



2009

Master Plan Update

Adopted December 16, 2009



This is to certify that this is the official Master Plan
of Ash Township, Adopted December 16, 2009.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele Geiermann", written over a horizontal line.

Michele Geiermann
Ash Township Clerk

TOWNSHIP BOARD RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION:
ASH TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

The following Resolution was offered by Board Member Carmack and seconded by Board Member Leiffer:

WHEREAS, Ash Township has established a Planning Commission under the Township Planning Act, State Public Act 168 of 1959, as amended; and,

WHEREAS, The Township Planning Commission is required by Section 31 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, State Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, to prepare and adopt a master plan as a guide for the physical development of the township; and,

WHEREAS, The Township Planning Commission has worked with the consultants at Wade Trim to oversee a planning process that included significant public input, as well as investigations and surveys of the existing resources; and,

WHEREAS, The plan was presented to the public at a hearing held on October 20, 2009, before the Planning Commission, with notice of the hearing being provided in accordance with Section 43 of Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended; and,

WHEREAS, The Township Planning Commission did review the proposed plan, consider public comment, and recommend adoption of the Master Plan on October 20, 2009, and,

WHEREAS, The Township Board of Ash Township concurs with the recommendations and proposals contained in the plan pertinent to the future development of the township;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The Township Board of Ash Township does hereby adopt the Ash Township Master Plan by means of the passing of this resolution, hereby adopted this 16th day of December, 2009.

AYES: 5

NAYS: 0

ABSENT: —

I, Michele Geiermann, Clerk of Ash Township, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a resolution that was adopted by the Ash Township Board at their regular meeting held on December 16, 2009.


Michele Geiermann
Ash Township Clerk



Ash Township
1677 Ready Road
Carleton, MI 48117

Board of Trustees

Robin Carmack, Supervisor
Michele Geiermann, Clerk
Doug Leiffer, Treasurer
Adam Grabetz, Trustee
Terry Wickenheiser, Trustee

Planning Commission

Eric Smith, Chair
Sid Stumpmier, Co-Chair
Fred Wickenheiser, Secretary
Tom Anson
Jim Booth
Robin Carmack
Don Kesckes
Jan Langton
Dan Mieden

Township Officials

James Vaslo, Township Manager/Zoning Administrator
Jon Tackett, Building Inspector
Susie Forrest, Building Assistant

Assistance Provided By:

 **WADETRIM**
25251 Northline Road
Taylor, MI 48180
www.WadeTrim.com



Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Authority	1
Purpose	2
Public Involvement	2
 Chapter 2: Community Description	 3
Population Profile	3
Housing Profile	6
Economic Profile	9
 Chapter 3: Existing Land Use	 13
Methodology	13
Land Use Distribution	13
 Chapter 4: Natural Features	 15
Climate	15
Topography	15
Watercourses	15
Wetlands and Woodlands	16
Soils	17
 Chapter 5: Transportation and Utilities Assessment	 19
Transportation Assessment	19
Public Utilities Assessment	21
 Chapter 6: Community Goals and Policies	 23
Basis for the Goals and Policies	23
Community Goals	24
Natural Features	24
Agriculture	24
Residential Development	24
Commercial Development	25
Industrial Development	25
Community Facilities and Services	26
Economic Development	26
Policy Implementation	27

Chapter 7: Future Land Use Plan	29
Introduction	29
Future Land Use Categories	29
Zoning Plan	33
Chapter 8: Implementation	37
Introduction	37
Public Support for the Long Range Plan	37
Zoning Ordinance	37
Enforcement	38
Capital Improvements Program	38
Planning Education	38
Funding Opportunities	39
5-Year Master Plan Review	39
Appendix: Mapping	41



Ash Township is located in the southeast corner of Michigan's Lower Peninsula, in Monroe County, just north of the City of Monroe. It is a place where people have chosen to live, work, and play, and, therefore, is a place where certain services and facilities are required. Police, fire protection, parks, religious institutions, government centers, retail shops, meeting places, and a host of other facilities are woven together by physical infrastructure and communication routes.

In support of these regular operations, the Township has created a number of commissions, including the Planning Commission. As one of its many duties, the Planning Commission has oversight responsibility for the creation and maintenance of the Township Master Plan. In part, Michigan State statutes provide that the purpose of a Township Master Plan is: to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare; to encourage the use of resources in accordance with their character and adaptability; and to consider the character of the Township and its suitability for particular uses judged in terms of such factors as trend in land and population development. The Township Master Plan includes narrative, maps, charts, and graphic material that provide a basis for the Planning Commission's recommendations for the future development of the Township. The Township Master Plan is linked with the Township Zoning Ordinance. The Township Zoning Ordinance is the regulatory mechanism through which the usage of land is governed.

This document is an update to previous master planning efforts: the 1998 Ash Township Master Plan and the Ash Township Master Plan Update, 2004-2005. This 2009 Master Plan Update incorporates some elements mostly unchanged from the previous Plans including the community description, existing land use analysis, and natural features analysis. However, several new or revised elements are included in the 2009 Master Plan Update, including a new transportation and utilities assessment, revised goals and policies, revised future land use plan, new zoning plan, and a new implementation section.

The 2009 Master Plan Update is a realistic assessment of current conditions and expressions of the future goals and vision of the Township, defining the form and character it seeks to achieve. The Master Plan Update is designed to provide guidance to both the public and the private sectors regarding a range of topics beyond future land use, such as economic and residential growth decisions. Finally, the Master Plan Update will be responsive to the land use changes that occur within the Township. The development of land can be dynamic and alter significantly over time. Therefore, the plan must be flexible to these changes while still advancing the goals and objectives of the community.

Authority

The Township derives its authority to Master Plan from the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, which was recently adopted by the State Legislature to replace the Township Planning Act. Public Act 33 states:

"The planning commission shall make and approve a master plan as a guide for development within the planning jurisdiction."

The master planning process is cooperative and public. Input from the public and various governmental entities are gathered throughout the planning process. Public Act 33 requires the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing before the final adoption of a master plan. Also, Public Act 33 requires review of a community's master plan after a five-year period but allows for change at any time. However, a public hearing is required if the Planning Commission wishes to alter or amend their master plan after its original adoption, as is the case with this 2009 Master Plan Update. The Ash Township planning process offers the Planning Commission the opportunity to analyze and address any significant changes to the Township that may result in needed modifications to previous planning efforts. It also provides the opportunity to ascertain progress in implementing the goals and policies outlined in previous planning efforts.

Purpose

The planning process was designed to involve conscious selections of policies and land use choices relating to growth and development in the Township. The Master Plan Update serves to promote these policies through the following:

1. Provides a general statement of the Township's goals and provides a comprehensive view of the community's preferred future.
2. Serves as the primary policy guide for local officials when considering zoning, land division, capital improvement projects and any other matters related to land development. Thus, the Master Plan provides a stable and consistent basis for decision making.
3. Provides the statutory basis for the Township Zoning Ordinance, as required by the State of Michigan.
4. Helps to coordinate public improvements and private development activities to assure the judicious and efficient expenditure of public funds.

Public Involvement

The process of developing a Master Plan which is both meaningful to the community and feasible in its implementation must enjoy the participation of a larger stakeholding group. In order to garner this needed input, direct communication between the Planning Commission and Ash Township stakeholders was pursued throughout the 2009 Master Plan Update process. Knowledge regarding the concerns of the community was gained through multiple meetings, a stakeholder focus group session, as well as a public hearing. This type of direct interaction with stakeholders allows for a more complete framework of the concerns and needs of Ash Township community members.

2

Community Description

The purpose of this analysis is to describe the social characteristics of Ash Township, which is an essential element in the short- and long-term planning goals of the community. Social characteristics include the size of the population, age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic levels, employment, and housing value, tenure and unit age. Compiling and examining data on these elements will help guide Township Officials in determining future land use needs.

Population Profile

Historical Population Growth

Population trends for Ash Township and its neighboring communities are presented in **Table 1**. The population of

the Township has increased by 17.4 percent (748 residents) since 1970. Of the 12 neighboring communities displayed in the table, ten recorded an increase in population during this same period. The Township ranked ninth for total growth in population; and Huron Township recorded the greatest percentage growth in population (at 71.1 percent).

Monroe County and the State of Michigan both realized population increases between 1970 and 2000. The 22.4 percent increase for Monroe County does not mirror the 12.0 percent increase of the State. These figures do indicate a positive trend for continued regional growth.

Population Projections

Data in **Table 2** provides the results of three approaches to projecting Ash Township's population levels for the year 2020. Population projections may be calculated in numer-

TABLE 1: Population Trends: 1970-2000

Place	1970	1980	% Change (70-80)	1990	% Change (80-90)	2000	% Change (90-00)	% Change (70-00)
Ash Township*	4,300	4,902	14.0%	4,710	-3.9%	5,048	9.2%	17.4%
<u>Monroe County</u>								
Village of Carleton	1,503	2,786	85.4%	2,770	-0.6%	2,562	-7.5%	70.5%
Dundee Township	2,439	2,820	15.6%	2,712	-3.8%	2,819	3.9%	15.6%
Village of Dundee	2,472	2,575	4.2%	2,664	3.5%	3,522	32.2%	42.5%
Bedford Township	21,505	22,902	6.5%	23,748	3.7%	28,606	20.5%	33.0%
City of Monroe	23,894	23,531	-1.5%	22,902	-2.7%	22,076	-3.6%	-7.6%
Exeter Township	2,971	3,236	8.9%	3,253	0.5%	3,727	14.6%	25.4%
Berlin Township	5,510	6,488	17.7%	6,286	-3.1%	6,924	10.1%	25.7%
Frenchtown Township	14,685	18,204	24.0%	18,210	0.03%	20,777	14.1%	41.5%
Village of South Rockwood	1,477	1,353	-8.4%	1,221	-9.8%	1,284	5.2%	-13.1%
<u>Wayne County</u>								
Huron Township	8,030	9,849	22.7%	10,447	6.1%	13,737	31.5%	71.1%
City of Flat Rock	5643	6,853	21.4%	7,290	6.4%	8,488	16.4%	50.4%
City of Rockwood	3,225	3,346	3.8%	3,141	-6.1%	3,442	9.6%	6.7%
Monroe County	119,215	134,659	13.0%	133,600	-0.8%	145,945	9.2%	22.4%
Michigan	8,875,083	9,262,078	4.4%	9,295,297	0.4%	9,938,444	6.9%	12.0%

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton

1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 US Census - SF1

ous ways but all involve the extrapolation of past population growth trends into the future.

Three sources were utilized to calculate population projections for Ash Township. The Woods and Poole projection is based on a regional technique that links counties together to capture flows in population. This method considers the nation as a whole simultaneously, and develops projections based on observations of the overall flow and movement of population, economic activity, and historical data within the nation. In this manner, it is able to predict, for instance, how a population shift in Washington D.C. could have an impact on population in Maryland. The second projection was made by the Office of the State Demographer and is based on 1990 Census data. This projection is based primarily on historical data, birth and death rates, and immigration or emigration. The SEMCOG model is based on a multi-variate model taking into account transportation, migration and birth, and death rates within the greater Southeast Michigan area.

Based on these assumptions, Ash Township's population is estimated to range between 5,188 to 6,011 persons by the year 2020. As can be seen in **Table 2** and **Chart 1**, all projections show population increases beginning in 2010.

Age Groups

The median age in 2000 for Ash Township was 37.6 years, making its population older than many of its surrounding communities, with the exception of Dundee Township (38.3). Monroe County and the State of Michigan, as a whole, also have a similar median age. Approximately 1,836 Township residents (36.4 percent) were over 45 years of age. At the other extreme, 1,752 residents (34.7 percent) were under the age of 25.

Ash Township's school-age population (5 to 19 years) totaled 1,190, or 23.6 percent of the Township population. This value is on par with the percentages of most of the neighboring communities. Another notable feature of the Township's age structure is the lower percentage of residents ages 65 and above (9.9 percent). The number of Ash Township residents in this age group again is on par with the same age cohort in most similar communities (**Table 3**).

Table 2: Population Projections 2000-2020

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Woods & Poole Projects¹					
Monroe County	145,945	144,840	147,390	150,300	153,300
Ash Township*	5,048	5,010	5,098	5,199	5,302
Office of the State Demographer¹					
Monroe County	145,945	145,700	145,700	149,100	150,000
Ash Township*	5,048	5,040	5,040	5,157	5,188
SE Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG)²					
Ash Township*	5,048	5,734	5,913	5,954	6,011

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton

¹ Projections assume Ash Township will maintain a constant share of Monroe County's population.

² SEMCOG 2035 Regional Development Forecast (RDF) Community Detail Report (April, 2008)

Chart 1: Population Projection 2020

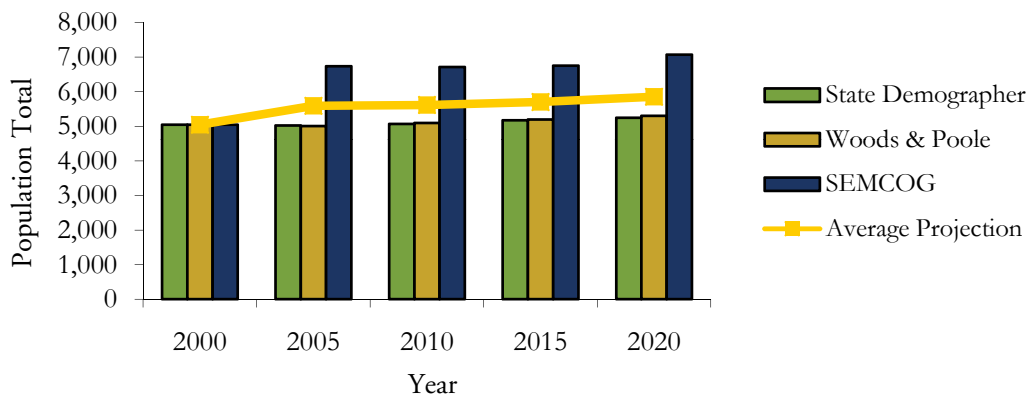


Table 3: Age Group Comparison: 2000

Place	Under 5 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	15 to 19 years	20 to 24 years	25 to 34 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	55 to 59 years	60 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 to 84 years	85 years and over	Median age (years)
Ash Township*	312	400	430	360	250	558	902	810	296	232	317	147	34	37.6
Monroe County														
Village of Carleton	187	209	220	191	170	371	410	372	90	68	153	96	25	33.4
Dundee Township	168	205	240	237	133	271	517	496	174	133	150	67	28	38.3
Village of Dundee	317	276	260	270	279	590	544	378	127	120	168	140	53	30.7
Bedford Township	1,753	2,201	2,582	2,205	1,173	3,160	5,189	4,507	1,592	1,130	1,797	1,033	284	37.5
City of Monroe	1,664	1,668	1,666	1,488	1,380	3,108	3,366	2,788	885	756	1,492	1,213	602	35.2
Exeter Township	221	304	309	312	188	447	713	587	168	120	221	106	31	36.2
Berlin Township	455	519	539	500	410	889	1,178	382	266	370	185	34	36.4	36.4
Frenchtown Township	1,460	1,553	1,689	1,565	1,407	3,093	3,455	2,732	985	742	1,190	664	242	33.8
Village of South Rockwood	72	107	92	103	83	147	226	220	72	46	74	34	8	37.1
Wayne County														
Huron Township	985	1,106	1,186	966	719	1,852	2,504	2,185	693	478	655	331	77	35.2
City of Flat Rock	698	726	663	650	607	1,169	1,402	1,179	340	245	432	316	61	32.8
City of Rockwood	227	238	235	247	234	467	569	588	186	127	196	107	21	36.5
Monroe County Michigan	9,683	11,126	12,095	10,946	7,960	18,747	24,799	21,376	7,384	5,607	9,019	5,387	1,816	36.0
	672,005	745,181	747,012	719,867	643,839	1,362,171	1,598,373	1,367,939	485,895	377,144	642,880	433,678	142,460	35.5

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton

2000 US Census - SF1

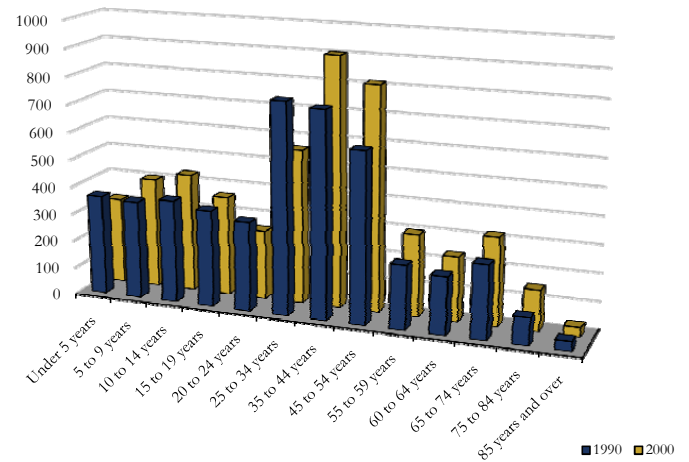
Table 4: Age Group Trends: 1990-2000

Age	1990	2000
Under 5 years	361	312
5 to 9 years	353	400
10 to 14 years	371	430
15 to 19 years	348	360
20 to 24 years	322	250
25 to 34 years	761	558
35 to 44 years	743	902
45 to 54 years	614	810
55 to 59 years	231	296
60 to 64 years	207	232
65 to 74 years	265	317
75 to 84 years	99	147
85 years and over	35	34
Median age (years)	32.2	37.6

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton

1990, 2000 US Census - SF1

Chart 2: Age Group Trends



Changes in Age Structure

The past decade, 1990-2000, shows significant changes in the age structure of Ash Township. The number of persons under the age of 20 increased by over 4 percent. The population of persons age 65 and older increased by 24.8 percent. These changes in population for Ash Township indicate an aging population balanced by an increase in younger families. This notion is also reinforced by the changing median age (Table 4 and Chart 2).

Household Size

Household size, as measured by the average number of persons per household, has been decreasing on a national level since the 1970's. This is true for both Monroe County as a whole and Ash Township. Table 5 provides

the household size trends for Ash Township and surrounding areas for a 10-year period. The number of persons per household in Ash Township has decreased at a similar rate than that of the average decrease for the surrounding area during the same 10-year period.

Declining numbers of persons per household often is accompanied by an increase in the total number of households and demand for new housing. This is often true even in circumstances of negative population growth. For example, a population of 1,000 with an average of 4 persons per household requires 250 dwelling units. The same population (1,000) with an average household size of 2 requires 500 dwelling units. Even with an unchanged population, there is a projected need for additional housing units.

According to SEMCOG's 2035 Regional Forecast, the average household size in Ash Township is projected to decline from 2.80 in 2000 to 2.55 by the year 2020 (a decline of 9 percent). The Township's projected population growth, coupled with the projected decline in household size, will result in a heightened need for new housing units through 2020.

Housing Profile

The Housing Profile section of the Master Plan describes the housing stock by age, type, value and tenure for Ash Township. This analysis will assist the Township in determining its future housing needs based on the characteristics of existing structures.

Household Type

The Household Characteristics Table (**Table 6**) outlines the total number of households in Ash Township, surrounding communities, Monroe County, and the State of Michigan, as well as a breakdown of family and non-family households.

When comparing Ash Township to surrounding areas, we see some significant percentage differences among the household categories. The Township has a higher concentration of family households than many surrounding communities. Ash Township has a significantly lower concentration of non-family households than surrounding areas. The percentage of female-headed households is also significantly lower than that of the majority of surrounding communities. Households with individuals under 18 years of age account for 38.8 percent of all households,

Table 5: Household Size 1990-2000

Place	1990	2000
Ash Township*	2.97	2.80
<u>Monroe County</u>		
Village of Carleton	2.82	2.57
Dundee Township	3.10	2.67
Village of Dundee	2.45	2.53
Bedford Township	2.94	2.76
City of Monroe	2.62	2.47
Exeter Township	3.2	2.95
Berlin Township	2.93	2.76
Frenchtown Township	2.74	2.65
Village of South Rockwood	2.99	2.85
<u>Wayne County</u>		
Huron Township	2.97	2.88
City of Flat Rock	2.73	2.66
City of Rockwood	2.85	2.60
<u>Monroe County</u>		
Michigan	2.84	2.69
	2.66	2.56

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton
1990, 2000 US Census - SF1

0.3 percent lower than the County, but 3.2 percent higher than State numbers.

Type of Structure

Data in **Table 7** details the residential structure types found in Ash Township and surrounding areas. The housing stock is composed mostly of single-family detached dwelling units. In 2000, just over 81 percent of the housing stock was categorized as one-unit structures. The next largest category of housing units is mobile home units, which make up 16.8 percent of the total housing stock. Except for the larger percentage (11.6 percent greater than

Table 6: Household Characteristics: 2000

Place	Total households	Family households (families)	Married-couple family	Female householder, no husband present	Nonfamily households	Householder living alone	Householder 65 years and over	Households with individuals under 18 years	Households with individuals 65 years and over	Average household size
Ash Township*	1,803	1,447	1,225	137	356	303	98	699	366	2.80
<u>Monroe County</u>										
Village of Carleton	998	678	484	136	320	267	101	387	218	2.57
Dundee Township	978	800	682	76	178	79	159	398	180	2.53
Village of Dundee	1,389	914	661	177	475	160	267	524	283	2.87
Bedford Township	10,327	8,083	6,863	867	2,244	1,895	824	4,202	2,236	2.76
City of Monroe	8,594	5,586	4,009	1,226	3,008	2,635	1,093	3,140	2,162	2.47
Exeter Township	1,262	1,005	868	85	257	205	71	516	258	2.95
Berlin Township	2,511	1,924	1,624	199	587	459	128	970	430	2.76
Frenchtown Township	7,733	5,601	4,335	847	2,132	1,735	615	3,034	1,471	2.65
Village of South Rockwood	450	359	301	40	91	67	26	183	88	2.85
<u>Wayne County</u>										
Huron Township	4,745	3,794	3,098	478	951	750	235	2,042	779	2.88
City of Flat Rock	3,181	2,306	1,645	527	875	729	274	1,363	615	2.66
City of Rockwood	1,318	929	736	135	389	319	108	479	245	2.60
<u>Monroe County</u>										
Michigan	53,772	39,933	32,241	5,426	13,839	11,665	4,565	21,005	11,460	2.69
	3,785,661	2,575,699	1,947,710	473,802	1,209,962	993,607	355,414	1,347,469	862,730	2.56

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton
2000 US Census - SF1

Table 7: Type of Housing Units: 2000

Place	Total housing units	1-unit, detached	1-unit, attached	2 units	3 or 4 units	5 to 9 units	10 to 19 units	20 or more units	Mobile home	Boat, RV, van, etc.
Ash Township*	1,884	1,534	0	11	6	0	8	9	316	0
Monroe County										
Village of Carleton	1,058	434	0	25	8	13	29	52	497	0
Dundee Township	1,022	1,014	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0
Village of Dundee	1,476	822	23	35	83	88	42	158	225	0
Bedford Township	10,659	8,930	194	168	93	147	40	308	770	9
City of Monroe	9,163	5,858	291	800	476	528	495	693	22	0
Exeter Township	1,307	1,216	22	30	22	3	0	0	14	0
Berlin Township	2,654	2,163	18	47	6	48	122	0	250	0
Frenchtown Township	8,247	5,204	96	72	158	350	159	544	1,664	0
Village of South Rockwood	461	432	3	15	4	7	0	0	0	0
Wayne County										
Huron Township	4,888	3,272	44	42	12	19	10	0	1,489	0
City of Flat Rock	3,291	1,773	57	71	72	360	103	135	720	0
City of Rockwood	1,353	914	43	19	56	74	74	77	96	0
Monroe County	56,471	42,044	1,097	1,546	1,071	1,596	1,141	2,103	5,858	15
Michigan	4,234,279	2,988,818	164,910	146,414	118,067	169,946	144,848	216,573	277,158	7,545

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton
2000 US Census - SF3

average) of detached single-family dwellings, this distribution of structural types is consistent with that of the surrounding area.

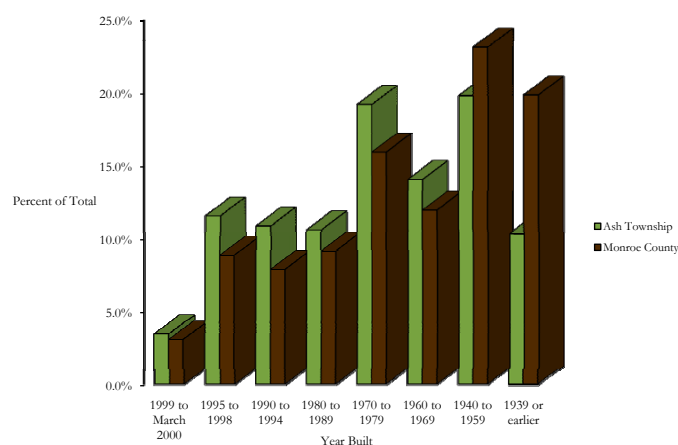
Age of Structure

The age of a dwelling unit is a factor used to evaluate the structural quality of the unit. The average industry standard for the life span of a single-family dwelling unit is generally 50 years. However, this typical life span often depends on the quality of the original construction and continued maintenance of the unit. Using this standard, some homes within the Township constructed prior to 1950 may be approaching the end of their utility.

Chart 3 identifies the age of year-round residential structures for Ash Township as compared to Monroe County. As is seen, the vast majority of the units (63.4 percent) in Ash Township were built in the decades prior to 1980. Of those homes, approximately 44 percent were built prior to 1970. When taking into consideration the average life span of a dwelling unit, about 70 percent of the single-family homes in the Township will be of marginal utility by the end of the decade in 2010. These homes will require regular maintenance to remain structurally sound.

Ash Township is slightly dissimilar in the age of its structures as compared to Monroe County. The structures in Ash Township are marginally younger. Monroe County has 55.0 percent of its structures built after 1960; Ash Township has 44.2 percent (**Table 8**).

Chart 3: Age of Structure 2000



Housing Tenure

Housing occupancy characteristics are presented in the following tables (**Table 9** and **Table 10**). According to the 2000 Census, 1,803 housing units were occupied. Of those homes, housing tenure was split between owner occupied (94.3 percent) and renter occupied (5.7 percent). These

Table 8: Age of Structure: 2000

Year Structure Built	Ash Township*		Monroe County	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total
1999 to March 2000	66	3.5%	1,760	3.1%
1995 to 1998	218	11.6%	5,028	8.9%
1990 to 1994	205	10.9%	4,475	7.9%
1980 to 1989	200	10.6%	5,176	9.2%
1970 to 1979	362	19.2%	9,000	15.9%
1960 to 1969	265	14.1%	6,758	12.0%
1940 to 1959	373	19.8%	13,063	23.1%
1939 or earlier	195	10.4%	11,211	19.9%
Total Structures	1,884		56,471	

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton

2000 US Census - SF3

percentages mark a rise in owner occupied housing rates from 1990 figures.

A small portion of the housing stock (78 units or 4.1 percent) in the Township was vacant at the time of the 2000 Census. However, due to the nation-wide housing downturn, vacancy rates have likely escalated within the Township. Although current data at the local level is not readily available, the U.S. Census' American Community Survey indicates that the County-wide vacancy rate as of 2007 was 9.6 percent. Generally, a five- percent vacancy rate is considered necessary to provide an adequate housing selection and to keep home prices from rising faster than inflation. Vacancy rates below five percent indicate a restricted housing market. Based on the 9.6 percent vacancy rate in Monroe County, the current supply of housing is likely sufficient to meet the short-term sale or rental needs of the local population.

Table 9: Housing Occupancy: 1990-2000

	1990	2000
Occupied Housing Units	1,588	1,803
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	1,452	1,700
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	136	103

1990, 2000 US Census - SF1

Housing Values

As illustrated in **Table 11**, the bulk of owner-occupied home values ranged between \$100,000 and \$200,000. Just 25 percent of owner-occupied homes in the Township were identified with a value greater than \$200,000. The distribution of dwelling units by value found in Ash Township is dissimilar to those of its neighbors and the larger region. In general, the housing values for Ash Township are generally higher than those in the surrounding area.

The median rent for the Township is \$533, which is on par with the average of the surrounding communities. In Monroe County as a whole, 67.2 percent of the renter occupied units in the Township have a contract rent less than \$750. Surrounding communities average 81.7 percent, 78.9 percent in Monroe County, and State of Michigan value at 77.4 percent.

Table 10: Housing Occupancy and Tenure: 2000

Place	Occupied Housing Units	Owner-Occupied Housing Units	Renter-Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units
Ash Township*	1,803	1,700	103	78
<u>Monroe County</u>				
Village of Carleton	998	828	170	63
Dundee Township	1,021	884	94	43
Village of Dundee	1,477	903	486	88
Bedford Township	10,327	9,180	1,147	332
City of Monroe	8,594	5,323	3,271	513
Exeter Township	1,262	1,145	117	45
Berlin Township	2,511	2,135	376	143
Frenchtown Township	7,733	5,954	1,779	511
Village of South Rockwood	450	402	48	14
<u>Wayne County</u>				
Huron Township	4,745	4,435	310	143
City of Flat Rock	3,181	2,303	878	110
City of Rockwood	1,318	963	355	35
Monroe County	53,772	43,536	10,236	2,699
Michigan	3,785,661	2,793,124	992,537	448,618

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton

2000 US Census - SF1

Table 11: Housing Values: 2000

Owner-Occupied										
Place	Specified Units	Less than \$50,000	\$50,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 to \$199,999	\$200,000 to \$299,999	\$300,000 to \$499,999	\$500,000 to \$999,999	\$1,000,000 or more	Median (dollars)
Ash Township*	1,114	18	175	273	370	251	27	0	0	162,000
Monroe County										
Village of Carleton	375	13	90	193	57	12	10	0	0	117,600
Dundee Township	672	40	119	240	170	103	0	0	0	137,700
Village of Dundee	651	41	179	336	79	16	0	0	0	113,600
Bedford Township	7,952	160	1,426	2,913	2,007	1,173	261	12	0	142,000
City of Monroe	4,971	191	1,438	2,253	682	277	124	6	0	115,500
Exeter Township	778	11	136	265	223	137	6	0	0	144,800
Berlin Township	1,740	30	391	507	454	331	27	0	0	145,000
Frenchtown Township	4,183	119	1,215	1,449	776	514	83	21	6	125,000
Village of South Rockwood	369	16	106	119	84	41	3	0	0	121,700
Wayne County										
Huron Township	2,858	50	364	800	590	772	273	0	9	168,500
City of Flat Rock	1,540	25	334	710	297	149	18	0	7	121,700
City of Rockwood	860	28	191	470	59	101	11	0	0	114,500
Monroe County	33,992	994	7,995	12,477	7,136	4,431	861	85	13	132,000
Michigan	2,269,175	224,603	711,648	603,454	339,716	252,044	104,079	27,642	5,989	115,600
Renter-Occupied										
Place	Specified Units	Less than \$200	\$200 to \$299	\$300 to \$499	\$500 to \$749	\$750 to \$999	\$1,000 to \$1,499	\$1,500 or more	No cash rent	Median (dollars)
Ash Township*	64	6	0	5	32	7	14	0	0	533
Monroe County										
Village of Carleton	168	10	14	69	43	17	11	0	4	469
Dundee Township	52	0	4	8	15	15	0	0	12	657
Village of Dundee	507	8	41	184	216	18	16	0	24	510
Bedford Township	1,131	57	36	268	426	277	27	0	40	604
City of Monroe	3,317	223	185	1,048	1,290	339	45	14	173	518
Exeter Township	88	0	0	13	67	3	0	0	5	545
Berlin Township	367	2	14	86	202	31	5	0	27	624
Frenchtown Township	1,763	30	7	379	880	287	81	0	99	598
Village of South Rockwood	52	2	5	21	12	3	5	0	4	478
Wayne County										
Huron Township	288	0	10	113	103	39	0	0	23	516
City of Flat Rock	877	162	92	236	262	83	6	0	36	464
City of Rockwood	353	0	18	62	223	26	7	0	17	605
Monroe County	9,945	497	419	2,834	4,092	1,279	226	26	572	549
Michigan	976,313	53,844	52,030	275,832	373,820	122,289	42,865	12,867	42,766	546

*V values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton
2000 US Census - SF3

Economic Profile

The economic strength of Ash Township is related to the number and type of employment opportunities in the labor market area as well as the level of educational attainment by its residents. Within a labor market area some communities' function as major employment centers while others serve primarily as residential communities. According to the U.S. Census, 2,284 Ash Township residents 16 years of age and older were employed in 2000. The following text identifies educational attainment levels, which industries employ Ash Township residents, what positions are held, and the wages earned.

Educational Attainment

Data in **Table 12** shows the educational attainment of the residents of Ash Township, surrounding communities, Monroe County, and the State of Michigan. As can be seen, Ash Township has similar values for high school graduation levels when compared to the other communities. Ash Township, however, has a lower percentage of persons with a Bachelor's degree at 4.9 percent. This value is also lower than both County data and State levels of attainment.

Employment by Occupation and Industry

Employment by Occupation and Employment by Industry are two related, yet individually significant indicators of community welfare. Employment by Occupation describes the trades and professions in which Township residents are employed, such as a manager or salesperson. Employment by Industry quantifies in what field that manager or sales person may be employed. For instance, two sales persons may be present in the "Sales and Office Occupations" category of the Employment by Occupation table (**Table 13**), but may be employed in two different fields. That is, a sales person in the manufacturing industry and a sales person in the real estate trade would be categorized within those different classifications in the Employment by Industry table (**Table 14**).

Employment by occupation for Ash Township, and surrounding areas is detailed in **Table 13**. The Township is extremely similar in the occupation of its residents to those of surrounding communities. The Census indicates three occupation classifications as being the most common for both Ash Township and surrounding area residents. These three occupation classifications include the managerial and professional occupation category, the sales and office occupations, and the production, transportation, and material moving occupations. The fewest number of people in all areas were employed in farming, forestry,

Table 12: Educational Attainment: 2000

Place	Population 25 Years and Over	Residents 25 Years and Over with only a High School Diploma/Equivalency	% of Population 25 Years and Over with only High School Diploma/Equivalency	Residents 25 Years and Over with a High School Diploma Plus at Least Some Post-Secondary Education	% of Population 25 Years and Over with a High School Diploma and at Least Some Post-Secondary Education	Residents 25 Years and Over with a Bachelor's Degree	% of Population 25 Years and Over with a Bachelor's Degree
Ash Township*	3,354	1,348	40.2%	1,510	45.0%	163	4.9%
<u>Monroe County</u>							
Village of Carleton	1,522	729	47.9%	505	33.2%	53	3.5%
Dundee Township	1,877	717	38.2%	830	44.2%	179	9.5%
Village of Dundee	2,082	764	36.7%	993	47.7%	252	12.1%
Bedford Township	18,838	6,620	35.1%	10,393	55.2%	2,551	13.5%
City of Monroe	14,325	4,853	33.9%	6,512	45.5%	1,467	10.2%
Exeter Township	2,394	916	38.3%	1,005	42.0%	155	6.5%
Berlin Township	4,509	1,887	41.8%	1,858	41.2%	343	7.6%
Frenchtown Township	13,089	5,238	40.0%	4,879	37.3%	826	6.3%
Village of South Rockwood	786	345	43.9%	321	40.8%	55	7.0%
<u>Wayne County</u>							
Huron Township	8,728	3,369	38.6%	3,734	42.8%	643	7.4%
City of Flat Rock	5,206	2,068	39.7%	2,277	43.7%	418	8.0%
City of Rockwood	2,293	828	36.1%	1,055	46.0%	159	6.9%
Monroe County	94,281	35,166	37.3%	43,197	45.8%	9,060	9.6%
Michigan	6,415,941	2,010,861	31.3%	3,340,947	52.1%	878,680	13.7%

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton
2000 US Census - SF3

Table 13: Employment by Occupation: 2000

Place	Employed civilian population 16 years and over	Management, professional, and related occupations	Service occupations	Sales and office occupations	Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	Production, transportation, and material moving occupations
Ash Township*	2,284	528	318	505	12	385	536
<u>Monroe County</u>							
Village of Carleton	1,151	196	145	298	7	153	352
Dundee Township	1,484	354	210	252	0	215	453
Village of Dundee	1,623	446	294	341	6	188	348
Bedford Township	14,355	4,422	1,595	3,589	25	1,802	2,922
City of Monroe	9,938	2,623	1,820	2,343	28	892	2,232
Exeter Township	1,838	393	234	412	30	285	484
Berlin Township	3,440	801	409	739	11	595	885
Frenchtown Township	9,788	1,723	1,471	2,320	114	1,371	2,789
Village of South Rockwood	601	138	73	143	0	99	148
<u>Wayne County</u>							
Huron Township	6,556	1,667	683	1,515	0	1,201	1,490
City of Flat Rock	3,994	827	709	954	0	461	1,043
City of Rockwood	1,723	420	211	369	13	300	410
Monroe County	70,344	17,467	9,793	16,620	426	9,060	16,978
Michigan	4,637,461	1,459,767	687,336	1,187,015	21,120	425,291	856,932

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton
2000 US Census - SF3

and fishing occupations. This matches a nationally occurring trend in this employment classification.

Employment by industry for the Ash Township and surrounding areas is detailed in **Table 14**. The Township is extremely similar in the industry of employment of its residents to those of surrounding communities. The Census indicates three industry classifications as being the most common for both the Township and other area residents. These three industry classifications include manufacturing, educational, health and social services, and retail. The fewest number of area residents were employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining, and information.

Income Characteristics

The data presented in **Table 15** describes the income characteristics for the residents of Ash Township. Data for surrounding areas, Monroe County and the State of Michigan are also provided for comparison purposes.

This table describes the median household, median family, and per capita incomes, as well as the percent of persons below the poverty line. A household is defined as all the persons who occupy a dwelling unit. Thus, a household may be one person living alone, two roommates, or a married couple with children. A family is defined, as might be expected, as a householder and one or more other persons

Table 14: Employment by Industry: 2000

Industry	Ash Twp	Monroe County									Wayne County			Monroe Co.	Michigan
		Vill of Carleton	Dundee Twp	Vill of Dundee	Bedford Twp	City of Monroe	Exeter Twp	Berlin Twp	Frenchtown Twp	Vill of South Rockwood	Huron Twp	City of Flat Rock	City of Rockwood		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	56	11	18	32	64	15	60	33	112	1	51	0	13	894	49,496
Construction	212	57	107	109	1,215	503	160	331	621	52	570	232	146	5,370	278,079
Manufacturing	660	337	379	574	3,456	2,215	500	965	2,873	163	1,841	1,081	578	18,120	1,045,651
Wholesale trade	45	52	18	25	535	208	44	191	44	18	284	134	61	2,307	151,656
Retail trade	206	197	154	111	1,635	1,319	216	315	1,319	85	687	432	166	8,430	550,918
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	219	97	85	69	909	699	207	262	810	43	762	342	93	5,112	191,799
Information	51	17	43	14	216	185	46	59	64	11	70	35	23	973	98,887
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	112	15	28	42	659	478	58	112	306	17	260	226	65	2,669	246,633
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	94	45	102	98	998	638	72	242	438	31	350	288	129	4,012	371,119
Educational, health and social services	369	153	356	259	2,935	1,961	258	499	1,462	105	1,024	624	282	12,891	921,395
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	141	85	175	41	896	882	139	214	730	37	344	285	92	4,894	351,229
Other services (except public administration)	79	51	110	101	620	534	56	143	387	26	222	182	48	3,054	212,868
Public administration	40	34	48	9	217	301	22	74	222	12	91	133	27	1,618	167,731

*Values do not include Census calculation for Village of Carleton
2000 US Census - SF3

Table 15: Income and Poverty: 1989*-1999 (*adjusted for inflation to 1999 dollars)

Place	Median Household Income		Median Family Income		Per Capita Income		Poverty Level**	
	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999
Ash Township	\$ 57,873	\$ 59,398	\$ 65,091	\$ 65,222	\$ 20,959	\$ 26,224	8.0%	4.2%
<u>Monroe County</u>								
Village of Carleton	\$ 43,795	\$ 44,205	\$ 49,848	\$ 50,000	\$ 16,247	\$ 20,394	14.1%	10.6%
Dundee Township	\$ 56,414	\$ 60,697	\$ 57,602	\$ 63,828	\$ 19,590	\$ 22,751	5.0%	6.2%
Village of Dundee	\$ 42,229	\$ 41,563	\$ 49,180	\$ 49,479	\$ 20,036	\$ 18,389	9.2%	9.0%
Bedford Township	\$ 56,009	\$ 59,835	\$ 60,387	\$ 67,239	\$ 21,123	\$ 24,131	4.2%	4.5%
City of Monroe	\$ 39,754	\$ 41,810	\$ 48,331	\$ 51,442	\$ 17,966	\$ 19,948	15.4%	12.6%
Exeter Township	\$ 53,478	\$ 63,806	\$ 60,974	\$ 69,429	\$ 18,007	\$ 24,308	9.3%	4.8%
Berlin Township	\$ 56,270	\$ 57,403	\$ 62,724	\$ 64,071	\$ 20,918	\$ 23,898	5.7%	5.6%
Frenchtown Township	\$ 43,639	\$ 47,699	\$ 49,535	\$ 54,032	\$ 17,612	\$ 21,335	8.4%	7.0%
Village of South Rockwood	\$ 55,777	\$ 62,500	\$ 60,712	\$ 68,304	\$ 19,949	\$ 22,245	3.7%	4.1%
<u>Wayne County</u>								
Huron Township	\$ 57,135	\$ 59,890	\$ 61,829	\$ 63,006	\$ 20,931	\$ 23,497	4.5%	5.7%
City of Flat Rock	\$ 47,834	\$ 44,084	\$ 54,462	\$ 54,186	\$ 18,215	\$ 21,256	13.2%	8.8%
City of Rockwood	\$ 42,394	\$ 55,987	\$ 60,312	\$ 59,677	\$ 22,713	\$ 23,563	8.6%	4.0%
<u>Monroe County</u>								
Michigan	\$ 48,465	\$ 51,743	\$ 55,394	\$ 59,659	\$ 18,987	\$ 22,458	8.6%	7.0%
	\$ 42,395	\$ 44,667	\$ 50,092	\$ 53,457	\$ 19,344	\$ 22,168	13.1%	10.5%

**All individuals for whom poverty status is determined/percent below poverty level
1990, 2000 US Census - SF3

living in the same dwelling unit who are related by blood, marriage or adoption. The income values are shown in 1999 constant dollars based on the Statistical Abstracts of the United States for Consumer Price Index (CPI) values. The CPI is a measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by consumers for a market share of consumer goods and services. This index helps to measure inflation experienced by consumers in their day-to-day living expenses by calculating the cost of market goods based on today's prices.

Ash Township reported median household and median family incomes in the 2000 Census which were slightly higher than those of surrounding communities. These values were also higher than those for Monroe County and the State as a whole. Per capita income for Ash Township was higher than all surrounding communities and the County as well. In general, the data indicates that the Township has a lower concentration of persons living in poverty when compared to similar communities, the County, and State of Michigan. Fortunately, however, the percentage of persons below the poverty level has decreased during the last decade for all areas.

State Equalized Value

One indicator of the economic strength of a community is the State Equalized Value (SEV). According to Michigan law, the SEV is equal to approximately one-half of the true market value of real property and certain taxable personal property. The taxable value is used for computation of the tax basis for a community.

Current SEV Data

According to the Michigan Department of Treasury State Tax Commission, the total SEV of real property in Ash Township in 2008 was \$355,678,915. Of this total real property tax base, residential property constituted 72.8 percent, followed by commercial property at 15.3 percent, agricultural property at 9.0 percent, and industrial property at 3.2 percent. Residential land use appears to be the major component of tax base in the Township, and will probably remain as such into the future.

SEV Historical Comparison

A five year comparison (2003-2008) of SEV in Ash Township reveals that the total equalized values have increased in every category, but the relative percentages of each category have remained generally the same.

In 2003, the total SEV of real property in Ash Township was \$271,653,390. By 2008, this total increased by 30.9 percent. This is a positive economic indicator for Ash Township as viewed in comparison to Monroe County as a whole, whose total SEV increased by 21.3% between 2003 and 2008.

Between 2003 and 2008, the commercial SEV category in Ash Township increased most significantly, from 14.1 percent of the total to 15.3 percent. The remainder of the SEV categories in Ash Township declined slightly in terms of total percentage between 2003 and 2008. The residential SEV declined from 73.3 percent to 72.8 percent; the agricultural SEV declined from 9.2 percent to 9.0 percent; and the industrial SEV declined from 3.4 percent to 3.2 percent.

3

Existing Land Use

The focus of this chapter is an examination of current land use patterns, their distinguishing characteristics and their impact on future land development. One of the most important tasks of the Master Plan is to develop a firm understanding of the types of land use activities that are currently taking place within the community. A thorough knowledge of existing land use patterns and site conditions furnishes planners and community leaders with basic information by which future residential, commercial, industrial and public land use decisions can be made.

The existing land use map and acreage tabulation chart, provided in the following pages, will serve as key reference points for Ash Township officials to utilize in their consideration of land use and infrastructure improvements in the future.

Methodology

A field survey was conducted by Wade-Trim on June 3, 2004, to gather existing land use data for all the parcels within the Ash Township limits. Each parcel of property was inspected in the field and its use characteristics were recorded on a base map. The land use field data was then transferred from the field survey notes into a Geographic Information System (GIS). The resulting Existing Land Use Map (**Map 1**) was prepared using ArcGIS software. In 2009, the existing land use data was updated to reflect recent changes. Acreage tabulation for each land use classification was calculated utilizing GIS software and, thus, there may be slight differentiations between GIS calculated and platted acreage. However, these differences will not adversely affect the planning process.

Land Use Distribution

Each existing land use was placed in one of 13 land use categories or the water body category. The Existing Land Use Map depicts the geographic distribution of these land use classifications.

Ash Township encompasses approximately 21,765 acres, or about 34 square miles in area. **Table 16** outlines the existing land uses found within the Township, while each category is further described below.

Table 16: Existing Land Use Acreage, 2009

Category	Acres	% of Total
Agricultural/Rural Residential	10,324.9	47.4%
Single-Family Residential	5,482.3	25.2%
Manufactured Home Park	162.8	0.7%
Neighborhood Commercial	35.4	0.2%
General Commercial	192.9	0.9%
Office	0.6	0.0%
Industrial	832.6	3.8%
Recreation	150.8	0.7%
Churches/Schools/Institutions	153.6	0.7%
Public Facilities	5.4	0.0%
Public Utilities and Works	704.2	3.2%
Vacant/Open Space	2,011.9	9.2%
Water Bodies	127.2	0.6%
Rights-of-Way	1,580.8	7.3%
Total Twp. Area	21,765.4	100.0%

Source: Wade Trim June 2004 Land Use Survey, Updated 2009.

Agricultural/Rural Residential

10,324.9 acres or 47.4% of total land area of Ash Township.

This classification is assigned both to lands being actively cultivated for agricultural purposes; it also contains single family residential homes located on very large lots. Many of these large lot residences are associated with adjacent farm uses, were formerly associated with a farm, or are new homes constructed in estate-style settings.

Single-Family Residential

5,482.3 acres or 25.2% of total land area of Ash Township.

This category includes structures used as a permanent dwelling, and accessory structures, such as garages, that are related to these units. Typical dwelling units primarily include single family detached homes; however, under certain circumstances, townhouses, attached condominiums, duplexes, multiple family structures and other

residences may also be permitted. This category is almost exclusively comprised of single family dwellings within the Township. Many home sites are distributed throughout Ash Township within subdivisions and condominium complexes, as well as areas along older residential corridors within the community, such as Grafton Road as it extends north and south from the Village of Carleton.

Manufactured Home Park

162.8 acres or 0.7% of total land area of Ash Township.

Areas containing groups of mobile homes, and their related service and recreational areas, are designated as mobile home parks.

Neighborhood Commercial

35.4 acres or 0.2% of total land area of Ash Township.

This land use category includes the land area occupied by retail users providing retail and service facilities that accommodate day-to-day convenience shopping needs. Neighborhood commercial land uses include, but are not limited to, groceries, florists, laundries, and restaurants.

General Commercial

192.9 acres or 0.9% of total land area of Ash Township.

This land use category includes the land area occupied by retail users providing retail and service facilities that appeal to a more regional audience. Comparison shopping, service facilities and larger scale commercial projects are included in this category. Larger commercial/retail strip developments may include regional supermarkets, national retailers, department stores, etc.

Office

0.6 acres of total land area of Ash Township.

Office uses include financial institutions, medical, and professional service establishments.

Industrial

832.6 acres or 3.8% of total land area of Ash Township.

This category includes land areas occupied by both light and heavy industrial facilities. Uses in this category include manufacturing facilities, warehouses, and storage and leasing facilities.

Churches/Schools/Institutions

153.6 acres or 0.7% of total land area of Ash Township.

This classification describes those areas developed for such uses as public schools, parochial schools, churches, fraternal organizations and institutional uses. This classification includes all properties owned and physically occupied by a facility of this nature; property owned, but not occupied by built facilities, was included under the vacant land use classification.

Public Facilities

5.4 acres of total land area of Ash Township.

This category was established to embrace all developed or undeveloped lands owned by various governmental agencies or other fully public entities. Within Ash Township, public lands primarily consist of Township buildings and facilities.

Recreational

150.8 acres or 0.7% of total land area of Ash Township.

This category includes all private and publicly owned park and recreation properties and facilities, including the Township Park and golf course.

Public Utilities and Works

704.2 acres or 3.2% of total land area of Ash Township.

This category was established to embrace all developed or undeveloped lands owned by various governmental agencies or other fully public entities for the purpose of accommodating infrastructure-related land uses. These uses include, but are not limited to, power lines, sanitary sewer treatment, landfill, and radio towers.

Vacant/Open Space

2,011.9 acres or 9.2% of total land area of Ash Township.

This land use category includes those lands which are presently undeveloped, including vacant lots, fallow farmland, forested land, and portions of vacant platted lands.

Water Bodies

127.2 acres or 0.6% of total land area of Ash Township.

Large detention and retention areas, creeks, lagoons, and any other open body of water comprise the water body category



4

Natural Features

The natural features chapter describes the significant natural features of the Township. An inventory of natural features is an important component of a local master plan and useful in the review of proposed development plans. With an understanding of the types, quantities and locations of natural features within the community, sound future land development decisions can be made. These include decisions related to land areas in the Township that should be preserved or which might have environmentally related development limitations.

Climate

The climate of the Ash Township area is continental, influenced by the midwest United States and central Canada. Data obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the nearest reporting station, in the City of Monroe, reveals that the mean average temperature in the area for the coldest month, January, is 24.6 degrees Fahrenheit; and for the warmest month, July, is 73.4 degrees. Record high and low temperatures are 102 degrees and -16 degrees, respectively.

Monthly precipitation amounts vary from 1.59 inches in February to 3.60 inches in June. The area receives an annual average precipitation of approximately 30.93 inches. Snowfall in the area averages 32.7 inches annually.

Topography

The topography of Ash Township is predominantly flat, with the majority of changes in elevation occurring along creeks and drains. Land elevations range from approximately 625 feet above sea level in the northwest corner of the Township to 591 feet in the southeast. The highest elevation in the Township is 625.4 feet above sea level at the intersection of Oakville-Waltz and Exeter Roads.

Watercourses

There are three creeks which flow through Ash Township. The largest of these is Swan Creek which travels northwest to southeast through the Township and encompasses several branches, including Little Swan Creek and North Branch Swan Creek. Other creeks are Port Creek, in the northeast part of the Township and Stony Creek in the extreme southwest. Associated with the creeks is a network of drains.

Several areas of the Township, particularly along these watercourses, are prone to flooding during major wet weather events, posing significant risks to development. Therefore, the economic gain from floodplain development must be carefully balanced against the resulting increase in flood hazards. To minimize the devastating consequences of flooding and to address the need for flood insurance, the United States Congress established the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in 1968. The goals of the program are twofold: to protect communities from potential flood damage through floodplain management and to provide people with flood insurance.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has developed flood insurance rate maps for most communities including Ash Township to determine flood risk as part of the NFIP. In communities that participate in the NFIP, all homeowners in high-risk areas (those areas within the 100-year flood zone) are required to get flood insurance in order to obtain a loan from a federally regulated lender. These high-risk areas have a 26 percent chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage, or roughly a 1 percent chance of occurrence in any given year. The limits of the 100-year flood zone within Ash Township are included on **Map 2**. Almost all of these areas are found along the drainage courses listed above. These areas should be considered as candidates for recreation-conservation uses due to their flood zone limitations.

The State Construction Code and/or BOCA National Code is enforced within Ash Township. Flood resistant construction standards for residential structures require that the lowest portion of all horizontal structural members supporting floors be located at or above the elevation of

the 100-year flood, referenced BOCA Section 2102, 1987 edition. All basement floor surfaces must be located at or above the flood elevation. Nonresidential structures may be elevated or floodproofed. Enforcement of these standards may also be prerequisite of the Township's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. There are no large, significant bodies of water (such as lakes or rivers) present in Ash Township. There are, however, several ponds along I-275. These were created as borrow pits, which were used in the construction of the freeway.

Wetlands and Woodlands

Wetlands are an important, though commonly overlooked, natural resource which provide both aesthetic and functional benefits. Through the years, over 70 percent of Michigan's wetlands have been destroyed by development and agricultural activities. Therefore, Michigan enacted the Goemaere-Anderson Wetland Protection Act, which has now become Part 303, Wetlands Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Public Act 451 of 1994. This legislation was passed to protect wetlands by restricting their use to certain activities (fishing, boating and farming, among others) while permitting other activities only after permit approval. The Act authorizes the MDEQ to preserve certain wetland areas. The MDEQ may require permits before altering regulated wetlands, and may prohibit development in some locations.

The MDEQ defines "wetlands" as follows: "land characterized by the presence of water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, wetland vegetation or aquatic life." Among the criteria used by the MDEQ when conducting a wetland determination are:

- Presence of standing water (at least one week of the year).
- Presence of hydric soil types that are saturated, flooded, or ponded sufficiently to favor wetland vegetation (usually black or dark brown).
- Predominance of wetland vegetation/plant material, or aquatic life, such as cattails, reeds, willows, dogwood, elderberries, and/or red or silver maple trees.
- Presence of important or endangered plant or wild life habitat or a rare ecosystem.

- The area serves as an important groundwater recharge.
- Size and Location - minimum size to be state regulated is five acres unless the wetland is contiguous to a lake, pond, river or stream, or is considered to be "essential to the preservation of natural resources of the state."

The determination that a site contains a regulated wetland can have several consequences:

- The MDEQ may issue a permit to fill the wetland.
- The MDEQ may require mitigation, such as replacing the wetlands (sometimes this involves increasing the overall on-site wetland acreage by two or three times).
- The MDEQ may prohibit development in the wetland area, if it is determined that there is a "prudent" alternative.

Wetlands and woodlands within Ash Township are shown on **Map 2**. Wetlands information was obtained through the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Woodlands information was obtained through the Michigan Resource Information System (MIRIS) Land Use/Land Cover data from 1978.

The wetlands generally fall within low lying areas along creeks and drains. Many of the wetland areas associated with streams are also forested. Such wetlands are shown as wooded wetland areas on **Map 2**. The map delineates significant wetlands, but not necessarily all the wetlands regulated under the State Wetland Act.

Where this map or on-site observation indicates the likelihood of a regulated wetland, sources (soil survey, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) maps, or U.S. Interior, Fish, and Wildlife maps) should be referenced to further determine if the wetland has the physical and biological characteristics which place it under the jurisdiction of the MDNR. A formal written determination by a qualified wetland consultant and/or staff from the MDNR may be required.

Local wetland protection can help preserve these important resources and can be achieved in a variety of ways. Foremost is ensuring that developers have received any necessary MDNR reviews or made permit applications, prior to final action of proposed projects.

There are several techniques which the Township could use to assist in local wetland protection. Some of these could be incorporated into existing development review procedures. Others, particularly a local wetland ordinance addressing wetlands smaller than the five acre minimum regulated by the MDNR, would probably not be cost-effective in the Township due to the administrative demands.

Among the options which Ash Township should consider are:

- Revise the site plan review requirements and Planned Unit Development provisions in the Zoning Ordinance with more specific language to preserve wetlands and other sensitive natural features.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require a 25- to 100-foot building and parking lot setback from regulated wetlands.
- Encourage preservation of natural features by directing clustered development to the most buildable portion of the site while retaining the overall density (some communities offer a density bonus as an incentive).
- Establish public education programs regarding the importance of wetlands.

Soils

Ash Township soils are predominantly of the silty clay loam type and are generally of a high agricultural productive nature. Soils most suitable for urban development lie generally in a north/south direction along the Grafton Road corridor. Generally, all of the land in Ash Township is classified as prime agricultural.

The typical depth to bedrock in Ash Township is about 20 feet, with the shallowest overburden in the northwest quadrant where depth to bedrock in limited instances would appear to lie between 5 and 10 feet. Generally, static water levels have been found at depths of 20 feet.

It may be said that Ash Township by and large is favorably disposed to urban development assuming availability of public wastewater pollution control facilities based upon an assessment of its geologic structure.

Prime Farmland

As noted above and shown on **Map 3**, Prime Agricultural Lands, most of the soils in the Township are classified as prime agricultural.

Prime farmland soils, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, are soils that are best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Such soils have soil properties that are favorable for the economic production of sustained high yields of crops. The soils need to be treated and managed using acceptable farming methods. The moisture supply must, however, be adequate, and the growing season has to be sufficiently long.

Prime farmland soils may presently be used as cropland, pasture, or woodland. They are either used for producing food or fiber or are available for these uses.

Prime farmland soils usually get an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation. The temperature and growing season are favorable. The acidity or alkalinity level of the soils is acceptable. The soils have few or no rocks and are permeable to water and air. They are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods and are not frequently flooded during the growing season. The slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent.

Soils that have limitations (sensitive soils) may qualify as prime farmland soils if the limitations are overcome by such measures as drainage, flood control, or irrigation. On-site evaluation is necessary to determine the effectiveness of corrective measures.

In summary, the farmlands and open space in Ash Township are valuable natural features which can also contribute to the rural setting which most Ash Township residents deeply value.



5

Transportation and Utilities Assessment

Ash Township, with support from a variety of outside public and private agencies, strives to ensure a high quality of life for residents and businesses within the community through the efficient provision of services. These services fulfill essential community needs such as public safety, health care, social welfare, recreation, education, mobility, potable water and sanitation.

By ensuring that future land development occurs at an appropriate scale and location given the existing or planned capacity of public services, sound land use planning is an important tool for maintaining a high quality of life. In order to determine suitable locations and allowable types of new development, the existing or planned capacity of all types of public services must first be considered, particularly the availability of public utilities and capacity of the transportation network.

Transportation Assessment

Communities are arranged around transportation networks. Historically, settlements were founded along or at the confluence of transportation routes such as rivers, railroads and highways. Following their initial settlement, urban expansion followed transportation routes such as streetcar lines and highways. Today, land development remains intrinsically tied to the transportation network, while quality of life is greatly impacted by mobility and access to varying modes of transportation. In addition to a safe and efficient road network, it is crucial to ensure that a community accommodates public transit, pedestrian and other non-motorized travel to ensure that seniors and young people can access public amenities and requisite goods and services.

Road Hierarchy

By illustrating the road hierarchy within Ash Township, **Map 4** helps to understand where future development is more or less suitable given existing road capacities. The road hierarchy within Ash Township is based on the National Functional Classification (NFC) system, which

is a federal classification system for all public highways, roads, and streets. This classification system provides the basis for federal aid eligibility of roadways (United States Code, Title 23). In Michigan, MDOT has the primary role in cooperation with appropriate local agencies in updating and revising the NFC. Updates and revisions are subject to Federal Highway Administration approval.

The two primary considerations in classifying the functionality of highway and street networks are access to property and travel mobility, as defined by trip travel time or operating speed. For example, local roads provide efficient access to property, but would be rated low in mobility.

The basic classifications for the functional systems are:

- Arterial highways, which generally handle longer trips and operate at higher and more uniform speeds;
- Collector roads, which collect and disperse traffic between arterials and the local roads; and,
- Local roads, streets, and other public ways, which serve the land access function to the residential areas, businesses, farms and other local areas.

The road hierarchy within Ash Township is illustrated in **Map 4**. Two principal arterial routes extend into Ash Township. These include I-275, a major interstate connecting Monroe County and the Toledo area with the western Detroit suburbs and Oakland County. I-275 runs north-south through the center of the Township, and features three interchanges: at Telegraph Road; at Carleton Rockwood Road; and at Will Carleton Road. The other principal arterial is Telegraph Road (U.S. 24), a four lane highway that connects Toledo to the south with Pontiac and Oakland County to the north. One minor arterial route, Oakville Waltz Road (west of Waltz Road) and Will Carleton Road (east of Waltz Road), is located in Ash Township and runs along the northern Township border. Oakville Waltz Road is an important and busy truck route that connects to the Carlton Farms Landfill, located just

west of Ash Township. Because of the high traffic volumes, many of the high density residential, public, office, commercial and industrial uses within the Township directly front these arterial routes (or in the case of I-275, are near the freeway interchanges).

Numerous collector routes are located in Ash Township. East-west connector routes include Carleton Rockwood Road; Carleton West Road; Sigler Road (east of Telegraph); and Newport Road (east of Grafton). North-south connector routes include Exeter Road (south of Carleton West); S. Stoney Creek Road; and Grafton Road. Collector roads tend to provide more access to property than do arterials. Collectors also funnel traffic from residential or rural areas to arterials.

The remainder of the roads in Ash Township are local roads. These roads are designed to accommodate local traffic, providing access primarily to homes and agricultural lands, over relatively short distances. These local roads are not well equipped to support higher intensity uses such as multiple-family residential, commercial or industrial.

Traffic Volumes

Map 4 also displays the traffic volumes for all arterial and collector routes within Ash Township. Roads with high traffic volumes are an important consideration and challenge in land use planning. Because of their high visibility, these roads are often desirable locations for business and industrial development. Therefore, the use of proper access management techniques and other land use controls becomes critical as higher traffic volumes in combination with intensive development may lead to congestion, traffic hazards, pedestrian conflicts, and visual blight.

Average daily traffic (ADT) volume data for 2007 was obtained from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG). **Map 4** utilizes a color scheme to illustrate the various classes of traffic volume in the Township. The roads accommodating the highest traffic volumes (12,500 ADT or higher) in Ash Township are I-275 and Telegraph Road, south of the I-275 interchange. Telegraph Road, north of the I-275 interchange accommodates between 10,000 and 12,499 ADT.

Road segments featuring moderate traffic volumes of between 7,500 and 9,999 ADT include: Oakville Waltz Road between I-275 and the western Township limits (a small segment of which is named Will Carleton Road); and Newport Road between Telegraph Road and the eastern Township limits. Roads with volumes between 5,000 and

7,499 ADT include: Will Carleton Road between I-275 and the eastern Township limits; Grafton Road south of Carleton Rockwood; and Carleton Rockwood Road between Grafton and I-275.

Collector roads with lower traffic volumes of between 2,500 and 4,999 ADT include: Carleton Rockwood Road between I-275 and Telegraph; and Grafton Road north of Carleton Rockwood. Finally, collector roads with the lowest traffic volumes of less than 2,500 ADT include: Carleton Rockwood Road between Telegraph and the eastern Township limits; Sigler Road between Telegraph and the eastern Township limits; Newport Road between Grafton and Telegraph; Carleton West Road west of the Village of Carleton; Exeter Road south of Carleton West; and S. Stoney Creek Road.

Road Surface Types

The Monroe County Road Commission has collected surface type data for the roads within Ash Township. This information is depicted on **Map 5**, which differentiates between hard surfacing (concrete, asphalt or seal coat) and gravel surfacing. The road surface data was updated for accuracy by Township officials.

Of the approximately 125 miles of road within Ash Township, the majority (approximately 91 miles) feature hard surfacing. Rural county roads primarily account for the 34 miles of gravel roads in the Township. Some of these rural gravel road segments include: most of Newburg Road; Carter Road; Port Creek Road; Burns Road; most of Maxwell Road; Jones Street; Fessner Road; Otter Road; N. Stoney Creek Road; and Creek Road.

Road Conditions

The Monroe County Road Commission continuously catalogues road conditions in Ash Township based on the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system. The PASER rating system is unique based on the different road surface types: concrete, asphalt and gravel roads. **Table 17** outlines the general conditions and recommended improvement strategies associated with the various rating types and surface types.

Map 5 shows the ratings of the roads within Ash Township. Of the approximately 110 miles of rated road within Ash Township, the majority (64 miles or 58 percent) are in Good, Very Good or Excellent condition (6-10 rating). Approximately 18 miles (16 percent) of road were classified by the Road Commission as being in Fair condition (4-5 rating). About one-quarter of roads were classified as Poor or Very Poor (2-3 rating). Finally, only one mile of

Table 17: PASER Road Rating System

Rating	General Condition and Recommended Improvement		
	Concrete Surface	Asphalt Surface	Gravel Surface*
10 - Excellent	New pavement. No maintenance required.	New construction	New surface condition. Excellent drainage. No maintenance required.
9 - Excellent	Recent concrete overlay or joint rehabilitation. Like new condition. No maintenance required.	Recent overlay. Like new.	
8 - Very Good	More surface wear or slight defects. Little or no maintenance required.	Recent sealcoat or new cold mix. Little or no maintenance required.	Excellent or good drainage. Little or no maintenance required.
7 - Good	First sign of transverse cracks (all tight); first utility patch. More extensive surface scaling. Seal open joints and other routine maintenance.	First signs of aging. Maintain with routine crack filling.	
6 - Good	First signs of shallow reinforcement or corner cracking. Needs general joint and crack sealing. Scaled areas could be overlaid.	Shows signs of aging. Sound structural condition. Could extend life with sealcoat.	Good or fair drainage. May need spot drainage improvement and/or minor patching. Preventive maintenance sealcoat recommended.
5 - Fair	First signs of joint or crack spalling or faulting. Grind to repair surface defects. Some partial depth patching or joint repairs needed.	Surface aging. Sound structural condition. Needs sealcoat or thin non-structural overlay.	
4 - Fair	Needs some full depth repairs, grinding, and/or asphalt overlay to correct surface defects.	Significant aging and first signs of need for strengthening. Would benefit from a structural overlay.	Fair or poor drainage. Ditching or culvert improvement needed. Patching or surface wedging needed. New surface sealcoat required.
3 - Poor	Needs extensive full depth patching plus some full slab replacement.	Needs patching and repair prior to major overlay. Milling and removal of deterioration extends the life of overlay.	
2 - Very Poor	Recycle and/or rebuild pavement.	Severe deterioration. Needs reconstruction with extensive base repair. Pulverization of old pavement is effective.	Extensive poor drainage. Needs base improvement and new double sealcoat.
1 - Failed	Total reconstruction.	Failed. Needs total reconstruction.	

*Gravel rating system modified from 1-5 to 2-10 for consistency with concrete and asphalt rating systems.

Source: PASER Manuals for Asphalt, Concrete and Gravel Roads. Transportation Information Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

road (Scofield Carleton Road) was classified as Failed (1 rating).

Of particular note, only one segment of arterial road within Ash Township (an approximately one-mile segment of Oakville Waltz Road in the northwestern corner of the Township) has a poor or lower rating. The entirety of both I-275 and Telegraph Roads are classified as Good.

Collector roads in Ash Township with a rating of Poor, Very Poor or Failed include segments of: Exeter Road; Newport Road; S. Stoney Creek Road; Sigler Road; Carleton Rockwood; Carleton West Road; and Grafton Road. Development on these deteriorating road segments should be limited based on the decreased capacity to efficiently accommodate traffic.

Proposed Road Improvements

The Ash Township Proposed Roads Master Plan identifies road improvement priorities for the years 2009 to 2012.

This general 5-year road improvement plan is depicted on **Map 5**, by highlighting the road segments slated for paving and/or reconstruction. Designated for road improvement are segments of: Newburg Road; Calkins Road; Burns Road; Maxwell Road; Jones Street; and Sweitzer Road.

Public Utilities Assessment

Planning for future land development must take into consideration the extent of public water, sewer and other services. Particularly in the case of higher intensity land uses, new development should not be located in areas lacking necessary public water and sewer service, unless utility extensions or other suitable systems are constructed in conjunction with new development. Therefore, this section provides an assessment of the public water and sewer service within Ash Township.

Map 6 illustrates the current extent of public water service in Ash Township. Through this network of water mains,

nearly 70 percent of the Township's residents have access to potable water from the Detroit Water District. As shown on the map, public water lines are fairly evenly distributed throughout the Township, as opposed to being concentrated in one area. The remainder of residents rely on private well systems approved by the Monroe County Environmental Health Department. **Map 6** also illustrates one proposed water main extension along Calkins Road, as designated on the Ash Township Proposed Water Main Master Plan.

Development potential within Ash Township is limited by the lack of public sanitary sewer service. At present, the Village of Carleton operates its own sewer system including a wastewater treatment plant that is located just north of the Village in Ash Township. One public sewer line, which runs along Will Carleton Road and Grafton Road north and east of the Village, connects into this sewer system. The remainder of businesses and residents must rely on private septic systems approved by the Monroe County Environmental Health Department or larger-scale private sewer systems. Currently, one privately operated wastewater treatment plant is located within Ash Township. This facility, which was constructed to serve the Lazy Oak residential development near Telegraph Road and I-275, has excess capacity that could be utilized by future developments in the immediate vicinity.



6

Community Goals and Policies

Basis for the Goals and Policies

Resulting from previous master planning efforts, a set of community goals and policies were adopted to guide future land development activities within the Township. These goals and policies were developed in recognition of Ash Township's position in an area of potential growth and endowed with an abundance of assets.

Focus Group Session

To establish a basis for necessary changes to the adopted goals and policies in light of the evolving regional marketplace and other ongoing trends, the Township Planning Commission held a focus group session on February 17, 2009. This session was attended by approximately 20 community stakeholders representing various cross-section of the community. The attendees participated in several activities that included personal reflection and group interaction. During the session, attendees were asked to identify the one thing they like most about living in Ash Township. Responses included (number of similar answers indicated in parenthesis):

- Country atmosphere and small town character (10)
- Close proximity to area destinations (urban centers, highways, entertainment, education, cultural and recreational facilities, etc.) (6)
- People and close-knit community (3)
- Future development
- A community that we take pride in

Clearly, the stakeholders of the Township enjoy living in a rural setting with small town charm, but having easy access to nearby destinations. Attendees were also asked to identify the actions or concepts that are essential for Ash Township in the future. A broad number of responses were received, including:

- Create local jobs and businesses (8)
- Road improvements (7)

- Encourage and facilitate new growth in a planned manner (5)
- Infrastructure improvements (generally) (5)
- Keep rural character and quality of life (4)
- Expand tax base (3)
- Maintain agricultural areas and agribusiness (2)
- Promote a diversified economy (2)
- Partner with the Village for public sewer or consider constructing a Township sewage treatment facility (2)
- Infrastructure along Telegraph Road (2)
- Openness to change (2)
- Community involvement (2)
- Alternative energy (2)
- Target business growth near interchanges (2)
- Allow for residential growth (2)
- Community beautification
- Establish additional industrial property in the north end of the Township
- Work cooperatively with the Village
- Expand recreational facilities
- Code enforcement
- Continue doing a good job
- Develop higher density housing
- New fire hall to replace Station No. 1

The most frequent responses related to job growth, business and industrial growth, infrastructure improvements (roads and utilities) and growing in a planned manner that would maintain rural character.

The focus group session concluded with a community character exercise where small groups were asked to visualize Ash Township 10 to 15 years into the future. Using a blank map of the Township, small groups geographically delineated the “preferred” character areas of the Township. Small groups were asked to present their findings to the group at large. Through these presentations, the participants discovered many similar desires for the future of the Township. **Map 7** summarizes the results of the small group’s visualization efforts by illustrating the character areas that received general consensus from each small group.

The results of the focus group session heavily influenced changes and additions to the goals and policies and Future Land Use Plan.

Planning Commission Review

At their March 2009 meeting, the Planning Commission conducted a detailed review of the adopted goals and policies based on the results of the focus group session, recent community trends, regional economic trends, and relevance to the overall community vision. The result was a revised set of goals and corresponding land use policies. These goals and policies are presented below.

Community Goals

1. Create an optimum human environment for the present and future residents of the Township, an environment that will not only solve their physical needs but will offer variety, choice, opportunity for change, and individual growth.
2. To ensure diversity, stability and balance of land uses to serve human needs: residential areas; agricultural land; natural and recreational areas; schools and cultural activities; adequate public services; access to shopping; health services and places of employment.
3. Relate land use primarily to the natural characteristics of the land and the long-term needs of the community, rather than to short-term private economic gain.
4. Preserve and promote the rights of the individual property owner while maintaining the rural character of the Township.

Natural Features

Goal

Encourage the preservation of natural assets and open spaces as a means to maintain the health of natural systems, wildlife habitats, community character and quality of life of Ash Township.

Policies

- N1** Protect and enhance sensitive and other environmentally significant areas, such as water resources, wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitats and scenic views throughout the Township.

- N2** Encourage the use of the open space development option, cluster housing option, and other techniques to minimize the impact of new residential development on existing natural assets and make them an integral part of new development.

- N3** Link natural features and open space areas to create a system of natural corridors.

- N4** Maintain a community recreation plan and other community-wide natural resource related studies (i.e., Green Infrastructure Plan, Non-Motorized Trails Plan) to be used as a short term and long term guide for land conservation activities and to ensure eligibility for certain State recreation grant opportunities.

Agriculture

Goal

To encourage the retention, wherever possible, of selected prime agricultural lands in the Township by protecting them from urban development through the concentration of urban growth.

Policies

- A1** Recognize that agriculture is an important economic activity of the Township, as well as an environmental asset, by encouraging use of tools and techniques such as the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (Act 116), farmland conservation easements, and the Monroe County Purchase of Development Rights program, among others.
- A2** Support only very low density, dispersed residential uses in primarily agricultural areas.
- A3** Encourage the use of innovative residential subdivision design that helps conserve agricultural land and eliminates poorly designed lot splits.
- A4** Ensure that land development codes allow for activities that might reduce costs or provide supplementary income for local farmers, such as farm stands, consistent with community character.

Residential Development

Goal

Promote the development of planned residential areas designed to offer a variety of identifiable living environments.

Policies

- R1** Promote higher densities in areas which are, or may be, served by public utilities such as sewer and water, parks, and major roads, to reduce urban sprawl and random development.
- R2** Develop and utilize contemporary design standards and review procedures which will encourage developers to employ innovative design techniques on their building projects.
- R3** Promote concentrated code enforcement to help maintain the quality of residential areas, through the use of zoning and building codes to preserve the quality of housing in the Township, and to prevent blighted areas.
- R4** Encourage the removal of conflicting or undesirable land uses from residential areas.
- R5** Seek ways to encourage the development of suitable housing for the elderly population and for low and moderate income households.
- R6** Allow cluster housing, planned unit development, and open space preservation developments consistent with local zoning eligibility requirements to provide a mixture of densities, housing types, housing costs and size of housing units.

Commercial Development

Goal

To provide for a full range of commercial facilities that create a stable economic tax base and which are adequate to serve the resident population within the Ash Township market area.

Policies

- C1** Encourage new commercial uses and expansion of existing establishments, making sure that such developments do not adversely affect adjacent

residential properties through the use of buffer devices such as walls, landscape areas, and transitional areas.

- C2** Require all proposed commercial rezoning to be justified in terms of neighborhood, community, and market area needs, as applicable.
- C3** Encourage the clustering of commercial and/or office facilities in close proximity to major roads and intersections, which will discourage the development of strip commercial. Use of marginal access drives and a limited number of entrances and exits, which reduce traffic conflicts, are also encouraged in conjunction with clustered commercial development.
- C4** Recognize the role of the cities of Flat Rock and Monroe as regional commercial centers and cultural and entertainment destinations. Recognize the role of the Village of Carleton as a local center for daily shopping needs.
- C5** For commercial and office development along Grafton Road, east of the Village, encourage site design standards consistent with the architectural and pedestrian appeal of the Village's business district.

Industrial Development

Goal

Encourage a variety of light industrial development with attractive sites which will strengthen the tax base and provide a place of employment for area residents without degradation to adjacent land uses, natural resources, and overall community character.

Policies

- I1** Promote continued industrial development at locations which can be readily serviced by public utilities and are easily accessible to the existing transportation network; primarily near locations where industrial development currently exists. Such locations may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the I-275 corridor, Oakville-Waltz/Will Carleton Roads between Exeter Road and I-275, and Telegraph Road near I-275.

- I2** Incorporate and utilize the concept of development of industrial parks with well designed points of entrance and exit, controlled site and building design, and adequate parking areas.
- I3** Locate industrial areas where they are not subject to encroachment by incompatible uses, and will not themselves encroach on non-industrial uses.
- I4** Offer firms a range of choice by providing sites of varying sizes and locations that are available for industrial development.
- I5** Encourage the expansion and diversification of the local industrial job base commensurate with local needs.
- F6** Create an interconnected system of sidewalks, paths and trails to increase safety, promote healthy lifestyles and provide linkages between destinations.
- F7** Coordinate with MDOT to facilitate the improvement of the I-275 Bicycle Path.
- F8** Assist and guide the Planning Commission, Township Board, and citizen groups in their efforts by making professional expertise available to help determine the need for desired public and semi-public improvements.
- F9** Provide public facilities and encourage private community facilities by taking into consideration alternatives available in order to provide the best solution to citizen needs and desires.

Community Facilities and Services

Goals

Continue to offer efficient services and facilities to residents and businesses offering a variety of opportunities for human fulfillment, in locations appropriate for their development and utilization.

Support the development, and continued maintenance, of an area-wide multi-modal transportation system reflective of current and future Township access needs.

Policies

- F1** For Township provided facilities, plan, locate, and provide public areas based on a long-range general plan, short range project plans, and capital improvement programming.
- F2** Continue the cooperative relationship with the Village of Carleton for the shared provision of public services and facilities, like recreation, emergency services, library, and senior services.
- F3** Diligently monitor and seek funding opportunities to develop and improve essential community services, such as a centrally located public sewer treatment facility.
- F4** Apply access management standards to road design and site development to promote safe and efficient traffic movement.
- F5** Coordinate motorized and non-motorized transportation enhancement with neighboring communities and regional entities.
- F10** Maintain a community recreation plan and other community-wide recreation related studies (i.e., Green Infrastructure Plan, Non-Motorized Trails Plan) to be used as a short term and long term guide for recreation improvements and to ensure eligibility for certain State recreation grant opportunities.
- F11** Enhance coordination and cooperation between local municipalities and the Airport Community School District to support the District in providing first-class educational opportunities to Township residents.
- F12** Encourage and support community volunteerism by providing opportunities for citizens motivated to contribute to the community's well-being, and to satisfy one's personal need for fulfillment, sense of accomplishment, and self-esteem.
- F13** Encourage long-term sustainability and the reduction of fossil-fuel emissions through the promotion and implementation of energy efficient facilities, services, programs and incentives.

Economic Development

Goal

Capitalize on Ash Township's quality of life, community pride, natural assets, transportation access and locational advantage as a place for life-long living, commerce and employment.

Policies

- E1** Work cooperatively with the development community to undertake inventive development and redevelopment concepts.
- E2** Explore various economic development tools and programs, such the creation of a corridor improvement district and use of tax increment financing, as a means to generate funding for enhancements and improvements within business districts.
- E3** Diligently monitor and seek funding opportunities to develop and improve essential community services as a means of enticing new development.
- E4** Create a marketing strategy for promotion of the Township's quality of life, public services, transportation access and available development sites.
- E5** Develop incentive programs, such as tax abatements and site plan preparation assistance, based on well defined criteria for participation to promote business development and expansion.

Policy Implementation

To assist the Township in the implementation of the above policies, Chapter 8 provides a matrix of available funding programs. Where a funding program is applicable to a specific policy, that policy number is included in the matrix. For example, three potential funding programs that would support Policy F6 include the Transportation Enhancement Fund, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program. These programs and others are detailed further in Chapter 8.

7 Future Land Use Plan

Introduction

The Future Land Use Plan is the physical result of the Master Plan development process. In the focus group session held on February 17, 2009, and at a Planning Commission meeting held on April 21, 2009, Ash Township residents worked with Planning Commissioners, business owners, and other community stakeholders to develop a series of recommendations to be used in the development of the updated Future Land Use Plan.

The Future Land Use Plan equips Ash Township Planning Commissioners and elected officials with a literal depiction of the desired land uses throughout the community. Derived from the Goals and Policies and created through public participation, the Plan represents the vision Ash Township has established for itself over the next 5 to 15 years. The Plan will be a useful tool on which to base zoning and capital improvements decisions, and will allow for consistent and sound planning in the community.

Future Land Use Categories

A total of nine future land use categories have been established in the Future Land Use Plan and Map (**Map 8**). **Table 18** summarizes the distribution of the various future land use categories within the Township. Provided below is a detailed description of each category.

Agricultural/Rural Residential

The agricultural/rural residential future land use classification encompasses those areas intended to be used primarily for agriculture, horticulture, or agribusiness support uses, as well as farmsteads and related agricultural buildings located near the principal dwellings on those farmsteads. This category also includes large lot single family residential uses, and isolated single family residences situated in predominantly agricultural areas.

Significant portions of the Township are categorized as agricultural/rural residential. This includes the majority

Table 18: Future Land Use Distribution

Future Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total
Agricultural/Rural Residential	6,758	31%
Rural Estates	8,509	39%
Single-Family Residential	2,151	10%
Manufactured Home Park	163	1%
Commercial	496	2%
Specialized Commercial	325	1%
Light Industrial	975	4%
General Industrial	315	1%
Public/Semi-Public/Recreation	365	2%
Water Bodies and Rights-of-Way	1,708	8%
TOTALS	21,765	100%

of the western, south-central, and southeastern portions of the Township. The designation of these areas for agricultural/rural residential usage reflects the established development pattern, which is dominated by agricultural uses, with isolated farmsteads and residences. It is the intent of this category to prevent these agricultural and rural residential uses from encroachment by higher intensity land uses. Additionally, lands within this category are prime candidates for participation in the Monroe County Purchase of Development Rights Program. In total, this category accounts for approximately one-third of the Township's land area.



The Agricultural/Rural Residential Category seeks to protect the Township's agricultural heritage and resources.

Rural Estates

The rural estates future land use category specifically refers to those areas planned for use as rural estate developments, as defined in the Zoning Ordinance. The rural estates classification, as well as the Rural Estates Zoning District, is intended (as stated in Section 5.01 of the Zoning Ordinance) to provide open land area for orderly residential growth; to permit continued agricultural use and residential activities of a semi-rural character in areas that are presently without public water and sewerage facilities and are likely to remain without such services for an extended period of time; to protect and stabilize the essential characteristics of these areas in order to promote and encourage suitable environments for low density, family life; and to maintain and preserve the semi-rural character of the Township. In addition to single-family detached dwellings, supportive land uses such as schools, churches and golf courses may also be appropriate within this category.

To support the intent described above, and as enabled by the Ash Township Zoning Ordinance (through the cluster housing, open space preservation and planned unit development options), rural estate developments that preserve agricultural resources and natural areas are strongly encouraged.

This future land use category comprises the largest proportion of the Township at nearly 40 percent. The most sizeable area of planned rural estates use is found in the northeastern portion of the Township, between the Village of Carleton and the greater Detroit urban area to the northeast, where existing rural estates development has occurred, and where future residential development is most likely to occur. Rural estates use is also planned south of the Village, along the Grafton Road corridor and extending east along the Labo Road and Newport Road corridors toward Telegraph Road. Finally, a smaller area of rural estates use is planned to extend north from the Village.

Single-Family Residential

This category primarily supports single-family detached structures including permanent dwellings and accessory structures, such as garages, that are related to these units. The intent of this category is to support and protect existing residential developments and encourage the construction of new, predominantly single-family detached homes in a carefully planned setting. In addition to single-family detached homes, residential types such as attached dwellings, two-family residences, nursing homes, and elderly housing may also be appropriate within the category as regulated by the Ash Township Zoning Ordinance. Resi-

dentially supportive land uses, such as schools, churches and golf courses may also be appropriate within the future land use category.

Through the Zoning Ordinance's planned unit development option, unique residential developments that preserve natural amenities, provide for a mixture of housing types, and a mixture of residential and compatible non-residential uses under certain circumstances, are strongly encouraged.



Through the planned unit development option, attached multi-family dwelling units could be integrated within larger single-family residential developments.

This future land use type is clustered within the Township's already established higher-density residential areas, including the Grafton Road corridor, north and south of the Village, the eastern half of Township Section 18, and the Carleton-Rockwood Road corridor. Lands within this category having the greatest potential to support new residential growth are found along the Carleton-Rockwood Road corridor and along Labo Road, west of I-275. In total, this category comprises approximately 10 percent of the Township's land area.

Multi-Family Residential

This future land use category is designed to provide sites for multiple-family dwelling structures, and related uses, which would generally serve as zones of transition between lower density residential uses and more intensive non-residential uses. More specifically, this category would accommodate those multiple-family types allowed within the RM Zoning District as established in the Ash Township Zoning Ordinance. Although a variety of multi-family housing types may be allowed, varieties that can be easily integrated into the rural residential context of the Township, such as attached townhomes, stacked ranches, and garden apartments, are specifically encouraged.

No lands for future multi-family residential development are identified on the Future Land Use Map. This is reflective of the existing land use pattern of the Township, where no multi-family developments currently exist. In the event of a request for a rezoning to support a new multi-family residential development, the following criteria must be considered:

1. Access to a road designated as an arterial or major collector, capable of handling the expected amount of traffic to be generated.
2. Availability of existing or proposed public sewers, community facilities and services.
3. Substantial, effective pre-existing or planned buffering from incompatible adjoining land uses.
4. Non-buildable sites such as tracts substantially located in a floodplain or wetland are excluded from consideration.
5. Suitable location within a transitional area between less intensive residential uses and more intensive non-residential uses.

Manufactured Home Park

This category is specifically dedicated to manufactured home parks, as defined and regulated by Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance. A total of 163 acres of the Township is planned for manufactured home parks.

Commercial

This future land use category is designed to accommodate retail, service and other commercial establishments that accommodate day-to-day convenience shopping and service needs, comparison shopping needs, as well as the general commercial needs of a larger consumer population. Two areas of the Township are planned for such usage: along Grafton Road, east of the Village, and along much of the Telegraph Road corridor.

The planned commercial area along Grafton Road is primarily designed to accommodate uses such as grocery stores, barber shops, beauty parlors, florists, bakeries, laundromats, restaurants, hardware stores, drug stores and offices that serve the residents of the immediate vicinity.

The Telegraph Road planned commercial corridor is designed to accommodate general commercial uses that serve the needs of the motorists traveling along Telegraph



Commercial establishments are encouraged to provide substantial landscaping and other site amenities to enhance aesthetic appeal.

Road and the larger community. These uses would include general merchandise stores, offices, private commercial recreation facilities, restaurants, theatres, car washes, limited automotive service, automotive sales, and storage. Individual commercial establishments must maintain superior site design standards that provide landscaping and other site amenities to enhance aesthetic appeal. Such commercial uses are also encouraged to be provided in planned commercial centers, having a uniform architectural design and employing sound access management techniques. When adjacent to residential uses, commercial establishments must provide adequate buffering, in the form of screening walls, vegetated berms, and/or greenbelts, to minimize the impacts of such uses.

Lands planned for commercial use account for approximately two percent of the Township.

Specialized Commercial

This future land use category is designed to accommodate specialized commercial uses that serve the needs of a more regional clientele and depend on the visibility and mobility made possible by Interstate 275 and Telegraph Road. These commercial uses would include hotels, technology and office parks, shopping centers, office parks, truck stops, and automobile, truck, boat and recreational vehicle sales, service and storage. Due to their larger-scale operations, these specialized commercial uses are more intensive than traditional commercial uses, and therefore, must be properly planned and designed to minimize impacts to public services and ensure their compatibility with adjoining properties.

Lands planned for this future land use category are found at the three I-275 interchanges within the Township: at Will Carleton Road, Carleton Rockwood Road and Telegraph Road. In total, these lands comprise approximately 1 percent of the Township.

Light Industrial

This use type is characterized by properties with high tech uses and functions, including light-manufacturing, telecommunications, logistics and office roles. In addition, industrial land use areas are categorized by the existence of wholly enclosed wholesale activities, warehouses, and industrial operations whose external physical effects are restricted to the site and do not have a detrimental effect on the surrounding areas. It is not the intent of this land use category to allow intensive manufacturing, assembling, fabrication, incineration, salvage and landfill activities whose physical effects could potentially impact surrounding development.

It is intended for these establishments to be situated in industrial park settings characterized by generously landscaped front yards, ample side yards, attractive buildings, full screening of outdoor activities and other operations, and an overall neat, clean, and unobtrusive appearance. Such uses must also be fully served by public utilities and designed to minimize impact to public services.

A large area of this planned use is found in the northeastern corner of the Township, which generally encompasses an existing automotive testing facility. Lands near the I-275 and Telegraph Road interchange, as well as lands along the south side of Oakville Waltz Road are also included in this category, due to their location along major roadways, high visibility and access provided by I-275. In total, light industrial lands account for 4 percent of the Township.



The Light Industrial Category envisions attractively designed light-manufacturing, technology, research and office uses that provide jobs and boost the local economy.

General Industrial

Proposed general industrial lands are located in those areas of the Township where infrastructure is available and where efficient access is provided to major highways. The general industrial future land use category would permit uses that require more intense manufacturing, processing or contracting, typically with outdoor storage needs. These uses are often associated with nuisances which require careful planning and the development of comprehensive land development regulations to mitigate.

Reflective of existing intensive industrial uses, only one area of the Township is planned for general industrial use, found along the south side of Will Carleton Road near I-275. In total, this category comprises approximately 1 percent of the Township.

Public/Semi-Public/Recreation

This category was established to embrace the larger facilities operated by various governmental and public agencies and institutions (including municipal services, religious uses, and park space). Included within this category is the Village operated wastewater treatment facility, the Township Hall and Unity Park, Airport Schools complex, and the Carleton Glen Golf Course. In total, lands within this category encompass approximately 2 percent of the Township.

No areas slated for future public, semi-public or recreational use are included in the Future Land Use Plan. Rather, any new facilities could be accommodated throughout the Township, where appropriate and consistent with the requirements of the Ash Township Zoning Ordinance.

Non-Motorized Trails

One existing non-motorized trail, the I-275 Bicycle Path, extends through Ash Township. This path was constructed in 1977 as part of the I-275 freeway construction project, and is located on the west side of I-275 within the freeway right-of-way. The path stretches more than 44 miles from the City of Northville in Oakland County to Post Road in Frenchtown Charter Township in Monroe County. Particularly within the southern Monroe County portion, the path has fallen into disrepair. In some locations, bridges have been removed or trail segments have become impassable.

In early 2009, the I-275 Bicycle Path Asset Management Study was completed by MDOT to assess overall trail conditions and to create a strategy for trail improvement. Several necessary improvements are identified for the portion of the path within Ash Township. These include reconstruction of the pathway, implementation of non-signalized roadway crossing improvements at Will Carleton Road and Telegraph Road, conducting repairs to the existing bridges, rebuilding the bridges over the Swan Creek and other drains, installing new trail signage, and various other improvements. It is the intent of this Master Plan to partner with MDOT in the facilitation of the proposed improvements to the I-275 Bicycle Path, in order to restore the path to full operation for use by the citizens of the Township and region.

In 2008, a new park, Unity Park, was developed by Ash Township adjacent to the existing Township Hall located on Ready Road near I-275. Unity Park features ball fields, playgrounds, open spaces areas and a walking trail that connects the park facilities and encircles a large pond. This park currently serves Township residents as well as the residents of the Village of Carleton. Potentially in conjunction with improvements to the I-275 Bicycle Path, a new non-motorized trail is proposed to connect Unity Park with the Village of Carleton. The conceptual location of this trail is shown on **Map 8**; however, a precise trail route has not been identified.

Future Land Use Summary

The distribution of land, as delineated in the Future Land Use Map, helps to more clearly define the development vision and goals for Ash Township by working toward the following:

- Ensures stability and balance of land uses: residential areas, natural and recreational areas, community facilities, and commercial and industrial land uses;



The Future Land Use Plan envisions the development of a non-motorized trail between Unity Park and the Village.

- Promotes and encourages single-family developments and homeownership through the encouragement of different residential types and densities;
- Encourages safe and efficient access to all areas, essential services and amenities of the Township;
- Facilitates continued local economic development through controlled residential and nonresidential growth; and,
- Solidifies and protects the Township's identity.

Zoning Plan

The Ash Township Zoning Ordinance No. 7C was adopted by the Township Board on January 12, 1999, and has seen numerous amendments since adoption. The Ordinance established a total of five residential zoning districts and six non-residential zoning districts. As required by Public Act 33 of 2008, the following is an explanation of the relationship between the future land use categories presented above and the Zoning Districts established in the Zoning Ordinance.

Residential FLU Categories

The Future Land Use Plan identifies five residential future land use categories:

- Agricultural/Rural Residential
- Rural Estates
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Manufactured Home Park

The detailed descriptions of each category were included earlier in this chapter.

Residential Zoning Districts

The following residential Zoning Districts have been established in the Ash Township Zoning Ordinance:

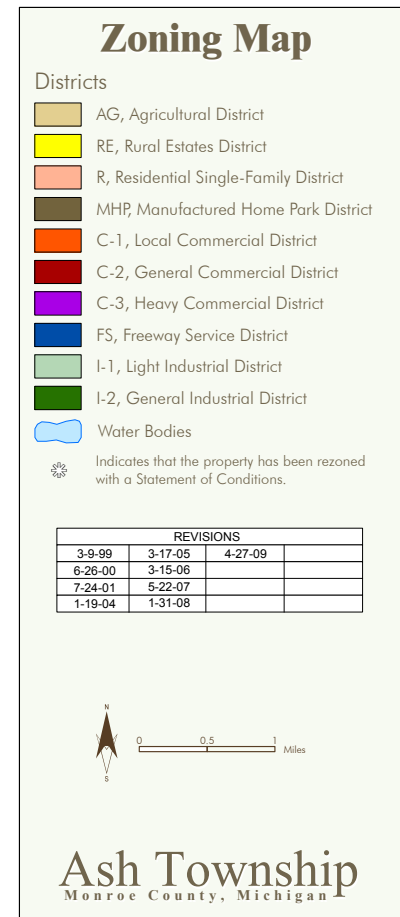
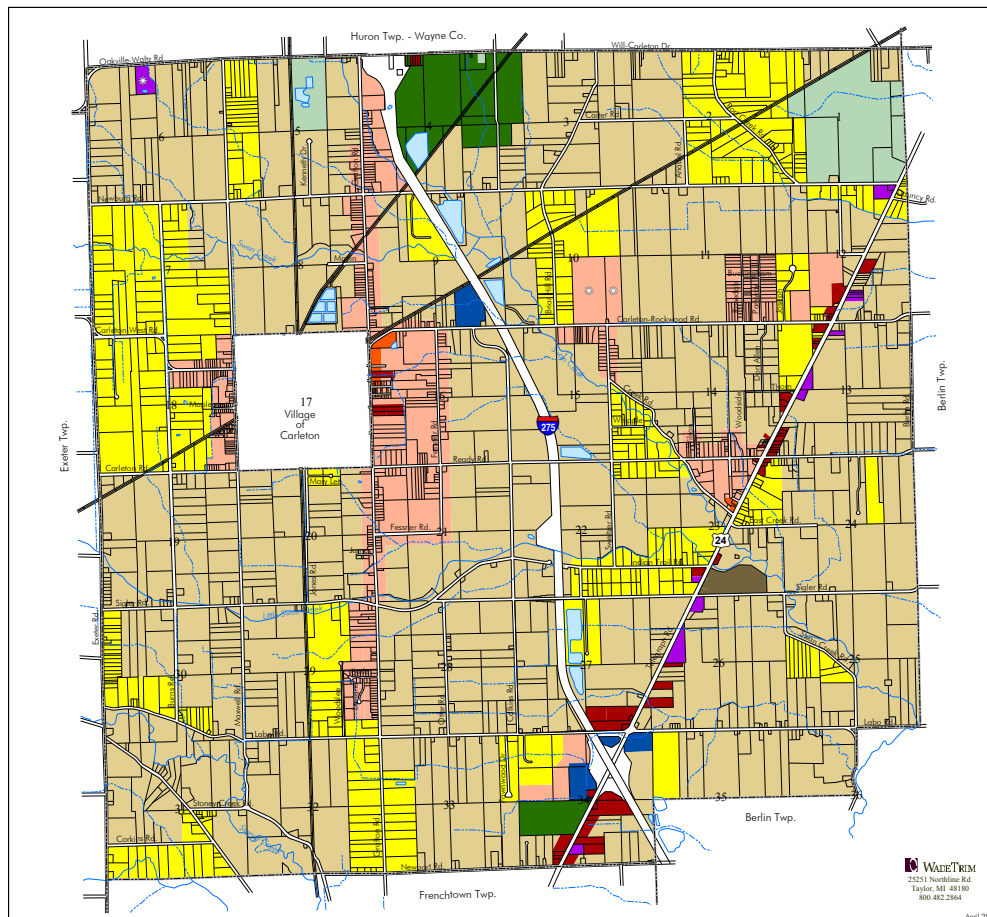
- AG, Agricultural District
- RE, Rural Estates District
- R, Residential Single-Family District
- RM, Residential Multi-Family District
- MHP, Manufactured Home Park District

The AG District is the least intensive district in the Township and is intended to accommodate agricultural uses and low-density single-family homes. The intent of the AG District is to conserve, stabilize, enhance and develop farming and related resource utilization activities, and to provide for non-farm development in a manner harmonious to the preservation of farming activities. The minimum size per lot to determine the AG District is 2.5 acres, with a sliding scale approach for the number of new building sites allowed based on the size of the parent parcel.

In part, the intent of the RE District is to provide for continued agricultural use and residential activities of a semi-rural character. The minimum lot size for the RE District is 1.5 acres.

The R District is designed to encourage the construction of, and the continued use of land for one-family dwellings. The minimum lot area for this District is dependent upon the availability of utility services, as outlined below:

- With no utility service available, minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet
- With only water available, minimum lot size is 12,000 square feet



- With only sewer available, minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet
- With both water and sewer available, minimum lot size is 8,750 square feet

The RM District is designed to provide sites for multiple-family dwelling structures that will generally serve as zones of transition between the lower density single-family district and the non-residential districts. The District allows a variety of housing types, including two-family dwellings, multiple-family dwellings, nursing homes and other forms of elderly housing. The number of dwelling units per acre, measured as a maximum number of bedrooms per acre, is dependent upon the availability of utility services, as outlined below.

- With no utility service available, maximum 8 bedrooms per acre
- With only water available, maximum 19 bedrooms per acre
- With only sewer available, maximum 24 bedrooms per acre
- With both water and sewer available, maximum 30 bedrooms per acre

The MHP District encourages the development of manufactured home parks in suitable living environments. The minimum lot size for each manufactured home park development is 15 acres.

Plan and Zoning Relationship: Residential

The long-term implementation of the residential future land use categories outlined in this Master Plan will be accomplished, in terms of height, area, bulk, location and use, by the specific requirements outlined in their corresponding residential Zoning Districts, as listed below.

- The Agricultural/Rural Residential future land use category is accomplished through the AG Zoning District.
- The Rural Estates future land use category is accomplished through the RE Zoning District.
- The Single-Family Residential future land use category is accomplished through the R Zoning District.
- The Multi-Family Residential future land use category is accomplished through the RM Zoning District.
- The Manufactured Home Park future land use category is accomplished through the MHP Zoning District.

It should be noted that flexibility in the design and density of residential developments may be accomplished through several available development options within the Ash Township Zoning Ordinance, including the Single-Family Cluster Housing option, Open Space Preservation and Development option, and Planned Unit Development.

Non-Residential FLU Categories

The Future Land Use Plan identifies five non-residential future land use categories:

- Commercial
- Specialized Commercial
- Light Industrial
- General Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public/Recreation

Non-Residential Zoning Districts

The Ash Township Zoning Ordinance outlines six non-residential Zoning Districts:

- C-1, Local Commercial
- C-2, General Service
- C-3, Heavy Commercial
- FS, Freeway Service
- I-1, Light Industrial
- I-2, General Industrial

The intent of the C-1 District is to meet the day-to-day convenience shopping and service needs of persons residing in adjacent residential areas. The C-2 District caters to the needs of a larger consumer population, including the needs of passer-by traffic and comparison shopping needs. The C-3 District is designed to provide sites for land use activities that are more intensive in character than those allowed within the C-2 District. The FS District is designed to service the needs of businesses requiring ready access to major highways and freeway facilities. The I-1 District encompasses those areas of the Township whose principal use is, or ought to be, light manufacturing and other limited industrial uses. The I-2 District is designed primarily for manufacturing, assembling, and fabrication activities including large scale or specialized industrial operations whose external physical effects will be felt to some degree by surrounding districts.

Plan and Zoning Relationship: Non-Residential

The long-term implementation of the non-residential future land use categories outlined in this Master Plan will be accomplished, in terms of height, area, bulk, location and use, by the specific requirements outlined in their cor-

responding non-residential Zoning Districts, as described below.

The Commercial future land use category would be effectively accomplished through either the C-1 District or C-2 District, dependent upon its context within Ash Township. The planned commercial area along Grafton Road is primarily designed to accommodate convenience uses that serve the residents of the immediate vicinity and, thus, is more reflective of the C-1 District. The Telegraph Road planned commercial corridor is designed to accommodate general commercial uses that serve the needs of the motorists traveling along Telegraph Road and the larger community and, thus, is more reflective of the C-2 District.

The Specialized Commercial future land use category may be effectively accomplished through the C-2 District, but also potentially through the C-3 District or FS District, dependent upon its context within Ash Township. Lands planned for Specialized Commercial along Telegraph Road are more likely to be accomplished through the C-3 District, while lands planned for Specialized Commercial near the I-275 freeway interchanges are more likely to be accomplished through the FS District.

The Light Industrial future land use category is accomplished through the I-1 Zoning District.

The General Industrial future land use category is accomplished through the I-2 Zoning District.

The Public/Semi-Public/Recreation future land use category does not relate to any particular Zoning District. Rather, public, semi-public and recreation uses could be accommodated in a variety of Zoning Districts. For example, a fraternal organization is permitted as a special land use in the R District and C-1 District and is permitted by right in the C-2 District.



8

Implementation

Introduction

The Ash Township Master Plan is a comprehensive community policy statement. The Plan is comprised of a variety of both graphic and narrative policies intended to function as benchmarks and to provide basic guidelines for making reasonable, realistic community development decisions. The Plan is intended to be used by Township officials, by those making private sector investments, and by all of those Ash Township citizens interested in the future development of the Township.

The completion of the Plan is but one part of the community planning process. Realization or implementation of the recommendations of the Plan can only be achieved over an extended period of time and only through the cooperative efforts of both the public and private sectors. Implementation of the Plan may be realized by actively:

- Assuring community wide knowledge, understanding, support, and approval of the Plan;
- Regulating the use and manner of development of property through up to date reasonable zoning controls, subdivision regulations, and building and housing codes;
- Providing a program of capital improvements and adequate, economical public services by using available governmental financing techniques to encourage desired land development or redevelopment; and,
- Reviewing the plan periodically (at least every five years) to evaluate its consistency with changing trends and citizen desires.

Public Support of the Long Range Plan

Citizen participation and understanding of the general planning process and policies of the Plan are critical to the success of the Township's planning program. A well organized public relations program is needed to identify and marshal public support. Lack of citizen understanding and support could well have serious implications for the

eventual implementation of planning proposals. Failure of the public to back needed bond issues and continuing dissatisfaction concerning taxation, special assessments, zoning decisions, and development proposals are some of the results of public misunderstanding and rejection of long range plans.

In order to organize public support most effectively, the Township must emphasize the necessity of, and reasons for, instituting the planning program. Accordingly, the Planning Enabling Act under Section 51 states that the Township Planning Commission "may publish and distribute copies of the Master Plan or of any report, and employ other means of publicity and education." Additionally, the Planning Commission "shall consult with and advise public officials and agencies, public utility companies, civic, educational, professional, and other organizations, and citizens concerning the promotion or implementation of the Master Plan." In this spirit, the Township may wish to prepare a plan summary brochure for public distribution upon its adoption.

Zoning Ordinance

Zoning regulations are adopted under the local police power granted by the State for the purpose of promoting community health, safety, and general welfare. Such regulations have been strongly supported by the Michigan courts, as well as by the U.S. Supreme Court. Zoning consists of dividing the community into districts, for the purpose of establishing density of population and regulating the use of land and buildings, their height and bulk, and the proportion of a lot that may be occupied by them. Regulations in different kinds of districts may be different. However, regulations within the same district must be consistent throughout the community.

The intent of zoning is to assure the orderly development of the community. Zoning is also employed as a means of protecting property values and other public and private investments. Because of the impact that zoning can have on the use of land and related services, it should be based on a comprehensive long range community plan.

Zoning is an effective tool not only for the implementation of the Plan, but also benefits individual property owners. It protects homes and investments against the potential harmful intrusion of business and industry into residential neighborhoods; requires the spacing of buildings far enough apart to assure adequate light and air; prevents the overcrowding of land; facilitates the economical provision of essential public facilities; and aids in conservation of essential natural resources.

Enforcement

The ultimate effectiveness of the various ordinance requirements, however, is dependent upon the overall quality of ordinance administration and enforcement. If administrative procedures are lax, or if enforcement of regulations is handled in an inconsistent, sporadic manner, the result will be unsatisfactory at best. The Township Zoning Administrator is often responsible for carrying out zoning/development related functions including building inspections, ordinance administration, community/developer liaison, and so forth. Each of these functions requires a substantial investment of staff time. If sufficient time is not made available to carry out these critical functions, they may only be accomplished in a cursory manner. Therefore, the Township should provide for adequate department staff levels and/or consulting assistance to assure that these essential day-to-day functions will receive the professional attention required to assure quality development.

Capital Improvements Program

The term “capital improvements” is generally intended to embrace large-scale projects of a fixed nature, the implementation of which results in new or expanded public facilities and services. Such items as public building construction, park development, sewer installation, waterworks improvements, street construction, land acquisition, and the acquisition of certain large-scale pieces of equipment (graders, sweepers, trucks, etc.) are included in the capital improvements budget.

Few communities are fortunate enough to have available at any given time sufficient revenues to satisfy all demands for new or improved public facilities and services. Consequently, most are faced with the necessity of determining the relative priority of specific projects and establishing a program schedule for their initiation and completion. The orderly programming of public improvements is to be accomplished in conjunction with the long-range Master Plan for development.

In essence, the capital improvements program is simply a schedule for implementing public capital improvements, which acknowledges current and anticipated demands and which recognizes present and potential financial resources available to the community. The capital improvements program is a major planning tool for assuring that the projects proceed to completion in an efficient manner. The capital improvements program is not intended to encourage the spending of additional public monies but is simply a means by which an impartial evaluation of needs can be made. The program is a schedule established to expedite the implementation of authorized or contemplated projects.

Long-range programming of public improvements is based upon three fundamental considerations. First, the proposed projects must be selected on the basis of community need. Second, the program must be developed within the community’s financial constraints and must be based upon a sound financial plan. Finally, program flexibility must be maintained through the annual review and approval of the capital budget. The strict observance of these conditions requires periodic analysis of various community development factors, as well as a thorough and continuing evaluation of all proposed improvements and related expenditures.

The Planning Enabling Act outlined a new requirement for all Planning Commissions in communities that have adopted a Master Plan to annually prepare a capital improvements program. According to the Act, the program “shall show those public structures and improvements, in the general order of their priority, that in the Commission’s judgement will be needed or desirable and can be undertaken within the ensuing 6-year period.” To fulfill this requirement, Ash Township should develop formalized procedures for preparing a capital improvements plan. This annual process should be a collaborative effort between the Planning Commission, Township Board and Township Staff and must assure conformity with the Master Plan.

Planning Education

Planning Commissioners should be encouraged to attend planning and zoning seminars to keep themselves informed of current planning issues and learn how to better carry out their duties and responsibilities as a Planning Commissioner. These seminars are regularly sponsored by groups as the Michigan Association of Planning, Michigan Townships Association and the Michigan State University Extension Service.

Funding Opportunities

Ash Township's Master Plan has focused on providing an overall recommended pattern for future land uses in the Township. At the same time, however, it also has identified a number of policies, programs and services that will be important for the successful implementation of the Plan's goals. In particular, these policies and recommendations are listed in the Goals and Policies chapter of this Master Plan, and include: creating a system of natural corridors (Policy Number N3); promoting concentrated code enforcement activities (R3); developing and improving essential community facilities (F3); creating an interconnected system of sidewalks, paths and trails (F6); promoting and implementing energy efficient facilities, services, programs and incentives (F12); and developing a marketing strategy for the promotion of the Township's strategic assets (E4).

To accomplish these policies and recommendations, Township leaders, in conjunction with Township staff and consultants, should begin to develop criteria and priorities for such efforts including the provision of technical assistance and coordination of local project funding. However, in this time of diminished revenue from local funding sources, communities such as Ash Township must diligently monitor and aggressively seek funds from state and federal funding sources. To assist in the implementation of the Master Plan, a comprehensive matrix of funding opportunities applicable to Ash Township has been created (**Table 19**). Within the matrix, where a funding program might assist in the implementation of a particular policy, the corresponding policy number is listed.

5-Year Master Plan Review

The Ash Township Master Plan is a flexible document that should be updated periodically to address major changes in the community, such as the addition/loss of a major employer or changing citizen attitudes relating to a controversial issue.

At least every five years after the adoption of a Master Plan, the Planning Enabling Act requires that a Planning Commission "review the Master Plan and determine whether to commence the procedure to amend the Master Plan or adopt a new Master Plan." The findings of the review must be recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting or meetings of the Planning Commission.

Table 19: Matrix of Funding Opportunities

Category/ Program Name	Sponsor	Funding Opportunity Description	Required Local Match Percentage	Policy Implementation*	Link to Program Description
Parks, Recreation and Trails					
Transportation Enhancement Funds	MDOT	Acquisition of land and/or construction of non-motorized trails; bicycle and pedestrian facilities	20%	F6 F7	http://www.michigan.gov/tea
Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	MDNR	Purchase of land; development of outdoor recreational facilities and trails	25%	N1 N3 F6 F7	www.michigan.gov/dnr-grants
Land and Water Conservation Fund	MDNR	Development of outdoor recreational facilities and trails	50%	N3 F6 F7	www.michigan.gov/dnr-grants
Community Forestry Grants	MDNR	Grants to support urban and community forest activities such as tree inventories, management plans, planting and other maintenance activities	No Match	N1	www.michigan.gov/dnr-grants
DTE Energy Tree Planting	DTE Energy	Small-scale tree planting projects	No Match	N1	www.michigan.gov/dnr-grants
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program	MDLEG	Energy efficiency strategies and projects to reduce total energy use, reduce fossil fuel emissions, and improve energy efficiency (could include studies, recreation projects and trails)	Yet to be determined	N1 N3 N4 F6 F7 F10	www.eecbg.energy.gov/
Community Facilities and Infrastructure					
Economic Adjustment Assistance Program	USEDA	Projects that stimulate employment (i.e., industrial parks) in areas that have experienced severe economic distress		C1 I1 I2 I5 E3	www.eda.gov/AboutEDA/Programs.xml
Public Works and Economic Development Program	USEDA	Construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities necessary to generate or retain private sector jobs and investments.		C1 I1 I2 I5 E3	www.eda.gov/AboutEDA/Programs.xml
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program	MDLEG	Energy efficiency strategies and projects to reduce total energy use, reduce fossil fuel emissions, and improve energy efficiency (could include development of energy efficiency strategies and public facility improvements)	Yet to be determined	R2 F13	www.eecbg.energy.gov/
Clean Water State Revolving Fund	MDEQ	Grants and low-interest loans for water quality protection projects for wastewater treatment, nonpoint source pollution control, and watershed and estuary management.	No Match	N1 F2 F3 E3	www.epa.gov/owm/cwfinance/cwsrf/
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund	MDEQ	Grants and low-interest loans to install, upgrade, or replace infrastructure to continue to ensure safe drinking water.	No Match	F2 F3 E3	www.epa.gov/safewater/dwsrf/index.html
Rural Development Community Facilities Program	USDA	Grants and low-interest loans for essential community facilities and capital projects or equipment that supports police, fire and health services in rural areas (20,000 or less population)	25% for grants	F2 F3 E3	www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/cf/cp.htm
Rural Development Water and Environmental Programs	USDA	Grants and loans for drinking water, sanitary sewer, solid waste and storm drainage facilities in rural areas (10,000 or less population)	Varies	F2 F3 E3	www.usda.gov/rus/water/
Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program	FEMA	Grants to fire departments to enhance their ability to protect the public and fire service personnel from fire and related hazards	10-20% depending on service area population	F2 F3 E3	www.firegrantsupport.com/
Transportation (Including Non-Motorized)					
Safe Routes to School Program	MDOT	Trail development to improve school access	No Match	F6 F11	www.saferoutesmichigan.org
Transportation Economic Development Fund	MDOT	Category A: funding to assist in the development of highways, roads and streets necessary to support economic growth (must partner with the Monroe Co Road Commission).	20%	C1 I1 I2 I5 E3	www.michigan.gov/tedf
Transportation Enhancement Funds	MDOT	Bicycle and pedestrian facilities; sidewalks; curb ramps; wide paved shoulders	20%	F6 F7	http://www.michigan.gov/tea
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program	MDLEG	Energy efficiency strategies and projects to reduce total energy use, reduce fossil fuel emissions, and improve energy efficiency (could include various road improvements and trail development)	Yet to be determined	F4 F5 F6 F7	www.eecbg.energy.gov/

*Policy numbers refer to the specific Ash Township policies listed in Chapter 6.
Source: Wade Trim, April 2009.

Acronym Key:

FEMA = Federal Emergency Management Agency
MDEQ = Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
MDLEG = Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth
MDNR = Michigan Department of Natural Resources
MDOT = Michigan Department of Transportation
USEDA = United States Economic Development Administration
USDA = United States Department of Agriculture



Map 1: Existing Land Use

Map 2: Natural Features

Map 3: Prime Agricultural Lands

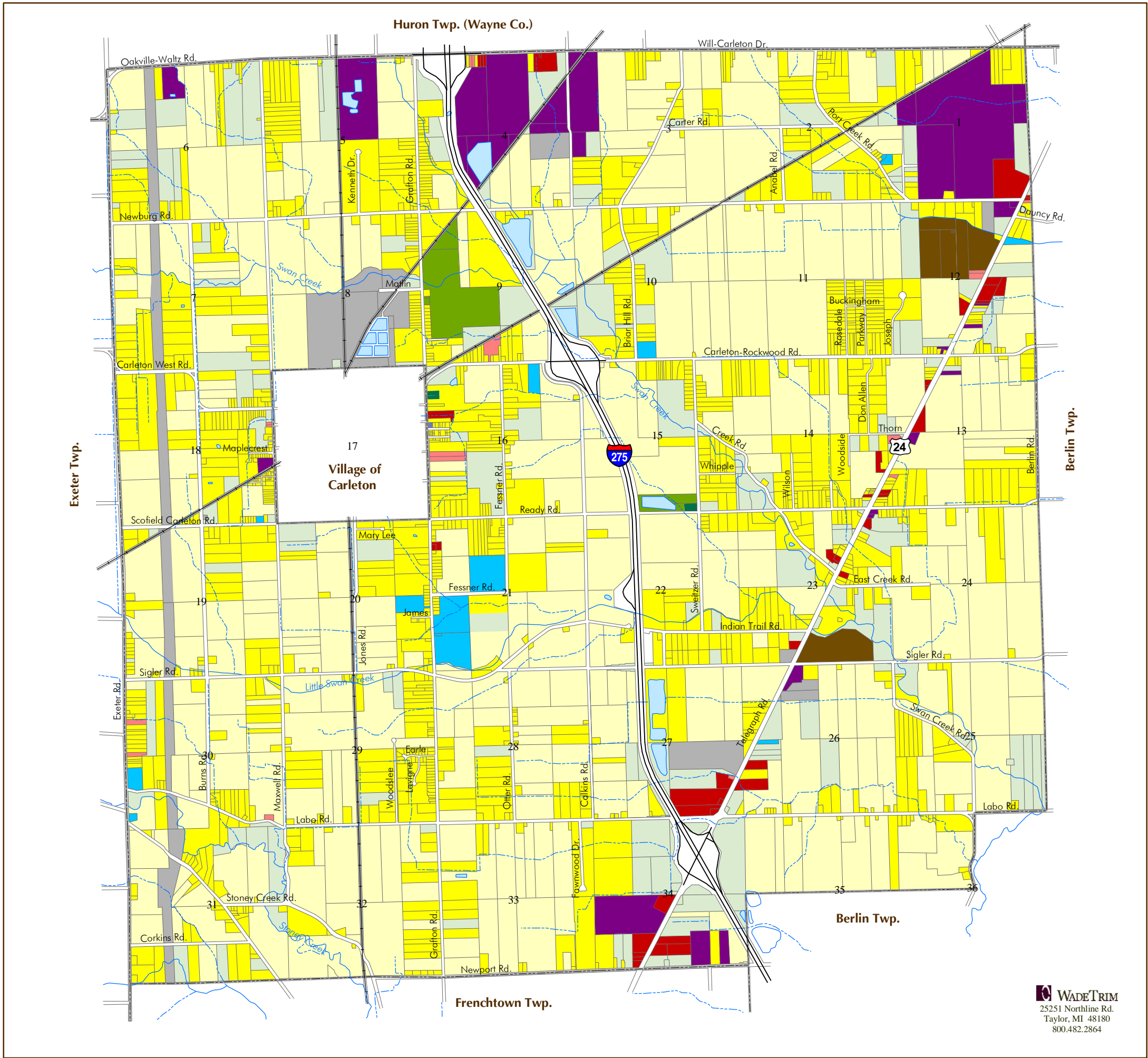
Map 4: Transportation Network

**Map 5: Road Condition and Proposed
Improvements**

**Map 6: Utilities and Proposed Improve-
ments**

Map 7: Planning Opportunities

Map 8: Future Land Use

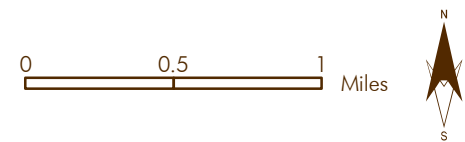


1 Existing Land Use

Legend

- Agricultural/Rural Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Manufactured Home Park
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Churches/Schools/Institutions
- Public Facilities
- Recreational
- Public Utilities and Works
- Vacant/Open Space
- Rivers and Streams
- Creeks and Drains
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Lines
- Railroads

Source: Wade-Trim field survey of June 2004, updated 2009.



Ash Township
Monroe County, Michigan

Master Plan
Update

'09

WADETRIM
25251 Northline Rd.
Taylor, MI 48180
800.482.2864

3

Prime Agricultural
Lands

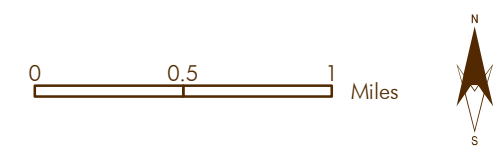
Legend

Prime Farmland Class:

- All Areas are Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Local Importance
- Prime Farmland if Drained
- Not Prime Farmland

- Roads
- Rivers and Streams
- Creeks and Drains
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Lines
- Railroads

Source: Michigan Geographic Framework, v8a; Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database for Monroe County, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, 2002;



Exeter Twp.

Berlin Twp.

Berlin Twp.

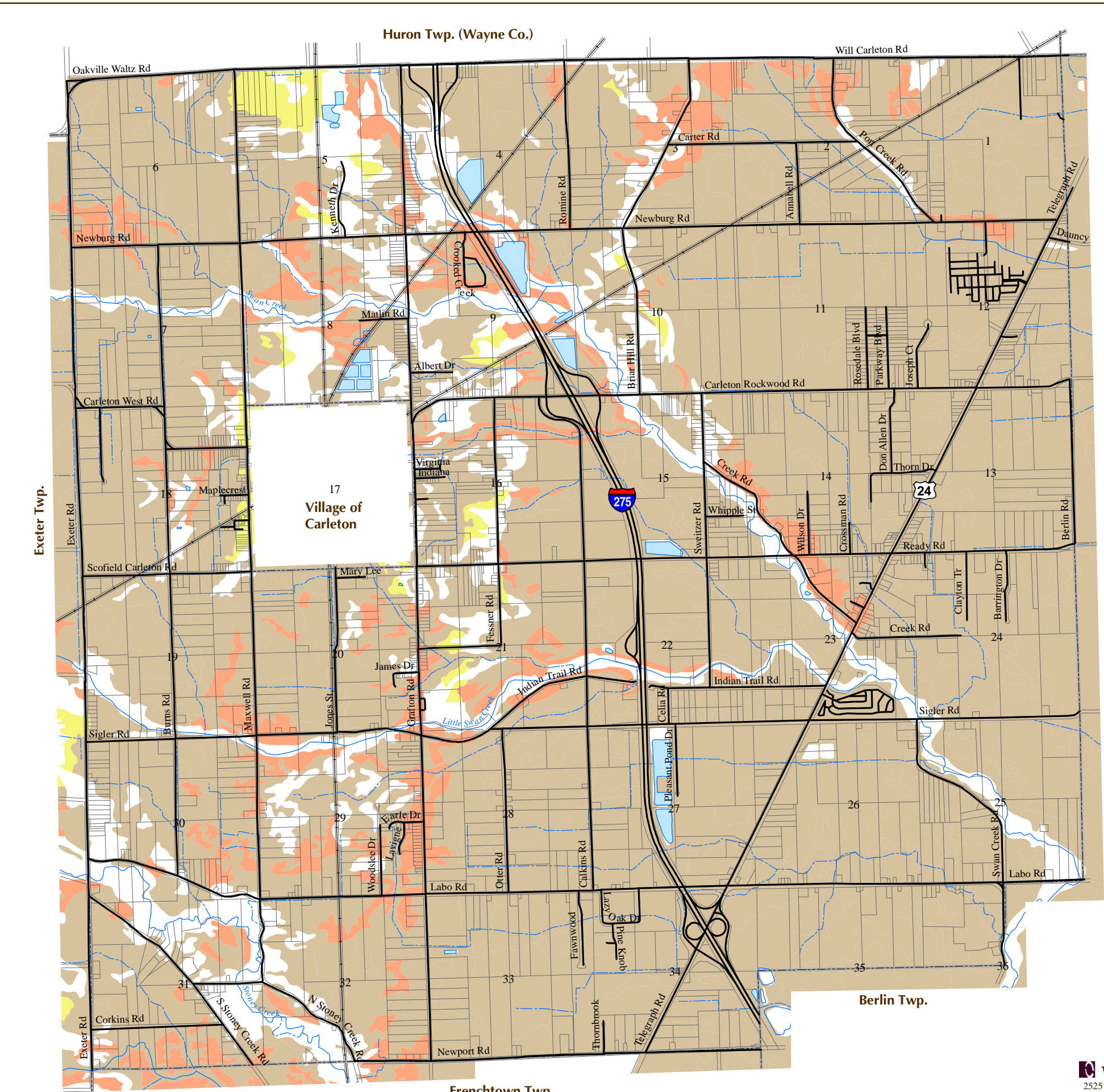
Frenchtown Twp.

WADETRIM

25251 Northline Rd.

Taylor, MI 48180

800.482.2864



4

Transportation
Network

Legend

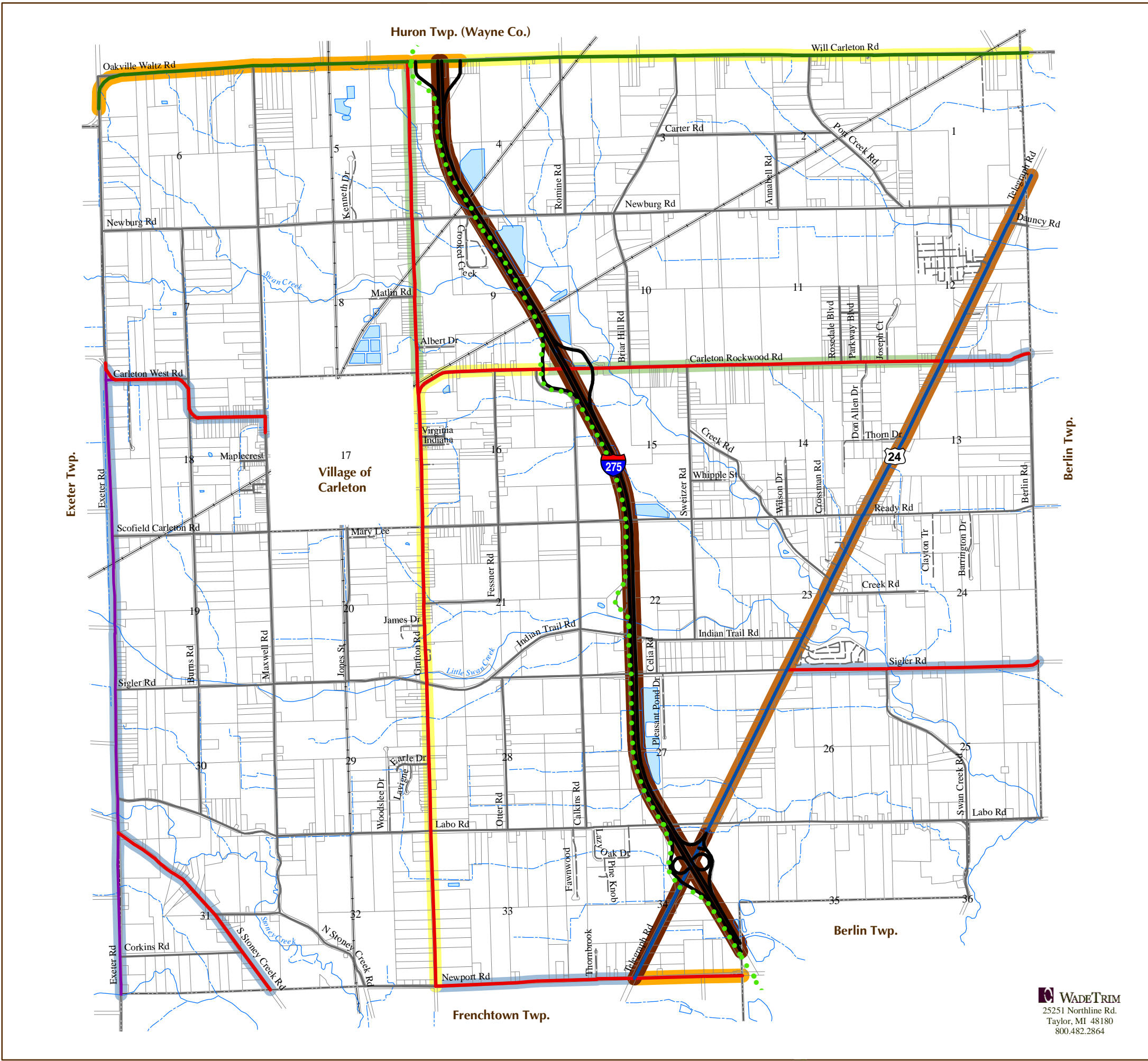
- Functional Class:
- Interstate (Principal Arterial)
 - Other Principal Arterial
 - Minor Arterial
 - Major Collector
 - Minor Collector
 - Local
 - Not a Certified Public Road

Traffic Counts:

- Less than 2,500
- 2,500 to 4,999
- 5,000 to 7,499
- 7,500 to 9,999
- 10,000 to 12,499
- 12,500 or More

- I-275 Bicycle Path
- Rivers and Streams
- Creeks and Drains
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundary
- Parcel Lines
- Railroads

Source: Michigan Geographic Framework, v8a; SEMCOG 2007 ADT Traffic Volume Data.



WADETRIM

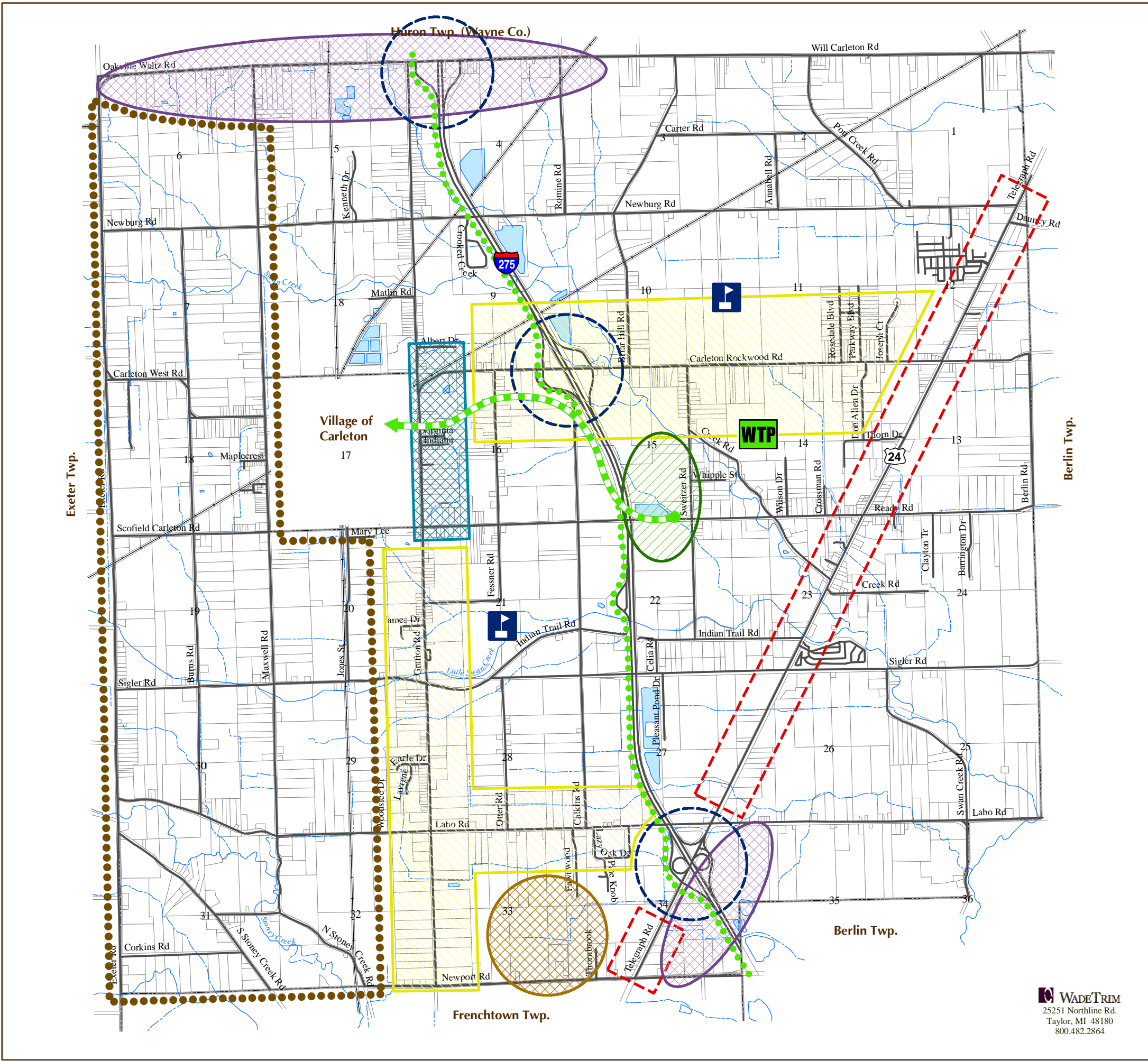
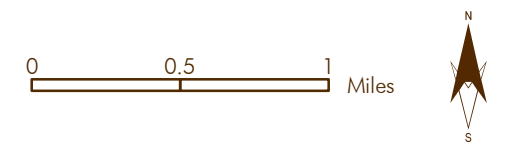
25251 Northline Rd.
Taylor, MI 48180
800.482.2864

\\aylor\projects\Ash\2731011\GIS-Data\Projects\Transportation Network.mxd

7 Planning Opportunities

- Legend**
- Commercial Growth
 - Residential Growth
 - Light Industrial/Research/Technology Growth
 - Freeway Service Growth
 - Downtown Development
 - Recreational and Community Center
 - Senior Housing
 - Agricultural Preservation
 - Educational/Vocational
 - Central Sewer Treatment
 - Village to Township Park Trail
 - Improvements to Existing I-275 Bicycle Path
 - Rivers and Streams
 - Creeks and Drains
 - Water Bodies
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Parcel Lines
 - Railroads

Source: Michigan Geographic Framework, v8a.



WADETRIM
 25251 Northline Rd.
 Taylor, MI 48180
 800.482.2864




8

Future Land Use

- ### Legend

 - Agricultural/Rural Residential
 - Rural Estates
 - Single-Family Residential
 - Manufactured Home Park
 - Commercial
 - Specialized Commercial
 - Light Industrial
 - General Industrial
 - Public/Semi-Public/Recreation
 - Village to Township Park Trail
 - Improvements to Existing I-275 Bicycle Path
 - I-275
 - Rivers and Streams
 - Creeks and Drains
 - Water Bodies
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Parcel Lines
 - Railroads




0

0.5

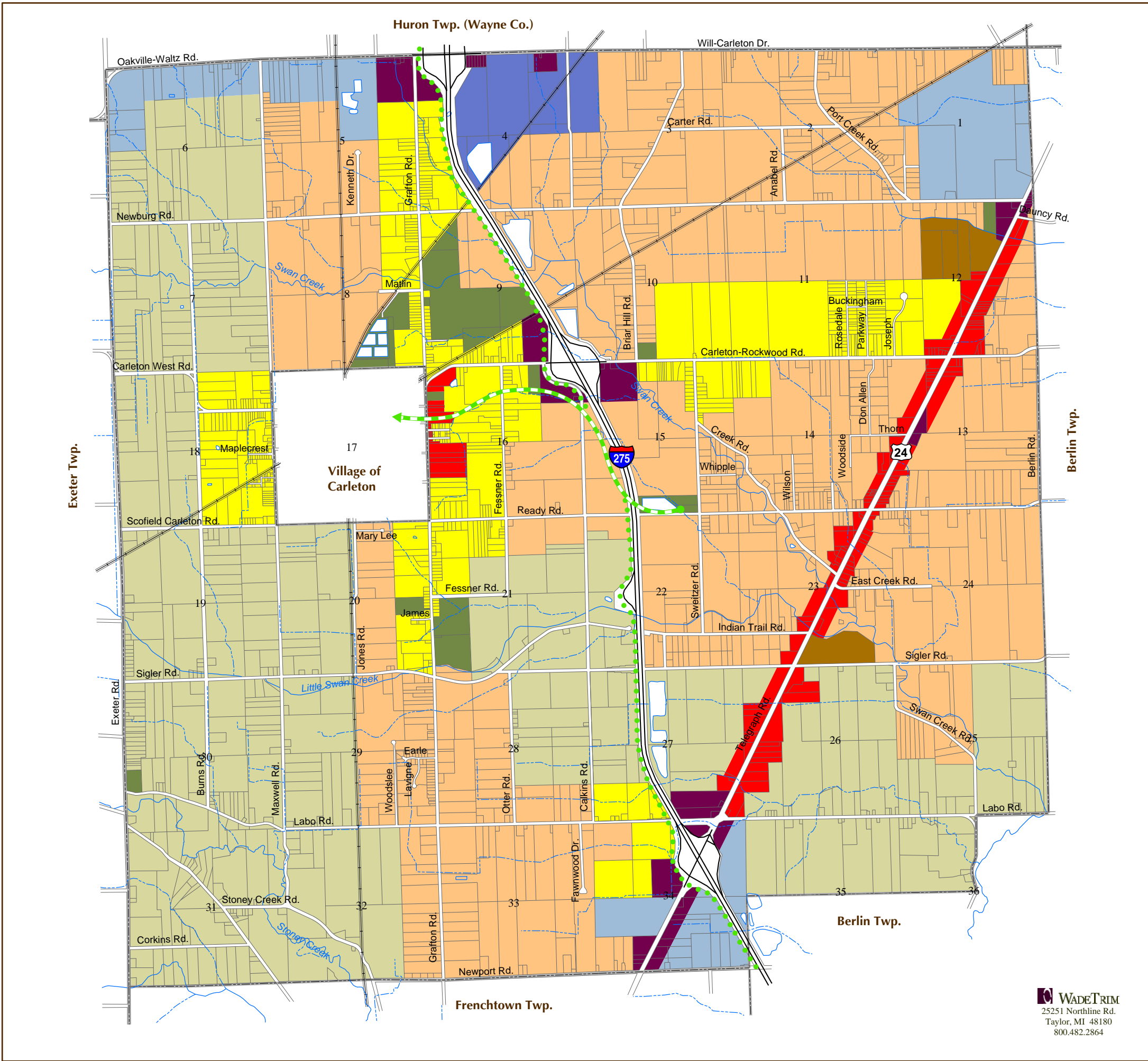
1

Miles

This is to certify that this is the official Future Land Use Map of Ash Township, adopted December 16, 2009.



Michele Geiermann
Ash Township Clerk





WADETRIM

25251 Northline Rd.

Taylor, MI 48180

800.482.2864



WADETRIM

25251 Northline Road

P.O. Box 10

Taylor, MI 48180

734.947.9700

800.482.2864

www.wadetrim.com

Florida • Indiana • Michigan • Nebraska

North Carolina • Ohio • Pennsylvania • Texas