

**MAPLE GROVE TOWNSHIP
SAGINAW COUNTY**

**MASTER PLAN
2024**

**Planning Commission Draft
December 3, 2024**

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Maple Grove Township

Master Plan 2024

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COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Prior to European settlement, it is believed that much of the Midwest was settled by Indian Tribes that were with the Hopewell tradition. These mound-builders declined by 500 AD. By the time the French introduced the fur trade in Michigan around the turn of the 17th Century, the Anishinaabe peoples had settled much of the State. The three main Anishinaabe nations in Michigan include: Ojibwe (Chippewa), Odawa (Ottawa), and Bode'wadmi (Potawatomi), which comprised the Council of the Three Fires. At first contact, the three Tribes were agrarian peoples with corn as a main foodstuff with some wild rice, squash, and kidney bean cultivation. Most of their settlements were along the Great Lakes shores and main rivers while much of the interior of the State was only seasonally occupied for hunting and gathering wild fruits and vegetables. Trade with the French had an impact on the traditional way of life and battles between the French, English, and eventually Americans increased aggression and war activities within the Council of the Three Fires and with other Tribes including the Iroquois Confederacy.

First contact with Westerners on the East Coast and Canada had ripple effects on Indian Tribes all the way west into Michigan and throughout the Midwest. Impacts of wide-spread fatal diseases, trade, and dislocation on the Eastern seaboard had far reaching effects including in the territory that would eventually become Michigan. Some Tribes that were in Michigan at first contact were pushed further west as a result of all of the turmoil and dislocation caused by European settlement on the eastern seaboard of North America.

By 1760, the Ottawa controlled much of the western half of the Lower Peninsula while the eastern half was under the Ojibwa. The area including much of the eastern Lower Peninsula including what would eventually become Saginaw County was ceded by the Treaty of Saginaw (aka Treaty with the Chippewa) in 1819, principally with the Ojibwe, but the treaty also included the Ottawa and Potawatomi. This treaty furthered the settlement of Michigan by non-Indians, which had begun in earnest with the Treaty of Detroit in 1807. This earlier treaty ceded SE Michigan and the lower 2/3rds of the Thumb, opening up the region around Detroit for European settlement. These two treaties laid the framework for the Treaty of Washington (1836) which ceded the western half of the Lower Peninsula and the eastern half of the Upper Peninsula. With much of the Michigan Territory now opened to European settlement, the Erie Canal, which opened in 1825, fueled rapid European settlement of Michigan with immigrants from the Continent and migrants from New York State.

Saginaw Territory was first organized in 1824, and it was appended to Oakland County for administrative purposes. Saginaw is an Ojibwa word meaning the "land of the Sauks" or "place of the outlet", which may be more likely. The outlet of Saginaw River in Saginaw Bay contained many Indian settlements. In January 1835, Saginaw County was formed as an official county. With the territorial dispute with Ohio finally settled, Michigan was able to join the American union in 1837.

With European settlement, logging became the main industry in Saginaw County. Like the rest of Michigan, the area was lumbered using water to drive logs down many streams and into the Saginaw River for processing at the mill in the Cities of Saginaw City and East Saginaw. Much of the lumbering of the region was completed by 1890.

Maple Grove's Layton Corner was first settled in 1854 and the Township petitioned the County to be formally organized in 1857. The Township is a standard 36 full sections and the Township Hall at Layton

Corner is located directly in the center of the Township. By 1880, an agricultural report indicated there were 200 farms in operation within the Township with a population of 1,378.

Since shortly after Township was initially lumbered in the mid-1800s up to the present day, farming has been the main economic activity that has supported the Township's residents. There are some woodlots along the Mistiguay Creek, woodlots along Mitchell's Creek, woodlands the northwestern corner of Section 6 of the Township, and some woodlands in Sections 1, 2, and 3 along the Township's northeastern boundary.

PLANNING CONTEXT

Saginaw County is located in Mid-Michigan, in the area which is now called the Great Lakes Bay Region with Maple Grove Townships being located on the southern edge of this region. Saginaw County is irregularly shaped with the southernmost row of townships only extending partially across the length of the county. Maple Grove Township is located in the most southeasterly portion of the County, butted up against Genesee County to the east and Shiawassee County to its south.

Saginaw County does not have its own planning commission or county master plan, and the GLS Region V Planning and Development Commission serves as the regional planning organization. The surrounding Townships in Saginaw and Genesee Counties have their own master plans and enforce their own zoning ordinances while Shiawassee County's Hazelton Township falls under the umbrella of county-wide planning.

The purpose of this Master Plan is to serve as a living document to guide Maple Grove's future development based on community needs and desires. A Master Plan is comprehensive in scope, but also provides more specific actions and site locations for implementing the community's goals.

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA), Public Act 33 of 2008, requires that the planning commission to create and approve a Master Plan as a guide for development and to assess the ongoing validity of the recommendations of the Master Plan at least once every five years after adoption. This Master Plan will be Maple Grove Township's first Master Plan.

The Township adopted its current Zoning Ordinance on July 19, 2021, publication date of July 24, 2021, with its effective date seven days later.

OTHER PLANS AND PLANNING EFFORTS

2019 MDOT Bay Region Region Nonmotorized Plan

This plan updates the first Bay Region Nonmotorized Plan from 2010. The plan covers 15 of Michigan's County's that are located around Saginaw Bay. The goal of the plan is to "identify a safe, comfortable, convenient, and interconnected nonmotorized transportation network" that is to be developed for pedestrian and bicyclist travel throughout the region.

Currently, the Plan does not show any nonmotorized facilities proposed for the southeastern corner of Saginaw County or for the surrounding Shiawassee or Genesee Counties. This plan only illustrates major regional trails, but it does not identify sub-regional and inter-local trails that connect adjoining communities and destinations together. The plan also does not take into account the advent of electric

bicycles (e-bikes) that are revolutionizing the bicycle and personal transportation industry, and these vehicles are significantly shifting commuter/pleasure riding habits.

2019-2023 Saginaw County Recreation Plan

The County's recreation plan does not include any proposed facilities within proximity to the Township. The nearest County operated recreation facility is Price Nature Center in Bridgeport Township, over seven miles from the northeastern corner of the Township.

Maple Grove Township Zoning Ordinance

Maple Grove Township's Zoning Ordinance acts as the local land use enforcement mechanism with very specific land use controls. The Zoning Map in conjunction with the Ordinance text provide specific regulations for each parcel of land within the Township. Overall, the existing Zoning Ordinance provides a foundation for land development actions within the Township. However, upon adoption of this Master Plan, the Township is recommended to begin the process to review and revise its Zoning Ordinance to ensure the general standards, development requirements, and district regulations support the goals and objectives articulated in this Master Plan.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A successful master plan projects the community's future vision for itself in clear and simple terms. This plan serves as the roadmap for guiding future land use decisions by the Township, its officials, and its boards with the goal of incremental changes guided by this plan will bring the Township closer to its vision that it outlined for itself during the 20-year term of the Plan.

Without a clearly articulated plan, no community will be able to accomplish its land use and development goals. A key tool to capturing this long-range vision is through community engagement. This approach ensures that all of the community members are asked in a manner in which they're comfortable to engage with the planning process. Proper engagement ensures that all community members are able to have their thoughts, wishes, and/or concerns heard. The results of the engagement are then validated through the various layers of the review process, eventually being affirmed by the final engagement steps – the Visioning Workshop and the Public Hearing.

Without community involvement, master plans will likely be ignored and not referred to after adoption. Community buy-in assists in driving master plan adoption efforts. This implementation challenge occurs in most Michigan communities. This plan has been designed to address this major implementation hurdle by focusing on land use and development issues facing the residents of Maple Grove Township. With community knowledge and support, the Master Plan's implementation chapters have been tailored to solely focus on those steps and actions that are within the purview and control of the Township and its various entities.

Community Engagement

There are several phases of the community engagement process. Firstly, all of the Planning Commission meetings were publicly noticed and open to the public. The public was also encouraged to seek out members of the Planning Commission to present their concerns and provide their vision for the future of the Township.

The second community engagement component was the online citizen opinion survey. This survey was targeted to identify resident concerns including housing choice, community character, commercial development, land use issues, green-energy production, and quality of life concerns/goals. The Planning Commission helped to fine tune the questions to the specific issues facing the Township. Over 200 people either took the survey electronically or hard-copy, which were available at either at the Township offices or Senior Citizens Center. Links were posted on the Township website, articles appeared in the *Saginaw News* and *Tri-County Citizen* and messages encouraging residents to take the survey were posted on multiple social media pages. The Planning Commission were asked to invite their friends to take the survey via email and to post about the survey's availability on their social media feeds too. Excluding non-residents who responded to the survey, the volunteer survey response rate was nearly seven percent! Though not a scientific poll that obtains a measured array of ages, races, and sex, this high rate provides a meaningful picture of the land use interests and concerns of Maple Grove residents.

The final main component of the community engagement activities was the Visioning Workshop. This workshop was held on [redacted] at [redacted]. At the workshop, Wade Trim prepared several interactive stations where core concepts of the Master Plan including [redacted], and [redacted]. The attendees confirmed several of the concepts presented while [redacted] was refined from input received at the workshop.

The last community engagement step in the Master Plan adoption process was a noticed Public Hearing, which took place on [redacted] at the Township's Senior Citizens Center.

Planning Commission

During the preparing of the Master Plan, the Planning Commission discussed components of the Plan at several of its meetings during the Plan's development where the public was encouraged to attend and participate with the discussion. Several members of the Township Board of Trustees were regular participants in these discussions as well. The input from these meetings provided guidance to the consulting team throughout the development process.

Once the final draft Master Plan was completed, it was presented to the Planning Commission final review, and upon acceptance, this final draft was then formally recommended to the Township Board of Trustees in [redacted] for its review. The Township Board accepted the recommendation of the Planning Commission at its [redacted]-meeting and approved the Master Plan for distribution to the State-mandated review agencies. Input received from the review agencies and the Public Hearing attendees was incorporated into the draft plan and presented to the Planning Commission at its [redacted] meeting where the Planning Commission adopted the Maple Grove Township Master Plan 2024.

Public Hearing

Formal Adoption

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Gaining an understanding of a community through socioeconomic data is an important component of the comprehensive planning process. An appropriate Master Plan socioeconomic profile will include significant data on population, housing, and local economy. All of these aspects of the community have direct impacts and influences on future land use decisions. These data identify trends that impact population growth or decline, aging characteristics of the population, and future demand for a variety of public services within the Township.

This socioeconomic profile uses both the decennial census data and the most recent American Community Survey five-year estimates (2017-2021 ACS) from the US Census Bureau as well as data from Esri, a GIS data company.

Population Trends

Population trends are the most important factor influencing land use decisions in any community. If the population of a community is growing, there will be a need for more housing, commerce, industry, parks and recreation, public services and facilities, or roads while a stagnant or shrinking community indicates a changing community with a differing set of needs that should be accommodated within the Plan.

Table X shows the population trends for Maple Grove Township, the surrounding four townships – Albee, Chesaning, Montrose, and Hazelton, Saginaw County, and the State of Michigan. In 1970, the Township’s population was 2,555, and it grew to 2,994 in 1980. Since 2000, it has fluctuated modestly, growing from 2,598 to 2,676 in 2020, with a 0.3% growth between 2010 and 2020.

The table shows Maple Grove’s population trends with its four surrounding townships, Saginaw County, and the State of Michigan. Since their peaks in 1980, all of the nearby communities have seen a gradual population decline except for Chesaning Township, which saw modest growth between 2010 and 2020. Saginaw County population also peaked in 1980 while Michigan’s population has not changed significantly since 1980, growing only 815,000 residents in the intervening 40 years, or 8.8% over that time period.

Age Distribution

Information on age distribution within a population can assist a community in matching public services to community characteristics and in determining special needs of certain age groups. For example, the younger population tends to require more rental housing units and smaller homes, while the elderly population may have a need for senior housing and nursing home facilities. Community policy makers may also use age distribution analysis in order to project future service needs for education, recreation, and medical care. It is of equal importance in planning to anticipate which age groups are likely to increase during the planning period and which ones are declining. Examples of this are the aging “baby boomers” and their children; both forming waves of population rise and fall as they move through their lifecycles.

Esri divides the population into five groups. The first age group represents the *preschool* population at 0-4 years old. The *school age* population is represented by those between the ages of 5 and 19. The *family formation* age group is represented by persons 20-44 years of age. *Middle age* are between 45-64 years old while *seniors*, 65 years and over, comprise the last group.

Table X shows the age groups in the Township, Saginaw County, Michigan, and the United States as projected by Esri in 2023. For all of the age groups that will support population growth, the Township lags all of the groups except for the school age group at 19.0%, which is higher than either the County or the State. Regarding middle age and seniors, the Township has the highest rate of all the groups except for the percentage of seniors where the Township's rate of 19.9% is below the County's rate of 21.0%. Without in-migration of new residents, this shrinking of the younger age groups indicate that the population is likely to continue to decline as the number of individuals reaching child-rearing years is dropping.

Table X further illustrates the aging of the Township with a median age of 43.7 years, which is over two and one half years older than Michigan's median age and 4.6 years older than the US median age.

Population Projections

Through the understanding of the population details, the study of demographics makes educated estimates regarding the future growth of a community. Demographers use birth rates, death rates, age, and in/out migration rates to project the future size of a community's population.

Most demographic studies will build their estimates based upon county-wide data. In Michigan, these estimates were built upon some basic assumptions for continued population growth, and their models didn't account for changes in migration pattern like the large out-migration of young Michiganders for other States, which started around the turn of the Millennium and are still being felt today.

The State of Michigan report identifies six age groups. The first two groups match Esri's classifications for *preschool* population at 0-4 years olds and *school age* population are those between 5 and 19. They divide the remaining categories slightly differently than Esri. *Young adults* are persons aged 20-34 years old. The *family formation* age group is represented by persons 35-54 years of age. *Empty nesters* between 55-74 years old make up the fifth group while the *elderly*, 75 years and over, comprise the last group.

Currently the State's population projections through 2045 show steady decline for Saginaw County, with the County's population declining by 19.1% by 2045. **Table X** shows Saginaw County declining from 190,124 in 2020 to 153,884 in 2045. Population decline impacts the ability to provide services to the residents as there are fewer people paying to support the services, and in low density areas, fewer people increases the cost to provide the service per person because program overhead has to be spread across fewer users.

Population projections that originated from before the turn of the 21st Century now seem quite flawed for the State of Michigan. They anticipated continued population growth for most of the State, but these projections are now seen as grossly inaccurate. In 2019, the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and the Budget's Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives report titled "Michigan Population Projections by County through 2045", found that the State's peak population was 10,055,315 residents in 2004 with economic related emigration causing the State to decline after that year. Michigan only reached its previous peak population number again in 2020.

This State of Michigan report projects a modest population growth to occur in Michigan as the Baby Boomers retire and people immigrate into Michigan for job opportunities. One drag on Michigan's growth is its natural change (births minus deaths) has declined from 98,000 more births than deaths in 1970 to only 19,450 more in 2015. By 2030, the natural change is expected to go negative as there will be more deaths in the State than births. This is estimated by the age of residents and the birth rate. Immigration is expected to allow Michigan to continue to grow modestly until about 2040 when it is projected to begin to decline again.

This information becomes significantly more volatile when looking at the county data. The estimates see a range of counties shrinking by almost 20% in parts of northeastern Lower Peninsula, the Thumb, and the Upper Peninsula while some counties growing by 12.5% in the southern Lower Peninsula. More rural communities have been facing population stagnation for decades due to many younger people moving to urban areas. This impacts the rural natural change rate by both reducing the population and driving down the number of people in prime child-bearing years. This change also increases the community's mortality rate as the average population age rises.

Providing population projections in Michigan has been difficult over the last 40 years due to several macro-economic forces that has been impacting the State's economy and its residents that do not easily factor into standard demographic models. These outside factors include: major shifts in the auto industry (Michigan's largest industry); reduction in the manufacturing and construction sectors; younger adults desiring to live in vibrant urban communities with good job prospects; substantial national changes in the development of the American family; and demographic shifts from the American Midwest to the South and Southwest. There are several external factors including ongoing globalization, impacts of technology, spread of broadband, impacts of climate change, and changes to U.S. immigration policy that cannot be factored into these statistical projections either.

Other newer factors are also at play as well including the advent of back-to-the-city movements having success in many of Michigan's larger urban areas while buoying smaller communities' downtowns as well. The long-term land use impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on where people are choosing to live and work has yet to fully mature regarding the ability of people to work remotely as well and affect living choices long term. The resulting resurgence of Michigan metropolitan areas may also impact the natural change rate that isn't covered in these statistics by providing desired options for young Michiganders to stay in Michigan in their youth instead of migrating out of the state.

Though there are inherent concerns regarding the accuracy of the data, if current trends do not change, it is likely that the Maple Grove Township will be losing residents for the term of this Master Plan.

Racial Make Up

Another important characteristic of a community is its racial composition. Knowing the racial make-up of a community helps to identify the diverse needs of its population. The census bureau separates race into six different categories: White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and Some Other Race. The Census Bureau also tracks the Hispanic ethnicity.

For all intents and purposes, the Township's population is white. With all the races combined, the Township is 3.7% non-white with only 0.6% Black in 2020. Hispanic or Latino make up 2.3% of the

Township's population, and this percentage has likely grown drastically since US Census definitions changed in 1997. These numbers have continued to evolve as cultural identification preferences have also changed.

Household Size

The number of persons per household constitutes household size. Since the 1970's, the nationwide trend has been a decline in household size. This trend is occurring due to a number of reasons including: declining number of children per family, higher divorce rates, growing number of elderly living alone, increasing numbers of individuals not having children, and until recently, the growing number of young people moving away from families to live on their own.

Knowing whether the household size is increasing or decreasing is very important. If the household size of a community is decreasing, this means that new housing units might be required. This can even be true if the overall population of a community is declining. In some municipalities, new housing units are being built to accommodate the demand for housing created by lower household sizes, in spite of declining overall populations.

Household size may also be measured by number of persons living in the household. **Table X** shows the average household size in 2021. There appears to be volatility in these numbers, especially with the higher household size of 2.62 for renters, which may be due to survey size within the Township with less than ten percent of the units (90 units) as rentals. The Township's owner-occupied rate of 2.56 exceeds the County but falls just shy of the State's. The second table does illustrate larger household sizes with higher percentages of 2, 3, and 4 or more person households when compared to the County and State.

Household Characteristics

This section examines households in terms of the relationships among the persons who share a housing unit. Some households are families, consisting of two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption, while others are non-family households composed of persons living alone or with unrelated persons.

Household characteristics for the Township, the County and the State from 2021 are compared in **Table X**. The highest percentage of households in the Township are traditional Married-Couple Families at 67.5%. This percentage is the highest of all the units of government compared in the table. Other significant percentages in Maple Grove include Householder 65 Years and Older at 33.4%, and the lowest with Female Householder, no spouse present at 4.3%.

Total Housing Stock

Housing stock is the most basic measure of housing that refers to the type of housing units found in a community. In this chart, the U.S. Census Bureau separates housing units into multiple categories with the following choices selected: 1-Unit Structures (single-family homes); 1-Unit, Attached; 2-Units; 3-4 Unit Structures; Units in 5 to 9; 10 or More Units; Mobile Home; or Trailer Units, and Other (Boat, RV, Van, etc). **Table X** shows the distribution of housing units for the Township, Saginaw County, and Michigan. Currently, the Township has a very high percentage of 1-unit detached homes at 93.5% of all housing stock

Saginaw County has a more diverse housing stock with only 75.8% of the housing falling into the 1-unit detached category. This allows for a larger mix of housing choice for residents. Younger adults without families and seniors often do not want to own a large detached home and would prefer a duplex, townhouse, or apartment.

Home Ownership

The home ownership rate is often another important determinant of a community. High home ownership rates often result in communities with stable neighborhoods with less incidents of blight and longer resident tenure. Areas with higher percentages of rental housing often lead to neighborhoods with increased resident turn-over and the potential for landlords that are not directing sufficient funding into regular and periodic property maintenance. The increased resident turnover and declining housing quality impact the overall appearance of the neighborhood and may drive loops of continuing disinvestment fueling more housing turn-over and further neighborhood decline.

Table X compares owner and renter occupancy rates. Though relatively steady over the last sixty years, it does often fluctuate during periods of prosperity (increasing) and economic uncertainty (decreasing). Maple Grove Township has a rental rate of only 9.1% which is one third of the State or the County or the State at 27.9% and 28.4% respectively.

Table X shows detailed Census statistics concerning owner and renter occupancy as well as seasonal vacancy rates for 2020. Vacant housing units are classified by the U.S. Census Bureau into two categories. Vacant Seasonal, and Vacant Other. Seasonally vacant units are those that are vacant during a period of time, but are occupied temporarily, typically summer months in Michigan communities. Other vacant units are those that are vacant throughout the year, often waiting to be sold or rented or are awaiting refurbishment.

High rates of year-round vacant housing may be a concern as it may reflect weakness in the housing market or declining population. Knowledge of Seasonally Vacant units is important in many Michigan communities due to the high percentage of seasonal homes and impacts their occupants' presence has on year-round and seasonal services. In communities with large numbers of seasonally vacant homes, it is important for a Master Plan to consider the needs and desires of the seasonal residents and tourists as they often contribute a significant portion to the community's economy. In these communities, part-time residents are a potential well of future residents who may choose to move year-round to the community upon retirement or after children have left their childhood homes.

The US Census illustrates in **Table X** that Maple Grove Township does not have a meaningful population of seasonal residents with only 10.9% of its vacant units designated as seasonally vacant. Saginaw County has an even lower portion of seasonal vacant at 6.4% while nearly half of the State's vacant units are seasonally vacant seasonal homes/cottages (46.0%).

Age of Structures

Analyzing the age of housing units is a way to measure the physical quality of the total housing stock of a community. Generally, the economically useful expectancy of residential structures is approximately 50 years. Beyond that age, many building systems reach their life expectancy and require replacement or maintenance costs will begin to significantly increase. In addition, homes built prior to 1980 often

contain asbestos, lead paint, and lead water service, which may all cause health problems if not properly maintained or remediated when replaced.

Older homes may also not be as desirable for modern living – smaller rooms, multiple levels, smaller windows, no in-house office – that all impact desirability. There are exceptions to this rule, however. Some older housing may have already received significant renovations or are desirable due to high quality or historic features/finishes.

For this report, housing units are divided into ten categories. **Figure X** shows the percentage of housing units in each category for the Township, Saginaw County, and Michigan. As can be seen in the table, the Township, County, and State have similar distributions of housing ages. In terms of older housing (built earlier than 1959), the Township has 32.1% of its housing stock predating 1959, which is slightly below the County and State, 39.7% and 36.3% respectively.

Housing Values and Rent

Analyzing housing values and rent is an important tool to assess both the quality and affordability of housing. It is of crucial importance that a community maintains both quality and affordable housing.

The distribution of housing and rental values for Township, Saginaw County, and the State of Michigan in 2020 are shown in **Table X**. The Township's rent is only \$20 more per month than the County's but 11.1% lower than the State's average rent of \$946. At \$170,100, the cost of a home in the Township is higher than the County's at \$114,400 and \$2,000 less than a home in Michigan.

Income and Poverty

Studying income and poverty levels is a good way to measure the relative economic health of a community. Three measures of income (median household, median family, and per capita) are illustrated in **Table X** for Township, Saginaw County, and Michigan. Household income is a measure of the total incomes of the persons living in a single household. Family income is a measure of the total incomes of a family unit. Because families often have two incomes, and do not include single persons living alone, median family incomes are typically higher than median household incomes. Per capita income is a measure of the incomes of every citizen of an area, including children. Because per capita income is based on the average of all individuals, they are much lower than family or household incomes.

Table X shows the family, household, and per capita income levels for 2021. Overall, the income levels for Township are higher than the County while lagging the State except for Median Household income, where the Township's Median Household Income is approximately \$6,000 higher than Michigan's.

Table X also gives the percentages of families who were found to be below the poverty level. The percentage for Maple Grove are higher than the County but lower than the State except for Median Household Income, which was higher. When compared to the country, the Township lags all except for the Median Household Income. Regarding both measures of poverty, over 65 and total population, the Township fares better than all other groupings.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is another important factor in analyzing the capabilities of the local work force and the economic vitality of the community. The educational attainment of the citizens of a community plays a major role in determining what types of employment industries are suitable or possible in regards to the workforce's skills and their educational attainment.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports on a number of educational statistics including percentage of citizens in a community who graduated from high school as well as those who went on after high school to complete bachelor's degrees. **Figure X** illustrates the educational attainment levels for the Township, Saginaw County, Michigan and the United States. In terms of high school graduate percentage, the Township has the highest high school diploma rate at 91.8%; however, the Township significantly lags all others with a bachelor's degree rate of 16.2%, just under one half of the State average of 30.6%.

Employment

The U.S. Census Bureau presents standard employment data in terms of employment by industry and occupation. Employment by industry is a basic tool for analyzing what type of industries employ the citizens of Maple Grove Township.

Table X shows the Employment by Industry for the Township, Saginaw County, and the State in 2021. As can be seen by the table, Maple Grove has four primary industries, which employ over 54% of its citizens. The four industries are: Health Care/Social Assistance (16.5%), Manufacturing (14.2%), Construction (12.1%), and Retail Trade (11.4%). When comparing the Township to the County, Education, Real Estate/Rental/Leasing, and Professional/Scientific/Tech all have significant percentages not found in the Township.

Table X shows the Employment by Occupation data in term of the actual occupations held by the Township residents. It breaks down jobs by White Collar, Blue Collar, and Services. Office/Administrative Support white collar occupation was the largest at 14.0% with Management (9.5%) and Construction/Extraction (9.4%) the next largest categories.

An additional pair of statistics that is valuable in understanding a community's workforce and the stresses and strains on the workforce is the time it takes to for them to get work and how they are getting to work. The Census Bureau tracks both by asking respondents to estimate the time required to get to work each day and how they're commuting to work. In rural communities, understanding how far people are traveling to their jobs provides information about the local employment environment and the number working from home indicates either a high number of home occupations and home-based businesses or telecommuting to work.

Due to the rural nature of the southeastern portion of Saginaw County, those individuals who do not work locally in town are required to travel a mean travel time of 31.6 minutes to work, which is the longest time compared with the County or State. Nearly all farm related work requires the worker to travel a significant distance to their job.

Due to the spread-out nature of the Township's work options and lack of transit options, **Table X** shows low public transit ridership in Maple Grove Township while the work from home percentage is significantly higher than the County and the State.

The unemployment rate is another economic indicator that illustrates the health of the community. In December 2023, Saginaw County's unemployment rate was reported by the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget at 4.6%, ranking the County thirteenth highest rate, tied for 49th with Charlevoix, Missaukee, and Mecosta Counties. In December 2023, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Michigan was 4.3%.

NATURAL FEATURES

The natural environment plays a major role in land development. Depending upon the natural environmental conditions, they may significantly impact development, including steep slopes, wetlands, and other natural features. Conversely, the natural environment is often harshly impacted by development. An example would be the draining of wetlands for creation of a tillable field. When preparing the Future Land Use map, it is important to understand the community's natural environment so that development is situated where it will have the least amounts of environmental impact.

In any environmentally sensitive area within a community, development should be prevented. Environmentally sensitive areas are lands whose destruction or disturbance will affect the life of a community by:

1. Creating hazards such as flooding or slope erosion.
2. Destroying important public resources such as groundwater supplies, woodlands, wetlands, or surface water bodies.
3. Wasting productive lands and non-renewable resources such as prime farmland.

Each of these effects is detrimental to the general welfare of a community, resulting in social and economic loss.

The purpose of this section is twofold. First, the goal is to identify areas in the Township that are most suited for development. The focus is on areas that will minimize development impacts and provide amenities without adversely impacting the existing natural systems. The second goal is to identify land that should be conserved in its natural state and is most suitable for conservation, open space or recreation purposes.

Climate, geology, topography, woodlands, wetlands, and soil conditions are among the most important natural features impacting land use in the Maple Grove Township. Descriptions of the Township's features follows.

Climate

The climate of Saginaw County is seasonal, as the region experiences considerable changes in temperatures and precipitation throughout the year. As a four-season region, the average wintertime low temperature is 15 in January while the average high in July is 83 degrees. There is an average of 32.1 inches of rain throughout the year with 49.0 inches of snowfall in the winter. The region receives 172 days of sun per year while there is measurable precipitation 132.6 days per year. On average, there are five days per year with temperatures over 90 degrees and 6.1 days where the nighttime temperature is below zero Fahrenheit. The growing season is 163 days long.

Geology

The geology of Saginaw County, as well as the entire Lower Peninsula of Michigan, is described in terms of surface geology or quaternary geology (materials deposited by continental glaciers), and bedrock geology (sedimentary rocks underlying the glacial deposits).

The sub-surface geology of Saginaw County is sedimentary bedrock that was laid down mainly during the Pennsylvanian ages of the Paleozoic Era. There are small areas of Red Beds from the Jurassic mixed in with the Saginaw formation from Pennsylvanian. Bedrock is covered by glacial deposits and, generally, depending upon the thickness of the glacial deposits, are located at depths from 40 to 300 feet below the surface. The bedrock was formed from ancient seas, which covered the area some 250 to 600 million years ago.

The Glacial Lake Saginaw deposited layers of silt, clay, sediments, marine animals, plants, coral, and other calcareous materials in till that is wave-beveled. These deposits formed sandstone, shale, coal, and limestone bedrock. Along Misteguay and Northwood Creeks, there are recent alluvium deposits of mostly bedded sands, silts, and clays that are found along many existing rivers and streams.

The quaternary geology of the Township developed during the Wisconsin glaciation, 21,000 to 13,600 years ago through continental glacial activity. As the glaciers melted and retreated from the landscape, large amounts of sand, gravel, clay, and loam were deposited. Massive glacial lakes formed at the front of the retreating glaciers with Glacial Lake Saginaw forming over much of present day Saginaw County.

The melting glacier was laden with fine soil particles, which eventually settled to the bottom, creating clay and loam soils. The glacial melt water streams also deposited fine sand into shallow glacial lakes. The sand channels are several miles wide in places, but the sand in them is general only five to ten feet thick.

Topography

The topography of Maple Grove Township is relative flat, generally declining in height from north to south with the highest areas in the Township's southwestern quadrant while the lowest points are generally along the northern tier of Sections 1-6.

The highest point in the Township is 839 feet while its lowest points are along Misteguay and Northwood Creeks in the northeastern quadrant of Township with the lowest elevation of 581 feet. There is over 250 feet of elevation change between the Township's highest and lowest points with the land predominately flat with some larger elevation changes immediately adjacent to the Township's creeks that generally run from south to north.

These steeper slopes along the Township's creeks should be protected from development to retain their natural contour and support wildlife.

Woodlands

Woodlands information for Maple Grove Township is derived from the Michigan Geographic Data Library, dated 2017. This dataset identifies 5,203 acres of woodlands within the Township, accounting for 22.6% of the Township.

Much of the woodlands are found along the northern tier of sections along the Township's northern boundary and Chesaning Roads. There are interspersed woodlands and wetlands along Mitchell, Misteguay, and Northwood Creeks. Smaller woodlots are scattered across much of the remaining sections of the Township .

There are two general categories: upland and lowland forests. Upland forests include mostly central hardwood trees such as red oak, white oak, sugar maple, red maple, black cherry, beech, basswood, and ash. Tree species in the lowland forest include silver maple, green ash, aspen, cottonwood, and elm.

Map 2 shows the general locations of upland and lowland forests in Maple Grove Township, with most of the forested lands in the Township are lowland. These groups are further divided into seven natural community types including dry northern forest, dry-mesic northern forest, mesic northern forest, boreal forest, dry southern forest, dry-mesic southern forest, and mesic southern forest. Classification of these Forest types is based on species composition, differences in soil chemistry, moisture, and composition, hydrology, geographic distribution, and landscape setting.

Wetlands

Wetlands are defined by the existence of water, either on the surface or near the surface during a portion of the year. Poorly drained soils and water-loving vegetation may also be present. Wetlands are often referred to as marshes, swamps, or bogs. Residents of Michigan have become more aware of the value of wetlands. Beyond their aesthetic value, wetlands improve stormwater quality of lakes and streams by filtering polluting nutrients, organic chemicals, and toxic heavy metals. Wetlands are closely related to high groundwater tables and serve to discharge or recharge aquifers. In addition, wetlands support an abundance of wildlife including waterfowl, and wetland vegetation protects shorelines from erosion.

As shown on Map X, Maple Grove Township has wetland areas located along the Township's creeks, the northwestern-most Section 6 of the Township and parts of several of the woodlots include both woodland and Forested/Shrub Wetland. In total, wetlands cover 1,093 acres for 4.7 percent of the Township. The Township should work to conserve these wetland areas because of their great value to the community and preserving the water quality.

Soil Associations

Soil characteristics help define the land's capacity to support certain types of land uses. Soils most suitable for development purposes are well drained and are not subject to a high-water table. Adequate drainage is important for minimizing storm water impacts and the efficient operation of septic drain fields. Adequate depth to the water table is necessary to prevent groundwater contamination from septic systems. A high-water table also limits the construction of basements. Though civil engineering techniques can be employed to improve drainage and maintain adequate separation from the water table, such techniques are expensive to construct and maintain.

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Services 2022 mapping of Saginaw County, there are five main soil orders within the Township. The general locations of these associations are shown on **Map X**. The map is not designed for site specific applications; rather, it can be used to compare land suitability across broader areas. Soil Taxonomy is a soil classification system that was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's soil survey staff. This system is based upon measurable and observable soil properties. Each order represents a grouping of soils with distinct characteristics and ecological significance.

According to information from the University of Idaho College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, five of the 12 soil orders are found within Maple Grove Township:

Alfisols – these soils are moderately leached soils that have a relatively high native fertility, which formed mainly under forest with a subsurface horizon where clays have accumulated

Entisols – these soils are recent in origin and they're unconsolidated in nature with no genetic horizons with ability to support cropland

Inceptisols – these soils exhibit minimum horizon development and may be found in a variety of deposits and may support a variety of uses.

Mollisols – these soils support grassland ecosystems and are characterized by a thick dark surface horizon and the soils are some of the most important and productive agricultural soils

Spodosols – these soils are acidic by nature with subsurface of humus with the soils supporting forestry and without amendment, not supportive of agriculture

Andisols are found predominated in the northern part of the Township while Alfisols and Inceptisols are evenly dispersed across the Township.

Surface Water

Maple Grove Township has little surface water. For this plan, surface waters includes streams, rivers, and lakes. Wetlands are also defined as surface waters, but they have been separated into their own category.

All of the Township's waterways flow from south to north. The largest riverine body are Mistegay and Mitchell Creek that generally drains the eastern half of the Township while the eastern branches of Fairchild Creek drain the western half of the Township. Several county drains convey a large amount of Township's surface waters to these creeks and into the [Flint-Shiawassee](#) River. The [Flint-Shiawassee](#) River flows into the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge and eventually into Saginaw River and Saginaw Bay.

Community Services and Facilities

Municipal Services

The Township's offices are located at Layton Corners, southwest of the intersection of Peet Road/M-57 and Lincoln Road. The municipal complex includes the Township's offices and senior center. Office hours are noon to five pm Mondays and Thursdays.

For Township residents over 60 years of age, the Township operates its Senior Center that provides hot daily lunches five days a week. In addition to the meals, there are a variety of weekly activities including chair dancing, line dancing, and painting classes. Informal activities occur while the center is open, including card games, bingo, and crafts. To support senior health, the center also provides periodic blood pressure checks and nutritional information. For those individuals who are unable to come to the center, volunteers deliver meals to them.

The Township operates Maple Grove Cemetery, which is nearly a two-acre parcel, located on Buenche Road, about 1/3 of a mile south of Peet Road/M-57. St. Michael's Catholic Church's cemetery is located on both sides of Lincoln Road, about ¼ mile of the church complex.

Public Safety

The Township relies upon the Saginaw County Sheriff's office to provide police protection within the Township.

The Maple Grove Fire Department operates with 100 percent volunteers to provide fire protection services within Maple Grove Township. The department is funded with an annual appropriation from the Township's general fund. The department also applies for grants and accepts donations to underwrite its operations. The service area is conterminous with the boundaries of the Township, but the department has mutual aid agreements with all of Saginaw County's fire departments and with Montrose and Hazelton Townships.

The department provides fire and heavy rescue services. They have two engines, one tender, one utility (mini-pumper), one brush truck, and one ranger for grass fires and wild land recovery.

Water and Sanitary and Storm Sewer Services

Maple Grove Township does not provide any water or sanitation services. All homes and businesses provide their own water through individual wells and independent septic systems.

In Saginaw County, the drain commission is operated by the combined Public Works/Drain Office. The office is responsible for the maintenance and operation of over 900 open drains totaling over 1,800 miles and 300 enclosed or partially enclosed drains that total approximately 400 miles.

The Drain Commission's responsibility is to safely convey all surface water flow away from private properties, into drains and rivers, and eventually into Saginaw Bay. All properties within the State of Michigan must limit the amount of surface water that leaves their property during or immediately following a rain event so as to limit the likelihood of flooding of adjoining properties and properties

further downstream. Where there are public drains, the Drain Commission may carry-out drain repair projects through the creation of special assessment districts where maintenance costs are appropriated to all beneficiary properties.

Similar to all of the Township creeks, the Township's drains generally run south from high points along the Township's southern border north towards Misteguay Creek on the east ½ of the Township and county drains on the western half.

Parks and Recreation

The Township operates Maple Grove Township Park, which measures 9.5 acres. The Park, located adjacent to St Michael's Parish, includes four baseball/softball fields, one basketball court, a concessions building with restroom, park pavilion, perimeter walking trail, and playground.

Public Schools

New Lothrop Area Public Schools provides public education to a majority of Maple Grove Township. Both the elementary and high schools are located within the Village of New Lothrop, and almost 900 students attend both schools.

Small portions of the northern part of the Township send their children to Chesaning Union Schools while a small sections of the southeastern portion of the Township attend Montrose Community Schools.

Public Library and Historical Society

Maple Grove Township does not have a public library. The nearest public libraries are located in adjoining communities. The River Rapids District Library, which is located at 227 E. Broad Street, Chesaning, MI, serves the residents of Village and Township of Chesaning. The Montrose-Jennings Library is a branch of the Genesee District Library, and it is located at 241 Feher Drive in the Village.

Post Office

There are no post offices located in Maple Grove Township. Post offices that are located the closest to the Township are located in Montrose, New Lothrop, and Chesaning.

Communications

According to online research, approximately 1/3 of the Township does not have high speed internet access. Information found on the Connected Nation website, the Michigan Broadband Map, the center of the Township, near Layton Corners, offers high-speed coverage with cable internet, providing 100M/10M Broadband. This high-speed area corresponds with Spectrum service area, which reaches about 15% of the Township. Frontier and Brightspeed offer DSL connections of varying speeds to nearly all areas of the Township. These speeds only reach 25M/3M, which no longer qualifies as a high-speed connection.

TRANSPORTATION

Maple Grove Township’s transportation system is completely motor-vehicle dependent. For those with automobile access, this system provides reasonably good access for daily needs travel for residents and businesses located within the Township as well as regional destinations in adjacent communities.

The major access route to the Township is Peet Road/M-57, which runs east-west across much of the Lower Peninsula from near Rockford at US-131 on the west to Otisville in the east. M-57 intersects I-75, eight miles east of the Township. North-south connectivity is provided by M-13 throughout the Bay Region, and it follows the Township’s eastern border. M-13 begins south of Standish area and travels inland of the western shoreline of Saginaw Bay into Bay City and Saginaw, continuing south along the Township before terminating at I-69, south of Lennon. Additional north-south and east-west travel is provided along most of the Township’s section line roads. With vehicular access, all of these highways and roads allow for the Township’s residents and business and property owners to conveniently move about the region.

To understate the layers and connectivity of the Country’s road network, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed the National Functional Classification (NFC) in 1968. This hierarchy system grouped streets and highways into classes, or systems, according to the level of service and access they are intended to provide. By the early 1970s, all streets and highways within the federal network were required to be classified. Subsequently, transportation engineers and planners around the country recognize the NFC as the unofficial road classification system for all roads within their communities.

As in all Michigan townships, Maple Grove does not own or operate the roads within its borders. All roads are under the jurisdiction of the Saginaw County Road Commission.

The definitions and classifications are based on the Functional Classification Guidelines, as outlined in the 1989 FHWA document. The Township’s streets and highways are classified based on the NFC and its jurisdiction identified below.

National Functional Classification (NFC)	Road
Interstate	None
Principal Arterial	None
Minor Arterial	Peet Road/M-57; Sheridan Avenue/M-13
Major Collector	Gary Road; Gasper Road north of M-57; Lincoln Road; and Ditch Road
Minor Collector	Gasper Road south of M-57y
Local Streets	All other public roads within the Township

Federal Functional Classifications

Interstates and Other Freeways and Expressways: are the prominent road type in the NFC hierarchy intended to carry the major portion of trips entering and leaving urban areas, as well as a majority of the trips bypassing the area. Principal arterials have planned rights-of-ways that exceed 250 feet in width, and provide high speed, uninterrupted travel with limited access or restricted access to regionally important urban areas and amenities, such as airports. This

system is a major source for interstate travel and fall under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). No road in the Township meets this classification; however I-75 is eight miles to the east of the Township.

Principal Arterials: serve major metropolitan centers focusing on providing a high degree of mobility and may also serve rural areas. These roadway provide both through and local traffic, and they do provide access to abutting land uses. No roads within close proximity to the Township are classified as Principal Arterials.

Minor Arterials: serve a similar in function to principal arterials, but they generally carry less traffic and connect to smaller urban centers. The minor arterial system interconnects with and augments the principal arterial system by providing for trips of moderate length with less traffic mobility. Accessibility is greater but stops are more frequent due to signalized intersections. Minor arterial streets are generally spaced from 1/8 – 1/2 mile in the central business district to 2 – 3 miles apart in the suburban fringes, but are normally not more than 1 mile apart in fully developed areas. Minor arterial planned rights-of-ways are usually 100 feet wide, and Peet Road/M-57 and Sheridan Avenue/M-13 meets this classification.

Major Collectors: provide access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas. These streets differ from the arterials in that they usually enter neighborhood areas to distribute residents throughout the entire system to and from their destinations. Collector streets also collect traffic from local streets and channel them into the arterial system. Major collectors are important intra-county travel corridors and provide service to county seats not on an arterial route, to larger towns not directly served by the higher systems, and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance. Major collectors planned rights-of-ways are generally between 80-100 feet wide. Gary Road; Gasper Road north of M-57; Lincoln Road; and Ditch Road are major collectors.

Minor Collectors: Minor collectors are identified to collect traffic from local roads and private property and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a major collector or arterial road. These roads are generally spaced on half section lines. Gasper Road south of M-57 is a minor collector.

Local Streets: comprises all streets and roadways not identified in one of the higher systems. Local streets primarily provide direct access to abutting land and to the collector road network. Movement of through traffic is usually discouraged on local streets. All of the remaining public roads in the Township are designated as Local Roads.

In the Township, private roads may also provide access to some properties. Requirements are often based on Saginaw County Road Commission standards; however, careful attention is required to ensure that private roads that are accessing only a few properties are not oversized for the access needs, saddling the current and future property owners with increased maintenance costs and impacts of needlessly increased impervious surfaces. A careful balance between access needs of safety personnel and expense and design requirements must be maintained.

State of Michigan Act 51 Classification

Michigan's Public Act 51, PA of 1951, as amended, is the mechanism under which the State of Michigan shares state gas tax revenues for road maintenance with its municipalities. Eligible units of government are awarded funds based on the mileage of roadway within their boundaries.

The State of Michigan retains a portion of the gas tax revenues, which are allocated to MDOT for maintenance and upgrading of the interstate highways and state trunklines within the local jurisdictions. The remaining funds are allocated to local units of government by a set formula, and ultimately, the allocation depends upon the length of roadway in each classification.

Under Act 51, Michigan's roads are divided into five categories – State Trunkline Highways, County Primary Roads, County Local Roads, City Major Streets and Local Streets. In regard to State funding and responsibility, the Township is generally concerned with the first three categories – State Trunkline, County Primary, and County Local. Both Peet Road/M-57 and Sheridan Road/M-13 are State Trunklines, ~~but they are maintained by the Saginaw County Road Commission which are maintained by the Michigan Department of Transportation.~~ County Primary Roads in the Township include: Gary Road, Gasper Road, Lincoln Road, and Ditch Road. There are 18.24 miles of County Primary and 46.40 miles of County Local, of which approximate 3.25 miles is gravel. Designed to carry higher volumes and heavier weighted vehicles at greater speeds, County Primary receive more funding per mile than County Local, which typically serve only residential areas.

At this time, ~~there are no private roads in the Township~~ there is a single private road in the Township – Rieber Court off of Chesaning Road between Bishop and Gasper Roads. If new development occurs, one of the tools used by developers is building developments with private road. It is typical for all private roads to be designed to meet minimum county road commission specifications. For roads that provide access to a subdivision, construction to county standards would be appropriate. Special attention should be given to the planning and design of private drives that serve up to four houses, to ensure that they promote the orderly development of land without overbuilding the access drive to standards designed for higher levels of travel. Overbuilt drives increase housing and maintenance costs, increase developed land, and increase water runoff. Care should be exercised to match the needs for access and preservation of the environment in an undeveloped state.

Under Public Act 51, county road commissions are authorized to develop a system of seasonal roads. The County road commissions do not have to provide maintenance from November to April on these roads. If they so choose, they may also limit access during these months to limit damage to the unmaintained road or to prevent unwarranted access to private vacation homes along these roads. There are no County seasonal roads within Maple Grove Township.

In addition to the County seasonal roads, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources maintains a forest road network, and the map of these roads is updated and published April 1st of each year. The normal and continuing use of state forest roads is to provide the general public with access to state forest lands for a variety of recreational purposes and to provide the DNR with road access for management and land protection purposes. The public may use these roads as long as the DNR permits the roads to remain open for general public use. There are no seasonal forest roads in the Township.

Railroad Transportation

There is no railroad operating in Maple Grove Township. The Great Lakes Central provides the nearest freight service in Chesaning while the Huron and Eastern Railroad travels through Montrose. Both railroads connect into the CN in Durand.

The nearest stop along the Blue Water Amtrak route, which runs from Port Huron to Chicago, is in the City of Flint.

Air Travel

The nearest general aviation airport is Owosso Community Airport with one paved east-west runway and one southwest-northeast runway, which is grass. There is a small private airport located in the southwest corner of the Township, and Howard Nixon Memorial Airport, for small private aircraft, is located just west of downtown Chesaning.

Major feeder commercial service airports are Midland-Saginaw-Bay City (approximately 25 miles to the north) and Flint (approximately 18 miles to the southeast) while the nearest full-service commercial airport is located at Detroit Metropolitan Airport (approximately 70 miles to the southeast).

Bus Service

The nearest intercity bus service is provided by the Huron Bus route, which travels along the east coast of Michigan from Mackinac City to Bay City where it intersects with the Indian Trails bus route that travels from Bay City to Flint/Detroit and Lansing with nearby stops in Flint, Owosso, and Saginaw.

There are no out-county bus transportation services in Saginaw County.

Nonmotorized Transportation

Nonmotorized transportation includes all non-vehicular transportation including walking, bicycle riding, and wheeled transit that includes wheelchairs and small wheeled transit including skateboards, roller blades, and other lighter small wheeled equipment. Nonmotorized transportation is used both for casual and necessary daily trips, and access to nonmotorized networks score as highly desirable in master planning and recreation planning public surveys.

Nonmotorized transportation is the most equitable form of transportation as all individuals have access to the nonmotorized network. Approximately one third of all Michiganders do not have access to a personal vehicle – being either too young, too old, not having access to a car, or without driving privileges – and the nonmotorized network serves everyone equally.

Being able to provide safe convenient connections to major traffic generators within proximity to the Township including Montrose and Chesaning and the school's complex in New Lothrop would be a tremendous foundation for a regional nonmotorized network. Challenges towards the development of this network include low population densities and longer distances between destinations. However, with the advent of electric bicycles (e-bikes), more individuals are choosing to ride, and having a connected network would greatly benefit these individuals. With e-bikes, more people are choosing to ride for both necessity and pleasure travel. The ease of e-bikes allow for faster longer trips that can be traveled with less effort, and they are becoming an attractive mode of transportation.

The development of an east-west nonmotorized connection from Montrose through Lawton Corners to Chesaning would create a connection for the Township to two nearby destinations. The Saginaw Valley Rail Trail currently terminates in St. Charles, and it is reasonable that it be continued southward to Chesaning. Once the trail reaches Chesaning, the next destination would be Owosso. It is at this point that the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail extension would connect into Fred Meijer Clinton Ionia Shiawassee Trail. This trail serves as an east-west spine to the emerging Mid-Michigan nonmotorized network.

Connecting the southeastern corner of Saginaw County east from Layton Corners to Montrose would be an important link into the existing rail trail network in Vienna Township and the City of Clio.

One final beneficial nonmotorized connection would be a north-south link from the center of the Township at Lawton Corners, connecting the Township's park with New Lothrop and the New Lothrop Area Public Schools complex, which are located within the Village of New Lothrop.

Existing Land Use

To be able to rationally plan for future uses within the Township, it is vitally important to have a clear understanding of the community's existing land uses. The Existing Land Use Map identifies seven land use categories within the Township, allowing us to understand where agricultural, single-family, commercial, industrial, public/semi-public, recreation, and wooded/wetlands/vacant.

With an understanding of the Township's current uses of land and their locations, married with the results of the earlier demographic and physical analysis, it is then possible to develop a reasonable and achievable land use plan for the community. Later in this plan, all of the analysis efforts will be incorporated into the visionary Future Land Use Map that is developed later with public input.

At the initiation of the planning process in the Fall of 2023, Wade Trim reviewed current aerial photography and compared this with Saginaw County's parcel map. These two pieces of information were the basis of the preliminary land use map.

As this was the Township's first Master Plan, it was not possible to review earlier land use maps to determine changes in land use within the last 25 years. Instead, Wade Trim reviewed historic aerials from NETROnline, including 1954, 1966, 1974, 2005 and 2012 aerial maps. There appears to be little change in the agrarian nature of the Township except for the development of some residential development along M-13 and a few of the northern section line roads, beginning in the 1960s.

This first draft of the Existing Land Use map was circulated to members of the Planning Commission and Board of Trustees for review and refinement. Additional corrections were made throughout the planning process as public comments and reviews of various drafts of the maps were circulated.

The following existing land use categories have been established for this Master Plan:

Agricultural

This land use corresponds to the predominate land use within the Township – farming and accessory structures including barns, silos, and other farm-related structures associated with this land use.

Agricultural uses comprise 18,438 acres or 80.0% of land in the Township.

Single-Family Residential

This land use corresponds to land occupied by stick-built and manufactured homes and their related accessory buildings such as garages and pole barns. Effort was made to separate single-family homes from active farm-land.

Single-Family Density Residential land accounts for 3,199 acres, or 13.9% of the Township. This housing stock is made up of mixture of older farmsteads that have been separated from their original farms and newer suburban homes built along the Township's section line roads. A larger number of these homes may be found in the northern 2/3rds of the Township, north of Peet Road/M-57.

Commercial

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Commercial land uses include properties on which goods are sold or personal services are provided. Uses that would qualify as commercial includes store, restaurants, offices, dealerships, and entertainment venues.

There are few commercial businesses that operate within the Township, and a major of them are located within [Lawton-Layton](#) Corners. There are a few additional commercial businesses located on and adjacent to the St. Michael's Parish complex, north of the intersection of Ferden and Lincoln Roads. [There are a couple businesses located at the northwestern corner of Peet Road/M-57 and Sheridan Road/M13 as well.](#) Nineteen (19) acres, or 0.1% of the Township is commercial.

Industrial

These parcels used for the purpose of manufacturing, processing, or storage of finished products and may also include logistics uses as well. Mining and quarrying of materials are also industrial in nature.

The Township has one industrial use, the junk yard, at the southwest corner of Gary Road and Sheridan Road/M-13. Industrial uses only four acres of the Township.

Public / Semi-Public

Land uses owned and operated by public agencies including municipal offices and storage buildings and yards, community/recreation centers, jails, municipal courts, schools, cemeteries, churches, hospitals, fairgrounds, and private recreation areas under five acres.

These uses include Township Hall and Senior Center, St. Michael Parish and cemetery, the Maple Grove Township Cemetery, and the transformer facility on Peet Road/M-57. This land use totals 30 acres or 0.42% of the developed area.

Recreation

Active and passive recreation areas, sports complexes and athletic fields, public parks, boat ramps, campgrounds, and private recreation areas larger than five acres are included within these recreational land uses.

Maple Grove Township Park is 9.5 acres and is the only recreation land use within the Township.

Woodland/Wetland/Undeveloped

This category identifies all of the land within the Township that is not currently under active use. that is currently undeveloped, vacant, or road right-of-way. This land use designation includes vacant lands and properties, undeveloped subdivisions and tracts, wooded areas, and wetlands. These lands are predominately found in the northern part of the Township, ~~and~~ portions of land abutting Misteguay Creek south of Peet Road/M-57

The undeveloped areas include approximately 1,322 acres of land or approximately 5.78% of the Township.

GOALS AND ACTIONS

Before a community can actively move forward toward implementation of its vision of its future, it must first articulate its vision in the form of a set of goals and action steps that will be necessary to achieve that desired vision. The goals must align with the community's needs and aspirations, be realistic and built upon a clear understanding of the community's existing conditions and recognize its financial and capacity limitations.

Background

This Master Plan is being designed with implementation at its core. This approach is a significant departure from standard land use master plans that were prepared for local communities by the planning profession for the last forty years. Master plans had been built to include a broad listing of desired goals and strategies, regardless of the local capacity for implementation, responsible party, or expected development potential of the community. These goals were to be carried out by a variety of agencies and organizations beyond the local municipality's control including: the school district, area economic development agencies, the County, and the State. They included employee training, business attraction, economic development, regional initiatives, social development, and others. In addition to the entities beyond the Township's control, implementation entities within the Township would include elected officials, the Board of Trustees, and the Planning Commission.

This standard approach would lead to plans that would be overwhelming to even the most ardent group of local land use practitioners and members of the Planning Commissions, Zoning Board of Appeals, Township Board, and administrative staff. It is little wonder that these master plans, once adopted, would be filed away where they would rarely be consulted until the next update process. Master planning evolved to become an exercise that was completed to allow for the community to utilize its power to wield zoning, but the resulting broad plans based on general planning and community development concepts would often undermine the community from being able to actually achieve its desired land use goals.

This mainly aspirational approach led to many goals that were far beyond the scope of a land use plan or capital plan, and many recommended goals and objectives would far exceed the capacity of a small community that relies on few paid staff, elected officials, and a small cadre of volunteers to implement its master plan.

These expansive master plans would not support the planning process in leading to concrete results. A community's future vision and land use desires may have been well formulated and articulated, but due to the large number of goals and strategies that were not within the purview of the Planning Commission or other local officials and volunteers, there would be no change in the community's development trajectory. Any specific action items that were implementable on the local level were lost within the overwhelming broader vision.

Land Use Focus

This Plan focuses its future efforts toward implementation with providing far fewer goals and targeting actionable steps that are within the purview of the Township's Planning Commission, Board of Trustees, and Zoning Board of Appeals. To support the success of impacting the future development direction of

the Township, many of the Master Plan’s goals would be accomplished through a comprehensive review of the Township’s Zoning Ordinance.

These goals were initially presented to the Planning Commission at their February 7, 2024 meeting with several of the Board of Trustees in attendance. They were further refined at the June 5, 2024 Planning Commission meeting. These goals were presented at the XXX, XX, 2024 Visioning Workshop that was held at the Township Senior Center, attended by X participants. The finalized draft plan was presented to the Planning Commission for its review at its XXX, XX, 2024 meeting where the visionary components of the Plan were presented for the Commissioner’s consideration including the following goals and actions. They were revised prior to the Plan’s distribution to the review agencies as part of the adoption process, and the public were able to formally comment on the goals and action steps at the Public Hearing held on [REDACTED].

Vision

The primary vision of the Maple Grove Township Master Plan 2024 is to ensure that the current agricultural character of the Township is maintained through the term of this plan and any commercial uses are focused within the vicinity of Layton Corners and at the intersection of M-57/Peet Road and M-13/North Sheridan Road.

Most of the specific land use and capital plan goals are included within the initial Physical Land Use Goals section while broader public policy items are included in the Public Policy section.

Physical Land Use Goals

1) Retain Community’s Agricultural Character

Most residents enjoy living in the Township due to its agricultural and rural character, and protection of this overall characteristic is paramount to this Plan, which underpins much of the community’s economy:

- a. Review the Township’s Zoning Map and consider changes to the Zoning Map so that it reflects the physical land use goals of the Master Plan
- b. Review the Township’s lot split requirements to confirm that allowable lots splits are supportive of retaining the agricultural character of the community by encouraging land divisions that preserve larger working fields while managing the impacts of residential-only housing along the Township roads
- c. Recognizing the negative impacts of large-scale industrial solar on an agricultural community, and if permitted by the State, limit green energy to small-scale private on-site facilities
- d. Consider developing “workable” clean energy siting zoning ordinance requirements that has reasonable regulations that exceed the State minimums found in PA 233 of 2023 and include requirements that will protect the Township’s residents and preserve the agrarian community character.

2) Limit Development to Existing Areas

Sprawling and unplanned residential, commercial, and industrial development can radically alter the appearance of a community by allowing these uses to spread across the community without consideration for their impacts by limiting all new development to Layton Corners and the intersection of M-57/Peet Road and M-13/North Sheridan Road:

- a. Review existing Zoning Map to determine the amount of land within the Township that should be downzoned from A-2 -Agriculture: General/Woodlot and B-1 Neighborhood

Commercial to A-1 Agriculture: Primary District near intersections of M-57/Peet Road and M-13/North Sheridan Road

- b. Consider eliminating the the A-2 Agriculture: General/Woodlot and B-2 Commercial: Community District zoning districts

3) Address Blight

The appearance of blight and its impacts was identified as a concern of a large percentage of the survey respondents:

- a. Ensure that the Township's Code Enforcement Officer has sufficient resources to support their efforts to achieve higher compliance in regards to meeting minimum property maintenance standards
- b. Develop marketing materials to describe the rationale for the Township's blight enforcement efforts and benefits of code compliance

4) Support the Environment

Through the adoption of reasonable Zoning Ordinance requirements that respect private property rights while furthering community development objectives that protect the natural environment:

- a. Evaluate increasing the water body setback requirement to 75 feet
- b. Consider adopting Zoning Ordinance measures that will limit clearcutting on woodlots
- c. Encourage of use of native landscaping and planting of hedgerow windbreaks for new housing and existing agricultural fields

5) Expand Economic Development Opportunities

Supporting local economic development and job creation activities is an important Master Plan Goal, which may be achieved through tactics that are within the purview of Township control:

- a. Consider allowing Light Industrial and New Economy uses within the Township's Agricultural and Commercial districts that will enable new jobs to be created within the Township
- b. Consider regulations to ensure that home-based businesses may operate but are reasonably regulated so that they do not adversely impact neighboring properties as these businesses expand
- c. Evaluate how to regulate agritourism and agribusiness operations within the Township

6) Improve nonmotorized transportation options within the Township

With the growth of e-bikes and other light-weight mobility options, [the number of](#) nonmotorized vehicle trips for both pleasure and daily needs is expected to continue to increase during the life of this plan and [the](#) distances that can be easily traversed by such nonmotorized users is expected continue to lengthen [during the plan](#):

- a) Encourage the Township Board to consider adopting a Complete Streets resolution to ensure that the Saginaw County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation consider all users when making improvements to roadways within the Township
- b) Support the development of a multi-use pathway east-west from Chesaning to Clio so that it would be able to connect the Township to an extension of the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail, which currently terminates in St. Charles
- c) Support the development of a multi-use pathway from the Layton Corners south to New Lothrop.

Public Policy Goals

1) Support Housing Choice

Work with regional partners towards the development of more balanced set of housing tenancy options (both rental and owner-occupied and at differing price-points) that provides affordable workforce housing that meets the needs of all residents and supports the ability of seniors to be able to age in place within the Township:

- a. Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments that would permit accessory dwelling units within the A-1, R-1A, and C-1 districts
- b. Work with the Cities of Chesaning and Montrose to support the development of a variety of housing choices within their communities that will allow Maple Grove Township residents to be able to take advantage of a variety of housing options, including supporting seniors to be able to age in relative place.

2) Encourage intergovernmental cooperation between Maple Grove Township, the surrounding Townships, Cities of Chesaning and Montrose, and Saginaw County

Due to the limited local capacity to develop, fund and operate desired services including youth, recreation, and senior services –work cooperatively to accomplish these tasks:

- a. Support workforce and economic development initiatives jointly.
- b. Work together on regional nonmotorized transportation efforts

3) Improve Internet Connectivity

High-speed access to the internet has become a necessity as more and more services are being provided through the internet including health care and daily business operations

- a. Advocate for grant funding to be provided to rural internet providers, allowing for affordable high-speed last mile connectivity

FUTURE LAND USES

The Future Land Use Plan identifies the desired pattern of land development in Maple Grove Township for a period extending approximately 20 years into the future. The Future Land Use Plan is a general statement of the Township's land use and development goals and provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's desire for its future. This chapter describes the basis for the plan and the intended character of each land use classification, with each corresponding to areas identified on the Township's Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map is the legal basis of the Township's Zoning Map.

What is a Future Land Use Plan?

A Future Land Use Plan is a guide to the physical development of a community. Based on the social and economic values of the community, it translates those values into a scheme that describes how, why, when, and where to build, rebuild, or preserve the community.

There are many general characteristics of a Future Land Use Plan. The first characteristic of the Plan is that it is long range, covering a time period of twenty or more years. Not only does the Plan present a vision of the community in the future, it also recommends procedures and policies that can help the community to get there.

A second characteristic of the Plan is that it is meant to be general in nature and flexible for the coming years. The Future Land Use Plan is not meant to be specific, recommending land uses property by property. It only provides land use recommendations for generalized locations in the community. This is one of the strengths of the Future Land Use Plan, allowing for the community to determine exact locations and boundaries for the proper land use classifications.

Lastly, a Future Land Use Plan is a statement of policy and a guide covering such community desires as quantity, character, location, and rate of growth and indicating how these desires are to be achieved. It is important to understand that the Plan has no legal authority, unlike legal documents such as a zoning ordinance, general municipal ordinances, or subdivision regulations. The Plan serves as a guide in the formulation of these legal documents. Government bodies and officials such as the Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Zoning Administrator should use the Plan as a guide in their day-to-day decision-making processes.

The Future Land Use Plan underpins the Township's Zoning Ordinance regulations. Without it, State and Federal courts would likely strike down the Township's Zoning Ordinance as being arbitrary and capricious if the Zoning Ordinance doesn't directly tie into the recommendations and vision laid out in the Master Plan into the regulatory framework of the Zoning Ordinance and its Zoning Map. This connection between a well-considered Master Plan that protects the community health, safety, and welfare and the specific land use regulations of the Zoning Ordinance is how the courts permit such stringent regulations of private property.

Basis for the Plan

Making informed decisions about the future growth and redevelopment of communities is very challenging. Communities have become centers of complex and interrelated activities. Employment and residential areas are interconnected and supported by public and private facilities such as streets,

water, sewer, county drains, parks, and services such as, garbage pick up, police and fire protection, medical and emergency services, recreation and entertainment, and personal services. Many of these facilities and services are interrelated, as are the land uses they support or serve. A Future Land Use Plan can only be created after this thorough understanding of all the elements in a community's land use system is gained.

In the proceeding sections of this Master Plan, many elements of Township were analyzed including demographic data, environmental features, existing development patterns, existing transportation network, and community goals and objectives. These elements, in addition to an understanding of regional conditions and market trends, combine to form the basis for the Future Land Use Plan.

Plan Recommendations

Five land use classifications are identified for Township's Master Plan. The various future land uses are portrayed on **Map X** and the total acreages for each category are shown in **Table X**.

Table X
Future Land Use Acreage

Insert FLU table here

Source: Wade Trim

The overriding principle behind the Future Land Use Plan is to maintain and protect the ~~existing small-town, up north character of Harrison as the gateway to central Northern Michigan~~ rural agrarian character of the community. The future land use categories, as described below, are intended to uphold this principle while guiding ~~the Maple Grove Township's future development~~ growth of the City.

Agricultural

Intent – The Agricultural Land Use designation is to protect the existing agricultural land uses within the Township and preserve the agrarian character of the community while limiting the impacts of single-family housing development on active farmland and the visual characteristics of the Township

Uses – All agricultural activities and accessory uses that support farming including agritourism and agribusiness activities and modest light industrial uses that do not have impacts that extend beyond any of the host property lines. Other compatible uses would be commercial recreational uses such as riding stables and golf courses and open spaces including nature preserves and campgrounds.

Low Density Residential

Intent – The Low Density Residential Land Use designation is to provide for new single family and duplexes in areas adjacent to the Township's commercial areas.

Uses – Low density residential uses is the primary use with other complimentary uses such as cemeteries, churches, schools, and park

Mobile Home Parks

Intent – To support the development of affordable housing and comply with State law, this designation permits the development of mobile and manufactured housing developments; however, no areas are identified for this use at this time. There are no demographic statistics that demonstrate that this land use will need to be developed within the Township over the term of this Master Plan. If the demand for this use is demonstrated in the future, this use must

be sited adjacent to the Township's existing commercial districts and along one of the Township's Minor Arterial roads.

Uses – Higher density residential developments that meet the State of Michigan's minimum standards for mobile home parks

Commercial District

Intent – To support the development of centralized location for commercial uses to congregate within the Township that is well-served by the main road network that limits the impacts of commercial sprawl on the Township's farming character

Uses – Includes a mixture of retail and restaurant commercial uses, office, residential, entertainment, institutional, light industrial, and public uses

Industrial

Intent – To provide a location for the exclusive use of light industrial uses that are dependent upon convenient access to transportation routes

Uses – Light duty manufacturing facilities and storage facilities

Using the Plan

Now that the Future Land Use recommendations have been laid out for the Township, it is appropriate to describe how to put the Plan to use. It is important to remember that the Master Plan and its Future Land Use Map are not a legal document but a policy document. The Plan should not be confused with the Zoning Ordinance or the Township's official Zoning Map. In fact, the Zoning Map and Future Land Use Map may not even look the same. The key difference is that Zoning is local land use regulations while the Master Plan prescribes a vision for land use in the future and serves as a guide to achieve that vision.

One of the principal benefits of having an adopted Master Plan is the foundation it provides for zoning decisions. As the Township Board, Planning Commission, or Zoning Board of Appeals is faced with making zoning and land use decisions, the respective bodies should consider the recommendations as set forth in the Master Plan. Rezoning, site plan reviews, and special land uses should conform with the principles found in the Master Plan. Any capital improvement investments should also be made in accordance with the recommendations of the Township's Master Plan.

Flexibility is a definite strength of the Master Plan. [Width-Depth](#) of the commercial land use on the FLU Map are 300 feet deep [from the road right-of-way where the future land uses do not align with existing property lines](#) while the residential [width-depth](#) is 500 feet [from the road right-of-way deep where the future land use designations do not align with existing property lines](#). The Future Land Use Map is not intended to be specific to any individual parcel but be focused on determining the type of land uses permitted within the general vicinity while the Zoning Map is specific to individual parcels.

Changing trends, circumstances, unanticipated opportunities, and unforeseen problems may require an amendment to the Master Plan. If a new development proposal does not conform to the specifics found within Master Plan or outlined in the Future Land Use Map, the Master Plan may be reviewed and a determination made if the proposal meets the Plan's vision and recommendations. If so, the Plan may be amended to allow for the proposed development to continue through the review process. Further steps may include a rezoning, special land use approval, and site plan review. If not, an amendment should not be commenced and the proposal should be rejected as not meeting the vision as detailed within the Township's Master Plan. If an amendment does occur, it is important to note that the rest of

the Plan remains in effect. It will only become irrelevant or obsolete if the Master Plan is not updated to address physical or social changes occurring in the municipality.

In order to keep the Master Plan up to date, it is important to schedule periodic reviews of the Master Plan. Per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, it is required that the Planning Commission conduct a review to determine if the Master Plan amendments or changes are necessary every five years. If the review indicates that the plan still reflects the community's vision and conditions, the Planning Commission may complete its mandated five-year review internally by recording the findings within its meeting minutes. However, if significant time has passed since an intensive review has been completed or economic, social, or land use conditions have changed in the community since the last formal master plan update, the Planning Commission would then be compelled to commence formal actions to amend its existing Master Plan or to adopt a new one.

Insert FLU Map Here

IMPLEMENTATION

Zoning Plan

According to requirements within Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, all master plans are to include a Zoning Plan when the community utilizes zoning to control land development. This portion of the Plan serves as a clear connection between the community's Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance, which underpins the community's power to regulate land through the Zoning Ordinance and its Zoning Map. This section provides that legal nexus between the documents and protects the [City-Township](#) from potential litigation regarding application of the Zoning Ordinance.

Bulk and Density Comparisons

One requirement of a Zoning Plan is that it must correlate the zoning district's height, area, bulk, location and uses with the land use designations within the Master Plan while also explaining how the land use categories on the Future Land Use map correlate with the Zoning districts shown on the Zoning Map.

To meet this requirement, the following table matches the Master Plan's land use categories with the [City's-Township's](#) Zoning districts, and the height, area, bulk, and uses allowed within the Zoning Ordinance would be generally appropriate for the corresponding land uses.

Land Use Designation	Zoning District
Agricultural	A-1 – Agriculture: Primary District A-2 – Agriculture: General/Woodlot
Residential	A-2 – Agriculture: General/Woodlot R-1A – Residential: Transitional
Mobile Home Parks	No Mobile Home Park land uses mapped or corollary zoning districts currently mapped
Commercial	R-1A – Residential: Transitional B-1 – Commercial: Neighborhood B-2 – Commercial: Community
Industrial	M – Industrial: Light

Zoning Plan Recommendations

A second and valuable component of the Zoning Plan is identifying recommendations of the Master Plan that will require changes to the Zoning Ordinance to be implemented.

The first recommendation is that the Planning Commission have a Zoning Ordinance Audit conducted to: ensure compliance with the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006; compliance with various State and Federal statutes; ensure consistency with recent court cases; identify fragmented or inconsistent zoning ordinance language; identify incorrect or irrelevant cross references; recognize contradictory or redundant policies; illustrate effectiveness, or lack thereof of, Ordinance to address emerging technologies; verify effectiveness of Ordinance in addressing emerging planning trends including zoning reform efforts; assist with the development of workforce housing; and ensure effectiveness in addressing local issues and concerns.

Following the Zoning Ordinance Audit, utilize its results to draft new zoning language to ensure that the goals of the Master Plan begin to be implemented while regulations that do not support the Plan's implementation are removed. Items to be addressed through the Zoning Ordinance Audit may include:

- Review the Table of Schedule of Regulations in Section 4.3 regarding the minimum lot size requirements in regards with the goals of the Zoning Ordinance
- Consider modifications to the Zoning Ordinance that brings it into alignment with the Michigan Department of Agriculture's Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMPS)
- Review the Zoning Ordinance district purpose statements and permitted uses to determine if they are reasonable and in compliance with the intents of the Master Plan
- Consider eliminating Article 6 Agriculture: General/Woodlot
- Consider eliminating Article 9 B-2 Commercial Community Zoning district and combine the permitted uses into a single commercial district.
- Evaluate the permitted and special uses that may be permitted within the new combined commercial district to determine if some New Economy light industrial uses may be permitted within the district
- Consider the elimination of the PUD zoning option detailed in Article 11 so as to ensure the development intensity recommended within the Master Plan is maintained
- Evaluate the Landscaped Buffer Area requirements in Section 12.22 and consider enhancing the requirements between differing Zoning Districts.
- Evaluate if the current parking requirements in Article 13 are appropriate and to determine if the parking requirements exceed the Institute of Transportation Engineers parking standards listed in the Sixth Edition of the Parking Generation Model
- To legally strengthen the Township's sign regulations, evaluate Article 14 for compliance with recent case law and the addition of a substitution clause
- Determine if adding the opportunity for Administrative Site Plan approval to be completed by the Zoning Administrator in certain instances is warranted

Master Plan topics to be addressed by Zoning Ordinance amendments include:

- To support local economic development, consider evaluating the ability for farms to engage in agritourism and agribusiness operations on their properties
- Consider enabling the Planning Commission to make determinations of whether undefined uses are appropriate as permitted or special uses within all zoning districts
- Conduct a review of the Township's new Future Land Use (FLU) Map and current Zoning Map to align the two documents
- Consider increasing the waterbody setback requirement to 75 feet
- Evaluate the Zoning Ordinance language to strengthen the limits on the ability of a property owner to clear-cut their woodlot prior to development
- Consider a Zoning Ordinance amendment to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to be allowed in all Agricultural, Residential, and Commercial zoning districts
- Review the number of as-a-right and permitted uses within all districts and consider allowing more uses to be allowed as-a-right within agricultural and commercial districts, including light manufacturing uses
- Conduct review of Zoning Map and adopt rezonings to align Zoning Ordinance Map with the Future Land Use Map
- Evaluate parking lot design requirements to address appropriate buffering and interior parking lot landscaping requirements for the edges of parking lots over 15 cars

- Review allowable lots splits within the Agriculture: Primary (A-1) and Agriculture: General/Woodlot (A-2) zoning districts to determine best strategies to manage these splits in a manner that balances the desire to allow reasonable splits to occur while preserving large agricultural parcels through clustering of residential uses and limiting the allowable size of “child” residential parcels within the districts
- Recognizing the adverse impacts that the siting of large-scale renewable energy systems will have on the Township’s agrarian character, consider adopting “Workable” clean energy siting zoning ordinance provisions so that the Township may adopt regulations that will lessen the negative impacts of clean energy siting on the Township by adopting more stringent requirements than being promulgated by the Michigan Public Services Commission .

In November 2023, the State of Michigan passed new laws that restrict the ability for local units of government to limit the siting of large-scale renewable energy facilities within their borders. The full impacts of this action are still evolving as the rules of the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC), the State agency that is tasked with implementing these new rules, is still rule-making at the time of this writing. Local communities will be able to review large-scale renewable energy facility siting, but local rules may be no more stringent than the MPSC’s.

While the Zoning Ordinance that will result from this effort will go a significant way towards implementing the many concepts of this Plan, additional efforts by the Planning Commission and the Township Board will be necessary to assist in achieving the vision created and zoning changes identified within this Zoning Plan.

Implementation Steps

This section outlines the most effective and direct approach towards successful implementation of the Master Plan. In many communities, a long list of options and opportunities are presented in this portion of the document that are often beyond the capacity of the community to implement or outside of the scope of land use actions. This type of extensive listing of projects overwhelms the Planning Commission, the legislative body, and the local administration, often leading to the plan not being reviewed or looked toward implementation steps until the next the Plan is updated.

To avoid this scenario, a short set of work items has been identified. This Action Plan is built on the premise that these implementation steps should be interlocking and mutually supportive. To assist in the implementation, the list does separate the priorities into Next Steps, Intermediate Steps, and Long Range Steps.

All planning, land use, and capital decisions should be made through the lens of the goals and actions identified during the development of the Master Plan and incorporated into the Goals and Actions section. It would be appropriate for the Planning Commission, Township Board or other municipal body to proceed with items that are not specifically identified within the Plan as long as they meet the Goals and Actions outlined in Chapter 7.

Next Steps

- Conduct a Zoning Ordinance Audit and address issues identified
- Implement the recommendations of the Zoning Plan
- Adopt a Complete Streets resolution

- Initiate steps to evaluate and revise the [official Zoning Map](#) to align ~~the~~ [it with the](#) Master Plan's Future Land Use Map [with the Township's Zoning Map](#)
- Determine the Township's direction regarding if the Township desires to regulate clean energy facilities through the establishment of "Workable" zoning provisions or if the Township will rely upon the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC)

Intermediate Steps

- Ensure the Code Enforcement Officer has sufficient resources to increase compliance including development of informational materials regarding the process and reasons for code enforcement
- Work with neighboring communities to develop a plan to improve nonmotorized transportation within southern Saginaw County and northern Shiawassee County

Long Range

- Continue to foster collaboration between Maple Grove Township, neighboring Townships, the Cities of Chesaning and Montrose, and the County
- Continue to support continued development of nonmotorized transportation options



POPULATION TRENDS						
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Maple Grove Township	2,555	2,994	2,830	2,598	2,668	2,676
Albee Township	2,242	2,642	2,395	2,344	2,160	2,046
Chesaning Township	2,578	5,317	4,904	4,853	4,659	4,748
Montrose Township	6,468	7,870	6,236	6,336	6,224	6,005
Hazelton Township	2,132	2,411	2,299	2,221	2,071	2,054
Saginaw County	219,743	228,059	211,946	210,039	200,169	190,124
Michigan	8,875,083	9,262,078	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331

Source: 1970 - 2020 U.S. Census



POPULATION PROJECTIONS										
Saginaw County										
	2025		2030		2035		2040		2045	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0 - 4 Years Old	10,494	5.7%	9,672	5.4%	8,777	5.1%	8,083	4.9%	7,481	5.0%
5 - 19 Years Old	32,949	17.9%	32,271	18.0%	31,055	18.1%	28,970	17.7%	26,382	17.1%
20 - 34 Years Old	33,227	18.0%	29,536	16.5%	27,223	15.8%	25,759	15.7%	24,859	16.2%
35 - 54 Years Old	42,074	22.9%	42,833	23.9%	42,398	24.7%	41,092	25.1%	37,596	24.4%
55 - 74 Years Old	46,570	25.3%	43,415	24.3%	39,452	23.0%	36,675	22.4%	35,792	23.3%
75 Years and Older	18,772	10.2%	21,137	11.8%	22,958	13.4%	22,990	14.1%	21,574	14.0%
Total	184,086	100.0%	178,864	100.0%	171,863	100.0%	163,569	100.0%	153,884	100.0%

Source: Michigan Population Projections by County through 2045 by State of Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget

https://miml.org/_docs/publications/Population_Projections_2045.pdf

AGE	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045
0-4	10,892	10,494	9,672	8,777	8,083	7,681
5-9	10,923	10,809	10,481	9,649	8,746	7,987
10-14	10,994	10,649	10,603	10,262	9,418	8,461
15-19	12,610	11,491	11,187	11,144	10,806	9,934
20-24	11,920	10,878	9,794	9,484	9,463	9,139
25-29	12,561	10,708	9,810	8,688	8,351	8,202
30-34	11,192	11,641	9,932	9,051	7,945	7,518
35-39	10,237	10,973	11,496	9,798	8,919	7,760
40-44	10,393	10,282	11,109	11,610	9,913	8,957
45-49	10,781	10,125	10,096	10,908	11,388	9,638
50-54	11,803	10,694	10,132	10,082	10,872	11,241
55-59	12,999	11,422	10,446	9,883	9,809	10,486
60-64	13,491	12,202	10,760	9,815	9,264	9,112
65-69	11,928	12,384	11,203	9,830	8,933	8,370
70-74	9,804	10,562	11,006	9,924	8,669	7,824
75-79	6,854	8,261	8,931	9,307	8,366	7,263
80-84	4,482	5,289	6,413	6,923	7,206	6,446
85+	5,056	5,222	5,793	6,728	7,418	7,865
Total	188,921	184,086	178,866	171,860	163,569	153,883



AGE DISTRIBUTION									
	Maple Grove Township		Saginaw County		Michigan		United States		
0 - 4 Years Old	125	4.6%	9,687	5.2%	528,483	5.2%	19,202,112	6.1%	
5 - 19 Years Old	512	19.0%	33,850	18.0%	1,828,202	18.1%	62,907,251	19.9%	
20 - 44 Years Old	749	27.8%	57,095	30.4%	3,180,464	31.5%	130,638,283	41.4%	
45 - 64 Years Old	770	28.6%	47,805	25.4%	2,635,725	26.1%	78,518,745	24.9%	
65 Years and Older	534	19.9%	39,542	21.0%	1,935,166	19.1%	24,439,098	7.7%	
Total	2,690	100.0%	187,979	100.0%	10,108,040	100.0%	315,705,489	100.0%	

Source: 2023 Esri Demographic and Income Profile

MEDIAN AGE				
	Maple Grove Township	Saginaw County	Michigan	United States
2010	41.8	39.4	38.8	37.1
2023	43.7	41.9	41.1	39.1

Source: 2010 U.S. Census; 2023 Esri Demographic and Income Profile



RACE & ETHNICITY DISTRIBUTION	
Maple Grove Township	
	2020
White	2,519
Black or African American	17
American Indian and Alaska Native	4
Asian	0
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	0
Some Other Race	17
Hispanic or Latino	62

Source: 2020 U.S. Census

PL 91-171, 2020

2,557

DP04, S2501

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied
Maple Grove Township	2.62	2.56
Saginaw County	2.27	2.40
Michigan	2.21	2.58

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Household size for occupied housing units

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

	1-Person	2-Person	3-Person	4-or-more-person
	%	%	%	%
Maple Grove Township	18.6%	37.9%	19.9%	23.7%
Saginaw County	31.2%	33.8%	15.3%	19.8%
Michigan	29.9%	35.1%	14.6%	20.4%

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey

*Household size for occupied housing units

S2501

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS (%)					
	Married-Couple Family	Householder 65 Years and older	Nonfamily Households	Households with related children under 18 years	Female Householder, no spouse present
Maple Grove Township	67.5%	33.4%	24.1%	32.3%	4.3%
Saginaw County	42.8%	30.6%	37.6%	26.9%	14.7%
Michigan	46.8%	27.7%	36.6%	27.7%	11.7%

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Totals will not equal 100.0%

s2501

s1101 for avg HH size

DP04

TOTAL HOUSING STOCK								
	1-Unit, detached	1-Unit, attached	2-Units	3 or 4 Units	5 to 9 Units	10 or more Units	Mobile Home	Boat, RV, Van, etc.
Maple Grove Township	978	0	51	0	0	9	8	0
Saginaw County	65,323	3,154	2,298	2,161	3,886	6,305	2,946	22
Michigan	3,296,200	209,870	104,193	120,875	193,094	405,830	235,036	1,406

0.049713

0.034218

0.051485

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

	County	Township		
1-unit, det	65,323	978	978	
1-unit, att	3,154	0	0	
2 units	2,298	51	51	
3 or 4 unit:	2,161	0	0	
5 to 9 unit:	3,886	0	0	
10 to 19 ur	2,828	4	9	
20 or more	3,477	2,946	5	8
Mobile ho	2,946	22	8	0
Boat, RV, v	22	0	0	



HOUSEHOLD TENURE		
	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
Maple Grove Township	90.9%	9.1%
Saginaw County	72.1%	27.9%
Michigan	71.6%	28.4%

Source: 2023 Esri Housing Profiles

DP1

OCCUPANCY STATUS

	Occupied	Vacant	Seasonally Vacant	Percent Seasonally Vacant*
Maple Grove Township	997	46	5	10.9%
Saginaw County	78,442	7,511	483	6.4%
Michigan	4,041,760	528,413	242,831	46.0%

Source: 2020 U.S. Census Survey

*Percent seasonally vacant of total vacant units, not total housing units

DP04

YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT

	Maple Grove Township	Saginaw County	Michigan
2020 or later	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
2010 to 2019	3.7%	2.2%	3.7%
2000 to 2009	9.1%	6.8%	9.9%
1990 to 1999	11.6%	8.7%	13.0%
1980 to 1989	6.4%	7.6%	9.8%
1970 to 1979	25.4%	19.4%	15.3%
1960 to 1969	11.7%	15.7%	11.8%
1950 to 1959	12.9%	16.2%	14.6%
1940 to 1949	1.6%	6.7%	7.2%
1939 or earlier	17.6%	16.8%	14.5%

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Financial Characteristics	Maple Grove Township		Saginaw County		Michigan	
	2021		2021		2021	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
VALUE: Spec	914	100.0%	56,203	100.0%	2,870,693	100.0%
Under \$100,000	106	11.6%	24,652	43.9%	707,432	24.6%
\$100,000-\$199,999	462	50.5%	20,004	35.6%	961,608	33.5%
\$200,000-\$299,999	258	28.2%	7,751	13.8%	602,204	21.0%
\$300,000-\$499,999	80	8.8%	2,976	5.3%	436,850	15.2%
Over \$500,000	8	0.9%	820	1.5%	162,599	5.7%
Median Value	\$170,100		\$114,400		\$172,100	
RENT: Spec	113	100.0%	21,792	100.0%	1,106,036	100.0%
< \$500	16	14.2%	2,874	13.2%	109,627	9.9%
\$500-\$999	53	46.9%	12,858	59.0%	480,618	43.5%
\$1,000-\$1,499	23	20.4%	3,888	17.8%	333,610	30.2%
> \$1,500	0	0.0%	1,058	4.9%	125,970	11.4%
No Cash Rent	21	18.6%	1,114	5.1%	56,211	5.1%
Median Rent	\$841		\$821		\$946	

DP04

	Michigan		County		Township	
Owner-occupied units	2,870,693	2,870,693	56,203	56,203	914	914
Less than \$50,000	284,457	9.9%	10,721	19.1%	21	2.3%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	422,975	14.7%	13,931	24.8%	85	9.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	471,208	16.4%	11,562	20.6%	269	29.4%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	490,400	17.1%	8,442	15.0%	193	21.1%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	602,204	21.0%	7,751	13.8%	258	28.2%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	436,850	15.2%	2,976	5.3%	80	8.8%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	136,250	4.7%	664	1.2%	8	0.9%
\$1,000,000 or more	26,349	0.9%	156	0.3%	0	0.0%
Median (dollars)	\$172,100	99.9%	\$114,400	100.1%	\$170,100	100.0%
Occupied units paying r	1,049,825	1,049,825	20,678	20,678	92	92
Less than \$500	109,627	10.4%	2,874	13.9%	16	17.4%
\$500 to \$999	480,618	45.8%	12,858	62.2%	53	57.6%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	333,610	31.8%	3,888	18.8%	23	25.0%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	85,844	8.2%	692	3.3%	0	0.0%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	22,749	2.2%	161	0.8%	0	0.0%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	7,598	0.7%	37	0.2%	0	0.0%
\$3,000 or more	9,779	0.9%	168	0.8%	0	0.0%
Median (dollars)	\$946 (X)		\$821 (X)		\$841 (X)	
No rent paid	56,211 (X)		1,114 (X)		21 (X)	

S1903, S1701, B19301

INCOME and POVERTY

	Median Family Income	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	Total Population Below Poverty Level	65 Years & Over Below Poverty Level
Maple Grove Township	\$77,250	\$69,344	\$31,935	12.1%	6.2%
Saginaw County	\$66,489	\$52,749	\$30,243	18.0%	8.2%
Michigan	\$80,365	\$63,202	\$34,768	13.3%	8.7%
United States	\$85,028	\$69,021	\$37,638	12.6%	9.6%

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

S1501

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (%)		
	High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Maple Grove Township	91.8%	16.2%
Saginaw County	90.5%	22.3%
Michigan	91.6%	30.6%
United States	88.9%	33.7%

*Data refers to the population 25 years and older

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

	Maple Grove Township	Saginaw County	Michigan
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing	14	701	41,118
Mining/Quarrying/Oil & Gas	0	32	5,490
Construction	144	4,094	290,859
Manufacturing	169	13,779	889,586
Wholesale Trade	9	947	74,647
Retail Trade	136	9,260	505,304
Transportation/Warehousing	46	2,877	214,264
Utilities	33	570	38,415
Information	2	1,196	56,887
Finance/Insurance	36	4,054	229,799
Real Estate/Rental/Leasing	0	1,013	68,537
Professional/Scientific/Tech	77	3,677	310,507
Management of Companies	0	55	5,901
Admin/Support/Waste Management	23	3,987	199,754
Educational Services	108	5,624	399,120
Health Care/Social Assistance	196	14,282	658,520
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	14	1,268	90,368
Accommodation/Food Services	74	6,077	313,789
Other Services (Excluding Public)	86	3,666	219,079
Public Administration	21	2,893	168,981
Employed Persons 16 Years and Over	1,188	80,052	4,780,925

*Data Refers to civilian employed population 16 years and over

Source: 2023 Esri Civilian Labor Force Profile

EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION

	Maple Grove Township	Saginaw County	Michigan
White Collar	725	44,873	2,844,958
Management	113	7,282	523,408
Business/Financial	76	3,694	260,307
Computer/Mathematical	18	2,111	162,545
Architecture/Engineering	46	1,929	178,001
Life/Physical/Social Sciences	0	830	51,549
Community/Social Service	50	1,879	97,076
Legal	3	707	43,117
Education/Training/Library	62	3,661	254,412
Arts/Design/Entertainment	42	1,151	84,766
Healthcare Practitioner	79	5,714	293,813
Sales and Sales Related	70	6,688	400,530
Office/Administrative Support	166	9,227	495,434
Blue Collar	315	20,644	1,195,653
Farming/Fishing/Forestry	0	226	15,958
Construction/Extraction	112	3,458	225,569
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	64	2,479	150,380
Production	70	7,683	412,791
Transportation/Material Moving	69	6,798	390,955
Services	148	14,535	740,314
Healthcare Support	35	3,575	143,601
Protective Service	8	1,430	77,642
Food Preparation/Serving	63	4,899	257,644
Building Maintenance	11	2,802	148,444
Personal Care/Service	31	1,829	112,983
Employed Persons 16 Years and Over	1,188	80,052	4,780,925

*Data Refers to civilian employed population 16 years and over

Source: 2023 Esri Civilian Labor Force Profile



Disability						
	Hearing Difficulty	Vision Difficulty	Cognitive Difficulty	Ambulatory Difficulty	Self-care Difficulty	Independent Living Difficulty
Maple Grove Township	3.4%	1.7%	3.7%	5.9%	1.4%	3.7%
Saginaw County	4.8%	2.9%	7.3%	10.1%	3.9%	8.2%
Michigan	3.8%	2.2%	6.0%	7.4%	2.8%	6.5%
United States	3.5%	2.3%	5.1%	6.7%	2.6%	5.7%

s1810



EMPLOYMENT STATUS			
	Maple Grove Township	Saginaw County	Michigan
Employed	1,188	80,052	4,780,925
Unemployed	58	6,973	272,426
Not in Labor Force	43.3%	43.7%	38.8%
Unemployment Rate	4.7%	8.0%	5.4%

*Data Refers to civilian population 16 years and over

Source: 2023 Civilian Labor Force Profiles



TRAVEL TIME TO WORK					
	Less than 10 minutes	10 - 29 Minutes	30 - 59 Minutes	60 Minutes or More	Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)
Maple Grove Township	10.8%	37.4%	40.7%	11.2%	31.6
Saginaw County	17.5%	58.7%	18.1%	5.7%	21.7
Michigan	13.7%	53.1%	26.9%	6.3%	24.5

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table S0801

Table B08303

COMMUTING HABITS					
	Drive Alone	Carpool	Public Transit	Non-motorized (Walk, Bike)	Work from Home
Maple Grove Township	58.2%	3.7%	0.0%	1.3%	9.8%
Saginaw County	81.0%	9.4%	0.4%	2.3%	6.1%
Michigan	78.8%	8.3%	1.2%	2.5%	8.3%

*Totals may not equal 100.0%

Source: 2017-2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Existing Land Use		
Type	Acreage	Percentage
Residential	3,192	13.9%
Commercial	33	0.1%
Industrial	4	0.0%
Public/Semi-Public	37	0.2%
Recreation	9	0.0%
Agricultural	18,438	80.0%
Vacant	1,327	5.8%
Total	23,040	100.0%

Source: Wade Trim Analysis, 2024

21,713

23040

Future Land Use		
Type	Acreage	Percentage
Low-Density Residential	362	1.6%
Mobile Home Park	0	0.0%
Commercial	88	0.4%
Industrial	9	0.0%
Agricultural	22,581	98.0%
Total	23,040	100.0%

Source: Wade Trim Analysis, 2024

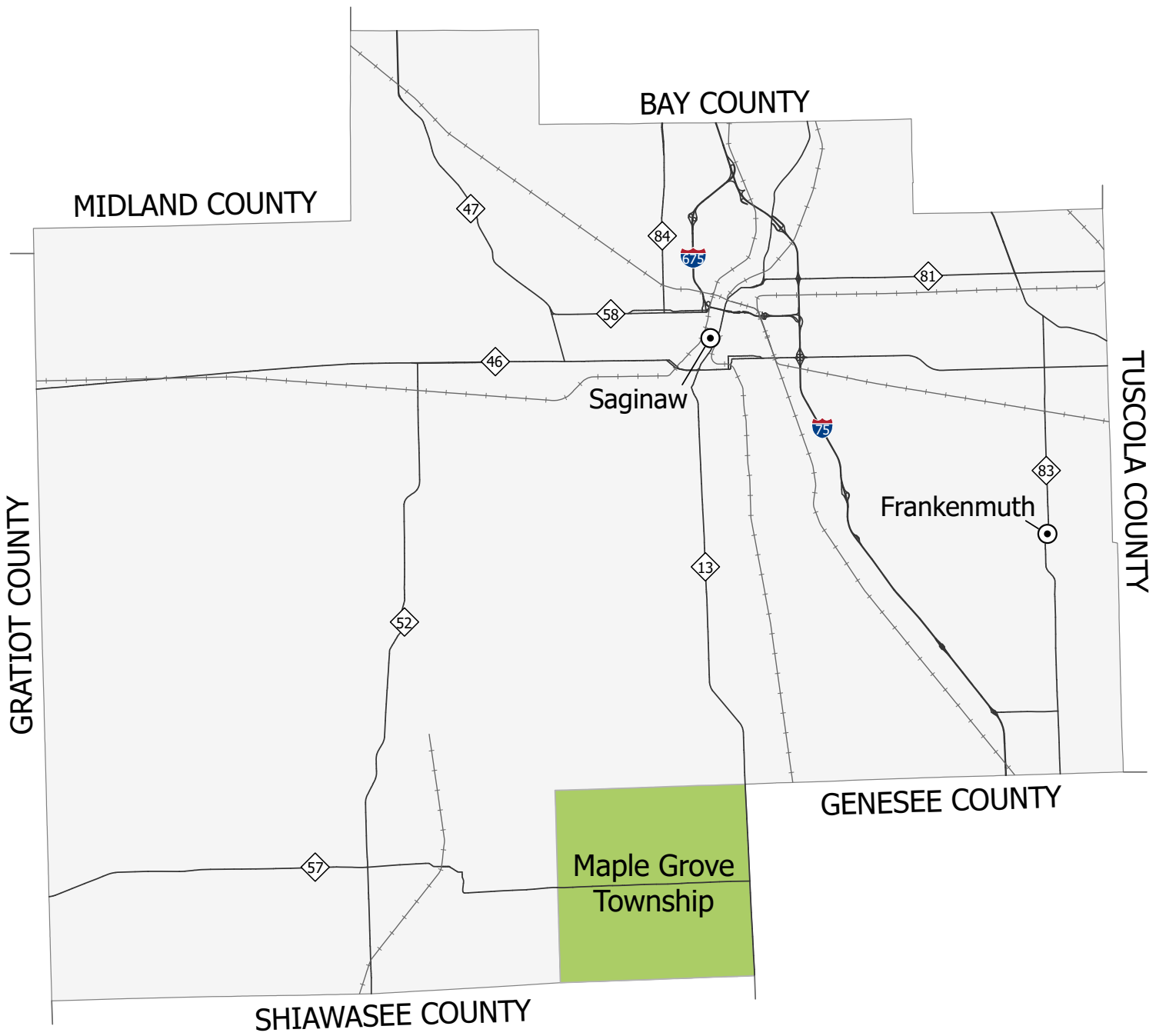
Environmental Resources Land Use

Type	Acreage	Percentage
Woodlands	5,203	22.6%
Wetlands	1,093	4.7%
Total	23,040	100.0%

1093

606

Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 2017; Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2019



MIDLAND COUNTY

BAY COUNTY

GRATIOT COUNTY

TUSCOLA COUNTY

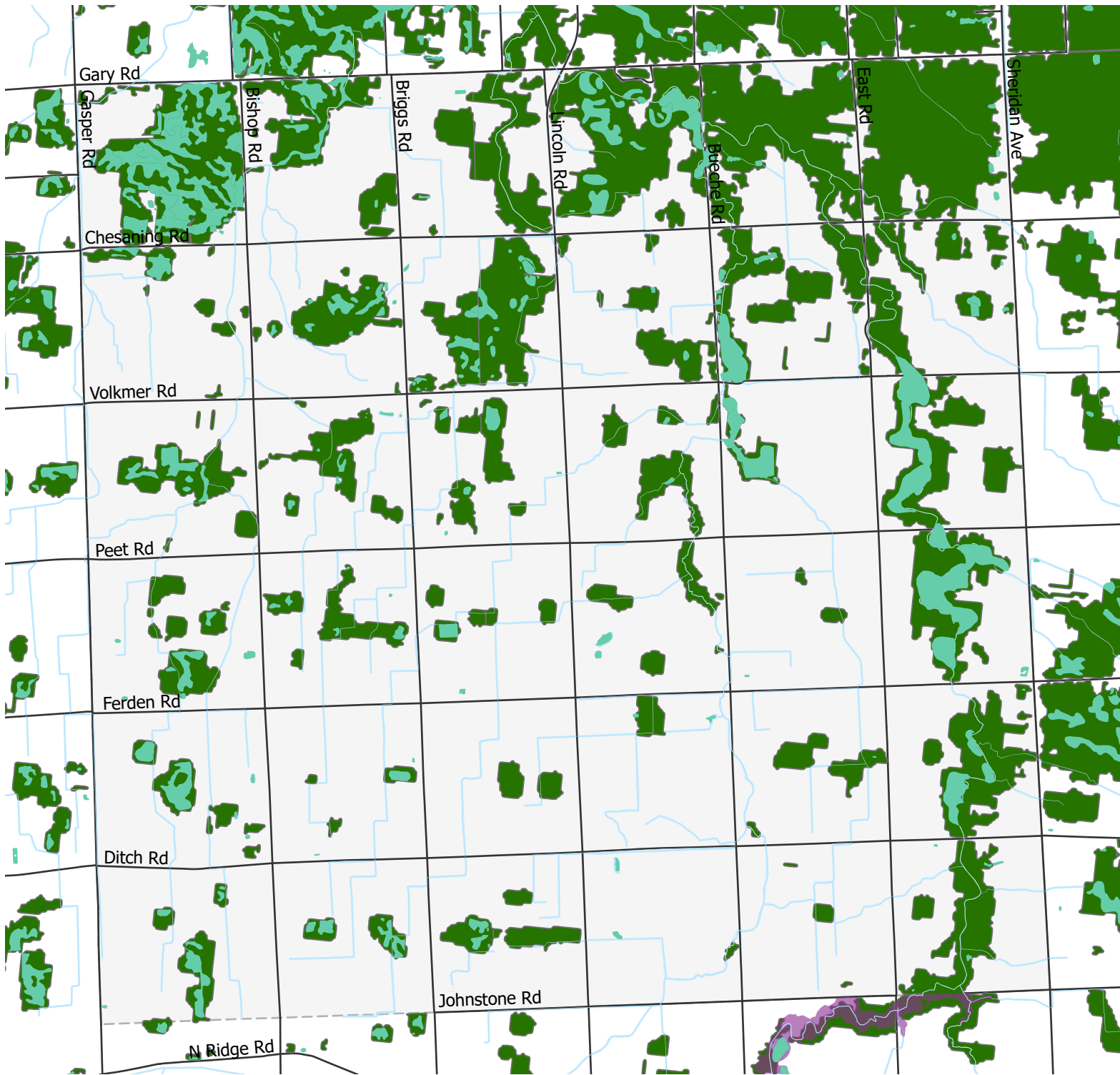
Saginaw

Frankenmuth

GENESEE COUNTY

SHIAWASEE COUNTY





Maple Grove
Township







Maple Grove Township Master Plan

Natural Features

Base Layers:

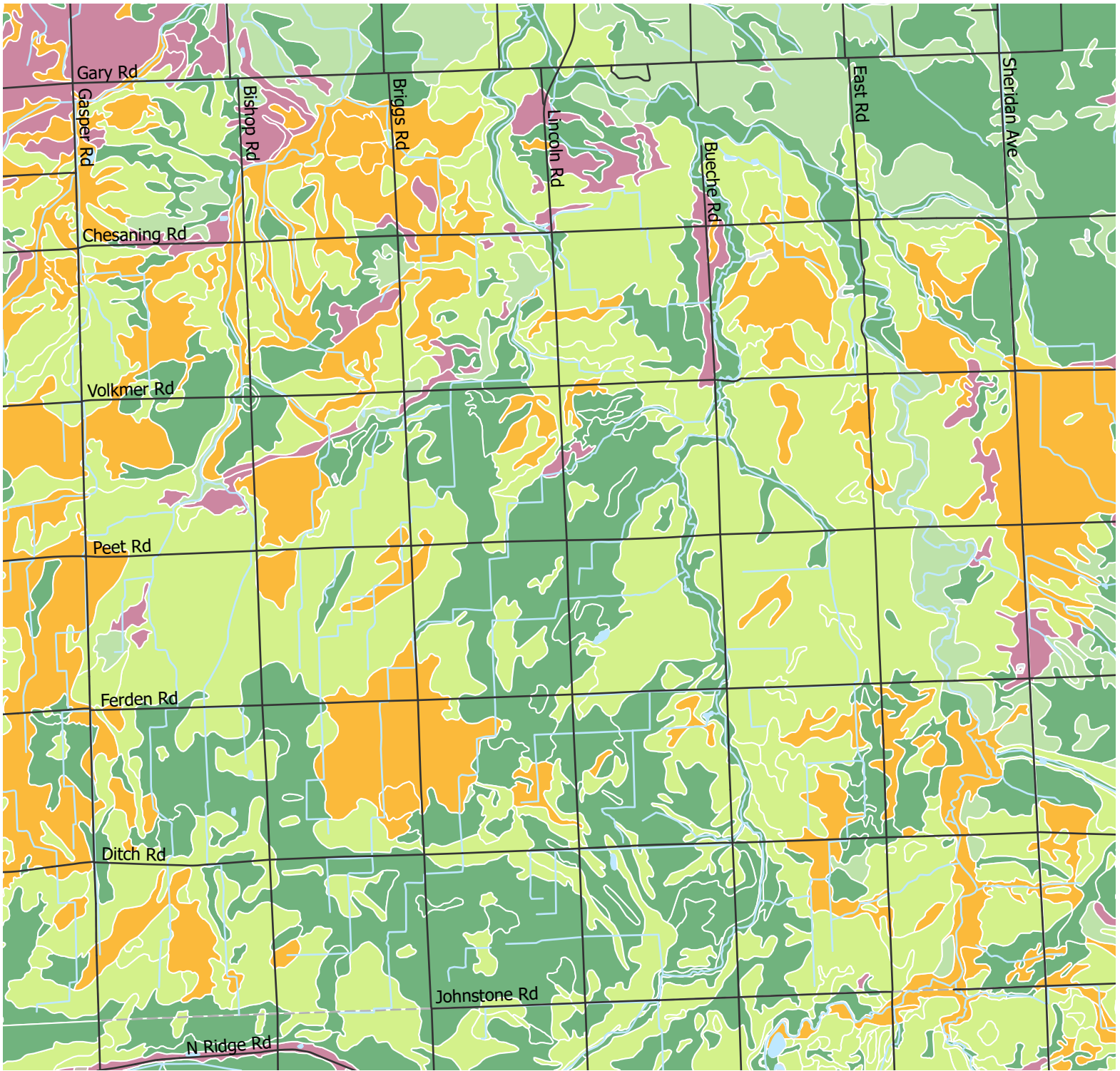
-  Roads
-  Creeks & Streams
-  Water Bodies
-  Township Boundary

Natural Features:

-  Woodlands
-  Wetlands
-  100-year Floodplain
-  500-year Floodplain

0 0.5 1 Miles





Maple Grove Township Master Plan

Soils

Base Layers:

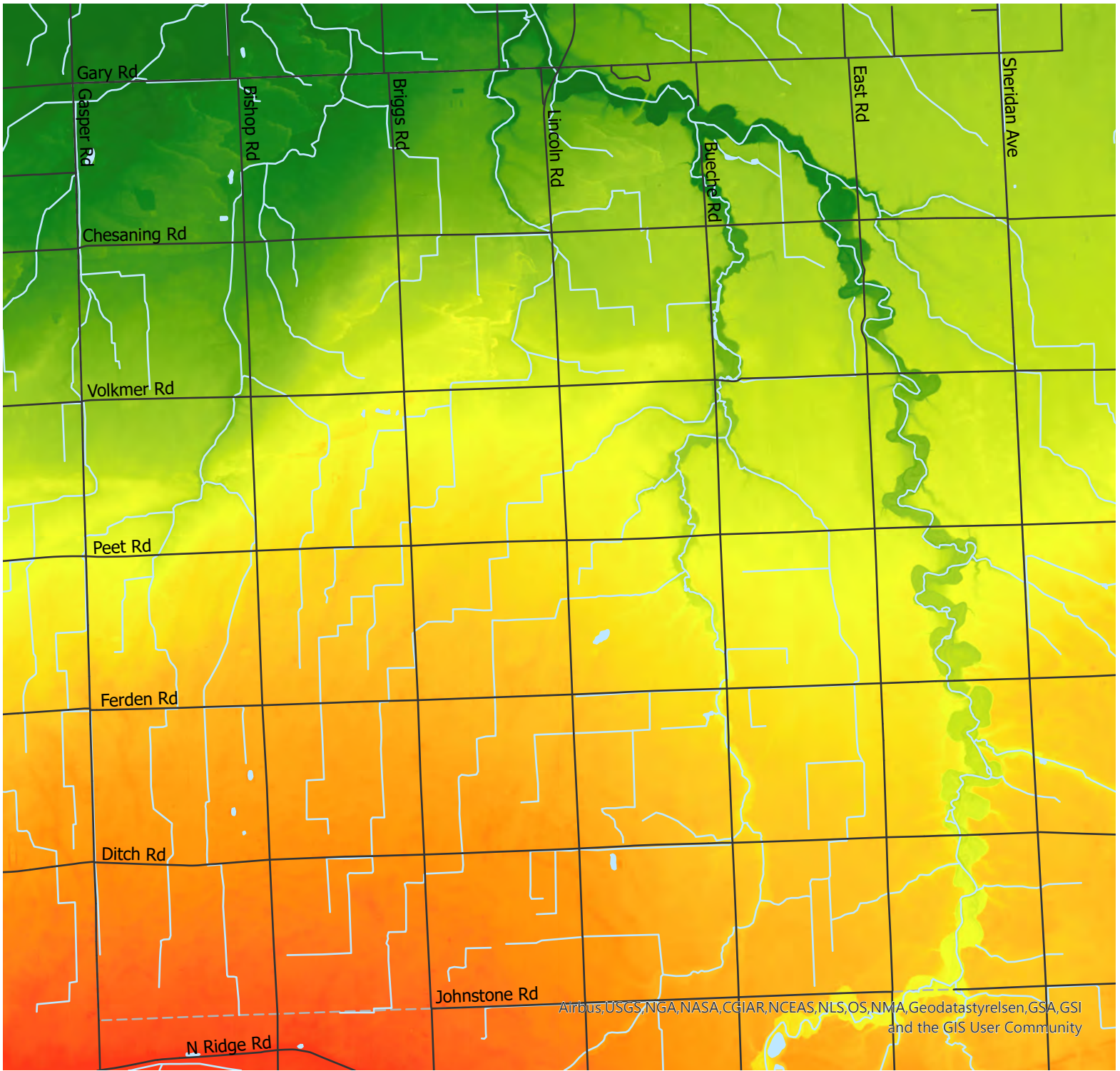
- Roads
- Creeks & Streams
- Water Bodies
- Township Boundary

Soil Types:

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| Alfisols | Gelisols | Oxisols |
| Andisols | Histosols | Spodosols |
| Aridisols | Inceptisols | Ultisols |
| Entisols | Mollisols | Vertisols |

0 0.5 1 Miles









Airbus, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastyrelsen, GSA, GSI and the GIS User Community

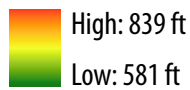
Maple Grove Township Master Plan

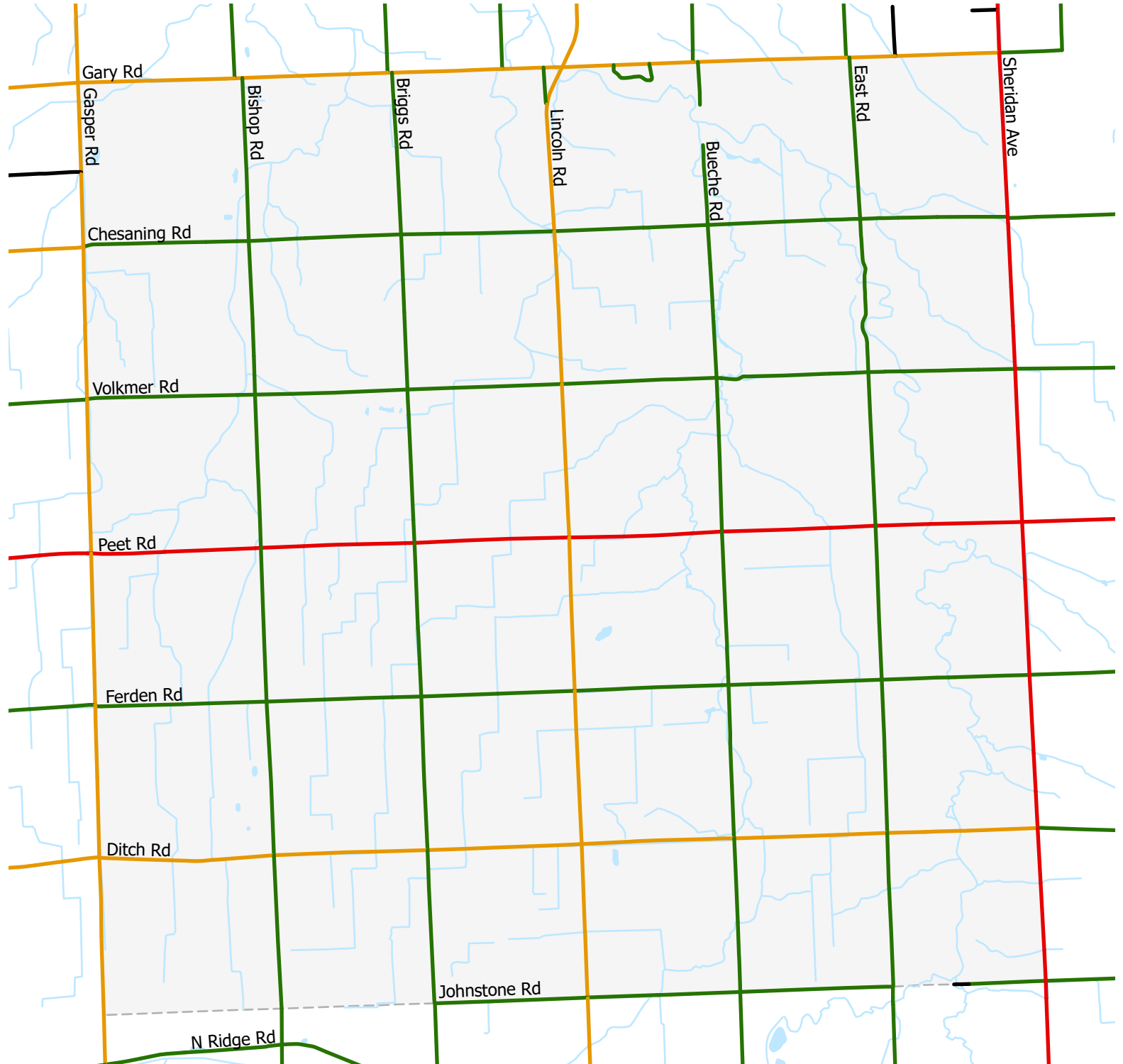
Topography

Base Layers:

-  Roads
-  Creeks & Streams
-  Water Bodies
-  Township Boundary

Elevation (Feet):





Maple Grove Township Master Plan

Transportation Network



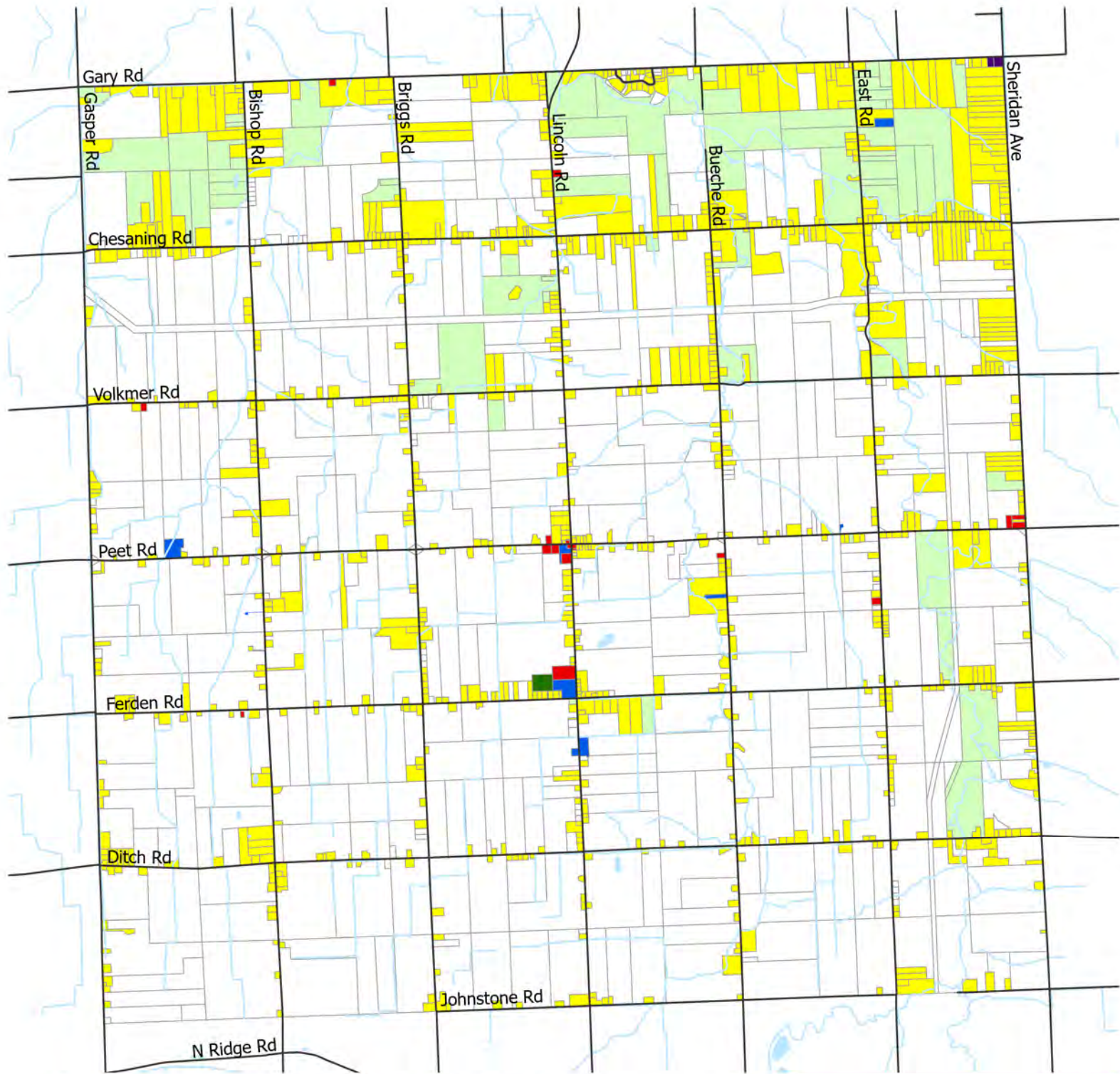
Base Layers:

- Creeks & Streams
- Water Bodies
- Township Boundary

Road Classification:

- State Trunkline
- County Primary
- County Local
- Other Local Road

Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2017
 Parcel Source: Saginaw Area GIS Authority, 2023
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Maple Grove Township Master Plan

Existing Land Use

Base Layers:

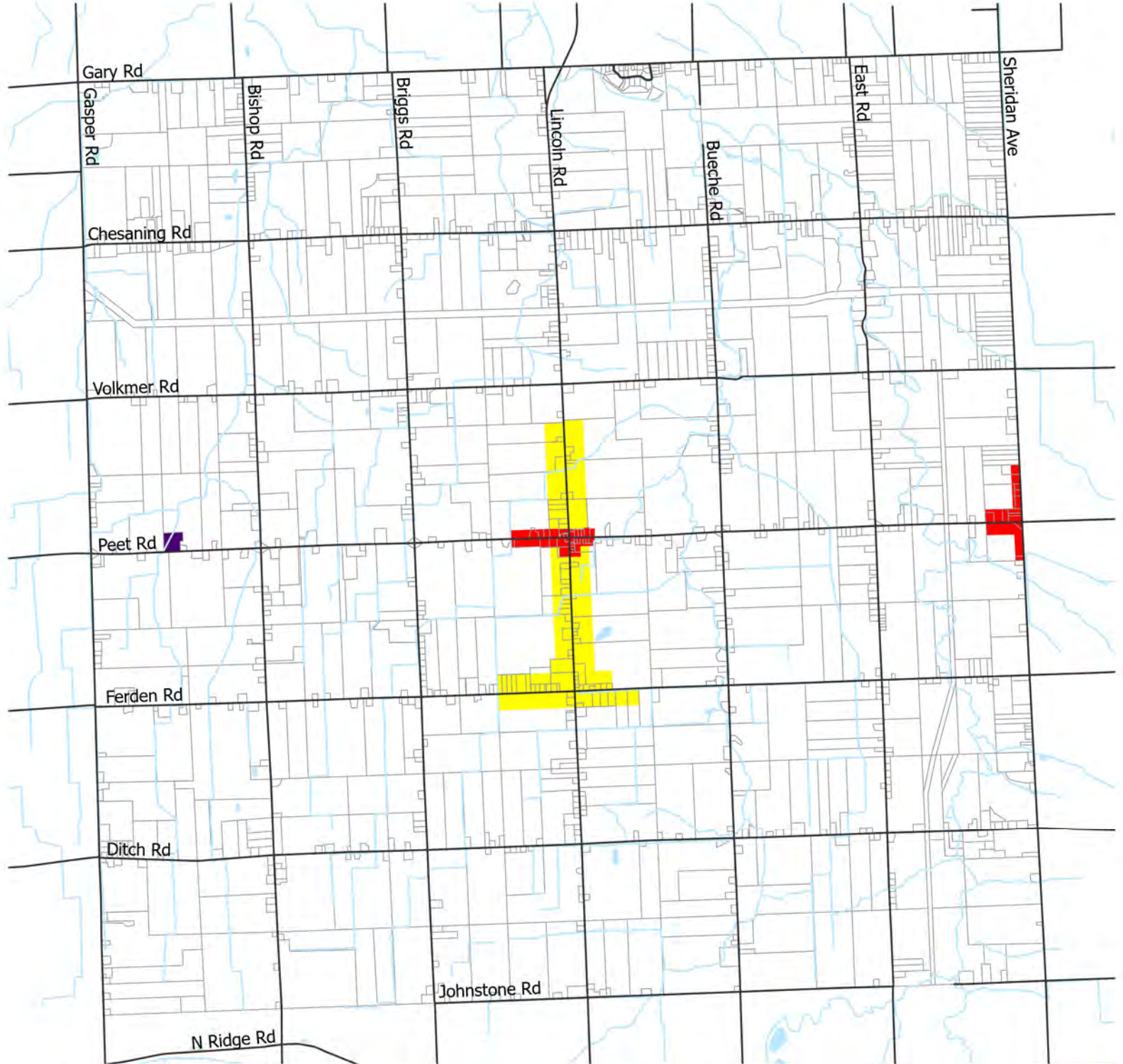
- Roads
- Creeks & Streams
- Water Bodies
- Township Boundary

Land Use Type:

- Single-Family Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Semi-Public
- Recreation
- Agricultural
- Vacant

0 0.5 1 Miles





Maple Grove Township Master Plan

Future Land Use

Base Layers:

- Roads
- Creeks & Streams
- Water Bodies
- Township Boundary

Land Use Type:

- Agricultural
- Low-Density Residential
- Mobile Home Park (none mapped)
- Commercial
- Industrial



Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2017;
 Wade Trim Analysis, 2024
 Parcel Source: Saginaw Area GIS Authority, 2023

