

MENTOR
Township

MASTER PLAN

Adopted April 15, 2013

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DRAFT Report, April 9, 2013

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Preamble

The content of this document, adopted by the Mentor Township Board on April 15, 2013, represents the Mentor Township Master Plan. This master plan has been prepared under the authority of, and in accordance with, the requirements of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008.

Mentor Township's previous master plan was adopted as an Ordinance by the Township Board on December 16, 1969, and was amended by adding numerous goals in 1986. This newly adopted master plan replaces the Township's former master plan. Although this new Mentor Township Master Plan replaces the former plan, the goals included in the previous master plan remain relevant today and continue to represent the core values of the Township. The Zoning Resolution from the previously adopted Master Plan continues to be in effect and is included on the following page.

Zoning Resolution from the Previous Mentor Township Master Plan

ZONING RESOLUTION

Whereas, it is deemed desirable to encourage the use of lands and natural resources of Mentor Township in accordance with their character and adaptability, and to limit their improper use and

Whereas, it is deemed desirable to conserve property values, to avoid overcrowding of population, to reduce hazards to life and property, and to facilitate adequate provision for a system of transportation, sewage disposal, safe and adequate water supply, education, recreation and other public needs and

Whereas, it is deemed desirable to promote the orderly development of the Township and to do so under food standards, and

Whereas, it is deemed desirable to conserve the expenditure of funds for public improvements and services to conform with the most advantageous use of land, resources and properties, and

Whereas, Act 184 of the Public Acts of 1943, as amended, provides that the Township Board and any organized Township in the State of Michigan may provide for the establishment of zoning districts in the unincorporated portions of such Township within which districts to use of land for agriculture, forestry, recreation, residence, industry, trade and additional uses of land may be encouraged, regulated or prohibited, and other appropriate measures adopted as conditions may require, and

Whereas, it is deemed desirable in the interests of the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the inhabitants of Mentor Township to provide for the establishment of zoning districts and other measures as aforesaid,

NOW THEREFORE, in order that said Act may become operative in this Township in accordance with provisions of Section 2 of said Act, it is resolved that the Township Board of Mentor Township, Oscoda County, State of Michigan, hereby declares its intent to proceed under the provisions of Act 184 of the Public Acts of 1943, as amended.

It is further resolved that the Township Clerk cause this resolution to be published in Oscoda County News (a newspaper of general circulation in the township) within ten (10) days of passage.

Adopted: December 16, 1969 Regular Meeting

Chapter 1: Introduction and Executive Summary

Regional Setting

Mentor Township is located in the northeastern portion of Michigan’s Lower Peninsula. Comprising more than 140 square miles, the Township encompasses the southeast corner of Oscoda County (see **Location Map** on this page). The adjacent townships are Comins to the north, Mitchell and Curtis (Alcona County) to the east, Goodar and Rose (Ogemaw) to the south and Big Creek to the west. The unincorporated communities of Mio (the seat of Oscoda County government) and McKinley are located within the municipal limits Mentor Township.

State Highway 33 (M-33) runs along the western boundary of Mentor Township, providing access to adjacent communities in the region, including Grayling (approximately 30 miles west), Traverse City (80 miles west), and Alpena (60 miles northeast). Interstate 75 is located 30 miles east or 40 miles south of Mentor Township, and provides access to destinations throughout the State, Midwest and Canada.

Authority

The Township derives its authority to Master Plan from the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, which was adopted by the State Legislature to replace the Township Planning Act. Public Act 33 states:

“The planning commission shall make and approve a master plan as a guide for development within the planning jurisdiction.”

The master planning process is cooperative and public. Input from the public and various governmental entities are gathered throughout the planning process. Public Act 33 requires the Planning Commission to hold a public hearing before the final adoption of a master plan. Also, Public Act 33 requires review of a community’s master plan after a five-year period but allows for change at any time. However, a public hearing is required if the Planning Commission wishes to alter or amend their master plan after its original adoption. The master planning process offers the Planning Commission the opportunity to analyze and address any significant changes to the Township that may result in needed modifications to previous planning efforts. It also provides the opportunity to ascertain progress in implementing the goals and policies outlined in previous planning efforts.



Location Map

Purpose

The planning process was designed to involve conscious selections of policies and land use choices relating to growth and development in Mentor Township. The Master Plan serves to promote these polices through the following:

- Provides a general statement of the Township's goals and provides a comprehensive view of the community's preferred future.
- Serves as the primary policy guide for local officials when considering zoning, land division, capital improvement projects and any other matters related to land development. Thus, the Master Plan provides a stable and consistent basis for decision making.
- Provides the statutory basis for the Township Zoning Ordinance, as required by the State of Michigan.
- Helps to coordinate public improvements and private development activities to assure the judicious and efficient expenditure of public funds.

Public Involvement

The process of developing a Master Plan that is both meaningful to the community and feasible in its implementation must enjoy the participation of a larger stake-holding group. In order to garner this needed input, direct communication between the Planning Commission and Mentor Township stakeholders was pursued throughout the Master Plan process. Knowledge regarding the concerns of the community was gained through multiple meetings, a public workshop, as well as a public hearing. This type of direct interaction with stakeholders allows for a more complete framework of the concerns and needs of Mentor Township community members.

Chapter 2: Socio-Economic Profile

Introduction

Population and household characteristics are essential components to consider in the development of any Master Plan. An analysis of a community's existing and future population and household characteristics provides a foundation upon which a major portion of a Master Plan is based. This information points out areas of growth and decline, and general information about the community's residents. While an evaluation of a community's current characteristics provides insight to immediate needs and deficiencies, population projections provide a basis for determining future land use requirements, public facility needs, and essential services. Township decision-makers have the opportunity to decide if they wish to encourage current trends or cultivate change.

The following examples illustrate this point. A younger population may demand schools and active recreation opportunities, while an older population may require property maintenance assistance and senior oriented services. Also, persons characterized as low income typically generate a higher demand for publicly provided facilities than persons in higher income categories who have access to private facilities.

This socioeconomic profile examines several elements which are central to understanding a community's population and housing characteristics. These items include population growth patterns, population projections, housing characteristics, income characteristics, and employment patterns.

Population Profile

Population Trends

Population growth is the most important factor influencing land use decisions in any community. Simply put, if the population of a community is growing, there will be a need for more housing, commerce, industry, parks and recreation, public services and facilities, or roads.

Table 1 compares population trends for Mentor Township, the adjacent Townships, Oscoda County and the State of Michigan between 1980 and 2010. In 1980, Mentor Township had a total population of 1,003, which increased to 1,098 by 1990. From 1990 to 2000, the Township experienced population growth, increasing from 1,098 residents to 1,220 residents by 2000. However, between 2000 and 2010, the Township experienced a population decline, losing 77 residents. The Township's 2010 population now stands at 1,143 citizens. Overall, Mentor Township grew in population between 1980 and 2010 by 140 residents, or 14.0 percent. In spite of the recent population decline, the long-term population growth of the Township is a positive trend that points toward continued growth into the future for Mentor Township.

The Township's historical population change is moderate when compared to the surrounding Townships, Oscoda County, and the State. In comparison to Mentor Township, all surrounding communities increased in population between 1980 and 2010, including Big Creek Township (18.2 percent), Comins Township (24.4 percent), Curtis Township (14.2 percent), Goodar Township (6.4 percent), Mitchell Township (41.9 percent), and Rose Township (107 percent).

Table 1: Population Trends, 1980-2010

Place	1980	1990	% Change (80-90)	2000	% Change (90-00)	2010	% Change (00-10)	% Change (80-10)
Mentor Township	1,003	1,098	9.5%	1,220	11.1%	1,143	-6.3%	14.0%
Big Creek Township	2,392	2,778	16.1%	3,380	21.7%	2,827	-16.4%	18.2%
Comins Township	1,583	1,785	12.8%	2,017	13.0%	1,970	-2.3%	24.4%
Curtis Township	1,082	1,128	4.3%	1,378	22.2%	1,236	-10.3%	14.2%
Goodar Township	374	381	1.9%	493	29.4%	398	-19.3%	6.4%
Mitchell Township	248	290	16.9%	396	36.6%	352	-11.1%	41.9%
Rose Township	661	686	3.8%	1,409	105.4%	1,368	-2.9%	107.0%
Oscoda County	6,858	7,842	14.3%	9,418	20.1%	8,640	-8.3%	26.0%
Michigan	9,262,078	9,295,297	0.4%	9,938,444	6.9%	10,071,822	1.3%	8.7%

Source: 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010 US Census Reports

Population Projections

Table 2 presents one method for projecting the future population of Mentor Township through the year 2030. For Mentor Township, the numeric population projection method was utilized, which is based on the Township's rate of growth between 1990 and 2010 and extended through 2030 on a linear basis. This numeric approach predicts continued population increases for the Township, reaching 1,235 residents by the year 2030. (Growth percent between 2010 and 2030)

As with all population projections, however, the number derived from the above described projection is completely based on past trends. This projection cannot foresee any significant developments, economic occurrences, or changing personal habitation preferences that may occur in the future. This figure should, therefore, be seen as a preliminary benchmark for analysis of future population attributes.

Table 2: Township Population Projections, 2015-2030

Place, Source and Projection Method	Historical Population			Population Projections			
	1990	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Mentor Township							
U.S. Census	1,098	1,220	1,143				
Numeric Method ¹				1,201	1,213	1,224	1,235

¹ Represents extension of population trend between 1990 and 2010 on a linear trend basis.

Age Distribution

Information on age distribution within a population can assist a community in matching public services to community characteristics and in determining special needs of certain age groups. For example, the younger population tends to require more rental housing units and smaller homes, while the elderly population may have a need for assisted living facilities. Analysis of age distribution may also be used by policy makers to identify current gaps in services and to project future service needs

for housing, education, recreation and medical care. It is of equal importance in planning to anticipate which age groups are likely to increase during the planning period. Examples of this are the aging “baby boomers” and their children; both forming waves of population rise and fall as they move through their life-cycles.

Data in **Table 3** provide the age composition for Mentor Township in 2000 and 2010. Statistics clearly indicate that the Township has grown older, similar to state and national trends since 2000. In 2000, the Township had a median age of 46.5 years, which rose to 51.1 years by 2010. The aging Township population is demonstrated by increases in certain older age groups and decreases in younger age groups. For instance, between 2000 and 2010, increases were found in the 55 to 64 year age group (1.6 percentage points), 75 and 84 year age group (1.1 percentage points), and 85 years and over (1.2 percentage points). Conversely, decreases were found in the under 5 years age group (1.1 percentage points) and 34 to 44 year age group (3.5 percentage points).

To address the aging population, the Township may want to seek opportunities to better accommodate its retirement population, allowing them to “age-in-place” within Mentor Township.

Table 3: Age Group Trends, 2000-2010

Mentor Township Age Groups	2000		2010		Change in Percent of Population
	#	%	#	%	
Under 5 Years	56	4.6%	40	3.5%	-1.1%
5 to 14 Years	134	11.0%	121	10.6%	-0.4%
15 to 24 Years	122	10.0%	105	9.2%	-0.8%
25 to 34 Years	100	8.2%	99	8.7%	0.5%
35 to 44 Years	170	13.9%	119	10.4%	-3.5%
45 to 54 Years	163	13.4%	158	13.8%	0.5%
55 to 64 Years	201	16.5%	207	18.1%	1.6%
65 to 74 Years	169	13.9%	169	14.8%	0.9%
75 to 84 Years	91	7.5%	98	8.6%	1.1%
85 Years and Over	14	1.1%	27	2.4%	1.2%
Totals	1,220	100.0%	1,143	100.0%	
Median Age (Years)	46.5		51.1		

Source: 2000 and 2010 US Census Reports

Persons Per Household

The United States as a whole has experienced a decline in the number of persons per household. The number of persons per household has also declined in Mentor Township. This is important since, as the number of persons per household decreases, the need for more housing units increases proportionately faster than the rate of population gain.

The 2000 U.S. Census reported that Mentor Township averaged 2.21 persons per household. By 2010, this number had decreased to 2.07. Based on a linear extension of this past trend through the year 2030, we can approximate that the Township’s persons per household figure will drop to 1.79 by 2030 (see **Table 4**).

Such a decline must be considered when analyzing future housing needs in conjunction with population projections, as housing units will be occupied by fewer persons. Based on an understanding of the declining number persons per household within Mentor Township, a more detailed estimate of the number of housing units needed by 2030 is provided below.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Mentor Township had a household population of 1,143 residents and a total of 546 households. As detailed in **Table 2**, the Township’s population is projected to reach 1,235 by the year 2030. Based on this projection, we can then estimate the approximate number of households that will exist in Mentor Township in 2030 by dividing the projected population (1,235) by projected persons per household (1.79). This results in an estimate of 690 households. Generally, each household requires one housing unit, indicating that approximately 690 occupied housing units will be necessary by 2030. As of 2010, 546 occupied housing units are present in Mentor Township, meaning that an additional 144 housing units may need to be added by 2030.

Table 4: Persons Per Household Trends and Projections, 2000-2030¹

Place	2000	2010	2015 Projection	2020 Projection	2025 Projection	2030 Projection	% Change 2000- 2030
Mentor Township	2.21	2.07	2.00	1.93	1.86	1.79	-19.0%

¹ Persons per household projection is a linear trend based on the rate of change between 2000 and 2030
 Source: 2000, 2010, US Census Reports; projection analysis by Wade-Trim

Housing Profile

Housing Stock

Type of housing structure is the most basic measure of housing that refers to the type of housing units found in a community. Data in **Table 5** indicate the total number of housing units in Mentor Township and Oscoda County, and compares the change from 1990 to 2010. During that timeframe, Mentor Township witnessed an increase in 178 housing units, representing a rate of 14.4 percent. For Oscoda County, the total number of housing units increased from 8,112 in 1990 to 9,118 in 2010, a growth rate of 12.4 percent.

Table 5: Housing Units, 1990-2010

Place	1990	2000	2010	Change 1990-2010	
				#	%
Mentor Township	1,239	1,357	1,417	178	14.4%
Oscoda County	8,112	8,690	9,118	1,006	12.4%

Source: 1990, 2000 and 2010 US Census Reports.

Data in **Table 6** provide information regarding the types of housing units within Mentor Township and Oscoda County in 2000 and 2010. In 2000, 88.4 percent of Mentor Township's units were one unit structures, while 9.2 percent were mobile homes (may also include boats, RV's etc. used as dwelling units). Between 2000 and 2010, the number of one unit structures increased, while the number of mobile homes decreased, resulting in an even higher one unit structure percentage of 92.6 percent for Mentor Township. Correspondingly, the mobile home percentage declined to 6.1 percent. As of 2010, only 19 dwelling units located within multi-unit structures (i.e., a duplex or apartment buildings) were found in the Township.

Similar to Mentor Township, Oscoda County also has a high percentage of one unit structures at 81.1 percent as of 2010. However, the County has much higher percentages of dwelling units within multi-unit structures and mobile homes in comparison to Mentor Township.

Table 6: Units in Structure, 2000-2010

Units in Structure	Mentor Township				Oscoda County			
	2000		2010		2000		2010	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1 Unit	1,191	88.4%	1,300	92.6%	6,898	79.4%	7,402	81.1%
2 to 4 Units	17	1.3%	5	0.4%	47	0.5%	52	0.6%
5 to 9 Units	13	1.0%	14	1.0%	27	0.3%	22	0.2%
10 or More Units	3	0.2%	0	0.0%	105	1.2%	128	1.4%
Mobile Home, Boat, RV, Van, etc.	124	9.2%	85	6.1%	1,613	18.6%	1,527	16.7%
Totals	1,348	100.0%	1,404	100.0%	8,690	100.0%	9,131	100.0%

Source: 2000 US Census Report and 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Occupancy Characteristics

The home ownership rate is a very important aspect of any community. A high home ownership rate could be an indication that the community has stable and well-kept neighbors. A higher percentage of rental housing might indicate a more transient population. Owner and renter occupancy rates can also reveal whether the housing stock in the community is affordable. Lower income citizens, who may include single persons, young families, and the elderly, require more affordable housing options including rental housing. A low percentage of rental units could indicate that the community is not providing adequate housing for these groups.

Occupancy characteristics from the 2000 and 2010 Census for Mentor Township and Oscoda County are presented in **Table 7**. In 2000, 40.9 percent of Mentor Township’s housing supply was occupied, with owner-occupied units accounting for 85.8 percent of all occupied units. However, in 2010, the US Census reported that 44.9 percent of the Township’s housing supply was occupied, with owner-occupied units accounting for 79.5 percent of all occupied units. Between 2000 and 2010, all occupied housing increased by 14.3 percent. However, renter-occupied housing units increased by 65.4 percent from 2000 to 2010, while owner-occupied housing units only increased by 5.9 percent. Approximately 20.5 percent of all occupied dwelling units are renter-occupied in 2010. Comparably, Mentor Township’s occupancy and ownership figures are quite similar to Oscoda County as a whole.

Knowledge of vacancy statistics can be helpful in predicting future growth and housing needs. A high vacancy rate might be an indicator of residential decline, but also shows that in the event of growth, housing units are available. Generally, a five – percent vacancy rate is considered necessary to provide an adequate housing selection to keep home prices from rising faster than inflation. Vacancy rates below five percent indicate a restricted housing market. As shown in Table 8, vacant units represent 55.1 percent of the total housing count. However, 91.5 percent of all vacant housing units are represented as “seasonal, recreational or occasional use” (708 units), and therefore are not used by permanent residents. Therefore, the vacant year-round percent rate for Mentor Township is 8.5 percent (66 units). In contrast, Oscoda County’s vacancy rate was slightly higher, with a vacancy rate of

55.6 as of 2010, 91 percent of all vacant housing units in Oscoda County are seasonal, recreational or occasional use units, while 9.4 percent of the total vacant housing units are vacant year-round units.

Table 7: Housing Occupancy Characteristics, 2000 - 2010

Category	Mentor Township (2000)		Mentor Township (2010)		Change in 2000-2010		Oscoda County (2000)		Oscoda County (2010)		Change in 2000-2010	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Occupied Housing Units	551	40.9	630	44.9	79	14.3	3,921	45.1	4052	44.4	131	3.3
Owner-Occupied	473	85.8	501	79.5	28	5.9	3,345	85.3	3371	83.2	26	0.8
Renter-Occupied	78	14.2	129	20.5	51	65.4	576	14.7	681	16.8	105	18.2
Vacant Housing Units	797	59.1	774	55.1	-23	-2.9	4,769	54.9	5079	55.6	310	6.5
Vacant Year Round	93	11.7	66	8.5	-27	-29.0	469	9.8	475	9.4	6	1.3
Seasonal, Recreational or Occasional Use	704	88.3	708	91.5	4	0.6	4,300	90.2	4604	91.0	304	7.1
Total Housing Units	1,348	100.0	1,404	100.0	56	4.2	8,690	100.0	9131	100.0	441	5.07

Source: 2000 and 2010 US Census Reports.

Housing Value

Analyzing housing values and rent could be the best way to determine both the quality and affordability of housing. It is of crucial importance that both quality and affordable housing is maintained to help retain current residents and attract new homeowners to a community.

The median value of owner-occupied housing units and median value or contract rent for renter-occupied units for the years 1999 and 2009 for Mentor Township is discussed below. The 1999 figures have been adjusted to reflect 2009 values in order to accurately reflect changes in housing prices over the decade.

Between 1999 and 2009, the median value of Mentor Township’s housing units increased by 10.53 percent, from \$81,513.76 to \$90,100. Similarly, the cash rent value also increased by 19.81 percent, from \$360.57 per month in 1999 to \$432 per month in 2009.

At present, the nation and State is recovering from a market slump, which has been evidenced by significantly declining home values throughout Michigan and the nation. Given the market slump, it is notable that Mentor Township has had a significant increase in median housing value between 1999

and 2009. As the market continues to improve in the next coming years, it is expected that the housing values in Mentor Township will continue to increase.

Income Profile

Studying income and poverty levels is a good way to measure the relative economic health of a community. Three measures of income (median household, median family and per capita) are recorded by the Census Bureau. Household income is a measure of the total incomes of the persons living in a single household. Family income is a measure of the total incomes of a family unit. Family income does not include non-family units, such as single persons living alone, and for this reason is usually higher than household income. Per capita income is a measure of the incomes of every citizen of an area. Because per capita income is based on all individuals, they are much lower than family or household incomes.

Income statistics for Mentor Township in 1999 and 2009 were obtained from the 2000 and 2010 US Census. In 2009, the median household income for the Township was \$30,673, which decreased from \$33,602 (8.7 percent decrease) in 1999. The median family income was \$38,229, which increased from \$35,778 (6.8 percent increase), and the per capita income was \$18,234, which decreased slightly from \$18,533 (1.6 percent decrease). These decreases or modest increases are reflective of the nation-wide economic recession that occurred during this time period.

Employment Profile

Employment by occupation and employment by industry are related, yet individually significant indicators of community welfare. Employment by occupation describes the trades and profession in which Township residents are employed, such as a manager or salesperson. Employment by industry quantifies in what field that manager or sale person may be employed. For instance, two sales persons may be present in the "Sales and Office Occupations" category of the employment by occupation table, but may be employed in two different fields or sectors. That is, a sales person in the manufacturing industry and a sales person in the real estate trade would be categorized within those different classifications in the employment by industry table.

Employment data by selected industry groupings for Mentor Township is displayed in **Table 8**. In 2010, the largest share (30.8 percent) of the work force was employed in the educational, health and social services industry. The next largest industries of employed were arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (17.2 percent), followed by other services (except public administration) (10.4 percent).

Oscoda County, as a whole, is service oriented with the largest share of its workforce employed in the educational, health and social services industry (16.7 percent). The next largest industry is manufacturing (15.3 percent), followed by the arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services industry (13.4 percent).

Table 8: Employment by Industry, 2010

Industry	Mentor Township		Oscoda County	
	#	%	#	%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	7	1.6%	102	3.6%
Construction	37	8.4%	275	9.7%
Manufacturing	31	7.0%	432	15.3%
Wholesale Trade	3	0.7%	15	0.5%
Retail Trade	25	5.7%	356	12.6%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	19	4.3%	98	3.5%
Information	6	1.4%	46	1.6%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Rental, and Leasing	8	1.8%	144	5.1%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	28	6.3%	151	5.3%
Educational, Health and Social Services	136	30.8%	472	16.7%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	76	17.2%	378	13.4%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	46	10.4%	241	8.5%
Public Administration	19	4.3%	113	4.0%
Total Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over	441	100.0%	2,823	100.0%

Source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Survey.

Employment data by selected occupation for the Township in 2010 are displayed in **Table 9**. The largest numbers of Township workers (144 or 32.7 percent) are employed in service occupations, followed by management, business, science, and arts occupations (109 or 24.7 percent). When comparing Mentor Township’s workforce against Oscoda County, differences are discovered. Generally, a larger percentage of the County’s workers hold “blue collar” positions such as production, transportation, material moving, construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations.

Table 9: Employment by Occupation, 2010

Place	Mentor Township		Oscoda County	
	#	%	#	%
Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations	109	24.7%	680	24.1%
Service Occupations	144	32.7%	575	20.4%
Sales and Office Occupations	87	19.7%	662	23.5%
Natural Resources, Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance Occupations	49	11.1%	391	13.9%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Operations	52	11.8%	516	18.3%
Total Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Older	441	100.0%	2,823	100.0%

Source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Survey.

Chapter 3: Natural Features Assessment

Introduction

The development of land can significantly impact, and in turn be impacted by, the natural environment. Thus, when preparing a future land use plan, it is important to determine the extent of environmentally sensitive areas within a community.

Environmentally sensitive areas are lands whose destruction or disturbance will immediately affect the life of a community by either:

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

Each of these effects is detrimental to the general welfare of a community and may result in an economic loss.

The purpose of this section is two-fold. First, it identifies which areas in the Township are most suitable for development; specifically, those areas which will minimize development costs and provide maximum amenities without adversely impacting existing natural systems. Second, it identifies land which should be conserved in its natural state and is most suitable for open space or recreation purposes.

Topography, woodlands, and soil conditions are among the most important natural features that impact land use. Descriptions of these three features follow.

Topography

The topography of Mentor Township is varied, with some areas generally flat or featuring rolling topography, while other areas of the Township are relatively rugged with steep slopes. Elevations range from a low of approximately 793 above sea level along the Au Sable River in the northern section of the Township to a high of above 1,456 feet above sea level in the southern portion of the Township, the highest point being Old Baldy Road.

The locations of steep slopes (greater than 15 percent) within Mentor Township are shown on the **Topography Map**. As can be seen, many areas of the Township feature steep slopes, particularly in the northern and the southeastern portions of the Township. These steep slope areas present many challenges to developers and builders, as development costs are considerably higher. Such areas should only be developed with caution due to erosion and drainage problems that might affect adjacent properties.

Woodlands

United States Geological Survey (USGS) data for Mentor Township show the existence of numerous woodlands throughout the community (see **Natural Features Map**). Woodland areas are complex ecological systems and, consequently, provide multiple benefits to the environment and its wildlife and human inhabitants. Woodlands play a role in flood protection by slowing the flow of surface runoff to allow for greater storm water infiltration. Woodlands also reduce air pollutants by absorbing certain airborne pollutants. In addition to providing wildlife habitats, forest vegetation moderates the effects of winds and temperatures while stabilizing and enriching the soil. For human inhabitants, forested areas offer a visual and audio barrier, which are considered aesthetically pleasing and offer unique opportunities for recreation and relaxation. Woodland resources contribute greatly to the Township's environmental quality. The conservation of woodlands will play a positive role in maintaining and enhancing the future environmental character of the Township. In total, woodlands cover the vast majority of Mentor Township, comprising approximately 85 percent of the entire township land area. The majority of these woodlands are located within the Huron National Forest. To the extent feasible, these woodlands should be protected from future land development.

Wetlands

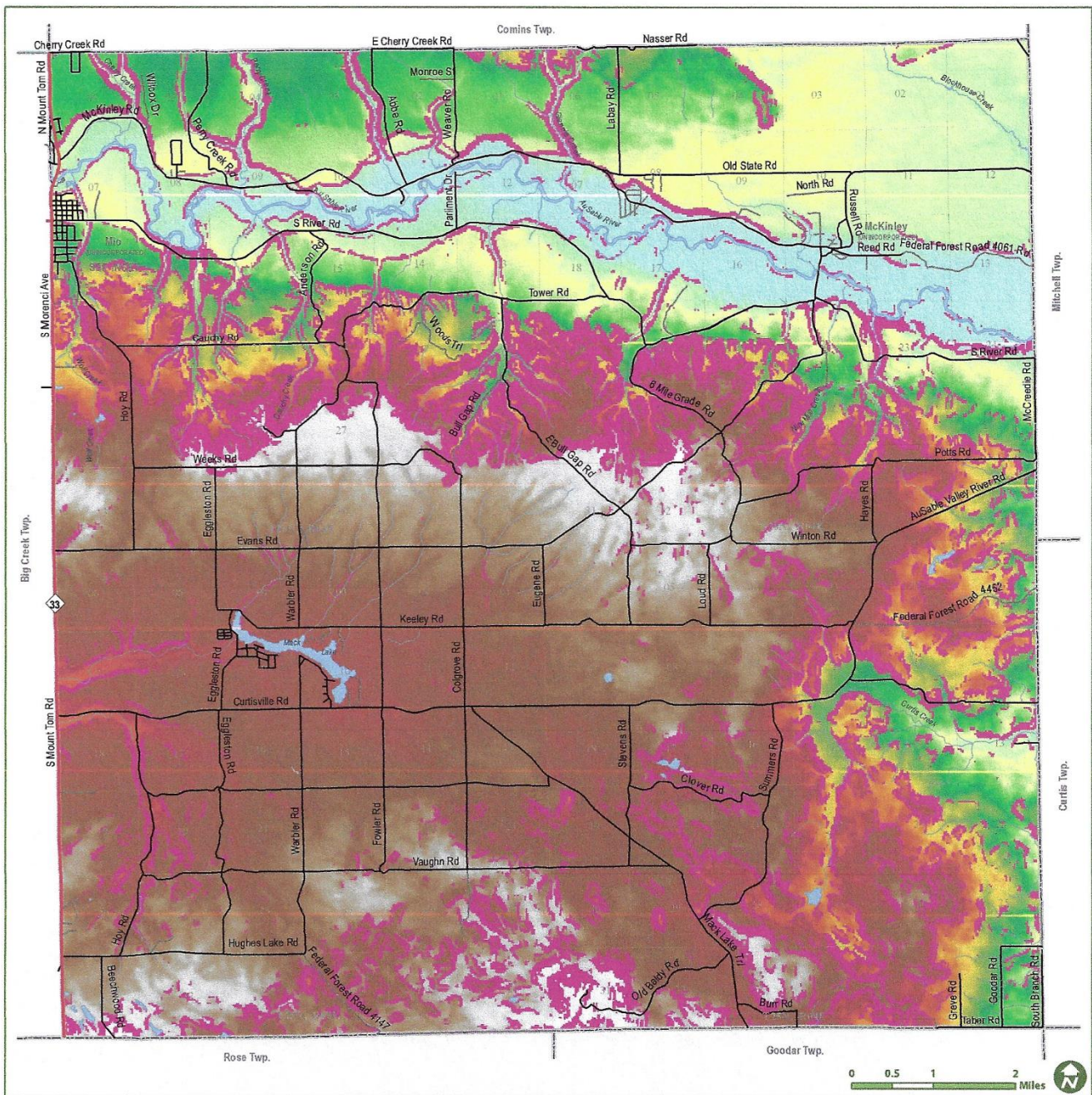
Wetlands are often referred to as marshes, swamps or bogs. The US Army Corps of Engineers defines wetlands as "those areas inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions". Residents of Michigan are becoming more aware of the value of wetlands. Beyond their aesthetic value, wetlands improve water quality of lakes and streams by filtering polluting nutrients, organic chemicals and toxic heavy metals. Wetlands are closely related to high groundwater tables and serve to discharge or recharge aquifers. Additionally, wetlands support wildlife, and wetland vegetation protects shorelines from erosion.

According to the National Wetlands Inventory, there are currently two larger areas of wetlands located within the Township, with small sporadic wetlands throughout the Township. The larger area of wetland follows the Au Sable River, Cherry Creek, Perry Creek, Glennie Creek, Wolf Creek and Blockhouse Creek. Another significant wetland follows Curtis Creek in the eastern portion of the Township (see **Natural Features Map**).

Soil Conditions

When planning for types and intensity of future land uses, the conditions of soil is one important factor that determines the carrying capacity of land. Soils most suitable for development purposes are well drained and are not subject to a high water table. Adequate drainage is important to minimizing storm water impacts and the efficient operation of septic drain fields. Adequate depth to the water table is necessary to prevent groundwater contamination from septic systems of other non-point source runoff.

Hydric soil information for Mentor Township was obtained through the Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database, which is essentially the County Soil Survey prepared by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in digital format. Hydric soils are soils with poor potential for development. These soils have high water tables and are often located within the floodplains of creeks or rivers. The locations of hydric soils within Mentor Township are shown in the **Soil Conditions Map**. Areas of hydric soils are scattered throughout the Township, particularly along the rivers and watercourses. The largest area of hydric soils is found in the northern portion of the Township, generally running along the Au Sable River.



Topography Map

Digital Elevation Model

Higher Elevations

Lower Elevations

Slopes Greater than 15%

Source: Oscoda County Digital Elevation Model, Michigan Geographic Data Library;

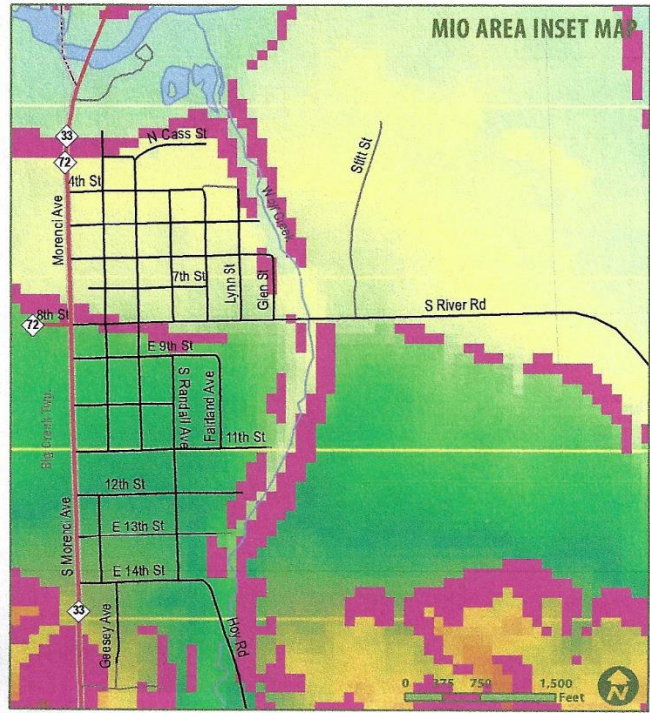
- State Highways
- Public Roads
- Non-Public Roads
- Sections
- Water Features
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Limits

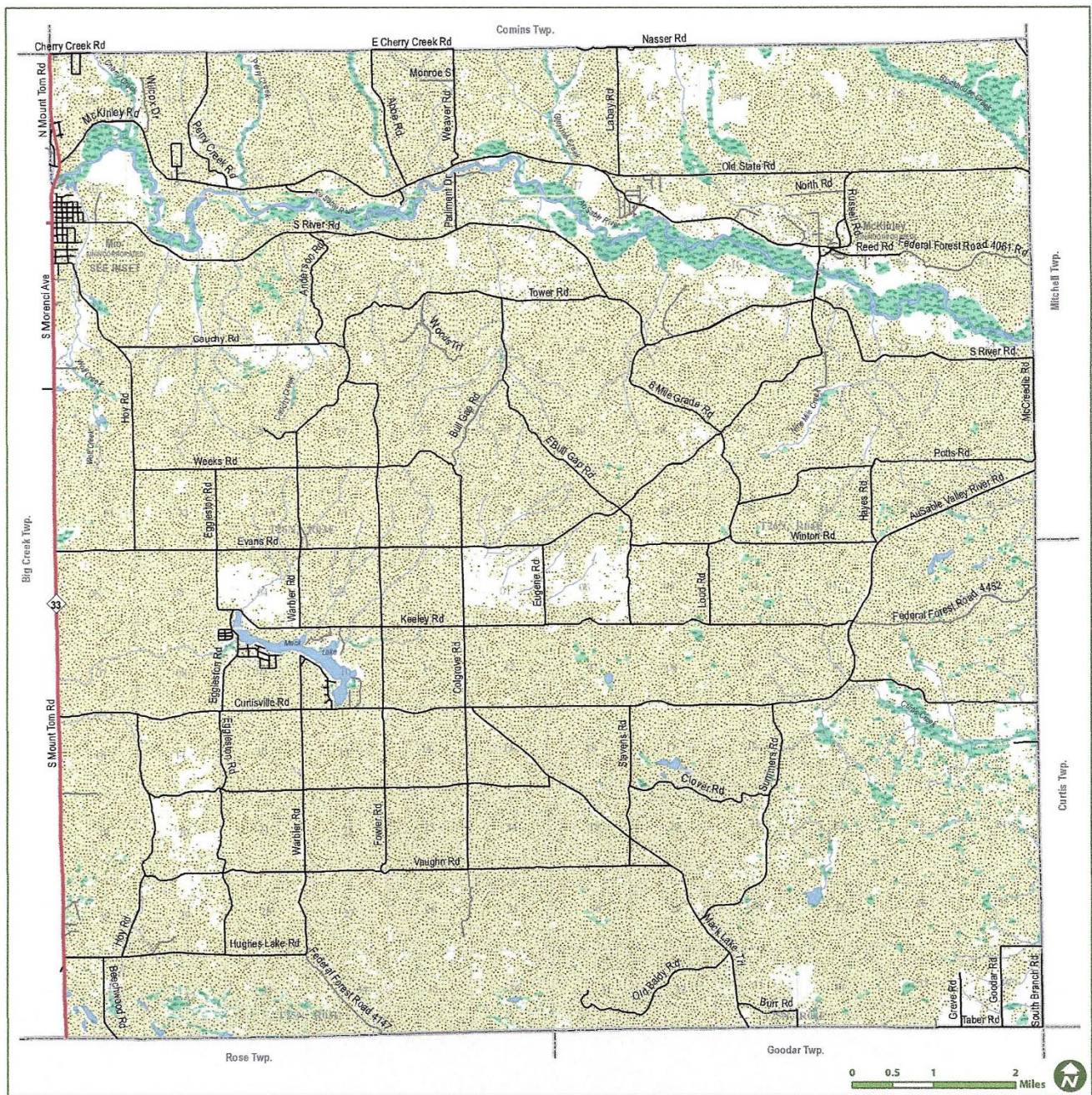
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Natural Features Map

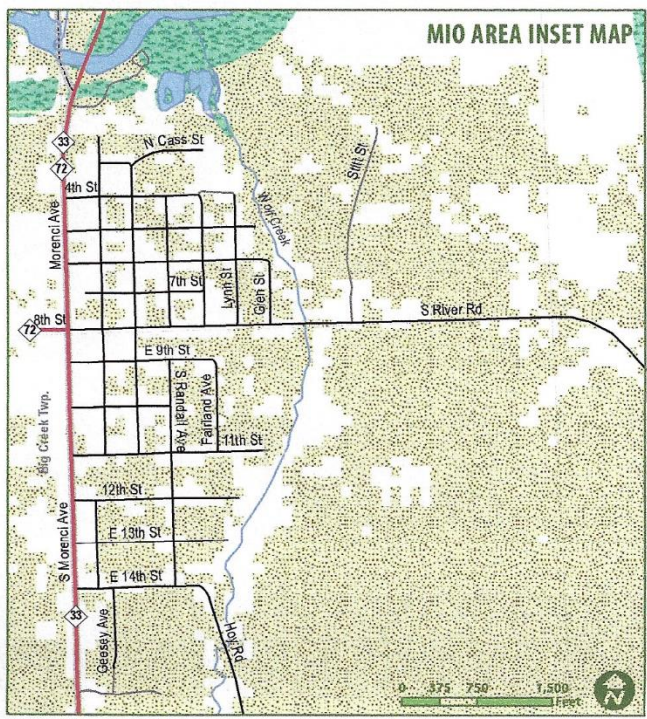
- Wetlands
- Woodlands
- State Highways
- Public Roads
- Non-Public Roads
- Sections
- Water Features
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Limits

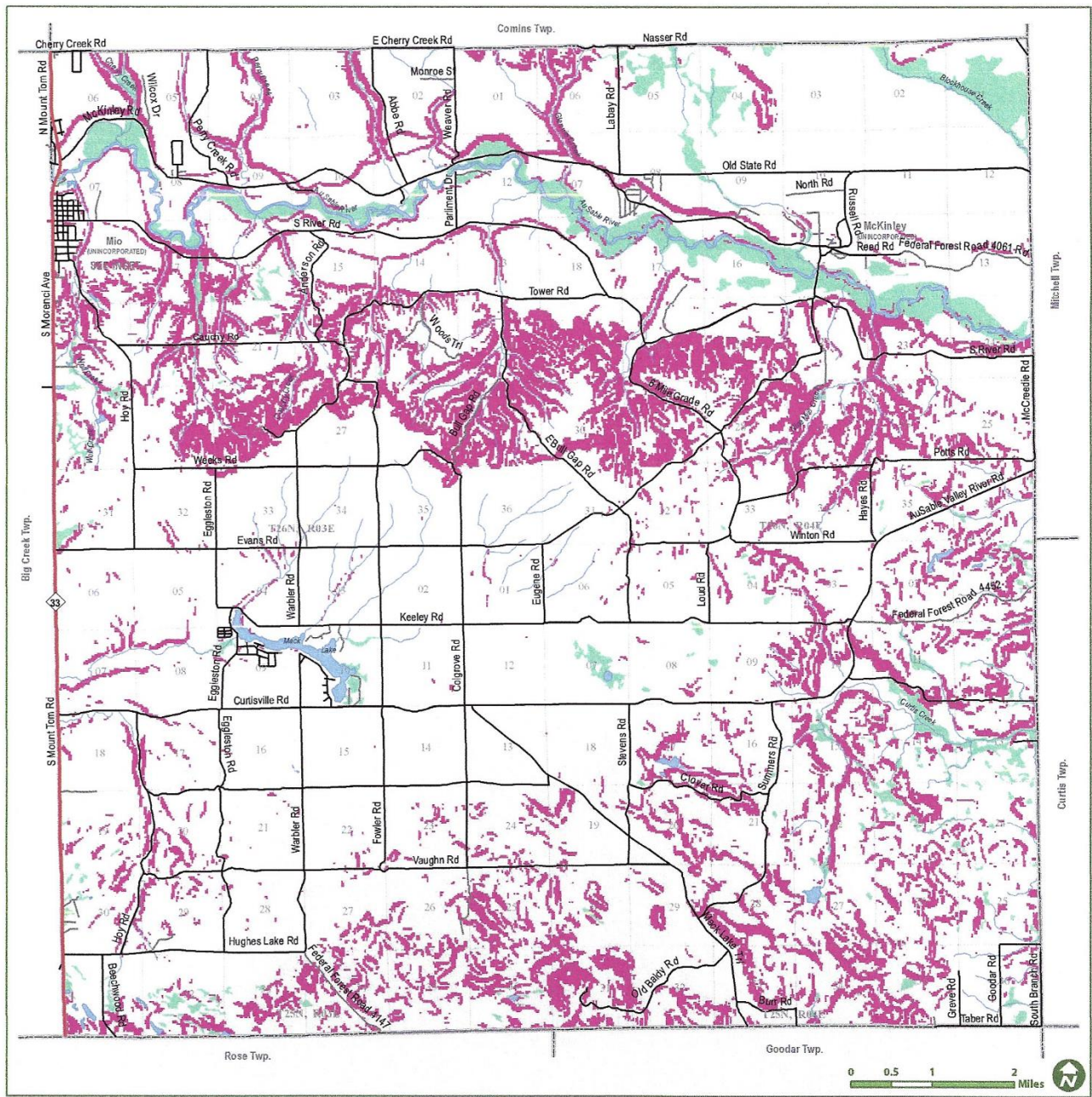
Source: National Wetlands Inventory, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 1979-1994; USGS Land Cover Data Set, 1992.

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Soil Conditions Map

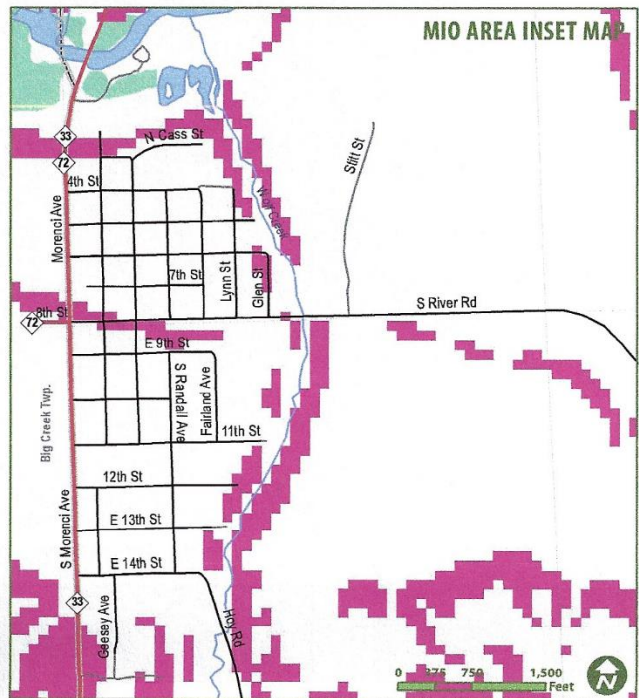
- Hydric Soils
- Slopes Greater Than 15%
- State Highways
- Public Roads
- Non-Public Roads
- Sections
- Water Features
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Limits

Source: SSURGO Soil Database for Oscoda County, Michigan Geographic Data Library, Oscoda County Digital Elevation Model, Michigan Geographic Data Library,

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Chapter 4: Existing Conditions & Facilities Assessment

Existing Land Use

The rational application of the planning process in the preparation of the Future Land Use Plan is possible only when there is a clear understanding of existing conditions and relationships between land uses. Knowledge of existing land development furnishes the basic information by which decisions can be made concerning proposals for future residential, commercial, industrial, and public land use activities. The **Existing Land Use Map** and table included in this section of the report will serve as a ready reference for Mentor Township in its consideration of land use management and public improvement proposals.

Existing Land Use Survey Methodology

An aerial topography interpretation survey was conducted in May 2012 to document existing development in Mentor Township. The use of each parcel was categorized in accordance with predetermined land use classification system, consisting of 9 land use categories as outlined below. Using Geographical Information System (GIS) software, an Existing Land Use Map was then prepared. Acreage calculations for each land use category were derived directly from the GIS software on the Existing Land Use Map, and are presented in **Table 10**.

Table 10: Existing Land Use, 2012

Category	Acres	Percent of Total
Agricultural	571.38	0.6%
Single Family Residential	1,177.47	1.3%
Multiple Family Residential	5.28	<0.1%
Commercial/Office	64.39	0.1%
Industrial	14.73	<0.1%
Institutional/Parks	87.07	0.1%
Publicly Owned Forest Lands	82,014.99	89.8%
Water Bodies	630.13	0.7%
Vacant	6,716.58	7.4%
TOTALS	91,282.02	100.0%

Existing Land Use Characteristics

The **Existing Land Use Map** illustrates how the land in the Township is being utilized as of May 2012. The Huron National Forest serves as a major contributor to the character of the Township, comprising of nearly 89.8 percent of all land. The majority of development (residences, commercial establishments, etc.) is concentrated in the unincorporated communities of Mio and McKinley, in the vicinity of the Au Sable River, and adjacent to Mack Lake. However, there are scattered residences throughout the entire Township. Few higher intensity developments exist in the Township, thus reinforcing its rural character.

The Township largely consists of public land and undeveloped land. Combined, public land and vacant land comprise 97.2 percent of the Township's total area, out of a total Township acreage of 91,282.02. A detailed discussion of each land use classification is presented below.

Agricultural

The agricultural category includes lands under cultivation, horse farms, ranching operations, sod farms, pastures, orchards, and tree farms. There are 571.38 acres dedicated to agricultural purposes, which amount to 0.6 percent of the total land area. Generally, agricultural lands are scattered around the southeastern and northwestern portions of the Township.

Single Family Residential

This category includes one-family detached dwelling units, two-family duplex dwelling units, trailers and mobile homes outside of designated mobile home parks, and accessory building such as garages that are related to these units. It also includes farmsteads and related agricultural buildings located near the principal dwelling. Within the Township, 1,177.47 acres, or 1.3 percent of the total land area, is considered single-family residential. Single family homes are scattered throughout the Township, with a particular concentration in the communities of Mio and McKinley.

Multiple Family Residential

This category includes a variety of multiple family residential types such as the traditional variety of structures including apartment complexes and senior living facilities. The multi-family residential units are all found in the community of Mio which comprises of 5.28 acres, or less than .01 percent of the total land area of Mentor Township.

Commercial / Office

Uses included in the commercial category are building material sales, eating and drinking establishments, grocery stores, banks, gasoline service stations and broker/realtor agencies. Mentor Township contains 64.39 acres of commercial land, which amounts to 0.1 percent of the total land area. The majority of commercial / office are found along M-33 in the unincorporated community of Mio.

Industrial

Included in this category are warehouse, processing facilities, and manufacturing and non-manufacturing uses which are primarily industrial in nature. This category may include land areas with or without building where raw or semi-finished materials are fabricated or those using or storing raw materials for primary production. Typical uses in this category include, warehouse, fabrication establishments, industrial printing operations and freight establishments. A total of 14.73 acres or less than .01 percent of Township land is used for industrial purposes.

Publicly Owned Forest Lands

Publicly owned forest land is managed exclusively by the federal and state. The Huron National Forest makes up for the vast majority of all land in the Township. Publicly owned forest lands, comprising 82,014.99 acres or 89.8 percent of the Township, are used for public/semi-public purposes.

Institutional / Parks

Public/Semi-Public land uses include lands for cultural, public assembly and utility substations, (e.g., gas, oil, water, electricity), educational uses, and governmental administration and service buildings. A total of 87.07 acres or .01 percent of the Township is used for institutional/parks purposes.

Water Bodies

This category covers all lands that are predominately and ordinarily covered by water. Water bodies account for 630.13 acres within Mentor Township.

Vacant

This category includes lands that are lying fallow, vacant lands, woodlands, rivers, and other open spaces for which no specific use is evident from field inspection. The second largest category in Mentor Township, this land comprises 6,716.58 acres, or 7.4 percent of the total land area.

Community Facilities and Services

Mentor Township, with support from a variety of outside public and private agencies, strives to ensure a high quality of life for residents and businesses within the community through the efficient provision of services. These services fulfill essential community needs such as public safety, public health, sanitation, social welfare, recreation, education, and mobility.

By ensuring that future land development occurs at an appropriate scale and location given the existing or planned capacity of public services, sound land use planning is an important tool for maintaining a high quality of life. In order to determine suitable locations and allowable types of new development, the existing or planned capacity of all types of public services must first be considered, particularly the capacity of the transportation network and availability of public utilities.

Transportation Network

Mentor Township is served by a hierarchical network of roadways with various functions. This hierarchical network is defined by the National Functional Classification (NFC) system, which is a federal classification system for all public highways, roads and streets. The two primary considerations in classifying the functionality of highway and street networks are access to property and travel mobility, as defined by trip travel time or operating speed. For example, local roads provide efficient access to property, but would be rated low in mobility. The basic classifications for the NFC are:

- Arterial roads, which generally handle longer trips and operate at higher and more uniform speeds;
- Collector roads, which collect and disperse traffic between arterials and the local roads; and,
- Local roads, streets, and other public ways, which serve the land access function to the residential areas, businesses, farms and other local areas.

Presently, only one road, State Highway 33, is classified as an arterial road in Mentor Township.

Major Collector roads in Mentor Township include:

- McKinley Road/Russell Road/Old State Road corridor running east-west in the northern portion of the Township;
- S. River Road/Evans Road corridor connecting Mio and McKinley;
- Abbe Road, from McKinley to the northern Township limits; and,
- Curtisville Road/Au Sable River Road corridor running east-west in the central portion of the Township.

Minor Collector roads in Mentor Township include:

- Evans Road/Eggleston Road/Keeley Road/Colgrove Road/Mack Lake Trail corridor extending from M-33 to the southern Township limits.

The remaining roads in Mentor Township are classified as local roads or are not classified.

The **Road Ownership Map** illustrates the ownership of roadways within Mentor Township. As can be seen, State Highway 33 is owned and maintained by the Michigan Department of Transportation. Numerous roads within the Township, including Curtisville Road, Mack Lake Trail, AuSable Valley River Road, South River Road, and Old State Road, are owned and maintained by the Oscoda County Road Commission. Finally, many roads are owned and maintained by the federal government. These include McKinley Road and many trails within the Huron-Manistee National Forest.

Public Services and Utilities

Public utilities and services, particularly emergency medical services and water supply and sanitary sewer systems, are important not only from a public health and environmental quality standpoint, but they also enable higher density development. The presence of utilities can also be an instigator of development, as developers and prospective business owners seek sites that have utility services in place.

Public safety within Mentor Township falls within the jurisdiction of the Oscoda County Sheriff's Department, which is located on M-33 in Mio. Additionally, public safety patrols are provided by the Michigan State Police.

Fire and emergency response service is provided through the Mentor Township-McKinley Fire Department, located in the unincorporated community of McKinley. Emergency response service in Mentor Township is also provided by the Oscoda County EMS, located on Court Street in Mio. No hospitals with 24-hour emergency care are located within Mentor Township or Oscoda County. The nearest hospitals are located in Grayling, Gaylord and Alpena.

Public water and wastewater supply within Mentor Township is provided by the Big Creek Mentor Utility Authority (BCMUA). The BCMUA is a combined water and wastewater utility, serving portions of Big Creek Township and Mentor Township. The Authority was formed in 1997 after groundwater contamination resulted in a consent order from the Michigan DEQ. The area was also in need of a wastewater system because of small lot sizes and failing septic tanks. The Authority applied for and received loans and grants from the USDA-RD to build a water treatment and wastewater systems.¹

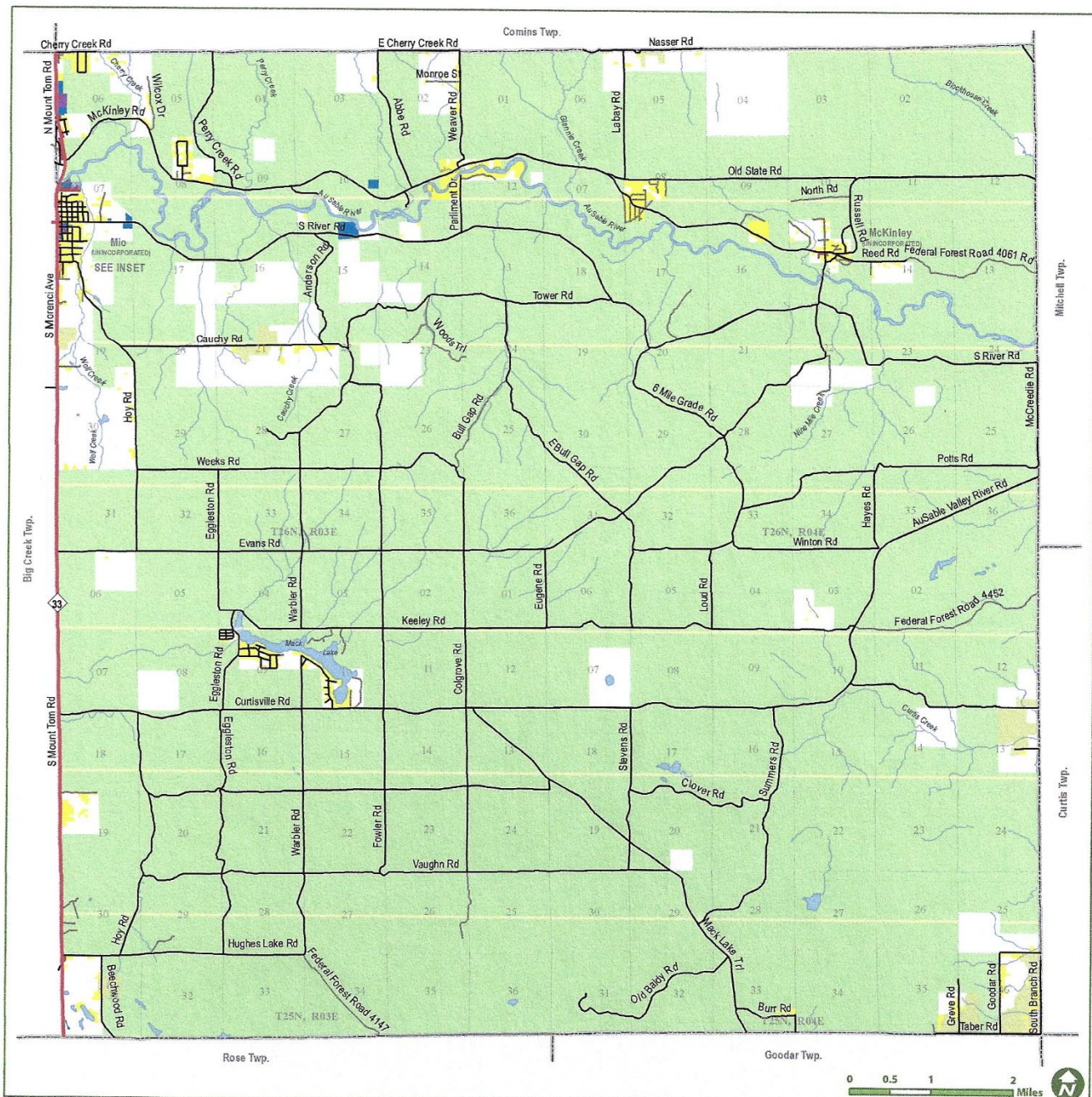
The majority of lands within Mentor Township are not served by the BCMUA public utility system. These lands must rely on private drinking water wells and septic systems. Because of the lack of public utilities, the ability to support higher density development within most areas of Mentor Township is limited.

Cultural and Educational Facilities

Public education within Mentor Township is provided by the Mio-Au Sable Public School District. The District Administration offices are located on 8th Street in Mio. Two public schools are operated by the District, including the Mio-Au Sable Elementary School (Grades KG through 5th) and the Mio-Au Sable High School (Grades 6-12), both located at the school campus on 8th Street in Mio.

One library, the Oscoda County Library, serves Mentor Township and the surrounding area. This library is located on 8th Street in the community of Mio.

¹ Michigan Rural Communities Assistance Program (RCAP). <http://michigan-rcap.org/content/big-creek-mentor-utility-authority>



Existing Land Use Map

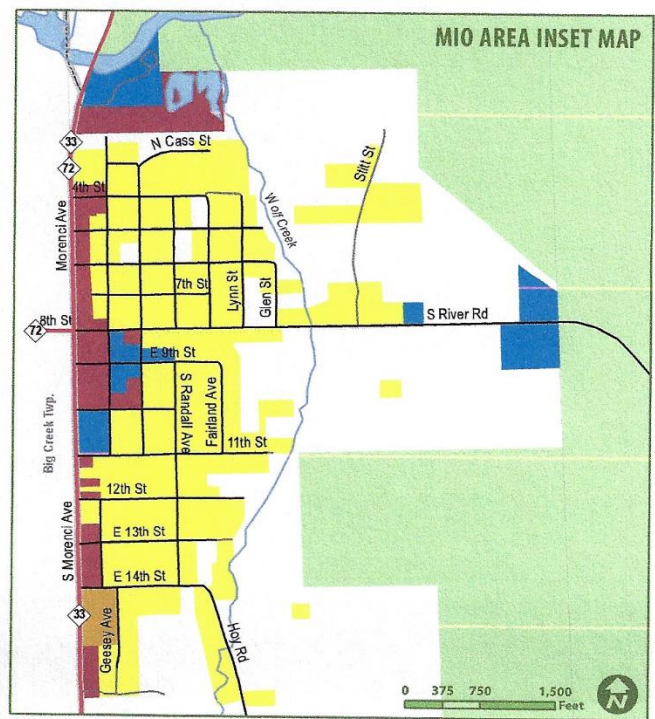
Agricultural	State Highways
Single Family Residential	Public Roads
Multiple Family Residential	Non-Public Roads
Institutional/Parks	Sections
Commercial/Office	Water Features
Industrial	Water Bodies
Publicly Owned Forest Lands (State/U.S.)	Municipal Limits
Vacant	

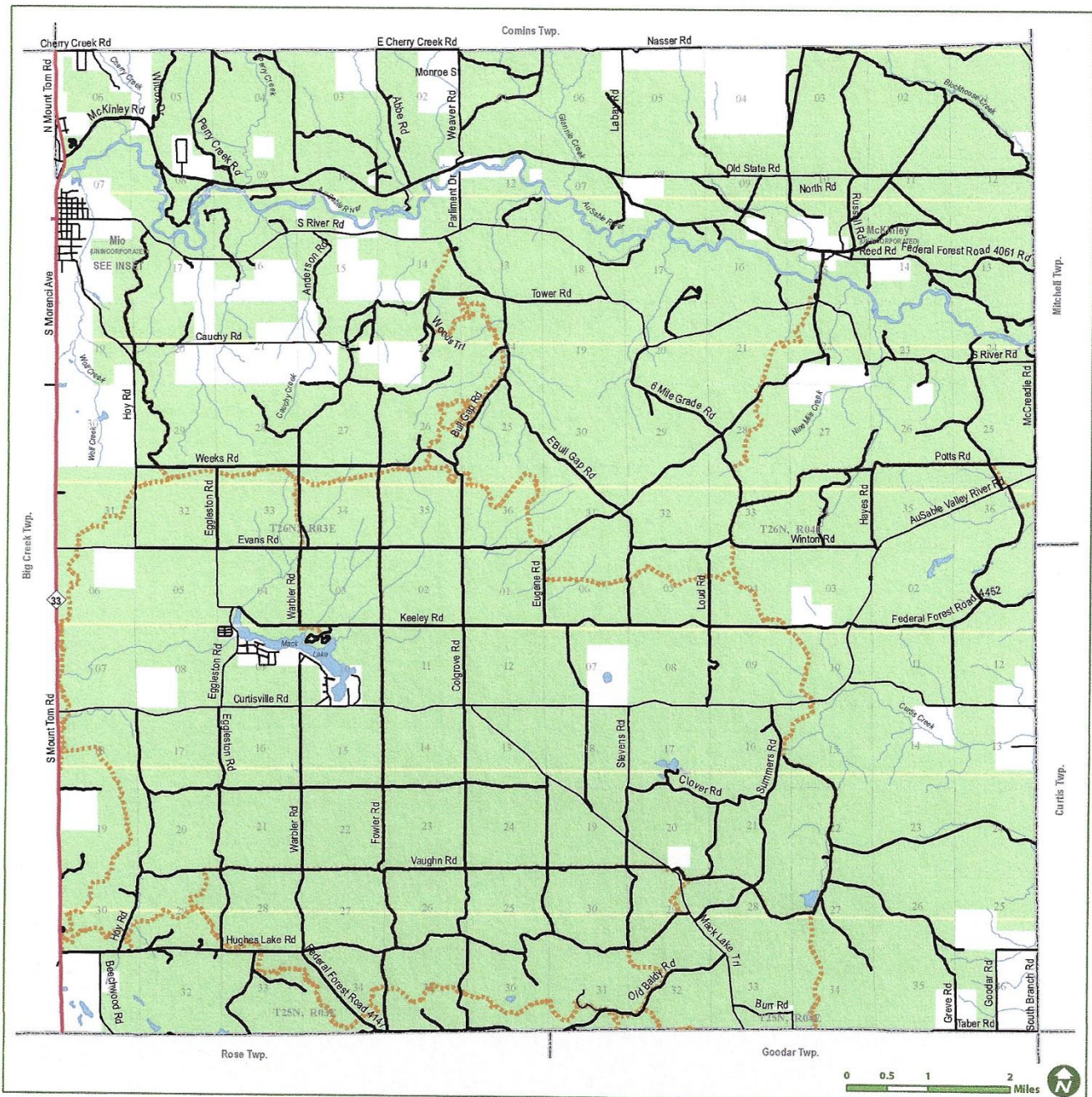
Source: Wade Trim aerial photography interpretation and research; Oscoda County Plat Book;

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Road Ownership Map

- State Trunkline
- Federal Roads (Huron-Manistee National Forest)
- County Road
- - - ORV Trails
- Sections
- Water Features
- Water Bodies
- Municipal Limits

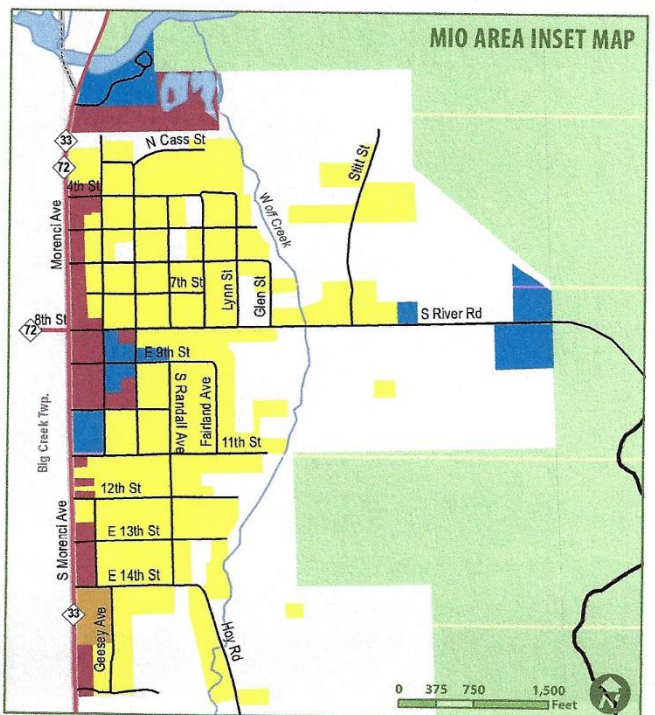
Source: Wade Trim aerial photography interpretation and research; Oscoda County Plat Book; Michigan Geographic Data Library

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Chapter 5: Goals & Objectives

Introduction

Before a community can actively plan for its future growth and development, it must first develop a set of goals and objectives that define the boundaries of its needs and aspirations and, thus, establish a foundation for Master Plan formulation. The goals and objectives must reflect the type of community desired and the kind of lifestyle its citizens wish to follow, given realistic economic and social constraints.

Goals and Objectives Defined

Each goal listed in this Chapter is a basic statement that sets a critical path, provides direction, and describes to the community how the desired outcome should look. Goals are a critical part of the planning process in that they are flexible, defining for the community, and timeless. Goals stay with the community until they are achieved. Goals are ambitious and general. They address issues and specific needs or problems, but they are grand in scope and speak to fundamental change and directly serve the mission of the community.

Objectives are the means to achieve a goal. An objective is a plan of action that sets a more specific task within a goal and helps gauge success. Objectives should often meet the following criteria:

1. An objective must be specific.
2. An objective must be measurable, that is, there must be no question that the objective was begun, carried out, and completed and that a tangible result can be produced.
3. An objective must be able to be assigned to a responsible party. There must be a party made to be in charge of each objective to ensure that it will be carried out and that there is no confusion as to who should answer for the results of the objective.
4. An objective must be trackable, or easy to follow. Each objective must be carefully monitored and its status must be known at all times. It is essential that the objective be set to a specific schedule and "landmarks" within it be set to convey its ongoing progress to residents and businesses alike.

Goals and Objectives

Community-Wide Goals

Mentor Township adopts the following general goals to guide future development and enhance the quality of life for Township residents:

1. Maintain a high quality of life for both present and future Township residents.
2. Preserve the physical, social, and environmental characteristics of the Township.
3. Guide new development in a manner that conserves natural features, protects environmentally sensitive areas, and meets the long-term needs of the community.
4. Balance the rate of land development with the available public facilities and services such as roads and utilities. Encourage development where infrastructure currently exists.
5. Encourage intergovernmental cooperation with Oscoda County and surrounding municipalities in the coordination of long-range planning for the provision of area-wide facilities.

The above stated general goals can be achieved if Mentor Township utilizes the following specific goals and related objectives.

Natural Environment

Natural Environment Goal

Conserve, protect, maintain, and promote the wise use of the natural resources of Mentor Township, such as groundwater, surface water, forests, wetlands, clean air, fish and wildlife, scenic vistas, and sub-surface non-renewable resources for the enjoyment of residents and visitors and for future generations.

Natural Environment Objectives

1. Implement land use patterns which will direct new growth away from environmentally sensitive areas, such as woodlands, wetlands, steep slopes and areas subject to flooding.
2. Encourage the removal of conflicting, unattractive, or undesirable land uses from the Township.
3. Link natural features and open space areas to create a system of natural corridors.
4. Maintain a maximum natural condition in close proximity to the Au Sable River and its tributaries to protect aesthetic beauty, recreation value, and wildlife habitat.
5. Promote the maintenance of farming lands and activities.
6. Work cooperatively with adjacent communities, agencies, and organizations to develop studies and institute programs that address watershed, woodlands, wildlife, and ecosystem management.
7. Identify methods to protect greenbelts, shorelines, farmlands, wetlands, forestlands, groundwater, and surface water and control storm water runoff.
8. Preserve scenic views and open space, especially along major roadways and shorelines.
9. Support natural resource education and technical programs (such as Soil Conservation District, MSU Extension, and Regional Planning) that assist land owners, forestry and agriculture operators, businesses, and communities.
10. Through zoning controls, coordinate the intensity of development with the environmental integrity and limitations of the land.

Housing

Housing Goal

Promote the development of stable, high-quality and well-maintained residential areas designed to offer a variety of housing choices at affordable prices.

Housing Objectives

1. Provide areas primarily for single family residential use.
2. Encourage a residential environment of primarily low density dwellings located on individual lots of various sizes that relate to the natural characteristics of the land.
3. Require adequate buffers or transition areas between residential and non-residential developments to maintain property values and attractiveness.
4. Encourage the removal of conflicting or undesirable land uses from residential areas through code enforcement and other means.
5. Encourage the removal of unsanitary or unsafe housing through code enforcement or other means.

6. Encourage the development of housing designed to meet the specialized needs of the elderly population, enabling them to “age-in-place” in the Township.

Economic Development

Economic Development Goal

Provide for economic growth that creates a diversified economic base and improves the competitiveness of the Township by enhancing employment opportunities for residents and the profitability of businesses and industries, while maintaining the community character and environment.

Economic Development Objectives

1. Encourage commercial development, especially retail and personal services, in locations where compact and coordinated development can occur without impacting residential neighborhoods. In general, these uses should be guided to the community of Mio.
2. Provide an area for the activities of the non-retail, heavy commercial, construction, and light industrial enterprises in areas that have adequate public services and facilities.
3. Direct higher intensity commercial and industrial land uses primarily to those areas served by the Big Creek Mentor Utility Authority (BCMUA) utility system.
4. A compatible relationship should be established between commercial and adjacent residential uses through the use of buffer devices such as walls, fences, landscaped areas, and transitional uses.
5. Ensure reasonable land use and development regulations and encourage the development of infrastructure and facilities necessary to support economic development in a planned and managed way.
6. Cooperate with agencies that provide support and technical assistance to residents in the agriculture and forestry industries.
7. Through zoning controls, welcome the concept of home occupations and “work at home” opportunities.
8. Cooperate with county-wide or regional economic development authorities to promote economic growth on a region-wide basis.

Recreation

Recreation Goal

Encourage the preservation of recreation resources, historical and cultural opportunities, and programs and facilities at a level which will meet the needs of permanent and seasonal residents, tourists and visitors, and future generations.

Park and Recreation Objectives

1. Support cooperative recreational planning and development between Mentor Township and Oscoda County, neighboring townships and communities, schools, non-profit organizations, and private entities.
2. Through a combination of funding sources including general funds, grants, and donations, continue to develop township parks with more active recreation facilities.
3. Promote tourism and economic growth through recreation facilities development and management.

4. Maintain a community recreation plan to be used as a short term and long term guide for recreation improvements and to ensure eligibility for certain State recreation grant opportunities.
5. Encourage development and improvements to non-motorized recreation trails, such as for biking, walking, running, or cross-country skiing.
6. Establish a working relationship with the MDNR and U.S. Forest Service in the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities, such as ATV-ORV trails and additional river access sites.
7. Recognize the importance of hunting lands within the Township and encourage the preservation of these lands.

Community Facilities and Services

Community Facilities and Services Goal

Continue to provide appropriate public facilities and services to support the residential, commercial, agricultural, forestry, and recreational activities of residents and visitors.

Community Facilities and Services Objectives

1. Continue providing public services and facilities residents are accustomed to, such as EMS and fire protection, and improve/expand these services as needed.
2. Support the Big Creek Mentor Utility Authority (BCMUA) in undertaking improvements to the regional utility system.
3. Continue the cooperative relationship with neighboring and regional governmental agencies for the shared provision of public services and facilities, like recreation, emergency services, library, and senior services.
4. Work proactively with the Oscoda County Road Commission and MDOT on road improvements, road maintenance, and snow removal, as well as road planning.
5. Encourage the development and/or expansion of telecommunication, internet, and cable services.
6. Encourage long-term sustainability and the reduction of fossil-fuel emissions through the promotion and implementation of energy efficient facilities, services, programs and incentives.
7. Explore the feasibility of the Township's wind resources as an economic development tool and means to reduce energy consumption, weighed against potential impacts to the natural environment and rural character.

Local Government

Local Government Goal

Cooperate and collaborate among all levels of government and communicate effectively with the public. Expend tax dollars in a wise and efficient manner.

Local Government Objectives

1. Operate a responsive and efficient Township government while allowing for meaningful involvement and participation by Township citizens and stakeholders in all planning processes.
2. Generate economies of scale and cost savings through collaboration, cooperation, and coordination among local units of government and Oscoda County on issues of mutual concern.

3. Ensure a responsible fiscal policy and budget process to finance the Township government.
4. Encourage and support community volunteerism by providing opportunities for citizens motivated to contribute to the community's well-being, and to satisfy one's personal need for fulfillment, sense of accomplishment, and self-esteem.
5. Assist citizens in communicating with state agencies on land use and environmental issues, including wetlands regulation, park management, and state forest management practices.
6. Consider creating a Township website containing contact information, ordinances, and meeting minutes to promote better communication between local government and the citizenry.

Chapter 6: Future Land Use Plan

Introduction

The Mentor Township Planning Commission developed the future land use recommendations for this Master Plan with assistance from the Township's professional planning consultant. Recommendations are based on an analysis of several factors including: existing land use patterns, social and economic characteristics, environmental conditions, available community services and facilities, existing land division patterns, public opinion, property ownership, existing zoning, and community goals and objectives.

The Future Land Use Plan is designed to serve as a guide for future development. If it is to serve the needs of the community and function effectively, it must incorporate several important characteristics as follows:

1. The Plan must be general. The Plan, by its very nature, cannot be implemented immediately.
2. Therefore, only generalized locations for various land uses are indicated on the Plan.
3. The Plan should embrace an extended but foreseeable time period. The Plan depicts land uses and community development strategies through the Year 2025.
4. The Plan should be comprehensive. The Plan, if it is to serve its function as an important decision-making tool, must give adequate consideration to the sensitive relationships which exist between all major land use categories.
5. The Plan should acknowledge regional conditions and trends.
6. The Plan must be updated periodically. The Plan may require periodic revisions to reflect significant changes in local, state, or national conditions which cannot be foreseen at this time. It is, of course, impossible to predict the type of changes which may occur over the next decade or two. Therefore, a comprehensive review of the Future Land Use Plan should be undertaken approximately every five years to provide for an adequate analysis of new conditions and trends. Should major rezonings which are in conflict with Plan recommendations be accomplished, the Plan should be reviewed and amended accordingly.

Future Land Use Classifications

The recommended future land use plan identifies locations for seven different land use classifications: Recreation/Agricultural; Au Sable River and Green Belt; R-1; R-2; R-3; Commercial; and, Heavy Commercial/Industrial. The **Future Land Use Map** illustrates the distribution of recommended future land uses by category. Activities anticipated within each of these land use categories are discussed below.

Recreation/Agricultural

As mentioned in Chapter 4, nearly 90 percent of the Township's land area is made up of forested land owned by the State of Michigan or the Federal Government. The majority of these publicly owned forest lands, in addition to most privately owned forest or agricultural properties of the Township, are designated as Recreation/Agricultural.

It is the primary intent of this classification to:

- Protect the rural character of Mentor Township from inappropriate development;
- Preserve the essential characteristics of agricultural and recreational lands; and,
- Promote the maintenance of farm areas.

As it relates to those lands within close proximity to water bodies, it is the further intent of this category to:

- Protect water quality
- Maintain the natural aesthetic beauty of the Au Sable River corridor; and,
- Avoid or lessen hazards to persons or damage to property resulting from accumulation of runoff or flood waters.

Lands in this category are likely to be used for timber harvesting, hunting and recreational pursuits, or undeveloped open space. Privately owned lands within this land use category may be used for single-family residences (both year-round and seasonal) on lots at least one acre in size, hunting camps, forest products harvesting, recreational uses, and farming where soil conditions are suitable. The protection of forested land, wetlands, and non-forested open spaces within this classification is critical to preserving the rural character of Mentor Township.

Au Sable River and Green Belt

The Au Sable River and Green Belt future land use category encompasses lands along the shoreline of the Au Sable River and its tributaries, as well as the shoreline of Mack Lake. The primary purpose of this future land use category is to:

- Protect water quality; and,
- Maintain a maximum natural condition in close proximity to the Au Sable River and its tributaries to protect aesthetic beauty, recreation value, and wildlife habitat.

This future land use classification is not primarily intended to prescribe allowable land uses; rather, it seeks to regulate the characteristics of development within these sensitive natural areas by requiring a greater standard of review. Future development proposals within the Natural Greenbelt areas should address issues including erosion control, minimum building elevations, setbacks from the high water mark of lakes and streams, stormwater run-off, septic field setbacks from the water, shoreline buffering and lower density development. These considerations are intended to grant private development access to these features with the expectation that a higher design standard and maintenance will be necessary.

Residential Categories

R-1

R-1 residential development, primarily designed to accommodate single-family dwellings on a range of lot sizes, is shown as light brown on the **Future Land Use Map**. Lot sizes should be large enough to accommodate on-site water and septic systems, since public services are not available in all areas. Areas within this land use classification are scattered in the northwestern portion of the Township outside of the unincorporated community of Mio.

In addition to single-family dwellings, home-operated businesses, two-family dwellings, community uses such as parks, churches, schools, libraries, cemeteries, and child care facilities may also be allowed in these areas if designed to be compatible with the residential setting.

R-2

R-2 residential development anticipates uses similar to the R-1 classification, except that the R-2 category would also allow for a slightly higher intensity of development and use. The majority of the established residential areas of the Township, including the existing neighborhoods of Mio and McKinley, have been classified as R-2.

Land in this category is generally subdivided at a density of not more than four residential lots per acre. Allowable uses would primarily include single-family dwellings and two-family dwellings. Additionally, resort residential developments, home-operated businesses, community uses such as parks, churches, schools, libraries, cemeteries, and child care facilities would also be allowed where consistent with adjacent residential uses. Under certain circumstances, where adequate public services are available and when appropriate buffers are provided between lower-density residential uses, multiple-family uses may be allowed in this classification.

R-3

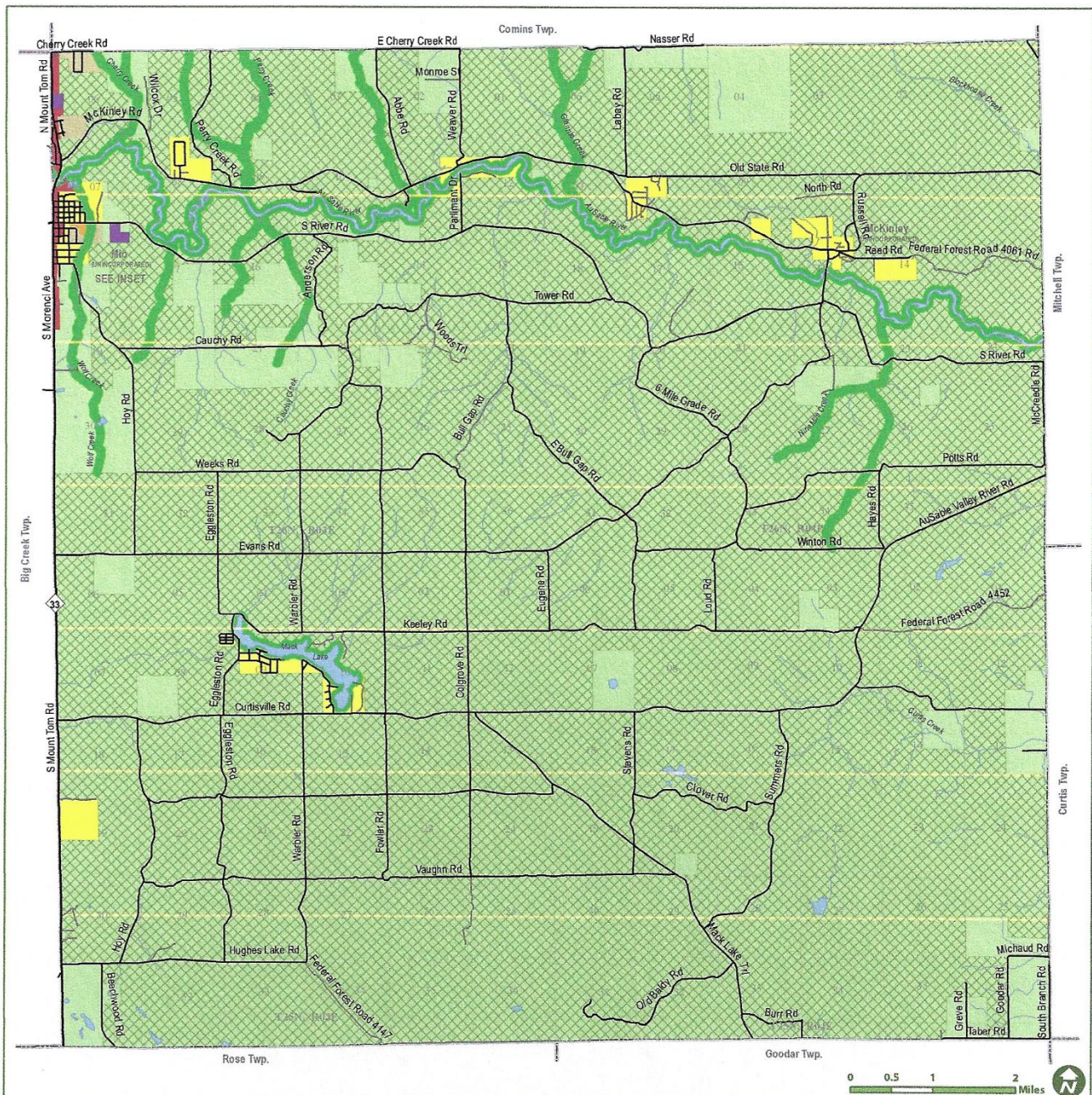
The R-3 future land use classification is intended to provide opportunities for more affordable housing and alternatives to traditional single-family detached development. R-3 residential lands may include such uses as duplexes, attached condominiums, senior living, and apartments. Manufactured, mobile or modular home parks may also be permitted within this land use classification. To ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses and the overall rural character of the Township, landscaping and buffering is required along the perimeter of any new development. Additionally, access to approved sanitary sewer facilities must be provided. One area along the south side of River Road in the community of Mio has been designated as R-3.

Commercial

The primary purpose of this classification is to provide areas for the sale of goods and services to accommodate the needs of both the residents and of the visitors to Mentor Township. This land use classification includes those areas of the Township that are currently developed or are planned to be occupied by retail and service facilities, as well as general commercial uses. Examples would include retail stores, personal service establishments, restaurants, grocery stores, general merchandise stores, and automobile-oriented uses. These commercial areas, thoughtfully designed and oriented, will accommodate the commercial needs of established residential areas within Mentor Township and will provide for the logical expansion of the commercial areas located along M-33/M-72 within the community of Mio.

Heavy Commercial/Industrial

The primary purpose of this classification is to provide an area for the activities of the non-retail, heavy commercial, construction, and light industrial enterprises of Mentor Township. The Heavy Commercial/Industrial classification consists primarily of an area located on the south side of River Road just outside of Mio. Another area is found near the airport on M-33/M-72 north of Mio. Recommended commercial and/or industrial uses for these areas are automobile service and repair, wholesale and storage facilities, petroleum storage and distribution facilities, light manufacturing, communication towers and similar uses. These areas are not compatible with residential neighborhoods without a buffer; thus, operations of these uses should be subject to performance standards to limit the environmental impact on the community.



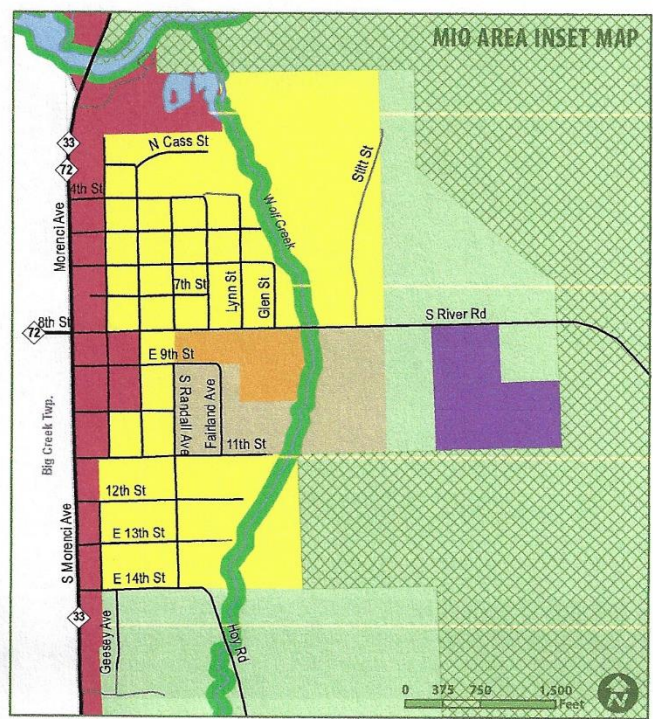
Future Land Use Map DRAFT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation/Agricultural R-1 R-2 R-3 Commercial Heavy Commercial/Industrial Au Sable & River Green Belt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Highways Public Roads Non-Public Roads Sections Water Features Water Bodies Municipal Limits Publicly Owned Lands (State/U.S.)
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Master Plan

Mentor Township

OSCODA COUNTY, MICHIGAN

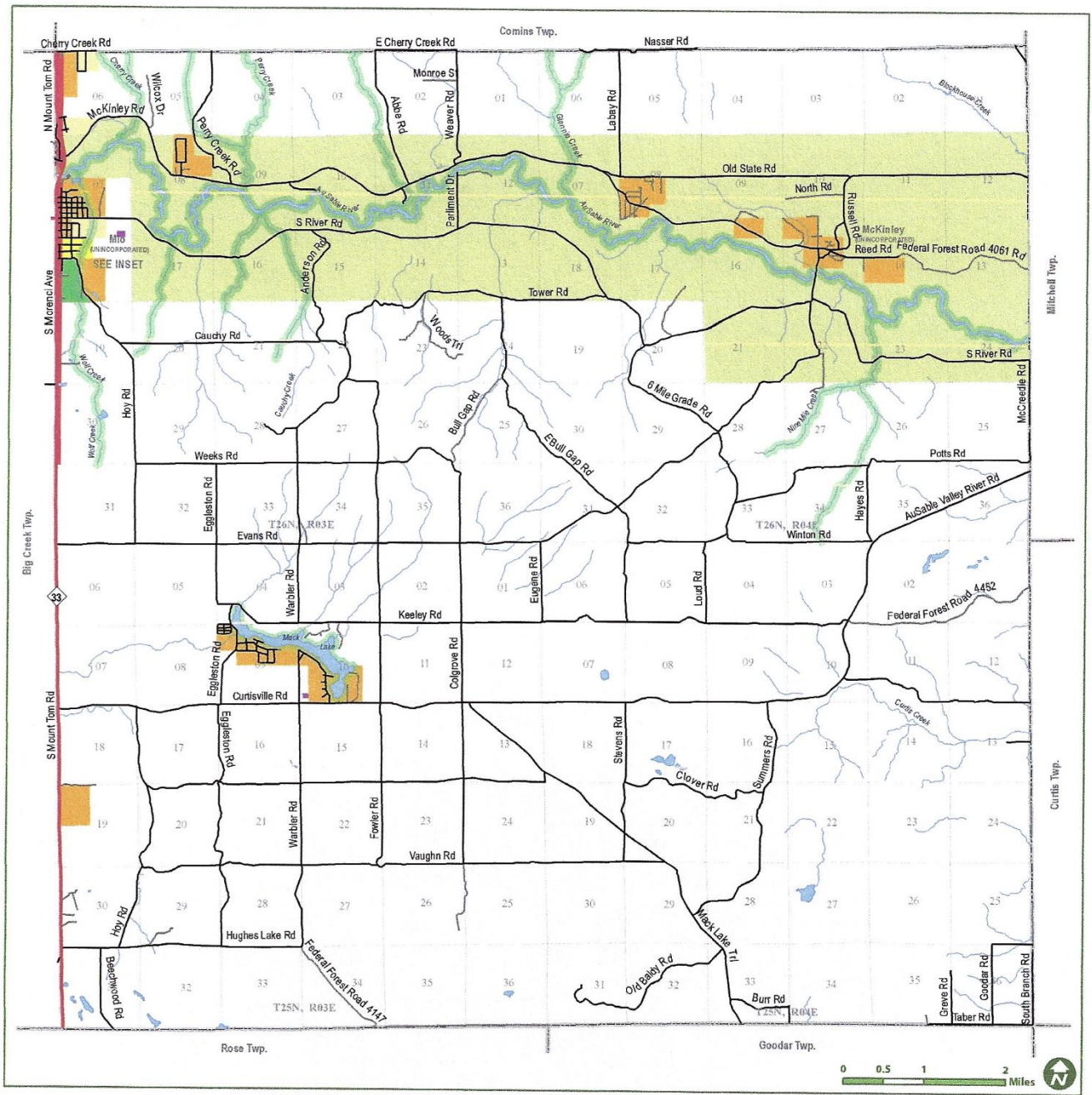


Zoning Plan

The Mentor Township Zoning Ordinance is a regulatory tool that guides land use and development within the Township. As stipulated by the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, Public Act 110 of 2006, the Zoning Ordinance must be based upon a Master Plan. Therefore, this Master Plan, by setting forth the long term vision of Mentor Township, provides the basis for the Township Zoning Ordinance, which contains the rules that govern the path to that vision.

As required by the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, the following is an explanation of the relationship between the future land use classifications presented in this Master Plan and the zoning districts established in the Mentor Township Zoning Ordinance. The **Zoning Map** shows the existing zoning districts established in the Mentor Township Zoning Ordinance.

As can be seen by comparing the two maps, the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map are largely similar. The majority of lands planned in the Recreation/Agricultural future land use classification are zoned either R-A District (Recreation & Agriculture) or Au Sable River District. These two zoning districts effectively work together to accomplish the intent of the Recreation/Agricultural future land use classification to protect the rural character of the Township. The lands identified as Au Sable River and Green Belt in the Future Land Use Map are zoned Green Belt District. Planned residential lands in the Future Land Use Map are zoned for a combination of R-1 District, R-2 District and R-3 District. These three residential zoning districts allow for a combination of residential uses at varying densities as envisioned in the Future Land Use Plan. Lands planned for Commercial use on the Future Land Use Map are primarily zoned C-1 District (Commercial & Highway Business). Presently, only one small area of Mentor Township is zoned C-3 District (Heavy Commercial & Industrial). The C-3 Zoning District would generally accomplish the intended uses and character as envisioned by the Heavy Commercial/Industrial future land use classification.



Zoning Districts Map

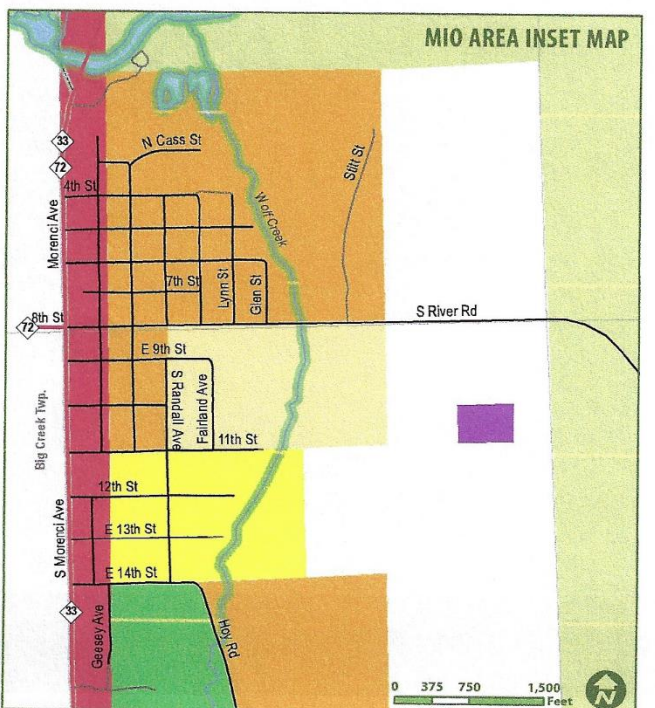
 A-R Au Sable River Zone	 State Highways
 R-1 Residential Zone	 Public Roads
 R-2 Residential Zone	 Non-Public Roads
 R-3 Residential Zone	 Sections
 C-1 Commercial & Highway Business	 Water Features
 C-3 Heavy Commercial & Industrial	 Water Bodies
 R-A Recreation & Agriculture	 Municipal Limits
 G-B Green Belt Zone	

Source: Wade Trim aerial photography interpretation and research; Oscoda County Plat Book;

Master Plan

Mentor Township

OSCODA COUNTY, MICHIGAN



Chapter 7: Implementation

Public Support of the Master Plan

Citizen participation and understanding of the general planning process and policies of the plan are critical to the success of the Township's planning program. A well-organized public relations program is needed to identify and marshal public support. Lack of citizen understanding and support could well have serious implications for the eventual implementation of planning proposals. Failure of the public to back needed bond issues and continuing dissatisfaction concerning taxation, special assessments, zoning decisions, and development proposals are some of the results of public misunderstanding and rejection of long range plans.

In order to organize public support most effectively, the Township must emphasize the necessity of, and reasons for, instituting the planning program. Accordingly, the Planning Enabling Act under Section 51 states that the Township Planning Commission "may publish and distribute copies of the Master Plan or of any report, and employ other means of publicity and education." Additionally, the Planning Commission "shall consult with and advise public officials and agencies, public utility companies, civic, educational, professional, and other organizations, and citizens concerning the promotion or implementation of the Master Plan." In this spirit, the Township may wish to prepare a plan summary brochure for public distribution upon its adoption.

Plan Implementation through Zoning

As noted in Chapter 6, a master plan provides the legal basis for the development of a zoning ordinance. With this legal basis in mind, it is recommended that Mentor Township review and revise, as necessary, the Mentor Township Zoning Ordinance based on the goals, objectives, and future land use recommendations of this Master Plan. In addition, the zoning ordinance should be reviewed for compliance with current state laws. The zoning ordinance is the most important tool for implementing the master plan.

Grants and Capital Improvements Investments

A master plan can also be used as a guide for future public investment and service decisions, such as the local budget, grant applications, and administration of utilities and services. Many communities find it beneficial to prioritize and budget for capital improvements projects (such as building expansions, infrastructure improvements, major equipment purchases, park improvements, etc.). A Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is one tool which is often used to establish a prioritized schedule for all anticipated capital improvement projects in the community. A CIP includes cost estimates and sources for financing for each project. Therefore, it can serve as both a budgetary and policy document to aid in the implementation of a community's goals defined in the master plan.

Planning Education

Planning Commissioners and Township staff should be encouraged to attend planning and zoning seminars to keep themselves informed of current planning issues and learn how to better carry out their duties and responsibilities. These seminars are regularly sponsored by groups as the Michigan Association of Planning, Michigan Townships Association and the Michigan State University Extension Service.

Recreation Planning

A recreation plan is one way to implement important recreation related goals defined in the master plan. By developing a recreation plan consistent with Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements, a community is eligible for certain MDNR recreation grants. Because Mentor Township owns and operates recreation properties, it is recommended the community develop a recreation plan and keep it updated at five-year intervals, as required.