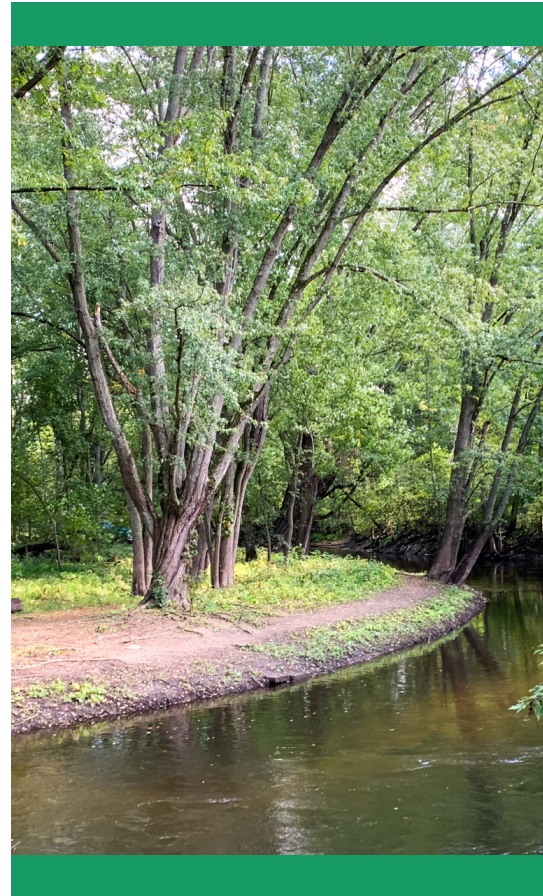
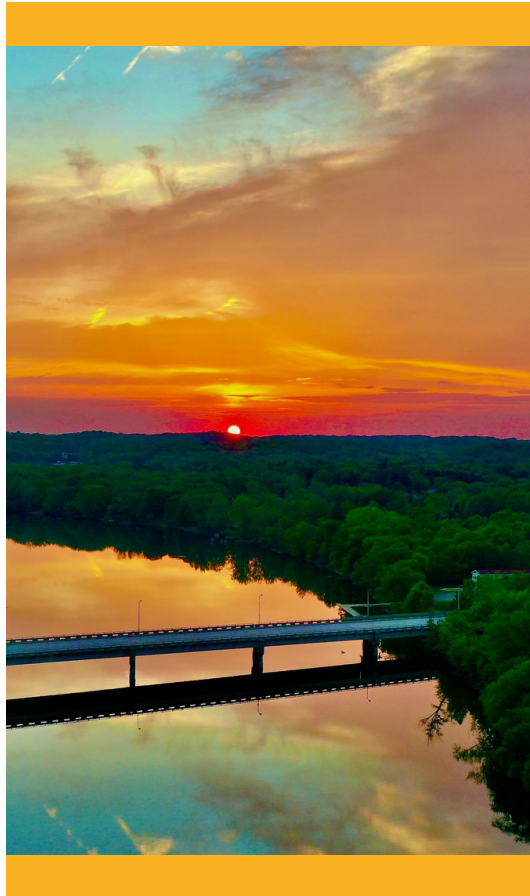


# PLAINFIELD CHARTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## STATEMENT OF THANKS:

This plan was developed through dedication and coordination with Township Staff, the Planning Commission, and Plainfield's residents. Their invaluable insights have collectively shaped a Master Plan that reflects the diverse needs and aspirations of our community, fostering a sustainable and inclusive vision for the future.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plainfield Charter Township: 36.73 square miles of land made up of abundant natural features, four thriving school districts, multiple commercial corridors ripe with potential, and 34,202 residents. Living in Plainfield allows residents to nestle into the comfort of the countryside while being a short drive from the vibrant downtown district of Grand Rapids. It allows for balance; this is a defining feature of the Township and one that guides the ideas presented within this plan.

Since the Master Plan's last update in 2017, the Township has continued to change and evolve with the times, responding to economic trends and environmental challenges. This Master Plan revision addresses those issues, specifically focusing on the following:



### 1. Natural Features Identity:

The Township has largely transitioned from its agricultural identity; it is now a suburban environment rich with natural features.



### 2. Utility Expansion:

Public water has been extended into the Northwest quadrant of the Township in response to the PFAS crisis, providing opportunities for a variety of residential development types.



### 3. Housing Diversity:

There is a demand for housing of different sizes and typologies due to changing demographics and lifestyles.



### 4. Commercial Transformation:

With the adoption of the Reimagine Plainfield Corridor Improvement Plan, the Township is well-positioned to transform its once strip-mall style commercial areas into vibrant mixed-use nodes.

The following vision statement and guiding themes echo throughout this plan and were thoughtfully developed with the Plainfield Charter Township Planning Commission. They recognize the Township for its rich suburban character as it exists today and encourage vibrancy for the future. They set the tone and capture the intent of this document, ensuring that future decisions made for the Township align with the sentiments established during this process.

## VISION

Plainfield Township will be a well - balanced, connected, and vibrant community that is consistently resilient to changing conditions and intentionally accounts for the needs of its natural environment and population as a whole.

## GUIDING THEMES



### GROW

Plainfield Township will retain and attract households, businesses, and jobs. The Township will facilitate development that allows for a variety of different housing types and land uses in a manner that optimizes infrastructure and natural features.

### ADAPT

Successful communities continuously evolve. Plainfield Township will intentionally develop the Township to be nimble and resilient as it enters the ever-changing future.

### THRIVE

As responsible stewards of the community, Plainfield Township will maintain quality of life, grow the tax base to provide essential services, and create a place the children want to come back to. The Township will build people-oriented places that are walkable, lively, and flourishing.

### BALANCE

Plainfield Township will seek to align seemingly competing priorities such as integrating the natural and built environments, accommodating all modes of transportation, and meeting residents' diverse housing needs.

## GOALS

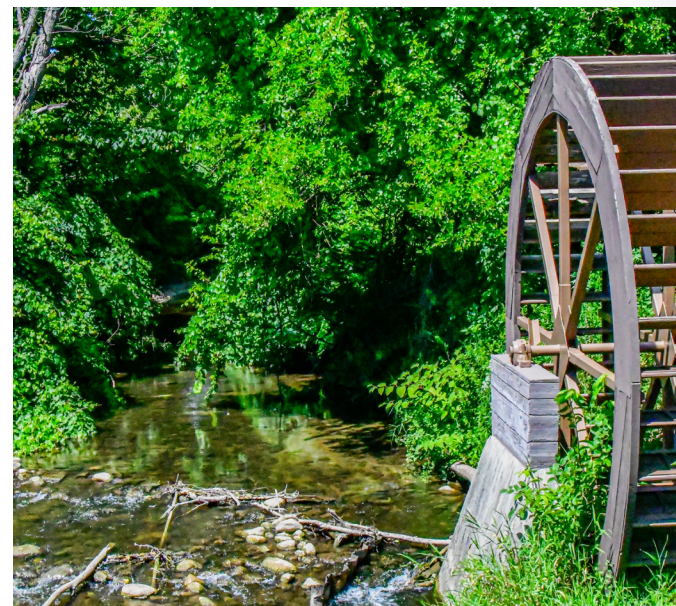
The following goals provide an overview of the topic areas featured in this plan and are further outlined in Chapter 3.

### Natural Features and Recreation

The Grand River, Rogue River, lakes and streams in the Township will be characterized by clean and cold water, natural riparian areas, and vital habitats for wildlife. These areas will include lands protected from development and areas that have been carefully developed to preserve and protect features.

The rich natural features of the community will serve as a sustainable resource for environmentally appropriate human recreation and use. Their preservation and enjoyment will be of the highest priority and opportunities to connect people to nature should be thoughtfully utilized whenever possible.

Public parks, trails, recreational facilities and private recreation lands will be conveniently located, safe and well-maintained to serve existing and emerging neighborhoods.



Mill Creek, Plainfield Charter Township



### Infrastructure: Water, Sewer, and Transportation

The land use plans of the Township will guide and direct the rational and sequential expansions of the public water and wastewater systems in the Township.

All modes of travel will proceed through and within the Township safely and at reasonable speeds along safe and attractive roadways dispersed through the community.

A network of safe and convenient pedestrian and non-motorized pathways, sidewalks and trails will connect neighborhoods to commercial and employment centers, public transit, health care and educational institutions, and the community's many natural features and recreational opportunities.

## Housing and Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods will be designed to accommodate people of all ages and households of all types.

Neighborhood design will encourage and preserve character and sense of community, while preventing sprawl.

### Development

The Township will take an active role to implement the goals outlined in the Master Plan.

Commercial developments in the Township will be diverse, responsible, economically viable, vibrant, and adaptive to ensure their longevity and ability to serve the community and provide meaningful job opportunities.

The Township will develop in a form and manner that meets the needs of the generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.



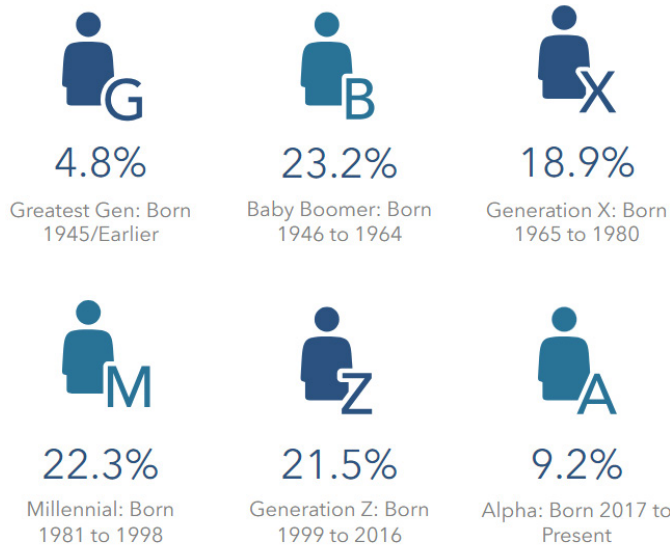
# PLAINFIELD FACTS

## 34,202 people call Plainfield home.

This is an increase of approximately 2,583 people since 2010; 8.35%. The Township's population is anticipated to grow to nearly 36,548 people by 2030 and to 39,562 people by 2040.

## The median age of Plainfield's residents is 42.1 years old.

Median age in the Township has gradually increased from 38.5 years old in 2010. However, as displayed below, it is evident that there are many age ranges living within the Township.

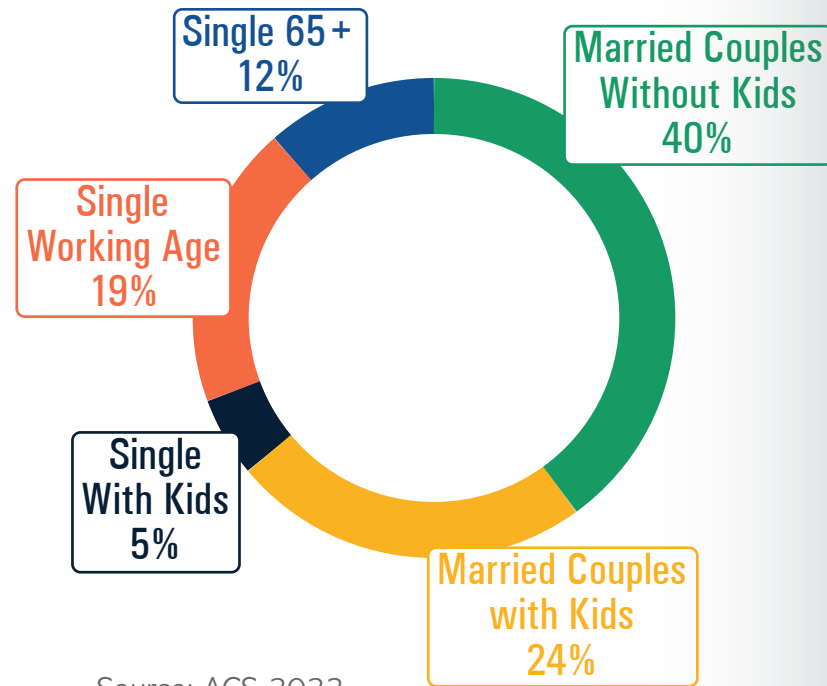


Source: ESRI Community Analyst, 2024

## The average household size in Plainfield is 2.53 persons per household.

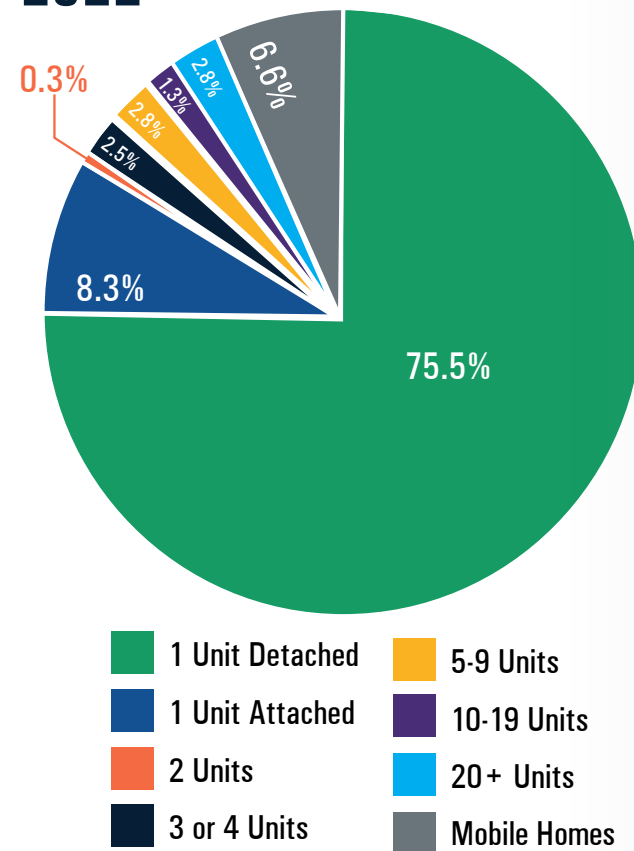
As of 2024, there are 2.53 persons per household. This is a drop from 2.56 persons per household in 2020 and 2.73 persons per household in 2010.

# Plainfield Housing Composition, 2022



Source: ACS 2022

# Plainfield Housing Stock, 2022



Source: ACS 2022

# PLAINFIELD EXTENTS



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

The fundamental purpose of a Master Plan is to enable a community to establish a direction for physical development, capital investment, and growth. Therefore, a Master Plan represents a foundation policy statement about what a community is, what its residents value, and what those residents and businesses hope the community will become. The Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) specifically gives the Township Planning Commission and the Township Board the authority to prepare and adopt a plan. Once prepared, adopted, and maintained, this Plan will serve as an advisory guide for the physical conservation of certain areas and for the development of other areas; enhancing the balance that the Township embodies.

## 2024 UPDATE

In 2008, the Township adopted a new Township Master Plan. The 2017 Master Plan update was later adopted to serve as a supplement to, rather than a replacement of, the 2008 Master Plan. Many of the policies from the 2008 Master Plan and 2017 Supplement remain valid.

As expected, significant changes have continued to occur since the adoption of the 2017 Master Plan supplement. Therefore, this 2024 update serves as a comprehensive reflection of the 2008 and 2017 work that has been done as well as the changes that have occurred within the community, as stated within the executive summary. In addition, the MPEA, as amended, requires that a community review its Master Plan every five years. Therefore, this update has been developed according to the requirements of the MPEA.

This Plan represents the culmination of many years of work by numerous residents and local officials. It reflects the community's deep concern for the natural beauty of its surroundings and a strong commitment to retain and strengthen local quality of life. The plan outlines the preferred future for the community and a comprehensive plan to realize it. The Plan is appropriately general, recognizing that planning for the future is a delicate blend of art and science and that sufficient flexibility will be needed to respond to the challenges of the future.

The Master Plan  
Informs...

The Zoning  
Ordinance which  
Regulates...

Growth and  
Development  
in Plainfield!

# 2. COMMUNITY PROFILE AND PLAN CONSIDERATIONS

In creating a Master Plan that uniquely fits the community it serves, a holistic understanding of its people, places, and systems must be developed. To assess the existing conditions of the Township and better understand the reasons for the changes the community has experienced, the context of the Township has been evaluated using data, trends, and close attention to detail. The categories that are expanded upon within this Chapter include the following:

- Natural Features
- Infrastructure and Utilities
- Existing Land Use and Development
- People of Plainfield
- Housing in Plainfield
- Transformation of the Plainfield Avenue Corridor

## NATURAL FEATURES

The Township has largely transitioned from its agricultural identity; it is now a suburban environment rich with natural features.

The Township is characterized by rolling hills, rivers, and creeks mixed with new and old human development. The Township is and always has been shaped by its natural features and thoughtful consideration of these features should play a crucial role in its development. Understanding and respecting the local environment can lead to sustainable and harmonious land uses that benefit both the community and the ecosystem. Alongside the preservation of natural resources is the enjoyment of them. The residents of the Township should feel connected to the waterways and wooded areas Plainfield has to offer and thoughtful interactions between them should be at the forefront of planning efforts.

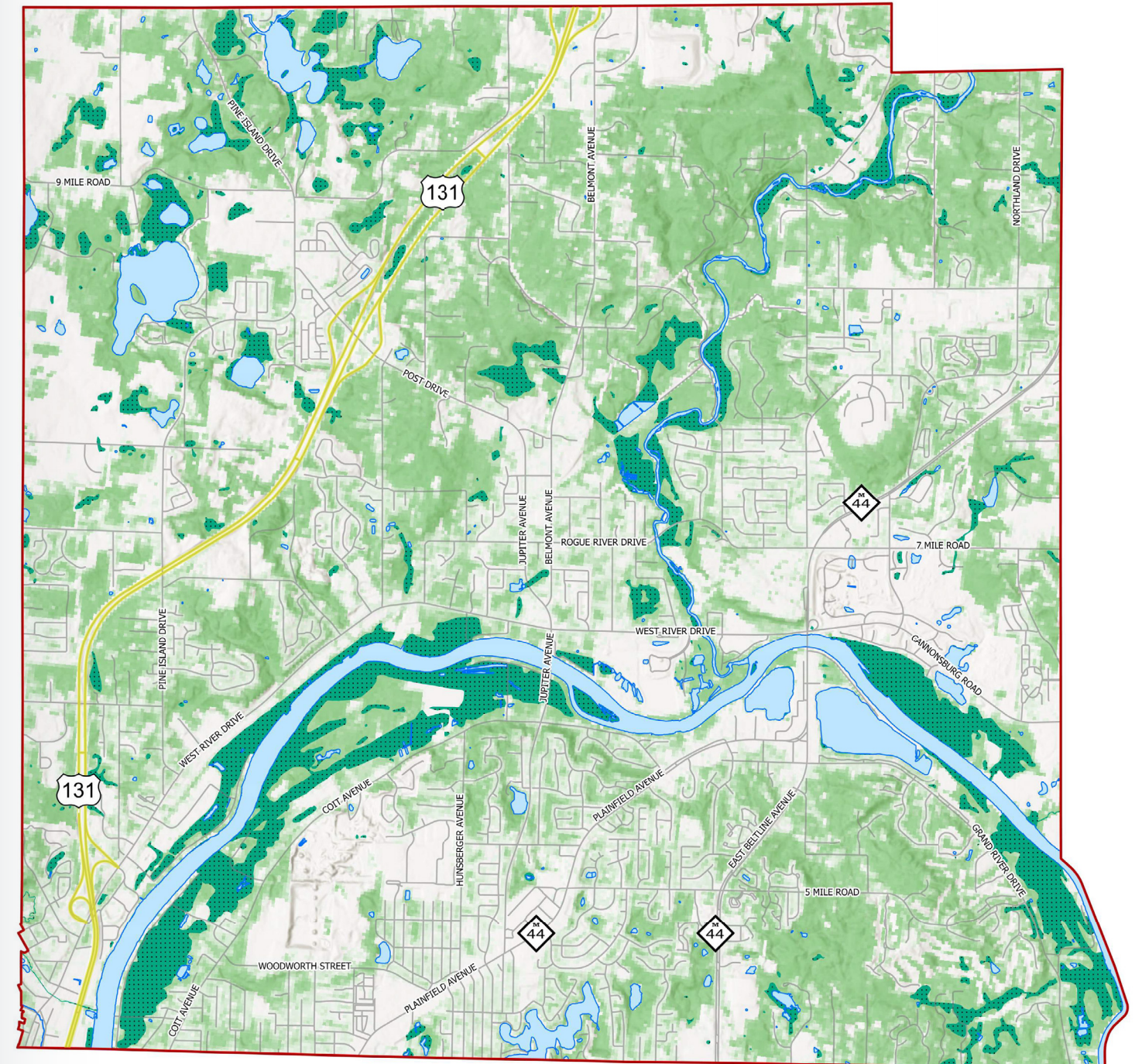


Pond in Plainfield Charter Township

# WHAT ARE THE NATURAL FEATURES OF THE TOWNSHIP?

The following Natural Features Map shows the water features, wetlands, and tree canopy cover of the Township.

# NATURAL FEATURES



Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA



### LEGEND

- Water Features
- Wetlands
- Tree Canopy Cover

Data Source: ESRI ArcGIS Hub, 2023. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2023, Kent County GIS, 2023. Progressive AE, 2023.

## WATER FEATURES

### Lakes

The Township has nine lakes totaling about 425 acres of surface area providing excellent recreational and residential opportunities. The Township's lakes play an important role in defining the community's character, enhancing both the natural environment and the lifestyle available for residents. Little Pine Island Lake is the largest of the lakes in the Township and much of the eastern shoreline of the lake is developed with seasonal and year-round residences. Versluis Lake, the second largest of the lakes, is a man-made lake that evolved from a sand and gravel operation and was donated by Leonard Versluis for the purpose of a park. The lake has a seasonal fluctuation of approximately seven feet as it rises and falls with the Grand River. The remaining lakes, in order from largest to smallest, include Dean Lake, Freska Lake, Clear Bottom Lake, Mead Lake, Scott Lake, Mirror Lake, and Duck Lake.



Dean Lake, Plainfield Charter Township

### Rivers

The Grand River and one of its main tributaries, the Rogue River, are predominating natural features in the Township. Both riverfronts offer excellent recreational opportunities, residential locations, and wildlife habitats. Preservation of these features is essential and thoughtful connections between the rivers and the community should be used to emphasize their enjoyment and appreciation.

### Rogue River

In July of 1973, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources completed the Rogue River Natural River Plan, through which the Kent County portion of the Rogue River has been designated a Country Scenic River, which is a river in an agricultural setting with narrow bands of woods or pastoral borders. The Rogue River Natural River Plan, which was updated in March of 2002, includes a description of the study area, existing uses, future use and potential problems, effective laws, and an overall strategy to implement the plan. The primary purpose of the [Rogue River Natural River Plan](#) is to maintain the integrity of the stream through appropriate land management along the river and its tributaries. The Natural River designation has resulted in a natural rivers overlay in the Plainfield Township Zoning Ordinance for the Rogue River and Barkley Creek. (Chapter 25 of the Zoning Ordinance)

**The Kent County portion of the Rogue River has been designated a Country Scenic River.**



Rogue River, Plainfield Charter Township

### Grand River

The City of Grand Rapids and Grand River region have formed their identity largely around this important river and its presence in the Township has been no less a significant element in the community's development. The Grand River is Michigan's longest river winding 256 miles from Jackson to Grand Haven spanning 19 counties with 12 major tributaries. The Grand River bends from the southeast corner of the Township, through the center of the Township, and then down to the southwest corner into the City of Grand Rapids.



Grand Rogue Park, Plainfield Charter Township

Plainfield Master Plan

Much of the Grand River within the Township is bordered by large riverine wetland areas. These wetlands and the broad floodplain areas have helped to limit intense development in close proximity to much of the riverbank within the Township. Opportunities to connect the community to the beauty of the Grand River should be identified and thoughtfully utilized whenever possible.



Grand Isle Park Rotary Disc Golf Course, Plainfield Charter Township

### Wetlands

Wetlands are an essential thread of the fabric of water bodies in the Township; without wetlands, water quality decreases, areas are prone to flash flooding, and habitat for specialized plants and animals is reduced. The wetlands in the Township are found primarily along the Grand River and Rogue River corridors and in the vicinity of the lakes in the northwest portion of the community.

## TREE CANOPY COVER

Much of the Township features trees of varying canopies. This is part of the reason why the trails that wind through the community are so valuable. The neighborhoods and natural areas that are nestled amongst the trees provide for the country feel that so many residents treasure; the impact that trees can have on the wellbeing of a community, both physically and mentally, cannot be overstated. Tree preservation and increase are of utmost priority; this is especially relevant as the Township is currently working to incorporate trees within the commercial areas of the Township.



Veteran's Park, Plainfield Charter Township

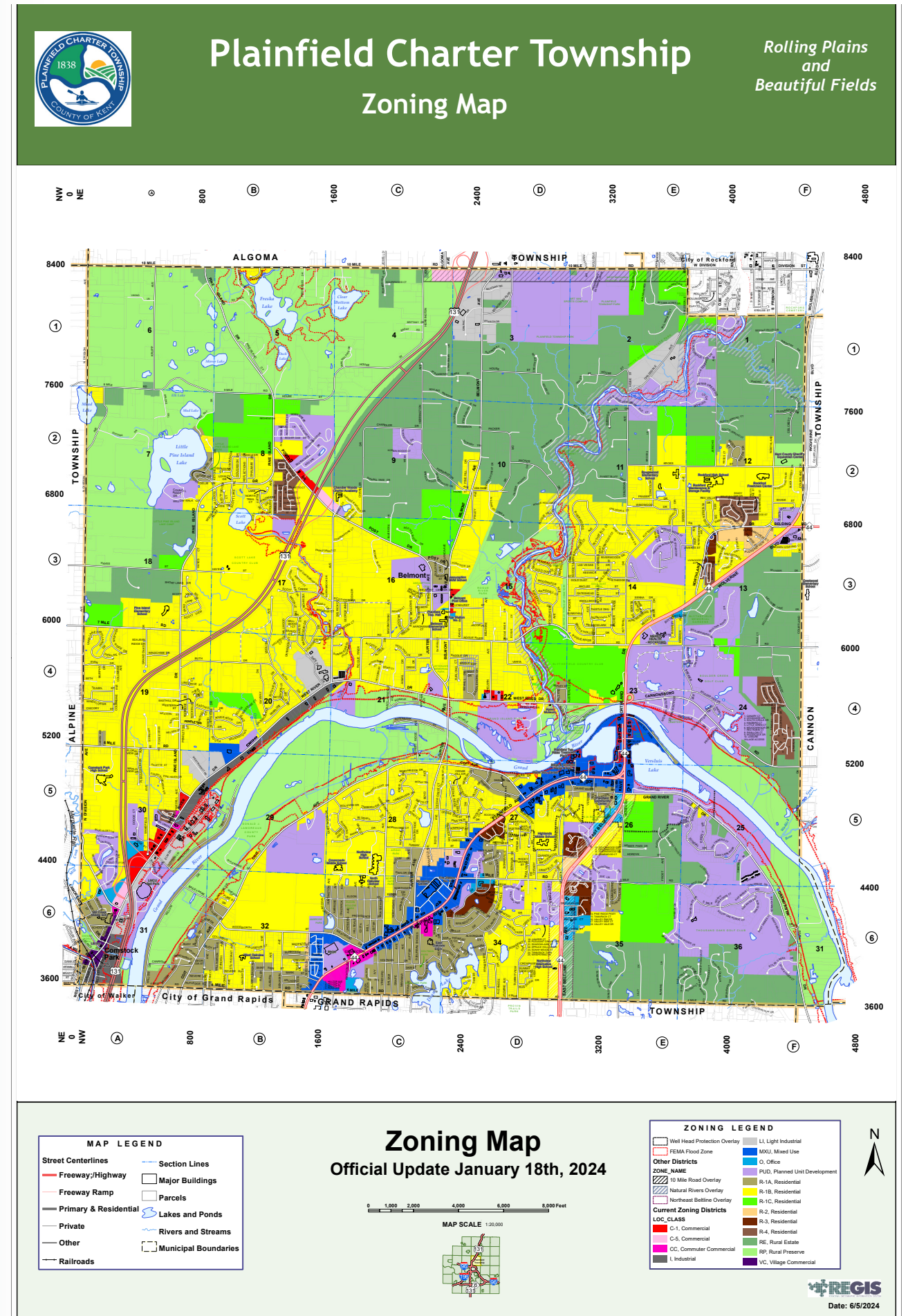
## FLOODPLAINS

The Township has several high-risk locations where flooding can occur, especially riverine flooding on the Grand and Rogue Rivers. Major flooding events have occurred at least three times in the past 10 years, in 2013, 2017 and 2018. The 2013 and 2018 events had the highest recorded historical crests.

To help protect the residents and the environment from the risks of flooding, the Township Board adopted a Hazard Mitigation Plan in early 2024. The purpose of the plan is to protect the health, safety, and economic interests of residents and businesses by reducing the potential for loss of life, destruction of property, and economic loss. The ideal result is full integration of flood hazard mitigation concepts into day-to-day governmental, business functions and management practices.

The following are the goals from the Mitigation Plan:

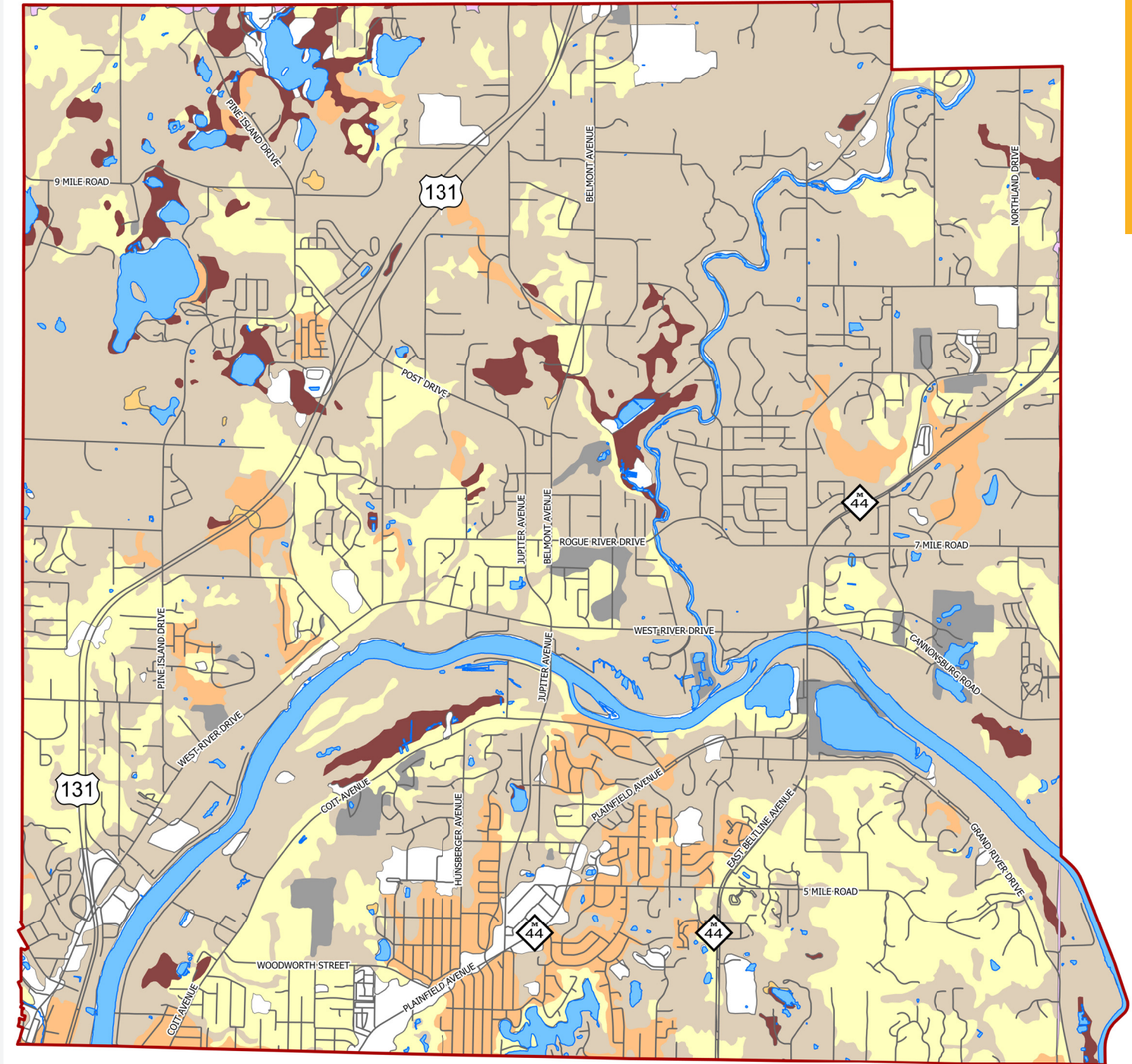
1. Safety: Provide for the safety of community residents and visitors from the effects of flood hazards that pose a risk to residents. Efforts will focus on providing improved warning, response, and recovery time.
2. Mitigation: Enhance township residents' quality of life through mitigation activities designed to minimize damage to public and private property, or to public services.
3. Prevention/Regulation: Maintain and enhance township residents' quality of life by managing potential impacts of flood hazards through planning, zoning, permitting, and other regulatory measures related to land use, development, ecology, and infrastructure.
4. Education: Maintain a positive community image / enhance community confidence through educational activities and public outreach.



# SOILS

Soil composition is an important aspect of planning for many reasons. Some soils are not well suited for individual septic systems and therefore may threaten groundwater or surface water quality due to lack of proper filtration. The composition of soils determines stability and suitability for structural development. Agricultural productivity is also determined by the fertility of the soils. With the soils of the Township classified, areas can be appropriately designated for suitable use.

# SOIL TYPES



**LEGEND**

Complex	Loam
Sandy	Muck
Gravel	No Data

Data Source: ESRI ArcGIS Hub, 2023. Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2023, Kent County GIS, 2023. Progressive AE, 2023.

progressive | ae



## IMPLICATIONS

The use of rolling fields for agricultural production has gradually shifted; Plainfield Township is no longer a place that relies on its natural features for agricultural purposes. Natural features must now be viewed through a holistic lens that emphasizes the health and enjoyment of the features themselves as well as the residents of the Township. The Parks and Open Space and Country Residential Future Land Use categories (found in Chapter 4) are the champions of the Township's natural feature preservation efforts, but higher intensity categories such as the Mixed-Use Areas also play a conservation role. Concentrating development in specific areas preserves the natural areas of the Township. Placing a focus on creating developments that align with and provide connection to the Township's natural features plays a critical role in the creation of a vibrant natural features-based community.

The natural features of the Township – including its lakes, rivers and streams, steep slopes, wetlands, and woodlands – will continue to serve as a magnet for residential development. While the pace and scale of growth is expected to be manageable, there is a risk that without effective planning, this growth will begin to degrade the very resources that draw it. It is for this reason that action must be taken now; preservation is proactive and by determining the best places for development to be concentrated, impact to natural areas will be limited.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

Public utilities are an important element in a growth management plan given that utility systems enable greater opportunities for a variety of different lot sizes in select locations. Through the delivery of reliable and plentiful water and the safe and efficient disposal of wastewater, communities can achieve an improved quality of life for local residents. Finally, and most importantly, public utility systems give the community the ability to provide effective stewardship over such important natural features as groundwater and surface water features.

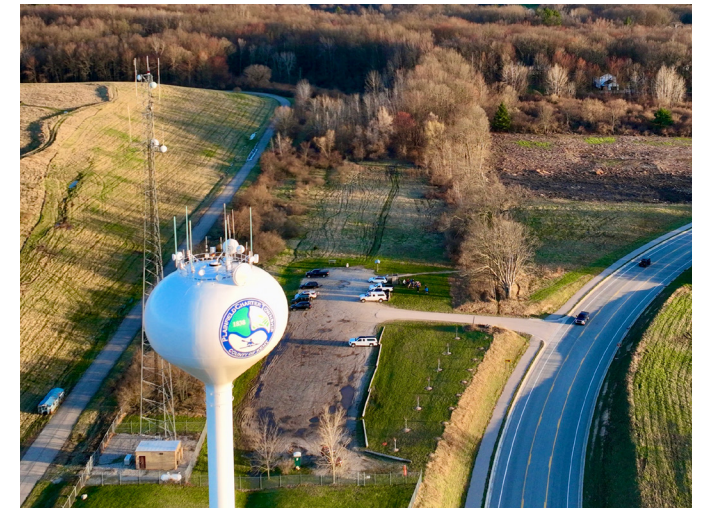
## WATER

A safe, secure, plentiful and reliable source of water is vital to a community's growth and development. Potable water for drinking, sanitation, fire suppression, and industrial uses are the hallmarks of modern society. The Township operates a Type I municipal water system, which meets the needs of a significant share of the community's residents and businesses. The water supplied by the municipal system is supplemented by private wells and some community systems. The map provided on page 28 illustrates the locations of key watermain installations in the Township. Groundwater is the source of water for the Plainfield Township Water System. The Township maintains three well fields located in the vicinity of Plainfield Avenue and Northland Drive, south of the Grand River. The Water Treatment Plant, which is located on Woodfield Court near the Grand River, provides filtration, lime softening, and chlorine disinfection.

The total pumping and treatment capacity of the Plant is about 16 million gallons per day (MGD). The estimated storage capacity of the regional aquifer equates to about 20 MGD, but a detailed hydro geological analysis of the aquifer capacity has not been conducted. Total system production is responsive to demand, which is greatest during the summer months when lawn sprinkling needs are greatest. The system averages about 3 MGD during the winter months and the peak delivery rate of about 10.4 MGD occurred during a recent summer month. During the summer of 2004, pumping averaged about 8 MGD.

North of the Grand River and west of Northland Drive, much of the developed area of the Township is served. According to Township officials, all elevation zones of the Township are able to be served when demand warrants and extensions are approved. Township policy related to watermain extensions generally requires that the system will not be extended at public expense except as may be needed to improve the water system. This may include looping to enhance water pressure and reliability or replacement of undersized mains. Typically watermain extensions are financed either through voted special assessments or through developer agreements subject to pay-back provisions as additional users connect.

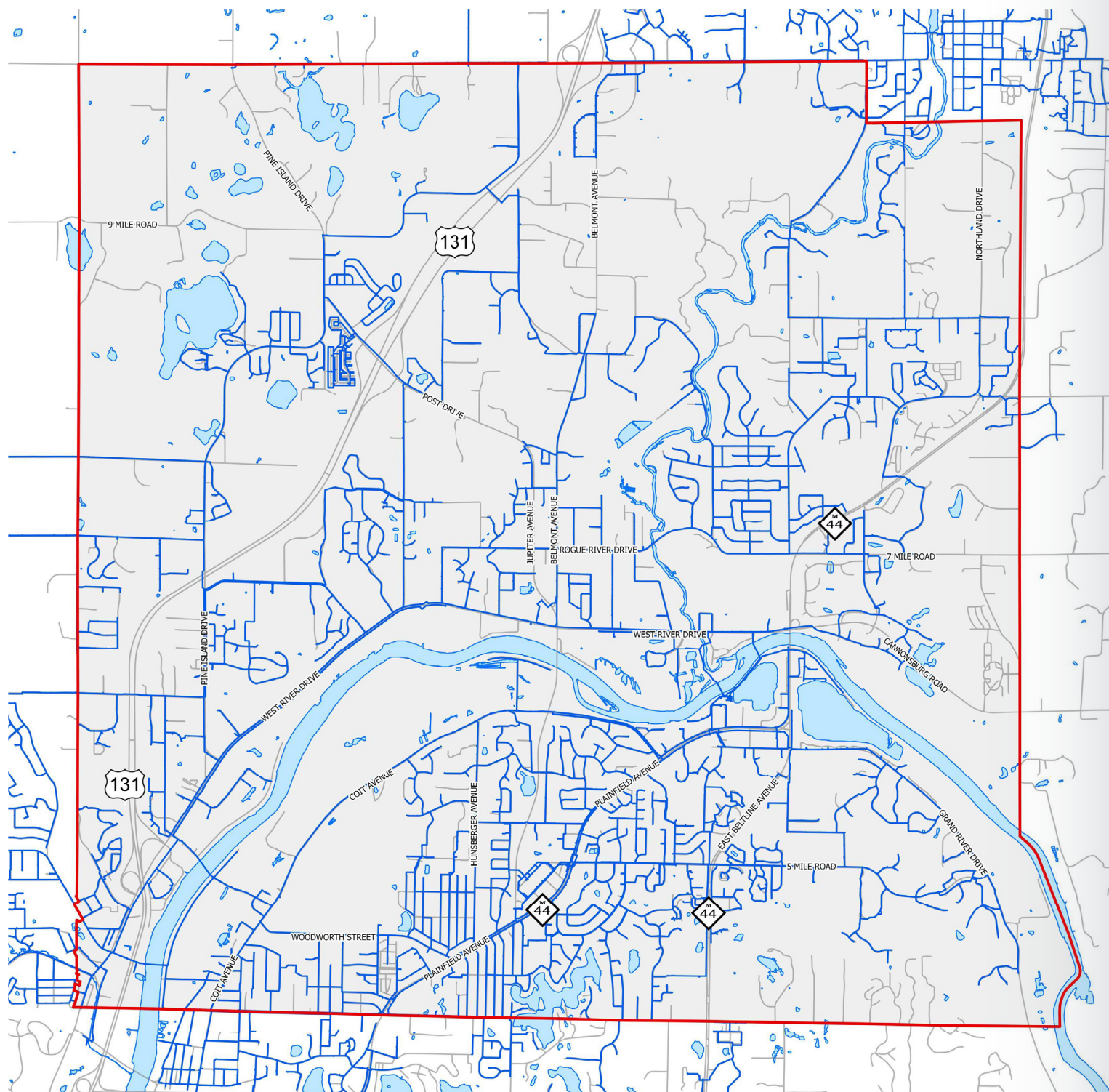
Public water is being extended into the Northwest quadrant of the Township, providing opportunities for a variety of lot sizes where they once were not feasible. This is a chance to concentrate additional development in the areas that will now be served by public water in an effort to preserve surrounding, less-developed areas. The below map illustrates the extents of the public water infrastructure within the Township limits. The water system serves surrounding communities as well.



Water Tower, Plainfield Charter Township

Why has public water infrastructure been extended? This is in part due to the Per- and Polyfluorinated Substances (PFAS) contamination that occurred in the area in 2017. PFAS is a family of long-lasting chemicals that Rockford-based Wolverine Worldwide used to waterproof its boots and shoes, which has been linked to certain types of cancers and other health issues. In 2020, a \$69.5 million settlement was finalized between the state of Michigan, Plainfield Charter Township, Algoma Township, and Wolverine Worldwide for the shoemaker to pay the cost of extending municipal water service to nearly 1,000 homeowners whose private drinking wells were contaminated by PFAS, along with all hookup and connection fees. Plainfield's municipal water continues to provide safe drinking water for its customers as indicated in its latest [annual water quality report](#). In response, the Township invested in a Granular Activated Carbon (GAC). The Township's investment in GAC for its water system continues to be highly effective in eliminating PFAS, bacteria, pathogens, and other undesirable elements from drinking water. This filtration uses activated carbon material that absorbs contaminants from the water as they filter through. For further information regarding the settlement, please access the Township website at [https://www.plainfieldmi.org/information\\_about/pfas\\_settlement](https://www.plainfieldmi.org/information_about/pfas_settlement).

# WATER INFRASTRUCTURE



Data Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2023, Kent County GIS, 2023, GVMC REGIS, 2023, Progressive AE, 2023.

N  
  
**LEGEND**  
  
 Water Mains

progressive | ae



# SEWER

Currently, wastewater from Plainfield Township is treated at PARCC-Side Clean Water Plant (CWP) that is located on Coit Avenue in Plainfield Township. PARCC-Side CWP, was completed and went into service on October 29, 2008. It is a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment facility. The plant is owned and operated by the North Kent Sewer Authority, which is owned together by Plainfield, Alpine, Cannon, Courtland Townships, and the City of Rockford.

The wastewater collection system (sewer system) in Plainfield Township is owned by the Township and maintained by North Kent Sewer Authority under an agreement with the Township. The Township system serves most of the densely developed portions of the Township, including virtually all the area south of the Grand River and west of the Beltline.

In addition, most of the area north of the Grand River is where the significant population is served. New extensions of the collection system are typically undertaken in response to resident requests stemming from failing septic tank drain fields. These are implemented by the Township with the costs supported by special assessment. In addition, a developer may seek to extend the wastewater collection system to enable a new development to occur. This type of development is financed by the developer with pay-back arrangements as adjoining property owners are connected. Properties adjoining such an extension are given ten years to make that connection. The Township normally does not extend the sewer system to provide service at system expense.

Plainfield Township is responsible for 15 lift stations and approximately 147 miles of sanitary sewer collection system. About 2,000 homes are served by individual on-site septic tank/drain field systems. In some areas of the

Township relatively dense development has occurred over the years served by on-site well and septic systems.

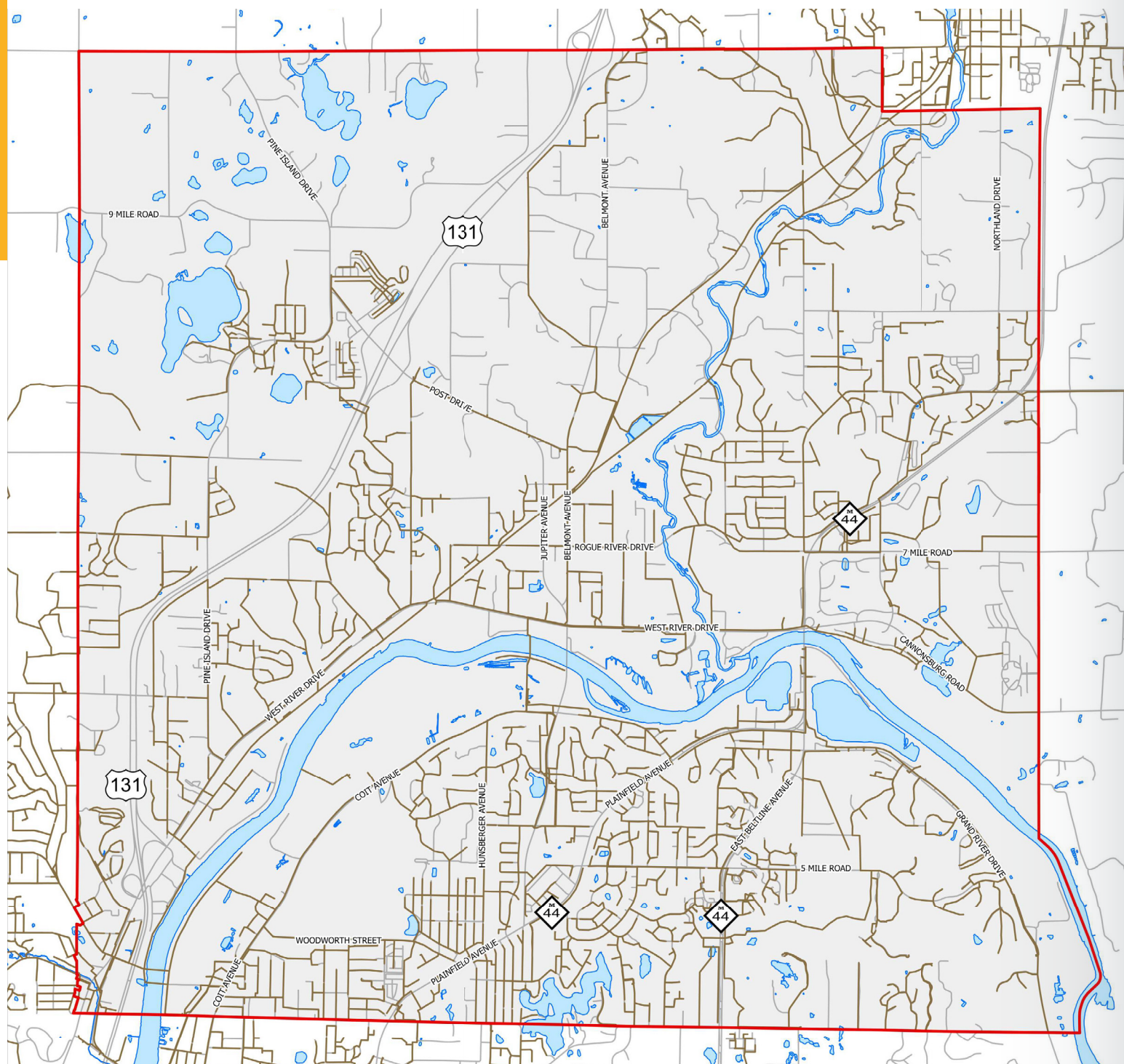
As these systems begin to fail, most of the developed portions of the Township are either served with public wastewater or reasonably able to be served. The public wastewater collection system has been and will continue to be extended. However, the Township's engineer reports that in lower density developments, the Kent County Health Department has worked cooperatively with landowners to approve locations for private drain fields.



PARCC-Side Clean Water Plant, Plainfield Charter Township

- There are over 6.2 million membrane fibers in the PARCC Side treatment process. Laid end-to-end they would stretch 7,600 miles; that's almost 1/3 of the Earth's circumference.
- The total volume of all tanks at PARCC Side is 7,250,000 gallons, the volume of 11 Olympic-sized swimming pools.
- The smallest pump at PARCC Side can pump five gallons/hour; the largest pump can pump over 1,000,000 gallons/hour.
- Building PARCC Side required 13,500 cubic yards of concrete, weighing over 54,000,000 lbs. The concrete is reinforced with 3,300,000 lbs. of steel.

# SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE



Data Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2023, Kent County GIS, 2023, GVMC REGIS, 2023, Progressive AE, 2023.



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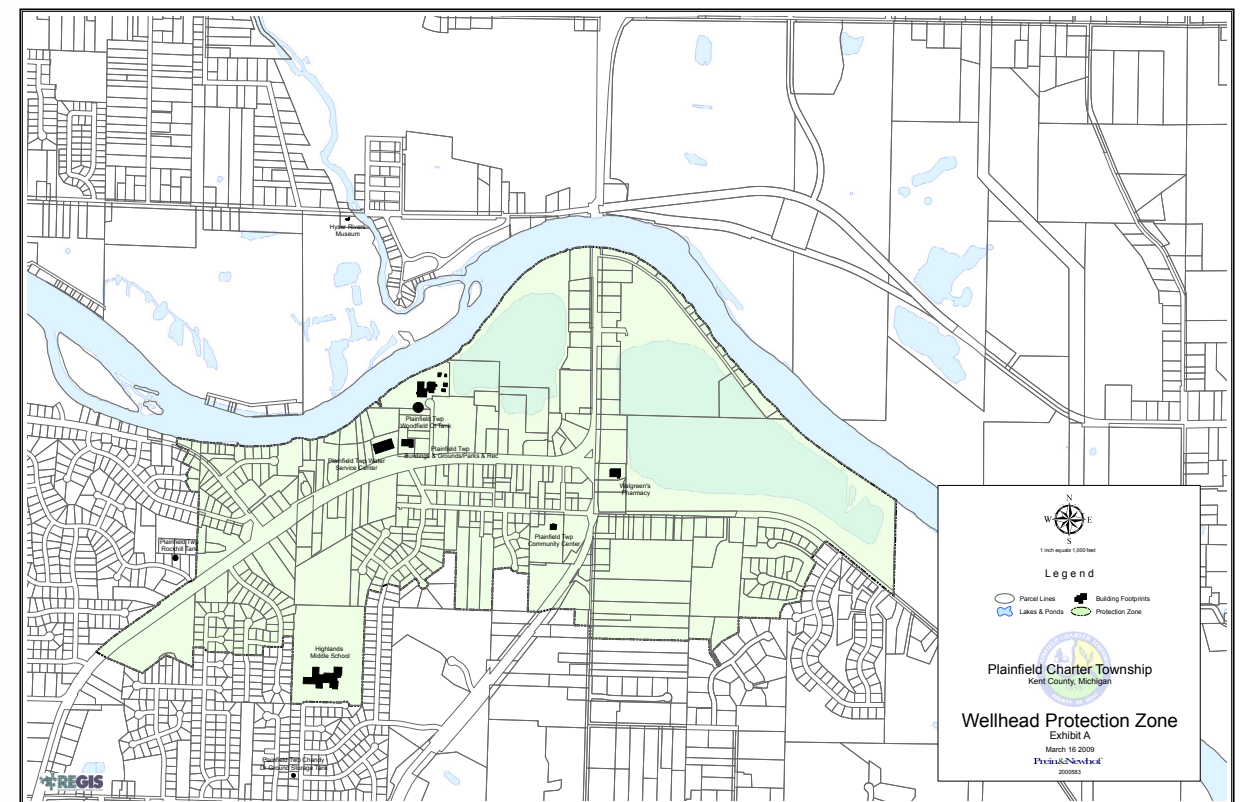
# WELLHEAD PROTECTION PROGRAM

The Township has developed a Wellhead Protection Plan (WHPP) to protect the public water supply from contamination. Over 28,000 people use the Plainfield municipal water system and it is important that this vital resource is preserved. An example of possible contamination would be gasoline or motor oil from automobile-related activities leaching into groundwater. Well fields are located in the southern portions of Township. Typical of land above the local aquifer, soils are exceptionally permeable, which means that any contamination would have a higher likelihood of percolating to the water table.

The process that the Township used to compile the WHPP involved several phases. A first step was to identify the area from which the Township's sixteen wells draw their water over a ten-year duration. This included reviewing elevation surveys; various topographic, geologic, hydrogeology, piezometric, and well maps;

aquifer characteristics; well logs; and, municipal well data. Once this area was delineated using model conceptualization, potential and existing contamination sources were recognized by utilizing various databases to locate source contaminant sites. Mechanisms to manage and protect the wellhead protection area were developed for the Township to implement, including a contingency plan. The WHPP may also serve as a source of information in selecting new well sites.

The WHPP outlines a proactive plan for protecting Plainfield's public water supply while meeting requirements of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). As a result of the WHPP, the Township has implemented an overlay zoning district to better protect and preserve the community's vital water resources. Information regarding the overlay district can be accessed [here](#). The Wellhead Protection Ordinance can also be accessed [here](#). The following map shows the extents of the Wellhead Protection Zone within the Township.



## PRIVATE UTILITIES

Most of the developed areas of the Township are served with a complete complement of energy and communication systems. These include natural gas, electricity, telephone, cable television, and broadband internet access. In some areas, natural gas has not been extended and residents rely on on-site fuel oil or LPG tanks for heating and cooking.

## TRANSPORTATION

A transportation network links activities within a community to those in surrounding municipalities, and the larger region as a whole. Transportation plays a critical role in determining the nature and intensities of land uses that occur throughout a community. The Township has a wide variety of land uses and in turn, a rather diverse transportation network, providing its residents with a mixture of transit experiences, from winding rural roads to congested rush hour traffic. The Township's public roads are managed by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Kent County Road Commission (KCRC).



Plainfield Avenue and Northland Drive Intersection, Plainfield Charter Township



White Pine Trail West River Dr Overpass, Plainfield Charter Township

A component of transportation that the Township is committed to enhancing is its non-motorized options for pedestrians who walk, run, cycle, or otherwise move throughout the community. The Sidewalk Ordinance, the extensive and expanding trail network, enhancements to major roadways, and the continued prioritization of connection between residents and non-motorized options is a priority within the Township.

Due to the rolling topography and natural features in the Township, there are very few straight north-to-south or east-to-west roadways in the Township. Most major roads are routed around natural features such as the Grand River or one of the inland lakes in the Township. There are only two crossing points along the Township's segment of Grand River; the bridges at Jupiter Avenue and Northland Drive. Where feasible, private roads should be discouraged in areas suitable for affordable connectivity.

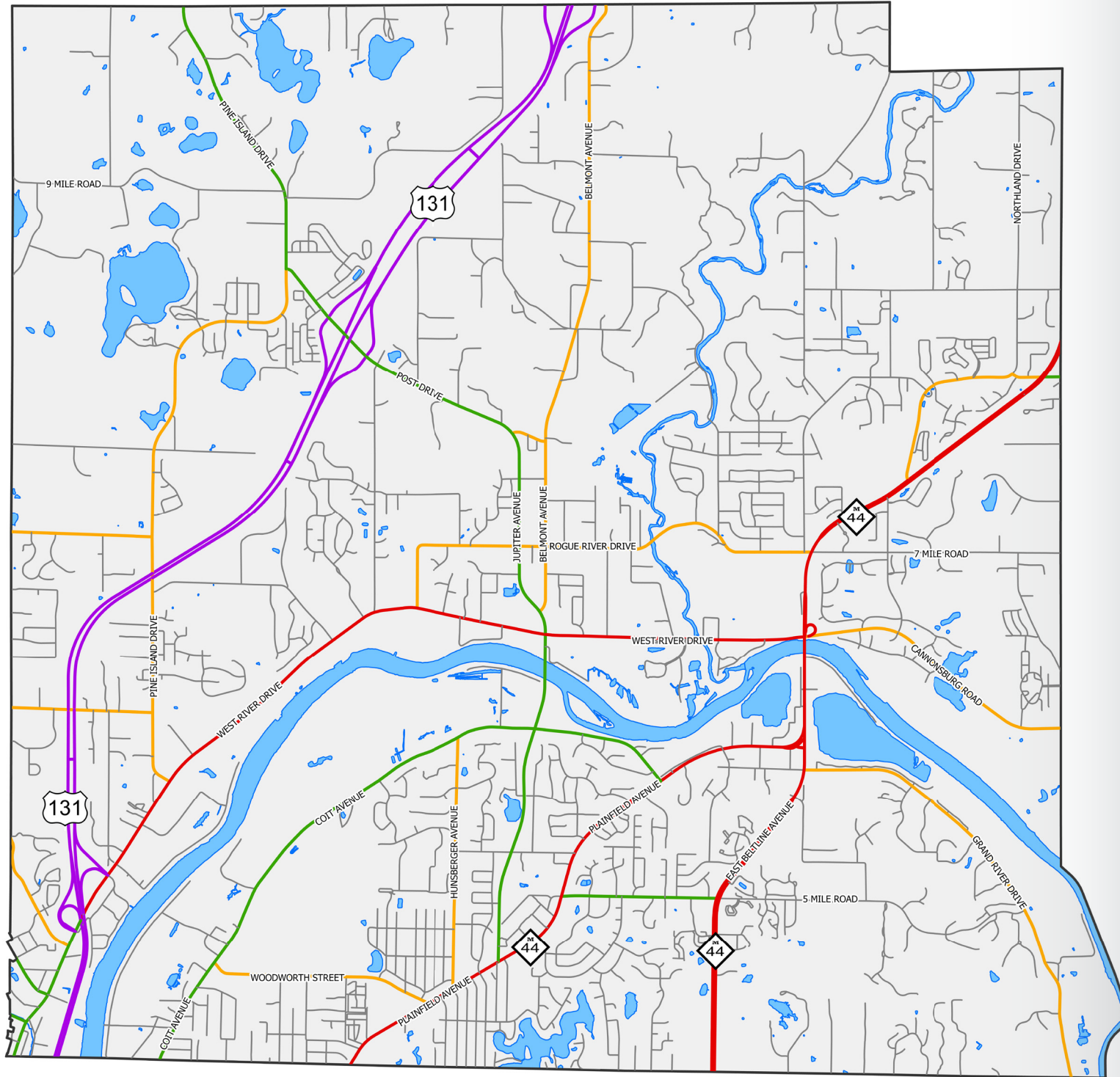
## Functional Classifications

One approach to gaining a better understanding of motorized transportation networks has been to classify the roads that make up these networks into groups based on the role or function that they play. One such classification scheme is that devised by the Federal Highway Administration, referred to as the National Functional Classification (NFC). Classes relevant to the Township are described below:

- Principal arterials are at the top of the NFC hierarchical system. Principal arterials generally carry long distance, through-travel movements. They also provide access to important traffic generators, such as major airports or regional shopping centers.
- Minor arterials are similar in function to principal arterials, except they carry trips of shorter distance and to lesser traffic generators.
- Collectors tend to provide more access to property than do arterials. Collectors also funnel traffic from residential or rural areas to arterials.
- Local roads primarily provide access to property. Examples could include residential streets or lightly-traveled country roads.

The following maps provide a visual display of where the aforementioned roadways exist within the Township as well as the annual average daily traffic (AADT) counts.

# NFC ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS



### LEGEND

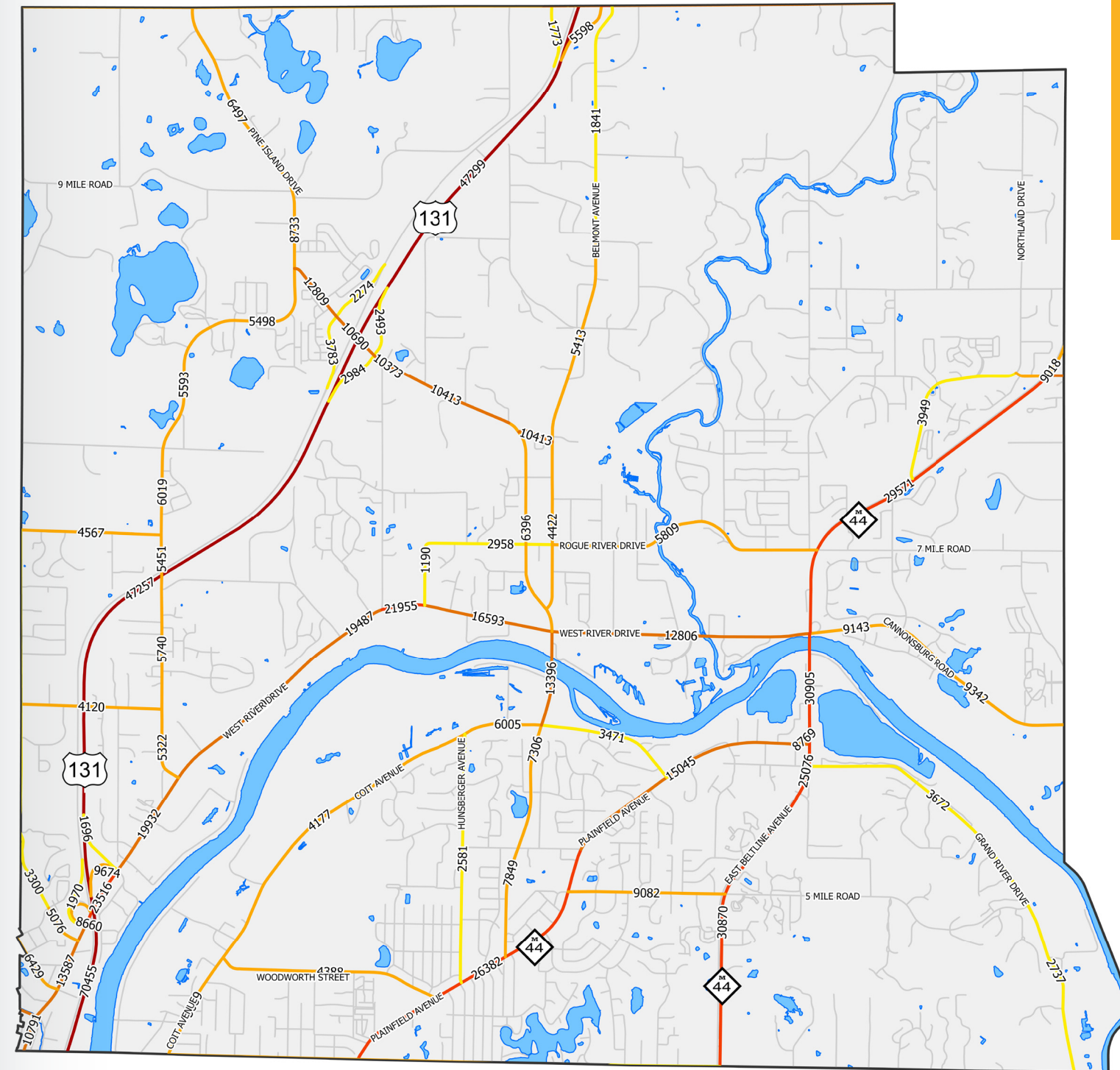
- Interstate or Other Freeway
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Local

Data Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2023, Kent County GIS, 2023. Progressive AE, 2023.

progressive|ae



# 2021 ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (AADT)



### LEGEND

- Less Than 3,999 AADT
- 4,000 - 9,999 AADT
- 10,000 - 19,999 AADT
- 20,000 - 39,999 AADT
- 40,000+ AADT
- Local Streets (Not Analyzed in 2021)

Data Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2023, Kent County GIS, 2023. Progressive AE, 2024.

progressive|ae



## Commuting Patterns

According to the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS), 81.2% of Plainfield Township residents drive alone to work with an average commute time of 21.6 minutes. This results in the majority of the Township's working residents having to utilize the regional transportation network while traveling to places of employment.

The automobile is overwhelmingly the most popular form of transportation with 87.7% of residents either driving or riding to work, although this is a decrease from the 98% statistic from 2008. Of the people utilizing an automobile, only 6.5% of them are in a carpool of some sort, with the most common being a carpool of two people.

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



81.2% Drive Alone



10.6% Work from Home



6.5% Carpool



0.8% Walk



0.5% Take Public Transit



0.1% Bike

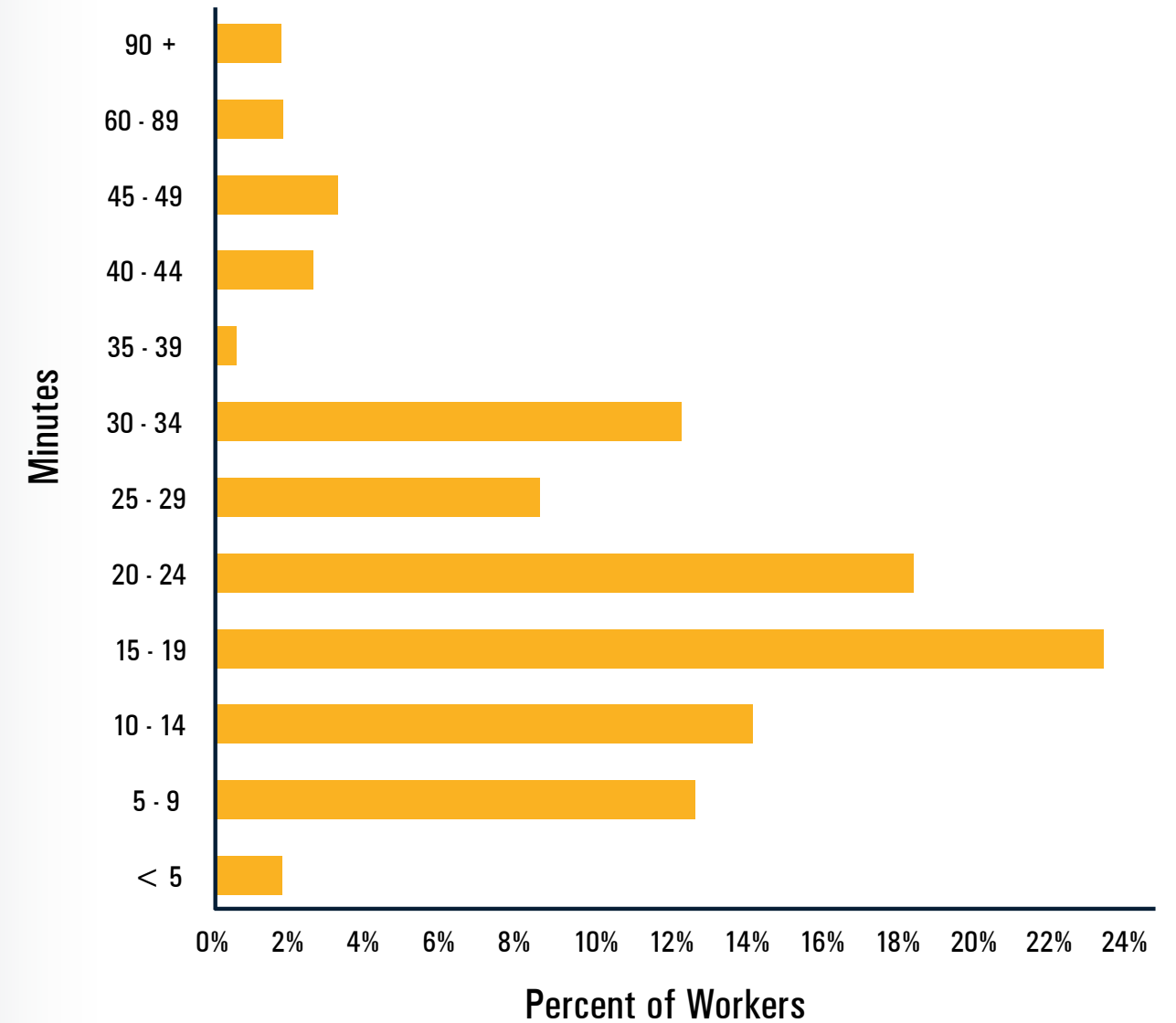


Source: ACS 2022

**This displays a need for better non-motorized options!**

Most residents who work outside of the Township work within a 15-to-30-minute drive of the Township, as displayed below.

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



Source: ACS 2022

## Public Transit

The Interurban Transit Partnership (ITP) was created in January 2000 by the cities of Grand Rapids, East Grand Rapids, Grandville, Kentwood, Walker, and Wyoming under Act 196 of the Public Acts of the State of Michigan. The formation of ITP played a fundamental role in expanding public transportation in the Grand Rapids metro area. Presently ITP is referred to as “The Rapid.”

The Rapid provides fixed-route services to the cities of Grand Rapids, East Grand Rapids, Grandville, Kentwood, Walker, and Wyoming and the townships of Byron, Gaines, Cascade, and Alpine. Route 11 of The Rapid was extended northward to the Meijer store from its previous northern terminus at Salerno Drive beginning in August 2021 based upon recommendations developed in The Rapid’s Comprehensive Operational Analysis (COA). The COA was an 18-month study with the goal of optimizing The Rapid’s fixed route network, exploring and implementing new types of transit services, and increasing ridership. Since the extension was authorized in August 2021, Route 11’s ridership has grown significantly. Before August 2021, the two stops at the northern terminus of the route (Elmdale NB and Salerno SB) provided an average of 79 boardings and 70 exits per weekday. With the extension to the Meijer, the route now sees 157 boardings and 138 exits on average per weekday at all stops north of Elmdale. This is a 97% increase in total ridership.



Bus En Route from The Rapid Station to the Plainfield Charter Township Meijer Stop

North Kent Transit Services, a program offered by Hope Network of West Michigan, provides transportation services to the Township. The service is available 7 days a week, 5:00 am to midnight and primarily serves persons with disabilities and persons over 60 years of age. Transportation is on a call-in basis; there is no fixed route.

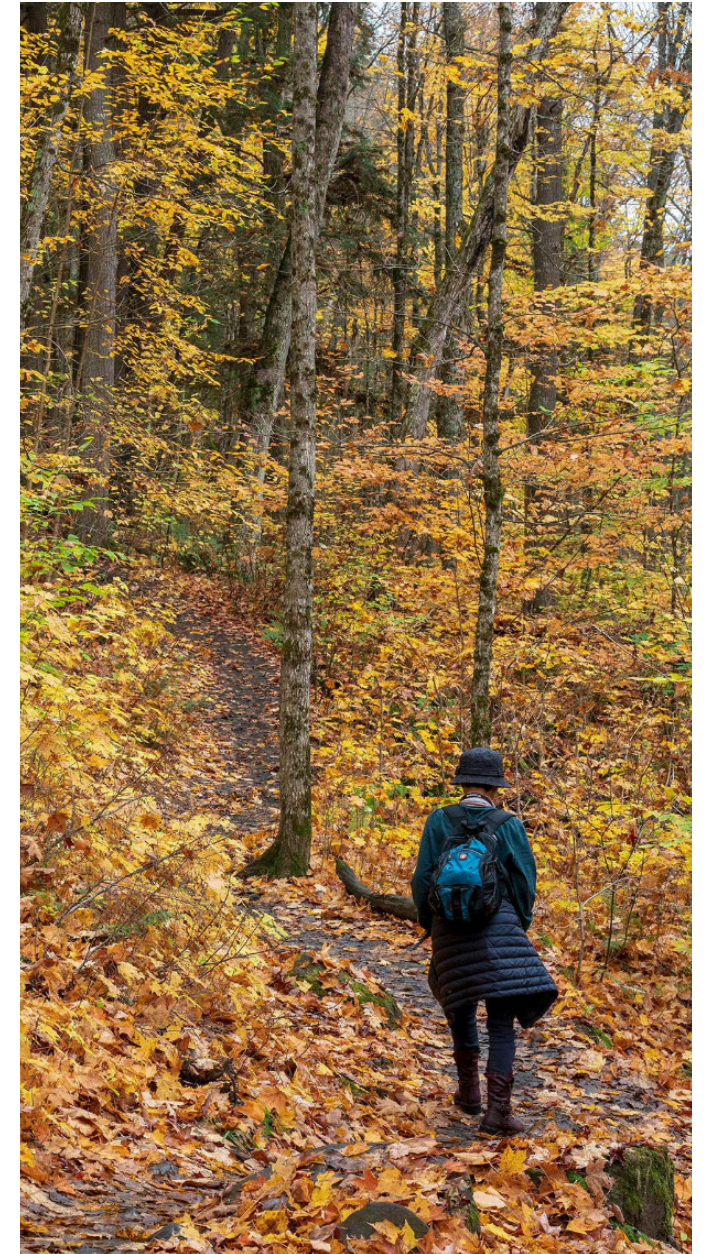
**This influx of ridership generated by the route extension has contributed to Route 11’s stronger recovery from the pandemic. The Rapid’s fixed route system has recovered approximately 55% of its pre-pandemic ridership, whereas Route 11 has recovered nearly 75% of its ridership.**

Source: Max Dilivan, The Rapid

## Non-Motorized Transportation

The Township has a Sidewalk and Non-Motorized Trails Ordinance, requiring the extension of sidewalks or trails with all new development. The purpose of this ordinance is to protect the public health, safety and general welfare of the community by adopting regulations concerning the installation, maintenance, repair, and safety of public sidewalks and non-motorized trails within the Township; encouraging non-motorized modes of transportation; imposing a duty to repair, maintain, or keep safe sidewalks; providing standards of proper sidewalk maintenance, installation and repair; and imposing liability for the failure to perform maintenance or repair duties. The Sidewalk and Non-Motorized Trails Ordinance can be viewed here.

The Township is proud of its natural setting and its abundance of opportunities for residents to lead a healthy and active lifestyle. Trails are gaining a growing presence and sense of value within the Township and it is a priority to ensure their continued extension and enhancement. The Township’s goal is to link trail systems wherever possible, connecting residents to parks, lakes, schools, and shops.



Trails that run through the Township include the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail, the Jupiter Trail, and the Jericho Trail. The Township has plans to construct more trails over the next several years. More details about these trails can be found in the following Existing Land Use and Development section.

## Traffic Calming

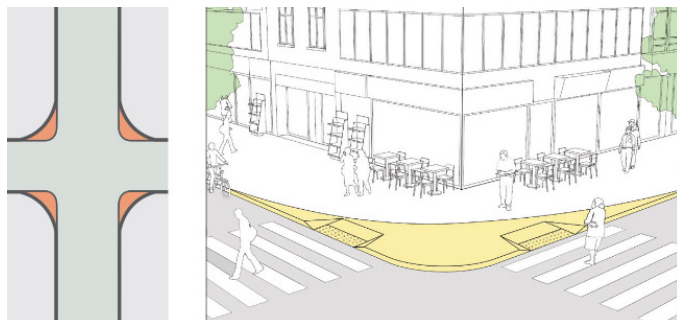
Traffic calming measures are designed to improve road safety, enhance the livability of neighborhoods, and create more pedestrian-friendly environments and should be prioritized on all roadways within the Township. The impact that traffic calming can have on a community is significant as it determines the ways in which spaces can be experienced by all pedestrians and the development that surrounds roadways.

Traffic calming measures offer a range of benefits, including enhanced safety, improved community livability, and a more sustainable and pleasant urban environment. These measures contribute to creating streets that prioritize the well-being of residents and support a variety of transportation modes. Traffic calming can be implemented in the following ways:

**Lane Narrowing:** Reduce speeds and minimize crashes on streets by way of reducing the right-of-way and making drivers conscious of traffic and adjacent users.



**Corner Radii:** Reduces vehicle turning speeds as well as pedestrian crossing distances.



**Buildings and Trees:** Indicate that a street is in an urban environment, not a highway.



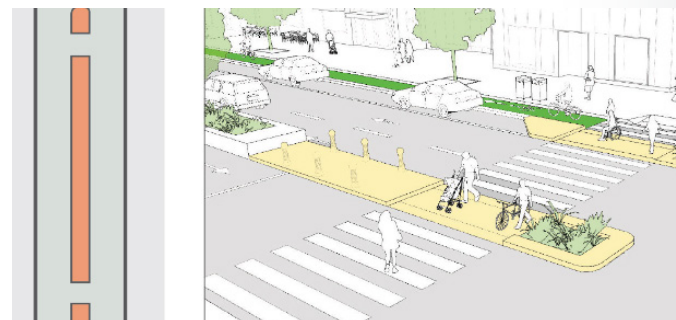
**Gateway Treatments:** Alert drivers that they are entering a slower area.



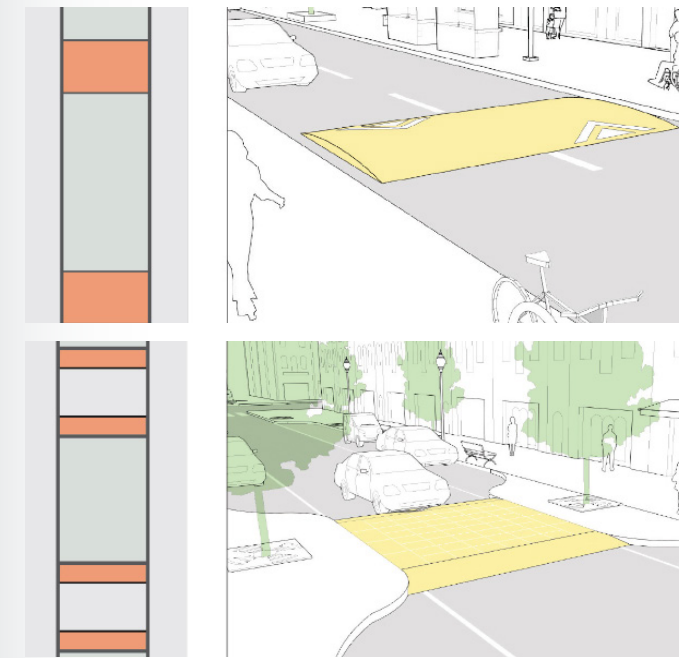
**Pinchpoints:** Narrow the roadway at a mid-block point. They can be combined with speed tables to create high-quality pedestrian crossings.



**Medians and Refuge Islands:** Can be used to reduce lane width for vehicles, even on relatively narrow streets.



**Speed Humps and Tables:** Formed by raising sections of the road with dimensions tailored to match the target speed of the street.



**Pavement Materials and Appearance:** Pavement appearance can be altered through unique treatments that add visual interest which can be used to make other traffic calming techniques more noticeable to drivers.



Source: Global Designing Cities Initiative

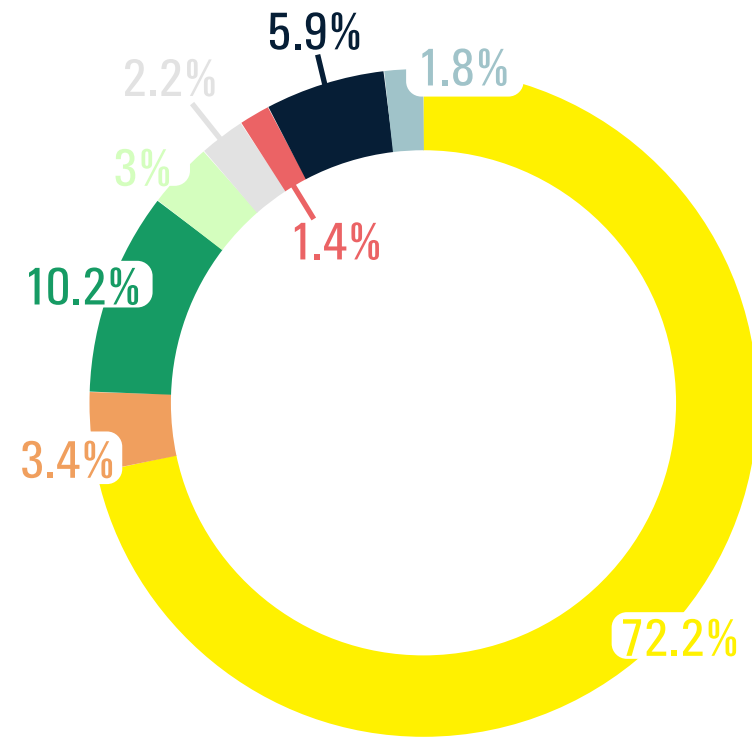
## IMPLICATIONS

By proactively directing where utilities may be placed, the Township will be in a better position to implement its growth management goals. The extension of public water into the northwest quadrant is a major change in the infrastructure system of the Township.

Given the topographic obstacles that fragment the Township, a few key roadways will continue to carry the bulk of local commuter traffic. This implies increasing levels of congestion on some roadways, but may also suggest that volumes on non-through routes will remain relatively manageable.

# EXISTING LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

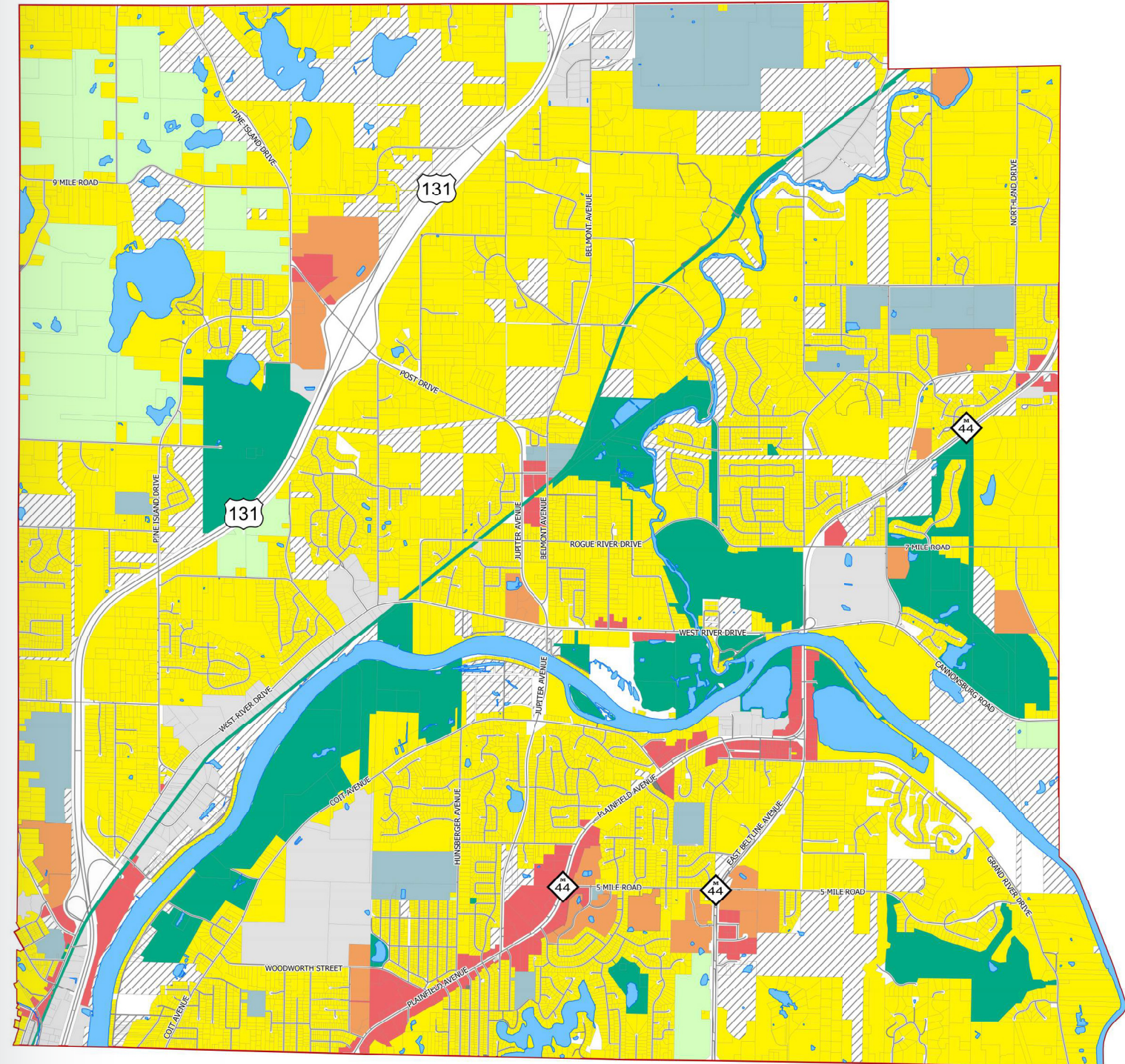
## CURRENT USE %



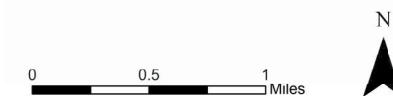
- Low-Density Residential
- High-Density Residential
- Recreation and Open Space
- Agriculture
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Unimproved
- Public

Progressive Companies Analysis (2024)

# EXISTING LAND USES



- LEGEND**
- Low-Density Residential
  - High-Density Residential
  - Recreation + Open Space
  - Agriculture
  - Industrial
  - Commercial
  - Unimproved
  - Public



Data Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2023.  
Kent County GIS, 2023. Progressive AE, 2024.

Note: Street Rights-of-Way (ROWs) extend to street centerlines.

progressive|ae

## COMMUNITY ASSETS

Community facilities play a fundamental role in augmenting civic engagement, sponsoring cultural events, and promoting community pride. High quality recreational opportunities are quality of life indicators and such facilities characterize the Township amongst its other community assets. The health and leisure benefits of the Township's growing trail system and other recreation lands, such as several popular golf courses, cannot go unnoticed. In addition to recreational facilities, Plainfield has a rich collection of public-school districts, providing local spaces for enriching interaction, learning, and community building. The safety services of the Township provide a compulsory service to the community.

### Libraries

Part of the Kent District Library system, three libraries serve the Township: Plainfield Library, Comstock Park Library, and Krause Memorial Library. The three libraries assist in conducting various youth and adult programs and offer the amenities of public meeting space, access to the Internet, and a myriad of books, encyclopedias, almanacs, and other informational reading material. The Plainfield Library is located at 2650 Five Mile Road; the Comstock Park Library is located at 3943 West River Drive. Krause Library is located at 140 East Bridge Street in Rockford, and also serves a large number of Township residents.



Kent District Library, Plainfield Branch, Plainfield Charter Township

## Higher Learning Institutions

While no institution of higher learning (a facility educating beyond a high school level) exists in the Township, several colleges and universities are located within a short driving distance. These include Grand Valley State University, Calvin College, Aquinas College, Cornerstone University, Grand Rapids Community College, and other smaller institutions. These academic facilities provide higher education opportunities and likely provide employment to some Township residents.

### Public Schools

In addition to the two private schools that serve the Plainfield community – Chandler Woods and Assumption Catholic Elementary – four public school districts serve the Township, Rockford, Comstock Park, Kenowa Hills, and Northview. These districts comprise thirty-one total school buildings used for educational purposes, of which thirteen are in the Township. Although four public school districts serve the Township, only three are within the Township. Cumulative total enrollment of these three districts is approximately 12,556 students.

### Rockford Public Schools

The Rockford school district serves the northeast quadrant of the Township and extends beyond Township boundaries. The district provides four educational facilities in the Township and has eight others located in neighboring communities.

The following Rockford Public Schools facilities are located in the Township:

- Rockford High – 4100 Kroes Street, Rockford
- Freshman Center – 4500 Kroes Street, Rockford

- Belmont Elementary – 6097 Belmont Avenue, Belmont
- Roguewood Elementary – 3900 Kroes Street, Rockford

## Comstock Park Public Schools

The Comstock Park district includes three school facilities in the western portions of the Township (and two other facilities outside the Township). Comstock Park Public Schools facilities in Plainfield Township include:

- Comstock Park High – 150 Six Mile Road, Comstock Park
- Mill Creek Middle – 100 Betty Street, Comstock Park
- Pine Island Elementary – 6101 Pine Island Drive, Comstock Park

## Northview Public Schools

The Northview Public School District serves the southern, most densely populated portions of Plainfield. Of the three districts serving the Township, the Northview area has the highest proportion of developed land, and therefore may not experience development and the influx of students at rates that, say, the Rockford district experiences, which is comprised, in part, by open lands in several townships.

All of Northview's six facilities are located within the Township:

- Northview High – 4451 Hunsberger Avenue, Grand Rapids
- Highlands Middle – 4645 Chandy Drive, Grand Rapids
- Crossroads Middle – 4400 Ambrose Avenue, Grand Rapids

- West Oakview Elementary – 3880 Stuyvesant Avenue, Grand Rapids
- East Oakview Elementary – 3940 Suburban Shores Drive, Grand Rapids
- North Oakview Elementary – 4300 Costa Drive, Grand Rapids

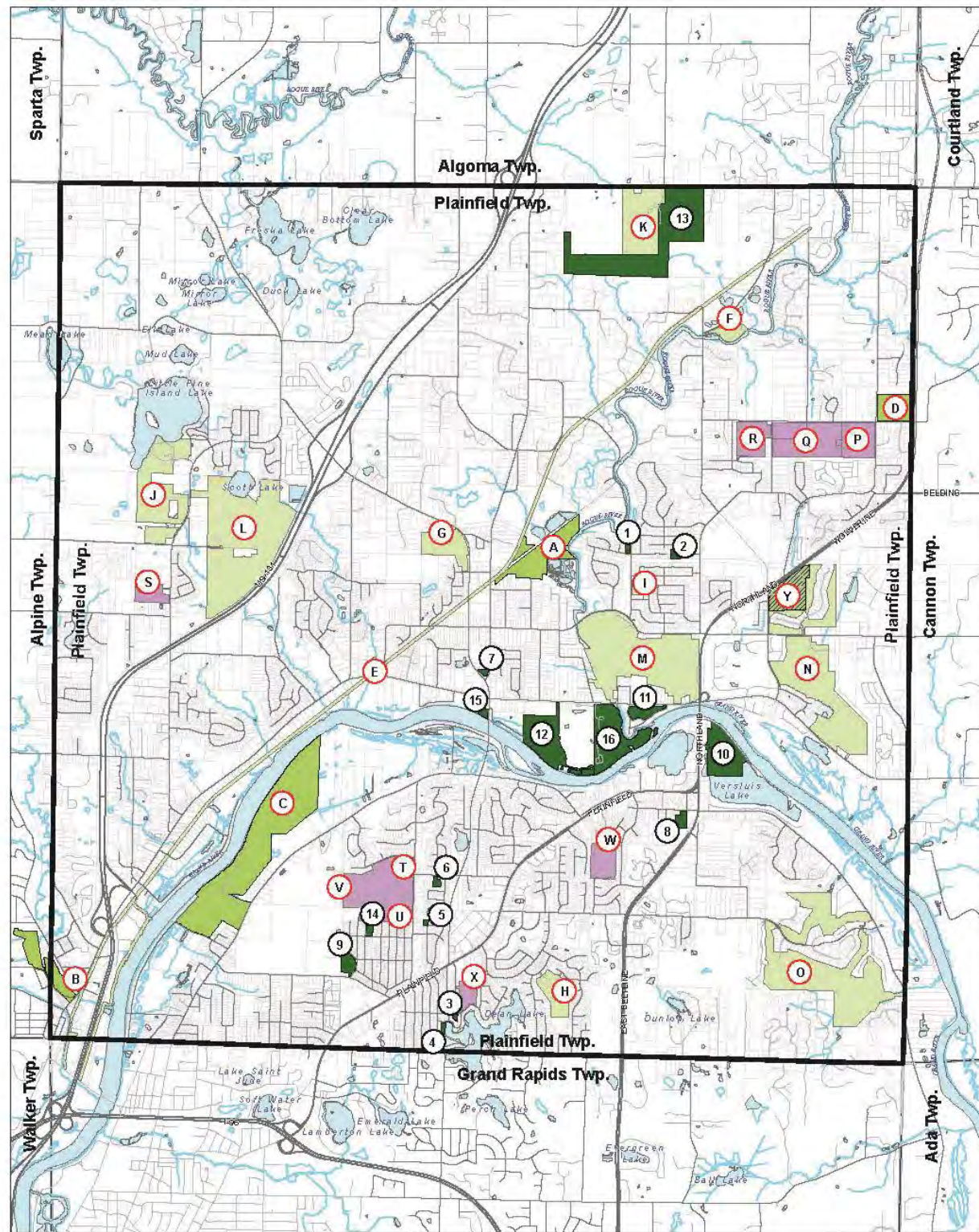


Northview Highschool, Plainfield Charter Township

## PARKS AND RECREATION

The Township maintains thirteen recreation and community facilities comprising approximately 325 acres, an increase of 285 acres since 2008. It also accommodates other facilities maintained by Kent County, a State agency, and private organizations. These facilities provide the opportunity for picnicking, golfing, boating, hiking, camping, walking, bicycling, fishing, meeting space, snowmobiling, competitive sports, and provide an aesthetic amenity for residents. They are illustrated on the following Overall Parks Inventory Map. This section provides a brief inventory of recreation opportunities in the Township. Please access the [Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2020-2024](#) to learn more about the amenities the Township offers.

## Overall Parks Inventory Map



### LEGEND

#### Township Boundary

Plainfield

#### Parks

- Other Park/Facility
- County Park
- Township Park
- Cemetery
- School

#### Township Owned Parks

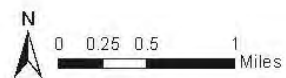
1. Packer Drive Park
2. Gold Dust Park
3. Hoffman Park
4. Dean Lake Park
5. Northgate Park
6. Airway Park
7. Charles Weldon Veterans Memorial Park
8. Community Center and D.W. Richardson Park
9. Ambrose Park
10. Versluis Park
11. DNR Park
12. Grand Isle Park
13. Premier Park
14. Eldon Hollow Park
15. Jupiter Bridge Boathouse
16. Grand Rogue Park

#### Other Parks / Recreation

- County:
- A. Rogue River Park
  - B. Dwight Lytell Park
  - C. Lamoreaux Park
  - D. Sheriff Equestrian Center
- DNR:
- E. Fred Meijer White Pine Trail
  - F. Childsdale Fishing Access
- Private:
- G. YMCA
  - H. Northville Park
  - I. Blythefield Acres Pool
  - J. Little Pine Island Lake Camp
  - K. Art Van Sports Complex
  - L. Scott Lake Country Club
  - M. Blythefield Country Club
  - N. Boulder Creek Golf Club
  - O. Thousand Oaks Golf Club

#### Other Parks / Recreation

- School:
- P. Rockford Freshman Center
  - Q. Rockford High School
  - R. Rogiewood Elementary School
  - S. Pine Island Elementary School
  - T. Northview High School
  - U. North Oakview Elementary School
  - V. Crossroads Middle School
  - W. Highlands Middle School
  - X. East Oakview Elementary School
- Cemetery:
- Y. Blythefield Memory Garden



## Trails and Pathways

Plainfield is proud of its natural setting and abundance of opportunities for residents to lead a healthy and active lifestyle. The Township's goal is to link trail systems wherever possible, connecting residents to parks, lakes, schools, and shops. Trails that run through the Township include the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail, Jupiter Trail and Jericho Trail. The Township has plans to construct more trails over the next several years.



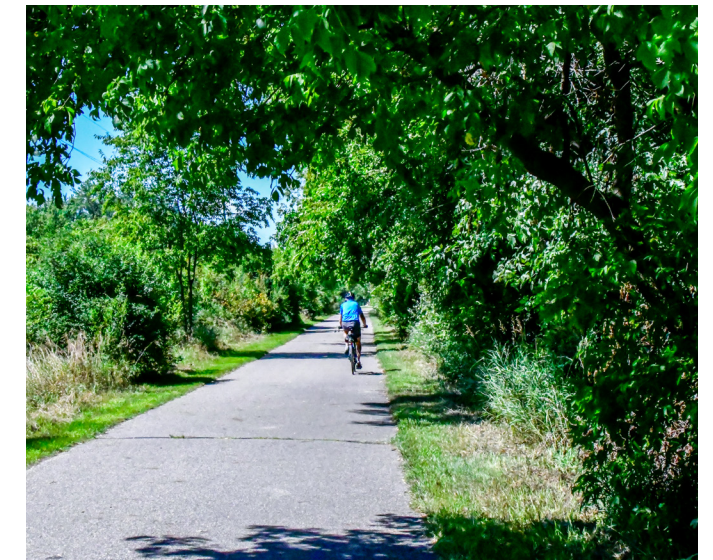
## Rockford Trail

The Rockford Trail extends two miles along Kuttshill Drive, Brewer Avenue and Kroes Street from Rogue River Road to Jericho Road.



## Jupiter Trail

This 2-mile trail is located along the east side of Jupiter avenue from Plainfield Avenue, northward over the Jupiter Bridge and Grand River, to West River Drive. The trail continues along Jupiter Avenue northward from West River Drive to the White Pine Trail.



## White Pine Trail

The Fred Meijer White Pine Trail stretches 92 miles long from Cadillac to Comstock Park. The trailway accommodates mountain biking, hiking, cross-country skiing, walking and running, and the northern 78.5 miles accommodates snowmobiling.

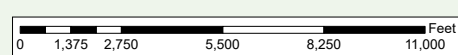
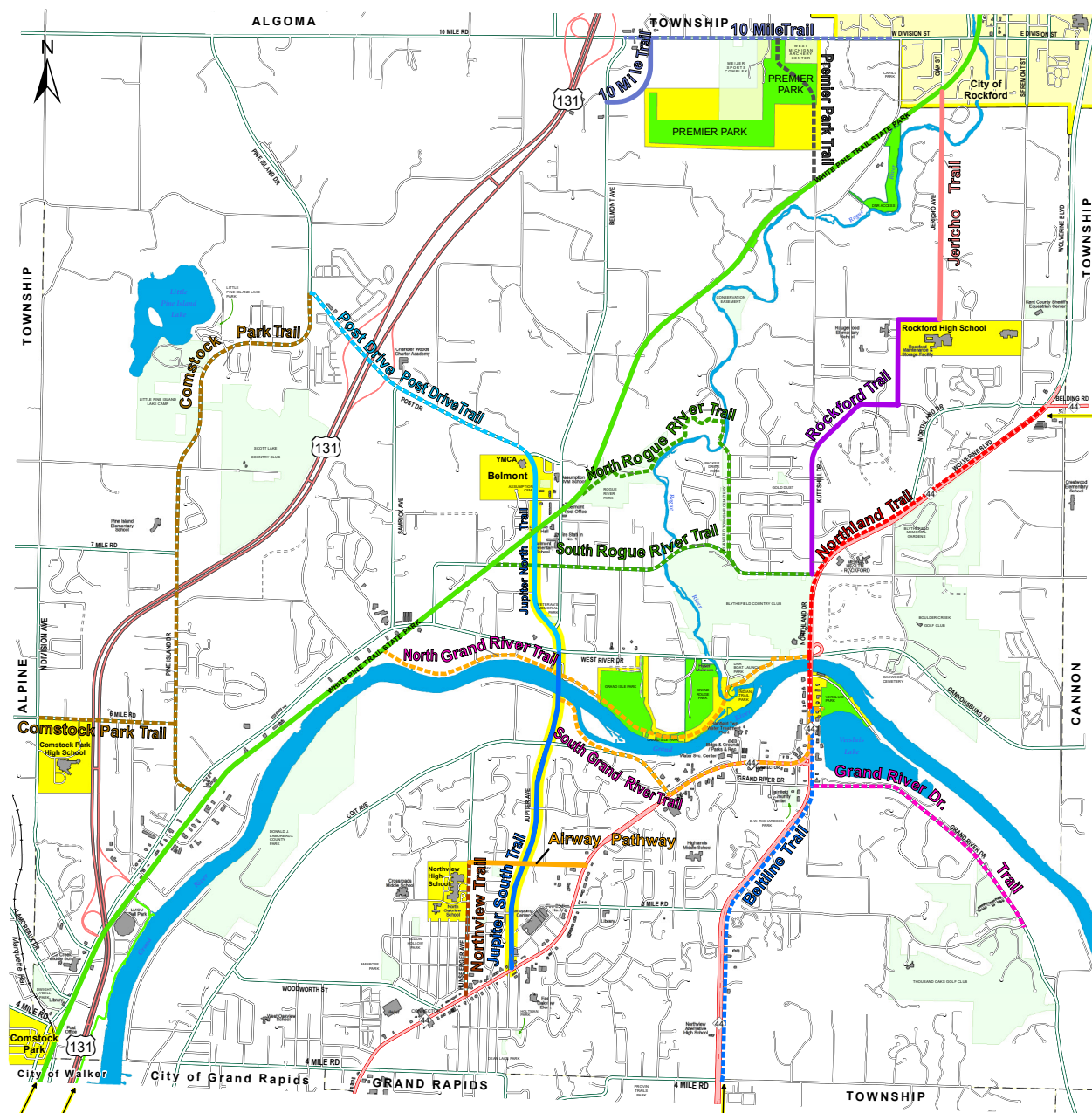




# Plainfield Charter Township

## Non-Motorized Pathways & Trails

Rolling Plains  
and  
Beautiful Fields



PLANNED & EXISTING TRAILS	
<b>Existing Trails</b>	<b>Planned Trails</b>
10 Mile Trail	Beltline Trail
Airway Pathway	Comstock Park Trail
Jericho Trail	Grand River Dr. Trail
Jupiter North Trail	Northland Trail
Jupiter South Trail	Rogue River Trail
Rockford Trail	Northview Trail
White Pine Trail	Post Drive Trail
	Premier Park Trail
	Connections to Adjoining Communities

**CONNECTION GOALS:**  
 - White Pine Trail & Parks  
 - Downtown Areas  
 - Water Access & Enjoyment  
 - Schools

Drafted by REGIS staff, and updated April 2024, with data supplied by Plainfield Charter Township, and the Kent County Road Commission.  
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 Date Last Revised: 4/15/2024

## Lake Michigan Credit Union Ballpark

The White Pine Trail connects to the 47-acre site of the Lake Michigan Credit Union Ballpark, home to the West Michigan Whitecaps. The stadium opened in 1994 and has become a major regional attraction, with professional baseball, high-profile concerts, and group events. Total capacity is 10,071.



## Private Facilities

Besides fostering scenic views and community open space, private recreation lands provide leisure opportunities, camping, and social gathering spaces. The following are privately maintained and operated recreational facilities in the Township.

- Blythefield Country Club
- Boulder Creek Golf Club
- Salvation Army Camp
- Scott Lake Country Club
- Thousand Oaks Country Club
- Meijer Sports Complex
- West Michigan Archery Center
- YMCA

## PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Police, fire, and hospital services are necessary for any community, as they protect the general welfare, help alleviate crime, and provide treatment when needed.

### Police Protection

The Kent County Sheriff's Department provides police protection and law enforcement for the Township. While there are no police stations located within the Township, the Township has 3 Kent County Deputy Community Policing Officers, 2 of which help with community relations, safety, and code enforcement, and 1 dedicated road patrol unit. The Township is also served by Michigan State Police Officers.

### Fire Protection

The Township has a large enough population to establish a comprehensive local fire department. The Township is not engaged in an inter-municipal fire service contract, where one central fire agency would serve Plainfield and at least one other community. However, several mutual aid agreements exist between Plainfield and its neighbors. These agreements initiate assistance from a neighboring fire department if a disaster is too great for the Plainfield Fire Department to address alone. Likewise, Plainfield would provide services to a neighbor under the same circumstances.



## PEOPLE OF PLAINFIELD

Population and demographic change are among the most important measures to express growth and its likely impact on land uses in a community. Therefore, it is helpful to recognize the Township's population and growth trends in preparing a realistic and meaningful Master Plan.



## POPULATION

Plainfield Township is a growing community, currently home to 34,202 people. This is an increase of approximately 2,583 people since 2010; 8.35%. Kent County has seen an increase of approximately 55,352 people since 2010, 9.19%, with a population of 657,974 as of 2020. The Township is experiencing growth rates nearly parallel to that of Kent County.

Will the population of Plainfield keep rising? As displayed below, it is anticipated that Plainfield's and Kent County's population will continue to grow in the years to come. The Township's population is anticipated to grow to nearly 36,548 people by 2030 and to 39,562 people by 2040.

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

PLAINFIELD	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
	20,611	24,946	30,195	30,952	34,370	35,042	36,548	38,055	39,562

KENT COUNTY	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
	444,506	500,631	574,335	602,622	657,974	690,516	723,058	755,599	788,141

Source: West Michigan Regional Planning Commission

**From 2020-2040, Plainfield's population will increase by 15.11% Kent County's population by 19.78%**

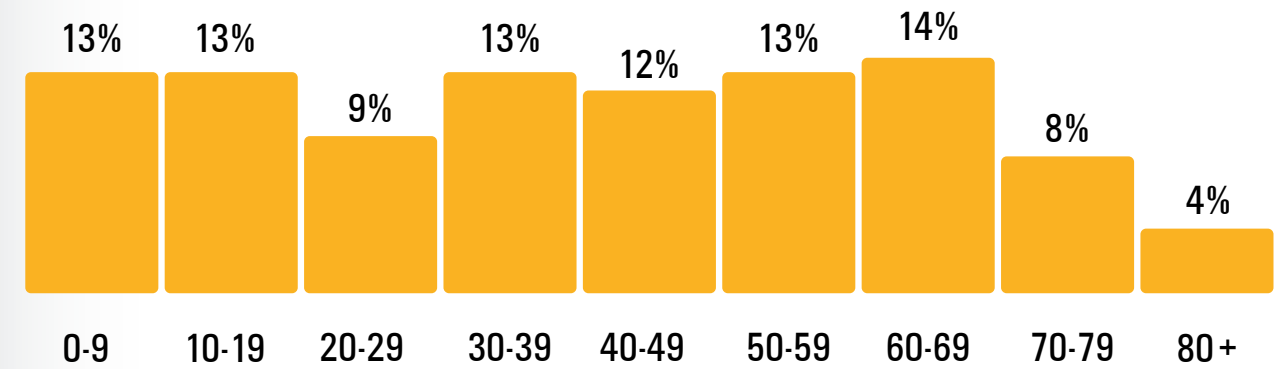
## AGE

Another opportunity to measure change involves comparing the age distribution of a community over time. This assists in determining the type of housing demands and recreational facilities that may be needed. As of 2022, the Township's median age is 42.1 years old. Median age in the Township has gradually increased from 38.5 years old in 2010. However, as displayed below, it is evident that there are many age ranges living within the Township. The median age within Kent County as of 2022 is 35.9 years old, a bit younger than that of Plainfield, as to be expected.

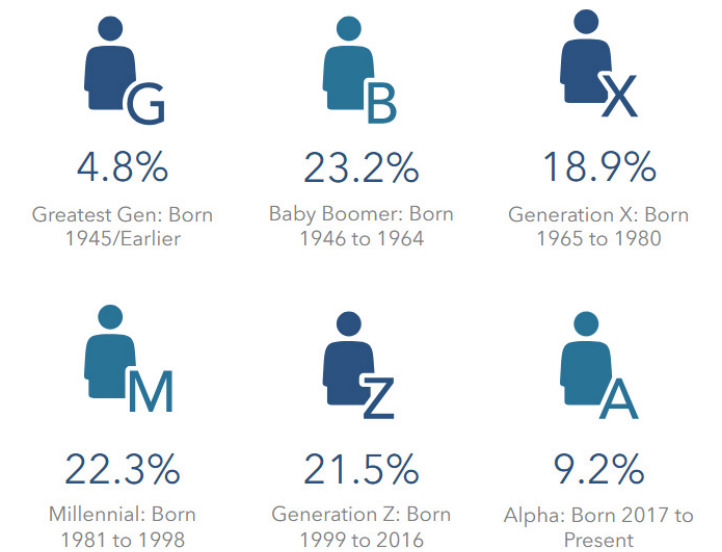


## Population by Age Range

Source: ACS 2022



In taking a look at Plainfield's population through a generational lens, it is evident that although there is a widespread population, the largest percentage of residents fall into the "Baby Boomer" category. This holds true with the increasing median age seen in the Township. Millennials and Generation Z make up a large percentage of the population as well, showing that younger individuals and growing families have and are choosing to call Plainfield Township home.



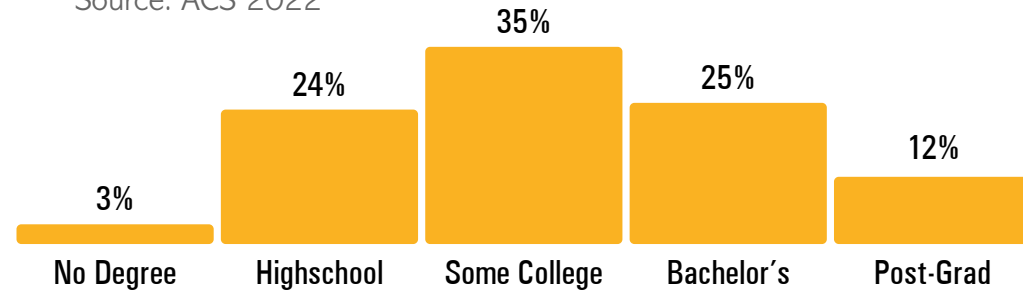
Source: ESRI Community Analyst, 2024

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Of Township residents 25 years old or greater, educational attainment is comparable to the county overall, with 37% of the community

having a Bachelor's degree or higher, 38.1% of which do in Kent County. Further breakdown is provided below.

**Population by Highest Level of Education (Population 25 Years +)**  
Source: ACS 2022

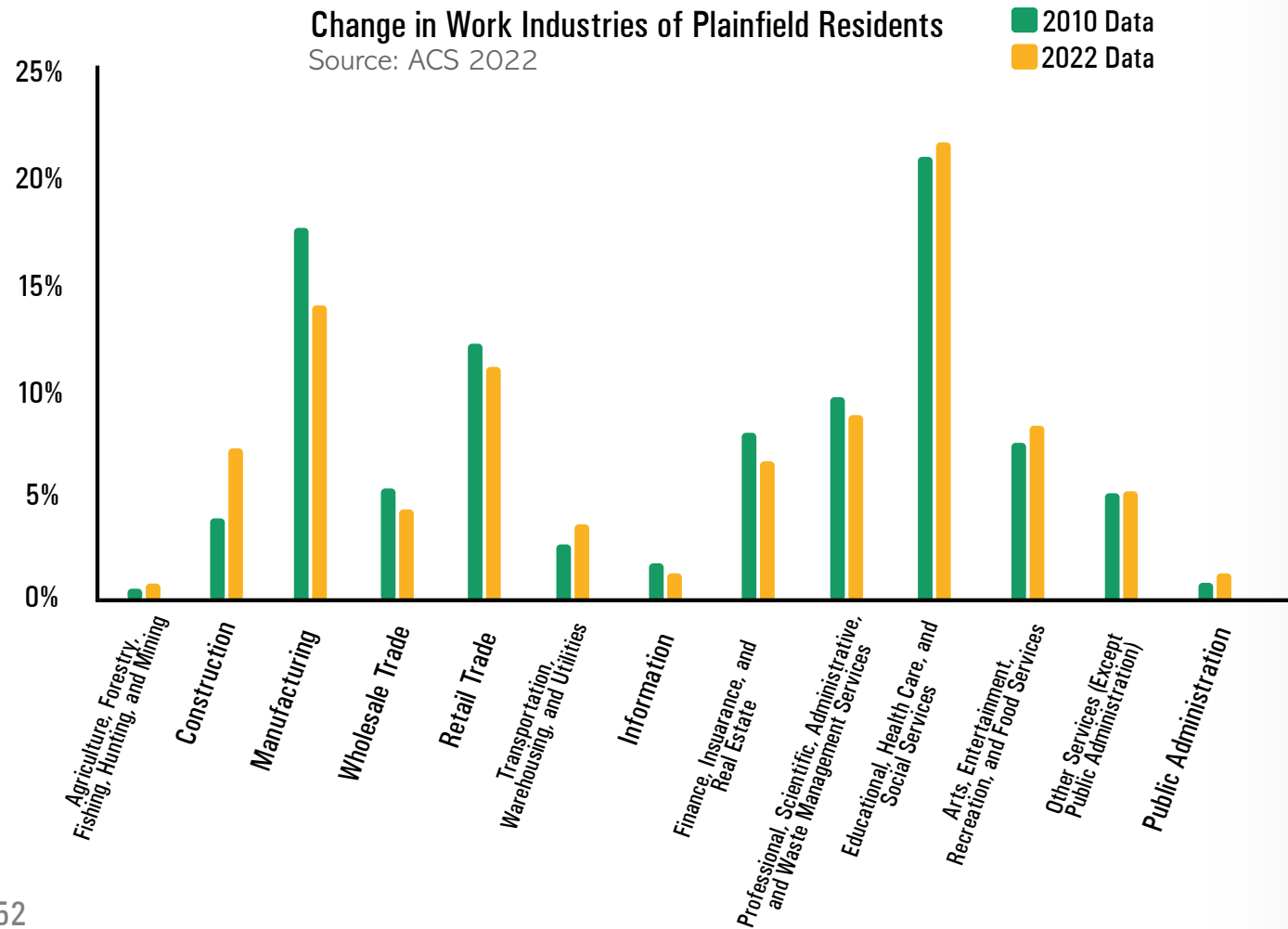


## EMPLOYMENT

Of the 34,202 people living in Plainfield, 18,463 are in the labor force. 96% of the Township's labor force is employed, 17,661 people in total. A detailed look at what industries residents are working in is provided below.

Educational, health care, and social service jobs have been the leading industry for over a decade. This is true for Kent County as a whole, likely due to the continually increasing presence of Corewell Health in the area.

**Change in Work Industries of Plainfield Residents**  
Source: ACS 2022



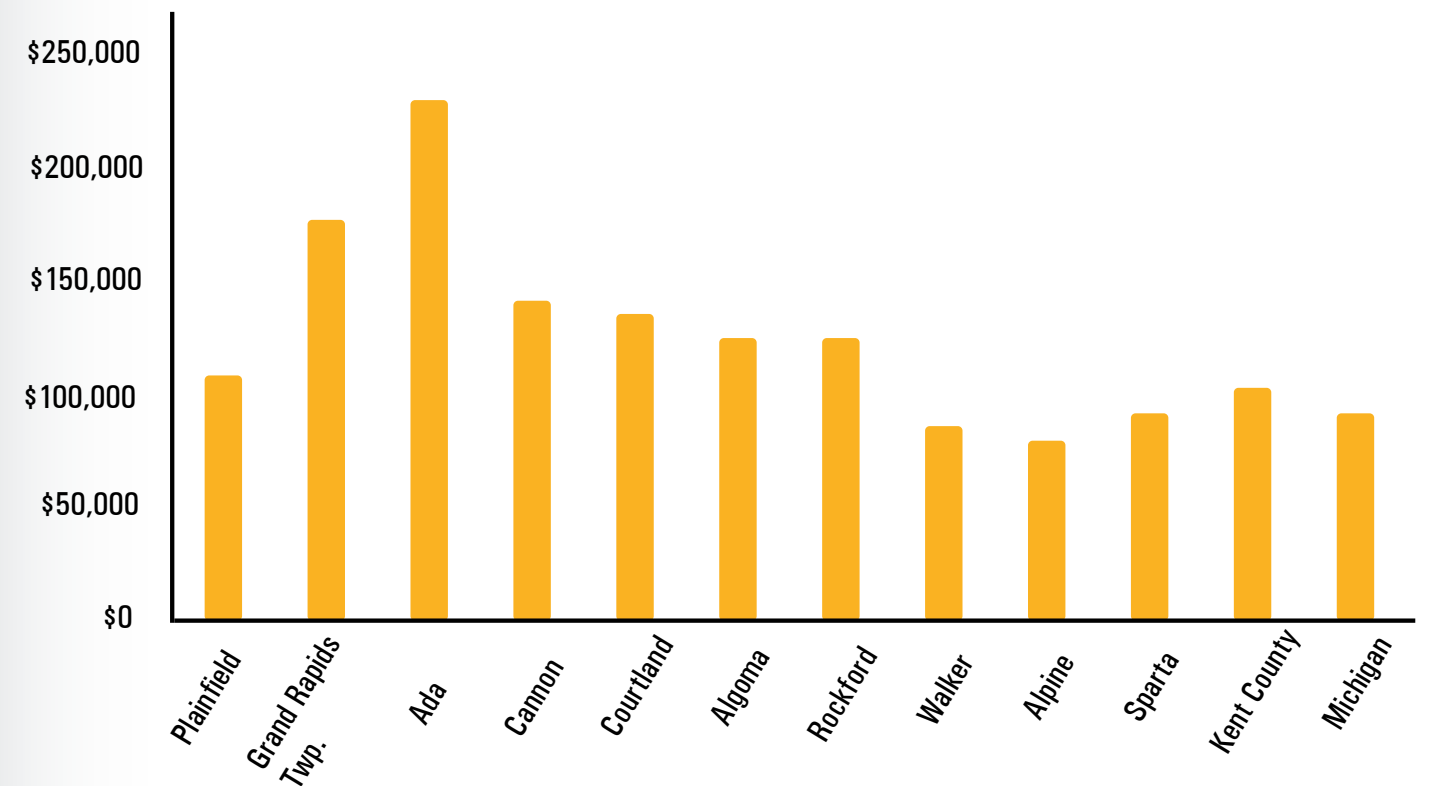
## INCOME

The average household income is a popular measure for determining the economic strength of an area. Income in relation to other components of the market can be a very telling sign of the wellbeing of the residents. Over the past twelve years, the residents of the Township have grown more affluent. The Township's average household income has grown significantly from \$71,881 in 2010 to \$107,241 in 2022. 43% of households make over \$100,000 annually, with 22% making \$150,000 annually or higher. Plainfield's median household income is \$84,900. Kent County has experienced a similar, slightly higher, increase in household income averages over the last 12 years from \$61,178 in 2010 to \$102,206 in 2022.

Why have household income averages increased? Several factors can contribute to the rise in average household income since 2010. It's important to note that economic conditions are complex, and multiple factors can influence income trends such as economic recovery from the financial crisis of 2008, employment growth, wage growth, inflation and cost of living adjustments, educational attainment, and changes in household structure.

In comparison to Plainfield's neighboring communities, average household income in the Township is similar to that of most, most closely to Grand Rapids and Kent County overall.

**Comparison of Mean Household Incomes in Neighboring Communities**  
Source: ACS 2022



## HOUSING IN PLAINFIELD

There is a demand for housing of different sizes and typologies due to changing demographics and lifestyles in the area.



## PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD

The current average household size in the Township is 2.53 persons per household, a drop from 2.56 persons per household in 2020 and 2.73 persons per household in 2010. It is expected that this trend will continue. Household sizes are shrinking in communities for a variety of reasons, and Plainfield experiences this same reality.

Shrinking household sizes reflect various shifts in societal, economic, and cultural dynamics. Here are some key factors contributing to the trend of smaller household sizes:

1. **Different Families:** Families now come in various forms, like singles, couples without kids, or smaller nuclear families. Not everyone lives with extended family anymore.
2. **Waiting to Settle Down:** People are waiting longer to get married and have kids. They're focusing on education and work first, leading to smaller households.
3. **Money Matters:** Finances play a big role. The high cost of living and raising kids makes some people choose to have fewer children, wait longer to start a family, and in the current scape of homeownership, unable to purchase a home of their own.
4. **Living Longer:** People are living longer, and older individuals may live alone or with a partner after their kids move out, leading to smaller households.
5. **Renting Instead of Buying:** Some prefer renting or owning smaller homes, and for some it is the only option. It's often more affordable and requires less upkeep.
6. **Technology and Remote Work:** Technology allows people to work from anywhere. This can make them more mobile, and some may move for work, impacting household size.

### What does this mean for the housing stock in the Township?

Shrinking household sizes has significant implications for the number of housing units needed in a community. This demographic trend increases the housing demand; more housing units are required to accommodate the same population, especially if population continues to increase as persons per household continues to decrease. Along with an increased demand for

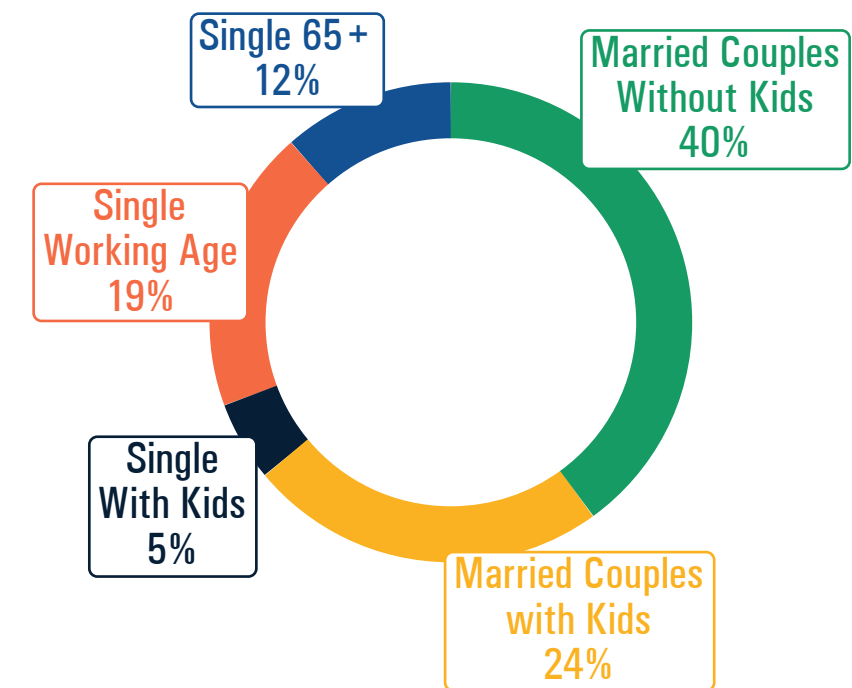
housing, increased housing diversity is also essential; there is a greater need for smaller living spaces and infill development to cater to single-person households, couples without children, and housing that suits the needs of the Township's seniors or empty nesters. In this same vein, housing diversity must meet the needs of varying financial capacities; living alone places increased costs on individuals, housing being one of the most prevalent costs. Attainable housing planning is crucial. As household sizes shrink, an increased emphasis must be placed on diversity in the housing stock and increased mixed-use developments. These can provide a variety of housing options, workspaces, and amenities within a concentrated area, promoting a more sustainable and walkable community that meets the needs of all people.

## HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

In taking a deeper look at who makes up the 2.53 persons per household statistic for the Township, alignment, or lack thereof, between the community's people and its homes can be analyzed. As displayed below, most of the households in the Township – about 40% of them – are comprised of married couples without kids. In relation to the data pertaining to resident age in the above sections, this may be explained by the large percentage of Baby Boomer residents whose children have likely moved out of their homes. This group of children of the Baby Boomers, categorized as Millennials, now have their own homes where they may be married with kids - comprising 24% of the Township's housing composition, single with kids – comprising 5% of the Township's housing composition, or single and of working age – comprising 19% of the Township's housing composition. As household sizes continue to decrease, these percentages will continue to shift.



### Plainfield Housing Composition, 2022



Source: ACS 2022

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

School enrollment data is a valuable indicator that offers insights into a community's demographic and economic characteristics. It reflects population trends and age distribution, providing information about the demand for educational services and the potential growth or decline of the community. School enrollment trends also inform what kind of housing options are needed in the community. School enrollment figures are critical for planning educational infrastructure and anticipating future needs for resources and facilities. As displayed below, enrollment rates have decreased across all of the districts, except for Rockford, displaying that there are fewer children in the area.

### Rockford Public Schools

The Rockford Public School District has maintained nearly the same enrollment rate since 2008. The district has a total current enrollment of approximately 7,719 students, an increase of 19 students since 2008.

### Comstock Park Public Schools

The Comstock Park School District enrollment rate is currently 1,776 students. This is a decrease of 568 students since 2008 when there was an enrollment rate of 2,344.

### Northview Public Schools

The Northview Public School District serves the southern, most densely populated portions of Plainfield. The total enrollment is currently 3,061 students, a decrease of 239 students since 2008's enrollment of 3,300.

As stated in the following section, 71.6% of households in the Township are made up of 3 or 4 bedrooms. As school enrollment continues to decline, as does the demand for houses with 3 or more bedrooms.



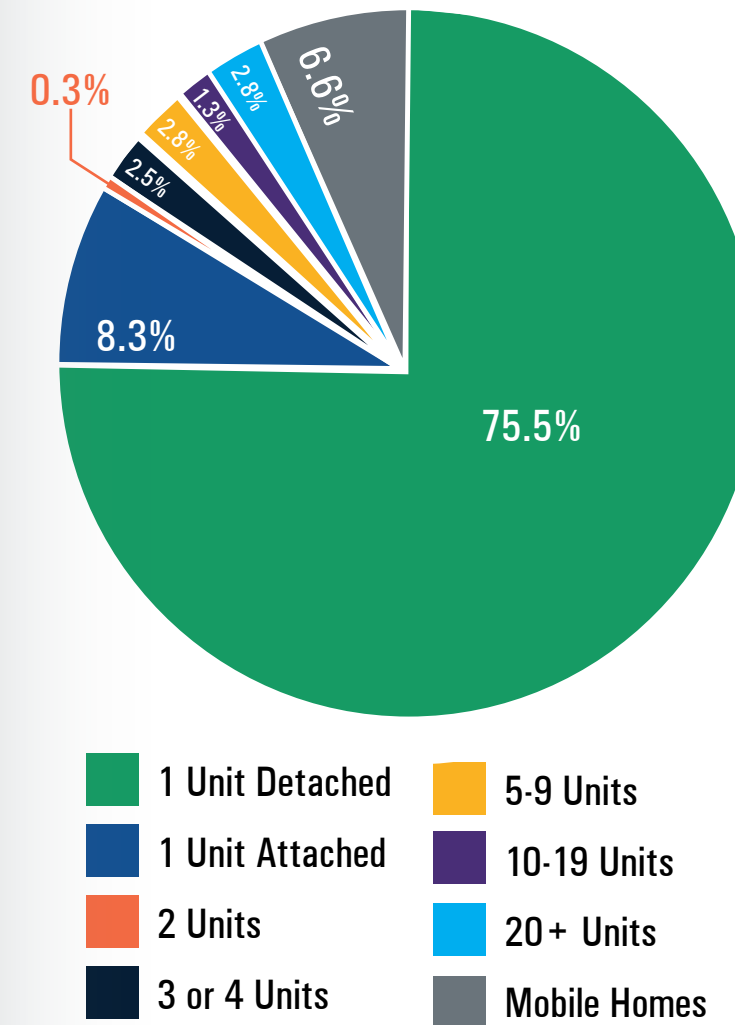
Northview Highschool, Plainfield Charter Township

## HOUSING STOCK

The housing stock of the Township in relation to household composition must be analyzed. There are approximately 13,694 housing units within the Township – compared to 262,724 in Kent County. 86% of these houses are owner-occupied. The majority of the Township's housing stock is comprised of single-detached homes and or multi-unit apartment complexes. One of the goals outlined in the Future Land Use Chapter of this plan is to identify locations for incorporation and creative infill of housing of varying size and type. The graph below illustrates the percentage of different housing types in the Township currently. In comparison to the Housing Composition graph shared in the above section, there is a mismatch present. 71% of the Township's housing is occupied by 1- and 2- person households without children.

However, 1-unit detached houses make up 63% of the Township's housing stock. Furthermore, the majority of these homes contain 3 or 4 bedrooms – in excess of what is needed by residents. The smaller living spaces that exist to be utilized by smaller families are few and far between within the Township – 6% of the housing stock is comprised of attached single-unit homes, such as townhouses, and 7% is comprised of duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes, crucial "Missing Middle" structures. This is a key opportunity for the Township to build upon.

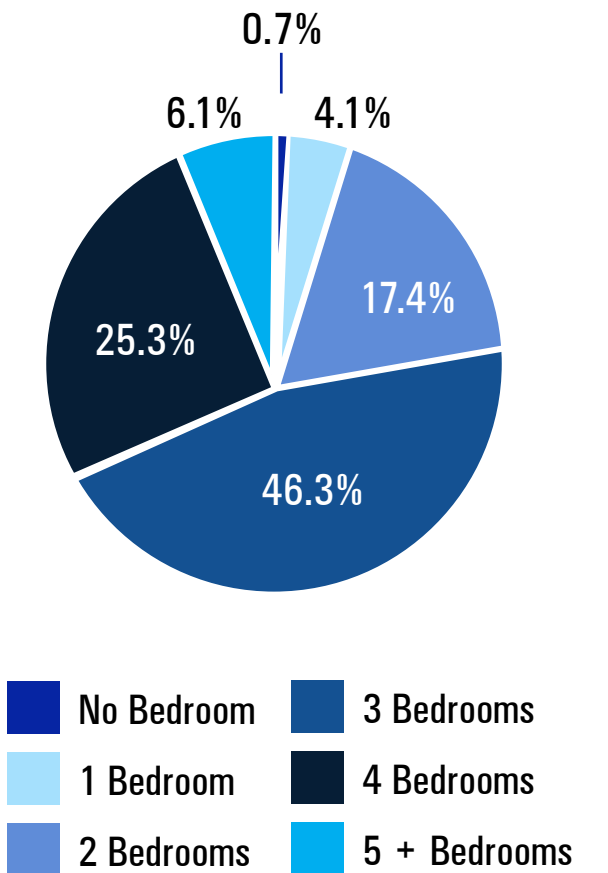
### Plainfield Housing Stock, 2022



Source: ACS 2022

**71% of the Township's housing is occupied by 1- and 2- person households. 1-unit detached houses make up 75.5% of the Township's housing stock.**

### Bedrooms Per Structure



Source: ACS 2022

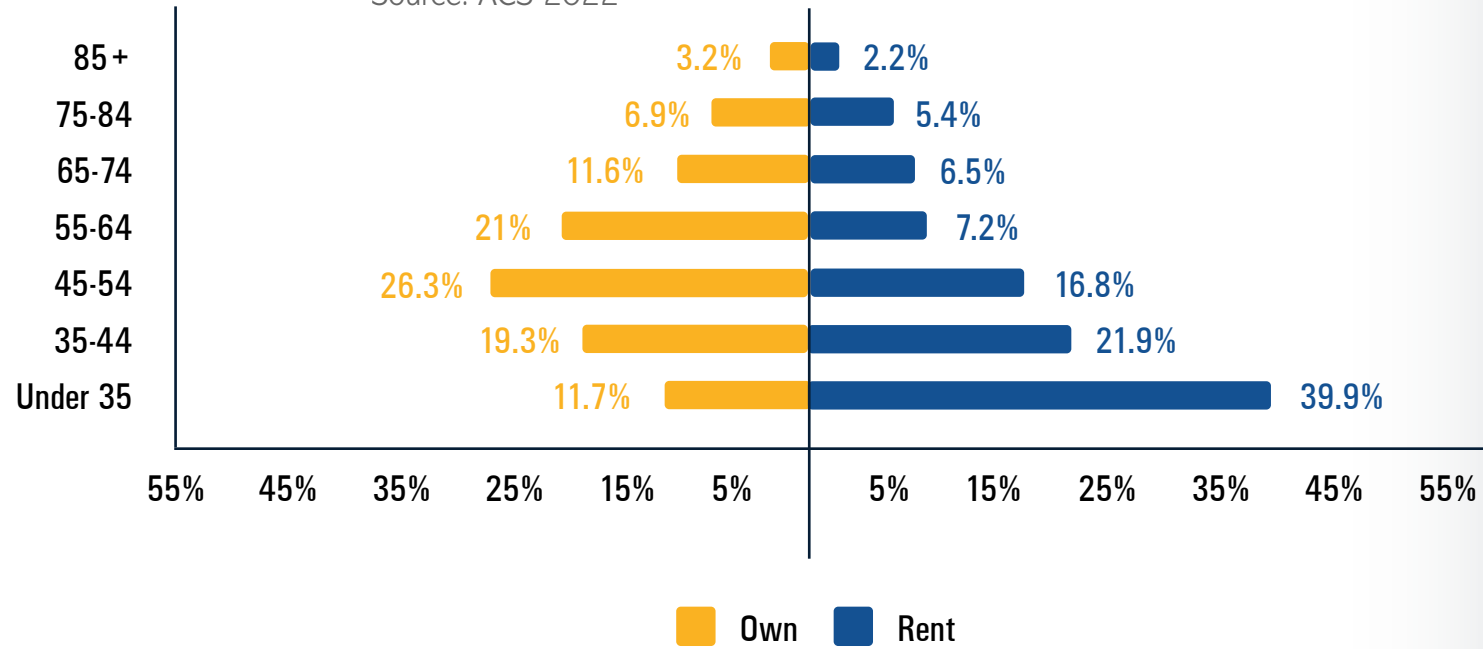
## AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER

As displayed below, the majority of homeowners in the Township fall within the 55-64 age range. The majority of renters in the Township are under 35 years old, with rentership generally decreasing as ages rise. The rising age of homeowners is influenced by delayed entry into

the housing market due to factors like economic challenges, high housing costs, and changing lifestyle choices. Young adults are living alone for longer, choosing to have children later, or not having children. First time home buyers typically cannot afford to purchase a 3 bedroom single-unit home, and therefore are renting well into their 30s.

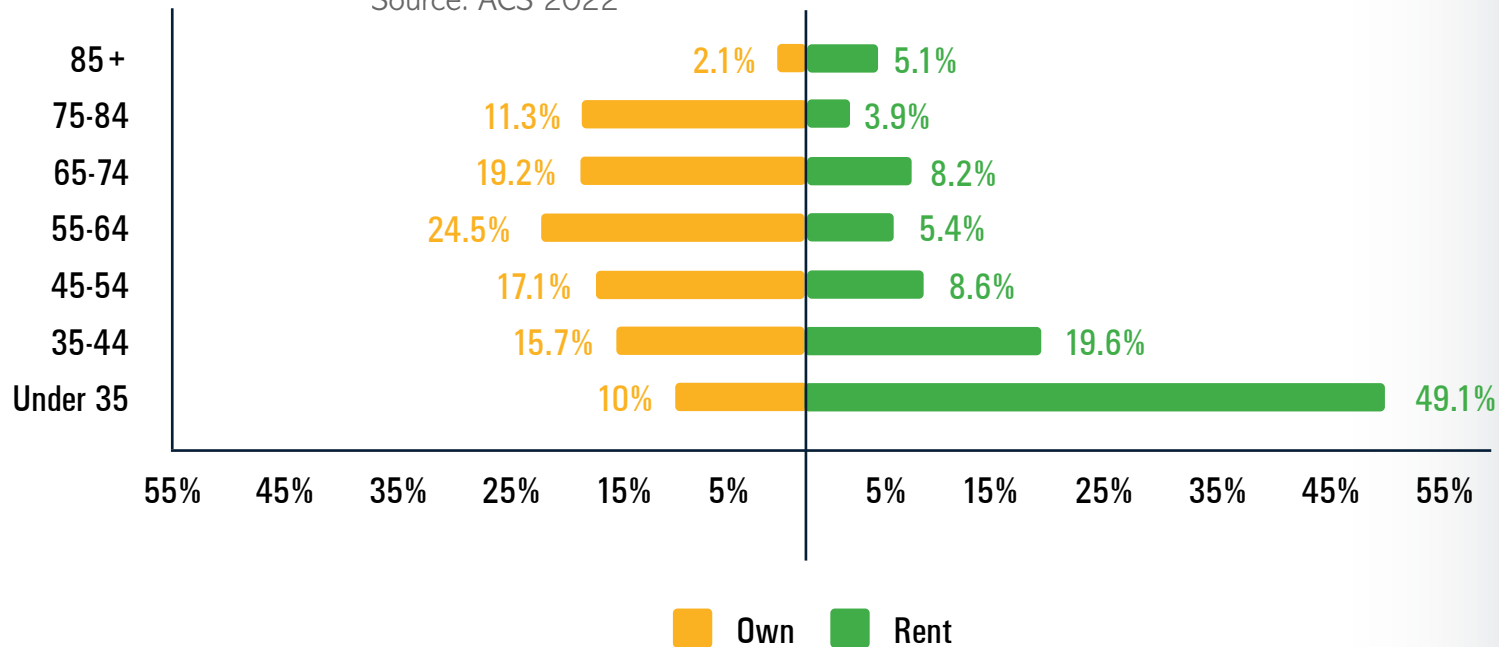
Housing by Age of Householder in 2010 (Own Vs. Rent)

Source: ACS 2022



Housing by Age of Householder in 2022 (Own Vs. Rent)

Source: ACS 2022



## INCOME-HOUSING PRICE DATA COMPARISON

As outlined in the Income section of this Chapter on page 53, the median yearly household income in the Township as of 2022 is \$84,900. The graphic below displays the median household income and household value for the Township in 2010 and 2022.

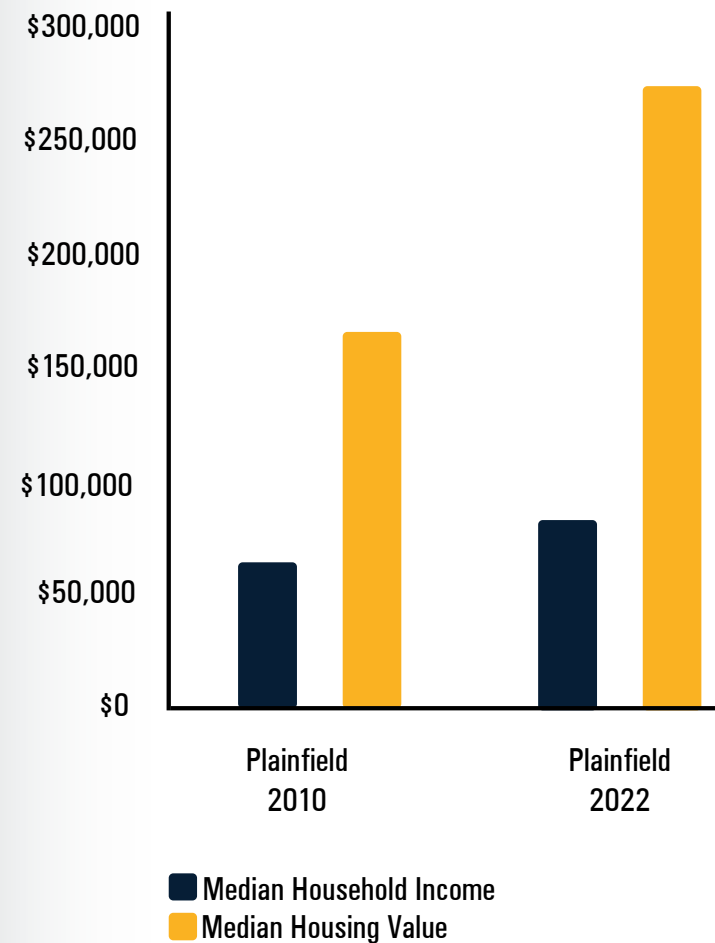
## INCOME-HOUSING PRICE DATA COMPARISON

A significant income-house value gap indicates a lack of affordability for many residents. This can result in a housing affordability crisis, where a large portion of the population struggles to find affordable housing options.

Lower disposable income due to high housing costs can lead to reduced consumer spending on non-housing-related goods and services. This can have a negative impact on local businesses and the overall economy.

Median Household Income and Housing Value (2010 to 2022)

Source: ACS 2022



Determining what constitutes a “significant” income-house value gap can vary depending on the local economic conditions, housing market dynamics, and overall cost of living in a particular area. However, a commonly used metric to evaluate housing affordability is the price-to-income ratio.

$$\text{Price-to-Income Ratio} = \frac{\text{Median Home Price}}{\text{Median Household Income}}$$

The price-to-income ratio is a measure that compares the median home price to the median household income in a given area. A ratio above a certain threshold is often considered indicative of potential housing affordability challenges.

As a general guideline:

- A price-to-income ratio of 3 or lower is often considered affordable.
- A ratio between 3 and 4 suggests moderate affordability challenges.
- A ratio above 4 may indicate significant affordability issues.

The Price to Income Ratio for the Township is **3.14**, indicative of a need for moderate affordability changes. Further supporting this need is the increased ratio seen from 2010, where the Price to Income Ratio for the Township was 2.68.

This ratio is supplemental information and must be analyzed in the context of other economic factors, such as job opportunities, wage growth, and the availability of affordable housing options. It’s not solely about the numerical ratio but also about the impact on households and the overall economic health of a community. However, the price to income ratio for Plainfield should be considered as efforts to diversify the housing stock begin. Housing demand is

continuing to increase and to ensure that the income-house value gap does not do the same, action must be taken now with the information available.

## MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

“Missing middle housing” refers to a range of moderate-density residential structures that fall between traditional single-family homes and larger apartment buildings or high-rises. These housing types are often absent or insufficient in many housing markets, contributing to a gap in available options. Missing middle housing includes various architectural styles and forms such as duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, courtyard apartments, and small-scale multiplexes. The term highlights the need for more diverse and affordable housing choices, promoting sustainable, walkable neighborhoods while efficiently using land resources. The introduction of missing middle housing aims to address housing shortages, improve affordability, and create more vibrant, mixed-use communities.

The introduction of missing middle housing enhances neighborhood diversity, preserves green spaces, and promotes sustainable development. The flexibility in housing options accommodates varying household sizes and lifestyles, while the improved density supports better public transportation and stimulates economic development. Culturally and socially, it builds a sense of community by bringing together residents from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, missing middle housing is adaptable to changing demographic needs, making it a valuable component in creating resilient, sustainable, and livable communities. Successful implementation requires careful urban planning, zoning policies, and community involvement to align with the unique characteristics of the area.



## Design

Diversification of the housing stock does not mean that the face of the Township’s existing neighborhoods has to change. Through thoughtful design, housing types different than the single-unit homes that currently characterize the community can be creatively incorporated into the existing stock while simultaneously enhancing the quality of the area. New housing options will make sense within the context of where they are developed, ensuring the continued character of the Township’s neighborhoods while addressing the prevalent housing needs of the area and fostering rich diversity.



# TRANSFORMATION OF THE PLAINFIELD AVENUE CORRIDOR

With the adoption of the Reimagine Plainfield Corridor Improvement Plan, the Township is well-positioned to transform its once strip-mall style commercial areas into vibrant mixed-use nodes with people-oriented transportation considerations.



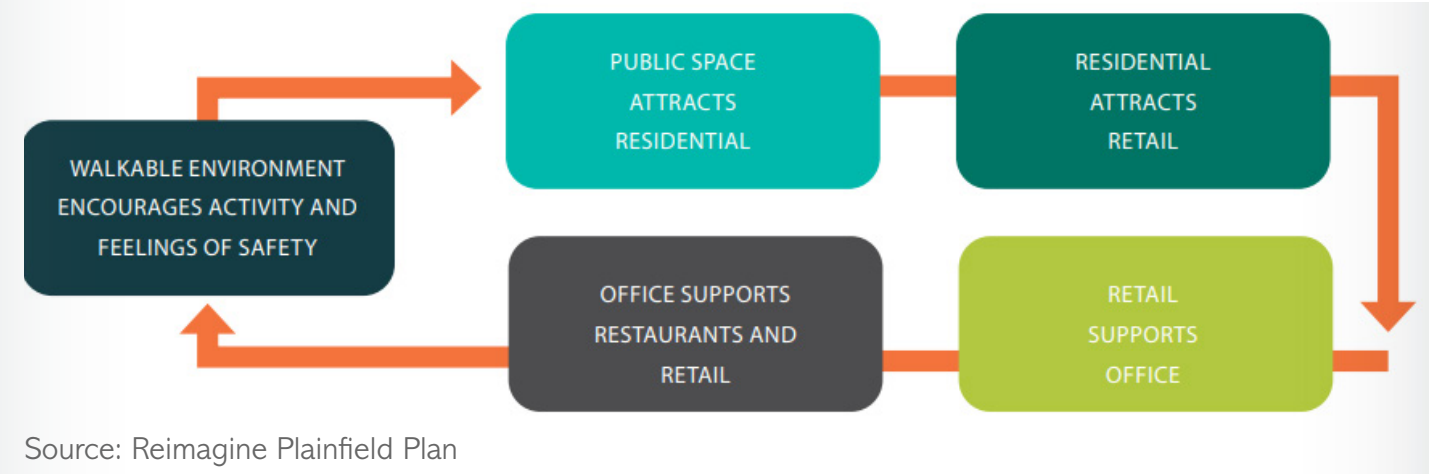
Cultivating a vibrant commercial area with mixed-use nodes and placemaking practices is crucial for the Township’s economic, social, and environmental resilience. This approach not only creates a more dynamic and attractive community for current residents but also positions the Township for sustained growth and adaptability in the future. Reimagine Plainfield champions these sentiments and its adoption by the Township Board on May 24, 2021 positioned the Township to begin making the changes it sets forth – an update of the Comprehensive Plan creates a strong alignment and partnership between the two documents. [View Reimagine Plainfield here.](#)

A key theme of the Reimagine Plainfield Plan is to “encourage a diverse, mixed-use environment that includes more housing”. Within this update, the expansion and specialization of the Mixed-Use Areas category, notably in the three Subareas, allows for the right-sizing of community commercial areas, allowing for the replacement of the previous Commercial/Office 2017 Plan designation. The new Mixed-Use Areas designation intends to provide a framework for future unique and modern development with flexibility in style and use at varying scales.

Mixed-use development does the following:

- Provide a range of housing types and costs to accommodate a variety of incomes, ages, and lifestyle choices
- Enhance market support for retail concentrations by increasing the resident population within walking distance
- Create human-scale and continuity of activity
- Ensure pedestrian orientation and safety are prioritized within the core of a mixed-use center
- Adaptive reuse is a strong option for the areas of Plainfield that have existing infrastructure and a built environment that can be rethought (investment to enhance already developed industrial, commercial, and institutional areas)

By creating Mixed-Use Areas that are a custom fit to different locations within the Township (Town Centers, Core Connectors, and Neighborhood Nodes) mixed-use development can flourish at different scales that work to balance one another while providing widespread increased business diversity, housing options, and sense of place.



Source: Reimagine Plainfield Plan

## IMPLICATIONS

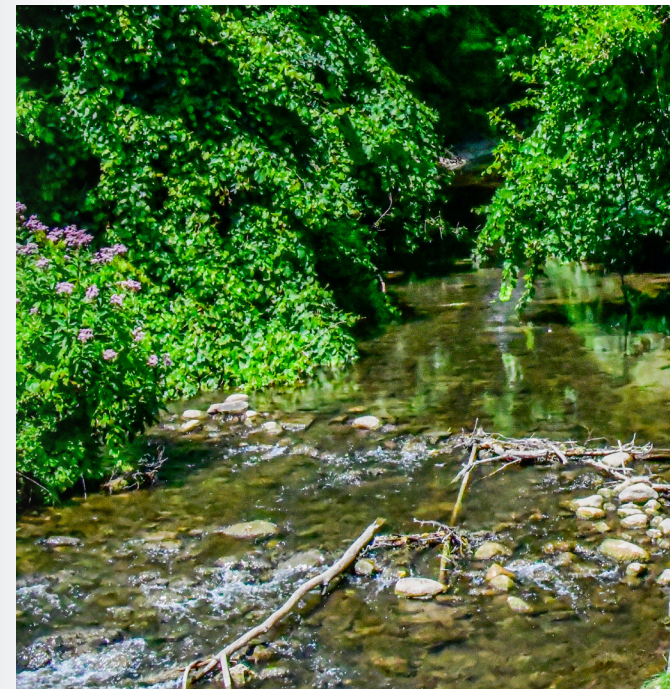
The way in which transportation systems are designed and therefore operate have an undeniable role in influencing the function and wellbeing of a community by shaping the accessibility, safety, and overall livability of the environment. Thoughtful transportation design enhances accessibility to essential services and opportunities, fostering community cohesion. Safe and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure promotes active transportation, contributing to improved physical health and reduced emissions for better air quality. Considerations such as reduced traffic noise, equitable access, and green spaces contribute to lower stress levels and increased mental well-being. Urban designs that prioritize walkability and incorporate human-scale elements create pleasant, community-centric environments that encourage social interactions and healthier lifestyles. In essence, transportation design plays a pivotal role in shaping communities that support the holistic well-being of their residents, emphasizing safety, accessibility, and the creation of vibrant and inclusive public spaces.

Using the Reimagine Plainfield Plan as a catalyst, the Township can work to transform the Plainfield Corridor, creating a vibrant stretch of revitalized business and mixed-use development that people not only travel through, but also to.

Research shows that improved walkability, including proximity to public transit, has a positive effect on a host of commercial real estate metrics. An improvement in Walk Score®, the yardstick by which many measure how walkable a particular address, neighborhood and city are, strongly correlates with an increase in property values, rents, retail sales, occupancy, absorption and price resilience in downturns. According to a study conducted by HR&A (real estate and economic development non-profit), mixed-use developments outperform single-use properties in both central business districts and suburban settings alike. Similarly, mixed-use projects located in suburban areas tend to outperform their single-use suburban peers. Shifting preferences among both the millennial and baby boomer generations, which are each gravitating toward new urban environments, drive the outperformance of these walkable developments. The outperformance can also be explained by companies that leverage walkability and strong amenities to attract top-tier talent and are willing to pay a rent premium for highly walkable space. What is perhaps most salient to property investors is that there is still a great lack of “highly walkable” real estate supply across property types in the U.S. This may represent a significant generational investment opportunity.

# 3. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goals and Objectives form the policy foundation of the Plainfield Township Master Plan. The Goals and Objectives from the 2008 Plan were founded on the extensive and meaningful public input that was gathered as part of the planning process. They represent the values and desires of the Township's elected and appointed officials and the public. As part of the 2017 Master Plan Update effort, the Township reviewed all Goals and Objectives from the 2008 Plan to ensure they remain relevant. Building upon the goals that have been established, reviewed, and refined, this 2024 update will continue to do the same, looking through the lens of Plainfield Township as it exists today.



Mill Creek, Plainfield Charter Township

## NATURAL FEATURES AND RECREATION

The Grand River, Rogue River, lakes and streams in the Township will be characterized by clean and cold water, natural riparian areas, and vital habitats for wildlife. These areas will include lands protected from development and areas that have been carefully developed to preserve and protect features.

- Prepare an inventory of natural features to clearly define features with environmental and aesthetic significance in the community.
- Implement the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan to ensure environmental quality.
- Continue to take a leadership role in working with upstream communities on both rivers and with the appropriate watershed councils to continually improve water quality.
- Explore a Natural Rivers designation for appropriate segments of the Grand River.
- Continually work to bring into public ownership or into conservation status, key riverbank and floodplain areas that are important to protection of water quality.

- Continue to promote natural filter/buffer strips and other mitigation efforts along the edges of rivers, lakes and streams, and wetlands to mitigate the impacts of runoff on sensitive water bodies.

The rich natural features of the community will serve as a sustainable resource for environmentally appropriate human recreation and use. Their preservation and enjoyment will be of the highest priority and opportunities to connect people to nature should be thoughtfully utilized whenever possible.

- Align zoning regulations and provide incentives for developments and undeveloped properties that tactfully connect the public with the natural features of the community.

Public parks, trails, recreational facilities and private recreation lands will be conveniently located, safe and well-maintained to serve existing and emerging neighborhoods.

- Township policies will recognize and support both publicly sponsored facilities and activities and recreation uses on private lands.
- The Township will prioritize the extension, connectivity, sustainability and access to the Township's trail network, recreational facilities, and the regional trail systems in Kent County.
- Recreation sites will be equitably dispersed throughout the Township, with particular focus for areas that have a combination of higher development densities and/or smaller lot sizes.
- The Township will continue to look for opportunities to acquire land in strategic locations to enhance natural ecosystems, protect natural features and provide

- greenways to filter storm water, create habitat and unobtrusive trail ways.
- The Township will continue to improve, maintain and renovate aging park infrastructure through existing and new funding sources.
- The Township will continue to promote diverse activities for people to partake in makes for a healthy vibrant community.



Grand Rogue Park, Plainfield CHarter Township

## INFRASTRUCTURE: WATER, SEWER, AND TRANSPORTATION

The land use plans of the Township will guide and direct the rational and sequential expansions of the public water and wastewater systems in the Township.

- Establish land use and zoning policies that reflect residential densities and commercial and industrial intensities that take into

- Develop and adopt utility policies to ensure that expansion of the systems will be driven by land use objectives and not by revenue considerations.
- Establish and periodically evaluate an urban growth boundary and prevent the expansion of utilities beyond the growth boundary until objective and pre-determined threshold requirements are met.

All modes of travel will proceed through and within the Township safely and at reasonable speeds along safe and attractive roadways dispersed through the community.

- Strengthen relationships with the Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to facilitate cooperative approaches to road planning and design, and with The Rapid, with regard to mass transit.
- Develop a Township Transportation Improvement Master Plan.
- Develop and implement a plan of future roadways to improve multi-modal connections across the Township and within the region.
- Develop and implement an access management plan and corresponding road design standards for Plainfield Avenue in alignment with MDOT's general parameters for arterial thoroughfares, referencing the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities.
- Achieve high aesthetic value for the Township's major roadways through the incorporation of roadside greening components, an increased tree canopy,

and the installation of landscaped medians.

A network of safe and convenient pedestrian and non-motorized pathways, sidewalks and trails will connect neighborhoods to commercial and employment centers, public transit, health care and educational institutions, and the community's many natural features and recreational opportunities.

- The Township will prioritize trails, sidewalks and pathways that connect the east and west sides of the township, along the Grand River, existing trails, neighborhoods, schools.
- Incorporate the recommendations of the Grand Valley Metro Council's Non-Motorized Transportation Plan to increase opportunities for recreational and commuting needs.



## HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods will be designed to accommodate people of all ages and households of all types.

- Include a mix of allowable housing types and sizes to accommodate people in all stages of life, varied housing preferences, and a range of incomes.
- Amend residential zone districts to reduce complexity and add flexibility for housing types.
- Revise zoning regulations that affect housing supply and choice, such as lot width and lot area requirements, and minimum house size.



Neighborhood design will encourage and preserve character and sense of community, while preventing sprawl.

- Encourage increased residential density where public infrastructure exists.
- Prioritize infill development over greenfield development.
- Develop a building and site element design standards manual to be referenced during the approval process of housing developments to ensure sustained character.
- Encourage inclusion of traditional neighborhood elements with a focus on a consistent local street network, sidewalks, street trees, and compact design.
- Promote walkable neighborhoods by emphasizing front porches and de-emphasizing garages and car parking.
- Prepare a pre-approved residential plans lookbook allowing for swift approvals of housing options that align with the desired design characteristics of the neighborhood.



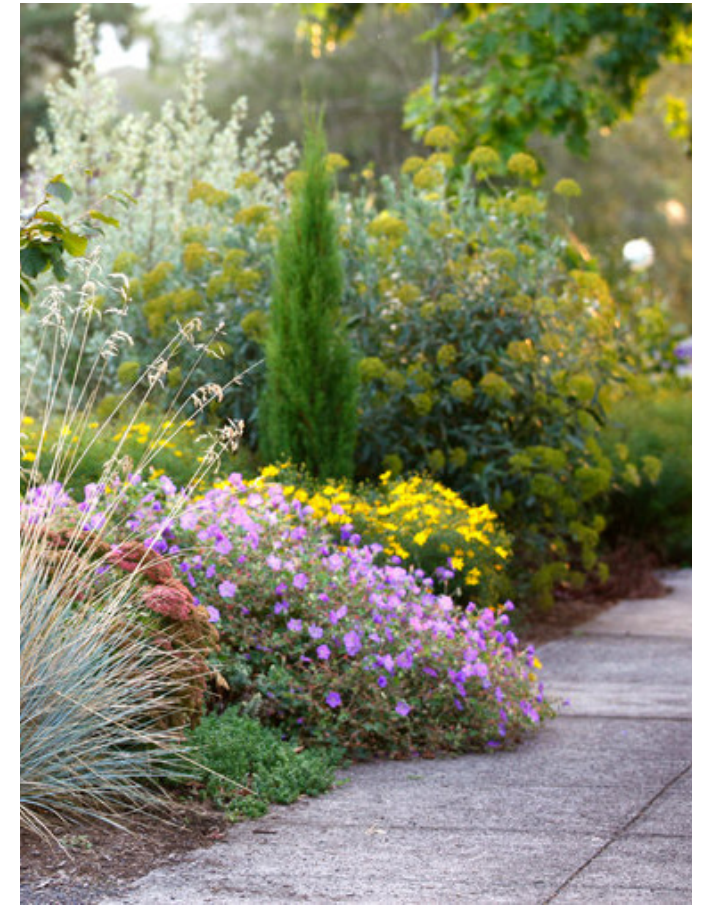
## DEVELOPMENT

The Township will take an active role to implement the goals outlined in the Master Plan.

- Adopt a development incentives policy that defines Township Board expectations in the granting of allowable financial incentives.
- Create a “Toolbox” that provides clarity on Township development incentives, partners, and programs.
- Reinstate and promote the Plainfield Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority
- Administer and promote the Brownfield Authority.

Commercial developments in the Township will be diverse, responsible, economically viable, vibrant, and adaptive to ensure their longevity and ability to serve the community and provide meaningful job opportunities.

- Provide incentives for commercial developments that incorporate pedestrian-oriented spaces to create a relationship between businesses and the public realm.
- Provide incentives for commercial developments that reutilize existing infrastructure to allow existing buildings to be transitioned into new uses.
- Partner with regional economic development efforts to promote the health of Township businesses and to attract desirable commercial and industrial land uses.



The Township will develop in a form and manner that meets the needs of the generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- Encourage environmental design standards consistent with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) requirements to apply to new sites and buildings and, as appropriate, to redevelopment.
- Provide incentives for transit-supported development.
- Implement innovative storm water management techniques, such as pervious pavement, rain gardens and similar facilities to minimize downstream impacts resulting from growth.

# 4. FUTURE LAND USES

The Future Land Use Plan is a visionary guide, shaping the uses of the community for the next 10-15 years. Each category was thoughtfully developed through consideration of the natural and built environments of the Township and the experiences that occur within and between the two. The categories are supported by an analysis of existing land uses and conditions, demographic and housing statistics, physical constraints and resources, community infrastructure, circulation patterns, community engagement, and the dynamic goals and objectives of this plan. Through land use planning and zoning controls, the Township intends to ensure that the character of neighborhoods is preserved, that economic development is encouraged, and that activation of mixed-use areas and diversification in use types will cultivate vibrant and exciting places to be for all. The future land use map and supporting narrative are especially important guides for the Township Planning Commission and Board of Trustees for reviewing rezone requests, zoning text changes, and evaluating development projects.

## 2017 FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

- Rural Preserve
- Country Residential
- Low Density Residential

- Moderate Density Residential
- Mixed-Use Areas
- Commercial/Office
- Industrial

## 2024 FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

- Parks and Open Space
- Country Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Neighborhood Residential
  - Mixed-Use Areas
    - Neighborhood Nodes
    - Core Connectors
    - Town Centers
- Office Park
- Flexible Industrial

## FUTURE LAND USE GOALS AND CHANGES (2017-2024)

In 2017, the Township updated its Comprehensive Plan, resulting in validated and refined future land use categories. Since then, there have been dramatic changes in the Township as well as the sectors that comprise the built environment. Shrinking household sizes and household preferences are causing us to think differently about a community's housing stock and the value of walkable places is now being supported with data.

New water lines will be expanding into Plainfield's northwest quadrant due to Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) contamination. Reimagine Plainfield was adopted last year to reinvigorate the Plainfield Avenue Corridor.

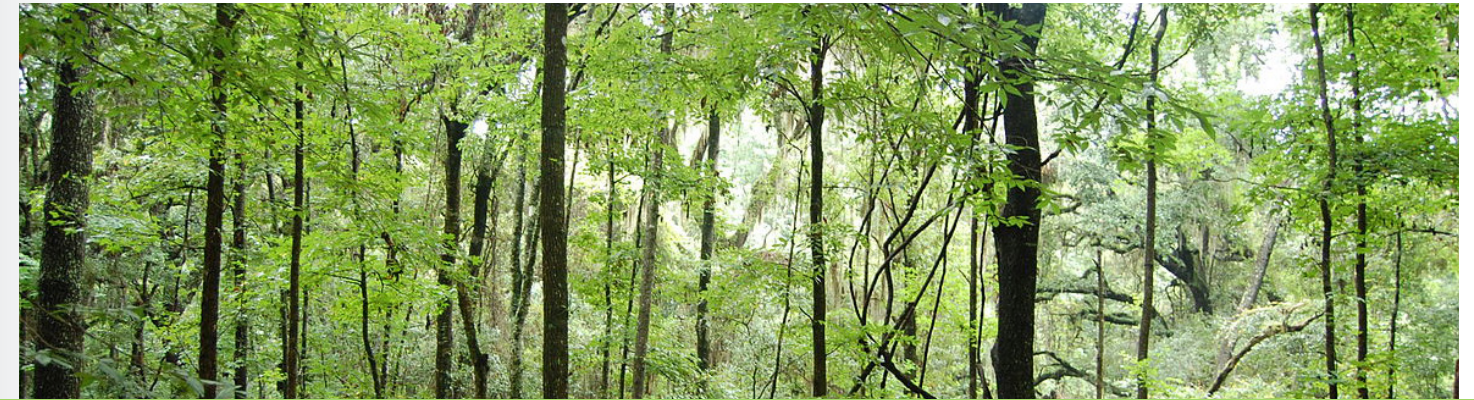
Consistent collaboration and workshops with the Plainfield Charter Township Planning Commission and insights gathered from the 2024 Master Planning Community Survey informed the 2024 Future Land Use Categories. Common themes gathered from the Community Survey are represented by the following resident responses:

- Encouraging more family owned, unique restaurants instead of chains. Attracting some more stores which will draw people further north up Plainfield.
- Nature and recreation. Be the oasis of tranquility amongst the developed areas.
- To provide housing for all economic classes
- Housing and retail variety
- Growth without disturbing the rural nature of the majority of the Township.
- Increase river sight lines and human access to the river front
- Diversity in housing options

By pairing the above findings with data collected within the Community Profile of this document, the 2024 Future Land Use Categories were carefully crafted to best guide the future of the Township while accurately reflecting community sentiment. Some of the significant changes that emerged from the 2017 Future Land Use Plan and the 2024 Future Land Use Plan include the following:

- Addition of the Parks and Open Space category, promoting the protection of the Township's existing parks and natural features while enhancing the people's enjoyment of them.

- Combination of the Rural Preserve and the Country Residential categories into a singular Country Residential category, emphasizing the importance of development being guided by nature, especially in environmentally sensitive areas of the Township that lack public infrastructure. (Floodplains, wetlands, topography, etc.)
- The Low Density Residential and Moderate Density Residential categories from the 2017 Plan were converted respectively to the Suburban Residential and Neighborhood Residential categories of the 2024 Plan. The intent of those districts has been refined to promote the construction of diversified housing typologies in areas of varying densities, most intensely in the Neighborhood Residential category. Density will be subject to availability and capacity.
- Expansion and specialization of the Mixed-Use Areas category, notably in the three Subareas, allows for the right-sizing of community commercial areas, allowing for the replacement of the previous Commercial/Office 2017 Plan designation. The new Mixed-Use Areas designation intends to provide a framework for future unique and modern development with flexibility in style and use at varying scales. An Office Park designation has been provided for specific areas that do not warrant a mix of commercial and/or residential uses.
- Refinement of the 2017 Industrial category into the 2024 Flexible Industrial designation allows for nimble highintensity use areas. Industrial locations within the Township must be resilient to change and able to seamlessly mesh with the surrounding community.



## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

### **INTENT:**

A symbiotic relationship between the Township's people and its rich natural environment.

### **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:**

The parks and open spaces of the Township should be specifically identified for their continued preservation and enhancement. These areas include open spaces, natural areas, large parks, and preservation areas currently existing within the Township. They should remain in their natural state and provide the community with places of recreation, reprieve, and minimal built elements.

The various parks, recreational amenities, and open spaces within this designation should be connected whenever possible to other Parks, Open Space, and Recreation areas, or smaller park areas to maximize their benefit to both humans and wildlife. With the Township's expanding trail network, trail connection to the different natural areas and parks is a priority. While large parks are included in this land use designation, smaller parks, and those within residential and commercial areas, are included as a part of that respective land use designation to ensure these areas are integrated with the fabric of that land use designation.

### **ASSOCIATED LAND USES:**

All areas should maintain uses that promote the inclusion of the public and provide recreational and gathering opportunities such as parks, playgrounds, natural open spaces, golf courses, trails, and other opportunities for connection with the natural world. Parks may include paths, picnic areas, recreation centers, and other structures that facilitate recreation.

### **TRANSPORTATION METHODS:**

Existing pedestrian and cyclist trails should be maintained. Additional pathways and associated amenities (i.e., bicycle racks, water fountains, wayfinding signage, lighting, etc.) should be constructed as needed. The connection of such pathways to connect the parks is strongly encouraged, as well as connection with the Township's trail network.

### **BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:**

There are no specific building and site design recommendations for this designation, although high-quality architecture is encouraged. Parks should be maintained and upgraded as needed and environmental preservation and enhancement should be the priority of all design decisions. Where there is private property within this designation, the construction of buildings must meet all environmental requirements.



## COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL

### INTENT:

Natural features guide the creation of the built environment with conservation and enhancement at the forefront.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Residential development in this area is used to not only accommodate but also celebrate environmentally sensitive locations or sites affected by physical features. Given that properties within this designation are not served by public utilities and are unlikely to be in the near future, lots will generally be of larger area and include single-unit housing types.

In the Rural Estate Zoning Designation, parcels will be approximately 1-2 acres in size. In the Rural Preserve Zoning Designation, parcels will be larger than 2 acres in size. Developments that preserve open space and natural features by concentrating/ clustering development in open areas may allow for increased units per acre. Intentional development of low-intensity and minimally-invasive housing amongst the rolling meadowlands and wooded hillsides that characterize these areas will allow the natural environment to remain the focal point. Protection of the floodplain and wetlands is a priority and development within them is strongly discouraged.

### ASSOCIATED LAND USES:

Typical uses in Country Residential areas include single-detached homes with parks, ample open space, and consistent opportunities for connection between the natural environment and those residing within it. Accessory dwelling units will be featured in these areas as well. In addition, so-called hobby farms and some field crop production may be expected in this area.



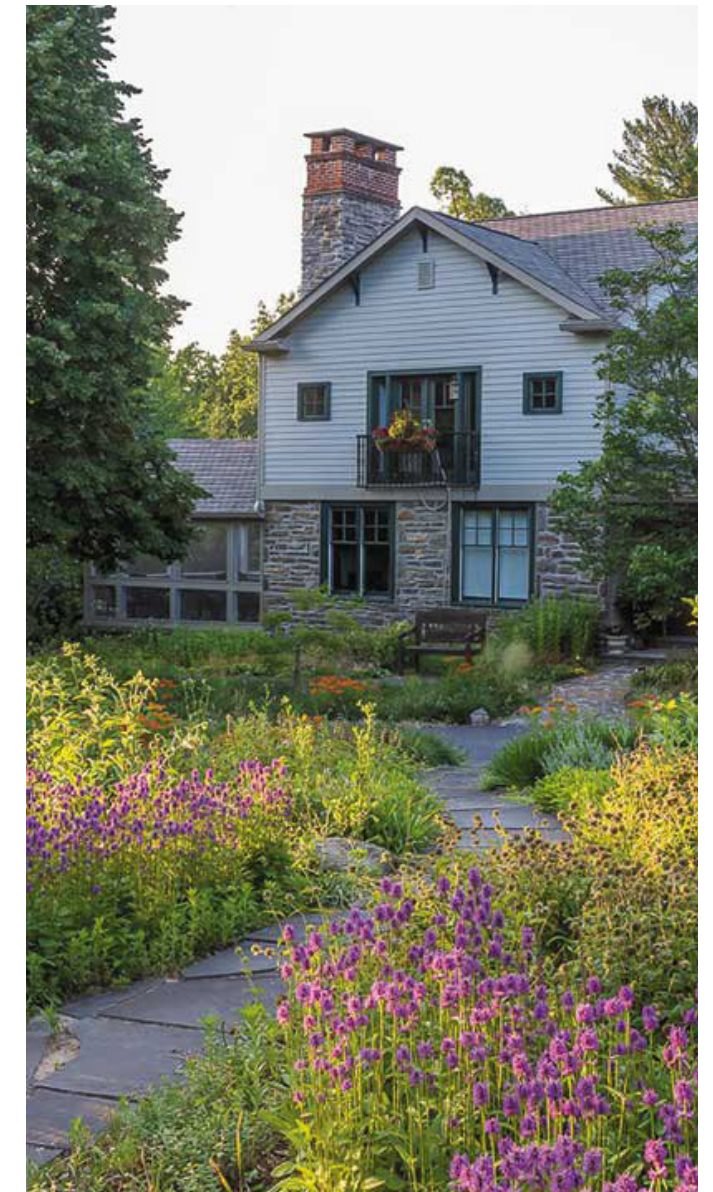
### TRANSPORTATION METHODS:

Streets should be well-connected to one another to provide access to major Township arterial roads. These streets have lower traffic volumes and are characterized by lower speeds. Private streets and cul-de-sacs are discouraged and should only be used in accordance with preservation of natural features. Sidewalk infrastructure with connections to the Township's trail network should be provided wherever possible. Although unlikely, public transit connections should be utilized when possible.



### BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:

New homes, including accessory dwelling units, should be constructed of high-quality materials and maintain the area's existing character. Fit and compatibility must be evaluated in each instance. The lot sizes and widths within this designation should match those of the existing surrounding lots. Cluster developments that preserve the natural environment will feature smaller lot sizes and increased density. Environmentally sustainable decisions should be made whenever possible in the effort to emphasize the natural environment as the guiding principle of all development in this district.





## SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

### INTENT:

Character preservation with gradual diversification of the housing stock.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

This designation provides housing stock consistent with the existing character of the Township and its typical subdivision and private street development patterns. There are opportunities in these existing low-density neighborhoods, served by public water and sewer, for infill of limited expanded housing options.

1-4 units per acre will be permitted. Single-detached homes will remain the primary makeup of these areas given their proximity to the low-intensity Country Residential designation, but multi-unit housing types will be considered in transitional areas. Steep slopes and terrain will limit densities.



### ASSOCIATED LAND USES:

Primarily single-detached homes with incorporation of townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and accessory dwelling units.

### TRANSPORTATION METHODS:

Streets should follow a connected pattern that respects topography and natural features, and therefore may not constitute a true “grid.” Connectivity does not only refer to streets and cars, but also to pathways, bikes, and people. Private streets and cul-de-sacs are discouraged and should only be used in accordance with preservation of natural features. Streets should feature elements such as sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, and a tree canopy. Where feasible, connections to the trail network and public transit are highly encouraged.



### BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:

Preserving the character of existing homes and the feel of the community is paramount; the lot sizes and widths within this designation should match those of the existing surrounding lots. The built form within this designation will maintain the existing character of the residential areas of the Township while integrating gradual diversity in housing types and encouraging pedestrian-oriented streetscapes. Fit and compatibility must be evaluated in each instance and density will be subject to availability and capacity. Infill residential development techniques are encouraged in this district where feasible. New housing units should be compatible and integrate with surrounding neighborhoods by aligning with their site orientation, bulk, massing, and proportion.





## NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL

### INTENT:

Collection of mixed-density home typologies, providing housing options of all shapes and sizes to diversify and cultivate community within neighborhoods.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

This designation provides diversified housing stock and market flexibility to allow for a wider range of housing choices by supporting residential development at varying densities in the suburban landscape, consistent with the goals of this Plan. These neighborhoods will be served by public water and sewer and will be rich with infill of diverse housing types, serving as an appropriate transition from Mixed-Use Areas to the lower intensity Suburban Residential and Country Residential areas.



1-9 units per acre will be permitted. Areas that are determined to be suitable for this land use that currently maintain a Suburban Residential development pattern will be reinvigorated with missing middle housing typologies. New housing developments are encouraged to provide diverse home types on different lot sizes that vary enough to provide a comprehensive range of home choices within the same neighborhood. New neighborhoods should include a network of open spaces throughout the site to accommodate small parks, multiple gathering spaces, and community gardens. Internal streets and open space in these areas should connect to existing or future neighborhoods nearby.



### ASSOCIATED LAND USES:

A mix of smaller lot, single-detached homes, with an emphasis on the development of duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, cottage court developments, accessory dwelling units, and other housing types. Apartment complexes will be permitted on a case-by-case basis where deemed suitable. Retail, schools, and other amenities should be located within nearby “Neighborhood Nodes.”

### TRANSPORTATION METHODS:

Streets should follow a connected pattern that respects topography and natural features, and therefore may not constitute a true “grid.” Connectivity does not only refer to streets and cars, but also to pathways, bikes, and people. Streets should feature elements such as sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, and a tree canopy. Where feasible, connections to the trail network and public transit are highly encouraged.

### BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:

The lot sizes and widths within this designation should coincide with those of the existing surrounding lots. The built form within this designation will generally maintain the existing character of the residential areas of the Township while allowing for flexibility and intentional integration of diverse housing types and increased density. Infill residential development techniques are highly encouraged in this district. New housing units should be compatible and well-integrated with surrounding neighborhoods and density will be subject to availability and capacity.



## RESIDENTIAL PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS (PUD)

A Planned Unit development (PUD) is a special district permitted in the Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission may consider a PUD where an Area Specific Plan has been completed or where flexible development standards are necessary to address special conditions with regard to setbacks, yards, building height, landscaping, and traffic circulation. As a form of zone change, a PUD must be recommended by the Planning Commission and approved by the Township Board.

Utilization of a PUD allows for cluster developments that are uniquely designed with fit and compatibility considerations at the forefront, allowing for a range of densities within the different residential districts.



## MIXED USE AREAS

### INTENT:

Land uses working in concert with one another to create areas of vibrancy, enhancing the community's economic vitality and the health and well-being of all residents.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

This designation champions an integrated mix of land uses provided within a pedestrian-oriented environment. Public and private spaces play an important role within individual developments, and connections to public transit are important. This district highlights the importance of supporting existing businesses and jobs in the community as well as providing opportunities for new enterprises to meet the changing needs of the community. The revitalization of underutilized sites and buildings through infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse is essential to maximizing available infrastructure, expanding access to housing and services, and minimizing the community's overall footprint. When a quality project comes forth, the Township may consider the addition of directly adjacent parcels into the project scope.

Uses are integrated in both a horizontal (side-by-side) and vertical (one use located above another) basis. These areas can include a variety of housing types, and the composite of land

uses can include civic and educational facilities, offices, and commercial establishments. Mixed-use development can occur at a variety of scales (Town Centers, Core Connectors, and Neighborhood Nodes).



Mixed-Use Areas will draw upon the recommendations of the Reimagine Plainfield Plan, adopted by the Township Board on May 24, 2021. The plan was created to encourage residents, property and business owners, developers, and other stakeholders to think differently about the Plainfield Avenue Corridor. Mixed-use development plays a large role in this Corridor transformation.



## ASSOCIATED LAND USES:

In Mixed-use Areas, appropriate land uses include live/work, duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes in conjunction with commercial and some light industrial (in certain circumstances) developments. Low-intensity businesses such as retail stores, personal services, small offices (including medical offices), and light industrial/creative industries (in certain circumstances), should populate the ground floors of buildings. Mixed-use areas must contain a collection of uses, either within the same building, within a defined area, or both! Uses may include the following:

- Residential Space
- Retail Space
- Office Space
- Institutional or Research Space
- Light Industrial space (in certain circumstances)
- Other



Existing development is primarily auto-oriented with drive-through facilities, large parking areas, and structures set back from the street. The area features a mix of large and small low-lying buildings and larger lodging and retail establishments. While most existing development is 1-2 stories, future development may be up to 8 stories on a case-by-case basis and within designated areas.

## TRANSPORTATION METHODS:

Streets in Mixed-use Areas should thoughtfully serve the scale of area they exist within. They should provide connections to Primary or Local streets. To create vibrancy and instill a sense of place, pedestrian-oriented facilities that encourage multi-modal travel are encouraged. Within developments, streets should provide safe walking and biking opportunities and infrastructure that makes the human feel safe, and not just the automobile. Where feasible, connections to the trail network and public transit are highly encouraged.



## BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:

Buildings should be built with high-quality materials and should be architecturally compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. Buildings with a connection to the street, including designs with attractive front facades, entrances, and porches or patios are all highly encouraged. Open spaces should be functional and allow for recreational enjoyment and the preservation of natural features. Architectural variation is highly encouraged to create character on long and connected facades. Buildings should front the street and provide parking to the rear wherever possible. Parking areas should be broken up with landscaped islands and trees.

Infill development is a key component within this designation, as within many of the preceding designations. A horizontal and/or vertical mix of uses is desired. Enhanced pedestrian connectivity and a reduction in surface parking is desired in certain areas. Development that backs up to neighborhoods should incorporate buffers and/or transitions in use and massing, and form to mitigate impacts on adjacent residential uses. These areas should make a visual distinction between key intersections and the rest of the corridor.





## MIXED USE AREAS: NEIGHBORHOOD NODES

### INTENT:

Community nodes uniquely developed to dynamically serve their directly surrounding areas; a “custom fit” thoughtfully tailored to the area.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Neighborhood Nodes are the lowest in intensity and smallest in scale of the Township’s Mixed-Use Area designations characterized by low-rise commercial areas typically located adjacent to, or within, existing residential neighborhoods. These areas provide goods and services to nearby residents within a short, comfortable walk or convenient drive from their homes, and serve as hubs of activity and socialization.

Limited mid-rise buildings can be expected in certain Neighborhood Nodes. Some types of auto-oriented uses, well-designed to support walkability, may be located on the edges of Neighborhood Node areas. Integrated residential uses are highly encouraged, and all Neighborhood Nodes should be integrated to coordinate with surrounding residential uses to provide support and pedestrian activity to provide customization.



### ASSOCIATED LAND USES:

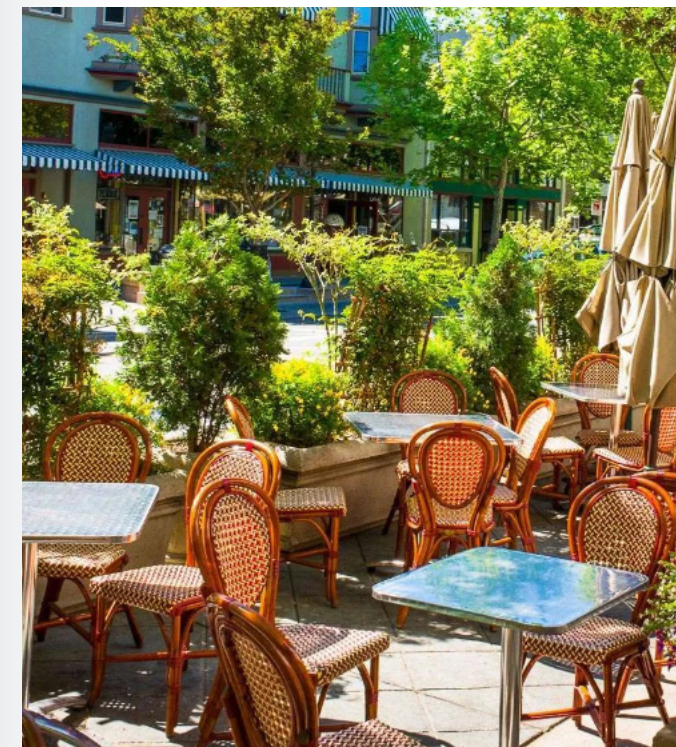
Features neighborhood-serving retail, office, and support services, as well as a variety of housing types designed in close collaboration with the needs of the area. Uses may include local restaurants, small-scale retail, bed and breakfasts, schools, libraries, churches, and more.

### TRANSPORTATION METHODS:

Neighborhood Nodes are designed to be local in nature; residents should feel comfortable and able to traverse to these areas without relying on automobiles. Infrastructure leading to and located within Neighborhood Nodes must accommodate pedestrians – providing safe options for walking and biking. Where feasible, connections to the trail network and public transit are highly encouraged.

### BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:

Buildings should fit the character of the surrounding neighborhood, with close attention being paid to detail. Outdoor gathering locations/ outdoor extensions of building uses are required to activate these areas. Density will be subject to availability and capacity. Each site should be pedestrian-oriented with placemaking elements guiding all design decisions. Buildings should vary in height, achieving anywhere from 1-3 stories in height. In certain circumstances, the Township will allow 8 stories in height, but this is highly discouraged in the Neighborhood Node designation. Robust landscaping should be installed throughout the site.



Plainfield Master Plan

### CALL-OUT AREAS:

The following 4 specialized areas are outlined to account for the unique conditions present within them, warranting specific land use considerations. They will generally follow the uses outlined by the Neighborhood Node Future Land Use Category, but they will have an additional set of recommendations to consider.

### AREA 1 - POST AND PINE ISLAND

The Post and Pine Island neighborhood is a unique area of the Township, located between the US-131 interchange and the Post Drive/Pine Island intersection, where the traffic from the northwest quadrant of the Township leads into Belmont Village. This area is characterized by small-scale commercial uses, including a locally owned restaurant, family dentistry, salon, dollar store, and more, along with limited highway commercial. The area is also home to Aspire Communities (a manufactured home community) and the accompanying self-storage facility, as well as a church. There is an abandoned Consumer’s Power satellite office and warehouse facility on a 16-acre parcel that presents a unique opportunity for residential infill to support the existing commercial uses. Additionally, at the time of this drafting, there is an approved Planned Unit Development on Post Drive including a mixed-use residential/commercial building along Post Drive with multi-family apartments in the back of the lot.

Anticipated uses in this area include additional housing projects that encourage infill and density to support the existing commercial uses, complimentary institutional uses (such as schools and churches), service-oriented commercial, and under carefully designed circumstances, light industrial development may also occur, if buffered from existing residential areas. Any highway commercial uses should be concentrated near the US 131 interchange and should not be encouraged to expand beyond this area.

## AREA 2 - BELMONT VILLAGE

The Belmont Village neighborhood is the heart of the Township, located in the center of the Township just north of the Grand River. This is a historic population center, with multiple neighborhood institutional uses, such as the Township Offices, Fire Station, Post Office, Belmont Elementary School, multiple religious institutions, the YMCA, and more. Additionally, the White Pine Trail intersects this neighborhood, providing recreational opportunities for residents, area employees, and business patrons. There is an office/commercial PUD development within the neighborhood including a daycare, restaurant, and multiple professional offices. Along Belmont Avenue, there is an aging single-family housing stock surrounded by scattered newer single-family plats.

There is a desire to expand upon and strengthen the existing neighborhood node in Belmont Village, one capable of supporting local commercial businesses, offices, and area employers. To do this, additional housing units and walkable community amenities are necessary to bring more people and life to this special neighborhood. This plan calls for infill residential development with a denser and varied housing stock, with architecture and character that makes sense for the area. Additionally, local small-scale neighborhood commercial retail and sit-down restaurants are encouraged. Context-specific design will be key to preserving the historic and small-town feel of Belmont Village, while evolving to support the needs and wants of local businesses owners and residents.

## AREAS 3 AND 4 - COMBINED WEST RIVER

The central West River Drive corridor from Jamail Drive to Isle Grand Drive presents challenges for development, including the speed of traffic access and floodplain considerations. There is a mix of existing uses along this stretch, including single-family homes, , financial institution, assisted living facilities, medical offices, retail shops, professional services, restaurants, and recreation. The key for any development or redevelopment along this stretch of West River will be curb cut and driveway consolidation and access management. Single-family homes with single driveways off West River Drive are discouraged, while parcel combinations and clustered development with consolidated access off West River Drive is favorable.

## AREA 3 - VETERANS PARK

At the intersection of Jupiter Avenue and West River Drive, land uses should be lower impact and may feature open spaces. Northwest of West River Drive, clustered residential and office uses are appropriate, while south of West River Drive is planned for large lot residential with an emphasis on natural features conservation and recreation. The Northeast\* side of West River Drive should remain single family residential. Traditional commercial uses, such as retail and restaurants, will not be a good fit at this intersection. Additionally, uses that have the potential to increase traffic substantially, especially at peak hours, are not appropriate without significant access management considerations. All development should include consolidated access points. Any development should be thoughtfully done and provide an effective and cohesive transition between existing single-family residential.

\*Alternative residential housing types and densities may be contemplated at the Northeast corner of West River, provided all or most of the parcels in the area are consolidated into a single development project, safe access can be demonstrated through traffic analysis, building height is limited to 35 feet in height, and significant buffering is provided from adjacent single-family residential.

## AREA 4 - GRAND ISLE CENTER

At the intersection of Ethelwin and West River Drive, on the north side of West River, is an existing commercial retail node that should be strengthened and supported by surrounding residential infill of a variety of housing types with an added emphasis on access management. On the south side of West River Drive at the intersection is an existing PUD that incorporates the former Grand Isle Golf Course club house recently renovated into a microbrewery with extensive outdoor seating and entertainment area. The outdoor area takes advantage of the Township Park to the south. The neighboring vacant parcels should be commercially developed in the future to similarly capitalize on the recreation and natural amenities in the area while contributing to the existing neighborhood node. Residential uses within the PUD are not desirable unless they are to exemplify consolidated access practices and take advantage of the surrounding natural amenities and parks. A signal light may be needed in the future for higher intensity uses or safer pedestrian access.



## MIXED USE AREAS: CORE CONNECTORS

### INTENT:

Active nodes providing intentional user amenities and a continued sense of place between major Town Centers.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

This district targets areas within the stretches between Town Centers that are intended to provide office support, small-scale niche retail options, and other conveniences to serve the community. Core Connectors incorporate moderately sized nodes of commercial activity, utilizing elements of placemaking:

- A mix of small-scale retail, service, entertainment, civic, office and residential uses in appropriate locations are encouraged to enhance the vitality of the areas.
- Retail service uses should be properly located to create a complementary concentration of uses, rather than a series of scattered uses throughout the Linear development character areas. These core areas should be linked by residential, civic, and institutional uses that also complement neighborhood character.
- Buildings should have enough developable density to allow for the planned mix of uses, including enough



residential and non-retail uses on upper floors to ensure a successful, economically sustainable project.

- While some suburban-style developments, such as auto-oriented uses, may be developed, they should not be so predominant that a suburban, strip development character is allowed to continue.

### ASSOCIATED LAND USES:

Core Connectors will be comprised of medium-intensity uses that provide support for the larger community. Commercial, office, and public services will be the primary components of these areas, with local restaurants and specialty stores that logically consider the user's trajectory and associated needs from one Town Center to the next. Residential options in the form of

primarily live/work structures, with a mix of additional multi-family housing types can be expected to populate these connection points.

### TRANSPORTATION METHODS:

Serving as the active connectors between areas of intense use – Core Connectors also require strong access to the primary roadway. To encourage automobile users to enter the area and linger, pedestrian safety enhancements within the sites are crucial, especially in Core Connectors where residential options are incorporated. Additionally, driveway connections to the primary roadway should be limited; reduced drive entrances encourage users to meander from place to place within the development while increasing safety for both on and off-street users. Where feasible, connections to the trail network and public transit are highly encouraged.

### BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:

Designs with attractive front facades, entrances, and patios are all highly encouraged to activate these sites, visually and functionally. Buildings should be constructed of high-quality materials and thoughtful signage. Buildings should vary in height, achieving anywhere from 1-5 stories. In certain circumstances, the Township will allow 8 stories in height, but this is discouraged in the Core Connectors designation and should be largely reserved for the core of the Town Center. Robust landscaping should be installed throughout the site.

### CALL-OUT AREA:

The following specialized area is outlined to account for the unique conditions present within it, warranting specific land use considerations. It will generally follow the uses outlined by the Core Connectors Future Land Use Category but will have an additional set of recommendations to consider.

### AREA 5 - BELTLINE

The East Beltline is subject of a regional land use plan, which identified this area as a location for moderate density housing. There are still strong pressures toward strip commercial and “big box” threaten to undermine the vision for this regional artery.

However, a better approach to the west side may be a mix of office, institutional, and residential uses. Residential uses shall be of moderate density with deeper setbacks from existing residential uses and may include a mix of housing types. The east side of the beltline is dominated by the former state landfill, owned by Waste Management, which limits development. The remaining area south of the landfill is best suited for office and institutional uses. The area to the north of the landfill shall retain its existing land use patterns as office parks and low to moderate residential. Single-family areas to the east may transition to low-density residential. The southwest corner of the East Beltline/5 Mile intersection is not suitable for high-intensity, auto-oriented commercial development. Rather, this location is ripe for multi-family development. Limited commercial uses as Planned Unit Developments may be considered on a case-by-case basis when incidental to a residential development. Access management will be key for the effective and safe development of this corner.



## MIXED USE AREAS: TOWN CENTERS

### INTENT:

Enhancement of well-established commercial nodes through high-intensity development and activation of internal, shared spaces.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Town Center areas is based on existing conditions where positive commercial activity is occurring and the potential to foster synergies with additional uses exists. Each center has a major anchor that can attract other tenants and enough land area for substantial redevelopment. These areas accommodate a strong mixture of uses in an active environment. This classification allows for the widest mixture of uses and highest development densities within the Township and is intended for application specifically throughout the Plainfield Avenue Corridor. Areas identified currently include the Meijer Mixed-Use Center (MMU), the Plainfield Village Center, and the Versluis Town Center (Refer to the Reimagine Plainfield Plan for further details).

A variety of building types ranging in height from 1-8 stories may incorporate commercial, residential, and institutional uses in various combinations. Buildings should be located close to public sidewalks and parking is accommodated through building-integrated facilities, strategically located around structures.

Key components include:

- Centers are viewed as mini-downtowns that foster diversity and interest with shops, residences, workplaces, and community gathering places.
- Taller buildings and more intense development are permitted here to frame and activate the public realm.
- Opportunities to create smaller blocks, a street network, and streetscapes.
- Building massing and scale is appropriate to support a pedestrian-oriented environment.
- Structures are oriented to frame internal streets.
- Parking is shared between uses, and off-street parking is located behind or to the side of buildings but not in front.
- Centers have the potential to be served by transit.
- Auto-oriented uses are discouraged; if allowed, they should be on the periphery of the site as part of a larger complex of buildings.
- Civic buildings, public greenspaces, and community gathering places are strongly encouraged.



### ASSOCIATED LAND USES:

Town Centers will be comprised of highly-traversed and well-established commercial uses. Big box stores, office, institutional, and some industrial uses are to be expected. Development surrounding these higher-intensity features will include residential infill options, primarily in the form live/work structures, with a mix of additional multi-family housing types.

### TRANSPORTATION METHODS:

Town Centers are areas of intense use – direct access must exist between these areas and the primary roadway, such as Plainfield Avenue or its associated side streets. Automobiles will be the primary mode of travel to and from these locations, but pedestrian safety enhancements within the sites are crucial, especially in Town Centers where residential options are incorporated. Where feasible, connections to the trail network and public transit are highly encouraged.

### BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:

Buildings along the west side may be a mix of office, Buildings should be constructed of high-quality materials that wrap around the entire building. Buildings can achieve up to 7 stories in height. Commercial buildings should be supported by sufficient but not overly excessive parking areas. Parking areas may be located in the front, side, or rear yards of buildings. Large areas of parking should be broken up with landscaped islands and trees. Robust landscaping should be installed throughout the site.





## OFFICE PARK

### INTENT:

A concentrated area of professional offices and personal service establishments that exists to serve the community.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

This designation will contain a variety of business services and professional office uses of both a public and private designation. Office developments are intended to vary in scale and character based on location and purpose and should be designed to complement their surrounding land uses when possible. Office Park areas are generally not suitable for commercial or residential uses.

### ASSOCIATED LAND USES:

Appropriate uses include professional offices and clinics of medical practitioners, professional services such as insurance, real estate, legal, financial, engineering, architecture, advertising, clerical, sales, management and similar or allied professions, offices of non-profit professional, civic, social, fraternal, political and religious organizations, public and quasi-public institutional buildings, municipal offices, libraries, post offices, and similar uses, personal service establishments, and essential public services.

### TRANSPORTATION METHODS:

Roads in the Office Park areas should be

be designed to be well-connected to major roadways and surrounding complementary uses. New road connections should be built as needed to connect Office Park areas without disturbing adjacent areas. Where feasible, connections to public transit are highly encouraged.

### BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:

Buildings in this district should be designed to be long-lasting and to support efficient office practices. High-quality appearance is encouraged and building design can vary throughout the development. Parking lots should be sufficient to support employee parking and truck maneuvering but should not be excessively large. Robust landscaping should be installed throughout the site, especially adjacent to residential areas.



## FLEXIBLE INDUSTRIAL

### INTENT:

A collection of nimble industrial activity; resilient to change and existing cohesively with its surrounding areas.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS:

This designation features a mix of manufacturing and processing activities, research and development, warehousing and distribution, and indoor and outdoor storage. Supporting uses include offices and live/work units. Facilities to power these establishments by alternative energy should be encouraged. Developments are intended to vary in scale and character based on location and purpose and should be designed and operated to be respectful of their surroundings, with mitigation of truck traffic, noise, odor, dust, or outdoor storage/operations. New business and industrial parks may build out into campus-style developments.

### ASSOCIATED LAND USES:

Appropriate uses include office, light manufacturing, artisan production, food and beverage production, creative industries, makerspaces (in certain circumstances), research and development uses and accessory retail uses. Large plants that involve manufacturing products, stamping, and machine operations are to be expected. Parking areas and loading zones are properly buffered and landscaped.

Along 10 Mile Road, in the area east of the US-131 interchange, some limited regional commercial and service destination uses will be considered.

### TRANSPORTATION METHODS:

Roads in the Flexible Industrial areas should be designed to be sufficient for truck traffic, without making them unsafe for pedestrians or bicyclists. New road connections should be built as needed to connect the industrial districts without disturbing adjacent areas. Connections to public transit are highly encouraged.

### BUILDING AND SITE DESIGN:

Buildings in this district should be designed to be long-lasting and to support efficient industrial and/or business practices. High-quality appearance is encouraged; however, sites should be designed to minimize off-site impacts and reduce pollution and site contamination to the extent possible. Loading, delivery, and storage areas should be sited to minimize impacts on adjacent uses. Parking lots should be sufficient to support employee parking and truck maneuvering but should not be excessively large. Robust landscaping should be installed throughout the site, especially adjacent to residential areas.

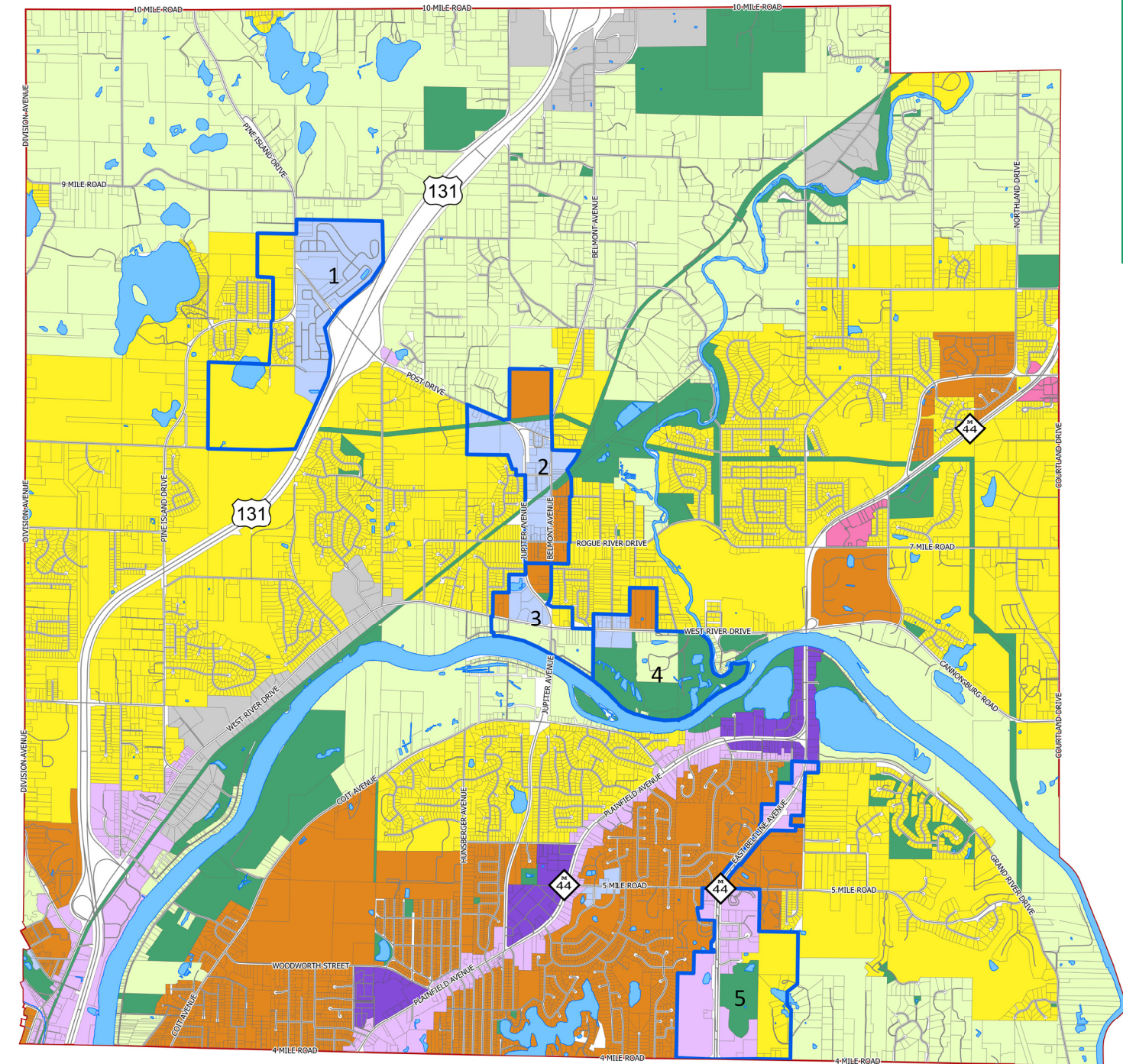
## HERRINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD

To ensure land use compatibility, the Township places special emphasis on protecting the Herrington residential neighborhood, which borders the planned Flexible Industrial future land use. Key protective measures include:

- A wide, densely vegetated buffer—potentially with berming—will separate homes from industrial uses.
- All industrial lighting will be fully shielded and directed away from residences to maintain dark sky standards.
- Industrial traffic will be routed away from residential streets, with a single access drive placed as far north as possible. Additional access will be for life safety only.
- The buffer zone will feature native trees and plants for year-round screening, stormwater management, and improved air quality.

These measures safeguard the safety, tranquility, and quality of life for Herrington residents while enabling compatible industrial development.

## FUTURE LAND USE MAP



### LEGEND

- Parks and Open Space
- Country Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Neighborhood Residential
- Mixed-Use Area - NN
- Mixed-Use Area - CC
- Mixed-Use Area - TC
- Office Park
- Flexible Industrial

### Sub Areas

- 1.) Post & Pine Island
- 2.) Belmont Village
- 3.) Veterans Park
- 4.) Grand Isle Center
- 5.) Beltline

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Data Source: Michigan Geographic Data Library, 2023.  
Kent County GIS, 2023. Progressive AE, 2023.



Note: Street Rights-of-Way (ROWs) extend to street centerlines.

progressive|ae

# 5. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

As the blueprint for guiding the future growth, development, and enhancement of our community, the Master Plan serves as a cornerstone document that articulates Plainfield's shared vision and aspirations. However, the true measure of its impact lies in the effective implementation of its goals and objectives. The Implementation Strategies Chapter of this Master Plan is a crucial component that translates vision into action, providing a roadmap for turning ideas and aspirations into tangible outcomes that benefit residents, businesses, and stakeholders alike.

Through collaborative efforts and partnerships with stakeholders across sectors, the Township aims to achieve meaningful progress towards the goals outlined in the Master Plan. By aligning resources, revising the Zoning Ordinance to reflect the desires expressed by this Plan, prioritizing projects that best serve the community's needs, and fostering innovation across all place types, Plainfield can create a more vibrant, resilient, and diverse community for generations to come.

Change takes time; the strategies detailed in the following pages are anticipated to extend over a long-term horizon, requiring adaptations as time progresses. Change takes strategy; collaboration among various entities will be essential in the completion of the different recommendations

and the Township will likely need to weigh financial, political, and other considerations when deciding how and when to execute these strategies.

## ZONING PLAN

How can zoning districts be anticipated to gradually change over time?

A "Zoning Plan" is required by the Michigan planning and zoning enabling acts. Section 33(d) of the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, requires that the master land use plan prepared under this act serve as the basis for this zoning plan. The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act, PA 110 of 2006, as amended, requires a zoning plan be prepared as the basis for the Zoning Ordinance. It must be based on an inventory of conditions pertinent to zoning in the municipality, such as vacant land available and/or underutilized land by zoning category, and the purposes for which zoning may be adopted (as described in Section 201 of the Michigan Zoning Enabling Act).

The zoning plan is a key implementation tool to achieve the vision of the Master Plan. In order to realize that vision, the Township must ensure that ordinances and regulations permit and direct the type and style of development recommended by the Master Plan.

## Relationship to the Master Plan

The Master Plan establishes the vision, goals, objectives, and strategies for Plainfield Township for the next twenty years and beyond. It includes a specific strategy for managing growth and change in land use and infrastructure over this period as well as the physical character of development. This zoning plan is intended to guide the implementation of these strategies through future changes to the Township Zoning Ordinance.

## Future Land Use Designation Correlation to Zoning Districts.

The following table summarizes the existing zoning districts that most closely correspond with each of the Land Use designations found in the Future Land Use Chapter of this plan. However, recommendations for changes to height, area, bulk, and location requirements for various zoning districts are described in the Future Land Use Chapter.

FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES	CURRENT ZONING DISTRICTS
<b>PARKS AND OPEN SPACE</b>	N/A
<b>COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL</b>	Rural Preservation (RP) Rural Estate Residential (RE)
<b>SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL</b>	Residential (R-1A) Residential (R-1B) Residential (R-1C)
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL</b>	Residential (R-2) Residential (R-3) Residential (R-4)
<b>MIXED USE AREAS</b> Neighborhood Nodes Core Connectors Town Centers	Mixed-Use (MXU) Village Commercial VC Commuter Commercial CC Commercial (C-1), Commercial (C-5)
<b>OFFICE PARK</b>	Office (O)
<b>FLEXIBLE INDUSTRIAL</b>	Light Industrial LI Industrial I

It is important to note that the Future Land Use categories should be viewed as a guide. Over the next ten to twenty years, it is intended that the Township direct growth in the way described. This may not equate to a direct, immediate change to Plainfield's current zone districts. Rather, the Township may choose to advance some zone changes in the near future and in other cases decide to wait until a development request is submitted to modify zoning. As the Township reconciles the future land use designation descriptions with the existing zoning districts, amendments to uses allowed within the existing zoning districts as well as development standards for specific uses may be necessary. Implementation of this plan will require a decision on the part of the Township regarding the best way to implement the zoning amendments. The Township could:

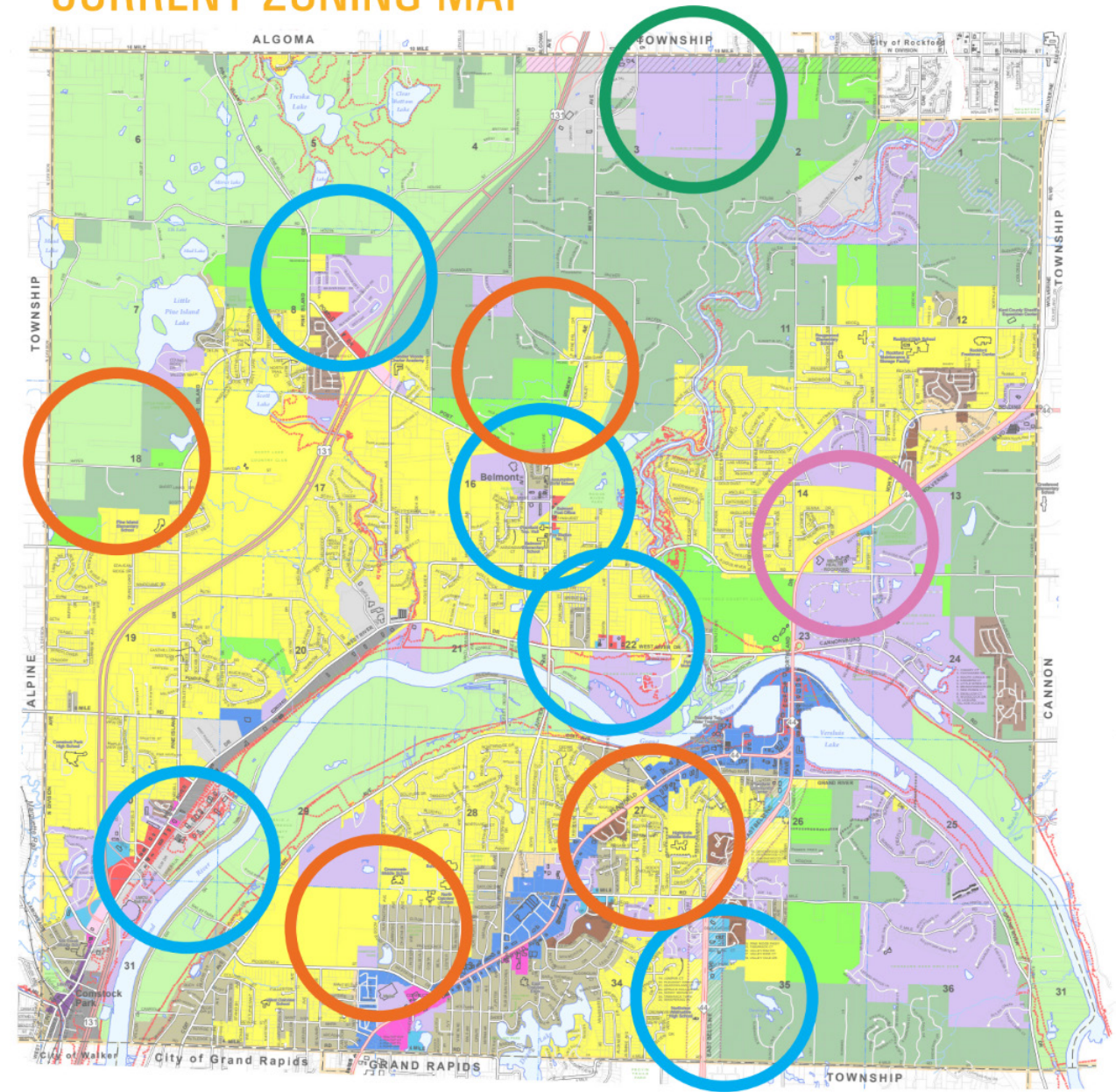
- Adopt New Zoning Districts and Zoning Map: This option for implementing the future land use plan would be the most comprehensive and time-consuming upfront as it would require a major amendment to the Zoning Map and Ordinance. However, it will provide the most certainty in the future. Adopting new zoning districts corresponding to the future land use designations will ensure that development and redevelopment is consistent with the goals and objectives of this plan. This method would provide a greater level of certainty to the Township regarding what kind of development will occur. It is therefore recommended for a majority of the areas where the existing zoning district is inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map.

## Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map Comparison

A modified version of the Future Land Use Map is attached following this section. This map identifies areas of Plainfield where the Future Land Use Map differs from the current Zoning Map. The purpose of this map is to indicate areas where there are inconsistencies between the two maps and identify possible changes to the Zoning Map that could be implemented to reconcile the two maps.

It is important to note that the changes shown on the following map are not intended as a mandate for future zoning changes but are intended as a tool to help future zoning decisions. Also, the inconsistencies shown on the map are not intended to limit future zoning changes; in other words, future decision makers are not bound to only make the zoning changes that are explicitly shown on the map. It is important to use the future land use designations as described in the Future Land Use chapter of this Master Plan when considering any of the zoning changes as described below. The bubbled areas on the map show parts of the Township in which the current zoning district does not correspond with the Future Land Use Map.

CURRENT ZONING MAP



ZONING LEGEND

Well Head Protection Overlay	LI, Light Industrial
FEMA Flood Zone	MXU, Mixed Use
<b>Other Districts</b>	
<b>ZONE_NAME</b>	O, Office
10 Mile Road Overlay	PUD, Planned Unit Development
Natural Rivers Overlay	R-1A, Residential
Northeast Beltline Overlay	R-1B, Residential
<b>Current Zoning Districts</b>	
<b>LOC_CLASS</b>	R-1C, Residential
C-1, Commercial	R-2, Residential
C-5, Commercial	R-3, Residential
CC, Commuter Commercial	R-4, Residential
I, Industrial	RE, Rural Estate
	RP, Rural Preserve
	VC, Village Commercial

CONSIDERATIONS

Based on Future Land Use Map (pg. 94)

- Explore mixed-use zoning
- Explore increased housing diversity
- Explore office zoning
- Explore preservation zoning

How do the Future Land Use Categories guide the Township toward its desired direction of housing diversity?

Efforts to increase housing supply and choice is oftentimes gradual. As was mentioned elsewhere in the Master Plan, Plainfield Township has a large number of single- and two-person households. To attract families, housing stock must be at an attainable price point. A range of housing types will allow people to downsize into smaller units to open up Plainfield's naturally occurring affordable housing stock of existing, older homes for families. Increasing the amount of housing choices also benefits multiple different household types, including young couples. Multi-generational living was a particular repeated theme heard in master plan engagements. For this reason, it is recommended that ordinance changes to encourage Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) be one of the first areas of focus for implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION

What steps can the Township take to achieve the goals set forth by this Plan?

Implementation of the community's vision is important to build public confidence and trust. It demonstrates Township leaders are being thoughtful about the future. Following the Master Plan's suggested policies and recommended actions demonstrates intentionality and provides consistency for the community.

The following will assist in advancing the desired outcomes of this plan to:

- provide high-quality natural features and greenspace;
- assure well-managed water, sewer and transportation infrastructure;
- increase housing supply and choice for a stronger community; and
- re/develop vibrant and prosperous commercial and industrial areas.

NATURAL FEATURES AND RECREATION		
WHAT	WHEN	COST
Adopt ordinance provisions that require specified tree preservation, soil volume, and minimum canopy coverage.*	Near	\$
Prepare an inventory of natural features that defines features with environmental and aesthetic significance in the community.	Near	\$\$
Continue to implement the Flood Hazard Mitigation Plan to ensure environmental quality; consistently review and revise as needed.*	Near	\$
Continue to take a leadership role in working with upstream communities on both rivers and with the appropriate watershed councils to continually improve water quality.	Ongoing	N/A
Explore a Natural Rivers designation for appropriate segments of the Grand River.	Near	\$
Provide incentives, such as density bonuses or other development rights, for property owners who commit to preserving and enhancing natural features on their land (e.g. connecting residents to natural features as Archival Brewing has done).*	Near	\$\$
Continue work to bring into public ownership or conservation status key riverbank and floodplain areas that are important to the protection of water quality, wildlife habitat, and/or flood protection.	Ongoing	N/A

WHAT	WHEN	COST
Continue to promote natural filter/buffer strips and other mitigation efforts along the edges of rivers, lakes and streams, and wetlands to mitigate the impacts of runoff on sensitive water bodies and steep slopes.*	Ongoing	N/A
Continue to look for opportunities to acquire land in strategic locations to enhance natural ecosystems, protect natural features and provide greenways to filter storm water, create habitat and unobtrusive trail ways.	Ongoing	N/A
Continue to improve, maintain and renovate aging park infrastructure through existing and new funding sources.	Ongoing	\$\$
Collaborate with local conservation organizations, non-profits, and state agencies to leverage resources and expertise in natural resource management.	Ongoing	\$
Collaborate with land trusts that focus on preserving open spaces, natural habitats, and ecologically significant areas.	Ongoing	\$
Establish requirements for the use of native plant species in landscaping to support local ecosystems and biodiversity.	Near	\$

\* Items identified with an asterisk are zoning-related items that should be considered as ordinance amendments. Other methods of implementation may also apply.

## INFRASTRUCTURE: WATER, SEWER, AND TRANSPORTATION

WHAT	WHEN	COST
Modify land use and zoning policies that reflect residential densities and commercial and industrial intensities that take into account existing and planned extensions of utility systems.*	Near	\$
Establish and periodically evaluate an urban growth boundary and prevent the expansion of utilities beyond the growth boundary until objective and pre-determined threshold requirements are met.*	Medium	\$\$
Strengthen relationships with the Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to facilitate cooperative approaches to road planning and design, and with The Rapid, with regard to mass transit.	Ongoing	N/A
Develop a Township Transportation Improvement Master Plan.	Medium	\$\$
Develop and implement an access management plan and corresponding road design standards for Plainfield Avenue in alignment with the Road Commission's and MDOT's general parameters for arterial thoroughfares, referencing the Institute of Transportation Engineers' Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities.	Medium	\$\$
Incorporate the recommendations of the Grand Valley Metro Council's Non-Motorized Transportation Plan to increase opportunities for recreational and commuting needs.	Medium	\$

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## HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

WHAT	WHEN	COST
Adjust lot size, lot area, and setback requirements to allow for more compact housing development, making efficient use of available land.*	Near	\$
Specify the exact housing forms permitted in all residential zoning districts.* Labeling all housing types of 3 or more units as "multi-family" can be confusing given that triplexes and large apartment complexes are very different.	Near	\$
Modify minimum parking requirements for residential development.*	Near	\$
Allow for administrative approval for all Missing Middle Housing developments of up to 8 units in all residential zone districts.*	Near	\$
Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in most residential zone districts with established design standards.*	Near	\$
Promote walkable neighborhoods by emphasizing front porches and de-emphasizing garages and car parking by implementing minimum front setbacks for buildings to bring them closer to the street, offering incentives or design standards that promote the incorporation of front porches in new residential developments, and limiting the size and prominence of garages in front-facing facades.*	Near	\$
Develop a building and site element design standards manual to be referenced during the approval process of housing developments to ensure sustained character.*	Near	\$\$
Prepare a pre-approved residential plans lookbook allowing for swift approvals of housing options that align with the desired design characteristics of the neighborhood.* Specific focus on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to promote infill housing within developed neighborhoods.	Medium	\$\$
Identify "target sites" for housing development in the Township; acquire target sites for Township ownership and complete pre-development services for target sites (topographic surveying, title work, etc.)	Medium	\$\$\$

WHAT	WHEN	COST
Utilize the Brownfield Housing Program TIF; Identify eligible sites within the Township and acquire desired sites that are not currently owned by the Township. ( <a href="https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/developers/tax-increment-financing-tif">https://www.michigan.gov/mshda/developers/tax-increment-financing-tif</a> )	Medium	\$\$
Discuss the viability of partnering with the State Land Bank to determine best uses for foreclosed properties. Potentially use the Grand Rapids model; <a href="https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Programs-and-Initiatives/Purchase-City-Owned-or-State-Land-Bank-Authority-Residential-Property">https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Programs-and-Initiatives/Purchase-City-Owned-or-State-Land-Bank-Authority-Residential-Property</a>	Medium	\$
Provide a bonus for greater housing densities and/or reduced parking requirements when workforce housing is provided in a project.*	Ongoing	\$

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COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT		
WHAT	WHEN	COST
Adopt a development incentives policy that defines Township Board expectations in the granting of allowable financial incentives.	Near	\$
Create a “Toolbox” that provides clarity on Township development incentives, partners, and programs.	Near	\$\$
Reinstate and promote the Plainfield Avenue Corridor Improvement Authority	Medium	\$\$
Partner with regional economic development efforts to promote the health of Township businesses and to attract desirable commercial and industrial land uses.	Ongoing	N/A
Assist businesses in acquiring grants for façade enhancements and business improvements/expansions.	Ongoing	\$\$
Establish regulations that allow for “Incremental Development”, allowing for an increase in size and intensity of uses in an incremental manner so that change is less abrupt and that the overall design and function of a neighborhood is not disrupted.*	Medium	\$
Continue to host “Developer Day” events to promote projects in the Township that are in alignment with the goals of the Master Plan and Reimagine Plainfield.	Ongoing	\$
Implement zoning provisions that support transit-oriented development, facilitating mixed-use developments near public transportation hubs to promote walkability and reduce reliance on cars.* At a minimum, an average of about 10 to 20 units per acre is required to support any form of regular, on-street bus service is for a transit corridor.	Medium	\$\$
Continue to implement strategies outlined within the Reimagine Plainfield Plan and apply them to commercial areas throughout the Township. <a href="https://cms7files.revize.com/plainfieldct/PlainfieldTownship_Final%20(pages)%202021%2005%2005.pdf">https://cms7files.revize.com/plainfieldct/PlainfieldTownship_Final%20(pages)%202021%2005%2005.pdf</a>	Medium	\$\$

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