

Master Plan Review

VILLAGE OF MILFORD



December 2022

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Purpose of a Master Plan

This Master Plan Review represents an opportunity to affirm and update the course for new development and redevelopment in the Village of Milford as identified and described in the 2009 Master Plan. Milford's 2009 Plan was a joint Master Plan with Milford Township and contains the mutual vision, goals, objectives, and strategies of both communities. The Master Plan is intended to guide future decision-making processes related to land use and development in the Village and Township, as well as overall community quality of life.

A Master Plan addresses future land uses and community development, and other community features in a coordinated fashion. It portrays a clear statement of community goals and objectives, establishes a vision of the future, and includes plans to achieve the vision. If followed carefully, the Master Plan will have a lasting impact on the built and natural environment. Decisions made when the plan is developed will likely be implemented over short-term, medium-term, and long-term timelines as specified in the Implementation Plan.

The Master Plan is long-range in its view and is intended to guide development in the Village over a period of 10 to 20 years, with reviews and any necessary updates occurring every five years to maintain consistency with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act of 2008. The information and concepts presented in the Master Plan are used to guide local decisions on public and private uses of land and the provision of public facilities and services. A sound Master Plan promotes a land use pattern that reflects a community's goals. It establishes long-range general policies in a coordinated and unified manner, which can be continually referred to in decision-making.

Lastly, the Master Plan aims to provide a complete picture of the historic and ongoing land use and development-related issues facing the Village. This Master Plan Review is intended to provide the Planning Commission and Village Council with an understanding of what changes have occurred since the last Master Plan in 2009. The findings may be used to develop a scope of work for an update to the Master Plan, as appropriate.

Within each section, the following guides may be included: "Questions to Consider" and "Opportunities for an Update."

Questions to Consider

- Questions for the Planning Commission to consider while reading the text as to whether the findings suggest an update to the 2009 Master Plan is required.

Opportunities for an Update

At the end of each section are "Opportunities for an Update," which offer some suggestions to guide the Planning Commission with an update, if that is their course of action.

General Considerations and Plan Structure

- The Village should consider whether the topic areas in the 2009 Master Plan cover everything they would like to include in the plan or if there are topic areas they would like to expand or consolidate. The 2009 Master Plan covers topics by type of analysis, but a simple, broad chapter title, will help the reader understand exactly what is included in each section.
- The previous Master Plan was a joint Master Plan with Milford Township. Although the Village and Township have distinct characteristics that require different planning treatments, it is important to consider that many residents of the Township work, shop, go to school, and enjoy recreation within the Village limits. The shared Master Plan between communities was intended to establish a shared vision for projects that require regional collaboration and cooperation. As Milford Township moves towards a concurrent Master Plan update, both communities should consider whether shared goals still exist and if there are opportunities to continue working together on the updated plans.
- The [Building Regulating Plan](#) should be consolidated into other sections of the plan. The summary of goals by neighborhood and a discussion of opportunity sites should be in the Zoning Plan, as this information helps to inform the Future Land Use plan. Guidance on design/placement standards should be included in the implementation section of the plan.
- The green infrastructure plan should be consolidated into the implementation section of the plan.
- The section [Strategies to Effectuate Change](#) should be more comprehensively developed into an implementation plan that clearly identifies who leads action strategies. Refining this section will promote the efficacy of the plan's implementation and enable the Village to monitor its progress.



Existing Conditions

This chapter includes an update to demographics from 2015, along with several maps that illustrate land use, impervious surface coverage and natural features that impact, or are impacted by, development.

Demographics

Understanding the demographics of a community is vital to sound policy making and planning. Demographics inform the trends in population, aging, migration, local economies, and much more. Master Plans rely on demographic analysis to better prepare for the issues and demands facing a community in the present and the future. The demographic makeup of a community contains valuable information that affects the types of resources, programming, and physical infrastructure required to meet the needs of residents and businesses. It should be noted that 2020 Decennial Census data is only partially available and for most data, the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates are used.

Table 1. Milford and Surrounding Communities: Demographics Snapshot, 2020 Census

Demographics Characteristic	Village of Milford	Milford Twp	Brighton Twp	Commerce Twp	Highland Twp	Lyon Twp	City of Wixom	Oakland County	Southeast Michigan
Population	6,520	10,570	19,144	38,514	19,172	23,271	17,193	1,274,395	4,830,489
Under 18 population	18.9%	21.6%	22.8%	22.1%	20.5%	29.5%	18.1%	20.5%	21.4%
Adult population	81.1%	78.4%	77.2%	77.9%	79.5%	70.5%	81.9%	79.5%	78.6%
Race									
White	90.6%	88.4%	91.3%	85.0%	92.0%	82.0%	68.1%	69.0%	64.3%
Black	1.0%	1.3%	0.5%	2.3%	0.5%	1.6%	15.1%	13.2%	20.7%
Asian	0.8%	1.5%	1.0%	3.9%	0.5%	7.4%	7.3%	8.3%	5.1%
Multi-Racial and Other	5.7%	4.8%	4.6%	4.8%	4.4%	5.0%	4.7%	4.7%	4.9%
Hispanic	2.0%	3.9%	2.6%	4.0%	2.6%	3.9%	4.8%	4.8%	5.0%
Group quarters	1.6%	1.1%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%	1.1%	1.5%
Households	2,834	3,914	6,966	14,616	7,455	7,928	8,478	524,047	1,936,635
Average household size	2.26	2.67	2.74	2.63	2.57	2.93	2.02	2.40	2.50
Housing units	2,985	4,057	7,210	15,235	7,897	8,185	8,968	554,403	2,087,258
Vacancy rate	5.1%	3.5%	3.4%	4.1%	5.6%	3.1%	5.5%	5.5%	7.2%
Persons per acre	4.16	0.54	0.91	2.29	0.88	1.17	2.94	2.30	1.68

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

Highest
Lowest
Above Southeast Michigan

Table 2. Milford and Surrounding Communities: Population Growth, 2020 Census

Housing Characteristic	Village of Milford	Milford Twp	Brighton Twp	Commerce Twp	Highland Twp	Lyon Twp	City of Wixom	Oakland County	Southeast Michigan
Total population, 2000	6,272	8,999	17,673	34,764	19,169	11,041	13,263	1,194,156	4,833,368
Total population, 2010	6,175	9,561	17,791	35,874	19,202	14,545	13,498	1,202,362	4,704,809
Total population, 2020	6,520	10,570	19,144	38,514	19,172	23,271	17,193	1,274,395	4,830,489
Change, 2000-2020	248	1,571	1,471	3,750	3	12,230	3,930	80,239	-2,879
Percent change, 2000-2020	3.95%	17.46%	8.32%	10.79%	0.02%	110.77%	29.63%	6.72%	-0.06%
Change, 2010-2020	345	1,009	1,353	2,640	-30	8,726	3,695	72,033	125,680
Percent change, 2010-2020	5.60%	10.60%	7.60%	7.40%	-0.20%	60.00%	27.40%	6.00%	2.70%
2045 (SEMCOG projection)	7,004	11,034	21,883	42,023	19,782	26,408	17,066	1,319,089	5,104,922
Projected percent change, 2020-2045	5.1%	3.5%	3.4%	4.1%	5.6%	3.1%	5.5%	5.5%	7.2%

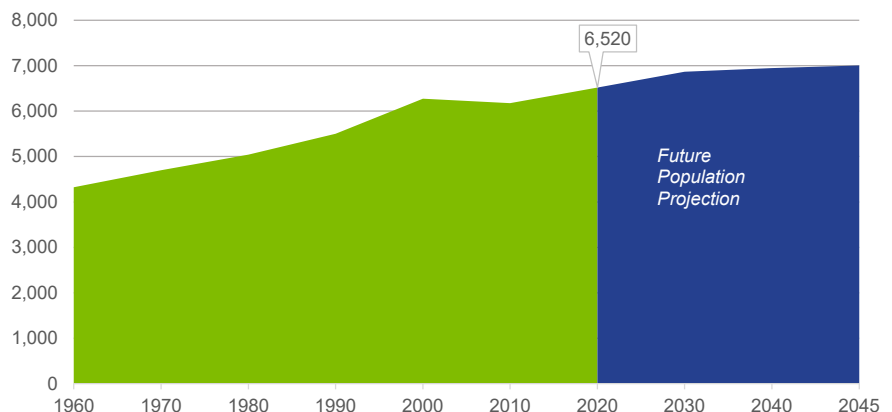
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2020 Decennial Census; SEMCOG Community Profiles

Highest
Lowest
Above Southeast Michigan

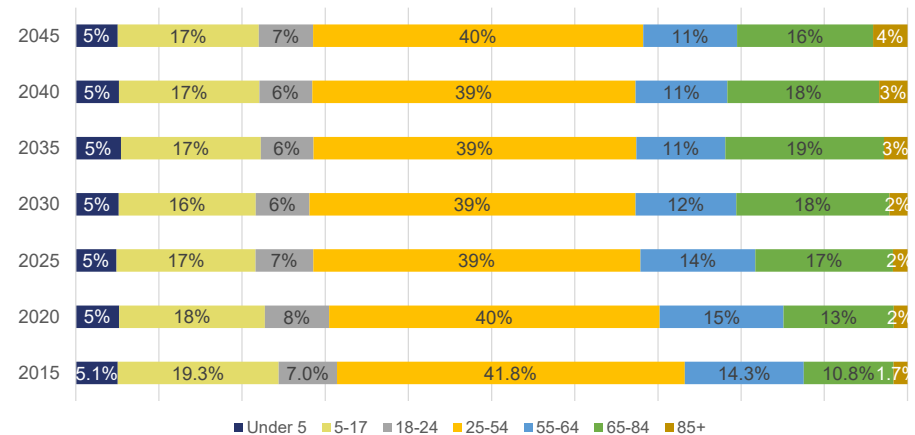
The communities close to the Village have experienced an increase in population since 2000 and 2010, although at varying rates (Table 2). Lyon has experienced major growth, though it appears to have slowed. Only Highland Township has lost any residents, and even then, it may be more accurate to consider it a plateau.

Racial composition has become slightly more diverse since the last Master Plan. While the 2000 plan did not distinguish between residents who were non-Hispanic compared to those of Hispanic origin, from 2010 to 2020, the Non-Hispanic white percent of the population declined from 94.3% to 90.6%, with the multi-racial population gaining the bulk of that change (3.2%).

Across the country, the population is aging. While the 2020 Decennial Census counts for older populations are not yet available, Table 3 shows 2020 ACS figures and projections from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) for 2045 in the Village. SEMCOG, is the regional planning agency and the 2045 Regional Development Forecast was developed in part to help communities consider changes over time and plan for services and facilities that consider those changes.

Figure 1. Population History and Forecast, 1960-2045

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

Figure 2. Population Forecast Breakdown, 2015-2045

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles

The Village has seen dramatic shifts in the age of its residents as evidenced by the median age creeping upwards from 35.2 in 2000 to 40.8 in 2010 and now 43.2 in 2020. As the trend continues, accommodating needs in all areas (e.g., housing, transportation, social/community, etc.) will be necessary.

Although there has been an increase in youth populations from 2010 to 2020, that rise is not expected to continue onto 2045. SEMCOG projected substantial losses for all age groups under 18.

Households

Knowing how the community is organized into its most basic unit, households, is key in making effective plans for the future.

According to the 2020 ACS, there were 2,631 households in Milford. Most households did not include a senior (someone over the age of 65). From 2010 to 2020, seniors who live alone grew by 53.1%. The average household size at 2.26 (Table 1) is consistent with surrounding communities, between two and three persons per household, but is down from 2.55 in 2000. The 2009 Master Plan notes that the downward trend can be attributed to the declining number of children per family, higher divorce rates, and a growing number of elderly living alone—those reasons persist.

A considerably high 98.2% of households have access to the internet, a key indicator of the ability of residents to communicate and also be connected to important emergency and civic information.

Table 3. Older Adults and Youth Population

Age Group	2010 Census	2020 ACS	Change, 2010-2020	Percent Change, 2010-2020	SEMCOG 2045	Expected Percent Change, 2020-2045
60 and over	1,184	1,633	449	37.9%	2,315	41.8%
65 and over	795	1,101	306	38.5%	1,939	76.1%
65 to 84	693	1,005	312	45.0%	1,474	46.7%
85 and Over	102	96	-6	-5.9%	465	384.4%
Under 18	1,451	1,792	341	23.5%	1,282	-28.5%
5 to 17	1,082	1,309	227	21.0%	909	-30.6%
Under 5	369	483	114	30.9%	373	-22.8%
Total population	6,175	6,502	327	5.3%	7,004	7.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census, 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Note: Population by age changes over time because of the aging of people into older age groups, the movement of people, and the occurrence of births and deaths.

Table 4. Milford and Surrounding Communities: Households Snapshot, 2020 ACS

Household Characteristic	Village of Milford	Milford Twp	Brighton Twp	Commerce Twp	Highland Twp	Lyon Twp	City of Wixom	Oakland County	Southeast Michigan
Total households	2,631	4,000	6,780	14,355	7,449	7,015	6,373	509,589	1,896,204
Average household size	2.46	2.58	2.75	2.72	2.69	2.90	2.19	2.44	2.50
Households with seniors (65+)	29.3%	32.5%	28.3%	27.9%	31.9%	23.3%	19.4%	29.6%	29.6%
Households with children	34.5%	29.3%	33.6%	33.6%	31.6%	41.8%	28.3%	27.7%	28.2%
Households with no car	4.9%	3.6%	1.6%	2.3%	1.6%	2.0%	1.6%	8.5%	5.6%
Households with internet access	95.1%	88.7%	95.3%	95.7%	91.4%	96.6%	93.4%	92.3%	88.8%
Households with broadband internet access	94.6%	88.4%	93.2%	94.4%	89.3%	95.8%	92.1%	90.5%	86.0%
Households with computing devices (desktop or laptop)	98.2%	93.6%	97.3%	96.1%	95.1%	97.4%	95.5%	94.4%	92.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; SEMCOG Community Explorer

Highest
Lowest
Above Southeast Michigan

Economy

Identifying trends in employment can help a community project future needs for land use categories and assess potential economic development opportunities. This section provides a snapshot of the Village's existing economic conditions.

Table 5. Milford and Surrounding Communities: Economic Snapshot, 2020 ACS

Economic Characteristic	Village of Milford	Milford Twp	Brighton Twp	Commerce Twp	Highland Twp	Lyon Twp	City of Wixom	Oakland County	Southeast Michigan
Total jobs	3,660	8,400	10,800	20,900	7,490	9,690	16,500	961,000	2,770,000
Jobs per acre	2.26	0.40	0.49	1.15	0.32	0.48	2.75	0.94	1.65
Unemployment rate	1.9%	1.2%	3.5%	3.7%	4.4%	5.3%	2.1%	4.7%	6.3%
Labor force participation rate	67.0%	58.8%	66.9%	68.5%	66.3%	68.9%	77.9%	66.2%	62.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	48.4%	40.5%	48.3%	46.9%	30.6%	53.4%	46.0%	48.0%	33.9%
Median household income	\$87,848	\$111,056	\$107,279	\$100,376	\$88,061	\$115,600	\$58,886	\$81,587	\$64,068
Per capita income	\$45,043	\$55,273	\$50,202	\$44,420	\$39,424	\$47,644	\$37,583	\$46,075	\$35,871
People in poverty	5.0%	8.3%	3.0%	3.7%	6.0%	4.4%	9.2%	7.8%	13.8%
Average commute time (minutes)	30.80	32.29	29.35	29.02	34.93	31.67	26.38	26.81	26.58
Drive alone to work	81.0%	80.2%	86.1%	83.8%	83.0%	83.6%	86.0%	82.7%	80.8%
Commute by transit	--	--	0.40%	0.00%	0.10%	--	--	0.40%	1.60%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; SEMCOG Community Explorer

Highest
Lowest
Above Southeast Michigan

Even with significantly different geographic conditions between the Village and its larger-in-land surrounding communities, in other economic characteristics, Milford is not so dissimilar from its neighbors.

Milford continues to boast highly educated residents. While educational attainment of the U.S. population has trended steadily upward since 2000, the Village has seen an impressive 18 percentage-point increase in that time. While the Village was slightly behind the Township and Oakland County in 2000, it has caught up in the last two decades. For residents who are in the workforce, [Table 6](#) shows the trades and professions in which Village residents are employed. Most residents (73%) work in management, business, science, and arts occupations and sales and office occupations, the former growing significantly from 2000 to 2020. Educational attainment and occupations that are held by residents are closely related and linked to income and quality of life.

The 2009 Master Plan showed the median household income in 1999 was \$59,688. Adjusted for inflation, that figure would equal \$92,725 in 2020 dollars, making the latest figure of \$87,848 a 5.3% decrease. This is in line with the general wage stagnation experienced by American workers since the 1970s. Incomes are still higher than the region and on par with the county, and though there are fewer people in poverty than 2000 and annual household incomes are concentrated at higher income brackets, there are still opportunities to address gaps and inequalities related to income and poverty.

Figure 3. Forecasted Jobs by Industry Sector, 2015-2045

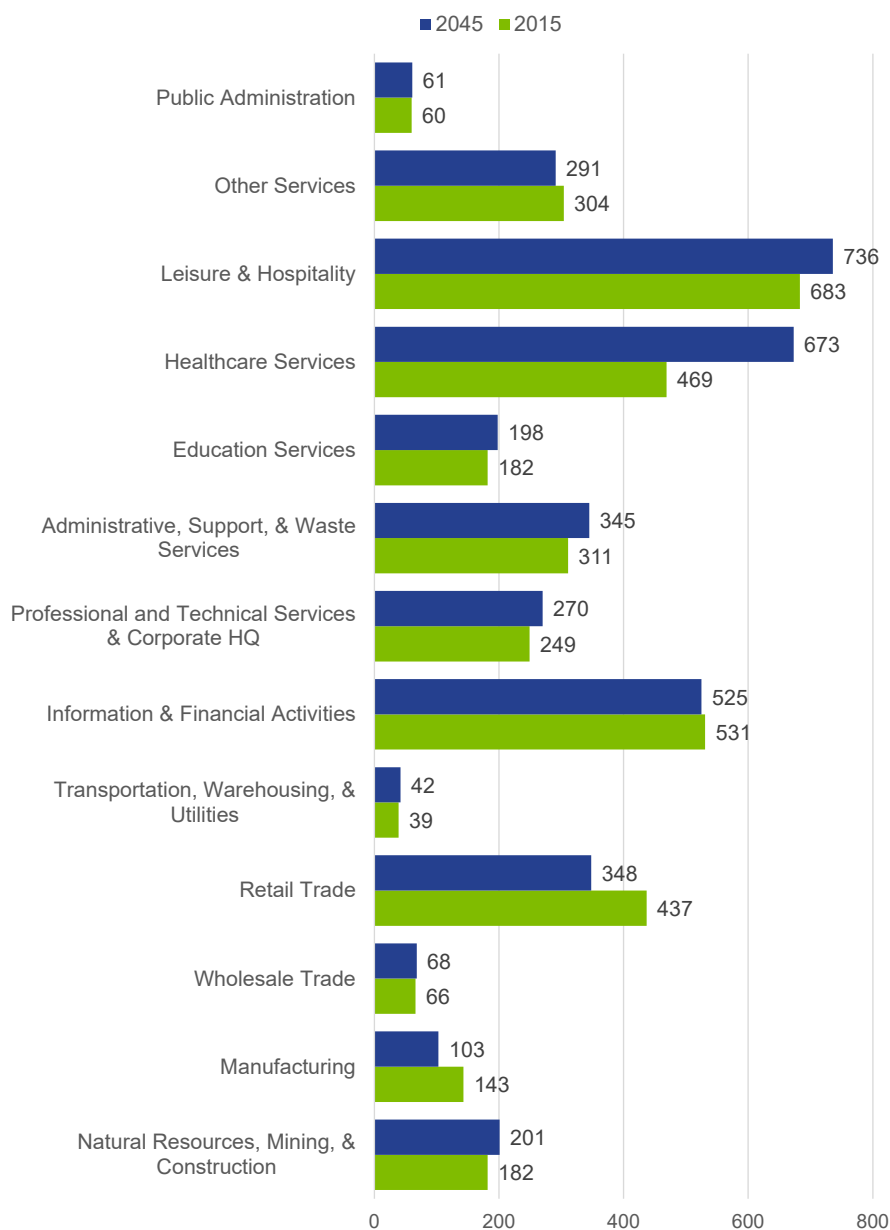


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; SEMCOG

According to SEMCOG, jobs are expected to be fairly steady in the Village, with a total increase of 205 jobs from 2015 to 2045, a 5.6% increase. Jobs in the Village cover a diverse range of industries (Figure 4), but leisure and hospitality, information and financial activities, healthcare services, and retail trade comprise nearly 60% of the total. While leisure and hospitality and healthcare services are expected to grow roughly 8% and a notable 44% by 2045, information and financial services is expected to hold steady while retail trade will fall by 20%.

The Census Bureau's Center for Economic Studies Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics OnTheMap application provides inflow/outflow job counts which can be useful in understanding commute patterns in a community. In terms of private primary jobs, Milford in 2019 had 1,907 employed in the Village, but living outside as well as 2,982 living in the Village, but employed outside, and just 185 people employed and living in the City. This indicates that only a small proportion of residents both live and work in Milford, which has implications for the balance of jobs and housing required in the Village, the Village's transportation network, and demand for goods and services.

Figure 4. Forecasted Jobs by Industry Sector, 2015-2045



Source: SEMCOG 2045 Regional Development Forecast

Table 6. Employment by Occupation

Occupation Type	2000		2020		Change, 2010-2020
	Count	Share	Count	Share	
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	1,250	38.2%	1,584	48.0%	26.7%
Service occupations	397	12.1%	497	15.1%	25.2%
Sales and office occupations	847	25.9%	830	25.1%	-2.0%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	360	11.0%	121	3.7%	-66.4%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	420	12.8%	270	8.2%	-35.7%
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	3,274	100.0%	3,302	100.0%	0.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census (2009 Joint Master Plan), 2016-2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Note: Since the 2000 Decennial Census, farming, fishing, and forestry occupations have been combined with construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations to form a new category: Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations

Housing

Data about housing can indicate the strength of the local economy and overall community appeal. Older housing reflects the physical, historic, and social context of a community. The age of housing influences local housing policies for rehabilitation and redevelopment. Older houses require additional maintenance and upkeep, and may also require upgrades to ensure energy efficiency, barrier-free access and increased livability for aging adults.

Table 7. Milford and Surrounding Communities: Housing Snapshot, 2020 ACS

Housing Type	Village of Milford	Milford Twp	Brighton Twp	Commerce Twp	Highland Twp	Lyon Twp	City of Wixom	Oakland County	Southeast Michigan
Total housing units	2,787	4,232	6,916	15,067	8,048	7,537	6,557	542,094	2,090,660
Vacancy rate	5.6%	5.5%	2.0%	4.7%	7.4%	6.9%	2.8%	6.0%	9.3%
Owner-occupied units	75.3%	90.5%	94.5%	90.0%	90.2%	86.6%	49.1%	71.2%	68.9%
Renter-occupied units	24.7%	9.6%	5.5%	10.0%	9.8%	13.4%	50.9%	28.8%	31.1%
Single-family units	85.5%	81.0%	94.9%	87.6%	84.1%	84.6%	48.4%	74.5%	75.7%
Multi-family units	24.7%	3.6%	3.1%	6.0%	4.3%	8.3%	51.6%	22.5%	21.3%
Median housing value	\$283,000	\$357,400	\$309,600	\$279,300	\$239,500	\$357,700	\$257,200	\$252,800	\$184,700

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; SEMCOG Community Explorer

Highest
Lowest
Above Southeast Michigan

Housing data from the Census tends to lag behind the real estate market, making it difficult to ascertain trends accurately. However, based on the median housing value of \$283,000 in 2020 and a value of \$236,417 in 2000 (in 2020 dollars, originally \$157,300), that would indicate a 19.7% increase. Compared to the -5.3% increase in median household income from 1999 to 2020 noted in the [Economy](#) section, questions of housing affordability may need to be addressed.

Single-family detached housing accounts for most of the housing stock in the Village, comprising 71.5% of all units, up from 70.7% in 2000. (Table 7 includes single-family attached units in its characterization of “single-family units.”)

Building permits over the past five years have been low, as seen in [Figure 6](#), but have tended to vary in the last two decades. [Figure 5. Residential Building Permits Breakdown by Type](#) illustrates the breakdown of building permits by housing type, according to SEMCOG data. SEMCOG defines the four residential building types as follows:

- **Single-Family:** A free-standing, detached building with only one housing unit. Includes single-family homes, detached condominiums, and manufactured homes not located within a manufactured housing park.
- **Two-Family:** A duplex, two-family flat, or condo with two units per structure and not considered to be a townhouse or attached condominium.

- **Townhouse/Attached Condos:** Townhouses or condominiums that are attached; units can be either side-by-side or above/below each other and each unit has a separate heating system, utility meter, and direct outside entrance.'
- **Multi-Family:** A residential building that contains three or more housing units, not considered to be a townhouse or attached condo, and usually has one entrance from the outside and a common hall (e.g., an apartment building).

Most permits have resulted in new single-family residential dwelling units. From 2019 to 2021, 100% of new housing units have been single-family. During this time, 14 permits have been issued.

The data does not identify if the units were age-restricted or general multi-family. Elsewhere in the region and throughout the U.S., a rise in multi-family dwellings is a common trend.

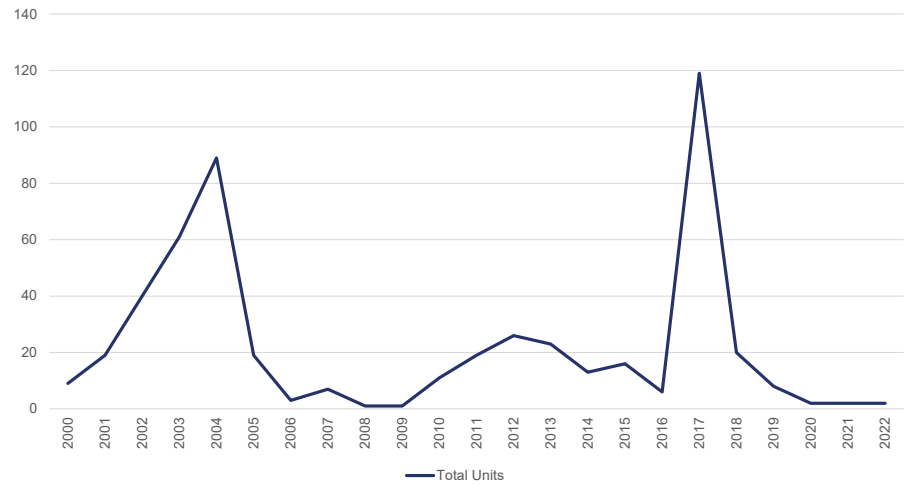
According to the National Multifamily Housing Council, the housing market needs 4.6 million apartments by 2030 to keep up with demand.¹ This 2018 report notes that both Baby Boomers and Millennials, who together comprise 100 million households are creating an increased demand for rental housing.

¹ Apartment Supply Shortage (2018): https://www.nmhc.org/contentassets/0662d3fe113046bb89019d0dfabfb271/apartment_supply_shortage_2018_08_fact_sheet.pdf

Along with high demand, supply of for-sale existing homes in Southeast Michigan was at record lows in 2021, and with increased costs, supply chain delays, and skilled trade labor shortages as well as rising inflation and mortgage rates, housing affordability is a major concern.²

² Residential Construction in Southeast Michigan, 2021 (2022): <https://maps.semcog.org/residentialconstruction/>

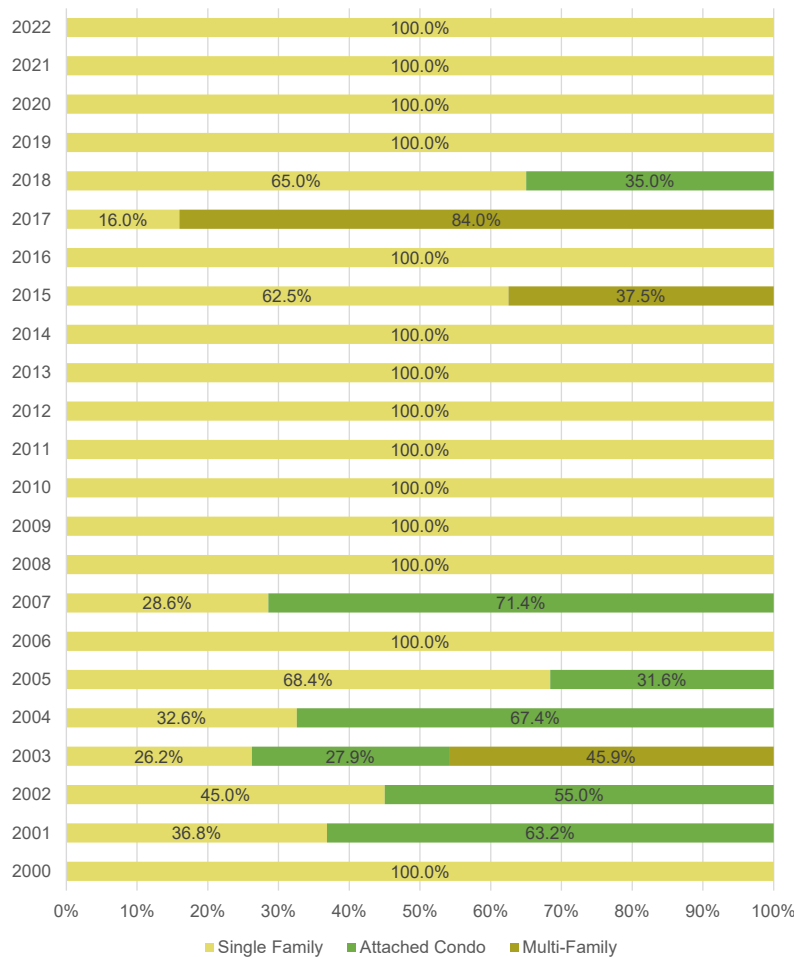
Figure 6. Total Residential Building Permits, 2000-2022



Source: SEMCOG Development

Note: Permit data for most recent years may be incomplete and is updated monthly. Data obtained November 2022.

Figure 5. Residential Building Permits Breakdown by Type



Source: SEMCOG Development

Note: Permit data for most recent years may be incomplete and is updated monthly. Data obtained November 2022.

Community Facilities

Community facilities include both physical facilities located within the Village of Milford as well as services provided by Milford Township ([Map 1. Community Facilities](#)). Community facilities include essential facilities or services like a fire station or public utility, or may be non-essential facilities or services such as a public park or library. Both essential and non-essential community facilities play an important role in the Village's potential for growth and resident retention. The availability of public safety services, attractive recreational and cultural facilities, and strong public school and library systems are some examples of community facilities that can help draw new people to the community and enhance the quality of life of existing residents.

Milford Village Municipal Building

The Village shares the building housing its administrative offices with the Township at 1100 Atlantic Street.

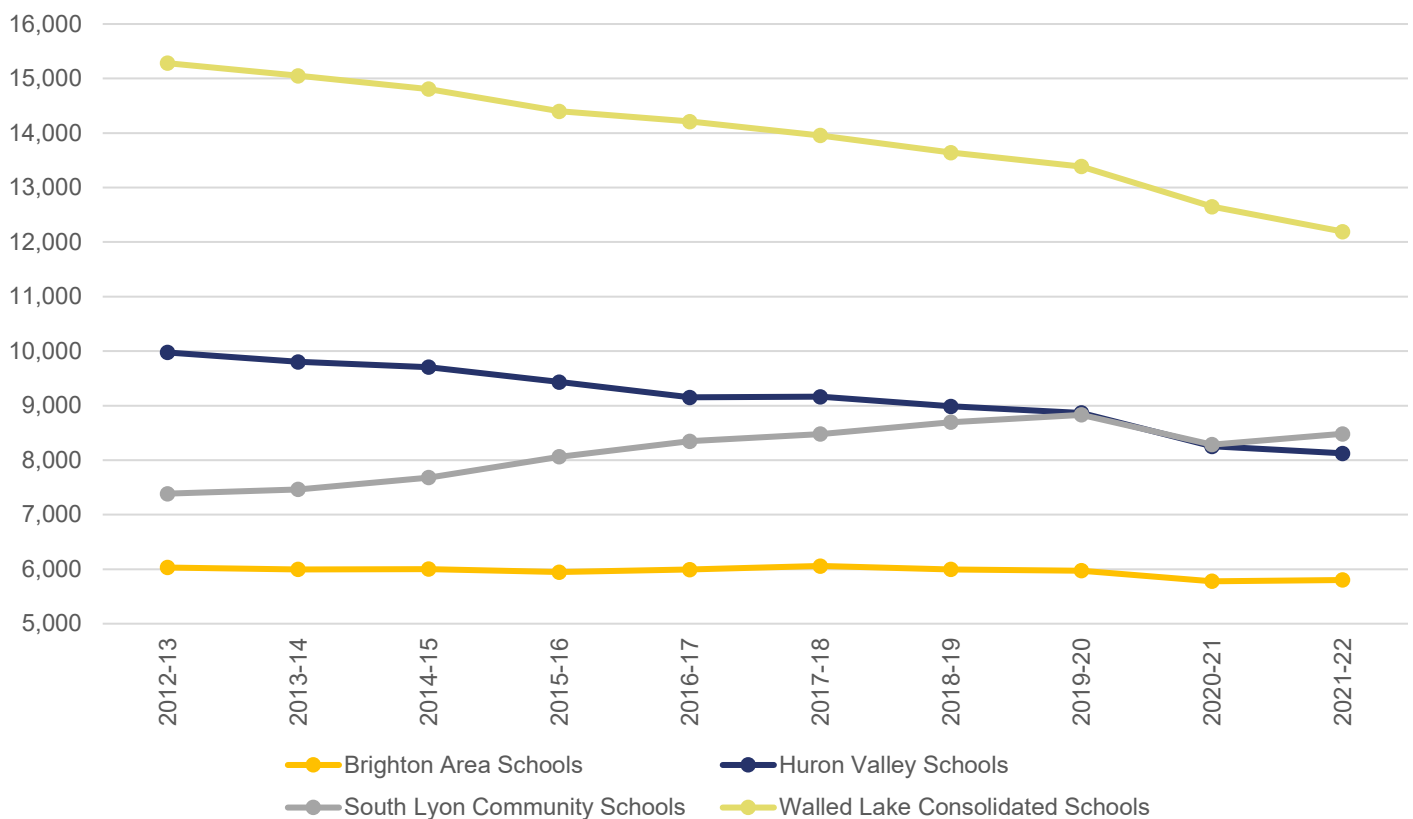
Milford Public Library

The library serves residents of both the Village and the Township. The library also houses three special collections on autism, genealogy and the Art Geyer Civil War collection dating back to the late 1800s as well as maintaining the microfilmed copies of the Milford Times from its inception.

Schools

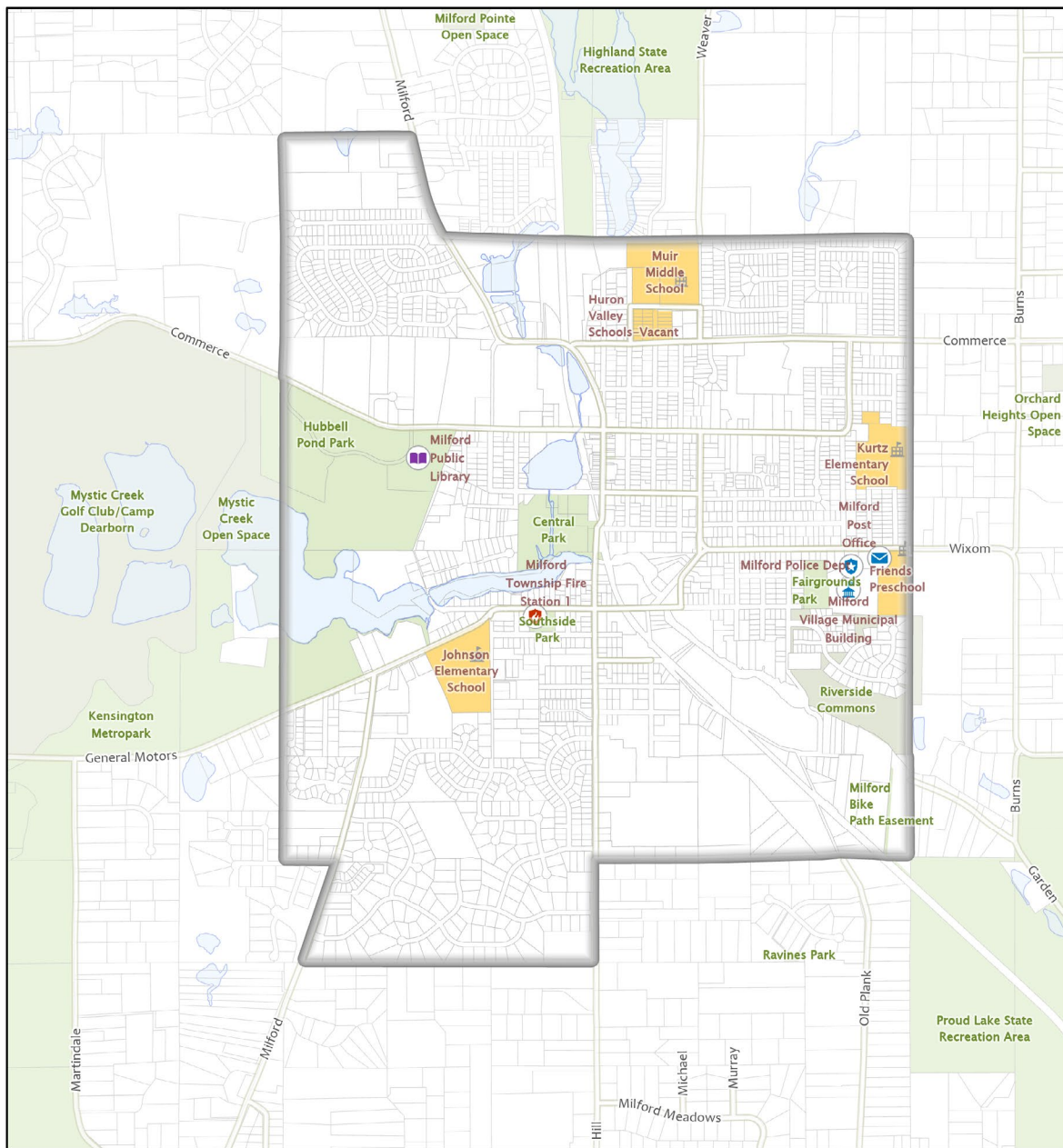
The Village is part of the Huron Valley School District and contains two elementary schools (Johnson and Kurtz) and Muir Middle School in the Village limits. These schools feed into Milford High School, which is located a couple miles north of the Village in Highland Township. Since closing Baker Elementary School in 2011 (formerly adjacent to Muir Middle School), enrollments at the remaining schools in the Village have been consistent until the recent Covid-19 pandemic, but overall enrollments in the district have been declining ([Figure 7](#)), down roughly 19% since 2012. This is consistent with fewer school-aged children leading to declining enrollments across the state, but Brighton Area Schools and South Lyon Community Schools are bucking that trend. Retaining current residents and attracting families to the Village and thoughtful residential development can play a role in school enrollments and operations.

Figure 7. School Enrollments, 2012-2022

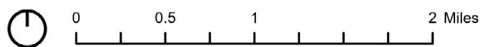


Source: MI School Data

Map 1. Community Facilities



Data sources: Recreation Land and Trails: Oakland County Open Data Portal. Parcels: Milford Township. Roads: Michigan Geographic Framework v17a. ©2022 Giffels Webster.



- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Administration | Schools | Parks |
| Court | Post Office | Private Owner |
| Fire | Public Safety | Educational Facility |
| Library | | |

Parks

The Village operates and maintains six parks within its boundaries (Arthur's Park, Center Street Park, Central Park, Fairgrounds Park, Hubbell Pond Park, and Southside Park). The parks offer a variety of amenities including walkways, gardens, fountains, sports courts, picnic area. Unique features include a butterfly garden at Arthur's Park, the LaFontaine Family Amphitheater and a Veterans' Memorial in Central Park, and even a remote control race car track and an authentic log cabin at Southside Park. Hubbell Pond Park is also home to the local YMCA, the Milford Public Library, and the Milford Trail connector that runs to Kensington Metropark.



Southside Park playground



Milford Dog Park

Public Utilities/Services

Fire. The Milford Fire Department operates two fire stations in the 36 square mile area of the Township, including the Village. The Fire Department is active in the community, offering classes and talks and participating in community events. Fire Station #1 is centrally located in the Village.

Police. The Milford Police Department is a department within the Village government that also provides police services to Milford Township.

Water and Sewer. The Village has approximately 2,500 accounts, (2,100 are for residential use, 200 for commercial use and 200 for irrigation use), which use about 200 million gallons of water each year. Drinking water is sourced mainly from two wells owned by the Village which draw water from an underground aquifer before it is pumped and treated.

Other. The Village of Milford also repairs and maintains sidewalks in the Village, plows snow and applies salt to public roadways, offers curbside refuse collection, recycling, and yard waste weekly, as well as expanded services for recycling, household hazardous waste, and electronic waste disposal services,



Milford Fire Station #1

Pathways

Non-motorized systems of pathways and routes are important in connecting communities. [Map 2. Parks and Pathways \(Existing Types\)](#) shows existing pathways in the Village and the surrounding Milford Township. Since the 2009 Master Plan, under design and proposed connections have been implemented, and now Village residents are linked to the premier regional parks and recreation facilities of Proud Lake State Recreation Area and Kensington Metropark).

Milford-Kensington Non-Motorized Connector

Milford Township spearheaded the design and construction of a non-motorized trail from the Milford Dam to Kensington Metropark as a top priority. Upon securing funding, the 10-foot wide trail was completed in 2009.

Village of Milford Trail

The Milford Trail was also finished in 2009 with the completion of the Milford-Kensington Connector to downtown Milford. The Village section of the trail connects the Milford Dam north around Hubbell Pond Park.



Cyclist using the Milford-Kensington Connector

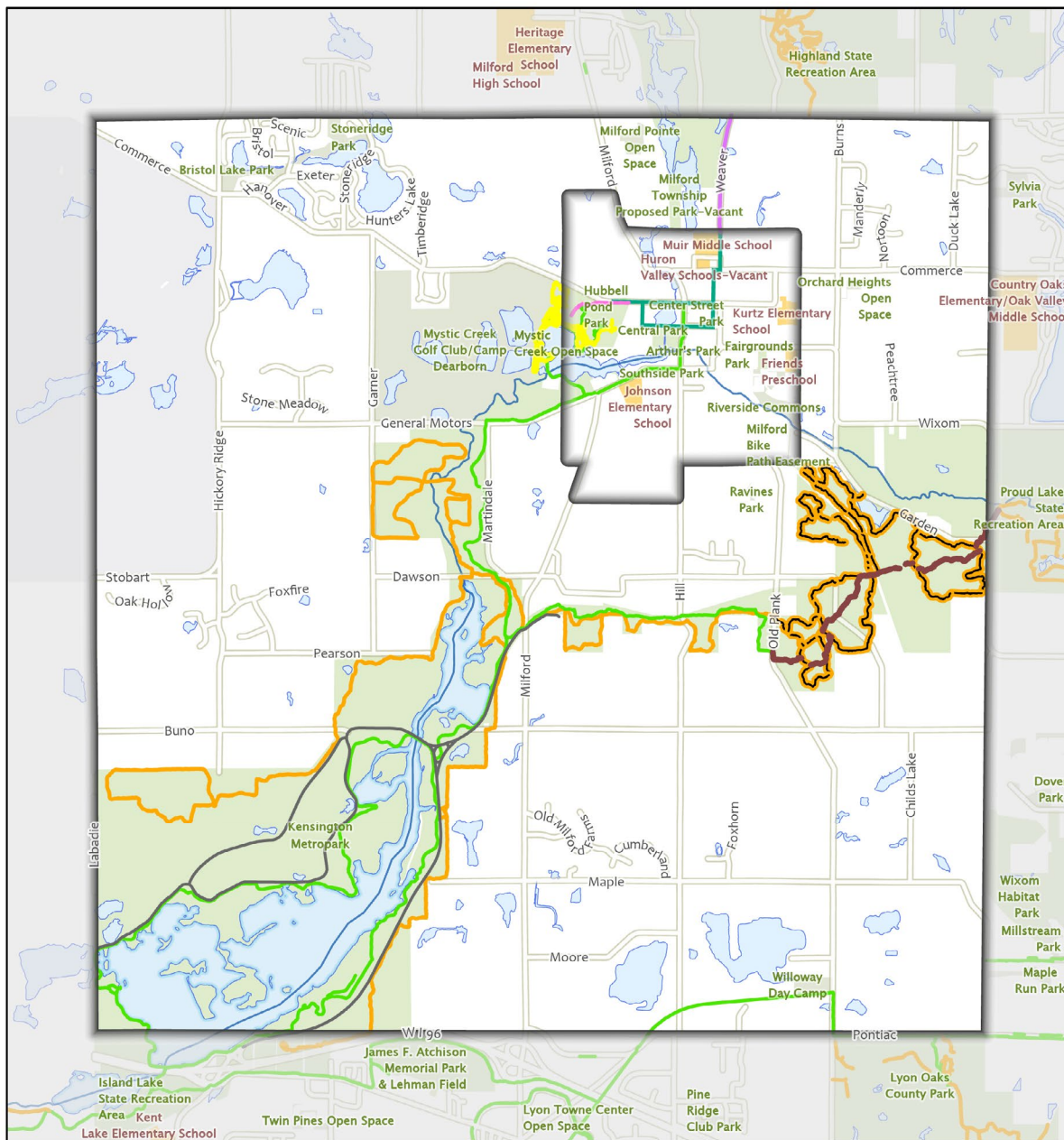
Questions to Consider

- What has changed since 2009? What has stayed the same? Why do you think these shifts took place?
- How do changes in demographics inform the land use, infrastructure and transportation needs of the community?
- Since the last Master Plan update, significant changes have happened to the economy, locally and nationally. The last Master Plan was adopted during the Great Recession of 2008, before many new technological, social, and policy changes that have shifted the goals and development patterns within communities. How have trends related to online shopping, Covid-19, and the aging of the baby boomer generation had an impact on Milford's long-term planning goals? How can Milford be a leader in business growth and private development as priorities and resources change?

Opportunities for an Update

- All demographic studies and community information should be consolidated into a single Community Background section.
- A Master Plan update could look at the impact of an aging community. Exploring enhancing livability for older residents through housing, transportation, and public services opportunities will result in improved quality of life for all residents and may attract young families to the Village.
- An updated demographics section will also enable the Village to establish metrics to evaluate progress based on current conditions.

Map 2. Parks and Pathways (Existing Types)



Data sources: Recreation Land and Trails: Oakland County Open Data Portal. Parcels: Milford Township. Roads: Michigan Geographic Framework v17/a. ©2022 Giffels Webster.



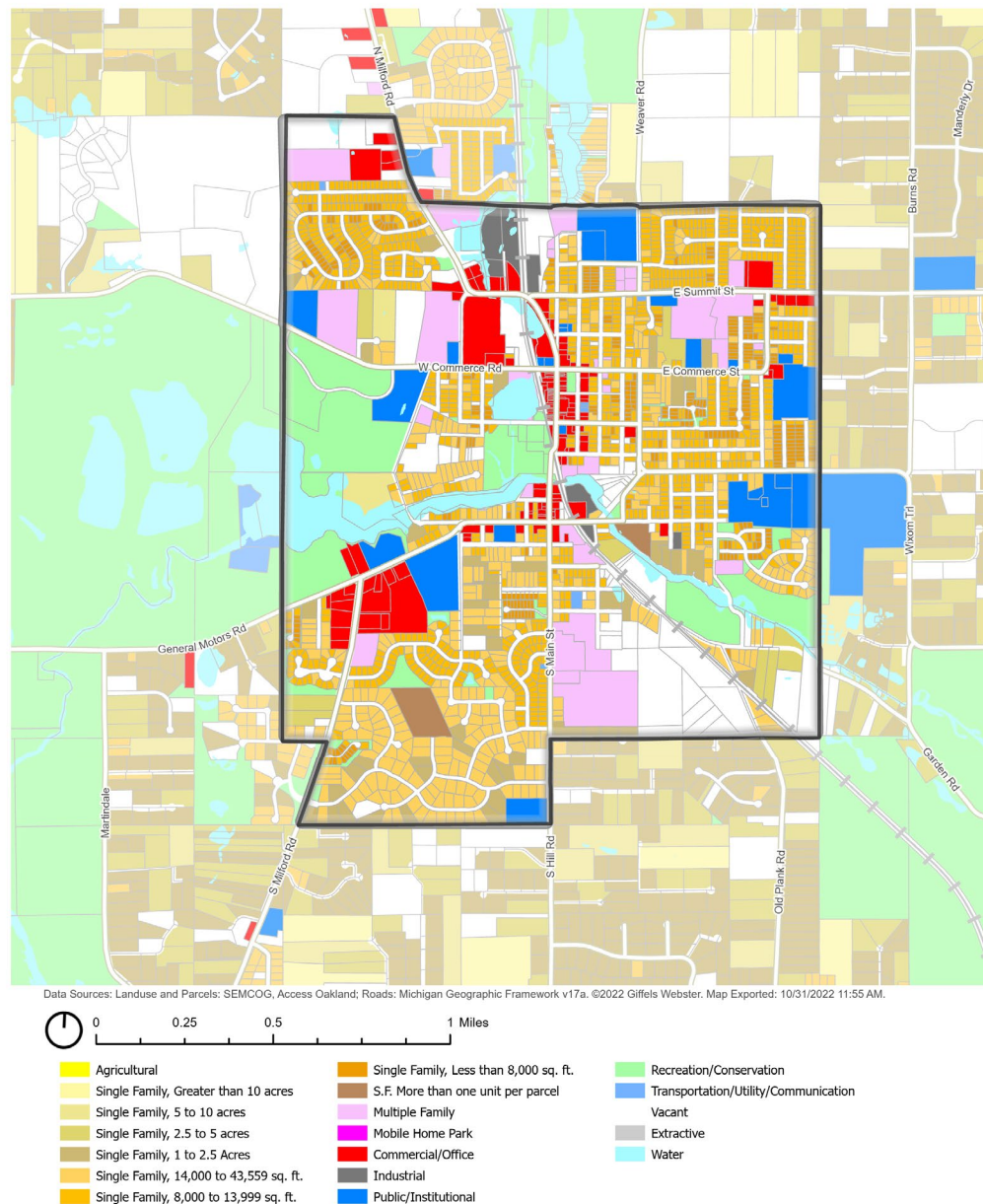
0 0.5 1 2 Miles

- Park Path
- Bike Lane
- Park Roads
- Hiking Trail
- Equestrian/Mountain Bike Trail
- Mountain Bike Trail
- Bike/Ped (Paved) Trail
- Equestrian
- Widened Shoulder

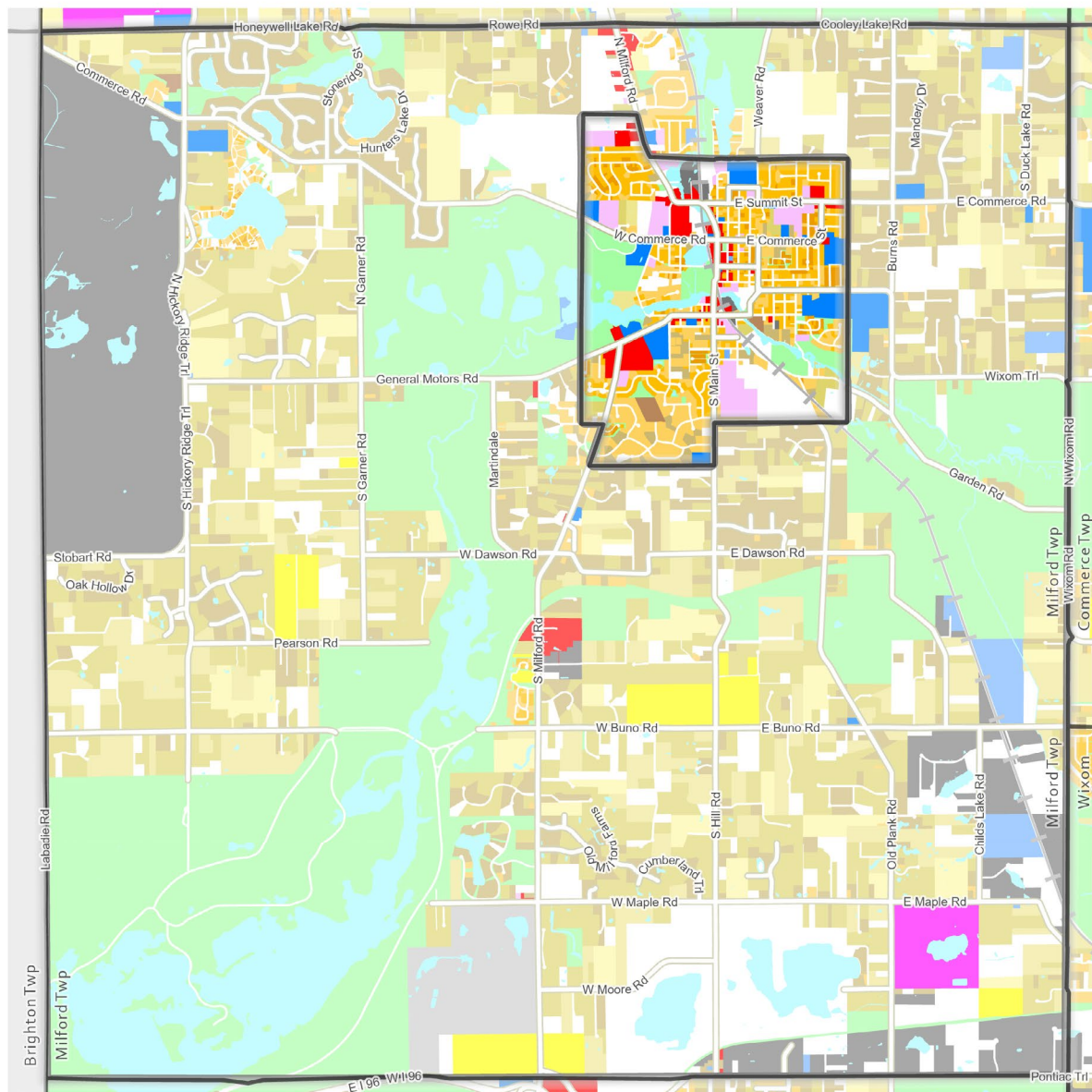
Existing Land Use

Below is an existing land use map, with data provided by Oakland County, documenting the existing land uses in the Village of Milford, and another map including the existing land uses in the Village and surrounding Milford Township. The land use classifications depicted on these maps were designated by the Oakland County Planning Services division, to provide a comparative context to review uses in the region under one system of classification.

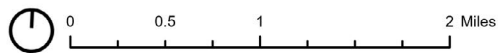
Map 3. Village of Milford: Existing Land Use



Map 4. Village of Milford and Milford Township: Existing Land Use



Data Sources: Landuse and Parcels: SEMCOG, Access Oakland; Roads: Michigan Geographic Framework v17a. ©2022 Giffels Webster. Map Exported: 10/31/2022 10:45 AM.



- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| Agricultural | Single Family, Less than 8,000 sq. ft. | Recreation/Conservation |
| Single Family, Greater than 10 acres | S.F. More than one unit per parcel | Transportation/Utility/Communication |
| Single Family, 5 to 10 acres | Multiple Family | Vacant |
| Single Family, 2.5 to 5 acres | Mobile Home Park | Extractive |
| Single Family, 1 to 2.5 Acres | Commercial/Office | Water |
| Single Family, 14,000 to 43,559 sq. ft. | Industrial | |
| Single Family, 8,000 to 13,999 sq. ft. | Public/Institutional | |

Land Use Categories

The land use classifications are described below, and a summary of the breakdown of land uses is included in [Table 8](#).

Table 8. Existing Land Use Breakdown

Land Use Classification	Acres	Percentage
Agricultural	0	0.00%
Single-Family	647.46	40.14%
Multi-Family	120.99	7.50%
Mobile Home Park	0.00	0.00%
Commercial/Office	94.99	5.89%
Industrial	16.75	1.04%
Public/Institutional	102.79	6.37%
Recreation/Conservation	149.78	9.29%
Transportation (TUC)	2.16	0.13%
Extractive	0.00	0.00%
Vacant	148.10	9.18%
Water	82.29	5.10%
Railroad ROW	16.75	1.04%
Road ROW	231.06	14.32%
Total	1,613.13	
<i>Source: Access Oakland</i>		

Agricultural: Parcels used as cultivated farmland, orchards, nurseries, or for livestock or equestrian activity, with or without related farm structures.

Single-Family: Improved parcels having three or less units per building in predominately residential use. There are eight classifications of Single-Family that are based on the parcel size (density). These classifications are shown below:

- Less than 8,000 sq. ft.
- 8,000 to 13,000 sq. ft.
- 14,000 to 43,599 sq. ft.
- 1 to 2.4 acres
- 2.5 to 4.9 acres
- 10 to 9.9 acres
- Ten acres and greater
- More than one unit per parcel

Multi-Family: Improved parcels having four or more units per building in predominately residential use, including apartments, condominiums, row houses, senior living facilities without skilled nursing care, and terraces plus any streets, service drives, and community areas such as yards, clubhouses, and pools. Hotels, motels, campgrounds, and mobile home parks are not included in this category.

Mobile Home Park: Improved parcels having multiple mobile home structures that are in the nature of a community or “mobile home park” plus any streets, service drives, and community areas such as yards, clubhouses, and pools. A single mobile home structure on a parcel is not classified as a mobile home, but “Single-Family Residential.”

Commercial/Office: Improved parcels used for wholesale, retail, office, entertainment, or services, including those uses predominately at street level on multi-functional structures, plus related contiguous accessory uses such as parking areas and service drives.

Industrial: Improved parcels used predominately for manufacturing or on which materials or articles are processed or semi-processed, but not retailed, including related storage areas, and warehousing. Commercial waste disposal sites, land fill operations, and junk yards are also shown as industrial.

Public/Institutional: Improved parcels and facilities that are held in the public interest and are usually exempt from real property taxation plus any service drives or roads inside the actual parcel. Examples of this category are churches, educational facilities, governmental offices, hospitals, assisted living and skilled nursing care facilities, municipal parking facilities, day care centers, and cemeteries.

Recreation/Conservation: Parcels for which the primary purpose is for outdoor recreation or natural area conservation. This may include public or private-owned parks, outdoor sporting clubs, hunt clubs, golf courses, marinas, campgrounds, or areas for which the primary purpose is preservation and conservation of undeveloped natural areas.

Transportation, Utility & Communication: Improved parcels containing above or below-ground utility or communication facilities, including electric and gas generating plants, transmission lines, booster and transformer stations, related storage yards, county drains, detention/retention basins etc. In addition, airports, railroad yards, buildings related to utility companies, such as Detroit Edison, Consumer's Energy, and telecommunications companies, plus wastewater treatment plants and water works, are also included in this category.

Extractive: Parcels that are primarily used for surface mining and extraction of materials such as gravel, stone, minerals, ore, soil, or peat.

Vacant: All parcels not included in one of the above definitions. These are unimproved areas that are not in a committed use and not in a use that is accessory to an adjacent parcel with a use described above.

Water: Areas that are ordinarily covered by water as depicted in the Oakland County Waterbody feature class.

Road Right-Of-Way: Areas that are predominately used for vehicular transportation. These areas may also contain pedestrian walkway, utility easements, railroad crossings, and/or on-street parking areas.

Railroad Right-Of-Way: Areas improved with a rail system and predominately used for train traffic.

[Map 3. Village of Milford: Existing Land Use](#) indicates that most of the land in the Village serves a single-family residential purpose, with mostly small to medium-sized lots (below 13,999 SF). Larger residential parcels are mostly concentrated in the area South of General Motors Rd. Commercial uses are scattered along the Village's major corridors but are especially concentrated within the Central Business District. The Village has two small areas with industrial land uses, both with proximity to the CSX railroad. The Village's industrial uses are buffered from residential uses by natural features (the Huron River) and less intensive non-residential uses.

In addition to understanding the breakdown of land uses in the Village, it may also be helpful to understand the built and natural environment. [Map 5. Land Cover and Impervious Surfaces](#) illustrates the land cover and areas of impervious surface coverage. This map indicates that while Milford has many areas of concentrated development, there are natural features buffering the Huron River, which slow stormwater runoff and help reduce community flood risk. [Map 6. Development Limitations](#) shows development limitations within the Village, including wetlands, water features, the 100-year flood plain, hydric soils, and recreational or educational land uses. The development limitations map indicates that the Village's development limitations are aligned with areas reserved for conservation, generally surrounding the Huron River.

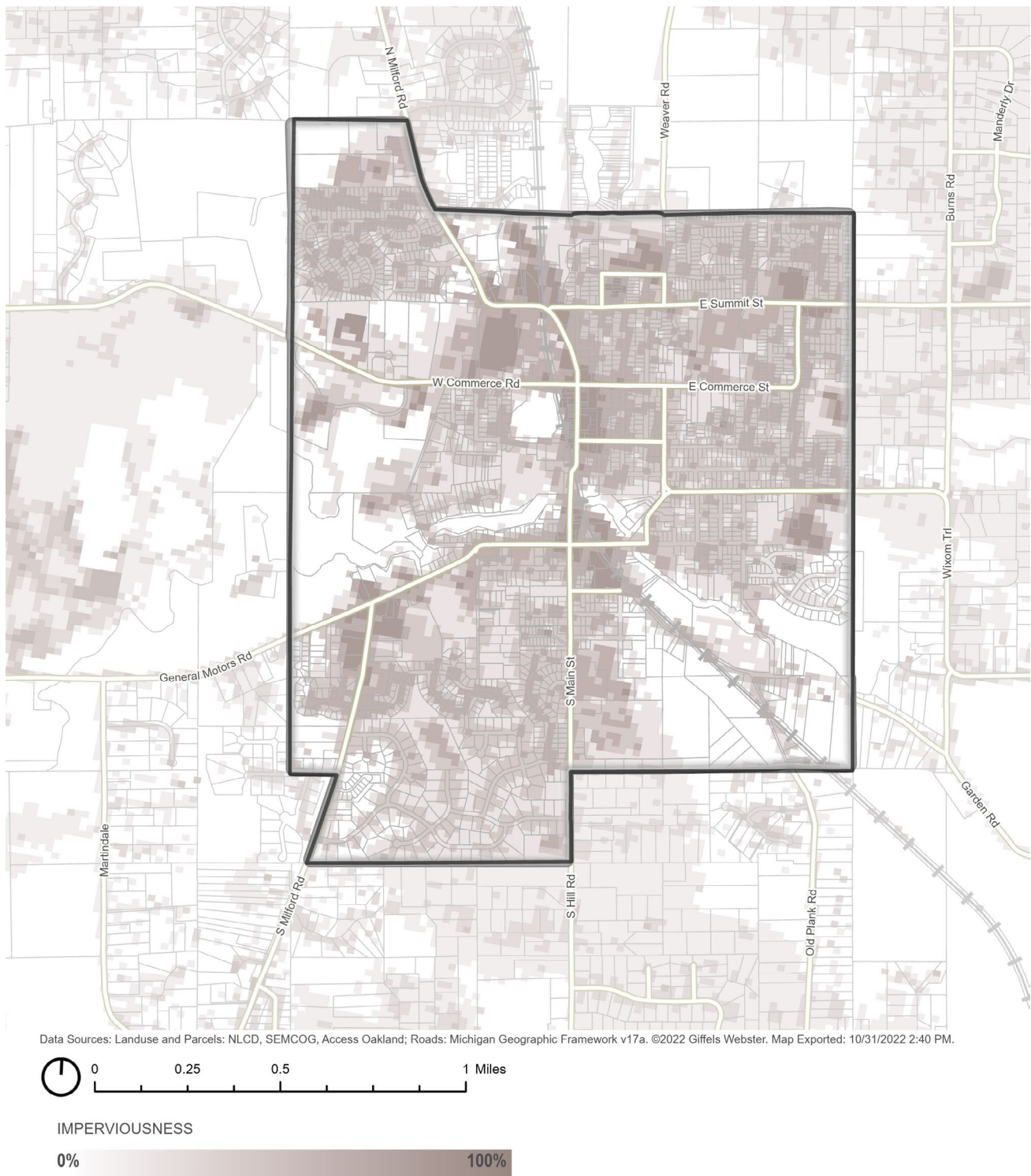
Questions to Consider

- Which land use categories have grown since 2009? Which categories stayed the same (or decreased)? Is this aligned with the Village's planning goals? How can we encourage/discourage this type of change?
- Are there any land use categories that were planned or expected to grow in 2009, but did not?
- Is there any anticipated growth that may alter the existing land use breakdown? How will these changes shift the number of residents who work or live in Milford? Will anticipated land use changes affect the Village's property tax revenue?
- Consider publicly owned parcels, public and private recreational lands, and vacant parcels. Based on anticipated land uses, will any future development effect the breakdown of these land use classifications?

Opportunities for an Update

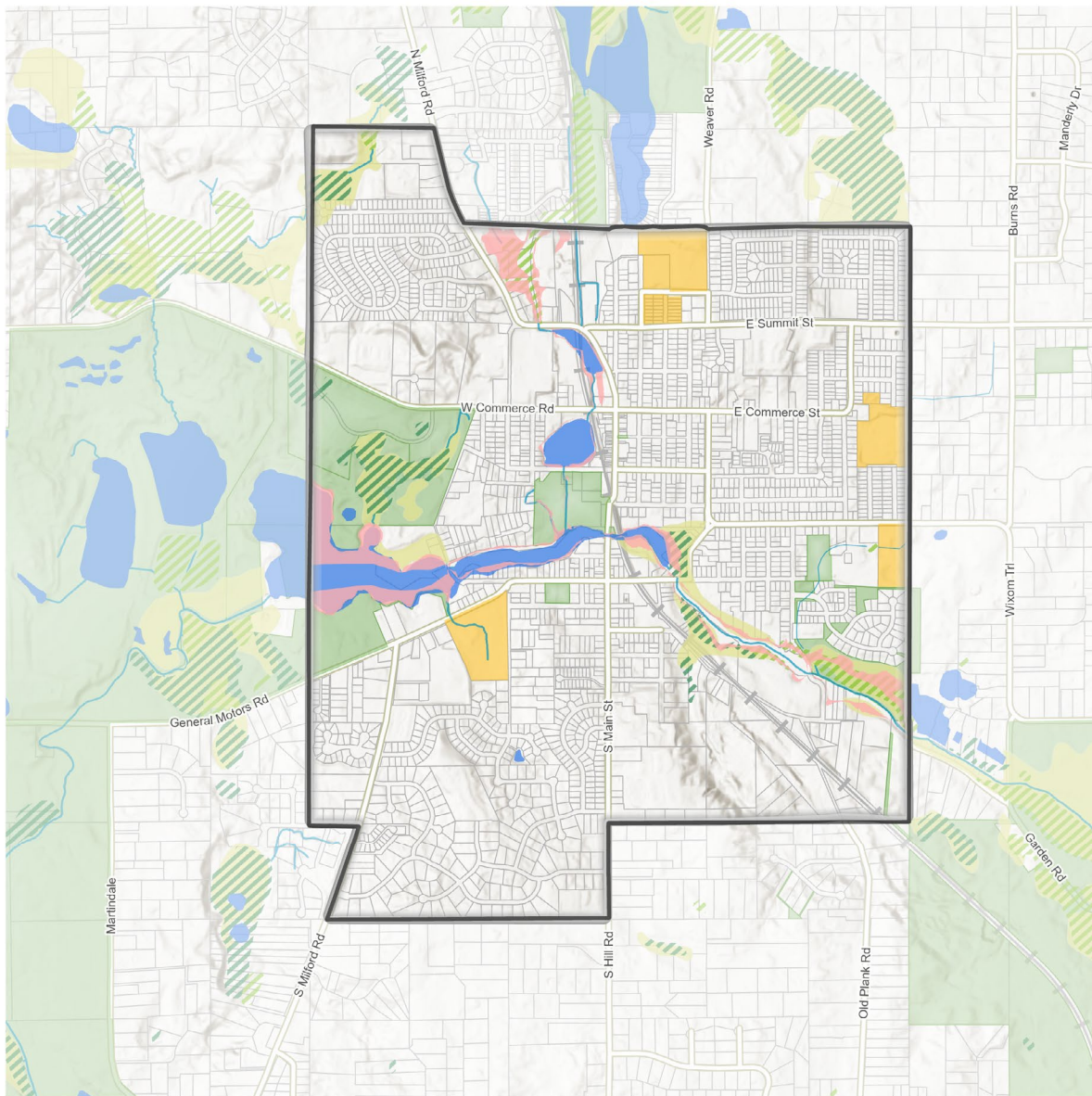
- An update of the Master Plan could include a focused look at land use, in conjunction with impervious surface coverage and development limitations to develop strategies to reduce flooding, improve water quality, and mitigate the impacts of significant weather events (such as extreme temperatures and participation).
- A Master Plan update should also review the breakdown of uses and consider whether there are too much or too little of certain use categories. For example, 9% of parcels in the Village are vacant—along with other parcels that may be ripe for redevelopment, an update may introduce opportunities to have future development meet Village goals. During the update, the overall use breakdown should also be reviewed to consider where it would be appropriate to phase-out or expand use categories.

Map 5. Land Cover and Impervious Surfaces

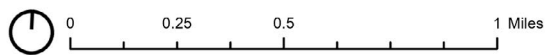


IMPERVIOUS SURFACES MILFORD VILLAGE

Map 6. Development Limitations



Data Sources: Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA Landuse and Parcels: NLCD, SEMCOG, Access Oakland; Roads: Michigan Geographic Framework v17a. ©2022 Giffels Webster.



WETLANDS

- EMERGENT WETLANDS
- FORESTED/SHRUB WETLANDS
- RIVERINE WETLANDS
- PONDS OR LAKES

- HYDRIC SOIL
- EDUCATIONAL FACILITY
- RECREATION LANDS
- PRIVATE OWNER
- 100 YR FLOODPLAIN



MILFORD COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN

Adopted February 26, 2009

2009 Master Plan

This chapter includes a recap of the 2015 Master Plan's goals and objectives as well as the description of future land use categories. Observations and opportunities start and end the sections in this chapter, with additional questions to consider alongside each goal and are intended to prompt discussion.

Planning Framework

Questions to Consider

- What differentiates these guiding principles from the goals? How do the guiding principles help to inform the goals?
- How have changes in development since 2009 impacted the planning framework? Are there changes in priorities, preferences, and community needs that effect the guiding principles?

Guiding Principles

1. Maintain a policy of controlled, moderated growth, based upon the principles of "concurrency" — requiring facilities and services at the time of development and "sustainability" — making community planning decisions that will benefit, not burden or penalize, the Community's future generations.
2. Acknowledge the historic community service center in the Village of Milford as a focal point for specialized shopping, office, entertainment and civic functions. Its available services, alternative housing opportunities and downtown historic focal point are features conducive to supporting the Township's surrounding rural residential development pattern.

3. Recognize the emerging importance of the I96/South Milford Road interchange area as the gateway entrance to the Community from the south. Carefully plan for commercial and residential uses in proximity to this interchange that will benefit from its proximity, as well as its position near the emerging shopping district located to its south in Lyon Township.
4. Understand the positive contribution certain large-scale land uses have had on shaping the existing development pattern: open spaces close to home and work which encourage walking, physical activity and time spent outdoors. These include Kensington Metropark, the Proud Lake State Recreation Area, and Camp Dearborn. Require any proposed changes to these regional land uses to be subjected to Master Plan amendment procedures to ensure that the Milford Community and neighboring jurisdictions fully participate in evaluating proposals for their re-use.
5. Protect "green infrastructure" using Low Impact Development (LID) techniques as a way to conserve native species and ecological sustainability. LID is an approach which emphasizes the integration of site design and planning techniques that conserve natural systems and hydrologic functions on a site. The Milford Community is uniquely situated within the Huron River watershed. Its fragile lands, water areas and natural assets represent irreplaceable environments for plant and animal life, and for recreational uses.

6. Allow for the continuation, resumption, restoration, reconstruction and extension of legally established nonconforming uses that contribute to Milford's built character or its heritage.
7. Reject sprawl development characterized by spread-out development along roadways, generic or uncoordinated architecture, big box construction, strip malls, and fast-food drive-through restaurants. Instead, focus development within planned centers offering a pedestrian orientation and distinctive design that maintains Milford's strong sense of place and protects its rural atmosphere, characterized by open fields, farmland or woodlands as common elements of the visual landscape.
8. Maintain "life cycle housing" and a full range of supporting community services so that people in various stages of life can find a home they can afford which is suited to their personal needs and tastes.
9. Preserve and protect cultural resources and properties, structures, and neighborhoods having historical significance.
10. Promote the development of community services and facilities that work to integrate and unify the Community.

Opportunities for an Update

The guiding principles should be reevaluated upon feedback from the community. This engagement should help determine what principles should guide the updated plan and inform goals. As priorities within the Village shift, development patterns change, and new challenges surface, it is important to revisit the 2009 guiding principles.

In addition, many of these guiding principles were written to better align with Township priorities. If the Village determines that the Master Plan Update should be independent of the Township, the guiding principles should be revised to reflect the specific intentions of the Village. In particular, Guiding Principle #3 relates to the I-96 interchange at Milford Rd, and is not relevant to the Village. This should be removed and other guiding principles re-prioritized to reflect the independent goals of the Village.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies



What are goals, objectives, and strategies? The 2009 Milford Master Plan defines these as:

Goals: Goals provide the general direction and serve as the description of the desired future. Goals are ambitious but are more general in nature. 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 community.

Objectives: Objectives are a means for achieving goals. Objectives must be relative and attainable. The human, financial, and institutional resources necessary to achieve them must be in hand, accessible, or at the very least, identifiable.

Strategies: A strategy is a statement that sets forth the specifics for accomplishment of an objective. One strategy may be used to accomplish multiple objectives, or an objective may require multiple strategies. For instance, an objective relating to the preservation of rural character may include identifying changes to development codes, targeting areas for acquisition or programs to strengthen agricultural enterprises. The strategies outlined in this chapter are intended to be promptly addressed and completed in the short-term.

Questions to Consider

- To what degree have the goals, objectives, and strategies been met since the plan was adopted? Which goals and objectives have been achieved?
- Are there any goals and objectives that are no longer relevant or that require modification to meet changing or new conditions in the community?
- Are there any new goals that the plan does not address? What objectives and strategies can help accomplish these goals?
- How do these goals align with the guiding principles of the plan? Are there other guiding principles that should be considered while evaluating goals?

Vibrant Residential Neighborhoods

Goal: Achieve viable residential neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing options for life long living.

Objectives:

1. Protect established residential neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible uses.
2. Support a pattern of residential densities based on current development patterns and smart growth principles and which is compatible with the character of the community.
3. Support affordable housing opportunities that are consistent with market conditions.
4. Allow cluster housing, planned unit, 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.
5. Accommodate a variety of senior living environments properly located based on the special needs of the occupants.
6. Limit mixed unit and higher density residential development to areas supported by existing public infrastructure and services.
7. Foster the development of new residential neighborhoods and support existing neighborhoods based upon traditional neighborhood design principles of scale, density, and connectivity.
8. Promote single-family residential developments that preserve scenic views and vistas.
9. Incorporate significant environmental features and assets into the design of residential development.
10. Support new lifestyle housing choices such as townhomes, rowhouses, live-work units, lofts, stacked ranches, and apartments in developed urban centers.
11. Encourage the preservation of historic homes in recognized and potential historic neighborhoods or districts.
12. Encourage infill residential development that is architecturally compatible with existing residential structures.
13. Promote the maintenance and rehabilitation of older housing.
14. Recognize the role of neighboring communities for their contribution to the regional market with regard to the type, character and amount of residential land.

Strategies:

1. Conduct a structural quality and environmental conditions survey on a recurring basis (i.e., every 5 years) to monitor neighborhood and housing conditions.
2. Implement a sensitive code enforcement program to pre-empt blight and neighborhood decline.
3. Utilize the Building Regulating Plan as a design guideline to ensure compatible infill development within neighborhoods.
4. Develop neighborhood design standards consistent with the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED-ND (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development) rating system for streets, sidewalks, lighting, street trees, signs, lot configuration, and neighborhood public parks to ensure residential development reflects a closeknit and integrated community atmosphere for residents.
5. Undertake a senior housing study to assess the unique housing needs of senior citizens.



Questions to Consider

1. Does the current housing supply meet the needs of the community? If not, what new housing types would be desirable for Milford Residents and where should they be permitted/restricted?
2. Where should residential growth be encouraged/ discouraged?
3. What changes have been made to the Zoning Ordinance since 2009 with respect to housing and what impact have these changes had on the built environment? Has zoning helped the Village progress towards its goals/objectives?
4. What new housing has been added since the last Master Plan?

Thriving Business Districts

Goal: Achieve business development areas that create a stable economic tax base and quality shopping and services for Community residents.

Objectives:

1. Recognize Downtown Milford's historical role as the primary commercial destination within the community and promote its standing as a local and regional destination for commerce, culture and entertainment.
2. Maintain superior site design standards and encourage landscaping and site amenities that enhance architectural and pedestrian appeal.
3. Direct business investment to vacant or underutilized properties before development of greenfield sites.
4. Minimize the nuisance effects associated with commercial development through the use of buffering techniques such as transitional zoning, landscape screening, and setbacks.
5. Support new commercial development based on market demand at planned commercial locations.
6. Provide new retail opportunities within planned shopping centers which are centrally located within defined trade areas.
7. Provide new retail opportunities within planned shopping centers which effect unified property management principles through leaseholder agreements or adherence to business association guidelines.
8. Build on the legacy of Main Street to its original mixed-use character, offering service, retail, office, and residential uses.
9. Support the development of public parking in downtown, deliberately distributed to areas of demonstrated need to maximize use by customers.
10. Employ the National Trust for Historic Preservation – Main Street Program approach to preserve, protect and provide architectural compatibility within downtown.
11. Recognize the role of neighboring communities for their contribution to the regional market with regard to the type, character and amount of office and commercial land.

Strategies:

1. Participate with the Downtown Development Authority in the development of projects and programming for the historic downtown.
2. Import the recommendations of the Village of Milford Corridor Plan into a land development code.
3. Revisit site plan review standards for commercial development to ensure that such development maintains superior site design standards and employs property management practices.
4. Require evidence of retail market support to justify commercial rezonings and new construction.
5. Utilize the Building Regulating Plan as a design guideline to ensure compatible infill development within business districts.
6. Create, maintain and publicize a database of available commercial sites for development.
7. Design and construct gateways (i.e., signs, monuments, landscaping) at strategic locations to mark the arrival into planned business districts.
8. Make the historic downtown active, busy and “alive after five” by extending business hours, offering an extensive calendar of special events, cultural and entertainment activities, and supporting residential living.



Questions to Consider

1. Which changes to the zoning ordinance have helped to improve the design and landscaping requirements for buildings, particularly in the Downtown? How have changes in the built environment as a result of zoning contributed to a thriving business district?
2. Since 2009, there have been many economic, political, technological, and social changes that resulted in a shift in the built environment. How have things like covid-19, the aging of baby-boomers, the decline of retail, and changes in motorized and non-motorized transportation shifted priorities and goals in the Village's business districts?

Locally Oriented Industry

Goal: Support industry that provides a positive contribution to the local tax base, as well as local jobs, without degradation to adjacent land uses, the environment, and overall Community character.

Objectives:

1. Recognize the role of neighboring communities for their contribution to the regional market with regard to the type, character and amount of industrial lands.
2. Offer firms a range of choice; provide sites of varying sizes and locations that are available for industrial development
3. Direct industrial investment to vacant or underutilized properties before development of greenfield sites.
4. Minimize the nuisance affects associated with industrial development through the use of buffering techniques such as transitional zoning, landscape screening, and setbacks.
5. Encourage the expansion and diversification of the local industrial job base commensurate with local needs.
6. Confine industrial development to sites that respect the historical and regional industrial development patterns, demonstrate convenient access to regional transportation systems, and have planned public infrastructure.

Strategies:

1. Foster a relationship with organizations such as Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Services and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, utilizing their services as a conduit for job training and placement at the local level.
2. Create, maintain and publicize a database of available industrial sites for development. Establish a volunteer mentoring team of seasoned businesspersons to provide guidance, outreach, business planning and other related services to small business owners.
3. Work with the local school district to develop a vocational training apprentice program.
4. Organize a local business expo to promote cross-selling and community awareness of local products and sellers.



Questions to Consider

1. How has the Village's industrial tax base changed since 2009? What changes led to industrial decline/growth during this time?
2. How have state and national changes in manufacturing and the labor market effected industrial development? What are the expectations for future industrial development in Milford?
3. Considering few areas are currently designated as industrial on the Zoning Map, are those areas best suited for continued industrial uses? Are there any places where there are conflicts between neighboring and industrial uses? Is more land for industrial needed? Are there sites that could be developed for industrial uses?

A New Economy

Goal: Capitalize on Milford's regional advantage as a destination for commerce, employment and life-long living.

Objectives:

1. Support the continued viability of the GM Proving Grounds and recognize its importance in providing employment, research, and world-wide innovation.
2. Explore opportunities to accommodate biotech, medical, and knowledge-intensive industries in a campus setting. In all economic development initiatives, protect the sense of place engendered by the natural environment and built character of the Milford community.
3. Work cooperatively with the development community to undertake inventive redevelopment concepts.
4. Apply "smart growth" principles as a guide for site planning.
5. Develop incentive programs and assistance methods, like business incubators, to help foster new local businesses.
6. Spearhead new development and redevelopment projects.

Strategies:

1. Develop incentive programs (i.e., tax abatements, site plan preparation assistance) based on well defined criteria for participation to promote business development and expansion.
2. Assemble a team of business ambassadors to assist in the recruitment of high profile business endeavors.
3. Coordinate the collection and dissemination of market, economic, social, demographic, infrastructure and transportation data to be used as a marketing tool to encourage economic development.
4. Work with Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Services and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to develop a capture plan for emerging service and knowledge-based industries.
5. Develop a smart growth scorecard and employ it as a component of site plan approval criteria.
6. Underwrite a guest lecture series featuring entrepreneurs, authors, businesspersons, inventors and educators to expose Milford's creative class.
7. Consider partnering with a premier community through a "sister city" or other community exchange program to facilitate the sharing of information, ideas, and solutions for mutual benefit.
8. Consider the potential application of renewable energy systems on brownfield sites to create jobs and to put properties into productive use.



Questions to Consider

1. How have changes in the labor market and the economy effected growth in knowledge based industries in Milford?
2. How have Covid-19-related impacts related to shifting workplaces impacted the daytime economy in the Village?

A Balanced Transportation Network

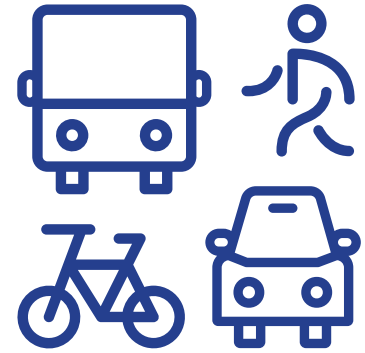
Goal: Establish a multi-modal transportation network that effectively serves both the motorized and non-motorized needs of the Community.

Objectives:

1. Accept limited congestion and travel delays on major roadways to minimize the paving of secondary gravel roads, road widening and other similar road construction projects that would negatively impact natural resources, neighborhoods and overall Community character.
2. Create a “walkable community” for pedestrians and non-motorized transport through a network of sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes to increase safety, provide linkages between destinations, and to promote healthy lifestyles.
3. Apply access management standards to road design and site development to promote safe and efficient traffic movement.
4. Investigate the application of new design concepts to maximize traffic flows and generate efficient use of roadway capacity such as roundabouts and intelligent transportation systems.
5. Coordinate motorized and non-motorized transportation enhancements with neighboring communities and regional entities.
6. Where necessary, implement traffic calming devices within residential areas to eliminate or subdue drive-through traffic and increase safety.
7. Commit to a network of Natural Beauty Roads to support rural character. Require street connections in appropriate locations to integrate neighborhoods, reduce traffic volumes on major roadways, and improve emergency response times.

Strategies:

1. Develop a comprehensive transportation plan for the Milford Community as a foundation for enhancements to the motorized and non-motorized transportation network.
2. Designate select roads as Natural Beauty Roads to help protect their scenic character.
3. Develop non-motorized transit centers, incorporating innovative amenities such as bicycle sharing stations, at strategic locations to enhance access to various modes of travel.
4. Formulate and require adherence to access management standards to ensure the efficient and effective management of traffic flows and to maximize the available capacity of the Community’s roads.
5. Prepare and implement strategies for traffic calming to minimize the impact of vehicular traffic on daily life within business districts and neighborhoods.
6. Implement uniform informational signage for pedestrians, motorists, and horse enthusiasts throughout the Milford Community to facilitate efficient “wayfinding” and increase awareness of Community destinations.



Questions to Consider

1. What non-motorized connections have been made since the 2009 Master Plan? What non-motorized connections are needed to improve transportation opportunities for individuals who prefer not to drive or are unable to drive?
2. How have major developments impacted traffic since 2009? Where have there been roadway improvements and where are there conflicts? How can traffic safety be improved through improved engineering and planning?
3. What efforts have been taken with respect to coordinating motorized and non-motorized transportation enhancements with the Township and regional entities?

A Sustainable Natural Environment

Goal: Strive for the protection of important natural resources and open spaces that contribute to the health of natural systems, wildlife habitats, Community character, and quality of life.

Objectives:

1. Protect sensitive and other environmentally significant areas, such as water resources, wetlands, woodlands, scenic vistas, and wildlife habitats.
2. Link natural features and open space areas to create a system of natural corridors.
3. Utilize zoning tools that conserve natural areas, provide community recreational space, and promote watershed protection.
4. Develop storm water best management practices to minimize the negative impacts development can have on runoff and water quality.
5. Support policies, ordinances, and standards that promote the U.S. Green Building Council's current portfolio of LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating systems for buildings and neighborhood development to minimize environmental impacts.

Strategies:

1. Update engineering design standards to incorporate best management practices.
2. Develop an incentive program and rating system to encourage low impact development.
3. Restore and enhance environmental functions damaged by prior site activities.
4. Develop a conservation overlay ordinance consistent with the Conservation Overlay Future Land Use Category.
5. Coordinate with the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy to facilitate land protection in the Milford Community.
6. Maintain a Community Recreation 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.
7. Initiate a tree replacement program for trees lost by damage or disease.



Questions to Consider

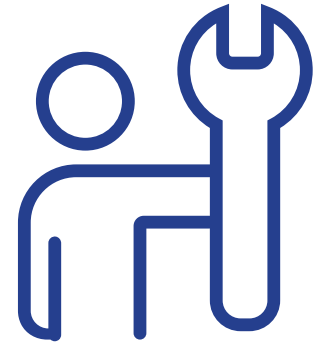
1. What changes to the environment have happened since 2009? Where have vacant/open/unused lands been developed?
2. What has the Village done since 2009 to prioritize conservation/preservation of land, trees, watersheds, and wildlife? Where should the Village focus these efforts in the future? What tools and resources can the Village implement to maintain/expand its conservation/preservation efforts?
3. Has the Village adopted new standards to better align with best management practices for stormwater? How can the Village better encourage low impact development and improved stormwater management?

First Class Community Service

Goal: Continue to offer efficient, first-class services and facilities to residents and businesses to preserve the Community's high quality of life.

Objectives:

1. Continue the cooperative relationship between the Village and Township for the shared provision of public services and facilities, like police, fire, library, and senior services.
2. Plan for the continued improvement of the Community's public facilities and services through capital improvement programming, coordinated with adjoining jurisdictions, Oakland County, and other public agencies.
3. Manage public water, sewer, and storm water systems to meet the development objectives of the Master Plan.
4. Incorporate best management practices in site planning.
5. Provide a sense of community by preserving existing public parks, open spaces, and public gathering spaces in the Community
6. Promote the development of public spaces that are easy to access, are comfortable, offer activities, provide opportunities for public art, and that will continue to nurture Community interaction.
7. Continue development and improvement of recreation facilities that provide Community residents with a variety of physical activities.
8. Support cooperative recreational planning and development among the Village of Milford, Milford Charter Township, Huron Clinton Metroparks, Oakland County, State of Michigan, adjacent communities, civic groups, and private entities.
9. Enhance coordination and cooperation between municipalities and the Huron Valley School District to support the District in providing first-class educational opportunities to Community residents.
10. Support Fraternal Organizations within the Community who often provide needed social services to Milford residents, as well as opportunities for community involvement.
11. Continue to maintain and support the senior center and its programs to provide high quality, cost effective services to Milford senior citizens.
12. Create a Community where local and regional cultural, social, sports, civic, educational and fraternal organizations complement one another, share resources, information and coordinate activities.
13. 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.
14. Work with area health care providers to ensure all segments of the Milford Community have convenient access to primary and specialty care practitioners offering diagnosis, emergency treatment, and managed care.



Questions to Consider

1. Since the 2009 Master Plan, how have the Township/Village worked collaboratively? Are there opportunities to expand collaboration? How can the communities work together to advance shared goals?
2. Has the Village adopted a CIP? How has the CIP helped direct capital projects since the 2009 Master Plan? What capital projects are included on the CIP for the next 6 years?
3. What new programming has been established that highlights Milford's community character? What new programming could be implemented to maintain and strengthen community pride and identity?

Strategies:

1. Develop a Milford Community Capital Improvements Program (CIP).
2. Make available a web-based bulletin board of events, programs, leagues and organizations to increase awareness of the myriad of community services.
3. Initiate a community opinion survey, concurrently with the 5-year evaluation of the Master Plan, to assess the adequacy and efficiency of community services.
4. Create a plan for public art and monumentation consistent with the history and built character of the Milford Community.
5. Organize and maintain a repository of historical artifacts, records, and media for public display.
6. Develop a local “citizen of the year” awards program to recognize significant contributions in community volunteering.

Opportunities for an Update

Over 20 years have lapsed since the Village of Milford collected community input on its Master Plan. New outreach and engagement with residents and businesses is imperative to understand whether the Village’s current priorities align with its earlier goals.

Consider how market and demographic trends have impacted the Village’s development pattern and land use composition, and whether this prompts a change in goals and objectives. In particular, data on population makeup by age group, projected population, and housing types may necessitate a need for refinement.

Consider which objectives have been met and whether goals should be updated to align with progress since the 2009 Master Plan. The Village should compare 2009 and 2022 existing uses to reveal areas of growth/development and understand whether development patterns were aligned with community goals. Metrics to measure progress towards achieving goals are recommended.

Milford Community Future Land Use Plan

Questions to Consider

- Do these land use categories make sense within the context of existing development and anticipated future development?
 - » How have changes in technology effected land use? (Will there be a high need for gas stations, oil changes etc in the future?)
 - » How have changes in the economy and the pandemic effected land use? (Housing needs, retail, professional office)
 - » How has the aging of the Baby Boomer generation effected land use? (Housing needs, accessibility)
 - » How have shifts in community preferences effected land use? (Demand for public space, transportation, commercial/housing needs)
 - » What new land uses should we plan for? (Marijuana, commercial solar, EV charging, mixed use)
- Do all land uses fit within the context of the Village and its character?
- Do the land use descriptions provide enough information to guide land use decisions?
- Are there any areas where it is more appropriate to regulate using a form-based code than traditional use-based/Euclidean zoning that are not located in the Special Downtown District Overlay currently?
- Is there enough guidance for housing variety and do the zoning districts allow for a variety of housing types? Can housing types be consolidated?

Recreation/Conservation

The Recreation/Conservation future land use category is designed to preserve and/or protect sensitive environmental areas of the Village, as well as existing community parks. Conservation areas could include wetlands, floodplains, and lands adjacent to streams, creeks and other water bodies. These areas present severe limitations for development and are proposed for very limited future development in keeping with their fragility and importance to offering a wide range of open space values. The Village's water resources, natural assets, and park lands make it a very desirable place to live. Preserving these resources is important to the essential qualities that help to attract and retain Milford residents. Therefore, future actions and policies to protect the natural environment will be of utmost importance. Where possible, these lands should remain as near to their natural state as possible. However, when the lands are utilized for a public purpose that provides a broad public benefit like a community park, then these lands may be altered to accommodate other uses.

Suburban Residential

After World War II, the new affluence of a growing middle class provided the means for millions of families all across the United States to seek a better way of life by purchasing their own single-family home. The massive exodus to the suburbs in the 1950s required residential development on a massive scale. Unlike the older suburban homes found closer to the center of the Village, which was predominately architect-designed, the 1950s suburban houses were builders' houses. These houses included "Cape Cod," ranch-style, 2-story Colonial, or split-level styles with attached garage. The Suburban Residential Future Land Use classification includes areas of the Village that exemplify this style of development. The uses allowed within this classification would include single-family detached dwellings and their accessory uses. The lot sizes within this category would typically range from around 7,200 square feet to 10,000 square feet. Lands so categorized are found in the northwest, northeast, and southwest portions of the Village, where post War subdivisions exist.

Village Residential

The Village Residential category includes a wide variety of housing styles from varying eras of development. Historic homes, post World War II homes and some current infill development are all found within this future land use district. While a wide variety of housing styles exist in this classification, the size of the lots, placement of the homes, and general “look” of these neighborhoods engenders a feeling of a historical village setting. The uses within this category include single-family detached structures used as a permanent dwelling, and accessory structures, such as detached garages, that are related to these units. Lot sizes are typically 7,200 square feet but can range up to around 9,000 square feet. Continuation of this land use typology is consistent with and helps to reinforce the historical development trends in the Village. Therefore, an important component of development within this classification must deal with compatibility and context sensitive design. Through careful planning and construction, new residential development and rehabilitation of older homes can occur in such a way as to enhance the Village Residential district instead of detracting from the overall character of the area. Ultimately the areas planned for single-family detached Village Residential reinforce the traditional neighborhoods and community culture found in Milford. In addition to the time-honored neighborhoods found within this district, new developments are embracing alternative residential typologies. Single-family attached townhomes, duplexes, and condominiums, for example, have recently been developed in several sections of Village and where appropriate, these types of residential uses could continue to occur. Lot sizes and density within these planned residential developments may vary based on the constraints of the property and the ability to develop a quality project that is compatible with the surrounding community. Each individual development would be unique and would therefore require a higher level of scrutiny by the Village.

Multi-Family Residential

This land use designation is intended to provide opportunities for more affordable housing and alternatives to traditional subdivision development. Multi-family development may serve as a transitional land use; one which buffers single-family units from more intensive land uses or the impacts associated with transportation corridors. This land use category is most commonly defined by the existence of multi-family apartment structures, but may also include group living quarters such as independent and assisted living, and convalescent care facilities. In addition, traditional attached single-family development types like townhouses, condominiums, and duplexes could be found within this future land use category. The majority of the lands designated as multi-family encompass existing apartment complexes found within the Village.



The Marquette apartment building on Washington Street

Office

Office uses include financial institutions, professional service firms, medical facilities, and personal service establishments. This category may include buildings occupied by single professional business or a larger multi-tenant office building. Only three areas of the Village are solely categorized for office uses. The placement of the Office district in these areas is to provide some buffering between existing commercial uses and/or transportation corridors and adjacent residential uses.

Office establishments would also be permitted within lands categorized as Mixed-Use.

Commercial

The Commercial district encompasses a wide variety of retail and service facilities. These businesses could meet both the day-to-day convenience shopping needs of Village residents, as well as commodities which are normally purchased at infrequent intervals, and for which the consumer may “shop around.” Examples of commercial development may include, but are not limited to: banks, florists, convenience stores, personal service establishments, gas stations, large single-use retailers, restaurants, and larger retail strip developments that contain two or more retail/commercial anchors including department stores and large-scale supermarkets.

There are three major concentrations of Commercial lands outlined on the Future Land Use Map. These areas are located where a predominance of commercial development is currently found. Depending on the location of the Commercial category within the Village, the type of commercial development may need to vary to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses. For example, a large-scale commercial retail development would not be appropriate in the northeast section of the Village. This particular area, due to its location, the size of the commercial lots, and the predominance of residential uses, lends itself more to a local commercial establishment, like a personal service business.

It is important to note that commercial uses may also be appropriate within the Mixed-Use category.

Mixed-Use

The Village center of Milford has many unique, historic characteristics such as zero lot line development, multi-use buildings, and pedestrian oriented amenities that form a traditional downtown. The Mixed Use district helps to preserve and enhance these valuable resources, and to create a cohesive downtown for the Village.

This future land use category is characterized by a combination of land use types that complement each other within a specific area. This could include anything from high-tech office uses to commercial retailers to attached residential homes. Development within this category may include a single project that features a mix of uses on the same property, or may also characterize an area of separately owned properties featuring a mix of land uses.

The purpose of the district is to encourage traditional pedestrian-friendly, local service character within an established village town center. It is the intent of the Mixed-Use district to encourage and to promote the proliferation of local and convenience commercial uses, traditional downtown entertainment and social uses, and the development of new buildings that ensure the desired character of the area. In addition to commercial uses, the district would permit the development of office uses, second-floor residential dwellings, civic uses, and other uses common to, and desirable within, the traditional Milford Village environment. Compatibility and context sensitive design is of the utmost importance to this district. The use of standards that are unique to the district for area, bulk, height, and orientation, as well as for design, parking, accessory uses, signage, lighting and screening, will empower the Village center to develop in a manner complementary to, and compatible with, existing development.

It should be noted that the geographic locations of the Mixed Use district is an important component to how the district develops. The types of uses, style of buildings, and pedestrian amenities may be somewhat different at the Huron Street/Main Street four corners than within the historic downtown. However, the emphasis of connectivity between these areas will be important to the overall design of the Village.



Mixed use building on Main Street

Public/Semi-Public District

This category was established to embrace all developed or undeveloped lands owned by various governmental, public, and semi-public agencies and institutions including schools, municipal services, religious uses, and park and recreation properties.

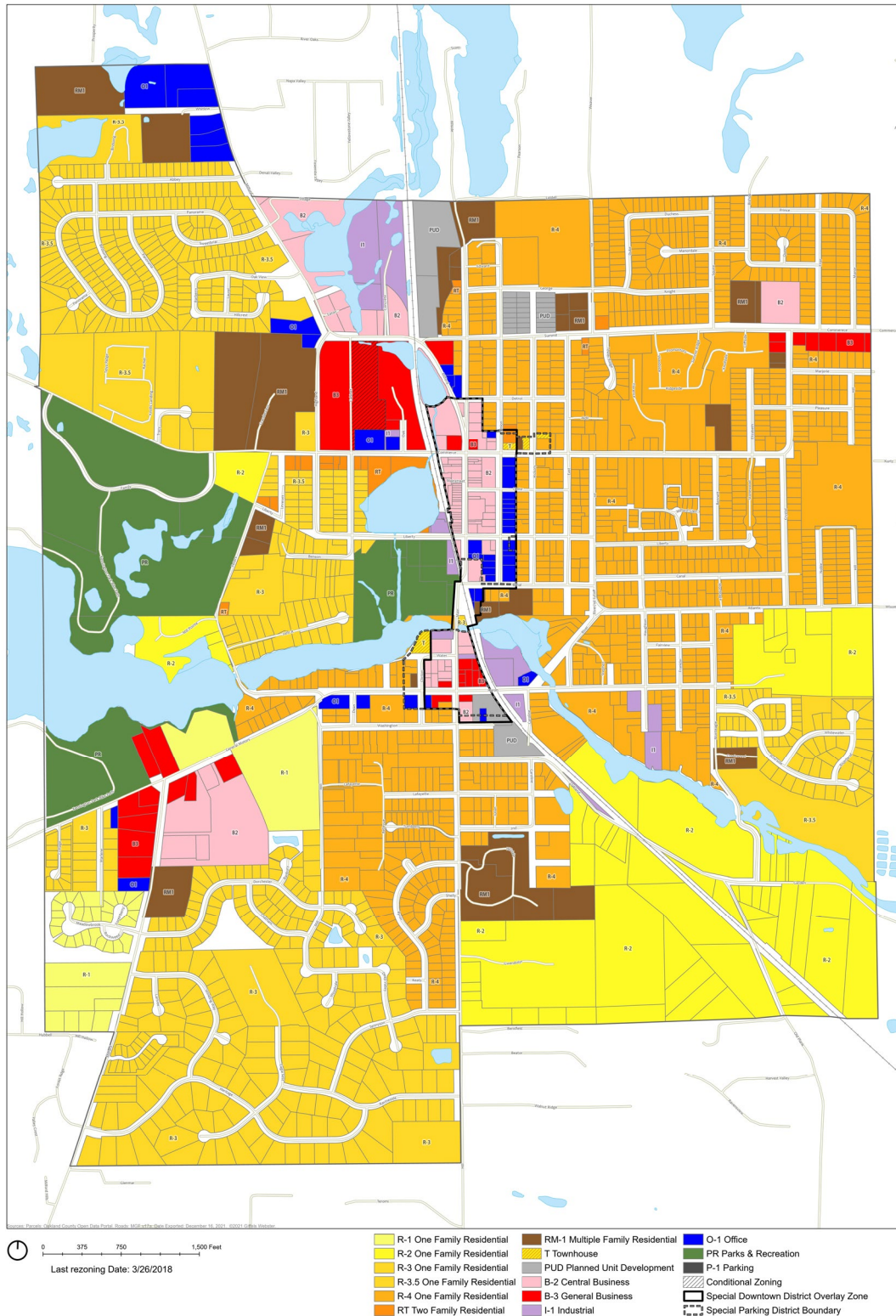
Opportunities for an Update

As a part of the 2022 update, the Village should compare the current zoning map with the 2009 Future Land Use (FLU) Map ([Map 8. Village of Milford: Future Land Use Map](#)). The FLU recommendations included only three residential districts, whereas the existing zoning map has five single-family residential districts, a two-family district, multi-family district, and a townhouse district. The Village should consider whether the FLU recommendation to consolidate residential districts is still an aspirational goal; if so, the Village should establish action steps to implement this change and include them in the implementation plan.

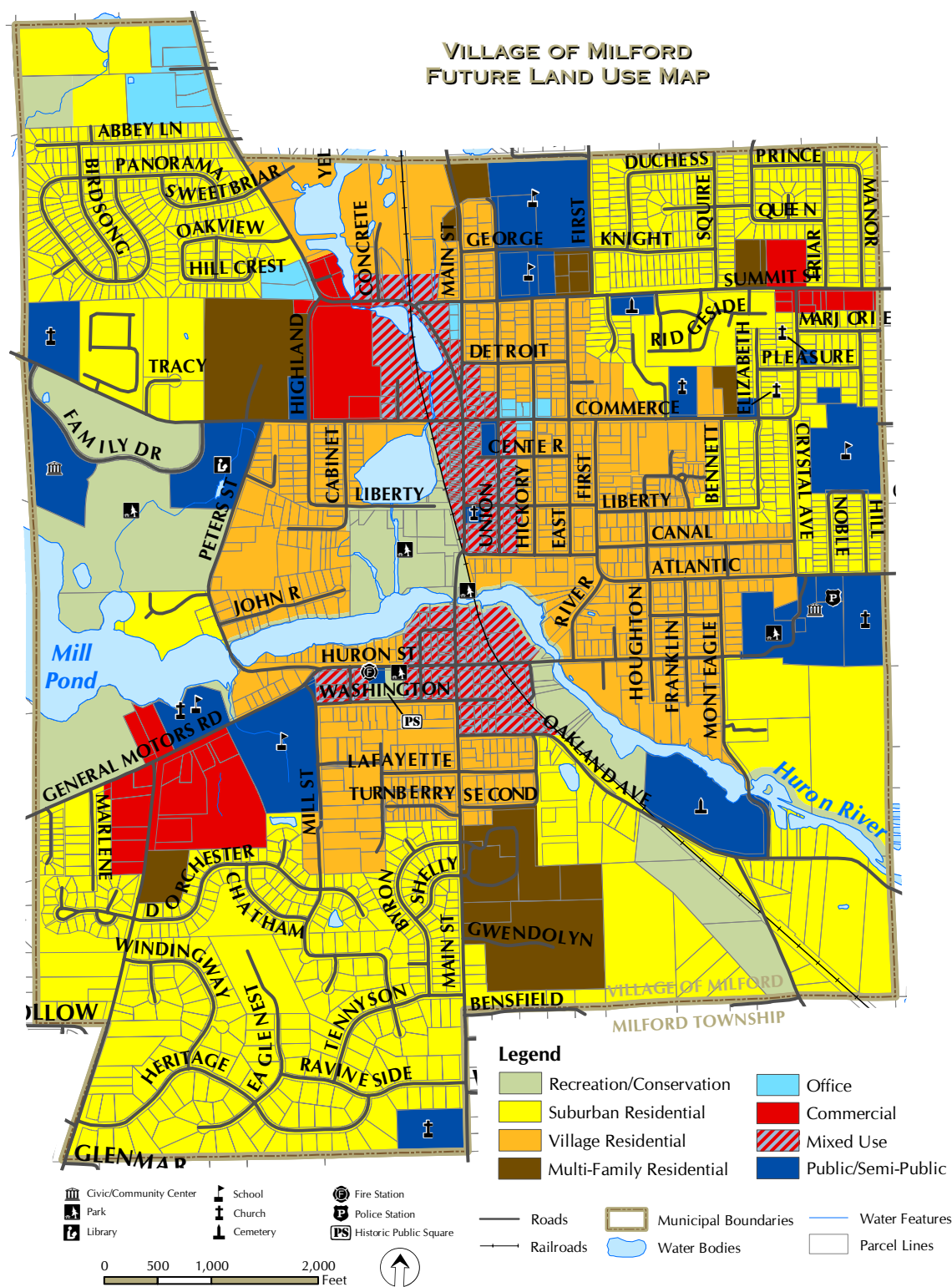
In some instances, areas that were proposed for future residential uses, have been rezoned to more intensive zoning classifications; these uses should be incorporated into the new future land use map. The Village should review compatibility between residential and non-residential zoning districts and identify whether there are opportunities to buffer non-residential with transitional or mixed use districts.

The current zoning map ([Map 7. Zoning Map](#)) indicates that the Special Downtown District Overlay District is smaller than the 2009 proposed mixed use area, which extended to include additional parcels to the North. The Village may consider whether it would be desirable to expand the Special Downtown Overlay District to encourage a mix of compatible land uses with form-based regulations.

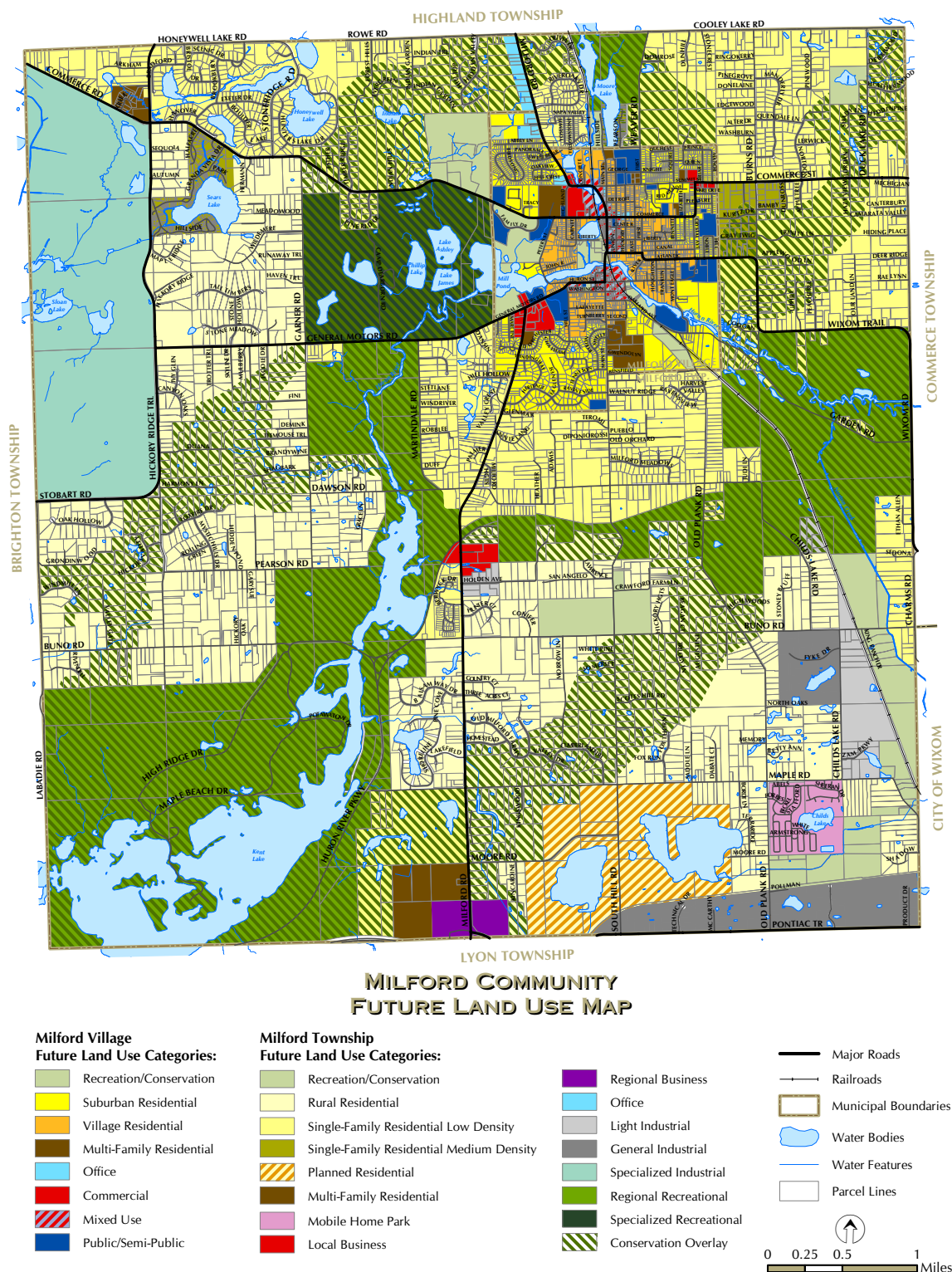
Map 7. Zoning Map



Map 8. Village of Milford: Future Land Use Map



Map 9. Village of Milford and Milford Township: Future Land Use Map



Long-Range Planning in Adjacent Communities

Questions to Consider

- How does long-range planning in the adjacent township impact the Village of Milford?
- Has development occurred in these shared border areas since the 2009 Master Plan? If so, are they consistent or inconsistent with the Village of Milford and Milford Township joint 2009 Master Plan?
- What strategies could strengthen or support development and redevelopment in shared border areas? Are there opportunities for regional collaboration between the Village and the Township?

As Milford plans for its future, it is critical to be aware of neighboring long-range goals and objectives. The Village is entirely contained within Milford Township, and [Map 9. Village of Milford and Milford Township: Future Land Use Map](#) illustrates the future land use designations for the Village and surrounding Township, as of the 2009 joint Master Plan.

Future Land Uses in Milford Township

Milford Township contains the entire Village limits within its boundaries. The shared boundaries around the Village are almost entirely residential, with a few notable exceptions, including the Western border which includes recreational lands and the strip of Milford Rd. directly North of the Village, which is designated for future commercial uses. This segment of Milford Road currently has many lots used as commercial, and the expansion of commercial in this area would be consistent with the surrounding uses.

In addition to the shared borders between the Township and Village, it is important to consider how future growth in the Township will affect the Village, as it serves as the Township's hub for shopping, employment, entertainment, and education. To that end, most future growth in the Township is planned to the South, by Milford Road and the I-94 Interchange. Construction at Kensington Ridge, a Planned Unit Development located at the intersection of Maple and Milford Road, is underway and expected to include 830 new single-family residential units, in place of land previously used as extractive industrial. In addition, more intensive residential uses are expected, with a large district designated for future multi-Family residential uses on S. Hill Rd, also intended to evolve from the extractive industrial uses there now. As the Township experiences significant residential growth, the Village should consider what this will mean for traffic, schools, parks, and township services, with new residents anticipated to shop, work, eat, commute, and play in the Village.

Opportunities for an Update

As residential and commercial growth continue to accelerate along the I-94 interchange and Milford Road, the Village and the Township may consider working together to provide greater accessibility and improve non-motorized connections between the Village's core area and new areas of growth.

In addition, as many new rooftops enter the market, the Village may become a more desirable location to attract key services for residents, including uses such as medical offices or grocery stores, which could be potential uses for redevelopment of existing shopping centers. The Master Plan update should include economic development recommendations that will position the Village to benefit from this growth within the region.

Building Regulating Plan

Questions to Consider

- There should be a clear connection between the goals and the future opportunity/redevelopment sites. Which goals does this section of the plan help to achieve? Are there other goals that these opportunity sites address that are not included in the plan?
- How are district specific goals outlined in the building regulated reflected in the implementation plan? What has been achieved since 2009? What is no longer desirable or a priority for future development?
- Where are form based codes used in Milford? Are there opportunities to expand form-based zoning districts?
- Review the proposed district boundaries and defining characteristics—have these neighborhoods maintained their boundaries or have they evolved since the 2009 Master Plan? Have any of the opportunity sites been developed? Have new sites surfaced as opportunities for redevelopment?

The 2009 joint Master Plan included a building regulating plan that includes prescriptive site and placement standards. The building regulating plan provides different recommendations for nine distinguished districts and includes an assessment of redevelopment opportunities within each district. In addition, the Building Regulating Plan includes specific form-based recommendations to guide future zoning changes and development. The nine districts include:

Main Street

The heart of the Village, Main Street is characterized by the classic 2- to 3-story buildings creating a nearly continuous 4-block double-loaded streetwall.

Defined by:

- The railroad embankment to the west.
- The trestle/gateway to the south.
- The line of Detroit Street on the north.
- The rear lot lines of businesses on Union and Commerce to the east.

Mostly intact, protection of historic buildings is paramount; redevelopment should be mainly smaller infill projects with the existing zero-lot-line setbacks required for all of Main and Commerce. The current setbacks on Union should continue the precedent set by the existing buildings on the east side of street. The scale and building relationships are regulated; however, the guidelines will not be architecturally dictatorial in terms of style. Variety is a key component of the character of Main Street, and the Regulating Plan provides the framework that encourages a balance of consistency and uniqueness. Additionally, a new connection at Liberty Street and the railroad track from Main Street to the Park should be considered to provide for a new pedestrian/bicycle access point as part of the larger connectivity plan, as well as a potential vehicular lane.

South Main

The area around the busy intersection of Main and Huron/General Motors Road has a few valuable buildings, but open corners at the intersection provides an opportunity for a creative traffic solution such as an enhanced roundabout (as shown in the Downtown Development Authority District Plan dated 26 November 2007).

- This special district is defined by:
- The railroad embankment to the east.
- The rear lot lines of parcels on General Motors Road to the south.
- The Huron River to the north.

The residential nature of the north side of Huron/General Motors Road on the west.

Building character is and will continue to be more diverse than Main Street, and therefore can accommodate a mix of uses. Redevelopment will take many forms, including Live/Work and commercial enterprises that do not require a Main Street location. Connectivity to Huron River should be enhanced in this area. Setbacks will follow existing precedents or new precedents set by transportation improvements.

North Main

Main Street changes greatly in visual character where it transitions to North Main. The pond to the west opens up vistas and effectively renders Main Street one-sided verses double-loaded as it curves into Milford Road at the Flatiron building. The Milford Road/Summit Street intersection, another congested point with the railroad grade crossing, is an additional location with the potential for a roundabout.

North Main is defined by:

- Main Street to the east.
- The lines of Detroit Street and Commerce Street to the south.
- The rear property lines on Commerce to the north.
- The northerly mill ponds to the west.

The character of this area should be pedestrian-oriented and potential redevelopment should take advantage of views of the ponds. Transitional and mixed use, the intention is for the zero-lot-line character of Main Street to continue north and define a new edge at the Commerce/Milford intersection.

Old Town

Old Town is the residential area east of Main Street formed by an intimate, small-block street grid containing both historic homes and an eclectic mix of other styles.

This special district is defined by:

- The boundary line of the historic district to the east.
- The side/rear property lines of Canal Street to the south.
- Summit Street to the north.
- Main Street and North Main districts to the west.

Protection and preservation of the existing single-family residential scale and character is the goal for this area. This will include maximum lot sizes, home sizes/density, setbacks, heights, roofs, etc. The Plan provides a more comprehensive planning tool to ensure that any redevelopment or building modifications/infill strengthens the character of Old Town and strictly regulates “teardowns”.

River East

Main Street is currently disconnected from the Huron River to the South. This transitional zone between Main Street and the River has buildings of character and value on the north side of Canal, but an array of inconsistent lot sizes, setbacks, uses, and vacant parcels south of Canal. Connected across the River by Huron, this district covers both sides of the River, with the potential for consistent redevelopment and possible public access from Main Street and easterly neighborhoods.

Defined by:

- The rear lot lines of River Street to the east.
- The railroad embankment to the west and south.
- The side/rear property lines of Canal Street on the north.

River East presents a significant opportunity to connect Main Street to the Huron River. The guidelines outline a framework for extending view corridors and street rights-of-way southward, and encourage a scale and character consistent with the north side of Canal Street and Old Town. Wetlands and the Riparian Corridor will limit any building.

River West

Connected by the newly rebuilt Peters Road Bridge, River West also straddles the Huron River, and is distinctly residential in character. River West is defined by:

- Central Park to the East
- General Motors Road/ Huron to the South
- The rear property lines of John R on the North
- The new residential and a church on the west

A combination of protection and guidelines for replacement residential construction characterize the area plan for River West. The Plan encourages a scale and character consistent with John R by allowing the pattern of larger lots and homes to continue.

Park West

Bracketed between the two main recreational areas- Central Park and the HCMA/YMCA/Library recreation lands, as well as the South Mill Pond, Park West is a very diverse mix of homes and lot sizes in some areas, and a consistent more suburban residential character in others. Defined by:

- Central Park and the south Mill Pond to the east.
- The rear property lines of John R to the south.
- The rear property lines of parcels on Commerce on the north.
- The YMCA/Library recreational area on the west.

This area could be considered the residential equivalent of South Main. Generally characterized by more modest homes, the neighborhoods have a pleasant scale. However, there are several large undeveloped parcels that present opportunities for redevelopment and/or greenspace. A pedestrian/bicycle path through Park West, connecting Central Park and the YMCA/ Library should be explored. Any redevelopment will have some flexibility here, to take advantage of greenspace network possibilities including potential new greenspaces, and a variety of housing types, encouraging a continuance of the existing fabric in some areas and a mix of smaller, more modest homes in others. All development should be of a scale and character that respects and enhances the existing recreational lands. All Park/Recreational/Conservation lands shall be preserved for these uses only and protected from development, including the scale and character of any adjacent development.

Uptown

Including perhaps the largest single redevelopment opportunity, Uptown is the northern and western gateway of the Main Street special district. The large shopping plaza also represents potential for re-thinking connectivity in this area.

Uptown is defined by:

- The railroad embankment to the east.
- The south Mill Pond and rear lot lines of Commerce to the south.
- Summit Street and the north mill pond on the north.
- Assisted living and newer single-family to the west.

Where opportunities are greatest, the guidelines encourage adding value and connectivity. The west side of the mill pond is an opportunity for public access, and the street layout of the former TRW site has the potential to create an intimate neighborhood similar to Old Town or the new development south of Commerce. It could also allow for a hotel or other larger facility such as high tech offices. There should be a connection between Commerce and Milford Road/ Summit through the TRW site. The shopping center parking lot has the potential to be enhanced and made more street-like, with new landscaping and smaller freestanding commercial buildings on "inparcels" across from the existing shopping center building, which is assumed to remain. Development along Commerce should continue the pattern of well-designed and scaled residential and allow for small institutional uses such as churches.

South End

Main Street undergoes a major transition in the South End, from a mixed-use street to tree-lined village street. Originally platted with the same intimate grid as Old Town, only portions of this grid were ever completed.

The special district is defined by:

- The railroad embankment and wooded/rural area to the east.
- The northerly property lines of newer townhomes and single-family homes to the south.
- The rear property lines of Huron and Washington on the north.
- The school and newer residential on the west.

This area is perhaps even more diverse than Park West including historic homes, the original “village square”, a portion of the lumber company, and a wide range of lot sizes and street types including small grid and long winding cul-de-sacs. Some large undeveloped parcels at both the southwest and southeast portions of the district could lend themselves to “completing the grid”, enhancing connectivity with the newer developments to the south, and greenspace.

Opportunities for an Update

This section of the plan was highly prescriptive; Milford may consider removing the building regulating plan in favor of an approach that provides more open-ended opportunities for future development and potential zoning reforms in certain areas, where appropriate. The plan should include an assessment of neighborhood characteristics and an inventory of redevelopment opportunities, with recommendations for potential uses and strategies for building form, but specific dimensional recommendations may be more appropriately analyzed during a zoning ordinance update. This section of the plan could be consolidated into the zoning plan, with implementation recommendations in the implementation matrix. Alternatively, the Village may decide to include this in a chapter focused on economic development.

In addition, evaluating consolidating districts or less fragmentation could be an option. Maintaining the focus on the central business district and downtown core of the Village could strengthen and reinforce the social, cultural, and historic tenets of the community.

Strategies to Effectuate Change

Opportunities for an Update

This section includes recommendations to enhance collaboration between the Village and the Township and recommendations that will help the Village and Township incorporate Smart Growth and Best Management Practices into their planning practices. However, this section is not well-connected to the plan goals and objectives, creating confusion about what the community should focus on implementing. To provide clarity and create a streamlined implementation process, this section should be removed entirely and replaced with an implementation table — a table that includes plan objectives, roles, responsibilities, and timelines in order to map out implementation and evaluate progress. Metrics should also be included in order to evaluate progress towards achieving goals, as shown below in pages from the City of Sylvan Lake’s recently adopted 2022 Master Plan.

Housing & Neighborhoods

The city will maintain its neighborhoods of single-family homes, concentrated between Orchard Lake Road and the lake, although there are two neighborhoods outside of this area. In the future, housing styles will continue to vary in size, architecture and materials, which all contribute to a distinct and unique character. Modest lot sizes and reasonable scale of homes will continue to create a cozy, charming feel. Trees on individual lots, along streets and in community parks will continue to contribute to the attractive, pleasant character of the community.

- Homes will be maintained in good condition; additions and new homes will complement the existing neighborhood character and respect adjacent homes.
- Residents in all neighborhoods will feel like members of the Sylvan Lake community.
- Infrastructure, including local roads, water, sewer and utilities will be maintained and improved as needed to meet the needs of all Sylvan Lake residents.
- The city will allow and encourage a variety of high-quality residential housing for people of all ages and abilities, now and in the future.
- Trees will be maintained in healthy condition and new trees added to ensure the long-term tree canopy.
- The city will remain a safe place to live.

ACTION STRATEGY	LEAD BODY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE	SUPPORTING PARTNERS
ZONING ACTION ITEMS				
Assess how the Zoning Ordinance accommodates housing; explore amendments as needed to ensure a variety of housing options for people of all ages and abilities are permitted in the city, as described in this Master Plan.	PC	2	1	Staff
Assess the Zoning Ordinance to ensure it allows appropriate residential retrofits for accessibility in order to help older residents remain in their homes.	PC	2	1	Staff
Assess the Zoning Ordinance to ensure it allows reasonable accommodation for residents who wish to expand their homes in ways that are contextually appropriate and fit in with nearby homes.	PC	2	1	Staff
ADVOCACY ACTION ITEMS				
Educate the community on the importance of trees.	Staff	1	1	CC
Develop a communications plan to improve community engagement and communication between the city and residents.	Staff	1	1	CC
Explore a tree preservation ordinance to preserve existing trees and improve the city's tree cover.	Staff	2	1	CC
Improve code enforcement to ensure property owners are maintaining their properties consistent with municipal codes.	Staff	1	1	CC

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ACTION STRATEGY	LEAD BODY	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE	SUPPORTING PARTNERS
Encourage renovation and appropriate additions to homes.	Staff	1	1	CC
Explore annual "home shows" that give residents and local home improvement professionals (builders, contractors and designers) opportunities to learn about home improvement. Consider partnering with neighboring communities to make this a larger event.	Staff	1	1	CC
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT ACTION ITEMS				
Plan for the maintenance and ongoing improvement of local roads and utilities.	CC	1	1	Staff
Plan for the maintenance and ongoing improvement of community facilities, including the Community Center, parks and pathways.	CC	1	1	Staff
Time Frame: 1 = High priority, 2 = Medium priority, 3 = Low priority Funding Sources: 1 = General fund/typical financial mechanism available to the city for general government operation; 2 = Special Improvement District programs, 3 = Grants related to connectivity/transportation, air quality, recreation; 4 = Non-traditional grants; 5 = Public-Private Partnerships (P3)				

Metrics - Housing & Neighborhoods

MEASURE	SOURCE	BASELINE DATE MEASURED	FREQUENCY OF BENCHMARK
Complaints for code enforcement have decreased.	Code enforcement tracking		Annually
The city's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) plans for, funds and executes improvements to local roads, parks and community facilities.	Annually CIP		Annually
The city's tree canopy coverage has improved.	Tree Density National Land Cover Data	2020	Every five years
The city's housing stock includes a variety of housing stock, including "missing middle" housing.	City assessing data		Every five years
Building permits for existing homes have increased.	City permit data		Annually
Demolition permits for existing homes have decreased.	City permit data		Annually
Public safety incident reports have decreased.	Public safety		Annually

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Example pages of the City of Sylvan Lake's 2022 Master Plan. Featured is the implementation matrix for its “Housing and Neighborhoods” goal and an accompanying set of metrics that should be assessed regularly following adoption of the plan.



Issues to Consider

This section is intended to highlight current issues for communities to consider in conjunction with long-range planning. They are not the only issues, but they are issues that are highly connected to the ongoing livability of communities.

Age-Friendly Communities

Since the early 2000s, it has been widely recognized that, as a whole, populations are aging. In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau's 2017 National Population Projections identified 2030 as a transformative year because, that is the year by which all baby boomers will be older than age 65. This will expand the size of the older population so that 1 in every 5 residents will be retirement age.¹ Further, that means that within about ten years, older people will outnumber children for the first time in U.S. history.

Across the United States, communities have been planning for their aging populations. As people get older, they have different housing, transportation, safety, health and social concerns. Fortunately for communities seeking to make strategic improvements that support older residents, many of those solutions and strategies also make a positive impact on other generations as well. Making that point clear, many communities now plan for “age-friendly communities,” a term that reinforces benefits to all.

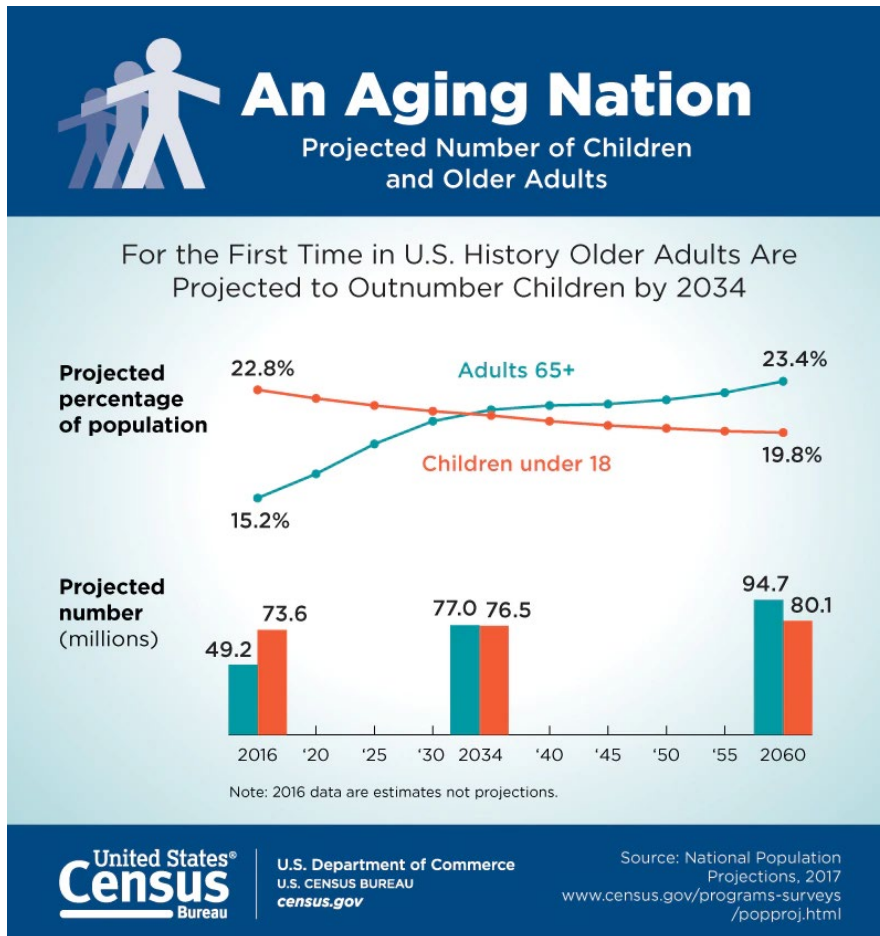
What is an age-friendly community? Simply, it is a community that is livable for people of all ages. That is the short definition of the AARP, a leading advocacy organization for the promotion of age-friendly communities. AARP is the United States affiliate of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and

Communities, which began in 2006. Together, these organizations promote the idea that an age-friendly community encourages active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.

The WHO describes active aging as a lifelong process that includes the following community characteristics:

- Barrier-free buildings and streets that enhance the mobility and independence of people with disabilities, young as well as old
- Secure neighborhoods that allow children and older people to venture outside in confidence, to participate in physically active leisure and in social activities
- Families who experience less stress when older members have the community support and health services they need.
- Engaged older people who participate in volunteer or paid work.
- A local economy that profits from the patronage of older adult consumers.
- Civic groups and others who benefit from the skills, talents, and experiences of older adults.

¹ “2030 Marks Important Demographic Milestones for U.S. Population,” U.S. Census Bureau, March 13, 2018 (Note: Updated September 6, 2018 and October 8, 2019).



An infographic produced by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Questions to Consider

- Is Milford an “age-friendly” community? If so, why? If not, why not?
- If older adults and children are not able to drive, or choose not to, how does the current land use pattern support their independence and mobility?
- Are there residential opportunities for individuals at all stages of life, particularly, young families and seniors?
- Are there cultural, entertainment, and social opportunities for individuals at all stages of life in Milford?

Opportunities for an Update

Consider how the goals, objectives, and strategies will impact different age groups. While the plan includes discussion on senior-focused housing, other alternatives to encourage multi-generational households and aging in place, such as granny flats or ADUs may be desirable. The Village may also explore opportunities to assist homeowners of historic homes with renovations and maintenance of historic homes with renovations and maintenance to support aging in place. Recommendations for non-motorized transportation should be aligned with signage and safety considerations.

Arts & Culture

The earliest human experiences include expressions of art and the creation of cultures that define a group of people. There is no one definition of art; expressions of art include the visual, such as painting, drawing, photography or sculpture, as well as the performed, such as music, theater, dance and film. Art includes the spectrum from the written word and storytelling to animation and textiles. It includes industrial design, architecture and graphic design industries. The definition of “culture” is “all that is fabricated, endowed, designed, articulated, conceived or directed by human beings, as opposed to what is given in nature. Culture includes both material elements (buildings, artifacts, etc.) and immaterial ones (ideology, value systems, languages).”¹

According to the American Planning Association (APA), planners in the past have used art and culture as a “community revitalization tool,” but today, there is recognition that arts and cultural opportunities have tremendous potential to contribute to broader social, economic, and environmental aspects of community life.² The APA states that arts and culture provide a medium to:

- Preserve, celebrate, challenge, and invent community identity;
- Engage participation in civic life;
- Inform, educate, and learn from diverse audiences; and
- Communicate across demographic and socioeconomic lines.

Arts & cultural activities – vast and innumerable – support individual health and wellbeing, promote community identity through placemaking and catalyze economic development.

The City of Fort Wayne's Art Master Plan, Art for All, notes that “public art provides the intersection between our past, present, and future, and also has the power to transform a city because neighborhoods gain social, economic, and cultural value through public art.” The plan identifies the value art brings to a community:

- **Economic Value:** Enhancing the identity and character of (the community) through public art directly supports cultural tourism and economic development strategies, which can attract and retain residents.
- **Social Value:** When people see themselves reflected in their civic spaces, they have a sense of attachment that allows them to feel ownership and respect.
- **Cultural Value:** Public art has the power to create uniqueness through the reflection of the local history and culture, which gives communities a sense of place and identity. Public art provides a visual mechanism for understanding other cultures and perspectives, creating social cohesion and encouraging civic engagement. Through the reinforcement of culture, public art acts as a catalyst for unity and social engagement.

¹ United States Department of Art and Culture (2018). Art & Well-Being: Toward a Culture of Health: Arlene Goldbard.

² American Planning Association (2011). The Role of Arts and Culture in Planning Practice (Briefing Papers), p. 4.

Health and Wellbeing

Over the past several years, studies throughout the world have shown the value of arts and culture on individual and community health. In a 2018 report, the United States Department of Art and Culture (USDAC), a non-governmental grassroots action organization, cites several of these studies that include wide-ranging data to support the power of art on health and wellness. The report concludes, “we understand human connection, meaning-making, creativity, and purpose as key contributions to individual and collective well-being and therefore as powerful modes of prevention.”³ The report concludes with the following findings:

The arts can help keep us well, aid our recovery and support longer lives better lived.

The arts can help meet major challenges facing health and social care: aging, long-term conditions, loneliness and mental health.

The arts can help save money in the health service and social care.

³ United States Department of Art and Culture (2018).

Placemaking

Placemaking means intentionally creating quality places that people seek out to live, work and play. It is a process of creating and nurturing quality places that have a strong sense of place. As it becomes increasingly easier to live and work anywhere, people will choose quality places that are:

- Safe
- Connected
- Welcoming

Conducive to authentic experiences

- Accessible; people can easily circulate within and to and from these locations
- Comfortable; they address cleanliness, character, and charm
- Sociable; they have a physical fabric that encourages people to connect with one another
- Able to promote and facilitate civic engagement.⁴

⁴ Steuteville, R. (2014) “Four Types of Placemaking,” Congress for the New Urbanism <https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/four-types-placemaking>



Because authenticity is a critical component of placemaking, arts and culture unique to a community are key ingredients in creating quality places. The Kresge Foundation is a strong advocate for placemaking in communities and focuses on the role that art and culture play. They establish the following guiding premises:⁵ :

Creativity, aesthetic expression and the impulse to create meaning are evidence of our humanity and serve as community assets from which to build.

Participation in arts and culture takes many forms and occurs in a wide range of venues—parks, community centers, churches and public spaces. People attend art events and buy art. But they also make, teach, learn and support arts and culture in myriad ways, from the amateur to professional realms.

Our societal tendency is to focus on art products, but it is also imperative to recognize and appreciate the creative process. Process can be as important as, or in some cases, more important than art product.

Artists have many kinds of relationships with communities, often helping people find their voice and expression or lending a different perspective when framing or devising solutions to community issues.

Arts-and-culture activity is intrinsically important and contributes to a wide range of community dynamics, conditions and issues.

Arts-and-culture activity in communities relies on supports inside and outside of the cultural sector

⁵ The Kresge Foundation (2018). Creative Placemaking and Expansion of Opportunities: Observations and Reflections: Jackson, Maria Rosario, Ph.D.

Economic impact of arts and culture

The nonprofit organization Americans for the Art provides research data on the impact of arts and culture in communities. Their 2018 report on the economic impact of the arts (supported by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis) found that nonprofit arts and culture industries generated \$166.3 billion in total economic activity and supported 4.6 million jobs in 2015. The report notes that findings show that the arts are an “industry that supports jobs, generates government revenue and is a cornerstone of tourism.”

The economic impacts are substantial in Michigan. In 2017, the arts and culture industries added 2.8% or \$13.9 billion to the state's economy and employed 121,330 workers (about 3% of Michigan's employment). These workers earned wages and benefits totaling over \$7.6 billion.

Questions to Consider

- Where do Milford residents go to enjoy, experience, and learn about arts and culture? How can cultural assets and organizations like the Village Fine Arts Association and the Huron Valley Council for the Arts (based in Highland) help to enhance the Village's thriving business districts and community experience?
- How does the Village incorporate placemaking into its public and private spaces? What Village assets should be highlighted as a part of placemaking efforts? How will these efforts help to generate community pride and distinguish Milford from other “Main Street” communities?

Opportunities for an Update

The 2009 Master Plan has a strong emphasis on economic development, with goals including, “thriving business districts,” “locally oriented industry,” and “A new economy,” yet the objectives do not reflect the substantial value that arts and culture have in meeting these goals. The community should review existing assets and identify strategies to address maintenance needs, enhance existing assets, and develop new opportunities for residents and visitors to experience arts and culture.

Attainable Housing

When communities have a wide spectrum of housing options to support residents, they can accomplish many goals. The availability of “attainable” housing helps accommodate everyone from young adults who are just beginning to live on their own, to families looking to grow, to older residents looking to downsize while staying in the community. It also provides for workforce housing. While there is no universal definition of “attainable housing,” The term was recently defined by the Urban Land Institute as “nonsubsidized, for-sale housing that is affordable to households with incomes between 80 and 120 percent of the area median income (AMI).”

In many communities, young adults and the elderly have limited housing options due to a combination of their lower income levels along with the pricing and availability of housing. This kind of financial challenge can impact people of all ages.

The general rule of thumb based on guidance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is to spend a maximum of 30 percent of a household’s income on housing costs, yet many people find themselves spending more on housing, leaving less of their income available for other household expenses. Finding attainable housing can be challenge and it can stress family finances.

Housing costs are on the rise. According to the National Association of Home Builders, the median price of a new-construction home was \$375,000 in March 2020, up from \$325,100 in October 2018. The median price for existing homes was \$280,600, up from \$257,500

in 2018. The cost of new construction is driving the overall cost of housing higher.

The supply of multifamily for-sale housing is decreasing. Multifamily for-sale housing has historically represented about 20 to 25 percent of total multifamily permits. This type of housing is often more attainable because of its lower cost. In the past 8 years, multifamily for-sale housing has represented 6 to 7 percent of total permits, reflecting a significant post-Great Recession decline.

The same ULI report notes that small housing, under 1,400 square feet, has historically represented about 16 percent of new construction, but in the last cycle, it has averaged closer to 7 percent. When combined with the next size category, 1,400 to 1,800 square feet, the overall distribution of “small homes” has declined from just under 40 percent to 22 percent. Homes over 2,400 square feet have increased from 32 percent to 50 percent of new construction since 1999, according to the ULI.

In Milford, with a median income of almost \$88,000, households should spend no more than \$29,333 per year or \$2,444 per month on all housing costs. For homeowners, this includes the mortgage payment, insurance and taxes. For renters, this includes rent and utility costs.

In addition to housing costs, transportation costs can also be a substantial economic burden. For the Southeast Michigan region (SEMCOG), 29 percent of income is spent on housing and 23 percent is spent on transportation (52 percent total). In Oakland County, where housing costs are higher, on average, than the region, 58 percent of income is spent on housing and transportation (34 percent housing and 23 percent transportation). According to the Center for Neighborhood Technology, the total housing and transportation costs for the Village of Milford are 51% of income.

Questions to Consider

- Do people who work in Milford have the financial means to also live in Milford, or do limited housing options require they commute? Where are there housing opportunities that are attainable and inclusive? Do they meet the needs of the Milford workforce? Do they meet the needs of Milford’s low-income/vulnerable senior population?
- How do housing options impact commute patterns? How do housing needs/types inform transportation needs? For example, areas near senior housing may require wider sidewalks to be accommodating for individuals who are less likely to use a vehicle.
- How do transportation options effect housing choices in the area? For example, non-motorized pathways may provide some relief for vehicle parking and storage, creating opportunities for housing that is less auto-oriented.

Opportunities for an Update

The Master Plan should provide direction for how the Village may look to include or encourage alternative housing types, such as ADUs, live/work units, mixed-use buildings, or single-family conversions without compromising Milford’s character and identity.

The Master Plan should include economic development strategies to encourage new housing units/types that will address the housing shortage, support downtown businesses and meet the needs of Milford’s residents and workforce.

The Master Plan should include strategies to ensure compatibility between existing housing types and new housing types.

Complete Streets/Non-Motorized Transportation

'Complete Streets' is a term used to describe a transportation network that includes facilities for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and other legal users of all ages and abilities. In 2010, Michigan passed the Complete Streets legislation to encourage and justify the development of Complete Streets in communities. At that time, Michigan's Planning Enabling Act was also amended to require master plans to address Complete Streets. Communities that adopt Complete Streets policies recognize that:

- Complete Streets provide transportation choices, allowing all people to move about their communities safely and easily.
- Complete Streets policies acknowledge the problems with current transportation facilities.
- Implementing Complete Streets strategies will make communities better places to live and work.

An important element of the Master Plan is a plan for the overall system of streets and roads in a community. This system provides for the movement of people and goods to and from places inside and outside the community. Road rights-of-way also provide places for utilities such as water lines, gas lines, sanitary and storm sewers, cable television lines, electrical power and telephone lines to co-locate, lowering the need for easements across private land. Because of these combined roads and utility function, the system of roads in a community can impact economic conditions, environmental quality, energy consumption, land development, and overall quality of life in a community.

The area's trail systems are not only an important recreational amenity, but also is an important transportation facility locally and regionally.

Other than ongoing maintenance to keep local streets, sidewalks

(where provided) and trail surfaces in good repair, there may be opportunities to further enhance the Village's transportation network to better serve all users. These may include the following:

Site Design

Minor improvements within a site can improve the usability of public non-motorized facilities such as requiring safe pedestrian connections from building entrances to street sidewalks, requiring parking facilities including bike racks and/or storage lockers along with parking for motorized vehicles and considering access management within the parking lot. All bike parking should meet the APBP guidelines (Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals).

Access Management

Typical driveway standards require alignment or minimum offsets, as well as separation from intersections and other driveways on the same side of the street to improve safety of motorists. Additional access management techniques include limiting the number of access drives on major roads, shared drives, encouraging joint access easements and maximizing corner clearance requirements especially for intersections that require special attention.

Collaboration

Collaboration with multiple stakeholders is another important tool for successful implementation. Indeed, with road facilities connecting with and shared by adjacent communities, it is critical to have shared visions of local transportation goals. Most of the time, the roadway jurisdiction determines the combination of outside agencies that are required to be part of the stakeholder team. Local residents, surrounding municipalities, the RCOC, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and other local non-profit agencies such as Michigan Trails and Greenways, or Rails to Trails conservancy are the potential members of a team.

Questions to Consider

- Where is Milford connected to other places in the region through non-motorized transportation networks? Where are these connections needed? What other jurisdictions/stakeholders should Milford work with to strengthen its connections within the region?
- Where is it unsafe to get around in Milford on foot or by bicycle? What improvements are needed to provide better access and connectivity for these places?

Opportunities for an Update

The updated Master Plan should include a review of all existing and proposed connections since the last plan was adopted in 2009. This review should help determine what connections are available and where barriers prevent connections from being made as well as where safety should be improved.

Benefits of Complete Streets & Related Strategies

Safety



- Reduce pedestrian accidents by increasing the safety factor.
- Perceptions of the safety of non-motorized travel strongly influence decisions about alternative modes of travel for many.
- Reducing either the width or number of travel lanes (road diet) to make space for shoulder or bike paths will improve safety.



On average, a pedestrian was killed in the US every 88 minutes in traffic crashes in 2017.

Health



- Walking or biking to school may result in reduced child obesity rates.
- Sedentary lifestyles are associated with a host of long-term health problems.
- Sidewalks, bike paths and access to transit increases level of physical activity.



Between 1989 and 2018, child obesity rates have risen dramatically, while the percentage of walking or biking to school has dropped.

Access



- A variety of transportation options allows everyone – particularly people with disabilities and older adults – to get out and stay connected to the community.
- Designing a street to accommodate those with mobility challenges may reduce overall pedestrian risk.



54% of older American living in inhospitable neighborhoods say they would walk and ride more often if things improved.

Environment



- Our dependence on the automobile increases air and water pollution resulting from motor vehicles and the impervious surfaces of roads.
- Studies have shown that 5 to 10 percent of urban automobile trips can reasonably be shifted to non-motorized transport.



Carbon-dioxide emissions can be reduced by 20 pounds per day or more than 4,800 pounds in a year per each commuter by using transit instead of driving.

Economy



- Increase consumer activity by redesigning residential and local business districts with traffic calming measures.
- Implementing Complete Streets has proven to be an effective placemaking strategy for economic development and community revitalization.



Nearly 40 percent of merchants reported increase in sales, and 60 percent more area residents shopping locally due to reduced travel time and convenience associated with Complete Streets strategies.

Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are the fundamental building blocks of a community. More than just the area in which people live, neighborhoods also include shops, restaurants, parks, places of worship and schools. They tend to be the places where we can attend to at least some of our daily needs within close proximity of where we live.

Often, neighborhoods draw together people of similar ethnicities, incomes and life circumstances. Sometimes they have defined boundaries based on streets or natural features. Regardless of their shape or composition, neighborhoods can serve as a needed link between the individual and the overall community.

Neighborhoods are connected by physical elements like streets and sidewalks as well as by loose or formal social connections, like a neighborhood watch program, neighborhood association, time bank or phone chain. Well-connected neighborhoods are better able to share information about the community at large, encourage civic participation in events and activities, and raise awareness of resources that may be available for people when they're needed. In disconnected neighborhoods, people may be less likely to feel they're part of the overall community and may miss out on opportunities to participate in civic life. This presents challenges for local governments as well as schools, businesses and service organizations. Strengthening neighborhood connections helps tie the community together and improve quality of life for all.

Planning at the neighborhood level can provide an opportunity to engage more people because the topics have more immediacy and relevance. It can take advantage of some built-in neighborhood networks, where they exist, that provide another avenue for communication and outreach. While often neighborhood groups get active when faced with a controversial development project (as evidenced by the common term NIMBY – Not in My Back Yard), proactive neighborhood engagement might better prepare a community for new development/redevelopment.

Neighborhood planning looks at issues specific to an area within a larger community. Some of the issues that could prompt long-range planning include:

- Preservation and Conservation - conserving the built and natural heritage of an area
- Sustainability - developing sustainability policies and initiatives
- Access and Civic Engagement - improving access to local democracy, social services, and government institutions
- Housing and Community Development - addressing sector-specific issues such as housing or economic development
- Transportation and Connectivity - enhancing opportunities for active transportation by changing the physical treatment of neighborhood streets and public spaces¹

The American Planning Association developed a Policy Guide on Neighborhood Collaborative Planning in 1998. It finds that “neighborhoods are the strategic building blocks of overall community development. Neighborhood collaborative planning requires understanding of the economic, social and physical characteristics in order to maintain both the sense of place and the sense of community.”² The APA recommends seven general policies about neighborhood planning:

Comprehensive plans provide the framework for neighborhood planning and should be done within the context of a community-wide plan.

Where there are identifiable neighborhoods, a jurisdiction's comprehensive plan should reflect neighborhood plans and neighborhood plans should support the broader needs of the community and region.

Planning decisions should be directed to the most appropriate level. Planning decisions that have limited impact on the community as a whole should be made by, or on the basis of advice given by, those neighborhood groups primarily affected. On the other hand, planning decisions that affect the community as a whole should not be overly influenced by a single neighborhood's needs or interests.

¹ Neighborhood Planning for Resilient and Livable Cities, Part 1 of 3: Why Do Neighborhoods Matter and Where Are We Going Wrong? Jayne Engle, Montreal. Nik Luka, Montreal and Uppsala. 28 September 2014

² American Planning Association Policy Guide on Neighborhood Collaborative Planning, 1998.

Neighborhoods should be encouraged to seek the best organizational structure that is suited to achieve their goals and objectives such as, but not limited to neighborhood associations, co-ops, development corporations.

Neighborhood-based coalitions that assist in the development of individual neighborhood organizations, articulate neighborhood views on community wide issues, and facilitate coordination in the planning process should be encouraged and supported by local government.

Advocacy planning for neighborhoods should be accepted as a legitimate role for professional planners, both publicly and privately employed.

To be effective in many cases, neighborhood planning needs to go beyond addressing the physical conditions of the area and also examine issues of social equity. To that end, the APA at the national, chapter and division levels should work with social service, housing, economic development, public health, educational, recreational, judicial and other organizations to ensure that the issues social equity, children and families receive attention through the efforts of planners.

The challenge for communities is not letting the hyperlocal focus of neighborhood planning and involvement result in competition between neighborhoods or let the voice of the neighborhoods drown out strategies that are good for the overall community. Keeping a “glocal” perspective means that it is important to plan and act locally in neighborhoods while nurturing the relationships between neighborhoods and the community at large, highlighting neighborhood action strategies that result in resilient and livable communities.

Questions to Consider

- What parts of the community are distinguishable from other areas as a result of their unique development patterns, boundaries/borders, or identity? Are priorities within these areas the same as the broader Village?
- How can Milford encourage community building within and between neighborhoods?

Opportunities for an Update

The [Building Regulating Plan](#) includes nine districts with descriptions of the defining characteristics within each area and recommendations for development and streetscapes. Consider how these districts have evolved, both in terms of development patterns and boundaries. Perhaps there have been changes over time that altered or effected the priorities and future vision within the district.

As demand for new and different housing types have become more and more prevalent, it is important to create regulations that ensure new development is compatible with existing neighborhood character. As Milford reviews strategies to incorporate additional housing, maintaining the historic and distinguishing characteristics of neighborhoods must also be a planning consideration.

Sustainability & Resiliency

It is becoming critical to include concepts of resiliency and sustainability into land use plans. Though they are related, resiliency and sustainability are not the same. Sustainability is the well-established concept that focuses on decreasing or eliminating the detrimental future impacts of our current activity. Resiliency recognizes that our built environment will be subject to stresses and is the practice of designing that environment in a way that can endure those stresses. Some threats are ongoing, persistent stresses, while others are sudden shocks or single events that disrupt the day-to-day functioning of the community.

As we plan for the future, many of the challenges we will face are related either directly or indirectly to our place in larger systems, both natural and man made. We often have little direct local control over these systems, but adapting to change and discovering our role in contributing to the health of these systems is nonetheless essential to planning for a community that can survive and thrive even in the face of the most severe challenges.

Michigan is affected by our changing climate in many ways, some of which may seem counterintuitive. For instance, as average annual temperatures rise, the chance of prolonged deep freezes such as those experienced in the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 winters may increase, as warming elsewhere on the planet destabilizes the jet stream, allowing Arctic air that would normally be trapped further north to descend into the Upper Midwest.

A changing climate has far-reaching implications for Michigan's agricultural and tourism economies, waterfront development, and communities with older stormwater management infrastructure. Within the last decade, the local area has experienced multiple heavy rain events that have led to property damage and decreased mobility and must anticipate that more flooding will occur in the future, damaging property, impairing access to parts of the village, and creating financial distress for local residents and businesses.

Resilient communities are not only preparing for weather and climate-related shocks, but are also preparing for economic and health shocks as well. In 2020, we saw the impacts of a global pandemic on local community health, education, recreation, commerce, technology and social connectivity. These impacts touched everyone's lives in big and small ways and may have lasting impacts in our communities.

Planning for resiliency must consider that some threats are ongoing, persistent stresses, while others are sudden shocks, single events that disrupt the day-to-day functioning of the community.

Effects of Climate Change

Climate Change is not merely a future threat; changes in the local climate have already been recorded in places around the world, and Michigan is no exception. For instance, according to data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, average temperatures in the Great Lakes region rose 2.3 degrees Fahrenheit from 1951 to 2017, extending the frost free season by 16 days, while total annual precipitation increased 14 percent and the number of heavy precipitation events rose 35 percent. By 2070, average temperatures in southern Michigan are expected to rise an additional 4 degrees, and the annual number of days above 95 degrees will correspondingly rise by between 5 and 10. Communities will experience between 25 and 35 fewer nights below freezing, and average annual ice cover on the lakes will continue to decline.

As the frequency and intensity of severe weather events continues to increase, communities will experience economic disruption. For instance, while the frost-free season has nominally increased, farmers in many of Michigan's agricultural communities have not benefited in recent years due to abnormally late frosts (such as those in mid-May, 2020) or heavy rain events, which have damaged early crops or delayed planting of late crops. Rising temperatures and more very hot days may effect the timing of summer festivals and tourism.

As part of long-range planning, communities should understand, anticipate and plan for the local effects of regional climate trends. These include:

Precipitation. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, average annual precipitation in the Great Lakes region is expected to increase over the next several decades. While the change may seem small, projections indicate that the average rise will be driven by an increase in heavy precipitation days, and that there will also be a modest increase in the number of consecutive dry days each year. In other words, rainfall is expected to become more concentrated in heavy storms.

Temperature. Average temperatures in the Great Lakes region have increased and will continue to increase well into the future, even if greenhouse gas emission are sharply reduced soon; if emissions are not curbed, the increase will be greater. The region will likely see about a 4.5-degree rise in average temperatures over the next several decades, with more than 30 additional days over 90 degrees and more than 10 additional days over 95 degrees. The area is expected to see at least 30 fewer nights below 32 degrees by 2070.

Carbon dioxide is one of the most prevalent and damaging greenhouse gases that contributes to global warming. Trees naturally absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, intercepting that carbon dioxide before it enters the atmosphere. Trees can help mitigate against extreme temperatures and reduce energy needs by providing shade that can help reduce the energy needed to cool a building during the summer and can help reduce the heat island effect. Likewise, trees can buffer harsh winds, saving energy on heating buildings in the winter.

Addressing Resiliency & Identifying Vulnerable Populations

Resilient communities anticipate likely shocks, understand trends in stressors, and prepare for potential worst case scenarios. Understanding where a community is physically most vulnerable to specific events, and understanding which members of the community are likely to be most vulnerable in each case is key to effective planning. This section discusses in general terms what the community may expect in the future and what might be done to prepare for it; this plan recommends the development of a community resiliency plan.

Though an entire community will be affected by a major event such as a severe storm, flood, or long power outage, certain segments of the population are more vulnerable to the effects of such events, and in some cases are also more likely to live in locations that are more likely to be severely affected.

Public health emergencies. The Covid-19 pandemic brought with it unprecedented economic disruption, forced short-term changes in social habits, destroyed numerous small businesses, and led to a very large increase in unemployment in a very short time period. Planning for public health emergencies needs to consider the many dimensions of the social fabric that are heavily impacted, including the availability of medical services, government's ability to continue functioning under quarantines or stay-at-home orders, and the locations and numbers of vulnerable populations. Local police, fire, and ambulance services may be particularly taxed in a future public health emergency.

Though the most vulnerable populations will vary based on the specific event, certain population segments warrant special attention even in a general analysis:

- Low-income households
- Elderly
- Disabled
- Children

Low-income households may lack the financial resources to support quick recovery after a disaster or to prepare effectively for likely future events. The elderly and disabled may similarly lack financial resources and mobility, and may be more socially isolated than other groups. Especially in extreme heat events, the elderly and very young children are much more likely to be badly affected, including to the point of hospitalization, than the general population.

Planning Ahead

Sustainability and resiliency planning helps create a more equitable and inclusive community where people want to live, work, and play. Future planning should include: further refining sustainability and resiliency in the context of the Village determining areas of focus and goals, gathering baseline data related to focus areas, and setting up systems to monitor, collect, record, and analyze data.

Moving forward, planning efforts should include a public outreach process in two basic parts: education and input. Education includes making community members aware of potential threats and the process of planning for them, with an emphasis on outreach to the most vulnerable members of the community. The input process should offer the opportunity for residents and other stakeholders such as Village staff, commercial property owners and business owners to engage in detailed, focused conversations regarding resiliency planning issues.

Questions to Consider

- What potential future threats could impact Milford?
- How can Milford plan to protect and preserve community health and prosperity for future generations? Consider economic, public health, and environmental threats.

Opportunities for an Update

The 2009 Master Plan included a green infrastructure plan, which resulted in an analysis of opportunities for ecosystem preservation, amenities, and green infrastructure based on the habitat quality of land. However, since most of the land within the Village is developed, the recommendations were heavily focused on opportunities in Milford Township. The Master Plan Update should include specific recommendations for how the Village can better prepare for heavy rains and flooding events through green infrastructure and limitations on impervious cover.

Since the 2009 Master Plan was adopted, a national focus on climate protection and carbon output reduction has leveraged new advancements in energy and transportation systems. As non-renewable energy sources and electric vehicle technologies become more prevalent, consider the effect these technologies may have on the built environment.

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Conclusion

The Village's 2009 Master Plan was a joint Master Plan with Milford Township, and in consideration of an update, both communities should discuss what level of collaboration is appropriate. With that, the plan has many elements that are likely still consistent with both communities' vision for the future; however, the public input that informs the plan is over twenty years old and should be updated to reflect the issues that impact residents today.

In addition, changes to development patterns and growth in the Village since 2009 should be reviewed to identify shifts in previously stated goals and priorities. While the 2009 Master Plan established a vision for future growth, the 2022 Update provides an opportunity to review recent developments and identify where they were in and out of alignment with the 2009 vision.

Finally, structural improvements to the plan, such as the inclusion of an implementation table, will improve the ability to execute the plan and progress towards stated goals. A Master Plan should be action-oriented and recommendations should include specific timelines with responsible parties listed.

