



Spring Arbor Township Master Plan

2012 Edition

Adopted September, 2012

The 2012 edition of the Spring Arbor Township Master Plan was adopted by the Spring Arbor Township Planning Commission on August 14, 2012


Spring Arbor Township Planning Commission Chair

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The 2012 edition of the Spring Arbor Township Master Plan was approved by the Spring Arbor Township Board on September 10, 2012


Spring Arbor Township Clerk

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION



Why Plan?

Municipalities have a vested interest in developing master plans. The master planning process provides an opportunity for municipalities to develop an overall vision for the next 20 years and to conduct a comprehensive review of their facilities and services. A successful Plan also contributes to the public understanding of the planning process and describes how its goals are to be achieved.

Section 31 of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008, MCL 125.3831) requires each planning commission to prepare and adopt a “master plan as a guide for development within the planning jurisdiction.” The MPEA authorizes a planning commission to “do all of the following, as applicable:

- Make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth within the planning jurisdiction with due regard to its relation to neighboring jurisdictions;
- Consult with representatives of adjacent local governments in respect to their planning so that conflicts in master plans and zoning may be avoided;
- Cooperate with all departments of the state and federal governments and other public agencies concerned with programs for economic, social, and physical development within the planning jurisdiction and seek maximum coordination of the local unit of government’s programs within these agencies.”

What is a Master Plan?

A master plan provides a framework within which Spring Arbor Township can evaluate its present condition and develop a vision for the future. The master plan also serves as the guiding document for land use, development, and zoning decisions. A well-designed and implemented plan which is kept up-to-date will help Spring Arbor Township to continue to be a highly desirable community in which to live, work, and visit.

Master Plan Principles

Before using the master plan to guide future development, it is important to understand some of the basic principles upon which it is based:

- **The Plan is flexible** — The document is not meant as a monument cast in stone, never to be adjusted or changed given that it plans for the next 20 years. The plan is a general guide to be used by the government to give direction for the future of Spring Arbor Township. It should be reviewed periodically and altered as general conditions in the community change.
- **The Plan allows for orderly development** — The land use allocations reflected in the plan are based upon the best available projections of future population levels for the Spring Arbor area. The plan must realistically provide sufficient land area to meet the anticipated needs and demands of our residents and businesses, while at the same time protecting the overall quality of life and the physical

environment. While the document does not require a use which might provide the greatest amount of return on investment in land, it does require that property owners receive a reasonable return on their investments.

- **The Plan must encourage public understanding and participation** — The plan should be written in a way that aids public understanding of the planning process and describes how goals for Spring Arbor Township are to be achieved.
- **The Plan must be the result of a general consensus of the community** — Plan elements must be clearly understood by all and followed consistently to minimize the possibility of arbitrary decision making. A clear consensus is needed during the planning process to ensure that the Plan will be followed.
- **The Plan must balance property rights** — The law requires that all property owners be granted a reasonable use of their property. This includes the rights of adjoining property owners to enjoy their property.
- **The Plan is not a zoning map** — The document reflects the planned use of land, taking into consideration existing development, but does not depict a "new" zoning district map. Since the plan and zoning map are intended to be in reasonable harmony, it is likely that future zoning districts will take the shape of the plan as rezoning requests are received and reviewed by each community.
- **Zoning is not a substitute for a Master Plan** — The plan is a long range guide for community development. Zoning approvals are specific to a piece of property and are always attached to the land. They may not be restricted to an individual. Zoning approvals are always permanent, unless the use itself is temporary in nature.
- **Deviation from the Plan puts zoning decisions at risk of invalidation** — Zoning decisions that are not based upon the plan risk invalidation if faced with a legal challenge. Decisions made on the basis of the document may be afforded additional validity, since the decision was not made in an arbitrary fashion, but follows a rational plan for the Spring Arbor area.

Future Land Use and Zoning

The heart of the master plan is its depiction and descriptions for future land use. Determining the future use of land should be based on several factors, including:

- Community character
- Adaptability of land
- Community needs
- Available services
- Existing development
- Existing zoning

The connection between the master plan and the zoning ordinance of Spring Arbor Township is often misunderstood. Accordingly, the relationship between the plan's future land use map and the zoning maps is a critical one. That link is established through the zoning plan element of the master plan.

Use of the Master Plan

Completion of the Master Plan is not the end of the planning process. Continuous and effective use of a Plan is necessary to ensure its validity. Failure to follow a Plan may discredit any attempt to use it as a defense for actions which may be challenged by property owners or developers.

Likewise, consistent and vigorous use of a Plan will lend credibility to the community's implementation of controversial decisions on zoning actions. While state courts do not normally recognize the absolute authority of a master plan, they do lend more credibility to actions supported by careful planning than those which appear to be made arbitrarily. The more common uses of the master plan include:

- **Zoning Decisions** — Since the master plan determines the future use of land, rezoning decisions should be consistent with its provisions. This is not to say that all rezonings that are consistent with the future land use map should automatically be approved. However, if all of the preconditions of the Master Plan are met, approval of the request may logically be forthcoming.

On the other hand, a rezoning request different from that shown in the plan should not automatically be rejected, particularly if the Plan has not been reviewed in some time. Instead, each request should be evaluated to see if the conditions originally considered when the plan was adopted have changed. If so, the plan may deserve reconsideration (but need not necessarily be changed).

- **Utility Extensions/Capital Improvements** — A useful function of the master plan is its designation of land use intensity when evaluating the need for improved utilities, new roadways, new public buildings, and other public improvements. This information may be included in a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP is a six-year plan, updated annually, for capital expenditures necessary to implement the plan.

Development of the CIP is the responsibility of the township board, with considerable input from the municipal staff (e.g., engineers, planners, administrators, etc.) and the planning commission. Its principal elements include project names, descriptions, costs, priorities, years to be completed or begun, and potential or planned funding sources. This information provides property owners with some assurance that improvements necessary to implement the Plan are forthcoming, and shows a general schedule of those improvements.

- **Environmental Impact** — The master plan (as a reflection of the intensity of land use) should reflect the degree to which Spring Arbor Township desires to

protect its environment and natural features. The plan should establish that value to the community and propose steps to implement the appropriate regulations.

- **Recreation Planning** — The master plan (through the provision of future residential lands) will create a need for recreation/open space land. The master plan can assist in the setting of priorities for park development. For example, parks and recreation plans pay special attention to the goals and objectives of the master plan. If additional recreation services are called for in the plan, these services may be noted in the parks and recreation plan.

A review of Future Land Use is also important. If a Master Plan indicates that substantial new residential development will be forthcoming in a particular area, some indication should be made for the need to acquire and develop additional park land. However, the Future Land Use Map cannot indicate specific properties as park land, unless the land is in public ownership, or steps are already well underway to acquire that property.

In order to qualify for grant programs at the state level, or federal grants administered at the state level, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (MDNRE) requires that Spring Arbor Township have a current (no more than 5 years old) parks and recreation plan. The Township does not have a current recreation plan on file with the MDNRE.

- **Approval of a public way, space, building or structure** — An often overlooked provision in state law is a requirement that the Township planning commission review any new street, park acquisition, public building, or other similar easement, street, or use, shown in the master plan, prior to any positive actions taken to implement such improvement. This ensures that the proposed improvement is in compliance with the provisions of the master plan. Although a denial may be overruled by the controlling authority, the review is still required.
- **Transportation Improvements** — There is a clear relationship between transportation improvements and land use. As development proceeds, the need for new or improved roadways becomes obvious. By measuring the intensity of future development shown in the Master Plan, transportation planners can estimate needed rights-of-way widths, number of lanes, and the level of necessary access management.

Keeping the Plan Current

An outdated Plan that is not frequently reviewed can weaken decisions based upon the document. The planning commission should conduct an annual review of the Plan to ensure that it is kept current. Township officials and employees can assist by bringing issues not addressed in the document to the attention of the planning commission. Any amendments to the Plan can be done at that time to keep it up to date and consistent with community philosophies. For example, some goals may have been achieved and

new ones need to be established. Where uses have been approved contrary to the plan, the document should be amended to reflect these changes. By routinely following this procedure, the Master Plan will continue to be an up-to-date and reliable planning tool. Even though the plan has a 20 year horizon, a comprehensive update should occur at least every 5 years according to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA).

How Did the Plan Develop?

This document is the third update to the Spring Arbor Township Master Plan. The Township adopted its first master plan in 1975 and updates to the document were completed in 1991 and 2006.

Citizen participation is extremely important to the success of almost any planning effort. Citizen participation helps guarantee that the vision outlined for the future of the Spring Arbor area accurately reflects the true goals of its residents. Direct and indirect public input opportunities included:

- Meetings of the planning commission where the Plan was included on the agenda (open to the public);
- A community planning survey (provided to a sample of property owners);
- A public hearing on the Master Plan.

Who Will Implement the Plan?

Three distinct bodies in the Township are charged with planning and zoning: the planning commission, the zoning board of appeals, and the township board. All of their decisions and recommendations should be based upon the Master Plan. Decisions not based upon the Plan should trigger the review and possible amendment of the document.

Planning Commission

Development and approval of the Master Plan is an important responsibility of the planning commission. The commission is charged with the development of zoning and other ordinances (over which the township board has final authority). In this capacity, a subcommittee of the commission met to develop the Master Plan. The planning commission also recommends approval or rejection of requests to the township board for rezonings and various other zoning proposals.

Zoning Board of Appeals

The zoning board of appeals (ZBA) decides dimensional variance requests (e.g., setback requirements). The ZBA also makes official interpretations of the zoning ordinance when the meaning or intent of the legislation is not clear. ZBA decisions are final. Appeals are made to the circuit court.

Township Board

As the legislative body for the Township, the township board is responsible for the passage of all ordinances, including the zoning ordinance and other planning-related legislation. It also appoints members to the planning commission and the ZBA.

Other Planning Efforts

Township staff and other township committees may also undertake planning efforts on their own or in conjunction with the planning commission. These planning efforts may include housing, key transportation corridors, historical districts, and the other plans. Future updates to those plans should complement the goals of the Master Plan. In turn, those documents should be consulted whenever the Plan is amended or a new plan is adopted. This consultation should also extend to regional planning efforts.

CHAPTER 2
COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION AND ISSUE
IDENTIFICATION



Population/demographics

See Appendix A for detailed population trend information. However, the data contained in that appendix is summarized below:

- **General population.** The population of Spring Arbor Township was 8,267 in 2010, according to the U.S. Census. The population of the township has grown considerably since 1930 with most of that growth occurring during the 1950s through the 1970s (8.9% per year on average). Little growth occurred during the 1980s (1.0% for the entire decade). However, since then, the population has continued to grow at a slower rate (1.0% per year on average). The continuation of this modest growth rate will result in a population of 9,114 by 2020 and 10,049 by 2030.
- **Group homes.** Residents living in group quarters comprised 14.9% of the Township's population in 2010 as opposed to 10.6% in 2000. This, of course, is due to the presence of Spring Arbor University and various retirement homes. For example, in 2000, 606 residents lived in college dormitories, 126 lived in retirement homes, and 69 lived in other non-institutionalized group quarters.
- **Age of population.** As is true of the nation in general, the population of Spring Arbor Township continues to increase in age. For example, the median age of township residents increase from 32.0 in 1990, to 35.0 in 2000, to 36.3 in 2010. This can be attributed, in part, to the aging of the "baby boom" generation as well as the presence of retirement homes in the township. However, the presence of Spring Arbor University also helps to keep the population relatively young.
- **School population.** It is estimated that approximately 32% of township residents were enrolled in school in between 2006 and 2010. Of the 2,616 students, 39% were enrolled in college or graduate school. Many of them were undoubtedly Spring Arbor University students. Students enrolled in one of the area's elementary, middle, and high school comprised 56% of students. The remaining 5% were enrolled in nursery or pre-school.
- **Educational attainment.** Of the 4,883 township residents 25 years old or older in 2010, it is estimated that approximately 94% held a high school diploma between 2006 and 2010. Almost 25% attended some college and over 8% held an associate degree. Almost 22% held a bachelor's degree and 9% held a graduate or professional degree.
- **Employment by occupation.** Of the estimated 3,831 residents 16 years in the work force between 2006 and 2010, approximately 35% were engaged in management, professional, and related services and approximately 29% were involved in sales and office occupations. Many of those residents were also engaged in service (approximately 16%) and production, transportation and material moving (approximately 12%) occupations. A few of those residents were en-

gaged in natural resources, construction, and maintenance (approximately 12%) occupations.

- **Household income.** The median household income in the township between 2006 and 2010 was estimated at \$60,291 and the median family income was \$67,829. The per capita income was \$22,858.
- **Commuting characteristics.** It is estimated that the majority of employed residents (75.8%) worked in another community between 2006 and 2010 although a majority of them were employed (81.2%) in Jackson County and only a few were employed outside of Michigan (1.2%). Almost all of the workers (83.1%) drove to their work place alone. Approximately one third of commuters drove 20-29 minutes (28.1%) or 30-44 minutes (9.1%) to work.
- **Mobility.** It is estimated that the majority (83.1%) of residents between 2006 and 2010 lived in the same home they did the year before.

Location

Spring Arbor Township is located in the southwestern Jackson County, approximately seven miles southwest of the City of Jackson (please see the base map). The unincorporated village of Spring Arbor is located west of the center of the Township along Michigan Highway 60 (M-60). The Township is bordered on the north by Sandstone Township, on the east by Summit Township, on the south by Hanover Township, and on the west by Concord Township. Ann Arbor, Lansing, and Battle Creek are all located within an hour's drive of the Township.

Natural Features

The Township has a wealth of aquatic resources (please see the natural resources map). The majority of Spring Arbor Township is located in the Upper Grand River Watershed and its western third is located in the Kalamazoo River Watershed. The North Branch of the Kalamazoo River flows through the southwestern corner of the Township. The southern reach of Sandstone Creek, a tributary of the Grand River, is located in the Township's northeastern corner. A number of smaller streams and county drains also flow through the Township.

Cross Lake, Lime Lake, and the Spring Arbor Lakes are the major water bodies in the Township. Wetlands are located along the shores of many of the rivers, streams and lakes, as well as other low spots within Spring Arbor Township. The highest levels of elevation are located in the southern third of the township. Wellhead protection areas are located along the northern and eastern borders of the Township. Care must be taken to exclude land uses from those areas which may pollute ground water. It should be noted that all of the surface water eventually flows into Lake Michigan.

Outside of the unincorporated village and much of the M-60 corridor, the Township is a mix of agricultural lands and open space interspersed with residential development. It is

interesting to note that a small portion of the land currently utilized for residential development also adds to the available open space in the Township because those dwellings are located on large lots. Taken together, the agricultural land and open space comprise a mixture of plowed fields, pastures, and woodlands.

Township Facilities and Services

The section of M-60 located between Chapel Road and Gordon Street (e.g., about three quarters of a mile long) is known as Main Street. The thoroughfare runs through the heart of the unincorporated village of Spring Arbor (please see the base map). Many Township facilities are located within the unincorporated village.

Township offices

Township offices are located at the intersection with Main Street (M-60) and Teft Road. The administrative office, on the southeast corner of the intersection, is open five days a week. Business is also conducted online at www.springarbor.org. Located within a short walk of the Township offices are the Spring Arbor Branch of the Jackson District Library and the U.S. Post Office. Spring Arbor University and the Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church are located across the street.

Police and fire protection

The Township's police and fire departments are housed in the fire station located across the parking lot from the Township offices.

- **Police department.** The Township's police department consists of two full-time officers and three part-time officers. All officers, including the Chief, answer calls for service. Township police strive to protect and serve the residents and business owners with a high standard of honor and integrity through professional service. The Jackson County Sheriff's Department and the Michigan State Police also respond to calls for service.

Typical services include traffic enforcement (i.e., speed, drunk driving, crash investigations and reports); ordinance enforcement (i.e., junk vehicles, garbage and other junk, animal complaints); criminal investigations of state laws and local ordinances; responding to civil disputes and keeping the peace; and handling reports of missing and run-away persons.

The existing space utilized by the police department is not adequate. The possibility of developing a separate or larger facility needs to be considered in conjunction with the trend towards shared services.

- **Fire department.** The Township is served by a volunteer fire department with a full time fire chief. The 28 member force is dedicated to public service and is on call 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. The fire department provides general response for structure fires, brush fires, vehicle fires, burning complaints, downed power lines, etc. and also responds to traffic accidents and medical emergencies. Under a countywide mutual aid agreement, the department provides resources

when requested. In addition, the department responds to all calls for structure fires in several neighboring communities under automatic aid agreements. The department responds to about 800 calls per year with 85-90% related to medical emergencies.

A variety of educational programs for fire safety and prevention are provided within the community each year. The department also hosts firefighter training programs for all new firefighters throughout Jackson County. This is an example of shared services which needs to be encouraged.

Water and Sewer Systems

Water and sanitary sewer systems are primarily available in the unincorporated village of Spring Arbor as well as the other more densely populated areas of the Township to the east and north (please see the water and sewer maps). It will be necessary to make enhancements to both systems in the future. It is the intent of the Township to have the cost of those improvements covered by the developments needing these services. The Township does not maintain any storm water sewers.

- **Water distribution.** Water service is purchased from Summit Township, located to the east. Multiple wells are the source of water, and these wells are tested on a regular basis to assure compliance with State standards for purity. Summit Township provides maintenance for the distribution system.
- **Sanitary sewer.** Wastewater is transported to a collection system within the unincorporated village maintained by the Township. The City of Jackson provides treatment of the wastewater at their facility prior to it being discharged into the Grand River.

Transportation

The public road network is the primary transportation facility serving Spring Arbor Township. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Jackson County Road Commission (JCRC) are responsible for maintaining that road system in cooperation with the Township.

Michigan Department of Transportation

Michigan Highway 60 (M-60), the municipality's main thoroughfare, runs through the Township from the northeast to the southwest. The state highway turns into a freeway at the eastern township line and provides direct access to Interstate 94 (I-94) approximately three miles to the north (please see the base map). Improvements to M-60 in the vicinity of the unincorporated village are needed in order to relieve congestion and improve traffic safety. Accordingly, the Township advocates the following M-60 projects:

- A center-turn-lane from Emerson Road to Chapel Road
- A traffic signal at the Dearing Road intersection

The Jackson Area Comprehensive Transportation Study's (JACTS) 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan recognizes the existence of traffic congestion on M-60 particularly within the unincorporated village. The Township must continue to work closely with JACTS officials on the updating of this plan in order to ensure that deficiencies along M-60 are given appropriate attention and priority.

Development along M-60 should be planned and executed so as to minimize traffic hazards and delays. Such techniques as cluster development and shared driveways should be encouraged (e.g., access management). Safety will also be enhanced by minimizing the number of direct access points onto M-60.

Jackson County Road Commission

All other public roads and streets in Spring Arbor Township are maintained by the Jackson County Road Commission with financial assistance from the municipality. There are currently no uninterrupted north/south routes through the municipality and the possibility of creating alternative east/west routes north and south of M-60 should also be considered. Accordingly, the Township would like to investigate the following projects:

- A more direct link between Dearing Road and Moscow Road
- Extending Parma Road south to M-60 on the west side of the Township
- Extending Richard Street east to Dearing Road
- Extending Blenheim east to Dearing Road.

Recreation and non-motorized pathways and sidewalks

Spring Arbor Township has a variety of recreational resources that enrich our community. This includes a mix of township and county parks, quasi-public and private recreation facilities, and non-motorized pathways and sidewalks.

Township parks

Spring Arbor Township maintains several parks.

- **Harmony Park.** Located on Starr Road behind the Senior Center, Harmony Park is home to the Snyder School House and Museum. It has two playgrounds which are used by Warner Elementary School children and the youth from our community. The park also contains a basketball court, a softball diamond, and a large open-air pavilion.
- **Gallagher Park.** Located on the south side of Sharon Street, Gallagher Park is adjacent to the Township cemetery. The 10-acre park contains soccer, baseball and softball fields, playground equipment, and a pavilion with restrooms.
- **Falling Waters Historical Park.** Located on the southwest corner of Hammond and South Cross Roads, Falling Waters Historical Park contains several historical plaques describing regional history. Visitors may follow walking paths which

lead to a Pottawatomie Indian burial ground, the first housing site in the Township (an authentic log cabin), and a medicinal herb garden.

County parks and non-motorized pathways and sidewalks

A Jackson County park is also located within the Township as well as a linear park and other facilities used for non-motorized transportation and exercise.

- **Lime Lake County Park.** Located on Teft Road, Lime Lake County Park contains a swimming beach; picnic tables and grills; and playground equipment. Fishing is a popular activity as Lime Lake is not over populated with homes and boat ramp access is available. The lake is also unique given that the Falling Waters Trail—which runs on an old railroad bed—divides the water-body into two sections.
- **Falling Waters Trail.** Located on the old Michigan Central Railroad bed, the 10.5 mile non-motorized linear park runs eastward from the Village of Concord and connects with Jackson's Inter-City Trail. In time, the Falling Waters Trail will be a segment of Route 1 of the Great Lake-to-Lake Trails. Trailhead parking and a restroom are adjacent to the Lime Lake County Park.
- **Non-motorized pathways and sidewalks.** Many college students and other residents also walk, run and/or bicycle along Township roadways. Currently the number of streets with sidewalks is inadequate. Accordingly, improved pedestrian and bicycle access to local schools and parks is needed, as promoted in the current editions of the Jackson County Regional Trailway Study and the City of Jackson and Jackson County Joint Recreation Plan. The Township shall encourage sidewalks, bike lanes, and off-road non-motorized pathways in all appropriate areas of the municipality, including the development of a pathway to link the Falling Waters Trail with M-60 (please see the Future Land Use Map). These projects will require that the Township collaborate with Spring Arbor University, the Western School District, and Jackson County. Safe pedestrian crossings across M-60 should also be considered.

Quasi-public and private recreation facilities

Two golf courses open to the public fall within the Township and numerous other courses are available within Jackson County. Spring Arbor University and the Western School District also provide significant recreational facilities and programs available to Township residents that range from athletic contests to cultural events.

Education

Residents have access to a variety of educational opportunities available in and around Spring Arbor Township.

Local School Districts

Spring Arbor Township is served by three K-12 school districts. The majority of the Township is served by the Western School District whose facilities are located in the municipality. Warner Elementary is located on Star Road and Bean Elementary is located on Noble Street. The Western High School/Middle School complex is located on Dearing Road. Residents in the southern portion of the Township are served by the Concord Community School District. A few residents in the southeast corner of the Township are served by the Hanover-Horton School District. All of the school districts score well on both state and national tests.

Spring Arbor University

The Township is the home of Spring Arbor University (SAU). The University is a Christian liberal arts institution with 1,722 traditional students and 87 staff members located on the main campus for the 2010-2011 school year. SAU also had 1,194 graduate students and 1,279 professional (off-campus) students enrolled that school year. In addition to providing excellent educational programs for students, SAU contributes to the welfare of the community by providing employment as well as recreational and cultural opportunities.

Other Colleges and Universities

Many higher education options are available to Township residents. In addition to Spring Arbor University, Jackson Community College and Baker College also have campuses in Jackson County. Numerous colleges and universities are located within an hour's drive of the Township, including Albion College, Michigan State University and the University of Michigan.

Senior Living

Many seniors reside in Spring Arbor Township and enjoy a variety of activities offered by local churches and SAU. The Jackson County Department on Aging provides lunch Monday through Friday as well as a full slate of enrichment programs at the Spring Arbor Senior Center. The Center is located on Starr Road one block east of the Township Offices. It serves all of western Jackson County and provides a place for seniors to congregate and enjoy activities together. The community has many housing options for seniors as well as various levels of care including licensed assisted living, skilled care, and Alzheimer's care.

Intergovernmental Relations

Cooperation between governmental units is essential for the efficient use of resources. Therefore, it is the Township's desire to cooperate with other governmental units in pursuits toward the public good. However, the Vision and Goals of the Township should be subordinated to activities of higher governments only when the greater good of the larger population is clearly articulated and, where necessary, adequately funded by those

making conflicting requirements. Participation by the Township in the Jackson County Community Planning Committee is encouraged in order to minimize those potential conflicts.

General Law versus Charter Township

Charter townships and general law townships are similar in organizational structures and powers except for three specific areas. The Charter Township Act grants charter townships additional flexibility in their organizational structure; provides protection from annexation; and provides greater taxing authority with voter approval.

The flexibility in organizational structure may provide for better administration of Township affairs. In a general law township, the township board retains most of the administrative authority. The Charter Township Act grants the supervisor more authority over the day-to-day operations of the Township. The Township should pursue charter township status to achieve greater efficiency and accountability as soon as possible after the adoption of this master plan.

Existing Land Use

An inventory of existing land use is an important factor in the development of a future land use map for Spring Arbor Township. Assessing data compiled by the Township was utilized to determine existing land use in 2010. The township assessor assigns a numeric code to each property as part of the assessment process which was then translated into a broad land use category. Obvious conflicts were identified through the use of aerial photography and corrected. Using this process Spring Arbor Township can be divided into the following land uses (please see the existing land use map):

2010 Existing Land Use

Land Use	Sq Feet	Acres	Sq. Mi.	%
Agricultural	461,009,495.1	10,583.3	16.5	47.9%
Residential	420,236,254.3	9,647.3	15.1	43.7%
Commercial	35,093,375.4	805.6	1.3	3.6%
Industrial	9,456,268.0	217.1	0.3	1.0%
Institutional	36,986,975.4	849.1	1.3	3.8%
Total	962,782,368.2	22,102.4	34.5	100.0%

Agricultural

Agriculture is still an important land use in the Township with almost half (47.9%) of the township dedicated to this land use in 2010. Although 16.5 square miles were dedicated to agriculture, it appears that those properties are often commingled with other land uses distributed unevenly throughout the township. Further encroachment upon agricultural properties by other land uses may continue unless otherwise abated. However, it should also be pointed out that it is likely that the percentage of land dedicated to agriculture would be higher if an actual physical inventory of land use were conducted.

Residential

Residential properties also approach covering half (43.7%) of the township in 2010. Residential neighborhoods are distributed throughout the township and are often located adjacent to agricultural land. The close proximity of some residences and farmland increases the potential for conflict. Many of those residences are built on large lots, creating a lot of unformed and non-contiguous open space.

Commercial

Commercial properties occupy less than four (3.6) percent of the township in 2010. Most of the commercial properties are concentrated along Spring Arbor Road (M-60) extending westward into the village. Please note that the major commercial properties along the eastern township line are golf courses which could also be included in the institutional category.

Industrial

Industrial properties occupy one (1.0) percent of the township in 2010. Most of the industrial properties are located in the vicinity of the village although there are also some isolated industrial properties elsewhere in the township.

Institutional

Institutional properties occupy almost four (3.8) percent of the township in 2010. The major concentration of institutional properties is attributed to the various Spring Arbor Township facilities detailed earlier in this chapter, the campuses of Spring Arbor University and Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church, and senior living facilities located within the unincorporated village. Lime Lake County Park and the Falling Waters Trail are also important contributors to the institutional lands found in the municipality.

CHAPTER 3
COMMUNITY POLICIES AND PLANS



Various inputs into community policies and plans

The community policies and plans advocated in this document were informed by a variety of observations, opportunities, and concerns, including the following:

- Regional planning efforts
- The community planning survey
- Existing land use
- Various other observations, opportunities, and concerns addressed in Chapter 2

Countywide future land use map

It is important to take into account any regional plans for future land use prior to the development of a future land use plan. The following excerpt from the countywide future land use map included in the 2000-2025 edition of the Jackson Community Comprehensive Plan recommends commercial activity along Spring Arbor Road (M-60) from the unincorporated village eastward (please see the countywide future land use map). Residential development is recommended for the village as well as along M-60, surrounding the recommended commercial development and extending northward past Slayton Road. A couple of distinct pockets of industrial development are recommended. The larger industrial area is located along Moscow Road between M-60 and Carter Road. The smaller industrial area is located along King Road between Chapel Road and Dearing Road. Agricultural preservation and greenways are recommended for the remainder of the Township.

Community planning survey

In March 2011, the Master Plan Committee mailed a community planning survey to a random sample of 506 property owners. The survey was also made available to any interested property owners at the Township office and through the Township website resulting in a distribution of approximately 20 additional surveys. A total of 137 surveys were returned representing a response/return rate of greater than 25%.

The primary purpose of the survey was to obtain input that could be utilized by the Planning Commission to develop Township goals and objectives. Some of the conclusions that can be drawn from the survey responses are summarized below.

Future land use. The following future land use issues were identified by the survey:

- 90% of respondents believe that the Township should strive to protect our unique natural features
- 83% of respondents believe that the Township should strive to maintain our existing rural agricultural/residential character
- 79% of respondents would like the Township to encourage development of sidewalks and bike/pedestrian paths

- Approximately two thirds of respondents would like the Township to encourage additional commercial and industrial development
- Respondents were almost evenly divided as to whether the Township should encourage additional residential development

Quality of life and community services. The following quality of life and community service issues were identified by the survey:

- 93% of respondents rated Spring Arbor Township as an excellent or good place to live
- 88% of respondents rated the Township's fire department as excellent or good
- 82% of respondents rated the Township's police department as excellent or good
- 83% of respondents rated the Township's administration and its employees as excellent or good
- 68% of respondents rated the Township's parks as excellent or good

Public roads. The following public road issues were identified by the survey:

- 62% of respondents expressed concerns about the safety and/or quality of public roads in the Township
- The majority of responses concerned improving the safety of M-60

Existing land use

Based upon the analysis of its existing land use pattern in 2010, Spring Arbor Township developed the following observations, concerns, and policies.

- **Agricultural.** The Township respects and appreciates the contribution the agricultural community has made to its cultural fabric. Farms also provide the majority of open spaces in the municipality. Given that open spaces are increasingly rare in our society, it is the Township's desire that such spaces be preserved to the extent possible.

Over recent decades, fewer and fewer family farming operations have existed in Spring Arbor Township. The municipality will work with family farms (where possible), to permit continued profitable farming operations. The Township recognizes that the Right-to-Farm Act governs the continued usage of agricultural lands for farming, even as other development approaches such lands. Unfortunately, it does not appear practical—for the time period contemplated by this Plan—for the Township to acquire development rights or otherwise financially assist farmers.

It should also be noted that the Township believes that intensive livestock operations (feedlots) or other dense animal concentrations are not consistent with traditional agricultural activities, and are more properly described as industrial activi-

ty. The Township believes that industrial activity has a much greater potential for detrimental environmental effect than other forms of activity. Those activities with greater potential for detrimental environmental effect will be very closely scrutinized.

- **Residential.** Spring Arbor Township is valued by its residents for its family-friendly environment and takes residential planning and development very seriously. The municipality will encourage residential growth where its density and location can lead to continued open and rural spaces; where natural resources are not threatened; where recreational opportunities can be provided; and where housing of compatible value can be placed in proximity. Residential areas should be planned with the health and happiness of its residents foremost in mind. Clustered housing, with green spaces and recreation areas interspersed, should be encouraged.
- **Commercial.** Spring Arbor Township wishes to encourage commercial activity in the appropriate and designated areas. For example, new development should be required to concentrate within the unincorporated village rather than continuing to allow the commercial sprawl found along the M-60 corridor. The Township must also work with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Jackson County Road Commission to install the infrastructure needed to accommodate the new development while improving traffic on Main Street (M-60). Commercial growth must also take into account the health, safety and convenience of the population; its residential needs, and the preservation of the natural resources of the Township.
- **Industrial.** Industrial business can be advantageous to a community; providing jobs, services and products and will be encouraged by the Township within the unincorporated village to the extent feasible. Light industrial activity, within appropriately zoned areas, will be considered within the confines of protecting our natural resources and the peace, health and happiness of Spring Arbor Township residents. The municipality finds that sufficient areas exist within Jackson County for large-scale or heavy industrial activity. Therefore, the Township does not currently plan to encourage heavier industrial activity.
- **Institutional.** Spring Arbor University is the largest institution in the Township. The University is a tax exempt organization and the Township recognizes that continued growth will have an impact on Township services such as sewer and water service and police and fire protection. The Township intends to encourage the growth of SAU as long as the institution continues to enhance the quality of life in the municipality. The physical growth of the University is planned to the north and west along Chapel Road.

Goals and Objectives

The objectives of the plan, and the goals they are designed to implement, are informed by the various inputs described earlier in this chapter and summarized in previous chapters and appendices.

Goal #1

Protect, preserve, and maintain the natural resources of the Township.

Objectives

1. Identify environmentally sensitive soils, wetlands, lakes and streams, and adopt site plan review standards and other zoning regulations to preserve and protect them.
2. Identify and protect groundwater recharge areas.
3. Require each site plan to conform to the topography, instead of the topography conforming to the site plan.
4. Encourage the proper maintenance of on site septic systems.

Goal #2

Identify and preserve the qualities that make the Township a great place to live and raise a family.

Objectives

1. Encourage entities/organizations within the Township to promote family activities.
2. Encourage public, private and non-profit organizations to form informal relationships to strengthen the Township as “the place” to live and raise a family.
3. Encourage the development and promotion of community cultural events.
4. Encourage the Township to define a desired community character then review sign regulations to ensure that they balance the needs of the business owners with protecting the desired community character.
5. Encourage “workability,” “green initiatives” township wide that are easily accessible for our residents and visitors.
6. Encourage the Township elected officials to participate in social media such as Facebook (Fb), Twitter and have its own web site to promote activities for the residents of the Township.
7. Encourage the linkage of homes, schools, businesses, and organizations in the township to the global internet and to each other.
8. Encourage broadband access where currently not available.

9. Encourage the development of a strategy to require open capacity on any fiber optic infrastructure that is constructed for future public and private uses.
10. Encourage easement or right-of-way access for telecommunication and broadband facilities in new, retrofitted or (re) development sites.
11. Encourage the continued excellence and development of the Spring Arbor Fire and Police Departments through planning for future needs such as space, equipment and technology. Address the immediate need of the Police Department for additional space
12. Encourage the continual development of our parks through the acquisition of land for additional parks. Consider the possibility of building a roller blade course.
13. Encourage the acquisition of additional parking space for spectators at our parks.
14. Encourage the development of pedestrian and bike paths.
15. Encourage the development of a policy to require sidewalks for safe walking to and from schools and elsewhere when possible (new development and retrofitting.)
16. Encourage the continued use of the library and senior center by all age groups and by community groups.
17. Encourage the use of native grasses and plants in green spaces and the elimination of invasive species of grasses and plants at the same time.
18. Encourage the preservation of township historical places and landmarks.
19. Encourage the development and printing/distribution of Spring Arbor Township maps highlighting the points of interest such as historical sites, landmarks and buildings. The map should also highlight our parks, recreational areas, eating establishments, educational sites, churches, and the location of local governmental buildings.

Goal #3

Encourage residential growth where its density and location can lead to continued open and rural spaces; where natural resources are not threatened; where recreational opportunities can be provided; and where housing of compatible value can be placed in proximity.

Objectives

1. Encourage residential growth where its density and location can lead to open and rural spaces and where housing of compatible values can be place in proximity.

2. Residential areas should be planned and built with health and happiness of its residents foremost in mind. Clustered housing shall be encouraged with green space along with recreation areas interspersed, this should include sidewalks and/or trails.
3. High density residential development should only be planned where adjacent water and sewage systems can be extended. The existing areas designated to mobile manufactured housing enjoy sufficient excess capacity and therefore is adequate to the population needs for the period contemplated by this plan.
4. Encourage residential development which reduces the number of driveway and street access points along major roads. Subdivision development should be encouraged in areas where adequate services exist or are expected to be provided by the developer.
5. Encourage new neighborhoods to be served by sidewalks and trails and to promote the retrofitting of existing neighborhoods.
6. Protect existing residential areas from encroachment by any incompatible land uses through continuous and co-ordinate platting of land rather than piecemeal development requiring "spot zoning."
7. Encourage the development of office space in transition areas between residential and commercial and/or light industrial areas.
8. Encourage adequate open space buffers between residential areas and other commercial/light industrial areas, especially along M-60.

Goal #4

Encourage the development of commercial uses to support the retail needs of the Township and to diversify the local economy. Commercial uses should be located in areas that will provide convenient shopping and office related services to township residents and assure compatibility of commercial districts with other uses.

Objectives

1. Encourage clustered commercial development rather than sprawled development.
2. Provide for commercial development along major thoroughfares, preferably at the intersection of thoroughfares with controlled access to and from the development (i.e., shared drives, internal connections, service drives).
3. Locate commercial uses so as to avoid incompatible adjacent uses.
4. Provide for adequate buffering requirements between conflicting land uses and between parking areas and road right-of-ways (i.e., sidewalks, bike paths, etc.).

5. Encourage professional office development in transitional areas between commercial and residential uses.
6. Encourage office uses in clustered predetermined areas (i.e., M-60/Main from Chapel Road to Henderson).
7. Discourage commercial contractor uses (i.e. activities beyond those that would be described as a home occupation) in residential districts.

Goal #5

Encourage the development of light industrial uses to diversify the local economy and to provide a stable tax base for the Township, at locations that will allow the quality of the local environment to be maintained.

Objective

1. Industrial areas should be developed where a high degree of compatibility with surrounding land uses may be assured.
2. Industrial areas should be encouraged along major thoroughfares having access to surrounding region and state.
3. Industrial development should be located in areas where soils are suitable, drainage is good and potential for ground water contamination is minimized.
4. Encourage light, clean industrial development in industrial parks or subdivisions where there is sufficient room for growth and expansion.
5. Favor uses that do not pollute the air, soil, water or are offensive to neighboring land uses because of noise, sight or odor.
6. Plan additional industrial areas in the township to assist in providing an employment base and tax base for the residents of the township.
7. Light industrial uses should be encouraged at the intersection of M-60 and Moscow Road. M-60 to the Western side of the township should also be considered.
8. Require appropriate landscaping of each industrial site.

Goal #6

Encourage the retention and preservation of farmland in agricultural production as well as the preservation of general open space.

Objectives

1. Support the desires of individual property owners who wish to keep their land in active agricultural production
2. Encourage the proper maintenance of on site-septic systems.

3. Protect groundwater recharge areas.
4. (Right to Farm Act) Inform landowners, developers, and realtors of the importance of agriculture to the area and of the need to adequately inform new residents of activities related to farming operations.
5. Support county and state agricultural preservation programs such as PA 116.

Goal #7

Provide for efficient governmental services and infrastructure to township residents and businesses.

Objectives

1. Maintain sewer and water systems to protect health, safety and welfare of residents. Work with developers or the State to expand these systems as needed.
2. Work with the Jackson County Road Commissions and Drain Commissioner to address areas with inadequate drainage of storm water.
3. Encourage the development of a township and/or village WIFI network.
4. Aggressively advocate with the Michigan Department of Transportation and Jackson County Road Commission to work toward safe traffic management solutions with a focus on M-60. Amend the zoning Ordinance to require the use of access management techniques to reduce the potential traffic conflicts along M-60 and improve safety.
5. Promote higher standard of township cleanliness by sponsoring two township wide clean up days for trash and refuse removal. Work with the scouts and community service organizations to facilitate this.
6. Maintain a consistent enforcement program for building, housing and property maintenance codes by adding an enforcement officer on a part time or as needed basis.
7. Move towards obtaining "Charter Township Status."

Future Land Use Plan

The master plan represents a vision of how the community might look in the future. The horizon is the year 2030 or almost 20 years. The plan does not suggest that the Township will develop to the limits identified on the future land use map. Rather, the plan is intended to guide the community through its daily decision making processes so that future development will be consistent with the goals adopted in this plan.

The master plan consists of policies that address future land use and development of the Township over the life of the plan. However, the plan itself has no regulatory authority and must rely upon other tools for implementation, most notably the zoning ordinance. The plan simply suggests where various land uses should be located. The zon-

ing ordinance carries out the policies of the plan by regulating the type of use that a parcel may have, the location of the uses, and the bulk and density of development throughout Spring Arbor Township.

The future land use plan presented here is not static (please see the Future Land Use Map). It is designed to be a flexible document that can and should change as the community changes. Even though the document is long range in nature (20 years \pm), it should be periodically reviewed and updated as the community grows and changes. There will be times when it will be necessary to deviate from the plan. Changing land use patterns may cause certain areas on the future land use map to become obsolete for a use suggested. When this happens, the Planning Commission may be required to interpret the most appropriate type of use for an area. Interpretation of a specific site should be made with regard to the impact on the surrounding area.

The future land use map was not designed nor was it intended to parallel the zoning map. Zoning is the tool used to carry out the plan. Therefore, the zoning map will not look exactly like the future land use map. As the community grows and rezoning requests become necessary to accommodate development, future rezonings should be consistent with the plan in most cases or the plan should be amended to reflect changing trends. This is not to suggest that every rezoning needs to be consistent with the plan. However, in areas where several requests are made for rezoning, it may be necessary to consider amending the plan if changing land use patterns warrant a change in the plan. The future land use map is comprised of the following categories:

Agricultural areas

There are still significant agricultural areas within the Township, mainly within its periphery. The Township wishes to preserve these lands by concentrating new development along the M-60 corridor.

Residential areas

The Township's residential areas can be divided into two main categories.

- **Low-density residential areas** — Low density residential areas are set aside primarily for single-family homes although it also hosts some duplexes and other low-density residential structures.
- **High-density residential areas** — The majority of the Township's high-density residential areas are located in the unincorporated village of Spring Arbor. The few multiple-family complexes located outside of the Spring Arbor University Campus are accommodated in these areas as well as an existing manufactured housing park and retirement complexes.

Commercial areas

Commercial areas have identified along the M-60 corridor within the unincorporated village of Spring Arbor and to the east.

- **Office areas** — Office and professional use areas are proposed along the northern side of M-60 (Main Street) within the village, to the east of Spring Arbor University. The small lots with limited parking are more appropriate for small offices.
- **Local commercial areas** — Local commercial areas are located along the M-60 corridor between Mathews Road to the west and Fairway Drive to the east. The commercial strip often buffers the residential and light industrial areas which parallel the state highway.
- **Highway service commercial areas** — Larger commercial enterprises are proposed for the following intersections along the M-60 corridor: Chapel Road, Dearing Road, Moscow Road, Sandstone Road, and Reynolds Road.

Light industrial areas

The development of light industry is a priority of the Township. These new areas will provide the room needed by local plumbers, electricians, and other types of contractors to establish or expand their businesses. The general area in the vicinity of M-60 (Spring Arbor Road) and Moscow Road, just east of the unincorporated village of Spring Arbor has been identified as the location for this new development. The general area along the western township line south of M-60 (Spring Arbor Road) has also been identified for light industrial uses. However, this area should not be developed until appropriate utilities have been extended to that area and the primary light industrial area to the east has been substantially developed.

Institutional areas

Finally, institutions are also a significant component of the Township.

- **Spring Arbor University (SAU)** — The largest institution in the Township is Spring Arbor University. The SAU campus is located along M-60 (Main Street) and occupies a significant portion of the unincorporated village of Spring Arbor. The future land use plan recognizes the need for this institution to grow, allocating land for this expansion to the north of the existing campus.
- **Public parks and dedicated open space** — Jackson County's Falling Waters Trail and Lime Lake County Park, the Township's several parks (please see Chapter 2), and the golf courses along the eastern boundary with Summit Township comprise the parkland found in Spring Arbor Township. However, the Michigan Audubon Society property along O'Brien Road and several other deed-restricted properties located in the residential areas of the Township also provide dedicated open space.
- **Other institutions** — The municipal offices, cemetery, and wastewater collection area (lagoons) are all significant uses of land located in the unincorporated village of Spring Arbor. Warner and Bean elementary schools and the Spring Arbor branch of the Jackson District Library are also located in the village (please see

Chapter 2). The Western Middle/High School complex is located along Dearing Road on the northern edge of the Township. Finally, a variety of churches are scattered across Spring Arbor Township.

Zoning Plan

The master plan provides the legal basis for zoning in Spring Arbor Township. Accordingly, the plan is required to contain a special plan element, known commonly as the zoning plan, by Michigan's planning and zoning enabling acts. As noted in the Michigan Planning Guidebook (May 2008), "special plan elements are often prepared to establish a legal basis for a local regulation, such as a zoning plan to serve as the basis for zoning regulations."

The MPEA—the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008), as amended—requires "a zoning plan for the various zoning districts controlling area, bulk, location, and use of buildings and premises" because Spring Arbor Township has an adopted zoning ordinance (Sec. 33 (2) (d)). The MZEA—the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act (PA 110 of 2006), as amended—requires the planning commission to adopt and file with the township board "a zoning plan for the areas subject to zoning" in Spring Arbor Township (Sec. 305 (a)). Finally, the MPEA also requires the zoning plan to "include an explanation of how the land use categories on the future land use map relate to the districts on the zoning map" (Sec. 33 (2) (d)).

Zoning Districts

Articles 3 and 4 of the zoning ordinance establish and define the following zoning districts (please see the Zoning Map):

Open districts — Open districts are established to protect land best suited for open use from the encroachment of incompatible land uses, to preserve valuable agricultural land for agricultural uses, and to retain land suited for open space and recreation use for the future.

- **Agricultural District (AG-1)** — The intent of this district is to set aside land suitable for agricultural development and agricultural related uses.

Residential districts — Residential districts are designated principally for residential use and are limited to dwellings and other uses normally associated with residential neighborhoods in order to encourage a suitable and healthy environment for family life.

- **Rural Non-Farm Residential District (RNF-1)** — This district is established to provide suitable areas for single-family dwellings at low densities to preserve a predominantly rural character in these areas fit for concentrated residential use because of the ability of the soil to absorb sewage wastes from individual septic tanks.
- **Suburban Residential District (RS-1)** — The intent of this district is to provide residential areas principally for moderate suburban densities where necessary

urban services and facilities, including central sewerage and water supply systems can be feasibly provided.

- **Suburban Residential District (RS-2)** — This district is designed to permit a moderate density of population and a moderate intensity of land use in those areas where necessary urban services and facilities, including central sewerage and water supply systems, can be feasibly provided in the near future.
- **Multiple-Family Residential District (RM-1)** — The intent of this district is to permit a high density of population and a high intensity of land use in those areas which are served by a central water supply system and a central sanitary sewerage system, and which abut or are adjacent to such other uses or amenities which support, complement or serve such a density and intensity.

Office district — The office district is designed principally for administrative and/or professional offices and those which are customarily associated with offices. High traffic generators, such as commercial establishments of a retail nature, should be prohibited in this district.

- **Office District (O-1)** — This district is designed principally for administrative and/or professional offices and those which are customarily associated with offices. High traffic generators, such as commercial establishments of a retail nature, should be prohibited in this district.

Commercial districts — Commercial districts are designed to limit compatible commercial enterprises at appropriate locations to encourage efficient traffic movement, parking, and utility service; advance public safety; and protect surrounding property.

- **Local Commercial District (C-1)** — The intent of this district is to encourage planned and integrated groupings of stores that will retail convenience goods and provide personal services to meet regular and recurring needs of the neighborhood resident population. To these ends, certain uses, which would function more effectively in other districts and would interfere with operation of these business activities and the purpose of this district, have been excluded.
- **General Commercial District (C-2)** — This district is intended to encourage planned and integrated groups of retail, service, and administrative establishments which will retail convenience and comparison goods and provide personal and professional services for the entire area and to accommodate commercial establishments which cannot be practically provided in a neighborhood commercial area.
- **Highway Service Commercial District (C-3)** — The intent of this district is to provide for various commercial establishments offering accommodations, supplies, and services to local as well as through automobile and truck traffic. These districts should be provided at locations along major thoroughfares or adjacent to the interchange ramps of a limited access highway facility and should encourage

grouping of various facilities into centers and discourage dispersion of these activities.

Industrial district — It is recognized by the ordinance that the value to the public of designating certain areas for certain types of industrial uses is represented in the employment opportunities afforded to citizens and the resultant economic benefits conferred upon the Spring Arbor Township.

- **Light Industrial District (I-1)** — This district is designed to provide suitable space for light industrial uses which operate in a safe, non-objectionable and efficient manner, and which are compatible in appearance with and require a minimum of buffering measures from adjoining non-industrial zoning districts.

Dimensional Standards

The following bulk, height, and setback restrictions for each district are included in the zoning ordinance (Sec. 4.6).

Bulk, Height, and Setback Restrictions

Zoning District	Lot Requirements			Minimum Yard Requirements			Max Bldg Height Requirements		
	Min Lot Area	Min Lot Width	Max Lot Cov				Princi-pal	Acces-sory	
				Front	Side	Rear			
Agricultural (AG-1)	1 acre	150'	10%	60'	30' 60'	50'	2.5 story or 35'	80'	Single-family detached dwelling units.
	2 acres								All other uses.
Rural Non-Farm Residential (RNF-1)	¾ acre	150'	20%	35'	20'	35'	2.5 story or 35'	25'	Single-family detached dwelling units.
	1 acre								All other uses.
Suburban Residential 1 (RS-1)	10,000 sf	100'	30%	35'	10'	20'	2.5 story or 35'	14'	Single-family detached dwelling units with central sewage and water systems.
	15,000 sf	120'			25' total				Single-family detached dwelling units without central sewage.
	1 acre	120'			35'*				All other uses.
Suburban Residential 2 (RS-2)	10,000 sf	80'	30%	35'	10'	20'	2.5 story or 35'	14'	Single-family detached dwelling units with central sewage and water systems.
	15,000 sf	120'							Single-family detached dwelling units without central sewage.

(continued)

Bulk, Height, and Setback Restrictions

Zoning District	Lot Requirements			Minimum Yard Requirements			Max Bldg Height Requirements		
	Min Lot Area	Min Lot Width	Max Lot Cov	Front	Side	Rear	Principal	Accessory	
Suburban Residential 2 (RS-2) (continued)	15,000 sf	100'	30%	35'	25' total	20'	2.5 story or 35'	14'	Two-family dwelling units with central sewage and water systems.
	½ acre	120'							Two-family dwelling units without central sewage.
	1 acre	120'							All other uses.
Multi-Family Residential (RM-1)	10,000 sf	80'	25%	25'	10' min	25'	2.5 story or 35'	14'	Two-family dwelling units with central sewage and water systems.
	15,000 sf	120'			25' total				Two-family dwelling units without central sewage.
	15,000 sf	100'			25' *				15,000 sf for 1 st three dwellings + 2,000 sf for each additional unit.
	½ acre	120'							All other uses.
Office (O-1)	10,000 sf	80'	30%	25'	10'	25'	2.5 story or 35'	25'	Uses with central sewage and water systems.
	15,000 sf	100'			25' total				Uses without central sewage.
Local Commercial (C-1)	10,000 sf	75'	35%	35'	20'	35'	35'	n/a	Uses with central sewage and water systems.
	15,000 sf	100'			35' *				Uses without central sewage.
General Commercial (C-2)	10,000 sf	75'	25%	35'	20'	20'	35'	n/a	Uses with central sewage and water systems.
	15,000 sf	100'			35' *				Uses without central sewage.
Highway Service Commercial (C-3)	15,000 sf	100'	25%	35'	20'	20'	35'	n/a	
Light Industrial (I-1)	20,000 sf	80'	25%	35'	20'	35'	35'	n/a	

* Corner Lot

* * * In Central Business District, no lot requirements, yard requirements, or transition strips are required, only side yard and rear yard when abutting Residential Districts.

Rezoning Criteria

The most common zoning application of the master plan is during the rezoning process. Accordingly, a rezoning should be required to meet set criteria in order to be considered consistent with the master plan. Sec. 150.381 (c) of the township's zoning code contains standards which satisfy this requirement:

- Is the proposed rezoning consistent with the policies and uses proposed for that area in the Township's master plan?
- Will all of the uses allowed under the proposed rezoning be compatible with other zones and uses in the surrounding area?
- Will any public services and facilities be significantly adversely impacted by a development or use allowed under the requested rezoning?
- Will the uses allowed under the proposed rezoning be equally or better suited to the area than uses allowed under the current zoning of the land?

Relationship to the Future Land Use Map

The remainder of this chapter equates the various zoning districts included on the zoning map with the various categories included on the future land use map.

Open area — The following open areas are included on the future land use map:

- **Agricultural areas** — Agricultural areas are addressed generally on the future land use map. The following zoning district equates to those areas:
 - **AG-1** — Agricultural District

Residential areas — The following residential areas are included on the future land use map:

- **Low-density residential areas** — Low-density residential areas are addressed generally on the future land use map. The following zoning districts equate to those areas:
 - **RNF-1** — Rural Non-Farm District
 - **RS-1** — Suburban Residential District 1
- **High-density residential areas** — High-density residential areas are addressed generally on the future land use map. The following zoning districts equate to those areas:
 - **RS-2** — Suburban Residential District 2
 - **RM-1** — Multiple-Family Residential District

Commercial areas — The following commercial areas are included on the future land use map:

- **Office areas** — Office areas are addressed generally on the future land use map. The following zoning district equates to those areas:

- **O-1** — Office District
- **Local commercial areas** — Local commercial areas are addressed generally on the future land use map. The following zoning districts equate to those areas:
 - **C-1** — Local Commercial District
 - **C-2** — General Commercial District
- **Highway service commercial areas** — Highway service commercial areas are addressed generally on the future land use map. The following zoning district equates to those areas:
 - **C-3** — Highway Service Commercial District

Industrial Area — The following industrial areas are included on the future land use map:

- **Light Industrial Area** — Light industrial areas are addressed generally on the future land use map. The following zoning districts equate to those areas:
 - **I-1** — Light Industrial District

Institutional Areas

The following institutional areas are included on the future land use map:

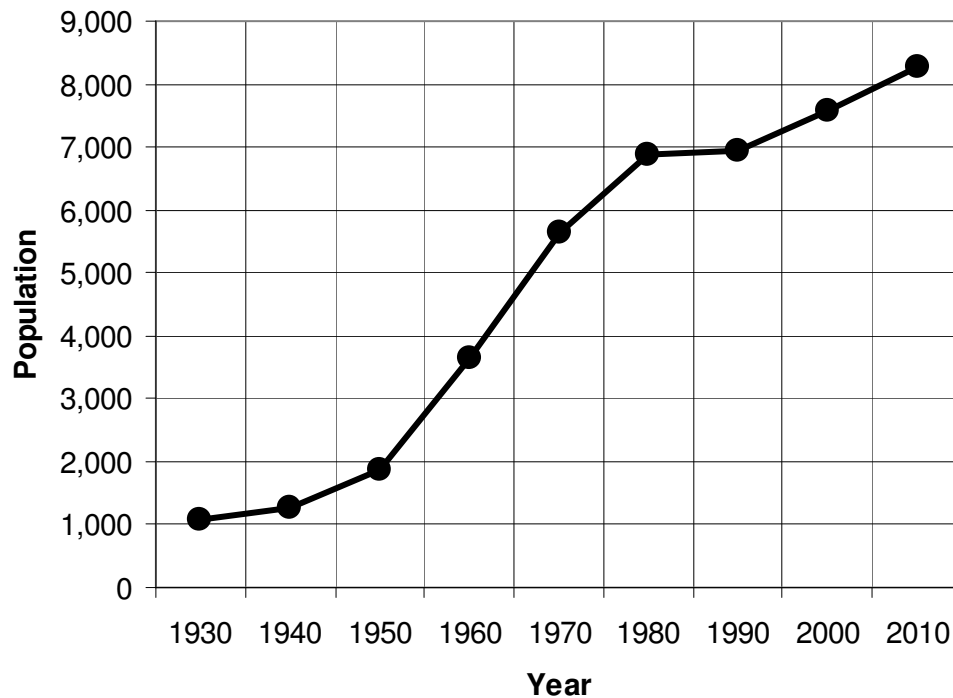
- **Spring Arbor University (SAU)** — The Spring Arbor University campus.
- **Public parks and dedicated open space** — Public parks and recreation facilities as well as land set aside as dedicated open space.
- **Other institutions** — Churches, schools, and other facilities open to the general public.

Although they are identified on the future land use map, they don't equate to any district on the zoning map.

APPENDIX A
DEMOGRAPHICS



Historic Population, 1930-2010

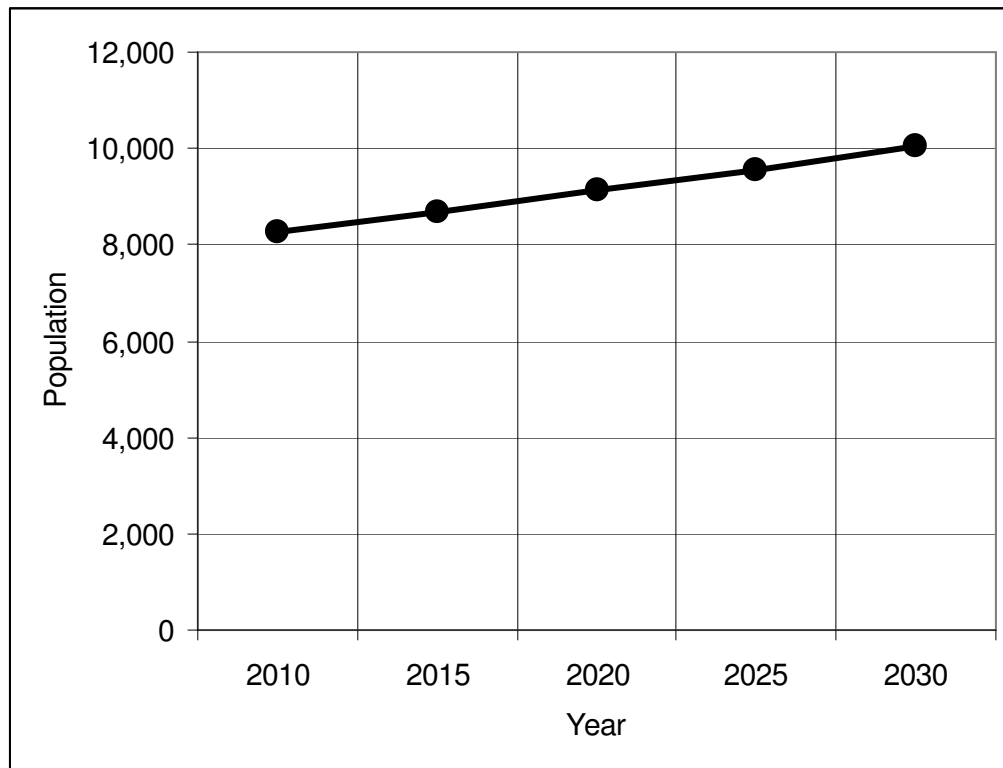


1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
1,073	1,257	1,874	3,631	5,650	6,868	6,939	7,577	8,267

Source: US Census Bureau

Notable:

1. Population of the township grew 670% (7,194) from 1930-2010.
2. Growth was relatively slow and steady from 1930 to 1950 (75% (801)) and then boomed from 1950 to 1980 (266% (4,944)). The population remained steady between 1980 and 1990 (1% (71)) and since then grew at a slower (19% (1,328)) rate between 1990 and 2010.
3. Population growth factors include university and nursing home expansion, population growth in rural areas, and the baby boom generation. For example, residents living in group quarters comprised 11% of the population in 2000 and 15% in 2010.

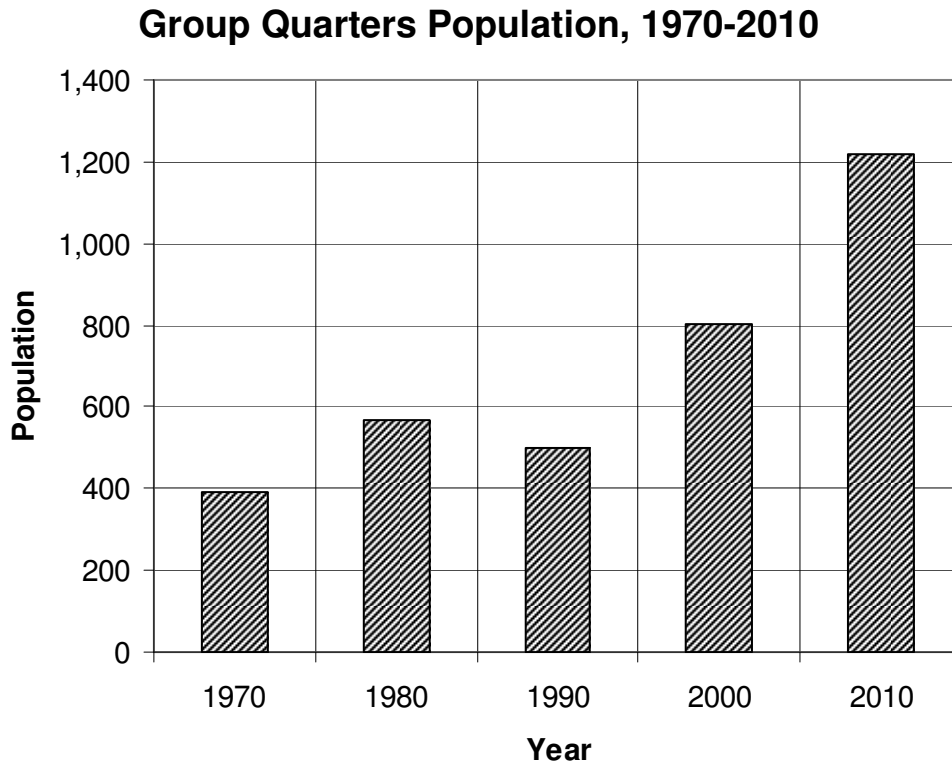
Population Projections, 2010-2030

2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
8,267	8,680	9,114	9,570	10,049

Source: Region 2 Planning Commission

Notable:

1. The growth rate between 2010 and 2030 is projected to be approximately 1% per year, given the modest growth rate of the municipality's population between 1990 and 2010.
2. Please note that the growth rate will not be as steady as the average rate depicted on the graph.



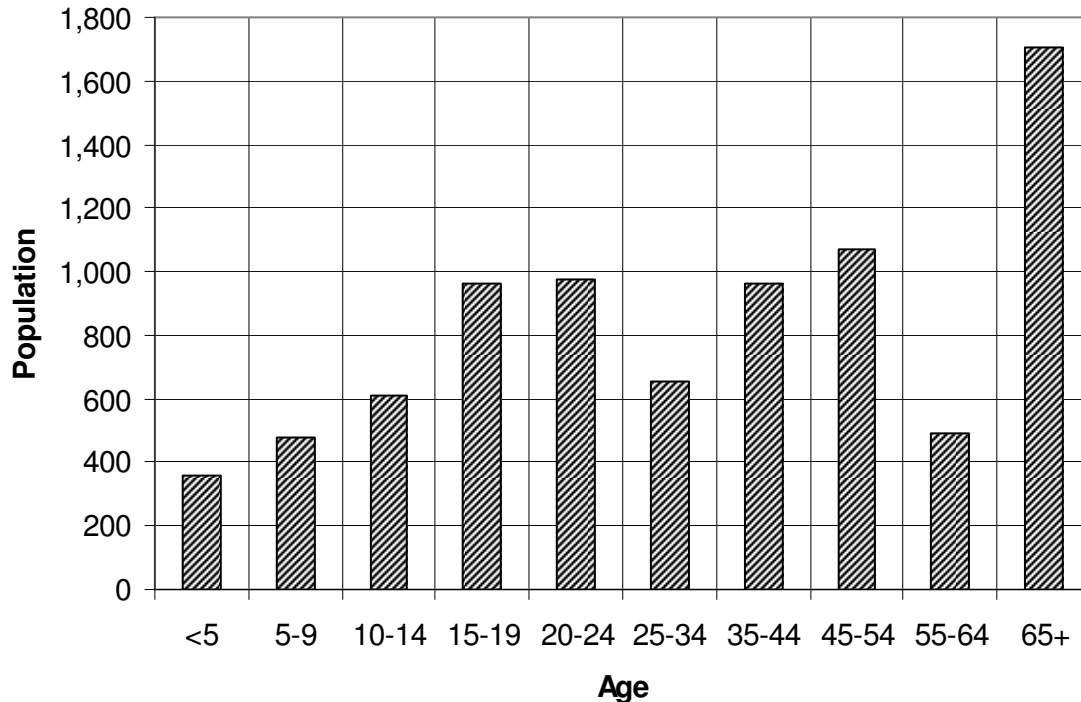
1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
392	567	499	801	1,220

Source: US Census Bureau

Notable:

1. 1990 breakdown of group quarters population: Total - 499 consisting of 150 in nursing homes and 349 in college dormitories.
2. 2000 group quarters population broken down as follows: nursing homes - 126, college dormitories - 606, and other non-institutionalized group quarters - 69.
3. 2010 group quarters population broken down as follows: college dormitories and other non-institutionalized group quarters = 1,111 and nursing homes and other institutionalized group quarters = 109.

Age of Population, 2010



< 5	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
359	478	611	960	976	655	963	1,069	489	1,707

Source: US Census Bureau

Notable:

1. The population of the United States is becoming older. The median age of the Township increased from 32.0 in 1990 to 35.0 in 2000 to 36.3 in 2010.
2. Senior citizens, many of them retired, make up a large percentage of the population. This percentage will grow significantly beginning at the end of the current decade.
3. The “baby boom” generation is reflected in the high number of people (23.9%) aged 45-64 in 2010. Many of these people will retire during this decade.
4. Due to a decreased birth rate and relatively few women of child-bearing age, the number of school age children has not increased in proportion to population gains. However, Spring Arbor Township shows relatively high numbers in the college age brackets (23.4%) due to the presence of the University.

Estimated School Enrollment, 2006-2010

Nursery School/ Pre-school	Kindergarten	Elementary School		High School	College/ Graduate School
		Grade 1-4	Grade 5-8		
131	65	424	468	507	949/72

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates

Notable:

1. Statistics apply to persons 3 years and above.
2. Due to presence of Spring Arbor University, the portion of the population enrolled in college is unusually high.

Estimated Educational Attainment, 2006-2010

Less than 9th Grade	9th-12th Grade (No Diploma)	High School Graduate	Some College (No Degree)	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate/ Profess. Degree
2.3%	3.9%	29.9%	24.8%	8.4%	21.7%	9.0%

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates

Notable:

1. Educational attainment data applies only to those residents that are 25 years of age and older.
2. Population continues to achieve higher levels of education as the number of people with lower levels of education decreases.
3. The largest increases are in the categories of high school graduate and bachelor's degree. However, there were slight decreases in those who had attended some college/earned an associate's degree and earned a graduate/professional degree.

Estimated Employment by Occupation, 2006-2010

Management, Business, Science, and Arts	Services	Sales and Office	Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance	Production, Transporta- tion and Ma- terial Moving
1,336	630	1,100	314	451

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates

Notable:

1. Statistics apply to workers 16 years of age and older.
2. Obviously, occupational statistics are a reflection of the level of educational attainment. Higher educational levels tend to produce more workers in management, certain service, and office positions.

Estimated Household Income, 2006-2010

< 10K	10K - 15K	15K - 25K	25K - 35K	35K - 50K	50K - 75K	75K - 100K	100K - 150K	150K - 200K	200K +
3.5%	4.9%	13.2%	6.5%	16.7%	17.1%	17.3%	16.5%	2.8%	1.6%

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates

Notable:

1. Household income is a common measure of quality of life. The median household income was \$60,291. Other quality-of-life measurements include per capita income (\$22,858) and median family income (\$67,829).
2. Income data from the census are based on a 1:6 household sample. The data reveal that no households had an income above \$200,000 which may be incorrect.

Estimated Commuting Characteristics, 2006-2010**Mode of Travel**

Drove alone	83.1%
Carpooled	6.8%
Public transit	0.0%
Walked	4.4%
Bicycled	1.2%
Other means	0.7%
Worked at home	3.7%

Travel Time

<10 min.	23.6%
10-14 min	19.1%
15-19 min	17.6%
20-24 min	15.4%
24-29 min	2.7%
30-34 min	5.8%
35-44 min	3.3%
45-59 min	7.0%
60+ min	5.6%

Location of Place of Work

Spring Arbor Twp.	24.2%	Jackson County	81.2%	Michigan	98.8
Other Community	75.8%	Other County	18.8%	Other State	1.2%

Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates

Notable:

1. The large majority of township residents drive alone to work. However, more people walked and bicycled to work or worked at home than they did in 2000.
2. Residents spend less time commuting to work than they did in 2000. However, some people drive over one hour to work. This length of drive time is sufficient for a commute to Lansing, the Detroit area, and Toledo.
3. Some jobs are available in the township but most workers leave the community for employment opportunities. However, most of them remain in Jackson County for work.

Estimated Mobility, 2006-2010

Same house	83.1%
Different house, same county	12.8%
Different house, elsewhere	4.1%

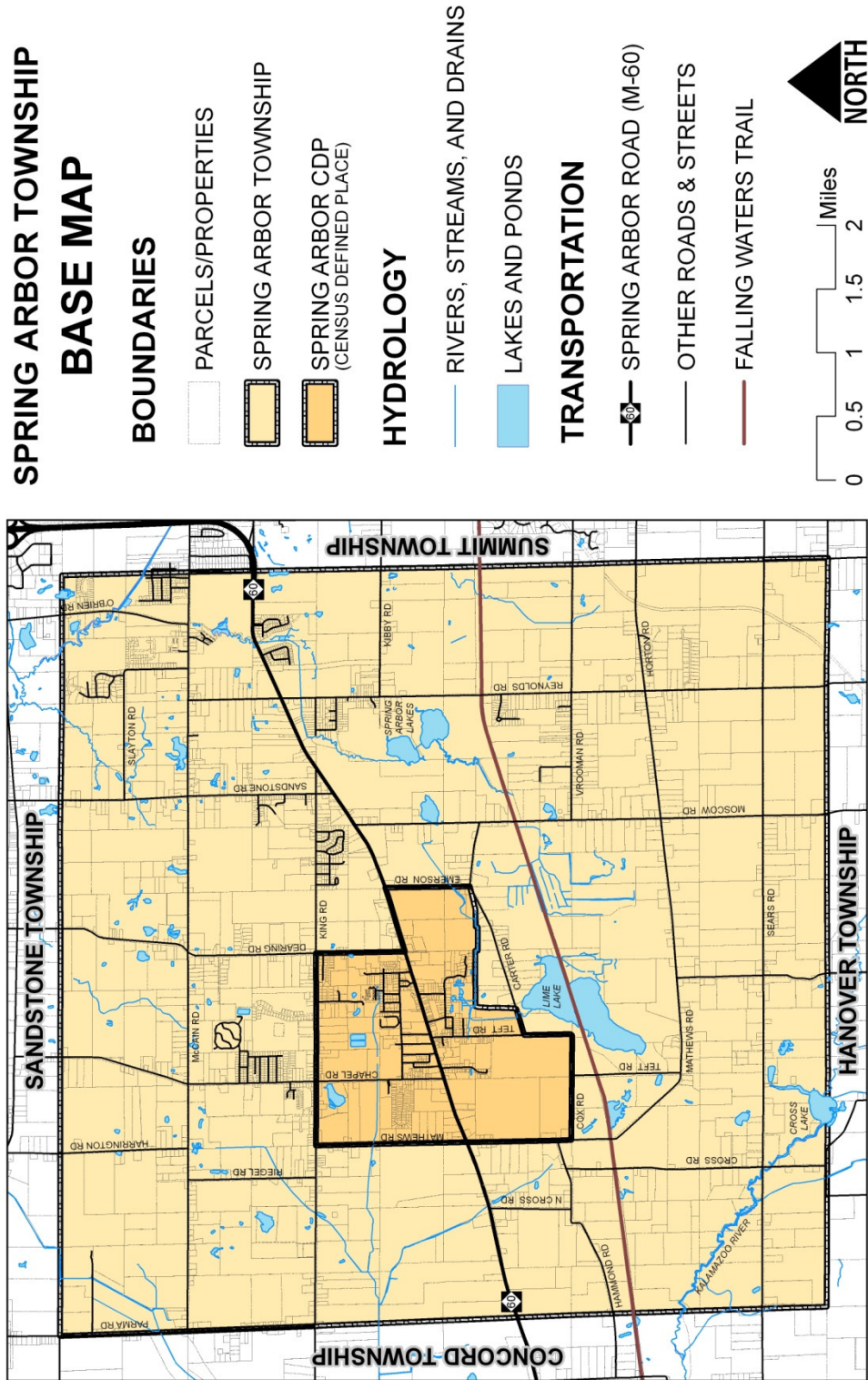
Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates

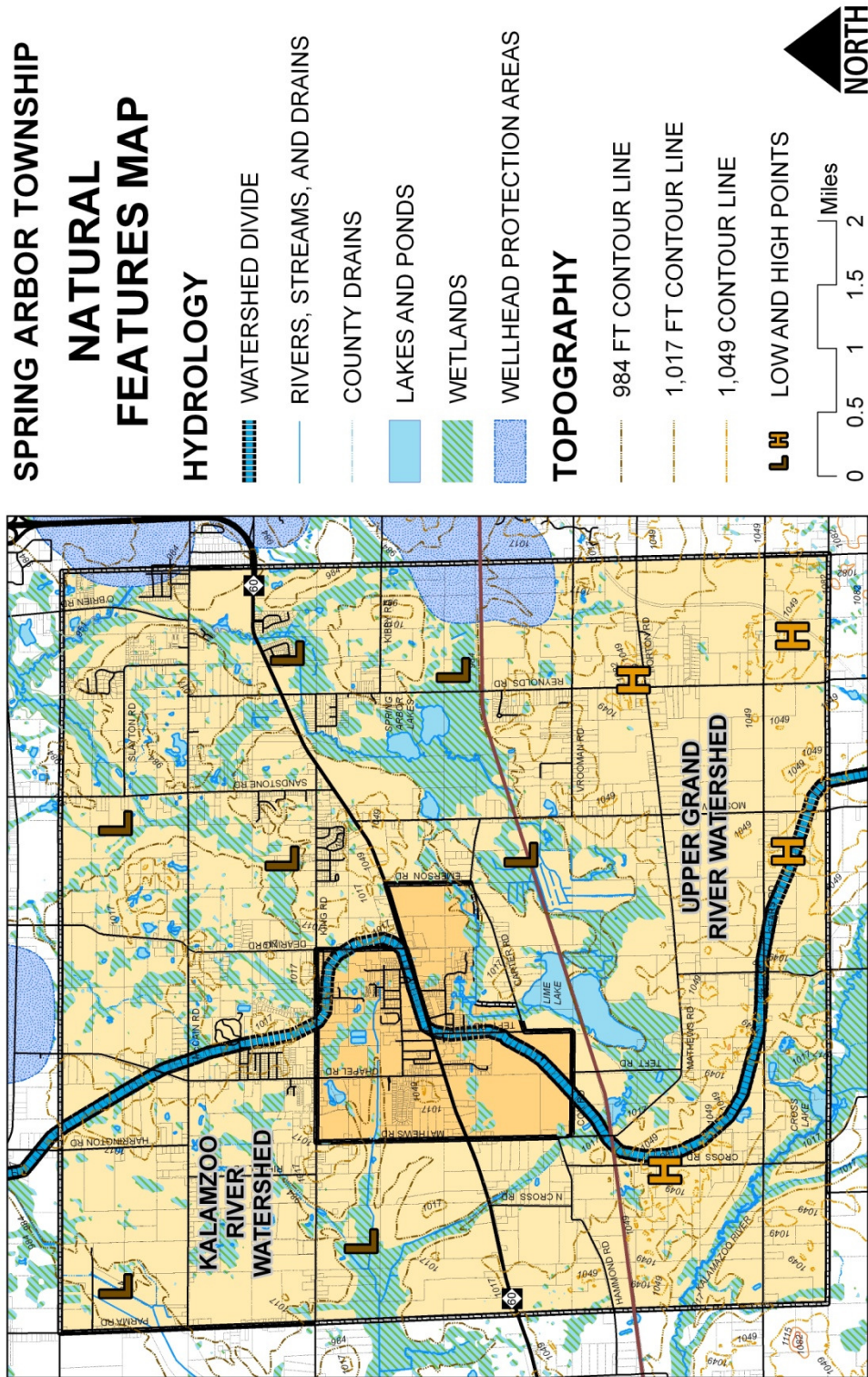
Notable:

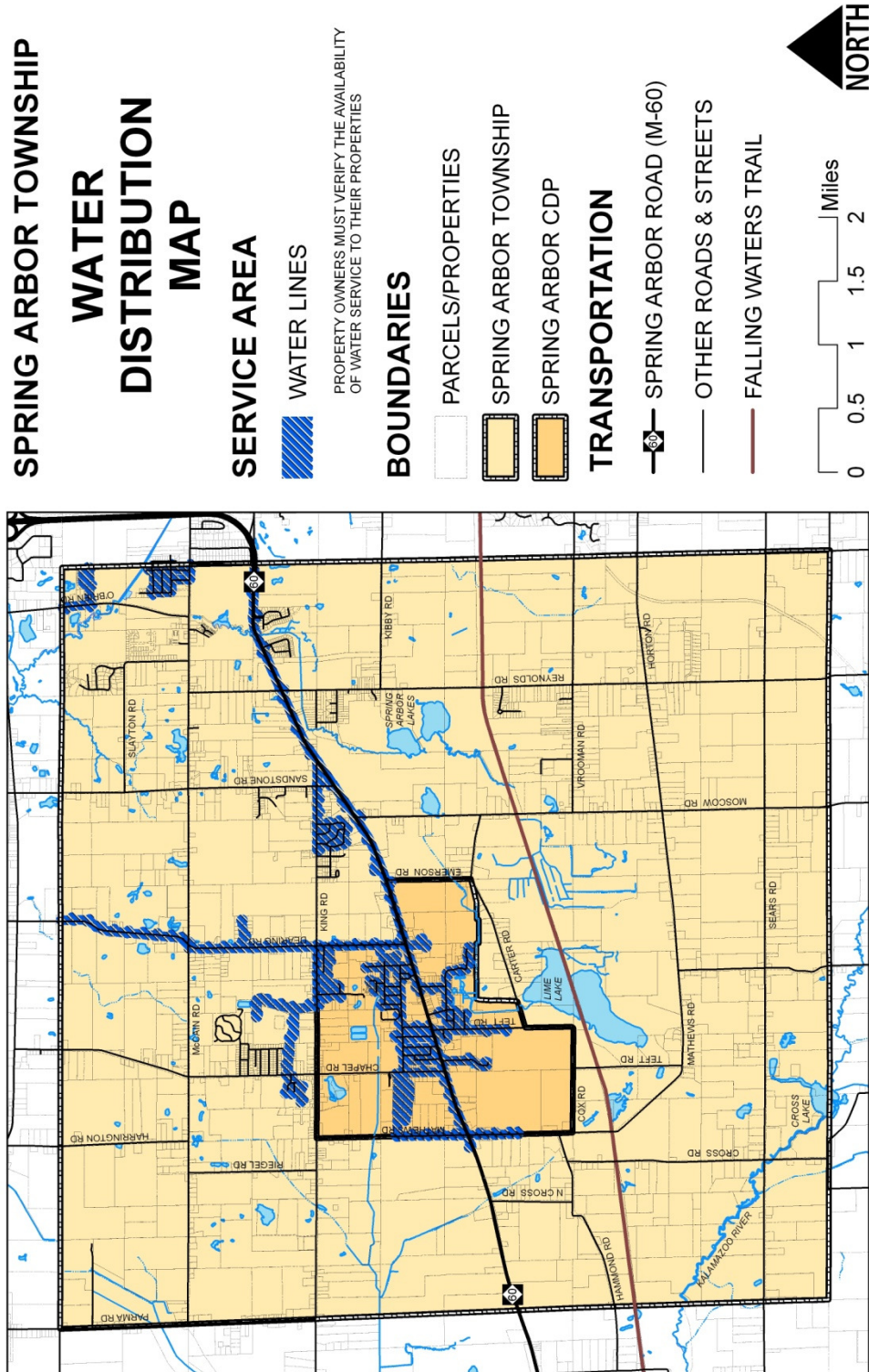
1. Results from question regarding residence of people 5 years old and older.
2. Compares where residents lived the previous year.

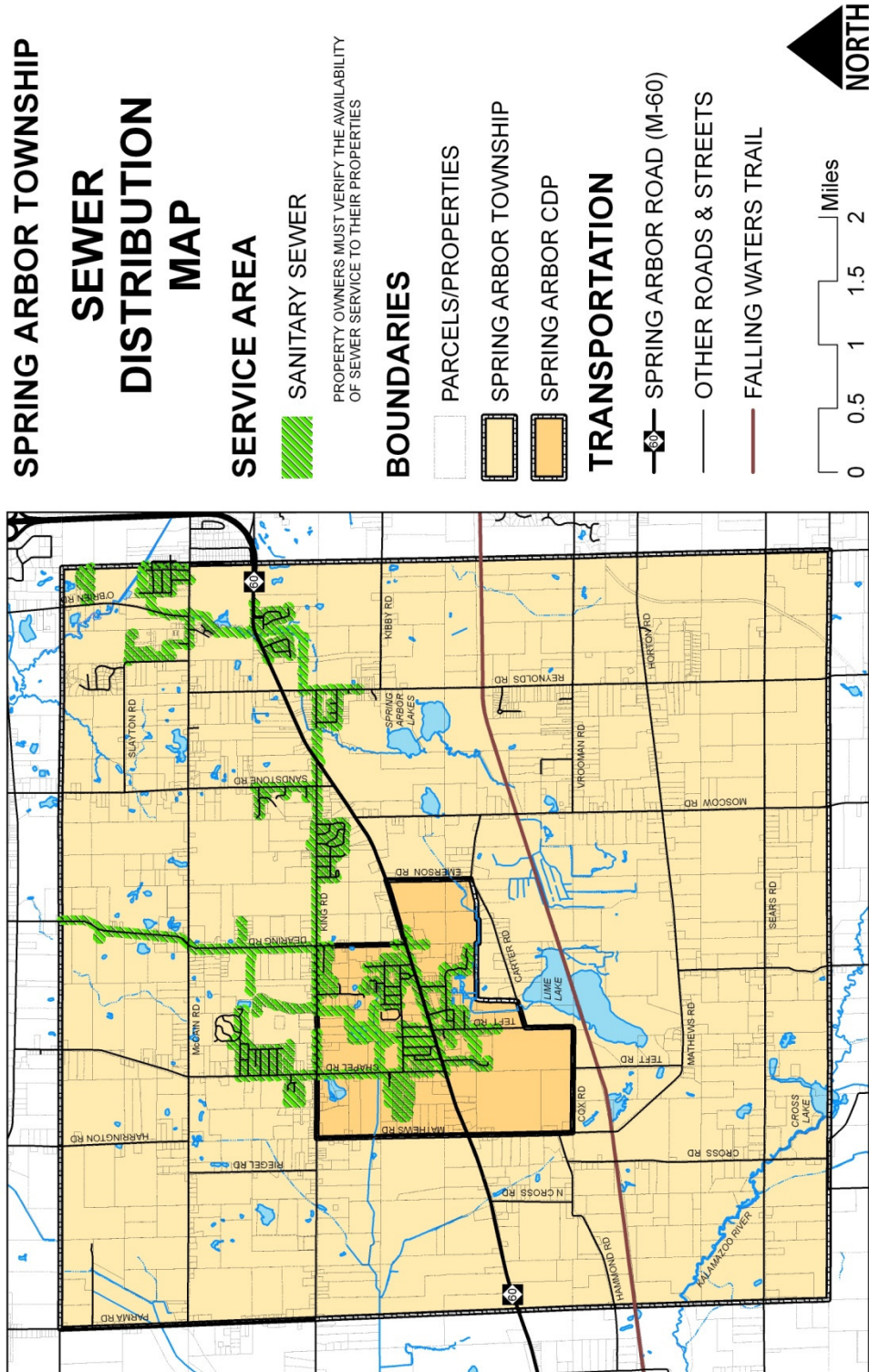
APPENDIX B
TOWNSHIP MAPS

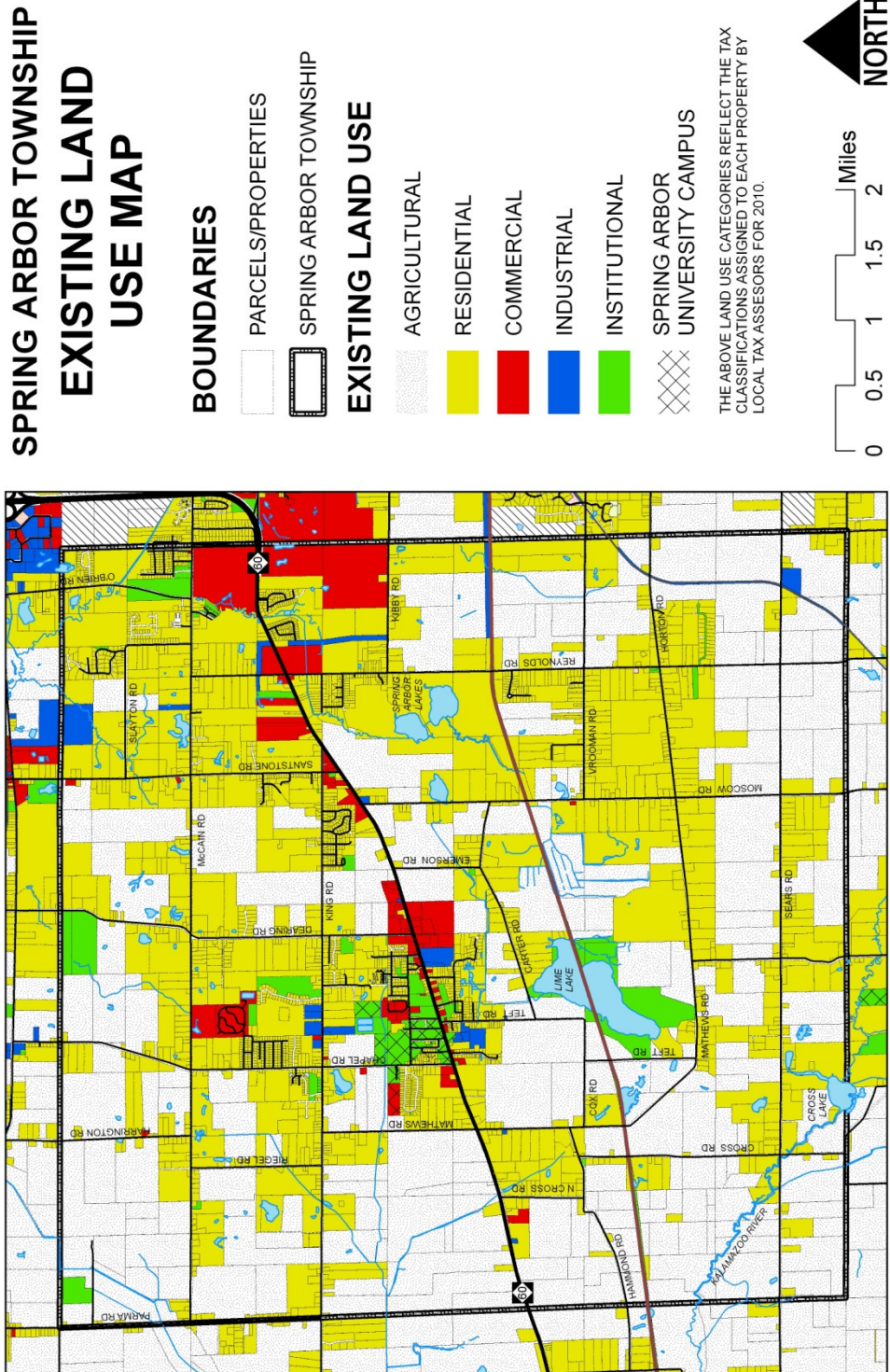


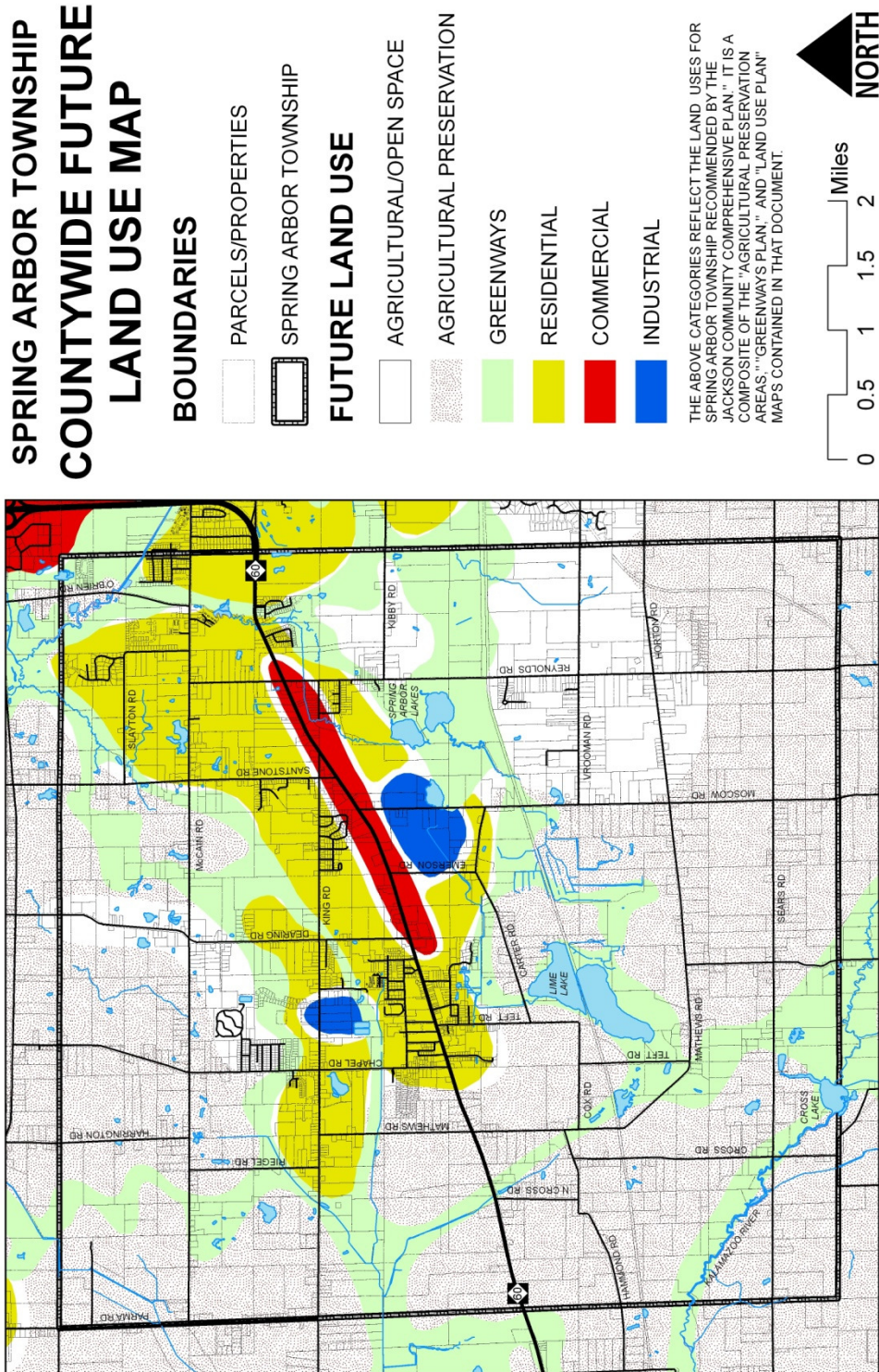


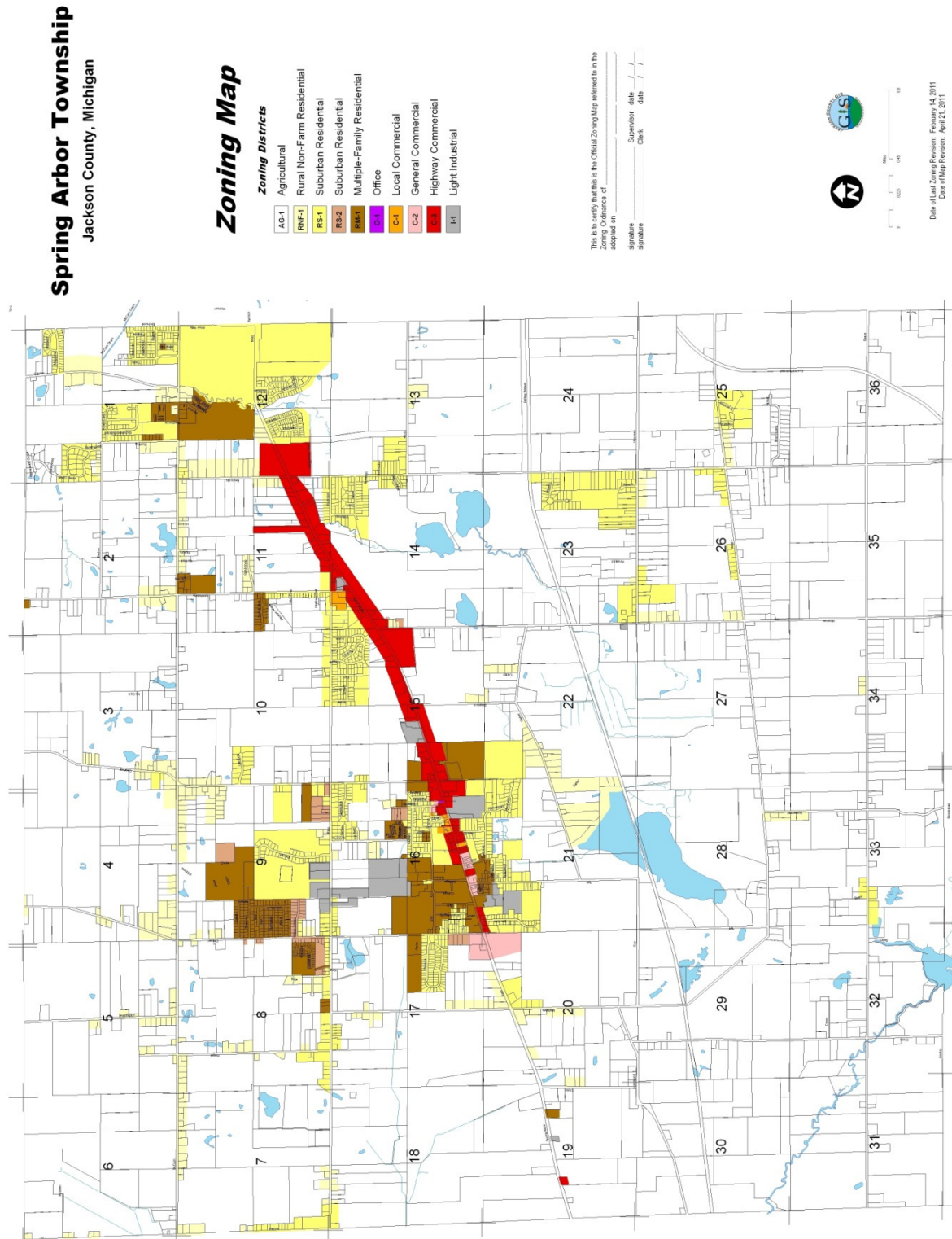


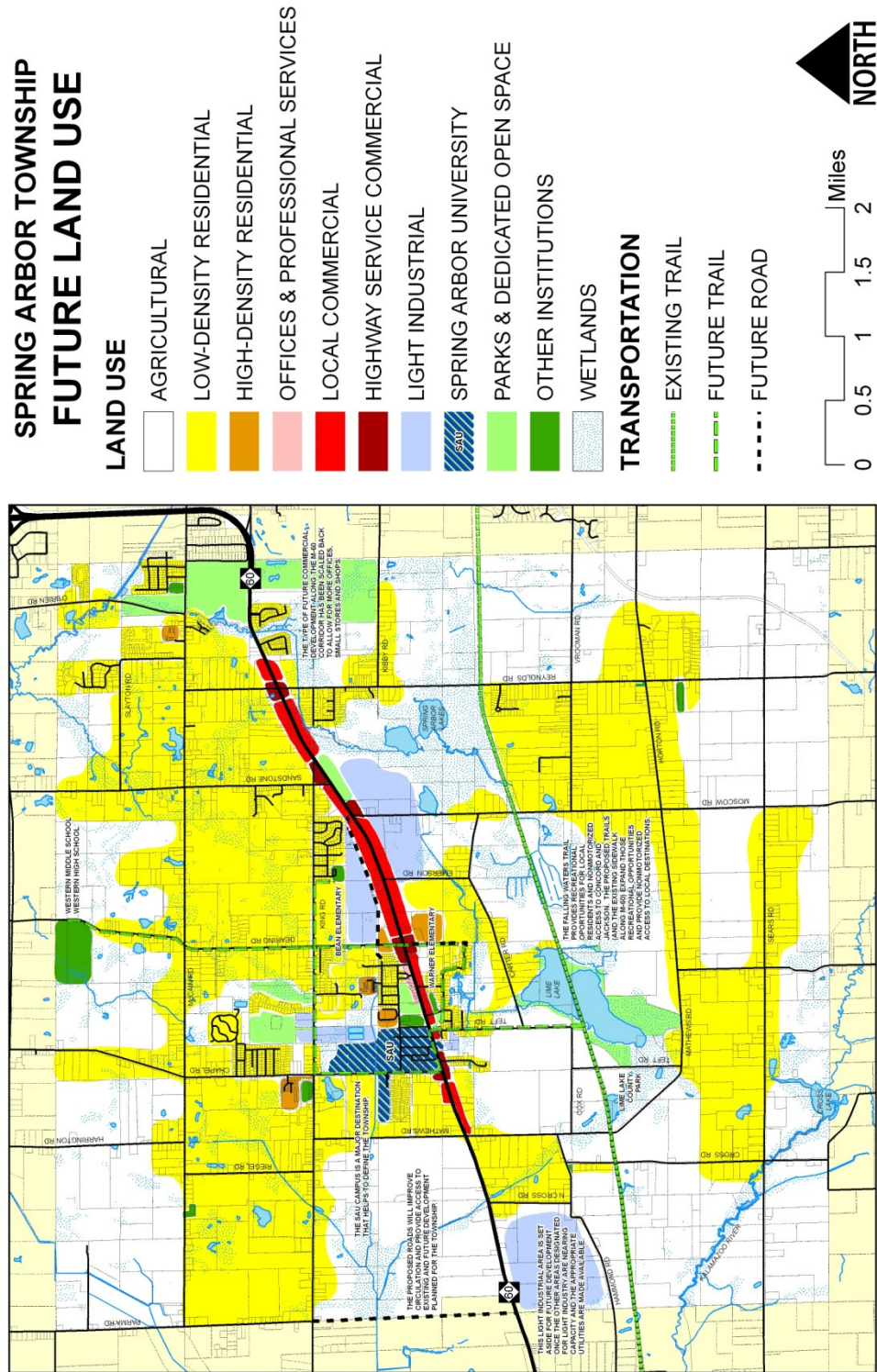












APPENDIX C
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM



What is a Capital Improvements Program?

"Capital improvements are those physical facilities which involve a substantial investment and last a long time . . . as opposed to the operating expenses that occur during the same year they are budgeted." Examples of capital improvements include: municipal buildings (e.g., Township Halls, fire stations, etc.), parks and recreation facilities, streets and alleys, and utilities (e.g., water and sewer lines). A capital improvements program (CIP) is a six-year prioritized listing of those projects along with the following information: location, date of construction, cost, means of financing, sponsor, and relationship to other facilities (if pertinent). The CIP "is updated annually with the first year being the current year capital budget" according to the Michigan Planning Guidebook (May 2008).

Why Prepare a Capital Improvements Program?

Section 65 of the MPEA —the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008, MCL 125.3865), as amended— requires that Spring Arbor Township "annually prepare a capital improvements program of public structures and improvements," upon the adoption of this Master Plan. Given that the Planning Commission was exempted from this task, the Township Board must "prepare and adopt a capital improvements program [(CIP)], separate from or as a part of the annual budget." Alternately, the task can be delegated the Township Supervisor (or a designee), "subject to final approval by the" Township Board. The CIP shows "those public structures and improvements, in the general order of their priority, that in the commission's judgment will be needed or desirable and can be undertaken within the ensuing 6-year period . . . [and] shall be based upon the requirements of the [Township] for all types of public structures and improvements. Consequently, each agency or department of the [Township] with authority for public structures or improvements shall upon request furnish the Planning Commission with lists, plans, and estimates of time and cost of those public structures and improvements."

Of course, there are also benefits to developing and maintaining a CIP. Chief among those benefits is the coordination of seemingly disparate projects. For example, water and sewer projects can be coordinated with street paving projects eliminating the potential for streets to be repaved, only to be torn up to for a water or sewer project two or three years later. It is also important to note that "plans for new public works that are identified in the [Master Plan can] actually come to fruition through the CIP" and to ensure that "new public facilities are built in locations and consistent with the public policy for development in particular areas or neighborhoods as spelled out in the" document, according to the Michigan Planning Guidebook.

Developing a Capital Improvements Program

The following information should be used to develop the capital improvements program (CIP) upon the completion of the comprehensive plan:

Establishing Objective Criteria

“Without objective criteria, the [capital improvements process (CIP)] can quickly break down into a strictly political process where those agencies or neighborhoods with more political or fiscal resources (or both) will run roughshod over smaller agencies or weaker neighborhoods,” according to the Michigan Planning Guidebook, and simply ranking proposed projects as ‘urgent,’ ‘important,’ or ‘desirable’ “leave room for disagreement in determining priority. More robust criteria are often used first to examine each project:”

- Does the proposed facility address a risk to public safety or health?
- Is the current facility deteriorated or unsafe?
- Is the proposed facility part of a systematic replacement program?
- Will the proposed facility result in improvement of operating efficiency?
- Is the proposed facility necessary to:
 - Ensure the success of another capital improvement?
 - Meet a state or federal statutory or administrative requirement?
 - A court order?
 - A major public goal of the township board?
- Will the proposed facility result in the equitable provision of services or facilities to a part of the population with special needs?
- Will the proposed facility protect or conserve sensitive natural features or natural resources or the air or water quality of the Township?
- Will the proposed facility protect the investment in existing infrastructure from becoming over capacity?
- Will the proposed facility result in a new or substantially expanded facility to provide a new service or new level of service in Township?

Those answers can then be used to place proposed facilities into groups based upon the following criteria:

- The proposed facility is urgent and fills a high priority need that should be met.
- The proposed facility is a high priority that should be done as funding becomes available.
- The proposed facility is worthwhile if funding is available (but may be deferred).
- The proposed facility is a low priority that is desirable but not essential.

The criteria listed above are recommended for larger governments with the potential for many projects. The criteria used for “small communities with few projects may not be much more than ‘urgent,’ ‘important,’ or ‘desirable.’”

Establishing a Process

The Michigan Planning Guidebook recommends that a medium or large-sized community create a special committee to advise its planning commission on the capital improvements program (CIP). The committee should be comprised of the chief elected or appointed official and representatives from the planning commission, the legislative body, and pertinent departments (e.g., engineering; finance; fire; parks, recreation and grounds; public works; purchasing; and water). A total of eight steps are recommended for the development of a CIP:

- Prepare an inventory of all capital facilities.
- Rate the existing level of service for each infrastructure element.
- Identify the structure needs.
- Identify options to meet needs and cost estimates to all projects over the next six years.

Prepare a draft CIP that includes a review of each project against the master plan and CIP prioritization criteria:

- Establish financial capacity for financing public works proposals over the next six years.
- Develop a project schedule for the next six years based on the ranking of selected projects and the availability of funding.
- Select projects to be undertaken during the coming year which become the capital budget. The remaining projects become part of the capital improvements program for the subsequent five years.
- Develop a project schedule for the next six years based on the ranking of selected projects and the availability of funding.
- After public review and hearing, the CIP is adopted by the township board with any agreed upon amendments.
- Implement current year of the CIP.
- Monitor projects and update the CIP annually.

The Michigan Planning Guidebook notes that “in smaller communities with few capital improvements,” such as Spring Arbor Township, the process can be simplified. “Each office, agency, or department responsible for public works is asked to submit proposed public works and the planning commission as a whole reviews and prioritizes them all —ensuring they are consistent with the master plan.”

Appendix D
COMMUNITY PLANNING SURVEY



Appendix D

Community Planning Survey



Summary of Survey Responses Community Planning Survey March 2011

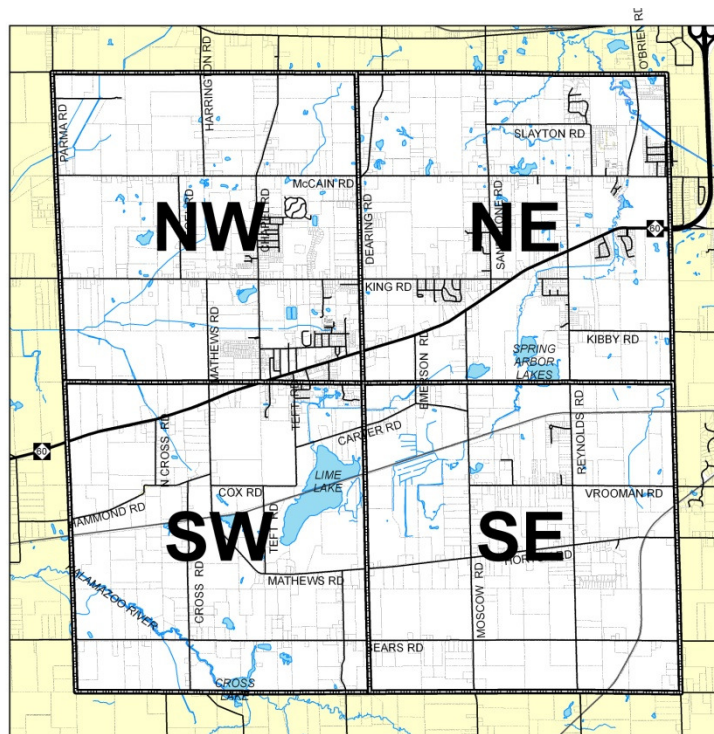
The Spring Arbor Township Planning Commission is in the initial stages of updating the 2005 Master Land Use Plan and seeks your input into the process. We would ask that you take a few minutes to complete this survey and return it to the Township Office by March 28. Once compiled, it will help the Planning Commission to develop a set of goals and policies for the future of the Township.

Please indicate your relationship to the Township (check all that apply):

a) resident	105
b) property owner	116
c) business owner	13
d) student	1

Using the map below, please indicate the area of the Township where your property is located:

a) NE	48
b) NW	54
c) SW	17
d) SE	18



Future land use and related planning issues

	Yes	No	N/A
1. Should our Township strive to maintain the existing rural agricultural/residential character?	115	7	15
2. Should our Township strive to protect unique natural features, including topography, soils, and lakes, streams, drains, and their respective watersheds?	123	6	8
3. Should our Township encourage additional residential development? If you answer No, please skip to Question # 5.	70	58	9
4. Which of the following types of residential development should be encouraged? – (choose all that apply)			
a) Subdivisions?	46		
b) High density housing (i.e., apartments, townhouses, condominiums)?	18		
c) Housing options for seniors?	35		
d) Single family homes (in rural areas) on parcels with a minimum size of: – (choose only one lot size)			
At least ¾ acre in area?	30		
At least 1 acre in area?	28		
At least 2 acres in area?	5		
At least 5 acres in area?	5		
5. Should our Township encourage additional commercial development? If you answer NO please skip to Question # 7	89	40	8
6. In which areas along M-60 should commercial development be encouraged? – (choose all that apply)			
M-60 from Chapel Road east to the Township line?	54		
M-60 from Chapel Road west to the Township line?	33		
M-60 next to existing commercial development?	58		
M-60 but only near major intersections (Chapel, Dearing, Moscow, Sandstone, King, Reynolds)?	29		
7. Should our Township limit the type of development along M-60 between Star and Melody to administrative and/ or professional services (i.e., medical, dental, legal, insurance, real estate, banking, etc.)?	79	41	17
8. Should our Township encourage light industrial development?	93	31	13
9. Should our Township encourage development of sidewalks and bike/pedestrian paths?	108	23	6
10. In which areas should they be located? – (choose all that apply)			
a) To/from schools?	77		
b) In residential/commercial areas?	65		
c) Link from M-60 to Falling Waters Trail?	76		
d) Loop – e.g. M-60, Dearing, King, Chapel?	61		

Quality of Life and Community Services

	Excel cel- lent	Good	Av- erage	Fair	Poor	N/A
How do you rate the following:						
Spring Arbor Township as a place to live?	74	54	4	0	1	4
The Township Police Department?	60	52	9	1	1	14
The Township Fire Department?	77	44	2	0	0	14
The Township administration and its employees?	49	65	11	2	0	10
The Township parks?	34	59	21	2	1	20

Which of our townships roadways and/or intersections do you feel should be improved?
– (please indicate roadway and change needed to improve safety)

Summary of responses

- Of the 137 surveys returned, 85 provided responses to this question.
- 52 responses contained various concerns about M-60 including suggestions about adding an additional (left turn) lane and adding a traffic light at certain intersections, etc.
- 24 responses expressed concerns about the M-60 and Dearing Road intersection
- 10 responses expressed concerns about the M-60 and King Road intersection
- 14 responses expressed concerns about the quality of road surfaces

Please list any other community planning issues you consider important.

Summary of responses

- Of the 137 surveys returned, 32 provided comments to this question.
- Comments covered a variety of topics with no common theme

NOTE: All 137 survey responses are available for review in the Township Office.