

City of Swartz Creek Master Plan 2015



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Downtown



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Natural & Open Space

Draft Edition
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City of Swartz Creek 2015 Master Plan

8083 Civic Dr.,
Swartz Creek, MI 48473

Approved by the Planning Commission on: _____

Adopted by the City Council on: _____

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Chapter One Executive Summary

“Where town and country join hands” has been an informal motto in the City of Swartz Creek for many years. Conveniently located near regional cities and interstate highways, the city is nestled amongst acres of prime farmland and natural features. The future success of Swartz Creek depends on comprehensive, on-going planning that recognizes Swartz Creek’s vital role in the Genesee County region.

Intent of the Master Plan

The master plan is a document created by the City Planning Commission to guide the future growth and development of the City of Swartz Creek. The master plan is intended to:

- ◆ Address the desires and needs of the residents, businesses, and property owners to preserve and enhance relevant qualities of the community and natural aesthetics.
- ◆ Provide a land use pattern which will result in a sustainable community with a diversified tax base and to support the desired facilities and services with reasonable tax rates.
- ◆ Present a future land use map that illustrates how the city desires future development to occur.
- ◆ Ensure that the city remains a highly desirable community in which to live, work, and visit.
- ◆ Provide a legal basis for zoning and other regulations for the type, intensity, and timing of development.
- ◆ Address the status and needs of infrastructure, recreational amenities, and public services.

Planning History

The City of Swartz Creek adopted a new master plan in 2004 with the help of a professional planning consultant. The Planning Commission finds that this plan is still largely relevant and representative of the City’s goals and objectives. As such the Planning Commission has decided to carry out only minor amendments and updates to this plan. Previously, the City utilized a plan written in 1992 and amended in 1995.

The Swartz Creek Zoning Ordinance, the city’s other key planning document, was newly created and adopted in 2007 per the recommendations of the operative plan.

This plan reflects significant changes that the City has experienced since the preparation of the 2004 Master Plan. These include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ The addition of a substantial amount of new housing.
- ◆ The on-going development of the Miller-Elms commercial planned unit development.
- ◆ The expansion of Heritage Village development on Bristol Road.
- ◆ The expansion of the senior center complex on Civic Drive.
- ◆ An unprecedented decrease in housing demand, fueled by a national housing crisis.
- ◆ A decrease in economic activity and regional population resulting from a restructuring of the automotive industry.
- ◆ The approval of the Meijer Planned Unit Development on Morrish Road.
- ◆ The construction of the Meijer store.
- ◆ The closure of the Sports Creek Raceway.

- ◆ The activation of the Downtown Development Authority.

This master plan will reflect these changes and position Swartz Creek for the type and amount of development that is anticipated during the next 5 to 10 years.

The Planning Process

The master plan represents an on-going effort by the Planning Commission, city officials, staff, residents, and community organizations. Development of the plan involved collection and analysis of data on land use, environmental, transportation, infrastructure and socio-economic conditions.

To encourage public participation in the process that will shape the future of the community, the City originally hosted two public open houses, one in December 2002 and another in February 2003. The most recent workshop was held August 31, 2015. Many comments and suggestions were provided, the most common of which are listed below:

- ◆ Maintain existing single-family neighborhoods.
- ◆ Improve downtown Swartz Creek: attract more retail, restaurant, residential, and entertainment uses.
- ◆ Improve recreational opportunities within the city.
- ◆ Improve maintenance and reduce congestion on city roadways.
- ◆ Develop a comprehensive non-motorized pathway system throughout the city.
- ◆ Rehabilitate older commercial structures, including the raceway.

Results

The master plan process identified and examined a wide range of existing conditions including popula-

tion, housing, natural resources, traffic and circulation, utilities, public services, and land use. The implications of each were analyzed and translated into a series of goals and policies for the city. This effort resulted in the creation of the master plan, which included recommendations for future land use that will assist leaders in making substantive, thoughtful decisions concerning the long-term development of the community.

Differences between Master Planning and Zoning

The master plan provides general direction on the future development patterns, policies, and actions for community leaders to consider. While the master plan itself does not change the zoning ordinance or zoning of any property, some of the plan recommendations will be implemented through zoning text and map amendments. Some of the other differences between the master plan and the zoning ordinance are listed in Table One.

Table One Master Plan vs. Zoning Ordinance	
Master Plan	Zoning Ordinance
Provides general policies, a guide.	Provides specific regulations, the law.
Describes what should happen in the future, recommends land use for the next 5 to 10 years.	Describes what is and what is not allowed today, based on existing conditions.
Adopted under the Municipal Planning Act, Public Act 285 of 1931, as amended.	Adopted under the Zoning Enabling Act of 2006, as amended.
Includes recommendations that involve other agencies and groups.	Deals only with development-related issues under city control.
Flexible to respond to changing conditions.	Fairly rigid, requires formal amendment to change.
Source: LSL Planning & City Staff	

Chapter Two Community Profile

Regional Setting



Map One: Regional Setting

The City of Swartz Creek is located in Genesee County, approximately ten miles southwest of the City of Flint. Flint serves as the regional center of the county; however, economic and residential activities have dispersed throughout the county and away from Flint. While the area around Swartz Creek has historically been agricultural, significant development has occurred in recent years.

The local economy and population are highly integrated with the Flint urban area and southeast Michigan in general. The roadway network, including I-69, I-75 and US-23 allow residents to travel to the cities of Lansing, Detroit, Ann Arbor, and Saginaw for employment, business, and pleasure.

The high quality of life offered within Swartz Creek has contributed to the relative growth that the city has experienced prior to the housing and economic crisis. Although much of the city's recent development has been residential, commercial development has also

been strong. The commercial and retail development in Flint Township, the city's access to regional services, and a well-developed road network, have contributed to the expansion of Swartz Creek's housing market. The accompanying population growth has also increased the demand for local services. Recently, this growth has resumed and it is apparent that land use and service changes may be needed. Though the City continues to add housing units on a yearly basis, the regional demand for future housing is uncertain.

Population Characteristics

The current population characteristics and trends determine, in part, what necessary city services and infrastructure demands are. These characteristics also identify the labor force, participation, economic power, and character that are brought to the city by its residents.

To better illustrate how these characteristics combine to influence future population, services, and development, the economic and other characteristics were analyzed in conjunction with neighboring cities and the county and state in order to obtain a relative comparison. Note that these characteristics are up to five years old, but still reflect the most up-to-date data and can still be used as a reference point to observe how Swartz Creek compares to other municipalities and the region.

Population Trends. Table Two shows that between 2000 and 2010 the city population grew at a higher rate than Genesee County and other nearby cities of similar size. As shown later in this chapter, there has been a disproportionate increase in the number of new homes over the last decade when compared to the population increase. This is due to the decrease in average household size as demonstrated by the housing data in Table Four. This decrease is most likely due to the aging of the community and smaller family sizes.

Note that, according to recent population estimates, Swartz Creek has lost population over the last five

years due to assumptions about household size. However, the City has gained additional housing since 2010 and remains in a stronger position than most municipalities in the region based upon this statistic.

Municipality	2000	2010	% Change
Swartz Creek City	5,102	5,758	11.39%
Davison City	5,536	5,173	-7.02%
Flushing City	8,348	8,389	0.49%
Grand Blanc City	8,242	8,276	0.41%
Genesee County	436,141	425,790	-2.43%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000-2010

Age. Swartz Creek has a significantly lower percentage of the population in the younger age groups, specifically the school age, family forming, and mid-life groups. The city has a higher percentage of seniors, which reflects the in-place aging of residents and demand on retirement housing stock. Table Three shows how Swartz Creek’s compares to that of the county and state.

Over the next 20 years seniors will constitute the largest percentage of the population nationwide. This is due primarily to the aging of the “baby boom” generation. Likewise, previous population projections for Swartz Creek predicted that the number of seniors residing in Swartz Creek will continue to grow. This is according to a demographic study completed in 2004 by city staff using a professional demographic research resource. This report confirmed that the highest growth age category during this time period would be seniors. The community should ensure that the proper amount and type of housing continues to be available to meet this trend.

Group	Age	Swartz Creek	Genesee County	State of Michigan
Pre-school	Under 5 yrs	5.90%	6.40%	6.00%
School Age	6-19	19.00%	21.50%	20.80%
Family Forming	20-44	29.50%	30.70%	31.50%
Mid-Life	45-64	25.50%	27.60%	27.90%
Seniors	65 and over	20.10%	13.80%	13.70%

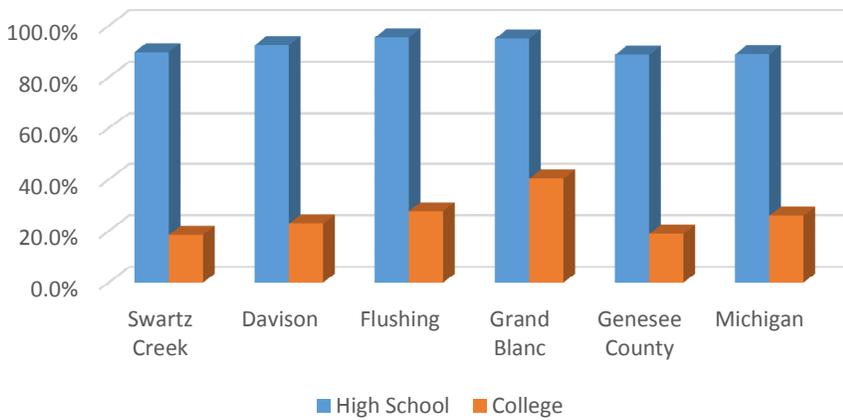
Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2010

Economic Characteristics

Economic characteristics provide another look at the different aspects of the population in terms of education, occupation, and income. This information indicates the general levels of participation and skill that the community may possess. It also provides insight into determining what services the citizens and other property owners will require, both public and private. This information will then assist the city in land use planning and service-related decisions.

Education. Educational attainment is based on U.S Census data that encompasses the population of those residents that are twenty-five years of age or older. The information shows that Swartz Creek has a very large population with at least a high school education, but the percentage of those that have graduated with advanced degrees is relatively small compared to the state. Swartz Creek generally reflects regional educational attainment, with 89.8% of residents over twenty-five possessing a high school diploma, compared to 88.7% for the county, and 18.5% possessing a college degree, compared to 18.9% for the county. This information indicates that the population is at no apparent advantage or disadvantage within the region. As shown in Figure A, Swartz Creek has a larger share of its residents holding a high school degree but a smaller percentage of the population has a college degree.

Figure A: Degree Attainment
US Census Bureau 2013



between 2009 and 2013 in the labor market. There are gains in transportation/warehousing, as well as a notable loss in manufacturing and retail jobs. As Figure B shows, much of the current employment is in education and health occupations.

Income. As displayed in Figure C, the median household income for Swartz Creek residents was \$43,105 in 2013. This is higher than the county average, yet below the average for the state and some of the neighboring cities.

Employment. General Motors and Swartz Creek Community Schools are the two largest employers in the city. Many of the residents still find employment with the auto industry in the surrounding area and beyond, despite industry reductions. Due to the recent bankruptcy of General Motors, the taxable value of the GM facility has plummeted, yet significant investments have been made to maintain the plant.

It is apparent that many of the residents commute as far as Lansing, Saginaw, Detroit, or the Ann Arbor areas. Figure B demonstrates the changes that occurred

Housing Characteristics

Housing data includes the value, type, occupancy, and construction rate. This data demonstrates the residential character of the City by analyzing the existing housing stock, the current trends in residential development, and what housing may be needed to accommodate the different needs of current and future residents.

Households. The housing market in Swartz Creek has expanded in recent years, thereby greatly increasing the

number of units in the city. The number of housing units in the city has increased by 17%, from 2,355 in 2000 to 2,749 in 2010. This is the largest percent increase experienced by the cities compared in Table Four. This table also shows that despite some housing growth in each of these communities, all of the municipalities experienced a decrease in the average number of residents per household. Swartz Creek dropped from 2.27 persons per household to 2.25. This decline in density

Figure B: Occupational Changes 2009-2013
US Census Bureau

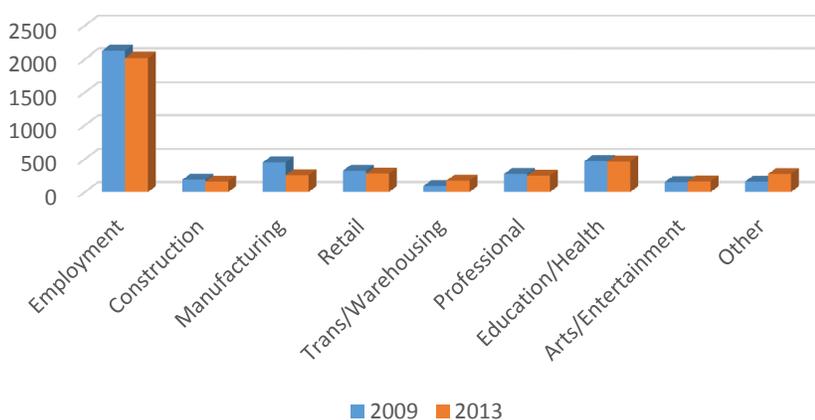
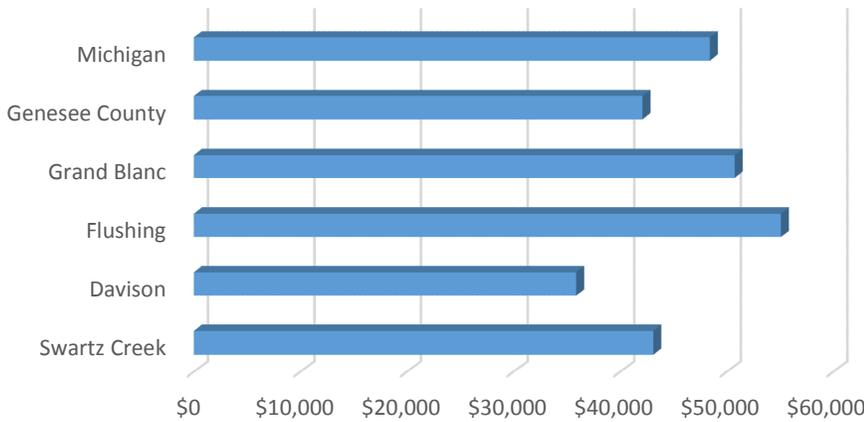


Figure C: Median Household Income

US Census Bureau 2013



is a common occurrence most likely attributed to the increasing size of the elderly population as well as families electing to have fewer children. The percentages of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units as well as the vacancy rates for 2000 and 2010 are also in Table Four. These numbers show that Swartz Creek has a relatively high rate of owner occupancy. However, the renter occupied percentage is up substantially for all communities, including Swartz Creek.

Table Four
Housing Unit Comparison, 2000-2010

Housing Units 2000					
Municipality	Total	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Avg. Household	Vacant Units
Swartz Creek City	2,355	70%	25%	2.27	5%
Davison City	2,652	54%	40%	2.21	6%
Flushing City	3,558	76%	21%	2.38	3%
Grand Blanc City	3,725	56%	39%	2.29	5%
Genesee County	183,630	68%	25%	2.54	8%
Housing Units 2010					
Municipality	Total	Owner-occupied	Renter-occupied	Avg. Household	Vacant Units
Swartz Creek City	2,749	71%	29%	2.25	7%
Davison City	2,593	55%	45%	2.18	9%
Flushing City	3,816	74%	26%	2.3	6%
Grand Blanc City	3,784	57%	43%	2.28	6%
Genesee County	192,180	70%	30%	2.48	12%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000-2010

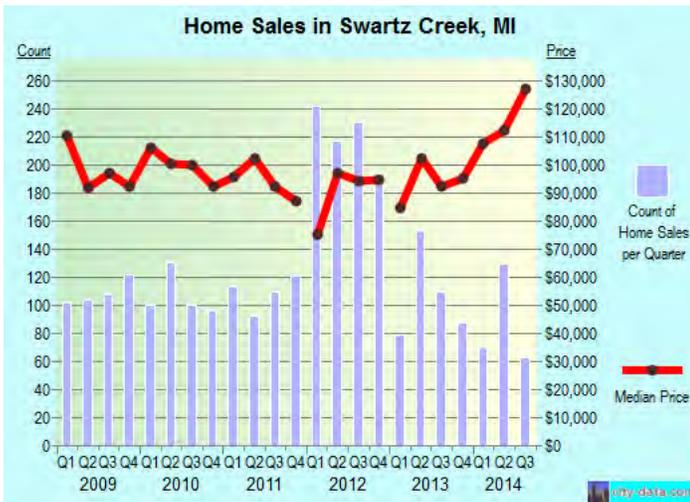
Note: 2000 data does not classify vacant units as rentals or owner occupied homes.

Recent years have witnessed a dramatic decrease in housing value and occupancy. Foreclosures spiked nationwide, and this trend has been apparent in Swartz Creek. Figure D demonstrates the housing sales rebound and value trend for about the last four years. New housing starts have almost ceased, leaving housing projects in a precarious state, and older neighborhoods may be at risk of vacancy.

Housing Value. As shown in Table Five, Swartz Creek’s housing value is well above the county average of \$91,700 at \$106,300 as of 2010. While this value is lower than some neighboring cities, it has retained value better based upon percentage. Note that the city is experiencing a recovery of values and maintains the highest rent values among peers.

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Figure D
Home Sale Quantities & Values



Source: www.city-data.com, 2015

	Median Value 2000	Median Value 2013	Percent Change	Median Rent
Swartz Creek City	\$112,400	\$106,300	-5.74%	\$774
Davison City	\$100,000	\$94,500	-5.82%	\$598
Flushing City	\$122,500	\$112,200	-9.18%	\$568
Grand Blanc City	\$148,500	\$136,500	-8.79%	\$717
Genesee County	\$95,000	\$91,700	-3.60%	\$711

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2010-2013

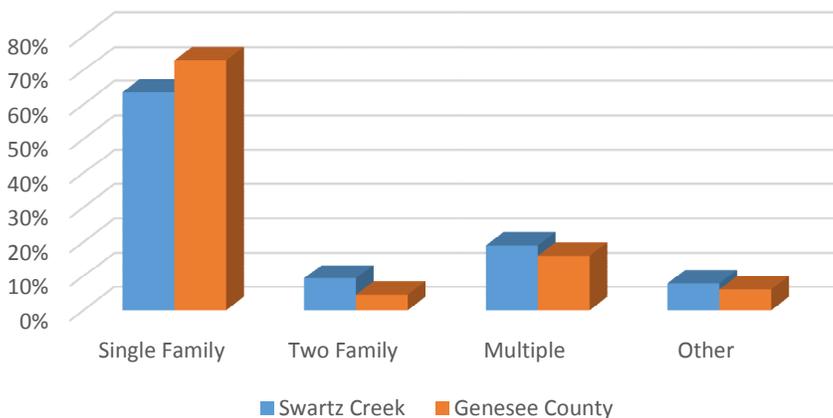
Housing Unit Type. Most of Swartz Creek is comprised of single-family units. Figure E compares the percentage of housing types in Swartz Creek to Genesee County. The data demonstrates that Swartz Creek has a slightly lower proportion of single-family units and miscellaneous units in comparison to the county. The city does, however, contain more multi-family dwellings than Genesee County overall. As an urbanized area, this ratio is not unexpected.

Year Structure Built	Number	Percent
1939 or earlier	190	7.36%
1940-1959	528	20.44%
1960-1969	447	17.31%
1970-1979	403	15.60%
1980-1989	264	10.22%
1990-2010	751	29.07%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2010

Figure E: Housing Unit Types

US Census Bureau 2013



Housing Construction. The U.S. Census shows that housing construction in Swartz Creek was at its highest in the most recent era, before the 2008 housing crash. Much of the city's housing stock was constructed during the 1940s through the 1950s, in Winchester Village subdivision. Table Six shows that the age of housing is quite balanced through the decades, with over 90% of the housing stock being constructed after World War II, including a boom in the 1990s & 2000s. Though housing construction has slowed dramati-

cally in the last few years, the mix of housing by age is quite diverse and adds stability to the community. Because older housing tends to require added public and private maintenance, such neighborhoods benefit from a mix of newer housing in the community because such housing tends to retain value and stability.

Most recently, new duplex housing within condominium developments has picked up speed, with new starts expected to reach 10-20 a year.

Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use Map is one of the most important items to generate before the planning process can effectively begin. This map gives a profile of how the city is currently developed and helps define what additions may be needed and where they should go. The current patterns result from the location, land use policies, as well as environmental, economic, social, and cultural influences. Physical infrastructure and development are the manifestation of the former planning desires and trends. These trends are not easily changed or reviewed but serve as a starting point for all future development or changes resulting from the Master Plan.

The residents and businesses of Swartz Creek have traditionally enjoyed a small town lifestyle which has been changed by the urban exodus and market pressures for development. Attention has been given to the preservation of the small town feeling, while integrating the city with the evolving urban area.

The City of Swartz Creek is composed of a mix of uses that is typical for a small town. The community is mostly residential, but it also has significant commercial and industrial development. There is also a sizable amount of commercial, industrial and vacant land within the corporate limits that will obviously be the focus of future planning. Table Seven shows how the land use in Swartz Creek was allocated in 2002. Current use closely reflects these ratios.

Single-Family Residential. Single-family residential accounts for approximately 45% of the city’s land use. This use is distributed to all areas of the city, but is concentrated on the west side of town, in and around Winchester neighborhood. Most of these dwellings were built to accommodate industrial workers and their families in the 1950s and 60s. These homes are still well-maintained and offer desirable family housing. There is also a concentration of single-family residential housing along Miller Road, to the east of downtown. Newer developments are increasing the amount of housing on the City’s east side.

Table Seven Existing Land Use		
	Acreage	Percentage
Single Family Attached	55.5	2.50%
Single Family Detached	966.3	43.20%
Multiple Family	55.1	2.50%
Commercial	164.2	7.30%
Industrial	201.9	9.00%
Institutional	165.5	7.40%
Office	13.9	0.60%
Public Recreation	55	2.50%
Manufactured Housing Park	43.7	2.00%
Vacant	517	23.10%
Source: LSL GIS 2002		

Multiple-Family Residential. Multiple-family residential comprises only about 2.5% of the land use in the city and over 15% of the housing units. The multiple-family residential uses are scattered on various sites near downtown, as shown on Map One: Existing Land Use.

Commercial. About 7% of the land area in Swartz Creek is commercial. This land is developed mostly for local uses; however, there is an area around the I-69 interchanges on Morrish and Miller Roads that is drawing customers from the region. There appears to be growing demand for both local and regional commercial services in the area as the population expands. The Morrish Road area offers the greatest potential to accommodate needed commercial uses, because most

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of the land on the north side of I-69 remains vacant and the raceway offers 108 potential acres for redevelopment. This location offers good access for residents in the city as well as other communities in the region.

Industrial. The most prominent industrial use in the city is the General Motors Customer Care & Aftersales facility on the east side of the city. This serves as a strong area employer and contributor to the city tax base. There are also some industrial uses that serve local needs off of Morrish Road, south of downtown. Industrial uses account for about 9% of the land area of the city.

Institutional. Institutional uses include schools, public buildings, churches and other similar uses. These uses account for over 7% of the land uses, and are distributed relatively evenly throughout the city, with a higher incidence of churches on Miller and Morrish Roads and a noted concentration of school uses including three schools near Fairchild Street (The Crapo Neighborhood).

Office. Office is a limited use in the city, accounting for only 13 acres or less than 1% of the overall land use. This use is located primarily near the east end of Miller Road, with a few other areas in the city being used for this purpose. There is also office space within the mixed-use Central Business District.

Public Recreation. There are over 60 acres of city park land in Swartz Creek accounting for 2.5% of the overall land use. This use is divided into two large parks, Elms Road Park and Winshall Park, along with the smaller bicentennial park, Veterans Memorial, and Pajtas Amphitheater located downtown.

Manufactured Homes. 44 acres, or 2% of the land use in the city, is utilized by a manufactured housing community. This area is located south of I-69 on the east side of Seymour Road.

Manufactured housing represents about 7.4% of the total housing units in the City of Swartz Creek. Although

some communities have a higher percentage, the City of Swartz Creek has relatively little undeveloped land, and has not planned for additional manufactured housing communities. Because communities are required, due to case law, to provide adequate manufactured housing opportunities, several manufactured housing communities have been built immediately adjacent to Swartz Creek in Mundy, Flint and Gaines Townships in order to take advantage of the infrastructure provided on the city's borders. A previous study by city staff reveals that 1,182 manufactured housing units are currently located in communities within two miles of the City of Swartz Creek boundary. Another 174 units were approved for future expansion as of 2004, but it is uncertain how many will be constructed.

The total number of existing housing units in the city as of the 2010 census is 2,749, of which 176 are in a manufactured housing community. When the manufactured housing in abutting communities is included, this brings the manufactured housing total to nearly 33% of the total housing stock in the expanded study area. Although these units are located outside the boundaries of the city, the City of Swartz Creek meets the requirement of providing adequate manufactured housing as a land use for the community.

Vacant. Vacant land stands as the second largest land use category in the city at 517 acres and 23.1%. A large portion of this land is located north of I-69 on both sides of Morrish Road. Though some of this land has been approved for the construction next to the new Meijer, it remains vacant as of 2015. There is also a concentration of vacant land at North Seymour and Miller Roads. These two areas are currently used for agricultural purposes. There is another area of vacant land on the south border of the city near the Middle School. This land is largely forested and presents itself as a development challenge since it has poor site access. All of these parcels, including smaller, isolated areas, need to be considered and planned very carefully to maintain and improve the city in accordance with the goals of this plan.

Natural Features

The natural, physical features in the City of Swartz Creek must be considered in the planning process as they impact both people and wildlife in the community.

Most of the natural features of the City of Swartz Creek have already been absorbed or integrated with some form of development. The land in the city is relatively flat with only a small area still containing dense woodlands. Some of this land is platted for residential use and is in demand for high-quality housing. The other portion of this woodland is north of I-69 and is privately owned with no platted divisions. Most other land has been cleared and developed.

Surface Water. The most prominent water body in the city is the Swartz Creek. This stream serves primarily as a drain for the city but has potential to provide recreational opportunities that tie into the trail plan or potential community gardens.

The watershed for this stream lies mostly to the south of the city and eventually empties into the Flint River. The maintenance of this stream is important when considering future land use because of the existing flood plain along with increased drainage and possible pollution created by impervious surfaces (roofs and parking lots).

Floodplains. The Swartz Creek floodplain is defined by the high-water mark of a 100 year flood as set by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). An area defined as floodplain presents limitations on development because of the presence of potential flood hazards. The floodplain was most recently updated in September of 2009.

Wetlands. Wetlands are composed of transitional areas between aquatic ecosystems and the surrounding areas. These areas are vital to the maintenance of high quality surface and ground water as well as generally contributing to natural ecosystems.

These areas may also include seasonally wet and permanently saturated areas.

Wetlands are vital to the environmental quality of a community. They serve by improving water quality, controlling soil erosion and sediment loading, detaining surface runoff, and by providing links with groundwater. All wetlands that are contiguous with a waterway (within 500 feet) and wetlands that are five acres or larger in size are regulated by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) through Part 303 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA).

Because of state and federal requirements, wetlands constrain developmental ability when they are present. There are a variety of wetlands within the City of Swartz Creek which include:

- *Mixed Wooded Wetlands.* These are areas that are dominated by trees more than twenty feet tall where the soil's surface is seasonally saturated or flooded with up to twelve inches of water. Several levels of vegetation are usually present including trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants.
- *Lowland Hardwood Wetlands.* Consist of ash, elm, soft maple, cottonwood, balm of Gilead and other lowland hardwoods.
- *Lowland Conifer Wetlands.* Areas of predominately cedar, tamarack, black and white spruce and balsam fir stands.
- *Emergent Wetlands.* Areas that are thirty percent or more covered by rooted herbaceous hydrophytic plants which are present for most of the growing season in most years.
- *Deep Marsh Wetlands.* Areas with an average depth of water between six inches and three feet during the growing season. Emergent marsh vegetation is usually dominant, with surface and submergent plants present in open areas.

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- *Shrub/Scrub Wetlands.* Areas that are dominated by woody vegetation less than twenty feet tall.

Soil. Because the City of Swartz Creek is integrated with a flood plain, the water table is moderate to high and is associated with poor drainage and wet soil. This means that the soil is not naturally suited for development without the addition of sand or through site mitigation, including the installation of storm water drainage, the extensive engineering of buildings and structures, or the grading of the site to establish an appropriate buildable area.

Transportation

Vehicular Travel. Vehicular travel dominates as the mode of transportation in Swartz Creek. This means that the existing road infrastructure is paramount in determining which land uses and future densities are compatible with future development. Existing road infrastructure and usage also give insight into possible improvements for specific roads depending on current and future needs. The City of Swartz Creek encompasses a variety of road types ranging from unimproved to the I-69 expressway.

The condition of city streets has been a primary concern for the community in recent years. The city streets were recently audited based on condition. A twenty-year, unfunded capital improvement plan was created. This improvement plan was the focus of a failed dedicated street levy in 2015.

Major Streets. The City of Swartz Creek maintains 11 miles of major streets. These streets are generally high volume and act as collector or arterial streets. These streets should be limited in driveway cuts and intersections to maintain safe access and circulation. There are also the notable areas where these streets intersect I-69. Attention should be given to the limited volume available at the Morrish and I-69 interchange as well as the future development potential at the Miller and I-69 interchange.

The city has approved a “complete streets” resolution that promotes design concepts such as the inclusion of narrow lanes, lower speeds, pedestrian amenities, street trees, street furniture, and other traffic calming devices. This has been done in an effort to encourage the safety and walkability of the city’s neighborhoods and corridors.

Local Streets. The City of Swartz Creek maintains 11 miles of local streets. These streets primarily serve residential traffic, but they must also be able to accommodate current and future bus and emergency vehicle travel. Due to the residential nature of these streets, there are inherent limitations on other future uses and capacity.

Most local streets have sidewalks, on-street parking, and right-of-way trees. However, the city has not been able to keep up with the replacement of trees as they mature and die. The city does enforce its sidewalk repair ordinance.

Air Travel. Within a few miles of the city is Bishop International Airport (FNT). This is a vibrant, regional airport that offers a variety of nonstop and connecting flights to some of the largest hubs in the world. Currently, the facility offers nonstop jet flights to Chicago O’Hare, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Tampa, and Ft. Myers (seasonally). The service is provided by the four largest carriers in the United States: American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines and United Airlines. The airport services approximately 1,000,000 passengers a year and handles approximately 24 million pounds of cargo and freight.

Railroad. Grand Trunk Railroad currently runs a line through the city adjacent to its southern boundary. The line carries approximately 20 freight trains and two passenger trains, in a twenty-four hour period. This line intersects with three major roads: Miller, Morrish, and Seymour Roads. It serves as the boundary of the city on Seymour. Passenger trains do not stop in the city, but cargo is directed to a rail spur that services GM facility on the east end of the city.

Public Transit. Within the city, public transit is available in the form of an on call curb-to-curb service called “Your Ride.” This service is a branch of the county-wide Mass Transportation Authority (MTA). “Your Ride” provides service to those people in the area who do not have access to fixed services provided by MTA. There are no fixed routes in Swartz Creek, however the MTA opened a state-of-the-art facility on the City’s east end in 2008 that functions as a regional deployment and service station for transit operations.

Non-Motorized Transit. Non-motorized transportation in Swartz Creek is limited but expanding. The city has a bike lane and off-street path on Morrish Road south of I-69, as well as Miller Road between Seymour and Elms for use by residents. This trail now extends to Elms Park in the form of an off-street path. Furthermore, the City adopted a Parks and Recreation plan in 2013 that delineates the potential city-wide system of non-motorized pathways. To this end, the City has acquired property and easements along the Swartz Creek. The city recognizes the importance of non-motorized transport today and in the future and encourages the expansion of these facilities.

Community Facilities and Services

Utilities. The City of Swartz Creek operates water, storm, and sanitary sewer distribution systems within the city limits. These systems serve the majority of parcels in the city with a few exceptions. Some areas, such as the land south of the creek on Seymour Road, have no service. Other areas, such as the land north of I-69 on Morrish Road, have recently been upgraded to accommodate dense development. The city serves portions of Clayton Township and Gaines Township with water and sanitary sewer as well. The townships consume some of the water and sanitary sewer capacity, thereby limiting additions to said systems.

Water System. The city buys water from the Genesee County Drain Commission utilizing connections at Miller/Dye Roads, Elms Road, and Morrish Road. The city is currently serving nearly 2,300 customers

with an average daily use of 60,000 cubic feet city-wide. Water service is important to the residents and businesses in the city and the ability to meet the current and future needs of the community is a priority. Due to countywide improvements in the system, it is expected that capacity shall not be a problem in the near future. Water costs have had a negative impact on the community. Bulk water from Detroit Water and Sewer Authority has risen dramatically in price.

The Genesee County Drain Commission – Division of Water and Waste Services is constructing a new water pipeline from Lake Huron to serve Genesee County customers, including the city, by 2017. The function and cost of this system could heavily impact the city and should be considered by the City Council before long-term services or improvements of the system are considered.

The city is also developing a Water General Plan that shall include provisions for reinvestment and capital improvements.

Sanitary Sewer System. The sanitary sewer system is currently serviced by a Genesee County interceptor that flows out of the west end of the City. As of 2015, there were over 3,700 units purchased from the County per billing period. This system is adequate to the city needs at present, with no known capacity needs. As of 2007, the Western Trunk Extension has increased the capacity and efficiency of the system.

The city adopted a 20 year capital improvement and maintenance plan for the sanitary system in 2014.

City Government. In 2001 the city invested in a new city hall to accommodate the growing community. This building houses the city administrative offices as well as the public meeting chambers. It is located on Civic Drive, near the District Library and Senior Center as well as the Edward F. Pavlica Public Safety Building, which houses the fire and police departments. The city also upgraded and expanded the building for the Department of Public Services in the late 1990s.

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Fire Protection. The Swartz Creek Area Fire Department provides paid on-call fire protection services in conjunction with neighboring Clayton Township. Fire Station One provides service for the city and is located in the Public Safety Building. The city branch of the department generally retains about 12 members who provide 24 hour on-call service. Additionally, there is a part-time chief and a part-time accountant. There are no plans to expand or improve the public safety building for this use.

Police Protection. Police protection is provided to city residents by the Swartz Creek Police Department located in the Public Safety Building. The department currently provides 24 hour protection with eight (8) full-time officers, a K-9 unit, as well as a part-time officer force. A city-wide assessment supports about half of the costs of fire and police department services. As of 2015, a merger is being considered by the city and Mundy Township concerning the potential for a new police authority.

Educational Facilities. The City of Swartz Creek population is completely within the Swartz Creek school district. There are two elementary schools, as well as the middle school and the high school within the city boundaries. The enrollment as of fall 2015 was approximately 4,000 students. Student enrollment had been growing steadily through the last decade, but the economic downturn has reduced the student population in the last few years.

The school district has been pursuing the expansion of its facilities in recent years to include the acquisition of the Cage Fieldhouse and the construction of the Performing Arts Center. New educational facilities have not been discussed for a decade, however, relocation of any facilities to a location outside the city has been found to pose a potential negative impact. However, the school has shown a strong interest in working with the city to locate any new facility on the vacant land near Seymour and Miller Roads and expand the school campus.

Downtown Development Authority. The City of Swartz Creek reinstated its DDA in 2004, complete with a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF). The DDA has been active in the community and now operates Family Movie Night, a façade improvement program, and a streetscape and decorating program.

Recreation. The City of Swartz Creek offers many recreational facilities for its diverse population. Due to the importance of recreation, the city has prepared a separate Parks and Recreation Plan. This plan analyzes existing facilities and opportunities and makes recommendations for improvements and additions over a five year period. These facilities are briefly described here:

Fred Pajtas Theater. This theater is privately funded and used for very popular concerts, outdoor performances and plays in the summertime.

Perkins Library. This library contains over 42,000 volumes and is funded by the Genesee County District Library millage and the City of Swartz Creek.

Swartz Creek Senior Center. This facility provides a lunch program and a range of social activities. It is funded by various sources including Genesee County, CDBG funds, private donations, and fundraising.

The Swartz Creek Area Senior Center expanded their operations and building with the addition of over 4,000 square feet in 2009. These activities are supported by a county levy for senior services.



Bicentennial Park. This park adds beautification as well as a pavilion to the city center. It has recently been improved with landscaping and sidewalk additions.

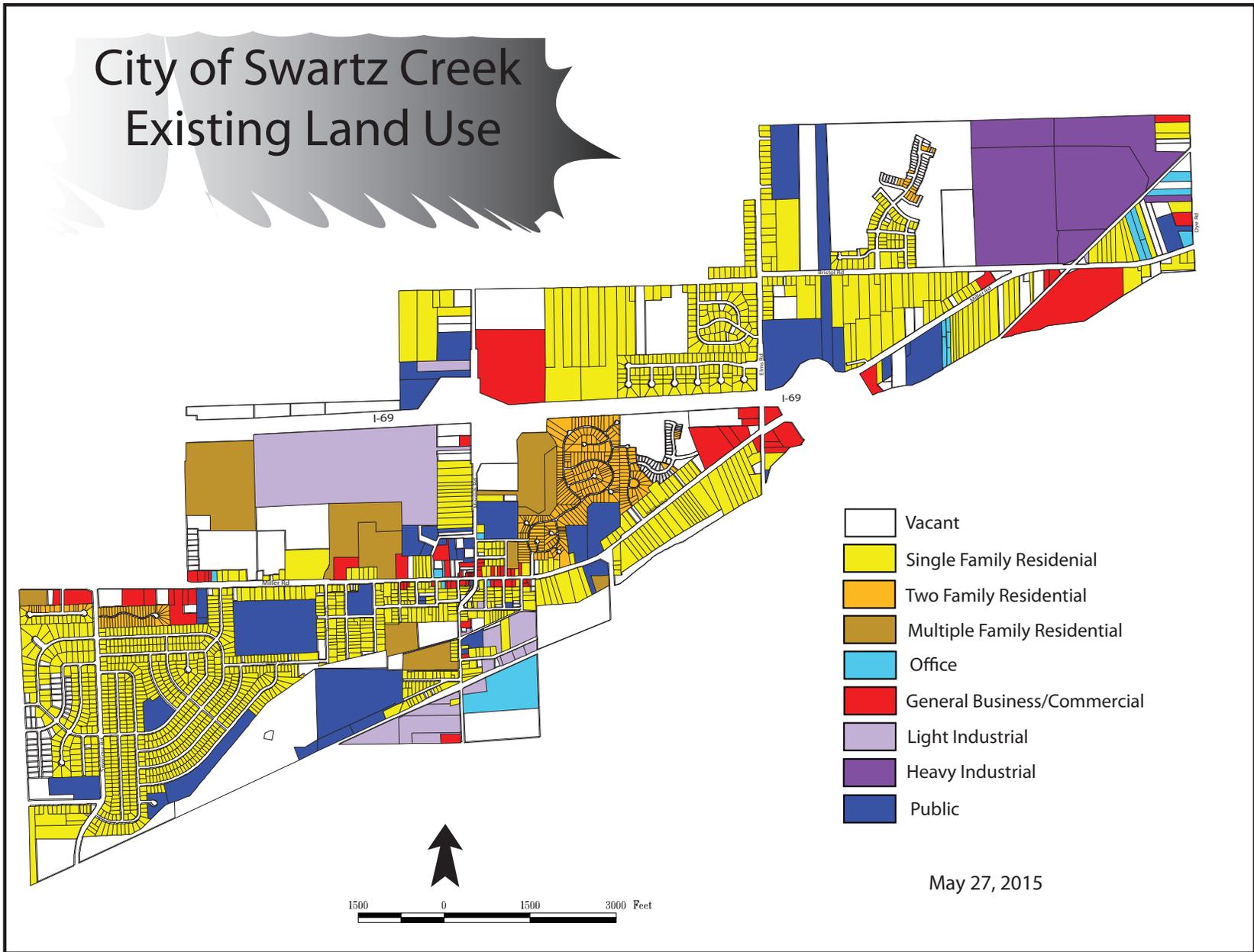
Elms Park. This park provides picnic areas, restroom facilities, a playscape, ball diamonds, soccer fields, a volleyball court, tennis courts, basketball courts, a non-motorized trail, and an outdoor ice skating rink.

Recent improvements included the addition of a non-motorized path, numerous tree plantings, and beautification of the entrance and streetscape. The aging of pavilions, trees, and other equipment is becoming a problem. The city expects to renovate the bathrooms and other facilities in the summer of 2016.

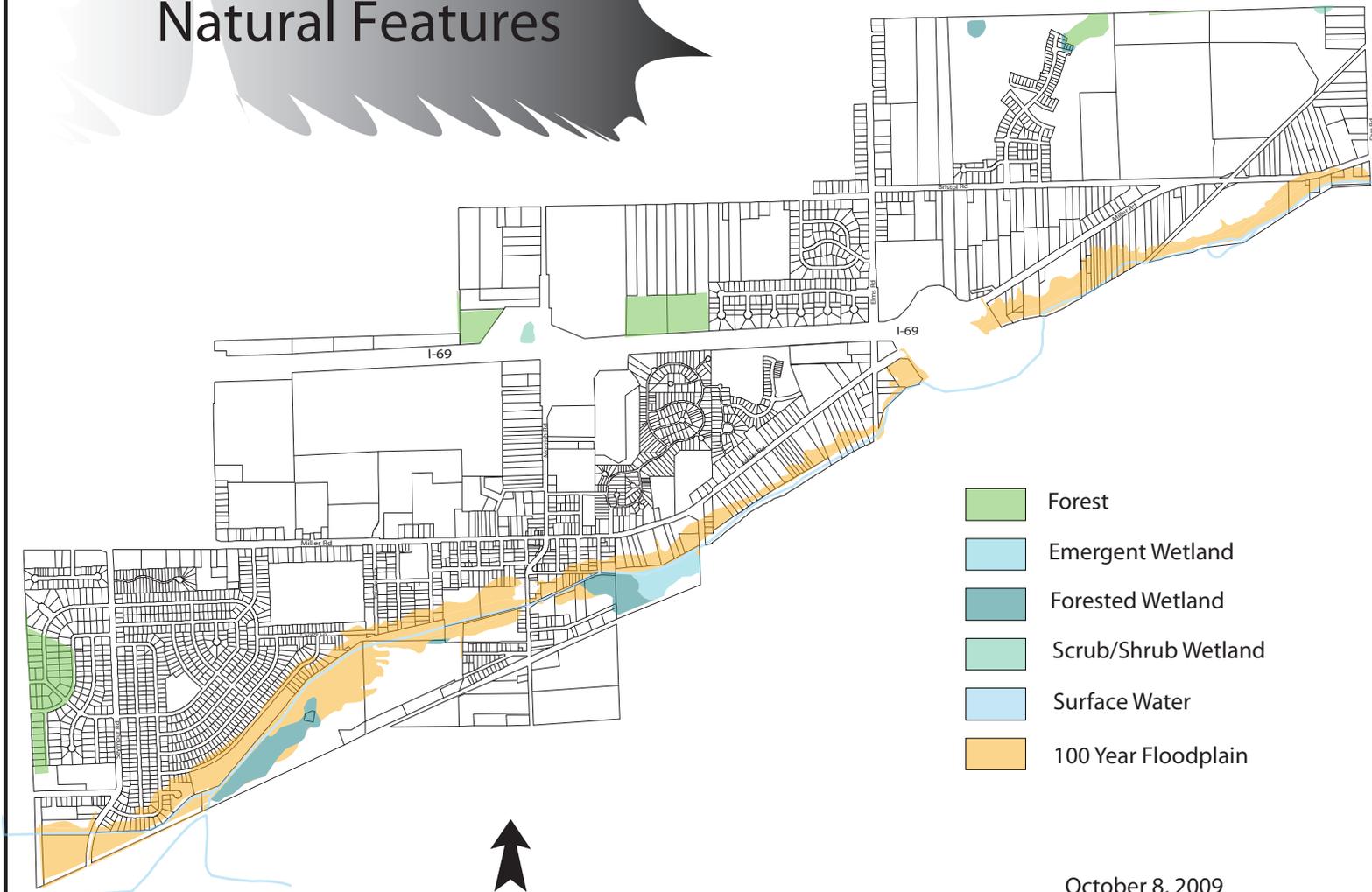
Winshall Park. This park provides picnic areas, basketball courts, two play areas, a new volleyball court, a refurbished restroom, a ball-diamond, access to the Swartz Creek waterway, and a sledding hill.

Veterans Memorial. Located on Fortino Drive, the memorial consists of a hardscape reflection area with numerous statues and landscape features. This park was completed in 2014.

City of Swartz Creek Existing Land Use

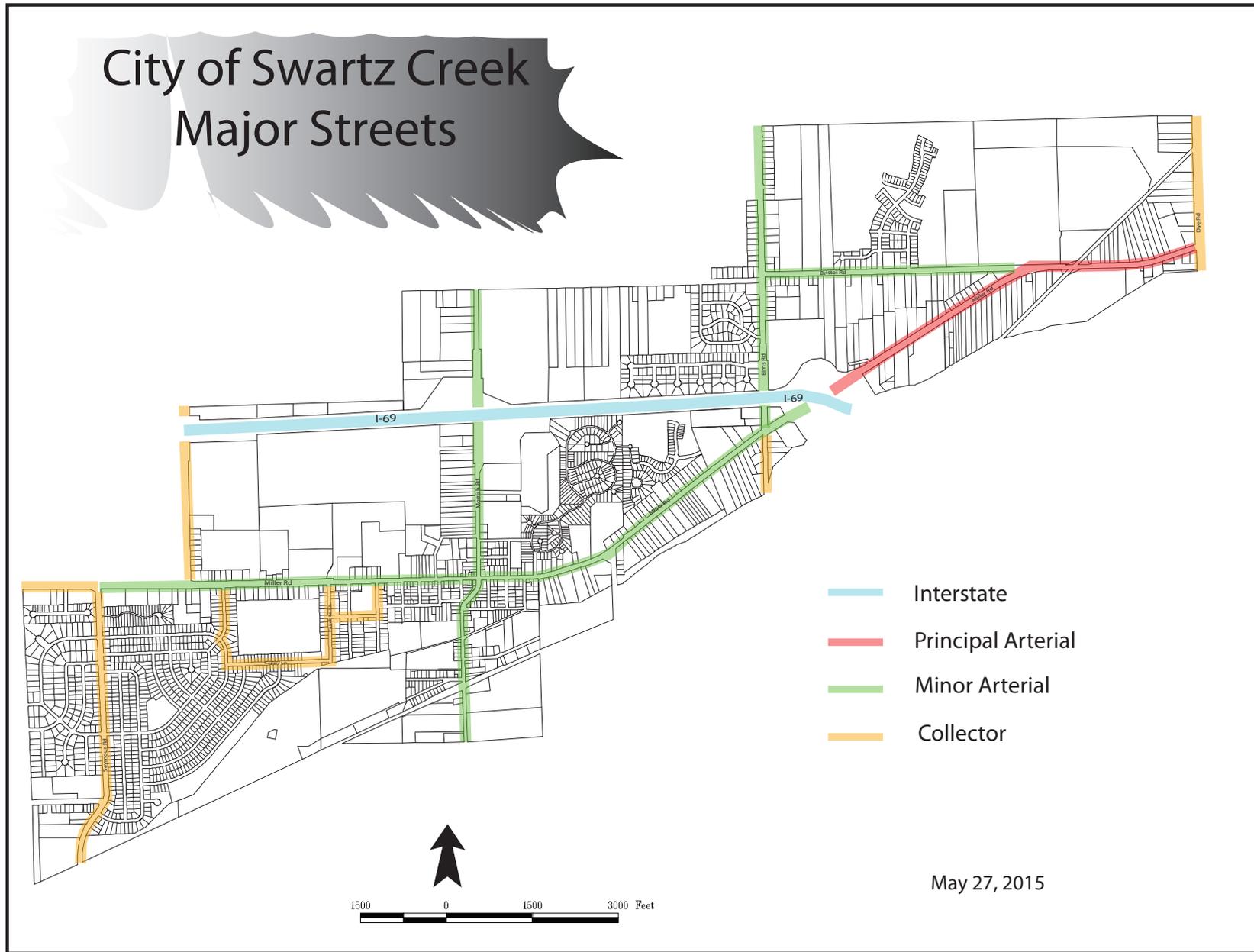


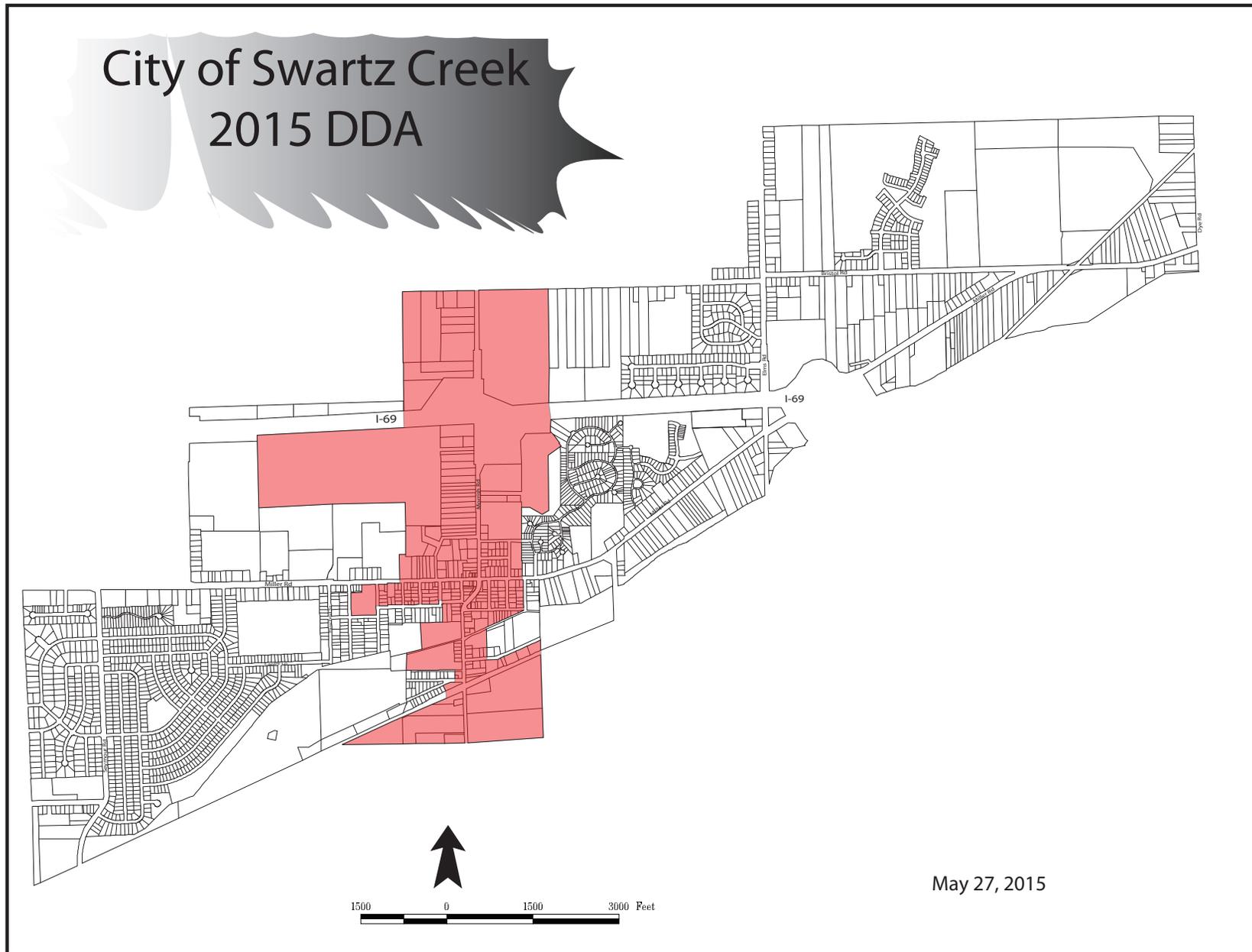
City of Swartz Creek Natural Features



- Forest
- Emergent Wetland
- Forested Wetland
- Scrub/Shrub Wetland
- Surface Water
- 100 Year Floodplain

October 8, 2009
Source: City Staff 2009





Chapter Three Goals and Objectives

Goals are statements that define a desired end-state or achievement for the community. Objectives are specific measures or processes that allow the goals to be met. To be effective, the Swartz Creek City Master Plan must include goals and objectives that reflect the community's desires, while balancing the rights of individuals and reflecting the technical evaluation carried out in preparing the plan.

The goals and objectives address various issues and concerns, thereby setting a course of action that will contribute to the future well-being of the community. They vary in complexity and are often interrelated or complementary. Therefore, it is important that they are viewed collectively and not individually.

The following goals and objectives give the Swartz Creek City Master Plan the direction to guide the community in addressing present and future issues such as, retaining the character of the community, protecting the environment, accommodating new growth, addressing the economic hardships of the community, and improving the quality of life offered in the City.

Overall Growth & Development

Goals

1. To sustain a balanced and efficient mix of land uses to meet the current and future needs of the city, while considering the existing development patterns, natural features and the capacity of transportation, utilities, and public and private services and facilities
2. To promote Swartz Creek as a preferred and high quality place to live, operate a business, and visit
3. To create a 'human scale' to development and re-



development that encourages human interaction and activity in the public realm

Objectives

1. Require all new development to be adequately served by municipal water and sewers.
2. Protect significant environmental features during site development, including water, trees and other vegetation.
3. Designate low intensity land uses for environmentally sensitive areas such as in the vicinity of flood-prone areas.
4. Promote land use patterns and design that provide a high quality of life and an attractive community.
5. Maintain the well-being of stable, developed areas.
6. Ensure compatibility of existing land uses and protection of property values by directing land uses to appropriate locations that have or are intended to have similar types of uses.
7. Promote the development of large parcels of vacant or underutilized land for a mix of compatible uses.
8. Diversify the tax base to help support the public services and facilities desired by city residents.
9. Provide landowners with a reasonable and practical use of their land in consideration of the above factors, though not necessarily the most profitable use.
10. Require sidewalks and connectivity to non-motorized trails where appropriate.
11. Promote the mixture of uses and higher densities within new sites.
12. Ensure that transition areas that are evolving from residential to commercial use develop uniformly and on a scale to avoid 'spot zones' or inadequate buffer zones.
13. Develop and promote the creek for recreation.
14. Recognize the 'Prosperity Agenda' as defined by the State of Michigan in future development.

Residential Neighborhoods

Goals

1. To protect existing residential neighborhoods and require new residential developments to be well-designed
2. To have viable residential neighborhoods that offer a mix of housing options
3. To provide opportunities for affordable residential development that will accommodate the future growth of the city, and contribute to the quality of life offered to current and future residents

Objectives

1. Encourage housing opportunities for a variety of preferences, lifestyles, and household types at appropriate locations.
2. Encourage a mix of dwelling types and densities, where they can be supported by the available infrastructure and services.
3. Promote and enforce maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing and residential neighborhoods.
4. Maintain an environment that encourages pride of ownership and contributes to an affordable and easily marketable housing stock that makes Swartz Creek an attractive place to live.
5. Require high standards in housing developments so that attractive neighborhoods, good housing design, durable materials (such as brick) and construction, privacy, and access to usable and convenient open space are achieved.
6. Consider incentives such as Planned Unit Development Districts and flexible zoning to offer developers opportunities to provide an affordable mix of housing, through a mixture of densities, housing unit types, and size of housing units.
7. Stabilize residential areas by preventing the encroachment of incompatible land uses into resi-



dential neighborhoods and eliminating non-conforming uses.

8. Buffer single-family residential areas from other uses, including medium and high density residential uses.
9. Provide zoning incentives such as a planned development district and/or density bonus for the creation of additional senior housing to meet growing future demand.
10. Integrate large projects directly with the existing urban fabric and major street network.
11. Include neighborhood businesses where appropriate into large projects.
12. Do not allow “spot zones” to develop in a residential setting unless part of a planned neighborhood.
13. Maintain and reconstruct local streets.

Design Guidelines

Goals

1. To utilize design guidelines to ensure that new development and/or redevelopment projects are an asset to the community and, where appropriate, are compatible with and result in an upgrade to existing development
2. To recognize scale and design of buildings, development setbacks, build-to lines, materials, buffering, and separation distances

Objectives

1. Identify key entryways into the city and prepare plans for improvements that address signs, landscaping, and land use.
2. Establish a consistent and attractive signage and landscaping theme at major gateways into the city to inform and welcome visitors.
3. Establish attractive entryways into the downtown on Miller Road and Morrish Road.



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4. Institute a sign program that will enhance the character of downtown.
5. Establish a street tree program throughout the city and require that street trees be planted in front of newly constructed houses.
6. Develop neighborhood design standards that address streets, sidewalks, lighting, street trees, neighborhood public parks and dwelling orientation to ensure low and medium density residential development reflects a close-knit and integrated community atmosphere for residents.
7. Relocate the overhead wires in the downtown area to the rear of the businesses or underground.

Economic Development

Goal

1. To provide attractive commercial areas that create a stable economic tax base and quality shopping and service uses for residents
2. To encourage the attraction of a variety and mix of new businesses to Swartz Creek

Objectives

1. Direct businesses to areas designated for such uses, based on land use patterns, transportation and utility systems.
2. Dedicate new, expanded areas for a mixture of commercial development, while supporting the success and improvement of existing business areas.
3. Encourage the type and amount of business operation supported by market analysis, historical performance and consumer desires.
4. Encourage new businesses that are in demand by customers.
5. Encourage the rehabilitation or replacement of obsolete commercial/office and industrial buildings and sites with viable business establishments or other appropriate uses.
6. Promote the revitalization of downtown Swartz Creek through the attraction of businesses and other uses suited to that area. This district is in-



tended for a blend of residential, retail, office, and service establishments. The focus of this district is entertainment, specialty retailing, small offices and government buildings. Residential uses also fit into this mixture of uses and help to create activity after the businesses have closed.

7. Discourage uses such as auto-oriented businesses and large-lot, retail and office developments in downtown Swartz Creek. Such uses require larger sites and parking in front of the building.
8. Direct large-lot, "suburban" uses toward the General Business District areas.
9. Encourage the retention of residential neighborhoods in the vicinity of downtown Swartz Creek as a source of customers; to add vitality to the downtown; and to provide convenient services to those residents.
10. Promote visual and physical links between the downtown and the Civic Center such as landscaped walkways, streetscape, and public art.
11. Continue to promote community events in the downtown and Civic Center areas as a way of attracting attention and customers to downtown businesses.
12. Prevent expansion of the Miller-Elms commercial area farther west along Miller Road to retain the separation of distinct General Business areas, protect the residential neighborhood located between downtown Swartz Creek and the Miller-Elms commercial area, and to provide an attractive and well-defined entryway into the downtown.
13. Use the General Business District to serve resi-

dents who do not wish to drive to the more distant commercial centers. The GBD designation is intended for the widest variety of retail and service businesses. Businesses could range from apparel shops, auto service, and restaurants to small commercial centers.

14. Require the commercial development in the General Business District east of the Miller-Elms intersection to be developed subsequent to the build-out of the commercial developments west of the intersection. The use of a commercial PUD is recommended.
15. Require a substantial integration between the commercial uses in the General Business District east of the Miller-Elms intersection and Elms Park.
16. Promote the development of a traditional mixed-use downtown corridor along Morrish Road, between the entrance into the Sports Creek racetrack and Civic Drive in accordance with the following standards:
 - Permit commercial uses such as small scale retail stores; professional offices for physicians, optometrists, chiropractors, dentists, psychologists, and similar professions, but excluding outpatient services, urgent care centers, emergency care centers, and similar uses; offices for other professional services such as insurance, real estate, legal, financial, engineering, architecture, clerical, and similar professions; restaurants.
 - Ensure businesses have frontage on Morrish Road and build to the right-of-way or agreed upon short distance setback.
 - Consolidate lots for the purpose of creating larger parcels.
 - Discourage commercial uses within existing dwellings that are converted for such use.
 - Encourage or develop requirements for a second or third floor for residential dwellings.
 - Allow parking in side and rear yards only.
 - Require sidewalks be provided along the front of the properties.
- Use buffers and screens, limitations on exterior lighting and signage for this area. The layout of buildings and additions should promote an attractive entrance into downtown Swartz Creek.
- Integrate this area with the downtown district.
- Require or install a streetscape on both sides of Morrish Road.
- Allow the use of alleyways for rear parking and loading.
- Ensure development occurs at the ends first and not on an interior residential lot.
17. Promote the development of the mixed use area north of the Morrish Road/I-69 interchange for retail and other uses. In this regard, the following guidelines should be used:
 - Locate any residential uses along or in proximity to Bristol Road or within the rears of the properties and locate commercial uses near I-69 and Morrish Road.
 - Ensure commercial uses are of a size, scale, and character consistent with other development in the area.
18. Coordinate efforts to attract industrial development and work with other groups that are involved in economic development such as the Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce.
19. Develop new industrial uses so that they create minimal impacts on nearby uses.
20. Market sites for advanced manufacturing.
21. Coordinate existing programs and provide information on small business development programs.
22. Encourage General Motors to increase its operations at the Customer Care and Aftersales facility.
23. Work with Bishop Airport to solicit intermodal or other distribution industries to the city.

Natural Features

Goals

1. To enhance the quality of life in Swartz Creek by encouraging the conservation of natural amenities such as water bodies, floodplains, open space,

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wetlands, and woodlots

2. To enhance the limited amount of these amenities and make public access available to land adjacent to the Swartz Creek

Objectives

1. Link natural features and open space areas to create a 'greenway' or system of natural corridors and connect the features and areas with pathways.
2. Require detailed natural resource inventories and documentation of key features that will be protected and managed with large development proposals.
3. Educate landowners and developers on the importance of conserving natural areas and environmental conservation practices that contribute to natural systems.
4. In areas where acquisition is not feasible, the city should encourage land stewardship by private landowners, or donations to a conservancy or land trust organization.
5. Discourage land uses that have a risk of pollution from locating adjacent to significant natural features.
6. Protect the quality of waterways from damaging erosion, overuse and harmful impacts of development.
7. Work with developers to identify natural features and incorporate them into proposals that retain their ability to function as part of the natural system.
8. Require development within or adjacent to areas of significant natural features to be at a density and of a design that minimizes impacts and can promote human interaction.
9. Set higher development standards or flexible/creative zoning for areas with significant natural features so development is more sensitive to the surrounding environment.



10. Promote the planting of additional vegetation that complements existing natural areas that are to be retained.
11. Encourage local botanical societies, garden clubs, and individuals to sponsor and maintain specific areas within the overall landscape development plan for such areas.
12. Restrict development of important natural areas and/or features through zoning, private open space, conservation easements, purchase by conservancies, or public acquisition.
13. Encourage the preservation and enhancement of key natural areas for wildlife habitats as well as for passive recreational areas and walking pathways.
14. Encourage protection of floodplains, wetlands, and other environmental features when reviewing development proposals. Prohibit or significantly limit development that would disturb or impact floodplains or wetlands.
15. Integrate walking paths, community gardens, and other desirable amenities with natural areas.
16. Consider innovative solutions for conservation and environmentally sustainable practises, such as energy reclamation from storm out-falls and dams.
17. Promote the concepts of sustainability by:
 - Reducing required vehicle travel and congestion.
 - Promoting or requiring building and development designs that conserve energy and recycle.
 - Promoting or requiring of higher densities, mixed uses, and walkability.
 - Reducing water consumption and energy consumption in new developments and in the public realm.
 - Reducing waste production.

Transportation

Goal

1. To create a safe, balanced, and coordinated multi-modal transportation system adequate to accom-

modate the current and future needs of Swartz Creek

Objectives

1. Continue the implementation of the non-motorized trail plan.
2. Seek ways to fund the 20 year street plan.
3. Complete non-motorized transportation links between downtown Swartz Creek, schools, the General Business Districts, and neighborhoods.
4. Ensure adequate provisions for the on-going maintenance of pedestrian pathways.
5. Ensure off-street parking areas serving commercial, industrial, multiple-family and condominium residential developments and recreation centers in the City should be of adequate size, connected to adjacent uses and buildings, and developed in a manner that is aesthetically pleasing.
6. Coordinate long-range traffic projections and programming of needs with MDOT, Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission, and adjacent communities.
7. Require traffic impact studies, where deemed necessary, as part of the development review process for compliance with accepted standards and to determine improvements needed to offset the direct impact of a development.
8. Utilize a series of tools to manage traffic and limit congestion and minimize the need to pave or widen roads. Tools may include road and pedestrian connections between subdivisions, coordinated signals, access management.
9. Encourage alternative modes of transportation (including pedestrian, bicycle, ride sharing), where practical, utilizing design that promotes, rather than prevents, their use.
10. Link new subdivisions with existing residential areas to form neighborhoods, including street and pathway connections.



11. Ensure roadway systems are appropriate for designed speeds and the character of the residential neighborhood.
12. Require non-motorized paths to be installed within all new residential developments and to link residents to other components of the city's non-motorized transportation system.
13. Apply contemporary access management standards, including spacing of driveways and intersections, minimum sight distances, and use of shared access systems, to help preserve road capacity and improve safety along main corridors.
14. Link parking areas and provide shared access points to reduce the potential for crashes, promote more efficient traffic flows, improve the aesthetics of the streetscape, and promote safe travel between different businesses.
15. Encourage the use of shared parking lots, where appropriate, by businesses or uses that have different peak parking demands.
16. Implement a complete streets design requirement that requires a streetscape, pedestrian facilities, and traffic calming measures along all new corridors and in front of new development.
17. Encourage long-term regional mass transit in the form of rapid bus or light rail to meet long term needs.

Community Facilities and Services

Goal

1. To continue to provide the quality of life that Swartz Creek City residents have come to expect by offering public facilities and services to meet current and future demands

Objectives

1. Provide public and encourage private community facilities in size, character, function and location suitable to their users.
2. Assist and guide community organizations and citizen groups in their efforts to provide needed community facilities and services that benefit the

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community.

3. Promote the use of the Civic Center and downtown areas for community events and activities.
4. Maintain a high level of public safety services to ensure property and personal safety.
5. Promote shared and underground stormwater systems amongst developments to reduce environmental impacts, land consumption, and maintenance issues.
6. Pursue regional watershed planning with neighboring communities, state, and county agencies.
7. Provide assistance or information to residents and neighborhood organizations on practices to protect water quality and wetlands, maintenance of open space, and storm water facilities, etc.
8. Communicate information of interest to residents through the city's web page and newsletters.
9. Continue efforts to provide quality refuse and yard waste pickup, as well as brush chipping and recycling.



Recreation

Goal

To provide a comprehensive system of public and private parks, recreation facilities and open space throughout the City that is accessible to residents, and to enhance the quality of life for all residents

Objectives

1. Explore opportunities to provide for the passive and active recreational needs of all residents.
2. Maintain and upgrade existing parks to meet the needs of the community in accordance with the parks and recreation plan.
3. Maintain the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
4. Evaluate options for acquiring future recreational sites based on the expectations of City residents in the future as they become available or additional

studies are completed and funding becomes available.

5. Conduct regular evaluations of current facilities in comparison to the needs and level of residential and employment population.
6. Promote the development of recreation facilities by private sources, non-profit organizations, clubs, and schools.
7. Explore opportunities for joint recreational services with other groups including schools, churches, surrounding communities, and organizations.
8. Encourage development of usable open space within new residential subdivisions.
9. Ensure private open space will be maintained through specific agreements or subdivision/condominium documents.
10. Utilize zoning, subdivision, and site plan review to protect the character of lands less suitable for development and to encourage residential developers to provide usable open space for property owners or tenants.
11. Preserve and/or restore areas with unique natural features, such as trees, forests, natural drainage areas, and nature trails as a way of providing passive recreation opportunities.
12. Plan and develop recreational facilities as multi-use facilities, where feasible.
13. Consider pocket-parks or community gardens in new or existing neighborhoods and downtown.
14. Evaluate the potential to create user interaction points with the Swartz Creek for the purpose of recreation or education.
15. Work with non-profits to perform maintenance and/or upgrade recreation facilities.



Chapter Four Critical Issues

Downtown

Downtown is situated around the intersection of Miller Road and Morrish Road. This area was traditionally Swartz Creek's main business area. Downtown is comprised of older buildings and businesses that are mostly locally-owned and not affiliated with national retail chains.



Downtown maintains high occupancy and a mixture of rent and land values. However, limited parking and space for business expansion has constrained growth. Consequently, the physical condition of the area has declined and its importance as a retail and business center is not as great as it was in the past. Furthermore, the buildings can be problematic because of their age and unique construction. While offering multiple floors in some cases, changes in building codes can actually make the use of these sites financially burdensome.

The declining downtown influence in Swartz Creek, if not adequately addressed in a timely manner, could result in a significant change in the character of this area. What used to be a defining characteristic and center of activity for this community could become an undesirable area for visitors and residents. Steps must be taken to build upon existing strengths and overcome weaknesses in downtown Swartz Creek. If new residential growth occurs in Swartz Creek and surrounding areas,

so too will the number of competing businesses. Major and national retailers should be attracted to nearby highway commercial areas. However, citizens have expressed a desire for the personalized attention and unique businesses and residences offered in small downtowns.

Alternative uses for these buildings, or investment incentives to attract diverse uses to downtown Swartz Creek, could bring back commercial and service users to this area and prevent further decline of the downtown. While the downtown cannot compete directly with other commercial developments in the region, it has the potential to be a location for specialty commercial, office, service, and residential uses that would help it become a pedestrian-friendly niche business area that is based upon a consistent theme.



The Downtown Development Authority and the city should work to bring more residents and businesses to this area through programmed infill and new developments. Public parking and integrated, complete streets must be a priority. Furthermore, the DDA should work with the city to promote or require 'traditional' building construction and design that includes: multi-story buildings, construction to the right-of-way, the use of brick or other durable materials that reflect historical uses, alleys, rear or side yard parking, and mixed uses within buildings.

Density, bulk, and parking requirements should be flexible and viewed or tallied on a district-wide basis. The city should also consider allowing on-street parking.

Initial public input leans towards reuse of the old Sunoco gas station for public purposes, potentially including parking, a market venue/plaza, and restrooms. The city-owned properties on Paul Fortino are to be

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investigated by the DDA for uses that could include dense housing, parking, and general mixed use. The Morrish Road corridor, north of Fortino, is expected to function as a transition area between the traditional downtown and more auto-dominated Northtown.

Northtown

The area of the Morrish Road/I-69 highway interchange presents a significant opportunity as a development area. This area, including all or part of the raceway, offers the greatest potential for beneficial growth for the city. The northeast quadrant contains a new Meijer store and outlots, while the Genesee County Road Commission, Cage Fieldhouse, a mini-storage, and several single-family dwellings on larger lots occupy the northwest quadrant.

The north side of this interchange offers opportunities for a mix of developments, including office, service, and retail of varying types and densities that can compliment the new retail. Such development can contribute positively to DDA's tax base. An integrated and well-planned mixed-use development would offer an attractive setting for future residents and would provide a different arrangement of land uses than are offered elsewhere in the community.

The City should continue to work with developers and the DDA to ensure that the road improvements and any aesthetic improvements meet the goals of the city. The status of the existing bridge across I-69 is of concern due to its limited two-lane capacity. It is crucial that the city work with the MDOT and private interests to widen this bridge. In the mean time, development impact should be strongly considered and mitigated as best as possible to ensure function of the interchange. If capacity is compromised, the city should ensure that development priority is given to the north end of the Meijer site as a result of the approved Planned Unit Development Plan and infrastructure contribution that has been required and contributed by the owner interest of that site. Given the eventual widening that is expected, the city should not reject development based

on level-of-service reductions unless studies indicate such development would make the interchange hazardous or otherwise unreasonably safe.

The Morrish Road interchange on I-69 serves as one of the key entrances into Swartz Creek. Development at this location will need to be of a high-quality and attractive design so visitors are presented with a positive experience as they enter the community. Development should continue to be carried out as a Planned Unit Development District (PUD) to ensure a logical and appropriate arrangement of commercial and possible residential uses. A PUD also provides the added benefit of allowing the buildings to be compatible in scale, design and character.

The south side of the interchange, including Morrish Road, should be integrated with the downtown by street, non-motorized, and design connections. This area should be of a mixed use and include a strong residential component that will help support downtown.

The City should also seek a method to cooperate with the Genesee County Road Commission to eliminate the facility's driveway on Morrish Road and relocate it to Bristol Road as development progresses.

Winchester Village

The Winchester Village plat is the oldest, large-scale subdivision in the City at approximately sixty years old. This neighborhood was one of the first complete, uniform housing developments to be completed with sewer, water, paved streets, sidewalks and street trees. The Village accommodates approximately 2,000 residents and has a large impact on city-wide housing values, demographics, and services.

Because of the age of this subdivision, many of the public and private investments (such as infrastructure, landscaping, and housing materials) are begin-



ning to depreciate or deteriorate. While private investments, in conjunction with code enforcement, have ensured the housing stock and sidewalks are in good order, other public infrastructure is deteriorating.

The city should seek revenue sources to enact the 20 year street plan and replace the aging water distribution infrastructure of Winchester Village. The long term viability of this neighborhood will be a determining factor of the quality of life in the City of Swartz Creek. If the public infrastructure (including local streets, Winshall Park, Syring School, and the street trees), does not receive investment, it is likely residents may choose to relocate, resulting in a very negative effect on the neighborhood and community at-large.

South Winchester

The area west of the middle school was once the target of many proposed developments, but this site is faced with several physical constraints. The land is not adequately served by utilities or transportation, and some of the property is located within a flood-prone area/wetland.

The property is privately owned and given the physical constraints, this site would be most appropriate for school uses, as well as active and passive recreation. The environmental and access issues related to the property will need to be addressed prior to development of this area for any other purpose. A detailed analysis of the area may discover opportunities for development that could be effectively integrated into the natural setting, thereby offering attractive and desirable residences.

The city should consider the possibility of integrating South Winchester with the Winchester Village neighborhood and Winshall Park as a natural area.

The city may also find an opportunity to work with the school district to develop this area as another school building site or shared recreational/athletic area.

Miller Neighborhood

Much of the land in the vicinity of Miller Road and Elms Road is currently developed as a Planned Unit Development.



The PUD has proven to be successful at attracting new commercial development to this area of Swartz Creek, while integrating this development with the Springbrook neighborhoods, Elms Park, and the planned assisted living. A majority of this land has been developed, however the remaining properties on the south side of Miller are still expected to be developed in the near future. In doing so, the city should ensure that access points for all development are limited to a minimum, perhaps two, on Miller Road. A signal is recommended for the western entrance of Kroger.

As the available undeveloped land in the Miller Neighborhood becomes scarce, there is pressure to make additional land available for commercial use, including areas to the immediate west. The land to the west is occupied primarily by new two-family dwellings, single-family dwellings, and several institutional uses. These uses form a mature, attractive and healthy residential neighborhood. The area serves as a highly effective transition between the commercial development in the Miller PUD and Downtown.

Allowing the Miller commercial district to expand to the west would unnecessarily compromise the well-being of the residential neighborhood. It would also result in a linear form of commercial development (commercial corridor) that will blend into Downtown, further compromising the future viability of downtown Swartz Creek and creating traffic congestion.

The loss of a stable residential neighborhood and its

positive contribution to the character of the city would impact the high quality of development that is being pursued for other parts of the city. For the above reasons, the existing west boundary of the Miller Neighborhood PUD should be retained as the west boundary of commercial development.

Pearl Harbor Interchange

The Pearl Harbor Interchange, so named for the Interstate designation between Flint and Perry, MI, is comprised of the undeveloped land between Elms Road and the Baptist Church lands to the east. The development of this area for commercial use is intended to serve as a relief valve for service or office developments that cannot be accommodated by the Miller Neighborhood.

This area represents a logical and contiguous expansion of the Miller Neighborhood development area and would avoid the need to consider the much less desirable option of expanding non-residential uses into the stable residential area west of the Miller Neighborhood. This area could provide for services to the east end residents of Heritage Village as well as the users of the interstate and the trade school, ITT. The area is comprised of large lots that can be developed individually or assembled for larger types of development. A larger scale or consolidated PUD is recommended.

The development of this area will present several challenges. Access will need to be coordinated so that the capacity of Miller Road is not unduly impacted. This was largely accomplished when ITT installed the left turn lane. The use of shared driveways, linked parking areas, service drives and other access management strategies will be helpful in ensuring that the traffic generated by the developments will be dealt with in a safe and efficient manner. Signals at the interchange may be required prior to rezoning/approval of additional traffic generators. The area shall also need pedestrian facilities that can co-exist with the large amount of traffic generated at this interchange.

A PUD plan is recommended to create a unified traffic

ingress and egress plan, design standards, and integration or buffering from the non-commercial uses to the east.

The city should direct all future development to the north side of Miller Road (Tallmadge Court) and eliminate the possibility of commercial development encroaching on the institutional and residential uses that exist along Miller Road east of Tallmadge Court and the trade school site.

Development of this area should not occur until the Miller Neighborhood has exhausted all undeveloped properties. Development should also be done in such a way to integrate Elms Park to Miller Road and the new uses, including a recreational trail.

Walsh Neighborhood

The Walsh Neighborhood is comprised of the vacant acreage north of Miller Road between Fairchild Street and Seymour Road. This area borders the school campus, Downtown, the Sports Creek Raceway, and Swartz Creek Estates. As such, it offers many opportunities and challenges for development.

Recently, the raceway closed. The city should consider integrating the raceway property and Morrish Road access to the undeveloped portions of this site. Doing so will increase the footprint of developable land and expand the access points to include Miller and Seymour Roads.

If such an undertaking is not feasible, the City should pursue the construction of a single family neighborhood that likewise integrates with the surrounding neighborhoods and compliments the Winchester Village neighborhood to the south. Such development should include potential to integrate with a redevelopment of the raceway as outlined. In order for such a neighborhood to maintain its long term viability, heavy attention should be paid to community amenities and durable materials.

Lastly, the school had considered this neighborhood for a new building project. This appears unlikely but was highly desirable during the planning phases as a way to expand the school campus and strengthen the area.

Senior Housing

As identified in the Community Profile section, the senior population in Swartz Creek will continue to grow as a percentage of the overall population, especially during economically tough times that drive working age families away. This means that additional housing opportunities will be needed. Zoning incentives must be provided to allow for the development of housing specifically for seniors. There are few large areas of vacant land remaining in the city, especially those that can accommodate medium- to high-density residential uses. Characteristics of such a site would include adequate size, good road access, and proximity to shopping and services.

The site to the immediate south of the Swartz Creek Estates manufactured housing community meets all three of these criteria. The site is approximately 40 acres in area and is large enough for a sizeable housing development. It has good road access to Seymour and Miller Roads, is in close proximity to Downtown and commercial shopping areas, and is also a short distance from the senior center and other services of the Civic Campus. This site could be developed as either a senior apartment complex or manufactured housing retirement community featuring high quality development, paths or sidewalks, a clubhouse, and open space.

Senior housing should also be considered in a high density or mixed use format in Downtown. Such housing could be integrated into a redevelopment of the Mary Crapo School or a new landmark building.

Other Issues

1. The General Motors property at the east end of

the city is primarily used for warehousing. Further decline of industrial activity is possible, but consolidation of operations on this site could also lead to an increase in activity. As of 2015, operations at this facility include a paint shop, but the front office has been removed. If the Swartz Creek site is selected for an increase in operations, the city should consider expansion of the site onto other industrially planned parcels, or possibly even residentially owned parcels. The city should incorporate best practice design, pedestrian, buffering/integration, transportation, and aesthetic components into any such expansion project.

Conversely, the loss of this important tax base would be a major concern for the city, unless the site is immediately reused for industrial or commercial purposes. If vacated, the city must seek state or federally funded grants for cleanup to begin the redevelopment process.

2. The residential properties fronting onto Morrish Road, to the south of the entry drive to Sports Creek Raceway, are currently used for single-family residences. These properties are very large and deep. Given their size and location between Northtown and Downtown, the properties would be appropriate for Downtown development or possibly commercial development.

The Morrish Road/I-69 interchange is one of the key entrances into the city of Swartz Creek. Therefore, the manner in which these properties are developed will be very important. Design guidelines should be prepared to ensure that the developments on these properties are attractive and serve as a gateway between the activity associated with the freeway and Downtown.

The city should pursue a PUD or zoning overlay concept that encourages or requires buildings to be multi-story with retail on the ground floor and residential uses above. The building design guidelines should encourage traditional era design and materials. Buildings should be constructed to

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the right-of-way line with no side yard setbacks, should include alleys, and allow rear parking only.

The timing and types of uses developed on these properties may be somewhat dependent on the activity level at the raceway site, Downtown, or Northtown. The unlikely addition of other entertainment at the raceway (e.g. slot machines; other gaming activities) would generate increased commercial development in the vicinity and result in such development moving forward more quickly.

The development of these parcels should only be allowed to occur at the ends of the residential district to avoid “spot zoning” of individual commercial uses between homes.

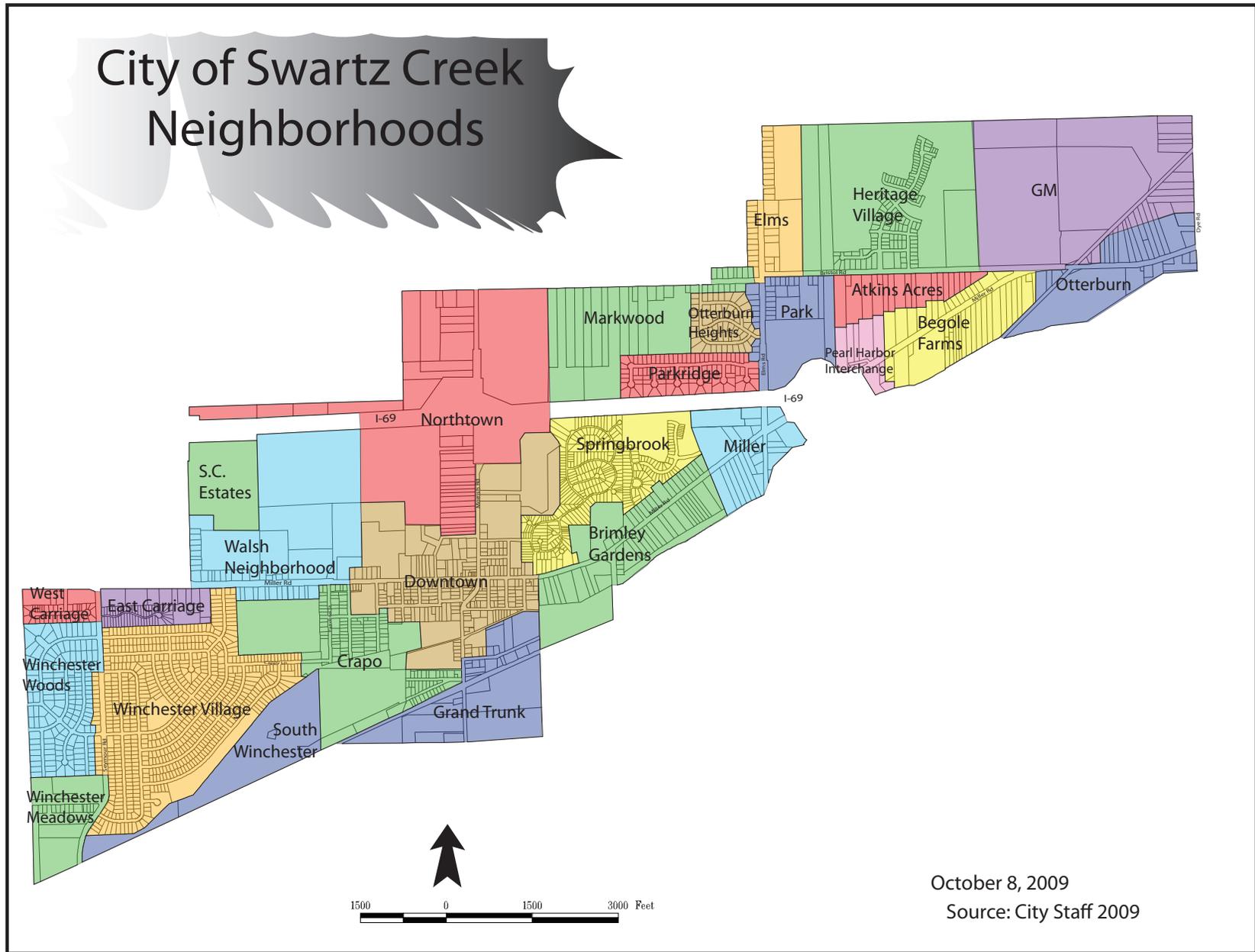
Concerning the raceway proper, this site has been evaluated by the public and found to have much flexibility in its future use. While heavy industrial and some light industrial uses were found undesirable based upon community impact (including outdoor storage, scrap facilities, storage, and related uses), job creating uses in enclosed buildings are desirable. Office, entertainment, and similar uses that contribute economic activity without stressing services/infrastructure, are preferred. More intense uses, such as retail, may be accommodated. Pending the most likely scenario of use for this site, the community should further investigate the most ideal way to integrate (or buffer) downtown and adjacent properties.

3. A consistent approach is required for the development of non-motorized transportation facilities in the city. Swartz Creek has provided walkways, bike lanes and sidewalks in certain areas. However, there is a need for a more coordinated approach to providing non-motorized transportation facilities and linking all parts of the city with a system of such facilities. The city should continue to invest in non-motorized transportation and pursue the implementation of the “complete streets” philosophy in all new developments and large scale street repairs.

4. The City has endeavored to ensure that recent developments contribute toward the image of Swartz Creek as a high quality community. This philosophy should continue with future developments, redevelopment of private and public uses, the activities of the DDA, and the upgrading of community services and facilities, including non-motorized transportation facilities, and park and recreation services and facilities.
5. The provision of regional services is important to the community. As of 2015, the city is currently engaged in the provision of joint services for building/code enforcement, fire, sewer treatment, water treatment, storm water management, and traffic signal maintenance. The provision of joint police services is under review. The city should continue to consider the sharing of services in the instances where doing so could increase the level of service and/or reduce costs.

Given the integrated nature of our regional economy, housing market, transportation network, and service needs, some issues may be best addressed at the regional level. As the county continues to expand and change, there may be opportunities to address other regional needs with regional solutions. Such services include but are not limited to police, park services, and traffic.

6. The city should continue to hire and develop a workforce of the highest quality. Swartz Creek has a history of developing a strong workforce using local talent and should continue to do so. A new personnel policy is expected by 2016, including a code of ethics. This handbook should be reviewed regularly to ensure employees, officers, and other officials maintain the highest standard of integrity and dedication to service in the public realm.



October 8, 2009
Source: City Staff 2009

Chapter Five Future Land Use

The City of Swartz Creek Master Plan includes a future land use map that will be used to help determine where land uses are to be developed. This chapter, including the future land use map, will be used as a guide in the decision-making process for future modifications to the city's zoning ordinance, consideration of development proposals, rezoning requests, variance requests, and other planning and development concerns that may arise.

The future land use plan is a representation of how the city will appear when fully developed. It does not imply that all of the changes should occur at once. While the Future Land Use Map designates all parcels and lots with a specific land use category, the zoning does not have to be changed immediately. A key factor to consider is the timing of land use changes. Some uses that may be desired in 20 years may be inappropriate today. Likewise, this plan does not call for the immediate elimination of all nonconforming land uses. Those uses should be changed over time so as not to create a hardship for current property owners. This does not mean that the future land use direction must be ignored, but rather tempered with regard to implementation.

Development will proceed in a manner and timeframe that is consistent with policies on the environment, infrastructure, and other matters. Deviations from the future land use map should be carefully considered to ensure that general consistency is maintained when making decisions on planning and development matters. Decisions that are in direct conflict with the future land use map, or which could undermine the long-term objectives of the community, should be avoided.

Factors Considered

The future land use map was prepared to reflect input received during the public participation process, dis-

cussions with government officials, existing land use patterns, and the consideration of accepted planning principles. This input and other factors affecting land use patterns were taken into consideration in preparing the future land use map and the plan, including:

Existing Land Use. Extensive changes to the existing land use pattern are not proposed. A significant amount of the city's land has been developed for residential purposes. The locations of many existing commercial and industrial developments are appropriate and will continue to serve as the primary business centers. The community land use patterns have evolved in a relatively orderly manner and will be built upon, with slight modification, rather than altered in a significant fashion.

Existing Zoning. Existing zoning designations were a factor considered in the future land use plan. There is no "vested interest" that guarantees zoning will not change, and zoning changes are suggested by this plan. However, such changes must be carefully considered to ensure the general development arrangement remains consistent and landowners will retain a reasonable use of their land.

Existing Master Plan. The existing master plan was prepared and adopted by Planning Commission in 2004. The land use plan contained in the existing plan has been re-evaluated based on current trends and conditions.

Infrastructure and Public Facilities/Services. The density of residential uses and the designation of land for industrial and commercial development are dependent on the availability and capacity of the community's infrastructure. Accessibility to and the capacity of the road network limits the type and intensity of uses that may be served in an area of the city without adversely impacting traffic operations. The proximity to community facilities such as schools and recreational facilities determines the areas that are especially attractive for residential development, while the level of police and fire protection limits the range and quality

of service provided to all land uses.

Land Use Patterns in the Region. Land use patterns for the surrounding areas and the Genesee County region were considered to ensure that the new plan would be compatible with those patterns. In general Genesee County governments have promoted a low-density, subsidized style of development that makes redevelopment and higher densities a challenge for Swartz Creek. It is imperative that the City be cognizant of changes around its borders and regional trends.

Desires of the City. The land use pattern desired by city officials and property owners has been an integral consideration in the development of the future land use plan. The public provided input during two public open houses.

Future Land Use Categories

All Residential Categories. The predominant land use in Swartz Creek is residential. The need for diversity in housing types will increase due to changing demographics (aging, smaller households). As current residents age, some will desire to downsize and stay in the area. Also, a variety of housing is needed for younger families, single parent households, and individuals. The average household size has generally declined in the past twenty years but appears to be stabilizing.

In addition, the increased number of households, relative to the size of the population has created a need for more housing. While there does not appear to be a regional demand for new housing at the moment, provisions remain in the future land use map to accommodate local population expansion should it occur.

Residential densities recommended by the future land use plan are based on factors such as the size of available vacant parcels, the existing transportation facilities, public infrastructure, and existing development patterns.

A variety of other uses that serve the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods are also allowed as special land uses in all of the residential categories. These uses include neighborhood institutional uses, such as small churches, government buildings and elementary schools, parks and open spaces including golf courses.

The location, size, scale, and character of any non-residential development must be complementary to the neighborhood it serves. In addition, these uses must be positioned so that they do not negatively impact the residential areas that surround them. They must be situated along a roadway that can accommodate the expected increase in traffic volumes, and can be supported by available public services.

1. Low Density Single-Family Residential

This area is intended to be developed primarily for single-family detached dwellings. Density of development will be



up to three point nine (3.9) units per acre, assuming that all ordinance requirements can be met. Other uses include group homes, day care facilities, and home occupations. The current zoning district this applies to is the R-1 zoning district.

2. Medium Density Single-Family Residential

This area is intended to be developed primarily for single-family detached dwellings, single-family attached dwellings such as linked condominium units, and



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two-family dwellings. Density of development will be up to seven (7.5) units per acre, assuming that all ordinance requirements can be met. Applicable zoning districts are currently the R-2, R-3, and R-4.

3. Senior Housing

The site designated for senior housing is immediately south of the Swartz Creek Estates manufactured housing community. The intent at this location is to develop either senior apartments, duplexes, or a senior manufactured housing community. If not developed for senior housing, the site should be developed for low density, single-family housing.



The best way to accomplish this objective will be through the use of the PUD (Planned Unit Development) option or PMSHDD (Planned Manufactured Seniors Housing Development District). The City has successfully utilized this zoning technique on other projects and it has led to higher quality development. This zoning option will also provide the guarantees necessary to ensure that the project is maintained for senior housing.

4. High Density Residential

This area is intended to be developed primarily for multiple family dwellings such as townhouses and stacked townhouses,



apartments, senior housing, and other forms of linked dwelling units. Other residential uses such as single-family detached dwellings, single-family attached dwelling including linked condominium units, and two-family dwellings may also be permitted where appropriate, such as within a planned residential unit development, and manufactured housing/mobile homes within planned mobile home parks.

Areas designated as High Density Residential were selected based primarily on existing higher density development, close proximity to major thoroughfares and commercial areas, and the existence of larger parcels of land that can accommodate this type of development. Density of development will be up to nine (9) units per acre, assuming that all ordinance requirements can be met. The RM-1 district is the applicable zoning classification for these areas.

5. General Business

This designation is intended for a variety of retail and service businesses. The uses in this designation are



not intended to compete with larger shopping centers found in other communities that serve city residents. Instead, they are primarily intended to serve Swartz Creek residents who do not wish to drive to the more distant commercial/office centers.

Typical uses would include smaller general merchandising/retail establishments such as convenience stores, banks, drycleaners, video rental shops, beauty/barber shops, and small retail strips. Such uses are to be accommodated in the Neighborhood Business District. The Miller Neighborhood and Northtown areas, among other current commercial areas, allow for larg-

er scale and more intense uses and are represented by the General Business District zoning classification.

6. Mixed Use

Lands designated Mixed Use, such as the Northtown area and Downtown Central Business District, are intended for a variety of uses in addition to General Business or Central Business District.

Northtown is likely to be developed out for general business district and office uses. This area is planned for large user business that fit within the GBD and O-1 zoning classifications.

The downtown area would reflect CBD zoning with uses mixed within buildings and/or including residential uses and commercial uses in close proximity.

The Mixed Use designation would allow sites at prime locations in the city, in terms of proximity to major roadways, shopping and services, to be utilized to their maximum potential. It would also help create an area of concentrated development that is easily accessible by both vehicles and pedestrians. This area should be represented by the PUD overlay.

7. Office

While there is not a high demand for office space in the city as of 2015, there is a cluster of such uses on the east end of the city. Vacant properties in the vicinity are designated for the inclusion of additional office uses and should be developed cohesively. The office uses are located along Miller Road, possibly extending north on Dye Road, near Flint Township's prominent office district. This district could provide valuable employment and services to the community without placing additional demands on infrastructure and traffic circulation.

These lands should be required to be developed with high quality building and site designs and the quality of construction should ensure that the resulting uses

are an asset to the community. This area is represented by the O-1 Office zoning classification.

8. Light Industrial

The lands along Morrish Road at the south limit of the city are intended for light industrial purposes. The subject lands are currently occupied by a mix of light industrial uses, including manufacturing uses, warehousing, wholesale establishments and other uses that are low intensity in character, require a location that offers sufficient room for their operations, and do not generally create detrimental impacts on surrounding uses. These uses provide some employment opportunities and are positive contributors to the city's tax base. This district is represented by the I-1 Light Industrial zoning classification.

9. Heavy Industrial

This designation applies to manufacturing and industrial uses that are intensive in nature and have the potential to create impacts on other uses. The only area in Swartz Creek that is affected by this designation is the General Motors property that occupies a significant amount of land in the northeast corner of the city.

While the industrial operations on this property have been reduced in recent years, the Plan would allow the reestablishment of industrial activities at this location. Historically, General Motors has been integral to the economic health and well being of the greater Flint area. While Swartz Creek's economy has been less dependent on General Motors, the city recognizes the importance of the company to the region.

The intent of this designation is to allow industrial uses such as research and development, wholesale and warehouse activities, and industrial uses which manufacture, compound, process, package, assemble, and/or treat finished or semi-finished products from previously prepared materials. Uses that process raw material, such as foundries, will only be allowed in very defined and limited portions of this area, and where

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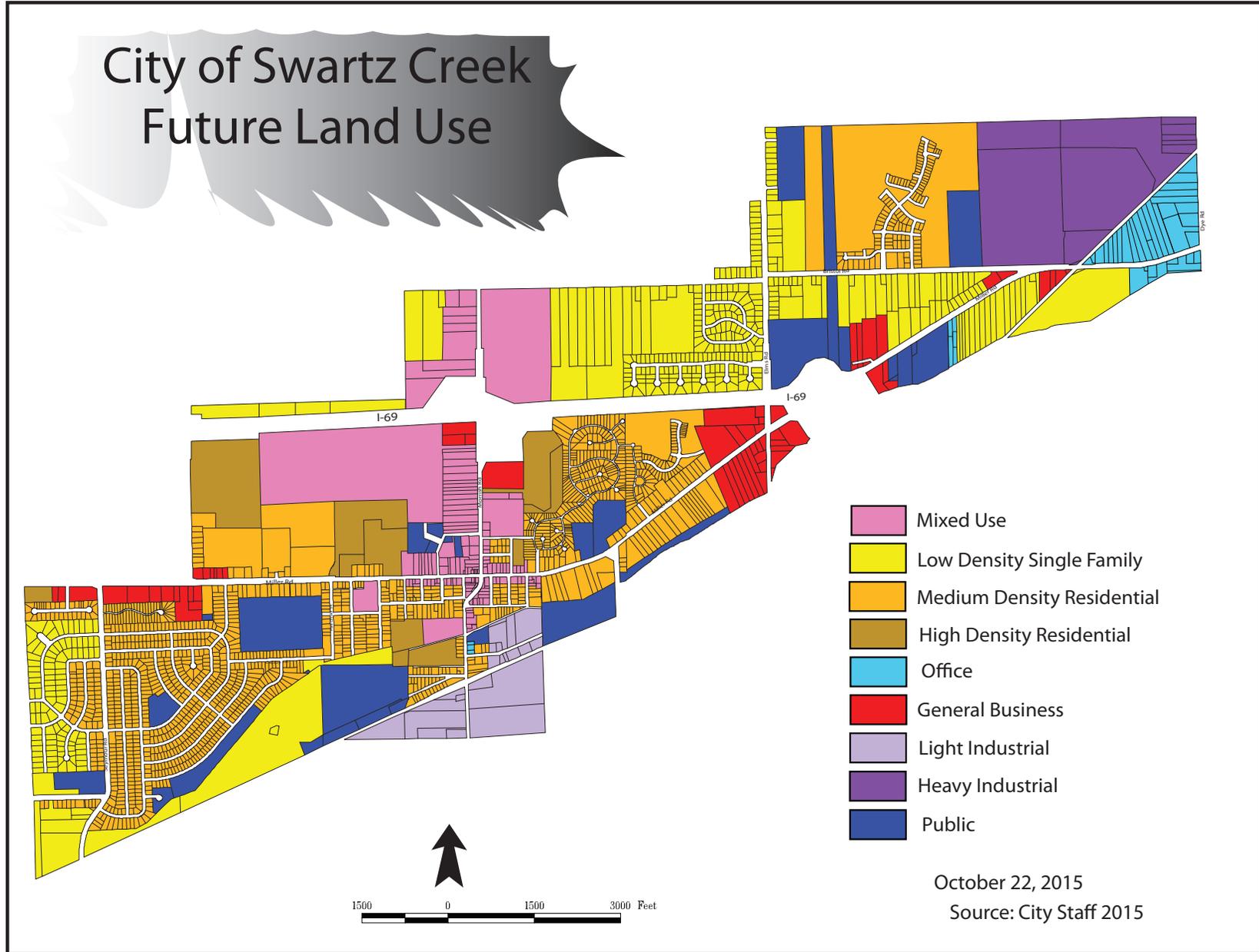
such operations will not have an adverse impact on other land uses.

New industrial developments and expansions of existing industries will be designed to ensure they are an asset to the community. This plan recognizes the important role that the transportation infrastructure in the vicinity has and intends to accommodate desired expansions of such uses. This district is represented by the I-2 Heavy Industrial zoning classification.



10. Public

The Public designation permits municipal and non-profit uses that offer services to Swartz Creek residents and businesses. These uses include the city hall, as well as public safety, public service, and public recreation facilities. Small sized institutional uses can be located in any residential category, and are not shown on the future land use map.



Chapter Six Implementation

In order for the City’s Master Plan to be an effective document for the next five to ten years, steps are herein described to guide community leaders towards implementation. To that end, this chapter provides a summary of the recommendations described in the previous sections of the Master Plan. It also acts as a quick reference for the Planning Commission to evaluate its progress toward implementation of the plan.

The following table is divided into four categories including the Plan Recommendation column, which refers back to specific issues identified in the Master Plan. Several actions are suggested to accomplish each recommendation. The body or bodies that should be responsible for carrying out the suggested actions are identified, and the expected timing for the completion of the actions is also noted

Plan Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility	Timing
Plan Overall and Future Land Use			
Schedule Review of Master Plan and Implementation	Review the Master Plan and prepare a report for the City Council on its implementation.	Planning Commission; City Council	< Five Years
	Hold a joint meeting with City Council to re-familiarize them with the Master Plan and Planning Commission roles. This is especially important as new members are elected or appointed. The joint meeting is also a good way to develop policy consensus between the two boards.		
Implement Future Land Use Plan	Amend the Zoning Ordinance to address new issues and recommendations detailed in this or an amended Master Plan.	Planning Commission; City Council	On-going
	Initiate appropriate rezonings, especially where the future land use map recommends a lower intensity use than current zoning.		
	Refer to the Master Plan when considering rezonings to ensure the conditions upon which the plan was based are still relevant and the timing for the change is appropriate (the Future Land Use Map is a 10+ year plan).		
Community Character			
Provide transition between land uses	Provide for appropriate transitional land uses in the Zoning Ordinance to reduce potential conflicts and maintain investment in properties.	Planning Commission; City Council	On-going
	Prohibit commercial uses from intruding into residential areas along Miller Road, west of the Miller Neighborhood PUD District.		
Establish standards for nonconforming situations	Welcome nonconforming land uses to continue but not be allowed to expand.	Planning Commission; City Council	On-going
	Encourage nonconforming sites to gradually upgrade and be brought into greater conformance with the Zoning Ordinance.		

Plan Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility	Timing
Regulate infill development	Enable home building in Winchester Woods by providing an engineered drainage system, unimproved roads, and sanitary sewer, including public workshops to develop a plan.	Planning Commission; DDA	Short-term; on-going
	Develop architectural design standards for downtown and the neighborhoods around it that will require more traditional features.		
	Promote infill and dense housing in and near downtown to help revitalize the downtown business area and activity associated with it.		
	Develop design standards for structures near downtown Swartz Creek that complement the historic character of the community while respecting the needs of modern businesses.		
Develop building setbacks and design standards	Enforce setback and site design standards that respect the existing nature of the community and promote developments that are high quality and complementary to the city character.	Planning Commission; Developers; DDA	Short-term; on-going
	Require building materials be durable high quality.		
	Require business signs that adequately serve businesses but are subtle, and offer materials, color and landscaping that complements the building or district.		
	Require landscaping that enhances the development site along the street and within the parking lot.		
	Use landscaping to screen and buffer sites.		
	Use the minimum amount of site lighting necessary to provide safe passage while avoiding negative off-site glare.		
	Consider “build-to” lines, mixed vertical uses, and minimum heights in certain areas.		
Encourage maintenance of existing buildings	Maintain buildings and sites with a neat and orderly appearance on all sides.	Building Dept; PC; DDA; City Council	Long-term; On-going
	Increase code enforcement activities		
Provide a comprehensive pathway and pedestrian network throughout the community	Require all new construction to provide pedestrian pathways along the roadway and require linkages from the building to the pathway.	Planning Commission, Department of Public Services	On-going
	Continue efforts to create pedestrian walkways throughout the community, as part of an overall network (see the city park plan).		

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Plan Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility	Timing
Coordinate the appearance of the community.	Establish a common theme for streetscape improvements and street signs along major streets that provide access to the city for visitors.	Planning Commission; City Council; DDA	Long-term; on-going
	Require high quality of design and aesthetic appearance of developments along main streets, including Miller Road, Elms Road, Morrish Road.		
	Develop design standards for structures near downtown Swartz Creek that complement the historic character of the community while respecting the needs of modern businesses.		
Ensure that entryways into the city create a positive impression of Swartz Creek and match the historic character of the community.	Work with surrounding communities to establish land use, transportation, and site design & development standards that are consistent with Swartz Creek's.	Planning Commission; DDA	On-going
	Establish a consistent sign program for each of the primary entryways into the city; one that is consistent with the streetscape and gives an image of quality.		
	Maintain the residential uses on Miller Road, to the west of the Miller Neighborhood.		
	Develop design guidelines and regulations to guide commercial development along Morrish Road, south of Sports Creek Raceway, to ensure attractive development and as transition into downtown Swartz Creek.		
	Develop design guidelines and regulations to guide commercial mixed use development of Northtown and incorporate provisions to ensure it is developed as a gateway into the community.		
Traffic Circulation and Parking			
Implement 20 year street program	Ascertain what, if any, additional sources of state funding can sustainably be contributed to the program.	City Council	Short-term
	Determine what level of repair the community is willing and able to contribute for maintenance, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.		
	Implement assessments and/or a voted levy to fund the program.		
	Prioritize major street projects that are eligible for federal funds, including those streets that serve a strategic purpose in accessing schools and neighborhoods, such as Fairchild, Winston, Worchester, and Cappy.		

Plan Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility	Timing
Maintain safe traffic circulation, speeds, and pedestrian safety throughout the city.	Maintain driveway spacing and location standards in the Zoning Ordinance.	Planning Commission; City Council	Short-term
	Provide safe pedestrian circulation when designing access and circulation for vehicles.		
	Continue implementation of the “complete streets” design concept.		
Downtown			
Create a lively commercial and living environment in Downtown Swartz Creek.	Develop an ongoing business recruitment program for Downtown.	PC; City Council; Business community: DDA	Long-term; On-going
	Develop new retail space in the downtown area to attract a greater concentration of tenants.		
	Develop additional housing in the downtown area to add to the customer base for retail businesses and to generate activity in the area.		
	Continue the facade improvement program offered by the DDA.		
Enhance character of downtown.	Establish downtown building and sign design requirements to create a unified, quality image.	PC; City Council; Business community: DDA	Long-term; On-going
Develop key properties	Demolish the Sunoco gas station and replace it. Public support exists for parking/plaza space able to support an open market and/or restrooms. A mixed use private development also has support.	PC; City Council; Business community: DDA	Short-term; On-going
	Consider use of the vacant property adjacent to the cemetery for public parking.		
	Hold the vacant property next to Chase Bank for private sector opportunities or public parking.		
	Consider housing or mixed uses on Paul Fortino.		
Local Services			
Strengthen housing and code compliance	Continue the rental inspection program.	City Council; Staff	Short-term; On-going
	Focus enforcement on neighborhood blight and structure issues, as well as community gateways with high traffic.		
	Consider assistance programs for older housing in need of updates.		
Police	Analyze the potential for regional provision of police service.	City Council	Short-term; On-going
	Focus efforts on ensuring a safe and orderly community for residents and visitors to city businesses and parking, both real and perceived.		
	Continue to provide residential interaction with programs such as Camp 911, Cops in the Park, vacation checks, and the Bike Rodeo.		

General services	Seek to increase office staff availability to the public by arranging flex office schedules, staggering lunches, and adjusting work weeks.	Staff	Short-term; On-going
	Develop and train the existing work force to plan for reliable succession.		

Using the Master Plan

The master plan is intended as a guide for city officials in land use, development, zoning, and capital improvement decisions. The City Council, Planning Commission, and the public should strive to ensure the continuous, consistent and effective use of this document. The master plan should be referenced and used to:

- Visualize what can be reasonably expected to occur - to provide some assurance and security with individual investment decisions.
- Review development proposals in concert with the master plan – to confirm that the proposal meets the goals and objectives of the master plan.
- Provide a basis for city initiated amendments to the zoning ordinance - to help realize plan goals.
- Review rezoning requests – to confirm the request is consistent with the city’s criteria to consider rezoning; including existing conditions, the future land use map, the appropriate timing of the change, consistency with the goals and policies of the master plan, and potential impacts on the city.

