



# Ash Township

Master Plan 2026

February 18, 2026 DRAFT





# Acknowledgements

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**February 18, 2026 DRAFT**

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# Table of Contents

February 18, 2026 DRAFT

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
Authority to Plan	1
Purpose of the Plan	2
Plan Organization	2
Regional Context	3
Community Profile Summary	4
<b>2. Community Vision</b>	<b>7</b>
Planning Influences and Drivers	7
Citizen Input	13
Community-Wide Vision Statements	18
<b>3. Future Land Use Plan</b>	<b>19</b>
Land Use Goals and Strategies	19
Future Land Use Plan	23
<b>4. Housing Action Plan</b>	<b>31</b>
Housing Strategies	31
Housing Development in Ash Township	33
Housing Assistance Programs	36
<b>5. Circulation Plan</b>	<b>39</b>
Circulation Goal and Strategies	39
Motorized Transportation Plan	40
Non-Motorized Transportation Plan	42
<b>6. Community Services Plan</b>	<b>45</b>
Goal and Strategies	45
<b>7. Implementation Strategy</b>	<b>47</b>
Tenants of Successful Implementation	48
Zoning Plan	49
<b>Appendix - Community Profile</b>	<b>A-53</b>
Population Profile	A-53
Housing Needs Analysis	A-57
Economic Profile	A-69
Natural Features Analysis	A-72
Existing Land Use Analysis	A-78
Transportation Assessment	A-82
Community Services and Facilities Assessment	A-87



# Introduction

The Ash Township Master Plan 2025 is a realistic assessment of current conditions and expressions of the future goals and vision of the Township, defining the form and character the Township seeks to achieve. The Master Plan is designed to provide guidance to both the public and the private sectors regarding a range of topics including future land use, rural character, the natural environment, housing, economic development, community facilities, and quality of life.

## Authority to Plan

The Ash Township Planning Commission has prepared this Ash Township Master Plan under the authority of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008. Article 3, Section 125.3831 of the Act states:

*A planning commission shall make and approve a master plan as a guide for development within the planning jurisdiction. In the preparation of a master plan, a planning commission shall do all of the following, as applicable:*

- 1. Make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth within the planning jurisdiction with due regard to its relation to neighboring jurisdictions.*
- 2. Consult with representatives of adjacent local units of government in respect to their planning*



Unity Park fishing pond

so that conflicts in master plans and zoning may be avoided.

3. Cooperate with all departments of the state and federal governments, public transportation agencies, and other public agencies concerned with programs for economic, social, and physical development within the planning jurisdiction and seek maximum coordination of the local unit of government's programs with these agencies.

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## Purpose of the Plan

A master plan is a comprehensive policy guide which provides a framework for growth, development, and the community vision. Simply stated, a master plan describes:

- Where the community has been,
- Where the community wants to go, and
- How the community plans to get there.

Article I, Section 125.3807 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008 gives a summary of the purpose of a master plan:

*The general purpose of a master plan is to guide and accomplish, in the planning jurisdiction and its environs, development that...is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical; considers the character of the planning jurisdiction and its suitability for particular uses, judged in terms of such factors as trends in land and population development; and will, in accordance with present and future needs, best promote public health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.*

Additionally, the master plan should provide a general statement of the community's goals and a comprehensive vision of the future. It should also serve as the statutory basis for the Zoning Ordinance, and as the primary policy guide for local officials considering development proposals, land divisions, capital improvements, and other

matters related to land use and development, pursuant to section 203(1) of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Michigan Public Act 110 of 2006.

The master plan is not a zoning map, though it does reflect the planned land use and existing developments. It does not introduce new zoning districts but serves as a broader, long-term guide for community development. While zoning and the master plan are distinctly different, they are interconnected. The master plan provides overarching guidance for zoning decisions, ensuring that these decisions align with community goals and long-term strategies.

Master plans are long-range policy guides. With an approximately 15 year planning horizon, the Ash Township Master Plan 2025 considers the future of Ash Township through the year 2040. Flexibility is a key feature of the master plan, allowing it to adapt in unforeseen future conditions.

Every community's master plan is unique, tailored to address the specific issues and challenges of the community. By combining data and local knowledge, the master plan's purpose is to develop unique and informed decisions for positive development of the community.

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## Plan Organization

This plan consists of 7 chapters. This first chapter introduces the purpose of master planning, provides a background on Ash Township, and considers the Township's context within the region. Chapter 2 identifies local planning trends and issues, led by research and community engagement, which led to the creation of vision and goals to guide the future development of the community.

Chapters 3 through 6 outline a comprehensive road map for future development of land use, housing, and transportation, and community facility systems. Chapter 3 presents the Future Land Use Plan, offering a strategic vision for thoughtfully

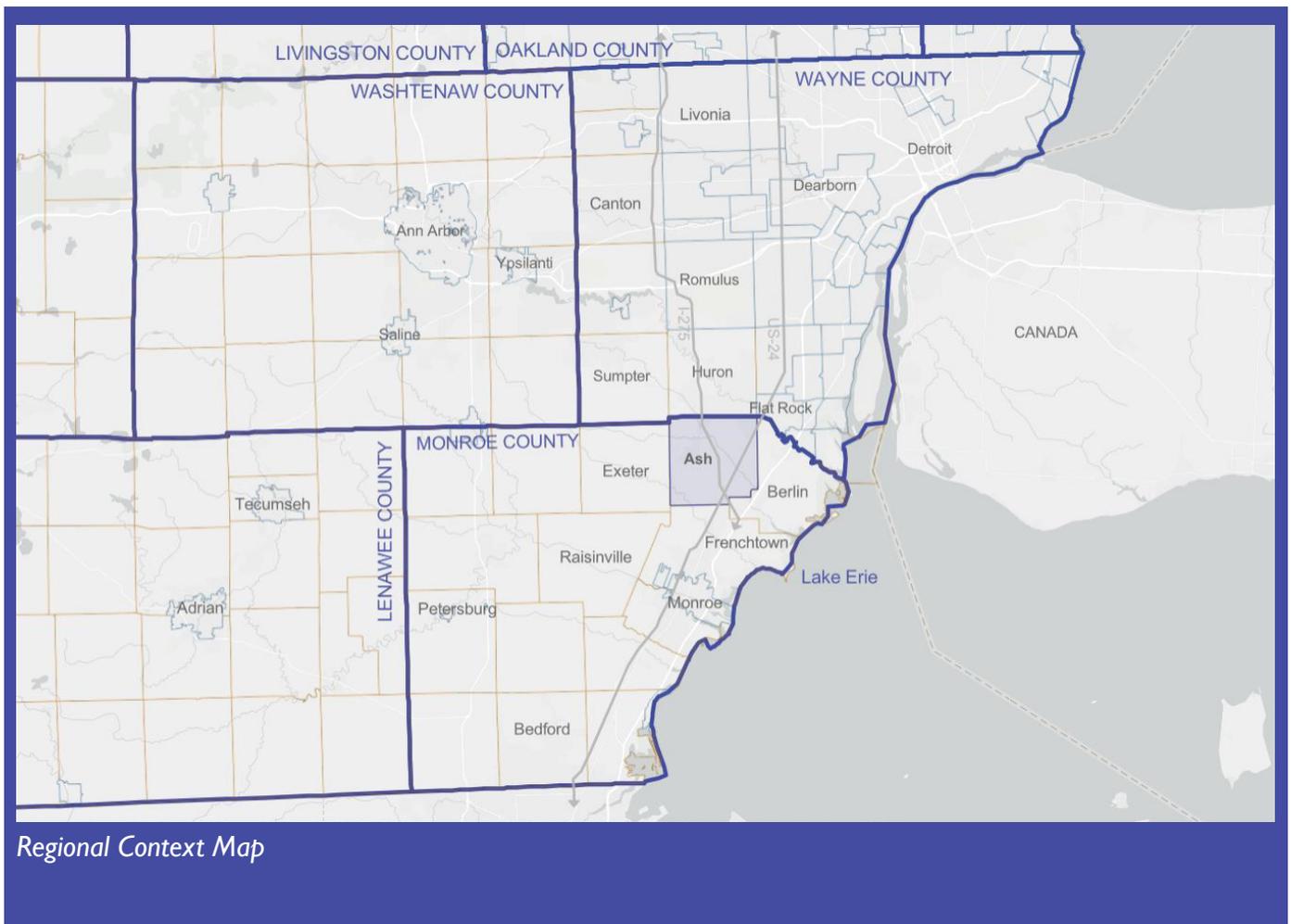
planned and sustainable land uses. Chapter 4 features the Housing Action Plan, detailing the current housing landscape and a proactive strategy to ensure the vitality and accessibility of the local housing market. Chapter 5 introduces the Circulation Plan, analyzing the existing transportation system, and enhancing connectivity within the community. Chapter 6 explores the key community facilities, including essential utilities and notable destinations, ensuring a strong foundation for future growth.

Finally, Chapter 7 outlines a road map for implementation of the Master Plan’s key recommendations.

## Regional Context

Ash Township is located in the southeast corner of Michigan’s Lower Peninsula, within Monroe County. It is located on the fringe of the Detroit metropolitan area to the north and the Monroe urban area to the south. The seven county region known as “Southeast Michigan,” which includes Monroe County, is home to 4.8 million residents. The City of Detroit is the largest city within Southeast Michigan.

Although located on the urban fringe of Detroit, Ash Township exhibits a predominantly agricultural and rural character. The Township maintains a largely agricultural zoning, reflecting of its rural heritage.



Regional Context Map

## Community Profile Summary

The **Appendix** to the Master Plan provides a detailed Community Profile of Ash Township. The Community Profile answers the question - “where are we today?” - and provides a foundation for the planning recommendations that are outlined in this Master Plan. For reference, an executive summary of key Community Profile findings is included below.

### Population

**Figure 1** displays Ash Township’s historic and projected population growth. Since 1970, Ash Township’s population has grown by more than 50%, increasing from 4,300 people in 1970 to 5,534 in 2020. Between 2020 and 2040, Ash Township’s population is forecasted to grow to 5,649, a 2.1% change. Similar positive historical and forecasted population growth trends have and are expected to occur in Monroe County as a whole.

### Age

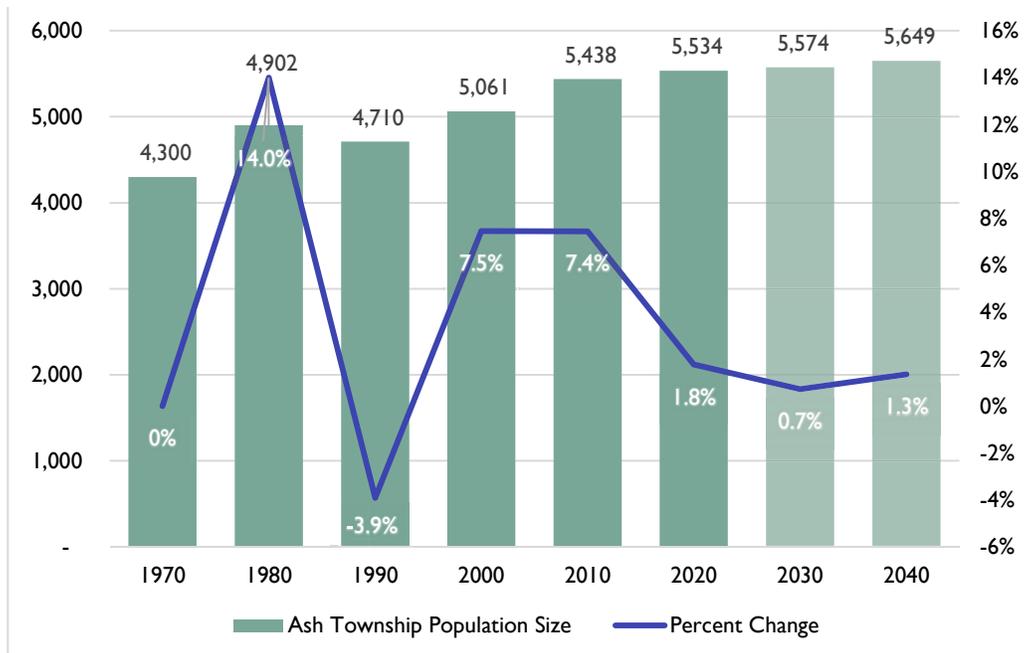
Based on U.S. Census data and Esri estimates, **Figure 2** shows that Ash Township’s median age has steadily increased by about 3 years each decade from 2000 to 2020, with projections suggesting it will rise to 47.5 by 2029.

### Households

Based on 2020 Census data and 2040 SEMCOG forecasts, the number of households within Ash Township is projected to increase from 2,174 to 2,299, a growth rate of 5.7%. This is notable, as the Township’s population is only forecasted to increase by 2.1% between 2020 and 2040. Ash Township’s household growth rate of 5.7% is slightly higher than Monroe County as a whole at 4.9%.

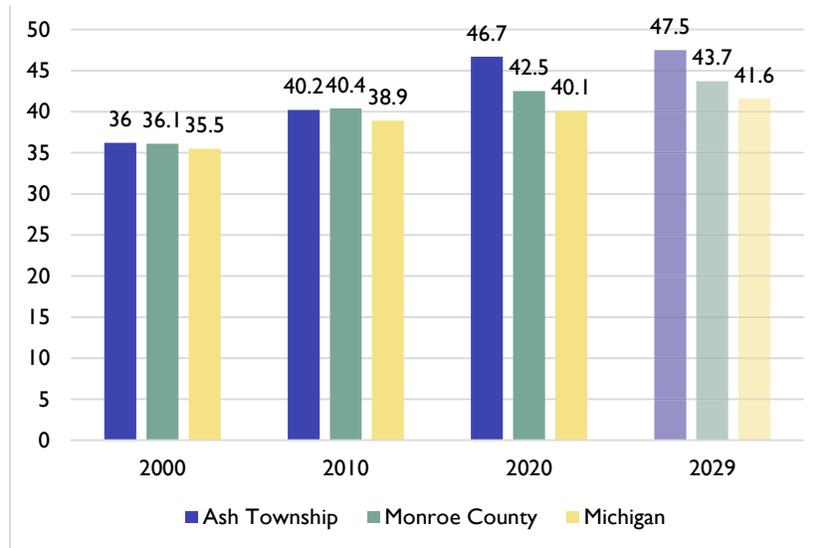
Nationally, household sizes have declined since the 1970s due to factors including families choosing to have fewer children, higher divorce rates, and a greater number of elderly living alone. According to the 2020 Census, Ash Township’s average

*Figure 1. Population Trends and Forecast, 1970-2040*



Source: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020 Decennial Census. 2050 SEMCOG Southeast Michigan Regional Development Forecast.

Figure 2. Median Age Trends and Estimates, 2000-2029



Source: 2024 Esri Demographic Profiles, U.S. Decennial Census

household size in 2020 is 2.55. According to SEMCOG, the Township’s average household size is forecasted to decline to 2.46 by 2040.

## Housing Types

Ash Township’s 2023 housing stock is made up of:

- Single-family detached homes: 85.5%, a higher proportion compared to Monroe County (78.7%).
- Mobile homes: 13.4%, a higher proportion compared to Monroe County (7.6%).
- Multiunit dwellings: 1%, a lower proportion compared to Monroe County (11.2%).
- Townhouses: 0%, lower compared to Monroe County (2.4%).

This data indicates limited housing type diversity within Ash Township.

## Housing Values

It is very important that a community maintains quality and affordable housing for its existing and potential future residents. Ash Township’s median home value in 2023 according to American

Community Survey (ACS) estimates is \$236,800, which was higher than Monroe County (\$215,700) and the State (\$217,149), indicating a high-quality housing stock. Most of Ash Township’s houses are valued between \$300,000-\$499,999, while the majority of Michigan’s houses are valued between \$100,000 and \$299,999. Ash Township’s median rent was \$1,082, slightly above Monroe County’s \$1,017 and on par with Michigan’s \$1,084.

## Housing Affordability

A common measure of housing affordability is the percentage of household income spent on housing. Spending over 30% indicates a “cost burden,” while over 50% signifies a “severe cost burden.” Based on ACS data from 2023, out of 2,748 housing units in Ash Township (with and without a mortgage), 15% of owners in paid more than 30% of their household income on housing costs. This is lower than the national average of 27.5%. Out of 308 rental units in Ash Township, 35% are cost-burdened. This rate is much lower than the national average of 50.4%. However, renters in Ash Township face more than double the cost burden of homeowners in Ash Township.

## Future Housing Unit Needs

Using estimates for population, average household size, households, and housing vacancy in 2040, a total estimated housing count in 2040 can be calculated. As noted in Table II in the Community Profile, it is estimated that there is a need for 2,420 total housing units in Ash Township to accommodate a slightly growing population and a slightly declining household size. This is an increase of 105 housing units from 2020.

## Employment

In 2024, the largest percentage of employed residents in Ash Township worked in Manufacturing (23%). The next largest employment industries included Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities (13%), Healthcare and Social Assistance (12%), and Wholesale and Retail Trade (11%).

## Income and Poverty

The median household income in Ash Township is \$73,076 in 2024, which was higher than Michigan (\$71,476), but lower than Monroe County (\$76,895). Ash Township's median household income is expected to increase to \$89,034 by 2029, an increase of 21.8% from 2024.

## Natural Features

The limits of 100-year flood zones are mainly located along the three creeks within Ash Township. These areas should be considered as candidates for recreation-conservation uses due to their flood zone limitations.

Ash Township features numerous wetland areas, most of which are found in low lying areas along creeks and drains. Wetlands offer numerous benefits including flood control, water filtration, habitat, and carbon storage. They also enhance the landscape's beauty and support recreational activities.

A large percentage of the Township's land is classified as prime farmland. The farmlands and open spaces in Ash Township are valuable natural features that contribute to the rural character highly valued by residents.

## Existing Land Use

In line with Ash Township's rural setting, the Township's land use pattern is dominated by agricultural and rural residential land uses. Commercial, industrial, and other non-residential uses are found primarily within the Telegraph Road corridor and near the I-275 interchanges.

## Transportation

The residents of Ash Township have good vehicular access to the region and the state through Interstates, U.S. Highways, and County primary roads. Running through the center of the Township is Interstate I-275, while Telegraph Road (U.S. 24) runs through the eastern portion of the Township. County primary roads within Ash Township include Will Carleton Road, Carleton Rockwood Road, Grafton Road, Exeter Road, and Newport Road.

## Community Services and Facilities

Public water service within Ash Township is available through the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) regional water system. Public water lines owned and maintained by Ash Township extend throughout the Township, with most properties served by public water. Those properties without access to public water must rely on private drinking water wells.

The majority of Ash Township is not served by public sanitary sewer systems. Although the Village of Carleton operates a sanitary sewer system, public sewer lines from the Village only extend into limited portions of Ash Township. The majority of Ash Township resident rely on private septic systems.



# Community Vision

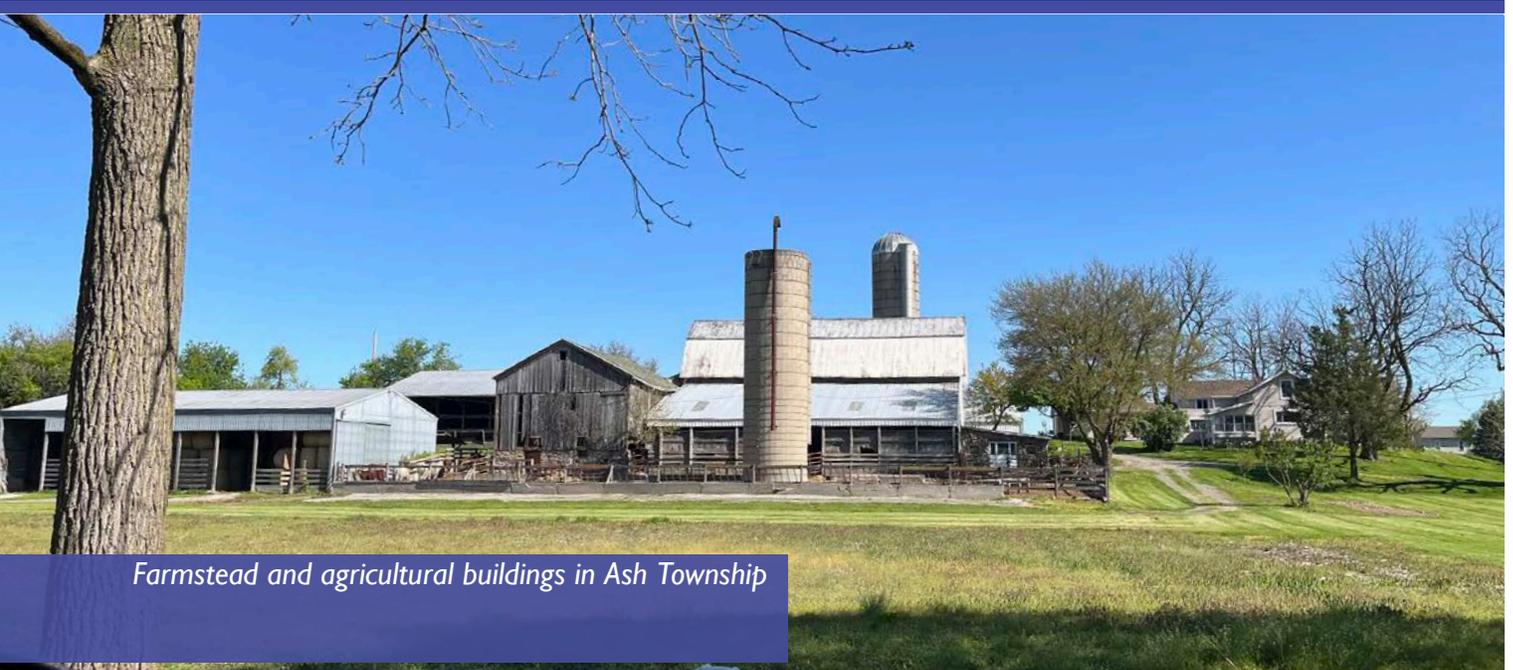
This Master Plan has been developed by and for the community members of Ash Township, ensuring it reflects their needs and aspirations. As such, the most important driver of the recommendations outlined in this Master Plan is the local voice and knowledge from the residents of Ash Township. While rooted in local priorities, it also acknowledges the Township's interconnection with the broader region, where environmental, social, and economic vitality influences its success. In collaboration with neighboring communities and regional partners, this plan aligns with broader initiatives to strengthen both Ash Township and the surrounding area. This section describes the key insights that shape the vision and goals that guide the following chapters of this plan.

## Planning Influences and Drivers

Local planning is shaped by a range of influences, including regional plans and initiatives, planning efforts in adjacent communities, and direct input from residents through community engagement. These factors help identify key priorities and challenges, ultimately guiding the development of community goals that reflect both local needs and broader regional objectives.

## Regional Planning Initiatives

The following is a summary of regional planning initiatives with particular relevance to Ash Township. These initiatives have been considered and evaluated by Ash Township and inform many of the recommendations outlined in this Master Plan.



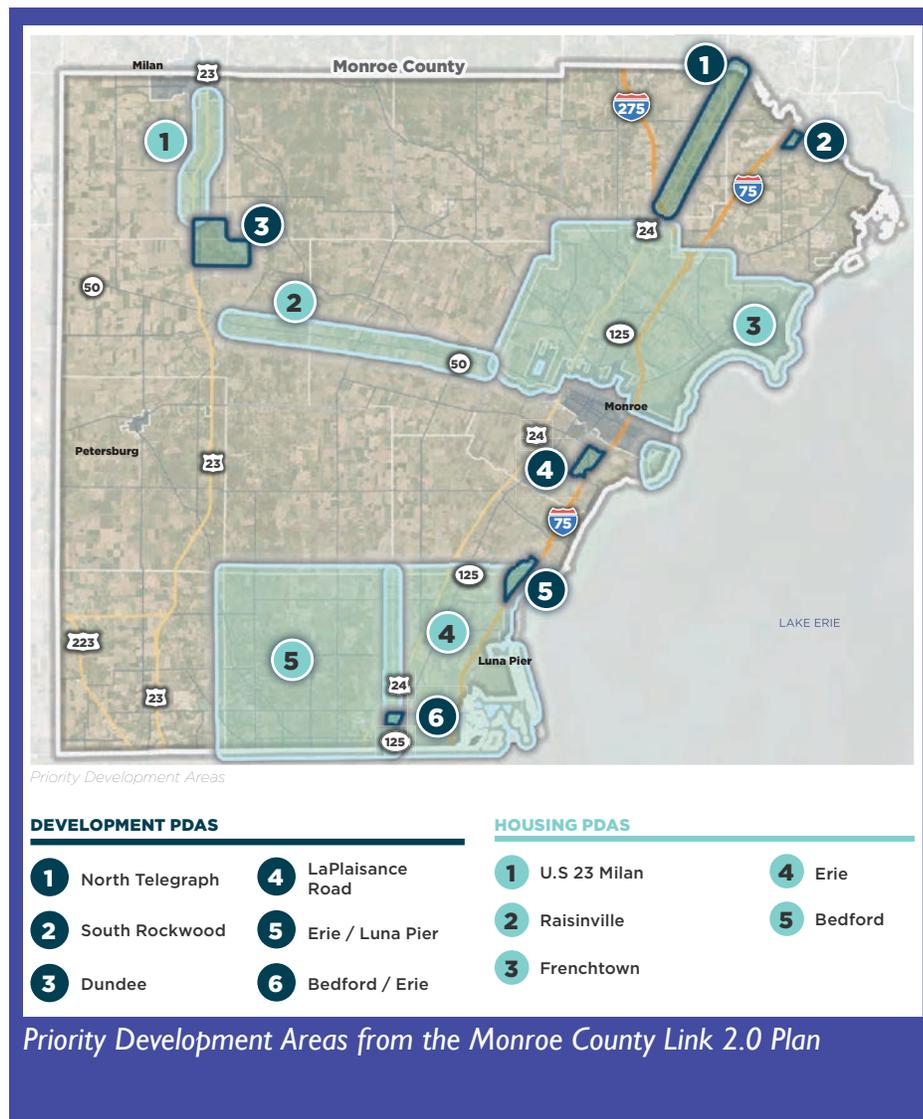
*Farmstead and agricultural buildings in Ash Township*

### Monroe County Comprehensive Plan (2010)

Monroe County completed their latest Comprehensive Master Plan update in 2010. The purpose of their master plan is to guide and accomplish development “that is coordinated, adjusted, harmonious, efficient, and economical.” In their Objectives - Transportation section, the first non-motorized goal is to: “Develop and implement a network of designated bicycle lanes and paths which connect major population centers within the County and connect with adjacent regional networks.

### Monroe County Link 2.0 (2024)

The Monroe County Link 2.0 Plan was adopted in 2024 as a strategic initiative for local economic development led through Monroe County Business Alliance and Monroe County Board of Commissioners. The plan focuses on key areas including the Cornerstone parks and non-motorized plan, investing in alignment with market demands, developing a co-working facility, and employee talent development. These initiatives align to attract residents, visitors, and businesses to the community, as well as invest in key infrastructure to build the local markets.



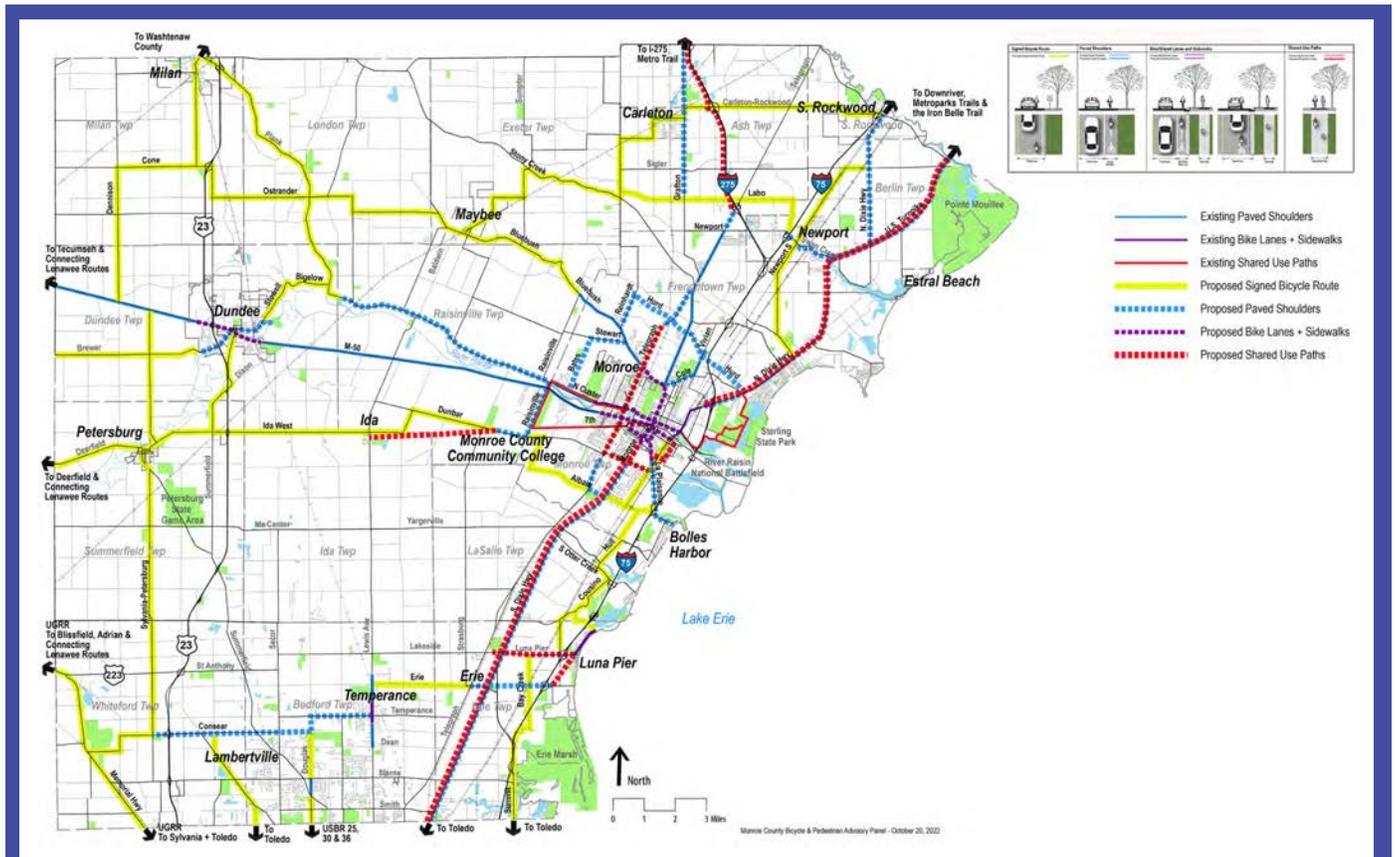
The plan includes priority development areas which feature location specific recommendations to achieve specific economic development objectives. The plan specifies North Telegraph Road and its connection to I-275 as a priority development area located within Ash Township. The goal is to develop this corridor to include a mix of commercial development and heavier commercial activities, such as an innovation hub, logistics, and warehousing to connect to the international bridge.

The plan recommends re-evaluating Ash Township’s master plan and zoning to allow and encourage logistic and warehousing units along Telegraph Road and Carleton Rockwood Road. In addition to this development, the Plan recommends extending sewer and public water along the corridor to ultimately support workforce housing, commercial, and light industrial development.

*Monroe County Parks, Trails, & Recreation Master Plan (2025)*

The Monroe County Recreation Plan, adopted in 2025 and effective through 2029, establishes a vision and goals for maintaining and enhancing facilities, improving accessibility, and fostering partnerships with the Monroe County Parks and Recreation Department.

Key objectives include enhancing park maintenance and accessibility, expanding land and water trails to promote non-motorized transportation, increasing public awareness and support for county recreation facilities, preserving and acquiring parkland, and strengthening collaboration with local and regional partners to further improve parks and trails.



*Monroe County Trail and Bicycle Network from the Monroe County Parks, Trails, & Recreation Master Plan*

Currently there are no County parks located within Ash Township. However, Nike Park is located just outside of Ash Township in Frenchtown Township. There are no plans to develop new parks in Ash Township, but there are proposed bicycle routes and shared use paths. The Cornerstone Bicycle Route is a connective bike route that links the small towns and villages of Monroe County. There are proposed signed bicycle routes heading east-west along Labo Road from the intersection of Swan Creek Road toward Exeter Township, and there is a signed route from Carleton-Rockwood starting from the intersection of Grafton toward South Rockwood. Additionally, there is a proposed shared use path along interstate 275 and a proposed paved shoulder path along Grafton Road south to Frenchtown Township.

### *Vision 2050: Regional Transportation Plan for Southeast Michigan (2024)*

The Vision 2050 Plan was completed by SEMCOG in June 2024. This Plan was created as the long range plan for regional transportation investments based on regional needs. These include investments to improve safety, traffic operations, and pavement. Specific recommended improvements within Ash Township include:

- US 24 / Telegraph Road: sign updates
- E Labo Rd over I-275 - Bridge updates (2026)
- Exit 5 I-275 at Carleton-Rockwood Road - resurfacing on carpool lot (2025/2026)

### *Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan for Southeast Michigan (2020)*

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Plan was completed by SEMCOG in March 2020. The purpose of the plan is to establish a common vision for bicycling and walking in the region, and provide guidance on how to increase the connectivity, use, and safety of the system for all residents.

The Plan outline several major goals, including:

- A growing interest in bicycle and pedestrian mobility throughout the region; the number of people walking and biking is increasing.
- A desire and need to enhance safety and comfort for people walking and biking through infrastructure improvements.
- Addressing gaps in the regional system and challenges for connecting existing and planned infrastructure.
- The need for collaboration and coordination to develop and sustain a regional bicycle and pedestrian system.

### *Southeast Michigan Regional Climate Resilience Framework (2024)*

The SEMCOG Regional Resilience Framework, completed in October 2024, guides communities, businesses, and natural environments to withstand and recover from natural disasters and related disruptions. It outlines methods assessing risks, integrating resilience into planning, and implementing strategies through programming and physical developments. The framework encourages numerous opportunities for local governments to incorporate resilience into planning and development, such as considering resilience in master plans, land use, asset management, capital improvement plans, and emergency preparedness plans. These tactics include storm water management, water quality improvements, building standards, and preventing development in high-risk areas.

### *Southeast Michigan Healthy Climate Plan: Priority Climate Action Plan (2024)*

The SEMCOG Priority Climate Action Plan, completed in February 2024, provides a guide to regional efforts in order to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Plan describes the scope of emissions within the SEMCOG region, and priorities for reducing these emissions. These priorities include increasing energy efficiency in buildings, modernizing mobility systems, reducing

waste materials, expanding renewable electricity generation, and optimizing natural and working lands.

### *Increasing Shared Prosperity for a Resilient Economy: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Southeast Michigan (2021)*

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was completed by SEMCOG in March 2021. The CEDS creates a guide to regional economic development strategies by connecting goals to develop workforce, businesses, and communities. These goals include marketing communities, preparing for land use demand, investing in infrastructure, fostering business competition, advancing entrepreneurship and innovation, and connecting workers with jobs.

### *Michigan Mobility Plan (2021)*

The MM2045 Plan was adopted by the State Transportation Commission in November 2021. It defines the long-term direction for the future of the state's transportation network for all users. Furthermore, it provides that direction with an aspirational multimodal vision, comprehensive goals/objectives, and actionable strategies to achieve that vision. It looks at past trends, new innovative initiatives, and at collaborative partnerships to lay out the direction that Michiganders, transportation stakeholders, and decision-makers aim to move toward by 2045. A central goal of the MM2045 Plan is to: "Enhance mobility choices for all users of the transportation network through efficient and effective operations and reliable multimodal opportunities."

### *Michigan Statewide Housing Plan*

The Michigan Statewide Housing Plan addresses the complex barriers to attaining safe, healthy, affordable, and accessible housing. The plan creates five statewide housing targets and eight priority areas. There are eight priority areas that guide the statewide goals and strategies listed below.

- **Equity and Racial Justice:** Addresses long term disparities in housing access and generational wealth building by striving for equitable access to housing.
- **Housing Ecosystem:** Striving for a housing ecosystem that is diverse and interconnected with other priorities of the Statewide Housing Plan. This includes the construction of housing, data and research on housing, and internet accessibility for housing.
- **Preventing and Ending Homelessness:** Prioritizes stability for people that have experienced homelessness and need additional support, as well as those that experience chronic housing instability.
- **Housing Stock:** Increases the supply of affordable, accessible, and attainable housing. This is driven by a need to develop, rehabilitate, and preserve housing for all levels of incomes.
- **Older Adult Housing:** Expands supply of affordable, accessible housing units specifically for older adults (65 years or older). This is important because Michigan has a growing aging population.
- **Rental Housing:** Prioritizes rental housing and rental affordability as a housing option for those who cannot afford or do not want to own a home.
- **Homeownership:** Increases the homeownership equity, for low- and moderate-income households, overall, and helping vulnerable homeowners keep their homes. This is important for financial benefits, generational wealth building, and community stability.
- **Communication and Education:** Focuses on inclusive communication and education to support affordable and attainable housing, understanding of housing programs and services, and enhancing awareness of fair housing rights.

### *Regional Housing Partnership: Southeast Housing Partnership*

The eight priorities of the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan is accomplished through the action planning of the regional housing partnerships. Monroe County is located within the Southeast Housing Partnership, which also includes the counties of Jackson, Livingston, Washtenaw, Hillsdale, and Lenawee.

The Action Plan is focused on six strategies to address the housing ecosystem, rental housing, preventing and ending homelessness, housing stock, and communication and education priorities. These strategies emphasize fostering regional networks to address housing challenges, promote equity, and streamline development while encouraging early eviction-diversion programs and referral programs for at-risk populations. It also promotes incentivizing of affordable housing development as well as collaborating with community partners to identify local special housing needs. Additionally, it plans to expand engagement with community members and stakeholders, with a focus on ensuring inclusive, culturally appropriate communication.

### **Planning in Adjacent Communities**

In addition to the broader regional planning initiatives identified in this report, Ash Township is also influenced by land use activities occurring in neighboring communities. Frequently, the planning policies of neighboring communities can have a significant influence on the future development of property on the opposite side of the municipal boundary.

The master plans of those communities sharing a common boundary with Ash Township were examined to identify their potential impact on the community. Ash Township shares a common boundary with Huron Township on the north, Sumpter Township and Exeter on the west, the City of Flat Rock and Berlin Township to the

east, and Frenchtown Township on the south. Additionally, the Village of Carleton is located within the limits of Ash Township. Relevant planning policies of these communities, as they relate to Ash Township, are described below.

#### *Huron Township Master Plan (2023)*

Huron Township is located to the north of Ash Township and is connected through major roadways including interstate 275 and Will Carleton Road. The Township's has a population of about 16,944 as of the 2020 Census.

Huron Township's master plan was adopted in 2023. As shown in the future land use map, the southeastern border of Huron Township is mainly designated as residential land uses including single family and multifamily. Then the southwestern border is designated as agricultural, commercial, and village land uses.

#### *Sumpter Township Master Plan (2018)*

Sumpter Township is located northwest of Ash Township, and is connected only in the southeast corner of Sumpter Township along the intersections of Oakville Waltz Road, Clark Road, and Exeter Road. This corner of the Township includes a landfill. The population of the Township was approximately 9,660 as of the 2020 Census.

The Sumpter Township Master Plan was adopted in 2018. The future land use map of the Master Plan shows the border area adjacent to Ash Township being planned as parks and recreation.

#### *Exeter Township Master Plan*

*[to be inserted later]*

### *City of Flat Rock Master Plan (2017)*

The City of Flat Rock is located at the northeast corner point of Ash Township and is only connected along Will Carleton Road near the Oakwoods Metropark. The population of Flat Rock was about 10,541 as of the 2020 Census.

The City of Flat Rock Master Plan was adopted in 2017. The future land use map shows the land adjacent to Ash Township to be designated low density residential and parks open space.

### *Berlin Township Master Plan (2023)*

Berlin Township is located to the east of Ash Township. Berlin Road and the Huron River form the border between it, Ash Township, and the City of Flat Rock. Berlin Township has a population of 9,890 as of the 2020 Census.

The Berlin Township Master Plan was adopted in 2023. As shown in the future land use map, the northwestern border of Berlin Township is mainly low density residential and agricultural land with commercial land uses along Telegraph Road. South of Labo Road, the designated land uses include a mix of denser housing options including manufactured housing, medium and high density residential located near industrial along I-75.

### *Frenchtown Township Master Plan (2017)*

Frenchtown Township and Ash Township share a border along Newport Road, Ash Township's southern border. Frenchtown Township has a population of 21,609 as of the 2020 Census.

The Frenchtown Township Master Plan was adopted in 2017. The adopted future land use map shows a variety of designated land uses along the Ash Township border. This includes agricultural, open and woodlands to the southwest of Ash Township, and a mix of manufactured residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational land uses.

### *Village of Carleton Master Plan (2024)*

The Village of Carleton is located within Ash Township, centered at the intersection of three railroads. The Village of Carleton Master Plan was adopted in 2024. The Village of Carleton's future land use map shows much of the perimeter to be designated as single family residential land uses. The northern perimeter includes the most diverse future land uses including recreational/conservation, multifamily residential, industrial, public/semi-public, and commercial land uses. The east and western borders include designated commercial land uses mixed with single family land uses. While the southern border includes single family residential, manufactured residential, and public/semi-public land uses.

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## Citizen Input

### Citizen Survey

Community engagement is an invaluable part of the master planning process. An online survey was made available to the public between August 1, 2025 and September 12, 2025. The survey was advertised on the Township's website, social media outlets, and paper flyers. Hard copies of the survey were also made available at the Township offices during business hours. A total of 198 surveys were completed. The results of the survey are summarized below.

Filters were applied to the survey results to evaluate differences in opinion between various segments of respondents. For the purposes of this analysis, the following respondent segments were considered

- Township Residents: (Ash Township residents only - 169 total)
- Older Respondents (65 years and older - 53 respondents)
- Newer Residents (lived in the Township or Village less than 10 years - 42 respondents)

- Family Households (children in the household - 81 respondents)

The survey summary narrative, below, identifies instances where differences in the responses across the respondent segments were especially notable.

### *Respondent Demographics*

The survey respondents were generally young adults to middle aged adults, with people aged 30-49 representing the largest group of respondents (40%), followed by respondents 50 to 64 years (29%), and 65 and older (27%). The least represented age group was 18 to 29 years old with 11 respondents (6%).

The household sizes of the respondents tended to be larger. The largest percent (42%) of respondents said there were three or four individuals living in their household. 33% said they lived with two people in their household, 18% indicated five or more people in their household, and 8% said they lived alone.

Over half of the respondents indicated their households' included children under 18 (58%), while 41% indicated they did not live with children.

Most respondents were residents of Ash Township (85%), while 10% were residents of the Village of Carleton. There were 10 other respondents from Berlin Township, Exeter Township, Flat Rock, Newport, and Woodhaven.

Of those who were residents of Ash Township, more than half (58%) indicated they have lived in the Township for more than 20 years, while 22% indicated they have lived in the Township for 10 to 19 years. Fewer residents indicated they have lived in the Township for less time, with 11% living in the Township for 5 to 9 years, 6% for 1 to 4 years, and 3% for less than 1 year.

Respondents were asked to indicate their relationship and/or association with the Township. The question allowed for multiple responses. Most of the respondents indicated they live and own a home in Ash Township (81%), with only 3% living and renting in Ash Township. Working reasons were the next most common response (11% work in Ash Township). Another 6% indicated that they own or operate a business in Ash Township.

When asked about their intentions for moving within the next 5 to 10 years, the majority (90%) of Ash Township residents did not plan on moving out of the community, while 7% indicated the question was not applicable to them,. Only 3% indicated that they do plan to move out of the community. The question provided an opportunity to expand upon their answer. Some respondents said they may move away, particularly if the character of the community was to change significantly.

### *Positive Aspects*

When asked what Ash Township's most positive aspects are, the 5 most common answers were:

1. Safe neighborhoods and community (65%)
2. Limited or no congestion (58%)
3. Proximity to family or friends (52%)
4. Friendly people or atmosphere (52%)
5. Quality of the school district (40%)

The following distinctions were noted across the respondent segments:

- Safe neighborhoods and community was the top answer for all of the respondent segments except Older Respondents, who listed friendly people or atmosphere as their top choice.
- For Newer Residents, "access to motorized transportation (roads, freeways, etc.) was the #5 choice.

## *Negative Aspects*

When asked what Ash Township's least favorable aspects are, the 5 most common answers were:

1. Lack of dining options (47%)
2. Lack of shopping, retail, and service options (31%)
3. Blighted or deteriorating homes or neighborhoods (25%)
4. Lack of entertainment options (25%)
5. Blighted or deteriorating businesses (24%)

The various respondent segments were generally consistent in their responses, with "lack of dining options" as either the top choice or tied for the top choice for each segment. Some distinctions across the respondent segments were noted:

- Although "housing costs" was the #7 overall answer (20%), it was the #4 answer for Newer Residents (28%) and Family Households (30%).
- Older Respondents indicated that "blighted or deteriorating businesses" (28%) was equal to "lack of dining options" (28%) as their top choice. Older Respondents noted "lack of senior services or activities" as their #5 answer.

## *Modes of Transportation*

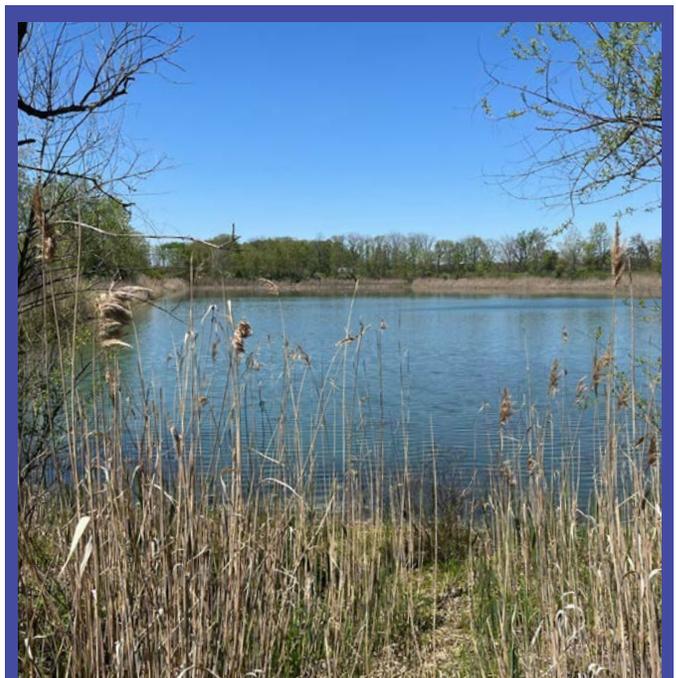
Car use dominated as the primary mode of transportation for survey respondents, with 95% routinely driving and none reporting rare or no car use. Walking was the second most common mode of transportation, though far less frequent - 31% never walk, 18% rarely, 31% sometimes, 14% often, and only 6% routinely.

Carpooling was the next most common mode of transportation, with 21% that sometimes and 33% rarely carpooling. Biking was less common - 26% biked sometimes, and 18% rarely. Rideshares and public transit were largely unused, with 82% and 95% of respondents reporting they never used them, respectively.

## *Barriers to Preferred Mode of Transportation*

Many cited a lack of safe or practical walking and biking routes, though some used paths in the Village of Carleton or Unity Park. When asked about barriers to their preferred transportation mode (typically driving), 62% skipped the question and 47% reported none.

In the open ended responses, some noted poor road conditions, including debris and snow, as obstacles - especially for motorcycles and winter driving. 22% mentioned the absence of sidewalks or bike lanes, acknowledging the cost and feasibility challenges in rural, low-density areas. Others highlighted shifting needs over time, such as wanting safe bike routes for children or finding driving stressful without traffic signals as older adults. Some respondents (8%) indicated the desire for golf carts as a form of alternative transportation that was fun and felt plausible, especially in the downtown area, but they are not permitted on the street in the Village and are policed often.



*Unity Park pond*

## Land Use Development Strategies

Respondents were asked to rate their level of importance (1 being low and 5 being high) regarding land use development in the next 5 to 20 years.

**Table 1** lists each land use development strategy and ranks them based on the level of importance (weighted average), with highest importance on the top and lowest on the bottom.

The most supported strategies were those that promoted natural feature preservation, social wellbeing and quality of life, and improving recreational facilities and programming. The least supported statements were tied to economic growth. Other strategies mentioned by respondents included preserving farmland and rural character.

There was general consensus across the respondent segments, with “preserving natural features” as the top choice for all. However,

Newer Residents and Family Households indicated a relatively higher level of importance for improving/expanding the non-motorized transportation network and improving/expanding recreational facilities and programming.

## Challenges to Economic Growth

Respondents were asked about the challenges to improving jobs and economic growth. The top four challenges to economic growth in Ash Township were indicated to be keeping young, skilled workers (37%), availability of jobs (30%), quality of amenities (26%), and access to capital and resources for small businesses (25%).

## Indicators of Effective Economic Development

Participants were given a list of potential indicators of effective economic development. They were asked to assign a level of importance to each indicator ranging from not important (1) to high

*Table 1. Land Use Strategies by Levels of Importance*

Rank of Importance	Statement	Weighted Average
1	Preserve natural features (floodplains, wetlands, woodlands, etc.)	3.83
2	Promote/enhance social well-being and quality of life (safety, health, culture, etc.)	3.50
3	Improve/expand recreational facilities and programming	3.33
4	Improve the appearance and quality of existing homes and neighborhoods	3.31
5	Improve/expand the non-motorized transportation network (bike paths, sidewalks, etc.)	3.27
6	Improve/expand community services and infrastructure	3.17
7	Improve/enhance public communication and civic engagement	3.13
8	Improve/expand the motorized transportation network (roads, bridges, etc.)	2.99
9	Expand the local economy (jobs, economic growth and wellbeing)	2.88
10	Encourage additional housing development	2.23
11	Encourage additional industrial development	1.75

importance (5). The indicators that were noted by the highest percentage of respondents as being of either moderate or high importance were:

1. Higher standards of living (3.54)
2. Improved awareness (reputation) of the township (3.41)
3. Better educational opportunities and developing talent (3.10)
4. Expanding the growth of existing businesses in the township (3.04)
5. Launching new businesses in the township (3.02)

The following indicators of effective economic development received the least support from respondents (ranked by percentage not important or low importance):

1. Enticing more tourists to visit the Township (2.43)
2. Attracting businesses to locate to the Township (2.76)
3. Creating more jobs in the Township (2.76)

## *Housing*

When asked whether service workers, like teachers or police officers, could secure quality and affordable housing in Ash Township, most respondents said yes (58%). Only 21% said no while 21% were neutral or had no opinion. Of those indicating no, many explained this was because of the high prices of housing in Ash Township, limited affordable options, and a competitive market.

When asked if the housing in the Township was appealing and affordable to young adults, the respondents were divided. 36% indicated they thought it was, 33% indicated it was not, and 31% indicated they were neutral or had no opinion. Of note, nearly half (49%) of Family Households indicated that housing was not appealing and affordable to young adults.

When asked if Ash Township offered sufficient housing, services, and amenities for lifelong residency within the Township, respondents generally indicated yes (52%). Only 18% indicated no while 30% were neutral or had no opinion. Many written answers noted the limited number of senior housing facilities and the need for seniors to be able to drive in order to get around the community. Of note, only 46% of the Older Respondents segment indicated yes to this question.

When asked about the type of housing in which respondents currently live, the majority said they lived in large single-family homes (larger than 1,500 square feet) (70%) or in small single-family homes (smaller than 1,500 square feet) (26%). Less than 4% indicated they live in any other housing type.

Respondents were also asked, if they could afford it and if it were available, what type of housing they would prefer to live in. They were allowed to select up to 3 housing types. The results indicate that the desired housing types generally match existing housing types, as 79% said large single family homes (79%) and 27% said small single family homes. However, certain other housing types were desired by some respondents, including townhomes (8%), accessory dwelling units (7%), and tiny homes (5%).

Each of the four respondent segments preferred large single-family homes as their top desired housing type. However, some distinctions across the respondent segments included:

- The Older Respondents expressed a relatively lower desire for large single-family homes (62%) and a higher desire for small single-family homes (41%). They also expressed a greater desire for accessory dwelling units (13%) in comparison to all respondents.
- Family Households expressed a comparatively greater desire for large single-family homes (89%) and a lesser desire for small single-family homes (16%).

Respondents were asked about the primary barriers to living in their preferred housing type. Most respondents (65%) indicated that there were no barriers. 19% of respondents said that the housing type exists in Ash Township but is not affordable. 14% said that their preferred housing type doesn't widely exist in Ash Township.

### *Final Comments*

As the survey concluded, respondents were invited to share final thoughts on land use and development. Many emphasized the importance of preserving Ash Township's agricultural roots and small-town charm, while also supporting placemaking and beautification efforts—such as installing a “Welcome to Ash Township” sign and enhancing central areas. Key priorities included improving road safety and conditions, upgrading traffic signals, and expanding essential services like recycling, sewer, and water systems.

There was also strong interest in promoting active lifestyles through expanded walking and biking paths, as well as upgrading recreational amenities at Ash Township Unity Park. Economic development sparked passionate responses, with many expressing support for growing small businesses, including restaurants, retail shops, and local services. Conversely, certain land uses - such as industrial warehouses, truck parking facilities, and concrete operations - were frequently opposed. Respondents cited concerns about their impact on road wear, visual appeal, and overall quality of life for nearby residents. However, some respondents indicated the desire for more industrial and light industrial uses in strategic locations to build up the local tax base.

## Community-Wide Vision Statements

Based upon the planning influences and drivers, as well as citizen input, four community-wide vision statements have been established to capture overarching community values within Ash Township. These vision statements provide a foundation for the goals, policies and recommendations that are outlined in this Master Plan.

**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. Ensure diversity, stability and balance of land uses to serve human needs, including residential areas, agricultural land, natural and recreational areas, schools and cultural amenities, public facilities, 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.**



# Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan is intended to serve as a guiding framework for the Township’s future land use, growth and development. The formulation of the Future Land Use Plan requires a comprehensive understanding of the community’s current characteristics to accurately anticipate future needs and conditions.

## Land Use Goals and Strategies

As a foundation for the Future Land Use Plan and Map, a series of goals and strategies have been established for Ash Township. Goals are basic statements that set a critical path, provide direction, and describe to the organization how the desired outcome should look. Goals are a critical part of the planning process in that they are flexible, defining for the organization, and timeless. Goals stay with the organization until they are achieved. Goals are ambitious and general. They address issues and specific needs or problems, but they are grand in scope and speak to fundamental change and directly serve the mission of the organization.



*Farmland in Ash Township*

Following each topic and goal is a set of strategies. Strategies are the means to achieve a goal. A strategy is a plan of action that sets a more specific task within a goal. Often, they assign responsibility, set schedules, and gauge success.

## Environmental Areas

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

### *Strategies:*

1. Facilitate environmental protection through joint governmental and landowner actions to manage and reduce stormwater runoff and maintain efficient drainage systems.
2. Protect and enhance sensitive and other environmentally significant areas, such as water resources, wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitats and scenic views throughout the Township.
3. Establish policies and standards that allow, encourage or require low impact development and other techniques to manage the quantity and quality of storm water in new and redevelopment projects.
4. Reinforce in the zoning ordinance the use of riparian buffers adjacent to tributaries, drains, and wetlands and provisions to protect environmentally sensitive areas.
5. Consider allowing pervious surfaces as part of development and redevelopment as a means to reduce storm water runoff.
6. 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.

7. Link natural features and open space areas to create a system of natural corridors.
8. 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.

## Agricultural Lands

*Goal:* Encourage the retention of selected prime agricultural lands in the Township, wherever possible, by protecting them from urban development through the concentration of urban growth in strategic locations.

### *Strategies:*

1. 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,



*Greenhouse operation in Ash Township*

and the Monroe County Purchase of Development Rights program, among others.

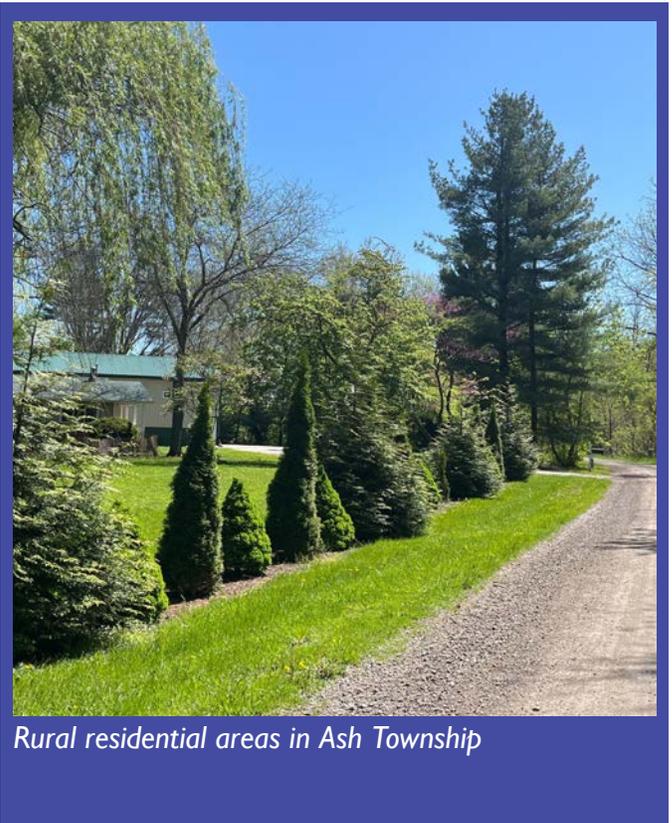
2. Support only very low density, dispersed residential uses in primarily agricultural areas.
3. Encourage the use of innovative residential subdivision design that helps conserve agricultural land and eliminates poorly designed lot splits.
4. Ensure that land development codes allow for activities that might reduce costs or provide supplementary income for local farmers, such as farm stands, agritourism and agribusiness, consistent with community character.

## Residential Areas

**Goal:** Encourage a range of high-quality housing opportunities and choices compatible with the rural character of Ash Township.

### *Strategies:*

1. Promote higher density residential use in areas identified on the Future Land Use Map and which are adequately served by public utilities to reduce urban sprawl and random development.
2. Encourage the removal of conflicting or undesirable land uses from residential areas.
3. In strategic locations adequately served by infrastructure and community facilities, plan for higher density residential development that attracts younger professionals and families and older “empty-nester” households.
4. Provide for existing manufactured housing to remain, but plan no additional land for the development of new manufactured housing parks unless and until a clear market can be demonstrated.



*Rural residential areas in Ash Township*

5. 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 Areas

**Goal:** Provide opportunities 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.

### *Strategies:*

1. 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.

2. Require all proposed commercial rezoning to be justified in terms of neighborhood, community, and market area needs, as applicable.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Re-visit the commercial district landscaping standards to ensure that they encourage quality development without disincentivizing investment or creating traffic and pedestrian safety challenges.
6. Closely monitor and promote enforcement of building and maintenance codes in commercial districts. Encourage buildings, signage, landscaping, and parking areas to be renovated or repaired on a timely basis, and monitor changes in business uses to be certain that new uses are in compliance with adopted building and zoning codes.

## Industrial Areas

*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.

## Strategies

1. 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.
2. Locate industrial areas where they are not subject to encroachment by incompatible uses, and will not themselves encroach on non-industrial uses.
3. Encourage the expansion and diversification of the local industrial job base commensurate with local needs.
4. Require that all new industrial developments comply with sound site planning principals, do not infringe on existing development, and are developed with adequate utilities to meet current and future needs.
5. Improve and enforce landscape standards for industrial development or redevelopment.
6. Promote enforcement of codes and regulations applicable to industrial areas, including industrial performance standards, screening, storage of equipment and materials, and storage of hazardous or toxic chemicals.

## Future Land Use Plan

The preceding sections of this Master Plan establish the foundation upon which the Future Land Use Plan was constructed. Specifically, the Future Land Use Plan and Map was developed based on:

- A review and analysis of existing land use conditions
- Infrastructure capabilities
- Analysis of demographic data
- Vision, goals, and strategies developed for the Master Plan
- Public participation gained through various opportunities during the planning process

Thirteen future land use classifications have been established and are shown on the **Future Land Use Map**. **Table 2** describes the allocation of land in acres and percent of the entire township devoted to each future land use classification category. Below is a narrative to explain the proposed development patterns illustrated on the Future Land Use Map.

### Agricultural (AG)

The agricultural 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.

Agricultural land is an important part of the economic and environmental systems within Ash Township. About 42% of the land in the Township are categorized as agricultural - the largest percent of any classification. This includes the majority of the western, south-central, and southeastern portions of the Township. The designation of these areas for agricultural usage reflects the established

*Table 2. Future Land Use Distribution*

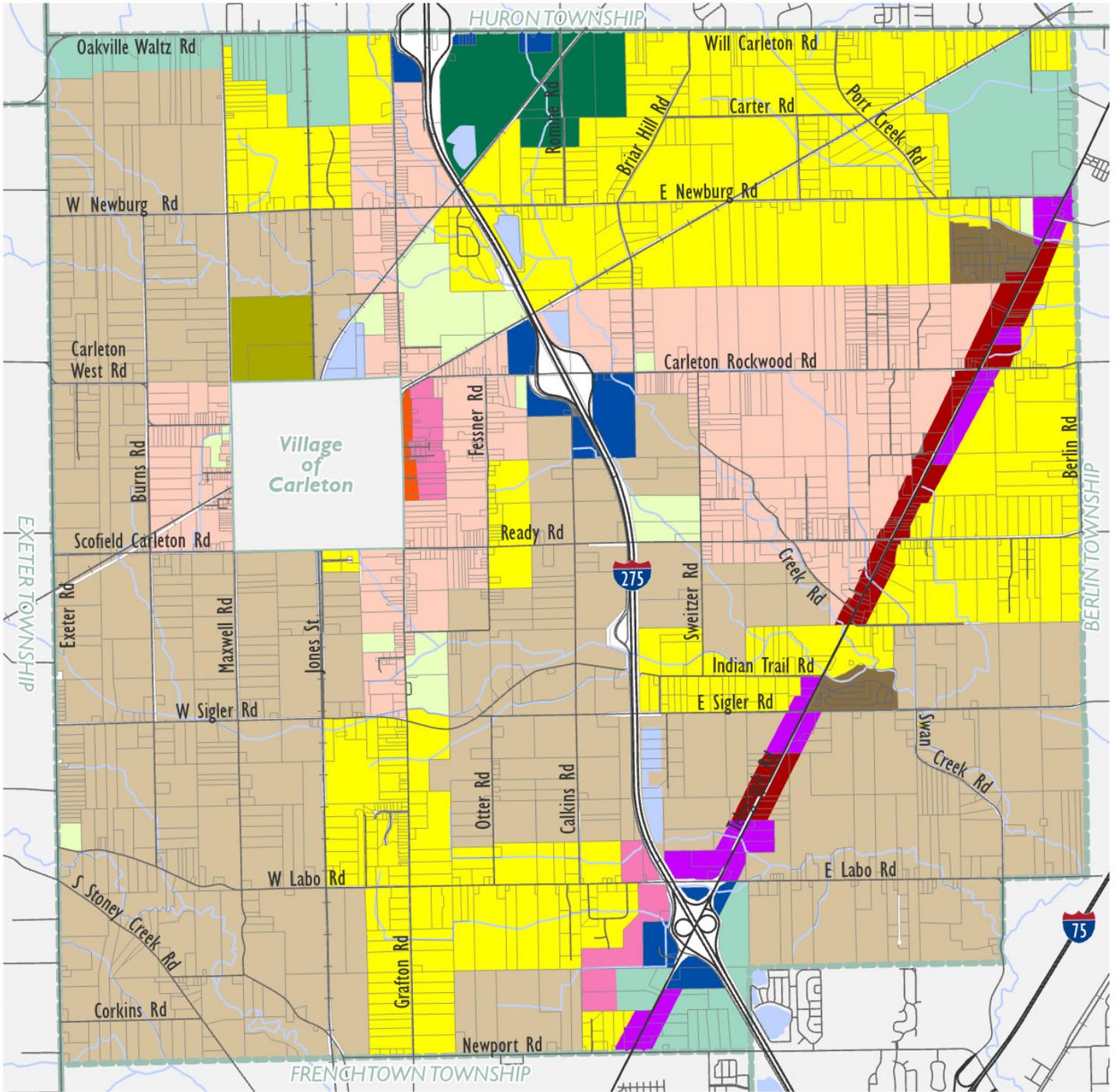
Future Land Use Categories	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	9,463.4	42.3%
Rural Estates	5,614.7	25.1%
Single Family Residential	2,986.6	13.3%
Transitional Residential	264.6	1.2%
Multi-Family Residential	150.9	0.7%
Manufactured Home Park	199.5	0.9%
Public/Semi-Public/ Recreation	456.4	2.0%
Local Commercial	135.7	0.6%
General Commercial	653.0	2.9%
Heavy Commercial	543.4	2.4%
Freeway Service	436.5	2.0%
Light Industrial	1,072.1	4.8%
General Industrial	400.5	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,377.4</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Wade Trim Analysis, 2025

development pattern, which is dominated by agricultural uses, with isolated farmsteads and residences. This category is intended to prevent these agricultural and rural residential uses from encroachment by higher intensity land uses. Additionally, this land should use tools and techniques to preserve the agricultural land uses through the Farmland and Open Space Preservation Act (Act 116), farmland conservation easements, and the Monroe County Purchase of Development Rights program, among others.

### Rural Estates (RE)

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 is intended to provide open land area for orderly residential growth; to permit continued



# Future Land Use

## Base Features:

- Freeways/ State Highways
- Roads
- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Parcel Lines
- Municipal Boundaries

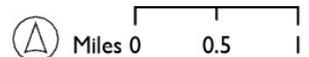
## Land Use Categories:

- Agricultural (AG)
- Rural Estates (RE)
- Single-Family Residential (R)
- Transitional Residential (RT)
- Multi-Family Residential (RM)
- Manufactured Home Park (MHP)
- Public/Semi-Public/ Recreation
- Local Commercial (C-1)
- General Commercial (C-2)
- Heavy Commercial (C-3)
- Freeway Service (FS)
- Light Industrial (I-1)
- General Industrial (I-2)

**WADE TRIM**  
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 Detroit, MI 48226  
 800.482.2864

October 2025

Source: Monroe County  
 GIS, 2019; Michigan  
 Geographic Data Library;  
 Ash Township, 2020;  
 Wade Trim Analysis, 2025



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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 like 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.

Approximately 25% of the Township is classified as rural estates. 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 corridor toward Telegraph Road.

### Single-Family Residential (R)

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. While the focus is on detached homes, this category may also allow some attached residential types.

This future land use type is clustered within the Township's already established moderate-density residential areas, including the Grafton Road corridor, north and south of the Village, the Carleton-Rockwood Road corridor, and Ready Road west of Telegraph Road. In total, this category comprises just over 13% of the Township's land area.

### Transitional Residential (RT)

The intent of this future land use classification is to accommodate a mixture of residential types, primarily composed of small-lot detached single-family homes and attached single-family dwellings such as townhomes and duplexes. This classification may also include senior housing developments, including independent living and residential care facilities. This category is not intended to accommodate conventional multiple-family apartment development or mobile/manufactured home park development.

In total, this category comprises approximately 1% of the Township's land area. Two planned locations for transitional residential development are outlined on the Future Land Use Map. One location is proposed behind the planned local commercial uses along Grafton Road, just to the east of the Village. This area would serve as a transition between these local commercial uses and residential areas to the east. A second location is proposed near the I-275 and Telegraph Road interchange as a transitional area between highway oriented uses to the east and single-family uses to the west.

Development within this category should be carefully designed to protect natural features, support high-quality architectural standards, and provide site amenities that benefit both residents and the broader community. When located adjacent to lower-density neighborhoods, Attached Residential developments should be appropriately screened to ensure compatibility.

## Multi-Family Residential (RM)

This land use category is intended to provide sites for multi-family dwelling structures, including housing types such as attached townhomes, stacked ranches, and garden-style apartments. While similar to the RT category in allowing townhomes and attached units, RM development supports greater density and intensity of residential use.

A significant area northwest of the Village, along the east side of Maxwell Road, is designated for future multi-family residential use. This area is currently used for agriculture and communication infrastructure, but has access to Village utilities, making it suitable for future development. In total, this category comprises approximately 0.7% of the Township's land area.

As of 2025, no land is currently zoned RM District. In the event of a request for a rezoning to support a new multi-family residential redevelopment, the following criteria must be considered:

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

## Manufactured Home Park (MHP)

This category is specifically dedicated to manufactured home parks, as defined and regulated by Article 8 of the Ash Township Zoning Ordinance. Approximately 0.9% of the Township is planned for manufactured home parks.

## 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, Township Fire Station, Airport Schools complex, and the Carleton Glen Golf Course. In total, lands within this category encompass approximately 2% 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.

## Local Commercial (C-1)

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. Local commercial land uses include, but are not limited to, groceries, pharmacies, florists, laundries, retail stores and restaurants. Office uses, including financial institutions, medical, and professional service establishments are also appropriate within this category.

Accommodating approximately 0.6% of the Township, these lands are found along the east side of Grafton Road, immediately east of the Village of Carleton. Existing local commercial uses are found within this area, but opportunities to accommodate new local commercial development are also present in this area. This 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.

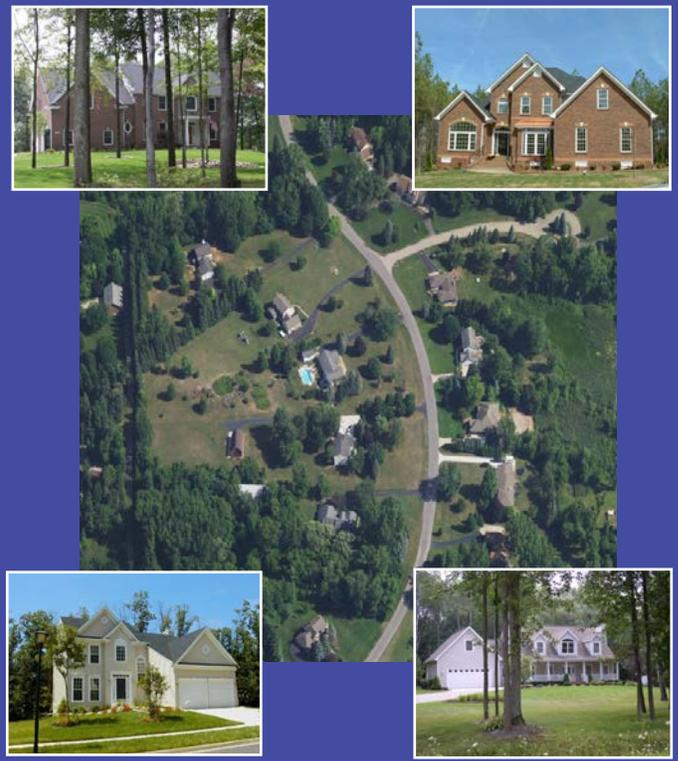
## Residential Future Land Use Classifications: Illustrative Recommendations

These “illustrative recommendations” are meant to portray generalized characteristics of each future land use classification through representative imagery. These illustrations are not intended to supercede the narrative descriptions of each future land use classification as included in this cChapter. Wherever any conflicts in interpretation arise between the narrative descriptions and these illustrative recommendations, the narrative descriptions shall control.

### Agricultural



### Rural Estates



### Single-Family Residential



### Transitional Residential

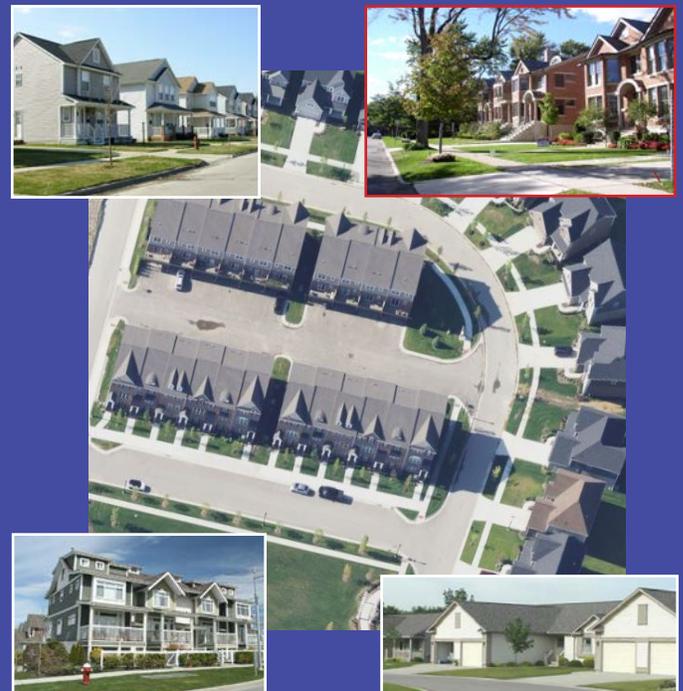


Image Sources: Bing Maps; Google Maps; Shutterstock; Wade Trim

## Residential Future Land Use Classifications: Illustrative Recommendations (cont.)

### Multi-Family Residential

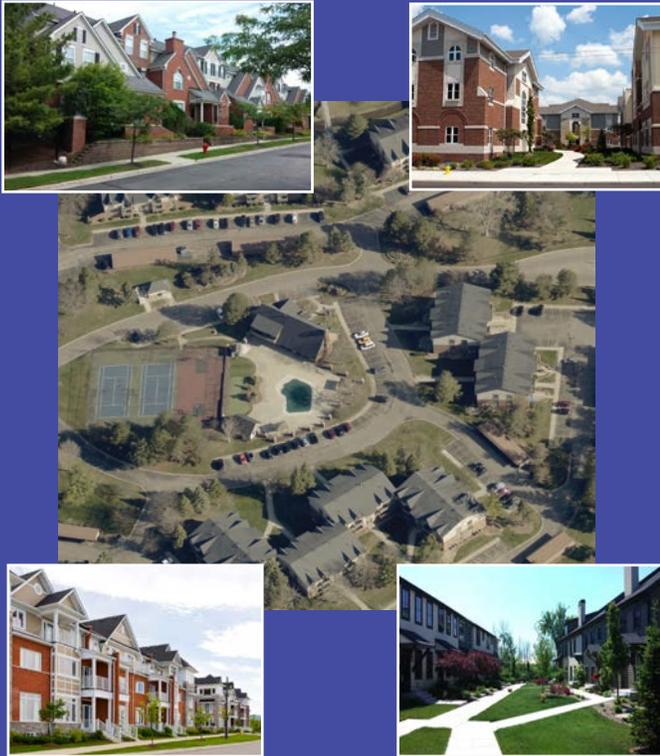
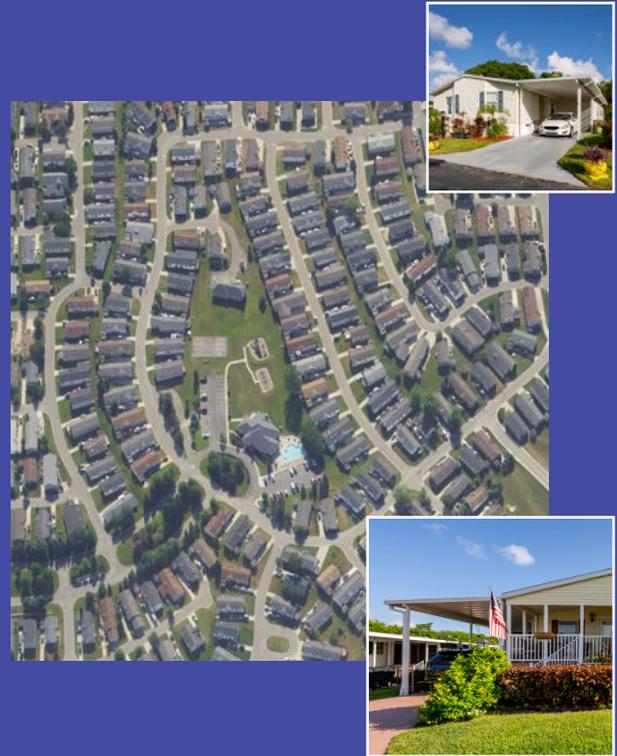


Image Sources: Bing Maps; Google Maps; Shutterstock; Wade Trim

### Manufactured Home Park



### General Commercial (C-2)

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. Typical general commercial uses may include retail buildings, vehicle sales and service, outdoor sales uses, restaurants, banquet facilities, commercial recreation facilities, personal and business service establishments, and multi-tenant shopping centers. Office uses, including financial institutions, medical, and professional service establishments may also be appropriate within this category.

Lands planned for general commercial use account for just less than 3% of the Township, and are located exclusively within portions of the Telegraph Road corridor. Here, such development already exists and is scattered throughout the corridor, intermixed with non-residential uses that are likely to transition to commercial use over time. To ensure orderly development, and protect existing non-residential uses, new general commercial development should only be allowed in close proximity to existing commercial development and be planned in such a manner to provide adequate buffers from non-residential development. Additionally, new commercial development along the Telegraph Corridor should use marginal access drives and a limited number of entrances and exits to reduce traffic conflicts.

## Heavy Commercial (C-3)

This land use category includes the land area occupied by retail and service users accommodating a regional clientele that often involve outdoor storage of merchandise or materials. Contractors businesses, sales of construction materials, vehicle sales and service, and uses which are heavy equipment related are included in this category.

Wholesale, warehousing, storage and logistics uses may also be appropriate in this classification, including mini storage, outdoor storage, trucking facilities and distribution centers.

Lands planned for heavy commercial use account for approximately 2.4% of the Township. These lands are located exclusively within the Telegraph Road corridor. These areas already include heavy commercial uses; but room for new heavy commercial development is also available. To ensure orderly development, and protect existing non-residential uses, new heavy commercial development should only be allowed in close proximity to existing commercial development and be planned in such a manner to provide adequate buffers from non-residential development.

## Freeway Service (FS)

The freeway service future land use classification has been established to provide opportunities for commercial service uses that cater to I-275 motorists and logistics uses that rely on freeway access. Uses that may be appropriate within this classification include restaurants, hotels and motels, vehicle sales and service, trucking facilities, distribution centers, and light industrial parks. General retail stores and professional office buildings may also be appropriate within this category.

Land in this classification generally surround the I-275 interchanges at Telegraph Road, Carleton-Rockwood Road and Will Carleton Road.

## Light Industrial (I-1)

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. This land use category is important to bring jobs and economic activity to the Township, along with the General Industrial land use classification, therefore diversification of industrial land uses is encouraged within these designated areas.

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 approximately 4.8% of the Township.

## General Industrial (I-2)

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 1.8% of the Township.



# Housing Action Plan

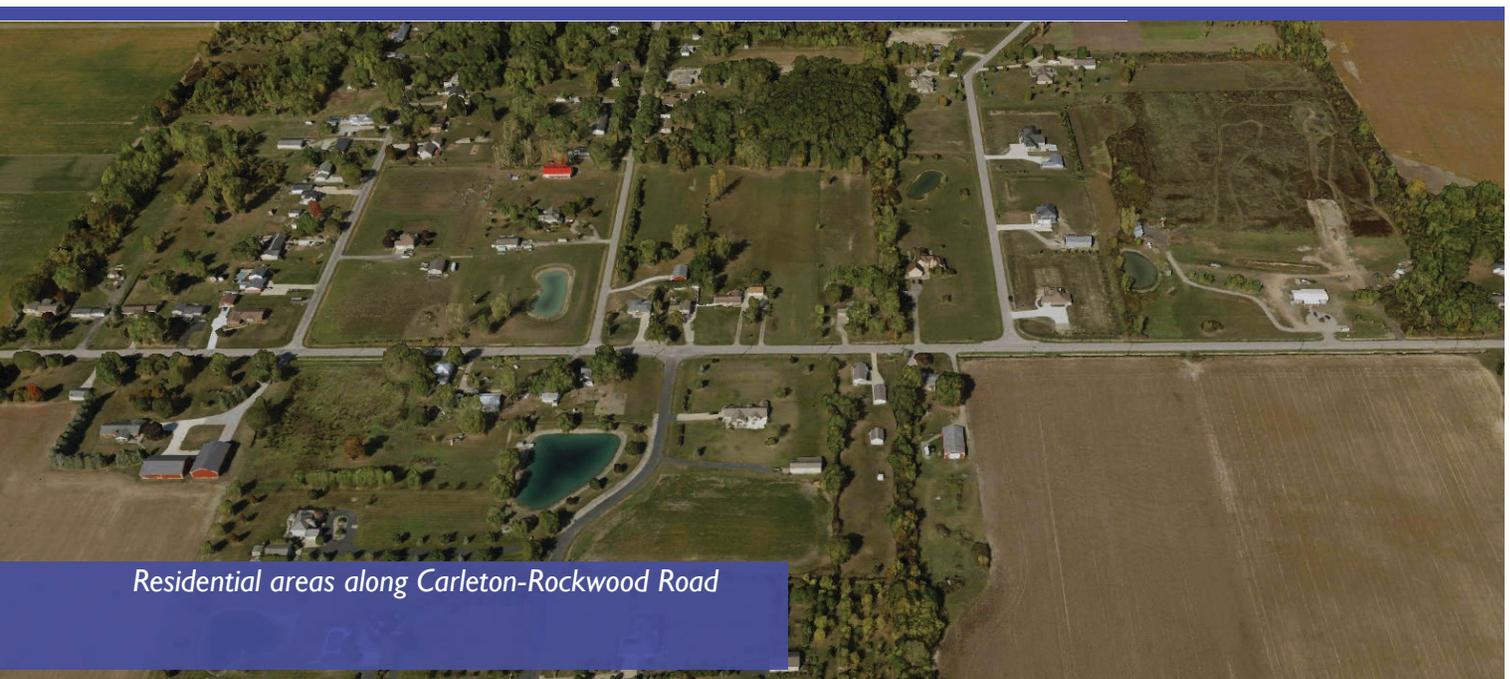
Based on the analyzed local housing needs, this study provides housing recommendations and implementation strategies for Ash Township. These recommendations align with the goals of the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan, the Southeast Housing Partnership, and the rest of the Ash Township Master Plan. Additionally, recommendations incorporate the public input gathered during the development of this plan.

## Housing Strategies

### Michigan Statewide Housing Plan

The Michigan Statewide Housing Plan addresses the complex barriers to attaining safe, healthy, affordable, and accessible housing. The Ash Township community supports these Statewide and Regional strategies by continuing to work with the State of Michigan and regional partners. There are eight priority areas that guide the statewide strategies listed below:

- **Equity and Racial Justice.** Addresses long term disparities in housing access and generational wealth building by striving for equitable access to housing.
- **Housing Ecosystem.** Striving for a housing ecosystem that is diverse and interconnected with other priorities of the Statewide Housing Plan. This includes the



*Residential areas along Carleton-Rockwood Road*

construction of housing, data and research on housing, and internet accessibility for housing.

- **Preventing and Ending Homelessness.** Prioritizes stability for people that have experienced homelessness and need additional support, as well as those that experience chronic housing instability.
- **Housing Stock.** Increases the supply of affordable, accessible, and attainable housing. This is driven by a need to develop, rehabilitate, and preserve housing for all levels of incomes.
- **Older Adult Housing.** Expands supply of affordable, accessible housing units specifically for older adults (65 years or older). This is important because Michigan has a growing aging population.
- **Rental Housing.** Prioritizes rental housing and rental affordability as a housing option for those who cannot afford or do not want to own a home.
- **Homeownership.** Increases the homeownership equity, for low and moderate-income households, overall, and helping vulnerable homeowners keep their homes. This is important for financial benefits, generational wealth building, and community stability.
- **Communication and Education.** Focuses on inclusive communication and education to support affordable and attainable housing, understanding of housing programs and services, and enhancing awareness of fair housing rights.

## Southeast Housing Partnership

Monroe County is located within the Southeast Housing Partnership which is led through the Community Action Agency in Jackson, Michigan. The Southeast Housing Partnership addresses the Michigan Statewide Housing Plan priorities through regional goal setting and collaboration. The five regional strategies are described below:

- **Information and Collaboration.** Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the housing ecosystem by enhancing collaboration on housing among federal and state agencies, philanthropy, local governments, tribal nations, education, and the wide variety of private sector organizations that make up the housing market.
- **Rental Housing.** Keep people housed by reducing the number of evictions.
- **Preventing and Ending Homelessness.** Increase access to stable and affordable quality housing options for households with extremely low incomes.
- **Housing Stock.** Impact overall housing stock.
- **Communication and Education.** Increase awareness of and support for the importance and benefits of accessible, affordable, and attainable housing throughout Michigan.

## Ash Township Housing Strategies

Building upon the state and regional housing strategies, a series of local housing strategies have been established for Ash Township.

### *New Housing Development Strategies:*

- I. Promote higher density residential use in areas identified on the Future Land Use Map and which are adequately served by public utilities to reduce urban sprawl and random development.

2. Actively market potential sites for new housing, particularly missing middle housing types (such as small-lot single-family, duplexes, and townhomes) and senior housing (such as active lifestyle developments and residential care facilities).
3. Increase the spectrum of housing units and sizes.
4. Coordinate with regional and state agencies to promote programs and initiatives that increase housing affordability and/or reduce barriers for persons who are struggling to afford housing.
4. Prioritize energy efficiency and weatherization in construction and housing rehabilitation.

## Housing Development in Ash Township

The following is a summary of housing trends and projections within Ash Township that have a significant influence on future housing development (detailed data is included within the Community Profile in the **Appendix**):

- The Township’s population has increased by more than 50% between 1970 and 2020.
- The Township’s population is forecasted to grow by 2.1% between 2020 and 2040.
- Ash Township is an aging community, with the median age of residents steadily increasing by about 3 years each decade from 2000 to 2020.
- The number of households within Ash Township is projected to increase by 5.7% between 2020 and 2040.
- The Township’s average household size is forecasted to decline from 2.55 in 2020 to 2.46 by 2040.
- It is estimated that Ash Township will need 105 more housing units in 2040 than currently exist in 2020.
- About 85% of Ash Township’s housing units are single-family detached dwellings, and 13% are mobile homes, while there are only 1% multifamily units and 0 townhouses in the Township.
- There are no senior housing developments or care facilities within Ash Township.
- Only 10% of all dwellings in the Township are renter-occupied, while 35% of renters are cost burdened.

### *Sustainable Housing Development Strategies:*

1. Balance housing development and community needs with environmental conservation by reducing sprawl through concentrated and connected growth.
2. Limit fragmentation of habitat corridors, such as along water courses, hedgerows, and fence rows.
3. Promote healthy quality of life through development that incorporates and/or connects to natural and recreational areas.
4. Ensure that new residential developments appropriately manage the quantity and quality of storm water.

### *Housing Rehabilitation and Preservation Strategies:*

1. Rehabilitate and preserve the existing housing stock while enforcing reasonable housing, rental, and maintenance codes to ensure the housing stock remains resilient and high quality.
2. Develop and utilize contemporary design standards and review procedures which will encourage developers to employ innovative design techniques on their building projects.
3. Improve the quality and health of existing rental units through regular maintenance checks and updates.

Considering these trends and projections, the Township can reasonably expect the need to accommodate additional housing in the next 15 to 20 years. The analysis also reveals a greater need for housing type diversity to accommodate the community's changing demographics and an opportunity to attract "target" populations who have a preference for a somewhat greater diversity of housing types.

## Residential Development Opportunities

As shown on the **Residential Development Opportunities Map**, four sites within the Township have been identified as residential development opportunity sites. These sites are presently largely undeveloped, are strategically located near the Village and/or along major road corridors, and are either currently served or are planned to be served by public water and sewer infrastructure. Thus, they have strong potential for future residential development. Below is a description of potential future residential developments at each site:

### *Grafton Road Site*

The Grafton Road site is located east of the eastern border of the Village of Carleton and behind the planned local commercial uses along Grafton Road. Small-lot single-family residential, duplexes, townhouses, and/or similar attached residential development is recommended within this site. Potentially, this site could also feature senior lifestyle housing and/or senior care facilities. This site benefits from its proximity to the local businesses along Grafton Road and the Village of Carleton; any future development should feature pedestrian connections to these adjacent areas. Future development would require connection to the public water and sewer lines along Grafton Road.

### *Maxwell Road Site*

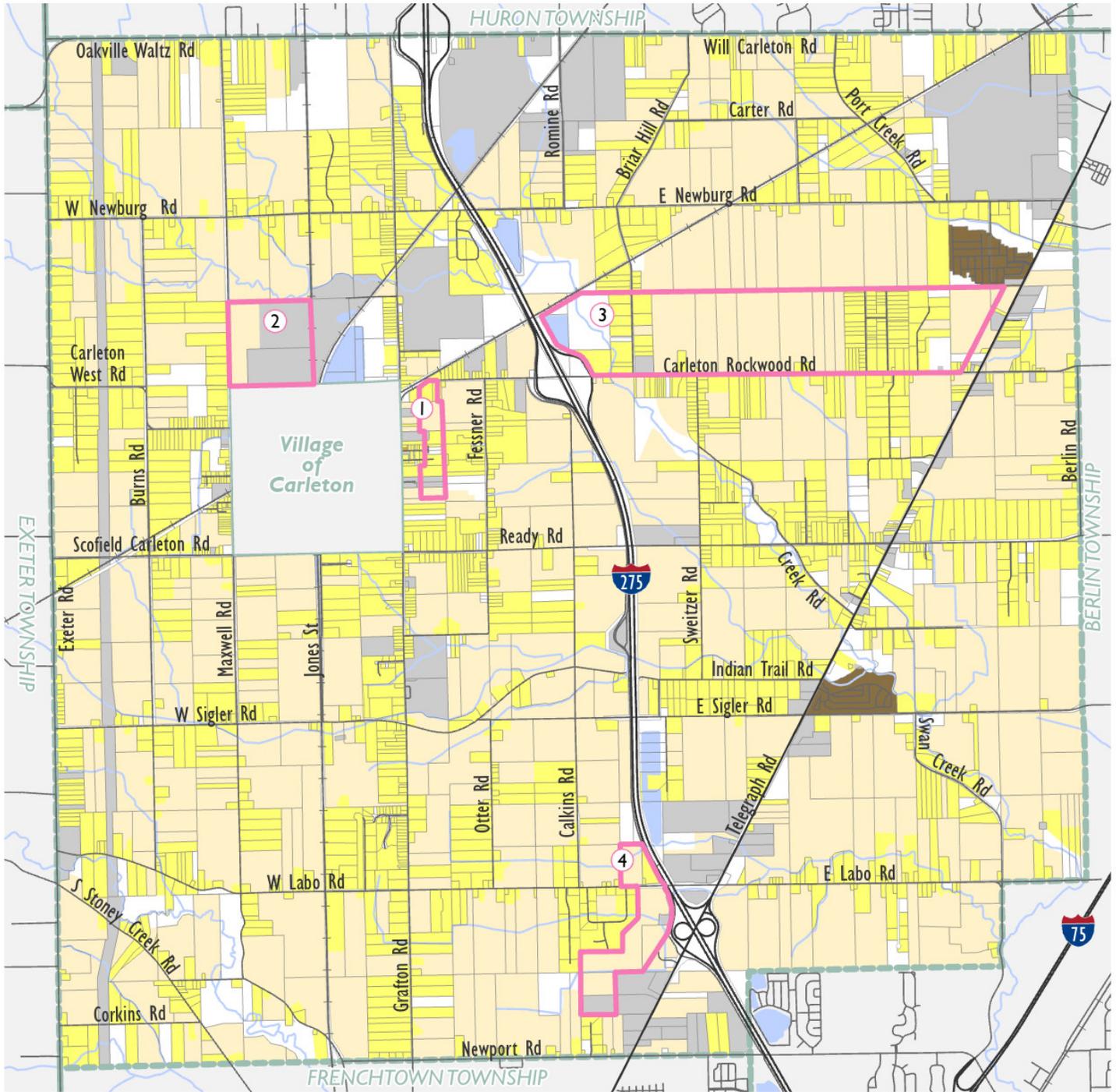
This residential development opportunity site is located along the northern border with the Village of Carleton and adjacent to Ash Carleton Park. The parcels within this site are underutilized properties that include a combination of industrial and institutional uses. This site could support multi-family residential development, senior housing, and/or residential care facilities. This site benefits from its proximity to the Ash Carleton Park and the Village of Carleton; any future development should feature pedestrian connections to these adjacent areas. Any higher intensity residential development would need to be connected to the Village of Carleton public water and sewer system.

### *Carleton-Rockwood Road Corridor*

The Carleton-Rockwood Road corridor to the east of I-275 is a potential growth corridor with considerable opportunity for future residential development. However, with only public water infrastructure available, the lack of public sewer presently serves as a constraint to future development. Single-family residential development is encouraged within this relatively rural portion of the Township. Cluster housing is encouraged as a tool to conserve environmentally sensitive areas for natural and aesthetic enjoyment. The design of residential development should include an emphasis on shared open spaces, such as small parks or gathering areas, that encourage community interaction and activity. It is also recommended that developments include internal walkability and nature trails that further support connectivity and active lifestyles.

### *East Labo Road Site*

The East Labo Road site, located between the existing Lazy Oak residential development and I-275, offers potential for a mix of residential housing types. Smaller-lot single-family detached homes could be considered immediately adjacent



# Residential Development Opportunities

## Base Features:

- Freeways/ State Highways
- Roads
- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Parcel Lines
- Municipal Boundaries

## Existing Land Use:

- Agricultural/ Rural Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Manufactured Home Park
- Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, and Other Non-Residential Properties
- Vacant/Open Space

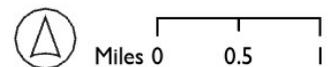
## Redevelopment Sites:

- 1 Grafton Road Site
- 2 Maxwell Road Site
- 3 Carleton-Rockwood Road Corridor
- 4 East Labo Road Site

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October 2025

Source: Monroe County GIS, 2019;  
 Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 Ash Township, 2020;  
 Wade Trim Analysis, 2025



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to the existing Lazy Oak neighborhood, while greater density residential use in the form of duplexes, townhouses, and attached units could border I-275 and the commercial areas to the east of the site. A buffer area is recommended along the edge of the site that borders the existing commercial/light industrial uses along Telegraph Road. The site has access to the public water system and may have the potential to connect to the Lazy Oak private treatment facility for sewer service.

## Development Challenges

Site development and redevelopment poses a variety of challenges. The following is a listing of challenges that Ash Township faces as it seeks site development and redevelopment of its four residential development opportunity sites:

1. Lack of control of the land due to ownership by multiple private property owners (applicable to all sites)
2. Zoning designations/requirements which serve as barriers to “creative” redevelopment concepts (applicable to all sites)
3. Limited public infrastructure (water, sewer or roads) (applicable to all sites)

The Township, with the support of private and public partners, has the ability and necessary tools to combat these challenges. The following strategies are recommended to overcome the various redevelopment challenges:

- Work with local partners (County, MEDC, etc.) to promote this Plan’s vision.
- Proactively rezone residential development opportunity sites to a district that would support the proposed developments.
- Review and amend the zoning ordinance to incentivize new residential development.

- Catalogue available outside funding resources and serve as a conduit between property owners and funding agencies, including the MEDC and EGLE.
- Work with State and local partners to identify and pursue outside funding sources to upgrade public infrastructure systems.

## Housing Assistance Programs

Ash Township should support and build awareness of various housing assistance programs, connecting community members to appropriate resources. The following is a listing of available housing assistance programs:

- **Fair Housing Act.** Education around the Fair Housing Act promotes inclusivity and prevents housing discrimination. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s website provides a full overview of the Act.
- **Monroe County Opportunity Program (MCOP).** The MCOP offers several resources for current and future homeowners. The resources include:
  - Foreclosure counseling
  - Weatherization programs
  - Utility assistance
  - Lead abatement
  - Homebuyer education.
- **Weatherization Assistance Program.** This program is administered by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The program provides energy conservation and related health and safety services for eligible low-income households at no cost to the resident.
- **Home Energy Loan Program.** Operated by Michigan Saves, it provides loans for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements. Homeowners, including those with secondary homes or 1-4 unit properties with at least one

owner-occupied unit, may qualify for a list of approved improvements. These improvements include new windows and doors, air conditioners or furnaces, and even some appliances.

- **Home Preservation Program.** Michigan Habitat for Humanity offers home repairs for low-income homeowners who need help with home maintenance as a result of either physical or financial hardship. In some cases, an affordable loan is made to the homeowner, and their payments are then placed in a revolving fund used to fund other Home Preservation repairs.
- **Single Family Home Ownership Loan.** A USDA program to provide safe, well-built affordable homes for rural Americans. Families and individuals in rural areas and communities of 20,000 or less population with qualifying incomes are able to use this program to buy, build, improve, repair or rehabilitate rural homes as a permanent residence.
- **Predevelopment Loan Program.** The Michigan Historic Preservation Network (MHPN) sponsors the loan program to provide aid to projects rehabilitating historic buildings. It is meant to cover the third-party costs of starting a preservation project. This loan is not only reserved for housing, and is eligible for non-profit organizations and for-profit groups.
- **Intervention Loan Program.** The MHPN also provides financial support to historic building repairs. This is meant to provide to support comprehensive efforts to rehabilitate the building. This loan is eligible for non-profits, municipalities, downtown development authorities, land banks, community development corporations, and religious groups.
- **Michigan Lead Safe Home Program.** The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services helps renters and homeowners find, fix, and reduce exposure

to lead in paint, dust, soil, and drinking water. Additionally, the Lead Prevention Fund helps qualifying homeowners cover 50% of the cost of lead abatement project.

- **Property Improvement Program.** A Michigan State Housing Development Authority program to assist qualified homeowners make repairs and improvements to their primary residences.
- **Single Family Housing Repair Loans and Grants.** The U.S. Department of Agriculture sponsors the Section 504 Home Repair Program. This program provides loans to very-low-income homeowners to repair or improve their homes. Additionally, the program can provide grants to elderly very-low income homeowners to remove health and safety hazards.
- **Ramps for Independence.** Administered by Michigan United Cerebral Palsy (MI-UCP), this program is designed to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, seniors, and veterans with low to moderate income by making their house more accessible.

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# Circulation Plan

Ash Township strives toward providing an efficient and safe transportation system that will serve its current and future residents into the future. The long term plan is necessary to accomplish a balanced circulation system of motorized and non-motorized transportation that serves the needs and safety of all users equally. The purpose of this section is to outline a 5 to 20 year vision for a transportation system that will provide convenient and safe options to link neighborhoods, schools, businesses, parks, and natural resources to each other within the township and to neighboring communities.

## Circulation Goal and Strategies

The following goals and strategies have been established to guide future motorized and non-motorized transportation decisions within Ash Township.

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

### *Strategies:*

1. Work with MDOT and Monroe County to develop access management plans, consider signal improvements, and consider roadway reconfigurations.
2. Coordinate motorized and non-motorized transportation enhancement with neighboring communities and regional entities.



Land uses along Telegraph Road

3. Create an interconnected system of paths and trails to increase safety, promote healthy lifestyles and provide linkages between destinations.
4. Improve traffic flow and safety within major road corridors by implementing access management solutions, including:
  - Consolidating/closing unnecessary driveways
  - Reconfiguring wide/undefined driveways
  - Maintaining minimum spacing between driveways and roadways
  - Encouraging shared driveways/service drives
5. Support and advocate for pedestrian improvements within or across major road corridors, where practical, such as the I-275 trail, shared-use pathways, crosswalks and pedestrian signals.

the adjacent communities. These roads have the capacity to support somewhat higher intensity residential uses, local commercial, and institutional uses. Close coordination with the Michigan Department of Transportation (for Telegraph Road) and the Monroe County Road Commission (for all other major roads) is needed to ensure that future improvements and road designs enhance safety while accommodating both motorized and non-motorized travel needs.

### *Access Management*

Access management is an important tool in creating a safe and efficient roadway system. The capacity of a major road can be enhanced, and its useful life extended, by careful attention to access controls and circulation between adjacent sites. This coordination and review will also likely reduce the total number of access drives as well as the total number of conflict points. The concept of access management is based on granting owners of property along a specified roadway, specifically those owning commercial, office or industrial, access to their property, but not unlimited access. There are many access management standards which can be implemented within the Township. This Master Plan recommends consideration of the following access management treatments along major roads:

- Joint Access Easement - One method of reducing the need for access drives onto a primary road is to provide joint or cross access easements between sites. During the site planning process, consideration should be given to the alignment of parking lot maneuvering lanes which would allow for continuous and safe travel between parking lots.
- Maximizing Corner Clearance - Curb cuts for properties located on a corner parcel require special attention. Access drives and curb cuts should provide the maximum amount of spacing possible from the intersection to the curb cut. Further, in most cases, the access drive

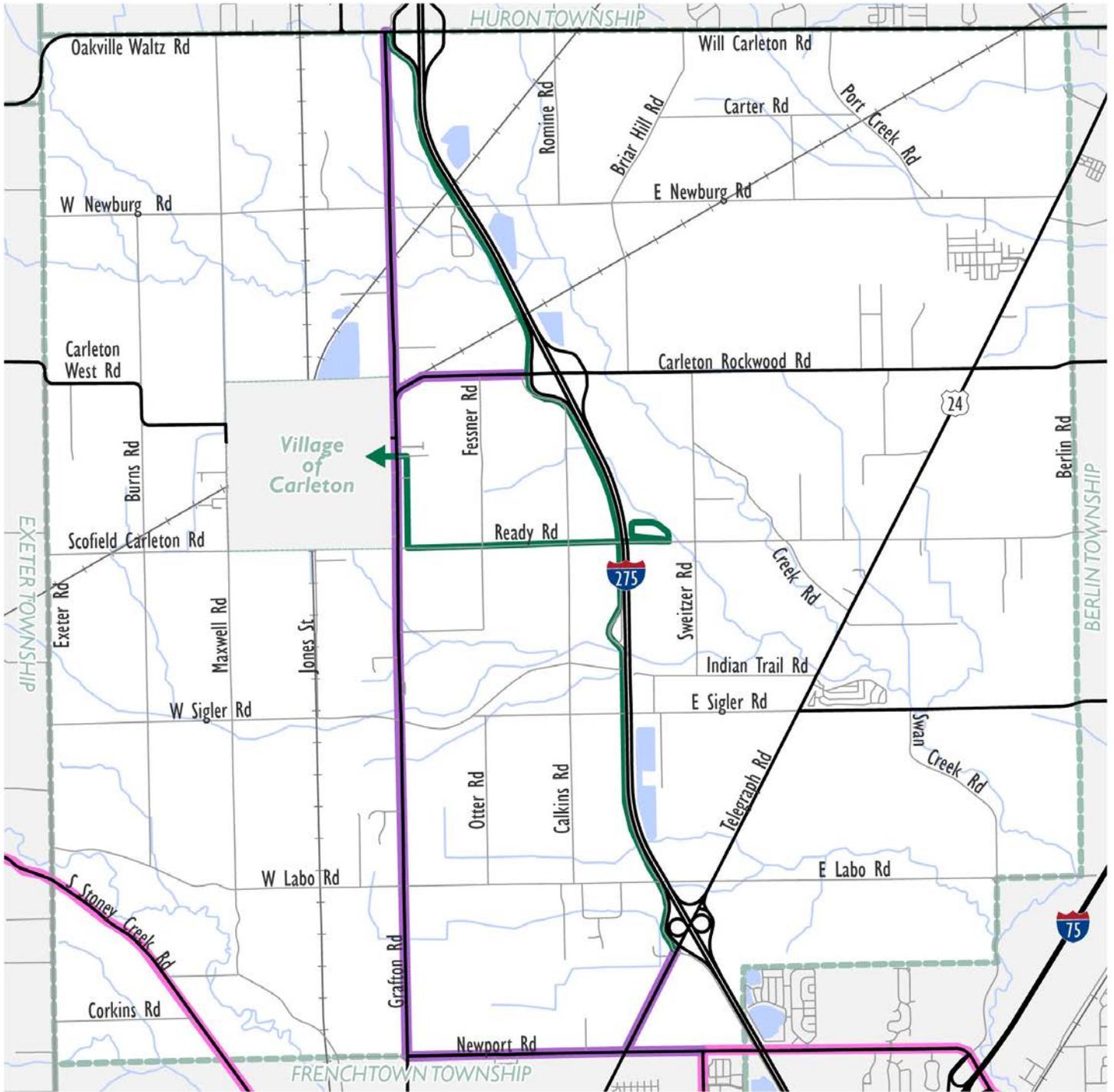
## Motorized Transportation Plan

The **Circulation Plan Map** highlights proposed major and local roads within Ash Township.

### Major Roads

Major roads include interstates, principal arterials, minor arterials, and major collector roads within Ash Township. These are roads that handle longer trips and operate at higher and more uniform speeds. Major roads connect points of high traffic generation and collect vehicles from local streets, distributing them to both local and regional destinations.

Within Ash Township, Telegraph Road carries the highest volume of traffic through and well beyond the township. Given its high traffic volumes and through traffic, Telegraph Road has the capacity to support higher intensive commercial, industrial and institutional uses. The other major roads in the township carry much lower volumes of traffic than Telegraph Road, but support the majority of through travel within the township and to



# Circulation Plan

## Base Features:

- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries

## Functional Class:

- Major Roads
- Local Roads

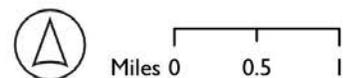
## Non-Motorized Routes:

- Cornerstone Bicycle Route
- Other Bicycle Routes
- Proposed Shared Use Paths

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Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 SEMCOG AADT Volume Counts, 2024  
 Ash Township, 2020



should be limited to the secondary roadway rather than the primary. This will help in channeling vehicles to a common intersection rather than creating new turning areas.

- **Maximize Clear Vision** - Particular attention should be given to the areas of the Township where commercial access drives would be located on curves or portions of roadways with varying topographic height. Clear vision for motorists in this area should be reviewed carefully due to potential blind spots. If possible, access drives should be located in such a manner where clear vision in both directions is maximized.
- **Maximize Drive Offset** - The Planning Commission, in their review of site plans, needs to pay particular attention to driveway offsets. Driveways and roadways on opposite sides of the road can increase the potential for conflict. Therefore, if drives cannot be aligned across a street, the distance between driveway centerlines should be maximized.

When implementing access management policies, the Township should consult the Michigan Access Management Guidebook prepared by MDOT as a guide to assist in determining appropriate standards.

## Local Roads

Local roads consist largely of county local roads and public and private residential streets. They are to be used by people traveling to and from destinations within the local area and to connect to primary roads. Aside from private roads serving residential developments, most of these local roads, including all section and quarter section line roads, are under the jurisdiction of the Monroe County Road Commission. These roads are generally not able to support any uses more intensive than agricultural and single-family residential development.

## Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

The **Circulation Plan Map** also sets forth recommendations for the expansion and improvement of the Township's nonmotorized routes, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The future nonmotorized circulation network is designed to link Ash Township's most important community facilities and establish easy to navigate connections for people to walk and bike in their neighborhoods and around the Township.

### Bicycle Routes

#### *Cornerstone Bicycle Route*

The non-motorized transportation plan for Ash Township builds upon of the County's efforts to establish the Monroe County Cornerstone Bicycle Route. This route was detailed in the Monroe County Parks, Trails, & Recreation Master Plan (2025) and the Monroe County Trail and Bicycle Plan (2021). The Cornerstone Bicycle Route is an approximately 100-mile long signed bicycle route that circles Monroe County. Much of the route consists of paved shoulders along county roads with low traffic volumes. The bicycle route extends into the southern portion of Ash Township along Stoney Creek Road and Newport Road.

#### *Other Bicycle Routes*

The Monroe County non-motorized planning efforts also identified additional signed bicycle routes within Ash Township. These identified routes include Grafton Road and segments of Carleton-Rockwood Road and Newport Road. These routes would connect Village and Township residents with the Cornerstone Bicycle Route.

### I-275 Shared Use Pathway

One existing non-motorize 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 popular 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 the **Circulation Plan Map**; however, a precise trail route has not been identified.

## Recommended Non-Motorized Trail Designs

### *Shared Use Paths*

These off-road paved or gravel trails serve pedestrians, cyclists, skaters, and wheelchair users. Shared use paths are typically 10 feet wide with 2 feet of clearance. They offer a safer, more comfortable option for users of all ages and abilities by being separated from road traffic.

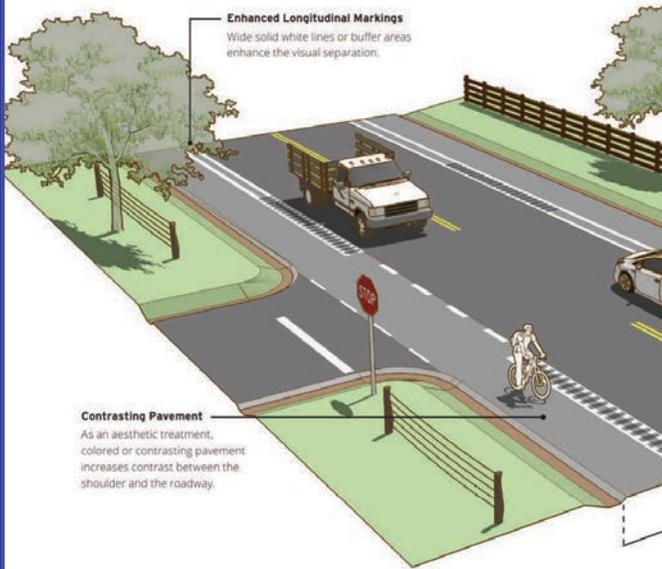
### *Signed Bicycle Routes*

A bike route are existing roadway marked with signage, but lack additional dedicated infrastructure for cyclists. These routes are generally appropriate on local or rural roadways where traffic volumes are low and where the costs of adding dedicated non-motorized infrastructure outweighs the benefits. From the perspective of the bicyclist, the bike route signage enhances navigation. From the perspective of the motorist, the bike route signage raises the level of awareness of potential bicyclists.

### *Paved Shoulders*

A paved shoulder is a space along the edge of the roadway which serves as a functional space for pedestrians and bicyclists. At least 4 feet in width, paved shoulders are separated from the roadway by a solid white line and in some cases through physical features such as rumble strips. They can provide space for pedestrian and bicyclists which is especially important along higher speed roadways. Pedestrians and bicyclists who use the paved shoulders should travel in the same direction as the adjacent road lane, and vehicle drivers should slow and pay attention in order to accommodate the safety of the cyclist or pedestrians.

## Paved Shoulder Bicycle Route

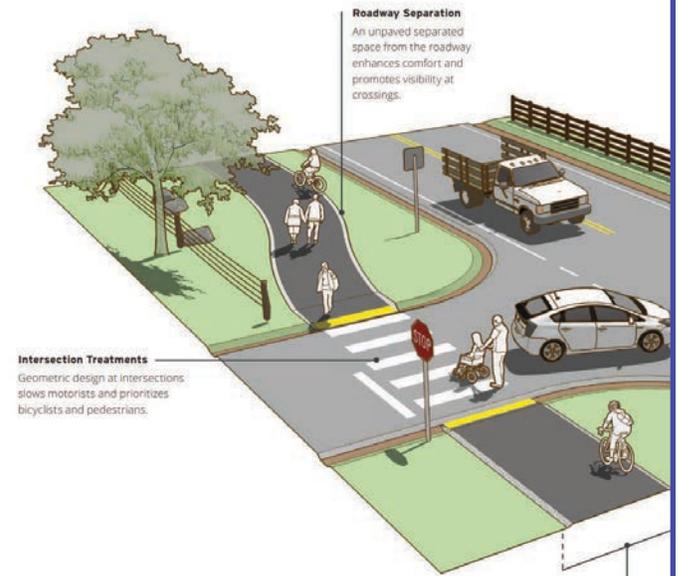


**A Paved Shoulder**  
4 ft (1.2 m) min.

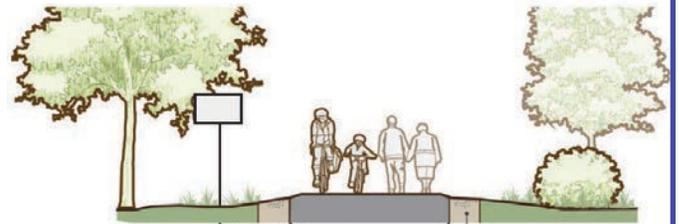
**Buffer (Optional)**  
1.5-4 ft (0.5-1.2 m) or wider

**Figure 3-1.** When adequate width is provided, shoulders can serve bicycle trips along roads too busy for comfortable shared roadway travel.

## Shared Use Path



**Sidewalk**  
Sidewalks serve bidirectional pedestrian and bicyclist travel.



**Horizontal Clearance**  
2 ft (0.6 m)

**Shared Use Path**  
10-12 ft (3.0-3.6 m)

**Shoulder**  
2 ft (0.6 m)

Source: Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks, U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, 2016



# Community Services Plan

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. This chapter outlines a community facilities goal and strategies to ensure the efficient and cost effective provision of community services and infrastructure.

## Goal and Strategies

The following community services goal and strategies have been established for Ash Township.

### Overall Community Services Goal

*Goal:* Deliver high-quality public services that balance efficiency with the evolving needs of the community, while supporting growth and ensuring reliable, cost-effective operations into the future.

### Community Facilities Strategies

#### *Strategies:*

1. Build on the existing system of community facilities designed around education, recreation, health care, police, and fire protection, locating new facilities so as to balance convenience to users, cost efficiency, and compatibility with surrounding areas.



Ash Township Hall

2. 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.
  3. 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.
  4. 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.
  5. 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.
  6. Encourage long-term sustainability and the reduction of fossil-fuel emissions through the promotion and implementation of energy efficient facilities, services, programs and incentives.
3. Explore the creation of a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) to capture tax increment revenues to help fund infrastructure improvements within the Telegraph Road corridor.

## Recreation Strategies

### *Strategies:*

1. Protect and enhance existing parks and natural features to provide safe gathering spaces, enhance the Township's natural beauty, and support a healthy and active quality of life.
2. 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.
3. Provide for the development, utilization, and conservation of natural resources in the Township including structures and land having historical, archaeological, architectural, scenic or similar significance.

## Infrastructure Strategies

### *Strategies:*

1. Diligently monitor and seek outside funding to expand infrastructure networks and increase the capacity and quality of the Township's public sewer, water, and stormwater infrastructure.
2. Explore all options and partnerships to extend public sewer service into the Telegraph Road corridor, to potentially include a public sanitary sewer system.



# Implementation Strategy

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.



Ash Township Unity Park

## Tenants of Successful Implementation

The feedback gathered during this planning process helped shape the community's vision for the future. To make that vision a reality, ongoing community involvement, support, and leadership are essential.

### Commitment

Strong, committed leadership is the foundation of successful plan implementation. While elected and appointed officials will guide the process, support from Township staff, local organizations, and community leaders is also critical. But commitment extends beyond the Township Hall. Residents, business owners, developers, and property owners all play a role in working toward a shared vision for Ash Township's future.

### Using the Plan for Development Decisions

This Master Plan is meant to be a practical, everyday tool. It should be used consistently when making decisions that shape the Township's future, whether those decisions involve public investments or private development. Developers, businesses, and landowners should use the plan as a guide to ensure projects support the community's long-term goals and stability.

### Role of the Planning Commission

The Planning Commission advises the Township Board and Township administration on planning and development matters. This role does not end once the Master Plan is adopted. Planning is ongoing as conditions change, new opportunities arise, and challenges evolve. Each year, the Planning Commission should create or update an annual work plan based on the recommendations in the Master Plan.

## Public Understanding and Support

Community participation and public understanding are essential to any successful plan. Without broad support, long-range initiatives can stall, whether due to failed bond proposals, lack of political support, or public resistance to zoning or infrastructure decisions.

To build and maintain support, the Township should clearly communicate the purpose of the plan and invite residents to take part in the planning process. Public education can take many forms, such as presentations, community meetings, local news articles, or easy-to-understand plan summaries.

Active participation in civic groups and community discussions also helps strengthen involvement and ensures the planning process reflects the community's priorities.

### Programs and Funding

Successfully putting this plan into action will depend on the Township's ability to secure the right funding at the right time. In addition to the general fund, millage proposals, and other traditional tools, the Township can also pursue a variety of state, federal, and regional grant programs.

Many of these programs have supported Ash Township in the past, and continuing to use them, along with exploring new opportunities, will help the Township move projects forward, reduce the burden on local taxpayers, and make the most of available resources.

## 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 has 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 in the Future Land Use Plan chapter and the Zoning Districts established in the Ash Township Zoning Ordinance.

### Residential Development

#### *Future Land Use Classifications*

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

- Agricultural (AG)
- Rural Estates (RE)
- Single-Family Residential (R)
- Transitional Residential (RT)
- Multi-Family Residential (RM)
- Manufactured Home Park (MHP)

#### *Zoning Districts*

The following five 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 for 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.

### *Planning and Zoning Relationship*

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 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.

Presently, there is no Zoning District that would specifically accomplish the intent of the Transitional Residential (RT) future land use classification. Therefore, it is recommended that Ash Township consider creating a new Zoning District which corresponds to this classification.

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 option.

## **Non-Residential Development**

### *Future Land Use Classifications*

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

- Local Commercial (C-1)
- General Commercial (C-2)
- Heavy Commercial (C-3)
- Freeway Service (FS)
- Light Industrial (I-1)
- General Industrial (I-2)
- Public/Semi-Public/Recreation

### *Zoning Districts*

The Ash Township Zoning Ordinance has established six non-residential Zoning Districts:

- C-1, Local Commercial
- C-2, General Commercial
- 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, including warehousing, outdoor storage and logistics uses. 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.

### *Planning and Zoning Relationship*

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 corresponding non-residential Zoning Districts, as described below.

- The Local Commercial future land use category is accomplished through the C-1 Zoning District.
- The General Commercial future land use category is accomplished through the C-2 Zoning District.
- The Heavy Commercial future land use category is accomplished through the C-3 Zoning District.
- The Freeway Service future land use category is accomplished through the FS Zoning 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.

## Zoning Amendment Recommendations

In order to implement the recommendations of this Master Plan, amendments to the Ash Township Zoning Ordinance are advisable. Soon after adoption of this Master Plan, it is recommended that the Township proceed with a detailed review (“audit”) of the Zoning Ordinance to outline detailed changes necessary. Below is a summary of major zoning ordinance amendments that the Township should consider:

1. Conduct a general review of the zoning ordinance for organization, formatting, user-friendliness, outdated language, errors, inconsistencies, and to address contemporary land use issues.
2. Review the permitted and special permitted uses within the residential zoning districts to ensure that the housing types defined as allowable in the Future Land Use Plan are also allowable in the aligned zoning districts.
3. Amend the zoning ordinance to create a new zoning district to align with the Transitional Residential (RT) future land use classification. Ensure that the zoning district provides flexibility and ease for developing small-lot detached single-family homes and attached single-family dwellings. Also allow for senior housing developments, including independent living and residential care facilities.
4. Amend the zoning ordinance to allow and provide flexibility in the design of planned residential development projects which offer significant public benefits, such as the preservation of open space.
5. Review and amend the permitted and special permitted uses of each zoning district to ensure the zoning ordinance allows contemporary use types

6. Review and update the zoning ordinance's design standards to ensure attractive and high-quality development throughout the Township. Specific attention should be paid to development and redevelopment within mixed-use and commercial districts.
7. Review the off-street parking and loading requirements to consider reduction in off-street parking in order to gain community benefits of reduced development costs, increased greenspace, enhanced stormwater control, and improved water quality.
8. Review the zoning ordinance and consider amendments that incentivize or require buffers around important natural features, including woodlands, wetlands, ponds, streams and drains.

Finally, after adoption of the Master Plan, it is recommended that the Planning Commission examine the currently adopted Zoning Map in light of the new Future Land Use Map. The Planning Commission may consider proactive changes to the Zoning Map upon adoption of this Master Plan. However, the Planning Commission is not obligated to amend the Zoning Map and may instead choose to allow private property owners, over time, to petition the Township for zoning district changes which the Planning Commission may approve if such changes are consistent with the Master Plan.



# Community Profile

This Appendix to the Master Plan provides a detailed profile of Ash Township. The evaluation and analysis of socioeconomic data, existing land use, community facilities and other background information was conducted early on in the planning process. The Community Profile answers the question - “where are we today?” - and provides a foundation for the planning recommendations that are outlined in this Master Plan.

This Community Profile includes eight subsections, as follows:

1. Population Profile
2. Housing Needs Analysis
3. Housing Analysis
4. Economic Profile
5. Natural Features Assessment
6. Existing Land Use Analysis
7. Transportation Assessment
8. Community Services and Facilities Assessment

The demographic analysis included in this Community Profile relies on several key data sources. Figures from the decennial U.S. Census reports, including the most recent 2020 Census are utilized, where available. Another key data source is Esri (a leader in GIS software, location intelligence and mapping), who produces independent demographic and socioeconomic estimates and forecasts for the United States using a variety of data sources, beginning with the latest Census base and adding a mixture of administrative records and private sources to

capture change. Esri data is available for 2024, with 5-year forecasts for the year 2029. Data on certain detailed demographic topics is only available through the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, made available by the U.S. Census Bureau. Finally, certain data for Ash Township, including future forecasts, is made available by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).

## Population Profile

### Historical Population Growth

Population growth is a key factor influencing land use decision in any community. If the population is growing, there will be an increased need for housing, commerce, industry, parks and recreation, public services and facilities, and roads.

**Table I** shows the population trends from 1970 through the most current 2020 Census for Ash Township, Monroe County, the State of Michigan, and surrounding communities. Since 1970, Ash Township’s population has grown more over 50%, increasing from 4,300 people in 1970 to 5,534 in 2020, a growth rate of 56.3%.

Similar positive historical population growth trends have occurred within Monroe County as a whole.

### Population Projections

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) developed the 2050 Southeast Michigan Regional Development Forecast in March 2023. This study includes forecasts for population, households, and employment by County and Community. **Table 2** shows the forecasted 2030

*Table 1. Population Trends, 1970-2020*

Unit of Government	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Ash Township	4,300	4,902	4,710	5,061	5,438	5,534
Village of Carleton	1,503	2,786	2,770	2,549	2,345	2,326
Berlin Township	5,510	6,488	6,286	6,924	9,299	9,890
Frenchtown Township	14,685	18,204	18,210	20,692	20,440	21,609
Exeter Township	2,971	3,236	3,253	3,727	3,975	3,927
Monroe County	119,215	134,659	133,600	145,945	152,021	154,809
Michigan	8,881,826	9,262,078	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Esri forecasts for 2024 and 2029. Esri converted Census 2010 into 2020 geography and Census 2020 data.

*Table 2. Population Projections, 2020-2040*

Unit of Government	2020	2030	2040	Percent Change ('20-'40)
Ash Township	5,534	5,574	5,649	2.1%
Carleton Village	2,326	2,326	2,377	2.2%
Berlin Township	7,900	8,317	8,720	10.4%
Frenchtown Township	21,609	21,845	22,174	2.6%
Exeter Township	3,382	3,382	3,481	2.9%
Monroe County	154,809	156,514	160,422	3.6%
Michigan	10,077,331	10,221,761	10,263,350	1.8%

Source: SEMCOG 2050 Southeast Michigan Regional Development Forecast, 2023.

and 2040 populations for Ash Township, the surrounding townships, Monroe County and the State of Michigan. Ash Township’s population is forecasted to grow to 5,649 citizens by 2040, a 2.1% change from its 2020 population. Out of the surrounding communities within the County, Ash Township is forecasted to growth at the slowest rate, while Berlin Township is forecasted to growth the fastest by 10.4%.

## Age Groups

Analyzing age distribution helps anticipate future needs in healthcare, education, and recreation. In Ash Township, the population is categorized into five life cycle groups:

- Preschool (0-4 years)
- School (5-19 years)
- Family Formation (20-44 years)

- Empty Nest (45-64 year)
- Older Adults (65 years or older)

**Table 3** shows population by age groups for the Township, County, and State. 2010 values are from the Census while 2024 and 2029 values are Esri estimates. This data reveals the following trends:

- 2010: Higher proportions of school-age children (5-19) and empty nesters (45-64).
- 2024: Many empty nesters have aged to the older adult category, significantly increasing that group’s size. Declines observed in school-age children and family formation adults (20-44), likely due to migration.
- 2029: Continued growth in the older adult population. Slight decreases expected in school-age children, family formation adults, and empty nesters.

*Table 3. Population Estimates by Age Groups, 2010-2029*

Ages	Ash Township			Monroe County			Michigan		
	2010	2024	2029	2010	2024	2029	2010	2024	2029
0 to 4	383	376	381	8,719	7,875	7,844	596,286	540,800	532,063
5 to 9	453	441	402	9,841	8,984	8,089	637,784	585,003	532,985
10 to 14	570	433	439	11,053	9,277	8,954	675,216	593,013	576,871
15 to 19	571	461	428	11,219	9,296	8,568	739,599	627,016	589,282
20 to 24	435	404	372	8,608	9,042	8,087	669,072	678,713	628,963
25 to 29	399	400	426	8,146	9,063	9,731	589,583	630,729	661,461
30 to 34	402	440	471	8,371	9,717	9,692	574,566	678,887	627,668
35 to 39	451	435	468	9,464	9,425	10,066	612,493	634,680	666,454
40 to 44	519	444	451	5,414	9,472	9,625	665,481	617,001	632,331
45 to 49	694	446	491	12,491	9,248	9,757	744,581	571,891	614,809
50 to 54	712	610	508	12,744	10,236	9,054	765,452	623,864	565,658
55 to 59	661	605	619	11,237	10,803	10,043	683,186	633,361	596,890
60 to 64	518	689	592	9,009	11,478	10,269	568,811	686,174	605,693
65 to 69	357	644	647	6,493	10,721	10,792	418,625	638,584	638,383
70 to 74	249	528	605	4,678	8,561	9,719	306,084	509,028	572,114
75 to 79	180	352	427	3,540	6,134	7,253	244,085	377,125	437,991
80 to 84	137	186	260	3,072	3,678	4,806	200,855	228,260	297,615
85 and older	92	159	189	2,609	3,244	4,806	191,881	216,012	248,483

Source: 2010 Census, ESRI 2024 Estimate and 2029 Projections

**Figure 1** shows Ash Township’s median age has steadily increased by about 3 years each decade from 2000 to 2020, with estimates suggesting it will rise to 47.5 by 2029 (Census, Esri). These figures clearly indicate an aging population within Ash Township, with implications for housing, healthcare, and community services.

## Disability

According to American Community Survey (ACS) 2023 estimates, Ash Township had slightly higher proportions of disabled population compared to Monroe County and Michigan.

- Age Group 18 to 64: 13.4% have a disability
- Age Group 65 and older: 34.5% have a disability.

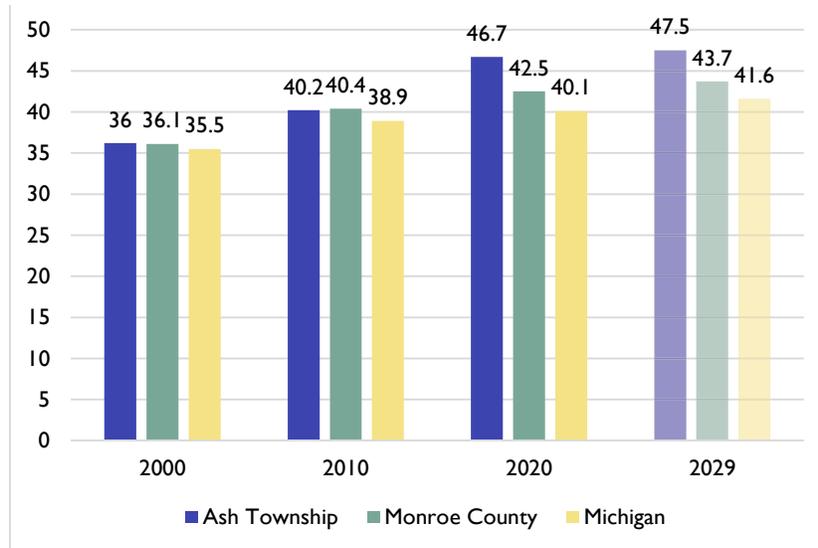
## Race

**Table 4** displays the racial makeup of Ash Township in comparison to the County and the State. The population of Ash Township is predominantly white, with 90.5% white population in 2020, although it has become slightly more diverse since 2010. The Township has a less diverse population compared to the County and the State.

## Households and Household Size

Nationally, household sizes have declined since the 1970s due to factors including families choosing to have fewer children, higher divorce rates, and a greater number of elderly living alone. Knowing whether the household size is increasing or decreasing helps to identify the community’s housing needs. A declining average household size may mean that a community will need more housing units to accommodate the fewer people

Figure 1. Median Age Trends and Estimates, 2000-2029



Source: 2024 Esri Demographic Profiles, U.S. Decennial Census

Table 4. Race and Ethnicity, 2010-2020

Category	Ash Township		Monroe County		Michigan	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
White	5,190	5,007	140,609	135,369	7,569,939	7,295,651
Black or African American	50	63	3,144	4,036	1,383,756	1,358,458
American Indian and Alaska Native	10	17	397	414	54,665	47,406
Asian	13	14	837	952	236,490	332,288
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	0	2	24	24	2,170	2,603
Some other race	3	19	78	490	9,866	37,183
Two or more races	61	250	2,265	7,293	176,993	439,320
Hispanic or Latino	111	163	4,667	6,231	436,358	564,422

Source: 2010 and 2020, U.S. Decennial Census.

living within each unit. In some municipalities, new housing units are being built to accommodate the demand for housing created by lower household sizes despite an overall decline in population.

Based on 2020 Census data and 2040 SEMCOG forecasts, the number of households within Ash Township is projected to increase from 2,174 to 2,299, a growth rate of 5.7%. This is notable, as the Township’s population is only forecasted to increase by 2.1% between 2020 and 2040. Ash

Township’s household growth rate of 5.7% is slightly higher than Monroe County as a whole at 4.9% (see **Table 5**).

According to the 2020 Census, Ash Township’s average household size in 2020 is 2.55. According to SEMCOG, the Township’s average household size is forecasted to decline to 2.46 by 2040. Similarly, Monroe County is expected to see a decrease in average household size from 2.47 in 2020 to 2.46 by 2040.

*Table 5. Total Households, 2020-2040*

Unit of Government	Households (Occupied Units)			% Change Households ('20-'40)
	2020	2030	2040	
Ash Township	2,174	2,261	2,299	5.7%
Monroe County	62,152	63,872	65,216	4.9%

Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2050 Southeast Michigan Regional Development Forecast

## Household Characteristics

This subsection examines households in terms of the relationships among people sharing a single housing unit. **Table 6** provides information for Ash Township, Monroe County, and the State of Michigan based on six household types according to household relationship.

In 2023, family households constituted 67.1% of Ash Township’s households, with married-couple families representing 57.7%. Compared to Monroe County and Michigan, Ash Township has a higher proportion of family households. Notably, households with one or more individuals aged 65 or older are more prevalent in Ash Township than in the County or State.

## Housing Needs Analysis

Housing, or more generally, dwellings, refers to the construction and assigned usage of houses or buildings individually or collectively, for the purpose of shelter. Housing is a basic human need, and it plays a critical role in shaping the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities. It is of great importance that communities maintain a stock of quality housing to serve the varied needs of its diverse residents.

Assessing a community’s housing stock is an important aspect in seeing how a community is currently structured to provide for their residents, in addition to analyzing where they may need to provide more variation to accommodate diverse housing preferences. An evaluation of housing affordability helps to reveal whether certain residents are prevented from securing housing, even where there is a surplus in available housing.

*Table 6. Household Characteristics, 2023*

Unit of Government	Total Occupied Households	Percent of Total Households					
		Family Households	Married-Couple Households	Male Householder, No Spouse/ Partner	Female Householder, No Spouse/ Partner	Households with One or More Children Under 18	Households with One or More People Over 65
Ash Township	2,142	67.1%	57.7%	15.5%	16.6%	28.8%	44.6%
Monroe County	63,686	65.8%	49.4%	17.8%	22.6%	27.0%	33.2%
Michigan	4,040,168	62.7%	46.3%	4.9%	11.6%	27%	15.2%

Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## Housing Unit Types

**Table 7** highlights the type of housing units within Ash Township, the surrounding townships, and Monroe County as of 2023, separating housing units into four categories: single-family (detached homes), townhouses (attached dwelling units), multifamily (triplexes, quadplexes, and apartments), and mobile homes or other (i.e. boat, RV, van, etc.).

As shown in the table, Ash Township’s housing stock is predominantly single-family detached homes (85.5%), with mobile homes comprising 13.4%, and multifamily dwellings accounting for just 1% of the total housing stock. No townhouses are presently located within Ash Township. (Also see **Figure 2**)

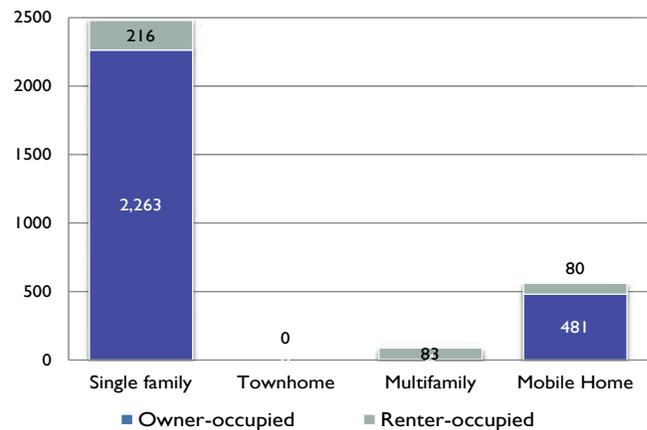
Compared to neighboring municipalities and Monroe County, Ash Township generally has a higher percentage of single-family homes and mobile units, and a lower proportion of multi-unit dwellings. This indicates limited housing diversity within Ash Township.

The **Residential Land Use by Housing Unit Type Map** illustrates the distribution of housing types across Ash Township. This data, gathered through a Wade Trim analysis using satellite imagery, provides an overview of the existing housing types. This map highlights the dominance of single-family detached housing within Ash Township.

## Residential Land Use by Parcel Size

The **Residential Land Use by Parcel Size Map** displays residentially occupied parcels color coded by parcel size. This provides a view of housing density within Ash Township. Property sizes can also influence housing affordability. Because of land values, a dwelling on a smaller lot is more likely to be affordable in comparison to a dwelling on a larger lot. The map shows that most of the residentially-used properties within Ash Township are larger than three acres in size. Smaller residentially-used properties, generally less than one acre in size, are concentrated near the Village of Carleton and along Grafton Road. The median size of residentially-used property in Ash Township is 4.6 acres.

*Figure 2. Housing by Type and Tenure, Ash Township, 2023*

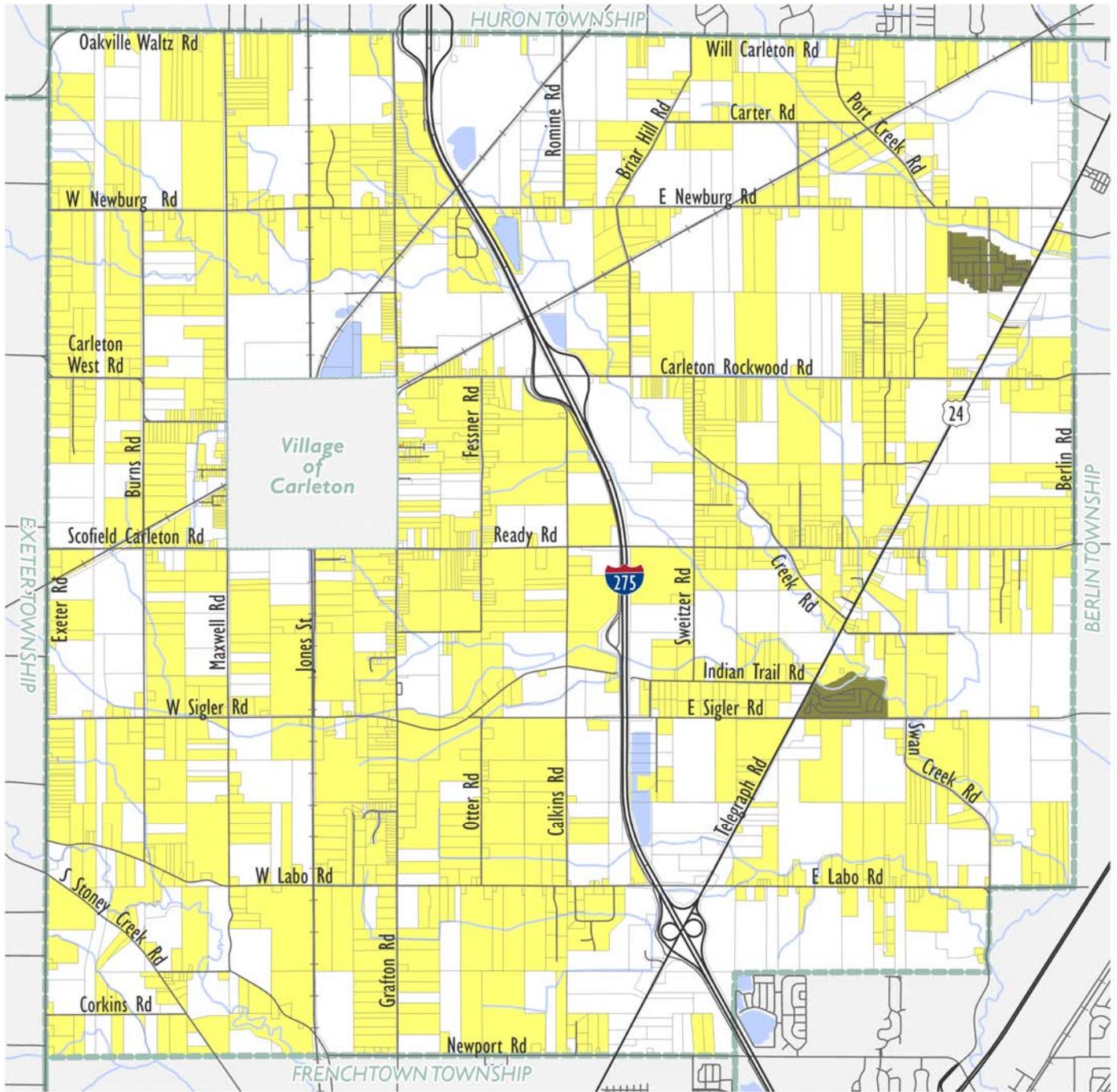


Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

*Table 7. Type of Housing Units, 2023*

Unit of Government	Single Family (detached)		Townhouses		Multifamily		Mobile Homes	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Ash Township	1,832	85.5%	0	0%	22	1.0%	288	13.4%
Village of Carleton	647	65.7%	0	0%	65	6.6%	273	27.7%
Berlin Township	2,899	80.7%	10	0.3%	278	7.7%	324	9.0%
Frenchtown Township	6,046	68.5%	209	2.4%	1,199	13.6%	1,373	15.6%
Exeter Township	1,559	90.9%	41	2.4%	72	4.2%	44	2.6%
Monroe County	49,267	78.8%	1,523	2.4%	6,970	11.2%	4,749	7.6%

Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates



# Residential Land Use By Housing Unit Type

**Base Features:**

- Freeways/ State Highways
- Roads
- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Parcel Lines
- Municipal Boundaries

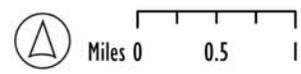
**Residential Use Type:**

- Single-Family Residential, detached
- Multi-Family Residential (3+ units)
- Mobile/Manufactured Home Park
- Non-Residential Property

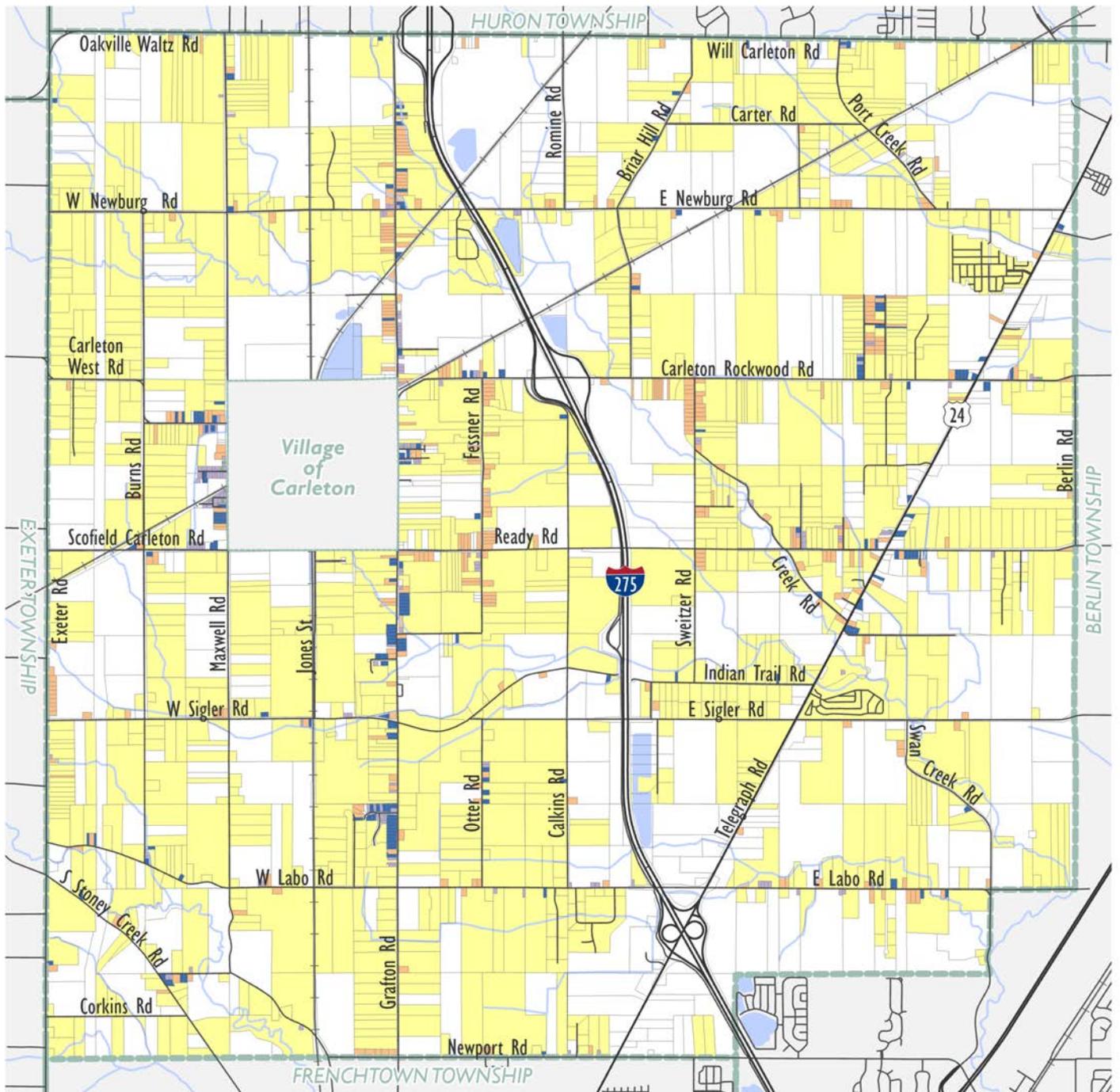
**WADE TRIM**  
 500 Griswold St #2500  
 Detroit, MI 48226  
 800.482.2864

March 2025

Source: Monroe County GIS, 2019;  
 Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 Ash Township, 2020;  
 Wade Trim Analysis, 2025



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## Residential Land Use By Parcel Size

### Base Features:

- Freeways/ State Highways
- Roads
- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Parcel Lines
- Municipal Boundaries

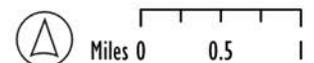
### Parcel Size:

- Less than 19,999 sq ft
- 20,000 sq ft to 1 acre
- 1 to 1.5 acres
- 1.5 to 3 acres
- 3 acres or More
- Non-Residential Property

**WADE TRIM**  
 500 Griswold St #2500  
 Detroit, MI 48226  
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March 2025

Source: Monroe County GIS, 2019;  
 Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 Ash Township, 2020;  
 Wade Trim Analysis, 2025



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## Age of Structure

**Table 8** displays the age of occupied housing units in Ash Township (based on the year the structure was built). As a rule of thumb, typically the economically useful age of a housing unit is approximately 50 years. Beyond that age, major repairs and modernization may be required to include standard amenities. The table reveals the following for Ash Township:

- Pre-1960: Approximately 27.8% of housing units (at least 65 years old).
- 1960-1970: About 30% of housing units.
- 1980-1990: Around 23% of housing units.
- 2000 and later: Approximately 20% of housing units.

The age distribution of Ash Township’s housing stock is comparable to Monroe County as a whole. Generally, Ash Township has a higher percentage of newer housing units (built since 1980) and a lower percentage of older housing units (built prior to 1960) in comparison to the State of Michigan.

## Housing Tenure

Housing occupancy and tenure data for Ash Township, Monroe County, and the State of Michigan is shown in **Table 9** based on data from the 2010 Census and Esri for 2024 and 2029. Ash Township’s 2024 housing market exhibited the following characteristics.

- Vacancy Rate: 5.7%, aligning with a healthy housing market benchmark of approximately 5%. The 2029 values show a lower vacancy rate (5.3%).
- Homeownership Rate: 83.6%, notably higher than both Monroe County (75.6%) and Michigan (74.1%).
- Renter Occupied: 10.7%. The 2029 values show a lower rental occupancy rate (9.4%).

*Table 8. Age of Occupied Housing, 2023*

Year Structure Built	Unit of Government		
	Ash Township	Monroe County	Michigan
2020 or later	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%
2000 to 2019	19%	19%	15.1%
1980 to 1999	22.8%	20.8%	22.5%
1960 to 1979	29.7%	23.9%	26.8%
1940 to 1959	12.4%	19.9%	21.2%
1939 or earlier	15.4%	15.5%	13.8%

Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

## Housing Values

Analyzing housing values helps to gain an understanding of the overall quality and affordability of housing within a community. It is important that a community maintains quality and affordable housing for its existing and potential future residents. **Table 10** provides the following data as sourced from the 2023 ACS.

Median Home Value:

- \$236,800, which was higher than Monroe County (\$215,700) and the State (\$217,149), indicating a high-quality of housing stock.

Home Value Distribution:

- Most of Ash Township’s houses are valued between \$300,000-\$499,999
- Majority of Michigan’s houses are valued between \$100,000 and \$299,999.

Median Rent:

- Ash Township’s median rent was \$1,082, slightly above Monroe County’s \$1,017 and on par with Michigan’s \$1,084.

*Table 9. Housing Occupancy and Tenure, 2010-2029*

Unit of Gov't	Year	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Vacant Units	Total Housing Units	% Change Total Units (2010-2029)
Ash Township*	2010	2,667	336	204	3,207	14.0%
	2024	2,943	377	199	3,519	
	2029	3,119	342	194	3,655	
Monroe County	2010	46,496	11,734	4,741	62,971	8.8%
	2024	50,787	12,899	3,529	67,215	
	2029	53,362	11,773	3,379	68,514	
Michigan	2010	2,793,342	1,079,166	659,725	4,532,233	3.00%
	2024	2,979,418	1,115,725	523,820	4,618,963	
	2029	3,083,723	1,067,966	516,678	4,668,367	

Source: 2024 Esri Demographic and Income Profiles

\* Township data includes the Village of

*Table 10. Financial Characteristics of Housing Units, 2023*

Measure	Ash Township		Village of Carleton		Monroe County		Michigan	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Value of Owner Occupied Housing Units</b>	<b>1,892</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50,732</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,946,157</b>	<b>100%</b>
Under \$100,000	313	16%	230	30%	6,948	14%	536,066	18%
\$100,000-\$199,999	379	19%	192	25%	15,924	31%	796,290	27%
\$200,000-\$299,999	300	15%	185	24%	13,650	27%	716,676	24%
\$300,000-\$499,999	845	43%	104	14%	11,490	23%	617,976	21%
Over \$500,000	145	7%	55	7%	2,720	5%	279,149	9%
Median Value	\$236,800		\$177,800		\$215,700		\$217,149	
<b>Rent Charged for Rental Occupied Housing Units</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11,019</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,036,181</b>	<b>100%</b>
<\$500	0	0%	48	25%	1,270	12%	90,676	9%
\$500-\$999	12	11%	73	38%	4,050	37%	346,671	33%
\$1,000-\$1,499	94	82%	58	30%	4,365	40%	394,193	38%
>\$1,500	8	7%	15	8%	1,334	12%	204,641	20%
No Cash Rent	46	40%	25	13%	758	7%	57,830	6%
Median Rent	\$1,082		\$871		\$1,017		\$1,084	

Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

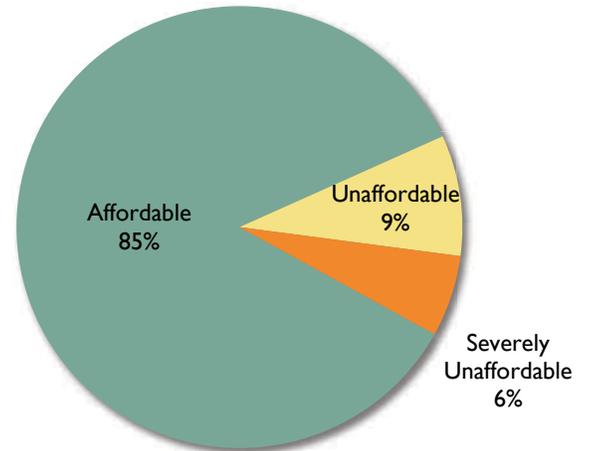
## Housing Affordability

Housing affordability is crucial for community wellbeing, as high costs can lead to economic and social challenges. A common measure is the percentage of household income spent on housing; spending over 30% indicates a “cost burden,” while over 50% signifies a “severe cost burden.” For Ash Township, monthly owner cost figures are provided by the ACS estimates of 2023. This data includes Ash Township and the Village of Carleton.

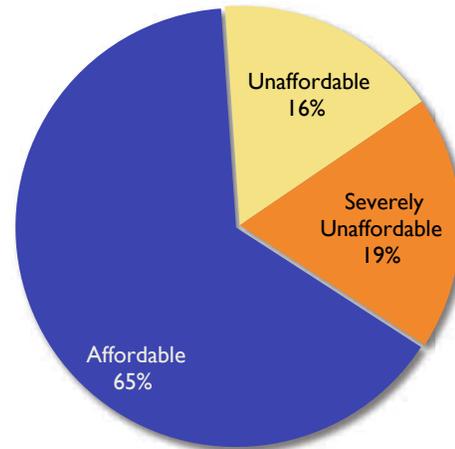
- Homeowners: Out of 2,748 housing units (with and without a mortgage), 15% of owners in paid more than 30% of their household income on housing costs. This is lower than the national average of 27.5%.
- Renters: Out of 308 rental units, 35% of renters are cost-burdened. This was much lower than the national average of 50.4%. However, renters in Ash Township face more than double the cost burden of homeowners.

Nationally, housing affordability has become an increasing concern, with home prices increasing by 30% over the last decade, while incomes grew by only 11%. In Ash Township, median housing costs are projected to rise by 16.3% in the next five years, while median incomes are expected to grow by 21.8%. This may help working households maintain affordability, but fixed-income individuals, such as seniors and disabled persons, could face greater financial strain. This is particularly important for Ash Township, given its aging population and limited housing options compared to larger metropolitan areas.

*Figure 3. Owner Occupied Housing Affordability, Ash Township, 2023*



*Figure 4. Renter Occupied Housing Affordability, Ash Township, 2023*



Figures 3 and 4 Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## Housing Unit Needs

Housing unit projections have a direct relationship to projections of population and households. An increasing population demands more housing units, as do decreasing household sizes. There are no published housing unit projections for Ash Township. Therefore, a housing unit calculation was conducted to create a benchmark for the number of housing units that are needed by the year 2040.

**Table II** outlines the methodology used to estimate the total housing units needed in Ash Township by the year 2040. The base data for this projection is the 2020 Census. Using estimates for population, average household size, households, and housing vacancy in 2040, a total housing count in 2040 can be calculated. As noted in the table, it is estimated that there is a need for 2,420 total housing units to accommodate a slightly growing population and a slightly declining household size. This is an increase of 105 housing units from 2020.

**Table 7** highlighted the current distribution of housing types within Ash Township, which consists of 85.5% single-family homes, 0% townhomes, 1% multi-family dwellings, and 13% mobile homes. If this current distribution were maintained for the 105 new housing units needed by 2040, this would

*Table 11. Housing Unit Projections for Ash Township, 2020-2040*

Characteristic/Year	Ash Township
<b>2020</b>	
Total Population	5,534
Average Household Size	2.54
Total Households	2,174
Housing Vacancy Rate	6.09%
Total Housing Units	2,315
<b>2040</b>	
Total Population (SEMCOG Estimate)	5,649
Average Household Size (SEMCOG Estimate)	2.46
Total Households (Occupied Units) (SEMCOG Estimate)	2,299
Housing Vacancy Rate (Assumes 5% vacancy rate)	5.0%
Total Housing Units (Assumes each household will occupy a housing unit, plus 5% vacant units)	2,420

Source: 2020 Census; SEMCOG 2050 Forecast; Wade Trim Analysis

*Table 12. Future Housing Type Distribution Scenarios for Ash Township, 2040*

Housing Type	Current distribution (2020)		Future Units Needed by 2040 (Following Current Housing Type Distribution)		Future Units Needed by 2040 (Targeting Greater Housing Type Diversity)	
	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,315</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>105</b>
Single Family, Detached	85.5%	1979	85.5%	90	40%	42
Townhouses / Attached	0%	0	0%	0	35%	37
Multi-Family Housing	1%	23	1%	1	25%	26
Mobile / Manufactured Homes	13%	310	13%	14	0%	0

Source: 2020 Census; Wade Trim Analysis

result in 90 new single family detached dwellings, 0 townhouse/attached dwellings, 1 multifamily unit, and 14 mobile/manufactured home dwellings (see **Table 12**).

However, the data and analysis outlined in this Community Profile demonstrates a greater need for housing type diversity to accommodate the community's changing demographics and an opportunity to attract "target" populations who have a preference for a greater diversity of housing types. For this reason, the Township may consider a planning and regulatory environment that is more supportive of housing diversity. Although the specific distribution of new housing units by type will vary, **Table 12** outlines an allocation of new housing unit types within Ash Township that targets greater diversity.

## National and Emerging Housing Type Trends

Today's housing market differs significantly from the past and has been significantly impacted by nationwide events such as the 2007 Great Recession and, more recently, the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and a subsequent housing affordability crisis. Today's housing market is also heavily influenced by various demographic shifts in the United States. These changes include aging populations, increased racial and ethnic diversity, and a rise in multi-generational and childless households.

The evolving preferences and needs of different generations have substantially impacted housing supply and demand. Below is an analysis of the generations and their generalized impact on housing needs.

### *Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964)*

This aging generation is expanding the senior population, driving demand for housing that accommodates their needs. Features such as

single-level layouts, step-free entrances, and wider doorways are increasingly sought after. While many Baby Boomers prefer to age in place, a significant number are moving. Notably, when individuals aged 65 and older relocate, 80% leave single-family houses, but only 41% move back into such units, with the majority transitioning to multifamily housing, often in senior living communities or care facilities.

### *Gen X (1965 – 1980)*

Currently, Generation X is the highest-earning homebuyer group, leading the market in terms of purchasing power and financial stability. According to the National Association of Realtors, approximately 75% of Gen Xers prefer detached single-family homes, which is the highest preference among any generation today. This preference for single-family homes reflects their desire for privacy, more space for their families, and the flexibility of a standalone property. Many Gen Xers, who are often in their prime earning years, prioritize long-term investments in real estate.

### *Millennials (born 1981-1996)*

As a major force in today's housing market, Millennials account for 75% to 80% of owner-occupied housing absorbed by those under 65. Their preferences differ from previous generations; many delay marriage and children, leading to a higher likelihood of living with parents longer. While some favor mixed-use urban environments and view renting as practical, the rise of remote work has enabled many to move to more affordable, less crowded areas like small towns and suburbs, seeking economic stability and lifestyle balance. However, Millennials face challenges such as high home prices and a shortage of available homes, partly due to slowed home building after the 2008 financial crisis.

## *Gen Z (born 1997 to 2013)*

As Gen Z enters the housing market, their preferences align with Millennials, favoring walkable communities with access to shopping, schools, recreation, and entertainment. The flexibility of remote work allows them to prioritize affordability. In-demand housing types for this generation include single-family homes (including rentals), townhouses, and garden-style apartments.

## *Opportunity to Capitalize on Emerging Housing Trends*

Ash Township should work to ensure there is attainable and attractive housing choices for individuals of all lifestyles and ages. Providing a more diverse and affordable housing stock is the first step in supporting a healthier future. This can help Ash Township retain and attract community members, particularly those that tend to move such as young people, young families, or older adults.

Attracting and retaining young people and older adults is important for Ash Township's growth and vitality. Young people, including new graduates or young families bring innovation, drive economic growth, and help sustain local schools. Meanwhile, older adults provide valuable experience, community stability, and support for recreation systems. A balance of age groups creates a dynamic, multi-generational community that supports local services and ensures long term success.

## **Housing Analysis based on Community Tapestry Data**

Tapestry segmentation data is made available through Esri. Esri tapestry segmentation provides detailed summaries of communities across the United States. Residential areas are grouped together into smaller, more manageable segments based on shared demographic, socioeconomic, and lifestyle characteristics. Neighborhoods with

the most similar characteristics are grouped together, and neighborhoods showing divergent characteristics are separated. Esri tapestry segmentation data can be used to understand a community's complexity. Each segment provides insight into patterns at the neighborhood and community level. For the purposes of this housing needs assessment, tapestry segmentation data provides insights into housing type and residential living preferences.

## *Ash Township Existing Tapestry Segments and Housing Preferences*

According to Esri as of 2024, the primary tapestry segments within Ash Township include Green Acres, Southern Satellites, Down the Road, Comfortable Empty Nesters, and Salt of the Earth. These groups are most often middle-age to older adults with fewer children. These groups have a strong preference for housing ownership, often living in single family homes. Provided below is further information about each tapestry segment within Ash Township.

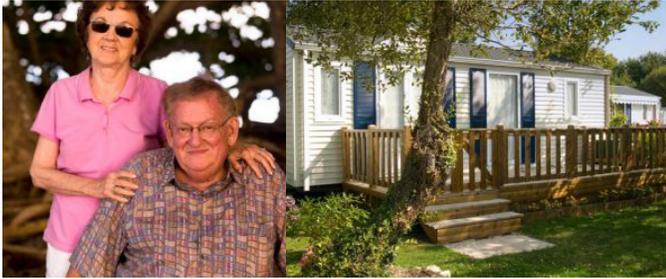
**Green Acres (39%):** Prefers single family, owner-occupied homes with significantly large lots. The median home value is approximately \$235,500.

**Southern Satellites (26.7%):** Prefers single-family homes in suburban neighborhoods, often with moderate sized yards. Homeownership is common with most living in single family homes and mobile homes. The median home value is about \$128,500.

**Down the Road (14.8%):** Typically includes married couples or single-parents, that seek affordable housing options. Approximately two-thirds of the households own homes, and about half of the households live in mobile homes or modest-sized single family homes. The median home value is approximately \$89,900.



Representative Image of the Green Acres Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri



Representative Image of the Southern Satellites Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri



Representative Image of the Down the Road Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri



Representative Image of the Comfortable Empty Nesters Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri



Representative Image of the Salt of the Earth Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri

**Comfortable Empty Nesters (10.7%):**

Usually own single family homes and may consider downsizing to smaller, low-maintenance properties. The median home value is around \$235,500.

**Salt of the Earth (8.9%):** Prefers single-family or mobile homes in small towns, often on larger lots. Homeownership is prevalent, and the median home value is \$128,500.

*Housing Preferences of Targeted Tapestry Segments*

Esri tapestry segmentation data can be a helpful tool to provide insights on what a local municipality could work toward to create an environment that is attractive to certain “targeted” tapestry segments. For example, if a township would like to attract young entrepreneurs, it could examine the lifestyle, housing, and community life characteristics that are desired by young entrepreneurs. With that information in hand, the township can establish plans and policies that work toward providing or improving the desired community amenities.

To identify potential tapestry segments that Ash Township would want to target, we have identified existing tapestry segments within the surrounding area that match certain population segments that may not be presently found in Ash Township. Described below, these segments are either candidates for Ash Township to target or they are segments that the Township’s existing population is likely to transition toward.

**Workday Drive:** Prefers single family, owner-occupied homes in newer neighborhoods. This groups median age is 37. Most households are married couples with children that enjoy family oriented activities such as visiting theme parks, biking, jogging, golfing, and gardening.

**Middleburg:** This group prefers single-family and mobile homes in semi-rural areas, typically in new subdivisions. It includes a median age of 36.1 and is mainly made up of young couples

with children. They prefer watching movies, hunting, fishing, visiting theme parks, family dining, DIY projects.

**Bright Young Professionals:** This groups median age is 33. Comprised of couples, singles, and single parents, this group often rent multi-unit homes, rowhomes, or single-family houses. They enjoy diverse activities such as sports, running, and yoga as well as social activities like going to bars and concerts.

**Retirement Communities:** With a median age of 53.9, this group lives in single family homes, independent living with apartments, and nursing facilities. This group often includes smaller household sizes, and typically enjoys fishing, watching movies, volunteering, and traveling.

*Housing and Community Amenity Strategies to Attract and Serve Targeted Segments*

The four tapestry segments described above represent a broad spectrum of ages, employment status, and household characteristics. Based on an analysis of lifestyle, housing, and community life characteristics desired by the targeted tapestry segments, Ash Township may consider policies and strategies that provide and/or enhance the following amenities:

1. Accommodate a greater variety of housing types, including duplex, triplex, townhouses, and apartments
2. Promote and embrace rental housing as an important option
3. Stabilize and enhance single-family neighborhoods with quality housing stock
4. Protect and celebrate rural and small town character
5. Invest in social and community welfare, such as cultural programs, community events, and social organizations



*Representative Image of the Workday Drive Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri*



*Representative Image of the Middleburg Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri*



*Representative Image of the Bright Young Professionals Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri*



*Representative Image of the Retirement Communities Tapestry Segment, Source: Esri*

- 6. Improve and expand recreational facilities and programs

Ash Township already features numerous attributes that could support the retention and attraction of these targeted tapestry segments. It’s proximity within metropolitan Detroit provides access to an urban center, jobs, entertainment, and cultural attractions, as well as the Detroit Metropolitan Airport. The Township’s close access to Lake Erie offers recreational opportunities like fishing, boating, and waterfront activities.

## Economic Profile

Economic characteristics comprise a major part of census data. Economic characteristics are important because they help determine a community’s viability and ability to fuel regional commercial, residential and industrial growth. 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.

## Educational Attainment

Data in **Table 13** compares the educational attainment of the residents of Ash Township, the Village of Carleton, and Monroe County between 2013 and 2023. For Ash Township, the high school graduation rate increase from 90.0% in 2013 to 92.5% in 2023, while the Bachelor’s degree

percentage declined slightly from 16.7% in 2013 to 16.6% in 2023.

Ash Township’s high school graduation rate of 92.5% in 2023 is higher than both Monroe County (91.8%) and the State of Michigan (91.9%). However, Ash Township’s Bachelor’s degree rate of 16.6% in 2023 is lower than both Monroe County (23.4%) and the State of Michigan (31.8%).

## Employment

Employment and unemployment data for the civilian labor force is presented in **Table 14**, comparing Ash Township to surrounding areas. Ash Township had a lower labor force participation rate in comparison to the Village of Carleton, Monroe County, and Michigan. This is likely due to the age of the population with a greater percentage of retirees in the Township. However, the unemployment rate for Ash Township was lower than the Village of Carleton and Michigan.

Employment by industry for Ash Township is detailed in **Table 15**. The information reflects the place of employee’s residence and not the location of employment. In 2024, the largest percentages of employed residents in Ash Township worked in manufacturing (23%). The next largest employment industries included Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities (13%), Healthcare and Social Assistance (12%), and Wholesale and Retail Trade (11%).

*Table 13. Educational Attainment Levels, 2013-2023*

Unit of Government	High School Graduate or Higher		Bachelor Degree or Higher	
	2013	2023	2013	2023
Ash Township	90.0%	92.5%	16.7%	16.6%
Village of Carleton	88.3%	88.0%	15.4%	9.7%
Monroe County	89.3%	91.8%	18%	23.4%
Michigan	88.9%	91.9%	25.9%	31.8%

Source: 2009-2013 and 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

\*Only includes the population 25 and older

*Table 14. Labor Force and Unemployment, 2013-2023*

Unit of Government	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force Participation Rate
Ash Township	2,067	1,954	113	5.5%	46.5%
Village of Carleton	1,114	1,047	67	6%	57.4%
Monroe County	75,403	71,545	3,786	5%	59.6%
Michigan	5,008,264	4,712,135	290,715	5.8%	61.4%

Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

\* Labor Force includes the population 16 and older, as well as the population employed in Armed Forces

*Table 15. Labor Force by Industry, Ash Township, 2024*

Industry	Employment	Percent
Natural Resources & Construction	223	9%
Manufacturing	575	23%
Wholesale & Retail Trade	268	11%
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	314	13%
Information & Financial	59	2%
Real Estate & Technical Services	56	4%
Administration, Support, and Waste Management	92	2%
Education Services	145	6%
Healthcare & Social Assistance	306	12%
Entertainment and Hospitality	245	10%
Other Services	148	6%
Public Administration	36	1%
Total Employment	2,464	100%

Source: 2024 Esri Civil Labor Force Profile

## Income and Poverty

**Table 16** shows median household incomes for Ash Township, Monroe County, and Michigan. The 2024 median household income in Ash Township was \$73,076, which was higher than the State, but lower than Monroe County. Ash Township’s median household income is expected to increase to \$89,034 by 2029, an increase of 21.8% from 2024.

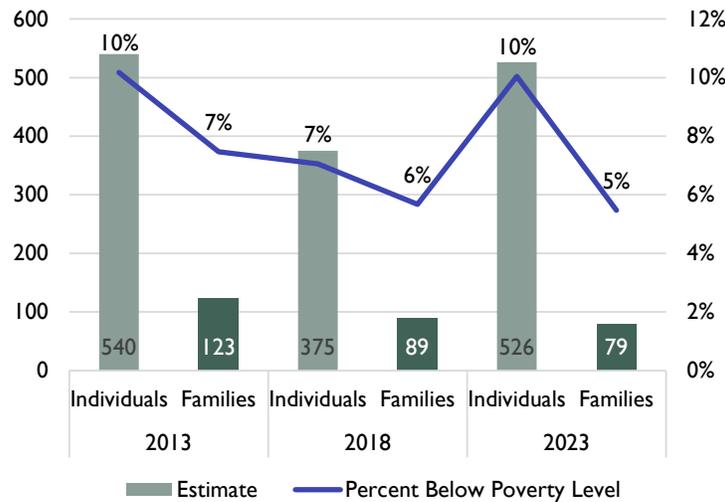
**Figure 5** shows the individuals and families living below the poverty line in Ash Township in 2013, 2018, and 2023. In 2013, 10.2% of the Township’s population lived below the federal poverty level, decreasing to 7.1% in 2018, and increasing to 10% by 2023. Though the poverty level did not decrease significantly from 2013 to 2023, the Township’s poverty level was lower than Michigan (13.1%) and Monroe County (11.1%). **Figure 2** also displays families having consistently lower poverty levels compared to the total individuals.

Table 16. Households by Income, 2024

	Ash Township		Monroe County		Michigan	
	2024	2029	2024	2029	2024	2029
Median Household Income	\$73,076	\$89,034	\$76,895	\$88,544	\$71,476	\$82,229
Average Household Income	\$102,186	\$118,377	\$100,284	\$115,143	\$99,903	\$114,987
Per Capita Income	\$42,128	\$50,111	\$40,922	\$48,085	\$40,752	\$47,744

Source: 2024 Esri Demographic and Income Profile

Figure 5. Poverty Trends, Ash Township, 2013-2023



Source: 2009-2013, 2013-2018, 2019-2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates

## 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. **Table 17** displays the SEV data for Ash Township.

According to the Michigan Department of Treasury State Tax Commission, the total SEV of real property in Ash Township in 2024 was \$476,361,100. Of this total real property tax base, residential property constituted 81.3% followed by commercial property at 8.8% percent, agricultural

property at 8.0%, and industrial property at 1.9%. Residential land use is a major component of tax base in the Township, and likely will remain as such into the future.

A ten year comparison (2014-2024) of SEV in Ash Township reveals that all land categories have increased in value (**Table 15**). The relative percentages of each category have remained relatively similar over time. However, commercial has decreased in proportion to SEV and residential has increased. Over this ten-year period, the total SEV in the community increased by 88.8%.

*Table 17. State Equalized Value (SEV), Ash Township, 2014-2024*

Category	2014		2024	
	Amount	SEV	Amount	SEV
Real Property				
Agricultural	\$24,747,100	9.6%	\$38,217,000	8.0%
Commercial	\$38,914,800	15.1%	\$42,071,600	8.8%
Industrial	\$6,535,000	2.5%	\$8,846,900	1.9%
Residential	\$187,076,200	72.7%	\$387,225,600	81.3%
Timber Cut-over	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Developmental	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Total Real	\$257,273,100	88.6%	\$476,361,100	92.9%
Total Personal	\$33,021,353	11.4%	\$36,224,206	7.1%
Total SEV:	\$290,294,453	100%	\$512,585,306	100%

Source: Michigan Department of Treasury, State Tax Commission: Taxable Valuations

## Natural Features Analysis

Natural features are assets which should be preserved and enhanced. Identifying and preserving natural features will help Ash Township retain its rural character and maintain the quality of its natural resources. Knowledge of the physical conditions and natural features within a community is also important to understand potential constraints to the development of land.

## Climate

The climate of the Ash Township area is continental, influenced by the Midwest United States and central Canada. Climate data was obtained from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Weather Service for the nearest reporting station, in the Detroit, with averages from 2020 to 2025. The average temperature in the area for the coldest month, January, is 27.7 degrees Fahrenheit; and for the warmest month, July, is 77.5 degrees. Record high and low temperatures are 96 degrees (in 2022) and -5 degrees (in 2022).

## 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

Ash Township has three creeks: Swan Creek, which flows northwest to southeast and includes Little Swan Creek and North Branch Swan Creek; Port Creek in the northeast; and Stony Creek in the southwest. These creeks are part of a drainage network, and many areas along them are prone to flooding, particularly during heavy rain, creating significant risks for development. As a result, these areas should be expected to flood and planned for accordingly.

There are no large, significant bodies of water (such as lakes or rivers) present in Ash Township. However, several ponds are present along I-275, which were created as borrow pits and used in the construction of the freeway.



Image Placeholder

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has developed flood insurance maps to determine the flood risk, as a part of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Homeowners in high-risk areas are required to purchase flood insurance to secure loans from federally regulated lenders. These high risk areas (within the 100-year flood zone) have a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage and a 1% chance of flooding any given year.

As shown on the **Natural Features Map**, the limits of the 100-year flood zones are mainly located along the three creeks within Ash Township. These areas should be considered as candidates for recreation-conservation uses due to their flood zone limitations.

The Michigan Building Code (MBC), which incorporates aspects of the International Building Code (IBC) and National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) standards, is enforced within Ash Township. Flood resistant construction standards for residential structures require that the lowest floor level of all buildings should be at or above the 100-year flood zone. Nonresidential structures may

be elevated or flood-proofed. Compliance with these standards is also required for the Township's participation in the NFIP.

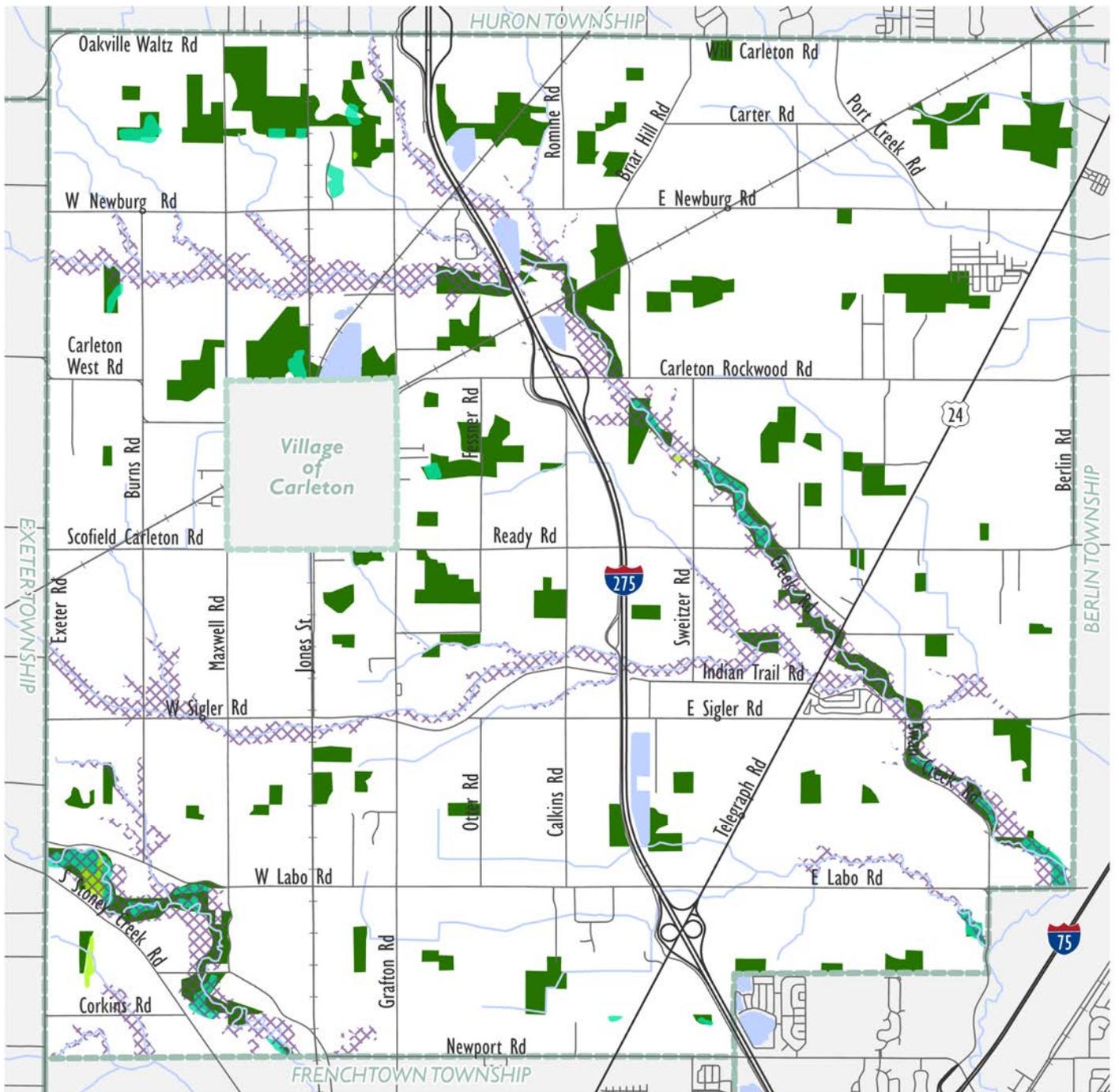
## Wetlands and Woodlands

Often overlooked, wetlands are a vital natural resource that provide essential benefits including flood control, water filtration, habitat, and carbon storage. They also enhance the landscape's beauty and support recreational activities.

Through the years, over 50% of Michigan's original wetlands have been destroyed by development and agricultural activities. Therefore, the State of Michigan enacted Part 303, Wetlands Protection, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, Public Act 451 of 1994 to protect the remaining wetlands. The wetland act authorizes the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), to preserve certain wetland areas. EGLE may require permits before altering regulated wetlands and may prohibit development in some locations.

EGLE defines and regulates wetlands as "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, and is commonly referred to as a bog, swamp, or marsh." EGLE reserves the right to regulate wetlands if they are any of the following:

- Connected to or is within 1,000 feet of one of the Great Lakes or Lake St. Clair
- Connected to or is within 500 feet of an inland lake, pond, river, or stream
- Not connected to one of the Great Lakes, or an inland lake, pond, stream, or river, but are more than 5 acres in size
- A wetland not meeting the above criteria, but EGLE has determined that the wetland is essential to the preservation of the state's natural resources and has notified the property owner.



# Natural Features

## Base Features:

- Freeways/ State Highways
- Roads
- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries

## Environmental Features:

- 100-year Floodplain
- Forested Wetland
- Scrub-Shrub Wetland
- Woodlands

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Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 National Wetlands Inventory, 2009;  
 Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 2009;  
 FEMA Flood Data, 2008; Ash Township, 2020



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Any wetlands in the Township not meeting the criteria for wetlands as defined by EGLE can be protected by local control techniques. Such techniques include a local wetland ordinance, policies in this Master Plan directing incompatible land uses away from wetlands, and specific wetlands provisions in the Zoning Ordinance.

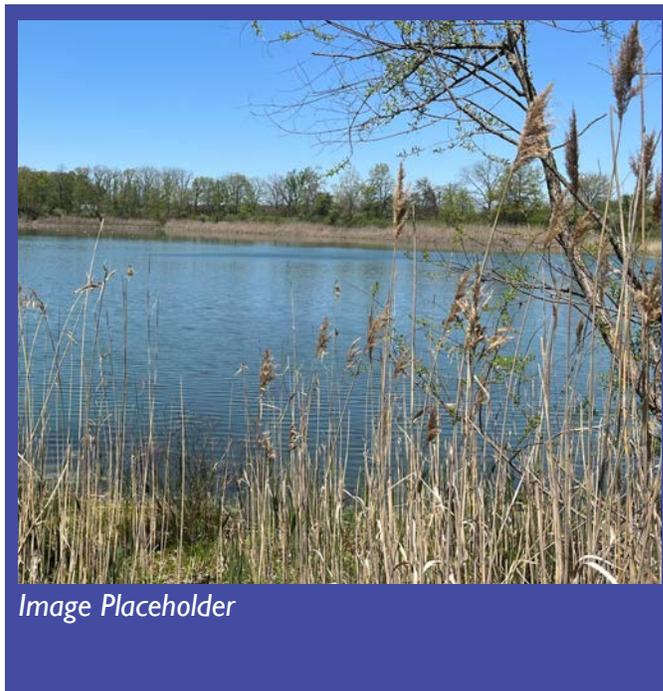
The **Natural Features Map** highlights major areas of wetlands within the Township. Generally, these are in low lying areas along creeks and drains. The map delineates significant wetlands, but not necessarily all the wetlands are regulated under the State Wetland Act. Soil Surveys, EGLE maps, or the U.S, Interior Fish and Wildlife Maps can be referenced to investigate whether specific wetlands are protected by the Michigan Wetlands Protection Act.

### *Wetland Mitigation Banks*

Within recent years, several wetland mitigation banks have been proposed and approved by Ash Township. These wetland mitigation banks are typically found on larger properties within the rural areas of the Township and on land that may not be as productive for farming.

According to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), wetland mitigation is the replacement of wetland functions through the creation or restoration of wetlands. Mitigation is required as a condition of many permits issued under state and federal law. The goal of wetland mitigation is to replace wetland functions which provide public benefits, such as flood storage, water quality protection, fish and wildlife habitat, and groundwater recharge throughout the watershed.

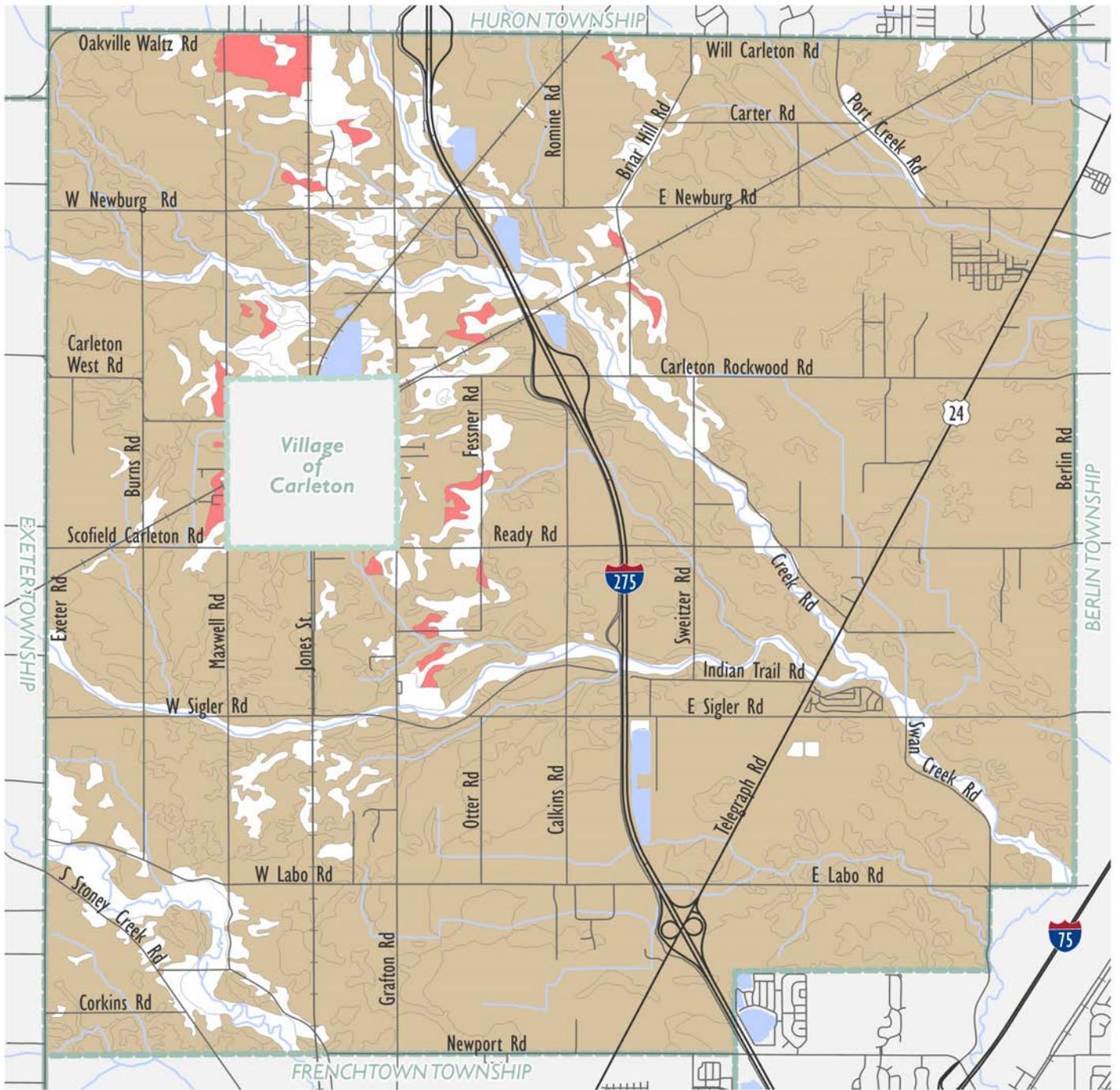
Wetland mitigation banking can facilitate compliance with permit requirements by providing a mechanism for the establishment of new wetland areas, or “banks” in advance of anticipated losses (typically through land development). Wetlands established in a mitigation bank provide “credits”



*Image Placeholder*

which can be sold to permit applicants, or used by the bank sponsor to meet wetland permit conditions (wetland mitigation, which usually must take place within the same watershed as where the wetland loss occurred). In this instance, the proposed project would be able to sell credits to off-set wetlands impacts within the Huron River watershed. A mitigation bank is typically used to offset wetland losses associated with several permits, rather than a single project.

EGLE maintains a registry of mitigation bank credits to inform the public as to where credits have been established and where they are available for sale. The amount of “credits” per bank is equivalent to the number of acres within the wetland mitigation area. Once all credits are sold or used, the wetlands in the bank must be maintained in perpetuity. Long-term management and protection of the wetlands in the bank is the legal responsibility of the mitigation bank sponsor, and a long-term management plan must be developed and approved before the bank is established.



# Prime Agricultural Land

## Base Features:

- Freeways/ State Highways
- Roads
- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries

## Farmland Class:

- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Local Importance
- Not Prime Farmland

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Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 Soil Survey Geographic Database, 2005;



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The following is an example of how wetland mitigation banks work:

Developer A wants to build a new development on Property A in a nearby township, which will require the filling of wetlands on the property. This requires a wetland permit from the EGLE. A condition of the wetland permit is wetland mitigation. However, Developer A does not have enough space on Property A to fulfill the permit condition of creating new wetlands. To offset the loss of wetlands at her development, Developer A may find a site within the same watershed to build new wetlands. Developer B owns land in Ash Township (in this case, the proposed site) upon which he has created a new wetland to be used as a wetland mitigation bank as allowed under State law. Developer B sells to Developer A “credits” from his wetland bank for the fulfillment of Developer A’s wetland permit condition.

## Soils

Ash Township soils are mainly silty clay loam and highly productive for agriculture. Most of the land in the township is classified as prime farmland based on the soil layers.

The typical bedrock depth in Ash Township is about 20 feet, with the shallowest areas, primarily in the northwest, ranging from 5 to 10 feet deep. Static water levels are usually found at about 20 feet.

Overall, Ash Township is well-suited for agricultural and urban development, provided that there is a balance between soil conservation and responsibly planned development.

### *Prime Farmland*

Prime farmland within Ash Township is shown on the **Prime Agricultural Land Map**. As indicated, a large percentage of the Township’s land is classified as prime farmland. The farmlands and open spaces in Ash Township are valuable natural

features that contribute to the rural character highly valued by residents.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, prime farmland soils are best suited for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. These soils have favorable properties for sustained high crop yields, provided they are managed with acceptable farming methods. Adequate moisture and a sufficiently long growing season are essential.

Prime farmland soils may currently be used as cropland, pasture, or woodland. They typically receive reliable moisture from precipitation or irrigation, and the temperature and growing season are favorable. These soils have acceptable levels of acidity or alkalinity, few rocks, and good permeability for water and air. They are not overly erodible, waterlogged, or prone to frequent flooding, with slopes generally ranging from 0-6%. Soils with limitations can qualify as prime farmland if these issues are addressed through measures like drainage or irrigation. On-site evaluation is necessary to assess corrective actions.



Image Placeholder

## Existing Land Use Analysis

Knowledge of existing land development furnishes the basic information by which decisions can be made concerning proposals for future residential, commercial, industrial, and public land use activities.

### Methodology

A computer-generated base map for the Township was first created using digital information from the Michigan GIS Open Data portal and other online data sources. The base features include the Township boundary line, streets, and water bodies. Property boundary line data was obtained from Monroe County. In 2025, Wade Trim staff conducted a parcel-by-parcel analysis of the Township using satellite imagery.

### Land Use Analysis

Each property in the Township was identified as one of 14 existing land use categories. The **Existing Land Use Map** depicts the geographic distribution of these land use classifications. Ash Township encompasses approximately 21,645 acres, or about 34 square miles in area. **Table 18** outlines the existing land uses found within the Township.

#### *Agricultural/Rural Residential*

This classification is assigned to lands being actively cultivated for agricultural purposes. It also includes farm buildings and agriculturally-related buildings and activities such as farmstands and greenhouses. This classification also includes farmsteads and single family detached dwellings on very large lots. Agricultural and rural residential properties are found throughout Ash Township.

This classification comprises 10,638.7 acres or 49.2% of total land area of Ash Township.

*Table 18. Existing Land Use, Ash Township, 2025*

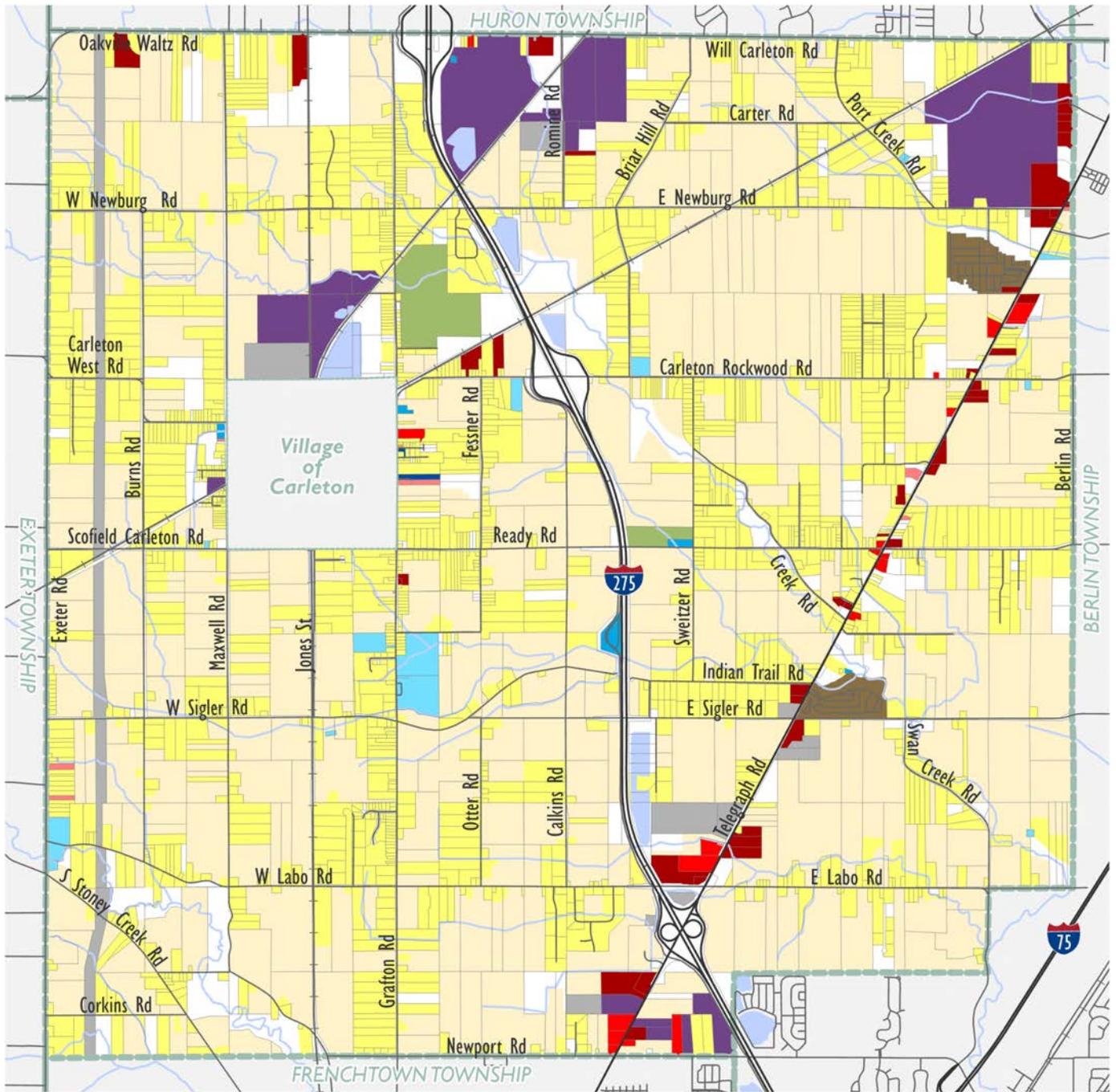
Land Use Type	Acres	Percentage
Agricultural / Rural Residential	10,638.7	49.2%
Single Family Residential	6,420.2	29.7%
Multiple Family Residential	2.0	<0.1%
Manufactured Home Park	146.3	0.7%
Neighborhood Commercial	17.4	0.1%
General Commercial	80.6	0.4%
Heavy Commercial	261.9	1.2%
Office	5.9	<0.1%
Industrial	859.3	4.0%
Public Facilities	156.9	0.7%
Recreational	161.7	0.7%
Public Utilities	448.8	2.1%
Vacant / Open Space	2,444.8	11.3%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>21,644.5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Wade Trim Analysis, April 2025

#### *Single-Family Residential*

This category includes structures used as a permanent dwelling, and accessory structures, such as garages, that are related to these units. This category is exclusively comprised of single-family detached dwelling units. Many home sites are distributed throughout Ash Township within subdivisions and site 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.

This classification comprises 6,420.2 acres or 29.7% of total land area of Ash Township.



# Existing Land Use

## Base Features:

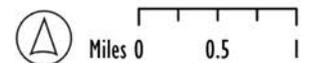
- Freeways/ State Highways
- Roads
- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Parcel Lines
- Municipal Boundaries

## Land Use:

- Agricultural/ Rural Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Manufactured Home Park
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial
- Heavy Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Public Facilities
- Recreational
- Public Utilities
- Vacant/Open Space

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Source: Monroe County GIS, 2019;  
 Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 Ash Township, 2020;  
 Wade Trim Analysis, 2025



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### *Multiple Family Residential*

Multiple family residential use includes any residential properties that have two or more units. These include duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes and traditional apartments, along with their related accessory buildings such as garages. Presently, only one multi-unit apartment building is located in Ash Township, along Grafton Road just east of the Village. Although the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey indicates that Ash Township contains 22 multiple family units (data from 2023), this figure may not be accurate, as there are no other known multiple family properties in the Township.

This classification comprises 2.0 acres or less than 0.1% of total land area of Ash Township.

### *Manufactured Home Park*

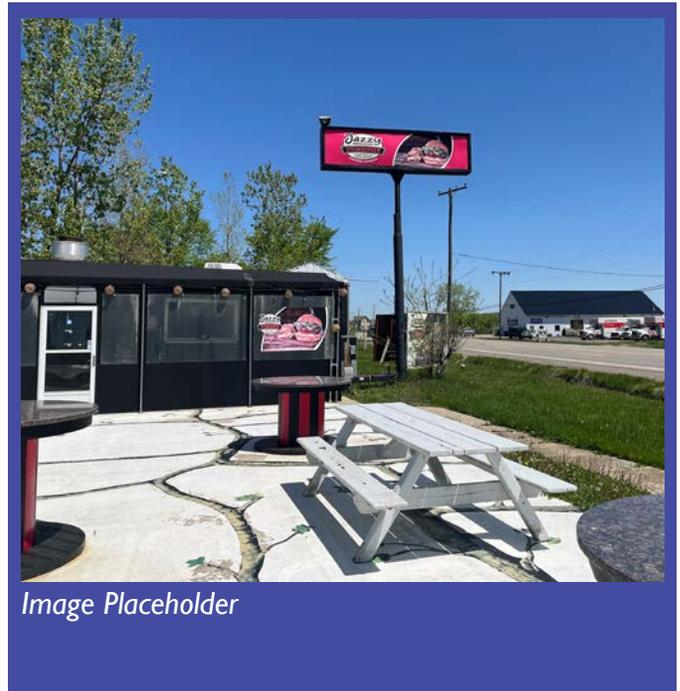
Areas containing groups of mobile or manufactured homes, and their related service and recreational areas, are designated in this category. Presently, two manufactured home communities are found in Ash Township - The Orchards and Flat Rock Village - both of which are located along Telegraph Road.

This classification comprises 146.3 acres or 0.7% of total land area of Ash Township.

### *Neighborhood Commercial*

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. Neighborhood commercial uses within Ash Township are scattered along Grafton Road and Telegraph Road.

This classification comprises 17.4 acres or 0.1% of total land area of Ash Township.



### *General Commercial*

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. General commercial uses within Ash Township are primarily found along Telegraph Road.

This classification comprises 80.6 acres or 0.4% of total land area of Ash Township.

### *Heavy Commercial*

This land use category includes the land area occupied by general commercial users that are highway-oriented and often involve outdoor storage of merchandise or materials. Contractors businesses, vehicle repair, outdoor storage, and uses which are heavy equipment related are included in this category. Heavy commercial uses within Ash Township are primarily found along Telegraph Road.

This classification comprises 261.9 acres or 1.2% of total land area of Ash Township.

### *Office*

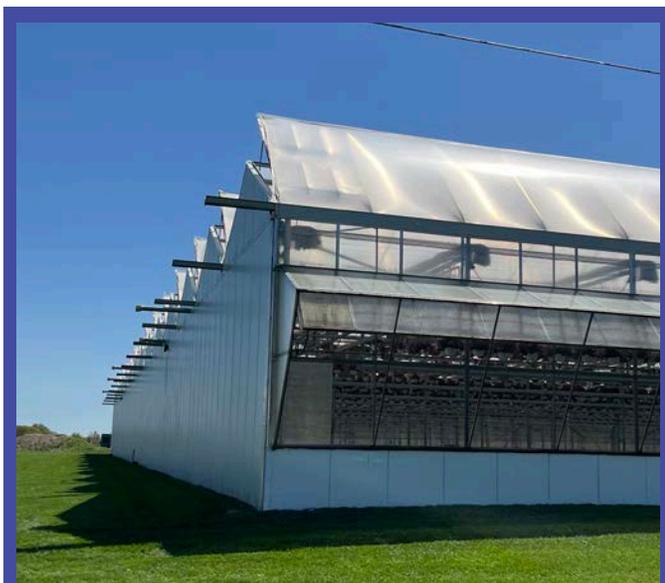
Office uses include financial institutions, medical, and professional service establishments. Only two properties in Ash Township feature office uses, both of which are located along Grafton Road near the Village.

This classification comprises 5.9 acres or less than 0.1% of total land area of Ash Township.

### *Industrial*

This category includes land areas occupied by both light and heavy industrial facilities. Uses in this category include manufacturing facilities, warehouses, trucking operations, and leasing facilities. Ash Township features several large industrial facilities, including the Manheim Detroit auto auction on Will Carleton Road, Guardian Industries on Will Carleton Road, and a Bosch automotive testing facility on Newburg Road.

This classification comprises 859.3 acres or 4.0% of total land area of Ash Township.



*Image Placeholder*

### *Public Facilities*

This category was established to embrace all developed or undeveloped lands owned by various governmental agencies or other public entities. This classification also describes those areas developed for such uses as public schools, parochial schools, churches, fraternal organizations and similar institutional uses. Public facilities within Ash Township include the Ash Township Hall, Airport High School, Wagar Junior High School, Carleton United Methodist Church, St Patrick Church and School, and a VFW Post.

This classification comprises 456.9 acres or 0.7% of total land area of Ash Township.

### *Recreational*

This category includes all private and publicly owned park and recreation properties and facilities. Included in this category are the Ash Township Park and the Carleton Glen Golf Course.

This classification comprises 161.7 acres or 0.7% of total land area of Ash Township.

### *Public Utilities*

This category was established to embrace all developed or undeveloped lands owned by various governmental agencies for the purpose of providing utilities or other essential services. Public utility properties within Ash Township include electric transmission corridors, gas transmission corridors, radio antenna arrays, an MDOT public works garage, and a Monroe County Road Commission public works garage.

This classification comprises 448.8 acres or 2.1% of total land area of Ash Township.

## *Vacant/Open Space*

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

This classification comprises 2,444.8 acres or 11.3% of total land area of Ash Township.

- Ann Arbor – 40 miles
- Flint – 92 miles
- Lansing – 104 miles
- Chicago – 280 miles

Coordination between Ash Township and county, regional, and state transportation agencies is extremely important in order to ensure and enhance inter-regional connections. Additionally, regional planning for transportation may be beneficial for future regional transportation investments.

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## Transportation Assessment

Mobility and accessibility are important components of the wellbeing of a community. The traffic circulation system is, in a large sense, the framework upon which a community is built. This system must support the collective mobility of community members and visitors of Ash Township. The system must also be fully coordinated with the other elements of the Master Plan, particularly future land use, so as to complement the collective goals, objectives, and policies of the plan, and to ensure that residents can access needed services and employment opportunities.

### Regional Highway Network

The residents of Ash Township have good vehicular access to the region and the state through Interstates, U.S. Highways, and County primary roads. Running through the center of the Township is Interstate I-275, while Telegraph Road (U.S. 24) runs through the eastern portion of the Township.

These highways provide easy access to other communities in the region such as Flat Rock, Monroe, Romulus, and Detroit. They also provide access to the major metropolitan areas of the state as well as the larger region. Major cities located within easy driving distance of the Township include:

- Toledo – 33 miles
- Detroit – 36 miles

### Local Transportation Network

The **Transportation Network Map** shows the current transportation network of Ash Township. All roads in the Township are divided into six categories:

- Interstate (Principal Arterial)
- Other Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local or Private Road

The basic transportation hierarchy system is comprised of arterials, collectors, and local roads. These are further described below:

- Arterial roads, which are usually used for longer trips and at higher speeds;
- Collector roads, which connect and move traffic between the fast arterials and the slower 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.



# Transportation Network

## Base Features:

- I-275 Bicycle Path
- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries

## Functional Class:

- Interstate (Principal Arterial)
- Other Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local or Private Road

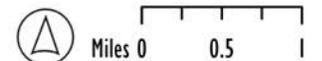
## Traffic Counts:

- 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

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Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 SEMCOG AADT Volume Counts, 2024  
 Ash Township, 2020



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## Arterial Routes

Two principal arterial routes move traffic through Ash Township. This includes I-275, an interstate highway connecting Monroe County and the Toledo area with the western Detroit suburbs, and Telegraph Road (U.S. 24), connecting Toledo to the south with the Detroit metro area to the north.

Minor arterial routes include Oakville Waltz Road (west of I-275) and Will Carleton Road (east of I-275), which runs along the Township's norther 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).

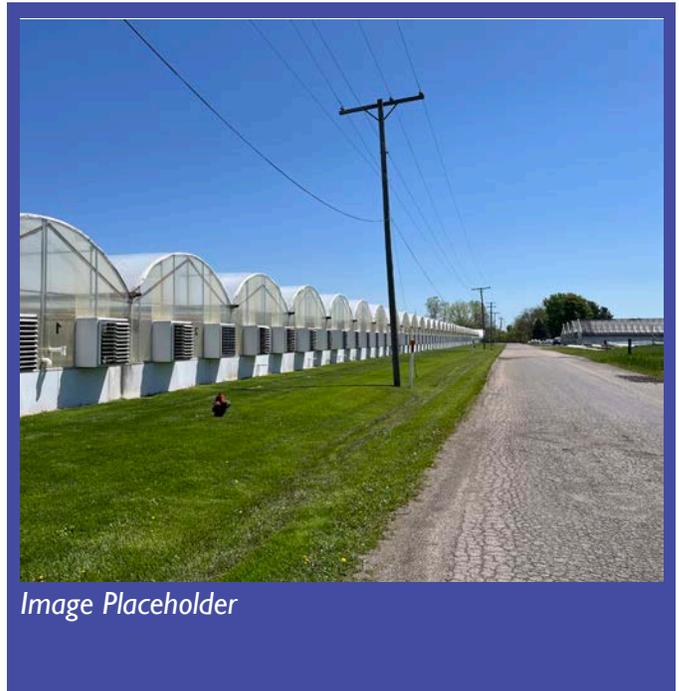
## Collector Routes

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 collector routes include Exeter Road (south of Carleton West); S. Stony 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.

## Local Routes

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



## Traffic Volumes

The **Transportation Network Map** 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, and pedestrian conflicts.

Traffic volumes are documented as annual average daily traffic (AADT). The roads accommodating the highest traffic volumes (12,500 ADT or higher) in Ash Township are I-275; Telegraph Road; and Will Carleton Road, east of the I-275 interchange.

Road segments featuring moderate traffic volumes of between 7,500 and 9,999 ADT include: the portion of Will Carleton Road west of the Maxwell Road intersection; various points of Grafton Road; and various points of Telegraph Road.

Roads with volumes between 5,000 and 7,499 ADT include: Oakville Waltz Road and Newport Road east of Telegraph Road.

Collector roads with lower traffic volumes of between 2,500 and 4,999 ADT include: Carleton Rockwood Road; and Grafton Road. Finally, collector roads with the lowest traffic volumes of less than 2,500 ADT include: Labo Road and Sigler Road.

## Non-Motorized Transportation

Non-motorized transportation routes, including shared use trails, safety paths, and sidewalks, are generally non-existent in Ash Township. Non-motorized transportation infrastructure in Ash Township is generally limited to paved or gravel shoulders along certain roadways. However, the majority of the roads in Ash Township are local, narrow roads with little to no shoulder.

When Interstate 275 was first built within Ash Township, it included a bike trail along its west side. Although the I-275 Trail has been maintained (and recently improved) along I-275 within Wayne and Oakland Counties, the portion of the I-275 Trail within Monroe County has essentially been “decommissioned.”

## Road Conditions

The **Road Conditions Map** differentiates between hard surfaced roads (concrete, asphalt or seal coat) and gravel surfaced roads. Of the approximately 116 miles of road within Ash Township (including I-275), the majority (approximately 85 miles) feature hard surfacing. Rural county roads primarily account for the 31 miles of gravel roads in the Township. Some of these rural gravel road segments include portions of Exeter Road, Burns Road, Maxwell Road, Fessner Road, Otter Road, Calkins Road, Sweitzer Road, Creek Road, Port Creek Road, Carter Road and Briar Hill Road.

The **Road Conditions Map** also highlights the current surface condition of the primary roads within Ash Township. This road surface condition data is made available by SEMCOG and is current as of 2024. SEMCOG classifies the primary roads as in good, fair, or poor condition. Within Ash Township, only small segments of Oakville Waltz Road, Will Carleton Road, Grafton Road, and Sigler Road are in good condition. The majority of the primary roads in Ash Township are in fair condition. Poor condition roads include segments of Grafton Road, Oakville Waltz Road, and Carleton Rockwood Road.

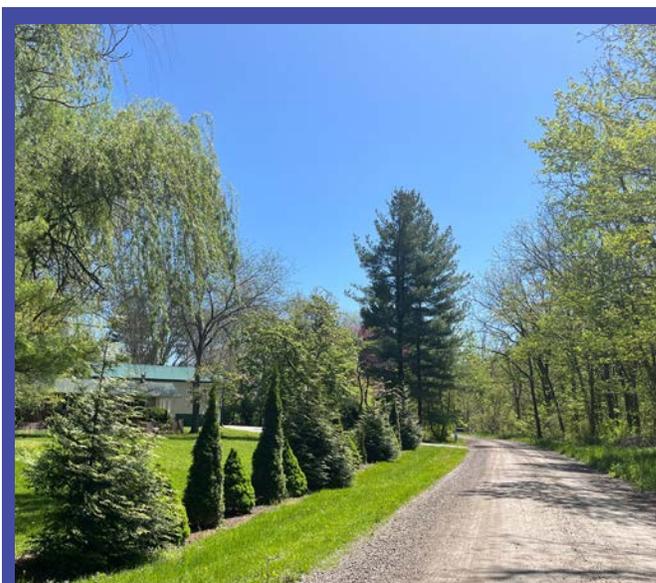


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# Road Condition

### Base Features:

- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries

### Road Surface Conditions:

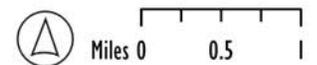
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Not Rated

### Surface Type:

- Hard Surface (Concrete, Asphalt, Seal Coat)
- Gravel Surface

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Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 SEMCOG Pavement Condition, 2024  
 Ash Township, 2025



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## Community Services and Facilities 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.

The **Utilities Map** highlights the location of key community service infrastructure within Ash Township.

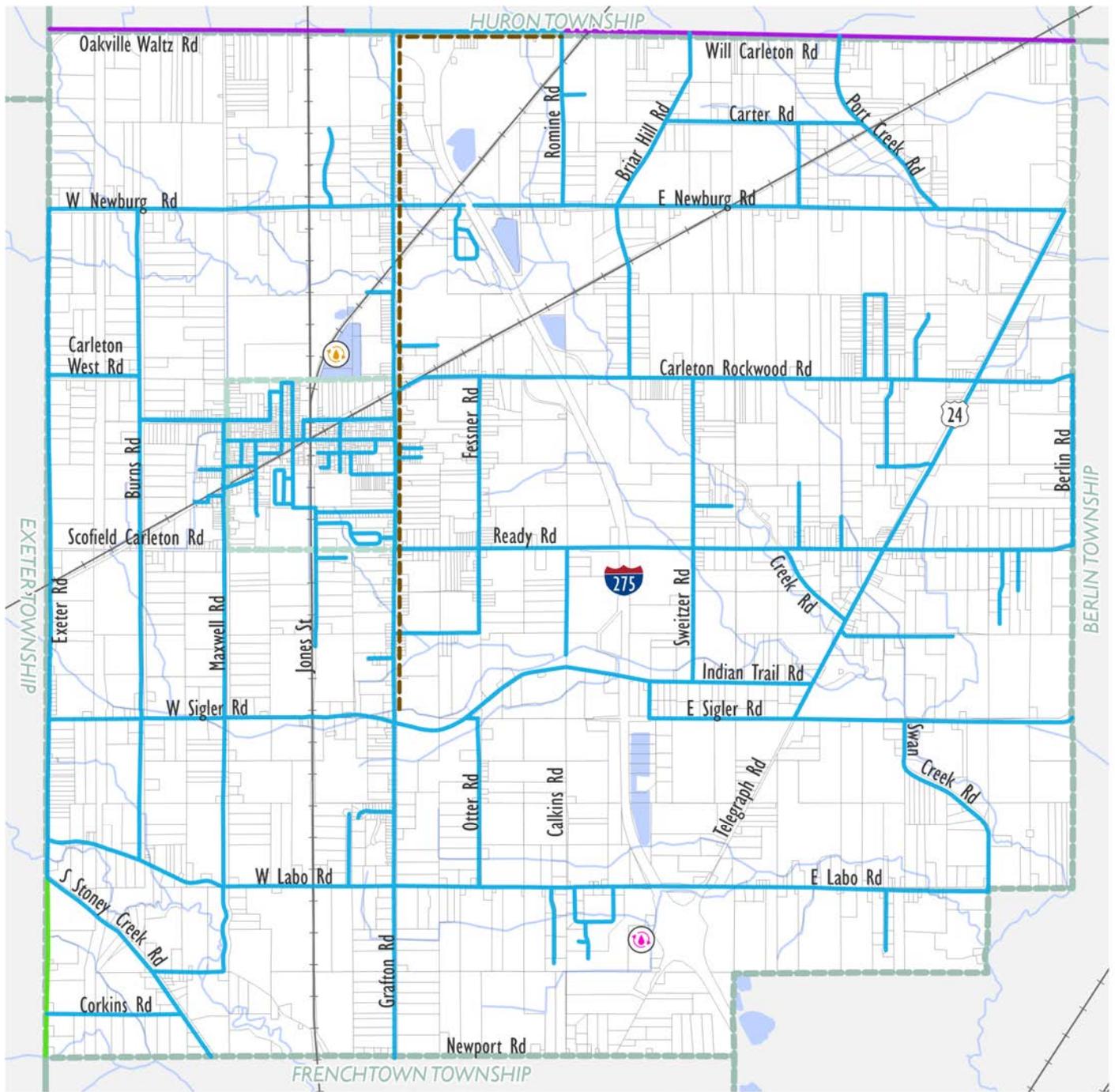
### Public Water Service

Public water within Ash Township is available through the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA) regional water system. Ash Township has responsibility for distribution of this water throughout the Township through a network of more than 84 miles of water mains, which Ash Township owns and maintains. This includes the water main network within the Village of Carleton. Along the Township's northern border, some water main segments are owned and maintained by Huron Township. Similarly, Exeter Township owns and maintains segments of water main along the western border. As shown on the **Utilities Map**, public water lines are provided throughout the Township with most roads and properties served. Those properties without access to public water must rely on private drinking water wells.

### Public Sewer Service

The **Utilities Map** illustrates the current extent of public sewer service in Ash Township. Development potential within Ash Township is considerably 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 in Ash Township 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.

Being that the public sewer system is operated by the Village of Carleton, Ash Township does not have jurisdiction over sewer system extensions and upgrades. Given this, along with current Village sewer system capacity limitations, it is unlikely that public sewer service will be extended any further into Ash Township during the horizon of this Master Plan.



# Utilities

## Base Features:

- Railroads
- Creeks and Streams
- Water Bodies
- Parcel Lines
- Municipal Boundaries

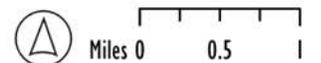
## Existing Utility Network:

- Village of Carleton Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Private Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Water Lines Owned/Maintained by Ash Twp
- Water Lines Owned/Maintained by Exeter Twp
- Water Lines Owned/Maintained by Huron Twp
- Sewer Lines Owned/Maintained by Village of Carleton

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Source: Monroe County GIS, 2019;  
 Michigan Geographic Data Library;  
 Ash Township, 2025



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