



Denmark Township Master Plan 2024

Denmark Township Master Plan Update 2024

Dan Bauer, Chair, Planning Commission

The process of preparing the Denmark Township Master Plan was initially begun in 2023 by the Denmark Township Planning Commission.

Township Board

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Planning Commission

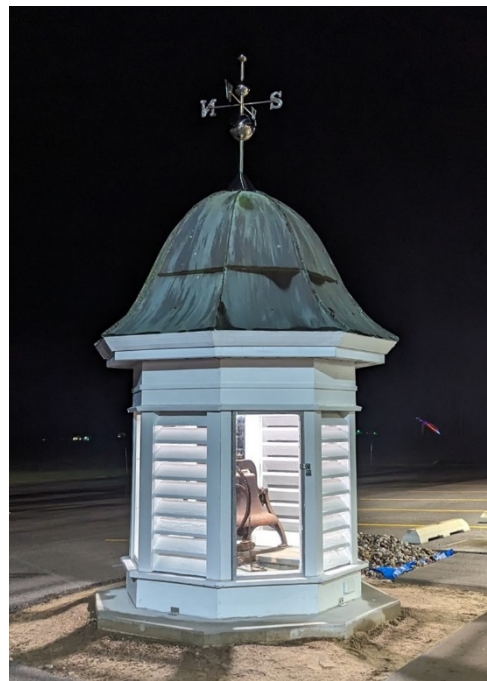
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The Master Planning Process

Legal Authority to Plan

Preparing a Master Plan is one of the major functions of a Township. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (P.A. 33 of 2008) states that “the planning commission shall make and approve a basic plan as a guide for the development within the planning jurisdiction”.

Purpose of a Plan

A Master Plan reflects the ideas and hopes of a community, translated into goals and actions. The Master Plan is a comprehensive document that is intended to guide development in the municipality in the next 10 - 20 years, achieving a better community and living environment.

A Master Plan serves to:

- Seek citizen input on needs and services.
- Form a general statement of goals and objectives.
- Provide an overall perspective for the future.
- Develop a future land use map.
- Guide the use of limited resources in an efficient manner.
- Promote public health, safety, and general welfare.
- Preserve the quality of the environment in the Township.
- Guide future zoning decisions.
- Encourage cooperation and economic improvement through the goals and objectives of the plan.

Master Plans and Zoning Ordinances

Zoning is regulation of the use of land. A zoning ordinance controls how land is used today. It is the law. A Master Plan is a set of policies, not a law. The master plan is the community's future vision while the zoning ordinance contains the rules that govern the path to that vision. The long range goals of the Master Plan are the basis for a zoning ordinance and zoning decisions. **State law requires that a zoning ordinance be based on an adopted plan.** Zoning decisions that are consistent with the Master Plan are more likely presumed to be valid if challenged in the courts.

How the Denmark Township Master Plan was completed

This document is an update of the 2021 Denmark Township Master Plan. Denmark Township began the process to update its Master Plan in early 2023. The Township reviewed the existing document and made changes/updates to specific areas of the document. Those included:

- Community Characteristics including updated Census data.
- Community infrastructure changes.
- Community Goals and Objectives.
- Future Land Use.
- Implementation Plan.

The draft plan was made available for review on April 1, 2024. A public hearing regarding the adoption of the plan was held on June 3, 2024. The Denmark Township Master Plan was adopted by the Planning Commission on June 3, 2024. The Denmark Township Board of Trustees approved of the Plan by resolution on June 24, 2024.



Regional Setting

Denmark Township is a rural agricultural township located on the western side of Tuscola County, in Michigan’s Thumb area. It is bordered by Gilford Township to the north, Juniata Township to the east, and Tuscola Township to the south. Saginaw

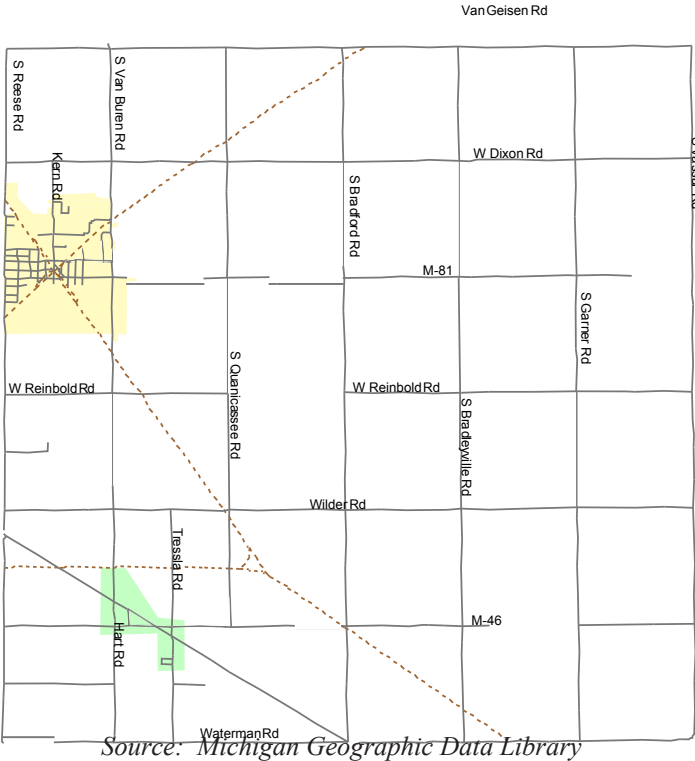
County’s Blumfield Township is situated directly west.

State highways M-81 and M-46 run east to west across Denmark Township. M-15 runs diagonally across the southwestern side of the township. The closest expressway is I-75, located 10 miles west of the township.

The Village of Reese lies entirely within Denmark Township on the north-west side of the township. The unincorporated community of Richville is in the southwestern portion of the township where M-15 crosses M-46.

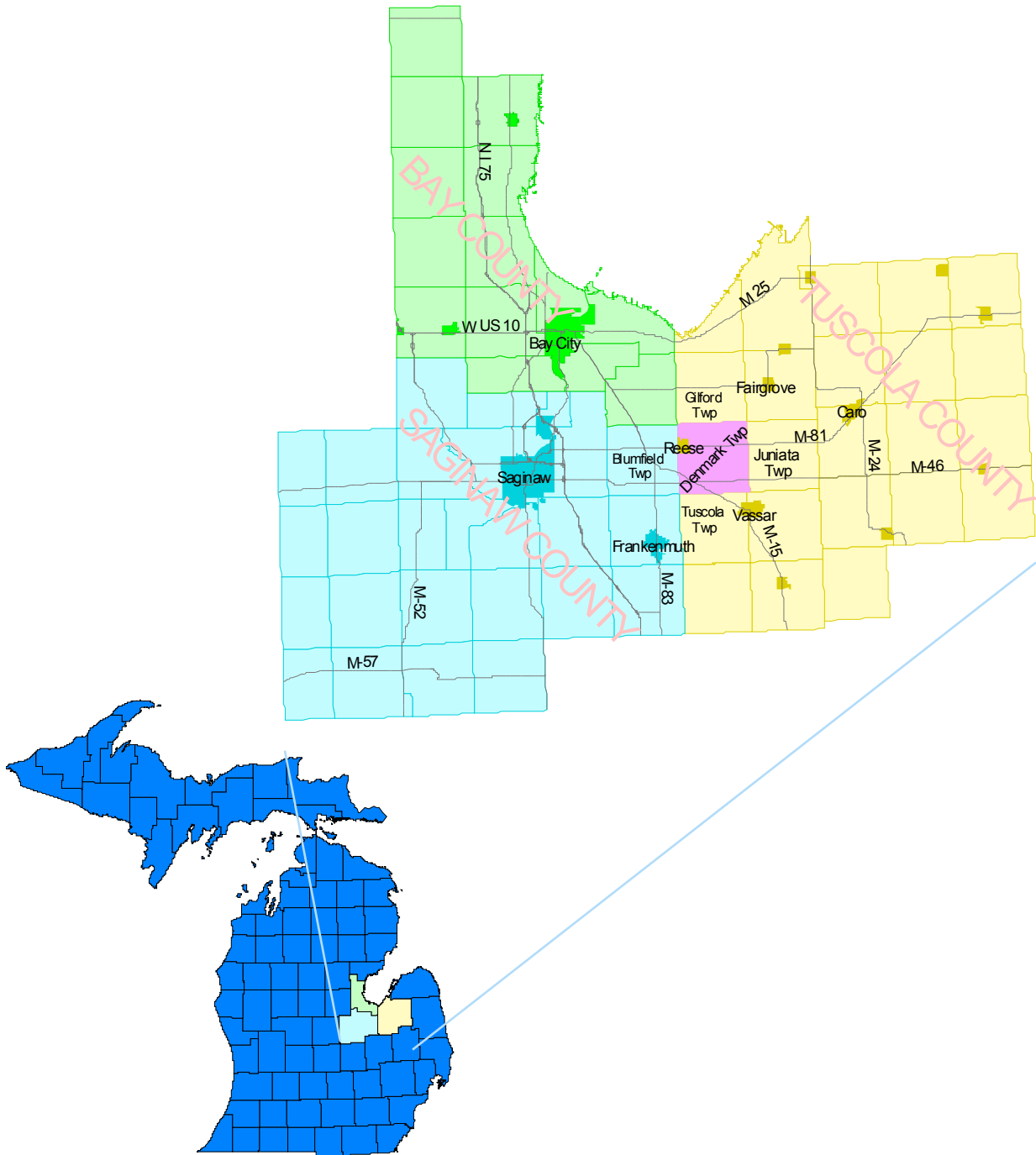
Denmark Township is located 12 miles east of Saginaw and 17 miles southeast of Bay City. Both serve as regional centers for shopping and employment.

Map 1
Denmark Township



Map 2 on the following page shows the regional location of Denmark Township.

Map 2 Denmark Township Regional Setting



Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library

Community Characteristics

History*

The earliest settlers in Denmark Township were the German Lutherans who settled in Richville (formerly known as Frankenhilf) in 1851. Germans from the Bavarian region came to four different communities in the Saginaw Bay area to settle and serve as missionaries to the Native Americans in the region. Mr. & Mrs. Gottlieb Ammon, Michael Schwartz, and Mr. and Mrs. Michael Gruber were the first known settlers in Richville. In December of 1851, Pastor Johannes Deindoerfer arrived. He conducted his first worship service on the second Sunday in Advent in the Ammon home. This was the beginning of St. Michael's Lutheran Church.



St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Richville built in 1875

Denmark Township was officially organized on October 11, 1853. The first town meeting was held on April 3, 1854 at the home of Joeseph Selden. The census of 1854 showed a population of 227. Statistical data shows that the community produced 100 bushels of corn and 75 bushels of wheat in 1853. By 1880, the population had grown to 1,643 and crop production increased to 33,542 bushels of wheat and 65,455 bushels of corn. The first Supervisor for Denmark Township is listed as John J. Rogner, who was elected in 1883.

The first settlers to the Reese area arrived in the 1860's. In 1872, Asenath M. Rogers platted 11 acres in Reese and named it "Gates" after a Saginaw entrepreneur. In 1873, the community received a major boost to the economy when the Detroit & Bay City (D&BC) Railroad built a line through the town on its way to Bay City. It was the railroad that gave the village its current name. The railroad named their depot "Reese" after G. W. Reese, railroad superintendent.

By 1878, the village was home to 300 residents, and the growth continued. In 1883, the Saginaw, Tuscola, and Huron Railway built a line from Saginaw to Bad Axe that formed a junction with the D&BC at Reese.

**Sources: villageofreese.org, stmrichville.org, History of Tuscola & Bay Counties, H.R. Page, Chicago, 1883.*

Population

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the population of Denmark Township was 2,923. This includes the Village of Reese, whose population was listed as 1364. The Township experienced strong population growth from 1960 to 1980, when it peaked at 3,615, and it has declined by 692 people in the period since then.

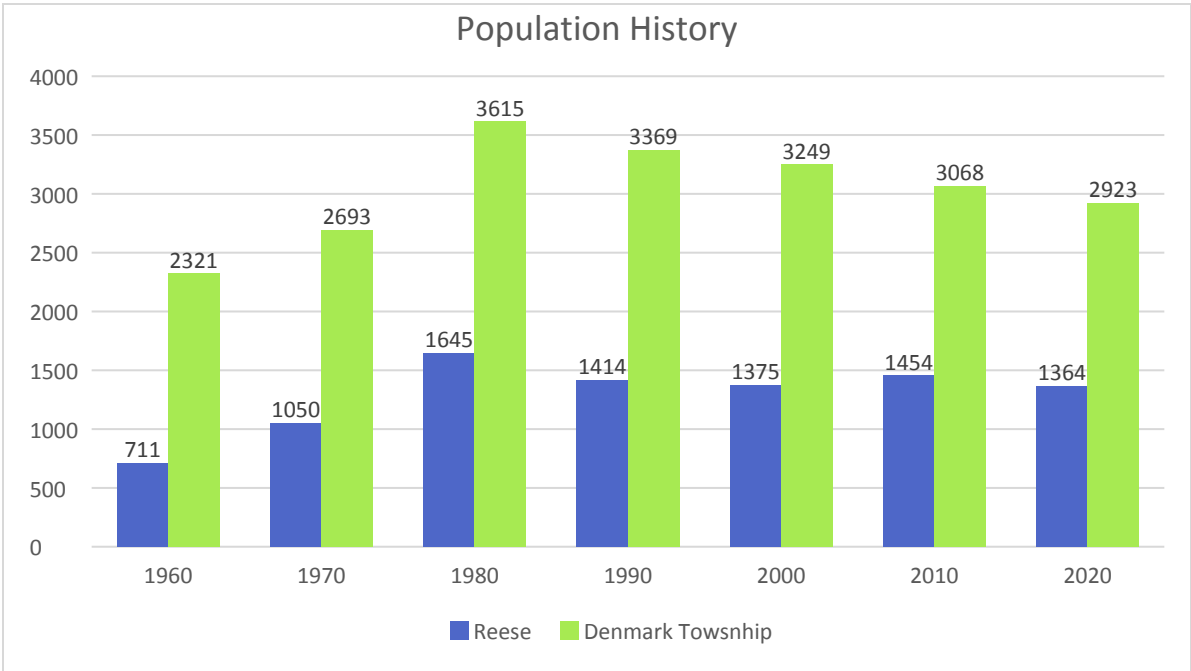


Figure 1 – Denmark Township’s population peaked in 1980 and has declined since then. Source: U.S. Census

Housing and Households

According to the 2020 American Community Survey, there are 1,338 housing units in Denmark Township. Approximately 95% of these were occupied. This is a fairly strong occupancy rate which allows for natural turnover of housing. Stability in housing can be shown in the percentage of owner occupied housing units. Approximately 84% of the housing units in Denmark Township in 2020 were owner occupied. (Homes are either occupied by an owner or a renter.) This percentage is the same in Tuscola County, and, it is lower in the State of Michigan where 72% of

the housing units were owner occupied.

Average household size in Denmark Township in 2020 was 2.2 people, which is the smaller than Tuscola County at 2.4 and also smaller than the State of Michigan at 2.5. Denmark Township’s average household size has decreased significantly from 1990 when it was 2.73. Decreasing household size is a reflection of several factors: 1) an older population with more empty nest households 2) more single parent households 3) a general trend toward families having less children.

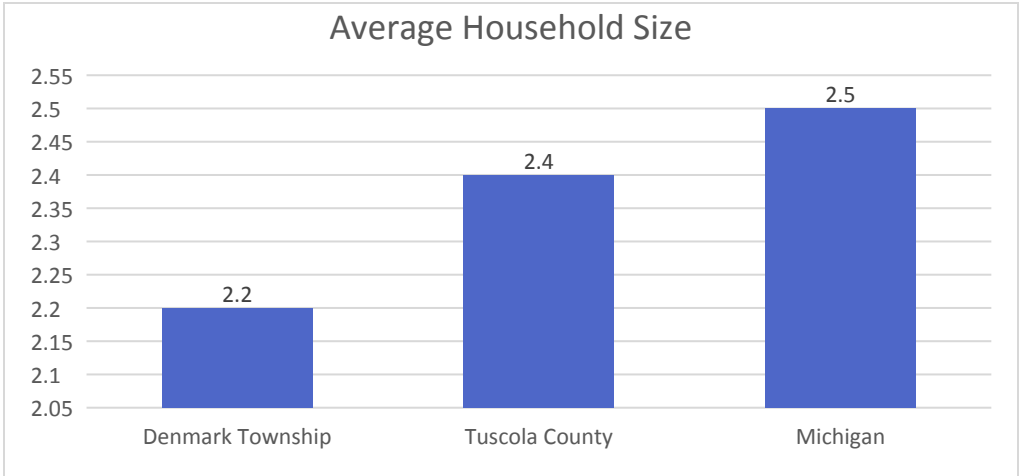


Figure 2 – Denmark Township’s household size is smaller than Tuscola County’s and smaller than Michigan’s as well. Source: 2020 American Community Survey

The median value of a home in Denmark Township in 2020 was \$134,800. This was higher than the Tuscola County median of \$112,400 but less than the state median of \$172,100.

Median housing value*

- Denmark Township**
\$134,800
- Tuscola County**
\$112,400
- Michigan**
\$172,100

*2020 American Community Survey

Income and Employment

Median household income in Denmark Township was \$62,632 according to the 2020 American Community Survey. This was more than the Tuscola County median household income of \$55,174 but slightly less than the state median of \$63,202.

Denmark Township had a smaller percentage of individuals below the poverty level in 2020 than Tuscola County or Michigan. Approximately 12% of individuals in Denmark Township had income below the poverty level. The figures for Tuscola County and Michigan were 13%. Poverty is measured by using 48 thresholds that vary by family size, number of children within the family, and age of the householder. To determine whether a person is poor, one compares the total income of that person's family with the threshold appropriate for that family size and characteristics.



Community Infrastructure and Facilities

Community Facilities and Infrastructure are those facilities and services operated by public or quasi-public entities for the benefit of residents. This section of the plan describes these public resources and their condition in order to incorporate their potential improvement or preservation into the future land use plan.

Transportation Network

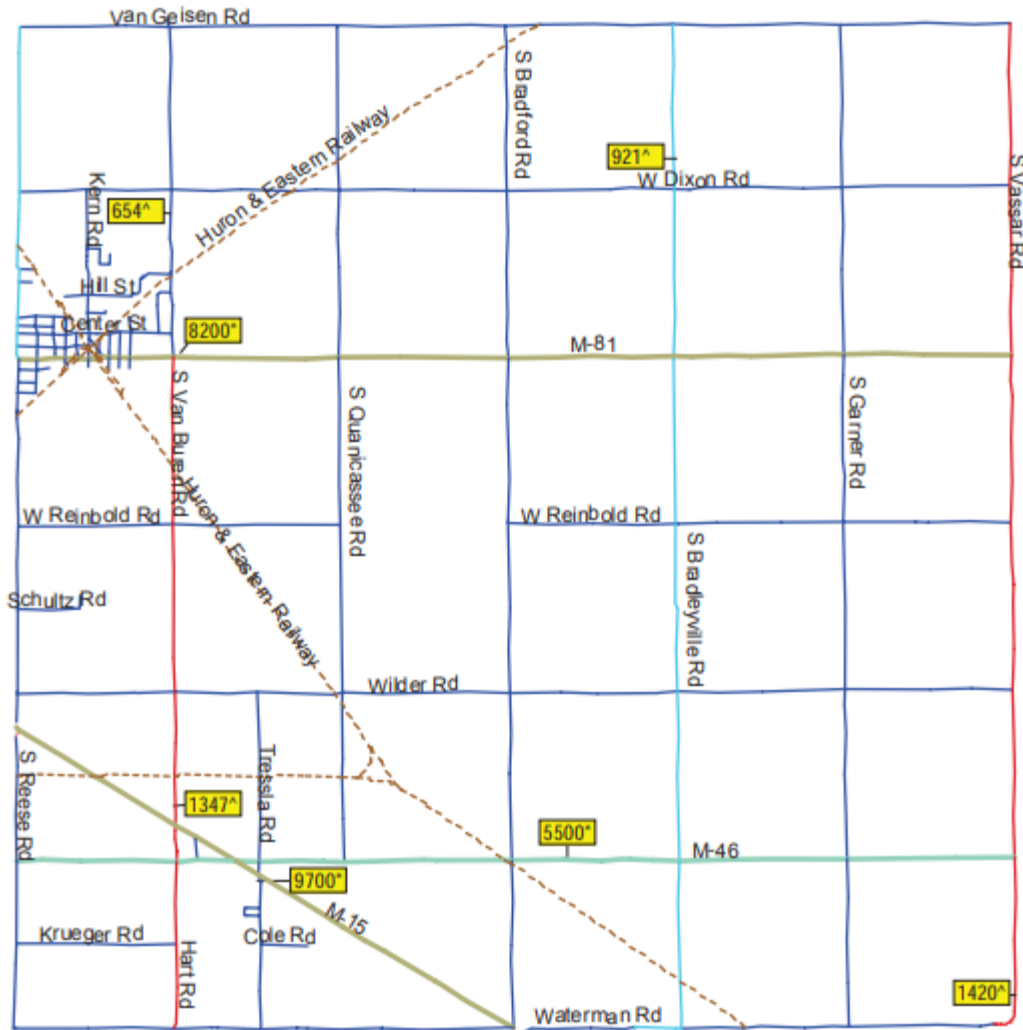
Roadways







Denmark Township is a typical square Michigan township that encompasses six square miles. Roads run along each of those square miles with the exception of one mile of Reinbold Road between Quanicassee Road and Bradford Road and Quanicassee Road between M-46 and Waterman Road. All roads in the township are paved. Three state roads traverse the township: M-46, M-81, and M-15.

The Federal Highway Administration developed the National Functional Classification (NFC) system to classify streets, roads, and highways according to their function. The Michigan Department of Transportation assigned each NFC value. The following paragraphs describe the main roadways in Denmark Township.

Principal Arterials - The only principal arterial within Denmark Township is M-46. Principal arterials generally carry long distance, through-travel movements. They also provide access to important traffic generators, such as major airports or regional shopping centers. M-46 carries east to west traffic across the State of Michigan. According to the Michigan Department of Transportation, the average daily traffic (ADT) volume on M-46 near the middle of the township is 6,000 vehicles. The ADT between Richville and M-83 is 7,500.

Map 3 Denmark Township Transportation Network



-  Rural Principal Arterial
-  Rural Minor Arterial
-  Rural Major Collector
-  Rural Minor Collector
-  Rural Local
-  Railroad

 2001 Average Daily Traffic Count from the Tuscola County Road Commission

 2002 Average Daily Traffic Count from the Michigan Department of Transportation



Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library

Minor Arterials are similar in function to principal arterials, except that they carry trips of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators. Minor arterials in Denmark Township are M-15 and M-81. The portion of M-15 just south of M-46 is very heavily traveled, as shown by the 10,200 average daily traffic (ADT) volume. The portion north of M-15 has much lower traffic counts, showing 4,200 ADT just west of the Saginaw county line. The M-81 ADT is relatively high (8,700) just east of the Village of Reese but drops to 5,800 as one travels eastward through Juniata Township.

Rural Major Collectors are important intra-county travel corridors and provide service to county seats not on an arterial route, to larger towns not directly served by the higher systems, and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance.

The major collector roads in Denmark Township are:

- Van Buren Road
- Hart Road
- Vassar Road

Rural Minor Collectors - Minor collectors are identified to collect traffic from local roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance to a major collector or arterial road; to provide service to the smaller communities and to link locally important traffic generators with their rural hinterland.

Minor collectors in Denmark Township are:

- Bradleyville Road

Local Roads - The remainder of the roads in Denmark Township are classified as local roads. Local roads primarily provide access to property.

Railroads

There are several miles of Huron & Eastern railroad lines across Denmark Township. Exact routes are shown on Map 3. It should be noted that the section of railroad that runs west of M-15 and south of Wilder Road has been abandoned. In 2008, it was developed into the Harger Line Rail Trail which travels from M-15 westerly for 10.1 miles to Towerline Road in Buena Vista Township.

Schools

Land in Denmark Township falls within three different school districts. The township can be split nearly diagonally from southwest to northeast. The northwest portion of the township lies within the Reese School District and the southeast portion falls in the Vassar School District. A few small parcels in the southwest corner lie within the Frankenmuth School District.

St. Michael’s Lutheran Church in Richville operates a K-8 private school for nearly 150 students. There are 75 in the childcare program.

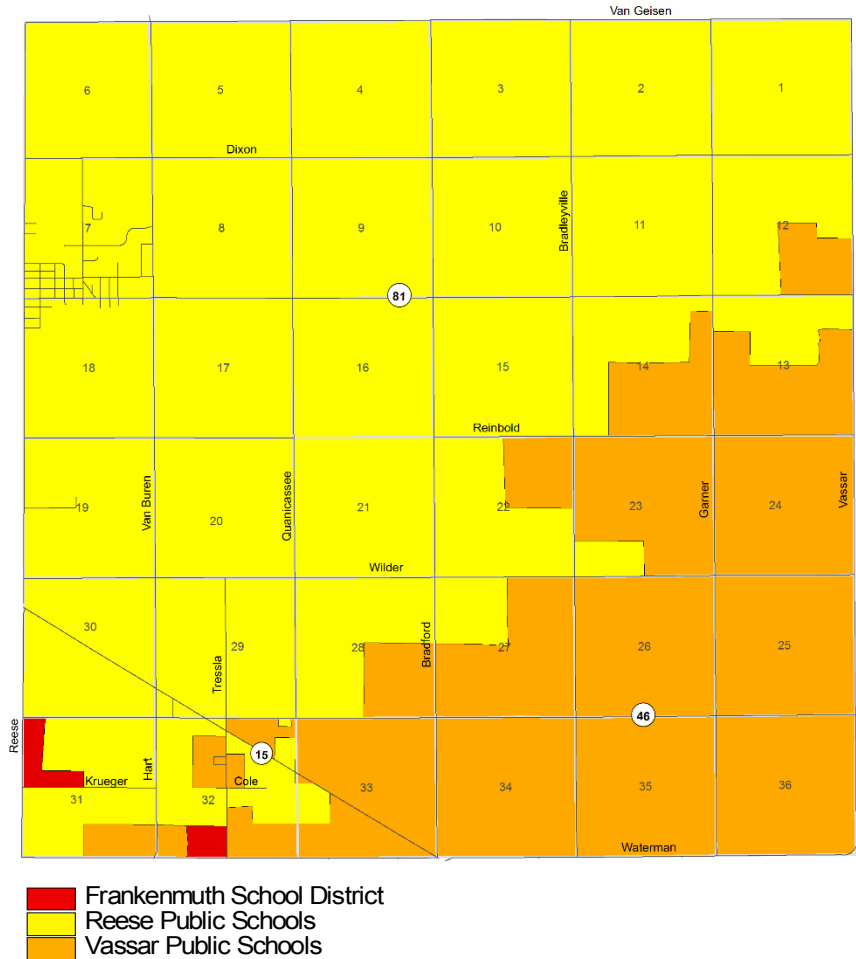
Other Community Facilities

The availability of public utilities is a major determining factor in the amount and density of development in a community. Because of its rural farming nature Denmark Township has limited public utilities.

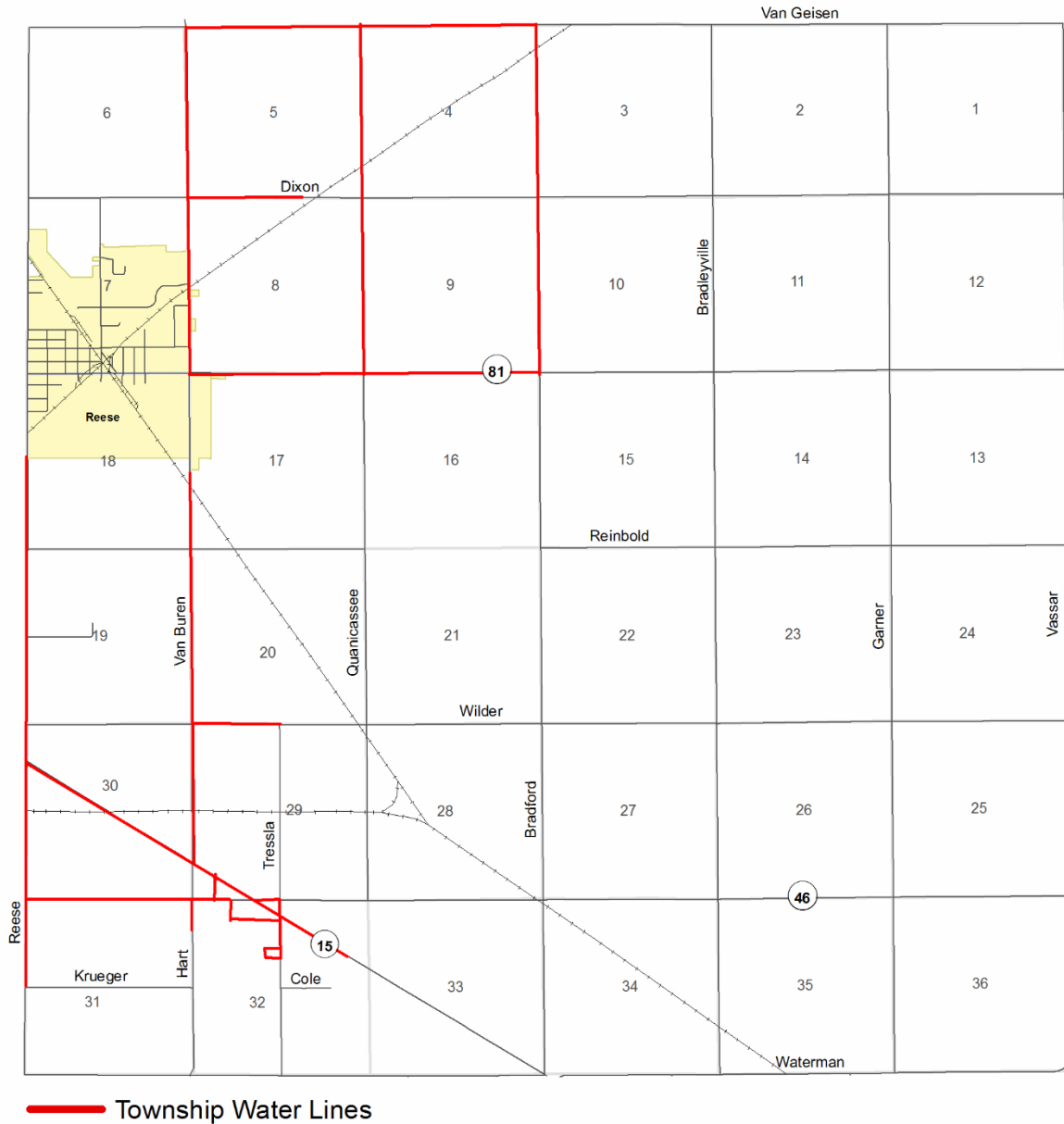
Water

The Reese Blumfield Water Authority purchases water from the City of Saginaw and distributes it through its own distribution system to Reese, Blumfield Township and selected areas of Denmark Township. Areas in Denmark Township that are served with public water are shown in Map 5.

Map 4
Denmark Township Schools



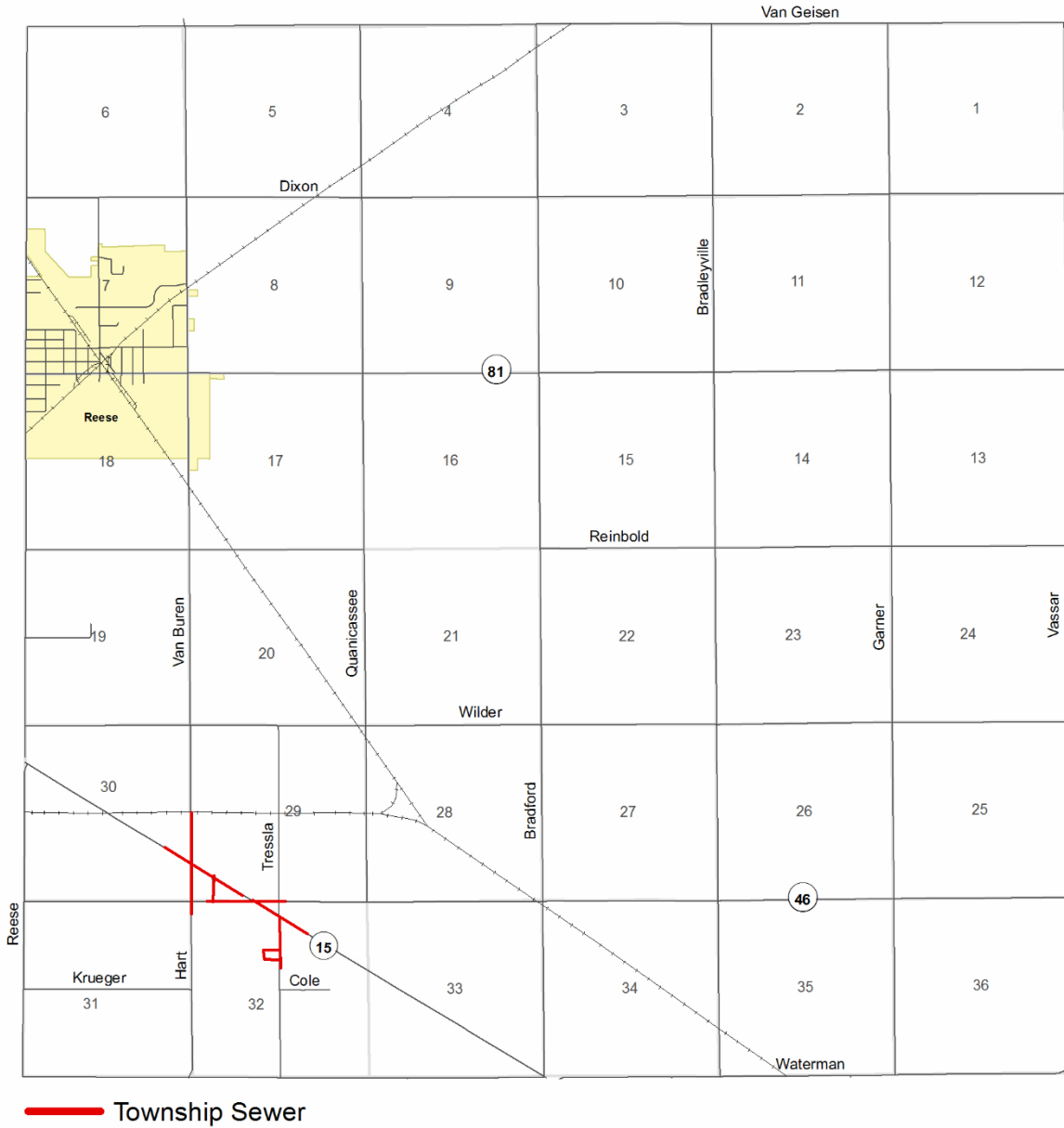
Map 5 Denmark Township Water System



Sewer

The Village of Reese has its own sanitary sewer service and wastewater lagoons. Denmark Township installed sewer service and a wastewater lagoon system in 2007. It services the Richville area.

Map 6 Denmark Township Sewer System



Other Services

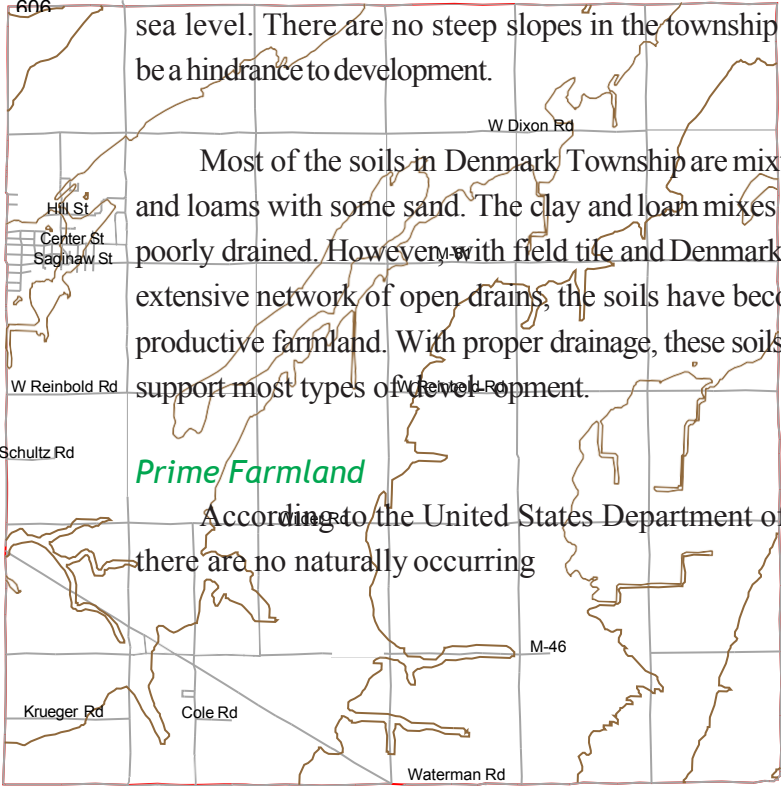
Police road patrol is provided by the Tuscola County Sheriff's Department. The Richville Fire Department provides fire protection for the township. Denmark Township contracts for weekly curbside trash pickup.

Natural Features

Topography and Soils

Denmark Township is very flat, varying in elevation less than 85 feet across the Township. The lowest portion of the Township is in the northwest corner at approximately 610 feet above sea level. The highest portion of the township is in the southeast corner at approximately 690 feet above

Map 7
Denmark Township Topography
feet above sea level



sea level. There are no steep slopes in the township that would be a hindrance to development.

Most of the soils in Denmark Township are mixtures of clays and loams with some sand. The clay and loam mixes are naturally poorly drained. However, with field tile and Denmark Township's extensive network of open drains, the soils have become productive farmland. With proper drainage, these soils could support most types of development.

Prime Farmland
According to the United States Department of Agriculture, there are no naturally occurring



*Source: Michigan
Geographic Data Library*

prime farmlands in Denmark Township. However, the vast majority of the township's soils are considered to be prime farmland if drained. Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics and is available for producing food feed fiber and oilseed crops.

It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.

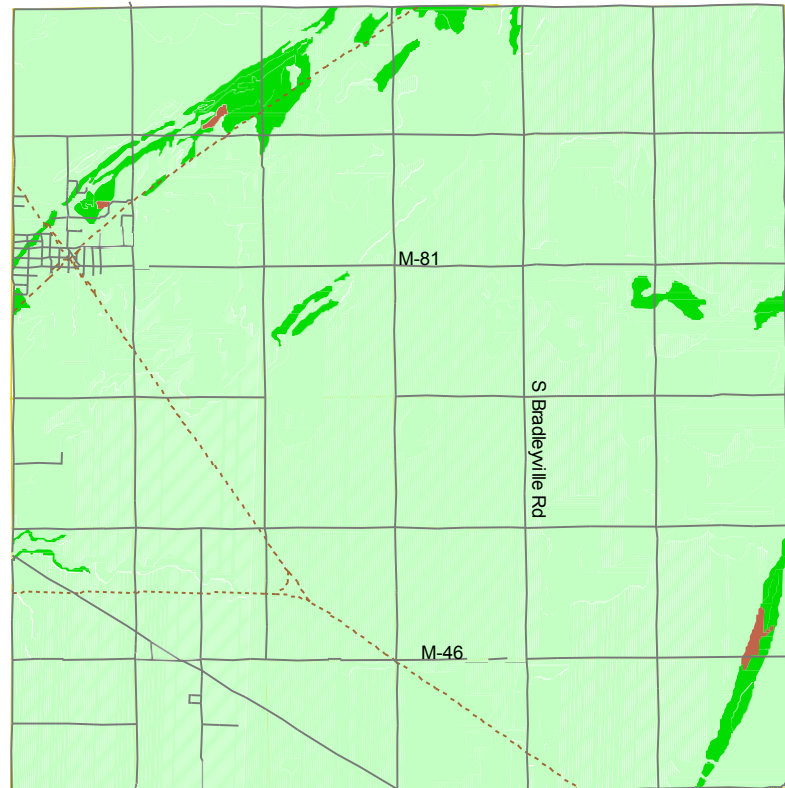
Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time, and they either do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding. Other small portions of the township are considered to be “farmland of local importance” which is a determination made by the local soil conservation district.

Climate

Tuscola County’s climate is considered a Cold Middle Latitude climate where the coldest monthly mean temperature goes

below 27° F and a long season of cold weather and a significant winter snow cover develops. In this climate the westerlies dominate all year. As such, weather changes are more frequent. Average rainfall is approximately 26-30 inches per year and average snowfall is approximately 35-45 inches per year. Summer months have average high temperatures around 80 degrees with cool evenings in the 50’s. Winter months see average highs in the 20’s and 30’s with lows in the teens and 20s.

Map 8
Denmark Township Prime Farmland



- Not prime farmland
- Prime farmland if drained
- Farmland of local importance

Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library

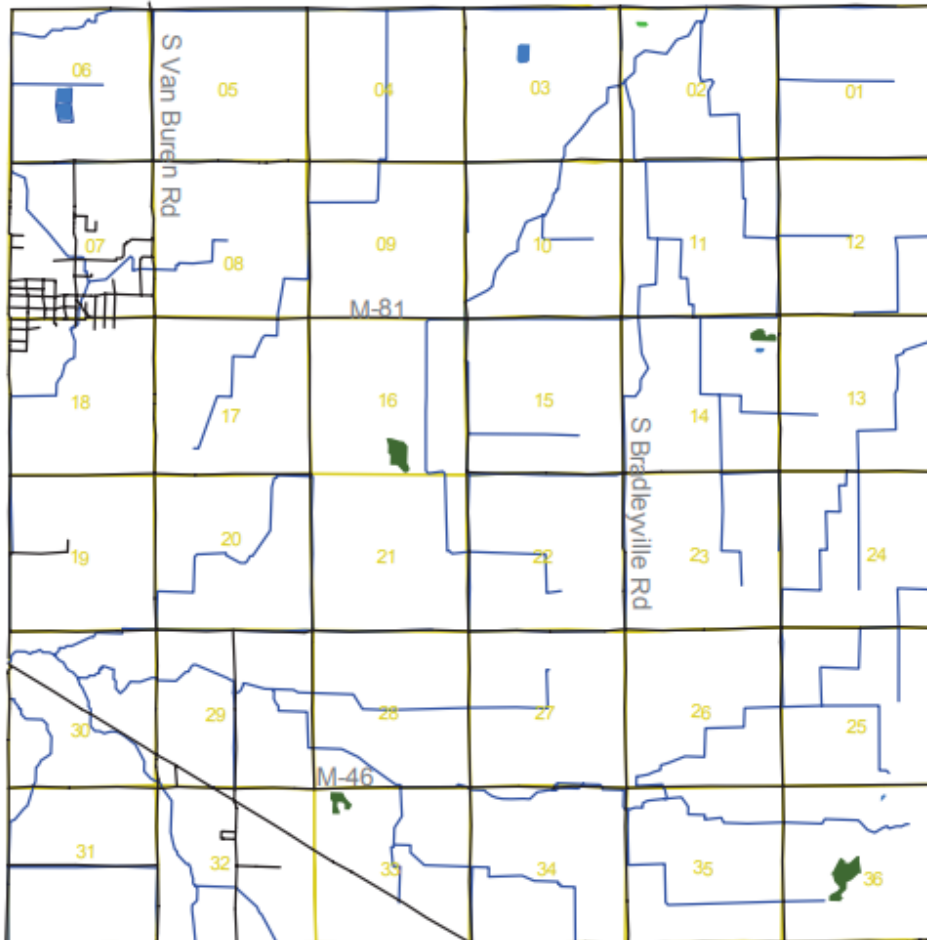
Wetlands and Waterways

Denmark Township has an extensive network of open channel drains that are owned and maintained by the Tuscola County Drain Commissioner. There are no officially designated inland lakes within the township.

According to the National Wetlands Inventory, there are only about 10 small parcels of wetlands, accounting for approximately 65 acres, in Denmark Township. These are shown on the Wetland and Waterways Map on the following page. Wetlands can limit development in a specific area and each type and extent must be carefully examined before proceeding with any type of development. Because they consist of such a small portion of the township's acreage, wetlands will probably not be a hinderance to any type of development in Denmark Township.



Map 9 Denmark Township Wetlands & Waterways



- Forested
- Open Water/Unknown Bottom
- Scrub-Shrub

***Forested** - Characterized by woody vegetation that is 6 m (20 ft.) tall or taller.
Scrub-Shrub - Includes areas dominated by woody vegetation less than 6 m tall. The species include true shrubs, young trees (saplings), and trees or shrubs that are small or stunted because of environmental conditions.*



Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library

How the Land is Used

The existing land use in a community is probably the most important piece of data to analyze among the existing characteristics in a community. In many cases, the existing land uses have set a pattern that is unlikely to change. In other areas there may be vacant or underused land that can be evaluated for its development or conservation value.

In order to provide a detailed account of the Existing Land Use, the consultants first used aerial photography to develop a draft of the land use map. After a draft was developed, the consultants used the draft as a guide and drove each road in the Township in August of 2003, correcting the map as needed to identify land that was used for agriculture, commercial development, residential development and to identify land that was currently wooded or vacant.



Land Use Classifications and Analysis

The land uses in the Township are divided into nine classifications for purposes of mapping. General definitions and a brief analysis are given below. An existing land use map is shown at the end of this section.

Agricultural

This classification is intended to accommodate primarily agricultural land uses and the accompanying agricultural buildings. Agricultural land uses would be characterized by traditional cash crops, animal raising, horse boarding, and pasture lands. Agricultural use is by far the largest land use category in the township accounting for more than 20,000 acres or 89.2 % of the land in Denmark Township.

Commercial

This land use category includes all lands that have structures where products, goods, or services are sold. The main commercial uses in Denmark Township are in Richville and along M-46. They account for 29 acres or 0.12% of the land in the township.

Industrial

This category includes all land used for processing, manufacturing, fabricating, assembling materials, or for the outside storage of equipment and materials. The major industrial land use in Denmark Township is the Star of the West facility in Richville. Industrial uses account for 15.7 acres or 0.06% of the land in the township.

Mobile Home Park

This category includes mobile homes, trailer homes, and manufactured housing. There is one mobile home park in the township located on Bradford Road just south of the railroad tracks. It accounts for 29.8 acres of 0.13% of the land in the township.

Public/Semi-Public

Land area in this category is used for public and government buildings, parks and cemeteries. Schools, both public and private, as well as religious institutions, are included in this category.



Residential - Single Family

This classification is for areas with residential dwellings and accessory structures. In Denmark Township, residential land uses are scattered throughout the township with the highest concentrations in the Richville & Reese area along M-81 and M-46.



Residential - Multi Family

Land used in this category is for duplexes, apartments, senior housing, and group homes. Denmark Township has one small parcel of land with an apartment building that is located on M-15 southeast of Richville.

Village of Reese

The Village of Reese occupies 806 acres of Denmark Township.

Woodlands

Woodlands include land area that is covered with forests and trees. Denmark Township has woodlands scattered in nearly every section of the township. They account for 678 acres or 3.0% of the land in the township.

Figure 3
Existing Land Use in Denmark Township

Type	Acreage	Percent
Agricultural	20,025.9	89.18%
Commercial	29.1	0.12%
Industrial	15.7	0.06%
Mobile Home	29.8	0.13%
Public/Semi Public	70.5	0.31%
Residential - Single family	897.8	4.00%
Residential - Multi family	4.2	0.02%
Village of Reese	806.0	3.57%
Woodlands	678.0	3.02%
Total	22,557.0	100%

Source: 2003 Driving Survey

Property Values

Property values in Denmark Township have risen steadily for many years. The 1994 State Equalized Value of property in Denmark Township was slightly more than \$51 million. By 2000, the figure had risen to \$72.6 million, in 2003 it was \$85.3 million and in 2016 it was \$159 million. **In 2023 it has grown to nearly \$192 million.**

Figure 4 examines the trends in the assessed values of the four taxable property categories in Denmark Township. Industrial property rose from 2002 to 2008 and

has since remained relatively flat. Commercial property peaked in 2008. Agricultural land is the only property class that has continually risen from 2002 to 2016. It has shown a dramatic rise between 2012 and 2016 leveling off after that. Residential property rose from 2002 to 2008, taking a dip from 2008 to 2016, stabilized, and then had a major increase from 2016 to 2023.

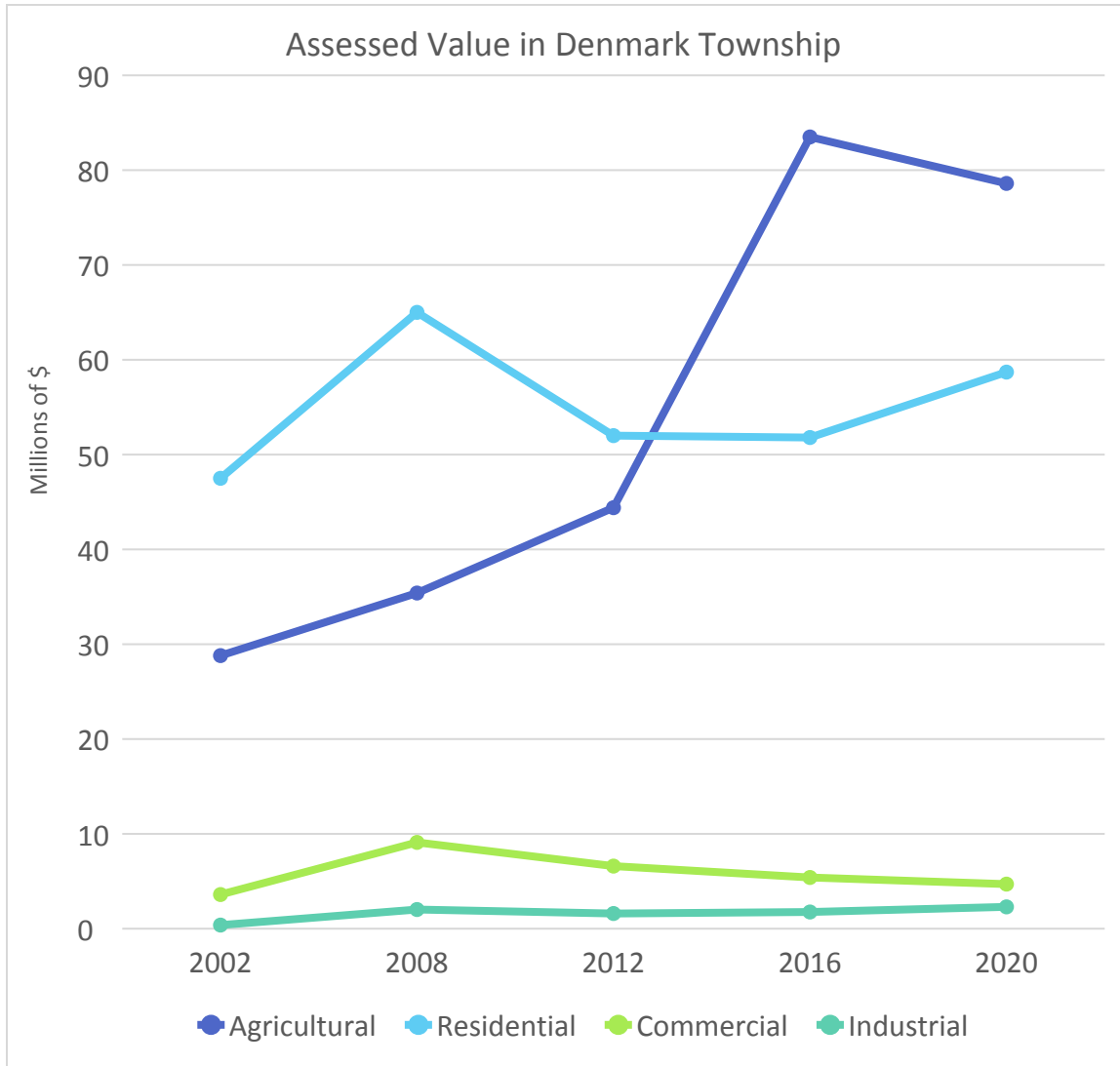
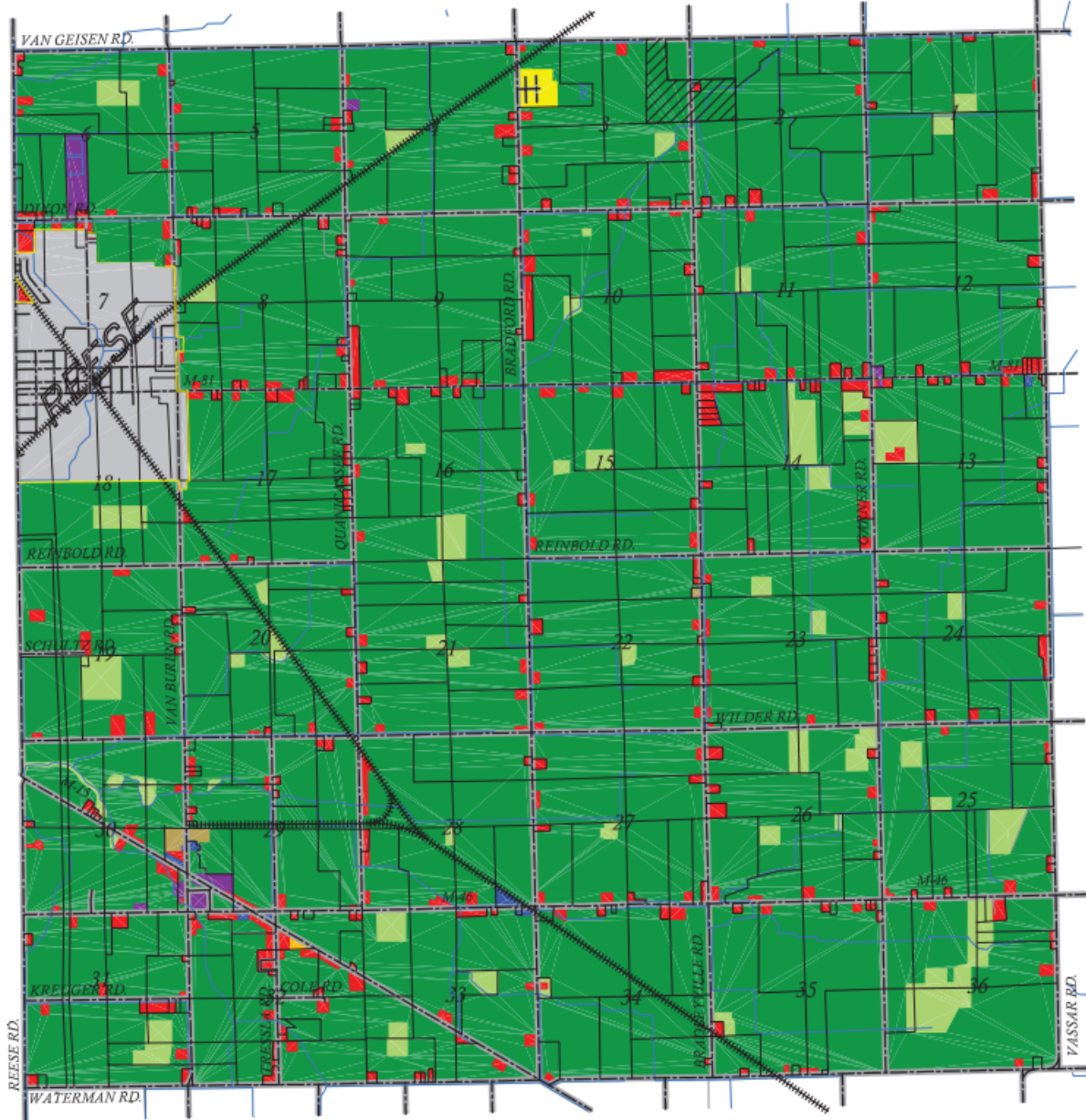


Figure 4 – Changes in assessed property values in Denmark Township. Source: State of Michigan

EXISTING LAND USE MAP

DENMARK TOWNSHIP
TUSCOLA COUNTY, MI



LAND USE LEGEND

- | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|---|----------------------|---|-----------------------------|
|  | - AGRICULTURAL |  | - PUBLIC/SEMI PUBLIC |  | - SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL |
|  | - COMMERCIAL |  | - WOOD LOT |  | - MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL |
|  | - INDUSTRIAL |  | - STATE LAND OVERLAY |  | - MOBILE HOME PARK |

SOURCE: SPICER GROUP DRIVE STUDY, SUMMER 2016



Community Goals & Objectives

Articulating goals about what should change and what should stay the same is especially important when a community is defining its direction for the next ten years. Based upon the community input, Denmark Township has developed goals for its future.

General Community Character

Denmark Township is described as a quiet community where residents enjoy the rural atmosphere that features farmland and open space. To the maximum extent possible, the lands should be preserved and maintained.

Goal: Preserve the rural character of the community

Objectives:

- Maintain natural features for the enjoyment of current and future residents.
- Encourage site design which protects the existing terrain, preserves significant vegetation and scenic views, and incorporates native trees and shrubbery into landscape plans.
- Slow traffic and improve traffic safety.
- Control growth through planning and zoning mechanisms.
- Maintain the serenity of the country setting.
- Limit additional visual distractions and noise.
- All ordinances need to be followed and as written and approved by Township.

Residential Land Use

Since Denmark Township residents have mixed opinions on the need for residential growth, it is important that any such growth be properly planned so as not to excessively interfere with the existing rural character of the township.

Denmark Township residents are united on the need for residents to maintain their property to avoid eyesores. The township needs to put measures in place that will encourage homeowners to properly maintain their residences.

Goal: Plan for limited residential growth

Objectives

- Plan for single family development in the Reese and Richville areas.
- Identify and plan for a medium density residential area.

Goal: Maintain quality housing

Objectives

- Investigate blight issues and actions to reduce abandoned vehicles.
- Review and update housing standards in zoning ordinance.



Agricultural Land Use

Agriculture and agricultural land define Denmark Township. Township residents feel that the preservation of agricultural land is very important in Denmark Township. The Township wishes to support agricultural activities as an essential part of the economy in the Township, County, and State. Efforts should be taken to avoid using farmland for non-agricultural development purposes.

Goal: Preserve agricultural land

Objectives

- Examine zoning ordinance to ensure proper definition and description of agricultural use.
- Discourage a pattern of scattered rural housing development on overly large lots in areas of productive agricultural lands.



Commercial Land Use

While commercial land use currently accounts for a very small fraction of the existing land use in the Township, there is a need to plan for carefully developed commercial areas that will meet the needs of residents without negatively impacting upon the rural agricultural character of the community.

Goal: Plan for commercial growth

Objectives

- Encourage small commercial operations that meet the needs of the township and do not detract from the visual character and rural atmosphere of the area.

Industrial Land Use

While there are limited industrial land uses in Denmark Township, the Township Board does feel that it needs to plan for it in the future. Additional industrial uses can boost the local economy, the township tax base, and provide jobs for township residents. However, development of industrial land use is strongly dependent upon the availability of adequate roads, utilities, and other public services.

Goal: Plan for industrial land use

Objectives

- Keep industrial growth limited to the M-46 corridor, Richville, and Reese areas.

Community Services and Infrastructure

Denmark Township residents have expressed a need for various infrastructure improvements, especially in the Richville area. Many survey respondents also expressed a need to have a better understanding of basic information about township operations.

Goal: Improve infrastructure in the Township

Objectives

- Expand water service where wanted and needed in Township.
- Improve sidewalks in the Richville area.

Goal: Improve communication with Township residents

Objectives

- Add appropriate communication pieces to keep Township residents informed of Township business. These could include a semi-annual newsletter, local newspaper stories, and/or a township web site that stays updated.

Others

Goal: Keep planning tools up to date for the Township

Actions

- Review and update existing zoning ordinance.
- Review general ordinances.
- Keep master plan updated with a review when needed.
- Investigate recreation planning and grants with a member on the Reese Parks Commission.





Future Land Use

Introduction

The future land use discussion in this Plan has a ten to twenty year horizon. The land uses outlined in this section of the Master Plan serve to convey the community’s desire to promote limited growth in specific areas while striving to maintain, enhance, and protect the rural agricultural character of the Township.

Keep in mind that some of these changes will not take place next year or five years from now, but possibly ten to twenty years from now. These proposed changes should serve as a guide. Every goal stated will not be accomplished, nor will every parcel of land be developed as shown.

The future land use map is a *guide* for development for the next 10 - 20 years. Not every parcel will develop exactly as shown.

As a reminder, these proposed changes will not be effective until the zoning is changed to allow development of the varying types to occur. That is, while the future land use map may indicate an area for commercial, the area may not be *zoned* commercial until the land users request the change and the Township Board approves it.

It is worth noting that future land use categories are slightly different from existing land use. This is because future land use is developed with an eye toward the zoning that will be needed to actually bring this plan to fruition. For example, while there were significant woodlands identified on the existing land use map, there is no “wooded” category in future land use. It is combined with agricultural because “agricultural” is the term for how all of the wooded and agricultural lands will be zoned.

The future land use map is shown at the end of this section.

Integration with Tuscola County General Development Plan

In 2003, Tuscola County completed a master plan that included a General Development Plan for the county. According to this Plan, nearly all of Denmark Township is considered prime agricultural land. The only area that is not is the area around Reese which is considered a Tier II Urban Service Area. This would refer to a smaller urbanized area where people traditionally seek

goods and services. Tier I service areas are in larger towns and cities that offer a greater variety of goods and services.

While the future land use map that Denmark Township has developed has several categories of land uses across the township, that does not mean it conflicts with the Tuscola County General Development Plan. Indeed, Denmark Township does see itself as primarily an agricultural community that has small areas of other land uses to



accommodate the needs of township residents. The Tuscola County Plan outlines broad county-wide land uses that provide a regional view of the area.

A general discussion of the future land uses in Denmark Township is given below. It is worth noting that there have been only two minor changes in the Future Land Use map since the 2005 Master Plan was written. Each section also provides the corresponding zoning district which constitutes the zoning plan portion of the Master Plan.

Agricultural

The Denmark Township community values its extensive farmlands because they are the basis for the success of the local economy and their quality of life. Residents have made it clear through the community input survey that they wish to preserve these lands. The future land use map identifies the vast majority of lands in the Township as agricultural. Agricultural future land use corresponds to the A - Agricultural zoning classification.

Commercial

Very little land is currently used for commercial uses in Denmark Township. Residents recognize the need for local convenience. However, they also live in close proximity to major shopping destinations in Saginaw, Bay City, and other surrounding towns. Therefore, this land use designation is intended to include businesses that provide local goods and services to the residents of Denmark Township. The future land use area that is designated commercial is the general Richville area. This corresponds to the B - Business zoning classification.

Industrial

Denmark Township residents have expressed a need for limited industrial growth if adequate public infrastructure is available to support it. The future land use map identifies two small industrial areas. The first is an area that is slightly larger than the currently zoned

industrial area near M-46, Bradford Road and the railroad tracks. The second is the area on the north side of Richville where VanBuren Road crosses the railroad tracks. This is the location of the Star of the West agricultural facility. The second area is slightly larger than shown in the 2004 plan. It extends further to the west, allowing for potential expansion of the existing facility. Industrial future land use corresponds to the I - Industrial zoning classification.

Mobile Home Park

There is one small mobile home park in the northern part of the Township that will remain as a mobile home park use in Denmark Township. No further growth is anticipated. It corresponds to the R-2 High Density Residential zoning classification.

Residential

Being mindful of the intent of Denmark Township residents to preserve farmland and limit residential growth, the future residential land uses in the township are targeted near the existing population centers. Three areas identified for residential land use are north of Reese, south of Reese, and south of Richville. The area north of Reese has been reduced since the 2004 plan because the Planning



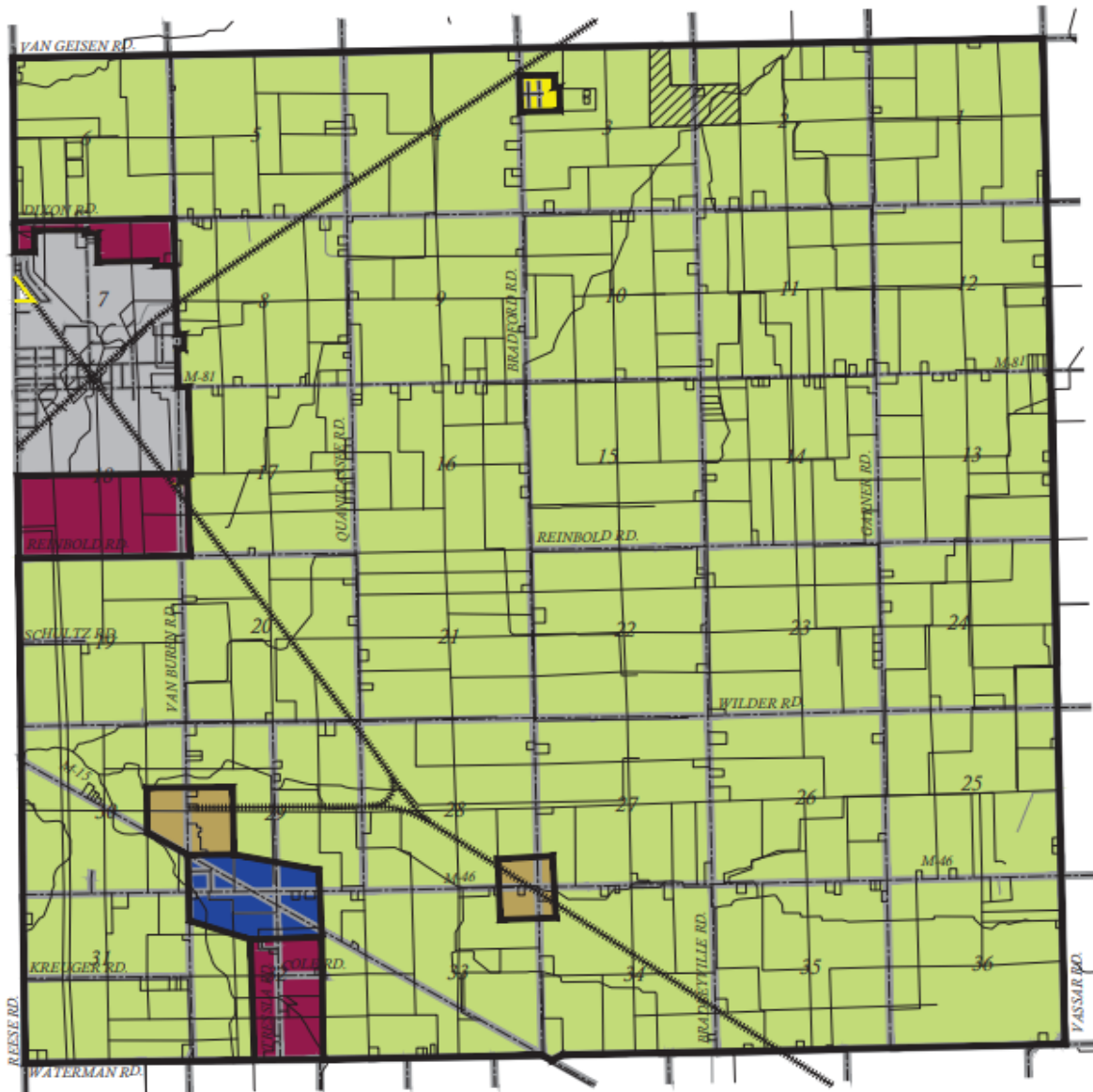
Commission did not feel that additional residential development in that area would be needed. The Residential future land use category corresponds to the R-1 Low-Density Residential zoning classification or the R-2 High Density Residential zoning classification.

Figure 5
Future Land Use in Denmark Township

Type	Acreage	Percent
Agricultural	20,515	90.95%
Commercial	213	0.94%
Industrial	170	0.75%
Mobile Home	30	0.13%
Residential	823	3.65%
Village of Reese	806	3.57%
Total	22,557	100%

2016 FUTURE LAND USE MAP

DENMARK TOWNSHIP
TUSCOLA COUNTY, MICHIGAN



LAND USE LEGEND

- | | | | |
|---|----------------|---|----------------------|
|  | - AGRICULTURAL |  | - RESIDENTIAL |
|  | - COMMERCIAL |  | - MOBILE HOME PARK |
|  | - INDUSTRIAL |  | - STATE LAND OVERLAY |



Implementation

This Plan is intended to be used by all Township officials, Zoning Board of Appeals members, Township Board members, those making private sector investments and by all citizens interested in the future development of the Township. The completion of this Master Plan is the foundation of the community planning process. The implementation of the goals and objectives of this plan is the next step. This must be an ongoing effort and can only be achieved through cooperation of the Township officials, the Township citizens and the private sector.

Key steps for the implementation of this Plan include:

1. Community knowledge and support of the Plan.
2. Zoning and Building Code updating and enforcement. Zoning must follow the concepts expressed in the Future Land Use map or both the Master Plan and the Zoning Ordinance will lose their effectiveness and enforceability.
3. Use of available preservation and conservation development incentives in zoning and land use activities. An example of this would be to require or provide an incentive for providing open space in a new subdivision development.
4. Consistent use of the Plan to ensure that commercial development is encouraged to increase in density rather than to sprawl outside the identified areas.
5. An annual review of goals and actions to evaluate progress and prioritize actions for the near future.

Community Support

It is important that the general public be aware of and understand this planning document. The Township has taken steps to ensure orderly future development for Denmark Township and it should be promoted to the citizens to foster support. Lack of citizen understanding and apathy can hinder the implementation process. There are several ways to increase citizen awareness, including:

1. Notify township residents via newsletters or mailings that the plan is complete. Share community input and goals. Keep the plan visible and available for citizens use at all Township meetings.
2. Seek media attention regarding the Plan and the public hearing for the Plan.
3. Display the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map at the Township Hall or local gathering place.
4. Cite the Master Plan in Site Plan Reviews and Zoning Board of Appeals decisions to establish the Plan as the justification, as well as the accepted development path for the Township.

Code Updating and Enforcement

The zoning ordinances and zoning maps must correctly reflect the goals and land use areas identified in the Master Plan. These documents must work together. Without this, the desired community results will be difficult to achieve. The zoning ordinance accomplishes many things. It separates incompatible uses of the land, protects property values, dictates development spacing, protects natural resources and prevents overcrowding of the land. The zoning ordinance also guides the process for development by addressing site plan review and approval, special use approval, and controls over signs.

There are numerous zoning concerns that have surfaced during the Master Planning process, ranging from residential upkeep and abandoned vehicles to open space laws.

A thorough review of the existing zoning should be done to address any inconsistencies and outdated aspects. In addition, the zoning map should be updated to correct the past revisions and the inconsistencies among zoning districts.

Consistent enforcement of the zoning ordinances and building codes are the next tools used to implement the Plan. Therefore, the Zoning Board of Appeals and the County Building Inspector should be knowledgeable of the Plan and its intentions. Many of the community's goals can be utilized and implemented from strict adherence and enforcement of codes.

Annual and Capital Budgeting

This plan should be consulted annually as the Township Board develops its budget. Capital improvement requests should be compared against the Future Land Use map and consideration should be given to how infrastructure improvements or expansions may impact growth. The plan could also be used to identify potential funding sources, based on the priorities of the Township residents.

The Township Board members must take an active role to propel the desired development or limit development within a community. This can include grant requests, tax issues, special assessments, and development incentives. To keep a community vital, local government must be aware of all the tools at hand. In many cases it can prove beneficial to work with a developer or the private sector to spur the desired development.

The Township Board members must take an active role to propel the desired development or limit development within a community.

Some of the incentive tools available for such co-development in Denmark Township are:

1. The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), using transportation funding. These moneys are available through the Michigan Department of Transportation and include such activities as historic preservation, landscaping and beautification, pedestrian pathways, and roadway improvements.
2. Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and Land and Water Conservation Fund administered through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. These funds are generally used for park, recreation, or environmental improvements.
3. Development incentives administered through the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. These funds are used for a wide variety of projects that are all tied to increasing employment.

Other Funding Sources

Three other specific funding sources that are available for capital improvement projects are described below:

Dedicated Millage: Special millages can be used to generate revenues for a specific purpose. Examples that may be relevant in Denmark Township would be to fund road improvements, recreation programs or improvements, or funding for a farmland preservation program such as purchase of development rights.

Special Assessment: A special assessment is a tax or levy customarily imposed against only those specific parcels of real estate that will benefit from a proposed public improvement like a roadway, sewer or water line.

Bond Programs: Bonds are among the principal sources of financing used by communities to pay for capital improvements. General obligation bonds are issued for specific community projects and are paid off by the general public via property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of projects that generate revenue (i.e. parking structure or community pool, etc.). These bonds are retired using income generated by the project.

Revisions and Updates

The Master Planning process is continual and ongoing. The Master Plan must be reviewed at least once every five years according to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. The plan should be reviewed to make one of the following determinations:

- no update is needed
- the existing plan needs to be amended
- a new plan needs to be written

The review should be done to ensure that the plan still reflects the current goals and desires of the Township. Generally, a plan needs to be updated or rewritten at least once every ten years in order to be responsive to new growth trends and current Township attitudes.

Conclusion

The Denmark Township Planning Commission has spent a year discussing and examining issues regarding the future of the Township.

As a result, the Township Board of Trustees has compiled a complete, carefully prepared document that represents the data, efforts and collective thoughts of Denmark Township residents. This Master Plan is only the beginning of a program of action for the next 10 to 20 years. Because the future

well-being of Denmark Township depends upon rational, coordinated action, the Township stands ready to meet with any person or group interested in the future development of the area. The Township will be available to help and guide those who need advice or wish to be part of the Master Plan acted upon.

Carrying out the Master Plan is a task which is led by Township officials and the Planning Commission, but is also dependent upon every responsible citizen of Denmark Township. By working together, Denmark Township will continue to be a desirable, attractive, and convenient community in which to live, work, and play.



Appendix – Adoption Documentation