



WASHINGTON CHARTER TOWNSHIP 2023 MASTER PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Washington Charter Township | 57900 Van Dyke, Washington, MI 48094 | (586) 786-0010



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Master Plans and the Planning Process

A Master Plan is a guiding document future development of a community. It addresses future land uses, community development, and other community features in a coordinated fashion, and it includes a clearly stated vision supported by goals and objectives, and an implementation plan with specific action items that will work toward that vision. If followed carefully, the Master Plan will have a lasting impact on the built and natural environment.

The Washington Township Planning Commission commenced the Master Plan process in October, 2021, with development of the plan beginning in earnest in late spring, 2022. Through the summer and fall of 2022, the Township held a series of public workshops where various aspects of development were discussed, and the public was asked to provide its feedback.

In 2023, a similar workshop was held to discuss updates to the Future Land Use Map, and the Planning Commission held a series of meetings to discuss the plan's content, culminating in a public workshop in August to unveil the full plan.

The Master Plan looks ahead 20 years and plans for projected growth and other change in that timeframe, with reviews and any necessary updates occurring every five years to maintain consistency with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008.

Master Plan Outline

1. What Is a Master Plan?
2. History and Regional Setting
3. Demographics
4. Existing Land Use
5. Public Engagement Summary
6. Vision Statement
7. Goals & Objectives
8. Community Facilities Plan
9. Housing Plan
10. Commercial, Office & Industrial Areas Plan
11. Village Center
12. Transportation Plan: Complete Streets, Thoroughfare Plan
13. Future Land Use Plan and Map
14. Implementation Plan, including Zoning Plan



The crowd from one of 2022's well-attended public workshops.

A Growing Township Looks to the Future While Keeping A Foot in the Past

Successful planning requires that we understand where we've been, where we are, and where we're likely to be in the future. Managing growth in a thoughtful way will be key to securing the Township's future as a desirable place to live.

Where Washington Stands Today

Development in Macomb County has generally advanced northward along two primary corridors: The Gratiot/I-94 corridor, and M-53. Washington Township is located in the M-53 corridor, and as Shelby Township to the south becomes ever more developed, Washington has begun to feel increasing development pressure. This pressure is unlikely to abate in the coming decades.

Washington now has over 26,200 residents, a 12.7% increase from 2010—in the preceding decade, Washington grew at almost twice the rate of its southern neighbor. At the same time, the Township's population has become more demographically diverse, and the Township now also has one of the highest percentages of households with children in the area.

Washington is also significantly more affluent than Michigan as a whole, with real median household income rising more than 3 percent from 2010 to 2020 and per capita incomes have risen more than 10 percent. Educational attainment has risen along with incomes, with more residents identifying as college graduates.

Even as the Township has attracted families with children, the population of the Township overall is projected to grow older between 2023 and 2045. Growth is anticipated to be robust over that time period, with a population in 2045 nearly 50 percent higher than today.

The challenge for Washington Township will be to absorb new growth in a way that does not erase the identity of the existing community.

Major Themes of Public Input

1. Preserving the Township's natural environment and rural character to the extent possible is important to many residents, who understand that the township is growing and that, in a sense, it is the current frontier for growth in the M-53 corridor. Most input received called for balancing that growth with consideration for historical resources, terrain, habitat, and agriculture.
2. Traffic is a major concern. Most major roads in the Township are considered by respondents to be at least somewhat dangerous, either due to high speeds, congestion, or other factors. As development continues, finding ways to mitigate vehicle volumes and conflicts, both with other vehicles and other road users (including wildlife) will be an important consideration.
3. Most residents would like to see greater availability of goods and services, entertainment, and other commerce in the Township, but would like it to be concentrated in corridors that already have a relatively high level of development, rather than spreading away from Van Dyke, M-53, and 26 Mile Rd.
4. New development should be in harmony with existing development. For some residents, this means concentrating higher intensity development in specific areas, away from lower-density development, while for others, this means concentrating on transitions between uses that will minimize impacts of new development.
5. The development of a village center remains a worthy goal, but it must consider the external impacts of one area of the Township becoming much more built up than the rest. A central organizing authority for the village center, such as a DDA, may be necessary to guide its development as a cohesive district.

Vision Statement

As Washington Township continues to grow, new development will occur in a planned manner that respects the history, natural environment, and rural character of the community and preserves agricultural uses even as it acknowledges the need for progress. Washington Township's future will be built on a strong, diverse economy, housing opportunities that serve an array of needs, a high quality of life, and well-managed growth.

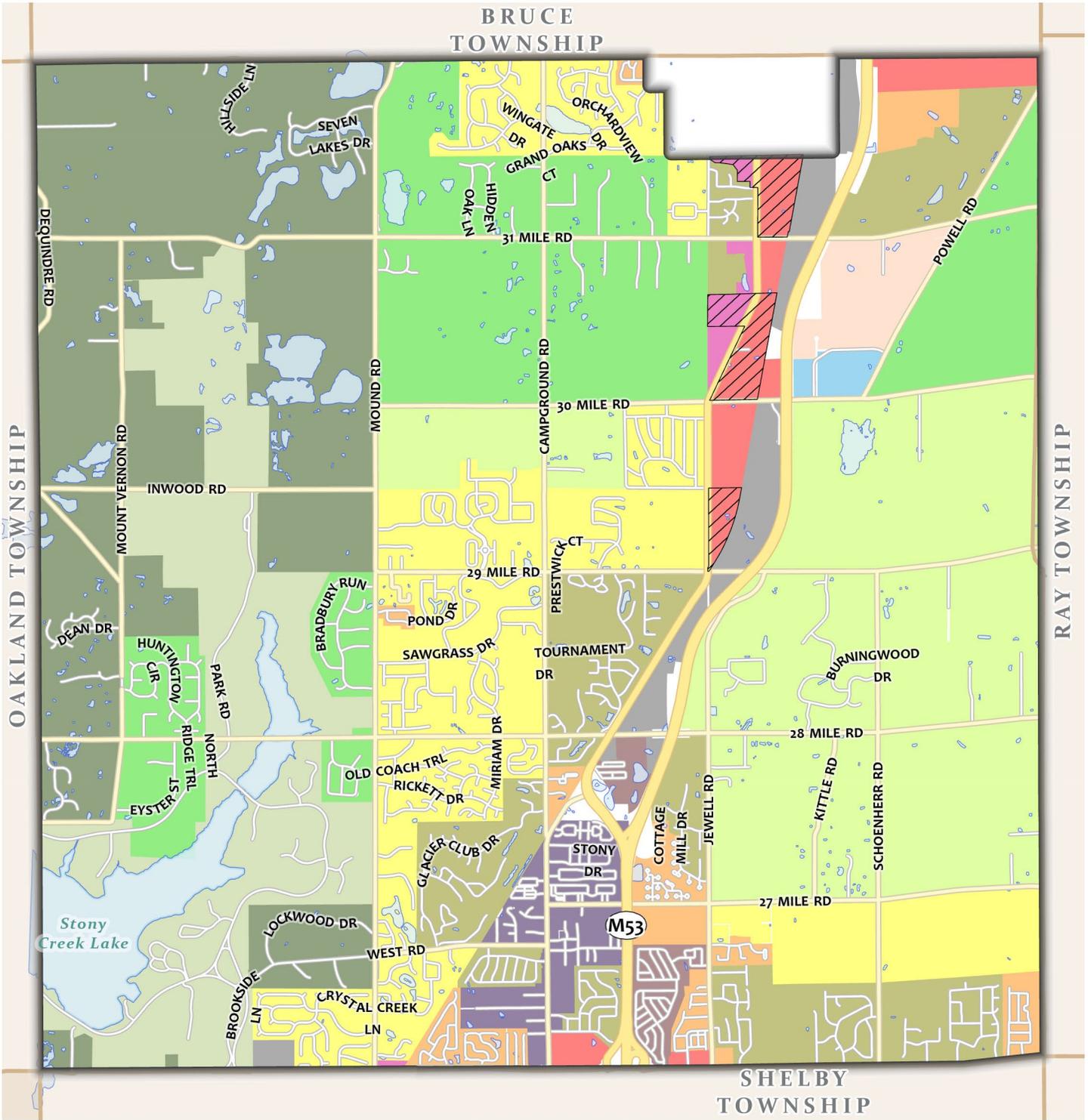
Goals and Objectives of the Master Plan

1. **Economic Development.** The Township will work to make itself attractive to businesses with the potential to provide professional employment opportunities, and plan to provide land for their facilities.
2. **Access to Services.** The Township will ensure that land is available for commercial development that provides services to residents in appropriate locations.
3. **Housing.** The Township will provide and permit housing that serves a variety of needs, facilitates aging in place, and offers a high level of quality and aesthetic appeal.
4. **Environmental Quality.** New development and redevelopment, when it occurs, will respect the natural environment and preserve its important features to the maximum extent possible.
5. **Transportation.** The Township's road and pathway system will provide safe and efficient circulation for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Road design will respect the context of the area surrounding the road.
6. **Community Facilities and Services.** The Township will provide high-quality facilities and services that meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.
7. **Unique Places.** The Township will recognize its unique areas and sites, including its historical, agricultural, natural, and principal commercial or mixed use areas and support their future development in accordance with each of their needs and characters.
8. **Harmonious Development.** Where more intense uses are developed close to less intense uses, screening, setbacks, and other measures will be used to ensure that potential negative impacts are minimized.

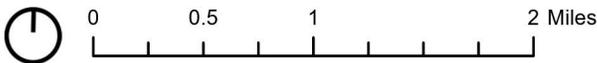


The plan recognizes the township's historical character and puts forth strategies to manage future development in a way that preserves some of the natural landscape and does not assume that the same level of development is appropriate for all locations in the Township.

BRUCE
TOWNSHIP



Data Source: Landuse: Washington Township. Roads: Macomb County. Water Features: SEMCOG 2022. Map Exported: August 23, 2023. ©2023 Giffels Webster.



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|----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Rural And Estate | Manufactured Housing Community | Industrial/Research/Technology |
| Large Lot | Community Wide Commercial | Recreational |
| Low Density | Local Commercial | Recreation/Support |
| Suburban Residential | Washington Village | Multi-Family Overlay |
| Moderate Density | Industrial | |
| Multiple-Family | | |



FUTURE LAND USE
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP



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