

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, a large, light-colored building with a grey roof is under construction on a dirt lot. To the left of the building is a large white water tank. In the middle ground, there is a paved parking area with a white house and a small trailer. A road curves through the scene, with a few cars visible. The background shows rolling hills with some trees in autumn colors and another house on a hillside.

CONWAY TOWNSHIP

Master Plan 2018

Adopted March 12, 2018

**PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION TO APPROVE
AMENDED MASTER PLAN**

Resolution No. 180312-1

Conway Township

WHEREAS, in 2016, within the 5 year timeframe since the last review of the Master Plan in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Public Act 33 of 2008 (“MPA”), MCL 125.3845(2), the Planning Commission began a review of the Master Plan and determined to commence to amend the Master Plan.

WHEREAS, several public workshops and meetings with the Township Planner were held as well as a survey of citizens of the Township for their feedback.

WHEREAS, the proposed amended Master Plan was sent to contiguous municipalities in accordance with MPA, MCL 125.3841, and comments were received.

WHEREAS, the proposed amended Master Plan was reviewed by the Livingston County Planning Commission and comments were received.

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on February 12, 2018.

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has considered and discussed input from its consultants, the public, and other local units of government in development of the proposed revised Master Plan which includes the following sections, maps and figures:

SECTIONS	MAPS	FIGURES
Community Description	Livingston County, MI	The Planning Process
Goals & Objectives	Nitrate Samples	Regional Population Growth 2000-2016
Future Land Use Plan	Volatile Organic Compound Levels	Community Population Growth 1940-2040
Implementation	Conway Township Roadway Network	Age Distribution
	Conway Township Existing Land Use	Land Use
	Conway Township Future Land Use Map	Community Input
	Conway Township Zoning Map	

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has not asserted its right to approve or reject the Master Plan, and therefore approval by the Planning Commission is the final step in the Master Plan amendment process.

WHEREAS, the Master Plan will include a link to the Conway Township Cemetery Master Plan upon approval of that plan by the Board of Trustees, and a link to results of the community survey.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that

- A. The proposed, amended Conway Township Master Plan 2018 as presented is approved.
- B. This Resolution shall be included on the inside of the front cover or back cover of the final Master Plan.
- C. A copy of the approved Master Plan shall be sent to the Board, all contiguous municipalities, and Livingston County Planning Commission.

The foregoing resolution offered by Planning Commission Member Dennis Sommer.
Second offered by Planning Commission Member Larry Parsons.

Upon roll call vote the planning commission members voted as follows:

Bowdoin: Y
Pushies: Y
Horton: Y
Stock: Y
Sommer: Y
Skwirsk: Y
Parsons: Y

The Chairperson declared the resolution adopted at a regular meeting of the Planning Commission held on March 12, 2018.



Londa Horton, Secretary

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Township Planning Commission

Dennis Bowdoin
George Pushies
Larry Parsons
Chuck Skwirsk
Dennis Sommer
Londa Horton
Mike Stock

Township Supervisor

Michael Rife

Township Treasurer

Debbie Grubb

Township Clerk

Todd Anderson

Township Trustees

Rick Kreeger
Larry Parsons

Zoning Administrator

Todd Thomas

With Assistance From:



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Chapter One Introduction



PURPOSE:

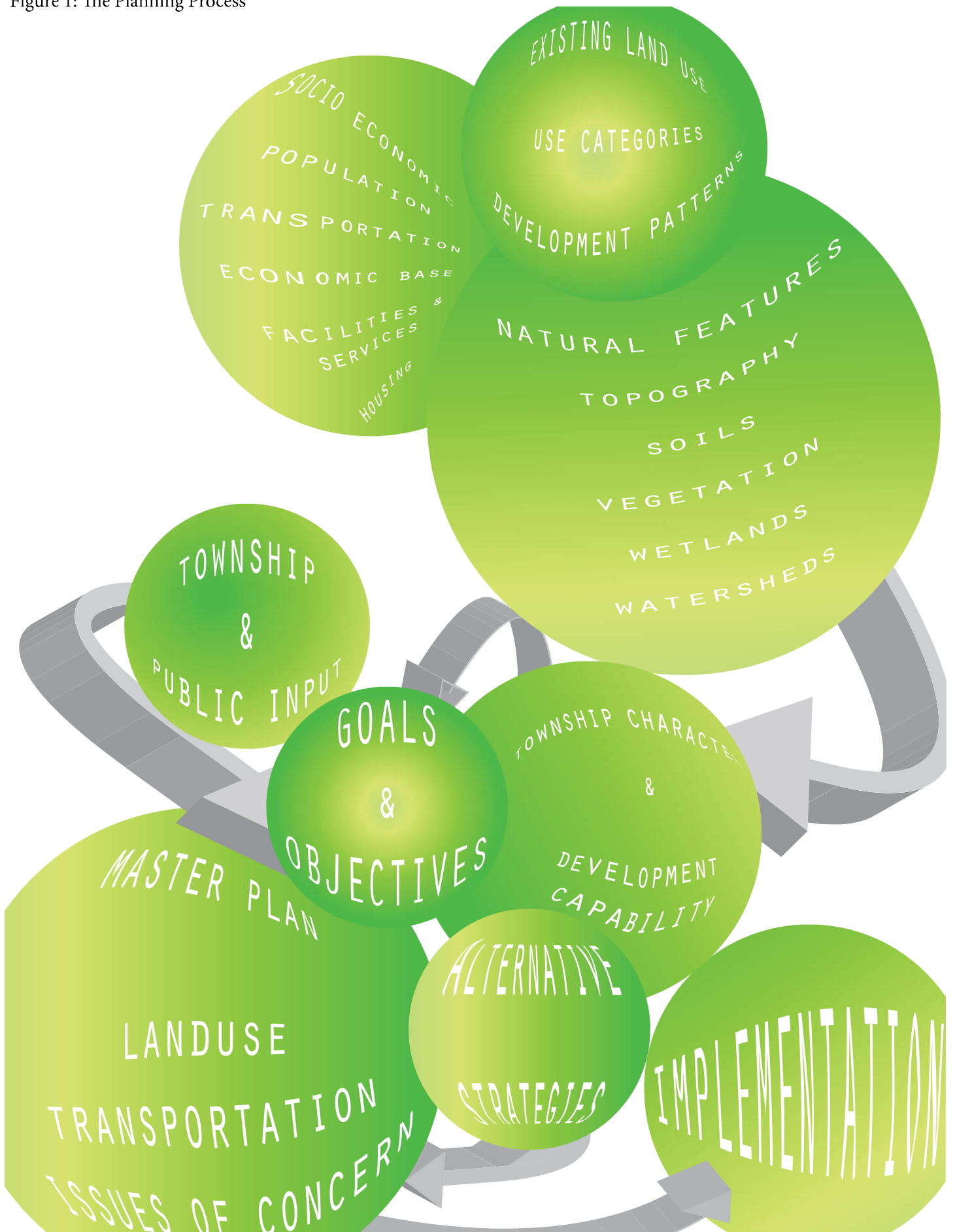
A Master Plan is a guide for the future development and land use in a community. A Master Plan is a living document, containing an inventory of existing and projected conditions, policy statements, future land use categories, and community goals and objectives. A Planning Commission and Township Board create the Master Plan to guide development decisions in the future.

The Master Plan involves four components: background studies, evaluation of community character, development capability and community needs, identification of goals and objectives and implementation. Each Master Plan amendment requires community feedback on needs and aspirations for the community. Feedback is collected and summarized for the Planning Commission. In addition to community background and feedback, the Planning Commission must consider all factors impacting the community in order to develop and implement strong policy. Policy statements, often known as goals and objectives, provide the township with conceptual guidance for decision-making. Policies state what the community plans to do when faced with certain land use decisions. The plan also contains a description of land uses planned for the future and a map detailing the areas proposed for each kind of use.

A Master Plan is a living document. A community, through its plan, expresses its thoughts and desires for the future. It must be amended and updated every five years in order to continue to meet the evolving needs of the people of Conway Township. Conway Township needs a Master Plan, as do all communities that wish to ensure the desired shape and character of the future community. A Master Plan is particularly essential as a community begins to experience growth and development pressure. A Master Plan can allow a community to guide and direct the growth as it occurs, preserving the desired character of the community. Without a Master Plan, growth is likely to occur in a haphazard, irrational manner.

A Master Plan is also an important indicator of a community's commitment to planning and its own future development. With a Master Plan, a community can influence planning activities with adjacent communities as well as other levels of government. Without a Master Plan there is less of an assurance that a community's desires and interests will be properly interpreted. Thus, the development of a township Master Plan is essential for the creation of an effective and functional planning network. A Master Plan is needed to comply with the Planning and Enabling Act of 2008.

Figure 1: The Planning Process



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Chapter Two

Community Description



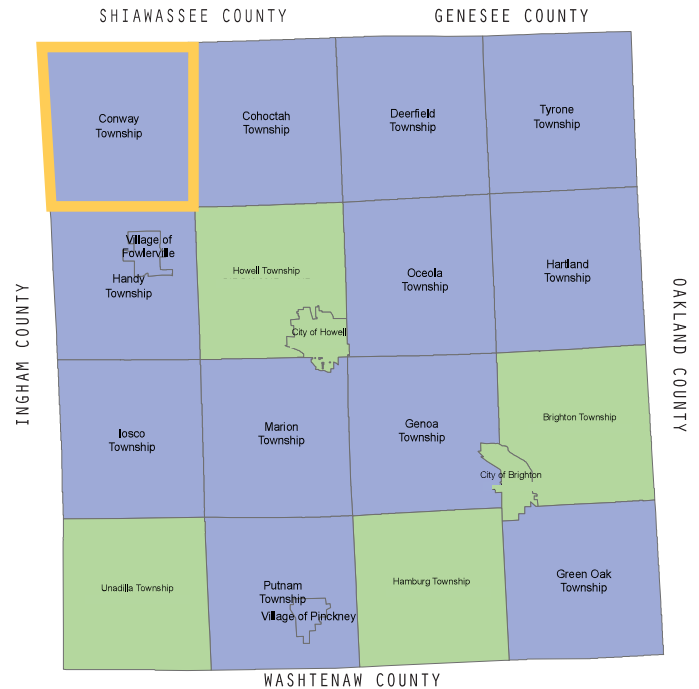
Located in the northwest corner of Livingston County, Conway Township is known in the region as a rural community. Situated in Southeast Michigan, the township is bordered by Cohoctah Township to the east, Village of Fowlerville and Handy Township to the south, Locke Township in the west and Webberville, and Antrim Township to the north (see Map 1 for Livingston County Map). The township's proximity to various commercial and industrial centers make Conway Township a commuter's community, in addition to agriculture. Residents are able to access Lansing approximately 35 miles away and Brighton 24 miles via I-96, and Ann Arbor within 45 miles via US-23. Villages and neighboring municipalities are easily accessible by county roads.

HISTORY:

The first inhabitants of the modern day Conway Township were the Pottawatomie and Saginaw Chippewa Native American tribes. The lands were known as tribal hunting grounds. In 1805, the first white pioneers arrived on Michigan lands, declaring ownership of Livingston County by legislature in 1836. Livingston County was one of the first counties in the state of Michigan. Livingston County was named after Edward Livingston, Andrew Jackson's Secretary of State. In 1838, the new settlers declared modern day Conway as Iena Township, separating the community from Howell Township. Located on a landscape of rich loamy soil, it became one of the largest farming communities in the county. By 1839, the settlers introduced treaties to the Native American tribes to push the native communities from the land they held for hundreds of years. Over time, hundreds of Native Americans emigrated from Southeast Michigan, relocating to West of the Mississippi River, Canada, or reservations established in Isabella County.

By 1836, the first American land purchase was by Frederick B. Parsons and Julius I. Parsons, claiming a total of 360 acres. On the land, they constructed the first building of Iena Township; an 18' x 24' home. Several other land acquisitions followed, including; Waterman H. Foy acquiring 80 acres of land, Ledyard S. Adams obtaining 320 acres, and Martin W. Randall with 80 acres. By 1838, the first township meeting was held. The first highway was opened in the township called "Trail Road", following an Indian trail running along the North bank of the Cedar River. By 1841, Iena Township was officially renamed Conway Township.

Map 1: Livingston County, Michigan



Source: Livingston County, MI

Historical information derived from "History of Livingston County, Michigan", written by Ellis, Franklin, 1828-1885.

POPULATION:

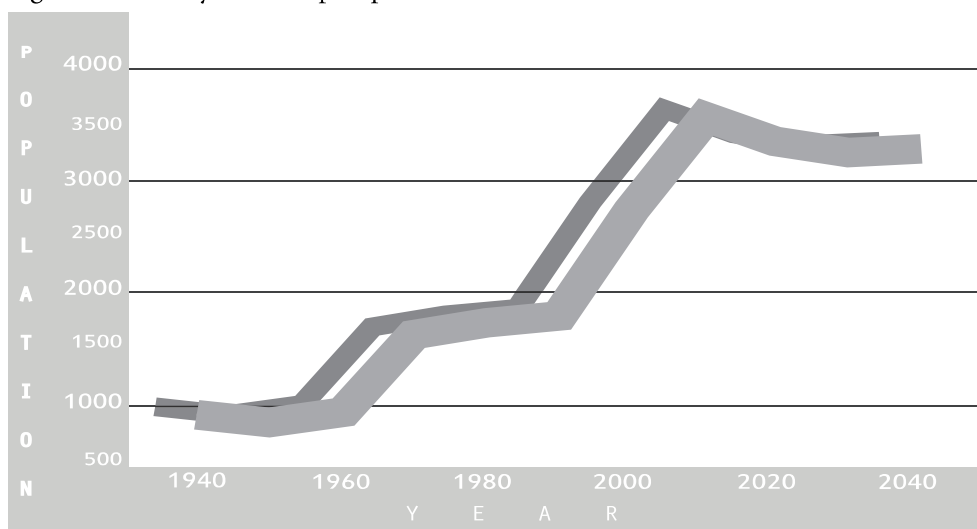
Throughout the 20th century, Conway Township was steadily growing, reaching a population of 1,818 in the 1990s. By 2000, the township's population increased by 50% to 2,732. Today, the size of the community is 3,614 individuals. The U.S. Census predicts the population will begin to decrease after 2016, continuing to slowly decline into the year 2040. In comparison to neighboring municipalities and the entire state of Michigan, Conway Township showed significant population growth between 1990s and present day, with no population loss between 2000 and 2016. This makes Conway unique despite the loss experienced throughout the state, with most municipalities decreasing due to the decline of Michigan's auto industry. Since 2010, most regions in the state are recovering and now experiencing steady growth and community revitalization.

The population of Conway is 95% White, 1.7% Hispanic, 1.5% multi-racial, 0.8% Asian and 0.3% Black. Since 2000, the racial composition has not changed significantly. A total of 36% of the population has achieved a high school diploma as their highest level of education, with 27% pursuing college, with no degree, and 15% of individuals as college graduates. The average household income is \$68,077, which is 19% less than the average income in 2000. In addition, approximately 10.9% of community members live in poverty; 268 more individuals than in 2000.

Figure 2: Population Growth Table 2000-2016

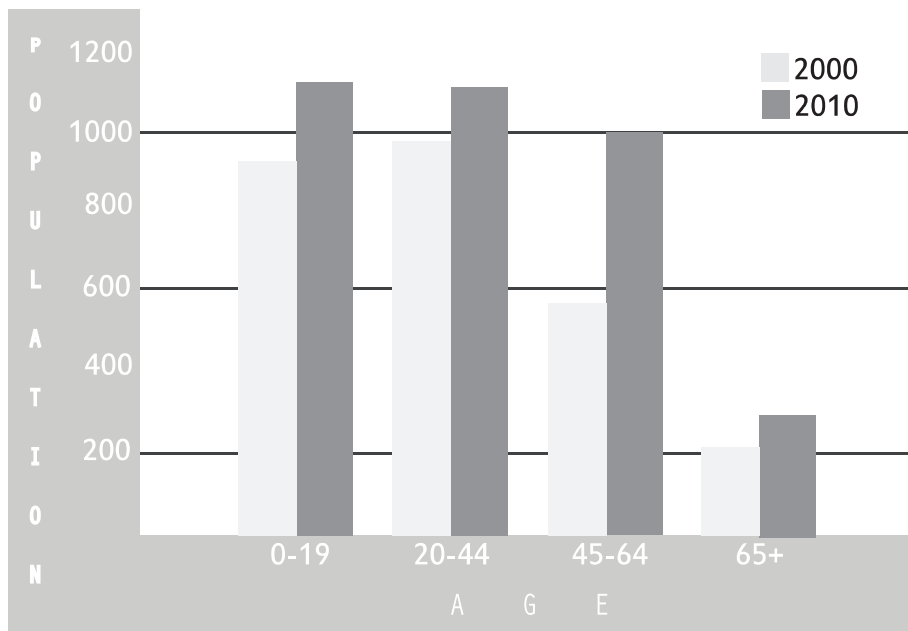
	2000	2010	2016	% Change 2000-2016
Conway Twp	2,732	3,546	3,614	32%
Locke Twp	1,671	1,791	1,625	-2%
Antrim Twp	1,679	2,050	2,161	5%
Cohoctah Twp	3,394	3,317	3,439	1%
Fowlerville	2,972	2,886	2,990	0.6%
Handy Twp	4,032	5,120	5,513	36%
Livingston County	156,951	180,957	188,796	20%
Michigan	9,295,297	9,928,444	9,878,000	-1%

Figure 3: Conway Township Population Growth 1940-2040



Source: U.S. Census 2010

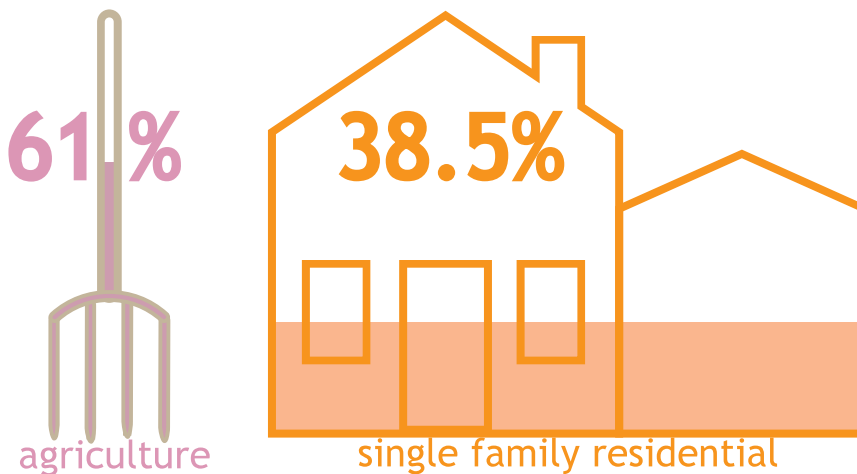
Figure 4: Conway Township Age Distribution



The majority of the Conway Township population is under 19 years old, making up 31% of the population. The second largest group, at 30% of the population, is between ages 20 and 44, with the most common ages from mid 30s to late 40s.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a household as a group of persons, who may or may not be related, living together in a dwelling unit. Households may be one person or several persons. This is distinguished from a family, which has persons related by birth or marriage living together. In Conway Township, the average household size is 2.88, a slight decrease from 2010. The community is almost exclusively owner-occupied single family housing, with less than 10 mobile and manufactured homes. Since 2000, alternative housing such as duplex or townhouse options have become unavailable in the community. The single-family home character is highly valued in the township. The single family housing stock has increased by 20 units between 2010 and 2016. Approximately 8% of the total housing stock of the community is vacant. The median housing value of 2010 is \$198,200 and the median gross renting value is \$900 per month.

Figure 5: Conway Township Land Use



Most residents of the community are required to drive or carpool to work, with 86% choosing to drive alone on their commute. Only 7% of residents stay in Conway Township for work, while others travel to Lansing, Howell, Milford, Brighton, Handy or in the region, with an average transport time of 40 minutes. In 2000, the number of employed individuals in Conway Township totaled 1,250. Today, the workforce has increased to 1,812 individuals. Approximately 19% of the workforce are in manufacturing and 18% in education/health/and social services. The retail industry provides jobs for 13% of Conway Township, 11% work in professional, scientific and management positions, and 3% are in agriculture.

Please Note: Although the data presented in the Plan is accurate at the time of completion, the data may change. For updated data, visit the U.S. Census, SEMCOG, Livingston County Planning Commission, and the Livingston County Road Commission.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Currently a seven member Planning Commission serves Conway Township. The Township Board and Planning Commission operate at the Township Hall, located at 8015 North Fowlerville Road, in Fowlerville, MI.

Public services and facilities are fairly limited within Conway Township boundaries. However, through inter-governmental cooperation with neighboring municipalities, Conway Township is able to access the following services:

- Fowlerville Area Fire Authority
- Livingston County Sheriff's Department
- Michigan State Police

EDUCATION

Conway Township falls on four school districts. The majority of township students attend the Fowlerville Community Schools. Students living in Northeast Conway attend the Byron Area Schools, students living in Northwest Conway attend Perry Schools, and students along the western border attend Webberville Community Schools.

SEWAGE & WATER DISPOSAL

There is no municipal sewer or water service in Conway Township. All water supply is available through private wells, and all sewer services are available through private septs. The township highly encourages development that does not rely on municipal sewer and water services.

UTILITIES

Conway Township residents are able to access the following utility services:

- Electric: DTE Energy and Consumers Energy available for residents in northern Conway Township
- Natural Gas: Consumers Energy
- Telephone: AT&T



NATURAL HISTORY

The glaciation period in southeast Michigan ended 10,000 to 15,000 years ago. The process shaped the Conway Township landscape through the deposition of rock debris. These glacial sediment deposits are the basis for soil development. The glacial sediments atop the bedrock range from 78 to 182 feet in depth. The glacial sediments are more prevalent in the northeast portion of the township and less in the southeast and southwest corners. Beneath the glacial deposit is two types of bedrock; the Saginaw formation and Coldwater formation. The Saginaw formation can be characterized as lineal beds of light and dark shale mix with white to light gray sandstone and lime stones. The Coldwater formation can be characterized as gray shale and numerous beds of brown dolomite, which has a salt and pepper appearance.

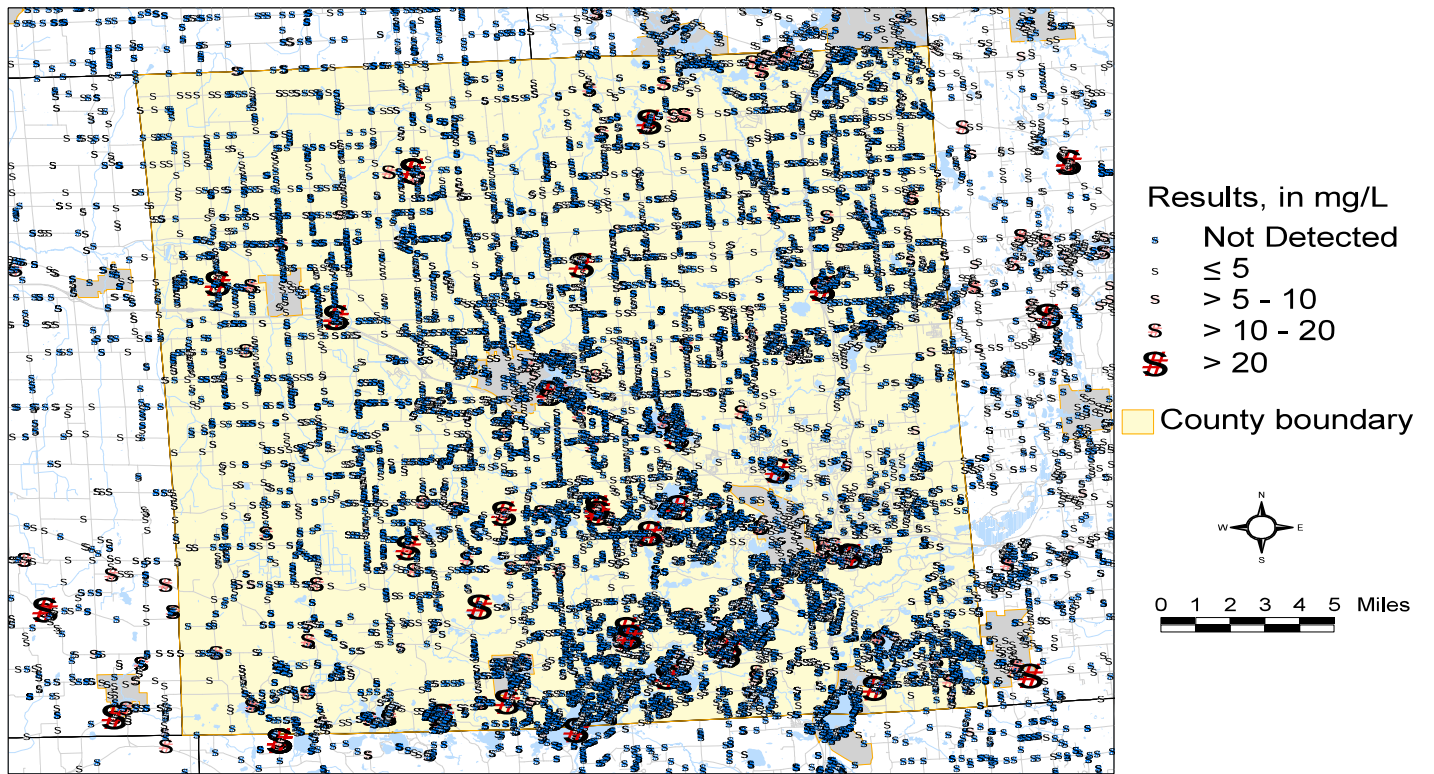


The surface geology of Conway Township varies. Moraines, which are hills that divide drainage basins, are found in the midsection of the township. The southern half of Conway is comprised of out wash plains, which are broad gently sloping plains, which originated from the melting of ice of a glacier.

The topography of Conway Township ranges from 870 feet above sea level along the Shiawassee-Livingston County line to over 970 feet above sea level along Fowlerville Road. Although a 100-foot elevation change may seem significant, the topography of Conway Township is relatively flat to rolling hills with slopes of 0 to 12 percent.

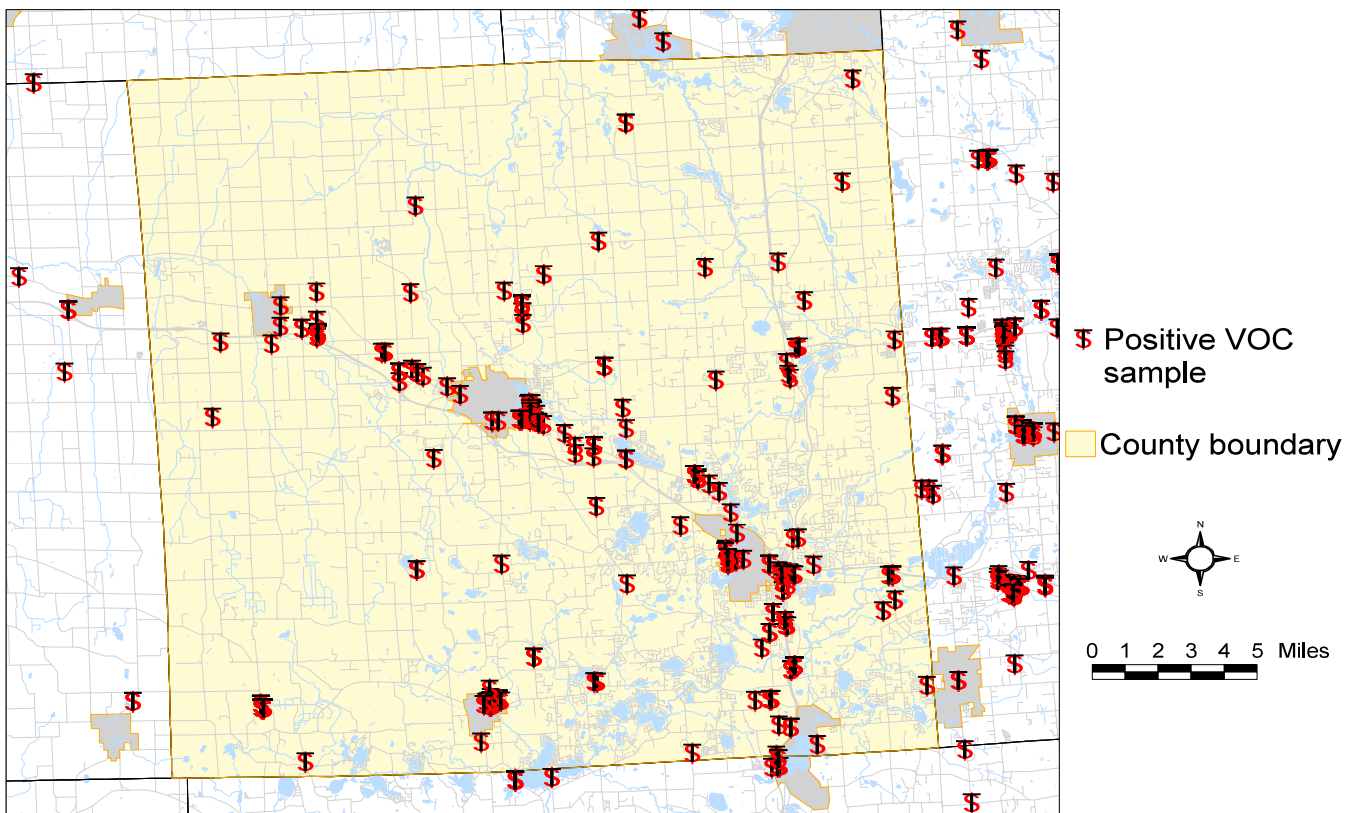
The major rivers that flow through Conway Township include the West Branch of the Red Cedar and the Looking Glass River. The West Branch of the Red Cedar flows north to south, draining to the southwest quadrant of the township. Portions of the West Branch are channeled into wetland marsh areas. The Looking Glass River flows north into Shiawassee county and drains the northwest of Conway Township. The central and northwest portions of Conway are drained by the Conway/Cohoctah Union Drain flowing to the north and east, emptying into Sprague Creek in Cohoctah Township. Conway is the only township in the county that drains stormwater runoff into adjacent municipalities due to its elevation. Therefore, the township highly encourages low impact development to better manage stormwater. The largest lake within Conway Township is Petty's Lake with a surface area of eight acres. Other water bodies in the township are substantially smaller and are pond-like in character.

Map 2: Livingston County Nitrate Samples



Source: DEQ WaterChem Database, 1983-2003 samples

Map 3: Livingston County Volatile Organic Compounds Levels



Source: DEQ WaterChem Database, 1983-2002 samples

WATER

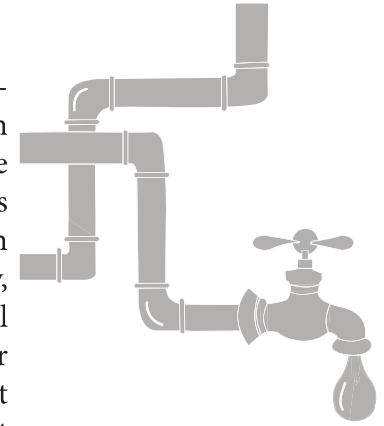
A wetland is an area where the land meets the water. The single feature that identifies an area as a wetland is the presence of water. A wetland does not have to be wet all of the time in order to be identified as a wetland. The three major types of wetlands present in Conway Township are marshes, swamps and bogs. Wetlands are an important community resource for several reasons, such as providing habitat to fish and wildlife populations, sedimentation control, water quality and flood control.

The U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service (SCS) has identified soils which are sufficiently wet to support wetland vegetation. These soils are termed “hydric”, meaning they are saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop conditions that favor the growth and regeneration of wetland vegetation.

A substantial portion of Conway Township can be characterized as wetlands. These wetland areas are primarily associated with the river channels and drainage ways within the township. Many of the township’s wetlands exist in relatively large, contiguous areas rather than in small fragments. Most of these areas are seasonally flooded usually in the spring and fall, and in summer they are often without standing water. Conway Township is covered by three watersheds; The Red Cedar Watershed in the southwest, the Looking Glass Watershed in the north and the Shiawassee Watershed in the east. All wetlands and drainage areas are components of these watersheds.

Conway Township is part of a geologic area in northwestern Livingston County, which is characterized by local groundwater recharge, widespread confined aquifers and relatively high groundwater quality. The availability of groundwater in the glacial sediments varies from location to location, based on the character of the material. Wells of six inches or more in diameter can be expected to yield from 10 to 100 gallons per minute. In areas of sand and gravel deposits along streams, yields may increase to several hundred gallons per minute. The depth a well must be drilled to encounter the bedrock varies according to the thickness of the

overlying glacially-deposited material. In Conway Township the glacial sediment ranges from 78 to 182 feet in thickness. In summary, there is a potential for groundwater availability for most residential and light commercial uses. Large users of water might experience difficulty finding an adequate supply unless a well is drilled through bedrock in an appropriate location.



Groundwater contamination from agricultural or residential runoff occurs within Conway Township. The Livingston County Health Department collected groundwater samples to test for nitrate levels. This allows the Health Department to map elevated nitrate areas throughout the County. The current Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) as established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been set at 10 mg/l (10 parts per million) for nitrate. Today, only two cases of elevated nitrates (10-20mg/l) have been reported in Conway Township by the Livingston County Health Department (see Map 2 for details). Map 3 shows the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) present in samples taken in Livingston County from 1983 to 2002. VOCs do not occur naturally in drinking water, generally occurring due to leaching or spills of industrial solvents, landfill leachate, illegal waste disposal, etc. Map 3 shows there are no VOCs present in Conway Township. However, the latest samples were taken over ten years ago, therefore the township should request for updated data on contaminants in Livingston County.

WATERSHED

NOUN WA · TER · SHED

ACCORDING TO THE EPA A WATERSHED IS DEFINED AS AN AREA OF LAND THAT DRAINS WATER, SEDIMENT AND DISSOLVED MATERIALS TO A COMMON RECEIVING BODY OR OUTLET.

WOODLANDS

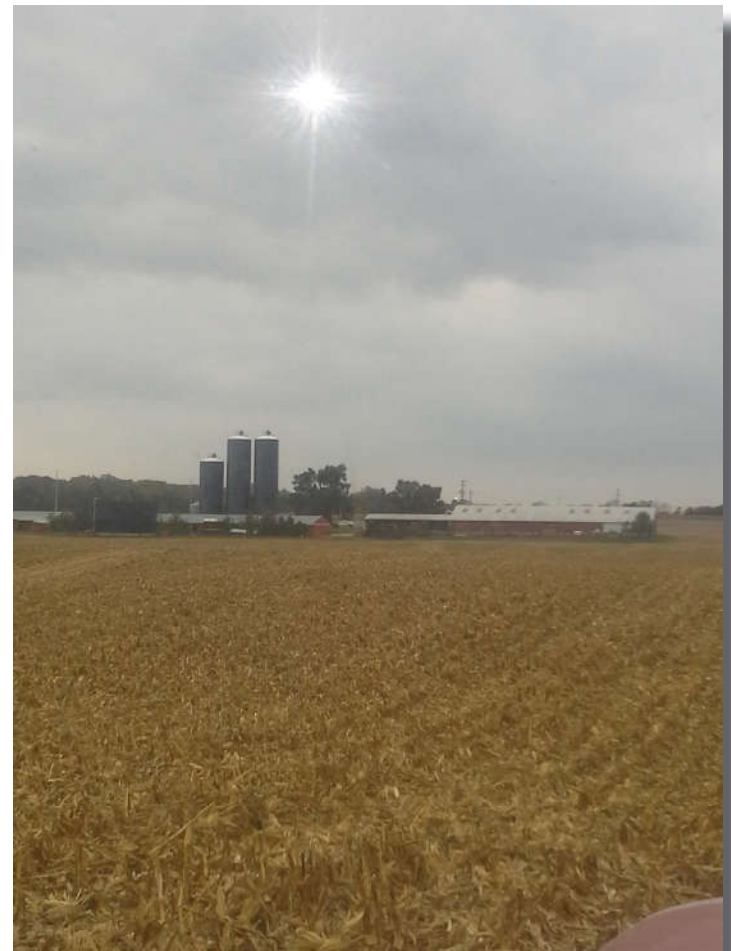
The forested areas of Conway Township are predominantly hardwoods, with small pockets of conifers. There are several large tracts (over 100 acres) of woodlands located in the northeast quadrant and numerous small tracts less than 40 acres scattered throughout the township.



PRIME FARMLAND

The Soil Conservation Service has classified prime farmland soil types. Prime farmland is land that has the best combinations of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food and fodder. Soil qualities, growing season and moisture supply are needed for a well-managed soil to produce sustained high yields. In various areas identified as prime farmland, the soils either do not receive an adequate supply of moisture, are saturated for long periods, or are frequently flooded during the growing season unless those limitations are overcome by irrigation, drainage or flood control. These soils are considered prime farmland only where the limitations have been overcome. Prime farmland soils comprise about two thirds of Conway Township. These soils are evenly distributed throughout the township, except in major drainage areas, which tend to be too wet to be considered prime farmland, without proper drainage.

The State of Michigan offers an income tax credit program to qualified farmers who agree to maintain their land in agricultural use for a specific period of time. Participation in the program indicates a long-term commitment to agriculture. As of May 2001, 5,152 acres were enrolled into this program under the farmland agreement provisions. This represents 21.3 percent of the township's total acreage. Lands entered into the farmland program are distributed primarily throughout the central portion and northwest quadrant of the township.



TRANSPORTATION

The Livingston County Road Commission is responsible for establishing and maintaining the public road network in Conway Township. Sources of funding for Road Commission activities include the State Motor Vehicle Fund, federal funds, and township contributions. The majority of traffic flow carried by county roads is attributed to rural residents traveling to and from work and Fowlerville for goods and services. The majority (87%) commute alone, with an average trip of 40.3 minutes to get to and from their place of employment. The remaining portion carpool to work. Most of Conway Township commuters are traveling to the Howell or Fowlerville areas.

Local and regional traffic flows depend upon the smooth operation of the existing thoroughfare system. Conway's road system is limited to the county primary and secondary roads as well as private roads. Conway Township has 68.25 miles of roadway with 13.07 miles (19.2%) of paved surface. Gravel surface makes up the remaining 55.18 miles of the township municipal roadway network. Although it is not directly connected to major rail routes and highways, Conway's road network is close in proximity to other transportation systems such as I-96 and the CSX railroad line. Located in the southeast portion of the township is the Maple Grove Airport.

COUNTY ROADS

Determination of primary roads is based on traffic volumes and service linkages between service centers. County primary roads serve as the main thoroughfares for regional movement. Access to a local activity center is a secondary function in Conway Township. The following three roads are among six classified as county primary roads. Due to changing traffic patterns and access to other communities, it would be the intent of Conway Township to replace primary Bell Oak Road and replace it with Sherwood Road.

FOWLERVILLE ROAD

Fowlerville road extends approximately six and one-half miles through the township and is the only north-south continuous paved roadway in the township. In addition, this rural major collector thoroughfare is

the most heavily traveled roadway in the community. Traffic volumes along Fowlerville increase from north to south with an average of 3,100 vehicles per day north of Chase Lake Road.

CHASE LAKE ROAD

Classified as a rural minor collector road. This roadway is the second largest traffic carrier in the township. An average volume of 200 vehicles per day were recorded west of Nicholson Road in 2014.

HAYNER ROAD

Hayner Road is classified as a rural major collector road, extending for two miles into Conway Township. It is the easterly link to U.S. 23 via Cohoctah Road and Bennett Lake Road. As of 2014, the average traffic volume on Hayner Road was 600 vehicles.

COUNTY SECONDARY ROADS

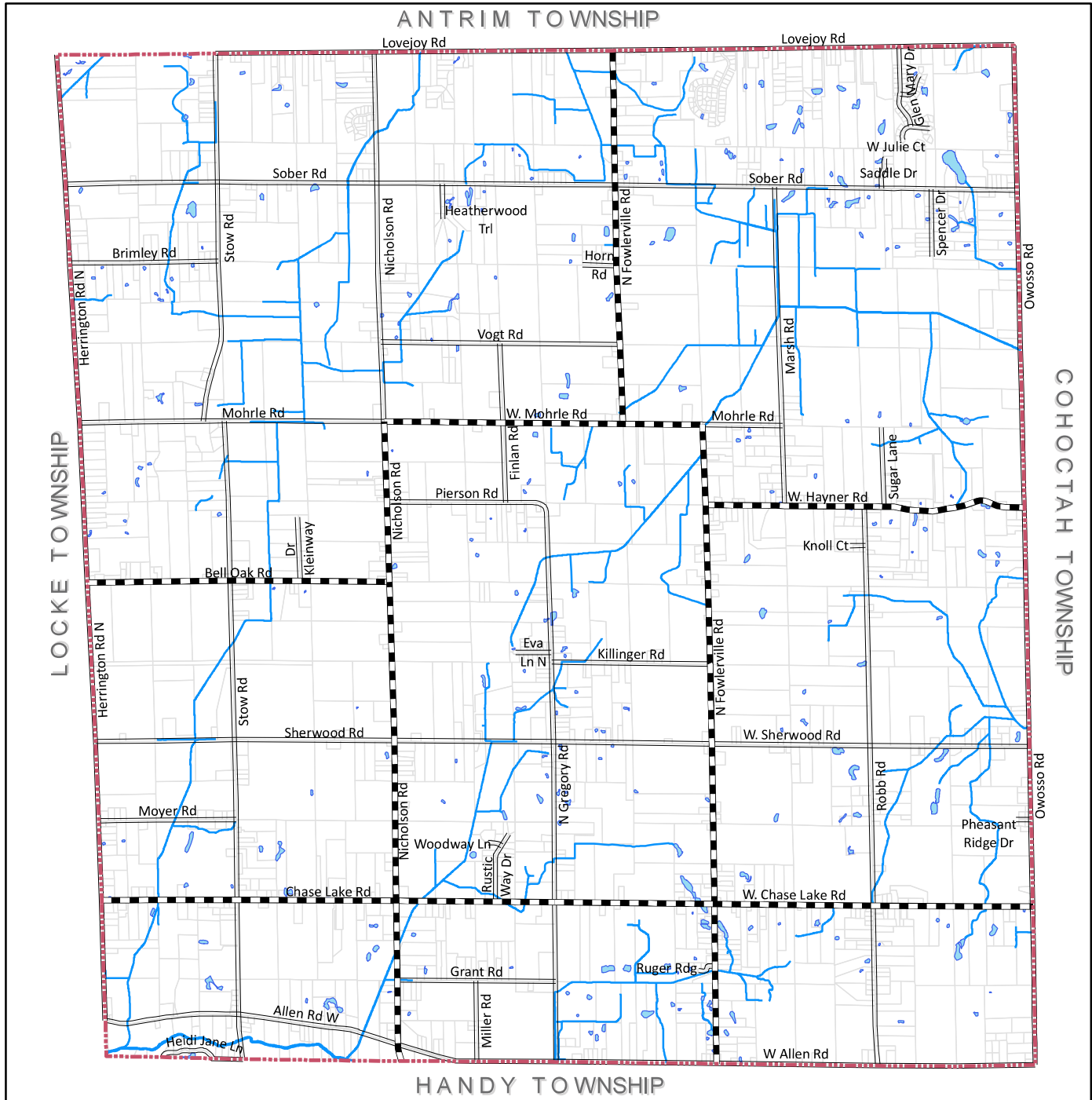
All other county roads in Conway Township are considered secondary or local roads. These roads serve as connector routes that connect separate parts of the township and provide access to individual residential property. Road improvements are funded by the township road millage.

PRIVATE ROADS

There are approximately six miles of private roads in Conway Township which generally are dead-end streets serving residential properties.






Map 4: Conway Township Roadway Network



TOWNSHIP ROADWAY NETWORK

Conway Township, Livingston County

-  County Primary
-  County Local
-  Conway Township Boundary



Source: Livingston County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
January 31, 2018

LAND USE

PRIME FARMLAND

Conway Township has 24,190 acres of land encompassing approximately 37.7 square miles. Agricultural uses including cropland, pasture, confined feeding, orchards and horticulture comprise 61 percent (14,757.5 acres), the highest single percentage of land cover in Conway Township. Agricultural lands are evenly distributed throughout the township. Livingston County has approximately 26.4 percent of its total acreage covered by croplands.

Agricultural trends over the past decades across the United States have indicated the number of farms is shrinking while the average farm size grows. Overall, total farm acreage has dwindled as urban developments sprawl. Farm acreage in Livingston County has demised by 36,621 acres in the fifteen-year period between 1982 - 1997; this is equivalent to the loss of one entire township and nearly 3/4 of another. It is expected that almost all of Wayne and Oakland County farmland will be converted to urbanized land uses. Therefore, it is important to maintain the prime agricultural land available in Conway Township.

WOODLAND

Woodlands make up 24.7% percent (5,956 acres) of Conway Township. This land use category includes deciduous and coniferous woodlots of upland character. Woodland areas are scattered throughout the township with several large parcels of over a hundred acres located in the northeast quadrant of the community.

WETLANDS & WATERWAYS

Over 0.7 percent (178.8 acres) of Conway's land is officially classified as wetlands and waterways. It should be noted that lowland hardwoods are not officially classified as wetland areas, but they are often considered wetlands subject to a MDNR permit requirement. Many of the township's wetlands exist in relatively large contiguous areas rather than in small pockets. Most of these areas are primarily associated with the river channels and drainage ways. Wetlands and waterways comprise 3.4 percent of the county's total land cover.

OPEN SPACE/UNDEVELOPED

Undeveloped/ open space areas represent 72 percent of total land area in Conway Township. These areas are covered by herbaceous or shrub vegetation and are fairly evenly distributed throughout the township. The county holds approximately 17,383 acres of undeveloped land.

RESIDENTIAL

Almost 38 percent (9,305 acres) of Conway's land is used for low-density single family dwellings. (Note: This is a large increase from 1990 when only 451 acres were being used for low-density single-family dwellings.) Residential areas are distributed relatively evenly throughout the township with a slightly higher concentration in the southern half.

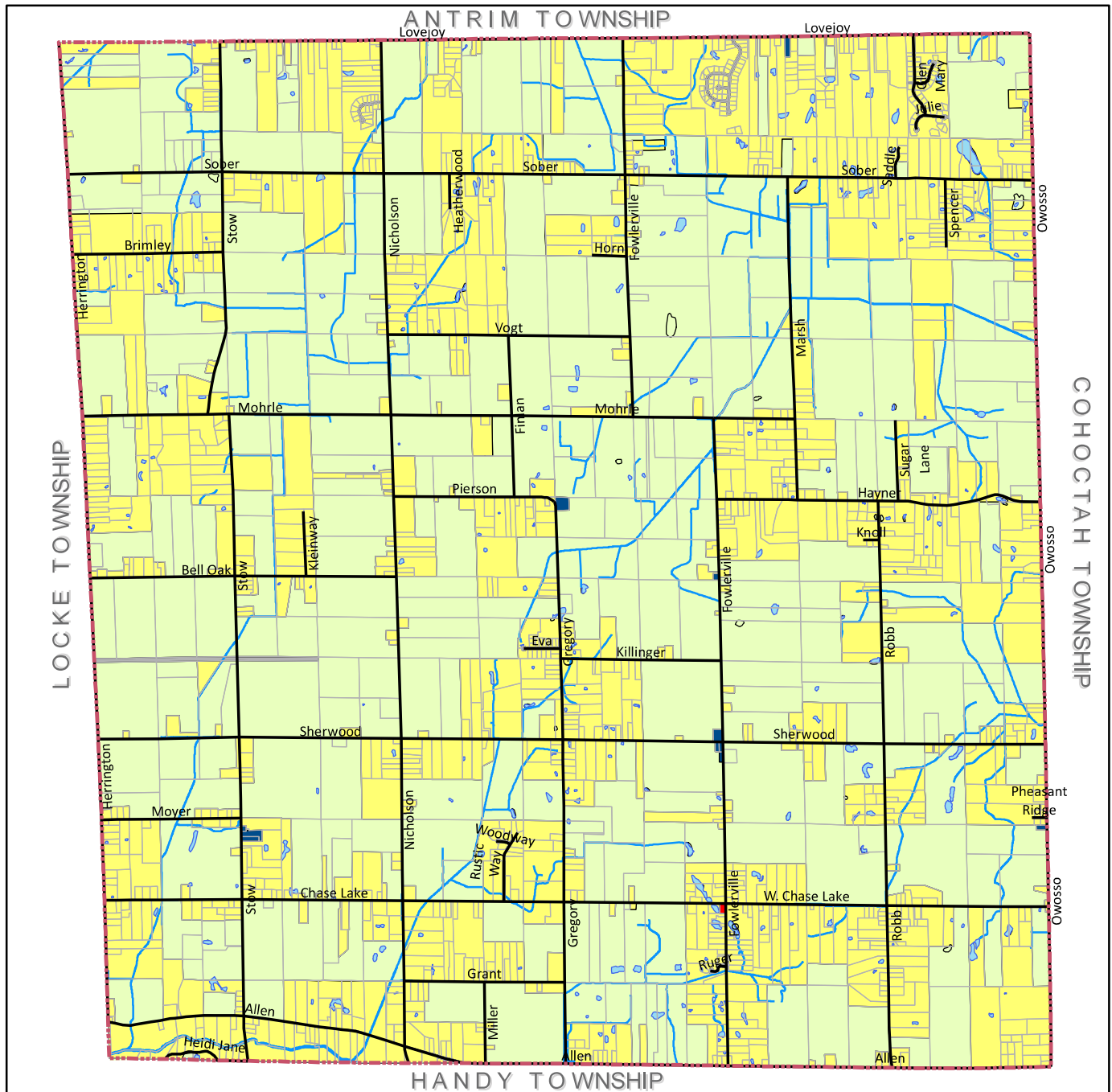
COMMERCIAL

Commercial land uses represent the smallest percentage, 0.3%, of land use cover type. Livingston County overall is not a commercialized area. Overall only 2% of land area in the county is devoted to commercial land uses. Residents utilize neighboring counties such as Washtenaw, Oakland and Wayne county to meet commercial needs. Due to the township's proximity to commercial centers, there is a strong community emphasis on minimal commercial development.

INDUSTRIAL

The area designated on the NW corner of Robb and Sherwood Roads is deemed industrial. Air transportation, currently Maple Grove airfield, occupies 64.9 acres of this land use category. This makes up most of the industrial land use in Conway Township. As of 2008, only 2% of land area is devoted to industrial land uses in Livingston County, primarily in Brighton and Green Oak Township.

Map 5: Conway Township Existing Land Use



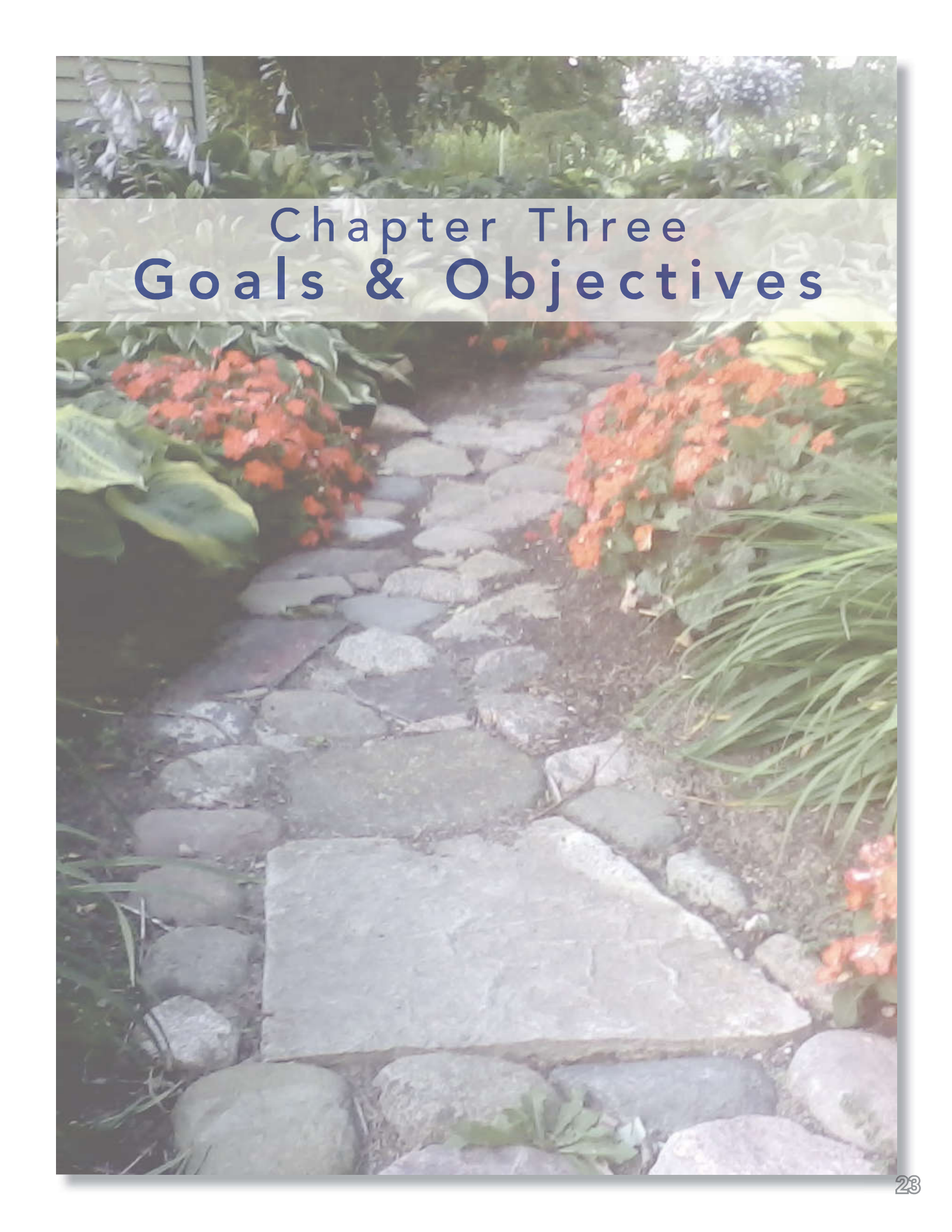
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Governmental / Institutional
- Single-family residential
- Transportation, Communication, and Utility
- Waterbody
- River/Stream
- County Road

EXISTING LAND USE
Conway Township, Livingston County



Source: Livingston County
Carlisle/Wortman Associates
March 17, 2017

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A photograph of a stone path in a garden. The path is made of irregular, light-colored stones. On either side of the path are various plants, including large green leaves and clusters of bright orange flowers. The background shows more greenery and a wooden fence.

Chapter Three Goals & Objectives

MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

In 2016, The Conway Township Planning Commission released a thirteen-question Comprehensive Community Survey to gain community input on topics such as road improvements, access to services and other issues concerning the community. A total of 155 of community members responded, a 4% sample of the population. See Appendix for the survey questionnaire and responses.

Based on the responses, the most valued component of Conway Township is the rural atmosphere (32%), with the second being the low-density residential areas (22%). About half of all responses like the community minded neighbors of Conway Township, with a quarter most satisfied with the churches and schools of the community.

Figure 6: Most common responses to the question: What do you value most about Conway Township?



INTERNET

Overall, the majority of responses from the community-wide survey indicated there is not adequate internet and cell phone services within the Township; over half of the residents lack broadband internet coverage. About 58% of those who responded would support a millage to cover the expenses for broadband internet infrastructure. On the other hand, over half respondents feel they have adequate emergency services such as police and fire protection.

TRANSPORTATION

Based on the community survey feedback, we can conclude most residents of Conway Township believe the community roads to be in good to fair condition. In summary, 28% felt the roads were in “good” condition, 36% believed the roads to be “fair” and 26% believe they are in “poor” condition. More than half of respondents would like to see more roads paved in the community. Primary road and intersection improvements include Nicholson, Chase Lake, Owosso, and Sherwood. Some individual comments on road improvements included bike lanes, lighting along Sherwood, and reduce speeding on Nicholson.

ENVIRONMENT

The most common outdoor recreational activities of survey respondents included hiking, hunting, biking, fishing, and horseback riding. 20% of individuals claim the open space of Conway Township to be the characteristic they like most about the community. Other common concerns indicated protection for natural resources.

PLANNING GOALS & OBJECTIVES

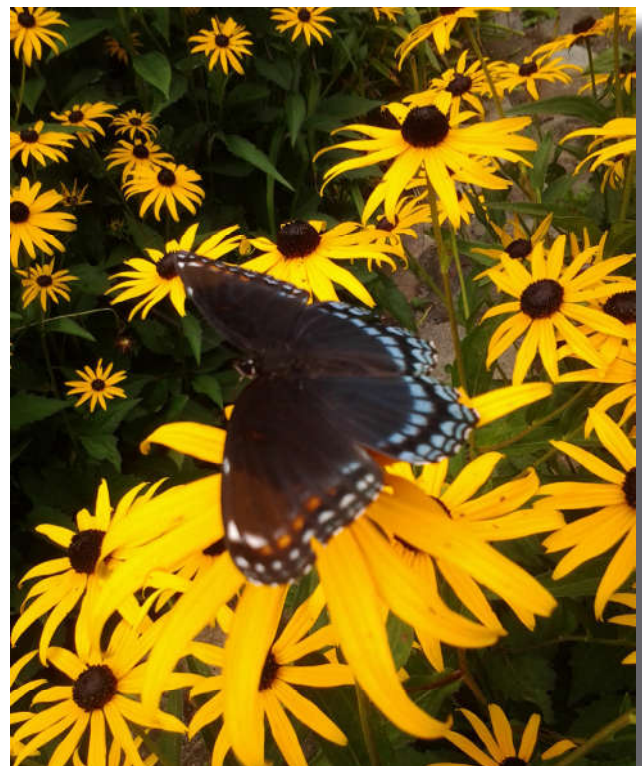
Long term land use planning requires policy goals from which decisions can be made. Such policy is often found in the thoughts, ideas and sentiments of members of the community, written as goals, objectives and policy for the township. The Conway Township Planning Commission and Administration solicited input for the resulting development of goals, objectives, and strategies contained herein.

Goals are intentions for the community.

Objectives are specific steps that can be prioritized and pursued; further defined as Strategies or Action Items.

Policy is a guiding principle designed to influence land use decisions and actions.

Goals and objectives are policies that establish an approach or position to land use planning. The following goals, and objectives will guide the Future Land Use found in this Plan.





GOAL: Manage the future development in a sustainable, controlled manner to ensure growth levels are consistent with the natural limitations of the land and the small-town character, while protecting the public health, safety and welfare of the community.

1 Provide regular opportunities for substantive public input on growth and development issues facing the township.

2 Update the Conway Township Zoning Ordinance to implement the recommendations from this Plan.

3 Guide development to make use of existing public services, utilities and infrastructure.

4 Promote sustainable design techniques in community development to increase community resiliency.

5 Coordinate land use and development with adjacent communities to ensure compatibility of communities in the future.

6 Provide regular training opportunities for Township Board, Planning Commission, and Board of Appeals members related to planning policies and techniques.

7 Preserve and promote the rights of the individual property owner while maintaining a rural way of life.

8 Provide high speed, reliable and cost efficient internet access to all residents and businesses.



GOAL: Manage future growth in a sustainable, controlled system to ensure growth levels are consistent with the natural limitations of the land, the availability of existing and planned facilities, protection of natural resources, and rural character of township.

1 Encourage the preservation, repair and maintenance of Conway's older homes, farmsteads and other structures, which offer the redeeming aesthetic, historical and social values.

2 Enhance single family residential character of neighborhoods.

3 Encourage cluster development of single family homes in new residential areas.

4 Neighborhoods must prevent pollution and siltation of wetlands by controlling drainage and stormwater runoff.

5 Update the township's zoning regulations to implement the Master Plan recommendations to maintain the predominant character of the community through standards regarding building heights, lot sizes, setbacks, and other site plan considerations.

6 Exclude land that has very high or high potential for agricultural use or contains wetlands or hydric soils.

7 Provide higher density housing opportunities for current and future township residents.



GOAL: Preserve existing agricultural operations and encourage continued farming activities through long-term protection of agricultural resources.

1 Support and promote the family farm operations through agricultural zoning provisions, enrollment in the P.A. 116 Farmland and Open Space Protection Act, and other initiatives when feasible.

2 Encourage limitations on development densities, and the avoidance of excess consumption of prime farmland.

3 Encourage agriculture-based tourism and a locally produced farm and food culture.

4 Promote riparian buffer zones between farmland, waterways and other uses to minimize nutrient runoff and noise pollution.

5 Support the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs administered at the county or other regional level.



GOAL: Limit new commercial development to serve the needs of the local population while preserving sensitive natural resources and water supplies.

1 Encourage commercial endeavors that serve daily, local requirements, rather than having a regional focus.

2 Plan commercial development only in concentrated areas within the township and avoid strip commercial development.

3 Locate commercial development with direct access to paved roads, and at intersections with regional connections.

4 Provide specific locations on Fowlerville Road as primary commercial nodes to serve the township and the more regional market

5 Apply extensive buffers and strictly enforce landscaping regulations to ensure appropriate screening and avoid negative impacts to adjacent parcels and uses.



GOAL: Allow for small industrial development in a manner that maintains the health and vitality of the surrounding natural environment.

1 Identify appropriate locations in the township for small-scale commercial and industrial land uses, while taking into account opportunities and limitations of the township's natural features and the availability of public facilities and services.

2 Support the development of small industrial uses in areas with adequate year-round roadway access, on soils of lesser agricultural capability, with adequate water and septic capacity and low environmental sensitivity.

3 Develop a balanced industrial development strategy to achieve environmental compatibility and maintain the small town character.

4 Update Zoning Ordinance to allow for renewable energy generation in designated areas of the community.



GOAL : Preserve the natural resources of the township, including its open spaces, woodlands, wetlands, agricultural areas, floodplains and natural aesthetics.

1 Monitor and maintain natural resources along thoroughfares to prevent environmental damage.

2 Preserve the natural water bodies and drainage ways, flora and fauna, and unique geologic landforms, which give Conway Township its natural character.

3 Update the Zoning Ordinance and other enforcement tools to ensure development will minimize disruption to wetlands, floodplains, rivers, and other natural features.

4 Enforce riparian buffers along waterways and to protect aquatic ecosystem health and prevent erosion.

5 Maintain and protect the surface and groundwater throughout the township through strategic measures that prevent wastewater discharge.

6 Develop an ordinance for renewable energy generation such as solar panels or wind farms.

7 Utilize green stormwater infrastructure, also known as low impact development to ensure development does not adversely impact natural resources and surrounding properties.

8 Establish educational programs such as Township sustainability initiatives and conservation practices, especially in local school districts.

9 Prohibit development of floodplains and wetlands, and avoid disrupting or infringing upon environmentally sensitive slopes and woodlands.



GOAL: Provide necessary utilities and public services to township residents to promote the health and welfare of the citizens, based upon priority needs, cost-effectiveness, technical feasibility, land use policy and future land use patterns of this Plan.

1 Collaborate with adjacent municipalities to provide adequate services to community.

2 Encourage development that does not require municipal sewer and water services.

3 Encourage the location of churches, meeting halls, places of public assembly, and residential concentrations along primary, hard surface roads.

4 Permit alternative sources of energy that benefit township residents and do not negatively impact the township's unique character and natural resources.

5 Continue to provide fire and emergency services for township residents and continue relationship with Livingston County Sherriffs Department and Michigan State Police for necessary police services.



GOAL: Maintain a transportation network which allows for safe and efficient movement of vehicles, both motorized and non-motorized, throughout the community, utilizing the existing transportation structure and improving the base structure as needed to accommodate higher traffic flows.

1 Establish a multi-modal transportation network throughout the Township in collaboration with the Livingston County Road Commission, and the Michigan Department of Transportation.

2 Encourage physical linkages such as bike and pedestrian trails between communities that connect important regional assets such as parks and community services.

3 Discourage high traffic generating land uses and development patterns along secondary roads until such roads have been improved to accommodate high traffic levels.

4 Coordinate with Livingston County to extend regional non-motorized pathways into the township.

5 Maintain rural character of roads when needed.

6 Primary road improvement plan, i.e. gravel roads upgraded to solid surface roads. Improvements and maintenance of secondary roads.



GOAL: Provide recreation programs and facilities to meet the present and future recreational needs of all township residents.

1 Preserve the township's natural resources through a coordinated future land use strategy and related regulations which permit reasonable use of land while discouraging unnecessary destruction and loss of natural resources.

2 Collaborate with neighboring communities and region to increase access to recreation opportunities for township residents.

3 Work with developers to ensure that a portion of all new development space is set aside as parkland or open space.

4 Explore options for recreation areas adjacent to Township Hall.

Chapter Four

Future Land Use



THE FUTURE OF CONWAY TOWNSHIP

The purpose of Future Land Use Strategy is to identify general patterns of land use and development throughout the township. In addition, it presents important guidelines for future public services. It does not intend to establish precise boundaries of land use areas or exact locations of future uses. Implementation of planned future land use patterns relies on regulatory tools of the township, most importantly the Conway Township Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance regulates the type, location, bulk, and intensity of land development throughout the community, and will be updated to support planned future land use patterns. The plan is the township's vision for the future, laying the groundwork for growth and development.

Conway Township is a zoned community that promotes preservation of the existing farmland, woodlands and wetlands, and other natural resource assets of the community. Conway Township plans for four major types of land use for the future, including; Agricultural Residential (A-R), Commercial (C), Industrial (I), and Manufactured Housing Park (MHP). (See page 41 for the Conway Township Future Land Use Map).



AGRICULTURAL/RESIDENTIAL

The Agricultural Residential land use category provides opportunities for low-density suburban style housing while preserving and supporting agricultural uses. District developments promote the preservation of Conway Township land area through low-density cluster development of housing and careful consideration of existing land uses and community input. Wherever possible, residential land uses are extended along paved roadways to provide better access for higher density uses.

The residential component of this land use category recognizes existing subdivisions and makes provisions for new residential areas on large lots. Average development densities within the residential areas are planned for one dwelling unit per two acres except for subdivisions. Anticipated average development for subdivisions, whether in the form of plats or condominiums, are planned not to exceed one dwelling unit per 32,670 square feet (3/4 of an acre) although dwelling units (or lots) may be clustered in order to maximize retained open space. Single-family detached housing will be the predominant style in this area, although the Planning Commission may permit multiple family units along paved County Primary Roads through special land use approval.

As the largest land use in Conway Township, farming activities are the predominant activity within this classification, although single-family detached dwelling units are allowed. This land use is characterized by large lots, very low residential density and agricultural business activities. This category intends to preserve prime farmland properties and should be protected from residential development when possible. The land within this area is well suited for growing crops due to soil type and terrain, which are unique natural resources of the township. New residential properties are highly encouraged to be contained in cluster development to preserve land area.

Some non-agricultural uses may be of no harm to, or enhance the character of the farming area. Uses related to farming or the Planning Commission should allow agricultural production through special land use

approval. For example, farm product processing, storage and distribution; the sale and service of products and equipment used in farming; farm related enterprises such as roadside produce markets, farm-craft stores; and sale of horticultural products and services. These uses should be evaluated for their unique impacts on surrounding agricultural lands with particular reference to the amount and quality of land to be taken out of production, and the way the sites are developed and accessed to minimize conflicts with adjacent agricultural uses.

The plan recommends that subdivisions in agricultural areas be subject to special land use approval by the Planning Commission to ensure better control over timing, size and location of projects. It is expected that subdivisions in the areas will develop in a logical pattern extending out from the residential areas so that subdivision developments do not “leapfrog” into areas and result in premature loss of farmland.

In order to further protect agricultural resources in Conway Township, properties within the Agriculture land use may be enrolled in the P.A. 116 Farmland and Open Space Protection Program. The availability of a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program is a critical component of agricultural land uses. PDRs allow landowners to sell development rights for the farm parcel to a governmental or not-for-profit entity in exchange for placement of an easement on the land which prohibits future non-agricultural development of the property. This agreement allows the farmer to receive the value of their property without allowing development.

MANUFACTURED HOMES

Land area for Manufactured Housing Parks is planned at a density of six to eight dwelling units per acre and requires diligent planning and design to ensure proper private water supply and waste disposal without the presence of public utilities. Development of this density should be located only on county primary or county local roads in Conway Township. Manufactured housing parks should incorporate buffers between lower-density uses, and large setbacks to protect rural view-sheds and minimize land use conflicts.

There are two areas proposed for use as Manufactured Home Parks, as indicated on the Future Land Use Map (Map 6). One is located at the northeast corner of Herrington Road and Allen Road, not to exceed fifty (50) acres in area; the second location is described as the southwest quadrant of the southeast quarter of Section 26, not to exceed fifty (50) acres in area. The site selection criteria considered for placement of high-density residential land uses should include avoidance of wetlands and hydric soils and preservation of prime farmland within the township.



INDUSTRIAL

The Industrial land use category is intended to accommodate less intensive industrial activities that present minimal impacts upon surrounding areas; industrial activities may be integrated with nearby land uses; primarily, commercial use. However, due to the lack of municipal sewer and water services throughout the township and the designated area, industrial development potential for the property may be limited.

Currently, there are approximately 124 acres of contiguous land designated for industrial use; access may be provided from Fowlerville Road, Sherwood Road, or Robb Road. Fowlerville Road provides vehicular access to interchanges with Interstate 96 to the south and Interstate 69 to the north in Shiawassee County.

To maintain and preserve the desired rural character of the township and immediate area surrounding the designated area; industrial land use will require high quality site design layouts, standards and bulk regulations necessary to mitigate, or avoid, adverse effects created by industrial use and operations; i.e. noise, smoke, glare, waste and other features of typical industrial operations. Strict compliance with standard zoning regulations and zoning district regulations should be enforced.



COMMERCIAL

Two commercial areas or commercial nodes are planned for the township's future commercial development. These commercial nodes are located on the southeast and southwest corners of Fowlerville and Lovejoy Roads, as well as at the intersection of Fowlerville and Sherwood Roads. Fowlerville Road is a paved, north-south road that bisects Conway Township. Fowlerville Road receives more traffic than any road in the township. Fowlerville Road provides vehicular access to interchanges with Interstate 96 to the south and Interstate 69 to the north in Shiawassee County. Commercial nodes are located at intersections of heavily traveled roads to provide additional market support and to concentrate commercial uses in the township.

Conway Township has a screening ordinance in effect for commercial areas.

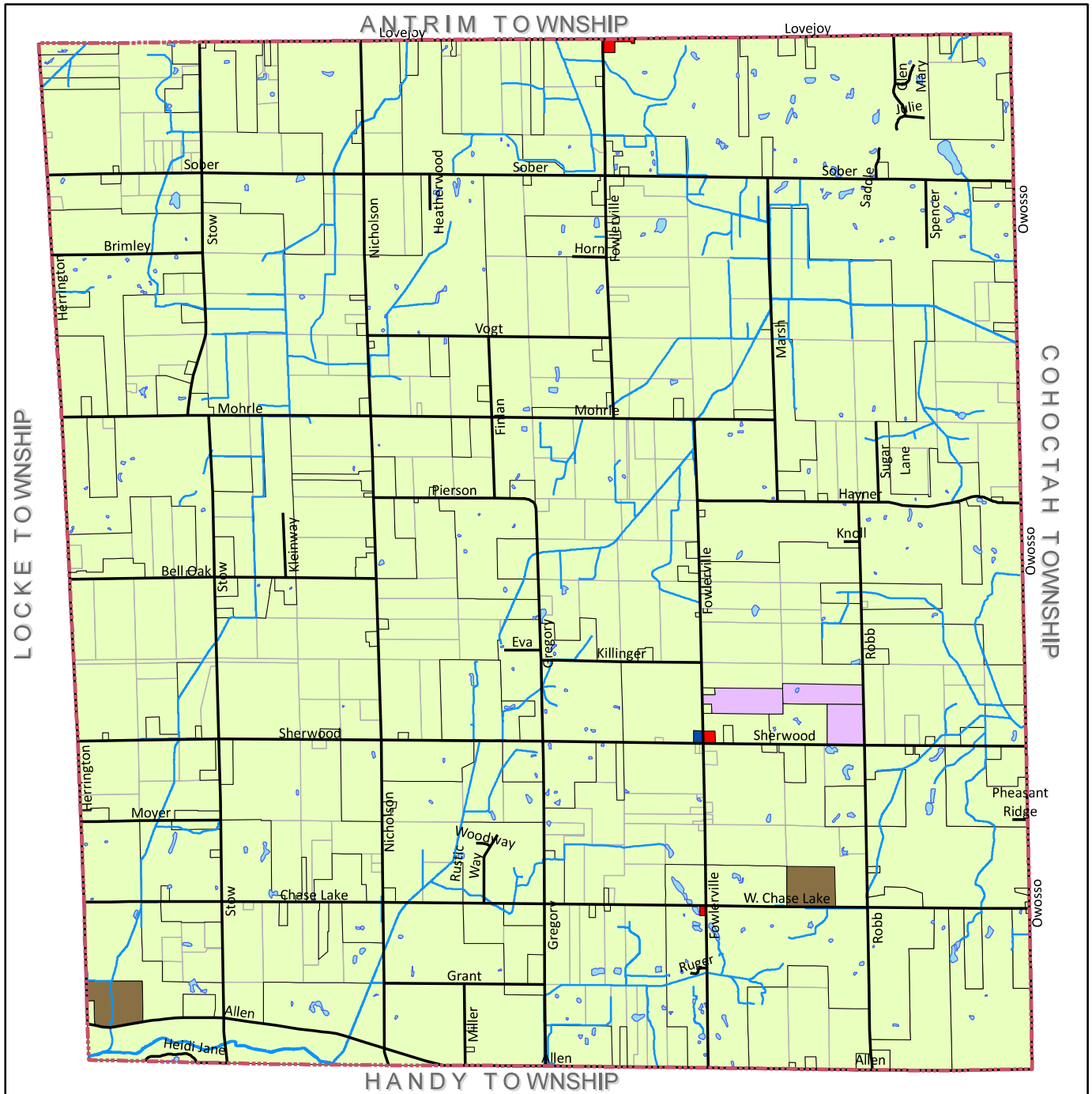
FOWLERVILLE ROAD & LOVEJOY ROAD

The southeast and southwest corners of Fowlerville Road and Lovejoy Road comprise the northern commercial nodes. This intersection is located roughly halfway between Interstate 96 and Interstate 69. The northeast and northwest corners of this intersection are located in Antrim Township, Shiawassee County.

FOWLERVILLE ROAD & SHERWOOD ROAD

The Fowlerville Road and Sherwood Road intersection is planned as one of two commercial development nodes. Township Hall is also located at this intersection. Sherwood Road, although only partially paved, provides vehicular traffic within the township with a direct west route toward East Lansing. Planning commercial development for these nodes will provide ample opportunity for uses limited to local convenience to locate within the township. Local convenience uses will provide goods and services to township residents, and will eliminate a need for strip commercial development along Fowlerville Road. High quality site design standards and regulations will be necessary to ensure quality development within the Commercial District.

Map 6: Conway Township Future Land Use Map



- County Road
- River/Stream
- Waterbody
- Agricultural/Residential
- Manufactured Home Community ≥ 50 Acres
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Township Hall

FUTURE LAND USE

Conway Township, Livingston County



Carlisle/Wortman Associates
January 31, 2018



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A dramatic landscape photograph capturing a sunset or sunrise. The sun is a bright, glowing orb just above the horizon, casting a long, shimmering reflection on a body of water below. The sky is a mix of warm orange, yellow, and soft blue tones, with scattered clouds. A utility pole stands on the right side of the frame, with power lines stretching across the scene. A prominent, bright, white streak of light, possibly a meteor or a lightning bolt, descends from the upper left towards the center of the sky. The overall mood is serene yet powerful.

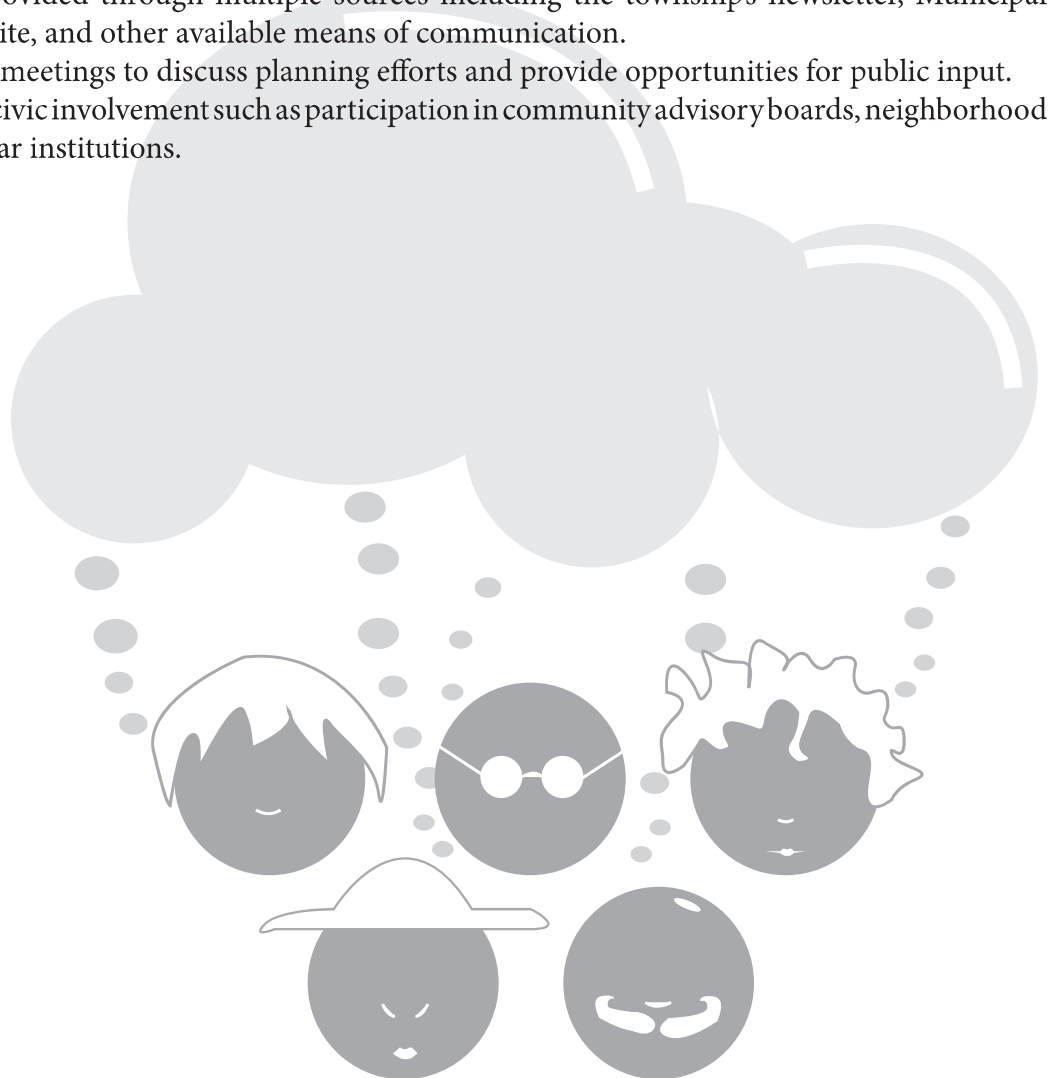
Chapter Five Implementation

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Success of the township's Master Plan will depend heavily on citizens' understanding of the planning process and the plan's specific goals, objectives, and policies. An engaged population will be more likely to support bond proposals, special assessments, zoning decisions, and development proposals. Conway Township must effectively communicate the importance of long-term planning and encourage citizen participation in ongoing planning efforts.

Specific actions which help to develop understanding and support for the township's planning process include:

- Ensure that copies of the updated Master Plan are readily available for viewing at the Municipal Office and township website (conwaytownship.com).
- Ensure that copies of the most recently adopted Zoning Ordinance are readily available for viewing at the Municipal Office and online.
- Post the Future Land Use Map of the Master Plan in the Municipal Office and online.
- Post a regularly updated list of current events pertaining to planning and zoning matters in the community on the township website.
- Notify residents of meetings that will address development and public service improvement proposals. Notifications should be provided through multiple sources including the township's newsletter, Municipal postings, community website, and other available means of communication.
- Hold periodic community meetings to discuss planning efforts and provide opportunities for public input.
- Promote opportunities for civic involvement such as participation in community advisory boards, neighborhood watch programs, and similar institutions.



ZONING ORDINANCE

Last amended in December of 2017, the Conway Township Zoning Ordinance is the primary tool for implementing and enforcing the vision of the Master Plan. As a regulatory guide for development of future land uses, it divides the community into districts. Each district is prescribed a set of uses and a minimum set of development requirements that must be met. Supporting staff of the township are tasked to enforce ordinance requirements by conducting plant and site inspections and periodic ordinance reviews.

The Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Districts Map are not to be considered long-term documents, but rather a tool to assist the implementation of the planning policy. The local government has the responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens. Proactive mitigation policies and actions reduce conflicts and promote safe and resilient communities.

SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

A Subdivision Control Ordinance is also an important tool in carrying out the concepts of the Master Plan. This ordinance sets forth requirements and procedures to control the subdivision of vacant land for development. A Subdivision Control Ordinance should be adopted by the Conway Township Board of Trustees under the authority of the Subdivision Control Act 288 of 1967, and the adoption of amendment PA591 of 1996.

REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

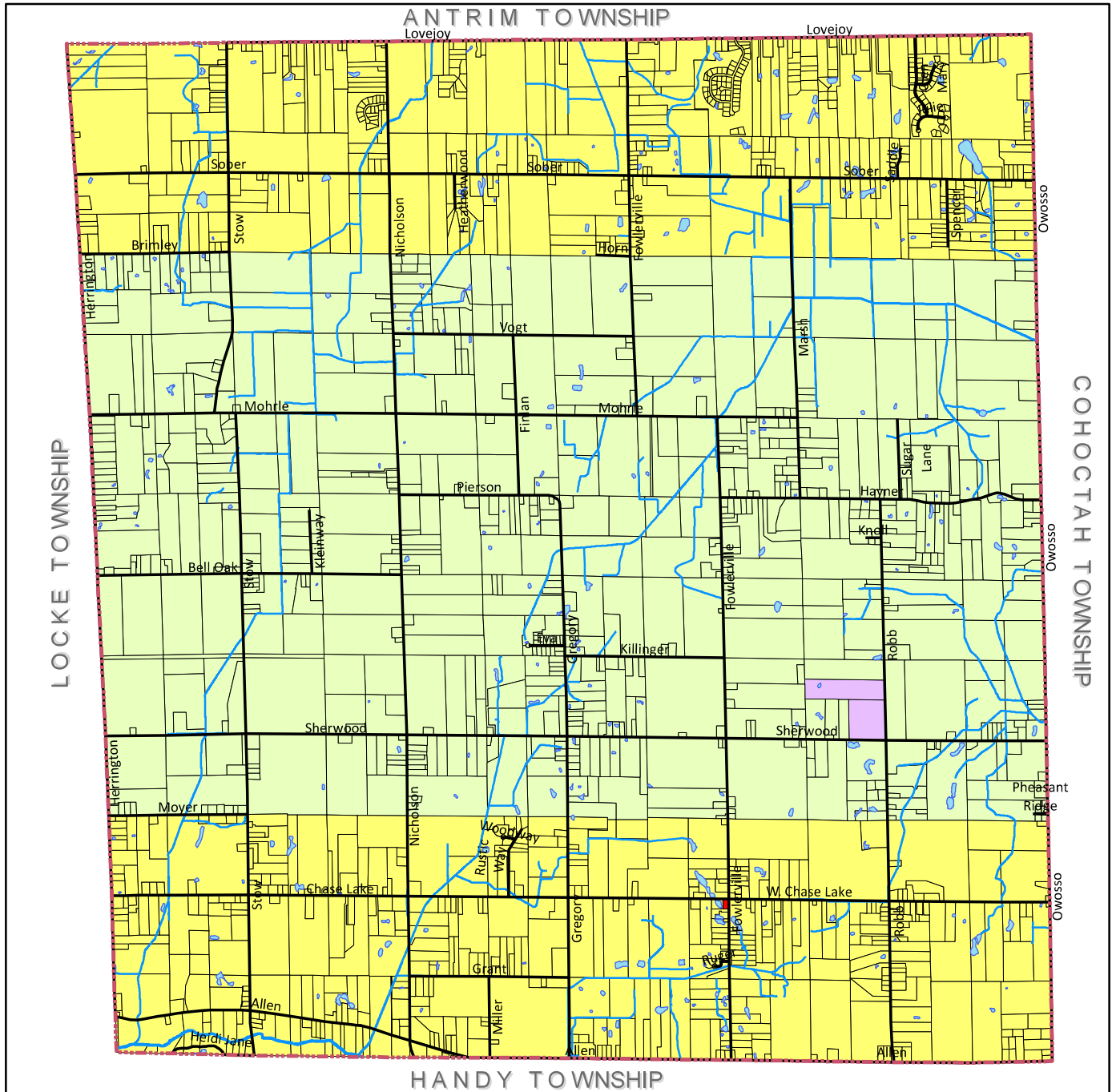
The Master Plan should be updated periodically, a review must be completed every five years in order to be responsive to new growth trends and current township attitudes. With all notices and applications required, as growth occurs over the following years, the Master Plan goals, land use information, population projections and other pertinent data should be reviewed and revised as necessary so the plan can continue to serve as a valid guide to the township.



PLANNING EDUCATION

Planning Commissioners should attend planning seminars to keep themselves informed of planning issues and learn how to better carry out their duties and responsibilities as Planning Commissioners. These seminars are regularly sponsored by the Michigan State Land Policy Institute and the Michigan Township Association (MTA) and are a valuable resource for Planning Commissions.

Map 7: Conway Township Zoning Map



- AR - Agricultural/ Residential
- R - Residential
- C - Commercial
- I - Industrial
- Waterbody
- River/Stream
- County Road

ZONING DISTRICTS

Conway Township, Livingston County



Carlisle/Wortman Associates
January 31, 2018



ACTION PLAN

Project	Implementation Objective	Time	Funding
Land & Resource Preservation	Work with the Township Board and Planning Commission to review development proposals and encourage developers to set aside land for open space preservation, farmland, and non-motorized pathways.	Ongoing	--
	Seek partnerships with the State of Michigan, Southeastern Livingston County Recreation Authority, and Livingston County Road Commission.	Ongoing	--
	Maintain and protect the surface and groundwater throughout the township.	Ongoing	--
	Preserve the township's natural features through a coordinated future land use strategy and related regulations which permit reasonable use of land while discouraging unnecessary destruction or loss of natural resources.	Ongoing	Township Funds, Grants, & Donations
Transportation	Work with the Township Board and Planning Commission to create a township-wide non-motorized pathway network.	Ongoing	Township Funds, Grants, & Donations
	Improve and maintain priority road segments based upon planned land use and existing and projected traffic patterns.	1-2 years	Township Funds, Grants, & Donations
Utilities & Services	Incorporate broadband Internet infrastructure into areas suitable for such development without disrupting natural resources.	1-2 years	Township Funds, Grants, Donations, & Millage
	Introduce zoning ordinance for renewable energy installations such as wind and solar farms.	1-2 years	Township Funds, Grants, & Donations
Agriculture	Provide opportunities for agricultural based tourism.	Ongoing	--
	Preserve existing agricultural operations and encourage farming activities through long-term protection of agricultural operations.	Ongoing	Transfer of Development Rights, Township Funds, Grants, & Donations
Parks & Recreation	Formalize a Conway Township Recreation Committee to oversee the creation and implementation of a Recreation Plan, and to coordinate efforts with adjacent communities, county agencies and other organizations.	1-2 years	--

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Capital improvement programs (CIP) consider the funding and timing of all municipally related capital needs. The CIP is a schedule of projects that contains estimated costs and sources of funding. The Master Plan should be used as a key reference document in the preparation of the CIP to ensure that public dollars are spent where the most benefit will be received.

Conway Township has a rich agricultural history with many of the members of the original farming families remaining in the Township within the existing five cemeteries.

1. Fuller Cemetery (Antrim) Est 1884 – Lovejoy Road
2. Benjamin Cemetery Est 1874 – Fowlerville Road
3. Coughran Cemetery Est 1841 – Owosso Road
4. Klein (Conway) Cemetery – Gregory Road
5. United Brethren (Miller) Cemetery Est 1880 – Stow Road

The Cemetery Board has developed a detailed and thorough plan that may be reviewed through the link provided in the appendix.

The Cemetery Board is an advisory body; the Township Board holds the deed to the properties and makes final decisions on the cemeteries and contributes 100% of the operating funds to care for and maintain these areas. According to cemetery records there are approximately 3,294 burial sites in Conway Township of which approximately 2,378 are occupied. The plan as linked above provides for plans for including but not limited to the following items for the existing cemeteries:

- Survey of all cemeteries except Antrim (completed)
- Designated Parking and Driveways
- Updated signs with historical name markers
- Posted signs for rules/ordinances
- Natural borders and/or fencing and gates
- Reflection gardens with benches
- Water access for watering flowers and plants
- Security Cameras
- Veterans Memorial
- Cremains scatter area and reflection garden with monument with name plaques
- Pet cemetery



FUNDING

A variety of funding mechanisms are available for Conway Township to implement the goals and policies of the Master Plan. Some of the current mechanisms available are listed below, however, legislation and sources of funding are constantly changing.

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT

This method provides the funding of public improvement projects through individual assessments of properties on an equitable basis for benefiting property owners in a defined district. This technique is common when funding road and utility improvement projects.

P.A. 116 FARMLAND & OPEN SPACE PROTECTION PROGRAM

Purchase of Development Rights (PDRs) allow landowners to sell development rights of a farm parcel to a governmental or non-profit entity in exchange for the placement of an easement on the land, prohibiting development on the property. This program is a critical tool in protection of farmlands.

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources Recreation Division administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF- requires 50% local match) and the Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF- requires 25% local match). Other funding may be available through programs at the State and Federal levels such as the Great Lakes Fishery Trust, the Inland Fisheries Grant Program, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Federal funding through the National Parks Service under the Rivers & Trails Program which includes the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery.

MDOT TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (SAFETEA-LU)

The township can take advantage of this Act to attempt to receive funding for transportation enhancement activities. Possible projects include a wide variety of efforts from historic preservation, landscaping and beautification, or streetscaping. The MDOT makes decisions after a local and regional screening process has been conducted.

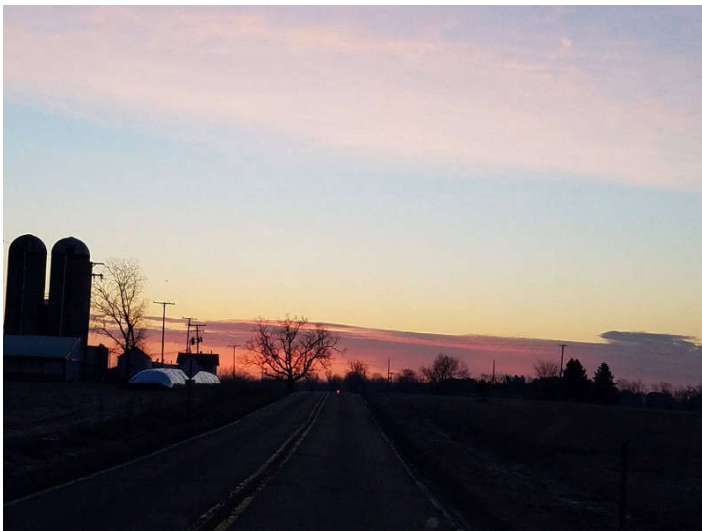
TAX INCREMENT FINANCING PUBLIC ACT 450 OF 1980

Tax increment financing is a means of funding infrastructure improvements such as roads, sewers, and other utilities needed for development. Bonds are issued by the community to pay for the needed improvements, then paid off by capturing the resulting increases in property taxes spawned by the improvements.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Midwest is currently facing the impacts of climate change. According to Global Change, "between 1900 and 2010, the average Midwest air temperature increased by more than 1.5°F. However, between 1950 and 2010, the average temperature increased twice as quickly, and between 1980 and 2010, it increased three times as quickly as it did from 1900 to 2010". Conway Township is a community at risk to the effects of climate change due to the potential threats to agriculture. Rising carbon dioxide levels and long growing seasons will increase yields of some crops. However, most crop yields will drop due to irregular and extreme weather events, such as abnormal temperatures, flooding and drought. Early crop budding and cold injury will greatly impact fruit crop yields. In addition, increases in pest and disease outbreaks are likely to increase, creating additional stresses to agricultural livelihoods.

The realities of climate change are requiring communities across the country to consider critical policy changes in order to address the impact of severe weather events and protect the livelihoods of its citizens. Communities are finding innovative solutions to increase resiliency while balancing economic development and meeting the needs of the people. A resilient community is defined as a community that can absorb the environmental stresses imposed by climate change and has the ability to reorganize and adapt. Conway Township must understand how climate change will impact the community, and develop a strategy for mitigating these impacts. Through community engagement and policy changes, the township can implement adjustments to address infrastructure, habitat protection, landscape design, and land use to increase community resiliency.



HAZARD MITIGATION

Local governments have the responsibility to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the public. There is a key opportunity to integrate hazard mitigation concepts into not only the disaster preparedness and response phases of emergency management, but more importantly, in the community planning process. The primary focus of emergency management has previously been on how to prepare and respond to disaster events, rather than preventing those hazards from causing disaster. A shift in emphasis from “disaster” or “emergency” management to “hazards” and resiliency management could help to ensure that planning activities are broadened to immediately address the hazards that face communities rather than just the disasters that strike. Many of the challenges that need to be overcome in order to implement local hazard mitigation stem from the fact the hazards receive little attention until there is a disaster.

To produce effective community planning decisions we must accurately develop and analyze the facts that uncover community problems (including possible hazards and vulnerability of the population to hazards) and provide a basis for their realistic solutions; and apply principles, standards, and practices that point the way to consistent, adequate plans, solutions, and mitigation of hazards that might affect a community. During the various phases of the planning process a community will:

- Identify problems/issues
- Gather and analyze information
- Formulate goals and objectives
- Identify and evaluate alternatives
- Select a course of action.

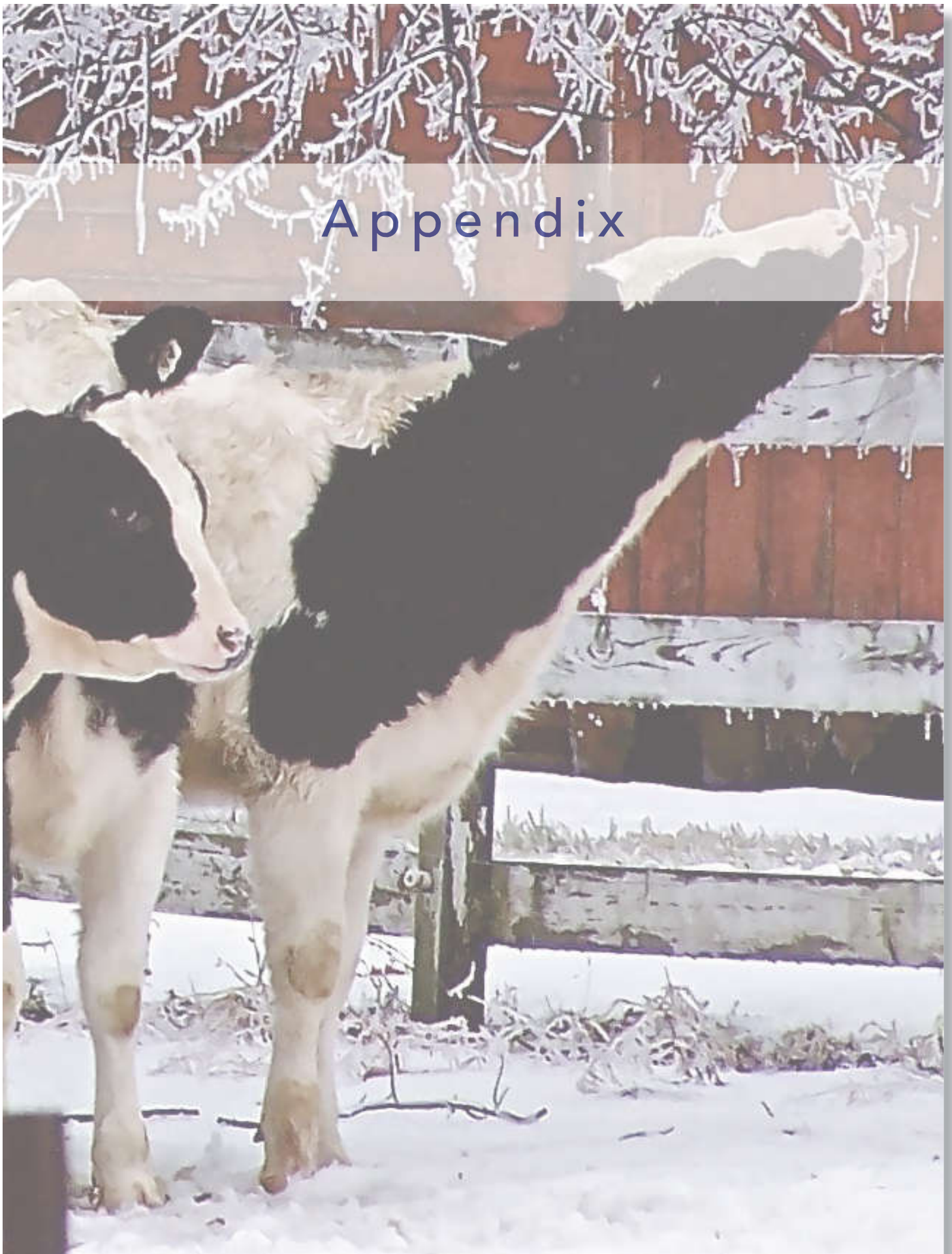
Integration of emergency management and the community planning process can serve as a bridge between local government’s growth and hazard mitigation plans, land development regulations, building codes and other ordinances. By working together to produce a county-wide mitigation strategy, local communities and the county, in partnership with the state, can help move a community closer to becoming a resilient county when disaster does strike. Communities who implement resiliency planning techniques and strategies stand to receive more money after a disaster, and will be given priority over communities who have not implemented a mitigation strategy.

Hazard mitigation deals primarily with long term, general hazard reduction issues, and resiliency planning in the face of climate change. Resiliency techniques involve community planning that incorporates sustainable design techniques to minimize erosion, increase natural habitat, reduce stormwater runoff, and maximize energy independence. The focus of mitigation is improving community capabilities to withstand future disasters, requiring effective strategic skills in planning, policy design, and implementation. Many hazards are localized, with their likely effects confined to specific known areas: floods affect flood plains, landslides affect steep soft sloped areas, etc. The effects of such hazards can be greatly reduced if the hazardous areas are eliminated from settlements or as sites of development. Most Master Plans involve land use zoning attempts to separate hazardous industrial activities from major population centers. Community planning needs to integrate awareness of natural hazards and disaster risk mitigation into the normal processes of planning the development and/or redevelopment of a community.

Zoning ordinances are used to regulate the use of land and structures and to set standards for setbacks and yards, building height and bulk, lot size, density, and treatment of nonconforming uses and structures. For implementation of a development management (hazard mitigation) strategy, low density zoning districts can be used to limit development in areas that are environmentally sensitive, such as water-supply watershed, or hazardous areas such as flood plains. Hazardous areas can be delineated in traditional zoning districts or as “hazard districts” which require special performance standards for all uses, no matter what their type.

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Appendix



COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY SURVEY

A vital component of the master planning process is community involvement. In 2016, Conway Township residents were provided a series of questions during a master plan update public meeting; their answers and suggestions are incorporated throughout the master plan. An analysis of the collected data may be viewed on the township website at http://www.conwaytownship.com/Conway_Township_Resident_Survey.120716.pdf.

CONWAY TOWNSHIP CEMETERY MASTER PLAN

Please visit the link provided to view a copy of Conway Township Cemetery Master Plan, <http://www.conwaytownship.com/planning/index.php> (temporary link until document is posted).