

# ALLEGAN TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN



ADOPTED: NOVEMBER 2002

UPDATED: DECEMBER 2010  
\_\_\_\_\_, 2016

**williams&works**  
engineers | surveyors | planners



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## SECTION I - INTRODUCTION

This Master Plan represents the culmination of over twelve months' work by numerous local residents and local officials. It reflects the community's deep concern for the rural character of the Township and a strong commitment to retain and strengthen local quality of life. It outlines the preferred future for the community and a master plan to realize it. The Plan is appropriately general, recognizing that planning for the future is a delicate blend of art and science and that sufficient flexibility will be needed to respond to the challenges of the future.

**This Plan reflects the community's deep concern for the rural character of the Township and a strong commitment to retain and strengthen local quality of life.**

The fundamental purpose of the Master Plan is to enable the Township to establish a future direction for the Township's physical development. The Township Planning Act (Public Act 168 of 1959, as amended) specifically gives a Township Planning Commission the authority to prepare and officially adopt a plan. The Township Rural Zoning Act, Public Act 184 of 1943, as amended, authorizes Townships to adopt and enforce zoning ordinances based upon a plan for the Township as recommended to the Township Board by the Planning Commission. Once prepared, officially adopted and maintained, this Plan will serve as an advisory guide for the physical conservation of certain areas and for the development of other areas.

Because of constant change in our social and economic structure and activities, the Plan must be maintained through periodic review and revision so that it reflects contemporary trends while maintaining long range goals. The Plan will be effective to the degree that it:

- ◆ Reflects the needs and desires of the citizens of Allegan Township;
- ◆ Realistically interprets and reflects the conditions, trends and the dynamic economic and social pressures that are brought about by change; and
- ◆ Inspires consensus and cooperation among the various public agencies, developers, and the citizens of the Township toward achieving common goals.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

**The planning process was seen as an opportunity to build and strengthen a community consensus about the future land use patterns in the Township.**

When Allegan Township began the plan preparation process, it had several objectives. First, it was important to achieve an understanding of the scale and scope of growth and development and the likely future trends in the community. Secondly, the Township sought to clearly define community priorities with regard to growth and development and land use. Thirdly, the planning process was seen as an opportunity to build and strengthen a community consensus about the future land use patterns in the Township. Finally, the Township sought realistic and effective mechanisms to achieve the plan's objectives.

This Township Master Plan accomplishes all these objectives. More specifically, this Plan will serve the Township in the following ways:

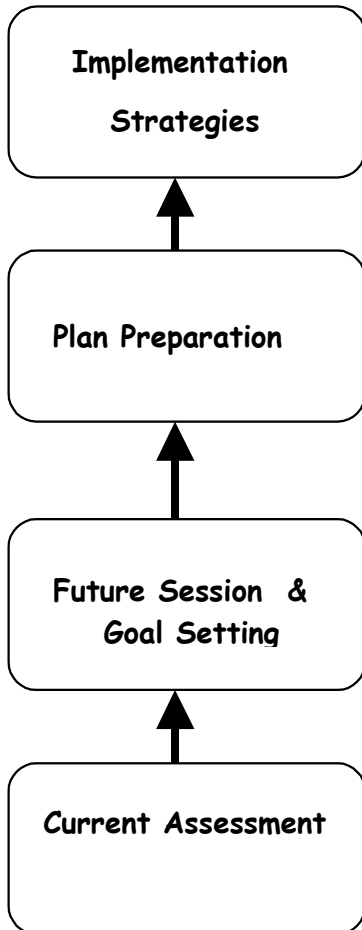
1. It provides a comprehensive means of integrating proposals that look years ahead to meet future needs regarding general aspects of physical conservation and development throughout the Township;
2. It serves as the official advisory policy statement to encourage orderly and efficient use of the land for agriculture, residences, businesses and industry, and to coordinate these uses of land with each other, with streets and highways, and other public facilities and services;
3. It creates a logical basis for zoning, subdivision design, public improvement plans, and to facilitate and guide the work of the Township Planning Commission, the Township Board, and other public and private endeavors dealing with the physical conservation and development of the Township;
4. It provides a means for private organizations and individuals to determine how they may relate their building and development projects and policies to official Township planning policies; and
5. It offers a means of relating the plans of Allegan Township to the plans of other communities in the region.

The relationship between the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance is a critical one that should be clearly understood.

- ◆ **A master plan is a statement of policy and the zoning ordinance is a law.** A master plan is a policy that states the general principals on which development will be based and identifies specific issues related to development. The master plan is adopted by the Planning Commission only, a quasi-legislative body, which gives the document no direct legal authority. It is only through the zoning ordinance that the use of land may be legally and immediately controlled.
  
- ◆ **The master plan refers to future land use while the zoning ordinance affects current land use.** The master plan is orientated to future land use, while the zoning ordinance regulates current land use. The master plan is not intended to be immediately translated into zoning; rather the master plan should be implemented over an extended period of time. The future land use map and zoning map should not be identical, although some immediate zone changes may be necessary and appropriate where land use intensities need to be adjusted to conform to the future land use plan.

## PLAN METHODOLOGY

The planning process involved four inter-related phases:



- ◆ Data Analysis - A Current Assessment,
- ◆ Goals and Objectives - Creating a Policy Foundation,
- ◆ Plan Preparation - Defining the Preferred Future, and
- ◆ Implementation Strategies - Getting There from Here.

The first phase of the effort involved a summary review and analysis of available data gathered from local and regional sources. Its purpose was to develop a comprehensive impression of the patterns of growth and the challenges that will impact the Township. This phase culminated in the preparation of a Current Assessment Report. That report served as a technical resource for the Planning Commission and the consultant and it also represents the essential Community Profile, which constitutes Section II (Chapters 1 through 5) of this Plan.

The objective of this second phase was to establish a policy basis for the Township's planning and land use regulations. Part of this process included conducting a futuring session where local residents were invited to a "town hall" type of meeting to express their opinions about the future of the Township. The results provided the Planning Commission with valuable feed-back, which began the process of defining goals and objectives for the future of the Township.

The third phase involved preparing a Future Land Use Plan, which is reflected in Section III of this Plan. The future land use designations and map (Chapter 7) were developed in a series of interactive meetings and the process involved several iterations of the draft map and descriptions.

The final phase of the process involved the development of specific implementation strategies to carry out the plan. These are reflected in general terms in Chapter 8. At the conclusion of the fourth phase, a public hearing on the entire plan was held by the Township Planning Commission on \_\_\_\_\_, 2016. The final plan was approved by the Township Board on \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.



## THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

This Plan is organized into three sections, each consisting of one or more chapters. Section I includes an introductory section which outlines the purpose of the plan, the process for its development, and acknowledgements to those involved. Section II, is the Community Profile, which presents an overview description of Allegan Township from the perspective of:

- ◆ Natural Features and the Environment. (Chapter 1)
- ◆ Population (Chapter 2)
- ◆ Income, Housing and Economic Development (Chapter 3)
- ◆ Land Use and Development Patterns (Chapter 4), and
- ◆ Transportation (Chapter 5)

Section III constitutes the Master Plan, which includes the Township's Goals and Objectives (Chapter 6), the Future Land Use Plan (Chapter 7) and the Implementation Strategies (Chapter 8).

The final section of the Plan includes a Bibliography, which outlines all of the various resources consulted in the completion of this Plan, and Appendix A, which describes the results of the Allegan Futuring Session.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Master Plan is the result of a collaborative effort of many individuals, agencies and organizations. The following individuals have provided key input to this report:

PREPARED BY THE:

### ALLEGAN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Jim Connell, Chairman

Ted Heckman

Mike Buese

Marty Ruiter

Keith Behm

Karl Spreitzer

Laree Waanders

IN COOPERATION WITH:

### ALLEGAN TOWNSHIP BOARD

Steve Schulz, Supervisor

Linda Evans, Clerk

Jane Waanders, Treasurer

W. Seth Hough, Trustee

Karl Spreitzer, Trustee

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Don Weaver, Zoning Administrator

Heather Mitchell, Assessor

Bruce Hoyer, Fire Chief

Connie Rushmore

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF:

### WILLIAMS & WORKS

Andy Moore, AICP

Nathan Mehmed

## SECTION II COMMUNITY PROFILE

Producing a Master Plan requires a solid foundation of data from both original research and from secondary resources. Analysis of this data can reveal trends and conditions that may be obvious, or not so obvious, to the residents of the Township. This data supports the goals reflected in the other chapters of the Master Plan.

**The Community Profile section provides a “snapshot” of current conditions in the Township with respect to five key aspects of land use planning.**

Planning for the long-term should be a process that is not carried at a general level that recognizes the potential for change and provides flexibility. This method will provide a Master Plan that can be useful well into the future instead of becoming obsolete if or when demographic and economic trends stray from the findings of the Community Profile.

This Community Profile section provides a “snapshot” of current conditions in the Township with respect to five key aspects of land use planning. Its purpose is to generally define current conditions and trends and, more importantly, to provide a basis for drawing broad conclusions about the implications they will have on the future of the Township. Each chapter includes an overview of its subject matter along with a brief discussion of the planning trends that are relevant.



# CHAPTER 1. NATURAL FEATURES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

It is important to begin an assessment of the community with a description of its natural attributes. This chapter presents a description of the topography, soils, water resources and woodlands that provide the physical basis of the community and available utility systems.

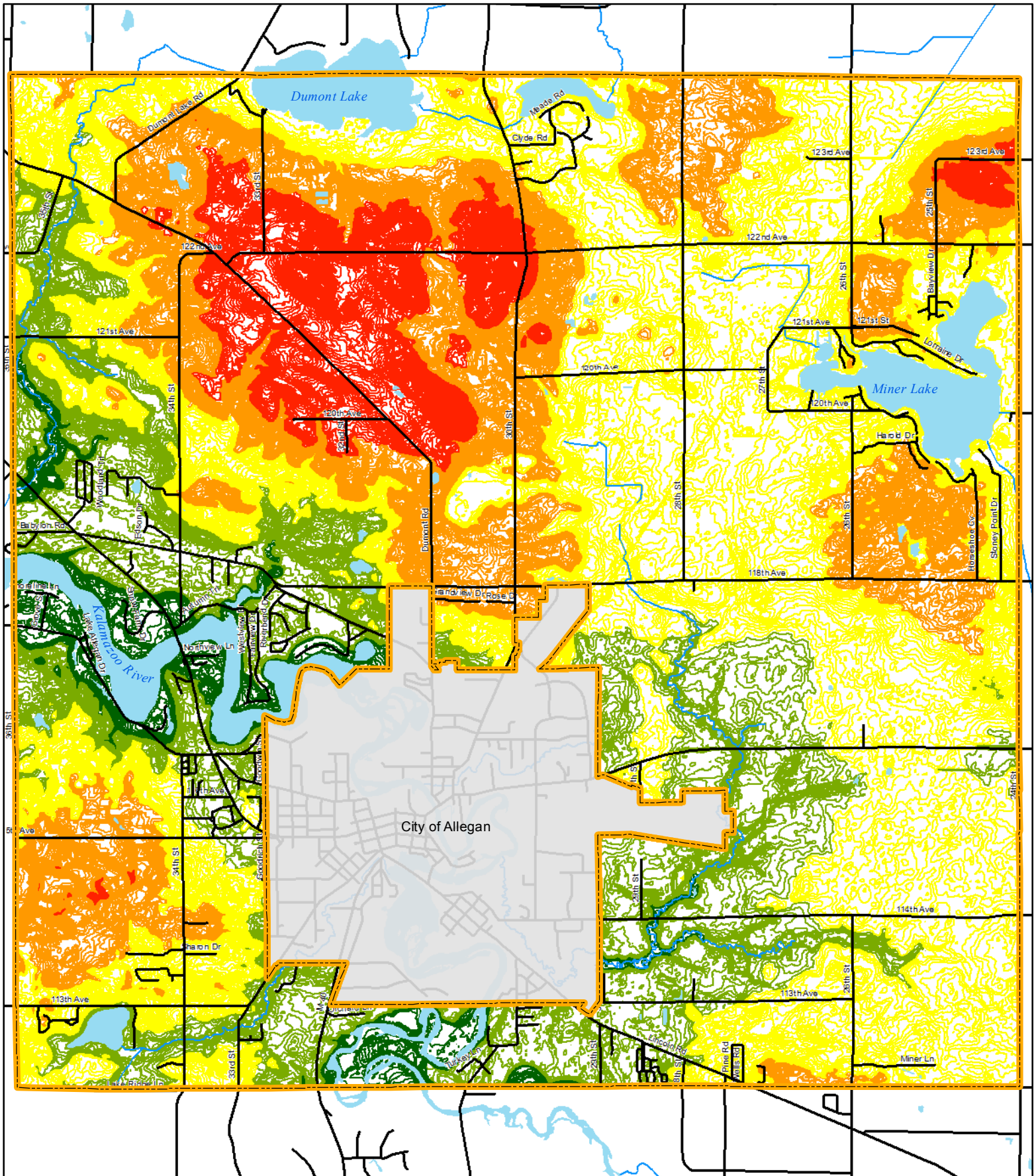
Allegan Township is situated in southwestern Michigan in Allegan County approximately 20 miles east of Lake Michigan. Primary access routes to the Township include U.S. 131, located approximately 6 miles east, M-89, M-222, and M-40. The City of Allegan is located completely within the boundaries of the Township and serves as a central business district for the surrounding areas. Allegan Township is within commuting distance of the greater Kalamazoo region, located approximately 20 miles to the southeast, the Holland area, located approximately 15 miles northwest, and the greater Grand Rapids area located approximately 45 miles to the northeast.

Some of the significant features in the Township include attractive lakes such as Dumont Lake, Wetmore Lake, Miner Lake, Littlejohn Lake and Lake Allegan. Lake Allegan, which is the only man-made lake, exists due to the impoundment of the Kalamazoo River located in Valley Township to the west. The land area of the Township is characterized by rolling terrain, productive agricultural land, and rural residential development. A portion of the Allegan State Game Area is located in the Southwest portion of the Township and expands further to the west of the Township. These positive attributes have historically drawn both permanent and seasonal residents into the area.

## Topography

**The topography of Allegan Township is a direct result of historical glacial activity.**

Soil topography is a characteristic of soil that generally illustrates the slope or "lay of the land." The topography of Allegan Township is a direct result of historical glacial activity. As the glaciers melted and receded to the north, they deposited debris (i.e. soils sediment and rocks) in the form of till and moraines. Till was typically deposited in a uniform manner as the glacier receded, while moraines were created when the glacier essentially "dumped" its debris in one particular location. The slopes and drainage of the area has, therefore, been determined by where and how much glacial debris was deposited in particular areas.



Allegan Township  
Master Plan

Map 1. Topography

Legend

- 612 - 660
- 661 - 706
- 707 - 744
- 745 - 796
- 797 - 886



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Feet

Topography can create limitations for development if the slopes are too extreme. The topography in the Township rarely exceeds twenty-percent slope and, therefore, does not create severe development limitations. Potential development limitations may exist in the flood plains of the community as these soils can experience constant or seasonal wetness and steeper slopes. The Kalamazoo River, being the largest drainage of Allegan Township, generates some of these topographical attributes. The Topography Map illustrates the elevation contours of the Township.

## Soils

**Much of the soils in the Township have limited capacity for individual septic systems.**

The soils in the Township are characterized in five broad categories according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service. A major portion of the Township is classified as the Oakville Association, which is a nearly level to steep soil that is moderately well drained to well drained. This soil type is typically sandy and is often associated with outwash and lake plains and is not typically associated with prime farmland. Depending upon the particular location, this soil may be suitable for individual septic systems. The general location of this soil is in the southwestern portion of the Township.

The second most common soil association is the Capac-Rimer-Pipestone, which is comprised of nearly level and undulating somewhat poorly drained soils formed in loamy, sandy and silty material. This soil type is associated with the prime farmland areas in the Township in the east half and northwest portion of the Township. According to the Allegan Township Septic System Suitability Map produced by Allegan County, this soil type has severe restrictions for individual septic systems.

The Marlette-Capac-Metea Soil Association is located around Miner Lake and in sections 8, 9, and 17. The slope of this soil can vary greatly from nearly level to very hilly and is moderately to severely restricted for individual septic systems. This association is primarily made up of loamy and sandy material.

The central and northern portion of the Township consists of the Chelsea-Ockley-Oshtemo Association. This soil type is typically nearly level and gently rolling and is made up of sandy and loamy material. Limitations for individual septic systems are generally moderate. The areas that are level enough for farming are considered prime farmland.

The last soil association found in the Township is referred to as the Sebewa-Colwood-Brady Association. Found in the northeast portion of the Township, this association is made up of loamy, sandy, and silty

material, which severely limits the functioning of septic system drainfields. Portions of this soil type are considered to be prime farmland.

### **Lakes, Rivers, and other Waterbodies.**

**The Township's inland lakes and streams provide an important defining characteristic of the community.**

Dumont Lake, located along the north central boundary of the Township and in Monterey Township, is approximately 240 acres in size. The land surrounding the lake is developed with single family housing of varying densities. Homes in this area are used both year-round and seasonally. According to the National Wetlands Inventory, a majority of the shoreline around Dumont Lake is considered a wetland and flood plain area. Wetlands are not suitable soils for individual septic systems, which is the primary method of waste treatment for homes around the lake. This situation may threaten the water quality in the lake as the effluent from septic systems is not properly filtered through the soil before entering the water table. With the increasing trend of converting seasonal homes to year-round use, the potential for contamination increases.

The south shore of Dumont Lake is home to the Allegan County Service Center and a County Park. The park includes a public beach, picnic area, boat launch, and other park amenities. The County also utilizes this site for office and institutional purposes.

Miner Lake is located in the northeast portion of the Township and, similar to Dumont Lake, its shoreline consists of many residential developments that utilize individual septic systems. A majority of the homes on the lake are located on the western side due to the high occurrence of wetlands on the eastern shoreline.

Significant efforts have been made through the years to maintain or improve the quality of Miner Lake. Part of this effort has included the formation of the *Miner Lake Improvement Board*. The Board is made up of the Allegan County Drain Office, lake residents, Allegan Township official(s), members of the Allegan County Board of Commissioners, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, and engineering consultants. The Board has initiated and completed projects that include nuisance aquatic plant control and watershed management.



The Eurasian milfoil, the primary nuisance aquatic plant, has been controlled through mechanical harvesting, biological applications and the introduction of the milfoil weevil to feed on the nuisance plants. Approximately 7,500 to 10,000 milfoil weevils were stocked in various locations in the lake in 1998.

The watershed project undertaken by the Miner Lake Improvement Board was an effort to gain insight about the source and type of nutrients and sediments that are entering the lake from the surrounding properties. A watershed is an area of land that drains into a specific body of water that may include a lake, stream or river. The Miner Lake watershed, approximately 4.5 square miles in area, includes land that is utilized for agricultural and residential purposes along with large wetland areas. Although agricultural lands do not directly border Miner Lake, nutrients such as fertilizers and sediments that drain into the lake may change the chemical makeup of the water. This change may stimulate undesired plant growth in the lake.

**While residential density in the Miner Lake watershed is not significant, shoreline development of the lake may threaten the water quality.**

While residential density in the Miner Lake watershed is not significant, shoreline development of the lake may threaten the water quality. Failing septic systems and lawn fertilizers can increase nutrient levels in the lake. Impervious surfaces such as roads and rooftops increase the rate of runoff, therefore, possibly increasing the amount of pollutants and particulate entering the lake. Educational efforts have been pursued with lake residents to help reduce these types of nutrients entering the lake.

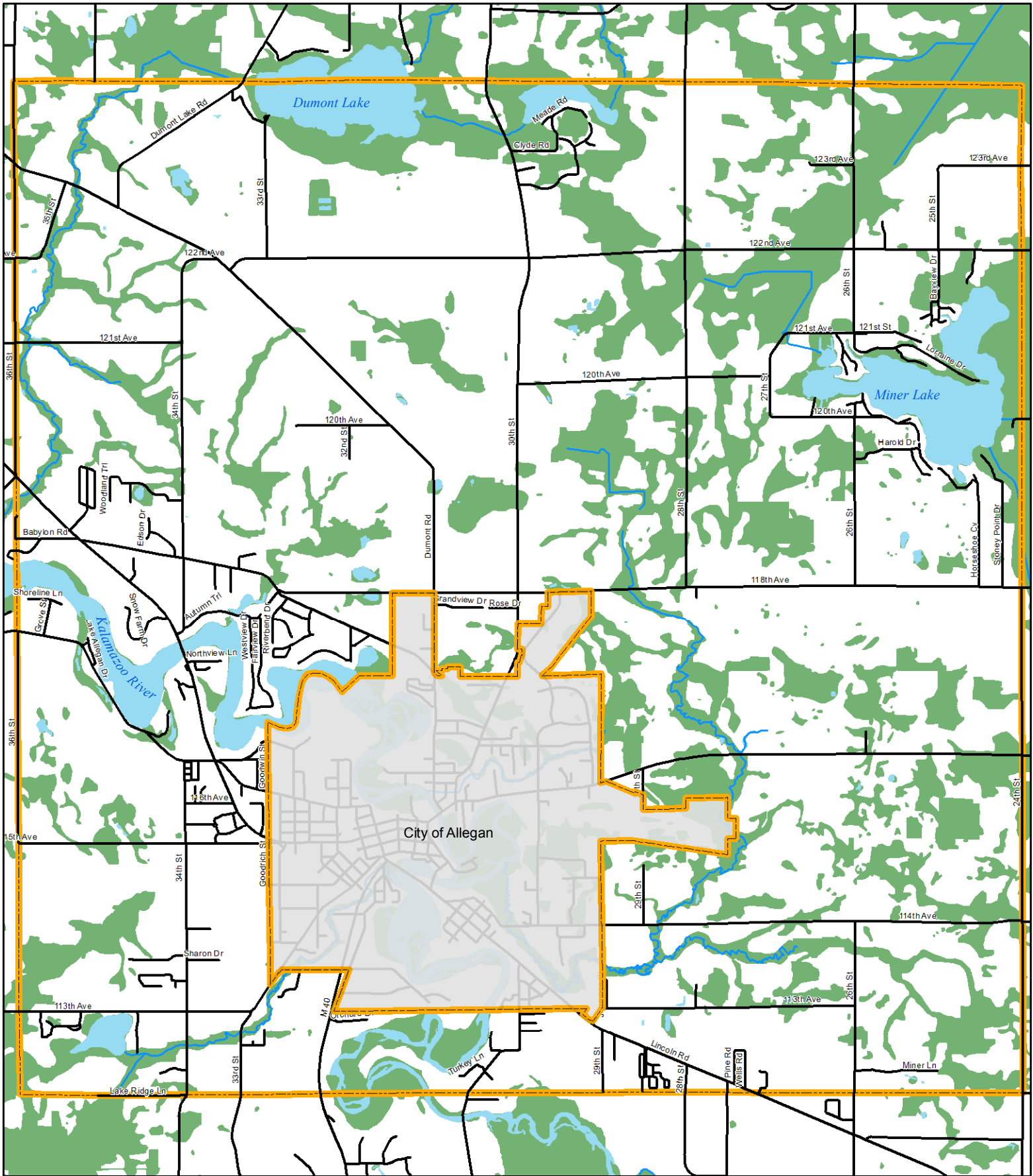
Significant areas of wetlands are located in the Miner Lake watershed. Wetlands serve as a natural buffer to surface water as they tend to trap and filter nutrients. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is the primary agency responsible for regulating wetlands. According to the State, any wetland adjacent to an open body of water or over 5 acres in size is a regulated wetland. Modification of these types of wetlands would require a permit from the DEQ. The Miner Lake Board has mapped the general locations of wetlands in the watershed and produced educational materials that explain the importance of the relationship between wetlands and Miner Lake.

Other watershed projects in the area include the Rabbit River Watershed Planning Project in the northern portion of Allegan County. This project, which in association with the Allegan Conservation District, will provide landowners, farmers, and residents an opportunity to establish goals for local water quality. The project will include the identification

and establishment of critical watershed areas, propose best management practices, and production of a Watershed Management Plan.

Wetmore Lake, located in Section 3 east of Dumont Lake, is a smaller lake with significant development located on the south shore. Similar to Miner Lake, the land surrounding much of lake is characterized by wetlands and floodplains. Littlejohn Lake is located in the southwest corner of the Township and it is the smallest lake in the Township. The eastern portion of the shoreline is developed with single-family homes while the remaining shoreline is undeveloped. Much of the undeveloped portions of the shoreline of Littlejohn Lake include sensitive wetland soils and a small County Park.

Lake Allegan is located in the central eastern portion of Allegan Township. This man-made lake is direct result of damming the Kalamazoo River in Valley Township to the west of Allegan Township. Similar to the Kalamazoo River, this water body was contaminated by past industrial operations, but water quality has been improving and the lake still serves as an excellent resource for recreation opportunities, such as fishing and boating.



# Allegan Township Master Plan

## Map 2. Potential Wetland Areas

**Legend**  
 Potential Wetland Areas



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This Wetlands Inventory Map is intended to be used as one tool to assist in identifying wetlands and provide only potential and approximate locations of wetlands and wetland conditions.

This map is not intended to be used to determine specific locations and jurisdictional boundaries of wetland areas subject to regulation under part 303 Wetlands Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended. Only an on-site evaluation performed by MDEQ in accordance with Part 303 shall be used for jurisdictional determination. A permit is required from the MDEQ to conduct certain activities in jurisdictional wetlands.

**The Allegan State Game Area accounts for much of the woodlands in the southwest portion of the Township.**

## Woodlands

Woodlands are located in various locations in Allegan Township with the densest areas existing in the southwest portion of the Township. The soil chemistry and make up is generally conducive to productive agriculture, which explains why there are not many large contiguous areas of private woodlands.

## Public Utilities

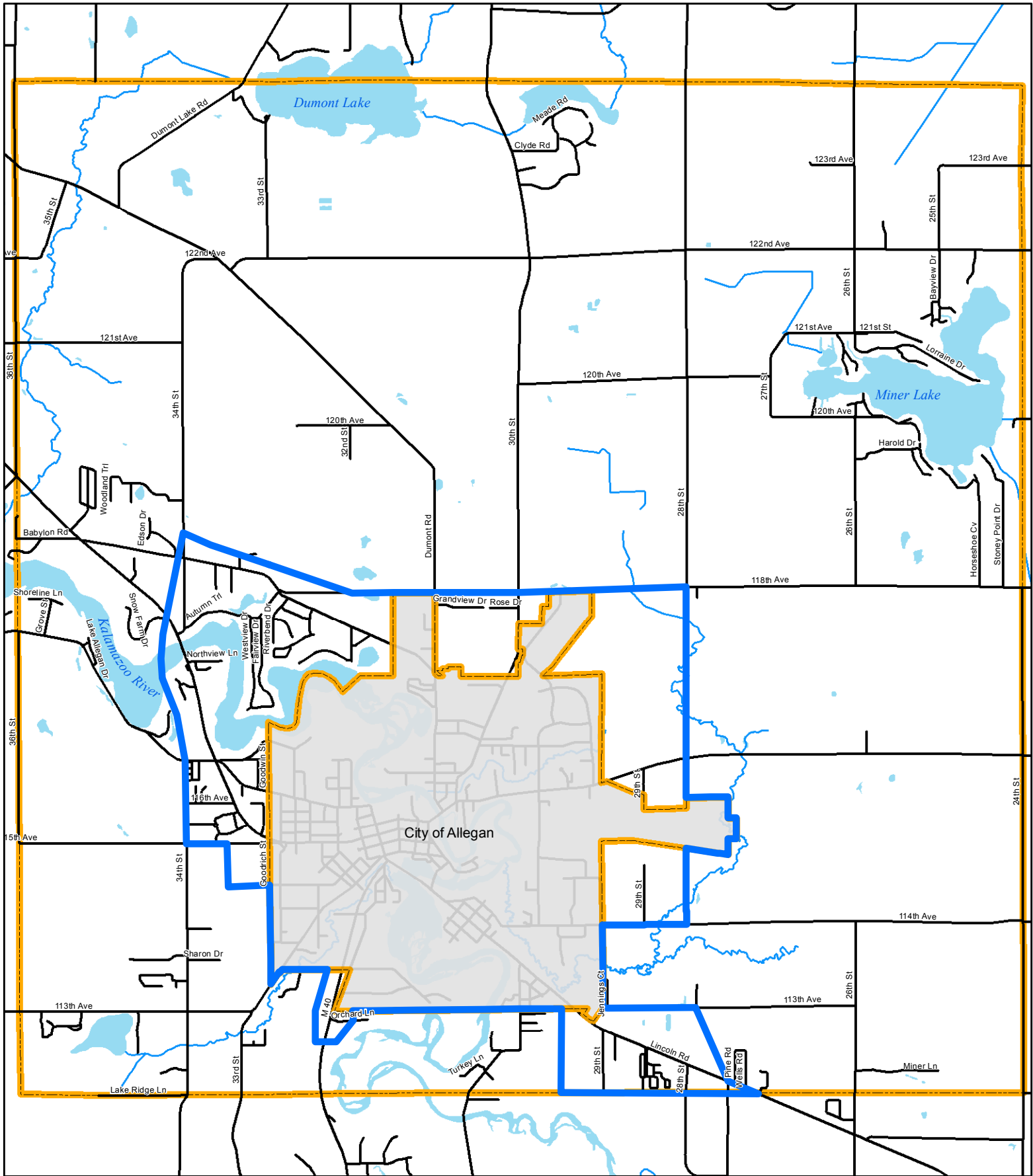
Public utilities, including public water and sewer, play an important role in determining the type of development that is possible within a community. Multifamily housing (i.e., apartments, duplexes, etc.), commercial, and industrial developments are typically restricted to areas that have public utilities available. By obtaining public utilities, a community can diversify its tax base, propose denser developments, and potentially attract businesses to provide jobs for local residents. Further, sewer systems can help protect groundwater quality by reducing the need for individual septic systems.

Allegan Township currently does not operate a public water or sewer system, although the City of Allegan does provide water and sewer services in the Township. According to the City of Allegan Public Works Department, the water system currently has the capability of distributing up to 2.3 million gallons of water a day. To date, the largest volume of water distributed in one day was approximately 1.8 million gallons, illustrating the additional capacity that is available. Expansion of the water system includes installation of new water mains in particular areas where demands are overtaking the existing mains. For example, a new main was extended to Allegan High School in 2002.

The City of Allegan sewer system, built in the late 1970s, was designed large enough to serve the City and surrounding areas, including areas in Allegan Township. While the sewer system primarily serves areas within the City limits, there are certain areas in Allegan Township that utilize this service.

The commercial and industrial areas that utilize public sewer in the Township are along M-40 north and M-89 east. Residential areas that utilize the sewer system are located along Delano Street. Allegan Township has purchased capacity from the City to serve up to 90 units and approximately one-third of these units are being utilized to date. This surplus capacity creates opportunities for further varieties of development that may require sewer facilities. Future expansion of the

sewer system into additional Township areas is not planned at this time, although it may be a possibility in the future.



Allegan Township  
Master Plan

Map 3. Utilities

Legend

 Utility Service Boundary



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Feet

## CHAPTER 2. POPULATION

Understanding the trends of population growth or decline in Allegan Township is an essential component for the creation of a workable Master Plan. Trends of the past and future projections help create a vision of the type and amount of development associated with the population. Further, comparing the Township to the neighboring Townships, Allegan County and the state of Michigan help put the Township plan in a regional context and create a well-rounded analysis.

The U.S. Census Bureau indicates that the population of Allegan Township grew to 4,406 persons in the year 2010, an increase of 356 residents since 2000. Tables 2-1 and 2-2 show the trends of population for Allegan Township and Allegan County from 1940 to 2010 and the percent change in population per decade.

**Table 2-1**  
**Population from 1940 to 2010**

Years	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Allegan Twp.	1,290	1,590	2,404	2,970	3,464	3,976	4,050	4,406
Allegan Co.	38,974	47,493	57,729	66,575	81,555	90,509	105,665	111,408

Source: U.S. Census

**Table 2-2**  
**Percent Change in Population by Decade**

Years	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Allegan Twp.	n/a	23%	51%	24%	17%	15%	2%	9%
Allegan Co.	n/a	22%	22%	15%	23%	11%	17%	5%

Source: U.S. Census

The trend in population shows the highest rate of growth in the 1960's followed by a gentle decline in the rate of population increase through the year 2010. It should be understood that the population for the Township is not decreasing, simply the rate of population increase is slowing down.

The Census suggests a modest 9% rate of growth from 2000 to 2010. However, based on actual building permit activity in the Township, there is some reason to question the relatively modest rate of growth in the Township. Therefore, the use of a simple 2% rate of growth may lead to inaccurate conclusions. Nevertheless, accurate and reliable population trends and estimates should be proposed to forecast future community development and improvements.

With the rate of increase identified, it is also important to determine the age distribution within the Township in order to characterize future service demands. (See Table 2-3 and Figure 2-1.)

**Table 2-3  
Age Groups in Allegan Township**

Age Group	2000	% of Total Pop.	2010	% of Total Pop.	Total Change in Group	% Change in Age Group	
Under 5 years	251	6%	244	6%	-7	-3%	
5 to 19	892	22%	895	20%	3	0%	
20 to 24	193	5%	187	4%	-6	-3%	
25 to 44	1,091	27%	975	22%	-116	-11%	
45 to 54	637	16%	673	15%	36	6%	
55 to 59	234	6%	356	8%	122	52%	
60 to 64	181	4%	293	7%	112	62%	
65 to 74	334	8%	393	9%	59	18%	
75 to 84	190	5%	265	5%	75	39%	
85 and over	47	1%	125	3%	78	166%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,050</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,406</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>356</b>		

The 2010 Census reports that the current median age for Allegan Township is 43.6, as compared to 39 years old in 2000. The median age for Allegan County was reported to be 39.2 and the State of Michigan was reported to be 38.9 in the 2010 Census. This fact, together with the trends illustrated in Table 2-3 and Figure 2-1, indicates that the Township's population is aging more rapidly than the county or the state. This demographic shift suggests that as families and residents mature, future land use plans and community services will need to take



the needs of this older population into account. It may also suggest a need for expanded efforts to increase the proportion of the population in the family-forming years.

**Figure 2-1**  
**Population Pyramid, 2010**

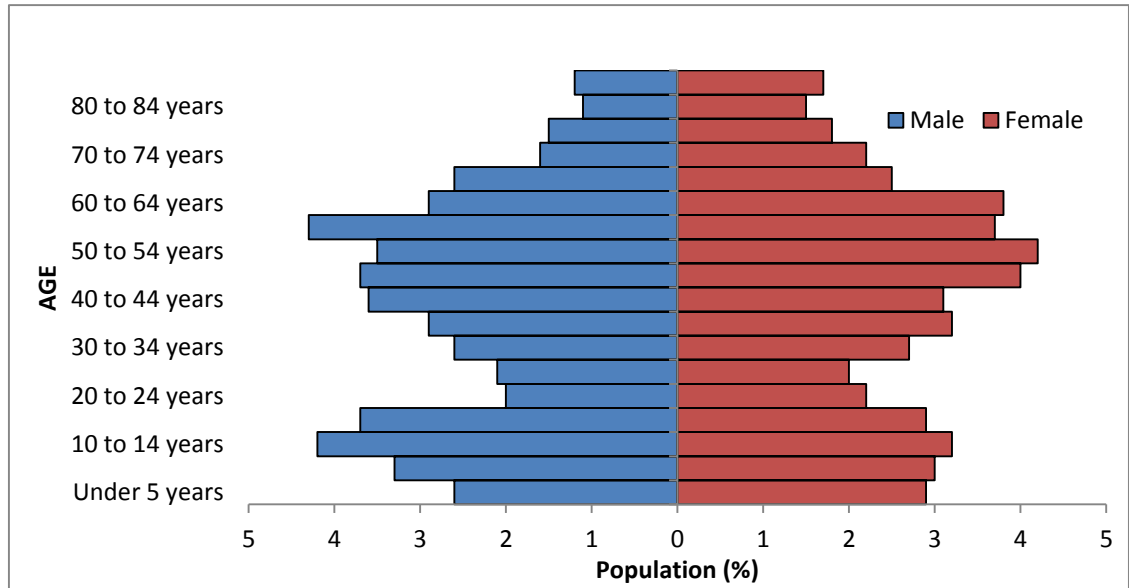


Table 2-4 compares the gender make up, the proportions of the population under nineteen years and over sixty-five years and the median age for Allegan Township and neighboring communities.

Table 2-4  
2010 Population Characteristics

Community	Total population	Male	Female	< 19 Years	Median age (years)	65 years and over
Allegan County	111,408	50%	50%	29%	39.2	13%
Allegan Township	4,406	50%	50%	26%	43.6	18%
Allegan City	4,998	48%	52%	28%	34.6	12%
Cheshire Township	2,199	51%	49%	26%	42.1	14%
Heath Township	3,317	52%	48%	31%	37.8	8%
Hopkins Township	2,601	52%	48%	30%	38.8	11%
Monterey Township	2,356	50%	50%	30%	36.1	8%
Otsego Township	5,594	49%	51%	27%	40.5	14%
Trowbridge Township	2,502	51%	49%	24%	43.2	16%
Valley Township	2,018	51%	49%	27%	42.3	12%
Watson Township	2,063	53%	47%	28%	38.7	11%

### Population Projections

For the purposes of this Current Assessment, statistical averaging techniques were utilized to project the Township’s population growth to the year 2040. These approaches are adequate to give a general sense of growth trends; but they have limitations, especially in areas of rapid growth or decline that may run counter to statistical trends.

Nevertheless, these approaches do help give a sense of scale to future land use requirements as well as the demand for various public services and capital improvements. The following summarizes the projection techniques.

**Population projections help give a sense of scale to future land use requirements as well as the demand for various public services and capital improvements**

**West Michigan Regional Planning Commission Projections** for the Township and County are as follows. The West Michigan Regional Planning Commission calculates population projections for the all of Region 8 after the release of each Census of Population. The projection was based upon growth trends from 1970 to 2010 and extrapolated to 2030 and then to 2040.

**WEST MICHIGAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION PROJECTION\***

	2010 Population	2020 Population Projection	2030 Population Projection	2040** Population Projection
Allegan Township	4,406	4,756	5,106	5,496
Allegan County	111,408	123,454	135,498	149,378

\* From the WMRPC: Projections are based on trends (10, 20, 30, & 40 year percent and numeric change) and may not be the best indicator of a community's future.

\*\* The WMRPC does not project Township or County population through 2040, this figure results from an extrapolation of the rates of growth projected from 2010 through 2030 for another ten years.

The **Growth Rate** (or geometric) method projects future population growth or decline based on the rate of growth in the Township in the past. Utilizing the growth rate method, the following assumes that growth in the future will occur at the same average rate as has occurred annually between 1980 and 2010. Using a longer-term time frame for the analysis, it is possible to mitigate the effects of temporary “boom and bust” cycles in home building. According to the U.S. Census, the population of Allegan Township grew from 3,464 persons in 1980 to 4,406 in 2010. This illustrates a total rate of growth of 36.4% over thirty years or a compounded annual rate of growth of 0.81%.

**GROWTH RATE METHOD**

	Average Annual Growth Rate 1980-2010	2010*	2020	2030	2040
Allegan Township	0.81%	4,406	4,776	5,177	5,611

\* Per U.S. Census

The **Arithmetic Method** is similar to the growth rate method in that population projections are based on growth that occurred in preceding decades. This method, however, bases population growth on the overall average increase in the number of persons per year, rather than on growth rates. The following projections are based on the average increase of 36 persons annually between 1980 and 2010 in Allegan Township, based on the U.S. Census.

### ARITHMETIC METHOD

	Average Annual Increase (Number of Persons)	2010 Population *	2020	2030	2040
Allegan Township	31	4,406	4,716	5,026	5,336

\* U.S. Census

The **Building Permit** method may be the most reliable projection method because it portrays the growth based on current building permit data. **Since 2009, the Township has averaged about 9 permits per year.** Assuming that the patterns of the recent past are to continue, it is possible to project population based on the rate of new home construction. According to the U.S. Census, there were **1,759 households in the Township in 2010.** This yields an average household size of **2.41 persons.** If the Township is to add **9 homes** per year with each home accounting for **2.41** persons, then each year the Township's population will grow by about **22** persons. The following table projects the implications in terms of population growth.

### BUILDING PERMIT METHOD

Average No Permits/Year	Pph	2010 Population *	2020	2030	2040
9	2.41	4,406	4,626	4,846	5,066

\* Per U.S. Census

**Allegan Township can expect to grow by nearly 1,000 persons or almost 400 households in the next thirty years.**

The anticipated population levels for the Township using each of the population techniques are summarized below. By averaging the results of these methods, it is reasonable to predict that the population will approach approximately **4,719 by the year 2020** and almost **5,377 by 2040.**

### POPULATION PROJECTION SUMMARY

	2010	2020	2030	2040
WMRPC	4,406	4,756	5,106	5,496
Growth Rate	4,406	4,776	5,177	5,611
Arithmetic	4,406	4,716	5,026	5,336
Building Permits	4,406	4,626	4,846	5,066
Average	4,406	4,719	5,039	5,377

## CHAPTER 3. HOUSING, INCOME & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

An analysis of households, income and economic development in the Township gives a good indication of potential growth, or lack thereof. Growth in the number of households, as indicated in the previous chapter, will parallel population shifts and speak to the need for land uses that support families and the elderly. Income and economic investment, however, help to frame the needs for infrastructure and services to support commercial and industrial activity. This chapter identifies trends and examines current conditions to support future decisions.

### Households

Allegan Township consists mostly of low-density residential areas. The highest concentrations of housing development are found surrounding the City of Allegan and along the lakeshore areas. Residential construction has remained relatively modest during and after the Great Recession and homebuilding has not quite fully recovered to pre-recession levels.

**Table 3-1**  
**New Home Construction**

Month	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total	7	8	12	10	6	8*

\*As of December 10, 2014

According to Township tax records, there are 1,921 residential parcels out of a total of 2,317. Many parcels include residential uses along with some agricultural lands, but overall this statistic reveals that about 83% of the properties in the Township include residential land uses.

Not surprisingly, the number of households has increased in accordance with the increase in population. Equally important, however, are the characteristics of the households in the Township. Table 3-2 reflects shifts in household type and size during the 2000s:

Table 3-2  
Allegan Township Household Characteristics

	2000	% of Total HH for 2000	2010	% of Total HH for 2010	% Change from 2000 to 2010
Total HH	1,574	100%	1,759	100%	12%
Family HH	1,157	74%	1,249	71%	8%
Married couple	953	61%	1,057	60%	11%
Female HH no husband present	144	9%	106	6%	-26%
Non-Family HH	417	26%	510	29%	22%
HH w/ individuals 65 yr. and older	153	10%	139	8%	-9%
Average HH size	2.57		2.41		

The table shows some interesting trends for Allegan Township. The amount of female-headed households decreased 26% in only ten years. In addition, the number of non-family households increased by 22%. With these trends, it is understandable that the average household size declined from 2.57 persons to 2.41 persons, a decrease of 6.2% over the decade.

### Income and Employment

According to the U.S. Census, Allegan Township had a median household income of \$40,972. In comparison, Allegan County had a median household income of \$50,240, while the State of Michigan median was \$48,432. Although the median income for the Township was lower than the County and State, Allegan Township remains competitively close to the other surrounding jurisdictions.

Further breakdown of the incomes per household, as seen in Table 3-3 and Figure 3-1, allows for analysis of income distribution. This information can then be compared to County and State median income patterns.

Table 3-3  
Incomes per Household for 2010

	Allegan Township	% of Total	Allegan County	% of Total	State of Michigan	% of Total
Less than \$10,000	192	11%	2,855	6%	304,785	8%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	59	3%	2,112	5%	219,924	6%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	219	13%	4,383	10%	442,676	12%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	261	15%	4,725	11%	430,558	11%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	294	18%	7,303	17%	577,569	15%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	253	14%	9,464	23%	728,579	19%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	218	12%	5,863	14%	466,664	12%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	204	12%	4,198	10%	433,144	11%
\$150,000 or More	59	3%	1,607	4%	240,098	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1987</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>42,078</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,843,997</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2010

In comparing the three jurisdictions, the bulk of households reflect incomes from \$15,000 to \$99,000, with the heaviest influence in the \$35,000 to \$49,999 median range in Allegan Township.

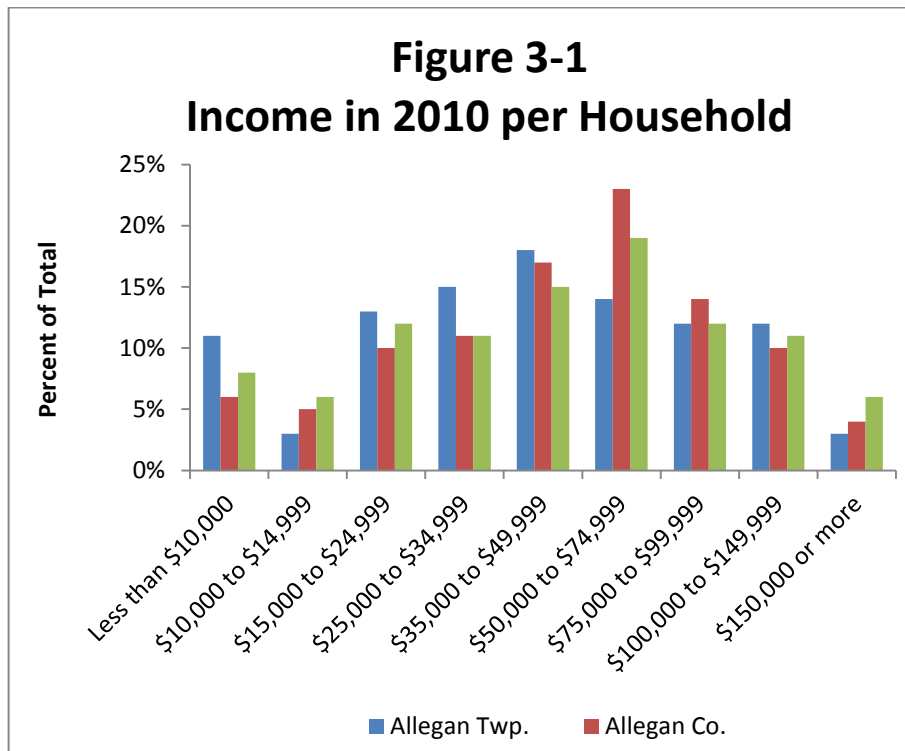


Table 3-4 illustrates occupations for Allegan Township, Allegan County and the State of Michigan, which have been broken down into general categories.

Table 3-4  
Categorized Occupations for 2010

	Allegan Township	% of Total	Allegan County	% of Total	State of Michigan	% of Total
Farming and Natural Resources	83	5%	1,600	3%	54,946	1%
Construction and Manufacturing	556	32%	13,043	32%	1,001,020	23%
Trade and Sales	275	16%	7,902	15%	629,908	14%
Transportation and Warehousing	70	4%	2,516	5%	181,648	4%
Professional, Scientific, Management, and Administrative	250	14%	9,883	19%	1,092,843	25%
Education, Art, Healthcare, and Social Assistance	498	29%	12,872	25%	1,409,420	32%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,732</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>51,416</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,369,785</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year, 2010



The majority of positions held by Township residents are in the construction and manufacturing sector followed closely by education, art, healthcare, and social assistance. These sectors of employment are supported heavily by area businesses and school systems located both within the Township and the County as suggested by the percentages in Table 3-4. The major businesses that impact Allegan Township, their products, and the number of current employees can be reviewed in Table 3-5 below.

**Table 3-5  
Major Business of Allegan Township**

	Number of Employees	Product
Perrigo	3,198	Pharmaceutical Products
Allegan Metal Finishing	90	Zinc Plating
Road Commission	50	Road Maintenance
Allegan Public Schools	475	Education
Allegan Tubular	85	Tubing Fabrication
B&G Custom Works	35	Custom Metal Fabrication
Allegan General Hospital	350	Healthcare
Milbocker and Sons Inc.	99	Road and Bridge Construction
Allegan Area Educational Service Agency (AAESA)	425	Education
Allegan County	400	Public service

Service sector businesses such as Allegan County, the Allegan Area Educational Service Agency (AAESA), Allegan General Hospital, and Allegan Public Schools have all expanded in physical size, although employment in these areas has not necessarily increased. The reason for size increase is due mainly to the increase in population in both the Township and the County.

Due to the Great Recession, Haworth eliminated its Allegan manufacturing location in 2009, laying off approximately 200 workers. The resulting increase of unemployment is not strictly localized to Allegan Township. Surrounding Townships may have also been affected by the economic slowdown and resulting layoffs. The impact of the Great Recession on the

unemployment rate in Allegan County and the State of Michigan is shown in Table 3-6.

**Table 3-6**  
**Annual Unemployment Rates 2007-2013**

Community	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Allegan County*	6.2%	7.4%	12.6%	12.1%	9.0%	7.7%	7.2%
State of Michigan*	7.1%	8.3%	13.5%	12.7%	10.4%	9.1%	8.8%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

\*Not seasonally adjusted

### Education

The Allegan Public School District (APSD), the Allegan County Intermediate School District (ACISD) and the Allegan County Area Technical & Education Center serve the entire Township and several schools are located in the Township and the City of Allegan.

Schools within the Township include: Allegan High School, L.E. White Middle School, and Pine Trails Elementary. Enrollment for the schools has fluctuated the past five years as illustrated in Table 3-7.

**Table 3-7**  
**Allegan Public School District**

Allegan Township					
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Allegan High School	823	811	759	713	724
L.E. White Middle School	562	601	605	619	594
Pine Trails Elementary	332	314	304	306	298
<b>Total</b>	<b>1717</b>	<b>1726</b>	<b>1668</b>	<b>1638</b>	<b>1616</b>

Table 3-7 (Con't.)  
City of Allegan

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Allegan Alternative High School	150	134	147	145	122
Dawson Elementary	352	334	322	316	292
North Ward Elementary	284	284	270	262	278
West Ward Elementary	308	312	306	306	313
Total	1094	1064	1045	1029	1005

Enrollment in Allegan Township facilities shows a mix of increases and decreases over the past several years, while the City of Allegan illustrates a decreasing pattern. This decrease and stagnation in enrollment contradicts the increase in population recorded in Chapter 2.



## CHAPTER 4. LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Allegan Township was originally laid out as a standard “6 by 6” Township with a total land area of approximately thirty-six square miles, or 23,040 acres. The City of Allegan has developed in the southern third of the Township and now covers approximately 4.28 square miles, leaving the Township with a net area of nearly 32 square miles, or approximately 20,416 acres.

The Township is located in central Allegan County, about sixteen miles inland from the Lake Michigan shoreline. In addition to the Township of Allegan, the Township’s neighbors include Watson Township on the east, Trowbridge Township on the south, Valley Township on the west and Monterey Township on the north.

### Land Use

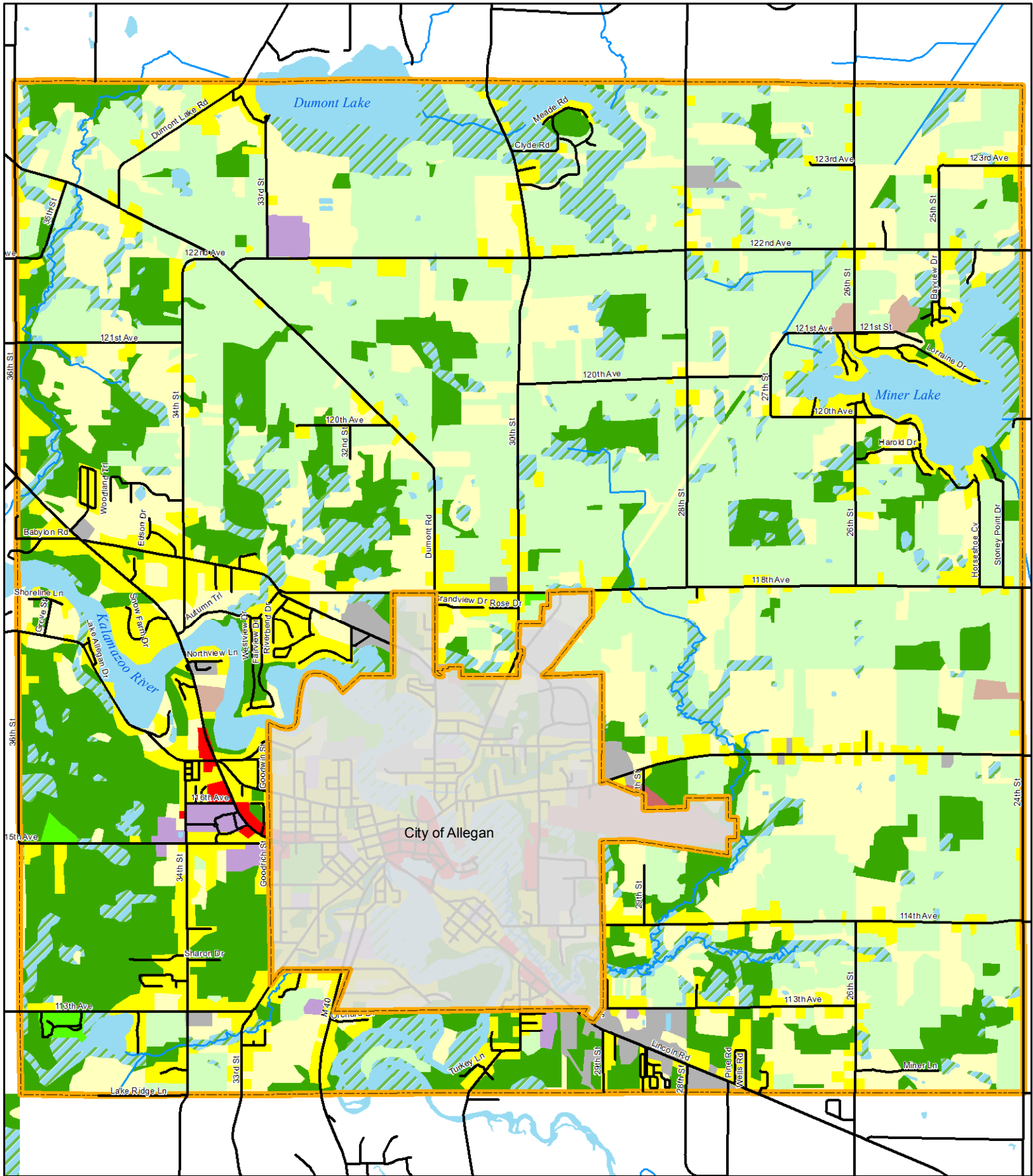
**Land uses in Allegan Township reflect those of a rural community beginning to experience a transition to more intense uses.**

The land use in Allegan Township is reflected in the Township Land Use Map. The land cover map is based on computerized mapping prepared by the Allegan County GIS Department from Michigan Resources Information System (MIRIS) and updated for 2014 by Williams & Works using the most recent aerial photography. Using aerial photography for this purpose provides an efficient and generally reliable mapping product. However, the resulting maps are limited by the constraints of the mapping software and the degree of accuracy used in identifying various land forms. For the purposes of this Current Assessment Report, this level of accuracy is adequate. However, it is also possible that some important features are not accurately characterized and some field adjustments may be needed.

The land uses in the Township have been consolidated into eleven categories. The allocation of the acreage for each category has been estimated as well.

Table 4-1

CLASSIFICATION AND AREA	LAND COVER DESCRIPTION
Residential (2,352 acres, 11.5%)	Including single and multi-family dwellings
Commercial (40 acres, 0.2%)	Neighborhood scale, downtown and highway commercial
Industrial (239 acres, 1.1%)	Industrial uses including assembly, manufacturing and warehousing
Transportation and Utilities (12 acres, 0.06%)	Padgham Field Airport, substations, water and wastewater facilities
Extractive Uses (61 acres, 0.3%)	Gravel pits and sand mines
Herbaceous and Shrub (3,800 acres, 13.5%)	Fallow farm land, vacant lands, harvested timber areas

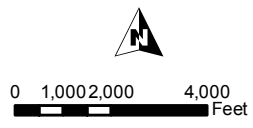


# Allegan Township Master Plan

## Map 4. Land Use

### Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Land Use**
- Agriculture
- Recreation
- Commercial
- Herbaceous and Shrubland
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Mobile Home Park; Residential
- Transportation; Utilities
- Wooded Areas
- Water
- Wetlands



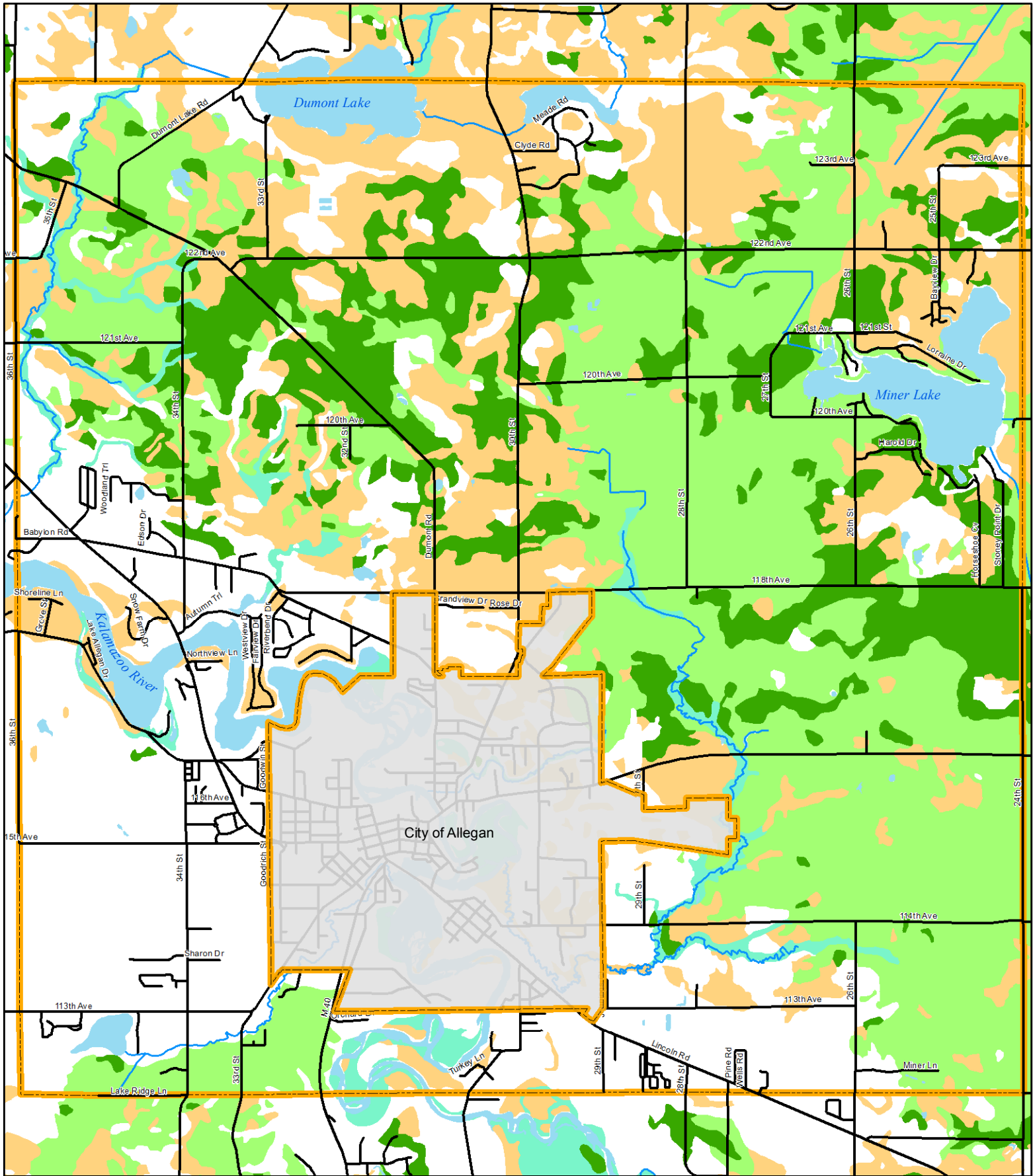
CLASSIFICATION AND AREA	LAND COVER DESCRIPTION
Agricultural (7,748 acres, 37.8%)	Cropland, orchards, permanent pasture and other agriculture
Forest (3,365 acres, 16.4%)	Hardwood and conifer stands
Water and Wetlands (2,902 acres, 14.1%)	Lake, streams, ponds, rivers, wetlands based on National Wetlands Inventory.

As is apparent from the Land Use Map, the most predominate current land cover designation is agriculture, comprising more than one-third of the Township. This is followed by a substantial amount of herbaceous and shrubland (3,800 acres) and forests (3,365 acres). Combined, forests, open lands, wetlands and surface water comprise the undeveloped land uses in the Township and together these designations account for about 10,067 acres, or about one-half of the land area. When the agricultural lands are added, nearly 18,000 acres of the Township, or about 88%, remains in a rural or undeveloped state.

**Nearly 18,000 acres of the Township, or about 88%, remains in a rural or undeveloped state.**

In terms of the distribution of land uses, agriculture is the predominate use in the northeastern quarter of the Township, with other significant areas found in the southeast. This is consistent with the location of the prime farmlands in the Township. Significant portions of Sections 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24 and 25 are characterized by large areas of prime farmland. A large forested area is evident in the southwest portion of the Township in Sections 19, 30, 31 and 32. Portions of this area are included in the Allegan State Game Area, which extends both to the north and west of the Township.

Residential land uses are prevalent around the City of Allegan and along many of the County primary roads. In addition, much of the shoreline of Miner Lake and Allegan Lake are developed in residential uses. Significant areas of wetlands exist in the vicinity of Dumont Lake and Wetmore Lake in the northern portion of the Township. With the exception of the Allegan County Service Center in Section 5, and a small area along M-89 west of the City, virtually all commercial land uses to serve the community are located in the City of Allegan. Industrial land uses in the Township are found along M-89 east of the City, along 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue, near the Airport and along Babylon Road, northwest of the City.



# Allegan Township Master Plan

## Map 5. Prime Farmland

### Legend

- All areas are prime farmland
- Prime farmland if drained
- Prime farmland if drained not flooded
- Farmland of local importance



0 1,000 2,000 4,000  
Feet

**williams&works**  
engineers | surveyors | planners

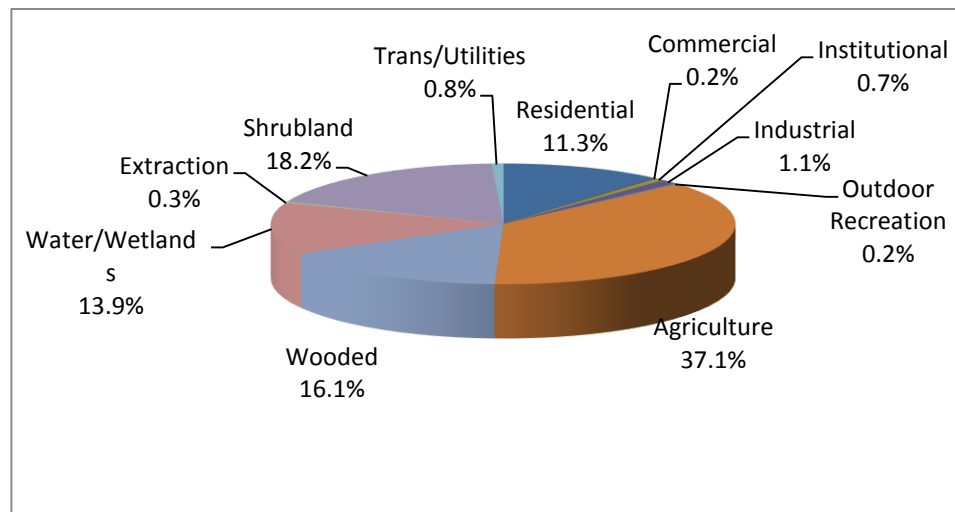


The primary surface water features in the Township include Miner Lake, Dumont Lake, Wetmore Lake in the northern portion of the Township and Littlejohn Lake in the southwest corner. In addition, Lake Allegan is formed by the impoundment above the Allegan Dam on the Kalamazoo River, located about five miles west of the Township in Valley Township. The south shore of Dumont Lake is home to the Allegan County Service Center and a County Park. The park includes a public beach, picnic area, boat launch, and other park amenities.

The Allegan Township is home to several institutional land uses. These uses include the Allegan County Technical Center on 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the Allegan County Service Center in Section 5 and three schools. Padgham Field is the Allegan County Airport and it is located on lands within the City adjoining the Township. The County Service Center includes a range of office and institutional services. These include an extended-care medical facility for the elderly, a County Health Department facility, a Mental Health Department, the Allegan County Youth Home (residential juvenile corrections facility), an animal shelter, and a variety of maintenance and storage buildings. The State of Michigan utilizes a portion of the facility for the Family Independent Agency. The Allegan County Health Department and a new 911 facility were both completed in 2002. The entire County complex is served by a small water and sewer system.

Figure 4-1 reflects the land use categories discussed above.

**Figure 4-1 Land Use, 2014**





## CHAPTER 5. TRANSPORTATION

**Effective transportation linkups are vitally important to the development of a community.**

Transportation linkages between Allegan Township and the remainder of the community are quite good. Three state highways (M-89, M-40 and M-222) converge on the community, intersecting in the City of Allegan. The arterial road network is laid out in a traditional grid pattern on section and half-section line intervals, with numerous collector and local streets adjoining as appropriate. Internal circulation within subdivisions and residential neighborhoods is generally accomplished on paved and fully improved streets.

The community lies about six miles west of US-131, a primary limited access expressway running north and south through the western portion of Michigan. US-131 provides rapid connections from the Michigan-Indiana border on the south, to Petoskey on the north, and it links the metropolitan areas surrounding Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids and Cadillac. It also provides interchanges with I-94 and I-96, resulting in high-speed and efficient connections to the east and west. Within the Township, US-131 may be accessed along 116<sup>th</sup> Avenue (M-222) and M-89. About sixteen miles to the west of Allegan Township, US-31/I-196 may be reached via M-89. US-31/I-196 parallels the Lake Michigan shoreline and connects to I-94 at Benton Harbor to the South and extends north through Holland, Grand Haven, Muskegon and several lakeshore communities.

Within the Township, a network of County primary and local roads provides access to most areas of the community. There are approximately fourteen miles of paved County primary roads in the Township, including Babylon Road, Dumont Road, Monroe Road, 30<sup>th</sup> Street, and portions of 112<sup>nd</sup> and 113<sup>th</sup> Avenues. Paved county local roads, such as 26<sup>th</sup> Street, 120<sup>th</sup>, 118<sup>th</sup>, and 114<sup>th</sup> Avenues comprise over eighteen miles of the road network. There are about six miles of unpaved County local roads in the Township.

A review of the current 2011-2015 Five-Year Road and Bridge Program published by the Michigan Department of Transportation for the Southwest Region<sup>1</sup> reflects no program road or bridge improvements scheduled for Allegan Township.

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<sup>1</sup> The MDOT Southwest Region include Allegan, Barry, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph and Branch Counties.

Traffic volumes are an important indicator of growth and development. Two-way average daily traffic (ADT) counts are the means of studying traffic patterns by the Allegan County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Annual average 24-hour traffic volumes reported by MDOT for the three state highways that converge upon the City of Allegan include 8,300 for M-40 north of the City of Allegan, 4,400 for M-40 south of the City of Allegan, 12,100 for M-89, and 7,900 for M-222. By way of comparison, under normal circumstances, a two-lane paved road with normal design and geometrics can safely carry volumes approaching 20,000 ADT. Of course, as development likely continues in the Township, these volumes are likely to increase.

Increased volumes of traffic along arterials may be anticipated with further expansion of the housing stock especially toward employment centers outside of the township. A typical single family residence generates about 9.57 trips per day.<sup>2</sup> As indicated in Chapter 2, the population of the Township could increase by nearly 1,000 persons by the year 2040. Based on an average household size of 2.41 persons, this results in almost 415 additional households in the Township. At 9.57 trips per household per day, this means an additional 4,000 car trips per day could be generated in the Township. These estimates do not take into account additional trips emanating from outside the Township and either passing through to destinations elsewhere or destined for local facilities.

## Public Transit

Public transit services in Allegan County and available to Allegan Township residents is limited to services provided by the Allegan County Community Mental Health agency and the Allegan County Resource Development Committee. Both services are offered to disadvantaged populations and operate on a combination of demand-response and fixed-route formats. The fixed route service consists of the larger buses that travel a daily scheduled route. In Allegan Township this type of service is limited to two, lift-equipped, sixteen-passenger vehicles, operated by the Allegan County Resource Development Committee. The demand-response system is a service that transports seniors and the disabled county-wide based on specific user request. The Allegan County Community Mental Health agency operates seventeen vehicles that provide this service. While this service covers the entire Township, it is limited to a specific, needs-based clientele.

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<sup>2</sup> Institute of Traffic Engineers, *Trip Generation*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2003.

Intercity regional bus service is available in Holland, Plainwell and Otsego, making connections in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. These are operated by Indian Trails Bus Lines and Greyhound Bus Lines.

## Air Transportation

Commercial passenger air service is available through the Gerald R. Ford International Airport and the Kalamazoo-Battle Creek International Airport. Both facilities provide daily jet and turboprop service to regional hubs in Detroit, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Minneapolis and Cleveland. In addition, Padgham Field located in the City of Allegan and Tulip City Airport in Holland offer general aviation services, primarily serving corporate and recreational aviation needs.

## Previous Planning Efforts

Recently, the City and Township adopted the M-89 Corridor Plan. The purpose of the plan is to “to provide the framework for cooperative planning and the future development of the M-89 Corridor,” and this plan is incorporated in to this Master Plan. The M-89 Corridor Plan also sought to:

- Provide a series of development options for the roadway that allow for vehicular and pedestrian circulation;
- Discuss improvements to enhance the aesthetic character of the buildings and surrounding landscape along the Corridor;
- Establish a framework for on-going communication and cooperation between the City of Allegan and Allegan Township;
- Provide resources, additional capacity and support material(s) for the development of the Corridor; and Compliment the work and recommendation outlined in previous planning efforts within the community.



## SECTION III MASTER PLAN

This section of the Plan is the culmination of the entire planning process. It includes the overall goals and objectives of the Township as development through the futuring process and ultimately as expanded in the preparation of this plan.

It also sets forth in Chapter 7 the future land use plan and map for the Township. Finally, in Chapter 8, the Master Plan offers a framework for the implementation of the Plan.





## CHAPTER 6. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**The Planning Commission members used the results of the futuring session along with their own experience and perspectives to prepare the goals and objectives in this Chapter.**

As a part of the effort to develop this plan, the Allegan Township Planning Commission undertook a community-wide effort to obtain the Township resident's opinion about the preferred future of the community. In February of 2002, approximately forty-five members of the Allegan community attended a Futuring Session organized by the Township. The purpose of the Futuring Session was to gain an understanding of how the residents of the Allegan community felt about the future and potential new growth. The Study Team members used the results of the Futuring Session along with their own experience and perspectives to prepare the goals and objectives in this Chapter.

The goals and objectives have been strengthened and updated based on previous planning activities and public involvement efforts conducted in support of the 2015 Master Plan update. Public input was received in March 2015 during a community-wide open house held with Allegan Township. Overall, residents expressed support for the continuation of existing planning efforts and policies. Of particular interest to residents were work on the Zoning Ordinance, development of a non-motorized trail network, increased access to the river, and preservation of natural features.

The following series of eight broad goal statements is supported by more specific objectives. This plan is founded on the policies outlined in the following statements. The goals are intended to describe a desirable end state or the condition of the Township about twenty-five years into the future. They are intentionally general but all are felt to be attainable through concerted effort. The objective statements tend to be more specific and may be regarded as milestones in the journey to achieve the larger goal.

### A. NATURAL FEATURES, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION.

1. Allegan Township will have clean water resources, significant areas of healthy, forests and open space preserved for public enjoyment and arranged in harmony with developed areas.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- a. Develop and refine zoning and land use standards that will result in gradual transitions in land use intensity intended to support the future land use map.

- c. Develop and implement practical and workable standards for impervious cover and natural feature protection to safeguard important streams and lakes.
  - d. Complete an inventory of areas of important woodlands.
  - e. Develop and implement technical assistance programs designed to help private landowners manage their timber and wildlife resources.
  - f. Establish a program that promotes and demonstrates low-input, sustainable landscaping practices for waterfront development. Such practices may include emphasis on the use of native vegetation and natural fertilization techniques.
  - g. Develop and implement an on-going program to inform and educate residents and homeowners on the need for proper septic tank drain field inspection and maintenance.
2. Recreational opportunities in the Township will be expanded to include accessible facilities with play equipment, hard surface areas, picnic areas and natural features.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- a. Prepare and maintain a Recreation Plan to set priorities and identify resources to support park and recreation goals.
  - b. Strengthen cooperative efforts with the City of Allegan, Allegan County and the public schools to meet the recreation needs of area residents.
  - c. Consider requiring parks, neighborhood gathering spaces and similar features in new developments.
3. The residents of the Allegan community will enjoy a network of trails and safe, inviting and non-intrusive connections to local and regional natural areas and recreational facilities.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- a. Amend the Subdivision Control Ordinance and/or Zoning Ordinance to require the inclusion of pathways throughout new development to promote pedestrian connections.
- b. Develop and implement a trail route plan, taking into account existing and likely emerging growth areas, existing and proposed regional trails, natural feature destinations, parks, public and quasi-public uses, and cultural venues.
- c. Explore possible funding opportunities or general resource partners, including the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund,

the Allegan County Parks Department, the Land & Water Conservation Fund, the West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition, the Bikes Belong Coalition, and the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance.

- d. Work with the County Road Commissions to develop bicycle lanes along key road segments.

## B. UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE.

1. Allegan Township will be served with efficient water and wastewater services with capacity sufficient to support areas planned for more intense growth and the Township's economic development objectives.

### OBJECTIVES:

- a. Cooperatively with City of Allegan, review and evaluate the water and wastewater facilities to ensure that future growth can be accommodated.
- b. Prepare a water and sewer long-range capital improvement plan in support of the Township's land use goals.
- c. Develop local regulations to assure timely connections as services are extended.
- d. Continue to explore provision for utility services for the area around Miner Lake.

## C. COOPERATIVE COMMUNITY PLANNING

1. Allegan Township will play a leadership role with area governments in promoting regional cooperation and mutual support between and among the communities and school districts of the County.

### OBJECTIVES:

- a. Support and encourage an unified perspective among townships through continued participation with the Michigan Township Association.
- b. Maintain active discussions with the City of Allegan, Allegan County Road Commission, Department of Health and Department of Public Works to guide public services in accord with the Township's Master Plan.
- c. Develop and implement plans to assure adequate road rights-of-way to accommodate future transportation requirements.

- d. Maintain efforts to work with the City of Allegan and surrounding Township's to address land use and regulatory matters of greater than local scope, such as storm water quality, river clean-up, land use conflicts and traffic congestion.
  - e. Continue to schedule regular meetings between the City of Allegan and Allegan Township Planning Commissions to ensure an open dialogue on important issues affecting the larger community and work cooperatively toward pursuing common goals. Contact city to discuss scheduling a joint meeting at least 4 times per year, if necessary. One meeting per year at the least
2. The Township will support a mix of land uses appropriate to the requirements of the growing southwest Michigan region and commensurate with the community's needs for residential and commercial growth and economic development services.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- a. Develop flexible zoning and land use regulations to guide growth in patterns and locations consistent with the Master Plan.
- b. Implement sub-area planning where localized conditions warrant specific attention. Such areas may include lakefront communities, existing and proposed village and hamlet developments and urbanizing areas of the Township.
- c. Regularly to review the Zoning Ordinance to provide for an appropriately regulate modern use of land and to explore innovative regulatory concepts.

**D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**

1. The vitality of Allegan Township will be assured through the growth of existing businesses and the addition of new business resulting in a diverse local economy balanced with an expanding population.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- a. Evaluate the formation of an Economic Development Corporation and, if appropriate, form such an entity to foster quality investment and job creation in the Township.
- b. Encourage academic and technical educational programs within the community to strengthen the competitiveness of the local workforce.
- c. Work with the Airport Board to promote the expanded use of the Airport.

2. Land use patterns and infrastructure in the Township will promote a range of quality employment opportunities and clean, desirable job-producing development.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- a. Implement an on-going program to establish zoning and development policies that correspond with the evolving requirements for clean and desirable job-producing development.
- b. Develop regulations to govern low-intensity home based businesses and home occupations that strengthen communities and reduce the demand on transportation systems while maintaining the attractive residential and rural character of the Township.

**E. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

1. Allegan Township will offer a variety of environments to serve all residents with attractive, efficient and affordable homes located in safe and quiet urban neighborhoods, village centers and in rural areas. Residential areas will be located in harmony with the area's natural features and arranged to promote social interaction among neighbors and the efficient use of public infrastructure.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- a. Encourage the establishment of residential developments to meet the full spectrum of housing needs for the Township's aging population.
- b. Develop and implement land use programs to encourage the formation of one or more relatively self-contained village centers appropriately sized with walkable patterns of development and a compatible mix of land uses. Such programs may include conservation cluster design, planned unit developments planned residential developments, among others.
- c. Encourage the development of a range of commercial and personal services within the Township appropriately located to serve population centers.

**F. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION**

1. A safe and efficient system of roadways, public transportation and non-motorized facilities will serve the citizens of the Township, providing effective linkages between and among neighborhoods, shopping natural features and employment areas.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- a. Expand and strengthen the role of the Master Plan and Planning Commission in reviewing and approving road plans, roadway funding priorities and new development that impacts roadway capacity.
- b. Develop and implement plans to assure adequate road rights-of-way to accommodate future transportation requirements.
- c. Develop standards, where appropriate, to encourage non-motorized connections and walkable designs in all new development.
- d. Develop and implement a private road ordinance to regulate construction and maintenance standards.
- e. Work with the Road Commission, the City of Allegan and MDOT to develop and implement a regional truck route system that is compatible with planned land use patterns.
- f. Work with the Road Commission, the City of Allegan and MDOT to develop and implement access management standards for the emerging arterial roadways in the Township.
- g. Work with the County to promote and expand safe and reliable transportation services for the area's aging population.
- h. Explore the provisions of a connector road between 118<sup>th</sup> Street and M-222 to provide access for future industrial uses in Section 22 of the Township.
- i. Partner with the County Road Commission in the enhancement of road shoulders so that they can be used as proper bike lanes.
- j. Work with the City of Allegan, the Road Commission and MDOT in the preparation and implementation of corridor improvement or sub-area plans for M-222, M-89 and M-40.

**G. AGRICULTURE AND RURAL PRESERVATION.**

1. Allegan Township will include vibrant rural communities surrounded by healthy and sustainable agricultural enterprises.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- a. Working with the various agricultural interests, develop and promote implementation of a strategic plan for the support of agricultural operations in the Township.
- b. Develop and implement land use programs to permit the gradual transition of marginal agricultural lands to more intense patterns

of development in a rational and phased manner consistent with the growth objectives of the Master Plan.

- c. Work with landowners to encourage transfers of development rights and purchase of development rights programs that may enable the continuation of agricultural operations, if available.

## H. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND INSTITUTIONS.

1. The citizens of Allegan Township will enjoy and support the finest quality services delivered efficiently and effectively.

### OBJECTIVES:

- a. Develop and implement a program to expand the management and service capabilities of the Township commensurate with the growth of the community.
- b. Maintain an on-going communication program with the citizens of the Township to enhance public understanding of and support for the financial requirements of quality public services.
- c. Continue to the thoughtful management and expansion of the Township cemetery.
- d. Evaluate the eventual implementation of Charter Township status for Allegan Township.





## CHAPTER 7. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Future Land Use Plan is a compilation of descriptions, recommendations and justification for future land use in Allegan Township. It serves as an overall framework for the management and regulation of future development and also serves as the basis for evaluating rezoning requests.

The Township Planning Act 168 of 1959, as amended, specifically gives a Township Planning Commission the authority to prepare and officially adopt a Plan. When prepared, officially adopted and maintained, this Plan should provide an advisory guide for the physical conservation of certain areas and for the development of other areas into the best possible living environment for present and future Township residents.

Because of the constant change in our social and economic structure and activities, the Plan must be maintained through periodic review and revision so that it reflects contemporary trends while maintaining long-range goals.

The Future Land Use Plan is general in scope. It is not in most cases intended to establish precise boundaries of land use or exact locations of future uses. It is also important to note that there is no schedule to implement the recommendations contained here. The timing of a particular land use is dependent upon a number of factors such as availability of public utilities, provisions for adequate roadways, effect on public services and the demand for a particular land use versus the available and zoned for this use. Those, plus other factors, must be considered when reviewing a request for rezoning a particular parcel of land.

### THE RELATIONSHIP OF PLANNING TO ZONING

The relationship between land use planning and zoning is an important one. Planning is basically the act of planning the uses of land within a community for the future from a policy standpoint, while zoning is the act of regulating the use of these lands by law or ordinance. The laws of the State of Michigan require that a community engage in land use planning activities, including the preparation of a comprehensive plan or Master Plan, prior to the initiation of a zoning ordinance in a community.

The following narrative provides a better understanding of the terms “planning” and “zoning.”

### **Land Use Planning**

Land use planning is the process of guiding the future growth and development of a community. Generally, a document is prepared known as the Master Plan, which addresses the various factors relating to the growth of a community. Through the processes of land use planning, it is intended that a community can preserve, promote, protect and improve public health, safety and general welfare. Additional considerations include comfort, good order, appearance, convenience, law enforcement and fire protection, preventing the overcrowding of land to avoid undue concentration of population, facilitating the adequate and efficient provision of transportation, water, sewage requirements and services, and conservation, development, utilization and protection of natural resources within the community.

### **Zoning**

Zoning is one of the instruments, along with capital improvements programming and the administration of local subdivision regulations, which implements the goals and policies of a Master Plan. The enactment and administration of the Zoning Ordinance are legislative and administrative processes conducted by local units of government relating to the implementation of the goals and policies of the Master Plan.

## **Land Use Categories**

### **Agricultural**

Agricultural operations are a primary land use in the Township. These operations are viewed positively, as farms establish a strong rural character and help to define the community. It is well documented that farms and non-farms uses can conflict with each other, for a variety of reasons. It is further recognized that non-farms development in transitional agricultural areas tends to have a domino effect, undermining the economies of scale in agricultural production that is afforded with relative size and contiguity of highly productive or unique soil classifications. Land use decisions in the Agriculture areas should be mindful of these considerations.

The Agricultural land use designation is meant to accommodate farming activities and agricultural support services and to recognize the desire of residents to maintain the Township’s farmland and rural character.

Agriculture is an important component of the heritage of Allegan Township and the region. This Master Plan recognizes this fact and the Agricultural designation is therefore crafted to encourage farmers to continue operating in the Township. As such, non-farm development should be limited.

Agricultural uses are encouraged, as well as associated farm homesteads. Future extension of public water and sewer into these areas is not contemplated over the life of this Master Plan; and densities should therefore be low. Density will generally not exceed one (1) dwelling unit per twenty (20) acres.

### **Rural**

The intent of the Rural land use designation is to provide areas for single family development in a relatively low-density pattern that will enhance the larger parcels under State ownership in Sections 30 and 31. New home sites will be situated to protect the rural scenery from roadways and neighboring properties. Cluster developments designed to protect significant natural features will be encouraged in this area while also allowing lot sizes to be flexible.

### **Low Density Residential**

Over the twenty-year planning horizon of this Master Plan, the Township expects to see slow but steady growth. As a result, it is likely that portions of the community may shift from commercial agricultural uses to hobby farms, rural estate residential and even some conservation cluster developments in areas suited for this form. The intent of the Low Density Residential future land use designation is to guide and assist this evolutionary process in the community by encouraging viable farms to remain and prosper as desired by property owners while enabling the gradual shift to residential patterns.

Therefore, within the Low Density Residential designation, the Township will promote land uses and parcel sizes that are conducive to the preservation of productive agriculture. Any future non-farm residential development will be located in a manner as to reduce conflicts with existing agricultural activities. While densities will be quite low for active farms, smaller lot sizes (two to four acres) and cluster type developments will be promoted to preserve the agricultural integrity of larger unfragmented parcels. Field crops, orchards, vineyards, hobby farms, tree farms, and livestock operations may be permitted within this designation. Rural character preservation is a priority in this area. However, as growth proceeds through the Low Density Residential future land use designation, agricultural uses will be gradually be

replaced by single-family neighborhoods that are primarily scaled for passenger car travel. As this shift occurs, density levels will increase to eventually to two (2) units per one (1) acre, depending upon site suitability and availability of utilities.

This designation, primarily located in the northern and eastern portions of the Township, will utilize cluster developments and planned unit developments to preserve open space and rural character. Over the term of this plan, the area will gradually transition from active agriculture to innovative residential patterns. Existing and surrounding land uses will be considered when determining the density of new developments. Any new land division, subdivision or site condominium development will be required to create a significant vegetative buffer between new residential development and productive agricultural land in order to minimize land use conflicts.

Part of this designation is located in the northwest section of the Township around the Allegan County Service Campus, which surrounds the Village Center future land use designation. Residential development in this area should be designed to provide efficient and safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the Village Center area. Sidewalks, trails, or other means for pedestrian mobility will be promoted within all new developments. Low intensity and other compatible land uses, such as professional offices and limited commercial development may be contemplated to provide services to residential areas. These uses would be regulated under the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate appropriate buffering and special use standards to assure compatible form and operations with the low intensity residential nature of the area. Development that provides housing for senior citizens may also be considered in this designation in planned communities that are compatible to existing and developing neighborhoods.

### **Medium Density Residential**

This land use designation is intended primarily for new platted residential subdivisions with densities of up to three (3) units per acre in, or near to, established residential neighborhoods. Achievement of maximum density levels in this classification will be dependent upon the availability of public utilities, including water and sewer facilities. Lesser densities may potentially be achieved without public utilities. These communities are to be designed for passenger car travel, pedestrian mobility, while preserving options for future public transit. Good connections to nearby commercial and institutional land uses will be planned in new developments. Conservation cluster patterns may also be anticipated where important natural features may be preserved.

Higher densities may be achieved through the preservation of significant open space areas to maintain rural character, and where compatible with adjacent land uses and densities. Conservation cluster patterns are especially encouraged where important natural features may be preserved. Pedestrian amenities, including sidewalks, benches, and common landscape areas will also be provided in areas where density is increased.

Similar to the Low Density Residential Designation, low intensity and other compatible land uses, such as professional offices and limited commercial development may be contemplated to provide services to residential areas. These uses would be regulated under the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate appropriate buffering and special use standards to assure compatible form and operations with the low intensity residential nature of the area. Development that provides housing for senior citizens may also be considered in this designation in planned communities that are compatible to existing and developing neighborhoods.

### **High Density Residential**

The High Density Residential designation is intended to provide areas in the Township primarily for multiple family residential, including duplexes, apartments and condominiums. This designation will also serve as a transitional area between lower density residential land uses and commercial/industrial areas. These areas will be designed to provide efficient pedestrian and vehicular access to commercial and recreational services. In all cases, water and sewer facilities will serve developments in this designation. Growth in this designation will be approved only in a rational and sequential pattern to promote proper zoning techniques and the efficient extension of water and sewer services.

### **Waterfront Residential**

The purpose of the Waterfront Residential future land use designation is to permit low-intensity residential development while protecting the integrity and uniqueness of Dumont, Miner, Wetmore, Littlejohn Lake and Lake Allegan. Development in the Waterfront Residential designation will consist of traditional single family homes in low-density patterns of one to two (1-2) units per acre, depending upon public utility service availability.

The Allegan Township Wetlands Map illustrates many wetlands around the perimeter of the lakes. The State of Michigan currently regulates

wetlands that are associated with open bodies of water, which may limit the build ability of these lake areas. Wetland soils are generally not stable enough to properly support structural foundations and cannot typically support individual septic systems. All new development should be designed to preserve wetlands around the lakes promoting sustainable development.

Development within the Waterfront Residential designation will prohibit "Keyhole" development (the use of a common open space water front lot for access to non-riparian landowners). Such patterns increase the potential for surface water pollution, noise levels, and general conflict between lake users. Keyhole development will therefore be prohibited.

Much of the land within the Lake Residential area has been divided into lots less than one acre, consisting of seasonal and year around homes, which do not conform to the recommended density of this designation. Future regulations should recognize these existing conditions and allow for the reasonable continued use and the more dense character of these areas while limiting the future expansion of higher densities. As renovation of seasonal homes into year around homes continues, redevelopment should be compatible with the architectural styles and scale of the existing neighborhood and development regulations will include measures to protect water quality.

### **Manufactured Housing Community**

The Manufactured Housing Community (MHC) designation will provide for the placement of a medium to high-density mobile home park with a density of four (4) to six (6) units per acre. Public utilities will be required and this designation is located near other areas at higher population concentration areas. Natural vegetative buffers around the MHC will protect less intense land uses and will be designed to retain the significant natural features. Greater road frontage setbacks will be encouraged to keep country roads scenic.

### **Office/Local Retail**

This designation will provide areas in the Township for professional business offices and neighborhood commercial development intended to primarily serve the needs of residents of the immediate vicinity. Any existing industrial land use applications will be allowed to continue although any future land uses will comply with the intent of this designation. Primary roads will serve this designation and the integrity of the road or highway will be protected through access management and building setbacks. Public water and sewer facilities will serve commercial

establishments in this designation. It will be a priority to ensure that all new development blend well with existing and future surrounding residential development and avoid land use conflicts with those neighboring areas.

### **General Commercial/Light Industrial**

The General Commercial/Light Industrial designation will provide an area in the Township that allows a mixture of land uses that includes commercial and light industrial applications. Highway, regional and community-based retail and general business activities will be the primary land uses within this designation, while complimented with appropriate light industrial activities. Development will be oriented towards serving the region with goods and services along with providing quality jobs for the Allegan community area and promoting uses that compliment and help strengthen the commercial core in the City of Allegan.

Development will utilize public utilities along with appropriate transportation connections and adequate roads able to accommodate heavy truck traffic. Industrial uses within this designation will be limited to uses that produce little, if any, off-site impacts in terms of noise, dust, odors or other detrimental effects that could conflict with adjoining commercial activities. Vegetative buffers and larger building setbacks will exist between any less intense land use and industrial use. The control of noxious odor and noise, lighting, transportation, vibration and site development will be the primary considerations for any new facility.

Preserving the integrity of M-89 as a primary regional transportation route will be a priority in this designation. Parts of this area may be incorporated in an overlay district for new development that would require managed access for all parcels. Increased front yard set backs, shared access points, frontage roads and building placement may be a part of the overlay district.

### **Industrial**

The Industrial area is intended for all industrial uses, particularly those which could cause greater impacts on the surrounding area due to the processing and handling of products and materials. Limited commercial development that serves the needs of a growing worker base within the Township may also be considered in this designation. The primary locations for this type of use are around the eastern and southeastern areas of the City of Allegan along the major transportation routes of M-89, and M-222 and around the Allegan City Airport. In addition, the

industrial areas shown on the future land use map may, over time as demand warrants and upon proper adjustment of the Master Plan, extend to the east to allow for expansion of the industrial areas and employment centers within the community. Industrial uses are anticipated where public water and sewer infrastructure is planned; and property owners will connect to these utilities as they become available.

These land uses should be coordinated with the planned land uses of the City of Allegan decreasing the possibility of land use conflicts. Substantial landscape buffering will be strongly encouraged or required to help ensure attractive development sites and minimize conflicts. Growth in this area will be approved only in rational and sequential patterns to promote proper zoning techniques and the efficient extension of water and sewer facilities. Moreover, it is contemplated that internal roadways will be constructed to connect 118th Avenue to M-222 in the area northeast of the City of Allegan; to establish this area as an “industrial park” and to help lessen traffic congestion on major roads.

### **Institutional/Public Lands**

This designation includes public and governmental lands. Uses include State managed lands, County facilities, local government offices and facilities, public cemeteries, and public schools.

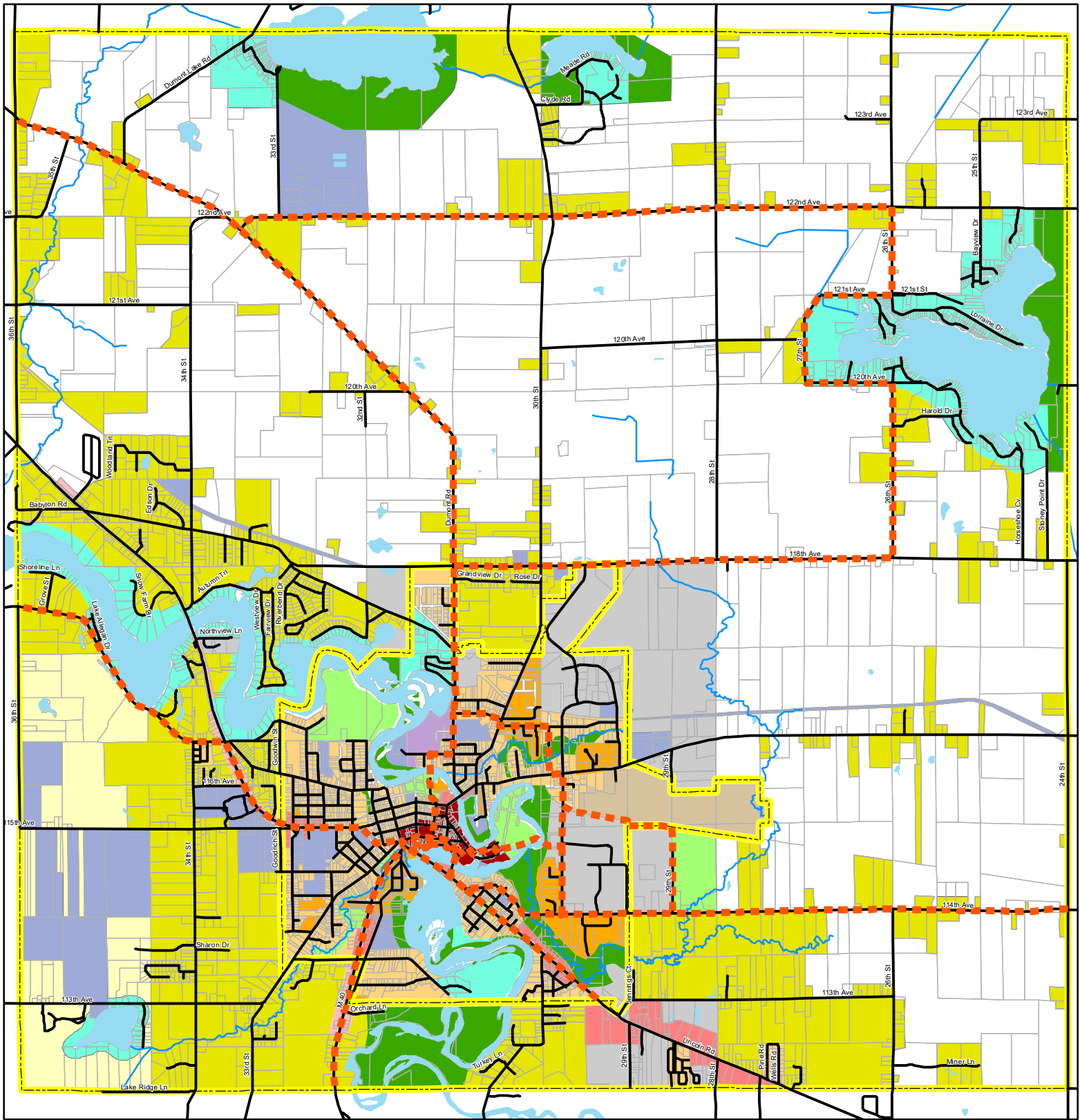
### **Community Recreation**

The Community Recreation future land use category reflects areas intended for public recreation. Specifically, the Allegan Wellness and Sports Center is included in this designation, and is located near Hooker Street and 29th Street. The facility is nestled on a 64-acre wooded site and includes various recreational and competitive sport facilities. This designation is intended for the perpetual preservation of community recreation areas in the Township.

### **Utility Service Boundary**

A key element of this Plan is the formation of a utility service boundary; within which, it is anticipated that public water and sewer will be gradually extended rationally and sequentially in cooperation with the City of Allegan and as growth and local policies warrant. A principal purpose of this utility service boundary is to avoid a “leap-frog” pattern of development in the Township, which can undermine the Township’s rural character. Additionally, the utility service boundary will foster greater efficiency of land use within the boundary and maintain rural densities and low-intensity development outside the boundary, in conformance with the Future Land Use Plan.



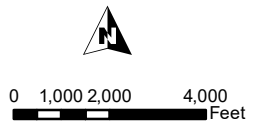


# City of Allegan Allegan Township Master Plan

## 2015 Joint Future Land Use

### Legend

- Joint Non-Motorized Transportation Plan
- Agricultural (Township only)
- Rural (Township only)
- Low Density Residential (Township only)
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Waterfront Residential
- Office/Local Retail (Township only)
- General Commercial
- Central Business District
- North Street Redevelopment Area
- Industrial
- Airport
- Institutional/Public Lands
- Community Recreation
- Resource Protection





## CHAPTER 8. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following strategies are established to implement the goals and objectives and land use recommendations of this Plan. It is recognized that many strategies will be long-term in nature and that many entities, in addition to Allegan Township, will need to cooperate to fully implement this Plan. In many instances, the Township's role is that of facilitator for some of the strategies listed in this Chapter.

This Chapter presents the action strategies for the Master Plan. Each strategy is numbered sequentially and the relevant Goals and Objectives statements are identified by their outline designation from Chapter 6. In some instances, a strategy may relate directly to more than one objective statement. A general description of each strategy is provided along with a suggestion of the roles and responsibilities of one or more agencies in carrying it out and a general timeframe for implementation.

### **1. EVALUATE AND REVISE THE ZONING ORDINANCE AND OTHER LAND USE ORDINANCES OR REGULATIONS**

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary tool for implementing the goals, objectives and strategies of the Master Plan. The Zoning Ordinance is a document intended to regulate current land uses while the Master Plan addresses future land uses. Since the Township's Zoning Ordinance was recently comprehensively reviewed and updated, an overhaul of the document is not needed. However, this strategy contemplates continued evaluation of the Ordinance in light of current trends in planning and desires of residents to ensure that it is continually effective. In some areas, amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and zoning district boundaries may be warranted if owner interest and market demands materialize.

It is important that the Township's Zoning Ordinance and zoning map are consistent with the Master Plan, so part of the periodic review process will be evaluating the Ordinance in light of the Master Plan to ensure consistency. Further, it may also be appropriate to review the Township's subdivision and site condo ordinance(s) to ensure that future plats and condominium developments are consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan.

The work associated with this is properly the role of the Planning Commission with the Township Board receiving the recommendations and ultimately adopting the revised Zoning Ordinance. It is

recommended that the Township solicit professional support to successfully implement this strategy.

## 2. CONTINUED INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

With the City of Allegan completely surrounded by Allegan Township, it is evident that a cooperative effort between the two jurisdictions is needed to effectively guide the growth of the larger Allegan community. The City of Allegan is also the owner of a public water and sewer system, which may greatly significantly impact the type and density of development in the Township around the City boundaries depending upon its availability. Part of this cooperation should include strategies for appropriate land use management around the airport on the east side of the City, as future expansion may be planned.

The Township Planning Commission is well positioned to use the Master Plan as a guide to foster intergovernmental cooperation with the City on a number of issues to the benefit of both communities. Of course, the implementation of any resulting programs will require support and endorsement from both the Township Board and the City Council. This activity has been ongoing for quite some time and should, of course, be viewed as an on-going strategy.

## 3. INCENTIVIZE ACCESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Traffic on M-40, M-222 and M-89 will likely increase, due to new residential, commercial, and industrial development. This strategy recognizes the benefits of avoiding the proliferation of haphazard, uncoordinated and unsafe driveways along high-traffic commercial and industrial corridors. The Planning Commission should contemplate the inclusion of standards in the Zoning Ordinance to consolidate and manage the opening of driveways and curb-cuts along these three corridors to help improve traffic flow, where needed.

Standards can regulate distance between access points and intersections, driveways consolidation, shared service drives, and other features to help ensure safe turning movements and proper traffic flow. The Township should establish a program that encourages application of such standards while ensuring reasonable access to properties. The Allegan County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation can be resources for the Township as it implements this task. In addition, the Township and City could partner in the creation and implementation of sub-area plans that focused on transport and improvement to the streetscape; since these corridors extend into both the City and Township.

#### 4. PROTECT INTEGRITY OF WATERFRONT RESIDENTIAL AREAS

This strategy is intended to help facilitate the amendment of the Zoning Ordinance to clarify regulations pertaining to waterfront properties. The Planning Commission should conduct a review of the Ordinance and consider amendments to better define minimum required setbacks from water bodies. In doing so, an evaluation of existing lots must be undertaken to help ensure that any new requirements do not establish an excessive number of nonconforming properties.

This strategy is recommended to aid in protecting the surface water quality of the lakes and the groundwater quality adjacent to the lakes in the Township. Components of this strategy may also include new standards for waterfront setbacks, measures to encourage native vegetation and filter/buffer strips, and lawn maintenance standards. In addition, the standards should address private access easements to water (i.e., keyhole development). Educational initiatives conducted by the Township will allow residents to gain a full understanding of the type of impacts that affect water quality.

#### 5. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Trails encourage health and wellness, enhance quality of life, and promote sense of community. Trails also can improve non-motorized system safety. Several entities can provide assistance with trail funding, planning, information or construction. These include the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance, the Safe Routes to School Program, the Allegan County Parks Department and Road Commission, the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance, and the Bikes Belong Coalition. In addition, the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources & Environment (MDNRE) may provide funding for numerous types of projects that encourage safe, accessible, and efficient forms of multi-modal transport, including non-motorized facilities and other improvements related to transportation. Finally, the MDNR Recreation Improvement Fund Grant and MDNR Recreation Trails Program Grant may help to fund projects that connect facilities on or to MDNR-owned property.

It will be important to coordinate any trailway planning with adjoining communities, existing and planned routes in the region, and property owners. Joint recreational planning among various local units of government typically garners more “points” in the recreation grant process and helps improve the chances that a request will be approved. Additionally, joint planning broadens fundraising possibilities; and assists in the pooling of resources. It will be important to plan for a

selection of non-motorized options, including bike lanes; multi-use, off-road trails; sidewalks; and various pathways that can be used by families to walk to local and regional destinations, such as local lakes and neighborhoods, downtown Allegan, the Allegan Wellness and Sports Center, and even other communities outside of Allegan.

A key aspect of the Township's Master Plan is the preservation of the natural beauty and important features of the community. To support trail planning, this strategy recommends the preparation of an inventory of important natural features. This may include woodlands, surface features as well as groundwater and possible surface impacts on groundwater. Using automated or manual mapping, the Township may develop a set of mapped exhibits that would serve as a guide to future land use decisions and identification of potential greenways, trail corridors, and future parkland. The Michigan Natural Features Inventory will serve as a good point of beginning with field verification and evaluation to be conducted on a sequential basis as the inventory develops. In some areas, it may be appropriate to develop overlay zoning or other preservation mechanisms.

Methods to encourage farmland and open space preservation should be reviewed to include in the zoning ordinance. Techniques such as Sliding Scale lot sizes, Transfer of Development Rights, or Purchase of Development Rights could be utilized to assist the limited farming element in the Township and also help to preserve open space, where the inventory has identified it. This activity may lead to several other strategies and work programs and should probably be undertaken on a periodic basis by the Planning Commission throughout the life of the Plan. Mechanisms to assemble public lands for parks and recreation throughout the Township may also be contemplated, which may include the designation of particular lands that are unsuitable for development.

**6. DEVELOP A NEW ACCESS MANAGEMENT OVERLAY FOR M-40/M-89 IN AREAS OF INTENSE DEVELOPMENT.**

Traffic on M-40 and M-89 will certainly increase, due to new residential, commercial, and industrial development. This strategy would establish new overlay district to regulate access to these roadways in all new developments. Its purpose will be to assure efficient and safe movement of traffic by regulating access points and building setbacks and encouraging shared access.

The Planning Commission should work with the Allegan County Road Commission and MDOT to outline appropriate alternatives to access management along these two roadways. The resulting standards may be

adopted as an overlay district that would complement the underlying zoning.

## **7. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

Educating the community is a key component to successfully implementing the overall goals of the Master Plan. With a clear understanding of the plan, the residents of Allegan Township are more likely to support it and provide input for new regulatory measures that are derived from the Plan. By inviting the involvement of residents, property owners, and business owners, a sense of ownership in the Master Plan will develop and strengthen the planning process.

Educational Programs may consist of a condensed version of the Township Master Plan for public distribution, informational brochures on various topics important to rural communities, and providing informational sessions by the Township Board or Planning Commission. This may also include information on local and state conservation programs as well as training on how to properly maintain an on-site septic system. This will be an on-going effort to be sponsored by the Planning Commission in conjunction with other local and regional planning entities.

## **8. UTILITY PLAN**

Policies that direct the location of public water and sanitary sewer services are an important growth control mechanism. By encouraging new development located in proximity to existing or proposed sewer and water lines, the Township will be in the strongest position to guide and direct growth in accord with the Plan.

In order for this technique to be effective, the Township must develop feasible mechanisms to manage the placement of utilities in the community. Since the central systems in the area are under the jurisdiction of the City of Allegan, this dictates the need for a cooperative arrangement. Many communities have developed inter-local arrangements to cooperatively share utility services and system operating liabilities and revenues. Many such arrangements also address the issue of tax base sharing. This strategy contemplates a comprehensive approach to utility services including a capital plan for utility extensions, a local rate structure, the phasing of utility improvements and the policies that may be necessary to address phasing and service to outlying areas such as Miner Lake.

Given the pace of growth and development, this activity needs to proceed relatively early in the implementation of the Master Plan. Since the issues involved in this strategy combine land use planning, utility design and operation and legal/financial considerations, it is likely the

Township Board will require professional support to complete a utilities plan.

## 9. M-89 CORRIDOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

In 2011 the City and Township jointly worked on the M-89 Corridor Plan. The purpose of that plan was to provide a series of options to improve transportation for all users of M-89, and provide additional capacity for development within the corridor. This corridor is a critical component of the community's identify and should be subject to further research and regulation, if needed, either independently or through a joint effort with the City of Allegan.

Increased incentives to provide shared driveways and implementation of other access management techniques should be provided to property owners along M-89. Additionally, the Township could adopt an overlay district for M-89 to implement the policies of the M-89 Corridor Plan and this Master Plan. Successful implementation of access management policies can result in a road that is safer for both motorists and pedestrians, and that is more attractive.

In addition, techniques to calm traffic and to help equalize use of the highway among motor vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists should be implemented, in partnership with neighboring communities and MDOT. A unified design theme may be applied to areas within the right-of-way in terms of aesthetic and safety Improvements, such as decorative lighting, sidewalks, gateway enhancements, and landscaping.

The MDOT Transportation Enhancement Program provides grants for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and improvements and landscaping and other beautification within the public right-of-way. A Minimum match of 20% is required and the Allegan County Road Commission and the Township should speak with the appropriate MDOT Transportation Service Center to discuss whether any proposed work would be permitted. This grant program can fund elements related to transportation, aesthetics and pedestrian safety.

Moreover, a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) could be created under Michigan Public Act 280 of 2005, as amended. A CIA is similar to a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) or other tax increment financing entity. A CIA can capture tax increment dollars and use those funds to make improvements within a designated area. The difference between a CIA and a DDA is that a CIA must apply to an older commercial corridor that has experienced disinvestment or some level of



decline, as opposed to a downtown area. Act 280 authorizes the formation of multi-jurisdictional Authorities; so a partnership between the Township and City in forming a CIA can be explored as a tool to improve the M-89 corridor.

In addition to general clean-up, the establishments along M-89 generate employment for the region and this Master Plan generally supports the growth of these establishments. Professional offices, light commercial and light industrial uses are expected to continue along M-89. Expansion of these businesses may provide additional employment for community residents and is encouraged when consistent with this Master Plan.

Additionally, improvements to existing buildings can be fostered by financial incentives for developers and property owners. For example, the Commercial Rehabilitation Act, Public Act 554 of 2006, as amended, and the Obsolete property Rehabilitation Act, Public Act 146 of 2000, as amended, can provide tax incentives for property improvements. Specifically, a commercial rehabilitation project can be kept at pre-rehabilitation values, essentially lowering taxes for certain properties. This legislation, as well as other incentives, should be explored to determine its use in the community to bring in desired development and improvement.

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The following entities were contacted to obtain current employee data: Perrigo, Haworth, Allegan Metal Finishing, Allegan County Road Commission, Allegan Tubular, B&G Custom Works, Allegan General Hospital, Delano Service, Inc., Millbocker & Sons, Inc., and the Allegan Tech and Educational Center.



## APPENDIX A

The following tables and text summarize the Allegan Township Futuring Session on February 18, 2002:

Table 1, facilitated by Erin Kilpatrick, had the following top results:

Table 1			
Rank	Opportunities	Rank	Threats
1	Promote Industry	1 (tie)	No Well Defined Plan
2	Roads	1 (tie)	Not Prepared for Change/Development
3 (tie)	Utility Infrastructure	2 (tie)	Increased Air, Noise, and Water Pollution
3 (tie)	Preserve the Quality of the School System	2 (tie)	Lack of Sewer and Water

Table 2, facilitated by Lukas Hill, had the following top results:

Table 2			
Rank	Opportunities	Rank	Threats
1 (tie)	KVCC	1	Ground and Surface Water Quality
1 (tie)	Water and Sewer	2	Over Development without Water and Sewer
2	Inter-Government Cooperation	3	Private Property Rights
3 (tie)	Tax Base / Balance Land Uses	4	Must Work with City
3 (tie)	Encourage Medical Facilities	5	Annexation

Table 3, facilitated by Jay Kilpatrick & Julie Lugaro, had the following top results:

Table 3			
Rank	Opportunities	Rank	Threats
1	Good Ground Water	1	Uncontrolled Growth
2	Good Schools	2 (tie)	Failure to Plan
3 (tie)	Need for More Factories	2 (tie)	Ground Water Threatened
3 (tie)	Zoning for Compatibility	3	Loss of Jobs

While the top results offer a variety of viewpoints of the community, our review of all of the group lists indicate a trend of similar ideas. Common themes see to include:

- ◆ Economic Development (e.g., need to promote industry and tax base, etc)
- ◆ Utilities and Infrastructure (e.g., roads, lack of water and sewer, etc.)
- ◆ Natural Features (e.g., ground water, pollution concerns, etc.), and
- ◆ The public schools (e.g., KVCC and school quality)

Some of these common themes are expressed as “opportunities” and others are evident in the “threats” column. In a few instances, an issue may be expressed as both a threat and an opportunity, depending on the nature of the discussion and the specific dimensions of the issue being discussed.

For example, the overall lists generally indicate the community wishes to preserve and protect the rural character of Allegan Township. At the same time, some growth was seen as positive even though it could threaten the rural lifestyle by increasing traffic, negatively impacting the natural environment, and consuming open spaces with residential development. The consensus of all groups seemed to favor controlled organized growth along with proper planning and zoning for future community development. There were mixed feelings regarding the addition of the community college. Some groups felt that it was a wonderful opportunity for the young people of the community while others believed that a related increase in development would threaten the rural character of the community.

The availability of public water and sewer in the Township was seen as both an opportunity and a threat. These utilities provide the Township with potential for dense growth and possible industrial development. A universal concern was expressed about the growth and development that is taking place where public water and sewer are currently not available.

The natural features and the open spaces within the Township are clearly seen as an important opportunity which may be threatened by growth trends. There is a strong desire within the community to preserve and maintain the open spaces and greenways. There are also parks and state lands that are available for a variety of recreational opportunities. Concerns arose in all groups regarding the depletion and

degradation of these natural resources. One of the key concerns expressed related to the protection of the quality of ground water and surface water, and all the groups voiced their worries over the potential for an increase in pollution.

Residential developments in the Township were a concern. Most participants wish to see new housing opportunities but are apprehensive about the cost of development and the possible strain it may have on utilities. One group felt that the Township has an opportunity to improve its regulatory structure to better control manufactured housing communities. It seemed to be understood that some of this type of housing is needed in the community, but the participants were mainly concerned about the size and intensity of such a development.

The loss of agriculture and farmland to development was also seen as a threat. The groups expressed their desire to encourage local farming services in an effort to maintain a rural community character. However, the participants recognize a need to work with the agriculture industry to promote and improve farm economics and to protect a farmer's right to use his property.

All three groups believe that communication and cooperation between municipal governments (Township, County) and the State is a necessity for successful growth and development of the community. Several members voiced their concern that currently the Township is unprepared for increased growth and development due its lack of planning tools and techniques.

Finally, all three groups agree that transportation networks in the community need to be addressed. There is concern regarding the current traffic loads on M-89, M-40, and M-222 and the impact increased community development will have on these thoroughfares.

Table 1			
Rank	Opportunities	Rank	Threats
1	Promote Industry	1 (tie)	No Well Defined Plan
2	Roads	1 (tie)	Not Prepared for Change/Development
3 (tie)	Utility Infrastructure	2 (tie)	Increased Air, Noise, and Water Pollution
3 (tie)	Preserve the Quality of the School System	2 (tie)	Lack of Sewer and Water
4 (tie)	Heavy and Light Industry	3 (tie)	Development of Farm Land
4 (tie)	Controlled Areas for Residential Development	3 (tie)	Lack of City/Township/County Cooperation
4 (tie)	Plan for Children	4	No Incentive for Economic Growth
4 (tie)	Maintain Open Space and Greenways	5	Spot Zoning
5 (tie)	Health Services	6	Lake Development
5 (tie)	Preserve Agriculture	7	Prevent encroachment of incompatible uses
6 (tie)	County Development	8	Reduce Property Rights
6 (tie)	Attract institution of Higher Education	9 (tie)	Inability to develop farmland
7 (tie)	Offer Increased Services	9 (tie)	Cost to Taxpayer, Cost to Farmer—Who Pays?
7 (tie)	Creating Growth for the Township	10	State and Regional Influence
8	Continue as Urban Rural Community		
9	City and County Cooperation		
10	Lake Development		
11 (tie)	Small Community		
11 (tie)	Promoting Public Land for Recreation		
12	Estate Living		
13	Choose the Type of High-Density Development		
14	No College		
15	Centrally Located		



<b>Table 2</b>			
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Threats</b>
1 (tie)	KVCC	1	Ground and Surface Water Quality
1 (tie)	Water and Sewer	2	Over Development without Water and Sewer
2	Inter-Government Cooperation	3	Private Property Rights
3 (tie)	Tax Base / Balance Land Uses	4	Must Work with City
3 (tie)	Encourage Medical Facilities	5	Annexation
4	Agriculture and Open Space	6	Loss of Wetlands and Natural Resources
5	Private Property Rights	7 (tie)	Loss of Small Farms
6	Tourism	7 (tie)	Traffic Congestion
7	Encouraging Industry and Commercial Uses	7 (tie)	Promotion of Local Community
8 (tie)	Retention of Rural Community	8	Mega Farm
8 (tie)	New Housing Opportunities	9	Loss of Rural Atmosphere
9 (tie)	Access Mgmt. /Commercial	10	Unequal Taxes/Loss of Farming
9 (tie)	Retirement Opportunities	11	Encourage Local Farming Services
10 (tie)	Process Driven		
10 (tie)	Mass Transit		

TABLE 3			
Rank	Opportunities	Rank	Threats
1	Good Ground Water	1	Uncontrolled Growth
2	Good Schools	2 (tie)	Failure to Plan
3 (tie)	Need for More Factories	2 (tie)	Ground Water Threatened
3 (tie)	Zoning for Compatibility	3	Loss of Jobs
4	Employment Opportunities	4	Lack of Infrastructure
5	Cooperation Between Governments	5	Increased Traffic
6 (tie)	Opportunities to Restrict Mobile Homes	6	Loss of Greenspace
6 (tie)	KVCC	7 (tie)	Public Services May Not Keep Up
7	Good Law Enforcement	7 (tie)	Lake Water Decline
8	Expanding Tax Base	7 (tie)	Lack of Employment Diversity
9	Opportunities for Good Transportation Connections	8	Over Crowding
10 (tie)	Development Center	9 (tie)	Over Use of Natural Resources
10 (tie)	Tech Ed. Center	9 (tie)	Junky yards & Rundown Neighborhoods
10 (tie)	Excellent Work Force	9 (tie)	Absentee Ownership/Management
10 (tie)	Parks & Recreation / State Land	10	Failure to Keep Up the Tax Base
11 (tie)	Good Agricultural land	11 (tie)	Population Density
11 (tie)	Close to Big Cities	11 (tie)	Inadequate Jail Space
11 (tie)	Sense of Community	12	Annexation by the City
12	Lakes	13	Cost of Development
13	Hospital	14	Too Many Cell Towers
14 (tie)	Proximity to Recreation Areas	15	KVCC
14 (tie)	Increased Real Estate Values		
15	River		
16	More Diverse Housing		
17	County Seat		
17	Land Conservancy		
18	Fair Grounds		
19	Airport		

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: City of Allegan Planning Commission  
 Allegan Township Planning Commission

FROM: Andy Moore, AICP

DATE: April 13, 2015

RE: **Open House Results**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the City and Township Planning Commissions with a summary of the public input received at the March 12, 2015 Open House. The Open house was generally well-attended with around 50 residents participating and providing input on a variety of topics. The results from the open house will be useful to both the City and Township as each looks to revise the future land use and implementation policies of their respective Master Plans.

At our April 20 meeting, please be prepared to discuss the results of the meeting and any specific changes that should be made to future chapters of the Plan documents.

**Station 1 – Introduction**

This Station was informational.

**Station 2 - Master Plan Implementation**

This exercise asked participants to indicate whether or not current action items in community Master Plans were still relevant. The purpose was to (1) inform participants relative to the current Master Plan policies and action items and reaffirm their relevance and (2) to receive new ideas from participants so that the Planning Commissions may consider adding them to the updated Plan.

**Allegan Township**

	Still relevant; very important	Still relevant, somewhat important	Still relevant; not as important	No longer relevant
Evaluate and revise the Zoning Ordinance and other land use Ordinances or regulations	12			
Intergovernmental cooperation	22			
Develop a new access management overlay for M-40/M-89 or areas of intense development	10		2	
Develop Lake Residential Zoning Overlay District	7			

Inventory key natural features/parks/open space areas	6		2	
Public Information and Education	8			
Utility Plan	2	1	1	
Wishing Well – Monroe Rd Develop.	9	1		
River Corridor Plan	10			
Camping Facilities	3			
Ice Skating Rink	13	2		2
Clearer Blight Enforcement Policy	6	1		
Support art in the Township	4			
Year-round entertainment opportunities	4			

**City of Allegan**

	Still relevant; very important	Still relevant, somewhat important	Still relevant; not as important	No longer relevant
Amend the Zoning Ordinance to reflect Master Plan	14	2		
Home Ownership and rehabilitation	14	5		
Continue efforts to preserve historic resources	17	6	3	
Inventory key natural features	12	4	1	
Strengthen Allegan's identity	20	2		
Improve non-motorized network	21	5		
Ameliorate truck traffic	11		1	11
Better access to Jaycee Park	13	2		3
Green space along old jail site	14			5
Condo and/or senior housing	8	3		
River corridor plan	6			
M-89 Corridor Plan	3	1		1
"Girl scout area" to nature park – walking trails	2			

### **Station 3 - Penny Jars**

In this exercise, participants were given cups with ten pennies and told that the pennies represented their tax dollars. Jars were placed on a table containing the ten topics below, and participants were asked to “invest” their pennies in any way they wanted. Therefore, the greater amount of money below can indicate more desired investment in that particular topic.

Attracting new downtown development	\$0.94
Developing a non-motorized trail network	\$0.74
Creating new jobs	\$0.50
Improving river & lake access	\$0.42
Protecting groundwater resources	\$0.28
Regional public outreach & marketing efforts	\$0.26
Creating more affordable housing Opt.	\$0.21
Protecting surface water quality	\$0.21
Preserving farmlands & open space	\$0.20
Acquiring additional recreational Land	\$0.07

### **Station 4 - Funding and regulation**

*Question 1. Should the City or Township change how local resources are allocated towards Master Plan Implementation?*

- In the City, most participants answered this question by indicating that no change was needed, while a few (2-3) indicated that more local resources should be allocated
- In the Township, one participant felt that fewer resources should be allocated, while about half of participants felt that no change was necessary. The other half felt that more resources should be allocated.

*Question 2. Should the City or Township change the degree to which it regulates land use and development in order to implement the Master Plan?*

- In both communities, responses were fairly evenly divided with about a third indicating that less regulation was desired, one third indicating that no change was needed, and one third indicating that more regulation was needed.

### **Station 5. Non-Motorized Transportation**

This activity asked participants to draw on maps where they would like to see non-motorized trails in the community. Map 1 illustrates the results.

### **Station 6. Traffic Congestion**

This activity asked participants to indicate areas of the community where traffic congestion and/or pedestrian safety were concerns. Map 2 illustrates the results.

**Station 7 – City Redevelopment and Township land Use**

This activity asked participants to highlight areas of desired redevelopment or beautification in the City, and highlight areas of preferred future land uses in the Township. Maps 3 and 4 illustrate the results.

**Station 8 – Water Resource Questions**

This activity asked participants to respond to a variety of water- and groundwater-related questions using a simple strongly disagree to strongly-agree scale. Votes were generalized and are summarized below:

*I am concerned about the water quality in the community's lakes, rivers and streams*

Strongly Agree/Agree 16

Neutral: 1

Disagree/Strongly Disagree: 2

*There should be more access to the water in the City of Allegan*

Strongly Agree/Agree 22

Neutral: 0

Disagree/Strongly Disagree: 0

*There should be more access to the water in Allegan Township*

Strongly Agree/Agree 13

Neutral: 0

Disagree/Strongly Disagree: 0

*The City or Township should acquire waterfront properties for public recreational use*

Strongly Agree/Agree 15

Neutral: 1

Disagree/Strongly Disagree: 4

*I would support additional regulations intended to protect/improve the water quality in my community*

Strongly Agree/Agree 12

Neutral: 2

Disagree/Strongly Disagree: 2

*I am concerned about the groundwater quality in my community*

Strongly Agree/Agree 13

Neutral: 5

Disagree/Strongly Disagree: 2

*I would support additional regulations intended to protect the groundwater quality in my community*

Strongly Agree/Agree 13

Neutral: 2

Disagree/Strongly Disagree: 1

**Write in:**

NO FRACKING! (in City or Twp)

Strongly Agree/Agree 13

Neutral: 1

Disagree/Strongly Disagree: 2