

# 2014

## SHERIDAN TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN





REPLACING THE 2002 SHERIDAN TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

THE SHERIDAN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION DRAFTED, AND THE  
TOWNSHIP BOARD ADOPTED THIS MASTER PLAN AS A GUIDE FOR THE PHYSICAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWNSHIP.

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RICHARD PORTER, PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR  
SHERIDAN TOWNSHIP

DATE

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KEN LAUER, SUPERVISOR  
SHERIDAN TOWNSHIP

DATE





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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## SHERIDAN TOWNSHIP BOARD

Ken Lauer, Supervisor  
Brenda Heisler, Clerk  
Shanna Pollman, Treasurer  
Scott Frederick, Trustee  
Ken Vogt, Trustee

## SHERIDAN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Richard Porter, Chair  
Sally Jackson, Vice-Chair  
Peggy Vogt, Secretary  
Harold Badger  
Scott Frederick



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# CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Master Plan.....	1
How is This Plan to be Used?.....	2
What This Plan Contains.....	3
Planning Process.....	3

## REGIONAL CONTEXT

Regional Setting.....	5
Municipal Services and Facilities .....	6

## BACKGROUND STUDIES

Population and Housing Summary .....	7
Natural Resources Inventory and Capability .....	10
High Quality Farmland .....	10
Soils .....	12
Water Resources.....	14
Woodlands.....	18
Transportation and Utilities .....	20
Existing Land Use.....	22

## GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals Summary.....	25
Residential Goals and Policies .....	27
Natural Resource Goals and Policies .....	28
Agricultural Goals and Policies .....	28
Mixed Use (Town Center) Development Goals and Policies.....	29
Economic Development Goal and Policies .....	29
Local Government Services Goals and Policies .....	31
Recreation/Walking-Biking Trails/Parks Goals and Policies .....	31

## FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Future Land Use Plan .....	33
Agriculture .....	33
Recreation Conservation.....	34
Low Density Residential .....	34
Medium Density Residential .....	37
Multi-Family Residential .....	37
Mobile Home Park .....	37
Local Commercial.....	37
Highway Service .....	38

Mixed Use Town Center .....	38
Limited Industrial .....	38
General Industrial.....	39
PA 425 Area .....	39

## **ZONING PLAN**

Zoning Plan .....	41
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## **ACTION PLAN**

Zoning Requirements.....	43
Zoning Adjustments .....	43
Subdivision Control Regulations .....	44
Special Purpose Ordinances and Standards .....	45
Capital Improvements .....	45
Economic Development.....	45
Plan Education .....	46
Plan Updates .....	46

## **APPENDIX**

Visioning Workshop Results .....	47
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## **TABLES**

Table 1. Population Change 1980-2010.....	7
Table 2. Population Change of Neighboring Communities – 1980-2010 .....	7
Table 3. General Population and Age Characteristics.....	8
Table 4. Sheridan Township – Population Distribution by Age Group 2010 ...	8
Table 5. Sheridan Township – Household Characteristics 2000-2010.....	9
Table 6. Sheridan Township – Housing Characteristics 2000-2010 .....	9
Table 7. Sheridan Township – Existing Land Uses .....	22
Table 8. Land Use Category Comparison .....	41

## **FIGURES/MAPS**

Figure 1. Planning Process.....	3
Figure 2. Township’s Regional Location .....	5
Figure 3. Farmland Classification.....	11
Figure 4. Soil Suitability .....	13
Figure 5. Kalamazoo River Watershed .....	14
Figure 6. Rice Creek Watershed .....	15
Figure 7. Water Resources .....	17
Figure 8. Woodlands.....	19
Figure 9. Circulation and Utilities .....	21
Figure 10. Existing Land Use .....	23
Figure 11. Future Land Use.....	35

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# INTRODUCTION

The Sheridan Township Master Plan articulates a vision for the Township's future growth and development. This Master Plan was developed considering input from local citizens gathered through a visioning workshop, and the latest information about the community's residents, land uses, and development trends. It is also based on the previous Master Plan, adopted in August of 2002, the Michigan Avenue Corridor Management Study jointly conducted by Sheridan Township and the Calhoun County Road Commission, and other historic planning documents.

Once adopted, the Master Plan is the official policy guide to be used by the Sheridan Township Board of Trustees and the Planning Commission to guide land use decisions and to solve community development problems. This Master Plan is not only a vision statement toward future growth and development, but is also a document that allows continuity in development policies as Planning Commissioners and Township Board Trustees change over the years.

## Purpose of the Master Plan

Planning is a process which involves the conscious selection of policy choices relating to land use, growth and the physical development of the community. The purpose of the Sheridan Township Master Plan is to state the goals for land use and development, and identify the policies and strategies that the Township will pursue to attain those goals. Sheridan Township derives its authority for the preparation of a Master Plan from the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, P.A. 33 of 2008. The Act states:

*A planning commission shall make and approve a master plan as a guide for development within the planning jurisdiction...In the preparation of a master plan, a planning commission shall do all of the following, as applicable: (a) Make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth within the planning jurisdiction with due regard to its relation to neighboring jurisdictions; (b) Consult with representatives of adjacent local units of government in respect to their planning so that conflicts in master plans and zoning may be avoided; (c) Cooperate with all departments of the state and federal governments, public transportation agencies, and other public agencies concerned with programs for economic, social, and physical development within the planning jurisdiction and seek the maximum coordination of the local unit of government's programs with these agencies.*



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## How is This Plan to be Used?

The plan serves many functions and is to be used in a variety of ways:

1. The Plan is a general statement of the Township's goals and policies and provides a single, comprehensive view of the community's desire for the future. It sets forth local goals, objectives, and policies for community growth and/or redevelopment over the next 20-30 years.
2. The Plan serves as an aid in daily decision-making. The goals and policies outlined in this Plan guide the Planning Commission, Township Board and other Township groups in their deliberations on zoning, subdivisions, capital improvements, and other matters related to land use and development. The Master Plan provides a stable, long-term basis for decision-making providing for a balance of open space, agricultural lands, housing, commercial, and industrial land uses.
3. State law requires that communities at least review their Master Plans every five years. In addition, this same law requires that communities have a Master Plan as the foundation for the zoning ordinance and other regulations that shape the physical and social development of the community. However, the Master Land Use Plan and the zoning ordinance and map are two separate documents. Zoning is one of the many legal tools used to implement the Master Land Use Plan.
4. The Plan attempts to synchronize public improvements and private developments. This is done by coordinating development areas that best utilize existing infrastructure within the Township, aligning future land uses and future infrastructure investments, and working collaboratively with external funding sources with respect to County, State, and Interstate roadways that are within the Township's boundaries.
5. Finally, this Master Plan serves as an educational tool and gives citizens, property owners, developers, and adjacent communities a clear indication of the Township's direction for the future.

In summary, the Sheridan Township Master Plan is the only officially-adopted document which sets forth an agenda for the achievement of land use goals and policies. It is a long-range statement of general goals and policies aimed at unified and coordinated development of the Township which compliments the goals of nearby governmental units, whenever possible. It helps develop a balance of orderly change in a deliberate and controlled manner which permits controlled growth. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

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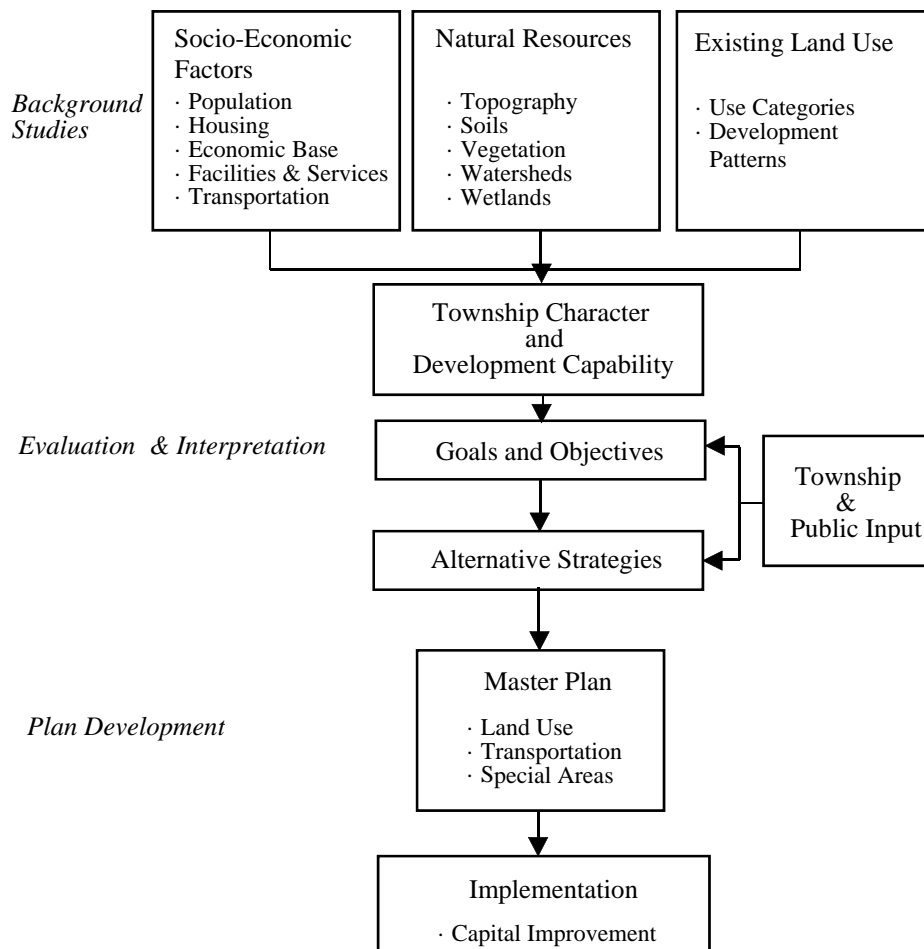
## What This Plan Contains

The Sheridan Township Master Plan is comprised of five (5) basic sections. The *Background Summary* section discusses current demographics, land uses, historical trends and projections, illustrating the point from which planning must begin. The *Goals and Strategies* section outlines policies that provide a framework for a final plan. It should be noted that future implementation action plans will be based on the adopted Township goals and policies. The *Future Land Use Plan* is the end result, in which the community's vision for the future is imposed upon the present conditions. While the starting point is unalterable, the end result can be changed according to the policies applied. The intent of the *Implementation and Zoning Plan* is to prevent a separation between the vision of the Future Land Use Plan and the Township's primary implementation tool, the Zoning Ordinance. This also briefly summarizes the tools to be employed that can carry out the goals and strategies.

## Planning Process

The process used to generate the Plan consisted of three phases: background studies; evaluation of Township character and development capability, and identification of goals and strategies; and plan development. This process is illustrated in the following diagram:

**Figure 1: Planning Process**



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## REGIONAL CONTEXT

In planning for the future of a community, it is essential to understand both the community of people to be served and the physical resources which the community has to offer. Identifying the needs of Sheridan Township residents, property owners, and businesses will help define an appropriate action plan, while available resources will help shape where and how the Plan is implemented. The purpose of the following section of the Master Plan is to provide an overview of the human and physical resources of Sheridan Township with the goal of understanding the unique features and opportunities the community has to offer.

### Regional Setting

Sheridan Township is located in central southern Michigan on the eastern side of Calhoun County. The City of Albion borders the south central portion of the Township. The cities of Marshall and Battle Creek, also within Calhoun County, are located west of Sheridan Township. The City of Jackson in Jackson County is 18 miles east of Sheridan Township and the City of Ann Arbor in Washtenaw County is approximately 50 miles east of the Township along the I-94 corridor. The City of Lansing, the Capitol of Michigan, is located approximately 40 miles north of the Township. M-99 offers a direct route to Lansing as well as U.S. 127, a limited access freeway. I-94, a limited access highway, runs east-west through the southern portion of the Township with 2 full-service interchanges at 26 Mile Road and 28 Mile Road.

**Figure 2: Township's Regional Location**



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I-69, located west of Sheridan Township and in conjunction with US 27, provides north-south freeway access to the Township. These transportation routes provide state-wide, as well as interstate, access.

The need to consider the region surrounding the Township is of importance. Sheridan is surrounded primarily by rural communities with the exception of the City of Albion to the south. Appropriate planning across borders will help facilitate compatible land use patterns between communities.

### **Municipal Services and Facilities**

The Township Offices are located at the northwest corner of C Drive North and 29 Mile Road (13355 29 Mile Road). The Township offices were expanded and fully renovated in 2002. The total area of the Township Hall and Fire Station is 5,608 square feet.

The following services / functions are carried out at the Township offices:

- Township Administrative Services
- Township Fire Department
- Michigan State Police Sub-station

Township Administrative Services carry out assessing, zoning, code enforcement, and other administrative matters. The Township Board, Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals each hold their scheduled meetings at the Township Hall as well.

The Sheridan Township Fire Department is housed in facilities attached to the Township Administrative Offices. The Township Fire Station is manned 24 hours a day by three (3) full-time firefighters. The remaining nineteen (19) firefighters are “paid on-call” personnel. Fire department equipment includes two (2) pumper trucks, one (1) tanker, one (1) grass fire truck, and one (1) snowplow truck.

The Michigan State Police provide police services to the Township. Four (4) Troopers work out of the sub-station located in the Township offices. The Michigan State Police provide service to Sheridan Township as well as to surrounding communities.

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## BACKGROUND STUDIES

Prior to developing a Master Plan and Land Use Plan for Sheridan Township, a comprehensive inventory of cultural and natural resources must be conducted. Information gathered through this process is critical to the accurate projection of future development patterns and the establishment of management policies.

### Population and Housing Summary

**Table 1: Population Change 1980 - 2010**

Year	Population	# Change	% Change
1980	2,257	—	—
1990	2,139	-118	-5.2%
2000	2,116	-23	-1.1%
2010	1,936	-180	-8.5%
<b>Total Change 1980 - 2010</b>		<b>-321</b>	<b>-14.2%</b>

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census

The loss of population reflects county-wide trends as a whole, as Calhoun County lost 3.8% of its total population between 1980 and 2010. Albion City and Albion Township experienced substantial population loss during this 30-year period, 22.0% and 20.5% respectively.

As seen in the table below, the population in Marengo Township increased considerably since 1980, while populations of Clarence Township increased slightly, and Parma Township virtually remained unchanged. Over the past 10 years, the most significant population change in the area came from Sheridan Township, with a population reduction of 8.5%.

**Table 2: Population Change of Neighboring Communities 1980 - 2010**

Year	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1980 - 2010
<b>Sheridan Township</b>	2,257	2,139	2,116	1,936	-14.2%
<b>Albion City</b>	11,059	10,066	9,144	8,616	-22.1%
<b>Albion Township</b>	1,413	1,256	1,200	1,123	-20.5%
<b>Clarence Township</b>	1,916	2,051	2,032	1,985	+3.6 %
<b>Marengo Township</b>	1,811	1,801	2,131	2,213	+22.2%
<b>Parma Township</b>	2,715	2,491	2,696	2,726	+0.4%
<b>Calhoun County</b>	141,557	135,982	137,985	136,146	-3.8%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census

Table 3 breaks down population by age group for Sheridan Township and the State of Michigan, including median age for both. In general, according to the 2010 Census, Sheridan Township mirrors the trends in age composition of the State of Michigan. For both the Township and the State, the median age has increased steadily since 1990, persons under 18 years of age have decreased as a percentage of population, and persons over age 65 have increased as a percentage of population. While following the general trend of an aging population, it should be noted that the population of Sheridan is on average "older" than that of the State as a whole.

**Table 3: General Population and Age Characteristics**

	Sheridan Township				State of Michigan			
	1990	2000	2010	Change 1990 - 2010	1990	2000	2010	Change 1990 -2010
<b>Population</b>	2,139	2,116	1,936	-9.5%	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	6.3%
<b>Median Age</b>	33.6	36.5	42.3	8.7 years older	32.6	35.5	38.9	6.3 years older
<b>Under 18</b>	665	623	504	-24.2%	2,463,253	2,595,767	2,344,068	-4.8%
<b>% of Total</b>	31.1%	29.4%	26.0%	-5.1%	26.5%	26.1%	23.7%	-2.8%
<b>65 Years +</b>	290	334	345	19.0%	1,106,140	1,219,018	1,361,530	23.1%
<b>% of Total</b>	13.6%	15.8%	17.8%	4.2%	11.9%	12.3%	13.8%	1.9%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census

**Table 4: Sheridan Township – Population Distribution by Age Group 2010**

	# of Persons	% of Total
<b>0-9 years</b>	219	11.3%
<b>10-19 years</b>	331	17.2%
<b>20-24 years</b>	74	3.8%
<b>25-34 years</b>	194	10.0%
<b>35-44 years</b>	220	11.4%
<b>45-54 years</b>	285	14.7%
<b>55-64 years</b>	268	13.8%
<b>65+ years</b>	345	17.8%
<b>Total</b>	1,936	100.0%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census

The tables below show the general housing characteristics in the Township, and how these trends have changed from 2000 - 2010:

**Table 5: Sheridan Township –Household Characteristics 2000 - 2010**

	2000	2010
<b>Total households</b>	770	751
<b>Family households</b>	559	512
<b>Married couple households</b>	439	377
<b>Percent of total</b>	57.0%	50.2%
<b>Non-family households</b>	211	239
<b>Percent of total</b>	27.4%	31.8%
<b>Householder living alone</b>	165	196
<b>Living alone and 65 +</b>	70	93
<b>Persons per household</b>	2.50	2.43

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census

**Table 6: Sheridan Township – Housing Characteristics 2000 - 2010**

	2000	2010
<b>Total housing units</b>	823	843
<b>Occupied units</b>	770	751
<b>Owner occupied units</b>	627	619
<b>Percent owner occupied</b>	81.4%	82.4%
<b>Renter occupied units</b>	143	132
<b>Vacant housing units</b>	53	92
<b>Owner vacancy rate</b>	1.3%	1.9%
<b>Renter vacancy rate</b>	10.1%	9.6%
<b>Persons per owned unit</b>	2.50	2.37
<b>Persons per rented unit</b>	2.51	2.69

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census

In summary, Sheridan's population is:

- Declining in number. Population decreased 14.3% over the last 30 years.
- Aging. The average age is increasing (33.6 years in 1990; 42.3 years in 2010).
- Decreasing in household size. Persons per household have decreased from 2.50 in 2000 to 2.43 in 2010. In 1970, there were 3.48 persons per household.

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## Natural Resources Inventory and Capability

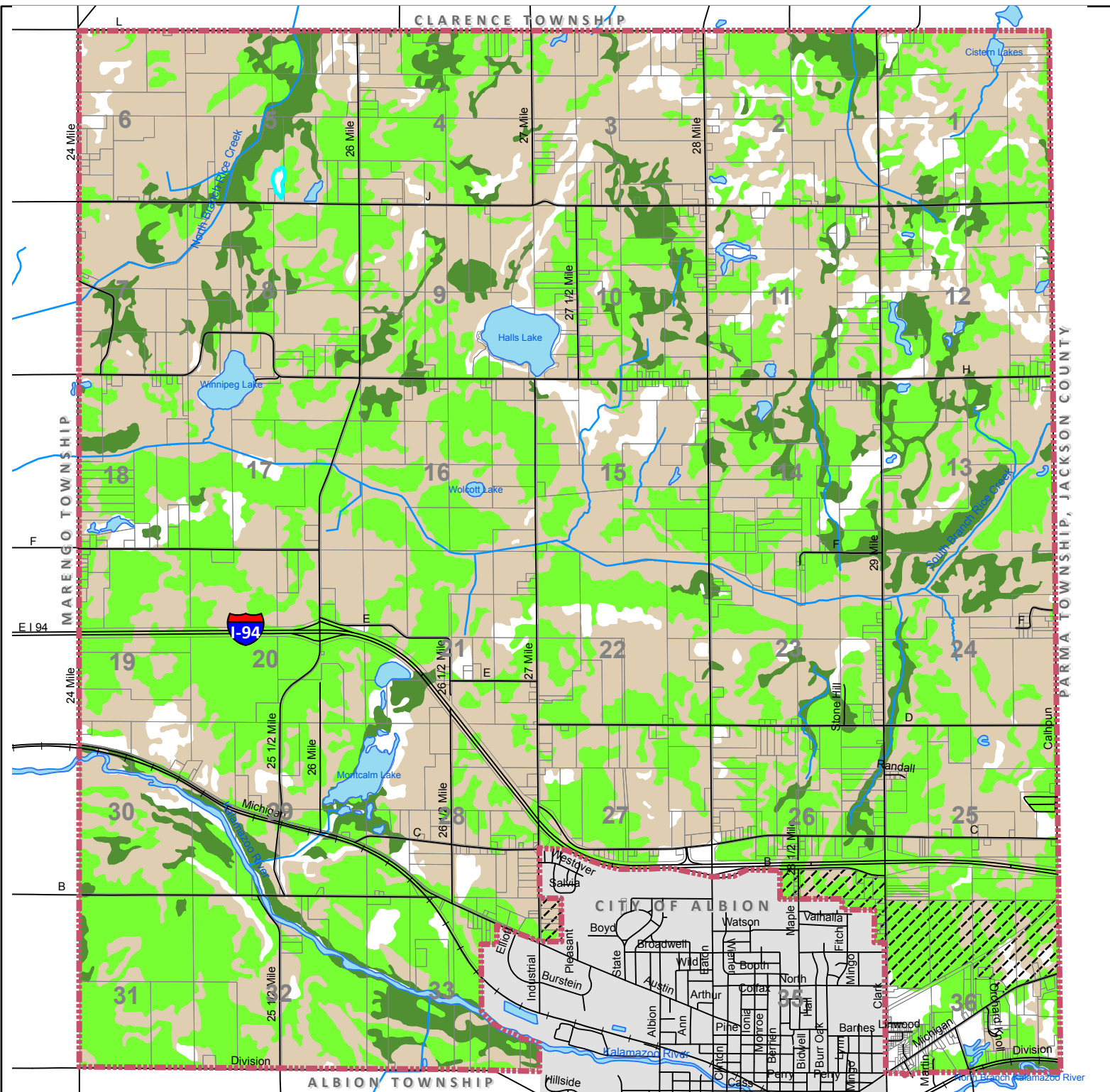
The Township contains significant natural features that provide for an agricultural way of life, as well as features that could create an attractive setting for new residential development. The maps on the following pages illustrate these features, including high quality farmland, general septic suitability for future development, water resources and woodland resources.

### High Quality Farmland

Soils in Sheridan Township provide residents with significant amounts of high quality farmland. The map on the following page shows the extent of “Prime Farmland,” “Prime Farmland if Drained,” and “Farmland of Local Importance,” as identified and categorized by Calhoun County. Agriculture is the main economic driver of the Township, and 12,412 acres (or 63%) of the Township’s land is used for agricultural purposes.

Calhoun County also recognizes the importance of agriculture, and the need to assist in the preservation of these resources. Adopted in 2003, and amended in 2006, Calhoun County has a Farmland Preservation Program that will purchase the development rights offered by a landowner. The purpose of this program is to: “preserve productive farmland in order to maintain a long-term business environment for agriculture in the county, to preserve the rural character and scenic attributes of the county, to enhance important environmental benefits and to maintain the quality of life of county residents.”





## FARMLAND CLASSIFICATION

Sheridan Township  
Calhoun County, Michigan

- Prime Farmland
- Prime Farmland if Drained
- Farmland of Local Importance
- PA 425 Area
- Lakes
- Rivers, Streams & Drains



0 1,000 2,000 3,000 4,000 Feet

Source: Map Data from Calhoun County & Mi Geographic Data Library (MGF v12b & SSURGO)

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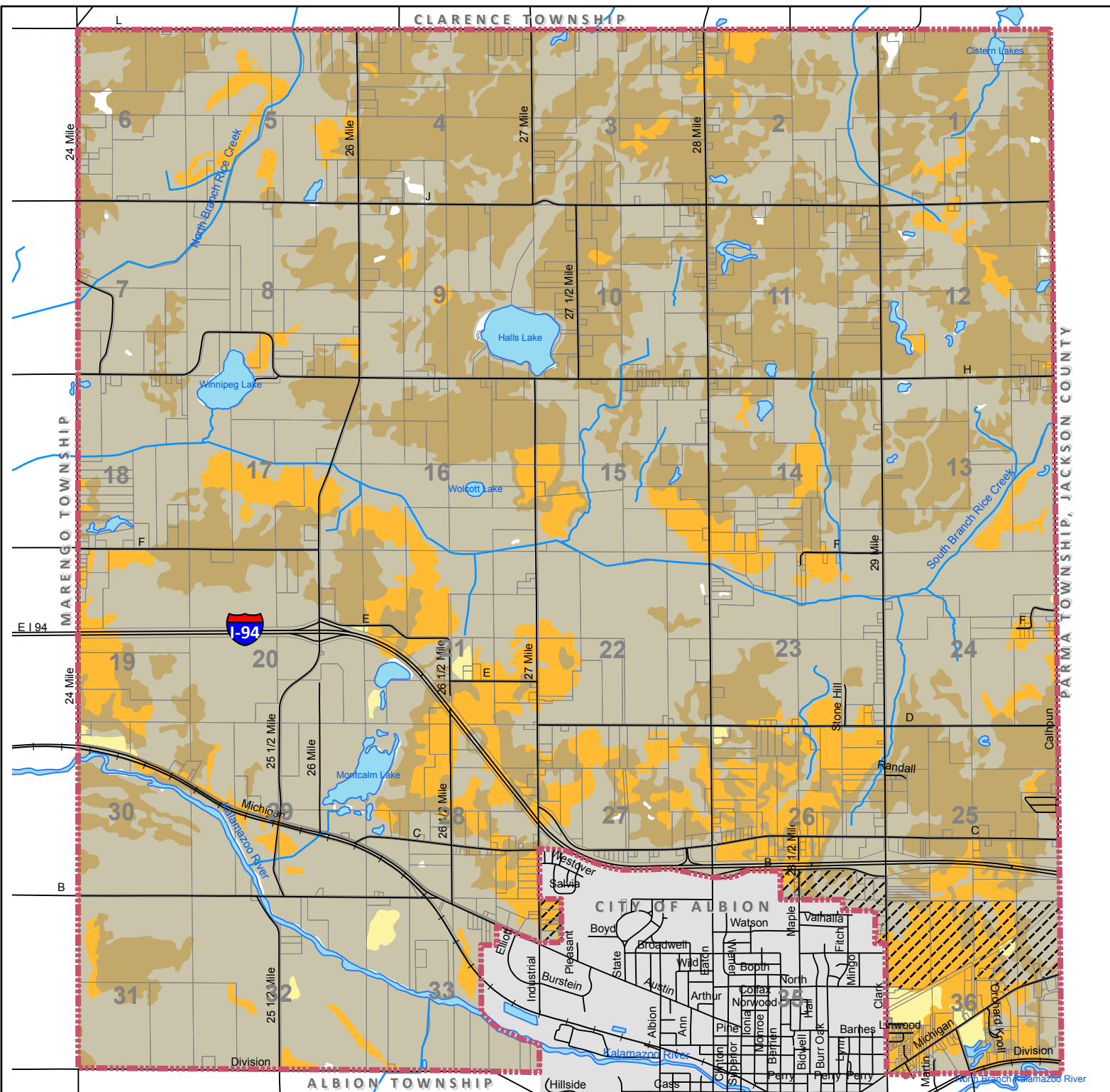
### **Soils**

Sheridan Township is served by a very limited amount of sanitary sewer. Sanitary sewer serves a small area within the Township directly north of Albion, serving several businesses and residences along C Drive North. The balance of the Township relies on individual septic systems for sewage disposal. Given this reliance, soils are an important element in the location of future land uses. Land uses which produce large volumes of sewage are not compatible with septic systems (such as large multi-family residential developments or heavy industrial uses).

To minimize construction costs and risks to the environment, it is desirable for future development to be constructed on sites with suitable soils. Poor soils present problems such as poor foundation stability and septic field malfunctions or failures. The three major soil characteristics considered in the analysis of soil conditions are drainage, foundation stability, and septic suitability.

The map on the following page identifies generalized areas of suitable soils for future septic systems, and therefore residential development. This data is compiled by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in their Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database. The unsuitable areas contain high concentrations of clays and/or organic material. Many of these areas are also inundated by a high water table. The suitable areas are favorable for septic field use and offer good percolation because of high concentrations of sands and loamy sands. Note that this map is a generalized map, and does not imply that local conditions are suitable for septic systems on individual parcels. Also, new engineering techniques also allow septic systems in areas that, in past years, could not accommodate this type of use.





- Slight Limitations
- Moderate Limitations
- Severe Limitations
- No Data Available
- PA 425 Area
- Lakes
- Rivers, Streams & Drains

## SOIL SUITABILITY FOR SEPTIC FIELD

Sheridan Township  
Calhoun County, Michigan



Source: Map Data from Calhoun County &  
Mi Geographic Data Library (MGF v12b & SSURGO)

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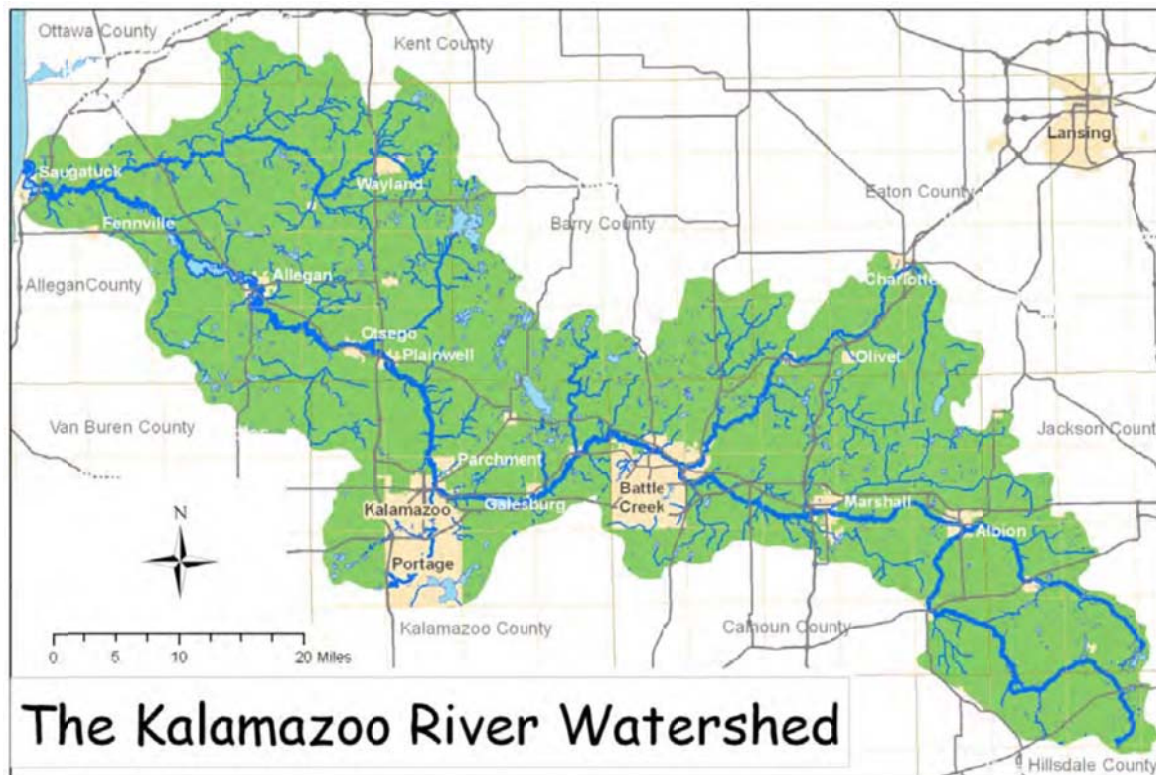
## Water Resources

Water resources include both surface water resources and groundwater resources. Surface waters include three large lakes and numerous smaller lakes throughout the Township. These lakes are part of the larger Kalamazoo River watershed, and Rice Creek subwatershed. Both waterways traverse the Township from the east to the west. The Kalamazoo River drains the southwest portion of the Township while the Rice Creek tributaries drain the remainder of the area. The map below shows the Kalamazoo River Watershed boundaries, and the lands that drain to the Kalamazoo River.

Kalamazoo River Watershed: The Kalamazoo River Watershed Council has drafted a Watershed Management Plan for the Kalamazoo River. Key issues identified by this plan include the following:

- Ground water provides the major water source for residences and communities, industries, and agriculture throughout the watershed. Groundwater is particularly vulnerable to surface pollutants due to high permeability of the soils, and should be protected as a valuable resource.
- Sediments and phosphorus are the two main issues facing the Kalamazoo River. Both come from urban and rural land uses. The Plan recommends encouraging Best Management Practices to minimize these pollutants in the river through practices such as riparian buffers, cover crops and reduced tillage.

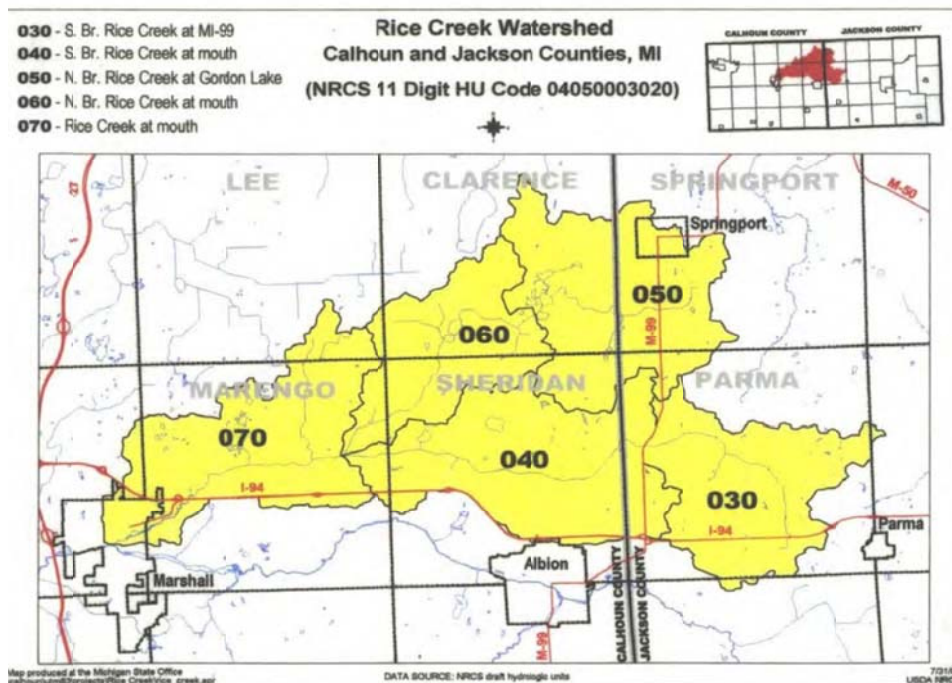
**Figure 5: Kalamazoo River Watershed**



Rice Creek Watershed: The Calhoun County Conservation District, with assistance from numerous land owners and citizens, drafted the Rice Creek Watershed Management Plan in 2003. The map below shows the boundaries of the Rice Creek Watershed, and all the lands that drain to Rice Creek and its various tributaries.

One of the biggest challenges in the future of this watershed will be to establish the delicate balance between the desire for drainage and maintaining aquatic habitat, fish habitat, and the abundant wildlife along the stream corridor. Like the Kalamazoo River, Rice Creek is also impacted by sediments and phosphorus, in addition to other nutrients from livestock manure. Best Management practices such as riparian buffers and manure management are recommended by the Plan.

**Figure 6: Rice Creek Watershed**



Groundwater: As noted above, Sheridan Township relies primarily on private wells for drinking water, as there is limited “City” water available. There is a water and sewer franchise agreement between the City of Albion and the Township which can allow for partial water access. There are also the water and sewer stub lines (utility sleeves) beneath I-94 which can provide future utility connections to the Township. According to an official at the Calhoun County Environmental Health Department, wells are on average between 70 and 90 feet in depth in the Township. Environmental Health reported no unusual problems regarding wells in either water quality or quantity.

Protecting groundwater should be a high priority in Sheridan Township. The most effective means of groundwater protection is prevention and education. A groundwater education program for Township residents and business owners should be established to emphasize the importance of groundwater and to outline methods of protecting this resource.

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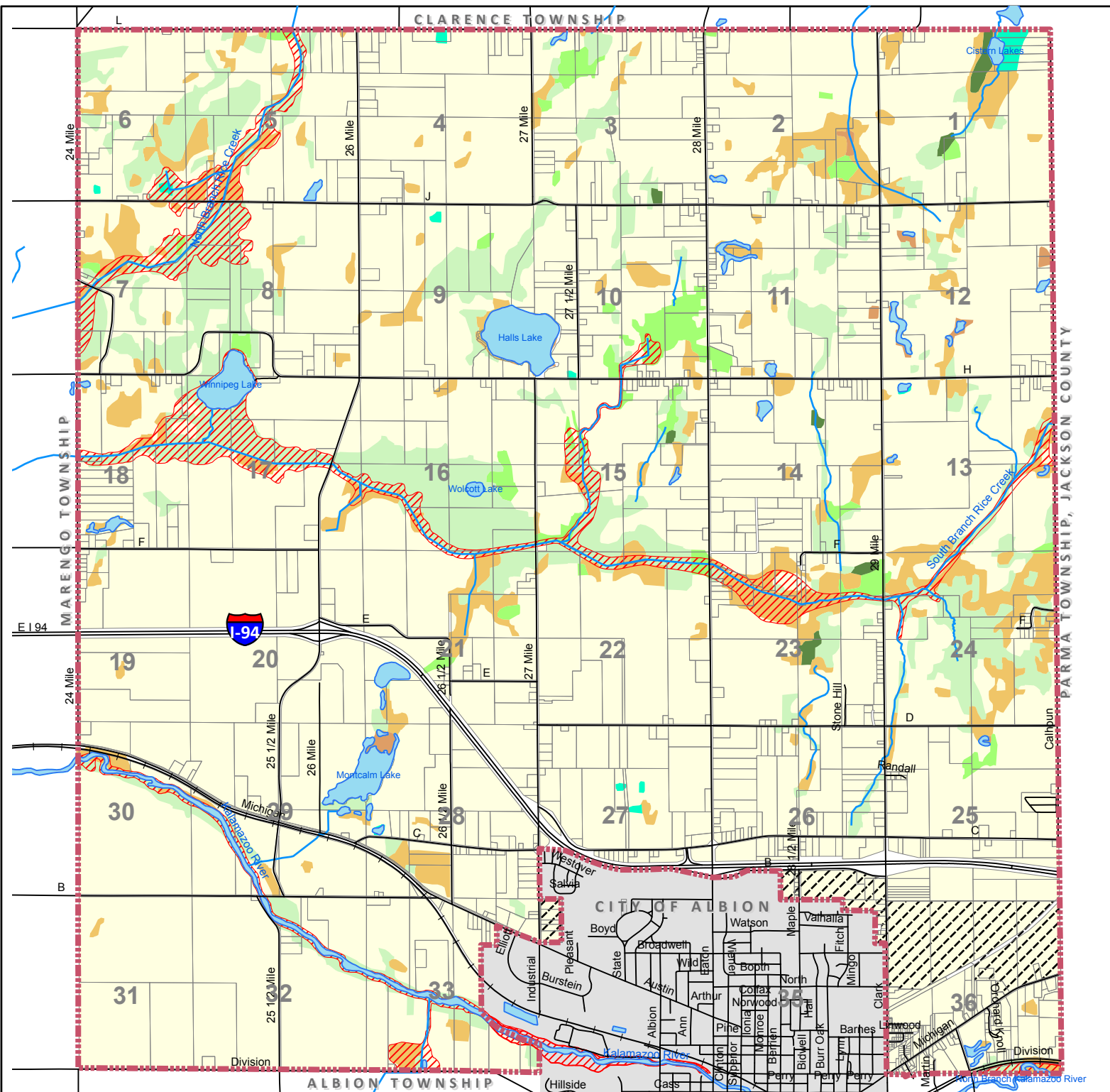
Sites of environmental contamination threaten groundwater supplies. There are a number of contamination sites identified by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) in Sheridan Township. These include: Albion-Sheridan Landfill, Cooper Industries site, Brooks Foundry site, Mid-Michigan Metal Products site, and the City of Albion Street Department garage.

Wetlands and Floodplains: Currently, the Township relies on the Wetlands Protection Act for the regulation and preservation of wetlands. Wetlands Protection, Part 303 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994, PA 451, was developed by the State of Michigan to institute stringent rules for any development within wetland areas. The Act regulates filling, draining, dredging, and construction within any wetland area. Wetland soils have a frequent presence of water saturation. They also contain heavy concentrations of organic material such as peat, marl, and decomposed vegetation. These soils are unsuitable for development, but are very important for supporting wetland vegetation and fish and wildlife habitat. They are also valuable for filtering pollutants out of surface water runoff.

Sheridan Township contains numerous areas of regulated wetlands. These wetlands have been identified, in part, by the MDNR and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Development is discouraged in wetland areas. The wetland maps provided should be used to help guide development decisions; however, actual wetland locations need to be determined as a requirement of the site plan review process. The wetlands included on the map on the following page are wetlands inventoried and included in the Michigan Resource Information System (MIRIS).

Floodplains are located adjacent to both the Kalamazoo River and branches of Rice Creek. Generally, floodplains adjacent to the Kalamazoo River are identified by the National Flood Insurance Program as areas of special flood hazard with no base elevations established. Areas adjacent to the South Branch of Rice Creek, the North Branch of Rice Creek, their tributaries, and around Lake Winnipeg are also designated as areas of special flood hazard. Development within these areas should be discouraged so as to prevent future flood damage to structures.

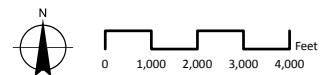




- Wooded Wetland
- Lowland Conifer
- Lowland Hardwood
- Shrub/Scrub Wetland
- Aquatic Bed Wetland
- Emergent Wetland
- Floodplains
- PA 425 Area
- Lakes
- Rivers, Streams & Drains

## WATER RESOURCES

Sheridan Township  
Calhoun County, Michigan



Source: Map Data from Calhoun County, FEMA & Mi Geographic Data Library (MGF v12b & MIRIS)

7-1-13

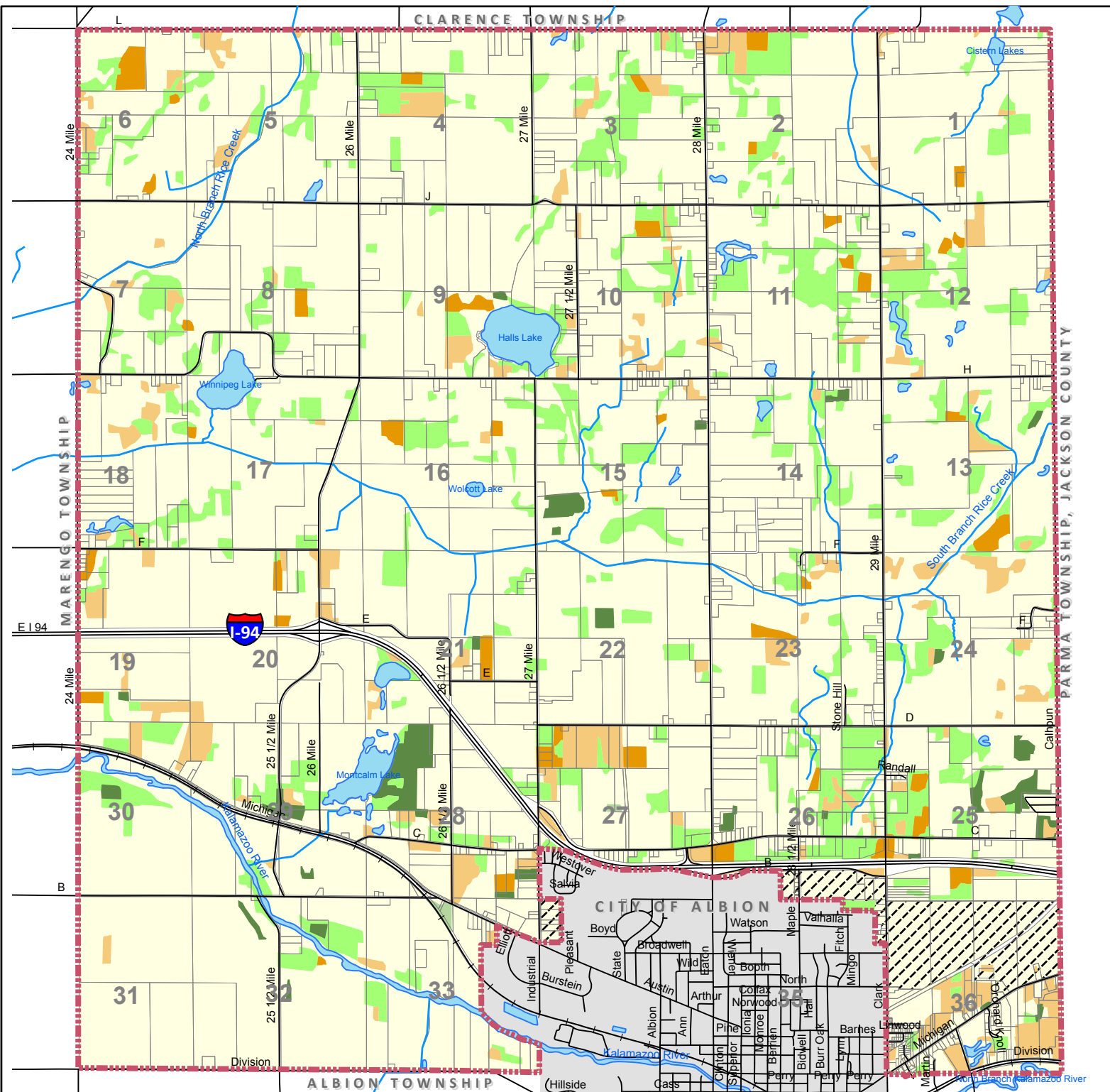
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### **Woodlands**

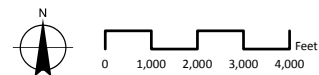
The Township has attractive natural features which make it a desirable rural community. The Township is dominated by large expanses of agricultural lands dotted with forested areas. According to data provided by the Michigan Geographic Data Library, the forested areas consist primarily of lowland and central hardwoods, with smaller areas of pines scattered through the Township. The Kalamazoo River and the North and South branches of Rice Creek are forested in many areas, providing important wildlife habitat, water quality services, and recreational opportunities. Woodlands are shown on the map on the following page, as well as on the preceding Water Resources map.



- Pine
- Central Hardwood
- Orchards, Vineyards & Ornamental
- Shrub Rangeland
- Herbaceous Rangeland
- PA 425 Area
- Lakes
- Rivers, Streams & Drains

## WOODLANDS

Sheridan Township  
Calhoun County, Michigan



Source: Map Data from Calhoun County & Mi Geographic Data Library (MGF v12b & MIRIS)

7-1-13

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Ann Arbor, Michigan



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## Transportation and Utilities

The Michigan Department of Transportation identifies six (6) separate classifications of roads in Sheridan Township: Interstate, non-freeway principal arterials, minor arterial, major collector, minor collector and local streets and roads.

These classifications are taken from the National Functional Classification (NFC) as developed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The FHWA developed this system as a means of classifying all streets, roads and highways according to their function. MDOT describes each as follows:

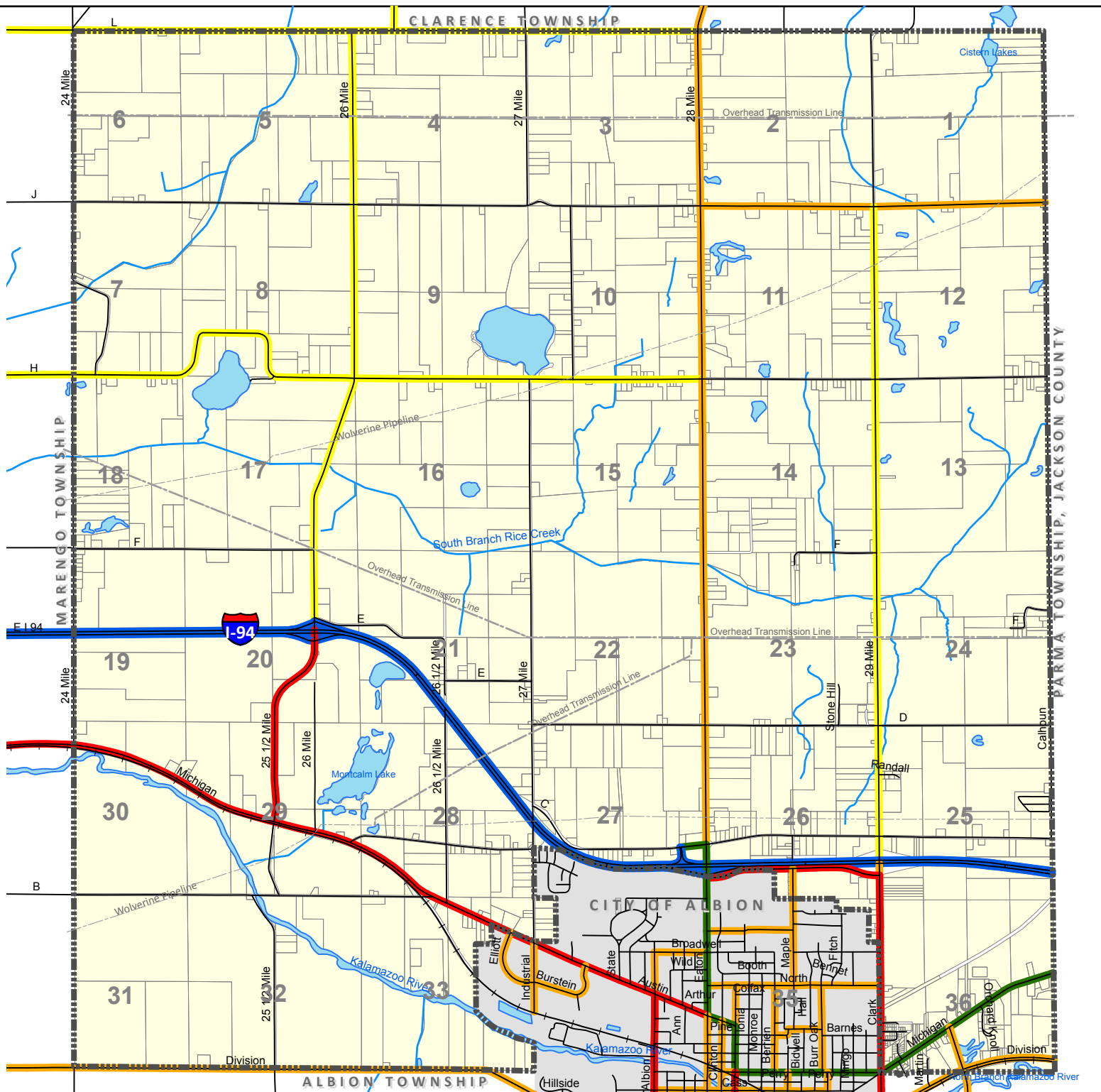
“At the top of the NFC hierarchical system are principal arterials, roads whose primary function is to carry relatively long distance, through-travel movements and/or to service important traffic generators (such as major airports or regional shopping centers). Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials, with the trips carried being of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators. Typically, collectors provide more access to property than do arterials. Collectors also funnel traffic from residential or rural areas to arterials. Local roads have the primary function of providing access to property, such as in residential neighborhoods or rural areas.

The NFC designation of a given road determines whether it is a federal-aid road. Federal-aid roads are eligible for federal aid, either as part of the National Highway System (usually limited to principal arterials) or through the Surface Transportation Program (STP). Federal-aid roads are, collectively: all principal arterials, all minor arterials, all urban collectors and all rural major collectors. If a road has a NFC designation of rural minor collector, it is not included in the definition of federal-aid road, but it does have some limited eligibility for federal funds. If a road is designated as an urban or rural local, then it is not a federal-aid road and it is not eligible for federal aid.”

Michigan Avenue east of the City of Albion is classified as a non-freeway principal arterial; Michigan Avenue west of the City of Albion, and the portion of 26 Mile Road between I-94 and Michigan Avenue are classified as a minor arterial; 26 Mile Road north of the freeway, and 29 Mile Road, L Drive North, and the majority of H Drive North are all classified as minor collectors; 28 Mile and J Drive North are classified as major collectors. These roadways and their classifications are indicated on the map on the following page. C Drive North is not currently designated as a major collector; however, due to heavy traffic demands and volumes, consideration should be made for upgrading the designation of this roadway for future classification.

Interstate 94 traverses Sheridan Township in an east-west direction, providing a direct link to the employment centers of Battle Creek to the west and Jackson to the east. The Township has two interchanges, one at 26 Mile Road (exit 119) and one at 28 Mile Road (exit 121). M-99 is a main business loop into the City of Albion and Sheridan Township. M-99 also offers a freeway intersection at I-94 (exit 124). The map on the following page illustrates the functional classifications for all existing roads in the Township.

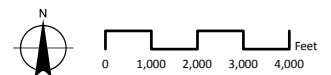




- Interstate
- Minor Arterial
- Other Principal Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Overhead Transmission Line
- Wolverine Pipeline
- Lakes
- Rivers, Streams & Drains

## CIRCULATION & UTILITIES

Sheridan Township  
Calhoun County, Michigan



Source: Map Data from Calhoun County & Mi Geographic Data Library (MGF v12b)

7-12-13

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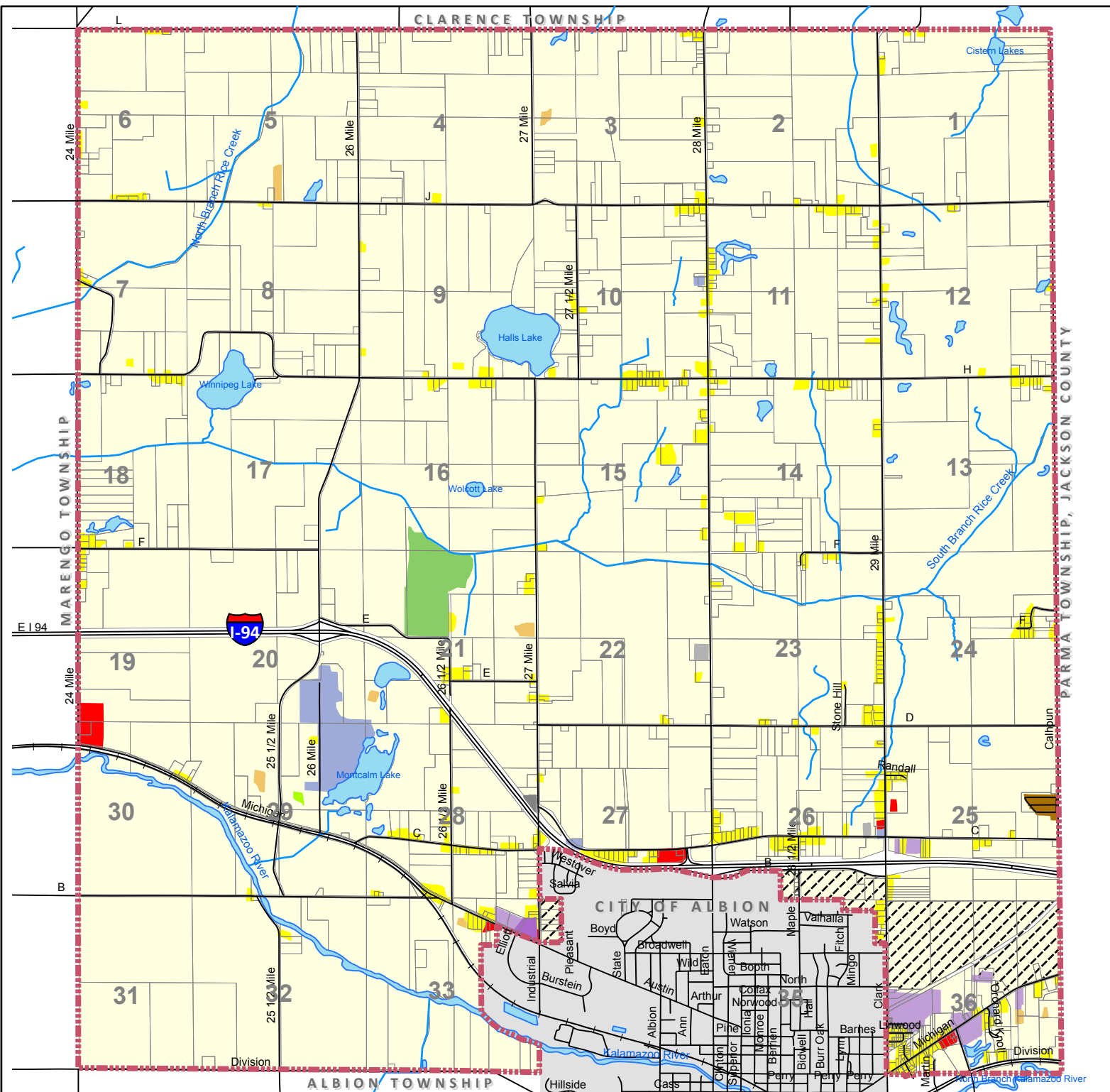
## Existing Land Use

Existing land use for the Township is illustrated on the map on the next page. This map classifies areas within the Township into the following land use categories:

**Table 7: Sheridan Township – Existing Land Uses**

Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total
<b>Open Space</b>	18,093 ac.	92.28%
<b>Single Family / Duplex Residential</b>	515 ac.	2.62%
<b>Mobile Home Park</b>	14 ac.	0.07%
<b>Neighborhood Business</b>	44 ac.	0.22%
<b>Shopping Center</b>	.06 ac.	0%
<b>Institutional</b>	116 ac.	0.60%
<b>Cemeteries</b>	2 ac.	0.01%
<b>Industrial</b>	80 ac.	0.41%
<b>Industrial Park</b>	9 ac.	0.05%
<b>Open Pit</b>	26 ac.	0.13%
<b>Utilities &amp; Waste Disposal</b>	8 ac.	0.04%
<b>Communication Facilities</b>	3 ac.	0%
<b>Road Transportation Facilities</b>	198 ac.	1.02%
<b>Outdoor Recreation</b>	105 ac.	0.53%
<b>PA 425 Area</b>	398 ac.	2.02%
<b>Total Acreage</b>	19,611.06 ac.	100%

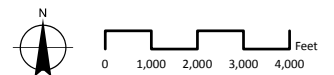
The predominant land use in the Township is open space (18,093 acres), which is mainly made up of agricultural uses including cropland/rotation, permanent pasture, rangeland and orchards/ornamental production (representing 12,412 ac. of the total “Open Space” figure). The next largest land uses are residential, institutional, and road transportation facilities. The most intensive areas of development are near the City of Albion and along the I-94 corridor. Pockets of low density residential development are scattered along the 28 and 29 Mile Road corridors, as well as along C Drive North.



- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Open Space            | Industrial                 |
| Single Family, Duplex | Industrial Park            |
| Mobile Home Park      | Open Pit                   |
| Neighborhood Business | Utilities & Waste Disposal |
| Shopping Center       | Communication Facilities   |
| Institutional         | Outdoor Recreation         |
| Cemeteries            | PA 425 Area                |
|                       | Lakes                      |
|                       | Rivers, Streams & Drains   |

## EXISTING LAND USE

Sheridan Township  
Calhoun County, Michigan



Source: Map Data from Calhoun County & Mi Geographic Data Library (MGF v12b & MIRIS)

7-1-13  
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Ann Arbor, Michigan



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## GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals and policies formulated by the community establish the framework for public and private decision-making. Goals reflect the broadest of human needs and establish the desired end results of the planning process for the health, welfare and safety of the Township residents.

While goals tend to be general in nature, policies set forth a particular approach or position to be taken when resolving a planning issue. Clearly defined statements of policy can go far to minimize arbitrary decisions and substantiate intelligent, objective decisions. Policies broaden the scope of the Master Plan beyond just a series of maps. Goals and policies which are directed to improving the quality, comfort and vitality of our lives and our community should remain valid and provide a consistent standard for the continuing planning process. The following goals and policy statements can provide the basis for wise and consistent public decisions for future development proposals in Sheridan Township. The following general master plan goals were established:

### Goals Summary

The following statements reflect the primary goals of the Township.

#### Residential Goals:

- The Township shall strive to maintain the rural residential character which contributes to making the Township a desirable place to live, work, and play.

This goal will be used to guide the development of the Township in a manner which will create, preserve and enhance the living environment of the existing and future residential areas of the community.

#### Natural Resource Goals:

- The Township shall plan future land uses to be compatible with the natural characteristics and the long-term needs of the community. New development shall be well planned, complement existing development, and conserve limited natural resources.
- The protection of wetlands and woodlands is essential to preserve water quality, stabilize stormwater runoff, recharge groundwater, provide wildlife habitats, and maintain the Township's aesthetic qualities.

#### Agricultural Goals:

- The Township shall foster the agricultural and recreational opportunities within its boundaries which provide an attractive recreational setting for residents, and which is compatible with the needs and comforts of the residents of the Township.
- The Township shall maintain the rural character and preserve the local characteristics that contribute to a viable, stable, agricultural

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industry. It shall be the Township's responsibility to encourage the retention of the best soils and farmsteads in agricultural production and encourage new economic opportunities within the agricultural community.

**Mixed Use (Town Center) Development Goal:**

- The Township shall encourage a concentrated cluster of mixed use development to create a new tax base, provide necessary goods and services, and organize the community around an identifiable core or Town Center.

**Economic Development Goal:**

- The Township shall promote economic growth opportunities and job creation, which are complementary to existing conditions within the Township.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation Goal:**

- The Township will encourage cooperation with the City of Albion and bordering Townships in an effort to promote sustainable economic development.

**Local Governmental Services Goals:**

- The Township shall seek to improve governmental services including roads, utilities, and recreation facilities.
- The Township will offer timely and efficient governmental services, providing quality service to Township residents.

**Recreation/ Walking-Biking Trails/Parks Goals:**

- The Township shall evaluate the benefits of developing a recreation master plan to determine potential recreation improvements within the community and to be eligible for recreation grant funding.
- The Township shall investigate the potential for developing a Township park and/or recreation improvements at local lakes, rivers, and other natural features.
- The Township shall investigate the potential for developing walking-biking trails within the Township, and connecting to adjacent communities such as Albion and/or Marshall.

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## Residential Goals and Policies

- The Township shall strive to maintain the rural residential character which contributes to making the Township a desirable place to live, work, and play. This goal will be used to guide the development of the Township in a manner which will create, preserve and enhance the living environment of the existing and future residential areas of the community.

### **Policies:**

1. Promote the development of a variety of housing types and residential living environments based on a sound balance within the community.
2. Promote quality single-family housing at a low and moderate density which will maintain the rural character of the community.
3. Provide sufficient open space to serve each dwelling unit either through generous yard spaces or common open space areas.
4. Medium and High density residential development should be planned only for areas where it is likely that the City of Albion sewer system can be extended, within the southern portion of the Township.
5. Encourage a high percentage of home ownership and permanent housing types.
6. Restrict multi-family residential districts and mobile home parks to locations which have direct access to major thoroughfares and municipal facilities.
7. Discourage haphazard lot splits which result in long, narrow parcels or parcels with substantial amounts of undeveloped land to the rear.
8. Require that a substantial buffer or landscape planning be provided between residential areas and conflicting land uses such as commercial or industrial facilities.
9. Discourage the development of high density residential projects which will have a negative impact upon schools or existing tax base.
10. Encourage the use of a cluster housing option or planned unit development for parcels which contain natural features such as woodlands or wetlands.
11. Propose low density land uses in areas where natural resource conditions are least capable of supporting development.
12. Propose medium density and high density residential uses in areas which are capable of supporting development with suitable soils, public facilities including roads.
13. Discourage residential development that causes fragmentation of agricultural lands.

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## Natural Resource Goals and Policies

- The Township shall plan future land uses to be compatible with the natural characteristics, and the long-term needs of the community. New development shall be well planned, complement existing development, and conserve limited natural resources.
- The protection of wetlands and woodlands is essential to preserve water quality, stabilize stormwater runoff, recharge groundwater, provide wildlife habitats, and maintain the Township's aesthetic qualities.

### Policies:

1. The Township shall promote efforts to preserve wetlands in their natural state and discourage the dredging or filling of wetland areas.
2. The Township shall promote the enforcement of State regulated wetlands, and apprise property owners or developers of the state regulations regarding control of wetland areas.
3. The Township shall review all proposed development in light of potential impact upon wetlands, woodlands and natural resource areas.
4. To the extent possible development should minimize adverse effects to woodlands, wetlands, lakes, and steep slopes.

## Agricultural Goals and Policies

- The Township shall foster the agricultural and recreational opportunities within its boundaries which provide an attractive recreational setting for residents, and which is compatible with the needs and comforts of the residents of the Township.
- The Township shall maintain the rural character and preserve the local characteristics that contribute to a viable, stable, agricultural industry. It shall be the Township's responsibility to encourage the retention of the best soils and farmsteads in agricultural production and encourage new economic opportunities within the agricultural community.

### Policies:

1. The Township shall identify prime agricultural lands and prime agricultural soils. The presentation of such shall be a top priority.
2. The Township shall discourage non-agricultural development of important farm lands through the Master Land Use Plan and Zoning Map.
3. The Township shall monitor lot splits so as not to fragment viable agriculture lands.



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4. The Township shall promote the enrollment of Public Act 116, Farmland Agreements.
  5. Cluster development and Planned Unit Developments (PUD) shall be considered as a means to help preserve agricultural lands.
  6. Consider agri-tourism uses to help promote continued agricultural uses and opportunities for land owners.

### **Mixed Use (Town Center) Development Goals and Policies**

- The Township shall encourage a concentrated cluster of mixed use development to create a new tax base, provide necessary goods and services, and organize the community around an identifiable core or Town Center.

#### **Policies:**

1. Permit a mixture of uses to create a dynamic environment in which activities may be mutually supportive. The types of uses envisioned may include commercial, office, business support services, industrial, research, and public uses.
2. Promote united development concepts with central design themes and features that provide site amenities affording functional and attractive user environments.

### **Economic Development Goal and Policies**

- The Township shall promote economic growth opportunities and job creation, which are complementary to existing conditions within the Township.

#### **Policies:**

1. Improve the industrial and commercial tax base for Sheridan Township.
2. Encourage industries or commercial enterprises to locate within the Township with emphasis on the I-94 corridor.
3. Streamline governmental permitting to allow economic expansion.
4. Provide adequate zoning, and infrastructure for economic expansion. Consider creation of a Township Industrial Park.
5. Provide job opportunities for local residents through economic expansion.
6. Explore tax abatement programs, job training, and economic start up grants.

- 
7. Investigate improvements to the retail and industrial segments of Sheridan Township for job creation and improved retail services. Explore possibility of creating a Corridor Improvement Authority CIA.
  8. Discourage the development of strip commercial which may occur in an unplanned fashion. Strip commercial may be managed through the following methods:
    - Minimize the number of curb cuts along C Drive North which may result in conflicting turning movements and traffic accidents.
    - Remove unsightly conditions to the amount of continuous hard surface parking areas and signs.
    - Reduce the impairment of land values in commercial areas due to excessive traffic, noise, parking, and lighting glare.
  9. Discourage the introduction of new commercial and industrial development beyond the scope outlined in the Township Master Plan.
  10. Provide a balance and variety of land uses including commercial, office, and industrial uses which will complement existing residential areas and not adversely impact the living environment of the Township.
  11. Encourage clustered (“nodes”) commercial development at selected locations. Cluster Commercial would take the form of either a small shopping center or a group of commercial buildings which share a common access, architectural style and design elements. Nodes would be found in relation to the I-94 corridor.
  12. I-94 and its interchange in Sheridan Township present potential for highway-oriented commercial uses. Uses should be ones which serve the traveling public and/or meet the needs of township residents.
  13. Encourage the re-use of brownfield sites within the Township.
  14. Recognize the importance of existing business and concentrate efforts on business retention and expansion.
  15. Continue to work closely with the City of Albion on economic development projects of mutual benefit.
  16. Encourage the development of C-Drive North between 27 and 30 Mile Roads and along 28 Mile Road from the City limits to D Drive North, with regard to commercial development as sewer and water is available.

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## **Local Government Services Goals and Policies**

- The Township shall seek to improve governmental services including roads, utilities, and recreation facilities.
- The Township will offer timely and efficient governmental services, providing quality service to Township residents.

### **Policies:**

1. Coordinate road improvements with the County Road Commission. Encourage the County to initiate road improvement projects for:
  - Improving D Drive North from 27 Mile to 28 Mile.
  - Improve C Drive North from 27 Mile to 28 Mile.
  - Improve C Drive North from 29 Mile to 30 Mile.
2. Improve Township-wide code enforcement.
3. Address blighted conditions and abandoned vehicles.
4. Explore Township recycling and improve refuse collection.
5. Continue cooperation between adjacent municipalities regarding land use decisions.

## **Recreation/Walking-Biking Trails/Parks Goals and Policies**

- The Township shall evaluate the benefits of developing a recreation master plan to determine potential recreation improvements within the community and to be eligible for recreation grant funding.
- The Township shall investigate the potential for developing a Township park and/or recreation improvements at local lakes, rivers, and other natural features.
- The Township shall investigate the potential for developing walking-biking trails within the Township, and connecting to adjacent communities such as Albion and/or Marshall.

### **Policies:**

1. Evaluate costs and benefits of establishing a recreation committee, commission, or other standing advisory board that would work to plan for and implement recreation amenities, including trails, within the Township.
2. Recreation board and/or temporary sub-committee to evaluate existing recreation opportunities within and adjacent to the Township. Determine recreation gaps and benefits of providing these to residents.

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3. Evaluate costs and benefits of creating a recreation master plan. Based on results, develop recreation master plan to address recreation gaps and apply for recreation grant funding.

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# FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan for Sheridan Township proposes future development patterns in a time frame of the next ten to fifteen years. Specific land use categories are identified and incorporated in graphic form as depicted in the Future Land Use Plan map on the next page. The following section describes the intent of each category in written form.

The Land Use Plan is based on consideration of a number of locational factors. Such factors include:

- Population Projections
- Roadway Access and Adequacy
- Availability of Utilities
- Compatible Uses
- Community Goals and Objectives
- Citizen Opinions
- Existing Land Use
- Existing Zoning

## **Agriculture**

The land use plan identifies agricultural lands in the north, east, and west portions of the Township. These lands incorporate many parcels of large lots containing over 40 or 80 acres. These lands are important in order to preserve the rural character of Sheridan Township as well as to preserve the economic mainstay for the agricultural economy. The designation of agriculture continues the policy of recognizing important farmsteads and the maintenance of established rural agricultural activities.

The designation of these agricultural lands is based upon three main considerations. This includes existence of large agricultural parcels (greater than 40 acres), contractual arrangements under Public Act 116, and farmlands under active farm production.

The densities for these prime agricultural lands are recommended as 1 dwelling unit per 2.5 acres and greater. The large lot size is recommended in order to discourage haphazard lot splits and is also designed to help protect the rural character of the Township. To this end, rampant lot splits along prime road frontage are discouraged. It is further intended that the areas maintain an agricultural characteristic.

Another factor in determining the location of agricultural land uses involves an analysis of lot sizes. Existing lot sizes were analyzed and approximately 90% of lots within the agricultural district were of a size larger than 5 acres.

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Another factor in determining the location of agricultural lands is the distance from the City of Albion and anticipated development. The land use plan identifies potential growth areas within the Township. These are areas along the I-94 corridor, within the perimeter boundaries of the City of Albion and south of Rice Creek. It is likely that most of the growth within the Township will occur in these areas.

The land use plan recommends clustering the growth within these areas while preserving other remote areas as prime agricultural properties. Cluster housing or rural open space development are land use techniques that can help to preserve significant natural features including agricultural lands, woodlands, wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, etc. The Township should explore the use of these techniques to meet this objective. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance may be required.

## **Recreation Conservation**

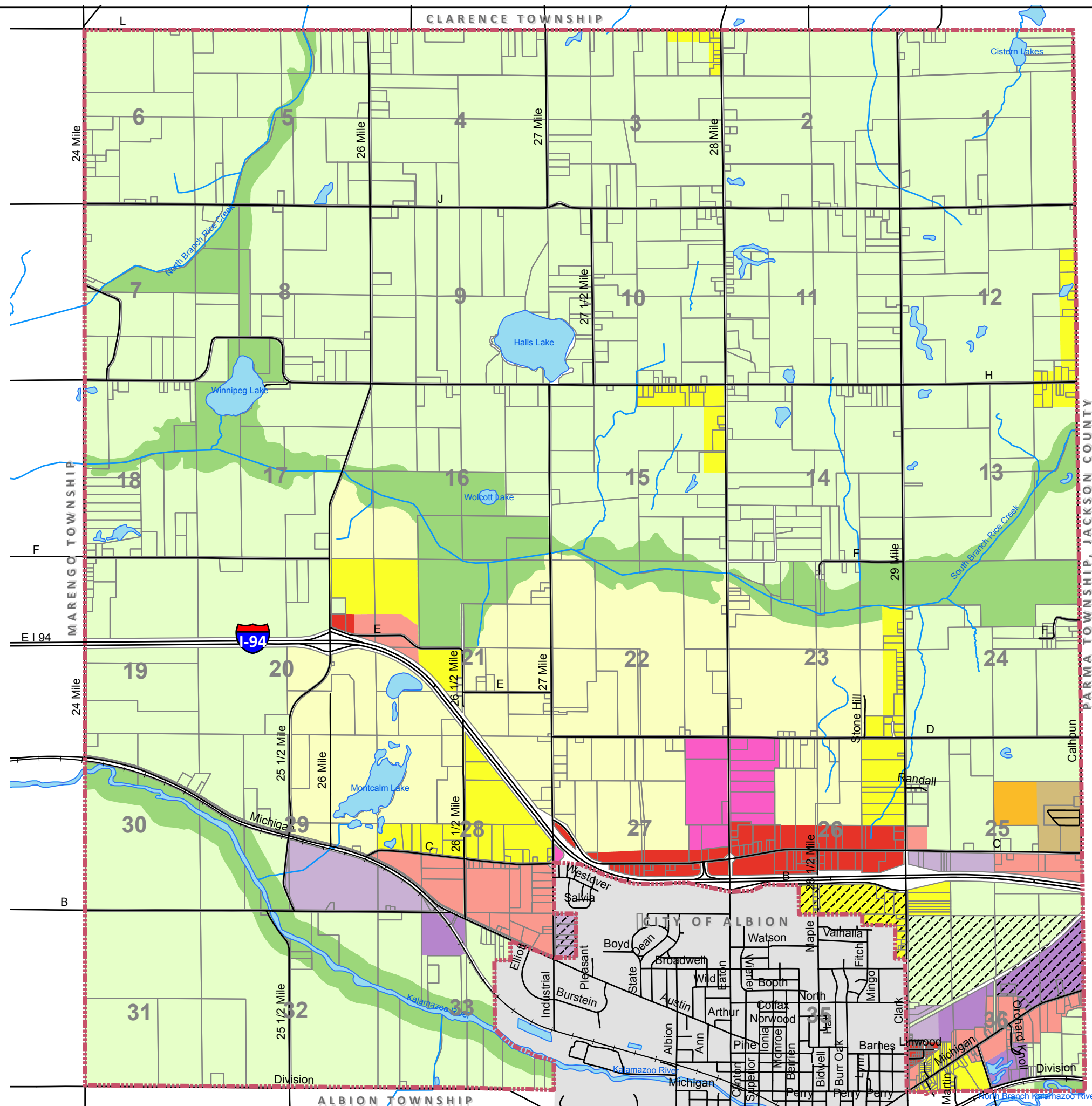
The recreation conservation areas are identified on the land use map and include flood plains, wetlands and major woodlots. The flood plains have been identified by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) and include portions of the Kalamazoo River as well as portions of Rice Creek.

Important wetland areas and woodlots have also been incorporated. Resource conservation areas are intended to preserve important natural features. They are not intended to exclude development entirely but rather to alert Township Officials and potential developers of the fact that these land areas include important resources which must be properly considered prior to development. All other land uses within the resource conservation areas would include agricultural activities and very low density (2.5 acres per dwelling) residential uses which would have a minimal impact on the sensitive land areas.

## **Low Density Residential**

Low density residential areas noted on the land use plan include lot splits and acreage properties ranging in size from 1 acre to 2.5 acres per residential dwelling. While agricultural activities would be allowed within this area, the low density residential uses are primarily for rural residential activities. The intent is to preserve the rural characteristics of the Township and to provide sufficient land area available for low density residential usage.

The majority of the low density residential lands are centered around the proposed mixed-use development area, south of Rice Creek, and along D Drive and 28 Mile Road. 28 Mile Road is a designated County primary roadway, is the main north-south corridor within the Township, and also provides a primary entrance into the City of Albion. The existing land use pattern within this area incorporates a number of 1-acre and 2-acre lots. The area also incorporates areas of land where soils provide adequate sites for on-site septic use.

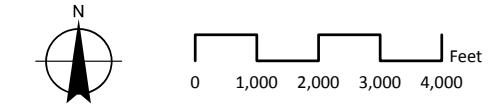


- Agricultural
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Manufactured Home Park
- Local Commercial
- Highway Service
- Mixed Use
- Limited Industrial
- General Industrial
- Recreation/Conservation
- PA 425 Area
- Lakes
- Rivers, Streams & Drains

# FUTURE LAND USE

## Sheridan Township

### Calhoun County, Michigan



Source: Map Data from Calhoun County & Mi Geographic Data Library (MGF v12b)

8-15-13

Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc.  
Ann Arbor, Michigan





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## **Medium Density Residential**

Medium density residential land use incorporates proposed residential uses at an average density of 0.25 acre to 1 acre per residential unit. A maximum of 4 dwelling units per acre would be allowed within this area. The medium density residential areas are located in close proximity to the City of Albion and future sanitary sewers or represent existing development patterns of higher-density residential development. Another section of medium density residential is also proposed near the western City limits of the City of Albion just east of the Starr Commonwealth complex.

## **Multi-Family Residential**

Multi-family uses include multi-family apartments, duplexes, townhouses or condominium style dwelling units. Overall density is not expected to exceed 4 - 9 dwelling units per acre. The residential complexes will be reliant upon the central sanitary sewer collection system or large, on-site septic field disposal areas.

One area of multi-family residential is designated on the land use plan near the eastern limits of the Township near C Drive North. This acreage would abut the existing mobile home park. It is recommended that any future planned multi-family areas be located within close proximity to paved roads and commercial service areas.

## **Mobile Home Park**

The Master Plan proposes the accommodation of one mobile home park site. This site is located on the eastern portion of the Township on Calhoun Road (30 Mile Road) and C Drive North. The site currently accommodates approximately 75 mobile home units. The site was selected because of the existence of an active mobile home community and also because of the close proximity to I-94 and the more intensively developed land uses along the I-94 corridor.

## **Local Commercial**

The City of Albion will remain the primary focal point for commercial land use within the region. It is the main commercial center supporting a large segment of the local economy for the Township of Sheridan.

Local commercial uses are proposed along C Drive North east and west of 28 Mile Road, at the intersection of C Drive North and 29 Mile Road, and along 28 Mile Road north of C Drive North. There is also a small portion of local commercial located near the intersection of 26 Mile Road and E Drive North. The local commercial is intended to primarily serve residents within the immediate area. The proposed land uses would include a mixture of retail, office and service uses.

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## **Highway Service**

Highway service land use designation is intended to provide commercial services for high traffic areas in conjunction with the I-94 corridor. This land use would support commercial uses which are dependent upon high traffic volumes and regional visitors to the Township. Uses could include service stations, restaurants and regional shopping centers. A highway service land use designation also assumes adopted land use policies which will retain the rural integrity of the Township. Strip commercial development is discouraged as well as haphazard driveways and excessive signage. The development of a highway service area must be carefully planned to avoid the pitfalls of typical highway corridor development. Highway service is located primarily along C Drive North, on both sides of the road, in sections 26 and 27. A second small portion is located at the northeast corner of the I-94, 26 Mile Road exit.

## **Mixed Use Town Center**

The mixed use designation is proposed to create a dynamic environment in which a variety of activities that may be mutually supportive can be permitted. The type of uses envisioned will include residential, commercial, office, business support services, research, and public facilities.

In certain instances, high density residential use may be permitted as either infill projects or as a part of a larger development scheme. The mixed-use area primarily encompasses the area east and west of 28 Mile Road between D Drive North, south to that area planned for highway service uses to the south.

It is anticipated that uses within the Mixed Use Town Center area will require municipal sewer and water.

## **Limited Industrial**

Industrial uses will be encouraged in appropriate areas. It is a goal of the Township to promote the creation of new jobs and expand the industrial tax base. To accomplish this goal, two industrial areas are proposed. The first area is located in the southeast portion of the Township. This includes lands north and south of I-94. Much of this area is within the P.A. 425 agreement area. It is anticipated that the PA 425 area will be incorporated within a sanitary sewer district as part of the agreement with the City of Albion. The second area of industrial land use is proposed near the western City limits of the City of Albion. This is located north of Michigan Avenue, south of C Drive North and west of 27 Mile Road. This area incorporates a substantial area for future industrial expansion.

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## **General Industrial**

The general industrial district is intended to encourage the location of clean industries which will have a minimal impact upon surrounding properties. Industries which have the potential for groundwater contamination or which create excessive noise or smoke are discouraged.

One area of general industrial land use is proposed along the east boundary of the City of Albion. This is in accordance with the PA 425 agreement and would allow heavy manufacturing type uses. This area is appropriate for general industrial uses because of its proximity to the I-94 freeway, sanitary sewer, water, and rail.

## **PA 425 Area**

This area shown on the Future Land Use map identifies the land that is subject to a 425 agreement between Sheridan Township and the City of Albion. This agreement was enabled through Michigan's Conditional Land Transfer Act, Public Act 425 of 1984. This act, commonly referred to as P.A.425, was passed by the legislature to promote cooperation among municipalities to facilitate creation of economic development opportunities while eliminating the win-lose dynamics of annexation disputes.

These conditional land transfers are typically called "425 Agreements." 425 Agreements are crafted in the form of an intergovernmental contract. Most frequently, a 425 Agreement is created when a development in a township is proposed that would create an economic benefit for the area, but that needs to be served by a municipal (city or village) sewer and water system. The township "conditionally" transfers the land to the city for a specified period of time (up to 50 years) and the city extends its sewer and water. Both municipal parties "win" because both municipalities continue to receive tax revenue (since both municipalities continue to provide services), while at the same time can have their respective broader interests preserved in a 425 Agreement. Further, one provision of P.A. 425 is that annexation cannot occur in the area covered by the 425 Agreement.

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## ZONING PLAN

To ensure that the land use categories in the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance coordinate, the following table outlines the categories in each, and how they relate:

**Table 8: Land Use Category Comparison**

Land Use Categories	
Master Plan (Future)	Zoning Ordinance
Agricultural	AA: Agricultural
Low Density Residential	AA: Agricultural
Medium Density Residential	RB: Medium Density Residential
Multi-Family Residential	MF: Multi-Family Residential
Manufactured Home Park	MHP: Mobile Home Park
Local Commercial	CS: Community Service Commercial
Highway Service	HS: Highway Service Commercial
Mixed Use	
Limited Industrial	LI: Light Industrial
General Industrial	HI: Heavy Industrial
Recreation/Conservation	OC: Open Space & Water-Body Conservation

The Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance land use categories complement one another well. However, as shown above, the Master Plan land use category of "Mixed Use" does not have a corresponding Zoning category. However, these uses are allowed in other districts. For example, Planned Unit Developments (Mixed Use) is permitted as a special land use in the MF: Multi-Family Residential district.

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# ACTION PLAN

The Master Plan is essentially a statement of goals and objectives designed to accommodate future growth and redevelopment. As stated in the introduction of this document, the Master Plan is the only officially adopted document that sets forth an agenda for the achievement of goals and policies. It helps develop a balance of orderly change in a deliberate and controlled manner that permits controlled growth. As such, it provides the basis upon which zoning and land use decisions are made.

The Plan forms the philosophical basis for the more technical and specific implementation measures. It must be recognized that development and change will occur either with or without planning, and that the Plan will have little effect upon future development unless adequate implementation programs are established. This section identifies actions and programs that will be useful if the Plan is to be followed.

A variety of programs or administrative tools are available to allow the Plan to succeed. These are discussed below.

## Zoning Requirements

Zoning is the development control that has been most closely associated with planning. Originally, zoning was intended to inhibit nuisances and protect property values. However, zoning should also serve additional purposes that include:

- Promote orderly growth in a manner consistent with land use policies and the Master Plan;
- Promote attractiveness in the Township's physical (built) environment by providing variation in lot sizes, architectural features and appropriate land uses;
- Accommodate special, complex or unique uses through mechanisms such as planned unit developments, overlay districts, or special land use permits to allow complementary uses;
- Guide development away from conflicting land uses (i.e., industrial uses adjacent to residential areas); and
- Preserve and protect existing land uses and significant natural features in accordance with the Master Plan.

The Zoning Ordinance and Future Land Use map in themselves should not be considered as the major long range planning policy of the Township. Rather, the Master Plan should be regarded as a statement of planning policy, and zoning should be used to assist in implementing that policy.

## Zoning Adjustments

A preliminary review of the Township's Zoning Ordinance identifies a number of potential deficiencies which should be adjusted. Adjustments include the following:

- Amend the Agricultural Zoning District (AA) from a minimum lot size of 1 acre to a proposed lot size of 2.5 acres. By establishing a minimum lot size of 2.5 acres, the Zoning Ordinance and zoning map would then be consistent with the newly adopted Master Plan. The

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2.5 acre lot size requirement would also be consistent with adopted land use policy regarding a preference towards larger lot sizes in the agricultural areas.

- Create a new low density residential zoning district having a minimum lot size of 1 acre. This new zoning district could be called Low Density Residential (LDR). The area would be set aside for those low density residential uses especially along the 27 and 28 Mile Road corridors north of C Drive North.
- The Master Plan sets aside new areas for highway commercial. This is provided in an effort to encourage economic development in those selected I-94 corridor areas. It is important, however, that these highway commercial areas be properly planned to avoid strip corridor development. Control of driveway curb cuts, signage, and land use must be carefully monitored to avoid unwanted development. The Zoning Ordinance should contain regulations regarding the development of highway commercial by establishing standards for driveways, setbacks, signage, landscaping, etc. A highway commercial overlay zoning district could also be considered for special I-94 interchange areas.
- One of the stated goals of the Township Master Plan is the creation of a Mixed Use (Town Center) Development. The intent of this district is to encourage a concentrated cluster of mixed use developments around an identifiable core or Town Center. The land use plan generally identifies this area north of a C Drive North, South of D Drive North, and on both sides of 28 Mile Road (see land use map).

The goals of this designation can be achieved in part through an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. Either a new zoning designation or an overlay zoning designation could be developed to help implement this goal. An overlay designation would be the recommended approach in this case and would offer the most flexibility.

- The Township's Zoning Ordinance should also be updated to contain the most current land use planning regulations pertaining to accessory buildings, home occupations, site plan review procedures, and junk yard and storage areas. These provisions should be updated to minimize blighted areas within the Township and improve the residential setting.
- Develop open space preservation or rural open space provisions in the Zoning Ordinance. This will help implement the express goals of the Master Plan. Newly adopted State law requires every municipality to adopt such an ordinance.

## **Subdivision Control Regulations**

Another means to control and implement the Master Plan is through a Subdivision Ordinance. This Ordinance should be developed so that current design regulations regarding the construction of roads and utilities are also current and in compliance with the City of Albion standards. Coordination



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with the City of Albion will be necessary to interface with the PA 425 agreement areas.

## **Special Purpose Ordinances and Standards**

Control of land use activities need not be confined to the Zoning Ordinance or Subdivision Ordinance. Special purpose ordinances which should be considered by Sheridan Township, would include the following:

- Wetlands Ordinance
- Woodlands Ordinance
- Private Road Ordinance
- Engineering Design Standards
- Sanitary Sewer Ordinance (in coordination with City of Albion engineering standards)
- Purchase of Development Rights Ordinance.

## **Capital Improvements**

The Planning Enabling Act (PA 33 of 2008, as amended) authorizes municipal master plans and the creation of a Planning Commission. Once a Planning Commission has drafted and adopted a Master Plan, in whole or in part, the Act requires that all public works occurring within the municipality be submitted to the Planning Commission for approval of the project. This would include such items such as sanitary sewers, water lines, road improvements, bridge improvements, etc. These public works and capital improvement projects must be coordinated and reviewed for consistency with the Master Plan. Obviously, these types of improvements will impact future land use development and therefore must be coordinated with the Planning Commission.

Capital improvements involving road projects are listed within the Goals and Policies section of this Master Plan. Capital improvement projects also include the extension of sanitary sewer and water lines into areas within the Township. This would include areas within the PA 425 agreement and other potential development projects such as Starr Commonwealth north of I-94 and the highway service and local commercial areas near C Drive North and 28 Mile Road.

## **Economic Development**

Economic development, industrial growth and an expansion of the Township's tax base are stated goals for Sheridan Township. Successful implementation of economic development will be dependent on a variety of local and county agencies. Their success in attracting new businesses or encouraging existing businesses to expand will be dependent on State and regional economic trends, marketing and locational factors. The Township must explore growth potential from existing local firms, attract new service industry employers, promote highway commercial growth within the I-94 corridor, and capitalize on the PA 425 agreements with the City of Albion.

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The attraction of industries or commercial enterprises to locate within the Township is an ongoing job. The State has set up a web site for potential developers to access available properties. The Albion Economic Development Corporation has been given the job of making additions/deletions from the site. The Albion EDC informs the Township when a developer is interested in a Township site. Specification sheets have been prepared and are updated regularly. A presentation folder was designed to include materials, specification sheets, zoning information, photos, etc., for easy distribution to clients.

## **Plan Education**

Citizen involvement and support will be necessary as the Plan is implemented. Local officials should constantly strive to develop procedures that make citizens more aware of the planning and zoning processes and the day-to-day decision making which affects implementation of the Plan. A continuous program of discussion, education, and participation will be extremely important as the Township moves toward realization of the goals and policies contained within the Master Plan.

## **Plan Updates**

The Plan should not become a static document. The Township Planning Commission should attempt to re-evaluate and update portions of it on a periodic basis. In accordance with Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008, as amended, the Township is required to review the Plan every five years to determine whether to commence the procedure to amend or adopt a new Plan. However, the Planning Commission should set goals for the review of various sections of this Plan on a yearly basis.

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## *Appendix A – Visioning Workshop Results*

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## PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

The Township hosted a public Visioning Session on April 11, 2013, where participants were asked to provide their future vision for the community

The meeting began with a presentation about the master planning process and also provided information about Sheridan Township, demographic trends, and current land uses.

Meeting participants were then asked to consider the following land use topics listed, and provide their ideas about how they see the Township developing over the next 10-20 years:

1. Agriculture
2. Residential Land Use
3. Economic Growth / Jobs
4. Intergovernmental Cooperation
5. Transportation
6. Natural Resources

This information was consolidated and used to formulate the Master Plan's goals and policies.

The meeting materials, including a fact sheet, presentation, and meeting results, are provided on the following pages.

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