use District

Consider the creation of a mixed-use light industrial, office, and commercial district on North Lapeer Road. The mixed-use district should permit a flexible list of compatible uses, including light industrial and manufacturing, high tech, and incidental office and commercial uses. The district should promote campus-style developments and include design standards, such as building materials and façade articulation.

Design Guidelines

This Master Plan continuously references "design standards" or "guidelines" that can be established to promote high-quality development, allow for the creation of an attractive streetscape, and create a defining image for highly-visible portions of the Township. These standards or guidelines may be incorporated into the Township's zoning ordinance or established as a separate document and can be applied to new developments within sub-areas and corridors within the Township, including but not limited to:

- Lapeer Road Corridor
- Village Mixed-Use Future Land Use Area
- Industrial/Commercial Mixed-Use Future Land Use Area
- Future residential development within extractive areas.

Design guidelines may fall into one of several categories, including building and site design guidelines and streetscape guidelines. Graphics and pictures should be provided within the document to help applicants and developers visualize the Township's vision. The following topics can be incorporated into a design guideline document:

<u>Building and Site Design</u>

- Building orientation toward the street.
- Reduced setbacks.
- Parking in side or rear yard.
- Vehicular cross-access.
  and pedestrian connectivity.
- Low-impact stormwater and building design.
- High-quality and natural-looking materials.
- High-quality site landscaping.
- Community amenities.

<u>Streetscape</u>

- Greenbelt and entrance landscaping.
- Pedestrian-scaled lighting.
- Consistent fencing.
- Sign design guidelines.

While the purpose of the design guidelines (whether incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance or established as a separate document) should be to establish design expectations and promote a vision for certain areas of the community, the Township should recognize site constraints or practical difficulties that could prevent full compliance with the guidelines. Therefore, the document should incorporate a flexibility clause which can allow certain waivers if the intent of the document can be achieved.

Source: Dixie Highway Design Guidelines, Springfield Township

PUD Adjustments

In order to ensure that the Township offers a flexible PUD development option while also maintaining clear development and density guidelines and regulations, the following adjustments should be considered for the Planned Unit Development section of the Zoning Ordinance:

- *Strengthen PUD Eligibility Criteria:* Clarify the definition of "recognizable benefit" to ensure that a project with a higher net density will result in a clearly recognizable and substantial benefit, both to the residents of the project and the overall quality of life in the Township. Consider establishing quantifiable eligibility criteria or a point-based system to make it clear to both the Township and developers as to whether or a not a project can qualify as a PUD.

- *Limit maximum PUD density to a factor which is only slightly higher than that permitted within the underlying zoning district:* Several purposes of the PUD option are to permit homes to be clustered together to preserve large tracts of open space and to permit compatible mixtures of uses, not necessarily to permit an overall density higher than that permitted within the underlying zoning district. However, when a higher density is proposed, it should be limited to ensure that the project will be consistent with the character of the adjacent area.

  As currently written, the PUD ordinance permits an applicant to propose an alternate underlying zoning district for PUD projects. Additionally, the Zoning Ordinance allows for density credits (up to a 15% increase in density) for exemplary projects The Township should consider strengthening the base PUD standards by setting a maximum density increase, encouraging applicants to pursue the "density credit" option.

Land Use Matrices and Use Review

To increase the user-friendliness of the Zoning Ordinance, the Township should consider reformatting the list of permitted and conditional uses into a *land use matrix.* A land use matrix classifies uses into clear categories, such as "General Sales and Service," "Food, Entertainment and Recreation," and "Institutional," and includes a letter next to each use to indicate whether it is permitted by right or as a special use, or not permitted within the district. The inclusion of a consolidated matrix featuring all districts can allow for cross-district comparisons, shorten the length of the overall Ordinance, and can eliminate inconsistencies in land use descriptions. The Township can use this opportunity to review the uses permitted by the current Zoning Ordinance and modify as necessary.

Figure 5.- Example of Land Use Matrix

Residential, Recreation Conservation, and Agricultural District Use Table								
Use Category	Districts							Specific Use Standard (Article, Section)
	Residential					Agricultural / Recreation		
	R-1A	R-1B	R-2	R-3	MHP	AG	RC	
Recreation								
Conservation Area / Game Refuge / Forest Preserve						P	P	
Country Clubs, including Accessory Uses and Buildings including Club House, Swimming Pool, and Sale of Food	C	C	C	C				11.22
Golf Courses	C	C	C	C		C	C	11.22
Golf Driving Range						C		11.22
Noncommercial Parks and Recreational Facilities	C		C	C		C	P	11.44
Commercial Recreational Facility						P	P	11.44
Playground	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Public and Private Campground							C	
Institutional / Cultural								
Adult Day Care Center				C				11.05
Adult Day Care Home	C	C		C		C		11.05
Adult Foster Care, Congregate Facility				C				11.05
Adult Foster Care, Family Home				C				11.05
Adult Foster Care, Large Group Home				C				11.05
Adult Foster Care, Small Group Home				C				11.05
Cemeteries	C	C	C	C		C	C	11.20
Convalescent Centers / Congregate Care				C				11.08
Day Care Centers and Preschools	C	C	C	C	C	C		
Family Day Care Homes	P	P				P	P	
Group Day Care Homes	C	C				C	C	
Places of Worship	C	C	C	C	C	C		11.21
Primary/Secondary Schools	C	C	C	C	C			11.18
Publicly Owned/Operated Office and Service Facilities	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	
Utility and Public Service Buildings and Facilities (without storage yards)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	
Utility and Public Service Buildings and Facilities (with outdoor storage yards)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	
Commercial WECS						C	C	14.11

P = Permitted Use C= Conditional Use

Source: Pittsfield Township Zoning Ordinance

A consolidated land use matrix allows for cross-district comparisons, can shorten the length of the overall Ordinance, and can eliminate inconsistencies in land use descriptions.

Rezoning Standards

When properly applied, the Zoning Ordinance accepts the realities of existing land use and gradually, as new development is proposed, directs growth in a manner than achieves the objectives of this Master Plan. As rezonings are considered, they should be compared to the concepts, policies, and future land use designations of this Master Plan, as well as factors such as adjacent land uses, infrastructure, transportation, and natural features. If a proposed rezoning is inconsistent with these factors, it should be discouraged. The Zoning Ordinance should be modified to include a list of clear criteria for evaluating a rezoning request.

Sometimes, a desirable land use is proposed which conflicts with a Master Plan (potentially due to a change in site conditions or infrastructure, among other factors). If the Planning Commission determines that the proposed land use would not be inconsistent with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan, and therefore a desirable alternative to the Plan, the Master Plan should be amended accordingly.

Signage

The Township will need to modify the Signage chapter of the Zoning Ordinance to comply with the recent Supreme Court case, Reed v. Town of Gilbert, AZ. As a result of the case, sign regulations may not make distinctions based on sign content, especially with regard to non-commercial signs.

Solar and Renewable Energy

The Township should consider modifying the Zoning Ordinance to accommodate solar energy systems and other forms of renewable energy. Language should include clear standards relating to the placement and dimensions of such systems, and efficiently outline the approval process.

Responsibilities

The Ordinance Review Sub-Committee and Planning Commission should take the lead in the implementation of the zoning adjustments listed within this section, with assistance from the Township's planning consultant. The Township Board will need to be involved from a budgeting standpoint.

Sub-Area Planning

Sub-area plans are detailed plans prepared for a smaller geographic area within a community. The Township may wish to consider adopting sub-area plans for several quadrants or corridors within the Township, including, but not limited to:

- Lapeer Road Corridor
- Northeast Quadrant ("Horse Country")
- Urban Service Area
- Extractive Site Redevelopment Areas

Responsibilities

The Planning Commission should take the lead in the development of sub-area plans, with assistance from the Township's planning consultant. The Township Board will need to be involved from a budgeting standpoint.

Other Development Ordinances

The Township has a number of other Ordinances outside of the Zoning Ordinance that relate to and regulate development within the community. The following considerations should be made so that these ordinances are aligned with the goals of the Master Plan. Several new ordinances may also be considered to implement this Master Plan. Coordination with the Township Board will be required for modifications to general ordinances.

Subdivisions and Land Division Ordinance

Ensure that the Land Division Ordinance complies with the Michigan Land Division Act. Consider restrictions on the creation of new flag lots and strengthen the language regarding the creation of "land-locked' parcels (parcels with no road frontage) in order to maintain adequate site access and restrict the number of unnecessary driveways and access easements.

Woodlands and Tree Protection Ordinance

Consider the creation of a separate woodland/tree protection ordinance, or incorporate standards into the existing Zoning Ordinance. Standards should encourage the preservation of existing significant woodland areas and mature trees, and establish replacement tree calculations.

Urban Service Area Expansion Policy

Consider the creation of an Urban Service Area expansion policy or ordinance based on the guidelines contained within this Master Plan. This document should establish policies for modifying or expanding the boundaries of the Urban Service Area, as shown on the maps within this Plan.

Responsibilities

In conjunction with one another, the Township Board and Planning Commission should take the lead in the development of these ordinances, with assistance from the Township's planning and engineering consultants and attorney.

Economic Development

Economic development is an important aspect of Master Plan implementation. According to the International Economic Development Council, economic development is defined as, "a program, group of policies, or activities that seeks to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community by creating and/or retaining jobs that facilitate growth and provide a stable tax base." To achieve this goal, long-term economic development strategies must be developed. Strategies to achieve long-term economic growth within the Township include:

Economic Diversification: Attract companies from broad economic sectors to balance swings in the market. The Township should continue its membership with Automation Alley and maintain a close alliance with Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services.

Tax-Base Development: Private sector investment increases the public sector's ability to provide necessary public services that benefit the community, and thus offer a higher quality of life.

Supporting Existing Businesses: Economic development can provide the means of expanding an existing business while working with local entrepreneurs to produce the goods and services presently only available outside of the community.

Positive Marketing: Promote the community via press releases, newsletters, web pages, and through engaging professionals.

Streamlined Zoning Procedures: Ensure that zoning forms and procedures are simple to understand and contain all necessary information. Improved zoning forms can lead to more expedient development process and decrease potential cost to developers. Oxford Township should continue to participate in Oakland County's One Stop Ready (OSR) Program.

Oakland County "One Stop Ready" Program

The One Stop Ready (OSR) Program encourages communities to refine their economic development processes for the purpose of implementing their community vision. The ultimate goal of the One Stop Ready initiative is to lower the barriers for business that want to locate within Oakland County.

Being one stop ready means understanding the effects of leadership, processes and time, and implementing a culture of collaboration with community stakeholders, businesses, developers, residents and resources. The One Stop Ready program encourages communities to think in the context of a developer, a business, or a resident making a decision to locate or invest in their community.

The OSR Program has five core tools and strategies that are considered best practices for improving economic development readiness:

1. Pre-application meetings with all necessary staff and consultants;
2. Internet accessibility;
3. Track projects from application through occupancy;
4. Mechanisms to gather input from the business community; and
5. Clear permitting processes and efficient time frames.

Source: www.advatageoakland.com

Funding and Budgeting

Capital Improvement Program

Capital Improvement Programs (CIPs) consider the funding and timing of all Township-related capital needs, including utilities, parks, facility improvements (such as the Township Hall or fire stations), etc. CIPs typically include a listing of proposed public facility and infrastructure improvements over the next six to ten years, a description of each project, its location and cost, as well as the means of financing and timing.

The Capital Improvement Program should be part of the Township's annual budgeting process. If the capital improvement process is instituted in the future, the Master Plan should be used as a key reference document in its development.

Local Funding

A number of tools and programs are available to help implement Township improvement projects. At the local level, funding can be raised through the following methods:

General Fund: The Township Board may make an appropriation from the general fund to finance certain improvements. However, this method may need to be supplemented by other funding tools, as general funds are usually needed to finance essential services.

Revenue Bonds: Revenue bonds are paid off through revenues generated by a project. For example, many municipal water systems are financed through revenue bonds with user charges paying off the bond. Revenue bonds are not necessarily backed by the full faith and credit of the Township, do not require voter approval, and are usually sold at higher interest rates than general obligation bonds.

Special Millage: The Township Board may ask for voter approval to earmark increased millage for a specific improvement project.

Special Assessment: Projects that benefit only a segment of the community may be financed through special assessments to the benefitting property owners.

Additional Methods of Implementation

Plan Education

Citizen involvement and support will be necessary as the Plan is implemented. Local officials should consistently strive to develop procedures that make citizens more aware of the planning and zoning process and the day-to-day decision making that affects implementation of the Plan. A continuous program of discussion, education, and participation will be extremely important as the Township moves toward realizing the goals and objectives contained within the Master Plan. The Township may wish to develop concise pamphlets that emphasize the most important visions of this Master Plan and have them available at Township Hall.

Plan Updates

The Master Plan should not become a static document left to sit on a shelf; instead, the Plan should be a flexible document which changes over time. The Township Planning Commission should attempt to re-evaluate and update portions of the Plan on a periodic basis. In accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (Michigan Public At 33 of 2008), the Township is required to review the Master Plan every five (5) years to determine whether to amend the current Plan or adopt a new Plan. However, the Planning Commission should set goals for the review of various sections of the Master Plan on a yearly basis.

Coordination with Adjacent Communities

As part of the Master Plan adoption process, and in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Oxford Township notified neighboring jurisdictions, Oakland County, regional agencies, and registered public utility companies, railroads, and other governmental entities of the intent to update its Master Plan. Subsequent to the notification and eventual completion of the draft, the noticed entities were asked to review and make comments on the proposed Plan. The comments were compiled and taken into consideration by the Township. Upon receipt of these comments, the Planning Commission held a public hearing as required per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act.